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The Journal of Professional Adventurers

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IN GRENADA:  
THE UNTOLD  
STORY**

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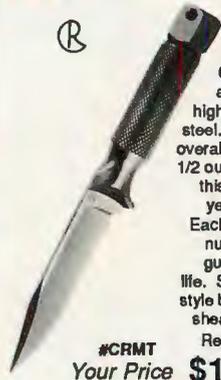
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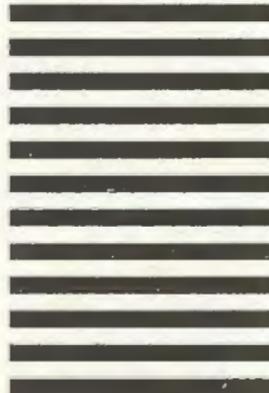
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## COVER

COVER: U.S. Army M60 gunner stands ready during American intervention in Grenada in October 1983. Considering obstacles faced by U.S. troops — least of which was the enemy force and most of which was our own planning — it's amazing Operation Urgent Fury was as successful as it was. Elite U.S. Army Rangers spearheaded the rescue of American students, and we bring you their story on page 56. Photo: AP/Wide World  
INSET: Bravery under fire shows the mettle of a true leader. Vice President and presidential contender George Bush was a Navy pilot during World War II, and Associate Editor Don McLean takes a look at Bush's uncommon valor. Check out page 65 for the true story. Photo: courtesy Sean Walsh, OVP Press Office



# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

## Winning the Twilight Struggle

**W**ITH due respect to Dukakis and Bush, this election is about neither competence nor ideas. It's about liberty and the resolve to defend it.

When John Kennedy took office in 1961, he told the country to prepare itself for "a long twilight struggle" against totalitarian oppression. That was 27 years ago — the Cold War was already in its 12th year by then — and it has been going on ever since. What will be decided on Nov. 8 is whether we will stay the course in that struggle or whether we will abandon it — at precisely the time, ironically, when there are signs of new light.

There is nothing very mysterious about how the United States has chosen to confront the Soviets over the past 40 years. The elements include a nuclear deterrent second to none, sufficient conventional forces to defeat any aggressor other than the other superpower, and the willingness to provide aid and comfort to peoples prepared to fight for their liberty.

To be sure, we have not always prevailed. But we have won more than we have lost.

Western Europe, a basket case in 1945, is today politically free and economically stronger than the Soviet Union. Japan, which we nearly boiled off the map, is a liberal democracy and the third strongest economic power on the planet. Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Thailand, and Malaysia — all of whom were threatened with overt or covert communist aggression — did not fall and today are economic tigers.

Twenty years ago the term "national liberation movement" was synonymous with Marxist insurgency. Today such movements are as likely as not to be fighting for freedom — and winning.

Most important, the main socialist powers have concluded that unless they restructure their societies along more economically and politically democratic lines, they cannot remain competitive with the West. The Soviet Union's *glasnost* and *perestroika*, China's Four Modernizations, and Gorbachev's emerging attempt to wind down wars by proxy around the globe didn't just happen by accident.

And that is what makes Michael Dukakis' defense and foreign policies so profoundly wrong. By advocating such policies as unilaterally scrapping the modernization of U.S. strategic forces, abandoning the goal of the 600-ship navy, emasculating SDI, and snubbing peoples fighting for their liberty around the world, Dukakis is in effect proposing to remove precisely those pressures that are forcing change in the Eastern bloc. He is acting as though the changes which are just beginning were accomplished facts. They aren't.

Both candidates have been reasonably candid with regard to defense and foreign policy. Bush has proposed to pursue the policies of the past eight years, and in a broader sense those of the past 40. Dukakis has proposed to abandon them.

Bush, who has devoted most of his public life to "the long twilight struggle," has proposed to stay the course. Dukakis, in our estimation, has proposed to stumble at the finish line.

We cast our vote for Bush — and completing the mission. ✘

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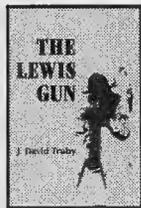


# KICKASS!

More Mayhem From the Master of Malice

by George Hayduke

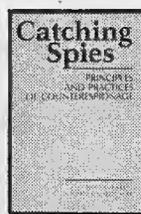
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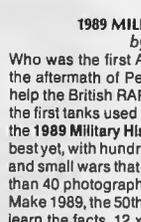
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## SEMI-AUTO BEST FOR SNIPING...

Sirs:

The adoption of the M24 bolt-action sniper weapon system by the U.S. Army needs to be discussed before it's too late. Before I start a letter-writing war amongst my fellow readers, I want to say that I am not debating the superior accuracy of bolt-action weapons over that of semiautomatic rifles. Between the two, there is no contest.

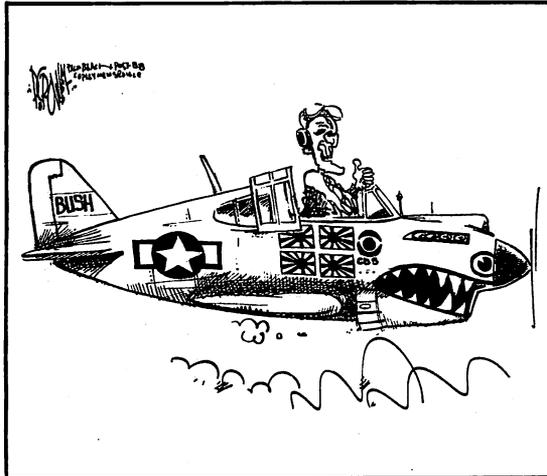
The problem lies with having bolt-action rifles in modern firefights. Let's face facts: No matter how fast you work the bolt or how good a shot you are, you are no match for a man armed with an AK-47. When a sniper is not performing his special task he must be capable of assuming a basic rifleman's role, otherwise he is next to useless to his unit. Don't send snipers out on a company level operation with a rifle that is designed to give more range and less firepower than needed.

Michael D.  
Ledbetter  
Phoenix, Arizona

*Technical Editor Peter Kokalis replies: "I agree with SOF reader Ledbetter and will opt for a properly tuned and scoped M21 over any bolt-action system any time the targets are likely to shoot back. Latest word from the U.S. Army is that someone must agree as M21s are being rebuilt and fitted with new mounts and scopes."*



## FLAK



## CASE OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY...

Sirs:

Imagine my surprise when I returned from a field training exercise to find myself and several of my men in a photo on page 48/49 of SOF ("Sandinista Staredown," SOF, July '88). As a scout squad leader in HHC 3/27 Infantry, 7th ID (L), I'm sure you could imagine my disgust upon reading the photo caption labeling us as 82nd scouts! We would appreciate a correction of Mr. Scroft's error. As a soldier I am surprised Mr. Scroft could not distinguish an 82nd patch from a 7th ID (L) patch.

I would appreciate the acknowledgement of the fact that us "legs" of the "light and deadly" 7th ID (L) were in Palmerola before the 82nd and we secured the DZ (Drop Zone) and watched the glory boys jump.

Sgt. David A. Pile  
Scout Platoon, 3/27 Inf.

*Senior Editor John Coleman caught the bullet on this error: "Consider the mistake acknowledged and corrected, Sergeant Pile, but the blame doesn't lie with Gene Scroft. He mailed his photos to our editorial offices in Boulder, Colorado immediately after he finished his assignment. The film was processed stateside and did not have accompanying captions. The task of identifying weapons and units fell to us, and from the original slide it was tough to spot anything except for the jump wings you're wearing. That, combined with the fact that Scroft spent most of his time with the 82nd while in Honduras, led me to misidentify you folks. I stand corrected."*

## FONDA- BUSTERS...

Sirs:

I don't see why the citizens of Waterbury, Connecticut, don't use the same tactics that Hanoi Jane and her commie cohorts used to subvert the media. Call the TV stations and newspapers, then spill "blood" (Karo syrup and food dye) over the sidewalks where the filming is going on.

When they try to film use your power tools, lawn mower, or "fix" that broken car horn that seems stuck on. At night flash your camera strobe lights, car headlights, flashlights, etc. . . . Invent and chant slogans (the media loved slogans when they used them against us).

Get creative and think up some other items like scheduling "press conferences" and publicizing Fonda's statements during the Vietnam War.

Bob Steiner  
Anaheim, California

## BEND OVER...

Sirs:

Your June 1988 issue carried a book "review" of *BOHICA* by Scott Barnes. Your "review," rather than offering excerpts of the work, merely made a statement that, out of context, conveys the message that neither Barnes nor anyone else could, would, should or will make a foray into Southeast Asia in search of missing Americans. Neither did your "review" mention the scathing accusations that several Americans in high government positions are involved in the drug trade originating from the Golden Triangle. Nor do you touch on the damningly related accusations from unrelated sources that George Bush is involved in this operation. As former head of the CIA and presently, as in the past, in charge of drug smuggling interdiction, Bush may be the main reason that imported drugs are now,

*Continued on page 8*



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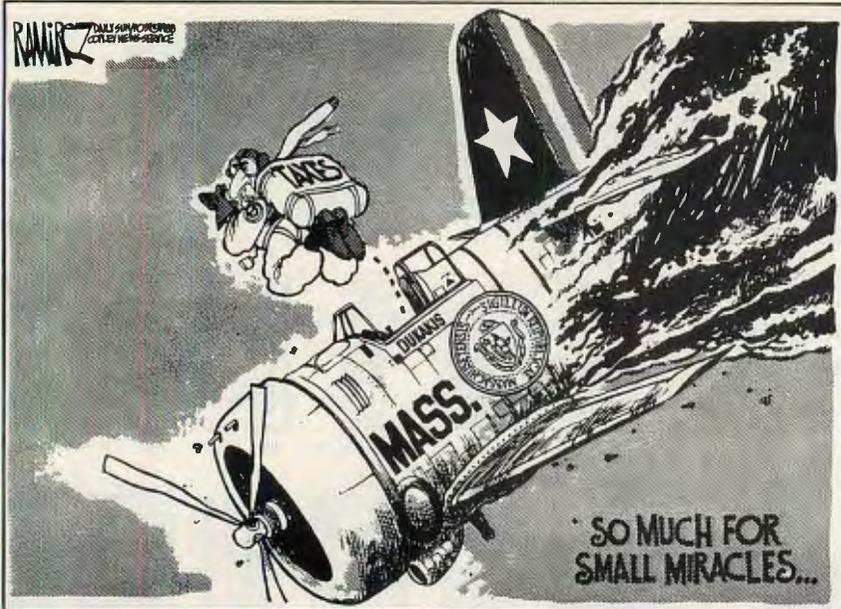
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Continued from page 5

more than ever, so available in the United States.

George D. McAdoo  
Yuma, Arizona

SOF's "review" was a dismissal of Barnes' book as hogwash. We first came into contact with Barnes back in 1982 and have kept sort of a casual watch on him since then. Our initial impression of him was that he had a rather tenuous grip on reality, and time has not changed that at all. While clever, on closer investigation Barnes' stories don't check out. Barnes and James G. "Bo" Gritz, who has given even wider distribution to the story about high-ranking Americans being involved in the drug trade, have been in contact with the "unrelated sources" pushing the "Bush is a doper" conspiracy. The source of this nonsense is a radical leftist group known as the Christic Institute.

The Christics recently had their lawsuit alleging the involvement of anti-communist Americans in the assassination, dope and gun smuggling business thrown out of court, because they couldn't present a single fact that would stand up in court.

Barnes has had previous contacts with the left, with articles appearing in such notable communist rags as The Daily Worker and Covert Action Information Bulletin. One English author has pointed to Barnes' basic tale as classic Soviet disinformation, and some of Barnes' victims in BOHICA also see his purpose as more evil than buffoonish. Gritz has credibility problems as well but

nonetheless we find his association with the looney leftists bewildering.

Lots of people, including some of us here at SOF, have gone into Laos looking for POWs. SOF's opinion, after spending some hundreds of thousands of dollars of our own money (money not raised from the public) is that the private searches are unlikely to lead to positive results.

## LEAVE SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET...

Sirs:

As a subscriber I always enjoy your magazine. However, I must strongly protest your photo spread that ran with the article on Japanese treasure hunting in the Philippines (Aug. '88). I am upset about the Japanese helmet/skull that seemed to be used as a photo prop in two pictures. This man was a soldier, a Japanese soldier, who gave his life fighting for a cause he believed in. That cause was wrong and just because Japan (fortunately) lost the war does not give us the right to put his remains on display. Also your treatment of General Yamashita was a little slanted. He was tried and convicted for war crimes committed by Japanese naval troops in Manila while he was in the mountains with no communications with same. Was it pure coincidence his death sentence was pronounced by General MacArthur on December 7th? (especially considering Yamashita beat MacArthur in the Philippines!).

Tom Reidy  
Clinton, Maryland

Associate Editor Don McLean replies: "Your point that Yamashita was hiding in the hills when the atrocities in Manila were committed is well-taken. As the author pointed out, Yamashita wanted the naval forces to abandon Manila and join him in the mountains. It may have been better to haul Yamashita back to the Asian subcontinent and throw him to the folks there whose people his troops butchered. They'd have tried him, cut him in little pieces — and damn sure displayed his remains. He was, as I pointed out, a capable general. If you want somebody to say he was a noble human being, you'll have to look elsewhere. Yes, my view of Yamashita is slanted and I don't like Hitler, Joe Stalin or Charlie Manson, either."

## MILITARY SKILLS, NOT MERC CAMPS...

Sirs:

I have a possible solution to the problem of people writing to you requesting the names of so-called "merc schools" where they can learn military skills.

Instead of wasting good money on these money pits, advise them to check out the schools that the U.S. Armed Forces and Reserves have to offer. It won't cost them a cent and, in fact, they can earn money while attending.

National Guard and Reserve units are crying for people who are willing to serve and learn military skills. If you're qualified, this can gain you entry to Ranger and Airborne schools.

This is better for everyone concerned, except, of course, for the rip-off artists riding the wave of Ramboism in this country. I have nothing against Rambo, just the people who rip off others in the name of patriotism.

William Smith, Jr.  
Army National Guard  
Akron, Indiana

*Absolutely right, Mr. Smith. Regular military training — especially in special operations forces — provides private professional soldiers with the best training they'll ever receive.*

Continued on page 10



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Continued from page 8

## VIETNAM MOVIES...

Sirs:

I'm still waiting for a review on the movie *Full Metal Jacket*.

You had one a while back on the movie *Platoon* and even a cover photo of it on one of your magazines. *Full Metal Jacket* was by far a better, more straightforward, down-to-earth movie than *Platoon* ever was. Well, how about it fellows? What is your opinion?

Mlekush

Tacoma, Washington

Managing Editor Jim Graves replies: "We did a full review on *Platoon* because we had sufficient advance time to prepare a review, and projected it would be both a success and controversial. SOF has to have at least 90 days of lead time in order for our review and a movie to appear at the same time, a marketing necessity. The producers of *Full Metal Jacket* kept changing their release date so we could not review it. The same goes for Hamburger Hill.

Of the three, Hamburger Hill is by far the best in terms of being a "Vietnam Movie." However, as a former Marine I enjoyed *Full Metal Jacket's* boot camp portion. It came about as close as anything I've ever seen to recreating what eight weeks at Parris Island was like.

The purpose of *Platoon*, like Jane Fonda's *Coming Home*, was essentially anti-military, anti-Vietnam veteran propaganda. Technically, *Platoon* is several degrees better than most Hollywood efforts at war movies — thanks to the contribution of former Marine and former SOF Executive Editor Dale Dye who was the film's technical adviser — but as a reflection of the American troop in Vietnam it was B.S. *Platoon* was what Oliver Stone's leftist pals — like Jane Fonda — believe Vietnam to have been like.

## LETTERS

Your input has made FLAK one of SOF's most popular columns. Write and tell us your opinion of SOF or any subject you consider worth our readers' attention. We reserve the right to edit for content and brevity. Send letters to FLAK, c/o SOF, PO Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. ✕



## PEACE IN THEIR TIME?...

We've been keeping a close watch on the events in Angola/South West Africa (Namibia), and it appears that the issue of Namibian independence — basically centering around the withdrawal of some 45,000 Cuban mercenaries from Angola — has been resolved (maybe).

According to an agreement reached in New York during July between delegations from Angola, Cuba, and South Africa (with the United States as mediator), 14 points regarding Cuban withdrawal, Namibian independence, the role of the United Nations in the area, among others, have been accepted by the major players.

Conspicuously absent in the formal agreement is any mention of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the terrorist organization dedicated to seizing power in Namibia, or the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), a pro-Western resistance movement led by Jonas Savimbi fighting against the Marxist Angolan government.

As part of the agreement, South African troops have already started pulling out of SWA/Namibia, although no timetable has been set for the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

We'd like to see a peaceful and reasonable settlement in the region, but we're hedging our bets for now. For some reason, the old joke about the blindfolded man walking the plank and saying, "So far so good" with each step keeps coming to mind when it comes to "peaceful and reasonable" settlements in southern Africa.

# BULLETIN BOARD



## BUSTED IN BOLIVIA...

Take that, scumbag! Roberto Suarez Gomez, who's been called the largest cocaine producer in the world, was recently busted by 10 Bolivian anti-drug police who trekked all night through the jungle to nab him at his ranch. Suarez Gomez, termed the "godfather" of Bolivia's cocaine trade by U.S. authorities, is wanted in the United States on drug trafficking charges, but first he faces a 15-year sentence in a Bolivian slam for the same activity.

In our August issue, we took Bolivian anti-drug authorities to task in "Bum Trip in Bolivia" for failing to do much about the heavy-duty cocaine pushers in their country. The Suarez Gomez bust shows that good cops in Bolivia can do the job — if they're given the right kind of backing.



Midnight in America

## HONOR ROLL...

El Salvador/Nicaragua Defense Fund contributors:  
Raymond Fischer — in memory of 101st Airborne lost in Newfoundland, Conservative Caucus of Lower Delaware, Chuck Miller, Christopher Marquette, Kevin Hutchison, William Smallwood.

Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund contributors:  
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Our heartfelt thanks go out to these people and the numerous other donors who requested their names not be printed.

## FREEDOM, INC....

No matter how the political pendulum swings this month, here's an organization that will stay the conservative course. Freedom, Inc., an international corporation which supports anti-communist resistance movements around the world, has already given substantial backing to the RENAMO freedom fighters in Mozambique, and is developing a package to aid the contras. SOF Contributing Editor Robert MacKenzie, who has extensive experience in Africa and Central America, is the executive director of Freedom, Inc. and coordinates directly with resistance leaders to determine the best areas for private sector support.

Heading Freedom, Inc. are its two co-chairmen, Sir Harry Schultz and Larry Abraham, two highly successful investment bankers who, as MacKenzie tells us, "Are tired of watching the betrayal of the very people whom America should be supporting."

So are we. For more information on Freedom, Inc., contact them at 18000 Pacific Highway South, Dept. SOF, Suite 1115, Seattle, WA 98188. As SOF has proved in the past, private sector support can make a difference.

## FROM D.C. WITH LOVE...

Looking for an interesting job that might help stave off World War III? (And we don't mean visualizing world peace in your spare time.) How about becoming a Russian-speaking State Department Foreign Service Officer with specialized training in the vocabulary of risk reduction.

In what?

As of 1 April, a new form of "hotline" — Nuclear Risk Reduction Centers — between Moscow and Washington are open, our side of the house being manned by the above-mentioned FSOs. Every couple of hours, they send across everything from Russian literature to arms control data to their counterparts in the Soviet Union, just to make sure the line's working.

We tried to find someone in Foggy Bottom who could explain exactly what training in the vocabulary of risk reduction entailed, but after nine phone calls we gave up.

How about: "Don't shoot, Ivan, the wheat's on its way"? ☒

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## WHERE TO BUY WHAT

SOF readers frequently write to Adventure Quartermaster asking, "Where can I buy . . . ?" Whether requesting hard-to-find, original-issue Rhodesian cammies, an ALICE pack, or tactical SWAT boots, their concern is the same: Which dealers can be trusted for top-quality, authentic paramilitary/adventure gear?

Though SOF has earned an industry-wide reputation for its honest product evaluations, we can't test everything. Therefore, we've compiled a list of mail-order suppliers who over the years have proven themselves to be consistently reliable purveyors of high-quality gear for the professional and part-time adventurer.

Space constraints have forced us to keep our list short, so if your favorite supplier isn't listed, don't interpret it as a slam against that particular company. Think of this list as a starting point in your search for the right equipment, and as a means of comparison. These companies' catalogues are also a great place to track down a Christmas gift for the adventurer who has everything.

# ADVENTURE QUARtermaster



by Tom Slizewski

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**U.S. Cavalry**, Dept. SOF, 2855 Centennial Ave., Radcliff, KY 40160-9000; phone 1-800-626-6171. Similar to other larger retailers but also offering several exclusive items. They're one of the few places you can buy a Ghillie Suit (Adventure Quartermaster, SOF July '88). 140 pages. \$3.00.

**Kaufman's West**, Dept. SOF, 1660 Eubank, N.E., Albuquerque, NM 87112; phone 1-800-545-0933. Recently billing themselves as Safari Outfitters, Kaufman's West offers many specialty items, particularly clothing, not available from its competitors. 84 pages. \$2.00.

**Quartermaster**, Dept. SOF, 750 Long Beach Blvd., Long Beach, CA 90813; phone (213) 436-6245. Covering the gamut from parade and drill accoutrements to paint-ball game supplies, Quartermaster also offers a comprehensive catalogue of military equipment and clothing. 88 pages. \$3.00.

**Shomer-Tec**, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 2187, Bellingham, WA 98227; phone (206) 733-6214. Though not offering as extensive a selection as other mail-order retailers, Shomer-Tec, formerly Alcan Wholesalers, caters to the more specialized law enforcement market. Their 64-page catalogue has telephone tapping devices, rappelling equipment and illuminating parachute flares, among many other items. \$2.00 (refundable with first order).

**Pachmayr**, Dept. SOF, 1875 S. Mountain Ave., Monrovia, CA 91016; phone (818) 357-7771. The self-proclaimed emporium of shooting sports, Pachmayr has much to offer. Their catalogue is chock full of everything the serious hunter could want. From boots and clothing to gun stocks and how-to books, you'll find it all here. 52 pages. Free.

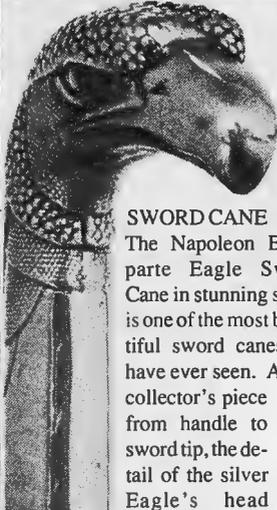
**Springfield Armory**, Dept. SOF, 420 West Main St., Geneseo, IL 61254; phone (309) 944-5631. Springfield Armory sells everything from assault rifles to pistols. Their catalogue also contains several pages of accessories, including gun cases, holsters, and bayonets. You'll find only shooting related supplies here, no clothing. 28 pages. \$3.00.

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Also worth mentioning is **Lancer Militaria**, Dept. SOF, Box 886, Mt. Ida, AR 71957; phone (501) 867-2232. They sell a wide variety of military patches, pins and insignia from the U.S. services, as well as some from the Soviet, German and ARVN military. Their selection of current military books is excellent. 72 pages. \$1.00. ✖



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For just \$46.00 because it's made of all THE RIGHT STUFF. The classic WWII Bomber Jacket for the Aviator/Racer look. Made of Dura-Hide, a man-made leather that defies you to tell it from the real thing.

This is your chance to pick up the hottest look today at a very reasonable price. Check out these features: heavy duty Brass zippers; horizontal (zippered) and vertical front pockets; zippered left sleeve utility pocket; heavy duty knit cuffs and waistband; heavy weight pile collar; stylish epaulettes on each shoulder; inside storm flap for wind resistance; 100% nylon lining; 8-ounces polyester body fill for warmth that doesn't weigh you down. This is a jacket taking America by Storm... don't miss out. Order yours today for just \$46.00 plus \$3.00 shipping. Specify XS (30-32), S (34-36), M (38-40), L (42-44), XL (46) and XXL (48-50) and be sure to tell us BLACK or BROWN.

## STUN GUN

NOVA XR5000  
\$63 POSTPAID  
50,000 VOLTS!

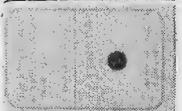


The Nova XR5000 Stun Gun can protect you from attackers.

STUN GUN will instantly "scramble" attacker's nervous system causing immediate (temporary) paralysis! By simply touching your attacker anywhere, he will drop helpless even through many layers of clothing. STUN GUN is not lethal and is safe to user. Cannot transmit shock back to you. Requires a 9 volt nicad battery and charger \$16.00. The Nova is sold with a leather holster for \$63.00 postpaid. This is the authentic American made product. Put 50,000 volts in the palm of your hand, order today.

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**BUG BOX**  
For Telephone  
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Assure complete telephone privacy with this telephone tap detector. It's the only device of its kind that prevents same-line eavesdropping PLUS notifies you of unauthorized intrusion onto your line. While most tap-detectors must screw into your phone's mouthpiece, the BUG BOX is totally independent: plug your modular phone into tiny (3" x 2" x 1") BUG BOX, then plug BUG BOX into the wall jack. Now you've got TOTAL privacy - BUG BOX's red indicator light lets you know if someone is eavesdropping AND if someone has intentionally (or unintentionally) tapped your lines inside or outside the house. BONUS: Attach BUG BOX to every phone in your house, then you, AND ONLY YOU, can access the phone. BUG BOX not only tells you if someone else is on the line, it KEEPS THEM OFF with its Privacy Shut-out Circuit. THEY CAN'T LISTEN IN EVEN IF THEY WANTED TO! Buy one BUG BOX and use its red indicator light to tell you if someone else has come "on line"; buy as many BUG BOX's as you have phones, and have it both ways - total Privacy Shut-out plus visible red light indicators. NO OTHER TAP DETECTOR HAS BOTH THESE FEATURES! Order BUG BOX for \$48.00 postpaid, and each additional unit for \$30.00 each.

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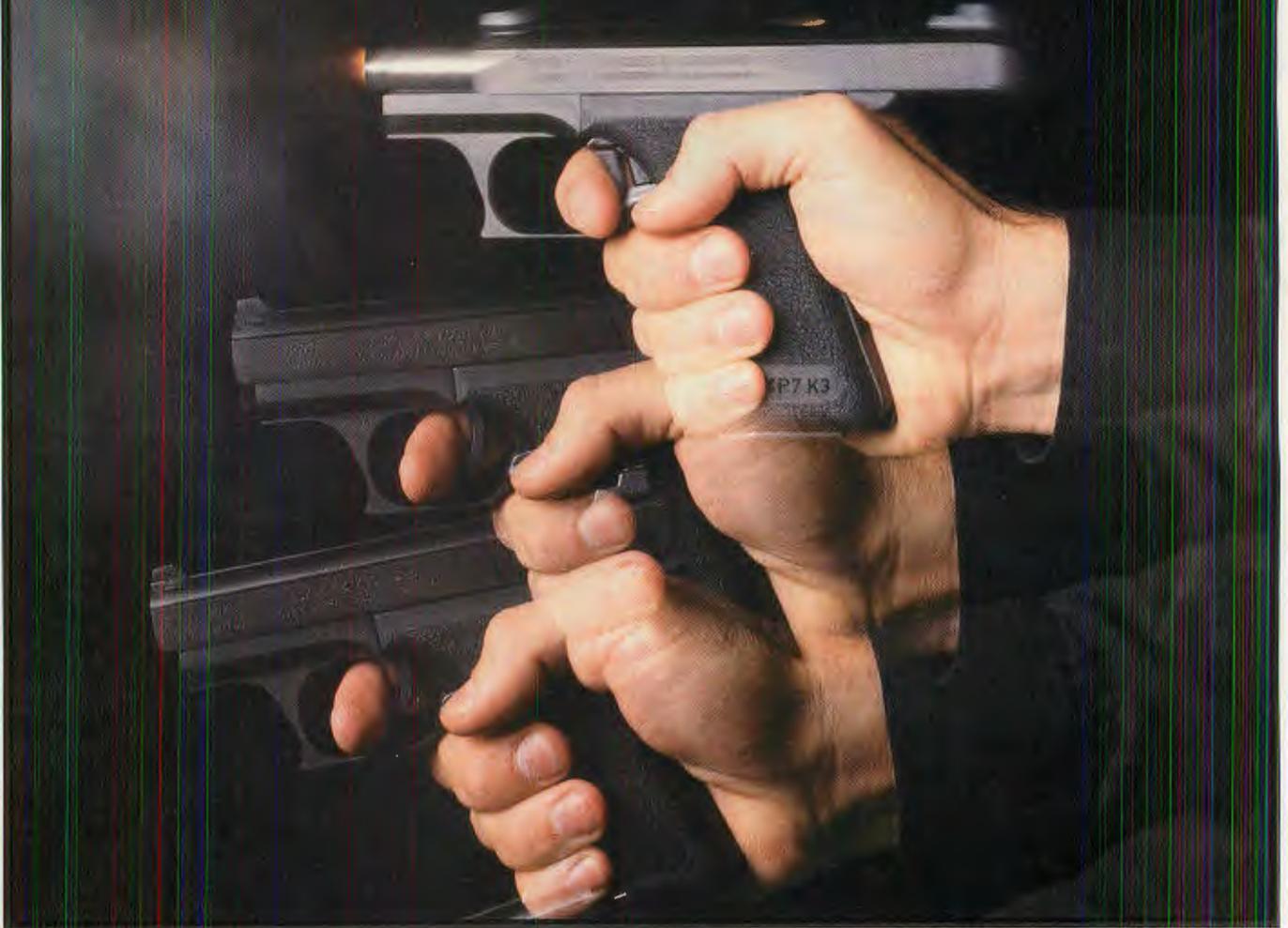
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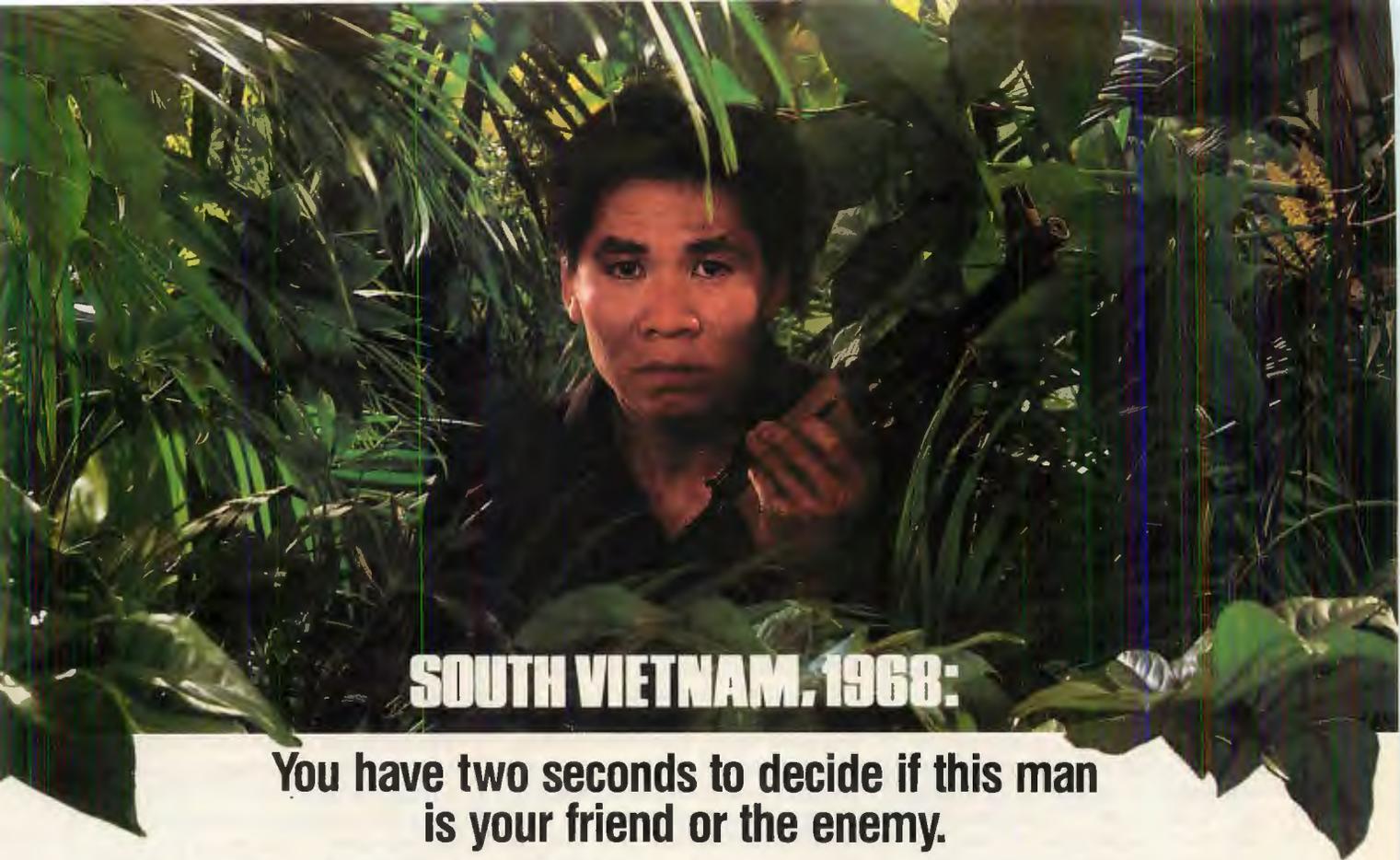
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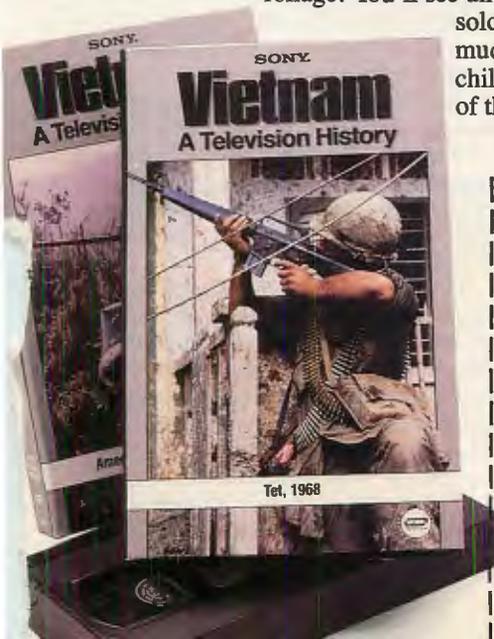
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**TIME  
LIFE**

**I**T was in the spring during the last few months of World War II that I settled into the cockpit of a military transport C-54, better known as a Douglas DC-4, at Reyjavik, Iceland. The war was beginning to wind down. We were winning on all fronts and it was quite obvious that it was just a matter of time.

