



# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

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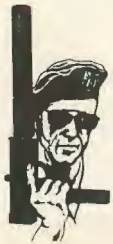
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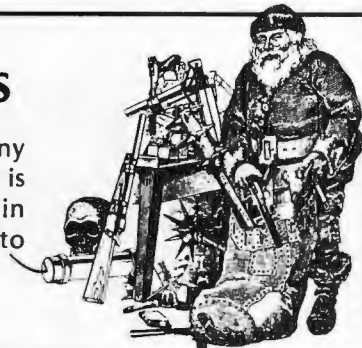
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Look for more Paladin Press titles further on in this issue.



**SECRETS OF THE NINJA**  
by Ashida Kim

Are Ninja the ultimate warriors? Read the *Secrets of the Ninja* and discover why this 2,000-year-old sect of silent stalkers has made headlines in the Western world after centuries of claiming horrified respect in the Orient. The Ninja were called Wizards of Invisibility. Certainly, at the height of their art, they were absolutely unseeable. And now, Paladin unveils the deepest, darkest secrets of those ancient assassins. Learn how you, too, can enter rooms unseen, climb vertical walls, and scout unknown territory in ways even more stealthy than the original Indians ever used.

A practicing Ninja himself, author Ashida Kim offers excellent instruction in the Silent Way. Step-by-step, prodigiously photo-illustrated chapters cover meditation methods, principles of light and shadow, escapes from holds, fighting multiple adversaries, *Inpo* (The Art of Hiding), *Pa Pu* (Night Walking Ability), and many other *Secrets of the Ninja*. The Ninjitsu approach is not always empty-handed—here's how the grappling hook, *Ninja-To* (sword), rope, and other devices can work to a Ninja's advantage. Understand what it means to operate the Silent Way and gain unique insight into this shrouded realm of martial arts.

Over two years in the making, this beautifully designed collector's volume is, without doubt, the finest Ninja training work ever published. Do not confuse *Secrets of the Ninja* with any other book on the subject. With over 200 vivid action photographs, 16 chapters, and 168 big pages, this book far outstrips any attempted imitation. This is the real thing! 5½ x 8½, hardcover, drawings, 200 photos, 168 pp.

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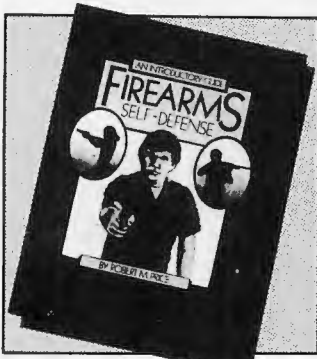
### BETTER READ THAN DEAD

by Thomas Nieman

A new study of nuclear survival focusing on nuclear weapons and their effects, the Soviet nuclear threat, civil defense preparedness, and related survival considerations. The author has tapped new sources of information, and for the first time presents special two-color fallout maps for every county in the United States. Survivalists can now pinpoint the exact locations of their homes or retreats on these maps, and plan accordingly for the expected amount of radioactive fallout.

Over one hundred drawings and diagrams demonstrate how nuclear weapons work, how fallout spreads, how to build fallout shelters, and much more. Chapter titles include: Birth of the Atomic Age, Categories and Types of Nuclear Weapons, Electromagnetic Pulse, The Age of Modern Electronic Weaponry, The Current Threat to the United States, National Survival, Individual Survival Planning, High Risk Area, Maps, Expedient Shelters, and twelve more. The special fallout maps in *Better Read Than Dead* are not available from any other source. An excellent choice for survivalists and retreaters. 8½ x 11, softcover, illus., 193 pp.

\$14.95



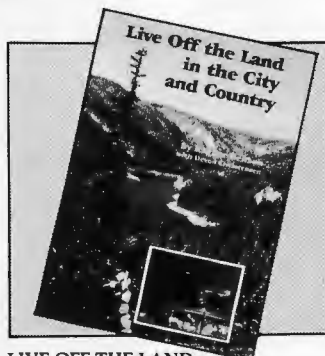
**FIREARMS SELF-DEFENSE**  
An Introductory Guide

by Robert M. Price

As crime rates rise, more and more people are turning to firearms as a last means of self-defense. Unfortunately, many gun-owners have little or no training in their proper and safe defensive use. These shortcomings can have tragic consequences. *Firearms Self-Defense: An Introductory Guide* is meant to help correct this situation. In this comprehensive, large-format edition, Price uses nontechnical language and high quality photos to explain how firearms function and how to use them safely and legally in self-defense situations. Thorough, thoughtful examination of alternatives tags this book as a standout. Chapter titles include: Is A Gun The Answer?; The Use of Deadly Force; Safety; Permits And Legality; Buying Your Gun; Care And Maintenance; Basic Marksmanship; and five others. Not just for novices, *Firearms Self-Defense* is recommended for anyone seeking more information about gun usage. 8½ x 11, hardcover, 125 photos, 12 chapters, 160 pp.

ISBN 0-87364-218-X

\$19.95



**LIVE OFF THE LAND IN THE CITY AND COUNTRY**

by Ragnar Benson

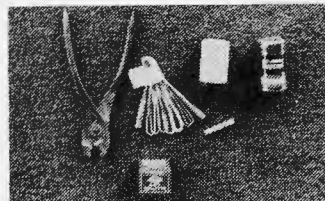
Not just another "eat roots and berries" book! Ragnar Benson, famed survival writer, looks back at his experiences while living off the land—even in the city—for the past 40 years. He reveals a totally practical survival program that is unlike any other. Contrary to similar authors, Benson believes that wild, fresh game (not plants) is the best source of nutrition in a survival context. Even in urban habitats, game is always plentiful—if you know how to find it.

Yet Benson's all-new book covers much more. A separate chapter details how to make your own cache tubes—a big money saver—and also which supplies to store away in them. (Hint: it's not that expensive freeze-dried stuff.) Gives hands-on advice about survival medicine, firearms, reloading, fuel storage, diesel generators, retreating, etc. Other comprehensive, photo-illustrated chapters explain how to raise livestock and vegetables/grains on your retreat the smart way. Drawing from his Indian background, he analyzes their good example of living comfortably and cheaply without the trappings of modern society. A gold mine of native American lore about: curing hides, preserving meats and vegetables without refrigeration, foraging and trapping the Indian way, and much more. Benson even provides plans for building your own A-frame cabin, just like his own, from local timber in one summer—3,000 square feet of living space for under \$10,000!

This complete guide to surviving in style is, of course, written in Benson's lively, down-home manner. Survivalists, retreaters, backpackers, and anyone else wishing to develop a more self-sufficient lifestyle should definitely have this one in their libraries! 5½ x 8½, hardcover, 20 chapters, over 100 photos, 263 pp.

ISBN 0-87364-200-7

\$14.95



Tools and supplies needed to cap dynamite include battery, blasting caps, film canisters for holding caps, and dynamite pliers. Photo courtesy of Ragnar Benson.

### THE DEADLY ROUTINE

by Jack Morris

Every day he's on patrol, a law enforcement officer lays his life on the line. Issuing a summons on a routine traffic stop, answering a domestic complaint, or responding to a report of a burglary in progress, he's a target for snipers, desperadoes, and nuts. Only a watchful, alert approach to these seemingly "routine" situations can prevent his needless wounding or death.

In *The Deadly Routine*, Morris uses the workbook approach to snap senior officers into realizing the very real dangers of mobile patrolling. True accounts of situations in which officers were killed or wounded have been reconstructed from eyewitness reports and court transcripts. The position of the police and criminal, time sequence, intent of the suspect, and level of officer training have been included. Follow-up questions give readers an idea of whether they would have ended up on the slab. This is intriguing, fast-paced reading. In this practical guide for honing officers' judgment, Morris advises officers to respond in pairs but not simultaneously, assess the capabilities of a .38 caliber weapon, treat all stops with anticipation, and pick the time and place for confrontation.

Ideally suited to both classroom and home study, *The Deadly Routine* can be a life-saver. 8½ x 11, softcover, illus., 208 pp.

ISBN 0-87364-241-4

\$11.95

### EVERYMAN'S GUIDE TO BETTER HOME SECURITY

by Vincent Joseph Guarino

The house is an ordinary middle-aged house. There are sash windows all around with catch-lock devices. One high window never closes quite right—something wrong with the hinge. In the living room are a young mother and two small children watching TV. Outside, shrubby grows too close to the sliding glass door. A dark, motionless man-shape crouches in the leaves and shadows.

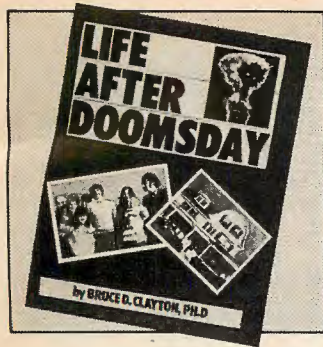
The house is a break-in just waiting to happen.

Would your home be safe if someone tried to get in?

With a burglary happening every fifteen seconds somewhere in the United States, the odds of break-in are against homeowners, whether they live in middle-aged houses or modern apartment buildings. The odds can be beat. *Everyman's Guide to Better Home Security* helps readers determine appropriate safeguard levels—for homes, businesses, and people—as well as aids in arranging feasible preventive measures. Step-by-step sections cover lock selection, door types, alarm setups, exterior and interior lighting, special considerations for apartment living, home and business safes, insurance coverage and claims, and personal safety. Guarino gives a complete run-down on the models of locks and alarms meeting minimum standards—a boon to the confused consumer. With the security check lists provided in the extra tear-out section, readers may keep important identifying information on file. This new edition in the Paladin Press *Everyman's Guide* series is a security investment in itself. 5½ x 8½, softcover, drawings and photos, check lists, 136 pp.

ISBN 0-87364-217-1

\$7.95



**LIFE AFTER DOOMSDAY**  
by Dr. Bruce Clayton

Who will survive the nuclear war that many experts predict is coming? *Life After Doomsday* tells you how to survive through such a nuclear nightmare. It is an exhaustive investigation of the strategies needed to survive an atomic war, and of the problems that will face those who do live through it. Suggests a step-by-step procedure for creating individual survival plans, including previously uncollected information about shelters, food storage, home medical techniques, and the psychology of survival. The difficult problem of shelter defense is also closely examined. Tells you the prime nuclear target areas in the U.S., as well as those areas least likely to be attacked. Dr. Clayton offers a practical discussion of both the short- and long-term effects of nuclear weapons' use, and ensuing medical consequences. Explains how to measure fallout radiation, and build an expedient fallout shelter on short notice.

One of the most comprehensive and up-to-date works ever compiled on modern survivalism, *Life After Doomsday* is also an excellent reference on surviving through any major disaster. An invaluable addition to your survival library. Includes dozens of useful charts, drawings, and photos. 8 1/2 x 11, hardcover, illus., 200 pp.

**EVERYMAN'S GUIDE TO FINANCIAL SURVIVAL**  
by Deane Kogelschatz

You don't have to be rich to financially survive the coming hard times, but you will have to be prepared. Whether you have a lot or a little money, *Everyman's Guide to Financial Survival* will tell you how to use it to your advantage.

Author Kogelschatz, a financial analyst who formerly advised Fortune Top 500 companies, explains the causes of our unbridled inflation and how each person can insulate his money from erosion by investing in certain currencies and goods. Kogelschatz succeeds in wading through the morass of investment advice available to the layman. In plain language he details the most viable methods of maintaining financial security in times of recession, inflation, and monetary instability.

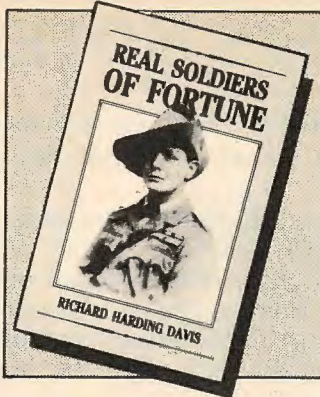
Chapters include: What You Should Know About Economics; What Inflation Really Is; Your Financial Privacy; Foreign Banking and Currencies; Silver and Gold: Buying, Selling, Testing; Standard Investments; Special Ways to Protect Your Resources; and more. Highly recommended for anyone concerned about financial security now and in the future. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, 160 pp.

**COMBAT SURVIVAL**

Never before available to the public. An extremely useful, comprehensive training manual on physical and combat survival, tactics, and techniques. Our inside sources believe that this is the same manual used to instruct Great Britain's elite Special Air Service (SAS). These specialists in secret warfare were responsible for the daring 1980 hostage rescue operation at the Iranian embassy in London. *Combat Survival* illustrates combat and survival training and tactical methods useful in similar ops, as well as general survival conditions. Also contains rare info on evading and silencing guard dogs, sabotage and intelligence gathering, navigating under survival conditions, and much more. Includes over 100 detailed line drawings and valuable charts. Chapter titles include: Evasion; Survival Navigation; Improvisation and Escape Kit; Contacting Agents; Dog Evasion; Wild Foods; Animal Traps and Snares; Fishing; Water Survival Still; Shelter; Primitive Medicine; and four more. 8 1/2 x 11, softcover, illus., 156 pp.

**TRAINING THE GUNFIGHTER**

by Capt. Timothy Mullin  
An encyclopedic, collector's volume on the combat application of firearms, written for law officers and legally-armed citizens by an ex-sheriff and practicing attorney. The author provides complete historical, tactical, and legal coverage for all combat firearms, and especially their use by police. Shotguns, rifles, and handguns are studied extensively, as are special purpose weapons, such as submachine guns and silenced countersniper rifles. The author is particularly well qualified to write on this topic: he presently instructs police forces on combat pistolcraft, and provides legal advice on the use of deadly force. Sixty photos accompany the text, which also analyzes the merits of various accessories, like grips, sights, holsters, and body armor. Chapter titles include: Handgun Selection, Revolver vs. Self-loader, Bullet Styles, Carries, Stances, Burst Firing, Night Shooting, Legal Considerations, Range Construction, and 21 more. 8 1/2 x 11, hardcover, photos, 250 pp.



**REAL SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE**  
by Richard Harding Davis

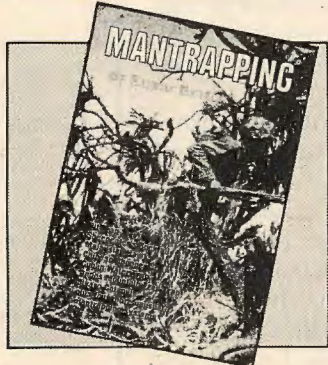
Thrilling, true accounts of six wild-and-woolly nineteenth century mercenaries, told by a man who was there. Author Richard Harding Davis became known as the world's first modern war correspondent. He reported on the Spanish-American War, Greco-Turkish War, Boer War, and World War I, among others, always risking his life to obtain eyewitness battlefield accounts.

In *Real Soldiers Of Fortune*, he tells the stories of six men, "who for pay, or the love of adventure, fought under the flag of any nation." Discusses the fighting exploits of such notable mercenaries as William Walker (who conquered Nicaragua with fifty-seven men in 1855), Major-General Henry MacIver (fought under eighteen flags during his fifty-year career), Winston Churchill (the famous prime minister was first a soldier who fought in the Spanish-American and Boer Wars, and was with Kitchener at Khartoum), and Major Frederick Burnham (an American and former Indian fighter who became chief of British scouts during the Boer War). Eight rare photos of these men-of-action complement the text.

This exciting hardcover volume is an exact reprint of the scarce 1906 first edition, which commands high prices—if you can find a copy. Historians, collectors, and SOFers will want to order this one today. 5 x 7, hardcover, illus., 240 pp.

**NEVER SAY DIE**

*Never Say Die* is a detailed study of what to do if... Techniques on how to survive in almost any terrain from desert to frozen tundra are presented. But unlike other survival manuals, these techniques include valuable information on how to combat fear, pain and PANIC—and win in the struggle against nature. This manual covers everything you need to know in an emergency: finding pure water, medical instructions, drawings of edible natural foods, improvised shelters, tools and equipment, and more. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, illus., 208 pp.

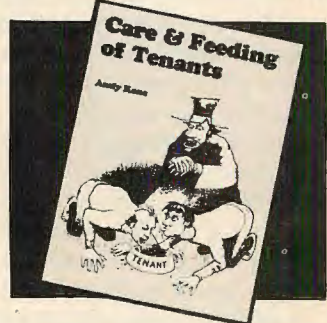


**MANTRAPPING**  
by Ragnar Benson

*Mantrapping* is the first book ever published to explain how to capture that most dangerous animal: man. Ragnar Benson, well known as the author of *Survival Poaching*, has based this gut-wrenching book on his own personal mantrapping experiences while on special assignments in Asia, Africa, North and South America, and Cuba. You have to see this one to believe it! Reveals over a dozen different traps specifically designed to catch and kill humans. Illustrated with detailed line drawings covering such mantraps as the Malaysian Hawk, the Andes Mountain Trail Trap, the Sheepstealer's Rock Fall, and the Cuban Water Trap. Survivalists can use these systems to help protect their retreats. As Benson says: "To know how to trap your enemy is to know how to avoid being trapped yourself." Each trap is constructed with primitive materials and tools. Includes a special chapter on the philosophy of mantrapping. 7 x 8 1/2, softcover, 15 chapters, illus., 88 pp.

**RIOT CONTROL**  
Materiel and Techniques  
by Col. Rex Applegate

Newly revised 1981 edition of Col. Applegate's classic manual on riot-makers, riot control, techniques and equipment. In 1980, worldwide riots claimed many lives and destroyed millions of dollars worth of property. The coming years promise even more mob violence and civil disorder. *Riot Control* is meant to help correct this critical situation. It is an up-to-date study of the tactics and tools needed to defeat every type of riot action. Law enforcement officials particularly will welcome this new edition to their libraries. Supplies complete training information on organizing riot patrols and large forces, handling barricade and sniper situations, prevention of looting, clearing houses and streetfighting, using the riot baton and chemical agents, and much more. *Riot Control* also includes a complete survey of modern riot control gear, such as chemical agents, foggers, batons, helmets, firearms, vehicles, etc. Hundreds of equipment photos and practical line illustrations. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, illus., 300 pp.




**CARE & FEEDING OF TENANTS**  
by Andy Kane

A humorous yet practical look at the lucrative art of landlording by an author who may be the meanest man in America. A born cynic, former gag writer Realtor Andy Kane tells how to keep wily tenants in their place—paying rent to make their landlord rich.

Landlording is one profession that requires no qualifications, yet it pays off twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, fifty-two weeks a year. In *Care of Feeding of Tenants*, Kane tells income property owners how to collect rents, train tenants to pay promptly and make minor repairs, fill vacancies, outsmart do-gooder groups and inspectors, handle complaints, and make a bundle off tenants besides their rent.

Sex, money, crime, violence—landlords and tenants alike are plagued with the issues of everyday life. Andy Kane tells it like it is. Don't miss the gory details!

Perfect for real estate agents, income property owners, and anyone who enjoys a good laugh. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, illus., 120 pp.




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# EDITOR'S NOTES

**A**S this is *Soldier of Fortune's* 50th issue, a look at its beginnings, some of the milestones along the way and its current status seems called for.

Quite a lot has changed since Robert K. Brown launched SOF in 1975 with a \$10,000 bankroll.

Assembled over a period of months and laid out almost overnight by a handful of close friends, the first issue of 8,500 copies was sent out in the summer of 1975. Brown had just enough cash left in the till to keep from starving until the hoped-for profits started rolling in.

Success seemed uncertain at first. The money came in so slowly and in such small amounts that Brown often carried the receipts in an envelope above the sun visor of his car. But sales grew gradually and it became clear that SOF had a corps of loyal readers that was growing with every issue.

One of the great stories told around SOF about the old days concerns the meeting Brown had with the bankers when he wanted to finance the changeover from a quarterly to a bi-monthly publication. Armed with a handful of back issues, Brown sat down with a local bank president — a conservative who was soon to be horrified: The banker thumbed through the pile of SOFs, wanting to look at the product he was being asked to finance; by chance, he picked up Issue Number 1. When he reached the famous photo of a dead Rhodesian native soldier with a rather large exit hole in his head, he threw the magazine down and said: "I never read anything that doesn't have a bridge column."

Thinking quickly, Brown replied: "Oh, we have a bridge column. How to build them. How to capture them. How to blow them up."

The silence was deafening, but Brown got his loan.

SOF was a considerable success as a bi-monthly. There was enough money in 1978 for Brown to enlarge the staff and to use color photography inside the magazine. In 1979, SOF took the big plunge and moved to monthly publication. The next three years showed steady improvement: more writers assigned to overseas stories, more color pages in each issue, and better payment to freelance writers for their stories. In 1980, SOF also moved to a bigger distributor and held the first SOF Convention and Combined Shooting Championship, which turned out to be an enormous success.

Publicity garnered at the convention pushed SOF sales to nearly 200,000 at the beginning of 1981. SOF topped that 200,000 mark in June. That month marked another milestone: World Color Press — one of the nation's biggest and best printers — began printing the magazine. World Color will print 375,000 copies of this, SOF's 50th issue, and total production costs will total more than 10 times the amount with which Brown launched SOF.

The numbers have grown, and the magazine has grown and improved: more color, more pages, better stories, better editing. But one thing that has not changed and will not change is the magazine's basic format. Brown's one iron-clad rule is: "Don't mess with the editorial mix."

Our aim is to continue to print what others won't or can't. To continue to take stands for our beliefs, regardless of the "popularity" of our views. To chastise our country and our leaders when they stray from the path. And above all to defend our country against its enemies.

In those areas SOF is no different today than it was in 1975. We like to think that the reason SOF is a publishing success story is *because* it has kept faith with the principles we and our readers have always stood for.

Thanks to all of you for making it possible.

— Jim Graves

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COVER: French Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment trooper carries FA MAS 5.56mm rifle. Legion paratroopers jump from 500 feet — and consider this accomplishment least of their combat skills. See story on p. 44. Photo: Donald McCullin, Times Newspapers of Great Britain.

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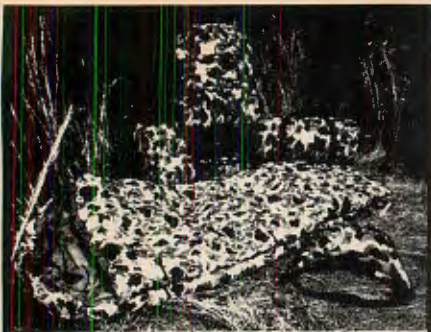
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# CUT AND SAVE FOR FUTURE SAVINGS! BAYONET BONANZA — ALL BRAND NEW!

<p><b>COLT AR-15/M16 Bayonet &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length: 7." Features: Wire cutter, razor back saw blade, belt attachments, sure-grip handle and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$29.95</b></p>	<p><b>COLT AR-15/M16 Bayonet &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length: 7." Features: Bottle opener, wire cutter, razor back saw blade, belt attachments, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$32.95</b></p>	<p><b>COLT AR-15/M16 Bayonet &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length: 10" (Long). Features: Wire cutter, razor back saw blade, belt attachments, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$37.25</b></p>	<p><b>COMBAT KNIFE with Scabbard</b> Blade length: 7." Features: Wire cutter, razor back saw blade, belt attachments, sure-grip handle, and tie thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$25.95</b></p>	<p><b>COMBAT KNIFE with Scabbard</b> Blade length: 10" (Long). Features: Wire cutter, razor back saw blade, belt attachments, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$32.95</b></p>		
<p><b>SWISS SIG Bayonet &amp; Scabbard Model 510-4 7.62 NATO</b> Blade length 7." Features: Wire cutter, razor back saw blade, belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$29.95</b></p>	<p><b>M4 CARBINE BAYONET with M8A1 Scabbard</b> U.S. Caliber .30 M1 Carbine. Blade length: 6½." Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$19.95</b></p>	<p><b>M5A1 GARAND BAYONET with M8A1 Scabbard</b> U.S. Caliber .30 M1 Garand Rifle. Blade length: 6½." Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$20.95</b></p>	<p><b>COLT AR-15/M16 M-7 BAYONET with M8A1 Scabbard</b> Blade length: 6½." Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$19.95</b></p>	<p><b>COMBAT KNIFE M3 Bayonet with M8A1 Scabbard</b> Blade length: 6½." Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and tie thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$16.95</b></p>		
<p><b>G-3 RIFLE* (HK 91/93) Bayonet &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length 6½." Features: Belt attachment and sure-grip handle. <small>*(NOTE: Bayonet adapter for rifle is separate. See item no. SI-20.)</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$26.95</b></p>	<p><b>G-3 RIFLE* (HK 91/93) Norwegian Model) Bayonet with M8A1 Scabbard</b> Blade length: 6½." Features: Belt attachment and sure-grip handle. <small>*(NOTE: Bayonet adapter for rifle is separate. See item no. SI-20.)</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$26.95</b></p>	<p><b>G-3 RIFLE* (HK 91/93) Bayonet &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length: 10" (Long). Features: Woodgrain scabbard, belt attachment and sure-grip handle. <small>*(NOTE: Bayonet adapter for rifle is separate. See item no. SI-20.)</small></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$32.95</b></p>	<p><b>COMBAT AUSTRIAN ARMY Knife and Scabbard</b> Blade length: 6½." Features: Bottle opener, belt attachment and sure-grip handle. Colors: SI-15 O.D. Green, SI-16 Black.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$14.95</b></p>	<p><b>BELGIUM FAL Bayonet &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length: 6½." Features: Belt attachment.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$36.95</b></p>		
<p><b>GERMAN ARMY MK III Boot Knife &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length 5." Features: Quick release safety snap, belt attachment, sure-grip handle, and leather scabbard.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$19.95</b></p>	<p><b>M-6 BAYONET M14 RIFLE with M8A1 Scabbard</b> Blade length: 6½." Features: Belt attachment, sure-grip handle and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$20.95</b></p>	<p><b>COLLECTORS' PRESENTATION CASE</b> 6 different Bayonets &amp; Scabbards are ready for your display. A must for every collector! Each case contains 1 each of the following: SI-1 COLT AR-15/M16 SI-10 COLT AR-15/M16 SI-3 COLT AR-15/M16 SI-4 COMBAT KNIFE SI-11 COMBAT KNIFE SI-5 COMBAT KNIFE</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$169.95</b></p>		<p><b>SI-1A COLT AR-15/M16 Bayonet &amp; Scabbard</b> Blade length: 7" Features: Razor back saw blade, belt attachments, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$25.95</b></p>	<p><b>SI-22 GERMAN ARMY BUNDESWEHR'S Combat Knife</b> Blade length: 5½." Features: Sure-grip handle, aluminum Scabbard and belt attachment.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$29.95</b></p>	<p>Example of wire cutting capabilities of the world famous Eickhorn bayonet. This feature available with the following models: SI-1, SI-2, SI-3, SI-4, SI-5, SI-6, SI-19</p>
<p><b>New COLT AR-15/M16 Bayonet with M8A1 Scabbard</b> Blade length 6½." Features wire cutter, razor back saw blade, belt attachment, sure-grip handle and tie thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$25.95</b></p>	<p><b>G-3 Adaptor</b> G-3 Adapter for SI-12, SI-13 and SI-14 for attachment of bayonet to rifle.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$8.95</b></p>	<p><b>SI-4A COMBAT KNIFE with Scabbard</b> Blade length: 7" Features: Razor back saw blade, belt attachments, sure-grip handle, and tie-thongs.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$23.95</b></p>	<p><b>SI-10A COLT AR-15/M16 M7 BAYONET with M8A1 Scabbard</b> Blade length: 9" Features: Belt attachment, and sure-grip handle.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>\$29.95</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BRAND NEW G.I. AMMUNITION CANS</b></p> <p>50 Caliber (M2A1) cans \$8.50 ea. Special case offer of 12 cans in original government pack (weight 70 lbs.) \$78.00 per case</p> <p>30 Caliber (7.62 NATO) cans \$5.95 ea. Special case offer of 16 cans in original government pack (weight 64 lbs.) \$64.00 per case</p> <p>Note: Individual cans purchased add \$3.00 per unit for shipping and handling. CASE LOTS SHIPPED FREIGHT COLLECT.</p>		







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# BULLETIN BOARD

by Bob Poos



## CAUGHT RED-HANDED ...

Soviet forgers proved clumsy and over-enthusiastic; otherwise they might have gotten away with passing off one of their bogus products as an official U.S. Army field manual, describing methods to undermine internal affairs of other nations.

As now revealed, the scam began in 1975 when a Russian agent got hold of FM 30-31A. It was classified and, like most other such manuals, bore the signature of former Army Chief of Staff Gen. William C. Westmoreland.

The agent passed it on to "disinformation" agents, whose business it is to create clever lies for propaganda purposes.

They rewrote the book, making it reflect adversely on the Army, copied the typeface, forged Westmoreland's

signature and ran off a batch of them labeled FM 30-31B.

