

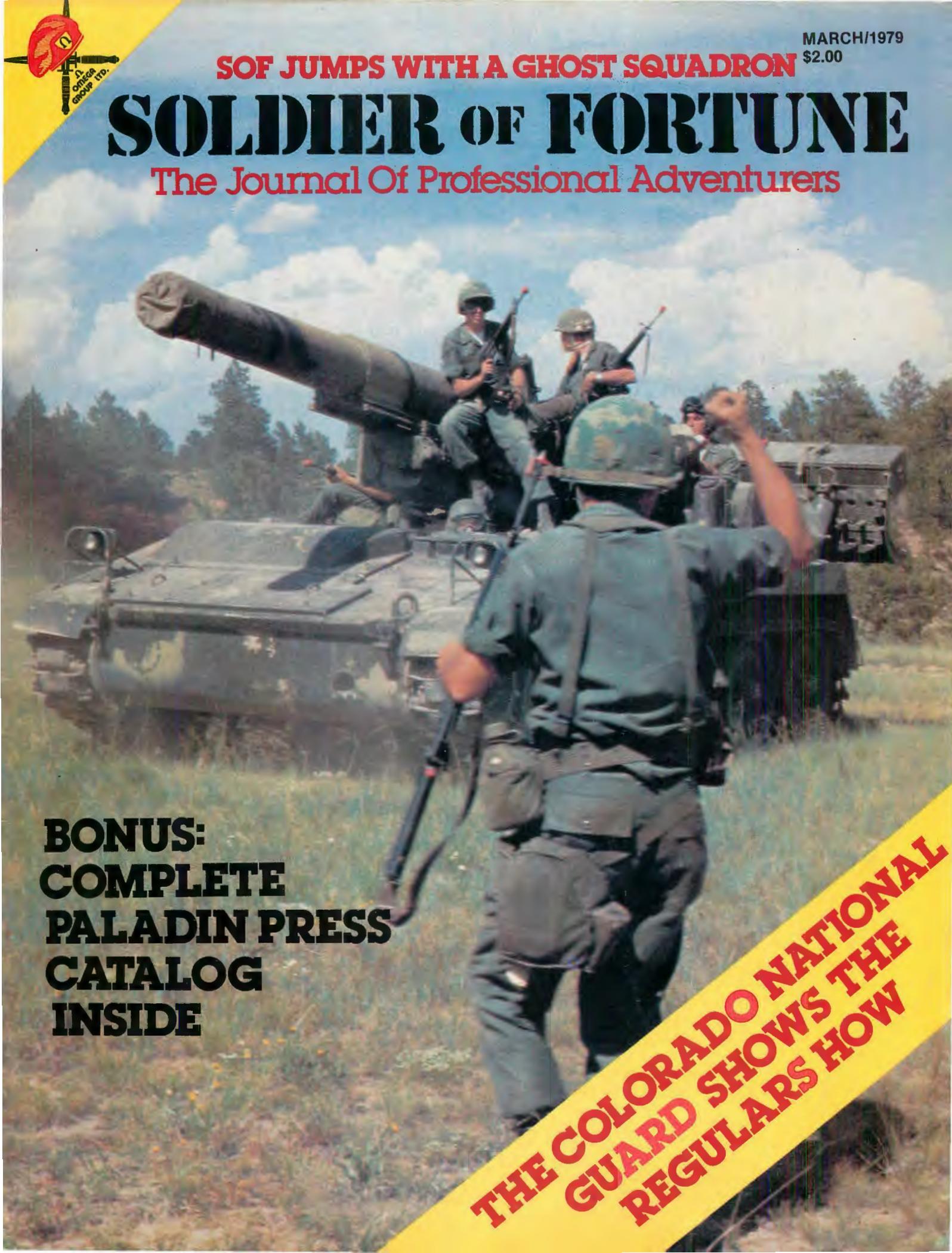


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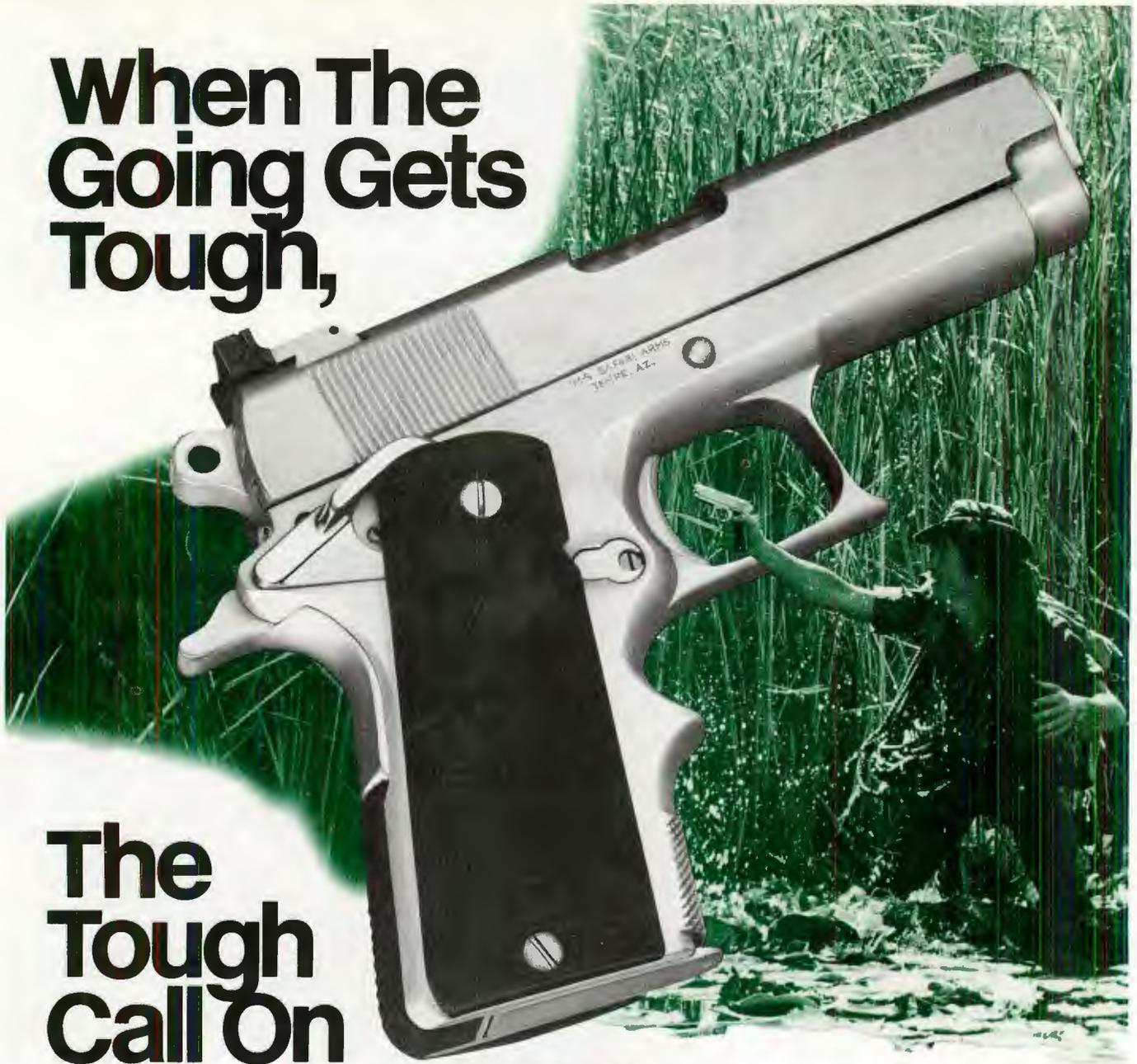
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SOF Salutes Survivors

by N.E. MacDougald

Harold Hatcher, 21, and Victoria Wyzykowski, 20, both of Romulus, Michigan, are average Americans. And it is this ordinariness that makes their recent bravery more noteworthy.

About 1:30 a.m. on Monday, 20 November 1978, at the Abbey Motel in Romulus, Hatcher went out for cigarettes. In the parking lot, he was approached by a man with a revolver. The armed man was John Conte, 43, an escapee from nearby Southern Ohio Correctional Facility.

Conte, an habitual criminal, was serving a 25-to-125 year sentence for a string of violent crimes, including killing a Florida law enforcement officer. Two other inmates escaped with Conte: William McKinney and David Pilkington, a convicted murderer. The three separated after escaping Friday, following a trial in Marion, Ohio.

Conte asked Hatcher if he were alone. Hatcher replied he was with Wyzykowski. Conte followed Hatcher to Wyzykowski and said, "We're gonna take a trip to Columbus [Ohio]." The abductor and his captives got in Hatcher's jeep and drove south toward Columbus on Interstate 75.

According to Detective Ed Lindberg of the Wayne County (Michigan) Sheriff's Department, "Conte sat in front, Hatcher drove and the woman sat in the back. Conte threatened his captives constantly as they drove." And Conte bragged of shooting someone during his escape.

As they approached Findlay, Ohio, they saw an Ohio State Patrol car with its lights flashing. The suspicious and volatile Conte quickly assumed that his victims had somehow tipped off the police and he became furious. He ordered Hatcher to make the first turn and

shortly afterwards told him to stop the vehicle.

Hancock County (Ohio) Sheriff Bill Bell said, "Conte cocked the hammer of his .38 and they thought he was really going to kill them. He said he was. Hatcher felt it was kill or be killed. Hatcher jumped Conte and fought for the gun while Wyzykowski looped her arm around Conte's neck Hatcher's pretty well-built and got the gun away from Conte."

Hatcher found himself on the ground, gun in hand. As he stood up, Conte came at him through the driver's door. Hatcher emptied the gun into the fugitive who, according to Bell, was only six or eight inches away. Conte died instantly. Afterwards, the couple went to a farmhouse and notified authorities.

Bell recalls, "Right from the beginning it was obvious we were dealing with two normal young adults. They were more concerned with telling us the facts than anything else. They were pretty shaken up right after it happened They were very cooperative."

Later, Sheriff Bell said of the incident, "This kind of reaction [by Hatcher and Wyzykowski] might help prevent future crimes."

Neither Hatcher nor Wyzykowski would talk to the media and this is particularly understandable, considering that fugitives McKinney and Pilkington are still at large. But even if the escapees had been recaptured, Hatcher and Wyzykowski probably wouldn't have wanted a big fuss made.

That's a common trait among heroes. First, they don't know they are heroes; second, they don't want publicity.

We acknowledge your courage, Miss Wyzykowski and Mr. Hatcher, and we thank you for setting an example for us to follow.

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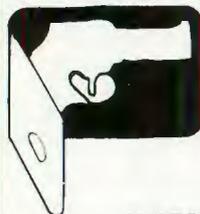
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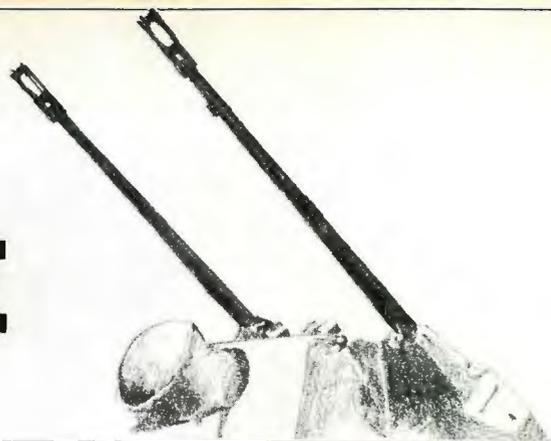
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FLAK



ECHANIS TRIBUTE . . .

Dear Sirs:

. . . I would like to thank you for featur-
ing Mike Echanis in several issues of SOF.
Through them and his published manuals,
I became aware of a young man who truly
exhibited a warrior's spirit. It was obvious
to me, as a Vietnam vet and martial artist,
that he knew exactly what he was talking
about. It's become all too rare to find a
person with the strength of character to
stand up for what he believes and to live
his beliefs to the hilt. Echanis did this, in
his life and in his death. His body is gone
but his spirit continues.

Sincerely,
Michael Barnes
Eureka, California

CPC CHEERS . . .

Gentlemen:

I greatly enjoyed the Combat Pistolcraft
column in the January issue, by Ken
Hackathorn. The philosophy of IPSC
needed clarification as the "gamesman"
approach has become far too predomi-
nant. Second, the discussion of holsters
was necessary as the open speed-rigs now
seen in such profusion do not incorporate
the practicality factor complementary to
this training. Who but a few deputy
sheriffs wear this equipment? These speed
rigs are for special purpose work under
controlled situations. Third, congratula-
tions to him for his honesty in condemn-
ing less-than desirable or second rate
handguns.

Best,
Karl Bosselman
Sedona, Arizona

FRIEND SOUGHT . . .

Dear Mr. Brown:

I would, first of all, like to express the
inner sorrow felt with the loss of Michael
Echanis. He took the warrior ethic beyond
the professional level and into the spiritual
level — a true "soldier of fortune"

I would like to congratulate you on the
decision to go to monthly issues. That
should not only cut my anticipation time
by half but also keep my back issues from
wearing out as fast (from reading them
over and over while awaiting the next
issue).

. . . I have recently lost contact with a
close friend (from the Corps days), a

Donald O. Spradlin, Jr.; as I know that he
is (or was) an avid reader of SOF, perhaps
he may see this and get in touch with me
(in care of Mentor Police Dept. Mentor,
OH 44060).

Respectfully yours,
L. R. "Leroy" Staton
Eastlake, Ohio

LESSONS FROM GUYANA . . .

Dear Sir:

I just thought I would write regarding
the tragic incident involving Congressman
Ryan in Guyana. Having been a
subscriber to your magazine for many
years, I have learned a lot from you guys
and have combined your teachings with
my military training. One of the major
ideas I have learned is to always establish
a psychological edge of self defense.

It was reported that Ryan's group knew
there might be violence but took no
measures for self defense. It has been my
experience, having been in places where
there was no law and order, that an edge
of self defense would be achieved easily by
the presence of my holstered auto.
Granted there may be problems in
transporting firearms from country to
country, but I feel if Ryan had allowed for
bodyguards they would have been permit-
ted to enter the country.

I am not saying anyone had to wave
weapons around, but again a holstered
weapon gathers a lot of respect. Who
knows, if one or two men had been put in
charge of security, they might be alive
today. I know this sounds like Monday-
morning quarterbacking but thanks to
your magazine I know better.

Thank you,
Reginald Pulley
Los Angeles, California

KEPI BLANC PRICE . . .

Gentlemen:

I note with interest your notice on the
Legion's publication, *Kepi Blanc*. The ad-
dress is correct but the price is wrong. Air
mail is \$30.00 per year while normal mail
is only \$10.00 per year.

Most sincerely,
Austin Kelly,
Bangor, Maine

*Thanks for bringing this to our atten-
tion — The Editors.*

CHEERS FOR .223...

Dear SOF:

Your continuing complaints about the .223 round really deserve a much needed reply Although the round is not perfect (no round truly is), it *does* fulfill its designed needs. The .223 is not designed to compete with the 7.62x51 NATO cartridge, which is much more powerful, but with the Soviet 7.62x39 M-43 rd. Anyone who has used a NATO caliber weapon will agree when compared to an AK-47 these NATO weapons are all too big (even folding stock FALs), too heavy, and are too inaccurate on full auto fire and suffer from excessive recoil.

AK-47s, on the other hand, are small, reliable, and controllable weapons under full auto fire, are lighter, and one can carry more rounds on his person with less fatigue. In reality, the AK-47 is very close to a *true* assault rifle, whereas NATO caliber weapons are at best very advanced semi-auto rifles that can, if needed, give auto fire. Many FALs and M-14s were even made so that full auto cannot be used because these weapons are so poor when used as such.

.223, on the other hand, is a very powerful round (in comparison to the Soviet M-43) and is very accurate and easy to handle on full auto. The M-16, however, is not a very good weapon, being too large, too complex, and much too frail. Although this is the fault of the rifle, unfortunately, it is also associated with the .223 round. Much better choices of weapons in this caliber are the HK-33 folding stock and the Israeli ARM, also a folding stock. These weapons are strong, reliable, small, and have a more useful rate of fire. Compared to the Soviet M-43 round the .223 has far better penetration; in fact, at close ranges, the .223 overpenetrates "soft" targets whereas the M-43, being larger and stronger, will make more of a wound. But at longer and medium ranges the .223 is a superior cartridge.

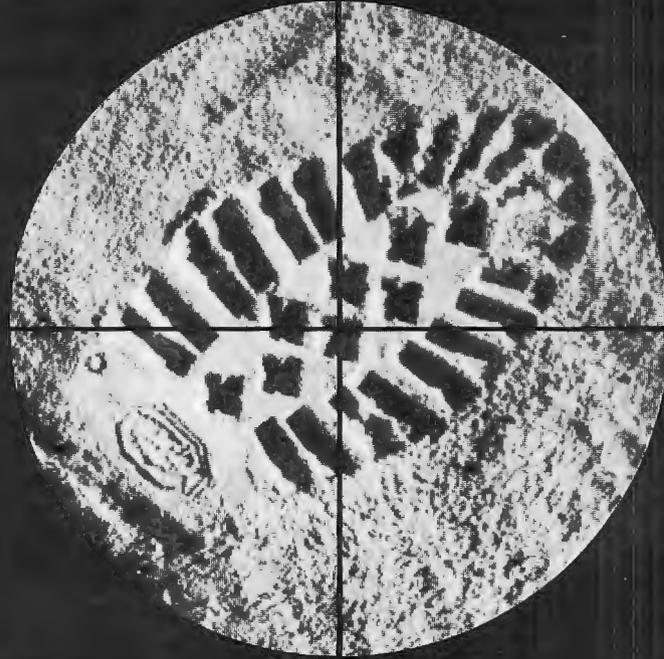
As far as Chuck Taylor's account of popping 20 .223s into a gook at point-blank range, all I can say is that he must be a very very poor marksman and as to his man's bouncing the corpse a foot off the grass with a M-21 sniper rifle at 25 yards, Chuck, I think you've been watching too many John Wayne movies.

Dave Hooper
De Kalb, Illinois

Chuck Taylor replies:

It seems that we must continually "go over plowed ground," on subjects such as this one. You are, of course, perfectly free to an opinion about anything you wish, but the fact of the matter is that the AK is awkward, overly heavy for the power it dispenses, and difficult to efficiently use in the fully automatic mode. It is, as you say, closer to an assault rifle than most everything else currently being billed as same, for what that is worth! My opinion: a good gun for the "other guy" to use.

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DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOMED

Power is a multifaceted subject, and if you wish to continue under the delusion that a cartridge that is unsatisfactory for military use is greater, far be it from me to object! If you feel that the .223 is the greatest thing since cookies, by all means, use it. I can only say that, for your sake, I hope it works, because if it doesn't ... you'll be the loser, not me!

Further, the FN-FAL, HK-91, and M1-A type rifles are made without a selector switch not because they are uncontrollable in full-auto fire, but because domestic and foreign law requires it for sale and exportation/importation. Again, it seems that we must "beat a dead horse."

Medical personnel have advised me that the wounds from the Soviet M43 cartridge are much more severe than the .223, and this coincides with my own and many others' observations in combat, so I'm afraid I must again disagree with you.

As far as I'm aware, my marksmanship with the M16, as well as all other forms of small arms, is at least adequate, since I possess, among other things, the following ratings:

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2. M16 rifle—expert
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4. M60 LMG—expert
5. Cal. .50 HMG—expert
6. M1 rifle—expert
7. M1 carbine—expert
8. .45 pistol—expert

Other:

1. NRA light rifle—expert
2. NRA high-power carbine—expert
3. NRA high-power rifle—expert
4. IPSC International Class A pistol rating

5. Class A winner, IPSC Colorado 1978, .45 pistol

I do object to one who wasn't there telling me that what happened ... didn't happen, with respect to the last paragraph of your letter. Frankly, I don't really give a damn if you like it or not, or even believe it or not, because the event did indeed happen, and it happened exactly as I described it. I have no choice but to interpret your statement as calling me a liar, and, since you weren't there when the event occurred, am somewhat amazed at your audacity, not to mention your lack of understanding of the subject on which you expound.

MOVIE PRAISE...

Dear SOF:

The January '79 issue of SOF is one of the best I have seen yet ... The article that made it the best issue for me was "The Wild Geese Fly Again." About a month back I was able to see a sneak preview of the film in Atlanta, Georgia. To me that was the best mercenary movie I have ever seen (I plan to sit through it several more times after it is released to the theaters)...

Sincerely,
Ronnie Dortch
Calhoun, Georgia

AMMO MAKER REPLIES...

Gentlemen:

Very much enjoyed Jerry Ahern's performance report on our metal-piercing ammunition in your January '79 issue. There are a couple of technological inexactitudes, however — something like the old priest critiquing the young priest after his first service. The former told the latter, "You did very well, son, and held up nicely. However, Jonah did not swallow the whale, and we are not having a peter pull at St. Taffy's Church."

With that entreed, or as it is called, please tell your readers that we do not have a wide variety of rifle calibers (our sole one is the .30 carbine) and we do not sell bullets for hand or custom loading. It takes a lot of time and expense to get maximum performance at safe pressure levels, and loaded rounds with max velocity and safe pressures are what we turn out. I am sure every one of your readers has seen ammo which was handloaded for a given weapon until the screws jump out a little every time the gun is fired; that's max performance and unsafe pressures which will blow the sides right out of the next gun which is a little tighter in the bore or a little less ruggedly constructed. Ours functions at the industry-approved safe pressure levels for each caliber.

Our rounds have no legitimate civilian use that we can think of. It would be quite legal but not moral for us to sell these on the open market, so we restrict them to police and military users only. Every round sold by us goes only to licensed Federal Firearms License holders, or sworn police or military personnel. No others need apply.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Kopsch
President, KTW Inc.
Lorain, Ohio

TRUE PROFESSIONALS...

To the Editor:

It is noteworthy that Col. Mike Hoare — a true "professional" who must be respected if not loved by all real soldiers, whatever their politics (my more "political" left-wing friends will be appalled, but let them burn) — considers that the modern mercenary should be "completely nonpolitical" (SOF, January '79, p. 77). It has been noteworthy since the days of

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LORAY KNIFE SHARPENER

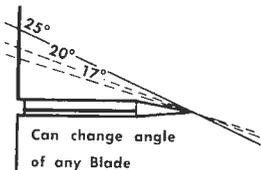
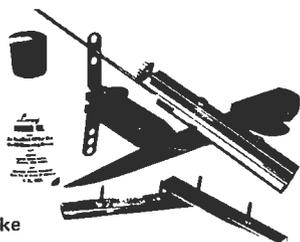
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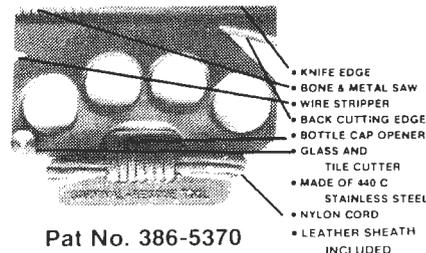
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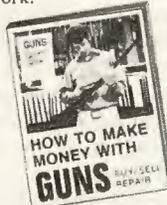
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SOUTH AFRICA TOUR...

Americans Concerned about South Africa (ACSA) are sponsoring a tour to South Africa, 26 January-9 February 1979 for \$2,149. For further info, write ACSA, Dept. SOF, Box 4235, Scottsdale, AZ 85258.

PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH...

The October 1978 issue of *Washington Report*, the Coalition for Peace through Strength's house organ, read like a *Who's Who*. No less than 160 members of Congress plus a blue ribbon panel of 200 leaders from the business, academic, and diplomatic communities have joined this bi-partisan alliance. The following quotations illustrate the newsletter's tone.

Congressman Bob Michel (R.-Ill.), Minority Whip, voiced his endorsement of the Coalition dramatically by saying: "I feel safe in predicting that our Coalition will be to defense policy what Proposition 13 is to tax policy."

Senator J. Bennett Johnston (D-La.) and Congressman Richard White (D.-Texas), Congressional co-chairmen, were invited to appear on the NBC "Today Show" on the morning of August 8th to explain the purpose of the Coalition and to indicate the interest of the Congress in the new organization.

Senator Johnston declared on that program: "The purpose of our group is to change policy, because, in our view, we're going in the wrong direction."

Proof of the potential importance of the Coalition for Peace through Strength was demonstrated by the Kremlin's reaction. In language straight out of the worst days of the Cold War, Moscow's "news" agencies accused the Coalition of representing "renegades and traitors" and of being "rabid dogs frothing at the mouth."

Another Coalition co-chairman, Representative Walter Flowers (D.-Fla.), added: "The Kremlin would like to see the U.S. pursue a policy of 'peace through surrender' rather than of 'peace through strength.'"

Amen, Representative Flowers.

Those interested in Coalition for Peace through Strength or *Washington Report*, may write or call American Security Council Press, Washington Communica-

tions Center, Boston, VA 22713 (703) 825-8336. Annual subscription rates for U.S. & Canada are \$10 a year.

ATTENTION...

In order to quickly locate *Soldier of Fortune* at your favorite newsstand, all future issues will carry the SOF logo on the upper lefthand corner of the front cover, as is the case with this issue. Look every month. Don't forget; SOF is now published monthly!

LEST WE FORGET...

The National Human Rights Committee for POW/MIAs was formed 7 July 1977 for the purpose of re-educating the American people to the fact that these men are still unaccounted for and to demand that the President give the American people an accounting. Readers interested in support of this committee should contact Joel H. Cook, Chairman, National Human Rights Committee for POW/MIAs, 86 Hill Street, Walden, NY 12586.

NATO VS. WARSAW...

"Can NATO Defend Itself?" by Arthur T. Hadley appears in the *Conservative Digest*, August 1978. The article specifies why NATO, indeed, cannot defend itself. Hadley pigeonholes NATO's inadequacies into three areas: electronic warfare, tanks and guided anti-tank weapons systems, and air power. He gives nuts and bolts reasons why NATO would lose in a worst-case scenario. His frightening article is a must-read for those not acquainted with the boondoggle that is NATO. The penultimate paragraph includes a bitter jest about NATO's masterplan: "U.S. plans to fight a war in Europe are based on flying imaginary troops in nonexistent planes to airbases that are destroyed at the command of headquarters no longer in action."

RHODESIA BOMBS ZAMBIA...

On Thursday, 2 November 1978, Rhodesian jets raided a black nationalist camp (code named "Victoria") about 10 miles from the capital city of Lusaka, reportedly injuring approximately 100 persons.

Rhodesian military sources stated the camp contained black Rhodesian guerrillas. A Zambian government spokesman claimed it was a refugee children's camp, but a Red Cross official refuted this.

This was the first crossborder operation into Zambia since paratroopers raided over 10 black nationalist camps during the week of 23 October 1978, reportedly killing hundreds of terrorists.

Shortly afterwards, England sent Zambia radar scanners, anti-aircraft guns, and ground-to-air missiles to help its former colony deter future Rhodesian air operations.

It appears this highly technical British defense materiel was not employed during the 2 November air action. A British embassy official confided that his country would send technicians to instruct Zambians on the weapons' operation.

DUNGAN OF PETROGUARD, LTD?...

For those interested in finding out what happened to their \$10.00 fees sent to Petroguard, Ltd. for employment assistance, the following individual may just be the mysterious "Colonel Dungan":

Mr. Erwin Panos-De Rakowszky
8E, Star Mansion
Minden Row, Tsim Sha Tsui
Kowloon, Hong Kong
Telephone: 3-688325

Possibly, he would be glad to explain why the fees were apparently not returned and why no jobs were seemingly secured for applicants.

Complaints may be sent to:

Mr. T.F. Donnelly
Commercial Crime Bureau
Police Headquarters
Arsenal Street
Hong Kong

(Correspondence reference number: CCB/MRB 395/75)

Along with your complaints, be certain to include any available documentation of your dealings with Petroguard, Ltd., such as cancelled checks, money order receipts, advertisements, copies of previous letters of complaint, and so forth.

Panos-De Rakowszky was also allegedly involved in several enterprises in Calcutta, India, including Panonia Relief, Craig Associates, Anderson-Roberts-Sutton & Pope and International Container Shipping [Panama], Inc.

SHORT WAVE BANDS...

William J. Haberer of San Antonio, Texas, has sent us information on short-wave broadcasts to and from Africa:

From South Africa:

RADIO RSA at 2100 to 2150 GMT to Europe on 9585, 11800, 11900, and 15155 Khz.

At 2230 to 2320 GMT to North America on the same frequencies.

On Monday they have lessons in Afrikaans (the language spoken by Dutch descendants).

At 0300 to 0426 GMT to East Africa on 9585, 7270 Khz.

At 0600 to 0700 GMT to West Africa on 11900 Khz.

The two to Africa can sometimes be heard here.

Springbok Radio 3980 Khz 0300 to 0522 and 4810 Khz 0300 to 0637 GMT 11935, 0637 to 1522 GMT. Springbok is an in-

ternal service in English and Afrikaans, news in English at 0430 GMT.

From Britain:

BBC News of the African world and network Africa at 0330 GMT* on 9580 Khz and 0509 GMT on 7270 Khz.

*There is an announcement at 0328 GMT for listeners in North America to tune to other frequencies. The station then goes off for a minute and comes back on with the African Service.

From France:

Radio France Internationale Paris calling Africa at 1700 to 1800 GMT* in the 13, 16, 19, 25-meter bands (explained below).

*This is standard time. When France is on Daylight Time it's 1600 to 1700 GMT.

From the U.S.A.:

African Safari in the 75, 49, 41, 31, 25-meter bands at 0300 and 0600 GMT.

From Israel:

IBA at 0500 GMT and 2230 GMT on 7412, 9435, and 11655 Khz.

Most of the above can be picked up in the United States. Shortwave radios cost from \$50 to several thousand dollars.

