

MASTER SNIPER'S TIPS



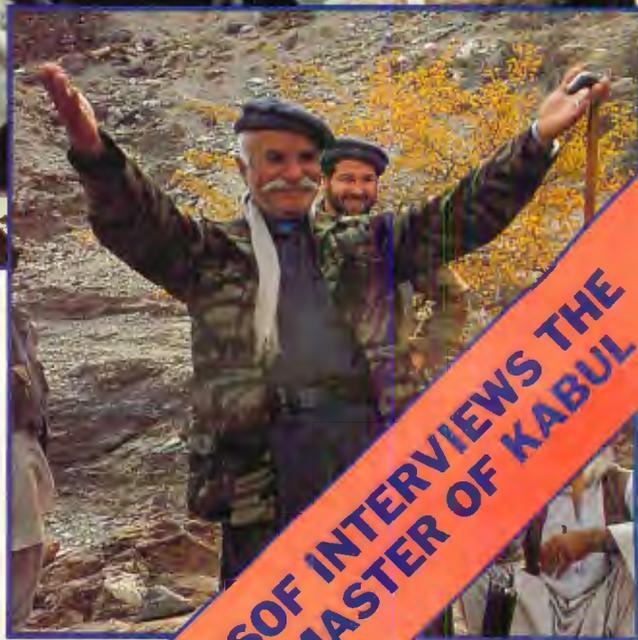
# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

The Journal of Professional Adventurers

## HOW YOU CAN STOP THE GREAT GUN GRAB!



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MASTER OF KABUL**

- REPORTS ON:
- M60 QUICK FIXES
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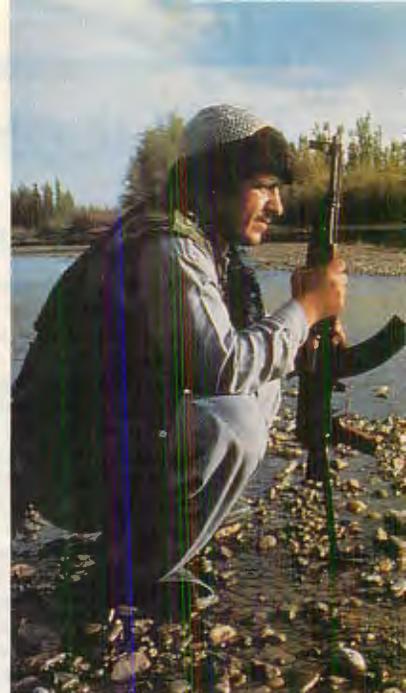
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## COVER

**COVER:** Downed Soviet transport helicopter carcass litters the Afghan countryside near Kabul. Only time will tell how long the communist Afghan government will stand now that their proletarian brothers to the north have gone home. SOF reports from *inside* Kabul (page 36) and interviews commander Abdul Haq, mujahideen leader poised to take the capital city (page 44). Photo: John Jameson  
**INSET:** USMC's master sniper, Carlos Hathcock, is passing on the skills he learned in Vietnam to police SWAT teams around the United States. Story on page 26. Photo: Craig Roberts



# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

## Stop the Great Gun Grab

**T**HIS time they have gone too far.

Using the tragedy in Stockton, California as a pretext, gun control activists have launched a sweeping assault on the right of American citizens to keep and bear arms.

They have introduced legislation at all levels of government — federal, state, and local — to prohibit Americans from owning modern rifles. If you own a semiautomatic rifle capable of accepting a detachable magazine, and Americans own some 23 million such weapons, legislation introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives last February — HR 669, sponsored by Rep. Howard Berman (D-Calif.) — and the Senate — S 386 sponsored by Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio) — may turn you into a criminal.

Rep. Berman's bill is the worst. It makes it a crime to possess an assault rifle, which it defines as a semiautomatic rifle made after 1954 capable of accepting a detachable magazine of 20 rounds or more. Not just to import or transfer them (though that too is outlawed) but to possess them. City ordinances doing the same thing have already been passed by the cities of Los Angeles and Stockton and elsewhere. Similar legislation is pending in several state legislatures.

Sponsors of these measures claim they are aimed 'only' at military-style assault rifles such as the Kalashnikov copy used by psychopath Patrick Prudy in an attack on a Stockton, California schoolyard in which five children were killed. The truth, however, is otherwise. While the measures vary in detail, the striking thing about all of them is that they define 'assault rifles' as semiautomatic rifles capable of accepting a detachable magazine of a particular capacity. Some also include shotguns capable of accepting a detachable magazine, or exceeding a specific capacity.

In other words gun control advocates are attempting to deny Americans the right to own modern weapons.

Let there be no mistake: The Constitution of the United States explicitly guarantees American citizens the right to *keep* and bear arms. Keep, as in possess. When gun control advocates attempt to restrict that right, they are striking at the heart of a fundamental American liberty. They are no different than those who would deny you the right to read books they deem dangerous or worship in ways they deem offensive.

Gun control advocates maintain the Second Amendment is an 18th century relic, and that at any rate the proposals to restrict gun ownership do not interfere with such 'legitimate' firearms uses as hunting, target practice, and collecting.

The truth is that the right to keep and bear arms is not an anachronism, nor was it placed in the Constitution primarily to protect the rights of hunters and sportsmen, although it certainly serves to do so. The founders of the American republic placed the Second Amendment in the Constitution because they did not believe that government — any government, no matter how momentarily democratic, just, or popular — should have a monopoly on the instruments of coercive force. They strongly felt that a free people should have a right to possess the tools with which to protect themselves against governmental and criminal oppression. Hard experience had taught them that militias are more inclined to be well regulated when the people are armed.

The Second Amendment is a fundamental, living part of the American Constitution — as fundamental and unequivocal as the guarantees of freedom of *expression*, freedom to worship, and freedom to assemble in the First Amendment, the guarantee of due process of law in the Fifth Amendment, or any other liberty secured by the Bill of Rights.

For the proponents of gun control to assert otherwise is arrogant, dishonest, and profoundly dangerous. It is arrogant and dishonest because the fact that Americans own more than 100 million firearms gives eloquent testimony that far from being anachronistic the right to keep and bear arms

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# COMBAT REVOLVERS

## The Best (and Worst) Modern Wheelguns

by Duncan Long

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## NOW HEAR THIS! (ON SECOND THOUGHT, DON'T!). . .

About a week before the last Soviet troops pulled out of Afghanistan, the Soviet newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* ran the following story on the planned ceremony marking the departure of the last Russian soldier from Afghan soil — Soviet commander-in-chief, Lieutenant-General Boris Gromov:

"On February 15th at 10 o'clock local time General Gromov will be the last to cross the bridge. He will pass without looking back. Then he will stop and 'deliver a speech,' but just to himself. It will last one minute, seven seconds. It will not be written down or listened to."

And that is exactly what happened.

But our curiosity is aroused. Just what did he say? Granted, one minute and seven seconds isn't a very long time frame, but hey, the Gettysburg Address didn't take very long either, and they're still talking about it.

Anyhow, most of the more eloquent military orations are blessedly concise. General Anthony C. McAuliffe, for example, needed far less than a minute and seven seconds to complete his fabled remarks at Bastogne.

General Gromov, why not reconsider and share your farewell address with the world? If you send a copy of the text to *Soldier of Fortune*, we'll be glad to reprint it — and we'll even pay the going rate we pay for articles. Sir, this is the age of glasnost, and inquiring minds want to know.

# BULLETIN BOARD



## HEY, JOE LOST A G.I.? . . .

If you've ever tried to locate someone you knew in the service, you know what a trial in can be — which is why we're delighted to pass the word about Lieutenant Colonel R.S. Johnson's new manual, "How To Locate Anyone Who Is Or Has Been In The Military."

This publication gives exact instructions on how to find anyone who is a current member of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, the Reserves or National Guard. It also spells out how to locate former members of all branches of the armed forces, both veterans and retired.

The book includes a section on how to find out about military unit reunions and a directory of all major veteran and military organizations in the United States and how to contact them.

Lieutenant Colonel Johnson has more than 27 years' experience in the U.S. Army and is an expert in locating military personnel. This book is available for \$9.95 plus \$1.05 postage and handling from Military Information Enterprises, Box 340081, Fort Sam Houston, TX 78234 (Texas residents add 74 cents sales tax).

If you've ever thought about locating a long lost buddy but didn't know where to start, this is the place.

## HONOR ROLL . . .

El Salvador/Nicaragua Defense Fund contributors:  
Tex Houston & Bob Bryan — Project Team South;  
GI Supply #1; M.E. Martin; Thomas Walker & David McElhiney.

Afghan Freedom Fighters Fund contributors:  
Loren K. Roberts; GI Supply #2.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to these people and the numerous other donors who requested their names not be printed.



LEFT: SOF Editor and Publisher Robert K. Brown (center) examines French-made Milan anti-armour missile with Afghan mujahideen. Brown was first western journalist to report that muj had received the Milan.

ABOVE: Close-up of muj Milan launch unit. French-made missile was used with devastating effect against Soviet-supplied Libyan armor by Chadians in 1987.

## CHRISTIC MYSTICS TOLD TO PAY . . .

For more than two years the liberal Christic Institute has been pressing a lawsuit against several contra leaders and their American supporters — including Adolfo Calero, retired Generals John Singlaub and Richard Secord, and Costa Rican rancher John Hull. The suit charged the defendants were part of a wide-ranging conspiracy that traded in guns, drugs, subversion of Third World countries, and, oh yes, detonated a bomb during a 30 May 1984 news conference in Nicaragua in an attempt to assassinate Nicaraguan rebel leader Eden Pastora. (The bomb injured the Christics' client, Tony Avirgan, which is how they got involved in the case in the first place.)

It made a great story, and the press lapped it up. The only problem was that the Christics' case was a mite thin on facts. That, however, didn't deter them from pursuing it anyway — trying it vigorously in the newspapers when things bogged down in court. The result was that the defendants had to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars defending themselves as the Christics flitted around the country shredding their reputations.

The Christics' fantasy world started to collapse last year, however, when U.S. District Court Judge James King tossed their case out of court as it was about to go to trial, with a scorching opinion that left little doubt that he felt the Christics had been wasting his time for two years. Then last February

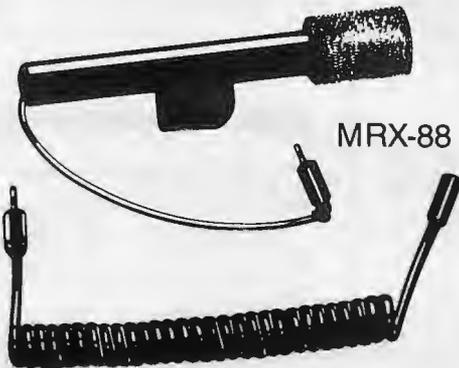
## ELECTRONIC SHOOTER'S MUFFS GO ONE STEP BETTER INTRODUCING THE RSX-87/88



RSX-87  
&  
MRX-88

### \* STEREO ELECTRONIC SHOOTER'S MUFFS

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MRX-88

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AND NOW GO ONE STEP BETTER: Add the #88 external DIRECTIONAL Microphone (via jack on RSX-87 muffs) and you've got a Distant Sound Detector to zero in on game and to use in security applications. This microphone can be mounted on the RSX-87 muffs for "hands-free" use, or you can use it as a hand-held microphone by attaching the included coiled cable extension. Automatic shutdown on high impact noise assures superior hearing protection. STATE-OF-THE-ART AND VERSATILITY PLUS! Pick your application, and rest assured the RSX-87/88 System CAN DO THE JOB! Components can be ordered separately, or order the entire system. To order electronic muffs only, order item #RSX-87, \$111.00, to order the external directional microphone, order item #MRX-88, \$37.70, and **SAVE** by ordering the entire system, #RSX-87/88 for just \$138.70 **SAVE \$10**. Brand new...be the first to own 'em!

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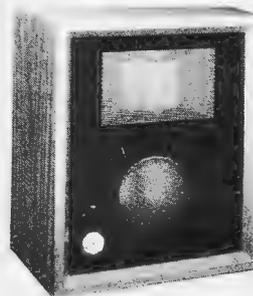
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The most sophisticated yet developed. Made for professional hunters to hear approaching animals at a great distance, the VanSleek has now been discovered by the security industry. On city terrain sounds leap across blocks and streets. Guards are using VanSleek in prison yards to listen to convicts. The range of uses of the VanSleek Farfoon is astonishing and satisfaction is overwhelming. Receptivity plus. VanSleek is superior to direct receiver products...utilizes a built-in 3-1/2" parabolic dish for Sound Mirror effect previously found only on larger, more expensive units. Convenient size, small enough for use in tight places. Weighs about 2-lbs. Solid-state circuitry. Powered by 6 pen-light batteries for increased amplitude. \$148.00 postpaid and worth it!

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reality delivered a flying drop kick to the Christics' pocket book, when Judge King ordered them to pay the defendants more than \$1 million to cover their legal expenses.

In ordering the award, Judge King found that "after two years of protracted and extensive discovery and testimony from scores of witnesses across the United States, Costa Rica, and elsewhere, the plaintiffs were unable to produce a single witness who could state the defendants exploded the bomb or were responsible for the assassination attempt. . . The Christic Institute's allegations, essentially maintaining that the plaintiffs were victims of a wide-ranging conspiracy spanning 30 years and involving the activities of former United States government officials, CIA operatives, Colombian druglords and arms merchants in Cuba, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Central America, were based on unsubstantiated rumor and speculation from unidentified sources with no firsthand knowledge. . ."

Daniel Sheehan, the Christics' chief lawyer, said the order could sink the institute. Pity.

---

## **A**N AMERICAN CHICKEN. . .

In the course of huffing and puffing about the evils of assault rifles (which he equates with the evils of drugs) *New York Times* columnist Abe Rosenthal unburdened himself of the following observation:

"If terrorists murdered even a few Americans on foreign streets, our Government and our country would be furious. We probably would not actually *do* anything, but at least we would shout quite a bit. . ."

We wonder if it ever occurred to Mr. Rosenthal that the fact that the American government rarely does *do* anything when Americans are murdered in foreign streets, or for that matter, that state and local governments do precious little when Americans are murdered, beaten, or robbed on American streets, is not *entirely unrelated* to the fact that the American people are arming themselves in record numbers and are disinclined to give up their right to do so. If it hasn't it should.

---

## **A**N AMERICAN HEROINE. . .

Let's give this month's award for quiet heroism to Officer Janett Caban, who at age 25 is a five-year

veteran of the New York Police Department. She is also the co-owner of a video rental store in Queens, where she works in her off hours and where late one January night earlier this year she confronted a gun-wielding thug named Ralph Richardson.

Richardson was on the run; two days earlier he had shot two NYPD officers who had tried to arrest him on murder warrants from Pennsylvania and Brooklyn. One of the officers suffered what the papers euphemistically referred to as "brain matter damage." Richardson then broke into the apartment of a 67-year-old woman who lived nearby and fatally stabbed her.

Two days later he walked into Officer Caban's store, Request a Movie, and ordered everybody to lie on the floor as he started waving two pistols around.

Officer Caban's cousin, co-owner Linda Sylvester, didn't move fast enough to suit the asshole — she only went to her knees — so he punched and kicked her to the floor.

Richardson took \$200 from the cash register and then grabbed for Sylvester's jewelry. That provided Caban, who stood silently behind the counter, with the chance she needed to grab for her service revolver, which was stashed beneath the counter.

Richardson got off the first shot, but missed. Policewoman and hood stood only a few feet apart, both of them firing and ducking. Caban fired five times, emptying her revolver; Richardson managed four, scrambling toward the door.

The marksmanship was not of firing range quality as several rounds plowed into the ceiling; another shot away part of the store's address. But Officer Caban fired the shot that counted, the one that tore through Richardson's hip.

Clutching his side, Richardson staggered away, shouting back to Sylvester, "I've got something for you, bitch. I'll be back."

An hour or so later Richardson shot himself through the head in a parked stolen car a mile away. Which was probably the first thoughtful thing he did in his life.

Janett Caban is a woman who went through the realities of face-to-face pistol combat with a desperate killer. She won. All honor to the victor.

---

## **K**OREAN WAR VETS MEMORIAL. . .

We've been badly tardy in mentioning this, but better late than

never.

Last year Congress approved a long overdue memorial for Korean War vets. It is to stand across from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington.

It's often said that Americans would like to forget the Vietnam war, but the truth of the matter is that the war we have really forgotten is Korea.

In the 37 months between the invasion of South Korea by troops from the communist north and the truce that ended what was called a "Police Action," some 5.5 million American servicemen and women fought directly or indirectly for Korean freedom. Of these, 54,263 lost their lives, 103,000 were wounded, and 8,177 were classified as POW or MIA.

Americans found Korea a bloody frustration, and it has only been in recent years that historians have begun to appreciate the enormity of — and sacrifice involved in — U.S. efforts to stop communist aggression and preserve liberty on that battlefield.

That sacrifice deserves a more lasting monument than M\*A\*S\*H re-runs.

Six million dollars are needed to complete the Korean war memorial. Hyundai Motors of America started the ball rolling with a \$1.2 million donation, but approximately \$3 million remains to be raised. Contributions can be sent to: Korean War Veterans Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 2372, Washington, D.C. 20013.

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## **D**UST YOURSELF OFF AND TRY AGAIN? . . .

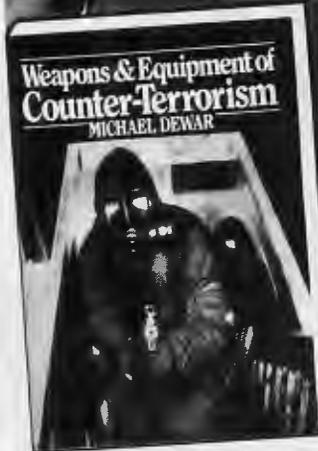
Jakobus Clarke is one tough paratrooper. How tough? Well, when the 21-year-old South African trooper jumped out of the proverbial perfectly good airplane in early February it turned out that his parachute was not perfectly good. It didn't open, and Clarke plunged 1,000 feet into a field near the city of Blomfontein — and survived.

According to Major Johnny Kieser, who was watching the exercise from the ground, Clarke did not appear to attempt to open his reserve chute.

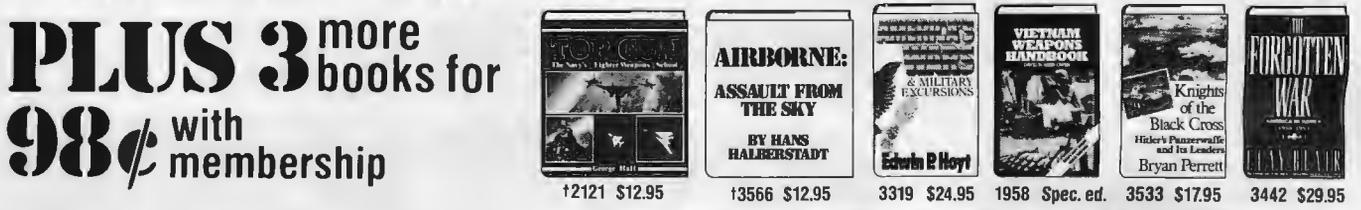
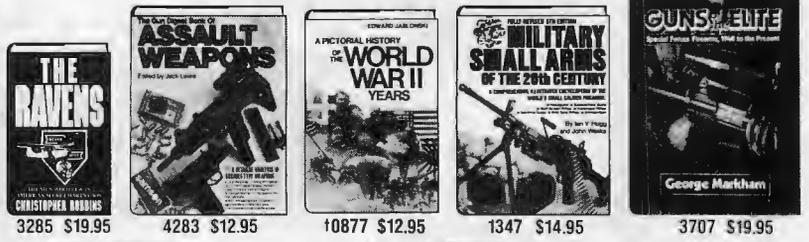
The following day Clarke was reported in satisfactory condition with two broken legs and a fractured vertebra. (A report on the condition of the rigger was not immediately available.) ✕

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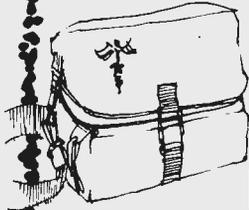
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 **U.S. Navy** (Tune: Anchor's Aweigh), Item #H-405



### Camouflage T-Shirt -

Top quality, 50% cotton, 50% polyester. Choose:  
 **Woodland Camo** Item #T-510... \$6.95.  
 **Desert Camo** Item #T-511... \$8.95.  
 **Tiger Stripe Camo** Item #T-512... \$8.95.  
 **Urban Camo** Item #T-565... \$8.95.  
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 XXL... \$9.95.  
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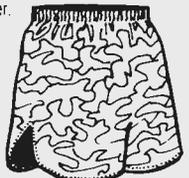


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### Brass Screened Eyelets - Chin Strap



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 **Solid Black**... Item #H-235  
 **Khaki**... Item #H-240  
 Choose Anyone... \$12.95.

