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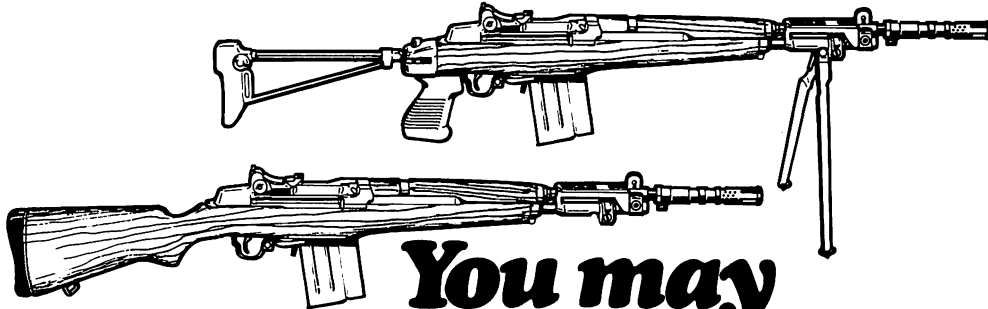
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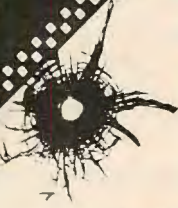
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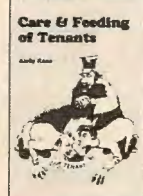
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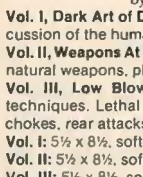
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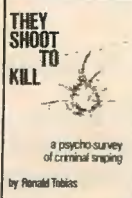
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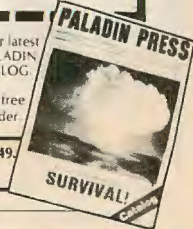
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EDITOR'S NOTES

WHO reads *Soldier of Fortune*?

Well, among our 220,000-plus readers are a number of star-bedecked or cloaked gentlemen inside the Pentagon and out at Langley.

We've known that for a long time, but a considerable portion of the American public found out when *Newsweek* magazine printed an item in its 28 September 1981 "Periscope" column.

Titled, "Hot Tips From an Adventure Magazine," it read:

"They don't like to admit it, but intelligence analysts at the CIA and the Pentagon rely on an adventure magazine published in Boulder, Colo., for some of their best information on Soviet military operations in Afghanistan. Every month the analysts comb through the pages of *Soldier of Fortune* for reports on machine guns, grenade launchers and other Soviet weapons that the magazine's correspondents in Afghanistan have somehow acquired. *Soldier of Fortune* even offers to sell captured Soviet weaponry to the highest bidder, preferably 'U.S. or NATO intelligence agencies.' One Pentagon official says that the ease with which *Soldier of Fortune* obtains Soviet arms is 'a real sore point' at the CIA."*

That means there are at least two leaks inside the military/intelligence establishment in Washington, since we don't believe *Newsweek's* reporter heard that from the same "throat" we heard it from.

Besides our source knows exactly how we get our scoops.

It's a simple process. First, you find a correspondent with combat experience — it helps if you know what you're looking at. Second, after properly equipping him (camera, notebook, boots, and lots of cash but no trench coat), you bundle him off via Pan Am for Pakistan. Third, your correspondent makes contact with various mujahideen leaders in Peshawar, who smuggle him into the Tribal Trust Lands on the Afghan border because you have supported their cause in the past. Fourth, he crosses into Afghanistan and travels via foot or captured Russian truck to the nearest mujahideen depot where captured Russian gear is stored. Fifth, he selects the items he likes and either photographs them (no charge) or offers something in trade for the items he wishes to bring back. Sixth, he smuggles his goodies into Pakistan and back to the United States, again on a commercial Pan Am flight. Sixth, he delivers them to Boulder, at which point Managing Editor Jim Graves gets to rip apart the magazine to get them into the next issue going to press, two days later.

If you don't want to go through all of that there's another way. Just go down to your newsstand and pick up a copy of *Soldier of Fortune*. Or you can do what the CIA does: subscribe.

It's only \$26 a year for 12 issues of the magazine that's "in the right places, at the right times." Like on desks in the Pentagon.

—Jim Graves

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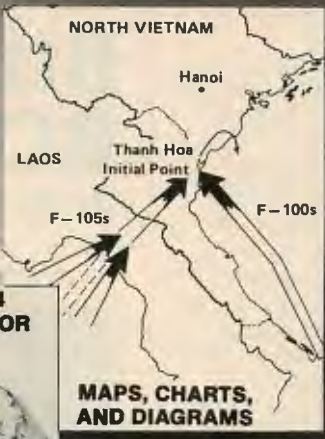
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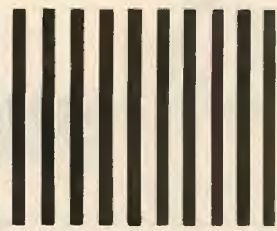
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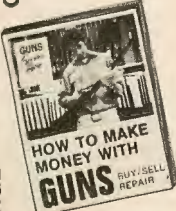
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YELLOW DEATH UPDATE . . .

Last month Jim Coyne reported, in a sidebar to his article, "Laos: The War That Never Ended," entitled "Yellow Death in Laos," that the chemical sample SOF procured from Laos was the "carrier" agent for the deadly Soviet toxin T₂ (Trichothecene) known as "Yellow Rain." Coyne was recently informed by the State Department (which is collating information regarding chemical- and biological-warfare violations by the Soviet Union) that the sample SOF provided for analysis proved to have positive traces of a toxin similar to the T₂ found in other samples (collected in Cambodia). Evidence, including that provided by SOF, was presented in October 1981 to the United Nations group of experts tasked with investigating Soviet chemical-and biological-warfare violations.

Because the analysis for T₂ is difficult and time-consuming, and because no one really knew what they were looking for in the beginning, the first tests completed were often disappointing. However, as the field of possibilities began to narrow, more attention and resources were provided by the current administration to discover the answers, and more tests were run.

For security reasons, SOF's sample was submitted for analysis to Congressman Jim Leach of Iowa without disclosing to him by whom, or how the sample was collected. He was told only that the sample had been recently returned from Laos. Congressman Leach was selected because he has consistently taken the Soviet Union's use of chemical and biological weapons seriously.

He was provided a portion of the chemical sample SOF procured from Laos, and he in turn handed it over for analysis to representatives of the Defense Intelligence Agency. The DIA, with cooperation and support of other agencies and departments of the government, began an exhaustive series of tests aimed at determining what chemical or biological agent was present in what was by then known as "the Leach sample" — the sample provided by SOF.

After months of analysis, the results of the tests were disclosed to the involved parties so that a strategy of disclosure could be worked out. The "smoking gun" has been found.

Test results of the "Haig" sample (T₂ collected by various sources in Cambodia) and the "Leach" sample (another toxin collected in Laos and turned over to SOF) have proved, be-

Continued on page 78

PROFESSIONALS

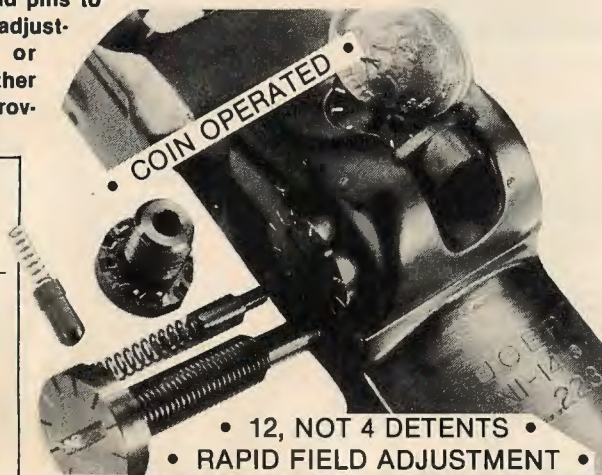


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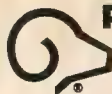
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bureaucracy to become first Ambassador Extraordinary and then Under Secretary General of the UN in charge of Security Council affairs and disarmament issues.

He defected three years ago but until recently had talked to no one except the CIA and FBI.

Besides his "unrelieved nonsense" comment on Afghanistan, Shevchenko says that the Soviet invasion had nothing to do with petropolitics or a Russian hunger for a warm-water port. The real reason, he says, was that Afghan communists had become badly fragmented and the pro-Chinese faction was gaining power. Such a flanking movement, he said, could not be tolerated. The Soviets, he added, felt they had to go in, but in so doing made a tactical error in that they did not realize they would have to employ regular troops to fight the anti-communist insurgents.

Regarding the Soviet mission to the UN, Shevchenko said there are some 800 personnel there and half of these are either KGB or military intelligence agents.

On other matters, Shevchenko said U.S. interpretation of Russian disinformation activities is exactly right: "That's just the way the Soviets do it."

However, he added, U.S. estimates of a timetable for taking over the world is absurd: "The Soviet foreign ministry doesn't know what it will do next month."

CORRECTION . . .

In the November '81 issue of SOF, on p. 59, we reported that Col. David Lownds received the Medal of Honor for directing defense of the Khe Sahn combat base while serving as commanding officer of the 26th Marine Regiment. He did not. He received the Navy Cross, the Marines' second highest decoration for valor.



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PMRS is an all-volunteer, non-governmental, non-profit disaster-relief organization whose president is Robert K. Brown, Editor and Publisher of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine. The 1st Airborne is a non-profit, non-governmental parachute organization composed of exmilitary jumpers and former members of the now-defunct Airborne Division of the Confederate Air Force. Its commander is Madro Bandaries of Shreveport, La. For an account of the first PMRS training conducted in April 1981, see "Suspended Agony," SOF, October '81.

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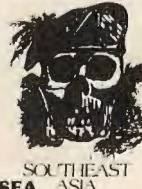
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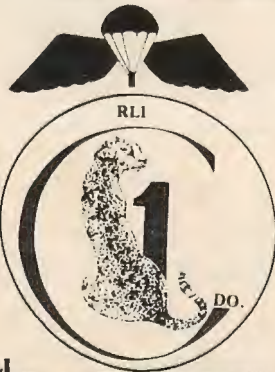
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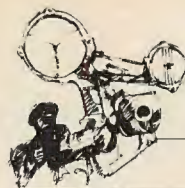
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FLAK

Continued from page 10

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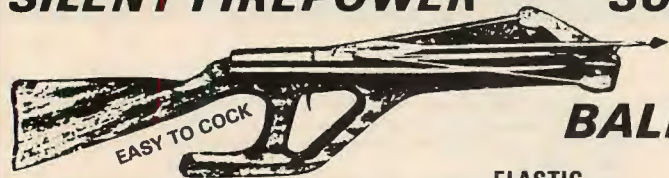
Sincerely,
Tim Moriarty
Annandale, Virginia

PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF ...

Sirs:

When the book store where my wife works was transferred to a large chain, the new manager refused to sell SOF, because she thought the store should not handle "that sort of thing." She admitted that she had never read SOF, so I appealed to her sense of fairness and loaned her two of your best, most scholarly issues. My wife joined the campaign by mentioning that SOF sold very well. Two months later, after I had helped the manager move into her new apartment and asked persistent questions about the status of the two issues, SOF was back on the store's

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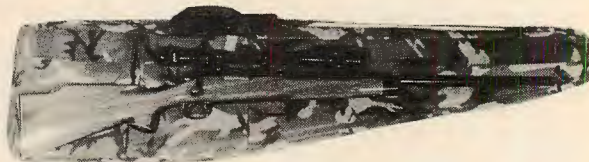
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shelves. (Unfortunately, she never returned my magazines and left a short time later.) Persistent, friendly persuasion sometimes works.

Sincerely,
Dean S. Weingarten
Madison, Wisconsin

We appreciate readers requesting that newsstands carry SOF and working, as Mr. Weingarten did, to make it happen. — The Eds.

AIR FORCE SPECIAL ...

Sirs:

I'd like to commend you on your fine publication. I enjoy the many articles you have published on special-operations units in the U.S. armed forces, especially the MACV/SOG articles (SOF, June '81). But you have failed to cover any activities of the U.S. Air Force elite, the pararescuemen, or the special terrorist units of the security police. The Air Force has a proud tradition and some damn fine members.

Sincerely,
S. Sgt. Lawrence M. Gattie,
USAF

Columbus, Ohio

See our article on the pararescuemen, or PJs as they prefer to be called, on p. 60 of this issue — The Eds.

GOLDEN DRAGONS ...

Sirs:

While driving around, I spotted a car with a 25th Infantry Division sticker on the window. I tried like hell to catch up with guy since I served with the 25th in Vietnam (2bn, 14th Inf., "Golden Dragons"). I would like to find out more about this association and I thought maybe you could help. I'd also like to make contact with anyone who served in this unit from February 1968-69.

Thanks,
John F. Canning
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MAG 1

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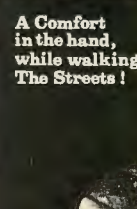


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LEGEND

Continued from page 35

people had known what was going on, because there was a whole tunnel system right across the street from our house, but there was so much underbrush you couldn't see it.

"Soon they asked for a volunteer to go back and take care of the wounded. I went and stayed until we were evacuated. Soon a doctor came in and we started plasma and stuff like that.

"When we were evacuated, we were taken to the Special Forces compound for part of the day, and then we were taken to the hospital, which gave us one ward. They needed help, so all of our nurses helped 'em. What really amazed me was that there were North Vietnamese wounded in our hospital. And boy, did they act nasty. I don't think they would have done as much for us as we did for them.

"The next morning some of the people in our group thought we should go back to help the wounded in town. I wasn't too crazy about it, but I thought, 'All right, if you want to we'll go back.'

"I drove a Korean vintage jeep, rode right up and over barbed wire and kept going. Someone told me later we were fortunate the jeep didn't stop right there. The Vietnamese people didn't want to associate with us, because if the enemy came back they could be killed too. So we were there long enough to get some clothes and pack a suitcase and go up to the clinic. Someone said the North Vietnamese were coming back — get outta town. I never went back.

"We got back to the hospital and I said, 'Let's go see Larry.' I grabbed one of my friends and we went over to intensive care and found him. I went to see him every day until he was evacuated.

"At that time he proposed. I accepted."

Dring said that wasn't the whole story. "I was in a long ward, and most of the people on it were my people, what was left of the guys from Mike Force. A couple of the guys got together. They wanted to do something nice for me.

"So they got an Australian go-go girl to put on a performance. That was when Becky showed up. I thought, 'How in the world am I gonna explain this?'

"So I said, 'Thank you very much, but Becky's the one I want to talk to.' (I proposed to her on the medevac aircraft just before it left,

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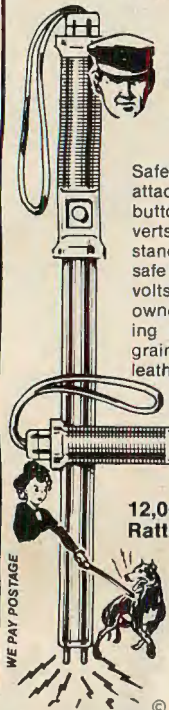
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when she came up the ramp to say goodbye.)

"My old Mike Force commander, Maj. McCarthy, came by and gave me a .45. He said that one of the guys we bumped off was a battalion executive officer [XO], who had an ops order that said the next target was the hospital. They'd already shelled it, taken out the pharmacy, a nurse and a couple of corpsmen. So McCarthy gave me his .45 and two magazines.

"Along came a nurse major. She said, 'Oh, you can't have a gun.'

"I said, 'Lady, this could be a very bad scene.'

"'Well,' she said, 'we have these two corpsmen to protect you.' Two dudes, very nice people, white uniforms, helmets, flak jackets — and one M14 with one magazine.

"I said, 'Lady, about four kilometers down that road I lost a rifle company.' She thought I'd misplaced it.

"I kept trying to explain what the word 'lost' meant, but I couldn't get the message across. I had a lanyard around my neck and I had that .45 hooked to it.

"So I said, 'Huh-uh! I'm not givin' it up. I'll be very nice, but what are you gonna do to me, shoot me? Send me to Vietnam?' She got all upset.

"She had another girl come in later and hit me with Demerol. I woke up without the .45, but I still had the lanyard around my neck and two magazines under my pillow.

"For three days during Tet they couldn't get anybody out during the daytime. At night, they'd orbit a C-130. The aircraft would come in — it wouldn't even cut the engine, but come in, drop the ramp and they'd start chuckin' litters on. When the rockets started comin' in they'd up the ramp and book it. After about three days they could bring 'em in in the daytime, and it started levelin' out.

"I was up there for 11 days.

"On a couple of nights, Becky and I went outside. It was just like 'The Star-Spangled Banner': 'Rockets' red glare, bombs bursting in air.' It tickled me.

"It was comical. The people who were bedridden, who couldn't get out, had a mattress over them like a sandwich. The rest of the people were put under the bed. I just took the mattress off. If they were gonna get me they were gonna get me. The mattress was a bore. I guess I wasn't the world's best patient — although I tried to be nice, you know how 'legs' are."

(To be continued.)



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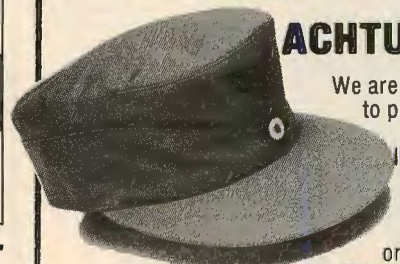
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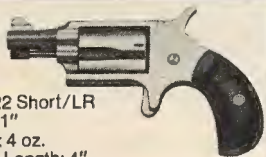
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THAILAND

Continued from page 43

LUCY'S TIGER DEN

by Alan Dawson

It's a modest little place, especially from the outside, where there's virtually nothing to attract a drinking man away from the fleshpot-neon of Patpong Road just across the street. It's just a shophouse wide, with "windows" of garishly painted plywood, and a sign that doesn't attract the average passerby.



Alban "Tiger" Rydberg, holding copy of SOG issue, with wife Lucy outside "Lucy's Tiger Den" on Silom Road in Bangkok. Many an Air America hand and SOG trooper have bent their elbows at "Tiger's," home of the brandy-flip and hobo beans and bread.

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someone drops in a nickel (one Thai baht, actually) there's Al Jolson's "Mammy," or Merle Haggard's "Okie from Muskogee," or Glen Miller playing "In the Mood," or an original Stompin' Tom number, or a few by Slim Dusty. A little unusual, for noisy, raunchy Bangkok.

The man who makes this place go (and just for a minute take it as fact that it really does go), the man who is almost everybody's friend, is Tiger.

He's a 65-year-old ex-ironworker from California with no gut, and has a 9-year-old daughter. The very suspicious might take his initial glad-handing with a "good-to-meet-ya" grain of salt, but it takes only a few minutes to find out that Tiger means it, he really is glad to meet you. And what's more, you'll be glad you met him: it's that infectious.

Lucy's Tiger Den is a bar for drinking and talking, and there's no banned subject (or language, as far as that goes, and it gets a bit blue some nights), and there are arguments and even an odd bit of personal violence. But, the ambiance (Tiger knows the word, but ironworkers mock words like that) is just, well, good. Fighting — even heavy arguments — just doesn't fit. It is a place to enjoy. Being in there is like being a guest in a friend's house.

Rydberg is a child of the depression, and of prohibition. He liked one about as much as the other, and he's not too willing to have reminders of either about him or his bar. He works out of his pocket to a large extent, so, often as not, there's money around. And never, never, will anyone in Tiger's bar be reminded of prohibition, unless it's in one of his endless, entertaining, often profane, and highly detailed stories.

Like many other Americans, Tiger got to Southeast Asia via Vietnam, when he went to Bien Hoa in 1966 to help put up the U.S. Air Force airbase there. He then worked in Da Nang and Saigon before visiting Thailand in 1967. In Thailand, he worked on the new, "secret" B-52 base at Utapao, 96 miles south of Bangkok, for the Dillingham-Zachery-Kaiser construction consortium. He, and men like him, built it. He was back in Vietnam with Pacific Architects and Engineers (PAE) by the year of the Tet offensive, 1968, and did almost another two years in Vietnam. Then he "drug up" for East Pakistan to help build bridges on an aid project. He was there when Indian troops invaded at the end of 1971, a war from which the nation of Bangladesh emerged.

I could tell you why every present and former soldier, flyer, oilie, construction stiff, merc, ironmonger, cowboy, pipe layer or deep-sea diver enjoys himself at Tiger's. But the basic

philosophy is told, in typical fashion, so well by Tiger himself that I'll let him tell you.

"Well, I got run out of East Pakistan when the war started in 1971. I came here, went on a 54-day drunk, married Lucy, sobered up to go back to bridging and ended up in the bar business. You don't get over a 54-day drunk in five minutes," he adds.

"I'd never been in the bar business before, but I'd done my share of drinking. Started in when I was 14 years old, and I was the only one under 21 who could drink in Duke Cutler's bar in Oakdale, Calif. Duke decided to sell his bar when I was 21, to Vern Engals and Cliff Moore of Gillette, Wyo., and I got to be good friends with both of them. Vern Engals gave me some advice in 1937 that I never forgot.

"Kid," he said, 'if you ever get in the bar business don't get anything too fancy. Throw sawdust on the floor, that's all right, but have plenty of cold beer in that box. Don't be sitting there with half a dozen empty liquor bottles on your shelf, have some booze back there. Keep some change in that damper, and don't be runnin' everybody up and down the street to break a bill. Cash those checks,' he says, 'try to cash all good checks, but if you're not going to do that, just do the best you can.'

"And I never did forget what he said. Maybe I've missed too many airplanes, but my friends are some of the best people in the world."

Tiger doesn't have sawdust on the floor, but he sure took the rest of that advice to heart. The beer is the coldest in Bangkok, and if you want a shot of, oh, say, Yukon Jack high-proof Canadian liquor, Tiger's got that back there, too.

Izzy Freedman, an ex-Air America chopper pilot from Laos, now working in Indonesia on bigger birds for Bristol Aircraft, tells his own illustrative story.

"A very good friend of mine was in some trouble early one morning and I called up Tiger first thing and told him, asked him if he could help. Tiger said he'd be over, and I hung up the telephone and started putting on my pants.

"Just then the doorbell sounded and I stumbled over, thinking bad thoughts about people who always bother you in the middle of a crisis. I couldn't believe it, there was Tiger. He was puffing because he ran over to help my friend.

"Tiger pulled out a wad of money, and said if that wasn't enough he had his business manager and his wife Lucy standing by to get some more if he called.

"Now I'll tell you, pardner," said Izzy, "if you were in trouble, wouldn't you wish for a friend like that?"

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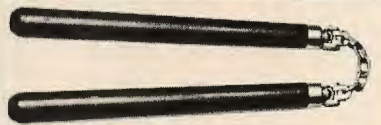
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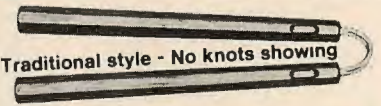


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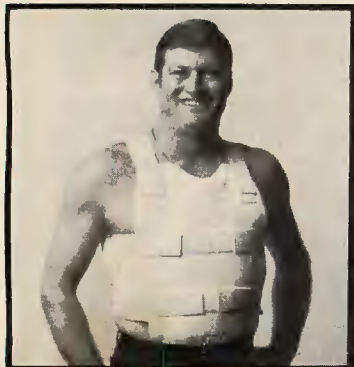
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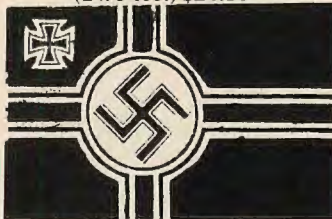
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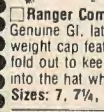
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No one who has ever met Tiger has failed to be impressed by his memory. He remembers names and faces better than any politician. He remembers every incident, suit color, mood and nuance that he ever saw, and uses them to tell hilarious stories. Deadpan, like W.C. Fields or Buster Keaton, Tiger reels off his past experiences.

As an iron worker, he put up iron all over the States and much of the world in his day. He remembers every friend he ever had, and can recite word-for-word a poem he heard *one time* from a drunken Canadian sailor when he worked on the Alcan (Alaska-Canada) project near Prince Rupert, British Columbia, during WWII!

Tiger's never been in the military — deafness kept him out — but here's "the right stuff," and what some of the most spectacular soldiers and semimercs of his day think of him: Tiger is Bangkok commander of Post No. 1 of the American Legion, the Ward-Chennault post registered in Shanghai, China, and "operating in exile" since 1948. Barry Goldwater is a member, and it's one hell of an honor.

"Hell, I'm no damned joiner and I never was in the military, but CASH (C.A.S. Helseth, leader of the post in the United States) asked me to do it. Shanghaied me into it, I guess you could say." Tiger recruits and raises money for the post by selling T-shirts.

Tiger used to give away food every Friday night, on "Hobo Night," as he called it, and a lot of ex-'Nam people around at the time, jobless, kept body and soul going with Hobo Night. Nothing fancy, but all the spaghetti and salad you could eat, or ham and beans, or whatever. He doesn't do it as often anymore.

"Damned hippies," said Tiger. "They found out about it and started comin' in. I didn't mind that, they could eat for free and drink water and I'd feel good about putting some food into them. But they came downstairs (the feed was in the 'Hobo's Roost' on the second floor of the bar) and drank their damned water and interfered with my drinkin' patrons. Had to close it up, the hobo's feast, 'cause of that. Can't have nothin' interfering with our customers' drinking; I learned that a long time ago, too."

Tiger doesn't drink now because of the diabetes that challenged him to a fight a few years ago and drew the battle. He doesn't smoke anymore either. The most frustrating thing in Tiger's bar is that when he buys you a drink, you can't buy it back for him. And, everyone who's in S.E. Asia wants to buy him a drink.

Tiger doesn't drink, doesn't smoke, but he hasn't stopped living. The bar opens at 10 every morning, and around 10 a.m. Tiger's on hand waiting for the first customers. Be-

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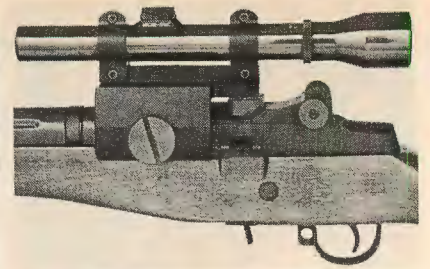
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A GRAVE FO



**Killing
For
Mother
Russia**

by Adam Novak

R IGNATIEV

AMERICANS who follow such things occasionally hear about the long arm of the Russian security service. Efficient, powerful, cunning and ruthless, it strikes far more often than generally realized in the West. Its targets are defectors, tiresome leaders-in-exile and, occasionally, influential citizens of the Free World. One of its victims was a man I knew. He was not a friend, but we shared some wine and bread occasionally, as well as life-in-exile (on the charity of a foreign government), which formed a kind of bond between us. He deserved to die, no doubt, and there is a moral in his death.

The Italian government maintains a refugee camp high in the mountains, near the Yugoslav border. It is a transit point for refugees from behind the Iron Curtain on their way to resettlement in the Free World. Nearly half the inmates are Hungarians; Poles rank second in number, then Slovenians from the border region of Yugoslavia, Rumanians, Bulgarians, Czechs and the occasional Albanian — a cross-section from the communist nations of Europe. East Germans and Russians are rare birds in the camp: East Germans are automatically admitted to West Germany with full citizenship, and the Russians are too well-guarded to defect.

When I was an inmate in the early '70s, Ignatiev was the only Russian. He was in his early 40s, tall, with a heavy Slavic face and incredibly blue eyes. Although some of the women found him attractive, he was generally detested. After all, he represented Russia, the oppressor of our countries.

Russian domination was the reason most of us chose exile: Russia sent the tanks into Hungary and Czechoslovakia; Russian troops murdered 15,000 Polish officers in the Katyn forest; Russian soldiers raped and plundered Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea — and Ignatiev, exile or not, was still a Russian.

