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The Journal of Professional Adventurers



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November/77

Vol. 2, No. 4

SOLDIER of FORTUNE

The Journal of Professional Adventurers

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Q. In the Winter '76 SOF, columnist Jerry Ahern praised the new Gerber Mk. II survival knife. I suppose it is a difference of aesthetics and use, but the original Gerber Mk. II Assault Dagger looks better to me. An aficionado of knives can well appreciate this dagger's *Zeitgeist*, the sinuous length-blade-curve ratio, its spiritual haft, in a very real sense tendering empowerment to its possessor. Truly a tribute to Gerber designer, Al Mar, who also developed the Mark I.

If I had my way with the proper military authorities, I would have the Gerber Mark II designated as the official sidearm of our Special Forces. After all, the British Commandos have their Fairbairn.

R.P.S., Brookline, Mass.

A. As you point out, the older Mark II is more useful as a combat field knife and killing dagger. The original Mark II had a slim, angled blade with no sawteeth. The angle of the blade was designed to more easily find the heart when the knife was thrust between the fourth and fifth rib; obviously, this was only a theoretical advantage, and the angle was dropped from later production. Bob Brown, Green Beret publisher of SOF, carried one of these early daggers in Vietnam. I also have one in my collection, flecked with blood rust left by its previous owner, an operative in Southeast Asia.

The second major Mark II design had a slim, non-angled blade with sawteeth. This is my favorite version of the Mark II, a lethal beauty. However, some soldiers reported the slim blade would not stand up to heavy jungle use, so Gerber beefed up the width of the blade to its current dimensions. A limited-production diving knife, the Neptune, was also produced,

using the Mark II design with a stainless blade and yellow-painted handle.

Most Special Forces recruiting literature shows the Green Beret with the old Sykes-Fairbairn Commando knife, the drawbacks of which are well known. I think the Gerber Mark II would make an excellent limited-issue knife for the Special Forces, just as the Case V-42 stiletto was issued to its predecessor, the First Special Service Force of World War II. Of course, there have been some other popular knives among Special Forces troopers, such as the Randall Model 18 Attack-Survival, not to mention the more mundane Camillus Pilot Survival and KeBar knives.

Q. I had the good fortune of seeing your book, *Secrets of Modern Knife Fighting*, just recently, and I must say that it is an outstanding work on the subject. I am a police officer by profession, graduate of several criminal investigation schools. I am also an ex-Marine sergeant with experience in boxing, jiu-jitsu, and hold a first dan Black Belt in Tae Kwon Do.

I have recently completed a biographical work on the famous Jim Bowie, *Bowie: The Man and the Era*, which will be in print shortly. Naturally, no book on Bowie could fail to at least mention the famous Bowie knife and the technique of its use. My book contains an entire chapter on the subject, a chore in itself, especially when one comes upon legends, rumors, and fiction. (My research began in 1968 and has taken me to no less than seven states and at least twice that many historical societies and museums.)

The Bowie style of knife fighting, as taught in the south in the 1830s and 40s, is the sabre grip and stance style used by Jack Styers in his book, *Cold Steel*. What little information about such schools exists is very fragmentary, but it indicates that Bowie-knife fighting was based on sabre-fencing techniques, the cut, slash, and thrust method which the late Col. James Bowie made famous.

Bowie's duels and encounters were almost invariably short. He used the principle of reach and disable, that is, attack the opponent's knife hand. Once dis-

continued on page 74

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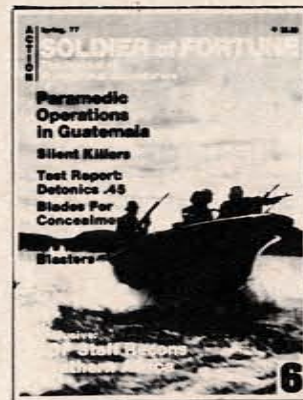
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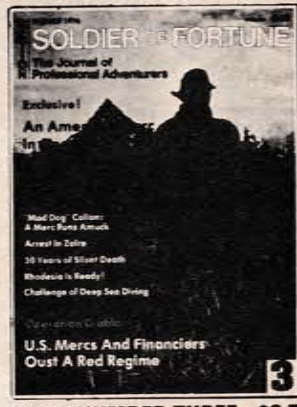


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TERRAIN AND SITUATION NO. 5

BY JERRY AHERN

For a long time, I was a firm believer in sticking to the factory wood or plastic on my handguns, since most custom grips have a tendency to require custom fitting and generally serve to give small guns big handles, thereby hindering their concealability. But I'd always been a sucker for the checkered rubber grips used on the old pre-1968 Browning M1910 .380 pocket auto. And a longtime favorite hideout gun with me has been the S&W Model 60, the all-stainless-steel version of the two-inch Chiefs Special .38. Less than two years ago, Pachmayr Gun Works (1220 S. Grand Ave., L.A., Calif. 90015, U.S.A.), apparently having read my mind on grips, came out with something I could not resist trying. They made a pair of grips in checkered rubber that increased the gripping surface on a Chiefs yet added next to nothing in bulk. It almost converted a revolver grip into the more natural feel of an automatic. And even though it was longer than factory grips, the flat configuration seemed to aid concealment rather than hamper it.

So, I bought a pair, put them on my dehorned Model 60, and now I wouldn't have things any other way. The checkered grips fit superbly. Being more bulbous than the factory J-Frame grips, they fill the hand better. They completely cover the entire grip frame, yet are sufficiently relieved on the left side to allow fast, trouble-free ejection of the spent cases and need no kitchen modifications, as do many oversized wooden grips.

The rearmost portion of the Pachmayr Compac grips pushes the web of the hand better than 1/4 inch beyond the backstrap, accommodating the average or larger-than-average hand more comfortably than spindly factory originals. The butt is rounded to aid concealability, and its base is deeply grooved to accommodate the little finger, which dangles below standard grips.

Because the grips are steel-reinforced rubber, they hold their shape and give a

positive gripping surface under all wet, cold conditions that might be encountered afield. Prolonged exposure to extreme heat could possibly be damaging, though no personal experience or reports from other users supports this. Since I was so impressed, the natural thing was to buy a set of Pachmayrs for my Walther PPK/S. These do virtually nothing to alter the size of the grip but do provide an all-over checkered surface, including the front and backstraps. Pachmayr grips for automatics are available for the .45 auto, the Browning P-35 or High Power, S&W Model 39s and 59s, and as mentioned, the PPK/S (also fitting the PP and, with some tinkering, the Turkish MKE). The Compac Presentation is made for S&W J-Frames, like my Model 60, Colt D-Frame guns, like the Dick Special, and Charter Arms revolvers. Standard Presentation grips, featuring the same wrap-around styling but with service stock configuration, are available for all DA Colt, Smith & Wesson, and Ruger revolvers, in large and small sizes.

Modestly priced, they're available in most gunshops. If you can't locate them, write Pachmayr. They're not hard to find, but even if they were, Pachmayr grips are worth it.

John Bianchi has long turned out some of the best holster designs on the scene. One of Bianchi's newest and perhaps least known models is the Number 11, a leg holster. That's what I said. Most of us think of leg holsters as something attached to a woman's garter 100 years ago. Bianchi has taken the leg holster concept and brought it into the present, constructed it of the finest materials, made it comfortable and durable, and in the process, turned out one of the best carry systems a man could want. The Model 11 Leg Holster is made for .25 autos, medium frame .380s, and two-inch and three-inch-barrel small-frame revolvers, like Smith or Charter guns.

Made of soft, full-grain leather, the Model 11 rides just below the knee, utilizing wide, double-snap-fastening elastic straps, one above the calf muscle, the other below. Since the holster naturally molds itself to the leg, thus retaining the gun, no safety strap is needed. With loose-fitting pants legs or high-top boots, it virtually defies detection.

The most significant feature of the Bianchi Model 11 Leg Holster is that it is nearly as fast as an ankle holster, vastly more comfortable, and much easier to keep concealed. Mine works well with my two-inch Chiefs. I haven't seen one with a .25 auto yet, but if I did, I'm almost certain I wouldn't spot it anyway. At about \$16, the Bianchi Leg Holster warrants a serious look (Bianchi Leather Products, 100 Calle Cortez, Temecula, Calif. 92390, U.S.A.).

Non-lethal weapons, to startle or confuse an enemy, are nothing new. Today, an effective, reliable chemical weapon is an increasingly important alternative with laws becoming ever more restrictive concerning the use of guns and knives when repelling attackers. Such a weapon may also be more suitable for persons too inexperienced or untrained in the effective use of firearms or edged weapons, and chemical weapons are important when you want an assailant controlled rather than dead. Chemical Shield, manufactured by Weapons Corporation of America (P.O. Box 681, Marietta, Ga. 30061), is one such product. The name "Chemical Shield" is apparently a play on Ortho-chloro-benzal-malononitrile, or CS gas, which is used by the U.S. Army and other agencies as a riot control agent. It contains a two-percent CS solution, a non-toxic solvent, and an invisible ultraviolet-light-sensitive dye, used in order to assist suspect identification, although, if memory serves, the dye is not sufficient evidence in itself to press charges. However, such a means of positive identification can aid police in obtaining an admission of guilt.

Aside from its effective range of up to ten feet and the possibility of its use on multiple assailants, the principal virtue of Chemical Shield is its ease of operation and its inherent safety factor when not in use. Most aerosol gas canisters are as easy to fire as a woman's perfume spray. Chemical Shield features a unique safety cap which must be rotated to the right into its recess in order for the plunger to be depressed. With reasonable care, this system is proof against accidental discharge.

Both models of Chemical Shield, the Mini-Shield with 20-burst capability, and the Midi-shield, capable of 50 discharges, feature an impact extruded aluminum canister, externally lacquered and internally lined. The Mini-Shield

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Carter's Korean Sell-Out?

by LTC. Alexander M. S. McColl

President Carter's action in relieving Major General John K. Singlaub as Chief of Staff of U.S. Eighth Army, Korea, has been discussed editorially in nearly every publication in the country. Of course, the President has the legal authority to direct reassignment of any officer of the Armed Forces without giving a reason. Of course—and I'm sure he was aware of this—General Singlaub, by his action, invited being relieved and certainly did his career no good. Of course, the contrast between the President's action in this case and his tolerance of Andrew Young's actions and statements as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations shows that there are quite subjective limits to the announced policy of "openness" within the present Administration. Of course, General Singlaub's new job as Chief of Staff of Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) is not exactly outer darkness. Of course, all these matters have been discussed at length and with predictable conclusions, all across the land, but none of them touches the strategic rationale for having a U.S. Infantry Division, with supporting troops, in Korea.

Since the end of World War II, the basic U.S. strategy in the matter of non-nuclear forces has been to have relatively small, highly visible ground and tactical air elements in a few "vital areas" overseas, keeping the balance of force in the continental United States, with substantial sea, air, and strategic mobility forces to assure rapid deployment to any threatened point, and support of those forces once committed. Since resources are never unlimited, this is the only way to do it; you can not have an "adequate" garrison at every imaginable trouble spot. Also, many countries, even many of our allies, are reluctant to have U.S. troops in their territory in peacetime.

What, then, makes defense of an area so "vital" as to require U.S. troops on the ground in "peacetime"? Within the Free World, the three major economic-industrial centers are the United States, Western Europe, and Japan. So long as all three are aligned together, they definitely outweigh the Soviet Union and its allies and are reasonably secure. If either Japan or Western Europe were taken over by the other side and its resources effectively mobilized to our detriment, we would be in very serious trouble. This makes the defense of these areas "vital" in a sense that can never apply to other, less developed, parts of the world. South Korea is a necessary outer bulwark for the defense of Japan, as well as having substantial industrial-economic resources in her own right.

Why troops on the ground instead of a security treaty and forces in CONUS or elsewhere who can be deployed to the area? The North and South Korean

armies are fairly evenly matched, with about 20 divisions each. One U.S. Infantry Division does not have a very great effect on the purely military balance within the peninsula. That is not really its function. Its function is to make it perfectly certain that if the North Koreans invade the South, they are at war with the United States from day one. In view of what happened to them last time around, this makes an invasion from the North very unlikely. This deterrence has worked very effectively over the last 24 years, permitting the economic and social resurgence of Japan, South Korea, and adjacent countries.

The Jimmy Carter Plan, if I may use the term, has one—literally fatal—flaw: under a security treaty, however worded and however solemnly ratified, with "earmarked" forces, however imposing, stationed somewhere else, in any crisis there must also be a Presidential decision to involve U.S. forces in the action, i.e., to commit the U.S. to "another land war on the mainland of Asia in support of a corrupt military dictatorship," assuming, of course, that the pacifist majority in Congress approves the action.

With U.S. troops on the ground, U.S. involvement from day one is certain, but Carter's plan brings the seductive element of uncertainty, of balancing probabilities, into the enemy's thinking. Communist states do not have a very good record of being able to resist this sort of temptation for very long. In addition, Kim Il-Sung, ruler of North Korea, is an older man; he is reported to desire the reunification of Korea under his own rule during what remains of his lifetime. Also, the economic and industrial growth of South Korea has been so rapid that in a very few years it may be forever too late for an attempt by the North to conquer the South. One does not like to think about the effect on the political alignment of Japan of a Communist conquest of South Korea, linked with yet another U.S. sellout and betrayal of a long-time, sworn ally.

There is nothing original in this argument. These strategic realities have been recognized and accepted by all serious professional military planners and writers for the last two decades. One ought to be surprised that only one out of our several hundred generals and admirals had the character to speak out on the matter—but this is to ignore what has been going on in the internal administration of the officer corps of all three services, at least since McNamara. The surprising thing, rather, is that even one general officer had the courage and loyalty to the Nation to speak out. And this fact is at least equally as alarming as the impending withdrawal of U.S. troops from South Korea.

NIGHTWATCH

Review by Jay Mallin

THE NIGHT WATCH: 25 Years of Peculiar Service, by David Atlee Phillips; Atheneum: New York, 1977; \$9.95.

"... Every kind of service, necessary to the public good, becomes honorable by being necessary. If the exigencies of my country demand a peculiar service, its claims to perform that service are imperious."

So said Nathan Hale, the first American spy. Appropriately enough, David Phillips took part of the title of his book from this quotation, for Phillips was a direct professional descendant of Hale's. In 25 years of "peculiar service," Phillips rose from a contract worker (non-staff) for the Central Intelligence Agency to the rank and position of super-spook, in charge of all CIA operations south (and east) of the border. (Phillips points out that "peculiar" in the sense Hale used the word was defined not as "strange" but rather as "exempt from regular jurisdiction." However, both definitions seem applicable.)

There have been—especially of late—a number of books about the CIA, all presenting an "inside" (more or less) look at America's intelligence service and most of them taking *de moda* unfavorable views of the agency's work. (Phillips notes that when he decided to retire from the CIA he consulted a lecture agent regarding the possibility of taking up the lecture trail. How much could he expect to earn in a year? he asked. "I expect you can make between five and 10,000 dollars," replied the agent. "But what about speaking **against** the CIA? That way I can promise you between 50 and a 100,000 dollars the first year.")

This book is different from the others. No sensational revelations here. Phillips is too patriotic (yes, Virginia, there are still unabashed patriots in this country) and too dedicated a warrior to reveal his country's secrets for coin. And yet this book probably provides the truest picture of the personal and professional life of a U.S. intelligence agent yet published. For those who really want to know what an agent's life is like, those who really want to know how the CIA operates, this is the book to read. In fact, this is the book for anyone who wants an interesting, highly readable, even-handed non-fiction account of modern espionage.

Phillips began his career as spy in Chili in 1950, operating in a minor and part-time capacity. Three years later, he was assigned to what became one of the CIA's



most successful operations, the overthrow of the left-leaning regime of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala. The downfall of the Arbenz government was accomplished almost entirely through psychwar means, the operational field in which Phillips specialized. (Ex-CIA director William Colby has aptly described Phillips as "a fine psychological warrior.")

Following the Guatemalan success, Phillips' career took him to Washington, to Lebanon, and then to Cuba, where he was present when Fulgencio Batista fled the country and Fidel Castro came to power. And if Phillips was involved in one of the CIA's major successes—Guatemala—he also participated in one of its disasters, the Bay of Pigs. The book provides no important secrets about that operation but does offer a good view of the planning and preparations that preceded the short-lived landing on Cuba's south coast.

After a stint in Mexico, Phillips had just been named COS (chief of station) for the Dominican Republic when civil war broke out in that country and President Johnson intervened with U.S. forces in order to block a Communist takeover. But rather than being in the DomRep, Phillips had to spend 3½ weeks in a "war room" ("The Pit"), handling operations from CIA headquarters. (A personal note: Danger is supposed to be part of a spy's life. It's amusing to me that while Phillips was helping to direct operations during

the Bay of Pigs and the Dominican fracas, it was handfuls of correspondents, including this writer, who were harassed, arrested, and ambushed on the scene.)

Other tours of duty followed for Phillips, and the latter part of the book deals with the controversial CIA role in Chile. Phillips makes the point that while the CIA did involve itself over a period of years in internal Chilean politics, it carefully kept out of the military coup that resulted in the downfall of the Salvador Allende government, although the CIA did know the coup was coming.

The people in this book are as interesting as the operations that are described. There are the directors of the CIA: Allen Dulles, John McCone, Adm. William Rarborn, Richard Helms, James Schlesinger, and William Colby. There are the colorful characters of the CIA, ranging from James Angleton, the legendary counter-intelligence chief who was "CIA's answer to the Delphic Oracle," to Philip Agee, considered to be the CIA's first defector.

Following the Guatemala success, Phillips was sifting through documents. He relates:

A CIA analyst approached me and showed me a piece of paper. "Should we start a file on this one?" she asked.

I read the paper. It contained biographical information on a twenty-five-year-old Argentine physician who had gone into asylum in the Mexican embassy; later he was to meet and scheme with Fidel Castro in Mexico.

"I guess we'd better have a file on him," I said. Although the name meant little to me at the time, the file on Ernesto Guevara, known as "Che," eventually became one of the thickest to be maintained by the CIA.

Phillips tells of a briefing at the White House in 1954:

A door opened near me. In the darkness I could see only the silhouette of the person entering the room; when the door closed it was dark again, and I could not make out the features of the man standing next to me. He whispered a number of questions...

I was vaguely uncomfortable. The questions from the unknown man next to me were insistent, furtive. . . . The lights went up. The man moved away. He was Richard Nixon, the Vice-President.

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Let's Print The Truth About Rhodesia

by Budd Saunders

"I do not speak of chance information or of my own notion. I describe what I saw myself or learned from others whom I questioned carefully." Thucydides, c. 460-400 B.C.

"Some of us lie now and again." Anonymous newsman covering Rhodesia, c. 1976

On October 2, 1976, near Mutema in southeast Rhodesia 12 black workmen were rounded up under a baobab tree and slaughtered by machine-gun fire. A reporter with a Danish press syndicate filed an on-the-scene report. The Selous Scouts, an elite Rhodesian military unit, he wrote, had done the deed. Indeed, they had not. Nor was the reporter on the scene. The Selous Scouts were operating in the Zambezi area at the time. All witnesses to the killings stated that they were done by black guerrillas. The reporter was sitting near me in the journalists' club eating lunch when it happened. The club is in Salisbury, nearly 300 miles from the scene.

I spent more than a month this fall hitch-hiking and traveling around Rhodesia, a fact which apparently perturbed some officials who couldn't decide if I were suicidal or CIA. They must have decided on the former, because the Ministry of Information officer who renewed my visa gave me a map, shook my hand with sad-eyed solemnity, wished me luck, and requested me to write the truth. A not unreasonable request, considering some of the stories that have been written and slanted to fit editorial or personal convictions.

A feature in *Time* (April 12, 1976) begins with a conversation with a lawyer and quotes him as saying, "You outsiders are forever comparing us to passengers on the *Titanic*. Well, if you're right, at least we'll go down first class." On the next page (43) is a photo of Ian Smith thoughtfully gnawing his knuckle. The caption is "at least we'll go down first class." Although he didn't say that, the implication is that he did. The article also states that "blacks are not permitted to own their own homes." This is not true. Many blacks own their homes.

Newsweek (June 7, 1976) has a photograph of some blacks standing behind a fence with the caption saying that they are in a "protected village," implying that it is actually a concentration camp; the body of the article describes it as such. These camps are only in operational areas where guerrillas regularly make strikes. The Rhodesian government is certainly cynical enough to have constructed them in order to more easily control the populace, but a prime reason for the camps is to protect tribal people, in light of past mutilations and killings by terrorists.

On September 30, 1976, in Nakiwa village (which is not "protected") 16 men, women, and children, including babies, were shot, disemboweled, decapitated, and burned. The 12 workers mentioned previously were not mutilated, just shot. In December, 26 black plantation workers were shot. These killings are being done by guerrilla units. Given the choice of losing my lips, ears, or testicles by mutilation or my life to someone playing "Come to Christ" on an AK47 assault rifle, I would opt for the "protective village." In fact, they couldn't keep me out.

(Lest it seem from my tone or point of view that I'm pro-Ian Smith, I'll say here that I'm not. Nor do I feel that the black insurgents are on a lark. They are not risking their lives just to get drunk in the bars of Lusaka or Dar es Salaam. They believe that they are fighters in a tradition that goes back to the Matabele and Shona wars of the 1890s. My concern is with the perspective of the news.)

There are many examples of biased reporting. A European TV team tossed coins in a sand pile and encouraged some young black children to dig for them. The article accompanying the pictures explained that they were starving black Rhodesians scabbling for food. In downtown Salisbury a mall is being built. The streets have been barricaded to keep traffic out. A news team which took pictures of this barricade stated that it was to keep rioting blacks out of downtown. A German team took pictures of Umtali near the Mozambique border, a favorite target area of the guerrillas, early on a Sunday morning when most city streets are empty, presenting this as a city abandoned by fleeing whites. The

old Meikles Hotel in Salisbury is being demolished to make way for a new, modern hotel — a shame because you don't see that kind of old colonial architecture anymore. The partially destroyed building was filmed, and the narration stated that it was destroyed by mortar fire.

Probably the most well known example of distortion is the picture of black workers taking an after-lunch nap in the park in Salisbury's Cecil Square. The caption states they were lined up and shot by security forces.

Most of the copy I've read takes the slant that Rhodesians are much like the erroneous view that many have of the aristocracy of the Old South in America: the effete white plantation owner sitting on the front porch sipping a julep and listening to the happy darkies singing in the fields. Many *do* live in Mercedes-Benz-type luxury, but for the most part Rhodesians are a hardworking and resourceful people. Many features I've read present them as behaving like Scarlett's Aunt Pittypat during the siege of Atlanta. The majority of people leaving the country are not Rhodesian born but came from somewhere else five to 10 years ago.

I can understand the temptation to slant the news, but I can't agree with it. I took a picture of a friend floating on a raft in a swimming pool. I asked him if he could get the garden-boy to get in and push him about while fanning him with the leaf of an elephant's ear plant. I sigh when I think of the money I could have gotten for that with a caption.

Eric Severeid once stated that the media have a vested interest in chaos and conflict and if it does not exist they'll create it. There's enough conflict in Rhodesia to report without creating more just to sell news copy. Even if a journalist is unsympathetic to the Smith regime, there is no excuse for reporting irresponsible bullshit about Rhodesia. And if you believe the situation there warrants it, I suggest you go to Kenya. File a story from Nairobi about the inevitable death of Jomo Kenyatta. After you've been summarily executed by law in that land of democratic rule — if they'll let me know which ditch you've been dumped in — I'll send flowers.

On Monday, March 28, 1977, CBS presented a program entitled "Who's Got the Right to Rhodesia," an example of the kind of distorted journalism brought out in Budd Saunders' article. Shortly after this broadcast, the Rhodesian Information Office in Washington, D.C., responded with a letter, printed in full below, to CBS in New York City.

Dear Mr. Salant,

I write in protest about a program presented by CBS at 10 p.m. on Monday, March 28, entitled "Who's Got the Right to Rhodesia." In his selection of film material, in his commentary, and in his interviews, producer Irv Drasnin presented a flagrantly slanted view of Rhodesia calculated to leave the impression of a sharply divided society on racial lines, of deep and abiding social and economic inequality and of pervasive resentment in the black community. Mr. Drasnin's bias was manifest throughout the program, and the end result was a totally unbalanced presentation of the Rhodesian scene. It was as though a foreign film-maker in the United States had concentrated his attention on urban ghetto conditions, rural poverty, and a rundown Indian tribal reservation, presenting the product as a fair cross-section of American life.

For example, blacks interviewed in the program were almost exclusively dissidents, conveying the impression that there is massive political discontent amongst Rhodesian blacks. There were no interviews with chiefs, with black government ministers, with successful and prosperous professional and business men, or with the expanding number of blacks who are making their way in the middle levels of commerce and industry at equal rates of pay with their white counterparts.

References to the education system were disparaging and inaccurate. Drasnin's commentary claimed, for example, that 40% of black Rhodesian children get no schooling. In fact 91.5% of Rhodesia's black children receive schooling, compared with 40.8% in Nigeria, 29% in Tanzania and 5% in Ethiopia. None of these comparisons was offered in the commentary. Critical reference was made to the small number of children completing secondary education. It would have been honest to have noted that the expansion of secondary school facilities has been greatly hampered by the application of economic sanctions against Rhodesia, but that despite this handicap, secondary school places have increased by 233% since 1965.

Drasnin makes no reference to Rhodesia's multi-racial university, where there is a rough equality of black and white students sharing the same facilities. This is understandable because it would sit very uneasily with Drasnin's evident determination to have his viewers believe that Rhodesia is an irretrievably discriminatory society. He makes a lot of play with "Right of Admission Reserved" notices. He never takes us behind the doors of Rhodesia's leading hotels to show us blacks and whites drinking in the same bars.

In a postscript so delayed that most viewers must have tuned out, Drasnin refers, albeit ungraciously, to a recent law which dismantled many elements of residual discrimination and opened up large areas of what was previously exclusive white land to black ownership without interfering with black tribal land. The practical effect of the new legislation is to leave 45% of Rhodesia's land area in exclusive black occupation, preserving 0.5% in exclusive white occupation. The comparative statistics are significant but are not called to the viewer's attention. Indeed he is encouraged to believe that the reform is meaningless.

