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from Cuba p. 30**

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# **SOLDIER OF FORTUNE**

The Journal Of Professional Adventurers

**SAS Dares  
And Wins  
A Raid  
That Worked  
p. 26**

**SOF 1  
CIA 0**  
SOF scoops CIA  
on  
**NEW AKS-74**  
round  
p. 42



# TAKE



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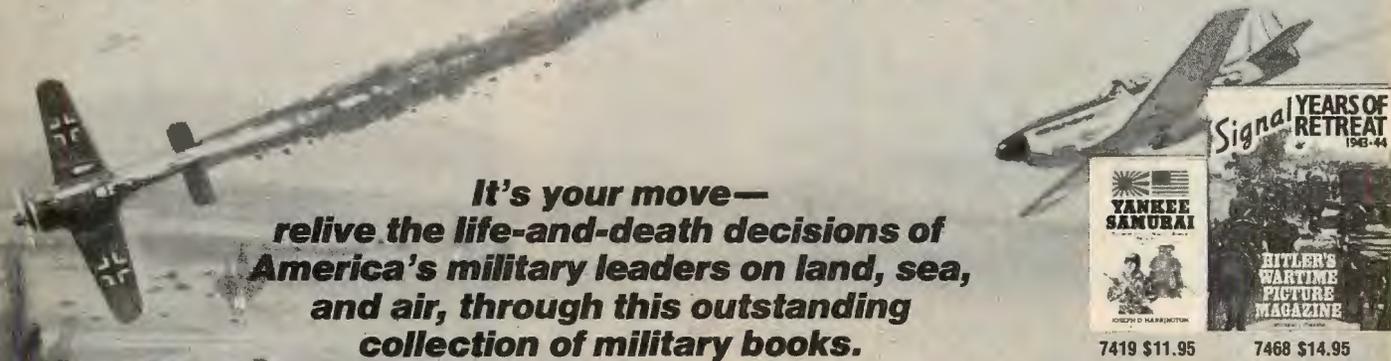
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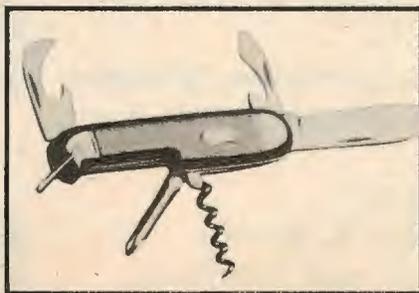
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## SOF CONVENTION COMBINED SMALL ARMS MATCH UPDATE

**S**OF's first annual three-gun combat match and convention are well on the way to becoming reality.

Information packets on the convention and invitations to select shooters will be in the mail about 1 July. If you feel you could qualify to receive an invitation to enter the match, please request an application form.

### Additional information:

1. Guests of the "Professionals" attending the match and/or convention will be charged \$12.50 each to attend the banquet.

2. A seminar on martial arts will be held by Randy Warner, a former associate of Mike Echanis.

3. A seminar on knife throwing entitled "Combat Power Throwing" will be conducted by a professional.

4. Details on skydiving and additional seminars will follow.

5. A limited number of display tables in the Chapman Academy's Exhibit Hall are still available. Each table will cost \$45 for three days. First non-refundable deposits will receive preference.

6. Match prize total will be no less than \$10,000 in cash and prizes.

7. For further information, write SOF Convention, Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306 or call (303) 443-5154.

Join the "Professionals" in Columbia, Missouri 26-28 September 1980. Don't be disappointed. Send in your reservation now!



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# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

COVER: Mului Jalal Udi Den, military leader of Afghanistan's Hazbi-Islami, shows first Soviet AKS-74 round seen by SOF's Galen Geer. Round was taken off body of USSR soldier in Afghanistan

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**N.E. MacDougald**  
Tinseltown maverick discusses heroes, politics, guns—and movies.

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# BULLETIN BOARD

by Jim Graves

## EMERGENCY SURGERY BOOK IN PRINT ...

*Emergency War Surgery — NATO Handbook* has been extensively revised by the U.S. Air Force to incorporate newly developed techniques. The book is available from the Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Published in February 1979, the book costs \$8.25 and its stock number is 008-000-00211-8.

## KEMP WINS SEVEN MEDALS ...

SOF Staffer Rocky Kemp recently earned seven medals shooting in California's State Pistol Championships at Fort Ord. Shooting in the Expert Class, Kemp won his medals using a Jim Hoag-modified .45 auto. Kemp got a silver in the Grand Aggregate, a gold in .45 Aggregate and silvers in .45 Timed, Rapid and National Match

Course. He took bronze medals in Center Fire Aggregate and National Match Course.

Kemp has won over 20 medals and trophies with the same gun in state or national competition. Kemp, who does his own reloading, prefers 4.5 grains of Bull's-eye with a 200-grain semi-wadcutter bullet for bull's-eye shooting. He says it gives him similar recoil to hardball ammo, with superior accuracy.

No slouch with a rifle either, Kemp has a Master classification for High Power rifle earned while shooting on the U.S. Marine Corps' team in the late 1950s.

His secret for shooting success? "About one million shots in practice."

## RUMOR OR TRUTH? ...

Rumor is that the Commandant of the Marine Corps called in all of the

Marine helicopter pilots flying on the Iranian hostage rescue operation and informed them, "Gentlemen, if you succeed, President Carter will be re-elected."

That's one joke, or theory on why it failed, and another Carter joke making the rounds is:

Recently, one night Jimmy Carter was having a hard time sleeping and he was visited by the ghost of Teddy Roosevelt.

Teddy asked, "Mr. President, how are things going?" Jimmy replied, "Teddy, they're going horribly." Teddy asked, "What is wrong, Mr. President?"

Jimmy replied, "Well, first thing, the Iranians siezed the Embassy and are holding all our Embassy personnel hostage." Teddy asked, "Did you

*Continued on page 14*

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—warns German Author Hans J. Schneider

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Well illustrated (over 350 detailed drawings, tables, and maps) and easy to understand, this book is a must for every man or woman who is concerned about the safety and survival of their family during the uncertain times ahead! Only \$7.95 postpaid. Order several—additional copies just \$6.95 each ppd.

## PHYSICAL and FINANCIAL SURVIVAL

*Timely and Profitable Help for Troubled Americans* picks up where the *USAF Survival Manual* leaves off. In it Survival Expert Hans J. Schneider reveals his proven plan for YOUR freedom and survival in the midst of economic and civil turmoil.

**FIRST-HAND ADVICE.** No one could be better qualified to write this book than Mr. Schneider. He survived a total economic crash and 2 dictatorships, including 5 years under Communism. 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. This *practical, first-hand knowledge* will help you in similar times ahead.

**BLEAK FUTURE.** America is already in hot water, but the future looks much, much worse—runaway inflation, price controls,

black markets, and eventually "a MAJOR depression that will make the 1930s look like a Sunday School picnic." After reading Mr. Schneider's book, you will also know:

- \* Why a dictator could rise to power in America (resulting in gun confiscation)
- \* Why the world is bracing for WAR
- \* Why famines and a collapse of the dollar are ahead
- \* Why big cities will be centers of bloodshed, food shortages, and massive unemployment

Hans Schneider adds this chilling warning: "Any one of these events could spell disaster to unprepared Americans, physically and financially."

**SURVIVAL RETREATS.** In his book, Hans has outlined what he has done . . . and what you can do to prepare for—even profit from—these times. 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? By following his helpful advice, you too can wisely select the right place to live and set it up for survival.

- His 288-page book also covers:*
- What essential provisions to store, and how some can be used for barter
  - How to educate your children at home legally—and avoid the bad influence of public schools!
  - Simple inflation/depression-proof investments with a 30-100% yearly increase
  - Jobs least vulnerable to unemployment
  - Foreign lands—A wise move?
  - 2 ways to hide valuables during chaotic times!
  - 5 different ways to produce your own electricity without gasoline!
- . . . and MUCH more.

You will also read about alternate lifestyles, weaponry, and defense tactics; turning a yacht into a "survival retreat"; 6 simple, inexpensive ways to preserve your own food (one using just a needle and string! page 47); and what is even more important for your physical survival than merely storing food (see pages 214 and 248-249)!

. . . And that's just the beginning. Mr. Schneider's book is literally a "goldmine" of valuable "how-to" information. But don't take our word for it, read what others are saying:

\* "Timely . . . a good prescription for those of us who no longer expect any help from the failing institutions of this world and recognize that we must work out our own salvation—physical, mental and spiritual."—John R. Andrews, M.D., Ellijay, 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* (288 pages) 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 conditions may be!

## GLOBAL SURVIVAL

Mr. Schneider is also the author of another book. 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 under survival conditions in almost 100 countries. It is beautifully illustrated with over 110 photos/drawings and a full-color cover. In a special chapter, Hans even tells you how you can save substantially on trips abroad using the same methods he did!

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**NO RISK—MONEY—BACK GUARANTEE**



# COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

by Jeff Cooper & Ken Hackathorn

*SOF's Combat Pistolcraft column welcomes letters from our readers. If you have a question or contribution, send it to Jeff Cooper, c/o SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. For a quick, personal reply, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.*

**Q.** I've just read through the April issue of *Soldier of Fortune* and I was very surprised that you would actively endorse the Star PD. The PD, in my humble opinion, is a piece of junk. I've come to this conclusion after some first-hand experience with the PD.

During two shooting sessions three major problems became obvious. First, the slide would not go into battery 100 percent of the time and would require manual persuasion to completely chamber the round. Second, the thumb safety would sometimes lock in the down position, then magically start working again. Third, and the most serious, was its tendency to lose its magazine when firing service loads (7.2 grains of Unique behind a 200-grain Speer JHP).

Granted, an aluminum-frame gun should only be fired occasionally, but the PD could not even take occasional firing. It is a joke as a service arm. I suppose that I could have gotten a lemon, but I own three Colt .45 ACPs and they all shot like champs right out of the box.

B.G.  
Greeley, Colorado

**A.** *My experience with the PD pistol is not extensive, but of the three weapons I have used, all were conspicuously reliable with all sorts of ammuni-*

*tion. It is my opinion that the Star pistols should be considered for light duty only, since one is never quite sure of the quality control exercised in their manufacture. I have said several times in print that a PD is a pistol to carry much and shoot little.*

*You do appear to have a "lemon." I am sorry about that but I can assure you that such PDs as I have known, both in person and by reputation, have worked quite well — within the limits of soft-steel construction.*

**Q.** I am seriously considering the purchase of a .45 automatic. I recently read about the Heckler & Koch .45 auto in a gun magazine. People have told me that they make high-quality guns.

What is your professional opinion of this .45 auto? Can it compare with the Colt Government Model or Colt Combat Model?

R.J.W.  
Columbia, South Carolina

*Continued on page 12*

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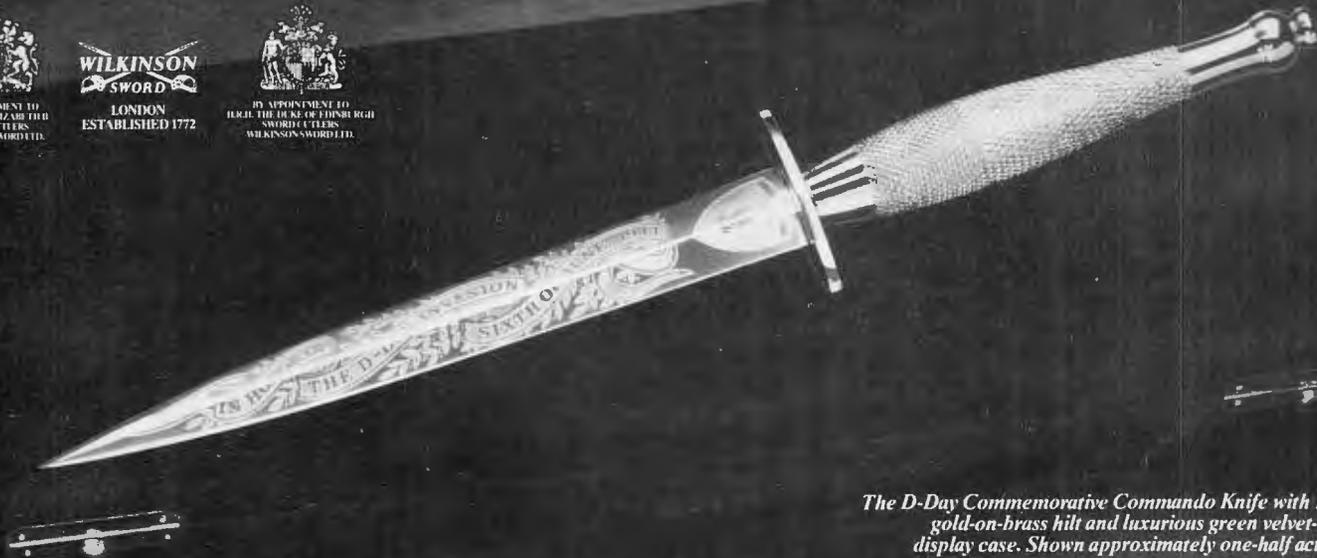
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*Dwight D. Eisenhower*  
(Night of June 5-6, 1944)

In this, the 35th anniversary year of World War II victory, The American Historical Foundation and Wilkinson Sword Limited honor D-Day, "the greatest invasion of all time," with the issuance of the same famous World War II Commando Knife carried by many of the heroic American, British and other Allied soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen in the combined military assault of 6 June 1944 "Hitler's Fortress Europe."

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Only twenty-five hundred will be made worldwide for collectors, military historians, museums and soldiers, sailors and airmen of World War II and their families. Each knife will be individually numbered and registered with The American Historical Foundation. A luxurious, dark-green, velvet-lined and fitted, richly gold-tooled presentation case with brass closure clasps will accompany your knife. This is the most spectacular version ever issued of this Commando Knife; experts agree that these will be greatly sought after by collectors.

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On the reverse of the blade the Swordsmiths will etch in an elaborate banner General Eisenhower's famous pre-invasion command: "Accept Nothing Less Than Full Victory!" For the first time since the war, the wartime Wilkinson Sword crossed-sword trademark will be etched on the shoulder of the blade. This has been selected from the historic Wilkinson Sword pattern library in London especially for this issue.

### 18-Karat Gold-on-Brass Hilt

The Swordsmith will then hand fit the magnificent 18 karat gold-on-brass chequered grip and top nut and richly gold-plated steel cross guard to the full-length blade tang for perfect alignment and combat strength. Finally, the Swordsmith will sight down the blade, test the balance of the knife in his experienced hands and inspect the knife in all particulars before giving it his final nod of approval — both as a battle-

worthy knife and as a museum-quality showpiece.

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This issue price is subject to advance without notice. Prompt action is suggested to avoid the inevitability of higher prices and the completion of the reservation roster for this strictly limited edition.

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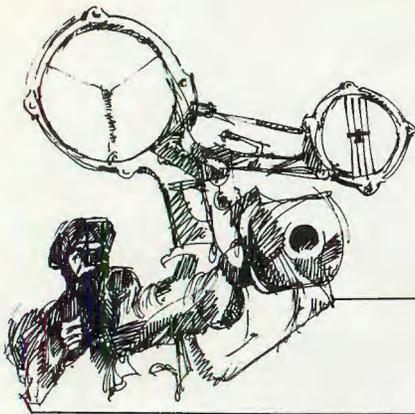
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**SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 9**



# FLAK

## SILENT INVASION AGREEMENT ...

Sirs:

I really enjoyed the article, "Silent Invasion" (SOF, June '80) and agreed with its many points. First of all, I think the dangers of disease brought in by illegal aliens pose a real threat to our health. It has taken years to get such diseases as TB and leprosy under control. The second point I would like to comment on is aliens taking American jobs. I think Mac-Dougald had his head on straight when he said we need a new president for this pressing problem. Thirdly, I want to expound on the problem of millions. Here we are trying to balance the federal budget, yet 2,700,000 illegals are coming

in each year. How can they live here and not pay taxes, and we have no way to combat them? The answer is, we can't have them here and we need to change the law now.

Yours truly,  
Brian Gillis  
Apopka, Florida

## DELTA AMBUSH REVISITED ...

Sirs:

I was fascinated to read Chris Doyle's article, "Delta Ambush" (SOF, June '80), because in June 1971, I took over MAT 18 (Mobile Advisory Team) which was designated a "night ambush" unit. Chau Got was its KCS leader. We worked in O'Lam, Tri Ton and Tinh Bien, but our

main outpost was a city called Ba Chuc, which was surrounded by three of the Seven Virgin Mountains which were filled with NVA and VC. I can tell you Doyle's article was true to fact and I can clear up Chau Ut Le's mysterious death. Chau Le loved women. He was killed by a jealous husband in August 1971.

Yours truly,  
Phillip L. Davison  
Nashville, Tennessee

## VIETNAM VETS WANTED ...

Sirs:

I am presently gathering material on the Vietnam War which I am planning to develop into a book. I am specifically interested in the 1968 campaigns of the Tet Offensive, the Khe Sanh "siege" and the U.S.S. *Mayaguez*. I would greatly appreciate hearing from your readers, military or civilian, who are veterans of the above actions. Personal accounts and experiences of these battles would be invaluable.

Sincerely,  
Keith William Nolan  
220 Kingsville Court  
Webster Groves, MO 63119

## SILENT INVASION: AN ALTERNATE VIEW ...

Sirs:

Your articles on the "brown invasion" are disturbing and offensive. It seems Mexican illegals are being made into American scapegoats for current economic problems. My mother brought me over here illegally when I was about seven years old, and after 20 years of hard menial labor and paying income taxes, all she has to show for it is a very inadequate monthly check.

It's unusual for Mexican illegals to be on welfare, and therein lies the fallacy that Mexican illegals are a burden to this country. As a former "wetback," I can tell you that since illegals live in constant fear of apprehension, they dare not apply for any decent employment where proper IDs are required or background research is standard practice. Where then do they go? To the most menial, hardest and dirtiest minimum and below-minimum-wage-paying sweatshops that no ordinary American would consider, since he can make much more as a citizen eligible for various benefits.

As for dangerous diseases, I don't know of any, and I've been living in a Mexican ghetto most of my life. It was crude to show a picture of a sick individual. As for drugs, come around Chicago's south and west sides. Only a small percent of the total amount of drugs entering this country actually come from Mexico. And lest we forget, most of what is now the southern United States was, not too long ago, northern Mexico.

Sgt. A. Vargas  
12th Special Forces Gp. (Abn.)  
USAR, Chicago, Illinois

Continued on page 15

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PREPARED BY LT. COL. ANTHONY B. HERBERT, (Ret.)

"America's Most Decorated Soldier"

JUNE, 1979

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## COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Continued from page 8

**A.** H&K does indeed make a .45 caliber version of their P9S pistol. It is well-made and soundly constructed, as are most of their weapons. I am no fan of trigger-cocking autos and I find the P9 configuration somewhat clumsy in my hand, but we have had a few P9s here at the school and they gave very reliable service.

**Q.** You really know how to put the left-wingers and the eggheads in their place. Your comments and my own experience have helped me form the opinion that the .45 has no better.

However, during my last two shooting excursions, the hammer on my Llama fell to half-cock when I released the slide stop. Please tell me what the problem is. I would also like you to advise me on a rugged, adjustable sight. I have been considering a Micro but am not sure how well it would work with a ventilated rib.

Z.G.

Springfield, Ohio

**A.** "Hammer follow" is fairly common on pieces which have had trigger jobs done by journeyman gunsmiths. It is aided and abetted by the practice of

slamming the action shut on an empty chamber. It is not serious unless it occurs during the live-firing cycle.

It may be corrected by a good pistolsmith (not common) and avoided in the future by easing the slide forward when the piece is empty.

The Bomar sight, properly recessed into the top of the slide, seems quite strong. I have been using one for two years now with complete satisfaction. (Who needs a ventilated rib?)

**Q.** Since you are quoted by Mr. Marv Wolf in an article in *New West*, 25 Feb. '80, and since that quotation has surprised and offended a number of people, I would like to ask:

Is the comment, "The only way you're going to find out for sure is to line up 500 Chinamen and shoot them," an accurate representation of what you said to Mr. Wolf?

L.W.F.

Research & Publications Director  
China Inst. of America, Inc. NYC

**A.** Let me set your mind at rest. I do not wish to impugn Mr. Wolf's accuracy as a journalist, but his quotation (as printed) is not exactly correct. I did not say "five hundred Chinamen." I said "Five thousand Chicoms."

Obviously, 500 is an inadequate number for valid statistical analysis.

Obvious also is the fact that the Red Chinese are not at all averse to using their own people as material for ballistic analysis. Anyone who has seen a Chicom

"human wave" attack in Korea will bear me out in this.

I trust this will clarify my statement as quoted, and I am sure the statement as clarified will give no offense to our tried and trustworthy friends in Free China — repudiated though they may have been by the dysesthetic chicanery of the U.S. Department of State.

This month Ken Hackathorn evaluates the custom combat work of Nebraska gunsmith Bill Laughridge and his *Cylinder & Slide, Inc.*, and finds it functionally reliable and accurate.

**I**NTEREST in combat pistol work is now at an all-time high, and I recently got the opportunity to test the work of one of the newer pistolsmiths offering combat pistol modifications. Last year I saw a couple of .45 Colt autos worked over by the *Cylinder & Slide, Inc.*, Fremont, Neb., and contacted Bill Laughridge of *Cylinder & Slide*, who sent me a full-house custom-modified Colt Government Model pistol for evaluation. Laughridge has been building custom combat-pistol packages for many of the Midwest practical shooters and now much of his business comes from throughout the United States.

*Cylinder & Slide* used a 1960's vintage Colt Government Model .45 auto as the basic gun that was sent to me for the test. I personally feel these pre-Mark IV Series

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Cylinder & Slide's combat .45 and 25-meter group shot by author using Matre Match commercial reload hardball ammo. Note new experimental Rogers front-break holster.

70-made Colt pistols are the ultimate for tuning and accuracy work.

The test pistol had been fitted with a combat-accuracy job, and the slide fit was solid, yet not so tight as to cause function problems. Also included with the accuracy package was a long six-inch Mag-na-ported custom barrel. This barrel was mated to a Micro bushing, and the feed ramp and barrel throat were readjusted and polished to feed all types of ammo. Standard modifications such as a lowered ejection port, beveled magazine well and long trigger with stop were included. A Smith & Wesson K-series white outline rear sight and red insert front-ramp sight had been installed on the slide.

The rear sight was installed in the protected position, allowing the base of the K-sight to be milled into the original rear-sight dovetail. This notch had been milled square, leaving a lot of space around the rear sight itself. While totally functional, it is not as pleasing to the eye as most other smiths' installations. I complained to Laughridge about the sharp front edge of the front sight. He tells me that all his guns now have this front edge slightly rounded to prevent holster snag.

The customer who owned the pistol that I tested had also ordered an ambidextrous safety, extended slide stop, and extended magazine catch. The slide stop was custom-made by Laughridge, but he now uses the better-designed, custom ones supplied by Jim Hoag.

Pachmayr Signature grips and main-spring housing complemented the test piece's gripping surface and a squared, checkered trigger guard provided positive placement of the weak hand's index finger while firing from the Weaver Stance. I took the pistol off to the shop pistol bench

and detail-stripped it to check overall fit and finish. Everything was satisfactory and worked well.

A Colt Gold Cup hammer and sear set-up were fitted to this pistol, giving a 3¼-pound trigger pull that did not jar off. This is due to the sear clutch unit, utilized as part of the Gold Cup system. Trigger-pull weight was much lighter than I care for on a combat gun, but Laughridge explained that this trigger was done to the customer's specifications. He normally prefers and recommends a trigger pull of 4 to 4½ pounds for combat work.

With an ammo can full of .45 practice loads, we headed for the range to give the pistol a workout. My standard IPSC practice load consists of a 200-grain RCBS 82047 Keith bullet on top of 5.8 grains of Winchester 231 ball powder. All who shot the Cylinder & Slide shop .45 were pleased with the piece's accuracy, and most commented on the light trigger pull and stated their preference for a slightly heavier one.

I fired the pistol over a number of standard drills and it never missed a lick or malfunctioned once. Since it had a heavy-duty recoil spring installed, we fired nothing that did not come close to hardball-equivalent loads. I personally favor nothing heavier than a 18½-pound recoil spring in a full-size Government Model pistol.

When I used match-grade .45 ball ammo, the Cylinder & Slide shop pistol shot impressive groups. Without checking the sights, I slipped into a rollover prone position at 60 meters and proceeded to dump two magazines of .45 ball ammo into a nice group centered slightly to the right of the silhouette target.

Bill Laughridge can make a .45 shoot! If this pistol represents his work, he should be a good man to work over your pistol. His work's cosmetic quality is not as good as many other pistolsmiths, but he understands the main thing about a combat pistol — functional reliability and accuracy.

For the owner of the P-35 Browning 9x19 parabellum pistol, Laughridge offers a complete line of custom combat modifications, and his popularity with the Browning P-35 crowd is testimony to his work. If one prefers the P-35 for practical shooting, Cylinder & Slide, Inc.'s price list and work sheet will be of interest. One big advantage of the smaller custom pistolsmiths is the good delivery on their pistol work. Unlike many big West Coast shops, the customer gets his pistol back in three to four months.

Drop Bill Laughridge of Cylinder and Slide, Inc., Dept. SOF, 523 North Main, P.O. Box 937, Fremont, NB 68025, a line. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for his price list and work sheet.



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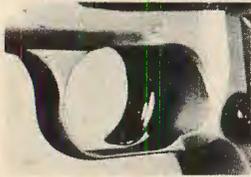
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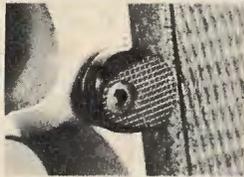
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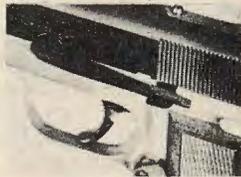
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**BULLETIN BOARD**

Continued from page 6

send in the Marines, Mr. President?" Jimmy replied, "No Teddy, we boycotted their oil shipments."