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 **Woodland Camo**       **Tiger Stripe Camo**  
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## SPETSNAZ IN THE USA...

Sirs:

It strikes me as remarkable that anyone could doubt that Soviet military intelligence has operated in Alaska or anywhere else in the United States. It is equally remarkable that active-duty American soldiers, National Guardsmen and federal and state officials would deny it. Would anyone deny that East Bloc spies recruit electrical engineers in the Silicon Valley? That they watch our subs leave East and West Coast ports?

You don't have to be a McCarthy-era hunter of commies under every bed or an enemy-among-us kook to acknowledge the games nations play. The truth shocks only because most of us never stop to think about what military "assets" really do in peacetime.

John Tillman  
Bonita, California

*SOF Associate Editor Tom Bates recently returned to America's frozen frontier to update and further dig into Spetsnaz incursions in Alaska. When he thaws out, he'll be putting pen to paper and describing some pretty strange occurrences in our 49th state for an upcoming issue.*

**STOP THE  
GUN GRAB —  
SUPPORT  
THE NRA**



## FLAK



## SOF SHOULD BAN ADS...

Sirs:

The advertisement for Doubleday's Military Book Club on page five of SOF (February '89) is hardly a credit to either the book club or your magazine. The ad depicts a Freedom Arms mini-revolver under the caption "5 oz. of PURE TERROR" and then makes extravagant claims regarding the weapon's lethality, popularity and ability to intimidate. All of this in a highly emotional tone.

Perhaps you've already forgotten S.465, the "Plastic Gun Ban" bill, that was contested so heatedly in 1988. Doubleday obviously hasn't. HCI and company could hardly produce a more effective ad to lay the groundwork for a repeat battle over "terrorist weapons" in 1989. For a magazine that believes in the right to keep and bear arms to run such a tasteless and misleading ad in its pages is foolish. It's cheaper to refuse the ad revenue now than spend money lobbying against the increased support for gun control such an ad will surely generate. I believe that running an ad like this in SOF is the height of cynicism. You should refuse to run any more of these misleading ads.

Christopher Meissen  
Colon, Nebraska

SOF Advertising Director John Bressemer responds: *It is not the policy of SOF to determine on behalf of its advertisers what are "extravagant claims." If we start denying advertisers their right to give an opinion, we defeat their purpose. If Mr. Meissen feels that claims made are extravagant, he should contact the manufacturer or advertiser and voice his opinion to them. Once SOF starts deciding which guns are legitimate and which are for "terrorists," we will give the anti-gunners an inroad such as they haven't had since the so-called Saturday Night Specials. The right to keep and bear arms would certainly be threatened if we deny the fact that the Freedom Arms mini-revolver is a legitimate firearm.*

## MERC SCHOOLS: THE GOOD...

Sirs:

Your comments in SOF (February '89) asked for recommendations on guerrilla warfare/survival schools that can be recommended without reservation. I'd like to recommend Base Operations School in Mesa, Arizona.

I'm not affiliated with the school in any way. But I did make an appointment with the owner-operator, John Verschoor, and was very impressed with him, his cadre and the whole operation. I wrote an article for *American Survival Guide* magazine on the school, which started out as an investigative reporting mission to expose another rip-off, but I was pleasantly surprised to find real professionalism in the curriculum, the team members and the instructional material. These guys know what they're doing and they do it well. Write Base Operation School, P.O. Box 8904, Mesa, AZ 85204.

Carl H. Yaeger

## THE BAD...

Sirs:

We're all suckers for bogus news. I'm writing in regard to the G. Gordon Liddy Academy in Miami, Florida. I'm hoping this letter will save fellow law enforcement personnel or those wanting to increase their knowledge of anti-terrorism from wasting their money.

In December I contacted the Liddy Academy about attending classes in January of 1989. At that time I expressed my concern over recent newspaper reports stating that the business was bankrupt. I was told at the time that only the security section of the business was affected.

After purchasing a \$250 airline ticket (non-refundable) and wasting a week's vacation I found out the phones were disconnected and mail was not forwarded. It seems Liddy, who I thought was a great American hero, is now more interested in making TV crime films.

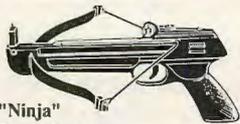
Terry B. Wells  
Franklin, Ohio

*SOF made repeated attempts to contact G. Gordon Liddy & Associates for a response. Their main number has been disconnected and a second was never answered.*

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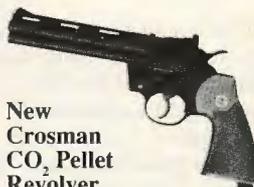
The author, an anonymous private investigator, specializes in helping clients "get lost" - permanently! Now his expertise can be yours. Create a totally new person - with bona fide birth certificate, passport, driver's license, credit cards, Social Security number and more! 120 pages.  
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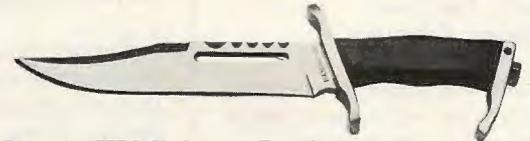
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## AND THE UGLY...

Sirs:

A few years ago I attended Camper's school in Alabama as a reporter. During our training one person injured his leg in self defense, a second was injured by either a stray round or splintered rock during a river crossing under fire, a third was roughed up to show "interrogation skills," and I came within six inches from having my head blown off by some psycho with an AK-47.

One day Camper and his patrol tried to infiltrate our camp; they proceeded to blindly fire (with some automatic weapons) into a river bank near our camp; rounds landed within six feet of my position and Camper never even knew I was there.

I respect Camper for his experience and service to Uncle Sam, however I did not care for his psycho executive officers. His school was informative and rough. The ever-present fear of being captured, stripped, tied to a tree and "interrogated" kept one on his toes. According to Camper, the reason for this was in the field you either survive or you don't.

Rumor has it that Camper is writing a book and his psychos are currently pulling time, not triggers.

Name Withheld

## URBAN WARFARE IN LOS ANGELES...

Sirs:

I'm sure SOF readers would be

interested in knowing more about the urban terrorist war being waged within the borders of the United States, namely in California's concrete jungle — Los Angeles.

The violent phenomenon of the large inner-city drug-dealing, death-dealing gang is accelerating out of control. SOF readers across the country could learn much from an in-depth article on the L.A. gang wars and the low-life scum that comprise their membership and whose illegal activities deprive law abiding citizens of their right to live without the ever present fear of violent crime.

John Steinhauer  
Fresno, California

*Even as Mr. Steinhauer was penning his letter we had two correspondents on the ground in Los Angeles getting the story. Stay tuned for an in-depth look at the drug gangs that have turned America's second largest city into an urban war zone.*

## MESSAGE FOR PEACENIKS...

Sirs:

The Peacenic's Creed — *Peace*: No matter what the cost to personal freedom, national sovereignty or human dignity, just please don't hurt me.

The Peacenic's Motto — *Better Red Than Dead*. It is better to live on your knees than to die on your feet.

Michael R. Little  
Omaha, Nebraska

## SERVE YOUR COUNTRY, NOT THE ALMIGHTY DOLLAR...

Sirs:

Yesterday I was watching a group of news commentators discussing why Congress deserves a 50-percent pay raise. This is the same Congress that screams about the budget deficit and blames it on the President. This is also the same Congress that screams about the budget deficit when the President suggests a four-percent pay raise for the military. One of the reasons congressmen needed the raise was because of the amount of time spent away from home. Although their trips are paid for, they said it was hard to live on \$89,500 a year. I can't help but wonder why a man would spend several hundred thousand dollars in campaign funds to get elected to a job that doesn't pay him enough to live on. What ever happened to wanting to serve your country?

I think something should be brought to their attention. Every year while congressmen are having Thanksgiving dinner and spending Christmas with their families, there are hundreds of thousands of men and women serving in the armed forces aboard ships, in underground missile silos, in the Arctic, in Iceland and many other lonely, desolate places. But they don't ask for any special recognition or for a raise. They are proud to be serving their country, no matter what the sacrifice.

The next time our rich congressmen ask for a raise I want them to remember the 37 crew members aboard the USS *Stark* who lost their lives in the Persian Gulf, or the 250 Marines who lost their lives in Beirut, or the 200 members of the 101st Airborne Division who died in a plane crash while returning from peacekeeping duties in the Sinai. They didn't ask for a raise or special recognition. They were just doing their jobs.

James A. King  
San Diego, California

## 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.** ✕

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\*CT residents add 7½% sales tax.

**H**.M.S. *China Bay*'s wooden prow quietly parted the silky waters of the Bay of Bengal, as a purple dawn gently washed away the black Asian night. The soft lapping of the sea against her hull harmonized with the muffled engines and would have drummed a lullaby of peace and tranquillity in other circumstances. But tranquillity here was only a fleeting illusion. We were thousands of miles from home and trusted friends, daily putting our lives in the hands of new comrades and at the feet of a wily Japanese enemy in our search for intelligence. But my companions had proven themselves in the recent past and I had no doubts about them in the future.

Aboard were two British Commandos, a crew of five and myself, with enough photographic equipment to film a war epic. I was not in India and Burma to film epics, but in a roundabout fashion that's how I happened to be there. When World War II broke out I was working in Hollywood for movie director John Ford, who for some time had been doing contract photo intelligence for the C.O.I. (Coordinator of Information under Bill Donovan, which became the O.S.S. in 1942 and in turn transmuted into the C.I.A. after the war). We had a crew at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese struck, and they filmed the attack. Pearl Harbor was hit on Sunday, and by Thursday John Ford and his entire crew, including me, had been drafted en masse and were in Washington, D.C. The government needed a trained cadre of photo recon people immediately, and because our people had already been working for the C.O.I. on the quiet, they were able to pull us off the shelf as an operational unit. On paper, I was in the Navy.

It was now the second year of the war, and after a tour in North Africa, O.S.S. headquarters had attached me to a British Commando/RAF photo recon unit based out of Chittagong, India. Under cover of darkness two days before, we had quietly weighed anchor at our berth in Chittagong and sailed south. Keeping close to the northeast coast of India during the first part of the journey, we headed toward a questionable location on the beach along the coast of Burma. One of our reconnaissance planes had reported an unusual amount of activity in a secluded cove. It could be nothing — or our small crew might be about to open the well-known bucket of worms.

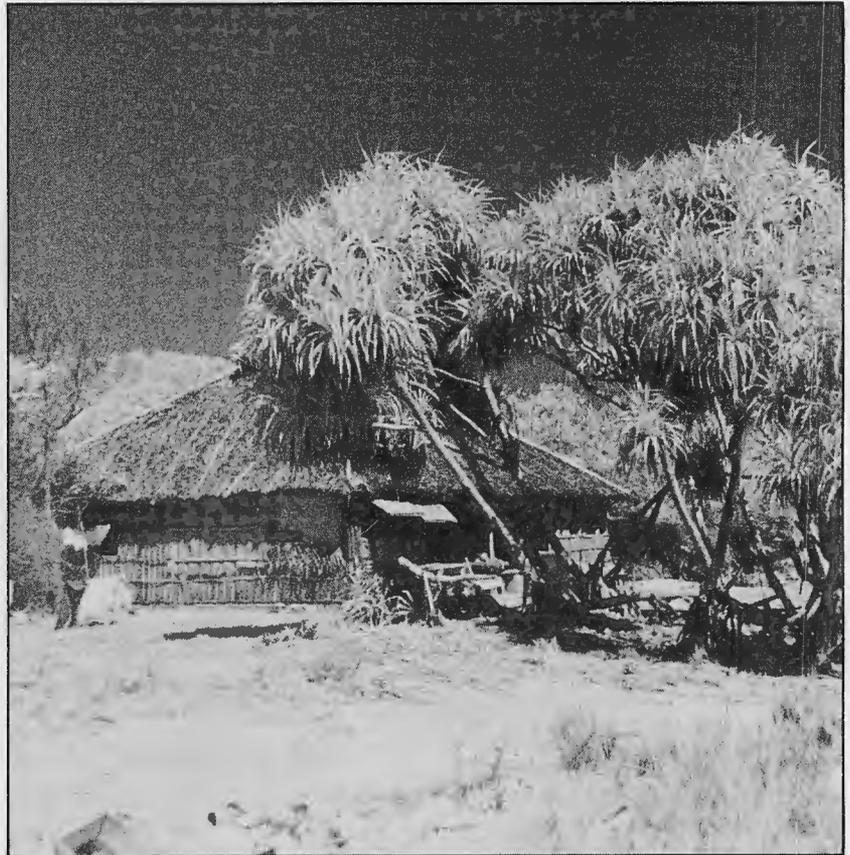
Our first night out we found a safe cove to drop anchor on the Burma side of the bay. The Brits stayed aboard and Stan and Mel, my O.S.S. crew, and I went ashore to explore. After two hours we returned with nothing to report. The following morning we cast off at 0400



# I WAS THERE

Text & Photo by Doug Clark

## The Old Man and the Unseen



**In the morning sun this native shack looked just like uncounted others in Asia — but it held some surprises for Clark and his OSS crew.**

and crept as quietly as we could down the coast. We were close to the area indicated on our map now, and coming up on our target without telegraphing our presence was imperative.

Within less than an hour we spotted our target, a thatched hut deep in a protected cove. There was no sign of activity. It could be that they had moved to another location . . . and then maybe not! Only one building was visible through the jungle, placed well back from the beach. We cut engines and drifted on down past the location before dropping anchor.

Stan, Mel and I loaded our camera gear into a launch and the three of us went ashore.

Stealthily, we crept up to the lone building in a small clearing. It was a typical shack the likes of which might be found almost anywhere in this part of the world. Nothing sinister, no shore battery, no anti-aircraft emplacement — just one very old Japanese man sitting in a bamboo chair, shaded by the grove of trees in front of the shack. Dressed in a kimono and sandals, he had long, white hair and a kind, placid face reflecting the wisdom of the old. I knew that he had seen us, but he made no sound, no move to acknowledge our presence. Was I wrong in writing him off as any kind of threat? As we moved forward, he still ignored us completely. Mel moved the old man to

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**50,000 volts of power!**  
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#A007.....\$49.95

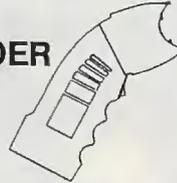
## LIGHTNING ZAPPER STUN GUN



This unique stun gun is similar to our regular Zapper in a most enlightening way. In addition to the stopping power, it also delivers a burst of high intensity light directly into the attacker's eyes. Chances are that his optic nerve will be so overdosed with excess light energy that he will not be able to see you let alone continue the attack. If he does, the "Lightning Zapper" delivers its painful bite, leaving him dazed and confused. 7 inches long.

#A008.....\$59.95

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This is one of our most popular models. It features a unique curved handgrip. This design protects you from being attacked from behind. It has a full 50,000 volts of power. The state-of-the-art micro-chip technology assures you against activator switch burn out and loss of voltage. The "Defender" is powered by a normal 9-volt alkaline battery or a rechargeable 9-volt. Comes with a handling strap. The "Defender" measures 6.5 x 2 x 3/4 inches.

#WC1.....\$54.95

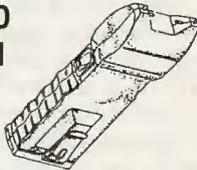
## MINI ZAPPER STUN GUN



The smallest, lightest stun gun available. This gun weighs only a few ounces and measures less than 4 inches, but it packs a full 50,000 volts of biting, stunning power. New space age technology has enabled us to produce this full-strength stun gun in a small package about the size of a normal beeper. Comes with a handy belt clip. Uses a 9-volt battery. Measures 4 x 2.3 x 1.3.

#SH1.....\$59.95

## X8000 STUN GUN



**80,000 volts of power from a 9-volt battery!** This gun is the height of hi-tech know-how. Just touching an assailant for one second will cause a loss of balance, loss of muscle control and a dazed condition. A 2 second jolt will have him on the ground completely immobilized. Measures 6.9 x 2.4 x 1.7 inches. Real awesome power!

#SH23.....\$79.95

**WHAT IS A STUN GUN?** A legal electrical self-defense device. It gives you greater sense of self-security.

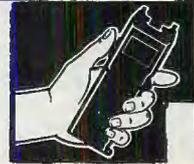
**HOW DOES IT WORK?** It puts out a high voltage shock. Touch it to a person - goes through clothing.

**WHAT EFFECT DOES IT HAVE?** Short circuits the muscle system. It immobilizes for several minutes. Will not cause permanent harm.

**HOW IS IT LEGAL?** No license or permit required. It can be used as reasonable force to resist attack. You can carry it concealed or not. Some State & local laws may vary.

**WHERE CAN I KEEP IT?** Clips to a belt; Fits in a purse; Keep one in your car; One in your house; Carry in a holster.

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The advanced personal protector. The FX includes a loud, piercing personal alarm siren, a high intensity strobe light AND 50,000 volts of non-lethal stopping power. It is powered by one alkaline 9-volt battery or a rechargeable battery. The FX measures 7.5 inches long by 2.5 inches wide. Protect yourself against rape, murder, or assault with the new space-age "FX" stun gun.

BT1.....\$79.95

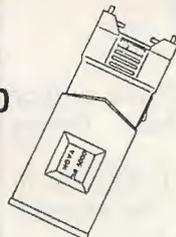
## "IMMOBILIZER" STUN DEVICE



**100,000 volts of stunning and immobilizing power!** This non-lethal Stun Device is visually intimidating with its high intensity discharge affective up to 20 feet on most attackers. This unit is designed for law enforcement, guards, watchmen or anybody exposed to potentially hostile situations. This "Super Stun Gun" measures 12 x 1.5 inches. It uses 8 AA cell batteries with a recharge jack built in. A membrane switch is recessed for safety considerations. This one is awesome!

#AC1.....\$119.95

## NOVA XR5000 STUN GUN



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#NV1.....\$69.95

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the palms to keep an eye on him.

Stan and I cautiously approached the shack. Stan kicked open the door and we dove inside, expecting all hell to break loose. Only a huge pack-rat scurried for cover. But there on the floor, neatly arranged, were rifles, land mines and provisions. On the lone table we found an intelligence trove: maps, documents, a transmitter and receiver, and of all things, a Mae West.

Back outside, I signaled to Stan that we would circle the cabin from opposite sides.

We met at the rear of the shack and I motioned for Stan to keep right on circling. Once again in front of the shack, I asked if he had noticed the huge straw pile at the rear of the clearing. The course of action was obvious, but neither of us had any dry matches. Mel provided the missing tool, a Zippo lighter. Morley Safer was not there to record the incident for posterity.

As the straw blazed, almost with the gusto of gasoline, three Japanese in their underwear exploded from the back of the inferno and took off like scared rabbits for the trees. We took off in the opposite direction with equal speed. Around 10 yards later I looked back in time to see the Japanese reach the safety of the wooded hillside. We were so taken by surprise that we just stood there like idiots. Our thought had been that the straw might be covering arms and ammunition and who-knows-what explosives, which accounted for *our* speed. The Japanese in their skivvies in a blazing straw pile had an even better reason.

I relieved Mel in the grove and kept the old man company while the others carted our intelligence prizes down to the launch. As I sat down on a crate, I lit two cigarettes and gave one to the old man. His eyes filled with tears as he bowed. I wished he would talk to me. Even with my limited knowledge of Japanese, I was certain that there must have been a story there.

We continued loading our booty until there was nothing left but the shack and the old man. After a conference over what to do with our prisoner, we decided to leave him there. The old fellow must have friends or family somewhere in the vicinity who would care for him. I felt for him, but I knew of no other way to help.

The others returned to the beach, and as I got up to leave, I felt a bond of friendship with this gentle, solitary old man. He smiled; by now the tears were actually streaming down his face. His eyes met mine as he pulled his hand from under his kimono, and in it he held a grenade. As I leaped back, he clutched it to his chest and pulled the pin.