There is no reference in the program to Rhodesia's health services, costing \$10 per head of population (black and white) per annum compared with an African continental average of about 50 cents. Blacks are treated at much lower costs than white. At Salisbury's Harari hospital 1000 outpatients are treated daily at 50 cents a visit. Hospitalization for blacks costs \$5 irrespective of the length of visit or complexity of the surgical or medical attention. One understands why Drasnin left the subject out of his theme of exploited and underprivileged blacks.

There is an interview with Prime Minister Smith edited down to an expression of concern about the encroachment of communism. This is then used in interviews with black political leaders to make Mr. Smith look as though he has a foolish and baseless obsession. It is a cheap shot which ignores the ideological underpinnings of the terrorist movement. Drasnin allowed some of the black politicians interviewed to get away with bland and innocuous statements of political objective at variance with views they have publicly offered on other occasions. The commentary reflected none of this ambivalence.

References to Rhodesia's armed forces sought to emphasize that they were segregated and white officered. An even-

handed presentation would have noted the predominance of blacks in Rhodesia's army and police, the fact that there are black police station commanders, the fact that there will be black commissioned officers in the army by the middle of this year, the fact that special units like the Selous Scouts and Grey's Scouts are fully integrated socially and operationally.

The only voice of organized religion on the program is that of Bishop Lamont, a highly politicized and controversial prelate, recently convicted in the court of harboring terrorists and inciting others to do so. Drasnin gives Lamont copious opportunity to air his anti-government views and to expatiate on alleged atrocities committed by Rhodesia's Security Forces. There is no balancing statement about the hideous atrocities perpetrated by the terrorists on innocent civilians. Over 900 (90% of them black) have been murdered in the last four years, either capriciously without reason or for no better reason than that they refused to support the terrorists. Not a word of censure or criticism is addressed to the terrorist leaders.

Throughout the program there is not a murmur of credit given to Mr. Smith for his acceptance of the Anglo-American proposals of last September, for his faithfulness to those proposals ever since, for his honest and sincere pursuit of an internal solution within the framework of the Anglo-American proposals, or for his courageous dismantling of race discriminatory practices.

Drasnin's program was a pitiful travesty of truthful reporting. It is greatly to be deplored that such a manifestly prejudiced film should have been made at all. It is even more to be deplored that it should be aired at a time in Rhodesia's affairs when balanced and responsible judgment is crucially important.

Judging from the large number of outraged telephone calls we have had in the last week, this office is not isolated in its condemnation of Drasnin's program. It is our request that you will discuss with us facilities for redressing the balance.





ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCE READY AND WAITING! BY AL J. VENTER

The words were measured and spoken with intent. They came from a young American Jew who had spent the past three years completing his military service with the Israeli Defense Force (IDF).

The issue at question was, quite simply, the state of Israel's military preparedness.

"I reckon," said the young man seriously, without disclosing any secrets, for Israel seems to imbue all youngsters with a strength of purpose, "that about the biggest single difference between the United States and Israel where it concerns the defense of the nation, is that Israel knows and understands the issues at stake."

The average person in America, he continued, does not want to know, much less understand.

The young man was outspoken, but he clearly knew what he was talking about. It was his view that it would take an experience like the Yom Kippur War to shake the west out of its complacency.

There were other, equally striking impressions during my two-week visit to this embattled land poised on the fringe of conflict in the Middle East for almost 30 years.

No matter where I went, or what hour of the day or night I was out, I always detected the unobtrusive presence of a security force patrol—in the streets of Jerusalem, in the Upper Galilee, or along the Sinai shore.

If it wasn't a foot patrol doing the rounds along the Jordanian frontier, or a roadblock near Bet Shean, there were border guards patrolling the highway that leads southwards from Jericho to Eilat. Invariably there was a cluster of young men in distinctive Israeli-type steel helmets with chin straps, hurriedly making their way in dusky gray IDF command cars with heavy caliber machine guns mounted in the rear.

Israeli troops, carrying Uzi SMGs, deploy from chopper in Sinai area near Sharm el Sheikh.



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A British Centurion tank and crew on maneuvers in the southern desert area. Note lack of night vision capability, a serious handicap during 1973 war. Most Syrian/Egyptian armor carried such devices. Israelis have requested from U.S. but apparently not received night vision devices.

In every instance the Uzi submachine gun was in as ready evidence as the Galil assault rifle; the Israelis have learned to fight with compact weapons.

Another experience left its mark. On this occasion, I was drinking beer in one of the cafes along Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Street; it was shortly after eight on the evening of *Shabbat* and the crowd had thinned markedly.

Two old men approached from the direction of Dizengoff Circle. Both were dressed in identical black raincoats and walked in a slow, measured step.

Over the shoulders of each of the men, who, judging by their gray hair and stooped gait, must have been well into their 60s, was slung a rifle, an American-manufactured Garand.

Later it was explained to me that both these men were members of the Civil Guard, mainly volunteers, doing their bit for society and proud of it. There were many others, the majority of them younger, a few even older, who spent valuable hours each week patrolling a specific area, most of them happy that they were still able to contribute something to the society they lived in.

Not even Israel's Arab neighbors have any doubt that Israel is probably the most militarily prepared nation in the world.

The impressions of that prominent American writer, Nobel-Prize-winner Saul Bellow, were as follows: "Guns are a common sight in Jerusalem at any time. In every quarter of the city, as in every community of Israel there are armed civilian patrols that include students.

"Daily before schools open in the morning they are examined by parents for bombs," he wrote.

Apparently Arab students at the Hebrew University were asked to participate on the campus but refused. Nothing is left to chance. Wherever you venture in the country, security patrols are evident.

Enter the Mann Auditorium or Eilat's magnificent new undersea aquarium, and as likely as not your bags will be searched and any parcels you are carrying gone through without so much as a smile. It's the same when boarding long-distance



Above: An Israeli fortified position on the Golan Heights overlooking Syria. Lack of camouflage could be disastrous. Even minimal camouflage would make it difficult for pilot of high-speed fighter-bomber to identify such targets.

transport vehicles; visiting the Knesset, Israel's futuristically designed Parliament in Jerusalem; government ministries; the approaches of the Wailing Wall in the Old City or any place where there may be a gathering of children.

Where children are concerned, Israeli security is uncompromising in the extreme.

School buses travelling between one center and another, whether in the streets of the capitol or in the middle of the Sinai Desert, are accompanied by one or more gun-toting guards, usually youthful volunteers who probably learned to handle carbines as well as their dads by the time they turned 15.

Any gathering of schoolchildren is invariably graced by the presence of

Israeli unit on anti-terrorist patrol in Sinai; they are armed with M-16s and FN/FAL. Note starlight on back of first trooper, second group.



armed guards and here brutal lessons of Arab terrorism have been thoroughly assimilated.

I attended a morning function in Eilat when the tourist city celebrated an important function. Most of the city's schoolchildren were present, some singing songs, others dancing, and many more generally taking part in festivities.

My presence as a stranger with a large camera case was immediately noted, and although security was discreet, I have little doubt that one or more of these custodians detached themselves from the crew to observe my activities at close quarters.

It was interesting that the drivers provided by the Israeli Government for the duration of my two-week visit—one at



Above: Deep commo trenches connect fortified positions. Israeli trooper carries M-16.

tached to the Ministry of Tourism, the other with the Foreign Ministry, were armed; the tourist driver secreted a tiny .22 on his person (loaded with Hi-velocity hollow points) whenever we went about on foot.

The Foreign Ministry man, on the other hand, made no effort to conceal his Uzi submachine gun which he lay between us on the back seat of the official IDF limousine.

IDF command car carries FN M.A.G. light machine gun. Borders are heavily patrolled to prevent terrorist intrusions.

Evidence of war is found in many of the regions of Israel one passes through during even the shortest stay. In the south one regularly crosses regions demarcated as minefields. Some were left by the Egyptians before they were driven out in 1967; others were laid since in a bid to foil any precipitate action by Arab armies.

Travelling through the Golan Heights, it was manifest that the battles of the past had been hard won. Regularly we passed the burnt-out hulks of tanks, armored cars, and personnel carriers, some of them left as they were for posterity, burnt and twisted, others fenced off, turned into memorials to fallen comrades, and regularly tended by those who survived.

Sentiment for those who fell in battle goes deep. Units regularly gather to pay tribute where the fighting was heaviest. Each year the living relive those grim moments that are regarded by non-participants as "glorious." You just have to look at the faces of some of these veterans to quickly realize that to them and those who did not come back the fighting was always grim, often barbaric, and anything but splendid.

Through it all, though, have come the heroes, the products of many wars and many campaigns, and of them the Israeli people are justly proud, for legends have always been built around brave men; history and the Bible have given us warriors like David, Joshua, Joab, Solomon, and others. The wars of 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973 produced their own

Israeli troops deploy rapidly from M-113 armored personnel carrier. APC carries .50 cal. Browning HMG.



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crops of war-weary gallants, some of whom, no doubt, will be remembered as Jewish heroes long after the shape and face of the Middle East have been moulded into something more durable than they are today.

It is almost four years since the Jewish nation was last called upon to thwart an

invading force and yet the level of mobilization remains high. No one is prepared to say how many men are in uniform at any one time, although an educated guess has put the figure at close to six figures—astonishingly high for a nation of only three million.

Arabs play no role in the security of the



Israeli APC took direct hit from a Syrian tank, killing entire crew. Now stands as monument on Golan Heights.

Most of the military games of 1977 are waiting ones; troops are deployed in their units throughout the country, the majority along the uneasy frontiers.

I was able to visit one of the forward positions along the Syrian front in the company of an IDF "guide." The position was within mortar range of the Syrian town of Kuneitra in the extreme north-eastern Golan region of the country. Photographs of the interior of the "fort," were strictly forbidden, but there was evidence in every direction to indicate that the position was not purely for show.

Riddled like a rabbit warren with tunnels and reinforced concrete living quarters, the fortification rests on the crest of one of the small hills that dot the eastern fringe of the Golan. A mile or two away there is another; a little further away, still another.

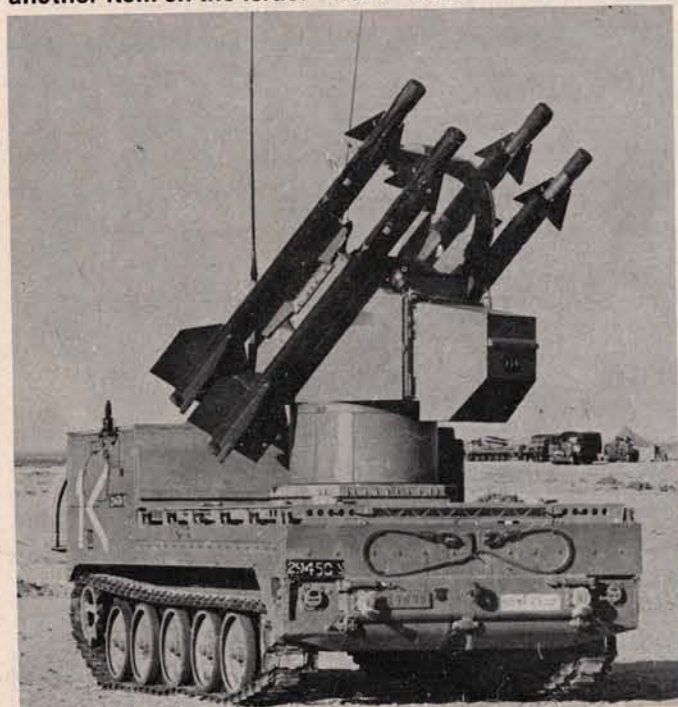
The tops of all these positions are heavily sandbagged and they are connected within by trenches. When I arrived, it had been raining hard and the mud was ankle deep, almost reminiscent of some of the Vietnamese hill-top positions during the long wet Asian summers.

Around the periphery of every one of these strong points has been laid a minefield which would have done justice to American efforts along Korea's 38th Parallel. And these fortifications have proved effective.

According to my guide, many of these positions were still intact and fighting hard days after the rest of the Golan area had been overrun by Syrian forces during the 1973 war. Their defenses are formidable and the Israelis make no secret of the fact that it would take the devil himself to oust them, if that were possible.

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An American-built Lance Missile and carrier, one of the many items supplied to the IDF by the U.S. to counter Arab aggression.



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THE KILL.

A FIRE FIGHT IN RHODESIA

by Sgt. W. S. Pullin

REPRINTED FROM ASSEGAJ - The Journal of The Rhodesian Army

The hot still air, not even ruffled by a breeze, the buzzing of insects and the annoying Mopani flies. Low scrub, rocky outcrops, all potential ambush positions. Away to the left, far below, the river twisted like a snake and spat white froth as it collided with the midstream rocks.

The Patrol Commander stopped and raised his hand, palm up to the sky. He buckled his knees and sank to the ground. Behind him, six men, dressed alike; camouflage shirts, green shorts and sandshoes. All are well armed with automatic rifles, ammunition and grenades. They went to ground as well, facing outwards so as not to be surprised. The Commander sidled across to one of them and whispered softly. Following his pointed finger, the soldier nodded and scrambled away to a position above with a commanding view.

Midday. Cigarettes smoked carefully, the smoke wafting away. A few ate from tins carefully opened. Water was no problem, they had to cross the river again when they went down the hill. Still, no need to use it all. Natural reaction to good fieldcraft. One hour went by, still as hot, beginning to sizzle. A few birds and then a large turkey buzzard wheeling lazily in the sky. Watching.

The Corporal stirred, checked his equipment. The map in its polythene bag, compass, notebook, etc., all was there. He made a sign and pointed to one of his patrol. The Lance Corporal edged over to him, careful not to make much noise. You never know, eyes may be watching for a tell-tale sign. The map with its contours, a finger outlining their route. The other man nodded, the way he had planned. Two heads are better than one.

A low whistle and the sentry came down. A last check of equipment, tins buried. Then up and in Indian file off along the age-old game track. Barely visible but the animals always found the easiest way.

Four years in the Army, one more to go. The Corporal wished the time would pass. Maybe he would sign again, but a spell in Civvy Street was most attractive. That is until you got there and found that the secure and protective screen had dropped away. The track dipped and started to wend its way down to the water. "Crash!" Hit the ground, roll, thoughts running wildly through the mind. Then a laugh behind. Looking up, a

Buck, a small Duiker. Wonder who got the worst fright?

Good reflexes, refreshing sign. Better to be sure than sorry. Jerked back to reality, time to make contact on the radio. Patrol facing outwards again, sentry facing along the track. "Hullo, Victor, this is Charlie Four." No luck. Check the batteries. Still charged. Other equipment all in order. Probably because of the high mountain to their front. Should have tried at the top of the hill. Too late now. Try again later.

The roar of the river reached them now, getting louder all the time. Blotting out other sounds. Time to rely on eyesight only. A movement below the trees. They froze and went down. The Commander inched forward to get a better view. All still. Maybe just a bird or perhaps a monkey. Keep still. Wait and watch. The end men in the patrol had turned to watch their rear. There, the movement again! In the thicket on the far side of the water. What was it, man or beast? Survey the surroundings, must find a fire position, can't take a chance. If the enemy is down there, the whole group must be able to shoot. The sand above the opposite bank caught his eye. Spoor! Tracks leading diagonally into the brush.

This is it. More movement, a wisp of smoke rising from the leaves. Somebody was cooking. Inch backward, join the others. Whispered instructions, nods of understanding. Crawl back to the line of rocks behind, careful to make no noise. "Clang!" A rifle barrel hit against a rock. They froze, hugging the dirt, waiting. No cry of alarm, no sound of people rushing away in panic. Another few minutes went by, sweat trickling down their faces and backs. Move on slowly, down into a dry tributary, safe from sight. Move quickly now. They ran crouched, force of habit, making the smallest target possible. Dry gasps for breath, chests heaving. The river turned to the right, they must cross here. The Corporal and two others first, the remaining four covering their crossing. The water was deep, the current fierce. Fight your way across, difficult with rifles held above the wet. One free hand clutching the rocks, clear water, backs to the current, walked and slid to the other side. Get your breath, cover the others. All across, one man with a hurt shoulder. Too bad, can't stop now. Clamber up the eroded bank, hanging on

to trees. Slipping, heaving one another up. All up. No time to rest. Plan of action. Grenade foliage, when enemy runs, shoot them down in the clearing on both sides.

Move in a little, a slightly circular approach. Come out at right angles. Right arms spread, the men move into line. Walking slowly, don't want to trip, center four with grenades out, pins removed. Clapped firmly in the hand. The others with safety catches off, in the ready position. Another ten yards. Closer. Everything still. Then voices. Metal scraping against metal. The enemy was doomed. "Throw," the missiles went down into the bush, then erupted in a sheet of flame. "Whoosh", "Whaddup".

Three men in tatty uniform, strange-shaped weapons clutched to their sides, raced across the sand to the shelter of the rocks. "Brmmm", "Brmmm", the soldiers' automatics flamed. Small spurts of sand danced to the enemies' heels then knocked them over, like skittles. One crawled behind a rock dragging his rifle. The other two lay spreadeagled in the sand, dark stains spreading.

The river gurgled by singing its ancient song. Had man's insanity been witnessed on these banks before? The silence was heavy, thick, like wool.

Be cautious, don't move. Wait. He can't stay behind that rock for ever. A grenade. The Commander threw. It bounced on a rock and fell firm in the sand. "Whaddup", sand and metal rained. The rock had protected the enemy. The rock of ages. A couple of probing shots to either side of the rock. No movement. Stay where you are. Watch. A groan of agony from the thicket below. Someone still alive, potentially dangerous.

A grenade. No more. All used in the attack. Try the radio. "Hullo, Victor, this is Charlie Four." Success. "Come in, Charlie Four, read you loud and clear." A brief description of events, an outline of the situation. "Roger, a helicopter with support aircraft are on their way." Good. Wonder how many are dead in the thicket below? Three or four? A chance for promotion?

Don't relax. Watch. A throb of and whine of engines to the East. Here they come. The 'chopper low on the skyline. The aircraft high. Speak to them. Guide them to you. Movement behind the rock. A rifle thrown to the sand. Surrender.

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The South African Army PREPARES FOR WAR

by Al J. Venter



Africa remains in turmoil. Following Marxist takeovers of all of Portugal's former African empire - Angola, Mozambique and Guine-Bissau - there have been a number of military conflicts which have affected the security of this volatile continent as never before.

Angola's bloody conflagration was followed by Cuban-directed cross-border operations into Zaire, communist-supported insurrection into the northern reaches of South West Africa (Namibia), dissension along the borders of the Congo People's Republic, Gabon, Sudan,

Right: S. A. Army patrol sends situation report to headquarters in hostile area. Dark brown uniforms blend in well with terrain and bush.

Left: South African officer gives last minute briefing to his senior NCO prior to patrol. Officers and NCO's carry Star 9mm pistols in canvas holsters - cross-draw style.



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Uganda, Burundi, Malawi and others. And while the political fortunes of a dozen Heads of State in Africa fluctuate with the prevailing political climate, the entire spectrum is carefully watched and monitored by South Africa which has a vested interest in maintaining a peaceful status quo on a continent which the Soviets have threatened, by their actions, to set ablaze with the fervor of communist revolution.

Conditions are not made any easier by the continuing guerrilla war in Rhodesia, another conflict sparked and fed by the Russians from Mozambique. The South Africans are well aware that the Mozambique leader, Samora Machel, has promised in the past that when the white Salisbury regime is overthrown South Africa will be the next target.

While South Africa's frontiers with the rest of Africa remain secure—in spite of a succession of internal problems which are now in hand following the Soweto uprisings—it is not impossible that at some stage in the future, one or more nations (probably Black) will lay claim to territory that they believe is theirs. Already some African states have stated that certain areas of South Africa's are theirs "by historical right" and that when the opportunity allows, they will demand "forceful right" to that land.

For this purpose, the South African government maintains a policy of vigilance, in much the same as the West German government maintains a careful military watch along her borders with Eastern Europe, or Malaysia monitors the situation in South East Asia.

Daily, from positions facing Rhodesia, Mozambique, Botswana and elsewhere, South African "troopies" (as they are called locally) keep a watchful eye on developments. There is no question of aggression; the accent is on preparedness and defense, as it is in Israel.

But life along the rugged bush-covered frontier can be tough, particularly in the sweltering heat of the low-lying bushveld



Above: A patrol scans Rhodesian territory across the Limpopo River, the boundary between South Africa and Rhodesia. Note R-1 assault rifles, S.A. version of FN/FAL.



Above: Terrain on South African borders is rough; visibility limited. Patrols often last two weeks.

of the northern and north-eastern Transvaal which adjoins both Mozambique and Rhodesia.

This is a trying country along the Limpopo River where malaria is as prevalent in some areas as sleeping sickness and where the temperature during summer months often reaches 140 degrees F in the shade.

Along the Limpopo River patrols fan out through some of the thickest bush country in Southern Africa. Because roads are few and bush paths ill-defined,

the men have to make their way on foot through forests of mopani scrub, often using machetes to blaze a trail.

Additional hazards include legions of snakes—including black mambas and forest cobras—during the searing heat of day and scorpions by the bootful at night. During the period that I spent at an operational base on the Limpopo near to where the Rhodesian, Mozambique and South African frontiers come together at a single point, two soldiers were stung by scorpions while on patrol.



Huge, ancient Baobab tree serves as observation post near convergence of borders of South Africa, Mozambique and Rhodesia.

Another man had a narrow escape when he found a puff-adder curled up at the foot of his sleeping bag before dawn one morning (see photo). He touched the reptile before he spotted it and barely escaped the strike. Puff adders, while not as lethal as cobras and mambas, claim more victims than any other snake in the southern half of Africa.

But life in this bush country has its compensations. The area fringes the Kruger National Park and game is plentiful. More than one soldier has been

charged by irate elephants who believe their territorial domain has been threatened.

Orders issued to troops on this subject are clear: there is to be no shooting unless a man's life is threatened by a wild animal. And judging by the number of succulent impala and kudu steaks that were served during my stay, it is astonishing how many soldiers were charged by antelope!

One of the big problems facing security forces in the region is maintaining some sort of control over many of the black tribesmen who live there. A fair proportion of the blacks living along the Limpopo are related to people resident in Rhodesia's south-east area, now a fully operational anti-insurgency region. These people move backwards and forwards between South Africa and Rhodesia without any restrictions imposed on their travels; this is the way it has always been and it is difficult to stop social movement even though there is a war going on in the neighboring territory. (The same problem, incidentally, now faces the authorities along the border with Angola, and, to a lesser degree, along the Botswana frontier.)

Nevertheless, the activities and movements of these tribesmen are constantly checked. The movements of livestock and



South African "troopies" must be as alert for deadly snakes as terrorist infiltrators. This soldier holds a Puff Adder found near his sleeping bag.

other animals are also controlled, especially in regions plagued by foot-and-mouth disease, which is an old scourge of the Dark Continent.

And while most people living in this area co-operate, South Africans are the first to admit that operating in the region only a rifle shot away from one of the big anti-insurgency campaigns in Africa has its problems. They are, nevertheless, in a constant state of alert in a potentially dangerous situation.



South African patrols always risk encounters with Rhodesian terrorists infiltrating into Rhodesia from Mozambique.

OBJECTIVE: COTONOU

French 'Dogs of War' Strike Out

by Al J. Venter

It was just after dawn that the four-engined passenger jet aircraft lumbered down the runway at Cotonou Airport.

The plane had neither received nor requested landing instructions. It swooped in low across the capitol of the Republic of Benin—formerly Dahomey—touched down and then rolled to a halt a couple of hundred meters from the control tower where a drowsy air controller yawned and rubbed the sleep out of his eyes.

He and several others at the airport were surprised to see that the unexpected arrival bore no markings either on the fuselage or the tail.

A French-built Panhard armored car painted with the markings of the Benin Army, parked alongside the control tower, started its engine. A black officer sitting in the hatch of the armored vehicle shouted orders at another Panhard nearby. There was no response.

The black officer, clearly agitated, meanwhile swung the armored car's 60mm main gun around until it pointed directly at the mysterious plane, whose engines had not yet been cut.

Moments later, a door on the side of the jet was swung open and an improvised rope ladder thrown out. Without waiting for formalities, either from the control tower or the two Panhards, a white man clad in green camouflage and a black beret exited to the ground with a bazooka slung over his shoulder.

The man stopped only momentarily before swinging the weapon to his shoulder. He took a bead on the Panhard commanded by the black officer and fired. The blast of the bazooka was drowned by the flash of explosion, as the first armored car disintegrated in a mass of twisted metal and flame.

Seconds later, having reloaded his weapon, he destroyed the second Panhard. By this time, a stream of men of all races—every one of them dressed in identical camouflage dress—had left the aircraft and were racing for various vantage points around the airport. Sev-

eral black Benin soldiers who showed their faces around the terminal building were dispatched by automatic fire.

This attack, as recounted by a French-speaking mercenary, took place at Cotonou Airport on the morning of Sunday, 16 January 1977. And while there has been much speculation as to exactly what happened during this mini-invasion, which bore traces of a similar and far more successful Israeli operation, it is only now that details of the venture have been released.

The reason for the attack was clear from the start. Minuscule Benin, bordering on Nigeria and francophone Togo, has recently adopted the Marxist political creed. Originally known as the Republic of Dahomey, this tiny sliver of land on the west coast of Africa has had a history of political insurrection ever since it was granted independence by France in 1960.

It was in Benin, in fact, that Africa experienced one of the first post-independence *coup d' etats*. Since then there have been at least half a dozen attempts at overthrowing the Cotonou government by force.

The newly Marxist government of Lt. Col. Jamor Kerekou has proved to be no more popular than those that preceded it, and it is probably for this reason that an exiled wing of the Dahomeyan opposition party set into motion a train of events that led to the mercenary invasion.

While the facts are sparse, this much is known: a group of mercenaries, mostly from Central France—including a secret unit based in Paris—was contacted by a West African dissident with a view to overthrowing the Benin government.

The mercenaries, sceptical at first, soon saw potential in the scheme when a down payment of several hundred thousand dollars was made to the leader of the group, the same man that dispatched the two armored cars on arrival at Cotonou.

Later, a list of names was presented to the still-unnamed coup-leader. Once this had been cleared, 100 "volunteers" were handed air tickets to a destination in Morocco. There, with the collaboration of the Moroccan secret service and the Moroccan Army, the chosen few were subjected to one month's intensive military training.

