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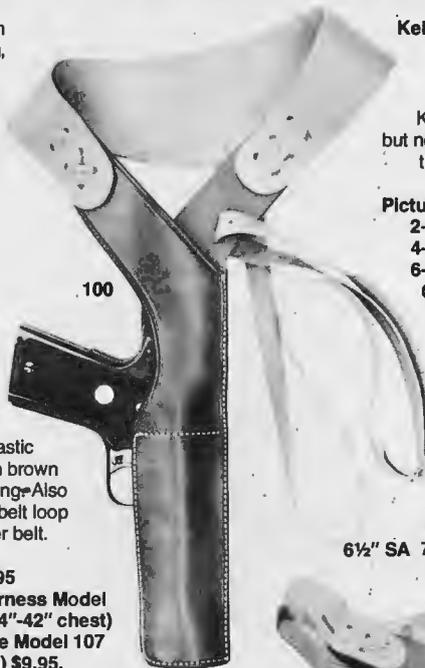
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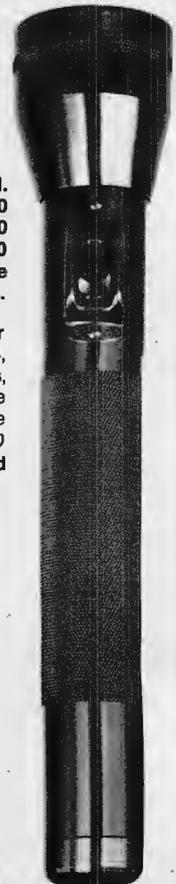
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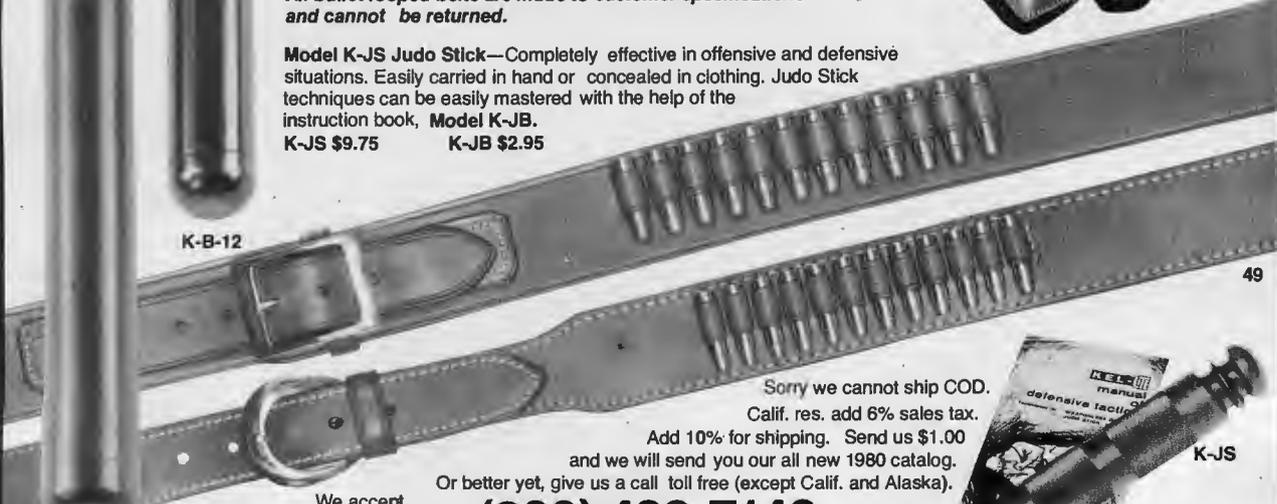
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101



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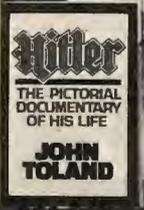
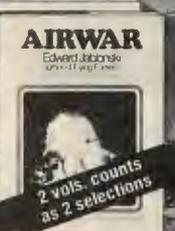
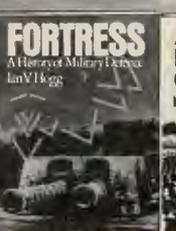
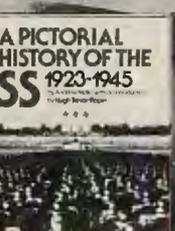
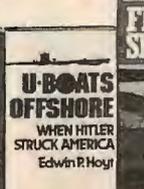
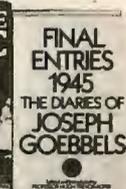
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# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

**COVER:** An M60 machine-gun team from the 9th Marine Regiment pounds away at charging North Vietnamese seeking to overrun perimeter during the 77-day siege of Khe Sanh in January-April, 1968. Some 20,000 men from the North Vietnamese 304 and 325C Divisions failed to overwhelm the 6,000 Marine infantrymen at Khe Sanh. See page 36. (Photo courtesy USMC).

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# BULLETIN BOARD

by Jim Graves



Chinese unit in formation wearing new mini-antitank rockets which are fired from the hand.

Department spokesman Hodding Carter is saying, "No, you didn't."

Toon, ambassador to Russia from 1976 to 1979, says he sent "almost daily" warnings that the Russians might move into Afghanistan. "I was somewhat surprised that he (President Carter) was surprised at what happened in Afghanistan," said Toon.

State's Carter claims Toon signed numerous cables calling a Russian invasion very unlikely.

## CHINA UNVEILS NEW MINI-ANTITANK ROCKET ...

The Ministry of Defense of the People's Republic of China recently unveiled a new mini-antitank rocket capable of being held and fired in the palm of an average infantryman.

Compact and light, the rocket is described as having "comparatively effective armor-piercing capability." Defense sources say once the rocket is perfected and mass produced, it will significantly enhance the Chinese anti-armor capability along the Sino-Soviet border.

## BOYCOTT THE GAMES ...

It's not very often when we give President Carter a favorable nod but his decision in January to call for an Olympic boycott makes sense.

It's doubtful if an American boycott of the Olympic Games in Moscow will cause the Russians to pull a single tank out of Afghanistan but every little bit helps.

It must have come as a bit of a surprise to the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) but two of America's best sportswriters were quick to support the boycott. Red Smith, who writes for the *New York Times* and

## BICKERING AMONG THE BOYS ...

Malcom Toon, Jimmy Carter's former ambassador to Moscow, had a bit of a falling out with Carter's State Department over who told what to whom and when vis-a-vis the Russian invasion of Afghanistan.

Toon, considered a hardliner, is saying "I told you so," while State

who was the first sportswriter to win a Pulitzer, did it on TV while discussing the issue with a USOC official, while Pete Axthelm did it in his column in *Newsweek*.

Axthelm wrote: "To participate in the Games would be to legitimize a propaganda charade and to help divert the world's attention from the reality of Soviet aggression. And although it will be inconvenient for our athletes to seek new places to run and jump for glory, their problems tend to pale next to those of people dying in various corners of Afghanistan."

Axthelm pointed out correctly that the Soviets see the 1980 Olympics as a "...chance to show off the best aspects of their system to thousands of tourists and millions of viewers."

In the last two Olympics, the communists got a lot of favorable publicity out of two innocent-faced young gymnasts, albeit with the help of American TV. For a lot of us it would be a little hard to stomach another sweet communist heroine in the summer of 1980.

Smith was even more adamant. Asked by a USOC official if he would still back a boycott if he knew it would mean the end of the games forever, Smith looked him dead in the eye and said, "Yes."

## KHMER ROUGE MURDER OF AMERICANS ...

New evidence from Cambodia indicates that as many as 44 foreigners including at least four Americans, were among thousands of people jailed and later executed by the Khmer Rouge at the Toul Sleng prison in Phnom Penh.

The Americans were identified as Lance McNamara, Michael Scott Deeds, Christopher Edward Delance and James William Clark. All four men were civilians and are presumed to have been executed after undergoing prolonged torture.

The evidence, in the form of forced confessions, other documents and photographs, were recently made available to the Western media by the Vietnamese-backed Heng Sanrim regime in Cambodia. U.S. officials view these disclosures as an attempt on the part of the regime to change its poor international image.

In addition to the four Americans, prison records noted three Frenchmen, two Australians, one Briton, one New Zealander and one Canadian, who are thought to have suffered the same fate as the Americans.

*Continued on page 11*

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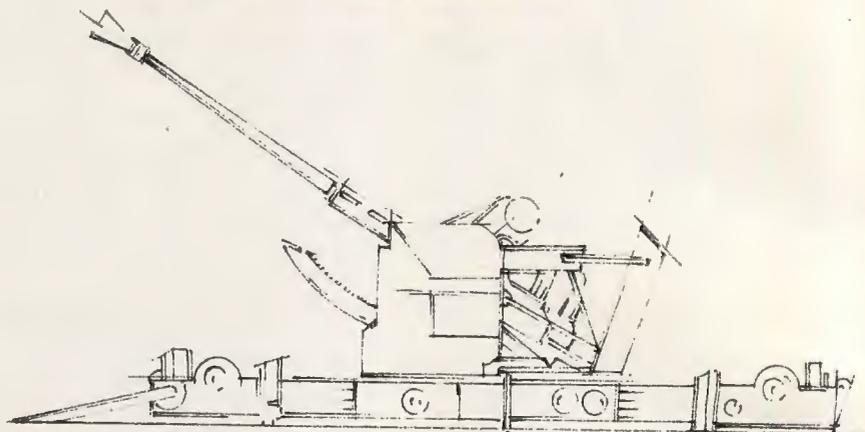
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## NAVY WANTS TO KICK ASS ...

Sirs:

I am a gunner in the U.S. Navy and a strong supporter of your magazine. I hope you continue to keep up the good work. I would also like to say that the Navy is full of people ready to kick ass if we get the chance.

GMG3 Robert Hendrick  
FPO, New York, New York

## OTHER LEGIONS NOTED ...

Sirs:

The articles on the French Foreign Legion in your fine magazine were indeed interesting. (See "The French Foreign Legion Today, SOF, July, September, November '78, "French Foreign Legion Update" and "Jump into Shaba," February '79.) I hope you won't stop there; another military force could be the subject of similar articles: the Spanish Foreign Legion. Is it possible that you already have some information on this force?

Thank you,  
Liam H. Coughran  
Olympia, Washington

*We hope to have an article on the Spanish Foreign Legion in a future issue of SOF.—The Eds.*

## WE NEED VANN'S VISION ...

Sirs:

I met John Paul Vann while he was IV Corps senior advisor. (See "Vietnam Visionary," SOF, January, February '80.) I was assigned to Mo Cay District, Team 88, Kien Hoa Province. Vann was not the only man of vision in Vietnam; there were countless others! However, he had the fortitude to tell it like it is.

Unfortunate as many of our fiascos were, progress was being made. My last tour (February 1971-February 1972) showed that Vietnamization was working

in our district of Mo Cay which had a reputation for being a hardcore VC stronghold. (Madame Binh, one of the North Vietnamese peace-treaty envoys, reportedly hailed from Mo Cay.) What failed to materialize was support from our home front. We had all the ingredients for success but no matter how good soldiers are, they will ultimately be defeated by bad policy decisions at the top echelons — often the least qualified make decisions in time of war.

It is easy in retrospect to see past mistakes and propose easy cure-alls; what remains is the inglorious way we let an ally "go down the tubes" when the North Vietnamese invaded. We ran and thus sealed the fate of Indochina.

What worries me now is how we can bridge our credibility gap — look at Vietnam, Taiwan, Iran. Our U.S. Army is in shambles when one compares our discipline to that of Israel or the USSR. What we need is the craft and a man similar to John Vann, who is not afraid of resigning his position and who faces reality ahead.

George W. Arruda  
Captain, USAR  
San Antonio, Texas

## SOF ENLISTS GUARD ...

Sirs:

You have the best damn magazine on the market! I have read the past issues with such zeal and fervor that I not only subscribed but ran out and joined the Tennessee Air National Guard! (I have four years' active service way behind me.)

We have long needed a magazine of this caliber (pardon the pun). Keep up the good work.

Regards,  
Joe M. Fisher  
Memphis, Tennessee

*Continued on page 13*

# WORLD AT WAR!

## Will the next 4 years bring a MAJOR war or depression to America?

by Roy S. Wathe  
Freelance Reporter

**A** MAJOR DEPRESSION, CIVIL turmoil, a dictatorship and gun confiscation may be ahead for America," now warns International Consultant and Survival Expert Hans J. Schneider. Far fetched? NOT AT ALL!

Hans spent his childhood in the Third Reich . . . his boyhood in the rubble of communist-occupied East Germany. His father, a former industrialist, lost \$10 million overnight and was imprisoned. This was a time when thousands of a disarmed populace were ruthlessly murdered. Hans and his family had to search the forests for food in order to survive.

### BAD TIMES AHEAD

Don't ignore his warning. Hans J. Schneider is internationally respected for his rather accurate political and economic forecasts.

After twenty years of research, he has reached this conclusion: "America will go through a major depression within the next four years." He foresees big cities as centers of bloodshed, food shortages, and massive unemployment. People unable to cope with these conditions, will demand a dictatorial government to restore order, just like they did in his own homeland, Germany. The result? A MAJOR WORLD WAR.

Hans Schneider adds: "Even if all these events don't happen, any one of them could spell disaster to unprepared Americans, physically and financially."

### "TIMELY HELP"

Mr. Schneider has written a book which I believe every concerned American should read. **TIMELY AND PROFITABLE HELP FOR TROUBLED AMERICANS** reveals his proven plan for your freedom and survival during economic and social turmoil.

There is hope and help! Mr. Schneider is NOT a prophet of doom. In his book, Hans has outlined what he has done . . . and what you can do to prepare for—even profit from—these times. 288 pages cover:

- ✓ Finding the right place to live in the turbulent times ahead
- ✓ How to educate your children at home! legally!
- ✓ What essential provisions to store
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- ✓ Survival hunting, unusual remedies, first aid
- ✓ Independent energy sources
- ✓ Becoming self-sufficient
- ✓ Barter items
- ✓ Alternate weaponry/defense tactics
- ✓ . . . and much, MUCH more.



Hans J. Schneider believes we are headed for a disastrous social and economic period. But he has practical advice to help you profitably survive this time.

Mr. Schneider is not a theorist, but actually "practices what he preaches," as one newspaper reporter put it. Hans, his lovely wife, and their five children live in unspoiled wilderness next to a spring-fed stream, teeming with trout. They produce most of their own food and enjoy a wonderful family life. Is this your dream? His book shows how you can do it too!

### WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

- \* ". . . sincere and engaging . . ."—Art Seidenbaum of *Los Angeles Times*.
- \* "It is the best book I have read on the subject."—Dr. Marjorie Fry, Editor, Castle Rock, CO.
- \* "Book is excellent. Number of my people want copies."—Pastor G. A., Amarillo, TX.
- \* "Your book is most appropriate for these days. Runaway inflation and civil disorder is just around the curve."—Dr. John R. Andrews, M.D., Ellijay, GA.
- \* "Sympathy and concern for an American populace headed toward what he feels is another period of 'hard times' prompted Hans J. Schneider to write **TIMELY** . . ."—*The Mail Tribune*, Medford, OR.
- \* "More people should read it."—S. S., Atlanta, GA.

\* "His book is exceptional not only because it is timely and practical, but because it is based on actual personal experience—it is not a lot of idealistic theorizing or useless philosophy."—R. A. Johnson, Survival Editor for *Inflation Survival Letter*.

You can order **TIMELY AND PROFITABLE HELP FOR TROUBLED AMERICANS** for just \$9.95 postpaid—certainly one of the best investments you will ever make. And his advice can profit you no matter where you live or what the economic condition may be!

### TWO OTHER UNIQUE BOOKS

Mr. Schneider is also the author of 2 other excellent books. His latest, **FLYING TO BE FREE** (256 pages), is his personal never-before-told story of his boyhood passion for flying in his communist-occupied homeland, the years he spent on dangerous aviation missions through war-torn Europe and the near-fatal accounts of his travels in almost 100 countries. It is beautifully illustrated with over 110 photos/drawings and a full-color cover.

**MASTERS OF LEGALIZED CONFUSION AND THEIR PUPPETS** (55,000 copies in print!) is an undisputed eye-opener written without compromise. These volumes will make wonderful additions to your library.

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If you feel like I do that conditions will get worse . . . that America is headed for a time of crisis, why not order these books now before it is too late? Write today. The small cost is certainly worth the peace of mind to know that you and your family will be financially and physically prepared for the bad times that are unfortunately facing our beloved land . . . America.

**I**N times of economic hardship, one way to save on the old dinero, yet still keep your firearms battery up to desired standards, is accessorization. Few kids in the 1950s and early '60s could afford the latest sportscar, yet with accessories took beat-up jalopies and turned them into potent street machines. The same can be done with guns, knives and other self-defense, sporting or hunting tools. The following example illustrates the point. You need a potent, big-caliber handgun for defense, yet sometimes the gun must be carried closely concealed. Centerfire ammunition is expensive, so a rimfire looks attractive, yet caliber is wanting. The dollar-wise man or woman could have the best of both worlds by careful accessorizing.

If the gun is to be carried close to the body, or under poor atmospheric conditions, one of the protective finishes can be secured. Having several holsters to use also improves versatility — say a shoulder rig and an inside-the-trousers holster.

For a ballpark figure of about \$500, you can have the versatility of one, possibly two hunting guns, an economical plinker, a big-bore defense gun and a casual or close-concealment gun, the shoulder rig also doubling as a field holster when the gun is used for hunting. The protective finish would tack on less than a hundred dollars more, and careful cleaning, plus waxing of the gun to pro-

## TERRAIN & SITUATION

Jerry Ahern



Browning's Challenger II rimfire with P-35 High Power. Note similar grip angles. Photo: Sharon Ahern

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tect it under poor conditions, can obviate the expense here. Finding any of the components used would mean a substantial saving. If you already have a Government Model Colt or another gun for which a rimfire conversion can be *obtained*, the expense is slashed still more. With a little thoughtful planning, similar accessorizing can give added versatility to almost any gun.

A gun with a rimfire conversion unit could be selected, the most well-known and readily available being the Colt Mk IV Series '70, the best caliber selection usually 45. But whether chosen in 9mm or 38 Super, so long as the full-sized gun is chosen over the Commanders, either weight, the conversion unit to 22 can be used. If you handload and can live with the smaller bullet, the 38 Super version can be made into a good medium-sized gamegetter. Rounds in 38 Super, when loaded properly, are capable of extremely flat trajectory and impressive ballistics.

**S**EVERAL years ago, Browning stopped importing their well-respected line of 22 target auto's. Prices were getting

*Continued on page 25*



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# COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

by Jeff Cooper and  
John Schaefer, Guest Columnist



*SOF's Combat Pistolcraft column welcomes letters from our readers. Send your questions 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** Do you consider the 9mm hollow point an effective man-stopper? If I have my Hi-Power throated, can I expect as reliable a performance as with FMJs?

I never hear anything about the Star Model P 45 — it seems like a clean design.

Is there some simple way I can set up a moving target on my firing range?

S.C., Lexington, Ky.

**A** The stopping probability of the .38 S&W cartridge runs around 50 percent. This can be raised by the use of frangible bullets — assuming that the circumstances are proper for the use of frangible bullets (a bullet that will break up on tissue will often also break up on something hard, like a car door or belt buckle).

Star pistols have been handicapped throughout their existence by unreliable control. The designs are often good. Whether the individual weapon that reaches your hand is sound depends upon circumstances beyond your control.

The simplest moving target set up is a gravity device allowing the target carrier to run on an overhead trolley. This arrangement is vulnerable to vaguely directed fire, but one should not be shooting at moving targets until he has got beyond the stage of two- and three-foot misses.

**Q** I am concerned about the quality of my Star B.M. 9mm for combat use after reading Ken Hackathorn's evaluation in *Combat Pistolcraft* (SOF, July '79). I have not yet been able to fire my Star. I do not know anyone who has tested it. I am also having trouble finding a combat holster to fit it because of the small barrel size (3.9 inches). Where can I pick up such a holster in my area? Will I have to have one custom-fitted?

D.W.S., San Diego, California

**A** In my experience the Star pistols are subject to fairly rapid wear. While they are very well designed and can be relied upon for light duty, I do not suggest that you shoot either a Starlight or a PD very much. As a rule of thumb I limit Stars to 500 rounds.

Your Starlight will fit neatly into a Yaqui Slide built by Milt Sparks, Box 7, Idaho City, ID 83631.

**Q** I own a Colt Mk. IV in .45 ACP and I like it very much. However, as I'm sure you well know, it has a couple of shortcomings. First, the sights are too small and secondly it is blued and the wear spots rust when it is handled extensively or in high humidity. I don't mind wiping the gun down with an oily rag, but I prefer checkered wood grips and you know how hard oil is on wood. I want a rust-proof finish and good sights put on the gun.

As for durable finishes, I have considered Armoloy, hard chrome and satin nickel. Which finish is more durable and what pistolsmith do you recommend?

B.G.G., Greeley, Colorado

**A** The inadequate sights on the government issue 1911 are one of those things that we simply have to accept. We start out by fitting high visibility sights, not necessarily adjustable (and thoroughly dehorned), before we do anything else.

Industrial hard chrome, on a roughened surface to give non-reflective finish, may be your best answer. I personally prefer a black slide to a white one but there are many people who get by very well with white guns.

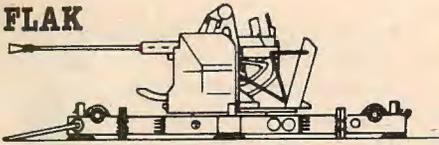
You might see Ikey Starks, Sports West Inc., 2200 West Alameda Avenue, Alameda Square Shopping Center, Denver, CO 80223, for some of your pistolsmithing work. He has a good reputation.

—Jeff Cooper

**J**OHNSCHAEFER, the founder and current director of the New Jersey Combat Pistol League, is a pistolsmith specializing in the 45 auto. He is a graduate of Jeff Cooper's Pistolcraft School and teaches pistol techniques to local police departments and civilian students.

Continued on page 65

# FLAK



Continued from page 8

## ARIZONAN SPEAKS OUT ...

Sirs:

Your article on the Senate BATF hearings ("BATF on The Hot Seat," SOF, December 79) by Morgan Norval states that Senator DeConcini (D-Ariz.) instigated the hearings as "an event to add lustre to a tarnished political image ... to mend his Arizona political fences."

Norval's condemnation of the Arizona senator is unsupported in fact. Sen. DeConcini is often presented favorably in NRA articles. An article in the September 1979 issue of the *American Rifleman* magazine outlined DeConcini's intensive questioning of BATF representatives, a fact conveniently omitted in Norval's article.

Sincerely,  
Carey A. Bunker, III  
Tucson, Arizona

*Upon receipt of this letter, SOF checked several Washington sources, people who attended the BATF hearings, and came up with this analysis of Sen. DeConcini's attitude on BATF. Prior to the hearings, the senator was firmly in the BATF camp. But as the hearings progressed and DeConcini began to realize just what BATF was and what it had been routinely doing, he grew first disillusioned and finally outraged. "I think he's a convert to the pro-gun folks now," said one source.—The Eds.*

## VIETNAM VET FINDS SOF ...

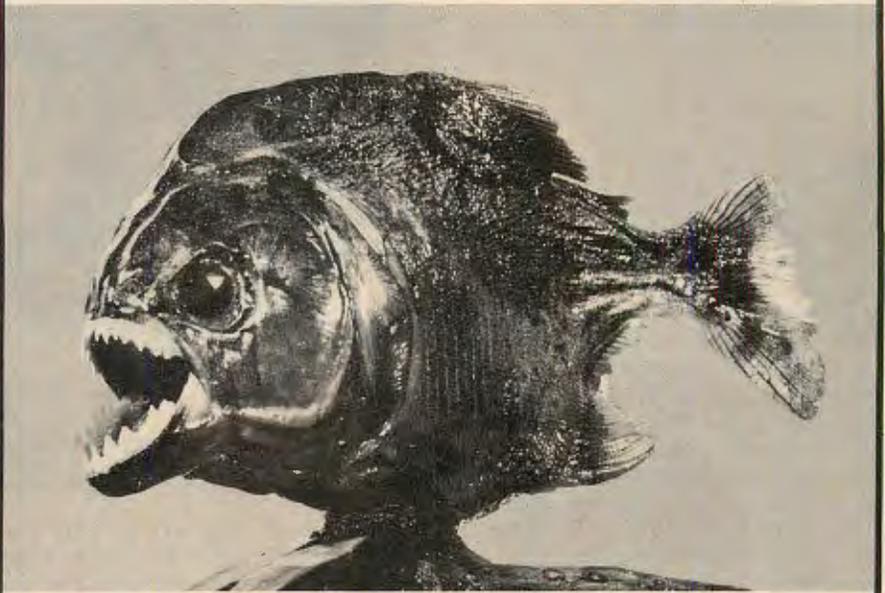
Sirs:

As a Vietnam veteran (I was squadron dental surgeon for 1/7 Air Cav in the Delta, 1969-70), I'd like to tell you what a pleasure it is to discover SOF. Your magazine is one of the few places I find people who speak my language and who have similar experiences to mine. Occasionally I meet other vets, but they regard their service in RVN somewhat shamefacedly. The wisdom of retrospect may cause many to regard America's experience in RVN with regret but I cannot be ashamed of obeying the law as it then stood or of doing my duty and more in support of other American soldiers caught in a bad situation or of Vietnamese civilians who believed that we would help them.

Sincerely,  
Steven Siegel  
Dix Hills, New York



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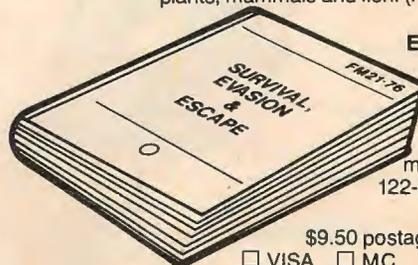
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# I Was There

by Erich R. Szilagyi  
as told to M.L. Jones

In 1977, Erich R. Szilagyi, bored with conventional hunting — as he says, “I believe anyone can take any animal with the proper weapon and still stay safe — without confrontation or danger” — turned to the unorthodox. He decided to hunt the wild razorback boar with a bamboo spear. He knew of 200 fenced acres of central Indiana woodland which held a small herd of boar, originally imported from Miami, Fla. The herd included two big black heavyweights.

To make his spear, he obtained a strong 10-foot piece of solid bamboo about 2½ inches in diameter and cross-cut the tip at a 30-degree angle eight inches into the stem, cutting ¼ inch down the middle to form two solid fingers of razor-sharp bamboo prongs. He drilled out the center of the first two joints for a blood-release valve. At the back of the spear he drilled a half-inch hole through the side and attached a braided leather lanyard to assist leverage and thrusting force. Now he was ready. As he tells it:



Szilagi's trophy boar's head. Author declares, “It's quenched a thirst in me, but only for a while. The lust for adventure in some men never fades.”

**T**HE alarm went off at 2:00 a.m. that third week of November. I slipped on my jungle fatigues, boots and field jacket. My heart pumped. This was the excitement I'd been searching for. I carried my Gerber Mark II fighting knife, its sheath taped to my right thigh, and my combat-modified Colt 45 automatic, loaded with Remington 185-grain, jacketed hollowpoints, as backup in a shoulder holster.

I reached the path in the woods about an hour before daybreak. The hunt was on. As I stepped into the forest, I slipped a round into my 45, let the hammer down slowly, snapped the safety on, put the gun back into the holster and began to track. The bamboo spear was light and easy to carry.

Daylight filtered through the trees onto the frost-covered ground. I knew where the boars were and frost made tracking easy. Soon I heard low grunts and I saw them once I breasted a small hill. There were two packs. The big black I wanted was in the second. I walked slowly toward him. When I was about 50 feet away he turned and looked me straight in the eye, snorting and rutting the ground. I kept closing the distance. I could see his red, bloodshot eyes clearly now and his magnificent set of tusks.

At about 20 feet, he rushed, raising and lowering his head, white tusks gleaming. I knew I had to hit him as his head came up, not as it was going down. I must drive the bamboo shaft to the lower right side of his throat to sever the main artery and hit the heart or at least the lung. The distance closed and I drove the shaft in.

I felt as if a train had hit me. I lost hold of the shaft and fell to one side. I heard wild squealing behind me. Instinctively, I drew my 45, safety off, hammer cocked, and twisted to my left to shoot.

The boar lay on his side, kicking, the bamboo shaft sticking out of his chest. The white-frosted ground reddened as his blood spurted from the shaft. I shifted the 45 to my left hand, grabbed the Gerber from its sheath and raked it across his throat. A few twitches and it was over. Man over beast, hand to hand. The old way, the way of the warrior.

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# It Happened To Me

by Galen L. Geer as told to M.L. Jones

Galen L. Geer, known to SOF readers for his Korean tour with the U.S. Army (see "Korean Combat of Nerves," SOF, December '79), also served eight years in the Marine Corps, including tours in Vietnam in 1967-68 and 1968-69. In 1967, he was at Danang the night it burned. As he tells it:

**E**ARLY in the evening of 15 July 1967, I wrote in my journal: "Something is wrong. What is it? For two days it has been too damn quiet around here...."

Earlier that night our reaction force had rushed to one end of the airstrip when an attack further south appeared to threaten the air base. An uneasy quiet, with two or three sniper rounds, was all we found. Disgusted, we went home, threw our gear on the floor of our hootch, drank a warm beer and fell in our racks. In minutes everyone was asleep.

It was, according to my notes, a few minutes after midnight when I heard them. In my imagination the first four rockets sounded like: "I'll-get-your-ass!"

I didn't wait to find out. I hit the bunker in a flying heap, rolled into one corner and realized in my rush I had picked up my steel pot and flak jacket, but I forgot my trousers.

As the first rounds slammed into the air strip, the rest of the crew piled into the bunker. No one said anything while the first 50 rockets chewed up Danang with dead-on-target shooting. Realizing we were not the targets, we stood up to watch the show.

Charlie earned his rice that night. In a methodological march down the row of aircraft bunkers he stopped the local air-war. We were fascinated by his shooting. Phantoms, F-8 fighter-bombers, fully loaded and ready for war, were tossed into the air like toys by exploding rockets and pay loads.

"Christ!" Sgt. Franklin, our squad-leader, said. "Somebody must have been sending those bastards to school. That's the best shootin' I've ever seen!"

The initial attack seemed to grind down after several minutes and we began walking around, lighting up smokes to calm jittery nerves and wait for the word to move out. Another rocket, a single and fired from somewhere beyond Hill 327, froze us. As it screamed overhead two more rockets followed it in.

"Better hunker on down," the lieutenant said. "They're shootin' a little closer this time."

As we shuffled around, a power-filled quiet settled over Danang. Someone, his face unseen, looked up and said quietly, "Hollly shit!"

A split second later the blast slammed us into the ground. Charlie had hit the Air

Force's bomb dump filled with 500 and 750-pounders. In one brilliant orange fireball, with small patches of black silhouetted by the blast as they turned and twisted up, out and away, the bomb dump exploded.

We thought we had been nuked. A blond kid who had just joined the platoon pounded his fist into the sand, sobbing, "Just give me one shot at the dirty cheatin' bastards!"

Shrapnel rained down on us. Large chunks fell into bunkers, through the roofs of hootches and dropped onto the ground, digging mini-craters. Somehow not a single man in our unit was scratched.

Others weren't so lucky: 173 men were wounded in the attack and eight killed. Two Marines completely disappeared from a direct hit on their two-man bunker.

Charlie did what he intended. He smashed 11 aircraft into junk and damaged 31 more. Next morning, to continue the air war, aircraft were flown in from other bases in the Pacific.

Charlie also hit the 1st Marine Tank Battalion and the Quang Nam jail, springing 1,220 prisoners (only 190 of them recaptured). He also pounded the Marine Air Facility at Marble Mountain and just before dawn polished off a small village, Guan Co, on the coast.

Next day, writing in my journal about the attack, I said:

"...Until the day I die I will never forget what I saw when I looked back at the air strip. It was a wall of flames from one end to the other. Danang, I knew, was burning."



