

AFGHANISTAN UPDATE

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

MAR/1984 The Journal of International Adventurers

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DIE IN
BEIRUT?**



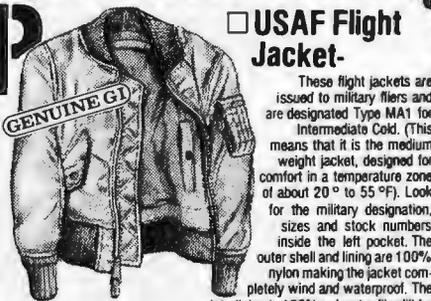
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Pants feature: 6 pockets (thigh pockets are belted); drawing cuffs; adjustable waist band. Jackets feature: 4 pockets, bellows style. Tell us your chest, height, and waist measurements when ordering. Choose from:

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- Tiger Stripe Pattern Camouflage - Commercial Manufacture** - these are made by a US Government contractor to military specs. The tiger stripe pattern is true. They are reinforced as the Woodland Pattern Camouflage, above. Regular lengths only (no longs). **Specify Jacket or Pants . . . \$34.00/each; \$65.00/set.**

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 - Ranger Commandos (Black)**
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All Orders Shipped Within 24 Hours

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 Choose: Olive Drab (OD) Green (USMC) or Black (Army) . . . \$39.75/each.

Commando Sweater - Commercially made

- patterned after the GI ones, these are commercially made in easy care 100% acrylic. Although they are copies, they are constructed surprisingly true to the all wool ones, complete with sleeve and shoulder patches. Choose between: Olive Drab (OD) Green or Black. **Specify Size: S, M, L, XL . . . \$21.75/each.**

Long Sleeve Camouflage T-Shirts - green leaf pattern; 50% cotton, 50% polyester . . . \$9.75/each; 2 for \$18.00

Hooded Long Sleeve Camouflage T-Shirt with Kangaroo Pockets - Green leaf pattern, 50% cotton/50% polyester . . . \$14.50/each; 2 for \$27.00

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Angle Head Flashlight - This is the heavy duty olive drab plastic flashlight issued to basic and stealth units. The flashlight is waterproof, non-glare and features 4 different lenses which can be easily installed or removed. It can clip onto the belt or suspender for hands free operation; operates on 2 standard D cell batteries; and comes complete with a spare bulb. Brand new, add in the GI box . . . \$6.50/each; 2 for \$12.25

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USAF Heavyweight Flight Jacket - Type N2B

- This is the warmest flight jacket that the military issues. It features full pile hood which drapes over the shoulders when not needed. This is the cold weather version of the Intermediate Weight Flight Jacket - Type MA1 featured elsewhere in this ad. This jacket is designed for subfreezing temperatures. Waterproof and Windproof. S,M,L . . . \$87.75/each; XL . . . \$95.75



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Choose from: Olive Drab (OD) Green
 Camouflage, Woodland Pattern (latest GI issue to Army).
 Desert Tan - (NATO issue) Camouflage, Tiger Stripe - (Commercially made in a US mill to military specs).

M-65 liner - Genuine GI - designed to quickly and easily button into M 65 jacket to provide complete warmth by sealing in the body heat. Brand New XS, S, M, L . . . \$19.00/each; XL . . . \$20.50/each

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COVER: T&E on location in El Salvador: Participatory journalism extends to weapons testing at SOF as Atlacatl Bn. 1st Lt. David Koch borrows Kokalis' Beretta SC 70 SHORT 5.56mm NATO assault rifle. SOF Military Small Arms Editor Pete Kokalis carried the new weapon when he trained Salvadoran troops with SOF's A Team. Story on p. 56. Photo: Peter G. Kokalis

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what good I did.
They only asked
how many people
I killed.”**



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They were outcasts. Soldiers fighting a war that nobody wanted. Blamed for policies they did not create.

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Crying out a warning to his buddies, a Marine fires his M79 grenade launcher at a hill near Khe Sanh.

and take a fresh look at the war as TIME-LIFE BOOKS and BOSTON PUBLISHING COMPANY bring you THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE. The first series of its kind that takes an objective look at the

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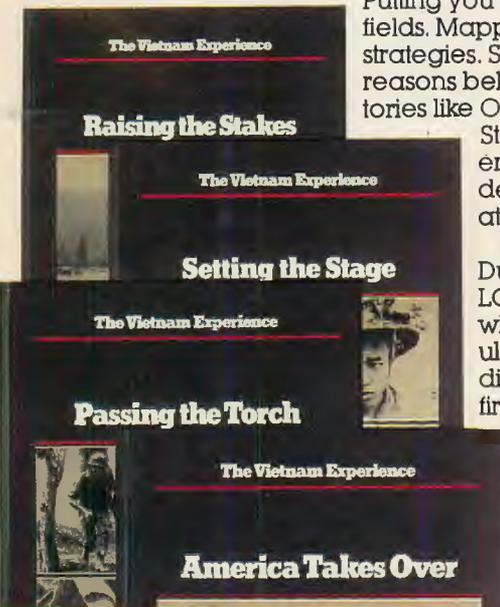
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Above: Taped for security measures, this captured Vietcong guerilla awaits his fate.

Above right: Armed with rocket pods, machine guns and grenades, the Huey helicopter became the symbol of the Vietnam War.

Right: A heavily laden soldier on a search and destroy mission in the DMZ. Soon all South Vietnam became a battleground.



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Right: Senator Wayne Morse confronts LBJ, warning that the senators who voted for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution would "live to regret it."



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EDITOR'S NOTE

AMERICANS are looking for someone to blame for the massacre of United States Marines in Lebanon. I did my time with the Marines in Vietnam, and I can almost guarantee you no one person was responsible.

Investigators want to find that there wasn't enough security. Well, in the sense that there wasn't enough protection to keep all those Marines from being killed, there wasn't enough security.

But if you were a commander of a small peacekeeping force in a pretty civilized country with an old civil war going on and people still living in their houses, would you think you had to defend against a five-ton truck filled with explosives driven through your gate at 60 mph by men bent on suicide? Probably not. No such attack was made against the United States in Vietnam. And I doubt the White House could survive such an attack.

Some people want to blame the State Department for making the rules of engagement. Most critics have pointed to the "no round in the chamber" rule as either the culprit or as evidence that American troops were not allowed to protect themselves.

But what could a 5.56mm NATO round have done to the driver if it was fired at an oblique angle through safety glass? Nothing, probably. If the bullets had punctured the radiator, would the engine have overheated and seized before the truck reached Marine quarters? Probably not. If the tires had been shot out, would that have kept those Marines alive? That's fancy shooting, and it's not certain the truck would have stopped anyway.

It must sound like I'm saying this was an act of God, or that there is just no stopping fanatics, so why worry about it? That's not what I'm saying, and even if I were saying it, it wouldn't be true.

Those Marines died because our society is so free at home we can't understand military necessity. And it affects the way our armed forces are managed. We figure those men are going over there to be away from families, homes, private automobiles and nice restaurants, so we have to make it up to them. We make it up with soft beds, hot food, beer, volleyball, mail, Thanksgiving dinner and visiting celebrities.

This is bad for men in a combat zone. It not only lulls them into a false sense of security, it tends to gather them together to make it easier to give them the comforts of home. That's what makes them targets.

I already said I did a turn in the Marines. I also served nearly 13 years in the French Foreign Legion, and I felt safer with the Legion. I was with the Legion in "combat zones" that were much safer than Lebanon. I can remember times when my unit was stationed at an unoccupied hotel, but the legionnaires were spread out, with their weapons loaded, dug into the dirt around that hotel. And we slept and ate in those holes. A terrorist with twice that load of explosives couldn't have killed 20, much less more than 200.

Barriers won't stop attacks like the one in Lebanon. And loaded M16s won't either. What will cut the losses is to change the minds and habits of Americans at home — civilians and soldiers — so that Americans in places where people are fighting will not be such tempting targets to those too cowardly to engage them in battle.

— Paul Fanshaw

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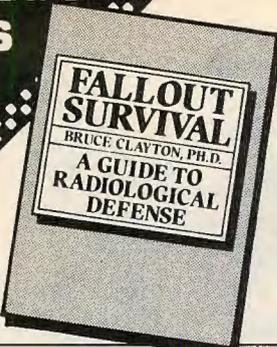
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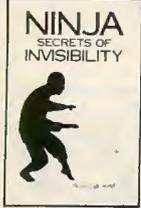


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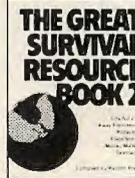


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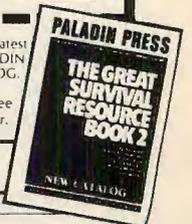
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CONTRIBUTING TO THE CAUSE...

Sirs:

Enclosed are a few items that have been in my closet for a while doing me no good, but, with your help, may do some good down south. It is equipment that I used in Basic Training, Infantry Training and Airborne School (this explains its worn condition). I'm sorry there isn't more, but there will be later.

I am currently unemployed, laid-up after falling from a building and fracturing both heels (my airborne training kept me from being more severely injured). I soon will begin a retraining program and, after I am gainfully employed, will strive to send our allies (in Central America and Afghanistan), via you, donations. I was planning on re-enlisting and volunteering for service wherever I could help stem the tide of tyranny and Marxism. But my injury has precluded that, at least for the near future. So, I will help in the only ways I can: 1) spreading the word that our fight is being fought for us and we should contribute to it in any way we can; 2) contributing myself in every way possible and 3) giving our warrior allies spiritual support.

Please continue to give us (your loyal readers) high-quality, honest reporting about the true conditions in the hot spots of the world.

Congratulations to all the Rangers, 82nd Airborne Troopers and Marines who kicked the Cubans' asses in Grenada.

And condolences to the families and buddies of those who were killed in Beirut and Grenada. They will not be forgotten.

And let us not forget the first American president to really stand up to the communists, John F. Kennedy, who was assassinated 20 years ago. Too bad his brother Edward does not have half the backbone he did.

Douglas C. Burket
Woodbridge, Virginia

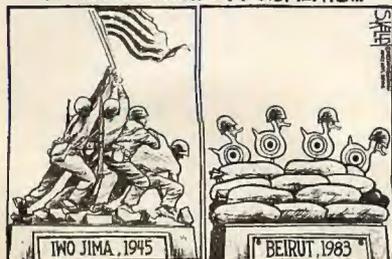
Thanks for the donation and we assure you that the equipment will do some good in Central America. Good luck in your recovery. —The Eds.

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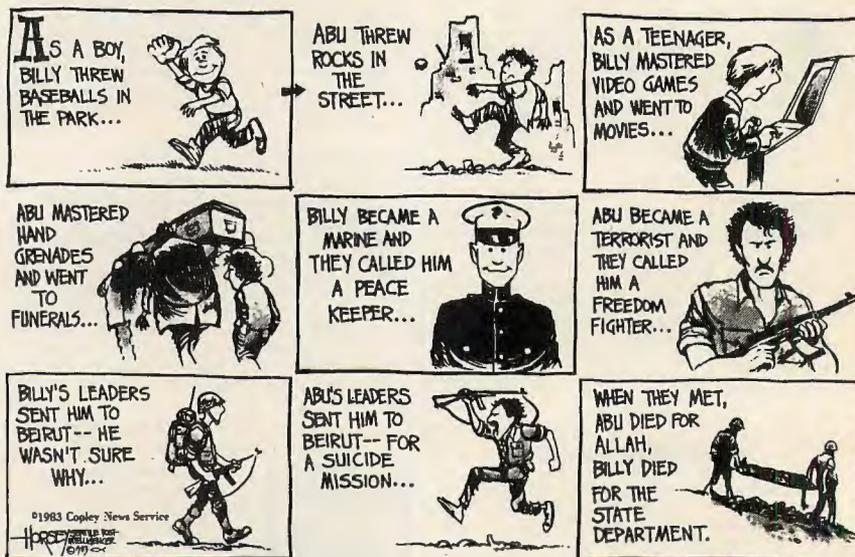
Sirs:

I read in FLAK, December '83, that your magazine was taken off the market in Australia. I have news for you: The same thing is happening right down here in good

U.S. MARINE CORPS MONUMENTS...



FLAK



old Texas. The statement I've been hearing across the board is, "We don't carry that magazine here anymore." They had even taken it off the shelf at the PX at Camp Mabry, the state headquarters for the Texas National Guard. It only reappeared after much wrangling. The statement from the PX attendants was that your magazine tended to make people want to go to war, etc., and they denied that it had been banned at all.

Is this freedom? You had better check into this before it gets too far.

J.W.
Texas

SOF would appreciate hearing from any other SOFers who are encountering similar problems. We will research each case and remedy said problem. —The Eds.

WOUNDED IN GRENADA...

Sirs:

I've enclosed a newspaper article on 20-year-old Specialist 4th Class Harry Shaw, an 82nd Airborne paratrooper who was caught in friendly fire and severely wounded during the liberation of Grenada. He consequently had both legs amputated, one below and one above the knee.

Harry was abandoned by his parents at age 8 and lived in foster homes till he was 18. Then, when state funds for his care ran out, he joined the Missouri National Guard. In 1982 he joined the Army, and was serving with the 82nd Airborne in Grenada.

Anyone who wishes to donate to a fund established in Harry's name, or simply send reading materials or cheer, may write to: Harry Shaw Fund, Mercantile Commerce Trust Co., 3590 Lindell Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63107.

Don Lutz
St. Louis, Missouri

Continued on page 103





GET EVEN: The Complete Book of Dirty Tricks

This ultimate work in do-it-yourself justice makes other harassment books look like a Sunday school picnic. You'll never again have to "grin and bear it" when inconsiderate creeps do you dirty. Learn how to get even when you're wronged by an enemy, victimized by a credit card company, or ripped off by any menacing organization. Here is a manual written by a master of revenge whose wisdom will put you on top of any situation where you used to feel helpless. Methods of revenge range from simple pranks to sophisticated techniques of devastation. Knowing these ingenious tactics of veteran tricksters, you'll gain new respect for yourself. You'll never again feel like a powerless underdog. Of course this is for entertainment purposes only! 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, 190 pp. **\$11.95**



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by M. Nelson Chunder

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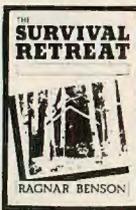
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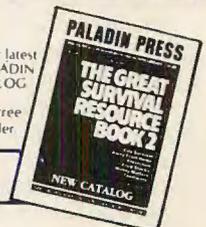


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SINCE the days of the pike, the Swiss have been military innovators. Schweizerische Industrie-Gesellschaft (SIG) has played more than its part in keeping on a par with or ahead of bigger countries with bigger arms development budgets. The newest evidence of SIG's contribution is the SG 541.

The Swiss run their military differently from the way we do. For all their neutrality and liberalism, the Swiss give every member of their 600,000-man militia a select-fire assault rifle. That's my kind of liberalism: Let your heart bleed publicly, but keep a machine gun in your closet.

One of the most important Swiss innovations in firearms was a 7.5mm rimless cartridge. It was just about the first modern small-bore, high-velocity rifle cartridge and the Swiss government adopted it in 1899.

With the world-wide popularity of ultra-high-velocity micro-caliber ammo, the Swiss were a little behind in adoption, but not in research. They had their own homegrown micro-caliber that measured 6.45x48mm. Still thinking about independence in arms manufacture and supply, but understanding the advantages of some sort of standardization, the government ordered parallel development of their two new assault rifles in 5.56 NATO and 6.45 Swiss. Federal Arms Factory of Berne worked on a line of weapons to compete with the SIG entry, but the Swiss have made their decision. SIG will continue to make the Swiss service rifle.

The rifle will be different, though. The Stgw 57 will be replaced with the SG 541. The SG 541 will follow the Swiss arms manufacturing tradition of well-made, carefully designed weapons, and it will be made by SIG. But from there on, it's a new gun.

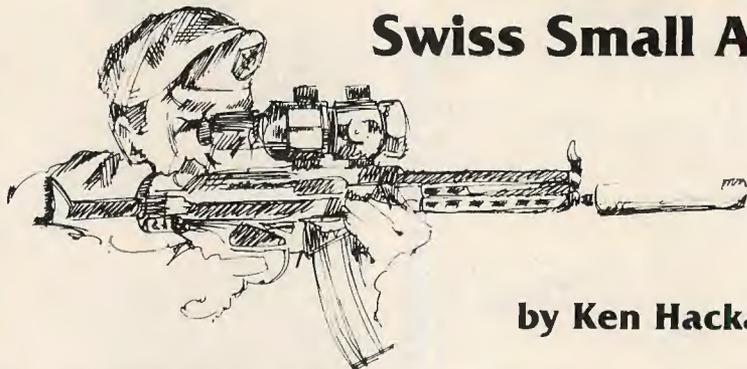
The old Stgw 57 — like H&K long arms — follows the roller-locked delayed-blowback action of one of the original assault rifles, the StG 45. Long proven in the extreme weather conditions of Switzerland, that reliable action probably isn't as reliable as the AK. Mikhail Kalashnikov's action was chosen for the SG 541.

Otherwise, the SG 541 is every bit as innovative as any other new assault rifle. It has three-round burst control, rotating trigger guard for easy trigger access with mittens, a skeletonized plastic folding stock with storage compartment and a reloadable transparent polycarbonate plastic magazine that is sturdy, can't rust and lets you keep count of your rounds — if you have time to look. Like most modern assault rifles, the SG 541 has a simple, sturdy bipod.

There is a shorter version of the 541. SIG calls it a "headquarters weapon" and it is obviously designed for such support troops. Still, at 177mm shorter overall length than the regular issue weapon (stock folded) I imagine armor and artillery crews, and armored infantry

COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

Banking on Swiss Small Arms



by Ken Hackathorn



SOF's affable combat weapons expert Ken Hackathorn hosted Three Gun International rifle course at Soldier of Fortune's Fourth Annual Convention in Las Vegas, Nev. Photo: John Metzger

are likely to see a lot of this weapon, too.

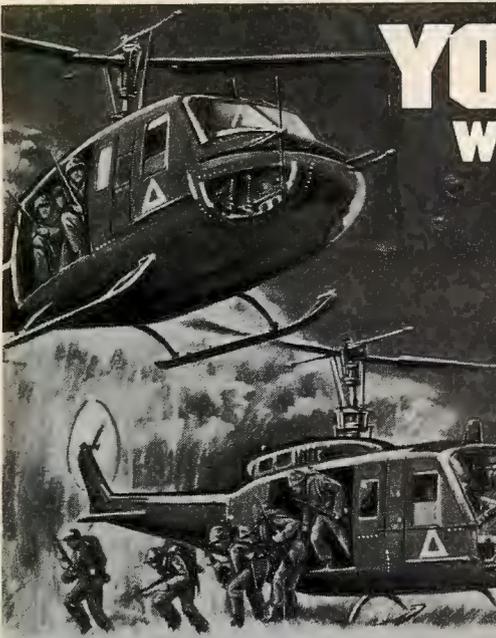
I like the SG 541. It handles well and it will probably prove reliable. But to my mind, that may be less important than the fact that the Swiss have gone to 5.56 NATO. The Swiss had just about the last modern army that used full-power rifle ammo.

At first, there's a political comment that might be relevant. The move to 5.56 might say something about what the Swiss might consider their best chances of resupply in the event of a war in Europe of the sort that might not respect neutrality. But that, alone, is probably too simple an explanation.

The Swiss were going to move to a micro-caliber, anyway. It's just politically interesting that they considered, and chose, 5.56 rather than 7.62 ComBloc. But remember, there was a Swiss cartridge entry, too.

I have my reservations about micro-caliber ammo as the standard for military battle weapons, and I've done my share of publishing on the subject, too. But it looks like nobody in the world's major military establishments agrees with me.

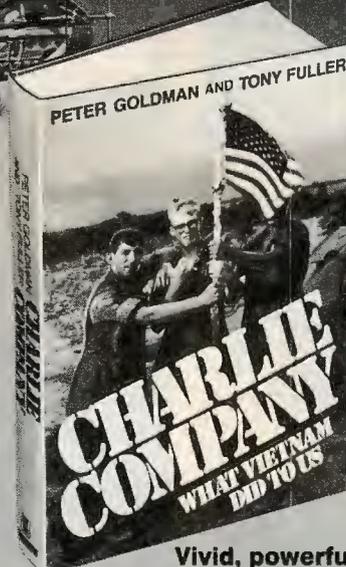
I would have guessed that mountain fighting and the long distances of engagement in alpine infantry battles would have encouraged the Swiss to keep the old .30-'06's cousin, 7.5 Swiss. But they must be thinking about something other than what I think is important, since they have made just the opposite judgment from mine. At least for the time being, the age of full-power military rifles is drawing to a close. ☒



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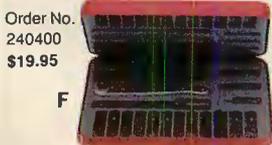


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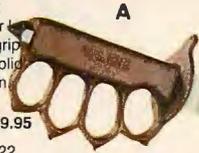
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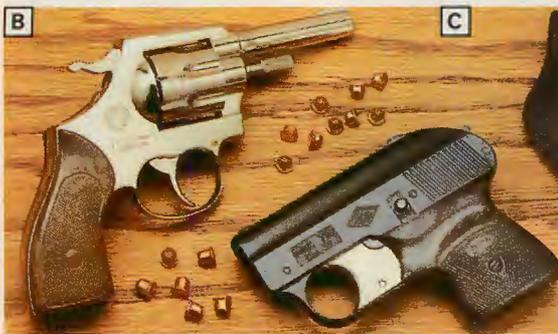


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WRITE YOUR BATF AGENT...

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) has proposed a regulation that would allow Federal Firearms License (FFL) holders to sell guns in the states in which they are licensed. Currently, dealers cannot sell guns from anywhere other than the licensed premises, making it illegal to sell or transfer firearms at gun shows. Changing this rarely enforced law may seem insignificant, but it's a step in the right direction for firearms freedom.

A proposed notice of rulemaking has been published in the *Federal Register* (a government publication that lists proposed rules and regulations by federal agencies) soliciting citizens' comments about the proposal. Unfortunately, few gun owners read the *Register*, so it's going to be tough to get an adequate response. SOF encourages readers to write (and tell their friends to write) the BATF and voice support of this proposal, which they refer to as the "Gun Show Notice." Time is running short. Write today to the Chief Firearms and Explosives Branch, BATF, P.O. Box 189, Washington, DC 20044.

ANOTHER SOF AFGHAN SCOOP...

One of SOF's Afghan contacts provided Foreign Correspondent Jim Coyne with a Russian bullet-proof jacket. Initial tests indicate that the alloy fish-scale plates, which contain 85 percent titanium and 30 layers of a Kevlar-like material, will stop high-power 9mm SMG ammo, but not .223, .308 or 7.62x39. Watch for complete test report in an upcoming issue.



SOF Art Assistant Kyle Smith models Russian bullet-proof jacket given to SOF by Afghan freedom fighters. Photo: John Metzger

BULLETIN BOARD

by Donna DuVall



HOT ROD REISINGER...

Tom Reisinger, assistant director of SOF Special Projects and president of Refugee Relief International, Inc., was recently presented with the title to a 1972 Citroen SM by PMRS member Scott Lowry of California. The car will be sold and the proceeds donated to RRII to send another medical team to El Salvador. SOF and RRII want to thank Scott for his generous contribution.

SOF GRENADA DOCUMENT...

SOF's liberated Grenada documents (see "The Grenada Papers," SOF, February '83) have made the big time again. Most recently, they were the basis of an Evans & Novak syndicated column that ran on 21 November. (Last month's Bulletin Board ran an excerpt from *Time Magazine's* use of the document.)

Evans & Novak, who did not credit SOF for use of the documents, have a well-known syndicated column that appears in 223 newspapers around the nation. In their column on the activities of Rep. Ronald Dellums (D-Calif.) in Grenada, the two journalists quoted the section about Dellums' aide, Barbara Lee, advising the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement that Dellums was ready to make any changes they deemed necessary in an official report he was preparing about the airport being built on Grenada.

SOF staffer and Refugee Relief International, Inc., President Tom Reisinger (right) accepts key to 1972 Citroen SM from donor Scott Lowry. The car will be sold and proceeds used to fund more RRII relief programs in El Salvador. Photo: Judy Harrod

According to the Evans & Novak column, Dellums' subsequent report to the House Armed Services Committee, of which Dellums is the 11th ranking member, stated that "nothing being done in Grenada constitutes a threat to the United States or her allies."

GRENADA PAPERS SCANDAL...

SOF reported last month that its Grenada documents indicated highly questionable dealings between several prominent Americans and the Marxist prime minister of Grenada, Maurice Bishop. As we go to press, a major scandal is brewing in Washington re-



garding a connection between Bishop and *Washington Post* foreign editor, Karen De Young.

The scandal results from a document, first discovered by SOF's Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown, which has served as the basis for an investigation being conducted by a media task force in Washington.

SOF will carry a complete report on the document and the allegations, along with an analysis of the inept manner in which document collection was handled by the U.S. military on Grenada, in an upcoming issue.

AFGHAN FREEDOM FIGHTER FUND...

After four years of ruthless Soviet occupation, indiscriminate slaughter of civilians, gassing of villages, destruction of crops and farm animals and other brutal acts of repression, the brave Afghan people are still fighting back. They are fighting for the right to run their own country, to be secure within their own country and to worship as their fathers did.

The Afghans are not asking for foreign volunteers — indeed they don't want foreigners fighting their Holy War — and they are not afraid to die in their battle against the Russians. But faith and courage are not enough to win a war against the modern Soviet army. They also need rifles, ammunition, medical supplies, blankets and food to carry on the struggle.

SOF created the Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund to try to raise funds for these necessities. All money donated to the AFFF goes directly into the hands of the Afghan leaders so that they can buy the supplies, ammunition and weapons needed to fight the Russians.

Since we have not yet convinced the IRS that killing Russians is a "charitable or educational" activity, contributions are not tax-deductible, but each donor does receive a certificate of appreciation signed by Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown. And each donor has the satisfaction of knowing that he has made a contribution to the struggle for religious and political freedom in Afghanistan.

Send donations to Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.

Allah Akbar. Death to Tyrants.

SOF CONVENTION '84...

SOF's 1984 convention will be held 20-23 September at the Las Vegas Sahara Hotel and Convention Center, in conjunction with the SOF Three-Gun International Combat Shooting Match 19-21 September, and the SOF Military Arms Show, 21-23 September. The Sahara is holding 800 rooms at



\$38 per double: 1(800)634-6078. The nearby Olanjo Hotel is holding 100 rooms at \$40 per double: (702)796-6666.

The '83 Convention attracted a sell-out crowd and rooms in the headquarters hotel and other nearby hotels were unavailable for the convention. So reserve early if you plan to attend. Rooms are on a first-come, first-serve basis and you must identify yourself as an SOF conventioneer. April's SOF will have more details about the convention.



CENTRAL AMERICA DEFENSE FUND...

How would you like to go into combat with one pair of worn-out boots, one pair of thin socks, worn-out web gear, and without poncho, liner or cleaning gear for your weapon?

That's how the Salvadoran Army and the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters do it.

Being brave, tough and willing isn't enough when you don't have the basic equipment. So if you have any of the following equipment that isn't being used, SOF knows a lot of soldiers who can put it to good use: combat boots, boot socks, fatigue or cammie uniforms (medium or small sizes only — we're not outfitting giants), rifle/MG cleaning gear, web equipment, ponchos, poncho liners, field dressings, etc. Send them to El Salvador/Nicar-

agua Defense Fund, *Soldier of Fortune* warehouse, 5721 Arapahoe, Boulder, CO 80303.

For those of you who don't have any equipment, the Salvadorans and Nicaraguan Contras can use money. (When sending first-class mail, address SOF at P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.) Whichever you decide to send, do it now and pass the word along to friends. After all, it is our freedom they are defending.

PMRS JUMP SCHOOL...

The Parachute Medical Rescue Service (PMRS) conducted its third annual jump school 7 through 9 September 1983 in conjunction with the Albuquerque Parachute Center (APC) in Albuquerque.

PMRS is a non-political, non-profit, disaster-relief organization. SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown is president. APC is a sport-parachute center operated by John Early, former captain in the U.S. Army Special Forces and member of the Rhodesian Army Selous Scouts. Early has over 4,000 jumps in his log book.

Twenty-nine PMRS Emergency Volunteers, including three SOF and five SURVIVE Magazine staff mem-

Continued on page 101

RECOGNITION FOR CONTRIBUTORS...

Any individual who contributes 1) funds, medical supplies or medicine to Refugee Relief International, Inc., 2) funds to the Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund or 3) equipment to the Salvadoran Army or Miskito Indians has the option of having his name mentioned in SOF with the amount of money or equipment donated. If you wish to be so recognized, please indicate this with your donation.

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SMALL ARMS OF THE WORLD, A Basic Manual of Small Arms. By Edward Clinton Ezell, Ph.D. Stackpole Books, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 1831, Harrisburg, PA 17105. 1983. 894 pp. Black-and-white photos and illustrations. \$49.95. Review by Peter G. Kokalis.

FORTY years ago W.H.B. Smith published the first edition of what he subtitled as "a basic manual of military small arms." Three decades ago I purchased my first copy of this now-famous volume, a 5th edition, for \$7.50. It was my entree to the passion of a lifetime. I still have that book, although the spine has been reglued several times and the pages are dog-eared and covered with gun grease. It has solved many a disassembly enigma for me.

The new 12th edition by Dr. Edward C. Ezell, curator of the Smithsonian Institute and the Western world's leading authority on military small arms, is the most comprehensive effort to date. It has been five years since Ezell composed the 11th edition, which is eclipsed in all aspects by this 1983 update. Expanded by 223 pages and printed on a better grade of paper stock (which has clarified many previously murky illustrations), the 12th edition of **Small Arms of the World** retains the format of its immediate predecessors.

Part 1, "Small Arms Developments Since 1945," is the most fascinating potpourri ever assembled on the topic and is, by itself, well worth the price of the entire volume.

Under Chapter 1, "Rifle and Carbine Development," we are treated for the first time in popular print to a complete description of the NATO trials which led to the standardization of the Belgian SS109 ammunition in caliber 5.45x45mm. No weapons were standardized since the test weapons varied from prototypes to in-service models. "The reliability of the weapon system appears directly related to their maturity."

Following this is a detailed analysis of the history and development of the product-improved M16A1 rifle (M16 PIP), recently adopted by the USMC and U.S. Army as the M16A2. Ezell reports that the USMC concluded that a 5.56mm weapon was "roughly comparable" to a 7.62mm weapon in maximum effective range and rate of fire and that there was "no clear-cut superiority of one caliber over the other" — pretty heady stuff for the big-bore looney tunes.

Ezell's brilliant insight into this controversy is best stated during his discussion of Heckler & Koch's G11 caseless rifle: "The 4.7mm bullet will not distort in human targets, being relatively stable even at short ranges. Some future judges of the G11 system may well question if complying with such guidelines does not run counter to the goal of providing a weapon-ammunition system with maximum incapacitating capabilities. It is pre-

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Czechoslovakia	Portugal
Denmark	Romania
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Hungary	United Arab Republic
India	United States
Indonesia	Vietnam
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cisely the tumbling of the American 5.56mm M193 and the Soviet 5.45mm M74 projectile that makes them so lethal and devastating. Being marginally stable as they pass through the air, they lose their stability and tumble when they strike the denser medium of human flesh. As they tumble, they tear the flesh, but more significantly they dump their kinetic energy quickly into the target. It is that sudden energy dump that results in serious incapacitating wounds or death. Very stable projectiles pass quickly through the target and do a minimum of traumatic damage from the release of kinetic energy. Humane bullets versus effective incapacitating projectiles is an issue that continues to demand closer scrutiny by military and civilian authorities."

Chapter 2, "Machine Gun Development," details the M73/M219 fiasco as well as the trials which led to adoption of the FN MAG (M240) over the M60E2 as the coaxial machine gun for use in all U.S.

armored fighting vehicles. Also included in this chapter is the most complete description of the U.S. Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW) Program ever to appear in print, including the bitter controversy between Heckler & Koch and Aberdeen over the HK23A-1 entry.

In Chapter 3, I must take exception to Ezell's distinction between submachine guns and machine pistols. They certainly cannot be distinguished by caliber, i.e., SMGs by definition fire full-power pistol cartridges and machine pistols fire less powerful pocket-pistol cartridges. This is simply not usually the case. We can more correctly say that submachine guns start in the design phase as just that (carbine-like, selective-fire weapons chambered for pistol cartridges) while machine pistols are basically extensive modifications of pre-existing, selective-fire auto-pistol designs, regardless of caliber. However,

Continued on page 100

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**we reveal a secret of ballistics that can
increase your hunting accuracy so dramatically...**

**YOUR FRIENDS WILL BEG YOU TO SHOW
THEM HOW YOU DO IT!**

The men you shoot with will scarcely believe their eyes when they witness your sensationally improved shooting accuracy. (You may even have trouble believing it yourself!) It seems like a miracle—yet, it's part of your training on the way to becoming a **gun pro**. The way you do it is the simple application of revealing new information concerning ballistics that is explained with a simple, easy-to-understand chart that accompanies your first lesson. And this is just one example of the dozens of inside tips and gun secrets that will be revealed to you as you progress through this exciting course.

G14D

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**NO SALESMAN
WILL CALL...**

**NO COST...
NO OBLIGATION...**

Robert R. Curtis is now a detective for the Dade County (Fla.) Department of Public Safety but at the time of his herpetological adventure he was a uniformed patrol officer for the county. As he tells it:

THE call came over the radio as I finished my last report of the day: Snake in the yard. As I listened I realized the officer who was taking the call was scared stiff of snakes — so I decided to go along to see if I could help.

I got there first.

As I pulled up, the caller, a Cuban gentleman, ran up, explaining that the snake was in his yard by the front door. I got out of the car, pulling my nightstick from behind the passenger's headrest.

"What are you going to do with the stick?" asked the Cuban.