From Morocco, the group was flown by an unidentified airline to Libreville, capitol of Gabon, a steamy, tropical west African country which played a major role in propping up the rebel Biafran secessionist state during the Nigerian civil war.

Although it is unclear how long the mercenaries remained in Gabon, it is known that they were completely isolated from the outside world during their African sojourn. Their camp was heavily guarded by Gabonese militia, and they were allowed no leave prior to the "adventure."

Finally, not long after midnight on the morning of 16 January 1977, the men were taken to Libreville Airport on the outskirts of the Gabonese capitol. An unmarked jet aircraft was taxied to the far end of the runway and there, in total darkness, the mercenaries boarded. Cotonou, their destination, was only a few hours' flying time away, and they were scheduled to arrive when the city was still asleep.

What should have been a complete success, turned instead into disaster.

It was no accident that two armored cars were parked on the runway at Cotonou Airport nor that several hundred crack troops were deployed around the periphery of this tiny African city that Graham Greene once wrote "has been left in the sun to rot."

Within minutes of leaving the airport in a variety of trucks and cars, the first opposition had been encountered. Awakened by the bazooka blasts, the first ring of troops around the Beninise capi-

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SOF INTERVIEWS **MIKE ECHANIS:** ONE OF THE NEW BREED OF AMERICAN WARRIORS

Ex-Special Forces and Nam veteran Mike Echanis is one of the most deadly hand-to-hand combat experts in the world. As he has served as Chief Instructor in the techniques of hand-to-hand combat for America's military elite, S.O.F. decided to have Martial Arts Editor, Art Gitlin interview Echanis in order to provide S.O.F. readers with a "professional's" view of the state of the art vis-a-vis the U.S. military; the background of his "old" but "new" fighting techniques. It is my personal opinion that the close combat developed and refined by Echanis and his assistants will be of immense value to all "professionals" who may find themselves in a situation where their lives or the success of their mission depends upon "neutralizing" the enemy with hands or knife. — Lic. Robert K. Brown, Editor and Publisher.

SOF: We have recently read your new book on knife self-defense with great interest. How were these techniques developed?

ECHANIS: The system demonstrated in the book is a new system of hand-to-hand combat devised and developed by myself and a group of former military hand-to-hand combat experts. We have tested and analyzed these techniques over a period of years. We have developed and refined these techniques from a system of hand-to-hand combat that was developed some 1800 years ago by the Korean Hwarang.

SOF: Who were the Hwarang?

ECHANIS: The Hwarang were a group of aristocratic young men who were the leaders and instructors of the warrior class during the feudal period in Korea. Those young men developed a fantastic scientific approach to combat - mentally, physically, and spiritually. They devised a special system of physical techniques and mental training that were utilized in conjunction with special concepts of strategy in attack and counterattack, insurgency, counterinsurgency, infiltration, and exfiltration. This was in the feudal period and these people actually did engage in close quarter warfare with swords, knives, bows and arrows, spears, etc. Keep in mind that the strategy and these techniques came from China. The Hwarang sent a group of monks to China to study 9 different systems of fighting. The techniques that you see in Hwarang Do are the result of the information that they brought back and the adaptations made by the Hwarang in later years. This system developed into what is now known as Hwarang Do. My master instructor, Joo Bang Lee, studied those arts in the same temple in which the monks taught the original Hwarang.

Until recently, Hwarang Do was a secret art. We are the first Caucasians to learn the secrets of the inner group of Hwarang who were known as the Sul Sa. The Sul Sa were masters of infiltration and exfiltration. Their missions included: basic intelligence gathering, disruption of enemy camps, elimination of key enemy personnel, and many of the same kinds of missions that the modern Special Warfare soldier is assigned. My training in that area included not just becoming a Sul



Sa but a master instructor of the Sul Sa arts. We've taken this information, and modernized it to fit our needs.

SOF: Let me ask you whether you feel the techniques that were applied 1800 years ago, are still viable in a modern Special Warfare situation?

ECHANIS: I think it is very important to remember that 1800 years ago these guys actually fought in close quarter combatives to the death every time they met. Not at 1000 meters with an M-21 sniper system, or at 50 yards with an M-16. I am not minimizing the danger or the skill necessary to fight at a distance, but we are talking about a different kind of warfare here. These guys fought at two to five feet from each other and killed each other with knives and swords and spears and staffs. From this kind of experience in constant close quarter combat, they developed systems of protection and response far superior to our present methods because our range of development and the scope of our strategy relies on the .45, the M-16, the M-21 sniper system and only rarely if ever, a knife or bare hands. Remember, most of their battles, if not 100%, were conducted at close range. In S.E. Asia, less than 5% of the battles were conducted in any kind of a hand-to-hand situation, and even that may be too high an estimate.

We have refined and adapted the Sul Sa methods for today's soldier taking into consideration the types of tools and weapons that he finds readily available, the kinds of situations that he can adapt to with his uniform and his equipment. It

is also very important to train these men in strategy. Through this, they develop confidence which in turn results in a fierce fighting spirit, and an aggressive attitude. They must be confident they can go into battle and win; this is most important.

S.O.F.: The primary value of your training program is building the self confidence of the modern soldier?

ECHANIS: Primarily building self confidence and the aggressive fighting spirit which is necessary in special warfare operations. A trooper must have the right attitude to survive and win. We improve his physical capabilities in close quarter combatives and also developing his psychological attitude towards battle by developing a fierce fighting spirit. That's the best way to describe what we are really doing. Self confidence by itself is too limiting a term.

S.O.F.: Over the years you have worked with and trained the elite of the U.S. military; who is the best?

ECHANIS: We have always had the reputation for being the toughest and the hardest school in the military. Anybody who successfully completes our school is tough. But I would say pound-for-pound, man-for-man, the toughest fighting unit in the world today is the United States Navy SEALs.

S.O.F.: Is it okay to print that?

ECHANIS: You bet. It will probably piss a lot of people off, though.

S.O.F.: You're not a SEAL are you?

ECHANIS: No, but I'm a member of their brotherhood. I was the senior instructor of their last hand-to-hand combat program; and I stand behind what I said. However, when we are talking about individuals, probably one of the toughest hand-to-hand combat instructors and probably one of the best professional soldiers that I have ever met is MSG. Jakevenko, known to his friends as "Big Jake." He tears full beer cans in half with his hands. He was one of the leaders on the Son Tay raid into North Vietnam; he was the guy who carried the M-60 machine gun. I'd follow that man to Hell to kill the devil. He is one of the toughest men that I have ever seen. He's Special Forces and Ranger qualified. His knuckles look like he's been pounding on man-

continued on page 62



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REMOVAL ~



PHOTO #1
"Removal" of a sentry can be accomplished in any one of a thousand ways. To do the job silently and quickly presents a more difficult problem. Combat use of the garrote, even in this age of lasers and space ships, provides one excellent answer. Mike Echanis (in black) uses a belt, more easily seen in photos, instead of his usual wire garrote. Approaching his victim from the rear, Echanis silently syncs his movements to the movements and breathing of the sentry.



PHOTO #2
When Echanis reaches the point at which the sentry is in range, he throws both his arms over his head in order to get more power in the down stroke. Notice that Echanis places his left leg in the lead position. His entire physical and mental concentration is centered on the sentry's movements and breathing. Under the black mask, Echanis keeps his mouth wide open, to allow for totally silent breathing.



PHOTO #3
Snapping his arms down rapidly, Echanis pulls rearward and down. By pulling the sentry's head into the position shown in this photo, pressure is applied from the bottom of the throat to the top. This upward thrust against the throat is much more effective. Driving his knee into the small of the sentry's back allows Echanis to keep his victim from turning and provides a fulcrum around which to apply strong backward pressure against the throat.

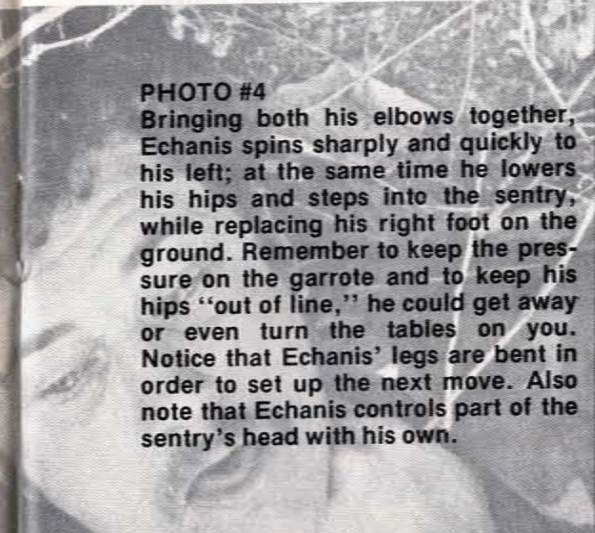


PHOTO #4
Bringing both his elbows together, Echanis spins sharply and quickly to his left; at the same time he lowers his hips and steps into the sentry, while replacing his right foot on the ground. Remember to keep the pressure on the garrote and to keep his hips "out of line," he could get away or even turn the tables on you. Notice that Echanis' legs are bent in order to set up the next move. Also note that Echanis controls part of the sentry's head with his own.



PHOTO #5
Now Echanis concurrently pulls downward sharply on the garrote, bends forward from the waist, and straightens his legs. Consequently, Echanis' hips lift those of the sentry, breaking his balance. Therefore, the sentry is unable to "drop" his weight in order to prevent being thrown by Echanis. Even if he did manage to do so, it would do him little good. He would simply hang himself.



PHOTO #6
With the full effect of the powerful throw just completed, stunning the already panicked and confused sentry, Echanis applies the last pressure that man will feel in this life. Pulling sharply up with his left arm (holding the end that goes under the sentry's neck), he slips his right hand under his left fist, causing a twisting tightening of the garrote. Notice that Echanis' right knee is placed across the sentry's shoulder in order to prevent him from wiggling away. If a wire garrote had been used instead of the relatively wide belt, our subject's head might be severed by now.



NRA SHAKE-UP

A Victory For Gun Ownership

by Gene Crum

In an unusual resurgence of popular sentiment, the voting membership of the National Rifle Association/U.S. on May 21, 1977, took over the normally ceremonial "Annual Members Meeting" at the 1977 NRA Convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. They conducted business affairs until about 3:20 A.M., causing a major revision of the NRA bylaws and removal of the top NRA officials, coupled with their replacement by men long associated with militant "pro-gun" sentiments.

Replacing Gen. Maxwell Rich (Ret.) as Executive Vice-President of the NRA is Harlon B. Carter, a retired official of the U.S. Border Patrol. Carter is credited with actually setting up the present "gun-lobby" structure for the NRA in the form of the Institute for Legislative Action (ILA). Confirmed by the membership for heading ILA is attorney Robert J. Kukla, a razor-sharp intellect who has become increasingly popular among rank-and-file NRA members. Elected President of the NRA is Admiral Lloyd Mustin (Ret.), selected by the Board with membership support in place of candidates identified with the old "management" group.

In addition to these changes, the NRA voting membership also directed that the organization focus its attention on the gun issue, and stop a variety of involvements with ecological and environmental projects. The members also directed that the headquarters of NRA remain in Washington, D.C., despite a decision by the past management to relocate the NRA in Colorado Springs, Colorado. A variety of other reforms were also instituted, including a new means of nominating candidates for the NRA Board of Directors. The NRA President has been stripped of his old power to virtually dictate the composition of the Board, and under the new nominating method, NRA members themselves will be able to propose local or other candidates to the Board and force nominations to be included on the official ballot each year.

These reforms were the result of long-standing membership unrest over poor responsiveness of NRA's leadership to their complaints and their growing concern that individuals responsible for NRA policy and operations were not only exceeding their authority but were also moving to shift NRA activities away from a strong stand on the gun issue, away from a high profile in pressing for recognition and development of the shooting sports, toward an environmental-ecological-oriented organization. In the face of



increasing social and political attack, NRA gun owners struck to insure that their organization could be used as a powerful political weapon in the months to come, fighting for the traditional rights of the American gun owner.

The political and military impact of the May 21st meeting is expected to be far-reaching: the National Rifle Association/U.S. is the effective governing body for the broadly defined sedentary militia in the United States. In the U.S., due to recent advances by minority elements, a legal definition of the sedentary militia includes practically everyone capable of bearing arms. From a practical standpoint, in effect, the roughly 1.2 million members of the National Rifle Association comprise the "hard core" of that nation's armed citizenry—and that "hard core" is angry, increasingly so, over efforts to disarm it, and to terminate the Constitutional right to possess and bear arms. In the May 21st meeting, the members ordered that NRA officials move at once to politically organize the whole membership, in order to give U.S. gun owners an effective voice in the U.S. political system.

Subsequent investigation by SOF indicates that this political organization, focusing on the preservation and advancement of the Constitutional right to possess and bear arms, is going forward, even as the new leadership conducts a reorganization and housecleaning at headquarters. The organization is not being constructed around recent political blocs, but is—in effect—being constructed around a basic Constitutionalist appeal, in keeping with the NRA's being, as a part of its stated purpose, a "patriotic organization."

In the present U.S. political context, the impact of NRA organizational, educational, and political efforts is very likely to be greater than is presently expected by that group's officials—and possibly the members themselves. Presently, the NRA's purpose and thrust are toward very limited goals: the preservation—within reasonable laws—of the rights of citizens who choose to possess and carry arms for honest purposes. These rights also include a favorable social climate and the absence of governmental harassment.

Most of these goals can be reached swiftly by means of policy changes. The mass media, which for years have attacked civilian gun ownership and use, are capable of a nearly instantaneous change of direction, creating an atmosphere in which such matters are discussed within an acceptably constructive framework. The bureaucracy is capable of somewhat slower change, if ranking political figures provide clear-cut directives and goals. Political leaders have a ready-made escape from unfavorable positions, on the basis of their change of heart due to increased exposure to large amounts of data now being collected by the NRA and other pro-gun groups. This data includes thorough research into the roots of the Constitution's Second Amendment, the relationships between gun laws, crime, arms ownership and other factors, and surveys which define with increasing sharpness the determination of the American people—and particularly the gun owners—that anti-gun laws and policies will not be accepted.

In this latter context the full impact of the shift in NRA policies and programs remains to be determined: for some years, SOF has seen and been advised of an increasing determination among the American people not to be disarmed. Rhetoric increasingly common among gun owners indicates that political decisions have been subtle but increasing factors in the buying of firearms, and the tastes which are being exercised in purchases. Underscoring this, increasing evidence shows that an unknown but increasing number of gun owners have been taking steps to hide—in some cases, by burial—some of their purchases, along with ammunition, preserved food, medical supplies, and basic valuables useful in a barter economy.

Pursuit of this has increased to such a degree that some publications have been carrying ads for commercial burial vaults for such commodities, special preservatives, as well as literature discussing the

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RELOADING FOR THE M1A

BY ROBERT SUNDANCE

Like to have a M1-A commercial version of the M-14 7.62mm rifle that shoots minute-of-angle groups out past 300 meters? It can be done, but not with issue ammunition. You'll have to work for it, but the accuracy can be had with a little effort.

This article is dedicated to those owners of the M1-A who don't have an unlimited ammo supply or a friend at Ft. Benning. NATO 7.62 (.308 Winchester) ammo is getting harder to find at reasonable prices and this is especially true of match ammo. Prices range from 15 cents for ball (try to get this price) up to 40 cents per round for military match ammo. Even then, the stuff may be of doubtful accuracy. These conditions force you to seriously consider rolling your own.

The difference in both price and accuracy can be astounding. Handloads that deliver match accuracy may be loaded for as little as 10 cents per round, using military brass. As an example, the other day I fired several 100-yard, five-shot groups, using standard military ball ammo and a standard M1-A with issue iron sights. The smallest group went 4.5 inches with an average of 6.5 inches. Disappointed, I rushed home and found a load I liked in an old Speer manual, using the 130-grain H.P. Speer bullet. Subtracting two grains of 3031 DuPont powder from the listed "accuracy load" for safety's sake, I threw 10 rounds together and headed back for the range. The two five-shot groups went into 1.25 inches and 1.33 inches under identical conditions. Everyone around me was shocked to see the huge difference, especially when I explained the hurried load choice. Need I say more for handloading?

In working up the loads for this article, I wanted to stay within reasonable costs that the average handloader can afford. This is the primary reason for limiting myself to a small bullet and powder selection that costs \$45. By doubling or tripling the cost, a slight improvement would be obtained, but it probably would not be worth the extra money.

The loads we developed are safe in the individual rifles tested. However, due to unpredictable variations, they might be too hot in some guns or too light in others. So, be smart; back off one full grain and work up slowly to the load that performs best in your rifle. Keep in mind that handloads or civilian .308 ammo will void your rifle warrantee, so, take it easy. Besides, there is no warrantee on your head, fingers, or eyes.

DuPont 3031 and 4895 were chosen for their case-filling characteristics and excellent performance in medium-size

cases. There are several other powders suitable for the 7.62mm round and you can experiment as long as your money holds out, but these two will do a good job.

Bullets used were the Speer 130-grain hollow-point; Sierra 165-grain; Spitzer boat tail; Hornady 168-grain H.P. B.T. match bullet; and Sierra H.P. B.T. hunting bullet. The 130-grain H.P. bullet yields the highest velocity. The 130-grain is good for accuracy and is deadly out to



600 yards—it's also lower in price than match bullets. The 165-Grain Spitzer boat-tail soft-nose bullet is an excellent big-game hunting round. The Hornady 168-grain match bullet was chosen for target or sniping use. This hollow-point boat-tail bullet is extremely uniform in weight and concentricity. The 165-grain H.P. B.T. Sierra bullet is extremely accurate and has a devastating effect on game. The military N.M. bullet (M-118) is a full-jacket (ball) type of 173 grains. The standard military combat ball bullet (M-59) weighs 147 grains; both military bullets are of boat-tail design, which retains velocity better at long range. I used CCI and #200 primers since I am partial to them.

Use only good-condition, U.S. military brass, since it is heavier and thicker than

commercial cases. The M1-A is not set up for civilian brass—so, for safety's sake, don't use it. Because military brass is thicker, there is slightly less room for powder; however, it develops greater pressure with less powder. My rule of thumb is to load G.I. brass two grains lighter than the maximum loads listed in a civilian reloading manual and to load match brass 2.5 grains lighter. Ultimately, I found that match brass could be loaded hotter than the standard G.I. brass, because it was stronger.

Be careful and conservative in your use of powder before you work up to hot loads. After you find your minimum safe load, increase by 0.10-grain increments up to that "ideal" load, watching very carefully for any signs of excessive pressures, since they can cause parts breakage and increased wear in any gas-operated rifle such as the M1-A.

Any brass used for match or accuracy should be of the same year and manufacture for the most consistent results. Different lots of brass vary in capacity, so always back off on any maximum load you have developed by 0.5 grain, when switching years, lots, or type of brass, or you could be in for a bang-up good time. Then proceed to work up to a safe level again by 0.10 grain. Be sure to lube the outside of your cases sufficiently (don't overdo it), or they will stick in the resizing die—great fun! All brass was resized full length, using standard-base RCBS .308 Winchester dies. I did not have any malfunctions due to feeding problems, although I have heard that small base .308 dies seem to work better for the M1-A since they size the brass smaller. The people at RCBS will help you in your choice—write them.

To make room for the new primer, the military primer-pocket crimp must be removed by reaming. National Match (1968 L.C.) brass did not have a crimp and only a clean-up reaming was needed to allow easy primer seating. Make certain the mouth of the pocket has a slight radius so new primers will seat easily. In either case (no pun intended), don't over ream the primer pocket, or you'll be in for a loose primer condition. Clean all residue from the primer pocket and you're finished with this phase of the operation.

Primer seating in standard military cases is more difficult, due to a heavy crimp which you must remove. If you meet resistance during primer seating, rotate the case slowly with your fingers. By the way, civilian primers are apparently made of thinner metal than military; therefore, they are slightly more sensitive



The author, formerly a member of various U.S. Army rifle teams, found custom reloading for his Springfield Armory M1A improved accuracy. The M1A has excellent long range sniping capability

than G.I. primers. Make certain that primers are seated slightly below the case head, about .001 inch to .005 inch. If a primer is protruding, firing-pin inertia might fire it as the bolt slams shut.

The use of the more deadly sott-nose Spitzer bullets such as the 165-grain Hornady will result in some nose blunting due to contact with the magazine during recoil. This will not result in any significant accuracy change out to 300 yards, but it is worthy of note. The even deadlier hollow-point rounds do not experience any blunting by recoil. Obviously, all of these bullets are more "efficient" than military ball-type ammunition, when

shooting at any type of game.

If your ammunition will be exposed to severe moisture, you can "combat condition" each round by painting colored lacquer around the primer with a small brush after it is seated. Wait a couple of seconds and wipe across the base and primer with your thumb for a clean base and primer with a residual ring of lacquer sealing the primer. Waterproof the bullet by painting a thin (1/16 inch wide) coating lacquer around the outside of the bullet.

Do not paint the base of the bullet as this will contaminate the powder. Paint only where the bullet will actually contact the case neck and seat the bullet immediately while the lacquer is wet. Any model spray lacquer will work well for the above purpose. Simply spray a small amount into a paint lid, get your brush, and away you go. The "bullet end" waterproofing gives the bullet a mild adhesive effect which could raise pressures, so back off your load by 0.2 grains until you are sure you're safe. This seemed to adversely affect accuracy by 1/2 M.O.A.; therefore, this method was not used in the test results.

The case mouth should be slightly deburred on the inside and outside after the first resizing and after each case trimming to facilitate easy bullet seating and chambering. Remember, the base of a bullet has a tremendous effect on accuracy, so be careful in the seating operation not to damage the bullet. After sizing and completing the above case modifications, I prefer to clean or degrease my cases by wiping them with a clean rag.

Empty cases should be trimmed to 2.015 inches after one firing, as well as every couple of firings thereafter. I used the RCBS file-type trim because it is fast, cheap, and easy to use. National brass is somewhat hard and may split if you try to go over five loads—although I did reload some cases six times with only one split case in the whole test. After five resizings, the necks got too thin to do a good job of holding the bullet and

pressure changes caused accuracy to go crazy. I recommend throwing away cases that have been full length resized five times.

It would be prudent to fire several standard military ball rounds through your M1-A to insure that everything works right before handloading for accuracy. Keep a few of the military-fired cases for comparison with your fired handloaded cases for signs of excess pressure. Follow this same procedure with National Match brass.

The M1-A is gas-operated and requires a certain amount of pressure at the gas port in order to function. If loads are too light, the bolt will not travel back far enough to pick up a round from the magazine. With the powders I used, it is safe to simply increase the charge 0.10 grain at a time until reliable feeding, accuracy and power are achieved.

The rifles used were a standard Model M1-A and a factory National Match Model M1-A, not the newer, more accurate heavy barrel N.M. The standard M1-A had a modified glass-bedding job of my own design and standard six groove 1-in-12-inch twist barrel. The National Match rifle had all the usual modifications and a four-groove 1-in-12-inch twist match barrel. Both rifles are the product of the Springfield Armory, Geneseo, Illinois. They were fired by the same shooter on the same day. All 100-yard shooting was done in four-shot groups from a bench-rest sandbag position. No barrel cooling was allowed between shots for each group. Both rifles were equipped with standard iron sights.

After each 100-yard accuracy load was fired, I then tested the load at 300 yards, using a \$9.98 Japanese 2.5X scope of unknown manufacture. Due to limited amounts of ammunition, all accuracy loads were established for the match rifle; then I used them for final loads in the standard rifle.

I obtained what I think is phenomenal accuracy, since these are semi-automatic military-type rifles. Using iron sights, I shot a dozen or more loads under one inch. The best four-shot 100-yard group went 0.65 inch center-to-center, using the match rifle. The best overall 300-yard five-shot group was 2.5 inch center-to-center from the standard rifle! This was backed up by a 3.2-inch group, using a different load. The match rifle got down to 3.2 and 4.0 inches at 300 yards. (See the load table for complete documentation.)

I suspect that certain bullets are just not compatible with particular rifles, hence the widely differing groups. After all, my friends, that's what handloading is all about. Although U.S. government N.M. ammo uses 4895 powder, overall, 3031 powder outperformed 4895 in these tests. In the load table, I listed the best 4895 loads for those of you who like that particular powder. The best military match shooters in our area use 40 grains of 4895 with Hornady's 168 grain, match bullet, and they are bad news shooters.

If you wonder how handloads stack up against National Match ammunition in a N.M. M1-A rifle, consider this—when fired from a standard recoiling accuracy cradle, military requirements state that the rifle must average 6.0 inches for three consecutive ten-shot groups at 300 meters, using N.M. ammunition that does not exceed 3.5 inches group average at 300 meters when fired from an accuracy test barrel and fixture. In other words, the rifle and ammunition must go under six inches at 300 yards.

Top shooters in military matches use a couple of really good tricks. First, they pull the standard N.M. bullet from a new round and replace it with a Hornady 168 match bullet with no other changes. (Rumor has it that this can cut group size by 50%.) Second, N.M. ammo has the bullet sealed with a tar-like substance. If you put the round in a reloading press and adjust the seating die to seat the bullet, just .001 or so deeper, this cracks the old "dried up" seal (ammo over one year old) and can cut group size by 20-50%.

As you can see, it is no big problem to greatly increase the M1-A's (and the M14's or your .45's, 9mm's, 30-06's, etc.) accuracy by handloading. It doesn't cost much to work up loads, and after that your ammunition costs are reduced substantially. I hope that these general guidelines will help you: remember, the idea is to hit what you are aiming at. Have fun and good shooting!