## Escape From Laos

Dieter Dengler

Remarkable story... calls to mind the Vietnam sections of the film "The Deer Hunter." —Publishers Weekly

Recommended reading... Soldier of Fortune Magazine, February, 1980

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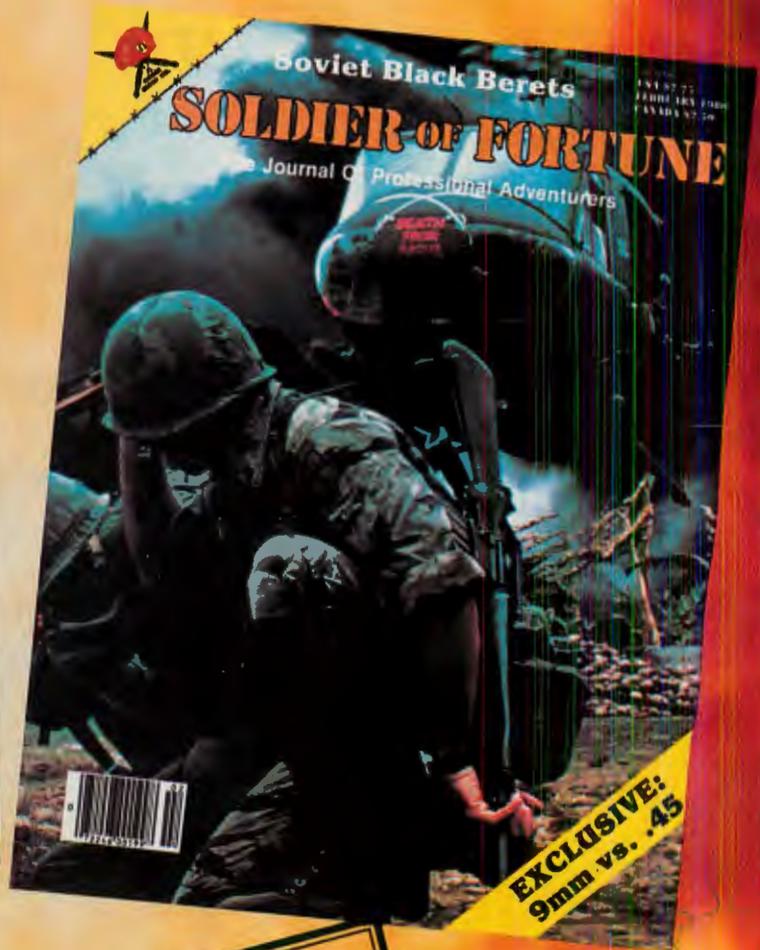
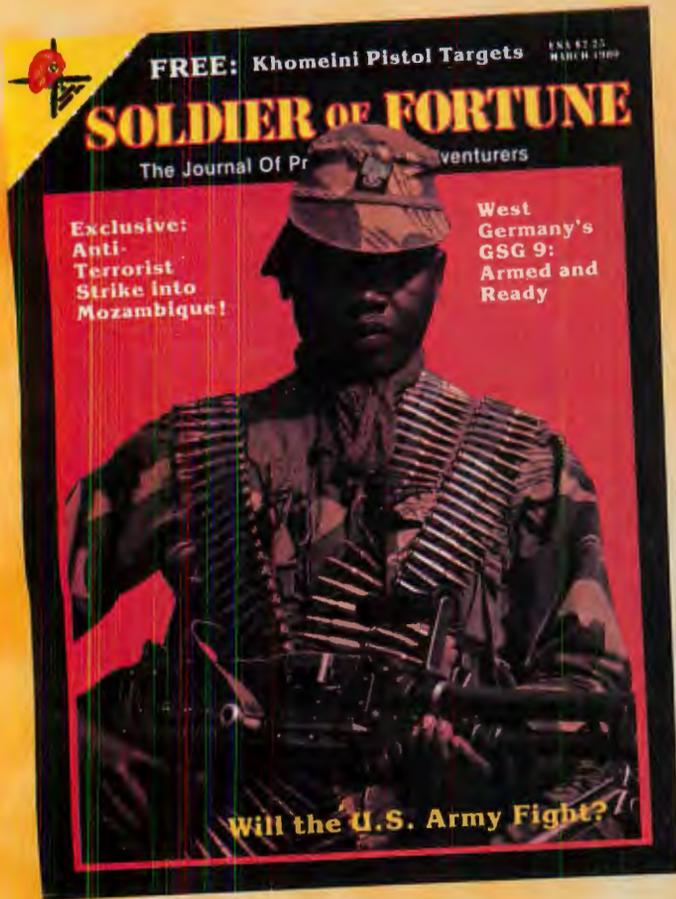
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**Q** I just wanted to write and tell you how important it is always to be armed. I come from northern New Jersey, which, needless to say, isn't the safest place in the U.S. When I was younger I always carried a small-caliber pistol or at least a knife on my person. I used to go bar hopping with my buddies and never knew what would turn up.

Over the past few years I have married and settled down. I didn't see any need to carry anything except when I went into New York City. Even then my wife would get nervous and beg me not to carry anything because of the restrictive weapons laws.

I work in data processing and one of our accounts is in a very bad part of Newark. I had just left my account and was walking to my car. I saw about seven or eight guys sitting all over it, on the hood, the roof, you name it. They were all speaking Spanish. I walked over to the driver's side. This guy was leaning against my door.

"Excuse me," I said. "This is my car."  
"What?" the guy leaning said.

"Excuse me," I said again. "I have to get into my car." I have to admit I was a little cautious because there were so many of them.

"Man, you got proof this here is your car?" one of them said.

I was getting mad now, so I pushed the guy leaning away from the door. When I pushed him he went nuts, screaming in Spanish and throwing a punch at my head. He fell against the car. Before I knew it someone had hit me from behind. I started stomping his instep with my foot; he let go, but now all of them were on me. I was swinging like crazy with my briefcase trying to get away, but more came out of nowhere. They were holding me and punching me in the head and groin: I started yelling for help; there were people standing on the sidewalk just watching.

"Call the police!" I was screaming. They dragged me into a hallway. I went down on the floor, curled up in a ball trying to cover up. They started stomping me, then punching me in the back and head. I didn't know it at the time, but they were punching me with knives in their hands. I must have gotten a surge of adrenalin because I remember screaming, breaking away and rushing out the door onto the street again. They followed me out and continued beating me. I was leaning across the hood of my car and saw a squad car passing.

"Help!" I yelled. "Please help! They're killing me!" The squad car slowed down, looked at me for half a minute, then drove on. They had seen me, a mass of blood, getting a beating by a street gang, and kept going. They didn't care. Finally, I passed out.

MAY/80

# STEELE ON KNIVES

David Steele



FL-7 "Folding Boot" knife made by Centofante of Tampa, Fla. Note unique double-ground 2¾-inch blade. Photo: Weyer of Toledo

I woke up in the hospital. How I got there I don't remember. I had suffered 13 stab wounds, one of which went through my left temple, blinding me in my left eye. Other cuts opened up the side of my face, requiring 32 stitches. I also lost one of my testicles, from a kick or a stab — I don't know.

The police have turned up no suspects. Now the point I am making, is don't listen to anyone who is scared for you to arm yourself, like your wife, girlfriend, mother, father, etc. Don't let them take out their fears on you. If I had had a pistol or even a knife I might have been able to back them down or at least gotten a couple of them before I went down. Now I'm lucky to be alive; maybe next time I won't be, but I'll be damned if I won't be prepared.

When the chips are down there isn't going to be anyone there to help you. No one gives a damn, or they're too scared. Even the police are scared or don't care.

I'd like to hear some of your views on this, and how you think this situation might have been prevented. Please print this so others will benefit from my experience.

J.C., Garfield, N.J.

**A** At the outset, let me say that I dislike playing Monday morning quarterback, since I wasn't there, and I can't feel anything but distress at what you have experienced. However, for the benefit of those who may be in such a situation in the future I will offer some advice.

Confronted with such a situation I would not go near my car but would retreat to a telephone. I would call the police, giving my name and location, and would tell them that there was a car-stripping in progress (a "loitering" call would probably not bring a fast response, and the officers would not be motivated by the

chance to make a "felony collar"). When the officers got there I would go with them; probably just the sight of uniforms would cause the gang to move elsewhere, and I would drive off. If the officers do not respond right away there would probably be a real car stripping or vandalism. In neither case would I approach the car: that's what insurance companies are for.

Approaching seven or eight potentially armed Latin delinquents requires some backup. There are parts of New York where even uniformed patrolmen do not go except in pairs.

You are correct about the necessity of weapons. If Bruce Lee had been in your place unarmed he would have ended up in the same condition. However, to avoid legal complications, do not use weapons when there is another alternative.

In any case, be assured that if I had seen you being beaten I would have gone to your assistance, as would all of those I call friends. Often only one extra person can turn the tide, especially if that person is armed. Incidentally, one of the best street weapons is a cane or walking stick: it has a distance advantage over a knife, and its blows are felt immediately. Of course, the best thing about a cane is that it cannot be legislated against.

**Q** I firmly agree with your belief that a man has a responsibility to protect himself, his property and his loved ones. I have carried a serviceable knife on my person for over a year now. When the Ninja hit the commercial market I purchased one and scrapped the Buck folding hunter I had been wearing. I found it was easily as versatile in terms of comfort and concealability. It had the added advantage of being technically legal by the definition in the Texas penal code (the Buck was not).

A few months ago I was walking with a lady friend after dark in one of the larger

Continued on page 83

1st Lt. Steven J. Lynn's "Field Gear Needs Face Lift" (SOF, January '80) exposed the tip of the iceberg, according to one of our readers, in the controversy between modern technology and personal battlefield equipment. Reader comments about this article and their suggestions for further improvement have been so good that we're passing some of them on to you.

## MORE MODERN TECHNOLOGY . . . Sirs:

You should be commended for selecting two articles in your January 1980 issue: "Ex-Green Beret's System" and "Field Gear Needs Face Lift." Based upon my survival training experience and a couple of Escape and Evasion (E&E) field training exercises (Reforger in Germany and at Ft. Bragg with a Reserve Special Forces unit), I feel that these articles cover a long-neglected area which should be of urgent concern to all who might someday have to survive on the modern battlefield.

Sad experience has taught me that one is ill-advised to head into the field under the sublime assumption that the marriage between the individual and his GI equipment will be an entirely happy affair. It is necessary to remember that no one in this whole world cares more about *your* survival and field comfort than *you* do. As for me, I want nothing but the absolute best, and if that means trekking down to my local backpacking shop with check-book in hand, I'm willing to do it. Why do I or those like me (on call for the defense of the country and furtherance of its foreign policy) have to dig into our pockets in order to have sufficient, decent field gear (basics, not gee-whiz stuff)? By basics I mean packs, tents, boots and overgarments. A lot of gear you see in the field today (regardless of service branch) is individually purchased, and for very good reason.

The backpacking and camping industry has undergone a vast technological revolution during the last 10 years. Innovators have seized upon space-age advances which have brought lighter and stronger metals, stronger plastics and improved textiles. One has only to visit the personal equipment shops on military installations to discover the military is virtually oblivious to these advances. With few exceptions, our troops are still being sent to the field with WWII and Korean War vintage stuff — not all of which is bad and some of which is unexcelled. But when you *match* that which is available to the troops against that which exists, it's enough to make you wonder who's really concerned about individual grunts, Marines and aircrewmembers.

Of course, all this new-technology gear is terribly expensive, probably too expensive to issue to everyone, but if we could get the services to adopt some of the major technological advances in the big tick-

# CUSS & DISCUSS

## Field Gear

et items (packs, tents, boots, overgarments) it would certainly be helpful. Specifically, we need better boots, sleeping bags (and bag covers), backpacks, field jackets, parkas and flying clothing.

The LOCO pack certainly seems a step in the right direction. Aircrews might appreciate a much smaller version for survival/E&E purposes. I strongly suspect a Gore-tex® field jacket would be the greatest single contribution to battlefield morale our uniform suppliers could make — it would sell like hot-cakes to the troops until it became an issue item. Also, someone needs to look into the feasibility of combining the qualities of Nomex (fire protection) with those of Gore-tex® (protection from the elements) to improve the cold weather survivability of our downed aircrews. Unfortunately, the best gear for cockpit wear for aircrewmembers is generally abysmal (boots and jackets especially) once they are forced down into combat survival conditions.

I seriously doubt if many official military-oriented publications would be disposed to pick up on this theme. That is why Lt. Lynn's article is such a positive, timely contribution. He has exposed but the tip of the iceberg. It remains for those of us from other service branches to take a closer look at our gear, to highlight its obvious inadequacies and to point out good qualities of gear in our inventories.

Sincerely,

Maj. Jay D. Patton USAF-R  
Rock Hill, South Carolina

## NOT OUT IN THE COLD . . .

Sirs:

I was not a Marine but have suffered in similar gear in the Army. As an outdoor worker for the majority of my life and an experienced cross-country skier and winter camper, I can especially vouch for Lt. Lynn's cold weather gear observations. While a person can be acclimated to cold weather, the body will *never* work efficiently when cold *and* wet. Most hypothermia cases occur between 30 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit when wind and moisture are present rather than at colder temperatures. Gore-Tex® is fantastic for wet, cold conditions, as it breathes and is waterproof.

As an American citizen, I believe we should fight the enemy, not ourselves.

B.T.L.

Baraga, Michigan

## BACKPACKER AT SEA . . .

I'm currently serving with an aviation squadron deployed aboard *USS Coral Sea* in WESTPAC. While my contacts with field gear are few and far between in this

job, I worked as an instructor for Northwest Outward Bound School for several years before I joined the Navy. I have been a member of a local mountain rescue unit and done a lot of backpacking and mountaineering on my own.

My job at NOBS required me to spend months in the field with few breaks. I generally worked mobile courses, and my gear got a tremendous workout. While my experience with military equipment is limited, I *know* what it takes to be comfortable for extended periods in the field.

I think an aluminum packframe would be far too delicate for military use. It is excellent for open country and trail walking but noisy and clumsy in the brush. In addition, it is easily damaged by misuse. I agree with Lynn that the ALICE pack is not perfect; mine is uncomfortable with more than 35-40 pounds in it. I think the LOCO pack, described in the same issue, is better. The detachable asspack and harness is excellent: make sure that the padding is Ensolite, not open-cell foam, which crushes under a heavy load. Also insure that the harness allows one to shoulder a rifle comfortably!

The tent must be kept *light*. If it's more than four pounds it's too damned heavy for a single shelter. A less complex design might be better, although Lynn's looks good.

Lynn's ideas on sleeping bags are excellent, but do not use too heavy a bag — extra insulation will always be available in the form of clothing or possibly a poncho liner. Maximum weight should be 3½ pounds — even with a synthetic fill. The dual-material sleeping pad is unnecessary. A hip-length 3/8-inch Ensolite pad is all that's needed. For winter, use two of them.

I disagree with Lynn's ideas on boots. My favorites are an old, much-used pair of Danner Forest Service boots. Insulated boots are too hot for most climates. In addition, the insulating material is usually Ensolite, which is impermeable to water vapor and would cause excess perspiration. For extremely cold weather, Sorel's are indeed hard to beat. For tropical use, I think the present boots are fairly good. A new general-use boot should have single-layer leather, lug soles and good arch support, sorely lacking in current-issue footwear.

Lynn's appraisal of waterproof clothing is generally correct; however, when it's really pouring down rain, the clothing *must* be completely waterproof. I prefer warm sweat to cold rain-water, having been close to hypothermia a couple of times. Urethane-coated nylon is inadequate; if nylon is used, the garment must

be double-layered with the coatings facing each other. As a civilian, I have used a North Face cagoule for eight years with tremendous success. This garment may be too restrictive for military use, but its construction is sound. My experience with Gore-tex® products has been positive. One problem with all these materials is that they are noisy when rubbing against brush, rocks or other clothing. The same applies to the "60-40" type cloth Lynn wants to use in field jackets. Ventile cotton would be better.

Do not even consider a stove that uses disposable butane cartridges. Few of these put out enough heat to justify their containers' extra weight and bulk. White gas stoves are often more compact and cheaper in extended use.

I agree with the utility of freeze-dried foods, but I found after eating them for a couple of weeks I was longing for real meat. Thereafter, I carried mostly rice-and-noodle dishes, heavily supplemented with canned meat. The human body needs the oils available in these foods. They were well worth their weight on extended trips. Actually, the Australian daily meal packs Lynn mentions sound excellent without much modification.

As a professional military officer, I applaud Lynn's efforts to improve the equipment used by his men. Although the gear he wants is expensive, it's apparent that poorly designed equipment, whether field gear, aircraft, or ships, is an invitation to defeat.

Sincerely,  
Lt. Dan Muir  
FPO, San Francisco, Calif.

**A**LICE OK ...  
Sirs:

Regarding 1st Lt. Lynn's article, the ALICE pack used by the Marine Corps is totally adequate for the requirements it fulfills. Having used this pack since 1974 on Okinawa, I found it comfortable, practical and durable, even with a payload in excess of 50 pounds. Marines who served with me also praised its design and usefulness. The ass-pack described in the article is too small to carry any practical volume of supply. To use such a pack would limit the range of infantry units without resupply.

The current cartridge-belt system suits the needs and stature of the individual Marine. Complaints of its biting into the hip are generally prevalent from those who carry it in a low-slung gunslinger style. The belt suspender straps do an excellent job of supporting the weight of the belt with attached equipment. The holster currently in inventory was designed to be worn on the cartridge belt and to protect the enclosed weapon from mud, sand and dirt. The holster hangs low enough from the belt to be worn during a parachute jump without interfering with parachute

Continued on page 72



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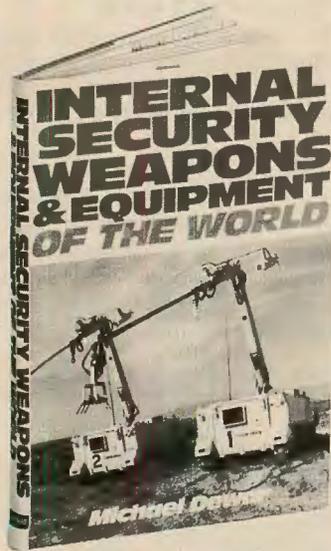
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# IN REVIEW



**INTERNAL SECURITY WEAPONS AND SECURITY EQUIPMENT OF THE WORLD.** By Michael Dewar. New York: Scribner (1979). 128 pages. \$12.50. Review by Leroy Thompson.

**T**his book should prove to be one of the most useful reference works ever written for police officers, military personnel, government or private security officers and bodyguards. Equipment and weapons for all aspects of security work are discussed and pictured so that the reader will be familiar with any domestic or foreign equipment he might encounter. For ease of use, **Internal Security Weapons and Equipment** is divided into eight chapters with each treating a specific type of equipment.

The first of these chapters, titled "Internal Security Vehicles," is devoted to armored cars, APCs, mobile command vehicles and water cannons mounted on trucks. Vehicles from more than 15 countries are included, and although well-known vehicles like the French Panhard, British Ferret and U.S. Commando are covered, most value comes from information on less widely distributed vehicles such as the Egyptian Walid or the Irish Republic's Timoney BDx.

The chapter dealing with "Anti-Riot Equipment" covers a broad spectrum ranging from tear gas grenades, gas guns and gas masks to riot guns and sniper's rifles. Once again, U.S. readers should be most interested in overseas equipment not usually encountered in the States. Items like France's Alsatex cowled grenade projector or Britain's S.A.S. Development SA121 Shockstick (a nightstick giving a powerful electric shock) will be completely new to most readers, and those readers unfamiliar with vehicle traps should find the analysis of the British "Lazy Tongs Vehicle Trap" particularly enlightening.

Closely related to anti-riot equipment is "Body Armor and Shields," discussed in the third chapter. Most personal body armor shown is reasonably similar to U.S. designs, as are many of the ballistic shields and helmets. Of prime interest among the foreign equipment is some of the bullet- and blast-proof glass developed by the British for use in Northern Ireland.

Since most readers without demolition training will have little prior knowledge of the subject, Section IV, dealing with "Bomb Disposal Equipment," should be particularly informative. Virtually every type of equipment used by EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) teams from briefcase-sized kits containing EOD inspection tools to remote control EOD vehicles weighing tons are treated. This chapter covers in detail the latest U.S. developments in bomb disposal and deactivation equipment. Any reader not actively involved in the field — and even professionals — should learn something new from this section.

Chapter five treats all types of detection equipment from table-top letter-bomb detectors to full-size airport-bomb or weapons detectors. Although explanations are concise and non-technical, readers should be interested in learning the methods by which many of these devices operate. Interestingly enough, one discovers that Finland produces one of the best weapons detection systems, the Outokumpu Meteor Weapon Detector, and many large countries, including the U.S., use this system. All other types of metal detectors and inspection devices are treated in this chapter as well.

For bodyguards and area security personnel, the most valuable chapter will likely be the one devoted to "Perimeter Protection." In addition to PM security devices similar to those used around many U.S. military bases and, hence, familiar to many ex-service men, this chapter also features the whole spectrum of intruder detectors, surveillance radars, etc. Even the Omni Spectra Microwave Intrusion Link widely used by the Secret Service is covered.

"Special Communications" equipment, featured in Section VII of **Internal Security Weapons and Equipment**, is a catch-all grouping of cipher units, miniature radios, bugs or bug detectors, telephone scramblers and ECM (electronic countermeasure) systems. All are treated succinctly but in enough detail to give the reader an overview of the field.

The final chapter is devoted to "Surveillance Equipment" and deals primarily with night vision devices; however, other types of battlefield intruder alarms, including radar and infra-red types, are treated.

Michael Dewar has assembled an invaluable reference book for anyone either working in the military or civilian security field or with an interest in the latest developments in security equipment. To-

day's battlefield is truly the "electronic battlefield," and anyone ignoring this fact is likely to be bleeped, blipped or blown out of existence. In civilian security, being fast on the scanner is now more important than being fast on the draw.

Not everyone has the aptitude or training to understand all of the complex equipment in use around the world. If there's a chance you'll someday find yourself in the position of preventing intrusion into an area or, even tougher, infiltrating a well-secured area, **Internal Security Weapons and Equipment** could be the best \$12.50 you've ever spent.

*Leroy Thompson has previously contributed to SOF (See his book review of The Last Adventurer, SOF, October '79). Thompson's military experience was with the USAF, but he commanded Air Police special security and base security units. He also went to grad school, majoring in military history, in the UK. He now runs a military book business in Missouri.*

**MENTAL TRAINING OF A WARRIOR: An Advanced Manual of Strategy and Principles for the Non-Classical Martial Artist.** By John M. LaTourrette. Warrior Publications, 2511 N. 31st St., Boise, ID 83803. 208 pp. 1979. Paperback, \$12.95. Review by Rafael Lima.

**I**n **Mental Training of a Warrior**, John M. LaTourrette has broken through the stagnant forms of classical and non-innovative present-day martial arts. Had he been born in feudal Japan, LaTourrette most likely would have been one of those warrior-monks who, when asked about the "Way" or the "Truth" of martial arts, would have given the student a swift kick and advice about how each finds his own way. Those monks found what LaTourrette has also found; that after a certain phase, after a student has mastered certain principles, the "art" in martial arts should lead the way for a student. And art is only art the first time. After that it is merely a copy. All this is to say that the innovative human should always be his own master, in the fighting arts, as in life.

LaTourrette's book will help a student rediscover the art in the martial arts. In **Mental Training of a Warrior**, LaTourrette tosses aside classicism, useless routine, ritual and non-functional poses. He believes ultimately in "anything that works."

LaTourrette knows and preaches, as did Bruce Lee and Michael Echanis, what any good street fighter can tell you about combat: *Win. Any way you can.* Forget orthodox poses, flashy high kicks and useless arm waving. Remember effectiveness in anything that scores.

I've seen students come away losers in many incidents because they never veered away from a narrow set of techniques taught to them in the calm of classroom sparring sessions. While they were getting

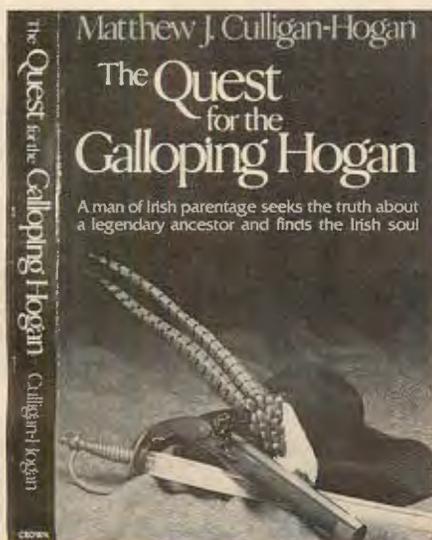
into their classical stances, the street fighters with no formal training but a lot of street experience had six inches of steel sticking into the karateman's side.

The martial arts is slowly evolving from useless routine to the nitty-gritty of full-contact sparring sessions with the unbridged use of knees, elbows, floor techniques, combinations of choke locks and strikes and the new mentality of using whatever works. Whatever works can mean anything from grabbing a handful of hair to breaking a beer bottle over somebody's face to faking cowardice long enough to catch someone off guard with an elbow or a knee or to using walls as weapons.

LaTourrette's book is as good a guide to unarmed combat as I've come across. Intelligently written with clear language and adequate photos, it covers many new facets of training. There are chapters on stalking, striking points, awareness training, night vision, aggression, tactics of surprise, conditioning, movements and kinesthetics, combat-ready positions and theory of target penetration.

The book is dedicated to the late Michael Echanis, former martial arts editor of this magazine. I think Mike would be proud of it.

*We're pleased to publish SOF martial arts editor Rafael Lima's recommendation of a manual by one of Mike Echanis' first martial arts teachers (see SOF, February '79). As a man who doesn't pull punches and who believes in using anything — from a hooking punch or a jab to the knee — if it works, Lima's recommendation of the non-classical martial arts principles formulated in LaTourrette's book is high praise indeed.*



**THE QUEST FOR THE GALLOPING HOGAN.** By Matthew J. Culligan-Hogan. New York: Crown Publishers. 1979. 120 pages. \$7.95. Review by Richard T. Crowe.

**I**RELAND'S Wild Geese were the first modern mercenaries. These Irish soldiers fought against desperate odds, out-

lasting the numerically superior Williamite army at the siege of Limerick in 1691. In exchange for the Treaty of Limerick, which granted religious and other concessions to the native Irish, they gallantly left their homes forever to soldier in foreign lands. "The Galloping Hogan" was one of the most legendary figures of that era.

Matthew J. Culligan-Hogan comes from Irish rebel stock. He first heard of the Galloping Hogan from his mother who proudly claimed clan kinship. Years later the author launched a freewheeling investigation that would take him from the U.S. to Ireland, France, Portugal and finally the Vatican in search of information about his ancestor.

This book is a fascinating recollection of Culligan-Hogan's travels. It contains genealogical data on early Irish families and a number of Irish ballads on the exploits of the Galloping Hogan. It is also peppered with anecdotes about the colorful personalities the author encountered while pursuing historical and military records across Europe.

The author's research uncovers much about the man known in Irish legend and folklore only as the Galloping Hogan. Hogan's first name had been lost in time, but it now appears certain that he was one Michael Hogan of Doon, County Limerick, near the Tipperary border. Research also indicates that this Hogan left Ireland as one of the Wild Geese to serve in the French army and later rose in the ranks of the Portuguese army to become a general.

Hogan was the mastermind of the most spectacular and daring action of the siege of Limerick. The leader of a band of Raparees (Irish outlaws), Hogan joined forces with Patrick Sarsfield and using his uncanny knowledge of terrain and countryside, moved 600 mounted troopers unseen to outflank the Williamite reinforcements on their way to Limerick City. Intercepting the enemy at Ballyneety, the Irish destroyed the guns and powder that were on their way to knock down Limerick's walls.

The importance of this action in Irish history is so great that today Hogan and Sarsfield's route is signposted "Sarsfield's Ride" for the tourist or military historian to duplicate.

Strangely enough, years later, the Galloping Hogan, then Andre Miguel Hogan, duplicated his earlier military success by leading an almost identical cavalry raid in relief of the Portuguese town of Campo Maior. It was the last action of the 1712 Peninsular War.

The blarney gets a bit too thick in parts of this book for my taste but will appeal to many. Besides giving good background on Ireland's plight three centuries ago, its action was prophetic. The same area of suppressed Ireland that produced the Galloping Hogan would later be the scene of the first IRA action of the Black and Tan War, the raid at Sologheadbeg,

Country Tipperary, in 1919. There was a Hogan there, also.

The years pass by, but family and place names recur. Culligan-Hogan's search for his semi-mythical ancestor was truly a search for the Irish soul. It is a fitting monument to the often neglected human side of military history. It is also required reading for anyone hoping to understand the situation in Northern Ireland today.

*Richard T. Crowe is a freelance writer whose special interest is Ireland's centuries-long struggle for independence. He has made five trips to Ireland and has family ties to the Limerick and Tipperary area.*



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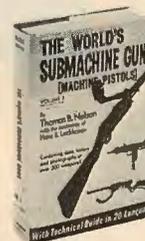
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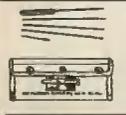
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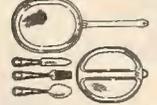
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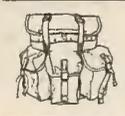
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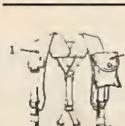
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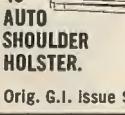
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# FIGHTING For Keeps

by Rafael Lima

**Step 1: Trapping.** Lima squares off with attacker in mobile fighting stance.

**Step 2: Attacker commits himself to straight-line attack at Lima's midsection.** Turning out of line of attack, Lima prepares to use nunchaku to trap attacker's knife hand.

**Step 3: Keeping clear of knife blade, Lima applies nunchaku to attacker's wrist in vise-like grip.** Moderate pressure causes attacker to drop knife, more dislocates wrist and extreme pressure breaks wrist and forearm bones.

## SILENT WEAPONS: NUNCHAKU

**T**HE nunchaku, two batons joined in the middle by a length of chain or rope, is one of the most deadly and versatile oriental weapons. It can be used as a club, a garotte, or as a double lever to break or dislocate joints. Originally a farm implement, Okinawans, disarmed by their Japanese overlords, developed it as a fighting weapon.

The nunchaku's incredibly destructive power comes from the whipping action of the free end in the process of the swing and the leverage attained by the length of the sections when used as a garotte. If one applies pressure at the free ends of the weapon, creating a vise-like grip at its center, he can easily snap an opponent's bones. The nunchaku can be used effectively to block or to redirect attacks and to parry. Its main use is as a joined club.

The photographs show the nunchaku used as a lever to parry a straight-edge knife attack.



## TERRAIN & SITUATION

Continued from page 10

high. But every full-line gun firm needs a .22 and the Browning name is so well respected that many shooters refuse to settle for anything less. In response to this, Browning decided to manufacture their own gun, known as the Browning Challenger II. In appearance, reminiscent of the Browning-designed Colt Woodsman series guns, it is a superlative woods plinker and informal paper-punching gun.

Overall length is 10-7/8 inches, with a barrel a quarter-inch shy of seven. Sight radius is 9-1/8 inches and empty weight 38 ounces.

With 10-round magazine, the Challenger II is designed to be a sporting pistol, yet with some fine target qualities. The rear sight is inletted into the slide so that when the slide cycles, the rear sight remains fixed on its rib and the slide moves around it. Because of this, sight picture is constantly the same. The rear sight is screw-adjustable for vertical deflection and drift adjustable laterally. A wedge locking system gives greater action stability.

All parts are machined, then hand-fitted. The grips are impregnated hardwood with an attractive Browning medallion inset into each panel. The one feature I could live without is the gold-plated trigger, yet this is quite attractive. I just don't like gold-plated triggers. The Challenger II is beautifully blued, yet the finish should prove durable for field use. Browning also offers a holster for the Challenger II, similar to the basketweave single-tunnel-loop sportsman's holster it offers for the High Power 9mm.

The Challenger II is not designed for defensive use, yet a steady, accurate, reliable stream of 22 LR rounds can serve in a pinch. More importantly, for someone looking for an excellent quality 22 auto to take along for shooting fun, the Challenger II is an excellent choice. My test gun printed three-shot groups of approximately one inch at 30 feet when I fired two-hand unsupported, using CCI Mini Mag solids. Functioning was excellent, even with hollow-points, from the conveniently placed thumb safety to the slide hold-open feature on the last shot. For more information on the Challenger II and the complete line of Browning firearms and accessories, write Browning, Consumer Sales Department, Dept. SOF, Route No. 1, Morgan, UT 84050, U.S.A. As this is written, suggested retail on the Challenger II is a ridiculously low \$169.95. For a gun of Browning quality, such a price is almost like getting it for free.