To this day, I don't really understand why. ☒

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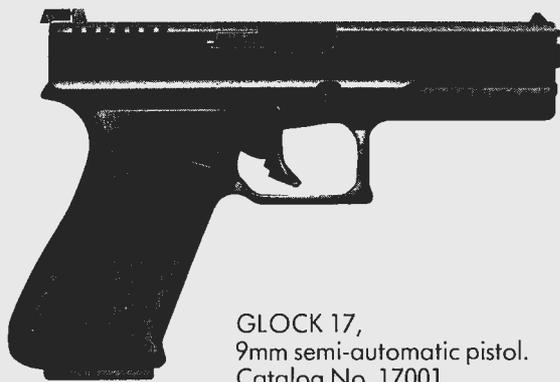
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		1	40/12 Firecrackers - Br. 480 pcs., Case 15,360 pcs.	6.00	127.00					<b>Missiles and Helicopters</b>			
		2	80/16 Firecrackers - Br. 1,280 pcs., Case 15,360 pcs.	13.25	127.00				36	Junior Jets w/Reports	8.60	86.00	
		3	40/50 Firecrackers - Br. 2,000 pcs., Case 16,000 pcs.	19.50	132.00				37	Two-Stage Helicopter Spin Up - \$2.00 ea.	16.80	168.00	
		4	10/200 Black Cat - Br. 2,000 pcs., Case 16,000 pcs.	21.75	156.00				38	Two-Stage Space Jets (12 to pkg.)	4.00	40.00	
		5	40/12 Black Cat - Br. 480 pcs., Case 15,360 pcs.	6.75	150.00				39	Reconnaissance Planes (1 pkg. of 6 - \$3.95)	7.25	72.50	
		6	Lady Crackers - Br. 1,600 pcs., Case 51,200 pcs.	11.00	208.00				40	Plane Flying at Night (12 to pkg.)	7.25	72.50	
		7	Jumping Jacks - Br. 576 pcs., Case 11,520 pcs.	12.25	220.00				41	Flying Disc or Satellite	2.50	25.00	
			<b>Underwater Firecrackers</b>	<b>BOX</b>	<b>CASE</b>				42	Large Missile - \$1.75 each	17.50	175.00	
		8	M-60 - works in water, Box 72 pcs., Case 1,440 pcs.	15.00	241.00				43	Giant Missile - \$2.15 each	21.50	215.00	
			<b>Sky Rockets</b>		<b>DOZ.</b>	<b>GROSS</b>				<b>Smoke and Novelties</b>	<b>DOZ.</b>	<b>GROSS</b>	
		9	Pop Bottle Rockets, report - 144-\$5.00, 3,600-\$96.00		5.00				44	Two Colored Smoke	2.00	20.00	
		10	Black Cat Bottle Rockets - 144-\$6.00, 3,600-\$112.00		6.00				45	Cherry Smoke Balls (assorted colors)	2.00	20.00	
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		15	Butterfly Rocket	6.80	68.00						<b>PKG.</b>	<b>DOZ PKG</b>	
		16	Parachute Rocket with Flare	6.80	68.00				50	Red Rat Chasers (144 to pkg.)	8.30	83.00	
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			<b>Night Display Shells</b>	<b>EACH</b>	<b>DOZ.</b>				54	Whistling Jacks (24 pcs. to pkg.)	1.25	12.50	
		20	Saturn Missile Battery - 12 shot	1.80	18.00				55	Rocket Guns (pkg. of 12)	7.00	70.00	
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		22	#100 Floral Shell	9.50	95.00					<b>Sparklers and Fountains</b>	<b>BOX</b>	<b>DOZ BX.</b>	
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		24	100-shot Magical Barrage	6.50	65.00				58	Sparklers - 14", Morning Glories (144 pcs. \$12.95)	12.95	129.50	
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		27	News Transmitter	4.00	40.00						<b>EACH</b>	<b>DOZ.</b>	
		28	Kaleidoscope	4.50	45.00				61	No. 3 Assorted Colors Cone - 7" Fountain	1.15	11.50	
		29	Garden-in-Spring	6.50	65.00				62	Jumbo Carnival Cone	2.10	21.00	
		30	96 shot Colored Pearl	9.25	92.50					<b>Roman Candles</b>	<b>DOZ.</b>	<b>GROSS</b>	
		31	48 shot Colored Pearl	4.00	40.00				63	Roman Candle - 5 shot	6.70	67.00	
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		33	Night Parachute	.85	8.50				65	Roman Candle - 10 shot	11.00	110.00	
		34	Day Parachute	.85	8.50					<b>Assortments</b>	<b>EACH</b>	<b>DOZ.</b>	
		35	Marching Cicada (61 4-inch firing tubes)	18.99	189.90				66	Mad Hornet Assortment Box - \$34.00 value	24.00	240.00	
									67	Black Hornet Assortment Box - \$45.00 value	30.20	302.00	
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**P**OLICE officers increasingly carry semi-automatic pistols as duty weapons. Citizens too, in perhaps greater numbers, have chosen auto pistols for personal and home defense. The reasons for this trend are sound, compelling, and too well-known to need repeating here.

Certainly, semi-automatic pistols function as reliably as revolvers, more so in my experience, but they *can* jam. Police weapons, subject to rough treatment out in the real world, are a bit more prone to failure than pampered home-defense weapons.

Malfunctions arise from various causes. Failures to feed can be caused by bent magazine lips or an improperly seated magazine, dirty or misshapen ammunition, or lubrication problems. Failures to extract are most often caused by a dirty chamber, dirty ammo, or a broken extractor. Failures to eject most often result from parts breakage, underpowered ammunition, or improper hold. The reasons *why* stoppages occur — usually neglect of some sort — are important, but are not your immediate concern in the middle of a gunfight; getting your weapon back into action is.

Under fire, the officer doesn't have time to examine the weapon and determine the precise cause of the malfunction. He doesn't have time for a considered remedy for the malfunction. He must put his weapon back into action, *immediately*. Malfunction drills, properly and instinctively performed, are designed to do just that.

These drills, practiced until they are reflexive, will teach the officer standard sequences of immediate action that will clear malfunctions of any kind and put the weapon back in action with a fresh round in the chamber. Only when the malfunction is due to a broken part might these steps fail to return the weapon to firing condition.

The drills are in two stages. Stage I is always performed immediately whenever any malfunction occurs. Stage II is only employed if Stage I doesn't cure the problem. We have been training with these drills for several years in our department; they work well for us. To practice them most effectively, you'll need dummy ammunition with which to load the weapon.

When executing these drills, for real and for practice, perform each step quickly, vigorously, smartly. Always keep your eyes on the target, not on the weapon. The steps performed in each of the stages, and the reasons for each step, are as follows:

#### STAGE I:

Step 1: Slap the bottom of the magazine upward, into the butt of the pistol. *This step ensures that the maga-*



# COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

by Andy Krietemeyer

## What to do in a Jam



**"Immediate action" malfunction drills start by ensuring the magazine is properly seated, and retracting the slide to eject the round or empty cartridge. Photo: Tom Slizewski**

*zine is fully seated and thus in the proper position to feed the next round.*

Step 2: Draw or push the slide fully rearward while tilting the ejection port toward the ground. Let the slide slam forward — do not block the ejection port with your hand and don't retard the forward motion of the slide by touching it after it's been released. *Retracting the slide will extract and eject any case remaining in the chamber; tilting the ejection port down will allow the case or round freed from the chamber to fall clear if the ejector fails; when the slide slams back to battery, it will feed and chamber a fresh round from the magazine.*

Step 3: Aim weapon and pull the trigger.

If the Stage I drill doesn't solve the problem, employ Stage II.

#### STAGE II:

Step 1: Retract and hold slide fully rearward and briefly tilt the ejection port to the ground; shake the weapon. *Any case in the chamber or breech is ejected or falls to the ground; by continuing to hold the slide to the rear,*

*pressure on the slide is relieved and an extra one-eighth to one-fourth inch clearance in the ejection port is gained for the next operation.*

Step 2: Continue holding the slide to the rear and drop the magazine. If the magazine doesn't fall free, hook its front lip on your belt and draw it out. Then, let the slide slam forward. *Since the magazine in the weapon might be the cause of the malfunction, dropping it makes way for a new one; letting the slide slam forward gives the extractor another chance to grab any case stuck in the chamber.*

Step 3: Insert a fresh, loaded magazine into the weapon, slamming it home. Draw the slide to the rear again, and release it to chamber a new round from the new magazine. *The second rearward movement of the slide will eject a case previously stuck in the chamber, and when the slide goes forward it will chamber a new round from the new magazine.*

Step 4: Aim, and pull the trigger.

If the gun now fails to fire, you may employ the Stage III malfunction drill: go for your backup piece, or if you have none, *run like hell!*

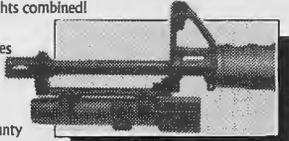
— Andy Krietemeyer is a police sergeant and firearms instructor in Florida. His 12-year career has included patrol, investigative and supervisory assignments. ✎

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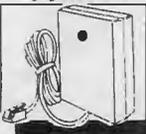
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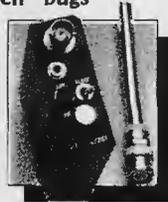
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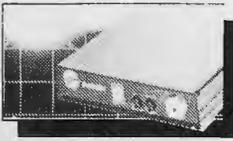
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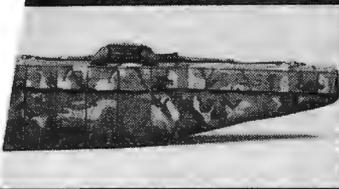
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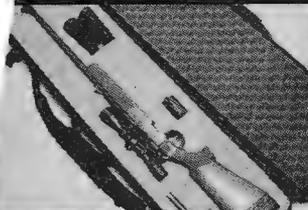
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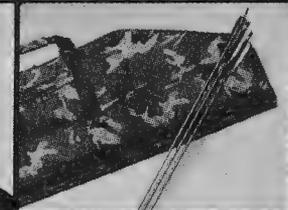
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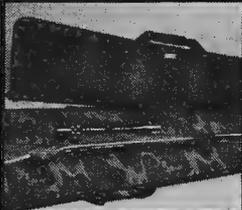
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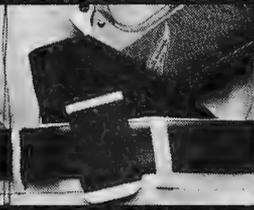
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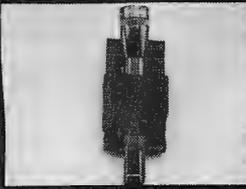
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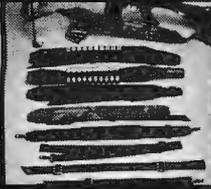
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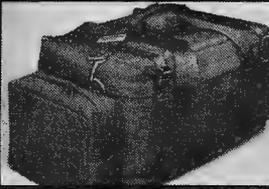
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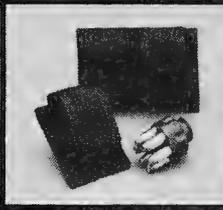
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# MASTER SNIPER'S ONE SHOT SAVES

## USMC's Hathcock Trains SWAT Teams

Text & Photos by Craig Roberts



**ABOVE:** Hathcock firmly believes that snipers and counter-snipers should train on targets that look like people — not bull's-eyes. His trademark — the white feather — still adorns his hat. In Vietnam he was known as “the White Feather Sniper,” and the VC put a reward of three years pay on him.

“**T**HE value of the one well-aimed shot, gentlemen,” said the speaker, his eyes scanning the attentive faces of the audience, “is what it is all about. You only have one chance. One shot will save a life — or cost one. It has to be the best shot you ever made.”

The man paused for effect. He knew what he was talking about, and the audience knew it as well. The speaker was none other than Gunnery Sergeant Carlos N. Hathcock II, the highest-rated Marine sniper of the Vietnam war. The men in the audience were police SWAT team sharpshooters. They

**RIGHT:** Sniper from Tulsa PD, foreground, and SWAT team member from Arkansas train with Steyr SSGs fitted with Harris bipods, as Gunnery Hathcock coaches.

### SNIPER, PILOT, POLICEMAN, SCRIBE

Craig Roberts spent part of his tour in Vietnam as a Marine sniper in the Da Nang area, and his 20-year police career has included duty as patrol officer, bomb disposal technician, SWAT team member and police academy instructor. He currently serves as helicopter pilot for the Tulsa, Oklahoma Police Department, and he has held numerous assignments in the Army Reserve since 1972. He has published numerous magazine articles, and his book *The Walking Dead: A Marine's Story of Vietnam* was recently published by Simon and Schuster.





were training to save lives by eliminating a threat — with a single well-aimed shot.

Now retired from the Marine Corps, Hathcock volunteers his time and knowledge to law enforcement agencies around the country. What he learned in the rice paddies and jungles of Vietnam gives him the background and expertise to help police marksmen do their job effectively on the streets. With 93 confirmed kills (those witnessed or confirmed by officers) and more than 300 actuals, the Gunny knows firsthand the value of the “one well-aimed shot.”

“Gentlemen, in Vietnam it took an average of 50,000 rounds of ammunition to kill one bad guy. That’s how many rounds were expended for each body that was claimed over the period of the war. Can you imagine a squad leader saying ‘get down to the ammo dump and draw 50,000 rounds of ammo and distribute among the squad. The old man wants a body today, and he’s really on my butt.’ ”

Hathcock chuckled briefly and continued as his face again turned serious. “The *snipers* in Vietnam, on the other hand, expended 1.3 rounds per kill. Folks, that’s the value of one well-aimed shot.”

I had flown the “Gunny” from his home in Virginia Beach to Tulsa to interview him for my latest book about military sniping. But I knew what Carlos liked doing best — besides fishing — and arranged our interview time around a training day for our Special Operations Team. Our counter-snipers had heard of Hathcock (some had even read the book *Marine Sniper* by Charles Henderson about Hathcock’s experiences in Vietnam) and had awaited his arrival with great anticipation. Now he stood before them, and they hung on every word the legend spoke.

“I require 100 percent out of my students. The school I teach lasts two weeks, and I work the class until they can consecutively put three-round shot groups through the *same hole* every time!” Hathcock’s face began to show the hint of a grin, but immediately turned serious again. “If you can’t do that, you just might get a *hostage* killed. You have to put that one well-aimed shot through the ‘no-reflex zone’ every time you pull the trigger.”

“Today, we’ll see what we can do on the range. I’ll help you as much as I can, and by the end of the day maybe we can identify and correct any problems you might have.”

Hathcock kept classroom time to a minimum. Though he is comfortable on the speaker’s stand, he is a *hands-on* kind of a guy. You can’t teach someone to shoot with words alone.

But certain things *can* be covered in the classroom. Hathcock continued, “When you look through that scope, what do you see? If you see a shadow on one side, your alignment is incorrect. The bullet will go the opposite way from the shadow. Make sure you have a clear field of view with no shadows. Your eye relief should be two to three inches, depending on your scope. I don’t see any half-moon scars around anyone’s



eyes here, so you obviously aren't too close to the scope."

"When you look through that scope, concentrate on the crosshairs. They should be clear and steady. The target should be just a little fuzzy. If you're too far away from your scope, you will get shadows. Your grip should be a firm 'hand-shake' grip. Grip it the same way every time. Use firm, steady pressure on the trigger and move it straight back.

"Proper body alignment is one of the most important things that affects your shot. If your alignment is incorrect, you won't be able to acquire the target after you shoot, without a shift. To achieve proper body alignment, lay in the prone position and sight in on your target. Close your eyes and relax completely. When you open your eyes, the crosshairs should still be on target. If they are not, your body alignment is wrong. You then adjust your body, not your rifle, until you can keep your crosshairs on target."

The Gunny brought out several important aspects of police counter-sniper training, mission requirements and equipment throughout the morning. Since he had not previously worked with this particular group, he could only evaluate the status of

**TOP:** "See that? That's a grip problem. Use a firm 'hand-shake' grip and concentrate on those cross-hairs." Carlos Hathcock in his element and doing what he does best, training men to shoot with precision for situations where one well-aimed shot can save a life. Hathcock spends as much time as necessary with each man before moving to the next.

**ABOVE:** Then it's back to the firing line for more individual instruction from the master. By the end of the first day, the men's groups had tightened considerably.

their training and experience on the range by the questions they asked. Below are some of the topics he addressed:

**TARGETS** — "If you are going to train to shoot people, then your targets should look like people. Few suspects dress up to look like bull's-eyes. When you look through that scope, the first things that jump out at you are the eyes. You see a living human being — possibly your next door neighbor — in your sights. I teach with targets that show life-size faces. The targets that show a hostage with a gun to her head and the bad guy's head next to hers are good."

**RANGE** — "No police marksman should ever have to shoot more than 100 yards. Most shots are 70 yards or less. When you're in an urban environment you often only have to shoot across the street or down the block. The closer you can get without being detected, the better."

**MOVEMENT** — "When you move into an area, move slowly — slow, deliberate movement, observing everything you can see. Analyze the terrain and know how you're going to get there and how you're going to get back. Never get in a hurry if you don't have to. After you occupy your firing position, you have to sweep the area in front visually, making sure there is nothing that will endanger or affect you or your partner. Scan the area from left to right, then right to left. Note the bushes, trash cans, trees, cars and so on. Make notations on your range card, but don't clutter it up. Three or four objects in a sector are enough. Then number them."

**RANGE CARDS** — "A sniper looks straight ahead. He observes his TAOR (Tactical Area Of Responsibility). You and your observer set up a range card so that you know exactly what is out there by writing down each prime point. You number each obstacle and point so that you each know what to shift to if a number is called out. When the observer says 'Section A, Position 2,' you know exactly where he is talking about and you don't have to search the whole area for the bad guy. If you are watching a building, number the windows and you'll know exactly where the observer spots the suspect when he calls out 'window three.'"

**DATA BOOKS** — "Keep a data book with the information that concerns your rifle. Know how many shots have been fired through that barrel. If you wear out a barrel on the range, it would be nice to know that you need a new barrel before you have to make that one well-aimed shot for real. An inch is the difference between life and death for your hostage."

**LOG BOOKS** — "Log books contain the basic information and record of each situation you have been involved in. Keep a record of 'Who, What, Where, When, Conditions, Wind, Range, Shots Fired, Situation and Location.' You have to answer the questions 'Whose log book is this? What are we doing? Where are we? What is the date and time?' And so on. This information is invaluable later to your intelligence people or command post. You are in the best position to see what is going on. If you can look through a window and see the bad guy tie up a hostage in a corner of a certain room, that is information your higher-ups need to have."

**BACKUP WEAPONS** — "As long as the observer is able to get the primary sniper and himself out of a situation, the backup weapon should be the one that does the best job. A shotgun or submachine gun is fine."

**AMMUNITION** — "I highly recommend the Federal 168-grain boat tail. The Federal people make a good round. I've seen their operation and they go to great pains to inspect and give quality control to each round.

These bullets consistently hold their group, round after round."

**TEMPERATURES** — "Temperature affects your shot. At 100 yards, the temperature effects are minimal, but what you should be careful of is the sun. Shadows can play tricks on you, so try to practice at different times of the day and get used to the shadows. The difference in a shot on an 80 degree day and a 15 degree day can be three inches at 100 yards. In colder weather, the barrel contracts and squeezes the bullet more, increasing muzzle velocity. Recording your shots in your data book and noting the conditions will help you later. You can look up a similar day on record in your book and compensate accordingly."

**RANGE ESTIMATION** — "For police marksmen, 100 yards should be your maximum shot. If you practice on a 100-yard range, you know what 100 yards looks like. If you shoot over a depression, it makes the range look longer. Obstacles will try to fool you into incorrect range estimation. Be careful of this. Practice observation and range estimation every time you go to the range."

**TRIGGER CONTROL AND BREATH CONTROL** — "When you're in a real situation, your heart will be beating faster, your adrenaline will be pumping and you will be somewhat excited. To train for this you have to do 'stress shots' on the range. Run a quarter- to a half-mile and get into position. Allow no more than 10 seconds to make the shot after you are in the firing position. This will simulate a stress shot and allow you to train for it. When you can consistently hit your target in the no-reflex zone, you will be able to do it for real later."

**EQUIPMENT** — "The finest sniper rifle in the world is the hand-built M40A1 made by the Marine Corps. It is basically a Remington 700 action with an Atkinson stainless steel Parkerized barrel on a fiberglass stock. The scope is made for the Marines by Unertl and is a fixed ten power. You can't buy this rifle or scope, but there are others that do a good job. The Steyr SSG in .308 is probably the best off-the-shelf stick available. I understand that Leupold makes a very good scope at a reasonable price. Try to use a fixed power. I don't like moving parts in a precision instrument like you have on a variable scope."

I personally don't like 'set' triggers. When you have a 'set' trigger, the rifle controls *you*. I like a standard trigger with a pull of four to four-and-a-half pounds. This allows *you* to control the *rifle*. With a trigger pull lighter than four pounds, the rifle still controls *you*."

**MIRAGE** — "Mirage is what you use to read your wind. When you look across a hot asphalt parking lot, you will see wavy lines radiating above the surface. If the lines are straight from side-to-side, the wind is strong. If they wave more, the wind is less. If they go straight up, there is no wind. Learn to read the mirage and apply it to your skills."

**IN THE 'BUBBLE'** — "It never rains on the range. It never gets cold or hot. You aren't hungry or thirsty. You are never un-



**GSgt. Carlos Hathcock with students on Tulsa, Oklahoma PD range after a day of training for one-shot saves.**

comfortable or lose your attention for any reason when you are in position. When you can mentally remove outside influences from your concentration, you are in your 'bubble.' When I was in Vietnam, the temperature could soar to over 120 degrees. It could pour down rain or the wind would blow the stink of rotting vegetation into your face. But I'd get in my 'bubble' and wouldn't have to notice these things. My only thought was directed toward that one well-aimed shot."