I was not too keen on him either, but my perverse curiosity prevailed. Just as other people collect stamps, coins or garter belts, I collect personalities. If I find a man or woman interesting, I do my best to find out what makes him or her tick. I have a hell of a collection, from hookers in Rome and deserters from the Foreign Legion to the Greek Orthodox bishop of the Greek community of Teheran and the deputy mayor of Helsinki.

Because I was working as an underpaid translator/typist/gofer for one of the camp offices, I met Ignatiev the day he arrived. He was extremely reluctant to provide the information necessary for processing his case. He was nervous as hell; he chain-smoked and perspired profusely. I thought it was the usual case of nerves in a new environment, the natural feeling of apprehension that comes when you burn all your bridges, sink all your boats and mine the ford behind you — but I was wrong. It was fear, a kind I have never seen before or since.

I have been scared under fire; I have seen a man freeze in the door during airborne operations; I have seen a man glued to a cliff face, unable to go up or down — but Ignatiev's fear was different. It was fear of some unknown, nameless, faceless evil. He lived with it day and night. He was assigned a room all by himself, and he spent most of his time there, alone with his fear and brooding. He appeared for meals, occasionally went to the small canteen next to the mess hall for cigarettes, but he hardly ever talked to anybody. He never left the camp, and he was in his room before dark. He was one paranoid bird.

Ignatiev's fear was different. It was fear of some unknown, nameless, faceless evil.

According to the information he gave our office he was a commercial pilot, captain of an Aeroflot flight. On his first trip to the West, he landed his aircraft and immediately left it with crew, passengers and KGB agents still aboard, and requested political asylum at the police station in the Fiumicino Airport terminal. After a couple of weeks he must have felt lonely, because he accepted my invitation of wine and filled in some of the spaces in his story.

He was born a few years before one of the great Stalinist purges. His father, a highly decorated hero of the civil war and the Polish war, was arrested for "anti-Soviet agitation" and "slandorous remarks against the state" in 1936. He was duly tortured, tried and shot in accord with Soviet justice; the rest of the family was "resettled" in a remote corner of Siberia, where Ignatiev grew up. He learned and did all the things expected of a proper Soviet youth.

Russia was at war, besieged on all sides by enemies, and needed everything her people could give. Ignatiev put his back into volunteer work; he was an enthusiastic Komsomol member, often praised and cited as an example, yet his father's fate haunted him constantly. If a hero of many battles could be arrested and shot for a few mistaken words, his son, who had never distinguished himself by remarkable deeds, was bound to follow shortly. He was afraid that he was going to say or do something that would be misconstrued as proof of his anti-Soviet attitude, that he would follow the many thousands to the prison camps.

Purges were going on constantly, and youth was not a mitigating factor — even primary-school pupils were being sentenced to long years in special corrective institutions. Ignatiev, with the burden of his father's guilt on his shoulders, could think of only one way to keep himself safe from the procession of the damned: He became the most ardent communist youth in the district and, just to be on the safe side, he denounced several friends and two of his teachers to the authorities.

Shortly after the war, he was *drafted* into one of the NKVD (Narodny Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del) regiments. This was the first sign that he was considered trustworthy: Only the "politically mature sons of the proletariat" were allowed into the NKVD. One of the alphabetic descendants of Dzerzhinsky's Cheka, the NKVD was purely and simply an instrument of repression. Its well-trained and disciplined units were too lightly armed to compete with conventional forces, but their equipment, training and organization were singularly well-suited to hunting down partisans in the occupied territories.

Ignatiev was a clever youth, and by the time his regiment deployed in Lithuania he was a squad leader.

In Lithuania, the proud, industrious population deeply resented Russian oc-



cupation and the excesses of the Red Army. Realizing that the very existence of their nation was at stake, men and women of all ages, professions and social standing fled to the forests and organized partisan units to fight for an independent, democratic Lithuania. Unfortunately, the Russians were in a position of great strength, and they set out to destroy all resistance with absolutely no restriction as to ways and means.

The partisans were supported by the vast majority of the population; they were brave and dedicated, and they fought with merciless efficiency — but they stood alone. They were separated from potential Free World support by hundreds of miles of Soviet-occupied territory and by a hostile sea patrolled by the Soviet navy — and the Free World was not interested, anyway. Their resistance was slowly worn down by Russia's overwhelming strength and the indifference of the West.

In Lithuania, Ignatiev saw his opportunity to distinguish himself; to collect so many decorations that he would remove the stigma of his father's record and earn Russia's forgiveness for his father's crimes. He threw himself into his work with great enthusiasm. His squad excelled in terror: They looted and burned more farms, hunted down more partisans and arrested more sympathizers than any other squad in the regiment. Ignatiev was soon rewarded: He received a medal and was sent to a military academy. He returned to the regiment as a lieutenant and carried on the good work.

I must pause here to reflect on a feature of Russian character. I have noticed it in most Russians, both hardcore communists and reactionary exiles; those who are likely to fight against Russians will do well to pay attention. The average Russian is convinced that Mother Russia has the mission of extending her munificence over the

peoples of the whole world, and those nations that resist should be dealt with severely.

Once a piece of real estate has been trod by the foot of a Russian soldier, that land becomes Russian forever. In 1917, even Russia's most idealistic, liberal revolutionaries and reformers refused to consider the liberation of Poland, Finland or other subject nations of the Empire. In Russia today, the man in the street is shocked at the notion that any nation behind the Iron Curtain may want out. In his view, Russia is doing a great service to every nation under her influence: She protects them, she provides them with unstinted assistance in every conceivable field and they reap the priceless benefits of Russian culture — all Russia wants in return is loyalty and obedience.

Mother Russia is never wrong. Whatever she does is done in the interest of her peoples, and her peoples should realize this and be properly grateful. It is just and proper to put down national liberation movements with force of arms because such movements cannot be anything but the work of foreign agents and traitors. No nation could possibly benefit from leaving the protection of Russia, since they have already become Russian property.

If a nation tries to rebel, it is trying to deprive Mother Russia of what is rightfully hers. The Russians have become a nation of missionaries, forever willing to spread the benefits of belonging to Russia, forever ready to graft their social system, their government, their culture onto other nations. Colonization and imperialism are dirty words today, but they well describe Russian policy toward other nations.

Mother Russia is never wrong.

Do not believe journalists' fancy tales that Russian soldiers were reluctant to fire on freedom fighters and peaceful demonstrators in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968. These stories are pure hogwash, wishful thinking. In Hungary they were fighting an actively hostile population, and when a soldier is shot at he shoots back and asks questions later, if at all. In Czechoslovakia, the passive hostility of the nation led to very few casualties.

Russian soldiers showed no reluctance to carry out any order to put down revolts, because the locals were trying to

deprive Russia of her rightful possessions — and they had to be punished. A Russian will fight as fiercely in Angola or Afghanistan as he would in Moscow or Baku. He will be fighting for Mother Russia and her people, on Russian soil, no matter what the location or who the enemy.

Ignatiev did not see anything wrong with his actions in Lithuania, either — the torching of farms, the deportation of entire villages to Asia, the torture and execution of suspected partisan supporters. The public mutilation of dead partisans was a necessary measure to teach a rebellious people not to rebel against the benefits of being Russian property. He talked about his atrocities with righteousness and excitement in his voice, and he was proud of his achievements. The loot he accumulated was rightfully his because it had belonged to enemies of Russia, and the women he raped were the women of enemies of Russia.

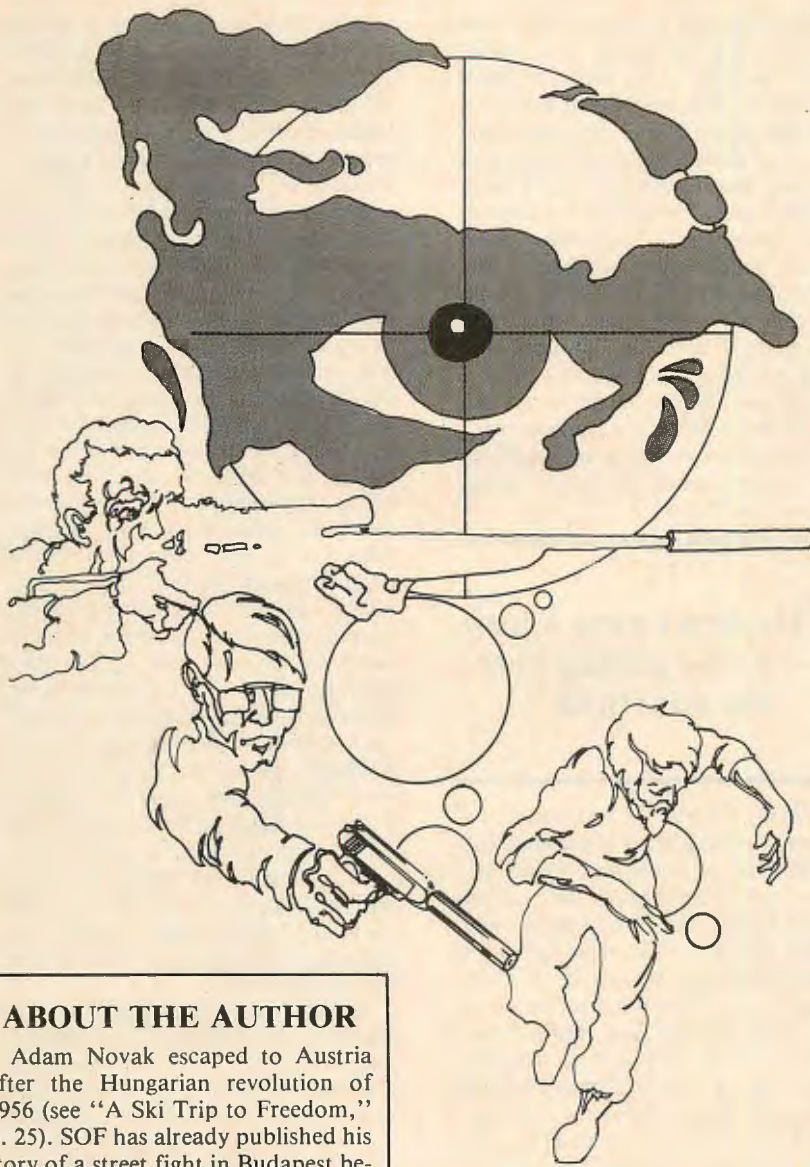
And yet I do not think he was a morally deficient monster. I felt sorry for him because, in his weakness, he turned to brutality and killing out of fear. To please and mollify the faceless, bloodthirsty government of a bloodthirsty land, he chose to become an official murderer, but his fear of Russia's wrath did not disappear.

In the last year of his service he began to fly small sailplanes, the first step for a pilot in Russia. Then he re-enlisted, became a pilot and flew military transports until his discharge, when he went to work flying domestic routes for Aeroflot. He was still constantly afraid. His wife, with the perception of most women, figured out his problem and planted the idea of defection in his mind. They planned and planned until it became an obsession with him.

When he was assigned to a route outside the Iron Curtain, the terms were made clear: He would be flying the route only as long as he had his wife — as a hostage — safely in Moscow. When he broke the news at home, his wife took it without batting an eyelid. Sitting in the cockpit before his first takeoff for Rome while waiting for the ground crew to finish its work, he broke out the sandwiches his wife packed for him — and found her note, saying she had incurable cancer and was going to commit suicide while Ignatiev was on his way to the airport. He should do as he saw fit, but at least one of them should be free.

He flew to Rome like a robot, landed at Fiumicino and turned himself in to the first policeman he saw. Instead of a mixture of grief for his wife and elation at his easy escape, his overriding emotion was an increasing fear of Russia.

About a month after Ignatiev's arrival, another Russian came to the camp. An engineer, he had been in Libya or Algeria as a member of an assistance program and decided against



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Adam Novak escaped to Austria after the Hungarian revolution of 1956 (see "A Ski Trip to Freedom," p. 25). SOF has already published his story of a street fight in Budapest between a group of Hungarians and a Russian unit (see "I Was There," March '81).

"A Grave for Ignatiev" is set in the refugee camp in Trieste where Novak was held for six months while awaiting a U.S. visa. The author is now a member of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C.

— M.L. Jones

going back to Russia at the expiration of his contract. He was shortish, fat and jovial, and he was accepted by the camp more easily than the gloomy Ignatiev had been, maybe because he had plenty of money and was quite free with it.

The two Russians naturally gravitated toward each other. They were of similar age, spoke the same language, and were highly trained professional men. Volkov, the engineer, bought many drinks for Ignatiev — who was broke — and they got drunk a couple of times and sang melancholy Russian songs in Ignatiev's room. They played chess and dominoes. Then, a miracle happened — Ignatiev actually left camp one after-

noon! He went down to Trieste with Volkov, and some people saw them in a bar, sampling the local fire water.

Neither of them showed up for breakfast the next morning, and around 10:00 the policeman guarding the gate started asking questions. Apparently, both turned in their mealcards for their ID cards when they left — as was SOP — and at six in the morning the two mealcards were still in their slots. Their gear was still in their lockers, although Volkov did check out his money, nearly a thousand bucks, from the commandant's office. It was assumed that they spent the night in town, a breach of camp regulations.

Ignatiev was found three days later by some laborers. He had fallen nearly 200 feet to the bottom of a quarry about a klick from camp. Volkov never turned up. There was only a perfunctory investigation. Medical evidence showed that Ignatiev was blind, falling-down drunk when he died, and it was assumed that he lost his way in the dark, stum-

bled off the path and fell into the quarry. It must have been a hell of a stumble, because the top of the quarry was fenced off to prevent just that kind of an accident.

Volkov was assumed to have gone to France or Germany to seek speedier processing of his case. No effort was made to explain why he left all his gear behind. The whole thing smelled uncommonly like a coverup of a mighty embarrassing mistake.

Rumors and opinions were freely aired all over camp, of course. I had the benefit of a little inside information since I worked in one of the offices, and the picture, as I reconstructed it, is certainly embarrassing, mostly for the Italian police.

Ignatiev must have known an interesting secret the Russians wanted to keep, and Volkov was sent to take care of the details — and he did, in an admirably professional manner. He was the perfect man for the job: a friendly, gregarious personality whose fat body concealed a lot of strength. He was everything James Bond is not and as unlikely a secret agent as you could find.

The Italian authorities held two intelligence scoops in their hands — a man with a secret worth the risk of an international incident, and a trained killer of the KGB — and they let both slip through their fingers.

God knows, Ignatiev deserved to die, but not at the hands of a Russian secret agent. If there were justice in this world, he would have been strangled by a couple of Lithuanians and his body thrown into the sewers. But I still feel sorry for him — no man should live in fear in his own country, when his only crime is being the son of a man sentenced and executed for a questionable offense.

The truly guilty party is not Volkov — state secrets have to be protected, and I wish we had a Volkov to visit Mr. Philip Agee. Neither is it Ignatiev, who turned to murder from paranoia. The guilty party is the social system that drives a man to commit atrocities in order to win approval, a social system that engages in social engineering without regard to costs, that tinkers with the heritage, structure and economy of entire nations, that forces itself on superior civilizations. The butcher's bill for Lenin's and Stalin's experiments exceeds 20 million deaths — not counting the losses in the world war — a figure that would make Genghis Khan or Hitler drool with envy. The guilty party is communism, and those who support it.

A Ski Trip to Freedom

by Adam Novak

The Iron Curtain is more than a physical barrier that stretches from the Baltic to the Black Sea. It is also a

concept of isolation, a denial of access to the outside world. It was invented to seal off the captive nations of eastern Europe from the influence of the Free World — to keep out such ideas as freedom, democracy and individual will and dignity. It has been devastatingly effective, turning nations with deeply-rooted democratic traditions into countries of listless, submissive slaves. Although it is cracking and crumbling in places, it still works. As a physical barrier, it is sophisticated in some stretches, with all the rings and bells of modern technology — sensors, trip flares, minefields, machine guns with automatic trigger devices, the lot. In other sectors it is somewhat dated. Many people try to cross it, and many fail. I was one of the few who managed to pass through it a few years ago.

I planned carefully. As a member of a backpacking club I was allowed almost free access to the border zone, enabling me to watch the movements of patrols for several months. I learned night navigation. I discreetly pumped every border guard I met for information on alarm systems, minefields and the state of readiness of the troops — and I bought all the foreign currency I could afford on the black market.

After more than a year of preparation I felt ready. It was early January. Heavy snowstorms had deposited several feet of snow, the weather forecast promised more snow, and the calendar showed it would be a moonless night. I approached the target area as any law-abiding citizen should: sitting in a second-class carriage, wearing a bright-colored ski outfit, and carrying a bulky rucksack. I was terribly nervous — basically, I am fairly honest and dislike taking risks, but this seemed the only way.

I got off after dark at a whistle stop, shouldered my pack and skis and took off down the narrow, unlit streets. My destination was an unused shed, where I had hidden a bicycle the previous week. It looked a wreck, with its dinged-up frame, patched tires, no chain and no lights, but was, in fact, in perfect condition. It took me five minutes to put on the chain I carried in my pack, fasten on the brackets I had made for the skis and pack and secure my gear. In that part of the world, a man on a bicycle is automatically considered a local and attracts no attention. Nobody gave me a second glance as I pedaled down the streets.

Soon I passed the last houses of the town and reached the local cemetery. There were no gates; I could roll right in. Snow began to fall, and I hoped it would cover my tracks by first light. I

pushed the bike past the church and hid it in a hedge under some snow, before putting on my skis. The fence on the far side was down; I had no trouble negotiating the remaining pieces of stone and mortar, even with skis on. Beyond the fence, in a small wooded area, I broke out my camouflage coveralls. I had sewn them myself from white bedsheets. The hood covered my face up to the ski goggles, my mittens were white, and I'd painted my skis, bindings and even my binoculars white. I think I was as invisible that night as one can get short of becoming transparent. I spent an hour in that wood, scanning the border, about 700 meters away. Beyond lay Austria.

“My heart gave a leap — I was gliding over the minefield.”

Finally the patrol I was waiting for came into sight in my binoculars, just a smudge of indistinct shape and movement even through the excellent 7x50 lenses, but I had seen them often enough — two men with automatic rifles and a German shepherd on a leash. I was not worried about the men, but the dog required caution even at such a long distance. They passed slowly. Unless they had changed their routine in the past week, I had more than a half hour to make my move. Patrols are supposed to be unscheduled in time and route, but conscript soldiers do not observe this basic rule. A new commander or a busybody NCO was always a possibility, but I had to take the chance. I knew that if I turned back then, I would never have the nerve to try again.

With pounding heart, I pushed off and slid down the gentle slope. The wind blew from behind, a great help for speed and visibility. In a few minutes, I was past the bushes and in the cleared belt of the restricted zone. When there is no snow, it is a neatly raked strip of sand; tracks, human or animal, are visible even from a helicopter. In seconds I was past it, and my heart gave a leap — I was gliding over the minefield, more than a hundred meters wide. The skis and the thick snow did what I'd hoped for: My weight was sufficiently distributed over a large enough area to have no effect on the mines, and the tripwires were buried too deep to do their job.

With the minefield behind me, I

crossed the patrol's path and reached the barbed wire. It was a 10-foot high fence with tightly stretched horizontal and vertical strands. I could see touch-sensitive wires attached to several strands. This was the biggie. I checked my watch (I was ahead of schedule by a comfortable margin), then whipped out the blanket, also sewn into a white bedsheet for camouflage. I threw it over the fence for padding, undid the bindings, slid the skis under the bottom strand of wire, and started climbing. It seemed to take a year; the pack was not heavy, but it restricted my freedom of movement, and I had to be careful not to put a foot near the touch-sensitive wires. Although I tore my overalls and lost some blood, the blanket helped a lot, as it covered the barbs on the trickiest section, the top. Finally I was over and coming down, keeping the touch-sensitive wires in mind. At ground level — or rather snow-top level — I had to do some fancy acrobatics: maneuver the skis into position so I could step into the bindings, while still hanging in the wire. The distance between the fence I had just scaled and the next one was only about 10 meters, but it was heavily mined: I had met a guy once who had gotten this far and stepped on one. I had no desire to keep him company in the nursing home for the rest of our lives.

After what seemed an eternity, the skis were on. I retrieved the blanket and set off over those 10 meters with a pounding heart: Mines are mines; never mind the fancy theories. I reached the last obstacle, a fence identical to the one I had just negotiated. I had seen Austrian border guards on the other side, and I was certain that Austrian territory began an inch from my toes.

The blanket went up, and then I went up, carefully stepping on each strand with a sensor wire. It was foolish bravado, of course, and I shudder today at the thought of those wires, which may have been connected to preset machine guns, but I was younger then, and the temptation was too strong.

When I was across, I buckled on the skis and took a few deep breaths. I know perfectly well that the air on the two sides of the fence was exactly the same, but on this side it held the heady scent of freedom.

For the record, the sensor wires were not as effective as I had thought, or the troops were slower than usual getting out of their bunks. I had put 400 meters and a small hill between the fence and myself by the time the first truck pulled up.



THE MERCENARY AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Adventurers Beware

by James E. Fender

AS almost every member of the profession is aware, mercenaries, in general, are held in low esteem by the governments of most nations. There has been a great deal of confusion even in defining a mercenary. But, until recently, a person who involved himself in a foreign war as a mercenary — for whatever reasons — if captured, could at least expect the treatment accorded any prisoner of war. This is not so anymore, and it's important for any professional who might become so involved to know exactly what his legal rights are.

First, though, how is a mercenary described in the latter quarter of the 20th century? Various definitions illustrate just how difficult it is to capture the essence of a mercenary. For example, *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines a mercenary as "one that serves merely for wages ... a person paid for his work, especially a soldier hired into foreign service." The best known French dictionary, *Larousse*, defines a mercenary as "*un soldat qui sert a prix d'argent un gouvernement etranger*," (a soldier who serves a foreign government for money). In contemporary American legal terms, a mercenary is "one who fights in a foreign war primarily for the payment of money. He is distinguished from the ordinary, paid soldier of a country at war in that he has sought to participate in the wars of others. He is distinguished from the volunteer from a foreign country in that he comes, not from any conviction or belief in the cause for which he fights, but rather for the promise of payment for his services."

These definitions, however, describe a

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This is James E. Fender's third contribution to the pages of SOF. (See "A Little Thing That Can Save Your Life," Sept. '79 and "Looking After No. 1," May '80.)

A specialist in medical-legal affairs, with experience in intelligence/counter-intelligence, and a former recruiter/employer of mercenaries, Fender is well-qualified to deal with the legal aspects and rights of the mercenary. —C.E.D. Kite

mercenary by what he *does*, not what he *is*. Even a synthesis of definitions — that a mercenary must be fighting for money and for a foreign government — is not really satisfactory. It would not cover the Hessian conscript involuntarily sent by his landgrave to fight for George III in the American Revolution. Nor would it cover most members of the French Foreign Legion, the Gurkhas in the modern British army, the International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War, the Condottieri employed by the Popes at various times during the Italian Renaissance — and most certainly it would not describe the "Crippled Eagles," those Americans who, for ideological reasons, fought communist-inspired terrorists in Rhodesia.

However, since 1977, there has been an internationally accepted definition of a mercenary. This definition is accepted by the United States, as well as most other countries, and significantly alters the legal rights previously enjoyed by a mercenary. This new definition is in Article 47 of Protocol I Additional to the

Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts. Briefly stated:

1. A mercenary shall not have the right to be a combatant or a prisoner of war.
2. A mercenary is any person who:
 - (a) is specifically recruited locally or abroad in order to fight in an armed conflict;
 - (b) does, in fact, take a direct part in the hostilities;
 - (c) is motivated to take part in the hostilities essentially by the desire for private gain and, in fact, promised, by or on behalf of a Party to the conflict, material compensation substantially in excess of that promised or paid to combatants of similar ranks and functions in the armed forces of that Party;
 - (d) is neither a national of a Party to the conflict nor a resident of territory controlled by a Party to the conflict;
 - (e) is not a member of the armed forces of a Party to the conflict; and
 - (f) has not been sent by a State which is not a Party to the conflict on official duty as a member of its armed forces.

Thus, anyone who fights in a foreign war in which his country of nationality is not a belligerent fits this definition. If a professional were to go to Afghanistan to fight with the Mujahideen, he would no longer have any legal right, under international law, to be treated as a prisoner of war should he be captured by the Russians. Realistically, of course,

any professional captured alive by the Russians would either be summarily executed or paraded before television cameras (from communist-bloc countries of course), given a "trial" and then be executed — as was the case with Daniel Gearhart.

You have probably already reached the conclusion that the internationally accepted definition of a mercenary applies to the Cuban troops who are occupying northern Angola to help the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) maintain its hold over that nation. And, of course, you are absolutely right; however, neither domestic nor international law is necessarily logical. Stripped of all the legalese, the definition of a mercenary boils down to individual interpretation. As far as the Cuban troops in Angola are concerned, they are considered by their supporters to be socialist auxiliaries aiding the "peace-loving" peoples of Angola in protecting their freedom from the capitalist-financed forces who would destroy their "workers' paradise."

Conversely, a professional, unfortunate enough to be captured by the Russians involved in the rape of Afghanistan, would be characterized as a foreign devil interested solely in private gain. If by now you suspect that most governments have a hypocritical and cynical view as to just what constitutes mercenary activity, your suspicions are well-founded.

Tragically enough, it was Gearhart's trial which led to the formal definition of a mercenary. Prior to June 1976 there was no such commonly accepted definition. And while a lot of countries did their best to keep mercenaries out of conflicts, at least captured mercenaries were given the same treatment accorded any prisoner of war. Daniel Gearhart was charged, along with Gary Acker, Gustavo Grillo and 10 British subjects, with "being a mercenary." The Angolan MPLA government accused them of *participating* in theft, rape and destruction of property and of participating in armed actions against the MPLA.

However, under international law or the law of Angola — as it then existed — there was no crime in "being a mercenary." The MPLA government relied on statements and resolutions issued by various African countries which condemned mercenary activity. None of these statements and resolutions had the force of law.

The trials were held under the auspices of the MPLA, which held power only through support of Cuban troops which the Russians had ordered Fidel Castro to send to Angola.

Gearhart and the other defendants admitted they had entered Angola for the purpose of serving in the armed forces of the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola), one of the factions fighting for control of Angola.

Although propaganda was put out by the communist-bloc countries to the contrary, the FNLA was as legitimate as the MPLA. Yet the Angolan court classified Gearhart and his fellow co-defendants as "irregulars," and denied them protection of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which specify the type of treatment a capturing nation must extend to their prisoners.

Basically, even if a person does not qualify under the Geneva Conventions as a prisoner of war, he may still qualify as a member of an irregular armed force. Such a person is protected by the Geneva Conventions as a privileged belligerent as long as he complies with these basic prerequisites:

1. Irregulars must be commanded by a person responsible for his subordinates.
2. Irregulars must have fixed distinctive signs recognized at a distance; use of military uniforms is sufficient to meet this requirement.
3. Irregulars must carry arms openly.
4. Irregulars must conduct their operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war.

Evidence at the trial clearly established that these conditions had been met. The defendants were accused of acting under the orders of Holden Roberto, leader of the FNLA, and others subordinate to him, while bearing arms openly and wearing uniforms.

No evidence was presented at the trial to indicate that the FNLA acted inconsistently with the laws of war.

Under international law, a national government is bound to apply the Geneva Conventions as a *minimum standard of law* in civilized society, regardless of whether it is a signatory to the documents. Gearhart and his fellow co-defendants were not punished for personal conduct of a wrongful nature — a member of any armed force who commits war crimes may be punished for those crimes (as were the Nazi war criminals at Nuremberg) — they were punished simply for their status in a particular armed conflict.