## NUNCHAKU

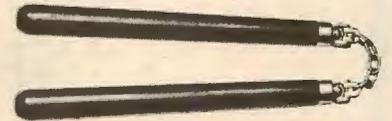
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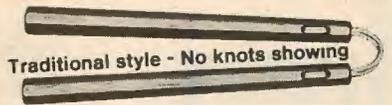


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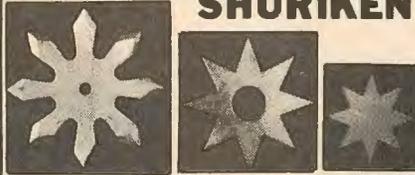
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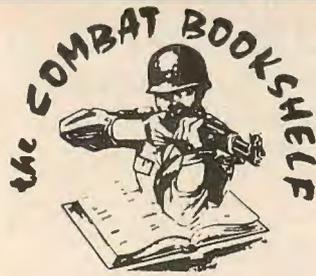


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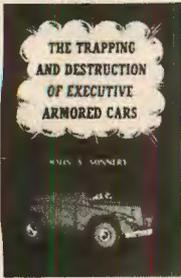
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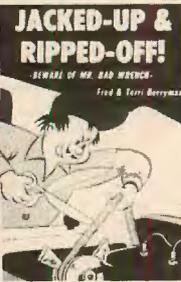
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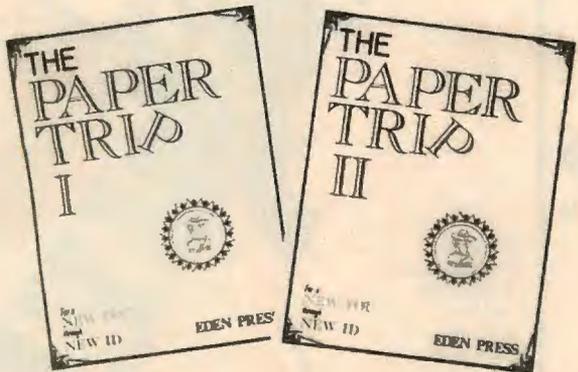


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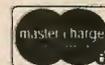
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# CAMERONE

## Birth of a Legend

by Patrick D. Andrews

ANY detailed discussion of the French Foreign Legion will inevitably lead to its most famous combat action — the Battle of Camerone — that took place in Mexico on 30 April 1863.

Many military historians equate this event with the futile sacrifices and perpetual aura of lost causes so often identified with the Legion. But if you take a hard look at exactly what happened on that day, you'll find that Capt. Danjou and his men actually accomplished the mission assigned to them. This was merely an episode in a larger scheme to establish a European empire in Mexico. While this grandiose plan failed, it certainly wasn't the fault of the Foreign Legion.

The events leading up to the battle began in January 1861, when an illiterate Mexican Indian, Benito Juarez, took over his nation's government from an ineffective, corrupt leader. Juarez was proud and strongly nationalistic, having had it with the bullying and high-handedness displayed by the European powers in their relations with Mexico. One of his first actions as president was to expel several diplomats he had little use for and to cancel all foreign debts in order to take some of the economic pressure off his impoverished country.

This caused quite an uproar in Europe. Since the United States was wrapped up in its own bloody civil war at the time and unable to apply the Monroe Doctrine effectively, Great Britain, Spain and France sent punitive expeditions to collect monies due.

### The Pride and the Poverty

Mexico was so impoverished that it was obvious she could not pay up. Britain and Spain, seeing no sense in maintaining troops there, withdrew and went their separate ways.

The proud Mexican race, angry about having Europeans trooping around their country demanding payment of debts accumulated by a former corrupt government, were infuriated beyond endurance at the idea of having a foreigner as their ruler.

Swift and deadly resistance grew up all over the countryside and Napoleon III turned to his Foreign Legion for additional help. The Legion had been in existence for more than 30 years when three battalions under the command of Col. Pierre Jeanningros left Sidi-bel-Abbes, Algeria, in 1863. The legionnaires actually looked forward to this assignment with optimistic enthusiasm. The squadroom scuttlebutt spoke of *Mexique* as an exotic green country that sported a mild climate of tropical balminess, a docile population and women who were not only pretty but more than willing for *liaisons d'amour*.

Like all squadroom talk, it was 90 percent unadulterated crap.

### Join and See the World

The legionnaires found a bad climate, sickness and poverty, as well as a drink called *pulque* that would singe the hair off a camel's belly back in home station. The unhappy battalions were broken up and scattered to protect lines of communications as they settled in to fight Mexicans, black vomito, boredom and the effects of that strong native alcohol. Only a short time had passed when it seemed obvious that this adventure would be one of the blandest periods of the Legion's service to France.

France, under Napoleon III and Empress Eugenie, on the other hand, began dreaming of conquest and the decision was made to stay on and pursue that particular policy.

A few skirmishes and battles with the Mexicans led up to the Battle of Puebla on 5 May 1862, in which the *Juaristas* handed the French a resounding defeat. (This event is celebrated to this day in Mexico as a holiday termed, appropriately enough, *Cinco de Mayo* — Fifth of May). There was no way that a French leader named Napoleon, be he the Third or the original issue, could tolerate such humiliation.

Plans for avenging the Battle of Puebla further evolved into a much bigger scheme to establish an empire in Mexico. Napoleon and his beautiful wife Eugenie thought things out carefully and chose as

the proposed emperor the younger brother of the Hungarian monarch, Archduke Maximilian, who was married to the daughter of King Leopold I of Belgium. She was the exotic Carlotta, destined for despair and madness, who took to the idea like an army-town B-girl to a GI's wallet on payday.

A phony plea was concocted whereby Mexican dupes begged the archduke to take over their nation. This was done both as propaganda for Europe as well as to put Maximilian in the right frame of mind. When he and Carlotta sailed for Mexico, they were convinced a loving, grateful populace awaited the benevolence of their future reign. After all, what could go wrong? They even had the Pope's blessing on the undertaking.

Then Col. Jeanningros received orders for a routine mission on the night of 29 April 1863. As he began organizing, the colonel did not realize he would be doing more than dispatching a detachment — he would be launching a legend.

### Setting the Siege

The French were once again fighting at Puebla. They had laid siege to that strategic location because it opened the way to Mexico City. Now a convoy of supplies, munitions and four million gold francs was waiting to be transported up to the units engaged there. But before these items were to be transported, the brass wanted a recon party to scout the road and run off any Mexican hangabouts that might be loitering in the area. Col. Jeanningros chose the 3rd Company of the 1st Battalion for this simple task. About half the men were down sick and all the officers were incapacitated, so the colonel asked for three available officers to volunteer to take charge of the operation. Three stepped forward, and their names are now permanently etched into the Legion's annals.

The senior officer was the battalion adjutant, Capt. Jean Danjou. Thirty-five years old, he had lost his left hand at the Battle of Sevastopol eight years before.

He now sported a wooden prosthesis, complete with glove, destined to be as famous as its owner.

Second officer was the battalion paymaster, Lt. Jean Vilain. A former sergeant major, he had won the Legion of Honor in the Crimea and was considered a capable leader.

The third-ranking officer came from another line company. Lt. Clement Maudet had also come up through the ranks, but his entry and subsequent service in the Foreign Legion had an ironic twist to it. He had originally enlisted to avoid jail as a political prisoner. As a journalist, he had opposed Napoleon III's rise to power and now he found himself soldiering for the man he despised.

Danjou was asked if he wanted more men, but he considered 62 adequate for the recon mission ahead. At 0100 hours on 30 April he formed his detail into two extended columns strung out on both sides of the road. As they left the village of Chiquihuite, the captain, with the pack mules and a small detail, marched in the road proper.

## Move 'Em Out!

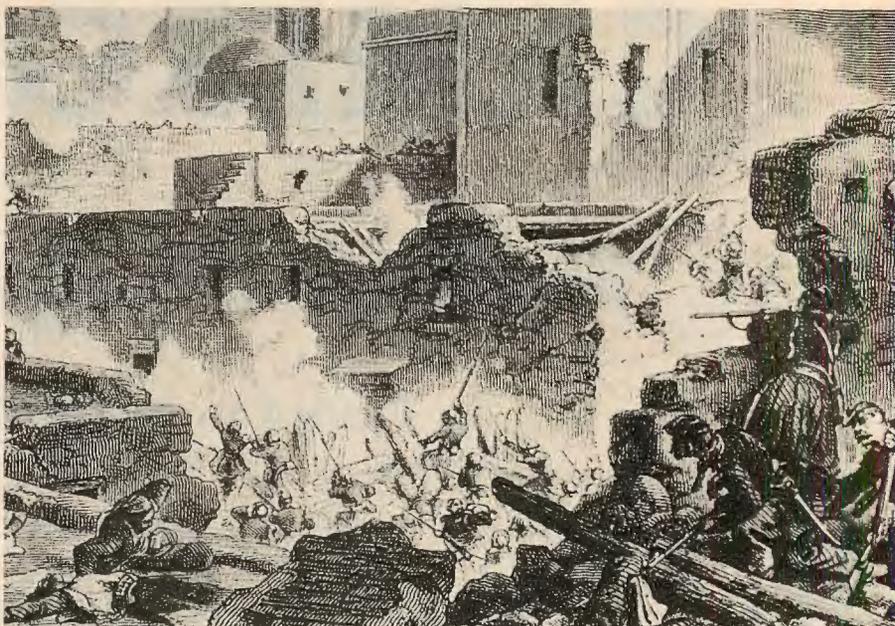
The column moved slowly through the night, keeping pace with the flankers who were carefully combing the underbrush as best they could. The legionnaires encountered no one as they continued up the road. As daylight slowly edged the darkness away, they were able to increase their speed slightly, but the flankers were still slowed by the vegetation.

At approximately 0700 hours, they passed through the ruined village of Camerone. Danjou noted the area's dominant building, a ruined hacienda, its two stories constructed around an open courtyard. One side of the building showed the results of the area's spasmodic guerrilla warfare. It had crumbled away, giving easy access to the inner yard. The captain, ever the professional soldier, mentally noted the structure's defense capabilities as they marched through the hamlet. About a mile or so further down the road, he ordered a halt and gave the men permission to prepare their morning chow.

Pots rattled and canteens clanked as small fires were lit and the men, hungry after nearly seven hours of steady moving, settled down to eat. But they never completed their meal. Hundreds of Mexican horsemen suddenly appeared on the skyline and cries of "*aux armes*" were given by the officers and NCOs.

## The Battle Begins

The Mexicans gave the legionnaires no chance and launched a furious cavalry charge without hesitation. The sudden explosion of musketry and yelling men startled the pack mules and they bolted away, carrying the precious extra ammunition and water. Danjou barely got



Artist's view of the Battle of Puebla, 5 May 1862. Mexican victory humiliated Napoleon into sending in French Foreign Legion. Photo: Brown Brothers.

his men formed into a hollow square in time to fire a repulsing volley that sent several of the attackers crashing to the ground with their mounts.

Danjou knew he was in a bad position. More enemy kept arriving on the scene and, despite the accuracy of the legionnaires' fire, the cavalry charges were pressing closer and closer. He remembered the hacienda back in Camerone and figured that there was his best chance to hold off the mounted attacks. With at least a thousand Mexican cavalry now waiting to crush his command, he had no choice.

He wisely moved his men off the road into the underbrush where enemy horses could maneuver only with great difficulty. Although movement was handled as smoothly as possible, several men, separated from the main body, were policed up as prisoners.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MSG Patrick E. Andrews, USAR-Retired, began his military career in the Kansas National Guard while in high school. After graduation he enlisted in the regular Army and served in the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team and the 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division. This tour also included a TDY assignment to the United States Military Academy at West Point as an instructor in small unit infantry tactics in 1957.

After leaving the regulars, he went into the USAR. Andrews, holder of the master parachutist badge, was operations sergeant for Company C, 2nd Battalion, 12th Special Forces Group (Airborne), USAR, when he retired in 1976 after 23 years of military service.

The cavalry kept the pressure on as the under-strength company continued withdrawing toward the village's sanctuary. The well-drilled legionnaires managed to keep the enemy horsemen at bay until they reached the hacienda. But to Danjou's dismay, he found that Mexican infantry had preceded them there and was pouring down fire on his men from the building's upper stories. Desperately, the legionnaires returned fire as they leapt over the crumbled wall and rushed across the courtyard to the cover offered by the other side of the building.

They pushed their way into that side of the hacienda and, once inside, began knocking out shutters and returning fire from the windows. The Mexican cavalry arrived and charged into the courtyard. Effective volleys drove the horsemen away, leaving the yard scattered with dead or wounded men and animals.

## Entrenched

The Mexicans suddenly stopped firing. Danjou and his men, sweat-streaked and apprehensive, stared out from their positions, trying to figure out what was going on.

A Mexican officer, carrying a white flag, rode into the courtyard. He stopped a few meters from the legionnaires.

"Who is in command here?" he asked.

Danjou showed himself at one of the windows. "I am Captain Danjou," he replied. "State your business."

"You are heavily outnumbered," the Mexican said. "We have 800 infantry and over a thousand cavalry against you. You have demonstrated your bravery and skill. So the sensible thing left is to face inevitable defeat. Will you surrender?"

"Never," Danjou replied. "We shall fight to the end no matter what the outcome."

The Mexican nodded his understanding and rode back out of the courtyard. Moments later the battle resumed. The legionnaires continued fighting through the morning, the accuracy of their fire evidenced by the bodies of enemy soldiers beginning to pile up in front of their position. Dense, acrid smoke hung heavy in the rooms they occupied and a new, insidious enemy now appeared — thirst.

In the dry heat, the legionnaires licked their lips as Danjou extolled them to greater effort.

"Make every shot count," he warned them. "And remember our mission. We must protect the convoy from the Mexicans we are now fighting — to the death if necessary!" He had a liter of wine with him that he took from man to man. A sip was taken and an oath given, each individual swearing that he would never surrender. Not one legionnaire refused the pledge.

### The Command Passes Down

At approximately 1000 hours Danjou was struck in the head by a musketball. He died instantly and Vilain took command.

"Remember the captain's orders," he reminded them. "To the death!"

Vilain stayed in command until 1400. Then he fell, badly wounded. He turned over command to Maudet, repeating the order of no surrender.

Shortly afterward Mexican fire again died down and the same enemy officer appeared with his flag of truce. "You are brave men," he conceded. "To die uselessly would be a pity. Now do you surrender?"

Maudet refused without hesitation and the battle resumed with the same vigor and intensity. The legionnaires were now driven to an insane rage as much by their worsening thirst as their desire to spill enemy blood.

### To the Bitter End

By 1700 hours only Maudet and 12 men were left. They could hear the Mexican commander, Col. Francisco de Paula Milan, shouting to his men. A Spanish-speaking legionnaire listened, then informed his comrades that the enemy leader told his men that to fail to win this battle would be a disgrace to all Mexicans forever. Then he had ordered an all-out effort.

The Mexicans responded to this urging with even more savage attacks and musketry. By 1800 hours only Maudet and five men were left. The lieutenant, knowing that the final moments had arrived, ordered his men to load their last rounds.

They rushed to the door and fired a final defiant volley, then, with bayonets fixed, charged into the Mexicans massed in the courtyard. The enemy formation literally swallowed them up in brutal hand-to-hand fighting. The *coup de grace*

seemed inevitable until another Mexican officer, a Col. Chambas, rode into the throng of combatants, beating away his men with the flat of his saber.

When he had established order, three legionnaires still stood defiantly facing the Mexicans. These were Cpl. Philippe Maine and legionnaires Laurent Constantin and Gottfried Wenzel.

Chambas saluted them. "Now surely you will surrender," he said.

By then Maine knew the sound of the fighting would have warned off the approaching column and that the Third Company had accomplished its mission. With his face smudged with smoke and dry, cracked lips, he nodded to the Mexican officer. "Yes, we will surrender. But only if we are allowed to keep our arms and tend to our wounded."

"For brave men like you, of course," Chambas replied.

Later, when the three survivors were marched from the hacienda, Col. Milan looked at them closely. He turned to Colonel Chambas. "But where are the others?"

Chambas shrugged in a typically Latin way. "There are no others, *mi coronel*."

"These are not mere men, they are *diablos*!" Milan marveled.

The colonel's admiration for the legionnaires was shared by his men. They treated the POWs decently, tending to their wounds and offering them food and water. The tension of the fighting slackened slowly, yet it is doubtful if any of the participants appreciated the real meaning of the fight in which they had just risked their necks. Like most soldiers after such an affair they were just glad to still be alive.

### The Legion's Legend

The several written accounts of the battle differ slightly on such matters as physical descriptions of the principal combatants, whether the building where the legionnaires sought refuge was a hacienda or just a farm house, certain occurrences and the time frame. But after 117 years there are bound to be discrepancies made by historians who were not there. But all agree that Danjou and his men saved the French column. As Maine had surmised, the convoy heard the sounds of battle and withdrew to safety until the situation could be stabilized.

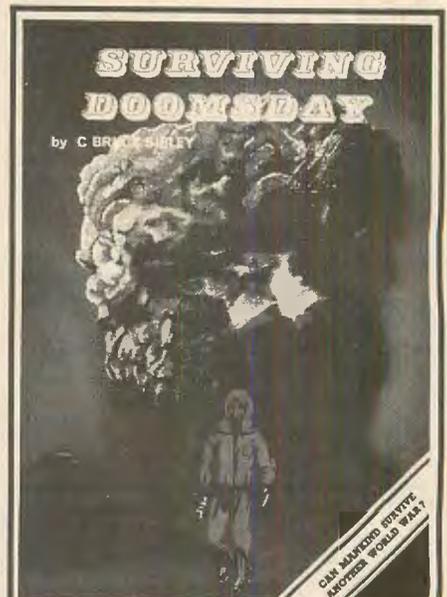
After the Mexicans withdrew, the French searched the area and, along with the KIAs, found Captain Danjou's wooden hand. It was sent back to Sidi-Bel-Abbes to become a Legion shrine.

While the battle seems almost inconsequential in light of an attempt to establish an entire empire, it somehow touched something deep inside each legionnaire. He could understand the defiance and the sacrifice and he could identify with the stubborn disregard of logic or reason that would lead to a man's own destruction.

The modern legionnaire feels this too. Each 30 April is Camerone Day in the Legion. Duties are suspended and special events scheduled to commemorate the battle. Captain Danjou's hand is taken to the Legion's Monument to the Dead and an account of the battle is read aloud there in a quasi-religious ceremony.

On this 30 April, I'll give the battle more than just a passing thought. I might even get together with some of my old jump buddies and hoist a few in honor of Camerone. It certainly would be in order to offer some toasts to the memory of Danjou, Vilain, Maudet and the Third Company of the First Battalion.

*Vive la Legion!*



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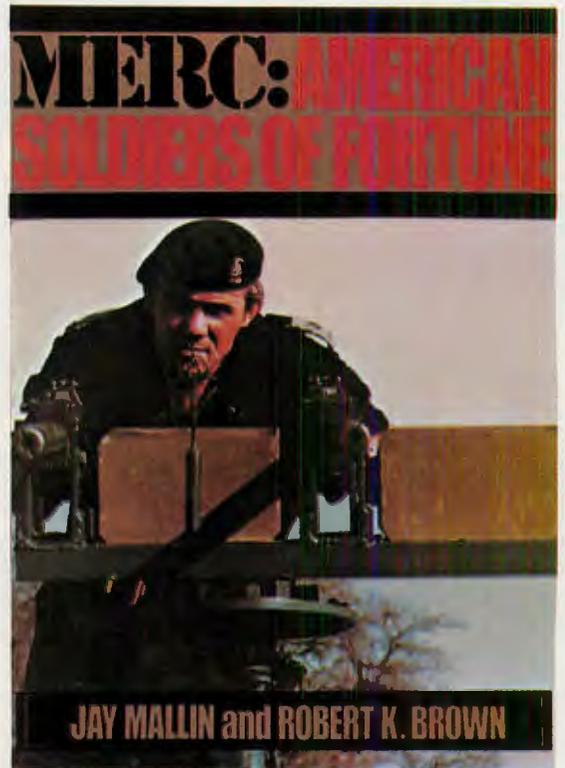
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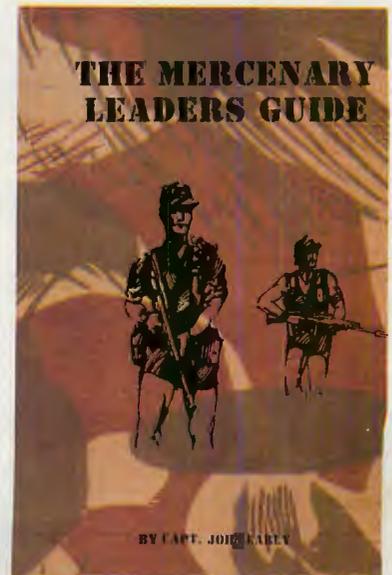
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# EDITORIAL

## Iran and International Law

by Alex McColl

**I**N addition to the political, strategic, emotional and humanitarian issues involved, there are several clear principles of international law affecting the present Iranian situation:

- First, it is simply a duty of the host country to protect diplomatic personnel of foreign embassies from mob violence. Even in the event of a declaration of war, it is not permitted to abuse or detain the diplomatic representatives of the enemy country; they are to be sent home in an honorable manner without harassment or undue delay. Even such thorough-going barbarians as Hitler, Stalin and Tojo, who had no qualms about murdering prisoners of war or oppressing civilian populations under belligerent occupation, observed this rule, which is simply indispensable to the conduct of relations between states by means of diplomatic representatives.

- Second, it is a universal function of diplomats to collect information about the host country. If the host government decides that objectionable techniques of information collection are being used, i.e., that a diplomat is engaged in espionage, the only legal remedy is expulsion of the offending diplomat or, in the extreme case, the entire diplomatic delegation. Even though this diplomatic immunity from prosecution by the host country is commonly abused, especially by the Soviets, its abolition would be a great step backwards as well as making it extremely difficult to recruit personnel for the diplomatic service. It is a necessary rule.

- Third, serious charges have been alleged against the shah and his government, and Iran's present rulers desire his return to that country for trial on these charges. The correct procedure in this case would have been a diplomatic note requesting extradition. If the U.S. government had then determined that the charges were well founded and justified denial of sanctuary to the shah as a *political refugee*, then an action would have been brought by the U.S. Attorney General to have the man extradited to the foreign jurisdiction for trial. This involves a hearing with full "due process of law" in a federal court. The Iranians did not seem to be aware that the President does not have the legal authority to have someone seized and turned over to them without trial here.

- Fourth, it has been alleged that a large part of the personal fortune of the shah was, in effect, embezzled from the Iranian people. The dividing line between the personal fortune of the sovereign and the public treasury of a monarchy is always a bit fuzzy, but the law courts of this country and elsewhere where the assets may be found, are quite competent, upon suit properly brought, to make that determination; the President does not have the authority to seize assets and turn them over to the present rulers of Iran without trial.

- Fifth, the U.S. government is quite within its rights, and in fact has no other option consistent with national honor, to refuse any action on any of these matters so long as its diplomatic personnel are subject to flagrantly illegal detention, abuse and harassment.

- Sixth, the two necessary preconditions for extending diplomatic recognition are (1) that the regime exercise effective control over the country it purports to govern (including the street mob in its own capital), and (2) that the regime be prepared to meet its obligations under international law. This includes not repudiating international debts and not mistreating foreign diplomatic personnel. It is unclear whether it is possible to withdraw a recognition once given, but certainly a regime in conspicuous default in both of these conditions is not a suitable partner for the exchange of diplomatic amenities.

All of the above are well settled, universally accepted rules, based on centuries of experience; they are neither obscure technicalities nor idealistic theories. Recent events in Iran not only affect the international prestige of the United States, but the whole structure of practical diplomatic and commercial relationships that make the world, in the international, universal sense, a community of civilized nations, and a bearable place in which to live.

There has been enough of emitting little squeaks of pious horror and collecting United Nations resolutions and other useless pieces of paper. If this crisis is resolved in a way that does not provide a clear and drastic example of the punishment attached to this sort of outrage, then there will be further and even more obnoxious confrontations with irresponsible and barbaric "maximum leaders" in other places, until even Jimmy Carter (who makes Neville Chamberlain look like Genghis Khan) has to take effective military action. In short, we are already at war.

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*Author Alex McColl, SOF Military Affairs contributing editor, served 11 years in the U.S. Army, including combat service in Vietnam. He is now an attorney and managing partner of his own private investment firm.*



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By Bernard C. Nalty

Forward by

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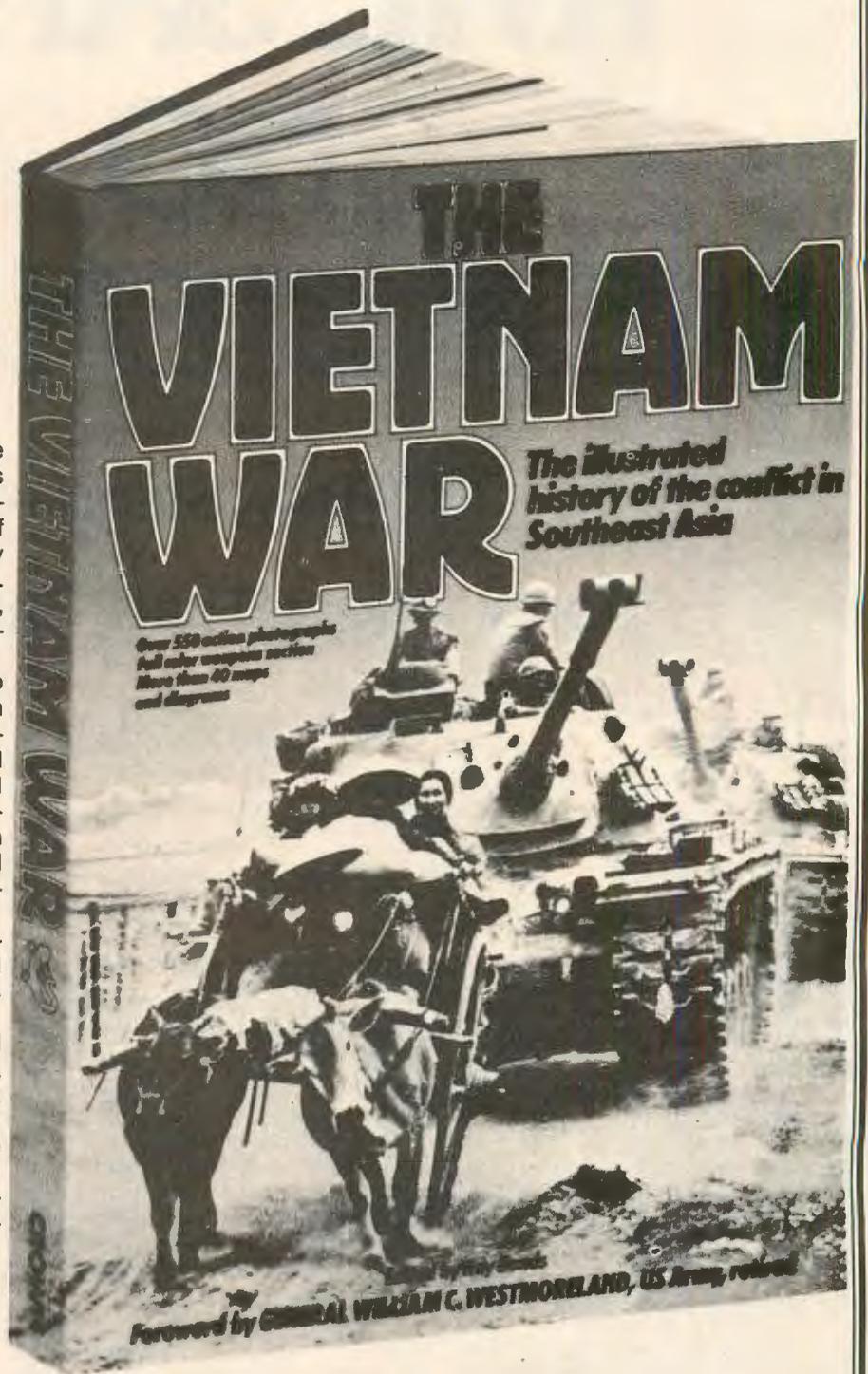
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# KHE SANH: NO DIEN BIEN PHU

77-Day Siege—

Sorry About That, Charlie

by Bernard C. Nalty

The Khe Sanh combat base, located in northwestern South Vietnam some six miles (10km) from the border with Laos and about 14 miles (23km) south of the DMZ, posed a threat to the Ho Chi Minh Trail linking North Vietnamese supply depots with communist forces deployed in South Vietnam. As early as 1962, when there were already more than 10,000 U.S. advisers in Vietnam, a handful of U.S. Army Special Forces, the Green Berets, had set up a camp at Khe Sanh from which patrols probed the maze of roads and trails nearby. The enemy put up with these activities for more than four years, before shelling the camp in January 1966.

Communist pressure on Khe Sanh increased during that year, and in January 1967 the U.S. Marines arrived: Col. John Lanigan's 3rd Marines took over from the Green Berets, who moved their camp westward to the Montagnard village of Lang Vei. A Seabee battalion built a 1,500-foot (460m) runway of pierced steel planking. In mid-May, after Lanigan's men had cleared the enemy from the nearby hills, Col. John Padley's 26th Marines replaced them.

Khe Sanh's new garrison immediately began improving the defenses, while Air Force C-130 Hercules transports flew in supplies. The pounding from the

transport planes — each weighing a maximum 135,000 pounds — caused the rain-soaked clay beneath the planking to shift; the airstrip had to be closed to the C-130s until the Seabees could make repairs. The smaller de Havilland C-7A Caribou transports that replaced the C-130s could not handle the heavy equipment and bulky materials needed for the job. The Hercules transports paraded some items to the Seabees, but they could not drop the aluminum matting needed to replace the pierced-steel runway surface.

"Parachute extraction" was the only way to deliver the matting. Riggers lashed the strips of aluminum to metal pallets and loaded them into the transports. The hatch at the rear of the cargo compartment was opened as the C-130 flew low over the outpost. At a signal from the pilot, the crew released the bonds holding the pallet and a parachute, filled by the force of the plane's slipstream, snatched out the load, which fell a few feet to the ground.

But although the Seabees extended the rebuilt runway to 3,900 feet (1,190m), Khe Sanh was difficult to defend. A chain of hills overlooked the plateau from the north and northwest. Drinking water came from a river that passed through

enemy-controlled territory. During the early months of the year, fog shrouded the base on most mornings, complicating air operations and limiting visibility from defensive positions.

In December 1967, Gen. William Westmoreland's staff detected two North Vietnamese divisions, each with about 10,000 men, massing around Khe Sanh. Patrols from the base clashed with North Vietnamese regulars dug in among the hills. On 20 January 1968, an enemy officer who surrendered to a group of Marines told of an impending offensive designed to overwhelm Khe Sanh and the other American strongpoints along Route 9, the highway leading from the coast at Dong Ha into Laos.

In Washington, President Johnson traced each development on a terrain model set up in the White House basement. He sought reassurance from his military leaders, who told him that Khe Sanh could and should be defended. Gen. Westmoreland believed that the communists intended to make Khe Sanh "an American Dien Bien Phu" — but he was confident the attempt would end in disaster for the enemy.

The battle began early on 21 January 1968, with an unsuccessful assault on a Marine outpost across the river from the



The trailing hook of C-130 Hercules cargo load catches on arresting cable that stretches across Khe Sanh runway. System decreases aircraft's exposure time to hostile fire. Photo: USAF

base. As this action drew to a close, North Vietnamese artillery and mortars began hammering the plateau, blasting holes in the aluminum runway, setting fire to the main ammunition dump with loss of some 1,500 short tons of munitions, destroying a helicopter, killing 18 U.S. troops and wounding 40. The 26th Marines, some 3,500 strong, retired within their prepared defenses: the civilian population was airlifted to Da Nang.

The Seabees immediately went to work, but could not repair enough of the runway for C-130s to land. As a result, Brig. Gen. Burl McLaughlin, USAF, responsible for aerial supply, ordered smaller Fairchild C-123 Providers to fly in ammunition to the Marines. Although the C-123K had undergone modernization, with a pod-mounted jet engine under each wing providing STOL capability, the wing capacity of this veteran twin-engine transport was no more than 16,000 pounds, less than half the payload of the Hercules.

The last explosions had scarcely died away when McLaughlin began diverting C-123s to Da Nang to take on ammunition for Khe Sanh. The first Providers unloaded 8,000 pounds of ammunition at the combat base during the afternoon of 22 January. The previous day's shelling had knocked out the landing lights, so

flares illuminated the runway during darkness. By the following evening, the C-123s had landed 130 short tons of ammunition, enough for the Marines to weather the initial crisis.

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman, Jr., commanding III MAF, authorized Maj. Gen. Rathvon C. Tompkins, commanding 3rd Marine Division, to reinforce Khe Sanh with the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. Col. David Lownds, Padley's successor at Khe Sanh, now commanded one artillery and four infantry battalions. The 37th ARVN Ranger Battalion increased his garrison to some 6,000 men by 26 January. Because his forces were spread thin, Cushman decided against an immediate attack to re-open Route 9. For the time being, the base would have to be supplied by and partly defended from the air.