Just before leaving the operations office with clearance papers to return to the United States through Newfoundland to New York, the operations officer told me that a flight some six hours ahead of us was unreported. The flight had made a position report halfway to Greenland, did not report at Prince Christian on the extreme southern tip of Greenland, and was now overdue in Stephanville, Newfoundland.

"Would you," the operations officer asked, "fly low on the route and look for signs of wreckage, life rafts, debris or anything that would indicate that something has taken the plane into the ocean?"

Of course I agreed, and at the same time learned that the captain was an old TWA captain who, like myself, had volunteered his services to Air Transport Command (ATC) at a time when it was in desperate need for pilots experienced in long-range flying, weather flying and celestial navigation.

"Do you have any ideas?" my copilot asked as we ran through the checklist. He had overheard the operations officer.

I shook my head. I had been flying trans-Atlantic for over three years with ATC. In wartime, flying overseas, anywhere, there was always a danger. If it wasn't weather, icy conditions, strong head winds or a fuel shortage combined with a heavy load, it could be antiaircraft fire from a submarine, surface raider, or who knows what.

I had seen it all. I knew how it felt to have three submarines open up on me in the dead of night and have the sky suddenly come alive with fire. The memory of how it felt to have shrapnel rip through my airplane was still vivid.

That TWA pilot had run into something, and from the weather map I had just seen, it wasn't weather. There was a little instrument flying in the vicinity of Greenland, but that was normal.

If he was overdue, it didn't mean he had strayed. It meant that he had run into something unexpected and would probably never show up. And it was my problem now to figure out what had happened to him and make sure it did not happen to me.

"Could that TWA pilot have had a fire?" my copilot, Ed Meeks, asked, knowing the direction of my thoughts.

"I don't think so," I replied. "If he had something like that, the radio operator would have gotten off a message of some kind."



# I WAS THERE

by Wayne Allison

## Prehistoric Sub

"You know, Ed," I explained, "if he had just a few seconds he would have gotten out an SOS — fire message. That would have told us something."

We completed the cockpit checklist, listened to the engineer, Johnny Kinney, give us the fuel and passenger load and heard the cabin attendant, an enlisted man, on the interphone tell us that the 20 passengers were aboard, the steps away and the door shut and locked. All so humdrum as to be boring, but it was necessary.

Soon we had the four engines going and were taxiing toward the runway. Turning sideways to the runway so we could see if any planes were coming in, we ran up and tested the engines. Then the takeoff clearance came and we went lumbering down that long path with all horses stretching and pulling.

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### Finally I saw it, just ahead and a little to the left; a long sub lying in a small sheltered cove with a walkway to the shore.

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At the quarter-mile marker the lumbering was much lighter. At the half-mile mark the wheels were rolling, but we could not feel them very much. Then a little further and we were floating — airborne.

At 1,000 feet we leveled out. Ed checked out with the control tower and it was Newfoundland, next stop. My navigator, Henry Bowers, looked at me, questioning from his seat behind the copilot.

"You set the flight plan up for 8,000 feet," he reminded me.

"Yes," I replied, "I know, Henry, but we had a last-minute change at the request of the operations officer. We are going to cruise at 1,000 feet and look for signs of the airplane ahead of us."

"Boys," I spoke loudly to all four of them, "I want all eyes ahead of us looking at the water for some trace of that airplane. But don't forget to watch

for a sub lying on top of the water. We would be a clay pigeon at 1,000 feet so we have to see him first to dodge him. That water is pretty choppy and his shooting will not be very good. So if we see one ahead we will just veer off and go around him."

All heads were suddenly up and their eyes searching when they realized that I was telling them that we were playing clay pigeon.

Over two hours went by with nothing but whitecaps to watch. I turned an automatic direction finder (ADF) to Prince Christian. The needle indicator swung as the identification signal of Prince Christian came in loud and clear. It was pointing a little to the right of dead ahead. I studied it a moment.

"Henry," I leaned back and spoke toward the back. "I thought you said we were north of the course."

Henry jumped out of his seat and leaned toward me. "We are," he insisted. "With the double drift I also took a sun-line shot and we are about 10 miles north."

Everyone spent a couple of minutes watching the quivering needle of the 3-inch dial located in the roof just above the windshield. Then I pointed at the dial.

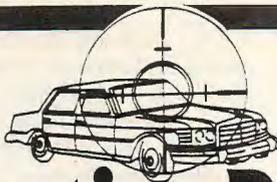
"That needle says we are south of the course from the way it is quivering and pointing to the right of dead ahead," I insisted. Henry looked very puzzled.

Dan Harding, my radio operator sitting directly behind me, came to life.

"Say," he exclaimed. "Cut all your circuits off that other ADF and let me have it on remote control."

We complied, then spent several minutes alternating our eyes from the whitecaps to the ADF dial with its two needles, one red, the other green. The green was steadily insisting that the correct course of Prince Christian was 10 degrees to our right.

Then the red needle came alive from Dan's turning on remote control and swung around to point steadily to the left of our course, indicating that the right course to Prince Christian was 10 degrees to our left. Both needles were quivering and twitching in reaction to the Prince Christian identification signal, but were in dispute as to the exact course to Prince Christian.



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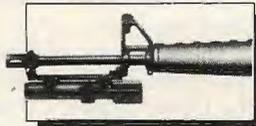
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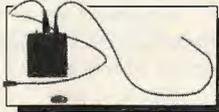
The size of a quarter, it is so sensitive it can pick up sounds 20' away and transmit them to any FM radio receiver (even the one in your car) up to several blocks away! Ultra II uses a four stage circuit and quality components to achieve maximum performance. Uses 9 volt battery.

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Special receiver for maximum performance \$269. (Ship/Ins. \$7.) A standard programmable scanner could be used, but will be of lower quality.

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#### Now you can listen for break-ins from several blocks away

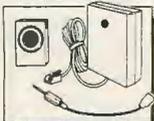
Protect your home or business! The Warehouse Watchman never sleeps. It is always listening for sounds and transmitting them to you. Just plug it in

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the "lead pancake" to insure accuracy. Reloadable, it can protect you again and again, while keeping your distance. Made of high impact, lightweight plastic, it will protect you for years. Now the best news! It is classified as not a firearm and can be sold to anyone over the age of 21! Keep one at home and take one with you when you travel.

Prowler Fowler II (improved design) Retail \$169.

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### EVALUATOR New microprocessor checks for phone taps



Evaluator is based on new technology, never before available. Other "tap detectors" are only simple voltage meters, and they just won't pick up real taps. The Evaluator takes a fingerprint of the voltage,

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Note: California, along with most other states, has expanded its wiretapping laws to allow local and state agencies to tap phones. This may compromise your privacy!

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"Listen to this," Dan held his headset to put one of his earphones to my left ear and told me to keep my right earphone on my right ear.

"What do you hear?" he questioned. I sat a minute with one earphone on the red ADF and the other on the green ADF. Unmistakeably the signal of Prince Christian came in identical on both sets. But one said to go left and the other said to go right. Both were in sensitive tune.

"We have two Prince Christians!"

"Exactly," Dan was excited and showed it. "One is a re-broadcast of the other and three kilocycles apart. It is likely the more powerful one."

"It's crazy!" Dan shook his head in disbelief.

I nodded slowly, studying both indicators and listening to both sets. Then a thought hit me, causing me to smile with its logic.

"Prince Christian is on the extreme southern tip of Greenland," I reminded everyone, "So it has to be the one pointing to the left. Henry is right about us being to the right of the course. Let's go to the other Prince Christian and see what we find."

Flying at 1,000 feet, we crawled under a cloud deck that dropped to the west. I studied it a little and moved the prop controls to climbing rpm and added throttle. At the same time I headed the plane more to the right until the needle of the green ADF was on zero, that is, dead ahead.

"Are we going to another altitude?" Ed looked at me with a penetrating gaze.

"You're damned right!" I replied grimly. "We're not sub hunting now. We're hunting a broadcast station, and it could be anything from a sub to a pocket battleship. I don't want any big, unexpected surprises. That east side of Greenland could easily hide a German battleship.

I increased the angle of climb and asked Henry for an estimate of distance to the east Greenland shore.

The cloud deck increased and we were soon in it, rocking a little and getting an occasional break, but seeing only whitecaps. So far, so good. I began to breathe a little easier as we climbed up to 8,000 feet — but I wanted more.

At 12,000 we were up out of the clouds and suddenly we could see the coast of Greenland ahead. The green ADF was giving indications of being close to the station and I could hear the station identification with the volume control turned all the way down. It was really booming in and I knew a lot of power was in the transmission. That's why we picked it up before the real Prince Christian.

I leaned forward to look over the nose and there were three other heads in the windshield. Finally I saw it, just ahead and a little to the left; a long sub lying in a small sheltered cove with a walkway to the shore.

The sub almost filled the inlet. Sheer granite walls rose on three sides of the cove with a permanent cap of snow and ice between the knife-like ridges.

I gave the controls to Ed and cautioned him to keep it on a straight course ahead, no turning, nothing to indicate we had seen the sub. Then I allowed each crew member to lean past me and take a good look at the "enemy." I felt sure he would not open up on us at this altitude and reveal his location.

Arctic twilight made the ice, snow and granite mountains look eerie. We were at 13,000 feet and I estimated the top of the ridge to be 12,000. A pilot on instruments would only have to be a little lower to bump into something real hard.

The east coast of Greenland is the graveyard for all weather that crosses the United States, Canada and Alaska. It all rolls over to Greenland where each storm hangs, slips over, settles down sometimes to sea level, waivers and dies. Sometimes a storm would lie there and take a couple of days to die.

I could visualize the sub crew lying there, in instrument weather, with sensitive listening devices, escorting any westbound flight over them until it slammed into the towering cliffs. I wondered if they had chalked up the TWA plane ahead of me, for I was sure that he had pretty solid instrument weather at the time.

"Do you want to send any kind of message?" Dan leaned forward and spoke in my ear.

"Not a cheep!" I ordered. "Complete radio silence. If we are called, do not answer. We will give it to Blue West One on the little control tower transmitter by voice as we go by." I knew that little transmitter would not go out much further than 10 miles.

Blue West One was an airport base we had established on the west side of Greenland, some 40 miles up a long fjord that went by the base on an easterly direction. A short distance east of the base the fjord ended in huge glaciers off granite walls. A long runway ran east/west with the fjord, with such a grade that you had to land east and take off westward, regardless of the wind. It had been literally carved out of the granite with room for buildings between the runway and the mountain, which rose to nearly 9,000 feet south of the runway.

A long row of Quonset huts and hangars were squeezed in between the runway and the mountain. Here the wind, during a bad storm, could reach 80 to 100 miles per hour. Heavy rope railing led from one building to another and was installed to assist in going between buildings.

The base had been established as a service stop for transit and short-range

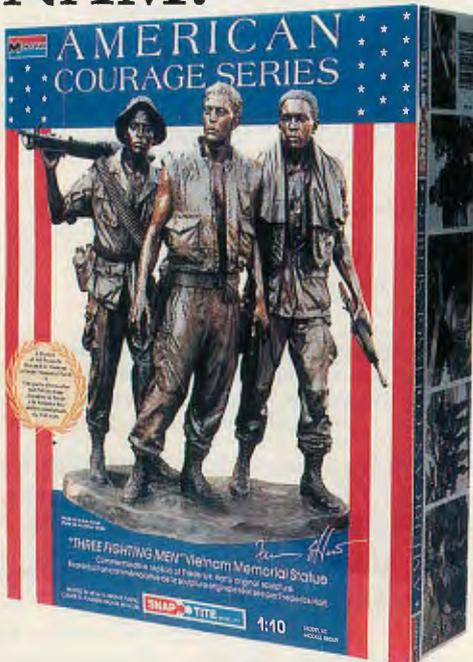
## BUILD A TRIBUTE TO OUR HEROES OF VIETNAM.

Monogram introduces a model kit that lets you create your own tribute to America's heroic veterans. Molded in bronze-colored metallic plastic, it's nine inches tall. And this incredibly detailed model snaps together without glue. Build this dramatic 1/10 scale replica of Frederick Hart's "Three Fighting Men" located at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund. Join us in this model way to honor those who served their country.



It's time to say thanks.

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aircraft going to the war zone. On a stop there while flying a local run in the Arctic a year back, I had picked up a soldier returning to the States for reassignment. He classified a tour at Blue West One as: "Like serving time at Alcatraz—but the salmon fishing is out of this world."

With the high granite ridges of Greenland behind us, we began descending and turned southward toward Blue West One. Twilight was deepening, but we could still see several miles, especially westward with the western light reflecting off the Davis Strait. Ed was flying and I picked up the microphone when we saw the subdued lights of the base.

"Flight 84 calling Blue West One control tower."

The tower came right back, surprised at night traffic, to give me landing instructions.

"We are just passing, not landing," I replied. "Is the operations officer available?"

"It will take a little while," the reply came back. "Can we be of assistance?"

"No," I replied. "Get the operations officer. This is an emergency."

That started things moving. We made a slow turn over the fjord. But little time elapsed before the operations officer called.

"Major Westmark to flight 84." The tower came on the air in just a few minutes. "I understand you have an emergency."

"Major Westmark, this is Captain Allison speaking. We had an emergency," I smiled to my crew, "but now I am giving it to you. It is an emergency mission you might enjoy."

Then I proceeded to tell him about the sub, its exact location by longitude and latitude and the re-broadcast of the Prince Christian range.

"You can home on his broadcast and go right to him, probably from the east side of Greenland," I finished.

"Great!" he responded. "We are delighted! And we will take formal calling cards." We could hear him chuckle with glee.

Then, as an afterthought, he asked, "Are you going to report this on the air or at Newfoundland?" Both he and I knew that if it was reported on the air, the Corps area commanding general at Presque Isle, Maine, would immediately take charge on the basis that it was a tactical mission.

"Negative," I replied, "He's all your baby. Treat him well."

"The CO, Colonel Jackson, is at my elbow," Major Westmark came right back, "He sends his appreciation of the emergency mission and thanks."

"Just give me a blow by blow report

*Continued on page 79*

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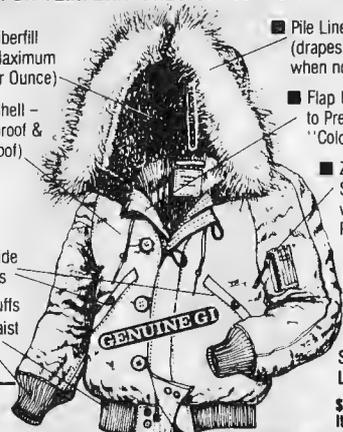
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 \$99.75/each.  
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**USAF Flight Jacket**



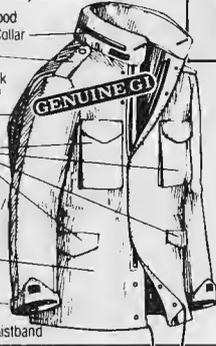
These flight jackets are issued to military fliers and are designated Type MA1 for Intermediate Cold. (This means that it is the medium weight jacket, designed for comfort in a temperature zone of about 20° to 55° F). Look for the military designation, sizes and stock numbers inside the left pocket. The outer shell and lining are 100% nylon making the jacket completely wind and waterproof. The interlining is 100% polyester fiberfill for the highest degree of warmth per ounce. This jacket is reversible; outside in your choice of either sage green or blue and the inside is survival orange. It features: two hip pockets outside as well as inside, sewn pen and pencil holders plus zippered easy access storage pocket in the left sleeve. This a snappy, convenient, warm, fully functional jacket and it happens to be the latest fashion trend.

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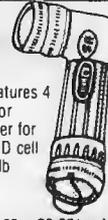
- Knit Face Mask**  
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**PLEIKU: The Dawn of Helicopter Warfare.** By J.D. Coleman. St. Martin's Press, Dept. SOF, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010. 1988. 315 pages. Hardcover. Black & white photos. \$19.95. Review by John Coleman.

“**A**N army consists of individuals, organizations, and equipment. *Seldom* in the long history of armies have these three ingredients been so ingeniously intermixed as they were in the creation of the first air assault division.”

So begins General E.C. Meyer's foreword to this book. I'd add: Seldom in the long history of military writing has an author been able to take those three ingredients, breathe the spark of life into them, and produce a historical reference guaranteed to captivate any audience.

And that's what author J.D. Coleman has done with *Pleiku*, a rare breed of factual book that reads better than most fiction.

The concept of airmobility is accepted doctrine now, but in its Korean infancy the idea of airlifting masses of men and equipment by helicopter was really no more than an interesting — if somewhat fanciful — idea on the drawing board.

It wasn't until 1962 and the creation of the U.S. Army Tactical Mobility Requirements Board that the concept of an airmobile division became a reality, although fruition of that reality didn't come until three years later when the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) became the first Army division deployed to Vietnam.

And it was there, in the central highlands around Pleiku, that this fledgling division — in what now seems an almost foreordained scenario — en-

## IN REVIEW



**Command group of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) takes cover from sniper fire near Binh Khe on 28 October 1965. Airmobility as a workable concept was put to severe test when the Cav — the first American Army division deployed to Vietnam — locked horns with regular North Vietnamese Army units from 23 October-26 November 1965. Photo: DoD**

countered regular North Vietnamese Army forces, engaged them for more than a month, and walked away with a

Presidential Unit Citation that proved the viability of airmobility and the courage of the Cav troopers.

As General Meyer says in his foreword, this book could have read as dry as an Army field manual. But it doesn't. Coleman, the Cav's official historian who also participated in the Pleiku campaign, has weaved a remarkable tale of the trials and tribulations of putting a division in the sky, and brought it to life by concentrating on the human dimension — the Sky-troopers who made it work.

**THE DICTIONARY OF ESPIONAGE.** By Henry S.A. Becket. SOF Exchange, P.O. Box 687, Boulder, CO 80306. 1986. Hardcover. 203 pages. \$17.95 plus \$1.75 postage and handling. Review by Derry Gallagher.

**E**VERY profession or trade has its own jargon — inside terms and phrases used with that particular activity. To insiders, these terms and phrases have a very specific meaning which cannot be misinterpreted. As jargon begins to find its way into print or conversation, it is seldom defined. The reader or listener is left to define the jargon on his own, based on his personal experience, perspective, and the context in which the jargon is used. Oftentimes the true or intended mean-

ing is lost in the translation. *The Dictionary of Espionage* provides the uninitiated with a guide to the meanings of these unusual and arcane words, terms and phrases.

The author and I share the same alma mater, Fort Holibird's school for spies, fondly referred to as the “lie, cheat and steal school.” Our textbook was classified, we never had homework, and we were immediately immersed in “spook speak” — the jargon of spies and spymasters such as live drops, dead drops, terminations, SICRS, IRs, DSCIDS, NSCIDs, case officers, CAS, agents, addresses, safe houses and all the rest. We also learned something that Ian Fleming didn't teach us: The intelligence community cannot survive without paper. Every activity generates voluminous

reports, all written in “spook speak.”

The author has excellent credentials for this project. Henry S.A. Becket is a nom de plume for wordsmith Joe Goulden, a contributor to SOF and author of numerous books under his own name. His training and service in the intelligence community, as well as years spent as a Washington, D.C.-based writer and reporter have given him wide exposure to the unique language of the intelligence services.

Aside from serving as an essential primer for anyone trying to follow recent congressional hearings and independent counsel witch hunts, *The Dictionary of Espionage* is both a good read and an excellent reference for anyone interested in the real world of intelligence and/or the fictional world of spys. ☒

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“SOAF jet, SOAF jet, this is Fortune 22, target, over.”

The aircraft from the Sultan's air force was quick to respond: “Alpha 36C, roger, over.”

The circling Strikemaster was a dot in the dawning blue sky. The pilot's voice was calm, as befitted someone who only a few minutes before had been eating a leisurely breakfast in the comfortable officers' mess at Salalah airfield.

“Target is a heavy machine gun, now firing; stone sangar [bunker], near crest of ridge. Nearest own troops are 100 meters south of target. Tango [ground identification panels of friendly troops] at grid 372931, over.”

The circling dot crept a bit closer. The Shpagin's tracers searched the slope below, seeking soldiers of the advance platoon of the Frontier Force company that I was supporting. I'd already tried to suppress the Shpagin with artillery fire, but the crest of a knife-edge ridge is about the hardest gun target there is. A short horizontal miss carries the round well out of lethal burst radius down the slope.

“Tango not seen.”

*Oh damn, wake up, will you.* “Roger. Tango marked by yellow smoke. From tango go 350 degrees, 225 meters; that is your target. Wind is from the east 15 knots; you are clear to attack, over.”

“Roger, running in now.” Then, chillingly, “Target identified, marked with yellow smoke, stand by.”

“STOP, STOP, STOP,” I shouted into the mouthpiece, looking up at the nose of the aircraft. Too late. On balance, it's marginally better to be shot by the enemy than by your own side. Two-and-a-half-inch Sura rockets streamed overhead to impact on the other side of the valley.

After a few violent threats from me and apologies from the chagrined pilot, the next rockets went where they were supposed to and the Omani infantrymen pulled back over the ridge as the opposite crestline dissolved in a haze of dust and flying debris.

In 1972 the Dhofar war was at its height. The Sultan of Oman's army was still trying to establish itself on the Jebels. At times it was touch and go, as the rebels made a serious fight of it. Air force support was vital, as it was the one asset the Adoo rebels couldn't match.

So important was it that the Dhofar brigade commander's orders to new units deploying in the area included the sentence: “No officer should come to Dhofar unless he is able to direct artillery fire and air strikes swiftly and accurately.”

I would broaden that statement to include *any* counterinsurgency opera-



# COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

by Major C.E. Parks

## Don't Eat the Yellow Smoke



Strikemaster aircraft of the Sultan of Oman's air force on patrol off the southern coast of Oman. Photo: British Aerospace

### FRONT LINE LESSONS

Major C.E. Parks, formerly of the Royal Horse Artillery, served two tours of duty in Oman, and saw extensive service in northern Ireland. His two previous articles for SOF are “Dawn Assault in Dhofar” (September '87) and “Crater Reading” (March '88).

tion, and all platoon and squad leaders as well.

For many years forward air controllers (FAC) have made the whole business seem like a black art, not to be practiced by mere mortals. That's not so at all, although I would be the first to agree that the job of a primary FAC in modern war, for example in western Europe, is one that is best left to the professionals, mostly pilots themselves.

For the simple infantryman pinned down in the desert of Arabia, the veldt of Africa or a South American jungle, the job is usually much simpler. His supporting aircraft is likely to fly much slower and the pilot can pick out the target much more easily than his counterpart flying fast-mover antitank missions over the German plain from a base in England.

To successfully control an air strike

there are four basic items you need to carry. Most important is a suitable radio. European armies often burden themselves with specialist sets of varying complexity, but I have found that the best option is the simple Sarbe, designed originally as an emergency radio for downed pilots.

Every officer who could get his hands on one carried a Sarbe in Oman. The sets are pocket-sized, light, pretuned and as near foolproof as can be. They have an adequate range over line of sight. The only problem with a standard set is that it is switched on by pulling out a pin which transmits a squawk on the international distress frequency.

Next, try to make sure that you have the same map as the pilot, as well as a good compass. It is a lot easier to guide him onto a difficult target if you are working from maps of the same scale and edition. Many pilots use a 1:100,000 scale map as opposed to the infantryman's 1:50,000. A compass, of course, can help establish a magnetic bearing from your known position to the target, making acquisition that much easier.

It is worth the extra weight to carry in your webbing a set of air contact panels, fluorescent nylon sheets in a rectangle about 2 x 6 feet. These are laid out on the ground to form a “T,” referred to as a tango, which indicates your position to the pilot. Expedient ground markers — fluorescent panels

*Continued on page 80*

# New Toys For The Big Boys.



**Action Arms has an armload of new products to tempt every shooter.** If you think of Action Arms as just the world-famous UZI, you're in for a pleasant surprise. There also are GALIL rifles, SAMSON and UZI ammo, and more than a handful of new products.

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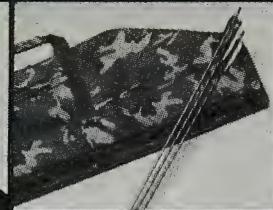
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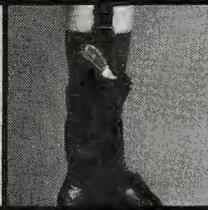
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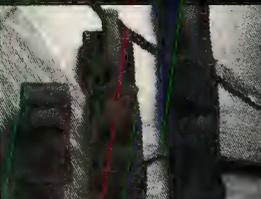
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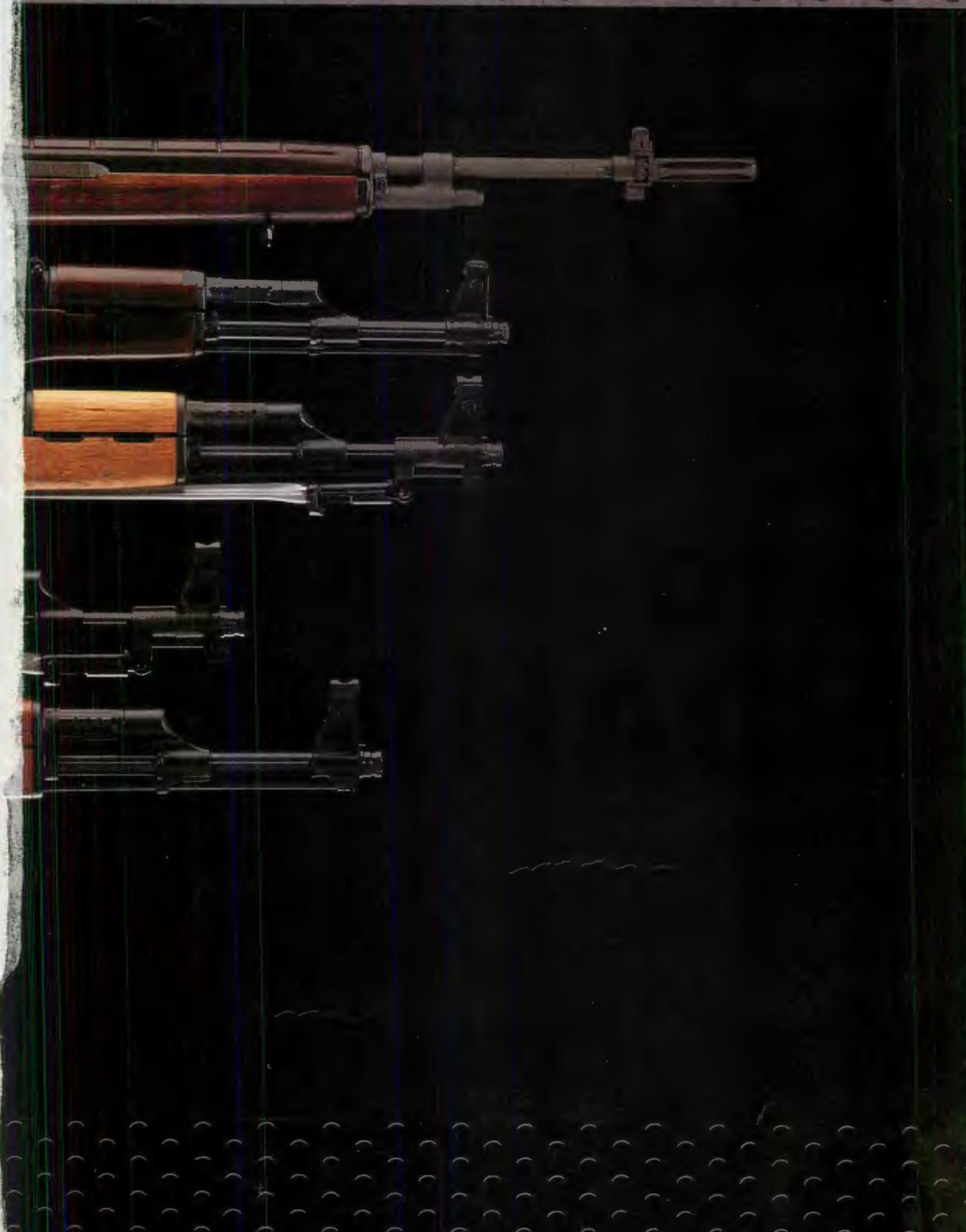
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Small muj convoy crossing border into Afghanistan.

## SOF AFGHANISTAN

# HARD ROAD TO KANDAHAR

## SOF Joins Convoy Through Afghanistan's Bandit Country

Text & Photos by Jake Border

### **BORDER'S BACK IN AFGHANISTAN**

Jake Border has traveled extensively in Afghanistan and southern Asia, always seeming to show up in places where men are locked in battle. His previous articles in *Soldier of Fortune* include accounts of fighting in Burma ("Battle at Three Pagodas Pass," SOF, August '87) skirmishes along the Thai/Cambodian border ("Cambodian Recon," SOF, October '86) and attacks by Afghan mujahideen around the city of Kandahar ("Afghan Attack," SOF, September '86). This is an account of his return to the Kandahar area.

**S**TARING down at me were hard eyes framed by the familiar black brows which contrasted so sharply with the flowing white beard. Bloody hell — could I be hallucinating? It was Khomeini! Or more precisely, Khomeinis. Not one, but several photos and colored portraits of Iran's supreme religious leader fixed me with their unforgiving gaze. The walls were plastered with them.

We had been driving all through the night and I needed to rest up and recharge my batteries. Khomeini didn't help much. What the devil was he doing here? We were supposed to be on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border at a mujahideen base camp, our springboard into Kandahar with an ammunition resupply convoy. Khomeini — who thinks Americans are personal emissaries of The Great Satan — is a hero to Shi'a Muslims. This was Sunni country, where we are supposed to be liked.

My Afghan escort had disappeared, so I sat and waited. I was even more dumfounded when tea was served. My host was turned out in green beret, cammie jacket and trousers, and black leather lace-up combat boots — nothing like the Afghans I was accustomed to. He looked like some commando-type from the war movies of my childhood, except for the green canvas webbing for his spare ammo magazines. That much was familiar mujahideen kit.

He smiled, and I asked him if he was a Khomeini man. His reluctance to explain and my broken command of the Dari/Farsi language led me to the confusing conclusion that he simultaneously was and was not.

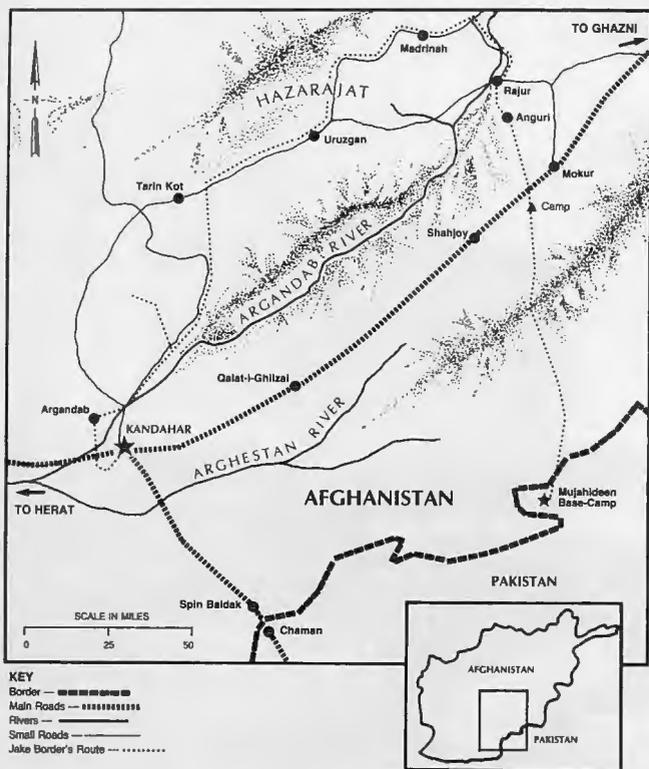
Later I learned he belonged to a mujahideen group whose members were indeed Shi'a Muslims (as are the majority of Iranians) who had been trained by the Iranian *Pasdaran*, the so-called revolutionary guards. They had called themselves *Hezbollah* (Party of God), a name associated with Iranian-backed paramilitary groups all over the Middle East. But just recently this particular contingent had decided to join the mainstream of the Afghan resistance, accepting leadership

of the predominantly Sunni Muslim *Jamiat-i-Islami*, with whom I happened to be traveling.

