



# MERCENARY'S MANUAL

## MERCENARY'S MANUAL PART TWO

By Terry P. Edwards. Edited by Robt. K. Brown.

Photos by Gary Flanagan and Al Venter.

300+ pages, 150+ photos, dozens of illustrations.

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Books don't make soldiers. And no one can sell you all the stuff that does. But these days it takes more than guts and muscle to win battles. Mercenary's Manual Part Two gets to the details; the how-to-do-it side of urban war, anti-tank fighting, mortars, missiles, climbing, tracking, and more. There is more on demolitions, small-unit amphibious and air operations, weather predictions, mines, and much more. Part Two is over 300 pages, with dozens of line drawings and over 150 photos by Gary Flanagan and Al Venter. It does not deal in entertainment, politics or terrorism, just down-to-earth proven methods and techniques. It's plain know-how . . . dedicated to winning. It costs \$8.95 plus 75¢ for postage. This much we can sell you. The rest is up to you . . .



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- **NBC** — The bomb, biological war and chemical attacks. What can be used, how to avoid being affected and what to do if you are caught in an attack.

This is only a partial listing of what the sections cover; there is too much to list. A bibliography is provided to direct the reader in further study. The concept of the Mercenary's Manual is simple: Cram in enough facts to make it work!

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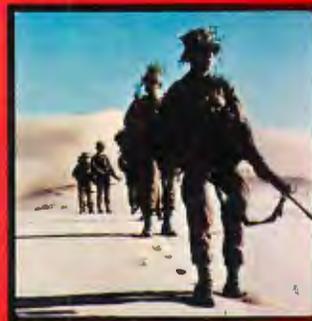
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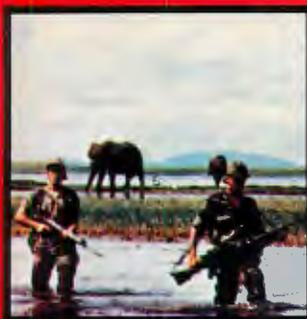
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## BY CHUCK TAYLOR

### Concept and Employment of Submachine guns

With the advent of the assault rifle by the Germans in 1943, most military entities felt that the conventional battle rifle, a la Garand, and the submachine gun were doomed to extinction. In fact, many publications extolled this theory in print for many years after the close of World War Two. Indeed, the assault rifle did fulfill what was then thought to have been the traditional roles of both the battle rifle and SMG, but, as time passed, and guerrilla warfare quite plainly became the most obvious means of Communist world domination, many began to realize that the SMG was far from obsolete. In fact, its concept lent itself quite well to "brushfire wars" where semi-skilled or non-skilled personnel were involved, and where the economic climate of the area in which the conflict was being fought was such that more sophisticated weapons-systems were not feasible.

The SMG, both of past and present designs, still accomplishes exactly what it is intended to do, and always will. It fulfills a role that even the assault rifle cannot . . . a cheaply manufactured, simply designed, simply used, close-range offensive/defensive weapon. In addition, the SMG is handier to use than a battle-rifle or assault-rifle, lighter, and uses cheaper, more easily controlled ammunition.

In the offensive role, the SMG is king for specialized missions like prisoner snatches, commando raids, airborne/ clandestine operations, and night fighting, because of its compactness, light weight, and lower power. Since most night encounters between armed forces



take place at very close ranges due to the visibility factor, the limited range of the SMG is not of primary importance. It is amply powerful to accomplish its mission in spite of the fact that it utilizes a pistol cartridge.

An additional bonus is the element of shock and surprise to the enemy. A tremendous amount of confusion, fury, and hell is created by sudden, close-range, effective automatic fire being received at night from an unseen and previously undetected enemy! Troops cower behind cover, reluctant to engage such an enemy because they can't see him, can't tell how many of him there are, and are afraid of being separated from their own comrades in the confusion and darkness.

For combat in wooded areas or jungle, again the SMG is superior. The ammunition it fires provides adequate penetration through brush and still retains enough power to incapacitate an enemy with a solid hit at the ranges common in such terrain.

Moreover, the SMG is unsurpassed for employment in house-to-house fighting where the ranges are measured in feet and the time frames between life and death are measured in milliseconds! Having searched many a house for VC/NVA in Indochina, I can vouch for this one personally!

Many claim that a short-barrelled shotgun is the answer to the problem, but I do not feel this is so, simply because of the factor of versatility that must be considered. While it is true that a semi- or non-skilled individual can *initially* employ a shotgun more effectively than a SMG,

(continued on page 82)

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Concept of the modern SMG was pioneered by the German MP-40 and U.S. M-3 "Greasegun," shown above.

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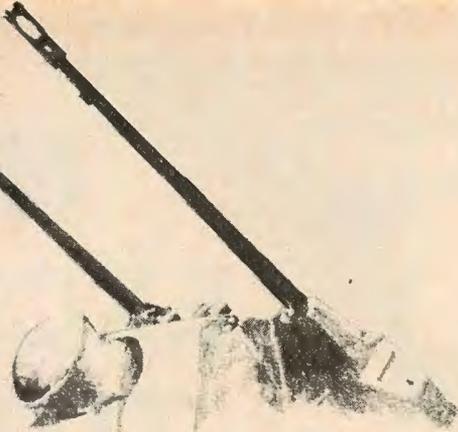
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# FLAK



## MORE ON LINEBACKER II...

Dear Mr. Drenkowski:

While reading the November issue of SOF and enjoying your revealing account of Linebacker II, I was greatly amused by the picture of Eldridge "imitating his masters while on R & R." Needless to say, the picture elicited much comment from the men of the squadron.

If possible I would like to obtain a copy of the photograph for display in the squadron. We still feel that Eldridge is our mascot and his fame is always a topic of conversation among members of the "Panther Pack."

The 13th continues to support the fighter force by training F-4 aircrews for units throughout the world.

Thanks to a fellow member of the "Panther Pack."

Sincerely,  
13th Squadron Member

Gentlemen:

Dana Drenkowski's article describing SAC's participation in Linebacker 2 is superb and should be required reading for every SAC operations officer above the grade of major. I know: I was there in one of the 17 BUFs downed.

The enormous gulf of respect between the crewdogs (as we were perceived by the staff) and the staff weenies (as they were referred to by the crews) is almost captured in his story. To add to the examples of the senior officers' ineptness would seem redundant, but for me, seeing the most respected field grade officers get continually passed over while their "YES-MEN" peers received the promotions and cushy jobs made me sick, and was the major factor in my quitting the Air Force. . . .

Jim Farmer  
Straw 02 Bravo  
Bellevue, WA

P.S. if the crew of Paula on Dec. 21, 1972 should read this: thanks, guys, I and my crew owe you one. . . .

Drenkowski replies:

"Crewdogs" was not a humorous term. It reflected the dislike and low respect that SAC staff in U-Tapao and Guam had for the aircrews who carried out staff orders at the risk of their lives.

Dear Mr. Drenkowski:

I am writing to you relative to your article in the September '77 SOF on the Linebacker air campaigns. I am particularly interested in your comments on the North Vietnamese Air Force and its star performer, Colonel Tomb. For several years I have been researching Tomb and other pilots claiming to be aces. Thus far, most of the information I have has come from North Vietnamese sources and hence is suspect. Tomb's career continues to be a puzzle to me. Your article is the third American source detailing Tomb's exploits. I have yet to find any mention of him in North Vietnamese sources. Since he apparently flew combat since 1966, I find this absence doubly puzzling. The North Vietnamese were never reticent about publicizing their so-called aces, yet no mention of Tomb. Contradictions exist in the American accounts to complicate the matter. An article on Randy Cunningham in the AAHS JOURNAL by a member of Cunningham's squadron states Tomb is actually Toon. Your article states Tomb (or Toon) survived. The other articles say he died and so on. Could I ask the source of your information on Tomb? I don't wish to violate any security regulations, but I am very interested in finding out the true details concerning Tomb, Van Bay, Tran Hanh, and the other DRV aces.

Thank you.

Yours truly,  
Michael O'Connor

Drenkowski replies:

I realized when I wrote the article that there were two versions of the man's name by American sources. I chose to use "Tomb," since it was the name I remember appearing most often in military documents and reports. Lou Drendl's And Kill Migs relates the Cunningham story, with Cunningham himself as narrator. I am not violating security by telling you I heard most of the stories piecemeal in intelligence briefings and in fighter tactics classes (in which Cunningham's engagement and Tomb's exploits were discussed in detail). I received additional information from the same type of sources during the 3½ years following the war, including accounts of his visits to Communist and Third World countries prior to the 1972 operations.

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## MARINES AND CAR-15s...

SOF:

In your January '78 issue, "Full Auto" states "(the CAR-15) is no longer in service on a T.O. & E. basis in the U.S. military." WRONG! In the U.S. Marine Corps Force Reconnaissance Company, there are 10 CAR-15s in the T.O. & E. Other than that, the article was great and the magazine as a whole was better than ever.

SSgt James H. Gregory  
Camp Lejeune, N.C.

## SOG VETERAN SPEAKS...

SOF prints the below letter, sent to D. Clayman, Adjudication Officer of the regional office, VA, Cleveland, Ohio:

Dear Mr. Clayman:

Enclosed you will find, I hope, all the information necessary to proceed with my claim for disability.

In your letter of January 14, 1977, you requested that I furnish you with the names of doctors and others who are or were aware of my disability. I am sorry that at the time I was on the operating table I did not ask the doctor's names who were taking care of me; but as you can see, I do have my orders. Please do not penalize me because some non-combat clerk lost my medical files. Also enclosed are the citations which indicate that I have been wounded and a doctor's statement which describes my current physical condition.

I spent a little under two (2) years in South Vietnam serving with a special unit called C&C S.O.G. as a Team Leader. The operations we performed were highly classified and dangerous. In this time period I was awarded four (4) Bronze Stars with V Devices, four (4) Air Medals with V Devices, two (2) Army Accommodation Medals with V Devices plus another Bronze Star with V Device and Air Medal pending orders. I also have numerous other citations and letters of recommendation, not to mention many Vietnamese awards.

In case you are wondering why I have waited so long to file a claim for my benefits, the reasons are as follows:

1. I did not agree with our pulling out of South Vietnam after losing many, many American lives and giving the country back to the North Vietnamese.
2. I wholeheartedly disagree with the blanket amnesty which President Carter said he was going to grant and has now granted to all draft evaders. I feel this is totally unfair to all the men who served and were wounded or died in South Vietnam.
3. Previously I felt that the wounds I sustained, my illnesses (malaria) and the discomfort and scars that I still live with were a part of my duty to my country; and I would

have felt guilty accepting monetary compensation. However, I now realize that my country is not standing behind the men who fought and many times sacrificed their lives in its honor.

I feel that I have done my part for my country, and at one time I did not feel that my country owed me anything. Now, I am taking a different view, and I do feel that my country owes me, and I expect to get what is due me.

I am awaiting your reply.

Very truly yours,  
James E. Bolen

## SOF SCREWS UP...

Dear Sir:

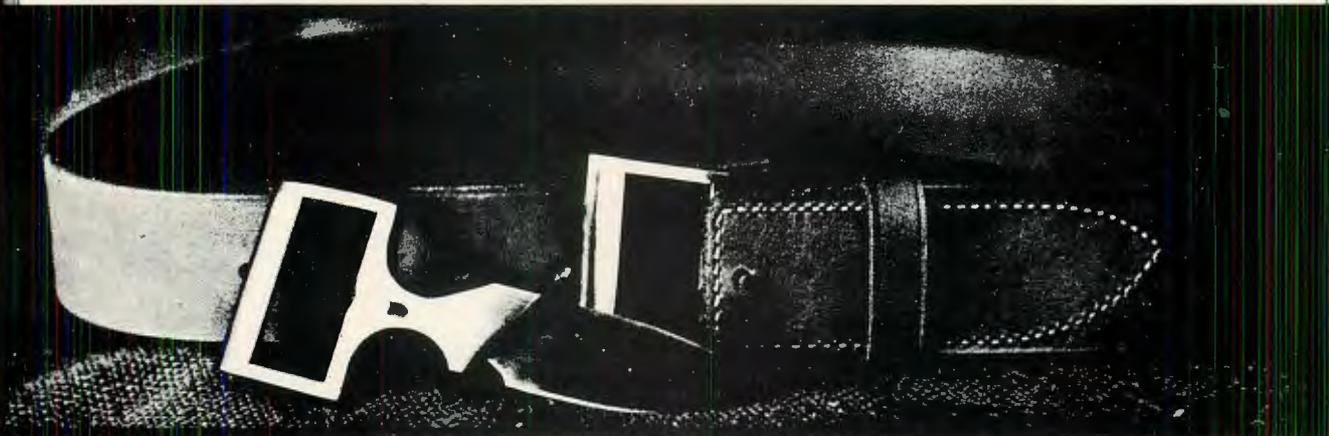
I have just received issue 9, Jan. '78. While this was another great issue, it brought to my attention the fact that I had *not* received issue 8 under my current subscription. Please send me issue 8.

I know things must get hectic around the office with Bob Brown off on covert ops. to the local Burger King. I can imagine the confusion when Art Gitlin puts out some intruder's lights in the parking lot, using his greatest, though least concealed weapon, his girth. Chuck Taylor test firing heavy machine guns in the halls, Donovan blowing an unused office off the back of the build-

(continued on page 76)

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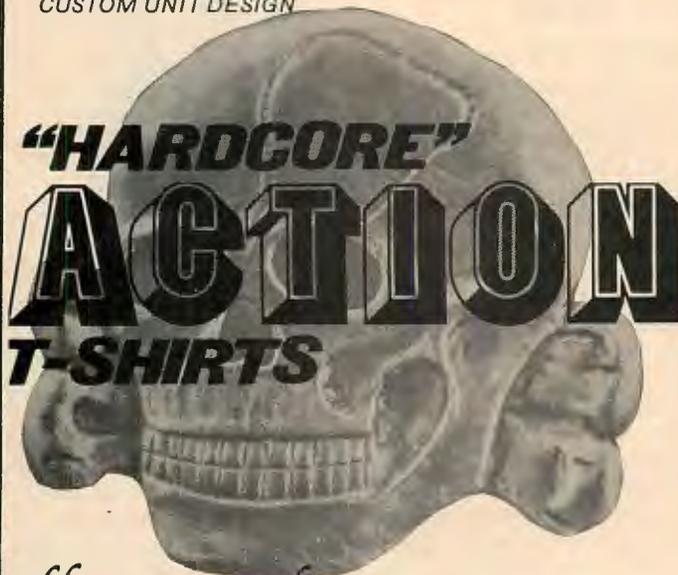
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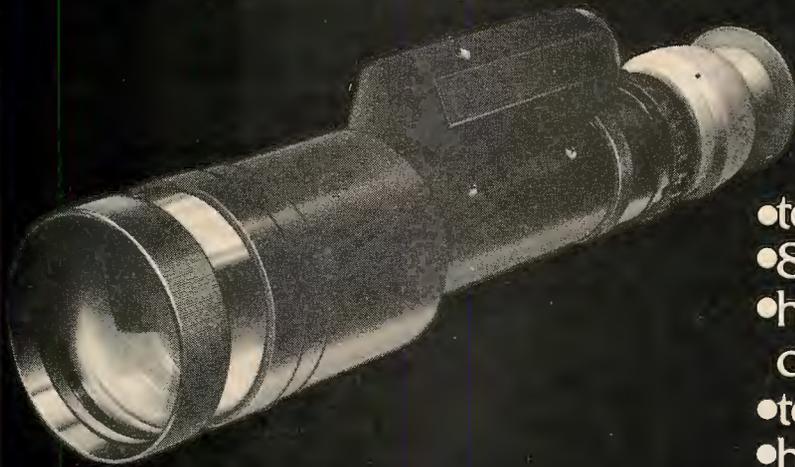
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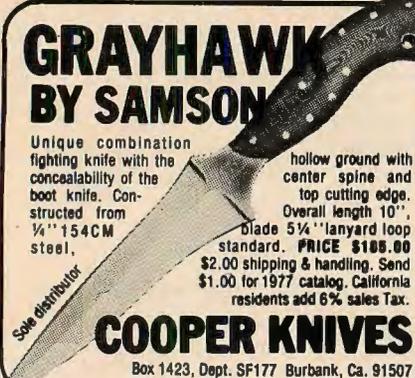
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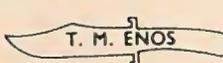
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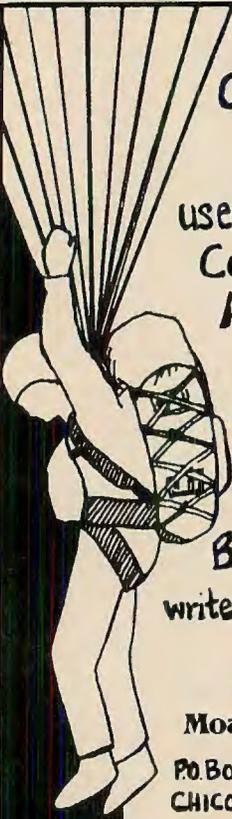
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# STEELE ON KNIVES

## FAST DRAW IN KNIFE FIGHTING

The knife is a very close quarters weapon. In tactical terms it can be thought of as a short sword or as an extension of the hands, depending on the size of the knife. A large Bowie, machete, or kitchen chef's knife is long enough to parry an opponent's blade; it is also large enough to be difficult to conceal. Therefore, the large knife can be used for slashes, parries, and thrusts like a sword, but like a sword it cannot be easily hidden. A short knife, on the other hand, cannot parry effectively, but it can be palmed until the last possible moment, gaining the element of surprise. The big knife can best be used with sabre fencing technique, while the small knife can be used effectively with a variety of boxing, fencing, or improvised moves.

The small knife is customarily used against an opponent unarmed or armed with a small knife or billy. It can be hidden behind the wrist until time to slash or thrust. It can also be used with a variety of foil or sabre fencing techniques, though, as mentioned, its effectiveness for parries and beats is minimal.

One improvised/boxing technique used with the small knife by certain New York hoodlums is the following: when involved in a fist-fight, close with the opponent, draw the knife, pump it several times into his body outside the view of spectators, drop the knife, and finish off with a conspicuous fist blow to the chin. The opponent drops as if knocked out, and his assailant disappears before the crowd realizes anyone has been stabbed. Needless to say, however, the foregoing technique is murder pure and simple.

Knife fights, especially those involving small knives, can favor those with a large physique. Unlike fencing where, because of the length of the weapon and its facility for parrying, a large man has no advantage, a knife fight can involve considerable grappling. In medieval times daggers were rarely used except as a last resort when one knight had fallen (the fallen knight might defend himself with a dagger; likewise the victorious knight might use his dagger to dispatch his opponent). Similarly, in Japan the only knife technique taught to samurai was *yoroi-doshi* or "grappling in armor" —two unhorsed warriors wrestled with each other until one found an opening in his opponent's armor and thrust



in with his dagger (usually the dagger was held like an icepick to give maximum force to the thrust). The stiff movements of these warriors in armor were like those of two fighting ants, each trying to pierce its opponent's exoskeleton with its mandibles.

Obviously the man who can hold his opponent down by brute strength has an advantage when knives are drawn. Likewise a man with a hardy physique is likely to be able to absorb more hand-cuts with subsequent bleeding than someone older or with less animal strength. It is because of these advantages favoring the large man that most duels were conducted with swords or pistols, weapons which would not favor the young or strong. This also is perhaps why the law in some States places greater penalty on the concealed knife than the concealed pistol, since the knife is the weapon of the young while legislators are at an age where they must defend themselves with firearms.

The first rule for the smaller person defending his life with a knife is don't let your opponent get you on the ground. The second rule is to keep him from controlling your knife hand. Mobility is the key. The small, quick man has the ideal physique for knife fighting if he remembers to sting like a bee rather than grapple like a bear. The Filipino, for example, has a good build for knife fighting, and it comes as no surprise that the *balisong* (the Batangas butterfly folding knife) and the bolo are favored weapons there. My fencing coach used to say that in World War II he saw their Filipino hand-to-hand combat instructor use a machete to strike a dummy 45 times without stopping, breaking rhythm, or repeating techniques.

Because knife fights can begin and end abruptly, the ability to draw the knife quickly can mean the difference between living and dying. Fast-draw techniques are most important to the defensive knife fighter: if a man knows in advance that a fight is coming, he will have the weapon in hand, not in sheath or pocket. The ancient samurai had a technique specifically devoted



The author, holding his knife in the "sabre grip," most practical for the slash and thrust, defends against opponent's attack.



Steele, controlling his opponent's knife hand, counters with a thrust to the throat: victorious once again over the forces of dark and evil.

to fast draw of the *katana* (long sword) called *iai-jutsu*. Of course, this technique was sometimes used for assassination (drawing on a man before he knew what was happening), but mostly it was a defensive technique which would allow a samurai to draw his sword instinctively when kneeling, sitting, or otherwise caught unawares. The sword for the dismounted warrior was usually slung edge-up through the *obi* (sash). From this position it could be drawn and used for a downward slash all in one motion. A similar technique was used by Western swordsmen: the sabre was drawn upward from the scabbard into the *prime* (first) parry position or directly into a flank cut.

The man armed with a machete or sheath knife must be able to draw his weapon instinctively. The knife should always be carried in the same position on the body. The belt attachment should not be so loose that the sheath moves about, impeding the draw. The retaining strap, if there is one, should be easy to snap off. If the sheath holds the knife by friction fit, Scandinavian style, it should not be so tight that the knife cannot be drawn quickly. Metal or plastic military scabbards (like the Bundeswehr or the U.S. M8A1) are much better for fast draw than many leather sheaths: they do not lose their shape or put a drag on the blade like leather sheaths. The old M-1 Garand bayonet sheath had the added advantage of having the sheath lock on the bayonet quillon itself, so that the bayonet could be un-

locked and drawn with the same movement. Some sheaths must be tied down to the leg for a quick draw, especially if they are attached to the belt by two hooks, military fashion, or with a belt loop that is substantially larger than the belt. The best methods for the machete are to attach the sheath to the left side so the left hand can hold the sheath as the machete is drawn, or to attach it firmly handle-up to the side of a pack so that it can be drawn over the shoulder.

The most practical knife for the city person is the folder. It can be used like a small sheath knife, but it can be carried either in a sheath or in a pocket. Since switchblades, gravity knives, and balisongs are generally illegal, the best choices for a folding defense knife are the rocker-locked knife and the Barry Wood "scissors design" folder. Either one of these can be opened quickly with one hand with practice. In some States, such as California, these knives must be carried openly in a belt sheath. Unfortunately, the typical folding knife sheath has a snap flap which slows the draw considerably; also, only a couple fingers can grasp the exposed part of the knife. It is possible to make a fast draw from these sheaths, but it requires extensive practice. A better sheath has been designed recently by Bill Johnson of Venice, California. This sheath has an open top so there is no flap to impede the draw; the knife, usually the Barry Wood model, is held in by a friction fit. This sheath can be constructed to hold the knife upward or horizontally. The horizontal position makes for a faster draw, but the upright version provides more secure retention, especially if the friction fit becomes loose with time.

If the folding knife is carried in the pocket for defense, nothing else should be carried in that pocket. Incidentally, Donald Hamilton's Matt Helm spy novels mention a number of knife fighting incidents. Helm favors the rocker-locked folding knife with four-inch blade, since the military style combat knives are simply too inconvenient to carry. This is one more reason to believe that the Matt Helm books are far more realistic than the James Bond stories (there is no similarity between the Matt Helm books and the movies starring Dean Martin).

Most books on knife fighting, with the notable exception of my own *Secrets of Modern Knife Fighting* (Phoenix Press, Boulder, Colo.), are devoted exclusively to the use of the sheath knife (mine has more information on fighting with folding knives than is published elsewhere). The soldier in combat usually carries a Bowie or stiletto with six to eight-inch blade for sentry silencing as well as for everyday utility. Concealability is not necessary or even desirable. Usually the knife is carried on the belt or taped upside down to

(continued on page 84)

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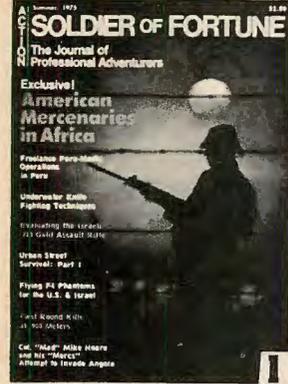
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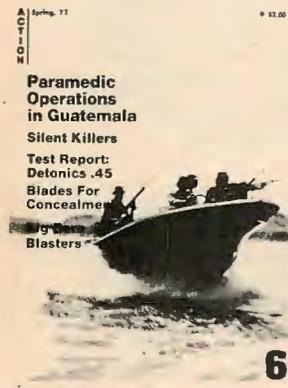
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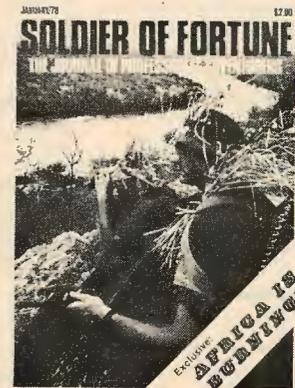
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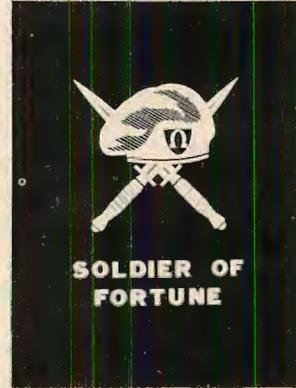
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## STAFF NOTES ...

Thomas Reisinger, author of the editorial on page 22, has joined the SOF staff as Executive Coordinator. Reisinger was a SF medic with A-331 Loc Ninh, September '68 to July '69; participated in paramedic ops in Peru, Honduras and Guatemala. Welcome aboard, Tom!

On 24 October 1977, Publisher Brown, Advertising Director William Garey and Tom Reisinger assisted in the apprehension of a suspect who allegedly knifed a middle-aged woman near the SOF offices. It's safer in Salisbury!

Dana Drenkowski shot in the South African Combat Pistol and IPSC World Championships in Southern Africa in August 1977. He was accompanied by SOG-veteran Thomas McGregor. Other staff members are scheduled to travel to the dark continent in November 1977 and February 1978.

## RHODESIA RECRUITER ...

Captain E.A. Lee has replaced Major Nick Lamprecht as Rhodesian Army recruiting officer. For information write: c/o Box 7720, Causeway, Salisbury, Rhodesia.

## BRINGING DOWN AMERICA?

In January '78 SOF (p. 76), N.E. MacDougald declared that *Bringing Down America* was "as dated as love beads." However, recent events show the contemporary relevance of its story.

National news services reported that on 14 September 1977 Mark Rudd, former head of SDA and Weather Underground leader, surfaced in New York City. He surrendered to the Manhattan District Attorney after seven years as a fugitive. Rudd faces state charges in New York and Illinois and a Federal charge for unlawful flight, following "the days of wrath." Rudd is also implicated in Dr. Timothy Leary's jail break.

## MERC RELEASED ...

On 22 November 1977, John A. Dane was released on parole. Dane served in Nam and as a merc in various parts of the world. He noted in his letter that upon his release he "... will enjoy (his) association once again with the truly best men in the world.

## IMPEACH YOUNG!

A member of conservative members of Congress have introduced a resolution calling for the impeachment of U.N. Ambassador Andrew Young. Drop your Congressman a line and tell him why you support said resolution. We don't need to tell you why!

## CRIPPLED EAGLE CLUB ...

Robin Moore, author of *The Green Beret* and *French Connection*, has established the "Crippled Eagle Club" in Salisbury, Rhodesia, for Americans serving with the Rhodesian Security Forces. He has purchased a large house in Salisbury which serves as the club's headquarters and as "the unofficial U.S. embassy." He presently is writing a novel based on the current situation in that beleaguered country.

## SPECIAL FORCES ASSOC ...

Special Forces Association has changed the format of their quarterly publication, "The Drop," to that of a 48-page magazine.

Join the SF Association and keep current. Write: Special Forces Association, Box 35173, Fayetteville, NC 28303, for further information.



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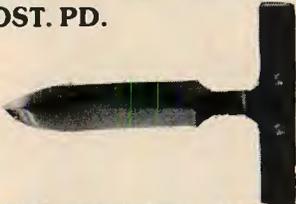


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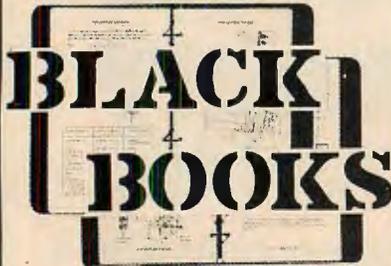
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# TERRAINE & SITUATION - NO. 7

BY JERRY AHERN

Quite some time ago, I wrote an article for SOF dealing with the Jackass Shoulder Holster System. Then and now the Jackass System had one problem. The construction and materials were and are excellent, the design intelligently conceived. But the problem, at least for many people interested in the rig, was the price. At last check, retail on the premium saddle leather holster was \$45.00, or almost half a C-note. And, because of the intricate Jackass holster-making process, supply oftentimes was far exceeded by demand. For that reason, Rick Gallagher, president of and designer for Jackass (920 Waukegan Rd., Glenview, IL 60025, USA), designed the SSII Model. To start with, the SSII is retailing at \$29.95, a more easily affordable and quite competitive price. But price aside, Gallagher has not cheapened the rig where it counts. The SSII utilizes standard vegetable-tanned saddle leather, as opposed to the \$45.00 model which uses select-grade leather only. In other words, the SSII is cut from the whole hide rather than select portions. The new SSII is not hand-edged and finished, as is the more expensive model. But there, essentially, the differences stop. The gluing and stitching are exactly the same, as is the hand wet-molding on the actual guns (Gallagher still has one of the finest collections of rusty handguns around). The same suede harness is employed, as are the plastic Flexalon swivels which resist rotting and won't sweat dye onto clothing or rust.

But the new innovations are perhaps more important than what has remained the same. Jackass holsters now feature a concealed and recessed thumb snap, reinforced with leather for added durability. The recessing prohibits the snap from scratching the finish of the handgun when it is drawn and the reinforcement simply makes the thumb snap faster and more positive. But as Gallagher always does, even the holster I'm using for one of my favorite guns—my Walther PPK/S .380—has now been changed again. The current production SSII now features a molded-in sight ramp and a glossy finish, serving both to protect the leather and dress up the holster.

What Gallagher has done is take an excellent design which he constantly works to improve, made it better and more functional, and then found a way to make a version of it which compromises little on quality, nothing on utility, and

wears a more readily affordable price tag. Rather like Rolls Royce turning out a production model with a few less frills that sold for about 35% less. In these days of inflation—especially in the firearms and accessory market—it's a welcome surprise. Steve Lentsch, a Jackass distributor (Indiana Arms And Ammo, 750 W. Indiana Ave., South Bend, IN 46613, USA), sent me the SSII a couple of months back and my PPK/S has been riding along in it ever since. The Jackass System is comfortable, fast, and reliable—and now it's that much more affordable.

\* \* \* \* \*

Not too many issues back, I profiled the Bearcat 101 Scanning Monitor. Excellent device that it is, the Electra Company (300 S. on E. County Line Road, Cumberland, IN 46229, USA), has devised still another scanning monitor with features that are even more advanced—the Bearcat 210. The new 210 has the appearance of some space age mini-computer. And, in essence, it is a computer. Scanning 10 channels covering five FM bands, it is controlled by a micro-computer. It has a search feature which allows unknown or unpublished frequencies to be detected and monitored. In any sort of survival situation where news is restricted or when moving from area to area, the search feature would be invaluable.

To use the search feature on the Bearcat 210, the most efficient way is to work through one relatively small number of frequencies at a time. This enables the user to locate intermittently used frequencies faster. Radio Telephone, Marine Band—anything within the parameters of the machine can be searched, located and locked onto, then returned to for future use. Frequency ranges for the new 210 are Low Band (32-50MHz), Ham Band (146-148MHz), High Band (148-174MHz), UHF Band (450-470MHz), UHF "T" Band (470-512MHz) and Government UHF (416-450 MHz).

The 210 features keyboard control and programming for easier user manipulation and a digital channel and frequency readout display, again like some sort of computer. It can be used with 117Vac or 12Vdc.