When the class adjourned to the firing line, targets were set up showing the face of a man with a gun pointed at the head of a lady hostage.

"Let's see what you can do," the Gunny said to the first shooter. "Put three rounds into the inside corner of the right eye of the bad guy."

The marksman took up his position, reduced the slack on his Steyr trigger and fired. The distance was 100 yards. After three shots, we went downrange.

"I thought you could shoot," taunted Hathcock as he pointed at the target. Three holes formed a two-inch triangle just over the bad guy's eye.

"I thought I could too, Gunny," said the rifleman.

"Come down a click and right a click and shoot again."

When we again went downrange to examine the target, the holes were in the correct area, but the group was still spread almost two inches.

"Concentration, body alignment and trigger squeeze, people. That's what it takes. This is not acceptable in a real situation. I want to tighten up these groups today." The Gunny turned away from the targets and walked toward the firing line, leaving the shooters to patch the holes.

And so the day went. After each string of

three rounds, the men checked their targets. One thing that surfaced early was something Hathcock noticed and corrected.

"What equipment do you normally wear on a call out? Do you wear body armor? Ammo vests? Go to your car and get what you wear on a real situation and put it on. It doesn't do any good to practice in a tee shirt, and then put your war gear on and have a different body position because of it. It may be hot out here today, but no one ever promised you a rose garden. Get in your 'bubble.'"

And they found out what it was like to practice with all their equipment on. Body angles adjusted, and men began to explore their 'bubbles' to get away from discomfort. The Gunny hovered around them like a mother hen. He let them know in no uncertain terms if they did something wrong, and he praised them when they did well.

By the end of the day, every man had improved his shot group and knew what he had to work on to become even better.

Carlos Hathcock travels around the country conducting two-week police counter-sniper schools for SWAT teams. He spends one day each week when he is at home working on the range with the Virginia Beach, Virginia police marksmen. His last Marine Corps assignment was Senior Instructor of the Marine Corps Sniper School in Quantico, Virginia.

Carlos Hathcock no longer shoots. The holder of the Wimbledon Cup and the highest rated Marine sniper of Vietnam suffers from both multiple sclerosis and grievous combat wounds, including being burned over 90 percent of his body when an amtrack he was riding on blew up on a command-detonated 500-pound bomb. He walks with a discernable limp and lights his cigarettes with a trembling hand. But on the range, I noted a quickened pace, a distinct alertness and manner that showed Carlos was in his element. He was doing what he does best — teaching men to shoot. In Vietnam his mission was to take lives; now he does everything he can to help police sharpshooters save them. ✖



**S**OME honk, others smile, a few grimace. Occasionally there's the finger of disapproval. The "666" on my license plate often becomes a conversation piece. But when it does, I begin remembering . . . remembering a time and place deeply etched in my memory. The intervening years vanish and I am once again back in Vietnam where my future was foretold in a tableau across the sky — a grim future of torture, imprisonment and degradation.

On the morning of 20 July 1966, I awoke with a gripping in my stomach. The same weird sensation that I had the last few missions, despite my contempt for anyone refusing to willingly serve his country. The thought kept returning to consciousness: I had been riding the gravy train for 14 years and now was the time to pay the price. One of my former classmates from officer candidate school worked in the personnel department at Air Force headquarters. Because combat experience always looks good on a military record, he had arranged assignment for 20 of us to the same 42nd Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron at Takhli Air Base in Thailand. We were soon to discover

**Air Force pilot one day, propaganda tool the next. This pilot went down over the North in 1966 — same year as author. There was only one good thing about having your picture taken: It proved you were alive and held POW rather than ending up on the MIA list. Photo: Black Star**

### FLYING THE NUMBERS

Glendon Perkins enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1952 and served as an aircraft mechanic until being commissioned in 1958. Of his seven years' service in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War as an Electronic Warfare Officer, six were spent as a POW after being shot down over North Vietnam in 1966. Among his many medals, he holds the Silver Star, Bronze Star and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Perkins retired from the Air Force in 1978 after 26 years, 6 months and 6 days' service. He now resides with his family in Orlando, Florida. We welcome his first article for *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*.

whether our buddy in personnel had served us well or doomed us.

Without a college education, I had reached officer status after six years as enlisted and six months of OCS with many failed tests. Only a highly decorated combat career would count for promotion. I needed to take chances — high-risk chances — even for a cause in which I had little interest and a country alien to my world.

I loved my family more than the Air Force. How could I choose what was best for us and still have their love and respect?

Just five months before, in the safe confines of Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane, Washington, I was the most skilled electronic warfare officer (EWO) in the wing. I loved the giant B-52s with their eight engines and bellies full of nuclear bombs. I had pulled alert and flown missions for three years as a member of a select crew in the Strategic Air Command proudly serving my country.

Now, for the first time in 14 years, a compulsive thought: "Go to your commander and say you don't want to fly anymore." But, I could never SIE (self initiate

# THE DEVIL'S LOTTO



elimination). I knew a few others who had gone home with a broad yellow streak down their backs. My family would live in shame. My children would disown and hate me. Surely my wife would divorce me. Better dead than live in dishonor, I thought.

On that fateful July morning in 1966, the acrid smell of rotting jungle filled my nostrils and I felt nauseous. I walked out of my hooch to the officer's latrine, still in the dark at 0400 hours. The sign on the mess hall read "Land of the King Cobra." I was walking on a raised wooden walkway over water-covered ground. We were now into the rainy season with snakes squirming and crawling from under the walk. Would one of them get me first? The deadliest was a two stepper — one bite, two steps, and curtains.

I loved and feared Thailand at the same time. As an adventurer, I rode my Suzuki 125 around the country on the left side of the road, which was thrilling and scary, frightening but pleasantly distracting. Exotic Buddhist temples, caves and even one remote jungle village were my agenda. The signs were in a different alphabet, but I could

U.S. pilot identified as Thomas Mitchell McNish. According to this propaganda photo, he was a "U.S. air pirate." Photo: Black Star

## Deadly Numbers Game in NVA Prison

by Glendon Perkins

make out danger symbols such as "DDT." Did the village have leprosy? Why was I pushing so hard? Was I that afraid to face my fears? Could I not face death with dignity? Or even worse, could I stand capture and torture by an unknown enemy who might brainwash me and turn me against my country . . . make me a traitor?

Above all else, I wanted to get my missions over and go home. For every 20 missions completed, we were able to go home one month early. I was shooting for eighty to end my tour in only eight months. Then I could be home for Christmas in our new home — in which I had lived only four days.

My fears about this tour of duty were overpowering. Why did I make out a "full and complete" power of attorney for an indefinite period, against the advice of the base legal officer? As Kay and I stood in the driveway of our new house in Orlando, I held her close and said, "Please wait for me. I don't like this assignment. I have a premonition that something is going to happen. But I won't be killed. If my plane goes down over the jungle, wait for me. I promise I will survive and walk out." I had resolutely practiced my survival training in the mountains surrounding Spokane, trying to suppress the bad vibes that surfaced.



**Author Glendon Perkins stands beside EB-66C aircraft at Takhli Air Base in Thailand. Perkins was EWO aboard such an aircraft when he was shot down on 20 July 1966 over North Vietnam and taken prisoner. Photo: Author's collection**

The briefing this morning was somewhat different, with the greatest number of aircraft to take off from our base at one time. Every flyable aircraft would be launched for one of the largest bombing missions over the North up to then.

The intelligence officer stood in front of us scowling. Tall and thin, he was a few years younger than me. There were no wings on his shirt — a penguin (an airman not on flying status), all ass and no wings. He was telling us that the few POW in the North were talking too much and propagandizing for the Viet Cong. He emphasized that if captured we were to stick with the first line of defense: name, rank, serial number and nothing else. I didn't like him or his arrogant attitude. How dare he tell us how to act if captured, when he'd never left the ground!

My first 50-plus missions had been very boring. They usually lasted three hours, and all we did was recon a few signals, occasionally locating a SAM site. But the last few had been different. We had been unable to stay in orbit over the target area. When a radar locked in on our aircraft, we had to dive (a split S) to evade being shot down. In split S, the pilot rolls the plane inverted and dives for the ground, doing a 180-degree turn and pulling many positive Gs.

Today would be our 60th mission. We were briefed as an airborne spare, meaning that we would not take off unless an aircraft that had departed before us aborted the mission on the way to the target. On the way to the flight line from the briefing room I stopped by the gun rack and picked up my .38 revolver and strapped it under my left arm. I put my security badge in the gun rack — it was never to be carried into combat.

As we walked out to the aircraft, an EB-66C, my thoughts were not about the mis-

sion as we were only a backup crew. I was thinking about where I would go or what I would do after release from the standby status. I would have the rest of the day free. Maybe I'd finish shopping for Kay. Her birthday, 8 August, was in the offing and I wanted to send her something special.

My flight suit was already sticking to my body from the tropical heat. It would be afternoon before the cooling rains came. Inside the aircraft we strapped in and sat and waited. Hot, stuffy, tense. No one talked. Bill, our pilot, already had his 100 missions. He didn't need to go. He was just waiting for his port call to return home. He said he didn't have anything better to do that day. Fate decreed otherwise. Still on the ground, a call came on the intercom. The primary crew aborted on engine start! This meant that they would take our aircraft. I unbuckled my seat belt and survival kit and started to climb out of my seat. The hatch opened from the outside and my replacement waited to trade places with me.

Suddenly, a change of plans came. We were going to fly the mission after all. I sat back in my seat, strapped in and hooked up my survival kit. Everything was secure. Just another "counter" (mission over the North) and we would be back in three hours.

It was 0605 hours as we lifted off the runway and climbed to our cruising altitude of 32,000 feet. The skies were clear and it was a smooth ride. We in the back compartment could not see outside the aircraft because a dark environment was needed to see the radar signals on our scopes. My

helmet was itching both the front and back of my head, the oxygen mask tight and uncomfortable to my face. My flight suit and body were soaked with sweat. I sat on a downward ejection seat, which is useless below 1,000 feet. The first few minutes of each flight were always tense until the pilot said, "Clearing 1,000 feet." He had reassured us before all flights that if we lost the engines below 1,000 feet, he would ride the aircraft in to give us a better chance to get out. He and the navigator had upward seats, which gave them a better chance of survival at low altitude. I had put my trust and faith in him, willing to accompany him anywhere.

Takhli was 300 nautical miles from our orbit area, approximately 50 minutes away. The orbit was about 35 nautical miles long in an area about 60 miles northwest of Hanoi where we were supporting the bomber strike force. I was in number two position, working a certain set of frequencies. I could tell when the SAM radar locked on our aircraft. This was not my favorite position, but we usually rotated every flight. I glanced at the wedding ring on my left hand, my lucky piece. I was thinking about Chuck M., a friend who had been my instructor in EWO school. He had been flying in the back seat of an RF-4 Wild Weasel. It sounded a lot more exciting than my job. Just a few days before, I was seriously thinking about asking for reassignment. Yesterday, his plane had failed to return and he was killed in action. I would have to rethink changing jobs. The EB-66C I was in was possibly the safest aircraft for flying combat. We stayed high, always above 30,000 feet, just flying in an orbit. We also had two fighter escorts with us since we were an unarmed aircraft. I felt secure. Why the dread?

Three days before, I had mailed the brass candlesticks that Kay had been waiting for. Last week, I had sold the motorcycle. I was on the downhill side of my tour. Just stay calm and ride out the missions, I told myself. I'd be going home in three months if I finished 80 missions. I only had 20 left to go.

I finished checking all my equipment and was busily recording the signals. The scope was full. The North Vietnamese must have been getting more help from the Soviets. A large strike force like ours should have been a clear message to Hanoi to stay out of South Vietnam. I hoped the war wouldn't end before I got in my 80 missions. Otherwise I would have to stay the whole year in Southeast Asia. Kay and I had never been apart more than three months at a time. How much would the children have grown in a year?

Then an explosion smashed my reveries, an explosion that rocked and shook the aircraft as though it were a toy. Over the intercom the pilot shouted, "Near miss, still flying!" The navigator quickly replied, "Sixty miles northwest of Hanoi."

My oxygen mask sucked my face. I quickly glanced at the gauge. Zero! How could it be turned off? I reached for the lever and went to 100-percent oxygen. It still read

zero and I couldn't breathe. I loosened the mask, went to the override position on the intercom and shouted, "Lost oxygen!" The pilot came back: "Going down." Without oxygen, we needed to drop to at least 13,000 feet. Again the plane rolled inverted and he pulled back hard on the yoke. We were diving like a rocket. All electrical power in the back was lost and we had no communication with the front cockpit. The previous week our squadron had lost its first EB-66 to hostile fire. The same distress! Communications lost with the pilot. That aircraft pilot was able to get out over the ocean and porpoise the plane up and down to signal the crew to bail out. The emergency red bailout light was hot-wired to the battery, but it didn't work. Would it work on our aircraft today?

The aircraft was shaking and vibrating so hard I thought the wings would disengage any second. I had both hands on the rack in front of me holding on as tight as I could. Grabbing the spare oxygen bottle, I offered to share it with Norm sitting on my left. He shook his head no, putting down his visor and pulling the green apple, the valve on his emergency bail-out bottle. I quickly put on my flying gloves, but saved my emergency bail-out bottle. It might be 15 or 20 minutes before we crossed into Laos, to bail out over a safe area where we would be picked up. How long would it take for the choppers to find me? Would the natives be friendly? All of a sudden we leveled off, out of enemy territory, but so fast? Two more explosions, but the aircraft stayed smooth and level. It was engulfed in flak. Why didn't the pilot take evasive action?

Then I saw smoke entering our compartment! I had my emergency procedures memorized perfectly: A cockpit fire requires immediate bailout. When I pointed to the smoke, Norm reached for the T-handle and ejected from the bottom of the aircraft. He was my friend; I wouldn't let him go alone. I reached for my T-handle, at the same time seeing a wall of flame through the hole left by Norm's ejection. If I took time to put on my mask, pull the green apple and put down the visor, I might burn up in the split second I was in the fiery furnace with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. A violent tumble and fast deceleration, and my 'chute opened immediately.

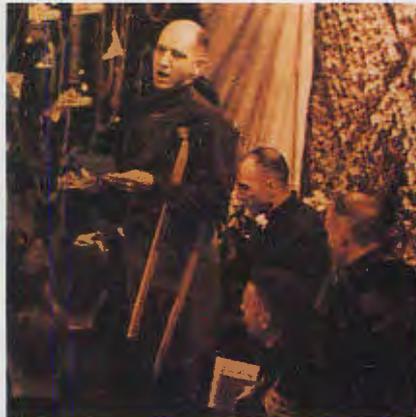
I almost blacked out as blood rushed to my feet. The 'chute swung hard to the left so that I was parallel to the ground, then hard to the right. I was getting sick. Then stillness. I smelled burning hair and skin — my own.

I opened my eyes and saw a bright flash in the distant sky, a multicolored mosaic of the number six shimmering and glowing like a treasured icon. SIX!? What did it mean? Was life flashing in front of me? A flaunting image of harmony amid the dissonance of war? I have six members in my family. It's 1966. I'm on my 60th mission. Was this the end of my life? Then it was gone.

I smelled gunpowder and looked down at my body. My sleeves and pant legs were



**ABOVE:** Navy Commander Everett Alvarez, Jr., held prisoner longer than any other American by the North Vietnamese, is greeted upon his return to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. Photo: AP/Wide World



**LEFT:** Glendon Perkins, Hanoi, December 1967. Photo: Author's collection

gone. I was burned on the arms and legs and bleeding from the top of my head. I couldn't see out of my left eye, but it was just blood from my head. My right foot throbbed painfully. The Bowie knife tied to my right leg hung off my ankle. The laces of my right boot were ripped out by the hasp of the knife. I thought my right foot was broken. Maybe I was hit by flak during the ejection sequence.

I glanced at the .38 revolver under my left arm. Should I use it now and end the suffering? I was badly burned and maybe disfigured; I didn't want my family to see me this way or pity me the rest of my life. But then the thought: I would recover. I couldn't give up. I wouldn't play God with my own life.

*Swish!* I heard a 'chute open above me, then two more down at lower altitude. Did only four of us eject? I pulled out my survival radio and let it beep four different times to inform other aircraft that four of us ejected. Where were the fighter escorts? I was looking for the giant C-130 with the hook on the front to close in, snag my 'chute, and reel me into the back of the cargo aircraft as I had seen in the Air Force survival films.

I was all alone. A huge column of black smoke spumed from the side of the mountain — our aircraft afire with its fuselage broken in two. I could not have survived that crash. The earth came at me fast, larger every second. Perfect stillness in the 'chute, no wind at all, but I could see that I was drifting fast. I looked for a landmark and saw the fork in the river below, the same one I had studied on the survival maps for the

orbit area. I would E&E (escape and evade) to the west then south through Laos into Thailand. I would avoid all contact with the natives, since I couldn't distinguish enemy from friend.

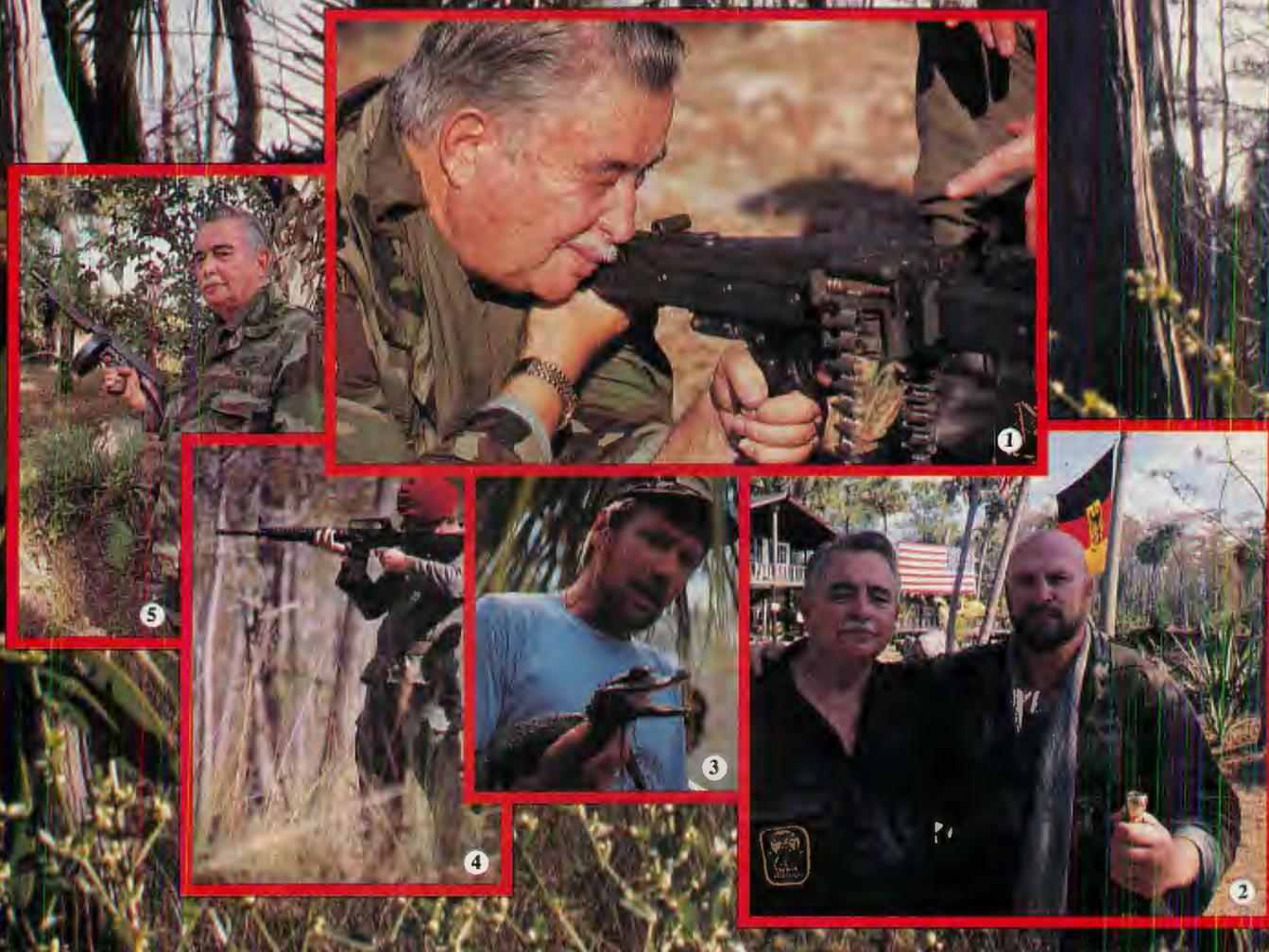
I told myself to remember to unbuckle the survival kit I was sitting on and let it hang on the 20-foot rope so it would not break my legs on landing. I reached down, but it wasn't there. I must not have hooked it properly just before takeoff. I would use my 'chute for bandages and hunt for food. Why didn't they let me go to that jungle survival school in the Philippines? Why were they in such a hurry to get me to Takhli?