RELOAD DATA:

165 gr. Sierra, spitzer, boat tail bullet.
seating depth 0.37 inch - Lake City 1968 case - match
3031 powder - 39.1 most accurate est. velocity - 2550 fps
39.1 gr. - 0.89 inch group 100 yds - match rifle
39.1 gr. - 0.98 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
39.1 gr. - 4.0 inch group 300 yds - match rifle
39.1 gr. - 5.2 inch group 300 yds - std. rifle
39.1 gr. maximum load
4895 powder - 40.8 accurate load est. velocity - 2500 fps
40.8 gr. - 1.50 inch group 100 yds - match rifle
40.6 gr. - 1.65 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
42.0 maximum load

165 gr. Sierra, hollow point, boat tail bullet.
seating depth 0.35 inch - Lake City 1968 case - match
3031 powder - 39.2 most accurate est. velocity - 2550 fps
39.2 gr. - 1.10 inch group 100 yds - match rifle
39.2 gr. - 0.75 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
39.2 gr. - 4.0 inch group 300 yds - match rifle
39.2 gr. - 2.5 inch group 300 yds - std. rifle
3.96 maximum load
4895 powder - 40.1 accurate load est. velocity - 2400 fps
40.2 gr. - 1.38 inch group 100 yds - match rifle
40.2 gr. - 1.40 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
41.0 gr. maximum

168 gr. Hornady, hollow point boat tail match bullet
seating depth 0.3 inch - Lake City 1968 case - match
3031 powder - 38.8 gr. most accurate est. velocity - 2500 fps
38.8 gr. - 0.95 inch group 100 yds - match rifle
38.8 gr. - 1.20 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
38.8 gr. - 3.20 inch group 300 yds - match rifle
38.8 gr. - 5.00 inch group 300 yds - std. rifle
39.3 hot maximum load
4895 powder 40.8 gr. accurate est. velocity - 2450 fps
40.8 - 0.98 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
40.5 - 1.12 inch group 100 yds. - match rifle
42.1 hot maximum

130 gr. Speer, hollow point flat base bullet
seating depth 0.23 inch Lake City 1968 case - match
3031 powder - 43.1 (most accurate) est. velocity - 2800 fps
43.1 gr. - 0.65 inch group 100 yds - match rifle
43.1 gr. - 0.85 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
43.1 gr. - 5.1 inch 300 yds - match rifle
43.3 maximum load
4895 powder - 44.2 accurate load est. velocity - 2750 fps
44.2 fr. - 0.89 inch group 100 yds - match rifle
44.1 gr. - 0.95 inch group 100 yds - std. rifle
44.5 maximum load

(M-118) U.S. National Match Ammo.
Lake City 1968

173 gr. spitzer boat tail water proofed bullet
seating depth 0.43 inch - national match case
4895 powder - 43.3 gr. est. velocity 2550 fps
match - 2.30 inch 100 yds - match rifle
match - 3.80 inch 100 yds - std. rifle
match - 5.80 inch 300 yds - match rifle
match - 7.08 inch 300 yds - std. rifle
Judging by case indications the 43.3 gr. of 4895 was a hot maximum load.

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THE BEST COMBAT SHOOTERS IN THE U.S. IPSC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

BY ART GITLIN

On June 8, the Table Mountain Gun Club and the Colorado Pistol League sponsored the first International Practical Shooting Confederations U.S. National Championships. From coast-to-coast, 97 of the top combat pistol shooters swooped into Golden, Colorado to compete for slots on the U.S. team which will compete in the IPSC World Championships to be held in Salisbury, Rhodesia, 25 to 30 August (a little terrorist problem doesn't bother a good combat shooter!). As expected, the course was both difficult and challenging.

Stage I consisted of having the shooter sit behind a table on which his or her gun, United States IPSC 1977 Champion Kirk Kirkham of Phoenix, Az. received part of his "loot" from SOF Associate Editor Art Gitlin. The custom fitted and engraved Colt .45 Gold Cup was donated by Colt to the IPSC Champion Class 1st Place winner, and dominating the background is the SOF Trophy which also went to

cocked and locked, was covered by a napkin-size piece of heavy cloth. The shooter was allowed to position the weapon and cloth cover. For the first two three round strings, the shooter, with both hands flat on the table, removed the cloth with either hand, picked up the gun and engaged three targets. The shooter had the choice of shooting with one or two hands.

The center target five meters away had to be engaged first. The shooter then fired at the second and third targets, 15 meters from the table, and placed on each side of the center target. For the last two strings the shooter had to remove the cloth and fire with his weak hand only.

The other hand had to be off the table.

This phase separated many of the men from the boys.

On of the "boys" in this case turned out to be SOF publisher Brown, who, while shooting in the open class, received 15 penalty points for fumbling his .45 as he removed the cloth with his weak hand. That was not the only reason he came in dead last, but we can't go into that further if I want to remain employed (Jeff Cooper remarked, "If Brown doesn't practice, he shouldn't compete." Ah, well).

Stage II required the shooter to face three targets - one at five, ten and twenty meters, with about 10 degrees angle between them. One had to draw and fire two rounds into each target within five

Kirkham. The presentation was made before approximately 250 people at the dinner following the matches. Kirkham's revelation that he had only been combat pistol shooting for three months prior to winning the top honors was somewhat of a shock to the assembled shooters.

seconds of the activation of the starting light. Not so difficult, but scoring well was something else.

Stage III was the most exciting. A "Running Felon" target was mounted on an electrically powered carriage that crossed 10 meters in five seconds. The contestant had to stand behind a five foot wide barrier and could only step out, draw and fire when the target moved into view. After firing six rounds, he had to move behind the barrier, reload and engage the target from the other side of the barrier as it was returned to its starting position. Three seconds were allowed to reload and reposition oneself on the other side of the barrier.

Each shooter ran through the three stages twice. Out of a total 360 points possible, the high champion class shooter blasted a 342.

Kirk Kirkham, who shot the winning score of 342, raised a lot of eyebrows when word floated around that he had only started combat pistol shooting less than three months before the matches. I asked Kirkham, who hails from Mesa, Arizona, how many rounds he had expended in practice, expecting him to reply that he was out on the range seven days a week, busting 200-300 rounds a day to obtain such proficiency. I was shocked when he told me he had fired only between 250-300 rounds practice from the time he started combat pistol shooting! There's a mystery here and it hasn't been solved as we go to press. Kirkham went on to say, "I tried the basic course and felt I was doing fairly well. I didn't want to practice too much. I felt I might become stale and acquire bad habits." Hmm. Lucky or just one in a million with God-given talents? We'll see in Rhodesia.

Even more astounding Kirkham claims he has had comparatively little experience with a pistol. He carried a government issue .45 as a backup gun as a Marine during his two tours in Nam in the late Sixties. However, he told me he only shot it for qualification on the range every six months.

Perhaps his phenomenal success can be partially attributed to John Mahan, a gunsmith and shooting member of the U.S.A.F. Pistol Team, 1960 to 1972. Kirkman said Mahan, who held 36 national pistol records at one time or another, "... knows what a 'mental' game competition shooting can be, and he helped me tremendously." Mahan is a gunsmith and owner of Shooter's Haven in Phoenix.

Kirkham's efforts won an all expense paid trip to the World Matches in Rhodesia provided by Jeff Cooper's American Pistol Institute, and a customized, engraved Colt Gold Cup .45, presented by Ted Smith, Executive Vice-President, Colt Firearms.

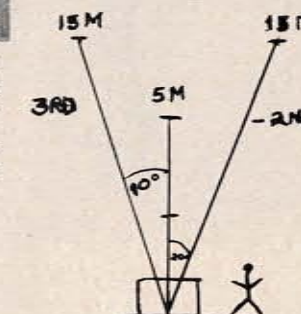
Kirkham, who shot a modified Colt .45 series 70, is a member of the Cactus Combat Club.

STAGE I

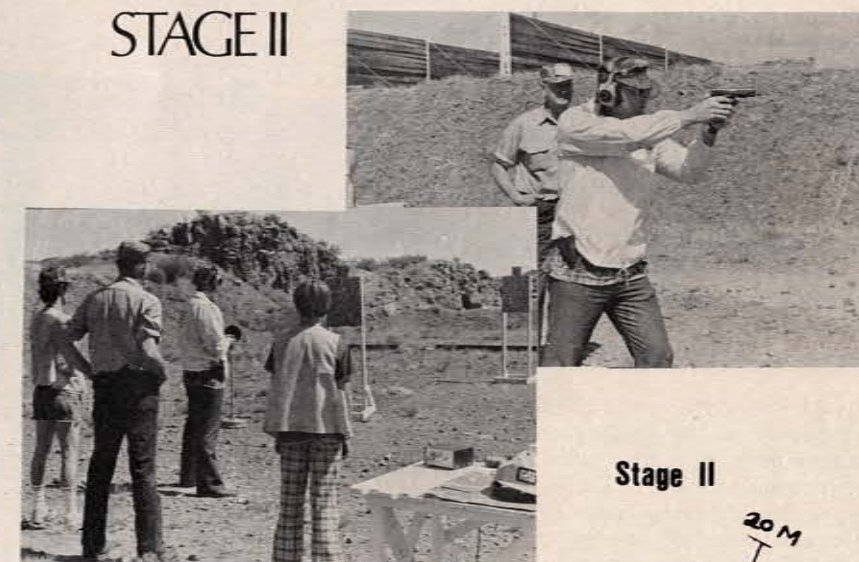


Stage I

Marge Kehoe, the only woman shooter to enter the match, tries her hand at the Stage I table. This proved to be the stage that made the most difference in shooter scores, especially when the "weak hand" only was used.

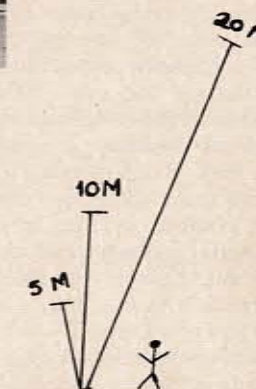


STAGE II

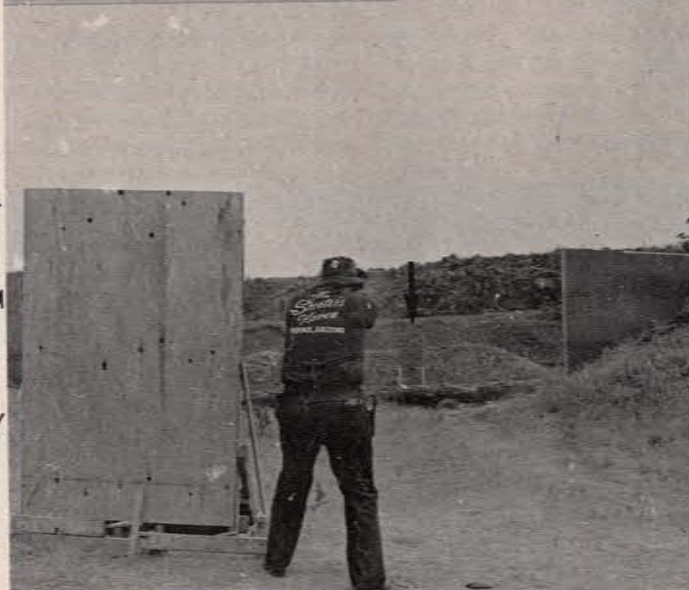
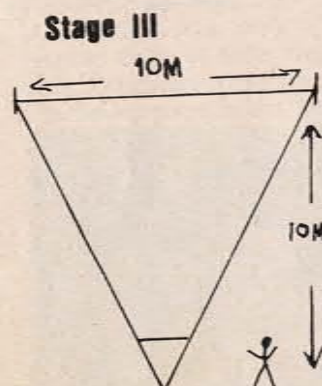


Stage II

Chuck Taylor, SOF Auto Weapons Editor, performs under the watchful eye of Match Director Jeff Cooper. Not quite as easy as it looks, Stage II required the shooter to engage targets at a variety of ranges.



STAGE III



Indicative of the growing acceptance and popularity of combat pistol shooting are the remarks made by Ida M. Younger who is the regional woman PPC champion and observed the match. When asked of her opinion concerning combat pistol shooting, she said, "As a PPC shooter some of the things that they do in this kind of shooting are completely different then what I'm used to. In PPC we do the same thing over and over, while in combat shooting the course teach you to think faster and to be more alert. I think it's very valuable because this course is a lot like that, it is always different and never easy."

The match was followed by a banquet and awards ceremony attended by some 250 people. Jeff Cooper, the grand old man of combat pistol shooting and one of the, if not the, prime moving force behind

the development of the sport made the following comments at the dinner:

"Someone recently suggested that no one knew where practical pistol shooting originated. I might point out that the first such match was held at Big Bear Lake, California in 1956. Some of you were there. The South West Pistol League, the first organization to try to put this thing together, was founded in '61. Many of you here were there. We went on for a long time and then suddenly things began to happen, because that's the way these things work. We pick up steam, gradually working, and then suddenly they begin to flower.

"In 1975, the first World Practical Championship was held in Switzerland. It had no parent organization. It was just people who got together and brought people around. Many of you were there. Last year, Columbia, Missouri, the International Practical Shooting Federation was founded. And that gave us our real start.

Stage III requires the shooter to start, concealed behind the barricade, and to step out shooting when the moving target hoves into view. Kirk Kirkham displays what turned out to be winning form, as he blasts through the third stage, which many shooters thought to be the most "fun" part of the match. Crossing a 10 meter wide opening in five seconds, the target pauses three seconds and then returns at the same speed as the first trip.



"Today, this weekend, we celebrate the first United States Practical Pistol Championship, which I hope will be an activity which will go on forever. And this year the winners of this match will meet with all the other shooters of the free world for the world title.

"Most everybody we asked to donate did so freely and generously. Our special thanks to Colt, Gart Bros. Sporting Goods, Garcia, Sporting Arms, Soldier of Fortune Magazine, Gordon Davis, from Davis Customary Goods, Erv Stone from Barstow, Willy Baker, Bill Rodgers, Littleton Gunshops Sports West, and Bud Greenwald from Foothills Shooting Center here in Golden. I can go on forever. In any case, the sponsors of these gifts deserve recognition and you shooters remember them when you need merchandise."

The course of fire for the World Championships is described in detail in the most recent IPSC bulletin and it is a bear and a half! We will carry a full description of said course in a future article which will cover the championships.

Special thanks go to John Bianchi, President of Bianchi Leathergoods, who is sponsoring an IPSC team member to Rhodesia; Chuck Burnstein, an active member of the Colorado Pistol League and executive officer of the Table Mountain Gun Club who was Chief Range Officer and Bud Greenwald, Assistant Range Officer, and played a major part in obtaining donations of equipment and weapons.



Ray Chapman, former IPSC World Champion shows form that won fourth place; gained him a position on the first team that will represent the U.S. in Salisbury.



List of Prize Contributors IPSC National Championships

John Bianchi of Bianchi Leather Goods, Sponsorship for the 1st Place Winner to go to Salisbury, Rhodesia; Colt Firearms, Colt Gold Cup-engraved in their custom gun dept; Soldier of Fortune Magazine, *Soldier of Fortune Trophy*, and magazine subscriptions; Bud Greenwald—Foothills Shooting Center, Two .45 Pistols that he customized (engraved), and four sets of Colt tie tacks and cufflinks; Littleton Gun Shop, Dumolim Rifle in .240 Weatherby caliber; Colorado Pistol League, Colt .45 Commander and a Ruger 10/22 Sporter Rifle; Garcia Sporting Arms Corp., Star Model PD .45 caliber Pistol; J.M. Buckheimer Corp., Ten Pistol Cases—embossed for the top ten winners; Davis Custom Leather, Four Competition Belt-Holster Rigs; Navy Arms, Remington 1875 Model Replica Pistol in .357 caliber; Gerber Legendary Blades, Engraved Gerber Knives; Dan Dennehy of Dan-D, Custom Boot Knife with an ivory grip; Tires Trap Co., Foot Operated Trap Clay Pigeon Thrower; LES Corp., Two Rifle Scopes and a Variable Spotting Scope; Gart Bros., Bausch and Lomb Discoverer Scope; Accuload Components, Five Gun Pistol Case; Ray Baker-Baker Pancake Holsters, Six Holsters and Magazine Pouches; Jerry Snap of Snap Shots, eleven Kershaw Knives; Packmayr Gunworks, Prime Target Shooters Pistol Cases, and 35 sets of their new Colt .45 Combat Signature Grips; Trig Walden, Hunting Knife; Sports West Inc., Wright McGill Bicentennial Custom Pack Rod; Herrits, Highlighter Sportsman-Law Enforcement Flashlight; TES Corp., Vibratex vibrating type case cleaner; Bill Rogers of Alpha Plastics, new style Combat Competition Rogers Holster; Gart Bros., five Belt Buckles; Platt River Gun Shop, Unprimed Brass; Barstow Precision Machine, Stainless Steel Barrels and Bushings, and ten Stainless Steel Accessory Packs; Western Cutlery, Three Camp Axes, and a Hunting Knife; Kershaw Cutlery Co., Hunting Knife; Ten-X Corp., down filled Trap and Skeet Jacket; Citizens Committee for the Right To Keep and Bear Arms, Belt Buckles, Shooting Jacket Brassards, and books on the Rights of Citizens to Keep and Bear Arms; Kings Gunworks, two sets King Tappin Gunsights, and four Combat Safeties for Government Model Pistols; PAW Enterprises—Raymond Pizolt and Willy A.G. Williams, Tie Tacks and a Rodgers Holster; Alan Winter of Rhino Products, Smith and Wesson Holster; Jet Air Corp., Dozen cans of G-96 Gun Treatment Spray.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Steele holds a master's degree in Police Science. He served as rifle and pistol instructor for the National Rifle Assoc., and as supervisor for the Police Weapons Center Project at the International Assoc. of Chiefs of Police. Steele, an accomplished fencer, has written several books on small arms.

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1.	Kirk Kirkham Mesa, Arizona	Colt .45 Mark IV	342
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3.	Jerry Kay Columbia, Missouri	Colt .45 Mark IV	334
4.	Ray Chapman Tujunga, Calif.	Colt .45 Mark IV	333
5.	Jerry Usher Indio, Calif.	.45 Auto	332
6.	Raul Walters Columbia, Missouri	.45	331
7.	Thomas Campbell Longmeadow, Mass.	.45M-1911 Govt. Model	330
8.	Mike Dalton Mission Hills, Calif.	.45	328
9.	Rick Miller Troy, Ohio	Colt .45 1911	328
10.	John Davis Litchfield, Ill.	.45	326

OPERATION LINEBACKER II



Summary of Part I

In the previous issue, Capt. Dana Drenkowski described how the North Vietnamese invasion of South Vietnam with a conventional army was countered by American fighter-bomber attacks on supplies, supply routes and the harbors of North Vietnam. Operation Linebacker, the code name of the air battle over North Vietnam's populous Red River Valley, lasted from April through October 1972. After the fighter-bombers successfully shut down resupply efforts to the North Vietnamese Army in South Vietnam and isolated Hanoi from her allies, the North Vietnamese asked for a moratorium on bombing targets in the Red River Valley. The U.S. administration, believing Hanoi's promises about signing a Peace Agreement, ordered all bombing halted North of the 20th Parallel.

During this period, B-52 heavy bombers were being used in less heavily defended regions of North Vietnam and in the relatively "safe" areas of Southeast Asia (where no weapons of sufficient calibre were available to hit the B-52s at their high altitudes). B-52 tactics had been developed over the years to reflect a concern for safety from mid-air collisions and to expedite an assembly line approach to bombing undefended targets. For years, aircrews requested changes in tactics, pointing out that their present "safe-area" tactics, if used in an area well defended by the enemy, would result in heavy losses to the B-52 force. These requests and warnings were ignored by the Strategic Air Command (SAC) staff.

In mid-December 1972, it became obvious that the North Vietnamese representatives had deliberately misled the U.S. administration into believing they would sign Peace Agreements and were using the bombing moratorium to rebuild their forces. President Nixon then directed resumption of Operation Linebacker, to be called Linebacker II, and used B-52 bombers over Hanoi for the first time. The 11-day bombing campaign was scheduled to begin on 18 December (Southeast Asia dates).



Dana K. Drenkowski, a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, flew over 200 combat missions over S.E. Asia in B-52s and F-4s. His many decorations include two Distinguished Flying Crosses. He has an M.A. in Psychology, is an Aviation Editor at SOF and a member of the SOF Combat Pistol Team.

On the evening of 18 December,¹ the fighters rolled down runways at Nam Phong, Udorn, Ubon, Takli, and Korat, Thailand. Initially straining under their heavy loads, they became agile and graceful as they accelerated, and gravity reluctantly gave up its hold on them. As each fighter became airborne, it was followed by another, and another at 12-second intervals, until each base's commitment to the battle was reached.

From Korat came the Wild Weasel F4Cs and F-105s, and from Ubon came the Woltpack chaff-droppers, famed from the days of General Robin Olds, a hero to many fighter pilots. Takli launched its F-111s, destined to precede the B-52s into the Red River Valley, flying single ship at low altitudes to evade radar and knock out enemy airfields. Nam Phong's Marine F-4s rose; their job was

to protect tankers from Migs. The tankers came from Takli and Okinawa to give fighters and bombers the extra fuel they needed to make it to Hanoi and back. From Udorn, F-4s of the famed Triple Nickel Squadron, and the 13th Panther Pack and the Black Widow squadron, all Mig hunters, rose to join forces. And from Guam and U-Tapao, the B-52s were coming, to loose their 20-50 ton bomb loads. The fighters and tankers rendezvoused over nighttime Laos, flying northward, parallel to North Vietnam. The F-111s reached the tankers first. After refueling, pilots and navigators checked their equipment for the last time, then left the tankers in their orbits and began individual approaches to their targets, each one scheduled to release its bombs as close as possible to the others.

As the F-111s left the tankers, the F-4s and B-52s took their places. Each plane greedily drank its allotted portion of fuel, then cruised alongside the tankers as its mates filled up. Then, in pairs, threes and fours, the fighters and bombers left the security of the tankers, each group seeking its place in a vast formation in the sky. The tankers rolled away in the opposite direction, accompanied by the "spare" fighters or those that were malfunctioning and replaced by spares.

On the opposite side of North Vietnam, in the Gulf of Tonkin, five aircraft carriers hummed in feverish activity, launching radar-warning planes, ECM planes and fighters. They, too, rose to rendezvous in the night sky, coordinating their activities with the Air Force and Marines.

The F-111s went in, striking at nearly every one of the major Mig air bases scattered in the Red River Valley. Descending from their refueling altitudes, they began low-level high-speed dashes to their targets, relying on their low altitude to evade enemy radar. They accelerated to supersonic or near supersonic speeds as they approached their targets, giving the North Vietnamese no warning of their attacks until the first bombs exploded. The F-111s' dark upper camouflage coloring and black bellies made them invisible in the night, and they all escaped unscathed. The F-111s sped away as quickly as they had come. But the targeted Mig bases did not re-

ceive heavy enough damage to put them out of action. Follow-on raids were conducted over the next few days.

The ECM planes took up their positions just out of SAM range from the Red River Valley and began their monitoring and jamming functions. Then came the chaff-laden F-4s, jinking² erratically through the black night, discharging bundles of chaff at preset points in the sky. They created a "corridor" paralleling Thud Ridge stretching from northwest to southeast, pointing like a finger into the heart of the Red River Valley. Aircraft could fly through this corridor, blinding much of the enemy's radar network.

The missile and cannon-armed F-4s, their shark's-teeth-painted snouts seeming eager to devour unwary Migs, appeared next and began orbiting as assigned over Mig bases or alongside the chaff corridor. In the backseat of each F-4, the Weapons Systems Officer (WSO) crouched over his radar and ECM equipment, looking for telltale blips illuminating Migs. Both pilot and WSO in each aircraft listened for the voice of Red Crown, coming from a U.S. Navy cruiser anchored in the Gulf of Tonkin. Equipped with powerful radar, Red Crown would tell them if a Mig were entering their assigned area.

Next came four F-105 Wild Weasels, setting up an orbit pattern alongside the route planned for the B-52s. They timed the legs of the racetrack orbit so that two F-105s would always be headed into the target area while two were going outbound. In this way, there were always Wild Weasels pointing toward the highest threat area, ready to pounce upon any SAM sites whose radar "came up" to engage the BUFs. But they were pitifully few for their mission.

With the stage set, the first wave of B-52s made their entrance, seven and one half miles above the earth, lumbering under the weight of their heavy pay loads. Over the pre-planned track they flew, one at a time, their crews holding them steady on course. Unlike other airplanes in the Valley, they did not jink to disrupt enemy tracking and lead computations (that would soon change). On they droned, with up to one minute between each one, as if on a training mission, in a line that stretched over 60 miles. In each plane, the Electronic Warfare Officer watched his scopes for signs of SAM radar activity, ready to jam the beam if it "locked on" to his airplane. The navigator and radar navigator hunched tensely in their windowless cubicle, watching their equipment and guiding their BUF to the target. The pilot and copilot in each crew struggled to maintain their position in the bomber stream, fighting 100 knot head winds. The gunner nervously scanned the skies, his fingers on the triggers of his quad-.50s or his 20mm Vulcan cannon. One minute to

bomb release, each bomber opened its bomb-bay doors, a move that vastly increased radar return reflected back to enemy radar scopes. As each bomber crossed an invisible point in the sky, the radar navigator began intoning, "30 seconds to release . . . 20 seconds . . . 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, Bombs Away!" For the next five to seven seconds, 40 to 108 (depending on the model of B-52 used) iron bombs tumbled out of the BUF's belly, beginning their seven and one half mile journey to their targets. The signs of their departure were a slight shuddering motion in the airplane, a slight tendency of the aircraft to gain altitude, and the flashing of an amber light over the radar navigator's head as each bomb released. Each bomber rolled in a steep turn to the right as soon as the bombs were released and closed its bomb-bay doors. The turn became significant later, because the ECM antennae were all located on the bellies of the B-52, radiating their jamming beams downward. By turning after release, the BUFs rotated the main power of their jamming gear away from the target area for 45 seconds or more. The fighter pilots, nearly all of whom had flown F-4s and F-105s carrying six tons of bombs in the past, were awed by the devastation wreaked by the 20-50 ton bomb loads going off under them.

The surprise of the first wave was total: no AAA or SAMs rose to meet the BUFs, no Migs were airborne. As the aircraft departed the valley, the lack of defensive reaction was creating consternation among SAC staff officers. As events later transpired, the staff was preparing a recommendation for award of the Air Force Cross to the man riding in the lead BUF jump seat. On previous mis-

sions in "safe areas," staff officers had ridden with the crews, occupying the jump seat, to earn credit for combat pay, monthly combat-zone income tax deductions, and medals (for which they did nothing to deserve)³. The position was titled Airborne Commander (ABC), but the title meant nothing, since the pilot in the lead bomber of a wave made the "go-no-go" decisions for the wave. Bomber crews frequently told interfering staff officers to "sit there and shut up for the rest of the mission," while they, the men who flew the missions regularly, continued doing their jobs.