Soon a left-wing Turkish newspaper obtained a copy and it spread from there. Articles of outrage appeared in the newspapers of 20 countries — including this one.

But the Soviets goofed. To lend authenticity to the document, they marked it "Top Secret." America had only to point out that no field manual has such a high security clearance — and FM 30-31B was exposed as a phony.

Ironically, most people who heard the lie will never get the truth. It doesn't make nearly as good a story.

## CHARGIN' CHARLEY RETIRES ...

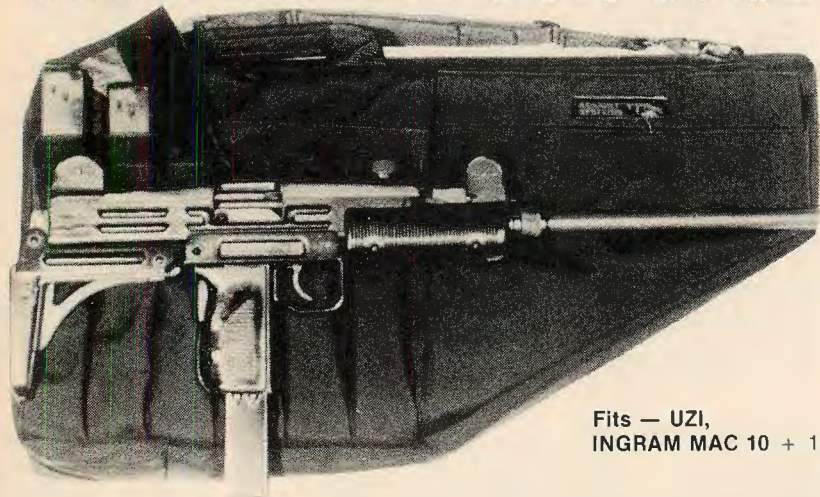
Col. Charles "Chargin' Charlie" Beckwith, the officer who led the Army's Special Delta Force on the abortive mission to rescue 53 American captives in Iran, has retired. Beckwith, 52, is now operating a firm in Austin, Texas, that advises and teaches corporate executives on how to protect themselves from terrorist attack. He and five other men who have worked with him on anti-terrorist activities operate the firm.

## VIETNAM MEMORIAL ...

The long-planned Vietnam Veterans War Memorial in Washington, D.C., has moved a step closer to realization with the recent selection of Maya Ying Lin's design from among 1,420 entries in a design competition for the monument.

Situated on a two-acre, parklike site, Lin's plan calls for slabs of black granite to rise from the ground and connect to form an inverted "V." The names of the 57,692 American soldiers who died in Vietnam will be inscribed on these walls. The monument is expected to be completed by Veteran's Day, 1982.

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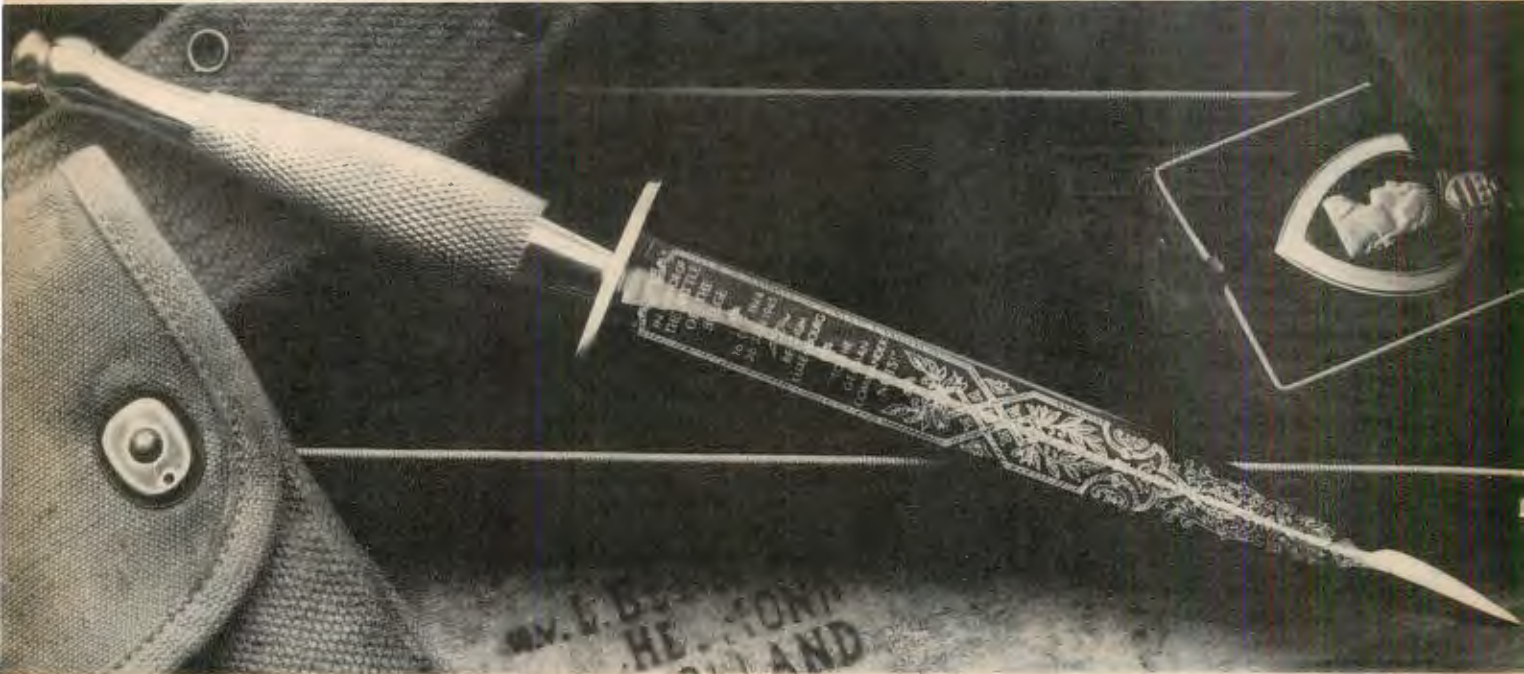
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Continued on page 66

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*"Thank you for these magnificent pieces of history and for the many other meanings you have added to my life!"  
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*"I have many wartime Fairbairn-Sykes Knives in my collection—but these are the focal point."  
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada*

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- Historical background material on the Battle of the Bulge, including its great significance to winning the Allied victory over Germany.

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This is available exclusively through The American Historical Foundation. You may write, call, personally visit or use the reservation form below. Only a small deposit is required. Reservations will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis. Requests for special registry numbers will be honored, if possible. Satisfaction is fully guaranteed.

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# FLAK

## AID IN TIME ...

Dear Col. Brown:

I want to thank you in a special way for the valiant aid — as much material as ideological — in your prestigious magazine, as it has served to raise the morale of certain Nicaraguans who had been unsure as to whom to give their aid.

Also, in the name of all of our officers and enlisted men — who see in you a friend who has known how to inject morale and hope in the fight against international communism which will result, with God's help and that of friends like you, in the liberation of our beloved country — my thanks and friendship.

I hope we may count on your important help until the liberation of our country.

God, Country and Liberty,  
Juan Carlos,  
Commander-in-Chief  
National Liberation Army of  
Nicaragua

## REST IN PEACE ...

Sirs:

Lt. Ronald Dodge and Lt. Stephen Musselman, U.S. Navy, and Capt. Richard Van Dyke, U.S. Air Force, have come home. They no longer have to endure inhuman treatment at the hands of the animals who masquerade as human beings in Vietnam. These men can now rest in peace in the land they thought enough of to give their lives for.

There are still about 1,400 Americans listed as MIA. Why is the greatest country in the world sitting around doing nothing? Is America afraid of Russia? To hell with Russia! It's time to stop using the wimps' guide to limp-wristed politics of the past administration. Bring back the trade embargo. When they start starving in Moscow, maybe they'll give their puppets in Hanoi a shove in the right direction.

America owes these men.

Sincerely,  
John D. Wincz  
MIA Co-ordinator, Middlesex  
County American Legion  
American Legion Post 248  
Colonia, New Jersey

## DELTA/ SOG SAGA ...

Sirs:

I read with interest SOF's last four issues with the articles on the Delta Project and MACV/SOG (see "SOG's Secret War," June '81; "Death-Dealing Project Delta," July-September '81). I found these articles especially interesting, since I had been assigned to both units.

*Continued on page 70*

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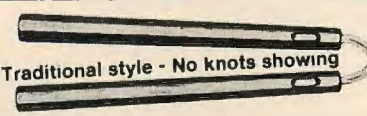
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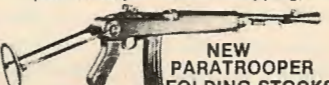
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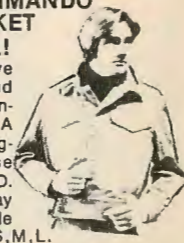
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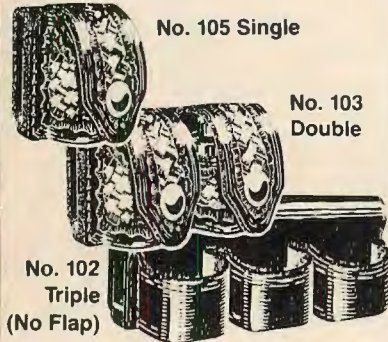
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# COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT



**9mm Service Pistol:  
Will the Soldier Pay the Price?**

**Ken Hackathorn**

**S**OF entered the new-service-pistol controversy almost two years ago (see "Shootout: 9mm vs. .45," February '80) with its article about the 1979 service-pistol trials held at Eglin Air Force Base by the Joint Service Small Arms Program (JSSAP). I am not alone in having second thoughts about those tests and the JSSAP pistol requirements. The choice of a 9x19mm-caliber weapon will mean lessened stopping power, since the 9x19mm cartridge is a poor self-defense round, despite the reasons which have been given for using this cartridge.

I am amazed at so-called gun scribes who champion the 9mm parabellum simply because it is widely used around the world. Popularity does not change ballistics. Those of you who have heard of a top-secret report, showing the 9mm as equal to or better than the .45 ACP, should remember that studies count only if they reflect what happens in real-life encounters — the 9x19mm just does not cut it.

The critical question is whether the U.S. military will improve or increase the level of small-arms training with its adoption of the new service pistol. This, I fear, will never be, since the most popular argument of those who are pushing for a new 9x19mm pistol is that because the Nine is easy to shoot, less time and ammunition will be required to train the troops. I've had experience with small-arms training in the military, and when I say that service weapons skill is low, I mean LOW. The concept of training with individual weapons is regarded as a necessary evil, since the top brass believes that skill at arms for the individual soldier is unimportant because sophisticated, expensive weapons systems are the key to modern warfare.

Which 9mm will be the final choice of U.S. military use? Rumors indicate that the field has been narrowed to the Beretta M92S and the Smith & Wesson M-459. The Beretta is regarded as a

reliable pistol, and S&W has worked hard at improving the early M-59 auto pistol into the M-459 to meet military requirements. I have handled and fired both pistols only a few times and thus have little first-hand knowledge of them. However, sidearms must be reliable, easy to use and simple to maintain. The reputation of the 1911, the current service pistol, is without peer; it is the most reliable and maintenance-free weapon in the U.S. military's 20th-century arsenal.

The complexity of design of the Beretta M92S and S&W M-459 is chilling. Consider the plight of the armorer who sees a truckload of either weapon heading his way for detailed stripping and maintenance. (Take one of these guns apart and the number of mouse-trap springs and mickey-mouse parts will amaze you. Assembly of the Beretta M92S magazine catch is easy if you have three hands.) The armorer has enough problems keeping the rest of the junk in our small-arms arsenal working without adding one more headache.

Some of the requirements for the new service pistol, such as a frame-mounted silencer, are simply ridiculous. A standard-issue service pistol does not need a silencer. For special-issue use in clandestine operations or for pilot bailouts, a specially modified pistol could be provided, but to require that every service pistol be capable of such modification — come on. The key to military sidearms should be simplicity.

We are also told that the new service pistol must be double-action. Who believes that the U.S. services will allow a man to carry his pistol with a round in the chamber? When will regulations and the practice of carrying the pistol only in condition three be changed? Who's dreaming now?

Furthermore, if you must hand-cycle the slide in order to chamber a round from the magazine before firing the pistol, what will the ambidextrous safety levers do to your hand? When the M-92S

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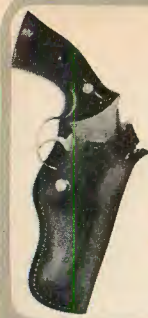
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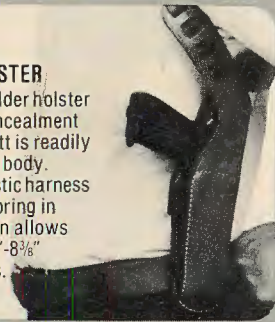
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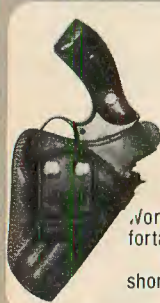
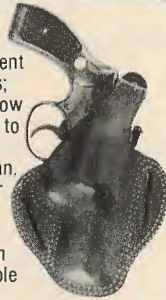
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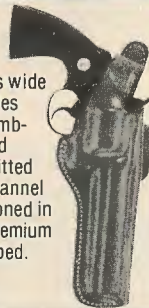


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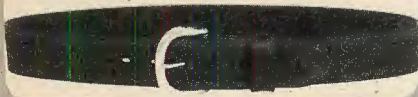
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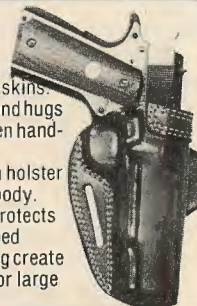
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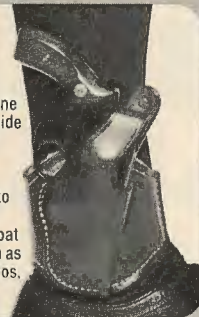


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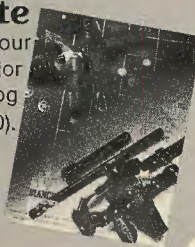
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must be drawn from the holster and a round chambered from the magazine by racking the slide quickly to the rear, you could easily find your hand needing six stitches.

The only positive aspect of the new-service-pistol requirements is the specification of large-magazine capacity. I agree that the new 9x19mm pistol's should be 14- or 15-shot at least. While I was in the Army, I never once was issued a spare magazine for my pistol. The only people who had spares were those (like me) who purchased their own magazines and pouches from surplus outlets. Therefore, a 15-round capacity will be welcomed by the troops who will have only the pistol and one magazine. Furthermore, anyone using a 9x19mm pistol will need those extra rounds to stop an enemy. Finally, with the current level of military pistol training, large-magazine capacity is practical, since the average trooper will miss most of his shots. Sad but true.

A few really good pistols have surfaced since the 1979 JSSAP pistol trials. Most are foreign designs, since the U.S. arms industry has lost the ability to compete in the world military arms market. The Sig P-6 (Sig-Sauer P-225) is one of the more interesting ones. Simple, compact and reliable, the P-225 has been made in a 14-shot version in hope of interesting the JSSAP. It does not have an ambidextrous hammer drop, but its simple design and reliability are outstanding.

The final choice of the new service pistol is still in the future. However, I believe that small-arms procurement is political; the history of U.S.-military-weapons selection shows that any firearm not designed and manufactured in the American marketplace has little chance of adoption. I expect the final choice will be the S&W 459 pistol.

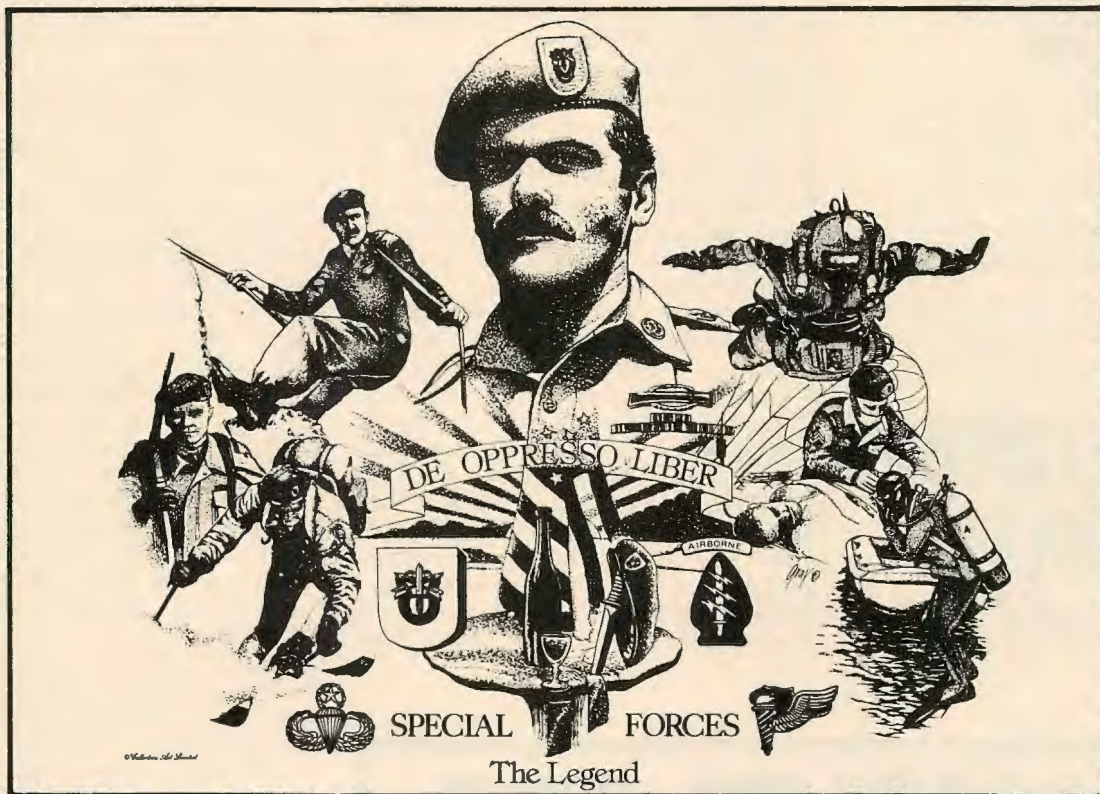
For those who seem to be panicking about the so-called demise of the 1911 pistol and its cartridge — fear not. Both pistol and stocks of .45 ammo will remain in the system for many years to come. I doubt that the 1911 will disappear from the supply system before the end of the 1980s, and Reserve and Guard units will probably still have it during the 1990s.

The choice of a new service pistol is more important to the trooper, the MP, the sentry and the crewman, who depend upon it for defense, than to those who will select it. Let us hope, however, that when the new service pistol is chosen, one more requirement is added to the present list: the possibility of individual survival. When the enemy is coming through the wire, he must be stopped before he gets to the man carrying the sidearm.



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# IN REVIEW

**THE SOVIET STRATEGY OF TERROR.** by Samuel Francis. The Heritage Foundation, Attn. Publications, 513 C St. NE, Washington, DC 20002, 1981. \$2.00. Review by Fred Reed.

**T**HIS nicely researched study of the link between international terrorism and the Soviet Union was written by a scholar for The Heritage Foundation, the influential Washington think-tank.

In the introduction, Francis begins by pointing out that the involvement of the USSR in terrorism is not well known because established academic writers, enamored of "detente" and imbued with a soft-scientific approach to politics, carefully avoid mention of Russia. He mentions that there are people in the West who simply will not recognize that Russia has ambitions, and who consequently discover endless excuses for Soviet behavior: "The 'hawks' have temporarily ousted the 'doves' in the Politburo; Soviet conquests are really signs of weakness; the invasion of Afghanistan will be a 'Soviet Vietnam'; Soviet aggression is really only a response to Western intransigence; the Russian

mind is inherently 'suspicious,' and so forth."

He then goes on to argue that, while some terrorism is indeed "mindless" and the work of unbalanced individuals, much of it is clearly instigated and supported by the Soviets, often through other nations, for the purpose of creating chaos. The goal, says Francis, is to deprive the West of resources in the Third World by installing leftist governments.

Chapter One gives evidence of Soviet involvement in North Africa, the Middle East, Southern Africa and Western Europe. The detail is considerable and interesting: "Khadafy paid \$10 million for the BSO's assault on the Olympic Village in Munich and provided a state funeral for the terrorists who were killed there." Chapter Two deals with the training of terrorists, the means by which they are supported, and the question of Soviet control of terrorists, pointing out that a group need not be under direct Soviet control, or even agree with Soviet ideology and aims, in order to be useful to Russia.

Chapter Three points out that the very ideology of Marxism-Leninism relies on terror, a fact seldom recognized in the West (Karl Marx: "There is only one way to shorten the murderous death agonies of the old society, only one way to shorten the bloody birth pangs of the new society ... only one means — revolutionary terrorism.") Chapter Four covers strategy and tactics of terrorism, and analyzes the strengths and weaknesses of terrorism as an international weapon.

For those unfamiliar with the subject, this is a good introduction. Those familiar with the field will find much that will be new to them.

**WE LED THE WAY: DARBY'S RANGERS.** By William O. Darby and William H. Baumer. 197 pp. San Rafael, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1981. Review by Fred Reed.

**T**HIS is the story of Darby's Rangers from their formation early in WWII through the remainder of the conflict. Well-written and always interesting, the book puts the unit's battles and training in perspective of the war as a whole without neglecting the details of training and life in combat that provide flavor and realism. Well worth reading for the student of WWII.

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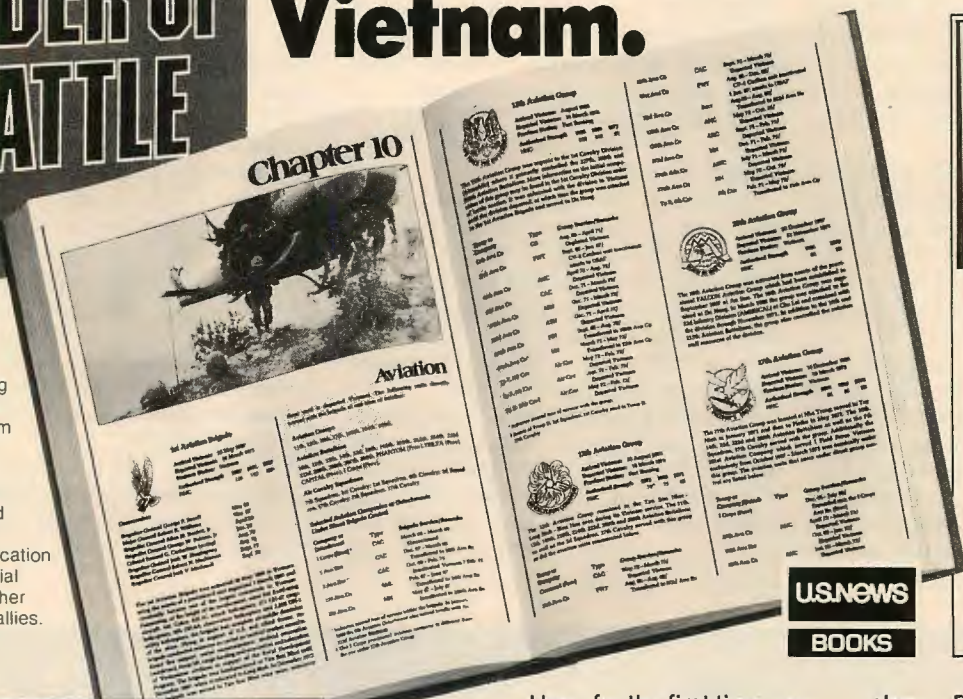
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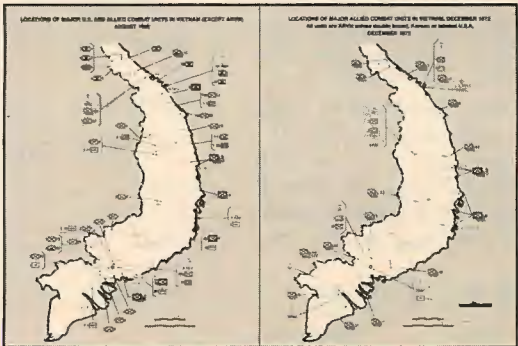
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# It Happened To Me

by Bill Saupe  
as told to M.L. Jones

*Bill Saupe is now a basketball coach at Castleton State College in Vermont, but in 1966 he was one of the original Marine volunteers who started the Combined Action Program in the Republic of Vietnam. After Saupe was shot in a communist ambush on 13 April 1967, Gen. Lewis B. Walt personally presented him with the Purple Heart at Da Nang. When his wounds healed, Saupe became a guerrilla-warfare instructor at the Guerrilla Warfare Training Center, Camp Lejeune, N.C. As he tells it:*

**N**EW Year's Eve, 1966, was probably my most memorable evening during my two tours of Vietnam. I was with Combined Action Company No. 3, located in the village of Thuy Phu, 23 miles south of Hue on Highway 1 in I Corps. Before my transfer to CAC No. 3, I had been assigned further south to a team at Loc Son, where I learned the Vietnamese language and where I'd served as Gen. Walt's interpreter when he visited the village. At Loc Son we had regular VC contact. Although I wasn't a senior member in the unit, I'd become widely known throughout the CAC groups because of my reputation as a Cong killer. I still

remember Nelson, a black Marine who worked in supply in the rear area of Phi Bai, sitting with me over a couple of San Miguel beers, saying: "Soupy, you're a stone killer, man."

By the time I reached Thuy Phu, the Viet Cong had a bounty on my head. They tried to kill me at least twice in the local marketplace. I went on patrols, wearing black pajamas and tire-fashioned sandals, carrying my M14 that had popped more than one VC head like a pumpkin. The villagers, the village chief and the Vietnamese Popular Forces whom I led and beside whom I fought all respected me.

That New Year's Eve at approximately 1800, Le Kim Bat, the village chief, rushed up to me in great distress. He spoke wildly and I had to make him slow down so I could understand what he was saying.

"The VC will come to the village tonight," he cried.

Because of the cease-fire during Tet we'd been ordered not to continue patrols. The VC had decided to use this opportunity to infiltrate and abduct young boys as laborers for the NVA across the border in Laos. The 324 B NVA unit had been operating across the border in our area for the last several months.

Le Kim Bat told me the VC would cross the river at Sector 2, about three miles west of our compound. He said that there was a sandbar in the river from which they would cross directly into one of the outlying hamlets. "They must be stopped!" he cried.

I immediately organized 12 of my best Vietnamese irregulars. We were ready to move at 2200. I'd be the only American on this patrol and without radio or support. Shit, I figured the only one to get a court martial out of this cease-fire violation would be me.

We reached the sandbar somewhere around 2230 and set up our ambush position. My men squatted, their weapons trained across the river.

I peered at the dial on my watch. Three minutes to 12. Back in the World, Guy Lombardo and his band would be playing. Happy New Year, I thought.

Then I heard them. The fuckin' VC were talking as if they owned the place as they approached the river. My men tensed.

The first VC waded into the water and moved slowly toward us. I counted 22 in all. The point had almost reached us when I gave the order to open up.

The M60 raked back and forth across the water and Thompsons, M2 carbines and my M79 kept them from running back across the river. Chun, my BAR man, laughed and fired with pinpoint accuracy at point-blank range. In less than a minute the ambush was over. Communist bodies sprawled in the water. Happy New Year, you mothers.

The next day I received a verbal reprimand from my Executive Officer (EO). After he learned what I had done, he said: "Soupy, you're fuckin' nuts. Good work."



