

WILLIAM MARES was born in Saint Louis and raised in Texas. He studied history at Harvard and received his B.A. degree there in 1962. Six months of active service in the United States Marine Corps followed after which he went to Germany for a period of study. When he returned to the United States he entered the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Medford, Massachusetts, receiving his M. A. degree in 1964. The following year he enrolled as a law student at the University of Chicago and while there, as an escape from classes, began making photographs. This interest grew until it became the fill time occupation at which he has worked for the last three years. At the present time he is a photographer on the staff of the Chicago Sun-Times.

In 1968, six years after his training at Parris Island, South Carolina, he returned with permission to document the ten weeks preparation of a seventy-five man recruit platoon. This was in view of producing a book of photographs with his text on the boot camp experience. A large body of photographs resulted and this exhibition - his first - has been chosen from them. In January, 1971, his book will be published by Doubleday and Company.

The Marine Corps has an unquestionable mystique. It is proud of its combat history and makes no effort to hide it.

"Every Marine a rifleman" whether he greases planes, drives trucks or carries radios. Marine infantrymen are the nearest thing to shock troops in the American military establishment.

Young men join the Marines for many reasons, some to escape their families, schools, or the draft, others for Instant Toughness, or a chance to enact their nation's ideals of heroism and valor.

But all recruits become one and the same bald, frightened, green-clad "scum," moments after a drill instructor breaks the uneasy silence of arrival:

You are now at Recruit Receiving Barracks Marine Corps Recruit Depot - Parris Island South Carolina This is your first step in becoming a member of the World's Finest Fighting Organization The United States Marine - Corps Being private in the Marine Corps you are the lowest of the low and you will conduct yourselves accordingly You will speak only when spoken to always using the word "Sir" IS THAT CLEAR, RECRUITS?

With that first YES, SIR! the recruit begins ten weeks of monastic life. He is scorned, hounded, and humiliated, but for an avowedly positive end. Much like religious institutions, the Marine Corps means to convert. It wants more than mere acquiescence; it wants "instant willing obedience to orders" the better to perform and survive in battle.

After four or five weeks, the constant pressure and harassment let up, but until the very end of boot camp, enlistment will seem almost like the last act of free will.