"Catch the snake with it," I answered. I'd done this several times before.

"I didn't call you to come over here to catch anything — I want you to shoot it!"

"Look," I said. "I can't shoot your snake. This is a residential neighborhood and somebody might get hurt. The police don't kill any wild animal needlessly."

"What will you do with it if you catch it?"

"I'll take it to a serpentarium where they'll extract the venom," I told him, explaining that the venom would be used to make medicine or for research for the curing of cancer and other diseases.

IT HAPPENED TO ME

Rattler Extraction

by Robert R. Curtis
as told to M.L. Jones

The Cuban looked doubtful. "I don't think you're going to catch it with that size stick," he told me.

"Why not?" I asked.

"This snake is the biggest rattler I've ever seen."

I didn't believe him so I went to look for myself — and found myself staring at the fattest diamondback that I'd ever seen. It must have been 5½ feet long. I backed up as far as I could.

The Cuban laughed at the look on my face. "Sure you don't want to shoot him?"

"No," I said — but I felt like saying yes.

"Get me a rake or a garden hoe." As the Cuban turned away, I added, "And get me a good-sized cardboard box. I'm going to put the snake in it when I catch it."

The Cuban shook his head. "You cops are crazy," he muttered. But he walked away to look for the box.

While I waited a second police car pulled up to the curb. I walked over and told the officer what we had. He got out of the car, pulling his shotgun out of its holder. So I repeated my plan to catch the snake alive. "I've caught snakes before and I'll get this one too."

He looked at the snake as I explained my plan. "Right," he said skeptically.

"Look," I said, "I know what I'm doing. Now this is what we do so that neither of us gets bit."

"What's this 'we'?"

"The snake's a big one," I said, "and because of that I may need a little help — but I'll do all the work."

"OK," he answered. "But if that snake sneezes in the wrong direction I'll blow it out of its skin."

Just then the Cuban came back with both a rake and a hoe. He left to find a box.

I gave the other officer the hoe and picked up the rake. We walked toward the snake. I kept the snake from coiling with the rake, being careful not to press too hard. I asked the other policeman to use the hoe to hold the snake's head down. "Be gentle," I said. "Don't hurt it — but hold its head against the ground so I can pick it up. That way I won't get bit."

He looked doubtful. The snake squirmed as the hoe pressed down but couldn't escape. I picked it up. As I turned around to walk toward my car I saw the crowd.

About a hundred people stood on the sidewalk and street. More were running up and they milled about with the people who were trying to back away from me.

The Cuban ran up with a box but it was much too small so I sent him off to find another one. When he brought it back, I dropped the snake in, tailfirst, and closed it in one motion. I then asked for some masking tape, secured the box and put it in my car.

I took the snake to the Miami Serpentarium where I was directed to the owner, Dr. Haast, who was giving the afternoon show for tourists. I found him standing beside a table, talking to a crowd. He stopped when I told him what I had.

"What kind of snake is it?" he asked.

When I told him, he smiled. "Great!" he said, and he opened the box and dumped the snake out on the table. When he saw its size, he stepped back quickly. Before it could move, he'd pinned it to the table.

He then picked it up and milked it of 11 cc of venom. He showed the venom to the crowd. "That's enough to kill 10 men," he told them.

When the show was over, Dr. Haast thanked me for bringing him the snake. "It'll be useful for my research," he said. "Bring me as many as you can find."

"I will," I said, not realizing that I'd be back before the end of the week with a Pygmy Rattler I captured when my wife and I were out riding mopeds on my day off. But that's another story. ☐

"A wonderful writer.

He makes us feel the texture of life of the ordinary soldier in Vietnam."

—Frances Fitzgerald

"What Miller has done, and done superlatively well, is to introduce us to an aspect of the Vietnam War we haven't encountered before. . . . He writes like a man who has been there, who has no ax to grind, who merely wants to tell it like it was. He is convincing."

—Barbara Bannon, *Publishers Weekly*

"TIGER THE LURP DOG is an extraordinary story . . . from a born storyteller."

—General James M. Gavin

TIGER THE LURP DOG

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#ARC Assault Rifle Case. Customized for all Assault Rifles including collapsible stock models. 5 Outside Mag pouches plus compartment for handgun, scope, bipod, etc. \$65

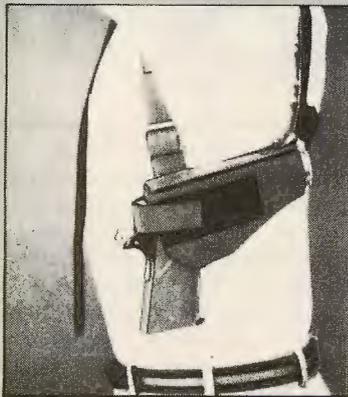
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Shoulder Holsters



Concealable Shoulder Holster (Top). Fits most any gun. Elastic back strap allows free movement of right arm. Fully adjustable 1 1/4" nylon web harness. SHC \$40.

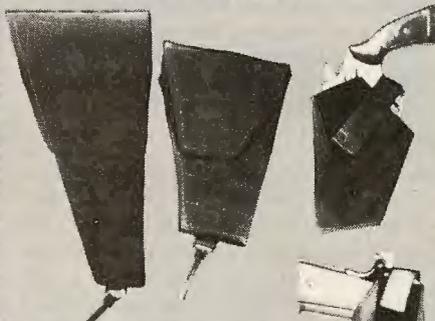
Military Shoulder Holster (Bottom). Constructed of 5 layers ballistic nylon. Sewn in sight channel. Fully adjustable 1 1/4" nylon web harness. HN45B for auto's \$35; HN45BR for revolvers \$35; HN45BL for 6" BBL \$40.

Ballistic Nylon Holsters

They're strong... stronger than leather, yet allow guns to breathe. Lightweight and flexible too... for utmost comfort. Washable—no mildew. Hook & Loop closures

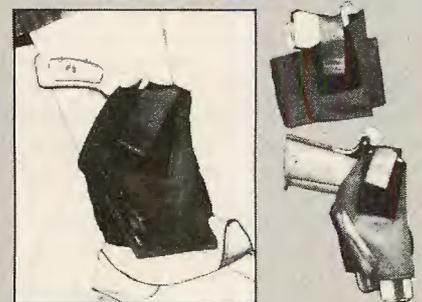
for weapon security and easy access. Black only, with military spec. hardware. When ordering, specify weapon and whether right or left-handed.

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Wear with military web belt, or any other belt. Five styles to fit most guns.
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THE FN FAL rifle, bewitching bitch that it is (see "Fusil Automatique Legere," SOF, June '82), often puzzles the will. Some will shoot three-quarters to one minute of angle and others an unacceptable four to six m.o.a. What's the explanation? Charles Leatherwood of Leatherwood Industries, Inc., manufacturers of the ART II and MPC/ART scopes (see "State-of-the-Art Scope," SOF, May '82) and, needless to say, interested in precision shooting, was determined to find an answer.

The rear of the FAL's bolt butts up against what is called the "locking shoulder." The dimensions of this locking shoulder, along with those of the chamber and the bolt itself, determine the headspace. Headspace is defined as the distance from the surface of the chamber that positions the cartridge and prevents its further forward movement into the chamber, to the face of the bolt when it is fully back against the locking shoulder.

The shortest amount of headspace permitted in a cartridge's specifications is called the minimum headspace. Usually, the closer we come to this dimension the more we enhance the accuracy potential of the rifle. Headspace can gradually increase over time through wear on the bolt and locking shoulder and by chamber erosion. Furthermore, some new FAL MATCH rifles exhibit excessive headspace right out of the box. But, like the Bren gun, the FAL's locking shoulder is replaceable and available in varying thicknesses.

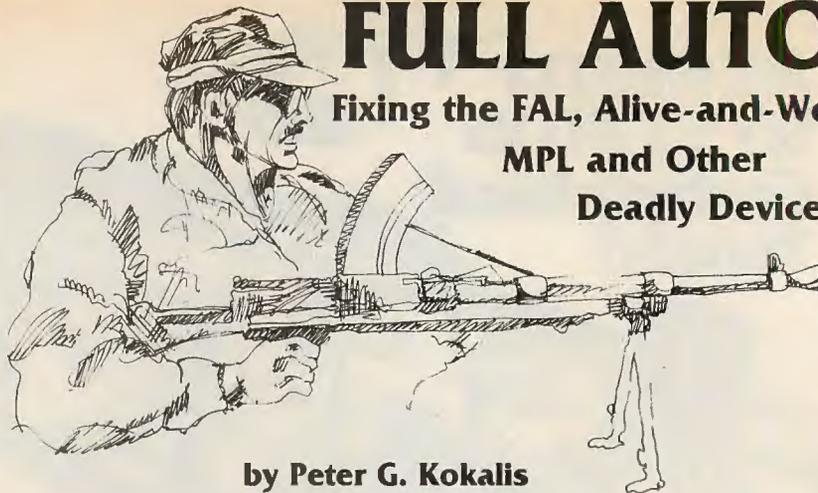
Leatherwood discovered that replacing the FAL locking shoulder, and in some instances the bolt also (so that the action would just barely close on a "GO" gauge), would change the rifle's accuracy potential from four m.o.a. to less than one m.o.a! Sounds simple. But it's not unless you have the gauges, a variety of locking shoulders, some new bolts and the considerable knowledge and skill to put them all together into a winning combination.

Now, it just so happens that our good friend E.A. Wilke of Ontario Gun & Tackle (Dept. SOF, Box 1000, Matachewan, Ontario, POK 1M0, Canada. Phone: [705] 565-2381) has all of the above and quite a bit more. Wilke now offers an accurizing/reheadspacing service for FALs. The standard service fee, which includes the correct locking shoulder, is \$100 plus shipping and insurance (the latter being equal to the cost of shipping the unit to them). U.S. customers should use U.S. Customs Form #4455 and send only the upper receiver assembly, bolts and bolt receivers (they have lower receivers which they use for service and testing). I heartily endorse this service and these folks as a source of FAL parts and accessories.

My "Full Auto" column in the September '83 SOF, entitled "The Clean Machine (Gun)," has engendered no small amount of reader response — most of it about the use of perchlorate ethylene as a weapons-cleaning solvent. Randall

FULL AUTO

Fixing the FAL, Alive-and-Well MPL and Other Deadly Devices



by Peter G. Kokalis



FALs get better groups with improved headspace from new locking shoulder. Top to bottom: early full-auto FAL (Peruvian contract), "G" series FAL and Para FN LAR (long barrel) — author's collection. Photo: Peter G. Kokalis

Kelley correctly pointed out that overexposure can cause serious chronic liver damage and applications to the skin may result in dermatitis. Depression of the central nervous system could also be a side effect. Reader Paul Pilgrim stresses that if used for gun cleaning there should be forced ventilation or, better yet, work outdoors (which is where I do all my weapons cleaning). Use rubber gloves and avoid contact with your eyes.

It does the job, and I shall continue to use "perk" in spite of the risk, as most of these admonitions apply to those who are exposed to it every day in the dry-cleaning business. But you're on your own — and there are alternatives. Stoddard Solvent is available from most bulk oil dealers. It's commonly used to clean automotive parts. It performs almost as well as "perk" and it's safer. Stoddard Solvent can be strained and reused, too — and at about two bucks a gallon, it's cheap.

If such vile potions are not your cup of tea, reader Bob Smith suggests ultrasonic

cleaning procedures. These units are now available in sizes to 72x18x18 inches. But they are expensive and will also attack painted finishes — even those that are baked on. I fear all of this may send some of you back to the old garden hose.

Michael J. Parker, vice president of Interarms, North American Group, took exception to my question in the March '83 "Full Auto" column, "Where is Walther's MPL?" He states that "... it's alive and well in Alexandria, Va. Interarms is the exclusive importer of this submachine gun brand-new from the Walther factory in Ulm, West Germany. The MPL is 'out of production' only in the sense that current inventory is sufficient to meet demand; production can be resumed as market conditions require. Walther's production facilities presently are fully occupied with an order of 30,000 P-5 9mm pistols for the Dutch police.

"Like all full-auto imports, the MPL can be sold only to law-enforcement agencies or (as a sales sample) to Class 3 dealers. The short version, the MPK, is similarly available brand new. Though lacking in the steadying weight of the MPL's longer barrel, a quantity of MPKs recently was purchased by an agency of the U.S.

Continued on page 99

160 Acres, Virgin Fertile Land, \$5,900

Down payment only \$200—easy monthly payments just \$133.86



"THE WORLD'S LAST UNEXPLOITED LANDS"

THERE ARE FEW RICH FARM LANDS LEFT ON EARTH

Because the Bolivian government wants to encourage development, there exists a rare and unusual opportunity in South America for anyone who is interested in becoming a landowner. The benefits go far beyond a chance to own fertile farm land. Yet, 160 acres of virgin farm land for \$5,900, a total down payment of only U.S. \$200 and easy monthly payments with little interest, is a big drawing card.

YOU CAN PIONEER OR LEAVE THE LAND IN ITS NATURAL STATE

Create a survival or recreational farm. Although we sincerely hope life in the industrial countries will continue to be warm and hospitable, there is the possibility that events could take an unpleasant turn. If this should happen, you could be prepared to secure your own little haven in these fertile Bolivian lands. To become totally self sufficient would merely mean clearing a small portion of your 160 or more acres for a home and garden plot.

There is also the possibility of commercial agriculture. You could manage your own farm, rent or lease to a tenant farmer, or hire someone to manage your property.

Or, you can opt to leave the land in its natural state, privately available to you and your family. There are exotic birds and an abundance of wildlife. You will discover the tapir, opossum, brown capuchin monkey, armadillo, anteater, agouti, grey fox, ocelot, puma, and jaguar. Although nearly all of these species are protected by Bolivian national law, there are deer, bear and a variety of other game for the hunter and outdoorsman.

Whether for profit, recreation, or securing a future, it is readily evident that this land purchase offer is unusual and quite possibly the world's last frontier opportunity. Recent figures show prime underdeveloped land in Santa Cruz to be appreciating at 20% to 30% annually.

GREAT PROSPECTS FOR AGRICULTURE

Menonite farmers have pioneered this fertile area and have helped to establish cash markets for a wide variety of products.

Cotton, just one of the major cash crops, has recently been joined by soybeans, corn, wheat and sorghum as proven safe returns on this fine land investment.

Livestock are also very popular among the ranchers coming into this rich fertile area. Many have turned to raising chickens, hogs, beef, dairy stock, fruit and vegetables.

Careful planning and positive ingenuity guarantee huge yields on this unusually fruitful land. You may harvest rice to cotton, soy to sorghum, or raise the livestock of your choice. This virgin fertile land has made real the hopes and dreams of many new owners.

LOCATION

This newly opened land reserve is located in the heart of booming Santa Cruz de la Sierra, an eastern Bolivian state.

These rich, agriculturally suited land parcels are located close to Brazil—the fastest developing country in the world and one of Bolivia's best agricultural and livestock customers. The Bolivian Utah State/USAID Study Team reports, "...the eastern plains of Bolivia should be considered as one of the world's outstanding potentials for agricultural development. Without a doubt, this is a prime growth area offering tremendous values and unusual opportunity.

BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT WELCOMES AND ENCOURAGES FOREIGN LANDOWNERS

Bolivia's progressive government has set important policies to accommodate the new foreign landowner. Special provisions guarantee each purchaser the same rights and privileges as native born citizens.

These affirmative policies create a no-hassle business environment that encourages free enterprise.

160 ACRES, 320 ACRE, OR FULL SECTION 640 ACRE FARM PARCELS ARE AVAILABLE

Because of the growing demand and obviously limited supply of top quality land it is increasing difficult to guarantee large acreages. However, for those fortunate individuals who learn of this offer and act immediately, large parcels can be reserved. A few parcels are actually larger than stated, and will be sold without additional charge for excess acreage. Each property is presented with full descriptions and a free and clear title of ownership.

There is no obligation to buy when you send for a free information packet. If you desire to assure yourself a part of this vanishing farm land, then you will want to include a refundable \$200 U.S. down payment with your information request to Bolivian Land and Forestry, Ltda.

Upon receipt of your application and down payment we will select the best acreage in the amount you specify. We will then mail you detailed plans of your property along with your Purchase Agreement. You only sign the Purchase Agreement and soon after begin making your monthly payments of \$133.86, including low interest costs of only 6% annually.

ONE FULL YEAR TO INSPECT YOUR PROPERTY

After signing the Purchase Agreement you have one full year to inspect your property in Santa Cruz. If you are dissatisfied for any reason, or if you just change your mind, we will refund in full every cent you have paid our office, including principal and interest. Should you wish to exchange your parcel for any other property, we will be glad to give you your choice of available acreage. Of course, this does not mean you have to visit Santa Cruz during the first year to be a land owner, but we hope you will.

WHEN YOU VISIT SANTA CRUZ

Fly to Miami, and board the Lloyd Aereo Boliviano (L.A.B.) late evening 727 flight to Santa Cruz. You will arrive early the next morning. First class hotel accommodations are available at Los Tajibos, a Holiday Inn affiliate. Or, you may select to stay at any one of the other excellent hotels in the area. If you contact us in advance we will be happy to make hotel reservations for you.

You will need your passport, but no prior visas are required for North American or European visitors. An international smallpox certificate is necessary.

You will find the state of Santa Cruz to be one of Bolivia's richest and biggest, with a population close to 700,000 and a land mass nearly equal to one third of the entire nation.

Hundreds from Canada, Mexico, and Paraguay have already discovered this rich agricultural area and are delighted with their decision. You will be too.

CALL OR WRITE FOR MORE INFORMATION. WE WILL SEND YOU PICTURES, MAPS, AND DESCRIPTIVE LITERATURE.

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Gentlemen:

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- Please reserve some of this rich virgin land for me. Hold 160 acres at \$5,900 for me and rush my Purchase Agreement to my address below. Enclosed is my refundable down payment of \$200 U.S.

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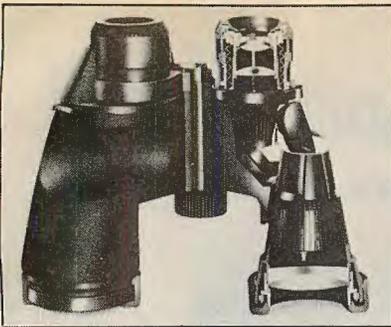
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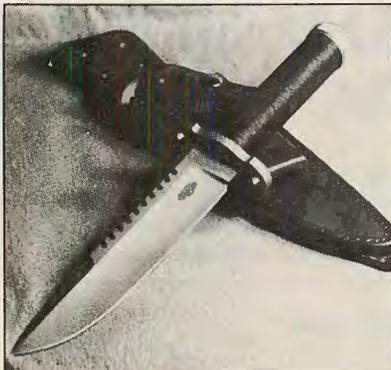
ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

by John Metzger



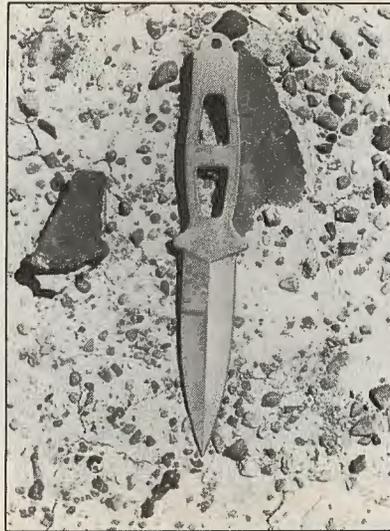
AUSTRIAN OPTIKS

Proven in bush and blind, the Habicht (Hawk), created by *Swarovski Optik*, is the world's first cast-molded binocular (the barrels are actually molded around the optical system). Now imported into the States, Habicht SL Series Binoculars are available in OD or black in three powers: 7x42 and 10x50 (about \$510), and 7x50 (about \$600). Easy to carry and clean, the center-focusing Habicht is state-of-the-art in binocular design. Contact *Swarovski America Ltd.*, Dept. SOF, 1 Kenney Dr., Cranston, RI 02920-8381. Phone: (401) 463-6400.



KNIFE FOR LIFE

Here's a new survival knife that cuts like there's no tomorrow. The *Timberline "SA"* blade is 7½ inches of 440C stainless hardened to Rockwell C59-60. Features include non-glare finish, roughing saw on the blade back, nylon-wrapped hollow handle with waterproof compartment and stainless buttcap, polished inside for use as a signal mirror. (SOF Editor/Publisher Bob Brown is impressed with his *Timberline*, Serial No. 007.) Retail price is \$360 with sheath. To order, contact *Timberline Knives*, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 36, Mancos, CO 81328. Phone: (303) 533-7006.



HANGING SKELETON

With strength, concealability and light weight in its favor, the skeleton knife is increasing in popularity. Here's a good example: The OSI No. 1 "Secret Agent" by *CAM III* is made of 440C satin-finished stainless and comes with quick-draw hanging sheath that allows for easy attachment almost anywhere. It's a decent thrower, too. (I know. Once you toss it, it's gone. But it's *fun*.) The knife, with four-inch blade, retails for \$37.50. Contact *CAM III Enterprises*, Dept. SOF, 243 Millbrook Way, Vacaville, CA 95688. Phone: (707) 446-8549.

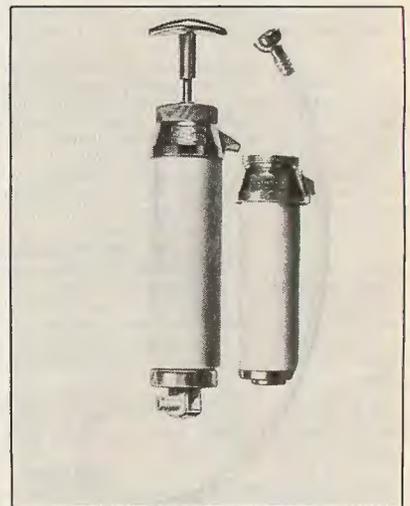
WE BE BAD

For the would-be Road Warrior or the merc who has everything (or the combat pistol shooter who likes *challenging* competition), *Barnett International* offers the Trident Pistol Crossbow. The fiberglass 45-pound-draw prod will spit out steel bullet-point arrows in excess of 150 feet per second. The pressure-die-cast aluminum-alloy frame is finished in black textured epoxy. Options on the \$99 Trident include three-shot rotating barrel and 1.5x15 optical sight. Contact *Barnett International*, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 934, Odessa, FL 33556. Phone: (813) 920-2241.



A BETTER WAY

Waterproof, fogproof — and simpler and cheaper than other range-finding and bullet-drop-compensating scopes — the *Shepherd D.R.S. Scope* can be zeroed using only one round with no tracking errors. Though not built to mil-spec standards, the *Shepherd* scope is more than adequate for hunters and all outdoorsmen — and you don't have to get on a waiting list to buy one. Retail price is \$595. For information write *Shepherd Scope Ltd.*, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 189, Waterloo, NE 68069. Or call toll-free: 1 (800) 228-3527.



SAFE WATER IS WORTH IT

It seems \$150 is a lot to pay for a flashlight-sized device that does nothing but clean your water. But that's what one case of amoebiasis will cost you. The *Katadyn Pocket Filter* reliably removes parasites, bacteria, radioactive fallout and most unpleasant tastes associated with turbidity by micropore filtration. The pump-action filter is compact (10-inches long, two-inches wide, 23 ounces) and the cleaned filter is reusable. In the long run it is the most effective and economical purification system made. For more information, contact *Provisions Unlimited*, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 456, Oakland, ME 04963. Phone: (207) 465-3212. ☒

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There are all kinds of ways to make money. Good golly, Molly — if anyone knows that, I do! For the past 20+ years I've concentrated on finding, investigating, creating and specifically singling out only the very finest legal and ethical methods for carving out a mass of wealth in a hurry. But believe me, in all those years never have I experienced anything remotely as exciting as this one!

Recently, I came across a fairly new way to make big bux, but after a thorough study I discarded it because it required too much investment of time, money and personal effort. But my study did serve as inspiration to develop yet another fantastic and unusual wallet-fattener — something that until now has never been done — yet fully complies with the tough set of standards I'm noted for demanding of any potential wealth-producing concept:

- Must be able to be started with minimum investment
- Must be possible to start at home and not interfere with family life.
- Must be able to be started and run initially by one man or woman
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- Must have realistic annual profit potential of \$40,000 or more

Well, this one goes way beyond my usual rigorous test. Get this: This extra-ordinary money-maker® allows you to:

- Start at once — within 30 seconds of studying my report
- Invest not a single cent
- Accomplish everything without leaving your home — heck, you can do it from your favorite easy chair whilst eating pizza or petting the dog (or vice versa!)
- Have a potential net profit (not gross ... net!) of \$100,000.00 by the end of 90 days — tops. And that's cash, not theoretical or paper profits.

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EDITORIAL

The Way of the World Is Force

by Charley Reese

IF someone puts a .45 to your head and pulls the trigger, you are going to die. Laws, public opinion, ethics, ideals, treaties, Geneva conventions and personal preferences will not prevent your death.

As a Buddhist sage observed, "If you understand, the world is the way it is; if you do not understand, the world is the way it is."

The way of the world is force. You may not like that. You may choose not to believe it. But it is true. The world is ruled by force.

Public opinion is worthless. It will not stop a handgun, much less a tank or a missile. Law is nothing but rules you apply after you have subdued people by force. Laws, without being backed up by more force, are not worth the ink they're written with.

Americans suffer from peaceitis, a mental disability. It has the same effect as a hallucinatory drug. It makes intelligent and educated people live in an illusory world that never has existed.

Peaceitis results from living too long in an artificial environment in which the reality of the world is concealed from view.

Most Americans who have never seen a burned corpse, a body torn apart by shrapnel or bullets or those peculiar mouth-shapes left by a knife or bayonet on flesh begin to think that words and ideas are what control the world, that any difference can be negotiated, that any conflict can be managed. They think that if everybody is well-fed and housed, they all will be nice.

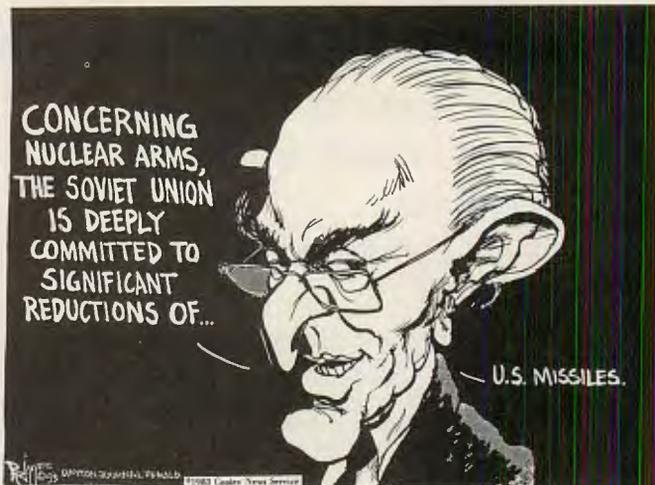
The reality is that the most terrible things are done by well-fed, well-housed people.

A penniless, starving peasant is no more of a threat than a crippled, starving lion. He has no power. He's probably stupid as a result of protein deficiency. He has no education. He has no training. He has no physical energy. He cannot make a revolution. He cannot afford a bullet, much less a gun. He is drudge labor, sometimes useful as cannon fodder. His principal role is to be a victim.

Peasant revolutions are middle-class fantasies, useful propaganda tools. In reality, they do not exist and never have.

The mild form of insanity known as peaceitis most recently manifested itself in the reaction to the invasion of Grenada. Intel-

lectual crooks and peaceitis victims argued that Grenada was no threat to us. Of course, Grenada by itself was no threat to us. Grenada was being converted to a platform for Soviet weapons. This was being done by a government that imposed itself by force on the people of Grenada. We removed the threat by force.



WHAT keeps you alive and free are nuclear warheads, tanks, rifles, machine guns and trained warriors ready to use them. It is not economics, philosophy, ethics, negotiations, treaties or laws. Power and the will to use it are the only things standing between us and the grave.

People infected with peaceitis are a threat to the physical safety of themselves and their fellow Americans. They try to prevent the use of American power. They try to prevent the proper arming and upkeep of our military power. In their sickness some think that military power not only is unnecessary but is evil in itself.

You cut a throat. The rightness or wrongness of it doesn't matter to the dead man. He is still dead. Whether the death is a good death or bad death depends on whether you like or dislike the dead person. Whether the man dies or lives depends solely on whether the knife thrust can be deflected and the knife wielder killed or disabled.

You can't depend on force, victims of peaceitis proclaim. Actually, you can't depend on anything but force. Diplomacy works only if it's backed by force. Diplomacy itself is about force: the threat of it, the use of it, the direction of it. Peace is nothing but the aftermath of war or the interlude between wars. War or the threat of war is what makes a peace, or else there is no peace.

Whether people like or hate us is irrelevant. Our choice is to be feared or to be a victim. There is no other choice. ☒

Reprinted with permission from the 31 October 1983 issue of the Orlando Sentinel.

ONE DARK AND STORMY NIGHT

Roosey Roads Routine Flight Turns Fearful

by D.R. McKenzie

Between July 1969 and July 1972, Commander David R. McKenzie, USNR, was a naval aviator attached to Fleet Composite Squadron 8 based at U.S. Naval Station Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. He flew both F-8 Crusaders and A-4 Skyhawks on various aggressor missions against elements of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet, as well as several allied navies. One dark and stormy night, McKenzie flew a mission over the Caribbean. One he would never forget:

IT was supposed to be a routine flight. I was scheduled to launch from USNS Roosevelt Roads in my trusty A-4C Skyhawk at "zero-dark-thirty" on 4 May 1972 for an "attack" against several U.S. Navy ships participating in an exercise in the waters of the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Range off the north coast of Puerto Rico.

When I reviewed the "yellow sheets" (maintenance records) I saw my aircraft had been "griped" for radio failures eight out of 10 flights; each "gripe" was signed off: "Removed and replaced radio, checks OK on deck." Terrific!

As I strapped in, lightning from the forecast thunderstorms flashed all around the field. Switching on the cockpit lights after engine start revealed that the altimeter lights weren't working. But the lights from other instruments provided sufficient illumination. Besides, my trusty GI flashlight was clipped to my torso harness. I called ground control — the radio worked fine — and taxied to the runway.

Cleared for an immediate departure, I blasted off into the stormy Caribbean night. I raised the gear and flaps, then attempted to contact San Juan Center. No luck. I switched back to "Roosey" tower. Again, nothing.

I could talk to no one but myself. Throttling back, I continued a gradual climb while making a gentle right turn to keep the field in sight through the clouds. Suddenly, the dimly lit altimeter

caught my attention. Instead of the needle rotating steadily clockwise to match my climb, it remained stationary, then jumped upward in 200-foot spurts.



A-4C Skyhawk flown by Lt. Dave McKenzie on his dark and stormy night.

Author McKenzie climbs into cockpit of F-8 Crusader.



This was not a pleasant situation. There I was flying among thunderstorms, at night, my radio failed and my altimeter with the hiccups. Fortunately, I had occasional glimpses of the runway. Unfortunately, it was surrounded by hills, one reaching up to 1,050 feet.

With an unreliable altimeter, I was reluctant to make a landing approach over those black hills. As every pilot knows, hills grow into mountains on stormy nights.

While I pondered my fate, a voice broken by atmospheric interference interrupted the silence in my earphones. The GCA (ground-controlled approach, a radar approach providing precise heading and glideslope information to the pilot) controller at Roosey was calling me on International Guard frequency. My radio's emergency guard receiver was working — barely.

One very sharp Navy controller had just made one very nervous Navy pilot very happy. He advised me to "squawk ident" on my radar transponder if I desired a GCA. I nearly broke my finger hitting the transponder switch.

Calmly he talked me down over those dark hills to landing. After rollout I tried to radio — sure enough, it now worked. It was quite an eventful routine flight.

Back at the hangar the maintenance chief advised me to wait while another radio was installed. I advised the chief where to install his radio, called the GCA controller to thank him and headed for my quarters.

The following day I learned that the cause of the repeated radio failures was a faulty antenna cable which worked fine on the ground, but opened up when the fuselage flexed during flight. The altimeter's stuttering and inoperative lighting occurred because maintenance personnel had failed to reconnect the electrical cable which provided power for the lights and the altimeter vibrator. (That's right, folks, altimeter vibrator!)







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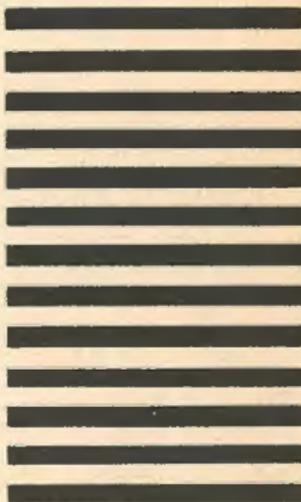
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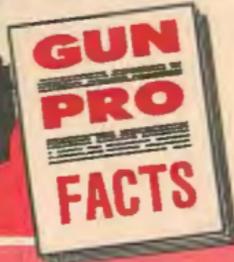




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FLYING TIGERS

Chennault's Merics Sink the Rising Sun

by Bruce Brodie

Taken several months after the disbanding of the American Volunteer Group — nicknamed the Flying Tigers — this famous photo shows already U.S.-marked P-40 Warhawks of the U.S. Army Air Force, not the AVG.
Photo: Wide World



EVERY other year, in the course of a long and often riotously nostalgic weekend at a resort hotel somewhere in the United States, a group of middle-aged airmen conduct a short, simple ritual of remembrance. One of the veterans lifts his glass. "To the Old Man," he says, as everyone drinks.

The moment refreshes the memory of an extraordinary military aviator, Claire Lee Chennault. The drinkers are the survivors of one of the oddest and most successful U.S. combat teams of the Second World War — the American Volunteer Group (AVG), better known as the "Flying Tigers."