The meter bands are as follows:

meterband	KiloHertz
75	3900 to 4000 (shared with amateur)
60	4750 to 5060
49	5950 to 6200
41	7100 to 7300 (shared with amateur)
31	9500 to 9775
25	11700 to 11975
19	15100 to 15450
16	17700 to 17900
13	21450 to 21750

A table which converts GMT to U.S. time zone follows:

GMT	EST	CST	MST	PST
	CDT	MDT	PDT	
0300	10:00 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.	7:00 p.m.
0600	1:00 a.m.	12 midnight	11:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m.
1700	12 noon	11:00 a.m.	10:00 a.m.	9:00 a.m.
2100	4:00 p.m.	3:00 p.m.	2:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.
2230	5:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.	3:30 p.m.	2:30 p.m.

OMEGA GROUP TOURS . . .

In order to produce a better and more well-rounded tour to Bangkok and other possible Far Eastern destinations, we are now in the process of investigating several options which will give our readers the most interesting trip for the least money. We are now looking at an initial departure date of February-March, 1979. As soon as things are firmed up, brochures will be sent to those interested persons who have sent in their bucks (\$1.00 per brochure).

PMRS APPLICANTS . . .

We have recently received several applications from people interested in future service with PMRS, who were under the impression that paid positions were available. Unfortunately, all slots are manned strictly by volunteers and no funds are as yet available with which to pay salaries. Over and above basic expenses, therefore, one cannot expect any payment.

MAYOR BANS GUNS . . .

A law enforcement student and loyal SOF reader in Alabama garnered the following intelligence.

On Monday, 30 October 1978, Sylacauga Mayor Ross Payton banned the sale of guns and ammo when the City Council failed to come to an understanding with representatives of striking policemen, firemen and street and sanitation workers. Striking over fringe benefits and vacation time, Sylacauga workers walked off their jobs midnight Sunday.

What was the reaction to an elected official infringing on Second Amendment rights? According to our source, as of 6 November 1978, no judge or other authority had challenged the mayor's ban. What next?



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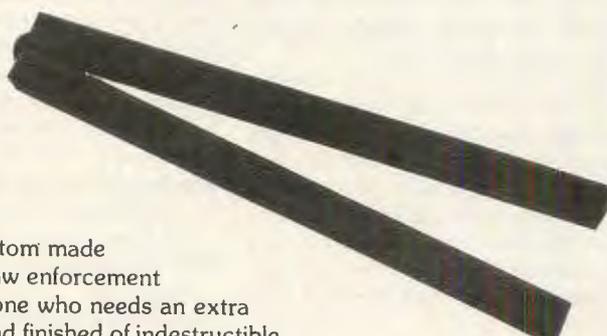
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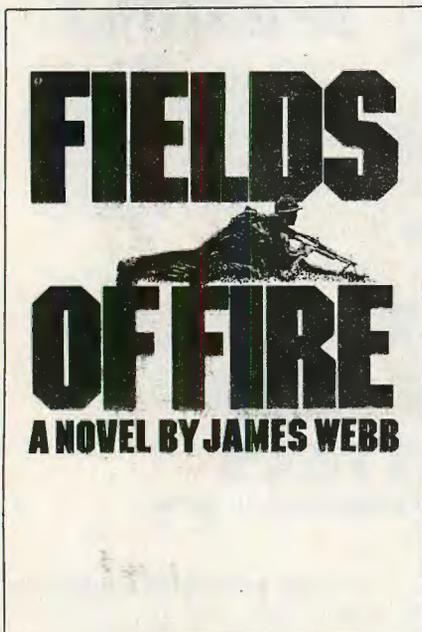
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IN REVIEW



FIELDS OF FIRE. By James Webb. Prentice Hall, \$9.95. Review by Bob Poos.



If a grateful government wished to extend a meaningful GI benefit to the infantrymen who fought in Vietnam, it could simply send each a copy of **Fields of Fire**. They would then know that their suffering, courage and seemingly limitless endurance will be forever recorded. James Webb has immortalized them.

He hasn't romanticized them, nor has he pitied them. There is no whining here. For although James Webb is now a lawyer with a comfortable office in the dignified old Cannon House Office Building in Washington where he works for the Veteran's Affairs Committee, he used to be a tough, experienced combat man, a Grunt; it is of them he writes and they had little time for self-pity.

In many respects this is a traditional American war novel in style, following an established pattern. It's about a platoon, some of the men in it, their backgrounds and how they react to war. There is a tough, streetwise slum kid, a Southern

rural Negro, a Redneck, the star high school football player who got the cheerleader pregnant, the Chicano from LA, the Harvard dropout and the lieutenant whose ancestors have fought in every American conflict, most notably in Pickett's Charge.

That is an invitation to cliches but Webb is masterful at avoiding them through consummate development of most of his characters.

Webb's powers of description, too, are superb. He tells chillingly of a night firefight up in Eye Corps, an incident so insignificant that it would not rate even a line in the daily MAC-V press briefing in Saigon but something that is the ONLY reality on earth to the men there. People who have not experienced such things can never really understand what they are like, but Webb makes it as vividly real as is possible in print.

Furthermore, for a former officer (Webb was a Marine lieutenant, a platoon leader and Company Commander), he has an uncanny ability to penetrate the minds and souls of his privates. There is a wide chasm between Quantico and Parris Island but Webb has somehow managed to leap it.

And although Webb was a highly decorated Marine's Marine of the 5th Regiment, one of the Corps' proudest, every infantry soldier who fought in Vietnam will identify with the men in his fictional platoon. For no matter what the unit or where it was, down South in the Delta, the Boi Loi Woods, the Ia Drang Valley in the Highlands or the Arizona Territory up North, there was a universality of experience in Vietnam that is mutually understood. The kid in the First Cav who fought for survival on the far side of Chu Pong Mountain will understand perfectly what Snake and Cannonball and the Cat Man are doing out in the Arizona here.

There are some imperfections, to be sure. Webb has trouble with one of his central characters, "Senator," the Harvard man. Some flashbacks and jumping back and forth from "The World" to "The Nam" are diverting. And Webb could well have ended a chapter sooner. The ending, while believable, is the only

part of **Fields of Fire** that seems somehow contrived.

But those are small sins compared with the overall excellence. Publishers' hyperbole holds that this will become "The classic novel of the Vietnam War." It may not be that, but it is certainly a classic war novel, among the best of the past 35 years, and Webb captures as no one else has the feelings of hopelessness, futility, despair — and the perverse, deadly attraction Vietnam had for so many who fought there.

Besides, it is a good read, something like a fine blend of the best of Robert Leckie and James Jones.

THE WAGES OF WAR: The life of a Modern Mercenary. By John Banks. Published by Leo Cooper, Ltd., 196 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2, England. 4.95 (English pounds). Review by Dennis Martin.

The author of this book is best known for his part in recruiting would-be mercenaries during Angola's civil war—in fact in the popular press his last name seems to be "of Angola mercenary fame"! Even apart from the Angola operation, which is not covered in this book, he has had an interesting and exciting life, and one which certainly merits telling about in a book. How accurate his account of his life is will have to be decided by the individual reader. Possibly some incidents are glamorized and some shortcomings glossed over, but this is a temptation to which even the most eminent have succumbed in their autobiographies.

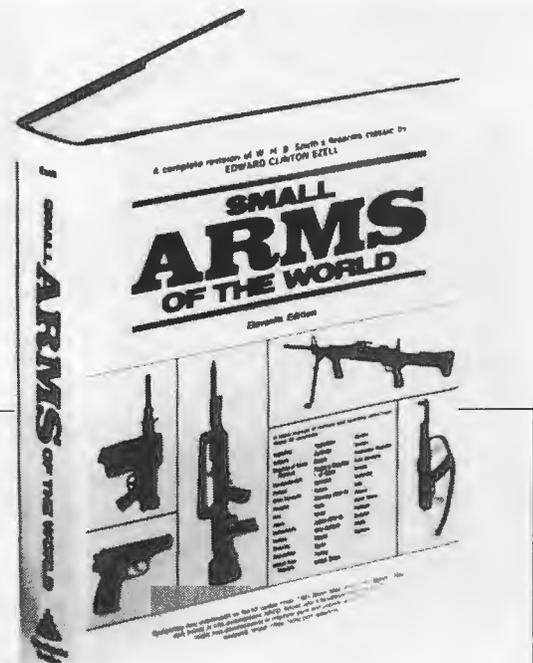
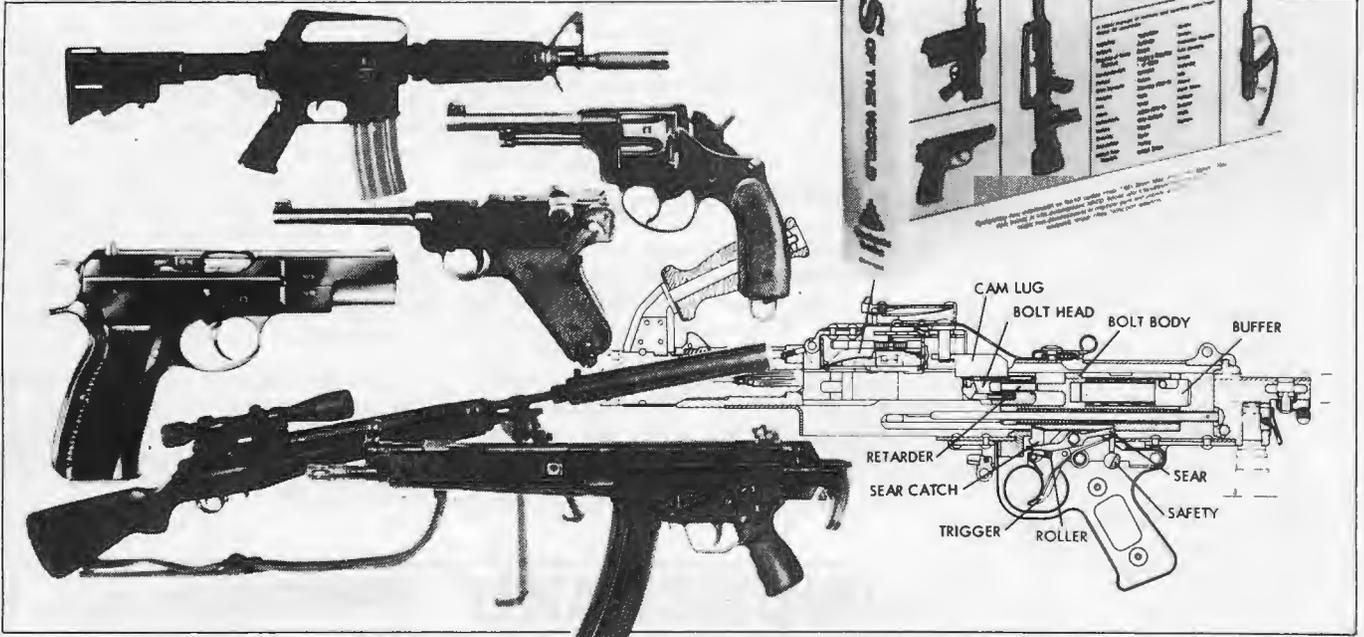
Banks' military career started in the Parachute Regiment of the British Army in 1962. Following the usual arduous airborne training (which he passed as top recruit, winning a trip to Arnhem), Banks was blooded in the Radfan mountains of Aden.

During the '60s, Britain was engaged in several counter-insurgency campaigns in various parts of the globe, giving experience to the Forces in all facets of this type of warfare. The author was able to undergo jungle warfare training in

Continued on page 88

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One morning in May, 1942, British 8th Army troops, dug in their defensive positions at Gazala, faced a new, terrifying weapon in the hands of Rommel's attacking Panzer Grenadiers. It was lean, dark, and ugly, and fired with a cyclic rate so fast that it sounded like giant hands tearing tent canvas. "Hitler's Saw," they dubbed it ... the astounding *Maschinengewehr Modell 42*: the MG-42 light machine gun.

Faced with a critical shortage of machine guns after the Battle of Britain and the United States' entry into World War II, Nazi Germany was looking hard for a machine gun that could be more easily and cheaply produced than the current MG-34, yet retain its best characteristics. Wartime needs for tactical efficiency quickly surpassed aesthetic values and the

Nazi war machine went into full production on the MG-42.

The origin of the MG-42's design remains a mystery to this day. It has been said that the 42's mechanism was the brainchild of Edward Stecke, of Warsaw, Poland, in 1938, and that the feed mechanism was created by Louis Stange, then an engineer at Rheinmetall-Borsig, Dusseldorf, Germany. It is also said that the stamping process used in the product of the '42 was developed by a Dr. Gruner, of Johanne-Grossfuss. However, no confirmation of these stories is available, so the origin of the MG-42 remains steeped in controversy.

The important thing to remember about this weapons system is that it was one of the first true *general-purpose machine guns* (GPMG). While it is true that the

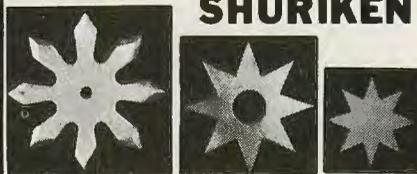
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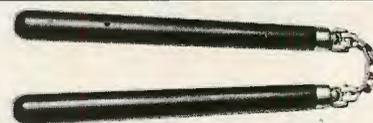
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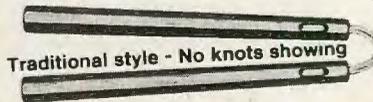


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Author firing German MG-42. Note flying brass (marked by arrows).

famous MG-34 was the real pioneer of the concept, the MG-42 was the LMG that achieved the distinction of being the best example of the species. It was more cheaply and quickly produced than the '34, owing to the extensive use of stampings, riveting, and very few forgings, instead of the usual milling operations.

Tolerances were kept intentionally loose in the MG-42. This, in turn, allowed it to earn a tremendous reputation for re-

liability under extreme field conditions, an achievement the MG-34 was unable to match because of its "old world" workmanship and resultant close tolerances.

The locking system of the '42 was something of a milestone, as was the rest of the weapon. The bolt head is locked into the breech at the moment of firing by two rollers which ride in tracks opposite each other in the bolt head itself. When the bolt is fully closed, these rollers are forced out-

ward in their tracks into grooves in the locking piece attached to the breech-end of the barrel. As the barrel recoils from the muzzle booster to the rear, unlocking the rollers, they move back into the bolt head, allowing it and the bolt-carrier to be blown rearward, thus unlocking the mechanism and initiating the extraction/ejection/feeding process.

The rollers themselves never touch the inside of the receiver. This causes the action to function with remarkable smoothness, and the somewhat astonishing cyclic rate of 1200 rpm was easily attained with no sacrifice in reliability.

Although the accuracy of the ground-mounted MG-42 is unquestionably reduced by the high cyclic rate vibrations, the German military felt that the dramatic increase in firepower more than compensated for the loss. Indeed, in the early years of modern infantry combat where the LMG was something of an infant, the '42 presented a formidable menace to Allied troops in their drive to conquer the Nazis.

The increased cyclic rate of the '42 did, however, create a problem not critically present in any previous designs: The barrel heated up *very* quickly, and an excellent quick-change barrel-system was immediately devised. In order to initiate the barrel change, the gunner need only to

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reach up with his firing hand, strike the barrel-latch with the heel of his hand, and move it to the right, swing out the barrel, discard it, replace it with a new barrel, close the latch and resume firing! A trained gunner can do this in less than six seconds, and with the use of only one hand!

The gunner does not need to open the feed-cover or deactivate the weapon from the firing mode in any way. Thus, he can leave a belt of ammunition in the feed tray while changing barrels with no problem.

This system is most efficient, with barrel changes recommended every three belts (150 rds.) or so, and has not been surpassed today!

The '42 quickly became a great favorite with troops of the Wehrmacht, and served

with distinction alongside the MG-34 to the end of the war. Over 750,000 '42s were made by 1945: not bad for the conditions under which the Germans had to operate, i.e. day/night bombing by Allied aircraft, and a tremendous logistical drain on their economy caused by a war on two fronts!

Allied troops, too, were impressed with it and treated it with great respect and extreme caution when they encountered it. The U.S. Army Infantry Board was also impressed with the MG-42. So much, in fact, that they arranged for two captured '42s to be shipped from North Africa to Aberdeen Proving Grounds for examination.

The features of the gun were deemed so superior that a research and development program was immediately initiated, with Saginaw Steering Gear of General Motors receiving the contract. The goal was to modify the '42 to function with the U.S. .30-06 cartridge and replace our M1917A1s and M1919A4s with it!

The U.S.-made MG-42s, dubbed the T-24 GPMG, were tested in October, 1943. Unfortunately, the guns failed to function properly, due to an error in receiver dimensions. It was found that a ¼-inch error had been made in the length of the receiver, precluding the bolt from fully cycling and causing many malfunctions. The tests were suspended, and the two guns sent to Springfield Armory, for inclusion in their museum. Because of this unfortunate episode, the U.S. was forced to finish the war with the M1917A1 and M1919A4 LMGs, both of which were obsolete designs when compared to the MG-42.

The end of World War II did not end the popularity of the '42 by any means, and original guns can be found in service around the world to this day. In fact, at my last counting, the MG-42 was still in service with West Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Pakistan, Denmark, Chile, Turkey, Iran, Norway, Yugoslavia, and the Sudan!

The West German Army has instituted some modifications on the original MG-42 design and uses a current model of the weapon, known as the MG-1/MG-3, as their standard-service LMG.

The MG-1 is virtually identical to the original MG-42 except for a minor modification in the feed mechanism and a change of caliber from 7.92mm to 7.62mm NATO. The MG-3, however, is a highly refined version with an improved recoil booster, trigger group, bolt, and bipod.

A unique and interesting feature of the MG-3 is its ability to utilize two different cyclic rates through the use of a spring/plunger cyclic rate reducing unit. The unit itself is reversible and, when engaged, bears against the locking rollers. This action retards the speed with which they unlock from the locking-piece, thereby reducing the cyclic rate of the gun from 1200 rpm to 700 rpm, an excellent, controllable rate of fire for bipod use! When

the unit is reversed, it allows the bolt unit, which is somewhat lighter than the standard '42 version, to cycle normally, resulting in a cyclic rate of almost 1300 rpm for vehicular and anti-aircraft use.

Tactically, the MG-42 is still one of the finest, if still not *the* finest, LMGs in use today, and several more modern guns owe their existence and many of their design features to the MG-42, examples of which are the U.S. M-60 and Belgian MAG LMGs. Both of these guns utilize the MG-42 feed system and trigger groups.

Viewed realistically, the 1200-rpm cyclic rate of the original MG-42 is a bit too fast, to say the least, for optimum efficiency on a bipod, although it is excellent from a vehicular or anti-aircraft mount. The newer MG-3, however, allows the selection of either a slow or fast rate of fire to suit whatever mission for which the weapon may be employed, and does it with little complication! For this reason, it is my candidate for the finest LMG in the world today, to include the MAG and M-60!

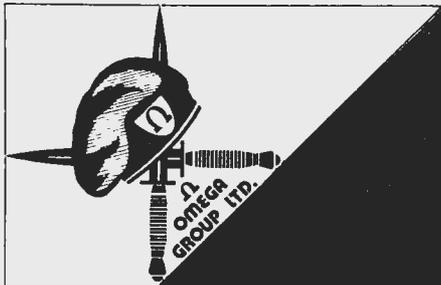
The '42, and its newer modifications, is far more quickly and cheaply manufactured than either the MAG or M-60 and is more robust than either. In addition the recoil booster system is not as prone to stoppage as the gas-operated systems of the M-60 and MAG because of its larger tolerances for grit and residue.

The standard belt of MG-42 ammunition contained 50 rds. of ammunition, with a starter tab, and was of a non-disintegrating type. The MG-3 features a feed-system that allows either this type of belt, known as the DM-1, or the use of the U.S. M-13 disintegrating belt, a useful modification to say the least! Naturally, the belts had provisions for linking together as many belts as the gunner needed, so, although the non-disintegrating belt is a bit fragile, it is not too difficult to live with under the circumstances! I guess the appropriate comment here is: "you don't get something for nothing!"

For patrol or assault use, the German Army standardized the 50-rd. side-basket and the 75-rd. saddle-drum for use on the MG-34 and MG-42. This, too, is an excellent feature that provides enough ammunition for reaction to a confrontation while not being excessively awkward, such as is the 100-rd. assault pack on the U.S. M-60.

Yes, the '42 may be old, but it is "old" only in the sense that it was 30 years ahead of its time! In these troubled times where "brushfire wars," and guerrilla warfare prevail, the soldier/merc/adventurer would do well to familiarize himself with this incredibly effective weapons-system that functions efficiently under unbelievable conditions of weather, terrain, and abuse.

If you come up against one: you're in big trouble.



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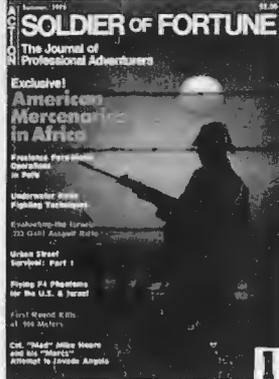
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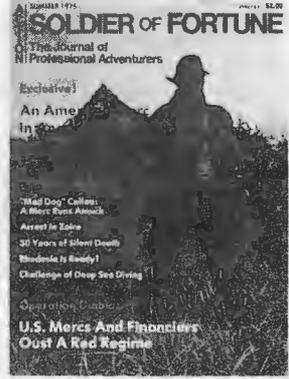




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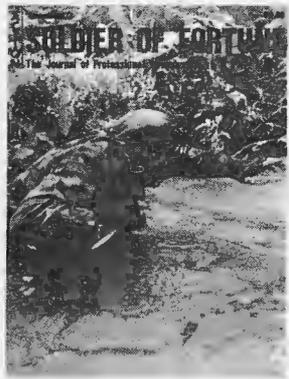
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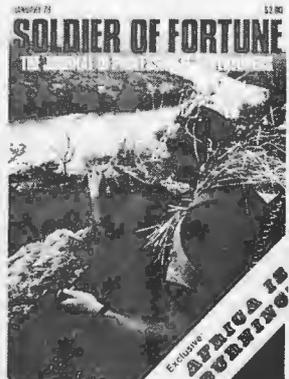
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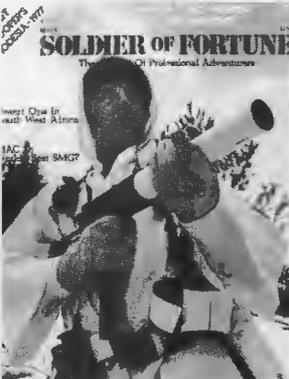
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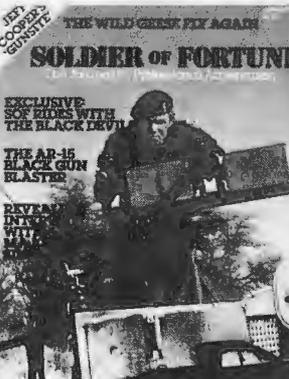
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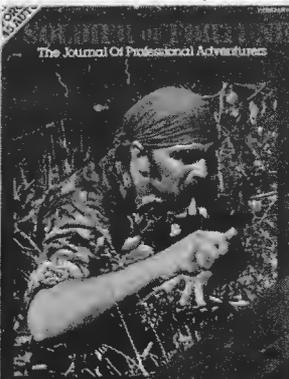
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TERRAIN & SITUATION

Jerry Ahern

One thing every cop carries is a handcuff key. A simple thing, there on the keyring until you need it. The trouble is, when you need it the darned thing is so small and awkward to use that the fumbling is sometimes unimaginable.

Safariland, the holster makers, have taken care of this problem for good. They have a stainless steel handcuff key which is about two inches long and could be used easily even with heavy gloves.

The new key from Safariland was wisely made to fit the Smith & Wesson Model 90 cuffs and their copies. Even though maximum security cuffs may well be better because of their fitted keys, the Model 90 style cuffs are most often used and generally perfectly adequate.

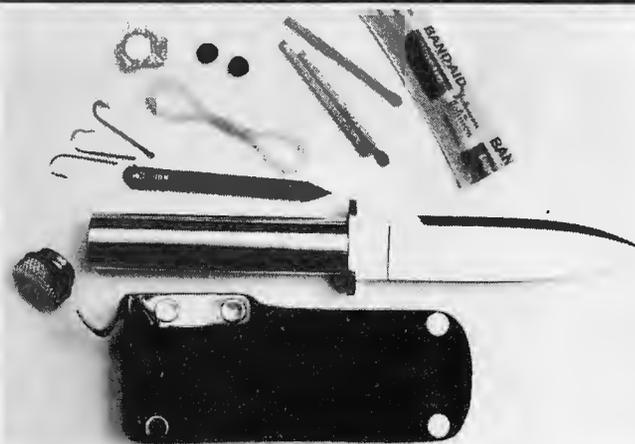
The new key has the same shank length as the keys that come with the cuffs. The difference is in the portion made to be

held by the fingers. I have better-than-average-sized hands and can grasp this new key with my thumb and first two fingers. This is impossible with the ordinary key. And, if you wish to double lock the cuffs, the fumbling on that end is gone as well.

Most officers use a ballpoint pen to double lock cuffs. Since the new Safariland key is so easy to manipulate, the little punch on the end of the key can be used — just as the little punch on the end of the original keys is intended.

The stainless steel construction feature is a nice touch for appearance and durability. At just a couple of bucks, the new Safariland item is a good investment for anyone using cuffs — you might say it's the key to success! (Bad pun!) For more information write Safariland, 1941 S.

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One of the most popular guns these days is the .380 automatic. For good reason — as talked about in earlier installments of this column. With such excellent guns as the Walthers and Berettas the popularity of this cartridge is increasing daily. The cartridge itself used to be a bone of contention about such things as power, effectiveness and other such considerations. This in the days when the solids were the only things available.

Lee Jurras and his old Super-Vel Cartridge Company changed all that and the Smith & Wesson .380 hollow point came along later and helped quite a bit as well.

We recently had the opportunity to test nearly all the popular .380s on the market and the lion's share of the testing was done through the excellent co-operation of the people at Federal Cartridge.

The .380 Federal Hollow Point was run through the Walther PPK/S, the little Llama .380, the Sterling Double Action .380, the Beretta double action Model 84, the Beretta single action 70S, the FI Model D — just about any .380 auto on the market and commonly available.

The results were excellent and the Federal .380 performed superbly. Feeding was uniformly reliable, as was extraction. Power in all the guns was manageable but impressive.

One of the most difficult problems in hollow point feeding is the sometimes shorter length of the bullet itself. No such problem with the Federal.

If the .380 automatic is your choice for personal defense or just as a back-up gun, the Federal hollow point makes fine fodder. As in any hollow point, check that your gun will feed properly without being gunsmithed — a throating job, for example. The Federal Hollow Points are carried exclusively in my PPK/S and have always functioned superbly.

* * * * *

Beretta's old 1951 Brigadier 9mm had to be a good pistol. It was the choice of both the Egyptians and the Israelis, as well as numerous other forces. It had one minor failing — the backstrap wasn't solid, the wrap-around grips filling in the gap.

With the clamor for double-column magazines and double-action first-round capability, the Beretta people wisely decided the old 1951 could use a revamping and the Beretta Model 92 was born. If the 92 isn't something that instantly rings a bell, try to remember the biggest 9mm you've seen recently, fitted with either black plastic or smooth walnut grips. That's the 92.

It really isn't that much bigger than a Browning High Power — just 8½ inches. It just looks bigger. It is of course a matter

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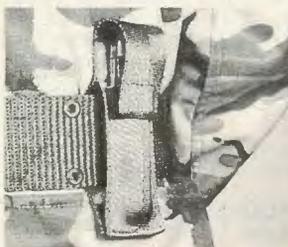
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of individual preference as to what is too large, but size aside, the 92 is a fine gun.

The one fault of the Brigadier, noted earlier, has been done away with in the 92. The backstrap is solid. Unfortunately, no one thought to do anything about the sights. The rear sight is rather on the small side and the front sight is infinitesimal. In a serious combat gun this would have to be altered.

But put on a new set of sights and the Model 92 at once becomes quite formidable. To start with, short of the Rogak P-18, the Beretta has the greatest magazine capacity of any of the 9mms — 15 rounds in the magazine and one up the pipe. The Rogak gun goes 18 plus one.

A good point about the Beretta 92, aside from just the fact that it is a Beretta, is the controversial size. Because of the slightly greater length it is much easier to point and easier to control in terms of muzzle climb.

Like any Beretta, the gun is well made and excellent looking. For more information, contact Beretta at P.O. Box 2000, Ridgefield, Conn. 06877 USA.

* * * * *

My wife and I just moved — to Georgia, if it matters, a little town called Commerce where the people have been nice to us beyond belief. In the process of getting some electrical work done we were without a clothes dryer for a little while

and drove to the laundromat nearby in the Ford and sat there on a Sunday morning while the clothes were drying.

While there, we witnessed a phenomenal sight. Now, most people who patronize laundromats will tell you that they generally aren't the most inviting places in the world. Usually at least a little on the grimy side and a great hangout for flies and used paper cups. The places sort of smell badly. The sight that amazed us was the older gentleman who ran the laundromat. He was conscientiously going around doing things. He swatted flies, added bleach for customers who had to step out, picked up trash, made change, wiped counter tops. Sharon and I started noticing that the place was spotless.

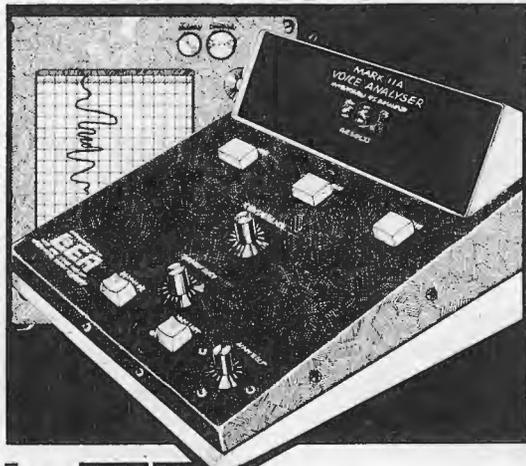
To top it all, the guy seemed to enjoy what he was doing. He was friendly, courteous, helpful — some lady's car started to overheat and he was the first one out the door to give her a hand.