The lack of opposition was conveniently ignored by use of the phrase "the threat of," so that the award commended the colonel involved with "overcoming the threat of intense AAA, SAMs, and Migs." The nation's second highest award for valor went to a man who braved "100 knot head winds" sitting in the jump seat of a B-52! The award was a grim jest to fighter pilots and it deepened the already deep rift between SAC staff and bomber crews.

After the bombers and fighters left, relative peace descended over the Red River Valley, broken only by the sounds of occasional secondary explosions as munitions or fuel caught fire and detonated. The POWs in the "Hanoi Hilton" prison cheered and danced, knowing that this all-out effort would undoubtedly result in their release. The next wave came in an hour later, and this time the North Vietnamese were ready for it. Twenty-seven battalions of SAMs were ready, thousands of AAA cannons were manned and aimed skyward and the Migs were on alert.

An F-4 on a combat mission shown from a KC-135 tanker during aerial refueling operations. The author flew over 165 missions during the 1972-73 period, including missions in Operations Linebacker and Linebacker II.





The author's B-52 crew during a previous combat tour in U-Tapao. From left to right are the gunner, navigator, radar navigator, co-pilot (empty seat) and pilot. Briefing rooms like this one became the scenes of angry exchanges between the frustrated aircrews and bureaucratic staff officers.

The chaff corridor slowly drifted away, as the next fighters took up positions. The North Vietnamese must have been incredulous as they watched the second wave approach down the same path or "stream" as the first wave. Their inflexible tactics did not even allow them to ease a few degrees off track to take advantage of the now-drifted chaff corridor's protection! Nonetheless, the professional bomber crews drove on, tight-lipped, into the waiting holocaust. The battle was joined, with F-4s jinking wildly over Mig bases, Wild Weasels firing their anti-radar missiles at SAM sites, and B-52s, with all the determination of Pickett's men at Gettysburg, driving relentlessly on.

Cannon and SAM fire was heavy. The scene resembled a huge Fourth of July Celebration, with rockets arcing high and exploding, tracers making intricate red and green patterns, and multi-hued cannon shells bursting everywhere. The second wave made it to their targets, striking the Yen Vien, Hanoi, and Kien No railroad yards. Enemy SAM crews panicked in some instances, launching barrages of SAMs, unguided, in efforts to connect with a lucky hit.

The following waves, each spaced about an hour apart,⁴ began to take hits as SAM and AAA crews settled down. The fact that the crews flew at the same altitudes, headings, and airspeeds simplified the defending gunners' problems of lead and fuse adjustment.

By 6 A.M. the following morning, the B-52 raids ceased. But there was no letup in the operation for Hanoi. During the day, Air Force and Navy fighter-bombers went to work on smaller targets, some in populated areas, requiring

Other pilots watched it, horrified, yet mesmerized by its seemingly slow descent. Did it take 30 seconds? 60 seconds? Or a minute and a half? No one knew. There were no parachutes. It seemed to take so long to reach the ground. It was an awesome sight.

Wildly maneuvering, B-52 pilots began to make mistakes. One realized that he was at his bomb-release point while still in a steep, evasive bank. He waited a fatal four seconds while trying to roll his wings level, and then released his bombs, during which he may still have been in a bank. At any rate, several of his bombs, destined for the Gia Lom Railyards, went ¼ to ½ mile long and struck the Gia Lom Airport terminal and runway, putting it out of commission for the remainder of Linebacker II. I was among those who were overjoyed to hear of this mistake because Gia Lom Airport, officially designated off limits to our bombing raids because it was Hanoi's "civilian international airport," frequently launched Migs at us. Even more important, we were informed the next morning that Joan Baez, Gen. Taylor (the U.S. prosecutor at the Nuremberg war crimes trials) and two other Americans, on a propaganda visit to Hanoi, were stranded for the remainder of the bombing raids by the fortunate accident.⁵

The SAMs hit several B-52s in the first wave, and the second wave of nine B-52s was in for a rough time.

Two Wild Weasels with the second wave, call sign "Soul 3" and "Soul 4," had launched several anti-radar missiles, knocking out a couple of SAM sites, but the SAMs were going up en masse. In Soul 4, Capt. George Connelly, a Princeton graduate with a Master's degree, and his back-seater, Capt. Duncan Wilmore, from the Naval Academy, both watched one site get several missiles off into the second wave.

"That one fucker got at least two hits on BUFs," George said. "Let's get that son-of-a-bitch before he gets another!"

They sped down the orbit track towards the site, Duncan intently studying his scope for the telltale greenish-white strobe that would indicate the Fansong radar beam⁶ emanating from the SAM site, and George peering into the blackness of the valley, which was frequently lit up by flashes of gunfire and exploding missiles.

"I think he's north of that little hill," George said, as they orbited outbound again. The SAM site operators were turning their radar set on and off to confuse the American ECM equipment operators and Wild Weasels.

"He should appear between your 11 o'clock and 2 o'clock," Duncan barked at the pilot as they roared back inbound. Then, "That's him! Shoot!"

The Shrike anti-radar missile hurtled downward and they turned outbound again, maneuvering at more than 600 knots.

As they came back inbound, both were watching the point.

"I think I see a small fire," George said. "Let's roll up on the left—no, right wing, and take a look."

As they streaked over the fire, they could see it was a SAM site.

"He's on fire!! We got him!" George shouted. "Kill those bastards!"

It was a deadly contest between the Weasels and the SAM sites. While a Weasel concentrated on one site, he might find two or three SAMs coming his way from several other sites and he would have to break off his attack to evade the SAMs.

SAM operators became cagier. Thanks to the B-52 tactics, they could watch where the lead BUF started its turn and, knowing that every other BUF would fly to that same point in the sky, would launch a SAM without "locking-on" or tracking the B-52s. They would allow the missile to fly ballistically for approximately 45 seconds, until it was close to the turning point. Then the SAM operator could "lock-on" for about 5-10 seconds of guidance to the missile, in time to catch the second or third BUF in the cell, as it was starting its programmed turn off the target. Since the BUF's ECM equipment pointed away from the target and its bomb-bay doors were open, it presented a fairly large target to the Fansong radar of the SAM site. This tactic gave the Wild Weasels very little time to find the Fansong radar, lock on and launch their missiles.

SAMs weren't just used against BUFs. Supporting F-4s, F-111s, and A-7s all caught their share as well.

On that second night, also during the second wave's strike, a pair of F-4s, call sign "Olympia 1" and "Olympia 2," were approaching the Red River Valley. Their mission was to enter the valley as the last F-4s and B-52s in the second wave were leaving. They were to orbit over the western portion of the valley for 15 minutes or so, to intercept any Migs that might try to nail the force from behind.

Olympia 2 watched the fight develop as they flew inbound toward Hanoi. They had a ringside seat for 10 minutes, watching AAA exploding and SAMs arcing upward.

"Uh-oh!" warned the Weapons Systems Officer.

"What's the matter?"

"The God-damn radar's down!"

"You mean the mags are out?"

"Ah, the whole fuckin' picture's gone!"

With only a couple of minutes to go until they arrived at their orbit point, they decided not to call out their problem to Olympia 1 for fear of also informing the North Vietnamese that they would be ineffective against Migs. That decision was almost fatal.

The last B-52s and other F-4s were out

of the valley as they began their orbit. Suddenly, Olympia 2's ECM gear began a high-pitched warble.

"Rattlesnake at two o'clock!" the WSO said to the pilot. The electronic "rattlesnake" was the audio tone the F-4's ECM gear heard when a Fansong radar was locked on and a SAM missile was airborne. Upon hearing the tone, a crew had up to 30 seconds to see the missile and outmaneuver it before it was close enough to destroy them.

"Don't see him yet," answered the pilot. "There it is!" Then, on the radio he said, "Olympia 2 has a tally at two o'clock!! Take it down, Olympia!"⁷

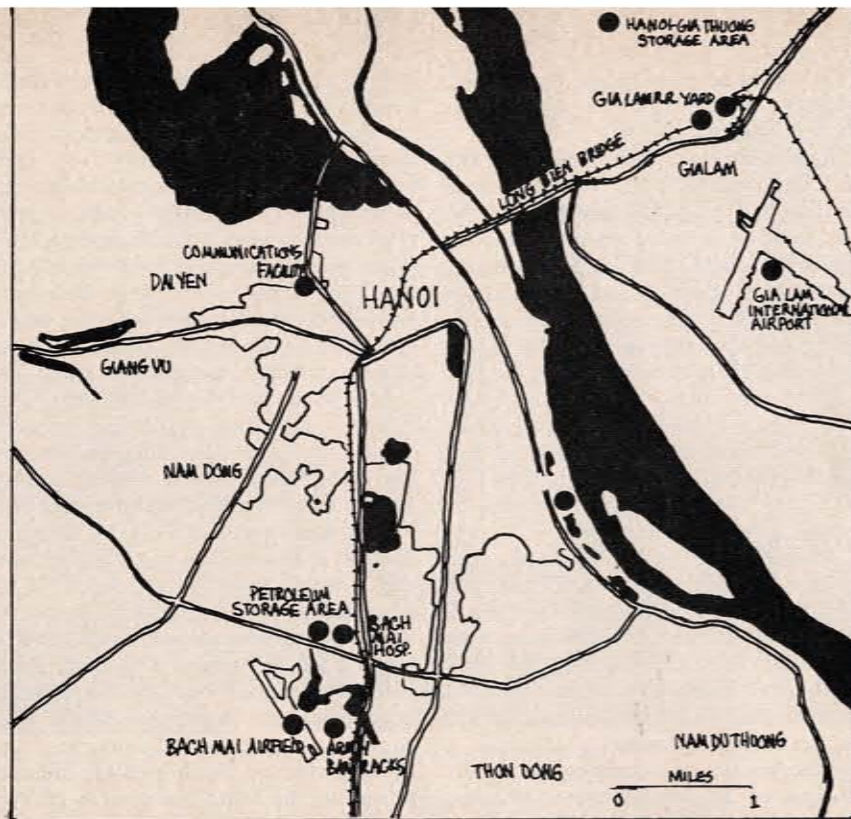
As they dove and maneuvered, the missile tumbled beneath them.

"Okay, let's ease 'er back up, Olympia," said Olympia 1 on the radio.

As they did, the pilot of Olympia 2 saw a SAM streaking after them from dead astern (six o'clock). He only had time to say "Hang on to your shit!!" to the WSO, then he snap-rolled and dove to the right. Simultaneously, Olympia 1 saw the missile and snap-rolled to the left, just as the missile roared between the two F-4s without exploding. From that moment on, the two planes were separated in the dark sky over Hanoi. The pilot of Olympia 1, coming out of his evasive maneuver, decided to head 20-30 miles northwest of the Red River Valley, just at the edge of the SAM ring. He could still intercept any Migs from there before they could get to the force. Not knowing that Olympia 2 had no radar, he assumed that Olympia 2 would follow him. However, Olympia 2 remained over the valley, thinking Olympia 1 was still there. Olympia 2's crew began their private duel with death.

There were no Wild Weasels, no ECM jammers, and no other targets; all SAM and AAA systems turned their efforts on the lone F-4 orbiting insolently over their positions. For the next 10-15 minutes, Olympia 2 weaved, dove, barrel-rolled and dodged its way through barrages of gunfire and SAMs. At one point, while maneuvering wildly away from two SAMs, Olympia 2 flew through the smoke of a B-52 D model bomber, capable of carrying 108 500-lb. and 750-lb. bombs, shown in revetments at U-Tapao. B-52 crew members reported to the author that one row of nine revetments contained B-52s too heavily damaged by enemy fire to fly again.





Rough map showing the targets in the Hanoi area and the proximity of Gia Lam "International" Airport (and Mig base) and Bach Mai Hospital to those targets. Both Bach Mai Hospital and Gia Lam airport were hit by stray bombs dropped from rapidly moving and maneuvering bombers. American and European news media attacked these accidental bombings while ignoring the simultaneous deliberate shellings of South Vietnamese cities, hospitals and other civilian areas done by the North Vietnamese Army as part of the North Vietnamese official policy of proving the S. Viet government could not protect its citizens. This double standard of morality engaged by the news media affected the morale of aircrews who were giving their lives while operating under severe restrictions designed to limit civilian casualties.

the tactics and suggesting new ideas. They complained to visiting senior officers and asked them to change tactics or request changes on the aircrews' behalf. But SAC staff refused to listen to the demands and requests for change. In response, the returning BUF crews began to turn their frustrations and rage loose in their only outlet: the Officers' Clubs in U-Tapao and Guam. The damage done to the clubs by the wild, angry crews became legendary as B-52 losses rose day by day. First three, then four, then six BUFs went down per day, yet SAC remained inflexible.

On the fighter bases, the grind was beginning to get to us. Many of the aircrews qualified to fly into the Red River Valley were the "old heads" who also held down staff or squadron jobs. Unlike SAC, the fighter staffs and squadron pilots were very close—the staff pilots frequently flew more missions than the squadron pilots. Those of us in the fighter units who worked on staff found ourselves putting in 12-16 hour days planning, plotting and organizing the missions, then flying one or two missions a night, with no sleep before going back to work the next morning. The pilots in the squadrons who had no staff duties and were qualified to fly Red River Valley

Missions flew two to three missions a day, around the clock. Maintenance men went on 24 hour shifts, struggling to keep enough planes operable.

By the third and fourth days, both aircrews and maintenance men were in a daze. It became a common sight for me to go to my airplane and see a maintenance man sound asleep, his hand still on the wrench with which he had been trying to tighten one last nut. It was the most motivated effort I had ever seen in my career, from both aircrews and ground personnel.

My experience was typical: I did not see a bed for five days. I worked in the command post all day and flew all night. Sometimes I would have the WSO fly the airplane to or from the target for a few minutes while I dozed. On the fifth day, I fell asleep while connected to the KC-135 tanker during a hazardous aerial refueling operation. My WSO saved both me and the airplane from an accident and, at the end of the mission, I asked to be taken off flying duty schedules for 24 hours. I slept the entire time and then returned to duty.

Losses increased as we went in, night after night. One of the chief targets until Christmas was Radio Hanoi, the combination propaganda network and com-

munications net for the North Vietnamese Army. For the first few days, the BUFs tried to knock it out. They leveled the barracks housing the soldiers who worked in it, the outbuildings and the main power supply, but the tiny building housing the actual transmitter and antennae was surrounded by a thick, 20 foot high revetment. F-111s pounded it to no avail—it still broadcast weakly on generator power. Finally, several F-4s carrying 2,000 and 3,000 pound laser-guided bombs dropped their ordnance directly into the revetment, whose walls contained and reflected the shock waves inward, virtually pounding the building to dust. We drank to the demise of Hanoi Hannah.

Migs were up, trying to get the BUFs and F-4s and the melees that resulted defied description. During one wave's attack on the night of 20 December, one of the Wild Weasels, call sign Wharp 4, with Capt. Don Henry (pilot) and Maj. Bob Webb (EWO), was busy trying to knock out an accurate SAM site while two bomber cells, call signs "Green" and "Cream," tried to sort out the confusion on the radios caused by their similar names. Red Crown called Migs in the area and the F-4s went after them. Just then, an air-to-air missile flashed directly over Wharp 4's canopy, missing the plane by a few feet. Henry and Webb couldn't see any fighters and were unsure as to whether a Mig had taken a passing shot at them or an F-4 had hosed them by mistake. They still continued trying to get the SAM site, breathing a little harder than usual. The pilot lead of "Cream" flight finally broadcast to the world in an exasperated tone of voice that he and his flight were now "Ice Cream" flight. This settled, the confused battle raged on.

By the 22nd of December, cracks appeared in the morale of the B-52 crews. More planes were aborted for imaginary or exaggerated maintenance reasons by their aircrews, while other crewmembers started going on sick call. The men had returned from each mission pleading or demanding that the staffs revise the tactics. But Strategic Air Command had fostered a "yes-man" mentality among its staff members. Recommendations for improvements in tactics were ignored or filed in the wastebasket. In addition, staff officers at the base level frequently misled or lied to aircrew members during meetings or aircrew briefings. The daily mission briefings became angry affairs where sarcastic or frustrated aircrew members derisively laughed at their pompous officer briefers or heckled them.

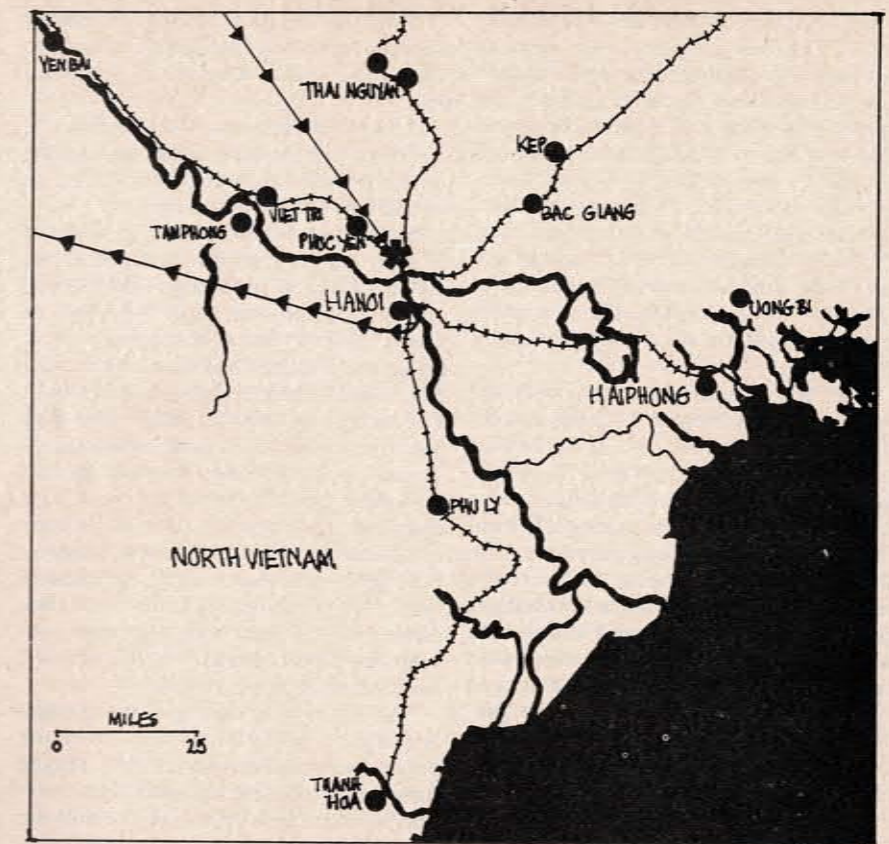
I personally interviewed several Air Force Flight surgeons from Guam and U-Tapao several months later, and they reported that large numbers of crew members were taking themselves off flying status for "health reasons" during those tense days. Two doctors specifically

used the term "mutiny" to describe what was happening. Some aircrew members, the ears of the higher echelons closed to their suggestions, took the only other legal course open to military men: they contacted their congressmen in Washington. A number simply refused to fly. One, Capt. Michael Heck, went public with his refusal by contacting the news media. The veteran of two combat tours, and over 250 missions in several aircraft types was court-martialed and discharged almost immediately. The others who refused to fly, but who were not reported in the news media, were grounded and returned to flying status months later. One brave Colonel on staff at U-Tapao (who rose through the ranks as a fighter pilot and was serving his first tour in SAC) attempted to pass the aircrew complaints to higher headquarters. The senior SAC officer at U-Tapao, a Brigadier General, was furious because one of his staff had the audacity to suggest that the aircrews had any right to say anything about the tactics they flew. The Colonel's chances for promotion ended the day he took his stand.

The significant point about all of the refusals to fly, letters to congressmen and other protests was that virtually none of the reasons given for the complainants' actions concerned the morality of the war or the types of targets fraggled, as might be expected. Instead, the complaints were the same: "stupidity and laxity" in planning the raids by SAC, "bomb runs on the same heading, with the same exit route," and unnecessary risks taken due to SAC inflexibility.⁹

The morale situation was at its worst in U-Tapao Air Base, where the crews had all been flying at least one mission per day. (The Guam aircrews, airborne for 12 hours or more each mission, flew every other day or every third day. Fighter crews flew more missions per day because they spent fewer hours airborne for each mission due to their proximity to the targets.) There the losses were heaviest and the number of aircrews available were less than on Guam. By Christmas Eve, B-52 losses were in the neighborhood of 10-12% of the total forces available and the situation became extremely tense. Compared to the fighter losses in the previous Linebacker Operation, in which a number of units (such as the 4th and 421st Tactical Fighter Squadrons mentioned earlier) lost more than 2/3 of their strength in a few weeks, the B-52 losses were light. But B-52 crew morale could not stand such losses due to the frustrations caused by SAC staff problems. The fighter aircrews had no such information flow problems and their ability to suffer 60% losses and bounce back reflected their better system of tactics planning and leadership.

I do not know if it was planned, but a Christmas Truce was declared as of midnight the 24th of December. It came at



Map A: This map shows the main population centers of the Red River Valley. The line going from the left hand corner (N.W.) and arcing north to Hanoi shows the route and turn-off target taken by every B-52 bomber during a 9-hour period on the night of raids (18 Dec. '72). Contrast with map B.

Map B: This map shows the attack routes for one raid the night 26 Dec., after the tactics were changed. Waves of airplanes, including 77 B-52s attacked almost simultaneously from 5 different directions. Some of the bombers hit active SAM launching pads. As a result, airforce loses dropped dramatically.



a very opportune time for the fighter bases. The crews finally were able to rest and the hardworking maintenance men had a chance to catch up for a few hours. During the lull, some tactics were finally changed. Either the "sick-call epidemic" was reported to SAC headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, or SAC generals used a slide rule to figure that, at the rate losses were increasing per day, they would be out of airplanes in exactly 14 days. I assume that the latter reason caused them to finally change tactics.¹⁰

After the 41 hour truce, the first raid over Hanoi consisted of 77 B-52s attacking together, of which 76 returned. That result by itself was dramatic. They still flew in trail (one behind the other), but they attacked almost simultaneously from as many as five different directions. The distances within the cells and between cells were drastically reduced, making a more compact mass of bombers over the target. The turn off target was eliminated and different routes were taken to and from the targets. The results were predictable. The North Vietnamese gunners and missilemen were swamped and confused. But there were still losses.

On that first day of the new tactics, a B-52 flown by Lt. Bob Hymel (co-pilot) out of U-Tapao was hit by SAMs on his crew's fourth raid. As his B-52 exited the target area north of Hanoi, the gunner said there were two SAMs coming up. The SAMs climbed up from behind and to the right and the pilot frantically whipped the huge plane into a right-hand descending turn as the missiles exploded.

"It felt like a kick in the pants, and all of a sudden we had fire lights in numbers seven and eight (engines)," reported Bob.

"I throttled back on seven and chopped eight off while the pilot called the navigators for the shortest route to the ocean, so we could bail out if necessary."

The gunner reported that the flames from the burning engines were reaching back past his position, and that he was wounded. Upon reaching the Gulf of Tonkin (where Navy helicopters could rescue them if they had to bail out), the pilot headed south, trying to reach a base big enough to land the BUF. The BUF was streaming fuel from hundreds of shrapnel holes and had to pick up fuel from three tankers during the next hour and a half. They decided to try to fly back to U-Tapao, which had the best hospital. Bob and the pilot had to fight the controls to keep the plane level, but they felt they could land it all right. As they came in to land a few hundred feet from the runway, the plane went out of control.

"As we were in the flare, the airplane just seemed to fly itself away from the runway, yawing hard to the left. Maybe some cables popped or something. Anyway, we came in with the power and the nose came up in the air . . . the pilot came on the radio and said 'the airplane won't turn to the right! . . .'"

"Then it seemed like it came back that way, to the right. We were using the outboard throttles to create some asymmetrical thrust."

The pilot pulled the throttles off, trying to set it down where it was (still a few

hundred feet from the runway), but the plane wasn't responding. Then he added power, trying to get some altitude for ejection. (The navigators, whose seats ejected downward, needed at least 400 feet altitude to get out of the plane alive.)

"It seemed like the airplane was pointing straight up in the air, with the altimeter winding up and the airspeed indicator going in reverse . . . I decided it was time to jump out of the airplane and I came on over the intercom and said, 'Bail out! Bail out!'"

"I reached down and pulled my arming levers up¹¹ and we hit the ground."

At this point, Bob was knocked unconscious. Other B-52 crewmembers waiting at the end of the runway saw the B-52 snap up, then hit the ground tail first and explode. One of the pilots watching, Major Brent Diefenbach from Westover AFB, Massachusetts, leaped out of a crew bus and climbed through the perimeter cyclone and barbed wire fence. He commandeered a passing Thai pick-up minibus and drove to the burning BUF. Finding the hatch above the co-pilot's position blown away, he crawled through flames and pulled Bob Hymel out. The pilot was dead, as were the EWO, radar navigator, and navigator. The gunner managed to knock the rear gun turret off and hobble to safety on wounded legs.

While Major Diefenbach was rescuing Bob Hymel, the other crew members saw a strange scene at the front gate of the base. Fire trucks and rescue equipment were halted by the gate guards who refused to allow Air Force equipment to be taken off base the few hundred feet to

the accident scene to fight the fire! When angry crew members demanded an explanation about blind adherence to SAC red tape at a crew meeting the next day, they were blandly told by the SAC General in charge at U-Tapao, "We (the staff) decided to keep the fire equipment on base because other crippled bombers might arrive soon and we might need the equipment if they crashed."

That "explanation," which was apparently a lie to cover up a red-tape foul-up (adherence to the "book," no matter what the circumstances, is a well-known source of SAC pride), was typical of many such statements that insulted the crews' intelligence and served to maintain the rift between staff and the crews.

In addition, SAC staff at U-Tapao at first prepared to court-martial or reprimand Major Diefenbach for his heroic single-handed efforts to save the co-pilot because the Major had violated several SAC regulations during the rescue efforts. Eventually, in the face of a threatened mass uprising by the aircrews, staff backed down on the suggested punishment. However, SAC staff officers in the launch tower and command post awarded themselves Bronze Star Medals for their heroism in talking on the radios to the crew of the crippled BUF as it looked for a place to land.