I would slip the 'chute toward the fork in the river to have a starting fix for my journey. My survival maps were in the leg pocket of my flight suit. But they were gone. No rations either. I remember the survival instructor's words: "If you are badly injured, you may have to turn yourself into the enemy just to survive." Could I do that or would I rather die alone in the jungle? How would Kay ever know what had happened to me?

*Zing, zing!* I heard bullets whizzing by. The yellow bastards were shooting at me while I was in the 'chute. I heard gongs, getting louder with each foot of descent. Would I bleed to death before I reached the ground? Then I heard shouting voices, gunshots. What awaited me, sudden death? I saw a house in a clearing with a stake fence around it. Would I land on the spikes of the fence or the roof of the house? About 30 to 40 people were running toward my expected landing spot. One had a rifle with a bayonet pointed at me; another held a long bamboo pole directed at my gut. Would I be impaled? How could I do my PLF (parachute landing fall) with only one good foot? Maybe I'd injure my good foot on landing? I closed my eyes and hung limp in the 'chute,

*Continued on page 72*

# DEVIL'S BODYGUARD



## SOF MILITARY AFFAIRS

### World War II Vet Tutors Today's Airborne

Text & Photos by Tom Slizewski

**S**TALKING the enemy through snake-and alligator-infested swampland and day-long humps through the sticky-hot air of the Florida Everglades was what I expected when I volunteered for this field trip. Equipped with everything from the best in jungle boots to the newest space-age, do-

everything-but-phone-home "battle blade," I was ready for anything.

My dreams of adventure were shaken when, after an hour-long drive into the depths of the swamp, we arrived at a lush, verdant, manicured estate. Obviously, this was not the Army's Jungle Operations

Training Center in Panama. I wondered how realistically you could train in this sort of pampered setting, sort of a Floridian version of Club Med with alligators. I would soon see.

I feared this was fast becoming a non-story. There was the standard training op

fare, nothing out of the ordinary: machine-gun range, wet para jumps, fieldcraft and weapons classes, beer — the usual. I did my PR bit, held my own on the drinking end, snapped some gratuitous photos and prepared for a tame five days.

But then I met our host, Duffield Walker Matson, Jr.

I was somewhat familiar with Duff's high-profile military exploits, having been briefed on some of his wartime experiences by SOF's managing editor before jetting to Miami. I knew little else about the man. As it turned out, the soft-spoken, 64-year-old Duff proved even more remarkable than what I'd heard.

"I received a battlefield commission after the Bulge and was asked to lead a group of seasoned combat paratroopers to assassinate Adolf Hitler in early April of 1945. I accepted the mission but then Hitler committed suicide," Duff told me. This turned out to be the high point of a career that's taken on many facets. From U.S. Army private court-martialed three times to wheeler-dealer on the Sicilian black market, to convicted felon serving a 45-year jail term for attempted murder, to multi-

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1 - Matson receives instruction on German MG-3, essentially identical to MG 42s the Nazis fielded during World War II.

2 - Matson and Donovan during Operation Gator '88, Big Cypress Swamp, Florida Everglades.

3 - Operation Gator's namesake held by instructor Joe Wasilewski

4 - German airborne troops cross-train with M16A2

5 - Matson with weapon of choice — Thompson M1928 SMG

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millionaire businessman, Duff's done it all.

Still, he's not widely known outside the Special Forces/Airborne community and southern Florida where he resides. Matson has always been a maverick who doesn't necessarily play by the rules, which goes against the grain of the by-the-book Army. During most of World War II, the military establishment did not seem eager to embrace him. Today it's a different story.

One of his more high profile endeavors is sponsoring the training exercise I was sent here to cover, but more on that later. For the moment it was Duff that held my interest.

As an editor at SOF you hear a lot of war stories, but after speaking with Duff at his Big Cypress Swamp estate, I knew I was meeting someone exceptional. Duff's stories aren't the standard, "There I was, this ain't no shit. . . ." talk. He doesn't brag; he just tells, at times even seeming to trivialize the extraordinary events he was involved in.

Though the war ended before the mission to go after Hitler got the green light and Duff's battlefield commission was rescinded (according to Duff, all battlefield commissions of this type issued within 60 days



ABOVE: German Paras during water jump into Biscayne Bay. Photo: Thomas Boegel



LEFT: SOF Demolitions Editor, John Donovan, had something to do with this trooper's sudden inspiration for a close shave.

of May 7, 1945, were declared null and void by General Eisenhower), his contingent was among the first posted to Berlin for occupation duties.

"I was one of the first Americans inside Hitler's bunker," he says, recalling the event fondly. "I chipped a chunk of red Italian marble from his wall. It weighed several pounds, so I sent it home by mail. I also searched through Hitler's desk, in his own room, and found several sheets of Adolf's personal stationery. I couldn't resist sending a letter written on it, so I wrote my folks about coming home," he told me, fully realizing the irony of the event.

He's extremely proud of his jump wings and it shows whenever conversation turns to airborne exploits. His reason for joining the paratroops was simple: they get to the enemy first. Upon enlisting in 1942 he asked the recruiter who the hardest fighting men were. The recruiter suggested the Marines, but Duff wanted something tougher. At this time America was still experimenting with the basics of vertical envelopment, and separate airborne troops had not been fully developed. The idea of dropping on top of the enemy to kill him fascinated Duff then, as it still does. He signed up.

"I left a trail of broken bodies from the U.S. to Sicily," he's fond of saying. Breaking bodies is fine when you're in a war, but for Duff Matson in those days the enemy as often as not included U.S. soldiers — officers and "legs" mostly. Not surprisingly, Duff soon found himself in jail.

Life in prison was hell, and Duff soon seized the chance to escape. After getting out he lived in the hills of Sicily for several

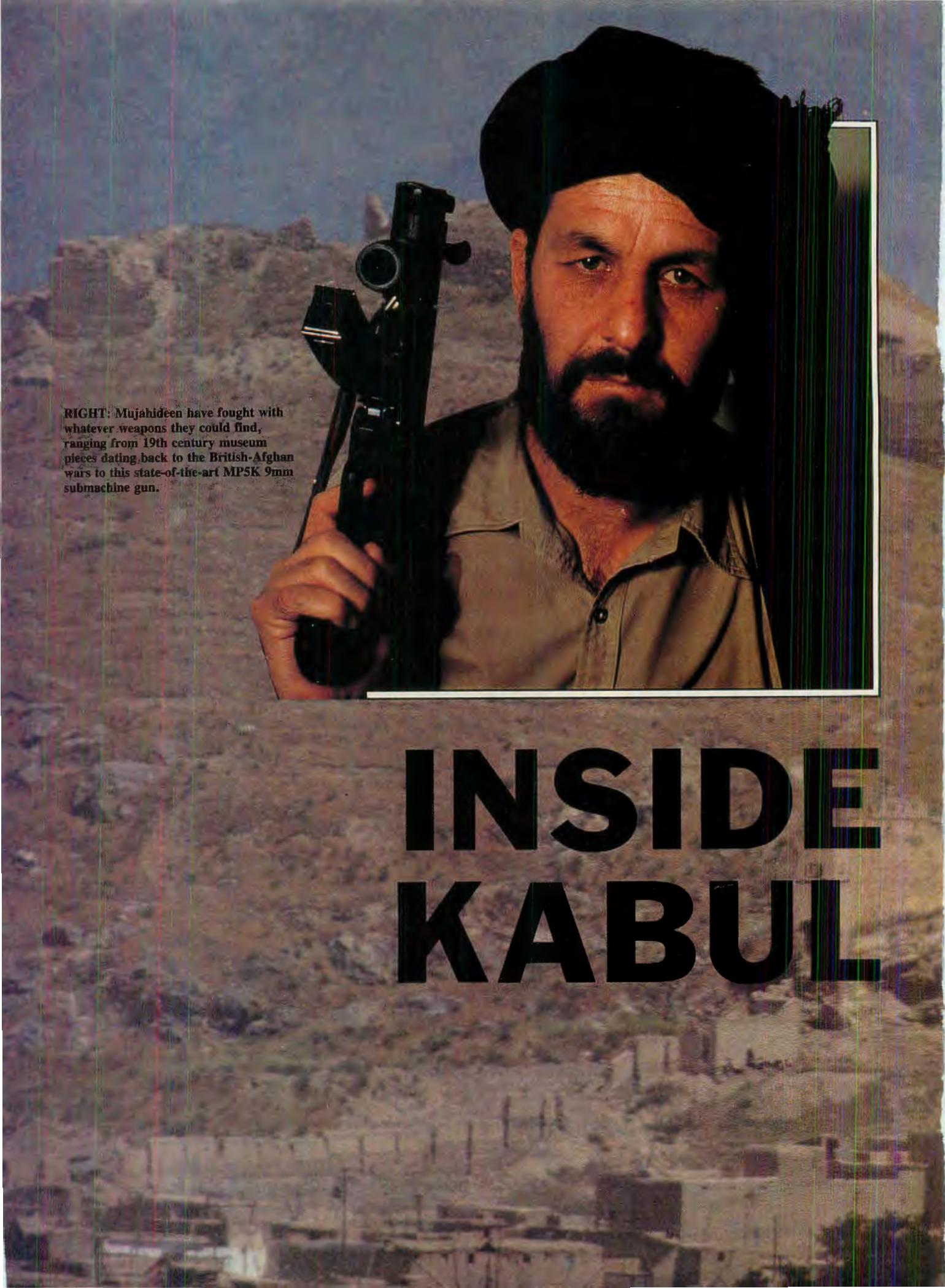
weeks, making a living dealing on the then-flourishing black market. Time passed and Duff's yearning for action overrode his common sense, and he turned himself in, hoping for leniency. His prior crimes were gone but not forgotten. They threw the book at him for his various misdeeds, paramount among them being an attempted murder charge. He was sentenced to prison for 45 years on this charge, which involved extensive damage done to an MP officer during a bar-room brawl. Since the death sentence was not uncommon at the time, particularly in the military, he could be considered "lucky" having gotten away with his life. Unbeknownst to him, Duff's luck was just beginning.

Within several weeks of his conviction he was taken from his cell at machine-gun point and brought before General Robert Fredrick, commander of the 1st Special Service Force, which the Germans called "The Devil's Brigade." Gen. Fredrick had a reputation for surrounding himself with hard-chargers, often ex-cons, a la the film *The Dirty Dozen*, who'd later show undying loyalty and gratitude to the man who rescued them from a dismal prison existence. Duff was offered the choice of rotting in some dank hellhole or taking on Fredrick's dangerous dirty work; he not surprisingly opted for the latter. After Duff agreed to work for him, Gen. Fredrick purportedly said, "Lower those guns, gentlemen. This is Matson. He has a wealth of talent; he's one of us now."

"The talent he was referring to wasn't just my capability for violence but also my skills in mathematics, trigonometry and geometry. He needed someone to coordinate maps and overlays to determine German unit and gun positions," Duff adds.

Under Gen. Fredrick, Duff served in various capacities. He performed behind-the-lines missions in Northern Italy with the

*Continued on page 83*

A man with a dark beard and a black turban is shown from the chest up, holding a black submachine gun. He is wearing a light-colored, short-sleeved button-down shirt. The background is a high-angle view of a city with many small, rectangular buildings, likely Kabul. The lighting is bright, suggesting daylight. The image has a slightly grainy texture and some vertical lines, possibly from a scan or print.

**RIGHT:** Mujahideen have fought with whatever weapons they could find, ranging from 19th century museum pieces dating back to the British-Afghan wars to this state-of-the-art MP5K 9mm submachine gun.

# INSIDE KABUL

# SOF Correspondent Infiltrates Afghan Capital

**Text & Photos by John Jameson**

**A**S mujahideen guerrillas loaded ammunition and weapons onto American Tennessee mules just inside the Afghan border, their commander joked, "The next time I come to Pakistan, it will be as a tourist, flying in from Kabul." His bravado illustrated the raised morale of the Afghan resistance in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal. For the first time in 10 years

of fighting the Afghan mujahideen sense victory.

These mujahideen were returning to their mountain positions, which encircle the Afghan capital, Kabul. Their caravan was taking in further military supplies, including American Stinger missiles — evidence that cross-border aid is continuing despite the Geneva accord.

Lying in a ditch 30 meters from the southern Kabul highway, observing the Soviet armored convoys rumble north, mujahideen commander Dr. Abdul Hamid said, "We won't stop them going home, but we will continue to fight the [Afghan] communists."

Their operations were now concentrated against the forces of Najibullah's regime in Logar Province.

Picketing the highway some 100 meters away were Soviet airborne troops with armored personnel carriers providing protection for their departing comrades. Deploying before dawn, they would send long bursts of cannon fire into the surrounding farming area as a warning to the resistance not to attack, with resulting fatalities among the local population. They were determined to maintain their low casualty rate in the war as they exited from it.

Just after dawn the convoys started rolling north toward Kabul: tanks, artillery and trucks taking with them the paraphernalia of occupation, from beds to refrigerators and generators, halting civilian traffic on the highway until late afternoon.

**Bala Hissar Castle's crumbling bastions have held off many previous invaders and have been the proud seat of past Afghan kingdoms.**



## SOLDIER WITH A CAMERA

Author John Jameson is a photojournalist who knows what he's talking about when he reports on war. Before becoming a journalist Jameson fought in Rhodesia, then entered the British army and graduated from the Sandhurst Royal Military Academy, later serving as a mechanized platoon commander in Germany. In civilian life he has continued to travel the world, this time reporting on wars rather than fighting in them. His assignments have taken him to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Northern Ireland and Africa (see "Eritrea's Femmes Fatales," SOF, February '88).

A letter torn up and discarded beside the highway gave an insight into Russian morale. Addressed to Andrei Sershenko from his aunt, it described the emotional feelings of the people back home in the Soviet Union. Dated 15 May [1988], the day the pull-out began, his aunt writes of the family's concern for him and his comrades:

"Andrewshka, how are things there after your arrival? You only have five months to serve. I cannot believe they will keep you there until the end, for all nine months. In nine months all our soldiers will have to be withdrawn from Afghanistan. You are all in our thoughts, and we live exclusively for news from Afghanistan . . . The heat is hard enough to survive without the war, but they [the mujahideen] don't keep quiet — the dogs!

"Andrewshka watch out for yourself, preserve yourself, we are waiting for you impatiently . . . I write to you often so you don't miss home . . . So I kiss you my berry, Your aunt Nadia."

Something had gone wrong. The Soviet retreat had begun early and commander Hamid was stranded 40 kilometers south of his destination — Kabul city. Hamid was a mujahideen guerrilla commander within the Afghan capital, and for three frustrating weeks he had watched Soviet convoys roar past, preventing him from joining his men. Now he was on three packs of cigarettes a day, pushing four, and the air in the farm house was acrid with smoke and anxiety. A few hundred meters away Soviet paratroopers could be seen on the highway.

Communications with the city's underground were proving impossible, and as time slipped by Hamid's secret mission risked being compromised. The waiting was proving to be too much. "We could hijack a petrol tanker, empty out all the fuel and then drive into Kabul hiding in the back."

"What?!! Are you serious." I had accompanied a few harebrained mujahideen missions in the past, though this proposal promised to surpass them all. It was clear that he was being very serious. "Don't you realize that the fumes would kill us if we sit inside the fuel tank? And, anyway you can't stop smoking!"

"I won't smoke," Hamid assured me, drawing on another Kent. "Also, we could leave the petrol caps open." It could have been Hamid's cigarette habit that on reflection saved us from suffocation, or even worse, immolation. Perhaps it was the prospect of attempting to capture a tanker from under the noses of elite paratroopers. But, mercifully, it was decided to wait a little longer for word from the city.

Hamid's mission was to distribute a message from Abdul Haq, Kabul's main mujahideen commander, to the Afghan military and the citizens of Kabul calling on their support in the wake of the Soviet withdrawal. Without such support, Haq realized that the mujahideen are incapable of overthrowing the communist regime. Haq offered me the unique opportunity of traveling with his men, demonstrating the mujahideen's following within the regime's forces, and their ability to move about at will within the capital.

Word came eventually. The message was written on a piece of cloth sewn into the clothes of a 14-year-old schoolboy who had managed to hitch a ride out to us. A specially adapted

vehicle with a secret compartment would be coming to pick us up soon.

It was 0400 when we departed, passing beneath a copy of the Koran held by a mullah. The mujahideen kissed it; I rather self-consciously crossed myself. We were going to Kabul, the heart of Soviet-occupied Afghanistan, which would be crawling with communist troops, both Russian and Afghan.

Hamid had dressed in the latest fashion in *shalwarkamize* pyjamas, Afghanistan's national costume, and crowned with a black silk turban. Spraying himself with a liberal amount of Joy perfume, a custom common to urban Kabuli males, he put his Christian Dior dark glasses on and prepared to run the gauntlet dressed like a rich trader.

Hidden in the secret compartment, I could see out as the driver eased the truck along the potholed track and onto the highway. Dawn was giving way to the pale blue light of morning as the first armored vehicles of the Soviet paratroopers took up positions along the road. It was chilly and the troops were wrapped up in their quilted khaki jackets. Some were eating breakfast and drinking tea as we drove past. Our Kabul number plates seemed to justify our presence to these somnolent soldiers. Within the hour, however, they would be firing into the farming area on either side — a sort of reconnaissance by fire to discourage ambushes.

We drove on, past a knocked-out school whose walls displayed the graffiti of a Soviet unit. Piles of shell cases lay in what had been classrooms. The torn and twisted skeletal remains of tanks, trucks and armored personnel carriers littered the roadside. Beyond lay the ruins of destroyed villages. Their few remaining walls stood like tombstones in a desolate graveyard. Our driver drove carefully by, negotiating the craters left by mujahideen mines from past attacks.

Stopping at the first checkpoint, he called out to what appeared to be a deserted blockhouse. A figure pulling on a pair of blue jeans stumbled out, and recognizing our driver, he waved us on. Nearby, a faded billboard showed an aged Chernenko clasping Babrak Karmal to his chest in apparent amity. Both presidents have since departed; their actions a lasting legacy to the people of Afghanistan. Smoke from campfires rose on the hillside beyond, where troops were mustering in front of their tanks for an early morning parade. Artillery barrels bristled from the crest of every hill, all pointing away from the city toward the hinterland, toward what is "bandit country" to the Soviets. Then another cursory checkpoint, through which our driver was passed with a wave, before we rounded a bend in the road — and were abruptly flagged down by three Soviet paratroopers. This was unforeseen, and the driver didn't seem to have the banter to deal with them. I crouched down in my hiding place and tried not to breathe.

"I know you won't talk if you are caught. Anyway if you are, you can scream a lot; then you'll be too busy to talk." These departing words of advice had been given to me by Abdul Haq before I left for Afghanistan with his men. His faith in my stoicism, I now felt, had been a little premature.

A junior sergeant put his head through the driver's window. Like his two comrades, he had his AK-74 assault rifle slung over his shoulder. Their collars sported the green airborne symbol of a parachutist flanked by two aircraft. He had a red enamel *Komsomol* badge over his heart — Lenin's portrait mounted on a red flag. It is only awarded for meritorious party service. "Do you want to buy a box of biscuits?" he asked. "Or a grease gun?"