He was, in effect, an anachronism. Now, a lot of people still take pride in

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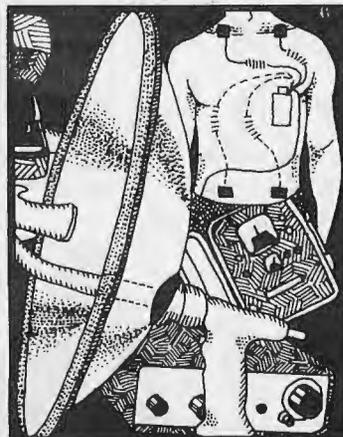
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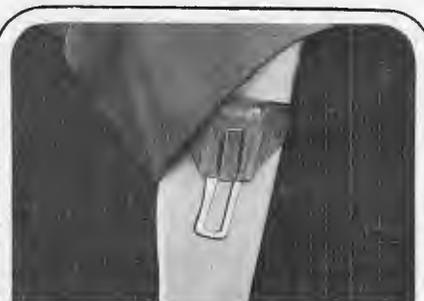
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their work, but not too many of the way this man did. Conscientious, yes, but caring also. Sure, what he was doing was good for business, but in a town of about 3000 there aren't too many competitors the clientele can run to. He was concerned and proud. He wasn't a nuclear physicist, but I'll bet not too many of those guys are as proud of what they do as he seemed to be.

One question people always ask gun-writers is, "Why haven't I seen a write-up about this gun or that?" The answer, in truth, is that if a gun is bad you usually don't write about it. The same probably holds true in car magazines, RV magazines and the like. See, not everyone takes the pride in their work that man in the laundromat in Commerce does. If everyone did, we'd be able to write about all the guns, the cars, the RVs and the like. The Terrain would be a lot smoother for all of us, and the Situation a hell of a lot better.



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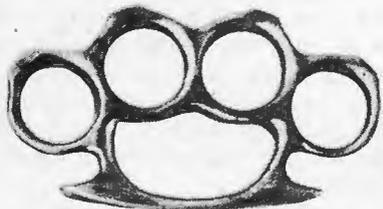
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COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Jeff Cooper & Ken Hackathorn

SOF's Combat Pistolcraft column welcomes letters from our readers. If you have a good question or contribution, send it in to Jeff Cooper, care of Soldier of Fortune Magazine, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. For a quick, personal reply, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Q. I am a trained machinist by vocation but my first love has always been firearms of all types. I have built a few low-pressure black powder guns from scratch as well as doing a semi-tuning on my own M1911-A1 (throating, trigger group lapping, etc). It is safe to say that I possess the skills and knowledge to be a successful gunsmith, but only on a private basis.

At the present, I am contemplating the design modification of one weapon and the total design of another, with plans to build both, but I am a little unclear on a few points of both law and actual practice. As for the legal questions, they are:

1. Are there any restrictions (FFL or gunsmith's license) on the fabrication of single, not-for-sale weapons for personal use?
2. If there are restrictions, is there an established procedure that the private man would have to go through to obtain the necessary permit/license?

The first weapon I'd like to build is an auto-loading pistol. There are two designs to choose from and I wish your advice on the stronger of the two for the application.

I plan to build an updated copy in 1.25 scale and in stainless steel, chambered in .41 mag. of either the Model 1912 Mauser or the M1910/21 Bergmann-Bayard, depending on which is the stronger action. Also, I am looking for at least a 20-round capacity and the .30 carbine box magazine seems the logical choice as the two rounds are fairly close to one another in length. Even though the .41 mag. caliber is nearly .100 longer in diameter than the .30 carbine, it seems to me that the .30 carbine mag. would be a good choice if the mag. was rebent to feed the .41 mag. round.

My question on the pistol is: which action (1912 Mauser or 1910/21 Bergmann), given the longer size and upgraded ma-

terial, would be the stronger and more reliable for the .41 mag. cartridge? (I would like to handload up to the round's peak.)

Weapon No. 2 is no more than a toy, but a very lethal toy for sure. I would like to build a straight blow-back single-shot .50 cal. rifle based on the M2 heavy barrel machine-gun barrel and the M2 ball ammo. The weapon would be shoulder fired with a bipod such as that of Col. Conway, AUSI, Ret., as featured in the September '78 issue of SOF. ("50 Caliber Sniping: 2000 Yard Kills," p. 46).

The problem, as I see it, is I do not know the laws concerning civilian possession of live M2 ammo and automatic weapons parts. Also, since I plan to utilize a simple blow-back operation with a fixed firing pin, it seems possible that the BATF could pose a problem on that design, as it is used on many of the world's sub-machine guns.

I know that this design seems rather unwieldy considering the mass/inertia involved, but as I say, it is only to be a toy for my own personal enjoyment. A locked bolt would undoubtedly be more accurate, but is necessarily more complicated, and I am looking towards simplicity/reliability. And for experimental purposes, it could evolve into a semi-auto with the addition of a good, solid disconnecter and the fabrication of a suitable box magazine.

So my questions on this weapon are:

1. What are the laws on private possession of live M2 ball ammo and on M2 heavy barrel?
2. Are there any laws governing weapons, single shot, or auto-loaders (semi-auto) which fire from an open bolt with a fixed firing pin?

J. L

West Palm Beach, Florida

A. The law is a peculiar thing, varying from place to place and from court to court. If I were to advise you in legal matters, I would be subject to action for practicing law without a license. I suggest you refer your legal questions to your own personal attorney.

I am not aware of the strength differential between the 1912 Mauser and the 1910

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Bergmann. I suspect that it would be justly easy to ascertain if we could look at an example of each.

I am somewhat concerned at the notion of building a straight blow-back action for the 50-caliber machine gun cartridge. The pressure in this weapon is high and if you use a breech block which is heavy enough and a recoil spring strong enough to hold it, the entire weapon will be excessively clumsy and heavy.

There is a Federal Firearms License required for people who intend to manufacture firearms. You can obtain one of these in the regular fashion.

I am sorry not to be of help in the legal area but you must understand that this is a specialty.

This month top-ranked combat pistol shooter Ken Hackathorn describes Ray Chapman's combat pistol school and the Chapman "Hi-Ride" combat holster produced by Bianchi Leather Works.

Early last September I attended a shooting school taught by Ray Chapman. Ray is recognized as the top practical pistol competitor in the world. Combat Master, World Champion, holder of more first place titles than anyone else, Ray Chapman's credentials are well established. Since the beginning of the sport, Chapman has been a leader in shooting skills. He has stood the pressure and stress that years of top level competition produce, plus, he continues to shoot so well that his record is one that few men could hope to approach.

His techniques have been refined over the past 20 years with the result now being offered in the form of a school to prepare shooters for competitive match programs. Ray's posture in the realm of competition has always been geared to win. Ray Chapman Inc., 609 East Broadway, Columbia, Mo. 65201, is a modern school of pistol shooting located on a beautiful new range constructed outside Columbia, Mo. All its facilities are designed to prepare students for the challenges that I.P.S.C. and Practical Shooting matches may have to offer.

Ray's classes are enjoyable and it is clear from the start that he teaches only methods that achieve results. The lessons are based on Chapman's own training system. The Advanced Class that I attended required 500 rounds of ammo. Each and every round is fired without waste. His instruction is exact and to the point.

Ray is a person who does not like mistakes. His tolerance of screw-ups by students is very low, so he quickly instills the ability to listen carefully and to get the instructions correct the first time. This way Ray teaches the student to make sure and understand the problem before getting engaged in a match.

Getting part way through a match and then falling apart because of a mistake or misunderstanding of course rules is something that Ray's method tries to prevent. Students learn quickly and in short order. Detailed comments about pistols, modi-

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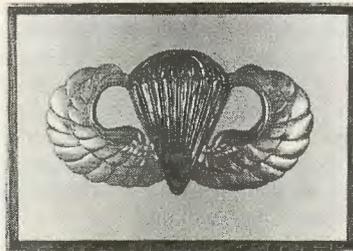
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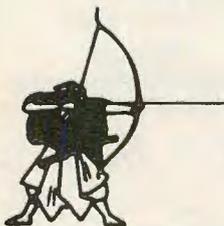
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fications, holsters, and ammunition requirements are presented so that everyone is clear on his meanings.

Schooling is conducted over a five-day period. The first days are devoted to super accurate pistol work at short, medium, and long ranges. Stress is placed on proper prone shooting. Braced barricade shooting is covered in detail. Jim Cirillo, top PPC competitor and firearms instructor for the U.S. Customs, was attending this class, picking up some points to pass on to his students. Jim's PPC barricade position is the same one taught by Ray Chapman. Since both men strive for top accuracy, they have settled on a natural protected position that is a great improvement over the old, opposite-foot-forward method.

Midway through the week, Ray covers speed shooting, firing while moving, and going over or under obstacles. He explains the techniques that he uses to win such standard courses as the Mexican Defense, Moving Target, Advanced Military, and Assault. He coaches students on facets of fast-gun handling, speed loading, weak-hand firing, as well as close-range point shooting.

For me, the educational part of the school was the means of mental control that Ray Chapman teaches. Anyone who has competed in Combat Pistol Matches knows what stress can do to one's nerves when good shooting is needed. The tips that Chapman gives in this area are most important. Trying to overcome a mistake in a match can be very difficult. With Ray Chapman, mental control is foremost. Anyone who has watched Ray compete in a match knows that he has mastered the art of calm, controlled preparation. He explains this technique in his school, plus reminding students to utilize it in each exercise.

The final days are spent firing various popular courses of fire. Ray goes over the points that have helped him win these matches.

Always quick to exchange ideas with students, he quickly brings problems to the surface and solves them.



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Anyone seriously preparing to take the role of competition match shooting would be wise to check into the Ray Chapman Academy. Some of Ray's techniques have been controversial for years. After attending the school, I now understand the basis of Ray's match strategy. Few people can afford to pass up this type of schooling if they hope to attain the level of top competitor. Also, a number of short seminars are being offered for beginning shooters who wish to introduce themselves to the art of practical pistol shooting.

* * * * *

For some time good functioning leather goods for practical shooters have been hard to find on dealers' shelves. Custom leather makers have provided us with the finest holsters and rigs. Men such as Milt Sparks and Gordon Davis make the best that money can buy. Still, for many these men were out of reach and the standard assortment of holsters over the counter have not been much to get excited about. For years the only stock choices were the Safariland Model 55 and Bianchi Model 100.

A couple of years back Dick Nickols of Bianchi worked up a combat rig for the .45 auto called the Model 45 Pistolero. It filled a real gap for those who wanted an over-the-counter outfit that they could purchase without the wait for a custom maker's rig. The new improved M-45 pis-

tolero is more worthy and is now common on ranges around the country.

What was needed, however, was a less expensive rig for the person starting out that could also be used for all types of matches. The man with only one rig is much more likely to use it well.

Ray Chapman had Bianchi design a rig for him last year for use in the World Matches. It had to be comfortable and secure. Drawing was to be easy from either seated position or with either hand. The answer was a cross-draw holster worn on the trouser belt that is high positioned to the left front.

This outfit is now standard in the Bianchi line and listed as the "Chapman Hi-Ride." It comes with a 1 3/4-inch, fancy-stitch belt and double magazine carrier that is called "Clip Grip" by Bianchi. The holster itself has a moulded sight track for front sight clearance. It is metal lined for a rigid position. It should prove to be very popular with even the top shooters, as it is a simple rig that does so many things well.

With the requirements in IPSC matches now geared to realistic hand positions and much more everyday wear holster requirements, the Bianchi "Chapman Hi-Ride" should be very desirable at \$54.95. Check one out at your Bianchi dealer or direct from Bianchi Leather Products, 100 Calle Cortez, Temecula, Ca. 92390.



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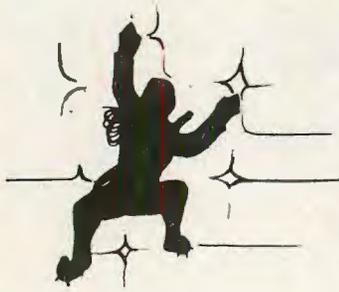
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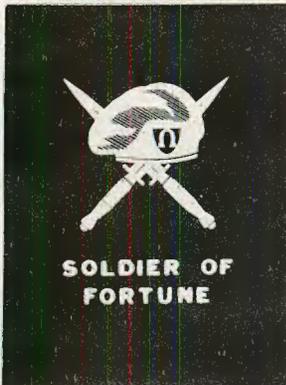
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In the next issue of SOF, David Steele's column will expand to cover police weaponry as well as knives and knife fighting. Featured will be a continuation of his analysis of blackjacks, billies, and batons (See also SOF, January 1978). Letters meant for this column should be sent to the author at Soldier of Fortune, Box 693, Boulder, Colorado 80306. For a quick, personal reply include a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Q. I recently read a letter in your column advocating throwing something in the face of an opponent when using or going for your blade. By gosh, sir, I haven't carried a knife without a teargas pen to soften up an opponent for years. Right now, I go with a legal Flicker-clad Gerber FS II and "Paralyzer" sticking out of a shirt pocket, both to pacify cops by giving me a "legit" look (the knife stays out of sight) and to prevent an opponent from suspecting another weapon.

I'm a white-shirt-and-tie dresser, and where I work a knife's a necessity for defense. Besides, I like them, and at close quarters they're quicker than guns.

In case I expect trouble, however, I

switch to an eight-inch fighting Bowie, backing up a .380 auto. This is in case the assailant turns out to be armed.

W. L., Phoenix, Arizona

A. Yours sounds like a good arrangement. Lightly armed for everyday, with a heavyweight backup for imminent-threat situations. For example, a teacher I knew always carried a Gerber Folding Sportsman II when teaching at his barrio school, but he carried an automatic pistol for several days after he reported a Mexican gang kid for having weapons in his locker, just in case the gang decided to retaliate.

Q. In one of your columns you mention that the lack of a ricasso on the Sykes-Fairbairn knife makes it impossible to choke up on the blade. Could you define "ricasso"; I can't find it in my dictionaries; and what do you mean by "choking up" on the blade?

J.B., Los Angeles, California

A. The ricasso is an unsharpened portion of the blade near the hilt, usually accompanied by a choil or cut-out. To choke up the first finger is placed in front of the guard around the cut-out. This makes it virtually impossible to knock the

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blade from your grasp, although it makes the first finger somewhat more vulnerable to a slash. I sometimes refer to this method of holding the knife as a "rapier grip," since that is the way the rapier was meant to be held (it is not the best grip for parrying, but in those days an opponent's blade was parried with a left-hand dagger rather than with the sword blade).

Q. I have a Gerber Mk. I, and the people I purchased it from told me that it could be sharpened only with a Gerber steel, that it was too hard to be sharpened with an ordinary stone. I thought that a steel was only for touching up blades.

In your column you say, "The drawbacks of the Sykes-Fairbairn knife are well known." What are the drawbacks?

How do the Gurkhas use their knives, like an axe? Are they of much worth in hand-to-hand combat today?

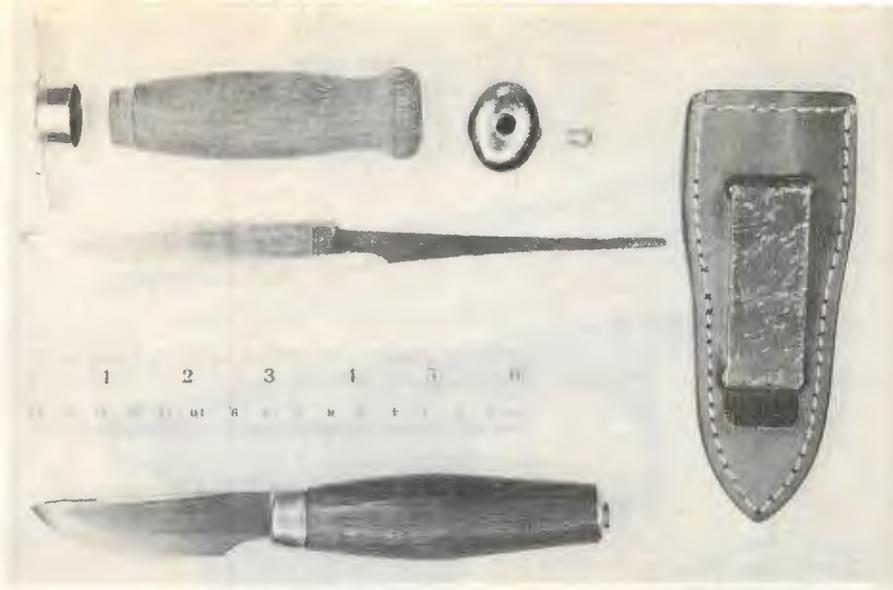
The Gerber Mk. II looks a little fragile compared to the Randall Model 2. Do you think it is sufficient for combat? For self defense do you favor a stiletto or a single-edge like Bo Randall's Model 1?

B.N., Rockwood, Michigan

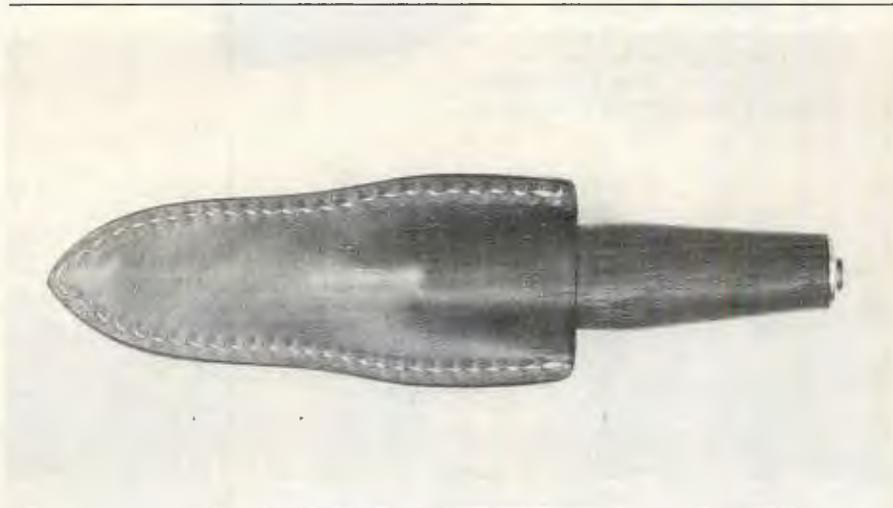
A. Gerbers can be sharpened on the usual Washita and Arkansas stones. You are correct that a steel is meant for a touch up.

The Sykes-Fairbairn knife has a brittle blade, weak at the tip and at the juncture with the hilt. It has a small handle and no ricasso. The rubber retaining band on the sheath wears out quickly.

The Gurkhas are said to use their knives in an upward, drawing cut. The kukri is heavy and well balanced for dismembering strokes. It can be thrown (not recommended for combat), and its weight could be devastating even if it did not strike point first. Like most soldiers the Gurkhas use their knives in combat primarily for silent throat cutting. As a design I do not recommend the kukri,



Above: The modified Mora knife described in the last letter, showing original parts above; the finished boot knife below.



Above: Modified Mora knife shown in sheath made for Russell "Sting."



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mainly because it is not designed for thrusting.

The current Mark II Gerber is quite strong enough for combat. Al Mar even uses his for boar killing (although I recommend a Bowie for that, to make ripping open the throat easier). For combat/survival I recommend the Bowie shape over the stiletto. The Randall Model I is an excellent example. It has a sharpened false edge (not single-edge as you described it) to assist penetration and for making back cuts, but it has an unsharpened spine to give strength, and its main edge is well designed for slashes as well as general utility.

Q. First, I must say I read "Steele on Knives" thoroughly every time I buy SOF magazine. I am an avid knife fan; I personally think you are one of the true experts in the field.

I am a police officer of almost 13 years and a martial artist (Aiki-Ju Jitsu) for the last eight. My question is: I am looking for a fairly small, single bladed knife I can carry on my person concealed. I find it a pain in the butt to carry an off duty pistol all the time. I don't want a folding knife because it takes too long to open and would not be strong enough.

G.R., Madison, Ohio

A. Hopefully your department won't give you any static if you bring in a suspect with puncture wounds instead of bullet holes. As you point out, it is a pain to carry around a heavy, bulky .38 for a situation that never seems to happen. In any case, it sounds to me like you need a good boot knife or push dagger. I can recommend boot knives made by Oda, Crawford, Randall, Samson, Cooper, Franklin, Viele, Lile, and a few others. A push dagger minimizes overall length while maximizing blade length; it also is easy to grab onto for a fast draw. Cooper (Box 1423, Burbank, Ca.) makes an excellent push dagger.

Q. After examining a number of folding hunting knives, I had decided on the Gerber FS II, and then read that this is a knife that you carry. I liked the feel of the FS II Drop Point better than that of the Trailing Point model. Which point would you recommend? What is your opinion on mounting a "Flicker" on this knife?

In the September 1977 issue you mention the Barry Wood "Sgian Dubh" and the "Odin's Claw" by E. G. Brooker and Wayne Goddard. Do you have addresses I can write to for further information?

T.G., New Haven, Connecticut

A. I prefer the Trailing Point FS II, but the choice is up to you. Neither is an ideal blade shape for a fighting knife. The Flicker sounds like a good idea, though I have no trouble opening the FS II one-handed without it.

Barry Wood's address is 38 S. Venice Blvd., Venice, CA 90291. He tells me that he intends to drop the Model 5 "Sgian Dubh" from his line after 1978, so if you want one you had better order it quickly.

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The "Odin's Claw" is available from Wayne Goddard, 473 Durham Ave., Eugene, Oregon 97402.

Q. I don't know if I can go along with you in recommending a folder for street wear. It would seem to me that you could easily get your hand "tied up" in sticking it in your pocket, not to say probably precipitating action by the other party. Of course if you do carry a folder it is a good idea to pat all your pockets (when checking your weapon) as if looking for your keys or wallet. Patting just one area of your anatomy is a dead giveaway to "Officer Friendly" or a potential enemy that you are armed.

Anyway, here in Chicago there is a "legal" maximum of three inches for a carried knife, thus eliminating most of the folders. In order to have a "legal" as well as maximum length weapon, I have cut down an inexpensive (\$4) Mora which can be easily taken down and which has an excellent laminated steel blade. Rather than regrind the tip, I relieved the back portion and cut new threads for the butt screw, epoxying the interior naturally, and bluing the blade. I just reshaped the tip a little.

I purchased a "Stinger" by Russell but I returned it, the handle being much too short for even my medium sized hand. Only three fingers actually grasp the handle with the thumb applying counter-pressure, leaving the little finger with nothing to do. A criminal waste of an otherwise good blade design.

I think the Gerber Mark I has a well designed grip. I have found a simple way to carry the Mk. I in the upside down mode: simply run a large safety pin or screw-type hat pin through the tunnel formed by the clip, and pin it to your shirt or jacket. It can be carried too with a nylon cord around the neck. All one has to do is to affix the shirt button so it appears through the button hole, but is actually open. This "false button" should allow one to rapidly grasp the Mark I, which nests comfortably in the hollow of the sternum.

R.S.K., Chicago, Illinois

A. Thanks for the information. The big advantage to the folder is convenience. Put it in the right pants pocket (by itself), and it is set, always ready. If stopped and questioned, one could maintain that he had no intent to "go armed," that he just forgot to put on the belt sheath. A stiletto clipped or velcroed in the boot would be much harder to explain.

Obviously, a sheath knife is stronger than a folder and can usually be designed with fighting in mind. Most folders used in this fashion are simply small hunting knives. One must decide for himself how much threat there is in his everyday environment. For example, when I lived in Washington, D.C., I never went out without a pistol, while my current location presents no similar hazard. As I once told a student, your best means of self defense is living in a good neighborhood.



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Combat Pistolcraft With The Shanghai Municipal Police **Quick Or Dead In Shanghai** by William L. Cassidy

For the past decade, William L. Cassidy has devoted his efforts to the study of special warfare, in all its manifold expressions, working in collaboration with distinguished military and intelligence personnel at home and abroad. As Director of the California-based Company for Security Research, Cassidy has served as a consultant to agencies both public and private, treating such topics as unorthodox weapons, clandestine operations, and specialized training techniques.

Cassidy is also a prolific author: his classified monograph on political assassination is considered a standard reference work, as are his bestsellers Quick or Dead; Political Kidnapping; Basic Manual of Knife Fighting, and the Complete Book of Knife Fighting. He is familiar to sportsmen and collectors as the originator and executive editor of Knife Digest, and the former editor of American Blade magazine. Cassidy has been written about in such publications as Esquire magazine and the London Times. His own articles have appeared in the British Police Journal, Guns & Ammo, and Guns magazine, among others.

Cassidy received much of his expertise by virtue of lengthy associations with British and American intelligence pioneers, and the history of intelligence methodology, or "tradecraft," is a field he cultivates with noteworthy zeal. His work in uncovering the early history of U.S. and British unconventional warfare training has won him praise on both sides of the Atlantic, and he is regarded as the world's foremost authority on the life and works of such early greats as W. E. Fairbairn, E. A. Sykes, and others.

In late 1978, Cassidy took a leave of absence from his firm and embarked on an extensive tour of Western Europe and Asia, where he met with high-ranking security officials to discuss the expanding war on international terrorism. He is scheduled to return to the United States in the spring of 1980; until then, his contributions to SOF are filed from exotic locations all over the world.

The following article is extracted from a chapter of Quick or Dead, Cassidy's analysis of the rise and development of hand-gun combat shooting. In the article, Cassidy describes Fairbairn's development of close-quarter combat training for the Shanghai Police Department in the 1920s. Quick or Dead may be ordered from Paladin Press, P.O. Box 1307, Boulder, Colorado 80302.

It would be inappropriate to use these pages to reconstruct the life of William Ewart Fairbairn. His time was a productive one, his contributions were numerous, and the complete record of these events, though known, is better left to the pages of his biography, now in progress. Instead, let us devote our attention to the precise nature of his contributions to close-quarter combat use of the one-hand gun, and to a description of what must be rightfully called the Shanghai influence.

Elsewhere in *Quick Or Dead* we refer to early British experiments in close-quarter firing, carried out in colonial police service. W. E. Fairbairn was the man responsible for these experiments, which began in 1910, when he was promoted from constable to sergeant-in-charge of Musketry and Drill Instruction to the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP).²

Due to the depletion of the Foreign Branch of the SMP during World War I, crime in the International Settlement increased to the point where the force had to be enlarged to twice its pre-war strength. "Armed kidnapping and armed robbery," Fairbairn later wrote, "[were] practically an everyday occurrence — resulting in the Force having to be armed day and night."³ It was the beginning of a time of much unrest, which would earn Shanghai a reputation equal to that of Port Said, Marseilles, Singapore, or Tangier, as one of the toughest cities the world has ever known.

Fairbairn approached his assignment as Musketry and Drill Instructor with quiet seriousness and scientific precision, seeking to learn anything and everything he could to add to the safety of the men in his care. Shanghai had become a battleground, and nightly, members of the SMP were forced to fight for their lives in the filthy, narrow alleys and the dense, maze-like Chinese housing. It was a particularly demoralizing situation for members of the Foreign (British) Branch: the majority of them had learned their close-combat in a boxing ring, according to the Queensbury Rules, and their gunfighting at a shooting club. Now they were meeting with skilled practitioners of Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Indonesian fighting systems, and trading shots with desperate men in dirty stairways or the catacombs of opium dens.

Fairbairn's problem was one of developing a practical method of close-combat to be used by men of varying cultural or racial heritage, who, by the nature of their

employment, were expected to repeatedly expose themselves to violent confrontations in a wide variety of urban and suburban terrain. To deal with the firearms-related portion of this problem, Fairbairn began keeping precise records of the almost nightly shooting affrays, in which all pertinent data was written out in painstaking detail, much on the order of the modern "officer-involved shooting" hearings so familiar to police of the present day. Thereafter, in addition to collecting written data, Fairbairn embarked upon a personal program of direct observation and participation. During the period of 1910 to 1919, insofar as he was able, W. E. Fairbairn answered every call for assistance where shots had been fired or were likely to be fired. For almost a decade, Fairbairn relentlessly placed himself in grave personal danger, in order to perfect his own techniques and to observe the reactions of the men around him.