(continued on page 81)

# CASTRATION BY DESIGN

EDITORIAL BY ALEXANDER MCCOLL

There are a great many arguments against giving away the Panama Canal, with or without "conditions," and with or without also paying out a vast sum of money to the regime of the moment in the Republic of Panama. Nearly every publication in the country has had its say, one way or the other, on the matter, and the debate has really only started. The arguments against ratification of the treaty so publicly signed by President Carter in what can only be defined as a very rash anticipation of favorable action by the Senate, come under two headings, the "make-weight" arguments, and the real substance of the issue before the Senate, the American people, and the judgment of History.

First, the "make-weight" arguments:

- Torrijos is a Communist-line dictator with an exceedingly bloody-handed and repressive record in the matter of human and civil rights, i.e. someone with whom it seems very odd that such a great champion of human and civil rights as Jimmy Carter would do business. Also someone to whom one would not really care to entrust de facto control of so important a strategic and economic asset. But even if he and his regime were the mildest and most amiable of liberal democrats (which in the Latin American frame-of-reference is synonymous with a regime about to have a coup laid on it), it would still be folly to turn the canal over to them.

- The homes and jobs of several thousand United States citizens who work in the Canal Zone (the Zonians) are simply being thrown away, and this is a major injustice.

- Our present status in the Canal Zone is as a result of a valid treaty, duly signed and ratified, and there is not much to be said for giving up sovereign U.S. territory upon the mere threat of possible sabotage.

The substantive matters are two and very simple:

- First, there has been enough of appeasement, surrender, backing-off, running-away and quitting. We betrayed our friends in Southeast Asia to massacre and hideous oppression; we are selling out in South Korea and Taiwan; we are actively supporting Marxism and murder in Rhodesia and South Africa. . . . There is a bit too much of the image of the guilt-seeking, self-castrated, self-destroying paper tiger about this once great, free, and proud country for the taste of any loyal American (there still are a few of us left, I hope).

We have been run and harried quite far enough by little yapping dogs such as Torrijos, and now is the time to tell them that they can have the Canal any time they want it, but they must be prepared to fight and win World War III first. Among other things, this would have a very satisfactory effect on the general and international credibility of our deterrence and status as a great power. We may not have the courage to stand up to such major powers as North Vietnam or Angola, but perhaps in the Republic of Panama, with less than one percent of our population and resources, we may at last be matched with an adversary whom we can handle.

Given the performance so far, it should be at least an even bet.

- Finally, and this is the "bottom-line" argument, the canal is a "vital" national strategic asset. I am using "vital" in the narrow, technical sense of something for which we are prepared to go to all-out nuclear war to defend. All sea commerce between the west coasts of South America and Europe, and between the U.S. east and west coasts, goes through the canal. Its closure would be an economic disaster, and the power to threaten that closure should not be in the hands of a Marxist police-colonel like Torrijos. The world had to put up with quite enough of this sort of thing from Colonel Nasser over the Suez Canal. Even now, the number of Israeli ships using the Suez Canal is zero.

Even more important, the ability to shift Naval units from the Pacific to the Caribbean, without the very long and damaging Cape Horn passage, is a major multiplier of combat power for a Navy already subject to worldwide challenge by the Soviets. The only active units not capable of making this passage are the large-deck aircraft carriers; the obvious solution here is to enlarge the Canal, not give it away.

If the Russians can send a Cuban army to set things up the way they want them in Angola, why not Panama? Not, of course, that the present ruler in Panama is unfriendly to their interests. . . . It is very definitely not in our interest to have the strategic mobility of the Navy subject to blackmail and whim by the likes of Torrijos. But this is exactly what this treaty asks to accept. It is altogether too high a price to pay for whatever momentary sweetening of atmosphere it may buy for us in Latin America.

One final, somber thought: It appears that a majority of the American people, and even a sufficiency of Senators, oppose the treaty. Even if the treaty is rejected by the Senate, we are not out of the woods. The President has the power to order withdrawal of the U.S. garrison in the Canal Zone, and surrender the place without consulting the Senate; would the Democratic majorities in both houses really impeach a President of their own party? Or, if this does not happen, how much support will there be, and for how long, for another slow, dripping, "Vietnam-style" erosive tropical guerrilla war to defend the Canal against a type of attack which our enemies know altogether too well how to inflict? It is one thing to strike the bold gesture and tell Torrijos to buzz off; it is quite another to set up the coup necessary to remove this thug and thus make the point that rulers of Panama who crowd us on the Canal thereby shorten their own lives; and it is yet another thing to put up with and hold out against the continual drip of casualties and damages that a well-laid guerrilla campaign could inflict on us.

But any of these is better than the craven surrender which the present Administration is trying to sell to the American people.

# THE SANCTIONING OF TYRANNY

by Thomas D. Reisinger

The "intrepid" Andrew Young, America's Ambassador to The United Nations, has again spewed forth rhetorical utterances which will undoubtedly gladden the hearts of admirers of Communism the world over.

On September 20, 1977, Young gave a warm welcome to the new "Socialist Republic of Vietnam," as it entered the U.N.

The "celebrated" occasion was the meeting of the U.N.'s General Assembly during which Vietnam was seated as a new member of that "grand" organization.

Our Ambassador proclaimed his agreement to Vietnam's recent U.N. admission and his admiration for this dictatorship in the following remarks, released by The United States Mission to The United Nations:

"I would remind this Assembly that Vietnam's struggle for independence was accompanied by a profound struggle within the nation which I represent. Ten years ago, Martin Luther King and hundreds of thousands of citizens of the United States came to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza in an attempt to end the conflict.

"Five years ago I was elected by the citizens of Georgia to the 93rd Congress of the United States which amended our military appropriations legislation to cut off funds for the purpose of waging war in Vietnam. It is quite appropriate, I think, that two of the delegates of my country to this Assembly are Mrs. Martin Luther King and Congressman Charles Whalen, one of the congressmen that sponsored the amendment."

One wonders if Young is bucking for the next Nobel Peace Prize or if he is simply a radical whose naivete, incredible stupidity, and/or allegiance to left wing totalitarianism has led him to become a camp follower of the Vietnam regime.

Regardless of his motivations and shortcomings, his statements reflect utter contempt for the thousands of American, South Vietnamese, Cambodian, and other Allied troops who fought and fell during the Vietnam War.

Young's audacity presumably represents the attitude of the Carter Administration, whose almost tearful, alleged allegiance to the cause of human rights has to be one of the biggest jokes ever foisted upon the American people.

His courting of the "new" Vietnam makes it abundantly clear that our anti-Communist allies should expect no U.S. aid or intervention should their countries ever fall victim to aggression from a Communist state.

Our Ambassador's blatant disregard for human freedom and dignity concerning Vietnam indicates his acceptance of a tragic double standard.

South Korea, the Republic of China, Rhodesia, and South Africa, among others, are condemned in almost daily diatribes for their alleged violations against

humanity. This pious attitude, however, quite expectedly does not extend to Vietnam, where nearly every vestige of individual freedom has been stamped out or to neighboring Cambodia, where an estimated 1.2 million people have been executed by the Khmer Rouge.

The Ambassador's role as an official U.S. apologist for left-wing tyranny also seems to serve as a license for irresponsibility. This obviously endears him to certain Third World nations whose clamoring and saber-rattling against the United States have served as excuse for the Carter Administration's vague and asinine foreign giveaway programs, which pass for diplomacy.

The "illustrious" Ambassador Young shares the same idealism that characterizes others in the present Administration.

An inability to recognize reality is a trait which is extremely dangerous. This fault, which is readily apparent in the high echelons of Carter's "Palace Guard," unfortunately and tragically crushes any genuine hope of U.S. intervention on behalf of the millions of human beings who are forced to exist under any leftist dictatorial system.

Despite the horrendous reports from thousands of refugees who have escaped from Vietnam and Cambodia, no words or protest have been forthcoming from official U.S. sources. No student demonstrations have taken place signifying opposition to Communist aggression in Southeast Asia and the halls of Congress have not echoed with speeches of indignation from Senator Kennedy and other "champions of human freedom."

The nauseating hypocrisy of the United States Government has never been more visible. President Carter, Ambassador Young, and others of their ilk are betraying millions under the guise of securing peace and have now embraced the rulers of Vietnam by granting U.N. admission. It would be interesting to know what any surviving U.S. POWs, who might be rotting at this moment in a Vietnam prison, think of their President's and U.N. Ambassador's forgiving and generous attitudes.

This despicable act should be met, not with polite opposition, but with active and caustic rebuke.

The allegiance by present and former leaders of the United States to the interests of the governments of Vietnam (and Cambodia) should not be tolerated.

Individuals such as former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark and former student-protest-leader Sam Brown, who now heads Action (Peace Corps and Vista), recently attended a celebration welcoming the Vietnam U.N. delegation to the United States. They, along with Ambassador Young, are but three examples of political prostitutes who have sold their loyalties to the sadistic tyrants of Southeast Asia.

# BIG STORY

REVIEW BY DAVID HARRIS

**BIG STORY: How the American Press and Television Reported and Interpreted the Crisis of Tet 1968 in Vietnam and Washington**, by Peter Braestrup, Westview Press, 1898 Flatiron Court, Boulder, Colo. 80301. 1st volume: 740 pages with illustrations, maps and index; 2nd volume: 706 pages of appendices, tables and story and picture indexes; \$50.00.

As long as the United States feared to risk provoking Chinese Communist intervention by launching a ground invasion of North Vietnam, it was clear that no classical military victory could be expected in the Vietnam War. The most that could be hoped for was that by fighting a protracted war of attrition U.S. and allied forces could buy enough time for the South Vietnamese to strengthen their own armed forces and expand necessary government services throughout the country so that they would eventually be in a position to meet the challenge of North Vietnamese subversion and aggression on their own.

By late 1967, the U.S.-sponsored "pacification" campaign appeared to have taken hold throughout the country. On November 21, the commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, General William C. Westmoreland, held a press conference at which he outlined the successful completion of the initial phases of U.S. involvement in the war and confidently predicted that within two years, U.S. forces could begin to "phase down" and turn the burden of the war over to the South Vietnamese.

(The General's prediction came to be fulfilled: Beginning in mid-1969 when the Nixon administration initiated the "Vietnamization" campaign, U.S. troops were gradually withdrawn and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) was expanded and strengthened so that it could assume primary responsibility for the country's security.)

Less than three months after Westmoreland presented his highly optimistic appraisal of the current military and political situation, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese launched simultaneous surprise attacks on most of the urban areas of South Vietnam. On January 30, 1968, the eve of the traditional week-long celebration of the Vietnamese Lunar New Year, Communists bombarded or assaulted 36 of the country's 44 provincial capitals and 64 of 242 district (or county) capitals. Yet, by February 25, with the recapture of Hue, one of the few urban areas which the invaders managed to hold for more than a few days, the fighting in urban areas was over. Within a

period of seven months, security was restored in rural areas to the same degree as existed before the enemy offensive.

In a background briefing for newsmen held in Saigon on March 6, General Westmoreland noted that Tet offensive had marked a drastic change in Communist strategy: Unable to match U.S. firepower in the field, the enemy had fought a war of attrition in order to wear down America's resolve to continue the struggle. During Tet, however, in what may be regarded as an act of desperation, they had opted for a "major military-psychological attack" in order to achieve this same objective.

Westmoreland concluded that the enemy offensive was a military blunder which provided U.S. forces an unprecedented opportunity to inflict extremely heavy losses, particularly in the ranks of seasoned Vietcong guerrilla cadres which could not readily be replaced. He reported that during the month of the offensive, the enemy had suffered 50,000 casualties, including some 30,000 killed, compared with approximately 2,000 American and 4,000 South Vietnamese killed. He noted that these enemy deaths amounted to 87% of the total enemy killed during all of 1966 and 56% of the total killed during 1967. In addition, he reported the capture during the offensive of more than 16,000 individual weapons and over 6,000 crew-served weapons.

Events proved Westmoreland's assessment of the military aspects of the Tet offensive to be correct: As a result of heavy losses by the Vietcong, North Vietnamese troops were henceforth obliged to bear the major burden of the fighting in South Vietnam. (It was they who launched a costly "second wave" guerrilla-style attack against Saigon in May 1968, a "third wave" against towns along the border in August-September 1968, and a "fourth wave" against these towns in early 1969. They then generally remained in their "sanctuary" areas in Laos and Cambodia until late March 1972 when they launched a conventional invasion replete with Soviet-supplied tanks and artillery.)

Communist leaders had promised their cadres that they would be welcomed by the urban population and that their attacks on ARVN units would result in a "popular uprising against the U.S. imperialists and their puppets." Such an uprising never occurred and as the security situation began to improve during the month following the offensive, there were several important indications that the South Vietnamese had reacted to the

violation of their Tet holiday by increasing their support for the government of President Thieu: The black market rate for the U.S. dollar remained steady; there was general acquiescence to Pres. Thieu's decision to expand ARVN by drafting 18 and 19-year-old men for the first time in the war; and civilian self-defense units began to be organized and armed throughout the country. (By the end of 1969, the Thieu government had issued almost one million automatic weapons to self-defense militia units, an act of faith in popular support which few other governments of developing countries would dare emulate in peacetime.)

Most historians today would agree with General Westmoreland that the Tet offensive resulted in a serious military and political setback for the communists. However, they are also likely to agree that the reporting of the offensive and its aftermath by our most influential news media persuaded the American public that U.S. and South Vietnamese forces had somehow suffered a disastrous defeat! **Big Story** is a highly documented, scholarly attempt by a professional journalist to explain how this distortion by America's most important wire services, newspapers, news magazines, and television commentators came about.

Its author, Peter Braestrup, is eminently qualified for such an assignment. He covered the early years of U.S. involvement in the war in Vietnam for the *New York Times* and in 1968 was appointed Saigon bureau chief of the *Washington Post*. Unlike most of his fellow newsmen in Vietnam, he had had previous combat experience (in Korea) and this perhaps explains his harsh criticism of those of his colleagues who could not refrain from engaging in sweeping "instant analyses" of the Tet offensive before the trend of the fighting had become clear. As a professional newsmen, he is particularly critical of those newsmen who relayed opinions about the offensive, which were refuted by the facts which were readily available at the time they were made.

**Big Story** is based primarily on a selection of news reports and commentaries during the Tet offensive, drawn from the AP and UPI wire services, the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*, *Time* and *Newsweek*, and the three major American television networks. Interspersed throughout the book are background information and the author's highly professional, penetrating critiques, which

(continued on page 68)

# TET 68: RANGERS IN ACTION - SAIGON

BY SGT HARRY STEWART



Member of Co A, 30th Ranger Bn (ARVN), maintain radio contact as they move in against Viet Cong terrorists during early hours of Tet. Contrary to distorted picture presented by

the "safe-at-home" press, South Viet troops fought well and effectively throughout the offensive.

On 30 January 1968, SFC Jerry Cox, NCOIC of the 36th Vietnamese Ranger Battalion, and I drove to his battalion's location in Ham Tan, Vietnam. We would stay the night, then drive to Lam Son, home base for the 36th, where Jerry would get paid. We were going to stay for a three-day blast and bring supplies back.

I woke next morning and thought to myself, "Ham Tan on the South China Sea. What a paradise this would be if it wasn't for the war." After breakfast, I took a walk along the sand dunes, not knowing this would be the last time I would see them. The long stretch of white sand, with the curving swell moving along the ocean's surface, was like a picture one sees and later dreams about. Here and there, old women from the village were digging for clams in the sand.

Like good Rangers, we loaded the jeep with a case of iced beer, two M-16s and a M-79, and took off. We had about 80 miles to go and it was already 10 a.m. After Xuan Loc, we came to a roadblock, where an American artillery unit was checking everyone and everything that came up or down the road. They told us that the VC had broken the truce that morning and to be on the lookout for trouble along the road.

We drove through Ben Hoa and took the shorter back road to Lam Son. We had

Master Sergeant Harry Stewart (Ret.) served as a Ranger advisor to the 35th Vietnamese Ranger Battalion in 1967 and 1968. During his second tour he was a member of Advisory Team 91 in Binh Duong Province. Upon his return he served as an instructor with the Ranger Dept., Ft. Benning, Ga. and subsequently served as 1st Sgt., Charley Rangers 75th/1/29th Inf. He is Ranger and Airborne qualified, was awarded four Bronze Stars with V Device, two Purple Hearts, two VN Gallantry Crosses and the VN Honor Medal, Second Class.

just passed Zian, six miles out of Lam Son, when we started taking rounds, coming from a creek bed to our right, at about 150 meters. I fired two rounds from the M-79 and it stopped.

When we got into Lam Son, everyone was talking about Charlie breaking the truce. Hell, where had he broken the truce? I thought to myself. Being fired on twice in an 80-mile trip was expected.

Jerry got paid and we bought two bottles of JB scotch and started back to Bien Hoa. It was getting dark and I'll bet we had to go through about 50 roadblocks set up by the RF and PFs. "Biet Dong quan co van ding eda (Ranger Advisor crazy)," was what we were told at every stop. VC were all over the place. Hell, we didn't see any, and besides, we were Rangers in for a three-day blast and no VC were going to stop us.

We pulled up to the front gate of Bien Hoa Air Base, protected by barbed wire, claymores, and a double wall of sandbags, at 1930 hours. The guards had been on red alert since 1800 hours. They told us that we were nuts. We went on to the training compound and to the NCO club. Jerry and I were the last to leave. The gate guard wasn't going to let us out. We, having good manners, told him that we would beat his ass if he didn't.

3rd Ranger Group HQ told us that there were VC in Bien Hoa. On our side, there were only wounded in action (WIA), clerical Rangers, and four American NCOs, a total of 35. All our battalions were up north on operations. Jerry and I had another drink and went to bed.

We woke to the plunking of rounds being dropped into mortar tubes and their twanging as they passed over our

heads at about 0300 hours, 31 January 1968. The rounds were aimed for the chopper pads on Bien Hoa Air Base.

We teamed up with the two other NCOs, McKay and Thompson, got hold of the VN Ranger lieutenant (staff officer) and told him to get his people out on the berms. We could see black pants and shirts as VCs ran up and down the street, between houses less than 100 meters from us. We could count eight mortar tubes, and they had positioned them effectively, beside and in front of the houses. The VC knew that we couldn't and wouldn't fire at them because of civilians. They also knew that they could overrun us any time they wanted.

So the four of us got on the roof with a machine gun and two cases of grenades. If they came, we were going to give them one hell of a fight. We also had a radio and got hold of the Bien Hoa gunships and had them rake up and down the street in front of us all night. A large group of VC went down our left flank, firing B-40s at us. Finally, when it got light, we saw at least 40 VC bodies in the street, wasted by the gunships.

Some of the married Rangers who were WIA lived in the small settlement to our left flank. The VC had shot or beaten most of them. All the civilians started to move along the road to 3rd Corps HQ where it would be safe. A woman came up to Jerry and told him that the VC had

beaten her wounded husband, a member of Jerry's battalion.

Jerry and I decided that we were going to get that VC. The other two NCOs were going to try to get to 3rd Corps HQ. As we drove up the street to where the WIA were lying, a platoon from the 25th Div. came along. I told the platoon leader there were VC up the street who had B-40s. Well, he took off with his 113s. The first track took about three B-40 rounds. Luck was on their side; no one was hurt except the track. They unassed that track and came back past us and were gone. They weren't much help.

Just then Jerry said, "Stew, look what's coming."

I looked up and saw one of the best assault lines I've ever seen, only it was VC. I picked up the WIA and got into the jeep. As we were approaching the small bridge between us and 3rd Corps HQ, three VCs came out of the creek bed, firing on us.

Jerry whipped the jeep around and crashed through the gates at the Bien Hoa Mental Hospital, stopping it in front of the nuns' quarters. A sister said that she would take the WIA but that we Americans must leave, because if the VC found us, they would kill the WIA.

Jerry said, "I'll tell you what, Stew. Let's make a run for it across that bridge. You fire to the right and I'll fire to the left as we run."

"Let's go," I said. "What have we got to lose?"

I guess those VC thought that we were too dumb to pull a stunt like that. We each threw a grenade into the creek and fired as we ran across. Although there were VC in that stream bed, we caught them by surprise. We were jogging along when that meek platoon came back.

The platoon leader said, "Forgot about you two when we got hit back there." I came real close to butt-stroking him but controlled my temper.

While riding back to 3rd Corps HQ, I talked to the platoon sergeant and found out that this was the first time his platoon had come under fire. They were all green. I was glad to get to 3rd Corps HQ, because the VC were using the tracks for marksmanship practice.

At 3rd Corps HQ we assembled with MAJ. Moses, CPT. Withrow, SFC McKay, and SFC Thompson, who were getting a voluntary task force together to sweep the streets and alleyways in front of 3rd Corps HQ. CPT. Withrow, Jerry, and I would act as point. SFC Thompson would follow with the lead track. Then MAJ. Moses would follow with the clerks, cooks, and the infantry platoon. SFC McKay, the rear guard with the radio, would be last.

**An armored personnel carrier passes buildings damaged by U.S. Forces when they destroyed Viet Cong hiding places during Tet. U.S./ARVN forces killed 30,000 VC and literally**

**destroyed VC main force units and cadres. Remainder of war was fought largely by NVA.**





**ARVN troops of Co A, 30th Ranger Bn. on alert for VC terrorists clean out suspected area. U.S. Army Ranger advisors, like author, turned counterpart ARVN units into elite combat units.**

I'll never forget that just before we took off, Jerry offered the Cap and me a cigarette and said, "It might be our last one."

There we went, three Rangers up in front of a bunch of American volunteers. Damn it, I was proud. (Intelligence said that there was a platoon of about 15 holed up in that area. Bullshit, we found out later there was a battalion in there.)

All of a sudden, rounds were ricocheting off the pavement around me. SFC Hall, the mess sergeant, who had only 15 days to go in country, went down. MAJ. Moses leaped over two sand drums, landed on his side, rolled to his left, and fired his carbine at a building top. I saw a VC take a swan dive, holding an M-60 machine gun.

CPT. Withrow said, "Stew, give me cover, I'm going to get SFC Hall." I gave him cover. He picked SFC Hall up in his arms and ran back. The captain took one in his lower left leg.

SFC Hall came to and said, "Hi, fellows, did we get those bastards?" Then he died in our arms.

The firing at us intensified. I could feel the rounds tug at my jacket and pants. The platoon from the 25th was hugging the building fronts. SFC Thompson had to beat one of the 50 cal. gunners over the head to get him to get up and fire his gun into the buildings. The captain and Jerry broke a door down and went in firing.

Jerry cried, "Stew, they're coming down the alley with a rocket."

I stepped into the alley, firing. Two VC and I came face to face, not more than 10 paces apart. I saw that B-40 coming. It went over my head and landed in the VN

Officers Club in 3rd Corps HQ. Further down the alley, we herded about 40 civilians who had been lying on the floor of a house back to safety. The firing started again and was getting bad.

SFC McKay said, "3rd Corps HQ is ordering us to pull back into the compound." So we pulled back to the east gate of 3rd Corps HQ. In came the tracks with the platoon leader, only he had left his platoon outside against the buildings! Jerry and I grabbed the tracks and went back and got the platoon. CPT. Withrow's leg was bleeding badly, but Jerry and I damn near had to beat his ass when we put him on the medical chopper. He was a damn good officer.

That evening the 11th Cav. came to 3rd Corps HQ and leveled the section across from it.

MAJ. Moses said, "Stewart, you and Cox will be in charge of the security element at Train Compound."

While I was at Train, I learned that on 2 Feb. '68 my battalion was picked up and dropped off at the Saigon race track. Finally, MAJ. Moses let Jerry and me return to our battalions.

I joined my battalion at about 0900 hours. CPTs. Ritzs and Sky were sleeping upstairs in the 5th Precinct in the Cholon sector of Saigon. I was given the lowdown on what had happened to them and how the battalion got to Saigon.

They hadn't heard any word about me until I walked in. LT. Jackson had joined our group while we were on the border. LT. Zoney had taken over the 31st VN Ranger BN.

We could eat all our meals in a horseshoe-shaped apartment house

across from the station. We were invited to eat there because the wife worked as a bookkeeper at the Cholon PX. We hit a few spots and drank a few, but most of the time we stayed at the 5th Precinct.

During the morning of 5 Feb. 1968, word came that we were going on an operation up a main thoroughfare, not too far from the Cholon PX. We loaded up in our jeeps and trucks as if we were going to a picnic. I guess that's what the VN BN CO thought. (Intelligence said a squad of Cong were holed up in a pagoda.)

In we went with the battalion HQ and 1st companies. Although it was one of the busiest streets in the city, right then there wasn't a man to be seen. The lead jeep, our gun jeep, took a full burst of MG fire. It bounced over the curve and went through a store front. By that time we had unassed our jeeps and were hugging the building fronts.

Jabber, jabber, jabber. Damn, they were talking so fast I couldn't understand them. The lead company had moved a long way up the street and all their WIAs had been hit in the ankle or lower parts of the leg. CPT. Ritzs cut the boots off the WIAs and cleaned and dressed their wounds.

Sky got a line on a VC with his M-79, and his third round hit right in the cellar window. He and I went down a side street to our right and damn near got cut in half by 50 caliber fire. You could see the bullets spark as they bounced off the pavement. The gunner would have our range in a second.

So I became a sniper. CPT. Ritzs pulled up an ammo can and sat down. He began to point out VC to me and I would shoot them. I had hit about six when a round came through the little wall railing over my head. CPT. Ritzs screamed. He was lying on his back, grabbing his groin. I saw the hole and blood on his pants. I ripped his pants open.

Here's another lucky incident that you laugh about later. When the armor-piercing round came through the wall railing, it was spent and went through the captain's pants, making a fingernail gouge and stopping between his thigh and scrotum. He was making all kinds of noise because it was hot and blistering his balls.

"Damn it, Stew," the captain said, "you ripped the only clean pair of pants I have."

The captain and I went down to the ground floor to see what LT. Jackson was doing and to get something to eat. We ate in the hotel kitchen and talked things over. LT. Jackson was to stay with the battalion XO and the captain and I with the battalion company.

Heavy firing started again. This time the VC were using 122mm rockets. I had left the kitchen and was walking down the hallway when the whole wall caved in on top of me. It knocked me out at first.

When I came to I was buried and found it hard to breathe.

I could hear the captain say, "Damn it, he is under this shit. Help me dig him out."

I was lucky again. My steel pot, now with a big dent in the top, had saved me. I was bruised but all right.

Now that it was dark, we sat in the front room of the hotel. I fell asleep and had slept for about an hour, when the captain woke me. He wanted me to go down to the feed store to see how LT. Jackson was doing and to report back to him.

I met the lieutenant. We smoked and talked about the night to come. The BN XO came over to us.

Sky said, "We have to get the hell out of here." The house to our left had the front screened in and no door.

One of us yelled, "Let's go through it."

We damn sure did. Once in, I started to light a cigarette when a hand grenade came through the window. I dove for the L-shaped corner and Sky was right on top of me. When the grenade went off, I thought the building was coming down and my ears were bursting with pain. I stayed there until the dust settled. Sky started to groan.

"Are you hit?" I asked him. All he could do was shake his head and point to his behind. We were both wearing flak jackets. The back of his looked as if someone had cut it in half. The back half had flipped down and slapped him in the butt, leaving a red welt on both cheeks.

We had holed up with the second platoon of the 1st Company, when word came over the radio that the HQ element was pulling back to the main street and setting up a command post. We were told to push our way back in 10 minutes. Everything was on fire. The VC often set fires and then pulled back.

On the move back, wooden blinds of a house to our front dropped down, and we took a full burst of MG fire. If the platoon leader and his radio man hadn't been in front of me, I would be dead. They were killed outright. I saw one of my little friends go down, firing his Thompson. Later, after the fight, I found his body with his hands frozen in a death grip like he was still holding his Thompson.

We were pinned down. They had us and they knew it, but they didn't know about Sky's M-79. When the grenade went off, I moved to my right and down an alley. Heavy firing started again. Sky and I got separated and didn't see each other for over 21 hours.

Finally, with two Rangers, I found the HQ CP and reported what had happened to CPT. Ritz and asked him to have the battalion company give me a squad, so I could go get Sky. He laughed and told me that Sky had run into one of the RTOs from the 3rd platoon with 15 men who were cut off from their platoon leader and 10 men from the 2nd platoon. He was now acting as platoon leader and kicking ass.

"I'll be damned," was all I could say.

The CP was set up on top of a hotel where the BN CO could see the area from all four sides and command his troops. He was laughing because he now had an

American platoon leader. We had walked into a battalion-sized unit or larger and we were surrounded. I went to the east wall and looked over the area. I could see our troops and I could also see the VC wearing dark blue pants, light blue shirts, and white bush hats.

"The VC have killed our rear LP and are going to make a rear attack on us," he said. The lieutenant and I were running back and forth across the street, placing troops in good positions to catch the VC. They started their attack as the lieutenant and I were recrossing the street. A B-40 hit the rim of one of our jeeps. Shrapnel was flying all over.

The lieutenant said, "Stew." As I turned around to see what he wanted, he fell on me.

I grabbed him and felt blood. I dragged him out of the street into the feed store. He had three or four holes in his back and one in his left buttock big enough to stick your fist into. I sent one of the Rangers to get the captain. I was trying to stop the bleeding when the captain got there.

"It's real bad," I told him. He tried to get the medic to drive to the helipad at the Free World Military Assistance Organization at 12 Tran Quoc Toan, but he refused.

"No, too many VC up the street."

CPL. Shung, the captain's driver, said, "I drive Trung Wy."

LT. Jackson said, "Stew, take this little pistol of mine because they will take it away from me."

"Okay," I said, "I'll have it when you get back."

**A C-47 destroyed during rocket and mortar attack on Tan Son Nhut Air Base at height of Tet. Damage scenes such as this**

**were used by the press to give distorted view to Americans of what was happening during New Year's truce violation.**



The captain turned to me and said, "Stew, you are now the SA until I get back."

Tears rolled down my cheeks as I watched that jeep move up the street. I saw two B-40s pass over the jeep and green tracer fire go at it.

Later, one of the BN CO's radio men said, "Some one speak English." He motioned me toward the radio. The captain had made the helipad okay, and the lieutenant was on his way to the hospital.

It started to get light and buildings were still burning. Other companies of the battalion moved in and the fighting stopped. The captain got back, and Sky came in with his platoon.

The battalion commander gave him a big hug and said, "No. 1 platoon leader, HQ wants to have a body count."

Well, we must have had about 30 lying out in front of the hotel and some of them were alive. The Red Cross came in and treated the VCs. Newspaper reporters from all countries were there taking our pictures, and television cameras were whirring, especially when Sky and I started loading VC bodies on the police truck. I remember an arm coming off as I was putting a body on the truck. I threw up everything I had eaten the night before.

Small shops in the area were burning badly and if things didn't change the whole area would burn to the ground. CPT. Ritz started a civilian fire brigade

and saved quite a few shops with his effort. The captain and Sky received silver stars for their actions.

We moved from the police station to a small VN-German owned plastics factory with two floors of living quarters above it. The next day I had to go before the promotion board. Here I was in the middle of a war zone and had to get dressed up! When the Vietnamese heard about it, the battalion supply sergeant got me a new

uniform with all the tags on it. I came out No. 1 on the board and bought four fifths of whiskey and 10 cases of beer. That night the old plastics factory was rumbling from all the noise. The BN CO came downstairs to see what was going on. He got drunk too.

On 11 Feb. 1968, we had another go at it. I don't remember the street, but it was three blocks south of the race track and three to four blocks right as you look at a

top of an old bus or in the houses. I would take a drink, then stand on a stool and hand it to the M-60 gunner. He would drink, hand the bottle back to me, and give the VC a burst, and the old VC would fire right back.

Four American MPs showed up during this ritual. They had a 90mm and asked if they could help. The BN CO didn't want to use heavy weapons because civilians

were still in there. One of the VC's B-40s hit the side of the wall and sent bricks down on us. We began to laugh. The MPs said we were nuts to sit there. They went across the street and got under the old bus. The next round landed on its top. Those MPs broke a track record getting out of the area.

More fires were burning now. A fire truck showed up and so did the Vietnamese Military Commander of Saigon. He was quite a man. Because ammo caches were exploding within the area, he told the firemen to get their hoses into the alleys to put out the fires. The firemen moved into the large alley but ran back because of VC fire. Sky and I went down the large alley; he jumped across the little one and damn near got another red welt.

At the same time, everyone was getting into the act, even cameramen and newspapermen.