For the first hectic, bloody seven months of America's war with Japan, this small band of aviators — young, green, and flying obsolete fighter planes — wrote indelible reputations for themselves in the annals of aerial warfare. Against what should have been impossible odds, they fought to protect bomber-threatened cities and supply-lines and keep an embattled, increasingly dispirited China in the war.

In the United States, during that bleak Christmas of 1941 and those terrible early months of 1942, reports of their exploits boosted a nation's sagging morale. While the fleet still burned at Pearl Harbor and one appalling Japanese victory followed another, the news that at least one group of Americans was combat-ready and capable of winning was a lonely headline of hope.

For battle against hundreds of Japanese aircraft over China and Burma, Chennault could muster no more than 55 fighters at any one time. For every one of the AVG's 196 days in combat, he was plagued by shortages of spare parts, fuel and ammunition. But when the unit was disbanded on 4 July 1942, his boys, using what one authority describes as "the strictest 'confirmation-required' process of any fighter-pilot organization known," had accounted for a defi-

nite 299 Japanese aircraft downed and another 153 "probables." The Tigers lost just 12 of their P-40s in aerial combat, a kill ratio unsurpassed by any other Allied fighter unit.

"The victories of these Americans over the rice paddies of Burma," wrote Winston Churchill, "were comparable in character, if not in scope, with those won by the Royal Air Force over the hop fields of Kent in the Battle of Britain." One anonymous Flying Tiger gave a less sonorous summing-up. "All hell on a shoestring," he proudly called his unit.

Chennault, the man most responsible for the AVG's record never flew in combat after Pearl Harbor. Indeed, despite friends' claims that he shot down 41 — some say 62 — Japanese aircraft over China before the United States entered the war and his own vague references to such aerial action, there is great doubt about whether he had seen much combat at all. But whatever the truth of his score of enemy aircraft, there can be no doubt about his greatness as a military theorist and commander. The AVG's combat figures, statistics won by untested airmen flying a problem airplane against a brave, well-equipped and numerically superior foe, are the proof. "A tactical genius," Gen. George C. Marshall, wartime Chief of Staff, called him.

The son of a northeast Louisiana farmer, Chennault, born in Texas in 1890, made his first career as a teacher in one-room country schools. After service in the United States as a volunteer infantryman during WWI, he qualified, after repeated failures, for flight training. Deciding to make the Army Air Corps his life's work, he continued to serve as a fighter pilot into the 1930s.

At the time, the use of military aviation in the next great war was the subject of heated discussion among aircorpsmen. In one of these savage pre-war debates — the Bomber

vs. Fighter row — Chennault aligned himself with those who argued that the fighter plane, given adequate advance warning of attack and employing correct tactics, was a match for the fast, heavily armed and armored bombers then coming into service in the world's air forces.

But despite a persuasive text he wrote at that time — *The Role of Defensive Pursuit*, a prescient work which spoke of the vital importance of early-warning networks for interceptor fighters — Chennault, by then a captain, made little progress with his theories. Passed over for promotion, fatigued by over-work and ill from chronic bronchitis, he decided in 1937 to resign his commission. His decision had been made easier for him by a contract offer from the Chinese Air Force, then trying desperately to prepare itself for war with Japan.

When Chennault arrived in China as a military aviation adviser to President Chiang Kai-shek, the country's air defenses were in shocking disarray. Its pilots had been inadequately trained by Italy, one of Japan's Axis allies, who had also undertaken to prepare China's aviation maps. When they were finally ousted from China, the Italians took most of their maps with them, leaving Chinese fliers with dangerously makeshift navigation. (Well into WWII, Chinese and American pilots often had to depend on crudely drawn mimeographed charts.)

Though the Chinese had 500 planes on paper, it was quickly discovered that many of these had either been written off in training accidents or had simply never existed, corrupt officials having pocketed the purchase money. Just 91 flyable aircraft faced the Japanese Air Force, then one of the world's largest and most modern. "About the only threat China's air defenses offered Japan," Chennault later said, "was the danger that the Japanese pilots might die laughing!"

After full-scale fighting between China and Japan broke out in July 1937, the U.S. State Department, under pressure from Tokyo, demanded that all American fliers leave China. "Guess I'm Chinese," Chennault noted in his diary, and continued to help put Chiang Kai-shek's air force into shape. One of a small group of freelance American consultants who remained in China, he organized training programs, advised on the purchase of new American warplanes and directed combat operations against the invader.

Almost incredibly, there were some notable victories over the Japanese. However, progress generally was slow and the Japanese were bombing Chiang Kai-shek's capital, Chungking, and other cities almost at will. Anxious to stiffen air defenses and also to get the United States more involved in their war, the Chinese proposed that Chennault go to the United States to recruit American fliers. Chiang and his officials had in mind the effectiveness, in combat and on public opinion, of Americans who served in the Lafayette Escadrille, a mercenary squadron fighting in France be-



Maj. Gen. George E. Stratmeyer presents Chennault with Distinguished Flying Cross in Kunming, 10 September 1943. Photo: Wide World

fore the United States entered WWI. At the same time, 100 Curtiss-Wright P-40 Tomahawk fighters — a production run declared obsolete by their original orderers, the British Royal Air Force, and their subsequent consignees, the Swedish Air Force — had suddenly been made available to China.

More conscious of the Japanese threat, Washington in December 1940 took a kind-

lier view of Chennault's work. Secret notices went out to Army and Navy flight-training schools publicizing the so-called American Volunteer Group. But there was little talk of "freedom's struggle" or other such rhetoric. Recruiting was based on a business deal. For salaries of up to \$750 a month, plus a \$500 bonus for each downed enemy plane, pilots who were then being paid about \$175 a month by the U.S. services began to sign up. High pay also attracted adventurous young ground crews. By December 1941, Chennault had one squadron of 21 planes based in southern

CURTISS P-40

by Bill Guthrie

The P-40 was the best known American fighter of early World War II. Its mouth-open shark's profile made it easy to identify, and the Flying Tigers flew it. That was enough to make it famous.

The P-40 was a long way from the best plane of 1941. But Claire Chennault had been a member of the U.S. Army Air Corps precision flying team in the mid-30s. His way of making a plane fly for the pilot led Chennault to a tactical system that turned the P-40 into the deadliest plane in the China-Burma-India theater.

Heavy and underpowered — compared to the Zero — for fast climbing or maneuvering, the P-40 could dive at a then-unheard-of 550 mph. Diving on any other fighter of the time, the Hawk could not be caught.

Its mouth-agape "face" tempted artists from China to Africa to heighten the resemblance, but it was a mechanical

liability. The radiator had been shifted from the wing-roots to the nose during development for cosmetic reasons. Marketing liked its looks better that way. A radiator in the nose was more vulnerable to gunfire, and increased frontal area compromised aerodynamics.

Still, the P-40 was heavily armed and armored, and variants carried as many as six .50-cal. machine guns. Never much of a dog-fighter, it was a fine weapons platform that served throughout the war.

Called the Tomahawk and Kittyhawk in Britain and abroad, all P-40 types were known to the U.S. Army Air Force (the name was changed in June 1941) as Warhawks. France and Great Britain had ordered P-40s before China. Afterward they were flown by Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and the United States in the European, North African, China-Burma-India and Pacific theaters. By the end of the war 13,738 P-40s had been delivered to Allied air forces.



Burma to help the British defend Rangoon, and two squadrons totalling 34 planes training for combat in Kunming, capital of China's remote southwestern Yunnan Province.

And a fight, of course, was not long in coming. On 8 December (Kunming time), the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. Twelve days later, the early-warning network that Chennault and the Chinese had set up, based on his rejected Air Corps writings, reported 10 Japanese bombers from airfields at Hanoi in occupied French Indochina flying toward Kunming.

For Chennault, the old fighter pilot, that first battle with the Japanese 80 miles southeast of Kunming — the first decisive defeat of Japanese arms by any American fighting men — was itself a justification for those long wilderness years. Because they had had adequate warning, the P-40s had been able to climb to a height advantage for the attack. And after they had attacked — a screaming dive in line-astern formation across one side of the Japanese "V" — the results went a long way toward vindicating Chennault's support for the fighter plane. Only one of the bombers returned to base. The AVG's losses: one P-40 which tried to chase a bomber too far and ran out of fuel. The pilot, Ed Rector, of Marshall, N.C., survived a crash landing in a rice paddy.

Though only small forces were involved

ABOVE: Squadron leader A.E. Olson of Chicago, Illinois, with cocky grin and naked angel on his P-40 Tomahawk, exemplifies AVG fliers. Photo: Wide World

BELOW: Even happy-go-lucky Tigers paid for success, pilot Matthew Warren Kuykendall's blood spots bandages and shirt. Photo: George Rodgers, LIFE Magazine © 1942 Time, Inc.



in the Kunming battle, the results were highly significant. The city was the terminus of the famous Burma Road, which was the link with ports in neighboring Burma and India, and by then China's only major route for Western war supplies. "The virtual annihilation of the Japanese formation in the area where they had never encountered opposition was a severe blow to the Japanese squadrons based in Indochina and a great stimulus to Chinese morale," one historian later wrote. "Japanese bombers did not venture to attack Kunming again until more than a year after the AVG was disbanded."

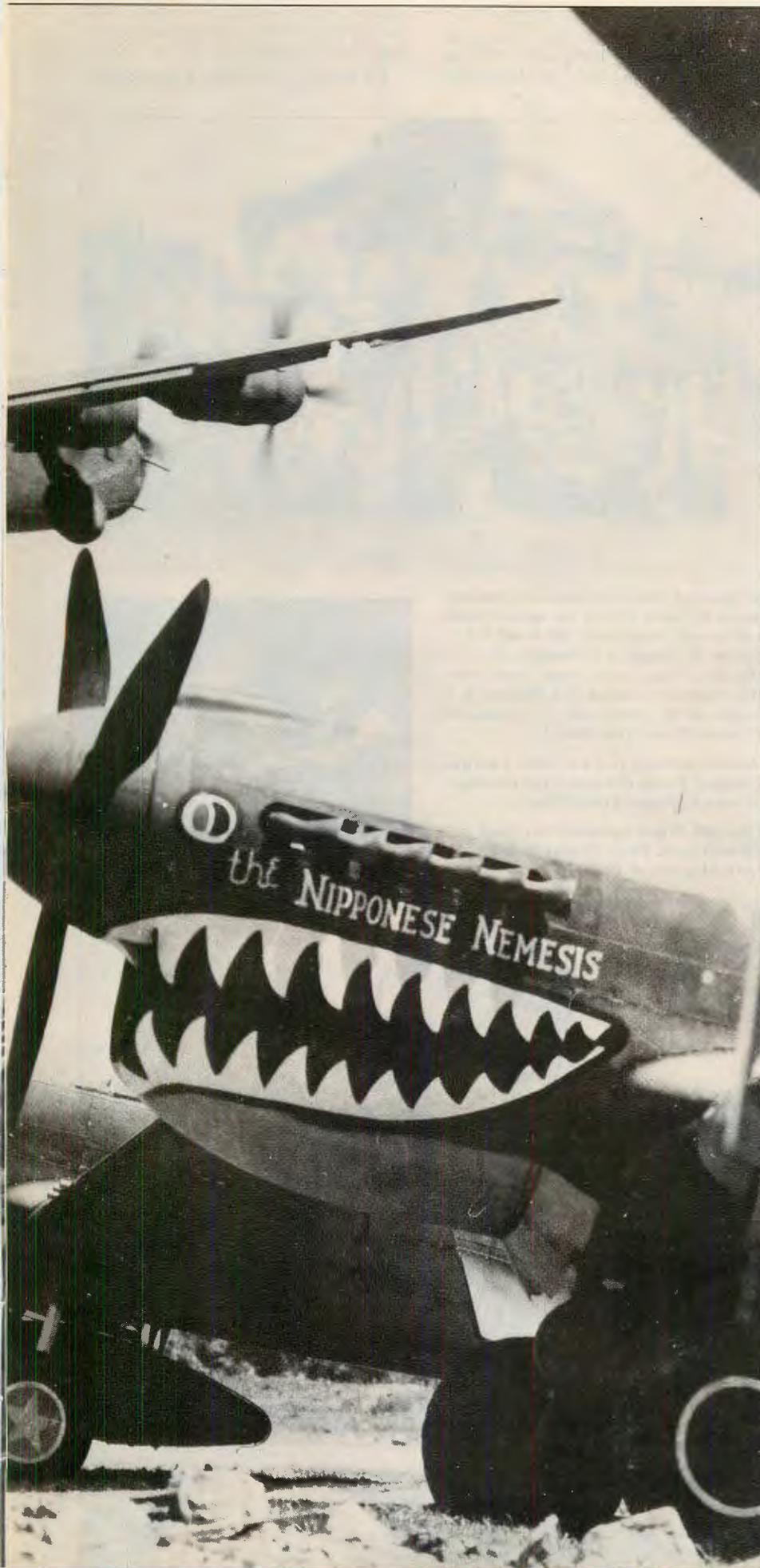
On 25 December 1941, as Hong Kong surrendered, Manila was abandoned and the Japanese Army raced toward Singapore, the AVG's other squadron in Rangoon gave Americans their only good Christmas tidings from the war theaters. The Japanese sent 60 bombers and 30 fighters against the Burmese capital. "Like rowboats attacking the Spanish Armada" (as one eyewitness later put it), 12 P-40s, once again waiting at altitude, dived into battle. Nineteen RAF Brewster Buffalo fighters took off in support. For the loss of just two P-40s, whose pilots parachuted safely, the AVG shot down 15 bombers and nine fighters. (The RAF's British, Australian and New Zealand airmen, bravely flying what proved to be markedly inferior combat planes and hampered by inadequate early-warning arrangements, accounted for seven Japanese aircraft, but lost nine Buffaloes and six pilots.)

As victory followed victory for the AVG, Allied war correspondents, starved of hopeful news and conquering heroes, began paying close attention to Chennault's astonishing young mercenaries. They found rich copy. Pilot Erik Shilling of Washington, D.C., had spotted in the *India Illustrated Weekly* a photograph of a German fighter plane in North Africa with the teeth of a tiger shark painted on its nose. Chennault approved use of a similar decoration as an AVG insignia, and pilots began referring to their P-40s as "tiger sharks." Apparently mishearing the phrase, a wire-service reporter dubbed the AVG the "Flying Tigers." Thus did a legend acquire a legendary — and headline-grabbing — name.

The Flying Tigers themselves were, at first glance at least, scarcely the stuff of legend. "Most of them are 100-percent mercenaries, over-cocky and know-it-all," a disappointed American correspondent, Leland Stowe, wrote in his notebook, after meeting them in Burma before war came. "They seem to have the notion that shooting down Japanese will be like hunting squirrels." In the correspondent's hearing, one of the pilots was offered a chance to go to Singapore on a special mission. "Is there any extra money in it?" he asked, and then refused to go. "Is much of young America like this?" Stowe asked himself. "If so,

Liberator takes off over parked P-40 Warhawks at USAAF airbase in China. United States picked up where AVG left off after 4 July 1942. Photo: Wide World





they need a war.”

But though many of them may have come only for the money, the Pearl Harbor attack gave them a cause. As he returned to wartime Rangoon five months later, Stowe was surprised to note the enthusiasm for combat of the first AVG pilot he spotted. “Where the hell is the car?” the young airman was shouting, as Japanese bombs straddled his hotel. “I’ve got to get out to the field!”

Out at the field, Stowe said later, “I knew everything was going to be all right.” As the Tigers returned from battle, the pilots’ faces were flushed and happy. They couldn’t wait to get back into the air. “I’d rather fight than eat,” one of them exultantly told him.

“I didn’t know the score,” says Stowe, “but I knew already that America’s honor had been saved.”

When the time came to fight, pilots who had never before fired a shot in anger displayed extraordinary courage. Over Burma one day, Robert P. “Duke” Hedman, a short, shy North Dakota rabbit hunter, attacked 53 twin-engined Mitsubishi bombers supported by Zero fighters. Within the half-hour, he had downed three fighters and a bomber.

Hedman’s canopy and gunsights had been shot away and his gas tanks punctured. He was low on ammunition. As the Japanese turned back toward their base in Thailand, his watching colleagues figured he’d land. But to their dismay, Hedman flew right into the middle of the tightly packed enemy planes and disappeared with them over the horizon. Within the hour, he was back, tanks dry, guns empty. Taking advantage of Japanese fear of shooting one another, Hedman had downed another bomber, becoming the first American of the war to achieve the fighter pilot’s coveted five-plane “ace” status in one battle.

There were, of course, examples of cowardice. One AVG pilot was reported to have fled during a fight, and was withdrawn from combat flying. But usually that first battle was more likely to point up lack of experience than of courage. In his first encounter with the Japanese, Robert Prescott of Fort Worth, Texas, a former Navy aviation cadet, dove several thousand feet at full throttle, convinced that his own rudder was a Zero that he’d have to shake off his tail. Later, Prescott made good by becoming an ace, averaging one enemy plane a month.

As the Japanese Army continued its advance across southern Burma from Thailand, the fighting became tougher. More and more, the Tigers were being called upon to undertake strafing missions. On one such assignment, Prescott, his former Navy classmate, Dick Rossi, of San Francisco, and four other pilots took part in a bizarre skirmish outside the key Burmese city of Moulmein. Hoping to surprise Moulmein’s defenders, an ingenious Japanese commander had arranged for some 50 elephants to force a way through a trackless stretch of jungle. The Tigers thwarted the advance, at least temporarily, by frightening the elephants, which stampeded into the light

tanks and infantry massed to the rear.

Air-to-air action also showed the Tigers good at spur-of-the-moment improvisation. In China later in the war, David "Tex" Hill, a former San Antonio, Texas, Navy dive-bomber pilot, parried a night raid on Hengyang with nothing more lethal than his radio set. Deciding that his five P-40s were too heavily outnumbered by the estimated 70 fighters in the attacking force and aware that the Japanese monitored the Americans' radio frequency, Hill began giving deployment orders for large numbers of imaginary aircraft. Convinced that their forces were about to be overwhelmed, Japanese commanders ordered the mission aborted.

Because they were young, maybe about to die, and — like fighter pilots anywhere — often highly eccentric, this was a time of high jinks. One pilot insisted on dressing like a pirate. Others had to be disciplined for, at various times, storming the Kunming YWCA in search of dates, riding water buffaloes down Rangoon's main street and playing tag on the top of a speeding train. In Kunming, an AVG mechanic kept a leopard as a pet, assuring everyone she was tame — until one day she casually dispatched and ate a passing dog.

And combat, of course, was rife with odd escapades. One tall pilot, who heard the warning siren "scramble" fighter crews during his morning shower, went into battle in just his boots, flying helmet and briefs. An hour or so later, Yunnanese villagers, who may never before have seen a foreigner, were startled when a lanky, under-clad American who had been shot down suddenly appeared, inquiring after transport home. In a similar incident, a Tiger — scrambled as he returned to base from a Rangoon party — had trouble identifying himself to Burmese peasants as a downed fighter pilot: He was in full evening dress and his face was still smeared with lipstick.

As Rangoon's defenses began to collapse, the capital became one of the war's more horrible nightmares. Much of the city was rubble, more than 25 blocks were in flames. "When the retreating British set fire to a warehouse containing 20,000 cases of Scotch, we knew the end was near," remembers George Burgard, one of the Tiger's many "double aces" (10 planes downed). As the Japanese came within artillery range, the jails, leper colonies and lunatic asylums were opened. Convicts began to loot remaining liquor stocks; lepers and madmen roamed the city aimlessly. To his *Burma*-based squadron, Chennault in Kunming gave one of air warfare's more memorable orders: "Retire with last bottle oxygen." On 1 March, two days before the city fell, Rangoon's Tigers, their remaining P-40s by now all but unflyable, rejoined their colleagues in China.

After the briefest lull, the air war resumed over south China and north Burma, with the Flying Tiger/RAF total strength of 30 serviceable fighters and 12 arthritic Blenheim bombers now facing almost 500 Japanese warplanes. Chennault's supplies were beginning to run dangerously short. Fuel came

in a trickle from India. Spare parts were so scarce that the P-40s were using long-range wing tanks made by Kunming's craftsmen from bamboo and fish glue. And the

Japanese were replacing their damaged and downed aircraft with increasing numbers of their new Zero fighters.

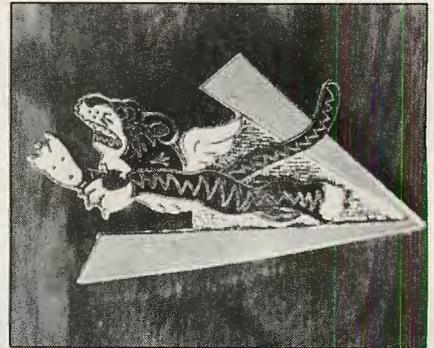
By then the confrontation between the



In March of 1942 these pilots were already heroes of America's new war against Japan: Left to right (front row) C.R. Bond, G.L. Paxton, P. Wright, J.V. Newkirk, D.L. Hill, J.G. Bright, E.S. Conant, (back row) R.B. Keeton, F. Lawlor, F.I. Ricketts, R.F. Layher, H.M. Geselbracht, T.A. Jones, and F. Schiel. Photo: Wide World

Invented and approved long after American Volunteer Group disbanded, this pin may be worn by former Flying Tigers.

Pilot Jack Bright ruminates over lunch in the ready tent. Photo: George Rodgers, LIFE Magazine © 1942 Time, Inc.



P-40 and the Zero had become an epic weaponry struggle. From the beginning, Tiger pilots had had trouble with their plane. The engine was slow to start in scrambles. Its radiator was highly vulnerable to gunfire. Worst of all, its wide, flared nose reduced pilots' forward visibility during landings, causing many crack-ups. Because he had written off five P-40s, one of Chennault's slower-to-learn pilots was known as "the Japanese ace." He had five American flags painted on his plane to testify to his "score."

On the other hand, the Zero entered the war with a formidable reputation: a faster rate of climb than the P-40, higher ceiling and greater maneuverability. When the AVG received a secret report shortly before Pearl Harbor on the Zero's capabilities, several pilots resigned and went home.

But Chennault devised tactics which made it possible for the American plane to prevail in combat. Noting the P-40's sturdiness and its consequent high diving speed (up to 550 mph), Chennault taught a cardinal rule: "Never get into a conventional turning dogfight. Make a pass, shoot — *and then dive away*. Don't fight again until you've got into position to repeat the procedure."

To many airmen trained to be 1918-style gladiators, Chennault's unconventional shoot-and-dive proposals sounded suspiciously like cowardice. So appalled was one RAF commander in Rangoon that he posted a notice promising a court-martial for any of *his* pilots seen diving away from combat. But many pilots objected to the large numbers of ground-attack missions now required by this different war. Partly because regular military discipline did not apply to this highly irregular group, some pilots felt free to refuse combat orders. After dealing with several mutinies, and under pressure from Washington to regularize his Tigers, Chennault reluctantly called a halt. On 4 July 1942, exactly a year after the first Tigers' contracts began, the AVG was disbanded, with many members later re-enlisting in regular U.S. air units. After a subsequent stormy career in the U.S. Air Force, the recent ex-captain ended the war a major general.

Though Chennault died in 1958, he is far from forgotten. At each Flying Tiger reunion, the "Old Man" still gets a program listing as "Honorary Permanent Chairman." Madame Chiang Kai-shek and the Republic of China Air Force commander never fail to cable the reunion with tributes to his memory. And his portrait — jaw-jutting, craggy face leathered by those long years of flying in open cockpits — presides over all AVG festivities.

From across an Allied war conference room at Quebec in 1943, Churchill studied that old fighter's magnificent face. "Thank God he's on *our* side," the British leader muttered to an aide.

He might well have said it of all the Flying Tigers. ☒



USAAF pilots scramble on dirt field in China in 1943, members of successor force to AVG. Photo: Wide World

Still a merc, Claire Chennault (left) and Owen Lattimore — U.S. economic adviser to China — confer with Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek in Chungking in March of 1942. Photo: Wide World



Two years after the disbanding of the AVG, now-Maj. Gen. Claire Chennault, CO of U.S. Army 14th Air Force, at his base air-raid command post. Photo: Wide World



SOFT THREE-GUN INT



LEFT: Everything that goes "boom." Running course cut the auto's edge, but they still won. Photo: John Metzger

BELOW: Smoke from the fires of Hell is what this must have looked like to the damned souls who ran the rifle course. Photo: John Metzger



INTERNATIONAL

Provience Beats the Odds in Las Vegas

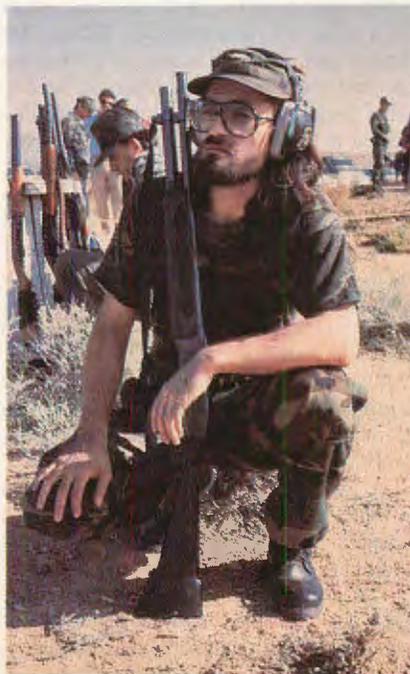
by Jake Jatras

“REMEMBER that when you reach the final objective you must be in condition to complete your mission!” Ken Hackathorn re-emphasized as he finished briefing the 160 men, who in the morning would begin their grueling three-day test of skill to determine the 1983 *Soldier Of Fortune* Three Gun International Combat Champion.



RIGHT: Planning was required for shotgun and rifle courses: Competitors spent hours watching others shoot. Photo: Jim Coyne

BELOW: Buff targets against the sand looked a lot like polar bears on the snow. Photo: John Metzger



“Run and gun” was the rule of the rifle match. Photo: John Metzger

Hosting this year's contest was the Desert Sportsman Rifle & Pistol Club and its facility near Red Rock Canyon outside Las Vegas, Nev., was ideally suited for the unique SOF match.

As in the past, the stages were divided into rifle, pistol and shotgun. The rifle portion was the most important, and will be remembered by all as the most difficult to date. Last year's match organizers added realism to the contest by limiting the amount of ammunition that could be carried in the pistol match — and this year the rifleman's gear got some special attention. Philosophically the SOF match is a contest in which a combat soldier can compete using his issue gear. Unlike some other forms of shooting this requires that weapons be limited to avoid specialization.

Rifles were allowed with iron sights only. No bipods. Each rifle had to be capable of being mounted with bayonet. Ruger Mini-14s and a few others were exempted as they did not come from the factory with a bayonet lug. Competitors were required to carry their sidearms for all events in the same holster used for the pistol exercise. All spare ammo had to be carried in a secure manner.

Normally the contest is limited to 150 entrants. Since the match is invitational many of the applicants do not qualify, but this year we had a record field of 160 shooters. (A slight case of overbooking.)

Each year the format of the different stages is altered. Shooters do not receive the course of fire (COF) until the day before the match, and practice on the range is not permitted. Last year we ran an assault pistol match; this year it was a standard exercise. The rifle COF was changed from a simple stand-and-shoot to a rugged assault test, and the shotgun course was an expanded assault, utilizing steel knock-down targets.

International Practical Shooting Confederation (IPSC) handgunners traditionally dominate in the pistol stage and the '83 match was not a trend-breaker. The stage was a standard exercise (no movement required), using the limited Comstock, or Virginia, count. Under this system, shooters are limited in the number of shots they may fire in a string, but a miss is still a 10-point penalty. Shooters' point totals are divided by total time. Speed is essential, but missed shots are difficult to cancel with sheer speed, even for the fastest.

Chief Range Officer Dave Arnold of Virginia and Steve Herberth from Illinois were in charge of the handgun match. Competitors began facing three standard IPSC Mil-park cardboard silhouette targets at 35 yards. The start position for each string was parade rest. A Pro-Shot timer was used. (Competition Specialties, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 239, Roscoe, IL 61073.) A microphone recorded the time for each shot from the start signal. Extra shots — which would result in a procedure penalty — were also recorded.

Shooters fired their way through the 36-round course at 25, 20, 15, 10 and finally seven yards. At the seven-yard line shooters fired one round at each target, reloaded (mandatory) and re-engaged each buff opponent with one round.

It was a great test for a real "hosemaster" and Arizona's Rob Leatham lived up to his reputation, factoring a 6.635. Leatham is the IPSC World Champion and the 1983 U.S. National Champion. The rest of the top five were also experienced practical pistol shooters: 2nd, Mike Plaxco-6.565 (1982 IPSC U.S. Champion, Steel Challenge Speed Champ, two-time U.S. IPSC National Team Member); 3rd, Brian Enos-6.493 (1983 Bianchi Cup Champion, IPSC U.S. National Team Member); 4th, John Shaw-6.199 (two-time IPSC Champ, '82 SOF Overall Champ), and 5th, Mike Dalton-6.151 (Southwest Pistol League Combat Master, 1983 Bianchi Shoot-Off Champ). When you shoot the SOF match, you are up against the best in the world. Many top handgunners had problems with the pistol stage. Misses at 35 yards were common as entrants attempted to speed up.

Iowa's Lee Hinders and John Satterwhite worked hard for two days setting up the shotgun match. The course utilized the terrain for an assault contest. Full-sized steel silhouettes were used for the match.

In Charlotte, N.C., full-size steel targets were used, but the heavy opponents were set on stands and time was lost in picking them up to re-set them. Shotgun Wizard John Satterwhite worked tirelessly to correct the situation by designing some self-setting knockdowns. Field conditions, however, prevented the targets from working as planned, when wires running some distance from the targets to the control loosened and caused some malfunctions.

Combining the use of slugs with buckshot in one stage of fire is tough, but the '83 SOF shooters found themselves facing a tougher challenge. First, competitors faced a lone steel target that had to be engaged with a slug. This target had to be taken down before one could begin the assault to knock down the other 10 steel targets.

IPSC regional director Jatras shows his handiwork to woman shooter Lee Cole.



The only man who knows what he's doing: Plaxco contemplates rifle match moves from the starting block. Photo: John Metzger

None of the other targets could be shot with a slug. If the first target was hit on the first shot, one had to clear his weapon of remaining slugs before taking off for the second firing point. A slug hit on a knockdown was a disqualification (DQ).

The slug target at 75 yards created its own challenge for those with poorly-sighted-in shotguns. A few others ran afoul of the rules when they engaged a knockdown with a leftover slug.

Target placement was designed to make movement necessary before shooting. This gave the pump shotguns some equal ground with the auto shooters. The longest buckshot target was at 35 yards, with most being at 20 yards. Running out of ammo was also grounds for a DQ.

Bill Rogers of Florida took the shotgun stage with a factor of 3.164. Great shooting and fast movement! Overall, the autos still dominated with the Benelli auto being the most trouble-free. Supposedly more-reliable pumps often suffered from operator malfunction in the form of short-stroking.

Hackathorn's Valley: Few contestants who ran the rifle assault match made the trip back from the final firing point still able to take a good breath. It was long, hard and full of surprises.

The mission was simple, but deceiving. Each shooter faced 30 targets arranged in three banks of 10, then proceeded up the valley taking out the hostiles before grabbing a foreign rifle and hitting a steel stop plate to end the run. The match was scored Comstock: point score divided by time.

As a stage, the rifle match may be best described as a "jungle lane." Target placement was random, but set in groups of 10. Ranges varied from 50 to 150 yards, but the yucca plants and cactus made finding the silhouettes tough.

The start position for the test was seated on a toilet: The Kokalis Start. Rifles were loaded and resting in a rifle rack. Only on the first magazine were shooters allowed to have a spare magazine attached to the one seated in the weapon. After that all spare magazines had to be carried in a secure manner. On the start whistle riflemen dashed to the rack, grabbed the weapon and from the first firing point engaged the first bank of targets set off to the left at fairly close range.

Targets were scored major 10-9-8 (.30-06, .308, etc.) and minor 10-8-7 (.223, 7.62x39mm, etc.). Each target had to have a minimum of two hits, but one could shoot as many at each silhouette as one wanted. Only the best two counted for score.

A miss was a minus 20 points, which meant that if one did not see a target a 40-point penalty was added to the score factor.