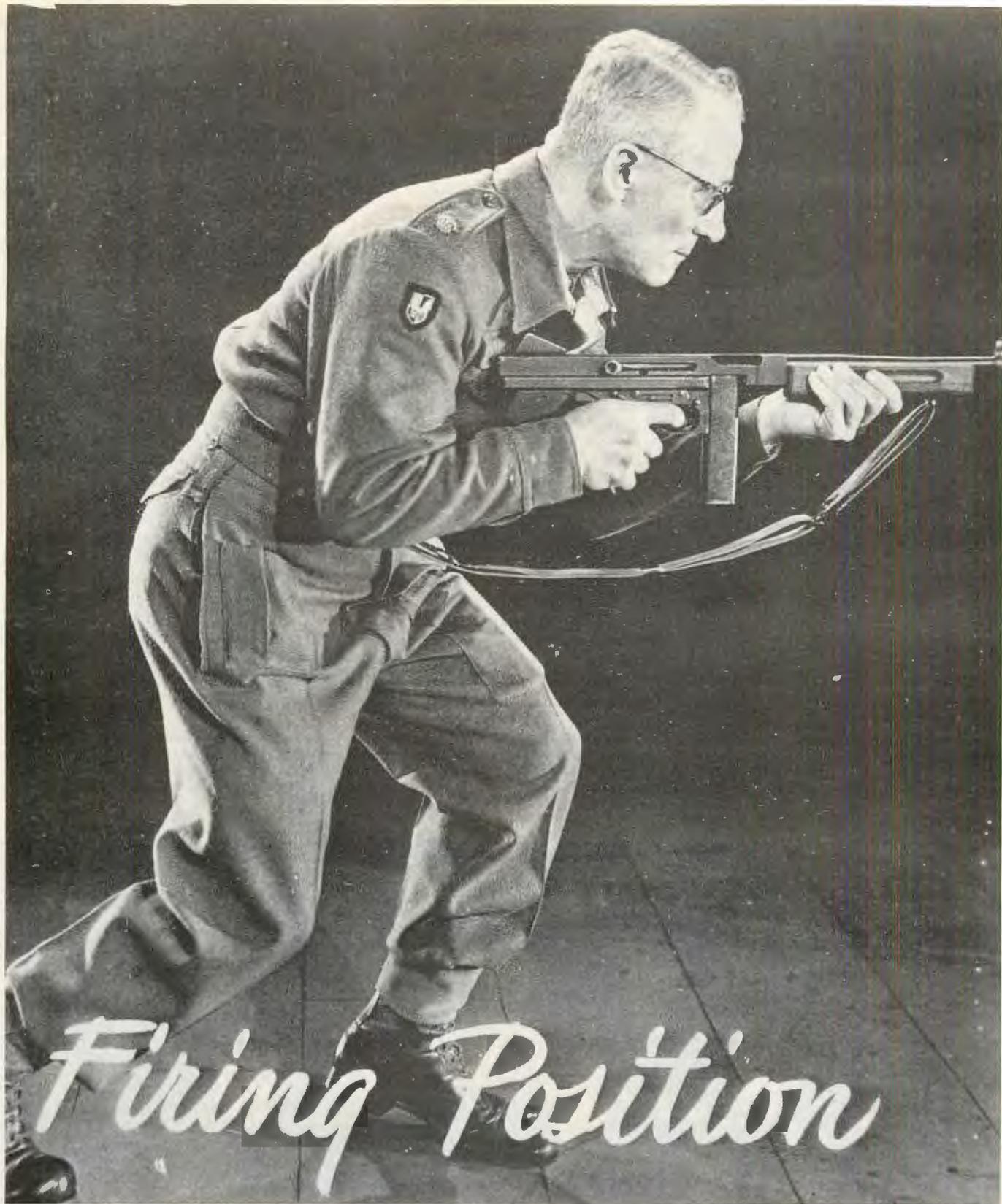
When Fairbairn first addressed the problem of pistol training, the SMP's method of instruction was the same as that laid down for the British Army. Members of the SMP were, therefore, particularly skilled target shots, able to demonstrate better than usual competence with the standard service course of fire. To maintain one's position in the police pistol team, for example, one had to qualify twice yearly with a perfect score on a rather difficult course, firing 72-rounds at each test. As acceptable as this may seem, however, it was not good enough. In Fairbairn's own words:

During 1919 the Police . . . lost nine men at the hands of armed criminals, and the Watch Committee called for an investigation. I was sent for and asked what was wrong with our men. To their surprise, I replied, "There is nothing wrong with the men. It is the antiquated methods that you insist they be instructed in. More attention is being paid to winning Silver Cups than shooting to live."⁴

They, the Watch Committee, and the heads of the Department, never having been in a shooting affray, were not aware that it was a case of shooting instinctively, nearly always in a poor light, with the criminal usually having the advantage of the first shot. They did not realize that there was not time to take up a correct (!) stance and gently squeeze the trigger.⁴

The SMP Watch Committee listened hard to Fairbairn, and was impressed by what it heard. A hearing was convened, and Fairbairn was asked to elaborate on his remarks. After nine years of research, Fairbairn was only too pleased to comply:

This was an opportunity I had been looking forward to for a number of years. Although I was responsible for the training of the Police in



Above: Photo #OSS 20/ The great W. E. Fairbairn in battle firing position.
(Copyright © 1978 by William L. Cassidy. All rights reserved.)

shooting, I was compelled to teach only the methods as laid down in Army textbooks. Anything that savoured of being original was not permitted. The methods of loading and the use of the so-called safety catches had to be as per the book.

I pointed out that one of our men had his safety catch on SAFE when he was killed and advanced the theory that the only man who

gained the advantages of the safety catch was the criminal.

I explained that I had a method of instruction based on the principle of "shooting to live," in which men would be trained to fire instinctively in bursts of two shots without even bringing their pistols to the line-of-sight; practice in the dark when all one would see of their opponents would be a shadow; firing up and down a stair-

case at moving objects, with off stage noises to make the practice as near as possible to the conditions one would have to contend with in actual combat. I asked for and obtained permission to pin down all safety catches.'

Reaction to Fairbairn's testimony was swift and favorable. He had put his argument across at last, and all that remained

was to test his methods in actual application by the entire force. Fairbairn, who had already proved to his own satisfaction the soundness of his ideas, relished the challenge.

Fortunately, the members of the Watch Committee were of various nationalities, and they eventually agreed that at least the method should be given a trial — thus throwing the onus on me to make good.

I pointed out that I was not interested in paper results but would leave them to judge if the method was a success or not by what happened when the Police were engaged in shooting affrays on the streets.

The immediate results were so outstanding that permission was given to erect "Mystery House" shoots, and instead of having to plead for money to put ideas over, I was given practically a free hand.⁶

The Shanghai Municipal Police Watch Committee hearings of 1919 thus represent the functional beginning of the first systematic approach to practical close-quarter combat use of the one-hand gun.

Fairbairn began modestly: for example, trainees of the Chinese Branch learned the subtleties of their .380 Colt Automatic Pistols by teaming up in threes, pursuing a fourth team-mate at top speed over an obstacle course, across a parade ground, and onto the pistol range, where they were made to immediately fire six shots at surprise targets. Marks were given for the first to arrive, number of hits, and safety in handling the weapon.⁷ Thereafter, they were made to holster their gun with a full magazine, but no round in the chamber.

They were then presented with a standing man target, a crossing man target, an advancing man target and a retreating man target. When motion was observed in such targets, the recruits had to draw the Colt, function a round into the chamber, and squeeze off four fast shots.

Following the Watch Committee hearings, Fairbairn asked for and received permission to make the .45 caliber Model 1911 Colt Automatic Pistol the standard weapon of the SMP, replacing the previously-standard .455 Webley. Owing to their small hands, Chinese personnel were furnished with the .380 caliber Colt Automatic Pistol. Also in that same year of 1919, Fairbairn began the SMP Ballistic Section, and as an aid to his research, introduced the concept of marking the base of each bullet purchased for police use with a distinctive symbol. As the base of a bullet will rarely deform, it thus became possible to tell exactly the number of shots fired by police, by virtue of recovered evidence.

Besides being an excellent research tool, Fairbairn's bullet marking scheme contributed to his making the acquaintance of a man who would later become his best friend and collaborator. Wishing to avoid a possible British embargo of ammunition to Shanghai, Fairbairn chose to purchase his special ammunition from an American firm. The firm he selected was Remington, then represented in Shanghai by a gentleman named Eric Anthony Sykes.

Sykes was a crack rifle shot, had hunted all over Malaysia and China, and had served with distinction in World War I. Upon making the acquaintance of Fairbairn, Sykes was encouraged to join the police reserve, obtaining the rank of sergeant-in-charge of the SMP Sniper's Unit, a reserve force of civilians especially chosen to engage in countersniper or fire suppression situations.

With his innovative training methods under way, Fairbairn took an extended leave in 1920, during which time he was attached as a Captain to the New York Police Department for a 10-week period of observation. During this period he participated in everything from routine patrol duty to major gambling raids, in order to absorb as much as he could of American methodology.

Traveling from America, Fairbairn attended the British Army's Small Arms School, at Kent, in June 1920. "My object in attending the Small Arms School," he later wrote, "was to have first hand information of their methods of instruction, and to have the Instructor's Certificate locked away against possible argument."⁸

An incident took place during Fairbairn's stay at the school, which, though amusing, serves to shed light on his careful approach. Feigning total ignorance of firearms, Fairbairn duped his instructors into believing that he was a poor shot. His idea was to see how the British Army would deal with a particularly

Below: The Shanghai Municipal Police Armoury staff, in a photograph taken upon the occasion of W. E. Fairbairn's retirement from the SMP in 1939. W. E. Fairbairn is in the second row, seated third from the right. On his right is E. A. Sykes. To the right of Sykes is a former White Russian colonel, Nicholas Solntseff, who served as Master of the Armoury.

Among other accomplishments, these men designed and produced the first Fairbairn-Sykes Fighting Knife, in the early 1930s. This is one of two known photographs of Fairbairn and Sykes together, and comes to us courtesy of the Estate of W. E. Fairbairn. (Copyright © 1978 William L. Cassidy. All rights reserved.)





Above: This wartime version of the Shanghai Mystery House was used to instruct British Commandos, and agents of the Special Operations Executive, Britain's super-secret sabotage agency. The time is 1942, the

place "somewhere in the British Isles." (Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London.)

backward trainee, and in creating his illusion, he resorted to some of the antics of his own trainees, in China.

He might have been successful in carrying out his ruse with no one the wiser, had it not been for an unguarded moment. "Being under the impression that nobody was present," he confessed, "I could not resist the temptation of doing a little Shooting to Live practice by throwing a tin can up and knocking it around. I was very pleased with myself and spent the next 15 minutes trying every trick in the bag. To my surprise, I heard a voice cry 'Hold it!' and turning saw my instructor plus several of the staff, who had been observing through [field] glasses.

"I tried to explain that I was experimenting for the first time with a method of shooting that I had seen in a 'Western' book. It was no use, they were too old at the game...."

This episode was followed up with a request from the commandant of the school for Fairbairn to give a demonstration in front of 250 students and staff. "I had been present at several shooting affairs against criminals," he admitted, "but I was never so scared as I was when I stood in front of that number of Weapons Instructors. My one and only desire was for a large hole where I would be completely undercover."

Nevertheless, Fairbairn let himself go that afternoon, and gave a rousing demonstration of practical shooting techniques. He was immediately awarded a British Army Revolver Instructor's Certificate, being the only man ever to do so by failing the standard course.

Upon his return to Shanghai, in 1921, Fairbairn created the first practical pistol range ever built, locating it in an old warehouse. It was known as the "Mystery House," the scene of what Fairbairn called his "mystery shoot," in which the range was decorated to look like the interior of a Chinese lodging-house occupied by armed criminals. The early version of Mystery House was described by Commander G. M. Baum in the 1 December 1924 edition of *American Rifleman*; later quoted in Hatcher's *Textbook of Pistols and Revolvers*, published in 1935:⁹

The shooter takes his position outside of a door which leads into a dark passageway. Upon opening the door he is permitted to draw and cock his pistol. The passageway is dark and littered with chairs, boxes or short stairs, in fact, many things to cause extreme care in walking. At the end of the passageway is another door leading into a dimly lighted room. Immediately he steps into the room he must be prepared to shoot at whatever target he sees representing a human being. As soon as the shooter clears the threshold, firecrackers, confetti, sticks or other objects are thrown at him; then someone yells into his ear, pistols are fired behind him and everything possible is done to shake his nerve and disconcert him. A target representing the head and shoulders of a man swings out from behind a wall, remaining in sight only momentarily, a moving target slides across the end of the room, and a head is dropped into the room from above to represent a man springing down. Only three targets are shown and the shooters is permitted only one shot at each target.

Fairbairn's own description of Mystery House, as it was at the height of its complexity, is also of interest:

All they see from the outside is a wall with a door, through which, one by one, they will have to enter the lodging-house. No one knows what he will encounter inside, and the only instruc-

tions given are that innocent civilians are not to be "killed," such action being likely to impede promotion. The first man to shoot pushes in the door, closely followed by the range officer, and proceeds with caution or reckless abandon, according to his nature, along a dark, narrow, twisting passage, kicks open a door at one point, descends a few steps, treads on floorboards which give way under him, climbs some more steps and finds himself in a dimly lit room occupied by apparently harmless people (dummies) who vary from mere lodgers to dope fiends or stool-pigeons. He has to take in the situation in a flash, for his appearance is the signal for the fun to commence. A shot is fired at him (blank cartridge in the control room), and the criminals commence their "get-away" ("criminals" are life-size targets that bob up from nowhere and disappear as quickly, heads and shoulders that peer at him briefly round a corner, men running swiftly across the room, possibly at an oblique angle, etc., all masked at some point in their careers by the "innocent bystanders," who must not be shot). There is no time to think, and anything resembling deliberate aim is a sheer impossibility. Furniture and dummies impede his movements, and it is noticeable that he instinctively adopts the "crouch" and shoots as a rule with the arm in any position except fully extended. His only course is to shoot quickly and keep on shooting till his magazine is empty, hoping that he is hitting the "criminals" and not the dummies. Any ill-luck as regards the latter is rewarded, when the results are announced, by precisely the sort of comment that might be expected from the crowd.¹⁰

In 1925, Fairbairn wrote his first book on the subject of combat use of the pistol, a now-rare 40-page manual entitled *Shanghai Municipal Police Instruction and Conditions of Practice for the .45 "Colt" Automatic Pistol*.¹¹

In this first book, Fairbairn advocated carrying the pistol stiff-armed, pointing toward the ground at a 45° angle, and advised trainees to, "... grip the pistol firm-



ly as if it was 30 pounds in weight."¹² The thumb of the gun-hand was to remain straight and parallel with the bottom of the slide.

To fire, Fairbairn recommended that both eyes be open and focused on the center of the target, and that the shooter stand square with the target. The arm was to be raised in one smooth motion from the shoulder. When the pistol cut the line of sight, "... make a pause of a fraction of a second. Fire the pistol by releasing the trigger with an equal pressure of fingers and thumb..."¹³

At first glance, the written admonishment to bring the weapon to line-of-sight would seem to contradict Fairbairn's remarks regarding below line-of-sight shooting, which he made before the Watch Committee hearings of 1919. What Fairbairn was trying to accomplish, however, is revealed in his later work on pistol firing, *Shooting to Live*, written in collaboration with Eric Anthony Sykes in 1939, and published in 1942.¹⁴ In *Shooting to Live*, Fairbairn states that such instruction is, "... a deliberate attempt to eliminate conscious control by the master-eye. Instead the aim is controlled by the combination of the square stance and the manner of holding the pistol..."¹⁵

In 1927, violence in Shanghai took a turn for the worse. "It is the armed robbers and kidnappers who are a constant menace to the lives of our men and the peace of the Settlement," Fairbairn's commanding officer wrote in 1929, "and it is in fighting against these desperados that the best qualities of our men come out. Robberies are most common between 6 p.m. and 11 p.m., but may of course occur at any time. No man when he goes on duty can be certain that before he reports off duty he will not have had to engage in a life and death struggle with a party of armed robbers."¹⁶

Police fatalities began to rise at an alarming rate, not through any fault of training or method, but simply because of the sheer number of incidents. The records of just one branch, the Chinese Uniform Branch, for the period of January 1927 to March 1928, are enough to demonstrate the lethality of Shanghai nights:¹⁷

Number of men killed by robbers — 8
Number of men wounded by robbers — 17
Number of men given rewards and promotion for successful action against robbers — 205.

Thus we find that in the period of approximately one year, the Chinese Uniform Branch engaged in over 200 armed encounters against robbers alone. Not all of these involved the use of pistols at close-quarters, but the record is demon-

Left: Variations on the Mystery House were also used for instruction in room sweeping. "Hitler's Log Cabin" served British and American personnel alike. Volunteers shown here practice elementary street-fighting techniques. (Photograph courtesy of the Imperial War Museum, London.)

strative of conditions, especially when we consider it is for but a single branch; one at the low end of the violence spectrum. For *serious* encounters, Fairbairn's Reserve Unit, otherwise known as the Shanghai Riot Squad, was called out.

When whistles are blown at night every man runs towards the sound with his pistol in his hand. Should he meet the robbers in flight, he can be certain they will open fire on sight, and he knows he has to stand up and return the fire. Bright buttons and badges have all been exchanged for black to make our men less visible at night.

Men walk in pairs in the more lonely and rougher districts. The challenging of suspects is one of their most hazardous duties, since if such men are armed they usually carry their pistols in their hands concealed up their long sleeves, and often open fire on the police the moment they are challenged. Our men have to be ready to reply at express speed. The most dangerous and successful robbers often wear well-cut silk gowns, at first sight in no way different from good class Chinese gentlemen; so the respectable appearance of a man challenged for search is no guide to his subsequent actions.¹⁸

Presented with an ever-increasing number of incidents of varying types, Fairbairn stepped up his research program during this period. He also began to acknowledge the various categories of behavior under fire, and personal preferences displayed by his men. In the latter category we include the two-handed hold, the quarter-hip, and half-hip or close-hip positions. By investigating such traits, Fairbairn was able to conclude that apart from the purely instinctive moves, "stance" is a function of distance. At extremely close-quarters, one will employ the close-hip position; at mid-ranges one will fire from the half-hip position, this also being true where extreme, almost unthinking speed is demanded, and at longer ranges, where time permits, one will employ the two-handed hold.

Also in 1927, the United States was treated to its first in-depth look at Fairbairn's early methods, by virtue of an article he wrote for the March 1927 edition of *The American Rifleman*.¹⁹ Entitled "Pistol Shooting," it presented an explanation of the standard Shanghai practice, and a number of then extremely radical tidbits of information:

Any man who carries a one-hand gun should be able to walk or run with his finger on his loaded gun and still be perfectly safe.

We are aware that nearly all other methods teach that the trigger finger must be outside the trigger guard when not actually firing. We have yet to meet the man who is looking for an armed opponent who carries out this instruction. Why should he — when he is aware that it takes time to insert his finger into the trigger guard. At that particular time of his life, time is the most important thing he knows about.²⁰

Fairbairn also threw something of a gauntlet at the feet of U.S. shooters, when he reported on the results of a SMP test. Three men fired 100 rounds through each of three pistols at an average of nine yards, scoring approximately 90 percent hits on a man-sized target. Using previously charged magazines, time required for this performance was 4½ minutes total for the 300 rounds.

The American Rifleman article was not the first account of Fairbairn's methods to reach the U.S. — the author believes that distinction must go to a lecture delivered before the Naval Institute in August 1923 by Commander G. M. Baum, USN, entitled "Common Sense Training With the Service Pistol." There is also evidence which indicates certain of his methods were sampled by the New York and San Francisco police departments as early as 1920. The San Francisco department, in particular, is known to have used the 8'x8' standing man target developed in Shanghai, calling it a "Fairbairn Target."

So by the 1920s, Fairbairn's fame and influence were spreading. Among the colonial forces his battle-proven methods were found particularly useful. In the following years such agencies as the Iraq Police, Palestine Police Force, Ceylon Police, British South Africa Police, Straits Settlements Police, Burma Military Police, Kenya Police, British Guiana Police, British North Borneo Constabulary, Federated Malay States Police, and the Natal Mounted Police all began to feel the Fairbairn influence in one way or another. Beginning in 1931, so did the United States Marine Corps, but we are getting ahead of our story.

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NOTES

¹William L. Cassidy, *Fairbairn of Shanghai: A Biography of William Ewart Fairbairn*. (Forthcoming).

²Elaborate citation of sources for biographical information will become tedious. Most of it has, in any case, been provided by Fairbairn's late son, in letters and taped interviews with the author. We therefore omit citations which refer to such material.

³W. E. Fairbairn, "Cavalcade," 39 pp. holographic manuscript in Fairbairn's own hand, n.d.

⁴*Ibid.*

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷Maj. K. M. Bourne, M.C., "The Shanghai Municipal Police: Chinese Uniform Branch". *Police Journal*, Vol. II, 1929, pp. 35-36; conversation with Fairbairn's son.

⁸W. E. Fairbairn, *op. cit.*

⁹Julian S. Hatcher, *Textbook of Pistols and Revolvers*. (Plantersville: S.A.T.P. Company, 1935), pp. 523-524.

¹⁰W. E. Fairbairn and E. A. Sykes, *Shooting to Live With the One-Hand Gun*. (Edinburg: Oliver and Boyd, 1942), pp. 68-69.

¹¹W. E. Fairbairn, *Shanghai Municipal Police Instructions and Conditions of Practice for the .45 "Colt" Automatic Pistol*. (Shanghai: Shanghai Municipal Police, 1925).

¹²W. E. Fairbairn, *Shanghai Municipal Police Instruction &c.*, p. 11.

¹³W. E. Fairbairn, *Shanghai Municipal Police Instructions &c.*, p. 13.

¹⁴Sykes had very little hand in the writing of this book, his contribution being that of editor. Sykes also posed for the photographs from which the drawings were made. It was originally planned to publish an extensive second part to the book, illustrating the many weapons collected by the SMP Armory, and photographs were prepared to this effect. This section was, however, cut by the Scotch publisher as a war-time economy. The original version of *Shooting to Live* is still intact and has been examined at length by the author.

¹⁵W. E. Fairbairn and E. A. Sykes, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

¹⁶Maj. K. M. Bourne, MC, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

¹⁷Maj. K. M. Bourne, MC, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

¹⁸Maj. K. M. Bourne, MC, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

¹⁹W. E. Fairbairn, "Pistol Shooting," *American Rifleman*, Vol. XXV, No. 3, March 1927, pp. 17-20.

²⁰*Ibid.*



The Second Annual U.S. International Pistol Shooting Confederation Championships

by Chuck Trolley

12-14 October 1978 was a strenuous, important time frame: the International Practical Shooting Federation (IPSC) U.S. National Championships. The best pistoleros in the United States had been gearing up for the event for the whole of 1978, with long, hard hours of practice and a grueling championship qualification match schedule to insure that only the best were eligible to compete, based on their continuous performance throughout the 1978 competitive year.

As might be expected, competition was the fiercest experienced to date in IPSC competition, and many were have heard to say that anyone in the top 20 could have won it, but only the one man who made no mistakes that day would take home the giant Soldier of Fortune trophy and other "booty."

The match consisted of four stages. Each competitor's standing in these stages would result in him being "awarded" a number of "stage points" equal to his standing. In other words, the man who came in 35th on Stage I would be awarded 35 points. The man who, when the match was over had the *lowest* number of points,

indicating how highly he placed in each stage, was the Champion.

The lead changed many times, and mishap after mishap caused many of the "big guns" to fall. In fact, the most popular place on the range complex, aside from the water fountain (it was 100 degrees most of the time!) was the score board, as individual shooters feverishly compared their performance with other competitors.

Stage One of the match was the "Advanced Military," consisting of the shooter firing strings of two shots in seven seconds from 50 meters, strings of one shot in 2½ seconds at 25 meters, all from the leather, of course, and other drills such as engaging three silhouettes, spaced nine meters apart from 10 meters downrange. The catch here is that the competitor must draw his weapon, shoot two rounds into each of the three silhouettes, reload, and shoot two more rounds into each target — in a total time of nine seconds! (If you don't think this one separated the men from the boys you have my earnest invitation to try it!) The final exercise entailed the shooter executing a 90 degree turn, drawing his weapon and

placing two shots on each of three silhouettes 10 meters downrange, spaced nine meters apart — in four seconds! This one, too, allowed virtually no margin for error, as one might expect by this point.

Stage Two was the "Cooper Assault Course," designed by legendary pistolero Jeff Cooper (also known affectionately to many of us as: The Man). The "Cooper" is the most strenuous course of fire now in existence, consisting of the competitor firing at two silhouettes 15 meters downrange, holstering his weapon, moving forward at a dead run, climbing a four-foot barricade, engaging two more silhouettes 10 meters downrange, again holstering, executing a flying dive into a 24-inch-high, six-foot long tunnel that falls apart on you if you touch it, and finally coming to rest behind a barricade with an 18-inch square "window" in it from whence the shooter must *draw and handle his weapon only with the weak hand* and put two hits on one last silhouette seven meters away and pivot approximately 60 degrees to hit an impact plate to stop the timer. Like I said — strenuous.

Stage Three was the "Unique Runner," the name of which proved to be one of the

IPSC President Jeff Cooper (left) discusses present Handgunning State-of-the-Art, with Mike Dalton, Shooting Machine Pistol Club President.

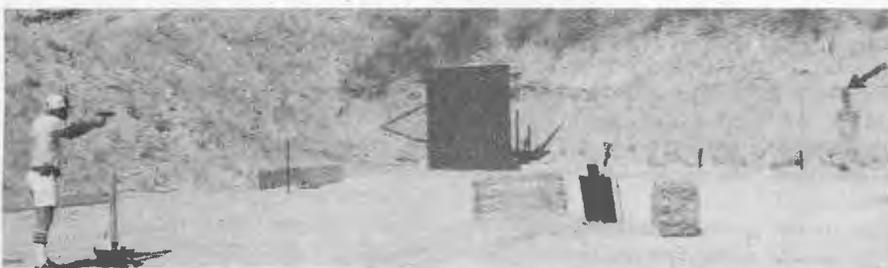


Stage One; "Advanced Military." Here contestant is attempting to place hit on silhouette target "from the leather" at 25 meters in 2½ seconds!





Stage Two: "Cooper Assault Course." Here competitor is in process of negotiating 4-ft high barricade. 10-meter targets and window barricade at end of course can be seen downrange.



Stage Three: "Unique Runner." Moving silhouette that covers 50 feet in four seconds can be seen (marked by arrow) at right of photo.



Stage Four: "Quick and Dirty." Here contestant completes last string in Stage, will immediately reload and transfer weapon to weak hand to shoot last two targets on left.

great understatements of all time! As could be expected, the course involved a "running man" silhouette, at 20 meters, no less, that covered 50 feet in four seconds. But, added to that, were two additional silhouettes to the right at 10 meters, and to the left at 15 meters, plus a metallic impact silhouette directly in front of the firer. The object of the exercise was for the firer to place four hits on the moving target as it moved from left to right, one hit on the left target, one on the right, move six feet to another firing position, reloading on the run, place a hit on

the right target, another on the left, and three more on the runner as it came back from right to left. Unique Runner, indeed! Obviously this stage was, in my opinion, the toughest of the entire match.

Stage Four was the "Quick and Dirty," a multi-faceted course that involved the firer sitting at a table with weapon "cocked and locked" on the table in front of him, facing a series of silhouettes seven meters downrange. One more thing — all but one of the silhouettes had "hostages" in front of them! The contestant must, upon signal, pick up his weapon and place

1978 I.P.S.C.—U.S. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS
October 12-14, 1978

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Ross Seyfried | 62. Wayne Umberger |
| 2. Raul Walters | 63. Ed Burg |
| 3. Tom Campbell | 64. Louis Davis |
| 4. Mickey Fowler | 65. Scott Frazier |
| 5. S. Blankenbiller | 66. Dave Stanford |
| 6. John Shaw | 67. Mike Kelley |
| 7. Ron Lerch | 68. Mike McCarty CA |
| 8. Keith Hamilton | 69. Tony Smith |
| 9. Jerry Usher | 70. Larry Champion |
| 10. Nick Pruitt | Jim Hogan |
| 11. Chappie Gennett | 72. Ken Ideen |
| 12. Dave Wheeler | 73. Cluck Ries |
| 13. Chuck Taylor | 74. David Allen |
| 14. Don Hamilton | 75. Mike LaPlante |
| 15. Ray Neal | 76. Dennis Page |
| 16. Lowell Larson | 77. Loren Busch |
| 17. Stephen Knab | 78. Tom Bourland |
| 18. Al Allen | Jim Coxen |
| 19. Leonard Knight | 80. Charlie Mills |
| 20. Mike Taltan | 81. Richard Marx |
| 21. Mike Dalton | 82. Joe Weatherby |
| 22. Andy Stanford | Bill Jeans |
| 23. Chuck Byers | 84. Richard Bancroft |
| 24. Jim Scordato | 85. Coy Massey |
| 25. Robert Pruitt | 86. Al Gilbert |
| Dennis Tueller | 87. Richard Strahs |
| 27. Ray Higbee | 88. Dave Cosby |
| 28. John Davis | Scott Hieronymus |
| 29. Charles Bingham | 90. Tom Banks |
| 30. Ron Sharp | 91. L. Person |
| Gordon Davis | 92. Phillip Packard II |
| 32. Vern Reed | John Stowe |
| 33. Tom Schneider | 94. Wm. Weatherman |
| 34. Rick Miller | Joe Simcho |
| 35. Harry Bovos | 96. Massad Ayoob |
| 36. Michael Frazier | 97. Dick Thomas |
| 37. Don Fisher | 98. Eugene Carkoski |
| 38. Michael Horne | 99. Lee Souter |
| 39. Roger Harrison | 100. John Nowlin |
| 40. Lynn Schoening | 101. John Cowdery |
| 41. Ray Borges | 102. Ted Kenyon |
| 42. Kirk Kirkham | 103. Charles Funk |
| 43. Phillip Packard | 104. E. W. Estes |
| 44. Richard Watson | 105. Don Clark |
| 45. Larry Gray | 106. Fritz Huls |
| 46. Hank Shows | 107. Joe Gardner |
| Wayne Freer | 108. Dennis Butler |
| 48. Lewis Chang | 109. David Twigg |
| 49. Seth Nadel | 110. Mike Brandt |
| 50. Tom Kettells | Mike Moore |
| 51. Vern Wright | 112. Bill Johnson |
| Jim Cook | Gene Harrison |
| 53. Don Aker | 114. Ray Brown |
| 54. Paul Walker | 115. Jake Jatras |
| 55. Frank Triplett | 116. Susan Yorty |
| 56. Edwin Yorty | 117. Gary Hausler |
| 57. P. Kumpulainen | 118. T. McCormick |
| 58. Mike Fichman | 119. Tommy Ashford |
| 59. Ron Phillips | 120. Sarge Byerly |
| 60. Mike Waidelich | 121. D. Edwards |
| 61. Bill Wilson | 122. Sidney Smith |

a hit upon each of the "felon" silhouettes without hitting any of the "hostages." He must then repeat the exercise from 12 meters, this time standing with this weapon holstered. Finally, he must fire from 10 meters at each of five targets, placing two hits on each the complication is that, after the first three targets, he must reload and switch to the weak hand and shoot the last two targets weak-hand unsupported.

As is now rather obvious, the match was a most difficult one, in fact the toughest one to date in IPSC competition, and winner Ross Seyfried, of Roggen, Colorado, also a personal friend of mine, had every reason in the world to be proud as the trophy was handed to him. I've shot with and against a lot of fine pistoleros, but Ross is the best I've ever had the pleasure of knowing. SOF offers him our heartiest congratulations and best wishes for the World Match in Roodeport, South Africa, in the fall of 1979. From what I understand, that one will be even tougher!