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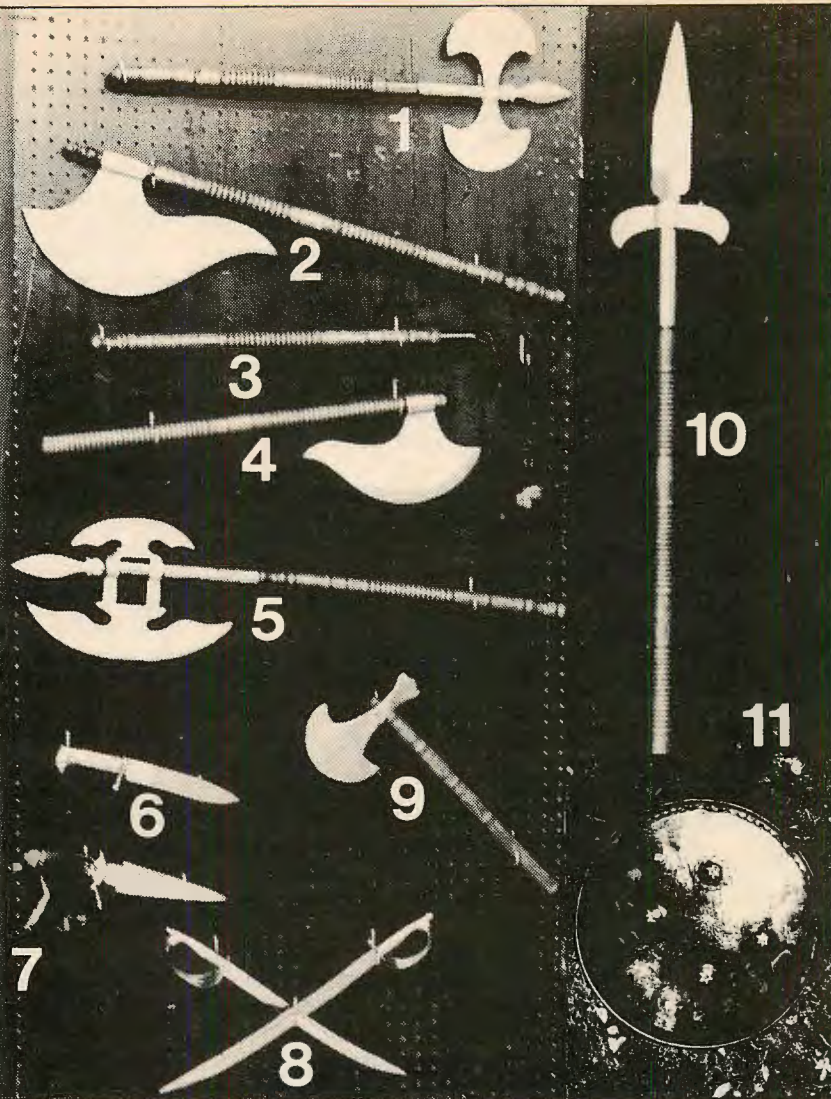
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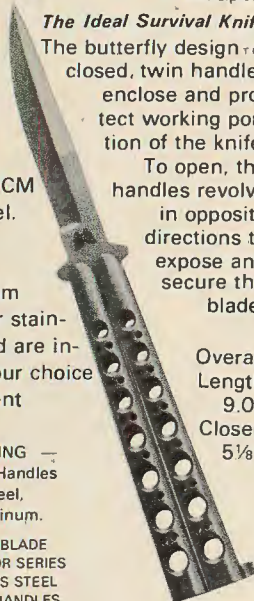
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## I Was There

by Robert D. Andrews  
as told to M.L. Jones

*Robert D. Andrews, now a sergeant in the Marshall County (Ind.) Police Department, sent us two I Was There articles more than a year ago. The first, about an experience during his service in the U.S. Navy in Vietnam, we published in February '81. The other was this police story. As he tells it:*

**B**EING a deputy sheriff in a small county of 40,000 was fairly easy — until that cool August night in 1975. It started out like many: a few dog complaints and one family argument. But after the next call I felt like I was 100 rather than 23.

My dispatcher radioed that an elderly man was walking a mile north of town. She said that he might need some help.

I drove north looking for the old man with my foot on it a little too much so that when I saw him, I overshot my target. As I turned around, I called my dispatcher, saying I had spotted the subject and would be with him shortly.

When I pulled up, the old guy was just in front of my squad car. I could see him clearly in my headlights, and for a brief moment he reminded me of my grandfather.

Then I stepped out of the car — and he pointed a Remington automatic shotgun at my midsection. I instinctively slipped my Model 19 out of its holster and held it

at my side. The opened car door was between us, but sheet metal isn't a match for a shotgun blast.

"Where are you going?" I asked him.

"I'm just taking a walk," he said.

"Why do you have that shotgun?"

"In case I get hungry I can shoot my own food," he said. Then he asked me: "Do you have a problem?"

"No problem," I said. "You're free to go on your way."

He nodded, cradled his shotgun in his arms like a small baby and continued walking.

I holstered my gun and grabbed my radio mike, telling my dispatcher that I had a nut with a gun: "Get me a backup quick!"

She told me that my closest unit was 10 minutes away and she would have him respond.

Ten minutes was just too long to wait; I had no idea what the old man might do with the shotgun. I reached up and grabbed the brace for my red lights and slid across my windshield. Reaching the other side of the car, I could see the old man about 10 feet ahead of me.

I came up behind him, reaching over his shoulders, and made a grab for the gun. Grasping it, I pulled with all my might — and it was mine. At that instant a pickup truck pulled up and a young guy jumped from it, carrying a .30-06 rifle. He had been at home listening to my radio traffic on his police scanner. "Thought I'd come out and give you a hand."

While he covered me, I put the old man in handcuffs and patted him down for more weapons. I found 50 rounds of .12-gauge 00s and a hunting knife that would have put Daniel Boone to shame. When I took the old guy to jail, I looked through his wallet and found his wife's name and phone number.

I called her to tell her that her husband would be staying with us for a while. She was crying. She told me that her husband had left home with his shotgun to find their 32-year-old son. He was going to kill him, because the son had just raped her.



**I**F you have a combat or adventure story for "It Happened to Me" or "I Was There," triple-space type it and send it to SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, Attn: M.L. Jones. All stories should be 500 words or less. Upon publication, SOF will become owner of all publication rights. Submitted articles are subject to editing and revision, although their content and theme will not be changed.

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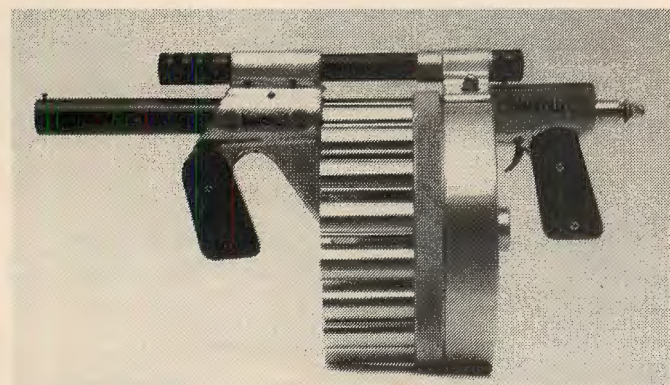
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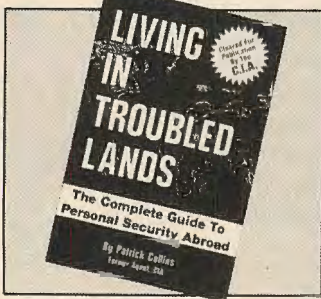
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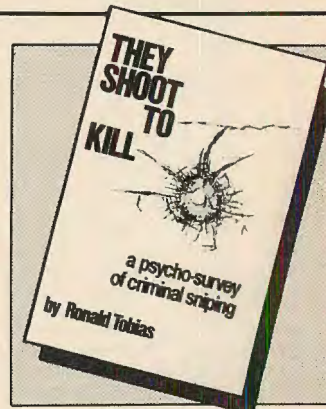
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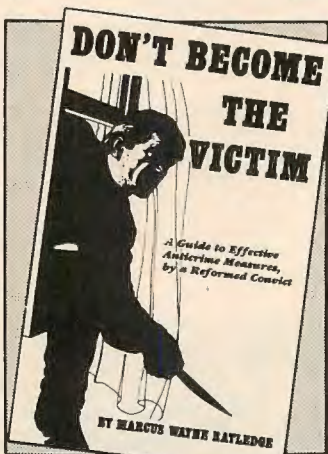
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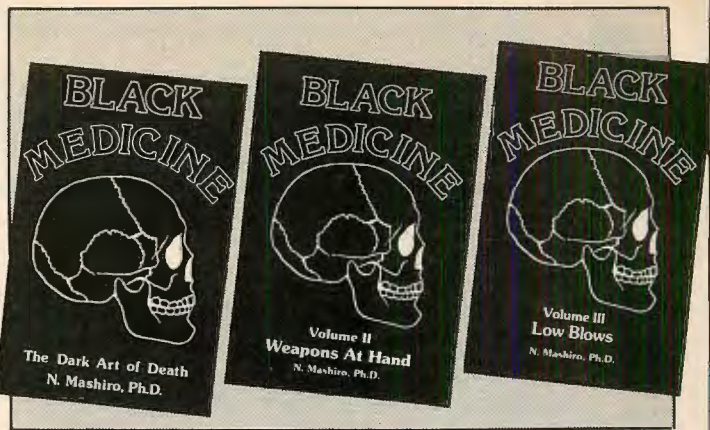
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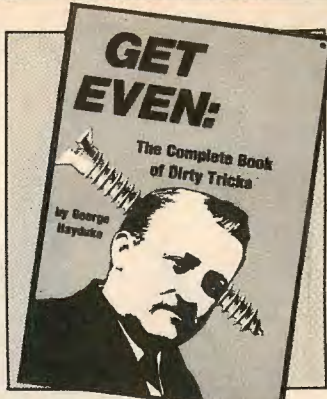
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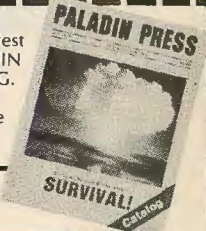
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# The Kid Gets A Dose of Medical Magic in

by Robert V. Larson



## THE TREATMENT

**M**ORNING sick call had ended. The last of the sick and the lame had left the dispensary and were drifting slowly across the camp to their barracks. The doctor had left for his quarters, leaving Staff Sgt. Bernie Westrom, the duty NCO, alone in the treatment room.

Westrom, a stocky, light-haired Swede, clad in bleached khaki shorts and shirt, quickly cleaned up the room. He was about to make his first cup of coffee of the day when he heard a movement at the door. He turned peevishly, and saw the kid private — the one with the impossible name — grinning vapidly at him.

"Too late, kid," Westrom said testily. "Sick call's over. Come back tomorrow at oh-eight-hundred." Westrom did not suffer recruits gladly. They were, he felt, a crawly sub-species of a lower order, created solely to induce pain in the posteriors of weary NCOs.

The grin vanished. "I, ah, *can't* go on sick call, Sarge," the kid said. "I hafta see ya . . . alone."

"Like that, is it?"

"Yeah, Sarge, like that."

"Well," Westrom said. "It's just you and me, so say your piece." He spooned some Nescafe® into a canteen cup.

The kid eased himself into the room and angled his rifle against a wall. He drew a pack of tailormades from an ammo pouch and waved them at the sergeant.

"No, thanks."

The kid pondered a crack in the floor, and then began to trace it with the toe of a dusty shoe. "Uh, Sarge," he said. "I'm in deep shit."

"Yeah?"

"Yeah, I think I caught a dose." He plucked gingerly at his fly.

"So?"

"In my outfit, a guy, he catches the

clap, he can't go home for a year."

Westrom yawned. "You want sympathy, it's in the dictionary, between shit and chancres."

"C'mon, Sarge . . . I mean it's like pissin' broken glass."

"Don't go tellin' me what it's like," Westrom said. "I've treated the drip from the China Wall to Manila, for Chris' sakes, so spare me the gory details. You go dippin' your wick 'thout a rubber, you're gonna get burnt."

"I was drunk," the kid said. His voice was weak and uncertain.

"And you don't catch it from no beer bottle, either."

"Whatever," the kid said. "And then, you know, I heard you was doctorin' some guys on the sly, so I figured maybe you could help me, too . . . sorta off the record, like." He was perspiring now, with the passion of a thoroughly frightened young man.

Westrom poured boiling water into the cup and began to stir with a slow, rhythmic motion. His demeanor was serious, befitting a GI ceremony older than Sherman's March. The kid waited. Not for anything would he have disturbed the sergeant. The American serviceman — usually prone to humor — doesn't laugh or horse around when he brews his morning coffee. It's a solemn ritual that demands instant retribution if interrupted.

The stirring stopped. "So, that's what you heard," Westrom said. He rapped the spoon against the rolled rim of the cup. "Where didja hear that one?"

The kid shrugged. "I dunno. I jus' heard it. A guy, he gets around, he hears things." His face was a disaster area with its crop of leaky pimples.

"Uh huh, and while you was gettin' around out there, didja happen to hear the one about the farmer's daughter?" Westrom took a sip. "Look," he said. "I help a few of you birds outta the kindness of my heart, and then every swingin' dick needs a favor. Tell the truth, I'm all favored out. And what's gonna happen if some yard bird blows a whistle on me?" He snorted. "My ass'll be grass, that's what."

"I swearta God, Sarge," the kid said. "My lips'll be sealed for all time."

Westrom sighed and shook his head. "I don't know, I just don't know." He rotated his cup in a circular motion, thoughtfully regarding the steaming contents.

The kid was absolutely still, his eyes fixed on the sergeant's face in a classic picture of tortured indecision. It was quiet in the room. Over by the kitchen someone was singing lustily, off key: "If you're ever in a jam, here I am," came the reassuring pledge. A fly thudded against a window, the sound surprisingly loud in the heavy silence.

Westrom cleared his throat. "Okay, supposin', just supposin', I help you out," he said, finally. "I gotta be honest. What works for one, might not work for another. You hafta understand that. Your joint could still fall off — like in the shower." He began to make a cigarette.

The kid shuddered. "Mama," he said. "Of course," Westrom continued, "if I was to run a slicky-slicky like that, I'd have to have a little somethin' on the side. The wrong people hear about it, and my ass is signin' in to that ol' bivouac in the sky." He licked the cigarette and waited for a light. The kid complied, hurriedly. Westrom nodded curtly at him and pointed to a chair.

Relieved, the kid sat down. Westrom's nod had recognized him as a co-conspirator. Now they could deal. "I can give ya 10 maybe —"

"Bat shit!"

The kid was shook. "Oh, I —" Westrom drank some coffee. Just right. "Money's not worth a damn," he said. His voice was back to normal.

"Maybe before, but not now. I need some decent chow — cigarettes too — and booze, if you can swing it."

"Okay, okay, Sarge," the kid said. "No sweat. I got a buddy over'n the officers' mess. I'll bring a load over tonight — after dark."

"Eggs. I want fresh eggs," Westrom ordered.

"You'll get eggs," the kid promised. He glanced at his watch. "Now, can ya fix me up? I got guard mount in 15 minutes."

Westrom put down his cup and turned to a white medical cabinet behind the desk. A notice in scrawled red letters was taped across the front. The kid's eyes widened when he read it. "For Urinary Tract Infections, Only!" it said. This is some real good shit, he thought, those're important words. Westrom drew a jar from a shelf, unscrewed the lid and shook a number of large white tablets into his hand, counting them carefully under his breath as he transferred them to the kid's hand. The kid watched, transfixed.

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## The Kid Gets His Pills And Marches Off Happy

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"There," Westrom said, when he'd finished counting. "That'll do it. What you do, see, is to take four of these little bombs every four hours, until they're gone." He was the crisp professional. "You follow me?" The kid nodded, solemnly. "And be sure to drink a lotta fluids. It flushes out the trac'."

"Beer okay?"

"Beer's fine," Westrom said evenly.

The kid dropped the tablets into a shirt pocket and carefully buttoned the flap. "Sarge, what're these little jobbies, anyway?"

"Them? Ah, they came in on the last shipment. Called sulfa."

"Sulfa, huh? It does the trick?"

"Oh, shit yeah! Gooder'n snuff and not as dusty."

"Hot damn!" the kid said. "I sure don't know how to thank ya." He picked up his rifle and patted Westrom on the shoulder. "I'll see ya tonight, Sarge," he said, and went out the door.

Westrom watched the kid walk toward the guard shack at the main gate. He shook his head. "Jesus H. Christ," he said. Then he removed the urinary-tract sign from the cabinet and replaced it with a factual one that read simply: "Sterile Dressings." He was counting the remaining tablets, his lips moving silently, when Pfc. Rhodes came through the door.

"Hi," Rhodes said, amiably. "I jus'

saw ol' whats-his-name, the kid. He was grinnin' like a possum eatin' shit. He get the treatment?"

"Wait." Westrom counted, "Sixty-two, 63 . . . We got 64 pills left. Yeah, he came down with a dose, and I let him sugar me into treatin' him. He's bringin' a load over tonight."

"Goody," Rhodes said.

Westrom lit a cigar. "Let's see," he mused. "Sixty-four, divided by . . . hell! There's only enough for one more treatment."

"No joke? How many guys we treat so far?"

"Includin' the kid? Four so far this month."

"Imagine that," Rhodes said. "Horny bastards, ain't they?" He began to recite an obscene lyric:

"Have you ever been to the Phillipines?"

The place is full of pom-pom queens. The clap is bad, and the syph is worse,

So you beat your meat for safety first."

"When you're finished," Westrom said, "you can get your ass in gear and see how mucha that plaster-of-paris we got left."

Rhodes nodded and moved to a musette bag hanging from the wall. He undid the straps, removed a tightly capped can, lifted the lid and surveyed the contents. Westrom waited, blowing smoke rings at the door.

"We got enough for maybe 200 more pills," Rhodes said.

"That mold clean from last time?"

"Bright and shiny, Sarge."

"Okay, better bake off another batch today, while the sun's out."

"Right away, Sarge . . . Sarge?"

"Yup."

"I been meanin' to ask you. Is it true about the kid? I mean his livin' in Hawaii, and goin' to school there, and everything?"

"Beats the hell outta me," Westrom said airily. "What difference does it make?" He was eating a piece of cold chicken. "All I know is, he speaks damn good English for a Jap guard." He sat down and began to write in the daily medical log. "17 July 1943, Philippine Military Prison Camp No. 1," he wrote.

*Robert V. Larson sent us this short piece with "Judas Tree" (SOF, July '81), his article on his WWII POW experience in the Philippines. We accepted both stories. Larson notes that WWII Pacific Theater vets wouldn't be tricked by the surprise ending of "The Treatment," since they know that it was only the Imperial Japanese Army whose regulations forbade return to the home islands for one year after a soldier was successfully treated for VD. — The Eds.*



Editorial:

# AFGHANS BUY TIME FOR AMERICA

by Leon B. Poullada

**T**HE Soviet thrust toward the Persian Gulf through Afghanistan has fundamentally altered the geo-strategic balance of that region. Further Soviet moves toward the oil fields could not now be countered by American military power without danger of an unacceptable nuclear war. The Red Army demonstrated amazing mobility by deploying nearly 100,000 troops throughout Afghanistan within days.

In contrast, nearly two years after the Carter Doctrine defined the Persian Gulf as vital to American security, the U.S. Rapid Deployment Force is not "rapid" nor "deployed" nor a "force." Interservice rivalries, shortages of transport and manpower, and political resistance by Gulf states have prevented the RDF from becoming a credible deterrent. The RDF requires at least three Army divisions, four air wings, a Marine amphibious force of 50,000 men and two carrier battle groups. At present the pre-positioned ships at Diego Garcia can supply only enough water and ammunition for 15,000 Marines for one month. To airlift one reinforcement mechanized division from the United States requires all the planes of the Military Airlift Command to fly continuously for 13 days. Soviet forces in southern Afghanistan are only 400 land miles from the Straits of Hormuz and their airbase at Shindand has both fighter cover and bomber capability.

Is America then in a hopeless position? Not if we use the Rapid Deployment Force which is already engaged in mortal combat with the Soviets, namely, the Afghan mujahideen or freedom fighters. American failure either to help or use these superb guerrilla fighters has conceded Soviet dominance in the area. It smells of appeasement similar to that which encouraged Hitler and Mussolini to rape Ethiopia, Spain and Czechoslovakia, an appeasement whose price was the holocaust and bloodshed of World War II.

To ignore the Afghan struggle is also a foolish repudiation of American self-interest, because the Afghans are defending the Persian Gulf which is vital to our security. At the moment, they are *better* than an American Rapid Deployment Force because they are an *Instant* Deployment Force already fighting and successfully barring Soviet expansion. They are pinning down nearly 100,000 crack Soviet troops, thus restraining the USSR in Poland and relieving intolerable pressures on Pakistan and on Iran, a country which is the next logical target for Soviet penetration.

Soviet terror tactics, civilian atrocities and genocide in Afghanistan have produced a backlash of revulsion throughout the Third World, especially in Moslem nations. The United States is missing a prime opportunity to align itself with this Islamic revival. Supplying weapons to the mujahideen through the Islamic Conference, which includes most Moslem nations, would enhance American prestige in the Islamic world. The use of this Islamic channel would also reduce the natural reluctance of Moslem Pakistan to serve as a conduit for aid to the mujahideen.

Should Pakistan remain reluctant, it would be fairly simple to supply the light armaments the mujahideen need by utilizing the gun-running professionals along the Makran coast of Baluchistan who have for centuries supplied weapons to the tribes on the Pakistani-Afghan frontier. Aid should go to all groups resisting Soviet aggression, but especially to those fighting inside Afghanistan. Lack of unity among resistance groups should be disregarded. Remember the mess we made in Yugoslavia when we tried to choose between Tito and Mikhailovich. Natural leadership will emerge from the struggle and this problem should be left to the Afghans themselves.

**W**HAT about the risk of Soviet escalation in Afghanistan? For total pacification the Soviets would need at least 300,000 troops. If the mujahideen are well-armed even that level of escalation would probably fail, because the struggle is not merely an insurgency but a national-liberation war involving the entire population of millions fired by the unquenchable flames of independence and Islamic fervor. With more weapons, the mujahideen can multiply faster than the Soviets can escalate. In Afghanistan the Soviets have to use scarce, elite mobile units which would deplete essential forces in Eastern Europe and on the Chinese border. The financial costs of escalation would greatly increase the drain on the weak Russian economy. Growing casualties would reveal to the misinformed Russian people the true Soviet role in Afghanistan. Increased genocide would further inflame Third World and especially Moslem resentment. Even waverers like India might no longer be able to suppress their revulsion. Facing all these costs, Soviet leadership might well react, as it has in the past when meeting firm resistance

*Continued on page 74*

# 7th ANNUAL 2nd CHANCE



Nick Pruitt shows winning form. Weapon is Michigan Armament .45 with Mag-Na-Ported slide, bushing and barrel.

## Five-Pin Pruitt Takes The Prize

Text & Photos by Matt Fredericks



Jim Weller of Pennsylvania State Police makes effective use of M1 carbine during Rolling Thunder event.



Richard Davis takes shooting time-out from running Second Chance match. Weapon is M60 MG.



Lynn Schoenning rolls and thunders with his Remington Model "2200" (two 1100s hooked together).



**N**ICK Pruitt of Piru, Calif., won the principal five-pin match at this year's Second Chance multi-event shoot, and SOF-sponsored John Shaw of West Memphis, Tenn., took second place in three shoot-outs.

The seventh annual Second Chance was again held on owner Richard Davis' property at Central Lake, Mich., but a week later than usual in hope of having better weather. Rain plagued the match the previous two years, but this year it was only a minor annoyance.

Second Chance offered a variety of different matches that gave the shooter a chance to test his or her skills with the pistol, rifle and shotgun. They ranged from the original five-pin event to the four-man versus 40-pins. All have several things in common: fast times, fierce competition and excellent prizes.

Pruitt won the five-pin match with a total time of 24.1 seconds. He used a .45 auto built by Michigan Armament. The gun had been Mag-Na-Ported right through the slide, bushing and barrel and it made a significant difference in recoil. I fired some of Pruitt's bowling-pin loads in my .45 and they kicked like hell! In his .45, however, they felt like hardball.

Shaw came in second in this event with a total of 24.9 seconds. Shaw used a custom .45 built by Jimmy Clark, and showed the skills that have made him the 1980 U.S. IPSC champion. For his efforts, Shaw won a Police Marksman Association commemorative set that consisted of two stainless-steel Rugers.

The two-man event involved two shooters working together to clear 10 pins off the table. Nick Pruitt and Mike Murray won this event with a time of 3.6 seconds. Both Pruitt and Murray used pistols built by Michigan, but Murray's was a bull-barrel stainless-steel .357 Magnum revolver.

June 1981 was the last year for "Rolling Thunder." This event pitted four shooters against 40 pins. Their armament consisted of a handgun, eight-shot riot gun, 10-shot riot gun and a submachine gun or M1 carbine. The team of Chudwin, Kulovitz, Lonsdale and Provience won this event with a time of 9.0 seconds. Rolling Thunder has been eliminated because of the excessive time necessary to set it up. It was, however, an awesome display of firepower that had to be seen to be appreciated.

The nine-pin event was designed for the 9mm shooter. The pins are placed at the back of the table so they do not have to roll as far. Dave Wheeler, an LAPD sergeant, won this event with a time of 4.9 seconds. John Shaw was a close second with a time of 5.0 seconds. Bill Wilson of Ber-



**Shooter blasts away with custom .45 during five-pin event. Heavy loads were a common sight at Second Chance match.**

ryville, Ark., came in sixth with the sharpest-looking, most accurate Browning High Power I've ever shot!

The seven-pin event was new for 1981. Sponsored by the makers of HKS speedloaders, it was designed for the revolver shooter. The competition was fierce in this highly popular

match. Gary Woodworth, a top IPSC revolver shooter, won the unlimited class with a time of 5.7 seconds. Dave Wheeler was in the four-inch class with a time of 5.9 seconds. Wheeler used a bank shot on his winning run to clear seven pins with only six shots.

The Banzai Charge, Bang & Clang (BCBC) was an event in which the competitor had to run uprange and set up a number of metallic targets before returning to the firing line and attempting to knock them down. Lanny Provience won it with a score of 59.85 seconds. John Shaw was again a close second with a time of 1:03.46.

The Light Rifle Pop And Flop was similar to the BCBC in that the competitor was required to set up his targets before starting. In this event, however, the targets were the familiar bowling pins. Jeff Chudwin won this event with a .223 rifle. Chudwin's winning time was a super-fast 53.17 seconds. John Shaw (again) came in second with a time of 56.4 seconds. The weapons here were restricted to .223 or lighter.

Kathy Goodall of Colorado Springs, Colo., was the top woman in the five-pin event with a total time of 42 seconds for five runs. Goodall won an S&W Model 66 .357 Magnum for her efforts.

John Farnam was present with his Duelatron system, and as usual there were long lines of shooters waiting to try this course. Farnam doesn't just stand there, but instructs the shooter in those tactics that will help him survive a lethal confrontation.

Also present were representatives from Heckler & Koch and Smith & Wesson. H&K had a number of full-automatic weapons that competitors were allowed to shoot and examine. S&W had its new handguns and riot guns on display.

Although other matches may have larger prize lists, the Second Chance match is the most fun. Richard Davis puts on a feed equal to the shoot. An entire cow was roasted each day, and there were hot dogs, chicken and other things to eat. It's easy to understand the spirit of cooperation among Second Chance competitors, often sadly lacking at other large matches.



## JOHN SHAW

At first glance, John Shaw might seem to be a good ole Southern boy. Slow of speech, Shaw has a quiet approach to life that routinely lulls his opponents into a false sense of security. A big man, he is nonetheless extremely quick.

The best measure of his ability is the fact that he is the only two-time U.S. IPSC champion (see "IPSC Nationals," SOF, November '81). Even more significant is the fact that he did it two years in a row. His other honors include superb finishes at the first SOF match in 1980 and Second Chance this year. Shaw's most unusual achievement at Second Chance (above) came when he beat a number of this country's top IPSC shooters while using an out-of-the-box S&W Model 27 .357 Magnum in a revolver class.

John Shaw may have a slow draw, but there's nothing slow about his draw or intelligence. His speed must be seen to be appreciated and his ability to evaluate and analyze courses of fire is proven by his consistently outstanding performances. Shaw and I have been known to have some rather serious differences of opinion, but I've never doubted his ability. If anyone deserves recognition, it's John Shaw. —M.F.



## ON MERCENARY WORK IN EL SALVADOR

by Robert Burton

*The Lure of the Tropics:* That's the title of a well-known ballad sung in many a Central American cantina by visitors — visitors with mayhem, money and military adventure in mind. The song, by an unknown author, declares:

"Six short months went by before  
I was back there on the job,  
Running a war in Salvador  
With a barefoot, brown-faced mob.

"A mob that made me general  
Leading a 'grand' revolt  
And my only friend from start to  
end  
Was a punishing Army Colt.

"I might have become their presi-  
dent  
A prosperous man of means,  
But a gunboat came and spoiled  
my game  
With a hundred and ten marines  
..."

That there is a "lure" cannot be denied. It's magnetic, demanding attention! It's hot, seductive and sweaty. Like a wet sarong draped on brown skin. Once the tropics grasp you with a hot, muscular fist, you're hooked.

A warning to those thinking of visiting Central America: Bring some skills with you!

There is work available to those who can make the contact/contract. Bring three things with you: common sense, patience and a marketable skill. Obviously, military skills are in demand, but forget about computer range officer, nuclear demo MOS, submarine-guidance-systems technician, or any skill which will be out of place in a land still fighting 1923-style. It's a soldiers' war, *not* a technicians'.

Can you read a military map? Use a compass? Understand what topography is? Use and strip a CAR-15, AK-47, M16? Know anything about emergency treatment of wounds? Know when *not* to use morphine? Can you communicate to your potential employer? (In other words, can you speak Spanish?)