From firing point No. 1 all the targets were easily visible, but prone shooting was impossible. Sitting or kneeling was the pre-



OVERALL RESULTS 1983 SOF 3 GUN MATCH

1. Provienc, L.	23.947
2. Shaw, J.	23.795
3. Gifford, C.	22.435
4. Sharp, R.	21.359
5. Lonsdale, M.	21.046
6. Leatham, R.	20.883
7. Kempton, J.	20.569
8. Plaxco, J.M.	20.543
9. Souter, L.	20.407
10. Smith, D.	20.296
11. Clark, J.E.	19.815
12. Schoening, L.	18.764
13. Umberger, W.	18.634
14. Nygard, L.	18.487
15. Dalton, M.	18.298
16. Harris, J.	18.259
17. Miller, P.	18.170
18. Zubiena, J.	18.009
19. Johnk, F.	17.826
20. Walters, R.	17.795
21. Watson, D.R.	17.649
22. McCreary, S.	17.446
23. Walker, P.	17.428
24. Fithen, R.	17.298
25. Rogers, B.	17.036
26. Colman, R.	16.946
27. McNeece, M.	16.924
28. Mullins, S.	16.877
29. Wheeler, D.	16.817
30. Gosnell, L.	16.727
31. Akers, G.	15.942
32. Albright, J.	15.900
33. Keiser, R.	15.883
34. Cole, J.	15.796
35. Reed, B.	15.719
36. Zellner, R.	15.655
37. Watson, D.L.	15.453
38. Schmauch, D.	15.255
39. Jason, A.	15.206
40. Hudson, M.	15.204
41. Thompson, B.	15.106
42. Vining, D.	14.962
43. Gray, B.	14.857
44. Pollack, S.	14.813
45. Lawver, D.	14.694
46. Allen, A.	14.391
47. Clafin, H.	14.239
48. Clark, D.C.	14.169
49. VanSickle, R.	14.132
50. Hall, S.A.	14.072



Talk was that .223s would walk away with the match: It didn't happen. Photo: Jim Coyne

1) First Place Overall Winner Lanny Provienc (center) of Germantown, Tenn., receives \$5,000 cash, trophy, gold medal and customized Mini-14 from 1st Place Sponsor Garth Choate (left) of Choate Machine and Tool Co. Provienc also receives handmade Damascus bowie knife valued at \$1,100 from custom knifemaker Bill Bagwell (second from right) as Convention Director Bill Brooks officiates awards ceremonies. Photo: John Metzger



2) Second Place Overall Winner John Shaw (right) of Memphis, Tenn., receives \$2,000 cash, trophy, silver medal and HK93 rifle from Neill Price of Heckler & Koch, Inc. Photo: John Metzger



3) Californian Craig Gifford (right) took Third Place Overall. Warren Barron of Beretta USA Corp., presents Gifford with check for \$1,500, trophy, bronze medal and Beretta 92SB pistol. Photo: Tim Oest



4) Fourth Place Overall Winner Ron Sharp (right) of Nampa, Idaho, receives \$1,300 cash and prizes from sponsor Dick Swan of Atlantic Research Marketing Systems. Photo: John Metzger

5) SOF Editor/Publisher Lt. Col. Robert K. Brown hangs medal on Arizona's Rob Leatham, Sixth Place Overall Winner. Leatham received \$1,000 cash, trophy, medal and Iver Johnson M1 Carbine from SOF. Photo: John Metzger

6) Fifth Place Overall Winner Mark Lonsdale (right) of Los Angeles is presented \$1,100, trophy, bronze medal and Ruger Mini-14 from sponsor Bob Bell of Silent Partner Body Armor. Photo: John Metzger



7) Rifle Match Winner Lanny Provience receives trophy from Bill Taurulis (left) of Springfield Armory, Rifle Match Sponsor. Photo: Tim Oest



13) Top Police Officer Award Winner Larry Nygard (right) of the Seattle Police Department receives trophy and \$500 check from sponsor Bill Rogers of Rogers Holster Company. Photo: John Metzger

15) Bill Brooks, SOF Convention Director representing *Combat Handguns Magazine*, sponsors of the Tyro Award (first-time SOF shooter), presents winner Ron Sharp (right) with \$500 cash. Photo: John Metzger



8) Sterling importer Roma Skinner (left) of Lanchester USA, presents Seventh Place Overall Winner Jack Kempton of Tempe, Ariz., with \$950 cash, bronze medal and Sterling HR-81 air rifle. Photo: John Metzger



14) Shotgun Match Sponsor L.L. Baston (left) presents trophy to Shotgun Match Winner Bill Rogers. Photo: John Metzger



9) John Bianchi of Bianchi Gunleather sponsored eighth through 15th Overall Match Awards. Winners were: Eighth Place, J.M. Plaxco, \$900; Ninth Place, L. Souter, \$850; 10th Place, D. Smith, \$700; 11th Place, J.E. Clark, \$650; 12th Place, L. Schoening, \$550; 13th Place, W. Umberger, \$500; 14th Place, L. Nygard, \$450; 15th Place, M. Dalton, \$400. Photo: John Metzger



12) SOF Convention Director Bill Brooks, representing Median Award Winner Sponsor Paladin Press, presents winner Lee Cole (right) with \$500 check and trophy. Paladin also sponsored Top Military Award, won by USMC Lt. Greg Aker. Photo: Tim Oest



10) Don Wortman (left) of Eagle, Ltd., gives congratulations to 5th Place Overall Winner Mark Lonsdale. Wortman donated the overall prize medals for the match. Photo: John Metzger



11) Detonics .45 Associates sponsored the pistol match. Left to right: John Shaw (4th Place), Rob Leatham (1st Place), Brian Enos (3rd Place), and Mike Plaxco (2nd Place). Photo: John Metzger



World champion Rob Leatham's quick-draw. Photo: John Metzger

PISTOL MATCH:

1. R. Leatham
2. J.M. Plaxco
3. B. Enos
4. J. Shaw
5. M. Dalton

RIFLE MATCH:

1. L. Provienc
2. J. Clark
3. J. Shaw
4. C. Gifford
5. R. Sharp

SHOTGUN:

1. B. Rogers
2. J. Shaw
3. B. Enos
4. P. Miller
5. M. Dalton

TOP POLICE: Larry Nygard**TOP MILITARY:** Lt. G. Aker, USMC**MEDIAN AWARD:** Lee Cole**TYRO AWARD:** Ron Sharp

**1983 SOF
THREE-GUN
INTERNATIONAL MATCH
SPONSORS AND DONORS**

1. Soldier of Fortune Magazine.....	\$17,370
2. Bianchi Gunleather.....	5,000
3. Choate Machine & Tool Co.....	4,000
4. Heckler & Koch, Inc.....	2,500
5. Beretta U.S.A.....	2,000
6. Atlantic Research Marketing Systems.....	1,600
7. Springfield Armory.....	1,600
8. Silent Partner Body Armor.....	1,600
9. Detonics .45 Associates.....	1,500
10. Paladin Press.....	1,500
11. L.L. Baston & Co.....	1,400
12. Lanchester U.S.A.....	1,200
13. Bagwell Knives.....	1,100
14. Rogers Holster Co.....	1,000
15. Combat Handguns Magazine.....	700
16. L.O. Albach Knives.....	450
17. Gerber Knives.....	400
18. Al Mar Knives.....	400
19. Bar-Sto Precision Barrels.....	350
20. Wells Creek Knife & Gun Works.....	350
21. Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc.....	300
22. Aimpoint.....	300
23. Pistolero Magazine.....	300
24. Iver Johnson.....	280
25. Bench Mark Knives.....	250
26. Patton & Morgan Corp.....	250
27. Bushnell.....	250
28. B-Square Co.....	230
29. Assault Systems.....	200
30. Group 5, Inc.....	200
31. Eagle Enterprises.....	200
32. Lone Star Ordnance.....	175
33. Bullet & Blade Gun Shop.....	175
34. KPB Co.....	150
35. Charter Arms.....	120
36. Sergeant Violin.....	110
37. Chuck Stapel Custom Knives.....	100
38. John Masson Co.....	100
39. Millet Sights.....	70
40. U.S. Cavalry Store.....	65
41. Wichita Arms, Inc.....	60
42. HKS Products.....	60
43. Spyderco.....	35
TOTAL:	\$50,000

ferred method of steadying the rifle.

Past SOF Matches had been criticized for favoring the .308s, but with the short ranges and the speed element it seemed that the mouse guns (oops, I meant .223s) would get a break. It simply did not prove so.

After engaging the first set of 10, shooters had a good run through the cactus to the next position—the tough one. Targets were set on the right up a hill. Some were spotted without difficulty, but the ones at ground level at the base of the rise were elusive. Most misses came from this point. A large yucca plant had been used by some as a semi-rest, but California's Bruce Thompson completely took it down with his full-back-like charge.

Off the firing line, conversations ran more to the "What went wrong?" than "How did you do?" Disasters were common. Arizona's Brian Enos was smokin' when his M1A hammer broke. Raul Walters of Missouri was on a real sprint when he had mag problems with his AR-15. Manually assisted semi-autos were not uncommon.

While competitors only had to make the trip once, Range Officers grew weary of the trek. Soon volunteers were being accepted from the ranks to relieve the overworked ROs.

At last shooters reached the final firing position: 10 cardboard silhouettes directly downrange at relatively short ranges. Luckily it had rained in Las Vegas for a couple of weeks and a little green helped identify the buff-colored targets against the brown desert background.

After the 20 minimum shots, rifle champ aspirants placed their weapons on a table and picked up a Maadi AKM in 7.62x39mm to engage the 10-inch round steel stop plate at 65 yards.

The now-panting shooters picked up the rifle and chambered a round, then had five tries to get the stop plate. After five misses the time was stopped and a 30-second penalty assessed the errant marksman.

It was a test of shooting skill and endurance. Shooting matches should be just that—shooting activities—but the SOF match added a new dimension to practical rifle shooting by the difficulty of the contest.

Lanny Provienc had been doing well, up to the rifle stage. But his outstanding run on this match put him in the top spot. Each match was weighted, but this year it was the rifle stage that was the most important.

Tennessean Provienc sealed his victory with a rifle factor score of 16.070. Second Place Jimmy Clark factored 15.045, but by the time one got to tenth place the factors were in the 12.000 range.

Provienc's run was amazing. He hit with his M1A and ran well. IPSC Champ Ray Chapman once summed up the concept of running a good match: "When you shoot—shoot, and when you run—run!" Lanny Provienc earned his medal with his rifle ability. ☘



AFGHANISTAN

After Five Years What's Next?

by David C. Isby

IN the West, a lot of people talk about dying in freedom rather than living in slavery. The people of Afghanistan are actually doing this, day after day. The war in Afghanistan is not going well. Neither the Soviets nor the Afghan people have wavered in the goal they have both shared since the Soviets invaded on 27 December 1979: to control the future of Afghanistan. Both sides have fought bravely. Both sides have learned a lot on the battlefield. Unfortunately, while the Soviets have great resources to draw on, in 1983 the shoestring war of the Afghans suffered even more from the shortages that plagued them from the beginning. Now, the Afghans, always short on supplies, may run short on hope.



In 1983, the war in Afghanistan was frequently described in the popular media as a stalemate. That is an overly simplistic view. Guerrilla wars are, by their nature, seldom dramatic or decisive. Their outcomes are often shaped in periods that seem to be stalemates. Thus, the British used the "stalemate" of the latter years of their war in Malaya to help create a civilian government that would outlast the communist guerrillas who sought to overthrow it. The North Vietnamese used the "stalemate" of 1973-75 to reorganize, re-equip and prepare for the final offensive that was to take them to victory.

The Soviets have attempted to take advantage of the divisions within Afghan society since the start of their

involvement. In 1983, they have increased their efforts. The Soviets have always approved of divide-and-conquer tactics, and, before they learned otherwise from hard experience, it might have appeared that Afghanistan was a good place to apply them. The Afghans are a diverse people. They include both Pushtu-speakers and Dari-speakers; Sunni and Shi'ah Moslems; political leaders who would like Afghanistan to have a government like that of Iran; tribes that have always hated each other, with blood feuds that have lasted literally for centuries.

Afghan government was always, of necessity, decentralized, due to the mountainous terrain, poor

T-54 "monkey-model," without bore evacuator or night-vision equipment exemplifies second-rate equipment provided Soviet allies. Photo: Galen Geer

communications and the preferences of the people. Because of this, although Afghan civilization is many centuries old, the country itself is only 30 years older than the United States. Only in

opposing foreign invaders have Afghans traditionally put aside their feuds and joined together. Even in the days of peace, no one really cared too much what the government in Kabul said or did. Now that it is a puppet of the enemy, its authority counts for nothing in about 85 percent of the territory of Afghanistan. The Soviets and their erstwhile allies control just about the direct fire range of their weapons.

In the wake of the Soviet invasion, the Afghans responded with a war of national liberation that proved to be one of the great popular uprisings of the 20th century. While the Afghans became a people in arms against the Soviets, they have never become an army, or a unified guerrilla fighting force like those that fought the Germans in Yugoslavia, the French and Americans in Vietnam, or those fighting the Cuban-supported Luanda regime in Angola. Yet, while this gives the Afghans some advantages — the Soviets could not decapitate the guerrillas by attacking a central high command and the diversity of groups allowed for easy reconciliation of the divisions within Afghan society — factiousness must be considered a drawback.

Heroic warriors may win battles, but in the industrial age, they do not win wars. All the heroism in the world cannot prevail, by itself, against the destructive power of modern weaponry. In any war in the 20th century, the ratio of corpses to heroes is a particularly bad one. In Vietnam, the United States and its free-world allies were up against not only a unified, centrally-commanded guerrilla force but also an army — the North Vietnamese Army. It was a particularly tough, hard-fighting, light-infantry army. The Soviets are fighting an enemy that not only lacks anywhere near the quantity and quality of weaponry the North Vietnamese had, but the coordination, discipline, organization, logistics, and everything else that made the NVA so hard to beat.

There is a long way to go before Afghanistan can become the Soviet's Vietnam. They are fighting the war on the cheap. According to Defense Intelligence Agency testimony before Congress, only about two percent of their defense spending goes to running the Afghanistan war. Only six percent of their active army divisions are deployed in Afghanistan. They do not intend to occupy Afghanistan. The forces they have committed to the war — about 150,000 Soviet troops and 30,000 untrustworthy Kabul-regime allies — are too small for that.

Rather, the Soviets hold the key cities, airfields, and road nets and are maintaining their strategy of slowly clearing large areas of Afghanistan of the people, agriculture and



Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown pauses for food during testing of new Soviet assault rifle. AK-74 story was one more SOF scoop from Afghanistan. Photo: Ralph Edens

infrastructure who can support a guerrilla war. As Mao said: "The guerrilla must move amongst the people as a fish moves in the sea." The Soviets have been slowly draining the water since 1979.

The hallmark of Soviet operations in Afghanistan are large-scale cordons and sweeps, in which the Soviets surround an area and move in or push through, preferably against a geographical barrier. These ground-force operations are supplemented by airstrikes, using chemical or conventional munitions. The aim of such operations is to destroy the agriculture and force the people to flee the area. With the local Afghans either refugees in Pakistan (imposing a burden on that country) or forced to go to the cities of Afghanistan (where they can be watched) or as internal refugees to liberated areas (where they will further deplete the limited food supplies) they cannot support guerrilla activities. This is basically a resettlement project. Unlike those carried out by the British in Malaya and by the South Vietnamese, however, it uses terror as the agent of resettlement.

This economy-of-force strategy explains much of the Soviet reason for their extensive use of a wide variety of chemical weapons in Afghanistan. They are excellent tools for depopulating an area. Once the Soviets have flown over and dropped a few bombs full of Yellow Rain, the deadly tricothecene toxin, and the local Afghans have watched the victims die in a most painful and spectacular manner, they are not going to wait around for the Soviets to come back the next day and try again. They are going to leave. The Soviets may want Afghanistan. They do not want Afghans.

The Soviets are doing to the Afghan people only what they perceive as being required for them to win. In

1864, during his campaign in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, U.S. Army Gen. Phillip Sheridan gave orders that "a crow flying over the Shenandoah Valley will have to carry his own rations." Nothing was to grow there, nothing was to be raised there. It was a harsh and brutal order, but he made very sure that no more supplies were ever going to reach Lee's army at Petersburg from the "breadbasket of the Confederacy." He succeeded. The Soviets seem to be applying Sheridan's principles of war to the Afghans in more ways than one. He also was the one who said, "The only good Indian is a dead Indian." The Soviets could easily insert "Afghan" in the appropriate place and agree wholeheartedly.

Any guerrilla war is dirty and harsh. This one is exceptionally so. The Soviets have lost at least 5,000 men KIA (possibly as many as 8,000), with 1980 having been the bloodiest single year. About three times that number have been wounded. Others have been evacuated suffering from hepatitis or other diseases. Estimates of Afghan dead range as high as 250,000 to 500,000. Of a prewar population of about 16 million, over 3 million are refugees in Pakistan and Iran — the largest refugee population anywhere in the world. Another 500,000 to a million are internal refugees. The cost in human suffering has been tremendous.

The Soviets have been making changes in their organization and tactics to come to grips with the problem of war in Afghanistan. According to recent Western press reports, a theatre of operations command has been set up at Tashkent in the Soviet Union. Under the command of Marshal Sergei Sokolov, it has responsibility not only for the 40th Army (the Soviet headquarters for all troops in Afghanistan) but also forces inside the Soviet Union, in the Turkestan, Central Asia and Transcaucasus Military Districts. This makes it a true "Southern Command," aimed at the Persian Gulf area as well as Afghanistan. This is significant because it points out the wide range of options the Soviets will have if they ever manage to pacify Afghanistan. Already they have expanded the airfields at Khandahar and Shindand to take strategic bombers, putting them within easy striking distance of the Persian Gulf and the Straits of Hormuz, through which most of the free world's oil must flow. The Soviets may not currently intend to use a pacified Afghanistan as a

Liberated materiel equips freedom fighters: Mujahideen scratch hammer-and-sickle from Soviet equipment since they believe it is a religious symbol. Photo: Galen Geer



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springboard for wider conquests, but it certainly gives them the capability. We can only judge capabilities — Soviet intentions are known only to the old men in the Kremlin.

The Soviet efforts to prop up the Kabul regime have continued. Their army is now up to 35,000 men and boys (they are kidnapping 14- and 15-year olds for the army), but combat experience has shown that about half of them will, if given the opportunity, shoot their Soviet advisers and join the guerrillas. Despite this, the Soviets make sure that the Kabul regime's army gets all the most dangerous, difficult and potentially costly missions.

It normally requires a modern society to field a modern fighting force. Afghanistan is definitely not a modern society. It was a slowly modernizing,

largely traditional society when the 1978 communist coup set the country off on a side trip to the Dark Ages. The regime of Nur Mohammad Taraki was marked by a reign of terror that horrified even his fellow communists and led to Taraki's eventual ouster and execution. The Kabul regime has admitted that 12,000 Afghans were killed by Taraki — the actual total is doubtlessly much higher. Many of these people were the leaders and educated people of Afghanistan, the people whose guidance has been sorely missed in recent years.

The Afghans have fought the Soviets in basically the same way they have fought for centuries. It's a great way to fight and it's won a lot of battles, ambushes, raids and skirmishes, but it's not the way you win wars these days.

SOF demo-expert John Donovan hefts AKM at Darra Adam Khel, drug, gun and smuggling center of Pukhtunistan. Photo: Robert K. Brown

Despite their skill as individual fighting men and their terrific courage, many Western observers believe the lapses that occur in Afghan tactics and their weakness in operational and strategic thinking to be a key limitation. Resources are not allocated or used optimally or, indeed, rationally.

For example, prior to 1983, journalists who have visited Afghan camps have commented that there exists no formal tactical or weapons training, despite the fact that cadres of ex-Afghan Army personnel are available.



This whole approach leads to battles lost and opportunities missed. In the spring of 1982, two British journalists accompanied an ambush team of Afghans along the "black road" — the Kabul-Jalalabad highway. The Afghans selected an ambush position that seemed to guarantee to the journalists, both ex-British Army, that the Soviets would first return fire and then envelope and annihilate them. Only Soviet tactical ineptitude saved the day. Other journalists have similar stories. In the words of Gerard Chaliand, a French journalist and writer on guerrilla warfare, "The Afghan insurgents know little of modern revolutionary war — its efficiency or organization or careful planning of time and work." It is a harsh judgment, but one which has some truth.

In 1983, however, it appears that the Afghans have started to train seriously for protracted guerrilla war. The coalition of the seven Pakistan-based groups that are fighting inside Afghanistan — The Islamic Alliance of Afghan Mujahideen — has now set up its own training camp in Pakistan under the command of a former colonel in the Afghan Army (reported in "Afghan Elite Forces," *SOF*, December '83). The alliance will use this camp to bring in their combat leaders from Afghanistan, train them and send them back to lead and train the rest of their fighting men inside Afghanistan. It is not known how effective this program has been, and Soviet pressure against Pakistan means that it will have to keep a low profile, but it is a step in the right direction.

But the Afghans do not have

anywhere near the weaponry they need for this new competence to be effective. Despite frequent press reports to the contrary, it appears that aid from the United States and pro-Western Islamic states remains limited. The Afghans have seen little evidence of such aid.

That some material aid has been provided seems certain. It includes both Soviet and Egyptian-made weaponry. The Afghans have even received a few of the weapons they need the most — SA-7 *Strella* man-portable heat-seeking surface-to-air guided missiles. But these have been few and far between. Indeed, it would appear that the country that has done the most for freedom in Afghanistan is China.

One of the indications that the Afghans had been receiving extensive outside aid would be the prevalence of Kalashnikov assault rifles in their forces. Most of their fighting men — 90,000 to 125,000 in the field at any one time — still use bolt-action rifles rather than Kalashnikovs. The Afghans have had plenty of opportunity to acquire Kalashnikovs. In 1980, the Kabul regime's army went from a strength of 80,000 or 100,000 to about 20,000. Many deserted with their weapons to join the guerrillas. Soviet losses, Chinese aid, raids and theft from arms depots provide other weapons. Yet, despite all these resources to obtain Kalashnikovs, it appears that a minority of Afghan fighting men are armed with them.

Why haven't the Afghans received more aid? They cannot understand why themselves. One Afghan tells of listening, in a house along the trail from Pakistan, to the Voice of America reporting President Reagan's statement of support for his cause. Being an educated man, and knowing what the Americans had done to aid people fighting communism in the past, he went outside to look upward for the black C-130s he thought would be arriving with what the Afghans needed to keep fighting. The black C-130s never arrived. This Afghan, now better educated in 1983-vintage U.S. policy, is bitter about their absence.

Such bitterness at the West's unwillingness to provide aid appears to be widespread among the guerrillas. But few Afghans will turn to a government they see as illegitimate and irrevocably pro-Soviet. The Kabul regime has been trying to win people over to its cause since 1978. While politics, food or money has given them some allies, these attempts have, overall, been failures.

In 1983, however, the Soviets have reportedly entered into negotiations directly with some Afghan groups (most notably those in the Panjshir Valley) and have again been able to literally buy off some Afghans — some Waziri

Pathans and other tribal groups. However, it appears that the Afghans made these deals only out of desperation, and the Soviets are probably finding they are buying only a brief respite, much as the Kabul regime has achieved through its actions in this area in the past. Sometimes these attempts to turn Afghan against Afghan have backfired on the Soviets and their allies. In 1980, they sent Afghan Army Col. Ghulam Wardak to Wardak Province. He had 6,000 rifles and orders to organize a militia to fight the guerrillas. The colonel, of course, took the guns, organized the forces and then led them into battle — but against the Soviets.

Recently, the Soviets have had more success in bankrolling gangs of *badmash* — bandits and drug smugglers on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border who, in 1983, have stepped up their attacks on not only Afghan guerrillas but also on the Pakistani government and its agents — part of the increased Soviet pressure on Pakistan.

While much has been made of the divisions between the Afghan groups, experience has shown that the fighting men will all join together, leaving the political differences to the politicians and the religious differences to the *mullahs*. There are six Pakistan-based Afghan groups with large-scale guerrilla forces, plus at least one Iran-based organization. There are also smaller Pakistan-based groups, and many Afghans fighting inside the country are simply not linked to any other organization. Different groups and regions will coordinate their efforts and fight together. Fighting between Afghan groups, though it does happen, is rare.

When it does occur, it invariably involves the Hezb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. Gulbuddin's group, though now diminished in strength and influence, had been among the large Pakistan-based Afghan groups. Gulbuddin had led the first large-scale guerrilla group in the field, starting operations even before the 1978 coup. Yet despite this initial advantage and some early successes, Gulbuddin has ended up out of the mainstream of the Afghan resistance. It is possible that he has made a deal with the Soviets.

In 1982, reports reached the West that Gulbuddin's forces were cooperating with Kabul-regime troops in the Hazara Jat, acting as militia. In return for this cooperation, the Soviets have refrained from attacking Gulbuddin's forces in the south. These reports have been supported by information from Western journalists and Afghan military and political leaders. Bernd De Bruijn, a Dutch journalist, reported that guerrillas in the Maidan area will not attack Soviet



Butterfly mines — another SOF scoop — now litter Afghan countryside, preventing night movement and blocking supply routes. Photo: Jim Coyne

convoys, not for fear of their escorts or the helicopter gunships, but in fear of the retaliation of Gulbuddin. Other journalists have reported Gulbuddin forces encamped within a mile of Soviet units, conspicuously unmolested.

Gulbuddin espouses a form of radical fundamentalist Islam that is rejected by the other guerrilla groups and is alien to Afghan traditions. The Afghans tend to be very suspicious of any outsider who believes he, and only he, knows Allah's true will and everyone better act accordingly, or else. Thus, Gulbuddin has been the only Pakistan-based leader who has not cooperated with the loose alliance of other Afghan groups in Pakistan. Gulbuddin's strange religious politics also earned him the support, early on, of Libya's Col. Khadafy. He has reportedly been on the Libyan payroll for a number of years. From there, it was only a narrow step to dealing with Khadafy's Soviet friends.

There is a historical precedent for this. During the subjugation of what is now the Asian part of the USSR, a process that required bloodshed and guile, the Soviets found that the more radical Islamic fundamentalists were their natural allies. This is because, in the fundamentalist's world view, the atheist communists were bad, but not nearly as bad as the Moslems who did not recognize that *they* were the one true way of Islam. There were reports that Gulbuddin might be included in the post-war government that might have emerged from the Geneva talks between the Pakistanis and the Kabul regime that collapsed in June 1983. The hated Babrak Karmal could have been retired in the same way as his two Moscow-approved predecessors — the 7.62mm pension plan — leaving a

government that would have a greater potential of gaining some legitimacy than the current one. This did not come to pass. The actions of Gulbuddin are certainly one of the "wild cards" in the future of Afghanistan.

If Gulbuddin is one of the shadowy figures of the war, then Ahmad Shah Massoud is one of the most brilliant. The "Lion of the Panjshir" has dealt the Soviets a number of hard defeats. The Panjshir Valley has always been one of the worst areas for the Soviets and one of the rallying points of Afghan resistance. Massoud, the leader of the valley, is a former graduate student and a young charismatic leader with military training of his own. He is well known in the West not only because of his accomplishments but because he and his associates understand the value of press relations. To the Afghans, he is a symbol of the best they have — skilled in Western ways, yet believing in traditional Afghan values and religion. To the Soviets, he is the most dangerous "bandit leader" they face, and the Panjshir territory that, while they may sweep through, is just too hard to hold and pacify.

Yet in February 1983, Massoud instituted a six-month cease-fire with the Soviets. This was a highly controversial move, as it allowed the Soviets to shift their forces to fight other Afghans. Yet it set a precedent for direct Soviet-Afghan talks and gave the Panjshir — desolated by the intense fighting of 1982 — a chance to recover. The Afghans have used this lull to re-equip, train and exercise their forces, as the government of the Panjshir Valley has also instituted a formal Western-style military training program for its troops. Panjshir fighting men are formed into tactical units, rather than loose bands or groups.

The context of the Afghanistan War in 1983 is highly complex. The Soviets have not gained victory on the battlefield, at the conference table or by splitting the Afghans. Yet it appears almost certain that they will be continuing these efforts in the future. They will probably be getting better and more successful.

The Afghans, on the other hand, are still fighting bravely. They are winning battles, but not the war. Unless they receive support, the strength of the Soviet Union will grind them down, maybe not this year or next, but in five or ten years. Then, Soviet weaponry, diplomacy and bribery can carve out a future acceptable to Moscow. The future will be a grim one not only for the Afghans, but for the world as well, if the Soviet Union wins this war. ✖

Captured DShK-38 HMGs are turned against original owners as mujahideen try to defend themselves against air attack. Photo: Jim Coyne



RRI Trains FDN Combat Medics PARA MEDICO

Text & Photos by John E. Padgett

During SOF's August 1983 Central American tour, two members of the Refugee Relief International (RRI) medical team were invited to visit the Nicaraguan Democratic Front (FDN) field hospital. Medics John E. Padgett and Phil Gonzales readily accepted the invitation — they wanted to get involved with training and treatment for the Contra freedom fighters. Padgett's report follows:

THE *finca* (farm) could have been one of thousands that dot the hillsides and back roads of Honduras: Its animals grazed peacefully and coffee beans ripened in the sun. But there was a difference: This *finca* held the field hospital of the FDN — the Contras.

We had turned off the highway and traveled a few dusty clicks to the farmhouse. All seemed quiet, just farmhands tending the livestock. It was only after our guide climbed down from the truck and identified himself that we could see the young men in dark-green uniforms, carrying an assortment of small arms and watching us closely.

We entered the farmhouse and were greeted warmly by the overworked doctor and his staff, who insisted that they weren't too busy to give us a tour. Nicaraguan politeness and hospitality — *mi casa es su casa* (my home is your home) — prevailed. After the tour and introductions, we were told we could visit or work in any part of the hospital.

The farmhouse held the consultation office, waiting room, improvised operating room, X-ray facility, kitchen, staff mess

RIGHT: RRI provides support that U.S. Congress is unwilling to give. Here Contras unload medical supplies for FDN hospital. **BELOW:** Mother and daughter learn IV therapy. Both joined Contras together and will serve as FDN combat medics.





MEDIC ALERT

John E. Padgett and Phil Gonzales make a good team, as this SOF report from Central America shows. Although the two former Special Forces medics met after their service in Vietnam, they now collaborate as freelance writers (see "Two to Tangle," SOF, December '83) and medical technicians — for RRI in Central America and for a minor-trauma clinic in Salinas, Calif., which they and two Vietnam-service former-SF doctors hope to establish.

hall and a single room that served as a doctor's office, medical supply room and guard house.

The operating facility was a far cry from the sterile environment found in most Stateside hospitals. It opened to the X-ray room by a curtained screen door. Instrument packs were made small to fit into the tiny space in the sterilizer, and the operating tables were probably older than most of the patients. The X-ray machine was adequate, but used Polaroid film, and it took some adjustment to read films in which the bones appeared black rather than the usual white of most X-rays.



Contra soldier stands guard with FN FAL as RRI medics, author and Phil Gonzales, arrive at FDN field hospital.

Converted stables contained the treatment room, recovery room/ward and women's dormitory. The building was dark, but clean and well-ventilated.

It was in this surgical ward that the war hit home with us. As we made rounds with the doctor, young faces, some of them no more than 15- or 16-years-old, looked at us with eyes that were much older than their years. Silent, proud, confident faces, some of them distorted by painful wounds, showed their determination to continue fighting a communist insurgency against fearful odds.

We proceeded down the rows of beds. We saw gunshot and shrapnel wounds on legs, arms, knees, chests. The doctors pointed out the sad case of a young soldier who was evacuated to the hospital with a head wound and who is now a hemiplegic. And the more fortunate young man who came in three months ago as a quadriplegic and who is now walking under his own power.

Looking at him, the doctor shook his head. "Impossible," he said, "but now he wants to return to his unit inside Nicaragua."

A young man sat at the end of the ward, wearing sunglasses. He had been struck by an AK round which entered his right temple and exited through his left eye. He was awaiting surgery and a false eye.

"What are you going to do after you receive your new eye?" I asked him, expecting to hear him tell about going home.

He looked at me with his remaining eye as if I should have known the answer: "I still have my right eye and I can see to shoot. I'm going to return to fight to free my country, with the help of God." He was 17.

The next building was the "chicken coop," which is what it was before the FDN moved in and cleaned it out. It now serves as a well-lighted, airy medical ward. Many of the patients lay on litters or foam mattresses on the floor, since there were not enough beds to go around. It was quiet, the patients sleeping, reading or writing letters. The medical problems were those common to Central America: dengue fever, malaria, tropical ulcer, dysentery. At the end of the chicken coop was the isolation ward, a former tool shed, with three TB patients.

The hospital also held the school for the *Paramedicos*, or FDN combat medics. This was high-pressure learning, as they had to learn combat first aid, how to start IVs, use of basic medications, field sanitation and evacuation of the wounded — all in eight days!

"Eight days!?" I asked the primary instructor, thinking I had misunderstood his Spanish.

"We desperately need them for our troops in combat," he answered. "We don't have any more time." He assured me that they would receive additional training on an individual basis as they were rotated from the combat areas.

Gonzales and I volunteered to teach some

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Future SAWs will probably feature many characteristics of the 70/78 LMG.

BERETTA'S 70 SERIES

SOF's El Salvador T&E

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



EL SALVADOR is a great place to test an assault rifle. The bush is thick, terrain is tough, primitive logistics make you carry everything you need, and the good guys are fighting a dirty little war. Conditions there are perfect for testing Beretta's 70-series weapons with *reality*, not just realism. That's why I took my SC 70 SHORT to El Salvador on my last excursion with the SOF A Team.

Kokalis (right) and Atlacatl Bn. 7th Company CO 1st Lt. David Koch lead ambush training. Kokalis carries Beretta SC 70 SHORT and Koch holds M16A1 while wearing Combat Equipment Sales, Inc. combat vest with Gerber Mark I combat knife



By the late 1960s it was becoming apparent to everyone in military small arms technology that the 7.62mm NATO cartridge had failed miserably to provide the proper medium for modern lightweight infantry rifles. The 5.56mm NATO round (at that time in the M193 projectile configuration) was obviously the wave of future developments. In 1968 Beretta commenced work on a new 5.56mm rifle to hopefully replace their 7.62mm BM 59 rifle which was in service with the Italian Army. The project was directed from its inception by Vitorio Valle, head of the R&D department, and P.C. Beretta, the firm's general manager.

Currently available systems, such as the Stoner 63, M16A1, FN CAL and the Kalashnikov were evaluated. The result, like most modern military small arms, is a thoughtful blend of what the Beretta designers felt were the best features of other weapons combined with some interesting innovations of their own. By 1970 the basic design was finalized and hence the name — Beretta Model 70. But, continuing product improvement and evolution is a Beretta hallmark and the currently produced rifles differ significantly from the early production models.

Desperate to field a light rifle in the mid-'70s, the Republic of South Africa was an early purchaser of the AR 70, principally because few others would deal with them. Grenade launching from these early guns fouled the gas system badly and resulted in frequent stoppages. This problem and some others are now long gone from the system. And, while the Beretta AR 70 has generally been replaced with the R4 rifle (the South African-made Galil), many of the RSA special operations units still use the AR 70 in preference to the much heavier R4.

The 70-series weapons fire from the closed bolt position and are gas operated. There is no gas regulator. Since the gas port has been placed close to the muzzle-end of the barrel the system requires a long 14-inch piston. This over-long piston threatened the compactness of the action. To regain the inches lost in the long gas system, Beretta designers devised the means to wrap the recoil spring around the piston shaft instead of placing it behind the bolt assembly. Compressed between the piston head and the front of the receiver, the spring returns the bolt assembly to the forward position after recoil by driving the piston head back to its original place at the distal end of the gas tube.