America's Underwater Elite

The U.S. Navy SEALs

Part One

by Dana Drenkowski

To be concluded in the next issue of SOF. Look for our analysis of SEAL operations in Vietnam, information on present personnel of this elite unit, and the Navy's methods of selecting SEALs from its recruits.

The humid night lay like a heavy hand on the seven SEALs as they loaded the Navy patrol craft for the three-hour trip up river to the V.C.-held island. Navy intelligence indicated that the island was a VC resupply point, and the SEALs wanted to disrupt its operations. Many of their raids were pure harassment raids, in which the object was to go as far as they could into VC "safe" areas and kill or capture armed VC, steal documents, and, in general, make the VC as insecure in their bases as many South Vietnamese and U.S. GIs were.

It was 1967. The U.S. was winning the military battles in Vietnam and losing the propaganda war in the U.S. Large VC units were decimated and their

North Vietnamese Army supporters were faring little better. In a few months, North Vietnam would order a massive assault by the remaining effective VC, some 60,000 to 80,000, against installations and cities throughout South Vietnam. The attack, to become known by its timing during the Tet holidays and truce period, would literally break the back of remaining VC forces, leaving the conduct of the war almost entirely in the hands of the North Vietnamese Army, which would take seven more years to complete the conquest of South Vietnam.

But that was all in the future. All over South Vietnam in 1967, very effective anti-VC work was being done by three to 25-man Special Forces SOG units, SEAL teams, and various other specialized units working in conjunction with regular forces.

At 0200 hours, Mike's SEAL group's boat ran aground some 500 meters from the island. (Ed. note: "Mike" is the

pseudonym of the SEAL who related this story to the author. Because of the classified nature of this career Navyman's past and present activities, his real name cannot be used.) Being SEALs, they felt it would be a simple matter to walk or swim the remaining distance to the island, arriving there before dawn to find cover. Light would come in 2½ hours. They didn't count on waist-deep mud under the shallow water. Like quicksand, it slowed their pace to a snail-like crawl. 4½ hours later, they were still 50 meters from the island and the safety of its trees, their protective cloak of darkness replaced by bright, searing sun. Their weapons, M-16s, M16/XM-148s, and Ithaca M37 pump shotguns, were rendered useless by the mud. After an ulcer-producing time, they made the safety of the tree line, where they took a break to clean their weapons and assess their mission.

Below: SEALs aboard mechanized landing craft fire on Viet Cong huts during combined Vietnamese/U.S. operation in Rung Sat special zone

(25 clicks southeast of Saigon). Note M-79 (grenade launcher) in foreground. Photo taken in January 1967.





Above: SEALs leaping from beached assault river patrol boat on Rach Thom Rach Mo Cay canal system in Kien Hoa province (90 klicks

southwest of Saigon). Note M-203 (carried by man on right) and Stoner with drum mag (second from right). Photo taken January 1968.

Mike did a preliminary recon, discovering that the majority of the island appeared to be covered by thick, deep mud. The seven-man group moved out in single file, with Mike as point man. For the next eight hours, they wandered fruitlessly over portions of the large island, finding nothing for their sweat but mud everywhere. They had resigned themselves to rendezvousing with the patrol boat with nothing to show for their effort but sweaty, muddy fatigues.

They were moving toward the patrol boat, which was hidden at a river inlet, when Mike cut a trail with fresh foot prints. The seven sailors suddenly became tight and professional in their movements and attitudes, alert to every sound, as they followed the trail to dry ground. It was the first dry land they had seen since getting on the boat the night before. It was logical to assume that VC would camp on the dry section of the island. They came to a fast flowing canal moving in the direction of both the footprints and the river where the boat would appear to meet them. After some conversation, they decided to use it to cover their movements. They slipped into it, inflating mini life vests sewn into their ammo and pouch vests. Holding their weapons high, they half walked and bobbed down the canal, letting the flowing water carry them downstream. The canal was bordered by thick, overhanging

Below: Face of war. Commo man catches breath during lull in operation Crimson Tide. Operation took place in enemy-infested Bassac River area (110 kilometers southwest of Saigon). Photo taken September 1967. Note improvised sling on M-16.



brush covering the banks down to the water.

Mike, ahead of the others, noticed three sampans beached around a bend. Signaling the others to remain where they were, which they managed to do by holding onto branches to keep from being swept down the canal, Mike moved carefully around the bend to reconnoiter.

He eased up to the sampans, peering between them to observe the situation. He saw two huts built off the ground with six VC soldiers sitting in a small circle between the huts, laughing, talking, and playing musical instruments. Their weapons were stacked near them: three AK-47s and German Mausers.

Mike had to work his way back upstream against a strong current. It was impossible to use only one hand to grab bushes, and he had no sling for his rifle, so he quietly laid his M-16/XM-148 on the bank next to one of the sampans and eased his way back, thinking humorously about the VC's reaction if one of them happened to see a brand-new M-16XM-148, fully charged and ready for action, leaning against one of their sampans. But he had no choice: the current was too hard to fight.

Using hand and arm signals, Mike split his six men into two groups, three men climbing out of the canal to flank the huts and block any attempted escape, and the other three following him around the bend in the water. When he



Above: SEAL team grabs smoke break after uncovering Viet Cong punji stake booby trap (lower right) during operat

Province (110 kilometers southwest of Saigon). Photo taken December 1967.

returned to the sampans, Mike discovered his weapon had disappeared!

The six VC sat nonchalantly 20 feet away, while Mike tried to guess if they had found his weapon and set up a trap for him. He groped frantically under water near the sampan, his fingers finally grasping the cold, reassuring barrel. The three SEALs waited patiently while he emptied the barrel of water, then stood in line facing the six unsuspecting VC. All were standing in water chest deep, waiting to give the three flankers time to move into position. Four men, weapons ready, faces painted black and green, wearing tiger-stripe fatigues, armed with an M-16, two M-16/XM-148s, and an Ithaca pump shotgun, stood in the water for what seemed like an eternity, watching their prey.

Suddenly, one of the VC stood up, yawned and stretched, turning to face the canal. His jaw dropped as he looked directly at Death, watching him patiently. Four weapons went off simultaneously, blasting him and four of his comrades into instant oblivion. The sixth VC rolled away from the line of fire and crawled rapidly into a bunker.

Mike yelled, "Grenade Front!" and threw an M-26 frag grenade at the hut.

The grenade bounced off an overhead vine, and landed within four feet of the four SEALs, who reacted instantly by diving under water. The grenade went off

without hurting any of them. They came back up, draining water out of the barrels of their weapons. One SEAL ran into the bunker, a new 30-round magazine in his M-16, firing full auto as he charged ahead. He came back out dragging the dead VC's body with him.

The three flanking SEALs came in to help police up the action. They found hundreds of documents, so that they thought they had hit a major VC post office and message center. They tore the huts apart, setting them on fire to prevent any re-use, then decided to use the sampans to float down the canal to their support boat. They had communicated with it by radio after the action, and it was now moving up the river, to wait at the mouth of the canal to pick them up.

Three SEALs clambered into the first sampan, which gently but decisively sank. Two jumped into the next sampan, but the force of their American bodies hitting it, coupled with the weight of their equipment, punched a hole in the bottom. They both went through the boat and watched as it sank around them. After those experiences, they decided to simply load the last boat with five plastic garbage bags full of documents and some equipment, and float it down the canal while they swam alongside it.

Their adventure was not over yet. The 200 meters of canal to the river was heavily mined and booby trapped, and

it took them almost an hour to get through. In the meantime, VC from all over the island were moving into position along the canal and river banks, protected from sight by thick jungle growth. The SEALs began taking a heavy volume of fire from the VC, which they could not return while swimming. At first, the fire was over their heads, as the VC were out of position behind the canal banks. But then the enemy moved onto the banks, firing directly down into the water around the SEALs, which came alive with angry little geysers as high velocity AK rounds began hitting closer.

At that moment, the patrol boat came into view. Its gunners immediately assessed the situation and opened up with the twin .50s mounted on the boat; then the direct-fire 81mm mortar began lobbing high explosive rounds over the SEALs' heads into the banks. The 81mm gunner suddenly switched to Willie Pete (white phosphorus). As the first few white-hot pieces of metal, looking incongruously like large snowflakes, began settling gently over the foliage on the canal banks, the sound of firing quickly died down, replaced by surprised and agonized screams as the burning metal did its horrible work.

The SEALs loaded their precious cargo onto the boat and sped away, drinking cold beer provided by the boat crew.



Above: "Are you sure this is the way to the NCO Club?" SEAL training includes low crawling under barbed wire as automatic fire whistles by overhead.

Who were these specialists, these professionals amongst professionals? The SEALs (for Sea, Air, Land) did not exist before 1962. SEAL Teams 1 and 2 were officially commissioned by order of President Kennedy in January, 1962. His order reflected his desire to see a Special Operations Force capability in each service, including the Army's Special Forces and the Air Force's Air Commandos.

The two SEAL teams were drawn from existing Underwater Demolition Team forces and contained 10 officers and 50 enlisted men each. Selection of UDT members for SEAL teams was a natural, due to the past history of UDT. Under-

water Demolition Teams were started after a disastrous attack on Tarawa, in late 1942. Landing craft carrying Marines to the atoll struck an uncharted submerged reef and had to discharge their human cargo hundreds of yards from shore, instead of at the beaches as planned. Hundreds were shot as they moved helplessly in the open, unable to use their weapons until they were on dry land. Hundreds more drowned as they stepped fully equipped into pot-holes and were unable to swim out.

Navy Combat Demolition Teams were formed as a result of that disaster, to provide pre-assault hydrographic infor-

mation and to blow up obstacles on or near the beaches.

The first units were comprised of men from Navy Construction Battalions and Navy/Marine Scout and Raider Volunteers, all of whom were in "rugged physical condition and had previous swimming experience."

In Florida swamps they trained, using the theory that a human being is capable of "10 times as much physical output as is usually thought," a concept tested again and again with today's SEALs. In those swamps, the Navy produced men who were at home with mud, exhaustion, water, explosives, and weapons.

Below: Mae Wests support SEAL trainees in group flotation drill. Water looks warm or perhaps this is only place troops can relax.



They proved their worth at Normandy on D-Day, where they eliminated obstacles while under heavy fire, suffering 41 percent casualties in one day.

As the war ground on, UDT men reconnoitered and cleared beaches for the major amphibious assaults that followed D-Day, Normandy. In the Pacific, they developed the tactic of tying a rubber seven-man raft to the port side of a high speed boat. Moving in close to the target beach, the boat would suddenly turn to present its starboard side to the target and run parallel to the beach. At selected intervals, UDT men would slip from the boat to the raft, then slide out of the raft into the water, presenting no target to the enemy during the process. In this way, a force of dozens of men could be dropped off to swim toward the beach, with only their heads visible above water. During the operation, the beach was usually under shell fire from nearby ships' guns or airstrikes in preparation for a forthcoming assault. The defenders would usually be hard pressed to see something as small as a coconut moving on the water toward their positions, and the UDT men were rarely seen.

UDT personnel would recon the beach, logging its obstacles, enemy positions, and basic hydrographic information. Following that, they would swim out to the pick-up point, forming a line as before. A boat with the raft would run down the line, a man with a snare loop in the raft for the UDT men to grab as it went by. The boat's momentum would swing the UDT man into the raft and the loop would be held out for the next man in line.

Two trips were necessary. In the first, the team would reconnoiter, as mentioned before, and after pick-up would



Above: Night operations necessitate dark camo facepaint. Note contrast of trooper in background.

debrief, pointing out which obstacles or enemy positions should be removed to ensure success of planned assaults. On the second trip, they would destroy the obstacles, using detonating cord to connect all charges on all obstacles. With a burn time of 4,000 feet per second, virtually all obstacles would go up at once, usually while the UDT men were out to sea being picked up.

At the end of World War II, there were 3500 UDT men assigned to 34 teams. Five teams were retained after the post-war demobilization.

The Korean War soon followed, and UDT men found themselves called upon again for beach reconnaissance. However, they also found their skills as demolition experts much in demand. They were ordered to conduct raids deep into enemy territory to blow up bridges, railroads, and railway targets. They eventually came to serve as behind-the-lines guerrillas and as counter-guerrillas in activities behind enemy lines, pre-aging the role of SEALs in Vietnam.

During the Cold War era of the 1950s and early '60s, hints point to UDT activities in support of U.S. and allied operations, including roles in the crisis between Red China and Nationalist China. To date, no details have been declassified concerning UDT peacetime activities.

With their background in commando operations developed in Korea, it was logical that UDT would be the source of the first SEALs. But UDT's primary role revolved around beach reconnaissance and obstacle demolition, so the SEALs branched out in their training to include skills available in other services. UDT's 23-week school was still the basis for SEAL training programs, with 50-80 percent of the volunteers being washed out in any given class.

TRAINING

SEAL/UDT training begins with four weeks of intense physical activity designed to condition and toughen the body for the rest of the course. During those four weeks, SEAL trainees do toughening runs (sometimes with a squad carrying a 300-pound log for six miles in sand or mud), calisthenics, endurance or speed swims, races, competitive games, and inflatable rubber boating.

Below: Amphibious insertion/extraction practice keeps SEALs combat ready and strengthens teamwork with support troops. Note harness.





Underwater is no place for loners. The buddy system is stressed repeatedly during UDT training.

Then comes the fifth week, officially called Motivation Week, and unofficially, Hell Week, in which the recruits' mental and physical endurance is tested. During this period, the men work in small units, sometimes as boat crews or teams, averaging a total of seven hours' sleep in six or seven days.

According to Navy manuals, the "student conducts raids, establishes camp security against hostile forces, engages in competitive boat races against other student crews, all while working in sand, surf and heavy mud." Mud and sand are at first inhibitors, slowing the men down and frustrating their efforts. Eventually, they come to see them as part of their new lives. They are no longer reluctant to crawl in mud, sewage, or cold water to reach their objective in operations—and they usually find them to be good cover, since most military persons avoid them whenever possible.

Meals may be limited to two or three minutes, and trainees are given no time to recoup from one physical exertion to the next. If a certain portion of training is not completed to an instructor's satisfaction, they may be required to reaccomplish it, even if an extra day or two must be added to Hell Week.

Those without desire to go beyond what they thought were their own per-

sonal limits drop out, and Hell Week ends with the survivors aware of their inner strength—an awareness that in itself strengthens them and sets them apart from most of their fellow men. Now they must buckle down to the task of learning the techniques and tactics of their profession. The physical and mental demands do not let up for the rest of the 23-week course, but the men's self confidence and endurance have been built up and tested, and much of the rest of the course seems to be an anti-climactic grind.

Trainees are instructed in boat and water pick-ups, water parachuting, land jumps, deep diving, and demolition. They go through SCUBA school, learning both warm water and arctic techniques, plus use of underwater propulsion craft. Hand-held sonar and underwater communications equipment is emphasized, as are hydrographic charting and reconnaissance.

In the martial arts field, trainees are taught Hwarang Do combative techniques. This martial arts style is aggressive in nature and includes methods in barehand, knife, club, or other weapon fighting, or any combination. The aggressive, offensive nature of Hwarang Do is in keeping with the "attack" philosophy of the SEALs. SEAL trainees are taught

by men trained by the late Mike Echanis, who until his death was Martial Arts Editor of SOF Magazine. Echanis knew the value of martial arts training, having used it during cross-border operations while in Special Forces during the Vietnam war. On 8 September 1978, Echanis was killed in a plane crash while engaged in training antiterrorist commandos in Nicaragua.

SEAL trainees are given complete training in allied and communist weaponry, knowing they may use different weapons for various jobs.

First aid and survival courses round out their formal UDT/SEAL training but SEAL training is not over. After the 23-week course, SEALs are sent to the various services for additional training in other specialties, such as HALO school, more survival schools, language schools, or to an allied country for cross-training in its commando forces. Many are sent to Alaska for cold weather/arctic training. The U.S. military's renewed commitment to NATO has resulted in an increased awareness of the need for such cold weather training, preparatory to insertion of SEALs into northern harbors or logistics centers during a European war.



SOF Staff Takes Working Vacation With The Confederate Air Force **SOF Jumps With A Ghost Squadron**

by N.E. MacDougald

Sweating in the B-29 cockpit, nostalgia hangs like fog as 26 sheets of inch-thick plexiglass turn the bulbous bomber nose into a hothouse. The feel, the smell, the patina of sweat and grime let the imagination play tricks. Glancing down the six-yard cockpit-to-bomb-bay tunnel elicits an eerie feeling. Gauges, levers, buttons, switches, lights, buzzers, toggles, all there to baffle neophytes and delight technophiles. But I am getting ahead of myself....

On Sunday, 1 October 1978, Michael Grau von Trytek and I left our new SOF offices to fly south to Harlingen, Texas (about 25 miles north-northwest of Brownsville), for AIRSHO 78, the Confederate Air Force (CAF) annual flyfest.

For those unfamiliar with the CAF, it is a flying museum (status ratified by Congressional act) founded in 1951 by Lloyd Nolen (see box), a former Army Air Corps flight instructor. He bought a battered surplus P-40 (Warhawk) fighter in Arizona and nursed it home to Texas. From that first craft, the CAF has grown to a multi-million dollar institution with 14 wings nationwide and some 4,000 members. It is a fiercely proud, patriotic organization dedicated to preserving historically important W.W. II combat aircraft. Hence the "Ghost Squadron." Their unofficial motto, *semper mint julep*, exemplifies CAF homage to tradition. Objective three of the CAF charter states, "Use all our political influence to



have the capitol building at Washington turned to face SOUTH."

The origin of the CAF's name was unplanned. Years ago, somebody painted the name on the fuselage of a plane and the name just stuck.

Nestled in the verdant lower Rio Grande Valley, the Ghost Squadron boasts 82 warplanes: 40 types of bombers, fighters, trainers, transports, and liaison aircraft and includes the only airworthy examples of the B-29 Superfortress, A-20 Havoc, SBD Dauntless, P-39 Airacobra, SB2C Helldiver, and F82 Twin Mustang. Many CAF craft have starred in *Tora Tora Tora*, *The Hindenburg*, *Midway*, *Black Sheep Squadron*, and *Battle of Bri-*

tain. These flying artifacts are sponsored by CAF members for \$3,500 or more.

If a \$3,500 sponsorship sounds a bit steep, there are alternative routes. A life membership costs \$1,000; a squadron membership ranges between \$350 and \$3,500; a yearly membership runs \$125; and an associate membership is \$25. In short, something for everybody. Out of the 3,000-plus membership, 250 are life members. During the last 20 months, membership has grown over 40 percent.

About the only requirement for CAF membership is that one must be 18 years old. Members have diverse backgrounds and hail from all 50 states and over 20 foreign countries. Three of the most distinguished members are astronaut Joe Engle, who flew the space shuttle *Enterprise* on its second test flight in 1977, Senator Barry Goldwater, an ex-major-general in the Air Force (Res.) and General Jimmy Doolittle.

CAF's flight safety record is exemplary. Their pilots are human though, and three years ago a Catalina (PBY) flying boat crashed near Harlingen, killing all three crew members.

What's an air force without a uniform? CAF has unique and tasteful duty attire. We noticed that tailored medium gray khaki shirt and trousers were most popular. Eagles soared on collars, confederate and American flags waved on shoulders, and various squadron insignia were

Below: Berke (saluting) with troops. Note shaven-headed jumpmaster standing apart.





Above: B-29 (Super Fortress) in foreground accompanies a pair of B-17 Flying Fortresses. B-17 in middle has top turret while one in background does not.

sported wherever there was room. Stetsons replete with silver braid and pompons complemented elaborately hand-tooled western boots. Belt buckles were a study in themselves. Most aircraft manufacturers were championed as were W.W. II units. Just plain gaudy silver and turquoise was also the fashion.

Large patches stating, "This is a rebel aviator. If found lost or unconscious please hide him from Yankees, revive with mint julep, and assist him in returning to

southern territory," were sewn on the back of flight suits or silk-screened on the back of T shirts.

After being greeted at CAF HQ by particularly vicious mosquitos (we thought them hummingbirds), we met Colonel John Berke, Commanding Officer, 1st Airborne Division, CAF (see box). A bullet-headed, gravel-voiced attorney from Houston, Berke entertained us royally in CAF's Officers' Club. As we swapped exaggerations, Berke's background and

bodacious tales bespoke an outstanding adventurer. It was immediately apparent that he and our illustrious publisher had much in common.

As if on cue, Robert K. Brown sauntered in and sat at our table. Always polite and considerate, Brown observed he was somewhat behind in imbibing libations and thus began enriching our balance of trade with Scotland. About midnight we decided dinner was in order. We weaved directly to a local house of grease and con-

Below: P-40s (Warhawks) wear colors and markings of Chennault's Flying Tigers of China. Note rounded canopy on plane in foreground.





Above: FAU (Corsair), nicknamed "whistling death" by Japanese pilots. Note pontoon-like bombs on the gull winged fighter.

continued bartering superlatives and contradictions. When our verbal house of cards began collapsing, we resorted to sampling each other's food with our hands. Berke demanded, and almost got, a hot fudge enema, and we departed, much to the management's relief. The table looked like someone had tapdanced on it. We mumbled goodnight to Berke and sought air-conditioned sanctuary.

Monday morning, 2 October, found us overhung and cotton mouthed. We regrouped with Berke and his son, a CAF colonel and Marine reservist. We breakfasted like gentlemen and drove back to CAF National HQ at Rebel Field under low-hanging cumulus.

We staffers spent the day learning CAF inner workings. The key word was *scrounge*. Almost every part was traded, found, cannibalized, salvaged, scavenged, or borrowed. About the only aircraft item purchased was the airframe. Rumors were rampant as to which colonel had the best scrounging record.

Back at HQ, a local Marine prep school military band rehearsed outside and excitement increased exponentially as out-of-town colonels arrived (yes, every CAF member is a colonel). Aeronautic photos hung on nearly every surface of HQ and the Officers' Club. Cheerful, efficient receptionists and administrators skillfully processed visitors and colonels and fielded requests for information. Southern hos-

pitality coupled with efficiency allowed the CAF to function smoothly.

We later roamed runways and hangars, soaking up the pungent ambiance. Late afternoon found us viewing the film, *Wings*, by the U.S. Freefall Exhibition Team. Seeing their precision and exuberance made us eager to jump soon.

At 0800, Tuesday, 3 October, SOF staffers, joined by Aviation Editor Dana Drenkowski, met with 46 others in parachute jump school at CAF Base Operations. A discreet sign, dominated by jump wings, declared, "IF YOU AIN'T AIRBORNE, YOU AIN'T SHIT." We staffers had jumped before, but we understood that repetition in training, though a pain in the ass, was usually beneficial.

Below: Berke (in striped pants) makes last-minute check as Fallschirmjaeger unit emplanes. Note jumpmaster in doorway.



Colonel Berke looked businesslike with swagger stick and burgundy beret as he growled into a red bullhorn. A cadre of 11, clad in khaki shorts and O.D. T shirts with CAF Airborne logo, looked politely bored by routine business. Impartiality ruled; we were treated as students during training, and friends after hours. We were taught military techniques; sport jumping would not be allowed. Multi-media training was professional, thorough, and redundant.

Berke said often, "I ain't lost a customer yet," and made it clear if we "creamed in," we'd ruin his record and piss him off. However, we would be locally televised so if we cratered on TV we'd probably increase AIRSHO 78 attendance. Many first-jumpers were visibly impressed and excited by Berke's sarcasm and horror stories.



Above: B-17 (Flying Fortress) does low altitude flyby at AIRSHO 78. Colors and markings commemorate 305th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force.

One such tale that he didn't share with the class occurred in 1966 on Berke's 100th jump. A free-falling companion plummeted through Berke's canopy, breaking Berke's jaw, left elbow, wrist, five ribs, and pelvis and tearing ligaments in his left knee. The friend, colliding at roughly 120 mph, became tangled in Berke's chute, making Berke cut away and land on reserve. Berke's cavalier attitude belies the fact that he has trained over 5000 students in the last 14 years. He became a USPA certified jumpmaster in 1967 and a USPA certified instructor in 1971.

During harness training, we staffers had time to look around us. Weaving through our class were several elderly, avuncular CAF colonels dressed in dove gray western hats and immaculate gray khakis. Their dignified bearing sustained them through the wilting torpor as they took photos with expensive cameras and smiled benignly and genuinely.

Adorning hangar walls were over 30 sheets of rivet-ridden W.W. II fuselage art. The painted cuties had names like: Miss Behavin'; Squeeze; Yankee Girl; Sloppy but Safe; Lassie, I'm Home; Easy Maid; Ma Ma Foo Foo; Miss Your Lovin'; Flamin' Mamie. One corner had a half dozen huge Wright 3350s, spares for the mighty B-29. . . . One can almost hear the big band sound in the background; hear the Andrews Sisters' harmony.

Names like Helldiver, Hellcat, Wildcat, Bearcat, Dauntless, Corsair, Warhawk, Spitfire, Thunderbolt, Mustang, Mosquito, Avenger, Liberator, Dragon, Superfortress, Liberator, Invader, King Cobra, Airacobra, Lightning, Messerschmitt, Warhawk abound.

Thoughtful nuances made CAF's physical plant fun to explore. Besides the neo-colonial pillared HQ, there was a museum, a PX, and an Octagon (thus outdoing by three their northern counterpart), a bridge over the River Kwai and on and on. A sign over the Officers' Club bar proclaimed, "There they go and I must hasten to catch them for I am their leader."

One babyfaced, chubby student, alias Walt Mitty, told Berke he'd been in almost every battle, served in almost every unit, made several hundred jumps, and in short was a hard man. Berke, a knower of and leader of men, could only laugh up his sleeve at the poor bastard. Needless to say, he spent an inordinate time in the chafing, binding, ball-crushing harness, while getting an officious ass chewing from half the cadre. Not that the cadre was cruel; the punk just deserved what he got.

Just after jump school ended, sheets of rain forced us into CAF's Officers' Club. Once there, simple courtesy demanded we enlarge the club's coffer. After being lubricated, we staffers met Berke and

offended some sensibilities when in a feeding frenzy, we began scarfing leftovers off others' plates. Sweat-stained camo fatigues and a beery intensity in our eyes didn't make us too popular with the management. After a mediocre combo plate of corn starch, chilies and lard, we swapped war stories and exited early, anticipating the morrow's 0700 jump.

0645 hours, Wednesday, 4 October, found us speeding through thick air and thicker darkness in a *kubbelwagen* (VW's idea of a jeep) with windshield down. Our driver, no fool, sported goggles. We reached Old Rebel Field's drop zone just after 0700, picking bugs and other debris off forehead and out of teeth.

Then came the wait. First, overcast shut us out. Then, the Skytrain (C-47) had indigestion. Then our co-pilot was misplaced. To make a long story short, we didn't clip onto cable till after 1300. Our jumps were uneventful, except for our undaunted publisher's Mae West (line over) that miraculously righted itself but put gaping holes in his canopy. The shredded nylon was retired on the spot.

The day's balance was anticlimactic except for a story from the inexhaustible Berke. Seems he took a married couple up for a first jump and they had some, er, problems. The little woman, whom Berke referred to only as the "elephant," weighed well over 100 kilos. As she prepared to jump, straddling the Cessna's landing gear (severely altering the tiny plane's aerodynamics), she hesitated.

Berke clubbed her thigh fraternally to assist her. No response. He repeated, but this time she snatched his wrist in a death-grip as she jumped/fell.

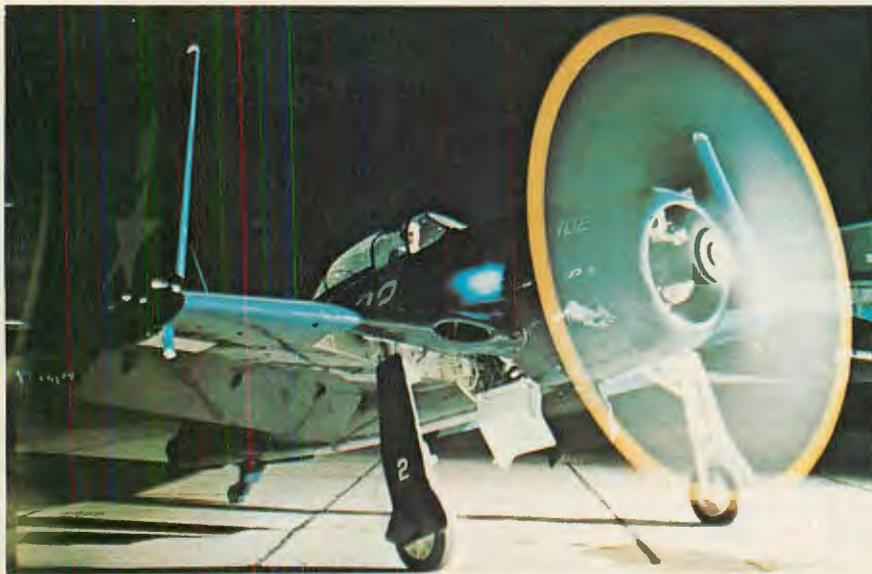
Berke explained, "I couldn't curl 200-plus pounds of ugly fat and the pilot was bleating for me to *do something*, so I coldcocked her." Wifepoo broke both ankles landing.

Below: Berke gets into character as Fallschirmjaeger commander.





Below: F8F (Bearcat) fires up at night. Folding wings were a necessity on all carrier-based aircraft.



Above: Comin' atcha! P-51 (Mustang) on maneuvers. Pilot (in foreground) is either asleep or anticipating a turn.





Below: A couple of CAF stalwarts dive from Heinkel's (HE 111) ventral gunport. Note jumper hanging from gunport.

Above: CAF's 1st Airborne leaps from C-47 (Skytrain) in 82nd Airborne uniform of WWII vintage.



Above: Photo taken during the filming of *Tora! Tora! Tora!*



Above: *Tora! Tora! Tora!* was 20th Century Fox' way of dramatizing Pearl Harbor. The Zeros and Kate simulating a bombing run were replicas built for the film.





Above: Pappy Boyington (center) swaps lies with publisher Brown (left) and aviation editor Drenkowski (right).