Teddy kind of shook his head and asked, "Well, Mr. President, what other problems do you have?" "Well, Teddy," Jimmy responded, "the Russians have invaded Afghanistan." Teddy asked, "Well, Mr. President, did you send in the Marines?" Jimmy said, "No, Teddy, we boycotted the Olympics."

Teddy said, "Well, my God, Mr. President, I suppose the next thing you'll tell me is that you gave away the Panama Canal."

**A CHANGE OF HEART ...**

Newspaper columnist Bob Green made some interesting observations about the changes America's pacifists have undergone since Iran.

Green pointed out the change in attitude toward weapons like the stun grenades used by the British Commandos in London and the "sleeping gas" that was rumored to be available to the American raiding party in Iran.

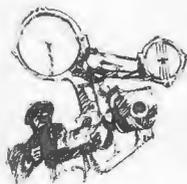
Greene wrote: "Only a few years ago, many Americans heard of tools like those two, and assumed the worst about them. Many thought that the hardware was meant to be used against domestic dissidents taking part in peaceful demonstrations." Greene admits he wrote a column very much like that.

Today Greene sees it differently: He wrote: "The question is no longer whether we should have sophisticated commando teams with science-fiction weaponry; it's whether we are capable of fielding a commando team that's good enough to deal with contemporary terrorists.

"If the terrible time ever comes when we will have to find out the answers to these questions, it will not be the former doubters who will provide the answers; it will be the people who were with the military all along. But we are indeed in a new age, when even men and women who have always considered themselves pacifists are still hoping that there will be no warfare, but praying that we will be damned good if there is."

Welcome to the club, Bob.

Continued on page 18



## FLAK

Continued  
from page 10

## WE STAND CORRECTED ...

Sirs:

In his letter to Jeff Cooper (Combat Pistolcraft, SOF, April '80), M.Z. of Nantucket, Mass., inquired about the Heckler & Koch VP70Z 9mmP pistol. Cooper was in error when he stated that the above gun has a three-round burst capacity rendering it an automatic in the eyes of the law. In fact, it is the VP70M or VP70 that has the selective-fire capability and then only when a shoulder stock with selector switch is attached.

Respectfully,  
David Velk  
Highland Park, Illinois

Jeff Cooper replies:

Heckler & Koch just deleted the three-shot burst control from the VP70 so that is could be sold in the U.S. Velk is right — mea culpa.

## PHOTO ID MADE ...

Sirs:

In "It Happened to Me" (SOF, June '80) by Rod L. Hinsch, you displayed a

photograph of a SF base camp in the Central Highlands taking a hit from friendly mortar fire during Tet '68. The photograph was actually that of a U.S. transport plane, shot down by American gunners, plummeting to earth in Haphan, about 15 miles west of Quang Ngai. The plane, loaded with ammunition, was about to land at a Special Forces camp when a single round of artillery from the ground cut it in half. All three crewmen died in the mishap. This photograph, by UPI, appeared in the *New York Times* on August 4, 1967, six months before Tet. The incident took place on August 3.

Yours truly,  
Frank Hoffman  
Greenville, South Carolina

## WEAPONS AND WOMEN ...

Sirs:

"Guns for Gals" (SOF, June '80) was not only an informative article but also a convincing one. I personally have never been afraid of guns, and I have my husband to thank for encouraging me to practice shooting frequently. He is an avid SOF reader, and occasionally I read it, but this particular article had the trigger on me.

A woman *must* be comfortable with her gun — she must feel confident of its power. She can only achieve this by prac-

Continued on page 17

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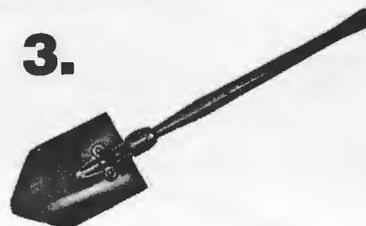
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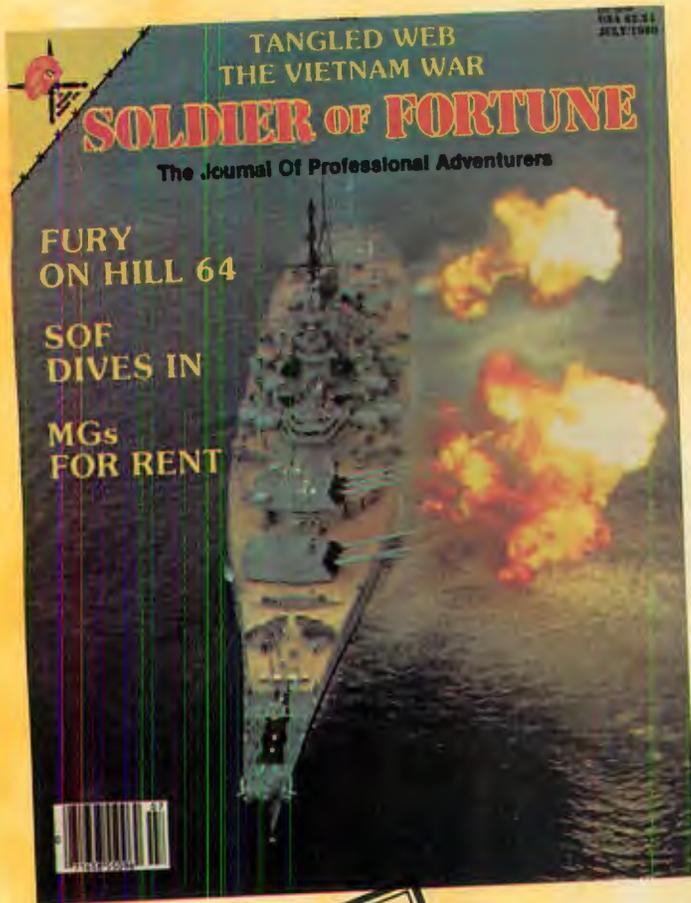
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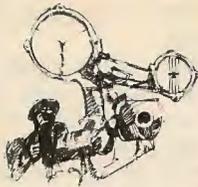
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SEPTEMBER/80



## FLAK

Continued  
from page 15

ticing with it, and, as Bill Carpenter states, "learn to shoot it well."

I don't know about the rest of the women, but I'm ready to shoot (if my Doberman doesn't get there first).

Sincerely,  
Bev Beverly  
Greenville, North Carolina

## PPI PRAISED ...

Sirs:

You recently ran an article on Pilot Personnel International in Albany, Ore., headed by Gene Perry ("Chopper Jobs," SOF, November '79). As a result of your article, I went out to the school for three weeks in December and would like to report that I am highly impressed with the degree of professionalism in evidence there. For the Viet vet pilot, as I am, who has not flown for 7-10 years and would like back into the game, PPI offers a good chance to break into the industry.

Congrats on giving a good outfit some well-deserved exposure.

Arthur Atkinson  
Jasper, Missouri

## NO AFGHANISTAN CONTRACTS ...

Sirs:

As you know, the fighting in Rhodesia is over and all the European units are either being disbanded or integrated. I am in the RLI, which happens to be one of these units.

Do you know of any contracts for Afghanistan? I'm not the only one who wants to go there from here.

A bit about myself now. I am a New Zealander. My service consists of six years New Zealand Army, four years infantry, two years SAS and 1½ years in Rhodesia with the RLI. I have also worked with the U.D.R. in Ulster during my break in between. I am airborne and SCUBA-qualified.

I would be grateful if you could help me with any information.

Yours sincerely,  
T.G.V.

Salisbury, Zimbabwe-Rhodesia

*We have received numerous inquiries regarding service with the Afghan rebels. Our on-the-scene correspondent reports that no foreign volunteers are being accepted at this time. — The Eds.*



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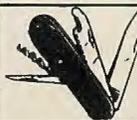
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## BULLETIN BOARD

Continued from page 14

### SHORTAGES NOT HOSTAGES WORRY IRANIANS ...

Iranians are a lot less worried about the situation between America and their government than they are about increasing prices and shortages.

Iran stopped imports of meat from New Zealand and other countries and as a result beef now sells for \$5 a pound. Frozen mutton is \$2.50 a pound but freshly slaughtered lamb — the preference of orthodox Mos-

lems — is \$4. Even harder to find and relatively more expensive are eggs, milk, cooking oil and baby milk products.

Cigarettes are in short supply — with American brands selling for \$2 a pack — as are heating oil, cosmetics, soaps, shampoo and automobile parts.

SOF wishes Iranians more of the same.

### NO IRANIANS NEED APPLY ...

The Board of Regents at New Mexico State University voted unanimously in April to forbid admission to students from Iran or any other nation

that holds Americans hostage or permits hostage taking.

Regents President Bill Humphries said: "It's time for this board and other policy-makers to make difficult decisions. We are questioning whether we are supporting someone who is an avowed enemy of our country and, in turn, an enemy of this institution and us."

It is believed that the University of South Alabama is the only other university considering a similar move but perhaps more of them should.

### INSTANT JUSTICE IN ZIMBABWE ...

"Instant justice" in Zimbabwe is beginning to take a rather barbaric turn.

In a "trial" staged by the local branch of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front, a woman found guilty of being a witch was beaten to death.

In another rural area two former members of the auxiliary force loyal to Mugabe rival Abel Muzorewa were sentenced to a beating by village elders for having had sexual relationships with local women. Dissidents of Mugabe's guerrilla army overruled that and had the men shot. When that failed to kill them they were buried alive.

### THE MARINES AND THE M16 ...

"With more than the usual fervor, nations are beating their plowshares into swords. Oil has become a weapon of siege, with the U.S. in the role of crumbling fortress. Later-day Mahdis rail against the infidels of the technological West; diplomats are held hostage with a heady, reckless disdain for America's legendary might. And as television interviewers push their microphones into the faces of frustrated citizens in the street, asking what ought to be done to reestablish that might, the answer often comes back: 'Send in the Marines.'"

Are the Marines ready to go in? That's the question to which Owen Edwards addressed himself in an article entitled "Marines In Doubt: Are We Ready For A Crisis?" in the 19 February *Saturday Review*.

Edwards' article, quoted above, is a perceptive and finely crafted one. We recommend that SOF readers who have not seen it look it up.

In his article he deals with two general areas: personnel and technology.

Edwards concludes that Marine Corps' personnel are considerably

Continued on page 90

SEPTEMBER/80

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# The Colonel Arthur D. Simons Scholarship Fund

The Iranian rescue team members are establishing a college scholarship fund for the children of their comrades who were killed attempting to free 53 fellow Americans April 24 and 25.

This scholarship fund is named in memory of the late Army Colonel Arthur D. Simons, a legendary soldier who risked his life repeatedly to rescue his fellow Americans. Many of the American Servicemen who planned, and some of those who were on the mission to rescue 53 American embassy hostages from Iran, served with Colonel Simons during his career.

This scholarship fund has no overhead. Every penny you contribute will apply directly to the scholarships.

Tax-exempt status is being applied for; however, the issue is not a tax deduction. Rather, it is to ensure that these youngsters will have an opportunity to go to college without further burden to their families.

Colonel Arthur D. Simons Memorial Fund  
c/o Lt. Gen. Leroy J. Manor, USAF - Ret.  
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Enclosed is my contribution for scholarships for the children of the American Servicemen who gave their lives in April, 1980, trying to rescue their fellow Americans from Iran.

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# SALT IN THE WOUND

by N.E. MacDougald

**S**OVIET Commissar Provitch laughed deeply, almost choking. "Da, da, comrade!" He regained his composure and wiped his eyes. "We should have thought of this months ago. Put something on paper and I'll push it through the Committee. But hurry before the situation in Iran changes."

Ten days later, Colonel Dragov received his orders. He was stunned by the latitude he was being given. He had *carte blanche* to procure personnel, equipment and transportation. He sat down and called in his aide, Zhednick. "We are to free the American hostages held in Iran." The shrewd colonel put up his hand to forestall Zhednick's outburst, and continued: "We are to free them, feed them and send them home." Zhednick was stunned. Had the Central Committee gone mad? But then his peasant heart quickened and he saw in a flash why his superior was smiling.

"They'll never live this down!" cried Zhednick. The two comrades sat down and got to work on logistics. Their fourth revision of plan two was deceptively simple: After a carefully orchestrated meeting with the senile Ayatollah, the Soviets convinced him that the most unassailable place for the hostages was the Russian Embassy. The rest was easy.

Four days later, under cover of darkness, the 53 American hostages were blindfolded, handcuffed in pairs, and led to waiting vehicles where they were transferred, uneventfully, to the Soviet embassy. The Soviets instructed the "students" not to announce the transferral of hostages for 48 hours. They complied.

The following evening, however, the hostages were on their way to New York on Aeroflot Flight 666. A televised transcript for the "Great Soviet Liberation Operation" was in the hands of the three leading U.S. TV networks. Sadly, one of the networks aired the propaganda piece before our government could intercede. After that, the other networks could not be enjoined from following suit.

The videotape, artfully edited, well-produced and only 12 minutes long, showed the now-famous 53 hostages accepting soup and sandwiches from attractive Russian nurses. American beer and French champagne were being raised to salute the "liberators." Only a few hostages did not share the jubilation, but curiously they were edited from the footage. An announcer informed viewers (in a faultless American accent) that the freeing of the hostages was done as a gesture of simple good will with no political motivations whatever.

The damage was done.

Concurrently, a coded message reached the White House informing Carter he had 24 hours to ramrod a new SALT agreement through Congress. If the President did not, more videotapes would be sent to the media, including interviews with the recently-freed hostages saying the Soviets had done what the U.S. could not. Carter, with the forthcoming election foremost on his mind, capitulated.

It could happen.



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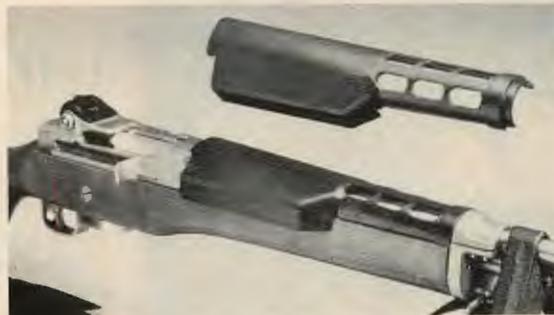


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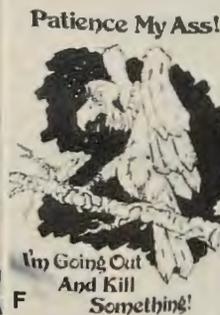
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# RHODESIA'S 'NO WIN' WAR

## Lupane: Part 2— Conclusion

L.H. "Mike" Williams

*In the first installment of his article on the war without victory in Rhodesia ("Do Not — Repeat — Do Not Fire!" SOF, August, '80), Maj. Williams was given orders not to fire at a group of Frelimo and terr troops. In his conclusion, he exposes the politics behind the no-win attitude.*

SOME three hours' drive from Bulawayo on the Victoria Falls road is the largest Tribal Trust Land in Rhodesia. Scene of Alan Wilson's patrol massacre on the Shangani River where thousands of Matabele warriors finally overran and slaughtered a mounted column of Rhodesian troopers in 1895, Lupane still quartered Matabeles — only this time they were carrying AK-47s instead of assegais, and wore East German camouflage rather than loin cloths.

During the last weeks of the Grey's Scouts' operations in the area, something happened that was the forerunner of what was to come to Rhodesia in the 1980s.

Our command post was located in a ramshackle old house, several hundred meters from the Bulawayo-Vic Falls road; the dirt air strip, rail junction, "cop shop" and district commissioner's headquarters were also nearby. Although it was difficult to set out final protective lines of fire and mortar concentrations due to other buildings in the area, I felt

R&R in Salisbury — Maj. E.H. "Mike" Williams (right) relaxes with driver Cpl. Ed Wandell at Crippled Eagles Club in 1977. Wandell, a former U.S. Marine, served in Vietnam and was in Grey's Scouts throughout his Rhodesian tour. Crippled Eagles was Robin Moore's response to official U.S. Rhodesian stance (see SOF, September '78).



that it made more tactical sense than having to run supply vehicles up a single dirt road to the north, where the terts would scatter TM-46 mines like confetti.

Early one morning I was drinking hot tea (what else?) and reading sit-reps from the preceding 24 hours. A knock on the door caused me to look up. Sergeant Blake, an Australian who'd been with the Grey's for three years, stood uneasily in the doorway.

"What's on your mind, sergeant?" I asked, returning his salute.

Glancing around the room at the sit-map pinned on the wall and the radio operator boredly leafing through the pages of a year-old magazine, Blake chewed the tips of a scraggly moustache and cleared his throat. I was curious because he rarely had anything to say to anyone. Skinny, tow-headed, given to wearing a battered bush hat, he was solid, unimaginative and laconic whether in a contact or riding mile after mile under a brutal sun.

"Well ... ah, sir ... some of the blokes asked me if you would speak to them and ... kind of clear up a few things ... you know?" He shifted a boot, the heel dragging on the dirty, wooden floor.

I told him, "No, I don't know," and to get to the point.

"Sir, haven't you heard about the telly broadcast last night?" His face had a disbelieving look. I shook my head.

### TV statements need explaining.

According to the bush telegraph and one of the cook boys, General Peter Walls, combined operations commander, had appeared on a special RBC-TV broadcast the night before, and made a statement to the effect that there could be no military victory — only a political settlement. To add to the impact of those words, the prime minister had said the same thing on a similar broadcast the preceding night.

No wonder Blake and the rest of the troops were anxious for a "talk" to clear up things. For that matter, so was I.

A voice booming over the radio loud-speaker caused the operator to put down his magazine. It was the pilot of an inbound aircraft carrying the brigade commander and requesting someone to meet them at the airstrip on arrival; their ETA was in 10 minutes. Before we could "Roger" his transmission, another voice — that of the local district commissioner — interrupted. With a flourish, he assured the pilot that indeed there would be a vehicle and party from the DC's office awaiting their arrival.

"Here we go again," I thought, picking up my FN and webbing.

"Blake, we'll get to this later. In the meantime, get on the blower to that incoming patrol and have them sweep the airstrip before the colonel gets here." I



When not acting in military capacity, Williams sometimes took on civilian responsibilities calling for meetings with top-ranking officials of former

pro-Western Rhodesian government. He is seen here with former Premier Bishop Abel Muzorewa.

didn't need a handful of terts zapping the commander's aircraft as he was trying to land. Minutes before the arrival, troopers would sweep the surrounding terrain, cross-graining for tracks and making sure there were no hostiles about. A C-47 had been lost in Mapai on take-off roll when three terts had hit it with AK and RPG-7 fire; the rocket had exploded in the cockpit and wasted the pilot. The aircraft was totaled. No airstrip security had been evident at that location and I sure as hell wasn't going to make the same mistake here. My jeep was in back of the CP and I waved to Blake to come along as "shot-gun" on the ride to the airstrip.

The DC wasn't really a problem, although he was determined to control everything that went on within his area — including Grey's Scouts' operations. We'd reached something of an armed truce; I would furnish whatever troops I could spare to provide security for his weekly forays into the bush to conduct cattle sales. In return, he would let me have some of his district assistants who were Matabeles and top-notch trackers. Unlike a lot of Africans, the DAs weren't afraid of the horses and were learning to ride in a dogged, hilarious fashion, proudly stating that only a "woman would be afraid of a four-legged thing."

As I'd expected, the DC's grey Land-rover was parked primly by the end of the airstrip as we rattled up. With him were his personal bodyguard of five DAs wearing dusty khaki uniforms and carrying G-3 H&Ks that were *not* dusty — their barrels wiped clean after the ride from the DC's HQ.

Moyo, the corporal commanding the detail, grinned broadly as I stepped down from my vehicle. He had gone with us on several ops and one attack against a tert base camp. He was to die three months later, murdered by terts who came to his kraal early one morning and riddled him with AK fire.

"Ah, good morning, major!" The DC beamed, smoothed back a handful of errant cowlicks and proceeded to exchange pleasantries with me that had no relationship to anything sane.

Suddenly he stiffened, turned and pointed dramatically to the northeast: "Look there!" he shouted in tones that would have done justice to Charlton Heston's "Moses."

I looked. Instead of a flaming bush and the sepulchral tones of God's voice, I saw a black dot in the sky that slowly approached, growing larger and becoming a Cessna 172.

### Aerial Ecstasy

"Marvelous! Bloody marvelous!" crowed the DC.

I restrained the impulse to explain to him that Wilbur and Orville had managed to work out that contraption at the bicycle shop near Kitty Hawk a few years back. Why spoil his fun? Buzzing the strip, the Cessna pulled up sharply at the far end, and racked around for a short downwind and base leg.

Behind us, there were howls, yells and giggles from Africans lined up along the bushline avidly watching the flying machine. One of the miracles of Africa

was the speed with which the locals materialized from the bush at the sound of an aircraft; an area totally void of human life became a meeting place of nannies, picannins, dogs, M'dalas — the old men grinning like children — the random goat and strutting roosters, all gathered to exchange opinions on the various aspects of the white man's invention. Moyo waved the crowd back, sternly warning them from further encroachment on the runway.

With a dusty thud, the Cessna bounced twice down the pebble-strewn strip, leaving a choking cloud of yellow dust behind. Turning around, the pilot taxied back to a point opposite our vehicles and shut down. The cabin door opened and the brigade commander crawled down, reaching behind him for his cap. The DC trotted out, extending his hand and welcoming one and all to Lupane. I waited until the ceremony was over and, walking over, reported to the colonel.

"Are you having any problems here, Mike?" he asked.

"None of a tactical nature, but there's something far more serious in the area of troop morale." I lowered my voice so neither Blake nor the others could hear. "Evidently there's been quite a reaction as a result of the prime minister's TV appearance — not to mention the general's statement about the 'no win' war." We crawled into my jeep and started back to the CP.

### "Not to worry."

"Not to worry . . . I'll talk to them when we get to the HQ." With that, it was apparent that the topic was closed. I hoped so, but knew better.

Braking to a stop behind the CP, I noticed a fairly large group of NCOs and troopers standing near the tent that housed the farrier's shop. They watched intently as the brigade commander stepped down, stretching and surveying the area.

"Sir, if it's all right with you, now would be a good time to speak with the troops — they're waiting at the tent there."

"Very well. Let's get on with it." He straightened his cap, squared his shoulders and marched over to the group. I followed, remaining to the side and halting near a rough wooden bench used by the saddler.

"SHUN!" The group came to attention and the sergeant commanding the detail gave a parade-ground salute and reported. The silence seemed much longer than it really was.

"Um . . . Yes. The major tells me you chaps have a question?" The colonel looked at the group steadily, clasping his hands behind a tailored blouse and gently rocking back and forth on his heels.

The sergeant glanced at me, then spoke. "Sah, we heard about the PM's speech and General Walls' as well."

He paused, wiped his nose with the back of a dirty hand and continued, "Well, sah, we'd like to know what's going on. If we can't win the war what are we supposed to be doing here in the bush . . . with due respect, sah!"

Realizing he was skirting highly dangerous ground, the sergeant stopped.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maj. Lewis H. "Mike" Williams is one of SOF's military affairs editors. His military career started in the U.S. Army in 1942, took him to Korea in the '50s, to the Congo in the '60s, and to Rhodesia and Central America in



## RHODESIA: NOW ZIMBABWE

by Maj. "Mike" Williams

Marxist puppet Robert Mugabe now sits in power over the Rhodesian people. Mugabe, on numerous occasions, stated that he would "turn Rhodesia into a model Socialist state" and that "after a fair trial, we will hang Ian Smith and all white members of the government and army."

His troops were responsible for the murder of six-month old Natasha Glennly of Melsetter, torn from the arms of her African nurse and bayoneted to death. The infant's right hand was severed at the wrist and carried away in the pocket of one of Mugabe's "freedom fighters" — all this is a matter of documented record.

Joshua Nkomo, now home affairs

minister, head of the British South African Police, and holder of the portfolio for law and order, "commanded" troops who shot down a Rhodesia Airways Viscount, then methodically slaughtered the survivors — all of whom were women and children. He boasted of this exploit to the international press in Lusaka.

The Rhodesian army is now being "integrated" by the infusion of terrorist forces. How all of this came about has a sickeningly familiar resemblance to Vietnam and the "no win" war that ended with Kissinger's absurdly disgusting "peace with honor" charade in Paris. That culminated in the sorry spectacle of U.S. troops being ordered to retreat from a war that could have been won in five weeks!

Ian Douglas Smith, fighting to the bitter end to salvage something from

the '70s. He resigned as tactical commanding officer of 1 Squadron, Grey's Scouts, Rhodesia's famed mounted infantry, for the reasons evident in the experiences described above. (For previous articles by Maj. Mike, see "El Salvador: The Next Domino," SOF,

April '80, and "Riding & Fighting with Grey's Scouts," SOF, Nov. '78, Jan. '79, Feb. '79 and "Remember The Alamo," SOF, July '80.)

—S. Nielsen



Rhodesia, was overwhelmed by the Carter administration, which slavishly bowed to militant black Marxists in the U.S., headed by Andrew Young and the Black Caucus in Congress, and the ever-treacherous British, seething with revenge against Smith's courageous 1965 Unilateral Declaration of Independence.

This is no apology for Ian Smith — he needs none. While I respect him tremendously and was honored to serve his government as a Grey's Scouts major, I wish to holy hell he could have turned loose the Rhodesian army and let us go. We would have been eating prawns in Beira in 24 hours.

With Rhodesia now Marxist, (anyone who can't see this is on the same intellectual level as Jimmy Carter), the Soviets have a solid line across this part of the African continent. South Africa

now faces Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Botswana. SOF readers, far better informed than the Carterian hordes of wimps, can now look forward to an increase in SWAPO attacks against South Africa from terrorist forces in Zimbabwe which will be sent to Zambia and Angola to bolster others presently operating in those areas.

The fact that the same political attitudes that gave away Vietnam are responsible for the tragedy in Rhodesia, in the clutches of a rabble-in-arms from Mozambique and Zambia, should come as no surprise to anyone who realizes that the Soviet Union will not be stopped in its drive to seize Africa.

With four more years of Carter in the offing, I would recommend basic Russian classes to more activist readers.

"Well, you chaps should know that the PM and General Walls have to say those type of things for the press . . . Cheers, then, where's the tea?" With a smile, he turned and cast a "carry on" over his shoulder. End of discussion.