Piston and bolt carrier had to be separable to allow for recoil spring installation, cleaning and replacement. The retracting handle doubles as a pin to hold the piston and bolt carrier together. A fortunate ulterior effect of wrapping the piston in the recoil spring is stabilization of the long shaft.



BERETTA

Semiauto-only AR 70 SPORT assault rifle fired by Arthur Cochran.



70/78 gas block with lever raised for grenade firing.

Barrel catch drilled for mount to tripod or vehicle pedestal.



Articulated, skeletonized 70/78 bipod in folded position.

LEFT: SOF's test sample of Beretta's front-line weapons, left to right: 70/78 SAW, AR 70/SPORT, and SC 70 SHORT.

The gas system is located in the conventional position above the barrel. While required because the magazine feeds from the bottom, balance and handling characteristics are enhanced by this location.

The bolt carrier is square cut and has a cam slot in which the bolt itself rotates and rides rearward. A free-floating firing pin is retained in the carrier by a cross-pin and rubber O-ring. Two M1 carbine-type lugs lock the rotating bolt. Instead of the usual barrel extension, a sleeve has been welded to the receiver body and the bolt lugs lock into its milled recesses (a borrowing from the Soviet AKM rifle).

Upon firing and after the projectile has moved about 13 inches down the bore, propellant gases pass through the gas block and drive the piston rearward. After 1/3-inch of free travel to assure that gas pressure has dropped to a safe level, the carrier starts to rotate and unlock the bolt. After camming through an arc of 30 degrees, the bolt is fully unlocked and travels rearward with the carrier and piston, extracting the empty case and compressing the drive spring against the front receiver wall. The compressed spring drives the carrier and piston forward as a fresh round is stripped from the magazine. Upon chambering, the bolt comes to a stop as the carrier continues forward to cam the bolt into the locked position.

The trigger mechanism is simple and well-designed. Semiautomatic fire is obtained by the usual disconnecter between the trigger and sear (which operates in a bent at the hammer's axis). A spring-loaded safety sear controls hammer release until the bolt is completely locked as it is actuated by the bolt carrier's last forward movement. The selector switch has three positions: "S" for safe, "1" for semiautomatic fire and "A" for full-auto. These positions should be reversed since it is more natural to push forward from "safe" into the two firing modes.

Upper and lower receiver bodies are sheet-metal stampings. Guide rails and ejector are welded and riveted to the upper receiver shell. The cocking handle slot at the rear portion of the upper receiver has been fitted with a spring-loaded dust cover. The rifle features a hold-open system which retains the bolt group in the rearward position after the magazine has been emptied, so there is a bolt catch on the left side of the lower receiver. It's almost identical to the one used on the M16. In practice it is easier to draw back slightly on the retracting handle and just let it fly forward. By pressing its lower tang inward, the bolt catch can be used to hold the bolt group rearward when no magazine is in place. However, without a magazine, slapping the butt smartly will cause the bolt group to leap forward. The trigger mechanism components are

retained by pins in the lower receiver.

Early 70 series rifles were phosphate finished only. Currently the rifles are finished with the same tough black epoxy resin over phosphate used on the Beretta Model 12S submachine gun (see "Beretta's Mean (Sub) Machine," SOF, March 1983). Oddly enough, the bolt and carrier have been finished in this manner also, although it quickly wears off the bearing surfaces on these two components.

Two buttstock configurations are offered and easily interchanged. A high-impact rigid plastic stock with a steel butt plate is used on the AR 70 model (AR — Assault Rifle or *Fucile d'Assalto* in Italian). The folding-stock version, called the SC 70 (SC — Special Troops Carbine or *Carabine per Trupers Speciali*) was originally equipped with a single-piece wire-type stock which proved to be unstable and insubstantial. It has been replaced by a hefty FN FAL/Galil-shaped stock that differs principally in latch-up (which is not as secure as the other two). Fabricated from tubular steel with an aluminum butt plate and a plastic sleeve over the top tube, it provides compactness in exchange for a slight loss in stability over the rigid plastic stock.

The four-port bird-cage flash suppressor forms the front portion of a five-inch investment-cast sleeve which slips over the barrel. The threaded and notched rear portion retains the gas block which is removed during disassembly. The sleeve also serves to hold the 40mm Mecar rifle grenade which the rifle is equipped to fire.

To mount the grenade for firing, the U-shaped sheet metal lever, attached to the gas block, must be raised to the vertical position. It closes a valve, shutting off the gas system to employ all of the ballistite (blank) cartridge's gas pressure to propel the grenade. A grenade launching sight, attached to the rear sight protective ears and containing 50-, 75- and 100-meter apertures, is also raised for this purpose.

The Belgian Mecar 40mm rifle grenades include fragmentation, antitank, smoke and illumination types. While those requiring a special ballistite cartridge are still available, the bullet range variety which enables use of standard ball ammunition is becoming prevalent. The low recoil of both types permits firing from the shoulder. The Mecar grenades turn every rifleman into a grenadier without special weaponry.

The Beretta 70 series forearm is hooked around the front pin which holds the lower and upper receivers together and held by a spring clip to the gas tube. It is easily removed yet securely retained. The original forearm had a trapezoidal cross-section, was ribbed and constructed of thin-walled, high-impact black plastic. After just a few magazines of full-auto burst fire it becomes uncomfortably hot.

The forearm had been replaced by a cylindrical, gray plastic forearm with longitudinal grooves. More comfortable and fabricated from thicker stock, it still overheats during sustained fire sequences. Plastic alone will not do the job. Aluminum heat shields of the type used on the M16 forearm are the only positive cure for this problem.

The rear sight is a flip type with apertures for 150 and 300 meters. It is protected by large, heavy ears and is only adjustable for windage by a large slotted screw-head on the right side. The front sight, mounted to the gas block, is a post with an offset bead head. It is adjustable for elevation zero. Since the bead is slightly offset, horizontal impact will change, too. (Why this was done I do not know.) Substantial protective ears have been milled into the gas block.

The AR 70 rifle is fitted with an integral scope base, machine spot-welded in no less than 12 places to the top of the receiver. It's not going to move, ever. A four-power combat scope and night-vision equipment are currently available but will not be marketed in the United States due to their high cost. Beretta U.S.A. Corp., (17601 Indian Head Hwy., Accokeek, MD 20607), exclusive importers of all Beretta products, plans to introduce a domestic scope and mount in the near future.

The ribbed, black plastic pistol grip of the Beretta 70 series is the very best to be found on any assault rifle. Hand-filling, comfortable and set to the right grip-to-frame angle, it speeds target acquisition considerably. A storage compartment inside the pistol grip holds an oiler, bore brush and pull-through rod. Open it by lifting the tang of the grip's bottom plate with the nose of a cartridge and sliding it outward.

The magazine well's flapper-type release catch is fast and sure. As with the Kalashnikov and Galil, magazines must be rocked into place. The 30-rd. staggered box magazine is of all-steel construction — heavier than those of the M16, but sturdier. Contrary to Beretta's own literature, no 40-rd. magazine is, or ever was, available.

The bayonet lug does not accept the U.S. M7 bayonet, rather one of Beretta's design. So, who cares anyway? A detachable bipod is also available. The SC 70 folding stock models use the well-designed Model 12S submachine gun sling. This heavy web sling has easy-to-engage spring hooks on each end. The rear hook rotates 360 degrees. The sling issued with the AR 70 rigid-stock rifles has a front spring hook and rear webbing clamp similar to that of the older U.S. web slings. The clamp is a flimsy and thin stamping which disengages continually. It needs to be beefed-up.

Now available for the first time in the United States is a BATF-approved semiauto-only version of the AR 70 rifle

BERETTA



RIGHT: Even the smallest Beretta 70 — the SC 70 SHORT — showed excellent full-auto controllability and high hit probability.

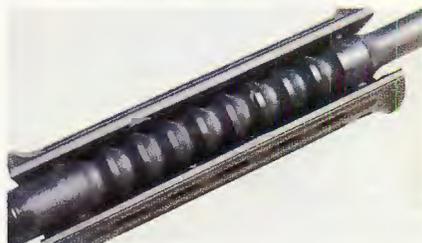


LEFT: Beretta 70 bolt assembly, top to bottom: bolt carrier, bolt, firing pin retaining pin, firing pin and retracting handle.



LOWER LEFT: Like other 70-series weapons, 70/78's barrel changes in seconds. Disassembly shows forearm and gas block.

BELOW: Radial cooling fins milled into chamber end of barrel in 70/78 SAW.



BERETTA 70 SERIES SPECIFICATIONS

	AR 70	SC 70	SC 70 SHORT	70/78 SAW
Caliber		∅ 5.56mm NATO ∅		
Weight, empty	7.8 lbs.	7.9 lbs.	7.6 lbs.	11.7 lbs
Length				
butt extended	37.6"	37.8"	32.3"	37.6"
butt folded	—	29.0"	23.75"	—
Barrel length	17.7"	17.7"	12.6"	17.7"
	all barrels four groove, right-hand twist, pitch of 1 turn in 12 inches			
Sights				
front	all adjustable post type with protective hood			
rear	all flip type with apertures set for 150 and 300 meters			
Integral scope base on AR 70 and SC 70 rifles				
Method of operation — gas-operated, no regulator; two-lug rotating bolt; fire from the closed bolt position				
Feed	all bottom fed magazine using 30-rd. all steel staggered box type			
Cyclic rate	700 rpm	700 rpm	700 rpm	700 rpm
	[available semiauto-only also]			
Grenade	military versions set up to launch the 40mm Mecar grenade series except SC 70 SHORT			
Finish	Black epoxy resin over phosphate			
Price	\$945: Military version \$924			
	\$749: Semiauto-only			
Accessories:	Sling, bayonet, scope, spare magazines and light bipod			

Note: Full-auto versions of any of the above are available to law enforcement agencies and qualified Class 3 dealers only.

Manufactured by Fabbrica D'Armi Pietro Beretta S.P.A., 25063 Gardone Valtrompia, Brescia, Italy. Imported exclusively by Beretta U.S.A. Corp., Dept. SOF, 17601 Indian Head Highway, Accokeek, Maryland 20607.



Field stripped SC 70 SHORT.



Close-up of SC 70 SHORT lower receiver shows bolt catch on left and selector switch above pistol grip.



Clearly marked flip-type rear sight.

Integral scope base mounted to top of AR 70/SPORT receiver.



Pistol-grip compartment holds cleaning gear.



Military 70-series retracting handles are canted upward to allow ambidextrous cocking.

Chopped flash suppressor squeezed close to gas block on SC 70 SHORT.



which weighs 7.8 pounds without magazine and sling. Called the Model 70/SPORT, the bayonet lug and grenade launching capability have been omitted. The safety sear has been removed from the trigger mechanism and the bolt carrier altered to prevent firing in the full-auto mode. The selector switch has, of course, only two positions — "S" for Safe and "1" for semiautomatic fire. At present, the older, ribbed black plastic forearm is being issued with this weapon. Its tendency to overheat under conditions of sustained full-auto fire is a complete non sequitur on this semiautomatic rifle. The front sight is a straight post type with no top bead and thus adjustment for elevation zero will not affect horizontal impact. With a suggested retail price of \$749, the well-built and attractive Beretta Model 70/SPORT should prove popular among military weapons' enthusiasts. Unfortunately, its retracting handle is not canted upward like those of the SC 70 SHORT and 70/78 SAW, so it's not quite as easy to cock the rifle with the left hand. An SC version with the folding stock will be on the scene shortly.

The SC 70 SHORT is the smallest and most compact of the 70 series weapons' system. With a barrel length of only 12.6 inches (almost an inch shorter than the 13.5-inch barrel of the Galil SAR) and an overall length of 23.75 inches with the stock folded, the SC 70 SHORT is another nail in the submachine gun's coffin. I carried this weapon in the field in El Salvador, where it was much admired by everyone in the Atlacatl Battalion.

"What kind of weapon is that?" they inquired through translator 1st Lt. Koch. I told them.

"They say it looks very small for a rifle. Does it shoot well?"

That night I had an opportunity to show them. During a firing exercise associated with ambush drills, I dumped a 30-round mag of tracer into the bush 100 meters away. Shooting from the shoulder the fiery stream of tracers was straight and level, with no visible dispersion. Even in the jungle you could hose any outline you could see.

"Asombroso" — astounding — a sergeant standing near me whispered after the magazine ran dry.

Beretta's SC 70 SHORT weighs only 7.6 pounds without magazine and sling. In addition, maneuvering through the bush was made easier by its compactness, and its excellent balance eased the burden of long marches. My only misgiving was that the Beretta magazines would not interchange with those of the M16s used by my comrades. This fine rifle is just the ticket for vehicle crews and special operations groups. Because of its barrel length, the piston and gas cylinder have been shortened by

Continued on page 90

CENTRAL America presents a fascinating opportunity for the student of military small arms. With an almost continuous history of warfare, these small countries have provided gun merchants with more than a century of lucrative transactions. During SOF's recent expedition to El Salvador, I was able to test and evaluate a most interesting potpourri of weaponry.

The Argentine 9mm FMK 3 submachine gun, manufactured by Fabrica Militar de Armas Portatiles

"D.M." Rosario, is one of the worst in both design and execution that I have ever fired. It is blowback-operated and fires from the open-bolt position. The model purchased in large quantity by the Salvadoran government has a retracting wire stock copied from the U.S. M3 submachine gun. Few features on the M3 "grease gun" deserve imitation and the feeble wire stock is certainly not one of them.

The FMK 3's upper and lower receivers are stamped sheet-metal

pressings held together by two spring-loaded pins, which are removed for disassembly. The barrel is retained by a threaded cap, which one unscrews — for what seems to be an eternity — for field-stripping. The 11.4-inch barrel has six grooves with a right-hand twist of 1:9.85 inches. The wrap-around bolt encloses 7.1 inches of the barrel. The oversize, cumbersome forearm is made of plastic. The entire weapon has been finished in black baked enamel.

The front sight is an adjustable post



WEIRD WEAPONS IN EL SALVADOR

and the rear a flip type with 50- and 100-meter apertures. (Because the magazine well is located in the grip assembly, some casual observers have thought they were looking at an UZI.) The magazine is a modern two-position-feed Beretta-type with a 40-rd. capacity. There is a useless grip-safety. The selector has three positions: "S" (safe), "R" (*repetition* = single shot) and "A" (automatic).

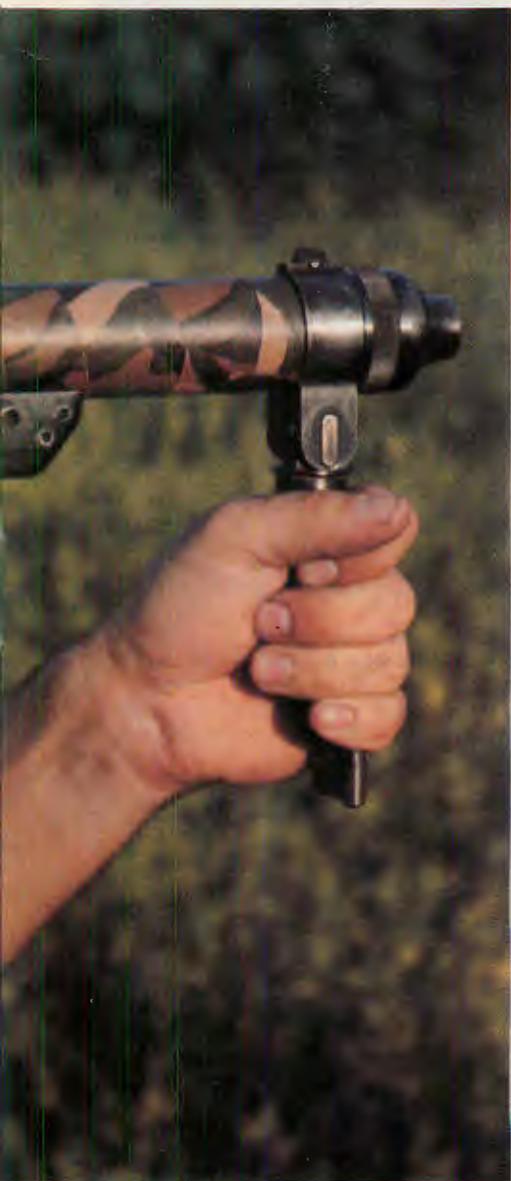
This black turd weighs 7.6 pounds empty, more than the M16A1 rifle! The

weapon submitted to me was a brand-new, unfired specimen. During the test-fire sequences, I determined the cyclic rate to be approximately 650 rpm. When it can be made to function, the FMK 3 is quite stable in burst fire, as well it should be at that weight.

During the first 40-rd. magazine, the FMK 3 failed to feed twice and failed to extract three times. The weapon also doubled twice when in the semiauto mode. These stoppages continued and I was told they are typical.

I have an unconfirmed report that no less than 14 National Police officers have lost their lives in gun fights as a direct consequence of FMK 3 malfunctions. It seems the magazine well-to-chamber angle is incorrect. The extractor spring also seemed weak. The latter problem can be corrected, but the former is an inherent design failure.

Some of the extraction failures are a result of the erratic, low-powered Argentine ammunition. The best use of these submachine guns would be to



ABOVE: Lt. Col. Steben of the Cavalry Regiment, SOF's Kokalis and Atlacatl 1st Lt. David Koch pose with Panhard AML 245 Armored Car. **LEFT:** Carlos Cucalon fires Mauser Model 57. **UPPER RIGHT:** Fore grip, trigger housing, grip and modified MP38/40 magazine of Mauser Model 57. **LOWER RIGHT:** Mauser Model 57 SMG, serial number 21, covered with camouflage tape for protection from wet Salvadoran climate.



SOF Uncovers What's Shooting Whom

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



TOP LEFT: AAT NF1 mounted coaxially on gun turret. **TOP RIGHT:** Coaxial-configuration AAT 7.62 NF1 removed from Panhard Armoured Car. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Disassembled AAT 7.62 NF1.



LEFT: Take that, BATF! Shop-modified Browning HiPower becomes machine pistol. **ABOVE:** Fire selector switch above right side of trigger on home-grown Browning machine pistol.



UPPER RIGHT: 7x57mm Madsen LMG used by Salvadoran Army. **LOWER RIGHT:** Crest shows Salvadoran original issue of recaptured Madsen LMG. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Argentine 9mm FMK 3 SMG: heavy, badly designed, unreliable and, perhaps, the worst SMG ever marketed.

distribute all of them with large quantities of Argentine ammunition along trails frequented by the communist guerrillas.

Unfortunately, the Salvadoran Army is replacing all of its FN-manufactured Browning HiPower pistols with those made under license in Argentina (also by Fabrica Militar de Armas). However, unlike the excellent specimens recently brought into the United States by Pacific International Merchandising Corp. (Dept. SOF, 2215 "J" St., Sacramento, CA 95816), the ones I examined in El Salvador had neither slide markings nor any semblance of quality control. The feed ramps and throats were rough and burred, the trigger pulls dreadful and many of the magazines defective. The Argentine HiPowers all have black baked-enamel finish over phosphate — superior to bluing in the humid heat of Central America.

While visiting the Cavalry Regiment, I fired an FN HiPower that had been locally altered into a machine pistol. A selector lever, fitted to the right side of the frame above the trigger, modified the function of the tripping lever and plunger to permit full-auto fire at a cyclic rate of 1,250 rpm. A 32-rd. magazine had also been fabricated for this pistol. This well-executed, interesting exercise in ingenuity has little practical application. Without either shoulder stock or front foregrip, with no muzzle compensator to reduce climb and without a burst-control mechanism, the weapon is difficult to control, except for the most experienced operators.

The Salvadoran Army's earliest true squad automatic was the Danish Madsen Model 1934 Light Machine Gun in caliber 7x57mm Mauser. It is still encountered in the hands of communist guerrillas and in battalion supply rooms. Introduced in 1902, the Madsen LMG has had a long history with minor users: Having been sold to 34 countries, it saw extensive service in wars, big and small, for more than 80 years.

The Madsen's method of operation is somewhat peculiar and merits close examination. The hinged bolt is similar to that of the lever-action Peabody/Martini rifle. The unusual recoil operation is part short and part long recoil. As the projectile leaves the muzzle, recoil forces move the barrel, barrel extension and bolt to the rear. A pin on the right side of the bolt moves backward in grooves in an operating cam plate mounted to the side of the receiver. After ½-inch of travel the bolt is cammed upward, away from the breech (the "short" portion of the recoil system). The barrel extension and barrel continue to move rearward to a point slightly exceeding the combined overall length of the cartridge case and projectile (the long portion of the recoil

... the Madsen's done its share of killing

system, responsible for the extremely low cyclic rate of about 400 rpm).

After the breech is exposed, an odd lever-type extractor/ejector, mounted under the barrel, is pivoted to the rear, extracting the empty case and ejecting it through the bottom of the receiver. The bolt's operating cam then forces the bolt face to pivot downward, aligning a cartridge feed groove in the left side of the bolt with the chamber. While the bolt and barrel are returning forward, a really strange cartridge-rammer lever, mounted on the barrel extension, is pivoted forward, loading a cartridge.

Just too many things take place during the Madsen's operating cycle and the principle is unsound in a machine gun. Unless the very highest quality ammunition is used, stoppages are frequent and difficult to clear rapidly. And most of the action must be removed to change barrels. Its complex mechanism required extensive machining and the Madsen was expensive to manufacture. The box magazines used on this gun are also prone to failure, as they feed from double column down to single column and the feed lips are in the receiver rather than on the magazine (also a feature of the Johnson M1941 LMG).

For all of its deficiencies, the Madsen was generally well-regarded over its lifespan. It was well-built and accurate, with high hit probability. With its extremely slow rate of fire and low recoil (especially in caliber 7x57mm) there is little to disturb the gunner's aim. With good ammunition and undamaged magazines, it will do. Although it cannot compare to the Bren or even the BAR, the Madsen's done its share of killing, and then some, from the Russo-Japanese War of 1904 to the present.

Prior to fielding the Heckler & Koch MP5 submachine gun, the Salvadoran military made use of another product from Dansk Industri Syndikat, the Madsen Model 1950 submachine gun (as well as a few of the earlier Model

1946). Innovative and designed to be produced at minimum cost, the M50 receiver is made of two mirror-image sheet-metal pressings, connected by a hinge at the rear and held together by the barrel nut. Unfortunately, this muzzle nut has been known to unscrew during firing sequences, opening the receiver shell and dropping the bolt group onto the ground. This embarrassing predicament has led to its nickname, the "Banana Peel Gun."

In addition, the M50 has a wretched bolt safety, located at the rear of the magazine well, which must be depressed when the weapon is fired. As if that were not enough, when the stock is folded it blocks access to this bolt safety. Otherwise, the M50 is quite unremarkable, but reliable, firing by straight blowback from the open bolt position.

El Salvador's final association with Madsen weaponry was the ill-fated Madsen-Saetter GPMG (see "Spreading the Dog Too Thin," SOF, September '83, p. 69).

The Salvadoran Cavalry Regiment is equipped with the Panhard AML (*Automitrailleuse Legere*) 245 Armored Car. It is one of the very best. Its 7.62mm NATO coaxial machine gun is one of the very worst. The main gun is the 90mm D921, firing HE and HEAT ammunition up to 1,500 meters in range. The coaxial machine gun for this three-man (commander/loader, gunner and driver) armored car is the AAT 7.62 NF1. This is nothing more than the woeful French AA 52 GPMG chambered in 7.62mm NATO instead of 7.5x54mm French. The vehicular configuration is without butt stock, has a heavy barrel and fires electronically.

The AA 52 (*Arme Automatique Model 52 = GPMG model 1952*) machine guns are delayed-blowback in operation. Designed for ease of manufacture, the receiver body is made of semicylindrical tubes welded together. The barrel chambers are fluted to ease extraction, as are Heckler & Koch's retarded blowback weapons.

To prevent premature unlocking while chamber pressures are still too high, the AA 52 employs an unusual, troublesome, two-piece bolt. (The bolt's two parts are joined by a fragile T-shaped connecting pin about one inch long. If this little pin is broken or lost the weapon cannot be made to work.) The bolt head contains a lever, the short end of which rests in a receiver slot while the long end bears against the bolt body. Gas pressure on the bolt head forces this lever to rotate, accelerating the bolt body's rearward movement but restraining the bolt head until the lever clears the receiver slot. After extraction the empty case hits two ejectors on the bottom rear of the feed tray and is expelled down through the bottom of the gun.

Headspace is critical in this system and although the receiver bearing surface can easily be replaced, severe deformation is often evident in a bulge in which the case expands into the bullet guide. At the time of its adoption, French designers argued this defect would in fact prevent the cases from being reloaded by their opponents. . . as if anyone else in all the world except the French and their colonies uses, or would want to use, the 7.5x54mm cartridge.

The AA 52 series fires from the open bolt position. The floating firing pin can be forced forward only when the bolt body butts up against the bolt head. As this cannot occur until the lever has rotated into the receiver slot and lockup is complete, firing out of battery is impossible. To reduce wear on the sear surface, a sear trip mechanism similar to that first used on the MG 42 has been incorporated.

The AAT 7.62 NF1 has a cyclic rate of about 900 rpm, acceptable for

vehicular hard-mounted machine guns. As expected, hit probability was high with the gun attached to a 5.5-ton tripod. However — as this poor grunt found out — even with the evacuator fan operating, one cannot fire for more than two minutes, due to the unbearable fumes within the Panhard's cramped quarters.

The AA 52 machine guns cannot make use of the usual roller in a reciprocating feedway to operate the feed pawl, since the two-piece bolt



stays separated until just before ignition. A cam groove on the bolt holds a lever which operates the feed pawl. Unlike most modern GPMGs which move rounds over one half pitch for each stroke of the bolt, the AA 52 collects a round on the forward stroke of the bolt and positions it for firing as the bolt goes back. Thus the gun must remain cocked before a loaded bullet can be put in place. The AA 52 disintegrating belt, although based on the U.S. M13, is not interchangeable (on this gun). I

found the Salvadorans using HK 21 non-disintegrating belts in the AAT 7.62 NF1 with moderate success.

Barrel changes are hazardous. A barrel release catch must be pressed and the hot barrel (no carrying handle on the vehicular version) rotated and pushed forward. The barrels are neither stellite-lined nor chrome-plated.

The excellent Panhard Armored Car deserves a much better coaxial gun than the AAT 7.62 NF1, which ranks in infamy with the U.S. M73/M219. The

M240, coaxial version of the famed FN MAG (See "Blue Force Blast," SOF, December '82) would be just the ticket to permanently collect on some communist laundry.

Prior to the advent of U.S. aid and fielding of the M60, the HK21 was the GPMG of issue in the Salvadoran Army. It has not been the most successful branch on the fine Heckler & Koch tree of weaponry. The HK21 is a

Continued on page 95



LEFT:
Theoretical perfection fails in practice as SOF's Kokalis testifies HK21 is world's most punishing GPMG. Photo: David Koch
ABOVE: Black sheep of the family: HK21.
ABOVE RIGHT: HK21 feed ramp.
CENTER: HK21 quick-change heavy barrel.
LOWER RIGHT: HK21 feed block with twin feed sprockets speckled with powder from dud round which lodged bullet in barrel. Fortunately, it was the last cartridge used in author's test.



CRASH COURSE AT KHE SANH

C-130 Slides to Disaster

Text & Photo by Ernie Husted

I glanced out the door to freedom. It was that close, but I had no chance of escaping. I was trapped in a classroom with an instructor who was determined to make me smarter, whether I agreed or not.

It's not easy to hide in the middle of a group of people, but I had. I was in the back row near the corner, with a huge post right in front of me. It's very important to pick a good place to sit when you have no intention of listening. If you don't you run the risk of being rudely interrupted from important daydreaming by someone asking you a silly question about something of which you've never heard.

I made the effort to listen to the lecture, but it was doomed from the start. I could only hear about every fourth word said. My mind, eager to help, started filling in the blanks with my own words. Several times I started chuckling at the new, more exciting sentences I was making. I ended up wondering what he was really talking about.

The rain had been coming down all morning. Our classroom turned out to be far from waterproof. The walls were made of stacked sandbags, as was the ceiling. The plastic covering on top had blown away and the water was coming in.

I watched this stream of water slowly make its way from ceiling to floor. The stream had started out as a little trickle at first, then more and more water joined in until it began flowing over and between the sandbags. It was interesting to watch until I realized my feet were sitting in the mud it had made. I lost interest.

Boredom is a terrible thing, and I was bored. Here I was, a full-grown man, kind of, fighting for his country in Vietnam. I was at Khe Sanh, one of the most dangerous outposts around, and I was feeling the very same way I had as a little kid in church, waiting for the moments to pass so I could go home and play. The only thing was that I was a long way from home this time.

The sound of a distant plane heading our way caused me to come around and once again gaze out the door. The fog had settled in around us. All our drab surroundings were covered in a soft white and gray which reduced visibility.

I had gotten used to the sound of planes close to me. Our area was right next to the runway, and I do mean right next to it. The wingtips of the planes passed over the trenches we had dug. An honest 50 feet is all that separated us.



Would-be rescuers could only watch when flames swallowed pilot's cabin.

When the heavy monsoon rains first started, something funny happened. Of course, this all depends on what you consider funny. Our runway sank into the mud, disappearing from sight. Since all supplies for the base came in by air, the missing runway made it harder than usual to receive them. The planes would make low passes over where the runway used to be, bellies no more than 10 feet off the ground. Then the people on board would push the supplies out the back. The planes came in very heavy to keep us supplied.

With this heavy fog, there had been no planes yet today. I guess they couldn't see well enough.

The sound of the plane became louder as it approached. I couldn't see through the fog, but I had a clear picture in my mind of what was happening. I could tell by the noise of the engines that the plane had dropped down and was making its low-level approach.

About now the plane was clearing the end of the runway and starting to . . . I flinched when I heard the loud crash. Something was wrong. The awful sound of metal sliding and gouging out the earth confirmed my feelings.

The horrible sound continued as I jumped out of my seat and ran through the door into the fog, heading toward the runway. I glanced ahead and saw the huge tail section of a C-130 transport plane slice through the fog like the fin of a shark through water. I couldn't see the plane, just the tail section as it came to a grinding halt.

There was an explosion as the plane's fuel supply started to burn. The fire, bright orange and red, rose high over the wreckage. The black smoke pushed the fog away and dirtied the sky. As I approached the plane, so much was happening that I couldn't handle what I was seeing.

The fog was pretty well gone around the

area. At the end of the runway, I could see where the plane had first hit. One of the engines had been knocked off and the bent blades of the propeller stuck up into the air like a marker. A section of one of the huge wings lay along the crash path. Burning pieces of plane and cargo littered the ground. The smooth skin of the plane was wrinkled and deformed: Only the tail section remained intact.

In front of me was the front section of the plane, completely surrounded by a ring of fire. A Marine was up next to the nose, trying to get through to one of the pilots who was trapped inside. The fire had cut off any way for us to get through to help. The Marine, ignoring the fire closing in, pulled his K-BAR from its sheath and started to break the thick Plexiglass. His knife was just starting to make progress when the blade snapped off.

I could see clearly the fear in the pilot's face. The flames were inside with him now. The Marine became frantic. He started to beat against the Plexiglass with his fists. He was hitting it as hard as he could. Blow after blow he continued, even though both his hands were bloody. Several other Marines broke through the flames and dragged the first one back to safety.

The pilot was now a mass of flames. We couldn't hear his screams over the noise of the fire, but we could see it happening. The stench of burning flesh went to my nostrils and stayed there. Nothing I tried would let me smell fresh air again.

The sound of fire trucks drew my attention. They were roaring down the road with their lights and sirens going full blast. Even before the trucks had come to a full stop, men had jumped off. The bulky silver fire suits made them look like space men.

Without a second's hesitation, they disappeared into the fire to try and save the pilots. It was far too late for that, but they still checked. The trucks started shooting streams of foam into the fire. It sizzled as it hit the hot wreckage.

The silver figures came back through the fire. One removed his hood and shook his head. It may have been the smoke that was causing his eyes to water, but I don't think so. I was feeling the same way.

I have no idea how much time passed before the fires at the wreckage and all along the runway were put out. I watched a charred, burned hunk of something being dragged out of the smoldering metal. I couldn't recognize what it was. When it was zipped up in a body bag, I felt sick. A bitter taste formed in my throat and mouth.

I could stand no more. I started walking away to clear my thoughts. My body and mind were very tired. I felt like I had been drained of all energy. I wished that I could have been able to change things. Sitting in that dull, boring class was far better than the sight of the pilot in the flames.

Near the edge of the base perimeter, I found a quiet, peaceful spot and sat down. There I stayed for several hours, just looking out into the green jungle. ☘

WHY DID PVT. TINGLEY DIE?

SOF Wants to Know Why Marines Were Easy Targets in Beirut

by John Metzger



Rick Venable was in Beirut for SOF in the summer of 1983. He took quite a few photos, and SOF would like to make these pictures available to the families of Marines who were killed in the bombing. These selections are just some samples of what we didn't use in our November '83 story, "Marines in the Middle." Please address all inquiries to SOF, c/o John Metzger, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. Phone: (303) 449-3750.



ROBERT K. Brown received a letter the other day from the family of PFC Stephen Tingley, USMC. The Tingleys wrote that on 30 September 1983 they received a letter from their son — stationed in Beirut — which stated the following: "Guess what? I made the front cover of the November issue of *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine, which is a big magazine for servicemen. At least we all read it. I'll see if I can send you a copy. You can imagine how jealous the guys are about it!"

The Tingleys continued their story: "The picture on the cover of your November '83 issue was of our son. We were so surprised and proud. We also spotted him in the picture on page 64.