International appeals for clemency had no effect. Gearhart and three others were executed on 10 July 1976, and the remaining nine defendants were sentenced to long prison terms. On this same date, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger commented:

"There is absolutely no basis in national or international law for the action now taken by the Angolan authorities. The 'law' under which Mr. Gearhart was executed was nothing more than an internal ordinance of the MPLA issued in 1966 when the MPLA was only one of many guerrilla groups operating in Angola. Furthermore, no evidence whatsoever was produced during the trial of Mr. Gearhart in Luanda that he had even fired a shot during the few days he was in Angola before his capture."



Until this trial, general international practice considered mercenaries in the same category as other combatants, and therefore entitled to be treated as such under the 1949 Geneva Conventions. This has been American practice as far back as the Revolutionary War and was reflected in American treatment of captured Hessian troops. The 1977 Protocol to the Geneva Conventions changed this, and the bottom line is that no one who is considered a mercenary can look to international law for protection. The Gearhart trial, which is considered in American legal circles to have been a farce, demonstrates this.

No one can prevent you from living as you choose, but just as the true professional is aware of the tools and techniques of his trade, he should also be completely familiar with its political and legal aspects. More now than ever, the professional is going to have to depend on himself, his skills and his training to keep out of trouble. Before going off to fight, he needs to know everything he can about the situation in which he involves himself.



However, by most legal definitions, the professional who is ideologically motivated may be able to circumvent the "mercenary" aspect of the Protocol — if he is willing to enlist in the regular forces of the party he seeks to aid. In the summer of 1976, I held extensive conversations with officials in the Rhodesian civil government. I was assured that *all* of the American citizens who were actively engaged in counter-terrorist activities were legitimate members of a duly constituted military branch of the Rhodesian government.

All Americans who had chosen to cast their lot with the Rhodesians had done so from ideological convictions and no American was paid more than a Rhodesian trooper of equal rank. This very important point may classify a person as a combatant rather than a mercenary.

My observations and interviews have been substantiated by others with active operational experience in Rhodesia. Of course, those Americans who signed on as private ranch guards and in other civilian security work were not considered part of a regularly constituted

military force. However, their functions were primarily passive and defensive in nature.

Thus, depending on the particular situation, signing on as a regular soldier/sailor/airman of a belligerent party *may* entitle a professional to prisoner-of-war status as a legal combatant. However, as the Gearhart situation illustrates, incorporation into the regular military establishment of a belligerent party is no guarantee that a mercenary will be afforded the protections granted under the Geneva Conventions.

The question frequently arises whether or not an American citizen may legally serve in the armed forces of another country. The answer to this question is highly technical and I hesitate to burden the reader with too much legal terminology, but, briefly, the answer is yes — and no. The principal statute covering enlistment or recruitment within the United States is contained in Title 18, Chapter 45 of the United States Code. Specifically, 18 U.S.C. section 959(a) provides that: "Whoever, within the United States . . . hires or retains another to enlist . . . in the service of any foreign . . . state . . . as a soldier . . . shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than three years or both."

In addition to the above statute, 8 U.S.C. section 1481(a) (3) provides that any citizen of the United States who enters the armed forces of a foreign state, without the written authorization of the Secretaries of State and Defense, shall lose his citizenship.

This provision, however, must be read in the light of a Supreme Court decision which holds that an act of Congress (which the United States Code is) cannot divest a person of his United States citizenship.

A person may voluntarily abandon his U.S. citizenship by swearing allegiance to a foreign power, but the Supreme Court has held that a declaration of intent clearer than mere enlistment in a foreign army is required for an effective renunciation of citizenship. Therefore, despite assertions to the contrary, service as a mercenary or as an active member of another country's military establishment does not cause loss of U.S. citizenship.

Except for a few test cases, the Department of Justice has not sought to deprive American volunteers in foreign wars of their citizenship.

The Supreme Court has indicated that the provision in the Code is unconstitutional — at least that is the present interpretation. To my knowledge, no American citizen has been deprived of his citizenship under provisions of Title 18 merely because he served in the military forces of a foreign country. There have been, however, several cases in which U.S. citizens specifically renounced their citizenship and were never able to regain it.

During international negotiations there is a great deal of "horse trading." The United States would have been happy not to have had an internationally accepted definition of a mercenary since defining something frequently makes it harder to deal with. Using our own American Revolution as but one example, foreign-born patriots such as John Paul Jones, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, Kazimierz Pulaski, Frederick von Steuben or the Marquis de Lafayette would fit the 1977 definition of mercenary.

However, following the Gearhart trial, most black African nations were extremely apprehensive on the subject of mercenaries. Original proposals by Nigeria, for example, would not have afforded *any* protection to mercenaries. Other Arab, African and communist groups initially thought the proposal meritorious — until someone brought up the matter of Cuban or East German "advisers." Furthermore, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) was anxious that its "guerrillas" not be categorized as "mercenaries." So the final definition was a compromise, which the United States accepted in order to have specific language incorporated into other provisions of the Protocol providing for the quick removal of wounded persons to hospitals and the granting of immunity from attack to medical-evacuation helicopters.

Thus, under the Protocol as codified in Article 47, a mercenary has been stripped of the right to be a combatant or a prisoner of war. However, even if a capturing state does not extend prisoner-of-war status to a mercenary, under Article 75 of the Protocol, persons who are in the power of a party to the conflict and who do not benefit from more favorable treatment, under the Geneva Conventions shall be treated humanely in all circumstances.

But such noble words may prove to be of little comfort to anyone captured in the remote places of this globe where mercenaries are most likely to be encountered.

Any true professional acknowledges that only the Western democracies are likely to adhere to the Protocol. The free spirit who signs on for a limited contract and thinks the conflict is going to be like a football game between the Miami Dolphins and the Dallas Cowboys — hard contact but within the parameters of well-defined rules — may have a very rude shock awaiting him.

Your lifestyle is your own. Live as you choose. But when you decide whether to accept a contract or lend your aid to a group such as the Mujahideen for purely ideological reasons, just be certain that you have considered all aspects of the situation, including your international status, so that your decision is indeed an informed one.



SF'S LIVING LEGEND

The War According To Dring

by Jim Morris



S/Sgt. Larry Dring during a tour with 1st Special Forces in Okinawa carefully cultivated his reputation for always being out of uniform. Here Dring is wearing a Korean Special Forces uniform, South Korean jump wings and is armed with a M3A1 "Greasegun."

LARRY DRING is one of those odd kinds of friends that one makes in the military. Before this year, I had seen him only a half dozen or so times, but there has always been a good feeling between us and I have been able to keep track of him through the years because of a Special Forces mafia network of mutual friends.

We met in 1962 when he policed me up off the drop zone after a night jump in Korea, during which I had fractured my coccyx — or busted my ass, as they say in regular English.

I was hurting, but not so much that I couldn't stop for a cup of coffee with him. I was a first lieutenant at the time and he was a

staff sergeant. He was a short man with a twinkle in his eye and an adventurous spirit. In the Army they usually call that being a wise-ass. Not content to let me star with my brand-new jump story, he told me a wild tale of having been the minister of agriculture of the Republic of Korea for a brief period during the coup which installed Chung Hee Park.

I didn't see Dring much over the next few years. We were both in the 1st Special Forces Group of Okinawa, but everybody in Group at that time was playing leapfrog in and out of Vietnam on six-month temporary-duty (TDY) tours. With so much coming and going, it was not unusual to be in the same

company with a man for two or three years and never meet him.

But I heard lots of stories about Dring. Once I saw him driving down Highway One on Oki in his jeep, a salvage model he had bought on sale, solid black with bumper markings. (The left one said DING and the right one DONG.) It looked like a military jeep — until you looked closely. The rumor was that he had ripped off a new engine for it in Da Nang, painted the box it came in OD, addressed it to himself on Oki, then run it over to the regular Marine C-130 for Kadena and sent it to himself.

Later I heard he had gone to Officers' Candidate School (OCS), a story I found difficult to believe,

since I had never seen him in a correct uniform, and didn't know anyone who had. The Dring they were talking about was a legendary Mike Force commander (the Mike Force — Mobile Strike Force — was an airborne-qualified reaction force maintained by the Special Forces command in each Corps area, with another at the Group headquarters in Nha Trang). By this time we were going PCS (permanent change of station — 12 months or more) to Vietnam, like everybody else. In the Central Highlands (where Dring's Mike Force Company operated), Mike Force was composed of Montagnards, most of whom belonged to FULRO (*Fronte Unifie de Lutte de Race Opprimee*: United Front for the Struggle of the Oppressed Race), the Montagnard separatist organization, which is still giving the present regime fits up in the hills.

This legendary Lt. Dring had gone home only a month before I appeared on the scene in the summer of 1967, so I figured I had missed him again.

But the following spring, when I was information officer of the 5th Group, Larry Dring sauntered into our embarrassingly plush officers' club. We were both captains. As usual, he was rolling — laughing and telling looney stories that always checked out.

"Some jerk captain down in Saigon tried to send me to the 9th Division. I told him, 'Hey, in case you don't know it, sweetheart, there's a new reg [which Dring made up on the spot], 460-12, that says if you get three Purple Hearts and volunteer to come back to Vietnam you can pick your unit. Well, I got five Purple Hearts, and if I don't go to Special Forces I'm gettin' back on that airplane and goin' back to the Land of the Big PX.'"

So they sent him to Nha Trang, where our adjutant, a man not noted for the flexibility of his thinking, wanted to send him to the Delta.

"Oh, no," said Dring. "I'm going to the 24th Mike Force Company. We've been corresponding. We've got operations planned."

"I am the adjutant here," said the adjutant. "I make the personnel assignments."

"Well," replied Dring, "you can cut orders for anywhere you want, but I am going to Pleiku to the 24th Mike Force Company. If you want me and the orders to coincide, that's what you'll cut orders for." (Which he did.)

A couple of months later I was

having lunch in the club when Dring walked in again. I hailed him over to show him off to some of my fat staff-officer buddies. We had all been on "A" detachments; most of us had been around for a while. Fairly often we went on hairy operations of our own, so we were not easily impressed by a standard animal act. But *he* impressed them.

"What are you doing here?" I asked him. "I thought you never came out of the woods."

He sat down and ordered lunch from a uniformed waitress. "Oh, I got some grenade fragments in my back a couple of weeks ago and forgot about 'em," he said. The others at the table raised their eyebrows a little. "They festered, so I had to come in and get them fixed. Look at this. They sewed 'em up with wire."

We looked and sure enough they had — but what impressed the staff officers was the fact that he was wearing bloodstained NVA underwear and an NVA belt. The way the American advisers in his company worked it, you would go on a 30-day Blackjack operation with no belt but the one on your harness, and you'd lose so much weight on those patrols that if you didn't kill somebody and take his belt in the first two weeks your pants would fall off.



Too much bush time — Larry Dring, who says "You have to keep smiling," shows Capt. John Dorf (left) and MSgt. Mike Magilliacuty way not to fire 81mm mortar in light moment at Camp Plei Do Lim near Pleiku.

He started kidding me about Psy Ops, one of my staff responsibilities at Pleiku. "I'll show you Psy Ops. We got nine in one ambush on this last operation —

big infiltration route, everything but a yellow line down the middle and traffic lights — and buried them beside the trail with their right arms sticking out and a note in each hand reading, 'Surrender or die.' That's Psy Ops."

I agreed that that was more effective than a dozen leaflet drops.

But despite his reputation in the field, I had never known Dring to drink, smoke, curse (except under extreme duress) or carouse with women. He spent his free time scrounging rice and clothing for the missionaries to give to refugees, whose kids called him "Uncle Larry."

That meeting was the last time I saw Dring in the Army.

A year or so later I was a graduate student at the University of Oklahoma, having coffee at a table with a group of students, all of whom were either veterans, gimps or writing students. Most of us were two of those things — I was all three.

I met an Englishman named Rick Rescorla there. Rescorla had been, successively, a sergeant in a British Airborne Intelligence outfit on Cyprus, a London Bobbie, a mercenary in what is now Zambia and a recon-platoon leader in the Cav. At that time he was a student, and senior Tac of the 45th (National Guard) Division's OCS program. When I couldn't top his stories with my own I started telling him Dring's.

It turned out they had been OCS classmates.

I asked him, "How did Dring get through OCS?" I had no doubts about his brains, but I simply couldn't visualize him in a hard hat and a pair of spitshined booties. According to Rescorla, Dring spent most of his time giving weapons demonstrations wearing a camouflage jacket and a red beret.

I had heard Dring had been pretty badly dinged up in Pleiku during Tet, been cared for by a missionary nurse and had married the girl.

In 1973, when I was working as a correspondent in Thailand, Vietnam and Cambodia, I went to Lop Buri, the headquarters of the 46th Special Forces Company. Lt. Col. Bill Radtke, the commander, told me I had just missed Dring. He was still a captain, still had his leg in a dropfoot brace (and was still jumping on it) — and his job assignment was Psy Ops. But Psy Ops was a cover for him (as it had been for me in a way), and he did his Psy Ops over the border in his old accustomed way.

When my book *War Story* came out, I got a letter from Dring asking for an autographed copy. Always ready to see an old buddy at somebody else's expense, I convinced SOF that he might be a good subject for an article.

I scanned the airport trying to find a familiar face. I hadn't seen him in 12 years. What would he look like? A 10-year-old kid in a khaki jumpsuit with a nametag that read "LARRY" came up to me. He wore wings and a fatigue cap.

"Your name Dring, kid?" I asked. He pointed to the corner where Larry Dring stood, leaning on a cane, leg in a brace, wearing khaki pants, a Cambodian army field jacket with Cambodian wings on them and an Afrika Korps cap with a CIB and Master Blaster wings on it. Same old Larry. He still wasn't in the right uniform.

Dring drove me to his home. He told me he was working on an advanced degree at the local university, after which he plans to make a career out of helping Asian refugee children adapt to American society. During the next two days neither one of us could stop talking. So brace yourself, friends. This is going to be a roller-coaster ride.

He has two kids, both carbon copies of their father (God help us) and his wife Becky is one of the neatest ladies I've ever met. I asked them about their unusual romance:

"It all started when we were out on Christmas. (We were over the border during that baloney about a truce.) I reported that we knocked off 10 of 'em on Christmas (the 25th of December was just another day). They shot at us and we got happy and shot back.

"Headquarters got real indignant about it and pulled us back in. It was a truce — they told us, but they forgot to tell the other guys. HQ said, 'Aw, ya violated the truce.' Blah, blah, blah, blah.

"So we got back to the Mike Force in II Corps, and I had my whole company together. Maj. Justin McCarthy, the CO, said, 'Hey, no other company is complete. Will you ask your guys to fill in?' It might seem odd to have to ask 'em, but we'd make deals — contract with them. (Most Americans never understood that we contracted for missions.) McCarthy said, 'Okay, you keep 'em together for Tet and we'll give you a week and a half off.'

"I said, 'Okay, can do.' We were ready. We had three basic loads of ammo in the packs. We'd been heavy on grenades (we'd just come



As part of his "Psyops" operation in Cambodia in 1972, Dring rounded up a couple of South Carolina Interstate signs and a South Carolina license plate.

from Bong Son, and the place is full of caves, trenches and ditches — all that stuff) and were carrying four frags and a couple of phosphorus each. I'd usually have the guys fill an extra canteen cover with five grenades and hang it off their belts to the rear; it compensated for the weight in front and I could stuff a couple of extra ones in there. Then you knew where they were.

"On the morning of the 30th, about 4:30, 5 a.m., they buzzed us and said, 'Hey, there's some small-arms fire coming from the vicinity of the POW compound.' (We were operating off the Military Assistance Advisory Group [MAAG] frequency — the only one I had.) Then they said, 'Do not — do not — take machine guns, mortars or rockets, because you're just going downtown. You'll be back by noon. Maybe put a can of CS in your pocket, or something like that.'

"So we bopped down there. We went by the POW compound — no action, just POWs and a bunch of ARVN guys snoozin'. Then I heard what I thought was gunfire, coming out of the new Pleiku area. (There was the old section, and the new market section.) I had about 170 tribesmen."

I said I thought that was pretty fat for a CIDG company.

Dring answered, "I had a pretty fat company. I always had volunteers. I never had to go lookin' for people because they'd

come to me. The 'Yards wouldn't go out with some of the other guys — and I'd be out sometimes with almost two companies.

"They'd come marchin' in in platoon formation," he said, explaining they were members of FULRO, "and I'd just accept 'em. They'd come marchin' in barefoot — but in a column of fours. They'd say, 'This guy's the platoon leader, this other guy the platoon sergeant.' I'd accept that.

"Some of the other advisers wanted to direct traffic. I'd tell 'em, 'Hey, you gotta go by the lay of the land. You gotta go by what the people think.' If they say, 'Hey, this guy's a leader,' he's the leader. Why try to make him a corporal?"

"So we got down to the POW compound and I heard what I thought was gunfire. I started deploying. Combat in cities is a drag, because you start in line with a company and you get to the first intersection and suddenly you have two platoons and at the next one you have one platoon and by the next you don't even have a squad with you.

"I noticed something. These clowns — about one per block — were shootin' firecrackers all over the town. 'Course, in Tet, you're supposed to be shootin' firecrackers. But after being over there five tours, you start learning the customs. Normally they'd shoot strings of small firecrackers. But these were loud singles —

they sounded almost like gunshots. In fact, that was the purpose of the exercise.

"When you pop a firecracker there's a little bit of paper on the ground. But I started lookin' and thinkin': that's an awful lot of paper and an awful lot of noise. Something was wrong. I didn't know what — but there was something about those firecrackers.

"Then I started hearing, every now and then: *pop-pop...pop-pop...pop-pop*. The guys that were doing it were very cool, because they were keeping it down. The firecrackers were masking it, but every now and then I'd hear one just a little bit too close. And I said, 'Forsooth! That's gunfire.'

"So I started aimin' my men down toward the missionary compound, because I knew it. In fact, I was pretty familiar with the town. The II Corps spook place, the CID, was right next to it, and that's where they had all the agents' names.

"You know the way Pleiku is — the streets are laid out in strips, and one group of houses faces one way and the other faces out, back to back, with a communal back wall. There's usually only one door to the house and it faces the street, so you can't go over somebody's back fence. You have to go to the corner — it channelizes your unit.

"Another thing: If you held the mission compound you could shoot straight down the street and X anybody that tried to go across. We got there at about 5:30, quarter to six. The town ends at the mission compound, which is in the last row of houses. There's nothing but rice fields and a little brush beyond it.

"And right there, across the street, were more VC, no, North Vietnamese regulars, than I'd ever seen in any one place, including the POW compound, during five tours in 'Nam. The squad leaders were getting their people on line, getting ready to sweep through.

"We found out later they'd been told that the Vietnamese military were gone, that it was gonna be a walk-through. They were gonna meet up with those firecracker guys, who would give 'em the names, telling 'em who to knock off and who to leave alone, just like in Hue. They'd been told the people were gonna rise up and be with 'em and all that stuff.

"Then we showed up on the other side of the street, no more than 20 meters away. I looked across the street at them — I was



ABOVE: Capt. Larry Dring's unusual romance, which began at Pleiku during Tet battle, culminated in April 1968 at Altoona, Pa., when he and Becky said, "I do." BELOW: II Corps Mike Force Montagnard troop waits off trail in bush. Soldier is armed with M1 carbine.



in front so I got a pretty good show. Picture it — you have a rifle and you're lookin' at some guys across the street. You could throw a rock and kill 'em. You're used to seein' 'em at about a hundred meters.

"And they looked at us and we looked at them and then — wow! **Wham! Wham! Ping!** It started raining bullets.

"I looked over again and the first thing I saw across the street, sitting in a small courtyard (most of the houses had them), was a little, old, gray-haired lady and a couple of kids.

"So I yelled to the 'Yard platoon leader, '*Regardez la femme! Non grenade!* (Don't throw grenades; there's a woman over there).'

"I'd just gotten the words out of my mouth when — **Wham!** I got hit with a grenade. A little dude chucked one at me and caught me in the back. It redesigned me. I mean it put holes in me. I was saved because I didn't like plastic canteens. They made the water taste lousy, and I didn't like the aluminum ones 'cause they corroded, so I had a steel one."

I asked him where he got it.

"It was an old World War Twice steel one, and I had a steel cup. The biggest slug hit me in the spine (later causing me a lot of grief). It went through the canteen, cup and cover, and if I'd had a plastic one it would have come right out my stomach.

"It knocked me down. I had a piece coming out of my head and my back was torn up, and I was lying there, not feeling too happy. And I looked up and I saw this little gerbil with an AK, and he just laid it on me. It was like a fist fight. You see the fist comin' and you know you could be hurt — then there's that little tug that says, 'You are gonna be hurt.'

"This guy went **Wham!** and it hurt. It was the most painful thing that ever happened to me. He blew out six inches of femoral artery. I thought, 'Boy. He hit me in the leg. But if he can't shoot any better'n that ...'

"As he went by me, I grabbed my M1A1 carbine and flipped it over like a pistol and **plup ... plup ... plup.** I got a little equal time there.

"My medic came out to get me — an old gray-haired Chinese guy. And he took one, a shot just under the jaw (we didn't have flak jackets or helmets). It removed the top of his head, and he lay there — and he wriggled a little bit.

"Then my radio man came out. He still had his radio on. Remember, these people I'd been

with for five years. I'd been over to their homes and knew their families. The radio man came out to get me and they hit him with a B-40 and he just disappeared.

"I lay there and this American tank came whizzing up. I thought the dumb PFC in the turret was gonna run me over. (I found out later he was the platoon leader.) I yelled, "FIRE!" He had more firepower than my entire company. He could have wiped 'em out.

"He looked down at me like, 'What are you?' That guy didn't get one round off. Not a round. They hit the tank. **Wham! Wham! Wham! Wham!**



Uniform regulations in II Corps Mike Force were loose so Larry Dring went to the Central Highlands dressed as he wanted. The jacket and hat are French. In 1960, Dring normally carried a Swedish K (actually a 9mm Model 45 SMG generally known as the Carl Gustav) but later on gave up the Colt .45 he is wearing here in favor of two additional and more useful hand grenades.

There were four guys in there. Two of 'em got out and two of 'em stayed. They started throwin' baggage out. Two Americans still in that tank, and this guy worried about baggage. (Eventually, the tank cooked off and a 12-ton turret went up through the air like a lollypop.)

"About then somebody grabbed me by the suspenders and dragged me into the nearest house. He kicked the door open and — wow! Four nurses and a doctor. No sign on the door, but they were missionaries and they lived in that house. One nurse was Becky. There were about 10 of us in there with her. Of course I'd seen her in church a couple of times, but I'd never really talked to her before.

"I didn't even have the wherewithal to mash on a handset. I had her hold the handset for me and I said, 'Mash,' and I snapped. Man, there were MAAGots on

there, asking, 'What's going on?' You know. It was a MACV frequency for the whole Pleiku area. And those dudes were busy talkin' to each other: 'What's going on?'

"I got a little unhappy about the whole thing. I guess I upset a few people. I found out some guy was just sittin' in a bunker at the end of the runway, curious about what was goin' on. So I said, 'You sorry ... people.'"

I told him that probably wasn't what he'd said.

Dring admitted, "Well, I got a little unhappy. The only guy who understood what was going on was McCarthy. I couldn't believe it.

"I said, 'There's at least a reinforced company down here. We've bitten off more than we can chew. They hijacked two American tanks and a Mike Force company' — because a second tank had arrived, but it knew how to operate. You know, run over the house and shoot.

"While I was inside, the rest of my guys were being literally blown back across the street into those little houses. It was like a whole bunch of Alamos. They couldn't get out because there was no back door, but the NVA couldn't get across the street to get in either, no matter how many of 'em there were.

"I think it was the phosphorus that did it. The frag goes bang, makes a lot of noise, but you don't see it. But phosphorus, you start slinging that around and guys want to run across the street.

"We were like the Dutch boy with his finger in the dike, but we had to bleed for it. Of four advisers, one was killed and three wounded.

"I found out later that those guys with the firecrackers did have lists. They were gettin' ready to go around and knock people off. They were Viet Cong that were comin' out of the woodwork. Our side aced out the Viet Cong in Pleiku, because they surfaced. All we had to do was locate those houses that had firecracker paper around them — because you can't pick up all that paper quickly. Most of the Vietnamese weren't there. They were visiting other places. But the guys who stayed at home shootin' firecrackers — they were Cong, the real VC infrastructure."

Becky Dring spoke up: "I went over in September 1967 and left the following February. Right around Christmas, and from then on, we heard there was going to be an attack on the city, and that if we stayed in our house everything



LEFT: Dring checks position on map after moving through lowlands village. **BELOW:** During Tet '68 battle, Dring was wounded and under fire on a street in Pleiku. His Montagnard radioman (shown here) tried to pull Dring out of the line of fire but was killed by a direct hit from an RPG.

would be okay. But as Tet got nearer, we grew more concerned.

"One night we woke up and heard gunfire, and discovered it was right out in front of our house. We had one central room that had no windows at all, and we went there. Finally one of the guys got brave and went to find out what was going on.

"We lived on one side of the house, and Chinese lived on the other. There was a walkway between the main part of the house and the dining room, and there was a walk between each section.

"The wounded were dragged in there. I don't like heights, but I climbed the wall and went over to take care of the wounded. I went into the front room and Larry was one of them. And I thought, 'Oh, I've seen him before at the hymn sing'."

I asked her "How bad was he dinged up?"

She told me, "He had about six inches of artery missing from his right leg. His leg was wide open."

"Tourniquet?" I asked.

Dring answered, "Not at that time."

Becky said, "A medic, or someone outside, had stuffed in wadding of some sort; otherwise he would have bled to death. He was on a mattress, and they dragged him to the back section, where the kitchen and dining room were. I helped take care of him.

"Then people came in and said a tank with a full load of ammunition and fuel had been hit outside, so we should get out. We climbed the walls of the compound and went into the houses in back of us. No one was there.

"We found out later that those



Continued on page 84



Col. Surachet, wearing tiger-striped ammo vest, carrying M16, and two men of the 2nd Pack Troop attached to CPMU 1617, Royal Thai Army, near forward road construction at Khoa Kor, central-highlands Thailand. Note folding-stock Soviet AKM captured nearby and U.S. M79 grenade launcher now discontinued by U.S. Army.



Exclusive
SOF Staffer On

THAILAND'S BATTLE ROAD

Text & Photos by Jim Coyne

IT felt strangely like taking a 14-year journey back in a time machine. The last time I did this in Asia, I was a helicopter doorunner in Vietnam, circa 1967.

The rotor blades' vortex created a dusty whirlwind as the chopper flared, then settled to land, at the forward Tactical Operations Center near Khoa Kor. The short hop into Thailand's central highlands from CPME 1617 headquarters (Combined Police Military Unit, Buddhist calendar year it was formed) at Lomsak proved routine.

Prior to takeoff, while we waited for the fog to lift, I talked with the crew of the venerable UH-1D "slick." Like most Thai soldiers I met, they had a quick sense of humor.

On a hot afternoon a few months earlier, this same ship took 79 hits while on a routine resupply mission to two companies of Thai infantry on Khoa Ya, a dominating ridge south of Khoa Kor. (Khoa Kor is the general name given to the entire area of operations; it is also the name of the 1,300-meter ridge and forward-fire support base which dominates the area.)



“We had to make an emergency landing,” the crew chief said, and laughed. He pointed to the patched holes now numbered and circled with chalk. I was sitting on number 57.

The first thing Col. Surachet did after we landed, the very *first* thing, was issue me an M16 and a tiger-striped vest with ten 20-round magazines. “You’d better take it,” he said almost apologetically, “the area isn’t 100-percent safe.”

He smiled as I took the weapon. I thought: “He ought to know.” The M16’s bluing was hand-worn to a dull steel finish from years of use and cleaning.

I hadn’t carried an M16 in a combat area since Vietnam, but it felt as natural in my hands as the cameras I have carried since.