"Stew, throw me a grenade," said Sky. We had been practicing throwing each other grenades in all positions. This time I pulled the pin, popped

the handle, then threw it to him. He caught it in his right hand and sent it down the alley in one smooth operation. After the explosion, we both stepped into the alley, firing. I covered him while he went down to check the VC with the MG. "Hell," he said. "That grenade got him."

"You two guys are nuts," a newspaperman said to me.

(continued on page 84)



Over 16,000 individual and 6,000 crew-served weapons were captured from NVA/VC. Shown here are AKs, B-40 anti-tank rocket launchers, 85mm rocket launchers, SKS carbines, Chinese Communist light machine guns and French MAT-49 SMGs.

map. Fires had already started and people were running all over the place. A network of smaller alleys spread out from a large one that had a little store, full of food and beer, at its corner. A balcony ran all around the building. The BN CO set up a CP in the store. We had an M-60 gunner on the balcony who would fire a burst around the corner.

The VC would fire back with B-40s. Their rounds landed across the street on

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# AFRICA'S NEXT HOT SPOT?

## SOUTH AFRICA FACES MARXIST ENEMY ACROSS ANGOLAN FRONTIER

BY AL J VENTER



Off-duty South African troops relax by fishing in the Zambesi River while ever-alert SA gun crew provides security with HB M-2 Browning .50 MG.

Since 1974 the vast West African state of Angola—almost twice the size of Texas and ruled by the Portuguese for four centuries—has been in the news. Civil war since independence in 1975 has been responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of people: guilty and innocent; military men and non-combatants.

Even as you read this article, sporadic action continues in Angola, fueled on the one side by Russia and her principal ally in Africa—Cuba—and on the other by several nations opposed to a Marxist presence on the “Dark Continent.”

One side effect of this continuing struggle is that several countries fringing Angola have been caught in the maelstrom of war. Already Angolan-based dissidents, again backed by Russia and Cuba, tried unsuccessfully in 1977 to invade southern Zaire’s Shaba Province. Zambia has also experienced unrest along her extended frontier with the embattled country.

South West Africa—called Namibia by some—also has its problems. Fringing Angola’s southern borders for a distance of almost 1000 miles, the anti-Southern African movement Swapo (South West Africa People’s Organization) uses Angola as a base to hit at targets in Caprivi, Owambo, and Kavango.

These terrorists, backed by a variety of Iron Curtain states and Cuba, have launched a war of attrition against the established authority in the territory. Ironically, the people who suffer most at the hands of the Swapo dissidents are their “Black Brothers” whom, they claim, they seek to “liberate.” For every white soldier who has died as a result of a contact with Swapo elements, thousands of Black South West African men, women, and children have been murdered, beaten, intimidated, and tortured by the force which calls for the “liberation” of this disputed land.

Because of this continuing threat, South African military forces are deployed throughout the operational area and while the state of war remains at a low level, contacts do occur. People do get killed.

SOF Contributing Editor Al J. Venter visited this troubled area as a guest of the South African Army in July 1977. He was the first journalist to gain unrestricted access to the region and travelled the length of the border area by chopper and in mine-protected vehicles.

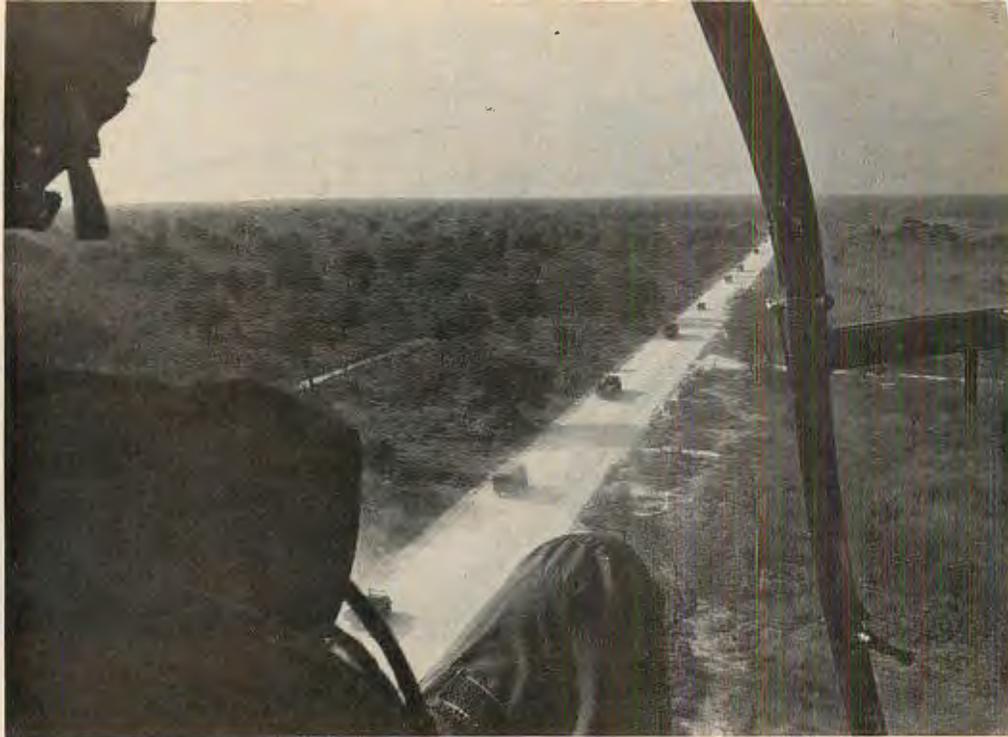
There was much evidence that the Swapo threat is real and that contacts are regular and often intense.

This is his on-the-spot report:

There was a note of urgency in Lieutenant Ian Dougall’s voice.

“Base. This is Echo Lima. Can you hear me?” He repeated the message. No reaction.

The lieutenant rose to his feet and for a moment looked pensive. Beside him, Staff Sergeant Hanekom said nothing;



South African chopper provides security to convoy, traveling the “Golden Highway,” the dusty, gravel artery that stretches the length of the Angolan border in northern S.W. Africa.

this was his umpteenth stint in the bush and he knew enough about radio comms to realize that it is the infantryman’s lot for the radio to go on the blink when it’s needed most.

Lieutenant Dougall tried again, this time switching to another waveband. “All stations, can you hear me? Come in please.” Still nothing.

He sat down on his haunches and surveyed the flat mopani bush country around him. Like seven other men on the patrol I was with, he had come to know the featureless terrain of the border regions adjoining Angola and never ceased to marvel at the surprises it offered the unsuspecting. Dougall felt that everything had gone wrong on his first fully operational patrol; this was not at all the way they had explained it at infantry school. Still, he would have to do what he could.

“Staff,” he called to Staff Sergeant Hanekom, “you heard the message. We have an enemy unit, unknown strength, possibly eight to 12 Swapo, heading for this waterhole.” Staff nodded in affirmation. “That’s right, sir,” he responded calmly.

By his professional manner, the older man seemed to provide the lieutenant with the stimulus he was looking for. The NCO was pleased that the officer was prepared to call on his experience; clearly here was a man not too proud to use every asset at his disposal when in a tight corner. He thought, “We’ll make a professional of him yet.”

The lieutenant continued, “Base knows we’re here. They know we received their message, so we can assume they will expect us to deploy in readiness for this group of —,” Dougall hesitated momentarily.

“Unexpected guests, sir,” the staff sergeant supplied with a smile. He felt the word “terrorists” might have been a little too dramatic for that particular moment.

“Quite right, Staff. Unexpected guests.” Things were gradually falling into shape for the young lieutenant.

“An ambush, sir?” queried the NCO, suggesting that three of the patrol members, himself included, should take up positions on the outer perimeter while the other five, under the lieutenant, should set up an attack position around the waterhole itself.

An armored car unit on patrol in Caprivi.





South Africa Air Force chopper on resupply mission to far-northern position in South West Africa. Though intruders do not move in large numbers, security is maintained at all times.

The lieutenant took his cue and started deploying his men. He placed his machine gun in a position to cover a wide arc. Two other men with grenade launchers covered the flanks, while an anti-personnel mine dominated the main access route through the bush towards the waterhole.

It was early in the day when the patrol first heard of the possibility of a Swapo unit in the area. Within 15 minutes every man was in his position, waiting and alert. By noon, one of the men indicated that he had used all his water. Could he move forward to get some more? The reply was a terse negative from the NCO.

The only movement was a relay of men, one hour at a time, who scurried up an old baobab tree which served the squad, somewhat inadequately, as an improvised observation post. If anything was spotted, the observer in the OP would throw down his cap to attract attention and would then evacuate the position with as little noise as possible and report what he had seen. It went without saying that the men would climb down on the nearest side of the old tree.



Author on operational flight in SAAF chopper just south of southern border of Angola. Was first journalist to obtain unrestricted access to region.

The odds were in favor of those who were doing the waiting, the lieutenant noted, but there were many imponderables. He soon found that the worst of these was time.

Two hours later, the sun still beat down out of a cloudless sky on the exposed soldiers. By now even the lieutenant would have traded half his spare ammunition for a canteen of the dirty, brackish water in the nearby waterhole. But no one moved. Within the confines of their self-imposed immobilization the soldiers were now being bothered by horseflies which seemed as big as sparrows and the occasional tsetse fly.

Now a small herd of eland moved sedately down the path leading from the border. Circumspectly, the eland approached water, drank and moved on again, totally unaware of the human presence so close to them. The lieutenant was pleased: his men had hidden themselves well.

The lieutenant's lungs screamed for a cigarette, but he knew that Swapo trackers could pick up the whiff of tobacco smoke in this open bush country, often from several miles away.

Gradually the sun moved across its orbit and started settling in the west.

It was not quite twilight when, suddenly, a cap landed next to the Lieutenant as he lay in a tangle of brush. He looked up and saw the youngest member of the patrol frantically scrambling down the old tree; one of the other men, jabbing at him angrily with his rifle, whispered savagely about the noise he was making.

"Sir," gasped the "Troopie," as he dropped to the ground. "Coming this way . . . and they're wearing uniforms." The youngster's eyes were wide and he

was breathing heavily. "What color?" asked the lieutenant. "Can't see, sir . . . but they're armed," said the young soldier.

It could only be the Swapo unit. Lieutenant Dougall dispatched a man on his hands and knees to inform the NCO who was lying in wait up front. Within 15 minutes it was dark. Excitement within the unit ran at fever pitch. Each man peered anxiously over the sights of his rifle; every one of them imagined shadowy movement in the unsure light.

Still they waited. No one said a word, the soldiers only too aware that if the unit's presence became known, they might well become the hunted instead of the hunters.

An hour went by. Nothing. Adrenalin pumped thickly through the lieutenant's veins. Others around him, he could see, were equally tensed and expectant. The silence was oppressive.

Night had long since enveloped the scene when suddenly all ears pricked at a sound to the left, well away from the approach path. There was a light crunch, as if a foot had snagged on a protruding branch or log.

Immediately the men prepared themselves. The lieutenant was not altogether surprised that the intruders had not approached the waterhole directly.

Suddenly a loud crack punctuated the night as a branch was ripped from a tree; then more heavy footfalls, closer this time. "What the hell!" the lieutenant muttered. It was clear to the men lying in ambush that this new disturbance was certainly not being created by terrorists. The next moment the man on the left flank, contrary to orders, materialized out of the gloom.

"You idiot, de Jager, you might have got shot. What are you trying to do, coming on us like that?" De Jager, his

face ashen, directed only one word at the lieutenant. "Elephants!"

De Jager had been lucky that night. One moment all was quiet; the next a herd of about 20 elephants had cut him off from the patrol. What was worse, he could hear more elephants following, and he was lying directly between them and the waterhole.

It was now impossible to hold the position, and the NCO ordered the men to a small clearing adjacent to the waterhole. That way, at least, the elephants could see there were humans about without stumbling upon them by accident and perhaps charging in fright.

For that night, at any rate, the war for eight South African soldiers was over. At first light a small reconnaissance detachment scoured the area for traces of the enemy. What they found had sobering implications for those who had lain in ambush the previous night.

Footprints, not more than a few hours old, led to within a few hundred yards of the waterhole. Here the terrorists, about eight in number, had waited, possibly for several hours, before filling their water bottles.

It is known that no Swapo unit will move into an area without first reconning the terrain and this is obviously what the terrorists had been doing when the elephants blundered from the bush and disclosed the presence of the South African troops.

. . . . .

The war along the northern fringes of South West Africa is different from any other yet experienced by South African forces in this century. As a conflict it has all the ingredients of the classical guerrilla struggle; there are government forces and there are the locals, some for the terrorist cause, others against it.

This is also a waiting war. The insurgent is aware that he can bide his time and strike at will; the defender must remain on the alert and counter each and every move as and when he finds them. There can be no letting up, for any respite can only be regarded by attackers and locals as a sign of weakness on the part of the defender.

More important, the insurgent is not disturbed by casualties. He is aware that his own people have been moulded to the implicit will of the movement; they are faceless and, in many instances, their true aspirations are rarely considered, much less known.

When a terrorist is killed in action, his loss is regarded as a necessity, a gesture for the revolution.

It is different when South African forces suffer a loss. The casualty's name, and very often his picture, is identified by the masses, for he is part of a society that finds its succor in traditions dating back centuries. When an individual dies, a proportion of that society mourns, for it has always been that way with South Africans.

Low intensity operations along the borders are different from those elsewhere in the world. In Rhodesia the enemy seeks to be identified. He operates from fixed bases, in Mozambique, Zambia, and Botswana, and often in large groups. In Vietnam, two powers clashed, using every means at their disposal to achieve victory. But along the northern frontiers of South West Africa, conflict is

South African Panhard armored cars on patrol in bush country. Panhards carry 90mm main guns which proved ef-

fective against Soviet-made tanks, operated by Castro Cubans during Angola conflict.





South Africa "troopies" on patrol in swamp country adjacent to Angolan border. South Africa troops have to operate in wide variety of terrain, climates.

essentially of a low intensity, protracted nature which the insurgents have geared for the purpose of wearing down morale both at the front and at home.

Swapo, operating from Marxist Angola, sees its operations as part of the process of eradicating morale and causing the South African public to question the reason why large bodies of men should be kept economically inactive in situations where very few of them ever make direct contact with the enemy.

Few of the critics of this kind of warfare are aware that the very nature of

**SA "troopie" armed with WW II Bren LMG, an old, but still effective weapon.**



hostilities dictates that there are no longer two clearly demarcated opposing forces, but rather a series of conflicts which are largely economic, psychological, and anti-social.

This is a war in which a group of insurgents will arrive at an African village after dark and murder anyone there who has been even remotely associated with established authority, in this case, the government. Brutal retribution is handed out to local blacks for trivial "offenses" such as treating cattle at a government dip, or visiting the local clinic to seek treatment for a sick child.

For a villager to have a member of the family in government service is invariably a capital "crime." The death sentence is usually carried out in the back of the *kraal* to the staccato rattle of Soviet-supplied AK-47 automatic carbines.

There are other implications in this continuing struggle for survival in an alien land that has remained virtually unchanged for millenia.

One of the biggest problems facing South African border forces is the identification of the enemy, an issue complicated by the fact that the insurgent is usually as black as the local friendly natives, and he speaks the same language.

Furthermore, the presence of a terrorist in a village is not often reported. If a local tribesman does tell the authorities that a Swapo militant has taken up residence at his *kraal*, there is every likelihood that a day, a month or even a year later, that same *kraal* will be visited by friends of the detained or dead man and the entire village will be razed and all its inhabitants —men, women, and children— massacred.

This is not idle conjecture. Such incidents have happened in the past. They will occur again, often, for such is the tragedy of this kind of unconventional warfare: unarmed civilians caught in the cross-fire of two opposing forces. Fortunately, however, the level of cooperation between local blacks and members of the security forces remains high.

Security force patrols rarely go out in strength without a doctor or a veterinary surgeon. A call at a village might result in all the local cattle being injected against a new strain of cattle flu that has spread from across the Angolan border, or all the dogs being inoculated against rabies. Or the doctor might try to check the level of trachoma among village children. There is an incredibly high incidence of this eye disease throughout southern Angola and, more recently, as a result of the influx of refugees from Angola, the northern reaches of South West Africa.

There are other duties a patrol might perform. One unit with whom I spent some days in the operational area included a soldier who excelled in repairing water pumps. Another detachment boasted an agricultural expert who made considerable effort to improve the crops cultivated by a nearby village.

Meanwhile, the war goes on. Matters are not eased by the fact that, soldiers being soldiers, there are few real secrets when there are people about who are trying to kill you, or at least maim you and your buddies with landmines.

For this reason, the real or imagined presence of a terrorist stronghold or training base just across the Angolan or Zambian borders makes for real frustration, especially when a unit has lost two or three trucks in a week to mines laid at

night. Time and again I heard the cry: "Let's go after them, we know where they are." But it is not to be, for any cross-border operation will inevitably spill over into the realm of international politics.

Terrorist incursions into South West Africa, when made, rarely last longer than a few hours. The terrorists lay their mines and their increasingly sophisticated booby traps—some of them distinctly reminiscent of Viet Cong devices—and then scurry back across the thin demarcation line before dawn.

The fact that a fairly large region running parallel to the frontier has been declared a "no-go" area in which locals are not allowed without permission, rarely intimidates terrorist transgressors. "They come at night and lay their mines. In the morning we follow their footsteps out again. There is nothing we can do," commented Commandant Derek Franz, a Citizen Force officer from Cape Town who was doing his third three-month tour of border duty in the past two years when I stayed at his camp about 10 miles from the frontier.

What of the future? It is clear that if South Africa pulled out from South West Africa tomorrow the result would be a massive insurgence from across the frontier, probably with Cuban and Soviet support. It could result in another Angolan debacle with resulting total chaos and huge loss of life.

Some say that while the South Africans have the Cubans as their neighbors along the Kunene River (the Angolan border), they would be inviting them to join them as partners along the Orange River almost 1000 miles to the south if they were to withdraw from where they are today. Then the war will be on the borders of South Africa proper, a 10-year tactic projected by the already radical Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Overdramatic? Perhaps. But going purely by the track record during the past two years in Angola, the likelihood of more communist involvement in southern Africa is there.

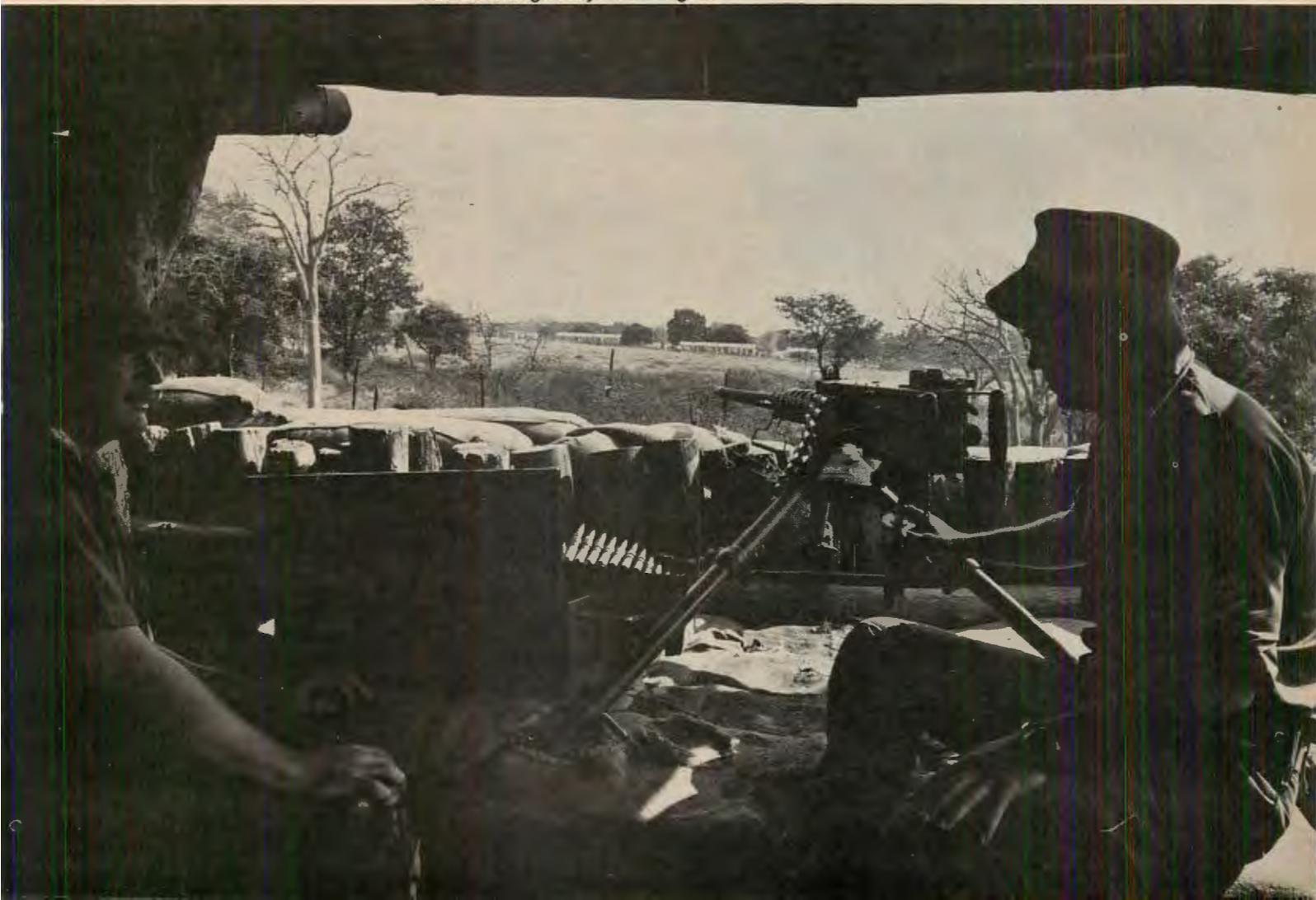
Of that even the most sanguine observer can be sure.



SA position overlooking Zambian border near Caprivi. This particular outpost has been target of several attacks. Note .50 cal. Browning heavy machine gun.



South African Army physician treating tribal woman during routine patrol. Many natives come to villages for treatment of their ailments due to shortages of doctors in southern Africa. Note Uzi SMG carried by physician.





# Pros At Work: BOUNTY HUNTING IN AFRICA

by Wyatt Earp Jr.

We moved quickly, almost at a jog, in order to reach our ambush position before sunset. The three of us were in single file, 15 to 20 meters apart, FN's at the ready, "jungle" slings keeping the weight on our shoulders. Our packs slapped and dug into our backs, and I felt sweat soaking through my shirt.

When one of my partners turned his face toward me, I saw tracks of sweat making little rivers through the dust map of his face. They were as hard pressed as I. Their heads rotated from side to side as they moved, looking for suspicious signs. I also turned, frequently walking backward to scan our rear.

We paralleled but stayed off the trail, since our boot tracks would be too distinctive. We did not want to announce our presence until we were ready. Occasionally, we saw terrorist boot prints on the trail. During an Intelligence briefing that afternoon, workers on the ranch indicated that terrorists and rustlers frequently used a specific waterhole, usually at dusk.

John, Bob and I had just completed a four-day ambush in another location. For six hours one dark, moonless night we had played cat-and-mouse with a large force that had surrounded us by accident. We could not see them, but we had heard their heavy boots, stalking us, apparently uncertain of our exact location. The boots told us they were terrorists, since inhabitants in this region go barefoot or wear light footgear, such as tennis shoes. Only terrors from nearby Mozambique wear military boots.

During that four day ambush our first contact had come as a surprise. I had made a tactical error by moving a few feet away from our position against a small embankment to relieve myself. I stood by a tree, stretching my cramped muscles, when I heard heavy booted feet moving through the brush. By the sound, I judged that two men were moving less than 50 meters away.

I tensed, concerned because I knew John and Bob couldn't hear as well as I. I moved as carefully as I could to warn them, but thick, dry grass gave away my

position. The unseen men ran through the brush away from us.

Bob and John indicated they had also heard the footsteps. We settled back, certain our ambush was blown, when the unbelievable happened! Footsteps moved in all around us and we heard whispers and low murmuring conversations. The two who had run may have been point men who had taken off without giving warning, or they may have joined the main body, now searching for us.

We had been hired to take out cattle rustlers; we knew we were now surrounded by terrorists, but we had agreed beforehand that terrors were our job too.

Their cautious movement, halting, listening, and moving again, indicated that they knew we were in the area but weren't sure where. We decided to "take" the first one we could see, although we had only two loaded FN magazines per man and couldn't sustain a long engagement. However, we felt we could initiate contact, then break it, using our two grenades and relying on our pistols for back-up when the FNs ran dry.

We had the advantage in knowing where each of our party was—within arm's reach and visible to one another—while they were spread out and wouldn't know friend from foe.

One of them moved to within 15 meters of me. Breath coming in muffled gasps, my heart pounding rapidly, I slowly shifted my FN toward him, straining to see, but he moved away.

After three tense hours, they suddenly moved back, apparently to regroup behind our embankment. We decided to return to our hidden base camp, a more defensible position, to secure our equipment. Our movement threw them off balance. Noise indicated we had accidentally moved between two small groups and the main body and they weren't sure which group was which. Some of them panicked, running away noisily, while others tried to creep away.

For 2½ hours we listened to the different groups, moving about, signaling and trying to stalk us or contact one another. After six hours of being stalked, we decided to force their hand and end the stalemate.

Leaving Bob at the base camp with my FN and extra magazines, John and I crept to where we heard activity. By pre-arrangement, he threw a grenade beyond them; we planned to nail some of them as they ran toward us. I chose my Colt .45 for this operation, since I had trained extensively with it and could aim it instinctively. Furthermore, I trusted the Super Vel hollow points to stop a charging man far better than the fulljacketed 7.62 rounds. But when the grenade was thrown, they ran away from us, providing us with no targets.

Now, three days later, after a second fruitless contact, we were racing toward a third ambush site. A short distance from



Two Americans employed as range detectives in Africa. Man on left carries .270 Winchester with wide 2½x Redfield scope. He also carries a Colt .45 for night work and a Gerber MKII combat knife on webbing. Man on right carries 7.62 FN rifle, 9mm Browning and Randall knife.

the waterhole, I was left to guard the packs, while John and Bob reconned around it. When they returned, we moved to within 150 meters of the waterhole in order to set up an ambush before sunset, a half hour away.

As light decreased, we would move by stages, reaching the rocks less than 20 feet from the waterhole, and be under cover.

Everything went according to plan for the first two stages. We watched and listened carefully, until it became too dark to see the waterhole from our second position. We eased out of our packs, taking only our FNs and pistols. I carried my

trusty .45 and four extra magazines; the others had 9mm Brownings. We each had three or four magazines for the FNs, plus extra 20-rd. boxes of ammo to reload empty magazines. We had learned our lesson from the first ambush and had scrounged up every FN magazine we could find in the ranch house.

We planned to move up to the waterhole, our final position, and crept forward within arm's reach, three abreast, John in the middle, Bob on the right, and me on the left. John stopped.

"Do you hear that?" he whispered.

Bob and I stopped too. I'd heard without realizing what it was, thinking,

American range detectives on patrol in village near Mozambique border. Rustlers, who have stolen or killed thousands of head of cattle, are now meeting effective opposition.





American soldier of fortune working as "range detective" in Rhodesia. He is carrying FN rifle and has 9mm Browning on his hip for back-up. Men such as he are fighting rustlers and terrorists on privately owned farms and ranches. Note mine-proofed Land Rover with roll-over bars behind him.

"That's the loudest impala I've ever heard drinking at a waterhole!"

"At John's whisper, I'd recognized what I'd been hearing.

"Canteens!" I answered.

I eased the safety off my FN, as the others did the same. We eased forward and heard low voices and the canteens rattling. 30 meters from the waterhole, we heard a dog growl. There was no time to move closer.

"Halt!" John yelled in the local dialect but couldn't finish with, "hands up!" before several dogs attacked.

We heard men moving. We all fired simultaneously, John with short bursts on full auto, Bob and I steadily on semi-auto. The dogs veered off. Our FNs roared like cannons, their bright muzzle flashes making flash-bulb spots of brightness. We saw flickering shadows caught like dancers by strobe lights. I saw flashes from my gun barrel and resultant sparks flying up from bullets ricocheting off the rock surfaces surrounding the waterhole. I used the flashes and sparks to adjust my fire.

My FN jammed. I cleared it so smoothly and automatically that I hardly interrupted my rate of fire.

John yelled, "Duck!"

I crouched lower, firing steadily. His grenade exploded 50 meters in front of us, an incredible throw. (John was an ex-baseball pitcher with powerful arms.) I couldn't hear in my left ear, but I was working too intently to give it other than passing notice until later.

My FN stopped firing again; I thought it had jammed again and changed magazines quickly. I did not know until later I had fired dry. It jammed again and I disgustedly let go of the handgrip and swept up my .45 with my right hand, still holding the rifle with my left. The .45 felt like a comfortable, old friend. I automatically fired two quick shots at a dark figure crouching prone on the rocks.

I heard a man yelling and splashing through the water. During our violent assault, we'd walked most of the 30 meters toward our opponents. I fired five rounds at the splashing man, quickly reloading a full magazine while keeping the last round in the chamber. Bob was also firing the last of his second FN magazine at the fleeing figure.

He was still running when John called out, "Back off! Back off! We've got to reload! We may get hit!"

He covered us, as we quickly snatched up the empty magazines and moved back to our packs. We reloaded the magazines, then searched for a defensive position.

Several other range detectives in an ambush almost ten miles away had heard our FNs, grenade and .45 and knew at once it was us. We all knew the different sound between terr' AKs and good guys' FNs. When they'd heard my .45 they figured we were in trouble, but we were still on our own until late the next afternoon, when a Land Rover, with as many men aboard as could be rounded up, made its way to a prearranged rendezvous.

In the morning, we reconnoitered the waterhole and found equipment and three bodies, later identified as part of a larger group camped nearby. They had been drawing water. The man on the rocks had two .45 caliber bullet holes approximately 1½ inches apart in his heart and an FN round had gone through his head. Another man had been killed instantly by the grenade. The third had crawled 50 meters into the bush with four or five FN rounds in him, before dying. The man who had been running through the water was never found.

Cattle rustling in Rhodesia has recently reached epidemic proportions. Although, historically, it has long been practiced by all races in Africa, in Rhodesia it has a new twist. Rhodesian terrorists, having suffered defeat after defeat from the regular Rhodesian Army, have turned to a new and safer target: the Rhodesian economy.

The majority of African tribesmen in Rhodesia live on Tribal Trust Lands, approximately 50% of Rhodesian land. The remaining land is open to private ownership or game reserves, with much of it in the hands of white Rhodesian cartels or private citizens.

Since receiving control of the TTLs (similar to U.S. Indian reservations but ruled by the inhabitants with far greater autonomy), tribal groups have disregarded game control, land management and proper grazing techniques. As a result, all wild game, up to and including songbirds, has been eliminated from the land, available grass has been overgrazed, and the land is virtually barren. Tribesmen have to look to white-managed farms and ranches to solve their basic food needs.

By attacking these farms and ranches, terrorists seek three objectives. The first is to bankrupt the Rhodesian economy. Produce from ranches and farms brings in much-needed foreign cash, since Rhodesia is a self-supporting agricultural society, exporting meat to other African countries, which, like the Tribal Trust Lands, can't get it together enough to raise the food needed for their own people. Rustling or destroying cattle and attacking the ranchers themselves cuts off this needed portion of the economy, bringing Rhodesia's government closer to collapse.

Secondly, eliminating cattle means starvation. As food begins to run out, black Africans on TTLs will be ready to join "revolutionary" forces out of desperation. If the government can't provide for them, the terrorists feel the indigenous personnel must turn to them.

Finally, as white-managed farms and ranches are driven out of business and abandoned, as is now happening in parts of Rhodesia, terrorists use the land for propaganda, saying they have "liberated" it from white managers for use by black Rhodesians.

These terrorist goals are short-sighted. Although their tactics effectively damage

the white-ruled Rhodesian government, their long-term effects on Rhodesian society and economy are terrifying. If the terrorists take over a society with a ruined economy and inherit a government unable to feed its people, they will also inherit the seeds of their own destruction, since the people will blame the new government when starvation continues.

Furthermore, if the only large source of qualified management personnel, the whites, are driven from the country, the future of Rhodesia will be comparable to the 15-year reign of terror and chaos that dominated the Congo (Zaire) from the 1960s on.

