

KEY TO BRAINWASHING

By Dr. Ruth Alexander

(Editor's Note: Following is the first article in a series on the theories of Russian physiologist Ivan Petrovich Pavlov as they are used by the Communists in the "cold" war and to "brainwash" captured American troops.)

One of our greatest weaknesses is our addiction to slogans. Our slipshod "education," with its emphasis on trumpet tooting and life adjustment, has rendered us incapable of pure thought and has created in us a genuine hostility toward any word, symbol or concept that smacks of the intellectual process.

Take the absurd slogan "brain-washing" for instance. It is a meaningless quickie dreamed up by some smart alec, yet it epitomizes the little we know about the Pavlovian stresses practiced ceaselessly upon us by the Communists.

If our POWs in the Korean War had been thoroughly familiarized with Pavlovian techniques, they might have been able to resist their apparent unpredictability.

Suspense, itself, is a form of shock and, being inexcusably unprepared for the pattern of Pavlovian degenerative psychology, our boys were sitting ducks for shock. Their wills were paralyzed and Korea was the first war in our once-proud history where few, if any, successful prison breaks were engineered by escapees, who had had it.

We excused them by claiming they were "brainwashed," but not a man in a million had the foggiest idea of what he meant by this superficial euphemism for the complicated but scientifically reputable theory and practice of the conditioned reflex.

It has been some ten years now since Korea. Our people are becoming slowly, painlessly and reluctantly aware of the minimal doctrines of communism and its

grandiose determination to conquer the world. But few have had the intellectual curiosity to dissect the Pavlovian base of "brainwashing" or to relate it to behaviorism, the basis of our welfare state and all other degrees of socialism.

Pavlovian techniques are not only the basis of so-called brainwashing, they are also the key to Soviet propaganda. We call the "cold" war "the battle for men's minds." Yet we wage it as flip-pantly as the Madison Avenue boys wage the battle of status for the status seekers.

The Russians, on the other hand, have built their strategy on the premises and conclusions of the great Russian physiologist, Ivan Petrovich Pavlov, (1849 - 1936), world famous for his research on digestive and cerebral activity and his theory of conditioned reflexes, Nobel prize winner, 1904, director of the Russian Academy of Medicine, the Institute of Experimental Medicine, and honorary fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in London.

Since World War I, which established the Communist system in October (old style) 1917, all Russian consultants on psychological warfare have been scientific experts highly versed in Pavlovian theory.

Hence, nothing on our enemy's side "happens" accidentally. But we continue to play the "cold" war by ear and publicize it by slogans.

"The election isn't very far off when a candidate can recognize you across the street."

KIN HUBBARD