Remember, like other merc operations, you're not part of a large American military command. It's YOU alone — and you have to talk to people of nations that have an average literacy rate of 40 percent. That means few speak English and a great number cannot *read* Spanish. In El Salvador this past June, one soldier manning a road-block "read" a text

# EL SALVADOR SIDELIGHTS

## Jottings From A Reporter's Notebook

by Bob Poos

printed in Spanish while holding it upside down. Seeing the official seal (also upside down), he waved me on. Learn Spanish. Most communities have language classes. And if your community doesn't have one, check nearby communities.

Specialize in a military skill. It's a war of small units, counter-guerrilla warfare, small groups of men chasing other groups of men. And chase they do — which brings us to another fact of life: How's your physical condition?

Are you ready for that climb up a 7,000-foot mountain? (And one hell of a run down if there are too many guerrillas?) Some very long walks under stress would help. Do some serious hiking with a pack (at least a 50-pounder) and get your wind up. Lots of running. War in Central America is a very serious business. Get your immunization against certain diseases: yellow fever, malaria, cholera, etc. Disease can be worse than a round.

Take everything very seriously there, from the minute the plane off-loads to the minutes waiting in ambush. It's a minute-by-minute lifestyle. Social life is sleepy, slow and sensual. War is explosive, fast-moving and totally unpredictable.

Remember, patience is a must-have value in El Salvador and throughout Central America. A white or black mercenary will stick out like a sore-thumb. You don't want to be at their mercy for anything. Know why you are there. Know who the bad guys are; especially know who the good guys are. And if you don't get shot, everything should work out okay. Oh yes — don't drink the water.

### CUSTOMS BOOT

SOF correspondents Bob Burton and Bob Poos were detained briefly at the San Salvador airport by soldiers when customs officials discovered that each had a pair of Vietnam jungle boots in his luggage.

Poos was almost through customs when a soldier came running up, saying, "If you've got combat boots with you, we wish to talk to you." Poos was then escorted into a bare green room, equipped only with an ancient wooden desk and some chairs.

Burton was already there, being interrogated by a sergeant.

Both were quickly released when Burton produced a letter from Col. Jose Guillermo Garcia, Minister of Defense, welcoming them to the country and telling authorities to give them all cooperation possible.

An official later told the two the reason the army is so sensitive about such gear is that a Scandinavian mercenary, on his way to join the guerrillas, and equipped with boots, uniform, etc., had once been intercepted by customs.

### DOWN THE ROAD

It is 56 kilometers to San Salvador from the airport and about the only way to get there is to rent a car unless you are lucky enough to catch one of the infrequently run buses.

So that's what SOF correspondents Bob Poos and Bob Burton did.

On the way there, Poos checked his notes and realized that this highway was the object of frequent guerrilla ambushes of vehicles. And it's the same location where three American nuns and a lay worker were killed.

Poos scooted down as far as he could on the passenger side and Burton's eyes could barely be seen above the dashboard. No use in making it easy for snipers.



SOF Correspondent Bob Burton (right) listens while El Salvador's Defense Minister Col. Jose Guillermo Garcia talks about effort to end communist activity in his country. Photo: Bob Poos

## GARCIA INTERVIEW

*SOF managed to obtain a rare interview from Col. Jose Guillermo Garcia, El Salvador's Minister of Defense, during the recent visit there by Executive Editor Bob Poos and Contributing Editor Bob Burton.*

**SOF:** What is this war all about?

**GARCIA:** We're fighting a war to preserve democracy from communism. We're fighting for the security of Central America, all the Americas, for that matter.

**SOF:** When did the war begin?

**GARCIA:** Well, it's been brewing for years, but it really started in earnest

last January when the guerrillas felt that they were well enough armed and trained to start their so-called "final offensive." That's when the fighting began in earnest and it's been going on ever since.

**SOF:** How much training do your troops get?

**GARCIA:** Not much by your [U.S.] standards. Six weeks' basic training and then another six weeks, if they are not required in the battle lines. Our young soldiers are not professionals. They serve only for 2 to 2½ years and then most of them return to their farms or to school.

**SOF:** What is the army's morale like?

**GARCIA:** The army's morale is very high. My young soldiers are brave. [SOF learned on the battlefield that that is so.] Despite the fact of being in a very hard war, there is no desertion problem. Wounded men even ask to be sent back into battle. The soldiers have earned the people's respect. [That is also true, SOF discovered.]  
**SOF:** How well equipped is each side?

**GARCIA:** The communists are well equipped with FN-FAL assault rifles, RPG rockets and RPD machine guns. We have a hodgepodge of weapons and need to standardize them. We have G-3s, some M16s and a variety of others. [SOF saw men carrying M1 and M2 U.S. Carbines, one with a captured FN-FAL, and some with Mauser Mod. 98s.]

We would like to adopt your M16 as our standard rifle and we need 60mm and 81mm mortars badly. Most of all, we need more mobility, both in the air and on the ground. We need more helicopters and trucks to move the troops to the front. We need some more fighter aircraft. And we need radar to detect the communist supply planes that fly in from Nicaragua. The only radar we have now is the eyes of the people who see the planes and tell us where they were. [SOF saw an airdrop panel that the guerrillas used as a target for the Nicaraguan supply planes. It was among more than a ton of weapons and other material that Alpha Co., 1st Bn., 5th Brigade, seized from a guerrilla battalion headquarters — see "The War in El Salvador," SOF, November '81.]

The colonel, who is five feet, five inches tall, weighs 150, has been in the army for 27 years and has piercing brown eyes, added:

"Our cause is just and we will pursue it."

## CITY AMBUSH

SOF Executive Editor Bob Poos and Contributing Editor Bob Burton drove smack into a cleverly planned but poorly executed ambush their second night in San Salvador.

Burton and Poos, both former Marines, had been invited to be guests at the U.S. Embassy's Marine Detachment semi-monthly TGIF party and were on their way there in a cab when they were rudely interrupted.

In the midst of a traffic jam at a stoplight, guerrilla gunfire broke out. But the taxi driver apparently was an old hand at such things. He drove over a curb, through the parking lot of a filling station and up the wrong way on a one-way street.

Down the right way came a truckload of government troops, part of the elite San Carlos Brigade, charged with protecting the city. They wore flak jackets and carried M16s.

Such a response was just what the guerrillas expected — and wanted.

As the government troops leaped from their truck, the terrorists fired an M79 round at them. However, their aim was bad. The round hit a tree instead of the truck and stunned the terrorists.

The troops then very professionally killed two of the terrorists. One got away.



Photo: Bob Poos



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Ultimate "game gun": .45 Devel Gammon.

# DAY OF THE GAMMON

## Devel's Pistol of The Future

Text & Photos by Sgt. Gary Paul Johnston

**A**T 10:00 a.m., Saturday, 23 May 1981, Mickey Fowler stepped up to the barricades. It was the last day of the 1981 Bianchi Match, held at the Ray Chapman Academy in Columbia, Mo. (See SOF's coverage of the event in our October '81 issue.) Fowler had shot well during the first three days, but competitors such as Mark Duncan and Nick Pruitt were still in the running. Fowler

Mickey Fowler shoots Devel Gammon at 1981 Bianchi Match.



loaded the big new automatic that had caused so much commotion and shot all of the strong- and weak-hand stages. When the smoke cleared, Mickey Fowler had picked up all the marbles. The .45 Devel "Gammon" had arrived.

But I was a witness to its evolution from blueprint to weapon. "What I'm going to show you is confidential," Charles Kelsey told me, when he showed me the initial drawings of the Gammon. I studied its unique mechanism, which was like nothing I had ever seen before. Kelsey told me he got the idea for the new design after he saw the pistol John Shaw used at the 1980 IPSC Nationals. He and his friend, Will Haupthoff, were in the process of designing the Gammon especially for top IPSC shooter Mickey Fowler. Kelsey asked Fowler what features he wanted in a winning-game gun, and Will Haupthoff was responsible for turning Kelsey's idea and Fowler's requests into reality.

When Kelsey first explained the mechanics of the gun to me, my first impression was "overkill." The design was fabulous, but it seemed to go beyond practical needs. When I fully understood the concept of the Gammon, however, I realized that it was indeed a practical game gun.

The Gammon is not just a gun, but a system. It was designed for adaptability. Every facet of this gun has a functional purpose in competition. I knew the Gammon would give a winning edge to any shooter - if it worked.

I had taken one of Devel's first custom-combat .45 Colt autos to Jeff Cooper's American Pistol Institute, so I knew what Kelsey and his boys could do with the Colt system. I looked up from the blueprint. "I think it'll work," I told Kelsey, not explaining that my answer was really a mixture of simple faith in Devel products and high-school-level knowledge of physics.

I followed the Gammon's progress almost daily, and saw its transition from paper into metal. The weapon began as a new Colt .45 Mark IV, Series 70; however, as new parts took shape under the deft hands of Jerry Baker and Rick Westfall, most similarities to the Colt ended. Irv Stone, of Bar-Sto Precision Machine (Dept. SOF, 633 S. Victory Blvd., Burbank, CA 91502), made a special 6¼-inch barrel to Devel's



Pause from inspection: (left to right) Charles Kelsey, author, and Dan Stanton, Tom Hunter and Jim Fischer, three of the boys from Devel.

specifications for the Gammon, and Walt Wolff, of Wolff Gunspringmakers Co. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 232, Ardmore, PA 19003), began to create a new type of spring to work the mechanism.

New Devel innovations were incorporated in the Gammon's frame and slide. Some of these will be standard features in future custom-Colt conversions to be done by the Devel Corporation. These options will include a specially designed roller in the feed ramp, similar in concept to the roller used in Devel's custom S&W Model 39s (see "Pistols with Polish," SOF, November '80). This roller will ensure that Devel's Colt conversions will reliably feed any .45 ACP ammo. Another feature that will be available on Devel's custom Colts is their superior method of mounting the Devel-modified Colt-Elliason rear sight.

The Gammon's unique features remained closely guarded secrets until the pistol was developed and placed in the hands of Mickey Fowler. When handfitting and assembly were completed, and the Gammon was ready for test-firing, Kelsey took the gun to the Air National Guard Marksmanship Training Unit in Nashville, Tenn., where it was shot in a machine rest with various loads. As expected, the Gammon shot 2½-inch groups at 50 yards, but more importantly, it performed flawlessly, and a week later it was in Mickey Fowler's hands.

Fowler outdid the machine rest, shooting a two-inch group prone at 50 yards with the Gammon. He was delighted - and rushed the gun back to Devel for final finishing and hard-chrome plating. The Gammon was

then "set up" especially for the Bianchi Match, and rushed back to Fowler so he could practice with it.

And so, Mickey Fowler, one of the world's top shooters, came to the Bianchi Match with - to date - the ultimate "game gun." At the match, I asked Fowler how he liked the Gammon. "Fabulous," he said. "It feeds anything, and recoils like a cap gun."

At the match, Mickey Fowler and the Gammon performed superbly; both are winners. The Devel Corporation is a winner too, as are all the people who contributed their talents and determination to see the Gammon Project through, from concept to physical reality.

Because the Gammon Project will be a continuing research-and-development program for Devel's conversions in the future, the shooting fraternity should keep abreast of its progress. Now that the Gammon is in Mickey Fowler's hands, that future looks better and better. For more information on all Devel products, write Devel Corp., Dept. SOF, 3441 W. Brainard Rd., Cleveland, OH 44122.







# **“REBEL” IN RHODESIA**

**Part 2: From Ballads to  
Battlefields: American On Op  
With The Black Devils**

**by Michael “Reb” Peirce**



# "REBEL"

## Along the road I saw the devastation of terrorist war.

Just as he got his big break in his musical career — and after 10 long years of trying and traveling — singer/songwriter Michael Peirce decided to postpone it to try his luck at an entirely different vocation. Having always been a military-history buff, Peirce felt he had missed out on an important experience by never having been a soldier (he had been rejected from the U.S. Army for medical reasons). So, prompted by an article in SOF (see "The Black Devils," January '79), Peirce wrote to the Rhodesian army recruiter.

Peirce was not put off by the negative response he received, interpreting it instead as acceptance, and proceeded to sell off his belongings — including his guitar — and pack himself and his lifesavings off to Salisbury, arriving with only one pound, 50 pence to his name.

He persuaded the customs man to call the recruiting office, and soon found himself face to face with Maj. Darrell Winkler of the Rhodesian Armored Car Regiment, with whom he was to enjoy a memorable relationship. Winkler got him into, and would later get him out of, the Rhodesian army.

In subsequent weeks, Peirce discovered what it was like to be a raw recruit, and began adjusting to the demanding military life. His nearly useless left eye proved no obstacle since, as the examiner explained, "We use our right eye for shooting, don't we?" So, Peirce swore on for three years.

When he was four days from being posted to Rhodesian Light Infantry (RLI) training, a rumor went around that the regiment was going operational. Thanks to a "mad" staff sergeant, who ended up one man short, Peirce got to go along in the major's stick. The objective: a group of 60 terrorists in the Chinamora Reserve near Dombashawa, 40 klicks from Salisbury.

So, "100 of the most bloodthirsty men" Peirce had ever seen set out in a column of Elands, Ferrets and APCs, and Peirce saw his first action. The regiment debarked, split into sticks and started pounding a hill with 90mm rounds, 50s and .30 Brownings. Then, at the major's command of "Take 'em!", Peirce joined others in firing at two approaching figures. They soon discovered their targets to be a man and a child; only the man was hit. A follow-up action report revealed that they had also taken out three armed terrorists. That's

when Peirce reconciled himself — as all soldiers must — to the inevitable: death in combat and his participation in it.

A few days later, Peirce and Dino, another nervous recruit from Armored Cars, reported to RLI Barracks for training — for tough and uncompromising physical and mental training. He found himself in the hard-working "blue" squad, for which he was charged with composing marching songs, and he made some fast friends.

Peirce's nickname, Rebel, arose from his RLI training. Having spent most of his life in the South, he didn't care for it when people called him "Yank." "That's Rebel to you," he'd always reply. The name stuck.

A week before returning to Armored Cars, Peirce ripped a muscle in his chest on the assault course. Due

Gradually it sank in that we were now members of a battalion, the fearsome days at RLI behind us forever. We felt pretty good and took pride in our military bearing and physical fitness. The best part was that now we had the right to wear our berets instead of the hated "cunt caps." Lt. Hartley kindly gave us four days' leave to recuperate from basic training and I proceeded to go on a binge that left me bleary-eyed and destitute.

Come Monday, I drew a rifle and five magazines to escort a sparky (electrician) to work on some Ferrets that were acting up. The sparky was an amiable guy called Nate, who wisely insisted we spend the first night in Umtali lest we be ambushed traveling after dark.

Shortly after we arrived at the armored-troops bivouac in Umtali, I



Typical RLI vehicles. APC is Rhodesian-manufactured "Bullet."

to his injury, the training officer informed him that he could opt for a non-combat outfit. Not having come all that way to be in motor transport, Peirce went to his sergeant and demanded a combat assignment.

With a weary smile, the sergeant replied, "Shut up. You'll be returning to your regiment tomorrow and you'll be taking the course on armored vehicles. You've got your combat assignment; now get out of my office — and good luck."

**N**O brass bands greeted Dino and me when we returned to Armored Cars. We did escort duty while we waited for the armored training course to begin. We got private rooms at the Corporals' Mess (what a luxury) and rekindled old acquaintances.

discovered that Nate's motive for stopping was not security alone. He seemed to know everybody in town, and took Dino and me out partying. Scarcely recovered from my four-day pass, I couldn't keep up the pace. About three in the morning, I gingerly opened one eye and discovered it was raining and that I was lying in a pool of water in the back of the open truck. Nate and a new female friend were calmly discussing the feasibility of joining me in back.

Early next morning we made our way to Chipenga. The road between Birchenough Bridge and Chipenga afforded me a good look at the devastation terrorist warfare had brought to Rhodesia. No building, not even a native hut, was untouched. We saw blackened spaces in the road at reg-

ular intervals where vehicles had burned out in ambushes. For the final 60 kilometers we kept our weapons on full automatic and both eyes open.

The battle camp at Chipenga was a depressing affair manned by a motley assortment of territorial troops on call-up and BSAP (British South African Police) personnel. The Armored Cars contingent consisted of our only African armored troop, with four Ferrets commanded by a rotund staff sergeant named Van Niekerk. Nate quickly diagnosed the electrical defects he'd come to correct as minor, and announced we could head back to Salisbury that same night. Van Niekerk, lonely for white men to talk to, invited us to stay until the end of the week, which meant we could avoid the routine hassles of depot and still make it back for our weekend pass. Gratefully, we accepted his offer and spent the week relaxing and watching others work.

We returned to depot just in time for a Friday afternoon regimental sergeant major's parade, best described as a general bollicking. RSM Van Breda was from the pre-electronic age and didn't need amplification. You could hear him for at least three miles when he bellowed, and he had eagle eyes which could apparently see through walls — as many chastened troopies learned to their sorrow. The RSM had no use for idle bodies. After a grueling half hour of abuse from this kindly gentleman, it was off to town to resume the eternal search for female companionship.

Dino and I went out together, but his methods turned me off so we split up. He told the young ladies of Salisbury some fantastic lies. At one point, he picked up an ordinary piece of grass, broke it in half and told a girl, "Nobody's passed this way in over six hours."

"How do you know that, Dino?"

"They teach us that sort of thing in Scouts, darlin', but it's hush-hush, you know."

Troops with AKMSs stand in front of T-55 tank. (Eyes blacked-out at author's request.)



# "REBEL"

## Fun in the sun with a Browning MG.

She looked up at him with admiration, and off they went to a hotel room for further discussion of a more intimate nature. Preferring a more honest approach, I ended up going home alone to an empty bed.

Monday rolled around, and with it came the new recruits from intake 163, fresh out of Llewellyn Barracks. Their arrival in depot marked the beginning of the armored training course. Dino, a tricky old Scotsman named Colin (Mac) MacDonald and I were the only guys on the course who were over 18. Naturally, our attitude toward training differed from that of our 40 youthful comrades. We wanted to learn how to handle the equipment, but had no desire to participate in the less-pleasant aspects of the course. We'd had enough of that at RLI.

The first few days of the course were filled with gratuitous harassment by the instructors at the behest of the training officer, Lt. Turnball. Known throughout the battalion as Vicki Vomit, he had the disposition of a rattlesnake. His top NCO was an eccentric character named Jerry Vorster, who gave us a unique orientation lecture:

"This regiment is wanked! Why? Because that Yank major is a fuck-up. The quartermaster is an idiot and so is the adjutant. The mechanics and armorers are a bunch of wasters and the training officer is an asshole! Besides the RSM, there is only one real soldier in the regiment: me!"

Vorster was a real character. When he took us for drill he reminded me of a demented conductor of some Wagnerian symphony, running wildly around the squad, waving his arms and cursing in three languages.

A few days later, we formed a convoy and traveled out to Katanga Range for a few weeks of fun in the sun. The new course was doing "B" vehicles and armored infantry. Regular Troop came with us to do a shoot before they qualified on Elands and went into the squadrons.

The days were long and the work hard, but I rather enjoyed it. We learned to drive and maintain the four-fives, big Mercedes trucks obtained from our German friends in the happier times before sanctions. The instructors encouraged slow learners to better performance with wooden switches, and occasionally made them run behind moving vehicles so they could experience firsthand the misery they would undergo if they washed out of the armored course and went to the infantry. The instruc-

tors often threatened us with a transfer to the infantry, which men in armored cars called "human mine detectors." A hollow threat, really, since most of us ended up as infantry anyway.

We learned to service the vehicles and fill out various forms, including the ominous "Mine Incident Report." About 20 of us, fairly decent drivers, got our four-five licenses and went to armored-infantry training. The instructor, an amusing individual named Van der Valt, considered himself a tough guy on a par with John Wayne.

He pulled me out of ranks one day and said in his best Hollywood style, "You! Yankee wanker. You're pretty



"Rebel" (right) and friend on patrol in Rhodesian bush. "Reb" carries captured Hungarian Model 48 7.62 SMG which is a copy of Soviet PPSH M1941. Other weapon is Uzi. Photo: "Reb" Peirce

big and I need a big dummy like you to carry the machine gun."

"But, Sarge, I don't know anything about these Brownings."

"Then I guess you'd better learn, Yank — by tomorrow!"

Fortunately, Allan Jones was with Regular Troop and we soon organized a private class in which I learned the ins and outs of the rebored 7.62mm Browning machine gun. To their credit, at least six of the young Rhodesian national servicemen heard about this and insisted on sitting in on the class.

Armored-infantry training was fun. They taught us how to probe for mines with a radio antenna, how to pull a wounded man out of a vehicle, and basic blitzkrieg. Sgt. Van der Valt was extremely lazy, which helped.

One day we spent a few hours jumping out of the APCs and skirmishing forward by numbers. The damn machine gun got heavy, but compared to RLI the going was easy. We had just climbed back aboard the vehicle when old Clarence (as Van der Valt was known throughout the battalion) gave me a tough-guy look and said out of the corner of his mouth, "Well,

Yank, I guess you see now it's not all fun and games, is it?"

Knowing a good thing when I saw it, I wiped imaginary sweat off my brow and said, "Gosh, Sarge, this is a little harder than I expected."

Pleased, he told us to take the afternoon off and had me referee a rugby game, a sport about which I knew absolutely nothing. MacDonald, a hustler from way back, got himself put in charge of the canteen, which at Katanga served soft drinks to the troopies and beer to the instructors. Three gentlemen from the ranks toasted the unwitting generosity of our superiors.

One night we got into a poker game



Black Devil trooper holds captured Dragonov after successful bush patrol. Photo: "Reb" Peirce

with three of the corporals. One, an Englishman named Borret, insisted we drop the official title and call him Rick. My luck was running good and I cleaned out the whole gang.

"Well, Rick, you can't win 'em all," quoth I, packing his money into my wallet.

"That's Corporal Borret to you, you Yank bastard."

We decided to celebrate my good luck with another drink, but Mac told us to lay low until the officers hit the sack. His temper fueled with alcohol, Dino got bent out of shape and started making a lot of noise about how he wanted a drink and wanted it now. Since he was threatening our whole game plan, I told him, "Shut up, stupid. You'll blow the whole thing!"

He flew into a rage and whipped out a knife. I eased my blade out from under my makeshift pillow and said quietly, "Knives are dangerous toys, man."

To my astonishment, Dino grabbed the nearest recruit, an 18-year-old kid named Marais, and screamed, "You probably think I'm stupid, too! Don't you? Admit it or I'll cut you into little



pieces!" Then he looked over at me to see what effect this had.

"Dino, I don't give a shit if you carve him up or not. Just keep that sticker away from me." Poor Marais turned green around the gills, but Dino finally quieted down and drifted into a drunken slumber.

Toward the end of our little excursion, we fell in with clean uniforms and no extra magazines for a night map-reading exercise. Being cautious, I concealed four extra mags, a knife and a pistol in various pockets.

I had to go to the Golden Mile nightclub with all that gear weighing me down. The map-reading exercise was a blind: The instructors had decided we needed some entertainment and took us into Que Que to a cabaret. There a comedy act from England entertained us. The jokes were funny, the music good. We all got plastered. The female singer came out for an encore and the boys started hollering, "Rebel, Rebel, you sing one!"

So up to the stage I went, Lion Lager in hand, to lead the boys in a rousing chorus of "Out there having fun, in that warm Rhodesian sun!" Even the instructors sang with us, and we left the Golden Mile feeling no pain.

Back in Katanga, we heard sobering news. One man in the 10-man detail left to guard the camp had ac-

cidental blown himself up.

Katanga being a range utilized by the air force and the army, the officers had repeatedly warned us not to pick up unexploded goodies. One of our young recruits, Trooper Jones — Patches to his mates — had tried to pound a dented 30mm round back into shape and blown off his hands and most of a foot. The tent looked like a sieve. Next morning, I was one of the men detailed to clean up the mess — not a pleasant task. We had to bury the leftover bits of flesh. Patches lived because Allan Jones, on the scene when it happened, ignored Patches' pleas to "shoot me, please." Instead he applied tourniquets.

The next day, Lt. Harvey joined Patches in the intensive-care ward. He was practicing throwing grenades from the turret of an Eland when his hand caught on the AA mounting. He dropped the grenade and it went off, tearing up his legs and torso and putting him out of action for months.

Gloom descended over the camp. Two casualties, and we hadn't even seen combat yet. The instructors kept us busy our last few days at Katanga. We spent a lot of time running around with rifles over our heads, legs over our shoulders and thumbs up our asses. It made me mad, but it took the boys' minds off Harvey and Patches. The finale of the three-week exercise

**Black Devils prepare to move out. Eland armored car, South African-manufactured copy of French Panhard AML, leads. Note 90mm cannon and 7.62 Browning on turret. Photo: John Crawford**

was an attack on a mock-up village with armored cars and infantry. I enjoyed it immensely.

The instructors were curiously non-committal about our next move. We returned to Salisbury and found out why. Rhodesia was preparing to abandon the outdated policy of white-minority rule and the army was to keep terrorists from disrupting the election of the first black prime minister.

Training Troop was standing down. Fleshed out with a few territorials, we organized as "A" Squadron, RhACR, with our instructors as stick leaders and Lt. Turnball in command. We lined up, counted off and formed into 10-man sticks. To my disgust, I ended up in Rick Borret's group. Borret was shitting in his knickers at the thought of combat duty. I managed to get out of his gang when Clarence made me a better offer.

"Yank," he said, punching me in the stomach for emphasis, "I want you as my gunner and MacDonald as my radio man. I'll be getting the shit jobs and I want some older guys in my stick. Say the word and I'll arrange it with Borret." Done.

# "REBEL"

I reported to work looking like a walking bruise.



Maj. Winkler's two-five halts while troops scout area.

Photo: Robert K. Brown

Clarence Van der Valt rubbed a lot of people the wrong way but, basically, he was a decent guy. Besides, he was the only one of the instructors with real combat experience. So Mac, Dino and I would be together on our first big op.

We got our vehicles and supplies organized, and got one day off. I was boozing it up at the Park Lane Hotel when I heard Mac's voice above the crowd. He was in trouble. A couple of greasy-looking Rhodies wanted to start a fight. I gave my glasses to the guy I was with, a fellow from pay corps with only one hand, and eased over to Mac. The minute I opened my mouth there was trouble.

"Listen to that accent, will you. What's a bloody Yank doing here? We don't want you bastards over here."

Considering that I was leaving next morning to fight for his country, I was not amused. Judging that a fight was inevitable, I took the initiative and knocked the big mouth on his ass. He got up with his hand extended and said, "No hard feelings, is there?"

Like a chump, I took his hand. Then the roof fell on me. My last conscious

act was to kick the gentleman between the legs. Then I was eating shoe leather. Four guys had crept up behind me and it was boot city.

I reported for duty next morning looking as if a tank had rolled over me — eyes swollen almost shut and my chin stitched back together. I was a walking bruise. Jerry Vorster demanded an explanation and, when he heard what had happened, he vowed that when we came back from the bush, "A" Squadron would take the Park Lane apart brick by brick.

While the boys loaded up the vehicles, I watched the rifles, which was about all I could do at that point. Major Winkler strolled by and said, "What the hell happened to you?"

"Got in a fight, sir."

"I kinda figured that. Tell me one thing, Peirce. Did you get in any good licks?"

"Yes, sir, I went down swinging."

Assured by Lt. Turnball that I'd be fit for duty, he sauntered off, complaining loudly about "goddamn regulars."

It turned out he had just gotten three other guys out of jail; two others

Bullet, RhAC's prize prototype, leaves depot. Armored infantry fighting vehicle carries crew of 10. Photo: Robert K. Brown



On patrol, Black Devils fire hostile kraal; troopers with FN FALs at hand check out village. Photo: Robert K. Brown



had wrecked a bar and Dino had hospitalized a couple of Selous Scouts.

We deployed at a camp near the Buby River. I found myself teaching six other human pack-mules to handle the Browning machine gun.

"Jesus Christ, Rebel, they don't really expect us to carry these things, do they?"

"Sure do, but don't sweat it. They're giving us 500 rounds of ammunition to balance the load."

The plan was simple on paper: Clarence would take three sticks on a five-day sweep down the Buby River. Six other sticks would form stop groups, and SAS would push the terts toward us from the other direction. Local Africans would be rounded up and the native villages burned. Whoever dreamed up this remarkable plan forgot one thing: It's a big world and three sticks have to spread pretty thin to form a two-mile sweep line. But we were green and anxious.

The night before we left, Dino came over to my bivvy and spent two tedious hours explaining how he was an old soldier and wasn't scared at all. Mac got drunk and the Rhodesian national servicemen huddled around their fires, talking excitedly about the upcoming action. I went to sleep early. Unlike Dino, I was apprehensive, and fear makes me tired.

The long patrol was a killer. The bush was thicker than anybody antici-

pated, we never saw a civilian and the heat sapped our strength. We stopped at dusk for the evening meal and a brew-up, then moved single file up a hill to bivvy for the night.