Thus, the problem of rustling in Rhodesia has assumed drastic proportions. The Rhodesian Army, busy dealing with terrorist attacks, cannot cope with what at first glance appears to be a "police" problem. Rustlers, encouraged, supported, and joined by terrorists, have grown bolder in the past few months. Several farms and ranches have been driven out of business, while others are ready to quit. One ranch started 1977 with over 25,000 head of cattle. By August, it had barely 10,000 left.

Initially, farmers, ranchers, and their workers attempted to patrol their property, working cattle and carrying arms to protect themselves and their animals. But this was not sufficient.

Professionals must be dealt with by professionals. Workers and managers hadn't the experience, nor could they spare the time to fight professional rustlers and terrorists. Little by little, professional warriors/soldiers of fortune were hired. Although most had military or police experience, the quality of the first groups hired was spotty.

Farmers and ranchers, like many businesses buying security for the first time, thought they could hire the cheapest "FN-operators" available (named after the Belgian-designed auto rifle which they carried). In most cases, ranches got what they'd paid for: nothing.

But over the last few months, ranchers have learned that for the best results, you hire experienced, competent individuals. Gradually, the inept have been weeded out and have been replaced with experts in guerrilla and counter-guerrilla operations. Salaries have risen and, as applicants appeared, their records were scanned for examples of past combat experience—not just military service but active combat. Veterans of elite forces, such as U.S. Special Forces, Rhodesian Selous Scouts or Special Air Services, British S.A.S. with experience in Northern Ireland, professional hunters and trackers have been hired.

History, we are told, repeats itself, and American history has its parallels to contemporary Rhodesia. In the 1880s and '90s in various western territories,

rustlers got the upper hand over ranchers, who at first tried to stop them themselves or with their own ranch hands. When they realized they could not cope with the problem they began to look for professional manhunters. The most experienced veterans of the 10-year campaigns against Apache guerrillas were hired, as were ex-Pinkerton agents, and noted lawmen. Large ranches hired their own personnel, while smaller ranchers relied on cattlemen's associations which loaned their professionals out on an as-needed basis.

Men such as Charlie Siringo, Whispering Smith, and Tom Horn became quiet legends as they pursued their grim professions. Their equally famous opponents turned to more lucrative pursuits as cattle rustling became more dangerous. Butch Cassidy, Harry Longbaugh ("the Sundance Kid") and the like were the men who worked the other side of the fence.

Countless battles between "range detectives," as the security men were called, and rustlers went unrecorded but had a telling effect on U.S. western history as cattle rustling was reduced from its monstrous proportions to the status of a minor problem. Justice was usually a .45-Colt bullet or a tight noose on a short rope.

Today's "range detectives" are fighting the same kind of battle in various African countries, most notably in Rhodesia. Like their American counter-

parts, many carry the Colt .45 as a personal side arm, but today's weapon is semi-auto instead of single action. Most carry the 9mm Browning, due to availability of ammunition. Weapons range from 7.62 caliber FN semi and full-auto rifles to 9mm Uzi submachine guns, and shotguns.

One of the most successful range detectives I know carries a 30-inch barreled 12-ga. Browning semi-auto shotgun. Loaded with #2 buckshot, it is lighter than FNs or Uzis with extra magazines, is effective in night ambushes, and in the event of a chase, is not as affected by heavy breathing and a pounding heart. His record of successful operations speaks for itself.

My background and those of my two partners are typical. John is a Special Forces veteran with several tours in Vietnam, specializing in S.O.G. cross-border missions. Bob is an Australian with Vietnam jungle experience and I spent several tours in Vietnam in the U.S. military and have been in revolutions in the Middle East. All of us had had jobs with good pay in our home countries but, finding life boring and unchallenging, had moved to Rhodesia to work as range detectives for less than what we had earned in our peacetime jobs. Yet our new jobs were challenging and personally rewarding.

Pay for civilian security work varies from place to place. One large ranch pays

**John leads authorities to scene of ambush mentioned in article. They had to wait several days to gather a force too big for terrorists to ambush. Three terrorist/rustlers met their end at the waterhole.**



\$450 Rhodesian (approximately \$700 U.S.) per month, plus room and board, while another pays \$7.00 Rhodesian per day (\$11 U.S.) with a \$750 bonus for each rustler. Most ranches provide long guns, usually FN 7.62 rifles, but since some of these weapons are inadequate, many operatives bring their own guns and ammo.

Contacts are escalating between rustlers, terrs, and security men. After contact between AK-47 (or AKM)-armed rustlers and their terrorist supporters, we range detectives are beginning to use Claymore mines and hand grenades. One range detective carried a Voere AR-180 .22 caliber full-auto machine gun with an 1800-round-per-minute rate of fire and a 177-round drum magazine.

Many rustlers carry only long-bladed knives or bows and arrows, preferring to run when contact is made, while others, particularly those in close contact with terrs, are armed with the full gamut of Eastern bloc weapons. In addition, many rustlers are Frelimo soldiers from Mozambique, trying to strike a blow against Rhodesia but also compensating for their own government's poor management policies which have driven their country to the verge of starvation. They, too, are heavily armed.

The cattle security business is dangerous, since we never know when we may be the targets. Recently, on one large ranch, range detectives in a night ambush near a previously used infiltration

route, saw several rustlers, led by a man in a white coat, approach their six-man position.

One security man yelled, "Halt!"

When the rustlers ran, the six opened fire. Several rustlers appeared to be wounded but all got away.

Their ambush position exposed, the detectives moved to a new spot a few thousand feet away. They were surprised to see another group of would-be rustlers, again led by the man in white, a highly unusual event, since the sound of firing, which could be heard for miles, normally ended all activity for the remainder of the night.

The range detectives fired again, killing one rustler, then moved to a new ambush where the scene was repeated. In each case, the security men saw opportunities to follow the rustlers off the ranch but chose instead to set up new ambush positions. They engaged in five fire fights that night.

Morning brought unexpected reinforcements to the detectives. It also showed that the rustlers were now trapped inside a 5,000-acre paddock where a few thousand cattle had been put for safe-keeping. The paddock contained heavy brush suitable for concealment.

The first reinforcements were a unit of policemen, mostly black Rhodesians on active reserve duty for 90 days.

The second group, two light plane-loads of hunters, all had come to the ranch on safari. These nine men, with

grenade throw resulted in this KIA. All three were armed. Note policeman's camouflaged FN rifle.

telescopic-sighted high-powered rifles, covered one end of the paddock. Range detectives and African police covered all other exits, while the pilots flew search patterns over the area. The surviving rustlers tried to break through police lines and lost several men in the process.

Later analysis indicated that this was no ordinary raid. The rustlers' persistence and their tactics pointed to an inescapable conclusion: they were trying to lure the range detectives off the ranch into their own ambush. Tracks of 50-man terrorist groups had been seen frequently on the ranch, coming from the direction of Mozambique. The detectives had assumed it would only be a matter of time before they made contact with one of these groups.

Sheer luck had swelled their numbers to over 50 men the day the terrs apparently tried to turn the tables. These range detectives had earned quite a reputation, since they had killed eight rustlers/terrs in five weeks. This particular ranch is a prime target for terrs, according to intelligence reports. In Rhodesia ranches are singled out by terrs, and then rustlers and/or terrs concentrate on raiding them until they go under.

Security teams at various ranches and farms vary from three to a dozen men, who do most of their work at night, when the majority of rustlers and terrorists strike. Some teams wait until cattle are stolen or killed, then try to track the perpetrators from the scene of the crime. If the rustlers or terrs make it back to TTLs ahead of range detectives, the race is over. Only the army can enter TTLs. By the time the army arrives, the trail is usually too "cold" to follow.

A more widely used method involves setting up ambushes on likely infiltration routes. Good intelligence is provided by ranch workers who realize that their jobs may be lost due to rustling and who also fear terrorists, since blacks form the majority of terrorist victims in Rhodesia.

Using this information, and frequently aided by the active participation of black ranch workers, we have been doing very good work in the past few months.

Until the terrs are forced out of the rustling business, this mini-war within a war will continue. The range detectives are almost all there is between the Rhodesian people and the grim prospect of agricultural ruin and nationwide starvation.

Range Detective program pays off. One of three dead rustlers at the waterhole. The extraordinarily long



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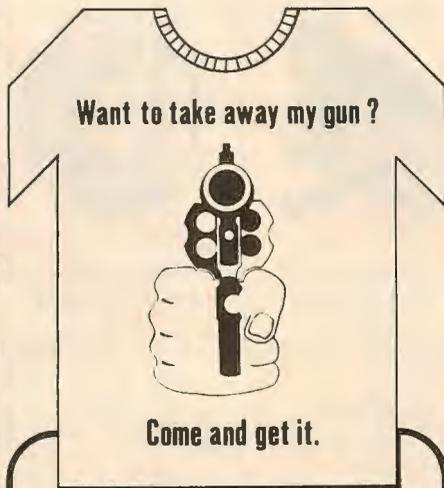
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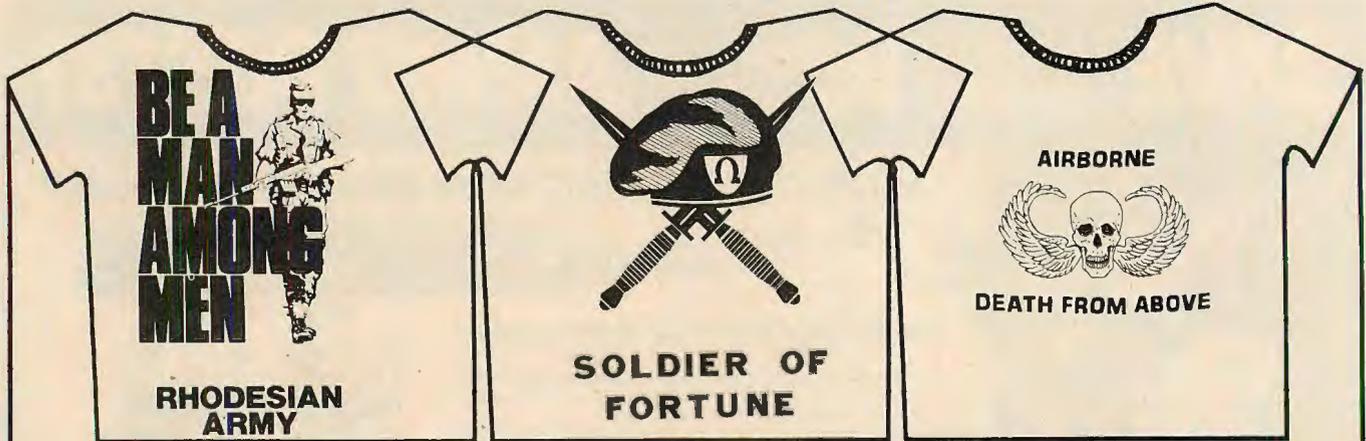
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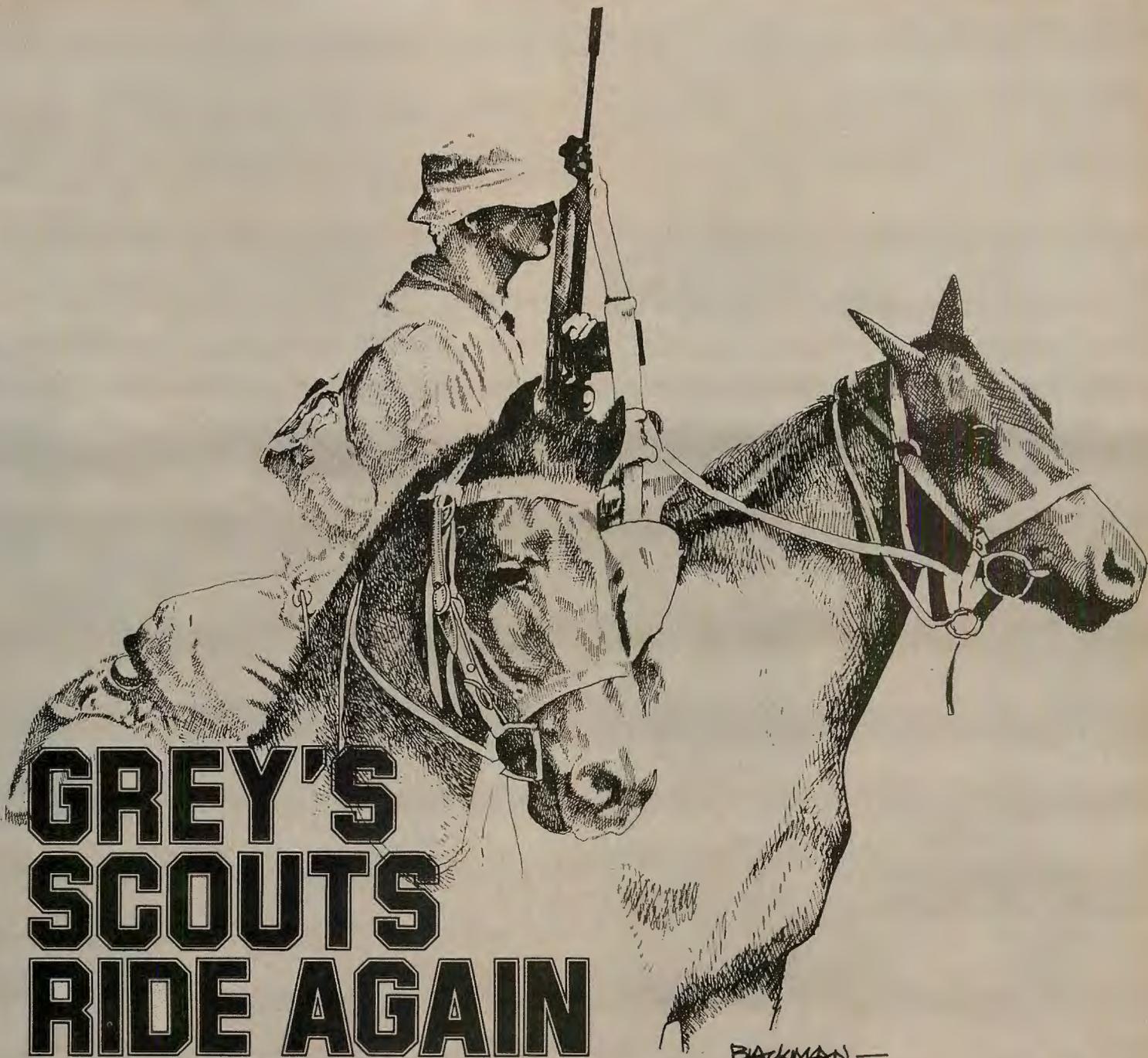
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BLACKMAN —

# GREY'S SCOUTS RIDE AGAIN

BY THOMAS MAC GREGOR

Lathered horses, carrying weary men in sweat-stained uniforms, pushed hard through heavy bush under a strength-sapping sun. Their bodies, slumped in McClellan-type saddles, flowed with the movement of their jaded mounts: eyes and ears alert, rifles held at the ready. Hostiles were near. They had cut the trail several hours before and were pushing hard to intercept the enemy, who was on foot, before he escaped across the border to safety.

One would think the above scenario was lifted from a Class B western of years ago. Not so! In fact, it's a description of a common operation carried out by the only mounted infantry unit in recognized military service in the West — the Rhodesian Grey's Scouts.

The original Grey's Scouts were a volunteer mounted unit which formed part of the Bulawayo Field Force raised in

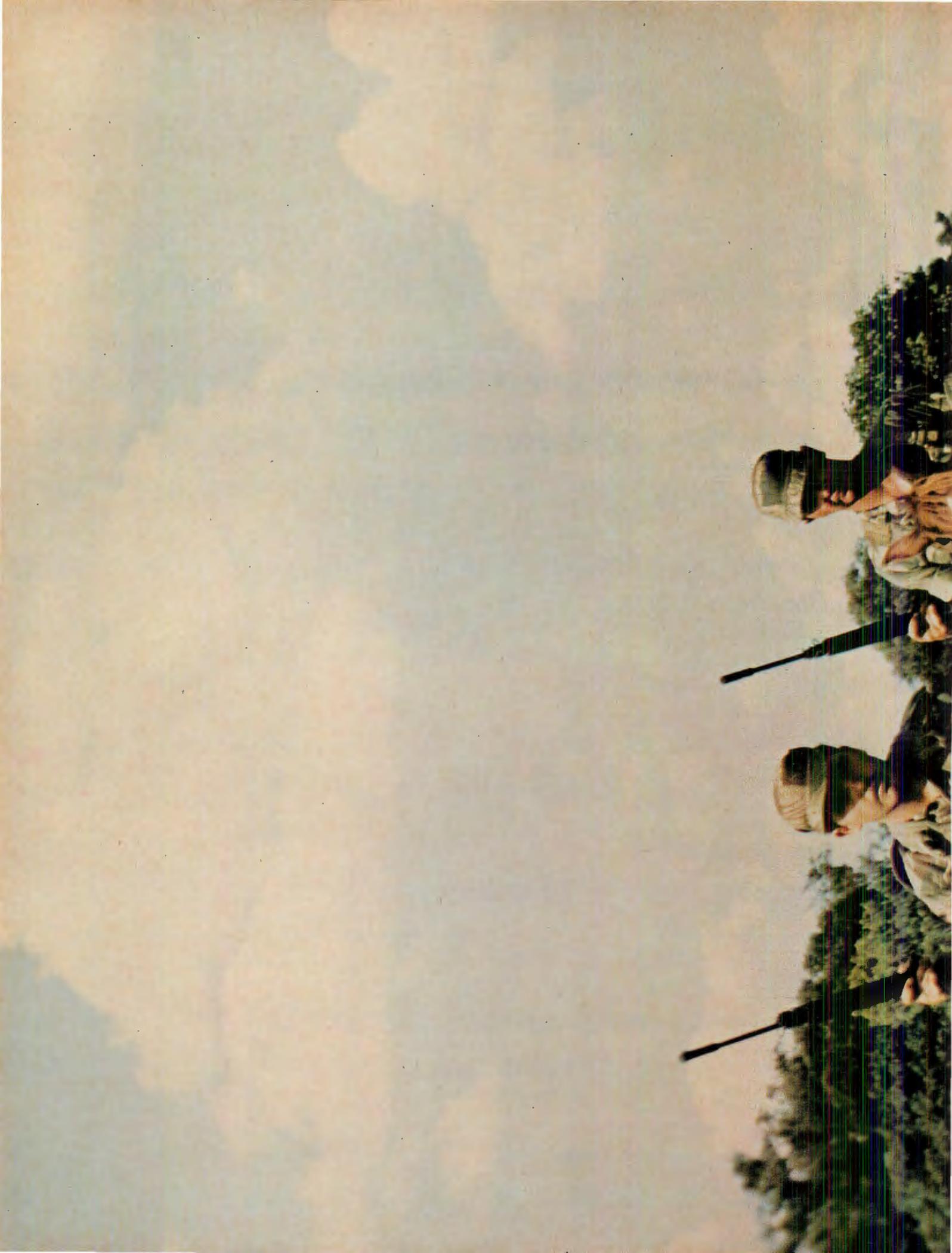
1896 at the beginning of the Matabele rebellion. Initially, the Grey's Scouts served in Matabeleland but with the spread of the native rising, elements of the unit found themselves committed to operations in eastern Rhodesia.

The founder of the Grey's was George Grey, son of Colonel G. H. Grey, and brother of Viscount Grey. George Grey came to Mashonaland in 1891 and became associated with various mining syndicates. He fought in the Matabele war of 1893, for which he received a Matabele medal. In 1896 Grey was on an inspection visit to mining properties of Bulawayo Syndicate near the Shangani River when he learned of the murder of settlers which signalled the start of the Matabele rising.

With considerable luck, he was able to evade the Matabele and return to Bulawayo on the 26th of March, where, in

the words of the famous scout, S. C. Selous, "Mr. Grey got together 23 good men and started back for the Tokwe that same evening. These men formed the nucleus of a force which had done splendid service in the suppression of the present rebellion under the name of the Grey's Scouts. They were a picked body of men and neither the name nor their brave deeds will ever be forgotten in Rhodesia."

Although the first Grey's Scouts were in existence for only a short period of 13 months, these were months in which the unit saw much action. In 1897 the *London Gazette*, quoting from a dispatch written by Major General Sir F. Carrington, K.C.M.G., said, "Captain George Grey raised a very efficient troop of mounted men which under his leadership did much good service in the early part of the campaign."





Now, almost 80 years later, the Grey's Scouts have again become part of the Rhodesian forces and in so doing assume the mantle of tradition and high ideals held in the past by Capt. George Grey and his hard riders. Today's mounted infantry unit came into being, following the disastrous rains of 1973/74 when Rhodesian Security Forces found that they had serious transport difficulties in the border areas where terrorists were operating. There were few roads in these areas and vehicles resupplying isolated base camps were continuously getting bogged down. It was suggested that horses could be used for these difficult resupply operations.

Their success was immediate. In one early operation vital supplies were moved over 43 kilometers of rugged countryside in one day. Experiments were continuously being carried out to ascertain the best types of packs to use and the most suitable kinds of animals to use them on. Their kit today is the result of this experimentation. Saddles, for example, are the old McClellan variety used by the U.S. cavalry, but their frame is fiberglass. The Grey's Scouts prefer farm horses called "Boereperd" of about 15 hands high, between four and eight years old. They also like Hackling crosses and American saddle crosses. But they'll employ any breed that will stand up under the hardships.

After proving their success in these resupply operations, the Grey's were used in follow-up operations. Mounted trackers would pursue fleeing terrorist units before they could escape over the border. Today this is their first job: to find terrorist tracks, assess their age, and if worth following up, close with the enemy as quickly as possible. As they approach the terrorists, they radio for instructions. Occasionally they move in for the kill but generally a "fire force" (helicopter-borne commandos) is flown in for mop-up operations.

Following nearly a year of intensive trials, the unit got the official go-ahead in July 1975 and established their headquarters at Inkomo Barracks near Salisbury. Inkomo Barracks, home of the Grey's, the tracker Selous Scouts, and other specialized units of the Rhodesian Army, is a dusty, sprawling area of half-built barracks, dining halls, lecture rooms, billets and stables. In the corner used by the Grey's, quarters are built around a square of solid fence with a huge flag pole on a mound in the center. It is reminiscent of the old cavalry forts that are featured in so many Western movies. Initially, the unit had no permanent buildings but was housed temporarily in tents. They took it upon themselves to acquire the materials and in their off-duty hours built permanent quarters. Stables, farrier shops, saddlery and



Recently a patrol came upon tracks of large number of terrorists. tracked them

harness rooms, paddocks, and all other needs of the mounted unit have been constructed by the men themselves and continuous improvements are being made.

The unit now officially designated as Grey's Scouts is commanded by Maj. Tony Stephens, who originally came to the unit to fulfill his annual call-up commitment and was so impressed that he promptly signed up for a three-year short service commission.

He is proud to command this highly effective, specialized unit.

"We have people of all types and nationalities in this unit. They are a mix of regulars, national service men, and volunteers. We only take volunteers who can ride, because they are only here for their 28-day stint, and obviously we cannot afford the time to train people who are only with us for such a short period. On the other hand, we will take regulars who have no previous riding experience because we can take time to train them, knowing that they will be with us on a permanent basis."

Sgt. Roy Elderkin, a senior instructor with the unit, was working as a manager on a farm adjacent to Inkomo when he noticed the influx of the Grey's horses. He inquired as to what was happening, found out, and promptly signed up. Prior to immigrating to Rhodesia some five to six years ago, Sgt. Elderkin spent six years as an instructor with the elite King's Troop of the Royal Horse Artillery in England.

"One of the reasons that this unit (Grey's Scouts) works so well is that everyone is so keen," he said. "We get



The Grey's most important job: find terrorist tracks, assess their age, and if worth following, close with enemy as quickly as possible.



for several hours, overtaking them before they could escape over border.

lots of volunteers and some of them don't fit in but we have never had to ask anyone to leave. They realize they're not cut out for what we do and they ask to be transferred to another unit. The volunteers who come in to do their annual call-up are a great bunch and of course they all have riding experience. At the moment we have a group of jockeys doing their 28 days with us and their experience is enormously useful when it comes to breaking in new mounts."

The deputy commander, Major "X," is an American, a former member of Special Forces, who came to Rhodesia to offer his services and found a niche commanding troops. After a life-long military career that spans World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Congo, Maj. "X" found it difficult to adjust to civilian life.

"A lot of people find greater fulfillment in military life than they do in civilian life. It's a sense of fulfillment as far as doing what I think I do best. Some people are doctors, others are lawyers, and I am a troop commander."

Maj. "X" fought his first battles in Africa as a Congo mercenary in 1964, which he describes as "a dead loss' financially.

"I violently disagree with the civilian concept that mercenaries are drifters. . . . Some are but a lot of them are not. Someone once said that being a professional soldier is the world's oldest profession. Nonetheless, I don't find any stigma attached to it."

A former instructor at the U.S. Jungle Warfare School, he is considered an expert in guerrilla strategy and is now primarily in charge of all operational

aspects of the Grey's Scouts, while his Rhodesian commander is primarily in charge of training, logistics, and administration.

The major's experience in a variety of military campaigns gives him valuable insight into the Rhodesian war.

"The Viet Cong," he said, "were far more sophisticated and in Korea the enemy was localized and easy to find but much harder to fight. Here in Rhodesia, the situation is generally far more uncertain, the conflict being basically an unorganized, fragmented series of skirmishes."

In just over three years, the Grey's Scouts have established themselves as a spectacular and successful feature of the Rhodesian war — respected and feared. Captured terrorists have admitted to being scared of these men on horses.

"Once they've found us, we can't get away from them," said one.

"The advantage our chaps have," said Maj. Stephens, "is that they can follow tracks for hours on horseback and then go to action quite fresh, with speed and surprise on their side."

The Grey's are not cavalry; they are skilled trackers and they are mounted infantry, and although the unit was not originally thought of as a combat unit, it has taken part in several successful contacts. Patrols vary from one to six days in duration and patrol members carry all their own gear plus feed for their horses as well as any supplies which they are transporting.

Recently, a patrol came upon tracks of a large number of terrorists, tracked them on horseback for several hours, and overtook the terrorists before they could escape over the border. The ensuing fire fight lasted for about three hours; firing from horseback, the patrol accounted for 18 KIAs. They were resupplied with ammunition by helicopters which followed up to lend assistance if needed.

One of the pilots said afterwards, "It was incredible. Those blokes on their horses moved so fast that we had a job to keep up with them in that kind of terrain."

Two years ago, the Grey's were the "Donkeywallapers," the joke outfit of the Rhodesian Security Forces. Now, they have a good reputation and are respected as specialists. Friend and foe alike now recognize that they know how to do their job.



Above: Firing from horseback, the patrol accounted for 18 KIAs.

Below: Unit is now commanded by Maj. Tony Stephens, who originally came to fulfill his annual call-up commitment . . . and promptly signed up for three-year short service commission.



# INTERNATIONAL PISTOL SHOOTING CONFEDERATION WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

By Dana Drenkowski

The World Practical Pistol Championships, called the Olympics of combat pistolcraft, were held 25-31 August 1977 in Salisbury, Rhodesia. In 1976, after the Rhodesians won the team championships in Austria, they volunteered to host the 1977 World Championships, offering better facilities and support than any other country.

Furthermore, the Rhodesians offered what few other countries could: access to the matches regardless of race, color, creed, or nationality. A number of countries, including the United States, refuse admission to teams from countries like Rhodesia or South Africa, allegedly in response to their "violations of human rights"—while saying nothing about representatives from such incredibly oppressive regimes such as Uganda, Cambodia, or Vietnam.

13 national teams participated, as well as individuals from a number of nations. The U.S. team included U.S. Champion Kirk Kirkham, Ray Chapman, Leonard Knight, Raul Walters, and Jerry Usher, all fresh from the Republic of South Africa National Championships, conducted the week before. The U.S. team members had swept the top four places at the South African matches and were eager to seize the world championship from Rhodesia. It was clear from the first day that the battle would be between those two national teams.

A superb jungle assault course was laid out in the rocks and ravines of the Draycot Farm near the Salisbury International Airport. The jungle assault course consisted of 12 exposed or partially hidden targets scattered throughout rugged terrain, with a gong to signal the end of timing for the course. Contestants were allowed to "walk through" the course several times prior to running the event. Comstock scoring (hit score divided by time) was used, so that winners would have to shoot both fast and accurately. The professionalism of the shooters and their closely matched abilities were illustrated by the fact that one or two seconds and one or two target points made the difference between winning or losing in this event.

The Rhodesian team used Browning 9mm Hi-Power pistols, which gave them the advantage of fewer magazine changes throughout the match, while the U.S. team used .45 Colt autos, which gave them a slightly higher scoring advantage, due to the greater stopping power of the .45 ACP.



Leather equipment varied, from cross-draw (used by Ray Chapman) to forward slant, rearward slant, and a unique cross-chest holster (designed and used by Smith & Wesson rep Tom Campbell). The only stipulation on leather was that it hold the weapon in place while the wearer did a backward somersault. If a safety strap was needed to hold the gun during this test, it would have to be used throughout the competition whenever the gun was holstered.

Ammunition, taken at random from competitors' magazines during competition, was tested on a ballistic pendulum, with the .45 military ball ammo used as standard for a major caliber and 9mm

parabellum hardball used as standard for a minor caliber.

Scores were tallied at the end of each event and were updated frequently on a large board for all to see (much to the embarrassment of the author, who was a competitor), adding to the daily tension, as the lead passed back and forth between the Rhodesian and American teams.

The Rhodesians provided an incredibly detailed and professional rule-and-explanation booklet, describing individual events, the minimum number of rounds needed, and the scoring to be used, which was sent to pre-registered competitors months in advance, allowing them to study and prepare mentally for the competition. In addition, a second pamphlet was provided upon arrival, showing when each team or individual would fire each event and listing transportation schedules between the ranges and to and from downtown Salisbury. Events were on time as scheduled in the pamphlet throughout the six days of shooting, a phenomenal accomplishment to those of us who in past matches have waited for hours past the scheduled time for an event to start or finish. In spite of this overall adherence to time schedules, the Rhodesian administrators were never too bureaucratic to allow shooters to shoot in another time frame when circumstances prevented adherence to the schedule. Their professional scheduling coupled with sympathetic understanding and dealings with individuals should provide a lesson for bureaucrats in any organization. Future match organizers, please take note!

The competition consisted of five/six events conducted over the six-day event, with the seventh day free for reshoots and the awards ceremonies.

One of the more exciting events was the jungle assault course. It started with the shooter standing at a designated point with weapon holstered and his hands up. No targets were visible from the starting point. At the officials' "go" signal, the shooter ran through the brush and over or around rocks, putting two shots on each target in as short a time as possible. The secrets of success included rapidly reloading while moving and shooting the nearer targets without stopping. Ten points were subtracted for each miss.

This event was won by Dave Westerhout, captain of the Rhodesian team, in a

blistering time of 46 seconds with 232 points scored out of a possible 240!

The open assault course was an event in which the shooter again engaged 12 targets, with hits on a gong signalling the end of timing. In this course, conducted over level terrain, the shooter could only fire from cover (nearby barricades or a tunnel), or while on the move. Any shooter who stopped to fire at a target while in the open had 10 penalty seconds added to his score.

The course began with the shooter seated, his arms folded, facing two targets turned away from him. When the targets were rotated to face him, he could engage them from his seated position or while moving forward. Barricades were placed so that valuable seconds would be lost with stationary shots, and the targets presented awkward angle shots from those positions.

After engaging the first two targets, the shooter had to crawl through a tunnel, at the end of which he faced two more targets approximately 20 meters away. The next position was a barricade with three openings. Only one target was visible from each of the openings, placed at varying heights so that the shooter had to engage one while kneeling, one standing up, and one while lying prone.

From that position, the shooter next ran to a cinderblock building, where he had to grab a rope, using it to lean around the corner of the building, where he engaged two more targets while firing single-handed. He or she then jumped over the building wall to engage another target from behind the barricade, then proceeded to another wall and repeated the rope trick, this time leaning around the left corner of the building while firing left-handed at two targets and the time-ending gong.

The urban event included a house/building-clearing exercise where several "felon" targets were located in each of the buildings and usually surrounded by numbers of "hostage" targets. Each hit on a hostage target cost the shooter 10



Four out of five of American team shooting at 50 meter point during walk-and-draw portion of the standard exercises. From the right, Jerry Usher, Ray Chapman, Leonard Knight and Kirk Kirkham. Note different styles.

penalty points. As in the open assault course, the shooter started from a seated position and timing began when a target was rotated to face him. He could then engage targets, moving from building to building in any order he chose, signalling the end of timing with a shot on the gong.