"On October 23rd, we heard of the tragic bombing and three days later, which would have been Stephen's birthday, we received a letter from him — and word from the Marines that he was missing. The next day came the dreaded news of his death. We later learned from Stephen's buddy, who was standing next to him at the time and was blown out a window and survived, that they had just returned from patrol 10 minutes earlier and were cleaning their rifles.

"This boy is home now. They will be making arrangements for him to come visit with our family, which he wants to do. We have gone to funerals for two other buddies, and these families also want to meet with this Marine as we are all grasping for information and news that anyone may have about our boys.

"We have no pictures of Stephen on tour in Beirut, as everything of his was destroyed in the blast. We wondered if *Soldier of Fortune* would have any other photographs that were not published in the magazine that could be shared with the other families that we are in contact with."

Brown immediately set to the task of gathering all photographs of Marines in Beirut and sent them to the Tingleys for them to look at, and pass on to the other families that they have been in touch with.

If there are any other families of Marines killed in Lebanon who would like to peruse our photos to see if they can spot their sons, SOF would be glad to supply a set of pictures. We would then provide color prints free of charge for Marine families. We are having the November cover shot framed for the Tingleys. We encourage families to contact one another and pass the word. Write to SOF, c/o John Metzger, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. We want to help.

We also want to know *why* 239 American servicemen died in the bombing. Who established the rules of engagement, and what made our Marines such easy targets? After about 30 calls to Washington and Beirut, we concluded that either no one was talking or they were blaming someone else.

In any case, there is an inordinate amount of confusion surrounding the question of who is responsible. For example, I called the State Department, and their public

Continued on page 98



Bushmen prepare to saddle up in the morning to resume routine duties after spending night near a kraal in Kavangoland.



SADF'S BUSHMAN BATTALION

**Primitive
Trackers
Fight 20th
Century War**

**Text & Photos
by Morgan Norval**

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 71

DURING the SADF's (South African Defense Force) withdrawal from Angola during Operation Savannah in 1974-75, they came across groups of Bushmen and their families who had been abandoned in southeastern Angola by the Portuguese when they gave up their former colony.

These Bushmen were in bad shape. They had been decimated by SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) troops who had hunted them down and exterminated them whenever they could, and those who had so far survived were too sick and weak to secure even the barest necessities of food and shelter. The South Africans gave the Bushmen food and medical treatment and brought them back to South West Africa (Namibia) with them.

Bushmen are drawn from two main tribal groups, the Barakwenka and the Vasquela. Although traditional enemies, both groups have settled in the western Caprivi Strip of South West Africa. This may prove to be their last secure domain.

There are more than 3,000 Bushmen living at Omega Base, the western Caprivi headquarters of 201 Battalion. The Bushmen and their families live in a full-service community which is part of, and not separate from, the military compound at Omega. Here they are provided with food, clothing, medical and dental facilities and all the rest of the services and conveniences of a modern military base.

Bushman soldiers get the same pay as white troopers (before, money did not exist in the Bushman's primitive culture). Single Bushmen live in typical military-style barracks, while the married ones are provided housing. A married Bushman gets one house for each of his wives — some have as many as three — and construct their own dwellings with wood furnished by the government.

The Portuguese used the Bushmen as local militia (like the Montagnards in Vietnam). The South Afri-



Bushman tracker Sgt. Maputao interprets track for SOF and SADF officers.



Signs Bushman trackers look for: Grass that is crushed not bent (bright yellow area in center of photo) shows that a man has stepped on it, obvious sign of human spoor.



Sgt. Maputao fires 60mm patrol mortar — deadly weapon in Bushman hands.

cans, however, decided to capitalize on their exceptional natural tracking and bushcraft abilities and organized them into a specialized counterinsurgency unit designated 31 Battalion. In 1978 31 Battalion became part of the South West Africa Territorial Force and was designated 201 Battalion.

Five officers are seconded to the battalion

from the South African Defense Force. The rest of the white element, both officers and NCOs, are from South West Africa.

Since many of the Bushmen keep black ravens as pets, it was suggested that the raven be incorporated on the official battalion badge. However, the army heraldry department changed the design, substi-

tuting a crow with a white band around its neck for the raven. This splash of white, so the heraldry bureaucrats decided, symbolized the white leadership element in the battalion. Crow or raven, the badge is fittingly distinctive: This unit is unique, in both organization and mission.

The battalion is composed of four rifle companies, A, B, C and D. Of these, two stay in the bush for six-week-long operations while the other two rest and retrain at Omega.

The 201 Battalion's primary operations area is Ovamboland, but occasionally they operate in Kavangoland as well. Elements of the battalion have also been on incursions into Angola, such as Operation Protea in 1981 (see "To Russia with Love," SOF, January '82).

The individual companies are organized into seven teams of 20 to 23 men each. Most of these are reaction-force teams. They are held in reserve until a unit makes contact with SWAPO terrorists in the operational area. If called in, the reaction-force team (or teams, depending on the contact size) tracks and finds the enemy.

Each team is further divided into one to three groups, and three fighting vehicles (SADF "Buffalo" anti-landmine troop carriers) are assigned to each group. Half of the group runs on the track while half rides in the vehicles as a mobile reserve. Then they switch roles, giving their buddies on the ground a chance to rest. It is therefore possible to keep fresh trackers running on the track — and run they do!

In late 1982, elements of 201 Battalion picked up the spoor of seven SWAPO terrorists in eastern Ovamboland which led to a 278-kilometer marathon tracking operation. Of that distance, the Bushmen actually *ran* on the spoor for 190 clicks! They followed the terrorists for three days before making contact. It took two more contacts to stop the fleeing terrorists: All seven were killed. The Bushmen

suffered no losses.

The seven dead terrorists were part of SWAPO's so-called "special forces" detachment. SWAPO recruits, whether volunteers or shanghaied civilians, are sent to Lubango, SWAPO's military headquarters in Angola, for training. After six months' basic, the outstanding recruits are selected and sent to Volcano or Typhoon Base for specialized training as SWAPO "special-forces."

They take advanced courses in such terrorist tactics as sabotage, ambush and anti-tracking techniques to prepare for small-group insertions into their target areas inside South West Africa. Their anti-tracking course is obviously not up to snuff — as the Bushmen have repeatedly demonstrated.

The weapons used by the Bushmen are the principal infantry assault weapons used by the South African and South West African Territorial Forces. Captured weapons, such as the Soviet RPG-7 antitank rocket, are widely used by the Bushmen. They are plentiful, as huge quantities have been taken in cross-border operations on SWAPO bases. The RPG-7 is an extremely versatile attack and support weapon in the bush war.

The wounded and crippled are not invalidated out of the battalion. They stay with their comrades, and are given jobs such as base guard duty. This frees the regular Bushman soldier for rest and retraining so that he's fresh when it's time to go back to the bush.

Many would think that after nine years of fighting these warriors wouldn't need further training. But the Bushmen come from a society drastically different from our own. They have been hunters and gatherers for centuries and now they have been thrust squarely in the middle of a 20th-century counterinsurgency war. Their training period at Omega is geared to rapidly accelerating their adaptation to the benefits and evils of the '80s. They are, to use a trite modern

FREELANCE MARINE

Author Morgan Norval is no stranger to SOF readers. His article, "32 Battalion," appeared in the February '84 issue of SOF, and his articles on gun control have appeared in *Conservative Digest* and *Reason* magazines, as well as SOF (see "BATF On the Hot Seat," December '79). Norval, a former Marine, is now a freelance writer based in Washington, D.C.

STICKING SWAPO

by Gordon Watt

I'm a South African who's now attending an American university but four years ago I did my stint in the South African Security Force. As a 17-year-old private fresh from the city of Port Elizabeth, I was ready for action and glad to be stationed at a border camp in Ovamboland for six months.

I met a remarkable man in camp, a Bushman whose Christian name was John. The troopies called him "Old Stick" because of his peg leg. John had served as a scout for the army for five years but lost his left leg during a patrol back in 1979 when he had some bad luck with a landmine. He was retired from service because of his injuries — but John wasn't finished yet.

The Bushman decided to become a bounty hunter, going after big money paid by the Security Forces for SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) weapons. I first saw John hopping into camp with three AKs and a slew of ammo slung over his shoulder. This tiny man was quite a sight with all that equipment and only one leg.

John had a big smile for everyone but refused to tell us how he got the guns. He collected his money, waited around for a few days and then headed off into the bush, going north into Angola.

Five weeks later I was on a two-week patrol near the border when we stumbled onto four dead "swaps." Their throats were slit from ear to ear. Looking around, we concluded they'd made camp for the night where they lay and someone had sneaked in and cut them, one by one, as they slept.

These were the first enemy I had ever seen, and I was very happy to know that someone on our side was running about the bush with a rather sharp knife. Looking closer around the camp, we discovered a lot of footprints of a small right foot, usually with a peg hole right next to it. The sand around the camp was covered with these tracks. We guessed that John had dropped in on these boys and relieved them of all their earthly burdens.

When we returned to camp we learned that Old Stick had arrived a few days before us with — you guessed it — four AKs for the bounty. I don't know if John is still in the same line of work, but if you belong to SWAPO don't sleep in the bush of South West Africa.

phrase, "widening the scope of their experience."

At Omega they undergo extensive training at the company level in order to operate more efficiently as a cohesive large-scale unit. New tactics are developed and incorporated into the unit's bag of tricks. This is necessary because SWAPO terrorists quickly adapt to the tactics they face. Battalion CO, Commandant Brian Adams, hit the nail squarely on the head when he told SOF: "If we want to win this war, we have to be one step ahead of SWAPO."

The Bushmen are keen students and catch on quickly to the complexities of modern warfare, adapting them to their innate excellence in bushcraft. Able to survive long periods on minimal food and water, the Bushman has an instinctive, highly developed sense of danger, and has proved to be an astoundingly good "snap" shot.

They are deadly, for example, with the unit's 60mm patrol mortar. The mortar is nothing more than a copy of the WWII Japanese knee mortar. It is simple in design — a 60mm tube with the standard base-plate replaced by a small piece of metal welded to the bottom; the legs and aiming assembly are removed and a couple of hooks welded on the tube so it can be carried over one's back by a sling attached to the hooks.

To fire the mortar, the Bushmen place it on the ground, use the arm holding the tube to adjust for trajectory and windage, drop the round down the tube with the other hand and fire. One man can effectively fire this weapon, although "Kentucky windage" is improved if one person holds and "sights" the weapon while another drops the rounds down the tube.

The Bushmen are very good at determining projectile trajectory because of their proficiency with their age-old weapon — the bow and arrow. The patrol mortar has become a highly mobile, deadly weapon.

The Bushman's forte is

tracking. SOF was given a memorable demonstration of this skill. SOF and two SADF officers were taken into the bush by one of the white officers of the battalion. Our job was simple — take a hike and do everything in our power to obliterate, disguise or otherwise cover up our tracks so nobody could follow us.

We tried everything we could think of: walked in one another's track, walked on fallen logs, kept off the dirt by walking on clumps of grass — you name it, we tried it.

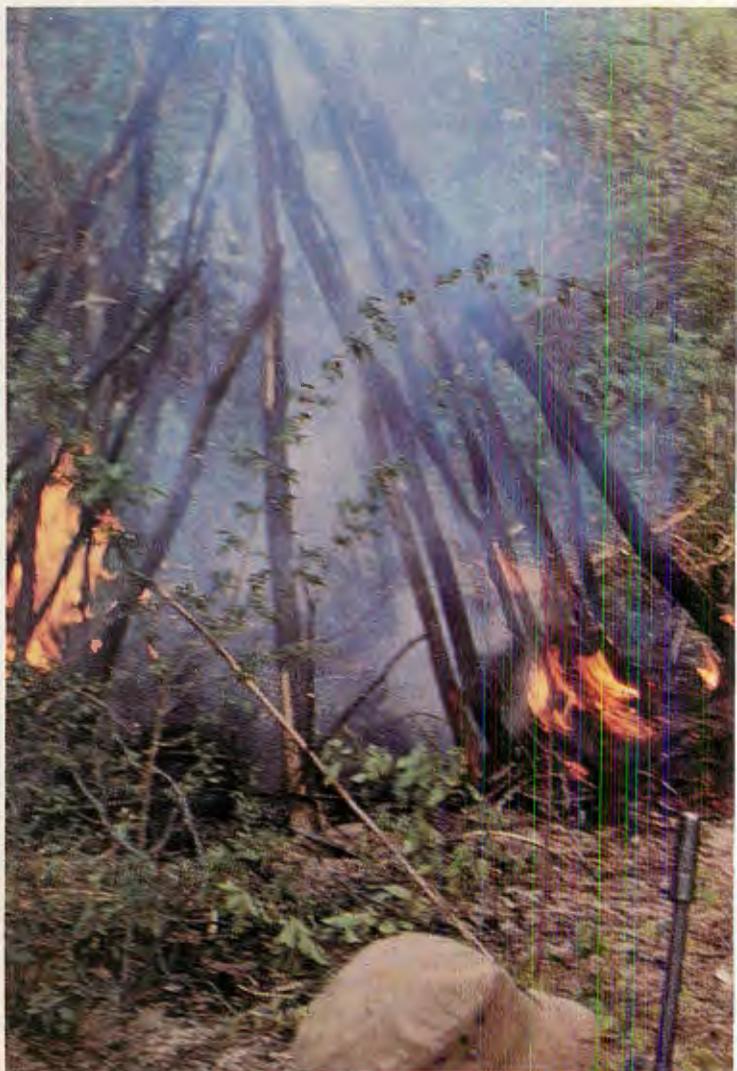
We even "bombshelled" — a South African expression for group members scattering in all directions, each doing his utmost to hide his trail. After bombshelling, each of us continued through the bush and eventually reached our preselected destination, then returned to our original starting point where two Bushman trackers were waiting.

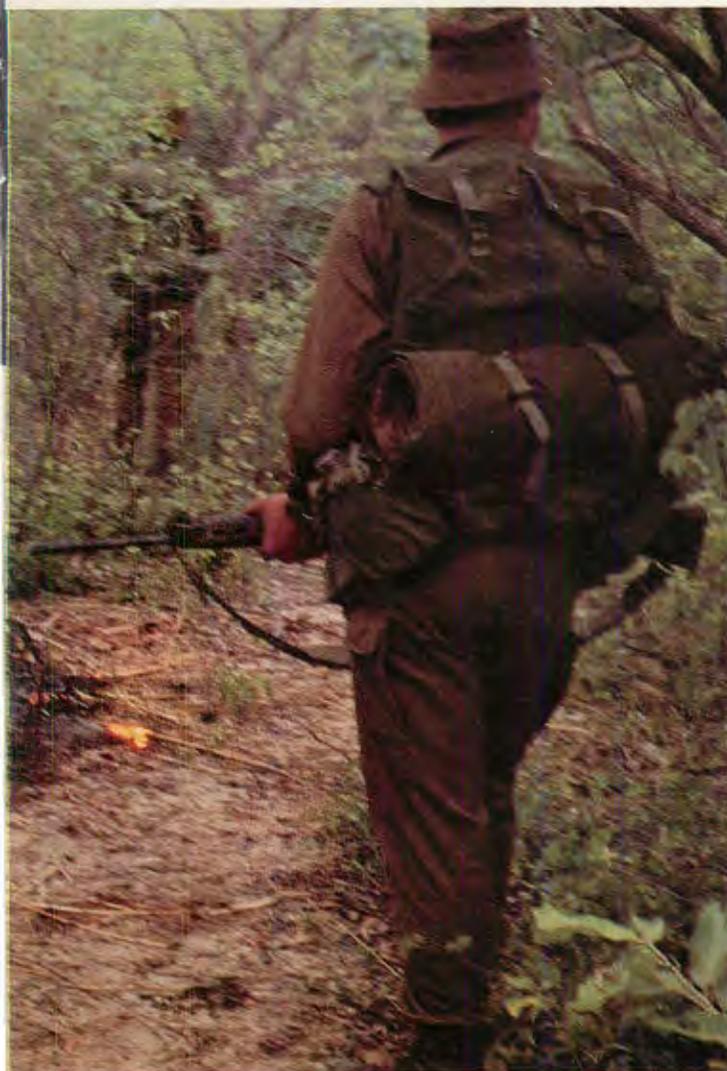
Off they went, hot on our trail, while we followed. If you've never seen a two-legged bloodhound at work, come to South West Africa and watch the Bushman. Actually, the Bushman puts the bloodhound to shame.

Not only did they follow our track with uncanny accuracy, but at the spot where the group decided to bombshell, one of the trackers, Sgt. Maputao, dropped his own bomb. He calmly pointed to the ground and said, "One chap came here and he stood in this area and he looked behind him. And then he turned and he came back and fell into the main spoor again."

It so happened that SOF's escorting officer, Maj. Jeff Hill, had indeed stopped at that very spot, turned around to see where he was and then walked a little further on with the group before deciding to bombshell. We were all greatly impressed, especially Maj. Hill, who may have thought at that instant that Sgt. Maputao had psychic powers.

He didn't. Like the rest of the Bushmen, he read tracks in the bush like an American reads a roadmap.





Any animal, four- or two-legged, leaves signs of his passage through the bush that are as plain as day to the Bushman.

The Bushman's tracking skills were impressive, but they do not have a monopoly on this skill. Some of the battalion's white trackers are better overall trackers than the native Bushman.

The reason is that the Bushman is not normally an innovator. His interpretation of marks on the ground is better than the white's, but he has difficulty adapting the tracks to their tactical significance.

However, both groups complement one another. The Bushman, using his exceptional skills following the tracks on the ground, and the whites, evaluating the information to the tactical situation and adapting both to modern counter-insurgency warfare, make a tough team. The result is a happy mix that means bad news for SWAPO.

There are, however, gifted Bushmen who have grasped the modern tactical aspects and applied their skills to them. They can run on a track, figuring out where an enemy would go or should go to either escape detection, set up an

ambush or booby trap, or any number of situations that are likely to occur in bush warfare. He looks for the unnatural — a spot of dew on a blade of grass that should be — but is no longer — there. This is typical of things he notices that indicate the passage of human feet that have disturbed the natural setting. They are as plain as day to him.

The reconnaissance wing of 201 Battalion has a different tactical organization and mission than the rest of the battalion. It is made up of five operational teams of six people per team. Each team has two whites and four Bushmen. This gives it great flexibility for it allows the team to break up into two units of three men each — one white and two Bushmen.

The recce wing is used primarily for surveillance or clandestine missions in its operational area. This involves hardcore behind-the-lines incursions — such as sneaking around in the bush looking for SWAPO bases or arms caches, and gathering information and intelligence on SWAPO units moving in the area.

These operations require stealth and a bundle of steady nerves. For, to be successful, their presence must not be detected by SWAPO or by local SWAPO sympathizers who may tip the terrorists off.

The Bushmen's tracking and bushcraft skills enable the recce teams to survive alone in the bush for long periods of time without outside help. Staying in the bush without need for constant resupply makes detection harder and allows them to keep on their mission. Usually, the only inkling SWAPO has that the security forces are on to their presence because the recce team has tracked them comes when a reaction force of Bushmen suddenly attacks.

A force to be reckoned with, 201 Battalion is a unique, effective element of the growing military capability of the South West Africa Territorial Force. ✕

TOP: Sign at entrance to Reconnaissance Wing of 201 Battalion. Skeleton emblem is appropriate — they've caused the demise of many SWAPO terrorists.
BOTTOM: Bushman trackers follow spoor in the SWA bush.

UNKIND CUTS

A Little Theory Is a Dangerous Thing....

by Geoff Willcher

ONE of the problems with knife-fighting instruction is that the instructor often assumes that the attacker will not do anything with his knife once his attack is effectively blocked. Some of these knife-attack blocks should be called "last-ditch" defenses. They are the last defenses you use before ending up in a ditch. Dead.

When reading about a knife-defense technique, one would be well advised to check it out with a *trained* knife fighter. Many textbook defenses are overly simplistic. They often have tactical weaknesses that can be exploited deliberately or even accidentally by your enemy to your disadvantage.

The overhand stab with the knife in the ice-pick grip and the upward stab with the knife in the hatchet grip are often considered marks of an untrained knife fighter. But they may well be a ruse. Your attacker could be setting you up. In this case, your mistake would be in thinking that his target is your head or stomach. Have no doubt, if you fail to defend these areas you will get stabbed there, but, in most knife fights, vital zones are usually secondary targets. The intended target might be your hands, wrists or fingers.

In Bando (the military martial-art method of Britain's Gurkhas) we have a saying: "Deprive your enemy of his weapon and he is no longer a fighter." By cutting your enemy's hands you reduce the effectiveness of his grabbing, holding and hitting capabilities, which also lessens the possibility of his using a weapon against you. You also gain the psychological advantage of having inflicted a wound and drawing first blood.

A standard defense against the overhead and upward stabs is the X-block, in which the arms form an X, stopping the attacker's thrust. After the block the defender may try to collapse his hands around the attacker's arm and make a joint lock, throw, disarming twist, counter kick, or a simple redirecting move. Against some untrained knife fighters, these defenses might work. But watch out. You may discover your enemy's skill too late.

The X-block technique violates some basic principles of defense. It keeps you directly in the line of motion of your attacker's weapons. It is the defense technique used with obstacles and armor, but, in this case, the armor is not thick enough to protect you and can itself become a target. Using your arms as obstacles to block the attacker's knife exposes them to attack, and can provide a point of resistance around which your attacker can turn the direction of his assault. The X-block defense fixes your blocking arm in one place for the attacker's return pull after his upward stab. As a general rule do not use anything valuable as an obstacle. It will get cut.

The counterforce X-block does something else. It commits both of your defen-

sive weapons (your arms) against the attacker's single assault. This leaves you with nothing in reserve when your attacker figures out that he has an uncommitted fist to punch in your unprotected head.

So what should you look for in a knife-assault defense? I am not going to present some magic series of counter moves that will devastate your attacker and leave you and your date free to disco all night. That is for the comic-book ads that promise, "Fear no man!" You must study the problem yourself and adapt to and create solutions that are likely to work for you. To guide you in this study there are a number of points that should be kept in mind.

One: Respect the threat that your enemy represents. Even though his visible weapon is a knife, he still has one other arm and two feet with which to attack. He is the one with the knife, and he probably thinks he knows how to use it. Treat him as dangerous until he proves otherwise by being defeated.

Two: Accept the fact that you are going to get cut. You are going to bleed and feel pain. If you are prepared for this injury you can surprise your enemy by not losing your cool when he expects you to do so.

Three: Keep cool. Your enemy has initiated the attack. He is likely to be nervous, but committed to the assault. You must prepare yourself mentally beforehand to face the attack. Do not freeze. Keep moving. Avoid wasted moves that tire you out. Distract your attacker by talking to him. You may be able to gain a psychological edge. Avoid letting your emotions direct your actions. Emotional response almost inevitably results in a direct approach that can leave you wide open.

Four: Get a weapon — anything available — and use it as armor to protect you or as a weapon to use on your enemy. A stick held against your arm or used as a club is good. Use a shoe, coat or anything that allows you to take a cut while you counterattack.

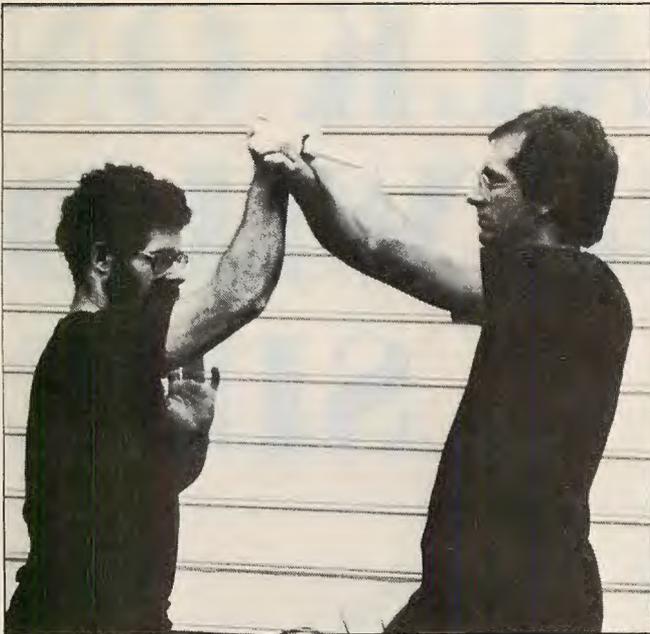
Five: Evade the attack. Run away and avoid the entire situation if possible, but once you are trapped and can't get out of it,

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

For the past 17 years, Geoff Willcher has studied Bando, the martial art of the British Gurkhas, under the tutelage of Dr. U Gyi, a retired Gurkha officer. Willcher has attained the 5th degree black belt in this combat art, and is well-versed in all aspects of knife fighting.

In this article, his first submission to SOF, Willcher addresses a problem that has always plagued knife-fighting instruction. Many self-professed instructors and myriad books on the subject make the assumption that an attacker will be so untrained or stupid that he will cease the attack after he is blocked by the defender. Often, knife instruction ignores the fact that blocks themselves can allow the attacker a new target, or allow him to redirect the assault. And some teaching methods carelessly forget that an attacker with a knife also has two feet and another arm to fight with.

Willcher resides in Georgia and is presently working on a doctorate in psychology. He is a martial arts instructor himself, and puts his black belt to work by teaching Bando.



Assistant Karl Duff defends against author's overhead stab with X-block. His defense protects his head...



...at the expense of his wrists. Author's return downward slash will cut deeply. Defender must keep cool, and expect to be cut.



Author's assistant uses strong downward X-block against upward stab. Block is powerful, but defender will get cut wrists, since knife is double-edged.



Dangers of the X-block: Attacker's return pull will cut veins of defender's right hand.

move sideways or down (beware of kicks) to avoid the enemy's weapon. Along with evasion you should use techniques that deflect the enemy's knife arm. Slap or hit his arm to redirect the attack. You will not be able to move fast if you choose wide, long or deep stances. Instead, use short, medium-height stances and keep your weight on your toes.

Six: Reduce your enemy's efficiency. Throw things at him: dust, dirt, coins and other objects can impair his vision. Whip his face with heavy clothes. Hit his hands with your feet or stick (if you have one) to weaken his grip. Kick his knees to reduce his mobility.

Seven: Only make a *committed* counter-

attack when your enemy has been disarmed or when his ability to fight is significantly reduced. Making a premature committed attack can expose you to enemy counterattacks. Your attack must be overwhelming, using rapid moves to attack high and low targets from changing directions. Continuous attack that drives an enemy to the ground to be finished off is a preferred way to end a fight.

Knife fighting is extremely dangerous. After reading an article on knife fighting you do not become an expert. Continual training under realistic conditions is required to build genuine skill. Your practice weapons should be those which can inflict minor pain or abrasions. You will not learn

unless you get hurt. This is not a sport for which rules exist to prevent injury. It is combat in which you and you alone must look out for your own survival.

In training, everyone can make mistakes. Use effective headgear to avoid facial cuts. Wear thick padding around your neck to work on throat cuts. Thick clothes and gloves can also protect against injury, but still allow a smart blow to be felt.

Training with actual contact is the way that we discover defenses that do not work. The X-block has been tested and found wanting. You must discover a more effective defense. Your survival depends on it.



WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

IT is a cool, overcast day and it has rained, turning the paddies into pools of muck. Our company is struggling through them in the demilitarized zone, searching for the enemy. We are walking east to west with our forward combat bases of Con Thien and Gio Linh covering our left flank. Our right flank, toward North Vietnam, is covered by artillery fire. The artillery provides a movable wall of high explosives as we advance across the DMZ.

We duck every time the artillery fires. Sometimes a salvo is a touch short and we flatten in the mud as shrapnel and debris whiz overhead and pummel the ground. This is enemy territory. We are heavily armed, and we wear flak jackets and steel helmets. In the jungle, I sometimes doff my helmet and flak vest, but not here with the ever-present danger of artillery fire, both enemy and ours. There are always enemy soldiers here, sometimes in great numbers. We come for them during the day; they rule the DMZ by night.

I am moving with the point platoon in the lead squad. I hope to get some action photographs, if I can do it without getting killed. My camera is preset and ready to shoot. So is the .45-caliber pistol on my hip.

There are mines and booby traps everywhere. Chinese broom-handled grenades and mines are tied to trees with tripwires set out. A small cluster of metal prongs marks the head of a buried antipersonnel mine in the center of a worn path. Pie-shaped mines filled with metal balls are arranged to fire a shotgun pattern across open paddies. These deadly mines are directional, and can cover a very large area. Like our own Claymore mines, they are usually command-detonated; hand-fired by the enemy, they use an electrical charge.

The DMZ is littered with military paraphernalia of many battles. Twisted metal, shell casings and bomb fragments cover the ground. Incessant shelling has practically defoliated large areas; most of the vegetation is shattered and torn. The paddies are worn and flooded. In places, a man can sink up to his waist in cozing muck.

It is dangerous walking on the paddy dikes, because this is a favorite place for the NVA to hide their mines. It is almost as dangerous walking on the solid ground in the DMZ. Where the ground is firm, the enemy has dug a maze of tunnels and bunkers. The solid ground just feels better, that's all.

We are crossing an open paddy. Caution, common sense and chicken-heart keep me on our side until the first squad crosses over. I have just slogged across the paddy when the North Vietnamese open up on us with a torrent of rifle and machine-gun fire. I end up in a deep ditch beneath the flying bullets. It is a long ditch and perhaps 20 meters wide in places: plenty of cover!

I'm in a reasonably safe spot to photograph the Marines still crossing the paddy

Under heavy small-arms fire, Marines move forward to attack North Vietnamese regulars in DMZ.



With a Marine Patrol in 'Nam's DMZ

Text & Photos by Dan Wisneski



and running like hell for the solid ground on our side. There's a heck of a lot of small-arms fire, and rounds whip and snap overhead. No one is hit in the squad I am with, so I lay low and click off a roll of photos as adrenalin-driven young Marines splash through the paddy and dive for the ditch.

Enemy rounds are still cracking loudly overhead as I watch a muscular young corporal whip his squad on line with a continuous stream of shouts and curses. As they return fire, he organizes a fire-team rush into the gunfire, which seems to be coming from just beyond a line of brush 50 meters to our front.

I'm still clicking away, safe and sound, when the cry comes from up ahead for a corpsman. A husky, bespectacled medic, bandoliers stuffed with bandages wrapped about his chest and a medical kit bag slung from one shoulder, crawls up the side of the ditch and braces himself for a rush forward.

"Now!" screams a Marine. "Go for it, Doc!" and the squad fires ahead. The corpsman clears the ditch amid a deafening outburst of automatic-rifle fire. He is barely lost in the brush ahead when a loud explosion obliterates him from view in a cloud of dirt and debris.

"Goddamn mine," mutters a Marine in disgust.

The firing dies down and we spread out to leave the ditch, cautiously, carefully, staring down the brush, peering into the soft earth for signs of booby traps.

The fire is sporadic up ahead in the brush, but we receive no more incoming rounds. In a few minutes, we enter a bunker complex and begin searching. The squads divide into small groups. Some Marines cover bunker entranceways with their weapons, while others cautiously approach, at a blind angle to the bunker, and toss in a hand grenade. Everyone dives to the ground and awaits the explosion.

After one grenade explodes, I leap up with a Marine, moving toward the dusty bunker entrance. I brush off my camera and hold it in one hand; the other clutches my cocked .45 automatic.

"You want to go in?" asks the Marine.

"Uh, uh," I mutter. "I'm here to take flicks. I'll give you some cover."

"Watch me!" he says, laying down his rifle, yanking a pistol from his belt, and sliding his feet into the bunker. There are three muffled reports as he dives shooting around a corner into the bunker; then it becomes very quiet.

"Are you okay?" No reply. I let the camera drop on its strap around my neck and point the .45.

"Hey!" I yell, stepping closer to the bunker, my trigger finger nervously brushing over the trigger. "Hey! You all right in there?" Hell, I don't want to go in. I almost shoot him in the face when he suddenly emerges in the entranceway. His face does a trip from terror to relief to a very small smile.

"Here. I gotcha a souvenir!" he blurts, tossing me a bloody NVA pistol belt with a star engraved in a gray metal buckle. I am

still mad at him, though not as mad as before.

I glance from the belt to him and ask: "Why in hell didn't you call out?"

"Huh?" He says. "Oh!" Recognition sets in. "Can't hear a friggin' thing. God-damned pistol was loud as hell. Don't think I needed it anyway," he continues. "That grenade blew his ass away. Horrible mess!" We sit atop the bunker, relieved, and scrutinize our souvenirs.

He is happy as hell with an NVA knife with electrical tape around the handle, though it looks like any old, cheap knife to me. We are elated and clap each other's shoulders and wave our souvenirs at others passing by. There are other shouts of "Fire in the hole!" signalling more bunkers being blown.

We search the bunkers quickly, not thoroughly, skipping many. We are in a hurry. This is merely a sweep; we are not setting up camp here. I suspiciously eyeball the bunkers we leave untouched, covering them with my pistol until I am a safe distance away. I put on my NVA belt, now that the blood has dried. We capture some automatic weapons, grenades and personal equipment, destroying 15 bunkers in the process. I never see a live enemy during the entire action. We leave the bodies where they were killed. Their friends will recover them after we are gone.

In my excitement, I move up with the point, the lead man of the element. I back off a few Marines, but I am ready for action, and this is the first place to get into it. It is not a clever thing for a correspondent, but, out here, I am a grunt like all the rest.

We are moving out slowly, cautiously, through a patch of scrub brush and small trees when I am frozen in place by a cry from directly behind me. "Booby trap!"

I stand very still as the lieutenant in charge of the platoon follows a tripwire across the trail to a wicked-looking Chinese grenade taped knee-high to a small tree. Either one of the Marines to my front or I have tripped the trigger, but it didn't blow — luckily, Chinese grenades don't work much of the time.

Our grenades — which work almost all of the time — are one of the few items of U.S. equipment that the enemy treasures. I take a few photos of the booby trap. Its tripwire is a flesh-colored bandage an inch wide. How in hell did we miss it?