### Sensors Surround The Base

A surprise awaited the estimated 18,000 North Vietnamese regulars who now surrounded Khe Sanh. (The actual number of North Vietnamese troops committed to the siege of Khe Sanh at any one time is a matter for dispute between various authorities. Gen. Westmoreland often

spoke of the communist strength as "two divisions," perhaps some 15,000 men. Other sources put the number as high as 50,000 for short periods, or as low as "a few thousand" second-rate troops for whom Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap had no other use at the time.)

Before the siege began, Air Force and Navy aircraft had planted electronic sensors along roads in southern Laos. These devices picked up either sound or seismic vibration and transmitted a signal to a surveillance center at Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, where analysts determined the route and speed of communist supply convoys. Air Force Brig. Gen. William McBride, in command of sensor operations, had been preparing to test the devices against infiltrating troops when the fight began at Khe Sanh.

McBride and his director of intelligence, Col. William Walker, USAF, flew to Dong Ha to confer with Maj. Gen. Tompkins. Walker told the general that he could lay a field of 250 sensors around Khe Sanh in a week or 10 days: Tompkins could give him only four days.

Planting the sensors proved difficult. Intelligence analysts, working from aerial photographs, had to determine which routes most needed covering. Then the electronic devices had to be placed with

accuracy enough to enable the specialists at the surveillance center to track the hostile columns. Infantry patrols, aided by maps and current aerial photographs, could guarantee accurate placing — but they could not penetrate far enough into enemy territory to cover the most likely routes. Helicopters provided a solution, hovering over the precise spot while a crewman tossed out the appropriate sensor. Acoustic sensors were dropped into trees or brush, where they hung suspended and picked up the sounds of motors or human voices. Seismic sensors, designed to react to earth vibrations, had spiked noses which dug into the ground.

Walker met his deadline, and the sensors were functioning in time to warn the Marines of enemy activity on the approaches to one of the hills overlooking Khe Sanh. At the base fire support coordination center, Capt. Mirza Baig collated sensor information with other intelligence and concluded that the North Vietnamese would storm the Marine outpost on Hill 881 South before first light on 5 February. Massed Marine and Army artillery began pounding the slopes of this hill at 0320 hours, and the communist attack never materialized.

Unfortunately, Marines manning the outpost on Hill 861A received no warning of an almost simultaneous thrust against them. At one point, the enemy advancing upon Hill 881 South had passed through an area not covered by the sensors, and it was there that the attackers divided — one force to storm Hill 861A, while the other marched into the waiting U.S. barrage, which was supported by air strikes.

The attack took the defenders of Hill 861A by surprise, forcing them back to a new position. Lt. Donald Shanley rallied his men, however, and launched a counter-attack. For about 30 minutes, the Marines fought back with grenades, automatic rifles, knives and fists. So close was the fighting that a Marine and a North Vietnamese struggling for a knife were caught in the same burst of gunfire. The Marine, wearing an armored vest, survived; the communist soldier died instantly. Shortly after dawn the assault force fell back, regrouped and advanced into a wall of fire from mortars and artillery. The Marines remained in control of Hill 861A.

Meanwhile, the Tet offensive had erupted throughout South Vietnam. But the enemy, instead of slackening pressure in the Khe Sanh area, attacked the Lang Vei Special Forces camp. (See "Armor In The Wire!" SOF, November '79.) Before first light on 7 February, about 10 Soviet-built PT-76 light amphibious tanks spearheaded an assault on the perimeter held by 24 Green Berets and around 900 Montagnard irregulars and Laotian troops (the latter refugees from a communist attack some days earlier). The 14-ton vehicles rolled over the defenders' bunkers.

The Special Forces fought back with grenades, 106mm M40A1 recoilless rifles (Bats), and rocket launchers, knocking out at least three tanks and damaging others. Forward air controllers directed strikes in support of Lang Vei defenders, despite darkness, cloud and smoke, and the danger of mid-air collisions with artillery shells fired from Khe Sanh. One controller used rockets to mark a target for an Air Force Martin B-57 Canberra bomber whose bomb-load triggered 15 secondary explosions and possibly damaged three more tanks.

Capt. Frank C. Willoughby, the Army officer in command at Lang Vei, radioed Khe Sanh for help. Although a rescue force was ready to move, Gens. Tompkins and Cushman agreed that it should not be dispatched: to advance in darkness invited almost certain ambush, and the enemy now held all the helicopter night-landing zones near Lang Vei. Two Green Berets rallied some of the surviving irregulars and attempted to fight their way to Khe Sanh, failing in spite of support from Navy A-1 Skyraiders. Taking advantage of the confusion caused by subsequent air strikes, Capt. Willoughby, 13 of his Green Berets and some 60 Montagnards managed to reach Khe Sanh.

From Lang Vei, the action shifted back to Khe Sanh. Before dawn on 8 February, the North Vietnamese attacked the position held by the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, just west of the combat base. While mortar and artillery fire pinned down the Marines at the main battalion position, the enemy stormed a company outpost, blasting holes in the barbed-wire barrier or crossing it over heavy mats carried into the assault. Sappers blasted Marine bunkers with satchel-charges and grenades. The attackers overran some 50 percent of their objective. A remarkable escape was that of L/Cpl. Robert Wiley, temporarily paralyzed by the explosion of a satchel charge, conscious while enemy soldiers searched him and took the photographs and documents he carried, and left him for dead. He was one of those rescued by a relief force led by Capt. Henry Radcliffe, advancing behind air strikes and fire from M48 Patton tanks. The North Vietnamese retired, leaving around 150 dead.

In spite of air attacks (it was estimated that 60,000 short tons of napalm alone were dropped in the Khe Sanh area in the four-week period ending in mid-February) and shelling, the communists were able to move anti-aircraft guns into position to fire at U.S. transport planes. On 11 February, one scored a hit on a Marine KC-130 Hercules carrying helicopter fuel. Trailing a plume of leaking fuel, the plane touched down safely, only to burst into flame and swerve from the runway. Eight of its crew survived; six burned to death.

Aircraft that succeeded in running the gauntlet of anti-aircraft fire faced danger

from mortars and rockets while taxiing to the unloading zone. To speed unloading, the C-130s and C-123s had rollers built into the cargo compartment floor. When the aircraft halted, crewmen released the pallets to which the cargo had been secured. Then the pilot opened his throttles, the plane surged forward, and the pallets rolled out of the open hatch, down a metal ramp and on to the taxiway. Within 30 seconds, the transport was unloaded and moving into position for takeoff.

But even this could not guarantee safety. The week before the Marine KC-130 burned, enemy fire ignited the ammunition carried by an Air Force C-130E. The pilot, Lt. Col. Howard Dallman, taxied off the runway and joined Sgts. Charles Brault and Wade Green in putting out the blaze. The crew made emergency repairs and flew back to Da Nang.

Another Air Force Hercules sustained damage while on the ground when shell fragments cut a hydraulic line and the fluid caught fire. The crew, assisted by members of the Air Force cargo handling detachment, extinguished the flames. Although replacement parts failed to arrive, a mechanic flown in from Da Nang patched the severed line. Aware that hydraulic failure meant certain death, Capt. Edwin Jenks coaxed his aircraft back to Da Nang, where mechanics counted 242 holes in the transport. This incident persuaded Gen. William Momyer, commanding Seventh Air Force, to withdraw the \$2.5-million Hercules transports from the Khe Sanh supply effort — a ban only rarely lifted.

Thus, the smaller, less costly C-123K Provider became the workhorse of Khe Sanh. This aircraft could land and lose enough momentum in 1,400 feet (430m) to turn into the unloading area. In contrast, the Hercules had to cover about 2,000 feet (610m) before slowing down enough to turn sharply, raising the danger that it might roll past both unloading bays and have to double back under fire.

Ironically, although the C-123K need spend less time on the ground than the C-130, the only transports destroyed on the ground at Khe Sanh were Providers. On 1 March, a C-123K was gathering speed for takeoff when a mortar shell burst alongside, knocking out an engine. The plane veered from the runway and caught fire, but the crew escaped. Enemy fire damaged an accompanying Provider so severely that it could not take off. Before spare parts arrived, a direct hit from a mortar destroyed the aircraft.

Another Provider lost at Khe Sanh fell to anti-aircraft fire on 6 March. As he was making his final descent, the pilot radioed that his port jet engine had been hit. The plane crashed in the hills east of the runway, killing all 48 on board. This disaster led to the increased use of helicopters for supply duties.

Deliveries to the combat base formed

only part of the supply effort. The hilltop outposts around the plateau had to be sustained and the wounded had to be carried to safety. Marine helicopters did this essential job, flying in formation and escorted by Marine A-4M Skyhawks. The Boeing Vertol CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters each carried up to 4,000 pounds of cargo in nets slung beneath the fuselage, simply cutting the nets loose when they reached their destination. As soon as an outpost had accumulated several nets, the defenders bundled them together for a helicopter to retrieve. On one occasion, a Marine responsible for this task became entangled in the cargo slings and got a wild ride.

The C-123K Providers alone could not sustain Khe Sanh. Their cargo capacity was small and bad weather hampered their operation. Further, the Tet offensive created a nationwide demand for the cargo handlers and unloading equipment that might have improved efficiency at Khe Sanh. The obvious solution was to para-drop supplies into the base.

Late in January, C-130s flew five test missions and para-dropped 134,000 pounds of rations, ammunition and fuel.

At that time, the Hercules transports were still landing at the base, and the parachute method was not yet essential. The January experiments proved, however, that accuracy was impossible when dropping through clouds. Moreover, aircrews dare not para-drop a 2,000-pound supply pallet directly on to the base, for fear of causing casualties or damaging the runway. Instead they had to aim at a small dropping zone between the main perimeter and the position held by 1st Battalion, 9th Marines.

To hit this zone in adverse weather, radar control was essential. A ground radar operator guided the incoming transport to a point 400 feet (120m) above the runway's end. While the pilot maintained a fixed speed and altitude, the navigator gave windage corrections and counted off the seconds until the plane reached a point that would put the cargo onto the drop zone. The loadmaster released the pallet locks, the pilot suddenly increased air speed, and the cargo rolled from the open hatch. A small parachute opened in the slipstream and dragged out the main canopy.

Parachute delivery had two disadvantages. It was not suitable for bulky items, and it brought Marines under enemy fire when retrieving loads from the drop zone. As a result, the Air Force fell back on cargo extraction — at first implementing the techniques (described previously) used to supply the Seabees in 1967. From 16 February, C-130s began delivering cargo, including heavy timbers for bunkers, by the parachute extraction system. But the heavily laden pallets soon began to tear the aluminum matting of the runway. Besides, low-level parachute extraction

endangered both aircrews and Marines, because, at the moment of releasing the cargo, the C-130s had to fly dangerously close to a wrecked C-123K. The slightest miscalculation could send 2,000 pounds of cargo into Marine positions, as happened on 2 March, when a container crashed into a bunker and killed one man.

The Air Force therefore adopted a modified extraction system. As before, the C-130 skimmed the runway — but now a hook was extended from the cargo hatch to engage a cable strung across the runway. Thus the cargo was pulled out and the transport flew on. Pallets no longer skidded wildly across the runway. Further, the cables could be installed where runway damage would have the least effect on landings.

While many media reporters were predicting a grim fate for the Khe Sanh garrison, the Marines endured long hours of boredom, interrupted by fierce barrages — sometimes more than 1,000 rounds per day — and sudden ground attacks on the base and its outposts. Although the enemy relied largely on artillery, the threat of an all-out assault persisted: Col. Lownds had to keep his men alert. That meant keeping them meaningfully occupied, so Lownds spread the word that the North Vietnamese might be tunneling beneath the plateau to emerge suddenly in the midst of the base. He organized teams of "tunnel ferrets" to drive metal stakes into the earth and press stethoscopes against them. These improvised sensors were to detect the vibrations of underground digging.

In fact, as Lownds realized, the deep ravines scoring the sides of the plateau were the best defense against tunnels. The enemy could not dig deep enough to burrow beneath these gullies and reach the base. The only tunnel dug by the communists was detected and destroyed near Hill 861A.

Trenches rather than tunnels represented the gravest threat to the base. The enemy dug a network of entrenchments

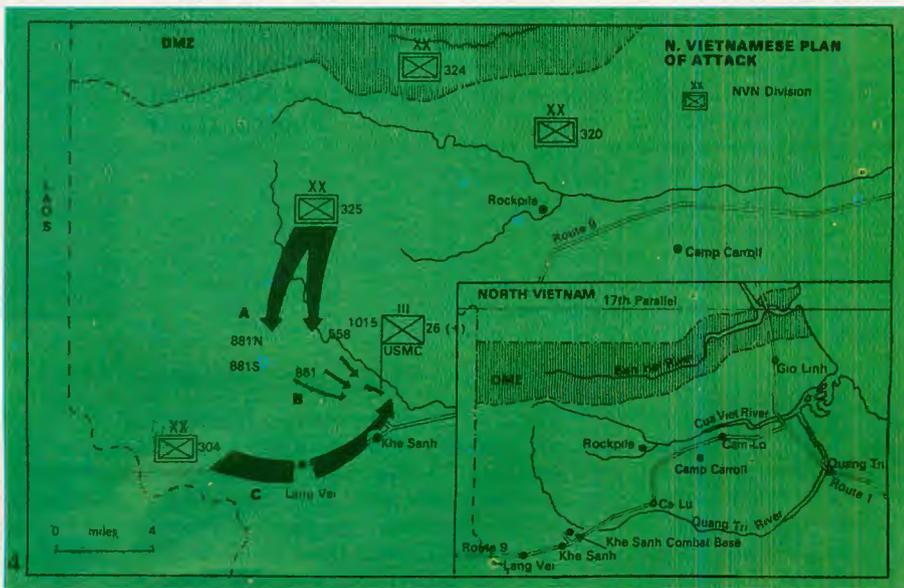
around Khe Sanh, often excavating close to 1,000 feet in a single night. Delayed action bombs proved the best defense against such traditional siege tactics.

Col. Lownds sent out frequent patrols to keep the enemy off balance and to collect intelligence. One of these, letting aggression override caution, fell into an ambush. Another Marine patrol went to the rescue, but the North Vietnamese anticipated the move and sprang a second ambush. After four hours' fighting, the patrols extricated themselves at the cost of 25 lives.

Along with the spectacular artillery and air bombardments, Marine snipers played an important role in defending Khe Sanh. Carrying bolt-action sporting rifles with telescopic sights, these sharpshooters waited patiently until an unwary North Vietnamese showed himself. Although comparatively few enemy were killed by sniper fire, the effect of seeing men shot down by an unsuspected, invisible enemy, cannot have helped North Vietnamese morale. In fact, realizing the effect of sniper fire on morale, the communists retaliated in kind, usually against Marines manning the outposts. One enemy marksman wounded 10 men before the sun reflecting from his 'scope betrayed his position to the crew of a 106mm recoilless rifle.

The North Vietnamese launched a large-scale final attack on the night of 29 February. Alerted by the electronic sensors, the defenders called upon mortars, artillery, tactical aircraft and B-52 heavy bombers to create a barrier of high explosive across the approaches to the eastern end of the main perimeter. The attack petered out before reaching the barbed wire of the South Vietnamese Rangers' position. Two weeks later, American intelligence reported that the enemy had begun withdrawing troops from Khe Sanh.

The defense of Khe Sanh called for cooperation between Air Force, Navy and





Marine Corps pilots, as well as airborne and ground controllers. Although the terminology used by one service might momentarily confuse the members of another, clarification had to be prompt. Typical of the spirit of cooperation was the Marine corporal whose radio requests called up 200 air strikes. Sometimes aircraft of different services responded directly to instructions from the ground; at other times, a forward air controller either relayed the request or himself located the target.

The Marine and Air Force forward air controllers faced difficult problems as they flew low over Khe Sanh. Often, they had to make immediate decisions, based solely on their observations from the cabin of a light aircraft, as to whether a specific target should be attacked. For example, early in February, Air Force Capt. Charles Rushforth saw a body of people moving westward from Khe Sanh in the opposite direction from that followed by most refugees. Suspicious, he was on the point of calling up artillery fire when a final, low altitude, pass convinced him that they were genuine refugees, probably hoping to salvage their belongings from the ruins of Lang Vei. There were many such unfortunate stragglers: some 6,000 refugees had to be excluded from the Khe

**ABOVE: Smoke and dust obscure part of beleaguered Marine combat base at Khe Sanh during North Vietnamese rocket attack. RIGHT: U.S. Air Force C-123K makes paratroop over sand-bagged bunkers at besieged Khe Sanh. Photos: USAF**



Sanh perimeter after the fall of Lang Vei. Attempts to air-lift them from the combat zone proved largely ineffectual.

Weather was both a help and a hindrance so far as tactical air support for the besieged was concerned. Cloud over North Vietnam meant that aircraft directed there could be diverted to Khe Sanh. But when low cloud hung over the

base, the forward air controllers' task was formidable. They must grope through the cloud cover, locate the target, and then climb above the overcast before directing the waiting fighter-bombers to the attack.

Radar was invaluable in guiding tactical fighters and heavy bombers, as well as in bringing transports to Khe Sanh through foul weather. Especially important was



**TOP:** Firing at rate of 6,000 rpm each, miniguns on AC-47 aircraft strafe Viet Cong positions in South Vietnam. **ABOVE LEFT:** AC-130 — or Gunship II — carries high-intensity light, flares for battlefield illumination, advanced detection devices, four miniguns and four M-61 Vulcan 20mm cannons. **ABOVE RIGHT:** U.S. Air Force F-105s of 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 388th Tactical Fighter Wing, drop 750-lb. bombs on target during Combat Sky Spot Mission in Southeast Asia. Photos: USAF



“Combat Skyspot,” a technique combining radar and computer, which enabled a ground operator to give a pilot the exact moment to drop his bombs in order to hit a selected target. The Marines had their own radar, controlling both air strikes and supply drops.

Utilizing data from sensors, the fire support coordination center at Khe Sanh could cover likely avenues of attack with combined tactical air, mortar and artillery barrages that could devastate an area up to 125 acres (50 hectares). Even more impressive were the strikes by B-52 Stratofortresses, when three aircraft flying at 25,000 feet might drop some 150,000 pounds of explosives. When the battle was over, Gen. Westmoreland declared that the air supply of the base was the “premier air logistical feat of the war.”

Planning for the relief of Khe Sanh began on 25 January, only four days after the battle opened — but the Tet offensive forced postponement. Finally, on 1 April, Maj. Gen. John J. Tolson, U.S. Army, launched “Operation Pegasus,” spearheaded by his 1st Cavalry Division (Airborne) and an ARVN airborne battalion.

As Tolson’s command advanced towards Khe Sanh, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, attacked an enemy-held hill that dominated Route 9, the highway for Pegasus. The Marines seized the crest against uncoordinated opposition; an enemy counter-attack the following morning, 5 April, was thrown back. The first element of Pegasus, a South Vietnamese airborne company, reached Khe Sanh on 6 April. Two days later, the Air Cavalry joined up with the Marines.

### Smoke rises from Khe Sanh fuel dump hit by Viet Cong mortar attack. Photo: USAF

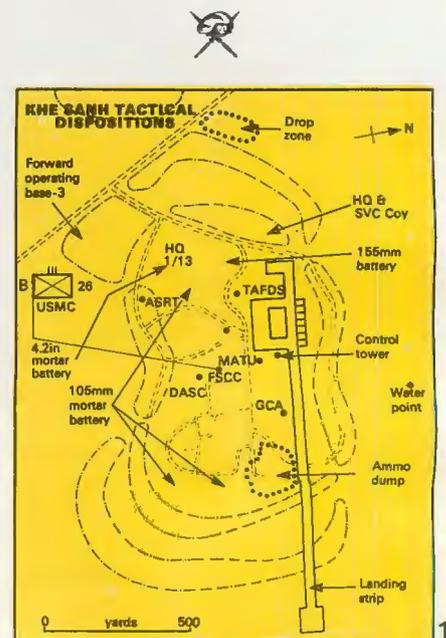
Route 9 was cleared for supply traffic by 12 April, and the skirmishing around Khe Sanh itself ended on 14 April — Easter Sunday — when Col. Bruce Meyers, who had replaced Col. Lownds, sent out two battalions to clear the area northwest of the base. Advancing behind a massive barrage, the Marines routed the enemy.

During the advance of Gen. Tolson’s column, which continued beyond Khe Sanh, the North Vietnamese seemed to melt away and the body count and number of weapons captured was disappointingly small. The enemy’s failure to storm Khe Sanh, added to his comparatively feeble resistance during Operation Pegasus, raised doubts concerning communist strategy. Did the North Vietnamese ever intend to seize the base — or were they creating a diversion to pin down troops and aircraft needed elsewhere in the aftermath of the Tet offensive?

President Johnson was convinced that the siege was the unsuccessful prelude to what was planned as an all-out attack along Route 9. However, it is more probable that the Tet offensive constituted the main communist effort. Khe Sanh was a desirable objective which the enemy would have stormed if the defense had seemed “soft” — but it is unlikely that

the North Vietnamese ever envisaged the base as a second Dien Bien Phu. It is difficult to sustain Lt. Gen. Lewis Walt’s claim that Khe Sanh was the “the most important battle of the war.” It has, however, been stated that during the 77-day siege, American aircraft dropped more than 100,000 short tons of bombs on the area around Khe Sanh — making it the most heavily-bombed target in the history of warfare.

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## I WAS THERE

**I**N January 1967, when our assignment orders worked their way down to us, they read: "Assigned to Khe Sanh Combat Base." We had no idea where Khe Sanh was or what it was like.

However, we learned quickly.

The learning process started at the armorer's building in Phu Bai. There was a bit of a shortage of M14 magazines at the time and the Marine issuing them out started to give us only six. A protest from one of our party solicited an exchange that boded ill for our minds and bodies.

"Hey Gunny, these Grunts want more than six magazines," called the Marine toward the back.

"Where are they headed for?" growled the Gunny.

"Khe Sanh," the Marine answered.

"Let 'em have all they want," the Gunny replied.

Several days later 10 Marines boarded a CH-46 for an anxious ride up into the Annamite Cordillera in Vietnam's northwestern corner. Touchdown at Khe Sanh in pre-siege days was a leisurely affair: we had lots of time to eye-ball the place as we moved off the LZ.

From the strip what struck you first was the mountains; Dong Tri (1,015 meters) due north, and swinging around to the left 950, 558, 861, 881N, 881S, 689 and 471. In almost every direction, there was nothing but sinister, brooding mountains and hills. And even a Marine as "boot" as I, knew instantly that there were some equally sinister people up on those hills looking back out of slanted eyes. Khe Sanh was a fishbowl and we were destined to be in the bottom of it.

At that time of year, ground fog at Khe Sanh limited visibility to a few meters through most of the night and morning. Our first night on line in the trenches west of the strip was not made any easier by that fog. By then we'd heard enough sea stories to scare us out of our wits, but the biggest problem was that some of them were *not* sea stories. As the ground fog swirled across your wire and lapped into the trenchline strange things started to happen. It got very, very quiet and then things began to move — trees, barbed wire stakes, the tin cans full of rocks you had tied to your wire.

But sometimes those moving trees weren't trees. Khe Sanh was then, and was even more so later, one of the few places in Vietnam where Charlie didn't mind you knowing that he was out there. Charlie thought the bamboo and elephant-grass-covered hills belonged to him — as we learned when we became intimately acquainted with them — and was not too happy about us occupying the plateau.

As a result, Charlie did lots of neat things to us. Like cutting Route 9 from Ca Lu and the coast so we were reduced to eating spam (breakfast) and C-rats (supper, lunch too when we had enough) until the ground fog burned off and we could get resupplied by air. Charlie also liked to mix his mortar fire with rockets and arty, which made us realize that our holes were not deep enough. He also sent probes out from time to time to make our nights more interesting by: cutting our wire, turning our claymores around, yelling out scurrilous remarks, chasing water bulls in-

to our wire and banging on them damn bamboo signal sticks.

But we did a lot of neat things to Charlie too. Our recon people kept him moving and when he stopped or paused too long Charlie got a visit from our jets or "Spooky."

Looking back on it, I think that was the night we did it. We made Charlie mad. The next time he came calling he brought two regiments or so. They called that one the Hill Battle (861, 881 South and 881 North). But Charlie guessed wrong on that one. In late April the weather at Khe Sanh is fair. Within two days Charlie got to watch company after company of Marines deplane from C-130s and head for his hills. It was also nice shooting weather for jets, Huey gunships, and "Spooky" and buzzing-around weather for the "Bird-dogs," which directed it all. When it was over in May, Charlie was hauling ass for Laos — leaving 940 bodies on the battlefield and probably more in the bush.

Whatever Charlie was, he wasn't dumb. The next time he came, he came early enough in the year that Khe Sanh was socked in and he brought two divisions. By that time the 26th Marines had taken over Khe Sanh defense and we were across the DMZ near Con Thien.

Charlie would probably have preferred to get a piece of the 3rd Marines. Sorry about that, Charlie. But I think the 26th was more than you expected — or wanted.

Jim Graves



## RAISING THE COLORS

**A**TENTION to Colors." The order having been given, Capt. William H. Dabney, a product of the Virginia Military Institute, snapped to attention, faced the jerry-rigged flagpole, and saluted, as did every other man in Company I, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines.

The ceremony might well have been at any one of a hundred military installations around the world except for a few glaring irregularities. The parade ground was a battle-scarred hilltop to the west of Khe Sanh and the men in the formation stood half submerged in trenches or foxholes. Instead of crisply starched utilities, razor sharp creases, and gleaming brass, these Marines sported scraggly beards, ragged trousers, and rotted helmet liner straps.

The only man in the company who could play a bugle, 2nd Lt. Owen S. Matthews, lifted the pock-marked instrument to his lips and spat out a choppy version of "To the Colors" while two enlisted men raced to the RC-292 radio antenna which served

as the flagpole and gingerly attached the Stars and Stripes. As the mast with its shredded banner came upright, the Marines could hear the ominous "thunk," "thunk," "thunk," to the southwest of their position which meant that North Vietnamese 120mm mortar rounds had left their tubes. They also knew that in 21 seconds those "thunks" would be replaced by much louder, closer sounds but no one budged until Old Glory waved high over the hill.

When Lt. Matthews sharply cut off the last note of his piece, Company I disappeared; men dropped into trenches, dived headlong into foxholes, or scrambled into bunkers. The area which moments before had been bristling with humanity was suddenly a ghost town. Seconds later explosions walked across the hilltop spewing black smoke, dirt, and debris into the air. Rocks, splinters, and spent shell fragments rained on the flattened Marines but, as usual, no one was hurt. As quickly as the attack came, it was over. While the smoke lazily drifted away, a

much smaller banner rose from the Marines' positions. A pole adorned with a pair of red, silk panties — Maggie's Drawers — was waved back and forth above one trenchline to inform the enemy that he had missed again. A few men stood up and jeered or cursed at the distant gunners; others simply saluted with an appropriate obscene gesture. The daily flag-raising ceremony on Hill 881 South was over.

This episode was just one obscure incident which coupled with hundreds of others made up the battle for Khe Sanh. The ceremony carried with it no particular political overtones but was intended solely as an open show of defiance toward the communists as well as a morale booster for the troops. The jaunty courage, quiet determination, and macabre humor of the *men on Hill 881S* exemplified the spirit of the U.S. and South Vietnamese defenders who not only defied the enemy but, in a classic 77-day struggle, destroyed him.

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# 3-1 BATTALION BUSHMEN

Montagnards of South Africa  
Their SWAPO Kill Ratio Is 36-1

by Bob Poos

Photos by Bob Poos and Al Venter



**I**T could have been any dirty little war. Most of us were uniformed and armed although there was a motley collection of a dozen or so civilians of different races. Some of the soldiers looked both tough and bored, having been there before, others pale with anticipation of the unknown that awaited them.

Outside rested a C-130, camouflage paint and all, its rear cargo door gaping. Inside we were packed in a cramped military-airfield flight-departure waiting room that featured scarred metal tables and choking clouds of cigarette smoke.

It wasn't Saigon's Tan Son Nhut, although it looked like it. Nor was it Vientiane although it looked just like Vientiane once did. Nor was it Kimpo Airfield outside Seoul although it resembled that too. Nor was it Salisbury nor Phnom Penh nor Kuala Lumpur during the Emergency, nor any of a dozen other similar places that have all looked the same.

What it was, was Waterkloof Military Air Base outside Pretoria, South Africa — our destination, M'Pacha Air Base in South West Africa's Caprivi Strip where Zambian and Angolan-based SWAPO terrorists do interesting things like mine roads, ambush vehicles, raid villages and all the other pursuits that Marxist terrorists excel in. The VC would love it. As I said, it's another dirty little war and we were headed right for it.

The flight-suited pilot announced that the trip would take 2½ hours and the last half hour would be flown at tree-top level at top speed "because of SAM missiles." Wonderful.

And the landing was one which would have been familiar to many SOF readers. The 130 roared in on a short tarmac strip, bounced a couple of times and the pilot reversed the propeller pitch to bring the aircraft to a short, shuddering halt.

A briefing officer addressed those of us who were headed for a destination beyond M'Pacha, speaking in a crisp British-sounding accent:

"You are going to Omega Camp. It is a five-hour journey by Land Rover and it can, I am afraid, get quite rough. Not long ago just outside of this base, the terrs ambushed a vehicle and killed three officers — including two majors." For some reason, he seemed quite proud of the fact that two majors were ambush victims.

### **Our Land Rover skidded sideways.**

We were less than a kilometer out of M'Pacha when a loud report sounded and our Land Rover skidded toward the roadside. I was half out of the seat and grabbing for a 9mm pistol when a South African soldier calmly remarked, "It's

only a blowout." Loud reports and skidding vehicles in bush country tend to unsettle my nerves but didn't seem to bother anyone else.

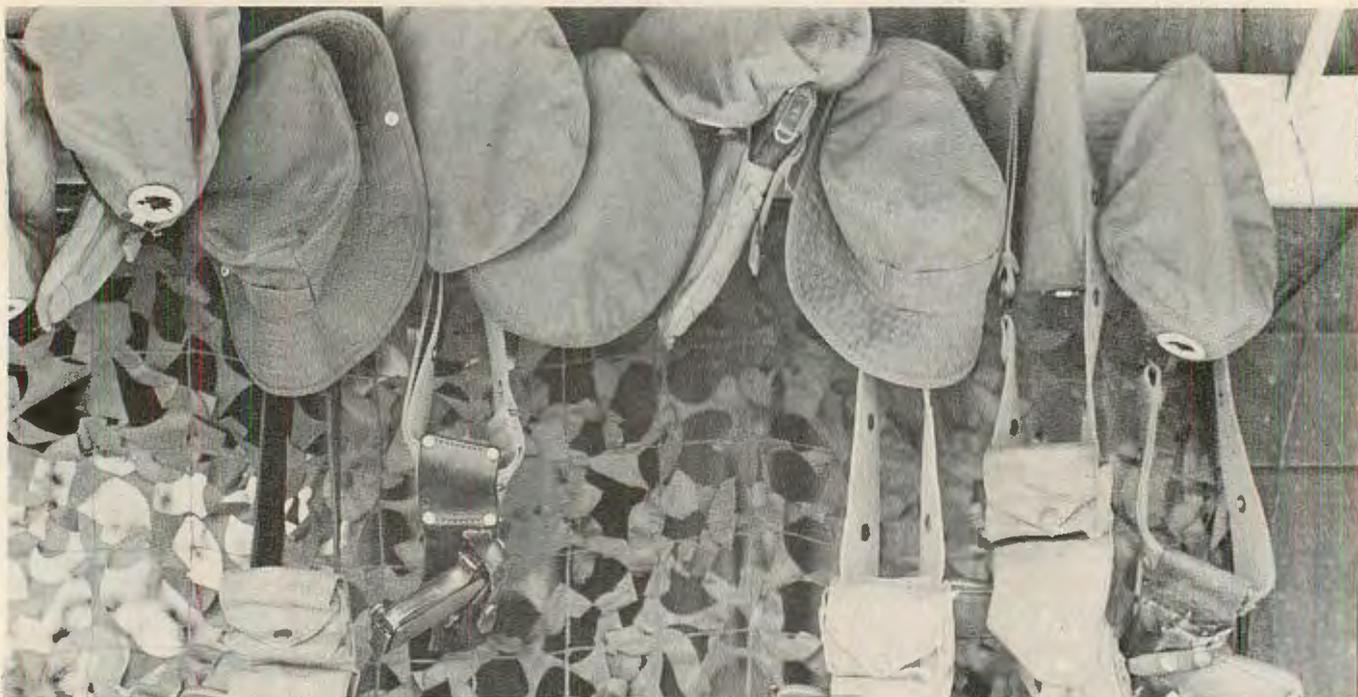
Tire fixed, our two-vehicle convoy raced on and it was soon evident what the briefing officer meant when he said, "The trip can get quite rough." The smooth, paved highway came to an abrupt end and the vehicles headed onto a rutted, pitted, waterhole-pocked dirt trail that was the worst road I've seen since Pleiku Province in 1965. The next five hours were a bone-jarring, tooth-rattling experience that will not soon be forgotten.