A particularly interesting and unique course of fire was the vehicle shoot, in which a terrorist assault on a vehicle was simulated. The shooter fired two strings at five targets and the gong, once as a driver and again as a passenger in the vehicle. The fact that Rhodesian guerrillas frequently ambush private cars on highways made it especially interesting to the Rhodesians, who televised the event.

Originally, it was planned to have the car moving, but for safety it was decided to stage the event with the vehicle halted. Contestants had to keep their weapons holstered and face front with both hands

on the steering wheel or dashboard until the starting signal was given.

Rhodesian team captain Dave Westenhout amazed spectators by drawing and firing his 14-shot Browning for 11 aimed shots from the car in 7.5 seconds! American Raul Walter's second place effort of 8.5 seconds is even more impressive due to the fact that he was firing a Colt .45, necessitating a magazine change during that string!

A moving exercise was included in which the shooter had to dash across a 10-meter space from barricade to barricade, while engaging three targets of varying distances and heights. The second part of the event included a "running felon" event, in which the target moved from barricade to barricade, surrounded by "innocent bystander" targets.

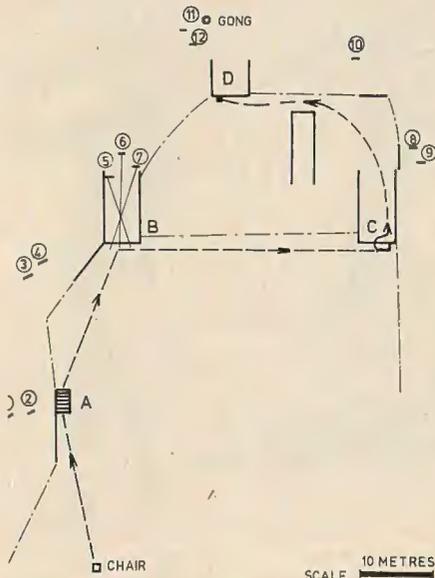
Another series of events included what practical pistol shooters call the "stan-

American IPSC Team during competition in Rhodesia. From left to right are Kirk Kirkham, Raul Walters, Jerry Usher, Ray Chapman and Leonard Knight.



Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith, right, and ISPC President Jeff Cooper discuss matches. Smith was an avid shottist before assuming duties of PM.





**Urban Assault Course.** Shooter can only fire while moving or from cover. Position B has three separate firing points; Position C includes the rope described in the article.

dard exercises." These included quick-draw events in which the shooter was required to place one shot in a target at varying distances and time frames: 2.0 meters in 1.0 second, 7 meters in 1.3 seconds, 15 meters in 1.5 seconds, 25 meters in 3.0 seconds, and 50 meters in 6.0 seconds. A part of the standard exercises included a walk-and-draw course that started at 60 meters and ended at seven meters with 10 shots expended.

Variations on the Mexican shoot (placing a single round on each of six irregularly spaced targets, reloading and reversing the order of fire on the targets)



**Urban Assault Course.** Building A is target in previous diagram. Photo shows two of three firing positions as forcing shooter to stand, kneel, and lie prone to shoot. Usher's body conceals third. Only one



**Urban Assault Course.** Building B is at position C on diagram. Shooter was required to stand on small platform (not shown), using rope to lean around corner and the El Presidente were completed during the standard exercises.

The last event of the match was the falling-plate event, in which six 10-inch-diameter circular plates were placed 25 meters away from the shooter on pedestals one meter above the ground. Each competitor was allowed nine seconds to

of building while shooting two targets to the right. Shooter then jumped over wall to proceed to next target. American Raul Walters is pictured during competition.

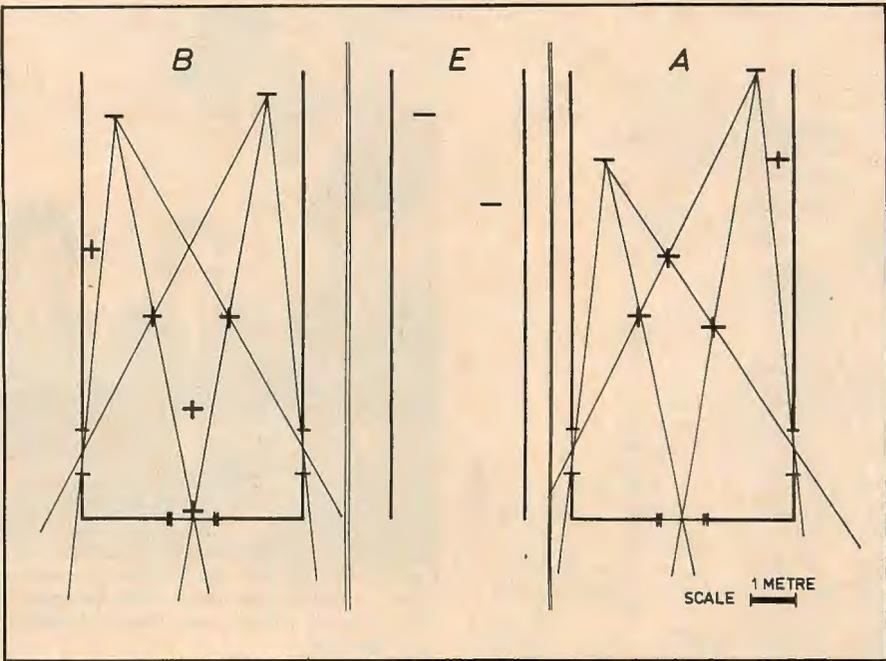
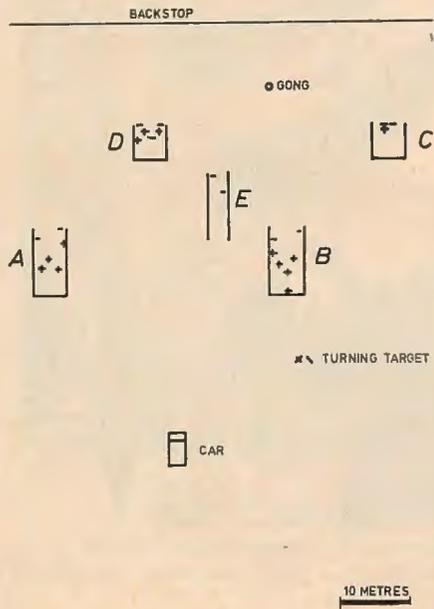
hit the plates with no more than 12 shots. The event was repeated for a total of 12 plates, with each knocked-over plate worth 10 points. The event turned into a tie-breaker for the Americans and Rhodesians, who were running neck and neck into the final day's competition. When the smoke cleared and the scores were tallied, the U.S. and Rhodesian teams had earned a total of 17,511 points, yet only 41 points separated the winning team from the number-two team. And who was that team?

The Rhodesians; for the second year in a row, won the World Championship title by a score of 8,776 points to the U.S. team's 8,735. Rhodesian team captain Dave Westerhout won the individual title of World Practical Pistol Champion, followed by Rhodesia's Peter Maunder and America's Raul Walters. With one exception, the Rhodesians and Americans swept the top 15 individual places.

The championship match was opened, appropriately enough, by the Rhodesian Minister of Justice, who fired its opening shots. Prime Minister Ian Smith gave the match his seal of approval by attending and shooting during the falling-plate events. His first shot, fired with a borrowed custom Browning 9mm, felled the first steel plate. According to various sources, Smith himself was an avid com-



**American Champion Kirk Kirkham demonstrates his search for sponsors to Rhodesia matches, using AKM and special techniques learned while studying Jesse James in grade school. Actually, Kirk was sponsored by John Bianchi, of Bianchi Leather Goods.**



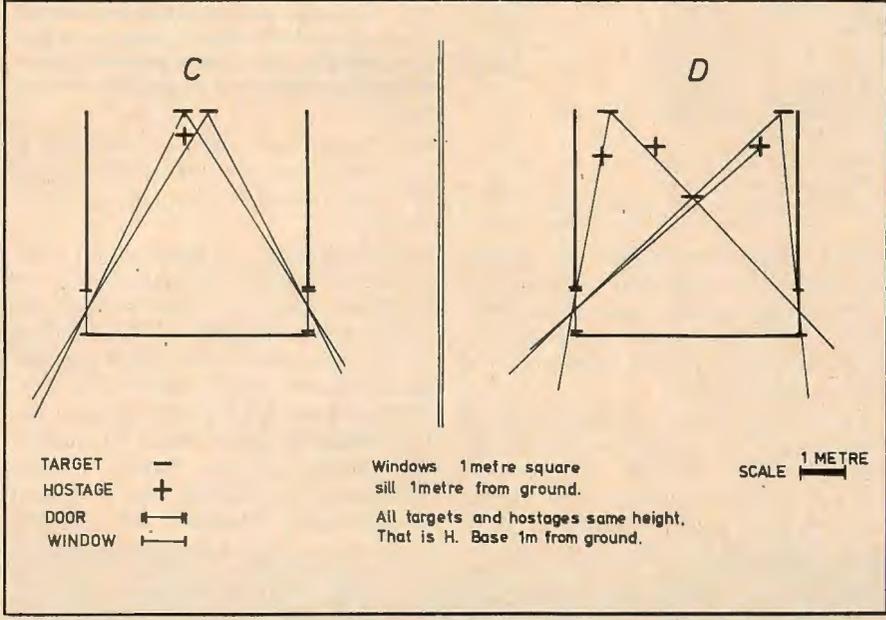
**House Clearing Exercise.** + = hostage. - = felon. Shooter started at car and attacked in any order he chose, trying to put two shots into each felon without hitting hostages. Diagrams at right show position of felon targets, hostages (silhouette target with red "X" taped on) and approximate angles of fire through doors and windows. Good time for this event was approximately 60 seconds.

**Team Results:**

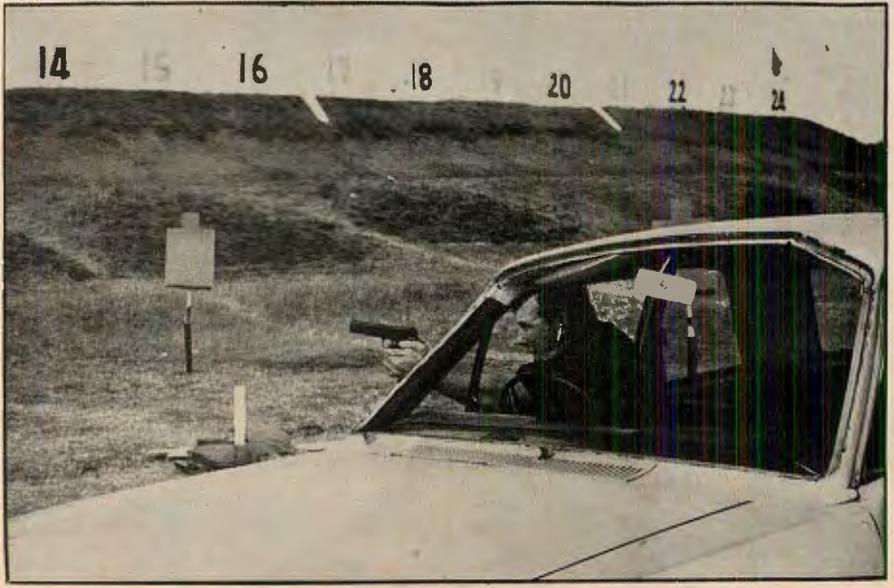
1. Rhodesia ..... 8,776
2. U.S.A. .... 8,735
3. South Africa ..... 7,808
4. Great Britain ..... 7,437
5. W. Germany ..... 6,941
6. Belgium ..... 6,465

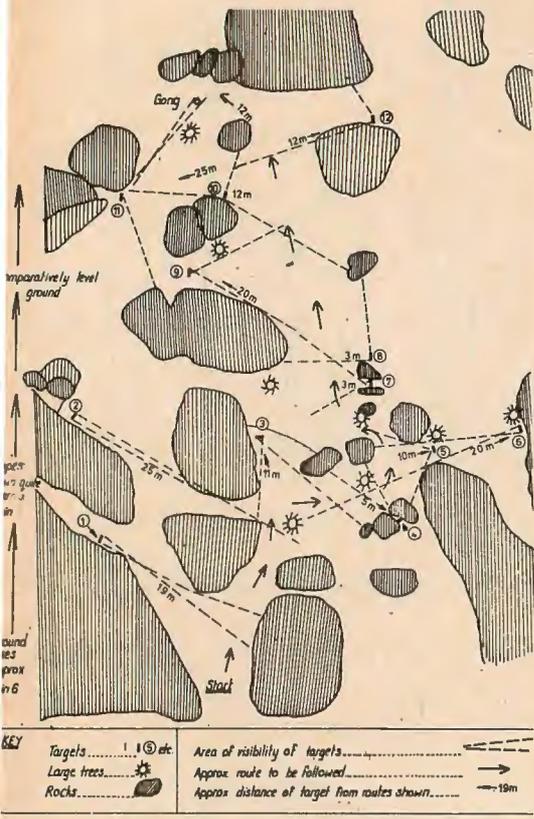
**Individual Standings (up to 15th place):**

1. Dave Westerhout ..... 1,960.433 (Rhodesia)
2. Peter Maunder ..... 1,844.030 (Rhodesia)
3. Raul Walters ..... 1,802.289 (U.S.A.)
4. Vidar Nakling ..... 1,802.272 (Norway)
5. Thomas Campbell ..... 1,793.337 (U.S.A.)
6. Ray Chapman ..... 1,778.371 (U.S.A.)
7. Lionel Smith ..... 1,776.675 (Rhodesia)
8. Jerry Usher ..... 1,741.721 (U.S.A.)
9. Ron Lerch ..... 1,731.898 (U.S.A.)
10. Leonard Knight ..... 1,719.523 (U.S.A.)
11. Mike Dalton ..... 1,717.555 (U.S.A.)
12. Peter Boniface ..... 1,699.725 (Rhodesia)
13. Kirk Kirkham ..... 1,693.149 (U.S.A.)
14. Andy Langley ..... 1,686.869 (Rhodesia)
15. Nigel Parker ..... 1,680.271 (Rhodesia)



**Vehicle Shoot.** Jerry Usher is shown firing at one of five targets (plus a metal plate) from a vehicle. This course of fire simulated a not uncommon event in today's Rhodesia.





Above: Rhodesian team receives accolades for victory at post-match banquet. High overall winner was David Westerhout, far left.

American Handgunner (Skokie, IL 60076), and Indian sportsmen, friends of Jerry Usher.

### SOUTH AFRICAN PRACTICAL PISTOL SHOOTING

Left: The jungle course simulated combat situation in which shooter was surprised by an ambush. As in most practical pistol competition, score was target hits divided by time.

He eased through the narrow ravine slowly, his .45 Colt in his hand. The hot sun beat down on him, burning the back of his neck as sweat trickled under his collar. Suddenly, in a crevice, he saw a shadowy figure, camouflaged to match the surrounding terrain. He fired quickly at it, once, then twice for insurance, finishing the job. The shots reverberated through the eight-foot-wide ravine; he barely noticed the buck of the Colt automatic against his hand. He looked around quickly. There, on a ledge above his head, 15 feet away, was another figure. He fired twice again, scoring perfect hits, then shot again at a third. He had one round left in the chamber. He punched the magazine out, ignoring its groundward fall as he slammed another one home. He backed up against a post as he reloaded, looking for more.

He heard a shrill whistle. The man following him tapped him on the shoulder.

"Clear and safe your weapon. You've been killed."

The official with the whistle was smiling gently as he pointed to a silhouette target stationed behind the post.

"He'd of slit your throat by now."

The contestant, wearing a sheepish grin, cleared his weapon and began the walk back to the assault course starting line, checking the hits on the silhouette targets as he passed.

The "jungle assault course" was the most challenging of five events staged at the South African National Practical Pistol Championship Match 20-21 August, 1977, near Johannesburg, S.A. Only three contestants out of 225 entries **Standard Exercises. Competitor is firing at three targets in front. He has hit two targets on right and is about to fire on the third. He started with his back to the target, weapon holstered, hands high. Again, two hits are required on each target.**

petition pistol shooter until the responsibilities of state forced him to give it up.

The Rhodesian hosts had provided the finest facilities and administrative organization ever seen by this author in a practical pistol match.

During the match, several meetings determined that the next world championship match of the International Practical Shooting Confederation (IPSC) would be held in South Africa in 1979.

Jeff Cooper was elected president of IPSC. For information about IPSC, write: Jeff Cooper, Gunsite, Paulden, AZ 86334 U.S.A.

After the matches, many of the competitors were invited on safaris by various Rhodesian citizens. This became an unexpected bonus and was only one of the many gestures that made us feel like welcome guests in a troubled nation.

Sponsors for the American team at the IPSC World Practical Pistol Championship matches include Bianchi Leather (Temecula, CA 92390), the American Pistol Institute (Paulden, AZ 86334),



**SOF Aviation Editor, on right, on safari after matches. Many competitors were invited to hunt on various ranches after competition. Drenkowski bagged a kudu and an impala on this trip, using Czech .308 Brno with Redfield 2x-9x scope.**

successfully "survived" the eight-target course, which emphasized combat alertness. If the contestant failed to see and engage a target during a specified exposure time, it was assumed by range officials that the target, simulating an enemy lying in ambush, would have shot (or knifed or blown up) the contestant in a real situation. This is the goal of practical pistol shooting (sometimes called combat shooting): to prepare the shooter for an actual situation in which his weapon may be required for defense.

South African events included the jungle assault (scored on targets shot and accuracy), a house-clearing exercise with "hostage" silhouettes mingled with target silhouettes (scored by accuracy over time), a walk-and-draw that started at 50 meters and culminated some 48 shots later with variations on the "El Presidente" course (where three targets are engaged, the shooter reloads and engages all three again), a barricade assault course scored by time only and a falling metal plate event, also scored by time.

The South Africans were kind enough to open their matches to foreigners. Some 10 Americans, one Australian, and one West German actually competed, with Americans (including the U.S. National



Team on its way to Rhodesia for the International Championships) taking the top four places in overall competition.

The South African Practical Pistol Association is relatively new, since practical shooting was only introduced in Africa during the past five or six years. Since 1976, membership has doubled from 500 to 1000 and, thanks to publicity from the Johannesburg newspaper, *The Citizen*, is achieving status and popularity unmatched in the U.S. The unprecedented growth of practical shooting in South Africa has been accompanied by the problems to be expected during rapid development, but South

Africans have a healthy, enthusiastic approach to shooting that will bear up under "growing pains."

According to South African National Match organizer Jack Zall, the fact that 1/4 to 1/5 of all registered practical shooters in South Africa signed up for the matches indicates the high level of enthusiasm for combat shooting in that country.



**SOF Combat Pistol Editor and IPSC President Cooper on safari in Rhodesia after the competition. Butt of his ever-present .45 can be seen on his left hip. Pictured with him are two trackers with bolt-action and double rifles and three soldiers with FAL rifles who provided security during hunt.**



# AND THEY WERE THE PROS?

by Bradley Ayers

## PART II

*Operation Mongoose, the CIA's covert war against Fidel Castro, was in full swing in the spring of 1963. Captain Bradley E. Ayers was ordered from his assignment with the U.S. Army Ranger Department, Fort Benning, Georgia, to Washington where he was given an opportunity to volunteer for an undercover assignment with the Agency training anti-Castro exiles at secret bases in South Florida. Captain Ayers' first task was to evaluate the Miami CIA Station's paramilitary training program. He made a tour of training bases and studied the existing program. To gain first-hand knowledge of the Cubans in action, he accompanied a commando team on an exfiltration mission to Cuba. With the commandos and survivors, he made a harrowing escape from a Communist shore patrol. Captain Ayers, in a detailed report to the Chief of Station, concluded that the existing Agency exile paramilitary training program was wholly inadequate for the missions being assigned the inexperienced Cuban volunteers. His next assignment with the "company" was to revamp the entire clandestine field training program. Captain Ayers has written in detail of his mission with the CIA in a hardcover book titled The War That Never Was, published recently by the Bobbs-Merrill Co. and to be reviewed in the next issue of SOF. Portions of the following article (second of a two-part series, the first appearing in the January, 1978 issue of SOF) are condensed from Captain Ayers' book.*

My first mission to the coast of Cuba reinforced my earlier feelings about the Station's paramilitary training program. It was hopelessly inadequate. They had asked me to evaluate the program and I was now ready to make my report. Not only would I report my studied opinion but I would also make recommendations for improvements.

A basic training program had to be developed to capitalize on the Cubans' strengths and overcome their shortcomings. It had to include techniques such as how to move silently, to camouflage and conceal, to move at night, etc., and to place emphasis on physical fitness, survival (seacoast and jungle), patrolling, and small-unit tactics. Along with this

should come the early identification of leaders within the teams and of men with special skills. This basic program, within the time limits imposed by operational requirements, should be made mandatory for all paramilitary teams.

I felt that the exiles viewed their case officers as "rich Uncle Sams," with endless supplies of money, guns, boats, cigarettes, and rum. The Americans I'd observed played out this role well. However, they failed in their primary responsibility—helping to transform the exile from an untrained civilian to a capable guerrilla fighter or clandestine operative. While the typical case officer passed out the rum and cigarettes with enthusiasm, he turned over to someone else the actual training of his team.

Besides a new training program, taught by skilled, experienced instructors, a follow-up was needed. The instructors could further aid the case officers by preparing post-training and agent evaluation reports for each team. To be of any value, of course, these reports would have to be read before the teams actually went to Cuba.

In my estimation, the present program was too fragmented and didn't make the best use of time and personnel. It would be vastly improved if it could be consolidated under one department: the most logical would be the training branch, coordinated with the team case officers in the operations branch.

Ideally, an exile team would undergo a complete program as follows:

- (a) Basic tradecraft, weapons, and map reading (two weeks).
- (b) Small-boat training, with emphasis on the type of craft the team could expect to use operationally (two weeks).
- (c) Small-unit tactics, survival, and physical fitness, integrating instruction received in the first programs in simulated operational exercises (three weeks).
- (d) Specialized training in specific espionage techniques (given during the breaks in the preceding program).

I knew that Dave, the Chief of Operations, was not going to like my evaluation of the present program, but I didn't

care: I was preparing my report on orders for the Chief of Station, Ted Morley. Besides, I realized now that there was more at stake than my personal convictions or integrity. It was the Cubans who were doing the dirty work, and although it was their homeland, the United States had endorsed their struggle and volunteered aid. As an American, I felt I had an obligation to aid them by pushing for more and better training, even if there were some risks involved.

In the end, Morley saw it my way, and my recommendations were accepted with little if any modification. As I walked out of the Chief of Station's office, I realized I had just written my own initial mission with the Agency. Morley had ordered me to begin reorganization of paramilitary training at the Station, immediately.

The first step in setting up the new program was to determine exactly what training areas would be used. Despite the travel disadvantages with the Flamingo area and the absence of any safehouse facilities there, I decided to leave the small-boat training pretty much as it was. Perry, a former Navy warrant officer, had been conducting that training, and it was fundamentally sound. Given adequate time and the raw talent to work with, it could accomplish its objectives. Much of its success would depend on Perry's ability to maintain his own motivation and stand up physically to the hardships of the schedule. I wanted to get him a bilingual assistant to help with the driving and maintenance of boats and provide a backup so that Perry could have break periods during the scorching days and long, hot, mosquito-ridden nights on the desolate Everglades coastline.

Cal and Rudy, the two principal staff members in the training branch, did not want my influence in their programs that were conducted by Greg and Otto at the Quail Roost Drive safehouse. Greg would continue to teach basic weapons, use of the compass, land navigation, and other miscellaneous subjects, just as he had in the past. It was decided that his two weeks of instruction would be received first by any newly recruited exile. Otto and Rudy would continue to teach tradecraft<sup>1</sup>, and their programs would remain pretty much the same. The volunteers would receive this training immedi-

ately following or concurrently with their instruction from Greg.

Theoretically, after these two phases of basic paramilitary instruction, the volunteer would have enough fundamental knowledge to go into the field. First he would go to Perry, ideally spending up to two weeks at the Flamingo base. Following this we would provide him with a program of intensive physical conditioning and survival training, patrolling and modified small-unit tactics, including a series of realistic, practical exercises. Those exiles whose primary function involved handling larger boats and engines, such as the V-20, would receive specialized training during this concluding period. Ideally, a team would complete training and shortly thereafter embark on a mission while still somewhere near a peak.

To make the whole program truly effective, we would have to convince the operations people of three necessities, and I knew it wouldn't be easy, for we'd be bucking Dave all the way.

First, operations would have to make teams available for an adequate period of time. In the past, case officers put teams in the existing programs and took them out at their own discretion. Often the Cubans got only a small portion of the training necessary for their particular mission. I drafted a minimum and optimum schedule for each program; Cal would have to take a firm stand on enforcing it with the case officers.

Each team or individual was usually assigned by operations a specific task. Some would be commandos, some infiltrators. Some would go in clandestinely and live "black," while others might make a clandestine infiltration but live in the open in their home community, under some sort of cover. So it was essential that the instructor know something about how the men were to be used. This could most easily be accomplished by the case officer's observing the team and working directly with the instructor.

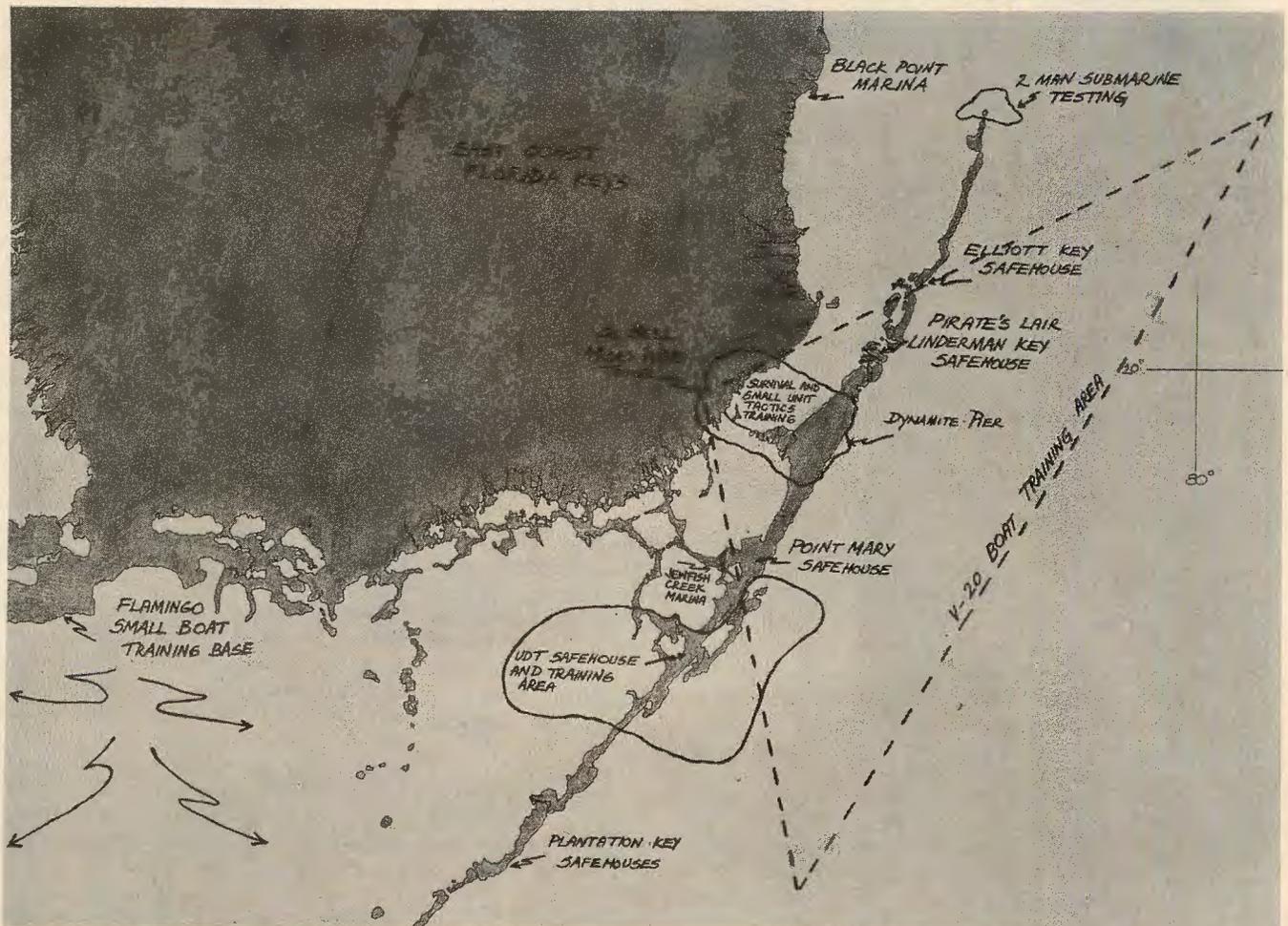
When I'd asked why case officers seldom observed the training of their men, Dave had become very angry and stated adamantly that the case officers didn't have time to spend in the field. Too busy with paperwork, security and logistical problems, Dave claimed. There was no real solution to this problem except to rely on the responsibility and dedication of individual officers. But, to prod them and the operations branch in general, we had to set up a system of written training evaluations on each team and individual, to be prepared by each instructor as he completed his phase of the program. Since the case officers usually became personally involved in the quality of the men recruited and their potential for success, I hoped that each officer would be inclined to look at his team's training performance as a reflection of himself. In a great many cases it was the case officer who provided the real leadership and motivation for the Cubans, and his pres-

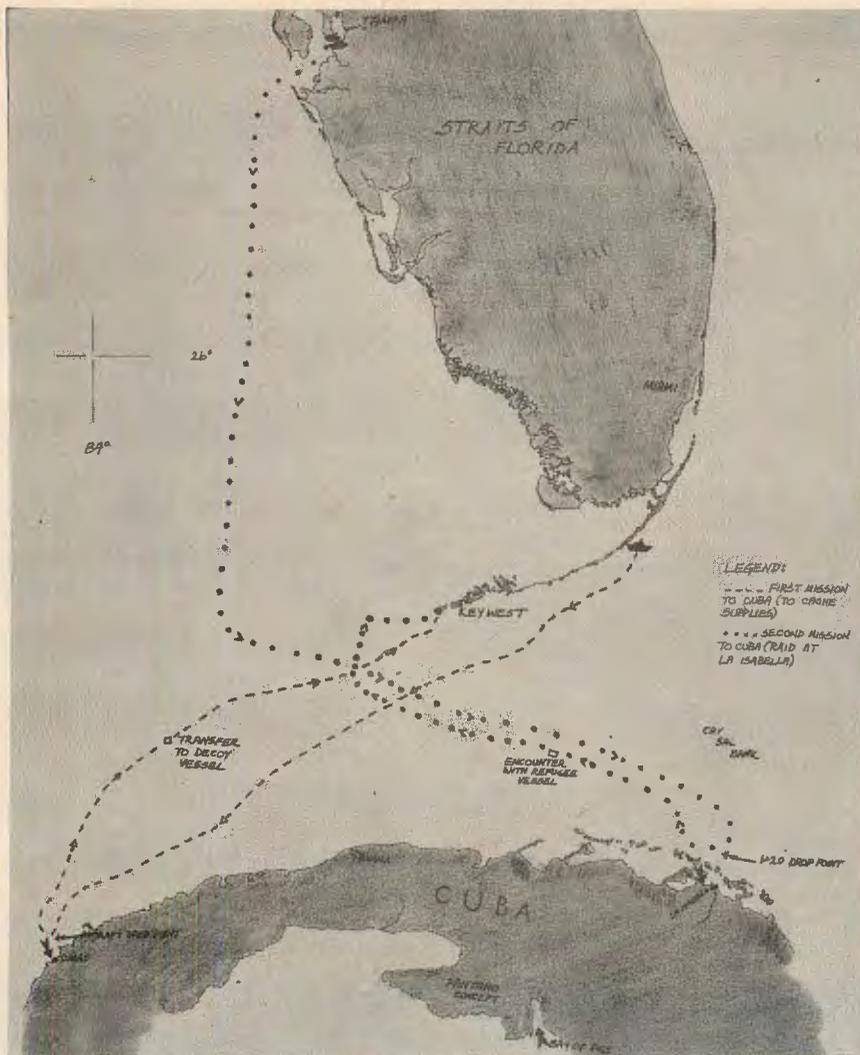
ence, or lack of it, in training usually had a considerable impact on them. The second necessity was to develop this kind of conscientiousness.