**Bang!** My first thought was "some dummy's had an AD [Accidental Discharge]." **Bang!** "Two ADs?" Then I heard the distinctive bup-bup of an AK and someone shouting, "Come closer, comrades!" as the greenish-white tracers cracked over our heads.

My number two put down the tripod and we set up the Browning in record time. But how could I fire when I had no idea where the rest of our people were?

Night is a lousy time to get your first real taste of enemy fire. Clarence hollered, "Contact, contact!" into the radio, along with some wildly exaggerated estimates of enemy strength. He ordered us to hold our fire and we spent a frustrating hour being sniped at by an unseen enemy. Later we snatched a little sleep.

When morning came, we maneuvered around a bit, looking for our antagonists. The terts evidently spotted our movement, since they greeted us with another burst of fire. We were impatient to come to grips with those

Rhodesian trooper behind twin Browning .30s. Photo: Robert K. Brown

people, but Clarence got timid and the opportunity slipped away.

Dino, meanwhile, had disappeared. Whether he ran away, as most of the men supposed, or got separated in the confusion, as he later claimed, I do not know. I do know he made his way back to base camp in record time. It marked the end of his career in Armored Cars.

I never felt qualified to judge his conduct since I was involved in some scenes later on in which I felt like running myself.

We completed the patrol without further incident and the mission, like many, was a flop. The squadron loaded up and returned to Salisbury for redeployment. We got a day off before leaving for Mudzi, our next assignment.

Before leaving depot, I traded the heavy Browning for a Bren gun, easier to carry but a trifle awkward. I kept hitting myself in the chin with the magazine.

Mudzi crawled with troops. The major was there with two troops of Elands and the whole of Support Squadron. In addition, there were a contingent of Guard Force and some third-rate people from INTAF (Internal Affairs).

Mudzi was a hot spot, being a favored infiltration point for ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army) forces who had sworn to stop the election at any cost. We had daily contacts. An Eland blew up on a Russian mine. We went to protect the recovery team, then redeployed on a night operation with an informant — whose information must have been the product of a dagga dream. We picked up one tert by simply letting him walk into us. He was not at all happy when he saw our knives glinting in the moonlight, but he was cooperative.

At Mudzi I got my first real look at grassroots democracy. We walked into the villages, rounded up the inhabitants and escorted them to waiting trucks. Next stop: the polling booth. We shot anybody who didn't want to vote or tried to run away. Even I had to vote.

"But, Sarge, I can't vote here. I'm an American."

"You Yanks are always talking about democracy; here's your big chance. You're going to vote."

"But who do I vote for?"

"The kaffir of your choice."

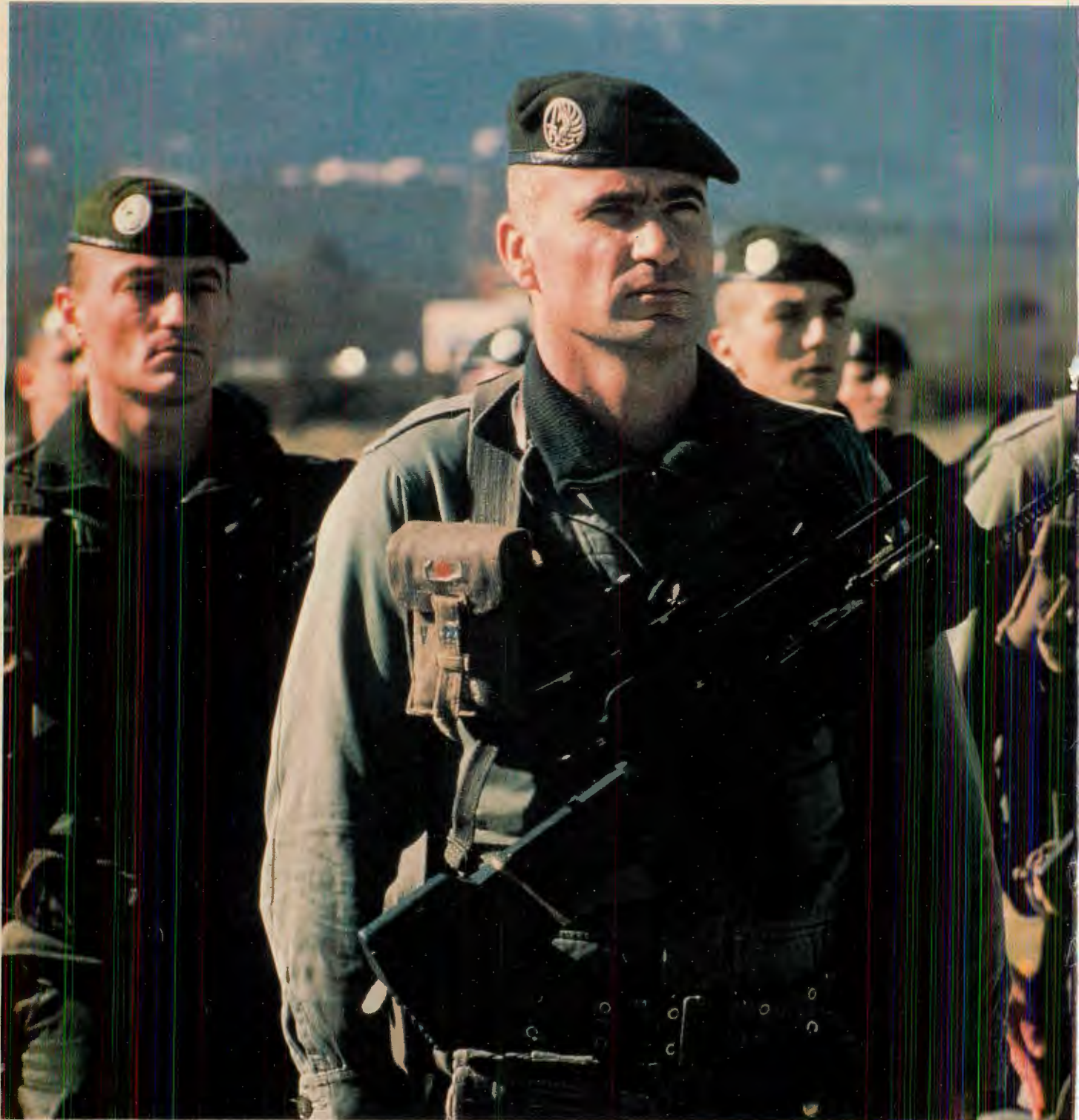
Lt. Sumpter had a close call at about that time while bringing in a patrol. Guard Force opened up on them with mortars and machine guns. He was so pissed off he dislocated his wrist punching out the Guard Force officer



Continued on page 83

# FAITHFUL U

## Legion of the Lost Refle



# UNTO DEATH

## cts Troubles of the World

by Brian Moynahan  
Photos by Donald McCullin

**S**AFE now from the bullets, behind armored glass in a museum near Marseilles, there is a wooden hand. It is slight, as if it had been made for a small man, discolored and rather crude. The wrist is a stump of mahogany, and the palm is attached to it by a joint of lighter wood, perhaps oak. The fingers are bent together as if from arthritis in winter.

This hand is rather more than an interesting example of an early Victorian artificial limb. It is a ju-ju of such power that, each year on the anniversary of its owner's death, it is removed from its case and taken out on a bed of silk to be saluted by bands, cannon fire, and marching men. It demands from the 8,000 who follow it that, like Jesuits, they will be "Faithful unto Death."

It is the hand of Captain Danjou. This real-life predecessor of Beau Geste and Luck of the Legion was killed, together with most of his 63 men, by a

**LEFT:** Legion's Second Parachute Regiment is equipped with France's entry in the 5.56mm field, the Fusil Automatique MAS. A product of St. Etienne Arsenal, FA MAS weighs 7.44 pounds, is 29.8 inches long, takes a 25-round magazine, has cyclic rate of 900 to 1,000 rounds per minute and effective range of 300 meters. It operates via unusual delayed-blowback principle and unlike other bull-pup design weapons can be fired from either shoulder because of two extractor positions on bolt face.



**ABOVE:** Legionnaires in formation. Soldier on left is carrying AA 52 machine gun.





division of 2,000 Mexicans, in a lonely *hacienda* near an insignificant village called Camerone. The captain's hand, the result of earlier wounds, was recovered from the battlefield.

The Legion has always lived with, indeed thrived on, its defeats, and each Camerone Day it celebrates those who, like the gallant captain, died rather than do the sensible thing and surrender. The Legion's 151st anniversary will be held in March 1982, and the unit has succeeded to a great extent in keeping alive its early ideals of disciplined self-sacrifice.

Its strength may be 8,000, down from the peak of 40,000 during the Indo-China War. Its postings may show, like bare ribs, what little is left of the French Empire it played so large a part in winning: Guyana, Tahiti, Mayotte, an island off the Malagasy Republic (Madagascar) and, by invitation only, Djibouti, and the Central African Republic.

But the modern legionnaire jumps from a lower height and in a tighter formation than any other paratrooper. He can change roles as swiftly as Action Man — frogman, mountaineer, parachutist, sniper, jungle patroller, desert fighter. Unlike other soldiers, he sings songs that constantly reflect the main occupational hazard: "Death, We have seen you from Algeria to Tonkin. When shall we see you again?"

After a century and a half, the Foreign Legion is still in business.

That business starts in the recruiting office, often at Fort de Nogent, a center incongruously placed in a housing estate in southeast Paris, sometimes at the other 17 offices in France, never abroad. Drumming up custom in foreign countries would lead to major diplomatic and legal problems, so French embassies abroad will often deny that the Legion so much as exists.

Recruiting follows the world's political upheavals, as the losers of wars and revolutions join up. After 1921, White Russians became the dominant strain among Paris taxi drivers, and Legion cavalrymen. The Legion's First Cavalry Regiment was formed largely from experienced Russians of the defeated Wrangel White Army. Many were senior officers, but the Legion ignored their past. Thus each day a sergeant would slip into the men's mess and kiss the hand of a legionnaire, second class, once his prince and general.

By 1939 the Legion was attracting the political reverse, beaten socialists and communists fleeing Franco's Spain. Not that the Right has had it all its own way. After the last war, more than half the Legion recruits were German and Italian. The song that dominated the bunkers of Dien Bien Phu was German, a typical dirge in

which the singer, all alone in the world, father killed in action, mother unknown, reflects that his regiment is also his home.

Hungarians arrived in 1956, Czechs in 1968, Portuguese after the loss of Angola: Legion officers hope that they will not soon be playing host to Poles. "We reflect the troubles of the world," says Col. Robert Devouges, a Legion veteran. "Laos, Cambodia, Bangladesh — you name the event, and we'll have the men."

The Germans are now down to 6 percent, the Italians to 2. The biggest grouping, ironically, is not foreign at all: 52 percent of all legionnaires, together with most of the officers, are French. They cannot join up as such, but claim to be Belgians, Swiss or French Canadians.

Nevertheless, the backgrounds are still exotic. One unit, the crack Second Parachute Regiment, the *Deuxieme REP* of Kolwezi fame, has men of 45 nationalities currently serving in it. There is now an Albanian — and two men who fled from China, who, when asked what were the main differences between life under Mao and under the Legion, politely replied: "None."

And there are the British. They number just over 5 percent of the Legion, or about 400 men, a figure that has risen sharply with unemployment.

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## "Okay, you have to be a bit nuts to join the Legion in the first place."

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The officers are rather ambivalent about them. "When they are good, they are very, very good," said one. "And when they are bad, they are truly awful. We get a lot of mercenary types who just want to bash people around. And the British account for a good few of the successful desertions. One day they're in the barracks, and then, wham!, they're off. They don't hang about making up their minds like the Germans, or take off to the mountains for a few days to see what happens, like the Italians and the Spanish. The British are very decisive, which is a mixed blessing in a soldier."

The Legion classifies the motives for joining up under headings as varied as unemployment and the search for glory.

"*Raisons judiciaires*" — the hot breath of the law on one's neck — have traditionally been an important motive for joining the Legion. In 1974, 20 percent of Legion recruits were either on the run or had a police record of some sort. By last year, this had

dropped to 8 percent. Family reasons, with unhappy, precocious marriages, and the desire to avoid alimony payments looming large, account for 12 percent of recruits.

Social reasons, which primarily means unemployment, are sharply up, and half of 1980's intake came in for no other reason than a good secure job. The pay is much better than in the classic desert days, when a man could get through three months' money in a night of whoring in Algiers. A raw recruit may start at \$165 a month, but an experienced sergeant can pull down \$27,750 a year pay and allowances. And this is spending money, for the Legion is all found, and well-found. Its four-course meals are excellent, it makes its own *appellation controllee* red wine from its vineyards near Marseilles, and even its combat rations run to *pate de lievre* and brandy.

Those with a strong career element in their choice account for a quarter of recruits, down from a half in 1978.

Many would-be legionnaires never make it past the recruiting office. "There's a classic type: trace of down on upper lip, expensive shirt and blue jeans, blinking through dark glasses and coughing on a cigarette," says a recruiting officer. "That's the 15- or 16-year-old runaway. They've had a row at home, invariably a rich home, or they're fed up with school. We get them from all over Europe. Had two from Birmingham the other day. And then the phone started — consuls, mothers, headmasters, lawyers.

"Well, we weed them out straight away. The Legion isn't interested in runaways, even if they are over 17 and we could sign them up. Runaways always want to run back at some stage. We want people who've walked out on their past, firmly and with purpose."

Those survivors are sent to the Legion induction center at Aubagne, the headquarters near Marseilles, slick ferro-concrete, neat parade grounds, home of Captain Danjou's hand, and the somber Monument to the Dead.

They are given three weeks of tests. They can leave at any stage and, more important, the Legion can ask them to go — and will do so to more than half of them. It is now that the Legion ensures the continuance of the breed. There is a thorough medical check and a battery of psychological tests, which can be given in anything from Norwegian to Rumanian.

"We want men who are averagely intelligent and who aren't nuts," says a colonel. "Okay, you have to be a bit nuts to join the Legion in the first place. Say slightly nutty in our sort of way."

Security checks are run on all recruits. "We don't want choir boys, and we don't want gangsters," said the

colonel. "Any evidence of serious crime, murder or violence, or any instability and they are out. Anything minor, and we ignore it. The usual things are debt, non-payment of alimony and stealing cars for joyriding." Nevertheless, some undesirables do get through: one who killed a tourist in Corsica, four who set fire to a hotel in Orange, burning two men to death.

If the legionnaire makes it through the first three weeks, the gates slam on him for a five-year contract. During this time, he loses his original identity totally. "Monsieur X becomes Legionnaire Y" is how the Legion puts it.

It does not matter if the legionnaire enlists under his real name: It is assumed to be assumed. The legionnaire gains from the *droit d'asile*, the right to asylum under French law. Any inquiries about him, be they from an ex-wife or a chief of police, will be met by official denials of his existence. Whatever his past may be, it stops the moment he passes through Aubagne. In one particular case, a polite brush-off was given to executors wishing to bestow a 12-million-crown fortune on an Austro-Hungarian aristocrat serving as a legionnaire.

But the legionnaire pays a heavy price for this protection. The right to resume his real identity is seldom given during the initial contract. This leaves him without any passport or legal identity outside France: He cannot travel abroad or go home. He is not allowed to marry until he is at least a chief corporal. In practice, it is rare for legionnaires under the rank of sergeant to be married. He cannot own a car, or have a credit card because filling in the forms would involve giving a false name.

The Legion now has the same disciplinary code as the regular French army, but it is enforced "*avec rigueur*." It likes to look after its family affairs and quarrels, something that the civilian police are pleased to go along with. They know that the Legion punishes its own harshly and that it might not be wise to intervene against a unit that once left six dead and 30 seriously injured after a brawl with another regiment.

How strong that discipline is, is a matter of contention. A recent book claims that deserters are forced to pick up leaves and stones with their teeth, and to wipe barrack squares with their tongues. There are said to be punishment runs with men carrying 100 pounds of rocks in their rucksacks.

Certainly, such things existed, along with the widespread use of torture on enemy suspects in Algeria.

But a problem is that legionnaires are as much in love with their own

mystique and macho as any schoolboy. An English legionnaire says: "Deserters? They get to go for a little run, 35 miles with an 80-pound load." Even Superman might have found it difficult to keep up with that.

In fact, the indications are that things have eased. Chez Lola is the Legion bar by the station in Marseilles which now reflects the aging respectability of its owner, Corsican Lola, rather than her wilder youth. A German legionnaire complains that the same fate has overtaken his outfit.

"The trouble with the Legion is that it is full of French," he says. "It's meant to be foreign. You can knock the stuffing out of foreigners, and nobody minds. But you can't lay a finger on the French. So we've got soft. Not enough punishment."

He complains that the training battalion has been moved from Corsica. "That was tough," he says. So it was, and it caused an embarrassing number of desertions and incidents. A British mother smuggled her 18-year-old son off the island hidden in the compartment of a converted ambulance. Four other British legionnaires sailed the straits to Sardinia on a homemade raft. Since then the battalion has been transferred to Castelnau, in southwest France,

the distant gaze is troubling, to show that, besides the gains of training, they have lost something, too, the sense of self.

There is little distinctiveness about them: The band plays the inappropriate tune *The Gay Legionnaire* at Aubagne, and the eye passes along them oblivious of the features of the Vietnamese, the Senegalese, the Germans. It is conscious enough of the colors of the desert khaki, the white *kepis*, the greens and reds on the epaulettes, but it sees no individual expression. The Legion has stamped out its own character.

That, of course, is largely a matter of history.

The tradition of foreigners serving France goes back well before 1831. There was a Scottish Guard, known through the novel *Quentin Durward*, under Charles VII and Louis XI. The revolutionary wars saw the creation of an "Independent Foreign Legion" in 1793. "If the kings close their ranks and dispatch great armies against the free people, the latter must accept into their ranks all those men who feel themselves called by some sublime impulse to fight for the sacred cause of liberty."

Those sublime impulses affecting the



Legionnaires clear wall during assault training exercise. Soldier in front is carrying AA 52 machine gun.

and has become rather more genteel.

The German has been in the Legion since 1970, and the reason is Lufthansa. What has the German state airline got to do with his stay in the Legion? "Ask Lufthansa," he says, and laughs. "They are as soft as the Legion."

If the rule book has replaced the fist-in-the-face punishment, the Legion's training is still hard enough. It cracks down on recruits during the initial four months of training.

The long-haired, slump-shouldered Europeans, the thin blacks, the Arabs in cheap suits: They go to Castelnau as recognizable types. They emerge uniform, all short-haired, self-evident fitness, smart bearing. Only

Irishmen and Germans of the first Legion may have had more to do with the desire to escape jail sentences than with Liberty, but they were the pre-runners of the unit formed by Louis-Philippe in 1831. He declared: "There shall be formed a legion consisting of foreigners. This legion shall assume the title of Foreign Legion." It was divided into separate German, Spanish, Italian, Belgian and Polish units — a practice soon dropped, with men deliberately distributed round the force to prevent any concentration of nationality.

It won its first colors in Algeria, and was soon embroiled in Spain where, after a Sergeant Berset had been hacked to pieces by the Carlists, it began to acquire its reputation for shooting prisoners on the spot. It returned to Algeria, making its spiritual home at Sidi-bel-Abbes.

The Legion campaigned in the Crimea, in Italy and in Mexico where Captain Danjou met his fate.

It fought in the Franco-Prussian war, and in 1871 was in action against the Paris Commune, fighting the Socialists in Neuilly and the Bois de Boulogne. All the Legion says officially of this is: "This is not the duty of the legionnaire and we will pass over this unhappy episode in silence."

French Socialists, and those worried that the Legion might again fight in the capital in a period of political instability, have been less forgetful.

Legionnaires fought the bare-breasted Amazons of the King of Dahomey in 1892, and helped subdue Madagascar in a campaign that saw seven killed in action and 5,736 dead of fever.

They fought in WWI, and then settled into their *Beau Geste* period. The sets were attractive, white forts like lighthouses in the sea of desert, oases and mirages, photogenic patrols in sweeping uniform with, after 1921, the *kepi blanc*. But the plots were bad: sentries picked off as they lolled in the heat, swift ambushes and, above all, *le cafard*, the sometimes fatal desert malady of boredom and the blues.

A message arrived from a small post in southern Algeria in 1923. A legionnaire had hanged himself on his mule chain. Three days later, a second message of a similar fate. Six days on, another. By the time a column arrived at the fort to investigate, the lieutenant in charge had shot himself.

A legionnaire shot at his platoon commander during a parade. "Fifteen days detention," noted the officer. "Reason: missed his target at less than 15 yards."

WWII intervened and after it the Legion swapped the desert for the paddies of Indo-China. The Legion lost more than 10,000 officers and men there, a quarter of its total dead. The *Indochinois*, introverted, living only for each other, suspicious, had to be mixed with the recent recruits and the fresh officers before they could fight the next colonial war, in Algeria.

The Legion always claimed to have won in Algeria. Militarily, it was right. It lost a sixth as many men as in Indo-China, while dispatching record numbers of Algerians, some on the battlefields, and some more obscurely.

Politically, it lost and lost badly. The First Legion Parachute Regiment, after slogging round the stone hills of the interior, its morale so low that not one man re-enlisted for almost a year, was posted to Algiers. It fell in love with that white port, and the white girls of Bab-el-Oued, and the white politics. On 22 April 1960, it attempted a *putsch* to keep Algiers French.

This was mutiny. It shocked France



RIGHT: Legionnaires sight in AA 52 machine gun during training exercise.

and shamed De Gaulle, and he disbanded the regiment. The rest of the Legion soon left Sidi-bel-Abbes for good.

It is politics that are still the Legion's biggest enemy, the widely held view on the French Left that the Legion is a colonial hangover at best, and of suspect loyalty at worst.

The service to France is incidental. The loyalty is to the Legion. Cut in granite in Aubagne, spelled out in stone at the Deuxieme R.E.P. headquarters in Calvi, ubiquitous, is the slogan: *Legio Patria Nostra*. The Legion is Our Country.

A Hungarian officer points to the medals of a German in the museum: "He wasn't a bloody German. He wasn't a Frenchman, either. He was a legionnaire." At Christmas, officers and NCOs leave their wives and children to be with their men. "It's all most legionnaires have got," says Col. Devouges. "It literally is their family, and that's where we spend Christmas."

It all makes for excellent *esprit de corps*, but also from understandable nervousness among civilians that it could, one day, again be unleashed on them.

Against that, as a go-anywhere, do-anything group, the Legion is superb value for money. As an integrated unit, it covers a bit of everything, and to the highest standard of training. On paper, it consists of an infantry regiment, an armored reconnaissance regiment and a parachute regiment. In practice, it runs the whole range of warfare. Its paratroopers consider their ability to make combat jumps from 500 feet to be the least of their skills; they are also specialists in, among other things, night and street fighting, assault engineering, anti-tank and mountain warfare and naval and submarine-base sabotage.

The French consider the Legion to be their "*force d'intervention*," a nice-sounding phrase which means the ability to meddle in other people's business. As such, it is vital to French involvement overseas, particularly in Africa. The Legion accounts for a full





half of the French army's all-regular force. Other units, if impressive on paper, consist largely of bored national servicemen.

The Legion's future was assured with President Giscard d'Estaing who must have remembered with affection its role in freeing the town and European population of Kolwezi, in Zaire, from rebel terror three years ago.

It was the Legion that enabled Giscard to play the grand role in foreign affairs. It alone gave him the ability to have a group of heavily armed and experienced troops on the way to any world trouble spot within 24 hours. He could use it to catch votes in Kolwezi, or to make theatrical gestures in the Central African Republic.

The Socialists talk much of disbanding the Legion but, now they are in power, one suspects they will not. Their leader, Francois Mitterand, is as committed to the dreams of French independence as the Right. He plays these out with the *force d'intervention* as well as the *force de frappe*, the French nuclear capability.

And the Legion's somber music and its slow march of 88 steps to the minute, as it parades in the red and the green, would bring a lump to the collective throat of any nation. It is a fair bet that boys will still be running away to join the Legion at the end of the century.



"Faithful unto Death" is reprinted with permission from the 22 March 1981 issue of *The London Sunday Times Magazine*.

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ABOVE: Standard Light Armored Cars for Legion are Panhard AMLs (Automitrailleuse Legere). AML on left is armed with 9mm D 921 gun (effective range 1,200' to 1,500 meters) while AML on right is fitted with H 60-20 turret armed with 60mm mortar and a 12.7mm machine gun. Depending on which mortar is installed (DTAT Model CS or HB 60 Brandt), it carries from 53 to 43 60mm rounds and 1,300 rounds of 12.7mm. Panhard AML has crew of three, maximum range of 600 kilometers, top speed of 90 kilometers per hour and has an all-welded steel hull. RIGHT: French legionnaire paras armed with 9mm MAT 49 submachine guns. MAT 49 weighs 9.41 pounds, has cyclic rate of 600 rounds per minute, takes 32-round magazine and blowback operation. BELOW: Legion paras jog toward aircraft. Legion deploys from 500 feet on most operations.



# THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION 1831-1981

by Bill Brooks

*"Sons of France, not by the blood received but by the blood they've shed." For 150 years the French Foreign Legion has carried the colors of France across four continents. Legendary in its courage, its tenacity, its spirit of sacrifice and its reputation for harboring the less than saintly, this mysterious army of adventurers, scapellows and professionals has attained a unique place in the annals of military history. This year the French Foreign Legion celebrates the 150th anniversary of its creation by King Louis Philippe.*

*Initially activated for the conquest of Algeria, the Legion gradually began to assume a role as an integral part of the French armed forces. Its valor was proven during the course of its first combat in Spain, then in Italy, the Crimea, Mexico, Tonkin, Dahomey, the Sudan, Madagascar, France, Morocco, Norway, Indochina, Chad and Zaire.*

*Today the French Foreign Legion is 8,000-strong, coherent, homogeneous, proud of its past and ready for any mission of war or peace. La Legion Etrangere continues to serve France avec honneur et fidelite.*

## ACTIVE UNITS OF THE FRENCH FOREIGN LEGION:

### Groupement de Legion Etrangere

Headquartered at Aubagne, France, the GLE directly controls the activities of the 1st and 2nd Foreign Regiments as well as the Instruction Regiment of the Foreign Legion (RILE) which was created in 1976.

#### 1er Regiment Etranger

The First Foreign Regiment is stationed at Aubagne, France, and contains elements common to the Legion as a whole: the Legion band, the Transit Company of Paris, recruitment detachments and the Pioneer Company.

#### 2e Regiment Etranger D'Infanterie

The 2nd Foreign Infantry Regiment was deactivated in 1968 and reactivated in 1972 under the title 2nd Foreign Regiment. It comprised two battalions: the *Groupement d'Instruction de Legion Etrangere* (GILE) stationed at Corte, Corsica, and the *Groupement Operationnel de Legion Etrangere* (GOLE) stationed at Bonifacio.



Legionnaire from Pioneer Company, 1st Foreign Regiment.

When the GILE was transferred to France in 1976, the headquarters of the regiment was installed at Bonifacio. On 1 June 1981, the 2eRE assumed its former title of *2e Regiment Etranger d'Infanterie*. The GOLE is composed of two *compagnies d'intervention*, the 3/2eREI and the 5/2eREI, both of which served in Chad. The other companies of the 2e REI are involved in the training of specialists at their base in Corte, Corsica.

#### 3e Regiment Etranger d'Infanterie

The 3rd Foreign Infantry Regiment was transferred from Madagascar to French Guiana in 1973. The 3eREI is the most decorated regiment in the French army and heir to the traditions of the *Regiment de marche de la Legion etrangere. Legio patria nostra* (the Legion is my homeland) is the motto of the French Foreign Legion.

#### 4e Regiment Etranger

On 1 June 1981, the Instruction Regiment of the Foreign Legion, stationed at Castelnaudary, became the reactivated 4th Foreign Regiment. The regiment provides the cadres for basic training, corporal and NCO schools.

#### 5e Regiment Mixte du Pacifique

The 5th Mixed Regiment Pacific was created in 1963 from the deactivated 5th Foreign Infantry Regiment. The 5eRMP is stationed at Moorea, Tahiti, and contains French army personnel as well as legionnaires, hence the title *Mixte*. The mission of the 5eRMP is to provide security and communications for the French nuclear and experimental center in Tahiti.

#### 13e Demi-Brigade de Legion Etrangere

Activated in 1939, the 13eDBLE has been stationed in the Republic of

Djibouti, formerly French Somaliland, since 1962. It is composed of one headquarters company, one work company and four combat companies. *More Majorum* (in the spirit of those before us) is the brigade motto.