In the paddies ahead, we find directional mines along the dikes. We disarm them. The enemy has fled in haste, and we recover rice, knapsacks, ammunition and gas masks. During a break, I take photos of young Marine warriors with captured weapons. It is the only time in South Vietnam that I see marijuana. The pot is tied in small sacks to my NVA belt. A grunt asks for the sacks, and I give them to him, not at all sure that it is really grass.

I notice a Marine engrossed in disarming a pie-shaped mine and take a few closeups as he follows the electrical detonating cord and loses it in the brush. He returns to the mine and unscrews an arming fuse at the

front, and I take photos as he calmly picks up the mine.

"You engineers have got balls," I congratulate him.

"I ain't no engineer." He cradles the mine under his arm. "I'm just a plain old grunt," he affirms, "who likes to play with mines. They're mostly easy to figure out," he assures me.

A happy occurrence: Doc, the corpsman who ran forward at the start of the shooting, shows up alive and well. He looks very un-medic-like, carrying a Soviet antitank grenade launcher made of bamboo and steel.

"I thought you got dinged, Doc," I say, shaking his hand. "What in hell happened?"

The Doc had tripped a booby trap in a clump of bamboo. It was probably similar to the one we found taped to the tree. Anyway, the explosion knocked him from his feet, with a loud report and cloud of smoke.

"I thought half my back was blown away," he says excitedly. "It stunned me for a moment, but I was lucky!" He lifts his helmet, revealing a small bloodied scratch on his earlobe. "I just got a scratch. I may, however, have unloaded in my pants!" he quips to peals of laughter. ☒



Pistol in hand, Marine awaits order to assault enemy position.



In the DMZ: Marines duck as friendly artillery lands nearby.

To the victors go the spoils: Marines show off captured NVA equipment in DMZ. Left to right: AK-47 assault rifles, RPD Light Machine Gun, Chinese Type 56 Carbine.



Clutching captured NVA AK-47s, Marine contemplates disarming directional land mine.



POW SURVIVAL

How to Keep Going When the Going Gets Toughest

by Robert V. Larson

SINCE the end of WWII, all wars have been fought in underdeveloped countries, brought to the attention of the world at large only when a particularly bloody incident catches the collective eye of the international media. These "ox-cart" wars would have passed unnoticed a half century ago. But now, with the advent of the atomic age — and attendant sophisticated weaponry — a tiny, factional skirmish in some isolated Third World hamlet could lead to an indirect but hairy confrontation between the two super powers.

Our national interests, of course, can best be served by supporting the side that favors us the most. We begin by sending arms and tech reps, then "advisers," and if that fails — and most generally it does — we send in the troops, most of whom never heard of the damned place until they were alerted.

Base camps arise in places impossible for American tongues to pronounce. Mail call becomes a daily occurrence, and at your camp there are even movies and beer. The greenery in which your camp was established disappears, replaced with dust churned up by tracked vehicles and boots. It's an uncongenial place, with an air of tired permanence. You train, you eat, you sleep, you wait. Occasionally, you ponder idly on the remote possibility of a pass.

Patrols are sent out. They return, reporting no contact. You volunteer for one. Despite the training schedule, you're bored. Hanging around this place is as exciting as watching paint dry. The day comes: Weapons are inspected, coordinates checked for the final time, and then a chopper drops you in the boonies, way the-hell-and-gone out.

Your first patrol.

The terrain is rough, slow going, but you keep moving. The heat is vindictive; your body absorbs it as if you were a solar panel. The patrol is alert, silent, suspicious — good soldiers. Hours pass. Suddenly, there's the malicious, impatient rattle of automatic-weapons fire — like sticks being raked across a picket fence. The point man collapses, dull scarlet rapidly soaking his cammies. Ambush!

You dive off the trail and empty your piece at movements in the heavy foliage above you: The movements stop abruptly. There are hoarse shouts, bright flashes, and tense, ugly sounds, urgent with hate, and someone is screaming on a high note —

OCCUPATION: WRITER

Bob Larson was a prisoner of the Japanese during WWII, a decorated veteran of the U.S. Navy, Army and Air Force, and has more stories about more places than most have ever heard. . . he's been there. And he'd rather not talk about it. With Larson it's not a case of delayed stress syndrome — he's just more interested in writing than in talk.

Talk at the Larson house is refined, but it is all about writing. His conversation is filled with literary allusions out of proportion to the top NCO ranks (master sergeant in the Army and Air Force, and gunner's mate chief in the Navy) he doggedly held throughout his two decades of military service. Favorite writers include John Masters, Peter Fleming, Wilfred Owen and John D. McDonald.

"The best book written in the 20th century is *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom*," he insists. We don't know who listened to Larson about T.E. Lawrence in NCO clubs in Occupied Japan.

Larson's bookish efforts are as successful as his efforts at survival were in prison and forced-labor camps in the Philippines and the home islands of Japan. "The Judas Tree" (SOF, July '81), and "The Treatment" (SOF, December '81) have received much favorable attention, including comment from James Webb (who wrote *Fields of Fire*) that Bob was "blessed with the literary vision." Larson's lessons for prisoners were learned in the toughest of schools. He graduated from Fukuoka prison camp, Kyushu, Japan, 16 September 1945. Larson now makes his home in Lafayette, Colo.

can't be a chest wound, you think, and your logic surprises then somehow calms you. The fire is vicious, close-in, and you decide that you don't like this movie, but it's for real, Jack — can't walk out on this one — and you keep working your piece. Then, something clubs you violently on the back, the earth rises up to meet you, and that's it, baby. Fade out, cut, that's a take. . . .

When you come to you're a prisoner of war. It's as simple as that. You can't grasp the enormity of it because you're hurting. Your right arm feels as if it's gone AWOL. But you've been "took," all right — "in the bag" as the British so aptly put it — and after a few moments a stringy shred of awareness reaches your brain. "Oh, shit!" You wonder vaguely if your brother will keep up the payments on your new Mustang. You're now a statistic, a nonentity — if lucky, a bartering tool — and henceforth what happens to you will be largely determined by your captors, and to a murky extent, the inexplicable vagaries of sheer luck.

Insurgents inflamed with revolutionary ardor do not generally take prisoners. Men who expect no mercy are not inclined to grant it. But recently, they have become aware of the propaganda value of captive "imperialists," and therein lies your main chance for survival. Force yourself to listen, read their hackneyed doctrinal crap — if it's in English — although Peter Fleming, the noted British author, wrote, "To read a propagandist. . . is as dull as dining with a vegetarian."

Guerrilla units survive chiefly because of their mobility, which can be hindered by prisoners, even healthy ones. And you've been wounded. A carbine slug has gone through the upper part of your arm, just below the shoulder. Fortunately, a .30-cal. carbine round does not create the tissue damage that an AK-47 does. You're hurting, of course — but don't fall behind. If you do, your Mama gets a Gold Star. Therefore, the most essential rule for POW survival on the march is this: Don't straggle! Keep up with the column. And remember: From now on it's "Help Your Buddy



Three Japanese soldiers supervise more than a hundred prisoners. Most Americans on the Philippines died of neglect rather than active abuse: The Japanese had not expected so many. Photo: Department of Defense

Week." If someone falters on the march, help him. POW survival is a joint venture.

Some helpful hints: If you were wearing a helmet, hang on to it. Hook the pot to your belt and wear the liner. Use the fabric helmet cover as a carrying pouch. The old helmet, whatever its drawbacks in combat, is an invaluable accoutrement for the prisoner. You can cook in it, eat from it and wash in it.

If you have a jungle hat, don't lose it. If you have no cover, improvise one out of a handkerchief or a strip of undershirt. Heat exhaustion on a march is lethal. If your improvised cover is white, dirty it. White stands out, and you don't want to be conspicuous. Also, for some obtuse psychological reason, a bare head is a more inviting target than a covered one. So wear a cover.

Evacuate your bowels and bladder at every halt. On the march don't ask for time out while you go wee-wee or toto. That's a no-no. It's like trying to teach a pig to whistle. It wastes time and it annoys the pig. And it can be extremely limiting to longevity. So, do it in your pants. You did it as an infant, right? And you survived. Remember, you're now a POW, a sub-human — an animal, really. And the metaphor is an accurate one, for like animals you'll sleep on the bare ground, and like animals you'll prize food above all things.

Eat everything your captors offer you, or — more likely — sling at you. If you're not hungry, you will still eat. Malnutrition does not enhance the healing processes. Citrus fruits prevent scurvy — eat the peelings, as well. If possible, toast them over a fire; they're more palatable that way. Tubers: Irish potatoes, camotes, yams, should be eaten with the jackets on. There's a lot of nourishment in spud skins. If time allows, boil green bananas in their skins, discarding the skin before eating. Bananas are an ex-

cellent source of potassium. Prepare beans by carrying a stout fistful in your canteen, letting them soak as you march.

And remember! Any mammal can be eaten — no big thing if cooked properly. It's social and religious custom that decrees what flesh we should eat. Actually, puppy dog is very tasty. The Sioux loved dog meat, and they whipped hell out of Custer. Fish is highly nutritious, but it spoils easily, and the bones can play hell with a stomach and digestive tract used to a regular diet.

With marginal sanitation, food poisoning can be a real problem. However, two drops of iodine in a third of a canteen cup of water will greatly assist recovery. Where will you get the iodine? Beats the hell out of me. Just hope it's available.

In tropical Asian countries, where beriberi is a severe medical problem, your basic staple will be rice — with perhaps some millet thrown in to provide bulk; it has no real value. The coarse red, or unpolished, rice, has a vastly higher nutritional value than the polished, sophisticated type preferred by the financially elite. Moreover, red rice, formerly used to feed convicts, contains 98.6 milligrams of B vitamins per pound, as opposed to mere traces found in the polished. And it's richer in protein. It's vital, therefore, to obtain red rice whenever possible. Steal it whenever you can. It'll provide a substantial nutritional bulwark against the painful, and often fatal, consequences of beriberi, a vitamin B deficiency.

Pellagra is another nutritional disease that develops in POW compounds because of the severely restricted diet. It's caused by the lack of nicotinic acid, and is characterized by gastro-intestinal disturbances, a rash similar in appearance to sunburn, and, in advanced cases, emotional unbalance. Liver extracts are rich in substances that prevent pellagra. You won't have bottles of it around, of course, but steal liver whenever you can, and ingest as many fresh vegetables as possible. Incidentally, corn meal is of little value in combatting pellagra.

Dysentery is endemic in tropical countries. The proportion of cases increases in areas where there is little or no sanitation. A weak, warm tea enema will provide some relief. A hollow reed or small bamboo stem can be used as a substitute for the more traditional rubber tube. The patient must be hydrated — given fluids to drink. Opium powder diluted in water will reduce the intensity of cramps.

Cholera is more to be feared than dysentery, so in my camps, no doctor ever diagnosed it as such. "Choleric form enteritis" was their term, and the different name may have saved lives. Everybody sweated cholera. And the doctors sweated it most of all.

Rats proliferate in prison camps, and rat-bite fever is dangerous because approximately 50 percent of those bitten will develop pneumonia. The mortality rate of those who have pneumonia will approach 10 percent. The incubation period for rat-bite fever is from one to three weeks. Symptoms include fever and a rash on the soles of one's feet. If you're bitten by a rat and possess no antiseptic, piss on it. Uric acid is an antiseptic. You may also hope that the rat was not rabid.

POWs have little resistance to infection because of the grossly inadequate diet. The slightest scratch can become a deep and painful ulcer. Again, piss on it. Also, bathe the ulcer in hot water — as hot as you can stand, and if maggots form on the area, be thankful. They'll clean up the dead tissue. A word of caution, however. Don't allow maggots to congregate on any ulcer close to the anus. Eventually, they'll get inside, and not all will be discharged with your fecal matter. This condition is known as "a pain in the ass."

Learn to be a good thief. In other words, don't steal from your buddies. That's abominable. But anything you can pinch from the enemy is fair. Even if you, yourself, have no immediate use for the object, steal it anyway. Someone else may have use for it. Besides, it deprives the enemy, and increases morale among your fellow prisoners. But remember: Your captors may be dumb, but they're not stupid. Unpleasant things happen when you're caught stealing from the enemy.

Shakedowns are routine in established holding camps. Let your imagination run rampant when hiding contraband. And that's all I'll say on that subject.

Keep yourself as clean as possible at all times. It provides parasites with less congenial areas of your body in which to nest and multiply. And cleanliness, in a very real sense, is a morale booster.

Remember: Just because you're a POW with an indeterminate sentence hanging over you, doesn't mean that you shouldn't see the humor in some aspects of camp life, and that ability — a sense of the ridiculous, if you will — is an indication of real morale. And, whatever happens, keep the faith: *Illegitimi non carborundum sunt* (don't let the bastards grind you down). ☞

Continued from page 55

classes, and were immediately taken up on our offer. We gave our much-practiced IV-therapy class; it included having all the students start IVs on each other, as well as instruction in field sanitation, skin infections, and dehydration recognition and treatment.

I've worked from the II Corps highlands to Micronesia to Central America — never have I taught a more attentive class. They hung on our words and watched the demonstrations carefully, as if they could wring a few more drops of useful information from them.



RRI medic Phil Gonzales trains Contran in IV therapy. After eight-day training period, medics move to battlefield OJT.

We finished with the old line, "If you ain't a medic you ain't shit," and were surprised to receive applause. We then told them quite sincerely that we were on the same side, and that we knew that they were carrying the fight to a common enemy: the fight for all Americans. They responded by rising and singing the Nicaraguan national anthem, proudly, solemnly, in one voice. The real anthem, *not* the "Internationale."

After class and dinner, we sat on the farmhouse porch with the staff and listened to the news from Nicaragua, brought out by returning commandos. They told of operations within sight of Managua, raids, ambushes, taking out the main power plant. We met the commander of the unit which blew the bridge at Osacala, and another who told of 3,000 Cuban combat troops searching for his unit of 150 commandos.

One patrol leader told an especially frustrating story: He had spent a month infiltrating his 60-man unit to the outskirts of a city deep inside Nicaragua. Equipped with RPG-2s and RPG-7s, they were to hit a column of Soviet-built tanks on its way through. When they arrived, they discovered that the tanks had passed through the day before.

As with most hospitals in a guerrilla-warfare situation, this one is underequipped. It needs more medicine, beds, bandages and basic appliances. It also lacks pediatric medicines and appliances to treat the children of the FDN, who are refugees

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from their homeland, as well as other refugees and innocent bystanders in various states of malnutrition and disease. Staffing is adequate, although not specialized, with doctors rotating in from dispensaries "further forward," and returning after a short stay.

We spent the second day doing more training and treating gunshot wounds. We had brought with us several cases of medical supplies provided by *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown, which were well received. We also emptied out our personal aid kits and distributed the contents among medics we knew would be using them shortly.

As we were reluctantly leaving the hospital (schedules to keep and planes to catch — they would have put us up for the duration), we met two commandos whom we could not help but admire. The first, toting a vintage Russian folding-stock AK, was a veteran of 10 armed clashes with the Sandinistas, and had taken a bullet along his back, the round passing along his posterior ribs on both sides. He was 12 years old. His companion, a charmer of 14, carried an FN FAL almost as tall as she, and appeared comfortable and familiar with it.

"When you come back, go inside Nicaragua with us," she said.

As we drove away they gave us the thumbs-up, and a parting wish reminiscent of the old Jewish toast, "Next year in Jerusalem":

"Next year in Managua!" they called. Only 8,000 Cubans and 40,000 Sandinista regulars to overcome. What the hell, with troops like that, they might just make it. Probably with a young man with a glass eye in the lead, fighting for his country "with the help of God."



Two young FDN fighters take break, cradling AK-47 (left) and FN FAL. Troop leader explains that youngsters "would fight by themselves if we didn't let them join us."

SOF INTERVIEWS CONTRA LEADER

by John E. Padgett

I conducted this interview for *SOF* during the RRI visit to the FDN field hospital. The FDN official was Luis H., S-4 for the Contras, who was at the hospital delivering medical supplies and arranging for shipment of more. During the informal interview, Luis relaxed in a hammock on the veranda of the farm-

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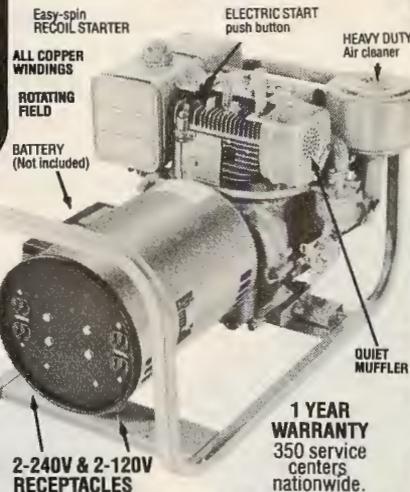
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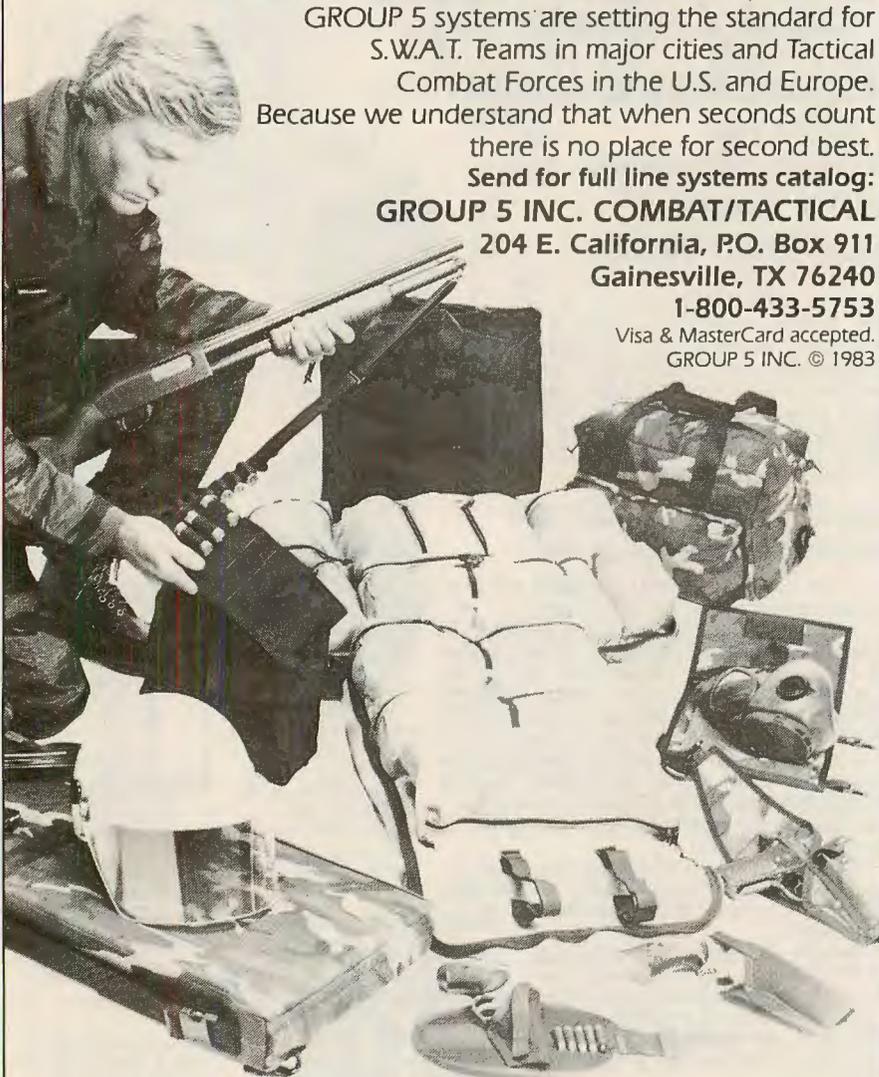
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house that serves as the FDN hospital headquarters.

SOF: You say that this is a fight against communism. Is the new government any worse than Somoza's?

LUIS: It's 100-percent worse now. People here who have lived through Somoza's regime and the present Sandinista government, myself included, say that Somoza's time was better. Then at least we had our families, our land and our cattle.

From 1979 to the present, the communists have taken everything! They have come to even the smallest farms and taken real estate, stock, clothing and food from the people. They have falsely imprisoned them. If the people resist, they are imprisoned or sometimes killed.

SOF: After the revolution to overthrow Somoza things went sour. What happened?

LUIS: I'll tell you in one word: Castro. Castro stole our country.

SOF: How did Castro steal Nicaragua?

LUIS: When Somoza was driven out, the Marxists were actually in the minority. They began by using their positions in the Sandinista military to force out or isolate the more moderate leaders. The Cubans came in immediately afterward. They took positions of responsibility in every government office. It was impossible to function in the government sector without their knowledge or approval. Cuban troops took over the important security positions at government offices, the airport, the docks, radio stations and newspapers. The top positions at the Ministry of Defense were filled by Cuban officers. Soon all industry was nationalized, taken over by the government, and Cuban managers were appointed.

SOF: Some people in the United States and elsewhere say that your fight to bring down the Sandinistas is just one more example of a regime that has lost power, and is now trying to get it back, that the Contra movement is made up mostly of former National Guard troops, and that the people in Nicaragua can't see much difference in the two sides. Can you respond?

LUIS: We have some 8,000 troops operating inside Nicaragua and in the border areas. Of these only about 150 are former National Guardsmen. One of our commanders was a former Guard officer. In the case of the troops and the officer, all have been screened and their records reviewed. We will accept no one with a questionable background, whether he be suspected of corruption, violence against the people, war crimes, whatever. We all have to work closely together and we can't afford any problems over what may have happened in the past.

In my own case, I was neither a National Guardsman nor a Sandinista. I'm a lawyer. Eight months after the

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Sandinistas took power, I had to leave. SOF: How about some of the others here? What can you tell us of their backgrounds? Where do they come from? What brings them here from inside Nicaragua?

LUIS: Ask them. (He pointed to the others on the veranda. I repeated my question.)

FDN SECTION LEADER: Less than a year after the Sandinistas took power, they came to the area of our farms in northern Nicaragua. They took our crops and animals with no offer of payment, and in some cases they abused our families. With others, I went into the mountains. We formed a guerrilla outfit of 22 men, and armed ourselves with .22 rifles, shotguns and machetes. We didn't have any military weapons. We waited for a chance to strike. Weeks later, we ambushed a Sandinista convoy. It cost us two dead, but we got assault rifles, ammunition and food. With our 20 remaining men we crossed the border and joined with the FDN units here.

LUIS: You can see some of the young ones here. Some of them not even 14. We let them stay because we feel that there is a better chance for them with us than by themselves. Believe me, they would fight by themselves if we didn't allow them to join us. Most of them fought independently before joining us. They can't remember Somoza, but they know what the communists have done to their families.

SOF: How long can you keep up this guerrilla warfare? Can you go on indefinitely?

LUIS: No, we can't. We're not professional soldiers. We're farmers, workers, teachers and clerks. We want to drive out the Sandinistas and Cubans and go home.

SOF: What happens if the war continues without much progress? You have many Cubans and Sandinistas to fight.

LUIS: We feel that we will ultimately win. The people are with us. But time is important. We can't keep our people under arms forever. We haven't got limitless funds or supplies, and some of us have to work for a living.

This problem with time and frustration with apparent lack of support by the Free World has led some of our leaders to say that we need something dramatic, something to get the attention of the world, to demonstrate our struggle.

SOF: What do you mean by a dramatic event?

LUIS: There are those who, in their frustration, say that we should turn to selected targets outside of Nicaragua.

SOF: That sounds like terrorism. Is that what you're talking about?

LUIS: Call it what you will. Those who argue for such tactics point to the publicity and success gained by groups who use them. Everyone knows what the

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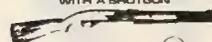
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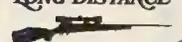
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But if you ask the same people in the States what the FDN is, they don't know. Most gringos think that Central America means Kansas or Nebraska.

SOF: As a friend, I must argue against such tactics. They would cost you what support you do have in the United States, especially in the U.S. government. You might also force U.S. troops to fight FDN troops — and wouldn't Castro love that!

LUIS: You're probably right. But the American people must show some sensitivity to the situation in Central America. El Salvador is in a war trying to resist an armed takeover by the communists, led by the Cubans and Nicaraguans, who are acting for the Russians. The communists have already taken over Nicaragua, and the people of Nicaragua are suffering and dying to get their country back.

We have the feeling that you Americans just don't care. You feel no involvement. There was no Pearl Harbor in this war. The United States has not been directly attacked, so North Americans don't feel threatened. Many are more concerned about what is on television or what's in the refrigerator than with what is happening here.

SOF: Isn't that unfair? Most of your outside support comes from the United States.

LUIS: We know that, and we know that without your support we can't win. It's just that the majority of North Americans don't know what is going on here.

We have talked about El Salvador and Nicaragua. Guatemala has been fighting Marxist guerrillas for years, and now Honduras has captured three guerrillas who say they are part of a 300-man unit infiltrated from Nicaragua. The communists, especially Cuba and Russia, have a big stake in Central America, and it's growing.

If the United States does nothing, we — you and us — will all lose by default. Then you will be fighting a guerrilla war in your own country.

How many communist agents do you suppose have been infiltrated into the United States with the hundreds of thousands of illegals from Central America? They're forming infrastructures right now.

We have a saying about this war: "Paga por la guerra, o guerra con su sangre."

SOF: Pay for the war, or war with your blood. A warning?

LUIS: A warning from your friends. God grant that it's not prophecy.

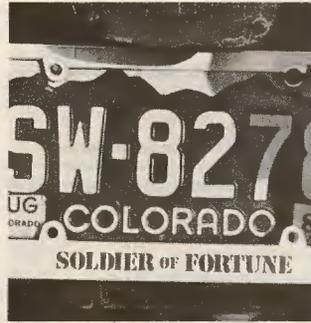
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The bolt can be separated from the carrier by merely rotating it clockwise 90 degrees. Push out the firing pin retaining pin and its rubber O-ring and the firing pin will drop out of the carrier. Rotate the piston 180 degrees in either direction so the roll pin holding the recoil spring in place will clear the receiver and withdraw the piston and spring assembly. No further disassembly is required for maintenance and cleaning. Upon reassembly make sure the notch on the rear of the piston is facing downward to accept the retracting handle.

The most interesting weapon in the Beretta 70 series is the relatively new Model 70/78 light machine gun. The original Beretta AR 70 LMG was nothing more than the AR 70 rifle with a heavier barrel, carrying handle and light, nonadjustable bipod. The Model 70/78 is quite a bit more — a largely successful attempt to meet the requirements of the modern Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW).

Only now in production, the Model 70/78's salient feature is its heavy, quick-change barrel. The heavier barrel acts as a heat sink and can be fired for longer periods at higher rates than the AR/SC 70 rifle barrels. Eight radial cooling fins have also been milled into the chamber end of the barrel — the area of greatest heat input. This increase in the barrel's surface is supposed to increase the rate of heat loss into the

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atmosphere. The bolt locking sleeve welded into the rifle's receiver body has been replaced by a barrel extension, which is notched to mate with the receiver's barrel catch. With the bolt group held rearward, a detent on the barrel catch is depressed, the catch is rotated upward and the barrel unit pushed forward until it clears the receiver and gas cylinder. The bipod remains on the gas cylinder and so the weapon remains elevated above the ground while the change is taking place. The forearm is held to the barrel by two threaded cross-bolts. The gas block's exhaust system remains the same, i.e., four equidistant ports in a cylinder forward of the gas tube vent excess gases into the atmosphere, but this portion of the gas block has been strengthened considerably. Barrel changes are a matter of only seconds with the Model 70/78 SAW.

The grenade launching capability is that of the AR/SC 70 rifles. A bayonet lug has been fitted, although the thought of thrust and parry with a Squad Automatic Weapon is less quaint than bizarre. The bottom portion of the barrel catch assembly has been constructed to attach the weapon to a tripod or vehicle pedestal mount. A carrying handle in FN FAL configuration has been added to the top of the receiver. The well-designed, skeletonized bipod legs are hinged in the middle to permit rapid adjustment to three positions of elevation. Disassembly is identical to the other weapons in the system, except that the barrel group must be removed first.

At only 11.7 pounds with empty magazine, the Beretta 70/78 compares quite favorably to both the U.S. M249 SAW (15.5 pounds with sling and cleaning kit) and the CETME MG82 (14.8 pounds). However, the M249 offers both belt and magazine feed and the MG82 is belt fed only. As the 5.56mm NATO cartridge moves to predominate in the field of Squad Automatic Weapons, as well as assault rifles among Western bloc armies, we will continue to see more and more truly lightweight squad machine guns. The trend is welcome indeed as it most closely approximates current user requirements at the infantry squad level. This is especially so with the arrival and NATO standardization of the SS109 ball and L110 tracer ammunition. Conversion of the Beretta 70/78 SAW to the new ammunition will require only an instant change to a 1:7-inch twist barrel. Those still frantically clutching to the 7.62mm NATO round, most of whom are not professionally involved in military small arms technology, will continue to stamp their feet and gnash their teeth in impotent rage. It is my most fervent wish that these ignorant wretches be consigned to march up and down the hills of hell for eternity with a 32.5-pound Browning 1919A6 "light" machine gun strapped to their backs.

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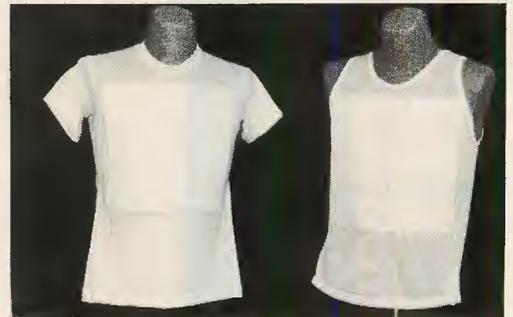
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In all, over 3,000 rounds have now been fired through the three test weapons — an SC 70 SHORT, an AR 70 semiautomatic rifle and a 70/78 SAW — without a single malfunction. Light reloads with only 22.5 grains of IMR 8208M (and the 55 gr. Hornady FMJ projectile) initially would not function in the 70/78 SAW. After firing 300 rounds of Lake City ball through the gun it digested the reloads without problem, albeit the cyclic rate went down somewhat. PMC and Israeli Eagle match grade ball were also used in the test sequences.

Firing two- and three-round bursts in rapid succession, the 70/78 SAW is capable — in the hands of an experienced gunner — of placing all 30 rounds from the magazine into the kill zone of a standard military silhouette target at 100 meters. Cyclic rate of the 70/78 SAW and the other 70 series weapons is about 700 rpm, depending upon the type of ammunition used. I also noted very little muzzle rise in longer bursts after the third or fourth round had been fired. Both the 70/78 SAW and SC 70 SHORT exhibit high hit probability and excellent controllability during burst fire sequences in all shooting positions. The 70/78 SAW is especially impressive when fired extensively from the standing offhand position — a task made easy by its mere 11.7 pounds. With the rigid stock these guns are all capable of two m.o.a. in semiautomatic fire. The less secure folding stock will increase this by another two m.o.a.

The Beretta's high hit potential is in no small way a consequence of their fine triggers. The weight of an infantry rifle's trigger pull should fall between 4.5 to 7.5 pounds. My Galil SAR has a 4.5 pound trigger and my FN FALs and Kalashnikovs hover around 7.5 pounds. The AR 70/SPORT trigger measured 5.5 pounds, the 70/78 SAW is 6.0 pounds and the SC 70 SHORT is 6.75 pounds. But other considerations are involved. From the Krag rifle to the M16A1 Americans have been taught to shoot military rifles with so-called two-stage triggers. During the first stage of the trigger pull ("taking up the slack") all movement of the sear is that of the built-in safety margin. It's during the second stage that we meet the actual resistance of the sear engagement.

European military rifles have traditionally employed single-stage trigger travel and an apparently sudden let-off to which Americans are not accustomed. The Beretta 70 series triggers, while of the single stage type, feature an exceptionally short travel and extremely crisp let-off. Very close to those of modern sporting rifles, they are without doubt the best of all currently produced military single-stage trigger systems.

Only Japan entered World War II with a more pathetic inventory of small arms than Italy. With one notable exception

Italian small arms of this period lacked originality and good sense in every area of design. The exception was, of course, Beretta. Beretta pistols and submachine guns were excellent and among the very best made during the entire war. As the succeeding decades have rolled by, it comes as no surprise that the Pietro Beretta company of Brescia, Italy, has maintained its proud, 300-year-old tradition in the field of firearms design and manufacture. From .25 ACP pocket pistols to superposed shotguns, Beretta products are among the finest in the world today. Their 70 series 5.56mm system maintains this reputation. ☒

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Continued from page 67

belt-fed GPMG in caliber 7.62mm NATO. It is part of the H&K delayed blowback system of weaponry which was described in detail in "Heckler & Koch's New 94" (SOF, December '83).

In theory the HK21 is the best of all possible worlds. It can feed either the German DM6, U.S. M13 or French AA 52 disintegrating belts, as well as the German DM1 nondisintegrating belt. However, the Salvadorans have had numerous failures they feel were caused by belts, and they reported to me that the Madsen-Saetter nondisintegrating belt yielded the best results. By installation of an adapter, 20-rd. and 30-rd. G3 magazines or 80-rd double-drum plastic magazine can be fitted.

Since the bolt passes over the belt, the belt must be placed links down in the feed tray. Unless a starter tab is used, loading is clumsy since the gun must be cocked and the first round placed in the feed sprocket, which is then rotated to the right until it locks. A curved cam slot on the bottom of the bolt engages an actuator on the feed mechanism. As the bolt moves rearward, the double sprockets are rotated and a new round positioned in the feedway.

Options abound. Changing the barrel, feed plate and bolt will convert the HK21 to either 5.56 NATO or 7.62x39mm ComBloc. The robust bipod can be mounted either in front of the feed mechanism for greater traverse or at the muzzle for greater hit probability. A tripod and three different vehicle mounts are available and scopes and passive night sights can be fitted. The gun is usually equipped with a 1,200-meter aperture drum rear sight, although those sold to El Salvador have only the G3 rear sight.