CAF MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Editor's Note: The CAF participates in airshows across the country. To find out exactly when and where, or to get membership information, write CAF National HQ, Rebel Field, Harlingen, TX 78550. If interested only in the 1st Airborne Division, be sure to address it to their attention. While down there, Publisher Brown joined the fighting First, so you know what kind of company they keep. Brown claims their \$25 jump school is the best buy since nickel beer. And that tells you how old he is.

After landing, when Berke asked baby whale if she had other injuries, she "looked me dead in the eye and said, 'I can't understand it, but my lips and nose are all swollen. . . .'" Berke and the rest of us roared at the unfortunate's retrograde amnesia.

Berke and pilot packed the young lady's feet in a pig trough filled with ice and were waiting for a station wagon when she crossed her arms and proclaimed, "I'm not going anywhere till I see my hubby jump."

So Berke went up again. Her spouse made a flawless porcine exit and broke but one ankle. Berke's eyes teared as he mimed the portly pair leaning on each other as they gimped away.

John Anton Berke, Jr., blurs in motion. His energy, intensity and humor sustain him through life's less interesting times. Hatched and thatched in Dallas, Berke graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1955 with a B.S. in economics and a body battered from football. He earned a postgraduate fellowship as a defensive back with the Pittsburgh Steelers, then joined the Marines. Months later he was a "DI in PI," a Drill Instructor in Parris Island, and was then accepted for Naval aviation cadet training. After training, he was commissioned and served with the Atlantic Fleet in the Mediterranean, Navy Squadron VF-84 deployed on the USS Forrestal. Later he went through the Navy/Marine contingent of Army Parachute School in Ft. Benning. Thus began Berke's romance with silk.

After service, Berke graduated from Southern Methodist University's law school in 1962 on the G.I. Bill and practiced trial law in Dallas. In 1968, the Navy reactivated Berke and assigned him to Navy Squadron VF-15 in sunny S.E. Asia for one year. On 10 March 1969, the "Crusader" fighter Berke

Thursday, 5 October, was different because we finally got some shuteye. We grabbed grits and eggs and arrived at Rebel Field just after 0800. AIRSHO 78 was in full bloom and we were amazed at the last 48 hours' progress. We spent the morning examining the esoteric planes and exhibits. The Blue Angels screamed by and put the fear of Thor in everybody. NASA had a trailer, as did a recruiting team from the Houston PD. Every kind of plane freak and groupie attended.

Major Gregory "Pappy" Boyington, autographed his book, *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, and prints of his air battles.

Junk jewelry, model kits, inflated 747s and blimps, hokey T shirts, unit patches and insignia, military castoffs, belt buckles, encyclopedias (!), rebel hats and

piloted was downed by a 100mm round about 25 miles northwest of Haiphong. Berke ejected, landing four miles off coast, and after 20 long minutes in the water, was rescued by a Navy Sea King (H-34) chopper. Berke logged some 237 missions — 180 over North Vietnam — including the first raids on Haiphong's petro. tanks and rail staging yards.

Berke first sport jumped with the CAF in 1968 in Dallas. By 1972, Berke began thinking about forming an airborne unit within CAF. He thought, "It would add a new dimension to CAF." But CAF had a bad taste in its institutional mouth from prior experiences with sport jumpers and was thus initially reluctant. After a skilled polemic from Berke — he is nothing if not persuasive — CAF's hierarchy saw things his way. The 1st Airborne Division leaped officially with the CAF at AIRSHO 75 in October of that year.

In 1976, Berke began amassing U.S. and German WWII military surplus, and finally assembled a *Fallschirmjaeger* (skyhunters) Airborne unit simulating the *Luftwaffe* 1st Regiment. The first

other crap were available at sucker prices from smiling parasites. *Caveat emptor*: let the buyer beware.

That afternoon, a D-Day-type, low-altitude troop jump by CAF's first AB Division delighted everyone.

Eveningtime and the O. Club was brimful. I joined Colonel Lloyd Nolen, the CAF's father, for a toddy. (See box) After a few neat whiskies, I sped back to our festively named crackerbox motel and found a scribbled invitation from my comrades to dine in the restaurant. When I got there, my companions, including our crazy-eyed, shaven-headed jumpmaster and his tolerant wife, had already gorged and were swilling unspeakable post prandial drinks.

jump in military configuration was in Phoenix on Labor Day, 1976.

To demonstrate his love for the sport and also to settle the question of his sanity, Berke made 90 jumps in 13 hours on 22 April 1977, thereby shattering the daylight-to-dark record of 55 jumps. Averaging one jump every 8.8 minutes, Berke had a crew of 20 CAF stalwarts, two planes, and 10 chutes.

In August 1978, Berke received the diamond freefall badge, awarded by the U.S. Parachute Association for a total of 24 hours in freefall. Understandably, less than 50 such awards have been granted to date.

Berke comes from a long line of pilots. His grandfather, Henri Josef von Berken, received the coveted Blue Max for 23 confirmed kills during WW I. Berke's father began flying as a barnstormer and finished as chief check pilot for Braniff. He also jumped for fun. His first jump was with a *Popular Mechanics* mail-order silk chute. In all, he made 63 jumps, the first 30 without reserve!

Berke now flies his own law firm in Houston and is a captain in the Navy Reserve.

Lloyd Nolen is a good ol' boy. A low-key man of average size, he is modest not shy. In contrast to some of his compatriots, Nolen wears a plain uniform: no eagles, no fancy belt buckle, few patches. As we sit on the patio of the Officers' Club, Nolen draws for a bourbon and water through the gold-capped, stained teeth of a veteran pipe smoker. He is difficult to interview because everyone in the club wants a word with him. He greets them all by name, displaying the memory of a socially gracious man.

As Nolen fields my questions, he talks aircraft engines with his cronies. His relatively wrinkleless face belies his age as he tersely answers another of my queries and turns to discuss comparative aerodynamics with the colonel next to him. He anticipates tomorrow's dogfight while chunky fighters buzz through the thick soup surrounding our awning.

Nolen learned to fly at age 15, and during WW II at 17, he became a civilian flight instructor. Shortly thereafter he was inducted into the Army Air Corps and served again as a flight instructor. Because he never flew combat aircraft

while in service, he bought one after being discharged.

Concerned about our nation's apparent cavalier attitude toward the 300,000 warbirds that helped us win the last world war, Nolen asked, "Why did the Air Force museum, which was founded in 1923, not keep one specimen of each craft? Why did the Navy not even begin its air museum until 1964?" Fine questions for the richest country in the world.

After the war, Nolen made contact with a Chilean in Washington, D.C. They made a deal for Nolen to fly to Chile to dust grapes. Nolen left happily a few days later, making Guatemala the terminus of the first leg. He spent the night and bought some local aviation fuel. Apparently the fuel was water-contaminated, because as Nolen took off the next morning, the engine quit. Nolen's altitude was only 200 feet, so he hastily crash-landed in a city park. After crawling out from his wrecked craft, Nolen was promptly jailed for a couple of days, then put under house arrest at the Palace Hotel.

"My guard at the hotel was an alcoholic — a U.S. citizen. He drank up all my money and was never seen again."

When Nolen got to court, he found that he was being tried for purposely crash landing! After assuring the handsome, 70-year-old judge that he had not ruined his livelihood as a stunt, Nolen was released.

"Court was like the keystone cops. Despite their ineptitude, the people were nice, strange but nice." Nolen did not return to Guatemala.

When *Battle of Britain* was filmed in 1968, the CAF leased Messerschmitt 109 fighters for the production and part of the lease agreement was that CAF members would fly them.

"Five of us went over to Seville for 'bout three months — we had a hell of a lot of fun. We all got to fly Messerschmitts and Spitfires and several times were fortunate enough to tangle in 'friendly' dogfights with the two types."

Nolen currently owns the Mercedes Flying Service, which he founded years ago. It is located in the nearby town of the same name.

I ordered broiled frozen fish and oversteamed canned peas and fought off my tablemates who wanted to help me eat. As I ate, Brown's pie a la mode arrived. I wanted a taste, just a taste, mind you, but he bolted from the table and began a hasty, strategic withdrawal. I could only pursue with fork poised high and distorted smile creasing my face. Got to give the Old Man credit — he sprang over booths and chairs like a hurdler and made it safely back to our table. I relinquished my advance out of respect for his agility and tactics. Editor Drenkowski, however, known for his miniscule booze tolerance, playfully snatched pie from plate. When Brown attempted to recapture his sweetstuff,

Drenkowski catapulted it into Brown's bewildered countenance.

The fat was in the fire. Not to be outdone, Brown neatly scraped the mess from his face and hurled it back. Drenkowski reciprocated, but this time splattered your scribe and a nearby tableful of Jehovah's Witnesses. By this time our waitress covered behind the cashier's desk and the Jehovah's Witnesses or CPAs or whatever were scarletly indignant. Brown, still chuckling, thought it prudent to overtip the waitress and depart before sirens were heard.

Friday, 6 October, dawned dark with pissing rain. The party was over. Ceiling was about 300 feet, so our proposed mass

jump was scrubbed. We breakfasted at the scene of the crime and received only minimal stares. Brown then decided he was leaving and dragged his Boswell along. We left our two anchormen to take photos, to raise hell, and to generally mop up.

* * * * *

"A time when America was proud," proclaims a pamphlet describing the era of camaraderie that the CAF strives to recapture. And that may be the heart of the CAF's appeal. In this unsettled, unsettling age when issues are concerned with shades of gray instead of blacks and whites, the CAF provides a refreshingly simple ambience. Not that its members are ignorant of the world's increasing complexity — they don't have their heads in the sand. Rather, they opt for a peer group that embraces values and experiences that are of another time: a generation of men and women that lived the Great Depression and lived the latest world war. The people, united to fight a common enemy, were perhaps subtly changed by that experience and don't want to forget the feeling of purpose it gave them.

Whether CAF is the world's grandest paramilitary adventure club or whether it's a pitiable group of wealthy dottards trying to recapture their youth, may be purely a question of perspective. Either way, it remains an interesting, historically important organization that preserves flyable warbirds that would otherwise have been so many piles of debris.

Below: Those who are about to die salute you. From left to right: aviation editor Drenkowski, publisher Brown, assoc. editor MacDougald, and photographer Grau.



The Colorado National Guard Shows
The Regulars How
The Bush League Gunnery

by SOF Staff





Above: Artillery battery during occupation of position.

We have heard the quote, "It's simple, it's inexpensive and it works — The Army will never buy it." We at SOF certainly don't subscribe to that theory, but you can imagine the surprise we felt when we stumbled across a Colorado Army National Guard Artillery Battalion using a hand-held calculator to deliver artillery fire accurately up to ranges of 11 miles. The most amazing aspect of this discovery was that the men of the Battalion were buying the computers with their own money because they felt the idea was so good and the Army wouldn't fund them. SOF decided to look into the system with the hope of learning a better way.

First we investigated the Fire Direction

Systems that are currently in use. Since SOF has no artillery experts on its staff, this took a little work. We found that actually three systems of fire direction are in use or planned use. Fire direction, for us non-artillery types, is the firing data that the Howitzers need to fire.

The first and original method is the manual method. This involved plotting locations on a chart and by means of various instruments and firing tables extracting the data. This method is slow to set up, relatively inaccurate, and involves significant training. Until recently, however, it was the primary means of artillery fire direction.

The age of computers introduced

FADAC (The Field Artillery Digital Automatic Computer) to the Army. While we certainly are not prepared to do a full technological description of FADAC, suffice it to say that it certainly does a lot of things, and it appears that it does them well. The size and logistical support required for FADAC seemed to us to be a significant disadvantage, but we'll address that later.

Finally, the apparent ultimate in systems — TACFIRE. This system is designed to do everything. Its 10-year research effort has still failed to yield a workable system, but if and when complete, it is supposed to be a fully integrated system from fire planning to

Below: M-577, armored personnel carrier fire direction center (M-113 APC with extended top).





Above: Publisher receiving briefing on T1-59's potential uses. (Photo credit: Chuck Taylor)

Above: FADAC's (Field Artillery Digital Automatic Computer) small size belies its sophistication. (Photo credit: Chuck Taylor)

technical fire direction. TACFIRE will not be addressed in this article except to say that at a cost of millions of dollars, its use is still questionable.

With all of the above three systems available or planned, it became even more interesting that people were going out and buying pocket calculators to do the job; so we went to our local store and bought a Texas Instruments Model T.I.-59 — the model apparently most used for fire direction — for \$239.50, just to see how it could be used.

The T.I.-59 is a commercial magnetic card programmable computer. I say again, no modifications to it are necessary to make this computer into a fire-direction center. As purchased from the store,

it contains rechargeable battery, magnetic cards, A/C power converter and programming instructions. Its programming capacity is 60 memories and 480 program steps. Now, we want to make it clear that we are not trying to sell Texas Instruments because other computers are available which will do the job, including the Hewlett-Packard HP-67. The T.I.-59 is just used more within the Artillery.

So, having gotten the basic facts together, we went to the field to find out why the Artillery, at least at Battalion and Battery level, wants this computer. Here are some of the answers received:

(1). "The hand-held computer gives the Artillery the flexibility it has always needed but has never had."

(2). "TACFIRE won't work."

(3). "The hand-held computer is easy to use."

(4). "It is cheap enough that I can have more than one per Battery."

(5). "My FADACs never work."

(6). "The hand-held computer is noiseless. I don't need a generator to run it."

(7). "I don't have to rely on one vehicle being operational in order for my Battery to shoot."

Keeping the points above in mind, an analysis was performed in a number of areas with which we were familiar.

(1.) Transportability — The current FDC (Fire Direction Center) uses an M577A1 tracked Command Post to haul its five-man crew, FADAC, 3 kw

Below: Hip shoot: rapid occupation of position. Note recoil spade in travelling position.





Above: M-110, 8-inch self-propelled howitzer just after firing. Fingers in ears prevent ruptured eardrums.

generator, charts and miscellaneous equipment. If this vehicle becomes inoperable, the FDC ability is severely limited. At best, manual systems will be used because of time involved setting up FADAC and generators from any other vehicle. The T.I.-59 can be carried on the belt of any soldier. All else that is required is radios which mean simply a jeep or even ANPRC — 77s in an emergency.

(2.) Noise — The FADAC will not operate unless the 3.0 kw 3-phase generator is also running. This gives a significant sound signature to the firing Battery. The T.I.-59 with its rechargeable battery will operate silently off batteries or any 12-volt power supply.

(3.) Reliability — The FADAC has a strong reputation for *not* functioning. It is our understanding that Army records refute this; however, their records are certainly not based on an Army functioning 24 hours a day. While the T.I.-59 has not been "Army improved" yet, at a cost of only \$239.50 each (retail), I am sure a direct exchange system would insure operational computers virtually continuously. By the way, no one talked to yet has indicated any problems with the hand-held computer.

(4.) Training Time — While FADAC, with an Army labeled keyboard, should be easier to operate, indications from the people we talked to were that the T.I.-59 was easier. Most people agreed that an easy-to-read checklist could accompany the T.I.-59, but that this had proven impossible with FADAC.

(5.) Ability to have more than one computer per Battery — Commanders indicated that one FADAC per unit was not enough for future wars. Artillery doctrine today apparently calls for speed of em-

placement and displacement, widespread units for defense in NBC environment, displacing of single Howitzers or Platoons (2 guns) for missions including nuclear fire, registrations or deception. This calls for more than one computer.

Now we can even take a look at cost. Here is an approximate breakdown of costs for a Battalion equipped with FADAC compared to one with T.I.-59s. Complete backup for T.I.-59 is shown and no backup system for FADAC.

FADAC (one per Battery and one at Battalion), \$235,000. T.I.-59 (two per Battery and three at Battalion) including power source and spare rechargeable, \$4,000.

In other words, 58 Battalions can be outfitted with a T.I.-59 system for every one outfitted with FADAC. This seems like a very cost-effective system to us. Additionally, for \$1,800 more per Battalion, all T.I.-59s would come with an on-line printer, a capability which FADAC does not have and which appears to have great safety implications.

So that this article won't appear biased, we did query as to disadvantages of the T.I.-59. They were given to us as:

(1.) Refinement data (from wind, temperature, etc., must be put into the T.I.-59 after being computed by hand.

(2.) Computer must be re-programmed each time it is turned on.

(3.) Different program must be used when changing shell type (basic program is for high-explosive rounds).

Now as to the second of the above disadvantages, many people thought that it was an advantage since most errors coming from FADAC involved items that were stored in its memory that no one knew were in there. Second, it was noted

that it took less time to re-program the T.I.-59 than to start the FADAC generator.

As to the first and the last objections, there is speculation that a permanent program for the T.I.-59 could be developed by the manufacturer and put into the "library" module of the computer that would give it capabilities equalling FADAC in almost every way. Cost for development of this library module is apparently embarrassingly low.

In summary, we at SOF would like to give our thanks to the National Guard for providing us some insight into what may become a Fire Direction System of the future. While the Army is spending literally millions of dollars developing TAC-FIRE (which we hope will be a good system), it appears that the Citizen Soldiers have come up with a very good and workable way to make our country a little more safe. From field comments we can only say that it appears that many people in the Artillery prefer the hand-held calculator to FADAC and even to TACFIRE.

"It's simple, it's inexpensive and it works." (For you Infantry types, the T.I.-59 can be programmed for mortars also.



A Submachine Gun For All Seasons

The .45 Caliber Thompson

by Chuck Taylor



Above: Special Forces troops are trained to use a wide variety of foreign and obsolescent U.S. weapons including the venerable Thompson. Trooper on right carries 9mm Sten SMG.

The Deadliest Weapon, Pound for Pound, Ever Devised by Man — *Time Magazine*, 1939.

The above was, and still is, a most appropriate definition of the (in)famous Thompson submachine gun. The "Thompson," as it has since become known, has chattered its way into the annals of American folklore as an artifact of both cultural and military history.

Initially conceived by General John Taliaferro Thompson as a military weapon during the "Great War" of 1914-1918, the TSMG was intended as a "trench broom" for clearing trenches and other fortifications of that era. At that time, the machine gun in its true form, i.e. with tripod, belt feed, traverse and elevation mechanism etc., was a new innovation in terms of military deployment and tactics, although it had existed quite a number of years in reality. The use of fully automatic weaponry

in tactical ground combat caused the methods and strategy of the day to become obsolete almost overnight and made World War I the most gruesome war in history to date.

General Thompson was unable to get his "trench broom" into production fast enough to facilitate its use in actual combat, since the war ended in 1918, although crates of TSMGs were reported to have been on the docks in New York awaiting shipment when the armistice was signed. Thus, he, along with his company, Auto-Ordnance Corporation, found themselves with a fully developed and capable mini-machine gun and no war in which to demonstrate it!

The obvious solution was to sell the weapon commercially to the military and civilian markets existing at the time. The U.S. Government, and particularly the Army and Marine Corps, lauded the weapon at initial demonstrations and predicted a great military future for it, but

for reasons not fully known or understood, *no* large shipments were ordered! It's my guess that this was caused by the well-known attitude of the U.S. military complex after World War I of refusing to accept new concepts of tactics and weaponry. Further confusion was undoubtedly caused by the fact that the Army did not fully understand the concept of the SMG. To them, small arms were either the M1903 cal. .30 rifle, the M1911 cal. .45 pistol, or the big Browning M1917 water-cooled cal. .30 HMG. The idea of a hand-held automatic weapon to Army ordnance personnel was the M1918 cal. .30 BAR, not a small, handy weapon that shot pistol ammunition!

The U.S. Army finally got around to officially testing the Thompson in 1922 and rejected it for nebulous reasons. The U.S. Marine Corps did not test the weapon at all, claiming that the Army did all of the testing, and whatever they said, the Corps would concur!



Prime Minister Winston Churchill inspects American-made Tommy gun during tour of northeast England's coast defenses in 1940 preparation for expected Nazi invasion. This famous photograph was retouched by Goebbels and used in Nazi propaganda to depict "Churchill the

Gangster." It was also retouched by British censors to remove the head and hat of the gentleman behind Churchill's left elbow: a senior member of the British Secret Service. (Photo credit: UPI)



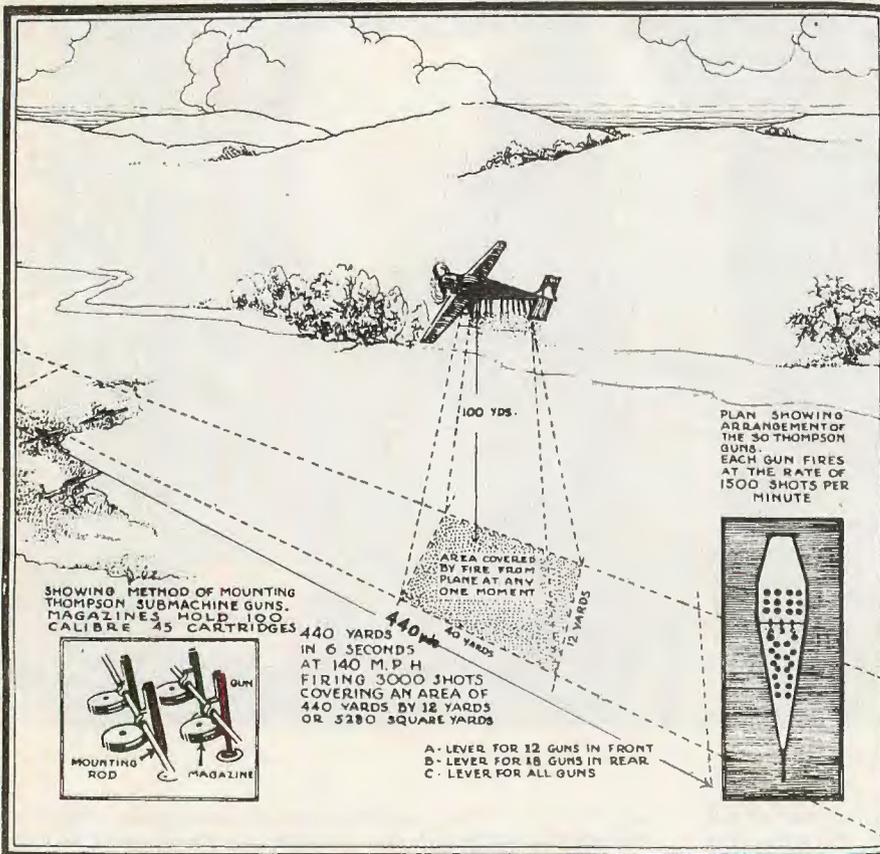
Above: During counterattack against Nazis at Kasserine pass, Tunisia, in February 1943, American soldier advances on German positions, Tommy gun at the ready. (Photo credit: UPI)

When the Thompson gun was not standardized by any of the U.S. military forces, Auto-Ordnance Corporation's

troubles began to show up graphically in the form of poor sales revenues. In spite of the fact that the gun was avail-

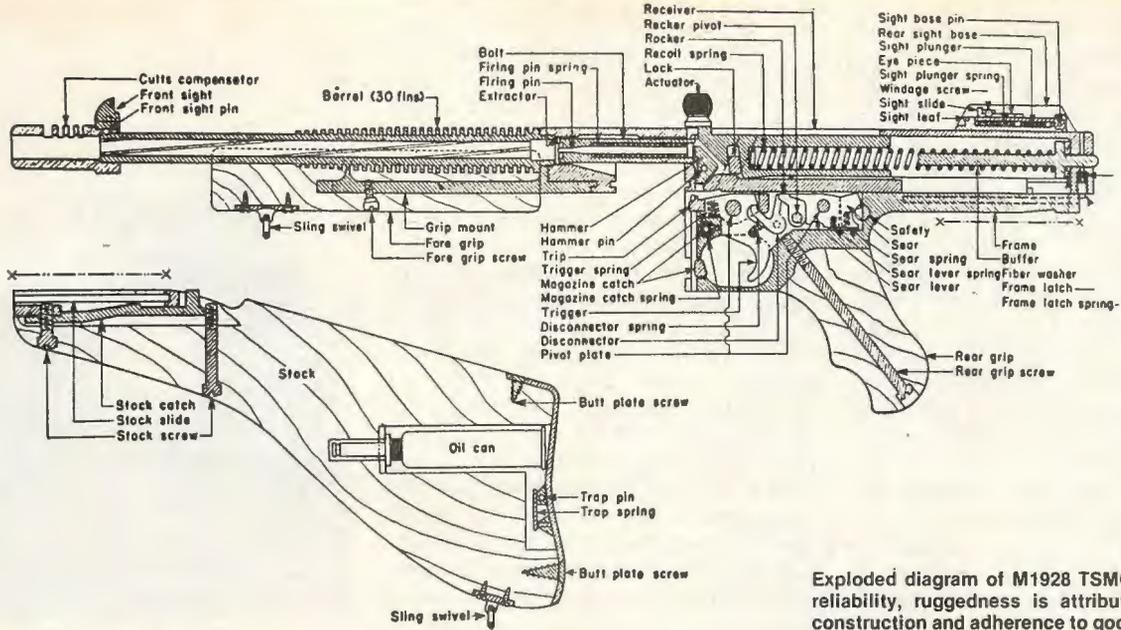
able to the general public, very few sales were made. With financial disaster looming large on the horizon, General Thompson's son, Marcellus, began marketing the gun to various law-enforcement agencies around the country, hoping to create the image of a super-effective police weapon. Most police officials were tremendously impressed by the firepower of the TSMG, but not enough guns were subsequently purchased to keep Auto-Ordnance in the black financially.

Below: Forerunner of modern gunship: 28 M1921 Thompsons mounted in light aircraft for strafing! Although idea was credible, successful employment had to wait for adequate aircraft, special aircraft weaponry, since when Thompsons were triggered, they all choked on expended cartridges from guns mounted to either side. (Copyright © 1969 William J. Helmer. All rights reserved.)



Eventually, the Thompson found its first place in American society in the hands of the gangs and "beer wars" of the late '20s. This, much to the dismay of the highly idealistic General Thompson, became the *era* of the Thompson. Although grossly over-publicized, the Thompson submachine gun *had* been used in several gangland killings, the most spectacular of which was the so-called "Saint Valentine's Day Massacre." This seemed to place the TSMG on the wrong side of the highly-publicized motto of Auto-Ordnance: "On the Side of Law and Order!" Needless to say, civilian sales were not stimulated by such goings on.

The Thompson, now called, "Tommy Gun," "Chopper," "Chicago Typewriter," "Piano," and "Squirtgun," was even further maligned through its use by depression-era bandits John Dillinger, "Pretty Boy" Floyd, Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, "Babyface" Nelson, "Machine gun" Kelley, and Arizona "Ma" Barker! Their exploits, much publicized in the news media, catapulted the Thompson to the status of being an underworld symbol, causing even more heartache to General Thompson. A noteworthy point here, however, is that although much dismayed at the illegal use his invention was receiving, General Thompson now began to receive sub-



M1928A1, section drawing.

Exploded diagram of M1928 TSMG. Tremendous reliability, ruggedness is attributed to robust construction and adherence to good design principles.

stantial orders for TSMGs from law-enforcement agencies around the country who wanted to meet these crooks on at least equal terms!

The National Firearms Act of 1934 curbed over-the-counter sales of the

Thompson and other auto-weaponry, notably the cal. .30 Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR) which was a popular, if less well known, underworld favorite. The criminal element now found that it was much more sensible to *steal* whatever

weaponry they required from local National Guard and Police armories rather than buy it anyway.

In 1939, the threat of world war and the distressing realization that the SMG would play a major part in any modern

New York City Police "control-of-road" plan in early 1920s featured motorcycles equipped with SMG and portable radio receiver. Photo

credit: William J. Helmer. (Copyright © 1969 William J. Helmer. All rights reserved.)



conflict jolted the U.S. Government out of its isolationist euphoria of the '20s and '30s and caused the military community to begin looking for a suitable SMG. Except for limited use by the U.S. Marine Corps in Nicaragua in 1928, and the U.S. Army Cavalry, the TSMG had been virtually ignored by the military in spite of the continuous efforts of Marcellus Thompson and the Auto-Ordnance Corp. staff. Finally, someone in the Army Ordnance Dept. remembered the TSMG and arranged for it to be tested again. It passed Army tests with flying colors and was adopted in its M1928 (U.S. Navy) version and began immediate mass production for issue to the U.S. military forces and all U.S. allies!

The British, who had rejected the TSMG in the late '20s because of its infamous reputation as a gangster's weapon, now couldn't get enough of them! The dream of General Thompson

became a reality overnight after almost 20 years of hardship. Sadly, both General Thompson and his son Marcellus died before the Thompson reached its heyday, never knowing the vital role it would play in World War II and subsequent conflicts.

So much for the history. If you're interested in the tragic story of the TSMG, I suggest you obtain a copy of *The Gun That Made the Twenties Roar*, by William J. Helmer. Originally published by MacMillan in 1969, an updated edition is now out from Gun Room Press, 127 Raritan Avenue, Highland Park, NJ 08904. This particular book makes for several hours of totally absorbing and most informative reading and is the factual story of the Thompson gun, its developers, and its history. W. H. B. Smith's *Small Arms of the World*, (Stackpole Publications) gives other information of interest on the TSMG, including



Above: Marine of 1st Division sights in on Japanese sniper on Okinawa, 1945, while companion ducks for cover. Firefight occurred on Wana Ridge before town of Shuri, Okinawa. (Photo credit: Photographer — SSGT Kleine, U.S. Marine Corps. Defense Dept. Photo.)