#### 1er Regiment Etranger de Cavalerie

Heir to the Swiss *Royal Etranger de Cavalerie*, created in 1635, the 1eREC was created in 1921 to affirm the continuation of a foreign cavalry unit in the service of France. Today the 1eREC is stationed in Orange, France, and is the armored regiment of the French 14th Infantry Division. It equally serves as a member of intervention force *GUEPARD* and has recently seen action in Chad. *Nec Pluribus Impar* (unequal to none) is the regiment's motto.

#### 2e Regiment Etranger de Parachutistes

Since 1967 the 2eREP has been stationed at Calvi, Corsica, as a member of the 11th French Parachute Division. As a result of each of its companies being trained in a different specialty, the division is able to participate in any conceivable kind of conflict, in any type of terrain. One company of the regiment is usually attached to the 13eDBLE for support. Units of the regiment served recently in Chad.

#### 61e Bataillon Mixte Genie Legion

Today the 61eBMGL (Mixed Battalion Legion Engineers) is stationed at Larzac, France, where it is involved in construction work. Besides the headquarters company, the battalion consists of one company of legionnaires and one company of army engineers.

#### Detachement de Legion Etrangere de Mayotte

Created 1 April 1976, by changing the name from *Detachement de Legion Etrangere de Comores* to *Detachement de Legion Etrangere de Mayotte*, the DLEM assures the presence of the French on the island of Mayotte. The detachment contains 250 combat troops.

#### HOW TO JOIN

To obtain information on enlistment in the Legion, write:

Service Information et Historique  
de la Legion Etrangere  
B.P. 78

13673 Aubagne, FRANCE.

See also SOF's articles, "French Foreign Legion Today," July-November '78, "French Foreign Legion Update," February '79.

*Continued on page 77*

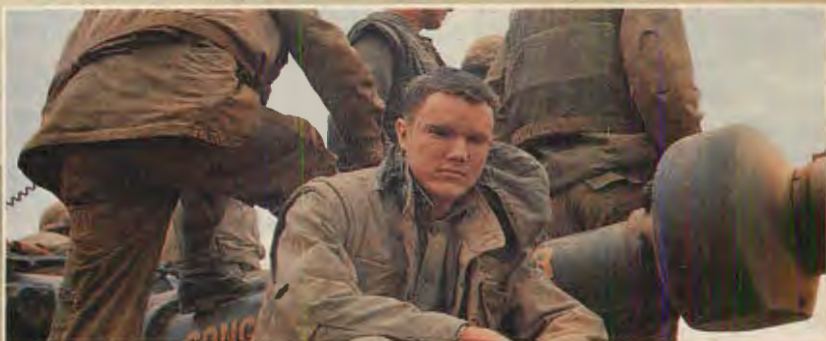
# THE FACE THAT HAUNTS ME NOW



# Nightmares from 'Nam

by George Upham

**W**HEN I was discharged from the Marines in July of 1967 — after spending 22 months in an artillery battery in the now defunct Republic of South Vietnam — I was still a kid really, a 20-year-old to be precise. I had forgotten the face — a face I never actually saw. It wasn't part of my edited collection of war stories. I enrolled in the University of Minnesota, using the GI Bill, and somehow the face just slipped from my mind. I remembered other incidents clearly, though. My memories were beyond the average college freshman's wildest nightmares.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

George Upham shot photographs as well as an M14 in Vietnam, and when he returned to the World in 1967, he enrolled at the University of Minnesota as a photojournalism student.

"I used up my GI Bill but I didn't get a degree," he says. At Minnesota, however, he learned the fundamentals of his profession. Moving from the beginning photographer's clichés he describes in "The Face That Haunts Me Now," he specialized in landscape photography. Some of his pictures hang in

the Minnesota Institute of Art.

Upham now supports himself as a darkroom technician in the Denver area and soon his lenses will undoubtedly focus on Colorado's mountain meadows and snow peaks.

"SOF's well written," Upham declares, adding, "some of the advertisements may not be up to the literary standards of your staff — but they at least offer ghoulish shades of unintentional humor."

—M.L. Jones



I remembered the near misses. The nauseating helplessness during mortar attacks. The time I was standing in the bed of a 2½-ton truck when it rolled over a landmine. (The truck was carrying a layer of 50 155mm high-explosive rounds which shielded me from the blast. But if they had detonated, I would have simply disappeared.)

The snipers. One time, on mess duty back in base camp, I'd just finished the last pot in the pot shack and was making my way across the battery for a beer when a sniper opened fire with an automatic weapon. Bullets cracked past; spraying sand from impacting rounds followed me as I sprinted toward the sandbagged enlisted club. Inside the club, Johnny Cash was on the jukebox, singing, "I Walk The Line," and nobody believed my story, spoken hoarsely between gulps of beer. But a few days later, the sniper wounded one of the cannons on gunpit watch.

I can't remember which one of our gung-ho lieutenants asked for volunteers for the revenge ambush. "L" Battery, 4th Battalion, 12th Marines had a fine reputation for delivering fast, accurate artillery support, but asking artillerymen to perform an infantry task turned out to be a mistake.

The weather went bad and something kept crawling on my poncho as I sat huddled under a bush trying to stay dry. The lieutenant scrapped the ambush before dawn and we filed back, inadvertently leaving the point man asleep outside our barbed-wire perimeter. I trooped into the fire-direction bunker to change into dry clothes.

Hunter, a friend of mine, was on FDC watch. Hunter had participated in the Watts riots prior to his enlistment. He took one look at me and slapped me hard on the shoulder. A six-inch-long, poisonous, orange centipede fell to the floor. It had crawled up inside my flak jacket sometime during the aborted ambush. Together, Hunter and I incinerated it with flaming cans of WD-40.

Some things I remembered were embarrassing. Drinking too much at the Red Beach In-Country Recreation Center; standing in line for the allotted two beers and drinking those while standing in line for the next two. Finally, on the ride back, firing my WWII-vintage 9mm pistol at a shrine with a distorted Nazi swastika. (I later learned the shrine was a Catholic church.) Or

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## The Viet Cong dragged them out and executed them.

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the time I kneeed my good friend, Manuel Orona, in the mouth during one of the rough Sunday football games and then pretended it was an accident. Or sitting on a dirt floor in a thatched hooch in downtown Da Nang, drunk on boilermakers, letting two children play with my unloaded M14 rifle while their mothers were upstairs with two PFCs from my section. (Wherever there were women in Vietnam there where children, even in whorehouses.) Or in convoy on Highway One, tossing C-rations to the civilians as we drove from village to village. At first it was fun, but then seeing all the Vietnamese grovelling for our leftovers became disgusting — the gap in the standard of living was just too great. Finally, we tossed the heavy cans of ham and limas hard, aiming deliberately.

I remembered the first months in-country setting up the FDC Section in a bullet-chipped French bunker, and then moving positions; tearing down the barbed wire, dismantling and reassembling the sandbagged outposts. Tossing tons of 100-pound howitzer rounds up into truck beds daily, and then spending six hours nightly awake on perimeter defense.



The face of 'Nam: fortified position with claymore.

Laying barbed wire in a waist-deep swamp, watching the leeches wriggle toward a bare leg or arm as they responded to some kind of internal guidance system.

And I remembered R&R in Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur. The Bob Hope Show at the base of Hill 327 with Hope mad because, as dusk approached, the MPs kept interrupting the act to announce unit recalls. Joey Heatherton in high-heeled shoes dancing in the rain; everyone in the crowd worried that she'd slip on the wet stage and break her neck. (The Nancy Sinatra Show was different, according to the two lance corporals in the FDC Section who attended. Everyone in the audience acted drunk and some of the Marines in the front row were openly masturbating.)

Most clearly, however, I remembered that crazy sweep that raised so many questions about actions and reactions. A Vietnamese truck convoy had been ambushed on Highway One. The Vietnamese rangers were preparing a pursuit, but the American adviser wanted American artillery support because the ranger battalion was losing more men to inept Vietnamese artillery fire than to the Viet Cong. We were to provide a forward observation team, not normally a function of a 155mm battery.

I immediately volunteered, but was overruled by the FDC section chief because I'd already been on more operations than anyone else in the battery. (I'd extended my tour of duty twice.) It seems absurd now with hindsight, but back then everyone in the section wanted to be on the FO team, and we ended up drawing straws. I won, to the further annoyance of the section chief.

The next morning at dawn, I was perched on a Marine Ontos escort in a Vietnamese convoy parked on Highway One somewhere between Da Nang and Chu Lai. Two days earlier, according to the Army adviser, the lead truck in a popular-force convoy detonated a landmine, and the remaining trucks had stacked up on the open road. The Viet Cong shot up the convoy from tree-line positions. The South Vietnamese reservists threw down their weapons and tried to surrender, but the Viet Cong kept firing, so the disorganized survivors crawled under their trucks. The Viet Cong dragged them out and executed them.

The strategy behind the sweep was simple, and had been ritualistically performed in South Vietnam for decades. Half of the South Vietnamese battalion, the blocking force, was positioned to our west. Our half of the battalion



**Self-propelled 155mm gun.**

would push any Viet Cong still in the area into the blocking force.

When we dismounted and I studied the map the lieutenant pushed at me, I knew I was in trouble. A long white sandflat stretched endlessly west from Highway One. I was an artilleryman accustomed to traveling in a truck, not on foot. Our half of the battalion entered the sandflat as the sun rose.

At first walking was easy, but then the sun dried the damp sand and the walking got rough. Fate was punishing me again; I was always losing. Why couldn't I have been assigned to the blocking force?

Each step became agony, and slowly the pain changed to rage. Tunnel vision, jerky strides, eyes blinking away sweat and the glare from the white sand. Floundering on gracelessly, feet plowing, gasping, rifle slung diagonally, pack strap clawing shoulder blades — and inside nothing but a red ball of quaking rage. I'm sure I looked ridiculous to the Vietnamese rangers, but I made it across the sand and so did Lt. Swankowski and so did Cpl. Kram, the radio operator carrying the PRC-25. Behind us the battalion was strung out over 300 yards with the stragglers from each platoon bringing up the rear.



**SK-14 Chinese centipede, copy of Soviet RFX-1 "Pronger."**

**North Vietnamese modified 7.62 SMG Type 50.**

An hour later we were on solid ground, weaving between deep B-52 bomb craters, when the point squad encountered incoming automatic-weapons fire and backed off to radio in an air strike. The yellow propeller-driven airplanes from the South Vietnamese Air Force dropped their silver pods and then dipped their wings. No one on the ground waved back.

When we advanced again, I remember the smell of burned rubber, the bush skeletons that disintegrated at the touch. I can still feel the heat generated from the napalm residue that clung to the grooves of my jungle boots. Everything was colorless — black or grey — and claustrophobic. The company on the left flank uncovered a Vietnamese family of six. They'd smothered to death in the dugout bomb shelter beside their hut. The napalm had burned up all their air.

The Vietnamese rangers looted the next village in our path. They giggled as they chased chickens — but they still looked deadly. Unlike



*Continued on page 90*

# OUR MAN IN BEIRUT

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** In June, SOF Contributing Editor Jim Morris traveled to Lebanon via Cyprus to investigate Lebanon's ongoing war. Arriving in the port of Jounieh near Beirut, he was driven to the Lebanese Forces' G-5 headquarters to meet a high-ranking officer in the Christian militia. Beirut, Morris found, was not "Vietnam with sand" but a city of paradox in which high-rise construction competes with the rubble of war. Lebanese Forces personnel to whom he was introduced were highly educated professional people, many of whom work by day and fight for their country's freedom by night. This was a different war, Morris discovered, in which civilization and combat are juxtaposed. Sitting on the balcony at G-5 HQ that first night, he sipped an ice-cold beer and watched the sun go down — and listened to the competing sounds of Charlie's Angels cavorting on a color TV in the living room and the staccato bursts of AK-47 and M16 fire a few blocks west toward Sodeco.

## Part 2

by Jim Morris

**S**INCE Sodeco wasn't hit the first night I was in Lebanon, it really hadn't mattered where I slept. I still had two sniper's manuals to deliver, so Rick drove me to Hadath, a suburb of Beirut. There is no real break between the two; Hadath is an old town that the city has grown beyond.

As usual Rick drove at top speed, and took a route that went all the way around Robin Hood's barn to get where we were going. Sometimes he sneaked slowly down narrow streets, driving carefully to avoid hitting anyone, then turned a corner, already accelerating, to burst across a thirty-foot clear area before a sniper could get it together to squeeze off a round.

"The Palestinians tried a probe the day before you arrived. There's a small Lebanese army platoon in position there, between the Palestinians and our guys, but they were outnumbered and had to withdraw. Then our boys counterattacked and drove the Palestinians off."

We coasted down a long hill, between narrow, close-set buildings, burst through a turn, rounded another corner, and pulled up across the street from an imposing building, which looked like a police station, but with the usual arrangement of sandbags outside.

"Nothing to worry about," Rick said. "But it's best to cross this street rather quickly."

"Sniper?"

He nodded.

The space in which the sniper had good

observation was only about six feet wide, in the middle of the street. We hopped across it and went into the building, which turned out to be the Hadath headquarters of the Kataebe Party, now given over to Lebanese Forces.

A couple of lads in fatigue pants, T-shirts and flip-flops, and a pretty girl in jeans and a pink top sat smoking, drinking coffee in the shade, and talking. They were about four feet from the sniper zone, and totally unconcerned.

Rick asked a question, and when they replied, turned to me and said, "Tony's in a meeting. He was due back an hour ago." I had been informed that the commander in Hadath was "Sheik Tony," but other than the name I knew next to nothing about him.

Rick had to get back to the bureau, so he turned me over to a hard-looking kid in a black T-shirt. His name was Rais, as near as I could make it out, and he offered to take me on a tour of the front.

The front was all streets, alleys and buildings. These buildings were old, constructed of solid masonry. Turning them into fortifications hadn't been much of a trick, but to get to and from them was a tortuous job. You had to crouch low, leap ditches and dodge down alleys. Then you arrived at a small chink in a masonry wall in an almost totally destroyed building,

Lebanese army troopers prepare to move out. Weapons are FN FALs.





through which you could see the Syrians' sandbagged emplacements in a half-completed building across a 200-meter wasteland of rubble.

We went through a half dozen of these outposts, until he was satisfied I had the idea.

Rais was in Lebanese Forces, but he had spent a year in the Lebanese army, and was on friendly terms with one of their platoons, so he took me to its CP. There were about a dozen Lebanese soldiers standing around outside a house, drinking coffee. They seemed like nice enough kids but, frankly, didn't seem any more military than an equivalent number of Fort Dix trainees. The difference between them and their Lebanese Forces counterparts was readily apparent. The army kids were younger and less sure of themselves than the militia. There were Christians and Moslems in the platoon, and although they seemed to get along well, it seemed obvious that they did so by not talking about things they should talk about.

The uniforms of both groups were almost identical, except that all of the army guys wore helmets or helmet liners and carried M16s — but they just sort of slung them around, without the respect a soldier should have for his weapon. The main difference that I saw was that virtually every member of Lebanese Forces wore a crucifix on a gold chain, usually with another medallion, often a tiny gold map of Lebanon.

As one of the soldiers brought me a cup of Turkish coffee, their platoon leader drove up in his jeep. Rais introduced us and I took my coffee and followed him down into his CP, which was in a shelled-out basement apartment.

He gestured me into the seat of honor, an easy chair, half torn apart by shrapnel. I balanced my coffee on my knee.

Opposite me the lieutenant sat down on a couch that was as ripped apart as my chair, and got his own cup. The furniture was arranged so as to face a black-and-white portable TV, sitting on top of two ammo crates. The sound was turned way down, and the picture was awful, but through the snow I could make out Henry Winkler doing his Fonzi number, as Ron Howard stood by with a stupid grin on his face.

"Pretty nice," I said. "Is there one for the enlisted men?" The line was a paraphrase of the caption of one of Bill Mauldin's WWII Willie and Joe cartoons. The lieutenant assured me that the lounge was for the entire platoon.

The lieutenant was pretty sharp. He was about 28 years old, in excellent physical condition, and he seemed intelligent and knowledgeable. However, he had a six-block front to cover with nineteen men.

In theory, both he and the Syrians were here to keep the peace between the Palestinians and Lebanese Forces. But in actual fact, the Syrians were sending shells and rockets into Christian areas on a daily

basis, and were perfectly happy to let the Palestinians try to probe whenever they felt like it. For his part, the lieutenant and his platoon functioned more as an OP-LP system for the Christians, since, with nineteen men, spread that thin, all they could do was zing a couple of bursts at the attacking Palestinians and then get out of their way.

The lieutenant was Christian, as were most of his men, but there was very little love lost between the Moslem members of his platoon and the Palestinians. So he was more than happy to be the early-warning system for the defenders of Hadath. He didn't tell me any of that, but in practice, that was how it worked.

There were more than 500 armed and trained members of Lebanese Forces in the town — more than enough to chew up anything the Palestinians could squeeze through the alleys and across the rubble.

But that wasn't really what the lieutenant wanted to talk about. He wanted to talk about the Infantry Officers' Advanced Course at Fort Benning. He wants to go there next year. I assured him that he would do fine, as I have no doubt he will.



Syrian "air-conditioning" does little to improve real-estate value of Christian areas of Beirut.

He will also probably profit from an association with officers from several different countries. But I doubt that the advanced course itself has much to teach that is applicable to his present situation.

It was way past time for Tony to return, so Rais and I went back to the Kataebe headquarters.

We went the usual circuitous route, a cautious walk down a trench, a quick burst down an alley, with the camera case thudding against my groin.

Next time I go to Lebanon, or any other war, for that matter, I'm going to take a BAR belt for my camera stuff. I'll also probably take a few extra bucks and buy an AK on the way in and sell it on the way out.

Let's face it, friends. If I ever do get in a real fire fight in Lebanon, they'll try to waste me as quickly as anybody else. And if this series has anything like the effect I hope it has, maybe a damn sight quicker. Correspondents say you can shoot pictures before and after a fire fight, but not during. I might as well go ahead and get me some boom-boom time.

When we arrived at the Kataebe headquarters, a different set of kids was taking a break in the shade. But just as we arrived, a new Audi screeched to a halt across the street. It snuggled against the curb, so that its near side was a good eighteen inches away from the sniper zone. Three doors sprang open, and three young men got out and stepped briskly across the street. Two were in uniform, but the big guy from the right front seat wore a blue warm-up suit, and had a .45 tucked under his left armpit. "Hi! I'm Tony," he said, and stuck out his hand for a shake.

I had been told the commander in Hadath was "Sheik Tony," but I had no frame of reference for a sheik in a warm-up suit, who looked like Buddy Holly, except for about twenty extra pounds of

solid muscle. He grinned disarmingly and blinked through thick, black-framed glasses, then led us into the headquarters with a long-legged, confident stride.

We went down a long corridor and a dark hallway, into a fair-sized room, lit by a naked light bulb. Mounted on a wall, on a standard sheet of four-by-eight plywood, was his situation map, which showed every house and alley in Hadath, with Syrian, Palestinian, Lebanese army and Lebanese Forces positions marked in different-colored crayons; weapons positions, sniper positions, and OPs were marked with different-colored pins.

It was the sort of map the city water department would have. Had I not toured those positions, it would not have made

much sense. Tony pointed out what, at first, looked like a major street. When it was identified I realized it was a tiny alley down which Rais and I had scuttled like crabs, sometimes walking, sometimes ducking, sometimes sprinting.

"This is my apartment," Tony said bitterly. Small wonder. It was marked as a Palestinian sniper position.

Tony introduced me to the two men with him. The short, compact one, Max, was his artillery commander. The stocky, good-natured guy was the chief of his mortar section. His name, he said, was Bob. They invited me to tour their artillery positions, and to join them for dinner afterward.

Outside we quickstepped across the street. Bob put the Audi in gear, gunned around the corner before the sniper could take aim, and then started driving normally — that is, like a maniac.

Tony wanted to drop by his dispensary before we went to the artillery positions. As well as being the commander, he was a fifth-year medical student, and he took a personal interest in treatment. "I still have two years to go on my medical studies," Tony said. "I should have finished by now, but the war..." He shrugged.

The dispensary was run by two attractive young nurses in civilian clothes. One wore jeans, a T-shirt and platform shoes, her hair hanging to the middle of her back, the other a fashionable summer frock. Despite looking like a pair of disco queens, they were all business.

There were eight or ten wounded or ill people waiting in the anteroom. The treatment room was well-equipped with examination tables and instruments, but there was little medicine on the shelves, and all the expendable items seemed to have been expended. "What are you short of?" I inquired.

"Everything," Tony said. "All that you see here is outdated."

After another short race through the streets, we pulled into a parking garage. There was a motor pool for a commando platoon down there. Two or three young guys in fatigue pants and black commando T-shirts bent over an engine under the open hood of a Land Rover pick-up, with a 106mm recoilless rifle mounted in back. There were two or three jeep-mounted 106s, and a jeep-mounted .50-caliber machine gun drawn up in the same line. The vehicles were all clean, and freshly painted olive green, but their bodies were dented all to hell.

The three guys under the hood and the two or three others hanging around were all laughing and jiving. As usual, the guys with the most difficult, dangerous duty had the highest morale.

Max, Bob and Tony led me down a long, narrow tunnel, which had been chopped out of the raw concrete; electric wire and naked bulbs hung from the ceiling. We emerged from it into another room, freshly made from thick concrete. That wet concrete smell still hung in the

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## We captured the guns and figured out how to shoot them — the math wasn't hard.

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air. Maps, charts and plotting instruments lay on plywood tables (slanted for easier access) that leaned against the wall to the right.

"Ah! Your FDC."

"What is FDC?" Max inquired.

"Fire direction center."

"Yes, this is my fire direction center."

I talked about his gear for a few more minutes. It soon became clear that neither Max nor Bob knew much about artillery, at least not the way they teach it at Fort Sill. It was not that they didn't know what

### WARWORLD

The officials of Lebanese Forces make it quite clear that they do not want mercenaries. Their troops fight without pay and indeed, in most cases, buy their own weapons and ammunition. Like any good military force they think that they are the best in the world. They are not particularly impressed with the idea that they need help.

Airborne troops might contest that, because they don't jump, and Marines might contest it because they have never been to PI or whatever. But within the parameters of the war they have, I must support their claim.

Even volunteers are not welcome. For the entire time I was there I never saw a troop carrying a map, or a compass, and damn few with canteens. They know where the water is; they know where their objectives are located. If they want intelligence they ask the first person who passes by. A volunteer would have to have a guide for the first six months he was there, and it would take three months before the volunteer and the guide together were as effective as the guide was by himself before the volunteer showed up.

A friend of mine, a former Marine, has come up with a counter-proposal that Lebanese Forces open an amusement park called Warworld where, for a fixed fee, say \$2,000 or an equivalent amount in ammo or medical supplies, one could come, go through an accelerated commando course, and be guaranteed two raids and a week in the line. Upon his return, the client would be issued a Lebanese Forces T-shirt, with the Lebanese Forces insignia and his own blood type embossed thereon, and an I Waxed A Camel Jock in Beirut bumper sticker.

—J.M.

they were doing, or that their stuff wasn't set up efficiently. It just didn't look like what I was used to. And none of their terminology was like anything I had heard before. "Where did you guys get your training?"

"We didn't," Bob said, grinning. "We captured the guns and figured it out from there."

"Jesus, how did you do that?"

Max shrugged. "I'm an architect and Bob's an accountant. The math wasn't that hard."

"You worked out your own firing tables?"

Bob nodded. "Yes, we can usually hit a target after two shots. We have to be very careful. We all have friends and relatives on the other side. We don't want to hurt anybody but the Syrians."

I thought about the rubble upstairs. "It doesn't seem as though they're that cautious."

Bob sneered in contempt. "They open the breech and look down the tube. If they can't see the building in front of them they start firing over here. They keep it up until we hit their positions. We have to be quick and accurate."

"Two rounds?"

"Right! Two rounds."

We went down another long tunnel, and emerged into what amounted to a large vacant lot, with sandbagged emplacements for the mortars.

I don't want to describe the area clearly, for the same reason that Tony didn't want me to take pictures which would reveal the surroundings. However, I must say that these were among the best-made mortar positions I have ever seen, neatly and cleanly dug, and sandbagged so carefully that nothing but a direct hit would have much effect on them.

Their pride and joy was a newly captured Soviet 160mm mortar. They were in the process of constructing a pit for it when I saw it. The bloody tube was longer than that of a 105, and the baseplate was wider across than I am tall.

After that we went to dinner. The original plan was to treat me to some Lebanese food, but the restaurant they wanted to go to was closed, so we wound back down the mountains, raced through the streets and stopped at a couple of check points, laughing and talking about the war, politics, girls, everything. During the course of the conversation Max said the one thing that stuck in my mind during the entire time I was in Lebanon. I don't remember how it came up, but it fitted smoothly into the flow of conversation. It had to do with why his people had risen, almost to a man, to fight with rage and intelligence against clearly impossible odds. "I think we fight," said Max, "for the human dignity."

We had our dinner on the verandah of a pizzeria. Tony reached over and took his .45 back from Bob, who had been holding it for him while he drove. He put it in his lap and carefully looked over the four or

five people eating on the verandah. It was wonderfully cool out there, and the lights of the city shone all around us. "What?" I asked.

"We might get a bomb or a grenade," Tony said. "It's not very likely, but you never know." It all seemed so quiet and normal out here. You might as well talk about a fire fight at Shakey's on a Saturday night.

As we talked, Max mentioned that he worked in West Beirut. Every morning he got up, put on his suit and tie, picked up his briefcase, and drove into enemy territory, to the office of his architectural firm. Then, at night, he drove back, put on his fatigues, and went down to the FDC.

"I don't tell them I am a fighter," he said. "If anybody talks about the war, I just act as though I am afraid."

"I'm sure the Syrians didn't plan on anything like this uprising," I said to Max. "I wonder what the Syrians think about you guys?"

Max deals with the enemy in his business on a daily basis. To do so, he has to see them as people. But he misunderstood my question and started explaining the Syrians' rationale for being in Lebanon.

Tony would have none of it. The bastards had invaded his country, delayed his career, usurped his apartment, and God knows what else. He totally lost it, screaming in Arabic, raging and waving his arms.

What impressed me most about this incident was the way Max handled it. Tony was his commander, with responsibility equal to that of a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army, despite being a kid in bop glasses and a jogging suit. In every army with which I am familiar, if the main man put on a display like that, all his flunkies would fall immediately into line, tug at their forelocks, and exclaim, "Yassa, massa! You sho' right. Them bassar ain't got no rationale."

Max did nothing of the sort. He patiently sat and waited for Tony to sputter to a halt, then went right back into his explanation.

Actually Tony was right. The bastards' rationale is totally false. But I was impressed by the fact that Max could fight them effectively and still see them as people. That's a pretty classy trick.

I slept in Tony's TOC (Tactical Operations Center) that night. The next day he had to rush off and do something important, and none of the guys I had met the day before seemed to be around. I was actually quite pleased with the chance to be alone to collect my thoughts, and start planning this article. I found a chair out in front of the headquarters, propped my feet up on a couple of sandbags and spaced out, watching flowers and palms rustle in the breeze in the back yard of a pock-marked villa across the street. I went over everything that had happened since Cyprus, sorting out what was usable and



**ABOVE:** Lebanese Forces FDC officer stresses hitting target in two shots — in contrast to Syrians who "open the breach and look down the tube," as this gutted ruin shows. **LEFT:** Lebanese Forces dig out position for recently captured Soviet 160mm mortar in Hadath section of Beirut. **LOWER LEFT:** Author believes Lebanese Forces' mortar positions are among best he's ever seen. Clean and neatly dug, only a direct hit could affect this sandbagged sanctuary.





**RIGHT:** Author Morris had difficulty photographing Lebanese Forces mortar positions since enemy intelligence could locate sites by terrain features. **BELOW:** Doctor examines wounded fighter in Beirut hospital. Lebanese Forces in Christian areas have enough doctors — but medical supplies are short.



what was not, how to tell it, and in what order.

Several times young men stopped and exchanged a few words with me. A kid named Jamil stopped. He was going out to drive around in a van to collect foodstuffs from merchants and households for Lebanese Forces. It seemed to me that he had been carefully selected for this job, since he was about as engaging and non-threatening as it is possible for a man to be, a skinny, doofus kid, with a grin that never left his face. He wore jeans and a checked sport shirt. The only military things about him were his baseball fatigue cap and the old, long-barrelled .38 in the waistband of his jeans.

All the kids who were trying to improve their English chatted with me; Jamil was no exception. "Last year I spent six months in San Francisco," he said. "I meet many heppies. You know heppies?"

A while later, a pleasant-looking kid, a boy of about 17, came lurching up the steps. His left leg was stiff all the way down, and his left arm was braced from the shoulder out, at a 45-degree angle from his body, and bent at a 45-degree angle from his elbow. When he saw me he gave a big, delighted smile, and said, "Bonjour!"

"Hi!" I replied.

"You speak English?"