After a mercifully short 35 minutes, we returned to the airstrip.

"Keep up the good work, Mike — let me know if you have any problems I can help you with." The colonel climbed down from the jeep and walked to the Cessna. I saluted, the DC pumped his hand, the Africans giggled and all was the same. We waited until the 172 took off and was well away before starting back to the CP — and the troops.

"All right, let's get this going . . . What's the problem?" I was sitting on the wooden bench near the farrier's tent. Around me were gathered the same group to whom the colonel had spoken earlier.

Sgt. Blake stood up and spoke, "Well, sir, it just seems to me that with the speeches and all, I don't know what we're doing out here in the bush . . . We're getting our arses shot off for nothin' — if we can't win the war, then wot?" There was a murmur of agreement from the rest of the group.

### "We follow orders."

"Sergeant, I'm not a politician — nor for that matter are any of us here. Our job is to follow orders and keep our mouths shut . . . DISMISS!"

I got up and returned the salutes, knowing full well that the answers given by the brigade commander and myself would in no way satisfy the minds of these troops. Leading troops in combat is a skill that requires many things; some tangible — others intangible. Beyond the proper equipment, weapons and supplies there is one essential without which there can be *no* success.

### The will to win.

No troops anywhere are going to fight if they're told they not only aren't going to be allowed to win, but that winning is impossible.

As I walked back to the ops room, I realized that the future of these troops and the Rhodesia we knew was sealed. Anti-climatically during the following weeks, a steady series of bromides were poured out from Salisbury: "There would be no surrender . . . There would *never* be terrorists allowed into the regular army . . . Neither Mugabe nor Nkomo would ever be allowed back into the country."

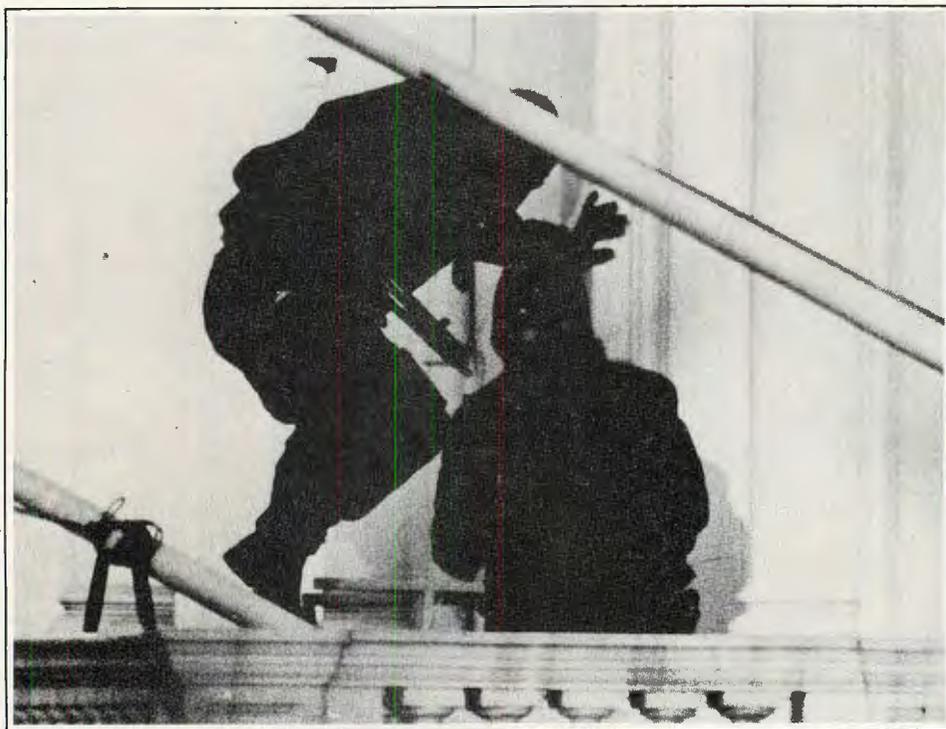
A look at Rhodesia today tells the story.

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# SAS DARES & WINS

## A Raid That Worked



by Doug Campbell

**B**BRITAIN'S elite Special Air Service Regiment was called in to the Princes Gate siege in London when the talking stopped and the shooting started. Eleven minutes later five of the six gunmen were dead and 19 hostages were freed.

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about Britain's elite Special Air Service Regiment's lightning attack on the Iranian Embassy in London and the freeing of 19 hostages is that it was conducted in the full glare of the world's press.

Normally the SAS, the Regular Army's own "hit squad," operates quietly and shuns publicity. Its members are never named and rarely pick up medals. Even when they are killed, the British Ministry of Defense never admits that they are SAS. Every trooper in the regiment comes from some other unit so it is an easy matter to announce the death of a member of the Parachute Regiment or Welsh Guards. That way, the SAS can continue operating and nine times out of 10 no one even knows they are there.

The siege at Princes Gate in London's "embassy belt" lasted six days, and although the SAS took no active part until the last 11 minutes, it had been put on standby hours after the hostages were first bundled inside the embassy and the doors bolted.

Immediately, the team of 20 men moved into a nearby barracks where models were constructed, equipment modified and briefings held. While they were waiting for the green light, the troopers selected another Georgian building, similar to the imposing terrace in Princes Gate, and practiced storming it. Most of their training was carried out in the belief that it would be a night operation, but that was not to be.

### "Who Dares Wins"

The SAS' motto is "Who Dares Wins," and this was certainly true of their storming of the embassy. The plan was bold, but it was recognized well before start-

time that things would inevitably go wrong. Improvisation was essential.

Twelve men were selected to form three teams, in theory acting in support of the Metropolitan Police Special Branch.

Two teams at the back of the embassy had the most daunting task. They secured ropes round the embassy chimneys and rappelled from roof to the ground-floor garden terrace and the first-floor balcony. They were equipped with specially-made oblong frames, four feet by two feet, carefully packed with plastic explosive, to blow in the embassy's armor-plated windows. They also had stun grenades to throw in just before going in themselves.

The plan was that at exactly the same moment, the third team was to make a frontal assault. The first pair in that team had another "frame charge" to fix on the ground floor window, with only a 10-second fuse. To create maximum surprise and impact, the charges at front and rear were to detonate simultaneously. The 12 troopers would then burst in and run

upstairs to the hostages held in two second-floor rooms. Male hostages were at the front of the building, overlooking Hyde Park, while the women were at the rear.

**“Dart holes across the body.”**

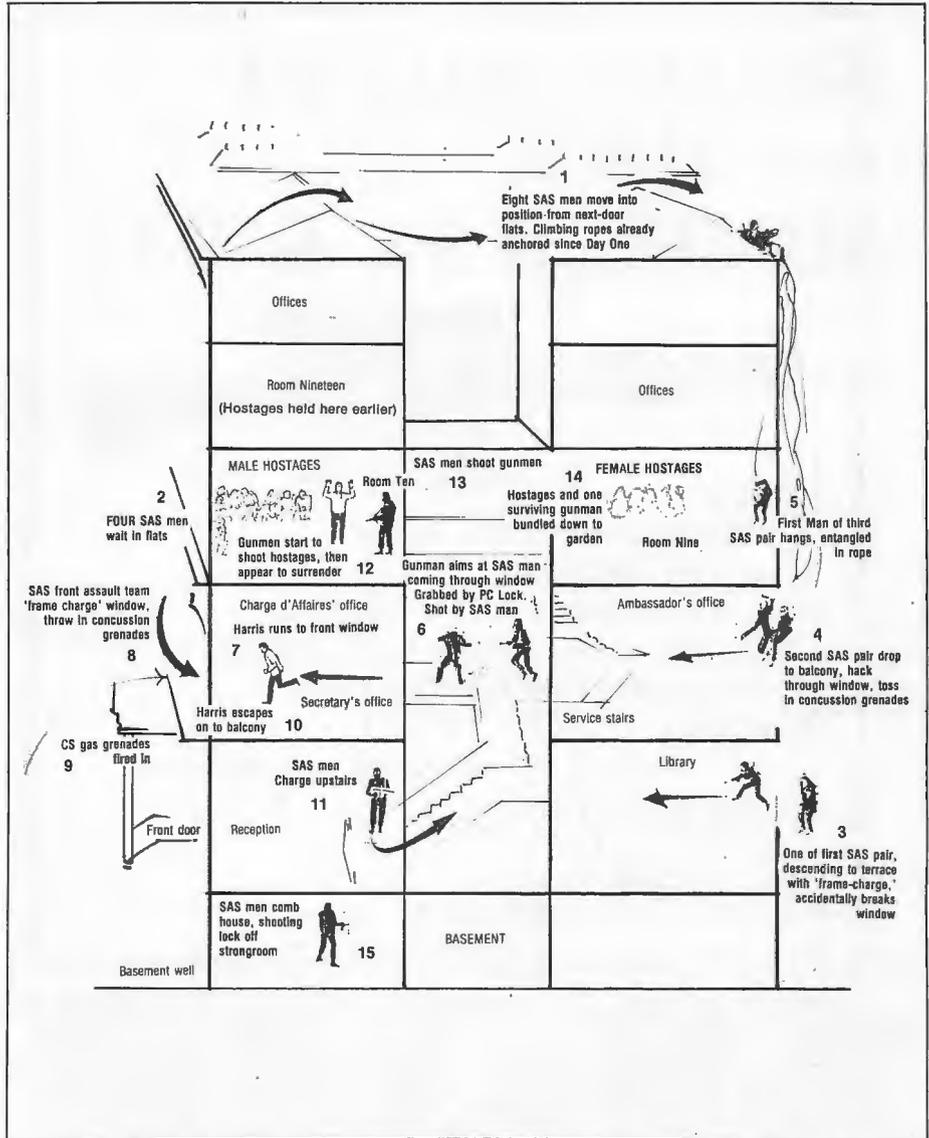
The SAS has always matched its weapons to the job at hand and this mission was no exception. The 12 carried West German Heckler and Koch submachine guns, fondly known as Kocklers, and trusty Browning 9mm auto pistols. Their mission was to neutralize the terrorists at the first opportunity.

Heckler and Koch’s submachine gun fires .223 rifle ammunition. This is borne out by eye witnesses who saw the bodies of the dead terrorists and described the wounds as a “line of dart holes across the body.”

The gun features a delayed blowback operation with a roller lock. It is a selective-fire weapon, single or burst fire possible, fed from a 40-round box magazine. The troopers chose not to use the stocks, which gave the weapon an overall length of 22 inches. It has a cyclic rate of fire of 600 RPM.

In the end, only one hostage died — apart from the one whose execution sparked off the raid, which is certainly more than the planning group dared hope for.

At 1920 on that fateful Sunday evening, the eight men in the rear assault team emerged from an adjoining skylight and crept stealthily over the embassy’s sloping roof. With their ropes secured among the chimneys, they prepared to rappel down.



**Glass Shatters**

Even mountaineers find this a tricky operation. Ropes get twisted. The friction device that slows the descent gets jammed. Problems are innumerable.

At 1926, the first pair stepped over the gutter and began their descent. At once disaster struck. A flailing boot crashed through an upper-story window but, surprisingly, although one terrorist did indeed hear the glass shattering, no one bothered to investigate. Afterwards, it was discovered that a hostage had reassured the terrorist by saying that the British would not dare try anything until after dark.

**ABOVE LEFT: Off rappel! SAS commandos, carrying H&K SMGs, reach Iranian Embassy balcony in first stage of successful raid. Photo: Press Association**

**RIGHT: Steel-helmeted security services' trooper stands near Iranian Embassy at 16 Princes Gate. Shotgun wasn't needed as SAS subdued terrorists. Photo: Press Association**



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The first pair reached the ground and the second — sliding down the same ropes — landed on the balcony. Through radio ear-pieces concealed inside their Balaclava helmets, they were told to go ahead without waiting for the front team.

But there was another snag. One of the third pair to descend at the back became hopelessly entangled in his rope and dangled helplessly. If they detonated the frame charges he would be killed or maimed in the blast. Instead they simply hacked through the windows with the ground-floor pair tossing in a stun grenade that burst in the central stairwell.

At least four of the six gunmen were on the second floor, guarding the hostages. But their leader, Oan, was on the first floor with a diplomatic guard, British Police Constable Trevor Lock, and BBC sound man Sim Harris. As the soldiers moved in, Oan ran to the landing to watch the rear window. When the lead trooper appeared he raised his machine pistol.

Then Police Constable Lock, married with two children, who had been carrying his service revolver in a concealed shoulder holster throughout the siege, took a hand. He brought down the bearded Oan with a hefty rugby tackle, and seconds later, an SAS man jumped the pair of them and shot the terrorist through the head.

## “Take Cover!”

Harris dashed into the front room, unaware, of course, that the third SAS team was on the point of blowing in the front window. The room was in darkness, so Harris threw open the curtains to be confronted by a black-clad trooper who gestured to him to take cover. Moments later the third charge exploded and the team slipped in through the pall of smoke.

There were now eight SAS men inside the building. One team was still outside getting the stranded rapeller off the wall of the building as he was seriously threatened by a raging fire started by the explosions.

Meanwhile, hostages on the second floor were getting more and more anxious. They heard the noises from below and could see that the terrorists were getting more and more worked up.

In the telex room at the front of the second floor, 15 male hostages were guarded by one terrorist armed with a machine pistol. But as the sounds of battle rose, another two terrorists rushed in.

“I sat facing the door,” Dr. Gholam Ali Afrouz, the embassy’s Charge d’ Affaires said. “One gunman was watching me and the other two were moving about.

“I wasn’t 100 percent aware of what was going on because I had just lost my best friend — Abbas Lavasani. A gunman pointed at me and fired. My face was bleeding, so I laid down and held a cloth over my face. Then I was shot in the legs.”

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Iranian doorman Abbas Fallahi claims that a 50-pence piece saved his life: "It was in my jacket pocket and it diverted a bullet."

Suddenly the gunmen appeared to lose heart. They threw their guns out of the window and the rounds on the floor. Then they shouted, "Tasleem! Tasleem," Farsi for "We surrender."

### SAS men burst through.

At this point, the troopers burst in, combat-fashion. The door flew open and black-clad SAS men — still wearing gas masks — dived through.

"Where are the terrorists?" they shouted. For a moment the hostages could not answer. Eventually one hostage, Dr. Ezzati, the press counselor, raised a shaky hand and pointed two of them out, cowering behind a large desk. Immediately, two SAS men moved around and shot the two where they sat. The terrors' bodies lay slumped against the wall.

Because of concern over who was terrorist and who was hostage — and the very real fear that the building was still wired to a bomb — everyone the SAS saw was securely trussed, and escorted from the premises. Only after the terrorists were positively identified, were the surgical-tape bindings cut away.

The British police and Home Office, the police's controlling body, have always believed in a go-slow approach to terrorism. This has been vindicated in other actions when the persistence of the men outside gradually wore down the resolution of those inside.

At the Spaghetti House siege, four black robbers were trapped in the cellar of a London eating house with hostages and eventually talked out after several days in their prison. The same thing happened when an IRA gang was cornered in a house with an elderly couple in Balcome Street. Only then it was merely the threat of SAS action that made them surrender.

So the police had established what they thought was the right approach. But of course nothing is perfect, and the Brits had not yet come up against fanatics prepared to kill or to die in the cause of martyrdom.

But even then, it was the appearance of the first body — Lavasani — that made the police take the initiative. On the direct order of the Prime Minister, the SAS went in. It took them 11 minutes.



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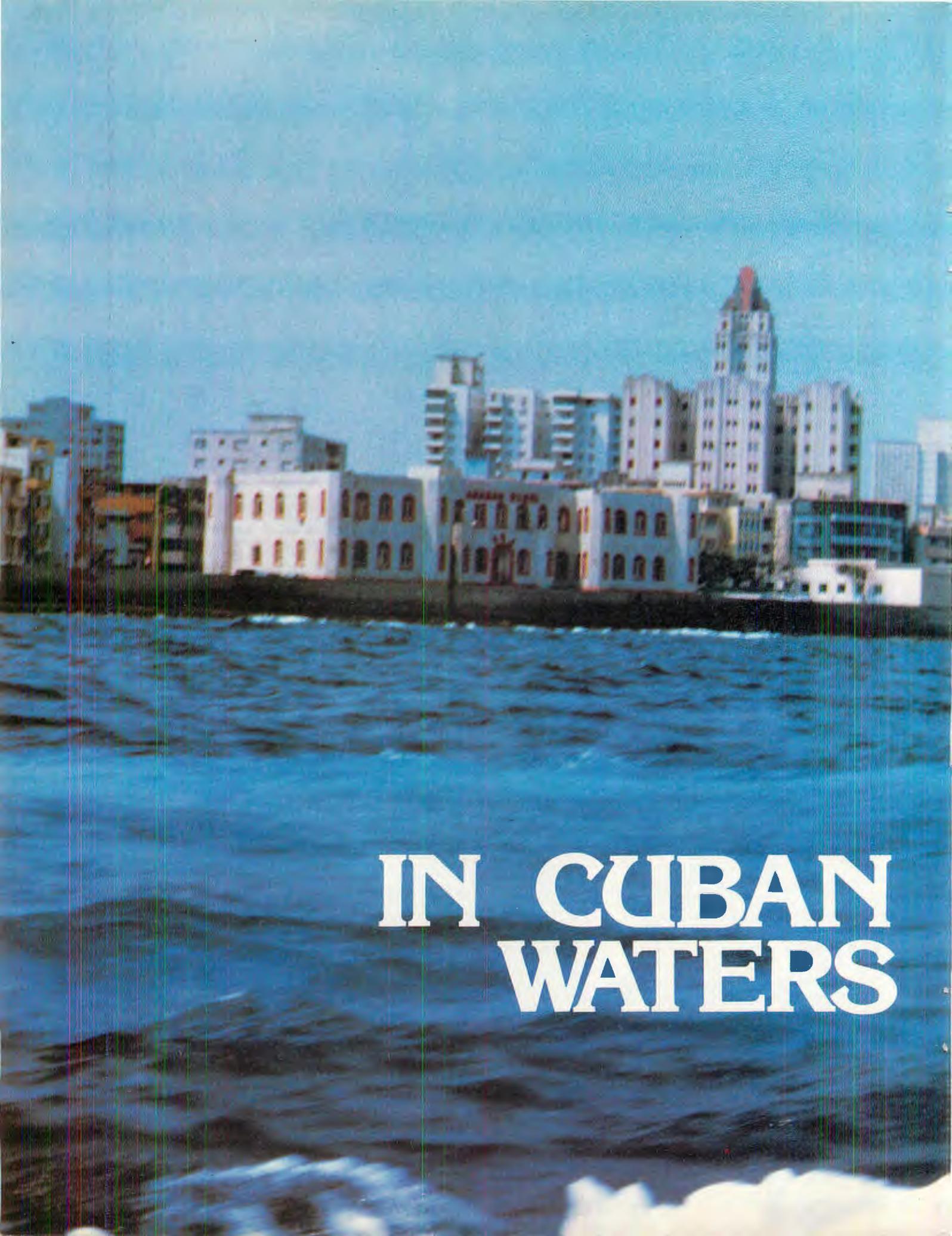
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# IN CUBAN WATERS



SOF Staffer N.E. MacDougald, Sandy and Octavio, two recently-released Cuban political prisoners, and anti-Castro Floridian Josh Habermann were among the first into Cuba's Mariel Bay in April. Their goals: pick-up Octavio's relatives and bring them to Florida, and take photographs of Cuban military personnel and equipment.

Because the freedom flotilla occurred so spontaneously, MacDougald arrived in Miami with only the clothes on his back. He borrowed a camera to take the photos for this story.

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## ARTICLE BY N.E. MACDOUGALD

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### DAY ONE Key West To Cuba

We put out from Key West at 0712. The 24-foot fiberglass inboard/outboard was pushed by a GMC V-8. I made fast a spray tarp that had blown loose. When I looked back, land was a hazy outline.

At 3,000 rpm the bow rose, obscuring our view; at 4,000 rpm it settled down and we planed. We estimated the 90 miles would take four to five hours.

By noon the sky was overcast; Cuba was not yet visible and we'd nearly expended our 30 gallons of reserve fuel. But we'd heard in Miami that we could buy gas in Cuba. Finally we spotted a lobster boat dead ahead. We throttled back and learned from the crew that we were roughly on course. I took the wheel for awhile.

We made Havana harbor an hour later with a near-empty fuel tank. We passed Morro castle, infamous La Cabana prison, and docked at a small harbor station southwest of it. The harbor was awash in congealed petroleum and other flotsam. I was sick and got out on the dock.

Officials taking our names and registration numbers were neither rude nor friendly. They radioed the name of our craft and our low gas situation to another station. I noticed that the dispatcher had to repeat our boat's name five or six times. He spelled the name each time, but did not use the international (or any other) phonetic alphabet.

Forty-five minutes later, a 30-foot, battleship-gray, square-prowed cabin cruiser approached us. It was a Russian-designed, diesel-powered jet drive and was poorly maintained. The superstructure, fabricated from a composite material similar to American beaverboard, was broken on the port side. Two rusting, folding-stock AK-47s rested in the angles made by the cabin and bulkhead. The three crewmen instructed us to follow them west where we could gas up. An hour later we made port and filled our tank and gas cans for \$2 per gallon. The officials here were a little friendlier. No two uniforms I'd seen yet were alike. All were of poor quality.

We followed the jet boat to the port of Barlovento. There we waited with other small craft to convoy into Mariel Bay. Later, an 18-foot cathedral-hulled patrol boat led us into the bay.

We were told to stay anchored — that authorities would visit us later. It was 1800 now, dusk, and still overcast. Fifteen minutes later, a frontier guard boarded us and took the names of the two Cubanos'

relatives whom we hoped to ferry back to Florida.

Other boats joined ours and by sunset the bay held 70 or more. The owners of commercial fishing vessels, speedboats, sailboats, skiboats, austere open fishermen and luxury cruisers (bristling with radar and antennae) bobbed together waiting for friends and relatives.

About 2330 hours, immigration officers boarded us and asked the usual questions. They left about midnight, saying we'd have to take extra passengers from the still-crowded Peruvian embassy. During the night, we were visited thrice more by authorities. Each had a different story as to how many people we should or could take back with us. But the officials never gave us a specific date. During one of these *Catch-22* encounters, we were given a number to tape on our windshield.

From their behavior, it became clear that some officials were not used to writing. And they had difficulty deciphering their own forms. So much for Castro's claims of having eliminated illiteracy.

### DAY TWO High Hopes

We slept through first light until 0600 hours. The sun was copper-brass, the sky only slightly hazy and the bay glassy. After a banana breakfast, we stowed gear in preparation for our guests. About 0730, more frontier guards appeared in their white-hulled, red-decked, twin inboard/outboard patrol boats. I noticed a roll of Ektachrome on the patrol boat's dashboard and assumed it was confiscated. Later my companions confirmed my suspicions. The officer that boarded and talked with us wrote on crude unbound paper, similar to that given grade schoolers.

The upshot of the conversation was that our craft could take only four people by choice, the remainder to be the officials' choice. Because it was their ball game, their rules and their guns, we agreed.

At 0915 hours, we were told by more *Guardia Frontera* that we could top off our tanks at the pumps near the cement plant. We did. And that was our action for the day.

### DAY THREE Cuban Capitalism

When I awoke an hour after sunrise, there was no haze to cut the sun's glare. My companions informed me that all manner of boats had entered the bay during the night and had filled up the bay's other end. Now there were several hundred boats waiting for Castro's castoffs.

We began wondering how long we'd be kept waiting. The monotony was beginning to get to us. We waited in ignorance.

*Continued on page 65*



**TOP: "SO I" class Soviet ship displaces over 200 tons when loaded. Photo taken through hole in spray curtain. ABOVE: One of many Cuban patrol craft, this twin inboard/outboard could be seen daily in Mariel Bay. Photo shot through pile of life jackets.**



**LEFT: Low-draft navy craft patrolled daily. Sailor in blue trunks is frogman. Photo taken via forward hatch through armpit. ABOVE: Open Cuban patrol boat powered by twin inboard/outboard.**



**TOP: Soviet " Hip " version of Mil Mi-8 makes low pass to take photographs of refugee fleet in Mariel Bay. ABOVE: Communication vessel sports elaborate antennae. INSET: Cuban ship of the line. This battered little boat was powered by an ancient diesel. Note lack of maintenance.**



**During storm in Mariel Bay boats were shoved together and one capsized (lower right).**

# An American With A Mission:

## Supporting Cambodian Anti-Communists In A Lost But Courageous Cause

by Tony Bliss

Khmer Serei soldiers (right) at Reahou are armed primarily with American or Russian weapons captured from Khmer Rouge or Vietnamese. Types shown above are: AK-47 (soldier standing extreme left), RPD (soldier standing second from left), Chinese Type 68 7.62mm rifle with 30-round magazine (soldier kneeling extreme left), AKM (soldier kneeling extreme right), M16s and M79 grenade launchers.

**W**HEN Gary Ferguson, an American Navy veteran, jumped off the back of a covered pickup truck after being smuggled into an anti-communist refugee camp inside Cambodia, he saw what he describes as “the worst thing I had ever experienced.

“It was a human garbage pit,” says Ferguson. Rotting garbage and excrement covered with swarms of flies littered the ground everywhere. A pond where refugees bathed and washed their clothes was putrid and full of waste. Feces surrounded the makeshift hospital and shelters used as schools.

Even for the 36-year-old Ferguson, who had previously visited 14 refugee camps throughout Southeast Asia, it was squalor he was unprepared for. But to Ferguson, this camp of the Khmer Serei (Free Cambodians) called Ban Mak Mun was special.

“These are people who have never given up to communists,” he says. For the Khmer Serei count as enemies both the Vietnamese and the Khmer Rouge soldiers of Pol Pot.

The Khmer Serei have renamed the camp, which straddles the Thai-Cambodian border, Reahou, after a legend of the sun god. The camp covers an area about 4,600 by 2,300 meters,





though much of it is on low ground and will have to be moved before the monsoon hits.

For one month Ferguson, whose home is in Arizona, lived inside Cambodia at Reahou. And, as he gained the trust of Van Saren, the Khmer Serei leader and a former captain in Lon Nol's army, he was appointed to the camp's number three position.