In the distance, the sharp *crump* of an exploding grenade echoed and rolled through the green mist-shrouded hills from the direction of “the road.” We walked to a sandbag-reinforced bunker dug deep into the ground and bristling with radio antennas for a brief situation report.

In April 1975, after the collapse of Cambodia and South Vietnam and the capitulation of Laos to the communists, the situation in Thailand—and all Southeast Asia—turned critical. The first dominoes had fallen. Captured plans disclosed that the strategic goal of the

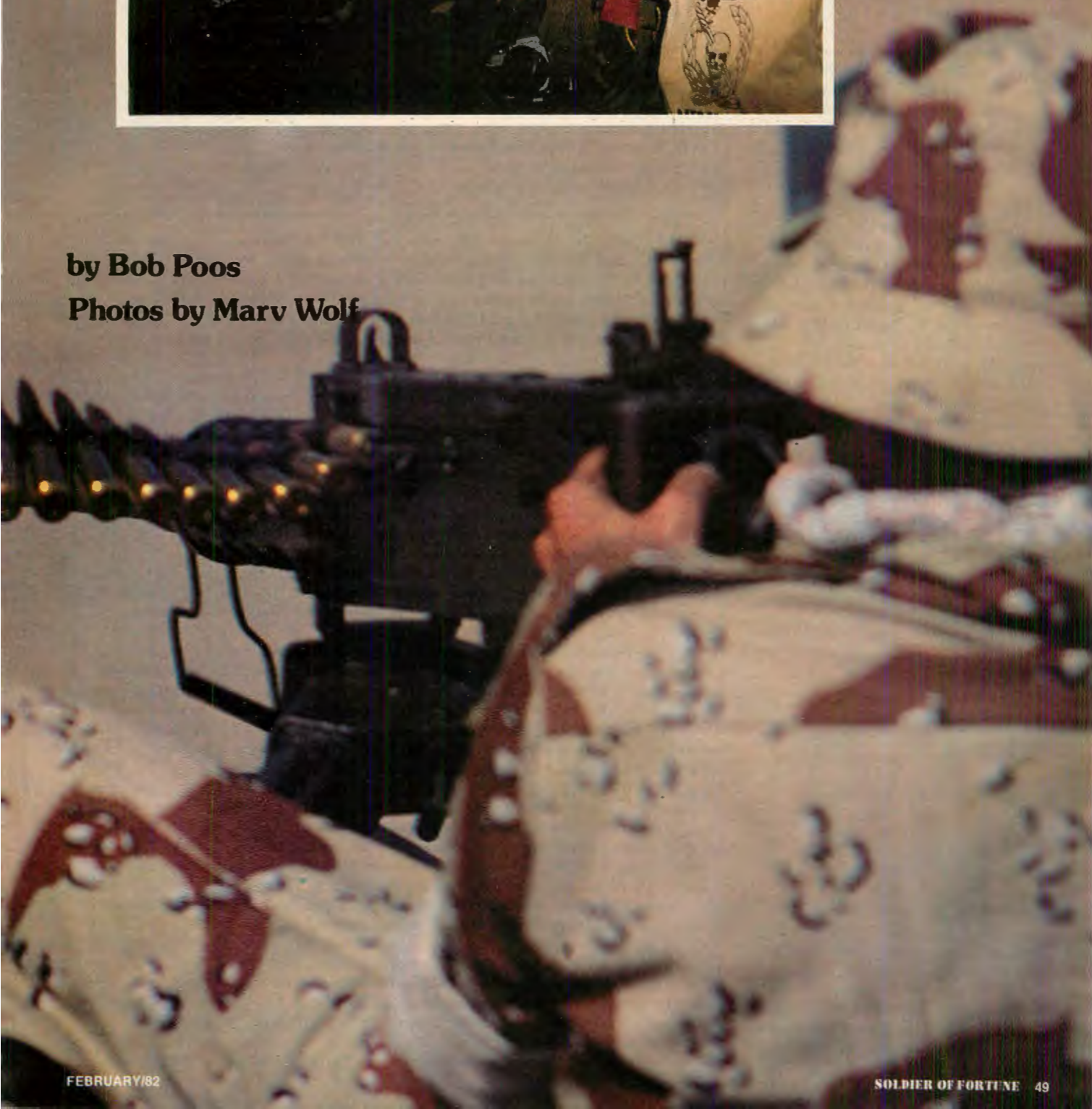


TOP: Commanding officer of 1st Division, Royal Thai Army, “The King’s Bodyguard,” Maj. Gen. Pichitr Kullavanijaya, disembarks with troops of 4th Battalion RCT for inspection visit to forward area at Nong Mae Na on Kek River, formerly CPT headquarters and staging area. Note U.S. CAR-15 with 30-round magazine, the general’s personal weapon. ABOVE: As a Special Colonel, Gen. Pichitr led first assaults on CPT strategic areas and successfully captured cultivated areas of Nong Mae Na and dominating heights of Khoa Ya and Khoa Kor. He is now a supervising officer for development project at Khoa Kor. Graduate of West Point (1958), he fought for two years in Vietnam as artillery captain with “The Queen’s Cobra Regiment,” and again for three years in Laos with Thai irregular forces. General “Pete” is widely known and respected as a fighting officer of great personal bravery and daring initiative. Note Black Panther patch on vest, Thai Ranger Badge beneath.



by Bob Poos

Photos by Marv Wolf



"I came for the combat-medicine seminar and because the convention was dedicated to Vietnam veterans. Most gratifying. As a combat medic I have vivid memories of my fallen comrades. The 30 seconds of silence during the presentation of colors was, for me, deafening with the sounds of gunfire and the screams of the wounded. When we sat, my vision misted and I felt an old pain in my heart. In spite of the pain, I thank SOF for that evening," said one conventioneer after SOF's second annual *Soldier of Fortune* convention, held in Scottsdale, Ariz., 17 through 20 September 1981. SOF hopes that a lot of conventionees — many of them veterans of Vietnam and other wars — felt this way.

SOF's second convention was bigger — and better — than last year's. Old friends got together and swapped stories, and many old friendships were renewed.

About 50 SOFers arrived on 12 September for training in SOF's pre-convention courses, and eagerly waited for the 1,000 or so conventionees to show up. Registration began on Wednesday the 16th, and activities were soon under way — starting with an unscheduled cadence-calling competition in the Oasis Bar at the Radisson Hotel.

This year offered some new attractions. SOF felt that we ought to honor the Vietnam veteran, and we dedicated the convention to him. The SOF combined combat-shooting championship attracted more than 100 of the top shooters in the United States — vying for more than \$40,000 in cash and prizes. During those well-spent four days, machine guns roared, choppers buzzed, official SOF Convention greeter Cammie Dimitro served lemonade, and the Louisiana 1st Airborne Division dropped more than 370 people out of a perfectly good airplane.

Probably the best-attended activities were the seminars. Each lecturer gave conventionees new information and insights on current events, survival skills and weapons.

One of the most popular seminars was on the Military Assistance Command/Vietnam Studies and Observation Group (MACV/SOG) (see SOF, June '81). SOF's Robert Burton, along with former deputy director of SOG, Col. Floyd R. Mullvaney, took a look at how SOG worked from the top — how the chain of command worked down the line to put some of the hairiest missions ever conceived out in the bush while maintaining a very high level of secrecy. With helicopter pilot Lt. John Barrett, Burton described a few cross-border reconns into North

Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia by air, submarine and on foot. Burton also discussed SOG "tradecraft," including weapons, bombs, silencers and uniforms. The seminar included a slide presentation by Ed Clough, showing some of his jungle outings in the late '50s and early '60s. The lecture finished with a discussion of American POWs who are still being held in Southeast Asia.

Lectures on current situations in other countries gave those who attended info that they could not find elsewhere. SOF author Smith Hempstone reminded us again of "the war the world forgot" as he discussed his recent experiences in Angola (see SOF, July-August '81).

A discourse on Latin America by myself, Arturo Alta-Mirano (a Nicaraguan exile now living in Guatemala), and newspaper columnist Bob Caldwell shed some light on what's going on in Central America.

SOF Associate Editor Jim Coyne drew a large audience when he provided an update on the current

situation in Afghanistan, from where he returned December 1980 (see SOF, April-May '81). Coyne visited the Afghan Freedom Fighter headquarters in Peshawar, Pakistan, just weeks before the 1981 SOF Convention for an update and to deliver funds collected through SOF's Afghan Freedom Fighters' Fund. Following Coyne's seminar, SOF's Soviet Analyst David Isby delivered a lecture on current Soviet small-arms technology and the directions they are taking, with specific regard to the new AK-74 and its accompanying 5.45mm cartridge. After discussing current trends in Soviet infantry-fighting vehicles, he addressed the questions of logistics, morale and discipline of Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan, and gave detailed information on the large-scale alcohol-and-drug problems plaguing the Russian soldier. He concluded with a slide show of current Soviet weaponry, artillery and military vehicles.

A popular lecture — particularly among police officers present — was

The high point for those who attended SOF's banquet on Saturday night was the Bull Simons Memorial Award speech given by Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown, when he presented the award to Medal of Honor recipient Fred Zabitosky, who received the award for all Vietnam veterans. It went:

"Many of you are, I'm sure, familiar with the significance of the Bull Simons Memorial Award; but for those of you who are not, let me give you some background.

"The *Soldier of Fortune* Bull Simons Memorial Award is presented annually to an individual who has distinguished himself in the increasingly important fight for freedom against tyranny wherever it occurs. As many of you are aware, Bull Simons was commander of Studies and Observation Group (SOG) operations in Laos from 1966 through 1967, and a legendary Special Forces colonel who commanded the Son Tay Raid in November 1969 to rescue American prisoners of war held deep inside North Vietnam. After Bull Simons retired, he went on to organize and command the largest mass jailbreak in history, freeing a number of Americans employed by Ross Perot and imprisoned in Iran following the revolution in 1979.

"The first Bull Simons Memorial Award was presented to Gen. Vang Pao, the famous Laotian resistance leader who fought bravely and effectively against the Vietnamese in Laos, at the *Soldier of Fortune* Convention last year.

"This year, however, instead of a single individual, *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine has decided to present this prestigious award to ALL Vietnam veterans — giving credit where credit is long overdue, to our friends and buddies, both alive and dead, and to those men who remain unaccounted for.

"We must now recognize that the Vietnam conflict provided as many heroes, and required as many sacrifices as the Korean War, World War II and World War I. But, instead of ticker-tape parades and a 'Welcome Home,' the men who fought so courageously and well returned to be spat upon and vilified by a small, but vocal, minority of the American public.

"The powers that be in the media have consistently misrepresented the Vietnam veteran as a dangerous, deranged, maladjusted, alcoholic, drug-addicted sociopath. It is long overdue that this stigma be removed forever. In fact, the majority of the Vietnam veterans are well-adjusted, successful men, who remain to this day dedicated to the highest ideals of this nation — freedom and the fight for liberty. Truly, without doubt, the best and the brightest — President Kennedy once said, 'The price of freedom has always been great, and Americans have always paid it.' I am proud to be a veteran of Vietnam. As far as I am concerned, I met some of the finest people on earth there.

"How many here are Vietnam veterans? I ask that you please stand. Now it is time to recognize your achievements — and it is to you that this Bull Simons Memorial Award is presented."



ABOVE: Dr. John Peters, SOF contributing editor on medical operations and director of medical operations for Parachute Medical Rescue Service, conducted five-day combat-medicine course prior to beginning of convention and seminar on the same subject during convention. Here, Dr. Peters describes treatment of bleeding from severed femoral artery, utilizing pneumatic Medical Anti-Shock Trousers in management of shock. External compression on legs and abdomen squeezes blood out of venous and capillary system and returns it to head, brain and lung circulation.

TOP: Diverse group showed up for Dave Ganci's five-day desert-survival course — SOF guys and gals from New Zealand to Canada. Here they have "hands-on" practice with lensatic compass. Ganci followed his course up with desert-survival seminar attended by a large number of conventioners. **ABOVE:** Ganci calls in sit-rep to headquarters. He is instructor at Arizona State University and does contract work for U.S. Navy. For further information on his courses, conducted year round, write Ganci, c/o *Soldier of Fortune*, Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.



on street survival. Detroit Police Sergeant and SOF writer Evan Marshall, together with John Farnam, law-enforcement firearms-training officer of Elroy, Wis., described to the audience techniques on how to survive hostile confrontations in an urban environment.

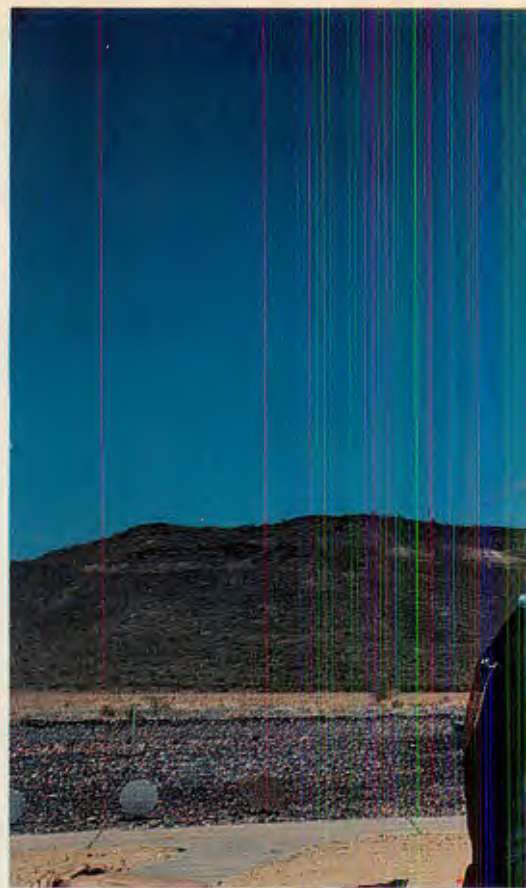
Featured on Friday the 18th was a seminar on desert survival by Dave Ganci. His credentials include teaching survival techniques at Arizona State University — and he is under contract to the U.S. Navy. Ganci is a contributing editor to *Survive Magazine*. He also conducted the SOF pre-convention desert-survival course in which he took his 12 students out into the desert for 2½ days, teaching them some hands-on survival tricks.

SOF Contributing Editor Dr. John Peters drew heavy attendance at his seminar on combat medical techniques. Subsequent to his seminar, Dr. Peters and SOF Contributing Editor on Military Affairs Alex McColl explained to an interested audience the mission and goals of the SOF-sponsored PMRS (Parachute Medical Rescue Service). Together with Gary Darley, Doc Peters conducted the pre-convention combat-medicine course for about 15 satisfied students — some of whom



were doctors themselves — who learned some interesting medical techniques that one might not experience in medical school.

Thanks to the Cactus Combat League and Match Directors Jake Jatras and Ken Hackathorn, the three-gun shooting championship was one of the smoothest-run competitions in IPSC (International



TOP: Ever see a tripod-mounted Bren gun in action? SOF conventioneers did. ABOVE LEFT: Peter Kokalis briefs large, patient crowd on characteristics and history of automatic weapons on firing line. LEFT: We can't remember the name of the manufacturer of this SWAT-type assault vest but we certainly think it has merits. BELOW: After his automatic-weapons demonstration decimated target area, Kokalis discussed wide variety of submachine guns on display with interested onlookers.





ABOVE: Mr. Shotgun himself (Satterwhite) with a smile on his face — as outstanding an instructor and showman as he was an incredibly accurate shot. **LEFT:** Satterwhite wows conventioners with incredibly fast, deadly accurate shooting. Here he wields Remington 1100 12-gauge auto.



ABOVE LEFT: Satterwhite, who conducted five-day preconvention course in use of big-bore babies, held crowd spellbound during his demonstration. **ABOVE:** One of John Satterwhite's student waits to test his newly learned skills with Ithaca M37 12-gauge pump shotgun. **LEFT:** Craig Gifford, 1981 SOF Invitational Match Champion, with Micky Fowler and Mike Dalton of International Shootists, Inc. ISI conducted five-day preconvention course in combat pistolcraft.





ABOVE: A not-so-well-camouflaged Cammie Demitro peers at convention goings-on. "Are these guys for real?" she seems to ask. RIGHT: Movie star Jan Michael Vincent was on hand for festivities and jumped out of a perfectly good airplane for the first time.

ABOVE LEFT: Brown and Donovan discuss (you don't argue with Big John) merits of various automatic weapons prior to auto-weapon demonstration. ABOVE: SOF art director has other thing on his mind as he gives Marilyn Chambers an evil hug. BELOW: Cammies, cammies everywhere — many types, sizes and colors were displayed and sold by numerous exhibitors. BOTTOM: "The big one." Venerable .50-cal. Browning drew attention at this exhibitor's display. BELOW LEFT: M.S. Safari Arms displays its line of .45s and other special weapons in crowded, well-attended exhibit hall.



Practical Shooting Confederation) history. More than 100 shooters vied for over \$40,000 in cash and prizes at the Black Canyon Shooting Range — one of the finest shooting facilities in the country. Top-three overall finishers were Craig Gifford of Bakersfield, Calif., Brian Enos of Mesa, Ariz., and John Shaw of Memphis, Tenn. Gifford won the rifle championship, Ray Neal won the pistol championship and Shaw was the shotgun champion. (For more complete match results see "Shootout at Black Canyon" in our next issue.)

Other displays and demonstrations ran concurrently with seminars and the shooting match. Helicopter tours were quite popular for those who could afford them. SOF Demolitions Editor John Donovan remarked upon

feet apart from each other, and included some old favorites: a WWII German MG34 in 7.92mm, a .303 British Mk I Bren, a .50-cal. Browning M II heavy barrel, a 1919A4 LMG in .30-06, an M60 and, last but not least, "The Queen of Battle" — a Mk I Vickers water-cooled medium MG in .303 British.

Carlos Davila, president of international sales for Odin International, demonstrated the Valmet M78 light machine gun and sniper system in full-automatic mode. The system is also available in semiautomatic mode for \$1,695.

SOF Sniping/Countersniping Contributing Editor Jim Leatherwood wowed the crowd with the first public demonstration of his new prototype 9mm submachine gun (see "The SMG

no modification to the weapon and can be installed by the individual shooter.

Another demonstration, by shotgun wizard John Satterwhite (see SOF, September '81) held the audience almost speechless, except for muttered comments of "that's impossible." This writer saw it and still is barely able to believe what he witnessed — but seeing is believing.

Satterwhite would throw seven clay birds in the air with his left hand and burst all before they hit the ground. He used ejected shells from a pump shotgun as targets; he pitched a loaded shotgun shell in the air and shot out the pellet compartment, leaving the wad and powder charge intact. He tossed golfballs in the air, pointing the direction in which he would "drive" them in order to demonstrate the accuracy of a scattergun. And Satterwhite startled his audience a few times. Once he pitched an egg into the air — "I'll show you how to scramble one quickly." And when he connected, the result was a loud BOOM and flash of orange fireball — he had loaded it with explosive. If he was concerned about losing his audience's attention, he needn't have worried.

One of the more dramatic demos came when SOF Martial Arts Editors Bob Taylor and Randy Wanner showed one and all how a car could be pulled across a man's chest via chains attached to another man's forearms by steel pins. Taylor drove two surgical pins through his forearms, attached the chains to them and with great effort dragged the vehicle across Wanner. It is difficult to say which was more impressive: Taylor's willpower, strength and mind control, or Wanner's courage and almost unbelievable body strength. At the cocktail party Friday night, Taylor had a pin stuck through his neck — and hefted a five-gallon bucket of assorted drinks by a cord attached between his neck and the bucket. After that feat, the bucket was passed around — Bob Taylor and Robert K. Brown took the first gulps — and emptied quickly. On Sunday morning, Taylor and Wanner also held a class on self-defense, which was only open to police officers.

By and large, the convention ran smoothly. Of course, there were some glitches — to be expected of such an ambitious undertaking. The most serious hitch in the flow of events developed in the airborne exercises. On the first scheduled day of jumping, an FAA examiner found a minor malfunction in the DC-3 Gooney Bird's tail assembly and grounded it. Airborne hopefuls waited patiently in the desert sun. Finally,



ABOVE LEFT: Well-known knifemaker Al Mar did booming business at the exhibit hall. ABOVE RIGHT: Yes, she sold a lot of T-Shirts.



disembarking from one: "You know, it's nice to leave one of those things, conduct the other passengers out, wish them well — and not have to go dashing off, looking for cover."

The most spectacular demonstration was of automatic weapons, held on Saturday, 19 September, at the range. SOF Military Small Arms Editor Peter Kokalis and his machine-gun crew spent the day setting up dynamite, magnesium, primer cord, gasoline and quick match — only to destroy their creation with an assortment of battle-tested weapons.

After a short introduction to each weapon, Kokalis gave the command to rock and roll — and, needless to say, the crowd loved it. The machine guns were placed in a line about 20

for the JSSAP?", SOF, January '82). We expect to hear a lot more about this gun in the future.

Beretta's Warren Barron conducted a demonstration of Beretta's Model 93R 9mm machine pistol, Model M12S 9mm submachine gun, Model AR-70 .223 assault rifle and the Model 92SB 9mm semiautomatic pistol. Further information on these weapons can be obtained from Beretta USA Corporation, Sales Department, Dept. SOF, 17601 Indian Head Highway, Accokeek, MD 20607.

Donald Stokes and Steve Blair from Qual-a-tec, 3204 Production Avenue, Suite 1, Oceanside, CA 92054, demonstrated a new muzzle brake which eliminates vertical and horizontal muzzle climb. It requires



the bird was deemed flyable on Saturday. First Airborne Division Commander Madro Bandaries reported 270 students took the full course, most being first-timers. These men and women made a total of 371 jumps after the malfunction was corrected. Some made two or three jumps, and expert jumpers did some free falling, including a mass-jump on Sunday afternoon. Although the LZ proved rather rough, the two days of jumping saw few casualties — serious ones were held to four broken legs.

The banquet convened at the Registry Resort on Saturday night. About 870 conventioners ate roast

Continued on page 72



TOP: Medal of Honor recipient Fred Zabitosky holds SOF's Bull Simons Memorial Award. He accepted it from SOF on behalf of all Vietnam veterans.

LEFT: Donovan, left, and SOF Managing Editor Jim Graves, right, argue (oops, discuss) the merits of the Marine Corps vs. Special Forces.

BELOW: Local Marine Corps Reserve unit provided color guard. And a hearty thanks to the Corps.



LEFT: Kuzan Oda presents one of his limited edition — only 50 will be made — SOF knives as door prize to lucky SOF conventioner. Retail value: \$500.

BELOW LEFT: Keynote speaker Col. Aaron Bank (USA-Ret.) entertained banquet military buffs with description of experiences with OSS in WWII.

BELOW: Brown and "Fat Ralph" ponder about where to obtain a can of snuff prior to kickoff of banquet.



U.S. STRIKES GOLD IN SOUTH AFRICA

Americans Win IPSC Title

Text & Photos by Jake Jatras



United States IPSC Gold Team: From left, Nick Pruitt, Mickey Fowler, Mike Plaxco, Ross Seyfried and John Shaw.

RIGHT: New IPSC World Champion Ross Seyfried of Roggen, Colo.

THE quest for gold by the United States practical pistol teams ended this summer in Roodepoort, South Africa, as Ross Seyfried captured the International Practical Shooting Confederation's (IPSC) World Championship and led the U.S. Team to the Gold Medal.

Seyfried displayed the same calm determination that took him to the 1978 U.S. Title, topping the field of 200 participants on his route to combat-pistol shooting's crown. Of the 12 shooting tests of skill, Seyfried laid claim to three outright, came in second in another three and third in another trio.

Courses of fire this year presented handgunners with a variety of problems — from basic exercises to complicated and difficult assault matches. At stake was not only the individual title, but 11 countries were also vying for the world team championship.

The United States Team of Ross Seyfried, Mickey Fowler, John Shaw, Nick Pruitt and Mike Plaxco was slightly favored, but the South African Springboks had proven in the past to be formidable opponents, and included in their ranks the current world champ, Jimmy Von Sorgenfrei, and top international competitor Gavin Carson.

The United States Gold Team and the South African Springboks were squadded together and faced each other first on the "Standard Exercises." In every major practical competition, one stage of fire is utilized to test basic shooting skills at targets at fixed distances under the pressure of set times.

This stage began with a six-shot string of fire at seven meters. On the start signal, each shooter had to draw and fire one round at a target in 1.5 seconds — only head shots counted. Shooters continued moving back through the strings to 50 meters. A few of the Americans experienced gun problems on strings that required not only quick shooting, but mandatory reloads.

Having a malfunction on a string that requires drawing, firing two shots, reloading and firing two more shots in four seconds is a real disaster. However, the Americans made up for the lost shots at the longer ranges.

At the end of day one, the U.S. Gold Team held a slight edge over the Springboks, and our second team — the Silver — was also looking good. The Silver Team of Tom Campbell, Ray Neal, Bill Wilson, Mike Fichman and Ray Chapman was eligible for one of the three medals to be awarded.

When one of the Silver Team members could not make the trip, IPSC veteran Ray Chapman accepted the call to serve on the team. Chapman is the only IPSC competitor who has competed in all the world matches, and he won the contest in Switzerland in 1975.

The host organization for this year's match was the South African Practical Shooting Association (SAPSA). The Cecil Payne Range in Roodepoort was prepared in the meticulous manner that shooters have become accustomed to

when competing in South Africa. To conduct such an important match, prospective range officers had to pass written, oral and field examinations to qualify for selection.

The Americans and the Springboks remained close during the first three days of the tournament. Seyfried took Match Three, the reactionary speed shoot "Pop Up Panic," and Nick Pruitt won Match Four: "Railway Yard Fiasco."

Match Five, "Highway Hassle," involved starting from a car and engaging targets hidden in vehicles and standing beside them, with no-shoots nearby. Tom Campbell blazed to win in this round, using his one-of-a-kind .45 auto Smith & Wesson. Campbell had gained his international reputation in practical-pistol shooting by firing his unique S&W 9mm "Super Gun," but astonished the IPSC world community by entering with the unique .45.

Jimmy Von Sorgenfrei, 1979 world titlest, was second and Ross Seyfried third, but the Yanks lost some ground as gun troubles haunted some of the team. The Springboks slipped ahead in the team competition column.

From Stumble And Dodge To Razzle Dazzle

The "Stumble and Dodge Field Course" was a lengthy assault match that began with each aspirant leaping into the back of a small pickup truck and engaging targets as the truck moved toward the beginning of part two of the test. As the truck passed through a gate, the shooter had to jump from the moving vehicle and run through a doorway to face targets that would turn away in a few seconds.

Next the participant ran to a bridge and opened a gate, triggering a moving target. After engaging the "mover" and running along a fence, the shooter took a couple of long shots and proceeded to a set of steps that went up to a balcony. From the raised platform four targets and a stop plate had to be engaged. Jimmy Von Sorgenfrei wriggled by Ross Seyfried to take top spot and the guys in red, white and blue failed to gain any advantage.

Tom Campbell was victorious in Match Eight and Nine — considered to have the highest degree of difficulty. The "Backyard Razzle" was labeled a speed shoot and was designed to test a shooter's ability to engage targets while on the move.

Contestants began with their hands in a wash basin on a table — the weapon and a spare magazine lay beside the shooter. On the start signal, the shooter

picked up his gun and spare ammo and ran into a room with targets and no-shoots on each side, then had to proceed to a stable door and engage a "mover," two targets and a stop plate. The catch was that the running man took off four seconds from the "go" signal.

In order to do well on this stage, one had to shoot while running to the stable door. Tom Campbell proved adept at the quick pace and Ross Seyfried was close behind.