All three were barely out of their teens, led by a street-wise comrade who probably hustled Levis from tourists in Red Square. They had now turned soldiering in a communist army into a profitable profession. Our driver was not impressed, telling the sergeant his prices were outrageous, as he could buy such things in the "black bazaar" for half as much. I had heard reports that departing soldiers had been selling their boots, clothing and equipment, even an instance of one selling a Kalashnikov rifle, but I hadn't really believed them. Now here

**In Kabul, school children from grades 10-12 are being given 30-days military training, a haunting reminder of the Hitler Youth's defense of Berlin in the last months of the Third Reich. Most mujahideen youth have known nothing but war for the last 10 years.**





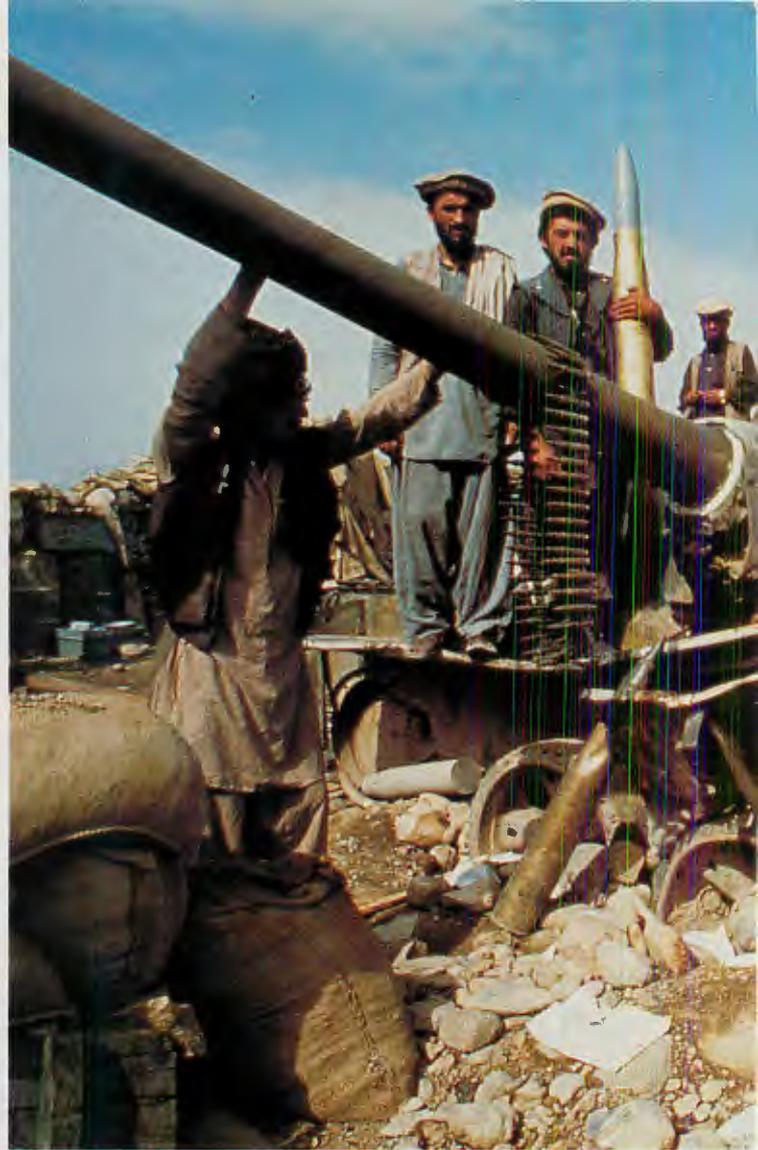
**ABOVE:** BMP1 armored personnel carrier heads toward Kabul. Tanks, artillery and trucks take paraphernalia of occupation with them, from beds to refrigerators and generators.

**RIGHT:** Mujahideen in their favorite pose: atop abandoned Soviet war machines.

**BELOW:** Housed in King Amanullah's dream palace, the Defense Ministry was scene of the first act in drama of invasion. In Christmas 1979 Soviet paratroopers stormed the building and killed wayward puppet President Hafizullah Amin.



**Mujahideen clown on wrecked communist Afghan helicopter.**



we were being accosted on the Kabul highway by the elite of Soviet forces selling their rations and equipment.

With their close-cropped conscript hair and healthy complexions they did not appear fearsome. Just three youngsters eager to get home. The largest of the three saw that our driver wasn't interested and shuffled over to a ditch, reappearing with a personnel carrier's tool kit. "150 afghanis" (less than \$1, which could only buy a pack of cigarettes, though more likely a joint). They seemed desperate to make a sale that morning. But they hadn't counted on the Afghans' inbred custom of haggling. Neither had I. Fifteen minutes of hard bargaining later a price of 100 afghanis was agreed upon, and finally we were on our way again. Our driver chortled — another small victory for the resistance. The tool kit must have been worth about \$200.

Bini Hissar was a small whitewashed fort that looked as though it belonged in the Middle Ages. This was the third and final checkpoint, on the outskirts of Kabul. Afghan army troops were searching all vehicles thoroughly, looking under seats and even behind door panels. But again our driver knew a guard, a cousin of a friend, who allowed us to go through unchecked.

It was 0600 when we drove into Kabul; the drive had taken two hours. Shopkeepers were rolling up steel shutters on stores which were well stocked, and commuters were congregating at bus stops on their way to work. It was only the scything beat of helicopter gunships sweeping suddenly overhead that struck a warlike note.

We turned off by the Bala Hissar, whose crumbling bastions have fended off many previous invaders and have been the proud seat of past Afghan kingdoms. At a bus station an



**TOP:** Soviet airborne troops with armor provide protection for departing comrades. Deploying before dawn, they fire long bursts of cannon fire into surrounding farming area as a warning to resistance not to attack.

**ABOVE:** Mujahideen lie in ditch 30 meters from the Kabul highway, observing Soviet armored convoys rumble north.

Afghan army major in full uniform hurriedly greeted us with embraces. We ducked into his waiting Volga staff car, courtesy of the Afghan Ministry of Defense, where he worked, and drove at breakneck speed to a safehouse. Wearing civilian clothes, I was taken for just another Russian out for a drive with his comrades.

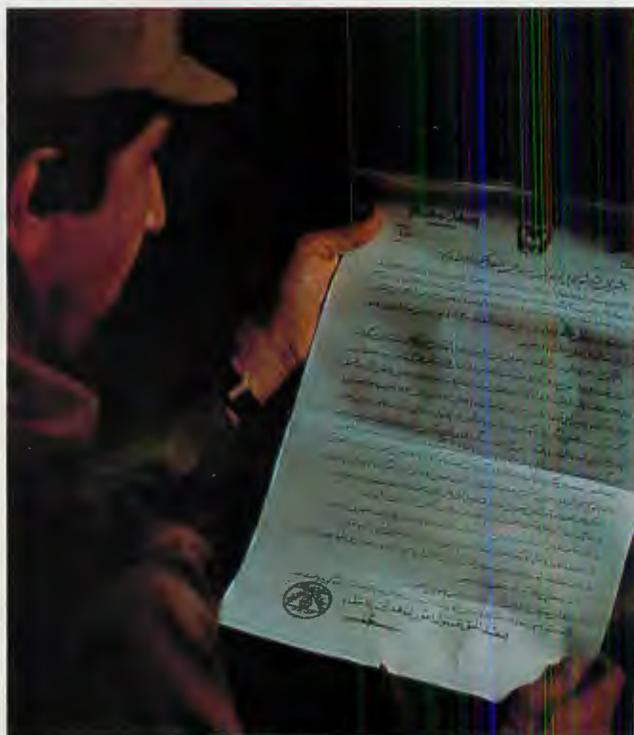
Hamid changed again, this time into a dapper three-piece black suit with flared trousers, which he proudly announced was of "English design" — though his brown platform shoes ruined the sartorial effect. He then left for a clandestine meeting with his men to arrange for the message's distribution.

"When the Russians leave, a large percentage of the army will join the mujahideen," explained the Afghan army general who had arranged my military escort in Kabul. One of Hamid's contacts, he had been a member of Haq's mujahideen for the last 18 months. "The army has been fighting only because the Russians are here. Only 10 percent are true party members who will stand and fight to the end. President Najib will then be on top of the last tank going to Russia.

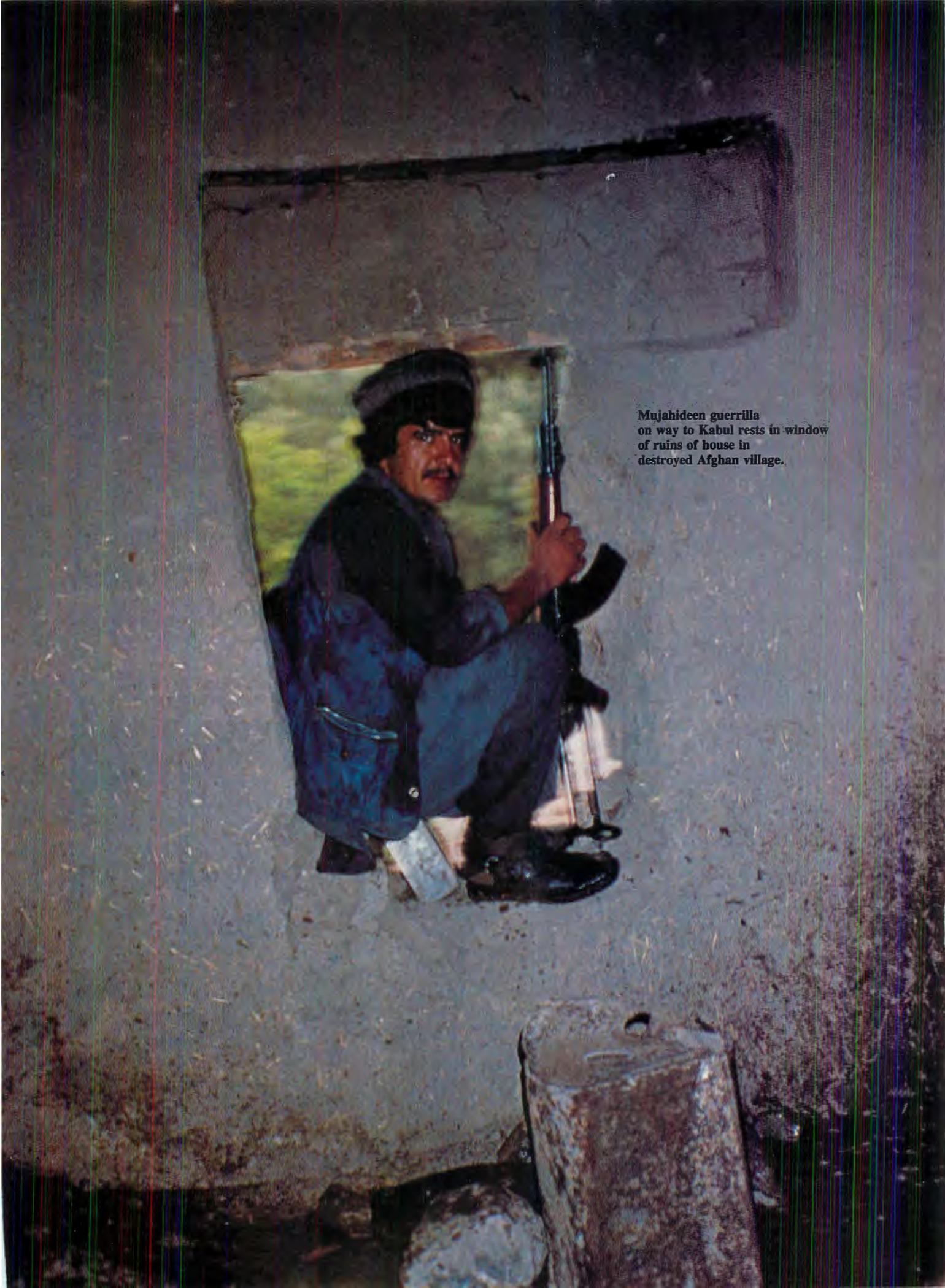
"Death awaits the leaders for what they have done — even the Russians are not happy with them — now the whole world is laughing at their failure in Afghanistan."

These sentiments were echoed by a young captain in the secret police, Khad. Involved in cross-border subversion in Pakistan, he told me, "Many of my colleagues are tired of the Russians; we cannot wait for them to leave." But, like all secret policemen, you couldn't be sure whether he was telling the truth.

The Najib regime does not intend to fall without a fight. Communist party members are each receiving 15-days military training and being issued Kalashnikovs. A relative of a Central



**Hamid's mission was to deliver this message from Kabul's main mujahideen commander, Abdul Haq, calling for support from citizens of Kabul and Afghan military in wake of Soviet withdrawal.**



**Mujahideen guerrilla  
on way to Kabul rests in window  
of ruins of house in  
destroyed Afghan village.**

Committee member was told, "Whatever happens, we will stand and fight." School children from grades 10-12 are being given 30 days military training, a haunting reminder of the Hitler Youth's defense of Berlin in the last months of the Third Reich. Nightly reports on Kabul television showed the army taking over from departing Soviet units, with officers confidently saying they could hold on.

With the Afghan army major at the wheel of the Volga, we were saluted at all checkpoints as we drove into the center of town. We drove past the American Embassy, with its tank traps at the gates and Afghan soldiers lounging outside, watching an Indian film on a portable television set. At every intersection an unmarked car was parked, its occupants in shalwarkamize and armed with Kalashnikovs. Each time the major would hiss "Khad," the feared name of Afghanistan's notorious secret police.

Then on out to Daraluman, the plush suburb built in the 1920s according to the whims of King Amanullah (it was to be his New Delhi), along what traveler Robert Byron described as "one of the most beautiful avenues in the world." Though poplars still line the avenue, tanks and jeeps sit parked in the shade. Daraluman is Kabul's most sensitive area. Here the KGB has its headquarters alongside Khad; barracks nestle among the 1950s-style luxury houses.

Further along is the vast Soviet Embassy compound, bristling with antennas and surveillance cameras, under the dubious protection of Afghan army soldiers lying on beds at the entrance. Close by, their BTR-60 armored personnel carrier looked abandoned, its machine gun pointing toward the Defense Ministry. Housed in King Amanullah's dream palace, it was the scene of the first act in the drama of the invasion. During Christmas of 1979 Soviet paratroopers stormed it and killed their wayward puppet president Hafizulah Amin.

I had been here with the mujahideen before, back in 1983, when I was asked by the commander whether he should attack the Soviet High Command or go down the road and attack the Ministry of Defense. I let him choose, and my last impression was of a fire burning from a second floor window before beating a none too timely retreat. In the daylight it was impressive with its imposing burnt-yellow facade, but spoiled by a hideous red iron rocket sculpture, surmounted by a star.

Heading out to Kwajarawah, the section where Kabul's international airport is located, we passed by the British Embassy, built on the orders of Lord Curzon to be the finest in Asia. It was a splash of white amidst green trees as we sped by. Soviet barracks lined the way to the airport, and the traffic was entirely military, with seemingly relaxed troops sitting atop their vehicles. At the airport we were pulled up barely 300 meters from the perimeter fence, where a squadron of SU-25s were parked. We were turned back as it was for Soviet military traffic only. A week later, Western diplomatic sources reported that eight of these ground attack fighters were destroyed in a rocket attack by Abdul Haq's mujahideen. It was the largest single loss of aircraft of the war.

While staying in a safehouse near the Soviet Embassy, our morning was interrupted by the explosions of incoming mujahideen rockets, possibly from Abdul Haq's men. Missing the embassy compound and KGB headquarters, the rockets slammed into some waste ground, killing a shepherd and a number of his flock. Ironically, it is the Soviets who are suspected. "People are saying that it's the Rooshians who are firing the rockets into the common people's houses," said a Kabul college lecturer in our supposed safehouse. Unperturbed, a Soviet husband and wife continued watering their garden next door.

Much of the time I was in Kabul I was sitting, waiting, watching television. Soviet TV carried Reagan's visit to the Kremlin. It was peculiar watching Reagan flying out of Moscow on Air Force One as MI-24s flew over at rooftop level.

Moving every night from safehouse to safehouse, it was apparent that the mujahideen enjoyed considerable support within the capital. However, their ability to turn a passive sympathy into military action will determine when Kabul will fall.

"We are not trained for street fighting," says Abdul Haq.



Muj salvage experts left nothing usable when they gutted and stripped this T-54 tank — just a few macabre dummies on top of the abandoned hulk.

"We are unable to capture any city by force without the help of the people and the army inside. It is important now to save human lives and stop unnecessary bloodshed as well as saving Kabul's infrastructure, which we will need in the future.

"So we are now working on the army and the security forces to turn against the Najib regime and help us take power. We are going to win this war. But we need the help of the people of Kabul to make it quicker, so we can save lives and diminish the losses; by (the people) stopping their support of the regime and turning to the mujahideen. They should commit acts of industrial sabotage, leave their jobs and join us."

There was an understandable unease about the future among the city's residents. I was asked by a Kabul University professor, "Should I take my family and leave the city? We are very concerned with what a post-Najib government could bring; there is a great fear of fundamentalism. We hate communism, but given the choice we would prefer Najib to Gulbuddin."

The professor's fears echoed many of those with whom I talked; all looked to the deposed king as a solution. "We feel that Zahir Shah is our only hope to the potential chaos. There is an old Afghan saying that 'The king is the shadow of God who protects all.'

"Ten years of war has cost Afghanistan dearly, not least the loss of the professional classes in our society, who have either been killed or have fled abroad. The fear of fundamentalism, far from encouraging them to return home, will only make the few of us left to go and join them."

This fear is understood by Haq, who has been frustrated as a military commander by the shaky mujahideen alliance's lack of leadership. "We need a broad-based government to be formed by the alliance to include different ethnic groups, tribal leaders, commanders and politicians. Only this can provide the leadership that is wanted.

"I don't think we need fundamentalism. Always in the history of Afghanistan the people have resisted any force. The British learnt this and now the Russians have — if our people are forced into something they don't want, the fighting will continue."

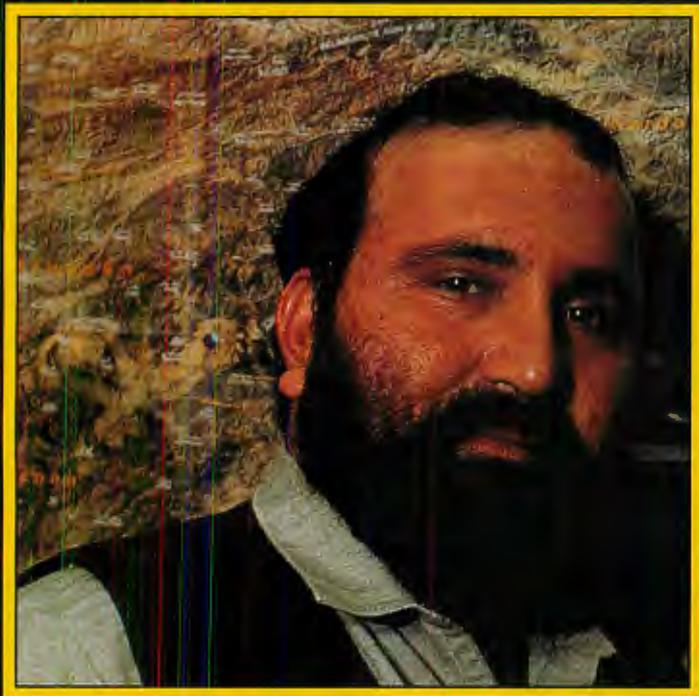
As I left Kabul after four nights with the capital's underground, I was made to promise I would return to visit my brave hosts in happier times when they are free. The general kissed me and gave me two bottles of Stolychnaya Russian vodka. "Thank you for coming," he said. "Drink to us when you get back safely."

Hamid and I left Kabul in the same way we had come, and again we were stopped by the three paratroopers. They were carrying empty shell cases full of diesel fuel. "Do you want to buy some fuel?"

This time our driver was warned against trading with the enemy. ✕

**SOF AFGHANISTAN**

# THE MASTER



ABOVE: Wounded 15 times, 29-year-old Haji Abdul Haq has been fighting for the last 12 years and is one of Afghanistan's foremost guerrilla fighters.

# OF KABUL

**SOF Interviews  
Guerrilla Leader  
Poised on  
Destiny's Doorstep**

Text & Photos by John Jameson



Nighttime attack on Kharga Dam, Kabul's main ammunition dump, in August 1986 was Haq's greatest success, coming at a time when resistance morale was still very low. The fire burned for two days and hundreds of enemy soldiers died.

**H**AJI Abdul Haq at 29 is one of Afghanistan's foremost guerrilla fighters. Wounded 15 times, he has been fighting to liberate his country for the last 12 years. As Soviet forces finally prepare to quit Kabul after nine years, having failed to defeat the fabled Pathan fighting men Kiping immortalized, Abdul Haq and his 5,000 men are poised to seize the capital.

Through his veins runs the fiery blood of his Ghilzai forefathers, who annihilated Elphinstone's retreating army in 1842 — the largest British defeat until the fall of Singapore a century later. His great-grandfather was one of the few leaders who remained unvanquished in the second Anglo-Afghan war against General "Fightin' Bobs" Roberts.

This was his first time back commanding his forces since he lost his right foot, blown off by an anti-personnel mine. Seated beneath a mulberry tree, Abdul Haq was holding court. Like a bearded latter day Henry VIII, crowned with a woolen Chitrali cap, he was planning operations against the city, plotting movements on U.S. Defense Department maps. His "courtiers," sporting U.S. camouflage and Chinese Kalashnikovs, were bringing in radio reports from his groups, perched on their mountain aeries above Kabul. Dispatch riders were sitting astride Kawasaki scramblers, waiting for the latest orders to be typed, before departing for outlying districts.

"It was during a lecture on Pushtunistan — I must have been about 13 then — and the teacher was telling us that we must fight against Pakistan for a separate Pushtun nation. I asked him why we did not fight against the Soviets for Panjdeh [Tsarist Russia captured the northwestern Afghan town in 1885]. He slapped me for that. So I hit him," a gleeful chuckle, "and then my classmates and I took him outside and dry-shaved his head. I was suspended, so everybody boycotted school until he was transferred — which he was.

"After this I was on vacation with my brother in Kabul, when Daoud overthrew the king in a [communist inspired] coup. Tanks were on the streets and there was much shooting. It was when my elder brother said to me that we must do something against the communists that I realized I must fight for Afghanistan.