Ferguson says, however, that he "did not exercise my power to that extent," but, as Van Saren's trusted lieutenant and adviser, he was involved in all major camp decisions. Van Saren put him in charge of camp sanitation, interior security and foreign relations, which included the press and relief organizations as well as Vietnamese defectors. It was Van Saren who gave Ferguson the .45 automatic he carried as a mark of authority.

Ferguson, though, has never fired a .45 in his life. He spent his military career as a Navy commo specialist — some of it on a destroyer off the Vietnamese coast. Since April '79, when he liquidated most of his real estate holdings in Arizona worth about \$400,000, he has devoted his life to helping Indochinese refugees. He has worked in camps from the Laotian border to isolated Indonesian islands.

He even brought his wife, Sandi, to Reahou for a visit when she and their daughters, 9 and 11, made the trip to Thailand.

## A Real Estate Tycoon With A Conscience

But for Ferguson, working in Reahou was no lark. It was a tough job and emotionally draining. "There would be times I would weep all night. I thought 'what's the use.' It is such an overwhelming problem, most of the world doesn't give a rip and my contribution is so small. But then I would see those suffering people and the masses of children and those thoughts would disappear," he says.

"An Arizona real estate tycoon with a conscience," is how the *Bangkok Post* referred to Ferguson. The *Post* quotes Van Saren as saying Ferguson is "like a son to me. He has a good heart. The Red Cross comes here with a salary and expenses paid, but Gary comes here on his own."

The International Committee of the Red Cross, however, has another view of Ferguson. "By his behavior he was disturbing our work, and some of our workers were afraid that he might harm them,"

Leonard Isler, the ICRC chief at Aranyaprathet told the *Post*.

It wasn't long after the Red Cross complained to the Thai military about Ferguson that he was arrested while crossing into Thailand and charged with illegal entry and possession of firearms. On 4 March, after two weeks in military and immigration jails, Ferguson found himself deported and "barred forever" from Thailand.

## Ferguson vs. The Red Cross

"It was a set-up," says Ferguson, who claims he was lured into Thailand on the pretext of discussing a refugee movement plan with the Thais. The Red Cross admits being very relieved to see Ferguson go — for good reason. For Ferguson, who by his own admission rarely stops talking and can be "rather" abrasive when confronted with bureaucratic stupidity, had waged a one-man public relations battle against the Red Cross.

The Red Cross controls all medical teams and approves entry to the camps, so right away Ferguson, as an "illegal" outsider, became a potential threat to their control.

**Wife of soldier who died because there was no medical staff or medicine in the camp at night sits beside her husband's body.**



Ferguson charges the International Committee of the Red Cross with extreme neglect. Their medical teams would arrive at about 9 in the morning and leave at 3 p.m. — or sooner if a round fell nearby.

So all night the sick and wounded had no medical attention. Nor did they have medicine, for the Red Cross locked away all supplies before leaving.

### Trouble Over Dying Soldiers And Children

In addition, Ferguson says, "They refused to work on soldiers and they carried no morphine or plasma. All my troubles with the Red Cross were over dying soldiers and children."

Ferguson's first run-in with the Red Cross occurred when he broke into a medical chest at night to try — unsuccessfully — to save a dying soldier. The Red Cross was furious. And when Ferguson threatened to take drastic action unless they improved the camp medical care — either themselves or by letting other agencies in — they became scared that Ferguson just might be angry enough to use that .45 stuck in his waistband.

To put pressure on the Red Cross, Ferguson created a cemetery next to the

hospital where only those who died unattended during the night would be buried. In a ceremony led by Buddhist monks, a soldier Ferguson had failed to save was the first buried — a burial that coincided with the arrival of the Red Cross team in the morning.

The insufficient medical care has created a situation so bad that many people will not visit the hospital themselves nor take their children. "They don't trust them," Ferguson says, "and they don't want their children dying there unattended at night."

And this is at a time when the Red Cross has announced in Geneva that fewer doctors are needed to treat Cambodians so as to "avoid the danger of the people becoming too dependent on a type of medical care which, being too sophisticated, would not correspond to their needs."

"Sure," says Ferguson, "there are doctors tripping over each other in Aranyaprathet but none stay inside Ban Mak Mun."

Ferguson charges that those at Reahou do not receive anything near adequate medical care. An example he gives is when he helped several midwives abort a baby that had been dead in the mother's womb

for a week. The next day when he confronted a doctor who had seen the woman previously, the doctor could only reply smugly: "Are you a doctor?"

That bureaucracy and politics are intertwined with the fate of Reahou is inevitable. Estimates of the camp population in the press run from 55,000 to more than 300,000. Van Saren himself claims 300,000. Yet the Red Cross says there are only 55,000 and provides rice for only that number.

### The War Around Reahou

For the Khmer Serei are often a headache for the wary Thais and Reahou is more than a refugee camp. Recon and combat patrols move deep into Cambodia from Reahou and coordinate with resistance groups throughout the country. "The Vietnamese are not safe anywhere," says Ferguson.

So far, the Vietnamese attacks have been limited to company-sized probes and almost daily tank and mortar fire, but a regimental-sized Vietnamese unit is reported within five kilometers of the perimeter.

There are two main lines of defense about 500 meters apart and several mine fields that surround the camp. Between

Close-up of living quarters in Reahou.



these lines live the families of the soldiers who man the lines.

Ferguson estimates there are 20,000 Khmer Serei troops at Reahou, but only about 2,000 are armed, mainly with AK-47s, M79s and RPGs — all of them captured from the communists.

In February, the Khmer Serei printed circulars in Vietnamese urging Viet soldiers to defect and posted them in the interior. Results were almost immediate and several soldiers a day began coming into the camp. From debriefings it became clear that, in this area at least, most of the troops were drafted South Vietnamese who were both poorly trained and equipped.

### **Ending Filth, Throwing Out The Money Changers**

Ferguson, with his lack of combat training, was involved very little with the military aspects of Reahou. But he did set up a recruiting program that in one week obtained 5,000 volunteers.

These men are trained to evacuate women and children in case of attack and to patrol the camps at night enforcing light and noise discipline.

During the day, they are organized into work teams to build toilets and bury garbage. The big pond behind the Khmer Serei offices was condemned and sanitation regulations — such as small penalties for defecating outside the toilet areas — were set up and enforced.

“We began in small areas, especially the area where most visitors came and the market place, then we spread out into the living quarters,” explained Ferguson.

Cambodians come from all over the country to trade in the market place, which the western press simplistically labels a black market. Ferguson, though, calls it a “survival” market.

Another project, one implemented only days before his arrest, was the elimination of the Thai money changers who ripped off desperate refugees by giving them next to nothing for their gold and silver. The money changers were reduced to three Cambodians who dealt with a government bank that set equitable exchange rates.

### **The Press And Reahou**

Ferguson has scorn for most of the western press who come into the camp “for 15 minutes and treat us like Disneyland.” Many of the resulting stories were so inaccurate that he banned most journalists from the camp unless they would stay for 24 hours.

Press stories have mentioned Van Saren in passing as a warlord holding people hostage by terror in order to enrich himself in a lucrative black market trade in international aid.





Ferguson violently denies these accounts, most of which he says are put out by the Red Cross, upset because both they and the Thais have no control over Reahou.

The soft-spoken Van Saren, according to Ferguson, has gone to extreme lengths to minimize corruption. One result is strict discipline, a discipline Ferguson says is "necessary for survival." And he challenges any journalists to inspect the camp's record of anti-corruption measures and investigate the camp thoroughly. None have so far.

Yet, most of the western press — Ferguson has a higher regard for the Asian press — continues to echo the same phrases spouted by relief officials and make little effort to establish the truth.

Ferguson claims many stories are based on a limited understanding of how the camp operates. People at Reahou are grouped according to the Cambodian province from which they come and aid food is picked up directly by representatives from each area. Each week a portion of this food — about 100 sacks of rice — is stored by the central government under Van Saren.

This food, Ferguson says, is used as pay for the soldiers and work teams. Some is used to feed the often hundreds of refugees that arrive daily. For it is not until these recent arrivals register in their province area that they are put on a rice ration.

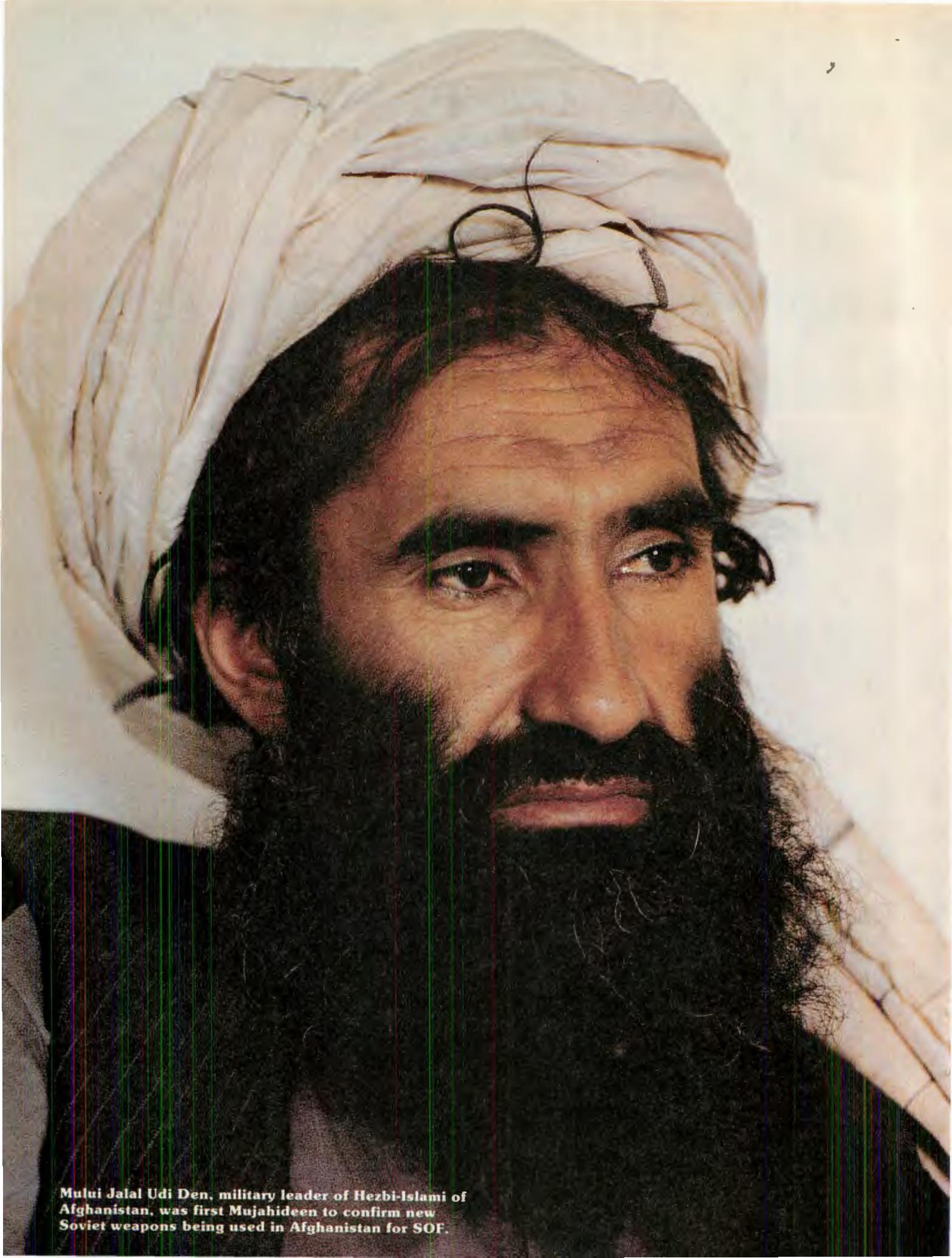
This is not to say that all runs smoothly at Reahou. One man, who was number two in the camp until about a week before Ferguson arrived, caused quite a few problems. He was dubbed the "Mad Prince"

*Continued on page 64*



**TOP:** Khmer Serei soldiers surrounded by children from the camp. **MIDDLE:** Van Saren (wearing cammies at left) receives visitors at Reahou. **BOTTOM:** Bunker used by Van Saren, Khmer Serei leader at Reahou, and Gary Ferguson. **OPPOSITE PAGE:** Young Khmer girl in Reahou.





**Mului Jalal Udi Den, military leader of Hezbi-Islami of Afghanistan, was first Mujahideen to confirm new Soviet weapons being used in Afghanistan for SOF.**

# ASSIGNMENT AFGHANISTAN

## SOF Correspondent On the Scene

Story by Galen L. Geer

Photos by Galen L. Geer and Paul James

### Publisher's Note

**S**OF's AKS-74 Project originated during a meeting in October 1979 between myself and an international arms dealer. In the course of the conversation the arms dealer stated he would pay \$10,000 for one of the new Russian assault rifles, though there was more curiosity about the round itself. Rumor Control theorized that the ammo could include a new flechette, an armor-piercing round, a hollowpoint and a tracer round. Where could SOF get rounds or the rifle?

A good question, as no western intelligence agency – including the CIA – had been able to procure an AKS-74 or the round, even though the weapon had been issued to elite Russian units since 1975.

We speculated that Afghanistan might be the place, due to a growing number of Russian advisers. But if we obtained one, how could we get it out of Pakistan and into the U.S.? The arms dealer replied cryptically, "You get one and I'll send a man to Pakistan who will bring it out and into the U.S." He didn't elaborate. Trade secret, we presumed. (Incidentally, if one runs across some item of ordnance that might interest the U.S. government but is illegal to bring through U.S. Customs, he can abandon it to Customs, and notify the government agency which might be interested, which in turn will obtain the item if it so desires.)

Late in October Managing Editor Bob Poos, while goose hunting with Galen Geer, discussed the feasibility of sending Geer, who's always looking for a war to cover, to Afghanistan on a dual mission – assess the Afghan war and obtain Russian equipment. Preferably before the CIA! When we read reports of Russian airborne units operating in Afghanistan after the 27 December invasion, our hopes rose. Undoubtedly the Afghan rebels would zap some Russian paratroopers – and capture AKS-74s and ammo. Off Geer went to Afghanistan. Before he left, the arms dealer was unwilling to front money to purchase the AKS-74. After Geer returned to Peshawar, Pakistan, he reported, "Yes, I've got the rounds but the gun is going to cost \$15,000 – \$5,000 to buy 3 AK-47s to use for barter for the weapon . . . and \$10,000 for the guy to bring it out."

SOF wasn't in a mood to foot the bill so we made a frantic call to the arms dealer who at that time was in Santiago, Chile. He agreed only to front \$2,500 and another \$7,500 when the weapon was delivered. Since we could not put the deal together, we decided to keep in touch with the man in Pakistan who would attempt to get the weapon out of Afghanistan. When Geer returned to the U.S., we would then decide upon the best course of action to obtain the weapon.

By this time, we started developing a case of SOF paranoia. We'd had, by now, a lot of overseas phone and cable traffic – not exactly secure! What if the CIA decided that if SOF could do what they had not – bring out the AKS round – would be an embarrassment, and intervened at U.S. Customs to confiscate the rounds. We'd have pictures, but not hard evidence.

Solution? Have Geer proceed to Seoul, Korea, to await further instructions. Poos would meet Geer in Seoul, take possession of a number of the rounds and wait to see if Geer got back with the goodies. If not, Poos was to give a portion of his rounds to yet another party in case he was on the "watch list" too.

Either Customs was waiting for Geer or he fit a "stop" profile. His luggage was thoroughly searched and 23 rounds were confiscated and a receipt given. Poos returned a couple of days later and received the same treatment. One round was confiscated – but no receipt.

The same day Geer arrived in the States, Geer and I flew to the east coast to hand-carry two AKS-74 rounds to a government agency (not the CIA) to beat the CIA. They did, and accomplished what the CIA, with its billions of dollars and thousands of incompetents, could not.

–Robert K. Brown

**W**E walked in silence. One foot in front of the other. Slowly. Feeling the rocks under our feet and the sun beating down as if it were fire falling from the sky to heat the Afghan desert like an oven, baking us inside. There was no shade, not even a rock we could crawl under like a lizard seeking shelter from the midday sun. So I walked. Eyes squinted against the sun. They hurt. The day before my eyes had been burned so badly by searing sun that the water in them had dried and the crusted film had to be peeled away like a layer of summer sunburn.

A day, maybe two, away was the river. In my mind, as I walked I could see it. Fresh and clear. The water would be cold, it would swirl around my feet and legs as I waded across, stumbling on the sharp rocks, smiling because I would know that we had made it. Thinking about it, I turned around and I could see the camel. Paul James' pack was tied to it, bobbing up and down as the camel walked. Inside that dark green, English army pack was our prize. Why I had traveled halfway around the world, what "Soldier Of Fortune" Magazine had invested thousands of dollars in since January: 30 rounds of ammunition for the Soviet Union's new rifle, the AKS-74.

## On The Trail Of The AKS-74 Round

For 10 days James and I had followed the trail of the "mystery bullet of Afghanistan." We had run the gauntlet of Soviet MiGs and gunships. We had stumbled across two deserts and climbed two mountain ranges. We had, to find that damned bullet, snaked along a narrow mountain road in daylight, driving a captured Russian truck while

From time to time we stopped to listen, hoping to hear the sound of a MiG or gunship before they saw us or we saw them. It was a habit we had picked up in the last 10 days. Always listening, straining our eyes. As we walked the last few miles to the border and the Tribal Trust Lands that were beyond it, I let my mind drift back over the days and miles to the night above Data Khel when we had slept fitfully in the mud hut with the sound of artillery rumbling through the ground. Just as in Vietnam, and even in Korea in '77 and '78, when the time came for a new operation, a new story to cover in some far-flung corner of a combat-riddled land, we grew quiet — each man lost in his own thoughts. The jokes, the stories ended — we were left quietly reflecting what could be — that it could be the last adventure.

In the mountains beyond the river, James and I knew, we would search for a story, and in that search we could leave our bones behind to be bleached by the Afghan sun.

## Assignment Afghanistan

My assignment for SOF had been more than tracking down the rumor of the new bullet. It included spending time with the Mujahideen in Afghanistan to research a series of articles about the organization, operations and weapons survival abilities of the Afghan Freedom Fighters — the only people in the world willing to lock horns with the mighty Soviet army.

Like most other writers who have found their way into SOF, I yearn for adventure. Publisher Robert K. Brown handed me adventure with the

**Soviet tube weapons brought out by SOF. Exactly what kind of weapon (nerve gas or HE?) is still unknown. SOF has retained control of weapon until details with U.S. government can be worked out.**



MiGs and gunships flew the valley. We had interviewed dozens of Afghans, always asking about a strange, small bullet that made terrible wounds and which, when it hit a man, nearly always killed him. From one Mujahideen stronghold to the next we had wandered through Paktia Province in Afghanistan trying to find it. Now we had it. Now all we had to do was get it to the United States — half a world away.

We were nearing the end of our walk through Afghanistan. As we rounded the bend in the canyon the smell of dead camels, killed by Soviet aircraft earlier that day and already stinking in the desert sun, assaulted us and we reeled backwards from the smell. Pulling our shirts up over our noses, we walked past — after taking a few pictures.

assignment to get the bullet.

"Bring it back," he said, "and we'll scoop them all."

A challenge like that is not easily turned away from. Also, I'm a journalist. There were stories in Afghanistan and in the Tribal Trust Lands around Peshawar.

When I first arrived there, following a 36-hour train ride from Karachi, I rested for a day, then began making the rounds of various Islamic groups. As it turned out, the KGB had infiltrated many of the sources with which I had been provided and I found myself, on one almost fatal day, backpedaling to avoid attending my own execution.

By that time, I had begun to have my doubts about anyone in Pakistan and was quite willing to



give up the whole adventure, return SOF's money and find a new way to make a living. Then, as I walked through the sitting room of Dean's Hotel in Peshawar, a rather surly looking man sitting draped over a sofa caught my eye. "Journalist?" I asked, since that had become the standard greeting of anyone who was not a Pakistani.

"Yes," he said, then added, "just came out too."

"Oh yea," I said, then parked myself across from him. If nothing else, I thought he might be able to give me a little information.

"So what did you see or do?"

"Got a good scoop actually," he said, then leaned forward as the waiter brought his tea.

"Got to photograph a good execution and mixed it up with the Ivans a little — bloody good show all the way."

Now this, I thought to myself, is a man I can work with. If mixing it up with the Russians made a "bloody good show," he was not some jackass off to find himself an adventure yet prone to panic if he got into a difficult spot. I ordered tea for myself and settled down to visit. As the afternoon unfolded, I learned his name was Paul James and he was an English newsman who came to Pakistan to photograph the Afghan war.

"I am not interested in photographing anything but war," he said at one time. "That is the only place you can see people as they really are — cowards or brave men — and it is all written on their face."

As James and I talked, and I showed him some of my stories about Vietnam and Korea, we agreed we would be able to work together and could count on each other to serve as each other's backup man, something any SOFer knows is essential to survive in a hostile environment. That night, while we gagged and choked on Pakistani beer (which I call buffalo piss for

lack of a more distasteful term), I outlined my assignment to James, ending it with the rumor of the new bullet and explaining that SOF was interested in any stories I could bring out about new weapons but that the story would be worthless without physical evidence.

"Sounds like a good trip," James said, "and might even be a good story with some good photos."

After we had been refinanced by the magazine, and after several false starts, we were in the Peshawar Bazaar buying Afghan clothing on Saturday, 19 April. The next morning we called a taxi to our room, left instructions for the management to store our clothes and other personal items and slipped out of the room, ditching our Pakistani secret service tails after less than a block. Ten minutes later we were at the political office of the Hezbi-Islami and were

where James and I were hidden inside a refugee tent while our equipment was loaded on a camel and our group of Mujahideen were hand-picked by Doc. Because we had put together a trip into an area where bandits roamed the hills and Soviet air was active, the Doc made each man who would go with us swear that he would die before he would allow any harm to come to the two western journalists.

When everything was ready, Doc reappeared at the tent and motioned us to follow. We were to spend the day walking up into the desert mountains across the river while our camels and equipment followed behind us. I didn't know it then, but within a few days I would begin to dream of crossing that river again.

We wound our way up into the desert, leaving behind the lush valley along the river. When we finally reached the crest of the mountain, I checked



**Pathans in Darra with hybrid sporting rifle. To improve their "line," Pathans have been working out new designs of classic sporting rifles with only subtle changes to actions or stocks.**

shunted into a back room where we waited for our guide. Half-an-hour later he showed up, motioned us outside and hustled us into a waiting car for a breakneck ride through the Kohat Pass to Miram Shat.

At Miram Shat, because we were only a few kilometers from the Afghan border and deep inside the Tribal Trust Lands, James and I were guarded carefully by the Mujahideen. That night we discovered the rumors of the new bullet were not unfounded. While I was interviewing Mului Jalai Ud Din he suddenly produced one of the AKS-74 rounds, and another weapon that neither James nor I had seen before. As we questioned him and learned where more of the rounds and the strange tube-shaped weapons might be found, James and I planned the trip. The next day we were off to Data Khel. Neither of us knew if we were on a wild goose chase or what, but we were determined to see it through.

We were taken to Data Khel in a captured Russian jeep. Once we arrived, to avoid having prying eyes identify us as westerners inside the Tribal Trust Lands, our guide, whom we called Doc because he had been in medical school when the war started, bought James and me turbans. We were then shuttled into the mountains and spent the night in a mud hut.

The next morning, the Mujahideen dragged us out of bed (off the floor) at 0400 to start our trip. We returned to a refugee camp outside Data Kehl,

my watch while we waited for tea. We had been walking for almost seven hours.

For the trip down the mountain into the wasteland valley, James and I rode the camels. What neither one of us knew was that the trip down was along a narrow mountain trail from which it was a 500 to 1,000-foot drop. In an hour I had blisters on my hands from holding onto the ropes as I perched on the back of the swaying camel. Looking down into the valley, every once in a while I could see the bones of a camel that hadn't made the trail. Not a pleasant sight when riding on the back of an animal that spits, farts, groans and does everything you don't want it to do while all you can do is hang on and hope your will is in good order.

We traveled throughout the day and worked our way into a broad valley late that evening. We spent the night in another mud hut and went to sleep to the sound of artillery pounding the next valley.

The following morning we ate a breakfast of dry bread ("nan") and tea, then set off again as soon as the camels were loaded. First we climbed to the top of a thousand-foot plateau, then began a four-hour walk up a gentle incline to the pine-forest mountains ahead.

As we reached the pine forest, James and I climbed back on the camels for what proved to be the shortest camel ride of the trip. Ten minutes after we started along the trail, the first gunships

appeared far overhead. James held an SLR while I idled away time smoking a cigarette on my camel. We heard the next Soviet chopper – lower and closer – before we saw it and somehow managed to get the camels stopped. This time I didn't wait for the camel to get all the way to the ground before I headed for the nearest cover I could find – with James hot on my trail. As we settled down to let the choppers pass over, James and I smiled at each other.

“Getting fun, isn't it, ole' boy,” James said, then laughed. He was at home.

Myself, I kept thinking: “Where is our air?” Then I realized we didn't have any.