Pretty soon the room began to fill with other *Jamiat* mujahideen who had journeyed from the western city of Herat in order to collect weapons. Although these guys lived right on the Iranian border they were, as are the majority of Afghans, Sunnis. The Shi'ite Iranians are supplying aid only to those groups with which they have religious affinity and over which

Soviet PMN-6 nonmetallic antipersonnel mines. Case is made of duroplastic, while cover over the pressure plate is rubber. Once the mine is laid and the safety pin is removed there is a 15-20 minute delay before the mine arms.





Route taken by Jake Border and his muj escorts.

they can exercise political control — like the Hezbollah.

That means the Sunni muj in the Herat area have to get their supplies from Pakistan, then haul their stuff the length of the country.

The Herat muj worked with a will, stripping and cleaning and loading dozens of ammo magazines. They had been issued brand-new AKMs and the RPD light machine gun they call the *sad-taka* or “hundred shots.” The guns were stamped with “SUEZ A.R.E.” and some script in Arabic. The finish was a little rough, and the bolts were very stiff to work, but no one was complaining. They could still kill.

After a substantial lunch of bread, meat and potatoes, I scouted around the camp. It was in fact a fair sized town, boasting a Red Cross hospital to receive war wounded and a large bazaar where merchants dealt in the cross border commercial trade. Scores of trucks of various makes (International Harvester, Mercedes and some obscure Russian models) were parked about. They had only one thing in common — Kabul license plates.

That left me wondering about security. How could we be assured that none of these truckers were working for the other side? We had a long journey ahead of us, much of it through enemy patrolled turf with no cover except the darkness of night, and a truck is an inviting target for an ambush.

Especially ours. Our two new trucks were loaded to the gunnels with several hundred 82mm mortar rounds, about 20 122mm rockets (each weighing 74 kilograms), untold cases of AK ammo, several crates of grease-packed Kalashnikovs, and a rocket launcher.

On the plus side, the trucks were loaded under cover of darkness. On the minus side, the loading was done in the middle of the street, without benefit of a protective wall or private courtyard to shield the munitions from prying eyes.

We set out at 2300 hours, in a convoy consisting of three trucks and two jeeps, one of which drove point and periodically informed us by radio of conditions ahead. Some time into the early morning hours we crossed over into Afghanistan, and the muj riding topside chorused “*Allah-o-Akhbar*” (God is Great).

Qabir, the driver, had a private message for me. “Have you learned how to use a Kalashnikov?” he asked. He was serious.

We were now in bandit territory.

At that moment I was more worried about the danger of him falling asleep at the wheel. After he nodded off for the second time I surreptitiously slipped him some mild stimulants under the guise of offering to share some “vitamins.” By sunup Qabir was literally speeding, racing our ammo-laden truck to prevent it from being overtaken by the others. Just a little macho demo. I soon got used to it.

It was flat, open country, dry and dusty, and Qabir nonchalantly spoke of the danger of an aircraft attack. As if to underscore his point we passed the graves of two drivers killed in such a fashion. Numerous trucks from Kabul passed us headed the other direction on their way toward the border.

At 0800 we pulled up at a place which was saved from total obscurity only by the presence of a solitary tea house. The vehicles were hidden under trees; we ate, washed and slept till afternoon.

The next leg brought us to the Kabul-Kandahar highway, first taking us across a dusty plain and then traversing a small mountain range where muj stood lookout on craggy peaks. It would have been dangerous enough driving under the best of conditions; we had to do it at night without lights. It was tortuously slow going, but I wasn't complaining. We were approaching “ambush alley,” a critical stretch of road anywhere along which an attack could be mounted from nearby army posts of the Soviet puppet government of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA).

Two of these points were now discernable, the lights of Mokur to the west and Shahjoy to the east. This night, at least, the garrison at Shahjoy had more pressing things to worry about than ambushing convoys. Rising flares and scarlet tracer lines stitching the night sky indicated a mujahideen attack on the town was in progress. We drove, stopped and regrouped, scouted, rested, ate and drove again until the sun came up. I was sure we were lost, but eventually we reached the cover of an orchard in a small village, where we parked for the day.

While the sounds of the attack on Shahjoy continued to thump and crackle down the road I tuned in some pop music broadcast on Radio Moscow's English language service. “We start with ‘Poppies and Roses’ from a group in the Baltic Republic of Latvia,” said the voice. When I tired of that I chanced upon Radio Australia playing a selection of golden oldies. Damned if they weren't right in tune with the latest in Latvian pop.

The grime and weariness were beginning to show in our faces when we departed that evening and cautiously edged toward the Kabul-Kandahar highway with its cracked concrete slabs. The muj fanned out well in advance to secure the crossing point, which was just a couple of clicks short of a Soviet-manned radar station perched on a hill overlooking us. We crossed without a hitch.

Two more hours of driving, lights on now, and we passed through a Hezb-i-Islami checkpoint with a graveyard of Soviet chopper parts. We pushed on to Anguri.

Soviet tank at Durahi checkpoint. Note DShK heavy machine gun mounted on turret.





Anguri was notable for two reasons. The first was that most of its shops were housed inside old shipping containers. Containers from the Soviet Union lay side by side with containers of U.S. origin in a curious display of detente. The second was that it marked our entry into the vast central Afghan region known as Hazarajat — a territory populated by the Afghan minority of Shi'a Muslims. That meant hassles.

They began on the outskirts of Anguri. A Hazara militiaman halted us at a checkpoint. "Where are you going?" he demanded. Qabir sighted down the magnificent arch of his nose and retorted with obvious contempt and mockery, "Where are you going!" and gunned the motor. He roared down the road leaving the militiaman choking in the dust. "Shi'a," growled Qabir. "Khomeini." There was no love lost there.

Next morning we spent 45 minutes hassling with guards at the checkpoint exiting town. I rashly wondered out loud if perhaps they weren't in fact members of the moderate Afghan Shi'a group *Harakat-i-Islami* rather than Iranian-backed extremists. Hearing this one of our group numbered off the full list of the seven Peshawar-based Afghan resistance groups in which this lot *and* *Harakat* were notably not included. "Shi'a," he sneered, "Iran." Heads nodded in agreement. The militiamen demanded 1,000 Afghans (about \$7.75) "road toll" before we could pass.

Beautiful desert country stretched before us, dotted here and

there with great houses that were in fact fortresses. Fields were being tilled by both donkeys with wooden ploughs and tractors, an interesting juxtaposition of the Middle Ages and the 20th century. My contemplation of the surroundings was interrupted by another Hazara checkpoint and an altercation which left Qabir fuming and out another 2,000 Afghans.

Even my cassette of Sade didn't rouse him out of his funk;

**One of Abdul Khaliq's muj with Soviet Romanian AKM equipped with a 75-rd. RPK drum.**





Soviet rockets impacting on muj-held positions in Mahlajat, a village near Kandahar in southeastern Afghanistan.

he wanted something with a “man singer.” A collection of rhythm and blues got only marginally higher ratings, so it was back to Pathan pop. At noon we lunched and rested at Rajur, a town which looked like an ideal setting for a spaghetti western except that pictures of Khomeini were hung everywhere. The local cinema was showing Chinese kung-fu flicks.

We crossed the Argandab River and then traversed a tortuous pass leading into a lush valley, where wheat was being harvested by hand and threshed by donkey, before turning westward toward Madrinah. Thus far into the Hazarajat we had witnessed absolutely none of the signs of the war that you usually find in Afghanistan: bombed buildings, deserted villages, dead villagers. Here everything was functioning much as it always had, and the war and fighting were far away.

I asked the hotel staff what mujahideen there were in town. They mentioned two groups, *Pasdaran* and *Nihzat*, the latter being a small pro-Khomeini group with an office in Quetta, Pakistan. They professed to be wishing for good relations between Shi’a and Sunni Muslims, but saw a possible union of Afghanistan with Iran “if Iman Khomeini orders it.”

Thirty of our number split from here on foot for Herat, which was still more than 300 miles away. We drove on to confront

yet another Hazara tollgate before arriving at Uruzgan. Uruzgan is a major town where the merchants in the bazaar will sell you AK ammo by the round or Iranian coins made into pendants for a woman’s necklace. We ate, refueled, and drove on. The next day we off-loaded the 122mm rocket launcher and ammo, which also were destined for Herat. At this point most of the remaining muj left us, heading for Herat as well.

By the time we ran into the roadblock we had by my count only four AKs left with which to defend two trucks and a jeep and a cargo of mortar rounds and other ammo. Large rocks had been strategically placed across the road at a stream crossing, leaving no alternative route. We were forced to stop.

“Thieves!” growled Qabir.

Not only had we to contend with Russians, the DRA and Hazara Muslims, but also with old-fashioned, greed-motivated highwaymen. One muj was posted as lookout while the rest of us manhandled the rocks clear. Fortunately we weren’t attacked.

We didn’t reach the next checkpoint until after nightfall, and it presented us with no hassles. They merely wanted some fresh tapes for their cassette player. “*Mohaz*,” informed Qabir, referring to the group generally known as NIFA. “No problem.”

We were now out of Hazarajat and back into Pathan territory — home turf — heading south toward Kandahar. At a nondescript teahouse we met two DRA army deserters. They had been drafted from *Mazar-i-Sharif* in the far north. Their monthly pay amounted to just enough to get them through one Hazara tollgate.

The continuing night drive called for more “vitamins,” which sustained us till morning when we parked up in a camp of “*Sayyaf*” (*Ittehad* or Islamic Alliance) muj, who treated us to a feast of rice and roast chicken.

For desert we were shelled. At first the explosions were distant, but they closed fast, showering us with a hot shrapnel downpour.

Change of plan: pull back fast.

That turned out to be easier said than done. Our truck was held fast, stuck in the sand while geyser plumes of incoming artillery fire marched closer. Qabir had the engine singing soprano as we were buffeted by shock waves and I braced for a direct hit.

Then, miraculously, the shelling stopped, and at the same time the truck’s tires gripped. We retreated and bivouacked in a deserted village.

Next morning the boys cranked up the Chinese field radio and received instructions for the trucks to return to Quetta.

Qabir passed me over to his brother Jamaluddin, and we spent a couple of days in the mountains before embarking by tractor for Argandab, where 2½ years previously I had arrived

Author was told that the mine in this photograph was Chinese, but in fact it is an Italian Technovar TC/6 antitank mine. Case is resin-based plastic, waterproof and non-buoyant. Pressure plate detonates the six-kilo Composition B explosive. Afghans in the photo are showing a locally produced instruction manual. Page on left details use of DShK 12.7mm heavy machine gun against aircraft. Illustration clearly indicates necessity for leading targets, but to get point across the artist has shown the rounds curving into the target.





**Red Army APC and local Afghan bus at Durahi checkpoint near Kandahar.**

for my first visit to Kandahar. Things hadn't changed a lot here, except that it was harvest time, and the pomegranates, grapes and ganja were in full bloom.

The daily bombardment started at 0600 hours — the national reconciliation wakeup call — and new trenches were under construction to cope with the ongoing Soviet/DRA forces offensives.

There was one big surprise in store for me though. Returning to the *jebha* (mujahideen camp) for lunch one day I commenced the ritual greetings with all present: standing, embracing, shaking hands and exchanging grandiose well-wishings ("may ye not be fatigued" is my favorite) as is the usual Pathan custom.

Suddenly a full-bearded, pistol-packing character locked me in a vice-grip and exclaimed in perfect English: "I know you — Jake Border!"

Jesus H! It was the East German I'd met on the border about Christmas of '84. He had been gung ho serious about joining the muj in their fight against the Russians. Seems he had done that for 13 months, but now was running his own medical service for war wounded, staffed by Afghan doctors and paramedics.

From Argandab to Kandahar I was retracing my earlier footsteps, with minor variations. Jamaluddin and I were escorted by mujahideen of the Younis Khalis faction of Hezbi-i-Islami from Argandab to Adah, where you must cross the Kandahar-Herat highway on foot under the guns of Soviet/DRA army posts.

Tanks dug into a hilltop were visible in the moonlight as we crossed in single file, our shawls carefully draped over weapons and equipment. My guardian angel was with me that night; minutes after we made the crossing a tank fired a flat trajectory shot into the open ground. It reminded me of a tracer round that ricocheted off the ground and disappeared into the night sky.

In the safety of the bazaar we ate melons and bid farewell to our escort, before setting out on foot for Narkuneh, a 10-hour trek from Argandab. We arrived at midnight.

To my pleasant surprise the camp commandant was an old friend of mine, Abdul Khaliq, who quickly put me on the spot by demanding, with a cunning grin, to see the motorcycles I'd promised to supply him. We had covered many dusty clicks together in '85 on a decrepit 90cc Yamaha which I had rashly insinuated wasn't up to the job.

He was mollified however with the copies of SOF I handed out describing my earlier trip. The ads in particular stirred much lively discussion. How to explain a frogman? Why was the man with the "air shot survival carbine" semi-naked? — the muj shook their heads in complete wonder. How to explain that a blowup photo of a 9mm bullet was not a surface-to-surface rocket? And, wonder of wonders, why were the women inside the front cover in a state of undress? I had to put the cover women back in *purdah* with masking tape.

Abdul Khaliq was concerned about security now that I had arrived. He'd already heard along the grapevine that an

"American/Frenchman" was moving through Argandab, so he suggested a trip to Mahlajat. I was all for that anyway as it was closer to Kandahar city.

After a couple of days rest and nourishment — on grapes picked fresh from the vines of the extensive vineyards enclosing our camp — Jamaluddin, a couple of others and I retraced our steps back towards Adah.

Along the way we paused in the lee of a crumbling mud wall and surveyed the open plain before us. It was barren and rock strewn, uninhabited and uninviting, but not untended nor uncontested. The steel carcass of a burned out tank testified to a clash that had taken place for the rights of passage here, and on the crests of hilltops overlooking us were DRA army posts.

My mujahideen guides concealed their assault rifles under their shawls and took care to ensure my cameras were likewise secured. Small piles of stones marked the safe route across the plain and through the defile that would deliver us to within walking distance to Kandahar city. I was warned not to deviate from this path even if we were fired on: *bomb-i-personnel* (antipersonnel mines) might be anywhere.

On my first visit to Kandahar we had used this pass with impunity, but since then the Soviet-backed DRA forces had tightened their grip on the city and had established outposts on either side of the pass. Just six weeks earlier an attack group drawn from several political parties wiped out these posts in a night assault, destroying three tanks and four trucks in the process. A fourth tank was captured "live" and driven to near the Pakistan border.

Wreckage lay everywhere, like vomit from a steel foundry, testimony to the grim fighting. Among the butchered tanks and trucks, barbed wire and empty shell-casings were piles of live mortar rounds, left undisturbed for fear of booby traps. We passed through unscathed and hiked to a nearby camp for refreshment.

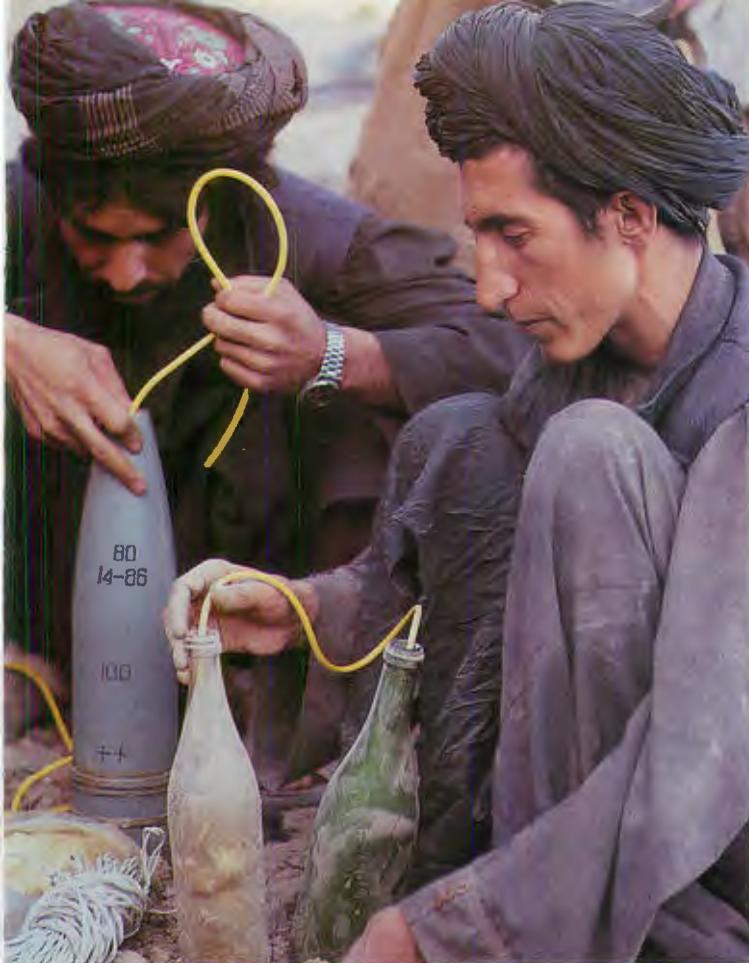
Typically in the Kandahar area muj camps are shared by groups owing allegiance to different political parties (in this case the Jamiat, Hezbi of Khalis and the Ittehad) and cooperation, including joint military operations, is not unusual. Nevertheless Jamaluddin advised caution regarding the purpose of my visit, being now inside the net of tightened government security. "It is enough to say you are a traveler." For added camouflage it was decided my nationality could continue to be French.

After the standard bread and tea had been served and the ritual exchange of conversational courtesies completed, we left for our own *jebha* in the outlying countryside south of Kandahar called Mahlajat. This strategic zone occupied by the mujahideen is ringed by hostile forces: to the north the garrisoned city of Kandahar, to the east the Soviet airbase, to the west the chain of hilltop DRA army posts. An arcing network of bunkers and minefields known as the *camarband* (defense belt), links the positions.

Within this ring of steel and fire the mujahideen are subjected to a continuous surface-to-surface missile barrages and air

**Checkpoint at Durahi near Kandahar, flying flag of the Marxist DRA (Democratic Republic of Afghanistan). Tank is Soviet crewed.**





**Afghans rigging a homemade command-detonated mine. Components are a tank shell, bottles filled with salvaged explosive from dud Soviet aerial bombs and a 9-volt battery.**

strikes. But they dish it out too. That night after dinner we watched a display of pyrotechnics verging on art as muj near Adah pounded a hilltop outpost with heavy machine-gun fire and rockets.

It was the time of the full moon, so clandestine entry into Kandahar city was deemed too dangerous. Infiltrating by day was all but impossible, especially for me, my beard, turban and Afghan clothes notwithstanding.

Since my last visit, an inner camarband of machine-gun nests had been dug in and additional checkpoints set up. The new checkpoints were reputed to be manned by specially trained militiamen from Jozjan province, which borders the USSR.

The Jozjani militiamen had an unmatched reputation for ruthlessness and were even suspected of originating from across the border in the Soviet Union. No one knew for sure. The muj hadn't captured one alive yet.

As a consolation I was promised a look at some "live" tanks at Durahi. Durahi literally means the "two roads." Located in the eastern suburbs of Kandahar, it is the point where the national highway splits, one leg going south to Spin Baldak on the Pakistan border, the other going northeast to Kabul.

We emerged from a small alley and took cover in an orchard of apricot trees about 150 meters from Durahi. There were two checkpoints clearly visible. The larger flew the Afghan flag and was manned by DRA soldiers. The smaller was manned by the Afghan militia called Esmat Khan. Its commander, Esmatullah Muslim, is a turncoat muj. In return for his perfidy the DRA puppet government had awarded him the checkpoint concession along the Kandahar-Spin Baldak highway. His men levied "taxes" on all passing vehicles.

The early morning traffic was light, consisting mostly of trucks and buses bound for the border. Locals were crossing the

road in horse carts or on foot. Birds were singing in the trees.

Then without warning the air was split by what sounded like a bolt of lightning whiplashing low over our heads. Then again and again, five times in staccato succession.

It sounded and felt like we were being fired on, but in fact it was a salvo of *torgandeh*, surface-to-surface rockets, launched from just across the road. The launcher was located behind a *kampun* (housing compound for Soviet and Afghan military personnel).

As the traffic picked up Soviet jeeps, truckloads of soldiers, an ambulance and Toyota pickups belonging to the Esmat Khan all made appearances. Cars, I was told, signalled officers. The only heavy military traffic was a convoy of six APCs, which came on at high speed. There were no tanks. It was decided that we would return the next morning.

On the way back to the jebha I ducked into a local shop long enough to stock up on biscuits and nuts with which to enliven our regular but monotonous meals. It was a general store and carried only the basics, but even so I was impressed by the international flavor of the merchandise. There were Russian matches — naturally — but several brands of American cigarettes. There were batteries from Japan, medicines from Pakistan, and, tucked away with the Afghan-made shampoo, hand creams from both East and West Germany.

There were plenty of women and children in this quarter and no signs that it had been bombarded. Jamaluddin claimed the residents were all supporters of the mujahideen. He conceded, however, that it was wise to bear in mind the possibility of *Khalqi* (communist party member) spies or even paid informers lurking in the area.

That night, as we sipped our tea after dinner, conversation was dramatically interrupted by the incoming whoosh of a rocket, probably launched from the *kampun*. Even as we stumbled over each other racing for the safety of an underground bunker, the house shook from the impact of the explosion. A close one. The crater in the adjacent vineyard was 25 meters from the house.

By 0600 the next day we were on the march without breakfast, an uncomfortable but not uncommon experience in Afghanistan. An hour later we were picnicking in the orchard near Durahi. That is an uncommon treat, and one made slightly surreal by the floorshow of Soviet tanks and armor rolling by as we feasted on bread, grapes, and tea.

For more than two hours tanks and APCs paraded back and forth. They were moving fast, but their crew members were always in plain sight, seemingly oblivious to the danger of an ambush. At the DRA checkpoint a column of tanks pulled up alongside public buses and trucks, and the crews clambered about their machines devoid of caution. They would have presented an inviting target had the muj been an attacking force.

Even seen from a distance, a tank is an impressive killing machine, but viewed close up and on the move, it is truly awesome. Especially when it is close enough for you to see the crew and realize that their mission is to shoot the man who is pouring your tea. And you.

**Jamaluddin, the author's escort during much of his trip, checks out a surface-to-surface rocket which did not explode on impact.**





And open fire they did. Barely 30 minutes after we vacated the orchard tanks straffed the area with machine-gun fire, killing a woman, wounding a child, and damaging 10 houses. Jamaluddin learned that government informers had notified the guards at the checkpoint that *Francivi* — French — were present and taking pictures.

We had since disappeared into the maze of abandoned houses which borders the inner defensive belt. A field of tobacco, a dead horse, and a large marijuana plant were all that remained among the bombed-out ruins. Squatting on a carpet of discarded machine gun cartridge cases and peering through a hole in a wall I could see a twin-barrelled 20mm cannon. The gunner was pacing about under a fluttering DRA flag. He was on the other side of a field of antipersonnel mines, only shouting distance away. I resisted the temptation.

Incredibly, however, he seemed to be yelling at me. Then I realized it was the sound of a loudspeaker broadcasting in Pashto from a nearby bazaar.

The message echoed DRA leader Dr. Najib's plea for national reconciliation: "Come and join us and let the Afghans be one. The Russians, who are in any case our brothers, will then go home. Come, and make peace."

The mujahideen weren't buying it. "Lies, all lies," they said. From somewhere in Mahlajat a more volatile expression of disagreement was aired. An 82mm mortar opened up on the camarband.

Things were hotting up; time for us to go.

We retreated to the safety of the wooded fields and quick-stepped it to the muj camp. But not quite quickly enough. A hail of machine-gun fire from the defensive belt showered us with a confetti of overhanging branches and leaves and sent me diving face down into the grass. Jamaluddin urged me on to a relatively sheltered position nearby. Macabre irony: It was a cemetery full of mujahideen martyrs killed in the jihad.

**Mujahideen at Argandab show off a Chinese-made BM-12 rocket launcher.**





Even the "white-beards," as Afghans sometimes call the elderly, have taken up arms against the Soviets.

Exiting Mahlajat we could see a rising column of black smoke which marked the progress of a muj rocket attack on a nearby DRA army base. Once through the pass we flagged down a passing van full of muj. They were jubilant; they had just knocked out a tank.

The van ride cut our walk to Narkuneh south of the outer camarband in half. With winter coming on most of commandant Abdul Khaliq's men had retired to Pakistan for rest and recreation, while those remaining were digging an underground bunker. The night lights from government posts in Kandahar city were visible from the roof of our camp. Scarlet tracers etched the exchange of fire between combatants. The fighting never dies in Kandahar — only people.

Even though only three mujahideen groups in the Kandahar area had the deadly Stinger heat-seeking anti-aircraft missile, its presence had forced the Soviets to revise their bombing tactics. Rocket-firing helicopter gunships (a plague over the city during my previous visit) had disappeared completely. Jets still bombed, but now the pilots covered their arses with strings of magnesium flares dropped at intervals. They dotted the sky like fireflies, their heat designed to draw off missiles.

"A week-long festival of Soviet-Afghan friendship," as Radio Moscow put it, had just ended in Kabul when Mahlajat

was subjected to a week of bombing. Formations of up to eight jets flew four raids a day. Mujahideen positions were also threatened by tank attacks. We set out to join a counter-offensive against the outer camarband.

The sector of the defensive belt which bisects the road from Narkuneh to Mahlajat consists of a *qaragah* (base) with nine subsidiary posts, each of which is manned by up to 25 Soviet and 45 DRA soldiers. Of the Afghans, about half were *sarboz* (professional soldiers) and half were *askar* (recruits). The latter were generally press-ganged into unpopular service and used for truck driving and manual labor such as carrying ammunition or digging trenches.

The second sector continues to the Soviet airbase and all these posts were said to be manned solely by Soviet troops. All posts are linked by telephone, radio and road and defended with tanks, mortars, heavy machine guns and gardens of antipersonnel mines.

Kandahar mujahideen military tactics are fairly simple, using either hit-and-run harassment from independently operating groups or coordinated assaults designed to overrun posts and capture the munitions. However even the hit-and-run attacks, which give the impression of a haphazard expenditure of effort, are loosely structured into an overall scheme through the continual liaison between the various camp commandants.

We joined eight Jamiat mujahideen on one such operation, an attack against one of the nine Afghan posts. Conditions were reminiscent of a World War I battlefield, not only for the generalized destruction and desolation but also for the extensive network of deep trenches which ran parallel to the camarband. The target was barely visible above the surface of the ground.

The trenches were up to two meters deep in places and afforded valuable concealment in approaching the target. They also minimized exposure during the attack, which our group began by squeezing off a round from a shoulder-fired 82mm recoilless rifle.

"Allah-o-Akhbar," they chorused with the first shot, then prudently retreated to the shelter of a bunker in anticipation of return fire.

There was no return fire, however, and the attack proceeded with several RPG rounds, backed up by full-auto bursts from their AKMs.

Recoilless rifle and RPG rounds are used with lethal effect against the defensive belts' fortified outposts. In comparison the AK fire is relatively harmless, unless the defenders are foolish enough to allow themselves to be caught in the open.

The real value of the AKM in Kandahar is that it gives each individual the physical means to participate personally in the jihad, thereby satisfying his sense of both honor and duty. This was particularly evident during the attack on the outpost, as most of the mujahideen were firing blindly into the air.

*Continued on page 70*

**Muj prepares to launch a 107mm Chinese rocket at government base guarding Kandahar. For close-in work, the rockets are laid flat on the nearest wall, and elevation is adjusted with the handiest rock.**





## Robar's Ultimate Alley Cleaner

Text & Photos by  
Peter G. Kokalis

“THE best alley cleaner of all.” So the late Elmer Keith once referred to the shotgun. During the Malayan counterinsurgency conflict and in Vietnam as well, it often armed the vulnerable point man and provided ambush response. Within the framework of its limitations, and maximizing its salient characteristics, the combat shotgun with its multiple-projectile ammunition provides short-range lethality matched by no other firearm.

One of the most successful slide-action shotguns ever enlisted for military and law enforcement applications is the venerable

Nothing is more intimidating than the .729-inch bore of a 12-gauge combat shotgun — except for what comes out of its muzzle.

Remington Model 870.

Its method of locked-breech operation has been taken from the John Browning-designed Model 11 semiautomatic shotgun. When in battery, the bolt remains locked to the barrel by means of a locking block within the bolt body, which engages a recess in the barrel extension. Receiver strength is not critical in this system as the recoil forces are mostly absorbed by the bolt assembly and barrel extension.

A steel slide, to which has been attached a stepped lug (also housed within the bolt body), is mated to twin action bars attached to the forearm. When the slide is racked forward, the front step on this lug moves under the front end of the locking block and pivots it upward to engage its forward projection in the recess on top of the barrel extension. After firing, when the forearm is manually driven rearward, the slide moves back through about ½-inch of free travel, after which the locking block drops downward to unlock the action. Completion of the rearward cycle by the operator will draw

all of the reciprocating parts to the rear and eject the empty shell out the ejection port on the right side of the receiver.

The trigger mechanism's disconnecter, which requires the trigger to be released between each shot, can be actuated both manually by depressing the action-bar lock button and by the fall of the hammer. There is a standard cross-bolt type safety at the rear of the alloy trigger guard.

Remington Model 870 Police Guns are equipped with 3-inch Magnum chambers and either 20-inch or 18-inch cylinder bore (no choke) barrels. I would select the 20-inch tube as it provides an extra shell with extended magazines and marginally superior performance with rifled slugs. These guns weigh approximately 7 pounds, empty, and with a 20-inch barrel the overall length is 40.25 inches.

All of this is fine, as far as it goes, but with the most dangerous prey in mind, we need to maximize reliability, enhance accuracy, and increase the speed with which the weapon can be employed. When the target shoots back, you can't afford to compromise on your equipment.

Once again, we turned to Robbie Barrkman (See “Streetwise Colt .45,” SOF, December '87), an acknowledged expert in the

# REMINGTON'S MODEL 870

combat shotgun. This fourth-generation native of the Republic of South Africa now operates an impressive gunsmithing and plating facility in the Arizona desert (Robert A. Barrkman, The Robar Companies, Inc., Dept. SOF, Suite B, 21438 N. 7th Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85027; phone: (602) 581-2648), where his work on combat shotguns has been highly acclaimed.

Our first attention was directed to the sights, as we need target acquisition at close-range buckshot distances, and accuracy for the long-range capability of rifled slugs. To date, there is nothing better for this purpose than the so-called "ghost ring" sight popularized by Jeff Cooper. This is nothing more than a Williams aluminum peep aperture rear sight installed without an aperture disc. The disc housing then serves as a large aperture that provides a shadow-like effect with extremely fast sight alignment, without compromising the requirements for precision with rifled slugs. This was matched with Robar's combat shotgun front sight — a blade-type with serrated ramp — which is machined from barstock to blade thickness of .130 inch and silver soldered to the barrel in place of the factory bead.

While cylinder bore barrels are best for rifled slugs, they usually produce poor patterns with multiple shot loads. During the turn of the century, Russian designers at the Tula Arsenal developed what is now called "jug choking" to open patterns for trap shooters. The process involves machining a ramped recess, or chamber, in the bore at the muzzle end of the barrel. By changing the angle of the chamber's front ramp Barrkman has been able to achieve the opposite effect. When the buckshot moves



## FIELDSTRIPPING THE MODEL 870

There are few tricks involved in disassembly of the Model 870 series shotgun. First empty the magazine tube and clear the weapon. Set the cross-bolt to safe. Rack the action rearward slightly to disengage the locking block from the barrel extension. Remove the front sling swivel assembly. Grasp the magazine extension tube by its knurled ring and turn it counterclockwise to separate it from the magazine tube. Remove the follower spring. Tilt the gun downward and the follower will drop out the end of

### Robar combat shotgun, fieldstripped.

the magazine tube. Pull the barrel away from the receiver. Insert your finger through the underside of the receiver and depress the left shell stop. Move the bolt group and action arms out toward the front. Separate the slide and bolt group from the action arms after they are clear of the receiver. Use a small drift to push out the trigger mechanism's retaining pins and separate the trigger housing from the receiver. No further disassembly is usually required. After cleaning and lubrication, re-assemble in the reverse order.