We had a brief break when the Land Rover got mired up to its axle in one of the larger, deeper waterholes we had been splashing through. The six occupants debarked and sloshed over to roadside. I stood there feeling nervous, disliking my closeness to a stuck vehicle in an "Operational Area." The South Africans stood around looking bored.

Fortunately the chase vehicle, a truck, had a winch on the bumper and we were soon freed.

Shortly thereafter we moved onto a relatively smooth, graveled road and before long came to a halt at a barricade with sandbagged machine-gun positions on either side.

Someone muttered, "Thank god, Kongola Fort. Not much longer to go now."



South African sidearms and headgear are hung up inside the Three-One Battalion's officer/NCO mess as men eat evening meal. Note Star 9mm pistols and Black Crow on white background battalion insignia.

And, indeed, over on the right was a Beau-Geste-style fort with gunports. We were at the Cuando River, bridged here, and a crew of South African engineers was busy working on a secondary bridge pier. A man clad only in tiger shorts and covered with mud and sand crawled out of the muck. It was Lt. Nick O'Brien, an old friend of SOF.

"How're Bob Brown and John Donovan?" he asked, wiping a mixture of slime, sand and sweat from his face. "This job's so screwed up, I thought I'd get down in the muck with the troopies and work out some of my frustrations."

I assured him that Brown and Donovan were fine and that Donovan would have been along had it not been for six bridges in Illinois that he had contracted to blow up. O'Brien was delighted to get a copy of the latest SOF. They are hard to come by in the Caprivi Strip.

Then we moved out once again and although the road didn't get any better, it wasn't a long trip to Omega Camp, home of 3-1 Battalion (its men universally refer to it as "Three-One Battalion," as is the custom in the South African army.)

### 3-1: The Bushman Battalion

Three-One Battalion is unique to the South African army — for that matter to any army in the world. It is composed of Bushmen, semi-nomadic people who have subsisted for centuries in the arid brush plains of southern Africa and along some of its rivers, land so poor that less hardy people cannot exist on it.

The South African army used Bushmen for years as civilian trackers but it was not until 1974 that the South Africans, con-

fronted by a steadily growing war of SWAPO terrorists in South West Africa (Namibia) decided to put them under arms, in uniform. Much to the surprise of many South African whites, the experiment worked. Worked so well in fact that Three-One Battalion is now one of the finest units in the Republic's army — which is a superb force in itself.

Commandant (Lt. Col.) Piet (pronounced Pete) Hall, commanding officer of Three-One Battalion, says: "The battalion started in 1974 with six white officers and NCOs and 45 Bushmen, employed mainly as trackers for white counter-terrorist units. But they [the Bushmen] took so well to soldiering and were such good learners that it quickly expanded. The Portuguese [in Angola before their pull-out] had used them as soldiers all along. When the Portuguese left, they started drifting across the border because the new black Marxist regime persecuted them, either exterminating or enslaving them. They have proven a real asset to us and the relationship has mutual benefits because they have both employment against and protection from their former persecutors."

To anyone who spent time in the highlands of South Vietnam, the comparisons between the Bushmen and the Montagnards is too close to miss. The Bushmen are essentially mercenaries, hired soldiers, who get along well with the mainly white South African soldiers. They loathe the blacks, particularly SWAPO terrorists, because for centuries the blacks have considered them worthless, unschooled savages — just as did the lowland Vietnamese the 'Yards. (A Special

Forces A team veteran would feel right at home working with the Bushmen.)

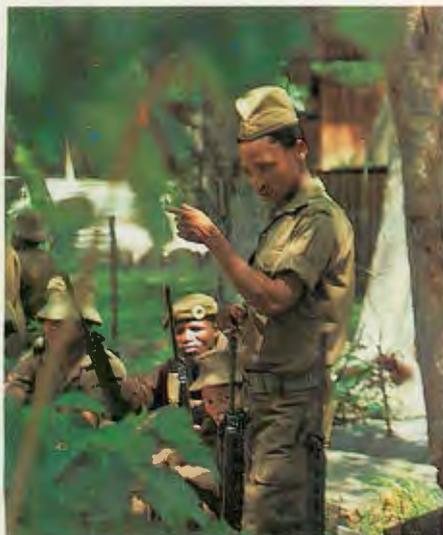
### "I like fighting SWAPO."

One Bushman sergeant told me: "I like this work, fighting SWAPO, so much, the South Africans almost wouldn't have to pay me." He grinned. "But it's nice that they do. And take care of my family when I'm out in the bush." Many a Special Forces trooper and Marine CAP veteran heard similar comments in 'Nam.

And, like in 'Nam, the Bushmen do not physically resemble the majority indigenous population. There are two basic tribes of Bushmen (there were about nine of Montagnards in 'Nam, as I recall). The dryland Bushmen are known as Vasquela and are usually dark tan in color, smaller in stature and more nomadic in nature than their river Bushmen cousins. The latter, called Barkwena, are taller and have blacker skins, although not the purplish-black hue of their SWAPO opponents, who are mainly from the Ovambo or related tribes.

Like the Montagnards, the Bushmen are much more at home in the boondocks than the majority indigenous group, since most black Africans in South West Africa, Angola and Botswana tend to be herdsmen who live in villages rather than hunters who are intimate with living outside — and pursuing game.

The Bushmen have an enlistment arrangement that differs from that of the 'Yards who served with us in 'Nam. It is indefinite, rather than the short-term three-, six- or nine-month enlistments the Montagnards preferred. (I remember be-



ABOVE: Bushman noncom giving instructions to his troops. RIGHT: Bushman baptism ceremony.

ing in an A team camp once when the 'Yards' enlistment ran out, an attack was imminent and the army captain-adviser was understandably eager to settle the issue; he offered a substantial raise in pay to all hands; it was accepted and the 'Yards fought bravely during the subsequent siege.)

As Piet Hall explains his arrangement with the Bushmen: "They can quit anytime and I can fire them anytime. I don't have to fire many and few ever quit. But it gives us both flexibility. None ever quit when they're out on ops."

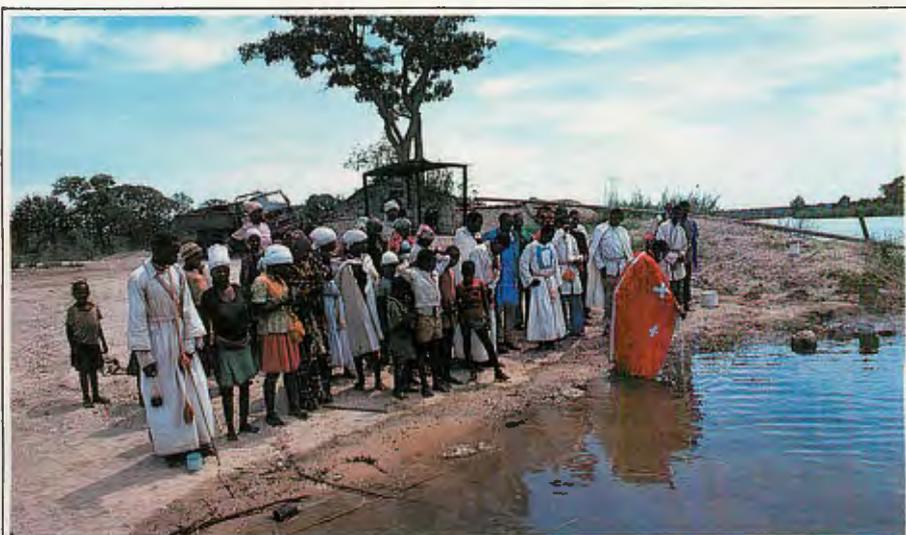
"Half Colonel" Hall (that's what they call them in the South African army) explains some more about the tough little Bushmen he has been working with for years and will continue to lead for several more: "From that small start, we now have 600 Bushmen and 250 white officers and NCOs. There are Bushmen NCOs also, but we always have one white in a stick (four to 12 men) out on ops."

"Besides the troops, we also take care of about 700 women and 1,200 children and some 200 other dependents, older people, cooks, laborers and such."

"Since the two tribes have entirely different languages and since each tribe has subgroups that speak different dialects, the first thing we do is introduce them to a common language — Afrikaans. Partly because of that and partly because these people are unacquainted with civilization, their initial training period ranges from nine to 11 months, based on how quickly an individual absorbs instructions."

"The training is basically your counter-insurgency work. They don't get much conventional warfare training and there's virtually no spit and polish. They learn how to properly wear a uniform, stand at attention and salute and that's about it."

MAY/80



## BUSHMAN BAPTISM

"This ought to be interesting," said Lt. Frannie DuToit of South Africa's 3-1 Battalion. "I think they're going to have a baptismal ceremony."

We were crossing to the mainland of the Okavango River from an island where we had spent the night: myself, SOF Africa Correspondent Al Venter and a small group of the battalion's mixed batch of Bushmen and whites.

Sgt. Martin Deetlefs — his nickname, pronounced "Puerter," means Big Foot in Afrikaans; he got it in the army because of the size 12 boots he requires — steered the rubber assault boat to the shore near a colorfully-dressed group of Barkwena (river Bushmen) assembled at river's edge.

He said: "It's OK to take pictures but please don't interfere too much with the ceremony. It's quite serious to these chaps."

Frannie DuToit elaborated. "This group of Barkwena consider themselves Christians. Actually, the religion they practice is a mix of animism, ancestor worship, Islam and Christianity. They have practiced animism and ancestor worship for centuries and have been exposed to both Islam and Christianity for many, many years. Quite practical people, these. They try to absorb a little of the best of everything they have encountered. That's part of what makes them survivors in a hostile environment."

And the ceremony was a colorful one, indeed, as the accompanying photo indicates. A priest clad in a white gown with a red cross on it would conduct a tribesman to water's

edge and then someone whom I suppose was a sort of subpriest would walk the person to be baptized out into the Okavango until they were at shoulder depth. Then the subpriest would duck the baptized one's head underwater three times.

Presently a loud murmur came from the crowd and Lt. DuToit said, "You're in on an historical moment. The chief of all the Barkwena has agreed to be baptized. We'll be the only non-Barkwena to see such a thing in the history of the world."

The priest went through what seemed to me, a fallen-by-the-wayside former Catholic, a meaningless ritual but the crowd of 30 or so Barkwena seemed to understand it.

Then it was the chief's turn. He displayed a distinct aversion to entering the water but the subpriest steered him gently by the arm and they walked out to chest depth. The old chief resisted being ducked, but the priest accomplished it, firmly but respectfully. After the third dunk the chief broke into a broad grin and brandished his arm in a victory gesture and then burst into laughter. The delighted crowd applauded and roared with laughter too.

Even the Bushmen and the South African officers and noncoms in our boat were chuckling.

It may not exactly have been religion as it's known in the "civilized" world but the Barkwena enjoyed and obviously drew satisfaction from it and that's what religion's supposed to be all about, isn't it? —Bob Poos

"Although the initial period might sound long, these chaps have good retentive powers and they do not forget their lessons and training once learned."

"These are good, aggressive troops in an attack but if they don't have strong leadership, they may tend to flinch in the face of an ambush."

"They tend to fire their rifles high — this is only a theory — but I believe that is due to the fact that for centuries they have been bowmen; a bow is a high-trajectory weapon and this instinct prevails upon them when firing a rifle. They make excellent mortarmen and I think that, again, is because of their instinctive use of high trajectory weapons."

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 47

"And one other problem is that when an enemy is hiding behind an object, they tend to fire at the object itself rather than just to one side or another in an effort to flush him out.

"Most people think it strange, but they make excellent paratroopers, have no fear at all of jumping from a plane. Your Bushman is a very practical person and to him an airdrop is simply the quickest, easiest way to get from point A to point B."

I spent several days with the Bushmen and can testify to their skill at maneuvering through the sparse scrublands of this part of Africa. They have an eye for terrain and use cover to the best advantage. Although we did not make contact, I watched some live-fire exercises and was impressed. (All training is done with live ammo and the troopers are not intimidated by the cracking of bullets inches away. The live-fire training is chiefly for a practical purpose — there could be some SWAPO out there where you're practicing your art and the exercise could turn into OJT — On-the-Job Training.

The Bushmen's excellence has a practical measuring point too — their kill ratio. It is 36 to one. (The week I spent in South West Africa, the army killed some 175 SWAPO at a loss of two killed. All told in 1979, the South African army lost 30 killed there.)

I cannot go into detail on Three-One Battalion's maneuver techniques for security reasons (SWAPO officers are avid SOF readers, I learned) but I can say that former Marine Force Recon people, LURPS and SF veterans would be familiar with it.

Omega Camp's men are responsible for maintaining security in western Caprivi, an area 200 kilometers from west to east and 30 kilometers north to south that is bounded on the east by the Cuando River and on the west by Kavango (province of South West Africa). The battalion, however, does not limit its operations to western Caprivi. It also operates in the east and over in Kavango, and as Piet Hall says, "Those are really our hotspots. Ninety percent of our contacts are made in hot pursuit of SWAPO there.

"I guess they told you that Katima Mulilo (location of M'Pacha Airfield) received a rocket attack not long ago. SWAPO fired god knows how many rockets, maybe a hundred, and only one did any real damage, hit a barracks as the men were trying to get out and killed 11 of them. Wounded a few civilians in Katima, but none seriously."

I suddenly looked forward even less to the return journey to M'Pacha than before.

### **Awesome physical hardiness.**

Another similarity to the Montagnards is the Bushmen's awesome physical hardiness. These are little people, ranging in



weight from 100 to 140 pounds. Their standard field gear weighs 110 pounds and the radio man carries 140 pounds on his back. That is like carrying one's own weight. But they can march seemingly forever without undue strain.

Standard weapons are FN rifles, Star 9mm pistols, Bren light machine guns, South African-made 60mm mortars and some more exotic weapons but I promised the South Africans I wouldn't say what they are. (I recognized all of them and I am by no means a weapons expert.)

Unlike many Rhodesians who sneer at American experiences in Vietnam ("You lost the war, didn't you"), the South Africans can't hear enough about them.

The South Africans marvel at the length and violence of contact in Vietnam. Hearing descriptions of the week-long battle in the Ia Drang Valley, the three-day fight at An Thi, not to mention the 77 days of Khe Sahn's siege, Sgt. Martin Deetlefs remarked: "Amazing. Our contacts are usually just a matter of minutes. They are quite violent while they last but they are short."

### **"We'd crawled into a terr camp."**

Deetlefs, who serves with one of the four- to six-man recon units, recalls an incident where he very nearly got himself "seriously in the soup. We were moving at night, trying to pin down a large group of terrors. As we were crawling, I noticed some forms around me. We had crawled past a sleeping sentry and were right in the middle of the terr camp. Now we had to crawl backwards, again past the sleeping sentry. It took forever, but we made it."

The terrorist unit suffered heavily the next day.

Reasons that few Bushmen take their option to quit at any time are the pay and benefits they get.

A Bushman sergeant, for example, gets about \$230 per month plus another \$3.15 a day while on ops and they spend five to seven months of the year out on ops.



Besides that, there is a light work pension program for men who get beyond combat age, for widows of men KIA and for elderly dependents of soldiers. Dependents are also fed and housed, as, of course, are the soldiers.

Col. Hall is also quite proud of the fact that Three-One Battalion has been able to significantly improve the health of his Bushmen and their dependents. "When the unit began, child mortality rate was extremely heavy because of malnutrition. Now it is practically nonexistent but for



one thing. Twin births are against Bushman tradition and when this happens, the parents watch until they can determine which is the healthier of the two and then the weaker is put out to die. This may be cruel but it is something they believe deeply in and I would not interfere with it for the world."

Hall grins. "There is one chore which I used to handle but I have now assigned to the RSM (senior NCO of the Battalion), that is being the divorce judge. These people have high morals — higher I'd say

**TOP LEFT:** Bushmen troops relax at Omega Camp in Caprivi Strip. Note old dugout canoe which symbolizes vessels once used by River Bushmen. **TOP MIDDLE:** Closeup of Bushman troops in the field. Soldier grinning is from Barkwena River Bushman tribe. **TOP RIGHT:** Closeup of Bushman corporal in dress uniform. **ABOVE:** Bushmen from Three-One Battalion move through sparse bush in Caprivi Strip Operational Area.



**ABOVE:** SOF Managing Editor Bob Poos shown with variety of weapons captured by Three-One Bushman Battalion in Operational Area of Southwest Africa. Poos holds Danish Madsen light machine gun. (caliber unknown). At upper left is a 7.62mm Russian RPD light machine gun. Below it is RPK 7.62x39. Gun on ground below Madsen is a Russian PKM 7.62x54 the latest model of this weapon. Below it is a British 9mm Sten. At upper right is a German Model 34 light machine gun in 7.92 caliber. Below it is an RPD Russian LMG in 7.62x39 caliber. Vertical weapons from left are French 9mm Brescia, Israeli Uzi 9mm sub-machine gun, an AK-47, a G3 assault rifle in 7.62 caliber, a Model 2 U.S. .30 caliber carbine, a Czech XZ-52 in 7.62x39 caliber, an 8mm Mauser Model 98 and an ancient Martini-Henry falling block which came in .455 caliber. At bottom is an AR-10, manufactured in Holland, coming in 7.62(308) caliber.



## Bushman troops, white noncom in center, study map of Caprivi Strip Operational Area.

than the whites — but occasionally there is a case of adultery or one or the other of a couple wants a divorce. Since such proceedings are vague in tribal law and since the Bushmen more or less recognize us as the supreme authority, anyhow, we handle that. My RSM, I might add, judges these cases with Solomon-like wisdom.”

Hall adds, “When this program began, the Bushmen were most prone to diarrhea, TB, conjunctivitis and such. Through proper diet we’ve been able to build up their resistance and some day this will give them a longer life span, but now a Bushman is old at 45 to 50.

“Another thing we do not interfere with is their religious beliefs, a form of

animism and ancestor worship. However, there are ‘Christian’ missionaries of their own tribes and some of them opt for that.” (See accompanying sidebar—*The Eds.*)

As my visit to Omega Camp and the ensuing forays to the Angolan and Botswanian borders came to a close, I had two reflections. One was that the South Africans at Omega Camp were most sanguine about some day being the subject of an attack. Although everyone goes everywhere armed either with a Star 9mm pistol or an FN rifle, no one seemed concerned about the possibility of a sapper raid or a mortar or rocket attack.

*Continued on page 84*

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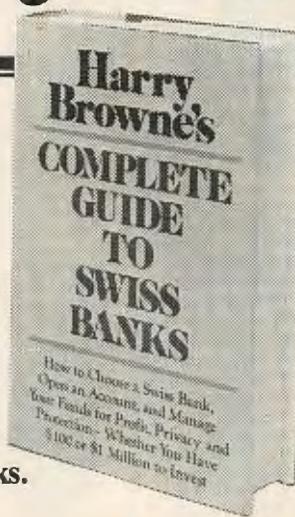
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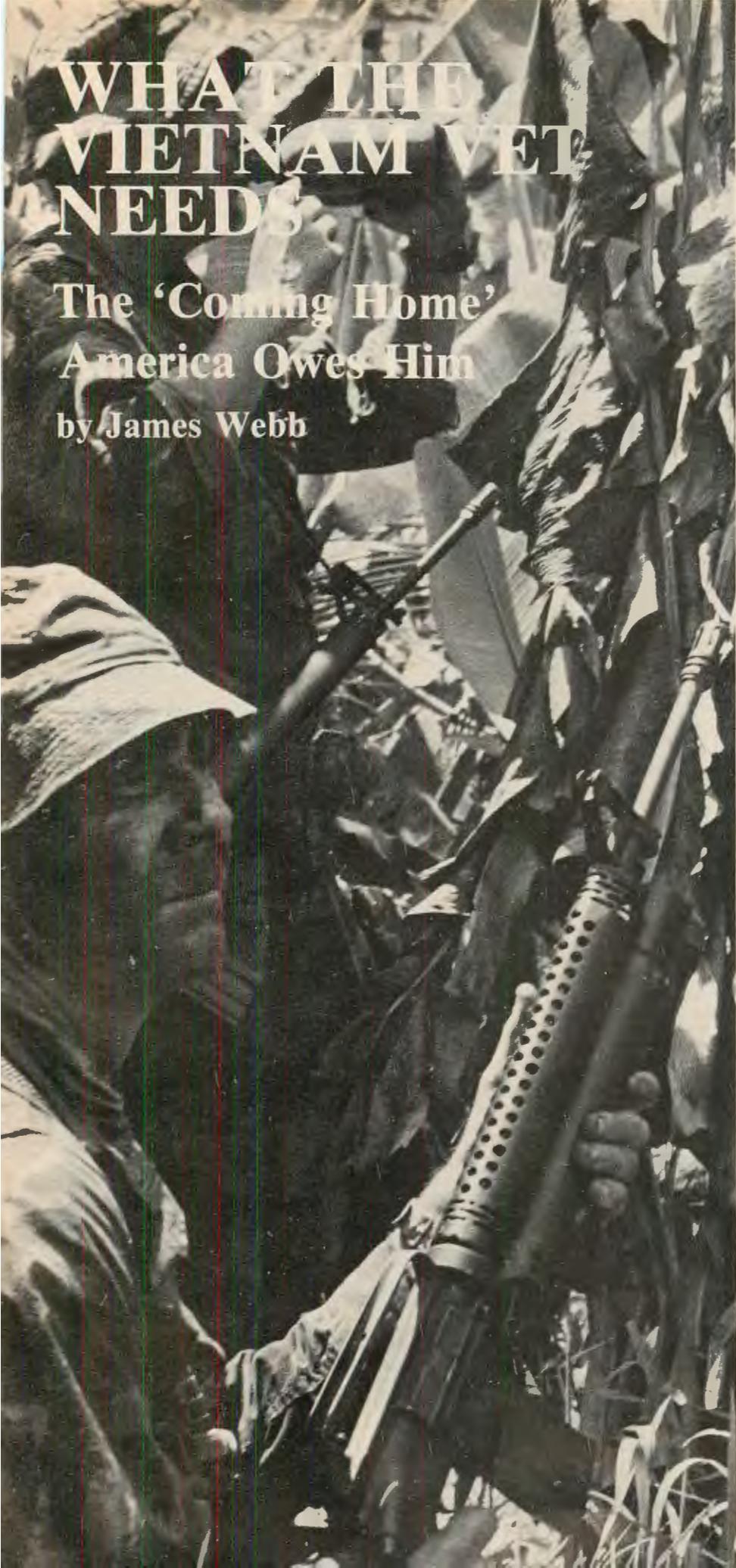


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# WHAT THE VIETNAM VET NEEDS

## The 'Coming Home' America Owes Him

by James Webb

*The writer of this column, done originally for the [Dallas Morning] News, is one of the most highly decorated heroes of the Vietnam War; the author of a best-selling novel, Fields of Fire, and an expert on the status of the Vietnam veteran.*

*While commanding a rifle platoon and later a company with the Fifth Marines, he won the Navy Cross, the Silver Star and two Bronze Stars in combat. Wounded twice, he was separated from the Corps because of his wounds. After receiving his law degree from Georgetown, he became counsel for the House Veterans Affairs Committee.*

I am often asked by interested citizens what the Vietnam veteran needs in order to fully assimilate back into the mainstream of our society. I am usually expected to name some new veterans' benefit, or an improvement to an existing one; a psychological readjustment program, perhaps, or maybe a new employment package.

But, while such quantitative offerings might be helpful to some veterans, these are not the most urgent needs for any of them: our Vietnam veterans have simply never been accorded the dignity of their experience, and in my opinion, most of their substantive difficulties stem from this one spiritual failing of society in general.

Even the most materially successful Vietnam veterans still carry around a piece of hurt from not having had their combat sacrifices recognized by their nation that sent them off to fight.

As for the others, I wonder how many psychological problems would exist if our government and populace had allowed those troubled veterans to look positively on their contributions. I wonder what sort of employment programs would be needed if prospective employers recognized the essential honor of combat service, as opposed to combat avoidance, during the most politically troubled war in our history.

### **Vietnam produced more Marine combat casualties than WWII.**

It is amazing to see the many misperceptions that continue to abound with respect to Vietnam and the people who fought there. Vietnam is remembered as a dirty little war, hardly a war in the traditional sense at all. And yet, even though there were no Iwo Jimas or Guadalcanals, Vietnam produced more combat casualties for the Marine Corps than World War II.

Vietnam is remembered as a war of the unwilling, conjuring visions of draftees being dragged kicking and screaming into uniform; and yet, two-thirds of those who served during the Vietnam era were volunteers, while two-thirds of those who served during World War II, the great "patriotic war," were drafted.

Vietnam is remembered as a political issue that pitted youth against age, widening the so-called "generation gap" — in reality it pitted culture against culture within various age groups. Neither Abbie Hoffman nor Dr. Spock spoke for me, or for the people I served with.

It was a war where people my age could gain political credentials for the rest of their lives by taking a few weekends out of their college careers and marching against it, while those who gave years, and often portions of their bodies, gained no more than stigmas.

In this context, it is interesting to note that, during all of Vietnam, only some 13,800 men actually refused the draft; for every man who actually refused to serve, four others died in Vietnam and more than 6,000 chose to serve.

It is also interesting to remember that, during the 1976 presidential campaign, when amnesty became such a hot issue, only some 2,000 draft evaders still remained in Canada — fewer men than those still missing in Southeast Asia.

Why did the media give so much play to the few who committed anti-social acts, and ignore the many who put their lives on the line?

## **We have never put the Vietnam veteran in proper focus.**

We have never really put the Vietnam veteran himself into proper focus. He is viewed largely as a draftee who put his 18 months in and got his early out and was not in need of significant readjustment help. In fact, he spent more time in uniform than even his World War II counterpart, during a period when our society was undergoing so many changes that the whole era was characterized as the "Future Shock" syndrome. As such, the Vietnam veteran probably needed more readjustment help than the World War II veteran, and many Vietnam veterans no doubt continue to have problems that could have been eliminated or reduced by such help.

The Vietnam veteran is often still viewed as an habitual user of dangerous drugs. When I was on my nationwide tour promoting *Fields of Fire*, one of the most frequently asked questions from interviewers was whether I had ever used heroin, as if we all had walked around with a needle hanging out of our arms.

In fact, hard drugs never emerged on any scale at all until the very end of the war. As for other drugs, I find it incredibly ironic that marijuana use became a dangerous act when soldiers indulged during leisure time, yet the males and females of their peer group who stayed behind in college could and often did blow their minds every weekend on dope, mescaline, LSD and other drugs, with absolutely no stigma once they graduated. I can honestly say that drug usage was much more prevalent at Georgetown Law

School when I studied there than it ever had been while I was in the Marine Corps. Where did the veterans go? To the unemployment lines, stigmatized by someone else's habit.

People too often remember the Vietnam veteran for the aberration of My Lai, rather than for the incredible courage and sacrifice that went into Khe Sanh, Hue City, Dak To and a thousand other places that never made the papers but caused all the frustration and fear and misery of every other war our countrymen have fought.

The Vietnam veteran is often characterized by bureaucrats as an "employment problem," on the same scale as ex-offenders. As a matter of fact, that has been one of the employment slogans for some time: Hire the veteran and the ex-offenders, as if both need to be forgiven.

There has been an employment problem, but it has been caused in too many cases by events beyond the control of the veteran.

First, he was taken into the service right out of high school, for the most part, and had never begun a profession. Consequently, he had no re-employment rights when he returned, as did so many veterans of other wars. Second, there was a recession, and he had no seniority, so he was the first man out the door when a cutback occurred — last in, first out. Third, affirmative action programs gave court sanctions to employment of women and minorities, so that employers were often reaching over the heads of the veterans to fill quotas. Fourth, because of the misperceptions about the nature of the war and of his service, too many people were afraid of him. As a result, the Vietnam veteran too often found himself, and continues to find himself, unemployed or underemployed.

## **How can you help?**

What can you do to help the Vietnam veteran fit himself back into society on the terms of his experience?

First, understand the nature of the war, and of his part in it. Then, buy him the beer you owed him 10 years ago, and let him talk about it. You'll find out that he is by and large a class act, much tougher than his nonveteran peers, much more used to hassle and disappointment.

You'll also find out that he's probably the best patriot this country has ever produced, because he's had to think about his decision to serve for years, and despite what Jane Fonda and her friends might want you to believe, he doesn't feel like apologizing for having served. I have a feeling you'll be pleasantly surprised.

And you may end up offering him a job or at least another beer.

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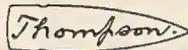


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MONEY BACK  
GUARANTEE

# MERCHA

by Tom Wilkinson

I attended the annual Association of U.S. Army (AUSA) convention in Washington, D.C., at the new Sheraton hotel, on October 28 through 30, 1979, in behalf of *Soldier of Fortune*. It is perhaps the biggest military hardware show in the Americas. Displays ranged from clerical to the most sophisticated anti-armor, anti-aircraft infantry material imaginable — in all stages of development. Some were ideas, some prototypes, some ready for production. Several of these systems are of particular interest.

It was also a place to meet the great and the famous: Gen. E.C. Meyer, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army; Senator Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.); Uzi Gaile, weapons expert and inventor from Israel, and VIPs from most major free-world arms manufacturers.

The impressive anti-armor systems included the new Hughs AH-64 attack helicopter; Fairchild's A-10 close-support aircraft, and the Rockwell International Hellfire missile system that can be used on the AH-64, the A-10 or ground-launched. For individual use, the Viper was most impressive. It appears to be a much improved Light Anti-tank Weapon (LAW).

Among individual and crew-served weapons, those of Fabrique Nationale and RAMO impressed me. FN had its fine MAG-58 machine gun and its new light machine gun, the 5.56 MINIMI. At the FN booth — which everyone visited — I observed a large number of combat-arms soldiers of all ranks and nations. Most of them liked the MINIMI. Carlos Davila and his team gave a convincing demonstration of the ease and simplicity of assembling and disassembling the MINIMI. The MINIMI's different configurations are great. Short barrels, short stocks — or no stocks for use as a firing-port weapon — and all so simple. Also of great interest was the FN .50 heavy-barrel M2 machine gun with — get this — quick-change barrel and no head-spacing requirements. The FN booth attracted visitors like honey draws flies.

RAMO Incorporated of Nashville, Tenn., and the crew of E.R. (Pony) Maples were there with perhaps the finest M2 .50 heavy-barrel machine gun in the world. Excellent workmanship in these weapons. Interestingly, RAMO sells only to foreign friendly governments.

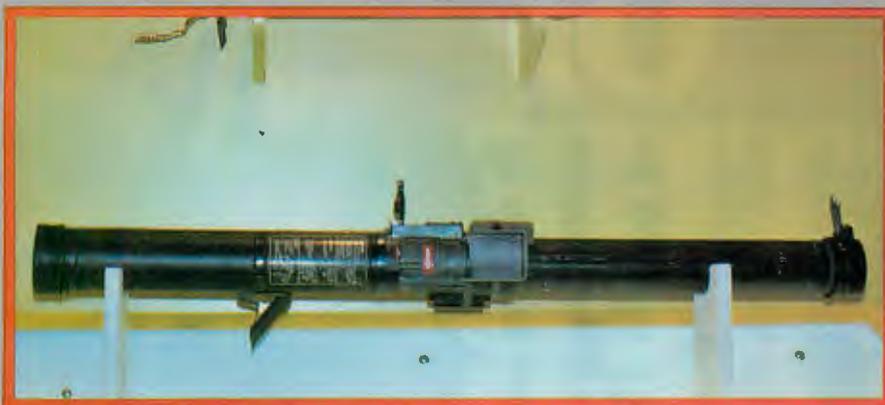
Charles (Chuck) Byers, Accuracy Systems Incorporated, Tempe, Ariz., had a fine display of special purpose weapons. Accuracy Systems also had some interesting concepts it is working on, such as laser weapons and laser sighting systems.

# POINTS OF DEATH MEET IN WASHINGTON

This is but a fraction of the space-age equipment brought to the AUSA show. All in all, politics disregarded, the '79 AUSA meeting, with its array of new weapons systems and technological developments, awed this layman. Someone did a fine job of putting this convention together.