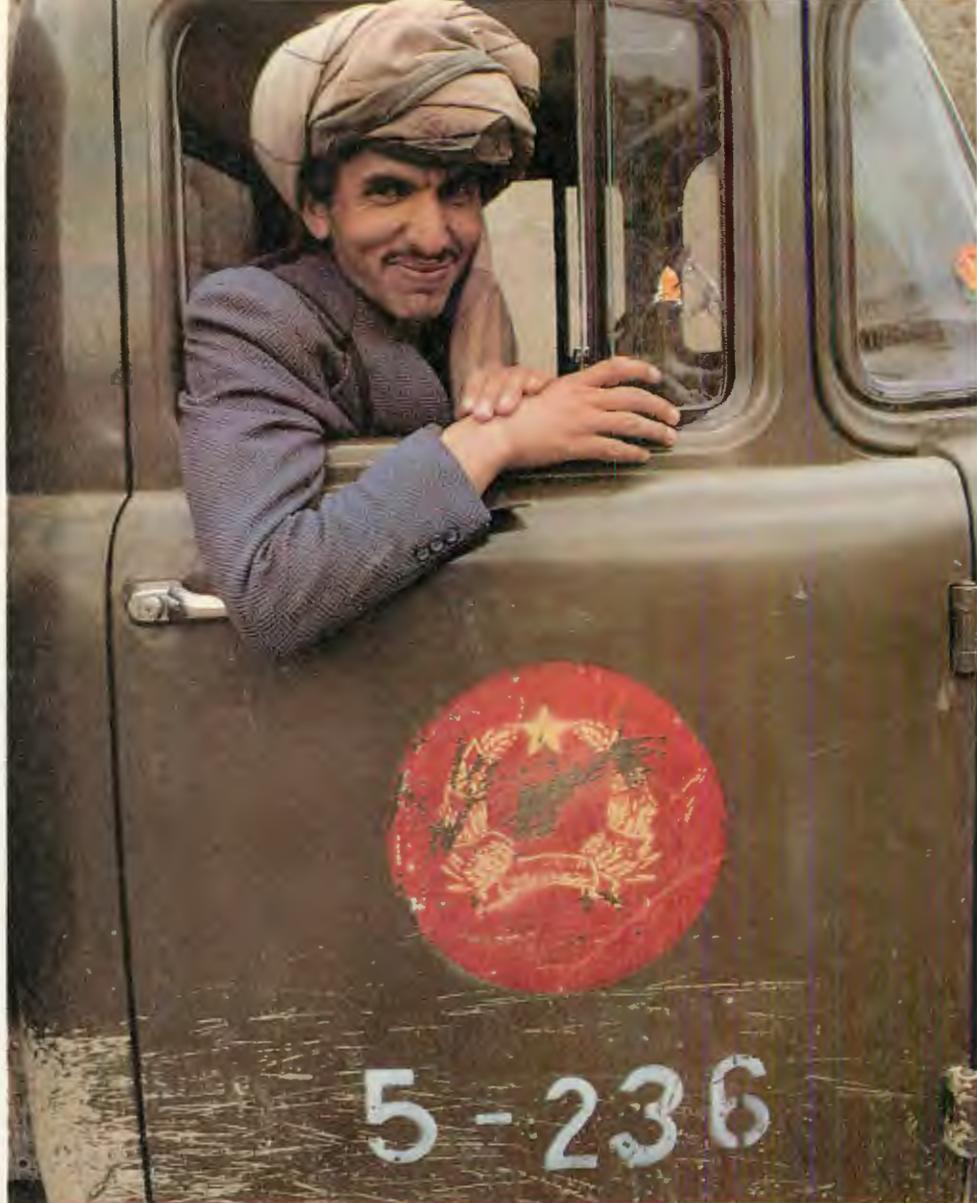
We spent the rest of that day (and every day after, although not as often) dodging choppers and MiGs. It didn't take long until our ears were tuned to the very distant “chop-chop” of the Mi-24. Ivan only flies in the morning and evening. We had just reached the edge of his range but there were enough MiGs in the air, and choppers prowling around at lower levels, that we kept alert. Also, we found out the route we were following was Ivan's favorite bomb run in the province. Unexploded rockets littered the area and we had our hands full convincing the Mujahideen that we did not want a Russian rocket to take back to the States.

### **A Large Standing Target**

We moved on foot throughout the day, sticking to the cover along the streams as best we could until evening. We reached the Russian truck Doc had driven away from an ambush a few weeks earlier and parked in a ravine. After an hour of fiddling with the batteries and pouring gas in the tanks, the truck was ready to go. That was when Doc informed me he had driven the truck up the valley and river bottom in first gear. James declined the invitation to drive, so I climbed

**ABOVE: SOF's guide – the “Doc” – poses in captured Russian truck along road to Zerke. His family was bombed out of their ancestral home by Soviet MiGs and gunships in January before the fighting in Zerke had even started.**

**RIGHT: Chinese copy of Russian ZPU-1 14.5mm towed anti-aircraft machine gun deployed on hilltop near Gardez.**



**At Mujahideen stronghold in pine forest above eastern desert, Afghan rebel practices with Russian DShK 38 12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun.**



**ABOVE: Tube weapon brought out of Afghanistan by SOF is held by Mului Jalal Udi Den.**

**LEFT: In order to penetrate Afghan desert, SOF's Geer (left) had to dress as Afghan. Weapons shown in photo are Russian AKM, RPG-7 and French 9mm Hotchkiss submachine gun.**

**RIGHT: Mujahideen prepare to load camel before trek through Afghan desert.**



behind the wheel, figuring there might be a road around that Doc would follow. There wasn't. I drove the damn truck, with 17 Mujahideen in the back laughing at every bump, waving their party's flag around (it's white and I brought one back for the SOF office). James sat next to the door, scanning the sky for choppers, and the Doc, along with our interpreter, sat between us arguing about which way to go along the river bottom.

After about 10 miles of the most back-breaking, kidney-pounding ride I have ever been on, we reached another tea house along the river and decided to call it a day, since the lights didn't work and the brakes were shot. I parked the truck down by the river, figuring that if Ivan did fly up the valley and see the truck we would be safe. Besides, there was a full moon and sooner or later Ivan was bound to figure out choppers can fly at night. Neither James nor I was willing to sleep inside the mud hut and we convinced the Mujahideen we would be better off sleeping on top of it. Actually, we figured it would be easier to find a hole if we were outside, since there are no windows in the huts.

After our gear had been unloaded from the truck (we left the camels when we picked it up), James and I were setting about making ourselves comfortable when we heard the truck start up. A few minutes later it was parked next to our hut.

"Shit!" I yelled. "You trying to get us all killed?" I tried to explain that the truck was too good a target to park next to us, but the Mujahideen were proud of their Russian truck and wanted everyone to know it was ours. Finally James and I gave up, ate a few handfuls of rice, drank our tea and went to sleep. One of us said something about it being a nice night to die before we started snoring.

## A White Knuckler

The next morning we were up before dawn and after the usual breakfast of tea and bread were off again. The same group of nuts were in the back waving that damn flag while James and I sat on either side of our two argumentative Afghans in the front. Except for James, who was watching the skies, no one else gave a shit. When we reached the promised road, it turned out to be a shelf carved into the side of a damn mountain with a 500-foot drop inches away on one side (half the





time the outside dual wheel was hanging off the edge) and a rock wall on the other. As we snaked along this road (where an American truck would never have gone), stopping every half hour or so to ditch the truck and run for cover while choppers flew past, I kept visualizing either SOF Publisher Bob Brown or Managing Editor Bob Poos tied to the front of the truck on my next trip unless we started drawing "dumb, dumb duty pay."

After four or five hours with the truck, James and I sighed with relief when it ran out of gas and we started walking cross-country again. Later, we found the road had been shot up around a turn and had we tried to drive any further we would have ended up at the bottom of the cliff.

### **An AA Salute At Zeroke**

We were back in the desert by this time, with new camels about an hour behind us. We walked until 1700 without food or water until we reached the edge of Zeroke – or what Ivan had left of it. We rested in a small tea house, then set off for the pine forest 10 miles away and the stronghold in which we hoped to find the bullets. When we arrived, the Mujahideen gave us their traditional greeting for anyone crazy enough to cross the desert and reach them – they opened up with all their AA guns at once. Which, of course, sent both James and me to the ground in a heap.

That evening, James and I toured the area, then feasted on a meal of roast mutton – three chunks of meat floating in some kind of oil that left you well lubed. That night we interviewed the Zeroke commander and then fell into our beds on the floor. By this time, day and night and the number of days we had been gone, all seemed to blend together.

The next morning we took another trip across the desert, to look over the last Soviet stronghold in Paktia Province and were informed that by the end of May that stronghold would be no more. They were planning the attack then and were

**Soviet air has healthy respect for the 14.5mm ZPU-1 anti-aircraft guns used by Mujahideen to defend mountain stronghold of Gardez.**

waiting on some more men before starting it. (As we go to press, Moslem newspapers report heavy fighting in the Zeroke-Tank area and the death of Afghan leader Sabdul Kahn, brother of one of our guides.)

Later, we asked about the bullet and were informed it was another 30 miles away. But, since we were going to write a story about how the Russians were not fighting like men, the commander of Zeroke agreed to provide us with another Russian truck for the trip to the next depot (stronghold) rather than our having to walk, which would take three days.

Late that afternoon we were off again. As before, the Mujahideen believed in short-cuts, right over the top of the mountains. As far as they are concerned, river bottoms and creeks are super highways. This time, James and I were able to ride in the back, as we were provided with a driver. About 2100, though, the truck bogged down and the Mujahideen worked in shifts to free it (they worked until dawn) while James and I carried our gear up into what we thought was an old mountain home where we curled up and went to sleep. The next morning we discovered it was a camel stall.

### **Ivan got his ass kicked.**

By dawn, we were ready to go again, and when we finally reached the top of the mountain and started down, James and I thought there was not a place on our bodies which hadn't been bruised. At mid-morning, we stopped for a tea-and-biscuits breakfast before setting off down the mountain through an area which Ivan had fire-bombed a few days before (See "Soviet Firesticks," p. 52). Early that afternoon, we reached the road to Gardez and

**Weapons familiarization for new recruits in stronghold. Mujahideen have grown up fighting with weapons like British SMLEs (Short Magazine Lee Enfields) but new recruits must be trained by more experienced men in use of RPGs and other modern weapons.**



the area of the heaviest fighting between the Mujahideen and Russians. It was clear after a few miles on the road (we walked part of the way), that Ivan got his ass kicked. More than 100 pieces of equipment the Mujahideen had knocked out littered the area. I counted over a dozen tanks, 30 APCs and scores of trucks and other equipment.

Late that afternoon, we stopped at a Mujahideen outpost to eat honey, "nan" and have tea. After shooting a few pictures, James and I again asked

questions about the new bullet. This time we were told the depot where the captured bullets were stored was 15 miles away in the mountains. Setting out in another truck, we lurched and and bounced across the hills until we reached the main depot of Hezbi-Islami.

### **Dropped At Our Feet**

After another series of interviews, photographic sessions and general visiting over tea, we were suddenly ushered out of the headquarters and into another Russian truck. For half an hour we bounced along on what had to have been the worst ride yet, then left the truck and climbed past captured artillery towards a collection of huts along the crest of a hill. There, weapons were laid out for us to view and, as James and I took pictures and asked questions, the impossible happened. First, two of the new tube weapons were handed to us, "as gifts for the American military magazine (SOF)," then a small sack of ammunition was dropped at our feet — the AKS-74 bullets.

It was dark by this time and James and I followed the small group of Mujahideen into the "hospital," little more than another hut with vitamins and crude bandages stacked around the room. Later, still carrying the ammunition and tube weapons, we followed the Mujahideen down the mountain to another hut where we met with all of the local leaders. After interviewing them, then drawing diagrams of how they could improve their defenses, James and I began to make arrangements to get back to Peshawar with our prizes. At 0200, in another truck, with two men to serve as guards to the edge of the mountains, our guide, an interpreter and a driver, we started our trip back.

Now James and I were worried about security. Both of us knew the KGB had penetrated the Mujahideen. If word got out that we had the new rounds and the tube weapons [due to national security, another item we brought out for SOF can not be named], Ivan would stop at nothing to nail us. For that reason, we decided to move all night and into the next without a break. It would mean 36 hours of walking and riding without stopping, but it would be worth it.

The next morning, we left the truck and its driver along the road to Zeroke and with our two Mujahideen and one more man to serve as gunner we started walking. We walked until that afternoon when we reached our truck (the Doc had found some gas someplace). By this time, James and I were so used to his coming up with things and pulling off-the-wall stunts like shooting quail with a .38 pistol, we stopped paying any attention to his exploits. After refueling, we were off again. We reached a safe house that night and ate a meager meal of bread and tea before turning into zombies and falling asleep. The next morning, we were up before dawn and returned the truck to its original hiding place. From there we walked, carrying our prizes and camera equipment, up a stream and over another mountain. We were taking a more direct route back because of security, but one that meant a climb that lasted nearly all day.

Finally, we started down the mountain and at mid-afternoon stopped at a tea house, where the Doc managed to scrounge up a bowl of rice and some onions. An hour later, we feasted on our first meal since leaving the depot and getting our bullets: rice, onions, tea and bread. Two hours later we were on the road again.

### Water swirled around my legs.

The days and nights in Afghanistan had become blurred, and as we passed the dead camels, walked out onto the desert and finally crossed into Pakistan, neither James nor I could speak. Our mouths were swollen from lack of water and our feet seemed like lead. That night we slept in the desert with a refugee family and were up at 0300 walking. That afternoon, with the sun still burning my hide, the sweat from the heat long since burned away and my body wrinkled from lack of moisture, I saw the river. Two hours later I felt it around my ankles, then my legs. The rocks cut at my bare feet as I carried my boots.

As I sat down on the far side to put my boots back on, I looked at James. He was smiling.

"Well, old boy," I said, finally able to talk again after drinking the cool water. "It looks like all we have to worry about now is bandits stealing our toys."

"Screw 'em," James said, then walked back into the water and began splashing. I dropped my boots and followed him.

**AUTHOR'S NOTE:** It would be two more days before we reached Peshawar, then 10 more before the rounds would be in the States. Although Customs did manage to confiscate 23 of the rounds in Hawaii SOF was able to extract them from the clutches of bureaucracy.

Tests are being conducted on the rounds at this time and SOF will have a through ballistic analysis of the AKS-74 rounds next month.

## Soviet Fire Sticks

**S**OF has documented proof the Soviets are using fire bombs in Afghanistan. After nearly a month of following leads on the weapon, including obtaining several samples of it and interviewing both Mujahideen leaders and former Afghan army officers, we can present a clear picture of the weapon's use and design to SOF readers.

During my own 150-mile trek through Afghanistan last April, I passed through an area of pine forest where "fire sticks" had been used to clear concealing cover along a Mujahideen supply road in the mountains above Gardez, in Paktia Province. The destruction of the pine forest where the bombs were used was complete.

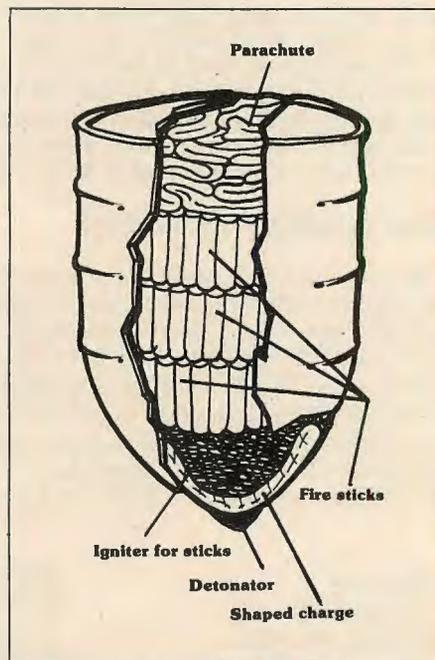
The individual fire sticks are about a foot long and a quarter-inch in diameter. They are brown in color and are hollow. When a piece is broken off and ignited with a match, it burns like cordite, although it appears to burn a little hotter. The sticks are used in two ways by the Russians.

The first and most common means of delivery described is by parachute. Apparently thousands of the sticks are tightly packed in a conical-shaped container with a shaped charge and igniter designed to throw burning fire sticks over a wide area. A detonator is in the nose of the cannister, and the parachute is packed in the flat end. The entire bomb is about the size of a 55-gallon oil drum and a single MiG can carry four of the bombs, although the Afghan defectors we interviewed stressed that the MiGs can only drop one bomb at a time and must make four runs to deliver all four.

We believe — from the evidence of the area we viewed, which was hit

with fire bombs — that a single bomb could almost cover a football field with burning sticks, assuming the Mujahideen were telling the truth about only one jet bombing the area.

A second delivery system and use of the weapon is apparently reserved for villages. Thousands of the sticks are dropped from helicopters, blanketing the village. White phosphorus rockets are then fired into the village, igniting the sticks and setting off a chain-reaction fire which cannot be stopped. According to the Afghans interviewed by SOF,



**Firebomb is about the size of 55 gal. oil drum**

the fire sticks' two primary uses are to burn villages and clear cover used by the Mujahideen. This would account for most, but not all, of the napalm stories being published by the western press.

The samples of the weapon which Paul James and I obtained in our search through the Northwest Frontier Province of Pakistan are now being tested and should provide interesting information to SOF readers in a future issue.

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## Mysterious Wounds

**K**HYBER Hospital in Peshawar, Pakistan, looks like the wrong place to be treated for battle wounds. Hundreds of Pakistanis and Afghan refugees cluster about the hospital's main gate while piles of trash litter the street in front of it.

Rumors have a habit of drawing people to strange corners of the world, however. Following the Russian invasion of Afghanistan last December, rumors of strange wounds to the Mujahideen freedom fighters were filtering into the SOF office in Boulder, Colo. I was in Peshawar's Khyber Hospital to check out those rumors.

According to reports received in Boulder, Mujahideen brought into Pakistan from the Afghan fighting were suffering wounds from a light infantry weapon which produced "terrible injuries." Reports ranged from a splinter round to super-high-velocity slugs, explosive bullets and flechettes.

American officials in Peshawar were reluctant to talk about the wounds although they had seen "disturbing reports." From them I was given the name of a lead in Peshawar. Late that night, two doctors from Khyber Hospital visited me at the Dean's Hotel in Peshawar's Cantonment. One was Dr. Mahn Zuhr, a surgeon at Khyber Hospital, and the other was a pathologist who did not want to give his name. The two men spent more than an hour talking about battle wounds they had seen in the hospital. They admitted they were fearful about giving too much information because of the abundance of wild rumors, many of them put out by members of the various Islamic fronts operating in Peshawar. They added they had bullet injuries they could not explain. Dr. Mahn Zuhr agreed to meet me the following day at Khyber Hospital and go over some of his cases.

As an orderly led me through the packed crowds of Afghans in the hospital the following morning, two things struck me. One was the lack of a sterile atmosphere found in even the most forward medical units in Vietnam, and the second was the Afghans' apparent immunity to pain. Many sat, silent and sullen, against the walls of the long hallways of the hospital with makeshift dressings over their wounds.

In the surgeons' lounge, I found Dr. Mahn Zuhr and a half-dozen other doctors eagerly waiting. They were all willing to talk about their problems and cases, hoping America would listen.

"We have had," they all said, "some very unusual cases here. But you must remember that we are eight to 10 days away from the fighting, by foot, and that many of those wounded in Afghanistan never reach us."

Mahn Zuhr explained that only Mujahideen wounded near the Pakistan border area or walking wounded return to Pakistan.

"They must cross mountains, rivers and always there are the Russian helicopters searching for them." He added, "Only a very small percentage of the wounded, perhaps only 10 percent, can make it here. Most die."



U.S. officials have provided the Pakistani doctors with technical reports covering the types of wounds experienced in Vietnam in an effort to help them, since U.S. medical teams, experienced in battle wounds, are not allowed in Pakistan.

As one official explained, "These people are used to .303s and low-velocity bullets, not the sophisticated weapons the Soviets are using. This means almost all of the wounds are strange."

Mahn Zuhr and other doctors differ with the "official position." They admit most of the wounds at the start of the war were new to them. However, they claim they have treated enough of them, and studied the U.S. reports, to know which wounds come from what weapon.

"Even comparing the reports with the wounds," Mahn Zuhr says, "we

are still finding wounds that we must call freaks because they do not match the wounds which are expected, even from high-velocity weapons such as were used in Vietnam."

Another surgeon, Dr. Rah In, an Afghan refugee himself and former Mujahideen, shed more light on the wounds when he explained some of his cases to SOF.

"In many cases a man is shot and we do not find a bullet, or even a large piece of what would be the 'slug.' All we find are small pieces and a very large wound. I don't believe the bullets explode, but they are much faster than before and made so they break up into small pieces, causing more damage."

All of the doctors claimed that often whole bone sections, such as the forearm, thigh, ankle or foot, or any place on a limb, would explode

from the round's impact.

"One man," Mahn Zuhr said, "was hit here [he pointed to the upper arm], and the entire bone, from the elbow to the shoulder, including the joint, was splintered. I don't think," he said, "that was a freak of battle."

All of the doctors at Khyber are hesitant to release much information because they realize they have something unusual. Also, they want to study the wounds and, as explained by Rah In, "I want to write medical papers about what we have found so that the world will understand."

They are also convinced that the Soviet Union is using weapons in Afghanistan against the Mujahideen that the west has not yet seen.

*Continued on page 83*

# FLIGHT OF THE WHITE EAGLES

## American Mercs Thwart Red Army

### Part 2 — Conclusion

by Dana K. Drenkowski

**I**N 1919, Marshal Josef Pilsudski, chief of state of Poland, agreed to allow Capt. Merian C. Cooper to form a squadron of American flyers to fight for Poland. Cooper and Maj. Cedric E. Fauntleroy recruited six other volunteers to form the nucleus of the Kosciuszko Squadron in Poland's war against Russia.

The Polish High Command, although initially skeptical, soon came to appreciate its air arm and employed it in different roles. Unsurpassed as a reconnaissance force, it provided the army with up-to-date information about enemy concentrations and movements. The PAF hit supply lines with light-bomb and machine-gun attacks and spearheaded Polish infantry and cavalry attacks against Bolshevik positions. For much of the winter of 1919-1920, the 7th Kosciuszko Squadron's fame spread throughout the Polish and Bolshevik armies.

By April 1920, Marshal Pilsudski had definite proof the Bolshevik army, cleaning up anti-Red resistance in the Crimea, meant to attack Poland within the next 45 days. On 25 April 1920, the Polish army attacked on all fronts to pre-empt the coming Russian offensive. The Kosciuszko Squadron mobilized by using box-cars for mess facilities, armory and engine shops and living quarters. Airfields were smooth meadows and pastures next to railroad lines.

The Kosciuszko Squadron, one of the four covering the southern prong of a 150,000-man, two-prong advance, carried more than its weight in the battle. In fact, Capt. Cooper was responsible for Polish air superiority due to a fortunate accident. He and "Ig" Noble shot up a Bolshevik encampment, not realizing it was the Russian air force headquarters. This attack so demoralized the Red pilots that they flew back to Kiev, 400 miles to the rear of the attacking armies.

Armored trains were used extensively by both sides as highly-mobile artillery and armor platforms, capable of rushing masses of preplaced artillery to attack or defend key positions wherever there was a railroad available. Noble was lost to the squadron when wounded while attacking a Russian armored train. However, his attack chased Bolshevik guards away from Polish hostages, who escaped during his strafing runs from almost certain death. Noble was awarded the *Virtuti Militari*, Poland's highest award for valor.

By 7 May, the victorious Polish army captured Kiev on the banks of the Dneiper, 400 miles inside the Ukraine in Russia. But Pilsudski and his staff realized victory was hollow without destruction of the Bolshevik army, whose reinforcements were streaming toward the Dneiper.

During this action, Maj. Fauntleroy, squadron commander, was awarded the *Virtuti Militari* for warning a Polish troop train of an impending Russian cavalry ambush. He halted the train and the troop commander deployed his men in fighting formation. Fauntleroy returned to his plane and supported the attack which decimated the unprepared Bolsheviks.

Meanwhile the Politburo met in Russia and decided to send in their top troubleshooter, Leon Trotsky, Red Army commissar and Politburo-member. Trotsky brought Gen. Mikhail Tukhachevsky, Russia's leading strategist, with him to take operational control of the Bolshevik forces. The two men took command of the larger northern front while retaining authority over the southern forces.

Josef Stalin was commissar for the southern forces. His army was reinforced by the *Konarmiya*, a self-contained cavalry unit led by Gen. Semen Mihailovich Budyenny. The *Konarmiya* was noted for its ruthlessness and victories during Russia's civil war.

As commanding general, Tukhachevsky unfolded a plan guaranteed to destroy the smaller Polish army — a counterattack with three forces, using the largest forces in the northern front as spearhead. Stalin's southern front would push forward, always in contact with and in support of the northern front. Budyenny's cavalry would lead the southern front. Further north, another self-contained cavalry army would provide flank security for the northern front's right flank.

With three times as many cannon, twice as many airplanes and a larger cavalry corps, the three-pronged Soviet offensive began to roll up its weaker Polish adversary, scattered in garrisons to protect supply lines from Kiev to Lvov and Warsaw. The heretofore underrated Polish air force was thrown in to stem the tide of advance.

**O**N the southern front, facing the *Konarmiya* spearhead, the 7th Kosciuszko Squadron worked from dawn to dusk, flying sorties to delay the enemy. Both sides soon realized the machine-gunned, bomb-dropping airplanes were an extremely effective fighting force. Time and again, Yank pilots spotted enemy forces closing in on unsuspecting Polish units. They dropped warning messages to the Poles, then attacked the Bolsheviks singly or in pairs.

Virtually every time, they slowed or disrupted the Russian advance, enabling the Polish force to fight back successfully or escape intact. At times, the angry hornets flying over their units literally fought the entire *Konarmiya* to a standstill, spitting hundreds of machine-gun bullets into marching cavalry units.

One of Budyenny's cavalymen described such an attack as being so skillful that "none of the shots fired by our men did the Americans any harm."

Not only their enemies took note of the 7th Kosciuszko Squadron's activities. A U.S. intelligence report declared: "During the retreat of the Polish army from Kiev . . . aviation was used probably for the first time as the rear guard of an army."

In order to keep the squadron mobile, "everything possible was left on the railway trains. Personnel were quartered there. Fifty-seven cars were required for the squadron. For changing fields the railway was used almost exclusively. Consequently, fields had to be near the railway lines.