LIST OF ACCESSORIES FOR THOMPSON SUBMACHINEGUN

Item	M1921	M1921/8	M1928	M1	M1A1	Remarks
Type XX 20 rd. mag.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Type XXX 30 rd. mag.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Type L 50 rd. drum	yes	yes	yes	no	no	Matte
Type C 100 rd. drum	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Type XVIII 18 rd. riot mag.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Type XXV 25 rd. mag.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Canvas carrying case (shoulder)	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Canvas carrying case (saddle)	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Canvas sling	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Magazine case, 4-cell for type XX 20 rd. mag.	no	no	yes	yes	yes	Military
Magazine case, for type L drum	yes	yes	yes	no	no	Military
Magazine case, for type XXX 30 rd. mag.	no	no	yes	yes	yes	Military
Vertical foregrip	yes	no	no	no	no	
Horizontal foregrip	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	Military
Buttstock w/no bolt & washer, detachable	yes	yes	no	no	no	
Buttstock w/bolt & washer, detachable	no	no	yes	no	no	Military
Buttstock w/washer & bolt, non-detachable	no	no	no	yes	yes	Military
Cutts compensator #1	yes	no	no	no	no	slip-on
Cutts compensator #2	yes	yes	no	no	no	
Cutts compensator #3	no	yes	yes	no	no	Trademark Cutts & Thompson
Cutts compensator #4	no	yes	yes	no	no	
Cutts compensator #5	no	no	yes	no	no	
Lyman adjustable rear sight	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Nickle plated self-cleaning rectangular oiler	yes	yes	no	no	no	
Flat black rectangular oiler	no	no	yes	no	no	
Round oiler	no	no	no	yes	yes	
One piece, solid brass cleaning rod	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Actuator M1921	yes	no	no	no	no	
Actuator M1928	no	yes	yes	no	no	
Recoil Spring, M1928	no	yes	yes	no	no	
Recoil Spring guide M1928	no	yes	yes	no	no	
Buffer, M1928	no	yes	yes	no	no	
Breech oiler, w/felt pads	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Blish lock, or "H" piece	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Safety tab, checkered	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Selector switch, checkered	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Safety bar, plain military	no	no	yes	yes	yes	Matte
Selector switch, plain military	no	no	yes	yes	yes	Matte
Barrel 10½ inch. finned, BLUE	yes	yes	yes	no	no	
Barrel 10½ inch. unfinned, MATTE	no	no	yes	yes	yes	Matte
Receiver, Colt, w/Auto Ordnance Markqngs, BLUE	yes	yes	no	no	no	
Receiver, Savage, w/"S-" preceding serial number	no	no	yes	yes	yes	Matte
Receiver, Auto-Ordnance Corp.	no	no	no	yes	yes	Matte
Firing pin assy	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	
Stamped rear sight.	no	no	yes	yes	yes	Matte
Ejector assy.	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Sling swivels	no	no	yes	yes	yes	

assembly/disassembly, concept of operation, and nomenclature.

There were five production models of the TSMG, excluding the M1927 semi-auto carbine—only 42 were made—they are the M1921, M1921/8 (U.S. Navy), M1928, M1, and M1A1. The M1921 and M1921/8 were basically identical with the exception of the actuator and recoil spring assemblies, both being Colt-

Below: American-trained Chinese soldier armed with M1928 TSMG waits in Burmese jungle ambush in 1943. Face is protected by mosquito netting, necessary in North Burma's Naja Hills. (Photo credit: UPI)





St. Valentine's Day, 1929 — Victims of gangland's most famous massacre sprawl across garage floor in Chicago. Tommy gun fire chopped them down. (Photo credit: UPI)

manufactured guns of high commercial quality.

Originally, the M1921 had a cyclic rate of 800-900 rpm, which the U.S. Navy considered too high for efficient use by the U.S. Marine Corps Expeditionary Force into Nicaragua in 1928. It also sported the well-known vertical foregrip.

Below: Radioman of "G" Co., 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment holds M1A1 TSMG during battle lull in Vietnam, 1968. (Photo credit: Photographer — Sgt. Dickman, U.S. Marine Corps. Defense Dept. Photo.)



THOMPSON SMG — Model of 1921

Cyclic Rate:	800-900 rpm.
Length Without Stock:	25 inches
Length With Stock:	33.75 inches
Barrel Length:	10.50 inches (w/o compensator)
Weight Loaded:	12.0 lbs.
Weight Unloaded:	10.75 lbs.
Magazine Capacity:	20, 30, rd. box type 100 rd. Type C and 50 rd. Type L drum type
Weight of loaded magazine:	20 rd.-1.25 lbs. 30 rd.-1.60 lbs. 50 rd. drum-5.0 lbs. 100 rd. drum-8.50 lbs.
Rifling Twist:	Right Hand
No. of Lands and Grooves:	6
Muzzle Velocity:	920 fps
Sights	Front: Blade Rear: Lyman adjustable aperture w/50 yd. battle sight notch

THOMPSON SMG — Model f 1921/8 and 1928

Cyclic Rate:	550-650 rpm.
Length Without Stock:	25 inches
Length With Stock:	33.75 inches
Barrel Length:	10.50 inches
Weight Loaded:	12.0 lbs.
Weight Unloaded:	10.75 lbs.
Rifling Twist:	Right Hand
No. of Land and Grooves:	6
Muzzle Velocity:	920 fps
Sights	Front: Blade Rear: Lyman Adjustable Aperture M1921A1 military, stamped aperture w/100 yds. battle sight notch provide over aperture.

THOMPSON SMG — Model M1/M1A1

Cyclic rate:	550-650 rpm.
Length (stock permanently fixed):	32 inches
Barrel Length:	10.50 inches
No. of Lands and Grooves:	6
Rifling Twist:	Right Hand
Sights	Front: Blade Rear: Stamped aperture w/100 yd. battle sight notch
Weight Loaded:	11.70 lbs.
Weight Unloaded:	10.45 lbs.
Magazine capacity:	20 & 30 rd. box mags. Will not accept 50/100 rd. drum mags as issued.

The Navy wanted the gun's rate of fire reduced and the vertical foregrip replaced by a more robust, carbine-type horizontal one to aid control and allow the efficient use of a sling. The task of manufacturing the guns for the Navy was an easy one, consisting of taking existing M1921s from in-stock inventory and making the necessary modifications to them!

The rate-of-fire problem was solved by using a heavier actuator, and lighter recoil spring. The horizontal foregrip was a modification of the experimental M1923 Thompson which never got into production. The gun, as delivered to the Navy Department, was stamped "U.S. NAVY," and the number "1," in "1921" was overstamped with an "8," thereby causing the final product to appear as:

**U.S. NAVY
Model of 192B
No. 12865**

The later M1928s were identical to the overstamped versions and featured the same rate of fire, 550-650 rpm. The "Navy Overstamps," as they became known, also introduced the Cutts Com-

pensator, which was claimed to increase full-automatic accuracy over 100 percent by redirecting a portion of the gun's muzzle gases when fired. The M1928 retained this feature, and was the target of considerable controversy as to whether or not it actually improved the control and accuracy of the gun. The Army finally settled the dispute once and for all by dropping the compensator altogether on the M1 and M1A1 models in late 1940.

The last two models, the M1 and M1A1, retained the same rate of fire as the M1921/8 and M1928, but dropped the complicated Blish/locking system which was of dubious value anyway, and eventually even the firing pin assembly, making the weapon into a simpler, more rugged, and easily manufactured "slam-fire." Even though many of the parts will interchange on all models, the M1 and M1A1 versions have a completely different upper and lower receiver than the M1921, M1921/8, and M1928 models and will not accept the Type C 100-rd. or Type L 50-rd. drum magazines.

The TSMG was officially declared ob-

solete because of its manufacturing costs in 1942, and was to have been replaced by the M3 "Grease gun," in the U.S. Army inventory. However, the "Police Action" in Korea precluded this and the TSMG once again was found in the hands of Army and Marine troops from Inchon to Seoul, serving until the war ended in 1953.

Immense quantities of Thompsons were exported to other countries in the 1950s via "lend-lease" programs and civilian sales, and today, as always, the Thompson will be found wherever there is a fight! Many TSMGs can be found in the hands of law-enforcement agencies who cherish them to an almost unbeliev-

able degree. In addition, many are in the hands of civilian collectors who pay sometimes phenomenal prices for them.

Technically, guns like the Thompson have been superseded by newer designs of the "assault rifle" principle, and, in fact, for many years, authorities who should have known better extolled the death of the SMG in print and word. Fortunately, this crap has begun to cease as everyone realized that guerrilla warfare is the wave of the future and SMGs are cheaper, simpler, and more quickly manufactured than battle-rifles and belt-fed MGs and lend themselves more readily to use by non-skilled or semi-skilled personnel. Even the TSMG

can be economically produced today through the use of investment casting, which would eliminate expensive milling operations. In addition, countries that lack sophisticated manufacturing expertise can gear up for SMG production with little or no problem.

In the U.S., machine gun collecting is the fastest growing gunsport in the country, and since there are only a limited number of pieces to go around (courtesy the GCA-68), prices are skyrocketing. The general price structure of the Thompson guns, in excellent-to-mint condition, follows:

M1921 \$1500-\$2000
M1921/8 \$1500-\$2400
M1928 \$750-\$900
M1/M1A1 \$550-650

Add to these prices, the whopping \$200.00 transfer tax imposed by the U.S. Treasury Department on each change of ownership of an auto-weapon, and one can readily see why prices are soaring!

Tactically, the Thompson SMG is still as effective as it was 40 years ago, and although a bit on the heavy side because of its robust construction, is still in my opinion, the most reliable SMG in existence in the world, bar none. Its weight, at about 12.0 lbs. loaded, allows it the unique advantage of exceptional controllability while its design lends itself particularly well to effective assault fire or "hip-firing" application.

Realistically, the TSMG is still one of the finest general-purpose SMGs in existence, in spite of the fact that it is over 55 years old, and was the third SMG invented! Placed in its proper context, this fact should be regarded not as a disparagement of the new, but rather a tribute to the genius of the TSMG's inventors, for the weapon was truly 25-30 years ahead of time. It is unbelievably rugged, superbly dependable, accurate, easy to control, and, for me at least, the weapon that possesses the best pointing-characteristics, and, make no mistake, I shoot SMG's every day of the week!

Until lasers replace small arms in warfare, the Thompson SMG will be found in the heat of battle anywhere in the world. The term "submachine gun" immediately is visualized as the TSMG by everyone. Perhaps Irish poet Dominic Behan best summed it all up when he wrote the following, a noted Irish Republican Army (IRA) ditty heard frequently even today:

"We're off to Dublin in the green,
in the green,
Where helmets glisten in the sun;
Where the bayonets flash, and the
rifles crash
To the echo of a Thompson gun . . ."



The Thompson Submachine Gun

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Information and prices promptly supplied on request

AUTO-ORDNANCE CORPORATION
302 Broadway Cable address: Autordco New York City

Early Auto-Ordnance ad depicting TSMG as excellent estate, ranch protection. (Copyright © 1969 William J. Helmer. All rights reserved.) Copies of this poster are available from SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, Colorado 80306 at \$3.95 each.



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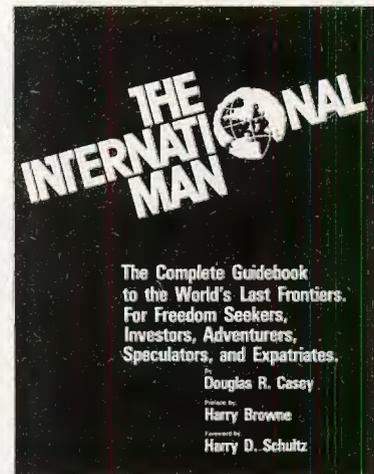
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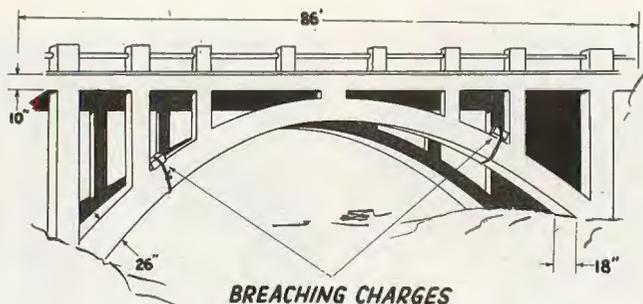
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PALADIN



Guerrilla Warfare



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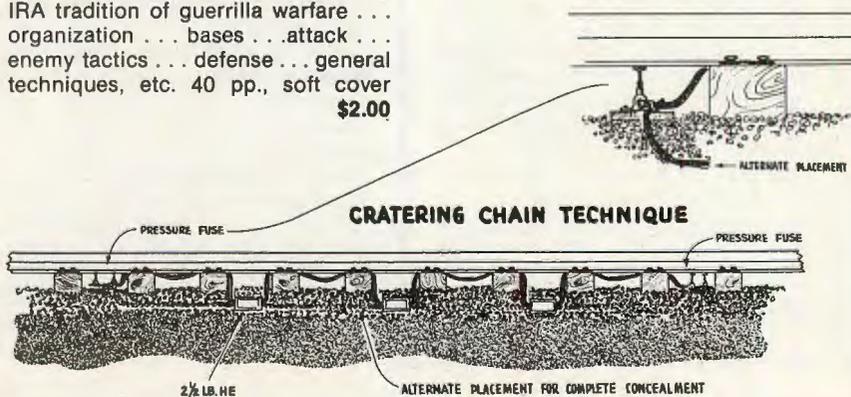
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By P. Kecskemeti

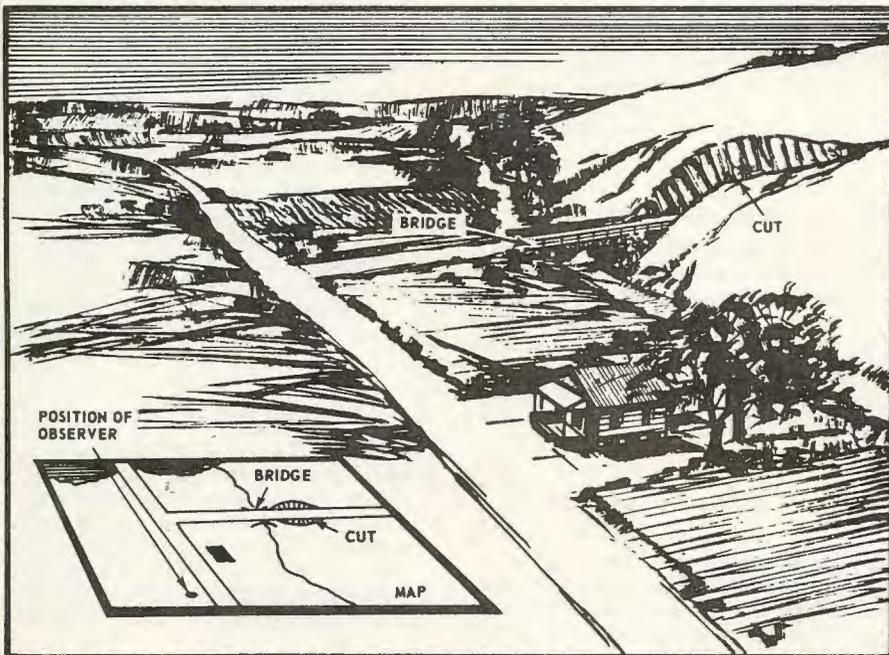
At last, a revealing informative look at the strategy of insurgency. Originally distributed by the U.S. Air Force, this concise text discusses strategic alternatives adopted in conflict, detailing such intriguing subjects as counterinsurgency vs. prevention of insurgency, crisis prevention and potential crisis areas today. No military library will be complete without this timely volume. 42 pp., soft cover, ISBN 0-87364-097-7. **\$3.00**

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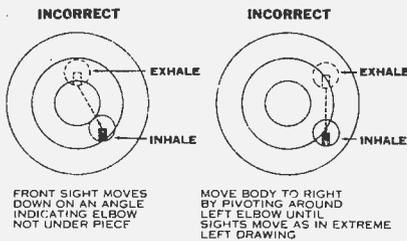
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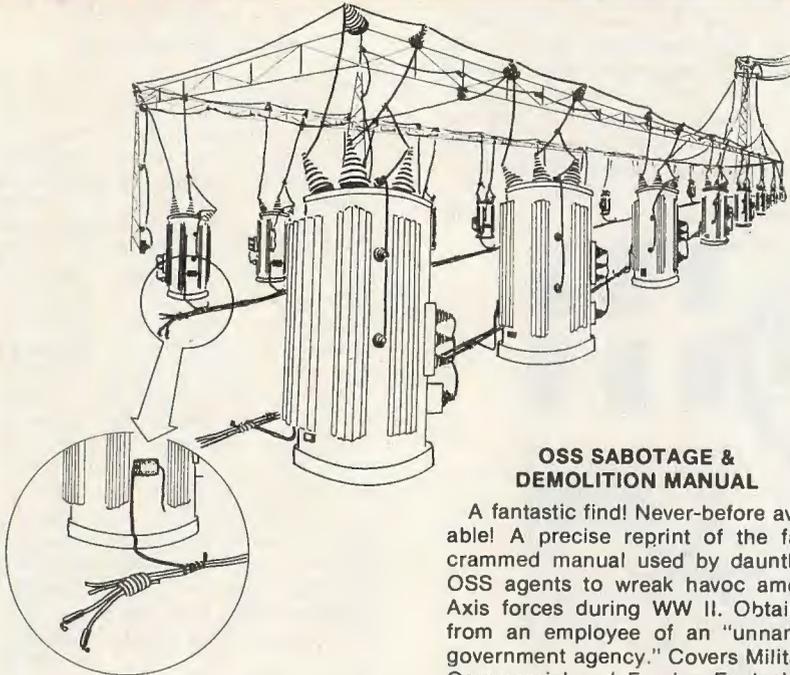
by John B. Lurvey & J.I. Galan

Crammed with important information and photographs, this handy pocket guide presents all of the basic methods used to collect and preserve evidence at a crime scene. The most useful manual of its kind we've ever seen! Topics of discussion include: searching the crime scene; crime scene photography; casting materials and techniques; crime scene drawing; latent processing; firearms evidence; collection of body fluids, and much more. Recommended by the *International Academy of Criminology*. 4 x 6, softcover, 96 pp., photos and illustrations. **\$3.50**

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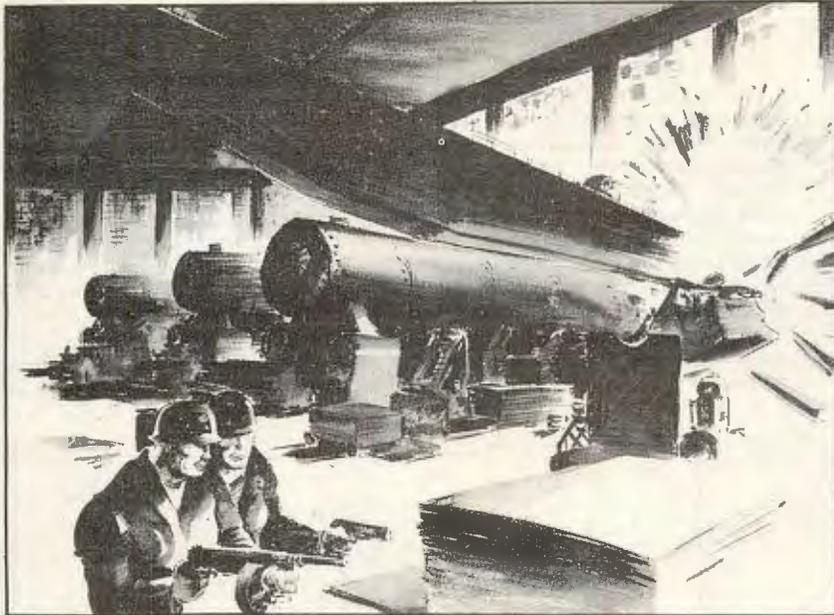
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"Once again available, the formerly restricted Navy 'bible' for frogmen and SEALs."

UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM MANUAL

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**UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE
DEVICES AND TECHNIQUES, TM 31-
200-1**

We have obtained a limited number of this never-before-available Army Technical Manual which we feel will be of immense interest to various law enforcement agencies and police bomb squads. This manual, published primarily for the elite Army Special Forces, exposes the intimate principles of construction and methods of use of a wide variety of destructive devices and techniques. It contains more than 400 abstracts on these subjects as well as over 230 photographs and illustrations in its 234 pages. The references in this manual are grouped into the following five chapters: Incendiary Systems, Explosives, Applications of Explosives, Small Arms, Harmful Additives — Chemical Materials **\$10.00**

**MANUAL OF EXPLOSIVES,
MILITARY PYROTECHNICS
AND CHEMICAL WARFARE
AGENTS**

This complete text is a reference work which cross indexes chemical names, chemical synonyms, American and Foreign trade names, warfare symbols, and chemical formulas. Composition, properties, and uses of industrial and military explosives and explosive mixtures are covered. Included are all other chemicals and modifying agents which are present in explosives and ammunition. This arrangement makes it possible to find out quickly why and where certain chemicals find application in the field of explosives for such purposes as deterrents, oxidizers, binding agents, fusion and flash point depressants, cooling agents, fuel components, gelatinizers, rust preventing and coating agents, lubricants, absorbants, etc. First printed in 1943 this is another rare book find by Paladin. No explosives library will be complete without this exclusive offering. 170 pp., 5½x8½, many formulas; **\$7.00**

**CIA AMMUNITION AND
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This companion volume to the CIA Special Weapons Supply Catalog lists over 500 items used by the CIA for various special purposes. A partial index includes limpet mines, stench agents, incendiary equipment destroyers, a concealable .22 calibre weapon disguised as a brand of European cigarettes, rocket rounds, and artillery ammo. Presented in supply catalog terminology, this reprint implies that the special equipment it offers could be ordered by anyone, even foreign intelligence agents! Collectors and clandestine buffs will appreciate this significant offering. 8½ x 11, softcover, 88 pp., illustrated. **\$7.95**

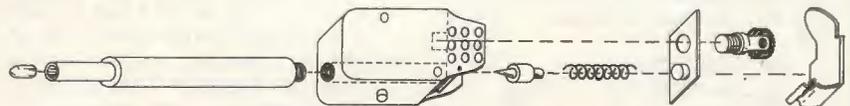


Figure 48 (UNCLASSIFIED). Vietnamese cigarette lighter (exploded view) (U).

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INCENDIARIES, TM 31-201-1

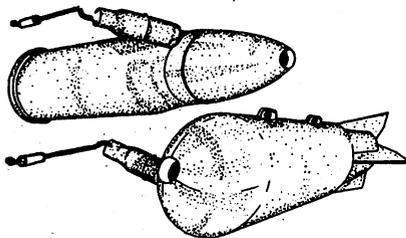
One of the most important areas of unconventional warfare is now covered for the first time in this Army manual. Topics covered in this highly informative book include: Initiators, Igniters, Incendiary Materials, Delay Mechanisms, Spontaneous Combustion, and many more. This book is a must for all firemen, law enforcement officials, insurance investigators and students of pyrotechnics. Supplies are limited. ORDER NOW. 150 pp., over 40 illus., 5x8, soft cover **\$6.00**

SPECIAL FORCES DEMOLITION TECHNIQUES

Extracted originally from Field Manual 31-20, this pocket-size, fact-crammed book was produced for those interested in the demolition methods used by the elite Special Forces. Just some of the topics covered are: 1) Saddle charges - fabricated from plastic explosives using the principles of explosive force and direction to destroy steel-bars, turbines, and propeller shafts; 2) Counter Force charges - used to destroy dense concrete targets up to 1.22 meters thick; 3) Ribbon charges - used to demolish steel "I" and "T" beams; 4) Platter charges - used against POL storage containers, transformers, etc. and much more. 6 1/4 x 4 1/4, softcover, 267 pp., illustrated, ISBN 0-87364-082-9. **\$3.50**

THE CHEMISTRY OF POWDER & EXPLOSIVES

A rare find for the ordnance buff! The purpose of this book is to supply chemists with information concerning the modes of behavior of explosive substances, and concerning the phenomena, both chemical and physical, which they exhibit. Chapter include: Properties of Explosives, Black Powder, Pyrotechnics, Aromatic Nitro Compounds, Nitric Esters, Smokeless Powder, Dynamite, and Other High Explosives. Nitromines and Related Substances, Primary Explosives, Detonators, and Primers. This monumental work is only for the advanced pyrotechnic buff or ordnance expert. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, 490 pp., cloth cover **\$10.00**



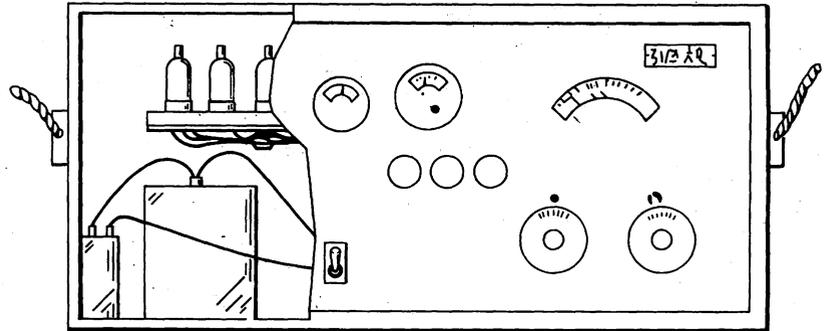
ELEMENTS OF EXPLOSIVES PRODUCTION

by James Glackin

This is a technical book which deals with producing quantities of explosives. Chapters include Reprocessing Smokeless Powder, Initiators, FAX, Nuclear Explosives, CHNO Explosives, Sprengel Explosives, and much more. Jim Glackin has spent years researching and experimenting with all types of explosives, both conventional and improvised. Anyone interested in explosives will find this book informative and revealing. 60 pp., 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, soft cover **\$4.00**

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by James Glackin

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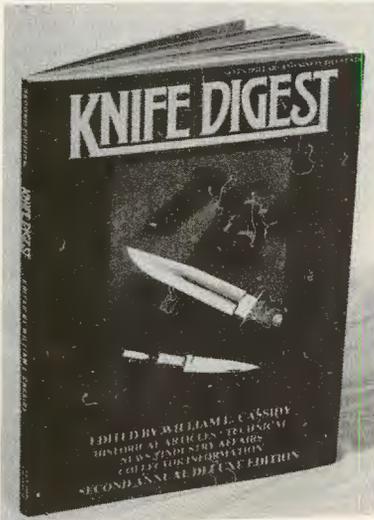
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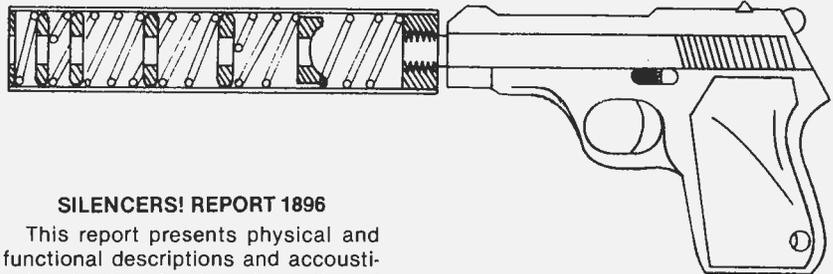
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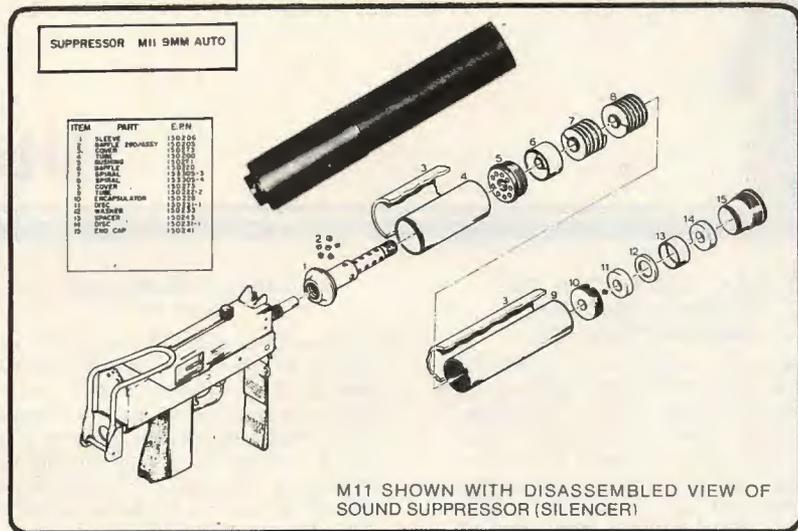
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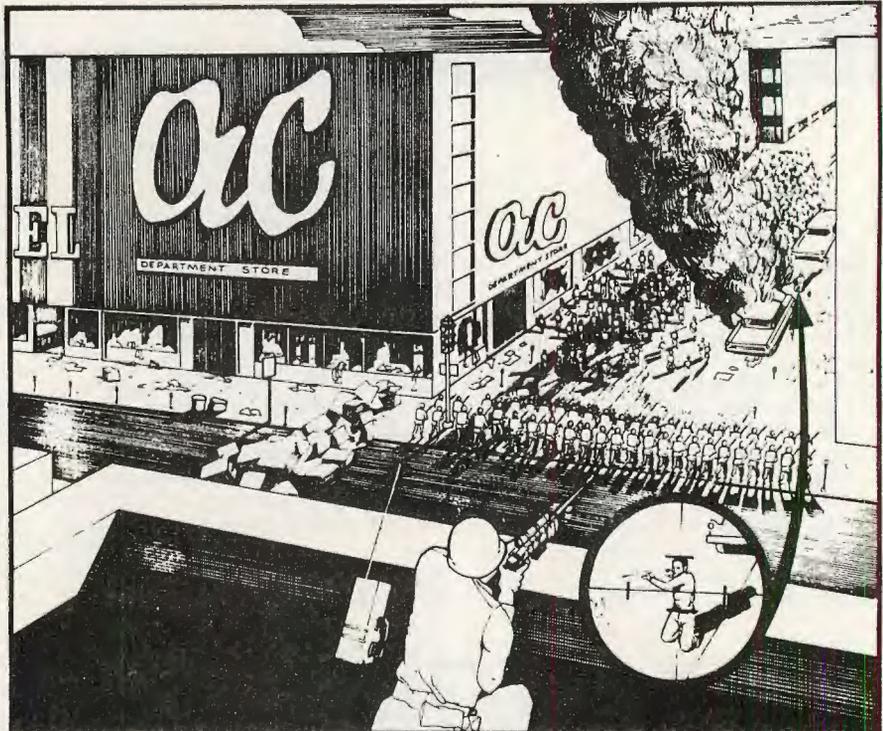
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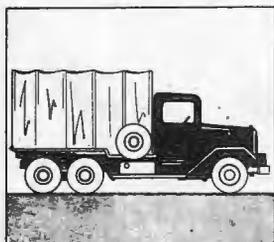
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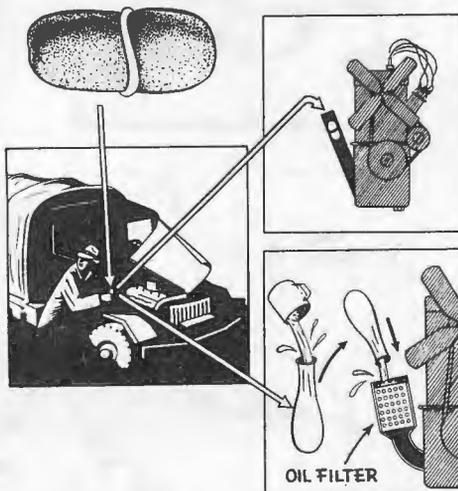
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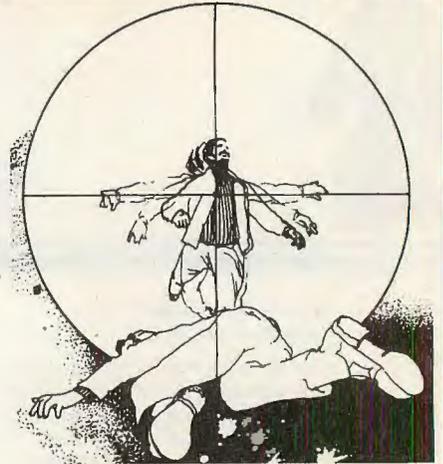
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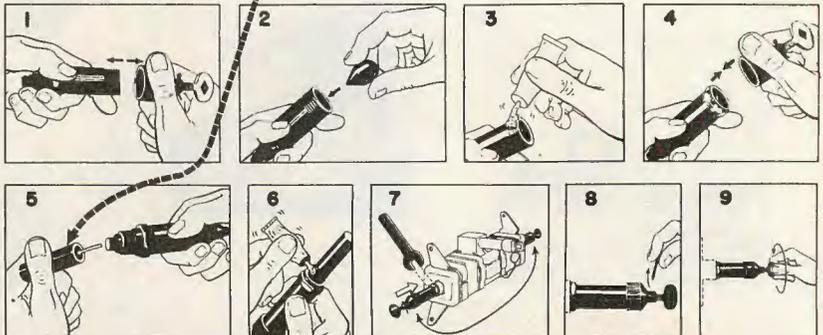
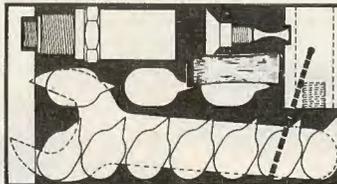
by Richard Camellion