"We began organizing groups of sympathizers and talking to people. But we didn't know how to start a coup, and there was always problems from secret police raids. The people didn't see what the communists were doing and didn't really help — they see their mistake now. When we did attempt a coup within the



As Soviet forces finally prepare to quit Kabul, Abdul Haq and his 5,000 men are poised to seize the capital.

military, we were soon found out, betrayed — many officers were shot. Perhaps, if we had succeeded, the Soviets might not have invaded."

Haq was 16 when he first went to Pakistan. His mission was to bring back 30 kilograms of plastic explosive for an operation on a district center in his home province of Nangarhar. But things went badly awry for these fledgling fighters.

"They began the operation early, and I missed it," Haq bashfully admits. "None of us had any military experience and we didn't know what to do. Especially when they captured the buildings, taking the weapons and ammunition — but what



Abdul Haq, on first day back commanding forces since losing right foot, plans operations against the city of Kabul on U.S. Defense Department maps.

should they do with the prisoners? It was a problem." He smiled at their military naivete. "Then one of the men dropped a grenade and was badly wounded. He was captured and under torture talked. After that we knew we had to be more careful.

"I went back to Kabul and continued my underground work, but the secret police were now looking for me. I was eventually betrayed by an informer we had released on trust and taken by the secret police. I sent a message to my people to have him killed. He was shot three days later on the front steps of the headquarters, when he came to testify against me.

"They questioned me for four months, during which time I was subjected to psychological torture, as well as being beaten and thrown in the snow. I knew they had a lot of information on me, but I wouldn't tell them anything. I was then taken in front of a military court at the palace. It was all over very quickly, before the general signed the sentence in a red pen. I was sentenced to death."

Were you afraid? "I am only human." He ran his hand through his thinning hair, remembering a day of great personal consequence that must have faded in light of further events. "But no, I was not afraid to die. There are some things that one must be prepared to die for — my country is more important than myself.

"A family friend, a general in the army, managed to get the sentence postponed until I was 18. I was then taken with Daoud's family [Daoud having been killed in a coup] to *Pul-i-Charkhi* prison [since gaining notoriety as a place of summary execution and indefinite incarceration] — we were the first prisoners.

"They hadn't finished building it; we were crammed into small cells with the stone floor to sleep on. Existing was very hard, unless you had money. Prisoners would just disappear; every night we could hear machine-gun fire. One day my name was called and I thought my time had come. My friends all came and said good-bye. The soldier who escorted me out was crying. He had been good to me in the prison. In an office I was made to sign a piece of paper before being led outside. I was then driven back to the secret police headquarters, where to my surprise I was released early in the morning. My cousins had paid a \$7,500 bribe. I left for Pakistan soon after, hiding in a fruit truck beneath a heap of watermelons going to the Frontier.

"You must understand that the [mujahideen] parties were very small then. Our organization in Kabul was now very small. We were existing on what money we could raise in our home province of Nangarhar to buy ammunition and locally made versions of the British Lee-Enfield rifle. The people were beginning to realize what the communists wanted from us, and we began to get more volunteers than we could arm. But it was necessary to get some military expertise, so we kidnapped an army captain from his house, which we then blew up. He now

works in one of my training camps.

Did you have any qualms about killing? "To kill a human is not an easy thing. But what else can you do when you are fighting to save your country from communism?"

"We were fighting small battles and I was wounded a number of times by shrapnel and machine-gun bullets." He exposed his leg to show the mottled scars where bullets had passed through muscle. On his scalp were the scarred indents of shrapnel. "But we needed to start work in the capital. So against my party's orders I went to Paghman (where royalty and the rich had summer homes) 15 miles west of Kabul. There we worked on establishing *chireek* [clandestine] groups, capturing what weapons we could from the police and small patrols. We wanted to clean the area of communists and informers. It was hard work, but exciting — we had to move house every night to avoid capture.

"It was difficult to fight against the tanks and helicopter gunships as we did not have any rockets or missiles, so we would hide in the mountains when they attacked. It was about this time, when our support was growing, that the Soviets invaded.

"With the Soviet invasion all the people came out to support us. In fact we did not have enough weapons to equip those coming to join us, so some would cook and guard our camps, others would carry equipment on operations, until we could give them guns we captured. Foreign aid was very limited — mostly money. We had to find our own weapons then. We concentrated on building up our forces and carrying out hit and run operations inside the city."

The first few years of the war the mujahideen grew, as covert weapon supplies from U.S. and Arab sources finally filtered through via Pakistan. Haq's mujahideen numbered a couple of thousand by the end of 1981. He was only 22, and had entered into agreements of cooperation with other groups around the city. The Soviet army, geared for a conventional war in Europe, found itself bogged down in besieged garrisons, unable to adapt to fighting a guerrilla war.

"Our plans were to attack targets of importance, like the power stations and grain silos, as well as assassinating prominent communists. We would carry out an attack and get away before the Soviets could react. Their chain of command was too inflexible; when they tried to come up into the mountains they got caught out in the open and died. We would leave their bodies out as a warning."

I came across a field of sun-bleached broken bones and skulls peeping through the shredded strips of uniforms in 1983; the tattered remains of a force which had attempted to take the Paghman heights — and failed. It has taken the Russians nine years to learn what the British learnt a century earlier. Perhaps if they had read Kipling's advice to the young British soldier, they might have realized what dangerous opponents the Afghans are:

*When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,  
And the women come out to cut up what remains,  
Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains  
An' go to your Gawd like a soldier.*

Haq has been bribed by the communist government to stop attacking the electricity pylon lines and escaped assassination attempts in the Frontier capital of Peshawar, where intrigue and danger are as real as they are gruesome reminders of times past. Tales told by his commanders have atavistic evocations, of headless bodies floating in the canal — failed assassins, they say with a grimacing leer that makes the blood curdle, to whom justice has swiftly been dealt by Haq's bodyguards.

When he is not inside Afghanistan, Haq is in Peshawar fighting for weapon supplies from his own party. He had to close his own training camp because other members of his party felt threatened by his growing power and military success. Refusal to do the Pakistan military's bidding in carrying out certain operations has cost him dearly in weapons. I have seen commanders I have known from different parties coming to his office, asking to join his party — only to be refused because of his inability to supply them. On his desk is a gold carriage clock, a gift from the U.S. Congress, and framed on the wall is

a scroll twinning Paghman with a town in France. His stature abroad commands greater respect than it does in Pakistan.

At the end of 1985 he met President Reagan; he met with Mrs. Thatcher in early 1986. He was the first mujahideen commander they had met, and it came at a crucial time when the war was going badly for the resistance. It is thought that at these meetings Haq managed to persuade the two Western leaders of the importance of the resistance acquiring surface-to-air missiles. Their introduction in 1986 was largely responsible in reversing the mujahideen's fortunes.

"I was more impressed with Mrs. Thatcher than I was with Reagan, as she seemed to understand our problems more than he did. I told Mrs. Thatcher that over a hundred years ago my great grandfather and his father before him had fought against the British when they had come to keep the Russians out of Afghanistan (in pursuance of the Raj's "Forward policy"). So I asked her: Now the Russians have come again; why are you so quiet? Why do you send everything a hundred years ago, and yet now you send nothing?" Haq tactfully forgets her answer.

Haq's greatest success was in August 1986, at a time when the resistance's morale was very low, when he blew up Kabul's main ammunition dump. "We planned the attack months ahead, finding the right firing point and infiltrating the rockets through enemy lines before we started the attack in late August 1986. We were lucky, as our first rockets hit the ammunition dump. The explosion was so big that it startled even us, making some of my men run for cover as rockets and shells exploded, sending massive fireballs into the air and the concussion being felt throughout the city. The fire burnt for two days. Hundreds of soldiers died.

"This had a tremendous effect on the morale of the people in Kabul, as well as our mujahideen. It certainly delayed many Afghan army operations and took months for them to restock their munitions."

I have been privileged to accompany Haq on a number of times going inside. Unlike other commanders he would always walk, declining a horse, on the grounds that the majority of his men do not have one to ride, so why should he. Although a German surgeon told him that he needs an operation on his knees, he says he can't spare the six months rest afterwards. He also demands as much from his men.

In 1985, I accompanied a group of his on an operation to blow up the Kabul power lines. After a day and a night's march, we were within a couple of hundred meters of a pylon when a man stepped on a mine, losing his left leg. The mission was rapidly abandoned, the man dying on the way back. Haq led the prayers at his burial that morning, saying afterwards, "They will have to go back next week and try again. Otherwise they will think that they can stop whenever they take casualties."

Two years later Haq was supervising an operation that involved four coordinated attacks on Kabul. "It was raining and my foot slipped. There was a flash and a loud bang; the next thing I saw was my foot flying past my head. I knew what had happened, but I tried to go on as I didn't want the operation to be stopped. I told them to take me to the operation, but they refused. They were all crying. I then wrote a message to the commanders telling them to continue without me."

He was taken to a clinic of Amin Wardak's two days' journey away. Doctor Csaba, a Hungarian defector working at the clinic, amputated his foot. "He had lost a lot of blood and infection had started. If it were not for Haq's courage and his will to live for his mujahideen, he would have died." Haq was flown to the United States and after a series of operations, was fitted with a prosthetic foot.

Essentially a shy man, Haq eschews the trappings and weapons that distinguish many Afghan commanders — the term Gucci-guerrilla aptly applies to many aspiring to lead mujahideen — for whom sartorial elegance on the battlefield is as important as any victory. Declining the hype and personal publicity that many of these Pakistan-based warriors seek, it was amusing to hear locals in a mosque discussing whether Abdul Haq would be returning, having lost his foot. He just sat



Haq was the first mujahideen commander to meet President Reagan and Margaret Thatcher; it is thought that Haq managed to persuade the two during these meetings of the importance to the resistance of surface-to-air missiles.

quietly next to them, and smiled.

Between 100,000 and a million people have died *in the war*. The fact that the figures are so imprecise illustrates the magnitude of horror and the difficulties to come. Some five million mines have been buried beneath Afghanistan's land, a treacherous welcome to the four million returning refugees. Thousands of rocket launchers and hundreds of thousands of automatic rifles will remain in the hands of a people who have rarely known unity against the Russians and now threaten to split the country asunder like Lebanon.

Winston Churchill observed the fierce nature of the Pathans

*Continued on page 82*



# M60 FIXES

LEFT: Marines from Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines return fire on Operation Meade River, south of Da Nang. This gunner and his AG illustrate proper form, but author recommends hitting the prone to provide cover and more accurate fire. Photo: DoD

## Seasoned, Reasoned Tips On An Old Warhorse

by Peter G. Kokalis



I don't like the M60 GPMG (General Purpose Machine Gun). This should be evident to anyone who has read SOF's previous articles on that weapon (see Full Auto, "The M60 Embarrassment," and "M60, The Great GPMG Snafu," SOF, August '85). Since type-classified on 30 January 1957, it has not served us well. It will eventually be replaced, at least at the squad level, by the M249 SAW (see "Now See the SAW," SOF, August '82 and "Military Misappropriations," SOF, April '86). But, like it or not, the M60 GPMG will be fielded well into the next century. Unfortunately, its period of service has paralleled a decline in machine-gun training within all branches of the U.S. armed forces. It behooves anyone connected with U.S. ground forces to acquire the skills necessary to minimize this weapon's many deficiencies and maximize its rare virtues. If properly maintained and correctly employed, the M60 will do the job until something better comes down the pipeline. The following is a distillation of information not generally covered by FM 23-67 ("Machinegun 7.62-mm, M60") and gleaned from employing and repairing literally hundreds of M60s over a four-year span off-and-on in the jungles of El Salvador.

Belt-fed machine guns are still the core of an infantry platoon's fire and movement tactical plan. After contact, three objectives must dominate the unit's actions. They are in order of response priority: 1) to return fire; 2) to suppress the enemy's fire; and 3) to gain fire superiority. Machine guns are an

important ingredient at all three levels of engagement.

However, before you trudge down a jungle path with a well-lubricated M60, there are some techniques you need to master that will appreciably increase the odds of your survival.

Never carry the weapon balanced on your shoulder(s) or by the carrying handle. Put the padded sling over your left shoulder (if you're right-handed) and around your back. Adjust the sling until the weapon lies at groin level so that you can instantly move into a prone firing position. If there is even a remote chance of contact, the bipod legs should remain extended — not folded against the barrel. At rest, never use the bipod legs and the barrel to stand the weapon upright on the ground, as this foolish practice will invariably leave you with a dirt-plugged barrel.

The moment there is contact with the enemy, the M60 gunner should assume the prone position, preferably behind cover and concealment, and commence to return fire. The operator's body should be directly in line with the bore, not offset at an oblique angle as when firing a rifle. In this manner, the entire body, not just the upper torso, will absorb the burst's recoil momentum. If you have time to do so, make use of the folding buttstrap (shoulder rest). Forget about the various sitting, kneeling, shoulder, underarm and hip assault firing positions as described in FM 23-67. In a high stress environment, you will invariably respond in

M60 General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG), caliber 7.62x51mm NATO, shown in cut-away, requires more elaborate maintenance procedures than any contemporary weapon of its type. Courtesy Aerospace Publishing Ltd.

the manner in which you have practiced. For example, in almost all combat scenarios, we fire the handgun from the Weaver position, because it has been demonstrated that no other position is superior. When the shit hits the fan, there isn't time for decisions between alternative firing positions. Having to make such a decision seriously degrades response time. Experience has also shown us that firing the machine gun from its bipod in the prone position will provide the greatest possible protection for the gun crew and enhance their hit probab-

## M60 BULLET BOX

**1957** — Ike was president. The new cars had tail fins. Elvis was hot. The M60 machine gun was type classified, with assurances to all that it combined the best features of every machine gun which preceded it. It had a lot of promoters, but it did not have a box to hold its ammunition belt.

**1965** — Vietnam. The M60 goes into combat with American Marines and soldiers *still without an ammunition holder*. The canvas/cardboard bandolier that comes out of the ammo can quickly deteriorates when wet, making popular the unwise practice of carrying ammunition belts slung over the shoulder. A short 25-30 round belt had to be carried in the M60 to act as a "teaser" to give the gunner a short burst before he took cover and fed in another belt of ammo — which the AG had to hold out of the dirt and help feed.

**1975** — The war ends for Americans, and the M60 *still has no ammo box*. There are probably some men who died needlessly because they didn't have a ready supply of ammunition and got shot while waiting for a "Pancho Villa" belt to be loaded from someone else or from their own shoulders, or because of a jam caused by dirty ammo.

**1989** — The new M60E3 machine gun is in use throughout the Marine Corps, offering lighter weight, smaller size, better handling with a forward pistol grip, improved barrel changing and accuracy for better support of maneuver elements, *but still has no ammunition box to hold a ready supply of belted ammo!* The new M249 SAW (Squad Automatic Weapon) has a 200 round plastic ammo box. Why not the M60?

The good news is that a sturdy and reliable plastic ammunition box for the M60 is available commercially until such time as one is issued. It retails for \$10, a small enough price for something which may save your life.

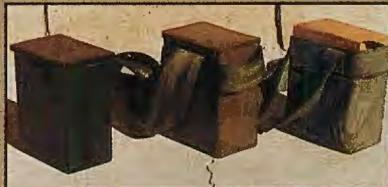
With this ammo box, the M60 can carry 100 rounds of belted 7.62mm machine gun ammo at the ready — thereby improving mobility and assault firepower. The box will keep the ammo belts out of the dirt, improving reliability and preventing jams from dirty rounds. Draping machine gun belts looks good in Rambo movies but is a bad practice that can get you killed in reality. The plastic construction will ensure that the box will not collapse and interfere with feeding like the cloth/cardboard bandolier does, especially when wet.

Firing with the ammo box mounted will free a hand from having to hold up the ammo belt, and it will free the assistant gunner from merely feeding belts and allow him to spot and provide rifle cover for the gunner.

If you are an M60 machine gunner, it

will improve your performance. If you are a weapons platoon leader or company commander, all it takes is \$60 to outfit six of your unit's M60s. Considering that individual soldiers/Marines already have to buy much of their own gear, the \$10 for something which improves their combat efficiency could be money very well spent.

Outfits such as Navy SEALs and nuclear security forces are already using



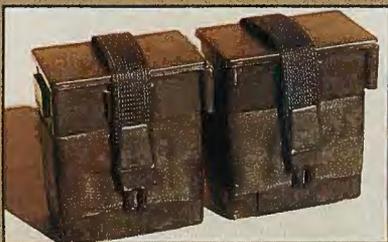
**ABOVE:** Left to right: Capco, G.I. prototype (more than \$200,000 in development), current issue bandolier. Photo: Capco Enterprises

**BELOW:** Hundred-round ammo carrier available from Capco Enterprises, mounted on M60. Photo: courtesy Capco Enterprises



**ABOVE:** Straps from issue bandolier can be used on Capco ammo holder. Photo: Mike Sparks

**BELOW:** Assault Systems, Inc. markets pouches for mounting Capco ammo holders directly to your LBE. Photo: Capco Enterprises



these boxes, and if individuals or units buy their own there is no problem shoe-horning the procurement into alignment with budget cuts until such time as one is an item of issue. It doesn't have to cost the DoD a cent.

The M60 ammo box can be obtained for \$10 plus postage and handling from Capco Enterprises Inc., Dept. SOF, 3250 Pollux Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89102; phone (702) 362-3700.

Use of these plastic ammo boxes can be enhanced by some field-expedient techniques. The box is designed to be mounted on the gun, but it comes without a carrying strap, and as presently manufactured, the belts can rattle inside it. Also, since it is waterproof — one of its virtues — water can collect in the bottom of the box.

The biggest complaint from field users is that belts rattle inside this box. The second model, which is not on the market yet, will have an accordion fold in the middle of the box which will hold the belts more snugly and preclude this, but until they are available, here's a quick fix: cut two sides and one end from the cardboard liner of an issue bandolier, trim to fit and insert it as a liner inside the plastic box, as is now being done with the plastic boxes for the M249 SAW belts. When this wears out or gets dirty or wet, replace.

The commercial plastic box mounts much more positively to the gun than the issue bandolier which hangs from a cloth strap, but it does not have a carrying strap. Here you have two options: either cut the carrying strap from an issue bandolier, run it through the loops on the plastic box and knot the ends so they will not pull back through; or cut off the end of a canvas holder strap and use the canvas bag to carry the plastic ammo box. Assault Systems, Inc., manufactures pouches for this plastic ammo box which attach right to your LBE, making a tidy set up (see photo).

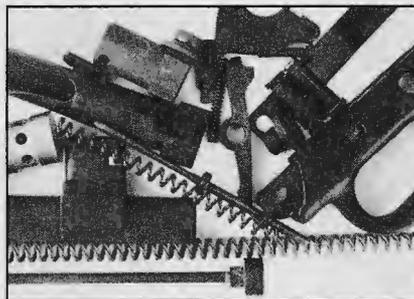
While with the lid snapped shut these plastic boxes are pretty weatherproof, in some climates water might collect in the bottom of the box. To preclude this, simply drill or cut small drainage holes in the bottom of the box. Rubber plugs are available at the hardware store which will keep out dirt.

It takes but seconds to load one of these plastic boxes from a bandolier, and they are sturdy and reusable for many, many missions. And, they are useful for carrying personal items or small gear which tends to get lost.

In a few minutes, four plastic M60 ammo boxes can be configured for silenced carry/drainage and be ready for use for years to come. One box should be attached to the M60 without a strap for assault fire, and three boxes slung over the shoulder or carried in belt packs for reloading — Mike Sparks, USMC



**ABOVE:** Perimeter guard in Vietnam, 1970, shows how *not* to. If serious about hitting the enemy, he should use the bipod. If serious about using the thousands of rounds flaked out beside him, he should have used the time *that* took — and the shovel in the background — to dig a proper position with room for his AG, whose job it is to keep him fed with clean ammo from protective containers. A close shell blast throwing debris on this woodpile of belts would just about guarantee a stoppage. Photo: DoD



**LEFT:** No fewer than eight of the M60's critical components can be reassembled incorrectly. While avoiding this may be partially a function of proper training, nevertheless at least a dozen major parts require almost constant inspection and maintenance and even then have a life expectancy of less than 20,000 rounds. Photo: Peter G. Kokalis

ity significantly. Even during the so-called "assault" phase of a fire fight — under conditions of dense jungle terrain — machine guns are more effectively employed if positioned behind cover on the flanks for fire support, as it is more difficult for the enemy to pin-point their locations out on the edges.

However, nothing will "make" your position faster than firing long bursts. It also wastes ammunition that you and your buddies had to hump a long distance on foot. I believe the six- to nine-round bursts recommended in the field manuals for both sustained and rapid fire are too long. Fire only three- to four-round bursts in combat, as this will not only increase your accuracy potential but will decrease the chance that your position will be located by the enemy. Fire discipline is every bit as important as dropping to the prone position the instant you start to take incoming rounds. Firing at the cyclic rate (in this instance approximately 550 rpm) is never justified unless they are crossing the wire and about to completely overrun your position.

