

Old Drill Instructors Arrive to Receiving Barracks, PISC

The year was 1988 and I was a green belt Drill Instructor working at the new Recruit Receiving Barracks for my seven months of hell. They call it "Quota Time" suggesting that it is a break in the stress of training recruits but for me it was torture. I came to PISC to train recruits, not process recruits fresh off the bus. I had always thought recruits were dumb on the first day of training after having spent a week in receiving barracks, but having worked at receiving for a few months I found out truly what the definition of dumb was, it was civilians during the first week of in-processing.

Late one afternoon in the spring of 1988 a charter bus rolls up to the front of our receiving barracks. I found this very odd since recruits do not show up until the hours 2200 – 0400 and we were unaware of any site visits by authorized tour groups. I quickly looked at the schedule of arrivals and there was no mention of any deliveries until after 2200.

Watching intently to see what happens, the door finally opens and off walks a Marine Liaison Officer in his Dress Blue Delta uniform looking sharp. Alone he walks up to the front door and enters the receiving barracks.

Marines, I have a bus load of former Marine Drill Instructors dating back to WWII and even a few years earlier for some. They range in age from about 55 years to 85 years. They are on a tour of Parris Island to see how much things have changed since they were Drill Instructors. One of the requests they made was to go to receiving and get yelled at by Drill Instructors as if they were young kids showing up for boot camp. Will you please participate and let them enjoy some Marine DI ass chewing.

I was instantly for it, but the remaining ten or so Drill Instructors were not very supportive. I spoke up and told my fellow DI's

Marines, this is bullshit! Those old timers are going to think we are a bunch of fucking pussies if we don't get out there and harass them as they have asked to be harassed. They will think that we don't measure up to the Drill Instructors of their era. We owe it to

them and to the traditions of our Corps to give them what they came for. And someday, we too will be on a bus trying to recapture our youth and make the same damn requests of future generations of Marines. Now I am doing it even if I am the only one. I expect you all to join me.

I got maybe four other Drill Instructors willing to help me out. I told them I would get on the bus and give the speech and they were to wait near the yellow footprints and harass them as they got off the bus. I told the DI's "and don't worry about profanity, they are not recruits. In fact I plan on doing everything short of punching or pushing them".

We exited the front doors in a very serious manner and my peripheral vision told me the old Marines looked like excited school children. I took my three steps on the bus to the top of the aisle. I heard quiet discussions amongst the passengers, without hesitation I said.

CLOSE YOUR DAMN MOUTHS. MY NAME IS
SERGEANT CROUCH, UNITED STATES MARINE
CORPS. YOU ARE NOW AT RECEIVING BARRACKS,
PARRIS ISLAND SOUTH CAROLINA. THE FIRST AND
LAST WORDS OUT OF YOUR MOUTHS IS SIR, IS
THAT UNDERSTOOD!

The response was pathetic; apparently they thought I would accord them the respect of old Marines. Well, that was not my style. One standard for all is my motto and I was not going to let them think the Corps has gotten soft.

LET ME GUESS, YOU GOT DEAD BATTERIES IN YOUR
HEARING AIDES, I SAID THE FIRST AND LAST
WORDS OUT OF YOUR FUCKING MOUTH IS SIR, IS
THAT UNDERSTOOD!

"SIR YES SIR"

I still was not satisfied "I DON'T CARE IF YOU DO HAVE ONE FOOT IN THE
FUCKING GRAVE, LOUDER...LET ME HEAR IT NOW".

"SIR YES SIR"

WELL IT'S ABOUT DAMNED TIME. WHEN I GIVE THE COMMAND YOU WILL GET OFF MY BUS AND GET ON MY YELLOW FOOT PRINTS. IF YOU BROUGHT A CANE OR A WALKER, YOU LEAVE IT ON MY BUS. IF YOU THINK YOU ARE GOOD ENOUGH TO STAND ON MY YELLOW FOOT PRINTS YOU HAD BETTER DO IT WITHOUT ASSISTANCE. NOW GET OFF MY BUS.

I jumped off the bus and we young DI's began our yelling and cursing of these old people to get their butt moving to the yellow foot prints and stand at the position of attention. I will be damned I thought, some of these old coots are testing me; I saw a couple canes. I watched to see where they parked their butt and happily made my way to them. I grabbed the two canes and tossed them to the grass near the curb with the reminder "YOU WILL NOT GET THROUGH MY BOOT CAMP WITH ARTIFICIAL DEVICES TO STEADY YOURSELF, YOU WILL DO IT LIKE EVERYONE ELSE GRANDPA".

Inside I was having a blast, how often in life do you have permission as a 26 year old Marine to chew the butt off old people in a very disrespectful manner. I was only enjoying it because our guests, veteran Marine Drill Instructors were all smiles. They loved every second of the group harassment that I and the other DI's were giving them.

Then I heard it, that very distinct sound. Someone had a 35MM SLR camera and was taking pictures. I shouted out "THAT BETTER BE YOUR FUCKING PACEMAKER I HEAR CLICKING BECAUSE IF IT IS A CAMERA IT IS GOING TO EAT PAVEMENT OLD MAN". I turned around to see this old Marine with his camera in front of his face shooting my picture. Of course I dared not touch his camera and sure enough another troublemaker had left his position on the yellow foot prints and retrieved his cane. After about five minutes of yelling I said "AT EASE MARINES". The old Marines were very appreciative and happy that we lite a fuse under their ass that day. Hearing their compliments and approval had value for us young Marines because throughout the history of the Marine Corps, Marines have always measured their performance against the legends, myths and rumors of "The Old Corps".

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MCRD Parris Island, 1988