In spite of all the staff problems, the new tactics began to have their effect. In addition to multiple attacks from different directions, a new and frightening twist was added. Several BUFs in each wave carried tens of thousands of the grapefruit-sized Cluster Bomb Unit (CBU) munitions, each of which consisted of an explosive center surrounded by hundreds of steel ball bearings. Their special targets were the most active SAM sites that had been pin-pointed on previous raids (such as the one that hit Bob Hymel's plane). The hunter-killer teams of a Wild Weasel F-105 or F-4C accompanied by a CBU-armed F-4 were reactivated with the same role. SAM storage areas containing hundreds of SAMs in reserve were targeted and destroyed. These moves heralded a new emphasis in the battle: the breaking of the North Vietnamese air defense system.

For the next three days, the battle raged, with fewer B-52 and fighter losses. Migs, SAMs and AAA sites were hunted out and destroyed or neutralized. By the 28th of December, the North Vietnamese air defense system was broken and U.S. aircraft roamed the length and breadth of the Red River Valley with relative impunity, destroying all the targets left on the authorized bombing list. The North Vietnamese air defense system had become so quiet that the Mig-hunting F-4s from Udorn had no more jobs. On 31 December, their air-to-air missiles were being removed and CBU's were replacing them as ordnance. We pilots received

briefings for a new mission unique to this war and indicative of the low level of defenses in the Red River Valley. Our mission was to roam at will up and down the roads, destroying all military truck traffic we could find. Then, before we could take off, we were informed that a cease-fire was in effect above the 20th Parallel. Linebacker II was over. Several weeks later, North Vietnamese and U.S. representatives signed the Paris accords and a month later, the POWs returned.

Overall, Operation Linebacker II was deemed a success, both in the sense that the targets selected were destroyed and, in a long-range point-of-view, the stalled peace talks were jarred into motion and agreements were signed.

It is difficult to assess the cost of the operation, because the U.S. Air Force seemed to use several methods of counting losses. Initially, the Air Force (or SAC) declared a total of 17 B-52s lost in a running count given news media during the operation. Later, during congressional hearings in March 1973, the Air Force gave 13 as the number lost. Most aircrews, myself included, felt the larger figure was closer to the truth. The SAC method of counting was as follows: if the plane were hit and crashed soon after, it was counted as a loss. If the plane returned to its base and crashed on landing or was declared unuseable for further combat, sometimes it was not announced as lost in combat. Throughout the Vietnam war, some combat losses were written off as "accidents," while some accidents were declared "combat losses." During Linebacker II, one parking row at U-Tapao was reserved for aircraft that were too badly damaged to be used again. If we add those nine aircraft (which were not included in the two figures given to Congress and the press) to the figures previously announced, B-52 losses range from a low of 22 to a high of 27. These figures are the closest I can come to an actual count. The official reports of non-B-52 losses were:

- 2 F-111s
- 2 F-4s (Air Force)
- 2 A-7s (Navy)
- 2 A-6s (Navy)
- 1 F-4 (Navy)
- 1 RA-5 (Navy)

North Vietnamese losses were more extensive. All transshipment points were destroyed, every power plant and railroad yard was knocked out, and most communications facilities and military headquarters were destroyed. All known oil stocks were destroyed, along with countless trucks, locomotives, railroad rolling stock, and associated repair facilities. Virtually no supplies were available for the North Vietnamese Army in South Vietnam, and no transportation was left that could have moved supplies there any to send. Two years would pass before Hanoi would be capable of mounting another invasion in South

Vietnam (a violation of the Paris Accords).

Hanoi claimed almost 3,000 civilians killed, a figure they said illustrated the intent of the bombing: to terrorize innocent civilians. To military observers familiar with air operations, the small number of civilians killed indicated just the opposite: that the bombing was conducted as carefully as possible and that civilian deaths were generally accidental, caused by stray bombs or errors in bombing navigation. By contrast, bombing campaigns conducted during 10 day periods against Hamburg and Dresden in World War II resulted in death tolls of 50,000 and 135,000 respectively. The cities were smaller and the tonnage of bombs dropped on them by U.S. and R.A.F. bombers was less than on the Red River Valley. If Hanoi and Haiphong and their civilian populations were the targets in Operation Linebacker, there would be no cities left and civilian casualties would have numbered at least one half million. Unmentioned by American (or European) news media at the time, was that North Vietnamese Army artillery was deliberately shelling the civilian population of An Loc, South Vietnam, during the same period as Linebacker II, resulting in many times the civilian casualties that Hanoi suffered.

In the words of Major General Allen, one of the three planners for Linebacker II in SAC headquarters in Omaha, Nebraska, "One point is significant: the B-52s had proved over Hanoi that manned bombers could penetrate a sophisticated Russian air defense system including Migs, SAMs and AAA, and still destroy their targets."¹²

The fact that the bombers could do this in spite of faulty tactics and morale-breaking activities of SAC staff reflected great credit upon the professionalism of the long-suffering aircrew men, smarting under the burden of SAC staff incompetence and fighting an unpopular war.

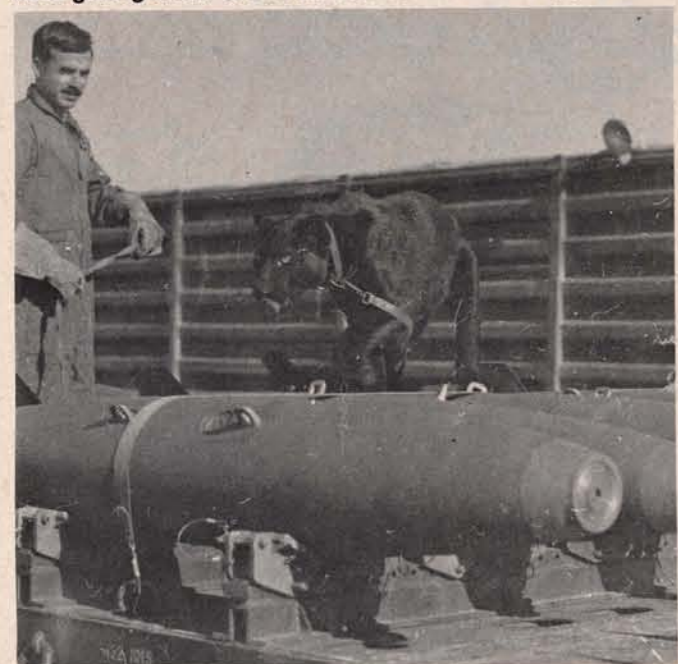
It is important to study the tactical errors made by the U.S. during Linebacker II, in hopes that such errors will not be made again by other commanders in future wars.

1. Piecemeal Attacks. Strategic Air Command planners used piecemeal attacks against a fixed defense system, violating the principle of economy of force. Attacking in successive waves up to an hour apart gave enemy defenses a chance to recover and prepare for the next wave. In addition, by attacking with all B-52s in the wave in trail, they further reduced the effect of each wave, allowing the enemy to concentrate on each plane one at a time. When up to five waves attacked from different directions simultaneously, the losses dropped dramatically.

2. Lack of Surprise. Due to excellent security, the first attack against the Red River Valley was a total surprise, as

WAR

Capt. Dana Drenkowski with Eldridge, the black panther mascot of the 13th Tactical Fighter Squadron (The Panther Pack). Eldridge was quite playful. He is shown here giving a row of 500 lb. bombs his official approval.



ELDRIDGE IN

Eldridge imitating his masters on R & R in Taiwan. In this case, he is shown in the Phoenix Zoo with his new mate, Bindu, a conventionally spotted Leopard. He was donated to the zoo by the 13th Fighter Sqdn.

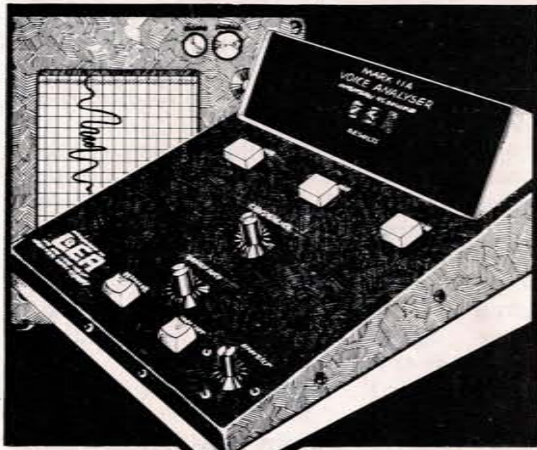


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witnessed by the relative lack of response from North Vietnamese defenses. However, SAC policy dictated that each succeeding attack would follow the track of the first, flying at the same altitudes and air speeds and departing on the same course from the target area. Once the first wave went through each night, the gunners knew exactly where every B-52 was going to fly for the rest of the night (on a few nights, B-52 waves striking targets 20 miles apart flew parallel tracks inbound, but still used the same headings, altitudes, etc.). Perhaps some thought should have been given to surprise low level attacks (such as the F-111s were doing) by a few B-52 waves to upset enemy calculations. At the very

least, BUFs should have been sent in at varying altitudes and air speeds.

3. Lack of Flexibility. Tactics, as mentioned above, were not varied to meet changing situations. For example, if a Wild Weasel were to report all SAMs knocked out in one area, the BUFs would not change course to enter from that area, but would be condemned to enter the target on a pre-planned course. A prime example of this lack of flexibility was shown when, on the first night, the protective chaff corridor had drifted from the pre-planned course. Succeeding B-52 waves could have adjusted their course by 15-20 miles from the pre-planned course to take advantage of the situation, but they were not allowed to.

4. Lack of Proper Priorities. Most-air strategists and tacticians agree that first priority in an air offensive should be given to the destruction of the enemy's threat to one's own force — his anti-air capabilities. As I have noted, F-111s preceded B-52s in to the targets on the first day, trying to knock out every Mig base to neutralize the 180-200 Mig jet fighters in the Red River Valley. Their efforts, combined with the airborne Mig hunters (at least 100 were launched from Udorn each night, and Navy and Marine fighters added to the overall numbers), managed to keep Mig activity down. But the B-52s went immediately after their strategic targets, with little thought given to the still active 27 battalions of SAMs (with over 2,300 missiles available for use). Only 16 F-105 and 8 F4C Wild Weasels were available for anti-SAM activities — the remaining B-52 defenses were passive: evasive maneuvers and ECM devices. As a result, B-52 losses were unacceptably high until, on the 26th of December, Wild Weasels were augmented by CBU-carrying F-4s, forming hunter-killer teams, while certain B-52s carried CBUs for use on identified active sites. Had an all-out effort been made against all anti-air defenses on the first few days, SAM site personnel would not have been able to operate at their leisure. The total number of SAMs fired during the operation was estimated at 1200-1500 (estimates vary, since crews in nearby aircraft would each report the same SAM as two separate firings). Some of the reloads were destroyed in their storage areas. Approximately 800-1100 SAMs were still available when the majority of firings ceased on the 28th of December.

In effect, the three day shift in emphasis to the SAMs from the 26th through the 28th, effectively knocked out most of those remaining missiles, an example of what could have occurred had the SAMs been concentrated on in the opening days of Linebacker II. The lesson here is similar to the one learned in World War II bombing operations in Germany concerning air offensives. In 1943, the heavy bombers went immediately after strategic targets and suffered heavy casualties from an unopposed Luftwaffe. The raids into Germany were effectively halted by bomber losses. In late 1943 and early 1944, long-range fighters accompanied the bombers to their strategic targets, but their role was only to defend them against Luftwaffe fighters. Losses were still too high and the bombing results were unsatisfactory because the aircrews were too harassed to find and concentrate on their targets. Finally, in February, 1944, emphasis was shifted. Instead of oil stocks and munitions factories, the Luftwaffe itself was the target of both bombers and Air Force fighters. Bombers were sent against Luftwaffe fighter factories and were used as bait to bring the Luft-

waffe up to battle. U.S. fighters were ordered to concentrate not on the defense of the bombers, but to hunt out and destroy the Luftwaffe wherever it could be found. Within two weeks in February, the Luftwaffe's back was broken, and the bombers could return to their previous strategic priorities. The lesson was obvious: the destruction of the enemy's anti-air capabilities frees the entire bomber and fighter force for concentration on any targets.

5. Lack of Internal Communication. The above errors were limited tactical and strategic errors that were partially or fully corrected after the Christmas Truce. But a glaring fact remains: all of these mistakes were foreseen by the aircrews and should not have happened at all. The aircrews predicted the folly of such tactics for years, but SAC staff ignored the aircrews. The sad irony of the situation was that the staff officers did not pay the price for ignoring the aircrews — the aircrews paid for such folly with their blood. The division between staff and line in SAC began a number of years ago.

General Curtis Lemay, who rose to prominence through his audacious and innovative strategies and tactics with bombers against both the Germans and Japanese in World War II, created the Strategic Air Command in the late 1940s and early 1950s. He forged a tool that became the most powerful weapon in America's arsenal during the 1950s, in

which staff officers and line officers alike worked together and were rewarded for initiative. He became Air Force Chief of Staff in the early 1960s. Gen. Lemay and his counterparts in the other services were dynamic, outspoken generals and admirals whose careers reflected the fact that they were used to winning wars.

In the early 1960s, Secretary of Defense Robert S. MacNamara clashed with his generals and, not recognizing the fact that they were simply expressing their opinions based on 25-35 years of experience and several wars, chose to interpret their disagreements with him as a challenge to civilian rule of the military. All of these dynamic generals and admirals were intensely loyal to the U.S. and, once overruled, they followed their superiors' orders. However, MacNamara seemed to believe that people who did not share his opinions were not capable of serving high positions. He forced men such as Gen. Lemay into retirement and saw to it that the men promoted to replace them would not object to his own ideas. The result was predictable. The men occupying high positions as we entered the Vietnamese war were men who would parrot Mr. MacNamara's ideas and policies, who became nothing more than "yes-men." The public remembers these men as pollyannas, who were constantly describing the war in the same glowing terms as Secretary MacNamara — men who

constantly saw "light at the end of the tunnel" and "victory around the corner." They, as yes-men, refused to listen to or pass on information from their staffs and intelligence men that indicated that the policies of Secretary MacNamara might not be working.

Officers on staffs who insisted on reporting the truth, conscientious men, found themselves passed over for promotion and removed to lesser assignments, while the generals in power insured that men like themselves — unimaginative, loyal "yes-men" who wouldn't "rock the boat" — filled the staffs. "Company men" and "loyalty" became more important criteria in a man's career than honesty (stating to one's superiors what one sees or believes) or innovation. This malaise became especially pronounced in the Strategic Air Command, where aircrews were not involved in especially hazardous combat situations.

In tactical fighter forces, whose officers were carrying the war to the enemy under very hazardous conditions, it was impossible to accept dangerous tactics or policies for long without experiencing unacceptable losses. In the Pacific Air Force (PACAF) in Southeast Asia, and in the Tactical Air Command (TAC) in the United States, the brightest and most experienced line aircrewmembers found themselves invited to work in staff positions, in contrast to the type of men who became staff officers in SAC. Unfortun-

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nately for the Air Force, the majority of officers promoted to the command ranks of Colonel and the various ranks of General came from SAC. This was due at first to SAC's role as Americas's first line of defense and later due to the fact that SAC staff officers weren't "boat-rockers" as were many fighter staff officers.

Operational contrasts between SAC and the other commands were pronounced. During Operation Linebacker I (April-October, 1972), after a major fighter plane assault into the Red River Valley, each flight would debrief the mission together, with suggestions for improvement or self-criticism sought from each man. Then every crewmember on base who participated in the operation was invited to a mass debriefing, in which the staff officers (most of whom had flown the mission themselves) were present. Suggestions from anyone were listened to and discussed. Representatives from each base involved would then fly to another base with the ideas and suggestions in hand to discuss the mission. In this way, tactics were constantly adjusted or tested to respond to any new threats or tactics by the enemy. If something new came up on one mission, or an improvement were found, it would be used on the next mission.

SAC's debriefing policies were different. During a tour in B-52s in Southeast Asia, I participated in a three month operation against the highways and passes of the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. After each mission, crews were debriefed individually by maintenance and intelligence representatives. For several weeks, flying the same monotonous routes into the same target daily, I (and the other crewmembers) reported the introduction of 85mm and 100mm cannons along our route. We each reported the altitudes of the bursts and number of bursts—after a few days we were able to approximate the number of enemy cannons. Since this report would indicate to SAC staff and the Defense Department that the North Vietnamese were equaling our escalation of the war (thus negating the effect of the escalation and, ultimately, discrediting the American administration's policy), this was the type of news that must not be true be-

cause it would indicate that our new policy wasn't going to work, in spite of pronouncements to the contrary. Therefore, intelligence officers would blandly tell us to our faces that what we were telling them did not exist—we must have imagined the airbursts, or we had mistaken lesser calibers of AAA, which couldn't reach our altitudes, for the 85mm and 100mm cannons! Our requests to change our course by as little as five miles, which would render the cannons ineffective until the North Vietnamese moved them again, were of course ignored, because the cannons did not exist. When, some six weeks after we reported their existence, evidence became too overwhelming to be ignored, intelligence officers announced that 100mm and 85mm cannons had been photographed, in the same numbers we had indicated, along our routes of flight as if the cannons had just been moved in the day before! When aircrews asked to change the inbound course to the target, since by now the AAA was getting accurate and SAM sites were also being established (I think one or two BUFs were damaged during this period by AAA fire), we were told that such changes would have to be made by Headquarters SAC, at Omaha, Nebraska. Throughout that particular operation, the course, altitudes and airspeeds were never changed. We had to rely entirely on our EWO's ability to jam the AAA radars.

Intelligence services throughout the military were affected by the yes-man malaise. Thus, information going to higher echelons and information given to combat aircrews reflected policy, not reality. Even the fighter forces' intelligence officers were affected by this. In August or September, 1972, one of the 13th Panther Pack aircrews encountered several SAMs in Banana Valley, next to the Red River Valley. They received no ECM indications that a SAM radar was tracking them, nor any audio warnings that SAMs were fired. They managed to see them in time to maneuver and quickly realized that the usual maneuvers to evade the SAM-2s were not sufficient. The pilot used full after-burner, which expended most of his available fuel, while using extreme maneuvers at altitudes

estimated below 100 feet off the deck (SAM-2s are not effective below 1000-1500 feet).

After barely shaking the several SAMs fired, he had only enough fuel to limp to the Gulf of Tonkin, where the aircrew bailed out when the engines flamed out. They were rescued and spent the next two days trying to describe what we identified as a new generation SAM, the SAM-3, to intelligence officers. Their explanation of a new SAM was not accepted and, because the pilot had run an airplane out of gas with no satisfactory explanation, his career was ruined. This veteran of two tours in Southeast Asia and our Squadron's leading instructor pilot had to resign his commission as soon as the war was over (after 10 years of service). Because the SAM-3 was not definitely identified in North Vietnam, our F-4 ECM equipment was not modified with SAM-3 frequencies (a simple job), to provide our airplanes with warning signals and tones. During Linebacker II operations several months later, a number of us were tracked and fired at by SAMs which our ECM gear did not record. Intelligence officers later informed us that the SAM-3 was positively identified in North Vietnam. I can not definitely assign any losses of aircraft and aircrews to this blunder, but I can say with certainty that at least one F-4 was almost lost to the SAM-3s during Linebacker II: mine.

One more example of the difference between SAC staffs and fighter staffs should suffice. In fighters, pilots had the option of carrying cassette tape recorders during a mission. The recordings were used exclusively to review tactics and procedures for change—in other words, in a positive sense. SAC bomber crews were required to carry and use tape recorders, and the recordings were used exclusively to determine if the aircrews were using prescribed SAC policies and procedures—not to determine the viability of tactics or to make changes. As a result, SAC aircrews (my own included) frequently jammed or broke the recorders. If we were unable to get away with jamming the recorders and were guilty of violating a SAC rule, i.e., not using a checklist when pressed for time, we would erase the offending portion later and re-record it, with everyone on the crew chiming in at the appropriate intervals with his portions of the required checklist.

The division between SAC staff and line aircrews was unfortunate. Five out of the six members of each BUF aircrew were officers and the gunner was usually a senior enlisted man with many years' experience. The officers all had college degrees and many, with hours available for study while on nuclear alert in the U.S., had Master's degrees and Ph.D.s. Many gunners were also highly educated. Virtually all of these men were capable of

holding significant positions in civilian society, but had chosen to be professional military men. They had been selected by the Air Force, on the basis of intelligence, motivation, and aggression, to attend flying or navigation school and had survived high elimination percentages to achieve their present positions. Thus, it was a tragedy when these intelligent and motivated career men watched the system reach into their ranks and promote to the staffs the yes-men, the dullards or least competent men available, who were regarded by the aircrews with disrespect.

Thus were sown the seeds of demoralization that resulted in the mutiny or near mutiny of a force of professional military men, all of whom were volunteers to their jobs. The tragedy continues to this day. After the war, the staff officers involved in the operation were usually promoted—Colonel to Brigadier General, and one, two, or three star Generals to the next higher rank. The conscientious officers, usually the Lieutenants, Captains and Majors who tried to change the tactics employed and were proven to be justified in their cause, found their careers ruined. Many officers in the service and others, who were passed over for promotion and forced out of service in the last three years, have told me the same story when interviewed. They flew their missions, some heroically, and voiced their objections through the chain of command. When they left Southeast Asia and picked up their personnel records to carry to their next base, they found that their annual Efficiency Ratings (on which officer promotions are based) had been downgraded without their knowledge (a violation of established Air Force procedures and regulations) and usually without explanation.

Two months after Operation Linebacker II ended, I visited U-Tapao Air Base and interviewed the aircrews who had flown the Linebacker II missions. I was given a private interview with the commanding general on the base, during which I related some of the stories I had heard and suggested one or two different ways in which to open avenues of communication between staffs and aircrews—methods which were successfully used in the fighter groups. The general became very angry, drew himself up, and summarized the SAC attitude on the subject:

"In the fighter forces, you all have weak staffs, so you and the crews have to ask each other for ideas and help to get the job done. But here in SAC, we have strong staffs. We don't need to listen to the aircrews!!"

A continuation of this attitude must result in a continuous waste of brave American lives whenever military action occurs. Is such waste necessary?

1. The dates were Southeast Asia time. In the U.S. it was 17 December.
2. "Jinking"—erratic twisting, turning, climbing or diving maneuvers done every few seconds at random to prevent enemy gunners and radar from computing a "lead" on the airplane.
3. Favorite missions were ones that launched late on the last day of the month. When the plane landed early the next morning, the staff officer qualified for two months' combat pay (\$130), and two months' income tax deductions (\$1000). The highest ranking officers fought over these end-of-the-month missions.
4. Interviews with SAC planners later indicated that only three waves were scheduled each night, but the time within the three-plane cells was extended so that a single wave, whose first elements took 20 minutes to pass over a target, were not followed by its trailing elements until some 20 to 30 additional minutes had passed. Foreign observers in Hanoi, POWs and the North Vietnamese all thought they were being subjected to a nine-wave attack, spaced at hourly intervals. The result was an even greater dispersion of the B-52 force.
5. Many of us respected Baez for her sincerity and objectivity in her anti-war views. We really would have been more pleased if Jane Fonda, whose views were 100% pro-North Vietnamese, were there instead of Baez.
6. Fansong is the name given to this type radar by NATO. It was designed by the Russians and is used extensively wherever the Russians have sold air de-

7. The initial anti-SAM maneuver was a dive.
8. Reconnaissance photos released to the public in April, 1973, showed that several buildings were damaged. One building was destroyed, but the Swedish Ambassador to Hanoi had visited the Bach Mai Hospital complex 10 days prior to Linebacker II. He reported that the building was destroyed by accident in a raid in June, 1972, and it had not been rebuilt. By that time, prominent Americans, such as ex-Attorney General Ramsay Clark, had donated money for its reconstruction. They gave nothing to the hospitals deliberately destroyed by the North Vietnamese in South Vietnam.
9. Quotations were taken from a letter sent by a crew to a U.S. Senator.
10. An interview with one of the highest ranking SAC generals involved in the operation confirmed my theory: he was unaware of crew disaffection and crew recommendations concerning tactics. He claimed to be uninformed about the extent of the sick-call epidemic or the numbers of men refusing to fly unless tactics were changed.
11. For the ejection seat.
12. Another significant point that General Allen overlooked was that many of the B-52 targets escaped destruction and had to be destroyed by fighters carrying highly accurate guided bombs. Guided bombs came late to the Vietnam conflict, but they proved their worth far beyond anyone's expectations.

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ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

The NRA National Convention wasn't all politics and factional infighting. There was a large exhibit hall set up with a wide variety of things to see, not a great deal of it new, but most of it very entertaining. SOF staff members spent much of their time on the exhibit floor, looking around for items of particular interest to our readers. Getting up off the floor and looking into the booths proved to be a more successful method of finding these items.



Of special interest to SOF readers, who own a mini-14, was the Metalife Industries Inc. treatment of some of the chronic problems inherent in the mini-14. Ron Mahovsky of Metalife showed us this mini-14 action, in which the gas piston, the operating rod and slide, as well as several other vital moving parts, are SS.-Chromium-M-treated. Since excessive wear at these points has been one of the mini-14's major problems, this process with a Rockwell of Apox 70-72 will alleviate some of those problems. With this modification, the mini-14 adds much to its potential as an addition to the arsenal of the man of action. For more info contact Ronald Mahovsky, Box 53 Mong Ave., Reno, PA 16343. Phone: (814) 436-7747.

Al Mar, chief designer for Gerber Knives, had this fine new locking pocket knife to show us. The lock mechanism is released by depressing the area inside the circle at the blade pivot point, to allow the blade to open or close, which it does with great smoothness and ease. The machining on this fine knife appears excellent and the materials, a stainless similar to 440C, are just right. Slated to sell for around \$60, it should be available very soon. Blade length is approximately three inches or slightly less. The larger knife shown is a prototype and no plans for production are currently in the mill. For further information contact your nearest Gerber dealer.