The final day of the match saw the Springboks holding a small lead over the U.S. Gold Team. Seyfried looked strong enough to wrest the world title from Von Sorgenfrei, but there were only two matches remaining. The first U.S. Team had dominated the night shoot, with Seyfried, Shaw and Pruitt finishing in that order.

At Match Twelve, the surprise "House Clearing," the U.S. shooters put on quite a show. Seyfried burst through the course, displaying the same form that brought him to the pinnacle of practical shooting. He was followed by speedster Nick Pruitt. The fine American performance assured the team of a gold medal, but the individual honors remained in question.

Going into the now-traditional man-versus-man competition, Ross Seyfried was in first, Tom Campbell second, John Shaw third and Mickey Fowler fourth. The points earned in the head-on shooting, however, could drastically alter this sweep for the Americans.

The shoot-off itself consisted of a modified "Flying M," using small black-metal squares, a reload, then a timer plate to stop the run. The top 16 shooters in the world now met to duel for the championship.

Seyfried first met the challenge of Springbok Dale Guthrie, then advanced to face Paul Liebenberg, who had recently taken top European at the Bianchi Cup. Seyfried was victorious and next found himself pitted against 1981 U.S. IPSC Champion John Shaw. In a close joust he propelled himself into the finals.

Meanwhile, Mickey Fowler put to rest any questions regarding his speed as he set a record time of 5.73 seconds in one run, and defeated hot-shooting Ray Neal and Jimmy Von Sorgenfrei. His toughest opponent proved to be South African Andy Goosen, who, in a brilliant burst of speed, halted Fowler's momentum. Goosen would now oppose Seyfried in the final round.

As the defiant Goosen prepared himself for his ultimate test against the proven Seyfried, the spectators could sense that this would be a historic meeting — and it was in fact a classic confrontation.

On the first run Seyfried was deliberate and accurate, but Goosen proved more so and took it. Round Two also went to the flawless Goosen — and Seyfried took up the gauntlet, picked up his pace and took the next two bouts to tie the confrontation. Goosen, nervously

CPT (Communist Party of Thailand) was to seize a vast, rich, L-shaped section of northcentral and northeast Thailand extending south from the Laotian border, through the central highlands, then eastward to Cambodia.

Only effective and immediate action could prevent this from happening. Military operations alone would be inadequate. Long-range planning was required to solve the broad social, political and economic problems facing Thailand. King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand outlined a comprehensive Strategic Development Project in 1976.

Known privately as "The King's Project," it used — and continues to use — the combined talents of Thai business and military leaders, educators, farmers and students to deny areas of influence to the CPT. The project established aggressive rural programs of land reform and agricultural guidance in disputed areas.

Within the sanctuary of triple-canopy jungle and difficult terrain, the CPT operated with virtual impunity, subjugating villages, taxing the population and directing terrorist attacks against the Thai government. The CPT infrastructure included a politburo, weapons and ammunition-storage depots, repair and maintenance facilities, radio transmitters, cadre training areas and a large, well-equipped hospital. The heavily-armed main-force units (515 Company, 520 Company and 523 Company, 130 men each) exploited the population of 10,000 Meos (H'mong) and Thais with Marxist discipline. If the CPT continued to consolidate the northcentral highlands, the fertile cultivated provinces to the south and then Bangkok itself would be threatened.

The first large-scale military operation against the CPT stronghold and northern headquarters began in early

1977 with operation "Pa Muang Padetsuk I." It encountered stiff resistance. The CPT fought from long-held fortified positions in areas favorable to defense. In the beginning, only moderate gains were accomplished. The emphasis, however, was on long-term strategic control and development, not search-and-destroy tactics. Gradually, the process of consolidation began to turn in the government's favor.

In 1979, the decision was made to strike straight at the heart of the CPT redoubt: the cultivated valleys and growing areas which provided food for the communists near Nong Mae Na, and the strategic heights of Khoa Ya and Khoa Kor. A four-phase plan sought to deny, once and for all, the "ocean" in which the CPT "swam."

Intelligence-gathering operations, combined with limited but effective small-unit military actions, ended just prior to an assault on the final objectives. Weeks before the first CA (combat assault), aircraft, helicopters, troops and support materiel began to arrive with great secrecy, at the small Royal Thai Army airstrip at Pitsanuloke. The staging area was cordoned off, and the troops quarantined. Aircraft arrivals, staggered at long intervals during daylight hours, created an illusion of normalcy.

In the predawn darkness of 24 January 1980, aircraft engines and helicopter turbines suddenly shattered the silence of the small airstrip. Airborne and helicopter assault troops harnessed up and began last-minute equipment checks prior to take-off. The first CA of Operation "Pa Muang Padetsuk II" committed four battalions of the Third Army Region (including airborne, ranger, special-forces units, infantry and armor) in support of a large road-construction project which would eventually encircle the entire tactical Area Of Operations.

With rented and leased D-9 and D-6 bulldozers, double-8x8-lumber bolted to the driver's cage for protection from small-arms fire, and supported by APCs and infantry, they did it: They built the road.

For three months the army punched simultaneously against all known targets, in two directions, through walls of virgin teak and bamboo which had once been an impenetrable National Preserve. The CPT pulled out all the stops.

As the bulldozers continued to cut deep into CPT territory, the communist terrorists began to slug it out toe to toe in a series of vain, costly attempts to stem the advance. In a captured document taken from a command bunker near Khoa Kor, the CPT admitted that if the strategic areas of Nong Mae Na and Khoa Kor fell, the highlands would be lost. In desperation, they fired 57mm recoilless rifles from the shoulder, mined the roads (60 percent of Thai casualties came from mines) and hurled themselves against the steel blades and bullets of the Thai army. They lost.

The lead clearing elements of the road-construction teams linked up successfully in March 1980, completing the first phase. A road now encircled the area of operations. It could not remain a dirt road; soon the monsoons would arrive.

A two-lane all-weather hardtop highway cleared 50 meters on each side began construction. Volunteer militia were trained, armed and then placed at intervals of 500 meters along the road for security. Construction continued although contact had not been broken.

The road provides resupply for forward combat and construction units, and will later provide access to markets. Already, fortified villages are spotted along it. A generous land-reform program grants 20 rai (about 40 acres) of land free to volunteer farmers, as well as two rai for construction of a house. All materials are provided or manufactured locally. Profits are kept by the farmers, many of whom are now well off by Southeast Asian standards.



Troopers of 2nd Pack Troop with donkeys used to resupply heights of Khoa Ya while road is built to two infantry companies on top. Note U.S. M26 hand grenade surrounded by clusters of Buddhist amulets and medallions worn for protection. Men of 2nd Pack Troop are spirited and capable of beating anything communists throw at them.



“The CPT tells them it’s a capitalist trick,” Col. Surachet says with a grin, “but nobody listens anymore. Why should they live a life of deprivation and hardship in the jungle when they can farm their own land and save enough money for a pickup truck?”

Maj. Gen. Pichitr Kullavanijaya (commanding officer of the 1st Division: “The King’s Bodyguard”), a dynamic and daring leader who as a Special Colonel (appointed by the king) directed the first assaults against the CPT, explained:

“Our strategy is that when you fight communist guerrillas, the first thing to do is make sure that the local villagers have enough to eat. You can’t expect them to help out or build up the will to fight if they are hungry.

“Secondly, they must see that they have a future. They must have their own land to farm and their own houses. Many of them haven’t had what they could call a home in years. We went in and offered them one. Now, they have something to fight for. We have provided land for each family which will be theirs to keep forever. We will train local militia and keep troops in the area to establish stability and effective control. We will never allow the insurgents to return and revive their influence again.” I was urged to see for myself.

Outside, a resupply helicopter hovered noisily over a sling-load of barbed wire destined for the Khoa Ya perimeter.

“How far do you want to go?” Col. Surachet asked as we walked toward the back of a small tan pickup truck. “I’ll go as far as possible,” I replied. He smiled and said something in Thai to the driver.



TOP: D-6 Caterpillar tractors with logs bolted to driver’s cage for protection from small-arms fire have cut deep into previously CPT-controlled areas. Road construction and security units faced problems of jungle and enemy with overwhelming courage and conviction. **ABOVE:** One of many civilian drivers who have made this hazardous project a success. Wire mesh and logs are bolted and wired to driver’s cage of D-9 Caterpillar tractor. Mines and 57mm recoilless-rifle fire were most discouraging weapons used by CPT.



TOP: Maj. Thomarat of the Ranger unit, 4th Battalion, RCT, at Nong Mae Na near Kek River basin deep in heart of Thailand's central highlands. Fertile cultivated areas nearby have been denied to CPT, now desperately short of provisions. Note USAF survival knife, and surgical-tubing tourniquet attached to first-aid kit; black uniform, gloves and headgear (Buddhist medallion for protection) favored by ranger units; tactical sit/rep briefing book. **ABOVE:** Maj. Gen. Pichitr Kullavanijaya and SOF Publisher Robert K. Brown discuss strategy and tactics of counterinsurgency warfare at the general's home near Bangkok. Large scale 1:10,000 operations map of central highlands delineates CPT L-shaped strategy of controlling central highlands of Thailand south from Laos, then westward to Cambodia. Thwarted in their efforts to control the central highlands, CPT may resort to urban terrorism in cities. **UPPER RIGHT:** RPG-"sung" (Thai for two) man faces forward over cab of our pickup truck as we push up road toward lead clearing elements. We bogged down ahead just as brisk firefight broke out to our immediate front. As firing slackened and rain began to pelt our position we withdrew.



"Maybe that was the wrong thing to say," I thought. We loaded into the truck bed along with a radio operator and a PRC-25. With a lurch that almost threw me from the tailgate, we were off down the road. "Hold on," the colonel said, "the driver likes to go fast." I cradled the M16 in my lap and silently cursed the people sitting in comfort back at the SOF offices.

Soon we were winding deep into the hills, the only vehicle in sight, through thick tropical forest dappled with shadows and sunlight.

It is difficult to describe in print the hardships and natural terrain obstacles encountered on the road-construction project. Three-hundred-year-old trees, vine-laced walls of bamboo, red clay, vertical drops and water courses from the heights, and the darkness at noon in the heart of it. It is a project which approached the impossible even without a dedicated, well-armed enemy contesting every inch of the way.

We stopped to pick up three men walking by the roadside, members of the volunteer militia. Each carried a different weapon and wore a different "uniform," a mix of camouflage fatigues and hand-woven black clothing favored by the hill tribes.

They grinned, gold glinting in their teeth, as they climbed on the back and saw me. One had an AK-47, the other an M16 and the third an H&K. "How do you tell the good guys from the bad guys?" I asked after they dismounted a few clicks up the road next to a newly-built fortified village and farming area. "The bad guys shoot at us," Col. Surachet laughed.

As we crested another hill, we came upon a work party digging drainage ditches. We slowed as the colonel waved and yelled in Thai to the men. "They had a few sniper rounds here last week," he explained. "No one was hit, but one of the drivers asked to be replaced. Everything seems quiet now; let's go on."

The radio operator switched frequencies and mumbled something into the handset as the driver gunned it toward the curves ahead. To our right the high ridge of Khoa Kor loomed in silhouette against the sky, to our left the top of Khoa Ya was wrapped in cloud. A deuce-and-a-half passed us going full bore in the other direction, leaving eddies of dust in its wake. Ahead, the recon and

security patrol of regular Thai troops, which had just been dropped off, fanned out toward the treeline, weapons at the ready. Startled birds wheeled into the sky, resentful of the intrusion.

The road abruptly turned from a paved two-lane highway to a raw, narrow, dirt track. Deep ruts from heavy traffic made progress slow and difficult as we bounced from one side to the other. From here the road twisted darkly beneath overhanging trees, and then bored into the vegetation as if it were a tunnel. Five or six clicks ahead, the lead battalions of the pincer movement are in almost daily contact with remnants of the CPT. Yesterday, a Thai patrol hit an ambush and suffered two KIA. We stopped at a log- and dirt-butressed outpost slashed into the hillside to pick up reinforcements.

The men of 2nd Pack Troop were dug in near the base of Khoa Ya, now immediately to our left and above. We climbed off the truck as Col. Surachet gathered them together for a briefing.

These men were undoubtedly some of the toughest, wildest-looking individuals I have ever seen in anyone's army. Their job is to climb regularly to the summit of Khoa Ya with supplies strapped to the back of their pack-animals: small, mean donkeys.

To a man, their legs rippled with tendons tempered to the strength of coiled-steel springs. They were armed with whatever they wanted: AKMs, AK-47s, M16s, M79s, RPG-2s, grenades, knives, swords, whatever.

Buddhist amulets dangled in clusters from cords around their necks, protection from the hazards of the job. They listened attentively, sometimes interrupting Col. Surachet as he drew a twisting line in the dirt with a stick, jabbing toward areas where there was new information. He pointed up the road, and then at me.

Four men broke from the informal formation and began to assemble their gear. "We'll take some of these men with us," Col. Surachet said. That was fine with me. The youngest of the four wiped off his favorite weapon, an RPG-2, slung it over his shoulder, and then checked each of the four rounds he would take with him. Another man placed a grenade into the breech of his M79, and wrapped a blue bandanna around his head. When they were finished with individual preparations, they looked ready to react in a heartbeat. I was glad they were coming.

They laughed and joked with each other as they climbed into the truck bed, pointing first to my camera and then to themselves. The driver shifted into gear and we began to rock and roll up the road. The RPG man stood facing forward, braced against the cab, with the weapon on his shoulder. I noticed the trigger was on half-cock. As we bumped and skidded along, I realized how deep we were into the badlands. Everyone assumed the 100-meter-stare ready position. I stood up next to the RPG man and made a mental note to try and avoid its backblast.

We drove for about four clicks, then bottomed out — stuck in deep mud-filled ruts. Forward and reverse, the driver tried to rock us out. We just got deeper. The engine screamed from the effort, RPM to the max.

Everyone dismounted except the radio operator and driver. Instinctively the M79 man and another man armed with an AK-47 went forward on either side of the road, then blended into the bush. The RPG man took up a position to the high side of the truck and crouched down on one knee.

Snap, crackle, pop! Abruptly, semi- and automatic-weapons fire broke toward our front, immediately ahead. The driver switched off the engine, then sprinted to the bushes. Two of our men with AKs ran forward, bent low at a half trot, and disappeared in the trees on our blind side. With the volume turned low, the radioman whispered into the handset and tried to make contact. The muffled one-two punch of a pair of grenades going off deep in the trees came from our front. The radio man calmly tried to raise someone on the net. Col. Surachet took the handset and spoke firmly and quietly. A reply came immediately. Two clicks ahead a Thai patrol had surprised some CTs with an RPG, and remained in contact. I stopped taking photographs and concentrated on the M16.

"We're building the future of Thailand."

I hadn't placed a round in the chamber! It was too quiet to snap the bolt back. I remembered from Vietnam that it is possible to pull the bolt back on an M16, and lock it without a sound, thumb the selector switch to automatic, pull the trigger and fire by pushing the bolt release. Prepared, I sat back in the weeds and waited, next to the RPG man. He gave me a nod, and I noticed the trigger of his weapon was in the cock position. Ever since seeing a below-the-knee amputee victim of an RPG backblast in Afghanistan I like to keep one eye on where the thing's pointed. A light drizzle began to fall.

The driver cautiously started the engine of the truck when the drizzle turned to rain which would mask the noise. With two men pushing, the truck was soon free and pointed in the direction from which we came. Col. Surachet said something into the radio and then acknowledged the reply. "Maybe 10 CTs near here moving our way," he said. "There's a blocking force between them and us though."

For my safety we withdrew. "They were probably going to mine the road," he said. "There's nothing much we can do about it, except beat them to it." The two point men backed up the road, eyes front. We mounted the truck and prepared to move out. The RPG man climbed aboard the tailgate facing rear. I crouched next to him. The driver started the truck and as we began to move, the others climbed on.

"We'll go there next," Col. Surachet said, and pointed toward Khoa Kor. "There's a road to the top."

We dropped the men of the 2nd Pack Troop off, and drove again onto the main laterite road. It now pushes 28 kilometers from one direction, and 23 from another, with only a few kilometers in the middle remaining to be surfaced. Back on the main road, seemingly oblivious to the fire fight ahead, work continued.

The road to Khoa Kor is most often at a 45-degree angle, and rutted with tracks and spill-off. We made it halfway. Col. Surachet laughed and said, "Let's walk." I left my M16 in the truck, thinking he meant over the next rise, but it was a long way up.

As we walked steadily upward, he casually pointed out the sights with the barrel of his M16. "It took us eight days to take the next 800 meters. Can you see the bunker

complex over there?" he asked, pointing. I couldn't see the small, dark opening in the bamboo thicket until we were within five meters of it. It was deep, and well-built, with a zigzag trench out the back and down the hill. "Look at this tree," he said. It was pockmarked and scarred with scores of hits. "Fifty caliber," he said. We passed a well-concealed Thai position, and walked along the ridgeline where it was narrowest, slanting sharply on either side down into the valley far below. The view was magnificent.

Lush green forest stretched for miles on either side as far as we could see. Mist rolled over the landscape, then fell away beyond the ridge. "We lost eight people in this spot," he said. "It was very dangerous to cross here. Even after the road was built, they would crawl up and lay mines. Once Gen. Pichitr's driver balked and refused to go on. Gen. Pichitr took the wheel, told the man to sit next to him, and then drove on," he said and laughed.

When we reached the top, a blue, white and red Thai flag snapped in the wind. Tightly gripping the highest elevation in the valley, a well-built forward fire support base ringed the crest. A pair of artillery pieces (a 155mm and 105mm each) guarded the road construction below. The area near Khoa Ya where we had just come from seemed peaceful from here.

Two quick shots rang out from below as a Thai patrol signaled it was coming in through the perimeter wire, the international code for "All's Well." A night ambush patrol saddled up nearby and prepared to go out into the damp chill of evening.

Far below, under the glare of lights, road construction continued. "We're building more than a road here," Gen. Pichitr had said to me earlier. "We're building the future of Thailand."

Continued on page 86

BELOW: Giant D-9 Caterpillar tractor leased for construction of road. Note logs bolted to driver's cage for protection. Supported by APCs and infantry, man and machine drove straight to heart of communist redoubt. **BOTTOM:** Maj. Gen. Pichitr Kullavanijaya inspects former CPT bunker and headquarters complex at Nong Mae Na on the Kek River, while Maj. Thomarar points out protecting tunnels across river with his M16. Note U.S. Colt .45-caliber pistol and two canteens — standard issue for jungle work. Maj. Gen. Pichitr carries short-barreled .38 Special.



SOF Saw In Mujahideen Trophy Room

What Ivan Lost In Afghanistan

by Jim Coyne

ON the return flight to the United States from assignments in Southeast Asia, I stopped in Pakistan to make a brief check on the war situation in Afghanistan. I had ventured inside Afghanistan almost a year earlier (December 1980) with the mujahideen, and wanted to see how the war was progressing almost a year later. I thought of all those people who had predicted that the Afghan resistance would roll over shortly after the invasion — how wrong they were.

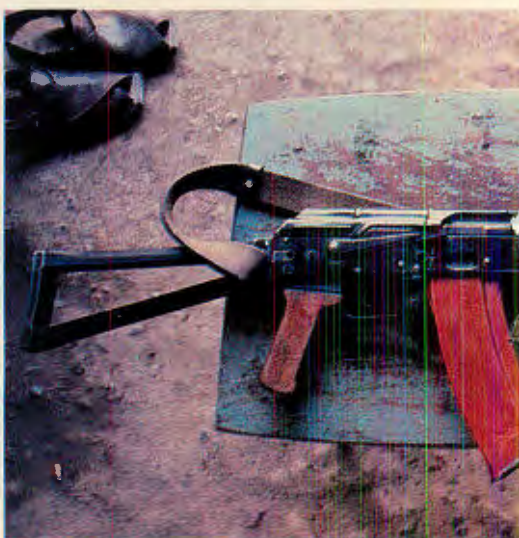
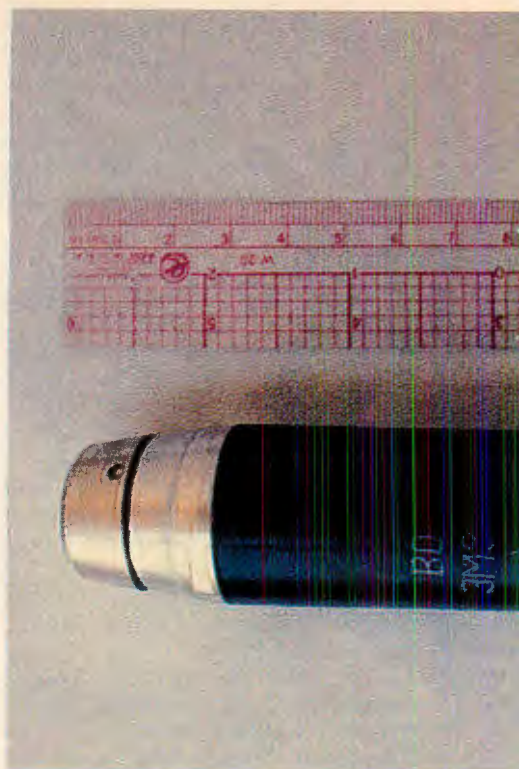
The war inside Afghanistan is going better than ever for the guerrilla mujahideen. Eighty to 90 percent of the countryside is securely in the hands of the freedom fighters; the Soviets only dare to venture out in force with protective air-cover. Soviet assaults into the Panjir Valley area had been repulsed for the umpteenth time, and morale was high.

While I was there, I had the chance to visit one of the mujahideen's captured-weapons depots in Pakistan. I was surprised to find a quite extensive inventory of assorted Soviet weapons and materiel.

It is standard procedure for the mujahideen to "sweep-up" after an engagement, with specific personnel assigned the task of stripping the battlefield of all usable weapons and gear. Others come in later and further strip vehicles, etc. All usable material is hauled away to be evaluated and used. Some of the stuff, such as avionics equipment, tank sights and damaged rockets, has no real value to the Afghans. This material is stored at various depots until a final disposition is made. The Afghans have managed to compile an eclectic assortment of somewhat-used equipment. Just a cursory browse revealed quite a few rather interesting pieces.

In the limited time I had to look through the place, I discovered things no one in the West had ever seen before. There simply was not enough time for me to go through all the equipment. I selected items I knew would have the most interest, photographed them, and made a mental reservation to return as soon as possible.

Interested parties, friendly to the United States or its allies, and able to provide adequate documentation to this effect, are encouraged to write *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine for more details regarding captured Soviet weapons, their availability, restrictions and price.





ABOVE: Side markings of new Soviet AGS-17 30mm grenade used in launcher that is capable of firing 300 rounds per minute.

LEFT: Soviet radio transmitter and receiver. Can be individually carried or mounted in a vehicle. Note instructions for rigging antenna, calibrations, etc.

BELOW: First folding-stock version of the new Soviet AK-74 assault weapon using 5.45mm ammunition. Note muzzle brake and sturdy stock construction.

LOWER RIGHT: Soviet AK-74 with stock folded. Left side.



TOP: New Soviet RPG-18 (RPG-76) in the collapsed carrier position. Note firing diagrams using easy-to-understand drawings on sideplate. Similar in construction to U.S. LAW, MAW and HAW weapons (Light, Medium and Heavy Anti-tank Weapons).

ABOVE: New Soviet RPG-18 (RPG-76) in extended-firing position. Note pop-up sights when tube is extended.



ABOVE: Close-up of new Soviet RPG-18 (RPG-76) instructions mounted on weapon sideplate.



Taking Secret Wraps Off USSR's Awesome AGS-17

Why Doesn't U.S. Have A Comparable System?

by David C. Isby



Captured Soviet 30mm grenade launcher photographed in Darra, Pakistan. With estimated range of 600-1,200 meters and cyclic firing rate of 300 rounds per minute, Western ordnance experts have described this weapon as "awesome . . . an automatic mortar." Some of the rounds are believed to be armor-piercing. Linked rounds feed from right-side feed box; rounds in photograph are draped over weapon. Weapon can be mounted on a vehicle or used in dismounted infantry mode.

THE 30mm AGS-17 grenade launcher (AGS: *Automatichesky Granatomat Stankovy*, automatic grenade launcher), nicknamed *Plamya* (flame), is one of the most powerful infantry weapons in the Soviet arsenal. Extensively used in Afghanistan, it has no equivalent in the United States Army or that of any other country. It gives the Soviets a powerful direct-fire-support weapon that can be used from a vehicle as well as from the ground on its tripod mount.

The AGS-17 was first seen in use with Soviet troops in East Germany in the late 1970s. It represented a completely new type of weapon, especially for the Soviets. They had not previously used a weapon that fired grenades, and lacked an equivalent to the U.S. M79 "Thump Gun" 40mm grenade launcher or the M203 grenade-launching attachment for the M16 rifle. The Soviet army does not use rifle grenades, although some of its allies — most notably the Polish army — do. The weapon that appeared to be the nearest thing to a predecessor to the AGS-17 was in fact an American-built grenade launcher, a Honeywell design that used standard U.S. 40mm grenades and saw limited use in Vietnam, starting in 1966, aboard patrol boats. The heavier tripod mount of this weapon allowed it a range of 1,500 meters, as opposed to 400 meters for the same grenades fired from an M79.

Before the introduction of the AGS-17, Soviet motorized rifle troops were dependent on vehicle-mounted weapons for direct-fire support. Dismounted from their APCs or BMPs, they carried nothing heavier than a 7.62mm general-purpose machine gun. They depended on the 14.5mm guns of the APCs, the 73mm cannon of the BMP and the 100mm, 115mm or 125mm guns of their tanks to engage any target that could not be handled by rifle-caliber weapons. The AGS-17 changed that. In Afghanistan, vehicles could not go wherever the dismounted troops went, as was the norm for the Soviets. In much of Afghanistan, the armored vehicles upon which the Soviets depend are effectively road-bound. Moreover, the weapons with which these vehicles are armed were intended to be used against enemy armor — not targets like Afghan guerrillas. The AGS-17 can go with dismounted, motorized riflemen or paratroopers up into the hills. It can be lifted in by helicopter — it will certainly fit in to the passenger compartment of a *Hind*.

Tactically, AGS-17s are used to form a base of fire while the other elements of a Soviet tactical subunit advance — fire and movement being the basis of all tactics in the Soviet (and any other) army. The AGS-17 has advantages above a tripod-mounted machine gun. Its grenades can be used to demolish field fortifications, especially the *sangars* (breastworks of rocks) extensively used by the Afghans. A machine gun would just splatter its fire against the rocks, allowing the Afghans to crawl away to another position.

The AGS-17 can also be used for indirect fire, and so can sweep the reverse slope of hills. Its fragmentation effect is especially effective against "soft" targets — anything not protected by armor. It has the capability to fire a wide variety of ammunition.

In high-readiness Soviet motorized rifle divisions — such as those in East

Germany — each motorized rifle company equipped with BTR-60PB APCs has two AGS-17s. Motorized rifle companies equipped with BMP infantry combat vehicles apparently do not use the AGS-17. In Afghanistan, however, it appears that the scale of issue is considerably higher than the norm, and Soviet troops on operations are up-gunned with additional AGS-17s and machine guns.

Although the AGS-17 is designed for dismounted firepower, it can be fired from a BTR-60PB APC — probably through an open roof hatch. Photos from Afghanistan have shown Soviet BMD airborne-infantry combat vehicles with what appears to be an AGS-17 replacing their 2A20 73mm cannon. This would be a sensible field modification, as the 73mm is primarily an anti-tank weapon. Such field modifications, common among U.S. forces in Vietnam, will probably be seen more and more in Afghanistan as the Soviets attempt to adapt weapons intended to fight against NATO or the Chinese to guerrilla warfare.

In Afghanistan, Soviet troops are upgunned with AGS-17s.