Third was the problem of maintaining proficiency among the exiles. Often a mission would have to be scrubbed just as a team had completed training. This was sometimes due to events in the target area and sometimes to a policy decision by the Special Group in Washington. Many times a team would sit, closeted in a safehouse somewhere, waiting for a new mission. This was demoralizing for the men and often resulted in loss of the tactical skills and physical fitness they'd achieved during training. We set up a special schedule for condensed training or review periods for agents who were idle. The case officers could put their men into this modified program to keep them on their toes and help overcome the boredom and tension of the periods between missions.

After we had hammered out the sequence of programs and the basic concepts surrounding their implementation, I returned to the field to get on with establishing the final phase of training, survival and small-unit operations. I would have to put the program together from scratch and supervise it until it could be turned over to someone else.

Map shows locations of CIA/Cuban exile areas of operations in South Florida.





**Ayers accompanied two clandestine CIA/Cuban exile operations to Cuba on CIA raider/mother ship.**

ation in Miami was typical of all CIA operations. All the fumbling and internal wrangling—was that the way our country's supersecret warriors did business? On one hand, Attorney General Robert Kennedy showed personal interest in what we are doing, but on the other hand, orders for equipment often were delayed because clerks in the supply branch took two-hour lunch breaks. I could not understand how, if the Administration was really serious about getting rid of Castro, such inefficiency could be tolerated. I tried not to let these feelings affect my personal relationships with Agency employees, and I kept my doubts out of the reports to my Pentagon case officer, Colonel Gralow.

It was mid-summer in south Florida when we finally got into the field. The heat and mosquitoes were intense. Jose Clark and I had to devise and construct all of our own charts and training aids. I would usually sketch them out and write the words in English, then Jose would translate to Spanish and advise me on whatever Latin nuances might enhance the picture or description.

We worked the same way as we hacked out the survival training area and constructed simple shelters, traps, and crude implements for the Cubans to practice with. As calisthenics and running were out of place in this kind of program, I planned to achieve physical conditioning by long hikes, field work, and restricted rations. For the infiltration teams, we developed several grueling reconnaissance exercises, using the large, tightly secured Southern Bell Telephone microwave facility on Old Card Sound Road southeast of Homestead as our objective. It was an ideal, ready-made, real-life target: the trainees simply could not allow themselves to get caught, for the high chain-link fences were electrified and the watchmen were armed.

Jose, who had trained with the Bay of Pigs force in Guatemala, said he had never worked so hard in his life. Sweating, cursing in Spanish, reluctantly learning to pick out wild edibles and to handle snakes, he gradually began to develop confidence as his knowledge of the desolate mangrove and coral seacoast increased.

Our evenings were spent reconnoitering the upper Key Largo coastline, both the ocean side and the Biscayne Bay-Card Sound side, for the unit exercises I hoped to set up. With the delivery of our major equipment—specifically, a jeep station wagon, a Boston Whaler with outboard and trailer, and a pair of rubber rafts with silent engines—I was able to begin to teach Jose boat handling. These excursions up and down the Key, both by road and by water under the cover of darkness, gave us a good feel of local

Having selected the upper Key Largo area as the best place for the survival and small-unit training, I spent the next two weeks ordering equipment, drafting lesson plans and exercises, and searching for a safehouse to use as a base of operations. I rented boats on several occasions to become familiar with the waterways. Besides needing a place to house the teams at the beginning and end of the training period, I would have instructors to house, equipment and boats to store, and vehicles to park. The 60-mile drive from north Key Largo to Miami was just too much. Valuable training time would be lost, and the exposure on the overseas highway was too great a security risk.

With the help of the real estate man from the cover branch, I finally settled on a complex of three houses on Plantation Key. (The run to the training area could be made by vehicle or boat, and although it was a bit longer than I liked, we could arrange to travel when there would be minimum traffic.) The houses, set on stilts, were well back from the road and protected by a screen of thick tropical shrubbery. There was adequate sleeping space for up to 15 men. One house would be used by the team undergoing training; the second house would be for the two or three Cuban instructors whom I hoped to

recruit and train, and it could also double as a mess hall and classroom; the third house would be used for storage of larger equipment, and there was a small room that I could set up as an office and communications center. The property was already under Agency control, having previously been rented by one of the cover companies for use by one of the commando groups. For reasons I was not told, the commandos had never used the houses, so the cover was still intact. If we were careful and didn't bother the old widow who lived next door, we would be able to use the property without suspicion or interference from other residents on the Key.

By the last week in June, 1963, I had the physical organization at both the safehouse complex and the training area pretty well completed. Greg had loaned me Jose Clark, one of his Cuban instructors, to help get things set up, and by the time we had finished organizing things he had decided he wanted to continue working for me.

There were times during this period, especially after enduring a senseless delay at the hands of the Agency civil servants or encountering a tangle of seemingly endless bureaucratic red tape, when I would stop and wonder if the situ-

traffic patterns; we learned when we could and could not move freely in the area. I taught Jose how to operate the equipment both during daylight and in darkness. We always carried fishing gear and dressed and acted like typical fishermen, no matter where we went.

I hoped to recruit some additional Cuban instructors during this period and instructed Jose to be on the lookout for the "right" kind of men in the growing exile community in Miami. Southwest Eighth Street, near the downtown area, was rapidly becoming known as "little Havana," and the word quickly spread through the close-knit community when "someone" was looking for a person with particular talents. This grapevine proved to be a real headache in terms of security, but it had distinct advantages when one had an immediate need for a volunteer with specific skills. We hoped the Agency's security screening would weed out the undesirables—the double agents and the Castro plants and informers who abounded in the exile community. Once a volunteer passed the screening and was accepted, he had to be taught the importance of keeping his activities with the "company" secret. At no time was it ever confirmed that he was working for the CIA. He was given a cover story that would make his employment and schedule of activities plausible to his family and friends. The final security precaution was "compartmentalization"—the volunteer was given knowledge and contact with other employees only to the extent necessary to do his particular job. This wasn't always easy to do in the field, where training programs overlapped one another and emergencies occurred, but we had to abide by security procedures as best we could. Frankly, I didn't worry about the Cubans as much as I did some of the heavy-drinking, loud-talking American Agency employees who frequented the bars in South Miami.

About a week after I'd asked Jose to look for some help for our new training program, he brought me a list of five Cubans and arranged a rendezvous with each of them, usually at the new Sears, Roebuck store in Coral Gables or near the Formosa Restaurant in South Miami. My Spanish was improving rapidly, but if the volunteer spoke no English, Jose would act as translator and later give me his own opinion of the man's suitability. Using a series of carefully prepared questions that did not divulge the nature of our interests, I was able to make a judgement on each of the men. We settled on two as potential instructors and one as a combination cook, housekeeper, and equipment-maintenance man. If they passed the screening, I would keep one instructor and the housekeeper and give Perry one to train as his assistant.

Following the initial interview, we set up the screening with the security branch. This included a physical exami-

nation, lie detector testing, psychological testing, and the preparation of background reports. It was an aggravating, time-consuming process that took me out of the field, where I hoped to be working on final preparations for the new program. It was not uncommon to be on the go, traveling to and from the Keys, or writing reports and equipment requests, or interviewing new recruits, or doing any of a thousand other things left to be done, until the early hours of the morning. Then it would begin all over again the next day. Finally, just after the Fourth of July, we were ready.

Jose was already at the Plantation Key safehouse when I arrived shortly after noon. He had brought with him Miguel and Mario, the two assistants I'd interviewed several weeks earlier. Their clearances had come through only a few days before. I welcomed the new men and briefly told them what we had planned for the next two weeks. They would learn chiefly by watching Jose and me as we instructed and by on-the-job experience. Mike, as Miguel soon became known, would be an assistant instructor, and Mario, the older of the two, would serve as cook and housekeeper. While Jose gave

**On 15 August 1977, Federal authorities from three agencies raided a Cuban exile weapons cache in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Weapons included CAR-15s, M-16s, .30 cal. BARs, .50 and .30 cal. Browning machine guns and 20mm Solothurn anti-tank cannon.**



them a detailed briefing on the new training program and issued them field equipment, I got ready to receive the first group of exiles.

The team that arrived a short time later proved to be ideal "guinea pigs" for the trial of the survival and small-unit-operations training program. The four men, headed by an intense, alert Cuban schoolteacher, were accompanied to the safehouse by their CIA case officer, Jerry, who had just arrived at the Miami station. This was his first exile team. I was pleased to see that he was highly motivated, and, unlike the older, more experienced case officers at the station, he communicated his enthusiasm to the team.

Jerry briefed me on the team's mission. The group was to make a clandestine infiltration by rubber boat somewhere in Pinar Del Rio Province. They would carry with them a powerful short-wave transmitter. After landing and moving inland, they hoped to join a small anti-Castro guerrilla force that had recently been creating havoc for the Communist militia in the province. It was hoped that the infiltrators would become integrated with the counterrevolutionaries and would be able to establish a clandestine link by radio with the CIA. With the radio, and the team leader's influence on the guerrilla leader, it would be possible for the CIA to direct the actions of the small force and coordinate its

activities with our own commando and sabotage efforts. If, all went well, the team would remain on the Communist island indefinitely.

Jerry also gave me a rundown on each man's background and function within the team. All of the men were under 30, each had at least the equivalent of a high school education, and each spoke some English. They had already undergone tradecraft, weapons, small-boat, and communications training.

To my disappointment, after he finished his briefing, Jerry excused himself, explaining that he was in the process of recruiting another team in Miami. But he promised to be back later in the week, and with that, he wished me luck and left.

Things went much more smoothly than I had anticipated. We spent the remainder of the first day teaching the team how to select, wear, and secure their field equipment. We showed them how to take care of their gear and protect and waterproof leather and metal items. Mike adapted quickly to his role as assistant instructor and was soon working alongside Jose and me. Meanwhile, Mario, a former seaman and ship's cook, organized the kitchen and familiarized himself with his housekeeping duties.

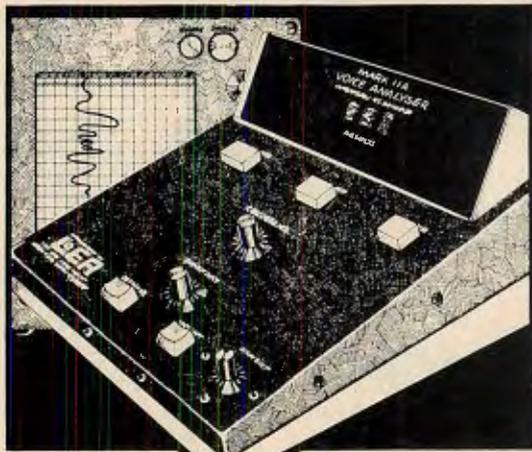
The rest of the program fell into place just as readily. All the planning, the frustration and hard work, when my idea seemed an almost insurmountable goal, paid off. The schedule held up well and there were no security problems. No one bothered us at the safehouse, and we saw no one in or about the training areas. The exile team quickly absorbed the survival instruction we gave them—I had come to feel that the typical Cuban would avoid physical hardship at nearly any cost, but these men were different.

The leader confided that the one thing the team feared most was to be landed on Cuban soil and find themselves stranded without food and water. Therefore, the men were intensely interested when we showed them how to spear fish and trap small game with crude devices, how to get water from a cactus, how to build a high and dry shelter in the mangrove thickets, and how to identify dangerous or poisonous plants, fish, animals, and reptiles. (We used the rugged, desolate seacoast surrounding Dynamite Pier in north Key Largo for this instruction.) The latter sparked rounds of hearty laughter as I had the Cubans handle some non-poisonous snakes in order to overcome their fear of them. At first, touching the scaly, writhing reptiles was accompanied by expressions of revulsion and disgust. But when the team leader, after my demonstration, mustered all his courage and put a big rat snake inside his work shirt, the others, including my instructors, had no choice but to follow suit. Latin masculine pride could clearly be used to our advantage, I learned. There were few, if any, snakes in Cuba, but

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learning to overcome this kind of fear was another step in developing confidence.

We supplied the men with raw fish or meat and coconuts, as well as emergency rations from a stock we had laid away at the safehouse, and they did their own cooking when out in the field. In this way we controlled their diet and provided adequate nourishment without losing sight of the course objectives. Long hikes and swimming were included in the team's activities when they were not involved in controlled survival instruction. By the end of the first week the infiltrators began to show the effects of living outside. Tanned, lean, dirty, and tired, but sharp-eyed and a little more confident, we took them back to the Plantation Key safehouse for showers and a week-end of rest.

The second week moved just as well, as we introduced the use of boats. First, we taught them how to tie knots and build simple rafts from natural materials, which complemented their earlier survival training. We used areas hidden deep in the swamps of saltwater creeks that ran through the Old Card Sound Road area in north Key Largo. We introduced the men to canoes, kayaks, the military-type rubber raft, and the standard Boston Whaler skiff. Although the team had already undergone small-boat training with Perry at Flamingo, nearly all of their work had been on the open water near Cape Sable. Now they learned to navigate and manipulate their boats through the narrow saltwater canals which were similar to those along the Cuban coast.

Having taught the team to move quietly and effectively on land and in water, in daylight and in darkness, we were ready to begin the final phase. First was a simple night exercise in which I towed the team in a rubber boat to a drop-off point at sea about two miles off Dynamite Pier. The team made its way ashore, deflated and hid their rubber boat, and found and set up a hiding place in the mangroves, where they were to await the arrival of a friendly partisan who would take them farther inland. Jose, Mike, and I observed the team from hiding places along their route. We hoped they would detect our presence, which would attest to their alertness. Later, we checked the security of their hiding place by approaching it, somewhat noisily, from the swamps. Again, we hoped that they had learned from our instruction and had posted adequate lookouts and security. Near dawn, the partisan, whose role was played by Mike, made contact with the team and led them back to the training area. Then we critiqued their performance.

We ran a number of exercises of this type, each a little more complex and demanding. As the week came to an end, I felt they were ready for a final test: the telephone company microwave station on Old Card Sound Road.

To my great satisfaction, they ran the exercise nearly without a flaw. Handling the rubber boats, their movement from the seacoast across the Key, their navigation of the intricate canals and across the open water of Card Sound, their traverse of the mangroves, their reconnaissance of the installation, and their exfiltration were all accomplished effectively and very close to schedule.

Again, Jose, Mike, and I posted ourselves at observation points along the team's route. Upon pooling our impressions, the only major criticism we had was the age-old problem of talking, it seemed. But despite this shortcoming, I was satisfied with their performance. Filthy and exhausted, we all rode back to the comforts of the Plantation Key safehouse complex that night. We had given our best to the infiltration team, and they had responded favorably. We were on our way.

But our work had just begun, I learned when I got back to Miami the next day. Another team was waiting and wanted to begin the program on Monday morning. Despite our fatigue and the fact that the program had been more demanding on us than I had estimated, I told Cal that we were ready.

I saw my family that weekend, very briefly, because on Sunday I had to write the after-training report on the last team. There was also equipment to order, groceries and supplies to buy for the forthcoming weeks, and equipment that had to be cleaned and maintained. I did the report on the patio at home so I could be with Nancy and the boys for a little while. Then, jamming my briefcase full of reports, orders, and papers, I jumped into my car and took up the role of Daniel B. Williams, the other identity of my undercover double-life.

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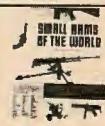
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For the next four weeks it went like that, and at times it seemed as though my real identity had ceased to exist. The second and third teams were not nearly so responsive as the first, and despite my complaints to Cal, neither case officer observed the training. The heat, humidity, and mosquitoes were at their peak; there seemed to be no way to dislodge the officers from their air-conditioned offices.

The intensity of our schedule, the physical discomfort, the confidences we shared about the teams, and the long hours of being together in the swamps or at sea fostered a close bond among Jose, Mike, Mario, and me. Although I was in charge, our camaraderie transcended our official relationship. There was no doubt about anyone's dedication to the cause; we never even discussed it. They knew I would not be standing with them in the mud and heat, going without sleep and the comforts of my family and a staff job in Miami, unless I believed in them.

We always looked forward to the evening meal, for we would usually snack on survival rations with the trainees during the day and by nightfall were ready for something more nourishing. We would be instructing the course indefinitely, while the trainees were there for only a couple of weeks. Mario, aware of this, would go to great lengths to prepare the most exotic Cuban dishes he could. He would pack the hot food in vacuum containers, and as soon as it was dark, Mike or Jose would take the jeep back to the safehouse and pick it up for us.

While the exiles were learning survival and tactics, we, the instructors, learned better how to cope with the grueling physical demands of the program and gained confidence in our ability to conduct the training without detection by outsiders. The greatest hardships were heat and humidity, insects, and fatigue. At first we all wore khaki or gray work clothes and boots, the dress commonly worn by surveyors and construction workers anywhere, but the clothes were much too heavy. They would quickly become saturated with perspiration and cling to our skin, and heat rash soon followed. Our boots would fill with water as we tramped through the swamps.

It didn't take us very long to change our daily uniform. Mine became a tank-type bathing suit or shorts and tennis shoes without laces. Jose cut the legs off his khaki trousers and got rid of his shirt but kept his boots. He still disliked the idea of walking over hundreds of creeping, crawling small animals in the swamps and on the jungle seacoast. Mike kept his long trousers and a T-shirt, but exchanged his boots for sneakers. We each carried a hunting knife and a compass on a belt, and Jose, who was a gun buff, always had a small-caliber pistol concealed somewhere on his person. At night we reverted to work clothes

and boots for protection from the mangrove branches, thorns, and shrubbery.

We slept in jungle hammocks slung near the water's edge to catch any breeze from the sea. Mosquito netting was essential. The insects were so bad that one could not venture forth without saturating his skin and clothing with bug repellent, and, even then, in a matter of minutes the salt-marsh mosquitoes seemed to become immune to it. Whenever we had a training group in the field, I insisted on being awake and alert at all times. Since sleep in the heat and in the uncomfortable jungle hammocks was difficult under any circumstance, we seldom got more than three or four hours of good rest at night. This made our sustained field trips even more exhausting. I had set up a schedule of rotation for myself and the instructors so that we could get back to the safehouse several times during the two-week course to shower and get a full night's sleep between clean sheets. As the weeks wore on, we came to cherish these brief periods of respite.

I insisted that each team carry a small military AN/PRC 10 type portable radio at all times. We kept another radio with us near our base campsite or hidden in one of the boats. In this way, we were in continuous contact with the groups no matter where they were. The trainees were instructed to remain hidden from any road or waterway, unless they had reason to be moving on it, and from the moment they arrived in the training area, we tried to make them cautious about being seen even by the instructors. We restricted our meetings and formal classes to places where there was a single route of approach, either by road or waterway. An observer, either Jose or Mike, was posted to give us warning of the approach of any interlopers. When someone came, the trainees would scurry to hide themselves and wait until the intruder was gone. In 1963, any Cubans in the Keys were automatically suspected of being engaged in some anti-Castro activity, so it was safer to keep them completely hidden.

Intruders usually were fishermen looking for good angling waters. While the trainees were concealed in the brush, my assistants and I would pick up our fishing poles and play out our cover as sportsmen. Much to our frustration and anxiety, the fishermen would sometimes linger for several hours as they tried their luck, and we would simply have to wait until they were gone to resume training. These delays were costly, but none of the fishermen ever pressed us for information or inquired about our presence.

Occasionally someone with a legitimate inquiry would appear on the scene. The same precautionary measures would be implemented, and if the visitors didn't approach me directly I would intercept them and ask if I might help. Sometimes, especially around Dynamite Pier, where

the Agency had worked out cover lease arrangements with the owner, I would demand the reason for the visitor's presence and order him off the land, but I always tried to avoid doing this, because it would immediately foster suspicion. Usually the visitor would turn out to be a real estate agent or some law-enforcement representative, and I would implement our carefully rehearsed cover story: My men and I were a mapping crew employed by Paragon Air Service and were doing survey work in connection with an aerial photography contract. Since we were doing some blasting in the area as part of our research work, we would advise the visitor to leave for his own safety.

When the trainees were occupied with independent practical exercises in the field, Jose, Mike, and I would fish together or skin-dive around the old bridge pilings in Steamboat Creek. We caught lobster, snook, and trout, which we'd send back to Mario to save for a later meal. In the evenings we would sometimes fish for tarpon with live shrimp that Mario sent at suppertime. These evenings helped break the boredom and drudgery of the weeks in the field, but we were thankful when we finished our third straight training cycle and learned that we'd get a two-week break. Six weeks in the mangroves had taken its toll. I was thoroughly exhausted but pleased as I locked the safehouses and headed for Miami.

I had achieved my first major objective. The new paramilitary training program was underway. It would be some time before the results would be seen, but I was confident our efforts would give these exiles a chance for survival and maybe even success in their missions.

During the months that followed, nearly one hundred exile volunteers passed through the training program as the CIA's secret war against Fidel Castro intensified. My belief that improved training would soon be reflected in greater operational success was born out. By the fall of 1963, the CIA's Cuban paramilitary capability had been upgraded to a point where many of us on the scene believed that Castro could be toppled. Infiltration-intelligence missions as well as commando strike raids were being carried out weekly, and the number of Cuban agents lost on the island was significantly reduced. Many returning Cubans credited their training in survival and small unit tactics for their success. I was pleased that our efforts had had a positive influence on the course of the covert war.

By September, with new developments in power boats and refinements in maritime delivery techniques, even more daring raids were tentatively approved by President Kennedy's advisory "Standing Group" in Washington. Targets that the CIA had long hoped to strike were taken

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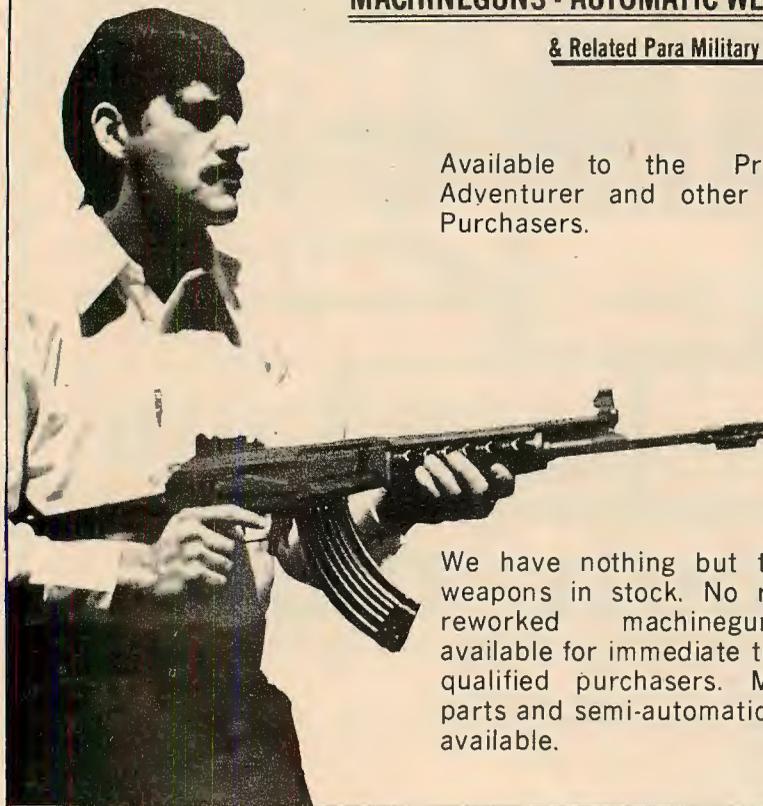
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off the prohibited list and we began training for more sophisticated missions. I was involved in training a select group of exiles for a raid against a major petroleum refinery near the Cuban coast. Mid-November, 1963, brought us to the highest level of para-military combat readiness we had enjoyed. All of us, Cubans and Americans alike, shared excitement and keen anticipation as we made final preparations to strike the Communist-controlled island where we could do the greatest damage.

But we never got our chance. The events in Dallas on November 22nd all but spelled the end of "Operation Mongoose." President Kennedy's death and the persistent rumors of Cuban-CIA involvement, the absence of Kennedy's personal influence in the anti-Castro war, the military-industrial rush toward involvement in Vietnam . . . each and all of these factors played some part in the shift of U.S. attention away from Cuba. By 1967, the CIA's covert war against Castro had been reduced to the collection of intelligence. The elaborate and painstakingly constructed paramilitary establishment in Miami was dismantled. The covert army of Cuban exiles we had trained so diligently was sent home.

Eventually, most of the men the CIA had trained drifted away from the anti-Castro crusade and settled down to more conventional pursuits in Miami's "Little Havana." But for a few of us the war against Castro and Communism had become a way of life.

After resigning my Regular Army commission, I returned to Miami in 1966 to work independently, as a civilian, with the exiles I had helped the CIA train. Without U.S. support, however, we were virtually powerless to conduct any cohesive, meaningful action. Governmental agencies including the F.B.I., the Coast Guard, the Border Patrol and various Florida law enforcement departments had tightened their surveillance of exile activities, thus adding immensely to the difficulties of mounting clandestine military operations. In the absence of the stabilizing, unifying influence of the Kennedys and the CIA in Cuban affairs, dissension prevailed among various exile political and paramilitary organizations.

It was in this atmosphere of discontent and seething frustration in the Miami Cuban community that a handful of highly trained exiles turned to violence on their own. They were labeled as militants, at first, then called radicals. Now they are referred to as international terrorists. Embarrassingly, for the U.S., many are the same guerrilla freedom fighters the CIA trained to overthrow Castro. For them, despite the obstacles, the secret war has never ended. In the years since President Kennedy's death, they have amassed an extensive record of essentially symbolic anti-Communist paramilitary and espionage actions, including:

•The 1964 mortar shelling at the United Nations in New York as Che Guevara addressed the General Assembly.

•Working with U.S.-trained Bolivian troops in 1967, Cuban exile specialists trapped and killed Guevara and members of his Communist guerrilla band in Bolivia.

•Frequent bombings and machine-gun attacks on the high seas against vessels from Cuba and other Communist countries between 1968 and 1972. Dr. Orlando Bosch, a militant exile leader, was jailed for a bazooka attack on a Polish ship in Miami Harbor.

•Cuban exiles trained by the CIA were recruited by their former case officer, Howard Hunt, for participation in the Watergate break-in. The Cubans testified they thought it was a CIA operation and that it would aid their anti-Castro campaign.

•Since 1974, as the U.S. has moved closer to "normalization" of relations with Castro Cuba, Cuban militants have intensified their activity. There have been at least seven assassination attempts against refugee leaders who were considered opponents of the exiles' violent tactics. One was killed by a bomb and three other men were shot to death. A prominent radio broadcaster lost both legs below the knees when a bomb tore his car apart in a Miami parking lot. Three other attempted killings failed. In 1975, bombs ripped through the Miami office of the F.B.I., a Social Security office, a Florida unemployment office, several post offices, a bank, a State Attorney's office and the Miami police department headquarters. These bombings were accompanied by exile attacks on airline offices and consulates of governments having commercial and diplomatic relations with Castro. Bombings took place in Panama, Mexico, Portugal, Puerto Rico and Jamaica. The Miami International Airport was hit in the fall of 1975. Shortly thereafter, a number of bombs exploded in New York, one at the Venezuelan consulate on Fifth Avenue.

•A Cuban fisheries expert was killed in July, 1975, when three men who had flown from Miami with coffee cans filled with plastic explosive attempted to capture Cuban Consul, Daniel Ferrer Fernandez, in Merida, Mexico.

•On February 12, 1976, the Soviet freighter Dzhordanao Bruno was attacked with heavy machine-gun fire from a speeding small boat, 35 miles off the north coast of Cuba; on April 6, two Cuban fishing boats were attacked and a fisherman was killed.

•On September 21, 1976, a bomb exploded in a car and killed former Chilean Ambassador, Orlando Letelier, in Washington, D.C. Letelier had served under the Marxist regime of the late President Salvador Allende. Rumors persist that the bomb was planted by Cuban exiles as

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There are now more "militant" exile groups in Miami than one can easily keep track of. Some, like Alpha 66, have a long history of anti-Castro activity. There are new organizations emerging while others seem to disappear; Accion Cubana, FLNC-Cuban National Liberation Front, Pragmatistas, Boitel Commandos, El Condor, and an assassination group called "Zero" have all been prominent from time to time, taking credit for the extremists' actions.

•In June 1976, Dr. Orlando Bosch (of 1968 Miami Harbor bazooka attack fame) emerged to call a meeting of activist Cuban exile leaders and their sympathizers, in the Dominican Republic. After heated discussion over strategy, a new organization was formed, to be known as CORU—The Coordinating Committee of United Revolutionary Organizations.

Since the June meeting of last year, a new wave of bombings and kidnappings has swept across Latin America, culminating on October 6, 1976, when a Cubana Airlines DC-8 exploded in flight shortly after take-off from Barbados. 73 persons were killed, including members of the Cuban national fencing team, when the plane fell into the sea. Dr. Bosch and three other Cubans were arrested by Venezuelan authorities and charged with homicide in connection with the plane crash. Since then, CORU has communicated threats of further Havana-Venezuela airline attacks if the imprisoned men were not released.

Many veteran Cuban exile anti-Castro guerrilla fighters look upon these isolated acts of violence with distaste. They fear that acts of terrorism play into Castro's

hands by making all Cuban exiles look like mad bombers. Many in the Cuban community in Miami are cooperating with Federal and local authorities in an effort to curb the violence.

But despite a crackdown on militant exile groups by authorities at all levels, the activity persists. Some claim the extremists are protected by a web of old loyalties, many of them having worked at one time or another for the government as CIA operatives, FBI informants, members of the U.S. military, etc. It has been suggested that law enforcement officials have not been successful in curbing the militants' activities "because they don't want to." To further complicate the problem, the activist movement has been infiltrated by Castro's intelligence corps who instigate terrorist acts to discredit the refugees and influence American policy. Meanwhile, it is alleged that the CIA stands quietly by, supporting neither side, apparently hoping to avoid undue exposure in an already uncomfortably embarrassing predicament.

And so it goes on; almost daily the newspapers in south Florida record some account of Cuban extremist action: MIAMI HOTELS DAMAGED IN 4 BOMBINGS; THREAT DOUBLES ROAD PATROL (Bomb threats in the Florida Keys along the Overseas Highway).

Not only are there threats and bombings, but sizeable commando raids in the making:

*Dateline: Miami, Tuesday, August 16, 1977: AGENTS ARREST 1, LOOK FOR OTHERS AFTER FOILING PLAN TO ATTACK CUBA (Fort Lauderdale News). Agents from three federal agencies raided a west side home*

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and a river marina yesterday, seizing three boats, a cannon and other weapons apparently intended for a commando raid on Cuba.

Newspapers quoted Pedro Rojas, a spokesman for the Bay of Pigs group, as saying the weapons belonged to the Brigade 2506 "secret army." "I don't believe we are violating any law when we fight for the freedom of our country, which is under the hands of international communism," Rojas added.

And a follow-up dateline: Miami, August 16, 1977, BAY OF PIGS GROUP HAS 9 BOATS READY FOR ATTACK ON CUBA (Miami News). Armando Lopez Estrada, military chief of the Bay of Pigs 2506 Brigade, said today his group is still planning an attack on Cuba, despite the confiscation of three boats and a cache of weapons yesterday and the arrest of a Brigade member.

Lopez-Estrada said the group has nine more boats, all heavily armed, outside the country—in Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. "I worked as a commando leader for seven years for the CIA," Estrada said, "We hid a lot of weapons and we know where they are."

Where will it end? For the militant exiles who look upon themselves still as freedom fighters and not as terrorists, the objective remains unchanged. For myself, and a few other Americans who, in one way or another, were drawn into the struggle for Cuban freedom, the commitment to the exiles' cause remains undiminished. While abhorring terrorism as a tactic, I must sympathize with the plight of the exile. For all of us, Lopez-Estrada puts it clearly, "There is only one policy. That policy is to fight to the end for the freedom of our country."



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# P-38K: Short Barrelled Dynamite

For the last several weeks, I've been shooting and otherwise getting familiar with a brand new combat auto, yet one with which most of us already have at least a nodding familiarity. The Walther P-38K is brand new in design, size, and intent, yet familiar for many reasons. The basic Walther P-38 has a fine reputation as a service pistol, was the winner in the pistol trials held in Germany prior to World War II, and was the choice of the West German Army after the conflict. Like all Walther pistols, it shoots where you point it, functions reliably under adverse conditions, and is as safe to operate as it is easy to field strip.