I shrugged. "*Je parle Francais un peu, pas tres bien.*"

"I woodd prefer English," he said. "I am learning."

He was a B-10-rocket gunner who had been wounded in a shoot-out with the Syrians.

"Tony was a B-10 gunner at Tall Zaator," I said.

The kid's smile widened. "He is my brother. Not my real brother, but he teached me the B-10. Three days I stay at his apartment. He teach me everything about the B-10."

When was the last time you heard a trooper say of his battalion commander, "He is my brother"?

After the B-10 gunner had gone I sat there for another hour or so, until a remarkably beautiful young lady tapped me on the shoulder. "Are you sad?" she asked.

I guess a man staring into space with a blank look doesn't look happy or busy — although, in truth, I was both.

The girl was just plain beautiful: big dark eyes, olive skin, aquiline nose, glossy dark hair; she was just a kid, maybe 18 or 19, whose smile and careful manner said: "Nice girl."

"I'm fine," I replied.

Clearly she didn't believe me. "Come inside for coffee," she said.

We went inside the communications center of the headquarters. One entire wall was filled with ranked row upon row of two-way radios, some military, some commercial. A girl wearing fatigues sat and muttered Lebanese into a microphone. A speaker sputtered back at her.



Her sad look had nothing to do with a long shift in the communications center. I never found out what caused it, but in Lebanon the possibilities were virtually endless.

There were three more women in the room. One, also in fatigues, lay dead asleep on a small bed against the wall opposite the console, her boots neatly lined up beside the bed, OD socks still on her feet.

The other two were girls about the age of my new friend, wearing civilian clothes, jeans and pants. They and my friend were all pretty — and obviously sisters.

For the next three hours, they entertained me to make sure that I was not blue and lonely, nor moping around in front of the headquarters. They told me jokes; they fed me coffee and a great lunch. Since their English wasn't much better than my French, we spent a lot of time groping for the right words. Sometimes it took all four of us to put together a sentence for one of us, all of us laughing at the curious fluffs we made.

Although they were sisters, the girls were very different. Farrah, the oldest, was the beauty queen, with a great body, and long, wavy hair that framed her face, and fell way below her shoulders. She wore a carefully chosen fashionable top, pretty little sandals that offered her feet no support whatsoever and showed her painted toenails. When we got to the inevitable part where I whipped out the

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## Lida's laugh was the sort that you'd expect from your teen-age point man.

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wallet and showed the pictures around, she studied my lady's picture long and hard. "Nott Badd!" she said, at last, in a tone reminiscent of Napoleon's admiration for Wellington's performance at Waterloo.

Gina, the girl who had brought me in from outside, had the most beautiful face, but she was obviously not interested in her looks. She planned to be a journalist, and showed me an article she had written, printed by one of the Kataebe magazines. I couldn't get much out of it, since it was in Arabic. I encouraged her, and offered to send her some texts from the college bookstore when I got home. I was a little leery of that though, because I liked her. All the newspaper people I have known are burnt and bitter by 35, from too many all-nighters, too much coffee, booze, cigarettes, dinner from cardboard cartons — and marriages that don't work because of the above. Still, some people are suited

to such work, and Gina didn't look like a potential housewife to me.

The youngest girl, Lida, interested me most. The whole time I was there she was smiling and laughing, but it was the sort of laugh you'd expect from your teen-age point man. She wore jeans, a none-too-fresh yellow T-shirt, and combat boots. Later when I mentioned the three sisters to one of the guys, he said, "Oh, Lida. She's a fighter." He did not mean only that she had a lot of moxie. He meant that when the Palestinians came to town she grabbed her AK and went into the line with the guys. I know all the arguments against women as infantrymen (and agree with them), but all she had to do was go two blocks over and squeeze a trigger. Most women are not good for heavy work, and sometimes their presence creates havoc in the ranks, but there are plenty of them who cannot be faulted for guts: Lida was one of those.

Several young men came through the communication center while I was there, and it was interesting to see how they and the girls handled each other. There was a lot of kidding, but it was all pointedly nonsexual. They treated the girls like comrades who happened to be made of Dresden china.

Later I mentioned this to a lady in a fairly high staff position at Lebanese Forces headquarters. "Yes," she said, "the boys act like brothers . . . and like boys." From this I deduce that there is

### DOUBLESPEAK IN LEBANON

Before I went to Beirut I didn't know anything about the war there. I'll venture to bet you don't either. If you're an average reader of this magazine you're probably aware of what's going on in most of the world's trouble spots. You probably read everything that appears in the papers about combat, anywhere. But I'll bet money you couldn't make any sense out of what comes out of Lebanon.

As it happens, the entire Beirut press corps lives in the Commodore Hotel, which is located in West Beirut, under the control of the Syrians and the Palestinians. Almost the entire Middle-East is covered from there. When I was in Lebanon the Israelis bombed the nuclear reactor in Iraq, and things were hopping in Iran, but it was relatively quiet in Beirut itself. All of this stuff was covered from the Commodore.

For my entire twelve days in Beirut I lived in the Lebanese Forces (Christian Phalangist) Press Bureau (and G-5). I did not see another American in that time, much less an American reporter. I know they were busy, but for twelve days they didn't cover one side of the war they were in the midst of. On 2 August the *Denver Post* printed a story

by J. Michael Kennedy of the *Los Angeles Times*. He wrote, "Syrian soldiers peer into each passing car as it passes. Often the Syrians ask for passports and want to know where the passengers are going. 'I told them we are going to the port,' the taxi driver said. 'You do not tell them you are going to the other (Christian) side.'"

Well, if you can't tell them you are going to the other side, what do you suppose would happen to any reporter who told the true story of what is happening in Lebanon and tried to maintain his residence in the Commodore? People disappear over there all the time; so far seven of them have been journalists. A guy from ABC was killed just after I left. Nobody knows why. He's just dead.

What do you suppose would happen to any reporter who wrote that the Syrian "Arab Deterrent Force" was sanctioned by the Arab League to conquer Lebanon in order to hold down the Lebanese patriots, and free the Palestinians to fight the Israelis? (As long as the press continues to call these patriots "Christian Phalangists," we are stuck in a semantic morass: The Lebanese Forces are not all Christians; they are actively and somewhat successfully trying to recruit patriotic Moslems; they aren't all rightists —

there is really no word that fits except the umbrella "Lebanese Forces," and that is so vague as to be almost meaningless unless something helps it to take hold in the public imagination.)

You can't really blame the press. Most of them are locked into their assignments for a number of years. Many of them have established themselves as Middle-Eastern "experts." They'd be out of business if they couldn't go into or even pass through an Arab country without fear of assassination. So they take refuge behind "objective journalism" and parrot the doublespeak of the Palestinians and the Syrians.

Our embassy there is no help. The inside guards are Marines, but the outside guards are Palestinians. The State Department is certainly not going to impede the flow of oil from the Middle-East by announcing that our gallant Arab allies are attempting to destroy the only Christian democracy in the area, and all the democrats and all the Christians in the process. The days when our government had that kind of guts seem long gone.

We have a right to be proud of our free press, which is, really and truly, the most free in the world. But it does no good to pretend that it is more free than it is. —J.M.

some hanky, but very little panky, unless the boy is dead serious. Every one of these girls has about forty big brothers to hammer anybody who does her wrong into a bloody pulp.

The girls were careful to make sure of my religious convictions.

"Do you believe in Jesus?"

"Yes."

"Mary?"

"Yeah, sure."

Then they took me on a walking tour of Hadath. One of the funniest and scariest things I have ever seen was Farrah, running through a sniper zone in those damned sandals.

They showed me the main street of Hadath, gutted and boarded up, their uncle's restaurant, gutted and boarded up, their parents' pharmacy, gutted and boarded up. "They want us to go to the mountains with them, but we want to help

When Tony got back that afternoon, he and I went back over to his mortar emplacements, so I could take a few pictures of the way they were dug in. One of his artillerymen came out while I was shooting and went into a nut roll for fear I would give their position away. Tony assured him that all would be well.

As it turned out, the best shot I got did exactly what he feared. It revealed the layout of the surrounding terrain. Any clever lad with a good city map could have pinpointed their location exactly. As a journalist it hurt me to do it, but as a soldier... It made a nice little fire in my wastebasket.

It was mid-afternoon by then, and Tony still hadn't had a chance for lunch. He drove to a small *patisserie* and we went inside. We each had a strawberry tart and a glass of milk. I still couldn't get over eating like this in a combat zone. I remem-

obvious above-the-knee prosthesis. The Syrians had blown her leg off.

I've seen a lot of dead men, and made a few, but none of that ever affected me like the sight of that pretty girl, who would never dance again, whose body would *always* hurt, who would never get to run for the Lebanese equivalent of homecoming queen.

Later that afternoon Sam came to take me back to the G-5 bureau. On the way back I told him what I had in mind. "It sounds like a good idea to me," he said, "but I didn't expect it from a magazine."

"Well," I said, "you'd kind of have to know the magazine. It started out as a trade journal for mercenaries, but it's grown to be the unofficial magazine of the combat-arms Old-Boy Network, worldwide. Obviously you guys should be in it."

He and I sprinted up the stairs. I called Tim Leifield at Paladin Press and ordered \$1,500 worth of demo and ranger manuals. Then I called Robert K. Brown at SOF.

I had my spiel rehearsed. What I was going to suggest was going to cost him a fair amount of money. But, well, you have to know Brown.

"Robert, these are the good guys, and I think they have a chance to win." I was about to mention our larger duty to mankind, when he cut in: "Great! How can we help?"

"Well, I wouldn't want you to send an MTT [Military Training Team]. Heaven forfend the thought. But I have a friend who is much better qualified to make a survey of Lebanese Forces technical innovations than I am, and, who knows, they might find chatting with him profitable as well. He's the best small-unit leader I ever met. His leg's kind of gimped, but his brain works great."

"Who is he?"

"Name's Larry Dring. He's going to learn as much as he teaches. He's no journalist, but he's a great storyteller. We'll debrief him when he gets back, and get another good story out of it."

"Roger that!"

That was all it took. Brown, I thought, eventually I've got to get you over here. We talked for a minute more, and I hung up the phone.

Something had clicked in me. For a lot of years I had been like half a puzzle, looking for the other piece.

I took the phone out of the bedroom, where I had gone for quiet, back out into the outer office, where eight or ten people were working, howling into telephones, poring over newspapers.

"All right," I muttered to myself, "Let's get down to it."

Sam was screaming into two phones at once, in three languages, but he stopped and looked up. "What?" He didn't know what I was talking about. He was already down to it.

(To be continued.)



Bechir Gemayel, commander of Lebanese Forces, is son of Peirre Gemayel, founder of Kataebe Party and original Christian militia.

the fighters."

They showed me their church, a beautiful, modern structure, as modern as the one in Sodeco, and as badly shot up. They showed me the refugee families living in the church basement.

I wanted a shot of Farrah and one of the guys walking down the street, from the back, no faces. People are not much interested in rubble; they are interested in people. I wanted a human-interest shot. Her eyes grew huge — and she flatly refused. I couldn't really blame her. If she were recognized when crossing into West Beirut, she would be subject to arrest, interrogation, torture, rape and murder; not necessarily in that order, and (except for the first and last) not necessarily just once.

bered Asian LRRP rations with the Mike Force, and the famous ham-and-lima-bean popsicle from frozen Chosen. These tarts had an incredibly light, flaky crust, and were surmounted by red, luscious strawberries that burst in your mouth like little ecstasy bombs. The milk was so cold it crackled in your throat.

"I still can't get over this."

Tony shrugged. He had never tasted C-rations. "You have to eat."

Tony was the biggest hero in Hadath. He practically had to browbeat the proprietor into taking money for the food.

We went back outside. Three teenagers came walking slowly down the street, to give one of them, the girl, a break. She was pretty, almost as pretty as Farrah, but she walked with a bad limp, and wore an

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*Continued from page 6*

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**RED ARMY DRUG DEALS ...**

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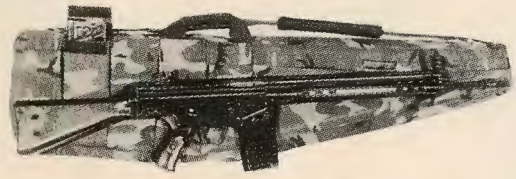
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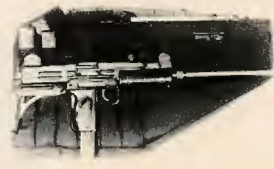
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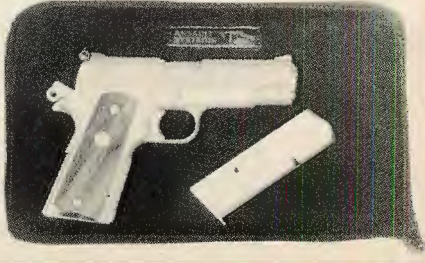
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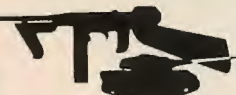
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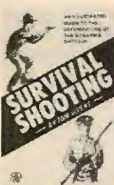


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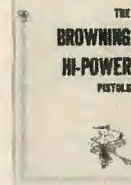
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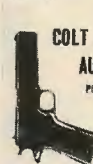
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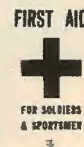
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the black market were confiscated from an armory of the Afghan secret police. Sources said the Russians do not peddle their own firearms for fear they might be traced.

**'NAM NEWSLETTER ...**

Another newsletter of interest to Vietnam veterans is now on the scene.

Entitled *Perimeter*, it is published by John B. Dwyer, 430 Westbrook, Dayton, OH 45415.

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A British writer/shooter says he wants to clear up the misconception that there are virtually no guns in England, including handguns.

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

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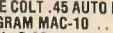

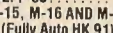

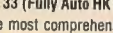

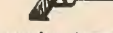
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## FLAK

Continued from page 8

Although the articles were excellent and I don't want to take cheap shots at Jim Morris, I would like to point out that the Delta Project was not formed in 1965 but in 1964. I know, because I was on the Delta Project until my rotation from Vietnam in October 1964. At the time that I was on the Project, Bill Richardson was the CO. As I recall, there were a total of six officers: two in Saigon, whose names I don't remember; Bill Richardson and Larry O'Neil in Nha Trang, and Dick Kamerling and myself at Don Ba Thin. Our teams were not commanded by officers — with a total of six it would have been virtually impossible — but by NCOs.

I thoroughly enjoyed the articles and agree with everything that was written. Although I haven't met Lt. Col. Allen, I have heard of him. Reading accounts of these two units certainly brought back many memories for me. There were an awful lot of names mentioned that I haven't heard for some time.

Respectfully,  
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I've been a subscriber for two years and have read SOF for about four years. I don't remember an article on the FN FAL. It should be done, as they are really the cream of the 7.62 field.

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## EDIT

Continued from page 28

and adverse world opinion, by some face-saving withdrawal restoring Afghan independence and neutrality. The American objective of removing the immediate Soviet threat from the Persian Gulf would thus be achieved.

If the Soviets did not withdraw, they would remain pinned down and restrained from new adventures in the Persian Gulf, Poland and elsewhere. The mujahideen would be buying precious time which America desperately needs:

- Time to solve the Arab-Israel problem, an essential condition for regional stability.

- Time to normalize relations with Iran, the strategic keystone to the Persian Gulf.

- Time to develop stronger relations with China, the most effective counterweight to Soviet ambitions.

- Time to build a credible U.S. Rapid Deployment Force.

- Time for Persian Gulf nations to deal with problems of modernization and internal security so they can concentrate

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on an indigenous regional defense organization with which America can work harmoniously.

● Time for the evolving Polish situation to make the USSR more vulnerable in Eastern Europe and less eager for mischief elsewhere.

● Time to develop a NATO policy to defend the Gulf, whose oil is, after all, much more vital for Europe than for the United States.

● Time for America to get its own economic house in order and diminish its dependence on imported oil.

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After we read a recent letter to the editor by Leon B. Poullada, professor of political science at Northern Arizona University, in the New York Times, we asked Prof. Poullada, who has been a Fulbright professor in Afghanistan and a State Department specialist in Afghan affairs, to prepare this editorial for SOF.



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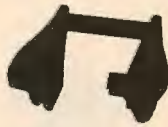
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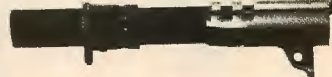
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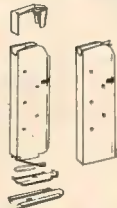
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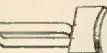
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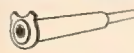
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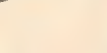
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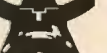
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# LEGION

Continued from page 51

## THE MOST HATED MAN IN THE LEGION

by Bill Brooks

**T**HE first time I saw him I knew he was looking for me. I was standing in formation in front of the barracks at Bonifacio, Corsica, preparing to be marched to chow. He came by, canteen cup and *gamelles* (knife, fork, spoon) in his hand, looking through the formation like a hunter looking over an assortment of small arms. I had heard there was another American in the French Foreign Legion at Bonifacio, and I sensed he was the one, but I couldn't speak: I was an EV (*engage volontaire*). I was still in boot camp and he was out; assigned to the 3rd Company, Foreign Legion Operations Group (GOLE), billeted next door.

He asked a cadre to point me out, then hurriedly walked up to me and introduced himself. "Hey, I'm Phil. Tomorrow's Sunday. After chow go through the 3rd Company door and ask for me."

The next afternoon I followed his instructions and found him sitting on the foot of his bunk. He offered me some hot chocolate and we began to talk. We talked like long-lost relatives. He was the first American I had spoken to in three months.

He had been kicked out of college, joined the Army, then the Marines. Wounded in 'Nam, he received a disability check each month. We were both borderlanders, raised in that area of the country where North meets South. We both had our hearts in Dixie and loved the military. But I couldn't picture Phil at VMI or The Citadel. I couldn't see him milling around the officers' mess with a bunch of smooth-chined subalterns, currying favor with the colonel.

I saw him as Sergeant Rock of Easy Company, leading a squad of Airborne Rangers against a deadly foe, showing no quarter and asking for none. As I grew to know him I found he was a man of few visible emotions. He showed kindness to those he liked, loyalty to those he served — and he wore a coat of despair like a well-tailored uniform. He was a borderland Confederate who couldn't go home.

The word soon got around among the *Anglophones* (English speakers) of the 2nd Company that I had a friend over in GOLE. On Sunday afternoons I would take them over in groups of two or three to meet Phil. They were all impressed because Phil was rich — as were his comrades in the 3rd Company, who swarmed around him, looking for a favor from *le riche American*. He always had more cigarettes, chocolate, whiskey, uniforms, knives and money than anyone had believed existed in the impoverished French Foreign Legion. Phil was generous, but never a fool.

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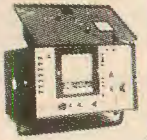
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If there is one attribute admired in the French Foreign Legion it is physical prowess — and physical prowess Phil had. There wasn't anything he couldn't do better than anyone else, except speak French. He could outshoot, outrun, outmarch, outshine and outclimb anyone in the regiment. It made the French sick!

For us few, sorry-assed, English-speaking EVs he became an idol, even though the NCOs and officers used Phil's exploits as examples of what all of us volunteers should do. In the eyes of the training cadre, the linguistic bond of the English language placed our weary bodies on an equal physical level with Phil; and we went through hell because we couldn't keep up. One Saturday morning I got right on his tail during an eight-kilometer cross-country run and begged him to slow down. He just picked up speed and ran out of sight. He finished first. "Gotta watch these Frogs," he said. "They gang up and block the trail."

The next Saturday we ran with 50-pound bags of sand on our shoulders. I thought I was going to pass out when Phil came flying by me, a big grin on his sweaty face, not even breathing hard! I loved it.

The next Saturday there was a soccer match between the 2nd and 3rd Companies. The lieutenant asked Phil if he knew how to play "football." Phil replied yes, temporarily forgetting that football in Europe is soccer in the United States.

Once the game started Phil grabbed the ball and began running down the field. Whistles blew, officers shouted and the crowd went wild.

"Tell him not to do that!" The lieutenant told me. "Tell him he can't touch the ball with his hands." I walked out to Phil and gave him the message. He looked at the ground and nodded his head.

The game resumed. Phil intercepted a kick and started running down the field. The teams and spectators went out of control. Whistles blew, officers yelled, coaches threw down their clipboards and all the Frenchmen ran around, as only Frenchmen can do, waving their arms and

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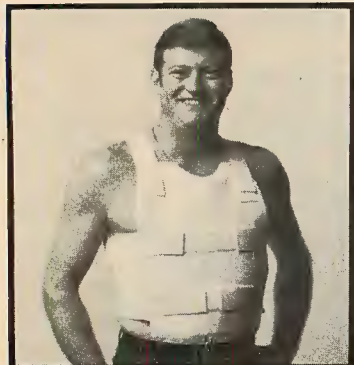
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shouting, "Mais, non! Mais, non! Mais, non!" An officer again approached me: "Explique a lui . . ." and again I passed on the information. Phil didn't seem upset.

The game started again. Lt. Renault received a high kick which he attempted to bounce off his chest. As the ball touched his jersey, Phil hit him with a teeth-jarring tackle! The whole place went insane: whistles, yelling officers, curses and Lt. Renault knocked out cold. Phil walked toward the sidelines, expelled from the game.

After much *bavardage* (yelling and arm-waving), the game recommenced. Phil stood next to me, arms crossed, surveying the field. He suddenly turned to me with a big grin on his face and said, "Frog bastards."

We left Bonifacio shortly thereafter. I went to signal school and Phil went to corporals' school — I flunked out while he, to the dismay of his French-colleagues, finished first in his class. Hell, there just wasn't anything he couldn't do.

I used to wake up in the middle of the night, listening to some fast-talking Frenchman trying to figure out a way of wiping his ass at something, but it was no use. He came in first in the regimental cross-country run. The French couldn't stand to see him win because he butchered their language. He had to be the most hated man in the Legion, but my friends and I loved him.

Phil then went to Calvi and joined the REP. I went to Africa with the *13e Demi-Brigade*. About a year and a half later, Phil turned up in Djibouti. His REP company was sent down to reinforce the 13th. Phil came rolling into Holl Holl one day while I was on guard. We exchanged a quick handshake and some small talk. He was now a sergeant and I had made corporal.

A few weeks later, we were on guard at the *Barrage*, a mined and barbed-wire strip surrounding the city of Djibouti. I was at Post 1 with 4th Company, 13th DBLE, while Phil was at Post 9 with 3rd Company, 2d REP. Behind Post 7 and 8 lay a dense area of camel-thorn bushes. We would hide in these bushes at night, waiting to catch someone who had successfully negotiated the mine field. That night I took a three-man patrol into the brush behind Post 7. When I heard someone speaking terrible French, I knew it was Phil. He stuck his big head through the thorns and said hello. We put our patrols together. He spread his out to his left and I spread mine out to my right. Shoulder to shoulder we faced the rear of Post 7.

Suddenly the guard at Post 8 yelled a challenge. He fired at someone running directly toward us. The first round cracked over my head. We all hit the sand, gnawing on our knuckles while the guard blasted away in our direction. Leaves, twigs and camel-thorns showered down our backs.

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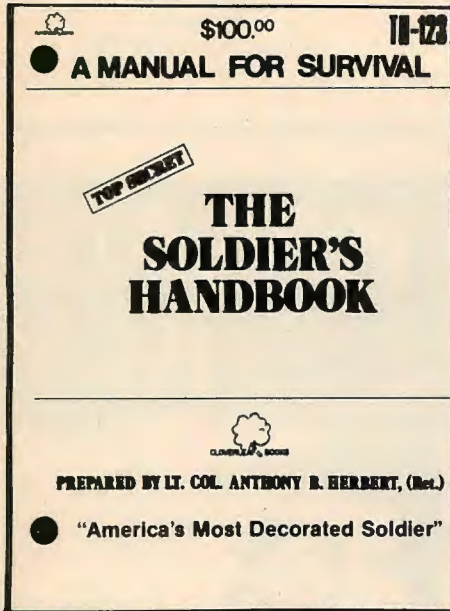
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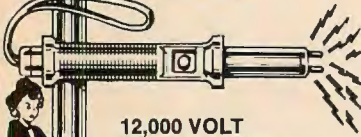
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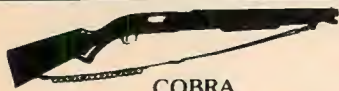
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"I'll kill that son-of-a-bitch. I'll kill him," Phil repeated over and over. Once the firing ceased, he leaped to his feet and raced for the guard tower. He bounded up the ladder, his submachine gun slung across his back, and told the guard to stand at attention. He took the guard's weapon, cleared it, then butt-stroked him across the head, knocking him senseless. He then gathered up his patrol and headed back toward Post 9.

I didn't see Phil again until the summer of '75. I was in Aubagne, getting ready for a 60-day leave in Marseilles, and Phil was there to muster out. He had a copy of *Soldier of Fortune*, Number One: "You see this article here, Bill. It says there are American mercenaries in Rhodesia. That's where I'm going."

I tried to explain to him that the mercenaries were actually members of the Rhodesian army, just as he was a mercenary in the French Foreign Legion, but he insisted there was a Congo-type operation brewing down under and he was going to get a piece of it.

Two months later, I was back in Aubagne and so was Phil. "I spent \$1,600 on plane tickets," he said. "I went to Paris, New York, home and Washington, D.C. I talked with the Rhodesian attache at the South African embassy. Hell, I almost flew to Salisbury. All they will let me do is join the Rhodesian army."

"I told you that before you left," I said.

"Well," he said, "the article said 'American Mercenaries in Africa!' If I ever see this Colonel Brown I'm gonna kick his ass."

Phil re-enlisted for three years and went back to the REP. I went to the cavalry in Orange and got out in 1977. Phil made the famous combat jump into Kolwezi in May '78 and almost single-handedly cleaned out the guerrilla-infested village of Metaba. He was a real Sergeant Rock. He mustered out of the Legion again later that year, placed an ad in *Soldier of Fortune* and merced out for two or three months.

He phoned me just before returning to France for another five-year hitch with the REP. "Hell, I'm getting older, Billy," he said. "I gotta start thinking about some things. The Legion has been real good to me, and I got no responsibilities except for myself. Soldiering is an honorable profession so I'm going back — and besides, you know, I'm good at what I do." Amen, Phil. Amen.

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# "REBEL"

Continued from page 43

On one patrol, I nearly killed some of our people. Clarence gave the hand signal for gunner forward, and I trained the Bren on some approaching figures.

"OK, Reb, take 'em."

"Sarge, I think one of them's white."

"Bullshit, fire!"

"No, wait, that's our patrol." Sgt. Covar was a very lucky fellow that day — also an idiot. He put captured *mujibas* (collaborators) out in front of his patrol, but didn't bother to call in the report. I wouldn't have minded shooting Covar, but I had some friends in his stick.

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One day, while I was walking across a field, everything started spinning and I felt a stabbing pain in my groin. They got me back to camp and diagnosed me as having tick-bite fever and dysentery. That crippling fever hit nearly 20 percent of the men at Mudzi.

I had to turn my gun over to Sammy Miller and sit out our most fruitful action. Clarence took the boys up a hill and set up an OP overlooking a native village. Shortly thereafter, about 30 terrors moved into the village. Clarence called in fire force and caught the terrors with their britches down.

I was on radio watch back in camp when the K-Cars (armed helicopters) went in. It was like listening to a ball game. Two Commando went in with a vengeance, and apparently they knew Sgt. Van der Valt because I heard the team leader say, "Well, Clarence, what have you got for us?" Our guys talked them in, marked the village with tracer and all hell broke loose. A series of booms came from a distance.

"Put another Golf bomb on them!"

"See those two by the big rock?" Whoosh went the rockets.

"That did for them. Thanks, old chap." The RLI stop-groups pulled in some prisoners: "Got one claims he can't speak English."

"Educate him with a rifle butt!"

All together, the toll came to 17 terrorists and 30 collaborators, including a district leader and a commissar. Six wounded prisoners were questioned, then taken for a one-way walk in the woods. We'd found a lot of badly mutilated locals in the bush and were in no mood to temper justice with mercy.

I pretended that I felt better so I could rejoin my gang for the next op — a night patrol in search of a terrorist base camp. The op was a lemon and we got lost, running out of food and water in the process. For the last 20 kilometers Clarence kept looking at his map and swearing, "It's only a couple more clicks, just a couple more clicks."

Then they transferred us to a temporary fire-force base outside of Salisbury and my health gave out completely. I ended up in a hospital ward with one of the crewmen of the ill-fated Eland that struck the mine. He screamed and cried in his sleep and it kept everybody on edge. The poor guy never did return to duty. But I did, and it was a relief. Army hospitals take all the fun out of being sick.