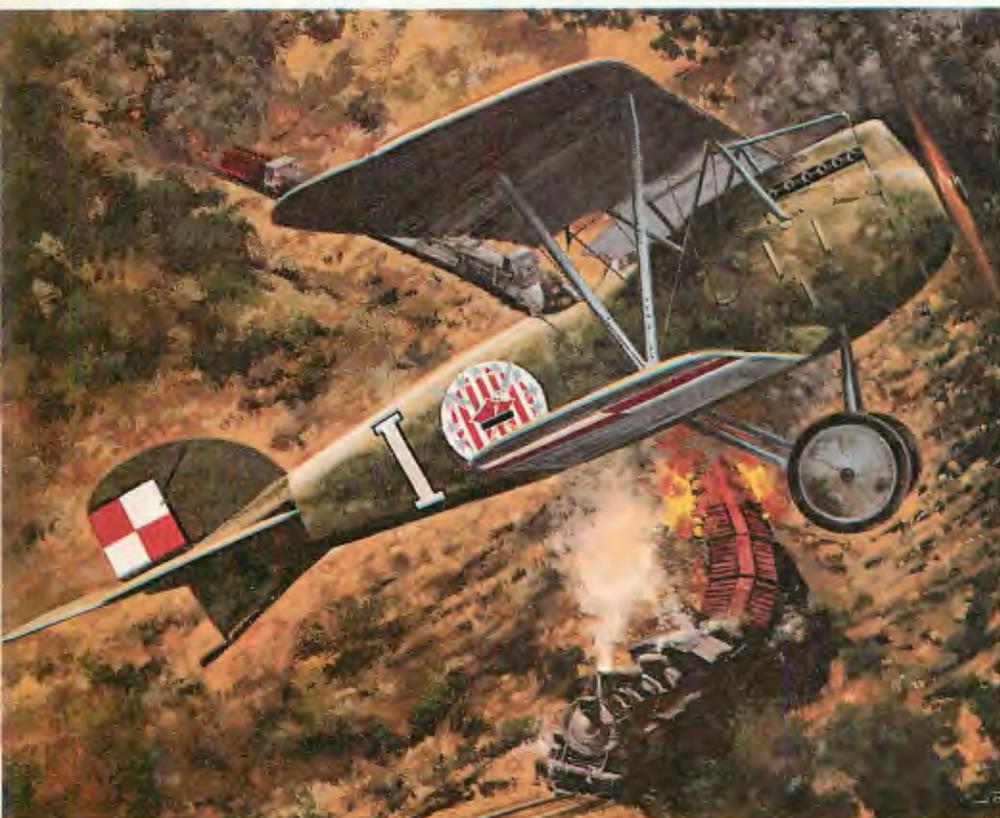
"When the Bolshevik cavalry approached too near a field, everything except the planes, a few mechanics and the serviceable trucks moved by train to a previously selected field in the rear. There was no opposition from Bolshevik aviation."

The report lists Budyenny's army as having four cavalry divisions of three brigades each with a total of more than 20,000 men, an extremely mobile force that covered remarkable distances, being



**ITALIAN ANSALDO A-1 BALILLAS**  
 Capt. Buck Crawford and Lt. Aleksander Sendowski attack column of Cossacks. In this frequently repeated maneuver of the Polish-Russian war, machine-gun fire inflicted heavy casualties on men and horses and disrupted Bolshevik advance.

**AUSTRIAN ALBATROS D.III**  
 Capt. Edward Corsi attacks Bolshevik armored train, making several strafing passes and raking it with machine-gun fire, to disable locomotive, enabling Polish ground forces to capture train.



able to march 70 kilometers every day, using river beds and forest trails, while avoiding main roads.

The report declares, however, "Aviation was always able to follow them with the greatest ease except during the early morning or late at night."

It listed Kosciuszko Squadron strength at "eight pilots and 14 single-place scout planes" and described aerial tactics: on sighting an enemy column, the pilot flew out of range about one-half mile to the rear and then flew over at 300 meters' altitude to drop two bombs on the wagon trains before diving and strafing troops with machine guns.

The report continued: "At this period of the attack, the wagon trains and the rear of the cavalry would commence scattering in all directions, and with the number of killed and wounded men and horses, the confusion is very great."

### Planes vs. Cavalry

The pilot opened his motor full so its roar would frighten the horses. He flew directly down the line, elevating and lowering the plane's nose slightly 10 to 15 meters above the column. He could spray machine-gun bullets through the column's entire length, causing casualties, great disorder and confusion. This enabled one squadron to check the advance of 20,000 cavalry for several hours every day.

The report declared the only successful counterattack technique upon the plane's approach was "to have different units throughout the column dismount and hold their horses by the reins. The dismounted men could deliver more effective fire and better control their horses."

Despite Polish aviation, the Reds steadily advanced. In the north, Gen. Ghai's cavalry corps wreaked havoc upon the retreating Poles. His effectiveness won him and his troops the name "Ghai Khan and the Golden Horde," in emulation of Genghis Khan and his Mongol horsemen.

The situation grew steadily more tense for the Western democracies which at first had condemned Pilsudski's pre-emptive strike into the Ukraine. They now watched with trepidation as Bolshevik forces neared their own borders. The situation worsened during July. Obviously the Red Army was going to advance well into Poland.

The Kosciuszko Squadron tried to hold back the onrushing Konarmiya, but began taking casualties it could ill afford. Rorison, the native North Carolinian, was seriously injured when shot down in May, but returned to flying status. However, his wounds refused to heal and he was shipped home to the U.S. Lt. Shrewsbury returned to the States for a personal emergency. Capt. Arthur Kelly joined the squadron. Capt. Cooper was promoted to

*Continued on page 62*

# “Apocalypse Now” Screenwriter Speaks Out



# John Milius

# Interview and Photographs

## by N.E. MacDougald

*SOF editor N.E. MacDougald traveled to Southern California recently to interview movie mogul John Milius. MacDougald spent two days with Milius and his wife, Celia. He talked with Hollywood's wunderkind at his sprawling Bel Air home, at his office (A-Team Productions) and at one of the Milius' favorite shooting clubs. His report:*

**J**OHN Milius doesn't put you on hold when he meets you. He's warm and informal and makes you feel like you're a friend he hasn't seen in a long time, rather than someone he just met. He and his gracious wife, Celia, shared their home with me without making me feel like a guest.

They are an unpretentious pair, more concerned with the real world than with Hollywood's gilt-laden artifice: more comfortable with meat-and-potatoes issues than Tinseltown's adulation.

Milius' screen credits, already awesome, belie the experience of a man still in his mid-30s. He has given the world such moving, varied works as *Dirty Harry*, *Magnum Force*, *The Wind and the Lion*, *Jeremiah Johnson* and *Apocalypse Now*. Presently, he is working on *Conan*, *The Barbarian*, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger in the title role.

From the onset, Milius' reputation as iconoclast and politically astute patriot proved true. He has not slipped into the easy rhetoric of euphemisms and generalities like so many in power have. Instead, Milius speaks out, using his power and position like a gentle giant: not to bully but to reassure.

**SOF: What do you think of Brando making \$7 million from his role in *Apocalypse Now*?**

**MILIUS:** They've been paying famous actors like Brando 10 percent of the gross for a long time. That's the deal they make going in; the actors say they want a percentage of the gross to be in the movie. I think perhaps there should be a cutoff point or something like that. But in *Apocalypse Now* many people said Brando wasn't worth it, because he was there only a month. If Francis [Coppola] needed Brando to get the movie made, then you live with the deal. You don't complain about it. Despite what anyone thinks about Brando, he certainly made a great impression. I love watching him; I don't tire of watching Brando. I may disagree with him politically or philosophically, but he's still the most interesting actor on screen.

**SOF: In the final analysis, do you think he was worth it?**

**MILIUS:** Yes, I do. I think he did a fine job. I disagree with a lot of people about it, and I've seen more Brando in *Apocalypse Now* than anyone else, other than Francis

or the people that edited it. Many of his scenes that were cut were outstanding, fascinating to watch. I completely believed him as Kurtz.

I believe a man that is this complex. The way I originally wrote it, Kurtz would have been more of a Lee Marvin type, a lean, tough, grizzled individual that would seem more like a Green Beret colonel, as opposed to Brando who got fat. There was no solution to that for Francis other than to put him in black pajamas and photograph him the way we did and that still works for me: this huge, heavy figure, that one wonderful photograph. "This is the last picture of Kurtz" — this dark gorilla-like figure in the dossier.

I thought that worked well, but my script was the opposite. I wrote Kurtz as emaciated, not just a lean, strack colonel, but a man suffering from a festering wound that was killing him from inside. The idea was that he was almost cadaverous but still powerful in his mind.

**SOF: *Apocalypse Now* cost over \$30 million. Do you think it was worth it?**

**MILIUS:** Yes. I disagree and argue with a few things, but I think it is a major piece of work. I really give Francis a lot of credit for that. I think he is a great director.

**SOF: What is Coppola like to work with?**

**MILIUS:** He's a master manipulator. I think Francis doesn't have many statements he believes in nor much of a personal philosophy. But he is the greatest at gathering interesting people around him — interesting personal philosophies — and melding them into something. Ultimately, if there is a failure in *Apocalypse*, it's a failure to provide a definitive point of view.

Francis and I didn't want to make an anti-war movie, but an anti-lie movie and I think that's strongly expressed in the film. He said an interesting thing on television the other night. He was asked why Vietnam caused so much trouble.

He replied, "Americans have always believed in themselves and have always wanted to be straight-shooters." But the grunts in the field, and even the generals weren't told the truth. No one seemed to know what the truth was and you can't fight a war for a lie. Americans don't like to lie — they like to shoot straight.

Americans don't like to lie — they like to shoot straight.

What was philosophically disturbing was, if we're going into a war to defeat communism, and I accept that, then we must win. Why do we have rules of engagement? Why do we have areas you can bomb and areas you can't?

*Apocalypse* shows a certain mad intensity that is seductive. I'm not saying it's pro-war or anti-war — it's

simply an examination of war. I would not work with Francis again because he's dishonest, but he also gets the best out of you. He's very good at what he does.

**SOF: How is Coppola dishonest?**

**MILIUS:** He tells people that he created the things that I did. That's dishonest. He didn't read *Apocalypse Now* until 1972. I think he didn't read *Heart of Darkness* until 1974, yet he says he suggested that it be done from *Heart of Darkness* and discredits me. I don't care about it that much; it's just that you should give credit where it's due.

**SOF: What did you think of Duval's performance in *Apocalypse*?**

**MILIUS:** I found that section of the movie heavy-handed. But I thought Duval was terrific in it; I thought he saved it. Someone else would have gone one step further and overdone it. If I were to write that scene again, I would approach it a little more obliquely. I thought it was wonderfully outrageous at the time because it was an outrageous war when I wrote that scene in 1969. I don't think there is much in the scene that is beyond what any Vietnam vet saw over there. War promotes a sense of absurdity.

**SOF: Have you read *Catch-22*?**

**MILIUS:** I read it when it first came out.

**SOF: Did it influence *Apocalypse Now*?**

**MILIUS:** No, I think *Dr. Strangelove* influenced it more. *Catch-22* had a no-hope attitude. *Catch-22*, to me, was a fantasy. I never felt they were really fighting a war.

But *Dr. Strangelove* really had a quality that was absurd and hilarious, yet you could believe the characters. They were wonderful characters.

Take Slim Pickens, for example. If anyone can have a great death, it would be to ride a 30-megaton nuclear device down into an ICBM silo. What better way can you go?

**SOF: Of your screen achievements, which makes the most important statement and what is that statement?**

**MILIUS:** *Apocalypse Now* makes the most important statement. It has a raw honesty. It says, "Listen, if you're going to do something, do it fully and take responsibility — call it what it is." Brando says it through Kurtz, "Have you ever considered real freedom? Freedom from the thoughts of others? Freedom from yourself?"

In *Conan*, my next film, the themes will be much the same — the conflicts between the "free man" and his civilized restraints. How you reconcile these conflicts is often the test of the person. There's a purity in man's pagan past and a sense of evil. And there is certainly an unclear nature to his civilizing restraints. There's a part of it you can call progress and enlightenment but part of it is as evil as anything from his heathen history or worse. I haven't become completely comfortable with man's civilized restraints. I don't know that other people have either. I think they fool themselves.

I like *The Wind and The Lion* too. I think it says clearly what it is and goes about doing a job. It's a good piece of historical adventure and that's what I like to do.

**SOF: Tell us more about *Conan*.**

**MILIUS:** One of the things that really attracted me to *Conan* when I started reading the books by R.E. Howard was the theme that Conan the barbarian, King Kall or any of Howard's characters, don't trust civilization. Civilization is always looked upon as evil, corrupt and decadent, yet wonderfully attractive and seductive. Conan is drawn into snares but his reliance on barbarian simplicity, honor and will pulls him out of situations. Conan believes in the individual.

I find that my characters are more questioning than before. I think *Dirty Harry* and *Jeremiah Johnson* were left asking a question of themselves. I think it helps to have a flaw in a character, a chink in his philosophy somewhere that allows him to challenge himself. I think *Conan* will explore this too. It'll be a good adventure story and it'll be good pagan entertainment. I've tried to create a story, a mood, a feeling, that is without Judeo-Christian morality.

**SOF: Where will *Conan* be shot?**

**MILIUS:** We're thinking maybe Canada, but more than likely we'll shoot in Europe someplace. Someplace like the steppes of communist Europe or Yugoslavia.

**SOF: What kinds of films do you see yourself making in five years?**

**MILIUS:** I'd really like to do more American history. I'd like to do a trilogy on the western experience. It seems to be a large part of what has made us what we are and I would love to do a movie on the early Kentucky phase of western expansion, the settling of Kentucky and Ohio during the revolutionary war and after-



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wards. I'm eager to do a film on mountain men. I don't know what the third one would be, maybe a story on young Teddy Roosevelt.

I don't have much interest in doing contemporary drama or science fiction. If they said, "What do you really want to do? Here's all the money in the world to make anything you want," I'd probably make the Genghis Khan story since I'm a mongologist.

**SOF: You are a mongologist?**

**MILIUS:** Yes, I study Mongols. I consume material on the Mongol invasions of Europe and the Near East. I'm fascinated with Mongols. I've always thought I am a reincarnated Mongol — although many people in Hollywood think I'm an unreincarnated Mongol.

**SOF: As a politically conservative writer and director, what is it like to live and work in Tinseltown, the foremost bastion of tooth-fairy liberals?**

**MILIUS:** It's frustrating at times and it certainly has been difficult for me. The critics take their toll: they've attacked my work viciously. I generally get ignored by Hollywood. I've learned to live with it, though. They love to talk about their human rights and their understanding of human liberties, yet they are just as harsh on opposing philosophies as they accuse the McCarthyites of having been. I haven't been as affected by it as I might have been because they consider me a colorful primitive. I hear about some actors' group that hates my films because I supposedly injured a horse in a stunt. Or I get blamed for killing the water buffalo in *Apocalypse Now*. Or I meet someone and they say, "Well, you're not at all what I expected. I thought you'd be festooned with grenades and knives." They consider me a crazy and there's something colorful about somebody who's crazy.

The critics, however, have taken me very seriously and think I'm a dangerous man. The only place I've really suffered from being a political conservative is in interviews and in criticism.

A Hollywood liberal has no regrets about the most heinous, fascistic idea, as long as it will sell a lot of tickets. They'll make movies about anything, if they'll sell tickets — greed is king here. It's the jungle. Everything you've ever heard about Hollywood is probably more colorful and romantic than it is. It's worse than any of the stuff you've heard about it, except it's ultimately boring. These people go at each other's

throats quickly, without passion. To live here, I maintain a strict sense of honor, my own personal Bushido. As the British say, in the jungle you have to dress for dinner, the deeper the jungle the better you dress.

**SOF: What is the Bushido code?**

**MILIUS:** The code of the Samurai: that you live by your word, that your soul is as good as the steel of your sword. You maintain a sense of loyalty to your beliefs and to your friends and to those that you're working for.

You protect your integrity because without it you have nothing. I know many people here that are fabulously rich and are searching for some new form of cocaine. What's the point of having a lot of money if you need a drug to enjoy it? If you don't have integrity, you don't have anything.

Everyone looks at Hollywood as Tinseltown, like it's not a place where one does serious work. I have always taken work seriously and done it seriously and done it for different motives. People would come up and say, "Well, how did you know to write *Jeremiah Johnson*? You picked it well because it was a big hit and you cashed in on the ecology craze." That's insane. I wrote *Jeremiah Johnson* because I liked the story. I was interested in that character. I was interested in mountain men, in people living in the jungle, so to speak, and facing the same things they face in *Apocalypse Now*.

I haven't written anything just to make cash. I wouldn't know how. Do the best work you know how to do. That's your reward. If they drum you out of the business — the hell with it — the hell with them.

It's like a painter trying to second-guess the public, saying, "I'll paint a lot of beautiful flowers." You're never going to be a fine painter doing that. And that's what we are, we're artisans. We're fascinated with work; that's what artisans are. We're just trying to build something that is pleasing to us, for the sake of workmanship, form and content. We're not trying to save the world.

One thing I think is horrifying regarding movie directors is that everybody feels that they've got to make a statement about something; they've got to propagandize. Though my movies have been accused of being right-wing, I don't think any of them are propaganda. They've always had two sides to the story; they've

shown as much fault with what I believe in as what I'm against.

**SOF: What is your favorite film?**

**MILIUS: *The Seven Samurai* by Kurosawa.**

**SOF: Why is it your favorite?**

**MILIUS:** It embodies most of what I love in movies. It has a kind of romantic vision. It contains different philosophies and human experiences that are interesting, wonderful, extraordinary. It's a visual experience. It's almost unmatched by other films. Its relationships, the sense of why people do things in that film, are great. You really like the people, you like the characters and you like why they do things. That film gives you a way to live. I've seen it about 50 times, and it's still as good. I've got a tape of it at home.

**SOF: What did you think of the American version, *The Magnificent Seven*?**

**MILIUS:** It was good too. It was nowhere near the other; it doesn't have the depth, but it was still a fine movie and at the time I loved it. If I saw it now, I wouldn't like it so much. It's a good romp where the original is a masterpiece.

**SOF: The theme in most of your films is that of a rugged individualist battling darkness and negativity. Is that autobiographical?**

**MILIUS:** I don't know if it's autobiographical. I think it applies to all of us, particularly to Americans. The best part of Americans is their ability to take things on, do them alone, get them done, face challenges on their own. From the time you're born, at least in my generation, you were always taught to go out on your own, to fend for yourself. You want the pleasure and pride of knowing that whatever you did, you did by yourself. We don't say that everything's in the hands of Allah. We say everything's in our hands. I think that's an American characteristic. Look at the people in United States history that we admire, from Daniel Boone to Thomas Edison. It's almost always the story of a loner. It is the one thing we do particularly well — or we did particularly well.

**SOF: Why do you say *did*, John?**

**MILIUS:** It seems that the values we're talking about have fallen into disfavor in recent years. You can't look at the last 20 to 30 years of the country's history without saying that some influences haven't been pumped in. Things started to change after Kennedy was shot. I think you could look at 1963 as a turning point in visible American characteristics. But there's something about Americans. You can push Americans so far . . . . They don't like being pushed. I think you see that in the country now.

**SOF: What are your views on gun ownership, gun registration, the whole right to bear arms issue?**

**MILIUS:** I think everything was just fine before 1968. In my community, Hollywood, it's interesting that my wife and I like to shoot skeet and trap; we do it competitively. And people know it. If we went out to play golf or tennis, that would be all right, but if you shoot skeet and trap, a stigma is attached. Recently, I've gotten Steve Spielberg and people like that interested in shooting. They shoot a lot with me, but until recently few people in the movie industry would admit to owning a gun or shooting. Bob Stack and I shoot ducks a lot. He was blasted by the press because he went duck shooting and because they said he was a killer — that

kind of thing. I remember reading a review of the Olympics where they refer to the shotgun events as something befitting a Mafia hit-man, not something that should be in the Olympic games. Isn't it peculiar that it's regarded that way in this country whereas in other countries our prowess with guns is what they used to like best about us?

**SOF: I noticed that you have many pictures of John Wayne, both in your offices and in your home. What is their significance?**

**MILIUS:** I really liked John Wayne. You asked me what my favorite movie was and I said *The Seven Samurai*. You notice I have pictures of Toshiro Mifune around too. Toshiro Mifune and John Wayne are interchangeable. They represent, as screen personae, many of the same values. My second favorite movie, *The Searchers*, I've seen more than 50 times. John Ford's work is just as influential as Kurosawa's to me. The directors that influenced me most and continue to influence me most are Ford, Kurosawa, Sam Fuller and David Lean. There're certain similarities in their work.

John Wayne has become an institution. Wayne once did a nice thing for me. My oldest son's name is Ethan and he's named after the character that Wayne played in *The Searchers* and I asked John Wayne's son if he would get me a picture of his father signed from *The Searchers* and send it to me. My son has it on his wall. It says, "To Ethan, grow up strong."

**SOF: What were some of your favorite characters in *Apocalypse Now* and what made them your favorites?**

**MILIUS:** The central character, Willard, is one. I think Marty Sheen did it the best it could be done. I think he did it better than it was written. He was the classic observer, the man who had gone further than maybe he should have. At the beginning of the movie he opened a crack into a truth. Willard wouldn't be anything if it wasn't for the war. And that was the whole point: that Willard [Marty Sheen] knew all these things within the war. If he were home, he'd be a bible salesman or something, and desperate and drunk. But the war, the intensity of the situation, afforded him a philosophy known to few.

*Continued on page 83*



**John Milius' wife, Celia, waits turn to shoot.**

# Mother Jones versus John Milius

In the September/October 1979 issue of *Mother Jones*, Deirdre English reviewed *Apocalypse Now*. Author English took pot shots at the film and its makers. Two items in English's review particularly upset John Milius. The offending items:

A tale told to Willard by Kurtz in *Apocalypse Now* — about a hamlet where the Vietnamese communists cut off the arms of children who had been given polio inoculations by American troops — was branded “a lie” by English. “Nothing like it can be proved or reasonably inferred to have ever occurred at the hands of the North Vietnamese or National Liberation Front cadres. No army that was ever even rumored to do such a thing could win a guerrilla war,” wrote English.

The other item to which Milius objected was English's claim that “. . . the United States was committed, in signing the Paris Peace Agreement, to provide reconstruction aid for Vietnam, and that we have never honored that agreement.”

When Milius sent *Mother Jones* a salvo of his own invective, the periodical reproduced only part of the letter. To set the record straight, Milius' missive follows. Note that those sections appearing in italics were deleted by *Mother Jones*. The editorial choice on what to delete is interesting.

Dear Mother:

Your recent article on “Apocalypse Now”: (Sept.-Oct., '79) is somewhat erroneous. Since I wrote the original screenplay, perhaps I could shed some light on the subject.

The central incident which you refer to as a “fabricated act of Vietnamese terror” is indeed true. But rather than argue with you about its veracity, I would rather point out how interesting it is that you think this act could not have occurred.

*Certainly in any war, acts of extreme brutality are committed by all the combatants. Civilians have suffered these acts since time immemorial. To refuse to accept that your vauntedly humane Vietnamese freedom fighters are incapable of such behavior is not only self-deception — it is insane. History has already proved you wrong. The enlightened peoples' regimes of*

*Vietnam and Cambodia have shown the world their ability to commit acts of genocidal depravity that would be the envy of Reinhardt Heidrich.*

What always disgusts me about impassioned activists is their prevailing blindness to the immorality of their own cause. It is blindness that makes them less than human — automatons for a dogma — spilling forth the party prattle in spite of all evidence to the contrary.

*The article goes further, reaching the point of total hypocrisy when it states that we (the U.S.) have never lived up to the terms of the Paris Peace Agreement, “to provide reconstructive aid for Vietnam.” The agreement was signed in 1973 and in 1975 the forces of Communist North Vietnam invaded the south and settled matters by fire and sword. Some peace agreement.*

*Ms. English is sanctioning a lie. If there is one thing that Francis Coppola and I tried to do — it was to make an anti-lie movie. Kurtz, for all his failings, tells the truth, looks at the truth and lets the truth destroy him. He at least has a glimmering of an ethic for which he dies. You have no real ethic, but the pretense of one.*

I went back and told my good friend who lived through the “polio story” that your magazine didn't believe him. He was in Special Forces at the time of the incident and that village and those kids were his responsibility. I might add that he took a just revenge for the act, as would be expected of a soldier. He didn't seem too bothered that Ms. English didn't believe him, he rather expected that. He knew that her heart will not allow her to admit a simple truth that encompasses her as surely as the rest of us. That truth is that man didn't descend from the heavens, he descended from the trees.

Sincerely,  
John Milius  
A-Team Productions



major and given command of the squadron, which retreated to its 13th airfield in the war, when Major Fauntleroy, whose heroism and outstanding staff work were well appreciated by the Poles, was promoted to lieutenant colonel in the Polish air force and given command of the aviation group facing the Russian Southern Front — a force of about four squadrons, including the 7th.

### Surrounded By Cossacks

On 13 July, Maj. Cooper was shot down on a reconnaissance mission. He was surrounded by a band of Cossack cavalrymen from Budyenny's Konarmiya, whose riders rode tight circles around him, sabers drawn, ready to toy with their captive before killing him. The Konarmiya hated the American squadron and let it be known they would kill any American officer flying for Poland.

Knowing that Bolshevik propaganda insisted that enlisted men were workers and were thus the object of the Red Revolution, Cooper displayed his badly scarred hands, burned when he was shot down in the Great War and captured by the Germans. He hoped to convince the Cossack leader he was an American worker forced against his will into the American forces and sent to Poland to fight for the bourgeoisie.

The Cossack hesitated in bringing down his heavy saber. His commissars told the men they were fighting specifically for the workers in other nations, and were to capture workers alive for re-indoctrination whenever possible. If he killed Cooper, the Cossack sergeant would have to answer to a commissar.

Cooper was stripped and searched while being questioned by the Cossacks. He was wearing U.S. Army surplus undershorts with the name "Cpl. Frank Mosher" stenciled on them. He knew the Russians knew him and Fauntleroy and his story would be found out if he used his name, so when they asked his name, he replied, "Frank Mosher," and pointed to the official stencil on his undershorts. He was taken to a Russian concentration camp to begin a day-to-day struggle for survival.

The 7th Squadron knew only that Cooper was overdue from a mission over enemy lines, a common occurrence — pilots frequently had to put their planes down, out of fuel, before they could reach the field, sending word by messenger or coming themselves a day or two later to get a party of squadron members to drive out to repair the plane or deliver the needed fuel.

Fauntleroy was in the area when Cooper disappeared, and he rejoined the squadron roster to fill in until Cooper could be found, running the Southern

Front Aviation Group from the 7th Squadron's airfield.