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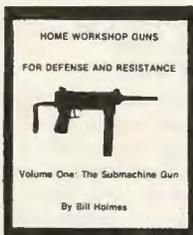
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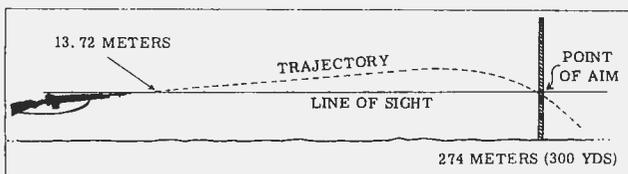
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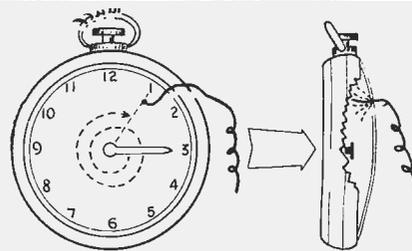
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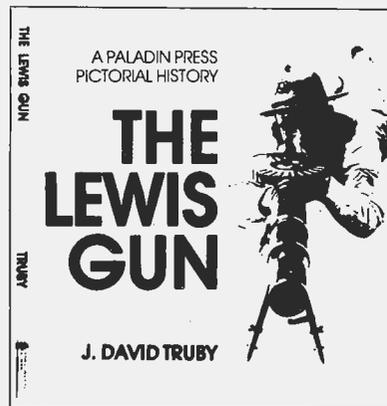
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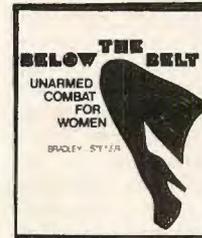
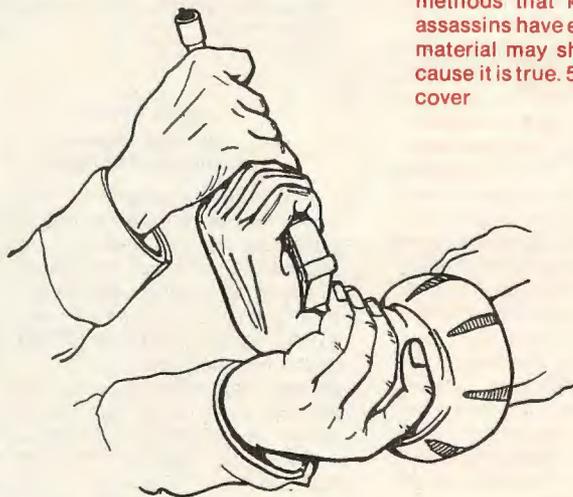


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FLAK

Continued from page 8

the Catalan Grand Company and the *condottieri* of John Hawkwood's *Compagnia Bianca*; and it is a point that SOF in its fervent partisanship tends to neglect — to the detriment of true professional objectivity.

Of course the international volunteer — including the "mercenary," though my leftist friends will again bristle at the equation — will consider political "causes" when deciding with whom to sign on. But it simply is not, nor should it be the case that all such should consider themselves bound, as SOF tends to imply, by "American national policy" and "Western interests."

I speak as one who has actively canvassed "left-wing" international recruiting possibilities in Asia, Africa and the Middle East for the past 15 years With Patrick Henry I will say only, "If this be treason, then make the most of it"

It is further noteworthy that one current runs alike through the writings and opinions of both Gen. Singlaub and another ex-officer, whose "political" judgments are virtually the opposite of Singlaub's: LTC Anthony Herbert, also highly decorated and widely respected. (In his book *Soldier* he has some harsh words for Singlaub and "Phoenix," but at the risk again of leftist censure I regard this as a legitimate professional disagreement.) That current, in any case, may be summed up in one word: Integrity.

Both are truly men of honor; both command the respect of all true professionals. That concept alone should make it both possible and necessary to respect and have a certain camaraderie among honest fighting men of all political complexions

Sincerely,
Robert H. Ross
New York, New York

ECHANIS' FAMILY'S THANKS . . .

Editor of SOF:

A special thank you for the honest, in-depth story on our son, Michael Echanis (SOF, January '79). I will have to admit I was hesitant about giving another interview with any writer or reporter. During the 10 days following the untimely death of our son, I was interviewed by reporters from the West Coast to Washington, D.C., and most of my comments were taken out of context or misconstrued. When Mr. MacDougald of SOF called, he seemed to sense my despair and kindly suggested I take some time to think about helping him with a story in memory of our son. He called again in a few days and my answer was yes. I knew Michael would want me to cooperate as he had been associated with SOF magazine.

I would like to say that it is the first story in print that we have wanted to read again, and again. We feel the story was fair and just. We were very proud of our

son and always will be. We loved him very much and feel our loss deeply.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone who wrote the letters to the editor concerning our son Michael and his dedication to his convictions. Your letters have been of great comfort to us.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank Echanis
and family
Ontario, Oregon

QUESTIONS . . .

Dear Sir:

Your very excellent magazine is well received by me and from the evidence in FLAK, many others. It is a quality publication all of the way, which creates a certain element of doubt by an old skeptic like myself.

One . . . question . . . : Why is *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine so anxious to get brave, courageous, idealistic, and patriotic young men to go to other nations to throw their lives away on a battlefield of another's choosing for a nation that for the most part doesn't know or care about the difference? *Soldier of Fortune* is either very naive politically and economically or it is a Communist front.

Jack Blossom
St. Claire Shores, Michigan

SOF does not encourage young men to throw their lives away on foreign battlefields. We simply provide information

which we feel will be of interest to our readers. As to whether or not we are "naive politically and economically," each reader will have to determine that for himself. Regarding SOF's being a "Communist front" — hogwash! — The Editors.

QUESTIONS FOR BUREAUCRATS . . .

Dear Editors:

Years ago when the Left's pot smokers were victims of The Midnight Knock, the Right snickered. Then the Right began experiencing The Midnight Knock. Remember that Maryland collector whose inert grenade got him a BATF bullet in the brain?

How long will it take people to realize that The Government is The Enemy? Everyone has his own pet ox he doesn't want gored, and to Hell with everyone else's. So the cancer of Government spreads. The sheep become apathetic or brainwashed by Tweedledee and Tweedledum—and the cancer spreads.

There is a ray of hope from time to time, however. I can't imagine how the Freedom of Information Act and the Privacy Act passed (with 1984 so few years away), but some people are making good use of it. Bill Drexler, the tax rebel (Box 22569, San Diego, CA 92122), designed a "Public Servant's Questionnaire." He claims that "public servants" are required by law to answer the ques-

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Continued from page 87

tions on it. It reportedly is very effective in dealing with bureaucrats, most of whom do not like to reveal personal information, such as their home address. I haven't had a chance to use one yet, but am looking forward to it. I believe that after San Jose a stack of these should be at every Gun Show. . . .

Jim Phelps
New York, New York

DEATH COMMENT . . .

The Editor, SOF:

I recently saw a death notice in one of the conservative magazines, printed without comment: "Died of unspecified causes in North Vietnamese prison, Thich Thien Miny, leader of Buddhist opposition groups in South Vietnam, who encouraged others to immolate themselves. He led the delegation which welcomed the NVA to Saigon."

Odd, ain't it? He lasted quite well under corrupt, repressive regimes for over 20 years, but it only took three years of the New, Honest, Upright People's Government to do him in. One hopes he had ample time to mediate on his stupidity before they planted him.

John P. Conlon
Newark, Ohio

TARGET ERROR . . .

Dear Sir:

I have enjoyed your fine publication since it began. However, I could not help but point out an error in your January 1979 issue. The targets on page 48 which you refer to as "unique" have been on issue to the Canadian armed forces, and probably others as well, for many years. They are known as Fig. 11/59 targets.

Yours truly,
D. O. Buck
Ancaster, Ontario, Canada

Sorry, we blew it. — The Editors.

WILD GEESE AS BOOK . . .

(Dear Sir:

Your January '79 issue contained an article on p. 54 entitled "Wild Geese Fly Again, This Time on Film." In this article you mentioned that Dan Carney wrote the book, *The Wild Geese*. Also, you write that Carney lives and works in Rhodesia.

Where can I buy a copy of this book? How can I contact Carney? Letters I sent to Rhodesia don't always get through I learned from an independent source that mail to Rhodesia is being intercepted and destroyed by black American post office clerks.

Sincerely,
Col. S. D. Ferris
Falls Church, Virginia

The paperback edition of Carney's The Wild Geese is available through Bantam Paperbacks, 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019. We suggest you write Carney, care of his publishers. Hopefully, this letter will get through. — The Editors

2ND CHANCE . . .

Dear Bob:

The January issue of SOF was one of the best issues ever except for the following small mistakes (in "1978 Second Chance Pistol Shoot," pp. 64-5):

The \$1,000 was presented by Denise Kelly, the daughter of Mag-Na-Ports Larry Kelly.

You neglected to mention that in the two-man shoot, besides the first place team getting 40 percent of the total entry fee, the second place team received 30 percent, third place 20 percent and fourth place 10 percent.

These facts were probably edited out for space, but it looks as though the "house" kept 60 percent of the entry fees.

The biggest error of all is: that in fact, I am not such a nice guy, nor am I that humorous.

How about showing the third picture of Bob Brown (SOF, January '79, p. 49) and the monkey just after he pulled the trigger?

Must close quickly now as I am working on a special vest for Idi Amin. My God, do you know how hard it is to sew toilet paper?

Drive Slow & Shoot Fast,
Richard C. Davis, President
Second Chance Body Armor, Inc.
Central Lake, Michigan



IN REVIEW

Continued from page 12

Singapore, then put it into practice during the "konfrontasi" with Indonesia.

Next it was back to Aden, this time for urban anti-terrorist operations around El Mansoura and Sheikh Othman. Private Banks was then posted to battle school back in the UK and shortly afterwards was discharged from the Army—"Services no longer required." Although the author provides no explanation for his discharge, I believe he was cashiered out of the service.

As a civilian, John Banks was confronted with a situation common with

many soldiers upon leaving the forces—lack of saleable skills. Those who have served in admin or trade branches can often transfer their skills to "civvy street," but infantry/para/commandos, etc. often find their hard-earned skills of no further value. For many there are only two choices: rejoin the forces (or a foreign army) or go "private." Banks chose to try the first alternative and enlisted in the U.S. Army, as a sergeant in the 5th Special Forces Group, stationed in Germany.

His "Green Beret" career was, however, to be a short one. After only one

Continued on page 90

Test & Evaluation

The Gladiator

by Michael Grau von Trytek

Joseph G. Cordova has achieved a milestone in his creation of the "Gladiator." Many have sought to combine a utility and fighting knife. Some have achieved their goal, but none has taken this desire to the heights which Cordova has reached.

The "Gladiator" is compulsive: one finds his hand drawn toward it. It bedazzles the eye. In hand it flows, becoming a natural extension of the arm.

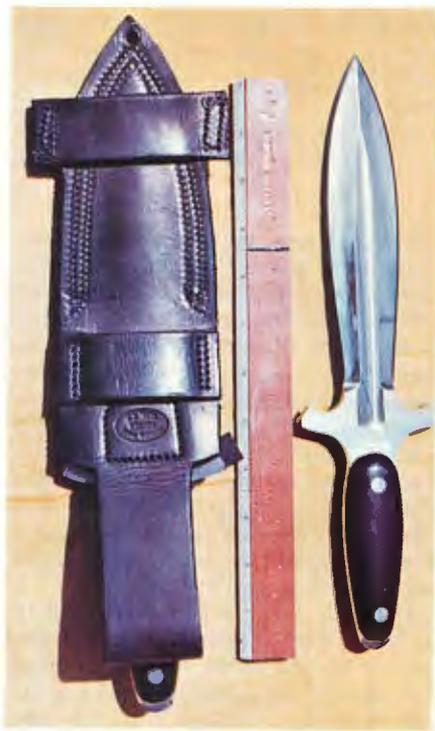
The work of master artist Frank Frazetta, inspired quillion design, and the natural line of the Japanese Yari and Hamadashi influenced Cordova's final design.

The "Gladiator" blade is eight inches long; overall length is 12½ inches; weight is 14 ounces with a centered gutter 6/8 of the blade's length on both sides extending from the center of the quillion. It is constructed of one solid piece of 440-C stainless AT 57 Rockwell standard.

The quillion is minimal in appearance at first glance, yet, when held, gives superb protection for the hand, something lacking in most fighting knives. At 57 Rockwell the 440-C is almost perfect. To project to 59 Rockwell would bring brittleness to the edge. At 57 it takes and holds the edge well!

Cordova believes that the pinned or soldered quillion and pommel are unnecessary in knife making. I agree. When holding the "Gladiator," this becomes a readily apparent fact.

The grips are radius morticed, inset black linen micarta, which add even more



Above: Gladiator's proportions and balance make it a natural thrower. Sheath's quality and versatility are outstanding.

strength to the unit design. The "Gladiator" will hack with the ease of a fine Bolo, slice with the grace of a carving knife, and in a last chance effort may be thrown with confidence. It is a knife which, regardless of whose fighting technique you emulate or incorporate, you will not find lacking in individual combat. It cannot do anything but increase your odds for survival.

Below left: With sheath worn transversely, blade can be drawn at angle.

Below center: Blade being drawn.

Below right: With sheath worn in conventional manner, blade also can be drawn at angle.



Balanced at the quillion, and then gripped, the base of the grip extends adequately for crushing blows. Its superb balance and unique design allow the "Gladiator" to take full advantage of saber, epee, and small knife fighting techniques. One may even cleave as with a Roman short sword.

Anyone who has studied the Japanese sword, especially Iai-Do Kata, will find a unique design which moves gracefully and is capable of delivering all the power and accuracy the swordsman can apply. In middle length (Wakazashi) and short sword (Tanto) movement, the swordsman will find balance and agility, coming close to the feeling of natural movement one finds in the Japanese short sword.

The "Gladiator" is delivered in bright finish, with smooth polished black micarta grips. However, the purchaser has the option of having the "Gladiator" totally vapor-bead blasted, which produces an overall satin non-glare finish and a non-slip grip, at an additional \$20.00 over purchase price.

Other options include copper plating, which will oxidize and provide a non-reflective surface, and a special flat black finish. Cordova will also add finger grooves on request, although it is his opinion — and mine — that they are unnecessary.

My personal "Gladiator" was ordered to the following specifications: Grip crusher extended ½ inch and slightly pointed; tang drilled, for experiment in wrapping as in the Japanese sword hilt



(Tsuka); complete weapon vapor-bead blasted, and grips checked; reverse of quillion serrated 5/8s of an inch from tip to produce a non-slip thumb area. Micarta checkers well and I feel this is a definite requirement for the "Gladiator."

Sid McQueen of S.S. Arms Co., Albuquerque, New Mexico, introduced me to the "Gladiator." Sid is responsible for the "Re-versi" sheath. Readers will recall from SOF (January '78) that Sid is the creator of the Sidewinder SMG. He is one of the outstanding designer/engineers of this century!

The "Re-versi" sheath may be worn in almost any posture one desires. The left hander, who is usually ignored, will be extremely happy, as a swiveling thumb-

break allows left or right release. Belt tabs allow the "Re-versi" to be worn horizontally, on the belt, front or rear. The "Gladiator" is secured by a "thumb-break snap," and literally explodes from the sheath. The tab mounts also facilitate mounting vertically on combat harness. In standard belt mounting, a dual inner snap easily allows one to go instantly from a standard belt to a web-combat belt.

The tab mounts and thumb-break on production "Re-versi" sheaths will be unitized and shaped slightly differently from the prototype which I tried. The standard sheath is a belt-tab, swivel-suspension, snap-tab, release sheath which is quite adequate. One simply states his preference upon ordering the

"Gladiator." Sheath is included in purchase price.

At \$225.00 (U.S.), the "Gladiator" is a superb weapon in which you will have pride of ownership as well as the knowledge that the maker cared about your personal needs and utilization. While many strive to imitate the "Gladiator," Joseph Cordova is the alchemist of the modern "Hyborian Age Gladiator." One may reach Cordova at 1450 Lillie Drive, Bosque Farms, New Mexico 87068. Phone (505) 869-3912.



Continued from page 88

month, he was called in for an interview with a couple of Military Security officers, who showed him a file with a photograph which they asked him if he recognized. He identified his brother, and was told that he was at present engaged in gun-running across the Mekong Delta for the Viet-Cong! They discharged him from the U.S. Army, as a potential security risk, and at the same interview Banks claims that they recruited him for cross-border missions into East Germany.

After enlisting a couple more ex-paras, he asserts that they performed four operations, to bring out important "refugees" for the CIA. The pay was good but the risks were high, so he became voluntarily unemployed—but not for long.

He was next recruited by David Sterling's Watchguard organization (plan-a-war, as it was nicknamed) as a radio operator for the "Hilton Assignment"—the "springing" of Colonel Gaddafi's political prisoners from the Tripoli prison. In the event, the operation was aborted by political intervention, and the assembled group of international mercs dispersed.

Banks' next venture was a security

agency. He went out of business, however, and turned to Vietnam for his next operational area. Banks claims an Australian mining company was acting as cover for recruitment of mercs for deep-penetration ops across the DMZ. Banks enlisted together with one of his ex-para mates from his CIA days. Based in Nong Truong, he claims to have spent a year working with the Montagnards alongside the Special Forces. He describes one operation in detail—a parachute infiltration op. which successfully took out an important bridge.

After a four-month tour fighting with the Kurds in their guerrilla war with the Iraqi Army, the author decided to enter a more conventional field by starting his own long-range haulage firm. On one trip to northern Iraq, he found himself right in the middle of a battle between his old allies, the Kurds, and the Iraqi troops. Financial problems caused the demise of his trucking activities, and he soon found himself back doing what he knew best: contract military operations—in other words, mercenary work.

The firm he started at the middle of 1975 was to become possibly the best known organization of its kind in the world, eclipsing the Wild Geese and Watchguard in the mass media, and turning John Banks himself into a house-

hold name. This was Security Advisory Services, whose S.A.S. initials were designed to "borrow" some of the prestige associated with the British Army Special Air Service Regiment.

The first job planned by Security Advisory Services was to raise a force to assist the terrorists in Rhodesia against the Rhodesian Army! A group of 330 men was requested, plus support elements, to form three raid squadrons. By advertising and interviewing, a force of 17 was raised, and how these would have fared against the Rhodesia Light Infantry, etc., would have been very enlightening! As it happens, they got no further than the airport hotel where they got drunk and performed so badly that the operation was permanently aborted.

Angola came next, and as I mentioned at the start of this review, Banks does not cover the civil war. The book ends with the initial contact with UNITA representatives in London. Possibly Banks is planning a sequel to cover in depth the entire Angola story, and his subsequent adventures, including his work for the police Special Branch against P.I.R.A. (Provisional Irish Republican Army).

The book is written in an open, easy-

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going style, and interspersed with the action is a certain amount of light relief around the bars and brothels of the world. **The Wages of War** is an exciting story which will appeal greatly to readers of SOF.

FIREPOWER by Chris Dempster and Dave Tomkins. Published by Corgi Books (Transworld Publishers Ltd.), Century House, 61-63 Uxbridge Rd., Ealing, London W5 5Sa. Paperback; 491 pp. Illustrated. Price 1.50 (UK). Reviewed by Dennis Martin.

Mercenary operations in the Angolan Civil War have been termed a "fiasco." This was due to two main factors—the recruitment of inexperienced and unsuitable personnel and, more importantly, the employment as Commander of the maniac "Callan."

In **Firepower** the authors do not attempt to correct the popular view of the fiasco; indeed they provide a lot of evidence themselves to endorse this opinion. They do, however, add much valuable information, ignored by the press at the time, concerning the positive contribution of the mercenaries, and the victories they won in battle against the Marxist forces.

Chris Dempster and Dave Tomkins are not journalists or writers. Their credentials are simple; they were there as mercs, from the beginning to the end. They were involved in setting up the recruiting machinery in London. They flew out with the first official group. They fought in Angola (Tomkins was wounded), and they have been involved in the mercenary business since then.

The authors first became involved in the "second oldest profession" when John Banks tried to set up a force to fight against the Rhodesian government. Chris Dempster, who had fought the Mau Mau in Kenya, refused to take part in the projected fight, but agreed to act as security officer for the recruiting meetings. The deal fell through, but it gave Tomkins and Banks (who were partners in the organizing company) a pool of possible recruits for further operations.

The real start of the Angola contract came when four former Parachute Regiment troopers contacted the British representative of the FNLA to volunteer their services. Their spokesman was Nick Hall, dishonorably discharged for selling weapons to the Protestant vigilantes in Northern Ireland. Mick Wainhouse and Costas Georgiou had robbed an Irish post office and served five years in prison. The fourth ex-para, Charley Christodoulou, had managed to complete his service in a normal manner. FNLA President Holden Roberto agreed to accept the volunteers, on condition that as a token of sincerity they set fire to the London office of the rival MPLA! This they did, and the first volunteer, Costas Georgiou, went to Angola as a medical orderly.

He decided to work under an alias and announced that in Africa he was to be known as "Callan."

After doing some good work in the Negage Hospital he found one morning that FNLA forces had fled without him, retreating before a large MPLA/Cuban advance. Catching up with the departing friendlies Callan persuaded two Portuguese mercs to go back with him to counter-attack. The three mercs surprised the armored column, killed 60 men, and knocked out all of the tanks. President Holden Roberto was understandably impressed by this feat. Promoting Callan to Commander-in-Chief, he sent Nick Hall back to England with instructions to "buy a British Parachute Battalion."

Back in London, frantically looking for someone to sell him a Parachute Battalion, Hall came into contact with John Banks and his company, Security Advisory Services. Here the two authors re-enter the picture. They both decided to enlist, and set about contacting other friends who might be interested. It was decided to send an advance party of 25, with recruiting to continue in order to raise another 200 men. In the event, 20 mercs left Heathrow Airport and 19 arrived in Kinshasa, Zaire, where FNLA had their HQ.

Dempster and Tomkins demonstrate extraordinary honesty in their story; they tell it "warts and all," pulling no punches even with themselves. Dave Tomkins freely admits his background as a pro. criminal, a safe-blower. He had spent a total of eight years in prison, mainly for assault and conspiracy. With no military experience, he had, though, great skill with explosives and firearms. Chris Dempster, on the other hand, had extensive military experience, Kenya, Borneo, and Hong Kong. He served in the Royal Artillery and took the selection course for the elite Special Air Service Regiment. He failed after hitting another recruit with a buttstroke. Later, working as a cook, he hit an officer with a pan of fried eggs, then went AWOL. He was dishonorably discharged. Most of the advance group had backgrounds in the Parachute Regiment, SAS, or some other top unit. Many, though, had had their careers terminated by undisciplined behavior. John Banks himself (who had remained in England) had been discharged from the Paras for buying a car with a fraudulent check. Sammy Copeland, another former Para, had been discharged for illegal possession of weapons. He became Callan's RSM and quickly displayed a murderous streak to rival Callan's own.

Of the better fighting men in the contingent were Mike Johnson, ex-Commando and Foreign Legionnaire, Peter McAleese, ex-S.A.S., who succeeded Callan as commander, and Jamie McCandless, who had served for 15 years in the S.A.S.

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Right from this first meeting with Callan, it was obvious to the newly arrived mercs that he was a madman. Most of them became apprehensive about their own survival—not from the enemy—but from their own commander. Why he wasn't fragged is a mystery. Only Sammy Copeland sided with him, and together with Mick Wainhouse, the three embarked on an orgy of torture and murder. Callan would kill for the slightest reason. He once shot a passing man—one of his own black troops—in order to test-fire his AK-47!

About two weeks later, John Banks arrived with a further 96 mercs. Unlike the first group there was a large percentage of inexperienced and unfit recruits, several of whom had been assured that they were going to training or admin posts. Even the men with a military background were not all suited to the task; for example, Banks had recruited two submariners!

It was from this group that the victims of the Maquela Massacre were selected. Chris Dempster was a member of the firing squad led by RSM Sammy Copeland. In this he maintains that he had no choice. Under the prevailing conditions this was undoubtedly true.

The book covers the entry of the American mercs into the war, giving the background to their recruiting. Led by

David Bufkin and Tom Oates, the U.S. contingent comprised Lobo del Sol, George Bacon, Danny Gearhart, Gus Grillo, and Gary Acker. Another recruit, Eugene Scaley, decided to pull out after hearing tales of Callan. At about the same time a further 23 mercs arrived from England, including a few undercover agents inserted by various Intelligence agencies.

Upon their return to the UK, Dempster and Tomkins were interrogated by the Special Branch. Dempster admitted being a member of the Maquela firing squad, but after considering all of the circumstances, the police released him.

Firepower is a long and detailed account. In fact, it is virtually a day-by-day view of the war. The authors tell their story well, and, as mentioned earlier, with refreshing honesty.

White mercenaries in Black Africa are an emotive subject, fraught with much suspicion as to motive. Greed and bloodlust are commonly assumed to be the only two. The book quotes Reginald Maudling, Member of Parliament:

There have always been mercenaries, and the reasons why men become mercenaries are many and mixed—money, idealism, boredom, craving for adventure. It is foolish to assume that you can tell what is in every mercenary's heart when he signs on.

In the case of at least one merc, money was by no means the motive. Jamie McCandless was already earning more than the proposed wage; in fact, it cost him almost \$1500 to break contracts so as to go to Angola. He was killed on patrol behind Cuban lines.

Although a grim story, there are moments of humor, for example, when some Portuguese mercs stole Idi Amin's personal executive jet to use it as a bomber!

If the original concept had been pursued, and only experienced soldiers recruited, and if Holden Roberto had not put Callan in charge, then perhaps things would have been different. As it was, the mercs fought and killed a lot of the Cuban-led MPLA. Despite being outnumbered, they won almost every engagement. And of course the war is not yet over in Angola.

The authors have continued in the merc business. Only a month after returning from Angola, they devised a plan to blow up the oil installations and shipping in Luanda docks. John Banks attempted to sell the plan to the South African government, who turned it down on the grounds that they did not wish to start World War III by sinking Russian ships. Dave Tomkins then became involved in the scheme (reported in S.O.F. "Mercs' Togo Mission, March 1978) to assassinate the President of Togo.

John Banks decided to hunt for Carlos "the Jackal"—the international terrorist—and sell his whereabouts to the Israelis.

When the Palestinians found out about this he gave up. He was last heard of trying to recruit mercenaries—for Angola.



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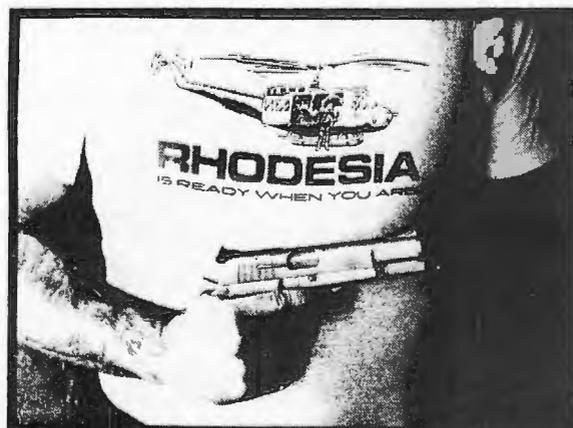
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