The HK21 can be field-stripped in one minute and reassembled in 1.5 minutes. The heavy barrel has an excellent quick-change mechanism. As the trigger mechanism is identical to the G3's, the gun can be fired either full-auto or semiautomatically. In fact, the HK21 has some 48 percent parts interchangeability with the G3.

All is for naught, however, since the HK21 weighs only 17.4 lbs., empty, with the bipod and has a cyclic rate of 900 rpm. Entirely unacceptable, in caliber 7.62 NATO, except for 300-lb. Nubian warriors. This is, without doubt, the most physically punishing GPMG I have ever fired. Counter-recoiling forces throw the gun about like a jackhammer. Before the brain is jarred into an amorphous mass of gelatine, its last thought is inevitably, "When will this nightmare end?"

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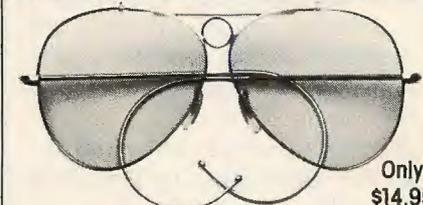
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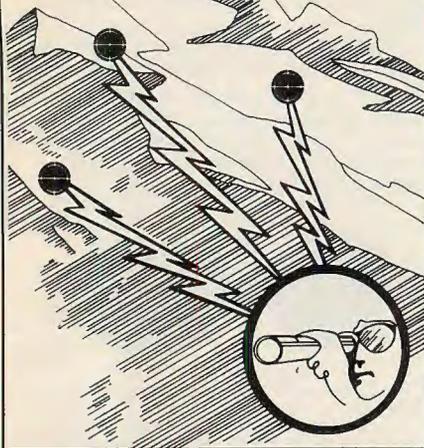
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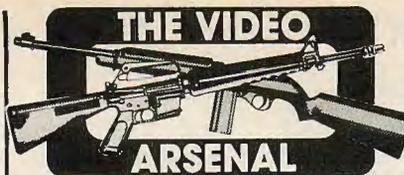


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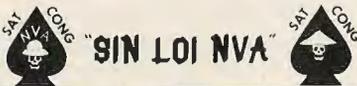
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In addition, it should be noted that, unlike gas-operated squad automatics with adjustable regulators, blowback-operated machine guns offer no power reserve to deal with the increased fouling associated with the sustained-fire role.

The HK21 has been replaced in the Heckler & Koch lineup by the HK21A1, which addresses some of these problems. The weight has been increased and a hooked butt stock with improved buffer mechanism has been added. The magazine feed option has been abandoned, but the feed mechanism is now hinged to allow easier insertion of the belts.

There is some good news from El Salvador. The Mauser Model 57 submachine gun I tested is innovative, reliable and well-executed. Now the bad news: It is the only one in El Salvador. Captured from the communist guerrillas, it's now the property of Carlos E. Cusalon. Carrying serial number 21, it is, in fact, one of only 25 ever made.

The Mauser Model 57 SMG was designed in France during the early 1950s by Louis B. Camillis. Early development of the weapon took place during 1955-56 at the relocated Erma plant near Munich. However, the gun's promoter eventually gave the contract to Mauser-Werke A.G. in Oberndorf/Neckar where it was extensively redesigned.

Pure blowback in operation and firing from the open bolt position, the Mauser 57 exemplifies many of the features we have come to expect in state-of-the-art machine guns. The magazine well is in the handgrip (which is a bit on the large side). The lower receiver assembly is made of black-anodized aluminum alloy. The black plastic grips display the famous Mauser banner. The other components are a combination of stamped sheet-metal pressings and milled forgings. All steel parts are well-finished and blued. A rear grip safety locks the bolt. The selector switch, located on the left side just above the trigger, has three positions: "D" (full-auto), "S" (safe) and "E" (single shot). Safe is the middle position and one pushes forward to go into full-auto or rather awkwardly pulls back for semiautomatic fire.

The telescoping two-piece bolt wraps around the greater part of the 10.25-inch barrel allowing an overall length of only 17 inches, stock folded. The recoil spring is wound around the barrel and rides inside the bolt assembly. A short, heavy buffer spring is positioned at the end of the bolt assembly. The weight, empty, is about 7 lbs.

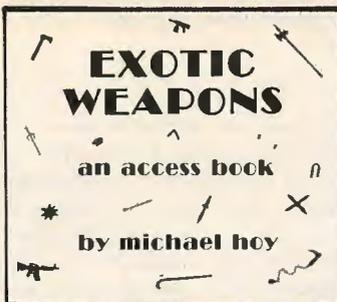
The butt stock folds over the top of the gun and does not interfere with normal operation of the weapon when in this position. A folding foregrip is useful in controlling muzzle climb during

burst fire when firing from either the shoulder or in the hip-assault position. The front sight is adjustable for windage zero by lateral movement in its dovetail. The rear sight is fixed with no protective hood.

The cyclic rate appeared to be 650 rpm. No stoppages were encountered, except as a function of the really bad Argentine ammunition. The 32-rd. magazines are tool-room modifications of single-position feed MP38/40 magazines. The weapon itself was robust and exhibited excellent human engineering for a 1950s design. It's a pity Mauser was unable to elicit any interest in its first serious attempt at a submachine gun after WWII, since the Model 57 showed great promise. But by this time the major contenders were already crowding the submachine gun's limited arena. What I'd like to know is how good old serial number 21 got into the hands of communist guerrillas.

El Salvador has become the elephants' graveyard of military small arms: It need not continue to be that way. The ultimate test and evaluation of small-arms technology — the flame and heat of actual combat — awaits those enterprising enough to offer their wares, on a limited basis, to the Salvadoran military establishment for this purpose. ☒

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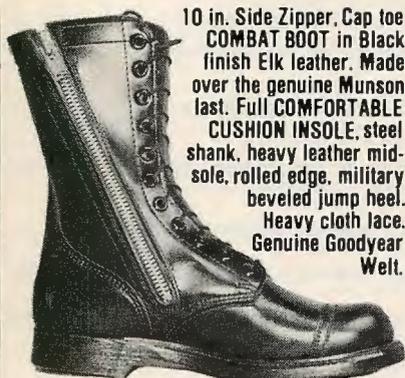
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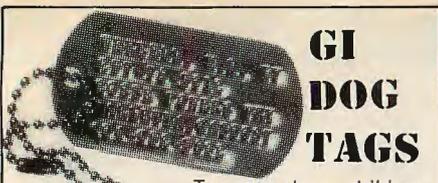
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PVT. TINGLEY

Continued from page 69

affairs desk told me that the rules of engagement were established by the White House, and they referred me to the Department of Defense. So I called the Pentagon press officer. They told me that the rules of engagement were established by the local commander, Col. Geraghty, who set up the rules with civilian safety in mind. "The local commander did not want the compound to appear like an aggressive, offensive military position." I asked who established the original rules of engagement, and they told me that it was the State Department and the White House. I then called Maj. Bob Jordan, USMC PAO in Beirut. He told me that the guidelines were originally established by the State Department and the Department of Defense, and the local commander "amplified those guidelines," which were established when the Marines were first deployed to Beirut in September 1982.

I then called the White House press department, which referred me to the DOD. I told them that the DOD referred me to them. Then they referred me to Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Bob Simms. Simms' secretary referred me to the DOD and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I couldn't get through to the JCS at first, so I called the USMC PAO in Washington. When I asked them who established the rules of engagement, the Marines told me that they were set up by "the JCS and the National Security Council in conjunction with the Marines and others involved." After a while, I got through to the JCS PAO, Col. Robertson. He told me that "the rules of engagement were standard peacetime rules. The operation commander recommended this. The mission was one of presence which is not an offensive mission. The rules of engagement were not the problem. Security was the problem."

You get the picture. Why weren't things changed? Why weren't the Marines dug in? Why was the compound so easily entered by the suicide truck, when that sort of bombing attack is a standard tactic for Middle Eastern terrorists (such as the attack on the U.S. Embassy in Beirut)? Why were over 250 Marines milling around a compound without rifles in easy range of 155mm artillery fire? And what was the point of using the fighting Marines in a nonaggressive, nonoffensive "peacekeeping" role?

There are a lot of unanswered questions being investigated by, among others, SOF. The Long Commission is studying the incident for the government. *Soldier of Fortune* wants to know, and would like to solicit the help of anyone who may have more information on precisely what individual or individuals were responsible for signing off on the stupid rules of engagement that resulted in the death of so many of America's

finest. Any information provided will be held in the strictest confidence. We also solicit any anonymous letters that might provide leads to help us solve this problem.

In the meantime, families mourn their dead. Stephen Tingley and his buddies died for their country. Please, we'd like to offer photos to the families, so pass the word. It's the least we can do. ✕

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FULL AUTO

Continued from page 24

Treasury Department which needed an absolutely reliable, hushable SMG that would fit, unaltered, into a standard government-issue briefcase. At 14½ inches long, the MPK was clearly in a class by itself." (Note: The new Mini UZI just beats the Walther MPK by a mere half inch.)

Reader Donald Fleu installed an AK-74-type muzzle brake on his CAR-15 fitted with the Atchisson MkII .22LR conversion unit. The combination proved to be potentially devastating. After firing 300 rounds of Remington high-velocity .22LR solid-points, a residue of lead shavings 0.150-inch thick, accumulated at the forward end of the device and started to close the muzzle. This is the second such incident reported to me. In the first instance the muzzle brake finally blew off the rifle. Stay with the Colt bird-cage or three-prong flash suppressors when you fire .22LR cartridges through your AR15/M16.

Speaking of the Atchisson .22LR conversion unit reminds me that John Norrell (Big John's Weapons, Dept. SOF, 416 W. Main St., Jacksonville, AR 72076) is without doubt the world's greatest living expert on this infuriating item. John has spent several years fine-tuning and debugging the Atchisson and has put it all together in a manual that is the final word on this subject. Twenty dollars may seem a bit high for such information, until you've tried to get your Atchisson unit to fire without constant stoppages (especially in full auto). You really have only two choices: spend several years to find out what John did or just send him his well-deserved \$20 American.

Finally, my good friend Doc Dater has announced the relocation of his manufacturing and distribution facilities to Houston, Texas. Phil Dater launched Automatic Weapons Company in 1978, operating out of his garage. Within a few years Dater was the acknowledged leader in sound suppressors designed to be easily maintained by their end users (see "Doc Dater's Deadly Devices," SOF, November '81). All of Dater's suppressors come with instruction manuals and the basic specialized tools required for disassembly and reassembly. The demand for Dater's fine products has increased asymptotically and quite beyond his capacity to continue alone and offer reasonable delivery schedules. Finding two associates, Lynn J. McWilliams and Charles E. Hair, who met his standards of excellence will allow Phil to devote his energies to the research and development of new products and the redesign of existing units. The manufacturing, promotion and distribution of Dater's suppressors will take place at Automatic Weapons Co., Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 772162, Houston, TX 77215. Phone: (713) 482-2134. ✕

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IN REVIEW

Continued from page 20

Ezell hits the mark when he concludes that in spite of their diminished tactical role, submachine guns will remain popular with foreign police and special operations units, especially in design envelopes that emphasize smaller size, less weight and suppressed capability.

Ezell strikes home, once again, in Chapter 4, "Handgun Developments," with the finest compendium to date on the JSSAP pistol trials. In February 1982 the DOD terminated plans to adopt a 9mm pistol. The reason submitted was the failure of the second round candidates (Beretta 92S1, HK P7A13, SIG-Sauer P226 and S&W 459A) to meet a sufficient number of the 71 test criteria. Most of the pistols failed at least 11 requirements — mud and sand were the biggest problems. Ezell correctly concludes that the U.S. military wanted too much. The requirement that the pistol must fire 800 rounds between major malfunctions is not related to the real world of the battlefield. No WWII Colt 1911A1 straight off the production line could shoot half that number without a stoppage, yet it has always been considered acceptably reliable.

Chapter 5, "Special Purpose Weapons Development," covers trends in sniper rifles, firing-port weapons, suppressed weapons, combat shotguns, grenade launchers and, strangely enough, blank firing attachments.

Part 2 is the "Description of Small Arms by Nation and a Basic Manual of Current Weapons." This latter feature, in essence a step-by-step photographic sequence of disassembly/assembly procedures for most of the world's important small arms, has always been the series' most useful attribute. It is no less now, as the 12th edition adds coverage in the following areas: Argentina — FAL, FMK 3 and MEMS M.75/1 SMGs and grenade launchers; Australia — increased coverage on the domestic FAL series and FI SMG; Austria — AUG rifles and the Glock & Steyr 9mm pistols; Belgium — FNC rifle and the first field-stripping procedures in print for the FN Minimi (M249 SAW); Britain — complete coverage on the Individual Weapon (IW); Taiwan — Type 68 5.56mm rifle; France — greatly expanded coverage on the FAMAS 5.56mm rifle; Germany — HK P7 pistol, G41 (updated HK33) and PSG 1 sniper rifle; Japan — expanded coverage on the Type 62 GPMG; Portugal — FMBP M976 SMG; Singapore — SAR 80 rifle and Ultimex 100 SAW; Spain — new Star & Astra 9mm pistols, the CETME Modelo L 5.56mm rifle and the MG-82 SAW; Switzerland — SIG P220 9mm pistol; USSR — AK-74 rifle and AGS17 grenade launcher; USA — M231 firing-port weapon and the Mk19 grenade launcher; and new chapters on Brazil, South Africa and "Small Arms for Outdoor Sports," which describes the civilian versions of some of the most popular military weapons.

Plagued of late by a plethora of pseudo-experts dredged from the ranks of hunting rifle enthusiasts, MAC-10 shooters and steel gong commandos by the popular gun press to appease the spiralling interest in military small arms, the public would be better served and informed if every single page of Ezell's splendid volume were required reading for these cavorting mag-gots.

Yet at \$49.95 a copy we could expect that Israel Galili's name would be spelled correctly, that photo captions would not be missing, that RPD would not come out as RDP, the Beretta 70/78 SAW as the 70/.223 LM or the 55-gr. M193 projectile as 5.5-gr. In matters more of opinion, the AKM's anti-bounce device is most certainly not a rate reducer, the AK-74's muzzle device increases rather than decreases noise level, and no matter what they contend, Colt had produced several million more than 3,440,106 M16s by the end of 1976 (those left in Vietnam and sent to Israel having been left off the inventory, no doubt).

But, aside from these gremlins and minor irritants, I can recommend Ezell's new magnum opus most highly and without hesitation. Everyone who professes an interest in military small arms must own, read and continually refer to this paragon edition of **Small Arms of the World.**

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Continued from page 17

bers, completed the 2½-day course; 21 of the 29, including all five SURVIVE-ers, were first-time jumpers.

DESERT SURVIVAL...

SOFer Dave Ganci has taught military and academic courses on staying alive for the last 25 years. This quarter-century of practical and pedagogical experience is now available to private citizens. Basic Desert Appreciation and Survival and the Advanced Desert Survival Course will be offered in April, May, June and July.

The basic course lasts four days and includes one night in the rough with minimal equipment staged in the fabled Superstition Mountains. Naturally, the advanced course is a lot rougher: six days' instruction includes a four-day, three-night desert crossing using no more than you can carry on your web belt. Needless to say, this is serious. If you have a need to know how to survive anything in the desert, contact Dave Ganci, Director, Arizona Outdoor Institute, Dept. SOF, 6737 N. 18th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85016, (602) 266-7585.

VIETNAM MEDAL...

A national medal to honor all Vietnam veterans has been approved by a House banking subcommittee on consumer affairs and coinage. The subcommittee plans to have a design contest and is encouraging Vietnam veterans to "participate in the design and selection of entries" for the Vietnam Veterans National Medal, as it's been formally dubbed. Wonder if it will be black?

SAIGON MISSION REUNION...

The Saigon Mission Association, Inc., founded by the last civilians and military present at the fall of Vietnam, will hold its Eighth Annual Reunion on the anniversary of the fall, 30 April 1983, in Hampton, Va.

Activities will begin Friday, 29 April, at the Hospitality Room in the Chamberlin Hotel, Ft. Monroe. The dinner/dance will be held Saturday night, 30 April. The organizers of this are looking forward to seeing all who participated

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in or supported this memorial event. For a brochure outlining the events, contact SMA Reunion, 1 Commander Dr., Hampton, VA 23666.

FRIENDS OF THE MARINES...

A Maine reader called SOF's attention to a local organization that provides a pen-pal network to the Marines in Lebanon. If you contact Friends of the Marines, they will send you the name of a Marine in Lebanon with whom you can correspond. Write Friends of the Marines, 2000 Oakland Ave. E., Austin, ME 55912.

The Marines in Lebanon need our support. They have a tough job to do and, as those of you who have been stationed far away from home know, nothing is quite as cheerful as a letter from home. Show the Marines that SOFers care.

MEMORIAL FUND SCANDAL...

SOF wants to know: What does the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund have to hide?

In a week-long series aired in November, reporter Carlton Sherwood of WDVN TV in Washington, D.C., reported that a five-month examination of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund revealed that the supposedly non-profit organization collected over \$9 million, yet had spent less than one-third of those collected dollars for the construction of the memorial itself.

What happened to the rest of the money? The VVMF has repeatedly turned down requests to open their books, telling WDVN TV that any responsible organization "doesn't just open books to everybody and their brother who comes along." That apparently includes H. Ross Perot, himself a \$160,000 contributor to the fund, who asked to hire an independent accounting firm to do an audit, and the Disabled American Veterans, whose donation of an estimated \$1,000,000 was allegedly turned down because it was contingent upon an opening of the books.

So far, six congressmen, led by Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.) have requested an investigation. They need the support of more of their colleagues. We urge all SOF readers to write their congressmen and demand a full accounting of the money donated to the VVMF. Further, anyone who donated money should contact their State Attorney General or the State Consumer Affairs Office in their state and demand to know what was done with their money.

Watch upcoming issues of SOF for a complete report on this serious story. And write to your congressmen. Don't let the Vietnam vet get screwed again!

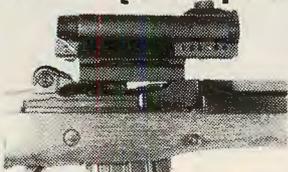
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FLAK



Continued from page 8

SOF spoke to Mercantile Commerce Trust Co. in December and found that within the first three to four weeks over \$4,000 had been collected for Sp/4 Shaw. In addition, many vets and relatives of vets have sent their sympathy and messages of hope. All have been appreciated, and the fund is still going. —The Eds.

LANGLEY LWOWS 'EM...

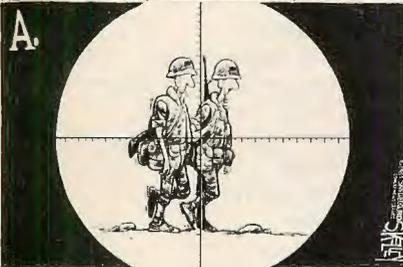
Sirs:

A very pleasant surprise at the fourth annual SOF Convention was Andy Langley's seminar on free-lancing as a military/security adviser. I didn't hear any "there I was, ankle deep in grenade pins" bullshit. Just a good, informative lecture on determining and satisfying your clients' needs, assessing and utilizing one's power to influence people and determining and using the most effective style of leadership for each situation.

Mr. Langley's three-hour course was well worth the entire convention registration fee.

Craig Gifford
Ensenada, California

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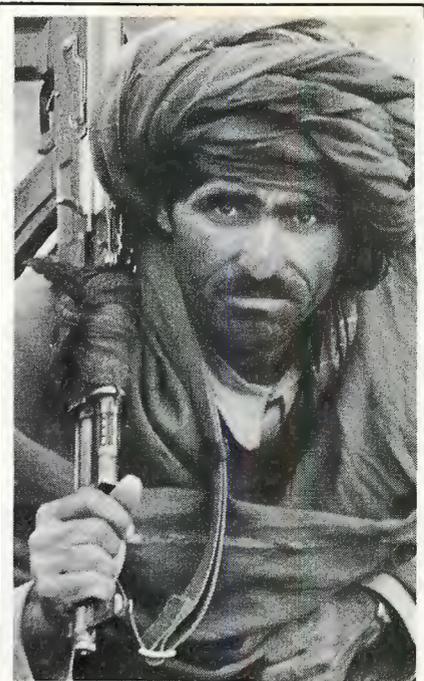
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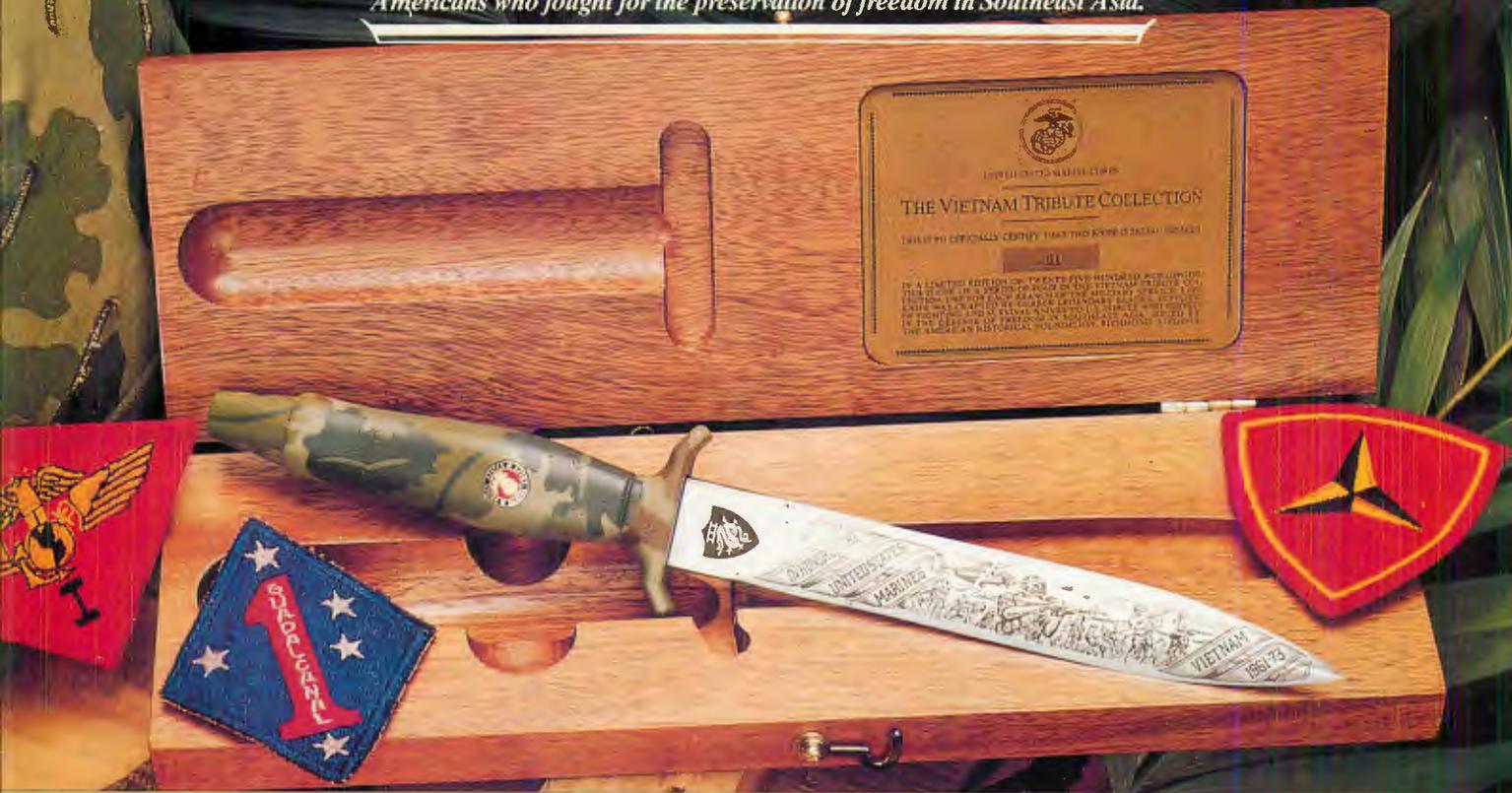
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VIETNAM TRIBUTE

This is the most spectacular object ever made available to honor the brave Americans who fought for the preservation of freedom in Southeast Asia.



This is a genuine battle worthy Gerber Mark II Combat Knife—not a reproduction or a stylized display piece—authentic to Vietnam and specially embellished for this tribute—the first limited edition Gerber combat knife ever made.

The Americans who served in the Vietnam War will be judged by history to be the heroes of that decade. Some were volunteers. Some were draftees. Most had other lives to lead. But when duty called, they served.

These Americans can take pride in their many accomplishments. They did what the leadership of our nation asked them to do, and they did it well.

Each branch of the service will be honored with a separate tribute. The tribute announced here honors the United States Marine Corps.

A Lasting, Tangible Tribute

Now, the Marines who served—and, in a sense, the noble motivations and the American spirit that caused us to enter the conflict—are honored through the issuance of this lasting, tangible tribute.

As an appropriate counterpart to the ceremonial swords awarded to American military heroes of the 18th and 19th centuries, a presentation military knife was selected for this 20th century tribute.

Authentic To Vietnam

The Gerber Mark II Combat Knife was selected because it was one of the most famous knives of this war. This knife first saw use in Vietnam, having been created for combat there. It quickly became the chosen knife of many men of all branches of the U.S. military. It was especially popular with men of Marine Recon, Green Beret and SEAL/UDT units.

The original Vietnam-era "wasp body" blade shape—no longer produced—will be reintroduced especially for this. This blade is hardened, tempered, sharpened and honed by hand to a razor's edge; it is so sharp you can shave with it. The overall knife length is 12."

But unlike any knife ever made, this limited edition tribute has been given distinctive embellishments designed with the assistance of U.S. Marine Corps combat veterans of Vietnam.

Symbolic of jungle warfare, the hilt is produced in the colors of the oak-leaf pattern camouflage helmet cover worn by Marines in Vietnam. A gold-plated, fired enamel cloisonne medallion of the U.S. Marine Corps insignia forms the focal point of the grip.

Marine Corps Combat Scene

The scene etched on the mirror-polished steel blade permanently records Marines in combat in Vietnam.

Marines armed with their M-16s, an M-60, an M-79 grenade launcher, an M-19 mortar and hand grenades close in on a fortified enemy position while Marine CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopters drop off supplies at the rear.

On the blade shoulder is etched the insignia of the Third Marine Amphibious Force, representative of all U.S. Marine Corps units that served in Southeast Asia. Or, if you prefer, the division insignia of your choice can be etched in this position.

As an important reminder to present and future generations of the significant sacrifices made by Americans who served in Southeast Asia, you will also receive a copy of "Vietnam Tribute." This was written by General William Westmoreland, former commander of all U.S. military forces in Vietnam; it is being published by the Foundation as part of this project.

Solid Mahogany Display Case

To display and preserve your U.S. Marine Corps Vietnam Tribute Combat Knife, you will receive a furniture-finished solid mahogany case of military design, with olive drab Certificate of Authenticity, recessed and fitted into the inner lid.

But only 2,500 of each knife will be made—one to represent each one thousand Americans of the 2,500,000 who served in the military services in Southeast Asia. Each limited edition serial number will be engraved on the reverse of each blade, inscribed on the Certificate of Authenticity and registered with The American Historical Foundation, as further assurance of this strict limit.

First Option, Without Obligation

As an added advantage, you will be guaranteed the opportunity, *without obligation*, to reserve subsequent knives in this series—so you can systematically acquire a complete set. These tributes—one to the Army, one to the Air Force and one to the Navy—will be announced to you privately, one knife at a time, in the months ahead. Each will have a different camouflage pattern hilt and blade etching.

You will also be made a member of The American Historical Foundation, with members across the U.S. and in 27 other countries worldwide. You will receive, at no expense, hard to obtain information concerning military history and the history, care, display and collecting of knives, swords, and militaria.

Whether or not you or a member of your family served in Vietnam, this tribute will give you a renewed sense of pride in the Americans who answered the call to duty in the defense of freedom in Southeast Asia. Contributions will also be made by the Foundation to Vietnam veterans associations, to help them to continue to perpetuate the memory of the Americans honored by this tribute.

How to Reserve

This is available only through The American Historical Foundation. You may write, call, personally visit or use the reservation form below. Reservations will be acknowledged immediately. Write or call about having your name, service number, dates, etc., etched on the blade reverse. You may send a deposit or payment in full. You may inspect your knife for a full 30 days prior to deciding to keep it. Satisfaction is guaranteed.

Prompt action is suggested to avoid the inevitability of higher prices and the completion of the reservation roster for this strictly limited edition.

The American Historical Foundation is a member of the Marine Corps Historical Foundation, the U.S. Marine Raider Association and other military and military history organizations.

RESERVATION

Satisfaction Guaranteed or Return in 30 Days for Full Refund

To: The American Historical Foundation
1022 West Franklin Street, Dept. SF-V7
Richmond, Virginia 23220
Telephone (804) 353-1812
24-hour toll free reservations (800) 368-8080

I wish to reserve the serially numbered limited edition U.S. Marine Corps Vietnam Tribute Combat Knife, with solid mahogany presentation case, "Vietnam Tribute" booklet by Gen. Westmoreland, Certificate of Authenticity and Foundation membership. No shipping charges.

My deposit of \$39 is enclosed. Please invoice the balance prior to delivery...

at the rate of \$75 per month, for two months.

in full.

I enclose \$189 as payment in full.

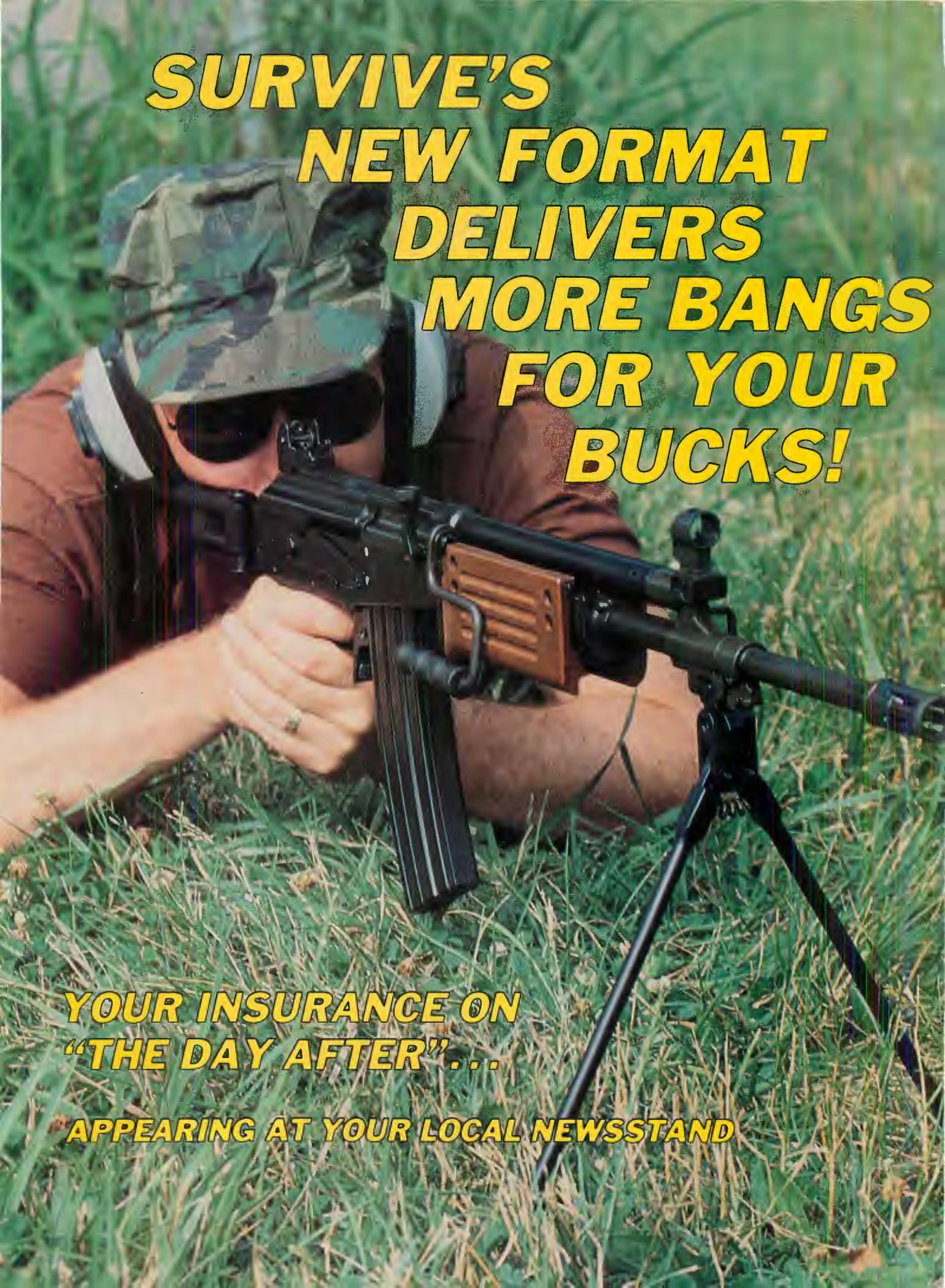
(I wish the following unit insignia to be etched on the blade shoulder at the charge of \$25, in place of the Third Marine Amphibious Force insignia)

Please send information about the Vietnam Tribute for the:
 U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force.

Name.....

Address.....

For Visa, MasterCard, or American Express, please send account number, expiration date and signature. Virginia residents add tax.

A person wearing a camouflage hat, sunglasses, and a brown shirt is lying in a field of tall grass. They are aiming a black submachine gun mounted on a tripod. The gun has a wooden magazine. The person's hands are on the gun, and they appear to be in a ready position.

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