The AGS-17 is fed from a belt, normally mounted in a 30-round drum magazine. Its maximum range is about 1,500 meters, but effective range would be less, possibly about 800 meters. Maximum cyclic rate of fire is estimated at 400 rounds per minute. Weight, complete with tripod, is approximately 17 kilograms (40 pounds, including an empty magazine) which is not excessive for a company-level weapon. It is apparently carried in two loads, the weapon and the tripod.

The only projectile definitely identified so far is the 30mm VOF-2 grenade. It is a high-explosive fragmentation round, weighing 300 to 400 grams. It uses A-IX-1 explosive, a standard Soviet compound of 94-percent RDF and 6-percent wax. This is a very quick detonating explosive and is normally used in Soviet HEAT (High-Explosive, Anti-Tank) rounds, although it has previously been used in some smaller caliber HE-Frag

rounds. The fuse appears to be a basic point detonating type. There have been reports of the AGS-17 using a shotgun-type flechette round in Afghanistan, but this has not been confirmed. Unconfirmed reports have also suggested that a HEAT grenade might exist for the AGS-17. This would be a marked change in Soviet policy — it was previously thought ineffective to make HEAT warheads smaller than 55-57mm. Such a 30mm HEAT grenade could have a theoretical maximum penetration of 150mm equivalent of homogenous-steel vertical armor, although in reality it would probably be less.

The burst of a VOF-2 grenade would be 5 to 10 meters for effective fragmentation pattern. This means that rapid fire could cover an area with deadly fire very quickly, making the AGS-17 a perfect suppression weapon. A 30-round magazine can clear out a considerable area.

The area-fire capabilities of the AGS-17 would make it an ideal helicopter-mounted weapon. There have been unconfirmed published reports that such a version is in fact in action in Afghanistan, mounted on Mi-8 *Hip-E* gunships.

Data on the AGS-17 is relatively scarce because the weapon has not yet been exported — none have yet been seen in non-Soviet armies — and so many of the usual channels for evaluating Soviet weapons would not apply. One captured AGS-17 is known to have come out of Afghanistan. It was brought out by British intelligence assets and is thus presumably undergoing evaluation and testing by the British. The Americans are known to have several 30mm grenades, but no AGS-17s.

British technical intelligence from Afghanistan has outstripped American efforts on several occasions. The British secured the first 5.45mm AKS assault rifle to come west. They have also secured some other choice items of hardware — including some very interesting vehicles. Doubtlessly one day someone will write a best seller about these efforts, but the time is not yet here for an open discussion. However, it should be pointed out that the British have been running intelligence networks inside Afghanistan for almost 200 years, and in a part of the world where ties of tradition are very strong, this may give them additional leverage.

The AGS-17 is a highly significant new weapon. The capabilities it gives to Soviet motorized rifle units mandate that other nations — be they American or Afghan — develop effective tactics for use against forces that may deploy significant numbers of AGS-17s. But before that can be done, more must be known about this weapon. Ignorance may prove fatal.





SOF HONORS THE VIETNAM VET

**2nd Annual
Convention**



Bill Wilson on surprise "House Clearing" course.



Ross Seyfried (right) and Springbok Dale Guthrie in man-versus-man competition. Seyfried won and went on to face Andy Goosen in finals. Seyfried was sponsored by Jeff Cooper's American Pistol Institute.



United States Gold Team: (Standing, from left) Nick Pruitt, Mickey Fowler, John Shaw, Ross Seyfried and Mike Plaxco. Kneeling: U.S. Region IPSC Director Jake Jatras (right) whispers sweet nothings to SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown. SOF provided a \$1,000 award to Seyfried for being the top shooter.

loading his magazine, was assured by his fellow South Africans that he could pull it off. Seyfried patiently waited at the line.

In a dramatic climax Goosen shot his way into IPSC history as he downed Seyfried in the last round. Friends and fans poured onto the field and hoisted the shoot-off king to their shoulders in a display unique to any shooting sport. Seyfried, however, by his steady shooting had earned the agnomen — World Champion!

The team results also reflected the influence of the Americans: 1. United States of America Gold Team, 2. Republic of South Africa Springboks, and 3. United States of America Silver Team.

In two years Ross Seyfried and the United States will put their titles on the line in England. Seyfried is probably the finest practical shooter the United States has produced and will be favored in 1983. If you are interested in practical pistol shooting contact: IPSC, P.O. Box 626, Sioux City, IA 51102.



TOP 16 SHOOTERS OVERALL

1. Ross Seyfried	128.000
2. Mickey Fowler	122.841
3. Andy Goosen	119.463
4. John Shaw	119.174
5. Jimmy Von Sorgenfrei	115.357
6. Gavin Carson	111.473
7. Nick Stamatiadis	107.246
8. Ray Neal	105.124
9. Nick Pruitt	103.022
10. Paul Liebenberg	102.085
11. Paul Bromfield	101.413
12. Tom Campbell	99.957
13. Peter Slack	98.634
14. Dale Guthrie	96.634
15. Marcel Barnard	91.631
16. Roger Stockbridge	87.194

SOF SUPPORT

Soldier of Fortune played a major role in assisting the United States Team members on their journey to the Gold Medal. SOF sponsored three of the five members of the finest combat pistol team in the world:

John Shaw, two-time IPSC United States Champion from Memphis, Tenn., won this year's "Steel Challenge" and served as captain of the Gold Team.

Nick Pruitt earned his reputation for speed in southern California and won last year's IPSC U.S. National man-versus-man competition. Pruitt now works as a firearms instructor in Walled Lake, Mich.

Mike Plaxco of Roland, Ark., won the IPSC Mid-Winter Championships in Ohio and placed third in the U.S. Nationals.

Soldier of Fortune is proud to have sponsored these outstanding practical pistol competitors and congratulates them for bringing the United States the World Team Championship.

FIRST AID FRO

Air Force's Elite Lifesavers



M ABOVE

Text & Photos by D. R. McMillan



“It is my duty as a pararescueman to save life and aid the injured. I will be prepared at all times to perform my assigned duties quickly and efficiently, placing these duties before personal desires and comforts. These things I do so that others may live.”
Pararescueman’s Oath

“SURE we teach ’em to jump into trees. We tell ’em to pick out the biggest tree in the area and drop that canopy right over the top of it.”

Senior Master Sgt. Jim Spears, Chief of Medical Services at the U.S. Air Force Pararescue School, Kirtland AFB, N.M., is explaining some of the training pararescuemen receive that other elite military units don’t.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

After 18 years in the Air Force, D.R. McMillan was embarrassed to find that there was a group of people called Pararescuemen — one of the finest elite forces in the world — and he had never heard of them.

As a Marine corporal, McMillan was a 3965 DKW driver. He went into the Air Force as a munitions and ground-electronics man, and retired with the rank of major in 1973. With service in Korea (1953-54) and Vietnam (1964-65), he is now a freelance writer living in Colorado.

He felt that there might be others who didn’t know that the Air Force has super troops too.

—John Metzger

USAF Col. Devol Brett is shown being pulled into HH-53 Jolly Green Giant helicopter by PJs Charles Vogeley and Dennis Richardson. He had been shot down over South China Sea during a mission over NVN. He was rescued within 10 minutes of his ejection.

“What’s on the ground in wooded terrain? Old rotten logs, rocks and what-not. A would-be rescuer with a broken ankle or leg isn’t worth a damn to anybody.”

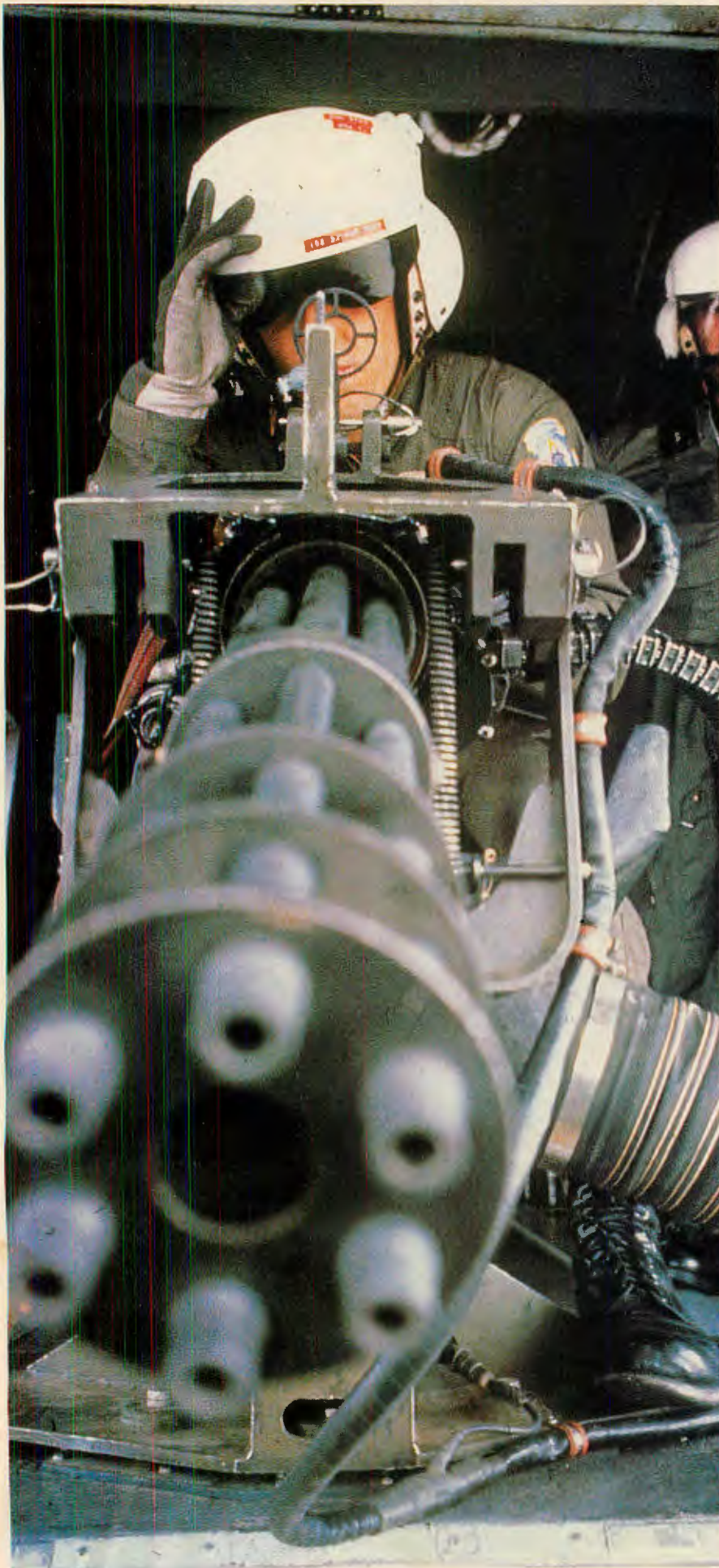
“Or to put it another way,” says Master Sgt. Leif Arvidson, Commandant of the Pararescue School’s Operating Location J (OLJ), at Lackland AFB, Texas, “most of the time it’s easier to hit the biggest tree in the area than to find a little hole to drop through.”

Spears continues, “Our students wear protective gear and carry a 180-foot let-down tape as part of their normal jumping equipment. It’s the most practical way to reach the target in wooded terrain.”

This is certainly not a new tactic in parachuting. The SAS used it in Malaya in the 1950s (See “SAS at War in Malaya,” SOF, April ’81). It is, however, the type of thing that makes pararescuemen a little bit different. A man is well into his nearly one year of training before he is allowed to make jumps like this. He first must be selected as physically and mentally tough enough to enter the program which will, if he’s lucky, graduate him as a pararescueman — or PJ as they prefer to be called.

“It starts at the OLJ. We might look at 2,000 people before we can get a class of about 40 together that are fit enough to begin training,” says Spears. “Eight to nine weeks later there’ll be maybe five left to move on to Benning.” (U.S. Army Jump School, Fort Benning, Ga.)

Arvidson elaborates, “The biggest difference between pararescue and other elite units in the military is our selection process. We are *super* selective. A student must be in above-average physical condition or he won’t even be able to start training as a pararescueman. He can’t be a dummy either. There is a certain degree of academics involved. We try our best to ensure that a student who makes it through our program at the OLJ will not have a problem after he leaves. When we get feedback that a particular portion of training is giving the students a problem, we adjust our program to prepare our graduates to cope with that type of training. At the OLJ, we try to run five classes a year of about 42 students each. Classes should ideally consist of 26 basic trainees, eight



crosstrainees and eight reserves of Air National Guard troops. We have to look at an awful lot of guys before we can even start a class. In a really good year, the entire training process might put 30 PJs into the field."

Although the specifics of his chosen career are mainly taught to him during his 20 weeks at Kirtland, the potential PJ must qualify in other areas first. Getting through the rigorous nine weeks at the OLJ is the toughest. Next comes eight weeks with the Army, three weeks of jump school and five weeks in Key West, Fla., at the Special Forces underwater operations (SCUBA) swimming school. Then he moves to Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., for 2½ weeks of air crew survival training.

"Most of the attrition occurs at the OLJ," continues Arvidson. "In the first week 50 percent will be eliminated because they aren't equal to the physical demands. A lot of them can't take harassment. We want to make sure that pressure eliminates them here, not at the end of a cable in combat. During the subsequent five weeks, we pare out the rest who either are not motivated or can't hack it. That generally leaves us with five to eight people to send down the pipeline for further training."

The three-man cadre that makes up the Pararescue Selection Team at the OLJ, in addition to making sure that the students are academically and physically fit, has another responsibility placed on them by the Air Force.

Arvidson explains, "This program has an adaptability clause built into it by the Air Force. Instructors can and will wash out a trainee who, in their opinion, is not adaptable to the career field (a total of about 260 worldwide).

"That's a pretty heavy responsibility for both the students and our fellow PJs in the field. To obviate the possibility of possible prejudice getting in the way, no one is eliminated in this fashion unless the vote is 3-0 against him."

"We have a lot of responsibility, but so does the student," says Staff Sgt. Kim Gregory, NCO in charge of the Pararescue Selection Team, Lackland Air Force Base. "After the first couple of weeks we just lay out a basic schedule for training and, aside from normal classroom sessions, the class must be self-motivated to keep up with the scheduled goals. Weekly evaluations tell us who's motivated and who isn't."

"We coach and teach but the students have to keep pace on their own initiative," says Staff Sgt. Ray Cooper, third member of the selection team. "I can motivate anybody to do one or two more pushups than he thought he could if I stand over him all the time, but that's

Gunner and observer with GAU-2B aboard HH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant helicopter.

not the type of person who'll become a good PJ."

Sgt. Arvidson adds, "PJs used to be their own worst enemies. Always in trouble of some kind. Punching out the wrong guy at the wrong time, that sort of thing. It was decided that our former training was turning out animals, not thinkers.

"The new approach lets the student motivate himself so he doesn't have to continually show how tough he is to others, because he's already proven to himself he can do anything he wants through his own initiative. This new system seems to be turning out a more complete PJ."

Talking to the students at the OLJ, it is easy to see how the program works. You are unlikely to see more gung ho, highly motivated troops anywhere in the military. Even the students washed back for medical reasons have fire in their eyes when they express their gratitude for being set back and not kicked out. Sgt. Matt Parker, a crosstraineer from security police who is recovering from a knee injury, says, "In most cases, a student will run with an injury for days for fear he'll be dropped from the program."

"We find that most of our guys have little trouble once they leave the OLJ. They often find themselves in leadership roles in other programs because physical demands on them are much less than they're used to. After all, they've been running six miles a day in 42 minutes or less, swimming 4,000 meters a day in 80 minutes or less and when they go down for pushups they do 50 not the 10 required by the Army," says Spears.

"I've had some of the PJs come in here to start their medical training and tell me that jump school and SCUBA school were kind of a nice break, almost like a vacation."

The medical training that Spears refers to actually started at the OLJ, where the men were introduced to medical terminology, anatomy and physiology. During the 10½ weeks between the OLJ and Kirtland they have been studying these subjects on their own, at a rate prescribed by the pararescue school's staff.

"We test the guy when he gets here," says Spears, "just to make sure he's up to par. Then we get down to what we think is the best trauma-medicine course available anywhere."

This is not braggadocio. Local medical and rescue personnel confirm the course's quality. Rick Goodman, search-and-rescue (SAR) field coordinator for the New Mexico State Police, concurs with Spear's assessment.

"I feel it's undoubtedly the best. The main reason is that it has got to be the most realistic training available. When a PJ does get into a real situation, he's not surprised by the gruesome shock and



Sgt. Tom Pope flew 142 combat missions during his 13 months in Southeast Asia as a PJ. While trying to rescue a downed pilot in January 1969, Pope took a shot in his left leg, and it had to be amputated. Before taking leave, Pope stood on the ramp at Udom RT AFB to cheer the HH-53 and his fellow PJs on. Raising his right hand, he flashed the 'V' sign — but for two not victory: He would be back in two years.

trauma that might exist. Their training turns out a very professional medic who remains calm, cool and collected under the most trying circumstances.

"I've been in this business 15 years. We in New Mexico have a reputation, among those who know, of being one of the best civilian SAR units in the States. When we need to call in the PJs, we know it's like putting superman to work on the problem.

BIRDS OF BOTH FEATHERS

It has been said that pararescue is the only military unit appreciated by both the doves and the hawks: the doves because of the humanitarian aspects of pararescue work and the hawks because pararescuemen are trained to use any method necessary to accomplish their humanitarian role. Who could disagree? —D.R.M.

"Just a few weeks ago, we had a situation where a guy was literally hanging onto a three-inch ledge. He'd been there a couple of hours and he'd already seen his buddy die. We knew it would take us at least three hours of rope work to get to him.

"We had already called for pararescue and when I saw Jim [Senior Master Sgt. Spears] coming out the door of that Huey 'N' model on the hoist, I had no worries at all. There was no doubt in anybody's mind that he saved that victim's life."

Jim Bagian, a mission specialist and former flight surgeon in the NASA program, expresses his opinion of pararescuemen. "I only became aware of these people when I began working on the recovery operation for the space shuttle. I've been impressed with their professionalism in the medical field. After all, when a PJ is working, both his life and the patients' are generally on the line. They must be quick and effective in their treatment. They are an impressive group of people."

Spears continues, "The medical portion of the training lasts six weeks. We start with basic patient exam and diagnosis and they learn our medical kit. Each week we cover a different type of injury — like chest, head, eye and face. At the end of each week we set up practical situations where they'll have to diagnose, treat and prepare to evacuate the patient. Then we terminate the exercise, tell him he's at the hospital and to debrief the doctor."

The "kit" Spears refers to is a 35-pound medical kit every PJ carries. It's designed to care for one patient for three days or three patients for one day. The contents are those necessary to treat the trauma injuries encountered in a typical aircraft accident. Other kits with which they must become familiar are a back-up kit, a burn kit, a hypothermia kit and a mass-casualty kit. These are normally stored aboard alert aircraft. HC-130 rescue planes, HH-3, HH-53 and HU-1H helicopters are used depending on the mission of each individual pararescue unit.

As the student progresses through the medical phase of instruction, the practical situations become more and more complex. The realism injected into the program becomes pretty gruesome.

"We try to be as realistic as we can during the practicals. We use mortician's wax, fake blood, chicken bones and things like that," says the chief medical instructor. "When these kids look at that guy lying there all bloody, screaming and yelling, you can tell for a minute they're thinking, 'My God,



Sgt. Spears prepares "victim" for student diagnosis and treatment evaluation.

they've run a real one in on me.' "

After the students become trauma medics, they go into specialized jump training. That's where the tree jump comes in. "They only do that once if they do it right."

Spears continues, "They'll do three land jumps and three water jumps. This is specialized jumping. They already know how to jump out of airplanes. They learned that at Ft. Benning. Now they're using our canopy [AP-28s-17/18] and they're learning to fly together as a two-man team carrying all their medical gear. In the case of the water jumps they're also wearing their scuba tanks and equipment."

The land jumps are generally done at Kirtland, altitude 5,352 feet. On a calm day at that altitude, a directional chute gets you to the ground in a hurry.

The school maintains two recovery boats and a small facility at Elephant Butte Lake, about 100 miles from Kirtland. Some water-jump training is done there but, primarily, water-jump training is done at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich., McClellan Air Force Base, Calif., Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. or Homestead Air Force Base, Fla.

Spears explains, "Where we take the students depends upon which of our units can support the training exercise at any given time. Naturally, we'll only go to Selfridge and jump Lake Michigan in the summer. We'll take the students to one of the two bases in Florida or the one in California only when they can support us without screwing up their missions.

"We primarily use Elephant Butte for low-and-slow training. We fly an H-3/H-53 in at 10 feet and 10 knots and the troops jump either with or without their scuba gear. This drill is used to train PJs to get in the water and assist a pilot who



After successful tree jump, pararescue student prepares to use his let-down strap.

is still tangled up in his chute and shroud lines or anything else that he punched out with.

"You know, those pilots receive a lot of training on what to do when they hit the water, but somehow a lot of them lose all sense of reason when the time really comes."

There is another reason for learning the low-and-slow deployment technique. Sgt. Spears relates a practical exercise from his own experience in Southeast Asia.

"There was an F-105 pilot down in the Gulf of Tonkin about a half-mile offshore. We went scootin' in and saw the bad guys were lobbing rounds out there trying to get him. I told the pilot that there was no way I wanted him to hover out there while we dropped a hook.

"We went in low and slow. I dropped off when I felt comfortable with the situation and swam with the guy out to

HOW TO JOIN— PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

AFR 39-11, Chapter 8, contains crosstraining information for those in the Air Force who think pararescue would better meet their career objectives. Those in other branches of the service should check with their personnel officer for the proper regs and forms. Civilians should contact an Air Force recruiter who can provide information on a career in pararescue.

The physical-fitness test given to allow entry in pararescue training consists of but is not limited to these minimum requirements:

RUN: 1.5 miles—12 min.

SWIM: 1500 meters—45 min.

SWIM UNDERWATER: 25 meters.

TWO-COUNT CHINUPS: 6—30 sec.

TWO-COUNT PUSHUPS:

36—1 min.

FOUR-COUNT FLUTTER KICKS:

35—1 min.

TWO-COUNT SITUPS: 30—1 min.

the open sea. When we were out of range, the Jolly Green [H-3] came in and picked us up."

The tree jumps mentioned earlier are now made at Eglin Air Force Base instead of the rugged high-altitude terrain of New Mexico used previously. An unacceptable number of torn chutes and injuries is the reason for the change. In the near future, the school hopes to coordinate the tree (1) and water (2 day, 1 night) jumps at one location.

"We own a piece of land up on the back side of Santa Fe, N.M. It's about six miles wide and seven miles long," says Spears. "We may not get to jump it any more, for safety reasons, but our boys still get a chance to use it during their two weeks of mountain operations."

In mountain training, the students use the old, issue mummy bag and shelter half that many of us remember. However, the equipment they'll use at their assigned field units is locally purchased and most of it can be found in the better mountaineering and backpacking stores.

Spears elaborates, "We've gone to the super-light, ultra-sophisticated mountain tents and bags similar to the type described in your March issue. [See "Silent Enemy: Hot Tips for Cold Weather," SOF, March '81.] The old stuff is just too heavy to pack around."

Considering all the gear a pararescue man has to take on a mountain rescue — like litters, medical kits, skis and snow shoes, if necessary — the less weight he carries, the more effectively he can get in

and bring back a live patient.

"You know, the Army, Navy and Air Force can all field a rescue unit with a medic aboard," says Rick Goodman. "The big difference is that these PJs are trained in parachuting, scuba diving and mountain climbing. When they go into a rescue, they're not only physically fit enough to extricate themselves if things go wrong, but they have the right equipment. If they have to walk out, we don't have to worry about having to go in after them. That's not always true of the other military units I've worked SAR missions with.

"Mountain operations only last 13 days, but the students learn it all," Spears points out. "They start with easy walking and climbing exercises to build confidence and get familiar with the terrain. Then they get into chimney climbs, setting belaying stations, the use of the Jumar System and of course rappelling."

They never let the students forget they're primarily medics. While in this phase of instruction, after they've learned the rudimentary techniques of climbing, they must use those techniques to reach a patient and treat him.

Spears adds, "After treating the patient, they have to get him off the mountain. There are several ways to do this. All depend on the extent of the patient's injuries. The use of a litter lowered either horizontally or vertically and the buddy rappel (carrying the patient piggyback) are the most common ways to get him down. It's not an easy 13 days."

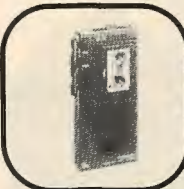
Even in training, PJs may save lives. Tech. Sgt. Bob La Pointe, presently NCOIC of the Pararescue Team, Osan Air Force Base, Korea, relates an incident concerning a group of pararescuemen training for high-altitude rescue work on Mount McKinley, Alaska, in 1977.

"We had reached the 14,000-foot level and were in the midst of an acclimatization stop. We got word by radio that a Japanese team ahead of us was having trouble at 17,000 feet. They didn't really ask for help or say what the specific problem was, but we decided to keep an eye on them through the binoculars. We saw a party of about six start to descend. At the same time we got word that one of the party was suffering from pulmonary edema but that he was still ambulatory and coming down under his own power.

"They got to the 16,000-foot level and started down a 1,500-foot wall when all movement stopped. We watched for a while and decided they needed help. I sent two guys ahead with light gear so they could move fast. The rest of us went up behind them as back-up.

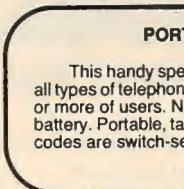
"We easily got the Japanese climber off the wall and brought him back to the 14,000-foot level where he could be taken off by helicopter. The team then

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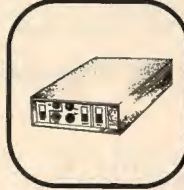
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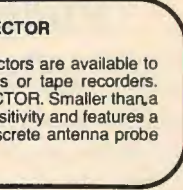
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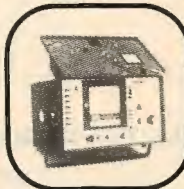
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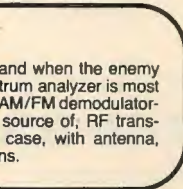
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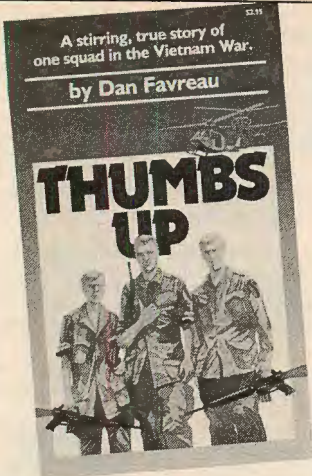
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continued the climb to the summit. It was a pretty routine rescue."

After mastering their mountaineering skills, the students begin ground operations. Emphasis here is placed on patrol movement in two-man teams. Students are taught map reading, compass use, camouflage and other forms of concealment. This training is conducted by the only two non-PJs on the staff at Kirtland. They are survival technicians. The senior survival tech is Tech. Sgt. Martin Alvarez.

"It's a lot of fun training these guys," says Alvarez. "Even though there are a few PJs that are in the career field for the glory that's generated by a unit of this type, the vast majority who come through here are motivated by a deep desire to be able to help others. The medical training they get makes it possible for them to realize that desire."

"We make sure that when they leave us they can navigate on the ground. We make sure they understand small-unit tactics so they can operate in combat environments without being seen or heard."

"We also refresh their survival skills learned at Fairchild, such as protecting themselves from the elements and relating basic survival skills to combat."

Survival-equipment selection is also taught during ground operations. Usually selection of shelters and sleeping bags and other specialized equipment is done by the unit a PJ will be assigned to, and varies according to the local conditions — but some survival gear will be chosen by personal preference.