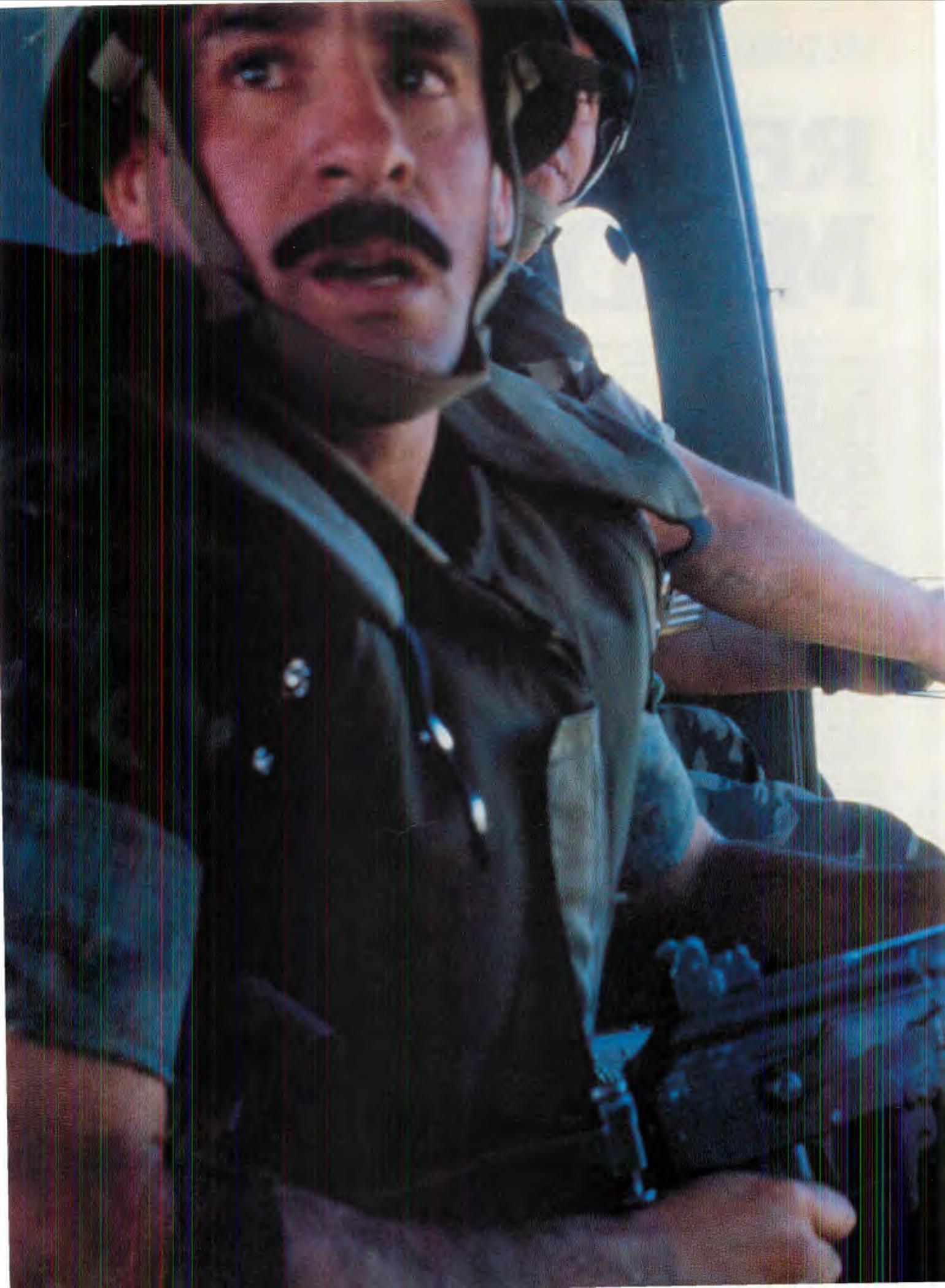
**Robbie Barrkman's 12-gauge combat shotgun has been modified with all the right ingredients for street sweeping: "ghost ring" sights, extended magazine tube, jug-choked bore, relieved forcing cone, re-worked trigger and action, sling swivels, rounded recoil pad and low-profile black chrome sulfide finish.**

into this chamber, the pattern opens up. As the buckshot impacts on the chamber's front ramp, it's constricted and leaves the muzzle with a full choke pattern. The length of this recess is critical. If it's too long, it will de-stabilize slugs fired through the barrel. Furthermore, it can't be too close to the muzzle as we need sufficient bearing surface to retain whatever pathetic aerodynamic qualities these 437-grain pumpkins possess. Correctly executed, jug choking will yield maximum potential with both slugs and pellets.

Barrkman also relieved the forcing cone. There are two benefits to this modification. It permits the shell's crimp to open completely and stretch the chamber pressure's peak. As this peak on the pressure curve



*Continued on page 76*



# WINNING HEARTS & MAYANS

## Guatemalan Special Forces Gut Marxist Insurgency

by Morgan Tanner  
Photos by David Bjorkman



**I**N late 1987 the Guatemalan military launched an escalated offensive into an area called the "Ho Chi Minh Trail" by the country's Marxist insurgents. For nearly a decade the rebels have controlled the civilian Indian population in the isolated mountains of Quiche, 200 kilometers north of Guatemala City. Army patrols have chipped away at this guerrilla stronghold since 1982 with little lasting progress. Any gain the soldiers made was lost the moment they turned back toward base. "This is the subversive's last sanctuary," Minister of Defense General Hector Gramajo, who heads the army, said. "Our offensive here means the beginning of the end."

The Kaibil Balam Task Force, the latest offensive in the army's 28-year campaign against the Marxist insurgents, has an effective twist. Military operations are being staged in tandem with the efforts of Civil Affairs, a special forces unit that, besides its combat duties, also works to win the confidence of rural Indians in order to minimize military and civilian casualties. Civil Affairs personnel also handle the temporary food, clothing, shelter, and medical needs of both the armed guerrillas who ask for amnesty and their passive supporters. As a result of this combined effort, more than 2,000 people presented themselves to the army for amnesty from September 1987, when the offensive began, until January 1988. Areas historically controlled by the rebels are on the verge of being integrated into the country's democratic system.

Guatemalan soldiers from Military Zone (MZ) 20 search for Guatemalan Army of the Poor (EGP) guerrillas in a Bell 4-12 helicopter near the road from Nebaj to Chajul in the Ixil Triangle of the Department of Quiche. Weapons are the Galil 5.56mm SAR and M60D machine gun in 7.62x51mm NATO.

"Always in the past, our army patrols went into the mountains, then left, always sustaining casualties," said one combat officer, who spoke on the condition that he remain anonymous. He is identified here as

### INTREPID NEWS HUNTER

Morgan Tanner is a correspondent for National News Service with more than 10 years' experience covering foreign conflicts, and has been working out of Central America since 1982. Tanner's previous articles in *Soldier of Fortune* include, "Wanted, Bounty Hunter Brings 'Em Back Alive," September '85, "Guatemala's Paracaidistas," October '87, and "Passing the Torch in Nicaragua," in the SOF Action Series: *Soldiers of Freedom*, February '87.



*El Zorro* (The Fox). "The guerrillas created the myth that their sanctuary here was impenetrable and that they were invincible. But the last three months have changed all this. Now the guerrillas are worried because the army is not leaving the mountains, but their civilian support is."

In 1981, Guatemala's Marxist guerrillas controlled roughly one third of the country. Their ranks were estimated at 1,000,000 strong, with 12,000 armed members, com-

pared to the military's 19,000 soldiers. Citing human rights abuses, Jimmy Carter cut military aid to Guatemala in 1976. (Some officers believe the reason for the aid embargo was because the CIA told Carter that Guatemala was planning to take over

Guatemalan army patrol in Quiche, armed with Galils (front and rear) and a FN MAG 58 (center), watch for signs of ambush and boobytraps.

Belize.) The army had only aging equipment and its ingenuity to fight the guerrillas. The situation, the military acknowledges today, was desperate.

"As a result, we developed a new doctrine," said Colonel Roberto Letona, head of the army's department of information. "Some officers still wanted to kill guerrillas, others wanted to control the terrain, and others wanted to fight for the hearts and minds of the people. We decided to try to win the people."

The plan began with "Victory '82," which officially set military priorities as defending the civilian population first, trying to convert enemy collaborators second, and killing guerrillas third. From that doctrine grew Civil Affairs, a multilevel psychological operation charged with attending the needs of civilians in areas torn by conflict. "We had to convince our officers that it was more important to sacrifice military objectives to protect the people. Then we had to demonstrate to the civilians that the guerrillas are liars," Letona added.

We headed north to Nebaj to see in action the Civil Affairs units the military claims are Guatemala's "secret weapon." Flying

## REAL HERO: JODY DUNCAN

In an isolated town in northern Guatemala, Jody Duncan pushes a curved needle through the skin of an Indian boy about eight years old. A couple of stitches mend the bloody gap in his eyebrow. A torrent of words drawled in her Texas-accented Spanish soothes his fear.

"We try to get them to go to the hospital," she tells me inside the dingy military infirmary, rummaging through her bag for a bottle of antibiotic, "but people here think the hospital is a place you go to die. That's because they wait so long to go, and their problems become too advanced." It's also because the bureaucracy is intimidating to them, and because they would have to walk more than a mile beyond town to the hospital.

The boy's uncle takes the antibiotic, nodding his head at Jody's instructions about dosage. He thanks Jody with smiling eyes, as do the hundreds of rural Indians Jody has helped with the medicines and supplies from the Air Commando Association (ACA). We step out into a dirt street on our way to the army base. A woman stops Jody and hands her a sweet potato.

"Her son had boils on both legs so bad you could see the bone," Jody explains. "I thought they might have to be amputated, but I gave him antibiotics and taught her how to wash the infection. Now he's fine, all except for the scars. This is her way of thanking me."

In the three years that she's been in Guatemala, Jody has conducted dozens of MEDCAP (Medical Civilian Action Program) clinics in rural villages. It's shade-tree medicine — basic, simple treatments, usually staged under a tree or on a porch to handle the long lines of people. Working with volunteer nurses and doctors, a medic, or a nurse from the health center, Jody can provide medicines to 500 people a day. "Most have problems caused by poor nutrition and sanitation," she says. "If they don't have anything else wrong, they probably have a belly full of worms and a cold."

But Jody's job took an added dimension in late 1987: She began supplying medicines for the more than 2,000 homeless people who deserted Guatemala's Marxist insurgents when the army launched an offensive into the mountains. Most of the displaced have been under guerrilla control for five or more years. The younger children have never seen an outsider, and families have lived in extreme poverty so long they have nothing but the ragged clothes they wear. The army's Civil Affairs troops give them clean clothes of their colorful native dress, food and shelter. Jody gives them medicine and wishes she could do more.

"They need so much," she sighs. "I once asked an officer I trusted if he thought our efforts are worthwhile. He said, 'Yes, definitely. When people see you hug and care for their children, it makes a lie of the communist propaganda that gringos are killing them.'"

A soldier intercepts us to tell Jody that a truck is heading for Salquil, and will take any medicine she has ready. Jody supplies medicine for the Catholic nuns in Salquil to give to the more than 100 displaced people who are temporarily sheltered there by the army.

"Can you get a couple of men to pick it up?" she asks.

The soldier nods, and we hurry to her storeroom to prepare two big boxes of supplies. The high-ceilinged room is stone cold from the chill of its adobe walls. It smells faintly acrid from the medicines. In the dim light of a naked 60-watt bulb, I can see her one-room living quarters behind the storeroom — a corner table holding makeup and an electric coffee pot, and an electric blanket neatly covers the bottom berth of a metal bunk bed.

Jody moves methodically among the stacked cartons of supplies with a slight limp — the result of polio when she was two years old. She has twisted her brown hair into a roll, and when a soldier comes to carry the supplies, her face lights up with a big, Texas-friendly smile. She adds a few bottles of analgesics and cough syrups to the boxes and white-and-orange antibiotic capsules bagged in plastic like Halloween candy. But she has none of the medicines that kill worms and lice — probably because they aren't used much in the United States. "When the displaced come in, they're hungry, they have vitamin deficiencies, and they have worms, scabies, lice, and skin infections from fly

in when the fog lifted, we reached the command post of the Kaibil Balam on our first attempt — something we wouldn't later be able to do despite repeated attempts. Operations for this offensive have been moved to Nebaj, an Indian town 6,500 feet in the mountains. Although Guatemala is smaller than Ohio, distance here is measured not in kilometers but in the time it takes to travel across the peaks and gorges that dissect the country. On a good day, Nebaj is three hours from Military Zone 20 via a rutted, narrow road — part dirt, part cobblestone — that fords streams and winds around switchbacks. Other than Pepsi and military trucks, few vehicles try it. But fog and rain

are the usual conditions, which preclude chopper traffic.

We hitched a ride to Nebaj on a Vietnamese Huey from Guatemala's small, aging fleet of aircraft — Aravas, C-47s, and A-37 Dragonfly bombers. Within minutes of our

liftoff the sprawling metropolis of Guatemala City blended into cornfields, which yielded to forests of pine trees as dense as hair on a husky. The twin-engine chopper flew through a 10,000-foot pass where the insurgents sometimes shoot down into the craft from their high mountain positions. But there was no gunfire today. Then, suddenly, we were approaching Nebaj, which lies in a steep-sided valley.

Chopper landings here are common now. But Nebaj, the largest of three Indian towns that comprise the Ixil Triangle (pronounced ee-shil), was hard won by the army. When it was captured from the guerrillas in 1983, enemy marksmen sniped at the soldiers

**Jody Duncan shot in helicopter. (Left) Fifteen rounds hit the chopper with Jody catching four of them, two in the upper leg and two in the lower leg cutting out two inches of bone. (Center) After instructing the soldiers to set up a tourniquet on her leg, Jody Duncan tells an officer to administer a painkiller in her left arm. (Right) Finally, Jody being unloaded from chopper at the hospital at Playa Grande.**



bites they've scratched with dirty fingernails," she says.

Occasionally an army officer or someone from home gives her a little money to buy the insecticide Lindane. A little stirred into shampoo kills head lice, and mixed with cooking oil it kills the scabies mites that burrow under the skin. With \$100 she can buy enough pills to rid 400 patients of worms. She also needs dental instruments that can be used by qualified volunteer dentists, as well as multivitamins.

By using mainly donated medicines and volunteers' help, ACA has supplied millions of dollars worth of medicines to Guatemalan civilians — more than 12,000 pounds of supplies late in 1987. The donated supplies are shipped without charge from New Orleans to Guatemala. In Guatemala, Civil Affairs arranges for in-country transportation. ACA personnel inventory incoming goods, and upon written request from health centers, distribute them for civilian use.

Jody had lived in Guatemala at her own expense until ACA recently began giving her a \$100-a-month stipend. Civil Affairs provides her food and lodging, as well as air transportation from the United States for her and ACA volunteer doctors and nurses.

Nearly 60 volunteers have worked for ACA in Guatemala, but life on an army outpost is austere, and only Jody has remained. In Nebaj, volunteers are without a salary and creature comforts. At the base, where we go to sit and drink a

mid-afternoon cup of coffee, the kitchen walls are soot-covered from the cooking fire, the dishwasher is freezing, and the kettles are scrubbed with sand. Then there are the ever-present weapons — which horrify some Americans — and the stress of working near a guerrilla war.

"I've never felt I was in danger here," Jody says, ignoring a pack of Guatemalan cigarettes and pulling a Marlboro from my pack. "Sometimes I've had my medicines ready to go to one village, then had to go to another because of fighting near the first. I've wanted to go to Bicalama, where people need me so badly, but the army tells me it's not secure enough."

The day Jody arrived in Nebaj in January 1985, a woman from a nearby village came in with a bullet wound. In March, a soldier in the corps of engineers was killed by a Claymore mine just outside Nebaj. In January 1986, 300 terrorists attacked the airstrip only five kilometers away. But Jody doesn't rattle easily. Her father was career Air Force, she has lived in Laos, and in the States she has worked as a paramedic. Still, war seemed impersonal to her until some friends of hers in the Guatemalan army were killed and she helped clean the bodies for transport.

"I did a lot of thinking about dying," she recalls. "It gives you an empty feeling in the pit of your stomach. But with time and experience, I realized how important the program here is — not only for the people I treat, but for the future of the United States. There's no greater

feeling than when a woman brings you a sick baby to treat, then brings the baby back later and it's healthy. But more than that, I feel that if Guatemala were to fall, there's only Mexico between here and Texas — and I come from south Texas!

"I came here knowing this is an area of conflict, so that didn't surprise me. It was when I started going out to villages in armored trucks and they gave me a flak jacket to wear that I became more aware of the immediate danger. That's when I started thinking I could die here. I was 39, I don't have children, and I didn't expect to be a special target because of the negative international repercussions. But I knew I could be killed by something as impersonal as a Claymore.

"I finally decided that if I were killed here it would have been worth it — that I'd rather die doing something I enjoy than get killed in a convenience store shootout, which could happen even in a peaceful little town like Rockport, Texas."

She stubs the cigarette out on the kitchen's concrete floor. "There's a lot of routine work here. There's nothing romantic about it, and sometimes it's heartbreaking. Babies pee on me, and I scratch all the way home from the psychological effect of being around lice and scabies. But here, we work against the communists without preaching — without asking for any kind of allegiance or money from the people — just by helping."



**ABOVE:** Convoy of soldiers from MZ 20 base. Armed with standard Galils, these soldiers are constant targets for guerrillas who mine the road or plant homemade Claymore-type mines. The soldier closest to camera is carrying the Galil 5.56mm ARM assault rifle with folding stock, bipod and carrying handle.

**LEFT:** Soldier from MZ 20 displays captured guerrilla weapons. Among them are M16s from Vietnam, FN FALs in 7.62x51mm, M1 Garands, and an assortment of shotguns and .22 rifles, along with a motley selection of pistols, including some .38 caliber revolvers taken from dead policemen. There are also homemade grenades, mines and Claymore-type mines. The soldier holds a 16-gauge single-shot shotgun that was manufactured by guerrillas in different villages. The water pipe barrel is fabricated in one region, the aluminum bolt and receiver in another, the pine stock in a third, and the weapon is assembled in a fourth region.

from the church bell tower. Army patrols were routinely ambushed upon leaving town until someone figured out that the church bell always tolled when the troops left. Even today, army personnel don't travel the town perimeter without an escort.

Historically, the Guatemalan government has largely ignored the Ixil Indians in their mountain enclave. Roads are few and poor, most of the Indians don't understand Spanish, and although Nebaj has electricity, it has never been connected to the rest of the country by telephone. The guerrillas gained an undisputed foothold both ideologically and logistically among the isolated population. "The problems of rural Guatemala had been faced only militarily, and not socially, politically and economically until 1981," El Zorro said. "Of course, the insurgents took advantage of that."

Vicente, a 15-year-old who ran messages between the armed guerrilla camps before he saw an army patrol and asked for amnesty, told me his family and neighbors joined the guerrillas willingly at first, and then stayed under fear of death. "We could see the lights of Nebaj from our village," he said, "but the guerrillas told us that the army had killed everyone in the city and the



lights were an army trick to lure us in so they could kill us."

Since then, the support of the Indians, who comprise about 60 percent of the population, has taken on new importance to the army. In fact, the task force Kaibil

Balam is named for an Indian folk hero, and translated loosely from Mayan means "cunning tiger."

From the landing pad, we hiked two blocks to the army compound, an old but neat adobe, built Spanish style around a big



**RIGHT:** Vicente, 15, was forced to serve as a messenger for the EGP, running notes and small goods between the guerrillas' dispersed platoons. He tried to defect three times, and was always forced to return. Finally, he saw an army patrol and turned himself in to them. The patrol flew him by chopper to the base in Nebaj. It was during his debriefing that the army realized how valuable was his information, and asked him to go show the location of the EGP dispersed platoons to the army. Vicente received pay, food and a bedroll, which was more than he had ever received from the EGP. He went on five missions before he was wounded in a firefight in November 1987. Since his family has not been located, he has become a permanent resident of the army base (rather than a refugee shelter). His valor is appreciated and applauded by the officers, even though they will not let him go back into the war because he is too young.



Quiche, to the frontier of Mexico on the north, and from Huehuetenango in the west, a major city on the Pan American Highway, to Coban in the east — 7,600 square kilometers from Nebaj to the border. The command post here coordinates the offensive with its northern counterpart in Playa Grande, which sits in a tropical jungle the insurgents call "Indochina."

"We estimate there are 200 to 400 armed members of the EGP (Guatemalan Army of the Poor) in our area, with 6,000 people under their control," El Zorro said. According to army intelligence, on 12 August 1987 the insurgents received a shipment of arms, although the number of weapons is unknown. Officials estimate there are 900 to 1,000 armed insurgents in Guatemala, with Organization of People in Arms (ORPA) fighting in Solala near Lake Atitlan, and in the west coast area of San Marcos.

Here in the Ixil region, the military fights the EGP's 19th of January Column and 31st of January Column. "There are 100 men in a company," Maria Lopez Brito, a former armed guerrilla, explained. "The first squad is advance combat, the second flank, and the third is to recover the dead and wounded and the weapons. I was assigned

**BELOW:** Evening meal distribution in Salquil. Civil Affairs realized after many failures that the Indians do not respect things that are given to them for free. Now, to rebuild the resettlement villages, the army supplies materials and inhabitants perform actual labor. Another refinement of this policy is that Indians are paid for their labors in food, thereby ensuring that each family will be fed properly. Earlier experiments in paying the Indians money for their labors resulted in the cash being used to purchase liquor instead of food.

courtyard. Soldiers were watching a homemade VCR tape of a weapons demonstration at Camp Pendleton. An American woman hurried past us. "I'll be back as soon as I get some boxes from the store-room," Jody Duncan said in her Texas drawl.

The chopper was going on to an outlying Civil Affairs health center that needs medicine and would take whatever Jody could get ready before it left. As representative of the Air Commando Association (ACA), Jody oversees the distribution of medical supplies donated for civilians in conflicted areas of Guatemala. "Jody is the first person who came to help and stayed," Lacho, a combat officer, told me.

Inside the base war room, we pulled metal folding chairs up in front of a floor-to-ceiling topographical map, and Lacho (his nom de guerre) and El Zorro briefed us on the situation. We were accepted here because we are with *Soldier of Fortune*. The military has been badly burned by the leftist press but knows that SOF will give them a fair hearing.

Black and orange lines mark boundaries on the map of the Kaibil Balam battle zone. It stretches from the Chixoy River in





**ABOVE: Training session at MZ 20 base rifle range. Soldiers must hit stationary targets with three-round bursts before moving to next obstacle.**

to a camp that maintained our perimeter. I carried a Galil and 120 rounds of ammo." (The Israeli-made 5.56mm Galil is standard issue to soldiers in the Guatemalan army, and prized plunder for the guerrillas when they can be recovered after a firefight.)

At the top of the Marxist political organization are the directors of Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG), the umbrella organization that includes EGP, ORPA and FAR. Then there are numerous structural levels down to the local committees, cells, family cells, and collaborators. "Some of this infrastructure has been fractured by the Kaibil Balam," El Zorro explained.

The insurgents' thousands of supporters are known as the Committee of Popular Resistance (CPR). They grow and cache food for the guerrillas, carry their supplies and messages, and retrieve their dead after a firefight. "The CPR has its farms," El Zorro explained, "but its roosters can't crow. They are muted to keep us from discovering their location."

In the field, the army's main problem is

the terrain. The forested wilderness is knife-pleated into canyons and ridges, and the guerrillas have the advantage of using Indian guides descended from the area's original Mayan inhabitants. "It's a different type of war than in Nicaragua," El Zorro said. "In Nicaragua, neither side knows the terrain. Here, the subversives know it like the back of their hand."

Army patrols suffer the psychological strain of hit-and-run sniping and harassment tactics. The guerrillas strive to seem like invisible forest predators and leave behind no evidence that would give the soldiers a sense of victory. After a firefight, CPR members scour the field for weapons and cart away guerrilla dead and wounded. The soldiers must gauge their success by the screams of the fallen and pools of dark blood that stain the dirt.

In this vast wilderness, chopper support is vital to ground operations but unpredictable because of capricious fog and winds. When the choppers can fly, they are disabled by enemy ground fire faster than they can be fixed. (While we were being briefed, the chopper delivering Jody's medicine took a shot in the rotor, stopped in Nebaj to unload, and returned to Guatemala City for repairs.) Supplies in the field are usually limited to what the patrols can carry with them, and wounded soldiers often die while waiting to be evacuated. "Obviously, it creates a morale problem," one officer said. "It's bad enough to see your companion wounded, but to have them die without help is very difficult."

The topo map is also coded with Xs and



**Member of Civil Patrol guarding 400-year-old bridge on main road from Quiche capital to Guatemala City. Weapon is World War II-vintage Mauser.**

## INTERVIEW WITH GENERAL EDUARDO WOLHERS

*General Eduardo Wolhers, commander of the Guatemalan air force, served as the head of Civil Affairs until 1 April 1987, and helped author the current Civil Affairs doctrine.*

**SOF:** The army refers to Civil Affairs as its "secret weapon" and is obviously very proud of it. What makes it different from what the army has done in the past?

**GENERAL WOLHERS:** Civil Affairs is pledged to attend the needs of people in areas of conflict. Throughout history, the government had never addressed the problems of rural people, and the terrorists were exploiting the fact to gain support. Helping solve these problems is a way to win the war by getting more support for the government.

**SOF:** Can you give us some back-

ground on how it developed?

**WOLHERS:** We had a social program called Civic Action, but when Carter cut aid to Guatemala in 1976, it almost disappeared. Civic Action was based on the Marshall Plan, which historically had been applied by a foreign army, usually to show that the army wasn't so bad.

We applied it for 15 or 16 years, but the reaction wasn't as good as we expected because the program was paternalistic and didn't involve the community. The problem was that we weren't occupying the territory. We would build a school, and it would be burned by the terrorists. So we began giving people technical advice and materials, and instructing them on how to build what they needed. And since they built it, they protected it. We learned that people appreciate only what is difficult to get.

In August 1983, we created the first organic Central American (Civil Affairs) units in the army. Then in May

1986, we put our experience to work for us by opening a school to train our people.

**SOF:** How do the units actually function in the field?

**WOLHERS:** Our troops plan and manage small projects, and coach kids in sports such as volleyball and soccer to integrate them into society. They also talk with villagers about family planning and drug and alcohol avoidance. In social work we focus mainly on human promotion — how individual persons can influence family changes and how families can change communities.

In the field, our priorities are counteracting psy ops, developing projects, and maintaining national security by working with military resources and the Civilian Defense patrols. It is a very ambitious program and the results have been very positive.

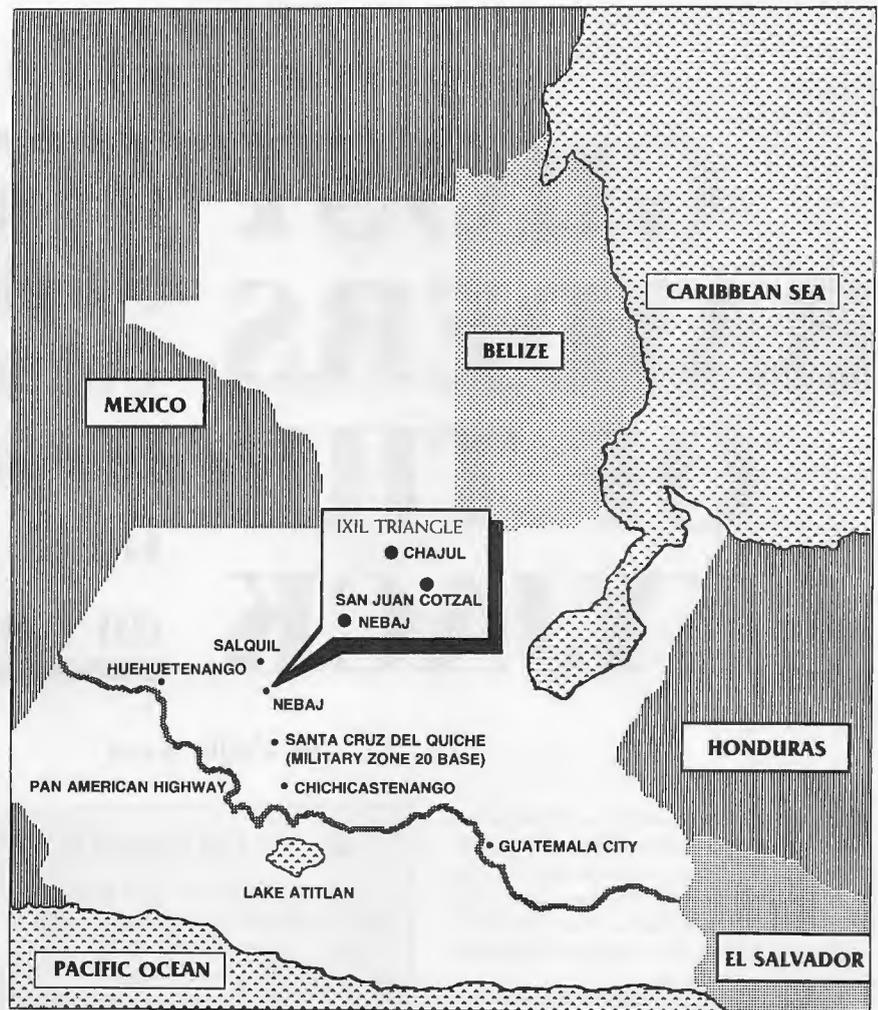
**SOF:** As a branch of the military, how does Civil Affairs integrate its efforts with the civilian government?

Os that mark villages that have been destroyed by the guerrillas and are planned for redevelopment. The guerrillas destroyed the villages so they could commandeer the people, cutting them off from contact with the military. "Once their houses were gone," Captain Carlos Mansilla, Civil Affairs, told me, "they had nothing to return to and could be manipulated." In the Ixil area, nearly 90 villages are ghost towns, according to Mansilla, while 54 have been reconstructed. Plans call for rebuilding 43 more in 1988.

Physically, the tiny settlement of Bicalama isn't much to look at, but it represents a major accomplishment for the army. There is no town square with the usual church and fountain. Only a few thatched huts make this a village, and they're scattered so they can't be burned en masse. Along with Sumal and Amachel, which still haven't been secured by the army, Bicalama is one of three CPR villages the army considers strategic to the EGP.

Eight years ago, the guerrillas destroyed Bicalama and virtually kidnapped its inhabitants. Then a committee established by the guerrillas controlled the harvest from the crops the people planted. Anyone who disobeyed was punished, and the guerrillas kept the people from escaping by scaring them with horror stories about the army. "They said they were going to build an army more powerful than the [Guatemalan] army," a woman from Bicalama said. "They said they would wipe out the army and take the farms away from the rich Ladino landowners. They would give us helicopters, electric lights and cars. At first we believed them."

But the guerrillas' promises didn't come true, nor did their threats about what the army would do to civilians. A few people managed to escape and asked for amnesty.



Author's general AO in Guatemala, including Ixil Triangle region.

The army gave them clothing, medical care and shelter. When the army decided to over-

take Bicalama in 1985, Civil Affairs spread positive propaganda about the army. Choppers scattered leaflets showing soldiers

*Continued on page 73*

**WOLHERS:** National Reconstruction Committee [NRC] and Civil Affairs began a combined program for small projects on 1 April 1987. NRC gets the money from the civilian government, and works with trained personnel from Civil Affairs. There are only 10 million quetzals to complete small projects using resources from the community. That's why our projects are cheap.

**SOF: Have you thought about offering your expertise to other countries?**

**WOLHERS:** Yes, but the problems are different in different countries. In 1986, 20 or 25 Columbians came here to visit Civil Affairs, and the last military attache from Columbia went home with a plan to institute a Civil Affairs program. But it is difficult to export the exact concept due to people's attitudes.

On 10 October 1986, we were ready to support El Salvador with a Civil Affairs task force to help solve some

immediate problems. Everything was arranged, but then the Salvador government didn't want us to come. We were willing to help. If we have the chance, we are willing to share with the world our capability to handle special projects.

**SOF: What is the long-term goal for Civil Affairs?**

**WOLHERS:** We are just beginning to realize how important Civil Affairs is in support of military operations. Just knowing how to deploy those units will be a secret weapon against any terrorist insurgency group.

The Civil Affairs brigade in Guatemala will need to be increased to cover the whole country because now we are assigning units for human resources. We need to maintain contact with the people. Through that, we can minimize the possibility of a war like the one we had in the early '80s.

**SOF: I wonder what you consider Civil Affairs' most important aspect.**

**WOLHERS:** If one method fills the field with dead bodies and the other doesn't kill anyone, yet they both achieve the same victory, which way is better? If you don't need to shoot in order to destroy the enemy, it's the best way. We need not only to go to battle, but also to go to the roots of the problem and see why it has arisen.