L.E.S. Company execs, Norm Sachs and Chuck Witbeck, show SOF Publisher R.K. Brown the prototype of their 9mm semi-auto. "Gas operated, the specially vented barrel, which is mounted directly to the frame, gives almost no recoil," Witbeck told us. The prototype has been around for about two years now, but Sachs said that they are ready to go into full production right around the time this

issue will reach our readers. They also told us that a .45 caliber model is planned for the near future. We sure hope so; the idea is a good one. While at the L.E.S. booth we spent some time with the L.E.S. binoculars marketed by Seagull Co. Rugged enough to take the 85-90 drops to the concrete floor of the exhibit hall, they are great for the field. Write L.E.S., 3640 W. Dempster Street, Skokie, IL 60076.



A. G. Russell's booth was chock-full of his quality blades of many styles. He showed us his newest copyrighted design, a boot knife called "The Stinger." The blade is similar to the Morseth sleeve knife and is approximately 3 1/4 inches long; overall length is 6 1/2 inches. Of full tang construction, the handle slabs are offered in several different options. An ebony handle at \$35, standard micarta for \$50, ivory (white micarta) with red liner for \$70. Included with every boot knife is a clip-on heavy leather sheath that holds the knife well and offers ease of carry, along with good protection. A great design, extremely well executed, and the price is right. To order yours, send complete information (and a check) to: Phoenix Associates, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.

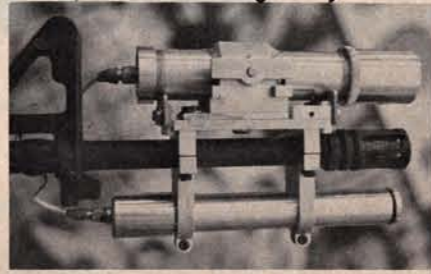


Bob Brown is being helped into a one-of-a-kind shoulder rig for the Gerber MK II, by Al Mar of Gerber Knives. Mar told us that it was made for him by his friends at Bianchi and that he thought that they had no plans at this time to produce any more of them. Of course, if they received enough requests through the mails we might just see a change of heart. The rig allows the butt of the knife to tilt forward slightly, which makes for a speedy draw.

Bianchi had a .45 holster on display that we found interesting. It's a multi-convertible type with a detachable flap to cover the entire butt of the weapon when out in the field. Bianchi Vice-President Richard Gerfen modeled this rig for us. He told us that it was intended for the military or police market, but we think it makes a fine rough country holster to avoid scarring up your side-arm more than you need to. You can wear it left side or right with flap or without, crossdraw or just about any way you want. One-direction snaps hold the belt flaps down real well. We liked it. For more information contact Bianchi Leather Products, 100 Calle Cortez, Temecula, CAL 92390.



"U.S. Marine, on Target with Laser." Sounds like a headline from the year 2001, but it could just as easily apply to the device we saw at the U.S. Marine Corps booth. A laser is attached to a M-16, and when "fired" at a special target, allows the trainee to learn proper sight picture without the expenditure of live rounds. "Dry firing is good training, but every round looks good. Put a live round in and it sure can change things. It can also start to cause bad habits. With this little goodie we get the best of both worlds," was the response of Sgt. G. Gregory, a Marine Corps armorer, when asked about the laser. It "fires" a laser beam (very low power) at a target equipped with "photo cells." When the beam activates one of these cells, a light shows on the target, indicating where the hit was. A "shining" example of Marine ingenuity.



This Vibra-Tek case cleaner caught our eye while it was being demonstrated at the exhibit. Made in Colorado Springs, it will handle the job of cleaning brass effectively and quickly. The base of this device is the vibration source that causes the crushed walnut shell cleaning material to apparently "flow" over, around, and through the cartridge cases. It has the big advantage of cleaning the inside of the cases, as well as out. The plastic bucket that holds the cases and the cleaning media can be simply lifted off and dumped as needed. The unit with tumbling media sells for around \$49.95. For more information contact TES Inc. Dept. SF, 2807 North Prospect, Colorado Springs, CO 80907.



Customized handguns are not new, but when they are produced by Austin Bhehlert they are certainly worth looking at. Starting out with a standard S&W Mod. 39 or 59, he removes 5/8 of an inch from the middle of the slide and heliars it back together. Heliarcing is how the patented finger groove is added. He adds S&W sights, a hooked trigger guard and a special patented "screw-on" barrel bushing. A complete action job and a set of custom Fuzzy Ferran grips are also added to the gun, which is returned to the owner completely SS.-Chromium-M-plated. Bhehlert told us that he prefers that finish because "it's got a Rockwell harness of 70 or higher and I can't scratch it. It just about wears forever." The mag. holds six and one in the chamber. Contact Austin Bhehlert for more info at 725 Lehigh Avenue, Union, NJ 07083. Phone (201) 687-3350.

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magazine. The average right-handed shooter holds the pistol grip in his right hand and the forearm in the left hand. If he wants to open the stock, work the bolt, or change magazines, he releases the pistol grip and uses his right hand. This could be fatal in combat. The right hand must remain on the pistol grip, ready to fire. From the instant the required operation is completed, the time it takes to return the right hand to the pistol grip is lost, whereas when using the left hand for the other operations, the weapon can be fired instantly. Of course, the actual time involved is small, but with most bullets travelling around 3000fps, it could be the difference between life and death. The advantage here is with the man who fires first.

Mr. Hall mentions the difference in ammo loads that can be carried between 7.62mm and 5.56mm. This is, of course, necessary in an army where the troops spray the bushes on full auto. I have used the M-16 in combat and found that control and shot placement were far superior on semi-auto. The inherent disadvantage to the smaller caliber is its lack of stopping power. Hundreds of articles in the gun magazines have hashed this out for years, especially between the advocates of big bore vs. high velocity, and no sure conclusion has been reached. However, Gen. S.L.A. Marshall, in one of his books on Vietnam, tells of a firefight where a G.I. emptied his clip (M-16) into a doped-up charlie and had to put a number of .45s in him to drop him. I believe the 7.62mm could have stopped him, with fewer rounds and further away (he fell at the G.I.'s feet). I would be interested in hearing from a Korean War veteran on the effect of the 30-06 on doped-up Koreans in a human wave assault.

I kept my M-16 clean and never had a malfunction in combat so my major contention with it lies in the area of durability. None of the new stamped receivers has the inherent toughness of the M-1 or M-14. (Of course they don't have the weight either.) I worked for some time in a base armory only one step below Depot stage maintenance. I saw several M-16s come in that had been totally destroyed. A common practice when going to the range appears to be propping your rifle up against a 2 1/2-ton truck and if the truck moves before you retrieve your rifle, the truck drives over it. When a deuce and a half drives over an M-16, very little is left to fight with. The receiver is crushed flat, the pistol grip stock and forearm are crushed and the barrel is bent. The weapon is a total loss. When a M-1 or M-14 is driven over (for some reason, not nearly as frequently), the stock is cracked or broken, the barrel is usually bent and the receiver may be sprung. If it is, it is sent to the Depot maintenance level to be straightened and can be reused.

One disadvantage that the M-16 has which the folding stock rifles (except the Car-15) do not have is the inherent weakness of the recoil buffer system in the stock. If you break the stock (very easy to do with any of the new generation of weapons, either with a butt stroke or by incorrectly assuming the prone from standing in fire and maneuver exercises), the M-16 is rendered inoperable and cannot be fired until repaired. The others, such as the Ar-18, can continue to fire if the stock is broken. In fact, the Ar-18S doesn't even have a stock.

I have never experienced any ammo problems with the Ar-18 family using U.S. ammo, although I have had trouble with Canadian ammo. I have not had any trouble with soft point ammo but that is irrelevant to combat use anyway.

Overall, I don't think the M-16 is a bad weapon. It just needs improving. It's time we did for the M-16 what the M-14 did for the M-1.

Sincerely,
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hole covers. There is a story around that he knocked out six MPs in about three seconds at Ft. Bragg. He's an amazing fighter. At six feet he weighs about 230 lbs and is called "Spike" by his team member. If you happen to print anything about the toughest hand-to-hand combat instructors, he happens to be the senior advisor for our group.

SOF: Mike, what would you say has been the military's response on the administrative level to your training program for the military?

ECHANIS: Right now the powers that be in the military do not believe that hand-to-hand combat training is needed; that it is no longer relevant. I believe, as long as there are soldiers in the field or in combat, hand-to-hand combat training will be needed.

But the thing that the brass is really overlooking is that during peacetime we are supposed to be building strength for peace by building a stronger army. Peace is maintained through the strength of our army. Peacetime is not the time to become lax. This is the time to regroup and to mentally, physically, and psychologically get prepared for any upcoming battle. The best way to maintain individual combat readiness and psychological readiness is through the method of tuning the mind and body in close quarter combatives such as the Koreans did with their Tae Kwan Do in all of the ROK army divisions. I and the members of my team feel that we need this to maintain mental and physical combat readiness. The upper echelons believe that it is not needed anymore. In fact, they are even taking away pugil stick training and other forms of hand-to-hand training because of the "violence" injury factor. But what are they going to do if it ever comes down again to actual hand-to-hand combat?

We are hoping that some of our training and development of this new system can spark a new interest. But the soldiers

of America and the other soldiers who are fighting throughout the world will remain in need of this type of a program. The brass who sit on their ass, who don't fight the fucking battles anyway, the ones calling the shots - they don't need hand-to-hand combat. So therefore, it is very easy for them to say that the soldier doesn't need hand-to-hand combat. But for those of us who are out in the field who are called upon to accomplish certain objectives or missions for these men who are sitting on their asses, we need it.

Consider the fact that the last new system of hand-to-hand combat, the O'Neil System, was developed in the 1940's. Nothing new has been added since then. In 1942 it was adapted for the U.S. Army and the Special Service Force which became the 1st Canadian/ American Special Forces. I don't think the brass should stick with a system when a better one has been developed and is available to them. Whether the brass likes it or not, the soldiers of America need it.

SOF: Mike, you mentioned earlier about a mobile training team (MTT) that you are heading up. Can you tell us something about that?

ECHANIS: At this point we really don't want to talk a whole lot about the details of what we have in mind. However, I can say it will be a hand-to-hand combat MTT available to countries which are listed by the State Department as eligible to receive this type of training.

S.O.F.: Can you name any specific areas that you might be going into?

ECHANIS: I could but won't. We are negotiating with several governments and I'd rather keep it confidential until such time as we sign a contract.

S.O.F.: In your book, you write about hand-to-hand combat for soldiers; do you think it has civilian applications?

ECHANIS: Most certainly. It is just a simple development of a manner of self defense in the knife book. A knife to me, is one of the best and most logical forms of self defense. Even if you know stick fighting or if you are a black belt in Karate or if you are a black belt in Judo, or if you're just a "tough Jose" in this or that, the moment that a knife has entered the picture is a moment where even a woman or a very small man becomes lethal. These techniques utilized in their basic form by any size man or woman, in an actual self defense situation are the most effective method of self defense.

S.O.F.: Then you have the moral, ethical, and legal right to use a knife?

ECHANIS: Ask any woman who has been raped and I believe that deep down inside she will be able to tell you that rather than be raped again, she would use that knife. Now we are not necessarily condoning knifing people, but we are stating that it is a realistic self-defense system.

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continued from page 14
of all Africans is the slitting open of
stomachs, followed closely, of course, by
that old standby, castration. Women
aren't simply raped; they're raped to
death, and Mr. Hitt spares us no adjectives
in describing the stages and states
of the dead and dying.

How can one be sure about this book?
Do we label it reprehensible? If it purports
to be a serious work about the activities
of mercenaries in Africa and the warfare
and politics of that continent, it deserves
the epithet. If Mr. Hitt produced this book
with tongue firmly in cheek, deliberately
giving us a fantasy, we must call it outstanding.



Knife Self-Defense, by Michael D. Echanis, 104 pgs., over 350 photos. Published by Ohara Publications, Inc., Burbank, California, \$4.95. Reviewed by Art Gitlin.

The art of knife fighting is one which everyone seems to think he knows a lot about or believes there's "nothing to it." There are several books on the subject in print, each claiming to be or implying that it is the final word on knife fighting. This writer has studied the martial arts for 15 years, much of which was spent studying the many forms and uses of the knife. I have never found a knife book that I felt really covered the subject thoroughly. Recently, the manuscript of a new knife fighting book was sent to SOF for evaluation and review. A somewhat wary eye was cast upon the manuscript as this reporter sat down to read "another knife fighting text." Well, that wary eye quickly became riveted to the pages of what can only be called the modern classic of hand-to-hand combat/knife fighting books.

It contains page after page of effective techniques, designed to permit step-by-step learning of strategy and tactical concepts, rather than "tricks" or generalities that when closely examined reveal little.

The many photos are clear, sharp, and uncluttered. There are enough of them to make cloudy, longwinded explanations unnecessary. The text was written expressly for the advanced martial artist; however, these parts also contain enough information of general interest to avoid becoming boring or confusing to the average reader. Likewise, the author sometimes addresses himself specifically to the "special warfare" soldier with the same satisfactory result.

That the author can address with equal ease and knowledge these two distinctly different types of modern warriors comes as no great surprise. Michael D. Echanis is a man deeply steeped in both traditions which is clear to even the casual reader. Echanis has appeared on the cover of *Black Belt Magazine* and his Hwarangdo-

based, hand-to-hand system has been called by them, "... one of the most effective systems of hand-to-hand combat in the modern world."

The "system" revealed in this book was conceptualized, developed, and refined by Echanis and a small group of hand-to-hand combat experts from the elite of the U.S. military services-Green Berets, SEALs, Rangers, and Marine Force Recon. They've all seen action at first hand and at close quarters.

It shows. The techniques, having a few frills ending with the final stopping of the opponent, are easy to understand and with some practice the concepts lend themselves well to personal readaptation and recombining of individual bits into "new" techniques.

Ohara Publications, Inc., publishers of *Black Belt Magazine*, the professional journal of the U.S. Martial Arts, have decided that some parts of this book would be just too dangerous in the hands of persons not of advanced Martial Arts "rank," or members of special warfare units who need this training. They will offer the general public only the section entitled, "Knife Self-Defense," in which Echanis describes several methods, strategies, and techniques of unarmed self-defense against a knife-wielding opponent. (The other sections of this manuscript are knife fighting and knife throwing for combat.)

The book section offered by Ohara on self-defense is, by itself, excellent. It belongs in the hands of every policeman, security officer, city dweller, traveller, military person, adventurer, and potential victim. Echanis states (and I agree) that even a small person, when armed with a knife and some knowledge of its use, becomes more than a match for the 250 pound hand-to-hand expert who is unarmed. That is not to say that the knife-wielder always wins. But keep in mind that every strike, cut, or stab of that knife is potentially lethal. I firmly believe that the best defense against a knife is a 230 gr. .45 caliber bullet at 890 F.P.S. between the eyes of the attacker. However, this is not always possible or even appropriate. We are, after all, talking about unarmed self-defense. The techniques in this book, once mastered, could spell the difference between life and death for the unarmed defender. I recommend this book as it is the best book on hand-to-hand combat I've ever seen. In fact, I could even say that it's the only one.

NOTE: The expanded book containing the other two sections, knife fighting and knife throwing for combat, will be made available to certified Martial Arts Instructors, police officials, and SPEC-WAR military personnel approximately three or four months after *Knife Self-Defense* is released. Keep your eye on SOF for its release date.



PERSONAL DEFENSE (160 pp.) by Blackie Collins and Chris McLoughlin. Published by Blackie Collins and Chris McLoughlin, P.O. Box 18595, Atlanta, Georgia 30326 (1977). Reviewed by Art Gitlin.

Self-defense is a subject much written about, and rightly so. For what could be dearer to your heart than being able to defend yourself against those whose hearts are not pure? (And dear reader, we both know that anyone who would attack us, could not possibly be pure of heart.)

An interesting point about most books on self-defense is that they cover only one or sometimes two or three areas of the subject, i.e., unarmed fighting, or defensive handguns or knives, etc. *Personal Defense* is unique in that it covers a wide range of subjects that relate to self-defense, such as telephone harassment, dogs, firearms, attitudes, common items used as weapons, etc. The general quality of the book itself is very good.

Written in a conversational, easy-to-read style, it contains many high quality photos, some of which offer step-by-step instructions on "how to" handle certain situations. Most of these are very good. They are simple and directly to the point. However, pages 152 and 153 show a sequence of a knife take-away in which the attacker has his left arm around the defender's throat from behind and a knife resting against the defender's chest.

It looked somewhat "risky," to say the least, so I instructed a few of my *Wu-Su* knife-fighting students to try it on me and with each other. Even when the attacker was one of the two first-day students in the class, the defender got badly "cut" every time. This is not to say that this technique can not be made to work; I do say, however, that trying to learn *how*

from this book is not fully effective.

The next few pages also offered me some doubtful moments. In reference to disarming a gunman, it says: "You can move faster than the gun can be fired." The photo shows the defender approximately five feet from the gunman with his hands raised. The idea is to slap or push the muzzle of the gun out of line and then beat the attacker senseless. The catch is that the gunman only needs to move his finger 1/4 to 1/2 inch in order to fire that gun, while the defender must move his hand approximately four feet in order to move the gun out of line.

Over the past 15 years in which I've taught many policemen and security personnel self-defense as well as thousands of civilians, I've always taught (and been taught) that unless you are convinced that the man is actually going to shoot you (rather than just rob you), don't try to take on a gunman. The money in your wallet just isn't worth getting shot over. Remember him well, and when you can, stack the odds in your favor to put things right.

Another area of general disagreement I have with this book has to do with the knife-fighting section. The authors say that the grip with blade extended from the bottom of the fist is next to worthless. Personally, I find it to be the best position for deep cutting and in a life-or-death situation, is there any other kind?

In the martial arts section prejudice rears its head and a partisan stand is taken. The authors state that of all the martial arts, "American Karate" is the absolute best for self-defense. They even go so far as to say that *Kung-Fu* (properly called *Wu-Su*) is just about worthless in a real-time situation.

The best way to determine which art is the best has been a subject of discussion (sometimes very heated) among martial artists for literally 1000s of years. To date, no one has found a way to separate the man from the style, and until one is found, I think that it must remain a

matter of personal preference. With all due respect to Joe Corley (a master instructor), who is mentioned in the book, I'm sure he would agree that as long as he had a competent instructor and the desire to be among the very best, it wouldn't much matter what style he studied.

Putting these and a few other points to the side, I found *Personal Defense* to be a really worthwhile book for anyone who feels he could be attacked, especially in an urban environment. Generally speaking, this is a dynamite book and I recommend it to you highly.

Information in this book that just isn't available in other books of its kind includes the dos and don'ts of travelling alone, being out at night and avoiding muggings or robbery, to name only some of them. Good commonsense advice. In the dog section, there is even a discussion of how to avoid being attacked by a strange dog. The section on rape is excellent and the section on attitudes alone makes the book worth reading.

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continued from page 6

So, if you have access to any of that old corrosive stuff, feel free to shoot it in your squirtgun or pistol. It will work fine, but... don't fail to completely strip the weapon and thoroughly clean it as soon as possible after firing, to avoid damage. A tip to minimize the chore is to fire a magazine of non-corrosive ball ammo through the gun after you have finished shooting the corrosive stuff, then clean the weapon in the normal manner. Much of the corrosive residue can be expelled from the weapon by utilizing this trick, thereby making the cleaning chore a little more bearable.

And don't forget... Don't attach that "snuffer" when you are shooting any ammo older than 1950, or be prepared to pay the price!

Mr. Chuck Taylor
contributing Editor
SOF

Dear Sir:

I read with great interest the two articles of yours published in the September '77 edition of SOF; however, I must take exception to your article, "M-16: Terror or Toy."

I served with the 1st Recon. Bn., 1st Mar. Div. in I Corps, RVN, and as TO&E weapon was issued and did carry the M-16A1 Automatic Rifle. In reading be-

tween the lines in your article, I have in my own mind found what may have been part of the problem with your dislike of the M-16 rifle, that being that you were probably trained with the M-14, and naturally a damn sight more comfortable with it, but I would like to comment about my experiences with the weapon. I was trained in boot camp, and in ITR with the M-14 rifle, and carried it when I served with the 2/27 (2nd Bn., 27th Marine Regiment, 5th Marine Division), but when still in training prior to assignment to an infantry unit, we were well trained with the M-16. We also used the weapon extensively in the staging units (where Marines were given a month's final training prior to shipment to RVN). While in the Nam, I carried the M-16A1 rifle along with 36 magazines, a feat which I wouldn't have attempted with a M-14. With the exception of the times where no current weapons could be carried in specific areas, and in those areas or on any SOG type operations such as Provisional Recon, Sting Ray, etc., we carried Thompsons, M-2s, or AKs, but in all other operations the 16 was carried, and I only experienced one malfunction, and that was because I borrowed some magazines which had too many rounds in them (21), which is not too bad a record.

After our scoped M-14 rifles were re-

placed by Rem M-700s for snipers, we had a hell of a time finding any M-14s that hadn't had the stocks sawed off to make them more portable in the bush. To be truthful, we found the CAR-15 an even better weapon for the majority of our uses.

I can recall very few instances where an NVA or VC failed to go down from a body hit from a 16, but undoubtedly those instances did occur, but I know of instances when the good hits from the M-14 failed to stop people immediately, just as hits from the M-60, 41G, the .45, or point blank shots from a M-79 didn't knock 'em down, so there are exceptions to any rule or any situation.

As I said, I read and enjoyed both your articles, and although I didn't agree with your article on the 16, I respect your opinion, as you earned your right to bitch about the weapon and the round, and since you are in a position to have your opinions published—that makes you the winner on the deal.

As you are probably aware, they are developing a new type round for the 16 which will supposedly be comparable to the penetration which you get with the NATO round, so how about scrounging up some of that ammo and doing a field test on it for your column? I would sure like to see something published also on the FN/FAL, and CEMTE rifles, as I don't seem to be able to locate the amount of material which I would like on those and other foreign power weapons.

I must totally agree with your comments on the training and skill needed with an auto weapon, and am having to live with the misconceptions which come about because of false assumptions and lack of understanding in the use of auto weapons in the Police Department where I am employed.

The administration is totally petrified when the discussion of issue of auto weapons comes up, so much so that when the idea is pushed, they get downright mad about it, so we get along as best as we can. To compensate for this, I teach a large number of police officers from departments all over this area in the proper and plausible aspects of auto weapons in hopes that when they become administrators, they will not be as adverse to these types of weapons. I also shoot the various types of auto weapons which I have available, the M-16, the M-14, the Thompson, the Sten, and one folding stocked AK-47 on a weekly basis as my ammo supply holds out, or should I say, when my suppliers of the ammo don't hold out on me.

Looking forward to your articles in the future and to possibly hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Roger T. La Rue
Field Sergeant
Olathe Police Department
Olathe, Kansas 66061

Chuck Taylor replies:

Dear Sergeant La Rue:

I appreciate your letter regarding your experiences with the caliber 5.56mm M16A1 rifle and read it with great interest. As I stated in "FULL AUTO," I welcome the experiences of others, since it seems that nothing is so absolute as to be without exception.

Primarily for this reason, I make no attempt to dispute you, as you too earned the right to your opinions in combat, which as far as I am concerned, is the ultimate test. Being a veteran of many firefights, it is obvious to me that the very fact that you are alive and present to even voice your opinions is ample illustration of your prowess with weapons.

In regard to my reasons for disliking the M16, or perhaps more correctly, the CAR-15 weapons-systems in its entirety, I can tell you that I qualified as an expert with the M16 with little more difficulty than with the M14. I was also trained thoroughly in the use of both weapons-systems, and in addition was responsible for the training and qualification of well over a thousand troops with each, prior to their deployment to Vietnam.

The military should deal with statistic probabilities in order to evaluate the performance of anything in combat, although they do not always do so. I have never claimed that the M14 was perfect, for as we both know, there is no such thing. We can merely attempt to create the best possible weapon for the job. On a general basis, the M14 is a much superior battle rifle, mostly because of the fact that it is chambered for a more potent cartridge (7.62mm NATO/.308) than the M16. Actually, were I given a choice of battle rifles, I would choose the CETME, FN/FAL, or AR10 over the M14 due to their more modern design. However, please note that all are 7.62mm! I too have made one-shot kills on humans with the 5.56mm, but on an overall evaluative basis, I found that the 7.62mm was a superior stopper by far, bucked the wind much more efficiently on long shots, and was a much better penetrator under typical combat conditions. Putting it in another way, if one were to shoot 10 enemy troopers with the M16 and six of them were stopped with one shot to the torso area, while the M14 stopped eight of them with one shot to the same area, the M14 is obviously superior.

I also witnessed quite a few occasions where the more potent calibers failed to put the adversary down, but upon serious examination, all proved to be the result of a poor or marginal shot in which a non-vital area of the anatomy was hit, at least initially. I can quite honestly say that I never saw a case where the 7.62mm did not do the job... as long as the job was done properly in the marksmanship department. I cannot say the same for the 5.56mm.

The .45 ACP also has an excellent reputation for stopping power which is well justified, in my opinion, whether used in the M1911 pistol, M3/M3A1 SMG, or the Thompson. The NVA trooper I shot at approximately 30 meters with the .45 folded immediately, while the one I hit with a .357 Magnum ran 60 meters before expiring. I guess it all boils down to the old saying about "one man's pride is another man's poison!"

Best Regards,
Chuck Taylor
Automatic Weapons Editor



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tol were waiting for the invaders. Within a brief period, gunfire could be heard from all over town. The only two casualties taken by the mercenary force—a black and a white soldier killed and one black mercenary wounded—occurred during the initial phase.

Although the attackers were able to neutralize several defensive positions, opposition strengthened the nearer they approached the presidential abode of President Kerekou. Even the most sanguine invader had to concede that this reconquest had been well planned.

Barely two hours after the mercenaries had landed, their leader gave the order to pull back. Within the next 30 minutes, the mercs straggled back to the airport. The pilot of the jet wasted no time in taking off, leaving behind at least a dozen of the invaders, who had been cut off in other parts of Cotonou.

Several facts emerged from the invasion. While President Kerekou admitted later that he had knowledge of the invasion, he was not certain when it would take place. He had maintained his troops in a state of alert for at least a fortnight, which is one of the reasons why the aircraft had been able to land without problems; his security forces, though prepared, were nevertheless initially taken by surprise.