## Association of U.S. Army Convention



ABOVE LEFT: New LAW (Light Anti-tank Weapon) — simple to operate and test data states weapon more reliable, effective than present LAW.

LEFT: Publisher Brown with FN 7.62 sniper system.

LOWER LEFT: Lightweight special-purpose M16 of Accuracy Systems Inc. has both optic, iron sights, heavy free-floating barrel with special flash reducer.

BELOW: Publisher Brown (right), Carlos Davila check out quick-change mounts on FN 7.62 sniper system.

LOWER RIGHT: Gen. E.M. Meyer, U.S. Army, checks out MINIMI 5.56 light machine gun.



# KINGS OF THE KHYBER RIFLES

Roll Your Own Rifles

by Norman J. Whisler





Gun laws are strict in Pakistan — except in the fabled Northwest Frontier Province. There, Pathan tribesmen live simple lives, observe the Koran — and turn out homemade firearms and explosives as if they were going out of style. Their best customers these days are Afghan tribesmen who are busy fighting Russian oppressors.

**I**N the Northwest Frontier Province of West Pakistan, the Pathan tribesmen handmake copies of European and American firearms.

In the summer of 1978, the government of Pakistan informed its civilian holders of gun licenses that they might go to government arsenals and recover their licensed and registered arms. Previously, upon declaration of an emergency, they had been required to surrender these arms for safekeeping.

Pakistan has strict gun control laws. Rifles and handguns are subject to licensing and registration and so, I suppose, are shotguns. Police will not issue licenses for handguns larger than .32 caliber or for rifles which take government bullets. Reloading tools and handloading are subject to control or prohibition. Possession of an illicit firearm and use of a firearm in commission of a crime bring severe punishment.

There is, however, one region of Pakistan where these laws do not apply. In the hilly region along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, Pathan tribesmen lead their simple lives according to tribal custom and the Koran, largely ignoring the state's regulations. While the region is legally a part of Pakistan, internal matters are settled by local methods — often the informal ones once popular in the American West.

The tribal territory is separated from the rest of Pakistan by checkpoints which restrict access into and out of the region. Nevertheless, contraband has a way of flowing east and west from tribal lands: hashish, gold sovereigns, and most interesting of all, homemade guns.

Pathan tribesmen in the hills of the frontier have for centuries made their own arms in village workshops, just as have most other pre-industrial peoples. They did not invent firearms, but have become adept at making them.

## Cottage industry and gun control.

When the British assumed control of the Indian subcontinent, they enacted laws designed to disarm the populace. But the British never really disarmed or conquered the Northwest Frontier warrior tribesmen.

They did, however, severely reduce acquisition of arms by the Pathans. By Victorian times, with breechloading rifles and revolvers in the hands of scarlet-clad legions of the Queen, the Pathans were outgunned, if still unconquered. Since even the best hill-made matchlock is at a disadvantage against a Martini-Henry, the tribesmen naturally sought some means of equipping themselves with their opponents' superior armament. Smuggling helped, but running guns past the world's greatest navy was no small matter. A rifle which would fetch \$50 to \$100 in Belgium

would fetch \$400 in the passes, a huge sum to a people whose wealth is measured in flocks of sheep.

The Pathans, therefore, adapted Early-Iron-Age technology to the production of 19th-century arms. In cottage workshops using tools which were modern in the time of Sikander Khan (Alexander the Great), the Pathans armed themselves with modern firearms in defiance of strict gun control laws.

By the 1920s, Pathan tribesmen were handmaking copies of Martini and Lee-Enfield rifles at perhaps 1/16 the price of a real factory product. Here, at last, was something a poor man could afford. And the tribesmen welcomed these new breechloaders. Quality was not up to Birmingham standards, however, and the real product still commanded a premium. In order to enhance the value of their own homemade weapons, Pathan gunsmiths even counterfeited western factory markings. Their spelling is often unequal to their gunsmithing and many otherwise excellent copies are found with letters stamped sideways or upside down.

The tribesmen are still in business today. If the price is right, one can have anything he wants, but certain standard products are available. Homemade counterfeits of the great old British guns form the main part of the stock: Martini and Lee-Enfield service rifles, Webley Mk. III and Mk. IV pocket revolvers in .32 and .38 calibers and Greener 12-bore Martini shotguns. Mauser-type rifles are also popular. At the top of the line one finds submachine guns like the Sten and Beretta. Other types of European and American arms are also made, including copies of Colt percussion revolvers.

The old muzzle-loading *jezail* has not completely disappeared. While tribesmen are not especially fond of firing them, they do respond to the high cost of fixed ammunition.

And ammunition is a problem. The Pathans cast their own bullets or recover metal-jacketed bullets and re-fire them. They make their own powder from imported synthetics or local raw materials. Primers they re-prime, using matchheads. Gunsmiths cannot economically make their own cartridge cases, however, and recovered cases fetch a premium. Handloading is not so much a hobby as a necessity.

The homemade guns' quality is variable. In former times, guns were hacked out of common railway iron. While this material may be suitable for building a muzzle-loader or black-powder breech-loader, it is weak for anything more powerful than a low-power smokeless breechloading revolver. A rail that had been embrittled or cracked by being run over too many times by a train would be unsuitable for any purpose. Some of these rifle barrels have burst upon firing.

Nowadays, however, tribesmen import steel from Belgium. The quality seems to



be picking up, and in recent years I have seen no reports of guns giving way at the most inopportune moment. Tribesmen are also improving their manufacturing methods to the point of using electric tools, but the industry still operates on a cottage or individual basis. In other words, the shooter should be cautious.

## On the black market.

Tribemen produce more than enough for their own requirements, and the surplus has to go somewhere. The British and Pakistani governments have bought up some of the production, partly for use, and partly, perhaps, to stop further distribution. The rest finds its way to various black markets in the Near and Middle East. These guns may be found wherever there is trouble, and in a good many places where there isn't. Mahatma Ghandi's assassins experimented with a homemade revolver, worth about 150 rupees, before acquiring their highly illegal factory product. Pathan guns have also turned up in Iran, Turkey, and in Afghanistan, where tribesmen also live and make their own.

These homemade guns are well documented in literature. Dr. Watson was sent  
*Continued from page 86*



**TOP LEFT:** Western tourists in Pathan gun shop. Proprietor probably made many, if not all, of these guns himself. Row of locally-made Webleys may be seen across back wall of room about even with shopkeeper's head. Rifles adorn side walls and ceiling. **TOP RIGHT:** Proud tribesman shows off his Lee-Enfield-type rifle.

**ABOVE LEFT:** 80-year-old Pathan craftsman works on self-loading pistol. It may be factory product; markings appear to be those of Ceska Zbrojovka. Note partially complete copy of Webley Mk. IV pocket model in background. Almost certainly handmade in village. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Workman visually examines gun barrel for straightness.



ABOVE: Officers of the Queen's Own Corps of Guides, 1878, raised in 1846 as Indian frontier special force. Unit was transferred to Pakistan army in May 1948. RIGHT: British infantry picquet during ops against Afghan tribesmen in 1919. Picquets, outguard positions to provide security, are still SOP in NWFP COIN ops by Pakistan army. Photo: National Army Museum, London.

## PATHAN TRIBESMEN

by Maj. John S. Arvidson

**P**ATHAN or Afghan tribesmen are divided into various clans, subtribes, and even religious Islamic sects such as the Ghazis — who seek paradise by dying in battle against the infidel. Some of the most militant tribes reside in the mountainous region of the Durand Line, which separates Afghanistan from Pakistan. These major tribes include the Mohmands, Afridis, Mahsuds and Wazirs. Each has its subtribes, such as the Yusufzai Afridis or Tori Khel Wazirs.

Today, Pathan warriors still carry the curved *tulwar* slashing sword and often a dagger. Their small arms range from CETME assault rifles (standard Pakistan army rifle) to the more numerous SMLE bolt-action magazine rifles, many of which are manufactured in small shops in the Kohat Pass area, 25 miles south of 60 **SOLDIER OF FORTUNE**

Peshawar. Antique weapons, such as muzzle-loading *jezails* and breech-loading 45 Martini-Henrys are treasured as family heirlooms — and are still fired in anger. Some Soviet weapons have also been smuggled in.

Pushtu-speaking Pathans, also known as “True Afghans,” have a celebrated history of tribal warfare which has been waged against ancient Persians, Greeks under Alexander the Great, Scythians, Turks, Mongols, Sikhs and British. Nearly 12 million Pathans, 60 percent of the population, dwell in the eastern half of the People's Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.

The British army fought the Pathans for approximately a century in three wars with Afghanistan and in endless counter-insurgency (COIN) operations in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) of India. Despite a superiority in weapons and sometimes a superiority in numbers, the British-Indian army never completely

subdued its Afghan foe. England learned its first major lesson in Afghan warfare in January 1842, when its entire force of 4,500 soldiers and 12,000 camp followers enroute from Kabul to Jalalabad was wiped out except for a sole survivor.

The British were still learning from the Pathans when English officers staged their final “march out” from the NWFP post of Razmak in Waziristan on 15 December 1947, over 72 miles of mountain pass to reach the Bannu cantonment, safely located on the Indus plain. Wisely, the Pakistan army chose not to occupy various tribal territory posts formerly held by the British.

Veteran NWFP officer, Col. J.P. Villiers-Stuart, described the Afghan warrior as a strange mixture of contradictions — including reckless bravery and fear of failure, pride and treachery, loyalty and vindictiveness, intelligence and credulity.

*Continued on page 90*



TOP: Fortified Pathan villages west of Peshawar by Khyber Pass. ABOVE: Sniper's view of Khyber Pass at Ali Masjid Gorge. Pass begins from Pakistan side 11 miles west of Peshawar at Fort Jamrud rises more than 3,500 feet before falling steeply. Final point on Pakistan side is Torkham — frontier post manned by Khyber Rifles. Photos: National Army Museum, London.

## NORTHERN PAKISTAN: TERRAIN

by Maj. John S. Arvidson

**I**NSURGENT Pathan tribesmen have long known how to best utilize the terrain of their tribal lands in the face of a superior enemy. Difficult terrain and expertise at guerrilla warfare have permitted the Pathans or Afghans to lead a relatively independent life in the face of governing powers from afar. Northern Pakistan is rough country for even the toughest professional adventurer.

The world's second highest peak, Pakistan's 28,520-foot K-2 in the Karakoram range, near Skardu, Baltistan, was finally conquered by American adventurer Jim Whitaker on 6 September 1978. Another mountain, as yet unscaled, is Tirich Mir, a peak of 25,264 feet, located by the legendary Chitral Valley, 200 miles long and scene of numerous British COIN operations against rebel Pathan tribesmen.

Pakistan's rugged Northwest Frontier Province borders the Gilgit Agency to the east, includes the Chitral Valley and numerous other embattled features, and borders Pakistan's Baluchistan Province on the southwest. Its capital is Peshawar, 11 miles east of the start — or end — of the celebrated Khyber Pass, historical invasion gateway from Afghanistan.

The Khyber Pass actually begins at Fort Jamrud, headquarters of the Khyber Rifles, a frontier force recruited primarily from Afridi Pathans. The pass is not a valley through the mountains but a narrow defile rising to more than 3,500 feet and falling steeply thereafter. It rises gradually past walled Afridi villages and fortifications to the village of Lnadi Kotal. Another post of the Khyber Rifles is maintained at old Fort Landi Kotal. The frontier post of Torkham marks its final point.

The Khyber road is really two, side by side, one for camel caravans and sheep,

and the other for motor vehicles. The latter is now two-lane and hard-topped. Parallel to the roads lies the narrow-gauge Khyber Railway, an engineering marvel of 34 tunnels and 92 bridges and culverts, which currently operates weekly between Peshawar and Torkham.

The Queen's Own Corps of Guides opened up the Khyber Pass to the British with the capture of Afghan Fort Ali Masjid in 1878. It has remained open since then primarily by the force of arms. Passing through the Khyber Pass is the so-called Asian Highway which connects Bangkok in Southeast Asia with Istanbul on the Black Sea.



# VISIT TO DARRA

by Jack Kurtz

*The Soviet Union may have overwhelmed the Afghan Moslem rebels with sheer weight of armor and with clouds of helicopters for the time being, but the rebels will doubtless keep on fighting — the British, who called these hardy mountain people "Pathans" never did totally subdue them during the long reign of the British Raj in India. And although the rebels are not being overtly supplied with arms by any outside power, they will remain armed. Author Jack Kurtz, who has spent many years in Southeast Asia and Africa, tells why. Kurtz' background includes work as a safari guide in Kenya and as a game control officer on private ranches in Africa. He is presently a student at Hamline College, Minneapolis-St. Paul, where he is majoring in international relations. Kurtz spent the summer of 1978 in Pakistan, much of it in that country's Northwest Frontier Province, which borders on Afghanistan.*

**I**t is a tough, twisting hour-long drive through the legendary Khyber Pass from Peshawar, a major city in Pakistan, to Darra Adam Kehl or simply Darra, a Pakistani village on the Afghan border. Darra is an unattractive mountain backwater, noted chiefly for one thing: its cottage industries in guns which have been a main source of supply for the Afghan Moslem rebels. (Darra has one other major "export" — hash of high quality, but that wasn't what caused me to journey there in 1978.)

Darra Adam Kehl probably boasts more gun shops per capita than anywhere else on earth. About 95 percent of the weapons sold there are of local manufacture in small family- or clan-owned factories. The rest are relics left behind after past wars and battles in the region, or weapons that have been imported primarily for the purpose of copying them.

Imported weapons I saw ranged from a U.S. M79 grenade launcher to a German 9mm Luger. And prices of imported weapons — they are for sale to anyone who's got the dough — are only slightly higher than the locally produced copies.

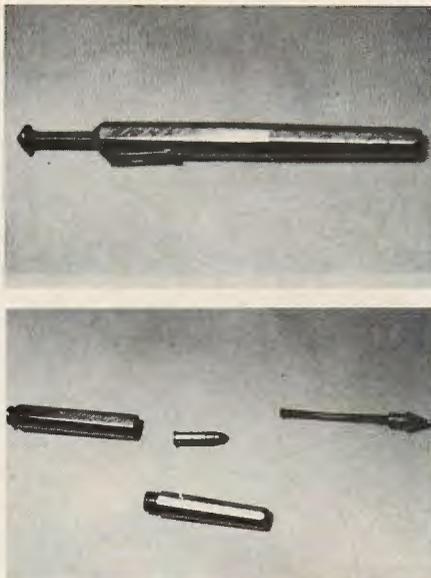
Home-made guns range from copies of the British service 38/200 S&W revolvers to small artillery pieces. Most of the locally produced weapons are copies of or adaptations from European-designed guns. The most frequently seen automatic is the venerable British Sten gun. Also available in numbers is the British SMLE .303 bolt action, doubtless a hangover from days of the British Empire. Most common non-British design is the Mauser Mod. 98 in 7/57 caliber. Quality of workmanship is, for the most part, good, but quality of metal used can be poor because

of unsophisticated forging processes. A Pakistani officer I talked to said many of these weapons are unsafe with ball ammo and this particularly applies to imitations of the Sten and other blowback actions.

The Pakistanis produce the G3 assault rifle under contract agreement with Heckler and Koch. Its sophistication makes it impossible for Darra villagers to copy, but they have found a use for its components. Using a magazine and barrel based on the G3 design, and a Mauser-type action, the Darra Pathans make a straight-stocked, full pistol-grip rifle in 7.62 NATO caliber. This heavy, awkward rifle has poor accuracy at best.

Using locally manufactured ammunition, the one I shot put five rounds into five inches at 100 yards — hardly Camp Perry standards. Despite its drawbacks, however, makers of this rifle claim it is quite popular with local tribesmen, some of whom had to be satisfied with muzzle-loading *jezails* until fairly recent times.

A most unusual weapon I encountered in Darra is a Sten modified to handle the U.S. 30-caliber carbine cartridge. It employs a 20-round box magazine and hits the scales at more than 10 pounds — empty. I refused to fire it. Of the numerous weapons I examined, it showed the sloppiest workmanship and no action designed to handle the 35,700 psi of the 9x19 cartridge is adequate to handle the 40,000 psi of the 30-caliber carbine unless its receiver and other parts are of the highest quality metal. I also found Sten designs in .32 ACP.



TOP: Pen pistol (described in article). ABOVE: Pen pistol's components: base (left), plunger (right), firing aperture (below). 22 LR cartridge shows dimensions.

Prices on locally-made products went from \$45 to \$50 for copies of British Webley-style revolvers to \$70-\$90 for Stens and other SMGs, on to \$120 for good quality bolt-action rifles. Fragmentation grenades are available for \$5 to \$10 each. This place would drive BATF nuts.

Although the 30-caliber carbine expending Sten and the G3-Mauser hybrid comprised two of the more interesting pieces I saw, there was one more real eye-catcher.

In the Winter 1977 SOF, an article by Jerry Ahern covered the MAC Stinger. (Editor's note: This was before SOF went monthly. See "The MAC Stinger, Lethal At Both Ends," p. 48, SOF, Winter 1977.) I found the Stinger's successor in Darra. It is a tiny single-shot 22 rimfire made from a ballpoint pen. The device is 4¾ inches long and weighs seven ounces. Its barrel is about 1¼ inches long and is what once was the pen's detachable front end. The weapon is fired by pulling a knob at the back fully to the rear and then depressing the pocket clip whose small spring drives a firing pin forward to strike the primer.

Loading is accomplished by separating the pen's two halves and inserting a 22 LR cartridge in the front half. This thing, as the Stinger, is useless unless a person is within inches of an opponent. Accuracy can best be explained by the fact that the one I fired put only three of five shots into paper at seven yards. And, like the Stinger, this item is as dangerous to the shooter as to the target. Because of the short barrel, likelihood of blowing off a finger is extremely high. In my opinion, ballpoint pens serve better as writing devices than as handguns.

What are the guns of Darra being used for today? Well, as many readers know, there was a pro-Soviet coup in Afghanistan in April 1978. Almost immediately Moslem religious leaders there launched an insurrection in an effort to unseat the communists. They were quite successful and had control of much of the countryside when, at the end of 1979 and the beginning of 1980, the Russians, dissatisfied with their puppet Afghan government's military vigor, staged another coup, murdered their first puppet and installed a new, more pro-Soviet, more aggressive chief of state. He lost no time in seeking "military assistance" from the Soviets, who obligingly threw in about 100,000 infantry, artillery, armor and airborne troops.

Ever since the insurgency began, there has been a shortage of firearms in Afghanistan — but not in good old Darra just next door. The Afghan rebels didn't have much money but they had plenty of



**ABOVE RIGHT:** Author demonstrates locally-produced Sten. **LEFT:** Afghan-Pakistan border checkpoint in happier times. Note short bayonet on border guard's rifle. **ABOVE LEFT:** Darra's arms sampler: from top, G-3 Mauser bolt-action hybrid, 9mm Sten, fragmentation grenade (left), bone-handled knife (center), .32 ACP Sten (right), 7mm sporting rifle, 12-gauge break-top shotgun (left), Luger (right), two pen pistols.

opium, which has been grown in the region for centuries. So they started smuggling the drug into Darra and trading it for arms.

Once again the Khyber Pass became an avenue for smugglers — just as it has been throughout its turbulent history.

While I was in Darra, its citizens spoke guardedly about Afghan gun buyers lurking around the narrow streets but their presence was really no secret.

Since then, however, the Pakistani government has closed the Northwest Frontier Province to foreigners and it is difficult to determine accurately the state of affairs vis-a-vis the Afghan rebels and the cottage industry armory in Darra. But judging from my personal experience and my study of source material from the region, I believe the Pak government is lending some support to the rebels. (There is an unverified rumor that Red China is aiding them, too.)

It's a pity that the U.S. has turned a deaf ear to their appeals for help from us. Because this is a golden opportunity for lending assistance to an anti-communist movement at little cost to ourselves — and to build a better image with the Moslem world, an image that the Ayatollah Khomeini has been largely successful in smearing.

The rebellion in Afghanistan has been called the Soviet Union's Vietnam. It is not that because the Russians, unlike the Americans, have thrown in massive military power to quell an uprising inimical to their policy. And through skillful use of armor and helicopter-borne infantry they have been quite successful.

But they will find, as did the British, that subduing the Pathans, even with overwhelming force, is an arduous task. The British were still trying to accomplish it in 1939 when Adolf Hitler diverted their attention.

The importance of Darra is bound to increase and its bustling little arms industry may have to put on extra shifts to keep the rebels supplied. For these Pathans of the barren, rocky, frozen hills of Afghanistan are fiercely independent and they intend to remain that way — or die.

*Editor's Note: The 100-plus gun shops in Darra are also capable of producing heavier weapons and their price is correspondingly higher.*

*For example, one can buy a three-inch mortar for about \$4,400; a 20mm automatic cannon goes for \$1,700, and anti-tank mines, which can be mass-produced relatively easily, are on the market for about \$45 each.*

*Munawar Khan Afrida, a Pathan who owns one of the heavy weapons factories, says, "It's personal, hand work. You want a machine gun, we'll have it ready in two weeks."*

*And there's even a tourist attraction on the way to Darra from Peshawar. The route takes travelers past Pakistan's Badaber air force base — from where Gary Powers took off in his U2 spy plane that was downed in 1959.*





## COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Continued from page 12

MUCH has been written on the fancy equipment used by "Champion" shooters in IPSC competition, but very little good advice has been written on what the beginner needs for a sound start in this sport. Although you can get started with just about any type of equipment, it helps to start out with the proper goodies.

Many types of handguns work for IPSC competition, but the reigning kings are the Colt 45 auto and the Browning P35. These two pistols have stood the test of time, and they've had the bugs worked out of them. If you don't already have a pistol, stick to one of these two. (I specifically stated the Colt 45 auto, not commercial copies such as the AMT, Vega and Crown City. Although copies of the Colt, these pistols all suffer from quality control problems and usually require beating on with a large hammer before they'll work reliably.)

As for modifications, the best bet is to follow the KISS principle (Keep It Simple, Stupid!). All that you really need is a set of good high-visibility sights, a decent trigger pull and a throating/polishing job on the feed ramp. If you find that you can't reliably hit the thumb safety, then you might want to add an extended safety to this list.

If you're a wheelgun fanatic, stick to one of the major domestic brands (Colt, S&W or Ruger). The most popular wheelgun is the S&W M19 (M66). Unfortunately, these medium-frame revolvers seem to need a major tune-up every 1,000 or so rounds, as the pounding of the required full loads tends to loosen them up fairly quickly. Normally, most wheelguns need a good action job to set them up for competition.

One major point. Before entering a match (or for that matter, going out on the street) with a new pistol, function-fire it with several hundred rounds of the ammunition you intend to use. Nothing hurts more than a pistol that you find doesn't work when you expect it to.

I'M often asked, "What kind of holster should I buy?" A really good holster costs money, and the novice shooter usually faints when he learns its price.

At my club, the most popular holster with newcomers and the one that I usually recommend is the Bianchi "Chapman Hi-Ride." It's reasonably priced and of good quality. For those who can't afford a little more, offerings from Milt Sparks (Dept. SOF, Box 7, Idaho City, ID 83631) and Gordon Davis (Dept. SOF, Box 466, Ar-

Continued on page 77

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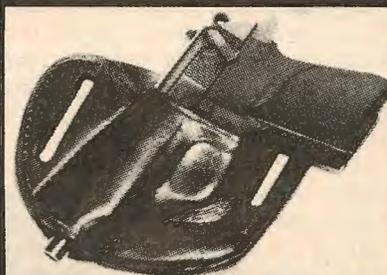
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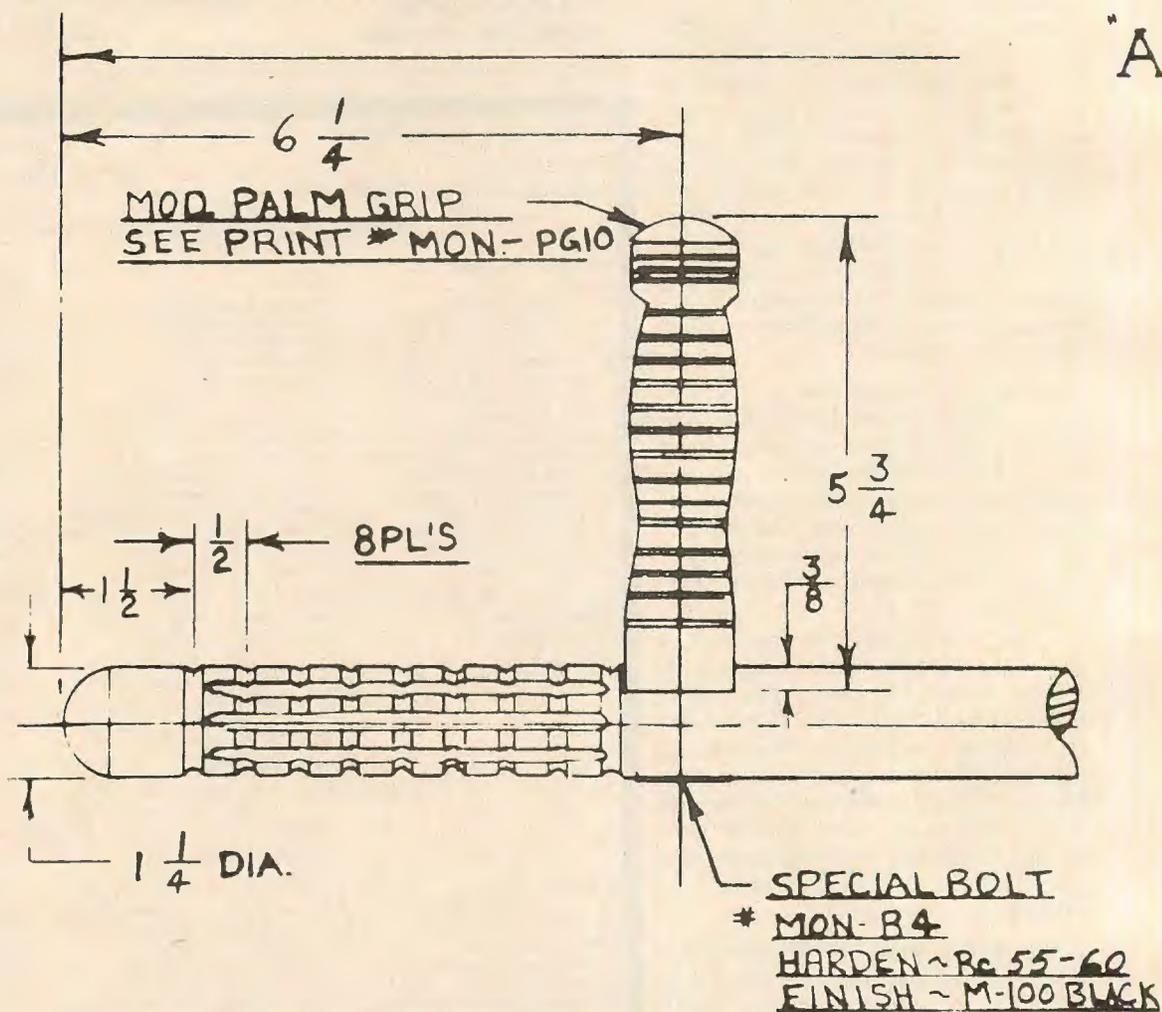
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# THE NUTCRACKER AND THE PROSECUTOR

## New Punch for Policemen

by David E. Steele



**T**WO special-purpose batons have been developed for police from ancient Okinawan weapons. The "Nutcracker" is a Penguin Industries trade name for the *nunchaku*, a weapon made from an Oriental rice farmer's flail. The "Prosecutor" is a Monadnock company trade name for a weapon resembling the *tonfa* (or *tui-fa*), developed from the farmer's millstone handle.

In the late 15th century, an Okinawan king restricted weapons ownership on the island. When the Japanese occupied Okinawa in the early 17th century they forbade arms to the local people altogether. In response, Okinawan insurgents

developed fighting techniques from farm implements which would be overlooked in a police inspection.

The *nunchaku* threshing flail had two round or squared pieces of hardwood connected by horsehair. The modern version has replaced the horsehair with a chain or a nylon cord. The typical *nunchaku* has two hardwood — usually white oak — or plastic pieces each a foot long. The sticks may be round or octagonal (the squared corners on the octagonal shape do more damage). Variants include one full-length stick and one half-length or two half-section sticks which fit together into one stick for carrying ease. Some *nunchakus*

have three or four full- or half-length sticks, providing greater reach and greater security (if one of the sticks should be cut off in a fight). Even the conventional *nunchaku* has one fighting stick left if one is cut off.

The *nunchaku*, by its flailing action, builds up speed which gives it more foot-pounds of energy than a conventional baton. It can be used defensively by flailing a figure-8 in front of the body, forming a three-foot no-man's-land in front (this technique can also be used with the *manriki-qusari*, which has three-inch metal weights on either end of a 24-inch chain).



ABOVE: Minn. policeman, Boyd Barrott, unlike Knife Editor Steele, recommends nunchaku for police work (see his article on page 71). Here he demonstrates neck strike — cautions head, neck and hard shoulder strikes should be used full force only on determined aggressors. CENTER: Barrott's gunbelt shows nunchaku holder. Note flashlight (left) on belt, yawara mace stick to right of nunchaku. Revolver is K-frame S&W Model 13 38 special with PPC-style rib. Bianchi break-front holster. BELOW: Barrott demonstrates block followed by effective single-stick strike.



The nunchaku can also be used as a choke or come-along device by forming a vice (or nutcracker) with the two sticks on the suspect's throat or wrist. Unfortunately, nunchaku chokes can easily result in death or permanent injury. The nutcracker action on the wrist makes a good come-along but does not justify the weapon's bulk: there are many good unarmed and baton come-alongs which have been used by policemen for years. Also, the nutcracker techniques which have been recommended by some for defense against fist, foot or knife attacks are practically impossible for the semi-skilled policeman to apply in a moving fight.

The ends of the nunchaku can be used to thrust, and the sides to strike (either one stick individually or as a flail). The sides, used individually or as a flail, can be used by an expert to parry a foot, knife, stick or sword. Flailing techniques are the most difficult to master, and an improper stroke can cause the far stick to come back and strike the user. Also, the speeds attained by the flail (approaching 100 mph) make it easily capable of breaking bones or fracturing skulls. The Okinawans designed it to kill the Japanese soldiers who had invaded their island, not merely to subdue them and take them into custody. The policeman using the nunchaku is more likely to do serious damage to (i.e., use "excessive force" on) the suspect he is trying to capture than if he is using a conventional baton.

The "Prosecutor" is a modern, hard plastic version, akin to the ancient wooden *tonfa*. (There is also a white oak *tonfa* sold in martial arts stores.) It has a 17-inch shaft with a perpendicular four-inch handle located about six inches from one end of the shaft. The stick is held by this handle with the long end of the shaft running under the forearm. The Thais have a similar device, called a *maisun*, with two short handles next to each other. It can be seen in stick fighting demonstrations in Bangkok.

For more information on these weapons, write to Monadnock Lifetime Products, Inc., Dept. SOF, Fitzwilliam, NH 03447 for their catalog. In addition to producing hard plastic (MonPac®) versions of the nunchaku and *tonfa* they also supply training manuals and films regarding their use in police work. Two books by James Phillips, *The Nunchaku and Police Training* and *Nunchaku II*, should be read by any department considering adopting this high-power weapon, as well as Richard R. Starrett's *The Monadnock PR-24 "Prosecutor": A Training Manual for Law Enforcement Officers*.

If one of these weapons has a real, though limited, future in law enforcement, it would be the "Prosecutor." This device has been tested by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office, among other departments, and has been approved for carry by those officers who have passed an authorized training course. The Los

Angeles Sheriff's Training Bureau, in October 1974, published a pamphlet (available from Monadnock) titled, "An Evaluation of the Monadnock Prosecutor Baton." The department conducted an eight-hour training course in the weapon for selected volunteers, then collected their evaluation statements over a period of months. Their statements are given in larger type throughout this article.

### **"Utilization of arm hold on drunk who refused to be handcuffed, eliminating any injury to myself or suspect."**

This study led to adoption of the PR-24 as standard baton for the L.A. Sheriff's Office and most of the 27 other police departments the LASO trains under contract — quite a recommendation since the PR-24 costs several times as much as a standard wood baton. It also requires a special baton ring. It comes with a lifetime guarantee.

Prior to the PR-24 adoption, most deputies left their batons in the patrol car and relied instead on a heavy Gonzales sap or a pair of sap gloves (neither of which is authorized). Now they carry the PR-24 in preference to any other weapon, no matter what type of call. Some never take it off, even in the car: it can be worn with a seat belt.