We founded our program on the theory of a British philosopher who believed that to understand politics, you have to understand war and men. When we were developing our concepts, we reasoned that you can't get rid of hunger with bullets. That is the problem with all of Central America. The governments try to solve problems with force. You must instead satisfy peoples' needs. If you don't satisfy their food and housing needs — their love, esteem and security needs — then you'll have social conflict. We are trying to find out if that's the solution, and I think it is.

# GHOST RAIDERS OF THE SKYJACK

**Georgia Redneck,  
Sleeping Brits,  
Uninformed  
Informant and  
Delta Force Descend  
on Larnaca**

by Collin Knox

As hostages sat cocooned in Kuwaiti Air flight 422 on the tarmac at Larnaca International Airport, a phone rang in the flight control tower. It was hurriedly answered by Civil Aviation Chief, Michael Herodotou. On the line was an excited caller from Dalton, Georgia.

"Get the 17 prisoners from the Kuwaiti jails and put them on the tarmac in front of the plane," the southern-accented voice twanged. "Then begin issuing your own ultimatums. Shoot a prisoner every hour unless the hijackers comply with your demands to release the passengers and give themselves up."

Herodotou, level headed, dismissed the

## KNOX ON CYPRUS

American journalist Collin Knox is an expert in all aspects of terrorism. In 1987 he spent several months in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley, documenting the drug trade and international narco-terrorism (see "The Lebanese Connection," SOF, May '88).

He later moved to Larnaca, Cyprus, where he found that Cyprus has become the heir-apparent to Lebanon in the Middle East as the center of intrigue, espionage and terrorism.



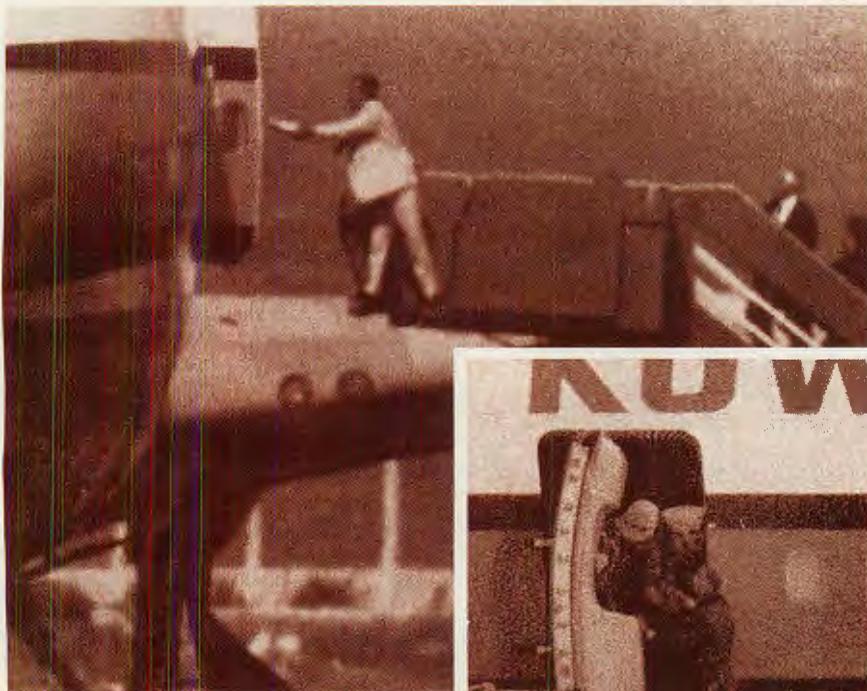
## VIEWED FROM THE CONTROL TOWER

Takis Telonis moved to the Larnaca control tower from Nicosia on the first of April because, "I thought things would be a bit quieter there." Telonis was one of three air traffic controllers who manned the tower during the hijack of KU422.

April Fool's Day was an unfortunate time for the move. Less than two weeks later, Takis, a veteran of four hijack dramas, including the 1985 TWA hijack, was again in the hot seat, trying to save lives and property.

Like his two counterparts, Takis has had no training in dealing with hijacks. "Of course, I'm interested in my job, so I read up on all the details about hijack-

One of team of negotiators hands papers through the door of KU 422 to hijackers within. Inset: Two hooded hijackers talk with negotiator in Algiers as hijacking nears end. Photos: AP/Wide World



caller's suggestion, plunked the receiver back on its cradle, and resumed his vigilance over the 747 jumbo jet parked at the eastern end of the runway. All the would-be merc lost was the price of an overseas phone call.

Other self-styled rescue enthusiasts lost a lot more. A group of four down-and-out ex-British Army types caught a low budget flight from Heathrow to Larnaca to offer their services. They checked into a cheap hotel, had a nap, and made their way to the airport. The hijacked plane lifted off six hours later, before the group had time to convince anyone that they were Cyprus' best chance to take the plane.

These two were some of the real offers. Much else was sheer rumor. Ever since the SAS shooting of three IRA plotters in Gibraltar, the British newspapers had been screaming that these elite troops had arrived and stood ready.

The Cyprus Police Force (CPF) does have a hijack unit, trained by GSG9 in West Germany. But they practice on Cyprus Airways jets; their experience with jumbo jets is zero. So they would only have mounted an operation if the hijackers had carried out their threatened "slow, quiet massacre" of the hostages.

It is easy to see how press rumors circulate. At 0116 hours Wednesday, 13 April, KU422 took off for Algiers. Hours earlier this correspondent was approached by a friendly Cypriot in his mid-30s. He obviously had the confidence of airport officials and showed no pass when entering the airport's forbidden zones.

**Terrorist elements are becoming increasingly active in Cyprus. Three weeks after the hijacking, in May 1988, a car bomb rocked the streets of Nicosia. Photo: Collin Knox**



"Be alert at 4 a.m.," he advised. (Three hours after the plane actually lifted off for Algiers.) "There will be a combined effort by Delta Force and Special Police Commandos to storm the plane."

Special equipment had been flown in from Israel the day after the hijacked jet arrived in Cyprus, backed up by another shipment flown in on a camouflaged Greek Hercules transport — the one that startled the hijackers when it touched down in their direct view.

The informant agreed to meet me again in an hour. Back in the crowded airport press room, there was no talk about a raid on the plane. My source had apparently spoken to no one else. Reporters were gathered around the VHF radio, monitoring exchanges between the plane and the control tower. Negotiations for the hostages' release were seemingly going well. There was constant back-and-forth chatter of refueling

**One hundred kilograms of TNT turned a busy street near the Israeli Embassy into an instant inferno, burning this Cypriot woman beyond recognition. Photo: Collin Knox**

the plane, allowing it to take off for an undetermined location.

An hour later there was an explosive noise near the plane. Hordes of journalists bottlenecked their way to every airport phone to file the news. Was an armed rescue in the works?

Amazingly, the hijackers made no contact with the tower about the sound. Nor, from the airport roof, was there any sign of hooded Delta Force rescuers swarming over the plane. According to Akis Fantis, a Cypriot government spokesman, "The noise came from a firework." He obviously expected everyone to believe him. No one did.

Shortly, my source explained hurriedly in an empty corridor, "It was a grenade that exploded by mistake in the Cyprus Airways hangar. There were casualties."

Our next rendezvous was four hours later, in the wee hours of Wednesday morning on the airport roof. Twelve passengers had been released two hours before.

The plane had a belly full of fresh fuel and the remaining 50 hostages on board. Its engines revving, its lights flashing, it taxied down the runway.

"I haven't heard the secret code from the control tower," the informant yelled over the noise below. "It won't take off."

A moment later it accelerated along the runway. No rescue force appeared miraculously from the shadows. KU422 soared into the air, refused to explode in mid-flight, and disappeared to Algiers.

*Continued on page 80*

ings." Throughout, the air traffic controllers worked on their own initiative and deliberately had little communication with the Cypriot and Palestinian negotiating teams. "We wanted to remain impartial. My objective was to save lives. I wanted them to trust me. If I knew things that I was not allowed to pass on to them, then they might detect that and it could have been dangerous."

Communications between the hijackers and the plane were bizarre: death threats and dramatic ultimatums, sprinkled with requests for food and drink. At one point the tower asked the terrorists what they wanted for dinner. Would omelettes be okay?

"Yes."

"How would you like the omelettes? Would you like cheese on them?"

Were these seemingly trivial exchanges designed to stall in order to give the negotiators more time? "No. I thought they would be more reasonable with full stomachs. Also, we tried to

keep in touch with them as often as possible to relax them. They were professionals. It could have been dangerous to try and deceive them. The more we talked about little things, the more we kept them away from possible evil thoughts."

As soon as Takis heard the Kuwaiti airliner was headed for Larnaca, he headed for the airport. It was an alert situation and only highly experienced senior air traffic controllers man the tower in emergency situations. He worked nonstop for 27 hours. Later he was able to organize 12-hour shifts with his two colleagues.

The most depressing moment came on Saturday, 9 April, when the hijackers murdered the first passenger, dumping his body on the tarmac. "I thought we had lost everything. If they could kill one, what was to stop them from killing the rest?"

Takis held no admiration for the Moslem extremists holding the plane but he

could not help marvelling at the cool, professional, calculating way they carried out their mission. He had a grudging respect for their determination. "These people had a faith in a cause and they were fighting for it. Even though what they did was, of course, completely to be condemned."

Unlike some of the press, Takis never for a moment believed that the hijackers were bluffing when, instead of carrying out a threat after a deadline expired, they agreed to more negotiations.

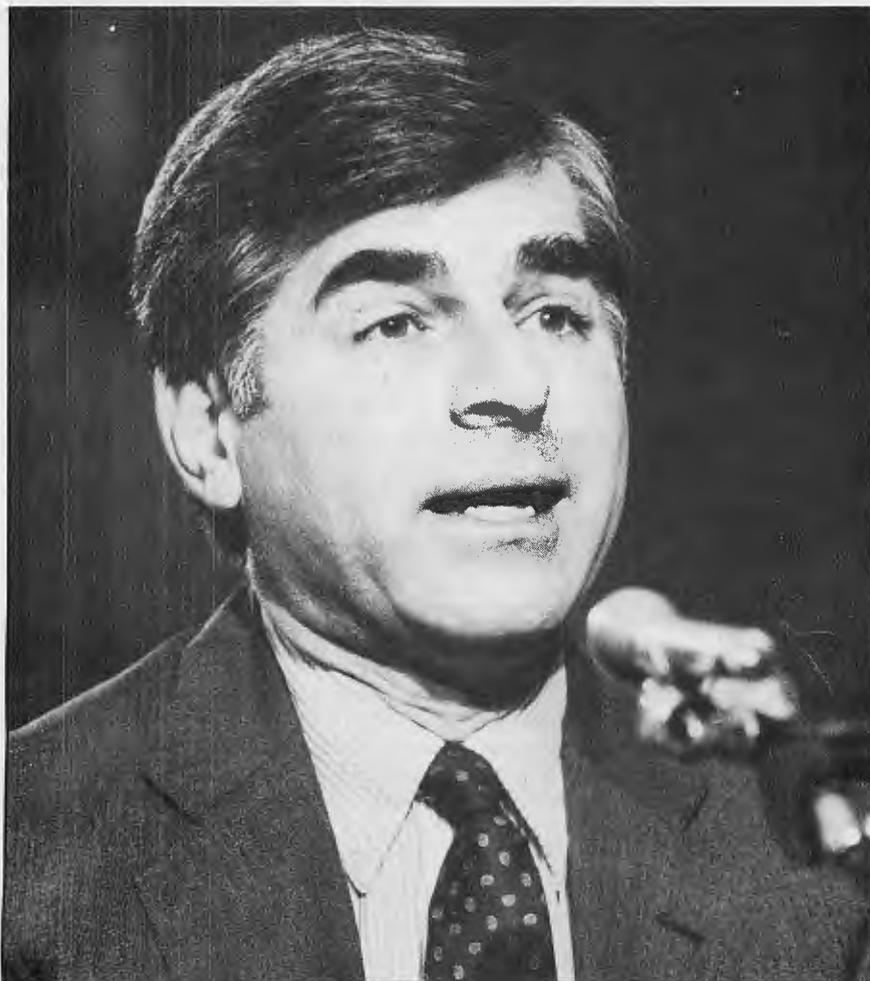
"People in the West don't understand the mentality of Muslim extremists. They were prepared to die. Their expressed desire to be martyrs was a real one."

"When they ended the hijack in Algiers, they must have done so under orders from their leaders outside. If they had just walked away to save themselves, they would have had no home to go to. They meant it when they said in Larnaca that 'death with glory is better than life with dishonor.'"

# DUKAKIS AND DEFENSE

## An Uncertain Trumpet

by SOF Staff



**W**HERE does Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis stand on defense and gun control, issues of particular concern to *Soldier of Fortune* readers? The answers are not reassuring.

The most charitable thing that can be said about Dukakis' stand on defense issues is that he doesn't seem to have thought about them much. The most charitable thing that can be said about his stand on gun control is that it is appalling.

On the latter issue, at least, Dukakis' record is uncharacteristically specific. In

Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis wants to cut strategic systems and emphasize conventional defense. He says he'll cut the MX Peacekeeper and Midgetman missiles and two carrier battle groups, but has been less specific about which programs he'll back. Photo: AP/Wide World

1976, as Governor of Massachusetts, he supported a ballot initiative that would have banned the possession of handguns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and required state residents to turn in the estimated

500,000-700,000 handguns they owned at the time. (The measure was defeated by a margin exceeding 2 to 1 and by more than 900,000 votes.) This year he has supported legislation to ban Saturday Night Specials.

He says he has no problem with sportsmen owning guns, although Mike Yacino, director of the Massachusetts Gun Owners Action League and a National Rifle Association board member, says that two years earlier Dukakis told him, "I don't believe in people owning guns, only the police and the military. And I'm going to do everything I can to disarm the state."

In contrast, Dukakis' positions on defense issues are considerably less specific and sometimes contradictory. They are most specific with regard to what weapons systems he proposes to cut or delay. They generally drift off into vagueness when they deal with how the candidate would strengthen the military. They are nonexistent with regard to which, if any, of those groups fighting for their liberty around the world the candidate would support.

Since World War II, Democratic presidents — with the notable exception of Jimmy Carter — have vigorously favored the creation of nuclear and conventional forces second to none and have shown themselves prepared to use them if the need arose. It was under Truman that America began the creation of its nuclear deterrent and under Kennedy that the Minuteman force, the centerpiece of the triad, was authorized. Presidents Truman and Johnson did not hesitate to commit American forces to combat aggression in Korea and Vietnam, even though doing so entailed considerable political cost to them; Kennedy didn't flinch from a nuclear confrontation over the Soviet attempt to install ballistic missiles in Cuba. All three had a clear vision of America's role as a global power in the post-nuclear world and shared a strong belief that the republic was not free to desist from its global responsibilities. It is not at all obvious that Governor Dukakis follows in this tradition.

The governor has proposed sweeping cuts in the country's nuclear forces. He says he wants to build up the country's conventional strength, but he sees conventional defense almost exclusively in the context of NATO and is far more specific about what elements of the nation's conventional defenses he would eliminate than about what he would create.

A good example is Dukakis' stand on sea power. The governor has proposed scrapping two new aircraft carrier battle groups — which he says will save \$36 billion — a highly specific proposal. Instead of procuring the carrier groups, he says we should "enhance" our anti-submarine warfare capabilities, "assure" that our own submarine program will give the United States an "adequate" number of "affordable" submarines, and "improve significantly" our capacity for rapid sealift of materiel. Left unstated is what constitutes enhanced ASW, an adequate number of subs and significantly improved sealift.

Dukakis' strategic weapons proposals show the same specificity with regard to cuts and vagueness with regard to alternatives. The governor, who in the past has supported a nuclear freeze, is proposing actions that go considerably beyond that with regard to strategic arms. He has called for abandonment of both the MX and Midgetman ICBMs, deferring the deployment of the Trident D-5 (a longer-range and more accurate version of the submarine-based ICBM) and the stealth bomber, and drastically scaling back the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Instead, according to Tom Wicker of the *New York Times*, he would seek additional arms control agreements with the Soviet Union, eliminating the most accurate multiple-warhead missiles and banning increases in accuracy levels for other weapons. Such agreements would permit "superhardening" of existing Minuteman silos rather than replacing the 30-year-old missiles with mobile launchers.

What is particularly interesting about this position is that it contradicts the approach to strategic weapons of both the Democratic Party in Congress and of former Democratic President Jimmy Carter — and is more dovish than either.

For most of the Reagan years congressional Democrats, led by Representative Les Aspin of Wisconsin, have favored the development of the single-warhead Midgetman mobile ICBM, on grounds that it would be both less threatening and a less inviting target — and therefore less 'destabilizing' — than either the 10-warhead MX or the three-warhead Minuteman. (Left unsaid is that replacing the Minuteman with the Midgetman on a one-to-one basis will reduce the number of warheads in the land-based ICBM force by two thirds.) The Reagan administration has favored procuring a smaller number of MXs and, most recently, basing them on rail cars.

In rejecting the Midgetman, which he says will save \$50 billion, Dukakis is rejecting the one strategic arms modernization program the Democratic Party has supported with any degree of enthusiasm in this decade. In proposing to scrap the MX and delay the stealth bomber, he is, ironically, proposing to end programs which had their origins in the Carter administration, which wasn't exactly notable for its hawkishness. In proposing to take all five steps without linking them to the negotiation of comparable reductions on the part of the Soviet Union, Dukakis is in effect proposing to abandon unilaterally most of the Reagan administration's eight-year investment in the modernization of U.S. strategic forces.

Dukakis argues that the world will be a safer place if the United States chooses to emphasize its conventional forces rather than its nuclear ones — particularly in the defense of Europe.

"Without strong conventional forces, a battlefield commander with his back to the wall may have no other choice than to surrender or ask for the authority to begin a nuclear exchange — a choice no comman-



**7th Infantry Division (Light) from Fort Ord, California, during deployment to Honduras earlier this year. Dukakis would up-gun three light divisions to mechanized standards, but would focus his efforts on Reserve units. Photo: Gene Scroft**

der should ever have to make," he says in his principal defense position paper. Having established that much, Dukakis makes several proposals for redressing the conventional force balance in favor of the United States and its NATO allies.

The first of these is to talk the other side into reducing its non-nuclear forces. Dukakis says he will "challenge General Secretary Gorbachev to reduce military forces in Europe — with deeper reductions in Warsaw Pact forces where they have an advantage." In particular he wants those reductions to "concentrate on the offensive systems, such as tanks and artillery, that pose the greatest threat of war." In other words, the first way Dukakis will attempt to enhance U.S. and NATO conventional force capability is by getting our principal adversaries to accept asymmetrical reductions in theirs. Great idea, but why on earth should they do it? Whatever else a Dukakis administration accomplishes, it will establish beyond all doubt exactly how nice a guy Mikhail Gorbachev really is.

Dukakis' second proposal for redressing the conventional force balance is to work with members of the NATO alliance to "enhance the effectiveness of our current conventional forces." He suggests that "we can make many of the improvements at little cost — through coordinated planning, more opportunities for integrated training, a better sharing of intelligence, increased standardization and interoperability of our equipment, and cooperative research and production of new systems." In other words, Dukakis wants a much closer relationship with our NATO allies.

Unfortunately, it's not clear that either our NATO allies or the U.S. Congress really want that. In the past year Spain and Greece have elevated the eviction of

selected American bases to issues bordering on matters of national honor. European countries have indeed become more willing to cooperate in the development and production of major weapons systems — but pointedly without U.S. participation and frequently as a direct alternative to it. The decision of five European nations earlier this year to develop their own advanced jet fighter (the European Combat Fighter) rather than participate in a U.S.-proposed joint upgrade program of the F-18 Hornet which would have provided essentially the same capabilities at less cost, is a case in point. The Europeans wanted to maintain an independent aircraft industry and technology base, even if it did cost them more. On the other hand, the U.S. Congress, for its part, has time and again killed proposals for U.S. procurement of European military hardware, fearing the impact on American jobs and the pork barrel. Attractive as closer allied cooperation might seem in principle, it has proved very difficult — and very costly — to achieve in practice as allies struggle to accommodate differing priorities and needs. There is no reason to believe it will be any different in the future.

Dukakis' third proposal for increasing conventional force capabilities is for both the United States and its allies to increase supplies of critical spares and ammunition. Despite previous NATO efforts to do this, he says "we still have less than five days or 30 percent of the required supply of essential items such as modern artillery munitions, 5-ton trucks, drive train components for wheeled vehicles and M1 tanks, air-to-air missiles, air launched Harpoon air-to-ship missiles, HARM/Shrike anti-radiation missiles, and anti-runway munitions." The United States and its allies must renew their efforts to meet needed levels of critical equipment, he says.

That's the good news. The bad news is that Dukakis believes "the pace and timing of our investments will depend on the success of our efforts to reduce the deficit and

*Continued on page 68*

# URGENT FURY

## Rangers in Grenada

by Mark Adkin

Five years ago this month, just after dawn on 25 October 1983, American Rangers and Marines began landing on the Caribbean island of Grenada. Shortly thereafter, UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters loaded with members of Seal Team 6 and Delta Force descended on the island.

The outcome was foreordained. Less than 72 hours later it was over — America and her Caribbean allies were in complete control of Grenada. Operation Urgent Fury, the only Western military victory over a Soviet-backed Marxist regime, was hailed as a foreign policy triumph, a clear message to those who would invite a greater communist presence in the Western hemisphere.

But while President Reagan was praised for his decisive action, U.S. military forces involved in the operation have been criticized for their performance. Urgent Fury has remained the subject of controversy,

been investigated by Congress, analyzed by military leaders and written about by prominent defense writers, among them, Edward Luttwak, Richard Gabriel, William Lind, and James Adams.

Mark Adkin, a retired British Army major, served on the staff of the Barbados Defence Force during the intervention and participated in the planning and execution of the operation. Now back in England, Adkin has written a book entitled *Urgent Fury* to be published by Lexington Books next spring, that details the intervention and the events that led to President Ronald Reagan's decision to launch Operation Urgent Fury.

What follows, taken from Major Adkin's book and drawn from interviews with participants and witnesses, as well as from after-action reports and his own experiences, is a look at the Ranger operations on the first day of Urgent Fury.



MAJOR Einstein Louison lying in his cell in Richmond Hill Prison; Barbara and George Reeves, a retired British couple in their house at Lance aux Epines; Michael "Heads" Mason, and Allan "Squeeze" Mitchell, both living in the little village of Calliste, all had something in common. In the early hours of the morning of 25 October they heard an aircraft droning round and round overhead. Estimates of the time vary from 0300 to 0430 hours, but all are emphatic that there were planes about long before the main parachute drop at Salines. None, of course, knew that it was Major Michael Couvillon, USAF, piloting a reconnaissance AC-130 Spectre gunship, or that on board was the pathfinder group of the Rangers about to launch the long-awaited invasion of Grenada.

The plane flew high, but the five people who heard it were only a fraction of the hundreds of others who wondered in the darkness if the noise above finally signalled the start. Louison heard some antiaircraft (AA) fire but could see nothing. Squeeze however came out of his small house up on Calliste Hill, overlooking the runway. He peered up into the sky, waiting, and watching. Then, suddenly, he saw something fall-



Major Mark Adkin, while serving as a staff officer with the Barbados Defence Force. Photo: author's collection

### EYEWITNESS AUTHOR

Mark Adkin, a former major in the British Army, recently retired after 31 years in the service of the Crown. Commissioned into the infantry in 1956, Adkin served as a platoon commander in Germany and Malaya, was seconded to the Mauritius Special Mobile Force, and later served as a company commander in Aden. After leaving the army, Adkin served as a District Commissioner on the Tarawa atoll in the Gilbert Islands. Returning to the military on contract in 1982, Adkin went to Barbados to serve as a staff officer with the Barbados Defence Force. While on Barbados, Adkin participated in Operation Urgent Fury in October 1983. After leaving Barbados in 1987, Adkin returned to England and began work on a book about the intervention in Grenada.



ing — parachutes over the eastern part of Salines. He shouted, pointed; others nearby saw them. He heard some firing, but not much. Squeeze had the distinct impression they were dummies tossed to draw fire.

The afternoon of Friday, 21 October, was a routine one as far as Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Hagler was concerned, that is until his phone rang at 1400 hours. Hagler was the commanding officer (CO) of the 2nd Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry, based at Fort Lewis, Washington. He was a highly experienced soldier and, like most officers of his age, a Vietnam veteran. The caller instructed him to report at once to Fort Bragg in North Carolina, to the headquarters of the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). No details could be given. Hagler flew off next morning on his long journey, arriving at around 1900 hours. He found Lieutenant Colonel Wesley Taylor from the Rangers' 1st Battalion already there.

They were told they were going to invade Grenada. Taylor was to land or drop at Point Salines in the south, to secure the runway, protect the American medical students at the True Blue campus, clear any obstacles and prepare to defend the airfield. Hagler was

**As troops of the 82nd Airborne look on, an Air Force C-141B starlifter loaded with American medical students departs from the airfield at Point Salines on Grenada. Photo: DoD**

going north. His battalion was to seize and hold Pearls airport and link up with Marines of the 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit, who would be coming ashore nearby. Hagler also had the option of landing or dropping on his objective, depending on the tactical situation or whether the strip was effectively blocked. So much for the good news.

The bad news was that there was no hard intelligence on enemy locations, strength, or intentions. There weren't enough maps to go around. Both Taylor and Hagler had to make do with photocopies of the out-of-date British 1:50,000 tourist map. Time was tight, as H-Hour was to be 0200 hours on the 25th. Worst of all, they were both to lead battalions reduced to 50 percent or less of their normal strength. This was due, in part, to the limited number of Air Force crews trained for night operations with the MC-130 and C-130 transport aircraft. Taylor was also told that he would lose C Company, as a Ranger company was

needed to support other special operations forces. Both officers left the headquarters to plan.

Hagler's battalion was alerted for an "exercise" deployment at 0900 hours on the 22nd, and while their CO was still flying to Fort Bragg, the men spent the day getting ready. The 2nd/75th flew out from adjoining McChord Air Force Base to Hunter Army Airfield near Fort Stewart, Georgia, arriving by 1400 hours on Sunday the 23rd. Thus far nobody suspected it was anything more than a test exercise, but rumors were rife on deplaning. They had arrived at Fort Stewart, Georgia, home of their sister battalion, the 1st Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry, who at 0500 hours that morning had also been alerted for the "exercise."

It had come as a shock to both COs when they heard they must fight with such depleted units. Taylor was fortunate in that, although minus C Company, he was able to keep the other two with virtually their normal structure plus a few reinforcements. Both A Company, under Captain John Abizaid, and B Company under Captain Clyde Newman, had about 150 men each. Two tactical battalion HQs were formed from another 50 men, giving the 1st/75th a fight-



Two of the rescued medical students pose with a Ranger at The White House, November 1983. Photo: author's collection

ing strength of 350. Hagler had to make do with less, so he was compelled to tell his company commanders — Captains Francis Kearney of A Company, Thomas Sittnik of B, and Mark Hanna of C Company — to select their best men only. This resulted in companies varying from 50 to 80. Like Taylor he had two tactical HQs. It was their fervent hope that Salines and the medical students were not heavily defended.

Hagler's next shock came late on the afternoon of the 23rd. Just as he had completed his plan to take Pearls he received a change of mission. Now he was to follow Taylor into Salines, assist in securing the airfield and then attack Camp Calivigny, the supposedly well-protected main base camp of the People's Revolutionary Army (PRA). Again the critical problem was lack of information, and the fact that Calivigny was some 12 kilometers from the airfield. His battalion of less than 250 was to march to the new objective, in darkness, with no proper maps, across unfamiliar terrain, and against an enemy whose dispositions and strength were unknown. The 2nd/75th would need to be in position to assault at dawn, which, with a 0200 hours drop, was asking a lot. Hagler and his staff worked feverishly to put the new plan together. Like the seizure of Pearls, the Calivigny objective had to be secured as early on D-Day as possible. Even if there was no opposition at all on the approach march, the operation looked highly dubious.

On Monday, while their men zeroed weapons, the two officers were forced to make further drastic alterations to their calculations. The original timings were all changed. The 0200 H-Hour was put back to 0400, and finally to 0500 hours, just 15 minutes before first light. What had started out as a night operation now had every likelihood of being in broad daylight. Virtually all hope of tactical surprise had disappeared, certainly for the 2nd/75th. They now had to drop or land, march to Calivigny and attack in daylight.

What was particularly frustrating was the

absence of intelligence on the defenses, if any, at the objectives. Where were the enemy positions; did they have AA guns deployed; what sort of obstacles blocked the runway, and was the medical school guarded? Little did they realize that their frustrations were only just beginning.

To carry the Rangers, and give air-to-ground fire support, was the responsibility of the USAF's 1st Special Operations Wing, under Colonel Hunter. The 1st/75th were allocated five C-130 transport, and two MC-130Es to lead the way. These aircraft came from the 8th Special Operations Squadron. The MC-130s are basically C-130s with precision navigation and terrain hugging equipment. The ordinary C-130s could follow behind these two. The 2nd/75th would get five C-130s for their lift. That left fire support and reconnaissance. These were to be supplied by three, later four, of the 16th Special Operations Squadron's AC-130 Spectre gunships. This squadron, at Hurlburt Field in Florida, is the only active duty unit flying Spectres in the Air Force. They are remarkable aircraft. Their sophisticated computers, detection devices and surveillance equipment permit pinpoint shooting at targets hidden by darkness or cloud.

Abizaid's A Company would lead, with pathfinders, well in advance of the remainder of the company, whose primary task was runway clearance. The pathfinder group were all military free fall parachutists and would use this technique in dropping over Salines. They would fly to Grenada in a reconnaissance AC-130 about 90 minutes ahead of the company. Their task would be to report on the situation on the ground to the incoming aircraft, identify (and mark with lights if possible) the landing zone (LZ) or drop zone (DZ) and carefully probe the surroundings of True Blue. Avoiding the enemy was essential. It was well within

the Rangers' capability.

The main body of A Company would travel in the two MC-130s to clear the strip for the bulk of the battalion coming in 30 minutes later. There was no margin for error if Abizaid was to complete his task in darkness. Thirty minutes is not long, and serious enemy interference would throw the whole concept out of gear.

The next five C-130s would hold Taylor and the rest of the 1st/75th. In the third aircraft would be Taylor himself, and the flight commander Major General William Mall who was the senior Military Airlift Command (MAC) representative on the operation. Also with Taylor was his tactical HQ, plus a platoon from B Company. In the fifth C-130 was the executive officer Major Jack Nix, with the alternative command post.

Their mission? To seize the airfield east of Hardy Bay and, of equal importance, to secure the safety of the American citizens at the True Blue medical facility. Although the Rangers were capable of landing or dropping, the feeling was, when they boarded, that they would be landing. The loading had been done mainly on that assumption, as neither battalion had been led to expect much opposition. Intelligence on the state of the runway was uncertain, but it was thought that, given an element of luck, landing would be feasible. If so, the plan envisaged pulling up as near to True Blue as possible, and roaring out of the aircraft with the gun jeeps to storm the campus.

Surprise was unlikely, as A Company would have been on the ground for half an hour, and it would be daylight.

Following immediately behind Taylor was Hagler with the 2nd/75th. He was, hopefully, to land and secure the runway west of Hardy Bay, reorganize quickly and march on Calivigny. Both battalions would have the benefit of the three Spectres on call, and the whole operation in the south of the island would be controlled by Major General Richard Scholtes in his EC-130 command and control aircraft. When the runway was secure he intended to set up his command post at Salines. With luck, all should be over by midday. The Rangers would hand over to the incoming 82nd Airborne unit and go home.

Few plans survive the first shot in their entirety, and the Rangers' was no exception. In their case changes started long before any shots were fired. Four hours prior to their departure from Florida, Atlantic Command ordered one of the three supporting AC-130s to leave an hour earlier, at 0630 hours on the 24th. This was to give more time for reconnaissance over Grenada and to ensure Abizaid's pathfinders had adequate time on the ground. At 1930 hours the remaining two took off, well in advance of the troop lift. Within a short time one developed an engine fire and was forced to return. It was replaced quickly, but instead of three aircraft arriving together, their arrival would be staggered. In the event this turned out to be advantageous, as it enabled continuous gunship support over Salines for

Originally tasked with seizing the airstrips at Pearls and Point Salines during the pre-dawn hours of 25 October, the Rangers' plans were changed radically, rapidly and repeatedly.

a much longer period than the planners had envisaged necessary.

At Hunter Army Airfield on the evening of the 24th both Ranger units were making their last-minute preparations for the invasion. At 1900 hours that night the 1st/75th were assembled near the runway listening to their CO's final briefing, when the noise of engines drowned out his words as seven aircraft taxied across. Taylor was annoyed to learn from the flight commander, Mall, that he was expected to board at once, instead of in two-hours time. A hurried consultation revealed that the Rangers' flight schedules were not the same as those being used by the 1st Special Operations Wing. There was a frantic rush to load. By dint of hard work, and not a little cursing, the first MC-130 was rolling down the strip at 2130 hours, only 25 minutes late. This loss of time was easily made up during the flight.