The P-38K's most obvious difference from the standard P-38 is its substantially shortened barrel. Though the most apparent feature, it is one of the least important. Most of us have seen P-38s with shortened barrels. On occasion, German undercover agents used such snubbed pistols during World War II, and the popular TV shows, "I Spy" and "The Man From UNCLE," both featured a short-barreled P-38. In the U.S., one in three gunshops has a homemade hack-sawed P-38 in the used-gun showcase.

If the new P-38K were only a P-38 with a shortened distance to the muzzle, it would be of no more interest than the two-inch barreled S&W Military & Police from the standard four-inch model.

But the P-38K is a unique departure in concealable combat autos and not just a curious variation, although like the P-38, it can be fired double action on the first shot, and field stripping is the same (with only minor differences), as are the excellent grip, the not-so-excellent base-of-the-butt magazine release, lanyard ring, magazine, and caliber.

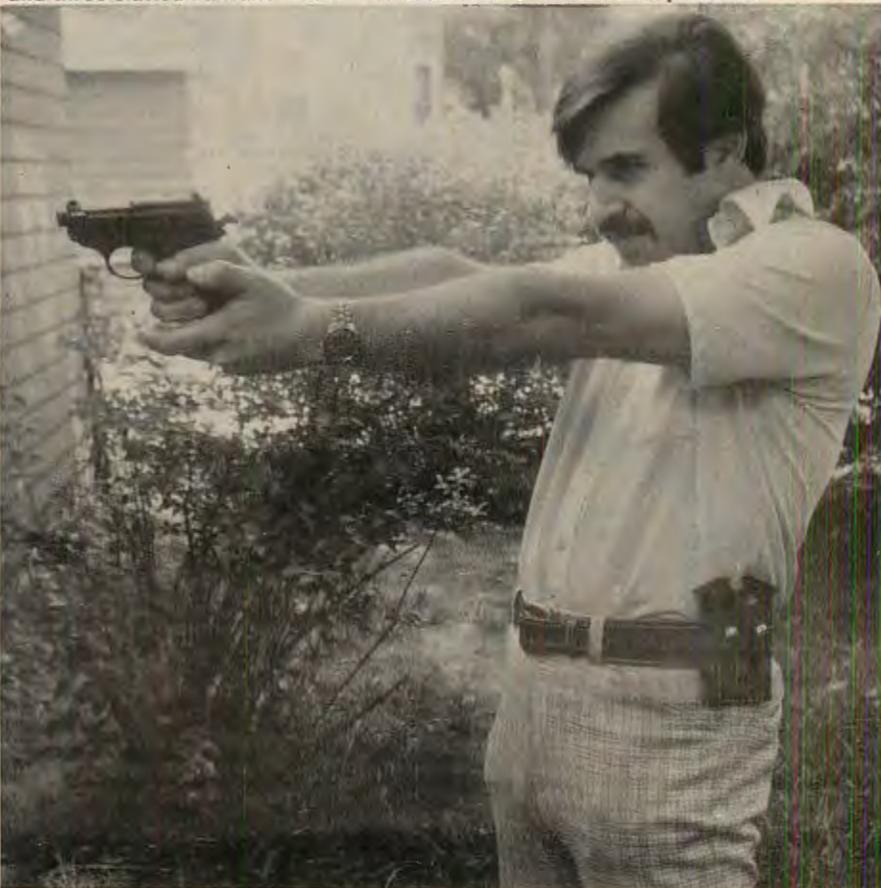
For the professionally armed person, the 9mm cartridge used in the P-38K is an excellent choice. Consider this, if you will. Most nations in Europe and in many other parts of the world favor the 9mm round so that surplus or "liberated" ammunition is more widely available in this caliber. Also, pistols chambering the 9mm generally have somewhat greater magazine capacity. Interchangeability factors with the more popular SMGs also make points for the 9mm. Over and above this, more and more evidence shows that with properly constructed bul-



## BY JERRY AHERNE

Left profile, Walther P-38K. Note device identical to standard slide mounted hammer drop thumb safety. On the P-38K, this is a hammer lowering device, not a safety as such. Note also slide mounted front sight. P-38K's major drawback is the base of the butt mounted magazine release.

Author Ahern, "afflicted" with a left master eye and right-handedness, uses solid two-hand unsupported position for best results with the new Walther. Due to smooth double action pull, first round accuracy is comparable to single action fire, even with longer pull. Ahern utilizes a Baker Pancake mode Anderson speed pouch on belt. Roy Baker also provided a complete leather rig for P-38K, including clip pouch, cuff case and three-slatted Pancake holster. As usual leather work was superlative.



lets, the 9mm is perfectly adequate for defense situations, closely rivaling and, according to some schools of thought, surpassing the effectiveness of the .45 ACP.

Although there are several excellent 9mm pistols, and among these many with the double-action feature, in this caliber no pistol, DA or single action, matches the features of the new P-38K. For European readers, the P-38K is not quite so new. Some West German units are now using it as a service pistol.

What, then, is so new about the P-38K?

It is the only commercial pistol available in the U.S.—and one of only a few available elsewhere—to feature a thoroughly reliable de-cocking system which is not a safety. The de-cocking system works by sheer genius.

The standard safety system on the Walther P-38, and similar systems on Smith & Wesson Models 39 and 59, uses a left face of the slide-mounted thumb lever. Depressing the lever counter- or anti-clockwise from the horizontal lowers the hammer onto the firing pin, which is blocked from forward movement. Were it not, the safety lever would merely be an odd way of pulling the trigger. Once the lever is depressed, it stays that way, disallowing pulling of the trigger or cocking of the hammer without returning it to the horizontal. To have the pistol instantly ready, the safety must be put off. Both the P-38 and the Smith & Wesson pistols are safe to carry hammer-down chamber-loaded. On the P-38, a sear-operated automatic safety precludes firing pin movement, while the S&W pistols use an inertial firing pin. In operation both systems provide adequate safety against accidental discharge. In the P-38, post-war pistols use a better designed firing pin which enhances the effectiveness of the automatic safety; only a malfunction of the automatic safety system itself could keep the firing pin from being blocked and invite accidental discharge via a blow on the hammer. In a well-maintained, post-war P-38, the likelihood of this happening is highly remote.

With the better known inertial system, though a blow on the lowered hammer almost never causes a discharge in a properly functioning pistol, a sharp blow on the muzzle could force the primer against the pin, making it fire.

The automatic safety of the new P-38K means that the new system is safer than either an inertial firing pin arrangement or the standard P-38 design. Only one other pistol is as safe or safer, and that is the superlative Walther PP, the PPK, or the American-import model with PPK slide and barrel on the PP frame, the PPK/S.

The new P-38K employs a tilting firing pin. When the de-cocking lever is depressed, the hammer is lowered. Internally, the firing pin is blocked by the de-cocking cylinder and also tilted out of

alignment with the part of the hammer surface which can connect to make it drive forward. For, built into the face of the hammer, is a recess.

Unless the trigger is deliberately pulled, the firing pin is aligned with the recess in the hammer face rather than the smooth surface designed to strike it. Similarly, though I wouldn't volunteer to stand in front of the muzzle to test it, even with the hammer fully cocked and the de-cocking piece out of the way, the hammer can be delivered a severe blow and the firing pin will still be sufficiently lowered to seat in the hammer recess. Only tripping the trigger will bring the firing pin fully on line to properly receive the hammer blow.

And, when the de-cocking piece is lowered anti-clockwise from the horizontal and the tilting firing pin, hammer recess and de-cocking cylinder are in operation, all that needs to be done to have the pistol ready to shoot DA is to release the lever. It automatically returns to the horizontal and the gun is ready to fire. Though mounted in the same position on the left face of the slide and identical to the P-38 safety in appearance, the de-cocking lever is a totally different concept.

If you got lost after the first de-cocking cylinder, the essence of my point is that lowering the lever lowers the hammer, safely. Then the lever returns automatically and the pistol is always as ready to fire as a double-action revolver, and just as safe, if not safer than a DA revolver and a hell of a lot safer than most other automatics.

In addition to always being ready to fire and always being safe to carry, the new P-38K has other desirable features. The hammer spur has been bobbed or cut off to about half the length of the P-38 spur, still affording adequate surface for single-action cocking, yet less prone to catch on clothing or holsters when drawn in a hurry.

The barrel is cut back and instead of the usual five inches is only 2½ inches in length. And, for added sturdiness and following the current vogue in high quality target autoloaders, the front sight is slide-mounted so both front and rear sight travel together as the slide goes in and out of battery, obviating any slight misalignment in the sighting system due to lateral side play.

The sights themselves are new on the P-38K. The rear sight is windage-adjustable by means of an allen wrench, keeping the notch firmly in place and less likely to drift out of alignment when knocked or jarred. Certainly, elevation adjustment would be useful, but is not mandatory, since each Walther pistol is set up and tested for accuracy before leaving the factory. The test target with my P-38K was fired at over 75 feet, an even 25 meters, and the slugs punched the paper dead on. The P-38K also utilizes the white-on-black color system,

using a white square at the base of the rear sight notch and a white dot at the maximum elevation of the front blade.

My accuracy with the pistol was surprising. Keeping the rear sight notch centered and using the excellent Remington 9mm 115-JHP round, I was able to keep all shots in a 3¼-inch diameter circle on a bullseye target 50 feet from my firing point, using a two-hand unsupported hold. The P-38K shot so well for me that I literally surprised myself. And, practically speaking, the pistol isn't even broken in yet. Feeding of the hollow point ammo and Interarms FMC slugs was 100% faultless, as was overall functioning of the pistol.

Dimensionally, the P-38K runs to 6½ inches overall length, 1¼ inches width and 5¼ inches height, with weight going to 27 ounces empty and 31½ ounces when loaded with eight rounds in the magazine and number nine chambered. Sight radius is 4½ inches. For comparison, a Chiefs Special runs 6¼ inches LOA, 1¾ inches in width and 4½ inches in height. Weight, loaded with five slugs, is 22 ounces. When seriously considered, differences in size and heft amount to precious little, yet first-load capacity is nearly twice as much, and reloading time is significantly less.

A less tangible measurement of the P-38K is the way it looks. A standard P-38 is an attractive yet nasty-looking piece of ordnance. The P-38K loses somewhat in attractiveness but looks as professionally mean as a handgun can get: it is all black, with a matte-finished slide, barrel, and hammer. It shoots surprisingly well with its short tube, functions perfectly, has features no high-priced combat conversion can offer, is easily concealed, and feels good in the hand. Like the standard P-38, it is simplicity itself to field strip, is the easiest of the big bore autos to single load should the magazine become lost, and, most important of all to those who appreciate quality and engineering excellence in a handgun, it's a Walther.

As yet, only one American manufacturer offers a holster for this pistol, Roy Baker of Magnolia, Arkansas. His Pancake holster fits the P-38K perfectly, and the Andy Anderson speed magazine pouch he offers for the Model 39 works perfectly with P-38K magazines. The combination of gun and holster is a true mating of quality.

I made arrangements to purchase the P-38K I tested, because it was one gun I definitely wanted to hold onto. I rather figured that since life can be a dicey thing at times and you don't always know where you're going, it was well to own the P-38K. I look at my investment as a sort of insurance policy for coming back.

The P-38K can be ordered from Interarms, 10 Prince St., Alexandria, VA. 22313 U.S.A.



# BIG STORY

(continued from page 23)

provide an invaluable historical and factual perspective in which to judge each news item under study.

Braestrup notes that at the time of the Tet campaign there were about 180 accredited American newsmen in South Vietnam, including 60 who represented America's most important news-gathering organizations. None of these reporters spoke Vietnamese and almost all were serving a maximum of only 12 or 18 months in the country.

Most of the fighting in Vietnam consisted of small-scale guerrilla attacks and counterattacks, with few set-piece battles and none of the stable front-line confrontations so characteristic of conventional warfare. Covering such a conflict would pose a formidable challenge to even the most experienced, battle-hardened correspondent. But, as Braestrup points out, most of the Americans charged with responsibility for reporting in Vietnam were in their late 20s or early 30s and had no prior military experience so that:

"many newsmen were ill-equipped to understand, let alone question, official or unofficial explanations of

military deployments, problems, and progress. They had to learn, in highly unsystematic, patchwork fashion, while on the job. And, as Tet was to show, this was insufficient."

Unlike World Wars I and II, the Korean and Arab-Israeli wars, and most of the other conflicts of this century, American newsmen in Vietnam were not subjected to censorship. With the cooperation of the U.S. military and the Embassy, they were able to travel almost anywhere in the country at will and interview whomever they liked. Also, unlike past conflicts, modern facilities were readily available to them, which ensured that their reports and films were transmitted rapidly back to their respective editors in the States.

Commenting on the lack of censorship, Braestrup observes that many Americans were "puzzled . . . [by] the apparent failure of North Vietnamese intelligence and operations officers to capitalize on the detailed press reporting of allied troop movements, down to company size (as at Hue), fortifications, losses, and morale." He notes: "It was suggested by some U.S. Army officers that

perhaps, in Hanoi, the U.S. media lacked credibility."

The fallacies and distortions about the Tet offensive which are documented in **Big Story** are far too numerous for us to outline here, but several basic errors can be mentioned which are of particular importance for an understanding of how the American public came to be deceived about the campaign's significance.

Two of the standard press fallacies which appeared during the early days of the offensive were that the U.S. command had been caught napping and that the Communists had achieved a "psychological," if not a military, victory by demonstrating that, contrary to the many optimistic "assurances" given by U.S. spokesmen in the past, they could attack any city or hamlet in the country at will. Despite a great deal of evidence to the contrary, this interpretation of events persisted long after the offensive had ended.

In an address to the Detroit Economic Club delivered on December 18, Gen. Earle A. Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, stressed the gains which had been made in Vietnam but warned that "it is entirely possible that there may



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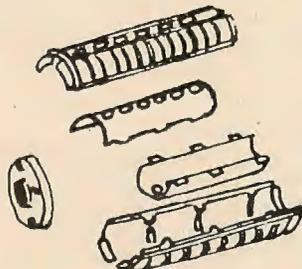
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be a communist thrust similar to the desperate effort of the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge in World War II." Wheeler's warning was in sharp contrast to prior optimistic statements by Administration spokesmen, but it received little attention in the media and, apparently, was not remembered by newsmen when the offensive occurred about six weeks later.

Two days after General Wheeler's speech in Detroit, General Westmoreland sent a message to President Johnson in which he reported indications that, owing to the deterioration in their position during the previous six months and their perception of a continuing adverse trend, the communists had decided to abandon a protracted war of attrition and undertake "an intensified countrywide effort, perhaps a maximum effort, over a relatively short period." Captured enemy documents indicated that instead of being urged to conserve their forces for a protracted struggle as they had been in the past, enemy troops were now being exhorted to make "a maximum effort on all fronts (political and military) in order to achieve victory in a short period of time."

President Johnson, apparently wishing to accentuate the positive in a pre-election year, did not publicize Westmoreland's ominous message. Nor did he or other Administration spokesmen repeat General Wheeler's public warning in Detroit. However, on January 17, General Westmoreland did receive widespread media coverage when he warned that he anticipated "a resurgence of enemy initiative just before or after Tet."

In a filmed interview with NBC, broadcast on the "Huntley-Brinkley Report" on 22 January 1968, Westmoreland repeated his warning, stating: "I think that (the enemy's) plans concern a major effort to win a spectacular battlefield success along the eve of Tet, which takes place at the end of the month." Braestrup notes that the impact of the General's warning was largely muted by the media as attention of press and public shifted to the crisis over the capture of the *Pueblo* by the North Koreans on January 23.

While the U.S. intelligence community could not predict the exact date or the massive scale of the offensive, they did provide U.S. and ARVN forces with advance warning that heavy assaults were imminent. Early in January, intelligence sources confirmed a large-scale buildup of enemy forces within South Vietnam; and, consequently, planned operations along the Cambodian frontier were cancelled so that the troops would be available for use wherever needed. On January 15, U.S. forces in Hue were warned to expect an attack. On January 22, U.S. forces were put on a countrywide alert and the halt in the bombing of North Vietnam which was planned for the Tet holiday was cancelled.

General Westmoreland attempted to persuade South Vietnamese officials not to order the ceasefire which was traditionally observed during the week-long holiday, but President Nguyen Van Thieu, fearing for the morale of his troops, was reluctant to do so. He finally agreed to limit the truce to 36 hours, with the result that when the offensive began about half of the ARVN troops were on leave from their posts.

All of these facts could have and, indeed should have, been perceived by American newsmen prior to the offensive; yet there is little indication that such considerations were allowed to alter their preconceptions or those of their editors back home: As far as many, if not most, of the media representatives in Vietnam, Washington, and New York were concerned, Tet had transformed the "credibility gap" between the press and the Johnson Administration into a canyon.

Commenting upon what he believes to be the proper lessons to be derived from Tet, Braestrup observes that "Tet showed that the enemy had scored a major surprise," but its ultimate effect was obscure initially, since it neither proved nor disproved the conclusions of either optimists or pessimists on the much debated 1967 "facts," except on two points:

"First, Westmoreland was wrong in publicly underestimating the enemy (in November). Second, the media pessimists were wrong to write off South Vietnamese ability to fight and 'muddle through.' Americans did not know enough about Vietnamese, North or South."

Braestrup also believes that "the President was wrong both to launch the rose-colored progress campaign and to persist in it without warning the U.S. public of what he knew: that possible heavy fighting lay ahead," and that Westmoreland's warning were forgotten by the media by the time that Tet broke:

"Journalists' memories skipped back to the General's star role in the progress campaign, to his promise that 'success' was discernible on the horizon."

Another standard fallacy which was found in the reporting of Tet was based on the view that while the Communists may not have achieved a military victory, neither did the United States and its allies. Only a few analysts, most notably Joseph Alsop of the *Washington Post*, accepted the Administration's position that the offensive was an act of desperation which signalled an early end to the war. Most commentators viewed the attacks as evidence of the superior initiative of enemy forces, compared with that of the ARVN, and a clear indication of a basic lack of popular support for the South Vietnamese government (GVN).

Joseph Kraft, columnist for the *Washington Post*, for example, observed

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in an article appearing on February 6 that Tet had demonstrated that the "corrupt military authorities" of the Saigon government could not "enlist the support of the local population," that the urban destruction caused by U.S. firepower had further alienated South Vietnamese civilians, and that, consequently, U.S. military power had failed to produce "useful political results" in South Vietnam. He concluded that the best course for the United States was to try to stabilize the military situation and then seek a "negotiated settlement" with the Communists.

In a special CBS televised report from Saigon on February 14, three days after the recapture of Hue, the last urban position held by the Communists, Walter Cronkite viewed the urban destruction resulting from the fighting, the massive influx of new refugees and other evidence of the disruption of the pacification campaign in rural areas and gravely intoned that "... the only rational way out [for the United States] ... will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could." Frank McGee, in a NBC-TV special on March 10, declared, "The war, as the Administration has defined it, is being lost."

**Big Story** explains that eminent newsmen were prone to engage in "instant" unsubstantiated analyses because "except at Hue and Saigon, there were few hard facts available to dispute the Administration's early military appraisal of the urban attacks." Since they were unable to contradict Administration spokesmen directly but deemed it their duty to rebut official claims:

"... many a newsman and commentator quickly resorted to other means. They turned to 'psychoanalysis' of the South Vietnamese—or speculation as to 'who held the initiative'—to explain to their audiences why, once again, the Administration was 'wrong' and Hanoi had scored a meaningful success in South Vietnam. At best, this was overwrought instant analysis; at worst, it was vengeful exploitation of a crisis. Historically, it proved unfounded."

The "psychoanalyses" of South Vietnamese by American journalists resulted in a variety of themes—which were almost uniformly negative with respect to the GVN. **Big Story** cites the example of a report by NBC reporter Douglas Kiker, who had been only a few weeks in Vietnam before he reported on the NBC-TV "Huntley-Brinkley Report" of February 22 the "psychological reaction" of the South Vietnamese to the offensive was to cause them to retreat even further from the war, since "They're people caught in the middle. They find it hard,

almost impossible, to commit themselves to anything anymore. Their big concern now is survival."

U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker entered into the "psychological" debate by observing that the communist violation of the sacred national holiday was deeply resented by the Vietnamese population and thus had hurt the Vietcong politically. But this was quickly challenged by the former *Newsweek* bureau chief in Saigon, Everett Martin. Writing in *Newsweek*, February 12, from the vantage point of New York, Martin discounted the Ambassador's remarks as being "extremely wishful" and offered his personal view that "things just don't work that way in South Vietnam."

Braestrup notes that *Newsweek* "persisted in the psychological-impact theme (of the offensive) longer than anyone else." In its February 19 edition, for example, the popular news magazine informed its readers that "... The number of South Vietnamese who were unwilling to oppose the Vietcong had almost certainly increased as a result of the events of the past two weeks." But, as we have noted, events were to prove just the opposite, as the offensive goaded the GVN into national mobilization. Braestrup concludes that *Newsweek's* "writers in New York, like journalists elsewhere, were seeking and offering instant explanation and measurement of disaster—telling the reader more than the writers themselves knew, or could know."

One of the more widespread bits of conventional wisdom about Tet was that the Vietcong could not have moved such large numbers of troops through the countryside and into staging areas in or near the cities if the South Vietnamese populace had not generally acquiesced in their cause. Several reporters made this point early in the offensive and it was swiftly seized upon by the critics of Johnson's war policy.

Braestrup offers a penetrating, highly professional comment with respect to such speculation, noting that it reflected "a remoteness from rural Vietnam and a lack of familiarity with Vietcong tactics, common to most Americans." In support of his analysis, he declares, first, in the swamps, woods, and canals around Saigon, "Vietcong troops, moving swiftly from jungle base camps in small groups by night, could by-pass scattered militia outposts and hamlets to concentrate for attack on the city's edge." Second, the Vietcong normally did not move in large groups in the lowlands. Third, Vietcong agents and sapper teams stayed out of sight in "safe houses." Finally, allied intelligence services, like the FBI, "did not rely for information on the average citizen, but on their own agents and informers, as well as on interception of Vietcong radio messages, interrogation of deserters and prisoners, and captured documents. Braestrup concludes:

"The Vietcong did not *need* popular acquiescence in order to penetrate the cities, nor did the allies depend on the populace for advance notice. Tet was not a referendum on Thieu's popularity."

Once the antiwarriors in the States had convinced themselves that the events of Tet 1968 were proof of the lack of popular support for the GVN, it was not difficult for them to determine why such support was lacking: clearly, the Thieu-Ky regime was "corrupt," "repressive," "inefficient," and consequently, was unworthy of further U.S. assistance. As Braestrup notes, "the Saigon regime, faceless to most Americans, offered a convenient scapegoat for the Tet surprise—and the war's frustrations."

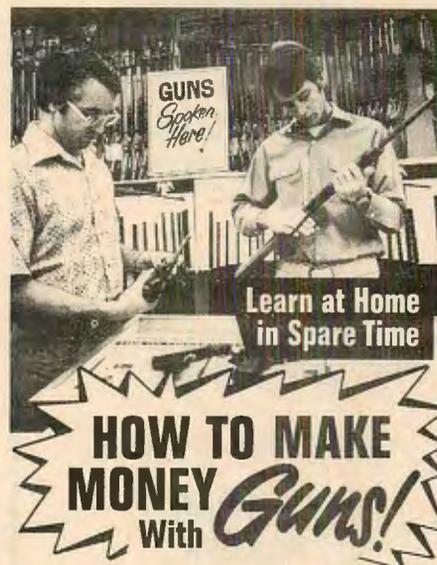
One of the most publicized proponents of the "corruption" theme was Senator Edward Kennedy, who, as chairman of a Senate subcommittee on refugees, was able to gain headlines by making vague, unsubstantiated charges of scandal in the administration of the U.S. war victim assistance programs in Vietnam. Kennedy's views were given by NBC anchorman Chet Huntley on the February 2 NBC radio program "Emphasis" after the Senator's return from a two-week visit to Vietnam prior to Tet. Huntley declared that Kennedy "found that the graft and thievery and favoritism go on unabated" and that

"American supplies are stolen off the docks of Saigon . . . , South Vietnamese landlords live it up in Saigon and collect their exorbitant rents from the peasants in the countryside . . . , South Vietnamese military officers are running bars and bordellos in the capital."

Huntley repeated Kennedy's conclusion that the affluence of the elected and appointed officials of the new South Vietnamese government were incentives to keep the war going as long as possible.

Anyone who has had the opportunity to live and work for extended periods in South Vietnam and other developing countries is quite likely to concur with Braestrup's personal appraisal of the "corruption" issue:

"Corruption—shakedowns, profiteering, or bribes involving officials—permeated much of the (GVN) Administration and its low-paid officialdom, especially under the inflationary impact of U.S. spending in Saigon. . . . In this, war-time Saigon was not unique, however; easy comparisons are Naples in World War II or Seoul in 1950-53. In any case, as far as this reporter is concerned, having already experienced the hand-me-down French administrative process in Laos and North Africa, I found Vietnam remarkably efficient by comparison, with underpaid



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local functionaries less prone to overt bribe-taking than those of Thailand or India."

With respect to the "repressive" nature of the GVN, Braestrup also points out that "by U.S. peacetime standards, the government was intolerant if erratic" but "by Southeast Asian (or Third World) standards, or by wartime standards anywhere, the Saigon press was remarkably free to criticize or report the criticisms of the regime's noncommunist foes during the 1967 election period, Braestrup concludes that

"... During 1967, newsmen had no problem locating and interviewing the government's noncommunist critics, most of whom were largely left unmolested, possibly because of U.S. Embassy pressure or possibly because most of them represented little more than themselves."

Braestrup's personal experience as a reporter in Vietnam led him to conclude that "the overwhelming journalistic fact about South Vietnamese performance at Tet was that it was rarely reported firsthand." This was particularly true of media coverage of the South Vietnamese military. American reporters "usually got their impressions about ARVN from U.S. mission officials, Vietnamese reporters, or U.S. advisors at base camps

or province headquarters, and rarely observed ARVN troops on combat operations." Unlike their predecessors in 1962-64 "newsmen skimmed on firsthand reporting of ARVN and Regional and Popular Forces militia." This omission was due to the difficulties resulting from the language barrier, the Vietnamese military's reticence in dealing with the press, the visibility and accessibility of U.S. forces in Vietnam by 1967, and especially, the ethnocentricity of U.S. newsmen and officials:

"The accepted thinking in 1966-67 was that the American troops were doing the important fighting, with the South Vietnamese (by design) relegated to territorial defense. It was seldom noted that the annual total of South Vietnamese battle dead exceeded the annual U.S. total by a substantial margin every year of the war."

There should be little wonder then that the image of ARVN dreamed up by anti-war pundits in the States went almost completely unchallenged by newsmen in Vietnam. But, as Braestrup's appraisal indicates, ARVN performed quite credibly during the offensive. "At Tet, the ARVN and South Vietnamese militia were deployed in pacification areas and in around the towns and cities—Hanoi's chief targets—while more mobile U.S. forces were largely oriented toward enemy main force units in the woods, hills, and on the borders." Although few U.S. installations outside the Saigon-Bien Hoa area were targets of enemy ground attacks at Tet, ARVN compounds and headquarters were badly hit, and ARVN suffered the "lion's share" of allied losses in Saigon and Hue. Although South Korean, Australian or U.S. relief forces saved the day in at least a dozen places, "with their U.S. advisors, the undermanned ARVN and the local militia did the ground fighting alone in most of



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the rest of the 36 (of 44) province capitals, and 64 (of 242) district capitals, and 50 hamlets initially assaulted at Tet. The South Vietnamese units' performance varied widely under the shock, but, overall, their stout resistance was an essential factor in Hanoi's military failure."

While the South Vietnamese were generally portrayed as unworthy allies, the media showed a pronounced tendency to idealize the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese. Braestrup observes that most media descriptions of the foe, even well into March 1968, emphasized the enemy's planning, tactics, execution, zeal, and weaponry as flawless. Such reporting was particularly prevalent on TV, drawn as a contrast to the South Vietnamese: "In short, even as they described the flaws and problems of the allies, the newsmen in Saigon and Washington by and large failed to examine the North Vietnamese and Vietcong with the same critical eye."

Braestrup believes that some of this exaggeration was caused by American expressions of respect toward their foes and frustration with their allies as well as by a subjective reaction to the Tet surprise, "and to the greater degree of personal risk involved in reporting combat operations thereafter." Finally, he believes that there was a desire to say "I told you so" to the Administration, "after months of broad official



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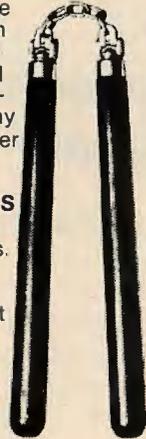
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assertions that the enemy's morale was slipping, his plans had been thwarted, and Hanoi was 'no longer winning.'"

Commenting on the enemy's performance during the offensive, Braestrup points out that the North Vietnamese Commander-in-Chief, General Vo Nyugen Giap, made several major blunders which cost him dearly. His subordinates' battlefield performance was often "muddled," although damage caused by his Soviet and Chinese-supplied weaponry was spectacular, it was nowhere decisive, and his troops often retreated when faced with determined resistance. He concludes:

"It can now be argued that Giap himself, after gaining a rare degree of tactical surprise, failed to exploit it, committing just enough troops (an estimated 84,000) to make good targets for allied firepower—and far more than enough to make headlines—but not enough in any one place at any time to score decisively on the ground."

Braestrup notes that because the U.S. and ARVN forces had far more firepower than the enemy, they were blamed "overwhelmingly" by newsmen for civilian deaths which occurred during the offensive. While the U.S. Embassy estimated that during the first three months of 1968, the Vietcong had deliberately murdered or kidnapped 12,000 civilians, newsmen tended to regard such official announcements with great skepticism.

Perhaps nothing better illustrates the peculiar mentality of most of the newsmen in Vietnam than their coverage—or rather, their lack of coverage—of the atrocities committed by the Vietcong while they controlled the city of Hue. Even before February 24, when the city had been completely retaken, there were persistent reports that the Vietcong had engaged in the selected execution of hundreds of civilians; yet, according to Braestrup, out of the entire press corps, only one newsman, Stewart Harris, a British correspondent for the *London Times*, ever bothered to make an on-the-scene investigation. Harris confirmed that hundreds of "little people, . . . village and hamlet chiefs, . . . teachers and policemen" had been murdered and buried in mass graves.

A noted USIA specialist on the Vietnamese communist movements, Douglas Pike, investigated the situation in Hue and concluded that most of the killings occurred when the Vietcong realized they could no longer hold the city and therefore liquidated those who could identify local Vietcong who had "surfaced" during the occupation.

Not only were the atrocity reports largely ignored by the media, but they were challenged by several anti-war protestors, including Senator George McGovern who labeled them "hysterical

misinterpretation." (Note: By mid-1970, 2,810 bodies had been found in dozens of graves around the city and a total of 1,946 persons were still unaccounted for.)

The Hue massacres got little play by the media because editors and commentators apparently wished to avoid "atrocious propaganda." They were soon to overcome this aversion with a vengeance when the news broke about what a platoon of U.S. infantrymen under the command of one Lt. William Calley had done in a little hamlet in Quang Ngai Province called My Lai.

The events which received the most media attention during the Tet period were clearly those of the siege of the U.S. Marine Combat base at Khe Sanh in the northwest corner of the country close to the Laotian frontier. Braestrup believes that "whatever its military or political significance, Khe Sanh filled a *journalistic* need." It had inherent dramatic value: isolated Marines, surrounded and bombarded by North Vietnamese troops, among whom General Giap was reported to have taken "personal command," served as actors in an ominous prelude to the attack upon South Vietnamese cities.

Armchair strategists among the press corps were quick to criticize U.S. strategy at the base as a classic example of a futile "static defense" posture and commentators, such as Walter Cronkite of CBS, presented Khe Sanh under siege as a "microcosm" of U.S. involvement in the whole war.