A young trooper named Byron-Moore helped me recover by fixing me and Mac up with some really nice girls. Along with Yves Debay, we went to Roger's French Restaurant for a Cameron's Day celebration. The girls must have thought we were nuts because we ended the evening by sing-

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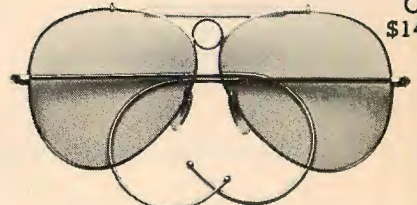
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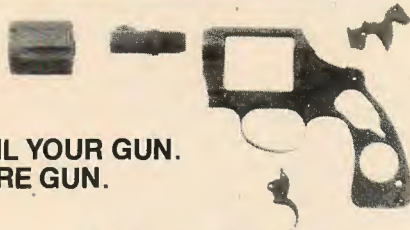
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ing Legion and Wehrmacht marching songs in French and German with a bunch of people who might be described as unsavory at best. Apparently, linguistic ability improves greatly with liberal doses of red wine, since Yves was the only one of our group who spoke anything but English.

Perhaps this conduct made Marie-Louise, the apple of my eye, spurn my advances and take off with a sissy-looking lieutenant from RLI. Too bad. I was so infatuated with that lady that when she told me she disliked violence, I swore that I, too, was peace-loving: I kept my jacket buttoned all night, sweating profusely, to keep her from noticing the .38 in my shoulder holster.

We rushed through our Eland course; it was the same old shit. Some new people joined us, and the regulars were put together in one troop and spared some of the mickeymouse. Some of the new men were really top notch: Trevor from England, veteran of the Royal Marines and RLI; Merv, one of the few intelligent South Africans I ever met; Dave from Canada, an ex-cop called Boring Dave by his mates; and John, the Australian weightlifter. They had all been at Mudzi with Support Squadron and we got on famously. The comedian of our troop was Arnie Harris, an American who often referred to me as "that long-haired, hippie draft dodger."

The course itself was a bore. I scored in the top 10 percent on all the written tests and failed all the mechanical tests; I couldn't even change a tire. But time and again my requests for transfer to Support Squadron were denied.

The gunnery portion was more to my liking. All my panzer fantasies came true when I got to blast away with that 90mm and rip through the jungle lane with the Brownings. We performed a tactical demonstration at the range in conjunction with artillery, infantry, anti-tanks (106 recoilless) and the air force. This was for the mutual benefit of ourselves and the mixed group of officers taking the combat team-commander's course. (These exercises served us well later in the year when large operations began in earnest.)

Regular Troop did our most unusual demonstration for the benefit of the renegade tiers of the so-called *Pfumo ReVanhu* (Spear of the People). Later on these "auxiliaries," as they were called, expanded by recruiting Africans from the age of 11 up. Different groups of them acted as unofficial private armies for the leaders of various political factions. But, at that point, the *Pfumo ReVanhu* consisted primarily of ex-terrs armed with AK-47s, RPDs and RPG-7s, and, in many cases, trained in Cuba and Eastern Europe. Many notables attend-

ed this demonstration, sporting such pseudonyms as "Mick Jagger" and "Comrade Max," among others.

The national servicemen finished their abbreviated Eland course and went to a new hot spot called Mzarabani in the Zambesi Valley, known as "Free Zimbabwe" to the terrors. Our men took part in 27 contacts in three weeks, trying to clear this area. The major, right up front as always, took an AK round through his water bottle.

Meanwhile, I wearily completed the Eland training and two weeks of signals instruction, which was very valuable when I finally got my assignment to HQ — which I did, thanks to a lot of determination and a little luck. Regular Troop completed the Eland training and got 10 days' R&R. By coincidence, the major was back in town and his crew reaching the end of their enlistments. I desperately wanted to man that big 50 on the major's truck and I asked for it. To my surprise and delight, I was told to start training immediately. The major was going on leave and I had two weeks to master the 50 and learn to drive the two-five. I forgot my R&R and, for once, I made training a labor of love. That big 50-cal. is easy to service and handles like a dream.

My partner and driver was Sammy Miller, a young Rhodie who had been lead scout in my stick at Buby River. He was a damn good kid and a hell of a soldier. Together we put the two-five through its paces and performed deeds of daring on the vehicle-assault course. We just about had it together when we had to pick up Major Stead and head for the valley. "Hot damn!" I thought.

But our territorial CO was not the same cup of tea as Major Winkler. In fact, tea was the main thing on his mind. An old campaigner, he insisted on carrying all the creature comforts, and we actually had to discard ammunition to make room on the truck for all his kit.

Major Stead was a nice guy, but we wanted action. After a brief, uneventful stay at Mzarabani, I finally got bold and went to his tent one morning in full combat gear. "When are we leaving, sir?"

"Leaving?"

"Yes, sir. We kinda figured you'd want to go up and have a look at the forward positions today."

"No, not today. You and Miller can have the morning off, then help out in the kitchen at lunch time."

Christ! The only action we got came when an INTAF wanker shot up his own tent with a Bren gun.

At Mzarabani I met a strange character, a sane enough nut, who called himself Doc Savage. He was a Yank and claimed to be a medic. (One time everybody in camp walked around on cloud nine because he

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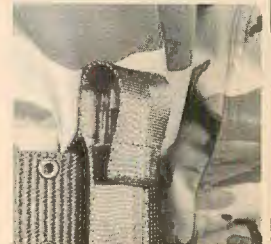
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gave us sedatives, thinking they were malaria pills.) I took to telling people I was English when he came by. Major Stead described his medical expertise: "If Doc Savage told me I was in good health, I'd consult my family doctor immediately."

Major Winkler returned at last, sporting a brand-new CAR-15, a big cigar and a box of American chewing gum. And I began the most exciting six months of my life.

Sammy and I jumped around, requisitioning supplies, checking the radios and setting up maps for the briefings. Putting our act together involved rubbing some people the wrong way. Nobody could figure out how we mysteriously obtained our own private storeroom (where we kept a couple of camp beds for slow days), our pistols, extra uniforms, or Sammy's folding-butt G-3. Suffice it to say that hustling is second nature to me, and Sammy was a good understudy. Major Winkler didn't care about our methods as long as we got the job done. If he held out his hand for the bins they'd be there. Our friends began to call us "Darrell's darlings," but the depot crawlers called us Winkler's wankers.

On our first operation as a crew, we hunted down some terrs in a desolate spot called Shamva. Once a nice area, it had been blown to shit and there were too many big holes in the dirt roads for my liking. Thank god for the pookies. Lt. Graham Ray (Bronze Cross) rode our vehicle while the major and Mr. Sumpter took four brand-new subbies for a walk with the infantry.

All morning on the first day at Shamva, we crisscrossed the area, finding beaucoup spoor but no terrs. We got together for lunch and the major took a few men for a stroll. Fifteen minutes later we heard automatic fire and explosions. The shave-tail lieutenants just stood there looking at each other until Staff van Niekerk bellowed, "Get the fuck up on those vehicles and go for it!"

It was a classic mechanized attack with Elands, Ferrets and the two-fives all blasting away at once, covered by mortar and light-machine-gun fire from the support infantry. We drove the terrs out of a little village and split into small groups for the follow up, assisted by a spotter plane.

Mr. Ray took our two-five and one other, both with 50s. We engaged twice in one hour. I got carried away and shot off one of our aerials. It pissed off the lieutenant but I defended myself, pointing at the bends and breaks in the ruined antenna: "Well, sir, at least I shot a good grouping."

Two African corporals interrogated a prisoner in the back of our truck. It was stiff-upper-lip time for me — I felt

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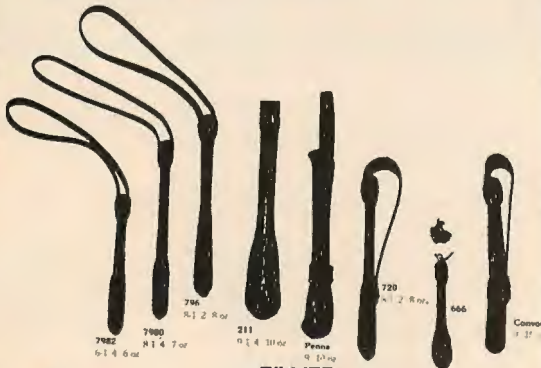
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a little sick to my stomach. Despite the use of extreme methods, the prisoner refused to talk. That is, until a huge South African NCO provided additional encouragement with a piece of rubber hose.

For the next few days we combed the countryside for the elusive terts. During one quick pursuit, the crack of that big 50 induced several collaborators to run out screaming, "Don't shoot, *baas*. We're *mujibas*, but we don't like those *Ganangas* anymore!"

The major's group got separated from the vehicles during the last day of the operation and we spent a cold, weary night tracking them down. The two-five got stuck in the mud, the infantry in the back went to sleep and one of the new subbies kept wringing his hands and moaning, "Where the hell can they be?" Sammy told him, "Not to worry, sir. It's always like this." We found the major and his freezing men at last. At dawn he went back to Salisbury for a meeting. Sammy and I stayed behind and shot up the countryside with Lt. Ray.

When Sammy and I got back to depot we were beat: three days without sleep. And who was the first person I bumped into? The bloody RSM: "Straighten up there, Peirce. You look like you're walking in your sleep!" We were put on one-hour standby and told to get some rest and keep the orderly room informed of our whereabouts; we didn't have long to wait.

Chirundu was on the Zambesi River bordering Zambia. Terts regularly paddled across the river. Formerly a border-control point, Chirundu was now deserted except for a garrison of RDR (Rhodesian Defense Regiment — Dagga Regiment to the troopies). The colored soldiers of the RDR were none too happy when Major Winkler and crew arrived at their OP on a hill overlooking the enemy side of the river. Those peace-loving types knew that trouble followed our boss.

A group of Mr. Sumpter's infantry and two troops of Elands came with us. All day long we peered through binoculars, familiarizing ourselves with the enemy dispositions. They had numerous bunkers, mortar emplacements, a command post and even a warehouse. We also spotted several heavy machine guns and recoilless rifles.

That night, Mr. Sumpter ambushed a group of terts coming across the river in little boats, killing most of them. A few made it to the dubious shelter of a sandbar in the middle of the river.

Next morning, Major Winkler took Sammy and me back up to the OP on the hill. The infantry and a troop of Elands had deployed below us, with another armored troop in reserve. On the hill we had a couple mortars man-

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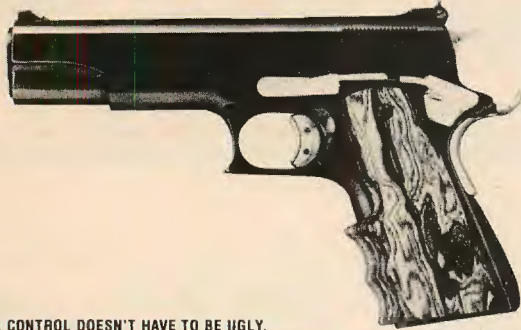
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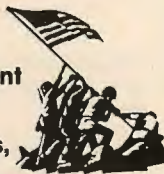
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ned by European reservists, as well as the platoon of RDR with two 50s set up in bunkers on tripods. Trenches had connected the bunkers. Sammy and I relieved the 50 gunners just in case it got serious. Those people didn't even know how to strip their weapons. Their European sergeant was obviously pleased when we took over the guns.

The major called in mortar rounds to harass the hapless terrs still clinging to the sandbar. This went on for about an hour. Then the Zambians started firing back with their mortars.

I heard a series of booms in the distance. "Sir, that sounds like artillery. I didn't know we had any guns near here."

"We don't. That's incoming. Get in the bunkers!"

The whole world seemed to explode. The enemy shells sounded like freight trains flying through the sky on steel tracks. A shell landed directly behind our bunker. I pressed forward in terror, instinctively squeezing the triggers of the 50. As I blew apart our firing aperture, Sammy screamed, "For Christ's sake, Rebel, everybody in the world's trying to kill us, and now you want to help 'em!"

The shelling increased in intensity. They had us registered, and our flimsy bunkers were in imminent danger of collapsing. The radioman looked pitiful and moaned, "Reb, Reb, they're gonna kill us! Do you hear me, they're gonna kill us!"

"I know, I know. Would you shut up."

The major was nonchalant about the whole thing. "I've been shelled before, in Vietnam. But I can't say I particularly like it."

He finally decided it might be healthier to get off that goddamned hill. We agreed, but the enemy rounds were falling so fast it took us 10 minutes to cover the 150 meters to the two-five. Then we scampered back down to the police camp with a terrified platoon of goffles clinging to the back of the truck.

We regrouped and went back up that hill like gangbusters. We couldn't get air support (I found out later that an air-mobile strike at Mapai, in Mozambique, had tied up our skyboys, but a couple of spotter planes took to the air and the enemy guns stopped firing).

Now it was our turn. Six Elands opened up with 90 millimeters and Brownings. Ignoring the enemy mortar rounds still falling, I jumped up behind my 50 and let rip. I spotted some terrs through the binos, running into a pink house near the river bridge. Three-hundred rounds later the pink house was a smoking ruin. The shelling had scared me out of my wits and I reacted to it with a surge of bloodlust.

My initiation to conventional war was a gut wrencher. I enjoy combat, but artillery fire seriously detracts from the fun.

"Sir, that was a little close for comfort."

"Don't sweat it, Peirce. A miss is as good as a mile."

I took off my helmet and put on my lucky baseball hat. We drove back down to camp for chow.

"Hey, Peirce! Is that an army-issue hat you're wearing?"

It was a smart-aleck corporal called "Tiger" (a great big puss).

"Yeah, man. I'm in the army and I issued it to myself."

We crept back up the hill for a night OP. The buildings on the enemy side of the river still burned. Even the whorehouse had been badly hit. Suddenly, my skin crawled and the hairs on my neck and arms stood up. I smelled lion. Although I'd never seen a lion, I knew instinctively what it was. It roared in the distance and we all clutched our weapons and yearned for a fire. Like our ancestors, we feared the beast that hunts in darkness.

In the morning, Darrell's darlings were off to Berg at a breakneck pace, leaving the others at Chirundu to block further infiltration attempts.

After one day in depot we went to Karoi to pick up Mr. Ray. It was a pleasant journey. We traveled in the major's staff car, which he drove as if his ass were on fire and his balls were catching.

These trips were always fun. Winkler never stood on formality and amused us with adventure stories. He always insisted on paying for meals and made sure we had a dry place to sleep if he could. Usually there were no accommodations, so the three of us passed many nights curled up under the two-five, serenaded by a chorus of farts and snores.

Mr. Ray and his gang had hearts aflutter in Karoi. Decked out in their black tank suits and berets, they certainly looked the part.

On the way back, I heard the boss tell Mr. Ray, "Well, Graham, we've waited a long time for this and I know it means a lot to you."

The terrs had killed many of Ray's family so "this" could mean only one thing: We would hit the terr where he lived. An external raid. Sammy and I grinned like two Cheshire cats. Major Winkler warned us: "Don't jump to any conclusions, fellas — and if you do, keep them to yourselves."

We returned to Salisbury, where we were promoted to lance corporals and put on indefinite standby. The big one was coming up.

To be concluded.



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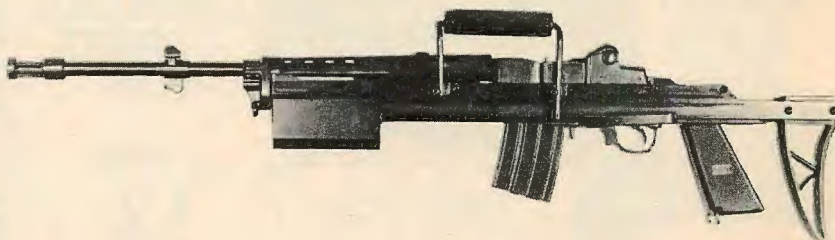
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# FACE

Continued from page 55

many South Vietnamese units, the Black Cats had a good reputation in the field. Still, I remember wondering even back then how many Viet Cong they were recruiting as they ransacked the village. The eyes of the villagers were evasive, impossible to read.

The column ran into a wide brown river and we swung north. At the first bend in the river, the

Vietnamese interpreter pointed upriver and began jabbering at me in broken English. He singled me out; I still don't know why. Either he wanted an American to fire first in case he'd misjudged targets, or he was offering the target to me as a gift. Upriver 300 yards, a barge full of Vietnamese was crossing to the far bank, just ahead and below the line of sight of the approaching point squad. The interpreter aimed a make-believe rifle at the barge. "Bang! Bang!" he said, looking at me.

"Fire?" I said.

"VC," he said, nodding. I stepped forward, lined up my M14 rifle on the barge and opened fire at a visible target for the first and only time in my 22-month tour. Bullets splashed into the barge. I aimed low, firing two-to-four-round bursts on automatic. Some of the people in the barge ducked down; others jumped into the waist-deep water and thrashed toward shore. They looked too tall to be children, but from the distance I couldn't tell age or sex. I didn't care at the time. I just kept pressing the trigger and trying to control the muzzle jump. The lieutenant and the radio operator joined me, sharing a rifle. Only then did the rangers join in, firing M1s and BARs.

Although the rangers sent a patrol across the river, no one ever satisfactorily explained who was in the barge or why the barge was crossing the river when we appeared on the scene. "Blood trails but no bodies," was all the interpreter said.

About an hour before dusk, our FO team was called up to the point. The Army adviser was studying a deserted village across the river through a scope mounted on his M16 rifle. Printed in Vietnamese on an arch above the main entrance to the village were the words: "This Village Belongs To Ho Chi Minh." The sign was ancient — it had probably been on display for years — but the village was in South Vietnam in an officially pacified area.

The sign enraged the ranger colonel. He decided to level the deserted village with artillery. Our FO team adjusted. We had to lie about the nature of the target, fabricate a fire fight, I think, to get

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the mission cleared. The first adjusting round went short, fountaining up in the river. We adjusted over the radio and 8,000 meters away, the howitzer crew changed the elevation and deflection of barrel minutely. The second round landed in the center of the village, surprising the Army adviser who was accustomed to more unpredictable results from South Vietnamese artillery.

"Fire," the lieutenant said to the radio operator, who relayed the order back to the artillery fire-direction center.

The rounds arced in six at a time, exploding in the village in huge black clouds. The archway collapsed in splinters. Straw huts bulged, then disintegrated. Shrapnel splashed in the river.

"And 100. Fire," the lieutenant said. He passed me back my binoculars.

"See him?" the Army adviser asked, nudging me. He was watching the village through his scope-mounted M16. I swept the village with the binoculars. A figure in white was moving in the village. It was a frail, bald-headed old man in a white robe. A round landed between the man and my line of sight. The foreshortening effect of the binoculars made it seem as if the round landed directly on top of the old man, but when the smoke cleared he was still standing, still walking through the exploding rounds, ignoring the shrapnel. The concussion whipped at his rope. He stepped behind a bush fence and didn't reappear.

"Add 100. Fire," the lieutenant repeated.

Eight months later, in February or March of 1968, I was showing Vietnam slides to the freshmen on my floor in a University of Minnesota dormitory, and I told them about the sweep. They didn't understand — the story was too alien for the average 18-year-old. They thought I'd made up the part about the white-robed figure. But I hadn't.

I don't think I mentioned the face to those freshmen in Territorial Hall. It just didn't come up back then. During the first few months after my discharge, I sat in campus bars, wanting to fight, but I couldn't find any obvious villains.

I refused to join the anti-war movement. If 19-year-old Americans with automatic rifles were behaving outrageously and recruiting more enemy soldiers than they were killing in Vietnam, 19-year-old college students in the United States were guaranteeing the war's continuance by offending the middle class with their own brand of outrageous behavior.

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I turned to the Nikon I'd picked up in Hong Kong, and I started photographing beginners' clichés — chipmunks on stumps, sailboats silhouetted against the sunset and close-ups of flowers. Later, I used the Minnesota State Veteran's Bonus to buy my first medium-format landscape camera, a Pentax 6x7.

It wasn't until an early spring evening in 1979 out in Joshua Tree National Monument that I finally remembered the face. I was with some students from L.A. City College. One of the students had a cooler full of beer that he'd been photographing on 4x5 film for a classroom assignment. We were drinking the subjects of his assignment, standing near our cars beside a huge boulder. Someone asked where the restrooms were, which brought a laugh. I started to mention a latrine at the Split Rock picnic site. The face I never actually saw came back to me.

On that day, years earlier, I'd been on an ammo detail delivering 155mm rounds to a platoon of Marine howitzers set up adjacent to a South Vietnamese compound west of Phu Bai. The platoon had been overrun the night before. A standard Viet Cong tactic had been employed. A traitor inside the Vietnamese compound opened the gate, and when the Viet Cong attacked, they pushed the South Vietnamese back, forcing them to retreat into the Marine position. The Marines couldn't distinguish the South Vietnamese from the Viet Cong so they shot everyone.

When I arrived on the scene, the South Vietnamese interrogation team had identified the traitor who had opened the gate the night before. A Vietnamese enlisted man with a flashlight was conducting tours. He led some of the men on our ammo detail one at a time over to a two-holed latrine. Some returned wordlessly, others returned with forced smiles. I refused to participate in the tour — but not because I was afraid to look down into the latrine.

There are some things on this planet that even a pampered, baby-faced, would-be juvenile delinquent won't tolerate. I'd have upset the Vietnamese interrogation team, because I knew that if I looked down into that dark hole, I'd have used my WWII 9mm. One quick shot in the face. The traitor was in the latrine, alive, tied up with barbed wire, down there with the maggots.

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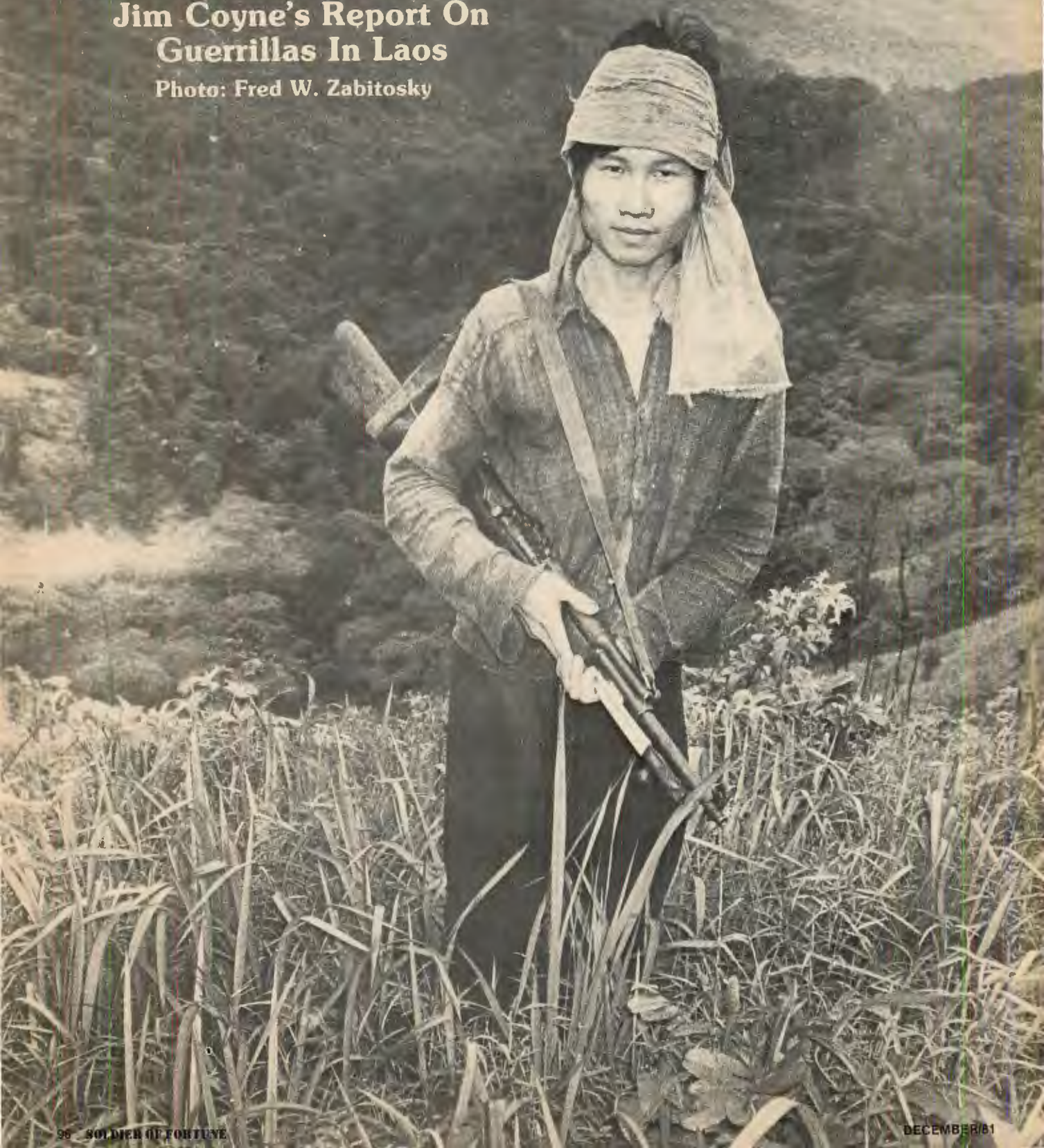
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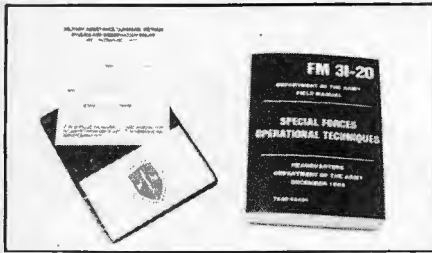
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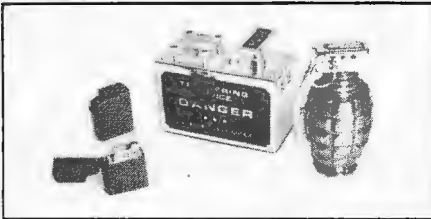
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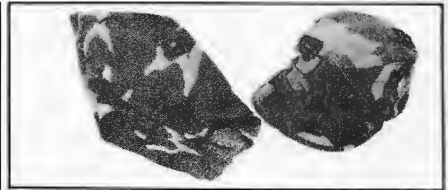
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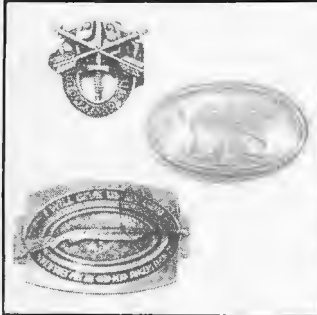
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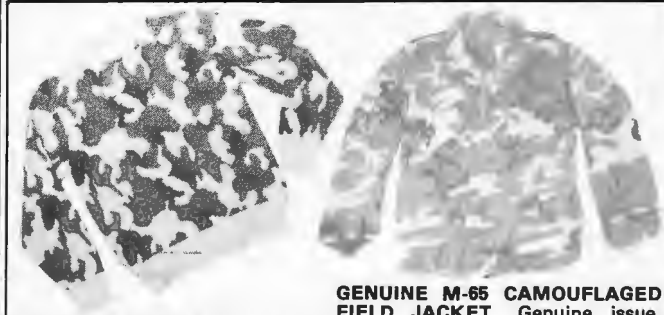
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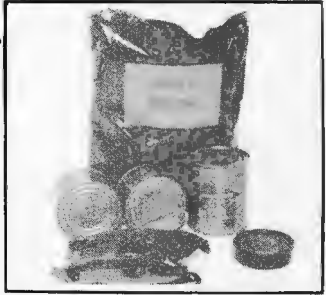
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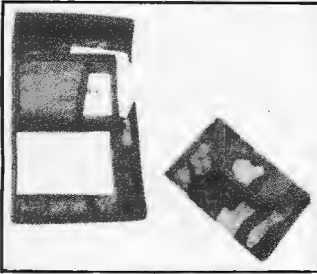


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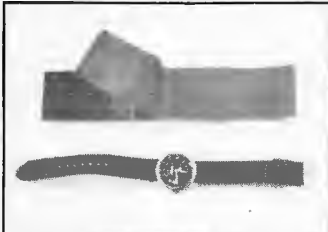
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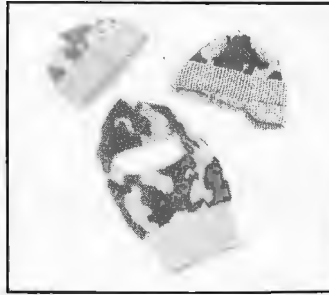
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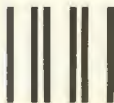
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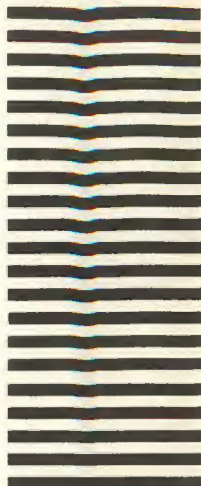
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