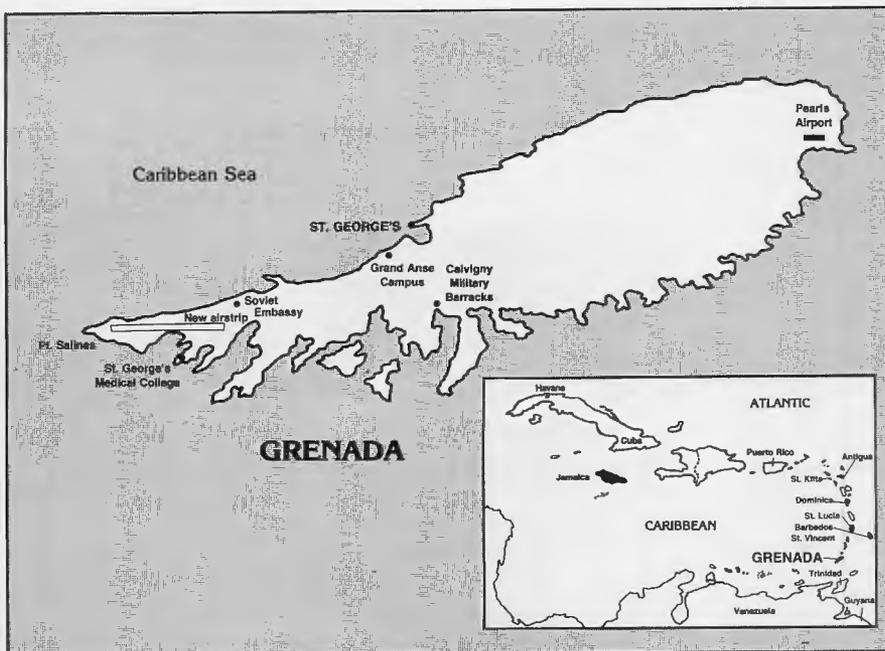
Nevertheless there was an annoying oversight affecting Taylor's aircraft. They had all arrived at Hunter airfield without hatch antennae attached. In the scramble to get away early there had been no time to rectify this omission. It meant that, in flight, the only way Taylor could communicate with his men would be through the aircrew's radios.

Inside each darkened plane the scene was almost identical. While the senior officers huddled up front near the radios, studying maps or photographs and discussing events, the Rangers were squashed shoulder to shoulder down each side. It was going to be a long flight, and after a while some managed to overcome the tension and sleep, either slumped in the front of jeeps or lolling half upright in their seats. In the cargo bays, in the center, were the gun jeeps, packed with stores and reserve ammunition, motor cycles and medical supplies.

At approximately 0400 Taylor heard that the runway was definitely blocked. Somewhat belatedly, aerial photographs had revealed the obstructions that had been put in place several days earlier. No news of other defenses. Taylor was concerned now as to whether A Company could land, and if so, clear enough runway for the remainder of the battalion in 30 minutes. It would likely prove impossible, especially if the enemy were waiting.

At approximately 2320 hours it was reported that enemy had been seen near True Blue, but no details. Still he struggled with his dilemma for another hour, before deciding that Abizaid and his men just jump. The risks involved in attempting to land were too great for the airfield clearance company. The Rangers inside the two leading MC-130s were already rigged for a drop.

At 0330 hours Couvillon arrived over the island. Although flying high, the aircraft was heard on the ground and attracted some AA fire. The pathfinder team leapt into



**Pentagon aerial photo showing the Rangers' objective, the airfield at Point Salines, which also served as their drop zone. Photo: DoD**

space over Salines, falling like stones through the darkness until their altimeters showed 2,000 feet; then they pulled their cords. Squeeze Mitchell and others saw them draw a few shots from PRA positions. Regrettably, something went wrong, either with the chutes or the altimeters of two of the free-fallers, and they plummeted into the ground.

Details of this bad news were unknown to Taylor, but Couvillon confirmed heavy vehicles blocking the runway. The likelihood of Abizaid clearing the strip in time for the battalion to land was now remote. At 0400 hours Taylor decided that everybody must jump, except for jeep crews and some administrative personnel. With only an hour

to H-Hour, the real confusion was about to start. Taylor had passed his order up to the signaller to send over the crew's radio, and he was given the thumbs up sign, which he assumed meant message passed. This was not the case with the fifth, sixth, and seventh aircraft, where Taylor's instructions had not been understood.

In the fifth aircraft Nix had anticipated his CO's decision to jump, and the Rangers had rigged themselves accordingly. However, shortly afterward the loadmaster firmly announced they would be landing. With much swearing the troops de-rigged; that is they removed their H-harness, rucksacks, main and reserve chutes, and life vests. These were then stuffed into kit bags and stowed in the forward part of the plane, to facilitate the speedy off-loading of jeeps and equipment in the center. Not long after they completed this, the loadmaster reappeared and yelled, "Only 30 minutes fuel left.



Rangers are fighting. Jump in 20 minutes.''

To be told to jump instead of land is not good news, especially having spent so much time and effort de-rigging a short while before. Now there was not time to rig everything for a drop. Chaos reigned as everybody struggled to get their gear, unpack nonessentials, and load up with ammunition taken from jeeps. Mounds of discarded kit choked the aisles as the men fought to put the main parachutes on their backs and the reserves on their chests (although on this occasion Hagler decided not wear the reserve). Then the rucksack must be hooked up under the reserve and personal weapon strapped to the left side. All this takes time under normal conditions. Inside an aircraft only minutes away from an operational jump it causes pandemonium. There is no space to move around, and proper checking by jumpmasters is impossible, so reliance must be placed on "buddy" rigging, whereby nearby comrades check each other.

Such was the scene inside the fifth aircraft. It was repeated in both the sixth and seventh.

Unbeknownst to Taylor, his first four C-130s had prepared to jump, but the last three

Soviet ZU 23mm anti-aircraft gun near Point Salines. The Rangers' aircraft were fired upon by this and other Grenadian anti-aircraft guns. Photo: Major P.J. Tomlin





still expected to land and were to be thrown into total confusion when the correct order finally got through. At this crucial moment, 15 minutes before H-Hour, the pilot of the leading MC-130 reported that his navigational equipment was malfunctioning. He could not guarantee the DZ in the dark. To make things worse, they were passing through a rain squall, so he considered a lead change with the other MC-130 unsafe. The pilot pulled away to the south and radioed Scholtes with the problem.

Scholtes responded that H-Hour was postponed yet again to 0530, and that the leading two aircraft with A Company should veer off and abort their first run in. For Taylor this was almost too much, but he attempted to put together a last minute plan in which his third aircraft would lead. The seven planes would try to reform into two groups, with one minute between each. Then to cap it all, Taylor discovered that numbers six, seven, and eight had derigged! They were told to circle until they could get ready to jump.

The original simple plan was in shreds. As Taylor's C-130 made its final approach to Salines at 150 knots and 500 feet, it was 0530 and already daylight on a windy (20 knots), partially cloudy day. As if that was not bad enough, a PRA searchlight at the western end of the runway locked onto the plane as it flew in. It had the makings of an unmitigated disaster. The enemy had been alerted, surprise was lost, some 600 men

**ABOVE: Artillery from the 82nd Airborne Division firing from positions secured by the Rangers the previous day. Photo: AP/Wideworld**

**BELOW: True Blue Campus, home to many of the American medical students in Grenada and a D-Day objective of the Rangers. Photo: author's collection**

were about to be dropped piecemeal onto a bare runway within a few meters of enemy positions. A parachute drop should be all over in a matter of moments. There was no knowing how long this one would take now. Taylor, through no fault of his, was about to lead his men into a jump that was a textbook example of how never to do a combat drop.





The unfinished terminal at the Point Salines airfield. Photo: Mark Adkin



Basketball court at Fort Rupert after the D-Day aerial attack. It was here that former Prime Minister Bishop and seven of his key supporters were executed, prompting the U.S. intervention. Photo: author's collection

aiming correctly).

At 0534 hours Taylor had himself and 42 men on the ground. He was in a most unenviable position. Strategic surprise had been lost; tactical surprise had been impossible ever since H-Hour slipped to 0500 hours; now yet another principle of war had been flouted — concentration. Urgent Fury was ultimately to involve 20,000 servicemen in one way or another, but at dawn on that Tuesday, in the critical southwest corner of the island, the point of the spear was a battalion headquarters and one infantry platoon. The platoon was from B Company, not supposed to have dropped until after A Company had cleared the airfield.

Taylor and his group were totally exposed to view and fire from the low hills 200 meters away north of the runway. There was no cover whatsoever. The ground to the south of the strip was grass covered with a few folds here and there in which the Rangers sought meager protection. Had the PRA been properly dug in around the terminal and on the ridges to the north, rather than the Cubans who were uncertain what to do, Taylor and his men might not have survived. They were perfect targets for machine guns and mortars. Fortunately, the Cubans had their orders, and the few PRA in the vicinity were concentrating on firing at aircraft rather than at the troops on the ground, and the Rangers were mostly in dead ground as far as the PRA were concerned.

All this was unknown to Taylor. He was well aware of his vulnerability and the need for fire support onto any likely enemy positions. He was later to say, "After landing the biggest concern was finding cover and setting up communications to direct suppressive fire from AC-130 Spectres circling the airport." Major James Roper, Taylor's air liaison officer, quickly established contact with two AC-130s, which began pouring shells into the vicinity.

Taylor was greatly relieved to discover that his group were not under effective fire. There, in front of him, was the runway covered with obstructions, the removal of which was one of his battalion's tasks. Abizaïd's A Company was still airborne, but the platoon from B Company was to hand. These men were ordered onto the runway to start clearance. There were trucks, bulldozers, tankers, drums, and stakes driven into the ground with wire between them. Some vehicles had keys in them; some were hot-wired. A Cuban bulldozer was used to flatten stakes and push aside drums. Miraculously, for 15 minutes this platoon continued clearance work virtually uninterrupted.

Taylor made no attempt at this stage to move to secure the True Blue campus. He saw as his priority getting clearance started and awaiting the remainder of his two companies before tackling the unknown defenses of the medical school. The original planning had never envisaged a quick dash on foot to secure the students, but rather that

Taylor, through no fault of his, was about to lead his men into a jump that was a textbook example of how never to do a combat drop.

Standing tense inside the C-130 waiting for the green light was Taylor, his HQ group, and the platoon from B Company. Both battalions had agreed to reduce the drop height to 500 feet, as this would give the jumpers only 12-15 seconds in the air, with minimum exposure to enemy fire. Also they were dropping onto a long, narrow DZ, with water along the south side and, in the Hardy Bay area, on both sides within a few meters of the tarmac. This meant they could not afford a long descent, with the possibility of drifting too far. The idea was to get down quickly, and not become scattered in the process.

Taylor's aircraft drew fire from the fully alerted gun positions below. The PRA detachment at Salines had positioned an old

12.7mm, four-barrelled, heavy AA machine gun on the ridge north of the terminal. This opened fire as well, sending streams of tracer rounds into the sky. All of Taylor's men were out before the aircraft slowly pulled up less than 100 feet from the sea.

The next two aircraft came in shortly after Taylor, but the pilots did not like the amount of fire they were drawing, so both aborted their drop. Almost any PRA soldier who could fire his weapon was now doing so. The fireworks looked fairly impressive, but little damage was being done, although several planes were holed (mainly in the tail area, indicating inexperienced firers not

**Cubans captured during the intervention awaiting their return to Cuba. Their commanding officer was later killed in Angola. Photo: Mark Adkin**

the school should be secured after, or simultaneously with, airfield clearance. Little opposition was anticipated when the Rangers had boarded their aircraft; there was thought to be a good chance they could land, and the gun jeeps would drive to the campus. With the element of surprise gone hours before, Taylor now needed to assemble his command before anything else.

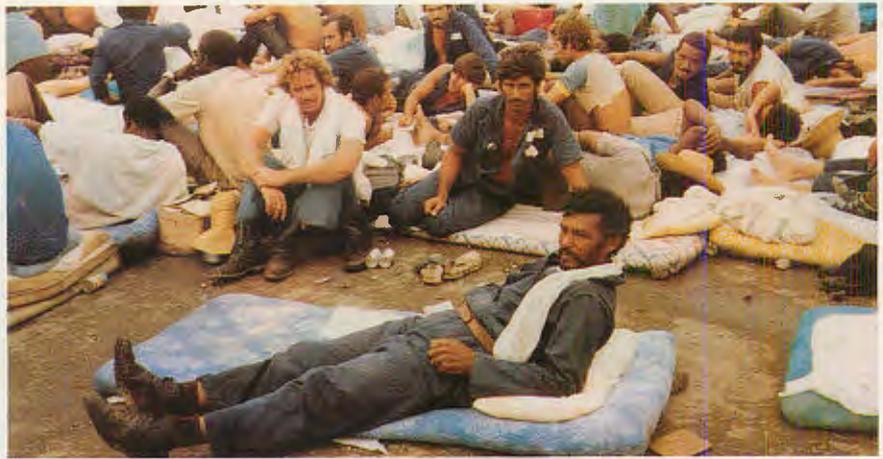
Twenty minutes after landing, Taylor saw one of A Company's MC-130s coming in low, with Rangers leaping from the rear doors. This aircraft was an attractive target. Machine gun, small arms, and AA fire was directed against it. The shooting had no effect on the aircraft and caused no casualties, but Taylor called a halt to clearance operations, moving his HQ from some rocks south of Hardy Bay to a tiny peninsula east of the bay. There he had to wait another 40 minutes for the remainder of A Company. It was not until 0705 hours that Taylor had his whole force with him — without a single casualty.

There was now a very long wait for the next drop. In the sky above and around Grenada circled no fewer than nine C-130s and one MC-130, apart from Scholtes's EC-130 and the Spectres, all waiting to get into position to approach the DZ. Inside many of these conditions were chaotic, with equipment littered everywhere as troops struggled to get ready. Fuel was tight, as they had to keep enough to reach Barbados, 45 minutes flying time away.

Then it was Hagler's turn with the 2nd/75th. It would have been too confusing to let him jump before Taylor, so his five planes were compelled to circle 'round praying that fuel would last.

Not long after 0700 hours Hagler was able to lead his aircraft in a tight group one behind the other. He was the first man to jump, with the rest of the battalion out within less than 30 seconds. By 0710 hours all the Rangers that jumped were safely down, all that is except for one Ranger who suffered a broken leg. Considering the circumstances, it was nothing short of miraculous.

It was 0730, however, before Abizaid was able to coordinate the actions of his platoons. He appreciated that the enemy on the hills just north of the runway dominated everything, and his first task must be to secure this ground. Also he must get to the True Blue campus. He ordered the 1st and 3rd platoons to attack across the runway, using M60 machine guns and rocket launchers for supporting fire. Second platoon was to approach True Blue along the beach south of the runway. The two assault platoons crossed the tarmac without loss, firing and advancing toward the village of Calliste. As they moved toward a school, a Spanish-speaking Ranger yelled out to the enemy to surrender. The response was increased firing, which killed the only Ranger



**Part of the airstrip at Salines as seen from the Cuban positions. The drop zone left the Rangers without cover and under the guns of the Cubans. Photo: Mark Adkin**

to die in the fighting to secure the runway. Private Mark Okamura Yamane was hit in the neck while operating his M60. Squad leader Sergeant Manous Boles from 1st platoon led the attack toward the school, gallantly driving a captured bulldozer. His men, crouched behind the dozer, succeeded in reaching the top of the hill, where they found an abandoned 12.7mm AA gun.

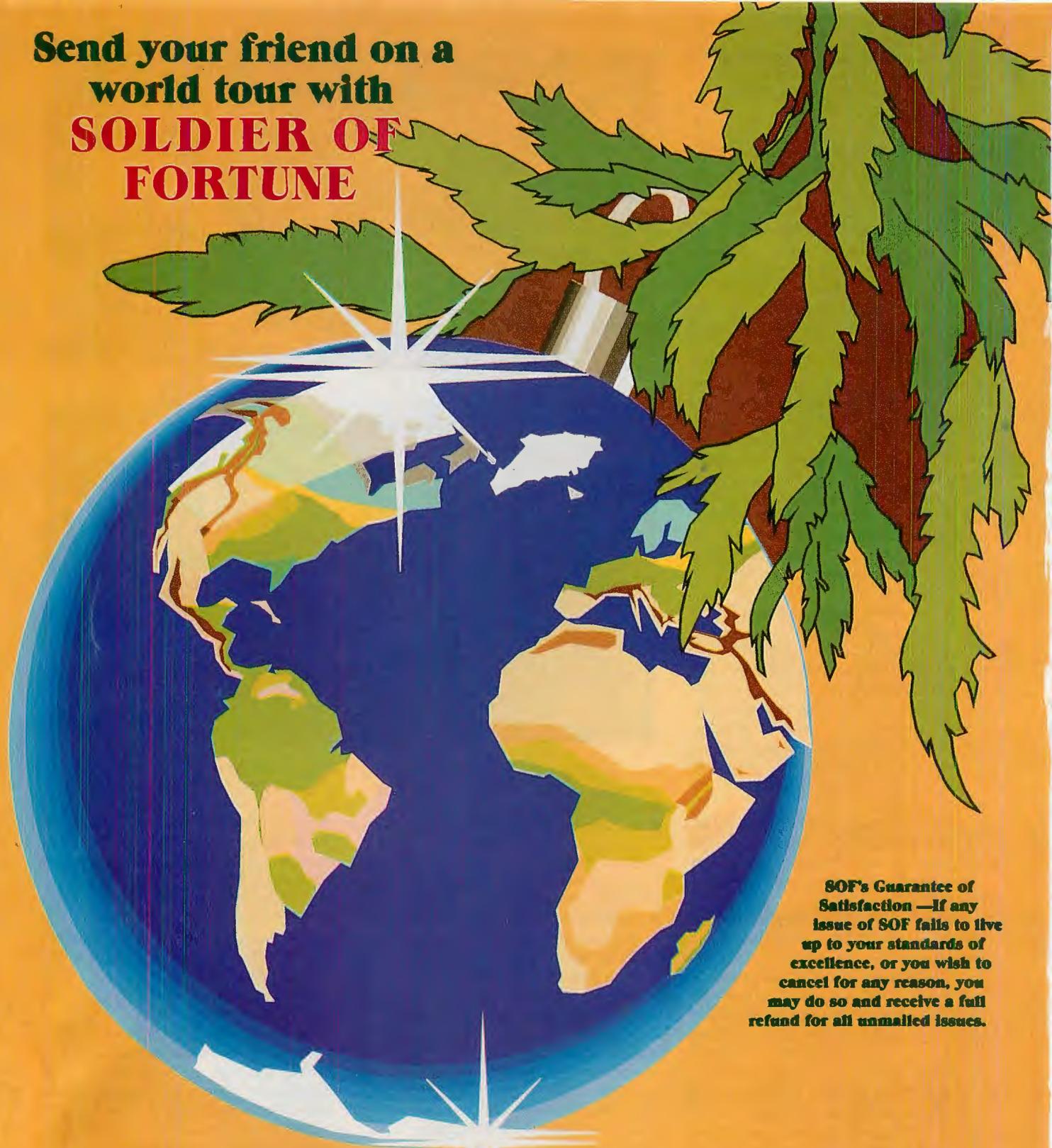
Inside the True Blue campus, at 0730 hours, most students had been awake for several hours, roused by the noise of aircraft overhead. Later, when shooting started, many, like Christine Gigliuto, dived under their beds. Some hid in bathtubs, while others peered out to see what was happening. Twenty-two-year-old Harold Harvey stated, "... Then I saw the paratroopers jumping. It was really thrilling to see, kind of like an old John Wayne movie, but I knew people were going to get killed." Stephen Renae was watching as well. He saw "planes diving and straffing at ground targets we couldn't see. The worst thing was not knowing where the planes were from." A few minutes after 0730, American voices were heard yelling to identify themselves and telling students to lie on the floor. There was some firing between advancing Rangers and the PRA guard detail at the main

gate. To the students it was very noisy, very confusing, and very frightening, with a number of bullets from the crossfire smashing windows and penetrating their accommodation buildings. Within 15 minutes the campus was secured, with the PRA detachment retreating north into the hills. No students had been harmed, no hostages taken and no casualties inflicted on the Rangers. But it came as a shock to discover that the students they had found were less than half the total number. Grand Anse, the other campus, had never figured in the Rangers' plans because they did not know it existed.

On the runway, the 150 men of Newman's B Company had been tasked with pushing northwest in the direction of the control tower and the hills beyond the terminal. They received heavy fire from the Cubans in and around their "Old" Camp, but the Rangers' advance soon had them on the run. One Cuban was killed and 22 surrendered to B Company as it moved steadily northward. By 0955 hours Newman's men had reached the fuel storage tanks on high ground 600 meters northeast of the terminal. From this scrub-covered vantage point they could look down into the Cuban Mission Headquarters at Little Havana. Cubans were clearly visible inside the compound and on the high ground nearby. They started to set up two mortars, but the Rangers opened up with a captured 12.7mm which

**Continued on page 84**

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**B**RAVERY under fire is the stuff heroes are made of. Bravery under fire is an indispensable characteristic of the soldier who would win. Bravery *under fire* is a different animal than bravado before the battle, or braggadocio after. And proven bravery under fire is a priceless trait for a national leader, military or civilian. Fortunately, the body politic in this country has the opportunity to examine the background of those who would lead us, and they have the say in selecting our commander in chief.

A lot about how a man will handle demanding situations in the future can be learned from how he has faced danger in the past. Only a fool is never afraid; the difference between heroes and cowards is that a hero may know fear, but goes ahead to bravely perform his duty, even if under fire. Using this criteria — *Doodles*' flaccid pen notwithstanding — George Bush is a courageous war hero. As Walt Harrington said in the *Washington Post*, "A war hero — not like John Kennedy, but an *undisputed* war hero." In other words, a hero not merely on a paper citation, but a hero also in the eyes of those who were *there* and served with him.

George Bush turned 18 a week after the Battle of Midway in 1942, and on his birthday he enlisted in the United States Navy, against the wishes of his father. Before his 19th birthday, he received his ensign's commission and wings, making him the youngest pilot in the Navy. He volunteered for advanced training in torpedo bombers at Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and Chincoteague, Virginia, and was assigned to the USS *San Jacinto*. The *San Jacinto* was originally laid down as the cruiser *Newark*, but after Pearl Harbor and Midway, the Navy had its sights set on a carrier war, and the *San Jacinto* was finished out as a 10,000-ton light carrier. For a flattop she was top-heavy, thin-skinned and lightly gunned, but the *San Jacinto* could do 34 knots and she carried two dozen F6F Hellcats and nine TBMs, the GM version of the Grumman Avenger (the "TB" of TBM stands for torpedo bomber, with the "M" being the abbreviated version of GM, General Motors, its manufacturer).

Bush was a TBM pilot, and logged some 1,228 hours flying time with 126 carrier landings and 58 combat missions. The TBM was the biggest carrier-based bomber the Navy had, and it carried 2,000 pounds of explosive ordnance in addition to its Browning .50s. Originally part of the 3rd Fleet, VT-51 torpedo squadron including the *San Jacinto* was assigned to Halsey's 5th Fleet and Task Force 58, a fast carrier group under Admiral Marc Mitscher. Although VT-51 was a torpedo squadron, most of their missions were anti-sub patrol and bombing runs on land targets. Starting with a 23 May 1944 raid on Wake Island, Bush flew low-level cover for the landings on Guam and Saipan.

During the battle for the Marianas, more than 300 Japanese aircraft attacked the American fleet and Bush was among the bomber pilots who took to the air to save



**SOF VOTE '88**

# UNCOMMON VALOR

## Bush's World War II Record Shows the Right Stuff

by Don McLean

**BELOW:** Newly-commissioned Ensign George Bush aboard the USS *San Jacinto* in 1943. This skinny, gutsy kid who enlisted in the Navy on his 18th birthday against the wishes of his father, was then the youngest flier in the Navy. When reminded that the Japanese who shot him down over Chichi-Jima were wont to butcher captured U.S. airmen for their sukiyaki and soup, Bush now quips, "I would have hardly made an *hors d'oeuvre*." Photo: Wide World Photos



their precious planes, but he promptly lost oil pressure and had to ditch at sea. As the plane sank and Bush rowed frantically with his two-man crew to clear the area, 2,000 pounds of depth charges exploded, but he was unhurt. They were taken aboard the destroyer USS *Bronson* and two days later transferred to another carrier, and Bush flew another TBM back to the *San Jacinto*.

**ABOVE:** George Bush in the cockpit of his TBM Avenger aboard the *San Jacinto* in the South Pacific, 1944. Bush logged some 1,228 hours flying time, and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and three Air Medals. Starting with a 23 May 1944 raid on Wake Island, Bush flew 58 combat missions and had 126 carrier landings. During the raid on Chichi-Jima, Bush was carrying a load of four 500-pound bombs when ground fire disabled his TBM, setting it on fire. He still went in to hit the target before bailing out. Photo: courtesy Sean Walsh, OVP Press Office

**BELOW:** Navy Pilot Bush rescued at sea by the submarine USS *Finback* after being shot down over Chichi-Jima. His fellow pilots strafed back the Japanese boats who set out to capture him, and Bush survived a blow to the head, a ripped chute, and an insult-to-injury sting from a *Portuguese* man-of-war — only to accompany the *Finback* on the rest of its extended combat patrol. Photo: courtesy Sean Walsh, OVP Press Office





On 1 September 1944, VT-51 squadron was flying missions against Japanese radio stations on Chichi-Jima in the Bonin Islands 600 miles south of Japan, in an attempt to destroy communications prior to the American assault on the Palau Islands. Antiaircraft fire was particularly heavy. As Bush's wing man, Milton Moore, described it, "They had a lot of antiaircraft there, in a situation where they could get you in a crossfire whichever way you came in." They lost one man that day (before the war was over, Bush's squadron was to lose nine of the original 14 pilots), but the Japanese radio stations were still broadcasting. The plan for the next day was to strike the radio targets again, then VT-51 was to rendezvous a few hundred miles away with Admiral Halsey's force for the amphibious assault on Peleiu, one of the Palau Islands.

Working with eight Helldivers and a dozen Hellcats from the USS *Enterprise*, Bush and his three companion Avengers took off at 0715 carrying a full load of four 500-pound bombs. Because of the attack the day before, antiaircraft fire from Chichi-Jima was intense. VT-51 squadron commander Don Melvin led the first pair of bombers in, destroying a radio tower and damaging the support buildings. By now antiaircraft fire was focused on the Avengers, and Bush, followed by Milt Moore, lined up for their run. Nosing over for a 30-degree glide, Bush flew into a maelstrom of flak and ground fire, taking a hit in an oil line which set his engine on fire. Melvin recalled that "You could have seen that smoke for a hundred miles."

With smoke pouring out of his engine and flames spreading along his wings, instruments signaling that he was going down soon, Bush could not have been faulted if he had jettisoned his bomb load and headed back out to sea to ditch as close as he could get to the *San Jacinto*, but he did not. Bravery under fire is not a trait which looks for excuses to cover one's backside. As reads the citation which accompanied his Distinguished Flying Cross:

**George Bush (kneeling, second from left) on deck of the USS *Finback* with her crew. Soaring aviators are not particularly fond of living under water in an iron tank, but Bush volunteered for duty and stood watch with the crew. The skipper was awarded the Silver Star for the actions of the *Finback* against Japanese shipping. After a brief R&R, Bush turned down his option to rotate home and island-hopped back to the *San Jacinto* for more air strikes against Japanese shipping and land targets in the Philippine campaign. Photo: courtesy Sean Walsh, OVP Press Office**

*Opposed by intense antiaircraft fire, his plane was hit and set afire as he commenced his dive. In spite of smoke and flames from the fire on his plane, he continued in his dive and scored damaging hits on the radio station before bailing out of his plane. His courage and complete disregard for his own safety, both in pressing home his attack in the face of intense and accurate antiaircraft fire and in continuing in his dive on the target after being hit and his plane on fire, were at all times in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.*

"I realized I was in serious trouble," Bush remembers, "when I saw the flames moving back along the crease in the wing, where it folds [when] aboard ship. That's where the fuel tanks were . . . I couldn't see the instruments for smoke. There was a procedure to get on the radio to notify any submarine in the area, or hope you're notifying them; you just go to a certain frequency. But I didn't know if I was transmitting or not."

Milt Moore, flying in Bush's wake, said, "He got hit and went on in, smoking. I pulled up on him, then he lost power and I went sailing by him. My gunner was the only one who could see behind us, and he called 'chutes!'"

After completing his bombing run, Bush headed back out to sea, leveling off at 1,500 feet to give his crew a chance to bail out. When Bush jumped over the side, he was struck by the TBM's tail, and he pulled his

rip cord too soon; the 'chute then caught on the tail and ripped out several panels. Falling too fast, and stunned by the blow to his head, Bush drifted toward the Japanese island, but managed to slip his chute before he hit the water. His seat-pack life raft had fallen free, and a Hellcat from his flight dove on it to mark it, and Bush swam for it. Swimming toward the raft, he was stung by a Portuguese man-of-war. He climbed aboard the raft and checked his .38 revolver, and splashed Mercurochrome on his head injury.

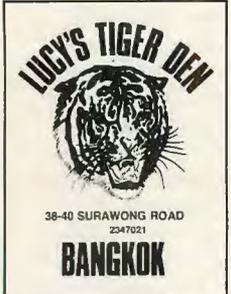
Two Japanese boats put out from the island to capture him, but the fourth Avenger pilot on this flight, Doug West, and some of the Hellcats strafed them and drove them back to the harbor. Melvin and Moore radioed his position and flew away, lest they disclose it to the Japanese. Still numbed from the blow to his head, and sick and vomiting from sea water he took in when he hit, Bush fought to keep the raft from drifting toward the island. After hours of rowing with his hands, Bush saw a periscope, then a conning tower cut through the water 100 yards away. It was American. Within minutes he was aboard and they quietly slipped beneath the waves. After the war, the military tribunal was told that Japanese on Chichi-Jima clubbed, bayoneted and beheaded U.S. airmen, and that their livers were served in sukuyaki and strips of their flesh were used to flavor soup.

Safely aboard the submarine *Finback*, Bush learned she was beginning an extended combat patrol in Japanese-controlled waters. "We got depth charged; we got bombed by a Nell bomber while we were running on the surface. We sank a lot of enemy tonnage, and the skipper got a Silver Star for the sub's performance on that patrol. But the depth charging . . . it just shook the boat . . . and those guys would say, 'Oh, that wasn't close' . . . it was funny; they would say it must be awful flying a plane, but I thought it was awful just sitting in this one place. On a plane you can do something . . . but down there . . ." Bush remembered.

Bush fought his claustrophobia by volunteering for duty, standing watch along with the regular crew. After several weeks on patrol, the battered *Finback* returned to Pearl Harbor to a hero's welcome. After his experience, Bush had the option of rotating home, but after some R&R in Honolulu he chose to island-hop back to Guam and then fly to Ulithi to rejoin the *San Jacinto*, just eight weeks after he was shot down. He then flew bombing strikes with VT-51 against enemy shipping and land targets in the Philippines, and just before Christmas 1944, he was ordered back to the States for retraining in Florida and Michigan, for assignment to another carrier for the final assault on Japan.

The war ended just before he was due to ship back overseas, and he was discharged as a Lieutenant (junior grade) in 1945, having been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and three Air Medals for his courageous and dedicated service to his country. ✕

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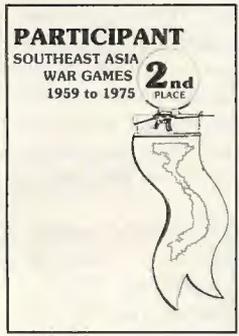
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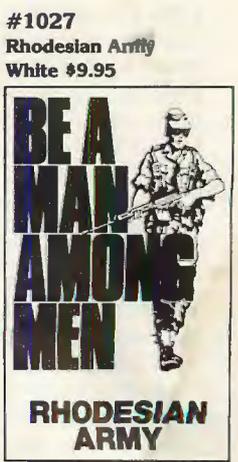
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the progress of arms control negotiations." Translation: Acquiring enough munitions and spares to allow NATO forces to fight more than a week has a lower priority than deficit reduction. This is a remarkable ordering of priorities, considering that the principal reason Dukakis wants to strengthen conventional forces is to avoid the "early first use" of nuclear weapons. If he is really serious about wanting to replace a nuclear defense with a conventional one, rebuilding war stocks should be his first order of business, and the one least subject to budgetary constraints.

Dukakis' fourth proposal for strengthening conventional defenses is to convert three of the U.S. Army's light divisions to heavier, mechanized ones. He wants to do this, he says, in order to meet "the unique demands of intensive combat" in the European theater, which he characterizes as "the most dense concentration of military forces in history."

Fine so far. The light division is one of the Army's more dubious ideas, and few would quarrel with up-gunning them. However, Dukakis also wants "to focus this effort primarily on reserve forces, which are most likely to be called on for a major conflict." That is a considerably more questionable idea, because the success or failure of a conventional defense may well turn on how quickly its forces can respond to an attack, and reserve forces cannot be expected to respond as quickly as active-duty ones. Moreover, Dukakis' defense position paper does not make it clear if he intends to upgrade existing reserve divisions as a means of supplementing the present active force, or if he intends to upgrade presently active light divisions and then place them into the reserves. That is, to say the least, a troubling ambiguity.