Capt. Kelly, the observer training to be a pilot, volunteered on the 14th to fly as an observer for the Polish 21st Bomber Squadron which occupied the same field as the 7th. He volunteered again on the 15th, but his luck ran out. His two-seater airplane disappeared. Weeks later, the squadron received confirmation from Polish peasants that the plane was downed and the crew killed.

On the same day, on a strafing run, Fauntleroy received a bullet wound in the leg and was out of flying action for a while. Buck Crawford was promoted to captain and squadron commander to replace Cooper. Fauntleroy took over the full-time duties of running the Group. The pilots wanted their luck to change.

### Lucky Landing

On the 18th, Crawford flew out to attack a Konarmiya cavalry patrol with Lt. Edward Corsi. While attacking, a bullet punctured Crawford's main gas tank. He switched to a small, gravity-fed reserve tank, but the engine sputtered and quit. Forced to land, he dead-sticked his plane in the middle of a wheatfield. As soon as he touched down, a group of 20 to 30 Cossacks came out of a nearby wooded area at full gallop. He jumped from his airplane and ran for his life, as Corsi flew above the scattered Cossacks, trying to slow them with machine-gun fire but with limited effect. The horsemen drew nearer his squadron commander and friend.

As Crawford ran, he heard his Balilla's engine cough, choke and sputter back to life. Apparently a vapor lock or piece of dirt, after blocking the reserve fuel line, had jarred loose when he landed. His hot engine kicked over and self-started. Crawford quickly about-faced and sprinted back to his slowly taxiing aircraft, while the cavalrymen, having seen the airplane start up, raced to cut their prize off.

Crawford reached the plane ahead of his pursuers and dived into the cockpit for the controls. Bouncing over irrigation ditches and slowed by heavy new wheat, he raced for life as he tried to get his reluctant bird airborne. The plane finally leaped into the air a few feet above his angry saber-waving pursuers, smashing its landing gear against a fence.

Corsi signaled that he had to fly on to the field. Crawford, short of fuel, crash-landed in a safe area where he was picked up by automobile later. His escape gave the squadron its morale boost.

While the 7th's luck was improving, so was Poland's. The French government, now aware of the threat to Germany and France from the Red Army, sent a military mission to Warsaw. Both France and Great Britain hinted that military assistance in the form of troops might be on the way. The U.S. State Department,

however, concluded that neither government would be able to convince its respective population of the clear danger in time.

The Kosiuszko Squadron, with half its members missing, KIA or wounded, called upon friends in the U.S. for replacement pilots. Almost overnight, 23 ex-U.S. aviator volunteers were found. But the State Department refused to issue them passports.

By 25 July, the 20 Polish air force squadrons had only 31 airworthy aircraft to cover two major fronts. Yet these few aircraft, including the Kosciuszko Squadron's seven, continued to play a key role in opposition to the Bolshevik steamroller. By this time, aviation was relied upon both as the eyes of the Polish army — replacing the role previously occupied by cavalry — and as a delaying or blocking force against Bolshevik advances.

Many Polish army units owed their existence to the timely intervention of aviation units, and their observation of and warning against the movement of large Red Army forces. Airplanes were frequently thrown into major battles as flying machine-gun and bomb platforms to disrupt Red attacks, enabling the still scattered Polish forces to retreat in good order instead of being annihilated piecemeal.

Flying units, such as the Kosciuszko Squadron, became centers of resistance, and their bases, behind Polish lines, remained until the rest of the Polish army streamed by. Airfields, still located next to railroads, kept all equipment possible in boxcars for immediate evacuation. The Kosciuszko Squadron stayed until its airfield was attacked, then it moved, the rolling stock going down the railroad while the planes flew to a preselected site behind Polish lines. The signal to move was two machine-gun bursts, usually given by a pilot who saw cavalry deploying nearby. Five minutes later, the unit would be gone.

### Last-Ditch Defense

The Polish army's retreat halted before Warsaw in the north and Lvov in the south. Here Pilsudski tried to reorganize his scattered, straggling army for one last stand for Polish independence. His fair-weather allies, the French and the British, secretly tried to pressure him into surrendering, hoping the Red Army would be satisfied with its victory — a grim prelude to their reaction to the threatened invasion of Czechoslovakia 17 years later by Nazi Germany, when that nation was forced by England and France to yield without a struggle.

Although newspapers throughout the world predicted the eminent fall of the Polish government and the defeat of the Polish army within days, the Polish people rallied in Poland's grimmest hour

since the 1796 partition. Factory workers, ignoring their communist labor leaders' propaganda, flocked, by the tens of thousands, to fight the hated Russian imperialists.

Women, children and non-combatant men were put to work building breastworks, obstacles and trenches, and battalions of women soldiers were recruited and trained to fight in artillery, machine-gun and rifle brigades. A surge of nationalism swept the country. Masses were said in every church for divine deliverance from the forces which destroyed churches wherever they went, and the devout Poles saw themselves as front-line fighters against atheist hordes about to sweep Europe.

## Reds Fall Out

On the other side, a curious event, soon to have decisive significance in the conduct of Poland's last stand, occurred. The Bolshevik southern front, headed by Commissar Josef Stalin and spearheaded by the powerful Konarmiya, ignored orders from the northern front.

Tukhachevsky and Northern Front Commissar Trotsky ordered the southern front to move closer to the northern front in preparation of the final assault on Warsaw. Budyenny's wide-ranging cavalry army was needed to cover the northern front's flank during the attack. But Budyenny and Stalin ignored the orders, repeated daily for three or four days; orders confirmed by the Politburo itself when Trotsky's orders had no apparent effect.

Attack against Lvov, perhaps because of personal animosity between Stalin and Trotsky and overconfidence from the continued retreat of the Polish army.

In answer to telegrams directing the southern front to break off the attack against Lvov to support the Warsaw attack, Stalin pointed out the Polish air force was making its last stand in Lvov and he had to destroy it, citing casualties inflicted by the Polish air force, especially from the 7th Squadron, as justification.

Pilsudski paid attention to the attack on Lvov and formulated his own strategy. The Polish Sixth Army, centered around Lvov, was to try to keep Budyenny tied down, while Pilsudski maneuvered other troops between the southern and northern fronts. Special orders went out to Fauntleroy's group of four squadrons, the only air forces facing Budyenny. It was to attack him with every means at its disposal for the next few days, beginning 15 August.

Over the next few days, the 7th put everything it had in the fight. At one point, Budyenny complained to higher headquarters that a divisional attack was stopped in its tracks by the Polish air force alone — the majority of attacks coming from the tenacious Americans of

the 7th Squadron. But he continued the attack for five days, moving his forces farther away from the northern front in the process.

## Charging The Gap

Pilsudski's concentrated forces charged into the gap, wreaking terrible revenge on the left bank of the northern army in front of Warsaw. The Poles broke through, then turned north, rolling up Tukhachevsky's entire army from its unprotected flank. Units fanned out to cut off retreat routes from the rear and destroyed the northern front of the Red Army in four days. By the time the Polish forces reached Gen. Ghai's cavalry corps on the north flank of the northern front, Trotsky and Tukhachevsky's Red Army ceased to exist and retreat routes were cut off. "Ghai Khan's Golden Horde" fled into German East Prussia, where authorities disarmed and interned it for the remainder of the war.

In front of Lvov, the fighting was conducted even more ferociously. On 18 August, the 14 available PAF planes flew 72 sorties, dropping 17,637 pounds of bombs and firing 27,000 rounds of machine-gun bullets into masses of cavalry forces attacking the city.

One chronicler later noted: "When bombs and ammunition were used up, the aircraft kept circling over the enemy and ploughed into the mass of cavalry with their undercarriages, returning home covered with blood."

Fauntleroy's group of four squadrons limited the Konarmiya to an advance on its front of only two miles in one day.

After the 19th, the Polish army turned its attention from Warsaw to aid besieged Lvov. In four days, facing an army of more than 200,000 combat soldiers in the north, the Polish army inflicted more than 150,000 casualties, including 65,000 captured, 30,000 interned in Prussia, and most of the rest wounded or dead. Budyenny was forced to break off his attack and retreat himself.

## Russian Defeat

The Polish army pursued his forces and the remnants of the northern Red Army. The Russians attempted to halt the rout and consolidate their forces, but the Poles smashed into them once again, inflicting another 50,000 casualties in one day's fighting. Budyenny's Konarmiya was encircled at Zamosc and decisively defeated.

The U.S. State Department, apprised of the extent of the Polish "Miracle of Warsaw," as the devout Poles called it, relented and allowed the first of several American volunteers to sail to Poland in time to join the Kosciuszko Squadron in the pursuit and final battles. On 24 August, the first of these reinforcements

arrived to fly for the 7th Squadron. While checking out in the unfamiliar Balilla, Capt. T.V. McCallum was unable to recover from a power dive and crashed, dying instantly — the squadron's third death.

An armistice went into effect on 18 October 1920.

For the next eight months, negotiators attempted to conclude a peace treaty with the Russian government. The Kosciuszko Squadron remained in existence until early May 1921, when the treaty was at last signed. As the squadron prepared to demobilize, it received word that Maj. Merian Cooper was alive and would return to the unit.

After convincing his captors he was Cpl. Frank Mosher, Cooper was taken to a concentration camp where, with other Polish POWs, Russian counter-revolutionaries, political prisoners and religious leaders, he fought for nine months to survive. After nearly dying of typhus, he nursed himself back to health, then escaped with two Polish POWs, returning to the squadron on 10 May. The next day it disbanded, with Cooper officially listed as squadron commander.

All members of the squadron during the Battle of Warsaw were eventually awarded Poland's highest award for valor for their individual and combined efforts. A monument was placed over the graves of Kelly, Graves and McCallum, honoring their contribution to Poland.

This small band of American soldiers of fortune, numbering less than a dozen at any given time, may have changed the course of world history. It is improbable that they foresaw the impact they would have on history, and few others in the world know of their contribution. The monument over the graves of the dead Kosciuszko Squadron members was destroyed by the Red Army in World War II after Poland was occupied.

The Polish-Russian War of 1920 has no place in American history books, while Russian-dominated schools in Poland insure that Poles will not be taught about that particular phase of history.

What happened to these Americans? Merian Cooper became a brigadier general in the U.S. Army Air Corps. Little is known about the others, who disappeared into American society, to live out their lives in obscurity.

## CREDITS

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**B**ARRED forever" from Thailand, Gary Ferguson is now looking for highly-trained volunteers who are willing to risk their lives to work with the anti-communist Khmer Serei.

There is no pay, but Ferguson promises the satisfaction of helping the "beautiful Khmer race" is more than enough remuneration.

Especially needed are doctors, medics, engineers, carpenters and teachers. Also welcome are those with previous Southeast Asian or comparable experience.

For those who qualify, Ferguson says he will pay all travel expenses and help make arrangements for transport to Khmer Serei camps. Once there, a support group will supply medical equipment, tools and other necessities.

Ferguson stresses that he wants quality and quantity. He wants no "flakes" — only mature individuals who are capable of keeping a low profile.

Those selected will be going under the auspices of a non-profit relief organization founded by Ferguson in August 1979 and involved solely with Asian refugees both in the U.S. and Southeast Asia.

It was set up because Ferguson says he doesn't "have faith in governments or the United Nations, but I do have faith in people."

Its philosophy is simple, as Chris Oberg, the group's national director, puts it: "We try to avoid the bureaucracy and plug the holes left by other organizations."

Those interested can send a resume or a letter stating their qualifications to Gary Ferguson, care of Soldier Of Fortune. For those who apply and who are chosen, SOF advises them to look at the situation carefully before they commit. SOF has no knowledge of how the Thai government will react.

**Gary Ferguson (white hat) with refugees in Indonesia.**



## AMERICAN

*Continued from page 41*

by the press whom he did much to antagonize. Even Ferguson calls the self-titled Dr. Prince Norodom Soryavong "arrogant and egotistical." Rumors abounded that the "Mad Prince" was killed, but Ferguson claims he was reassigned to organize resistance in the interior.

Whatever the fate of the "Mad Prince," fighting and quarreling between rival Khmer Serei groups is all too common. Though there was no fighting inside the camp when Ferguson was there, Reahou was constantly struggling to keep its unity.

"It's an anything-can-happen atmosphere when you have 300,000 people in such primitive conditions and you open your doors to everyone," says Ferguson. Personal jealousies or slights among the province chiefs who have their own armed following can often escalate into ugly scenes. Disagreement among Khmer Serei leaders as to how to deal with the Khmer Rouge, who are also fighting the Vietnamese, is another major cause of strife. Nog Samet camp to the north, for example, allows the Khmer Rouge refuge. But Van Saren draws the line on any communist, though infiltration of Khmer Rouge agents is a constant security threat.

On 19 March, a pincer attack on Reahou by an estimated 600 non-communist guerrillas left 46 dead — most of them civilians caught in the crossfire — before Van Saren reestablished control. On 10 April, the camp was attacked a second time by guerrillas, causing about 40 deaths, scattering tens of thousands of people and damaging hundreds of huts. This attack was reportedly led by Ong Chan "Mit" [Mit means comrade] Don, an ex-Khmer Rouge officer who operates from Nong Samet. With the devastation of this attack and the danger of monsoon flooding it is likely that most of Reahou will be relocated further north on higher ground.

But Ferguson's battles were of a verbal nature, as when actress Tippi Hedren, trailed by a film crew from Food For The Hungry, visited Reahou. "What are you doing?" asked Ferguson.

"We are evaluating the camp," was the answer. Ferguson said it would be the last time they would be allowed in the camp unless they brought aid instead of cameras. "There are enough pictures of suffering Cambodians to blanket the world," Ferguson told them, because he resented the camp being used as a backdrop for fund raising when proportionately so little of the aid gets across the border to Reahou.

Food For The Hungry did leave something useful, at least to help with the sanitation campaign — four cartons of Bibles.

"That's toilet paper," says Ferguson, himself a Christian. "A Bible's a Bible when you love the individual, give it to him personally and get to know his first name."

There are other Khmer Serei camps in Cambodia besides Reahou. Some, like former Cambodian Premier Son Sann's in the Cardamon Mountains, are run soundly. Others are run by unstable opportunists.

At the moment, it appears unlikely that the Khmer Serei will play a significant part in evolving Cambodia's future. Unfortunately, those decisions are being made elsewhere.

For the most part, after years of genocidal ravages of Pol Pot, followed by the Vietnamese invasion, Cambodians are sick of fighting. But resistance to the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnamese, who have long been traditional enemies of Cambodia, will continue, even if most Cambodians simply want to work their farms unmolested by anyone.

But right now they are a people desperately in need of help — at the very least they need food, medical care and security.

There is no doubt that Gary Ferguson's heart is in the right place and no doubt that much of his anger and frustration at the bureaucracy that surrounds the international relief effort is justified.

Ferguson blames the United States for the situation in Indochina today: "In Vietnam, we were the answer to the cancer of communism. We descended with our scalpel to cut out the cancer, and halfway through the operation we left them bleeding on the table."

Though Ferguson is not going to finish the operation, he is dedicating this portion of his life to stitching the wounds. For as an American and an individual he is heavily burdened by the plight of these people. He himself can't return to Thailand but if he had not been deported he says, "The only way I would have left is if they didn't want me or they were free."

*Continued on page 86*

## Chum Ron, leader of Khmer Serei women soldiers.



## CUBAN WATERS

Continued from page 32

Then a Soviet chopper began making lazy circles around the bay. We could see a man in the open door with a TV camera shooting the mass of boats. We thought it only fair to take photos of the chopper. We all moved at once. The forbidden camera and its long lens protruded from the forward hatch. Sandy and Octavio flanked the hatch and a bunch of life jackets camouflaged the lens barrel.

The tension of shooting covert photos dispelled the boredom immediately. It was like sniping without noise or recoil. The excitement was compounded by the difficulty. The rocking, drifting boat and the moving helicopter made shooting a challenge. Those not taking photos stood sentry. We all knew the price if caught. The Cubans would charge us with espionage. A double-digit prison term or a bullet in the head seemed a bit harsh to us. But communists aren't known for their humor.

After risking a dozen shots, the camera was hidden as well as could be on the small boat. We knew that no amount of concealment could keep the camera from being found if we were boarded and searched. We also understood that our safety lay in our anonymity. As long as we were one boat among many, we were relatively safe. But if anything happened to bring us to the authorities' attention, we had contingency plans, however meagre. The camera and lenses would go overboard. The film could be hidden more easily, but would not stand a thorough search. In the end we tried to balance bravado with survival.

Sandy (the younger Cuban) boarded another boat to show them where to gas up. While loafing on the dock, he saw a Cuban exile from Florida who got his legs crushed trying to fend off a colliding boat. After setting the man's legs, Cuban officials would not let the poor soul return in a larger craft, but ordered him to return in his own. Communist logic at its best.

At 1100 hours, a launch came by and sold us sandwiches. We bought four for \$20. Ah, capitalism.

Just after sunset, we visited a floating commissary (two government boats lashed together). Prices bordered on the unbelievable. A five-gallon jug of fresh water went for \$8. A roll of hard candy sold for \$1 and cigars cost \$17 per box (the last sold for over \$40 when we left). All through the night powerful searchlights scanned the bay.

## DAY FOUR Boredom Begins

We all slept late — no reason to get up early. How much longer? We were getting

SEPTEMBER/80

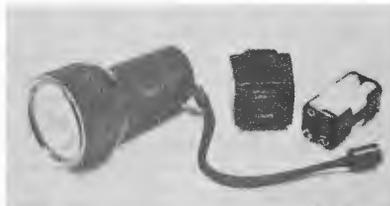
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stale. More boats inundated the modest bay. We estimated there were 1,000 boats in it and surrounding inlets. We couldn't see much now; larger boats obscured our view.

We monitored CB traffic. People were bitching that the ratio of chosen refugees to assigned refugees was unacceptable. The bay was now a vast marina.

At 1100, a shrimp-boat fleet entered the bay. Tony Cuesta (see SOF July-August '79) was rumored to be heading it. We tried to locate Cuesta, but did not succeed.

A 60-foot, Havana-based, ferro-concrete boat passed among us. Those exiles on board yelled not to go to Cuban hotels as they are a rip-off. One man claimed the hotel charged \$18 for a piece of grouper and \$45 for a bad room.

Life on board is tedious. We tried but failed to keep our anchor line from getting severed by passing boats.

Octavio went ashore this afternoon to talk with his relatives. He returned at 0300 with a message, for which he spent \$40 for a taxi driver to contact his family.

At 2300 hours, we heard a Mayday call over the CB. The boat identified itself as the *Sea Queen* and claimed to be three miles off Mariel, heading for Florida. It was sinking and the pathos of the man speaking alarmed and saddened us. The Cuban Coast Guard was not responding, so those with powerful transmitters relayed the distress signal to the U.S. Coast

Guard. To the best of our knowledge, all hands were lost.

## DAY FIVE The Storm

We woke at 0600. The weather was humid and overcast.

As noon approached, the sky grew darker. We agreed we were in for a blow and began buttoning up the boat. As we snapped the tarpaulins over the open stern, rain hit us. We hustled to secure the tarp as fierce winds tore at it. But the storm ripped it from our fingers. We yanked it off and threw it on the deck. The rain lashed us.

Everything was happening at once. We were dragging anchor. Other boats were blowing toward us. Habermann started the engine. Sandy weighed anchor. The sky got darker. The water grew rougher. Habermann maneuvered frantically. It was like being in a demolition derby. I saw three shrimp boats beached in the shallows.

Somebody shouted. We were about to collide with a shrimp boat. Habermann gunned it. We missed by a couple of feet. Then the engine quit. We couldn't start it. We donned life jackets. The ever-changing wind pushed us toward a large blue lobster boat. I hit the starter. Too noisy to hear it.

It caught the fourth time. Habermann slammed it into forward and gunned it. Again, a close miss.

I glanced at my watch. Only a few minutes had passed. It felt like hours. We were in a small patch of open water. If we could keep away from other boats, we'd survive. I spied a capsized small boat [see photo] near a cluster of shrimp boats. Poor bastard.

I asked if anyone was bored. After a quick translation, we all laughed.

Then, as suddenly as it began, the storm subsided. The fury moved out to sea. We bounced in the swells, but knew the worst was over.

The camera came out of its hiding place. Several commercial fishing boats had been blown together by the storm. We watched a small boat capsize. We shot pictures of the storm's wreckage, knowing damn well that its fury and suddenness could not be captured on film.

We'd lost both our anchors. But they were all we'd lost.

Later, we discovered that the U.S. Coast Guard had received 20 distress calls in a five-minute period during the storm.

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## DAY SIX Damage Report

About noon, more bad weather moved in. Dark clouds blocked the sun. We buttoned up the boat again and prepared to repeat yesterday's maneuvers. But the storm circled us.

Later, an acquaintance passed and gave us news of yesterday's storm damage. One man went overboard and lost a leg to a propeller. Another lost a finger to an anchor rope. Another went berserk and fell from a flying bridge to the deck (on his face). One boat sank. Many were damaged. Several people suffered broken bones and severe cuts and one man sustained a heart attack.

About 1700, fights broke out between boat crews. Tension and frustration were taking their toll. Most people were ill-prepared to spend days on end in cramped quarters with little or no information and no chance for exercise, myself included. But the chance of rescuing relatives kept us there like a magnet.

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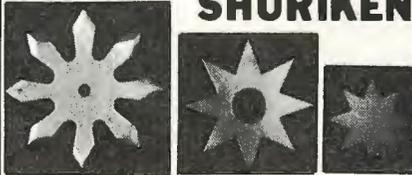
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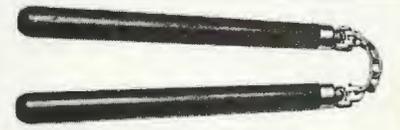
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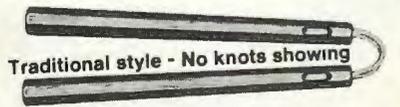


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**DAY SEVEN**  
**We Wait**

I awoke before first light. The weather was improving. A pair of ocean-going tugs entered the bay as did a small freighter. It wouldn't have surprised me to see a hydrofoil or hovercraft: anything that could float.

A large Soviet cutter cruised through the channel. We fired the engine and nonchalantly set an intersecting course. We wanted a photo of this antenna-laden craft. Since we couldn't shoot from the forward hatch, we used the shadow of the cabin. The long lens protruded from an armpit one moment, through a crotch the next, then through a hole in the cabin curtain. Another gunboat chugged by and we repeated our clandestine maneuvers.

We slept better that night, knowing we'd accomplished something.

**DAY EIGHT**  
**More Waiting**

Awoke at first light. Wind very still, smoke from cement plant stacks rose undisturbed. Little conversation this morning. Each man was alone with his thoughts. We'd been in Cuban waters a week.

**DAY NINE**  
**We Fast**

We slept past sunrise. We felt like we'd been on board for weeks instead of days. It was difficult to distinguish one day from another. I read a book for the second time.

It was late afternoon when I realized we were not eating again. Even the gasoline-soaked apples of a few days ago would have tasted good.

**DAY TEN**  
**More Fasting**

The day passed like the last few; nothing significant made it stand out.

**DAY ELEVEN**  
**Cuba To Key West**

At 0100, we decided we could not stay longer with no end in sight. We had little money and no patience left. It was a consensus, although our Cuban companions had heavy hearts. Thus our long vigil ended, without the sought-after relatives.

We bought gasoline, which had jumped to \$3.50 a gallon. Then we proceeded to immigration, where we spent four hours waiting.

Then it happened. Josh had been talking to an official on the dock. As he turned toward me, I sensed something was wrong. While the official walked slowly away, Josh told me in a controlled voice that we would be searched before we left. We looked at each other. I got the camera and put it where it could go overboard in a hurry. It was difficult to tell where the guards were in the harsh arc-lighting. We waited.

But we should have trusted communist inefficiency and indolence. For whatever reason, we were not searched. Perhaps the threat of a search was enough to cause some people to act suspiciously. Luckily, our experience allowed us to act gracefully under pressure.

We debarked Mariel at 0530 hours. Despite optimistic weather reports, the journey home became an epic.

We encountered chop as we left Cuba's shelf. The overcast, unbroken and threatening, stayed with us. As we passed our estimated halfway point, chop broke into rollers and gusts pushed our tiny vessel. We refueled from our gas cans, but the tortured sea made us spill more than went into the tank.

We continued into a squall line. Rain soaked what the sea missed. The spilled gas worsened Sandy's and my seasickness.

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If we did sit up or stand, it was only to vomit. We were of little use as crew.

The rollers tossed the boat around like a teacup. The constant slamming wore us out. We relinquished our northeasterly heading and tried simply to keep the larger waves from breaking broadside.

I knew we were close to capsizing when Josh began singing. He'd forgotten he'd told me he only sang on a boat when the situation was near hopeless. The last time he'd sung was on a similar mercy mission to Camarioca, Cuba, in the mid-60s. That boat sank. I rechecked my Mae West.

I almost looked forward to abandoning the slamming, stinking scow. Then we spied a large ship. We pegged the throttle and headed toward it. It flew a Cuban flag. A crewman threw us a stern line. We tied just aft of a Florida-registered cabin cruiser that also needed gas.

Time passed. It could have been 10 minutes or an hour. Shivering in soaked clothes and congealing vomit made me a poor judge of time. Not having eaten in 24 hours, I had great difficulty keeping warm. I was miserable, but felt safer near the big ship.

A U.S. Navy chopper circled us several times. We talked to it over the CB. It hovered nearby and a young Navy frogman dropped a few feet into the warm sea. He swam to us. I explained that we needed gas, but were otherwise okay. He said a Coast Guard cutter was about 10 miles away. He went to the other boat tied to the big ship's stern. I lay back on the deck and tried to think of pleasanter times.

Later, the same young man boarded again. He said someone on the other boat was very sick. The frogman had radioed his supervisor and he'd said it was just as easy to take two passengers as one. I thought quickly. I told him I was in no danger, but he told me to come anyway. I ran for film and notebook and pocketed them. The chopper hovered above us and lowered a flotation horse collar. I stood and was strapped in and hoisted up. A smile creased my face.