A more sophisticated, but equally erroneous analysis was offered by the editors of *Life* and *Newsweek*, who divined that the siege was launched by the "wily" Giap in order to divert or immobilize major U.S. and ARVN forces away from the urban areas which were his real objectives. Braestrup notes that ample evidence was available to refute the "diversion" theory, but that it was ignored:

"A little more study of the situation by newsmen might have precluded undue stress on the 'diversion' thesis. If Hanoi had, in fact, simply intended a cheap diversion of U.S. forces from urban areas, it did not turn out that way. As of January 25, the NVA's two divisions (18 battalions) in the Khe Sanh area equaled about 20 percent of NVA main-force battalion strength in South Vietnam and about 40 percent of NVA strength in I Corps. Westmoreland's four battalions at Khe Sanh were equivalent to 10 percent of his I Corps "maneuver battalion" strength and 5 percent of his 97 battalions in all Vietnam. These crude data were available at Tet to newsmen in Washington and Saigon, and no doubt to Hanoi."

While it was never spelled out to the press at the time, in addition to the obvious purpose of blocking the movement of enemy troops from Laos, the "static defense" of Khe Sanh was completely in accord with the basic U.S. strategy of attrition: Khe Sanh was serving as bait to lure enemy forces into large concentrations which could be decimated by U.S. airpower. As Braestrup notes: "In terms of the Vietnam War's military pattern, the siege was an aberration, giving MACVA rare opportunity to focus its B-52 bombers for a sustained period on a small area." As a result of the siege, which lasted from January 21 until the enemy withdrew on April 7, the communists suffered an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 casualties.

Though the media focused most of their attention on U.S. forces, their coverage was, with few exceptions, extremely superficial. Braestrup notes that "by and large neither the newsmen nor their editors thought it important to examine the U.S. Army's leadership tactics or organization performance in Vietnam in any detail after three years of war. The interest was in action and drama, not military concepts or systems."

In his overall assessment of the media coverage of the offensive, Braestrup concludes that

"... the performance by the major television and print news organizations during February and March 1968 constitutes an extreme case. Rarely has contemporary crisis journalism turned out, in retrospect, to have veered so widely from reality. Essentially, the dominant themes of the words and films from Vietnam (rebroadcast in commentary, editorials, and much political rhetoric at home) added up to a portrait of defeat for the allies..."

Was the Tet offensive a brilliant shift of strategy which revealed the hollow pretensions of Johnson's war policies as Administration critics contended? Or was it an act of desperation by the Communists owing to the success of those policies as Administration supporters maintained? It should have been clear even

while the offensive was underway that, despite their scale, the attacks, by themselves, neither proved nor disproved the correctness of U.S. policy or military strategy in South Vietnam: In any war, one side or the other can attack a given target or even a series of targets "at will"—if it is willing to pay the price of such a venture. As we have noted, the military cost of the Tet offensive paid by the communists—particularly the Vietcong—was very high indeed.

Was it worth it to the communists? To answer this, one must assess not only the military gains and losses in South Vietnam, but also the impact of the offensive on public opinion in the United States.

One of the last chapters in **Big Story** is devoted to a discussion by Burns W. Roper, head of the Roper polling organization, of the impact of Tet on U.S. public opinion. In his analysis, Roper found that the "very lowest" public opinion rating which President Johnson received during a "three-year trend measurement" (1965-67) occurred in March 1968, "when the full impact of the media coverage of the Tet offensive had developed." There can be little doubt that this was one of the major factors which caused the President to decline renomination by his party and withdraw from public life.

The reporting of the offensive clearly had undermined public support for Johnson's war policy, was one of the major factors which caused the President to decline renomination by his party and withdraw from public life, and perhaps more than any other single factor was responsible for the gradual abandonment of the U.S. commitment to the people of Indochina. One is tempted to speculate what the situation in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos would be today had the United States imposed news censorship in Vietnam as it had in all of the other wars in which it was engaged in this century.

The disjointed format, sheer bulk, and exorbitant price of **Big Story** are clear indications that it was intended for the serious student of the media, not the casual reader. It is an indispensable source of material for those who wish to study the performance of America's major news agencies and key individual

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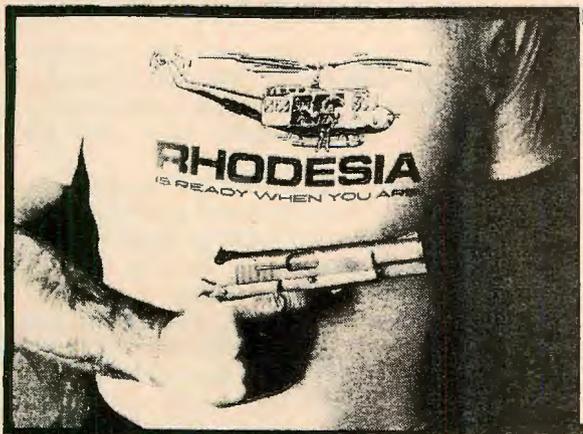
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newsmen and commentators during a brief but critical period of a bitterly contested and often grossly misunderstood conflict. (Those interested in an excellent, concise book on the offensive itself should read *Tet!: The Story of A Battle and Its Historic Aftermath* by Don Oberdorfer (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971), cited throughout **Big Story** as an authoritative reference.)

If there is any moral to be found in the pages of **Big Story** perhaps it is that when one is determined to write or talk about events occurring in an unfamiliar environment in a state of rapid flux, it makes for far better journalism to give the benefit of any doubt to one's fellow countrymen and their allies, rather than their enemies.

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*David Harris served as a program and reports officer with the U.S. Agency for International Development in South Vietnam during 1969-74. He is currently preparing a dissertation for a Ph.D. in international relations at Syracuse University.*

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**FLAK**

(continued from page 12)  
ing, and Venter herding African insurgents into the interrogation room—things must be busy, busy, busy.

All I really want is issue 8. I enjoy your publication and if I don't receive it soon I will be forced into some clandestine, covert, nocturnal, mercenary operation to procure the precious cargo.

Sincerely,  
Mark A. Bauer  
9248 Ft. Sumter  
Sappington, MO 63126

*On the way—wait. Eds.*

**PANOS CLARIFICATION...**

Dear Sirs:

In September 1977 issue of SOF, and after strong pressure from friends and associates, I have decided to write you a few words about N.E. MacDougald's article about Petroguard Ltd. ripoff.

In this article the name of an Erwin Panos appears. I have received two letters with complaints about it and I had a phone call from the U.S. from people that thought that Erwin Panos and myself is one person!

No, I have nothing to do with Erwin Panos. I am the managing director of an investigations agency in Greece. I have worked in Europe, Asia, U.S., and never had a complaint from anyone. Besides I was conned from Petroguard Ltd. myself. . . .

Yours sincerely,  
Anastasios D. Panos  
4-6 Voltairu St.  
Athens 411, Greece

**M-14, AR-10 COMPARISON...**

Dear Sir:

I read with great interest Terry Edwards' article, "Great Expectations: AR-10," and John Michaels' evaluation of the AR-10 in the Jan '78 issue of SOF. I had the opportunity to fire an accuracy test using two AR-10s in 1967 while I was a proof technician at the Frankford Arsenal. . . .

The test was "Accuracy Comparison," using two M-14s, two M-14 NM, two Mod. 70 Tgt. in .308, and the two AR-10s. The range was 200 yards, bench rest, and the ammo was an accepted lot of M-80, Ball.

I do not agree with Mr. Edwards' opening statement, "The kick is violent." To me, the Stoner buffer system reduces recoil to just slightly more than the M-16. . . .

The only problem I encountered with the AR-10 was the small ejection port. It was almost impossible to single load the weapon through the ejection port for bench rest accuracy testing.

Convey my thanks to Edwards and Michaels for their effort in bringing the story of the AR-10 to those of us who still feel that the Stoner is the best assault

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**MERC CENTERFOLD . . .**

Dear Sir,

For the benefit of your distaff readers, how about a center fold? "Merc of the month," perhaps? You guys wouldn't have to go all the way you know. Unlike some magazines, I would expect SOF to display a little class about the whole matter. I guarantee that you or John Donovan have a lot more going for yourselves, in my opinion, then say, Burt Reynolds.

On the serious side, thanks for the photo of Ocie McAbee in metallic silhouette competition (Spring 1977 issue). I get so sick and tired of women portrayed as hysterical fools when it comes to handling weapons I could throw up. No I am NOT a women's libber. I am perfectly content to let my husband defend home, hearth and me. Our only problem is what to do when he's gone. Well, my hubby has taught me a few things—including how to survive (we hope). SOF fills in many information gaps for me. Thanks a lot. As a matter of

fact, I'm working on my old man to buy me a Detonics .45 auto for an anniversary gift. I've been looking for the perfect .45 pistol for a long time now and I'd never found it except in your magazine.

I am sure many of your subscriber's wives, girlfriends, sisters and daughters read your magazine. Don't forget, we are around 50% of the population and a good market potential. Besides, many wives handle little details like paying for magazine renewals when the time rolls around.

By the way, is there any information available on how women were utilized by the Viet Cong? Were women used extensively? I am particularly interested in the motivational factors for joining the V.C. How were they trained and for what purposes? What were their reactions to combat and POW conditions? How was family life maintained or was it? Just curious if anything is known on this subject.

Anyway, keep up the good work, you sexy devils and don't forget we gals are avid fans also.

Just sign me a citizen soldier's wife.  
T.P.  
Chicago, Ill



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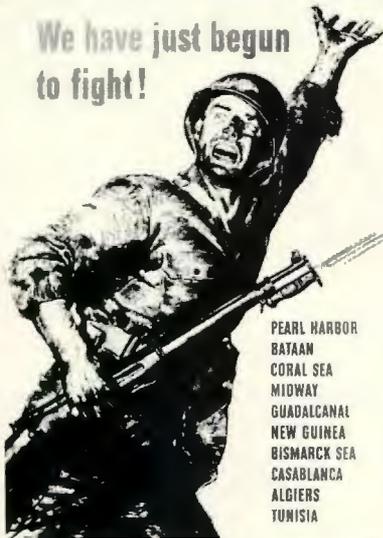
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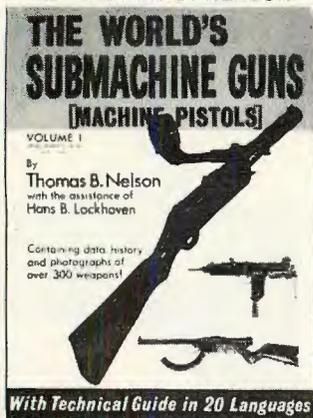
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# COMBAT PISTOL CRAFT

Dan Predovich



Due to the ever-growing interest and numbers of shooters participating in combat pistol shooting, we are initiating a new column. Our COMBAT PISTOL CRAFT column will cover evaluations of current and new weapons, leather and accessories used by combat pistol buffs.

**Davis Custom Holsters**

Gordon Davis, Arcadia, California, is one of the most innovative holster builders in the United States today. His work rivals the master leather engineer, Andy Anderson.

Gordon's latest piece of custom work is a .45 Colt auto combat competition/duty rig that departs somewhat from his usual welt-in-the-front style. The design reminds me of the excellent combat holster made by Milt Sparks. The style is a traditional welt-in-back holster incorporating a sight track that positively eliminates wear and leather drag on the front sight of your weapon.

The retaining device is a stroke of brilliance. A piece of what appears to be heavy surgical rubber tubing is compressed by an adjustment screw. This compressed thick piece of rubber wedges the slide of the .45 auto near the muzzle. The result of this device is a snap-fit gun to holster relationship that keeps the weapon secure ... period.

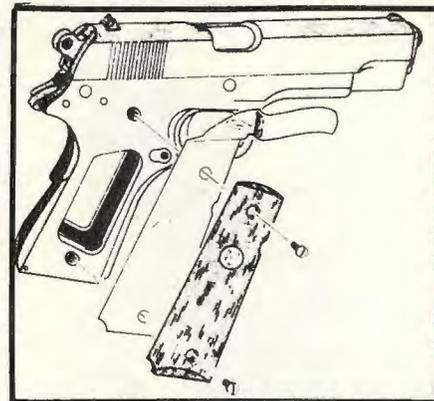
I recently (and successfully) used one of Gordon's compact new holsters on a particularly rigorous running, jumping type of combat pistol match. Many competitors sporting their super-nifty plastic quick-draw holsters left their shiny combat guns lying in the dust on this course. My Davis rig was just as fast and positively secure.

I'm not impressed with most of the holsters on the market today. I've made my own leather gear for a number of years and I'm picky about good stitching, nicely finished edges and compact utility of design. The three masters of the craft in my personal experience are Andy Anderson, Milt Sparks, and Gordon Davis, all custom leather craftsmen, who build their works of art one at a time. The extra cost of these custom rigs brings to your door such abstract qualities as a rich, deep, hand-rubbed finish, hand-burnished edges, faultless stitching, perfect fit and ingenuity of design. If you prefer Chevy to Mercedes, then these are not for you.

For more information on the Davis rig, write Davis Custom Holsters, P.O. Box 446, Arcadia, California 91006.

**The Browne and Pharr Belt Clip**

I just received a clever little device for a field test called the Browne and Pharr Belt Clip. I'm not much for gadgets and, I must admit, I wasn't too responsive to this item on first contact. The B and P Belt Clip is a piece of spring steel that fits under the right grip of a .45 auto. The clip portion extends above the grip and forward, parallel to the slide. The integral clip slides over the belt when the weapon is tucked under the waistband of your pants. When you draw the weapon, you draw belt clip and all. The extra bulk of a holster is eliminated.



**Browne & Pharr Belt Clip**

I got the habit of carrying my .45 Colt Commander holsterless while working undercover. I still carry it that way, tucked in my waistband. I guess I wore a place in my hide that fits that gun. I have never felt a need for a belt clip device, but other officers I have talked to have a constant fear that a holsterless gun will slip down their pants, creating a somewhat embarrassing situation. This device should salve their anxiety.

The sample I have is nickel plated. I would prefer the blue finish which is also available.

This is one of those why-didn't-I-think-of-that items. It is available for the .45 Colt Auto, .45 Detonics Auto and Smith and Wesson Models 39 and 59 for about \$3.95. The Belt Clip does not impair the function of the weapon in any way, nor does it interfere with a normal two-handed grip. The only fault that I could find with the B & P Belt Clip were

rough edges on the grip plate. A few minutes with a fine metal file took care of the roughness.

For more information write Browne and Pharr Mfg., Inc., 1775 Wilwat Dr., Suite I, Norcross, Georgia, 30093, or ask your local gun store to order for you, if he does not have it in stock.

#### The Behlert Pistol Sight

I just returned from the National Police Combat Championships in Jackson, Mississippi, where I had the opportunity to renew many acquaintances and friendships as well as to spend a good portion of my "mad money" at the dealer tent. The dealer tent is an annual part of the National Championships. Merchants, manufacturers and gunsmiths from various parts of the nation display their wares to gun-poor cops like myself. I had the chance to corner Austin Behlert, renowned gunsmith from Union, New Jersey, at his table. Austin is the inventor and maker of a rear sight that has been on the market for many months. The sight replaces, without modification, the stock Smith and Wesson adjustable sight on that company's revolvers.

Austin mentioned that another model of his sight will be available to replace both Ruger and Dan Wesson adjustable revolver sights in about six to eight weeks.

Austin first made a rear sight as an experiment for master pistolero Joe Benner in 1953 for Benner's .22 High Standard match gun. Austin took a Smith and Wesson rear sight and modified the sight blade to form a flat rear sight surface like the presently manufactured BoMar sight.

The production Behlert rear sight is a solidly built chunk of steel. It, too, has the large flat rear sight blade like the BoMar. The sight adjustments of the Behlert sight are twenty clicks per revolution in elevation and fourteen clicks per revolution in windage. Few rear-sight assemblies have finer adjustment capabilities.

To install the Behlert sight on your Smith and Wesson revolver, merely unscrew the rear sight retaining screw, remove the factory installed assembly and replace with the Behlert sight system.

I installed a Behlert rear sight on my custom-tuned four-inch barreled S & W .44 Magnum. After a few hundred rounds the sight retaining screw sheared off, leaving my forty-four sightless. The Behlert sight was simply too heavy for the small stock sight retaining screw under heavy heavy magnum recoil. I had the Behlert sight remounted with a heavier retaining screw and have had no further problem.

For further information, contact your local gun shop or write Behlert Custom Guns, 725 Lehigh Avenue, Union, New Jersey, 07083.



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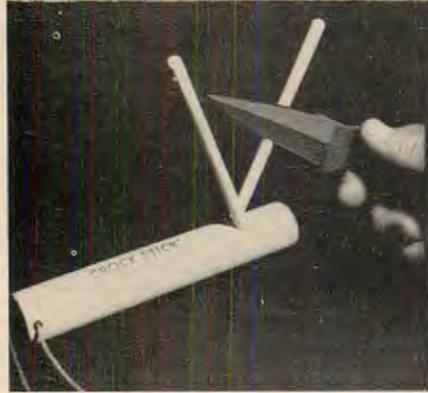
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**LOWE ALPINE SYSTEM'S** latest edition of the all-black **EXPEDITION PACK** is not new. But, its refinements put a smile on Lowe's sales manager, Tom Decker's face. The pack (see *SOF*, issue No. 6 for evaluation), already one of the simplest and ruggedest on the market, now boasts an integral Gore-tex® bivouac sack. Other changes include: more and better padding for the base of the spine, quick-release matte black plastic buckles that can be used with mittens on, loops sewn in the tails of all straps for ease of adjustment with mittens on.

Lowe Alpine Systems, P.O. Box 189, Dept. S, Lafayette, CO 80026



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## IMPOSSIBLE ELECTRONICS...

A new night sight offered by Impossible Electronics Techniques Inc. shown here mounted on an AR-15 has some very interesting features. It does away with the "blooming" effect that can limit the usefulness of other such sighting devices. You don't have to worry about allowing bright light to enter the front lens. This will not cause the usual "trails" and "blooms" that block out important images. It will instantly self-adjust to almost any light level.

For additional information: send \$2.00 to: Impossible Electronics, Dept. S, Box 232, Wayne, PA 19087.

# TERRAIN AND SITUATION

(continued from page 20)

Other features include solid state circuitry, external antenna and speaker jacks, and the total absence of crystals, due to frequency synthesis, similar to the 101. The cabinet is ruggedly constructed of steel with a vinyl coating.

Mobile installation is accomplishable on any vehicle with a 12-Volt negative ground system, though in many parts of the U.S.A. private citizens are prohibited from receiving police communications on a mobile receiver. If travelling with the 210, it might be wise to check about disconnecting it in some areas.

The one feature I don't like about the 210 as opposed to the 101 is that the memory is battery operated and the battery needs replacement every year or so. This is a minor inconvenience and easily controllable by keeping track of when the last battery change was made. It does wipe out the memory and necessitate reprogramming, but with the digital readout display one can simply jot down the precise frequency and re-program quickly enough. Considering all the other features of the Bearcat 210, it's quite a buy at \$350. A price like that isn't at all steep when you consider the information it can provide can save your life. More like a one-time premium on an insurance policy. My sample was provided by Empire Radio Communications, Inc., 2752 N. 47th St., Boulder, CO 80301, U.S.A.

\* \* \* \* \*

Safariland is one of the acknowledged leaders in holster making in the United States and well deserves its fine reputation. But in addition to holsters and their superlative Kel-Lite line, Safariland is now offering one of the most well-conceived and necessary products in the gun field to come along in years. That's the Safariland Keyless Gunloc.

In these days of frequent incidents of home invasion, keeping a loaded gun easily accessible is a must, but in doing so a greater risk of children tampering with a firearm and a resultant accident or worse is run. My son, Jason, at this writing two years, nine months, is precocious as hell and the sight of a gun is as familiar to him as the sight of an automobile. Firearms safety is not idle speculation. Now two years younger, my daughter Samantha will sooner than I know it be at the curious age as well. But the trouble with any gunlock has always been that it needed a key and unless you wore it around your neck it might not be available to free the gun for use when needed. Other types of keyless gunlocks were designed by people with no exposure to children apparently, since they are easily removed. The Safariland Gunloc is totally different.

The Safariland Keyless Gunloc is tension adjustable by means of a small Allen wrench provided with the lock. Working on the principle of spring tension, a plastic recess in the side of the lock is adjusted to only be operated by maximum thumb pressure of the weakest authorized user, still far stronger than anyone in my boy Jason's age bracket. The button has a pinching effect on small fingers and the smaller, weaker hands of a child cannot depress the button and release the gun. Made to retail around six dollars and available for DA revolvers, it affects useability virtually not at all to adult gun handlers in a crisis situation, but can save a child from disaster. I almost think if I ran a gunshop, I'd kick up the price of every revolver I sold just so I could throw one of the Safariland Keyless Gunlocs in as an accessory every time a customer walked out the door.

Obviously, a loaded gun is never totally safe from a child's tamperings, and no lock should be totally relied on. But the Safariland offering is the best and most sensible approach I've seen and I'm glad I own one. For more information or to get one, check your local gunshop or write Safariland Leather Products, 1941 S. Walker Avenue, Monrovia, CA 91016 USA.

\* \* \* \* \*

Television and film violence, especially that involving firearms, is getting raked over the coals quite a bit these days. It's being blamed for juvenile crime involving robberies or murders and even accidental shootings perpetrated by children. Perhaps there is too much violence on the tube, perhaps not, but once again society, as with the gun issue, is blaming its ills on some inanimate object rather than placing the blame where it belongs. If an eight or ten-year-old child picks up a handgun and uses it to play cops and robbers and kills another child, let the blame fall where it should. If guns are in the home—as they should be—what idiot parent will not properly instruct a child as soon as it marginally understands the language not to touch them? And what parent will not keep drumming it home at every opportunity, then take appropriate safety measures to ensure against the child picking up a gun and using it in an unauthorized way? For years, society has been blaming everything from arson to gum disease on someone or something else—the “crime is caused by the availability of handguns” absurdity, for example. Perhaps it's time that society realized that Harry Truman's famous motto doesn't just apply to decision-making, but also to crime, social maladjustment, lethal carelessness and a pile of other unpleasanties—“The buck stops here!”



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## FULL AUTO

(continued from page 8)

when the range is increased past 50 meters, the shotgun is totally worthless, even with rifled slugs, and therefore is a distinct liability to the person using it. Another problem with the shotgun is frequently and vehemently discussed by the logistics people: how does one carry enough ammo? The basic load of 9mm parabellum ammo for a SMG is in excess of 300 rds. How much do 300 rds. of 12-gauge #1 buckshot weigh? One simply cannot carry enough shotgun ammunition to remain effective on the battlefield while keeping weight down within tolerable limits. This is no problem with a SMG.

In the defensive role, the SMG is far superior to any pistol for use by anyone who does not require a battle-rifle to accomplish his or her mission. Infantry company commanders, platoon leaders, radio-telephone operators, platoon sergeants, medics, etc., can carry a SMG with minimum problems while retaining a truly effective weapon with which to defend themselves should the occasion arise. I am not debunking the pistol as a defensive weapon in any way with this statement. The military simply does not train the individual in the use of the handgun to an adequate degree. If all personnel who are issued a pistol could shoot like LTC Jeff Cooper, then pistols would do! However, this is just not the case; therefore, they are not satisfactory.

The merc/soldier/adventurer would do well to seriously consider the SMG for his own personal use if he has any choice in the matter. If he is a leader or any other non-rifleman, then the SMG is a superior choice for his purposes and will give him a far greater chance of staying alive while getting his mission accomplished at the same time.

### Legal Ownership of Automatic Weapons in the United States

Contrary to popular belief, the individual can legally purchase, own, and shoot fully-automatic weapons in the United States in most cases. The process of obtaining the necessary information, paperwork, and endorsements is somewhat involved and therefore tedious but not impossible.

First, it should be noted that there are at least two governing authorities over private ownership of squirtguns: the Federal Government, and the State in which the individual resides. In addition, county and even city ordinances can influence the matter. To avoid confusion, one should contact his attorney to research the laws involved to be certain that ownership would not constitute a violation. If you are fortunate enough to have a Federally licensed Class 3 dealer in your area, he will be the one to contact for all of the current information.

The proper forms for submission to the National Firearms Branch, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms, United States Treasury Department, Washington, D.C., can either be obtained directly from your nearest BATF office, or from any Class 3 dealer. You must then obtain an endorsement from the chief law-enforcement officer of the jurisdiction in which you reside, part of the BATF form, and be photographed and fingerprinted by a qualified individual, preferably a police officer.

Finally, all of this must be accompanied by a certified check or money order for \$200 per Title II item (example—SMG w/silencer is \$400.00 in transfer taxes alone, \$200 for weapon, \$200 for silencer). You can then expect to wait six to eight weeks for the approval/disapproval from BATF in Washington. If your application is disapproved, the reasons for the disapproval must have legal basis and be clearly explained on the application. Your \$200.00 will also be refunded.

The laws at the state level regarding auto-weapons change profusely and should be perused each time an individual wishes to purchase an additional weapon.

The most current information I have on the individual states' positions on private ownership of MGs is included as a guideline to any interested readers. I have stated that the laws *do* change quietly and profusely, and for this reason I recommend that any interested readers check for revisions or updates in the laws that may affect them.

The ownership of machine guns is an expensive and tedious process, but not an impossible one. The hedge against inflation is excellent, from an investment standpoint, and a profit is almost guaranteed should you decide to sell your weapon at a later date.

One last note is included here in regard to police officers and police departments as sources of information on Federal, state, and/or local laws governing MGs . . . **don't**. These individuals are simply not versed in laws of this type, and, as a result, give far too much personal opinion or erroneous information when questioned by the novice. If you want to know the law, have your attorney check it out for you, or call the nearest BATF office or Class 3 dealer! Any interested readers can contact me for recommendations on dealers and/or further information, by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope with their inquiry. All inquiries will be answered as always.

### New Book for Carbine Users

A new book, titled *Guide to Collecting the M1 Carbine*, has been published by Robert Gibson, one of the country's leading authorities on the caliber .30 carbine. All technical data on the weapons-system is included, along with line drawings of all accessories for it,

such as grenade launchers, muzzle brakes, etc. In addition, the book features drawings of all markings on the parts found in the many various carbines in the world to enable the examiner to determine who the manufacturer was, the age of the part, and possibly how to replace it if necessary without detracting from the value of the weapon by substituting an inappropriate replacement.

Although I am not a collector of weapons for collecting's sake, Gibson's book is of definite value to the man who has a need for information on the carbine. Since the M-1, M1A1, M-2, and M-3 carbines are one of the most prolific weapons-systems in the free world courtesy the CIA(!), any merc/adventurer should at least be up on the latest information on them to enhance his own potential effectiveness with the weapon should he be required to use it someday.

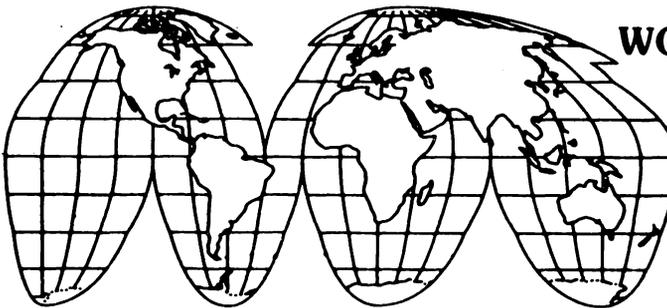
Interested personnel should contact J-B Publications, 1934 23rd Avenue Court, Greeley, Colorado 80631. This little book is worth having.

### MG PURCHASE/ POSSESSION REQUIREMENTS

State	MGs Live	Permitted Dewat	*Special Requirements to Purch. or Possess
Alabama	yes	yes	none
Arizona	yes	yes	none
Alaska	yes	yes	none
Arkansas	yes	yes	must register with state
Calif.	no	yes	dealers & permittees only
Colorado	yes	yes	none
Conn.	yes	yes	register with state after receive weapon
Delaware	no	yes	
Wash. D.C.	no	yes	
Florida	no	yes	dealers can possess
Georgia	yes	yes	none
Hawaii	no	yes	
Idaho	yes	yes	none
Illinois	no	yes	
Indiana	no*	yes	dealers can possess
Iowa	no*	yes	dealers can possess
Kansas	no*	no	dealers can possess
Kentucky	yes	yes	none
Louisiana	yes	yes	sheriff's permit required
Maine	yes	yes	none
Maryland	yes	yes	register gun with state
Mass.	yes*	yes	permit required
Michigan	yes	yes	state permit required
Minnesota	no	yes	
Miss.	yes	yes	none
Missouri	no*	yes	dealers may possess
Montana	yes	yes	register with state
Nebraska	no	no	
Nevada	yes	yes	none
New Hamp.	yes	yes	none
New Jer.	no*	yes	dealers can possess
New Mex.	yes	yes	none
New York	no	yes	
N. Carol.	yes*	yes	sheriff's permit required
N. Dakota	yes*	yes	permit required
Ohio	yes*	yes	\$5000 bond required
Okla.	yes	yes	none
Oregon	yes*	yes	permit required
Penn.	no*	yes	war vets can possess
Puerto Rico	no	yes*	police permit required
Rhode Island	no	yes	
S. Carolina	no	yes	
S. Dakota	yes	yes	state registration after purchase
Tennessee	yes	yes	none
Texas	yes	yes	none
Utah	yes	yes	none
Vermont	yes	yes	none
Virginia	yes	yes	
Virgin Isles	no	yes	permit required
Washington	no	yes	
W. Virginia	yes*	yes	permit required
Wisconsin	yes*	yes	permit required
Wyoming	yes	yes	none

Note: Dewat stands for Deactivated War Trophy. Consists of weapon being welded inoperative to U.S. Government standards.

**MEN**



**WOMEN**

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## STEELE ON KNIVES

(continued from page 15)

the shoulder harness. Occasionally a soldier will improvise or have custom made a special shoulder rig for his favorite fighting knife. The advantage of the shoulder position is that it keeps the knife above water when fording canals, it keeps the belt clear for other gear, and it provides a very fast draw.

A few special purpose shoulder rigs have been developed, such as the Seventrees "secret agent's sheath." James McCourt designed an upside down sheath of simulated leather which carries a light throwing knife and which clips to the shirt or jacket lining. The throwing knife is withdrawn, pushed past the hilt into a victim and left there. A shoulder rig is also marketed by the Ek knife outfit in North Miami, Florida. It is questionable, however, whether the latter device

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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, as written several books on small arms.

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## TET-68

(continued from page 28)

"Those are the same two that were loading the dead VC on the truck the other day and were on TV," another reporter said.

"What about it?" I asked.

"Well," he said, "the VC have put a big bounty on your heads: \$25,000 after the war in Hanoi."

"Big deal," I said and forgot about it.

The Vietnamese general was telling the firemen to get back in the alleys and get the fire under control. I went with the lead firemen, helping them drag the heavy hoses. Next came Sky, the general behind him, and then the newspapermen. CPT. Ritzs was to our right. All of a sudden, there was a guy firing a pistol right at us. It looked as big as a 175 just then. The first round hit the fireman on my left in the chest. The second round hit me in the right arm, although I didn't know it. The third round hit the fireman on my right in the gut. By this time I had bounced off the wall to my left. At the same time I saw CPT. Ritzs on his knees. I thought that the VC had gotten him.

I charged the VC, firing my M-16. He fell at my feet. He was still alive but would soon die. I reached down and took the pistol from his hand. I can still see those eyes, looking at me in hate. Just then two AKs and another pistol hit the ground in front of me.

Guys were saying, "Cho Hoy (I give up)."

I almost shot them, but the general took me by the shoulder and said to bring them to the street. There I went, dragging the one I shot and herding the other three ahead of me. In the street I saw CPT. Ritzs smiling at me.

"Let's take a look at that arm," he said, and I dropped my rifle.

I looked down at my right arm and for the first time I knew I was a WIA. It was bleeding pretty badly and it began to hurt a little. Our VN doctor started cleaning it.

All of a sudden a fellow stuck a mike in my face and asked, "What happened?"

I told him. I found out later that I was on TV in the states from coast to coast. The cameraman had filmed the whole action from beginning to end.

Later I walked over to take another look at the VC I had shot. He was still alive and looking at me with those eyes. The flies were beginning to get all over him. I put a blanket over him and rubbed water from my canteen onto his lips. That hard stare started to leave his eyes. He wanted to talk but was too far gone. I lit a cigarette, took a few puffs, and put it to his lips. He could barely puff. We each had had a few drags and that hard look had left his eyes before he died.



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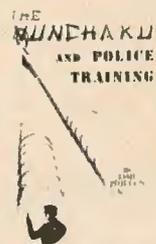
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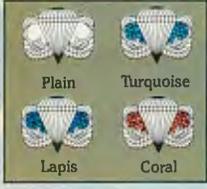
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