The PR-24 is somewhat larger than the standard Okinawan or martial arts *tonfa*. It is 24 inches long, with a 5¾-inch "yawara" handle projecting out at a right angle six inches from the tip. It is made from MonPac® plastic resin that is 2½ times the density of oak. The yawara handle is held by a hardened steel bolt and has a "turned" grip; the baton's tip has a "grenade" grip. The PR-24 was adapted from the *tonfa* by Lon Anderson when he was a deputy in the midwest. The story goes that he was beaten up after responding to a bar fight, so he designed a more effective baton, taking his ideas to Monadnock for development. Later, it is said, he took his new weapon back to that same bar and cleaned a few clocks.

After a demonstration by Lon Anderson and their own field evaluation, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Office adopted the PR-24. Sgt. Larry Martines, the senior baton instructor, developed a simple but thorough training program and obtained \$40,000 worth of equipment with federal assistance funds. Martines is a dynamic ex-Marine and a bug on physical fitness and proper armament for the officer on the street.

To give me an idea of the effectiveness of the PR-24, Martines offered to put me through private instruction equivalent to the eight-hour basic course. Most of the techniques were those illustrated in the *Monadnock PR-24 Training Manual for*

*Law Enforcement Officers* by Richard Starrett. However, there were some variations based on Martines' own expertise and feedback he gets from deputies in the field.

The first part of the course consists of learning to draw the baton correctly from the baton ring, followed by the five standard *tonfa*-style blocks, similar to karate blocks to protect the head, the right side, front, left side and groin. The baton is grasped by the yawara handle, while the long end runs along the forearm. These blocks were designed to be used against unarmed or lightly armed (blackjack, Coke bottle, brass knuckles) opponents, but the Sheriff's department uses them to defend also against heavier weapons (2x4, pipe, baton, ballbat), without using Lon Anderson's "fencing" techniques demonstrated in Starrett's book.

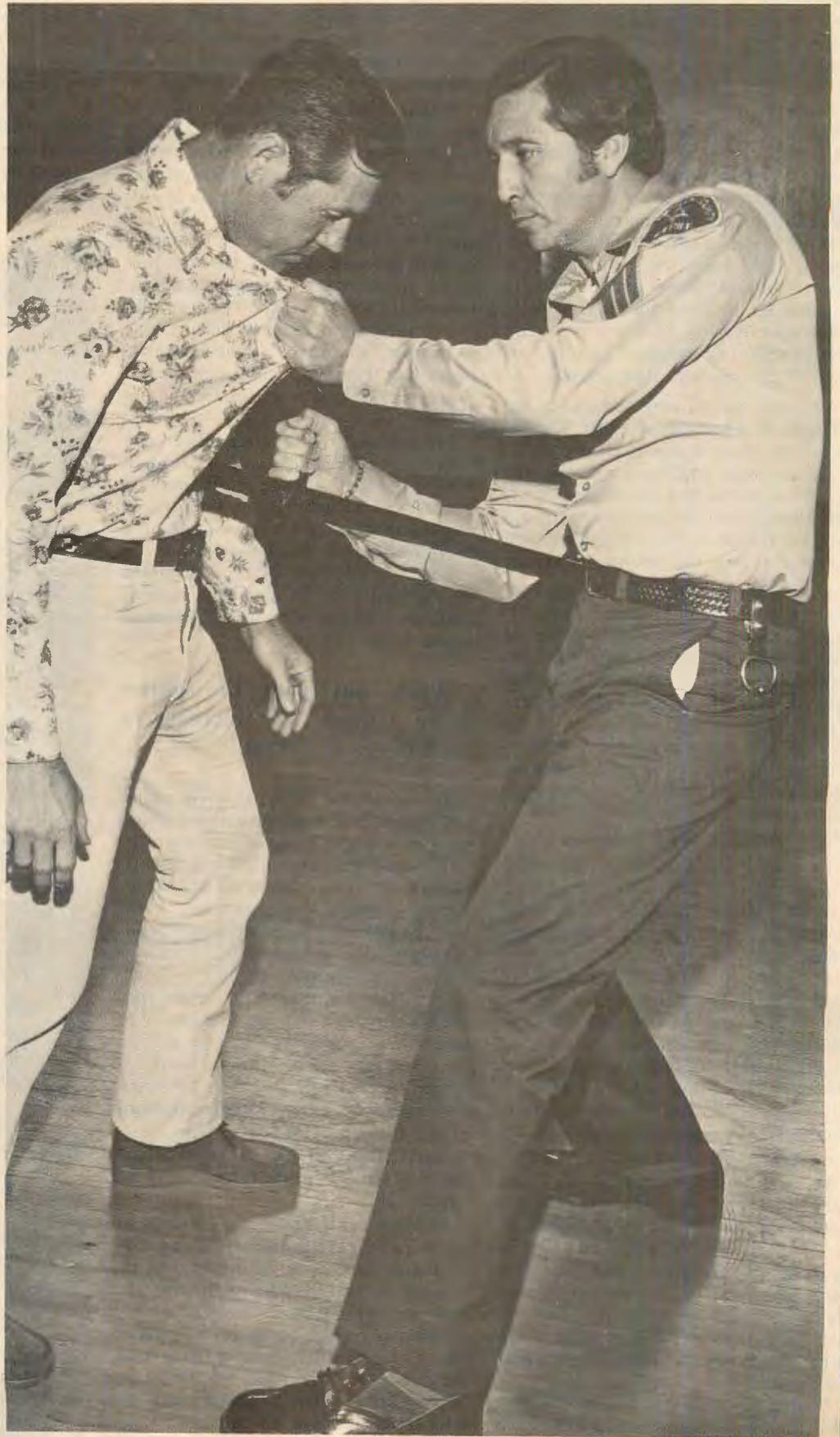
Next, I learned the front and rear jabs with the PR-24. In the front jab, the baton is held by the yawara handle and the long end remains between the arm and the rib cage. The strike is only eight to 12 inches. The long end is not allowed to extend past the upper arm, but the impact of the 1¼-inch tip of the baton on the opponent's midsection is tremendous. One can rip cartilage, break ribs or bruise the solar plexus from this position.

The rear jab is a maneuver to disable a citizen trying to interfere with the officer from behind (or to snatch his revolver). The officer looks back to see who is behind him, grasps his right hand with his left, then pushes the long end of the baton back suddenly to impact against the subject's chest.

We went on to the yawara strike and the one-hand chop. The yawara strike is used to take out an opponent to the officer's right side. The yawara handle is thrust suddenly into his midsection, while the left hand snaps to the left to maintain balance. The chop is like a karate chop except that impact is made with the base of the PR-24 just below the yawara handle. Chops can be made to the clavicle, shoulder, elbow, ribs, etc. The chop is the fastest move to make after using one of the blocks, particularly the overhead block.

Next came the spinning techniques, the tactics that sold the weapon to the Sheriff's Office. The impact from these spins is apparently substantially greater than from a conventional baton. For lack of scientific tests on the subject, I can only theorize that the greater speed of the PR-24 combined with its "bounce-off" characteristics (equivalent to the "snap-back" of the karate practitioner, as opposed to the "follow-through" of the boxer) cause the impact to be localized rather than spread through the body. In fact, the PR-24's velocity has been clocked at two to three times that of a normal baton. This means that its shocking power is four to nine times greater after the formula  $E = (MV)^2 \div 2$ .





UPPER LEFT: PR-24 baton used as brace for shooting arm. Note long end of PR-24 is hooked in belt while yawara handle supports pistol arm. LOWER LEFT: Blocking overhead stroke with PR-24. ABOVE: Instructor Sgt. Larry Martinez, LA Sheriff's Office, demonstrates short stick jab to solar plexus with PR-24 baton.

Strikes to the head are not taught and apparently are unnecessary because several lateral strikes are usually sufficient to break bones and put an opponent down for the count. Greatest drawback to the conventional baton is a tendency of officers to distrust any techniques but strikes to the head. The resultant head injuries, law suits and bad press have been a constant source of trouble to police departments around the country.

The first spin taught is the inside spin. Starting from basic ready position, the baton is brought down and up rapidly (knuckles-up position) allowing the long end to spin upward. This spin is usually directed against an opponent's crotch, but it can be used against other targets.

All spins and striking techniques are practiced on a heavy boxing bag. The impact of the blows is readily apparent.

The next spin taught is the strong side spin. From the ready position the baton is spun laterally with all the force of the upper torso behind it. The left arm is raised so that the baton will not impact against it. From this position, the officer continues to the other side, using a weak side spin. This weak side or reverse spin can be even stronger than the strong side spin because the arc of travel is greater. The right elbow is raised high so that the long end of the baton can come to rest on the rib cage, then the elbow comes down to lock the baton into the ready position. Although learning the spins can produce blisters on the elbow, it is worth it to master such devastating techniques.

The next series of moves is a *kata* used in riot control. Current LASO doctrine uses the police car itself to clear an initial path through the rioters. A slow-moving vehicle does not expose the rioter to more hazard than a nightstick, while giving much greater protection to the officer than body armor. After a path has been cleared, the officers form up in a strategic location using a conventional riot control formation. They use the same PR-24 baton, not some special 36-inch riot stick. Since there are deputies to right and left the spinning techniques cannot be used.

The first riot control move is the "pool cue jab." The baton is held in the long extended position with the right hand on the yawara handle and the left hand knuckles up toward the tip of the baton. The right hand jabs forward, pushing the baton rapidly through the fingers of the left hand, with the rioter's midsection as the target, followed by a two-handed chop to the clavicle.

The third move is a reverse jab using the short end of the baton. The last move is a lateral smash, striking directly forward with the side of the baton. Another move sometimes used in riot control is the "scissors," in which the long extended end of the baton rests on the outside of the right arm and the left hand grasps the grenade grip. Both arms extend suddenly,

causing the tip of the baton to twirl around and stop directly in front of the officer. This move allows powerful strikes to the rioter's left side, while not endangering the officers on either flank.

Finally, Martines taught me a variety of handcuffing, come-along and hooking techniques. I worked with him for several two-hour sessions over a period of two months, practicing with the baton at least a half hour a day during that time. The eight-hour course refers to the time it takes to show the moves. To become proficient takes longer. One of the advantages of the PR-24 is that no partner is required except to practice the handcuffing techniques, and one can practice with a heavy bag. However, more sophisticated maneuvers are best practiced with an opponent.

I recommend that a street officer at a "hot" station practice at least twice a week by himself to retain proficiency and increase confidence. He can improvise a duffel bag or martial arts kick bag on a backyard tree for weekly practice.

The basic PR-24 shape can be adapted to other materials. An aluminum model is available. The patent on the PR-24 refers to the design only.

**"Work out with the baton twice a week. The increase in confidence is unreal."**

To sum up, the PR-24 has several major advantages over the conventional baton for police work. First, officers carry it, rather than leave it in their patrol cars. Second, it avoids blows to the head, thereby helping the department avoid lawsuits and bad press, not to mention unnecessary deaths and skull fractures. Third, it is comparatively easy to learn, and once the techniques are learned they are not forgotten. Fourth, it is harder to take the weapon away from the officer, since his grip on the yawara handle is firmer and more natural than his opponent's grasp on the long extended portion. Fifth, the PR-24 is better for close-quarters fighting than a conventional baton, mainly due to the front jab and the yawara jab.

Another advantage of the PR-24 is its comparatively low profile. Holding a conventional baton down by the leg is an invitation to fight in some neighborhoods. Carrying the PR-24 in the basic ready position is seen as no more provocative than a Marine officer carrying his swagger stick under his arm. Also, the PR-24 can be concealed under the jacket, with the long extended end in the pants pocket and the yawara handle under the armpit. A variation on this technique used by plainclothes personnel is a special shoulder holster made up locally in the Los Angeles area. However, due to the PR-24's length this is uncomfortable for long periods when seated.

In conclusion, I cannot recommend the Penguin Nutcracker or any other nunchaku for police work, nor can I recommend the conventional Okinawan tonfa. I can recommend the PR-24 "Prosecutor" as a significant advance in police batons, after an exhaustive two-month test. I can also recommend the training courses developed by Lon Anderson, Monadnock, and Sgt. Larry Martines.



## ADVANTAGES OF THE NUNCHAKU

**A**N officer can be trained with the nunchaku in about the same amount of time as is generally allowed for the nightstick. Training can be done with flexible, simulated nunchakus to allow actual contact practice without injuries. Its main advantages over the nightstick are:

1. It has a much longer reach.
2. It functions as a non-violent, easily-applied come-along in many more situations.
3. It has several times the power in reserve for extremely serious situations.
4. It is extremely fast and nearly impossible to grasp when in use.
5. If grasped, it can be turned to the officer's advantage in nine out of 10 cases.
6. If control is lost, it makes a poor weapon in the hands of an untrained person.
7. It is extremely inconspicuous when handled properly and can be worn on the belt without undue inconvenience, thus being constantly available and not left in the car when needed.
8. When used, it is less likely to be used at the vital head area.
9. It creates confidence.
10. It provokes interest which results in the officer practicing on his own.

## DISADVANTAGES OF

### THE NIGHTSTICK

1. The normal use of the nightstick is a club to the head.
2. It is not used as a physical-fitness training tool.
3. Its training does not promote continued practice.
4. It lacks the built-in design of the nunchaku as a non-violent come-along.
5. It is cumbersome when worn on the belt and is often left behind unless the situation is reported to be extreme.
6. It is an obvious antagonistic tool, creating many problems on mere sight.
7. It is readily grasped and used against the officer.
8. It has a limited number of uses other than as a club.
9. It does not build confidence in intelligent men.

—Boyd Barrott

**A**S a probationary officer seven years ago, I experimented with all types of nightsticks, saps, sap gloves, palm saps, etc., and settled down to the Bianchi aluminum baton and Monadnock yawara mace stick, with a four-cell Kelite C cell for backup. During this period, I found when I got into a scrap, I had only what was on my belt, due to lack of warning — I always left my stick in the car. I did quite well with my Kelite and yawara mace stick, but was still dissatisfied.

Then I was invited to see a martial arts movie starring Bruce Lee. I was greatly impressed by Lee's use of two sticks joined by a short chain. With this weapon he amazed and beat the hell out of four or five adversaries. His speed was phenomenal in real life, and with the aid of cameras, simply awe-inspiring.

After seeing the movie, I wanted to try the nunchaku too. Checking police catalogs, I came across a police model known as the "Penguin Nutcracker Flail." I was greatly disappointed to find it was two pieces of square, heavily laminated fiberglass joined tightly by nylon. Its best use would be for hazel nuts or fingers — not my prime goal, although I later found with longer nylon it served well when I wore plain clothes.

I then found an ad for the real thing: a 14-inch-octagon wood model with adjustable nylon strings. I purchased it and a book on police nunchaku use by Jim Phillips, a Camden, N.J., police patrolman. With them and a tackling dummy in my garage, I commenced training.

In 1973 I proposed the use of the nunchaku in our department in a letter to my chief. He had just announced a new-equipment policy which outlawed saps, sap gloves and any other weapon not approved by him.

After receiving my letter, the chief said, "Fine, show me." I demonstrated the nunchaku's advantages — belt-carried, it is always along to be used as a come-along that leaves no scar.

The chief agreed to allow me to train our 20-some reserves and 15 patrolmen. In practice, I first demonstrated carrying methods, two-handed striking and blocking, come-alongs and finally full swings and strikes, stressing that in the police role, strikes were a last resort. Next I spent two hours training the men in techniques. At the end of the session, I told them to go home and practice what they had been shown, and on return demonstrate their abilities to me. I was convinced that after two hours' training, all personnel were better off with the nunchakus than the nightstick, if only as a come-along, since this technique needs little practice. Each year I hold a recertification session.

## NUNCHAKU IN POLICE WORK

*Boyd Barrott, a patrolman in a suburban Minneapolis police department, started using the nunchaku for police work seven years ago. After convincing his chief of the weapon's merits, he began training department members and reserve officers in its use, as the following article describes.*



Author Barrott (left) demonstrates good tactic to remove suspect from car.

We found that only the really whacked-out drunks or dopers could withstand the pain of the sticks squeezed around a forearm or elbow. And those who still remained standing couldn't use the arm and were usually disoriented. We also found if one officer distracted or wrestled with a suspect, the other could put the sticks over his head with the ropes under the chin and with little pressure, make anyone say, "Yes, sir, here's my hands," or gurgle as they went to their knees and blacked out due to pressure on the carotid arteries. Over the years numerous belligerent people ended up taking short naps and arising with stiff necks. Some even exited their cars fairly quickly. None had permanent damage — only permanent respect.

I once met a disorderly/resisting suspect next morning at court who could only look straight ahead. He had grabbed a fellow officer's uniform, and I put the sticks on his neck from the rear. He went to his knees and then I politely asked him to put his hands to the rear for cuffing. He asked me what I'd used and I told him.

He said, "Boy, it worked."

I asked him if he would rather be hit by a flashlight and he said, "Jesus, no,

Minneapolis PD put 10 stitches in my head once that way." Since our goal in the suburbs is to be inconspicuous, I was pleased by his comment.

Even hard-line veterans began to change to the nunchaks as they saw them work, but then disaster struck. In winter 1978 a sergeant stopped an extremely drunk chase suspect who hit a snowbank. When the suspect wouldn't get out, the sergeant put the sticks on with rope to the rear of the neck and bull-dogged him out. This method causes great pain to the neck muscles. Our sergeant's suspect went to our main hospital and told a doctor we had used killer sticks on his neck. The doctor called our chief and said he'd rather we nightsticked the man as we could have crushed the carotid sinus and provoked a heart attack.

I have to give our chief credit; he only banned the use of nunchakus on neck and head areas.

I, too, went to the hospital to plead my case and demonstrate the sticks. After my demonstration, the head of emergency services said he would rather we used our nunchaku choke on the wild ones a thousand times than give a depressed skull fracture with a Kelite.

He said, "How do you think I handle the nut cases — I choke them." He did say there is danger and after we knocked a man unconscious, we should not drag him to the squad car like a pull toy.

Armed with a sworn statement in which this doctor approved of our methods, I went to the chief who gave us back full use of our sticks, stating as before to use only enough force to do the job. This prevented departmental revolt, as we have found we would now be lost without our nunchakus.

I hope this article provokes individual officer interest in the use of what I believe to be the most humane, versatile, effective tool available for officers and for public safety. I hope other departments will evaluate this weapon and I will be happy to answer inquiries about my experience with it as a police tool. My address is 3047 173rd Lane, Anoka, MI 55303. As far as I know, my department is the only one in our state to adopt it, although I hope others across the nation are currently utilizing them.

Several officers in Minneapolis PD have expressed interest and some have purchased them. I demonstrated them to one of their inspectors one morning at an off-the-cuff 3 a.m. social session.

After having them tried on his neck, knees and arm, he said, "We won't be allowed to use these; they make too much sense."  —Boyd Barrott

# CUSS & DISCUSS

Continued from page 19

harness. To adopt a civilian combat-pistol-match holster and magazine pouch would work only if we were going to limit ourselves to combat pistol matches.

Having bivouacked in the field during inclement weather, the shelter half, when coupled with the poncho and liner, provided acceptable protection from the elements. Shelter halves were designed to allow for rapid assembly and disassembly and to encourage teamwork. Lt. Lynn's new tent is great for a civilian backpacker in the mountains but does not fulfill military requirements. It does not allow for rapid breakdown or exit and could give a false sense of security in combat that would cost lives in a "hot" situation.

Although the Individual Combat Meal (C-ration) lacks in taste, it provides necessary nutrition for a combat Marine.

Sincerely,  
 Capt. J.A. Wester  
 USMC  
 Camp Pendleton, California

## BACKPACKER AGREES ...

Sirs:

As a backpacker of several years experience, I can identify with most of the gear discussed by Lt. Lynn. However:

1. Polargard has apparently been used by the Army in the past but Celanese is discontinuing its manufacture, leaving DuPont's Holofil II alone in the synthetic insulation market.

2. Gore-Tex® is a great waterproof fabric, but I doubt its suitability for combat, since it loses much of its waterproofness when dirty.

3. Halizone tablets are no longer the accepted agent for purifying water, iodine tablets being more effective. Intensive Army tests with the two have found that halizone does not eliminate many harmful "bugs" in much of the water found in the field today.

4. Freeze-dried food is too expensive, even for our spendthrift government to afford on a large scale. It costs from two to six times more than dehydrated items. I admit it tastes better and is convenient. Maybe it could be issued to units expected to see action behind enemy lines.

I personally would like to see nearly all the gear Lt. Lynn lists issued to all combat troops, but I doubt any amount of training would encourage enough Marines to take adequate care of the type of backpacking equipment he talks about in the article. Most of it is much too fragile, requiring more care than time would permit.

Sincerely,  
 Bill Mitchell  
 Fort Payne, Alabama



<p>196</p>	<p>PARTICIPANT</p> <p>Southeast Asia War Games 1961-1975</p> <p>SECOND PLATE</p> <p>142</p>	<p>SHORT TIMER</p> <p>193</p>	<p>BAR/</p> <p>and /TAR/</p> <p>199</p>
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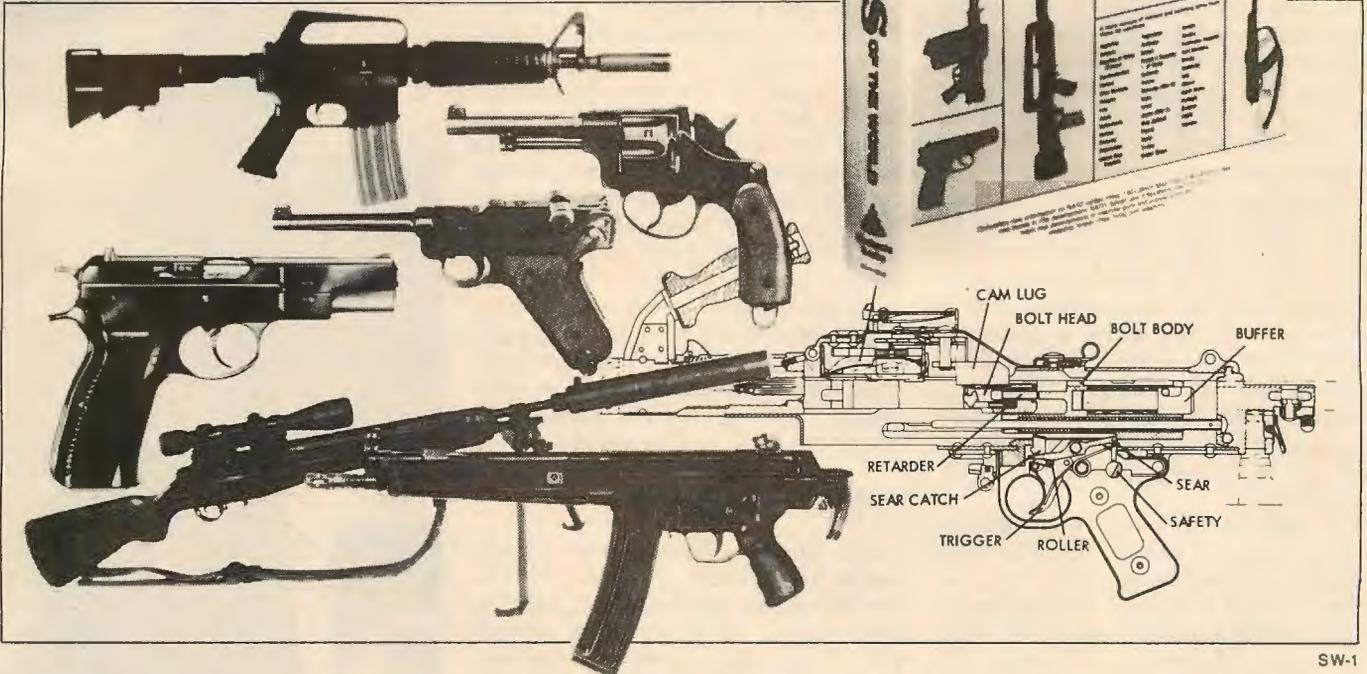
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**P**EOPLE who read my article about how I knew Idi Amin (SOF, April '80) will wonder how I pick my acquaintances when I say that a few years ago, I also knew and had a certain amount to do with Emperor Bokassa. I have a number of photographs to prove this; in most of them he is chatting amicably to me and in one case, he is telling me some involved story while we sip champagne.

The reason for this second brush with a dictator came when I was commanding the army of a small country and Bokassa was attending a conference there. Not only were my soldiers heavily involved in producing guards of honor at the airport (and elsewhere) for him, but were also directly responsible for his personal security. He also expressed a wish to make a formal visit to my barracks, which our government agreed to.

Before Bokassa even arrived in the country, we received peremptory directives from his office pointing out that he *must* have a certain number of soldiers (*not* policemen) to guard his place of residence and that these soldiers were to be armed with submachine guns and so forth. Eager to make the big conference a success, and not wishing to antagonize anyone, especially "President for Life" Bokassa, as he was then called, our government passed these directives on to me for compliance.

We were all very interested in Bokassa by this time, as he had achieved grisly notoriety a month or so before. This incident, reported in most of the world press, told how Bokassa had decided that there was too much theft in his capital. He therefore directed that a dozen or more thieves, under sentence in the local prison, be taken to a public square and there Bokassa personally beat them to death.

I was talking to my prime minister before the Bokassa visit and mentioned this. The prime minister (the kindest of men, though a tough politician) said to me: "Yes, it was a harsh thing to do, but I was, myself, in the Central African Republic recently and, do you know, you could be in a restaurant and accidentally leave your wallet on the table, and no one would dare touch it, so you see, the point was made!"

## GUARD OF HONOR

A number of heads of state arrived for the big conference and my soldiers were kept busy. In fact, at the airport, I had arranged "instant guards of honor" owing to the erratic timetables of these leaders. I did this by stationing at the airport a hundred-man-strong guard of honor, plus regimental color, the band and my troop of saluting guns. In this way, we were able to mount a guard at almost a moment's notice, without ever being taken unawares by the arriving dignitaries.

One thing that cynically struck me at this time was the fact that, though the

countries that these leaders came from were suffering the worst drought in living memory, and that thousands were starving to death, the opulence of the private airliners and the magnificence of the clothing and jewelry of the visitors was quite staggering. One wife of a visiting head of state took her husband's four-engined aircraft — plus crew, of course — to fly 2,000 miles away to "go to a decent hairdresser!"

But back to Bokassa. His aircraft arrived more or less at the expected time and we all wondered if he would be wearing his "zoot-suit" uniform with medals all over it, some even hung at the jacket hem. But — disappointment, on this occasion, he wore a suit.

He came down the steps of his aircraft and we had a good look at him, quite small, not much over five feet tall, a beaming smile and twinkling eyes, a tough compact body. The smile was seldom absent, but one thing we soon learned; his staff, every single one of them, were absolutely terrified of him.

As he was greeted by our prime minister and introduced to me to inspect the guard of honor, a great mob of people proceeded to rush off the aircraft; who they were exactly, I have no idea, but they could be described as staff and hangers-on.

## MADAM BOKASSA

The Madam Bokassa, who accompanied her husband, was the lady who later became his empress. A tall, graceful, good-looking, but frostily aloof creature who I, personally, never saw speak to anyone other than her child during the whole 14-day visit. I say "the Madam Bokassa" because, of course, he had (and, possibly, still has) several wives.

Bokassa inspected my guard in a pleasantly professional manner and (unlike a lot of people who ought to have known better) paid a compliment to our regimental color as he passed it. He had, of course, been an officer in the French army. Then, off he was whisked in a large motor car, and that was that. I had already inspected the guards and security arrangements at his bungalow and was very satisfied that they would be more than acceptable in every way.

The conference commenced the following day and I did not see Bokassa or any of the other delegates for several days. However, I note from my diary that the start of the conference was enlivened by the arrest of a known Algerian terrorist who posed as an observer, and, on the same day, our local liaison officer went mad and was carted off in an ambulance.

## CHILD AND BODYGUARD

I mentioned the Bokassa child that was with them, a boy about three years of age, with a bright intelligent look, and pale golden skin, like his mother. This little

# BESIDE BOKASSA

by Kifaru





## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kifarú is Swahili for rhinoceros. We received permission from Rhodesian Army officials to reprint this article on the former Central African Empire dictator from the July 1979 issue of their monthly publication, *Assegai*. The Rhodesians would not further identify the author but did confirm "his bona fides as impeccable. He has a strong military background and certainly knows what he is talking about."

From reading the article, SOF staffers have concluded Kifarú is a white British officer who spent much of his military career commanding black troops in Africa. —Bob Poos

boy had a permanent personal bodyguard who stood near him at all times and occasionally carried him. This bodyguard was a strange looking, rather pathetic creature. He always wore a large jacket with heavily padded shoulders, despite the humid heat, though this still failed to hide the bulge of his large pistol in its shoulder holster. He was of medium height, but very thin and emaciated looking and had a look of concentration like someone striving to stay awake.

This, in fact, was precisely what the expression portrayed because this unfortunate appeared to have no relief, so he never slept and never seemed to eat. My officer of the bungalow guard told me that one night they had found this man slumped, sound asleep, against the wall outside the child's bedroom. They quietly wakened him, whereupon he became almost hysterical with fear and begged my soldiers not to report to Bokassa that he had dared to have even a short sleep. He seemed certain that he would be executed if they did so. My man assured him that they had no intention of reporting the matter, but they left him in a thoroughly frightened state.

## THE UNIFORM

Next day, we did have the opportunity of seeing Bokassa in his full uniform. He was given the freedom of the capital city and, as normal with this ceremony, my soldiers supplied a guard of honor and I escorted the recipient. Bokassa's uniform with decorations and medals was a never-to-be-forgotten sight. His long tunic was literally covered with stars and orders. However, one must be fair and point out that Bokassa served as an officer in the French army in Indo-China and elsewhere and won several well-deserved decorations for bravery and good service. He did not award medals to himself like Idi Amin.

The ceremony went smoothly. Bokassa congratulated my guard of honor on their

turnout and bearing and then we went off to the big reception given by the mayor.

Next, we had a very full day of President for Life Bokassa as he made his formal visit to my barracks. The visit to my force went very well, indeed, with a couple of interesting and amusing incidents to add spice to the proceedings. As usual, there was a string of aides and bodyguards with President Bokassa, the leading one being one of his official ADCs in uniform. To deal with this mob, I deputized my excellent young operations officer who had an honors degree in languages from Oxford and who spoke perfect French.

While we watched one of the demonstrations my soldiers had arranged, I asked Jeremy how he was getting on with the "heavies?" "Hopeless, colonel," he replied. "Every time I speak to them, they put their fingers to their lips and go schhh, schhhh! When I asked them why, they said that one must not speak within five meters of the president!"

We approached a line of my armored cars. Bokassa showed great interest: "Ah, les blindes," he cried. Then he leaped into one, switched on the radio and asked what the call sign of the vehicle was? I told him and he promptly made a call asking for a report on signal strength. I was about to tell him that no one was on the other end, as our operational radio net was not operating at that time.

However, my clever, crafty adjutant had jumped into another armored car further down the line and when Bokassa asked for the report (in French, of course, while our signals conversations were always in English), my adjutant replied to his request, in French, and the president was impressed and delighted.

Then, to the horror of his staff, I said to the president: "Sir, as an old soldier, you were trying to catch me out, but you must remember that you are dealing with another old soldier." Bokassa seemed to think this terribly funny. He roared with laughter and slapped me on the back. By the looks on the faces of his staff, they seemed to think that I was to be executed on the spot for my temerity.

## THE EMPEROR'S PICTURE

We had decided to end the visit in our warrant officers and sergeants' mess so that Bokassa could meet the members who wanted to present him with a regimental plaque. On arrival there, my excellent RSM seemed slightly ruffled. Apparently just before our party had arrived, two of Bokassa's "heavies" swept into the mess without a word, banged a nail into the wall and began to hang up a portrait of President Bokassa. Not wishing to cause a diplomatic incident, the RSM kept his temper and worked out that Bokassa



TOP: Heads of State meet: Left, General De Gaulle, right, General Bokassa, President of the Central African Republic, 1969. Photo: Agence France Presse.

ABOVE: Bokassa I, watched over by a 2 ton eagle and crowned with \$2 million. INSERT: The royal carriage which rolled down Bokassa Boulevard, near Bokassa University, to Bokassa sports palace for the coronation festivities 4 December 1977. LEFT: The Emperor and his third wife, Empress Catherine, watch the festivities as heir apparent Jean-Bedel gives in to fatigue. Photos: AP

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was obviously giving the picture to the Mess and this was a rather crude method of presentation. However, after the little function at the mess, I thought my RSM was going to have apoplexy, as the same two "heavies" bowled in and took the picture away again.