Either way, Dukakis is strongly committed to increasing the role of reserve forces in U.S. and NATO defense planning. In addition to the light division conversions, he wants to re-examine the missions of the National Guard and the Reserve and explore what additional tasks can be assigned to them. He specifically mentions "manning a larger share of Navy ships, maintaining and repairing vital equipment, and providing more intelligence support to the active forces." He also promises, without elaboration, to provide Guard and Reserve units with modern equipment and to provide the training and supplies to assure their readiness. And he wants our NATO allies to do the same.

Dukakis is not the first presidential candidate who has proposed strengthening Guard and Reserve forces, but in the past this has usually been proposed as a means of supplementing active duty units. Although he doesn't quite say it, Dukakis' proposals leave one with the impression that he views building up the reserves as something which will allow him to cut back active duty

forces. If so, that's living dangerously. If the United States finds itself involved in a future war in Europe, the one certainty is that things will happen very fast — so fast that even reserve units in a high state of readiness might not be able to respond swiftly enough to preclude commanders having to choose between defeat and reaching for the nukes.

One also gets the impression Dukakis is adroitly exploiting the Army's lack of candor with regard to the purpose of the light divisions. The Army maintains the fiction that the divisions' purpose is rapid response in Europe (for which Congress is willing to pay), when in reality they are far better suited for low-to-medium intensity conflict in the Third World. Like eliminating carriers, eliminating light divisions as active duty formations will reduce U.S. ability to project force in places outside of Europe — and places other than Europe are where almost every round fired in anger by U.S. fighting men in the past 43 years has been expended. Dukakis' defense proposals focus almost entirely on NATO. NATO is important; it has historically been the centerpiece of U.S. strategic thinking, but it isn't the only concern, nor arguably even the most pressing. If the next president finds himself required to send Americans into battle, Europe is low on the list of places where it is likely to happen. Yet Dukakis casts his defense policies almost exclusively in the context of NATO. That too is living dangerously.

Dukakis' fifth proposal for strengthening conventional defenses is to drastically cut back the Strategic Defense Initiative and

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**Although he doesn't quite say it, Dukakis' proposals leave one with the impression that he views building up the reserves as something that will allow him to cut back active-duty forces. If so, that's living dangerously.**

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instead emphasize a conventional defense initiative (yes, there is such a critter, and it has the backing of both the Reagan administration and Les Aspin and Sam Nunn). Dukakis cites "a breakthrough in antitank war" as a major goal he would have the CDI pursue. He also wants to develop better battlefield command, control, communication and intelligence systems, along with better aircraft IFF [Identification friend or foe] systems.

Finding ways to apply advanced technology to the defense of the republic is an eminently sensible thing to do, and proposing to place greater emphasis on doing so is probably Dukakis' most constructive defense proposal. It would have been nice if his laundry list of research areas had been longer and more specific — how about advanced battlefield RPVs [Remote Piloted Vehicles] or a breakthrough in anti-

helicopter defense to neutralize the Warsaw Pact's Hind fleets, for instance — but the concept is sound.

Emphasizing the conventional defense initiative may have one consequence Dukakis may not have anticipated, however, and that is it will keep alive much of the R & D on core technologies critical to SDI that otherwise would be lost if he manages to scuttle the anti-missile program. The truth is the two initiatives have much more in common than first meets the eye. Both are, more than anything else, advanced computing initiatives, and the fundamental problems both must solve have some surprising similarities. The SDI C<sup>3</sup> [Command, Control, Communication] problem, for instance, is how to detect, track and destroy 10,000 warheads and a million decoys traveling at 18,000 mph; the analogous CDI C<sup>3</sup> problem is how to detect, track, and destroy 30,000 tanks and a million grunts traveling at 30 mph. Solve the latter problem, and you've probably taken a giant step toward solving the former, and vice versa. If SDI must be cut — and make no mistake, cutting it will squander a U.S. lead in a type of military technology whose development is as inevitable as that of air power — changing the emphasis to the conventional defense initiative is the alternative that will do the least damage.

One place where Dukakis' dislike of SDI will do enormous damage, however, is in the space program. That is because the Massachusetts governor opposes the National Aerospace Plane, a project begun by the Reagan administration with the aim of producing a spacecraft that could take off and land from commercial airfields like a conventional aircraft. Dukakis correctly recognizes that it is necessary to develop much better expendable launchers and that it is necessary to get the shuttle flying again, and to his credit advocates doing both, but both steps are only stop-gap measures. The National Aerospace Plane represents an attempt to make access to space sufficiently reliable and economical that military and commercial activity outside the atmosphere can become routine. Until that happens the space program will be forever crippled and unable to fulfill its promise which, ironically, keeps growing. If the two-and-a-half years since the Challenger disaster have made anything clear, it is that a) assured, economical access to space is increasingly critical to national security, and b) we don't have it. If Dukakis kills the National Aerospace Plane, it will be guaranteed we won't get it any time soon.

Perhaps the most troubling aspects of Dukakis' defense posture are the questions he has not addressed. His position paper says virtually nothing about aircraft, for instance, yet aircraft procurement programs account for roughly as many defense dollars as strategic systems, and — more importantly — profoundly affect the nature and type of conventional defense the country can mount

Continued on page 83

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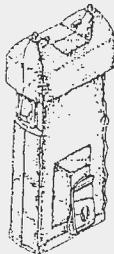
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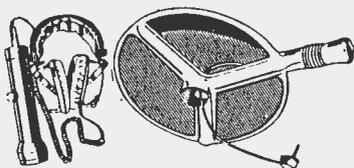
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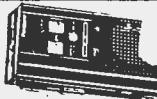
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# KANDAHAR

Continued from page 41

The muj upped the ante the following day, however, with a 107mm rocket attack on the fort. Normally the rockets are fired from launchers, but these are not essential, especially if the target is at close range. In the case of the fort, 500 meters qualified as close.

The projectiles were simply laid flat on a mud wall, and elevation adjustments made with the handiest rocks. Creative improvisation with a couple of wires and a 9-volt battery produced the firing mechanism.

Amazingly simple, but at first it wouldn't fire — the battery was flat! While that hitch was being attended to the muj opened up with an 82mm mortar, lobbing Egyptian-made shells into the fort. By the time the rockets joined the barrage there were signs of fire in the base, indicating a possible hit on a fuel dump or vehicle.

Eventually time out was taken for a lunch of bread and potatoes brought to our bunker. While we ate, the local commandant briefed us on his troops' successful operations against the posts of Lar and Pul to the immediate east of the fort. Six weeks earlier mujahideen drawn from 20 different jebha had overrun these posts on successive days, capturing a diverse collection of weapons, ammunition and other booty, including cash, a camera and the Soviet binoculars we were using.

Of the 11 prisoners taken, five were Soviets who were said to be held somewhere on the Afghan-Pakistan border for a future prisoner exchange. The six Afghan professional soldiers were executed.

Now the muj were to have another go at the Lar outpost. A group was going in to soften up the defenses. Yes, I could come along.

The few trees offered little overhead cover as long before all branches had been splintered into brush-ends. The choking dust compounded the discomfort of having to traverse the entire length of the trench crouched down until we were finally within 50 meters of Lar.

There was an animated debate in whispers as the mujahideen jockeyed for firing positions. My attention centered on the RPG man as he swung his launcher about. Getting caught in the ferocious back-blast of that beast meant a blinding at least.

The RPG slammed into the Lar outpost and AKMs ripped into action. A muj operating a light machine gun cranked off nearly a full belt of ammo in one frenzied burst before leaping back from the lip of the trench. I couldn't blame him. Unlike the others, he had to stick his head up to sight the target.

The return fusillade from Lar's new defenders included the meaty crack of a 14.5mm ZPU heavy machine gun. It had us hugging the trench walls and each other, and suddenly this exposed hole in the ground seemed the loneliest place in the

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world. We beat a retreat, but the danger wasn't over yet. On the way back one of our muj accidentally discharged half a magazine from his AK on full auto, fortunately into the trench floor, narrowly missing the man in front of him.

The jets continued to bomb Mahlajat and the mujahideen continued to attack the defensive belt from the trenches as we hiked back to Narkuneh three days later. It was colder now; the grapes had been harvested, dried and exported to Pakistan, and jackals had taken up residence in the deserted vineyards.

The muj camp was nearly deserted too. During our absence most of the remaining mujahideen had gone to Mahlajat with Gul Jan, the youth who had escorted me through the desert to Pakistan in 1985. He was an expert in electrically detonated mines made from captured tank shells. Some Chinese pressure-detonated antitank mines were in stock at camp, but the mujahideen habitually complained of shortages still.

Obtaining an adequate supply of weapons and ammo was a constant concern of the mujahideen, as ever-present and fundamental as obtaining an adequate supply of food. "It's not the daily bombardment that is the difficulty for us," said Jamaluddin, "but the lack of ammunition." In particular they wanted more RPGs, mortar and recoilless rifle rounds.

In the outlying districts of Kandahar,

such as Argandab to the northwest, some new weapons had made an appearance since my first visit to Afghanistan. These included the Chinese Type 77 lightweight 12.7mm machine gun. The latter was also seen in greater numbers, along with its big brother, the single-barrel 14.5mm ZPU-1. The 122mm rocket launcher, the BM-12 multi-barrel rocket launcher, and of course the Stinger anti-aircraft missile, were also in evidence.

Questioned about the exchange of drugs for guns with the Soviets, some of the Mahlajat muj admitted that the *titi*, or Tokarev pistol, in particular could be traded for hashish. Hashish is acknowledged as *haram* — forbidden — under Islam, but in the Kandahar countryside where it has traditionally been harvested for centuries the average Afghan does not consider it bad.

The smoking of hashish by Kandahar mujahideen depends on the strictness of the group's leader. On the other hand, heroin, which is sold in Kandahar city, is definitely "bad." Twenty-five Afghan civilians reportedly had been arrested there by a Jamiat commander for smoking heroin.

Kandahar used to be Afghanistan's second most populous city. Today, most of its residents are refugees in Pakistan or elsewhere. Attempts are made by the DRA authorities to minimize the besieged state of the city by maintaining links with the out-

side world. A bus still runs to Kabul (in convoy) making a stopover in Ghazni; the 12-15 hour trip costs about U.S. \$6.

Chaman, Pakistan's border town opposite Spin Baldak, receives a daily bus service from Kandahar, and the passengers, who are almost exclusively "white-beards" (the elderly) or children, do not require permits to travel. Young men are subject to the army draft; if they haven't already joined the muj, they keep a low profile.

Assassinations by the mujahideen do take place in the city, and weapons are routinely stored there for operations against government posts and offices. And as long as the Soviets remain they too will be a target. National reconciliation as far as the resistance is concerned will be the reunion of all Afghan refugees with their mujahideen brothers in a homeland liberated not only of the Soviets but also from their Afghan communist followers.

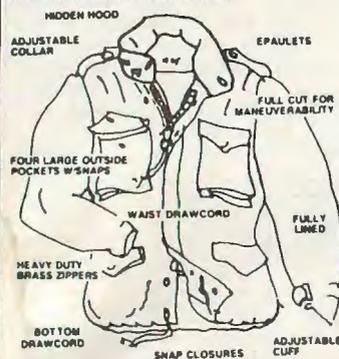
"The Soviets have invaded our land, bombed our houses and taken away our sovereignty, but some things they cannot take away," said Jamaluddin. "These are our customs and religion."

In a nutshell it is their religious faith that binds the mujahideen together, fuels the jihad — and sets them apart from their Soviet adversaries. "The *Shuravi* [Russians] have no book," says Abdul Khaliq. That is the ultimate ignominy for those whose lives are guided by the Holy Koran.

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## SPECIAL FORCES

Continued from page 51

helping the Indians and broadcast messages from former residents whom the army had helped. Armed with emergency medical kits, Civil Affairs troops and former residents of Bicalama accompanied the patrols into the area. "We expected heavy civilian and military casualties, but there was no resistance," Mansilla said. "The guerrillas had retreated into the mountains."

The military carted tin roofing and other supplies in on mules and stayed several weeks. When they left, the villagers asked for weapons for self defense, and Civil Affairs helped them organize a Civilian Defense group, giving them guns and ammo. Now a land reform is underway to deed land in certain areas to the Indians.

"We're not gathering the people up and moving them away," Lacho explained. "We're helping them live where they did before. We want the United States to know that we do not take away the customs of the people."

While Civil Affairs is instrumental in fighting internal subversion, it also is trying

to neutralize a negative image of the military at home and abroad. Hand-drawn leaflets targeted toward the Indians show friendly, smiling soldiers with natives. URNG is mockingly dubbed the "Guatemalan National Repressive Union." A wanted poster tacked up in villages offers 100 quetzals for handguns, 200 for an M16, and 500 (equal to \$200 U.S.) for an M60 or FN MAG 58. Some of the advice for behavior is directed to the soldiers themselves. One leaflet orders soldiers: "Be respectful of women, don't destroy crops, don't take gifts or favors, respect native customs and traditions, be courteous, pay for what you get."

Image mending is not so easily done outside Guatemala, however, and the army still stings from the blows it has received from the liberal press. Its earliest development villages for displaced people have been called "concentration camps" by detractors. And the Civilian Defense patrols who protect the villages at night have been criticized as being the military's "forced labor." "If we didn't have their loyalty, we certainly wouldn't arm them," Mansilla said. "I've gone into the mountains on patrol with very few soliders and many armed CD without a problem. They're even asking for missions into the mountains."

Officers angrily tell us that reporters have blamed the army for crimes against civilians that were committed by guerrillas in soldiers' clothing. In fact, the army's wood-

land cammies have become so common among the insurgents that the army is changing its standard field pattern. Johnny, a former combatant who spent four years in the EGP, told me that a group of highly trained guerrillas specialize in impersonating the army. "The guerrillas wore olive green, the same as the army," he said. "They recovered uniforms and equipment and had a special commando unit to dress like army and deceive people. There were 20 or 25 specially selected, intelligent men who did special duty. In 1984, in Chixel, some of them dressed like soldiers and confused the people. They told me they had killed some CD."

But Civil Affairs hopes to limit future incidents by its presence. Without popular support, the long corridor from Nebaj to Mexico will be closed to the guerrillas. "We gave the order that all military units had to be involved with people," Col. Letona said. "It's no good to have thousands of patrols in the jungles and the guerrillas in the towns."

Officers tell with outrage of two gruesome incidents in November 1986, when soldiers were mutilated by the EGP. In the first, the guerrillas put civilians in front of their ranks so the army wouldn't shoot, and ambushed 25 soldiers. When army reinforcements came in, they recovered eight wounded soldiers, but seven, including one officer, were missing. The weather closed

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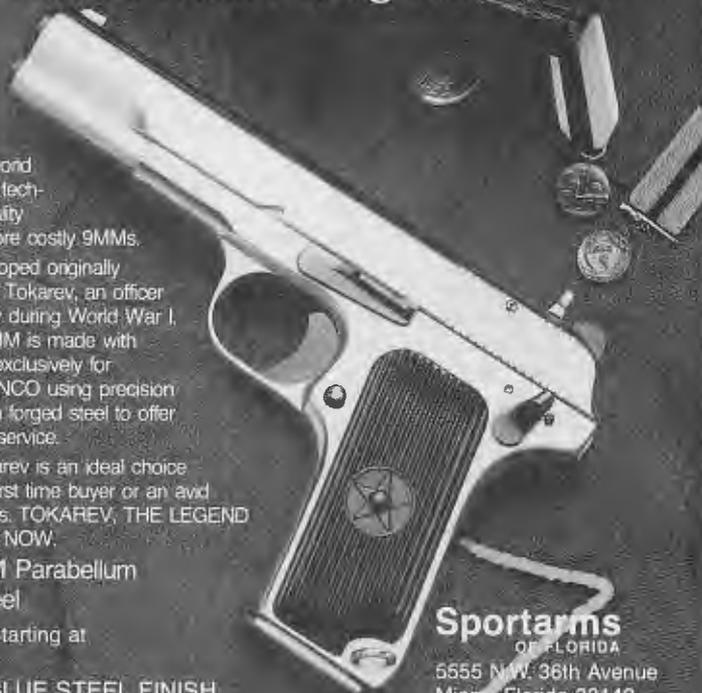
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in and it wasn't until the next day that the missing were found in a shallow grave. All had been shot behind the ear so the face was destroyed by the exiting bullet. A slab of flesh had been hacked off the thigh of one soldier. Two weeks later the EGP ambushed a truck convoy. The face of one soldier was ripped off. The mutilations may have been ritualistic cannibalism to bind the EGP platoon together. Or they may have been staged to demoralize the military. "Where were the human rights people then?" El Zorro demanded.

After a couple of days of Nebaj's icy drizzle that framed our breath in the air like small clouds, the fog lifted. Pilots Top Gun and Carlos returned with the Huey, which had been outfitted with new blades. The chopper was running supplies north, and we jumped at the chance to go. While the supplies were being loaded, Top Gun's blaster blared a Donna Summer song, then Wagner's "Parsifal." Then it was time to rock 'n roll, and the blaster was put away. We strapped ourselves into the seats behind the M60D on one side, the FN MAG 58 on the other.

We were barely airborne when the order came: Five soldiers have been wounded, and the chopper was needed to medevac them from Ixcán to Guatemala City. Top Gun changed direction and in a few minutes we were flying down between the sheer, green cliffs of a narrow canyon. At its mouth, we emerged into the steamy jungle of Ixcán. Top Gun barely skimmed the treetops, a tactic that affords the chopper maximum protection from ground fire.

Straight ahead, white smoke designated the LZ, but as Top Gun turned in for the landing, we saw the wounded lying on the helipad. Later we learned that the area was crawling with guerrillas, and the helipad was the only place the wounded could be protected. But there was no room to set the craft down, so Top Gun aborted the landing.

The soldiers frantically began to move the wounded, and Top Gun made a wide circle. But halfway into the second turn, a volley of machine gun fire punctured the floor of the chopper. Blood and torn flesh splattered the interior. A crew member jerked reflexively in surprise that had not yet become pain and shouted, "I'm hit!" It was Jody Duncan. Someone else sustained a flesh wound.

Trained as a paramedic, Jody immediately worked to stop her bleeding as coolly as if it were someone else's leg that had been shattered. She reached into a first-aid kit and applied pressure bandages to her thigh and calf, then directed a crew member to start a tourniquet and splint her leg. To counteract shock, she injected a painkiller into her arm, but her fingers were too shaky to push an IV into her vein. A soldier tried to help, but his repeated attempts to insert the needle only bruised and bloodied her arm.

Top Gun pulled the chopper up and yelled to Carlos. Their jaws clenched behind their plastic face shields, and although we couldn't hear what they said, we could see that the control panel was lit with red lights.

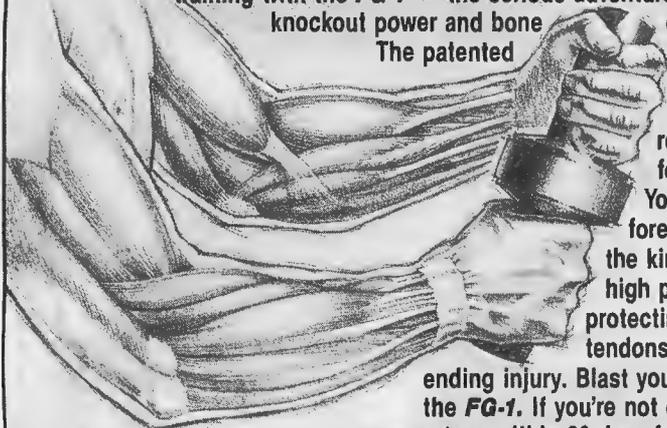
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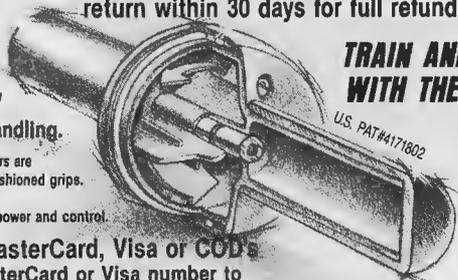


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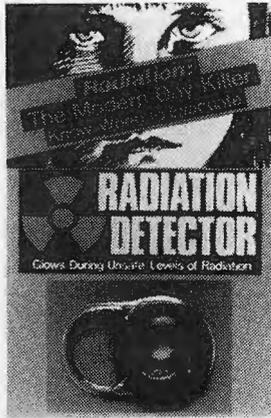
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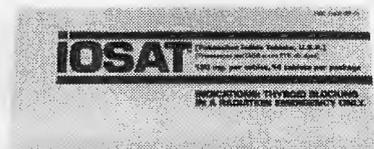
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After a few minutes' flying time, Top Gun set down at a primitive jungle guard-post. Soldiers rushed out with a stretcher, but he shook his head. He looked at Jody's blood-soaked bandages and decided to try for Playa Grande, where there is an army hospital.

Top Gun coaxed the ailing chopper into the air and in another 10 minutes or so he skidded onto the LZ at Playa Grande. Soldiers bundled Jody off to the infirmary — a low concrete structure with a few bandages and a table. The chopper was grounded, but Jody had taken four rounds in her left leg and needed sophisticated medical attention. A message was radioed to Guatemala City. In a few hours, Wolhan, a pilot who once flew us into the Peten, arrived in an Arava. In a race against nightfall, Jody was loaded and Wolhan flew us on to Guatemala City.

In the city an ambulance transported Jody to the military hospital and, with her in good hands, we made plans to get back to Nebaj to finish our work and retrieve our equipment. [ *Editor's note: Jody Duncan is still recovering from her gunshot wounds and will again work as an ACA volunteer in Guatemala.* ] We were promised a chopper ride first thing in the morning, but by day-break fog shrouded Nebaj. Ditto the following day, and then it was too late. We were scheduled to interview General Eduardo Wolhers, who helped write the policy for Civil Affairs, before we returned to the States. Nebaj would have to wait.

Later, when the disabled Huey was being repaired, air force mechanics found 14 7.62x51mm rounds (one in the gas tank) — probably from an FN-FAL or FN MAG 58. The shots severed some electrical wires, resulting in a loss of stabilization. Our pilot's guts and skill were what got us to Playa Grande in one piece. "Our choppers have holes and patches," said Colonel Carlos Posuelos, second-in-command of the air force, "but our pilots are young and valorous."

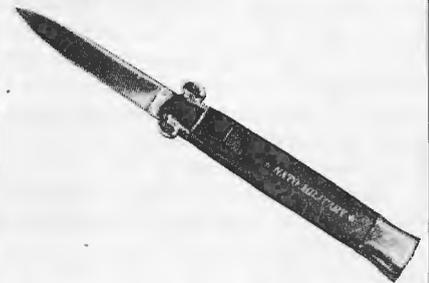
We asked about the wounded waiting in the jungle for a medevac, but Col. Posuelos could tell us little except they were still in the field. All he knew for certain is that the weather had closed down, and two of the five had died.

While the Kaibil Balam Task Force has damaged the insurgents' organization, the army holds no illusion that its internal enemy of nearly three decades will slink away. Just as the subversives concentrated their efforts in the wilderness when they lost in the cities, they may return to urban terrorism as they lose in the mountains. "We know they have been trained by Cubans, but their infrastructure is still too new," El Zorro said. "Right now, they are afraid to act because military intelligence knows about them, and they can't remain clandestine."

Whether the insurgents will find enough popular support to allow them to again terrorize the cities is questionable. In the early 1980s, when curbside assassination was common, civilians helped stop the terrorists by supplying the army with names

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and details. Today, army officers say that what Guatemala needs most, now that it has a developing democracy, is a stable economy that can support social and economic reforms. Increased tourism is helping. President Vinicio Cerezo's government is promoting Guatemala's beauty and good exchange rates in the United States and Europe, but the first hint of terrorism might also repel the subversives' foreign supporters. "I don't think they can afford to alienate the world to the extent they are denied support," El Zorro said.

In the peace talks, the insurgents asked to be recognized as combatants and allowed to live unchallenged in specified mountain zones, which they want the army to demilitarize. According to army officers, the government has no intention of providing a couple hundred armed dissidents with a haven for breeding subversion and exporting it into other areas of the country.

"Guatemala is a democracy," said Gen. Gramajo. "The constitution recognizes the communist political party, and it is free to present its ideology to the people. The guerrillas are down in numbers because they have strategic problems. Instead of facing one enemy, they face two: the government and the army. We are no longer defending the military. We are defending the will of the people of Guatemala, expressed in ballots, not bullets."

Unofficially, the military speculates about what the insurgents might do. Among the predictions are that they will:

- Try to group in larger units to give spectacular blows against military units;
- Take refuge in Mexico, leaving a cache of arms in Guatemala, and wait for favorable time to rekindle the battle;
- Remain in the villages and wait until the army leaves; or
- Ask for amnesty and promote their system in the political arena.

In the meantime, military offensives combined with the Civil Affairs program are delivering stunning blows to the Marxist infrastructure in Guatemala. But the struggle isn't over, according to Col. Letona. "It's difficult to be finished, but we know that because of the fighting things will be very different for the subversives next year," he said. "Besides, we are planning another project to deny them for another year." ✕

## ALLEY CLEANER

*Continued from page 43*

represents the moment of maximum perceived recoil, the effect is a noticeable softening of felt recoil. In addition, removal of the forcing cone improves shot patterns.

Pump guns intended for serious social purposes need silky smooth actions to speed the opening cycle and permit opening and closing with one hand, if required. To that effect, Robbie deburred and polished both the outer surface of the magazine tube and

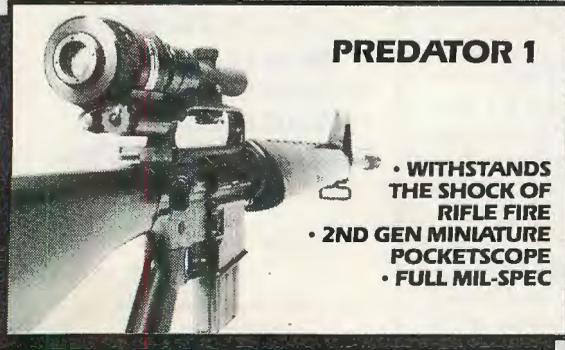
the inner surface of the fore-end tube. The two action arms were also reshaped to operate without binding.

The more you shoot, the more trigger sensitive you become. Because of its design, the Model 870 trigger mechanism invariably exhibits considerable creep prior to letoff. To the extent possible, this was removed by polishing and deburring all mating surfaces of the hammer and sear. The trigger pull weight was also reduced to a very consistent 3 pounds.

While cross-bolt safeties are not as convenient to employ as a top-tang safety, the Remington Model 870 is so superior in every other regard that we must overlook this minor irritation. To facilitate manipulation, an oversize tip was silver soldered onto the right side of the cross-bolt.

As it blocks the ejection port, one inch was removed from the back end of the forearm. Finger grooves were then machined into the forearm, and a non-slip textured surface was applied to the forearm and pistol grip area of the buttstock using an epoxy mixture. Finally, the entire buttstock and forearm were sprayed with a two-part epoxy paint.

Robar's extended magazine tube was fitted to the factory tube, together with a longer and stronger follower spring. Magazine capacity is now seven rounds with a 20-inch barrel and six with an 18-inch barrel. Choate's high visibility orange shell follower was also installed. It protects the spring from over-compression and offers instant



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visible recognition that the magazine is empty.

Occasionally, a shell will jump the shell stop and propel itself out of the magazine tube to lodge between the lifter and closed bolt. Cycling the action after this stoppage occurs is sometimes impossible. Previously, the only solution was to mill a slot in the lifter so that a makeshift tool (such as a key) could be inserted to pry the shell back into the magazine. About two years ago Remington modified the Model 870 bolt by machining an undercut below the bolt face. This permits the action to be racked rearward; extracting and ejecting the empty shell, freeing the shell on the lifter to be dropped out the ejection port by gravity and a new round to be chambered from the magazine tube as the action is racked forward. If your Model 870 bolt is an older variant, it needs to be altered in this manner.

Rubber recoil pads should always be rounded to facilitate speed mounts. Sling swivels are another useful addition. Finally, Bruce Nelson's #65 shotgun shell holder was attached to the stock (Combat Leather, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 8691 CRB, Tucson, AZ 85738. Catalog \$3). Fabricated from leather, it holds five rounds and will not interfere with a proper cheek weld.

Shiny, reflective surfaces just won't do on exposed shoulder arms. We chose a black chrome sulfide conversion coating for our Robar combat shotgun, which is non-reflective and more resistant to corrosion and abrasion than black oxide (salt bluing)

finishes.

All of these custom modifications will set you back about \$600, in addition to the cost of the shotgun. Not exactly inexpensive. But, remember, this is a professional tool. However, purchasing a weapon such as this is only the very smallest part of the equation. You must be trained, and practice unceasingly.

Proficiency with a combat shotgun should commence with a tough, demanding, formal training cycle. There is no better course offered on the fighting shotgun than the one given by Louis Awerbuck of the Yavapai Firearms Academy, Ltd. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 27290, Prescott Valley, AZ 86312; phone: (602) 772-8262). Awerbuck served in the South African Defence Force and as Chief Rangemaster of Cooper's American Pistol Institute from 1984 to 1987. He has taught combat rifle, pistol, shotgun and submachine gun employment to law enforcement, civilian and military groups throughout the United States.

Feeling that it would also serve as an excellent test bed for the Robar shotgun, I enrolled in one of Awerbuck's rigorous two-day shotgun seminars.

Students first learn that each shotgun barrel has its own idiosyncracies and will produce better or worse patterns with different loads and shot sizes at varying distances. You must know what your personal shotgun can and cannot do.

Other topics covered include shooting positions, slings, gun mounting and cheek

weld, "blind" fire drills, tactical manipulation and movement, house clearing, ready positions, loading techniques, shooting on the move and weapon retention. At least 250 rounds are fired during the two-day period. Slugs are shot from snap and braced precision positions at ranges out to 100 yards. All participants are constantly driven to their limits by incessant one-on-one competition in every tactical scenario.

In the real world we will invariably and instinctively react in the manner in which we have been trained and have practiced. Proper training and constant practice are especially important when you employ a manually operated shotgun. Pump guns must be racked smartly and completely, both rearward and forward.

One of the shotgun's most salient features is the large variety of ammunition types it can digest. Moving out of the muzzle at more than 1,500 fps, 437-grain hollow-based rifled slugs can extend the combat shotgun's range to 200 yards in the hands of an experienced operator. If the barrel has been correctly jug choked, you can expect 3 MOA accuracy. At closer ranges, these slugs will penetrate up to 14 inches of soft tissue and will expand to leave a wound track (permanent cavity) 1 inch in diameter. Some guns will shoot more accurately with the 490-grain Brenneke slug.

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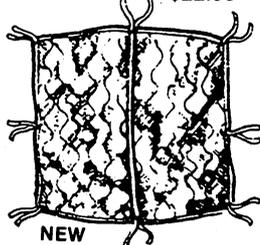
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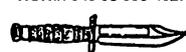
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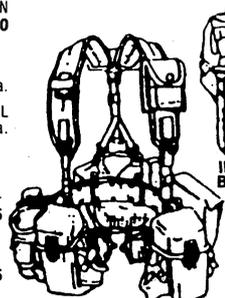


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Indoors, buckshot will penetrate several layers of sheetrock and could endanger family members in adjoining rooms. I prefer BB shot, which has a pellet diameter of .18 inches, in this close-range environment. Each 1¼-ounce shell contains more than 60 pellets. Another interesting alternative for defensive scenarios in confined spaces is Remington's (Remington Arms Co., Inc., Dept. SOF, Law Enforcement/Government Sales, Ilion, NY 13357) new Steel Shot Multirange Duplex™ 12-gauge shell which combines BBs with No. 1 pellets (.16-inch in diameter).

Other ammunition types for the 12-gauge combat shotgun include tear gas, flares, sabot slug loads and military flechette loads (used in Vietnam with poor penetration results).

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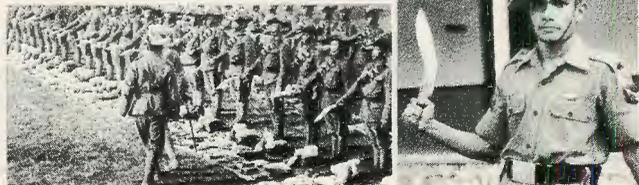
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## I WAS THERE

Continued from page 21

on my next trip," I requested.

It seemed like a ho-hum flight on through Newfoundland and to New York, our terminal, but the crew had plenty to speculate about. They knew, the same as I, that we could get no information from military channels, and everyone was trying to figure a way we could learn the results of the mission. Finally they asked me.

"Well," I suggested hazily, "if we have an engine failure, or an emergency in flight of some kind . . ." All knew that we wouldn't have an occasion to land at Blue West One for about a year.

However, it was on our very next flight out of New York to Newfoundland and on to Prestwick, Scotland, that we had to turn north to the Davis Strait and into Blue West One due to two rough engines. They were pretty bad. But broad daylight and clear weather made it easy.