"In this area [New Mexico]," explains Sgt. Alvarez, "it really doesn't get cold enough for down gear, which gets wet and useless quicker than some of the new fiber equipment. We generally try to stay away from shelters that are lined with polyurethane because they'll ice up quicker and heavier from condensation than just plain nylon."

"We train the students with regular military gear. It can be used for cold-weather survival if you really know what you're doing. In my opinion, the best things going in military winter-survival gear are wool shirts, trousers and vapor-barrier boots. That stuff can really help keep you alive."

"The majority of combat clothing I see out now, like jungle fatigues, cammies, packs and things — even the stuff I see in *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine — is made out of nylon, and when nylon brushes against nylon it is just too noisy in a hostile environment. I prefer wearing quieter materials like wool or 100 percent cotton."

Sgt. Alvarez continues, "We also teach other survival skills, like trying to smell natural. Tobacco smell on the skin can be easily detected from a short distance by a nonsmoker. No toothpaste; brush with salt water. No mouthwash. No deodorants. Clothing should not be washed in detergents with per-

fumy odors, just plain soap. When you are going into an area where you might be close to hostile forces, you even have to watch what foods you eat. It's a case of trying to smell as neutral as possible."

Whenever possible, personal weapons training is provided during ground operations. All PJs in combat carry the Smith & Wesson Combat Masterpiece and the GAU-5 SMG. Instructor and range-time limitations make it difficult to increase ground-weapon skills while the student is still in training. Expertise in this area is, however, among the first things the new PJ will be required to accomplish upon assignment to his field unit.

Spears explains, "The students familiarize themselves with the M16 while they're at Lackland. There's no real reason to have extensive hand-carried-weapons training here. We try to work it in where we can, but time is a limiting factor. We know that when the student graduates and goes to his new unit, he'll have more time for that training."

Skills taught during ground operations are those which over a number of years have been determined to be the most effective — usually because someone tried a particular technique and lived to pass it on to someone else. In combat, those skills are also used in other ways, on a selective basis. Examples: the Song Tay prison rescue attempt into North Vietnam in 1970 and the rescue of the crew of the American Ship *SS Mayaquez* from the Khmer Rouge on the Cambodian island of Koh Tang in 1975. Pararescuemen were involved in both.

Although combat skills are taught and used if necessary, Chief Master Sgt. John Tobey, commandant of the USAF Pararescue School at Kirtland, delineates the difference between pararescue and other highly motivated military units.

"Most elite-force units are trained to work on a search-and-destroy theory. We are in pararescue work on a humanitarian basis. I'd call our mission one of search and save. The PJ has the same talents available to him as men in these other units and he can and will kill if necessary to meet his objectives, but that is not the primary purpose of pararescue."

In Air Operations, the student learns how to be a part of the air crew on any airframe in the rescue inventory.

"There's a lot of classroom work involved," says Sgt. Spears. "The students have to learn where all the emergency equipment is located, how to operate the hoist, location of cable shears and the like. Then they'll spend time on ground drills, with hands-on experience in each of the aircraft. Physiological training and the altitude chamber are part of the program because those who crew the HC-130 will at times be operating at high altitudes."



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10. Still believe letters?
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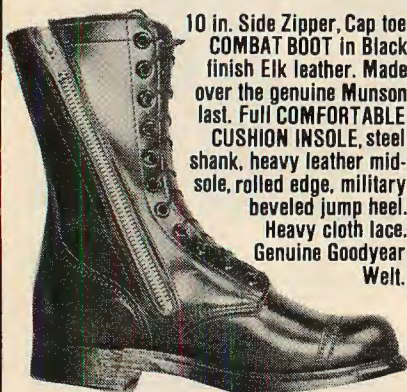
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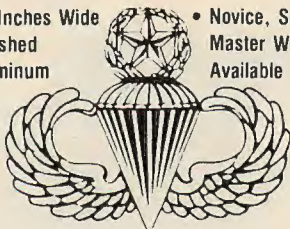
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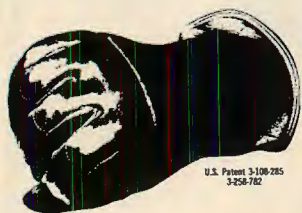
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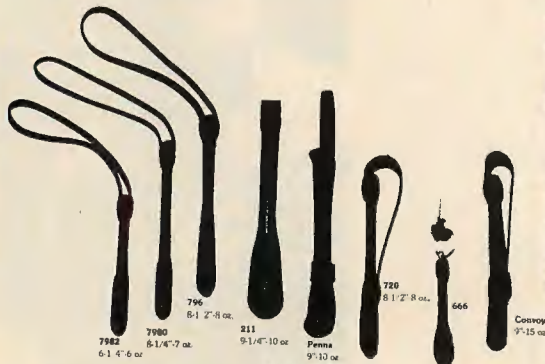
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Training flights provide the students a chance to use observatory skills since the pararescueman must provide peripheral and rearward vision for the aircraft commander.

Spears elaborates, "When a helicopter approaches the target area, the PJs have to relate to the pilot anything that will help or hinder the rescue effort. They watch for obstacles, terrain slope, open areas and wind indicators. Over the target, they instruct him to move left or right, forward or back, up or down, to get into the best position to make a recovery."

Eventually, they start riding the hoist and learning the aircraft weapon systems: GAU-2B, 7.62mm, mini-gun, M60 and the 7.62mm machine gun.

Master Sgt. Mike Smith, weapons instructor for the pararescue school, says, "Unfortunately, as with other weapons training, range-time availability and air-travel time to and from the range make it nearly impossible to get much aerial firing done. We do go through extensive classroom work on the GAU-2B, and the students get ground-range training on the M60.

"The HH-53 is the only airframe in rescue which carries the GAU-2B because of gun and ammo weight, so it's really more practical for those units with that aircraft to provide the training when the PJ gets to his new unit."

Master Sgt. Smith was originally in the weapons field as a gunner in "Shadow" gunships in Southeast Asia. He agrees with most others in pararescue that the humanitarian aspects of the job are what make it stand apart from other special military units and what drew him to it as a career.

"I suppose what we have in common with other special-mission units is ego," he says. "We all think we're the best. When I was a gunner in Vietnam, there was a lot of pride in being able to say that our outfit never lost a friendly force to the bad guys. But since I've become a PJ, I've gotten more satisfaction, even from peace-time rescues, knowing that in a one-on-one situation, I've helped save a life."

Having crosstrained from the weapons career field, Sgt. Smith is a spokesman for the unit in weapons testing and procurement. He describes the search for an individual weapon ideally suited to pararescue work.

"The GAU-5 [CAR-15] is presently in the inventory and it's not a bad weapon, but we're constantly looking for something better. Our combat mission on the ground is to remain covert if at all possible. Therefore, the M16 and weapons like it are too long and bulky. Also, when we're on the hoist we need a weapon that can be operated by one hand.

"The Air Force hasn't bought any, but I think one of the best new weapons we've looked at is the Sidewinder (SS-1)

SMG once manufactured by S&S Arms in Albuquerque. [See "The New Side-winder," SOF, January '78, "Side-winder SMG Revisited," SOF, October '79. Production rights to the SS-I have been sold to Craig Improved Armaments, Coushatta, La.] It has more stopping power than the .223-caliber GAU-5 since it is easily converted from 9mm to .45-caliber ammunition. Most PJs think it would better suit our needs."

Pararescue is generally a two-man operation, but there are situations in which a team of as many as six might be deployed covertly into a combat environment. Under this contingency, pararescuemen are trained to operate different weapons systems.

Smith explains, "In the case of a large team deployment, we have PJs trained to use the LAW, a grenade launcher that adapts to the GAU-5, and a stripped-down version of the M60 that only weighs about 20 pounds."

"Another weapon that impresses me for our line of work is the Israeli Uzi." (See "SOF Tests The Uzi," September '81.)

In the early '50s, the Marine Corps had a battle cry which probably originated during WWII. "Corpsman, corpsman, save my medals." It would seem that today's (and yesterday's) downed airman should paraphrase that slightly — "PJ, PJ, save my ass" — and fully expect an immediate response.

I WAS THERE

by John Toby
as told to D.R. McMillan

Chief M. Sgt. John Toby is the commandant of the USAF Pararescue School at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M. In May 1967, he was a staff sergeant working rescue missions out of Danang, RVN. As he tells it:

We got a call that a Marine recon patrol had been ambushed near Danang. They had four wounded and two KIA. We left the flight engineer behind (we knew we'd need the extra room and didn't want the extra weight). There were just two of us pararescuemen (PJs) in the back when they launched our H-43.

We found the patrol right away. Everything seemed peaceful. We lowered the forest penetrator, but it was obvious the troops on the ground couldn't or didn't know how to secure themselves to it. I told the pilot to bring the penetrator up and I'd go down to help. I sent the first three wounded up. The last guy had been shot in the head so I decided I'd better go up with him. Our bird was in about a 110-foot hover. We were about 10 feet from the helicopter, when bullets started to hit the side of

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the aircraft. The PJ operating the hoist immediately tried to get us back on the ground. The pilot got off a mayday call (he was losing oil pressure and control of the aircraft). I was only 15 to 20 feet from the ground when the helicopter crashed into the tree tops over our heads.

Just as it settled into the trees, the pilot threw it hard to the left so it wouldn't drop straight down on us. He did a super job and saved a lot of lives. The chopper hit the ground about 30 yards away. When I got there the engine was still running and the aircraft was on its back. The other PJ had a broken arm, the Marines in back had received additional injuries and the pilot was pinned in the wreckage with both legs crushed under the console. The co-pilot didn't have a scratch.

We dragged all the injured out and away from the wreckage. Then we got on the radio and found that help was already on the way. A FAC (forward air controller) came over. He told us that a Jolly Green (H-3) was on its way and that a bunch of guys in assorted uniforms, including black pajamas, were crossing a clearing below us and headed our way.

When the H-3 came in, it had a couple of Huey gunships as escort. They checked out the area. Everything seemed calm so they lowered the penetrator. It got about half way down and we could hear bullets splattering along the side of the air frame. The guys in the back of the Jolly Green immediately got on their M-60s and began to lay suppressing fire, but since they didn't know our exact location, they started spraying our area. We got some dirty noses but no injuries.

The radio crackled: They said they had to leave the area because they had taken wounded. (I later found out the wounded man was my PJ NCOIC, who lost his leg from his wound.)

Next a Marine Corps Chinook came in, making a couple of trolling runs to draw fire. Nothing happened until the horse collar was about half way to the ground. Then all hell broke loose. They took two wounded and had to leave.

Suddenly a cloud dropped down and blanketed our mountain. We knew no one could get us out before first light, but we didn't know that we'd be boxed in by artillery and close-air support all night long. It was really spooky, hearing that stuff whistling in. We hoped they knew what they were doing. The Marines with us directed artillery fire by coordinates through their command post and the Navy A-6s dropped ordnance, using "black-box technology" from above the clouds. Everything came so close that it shook stuff out of the trees onto us and lit

up the whole area. It helped me to see while treating our wounded all night long. They lay under a blanket that I had recovered from our helicopter.

In the morning, we hoped that all the bad guys were dead or gone. A Chinook came in and got four of the most seriously wounded out. As they were dropping the hook for the next guy, the aircraft started taking hits. The injured PJ, who had already gone up, jumped onto the .50-cal. machine gun. He thought he saw where the firing was coming from. Two Marine gunners pushed him away. Five seconds later, they were both wounded — so that aircraft had to leave too.

I figured I was never going to get out, and yet we were so close to the field at Danang we could hear the planes taking off. If we tried to walk out, we probably wouldn't last 200 yards. Then we got the Danang tower frequency from a FAC in our area and contacted them. Once the Air Force realized we were still out in the boonies, they diverted a flight of F-3s with a load of 750-pounders that had been headed up north. I came up on the survival radio (guard frequency) and directed them to our position, but they couldn't pinpoint us or see our downed helicopter.

Remembering my survival training, I got an MK-13 flare, tied a stick to it with a piece of shroud line and threw it up into a tree, hoping the smoke would penetrate the canopy. It worked. The lead pilot got a fix on us and asked how close we wanted him to drop his load. Since I had no idea of the lethal-burst radius of a 750-pound bomb, I suggested that they start out about 600 meters and walk toward us. They came in so low across the valley that we could hear the bomb shackles go *whack, whack* as the bombs were released. When they had put all their ordnance where we thought the bad guys were, another Chinook came in.

We got everyone out. I was the last one up the hoist. When I cleared those trees I was one nervous Jose — but no shots were fired.

We were taken to Danang Hospital. All the wounded from that mission were put in one ward. It was a good mission because no one was killed and we eventually got everybody out. But you should have heard the war stories flying around that hospital ward!



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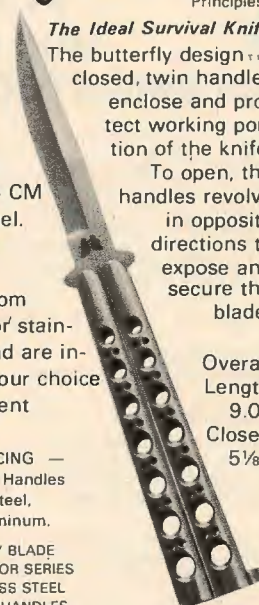
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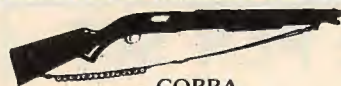
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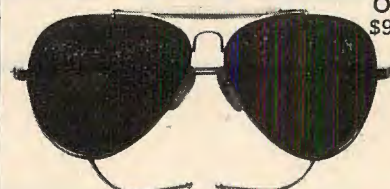
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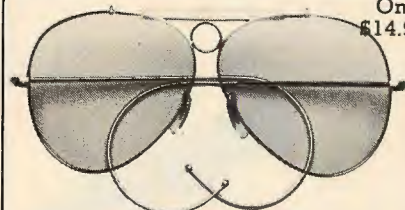
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CONVENTION

Continued from page 56

beef as awards were given, speeches made and jokes told. Keynote speaker at the banquet was Col. Aaron Bank (USA-Ret.). Col. Bank has had a full and interesting life. He was a prewar free-lance spy in Nazi Germany and an early member of the OSS for which he organized bands of partisan French to fight behind German lines and disrupt German communications, supply lines and troop movements. He is one of the founders of the Green Berets.

Although Col. Bank's subject matter may have seemed arcane to many conventioners — few of whom are WWII vets and most of whom served in more conventional units — he had many exciting tales to relate about his exploits in occupied France.

Col. Bank had an interesting prewar life, too. He was a lifeguard at French Riviera spas, an occupation in which he learned fairly fluent French and passable German. Bank took frequent "vacations" in Nazi Germany during which he seized every opportunity to study organization, training, weapons and discipline of the German *Wehrmacht* (army) and to observe political attitudes of the German people.

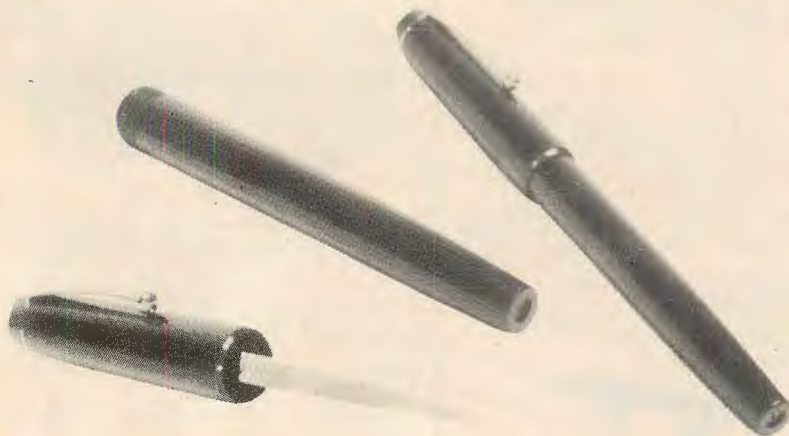
Bank will deny to this day that he was a formal secret agent for the U.S. government, but will acknowledge that he passed on the information he learned to people from Washington who had absolutely nothing to do with "vacationing" or "tourism."

As the ceremonies neared an end, the Col. Bull Simons award was presented by Editor/Publisher Brown to Medal of Honor recipient Fred Zabitosky on behalf of all Vietnam vets. The award is a recognition of outstanding heroism, and was awarded to Laotian Gen. Vang Pao last year in Columbia, Mo.

To conclude the banquet, SOF sponsored a raffle to support two of the causes the magazine has been involved in. Ruffled off were a gunsight from a Russian Mi24 Gunship (shot down by freedom fighters in Afghanistan) with proceeds going to the Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund; a Laotian United Liberation Front flag with proceeds going to the LULF; and a sculpture titled "For What" by former USMC combat artist Austin Deuel. Deuel's sculpture showed a medic during the savage fighting on Hill 881 South, May 1967. Proceeds went to the LULF.

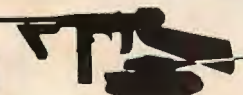
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organized by Deuel, was on exhibit in the Radisson Hotel lobby throughout the convention. The exhibit consisted of 52 pieces of art — watercolors, oil and sculpture. Nine pieces were from the USMC Historical Museum. Many Viet vets were drawn — and held in quiet reflection — to this exhibit. And these dramatic paintings — all by Vietnam vets, some combat artists, others plain old troopers — evoked many a bittersweet memory among those who witnessed them. The exhibit will be on a "roving" tour of the United States for most of 1982. We'd like to thank Deuel for providing us the opportunity to see these works.

Other events going on more or less continuously were movies (the most popular being *The Wild Geese*, *The Wild Bunch*, *The Big Red One* and *Apocalypse Now*) and the exhibit hall at the Sheraton Hotel. About 80 tables were set up in the hotel's ballroom and were covered with the latest equipment, guns and gear for sale. Most exhibitors were pleased with their sales, and conventioners and the public alike enjoyed the chance to see all the new goodies in one place. A popular attraction here was Al Mar, maker of the superb knives that bear his name, and Kuzan Oda, a Colorado knifemaker who displayed his wares and also put on a Samurai sword demonstration at the cocktail party held Friday night. Exhibitor and primo knife maker Dan Dennehy also demonstrated his knife-throwing ability during the Friday night cocktail party. Garth Choate displayed his new riot-gun stock with built-in pistol grip. Shotgun wizard Satterwhite liked this new stock so much that he bought 10 of them! Choate was one of the biggest donors of prizes to the match, and we would like to thank him for that.

Sunday saw the convention beginning to wind down. The exhibit hall and art show remained open and parachuting continued at a rapid pace so that everyone could get at least one jump in. Convention personnel **declared** all activities secure at 1800 hours, but many conventioners found it hard to leave their memorable four-day gathering and a sizable number of them collected around the Radisson bar for one last session of war stories and recollections.

This year brought no local hand-wringing or fear that SOFers might turn out to be a bunch of low-browed, blood-thirsty killers who would run around firing weapons and karate chopping citizens just for the fun of it, as was the case last year in Columbia, Mo. Maybe convention-wise Phoenix is just more used to such goings on than quiet Columbia.

A few hotel guests raised their eyebrows when they first saw cammie-clad men, whose sun- and

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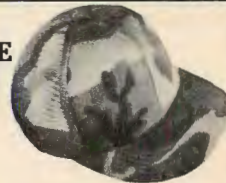
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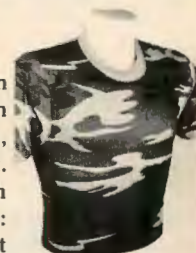
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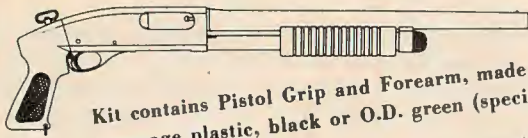
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wind-burned faces bore squint lines around the eyes from staring into endless days of Asian sun and wind — but most found them to be the gentlemen that they are, and there were no unfriendly incidents reported.

However, there were a number of "friendly" incidents.

Undoubtedly the most famous — and growing more famous with each retelling — was Saturday night's pool party. It occurred only because the law in Arizona demands that bars close down at 2:00 a.m. and because the hotel would not listen to reason. SOF bought the beer (20 cases, which vanished almost immediately) and provided the site — the small pool down in the staff area.

Convention Match Director Jake Jatras turned it from the sedate and dignified affair the SOF staff had intended into something all together different by chucking Editor/Publisher Brown into the pool. Brown asked Jatras to repeat his underwater Colt .45 demo, conducted in secret on a previous night, and he did. (Yes, they do fire underwater, but be careful to get all the air out first.)

After Brown busted a few caps, he climbed out, leaving the range to Jatras, and approached SOF Managing Editor Jim Graves, standing innocently and foolishly close to the edge of the pool. Graves finished out the underwater demo, and the pool rapidly filled up with SOFers, some not willing at all (like the famous "Fat Ralph," done in by Graves with lots of help). Some pure villain among the SOF crowd started chucking in the women and that led to the one not-quite-so friendly incident. One lady, with no apparent connection to the convention, but far too much curiosity, approached the pool and "went in" for a dip in her evening dress.

The next morning, while the clean-up crew was trying to figure out exactly what happened and how it could have happened, the ambitious among the SOFers, and some who spent the night there, were diving for nearly perfect slugs and other assorted souvenirs — change, earrings, keys, odds and ends of torn uniforms, etc .

Other convention high or low points (your choice) and heroes or villains (also your choice) include:

- John Donovan (a smallish 5-10, head-to-toe and shoulder-to-shoulder) explaining, "No, I don't want to go in the pool. And yes, I'll cut your throat if you manage to throw me in."
- Jatras' (again) spur-of-the-moment arrangements for a demonstration by X-rated-film star Marilyn Chambers, who "streaked" the shooting range flying the left-hand seat in the SOF Aloutte chopper.

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● Jatras (four and you're out of the convention forever) for the longest overhead throw into bushes of an SOF Military Small Arms Editor (Pete Kokalis) ever. Kokalis, a full-auto freak, said something about the relative value of handguns which Jatras took exception to.

● Kokalis, who dusted himself off, went right back in and picked up where he left off.

● All the challengers who took on Editor/Publisher Brown in his morning three-mile beer run and beat him out of a beer ("Anybody get the name of the guy who DIDN'T beat Brown?"). The beer run was organized in lieu of the 5,000-meter combat run and shoot, which was cancelled due to Phoenix heat. Next year we'll have it, weather permitting.

● Big George (James) who made even Donovan look small, and who conducted the "search and destroy" mission to a local Scottsdale pub which had turned down some SOFers for wearing cammies. When George and the gang showed up the next night, the house bought a round.

● The Pleasant Valley and Scottsdale Police Departments which let the "boys be boys" and even "excused" a conventioneer who decked a loud-mouthed veteran disparager. The loudmouth went for a ride.

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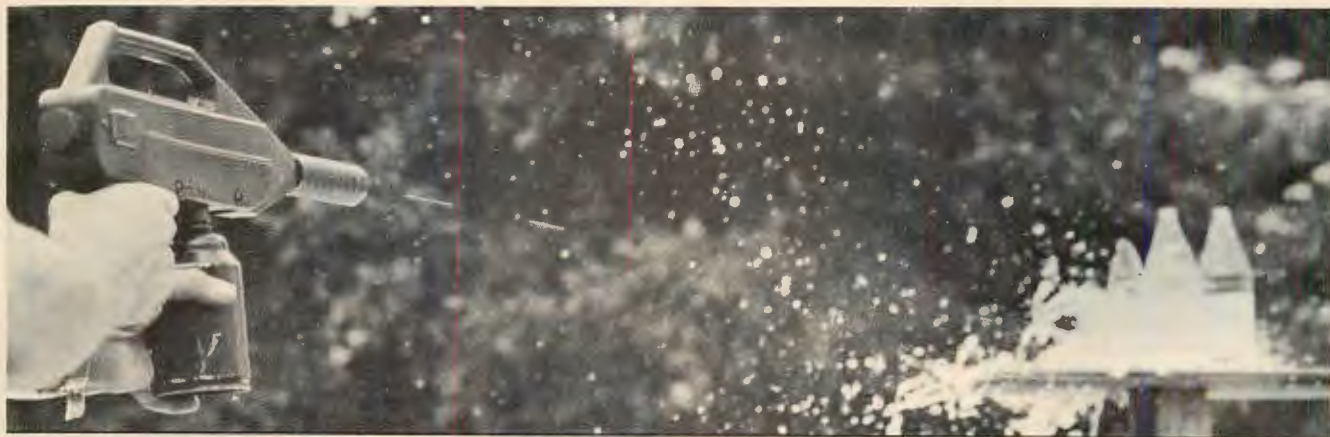
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Like last year, press coverage was well-balanced and fair, and most reporters left with better impressions than the preconceived prejudices with which some had arrived. A typical example of reporting came from Kevin Leary of the San Francisco *Chronicle*, who declared:
"For four days last week this stylish [Scottsdale] desert-resort community was the site of the second annual convention of the readers of *Soldier of Fortune*, a blood-and-guts action-and-adventure periodical that praises the warrior virtues
"The convention delegates wore camouflaged jungle fatigues, attended

seminars on street fighting, parachuted out of airplanes in mock-combat jumps and generally hailed warfare as the ultimate sport and adventure.

"Most of the conventioners were civilians in their 30s and 40s, mostly ex-military men longing for the carefree excitement and . . . friendships they remembered from their service days. About two-thirds were Vietnam veterans but there was one common denominator.

"'Camaraderie, that's what it's all about,' said Ernie Husted, Jr., 34, a Springfield, Ohio, security guard and former Marine. He served three years in Vietnam with a crack reconnaissance battalion.

"'It's a chance for us to be with veterans we shared experiences with and talk to people who don't lay a guilt trip on you every time someone mentions the war.

"'I'll be back next year . . . this is the best I've felt about myself since 'Nam.'"

Next year will be even better. It is a safe bet that conventioners will savor their recollections of SOF in the desert and that many of them will be repeaters — as many were this year.

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COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Continued from page 12



group two or 10 inches at 50 yards? Gun fights take place at very close ranges: 10 meters is extremely long range in most shootouts. Even if you decide that the MkIV collect bushing is your choice, be smart and buy a spare.

Another area of current Colt-auto difficulties is the slide stop — the part that locks the slide to the rear after the last shot is fired. The small lip that engages the magazine follower is critical. It often fails and breaks off. This problem used to be rare, but now the number of broken slide stops has increased to a staggering amount. I believe that Colt has either failed in its heat-treat process or in its stress-riser machining work. I recommend that you pick up a spare slide-stop pin for your favorite blaster and keep it handy in case the original fails. If yours does break, be sure to return it to Colt and demand a replacement.

WHEN Heckler & Koch introduced its P-7 9x19mm pistols, many shooters discovered that the three-dot sighting system was ideal for use in

low-light conditions. The P-7's front sight has one white dot centered on it and one on each side of the rear-sight notch. The three dots stand in a row when you have a proper sight picture. Although I've tried many types and various colors of sight inserts, I prefer plain black sights. (My only modification will be the addition of a luminous Nite-Site® for sight index in dark environments.)

For those who like the three-dot system, however, Bill Wilson of Wilson's Gun Shop, Dept. SOF, Route 3, Box 211-D, Berryville, AR 72616, now offers a high fixed-sight setup for the Colt .45 auto with the three-dot system. When installed on a .45 auto, it is fast to use, especially for those who prefer sights for street use. Wilson's system should provide good service for the

man who wants good, fast sights on his social blaster. Priced at \$32, these sights can be installed by Wilson's Gunshop for \$20. Shoptime is three weeks.