They did, however, explain that wherever Bokassa was, his portrait had to be hung on a wall. So ended the visit to my force and despite the described little incidents, it was deemed a great success.

That evening, my wife and I arrived at the beautiful chateau which was the governor-general's residence — ready for what would be an entertaining evening. We had assembled with our drinks and I was chatting to the comptroller of the household, a retired naval officer and good friend of mine. I asked him what he proposed to do with any of the "heavies" and hangers-on that would surely accompany the President and Madam Bokassa?

He said he had a large room set aside in one wing of the house, well away from the dinner party, where food and drink would be supplied to keep these people out of mischief. Sure enough, with Bokassa and his wife came the usual mob, numbering 10 or 12. With the utmost graciousness, my friend and his staff greeted the official guests and, politely, swept the rest of them off to their separate party.

However, there were two uninvited and unexpected guests, the Bokassa child plus his bodyguard. Again, courtesy and diplomacy swung smoothly into action, and a high chair was produced from somewhere and placed beside Madam Bokassa's chair for the little boy. The unfortunate bodyguard, who as we knew was not allowed to eat or sleep anyway, stood, like some bad waxwork effigy in the shadows cast by the candlelight, behind the child's chair, never once taking his eyes off his charge.

## GOLD AND GLITTER

President Bokassa wore a lounge suit, but Madam Bokassa in evening dress had on the most fantastic gold and jewelry. As my wife whispered to me: "And it's all real, too!" One wondered just how much this spectacular jewelry actually cost? I heard later, that it came from Paris where it had been especially made. This dinner in fact went smoothly, conversation flowed (except, of course, from Madam B) and Bokassa was charming and amusing. The guests left early, closely followed by the mob from the west wing, who now looked distinctly party-worn, having obviously drunk rather more than they had eaten.

## THE DEPARTURE

A couple of days later Bokassa and his traveling circus were due to leave and timings were given out and orders issued. My guard of honor, band, saluting troop and I trundled off to the airport where the members of the diplomatic corps, in all their splendor, were also assembled. Bokassa's airplane was standing on the tarmac and the red carpet, leading from the saluting dais to the aircraft steps, was laid. All was ready.

We waited — and waited — and waited! The Russian ambassador got fed up and left. The remainder of the diplomatic corps became very restless. I was just plain annoyed at my guard of honor having to stand for so long without good reason.

Then came a fairly casual message from the capital: "President for Life Bokassa has decided to stay here for another day. He will leave at the same time tomorrow." The diplomatic corps departed, muttering very undiplomatic things about Bokassa. My men and I returned to barracks.

We all assembled again on the following day and, this time, everything went as planned, and soon, with sighs of relief, we watched the little dictator, his wife, son and horde of followers climb onto their aircraft and wing off westwards.

Only a few years later, we read and heard that this ruthless man appointed himself emperor of his country.

One wonders, now in 1980, what the future holds in store for him?

*Continued on page 85*



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## COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Continued from page 65

cadia, CA 91006) are the gear of choice. Stay away from low-slung "walk-and-draw" rigs and stick to "belt-holster" rigs.

**T**HE gun belt is probably the most overlooked piece of equipment. Nothing is worse than a thin, flexible, improperly-sized gun belt. The holster flops around, sags and moves, making a good smooth draw just about impossible. Get a good-quality, double-thickness belt, that fits the holster slot tightly.

Spare ammunition carriers are another item that should be given careful thought. Spare auto-pistol magazines should always be carried in a speed pouch with a friction retainer. There are several good designs on the market (see Combat Pistolcraft, SOF, June 1979). The best designs have about 1/3 of the magazine exposed.

Revolver reloads are best carried in one of the speed loaders now on the market, with the Second Six and the HKS brands being most popular. The biggest problem with speed loaders is that their carrying cases seem to be designed with no thought to a fast reload. With the exception of the pouches made by Second Six, none of the retaining straps extend past the bottom of the pouch, thus making it hard to open

checked wood grips and you know how hard oil is on wood. I want a rust-proof finish and good sights put on the gun.

As for durable finishes, I have considered Armoloy, hard chrome and satin nickel. I have seen several guns that were Armoloyed and I was not impressed. They all needed a gunsmith's services to get them operating again. The Armoloy also seemed to wear quickly. This leaves me with hard chrome or satin nickel put on by a competent gunsmith.

them in a hurry. The Second Six pouches should fit other brands of speed loaders, so that may be a solution to this problem.

Continued on page 82

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**C**ONGRATULATIONS! You've just landed that big contract and now you're off to Asia, Africa, one of the Arab countries or perhaps South America. You're looking forward to a new adventure, but as you clear up last-minute obligations and prepare to leave for the airport, take a minute to think about medical care and personal health. Wherever you are going, odds are that the area won't have a health-care delivery system which measures up to what you've come to expect in North America or Western Europe. Depending on just where it is in the world that you're heading you can expect to encounter communicable diseases seen only infrequently in the West, exotic and perhaps not palatable foods and "doctors" who may be little more than orderlies.

Staying in good health will depend very much on you, and your chances of living to spend that bonus increase with your knowledge of elementary medical care principles. The time to think of these aspects of your lifestyle is now, while you are still in a Western country, not when you are stuck in the bush with the nearest hospital three days' hard slog away.

## Immunization

Most travelers between Western Europe and North America complete entrance and customs formalities at the port of entry without ever being asked to produce proof of immunization against certain diseases. Small pox, yellow fever, cholera, bubonic plague and typhoid fever are rarely seen in the West, but this is not true of the rest of the world. If you are enroute to, or coming from an African, Asian, Arabian or South American country you may not be permitted to leave or perhaps re-enter your native country without showing proof you have been immunized for diseases which may be encountered in your country of destination.

Those of you with former American military service will remember — without much affection — a small yellow-colored booklet which listed the various vaccinations you had. This booklet is published by the U.S. Public Health Service in a World Health Organization format as a convenient, readily acceptable means of listing immunizations. The booklet is available from many hospitals and doctors' offices where necessary immunizations may be obtained, or from the U.S. Government Superintendent of Documents (stock number 017-001-00393-0, price: 25¢). Anyone who contemplates travel outside the boundaries of North America or Western Europe should obtain one of these international certificates of vaccination and take the required immunizations. If you have your old military service certificate chances are you can get some vaccinations transferred to a new booklet and save expense by having only the necessary vaccinations up-dated.

# LOOKING AFTER NO. 1

## First Aid for the SOF'er

by James E. Fender

However, depending on your ultimate destination, you might be well advised not to carry in your possession any document containing a reference to the U.S. Department of Defense. In case of doubt or uncertainty, obtain new booklets and retake all the vaccinations. Why not use a certificate issued when you were in military service, considering that the immunizations are still valid? You can, if you restrict your traveling to South Africa or Rhodesia, but anyone who has ever gone through customs/immigration formalities in a newly emerging country knows that the functionaries checking documents are frequently not sophisticated. Anything connecting the traveler with the American military could result in your being labeled a spy. Remember, you may have to transit several countries and change your mode of travel to get to your country of employment, so avoid potential hassles; obtain a new certificate and get the vaccinations you need. It certainly beats coming down with yellow fever or typhoid somewhere in the outback of your country of employment.

## Personal Medical Kit

Okay, now you need to know something about field medical aid, and if you know you will be left fairly much to your own devices in your country of employment, you'll need to know a *lot* about medical aid and also have access to a first-class medical kit. Keep in mind that with the exceptions of Rhodesia and South Africa and possibly a few of the Arab countries, none of the countries where you might find employment can provide air superiority and helicopter-borne medical evacuation. If you take a hit you can forget all about a "dust-off" chopper being on the scene in a matter of seconds to take you directly to a field hospital.

The debris-contaminated wound which could have been treated routinely in a well-equipped medical facility 30 minutes from the firefight will look quite different three days later — if your buddies manage to get you to the hospital at all. Also, you could very well be the senior man in the team and if one of your troops gets hit

you will be the one who must see to it that the man receives the best treatment possible under the circumstances.

Now obviously neither this article nor any other can make you an expert in first aid, but it should make you *think* about field medical aid, and hopefully make you want to increase your knowledge of how to treat medical problems in the field. Hopefully, you'll want to design and stock your own personal aid kit.

Two very good paramedical texts could prove invaluable for the man who has just landed a contract in a foreign country: "Emergency Care and Transportation of the Sick and Injured," available from the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, 430 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611, and "The Ship's Medicine Chest and Medical Aid at Sea," published by the U.S. Public Health Service and available through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402. There are other good manuals and texts which deal with emergency care and first aid, but the two I've mentioned provide comprehensive guidance in layman's terms for the person who may be called upon to render field aid in a remote area.

The text published by the Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons is designed for the emergency medical technician, and thoroughly covers most of the types of injuries which can occur in a combat environment. "The Ship's Medicine Chest" offers a detailed list of the medicines which can be used to treat various diseases and conditions, as well as procedures for dealing with disease and injury. Both books will tell you what you need to know, but whether you obtain one of these books or another guide, a detailed manual for field aid should *accompany* you whenever you leave on assignment. Chances are very good that you will not find anything on field aid — at least in a language you can read — in your country of employment.

Included with this article are photos of two types of field aid kits. The first illustrates the type of kit you should have with you at all times. The second illustrates the type of kit which should be available back at the base camp, except in

the very rare circumstances when almost immediate evacuation to a well-equipped hospital can be guaranteed. You can purchase a first aid kit already assembled; the type put out by Johnson and Johnson and sold in most large drug stores is better than none at all, but anyone can develop his own aid kit to suit individual needs, and with a little planning the items selected can be fitted into a very small container.

My own personal aid kit — which goes with me whenever I leave the house — is contained in a small leather zip-bag made for a small camera. The bag is light, yet stiff-sided, water resistant and fits easily into a hunting coat pocket or the cargo pocket of fatigues. My kit works for me; I'm comfortable carrying it, though I'm the first to admit that it is larger than the usual field aid kit. However, the essential element of *any* first aid kit is that it be

- 1 Cutter snake bite kit
- 1 oral thermometer, with case
- 1 tube of betadine ointment
- 1 container of "Emprin," "Tylenol" or other pain reliever
- 2 ampules of ammonia inhalant
- 1 pair of small scissors
- 1 pair of forceps or a hemostat
- 1 Benezdrex inhaler
- 1 tube of chap-stick
- 8 sterile packaged alcohol swabs
- 4 antiseptic wet cleansing towel packs
- 1 container of 50 mg. Demerol tablets
- 1 container of 25 mg. Bonine tablets
- 1 container of 50 mg. Lomotil tablets
- 1 roll of 1" tape
- 1 small bottle of eye wash
- 1 packet of sterile suturing needles and sutures
- 4 2"x2" 8-ply sterile gauze sponges
- 4 3"x9" nitrofurazone sterile gauze pads

you might need than to need the material in the field and not have it.

## Questions to Ask

Wounds and other injuries require a quick assessment on the part of the person who is to administer field aid. How serious is the wound? Can the injured person be reached? An important question if your team is pinned down in a firefight! Can the injured person be moved? Can he take part in his own treatment? I.e., can he bandage his own wounds or staunch the flow of blood or otherwise take care of himself until you can break off the engagement? Is there more than one wounded person? How far away are you from any aid station? What sort of transport can you use or call in? How much aid equipment is available?

The response made by the person administering field aid will depend on the answers to these and other questions. Obviously, treatment rendered when there is a chance of getting a casualty to a hospital in short order is quite different from that given to a casualty with grossly contaminated wounds when there is no chance at all of getting him to a fully equipped medical facility. More than anything else, the ability to assess what can be done



Necessary equipment, supplies for field hospital or base camp. More important still — having someone who is knowledgeable about their correct use. Fender believes inadequate field medical support is grounds for scrubbing any paramilitary operation.

under the circumstances as opposed to what should be done and then render that aid will determine whether the casualty lives or dies.

## Base Camp Equipment

Field aid equipment which should be maintained at the base camp includes, as the photos show, bone saws, rib cutters, a wide variety of hemostats, various anesthetics and other medical equipment which cannot be carried in a personal kit. Hopefully this equipment will never have to be used. As Patton said, the objective of fighting is not to die for your country (or employer) but to make the other person die for his country (or employer). But if this equipment and someone trained to use it are not available, then the consequences can be grim. In the opening chapters of *White Soldiers in Black Africa*, Hans Germani paints a picture of how briefly it takes for a member of Mike Hoare's No. Five Commando to bleed to death from a severed femoral artery. Going on an operation without adequate medical equipment and someone trained in its use is as senseless as going on the same operation without adequate arms or ammunition. Any situation in which the

available when needed. The most elaborate aid kit is useless if it is not at hand when you need it.

I have made up fairly comprehensive aid kits for backpackers, kits small enough to fit neatly into a metal band-aid box. I've also made up kits for people which are much more comprehensive than the one I carry myself. The proper size for you will probably fall somewhere between these two extremes. Regardless of how you approach the task of accumulating your own aid kit, refine your aid items until they satisfy you and the kit is in a form which can be carried on your person as comfortably as your pistol, knife or other personal gear.

## Necessary Items

By the way of illustration, my personal kit contains:

- 1 pair of needle-nosed tweezers
- 25 band-aids (Johnson & Johnson plastic strip)

- 4 4"x4" sterile cover sponges
- 1 book of matches
- 1 pack of sterile surgical blades
- 4-6 safety pins
- 1 roll of gauze bandage.

Granted, this is a lot of equipment to carry personally, and most people don't need anything as comprehensive, but every item in my aid kit has been used numerous times either for myself or for companions on hunting, camping or canoe trips — or in actual combat. The kit has proved its value many times over. Of course, many of the items which are indispensable to me will not be needed by others.

The amounts of certain items can also be pared down, and many items can be made to do double duty. If you always carry a sharp knife you may not want to carry surgical blades, and if you always have a handkerchief on you then you may not need much in the way of gauze pads or bandage wrappings. Remember, though, it is far better to have more than you think

employer does not provide adequate medical equipment and trained medical personnel for the people under contract deserves a long, hard look.

Nevertheless, the realities of the situation, the fact that the money is right and the objective is a quick, fairly low risk target may convince you to press on even though the medical aspects of the situation are less than ideal. That is why it is important that you know how to look after yourself, since it is 1,000 percent certain that nobody else is going to be looking out for you!

Hopefully at this stage you realize the need to round out your professional skills with a sound basic knowledge of health care. By the way, this is a good selling point when you are advertising your capabilities. Any reputable employer putting together an operation knows that medical knowledge is important, and if you possess such knowledge it will be a definite asset.

perceived needs. At most community colleges, if you can get at least 10 people who want to take a certain course the college will locate an instructor, design and offer a program — once they've seen the "up-front" money.

Okay, so you can't find a Red Cross course and no college near you offers anything in the emergency medical care field; you'll have to work a little harder. If you are into the para-military scene at all you should be able to locate someone with medical expertise. A former U.S. Army Special Forces type, a USAF para-rescue specialist or a former Navy medical corpsman trained to work with Marine infantry can show you some of the things they have been taught.

Civilian physicians could be helpful, but keep in mind that most of the establishment medics are turned off by anything which even hints of a mercenary lifestyle. Even if you do locate a sympathetic physician, remember that few

physicians who have ever seen actual combat, even those trained in the area of emergency or trauma medicine, are expert in the management of the combat injured. Since most physicians are primarily concerned with elective operations performed in well-ordered surroundings with many trained assistants available, they are not as well qualified to provide you with the basics of wound suturing or bone setting in the field environment as a good SF, para-rescue type or corpsman would be. If you can locate a person willing to share his or her field medical expertise with you, treasure that person. He or she may very well save your life.

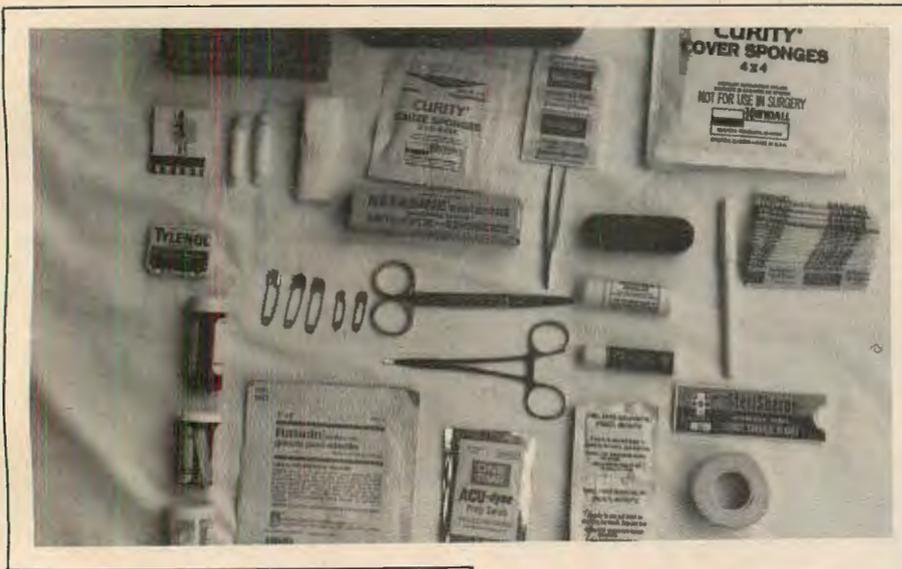
## Practice

Once you've gotten the basics through a formal course or by working with some medical technician, practice what you've learned. Bandages are cheap. Practice the types of wrapping and splinting you have learned and practice often. Make up your own personal field aid kit and carry it with you. Keep another first aid kit around the house for routine cuts and bruises; don't dip into your personal kit to take care of wounds or injuries sustained near home base unless you absolutely have to. If you do use something from your kit, replace it as soon as you can. Go through your kit periodically and replace anything which has exceeded its shelf life or is no longer sterile. Get a good manual, study it and take it with you when you enter any area where you don't have immediate access to competent professional medical care.

## Snake Bite

In many areas of the world where your talents may be needed, poisonous snakes are a fact of life. Recognition and avoidance is a lot better than treatment of bites. Nevertheless, some 40,000 people worldwide die each year from snake bite and thousands more are paralyzed or have to have limbs amputated. Rather than cover snake bites in this article let me refer you to SOF, Spring 1976 and SOF, Fall 1976. Page 37 of the Spring 1976 issue and the article by A.J. Kohler which begins on page 54 of the Fall issue will tell you all you need to know about snake bites. If your contract and travels will take you into areas infested by poisonous snakes, take the time to read those articles. You may be glad you did.

Remember that no one engaging in para-military operations is truly a professional unless he knows how to render basic field medical aid to himself and others. You owe it to yourself to have the necessary training, and if you're selected as the operation's leader you owe it to those people whose lives may depend on your knowledge.



## Training Sources

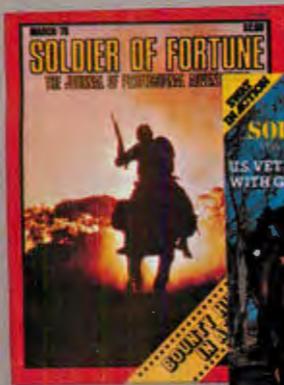
So if you can't learn from this article how to treat a stomach wound, treat a case of typhoid or splint a compound fracture of the femur, where do you go? For starters, try the local chapter of the Red Cross. The Red Cross offers periodic training programs, usually at no charge, which acquaint you with the rudiments of first aid. If you do take such a course, consider it nothing more than a building block; you still have a lot to learn.

Most people live within easy driving distance of a community college, many of which offer extensive emergency medical technician courses. Check out your local community college, but bear in mind that most of the courses you want may be listed under the Department of Nursing rather than a separate Department of Emergency Medical Care. The type of course regularly offered for police or fire fighting personnel is especially valuable. Also, community colleges, more so than more traditional schools, are responsive to

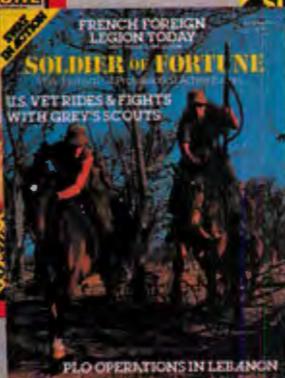
Splints, restraining forms and bandages, items too bulky to carry in individual field aid kit, but if not available at base camp someone's guilty of bad planning.



Some items carried in Fender's personal field aid kit. More important than bulky equipment is to have what one needs and to know how to use what one has.



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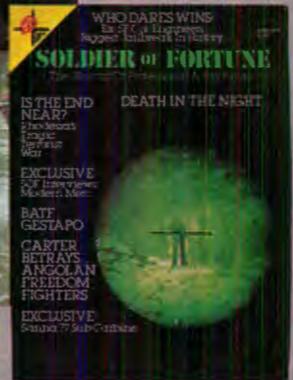
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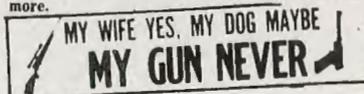
It goes without saying that you should have some form of ear and eye protection. The other "must-have" is spare magazines or speed loaders. The absolute minimum is three, but six or more are better. Nothing frosts a match director more than having to wait while some turkey fumbles to reload his only magazine for the next string of fire. It should be automatic for you to reload your spares before you stand around and chew the fat with your buddies. This way you'll be ready when you're called for your next string.

**B**EFORE attempting IPSC shooting, get some proper instruction on the basics from a competent source. Most clubs have several qualified instructors, and they're always willing to help a beginner learn the ropes. Beware of "gunshop-commando" instructors, police-type instructors and others who really don't know what it's all about. Drawing and firing a loaded weapon, smoothly and quickly, while under pressure, is no joke.



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# STEELE ON KNIVES

Continued from page 17

local parks. We were in a particularly dark area (for reasons that are obvious) when a young Latin male confronted us with a 38-caliber derringer. He did the "money-or-your-life" bit and waved the gun around. For a second the gun's muzzle was not actually pointed at either of us; I drew the Ninja from where it was attached to the back of my belt (covered by a jacket) and slashed for his gun wrist.

To an experienced knife fighter that probably sounds like a very stupid move, but I had had no formal training. The blade slashed his forearm shallowly, but he jerked his arm away, further pointing the gun away from us. Still I knew he would shoot if he could re-aim, so as quickly as I could thrust and draw I stabbed him in the abdomen three times.

To make a long story short, he fell to the ground and we ran like hell. When we got to the car and started off, my date handed me the derringer the mugger had used. She had picked it up when he fell down. I popped it open and found it loaded with two 38 shotshells; at the distance he had been from us he could have seriously wounded (if not killed) both of us with one round.

The incident was never reported and

never appeared in the papers. Anyway, he must have known the risks when he took up armed robbery for a living.

To finish up, your advice saved our valuables and possibly our lives. Thanks.

Name Withheld

**A** One cannot be too sure about what is legal or illegal in Texas. One man called me to say that he had been arrested for possessing a Gerber Mark I which he had bought in a local shop. Apparently it was legal for the shop to sell him a dagger, but not legal for him to possess one (he was not carrying or concealing it).

I won't comment on your not reporting the incident, but I will say that if the mugger had killed you both, he would not have reported it, and if by some miracle he were caught and the gun were found, there would be little ballistic evidence to connect him to the crime. Shotshells do not have much spread at close range, so it is not likely that a single charge would hit both of you; even if it did, the birdshot used in most shotshells is not high on the penetration or lethality scale. The advantage to using such loads is that there is no solid lead bullet to pick up rifling striations; how much the plastic shot case would pick up is a matter of conjecture.

As far as technique is concerned, it sounds like you did just fine. You slashed him obviously and visibly, which caused him to pull away, the natural reaction. At

this point you might have given yourself a safety margin by pressing his gun hand against his chest with your left hand before you stabbed into his lower abdomen. Incidentally, most knife fatalities are caused by multiple thrusts to the abdomen or the neck. Your instincts were correct.



\*\*\*\*\*

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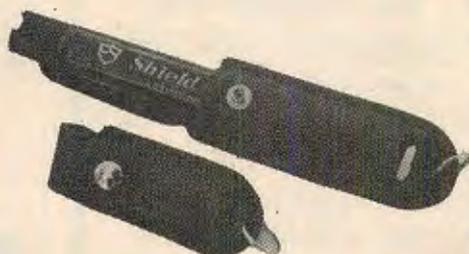
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**BUSHMAN**

Continued from page 50

I asked Lt. Frannie DuToit about that. He replied: "Oh, I guess it could happen. But I doubt it. We have very good intelligence from the Bushmen civilians who live in the area. They know we're their friends and they let us know when any strangers are in the area." Several other South African soldiers said much the same. But I can still vividly recall getting hit in Vietnam when one least suspected it — and when the people around were supposed to be friendlies.

The other thought I had was of my first visit to South Africa, five years ago. Then, the South Africans would not dream of using black or Bushman troops. Now they have both (See "Black Against Black," SOF, February '79).

**'I'll never serve with a white unit again — these people are the best.'**

Frannie DuToit, a regular career officer, said when I asked him how he liked serving with the Bushmen: "I will never serve with a white, conventional unit ever again so long as I can remain with these people. They are the best."

Think about that. The South African army has achieved in five years what it took the American Army from the Civil War to after the Korean War to accomplish: realize that black, white and brown can fight together when they are mutually threatened.

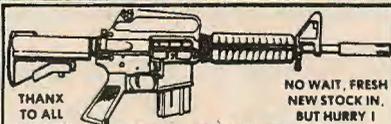


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# BOKASSA

Continued from page 76

## BOKASSA UPDATE

Located at almost the precise center of Africa, the Central African Republic (about the size of Texas) is about 400 miles from the nearest ocean. Although landlocked, the country, basically a fertile, well-watered plateau, is rich in diamonds, cotton, timber and coffee. Formerly one of the four territories of French Equatorial Africa, the CAR became independent on 13 August 1960.

Six years later, Col. Jean-Bedel Bokassa, Armed Forces Chief of Staff, overthrew the allegedly corrupt government of David Dacko, his cousin, in a bloodless coup. Dacko stayed on as advisor. Sweetness and light gradually dissipated over the years, however, as Bokassa's reputation for cruelty, megalomania and incompetence began to rival that of Uganda's Idi Amin Dada.

Bokassa, a French para, WWII vet and survivor of Dien Bien Phu, took the motto, "Lead from the front," literally. In 1972, for example, he joined his troops in the public beating of 45 thieves in the main square of the capital city, Bangui. His capriciousness took on sinister forms. One Mother's Day, he ordered all mothers in prison to be released — and all those accused of matricide executed. He suspended the constitution and placed all legislative and executive powers in his own hands, as president-for-life. On 4 December 1976, he declared a monarchy and changed the country's name to Central African Empire.

One year later, in one of the most sumptuous, expensive ceremonies ever celebrated in Africa, he crowned himself Emperor Bokassa I. The tone was Napoleonic. Coronation robes and gowns were made by a famous Parisian couturier and cost \$200,000. The emperor's crown was worth \$2 million — it sported a 138-carat local diamond. The banquet included 240 tons of food and \$25 bottles of champagne. In all, the bash cost \$25 million, equal to one year's worth of French foreign aid — and that in a country with an annual per capita income of \$86. European royalty and international heads of state were invited, but were conspicuous by their absence. The cold-shoulder treatment continued.

Bokassa lost even more credibility on the world scene in April of last year. He was condemned by Amnesty International when it became known that he

had ordered and participated in the massacre of 100 children who were protesting the royal decree that they wear school uniforms at their own expense. He was implicated in the slaughter by the findings of judges from five African nations. His ambassador to France resigned, asked for political asylum and began to form a liberation front. The U.S. terminated its aid program and France cut off all but humanitarian help.

On 20 September 1979, Bokassa was ousted by David Dacko with the help of the French. Bokassa fled to a military base near Paris, but was not allowed to deplane. This raised a controversy in France, since Bokassa is a French citizen. The problem was solved in backroom diplomacy between French President Giscard d'Estaing and Ivory Coast President Houphouët-Boigny. As a personal favor, the Ivory Coast agreed to extend hospitality to Bokassa. This gentleman's agreement worked, and Bokassa is now tolerated in Abidjan under Ivorian guard. He has no known plans for the future.

—S. Nielsen



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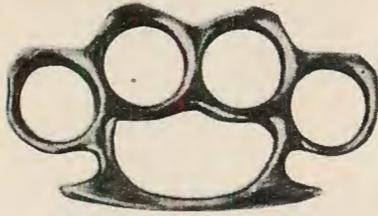
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## KHYBER

Continued from page 59

back to England, eventually to encounter Sherlock Holmes, as a result of a wound from a *jezail*. Kipling's works refer repeatedly to homemade native arms; for example, in "Arithmetic on the Frontier," he bemoaned the practice of shooting expensive British officers with a very, very cheap *jezail*, while in "The Man Who Would Be King" he mentions some "good Kohat *jezails* that'll carry to 600 yards." Kohat, just for interest, is located about 35 miles south of Peshawar, or 50 miles southeast of the Khyber Pass. In *Beyond Khyber Pass*, published in 1926, Lowell Thomas gives an excellent description of the workshops, arms, blood feuds and border conflicts of that region.

In the early '50s, William O. Douglas traveled in Pakistan and he, too, remarked upon the Pathan arms factories. Douglas stated that for years the British tried to shut down the tribal arms foundry, without success. He identified the tribal gun-making center as Dera Adamkhel, north of Peshawar. (Douglas, *Beyond the High Himalayas*, Doubleday, 1953.)

Another gunmaking center is Darra, about 30 miles south of Peshawar. I spent an interesting couple of hours trying to straighten out the difference between Dera and Darra. Guns are made in both places, but the locations are different. For that matter, guns or gun parts are made in almost every mud cottage on the frontier.

Occasionally I encounter Pakistanis in America, and whenever I get to know one of them, I ask about the gun shops. I get a standard response: a funny look and the incredulous question — "How'd you learn about that?" The question's phraseology seldom varies.

Actually, the gun shops are famous and have even become a tourist attraction. It is possible for Westerners to visit some workshops in Darra and examine their products.

Because the frontier region is still restless, it is best to stick to established methods. One Pakistani I interviewed told me that one does not leave one's house unarmed, and preferably one leaves only with friends who are also armed. Self-protection is a necessity on the frontier, and a homemade Enfield or Webley speaks a language men of prey can understand.



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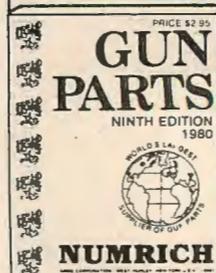
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## BULLETIN BOARD

Continued from page 11

The AKS-74, somewhat shorter than the AK-47, makes extensive use of plastics and stamped parts and is therefore assumed to be somewhat lighter than its ancestor.

Distribution of the rifle has been limited to airborne units, mechanized infantry and some guard units.

### WOOPS!

Typos in recent SOFs resulted in weapons misidentifications. GSG9 story (March '80) P. 39 middle column, second paragraph, parenthesis should read: (MG-42 GPMG-delayed roller locking, blowback action). P. 40 first caption should read: Taylor found MP5K, chopped and channeled version of MP5 in 9x19mm parabelum light, small, controllable. April '80 Rhodesia story P. 39 caption should read: HK91 (not 92).



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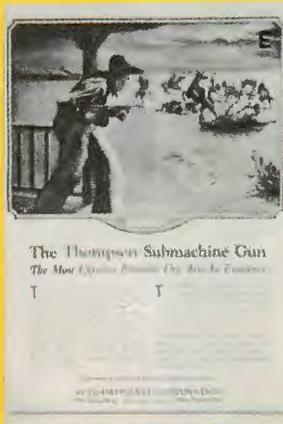
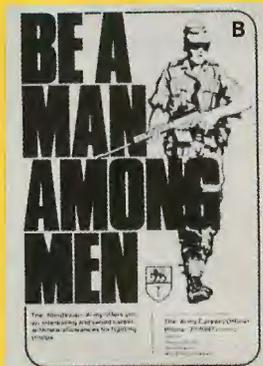
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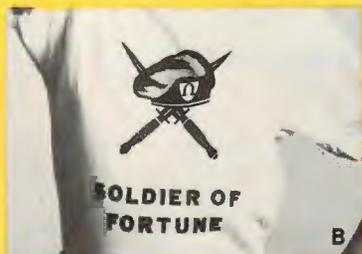


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**PATHAN**

*Continued from page 60*

He concluded: "It is never, at any time, safe to rely on their faith to carry out a promise unless they know you have the power to enforce it. To Afghan mentality it is stupid to do something you don't want to, unless you must."

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Churchill declared, "It is a point of honor on the Indian frontier not to leave wounded men behind. Death by inches and hideous mutilation are the invariable measure meted out to all who fall in battle into the hands of Pathan tribesmen."

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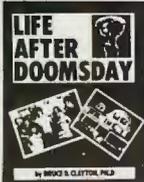
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