Major Westmark met us at the ramp in a jeep. He was a tall man of about 50 with a ready smile and twinkling eyes. We all liked him immediately, for he seemed quite efficient. He later told us he was a non-flying officer specializing in operations and maintenance. In civilian life he had been an archeologist before being called to active duty in the war.

"I've been expecting you," he grinned, shaking my hand, "As soon as you reported two rough engines."

Two mechanics appeared and Johnny told them we had some fouled plugs and suggested changing the front ones. They were easier to get to for replacement and took less time.

Major Westmark loaded us in the jeep and took us to the dining room for coffee. It was mid-morning and we settled at a table with the major. It was quite obvious that he was enjoying himself and our stop.

"You sure spiced up our life here, and gave us something to talk about," he began. "We sat up half the night after your emergency call planning the mission and arguing about the calling cards."

"The next day, near noon, we took two B-24s, with the colonel flying one and the engineering officer flying the other. We loaded them with two 1,000-pound bombs in each airplane. I went along as observer and cameraman. We slipped around Prince Christian just off the water and went up the east side of Greenland in broken clouds. It sure helped to be able to home on to his transmitter." He laughed as he recalled the mission.

"He was lying right where you said in the mouth of the cove and we went in at 2,000 feet in a big break in the clouds. As soon as we dropped the

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calling cards, we circled and I got some beautiful pictures, I think, but they haven't been developed yet."

"I don't think we got a direct hit, for all seemed to explode on the mountainside just above. The whole side of the mountain just seemed to start moving down into the cove. It became a huge glacier, sliding into the sea. It filled the cove and enveloped the submarine and kept pouring into the sea until it had moved the shore out nearly a quarter of a mile. I could see granite boulders mixed with the glacier ice and snow. We circled and watched for over 10 minutes, and when we left the slide was still coming down from some distance up the mountainside."

"You know that submarine is entombed in ice for the next few thousand years. Wouldn't you like to be here after civilization has been destroyed, rebuilt, lost and found a few more times, when the sub is unearthed through a volcano, a warming trend in the Arctic, possibly by a shifting of the earth's magnetic poles, or some other means? Just imagine the talk about the 'prehistoric submarine.'"

I was still thinking about that as we went roaring down the runway to lift off. Then I was looking for another sub — they often worked in pairs. ✕

## COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

*Continued from page 28*

or the backs of large map sheets — carried by individuals or team leaders can also help identify your FLOT (forward line of own troops) to a pilot.

Once you have these things you are in business. Now all you need is a target!

When you do have a target make sure you know where it is before you call for aircraft. They must have a definite target to go to. There will usually be two forms of request for air support, sent through your battalion headquarters perhaps. One will be for a normal response and one for urgent, sometimes last ditch, requests. In Oman the code word for the latter was "Star-trek."

Consider the weather. Shallow attacks can be made with cannon and rockets under a low cloud base, but most pilots prefer to attack from high-level, especially if there is a SAM threat. Things look different from the air, and in bad weather or low light pilots may have great difficulty in identifying targets.

The best way to identify the target to the aircraft is to fire a smoke round onto it from a gun or mortar, but if that is not possible you must direct the pilot onto it visually.

Choose a prominent landmark, remembering that small hills and slopes *do not* show up from the air, and then work toward the target by giving the pilot bearings and distances to other features, making sure at each stage that he is certain he has the right one.

If you are in close contact the best initial point of reference will be your own position, marked with your tango, and a direct reference can be given from it to the target.

Every army and air force will have its own conventions, but at the least a pilot will need to know *what* the target is and *where* it is. He must know where your own troops are, and if you are going to mark the target he will need to know whether it is to be with smoke or HE. If you are using a marking round it is usually best to let the pilot call for the round, so that he can position himself correctly in order to see it burst.

Make sure before you tell the pilot he is clear to run in, that all artillery and mortars have stopped firing.

Corrections to the strike of the first aircraft's guns or rockets can be given to the second aircraft as he runs in. They should be given in terms of a bearing and distance from the first strike.

Finally, remember that after calling the aircraft in it is *your* job to watch his tail. Keep a watch out for the telltale smoke of a SAM launch and warn the pilot if you see one. The call of "SAM, SAM, SAM!" over the Sarbe will be enough to send the aircraft climbing toward the sun to confuse a heatseeker's sensors — something *every* close-air support pilot will appreciate and remember when you need him the next time around. ✕

## HIJACKING

*Continued from page 53*

The apparently misinformed informant was not heard from until two days later, in a noisy taverna in Nicosia.

"So what happened to the raid on the plane?" I mused.

"It had to be cancelled at the last minute," he (mis)informed me. Five senior Cyprus Airways officials were bribed, he did not know by whom, to inform the hijackers if the plane was going to be stormed. A high frequency radio was installed in a hangar to communicate with the hijackers, he claimed. After a few hours they realized the police had detected their transmissions. The grenade was exploded to warn the hijackers. "Cyprus Airways knew who the five 'traitors' were, but were covering up. They didn't want a scandal."

Again, I asked for corroboration, ocular proof, evidence. He promised to take me the next morning to someone who would back up his story.

The next morning, no call from my talka-

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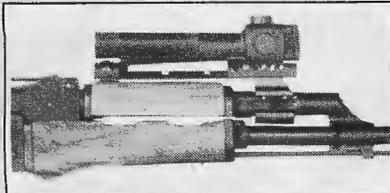
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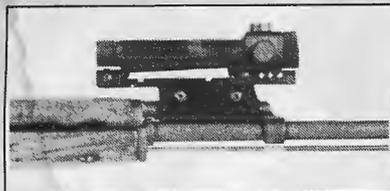
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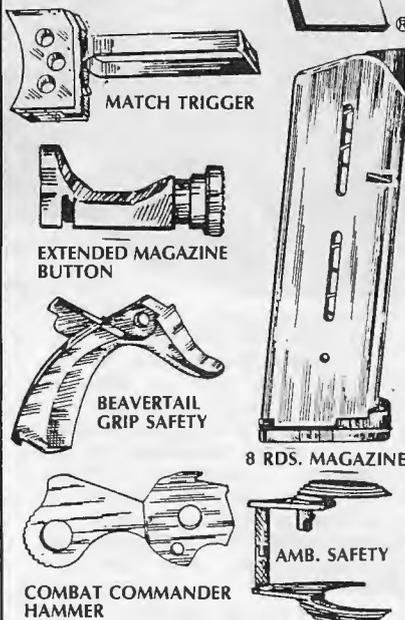
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counterspies, where Kim Philby once walked the streets of Hamrah, this island is the new mecca for tourists, radicals, and espionage. Each summer more than 1.5 million European vacationers flock here. But the year-round population now consists of Muslim radicals, arms and drug dealers, and a community of those practicing the art of intelligence.

Terrorist elements are becoming increasingly active. Three weeks after the hijacking of Kuwaiti 422, a car bomb rocked the streets of Nicosia. One hundred kilos of TNT turned a busy street near the Israeli Embassy into an instant inferno. The driver, later identified as a pro-Iranian fundamentalist traveling on a forged Lebanese passport, met Allah when the car exploded prematurely. Windows shattered and buildings rocked nearby. At the police headquarters a block away the police chief ducked under his desk as bits and pieces of plaster and paint rained down in his office.

The bomb blew a meter-wide hole in a bridge reducing the Pajero sedan to charred shrapnel. A Cypriot woman traveling in a car immediately behind was also killed, burned beyond recognition.

It was the second bomb attack this year. In February, a car bomb killed three Palestinian officials in the coastal city of Limassol. Less than a day later, another blast crippled a ferry leased by the PLO for a "symbolic voyage of return" to Israel. Authorities suspect the work of the radical Jewish Defense League.

In 1985, the local manager of Iraqi Airways died in his booby-trapped car and three Israelis were murdered in an attack by pro-Palestinian guerrillas on their yacht at Lamaca Marina.

On a given afternoon one can visit "Joe's Date Place" cafe or the lobby of the Churchill Hotel in Nicosia and catch a glimpse of those watching or being watched.

"Everybody is on this island," confessed a United Nations official who asked not to be named. "You name it ... the Libyans, PLO, Israelis, Bulgarians, Lebanese, MI6, CIA, KGB, they're all here — watching each other. There hasn't been such a cat-and-mouse arena since the old days in Vienna."

At times playing the spy game can be a bit humorous within the confines of an island nation with a population of only 600,000. Last summer Western intelligence agents installed a listening post in a Cypriot coastal town. Co-ax cables fed into a desk full of receivers from three antennas perched on the roof above. Within days, agents noticed a new set of antennas on the roof, apparently installed overnight. Cables led to an apartment next door. A bit of checking turned up the fact the next door apartment was leased to two men with Arabic sounding names.

When the mysterious new tower was



scaled by one daring agent and the frequencies obtained, they were horrified to learn their next-door neighbors were members of the PLO. It seems the Palestinians were picking up coded messages from colleagues driving taxis on the streets of Jerusalem, passing them to the PLO office in Nicosia, on another frequency.

The primitive Cypriot security force is unable to cope with the invasion of foreign intelligence operatives or those bent on blowing targets and themselves to bits.

Western officials responsible for training Cypriot law enforcement in counterterrorism methods voice frustration. "We've given them every piece of equipment you can imagine, backed with months of training, but they can't seem to get the hang of it," a European counterterrorism expert confided. "Electronic equipment has been sitting in a closet, unused, for almost two years."

But the game, of course, will last much longer than that — providing the players don't erase each other first.

## THE HIJACKING OF KUWAITI AIR 422

When Kuwaiti Air flight 422 was seized in mid-air enroute from Bangkok to Kuwait on 5 April 1988 as it neared the Straits of Hormuz, it marked the beginning of a ghoulish 3,200-mile journey that took the 747 from Mashhad in northeastern Iran to Lamaca, Cyprus, and finally to Algiers in the longest uninterrupted hijacking of all time.

Intelligence agents say it may have been a family affair. The hijacking was believed to have been masterminded by Imad Mughniyen, a 36-year-old Lebanese who is both cousin and brother-in-law to one of the 17 terrorists held in a Kuwaiti jail. Mughniyen, Western intelligence agents believe, had led several attempts to free the prisoners. Among them: the seizure of TWA flight 847 in 1985, during which U.S. Navy diver Robert Stethem was beaten and shot to death.

The kidnapers holding many of the more than 20 Western hostages in Lebanon, including nine Americans, had also made the release of the prisoners in Kuwait the key demand.

Hostages freed from Flight 422 indicated that fugitive terrorist Hassan Izzadin, wanted in the United States for the murder of the Navy diver, also may have been aboard the plane. Izzadin is a ruthless Muslim zealot and former bodyguard for Lebanese Amal leader, Nabi Berri. Izzadin's true identity was confirmed in early 1986 by Israeli-trained, pro-Western Lebanese intelligence agents who have successfully penetrated radical Moslem elements in Lebanon.

Izzadin's mark of brutal determination was evident as the hijack dragged

on. Deadlines came and went as the hijackers killed two hostages and continually threatened the lives of the rest.

The skyjacking triggered political chaos around the Middle East. The region's leaders, troubled that the incident had once again placed Arabs in a bad light and, more important, diverted attention from the four-month-old Palestinian uprising in Israeli-occupied territory, rushed to condemn the action. Many Arab leaders accused Iran of being behind the takeover. One hostage freed during the six-day stop in Lamaca reported several gunmen joined the hijackers in Iran and brought aboard sub-machine guns, hand grenades and explosives. It is well known among Arab rulers that Iranian ruler Ayatollah Khomeini seeks to topple all secular power in the Middle East, replacing it with Islamic religious rule.

After circling Beirut the airliner landed in Cyprus on 8 April where two passengers, Abdullah Khalidi, 25, and Khalid Ayoub Kander, 20, both Kuwaitis, were shot and dumped on the tarmac. Authorities in Lamaca initially refused to refuel the plane. But after the two hostages were killed and Algeria offered to take the plane, they relented. The standoff continued in Algiers, which helped negotiate the release of 52 hostages from Iran in 1981. Algerian officials opened talks with the hijackers the day the plane landed.

Hostages pleaded to authorities over the plane's radio to bring an end to the crisis. "I ask the authorities to free the prisoners or the kidnapers will kill us," one hostage urged.

The skyjackers defended their actions. "We are men of principle, not highway bandits," one asserted. "We would have preferred not to use such methods, but we have no choice. We repeat our demand for the liberation of our 17 brothers . . ."

The Kuwaitis view the hijacking as a part of their ongoing struggle with Iran, which has sought to destabilize their country, to punish them for supporting Iraq in the Gulf War.

There is little doubt the seizure of flight 422 refueled the explosive conditions in the Middle East. Even with the expected signing of peace accords between Iran and Iraq, jihad will continue. Islamic scholars point out that there are two elements of jihad: active and passive. Active conflict only takes a rest to allow the "fighters of Satan" to reenergize and start anew. ☒

## DUKAKIS

*Continued from page 68*

What does Dukakis think of the C-17 transport program, arguably the single most important development program in the Pen-



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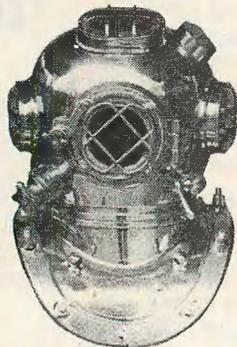
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tagon budget — and one whose expected cost is not all that different from the cost of the two carrier battle groups the Massachusetts governor wants to cut? We don't know.

What does he have to say about the Advanced Combat Fighter, presently under development for the Air Force, and the Navy's Advanced Tactical Aircraft project? Both are expected to be \$20 to \$40 billion programs. Will the candidate stay the course and preserve the country's 10-year qualitative lead in fighter aircraft design, or will he settle for parity in the interest of cost-cutting? Will Dukakis continue development of the National Strategic Reconnaissance Plane, the planned successor to the SR-71 Blackbird? In the past he has supported a mutual, verifiable nuclear freeze. Is he willing to bear the costs of verification?

Will he continue development of the V-22 Osprey tilt-engine aircraft, a system that will enormously increase the mobility and conventional war fighting capabilities of U.S. forces but is likely to cost \$23 to \$27 million a copy?

How does Dukakis, who has repeatedly expressed concern about Soviet tank forces, feel about the acquisition of additional AH-64 Apaches — at \$11 to \$12 million each? If that's too expensive what does he propose to do instead? Buy more antitank missiles? If so, which ones? Advanced TOW? Hellfire? The Army's new FOG-M [Fiber Optic Guided Missile] or the Hypervelocity missile? Dukakis has frequently said he thinks the services have too many weapons systems under development. Which of these does he intend to cut?

To be sure, it is unfair to ask a candidate in the middle of an election to pick and choose among the Pentagon's laundry list of systems, but it is not unreasonable, when the candidate has proposed to balance a major reduction in the nuclear deterrent with strong conventional defenses, to give some indication of the size and type of conventional forces that he thinks would be needed and to spell out a doctrine on how they might be used.

The last point is particularly troubling. In the absence of a clear doctrine explaining how a conventional defense can function as an alternative to the nuclear deterrent, it is very difficult to judge whether Dukakis has really bothered to think through his defense policy. The Pentagon has certainly spent a great deal of time (and not a little money) over the past decade trying to develop ways in which a major Soviet thrust in Europe could be countered without reaching for the nukes. What has emerged from this effort is that it probably can be done, but doing so may very well require higher military budgets and force levels than NATO now sustains. It is a near certainty it can't be done on the cheap. If Dukakis thinks it can be, he should explain how. So far he hasn't, and his failure to do so leaves doubt as to his real priorities: Does he want to replace a nuclear defense with a conventional one or does he want to reduce the defense budget

generally? After nearly two years of campaigning he still hasn't told us.

The ultimate question regarding any presidential candidate's defense policy is under what circumstances is he or she prepared to use military force. Dukakis' statements in this regard are predictably dovish, emphasizing deterrence and disarmament treaties and advocating a strong conventional defense because "a fundamental goal of our national security policy must be to prevent the use of a single nuclear weapon, whether strategic or battlefield, whether by calculation or miscalculation, by superpowers, by a regional power, or by terrorists."

Fine, but is he prepared to use his conventional force if the need arises? There is no way of telling. In the past, presidents faced with the choice of war or peace have often acted in ways far different than what might be expected from them on the strength of their backgrounds and campaign statements. Lyndon Johnson, who portrayed Barry Goldwater as a warmonger in 1964, sent American forces to Vietnam less than a year later. Jimmy Carter, who during the 1976 campaign wasn't bashful about pointing to his background as a Naval officer, chose not to use force against Iran, even though the provocation — the seizure of the American embassy — was an act of war. Ronald Reagan talks tough and has shown the willingness to use force — as in the Persian Gulf and Grenada — but he has done so with circumspection and caution. The fact that he did not destroy Shi'ite strongholds in Lebanon following the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut in 1982, or retaliate against Iran directly, provides ample testimony to that.

There is really no way to know how Dukakis might respond if confronted with the need to use military power. What is worrisome is that perceived weakness frequently invites attack, and Dukakis' defense pronouncements, which do not paint a picture of a politician to whom military strength is a very high priority, or of one who even has fully thought out the consequences of his own positions, sound an uncertain trumpet. ❖

## GRENADA

*Continued from page 63*

scattered the crews.

By 1000 hours B Company was firm on the fuel tank hill, while A Company held the Calliste high ground 500 meters across the valley to the southeast. Neither company contemplated further advance, as they had secured their objectives, and the action of 1st/75th was initially confined to consolidating its positions and providing sniper fire. From the area of a small building just west of the Cubans' compound however, 75mm recoilless rifle fire was proving effective against A Company. The men pulled back from their exposed positions, leaving observation posts on the ridge, while gunship assistance was summoned.

Four AH-1T Cobras from the 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit flew south to support the Army in the Salines area. Difficulties were experienced by the Marine pilots in obtaining any radio contact with the Air Force AC-130s or ground units. The radio frequencies given to the Marines were incorrect. However, after a fruitless flight by the first pair of Cobras, Captain Gary Watson, USMC, wingman to Captain Douglas Diehl, USMC, picked up an Army frequency. Diehl and Watson flew south, making contact with the 1st/75th's forward air controller (FAC). Neither pilot could make sense of the target identification message, as the Rangers and Marines were using different maps. However, with considerable ingenuity, the FAC used a reflecting mirror to pinpoint the house that concealed the recoilless rifle. Still slightly uncertain, the two Cobras came in. Suddenly both pilots heard the controller yell, "That's it! That's it! It's right under you!" Watson swung left, while behind him Diehl fired bursts from his 20mm cannon. Watson circled round to come in a second time. He fired straight through a window, which destroyed the building. Three Cubans ran for a nearby truck, so Watson fired again, hitting the vehicle and blowing it up. Both Cobras returned to the USS *Guam* to refuel.

Shortly after 1000 hours, B Company, 1st/75th was horrified to see two Ranger motorcyclists heading straight for the Cuban Mission from the terminal area. They were totally exposed on the track in the valley and obviously oblivious to the fact that they were riding directly into enemy positions. They came under heavy fire. Both fell from their machines, wounded, and lay in the dust. Because of their exposed position B Company was unable to bring them in. They were to remain there, protected by sniper fire, until mid-afternoon, when they were evacuated during a lull in the fighting.

The 2nd/75th had had an easier time. Not only did the battalion drop quickly as a unit, but the men met little resistance when they assisted in clearing the area west of Hardy Bay. Kearney's A Company moved into the partially completed terminal buildings and up into the "Old" Camp. Here they discovered many abandoned weapons, including a 12.7mm AA gun, recoilless rifles and small arms, in and around the Cuban barracks. Sittnik's B Company pushed along the narrow piece of land south of the runway toward Point Salines, while Hanna's C Company cleared the low hills to the north down to Canoe Bay. Nothing of interest was found. The battalion became involved in escorting and guarding Cuban prisoners. Although the plan was for it to advance on Calivigny, enemy resistance had proved far stronger than was anticipated, and the impossibility of getting to Calivigny that day was obvious to Hagler.

By 1000 hours both Ranger battalions were firm on their positions north of the runway. The 1st/75th held the area east of the terminal, with B Company on the left on

the fuel tank hill and A Company on the right around Calliste, including the platoon at True Blue. Hagler's men held the terminal area, "Old" Camp and the high ground to the west. Salines airfield had been taken. It was secure enough for the Rangers' C-130s, which had refuelled in Barbados, to land.

During the planning process there had been confusion over the arrival time in Grenada of the 82nd Airborne's leading elements. They should have been on the ground by H-plus-four hours, that is about 0930 hours. However, this was changed by Atlantic Command to a *departure* at H-plus-four, giving, with a five-hour flight, an arrival of H-plus-nine.

At 1405 the first C-141 Starlifter bringing 82nd Airborne troops touched down at Salines.

Shortly before Major General Trobaugh and advance elements of the 82nd touched down, Newman with B Company, 1st/75th decided that something must be done to rescue the two wounded Ranger scouts. Collecting some Cuban prisoners and a Spanish-speaking Ranger, Newman, holding a bullhorn, slowly advanced toward Little Havana with the Cuban construction workers in front. He called out to the Cubans to surrender, whereupon two came forward with their weapons above their heads. First Sergeant Cayton advanced to the compound, where he found about 150 Cubans apparently willing to give up. He also discovered two dead and 23 wounded. Cayton continued to negotiate, and shortly

before 1500 hours he was able to escort out the wounded, plus about 70 prisoners. The remaining 80 had decided to fight on. While at the compound, he was able to destroy several heavy weapons, including mortars and recoilless rifles. But even so the picture was far from rosy.

Salines had been secured; the students at True Blue were safe, and the Marines had Pearls. These were the pluses. The debit side was longer. Resistance had been heavier than expected; the Cubans and PRA were still fighting; there was another campus at Grand Anse full of students waiting to be rescued, and there was no way the two under-strength Ranger battalions could secure Camp Calivigny as planned.

Sergeant Randy Cline was in A Company, 1st/75th Rangers. He came from Belle Union in Indiana and had been a policeman and deputy sheriff before joining the Army. Like many in his battalion, Cline had been alerted at his home by a phone call early on the morning of the 23rd, but he did not think it was anything other than an exercise and joked with his wife about seeing her later in the day. Sergeant Cline flew to Grenada with his battalion, but unlike the majority of A Company, he did not parachute onto the Salines runway.

Cline was in command of a gun jeep, team number 5, so he was not involved in the frantic scramble to re-rig for a drop as the C-130 circled around and above the is-

*Continued on page 90*

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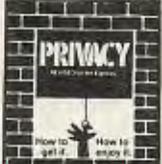
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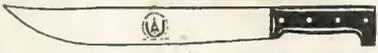
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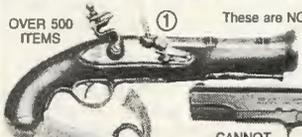
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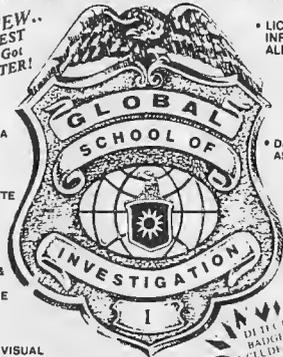
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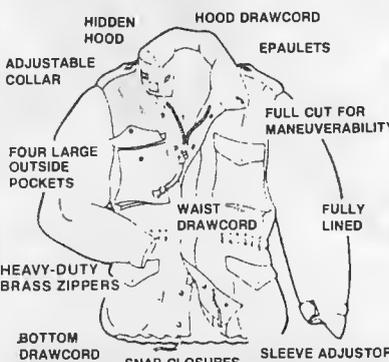
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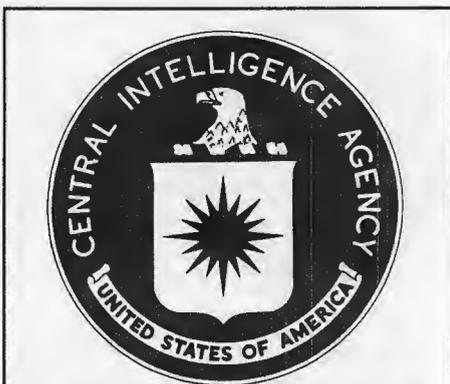
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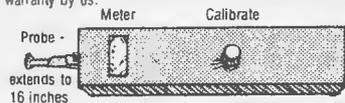
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## GRENADA

Continued from page 85

land. He and his jeep crew of four Rangers were required to remain with their vehicle until the aircraft landed. After most of the company had jumped in broad daylight, Cline's aircraft headed at once to Barbados for fuel. Several hours later he flew back, landed safely, and drove off the aircraft to report to Abizaid, his company commander. He was told to take his jeep to secure a road junction about 200 meters north of the True Blue campus, just forward of his company's position. With him went Privates Timothy Romick, Marlin Maynard, Mark Rademacher, and Russell Robinson.

If you drive along the track north of the runway in an easterly direction, it is easy to miss True Blue. The campus is hidden in a dip in the ground southeast of the end of the runway. At the time Cline tried to find the right crossroads there were numerous new tracks, which bore little relation to those marked on any map. Cline's jeep drove past True Blue along a dusty, dirt road heading northeast. He continued for some two kilometers before he was certain they were in the wrong place. By that time he was well into the area held by the PRA.

The PRA had set up a small ambush about 800 meters northwest of True Blue alongside the road up which Cline had just driven. The soldiers were concealed in the bushes, with one or two shallow trenches, and had seen the jeep pass. When Cline turned around, they were waiting for him. They opened heavy fire on the fast moving vehicle from very close range. Cline and his men responded with the M60 and their rifles, but they had been caught by surprise, and the jeep was wrecked. The uneven fight did not last long. Although at least one PRA soldier was shot dead in his trench, Cline, Maynard, Rademacher and Robinson were killed; Romick, although wounded, was able to make his way on foot back to his unit. Cline, his three crewmen, and Yamane were the only 1st/75th Rangers killed by enemy action in Grenada.

It was along the same road, in mid-afternoon, that the PRA launched their third counterattack. It was a brave but hopeless attempt to retake the western end of the runway. At about 1530 hours an OP from A Company spotted three BTR-60s approaching fast. They accelerated down the track, quite close together, came through 2nd platoon's position and opened fire in the direction of the runway with their turret machine guns. The Rangers reacted at once, firing any weapon that was to hand including rifles, rockets and recoilless rifles. The leading BTR screeched to a halt and reversed sharply — straight into the second one. After two misses the vehicles were hit by rockets and disabled. The crews bailed out through the roof hatches, leaving two dead. The third one turned around, retreating rapidly in the direction it had come. It was able to continue until it was spotted by an AC-130 overhead, which destroyed it.

A totally unsupported attack by about 24 men had no hope of success at that time. It was too weak and too late. Had it been launched in the early morning with a stronger force during the hour and a half it took the Rangers to drop, it might have had a different ending. As Sergeant James Bradford, 1st/75th said, "It was a valiant, heroic, but stupid move."

The finale of the day for the Rangers involved aircraft from the carrier *Independence*, and, again, A Company, 1st/75th. A house perched on top of a prominent hill 1,000 meters east of the end of the runway had provided two or three PRA guards with a spectacular view of the day's events below them. Late in the afternoon they had seen some Rangers come within range and opened fire, effectively pinning the U.S. troops and wounding one or more.

They were Abizaid's men, and he wanted to call up an AC-130, but none were available, so jets were summoned instead. They intended to use their Mk 20 bombs to destroy the house. After three separate passes had all produced dud bombs, and with the target uncomfortably close to his forward positions, Abizaid wanted to call the whole thing off. However, the pilots were re-briefed, and the Rangers put out marker panels to make sure they were not hit by mistake, so Abizaid reluctantly agreed to another try. This time the bombs hit and exploded, and the house collapsed.

The Rangers had reason to be content with their day, even though they wouldn't be returning home that evening as planned. Despite the chaos on the aircraft, despite the long drawn out daylight jump in front of enemy positions, they had gotten away with it. The Rangers should have received a very bloody nose at Salines on 25th October, but they did not. Not a single man was killed by enemy action during the drop. The reason for this: Castro's order to the Cubans, whose positions dominated the runway, was not to fire unless attacked. They had secured the airfield and True Blue at the cost of seven dead, including the two pathfinders, and some six wounded. Although there had been a lot of not very effective Cuban shooting, the enemy had, with a few exceptions, retreated or surrendered when under close attack.

From the start, the Rangers lacked the basic information on which to plan effectively; they were compelled to accept unrealistic times for H-Hour, which prevented surprise, and in the case of Hagler's battalion, were given an objective well beyond their capacity unless resistance was non-existent. The plan they were forced to adopt took no account of the inevitable difficulties which occur in every military operation. It is a fact that things always go wrong, as they certainly did on this occasion. Any plan must have a degree of flexibility, a margin for error and the unexpected, and above all should try to achieve surprise and not assume a docile enemy. Although professionalism and courage played a role in the Rangers' success, their efforts were greatly aided by pure good fortune. ✕

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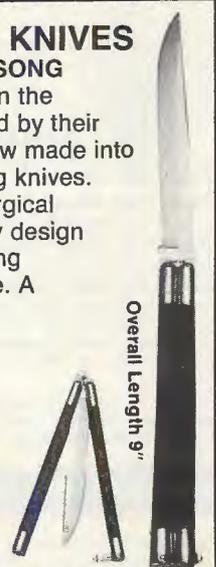
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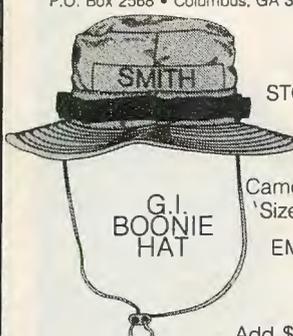
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# PARTING SHOT

by R.B. Anderson  
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## Vietnam Was Fun(?)



**T**WENTY years too late, America has discovered its Vietnam veterans. Hollywood is busy cranking out Vietnam movies that portray us as either heroes, dope fiends, or perverts. The paperback racks are littered with Rambo clones. Talk show hosts discuss our special "adjustment" problems. There're even a couple of prime-time Vietnam television shows.

Is this the same society that openly applauded those who had the "courage" to flee to Canada? Well-intentioned souls now offer me their sympathy and tell me how horrible it all must have been.

The fact is, it was fun. Granted, I was lucky enough to come back in one piece. And granted, I was young, dumb, and wilder than a buck Indian. And granted, I may be looking back through rose-colored glasses. *But it was great fun.* It was so great I even went back for a second helping. Think about it.

Where else could you do grocery-style shopping at an ammo dump? Any type of destruction you want. Free. Where else could you divide your time between hunting the ultimate big game and partying at "the ville"? Where else could you sit on the

side of a hill and watch an air strike destroy a regimental base camp? Man, if you don't think that was fun, you're reading the wrong magazine.

Sure there were tough times and there were sad times. But Vietnam is the bench mark of all my experiences. The remainder of my life has been spent hanging around the military trying to recapture some of that old-time feeling. In combat I was a respected man among men. I lived on life's edge and did the most manly thing in the world: I was a warrior in a war.

The only person you can discuss these things with is another veteran. Only someone who has seen combat can understand the deep fraternity of the brotherhood of war. Only a veteran can know about the thrill of the kill and the terrible bitterness of losing a friend who is closer to you than your own family.

Returning to the "world" was another singular experience. Someone forgot the brass band. Readjustment was difficult but not debilitating. I wasn't the first kid to discover that a chest full of ribbons doesn't open any corporate doors. I wasn't the only guy in the world to ever go from squad leader to ditch digger. Of course, losing

didn't help any. But I'm also not the first Anderson to suffer defeat. At least I didn't get reconstructed. Combat was tough. So what if life on the street is a little rough too. "Don't mean nothin'."

Like any population, those of us in Vietnam had within our ranks a number of nuts. And yes, they came back even nuttier. However, the great majority of us, even those with missing parts, are well-adjusted and feel quite comfortable with ourselves. After all, we didn't run away.

We were not the first generation that had to come home unappreciated, re-enter society and get on with the business of living. Actually we had no right to expect any more than we got. America was just exactly as we had left her. America was busy with business as usual and much too busy to pay us any mind. As Walter Cronkite used to tell us nightly, "That's the way it is."

So, after all this time, why all the hoopla now? Everyone talks about how great it is that we are finally getting the recognition we deserve. Isn't it kind of late? Is there a collective conscience in this country that needs soothing? Please don't do it on my time.

I may slap the next guy that tells me how sorry he is that he missed the "Vietnam experience." The war only lasted a decade; to miss it you had to want to miss it. These guys seem to think that they skipped some fundamental manhood rite of passage. They did.

Vietnam veterans are not another minority whose turn it is to be tossed the bone of recognition. Public opinion cost America a war and the Vietnamese people their nation. We lost our friends. All for naught.

If we weren't cool 20 years ago, then don't pass us through society's fickle consciousness again. If you didn't support me then, don't support me now. Keep your recognition. I can get all I need down at the American Legion. ☘

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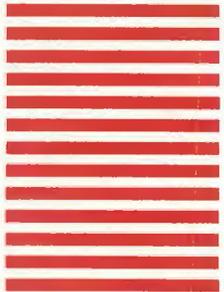
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