It is also interesting that the mercenaries left behind them large supplies of weapons and ammunition, all of it neatly stacked alongside the control tower at the airport. Among these crates was found a complete list of names of all the mercenaries.

This list has since been handed to a select committee of the Organization of African Unity for distribution among member states. The names of these individuals have been recorded and should any of them try to enter an African state, they will be arrested and tried. In most black states they are likely to be executed.

Of the mercenaries left in Benin, only one, an African of indeterminate origin, was captured. He was tried by a military tribunal shortly thereafter and shot.

The rest have disappeared. Some are said to have entered the Republic of Togo, a state with whom Benin has parlous relations. Others are believed to have been hidden by members of Cotonou's white community and eventually ferreted out of the country with consular help.

While the Benin incident can be regarded as the first full-scale mercenary invasion of any country in Africa, the use of mercenaries is not. Mercenaries, largely of French origin, are active today in a number of black states, the majority

of them on the west coast of the continent.

French mercenaries are known to be active and to have achieved considerable success with rebel movements operating against Cuban and MPLA forces in Cabinda, north of Angola. Like the Benin group, these Dogs of War have some type of connection with the doyen of French mercenaries active in Africa at the present time, Bob Denard. It will be recalled that Denard and 30 of his henchmen were responsible less than two years ago for the overthrow of the Comores Government in the Indian Ocean.

The new Comores Government has shown itself distinctly more amenable to French ties than the last, which also had strong Marxist links.

For while there are not many reports of the activities of French—or, for that matter, any other—mercenaries, it seems clear that the Benin operation is not the last to be launched with the collusion of hired European guns.

Already there are those who have mooted the idea of removing President Idi Amin of Uganda with the help of these Dogs of War...



Don't shoot. Give him time. We need information. Back at headquarters they'll be pleased. What about the green from below? The aircraft went overhead, the 'chopper staying to the rear. Sensible. Ask the 'plane to do an attack on the thicket. A roar of engines. A dark cross. Flame spitting from the wings. Like hail. Branches breaking from the trees. Then the aircraft was gone, climbing away clawing at the sky.

Silence once more. Just the buzzing of the aero engines. Instructions. The radio came to life. "Sweep the thicket then call out to the wounded enemy to surrender." Right. "Let's go." Fan out, don't bunch, weapons at the ready. In-to the thicket. Stooping low, the foliage thick. The small clearing charred and chaotic. Bodies lying motionless in grotesque positions.

Three men forward to search the bodies. The others keeping watch. No more trouble from them. Leave their equipment, don't touch. Sweep past, shout "Surrender". The enemy behind the rock crawled out, sat, with hands clasped on head. Search him. No other weapons. Yes. One grenade. Take it away.

Speak on the radio. Direct men up on to sides of the bank. The 'chopper's going to land! Giant beats getting closer. Then down in the clearing. Sand stinging the eyes and exposed flesh. The plane still circling above. Engine off. Dying whine, then still. Go back for the bodies. Collect the weapons and equipment. Captured enemy is wounded in the thighs. Needs medical attention. Not enough space for all. The whole patrol will wait behind. Another 'chopper will come for them. The aircraft stays behind as comforting assistance. We wait.

ways and means of successfully concealing hard-to-discover caches. Although there is little evidence of political organization of those making these individual decisions, there is no question that these decisions have been made by people who have come to hard political conclusions—and who to some degree have had the means to carry out expensive personal decisions, frequently under most discreet circumstances.

It is very hard to determine the extent of this quiet "movement." However, gun purchases continue to increase, in reaction to criminal activity and to political harassment (in that apparent order), and in direct response to the economic difficulties of the U.S. Interest in "gun burials" has increased so that a number of firms have seen fit to try to exploit an apparent commercial advantage, and there is a continually increasing reader interest in the subject.

Into this broad framework, a reconstructed NRA marches, obedient to the express orders of an aroused membership who, although perhaps unaware of the complete situation, desire an effective political organization to best insure being heard—heard concerning deep and bitter grievances which have been building for the better part of the 20th century, and particularly for the past 20 years.

Leaders of the gun owners have been comparing the situation to that of the black people in 1859, following the historic Dred Scott decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. In that decision, a major contributor to the Civil War of 1860-65, blacks were held to be property and not entitled to civil rights. The comparison is an emotional one: just as blacks in 1859 were told that as citizens with rights they did not exist, so today gun owners—keenly aware of clear Federal and State-

level Constitutional guarantees of gun ownership and use—are being boldly told that no such rights exist... and that they will have to knuckle under to laws decided by a governing elite. There is growing evidence that this is not being accepted.

It is very difficult to tell what lies ahead: it appears that the American middle and working classes are beginning to foster a basically revolutionary sentiment, aggravated by increasing governmental intrusions into their private lives. Judging from various signs, it would appear that their sentiment is a rebirth of the general ideals of the (American) Revolution of 1776, however overworked such a comparison may seem.

Many questions remain to be answered in the next several years, but it would seem that the gun owners represented by the National Rifle Association—indeed, after May 21, 1977, who ARE the National Rifle Association—have opted for at least one major, serious effort to gain redress of grievances through the political process. SOF guesstimates that this effort may last approximately three years, more or less, depending on a variety of factors. The attempt to gain redress and a settlement of the issue may or may not be successful.

During this period, however, there is no question that the quiet, steady acquisition of arms by the general public is going to continue unabated and very possibly accelerated by the ways in which government reacts. This pattern of behavior has been established independently of the National Rifle Association's influence, has been ongoing since at least 1965, and is unlikely to be depressed unless NRA efforts to resolve the gun issue are wholly successful.

If they are not, the United States in the 1980s will likely be a powder keg waiting for a spark.

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It was this same spirit that I found time and again when I came into contact with Israeli fighting men. They knew exactly what would be required of them should the enemy strike: the attitude of all was typified by a youngster of about 20 who wore a single pip on his shoulder. Patting his M-16, he smiled and for a moment said nothing. Then cocking his head sideways, he said in broken English: "I like they come. Then I show them something. All of them." He meant it; it was them or him.

From every vantage point in the Golan, and from Israeli positions facing the Egyptian armies in Sinai, it is possible to see the brilliant white roofs of United Nations Emergency Force positions straddling no-man's-land between the two cease-fire lines—the Israelis on one side and the Syrians on the other. It is the duty of the UN to maintain stability in the area, although any Israeli will ask you, before commenting on their effectiveness, to look at the 1967 and 1973 track record of the United Nations before forming an opinion.

Although there are thousands of UN troops in Israel at any one time—mostly Scandinavian and Canadian—and one is constantly seeing white trucks and cars with the letters UN daubed on roofs and doors, relations with the Israeli authorities have not been exemplary.

At the fortified post in Golan I met one

of the Israeli officers who spends part of his day liaising with the UN post nearest him. Each day at lunchtime he returns to his own people for food. Apparently, although UN elements live a life of luxury that compares with behind-the-lines American conditions in Vietnam, their brief does not include offering a single meal to the one man with whom they work closest in attempting to achieve a lasting peace.

Speak about the UN presence to some of the Israeli troops up at the front and most will open the corners of their mouths and deposit a thin sliver of saliva on the ground.

In contrast, by general consensus, the Americans are different. The United States presence which is concentrated in Sinai has the sole objective of monitoring any movement of troops on both sides through the use of extremely sophisticated "sensors" buried in the ground. This electronic equipment is delicate enough to detect a small group of camels walking across the desert 15 miles away.

Should the Egyptians decide to move a couple of divisions of troops and 600 tanks across the Canal into Sinai, the Israelis will be warned immediately. If the Israelis were to do the same, President Anwar Sadat's deputy in the region will have the news within minutes.

Israeli officers on the Golan expressed the view a number of times that a similar monitoring system was essential

for the purpose of maintaining the status quo along the Syrian front. Present controls, which are largely visual, they felt, are inadequate.

Like the UN units, the Americans in the desert live well. And they have brought a few of their comforts with them; Sinai now boasts its first desert-sand golf course and enough ice-cream-making machines to supply the entire Middle East.

And after the banter and conjecture, serious talk. Most people in Israel concede that another Middle East war is inevitable. Speak to the average Israeli, however, and you get a dozen different viewpoints about when it will happen. The older generation is optimistic; the youth often take a more hawk-like approach.

The timing of the new conflict ranges from early 1978 and extends to about five years. Not many people give much more time, especially now that the Afro-Asian bloc has control of the UN General Assembly.

Israeli observers also maintain that unrest in the Egyptian Army could cause problems in the future, especially since Sadat's economy has gone haywire in spite of huge injections of American aid.

In readiness for the coming struggle, Israeli authorities have accelerated their civil defense program, and although the program is subtle, the evidence is manifest.

During my visit there were advertisements inserted in the Press telling housewives to lay in a week's supply of nonperishable food. There are also nightly television programs displaying the ideal home shelter, complete with stocks of food and water, fire extinguishers and equipment for burrowing out from under wrecked buildings or debris-covered shelters.

The country has been divided into three civil defense zones. The first is the belt of land (six miles wide) along the frontiers, containing border settlements, each with an average population of 200 to 300 people. There are about 20 of these villages near the Lebanese border, another 20 around the Golan Heights and about 45 along the Jordan river. On the Sinai front, population is sparse. The civilian population in these areas has been integrated into the army's forward defenses. Bunkers, army posts, and connecting trenches have been built in the villages and weapons supplied to civilians include mobile guns, heavy artillery, armored vehicles, and anti-tank and SAM missiles. The fortified settlements are intended to serve as a second line of defense, if enemy tanks manage to break through the army's front lines (as in 1973) or if airborne commandos attempt to seize control of the main lines of communication to the front.

The second civil defense zone contains towns and villages 15 to 20 miles from the front, within range of heavy artillery. It

includes such towns as Nahariya on the Mediterranean coast (with a population of 30,000), Kiryat Shmona in Galilee (16,000), Tiberias on the sea of Galilee (26,000), and Beit Shean in the Jordan Valley (13,000).

Here top priority has been given to building enough shelters for the entire civilian population as well as fortified buildings to house emergency services, food and water stores, and emergency power units.

The third zone includes the three largest cities, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, and Haifa, and the more densely populated areas along the coast. Since 1973, there has been a scramble to build shelters, and there are now enough of them to hold 3/4s of the population.

Israel now has 20,000 private and 5,000 public shelters for its population of 3.4 million. The public shelters cost \$15 million and another \$15 million a year is to be invested.

In the event of a new war, the Israelis expect that seaborne and airborne terrorist squads would be sent to attack the main cities. The army's civil defense units and the 13,000-strong police force (particularly its border guards) would be primarily responsible for combating this kind of terrorism.

The border guards have been given special training in combat in built-up areas. In wartime the police would be equipped with armored vehicles small enough to maneuver in urban streets.

This division of labor between the army and the police has been a source of

in-fighting, since both are short of manpower. The police want to assume command of the civil defense troops which are divided into two units: one for guarding urban areas and the other for rescue duties.

The Israelis are also preparing in earnest against the possibility of chemical warfare. A factory has been built to manufacture gas-masks according to an Israeli design developed from American and West German models. Some 35 million gas-masks have been produced and distributed to 2,500 local stations. The Israelis have also produced protective cradles for babies too small to wear gas-masks.

Through all this Israel has become remarkably self-sufficient in the supply of weapons, including aircraft, artillery, and naval vessels. Some of this hardware is now exported.

Astonishingly, South Africa has become the biggest customer of an Israeli arms industry that exports jet fighters, missiles, missile boats, one of the world's most popular submachine guns, and—perhaps most valuable of all—technological know-how.

Israel has \$100 million worth of orders from South Africa, which has problems buying arms elsewhere, because of the UN weapons embargo against its government.

South African orders include both weapons made in Israel and those produced in South Africa under Israeli license.

The Israeli Uzi submachine gun is now produced in quantity in South Africa,

although the Israelis say the license was transferred from a Belgian manufacturer.

The catalog of Israel's rapidly expanding arms industry offers many items to foreign nations, including the following:

- Kfir jet fighter. Speed mach 2.3 (1,500 plus mph), single engine, single-seat air-superiority fighter. Carries two 30mm cannon and two Shafir air-to-air missiles. Israeli advertising boasts it can turn a tighter circle than any opposing fighter. Price: about \$4.5 million. Offered to many Third World nations.

- Reshev missile boat. It is 188 feet long, weighs 415 tons, has a speed of 36 knots, carries six to eight Gabriel sea-to-sea missile launchers, two rapid-firing 76mm guns and a crew of 39. Costs about \$10 million. According to American sources, six Reshev missile boats, carrying seven launchers for Israeli-made Gabriel sea-to-sea missiles, are being built by Israeli shipyards for the South African navy.

- Dabur patrol boat. Similar to U.S. Swift patrol boats used in Vietnam, it is 65 feet long and weighs 32 tons. Six of these speedy ships are being built at the Sandhoek-Austral Shipyard in Durban, South Africa, under license from Israel. Four more are planned.

- Arava STOL transport plane. Designed in Israel, it is a simple rugged twin-engine propjet which can operate from a 1,000-foot field. It carries seven passengers, or 12,500 pounds of cargo and by adding weapons pods can be utilized as a ground-attack aircraft. The cost is \$700,000. Sales include 13 to Ecuador, 6 to Bolivia, 25 to El Salvador

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● **Shafir air-to-air missile.** This heat-seeking missile for air-to-air combat is described by American defense experts as a copy of U.S. Raytheon AIM 9D/G, the Sidewinder. Israeli advertising says the Shafir has "extensive battle experience with overall kill ratio of about 60%."

● **Gabriel sea-to-sea missile.** This radar-guided missile has a range up to 22 miles. Israel developed the Gabriel after a Russian missile sank an Israeli destroyer following the Six Day War of 1967. Sold to South Africa, Argentina, Singapore. Cost: \$91,000 each, without warhead.

In the long term though, the Israelis will be masters of their own destiny.

Interviews, briefings with military officers, and observations of Israeli forces in the field indicate clearly two aspects of the nation's defense posture.

The "smart" of early Arab successes, in the October 1973 Yom Kippur War, coupled to surprises and unexpected Arab efficiency with sophisticated weapons, still rankles proud Israelis and makes them determined that no such situation will occur again.

There is a continuing need for arms help from the outside, with the U.S. as the principal supplier—and an accompanying worry that what are considered vital weapons will not be forthcoming fast enough in event of a new Arab adventure.

Military officers generally concede their forces were caught asleep by Egypt and Syria, at the start of the 1973 war. They also gave credit to the Egyptians for devising a way to take advantage of the element of surprise. The Egyptians, it is said, attacked what had been Israel's two strongest arms—the air and tank forces. They did so with great initial success.

There is little question that Israeli forces are more alert today. More important, they have changed their entire defense doctrine. The air force has counter-weapons—tank fire and artillery—to diminish the effectiveness of Egyptian missile fire. And tank forces will no longer operate independently as they did with great success until the 1973 War. They are now part of integrated tank-infantry-artillery teams, also used by U.S. and NATO forces.

The main problem today, as the Israelis see it, is the availability of sufficient sophisticated weapons and the money to pay for them. Also they view with despair U.S. sales of any weapons to any Arab nation. "Every one is an enemy of ours," is the word of all military or political officials encountered in the country.

Generally, Israel can provide from internal sources all small arms and ammunition, most artillery ammunition, all signal and electronics equipment. It is public knowledge that Israel is also

manufacturing its own main battle tank, the Merkava (chariot). A revolutionary combination 56-ton tank and armored personnel carrier, it has a crew of four and carries up to 10 infantry men. It is armed with the standard Israeli-built 105mm main gun and its armor plating allegedly not only stops AP rounds but U.S. and Soviet anti-tank missiles. Israel now uses everything from modern U.S. M-60s to rehabilitated Russian tanks captured from Egypt and Sinai.

Aircraft engines, however, are an item Israel must get from the outside. And U.S. F-16s are what are needed most at this time.

Israel would like to get up to 300 F-16s; the first segment as complete planes and the rest comprising mostly components manufactured in America but with some parts built in Israel and the entire plane assembled in Israel. Opposition has been expressed in the United States and among U.S. NATO allies to the latter Israeli desire—mostly for fear that low Israeli labor costs will have a long-range negative effect on licenses held by NATO allies for F-16 parts.

The Israelis, however, are seeking to develop a viable aircraft industry and see the license to make some U.S. F-16 parts as vital to this industry.

"It is in the U.S. interest that we be partly self-sufficient in providing arms for ourselves," an Israeli officer said, "but if we don't get a license to make some F-16 parts, our air industry will disappear."

In pushing for new and modern weapons the Israelis never mention nuclear arms. They don't like to discuss the subject, even when the reported exist-

tence of a nuclear arms plant in the Negev Desert's Dimona area is mentioned. While it seems clear that some Israeli nuclear weapons do exist, the standard government response is limited to, "We will never be the first to use nuclear weapons."

"However, if the Arabs produce them, we will too. What we need are conventional weapons—to avoid a war if possible, or to win it if one comes," said one IDF authority.

One thing is clear. Every move made by the military or the civilian government in Jerusalem must of necessity stress preparation for war every day of Israel's life.

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Though something which does no permanent damage to an attacker may seem too gentle, any weapon which can cool multiple assailants, resulting in only modest hassles with the law, has its virtues. In the days when going armed was as regular a thing for me as smoking, I almost invariably carried a canister of gas—right along with my lockblade folding knife and my gun. At the respective prices of \$9.95 and \$12.95, U.S., Chemical Shield is hard to beat as an ace-in-the-hole.

As this is written, a variety of anti-gunners recently completed a much publicized handgun turn-in program in several major cities around the United States. Aside from cap pistols, the results of the much vaunted program were considerably less promising than the guns-are-bad folks wanted. In Chicago, less than 60 real guns were turned in throughout the program. In light of other recent defeats suffered by the anti-gunners, two things are evident. It would be too easy for American handgunners to become complacent and relax. Also, it would seem obvious that despite the moaning of professional anti-gunners, the vast majority of Americans do not want gun control and certainly don't see banning or surrendering handguns as an answer to crime. But hopefully, handgunners have learned not to think their guns are secure and will keep fighting. And, as far as the hungry-for-a-phoney-issue politicians go, it seems they'll just never learn.



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continued from page 12

armed and often crippled, the man was at Bowie's mercy. Much legend and fancy have been attached to factual information about Bowie, but nearly all sources agree on the point of his technique.

Your book covers just about every phase of knife fighting imaginable, and I believe it to be the best work on the subject since Styers published his book in 1952. I think your techniques are simple, effective, and fully operational, unlike many other examples of techniques that I have seen.

I also liked your emphasis on the Bowie knife. I have always claimed, and still do, that the Bowie knife, with about a nine inch blade, or slightly larger if one prefers, is much more effective as a weapon and general utility tool than the dagger or stiletto that is still popular with many soldiers. In the Marine Corps, we were instructed in the Styers method, using the KaBar fighting knife, which is for all practical purposes a Bowie knife. The clipped point of a Bowie knife is also better in that it makes a backhand slash deeper, makes a more wicked wound in a thrust, and creates a slash by the natural action of the wrist.

In short, I would like to say that your book is a masterpiece. Good work!

George Kalishevich, Coaldale, Pa.

A. Thank you for your kind words. I have used your name, rather than initials, here so that our readers can watch for your book. It sounds like a "cut above" the usual sensationalized accounts of Bowie and his times. Most of the stories about him have no more substance than the tin-prop Bowie that Alan Ladd used in the action scenes of **The Iron Mistress** (this prop is now in the collection of George Cooper).

A nine-inch Bowie is a truly devastating weapon but too cumbersome for everyday wear, which is why I usually recommend it only for home defense in anti-gun states and countries. However, some people prefer a Bowie as a jungle knife rather than a machete or bolo. For this purpose a nine to 11-inch Bowie is about ideal. In my collection I have a one-of-a-kind nine-inch Bowie made in 1967 by John Nelson Cooper. Whoever originally ordered it requested that it be patterned after the rare First Ranger Battalion knife of World War II. This massive Cooper Bowie is made from 1/2-inch stock (yes, I said one-half-inch stock); it has a solid steel handle with integral knuckle bow. It is not light and quick like my G.W. Stone 11-inch Mexican Bowie, but it is practically indestructible. I saw one Cooper Bowie, not as massive as this one, that had been used as a jungle knife in Thailand for several years without appreciable wear.

I have nothing against stilettos, though one should remember their limitations. In fact, my next book will feature stilettos and folding knives, as well as stick fighting and handcuffing techniques. In other words, the next book will be geared toward the policeman and civilian rather than the combat soldier. The stick fighting techniques illustrated in it, whether using a baton, blackjack, yawara stick, or police flashlight, will be simple and direct, as in the knife fighting book. I never understood why most martial arts

books show only complicated multi-step maneuvers that are practically impossible to learn from a book. Besides, as you point out, most weapon encounters (unlike "empty-hand" fighting) are settled with the first or second strike. Perhaps more important than knowing series of complicated exchanges is being able to set up the situation in advance so that it is to your advantage, plus the ability to get your weapon into action fast (the celebrated quick draw of the Argentinian knife-wielding *gaucho* or the Japanese *samurai* swordsman). For example, if a policeman interrogates a suspect with his left side toward him and a baton concealed by his right leg, all he needs to do is give him a rap across the shins if the suspect becomes unruly.

Q. Is there really any advantage to stainless steel? If you wipe off a high carbon steel knife after each use isn't that good enough?

G.C., Joplin, Mo.

A. High carbon steel will stain and rust with use, no matter what. This will affect the value of the knife in resale, a serious matter with expensive custom knives. To some, the marginal increase in edge-holding with certain types of high carbon steel is worth the problems. If you feel you must have a high carbon steel knife, look for one that has enough chromium content to be at least rust resistant.

Beware of knives that merely call themselves rust resistant. For example, I purchased an Ek "Utility" knife for a price higher than a Buck or Gerber utility knife or even a Randall Model #10. This particular knife was made by Gary Ek, son of the famous John Ek, who has made knives for servicemen since World War II. This model has been in their line at least since those days. The Ek line is advertised as rust resistant, yet this knife managed to rust even in a dehumidified safety vault. Since I was not scheduled for a hunt for several months, I let my wife use the knife in the kitchen (never putting it in a dishwasher or subjecting it to any other abuse), and the blade was covered with stains and rust within two days. All this is added to the other drawbacks of an Ek knife: imperfect grind lines, a big, clunky handle, and an unattractive sheath. This knife does cut fairly well, but it should not sell for more than \$15.

I believe the best all around steels are 440C and 154CM. These are stainless (as best we can define that term) and have a high carbon content for superior edge-holding. These steels are as good as any for utility and superior to most for display.

Q. I have heard that knifemaker Clyde Fischer goes after wild boar with only a knife for a weapon. Is that true?

J.M., Venice, Ca.

A. According to John Wootters, Clyde does indeed go after wild boar with dogs

and a knife. When I heard this, I did some investigating. Although Fischer is probably the only one commonly doing this in the continental United States, this practice is well known in Hawaii.

Apparently, Hawaiians use knives for pig hunting for three reasons: 1) a Polynesian preference for edged weapons, 2) heavy brush which makes carrying a rifle or shotgun after dogs very difficult and 3) regulations against handguns in general and handgun hunting in particular, stemming from laws passed after the attack on Pearl Harbor. As most hunters know, compared with still hunting or stalking, hunting with dogs allows the hunter to get quite close to his quarry. Therefore, in the continental U.S. the handgun is the favored weapon for finishing off the boar, bear, lion, or bobcat held at bay by dogs, but in Hawaii that weapon is not available.

I have heard several versions of how the hunter actually kills the boar with a knife. Clyde Fischer is said to trap it in marshland, then drag it out, sometimes with the assistance of apprentice hunters, and finish it with a thrust to the heart with one of his seven-inch hunting knives. (Clyde has yet to send me details of exactly how he does this.)

George Cooper, on the other hand, told me about an order he got from a man named Hashimoto in Hawaii for another Cooper boot knife. It seems the man lost his last one when he plunged it into the skull of a pig, trying for the medulla—similar to the coup de grace in bull fighting—and the pig ran off with it. Incidentally, Hashimoto maintained that the dogs created a panic reaction in the boar so that it froze, allowing the hunter to approach it from the side or rear.

The most detailed account I have heard was from a man named Bustillo, who, as a teenager, used to go with his uncle on these hunts in Oahu. He said that the dogs, mostly mutts chosen for aggressiveness rather than blooded hounds, actually grabbed the pig by its legs or whatever else they could latch onto. Then his uncle, who weighed about 190 pounds, would jump on the boar from the back, grab an ear and press down on the back of its neck with his left forearm, and stab into the boar's throat with his dagger. This method seems like the most practical I've heard.

Remember that when you hunt with dogs, the dogs pick out the animal, you don't. The chances are that the animal you find after you have chased the dogs for several hours will be toward the low end of the 80 to 250 pound pigs commonly found in Hawaii. Of course, that can be to your benefit since a 250-pound boar is not only stronger than a man of comparable weight, but it also has a much lower center of gravity. I once shot a 200-pound boar with two-inch tusks; he seemed to be all chest and head with tiny little legs. I have the feeling that if I had tried to dispatch a boar of that size with knife alone,

I would have required a tetanus shot and a lot of stitches.

If you want a trophy boar's head you should stalk the animal with a scoped rifle, carefully checking each animal sighted for the proper head and tusks. If you want a helluva lot of excitement or if you want to test your endurance, try chasing the dogs who are chasing a boar; then see if you have enough strength to stab it to death. I remember one black bear hunt where the dogs caught the scent, and we didn't reach them until five hours later, after crawling and climbing through some of the worst brush and poison oak in the Cascade Mountains. When we finally got to them they had the bear treed beside a stream and a steep hill. I had to balance myself against the side of the hill, slick from four days of rain, while trying to steady my .44 Ruger revolver for a killing shot. Visualize a hunt like that with only a knife slapping your hip at the end of the trail.

Hunting wild boar with edged weapons is an old tradition in Europe. In Germany the boar and sword have an ancient history. In India of the last century British officers used to lance the pig from horseback at the gallop. Yet none of these practices involved the endurance or the final closeness to the quarry of the Hawaiian hunt. Perhaps we will have more information of this hunt at a later time. Meanwhile, if you want more information, the first place you should write to is:

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