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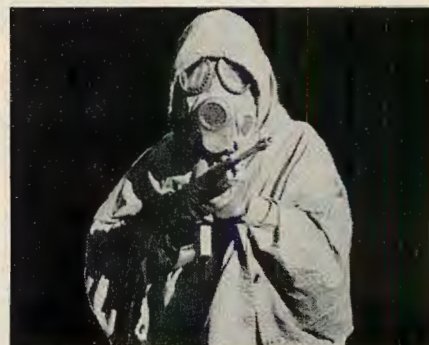
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Continued from page 8

yond reasonable doubt, that the Soviet Union and its client states are routinely engaged in the illegal use of chemical and biological weapons. (It is interesting to note that the toxin T₂ is classified as both a chemical and a biological agent.) Stand by: There promises to be more to come.

CUBAN COMMIES READ SOF ...

The following was read over the regular Radio Havana broadcast of Monday, 2 November:

"Two well-known American mercenaries, Robert Poos and Robert Burton, were recently in El Salvador as representatives of Col. Robert K. Brown, publisher of the Fascist magazine *Soldier of Fortune*. They were talking to [Defense Minister] Col. Garcia about the possible use of American mercenaries in El Salvador." Brown's comment was: "Castro's cohorts lie again; Poos and Burton aren't all that well-known. Yuk, yuk and up yours, Fidel." Poos and Burton, both former Marine sergeants, are flattered by the attention.

RUSSIAN MINE POSTER ...

SOF now has a poster available of the new Russian anti-personnel mine being scattered via helicopter and aircraft in Afghanistan (see SOF, April '81, p. 24). It shows the mine in exact size and with detailed description. The poster is free to all who order on military letterhead. Copies to others interested are available for 50 cents for the first and 25 cents for each additional.

Also available are lab reports on the mine and its explosive. The new Russian mine contains a very fast explosive with a detonation rate of 24,000-26,000 fps, about the same as detonating cord or C4.

RUSSKI REPORTS ...

A former high-ranking Soviet official in the UN who defected to the United States, Arkady Shevchenko, is quoted in *National Review Magazine* as saying that most Western press coverage of Afghanistan is "unrelieved nonsense."

Shevchenko, a protege of Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, rose through the murky Soviet

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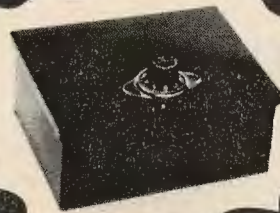
The Supreme court has ruled that locked personal effects are immune from search without a search warrant. *United States v. Chadwick* 433 U.S. 1 (1977). If they want to search it a warrant must be obtained, describing what they think is in the box and what the basis is for that belief. With a combination lock, like our strongboxes have, they cannot frisk you for the key.

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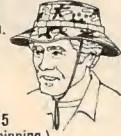
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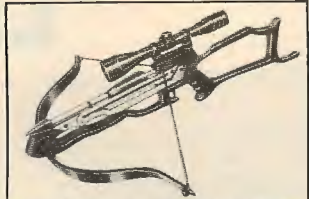
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FROM BULL TO 281st AVIATION ...

Sirs:

I'm a Regular Army and Reserve vet, now a college senior, to be commissioned next year in the Air Force where I'll someday pin pilot's wings over my jump wings. A lot has changed since I first entered the Army in early '75. Back then people used to crap all over military men, particularly 'Nam vets, who mostly kept quiet about the war to avoid problems. Now the mood of the country is different. People are realizing that the 'Nam vets have been getting a raw deal and are beginning to treat them decently.

But an army of bullshitters is emerging out of the woodwork, bums out to take some of the credit due to the real vets. On my campus I've run into a lot of them. One loudmouth Ranger-School "hero" was actually a washout who not only didn't complete the course but was thrown out of his National Guard Special Forces unit. (No, he wasn't SF-qualified either.) Another claimed to have been all over Southeast Asia, the States, and even the North Pole as a gunny in Force Recon. Pretty good for a 20-year-old. (Didn't even know what a "leg" was. He was actually a REMF E-2 thrown out of the Marines after less than a year.) One that I haven't met yet has been claiming he was in the Marines in



FLAK

'Nam and was one of the "Walking Dead." Must've been the only 8-year-old in the unit, because that's how old he was back then. Another one really takes the cake. He's told his girl-friend that he was drafted in '73 (two weeks before the end of the draft), went to the Defense Language Institute and an Army Scuba School, and was sent to Cambodia. There he was in an ASA unit, was promoted to captain (at the age of 18 with no college — this is while the Army was RIFing thousands of captains without degrees, you recall) because combat casualties were "so heavy" and in his job as "adviser to the Cambodian army" he had to have the rank for the indigs to work with him. He also engaged in swimming up rivers to blow things up. He even has certificates on his wall at home to

"prove" it, which I suspect were either falsified or purchased from Military Graphics. I told her to check his 201 file or DD214, but of course his work was "so secret" that it wasn't in his official records. (Not secret enough to keep from getting certificates about it all, though.) Between the bullshit artists and the ban-the-bomb activists you need high boots.

In November '81 you printed a letter from a reservist with the 281st Aviation Co. who was seeking info about the unit's past. Please advise your readers that Army unit histories are available from the Center for Military History at

Continued on page 82



TAC-1M semi-automatic carbine with walnut forearm, removeable shoulder stock, thumb safety, and 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ " barrel.

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This monthly publication is a gold mine of both interesting and valuable information. The Newsletter has been published for two and one half years and has established a working network of sources—publishers, bookstores, collectors, dozens of Vietnam Veteran organizations, and most importantly, readers who contribute news. The Newsletter functions as a clearinghouse, as Vietnam Veterans from all over the country send in information.

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The Vietnam Booklist will guide you to books on just about every aspect of the war. It includes fiction, nonfiction, personal narratives, pictorials, etc.

The Vietnam Booklist is invaluable as it contains all the books included in the Newsletter over the last two and one half years. It normally sells for \$7.50 but it's FREE with your subscription. If you wish to just order the Vietnam Booklist, see the order form.



Here's some of what you'll find in the Vietnam War Newsletter:

- Reviews of books—both old and new
- References to magazine articles—both current and past
- Movie announcements and reviews
- Information on Vietnam Veteran organizations
- Information for memorabilia collectors
- Vietnam Veterans in the news
- Updates on current events—like the Hunger Strike
- Updates on Agent Orange
- Updates on the MIA's
- Updates on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial
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AFTER observing many basic combat-pistol training sessions, I am bothered by two mechanical problems which plague the current Colt MkIV Series 70 .45 ACP pistols. Colt's factory-issue collect bushings and slide stops in these weapons frequently fail mechanically.

Most experienced users of the big Colt quickly exchange the factory-issue bushing for the standard-configuration solid bushing used during the .45-auto's first 60 years of production. Although Colt explains that the new bushing improves accuracy, the serious .45 user realizes that accuracy is less important than reliability. Furthermore, the current supply of Colt factory guns seems to have a high level of functional problems that are directly related to faulty collect bushings. If the collect bushing is fitted tightly enough to give top accuracy, it will also occasionally fail to function, because the collect-bushing fingers are too tight and cause binding of the barrel and the bushing. Therefore, the action will fail to close, only partly chambering a round. Inconsistent levels of production seem to give either nicely fitted MkIV collect bushings or very poorly fitted ones.

Another problem with the MkIV collect-bushing fingers is their nasty habit of breaking off the bushing body. Once this happens, your pistol is out of action, since an armorer will have to

COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT

Bushings, Slide Stops and 3-Dot Sights

Ken Hackathorn



pound the weapon apart to replace the bushing. Although this bushing may have looked great on paper, I don't think John Browning would have been impressed.

The recommended procedure is to replace the collect bushing with a standard solid one of the type that has been around since the U.S. military adopted the 1911. A standard GI-surplus bushing does just fine. Another solution is to have a gunsmith install one of the oversized, fitted, match-type bushings.

Some may question the accuracy of a standard GI bushing with its some-

times less-than-tight dimensions, but I prefer reliability over accuracy. After all, at normal combat ranges, the accuracy of a Colt .45 auto is far greater than necessary.



Wilson's Gunshop high-visibility combat sights use three-dot system that provides accuracy for low-light conditions. Photo: Wilson's Gunshop

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Sadly, many gun-rag writers have sanctioned the idea that a .45 must be capable of at least two-inch groups at 50 yards in order to be acceptable. I myself may be responsible for some of this crap, since I like to shoot super-accurate pistols for fun and pleasure. But if your sidearm is a tool instead of a toy, the bottom line is reliable function. Who cares whether your pistol will

Continued on page 77



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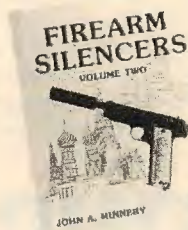
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IN REVIEW



SCOUTING & PATROLLING: Ground Reconnaissance Principles and Training. By Lt. Col. Rex Applegate (USA, Ret.). Boulder, Colo.: Paladin Press. 1980. 127 pp. \$15.95. Review by Alexander McColl.

This is a slightly updated version of a field manual written by Col. Applegate during World War II, based on his experience in training scouts and reconnaissance personnel for that war. Such textbooks are not exactly "escape" reading, but this one is written with clarity, vigor and some wit and does not belabor the obvious nor sink into ob-

scure "officialese." It's easy to read, and there is no talking down to the reader. If, somewhere, there is a school for staffniks who have to write field manuals, this one could be used as a guide for literary style.

Within the limitation of its being a WWII manual (and there really haven't been any revolutionary changes in the principles of scouting and patrolling since), this text covers the subject of infantry reconnaissance and patrol operations thoroughly and systematically. Notably outstanding are his chapter on Observation Posts (OPs) — a much neglected subject, especially today when we tend to rely too much on electronic gadgets as a substitute for binoculars and the calibrated eyeball, and his ideas for setting up and managing a training program for patrol personnel.

Too often "training management" is treated as a separate, abstract subject, and it's not easy to find a text on training in a specific and demanding subject like this one. In an Army where most

soldiers come from indoor, urban backgrounds, the only way to have good scouts is to train them yourself.

The sections on WWII (British, Russian, German, Italian and Japanese doctrine are of interest to the military historian.

A couple of areas where there is room for improvement:

- Soviet patrol and anti-patrol doctrine and tactics. There is a considerable amount of valuable information based on the German experience in Russia in WWII, and on the Israeli experience with Soviet-trained Arab armies, especially the Syrians in 1973. None of this information appears in Col. Applegate's book.

- For the last 10 years, infrared and starlight scopes, the more portable ground-surveillance radars, remote-reading sensors, and other electronic devices have greatly changed the whole business of battlefield surveillance and patrolling. Col. Applegate does not discuss this in any detail.

If one were planning to use *Scouting & Patrolling* as a practical manual for the 1980s, one would need better information on both these subjects. Inserting occasional references to the Viet Cong, or to M16s, does not constitute updating the text. The references to the SCR series of radios is baffling to modern readers, as these items have been out of the inventory since 1953. The allusions to patrols using sound-powered telephones seem a bit odd to a soldier brought up on radios, but based on what one hears about the effectiveness of Soviet radio direction-finding, monitoring and counterfire, maybe it's not such a bad idea after all.

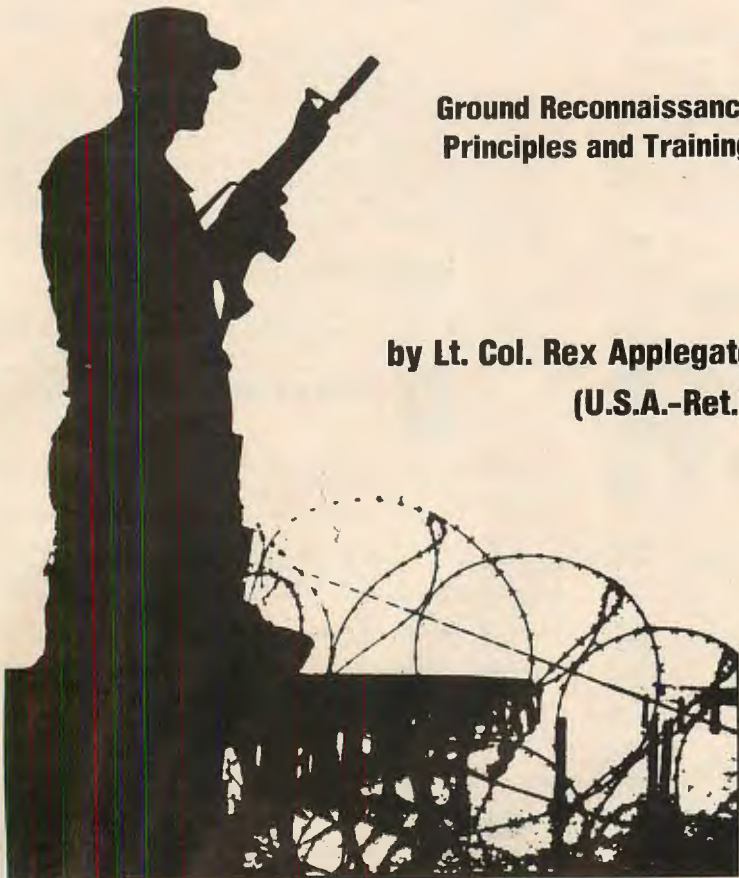
All of that having been said, Col. Applegate's book is an interesting, informative, well-written treatise on WWII infantry-patrolling doctrine, and as such of more than routine interest to the serious student of military history. Secondly, if you are in the business of training soldiers in dismounted patrol techniques, especially the basics, and especially if you expect to be operating in an environment that is not overladen with starlight scopes and other modern devices, this is a very good publication to work from.

I got an item in the mail the other day advertising the latest type of image-intensifier weapons scope for only \$5,500 a copy, so it may be a while before we find one of these attached to every AK-47 in every "liberation army" all across the Third World. Until that happens, Applegate on *Scouting & Patrolling* will be the standard text.

Alexander McColl is a Contributing Editor/Military Affairs for SOF. He is also an investment manager, lawyer, secretary-treasurer of Parachute Medical Rescue Service and a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve Special Forces.



SCOUTING AND PATROLLING



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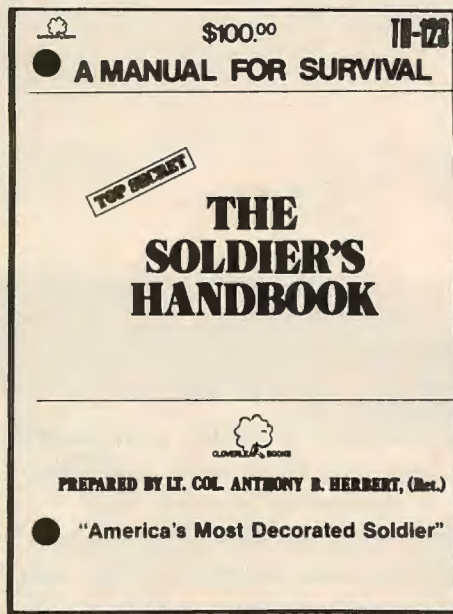
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Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Wednesday, Aug. 27

The book's already a big hit among old military hands, narcotics folk, cops, corporations and individuals with more than just a little to protect. And, promises Herbert, the book will be updated periodically. Which might prove necessary. After all, you never know when another Noble Cause may come loping around the next corner. □


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I Was There

by Carl Yaeger
as told to M.L. Jones

Carl Yaeger is a college counselor in Provo, Utah, and a U.S. Army Reserve major, intelligence branch. A former sergeant and structural-steel high rigger in military and civilian life, his story recreates the little known, but epic, battle of Fletcher's Island. As he tells it:

FLETCHER'S Island of Ice, or "T-3", was one of the cold war's hot spots in the spring of 1954.

Dien Bien Phu, French Indo-China, was besieged, and the Soviet Union was putting pressure on the United States wherever the opportunity presented itself. One such place was T-3, a U.S. Air Force weather-and-radar station on a floating island of ice, only a few miles from the North Pole.

Due to a freak thaw in the arctic ice pack, T-3 floated into the Soviet-control zone sooner than expected. The Soviets demanded that we get off, and we complied — but for a different reason: The ice island was breaking apart.

At that time, I was a high rigger (steeplejack) with the 1872nd GLOBE-COM Squadron stationed at Thule AFB, Greenland. Our team was dispatched to T-3 to dismantle the super-secret radar and antennas before they slid into the Arctic Ocean. Our C-47 Gooney Bird broke a ski on a pressure ridge while landing, ground-looped and busted a wing tip. It would fly no more — and became our barracks.

The days that followed were sheer misery — and full of terror. The temperature dropped to 10 below zero, winds blew up to 70 knots, and the island rumbled and shuddered while huge chunks of ice broke off. To add to our anxiety, "Moscow Molly" made

several references over Radio Moscow to our "invasion" of Russian waters. Her comments were followed by overflights and buzzing by a large Ilyushin-12 Soviet transport, which, at times, would shoot landings on the far side of the island.

Our NCOIC, a pot-bellied little tyrant, decided that his moment for combat glory had come. He ordered us to dig a defense perimeter in the ice around our "barracks." We were only able to pick down about two inches into the hard sea-ice. We were formidably armed: one .45 pistol, one M1 carbine — and an arsenal of spud wrenches.

Our fearless leader took it upon himself to operate the early-warning radar equipment. He knew just enough to make himself dangerous. While operating the set, he detected several, large "V" formations coming from the direction of Russia. Soviet bombers!

Frantically, he sent a TWX to Thule, which was relayed to the Air Defense Command in Colorado. The entire country was placed on Yellow Alert. *Attack possible!* F-94 Starfighters scrambled from Thule and screamed north to intercept the Russians. They found them — and flew right through them: thousands of Siberian Fish Ducks, migrating to Canada.

Fearless leader was whisked away by helicopter to parts unknown, and the incident, it was later rumored, formed the basis of Alastair McLean's novel, *Ice Station Zebra*.

It Happened To Me

by J. William Wells
as told to M.L. Jones

J. William Wells is a WWII veteran who now lives in Ohio. His story is not told in this column's usual format — but to change it would distort the impact of its message. As he tells it:

DURING World War II, the United States began its monumental battle to retake the Philippines from the Japanese war machine. The fighting was fierce — each foot of ground stained by blood from both sides.

During the fighting, a young GI was pinned down about a hundred yards in front of his platoon. The body of a dead American sprawled in front of him, the only thing between him and the heavy Japanese barrage. He thought he was sitting pretty, keeping his head down until the heavy enemy fire subsided, but then a Japanese grenade landed and exploded a couple of feet away. Shrapnel ripped into the soldier's right arm and slashed hard into his chest and he lost consciousness.

Most of the Americans behind him thought he was dead. But one young second lieutenant wasn't sure. Heedless of his own safety, he dashed out into the Japanese barrage, running toward the bleeding soldier and almost certain death. Somehow he managed to reach the injured man, receiving only a minor leg wound. As Japanese bullets snapped over his head, he staunched the bleeding and dragged the unconscious soldier back to safety.

At the battalion aid station the GI briefly regained consciousness and was told how the lieutenant had saved his life. The GI never did learn the name of that American hero — but should the lieutenant happen to read this article, please contact me through SOF. I was the GI whose life you saved. I want to thank you in person.



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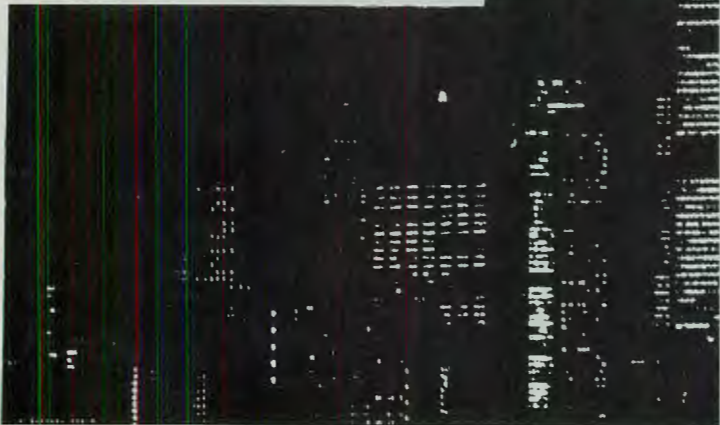


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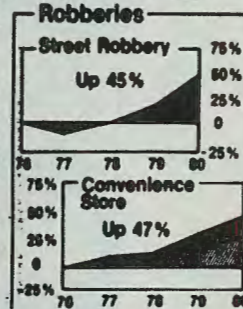
Lights Come Back On in New York



Serious Crime Up 55% From Decade Ago

WASHINGTON (AP) — A murder occurred every 23 minutes and a robbery every minute as crime in the United States rose 9 percent last year, the FBI reported Thursday.

The bureau's annual Uniform Crime Report said 13 million serious crimes were reported last year in a country of 227 million people, a level 55 percent higher than a decade earlier.



According to the report, criminals escaped apprehension in about four out of five crimes committed in 1980, with an arrest rate of 19 percent for all serious crimes.

Suspected offenders were taken into custody in 44 percent of all violent crimes but in only 16 percent of crimes against property, which outnumber violent crimes by almost 10 to one, the re-

U.S. 'in Greatest Danger' Ever From Soviets

The last clean place on earth is now polluted

THERE is probably no place on earth now free of man-made pollutants, report unhappy researchers at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas.

The researchers tested the air at one of the most remote spots in the world, Eniwetok Atoll in the South Pacific, and for the first time found the cancer-causing, manufacturing byproduct chemical HCB.

"The chances are there's now no place on earth you can go without finding HCB," said Dr. C. S. Giam, head of chemistry at A & M and leader of the expedition.

Eniwetok is a group of 40 tiny islands about 2,300 miles southwest of Hawaii.

It was chosen as the site of hydrogen bomb tests in 1952 because it is so remote.

Earthquake Victims Struggle to Survive

Europe's deadliest earthquake in 65 years rocked Italy last November, leaving 3,000 people dead and another 200,000 homeless. The victims predicted that the world would soon forget them. To some extent, their fears were justified. Although the Italian Government has allocated \$1.5 billion for reconstruction and housing aid, little of that seems to have reached the stricken area. And as the weeks drag on, relief officials are finding it harder to attract attention or support. "When I go to the ministries," says Giuseppe Zamberletti, head of the government's relief commission, "they treat me like a bore."

During the next three years, Italy plans to spend \$8 billion on reconstruction, some of which will come from a 5 percent "earthquake tax." The government has not yet decided how to spend the \$50 million in foreign aid that the United States has promised. Besides disagreeing over how much



The Crisis in Social Security

Today a hope of many years' standing in large part fulfilled," proclaimed Franklin Delano Roosevelt as he signed the Social Security Act, the most momentous piece of domestic legislation in his Presidency. "We can never insure 100 percent of the population against 100 percent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life, but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his

national debt. In more human terms, the numbers are just as appalling. Today every retiree is supported by 3.2 active workers, but the ratio could fall to 3.0 by the turn of the century—and according to pessimistic forecast by the SSA, it will plunge to just 2 by the year 2050. out any changes, workers and employers that distant future will be forced to pay as much as 43 percent of wages just to

ply grown too large, and unless it is reduced, the fears of the younger workers are amply justified.

'We Will Die of Hunger'

In Warsaw last week grim-faced housewives stood in line outside food stores for as long as five hours. Often they found nothing left to buy except canned peas and packets of tea. Restaurants had meatless Wednesdays and offered only one dish on the menu the rest of the time. In Gdansk, the Baltic revolt began last summer, virtually rationed. At midweek the

U.S. Government's Debt Nearing \$1 Trillion Mark

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See subscription card in this issue.

Are there American Prisoners of War still alive and unaccounted for in Southeast Asia?



Accumulating evidence strongly suggests that there *are* American Prisoners of War alive and unaccounted for, and who remain in captivity.

There is an urgent need for a full accounting by *all* parties regarding information pertinent to missing and captive American servicemen.

There have been more than 350 "live-sighting reports" of American POWs since the Paris Peace Accords were signed in 1973, but the U.S. government has been unable to substantiate any of them. Previous administrations have been less than candid regarding the possibility that American POWs may still survive in prison.

Project Freedom is a non-partisan, non-profit organization dedicated to the task of finding out, beyond any reasonable doubt, the fate of those brave men who so nobly risked their lives.

Project Freedom's National Chairman is Col. Lewis Millett (USA, Ret.), a Medal of Honor recipient; Honorary Chairman is Gen. William C. Westmoreland; the Executive Committee includes Maj. Gen. John K. Singlaub (USA, Ret.), Col. Charles W. Scott, the highest-ranking military man among the hostages in Iran, Master Sgt. Fred Zabitosky, the only recipient of the Medal of Honor for action in Laos, and Lt. Col. Robert K. Brown (USAR), Publisher of *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*.

There is much to be done.

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Funds are needed to conduct and support special projects in Southeast Asia — projects aimed at establishing the truth.

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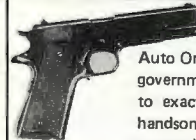
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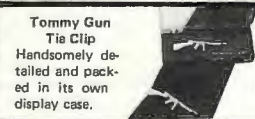


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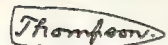


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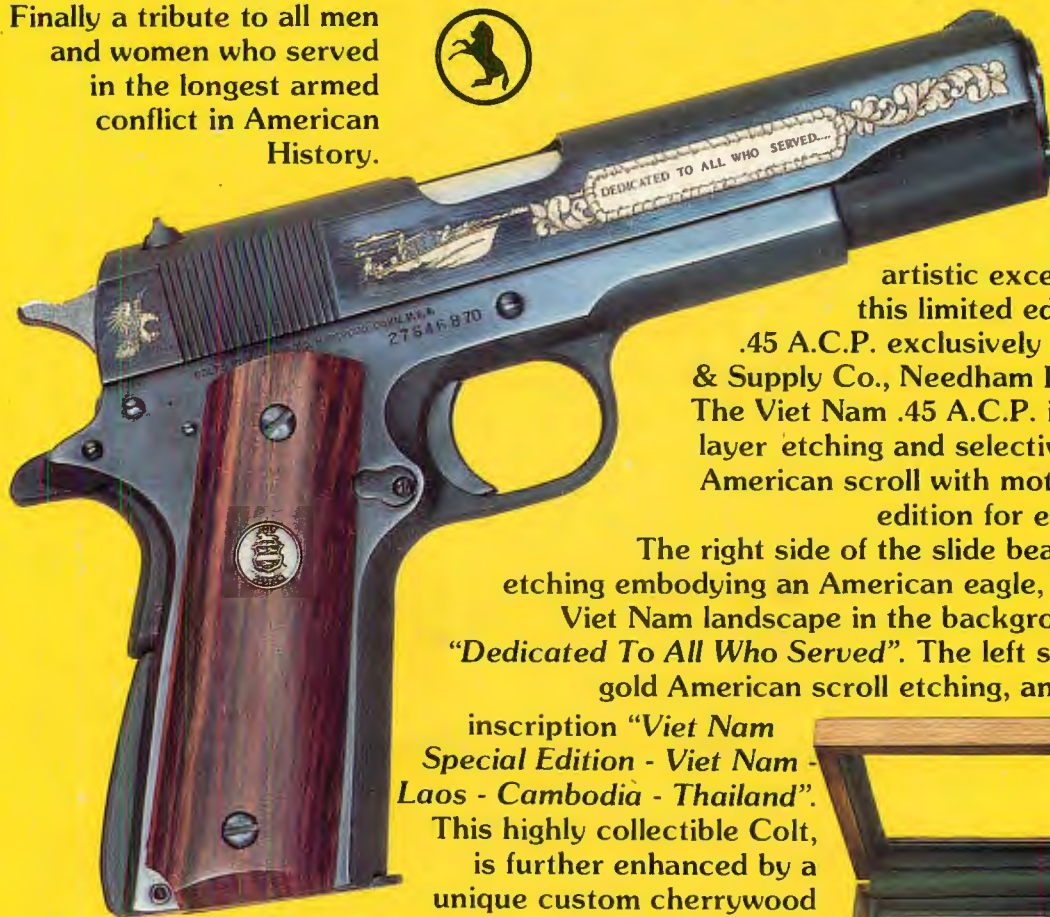
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