Once aboard the chopper, I found that Sandy and not someone from the other boat was the person the frogman was concerned about and he was hoisted up. I helped rip off his dripping clothes and wrap a blanket around him. He shivered wildly but managed a smile.

Then the door closed and we headed for warmth, for food — and most important, for freedom.



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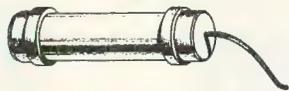
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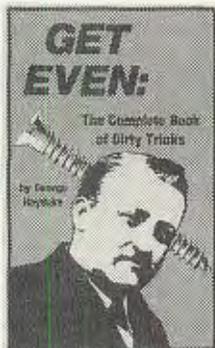
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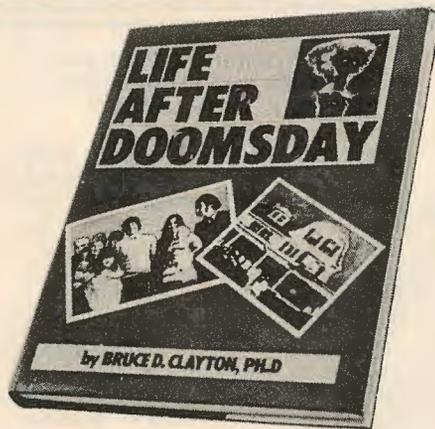
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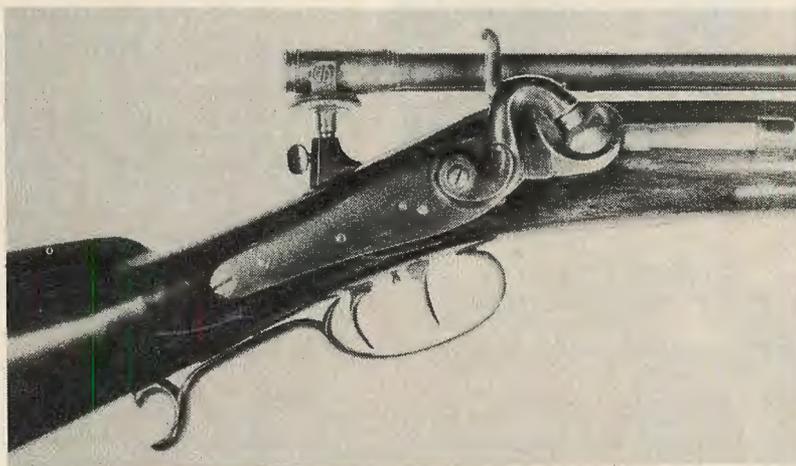
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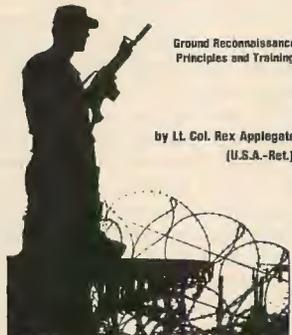
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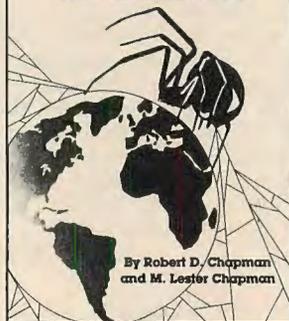
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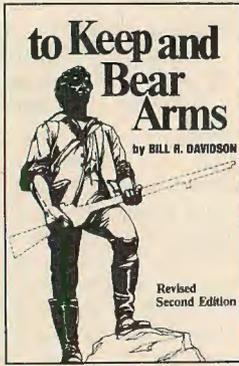
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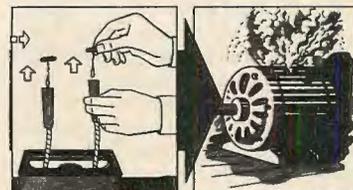
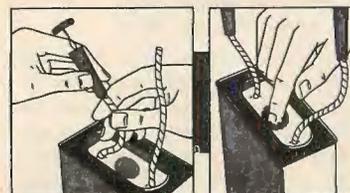
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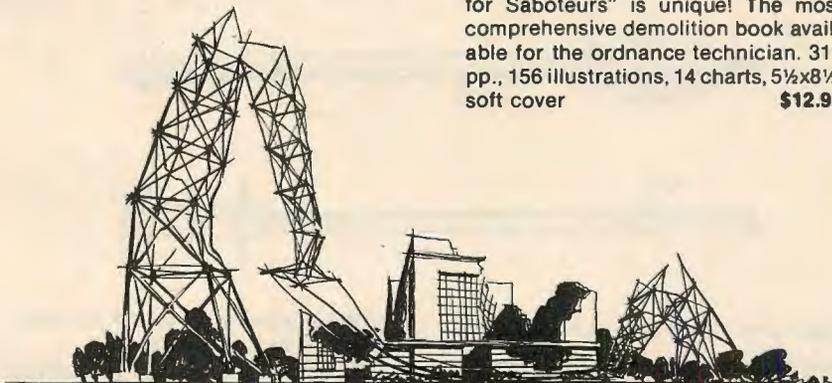


Fig. (d) Towers should be felled across transmitter station

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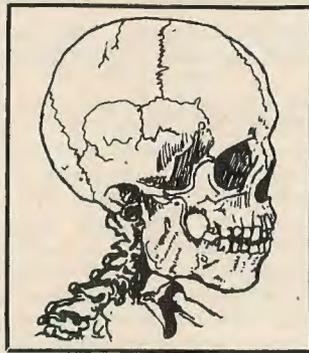
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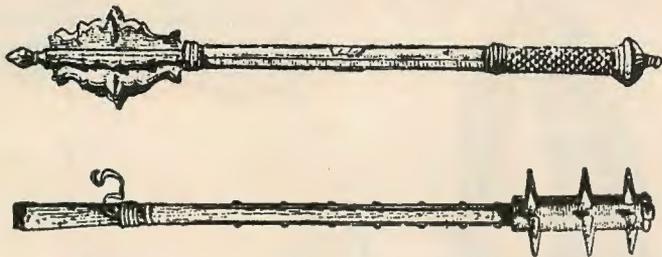
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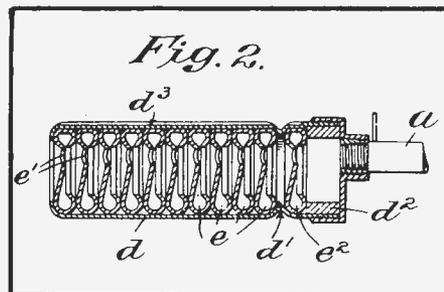
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## AFGHANISTAN

Continued from page 53

"You must know," Rah In said, "that the Russians have not fought a war in 30 years. Also, they do not seem to export their best equipment. So, many of these will be used in Afghanistan because there they can use them without giving away secrets." (They didn't factor in SOF - heh, heh, heh - The Eds.)

To date, doctors say the only strange wounds they have treated at Khyber have been limb wounds. Mujahideen with body-area wounds significantly different from the body-area wounds reported in Vietnam have not made it out of Afghanistan.

"I do not think," Rah In says, "the Mujahideen can survive the trip across the mountains because of the damage done to their organs. Only when a limb is hit can they seem to survive."

Because the roads into Pakistan are closed to the Mujahideen and the only way back into Pakistan is over the mountains, the trip is both dangerous and difficult. Pathan tribesmen along the border watch for wounded being brought back and, when they find them, help them to nearby roads by providing camels, donkeys, horses or carrying the wounded themselves, a trip that can require several days.

"The Pathans bring the wounded to roads where busses, cars, etc., are used," Rah In explained, "to get the wounded to hospitals. Still, we are told that many of the victims, Mujahideen and civilian, die in the mountains."

On a tour of the hospital, Drs. Rah In and Sha-E-Din pointed out various wounds to both civilians (mostly young women and boys) and Mujahideen. Many of them were expected combat injuries

Continued on page 84

## JOHN MILIUS

Continued from page 60

At the end of the movie, he doesn't come back a burnt-out or deranged man. He comes back a man who's rich in experience, who's looked into the pit of hell, and that's something very few people do, and it's got to make him a larger character because of it.

People ask, "Was the movie politically the way you wanted it?" In some ways, no. I did not write the scene where they machine-gun the people in the boat. I wouldn't have written it.

But Francis felt it was necessary to get the audience, which was beginning to like the people on the PBR, implicated in the guilt of war. My script never had guilt of war. It was beyond guilt. These people were in an on-rushing experience like the river: you jump in and are swept away with it. You don't have time to have guilt, and that's the way Willard was. He was a man taken by that river, going up that river. It was an examination in many ways of the Vietnam war, but it could have taken place in any war. It was really an adventure story. It was a search, a quest. Very much like Kipling's "The Man Who Would Be King." The theme has always intrigued me: the test of people, of morality, when all restraints are removed.



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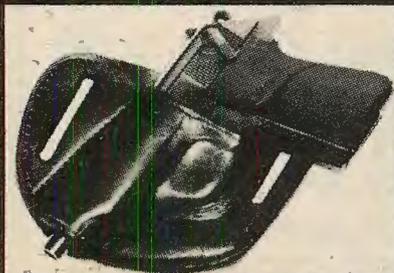
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**AFGHANISTAN**

*Continued from page 83*

(complicated by the lack of medical treatment when wounded). However, several men, some in for just check-ups, showed the results of a "single bullet" that seemed worse than my Vietnam experience. One of the recent cases was a young man, about 20 years old, who had his foot blown off by a single shot.

According to reports received by SOF, the wounds are reportedly products of the AKS-74, an advanced Soviet rifle which is more powerful and fires different ammunition than the AK-47. Efforts to obtain either a rifle or ammunition were difficult, as the Mujahideen, who have them, would rather turn them against the Russians or sell them in the market to secret buyers.

In any case, Afghanistan has provided the Soviets with the perfect "proving ground." They can field test - under combat conditions - weapons developed inside Russia and have the victims more or less locked up. Because the propaganda campaign of the Islamic fronts against Russia borders on hysteria, most of the Western press ignores reports of new weapons being tested. Also, the Mujahideen are not sophisticated enough in dealing with

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modern weapons to identify "scare tactics" from the real thing.

Since victims, for the most part, can't escape from Afghanistan and the dead tell no tales, it may be many years before all the military mysteries of Afghanistan are solved.

Evidence against the Soviet Union, however, is mounting. For the western powers, evidence of new weapons, gas and the fighting ability of Russian combat units may be slow in coming. One reason the doctors give is, "No one wants to believe the Pakistani doctors. We are just as good as yours [America's] and we learn quickly. Why doesn't anyone believe us?"

Some do, but as the American official in Peshawar said, "Anything I tell you has to be off the record. Political problems, you know."

Tell that to the victims, I thought to myself.

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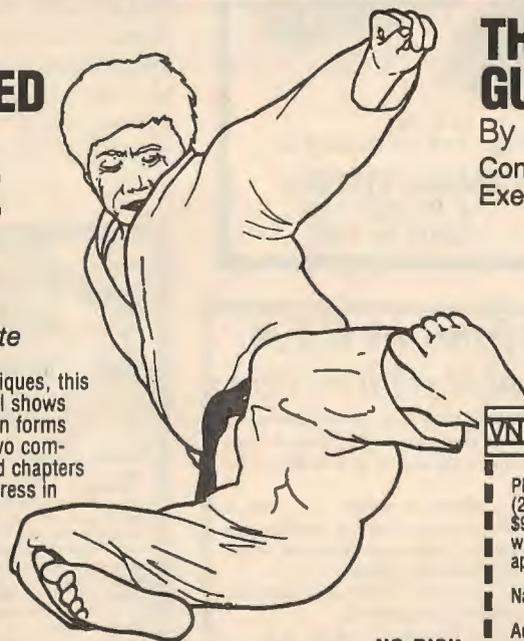
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**AMERICAN**

Continued from page 64

**KHMER SEREI**

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**T**HE Thai border region is a long-time stronghold of the Khmer Serei, whose origins go back to the 1941 founding in Bangkok of a movement known as the Khmer Issarak (Free Cambodians).

Its chief founder was an exiled Cambodian nationalist named Son Ngoc Thanh who, much to the annoyance of Norodom Sihanouk, was often referred to as Cambodia's "Father of Independence." For Thanh, an ethnic Cambodian born in South Vietnam, was virulently anti-French, while Sihanouk accepted French control complacently.

After leading an anti-French protest march by Buddhist monks in 1941, Thanh fled to Thailand to escape arrest. There, with the encouragement of the Thais, who were involved in a seesaw dispute with Cambodia over control of several border provinces, the Khmer Issarak was organized.

Thanh spent most of World War II in Tokyo, returning in 1945 with a captain's rank in the Japanese army. As a nationalist, he viewed the Japanese more as liberators from French colonial rule than as oppressors. By June he was appointed foreign minister and two months later became prime minister.

In September 1945, however, with British help, the French returned to Phnom Penh and a month later Thanh was arrested. He was sent to Saigon where he was tried and convicted as a war criminal. On Sihanouk's intervention, his sentence of 20 years at hard labor was

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remanded to exile in France.

It was during Thanh's six-year exile beginning in 1945 that many of his followers fled to the western provinces of Battambang, Sisophon and Siem Reap along the present-day Thai-Cambodian border. The Khmer Issarak became the underground of Thanh's Democratic Party whose appeal was based on a platform of national independence and expulsion of the French.

In Cambodia's first two elections in December 1947 and September 1951, the Democratic Party won overwhelming majorities in the National Assembly. But both times, when the Assembly blocked Sihanouk's programs, he dissolved it and ruled by royal mandate.

In an attempt to appease the Democratic Party, Sihanouk arranged for Thanh's return from exile on the condition that he stay out of politics. On 29 October 1951, he returned to a hero's welcome in Phnom Penh.

But, by February 1952, after calling on the French to leave Cambodia, Thanh was forced underground. From the forests of Siem Reap Province, he broadcast his intent to carry out guerrilla warfare.

The guerrilla units of the Khmer Issarak, however, were badly fragmented. Some factions had gone over to the Sihanouk government and others had become bandits or operated as little more than the private armies of provincial strongmen.

Thanh attempted to consolidate the Khmer Issarak and throughout the '50s his forces carried out small-unit forays into Cambodia from Thailand and South Vietnam.

In the late '50s — with CIA and Vietnamese backing — Thanh reorganized his group into the Khmer Serei which continued armed resistance to Sihanouk. Thanh, in fact, was accused by Sihanouk of conspiracy in several assassination attempts on his life and an open revolt in Battambang Province.



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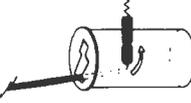
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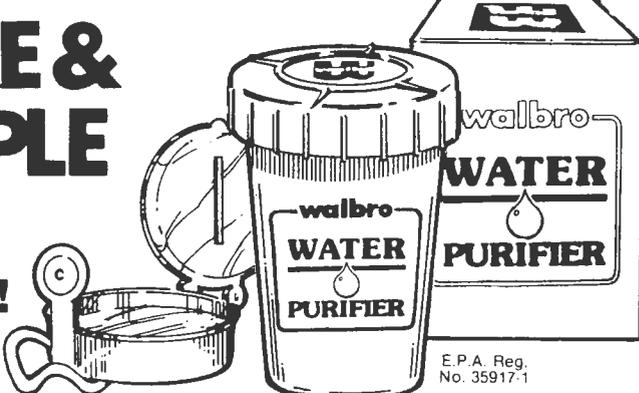
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There was also another group of Cambodians in South Vietnam who were reportedly organized by Sihanouk in an attempt to counter the Khmer Serei's influence. They were the Khmer Kampuchea Krom (KKK) who were particularly active in Chau Doc and Kien Phong Provinces. However, ARVN operations soon destroyed most of their effectiveness, and some of the remnants became bandits, such as the notorious White Scarf Clan that conducted frequent bus holdups and kidnappings in 1963-1964.

The 500,000 ethnic Cambodians living in South Vietnam were known as the Khmer Krom and they proved a fertile recruiting ground for Thanh's Khmer Serei, as well as the CIA and, later, Special Forces.

In the early '60s the Khmer Krom — and among them many who belonged to the Khmer Serei — were actively recruited into the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG), which was a CIA operation until it was taken over by Special Forces in 1964.

Most of the Cambodian CIDG units were strung out along the Cambodian border in Special Forces A camps. Other units served as reaction forces for Special Forces recon teams or as mobile guerrilla teams which would run sterile operations usually ranging from 30 to 60 days.

The best of these CIDG troops were recruited for cross-border recon and commando operations run by Studies and Operations Group (SOG). For example, Operation Cherry, run by SOG out of Special Forces Detachment B-57, was sending teams of 11 Cambodians and five Americans into Cambodia.

With few exceptions, the Cambodians working with Americans in South Vietnam developed a reputation for being tough, well-trained and reliable.

In 1969, numerous units of the Khmer Serei "defected" to Cambodia and were integrated into the national army. After the coup of 18 March 1970 when Lon Nol took power, Sihanouk charged that these defections were really infiltrations in preparation for the coup. In any case, Son Ngoc Thanh was quickly appointed an adviser to Lon Nol, though he initially continued to live in South Vietnam. Two years later he became prime minister.

In the spring of 1970, the 35,000-man Cambodian army was in no condition to resist the communists. There was an abundance of volunteers, but equipment and training facilities were meager. In April, thousands of AK-47s and M2 carbines were sent in by the U.S. and eventually many Cambodian units were trained by Special Forces at camps inside South Vietnam. But Lon Nol's army needed immediate shoring up.

The solution was the April airlifting from South Vietnam to Phnom Penh of four battalions of the CIDG made up of Cambodians. Thanh personally recruited

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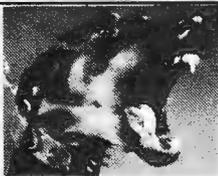
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most of these men as he flew to each camp and asked for volunteers. Several months later another four battalions of volunteers were sent.

These CIDG battalions filled the gap.

"They were the only people they had that were any good," according to Col. Jonathan "Fred" Ladd (USA-ret.), a former commander of the 5th Special Forces in Vietnam in 67-68, who was brought out of retirement to become the Political and Military Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh in 1970.

"They knew tactics and communications and had their own weapons and officers. They were professionals that had been in active combat situations in Vietnam," while much of the regular Cambodian army, says Col. Ladd, were "like children rushing off to the front on Coca-Cola® trucks."

The CIDG battalions paid a high price — because they were effective. Used as a fire brigade and thrown into all the hot spots, they were pretty well decimated after a year and a half. But, for a long time, says Col. Ladd, "They were a big factor in keeping the NVA and VC off the central path."

By this time Son Ngoc Thanh was a marked man. And, with the approaching communist victory, he was named by the Khmer Rouge as one of the seven Cambodians who would be executed when they took Phnom Penh. Instead, he escaped to South Vietnam, where he remained after the country fell to the North Vietnamese.

Thanh had sometimes been called a dreamer who never saw his vision realized. And he never will, for according to reports reaching government intelligence officials in Washington, Thanh died in a Vietnamese concentration camp in 1978. At the time of his death he had been shackled so long he was unable to walk.

Though Thanh is reported dead, the Khmer Serei movement is still alive. However, there are no reliable estimates on the number of Khmer Serei troops and sympathizers scattered in camps along the Thai border or working in Cambodia's interior.

And as for Vietnam, Lt. Gen. Sak Sutsakhan, Cambodia's last non-communist chief of state and the last high-ranking government official to leave Phnom Penh in 1975, has received recent reports indicating that many Khmer Serei returned to South Vietnam and are continuing to resist the communists.

"It wouldn't surprise me in the least," says Col. Ladd. "That's the kind of people they are."



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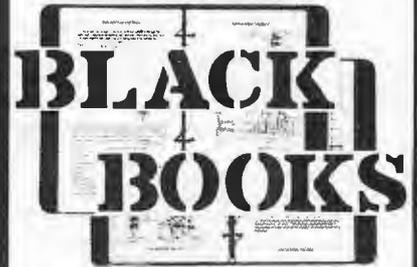
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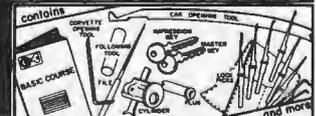
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tougher today than they were five years ago but he zeroes in on one critical problem: "Only about 15 percent of all Marines now on active duty — mostly senior NCOs and colonels — have experienced combat." Marine training today may be as tough and as productive as it has ever been but, as Edwards points out, you never really know until the rounds start coming in.

In the area of technological readiness, Edwards fingers some trouble spots: naval transport; the Corps' small budget; and the M16.

Naval transport for amphibious operations is woefully inadequate, and Edwards drives that point home, quoting U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, who said: "If the U.S. Marines were called upon to undertake a major landing in the Persian Gulf or elsewhere in the Middle East, they would probably have to walk on water to get ashore."

The Corps gets only 2.4 percent of the total defense budget, and because of the inflated cost of today's technology Edwards states that "... tradeoffs are being made that may someday haunt the Corps in battle." To illustrate his point, Edwards cites the \$1.2 billion the Corps is paying for 336 English-designed Harrier aircraft (vertical takeoff planes) "... that might have been dreamed up by a grunt under attack." But the question remains: Can the Corps have the Harriers and all the other items those grunts will need when the attack comes?

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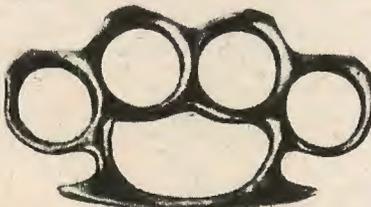
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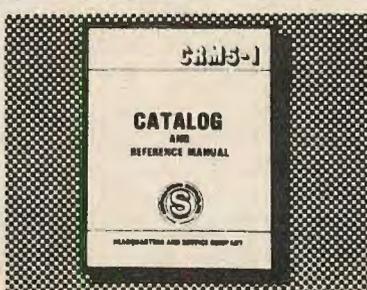


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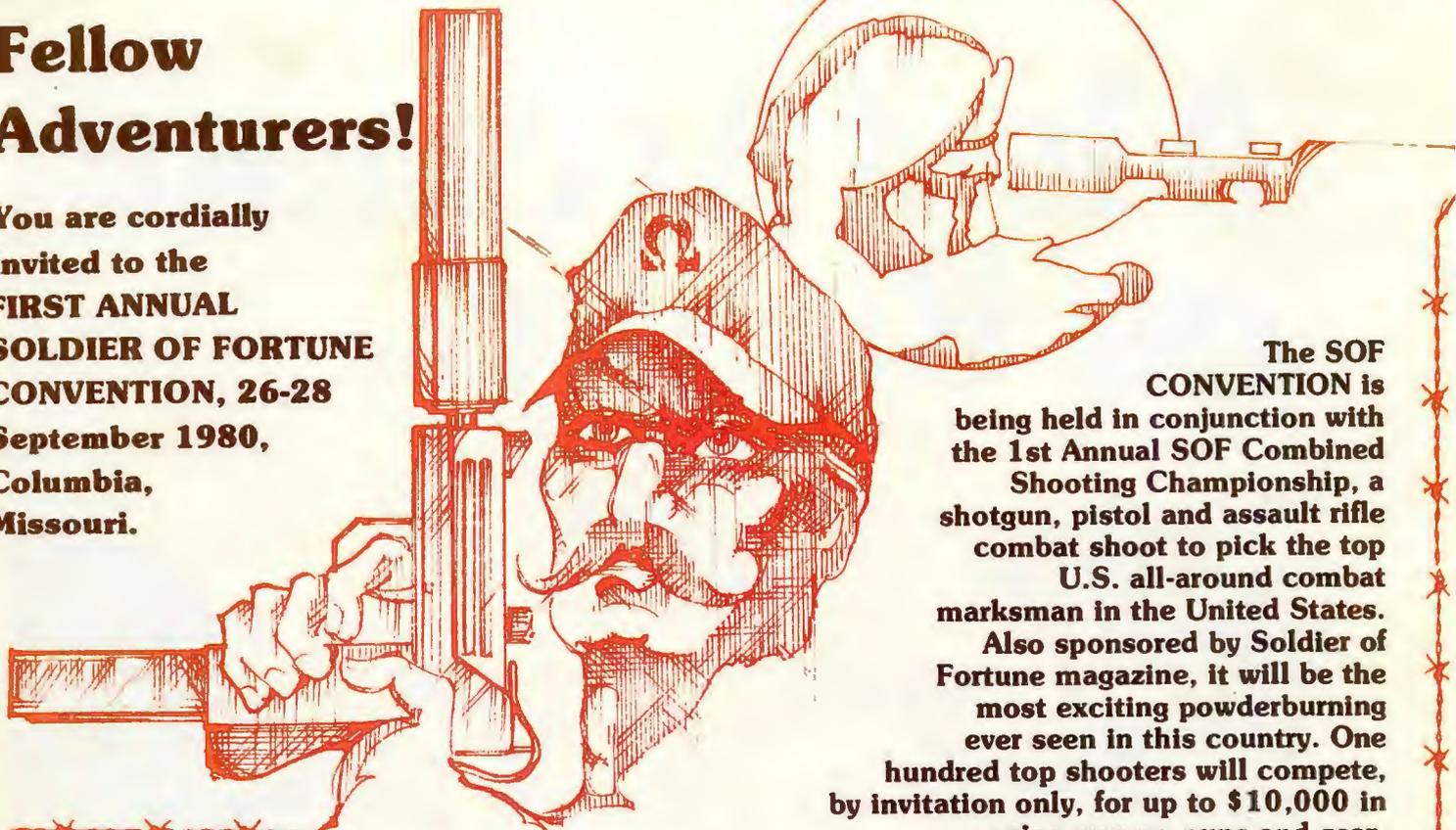
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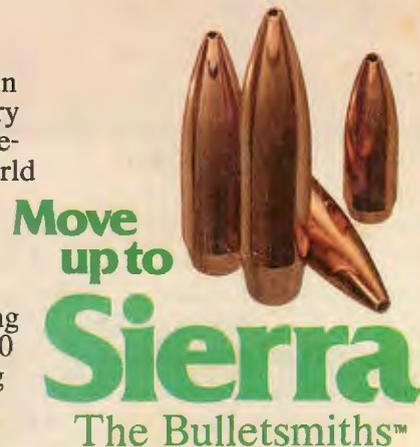
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