Only one other firing position is, in my

opinion, of occasional value. When it is available and the gun crews are properly trained in its applications, the M122 tripod can be useful for grazing fire (when the center of the cone of fire does not rise more than one meter above the ground); accurate plunging fire (when the danger space is confined to the beaten zone); for traversing fire (distribution in width); for searching fire (distributed in depth by successive changes in elevation); or fire from defilade (indirect fire on targets beyond the crew's field of view).

All three of the tripod's legs should be sandbagged. Let's remember that because of the cone of fire (the elliptical burst pattern formed by vibration of the gun and mount and by variations in both ammunition and atmospheric conditions, such as wind) and the consequent beaten zone (the pattern formed by the rounds within the cone of fire striking the ground), belt-fed machine guns are principally area, not point-target weapons. Although, sadly, most gunners today don't know how to employ them in any way other than as bullet hoses in direct lay. Avoid firing the M60 from the M4 pedestal mount. Both the weapon and gunner are completely exposed to enemy fire

and, because it has no T&E mechanism, the M4 pedestal is nothing more than a "free gun" mount which permits uncontrolled, and hence wildly inaccurate, traversing and searching fire.

There are no arcane mysteries to loading the M60, yet more gunners flub this drill than any other. Place the selector on 'F' (Fire) and retract the bolt. Push the cocking handle forward and set the selector to 'S' (Safe). Raise the top cover. Place the belt (links up) on the feed tray with the first round in the feed-tray groove. While holding the fifth round in the belt, to prevent the first round from falling out of the feed-tray groove, close the top cover by pushing down with one hand and pivoting the *latch* lever — gently. Do not smash the cover down with your fist.

On patrol, the M60 should *be carried* loaded with a 25- to 30-round "teaser" belt. That's enough to get you started when there's contact and until either you or the AG (assistant gunner) reload with a 100-round belt out of the cloth bandolier. This technique will prevent your belt from snagging on the underbrush. Carrying 100-round belts across the chest — "Pancho Villa" style — is very stupid and merits

*Continued on page 78*



**SOF ELITE UNIT**

# THE CORSIKAN CAPER

Royal Marine Learns How  
To Do It the French Way

Text & Photos by Ewen Southby-Tailleur

**I**N the early 1960s, having seen action from Dien Bien Phu to Algeria, *Les Commandos Marine* were, in numerous respects, the envy of many fighting men anxiously retained "at home." The French had converted *Arromanche*, their ex-British (HMS *Colossus*) fixed-wing aircraft carrier, for helicopter operations; their assault ship *Jeanne d'Arc* was built and her trials completed on the 1 July 1963; and their company-sized Commandos were already well versed in the intricacies of amphibious operations as we then knew them.

Two of their Commandos, *Commando Joubert* and *Commando Clemenceau*, were stationed at Toulon in the south of France whilst the remaining three were at their more permanent home in the north.

French Commandos were then an unknown quantity to us in England as there was little or no liaison at working level. Our first assault ships (later designated LPDs), HMS *Fearless* and HMS *Intrepid*, were still under construction. *Fearless* was completed on 25 November 1965 and *Intrepid* on 11 March 1967, and yet we regarded ourselves as the acknowledged experts in this growing



Ewen Southby-Tailleur while training with the French *Commandos Marine*. Officer at left is Bruno de la Maisonneuve, who was awarded the *Croix de Guerre* five times.

## FROM THE EMPIRE

Major Ewen Southby-Tailleur, OBE, Royal Marines, has seen service in Dhofar, Aden, the Persian Gulf, India, South Yemen, Kuwait, North Africa, Cyprus, the West Indies, Northern Ireland and the Falklands. This is Major Southby-Tailleur's third article for *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*. Previously, he has described his experiences during the war in Oman (see "Dhofar's Ambush Corner, SOF, April '88) and Operation Corporate, the retaking of the Falklands (see "Sands of San Carlos," SOF, September '88).

"Pollop," one of the French officers escorted by Southby-Tailleur, prepares to jump from a Nord Atlas 17 over southern France.

style of warfare. Suez was under our belt, and despite what else may be said about that affair, the helicopter-borne landings by 45 Commando (the first opposed helicopter landing in history) and the seaborne landings of 40, 41 and 42 Commando were a success. My father had been the commanding officer of 45 Commando and so I am biased — along with every other Royal Marine!

In 1963, I had been commissioned just three years in the Royal Marines after attending an intensive French language course at Grenoble University in the foothills of the French Alps. I can't pretend that I learnt much French, formally, but as the only Englishman living in a *pension* and spending all my time skiing in places that were shortly to become fashionable, famous and expensive, I had managed to practice what I had learnt as a child cruising on yachts between Cherbourg and the Italian border.

Even so, it came as a surprise when my

adjutant at the Joint Services Amphibious Warfare School at Poole (on the south coast of England) told me I was to be the accompanying officer for two French "*Commando Marine*" officers who were to arrive shortly for a fortnight's tour of our training establishments, commandos and amphibious fleet. I was rather young for this privilege but kept my mouth shut. It was an unexpected assignment, for although I was the seamanship training officer of the Landing Craft branch I had yet to command a detachment at sea in an assault ship. My only commando experience at that stage had



## LES COMMANDOS MARINE

Marines have been a part of France's military since the days of King Louis the XIIIth. French sailors specializing in infantry warfare were designated *Troupes de Marine*, and in 1622 a unit was formed, under the title *Premiere Compagnie de la Mer* (1st Company of the Sea) by Cardinal Richelieu, the chief minister to the King. Later expanded, the unit became *1er Regiment de Marine* (1st Marine Regiment). In 1769, Duke de Choiseul created the *Corps Royaux d'Infanterie et d'Artillerie de Marine* (Royal Corps of Marine Infantry and Artillery), composed of 24 companies.

The next step was the formation of the *Corps Royal des Canoniers Matelots* (Royal Corps of Seaman Gunners), and the *Voltigeurs, Grenadiers* and *Fusiliers* (boarders, grenadiers and riflemen) of the *Regiment Royal Vaisseaux* (Royal Ship's Regiment). These French marines helped the United States win independence in the American Revolution before reverting to the less colorful name of *d'Infanterie et d'Artillerie de Marine*.

French marine units subsequently served on land for several decades, and the marines came to be looked on as regular infantry. Helping save the French marines from obscurity was a decision by their navy to reinstate *fusiliers marins* and *canonniers marins* (marines and marine gunners) military specialties in 1856.

By the time of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, the various marine units has regained some of their distinctive identity. During that conflict more than 28,000 *fusiliers marins* and *canonniers marins*, plus an equal number of

*d'infanterie et d'artillerie de marins*, helped defend Paris.

These naval troops were quite successful in their service, both at home and abroad. By the early 1870s, the army had gained control of part of the navy's marines. The *d'Infanterie et d'Artillerie de Marin* were renamed *Troupes Coloniales* and divided into *Infanterie Coloniale* and *Artillerie Coloniale*.

The War Ministry set up a separate department to administer the new colonial troops and allowed them to wear an anchor on their tunic collars as a distinctive insignia. The anchor insignia was later transferred to shoulder boards and to the front of the helmet. For more than 90 years the colonials campaigned in France's overseas territories.

The colonials reverted to the term "marines" in 1961. The "new" marines, however, are still under army control, and while they have training in landing operations, they are not specialists in amphibious warfare.

Following the loss of the *d'infanterie et d'artillerie de marins* to the army, the navy was left with just its *fusiliers marins*, which it expanded. There was no danger of losing these men to the army, because they were sailors with sailors' duties aboard ships. Later, they would be taken off the ships and made into naval infantry again.

Following World War I, in which the two regiments of the Admiral Ronarch Brigade played an important role (particularly during the fighting at Dixmude and Yser), the size of the marines declined and only a small force was maintained.

When World War II began and France

been on the Yemen border with 45 Commando, which was as far removed from helicopters and assault craft as was possible. However, like so much appointing, I was selected for my availability rather than my suitability.

I was very keen to be involved. The spin-off from the non-stop work involved as a liaison officer was the chance to see and hear things out of the normal ken of an acting lieutenant; one would be able to listen to senior officers (of whom one had only heard) and their experiences and theories, and one would visit establishments and ships and witness demonstrations of a higher classification than dreamt of at that stage of a career.

University and ski-slope French does not prepare an officer for in-depth discussions of amphibious tactics and equipment capabilities, but I needn't have worried. The visiting officers spoke perfect English and

was overrun, some of the marines were evacuated from France to continue the struggle from England. Their ranks were supplemented by sailors without ships who were retrained as marines. Others came later in answer to de Gualle's appeal to fight on.

After World War II the French navy reduced its large *fusiliers marins* formations to relatively small naval commando units. During the Indochina War, French naval commandos operated along the coasts of Indochina and in the vast river networks as well. Following the French defeat there, the naval commandos were sent to the war in Algeria.

Today, the naval commandos are organized into two branches: regular commandos and combat swimmers.

*Groupement de Fusiliers Marins Commandos* is the name now given to the *Commandos Marine*, or naval commandos. Numbering about 600 men, they specialize in small boat operations and receive training in sabotage, raiding, and reconnaissance, as well as general amphibious assaults.

*Hubert* Commando, France's *nageurs de combat* (combat swimmers), perform similar missions to the U.S. Navy SEALs and the British Royal Marines Special Boat Squadron. The 40 or so members of *Hubert* are parachute qualified (as are all *Commandos Marine*) and are capable of everything from hydrographic survey work to through-the-ice diving.

Only about two percent of those who volunteer for service with France's elite naval commandos eventually succeed in becoming a member of the *Commandos Marine*. Those that do qualify find themselves providing the cutting edge of France's special warfare capability. — *SOF Staff*

**Commandos Marine during para training. All French marines are jump qualified.**

were supreme professionals who had studied the British way of doing things. One, Bruno de la Maisonneuve, had been awarded the *Croix de Guerre* five times, three from Dien Bien Phu and two from Algeria. His companion, who was only ever known to me by his nickname of "Pollop," was the French free-fall champion in an age when the sport was still in its infancy. Pollop was violently anti-de Gaulle, which made his Algerian service in support of the General's policies a source of amusement to his fellows. Being a professional soldier, he carried out his duties impeccably — so he told me — although I was surprised to discover later that, as a protest, he had removed with a metal file the Cross of Lorraine from the top left corner of his cap badge. He was not the only Frenchman to have done this.

The officers arrived one early October day in 1963. For the next two months my feet hardly touched English or French soil, and although there was no "action," some of the experiences required as much adrenaline.

After a fascinating fortnight touring Royal Marine and Royal Naval establishments and ships, the two French officers flew back to Toulon. In return, the Royal Marines had asked that I should visit the commandos stationed there to see if there was anything at my level with which we could help. It was also an opportunity (and a much more likely event considering the French experience and state of their art) for me to see if there was any firsthand knowledge I could bring back.

A car met me at Toulon station, and although it was November, the warmth after Poole Harbor was stifling. When I saw my quarters I was not too sure that this was a good thing, for the French ship *Les Deux Mondes* was a wooden-decked aircraft carrier converted during the war from, I think, an ex-U.S. merchant ship. She was a reasonably permanent fixture on the western shore of Toulon Harbor, joined to the mainland by a floating walk-ashore. The plumbing was "continental," and there was no air conditioning. Even at the onset of winter the air below was warm, fetid and very French!

I had arrived on a Friday with the naval base almost closed. However my conscript driver and his gallant *deux chevaux* motor car were at my disposal until Monday morning; I was warned not to be late as work would start in earnest. It did.

The main autumn exercise testing French amphibious forces was to take place that year in Corsica using Toulon as the mounting base. The overall plan was to launch a helicopter assault onto high ground to the south of the Gulf de Sagon on the west coast of the island with a view to leapfrogging inland against guerrillas hiding in the valleys.

Covert parties were to land in advance, block the approaches to the LZ, and set up ambush positions as a forward protective perimeter. A submarine was allocated to



**French helicopter delivers supplies during the post-assault build-up.**

one of the commandos for this task, and I was asked to accompany them. We were to launch four hours before dawn by Zodiac rubber assault craft, paddle ashore by H-plus-2, and make an RV with, friendly agents supplied by the resident Foreign Legion. The "agents" would guide us to selected bridges that were to be blown and then take us on to prepared ambush positions covering tracks and ravine crossings. After H-Hour I was to join the main assault group on the mountain top and follow the counterinsurgency operations with the CO.

After the briefings were over I was kitted out for four days in the field. The French ration pack was the first surprise. It was designed to be eaten cold; there was no issued heating equipment, the individual supplying his own. The bulk of the 24-hour ration pack consisted of tins of corned beef and small tins of anchovies, together with numerous packets of lemonade powder, milk powder and coffee powder (but, of course, no heating) and a small bottle of cognac. Each man was also issued a yard of French bread, which was either broken into smaller pieces for the inside of the pack or, more usually, lashed to the top of the pack so that it stuck out each side. A handful of small, boiled sweets were thrust into pockets along with a further handful of sugar lumps. The daily fare was completed by a

packet of Gauloise cigarettes, a Camembert cheese and an orange. The chance to fill up one of the two issue water bottles with white wine was taken by every marine.

I joined the submarine *L'Astree* alongside in Toulon harbor with 20 of the commandos and three Zodiac inflatable rubber craft. *L'Astree* was not a large submarine and, I was told, ex-German; at least her captain proudly pointed out how all the dials were written in German and how a few did not work. His depth sounder certainly did not operate accurately, and *this was to cause* some concern later. Immediately forward of the conning tower, outside (but joined to) the pressure hull and within the casing, was the submarine escape compartment, allocated to me for the voyage. There was just room to fit my camp bed, which by standards of the day was a luxury. Apart from the captain I was the only member with his own private space, for which I was grateful; it allowed me room to lay out my sketches and write up my notes.

The marines were spread about the boat in any cranny they could find. We sailed that night and dived almost immediately.

Everyone smoked whether dived or not. Luckily in those days I smoked Gauloise, a legacy from my university, and so could hold my own at that and the French card games played almost incessantly in the wardroom.

There was time to fill, for these were before the days of rehearsals and demonstration or turn-away landings. We surfaced

and dived, carrying out naval evolutions, including a communications exercise with the Corsair aircraft which were to support the operation. During the first afternoon at sea the captain took us, on the surface, close to a well-known nudist beach (rare in those days even for the south of France). The crew were allowed on the casing with binoculars, whilst others took it in turn to stare through the periscopes from below. That night we made contact with a Corsair for a final communications check before diving for the approaches to Corsica.

Five hours before dawn the troops were woken. The boat went to "surface stations," and we prepared for our long, dark paddle. As the depth sounder was faulty, the captain ran in slowly toward the distant beach at periscope depth until we slid gently onto the sandy bottom. He would then bring the submarine up slightly and move forward until we touched again a little further inshore. This process was repeated many times until the casing was few inches above sea level with the submarine sitting firmly on the sand. The order was given for the forward hatch to be opened, and we struggled into the cool, damp, sticky air with our folded and deflated craft and our awkward, bulky, large packs. Each dinghy was quickly inflated and launched. We embarked and pushed off into the darkness after receiving a final course check from the navigating officer. As we paddled away, the submarine slowly and silently moved astern, sinking with the Gulf's deepening bottom contours as she did so: a diminishing, but still malevolent, black slash against the blacker night. We started our two-hour paddle toward the southeast corner of the bay.

I remember little of that paddle, similar to so many before and a few since, except for one phenomenon which kept me amused. As the spray, rhythmically flung back from our paddles, soaked into the long loaves of French bread, the crusts softened and the ends drooped slowly until each pack was neatly *embraced* in soggy dough. It was a rather bizarre and unexpected sight in the dim starlight.

The beach was approached with caution for fear that our guides had been captured or were simply not there. All was well, however, and a single red light flashed before we slid noiselessly onto the sand. As soon as the Zodiacs had been hidden in the shrub at the back of the beach there was instant relaxation. Longed-for Gauloise were lit; there was laughing and joking between old friends, and the non-water water bottles were passed a number of times. It struck me, as it certainly struck my companions, that two hours of hard paddling was a long time for a Frenchman, even a commando, to be without his national sustenance.

This interlude over, we split into previously arranged groups and set off silently toward our varying objectives. Mine was to blow an important road-bridge leading to the hill which was to be the objective of the dawn helicopter assault. The bridge was a likely route for an enemy who might want to



**Hilltop command post, preparing to move out during operations in southern Corsica.**

move quickly in counterattack, and yet its loss would not be felt by the commandos whose further objectives lay in the opposite direction. Our orders were to destroy the bridge — and destroy it we did. I learnt then that realism played a great part in these training exercises, even if I had already been surprised by some of the non-tactical aspects. The real loss of the bridge also produced excellent training for the Legion or Commando engineers who would be required to rebuild it. Everyone benefited.

The different groups, having completed their tasks, lay up in prearranged ambush positions to thwart any further enemy ambitions. They, too, would rejoin their fellows at dawn.

When the assault came it was on time, and impressively fast and efficient, from a darkened and apparently empty western horizon. The main hilltops were quickly seized — patrols were dispatched to keep any enemy at arms length — and the buildup of stores and command facilities was soon under way. Enemy opposition was light, as the main concentration was expected to be in the mountains of inner Corsica against which we were to operate using the Mont Sebastiano area as a support base. When this posi-

tion had been consolidated, I moved, tactically, to join the force commander in his hilltop command post.

There was a brief lull in the exercise that to a British Royal Marine was unusual, but it was of good value. The exercise was halted at various stages so that lessons learnt thus far could be evaluated and re-emphasized if necessary. This was useful, for each evaluated event was fresh in the participant's mind. An added benefit, which was so often missing in our own exercises, was the junior commanders' ability to see, immediately, how their small sub-units were affecting the larger plan.

The battle plan was explained to me, as were the future intentions of the force, with much Gallic waving of arms toward the distant, steep-sided and thickly vegetated mountains.

Commandos were to advance in helicopters, whilst the dominating heights were picketed by men and their own dedicated aircraft. Beneath the heights the advance would be in an "advance to contact" formation, as far as the rugged ground allowed, using a combination of helicopters over the sheer ravines and fast foot patrols where tactically prudent.

I suggested that I might follow the progress of the advance on foot so that I would not take up valuable helicopter space. This



would keep me out of the way and yet allow me to observe closely the tactics and drills. The CO agreed, and after much consulting of maps I set off with full pack and replenished non-water water bottle.

Immediately the going was terrible. De-files thickly covered with undergrowth well above head height made navigation difficult and the going very slow. After about an hour it was obvious that I would not make the RV with the final lift-off by helicopter, which was scheduled for a few hours before dusk (assuming that the enemy had been soundly beaten by then). However I could not return to the headquarters, for they and the small supply base had already moved to avoid enemy observation. I had to push on and hope that the going would ease.

There was to be no such luck that day. It was hot (it was November); it was very tiring (I was as fit as I've ever been); it was difficult to navigate (I was a qualified navigator); and it was very rough under foot (I was commando trained).

I arrived at the foot of the objective at about 1600 that day, just in time to watch an impressive display of very close air support by the piston-engined Corsair aircraft. It was a perfect example of why, against criticism, *Les Commandos Marine* insisted on keeping the Corsairs. No jet could have carried out the sorties in such narrow val-

leys, where success lay in the tightness of the turns between mountain peaks. In the narrow mountain passes of Corsica (which mirrored other operational areas) the piston aircraft were supreme.

The Corsairs carried out strafing runs against the enemy, preventing them from mounting counterattacks. Unable to break for cover, the "terrorists" were surrounded by hastily deployed troops whilst others simultaneously began the lift off from the peaks to a rear concentration area. It was glorious watching the differing activities dovetail into each other, emphasizing vital lessons in command and control that I was never to forget.

As the last helicopter left I was still 2,000-feet away in an adjacent valley bottom. I waved, I lit a fire, I even shouted, but as I was to learn later on in my career, there is nothing one can do to attract the attention of a busy, friendly aircraft 600 yards away. Paradoxically, I was also to learn that despite lying in the bottom of a camouflaged slit trench two miles away, the brain will insist that one is always highly visible to enemy aircraft. Such is the psychology of the imagination under combat conditions.

Immediate action was needed. By chance there was a village straddling the track that ran down the side of my valley. Ducks,

goats and forlorn-looking cattle wandered the paths and scrub. I weaved my way through these onlookers as unprovokingly as I could.

The next few hours are best left unrecorded, for they were not very military and involved the help of a Corsican mountain family (eventually the whole village), the contents of my whisky flask and non-water water bottle, a mad drive in a police car through the mountain passes, Ajaccio's Chief Gendarme, a night club, another wild dash with yet more police cars and a last moment rendezvous with the Commando CO on a mountain plateau *two hours* before dawn. I was just in time for the start of the tactical withdrawal to the beach area and the helicopter LZ.

Our withdrawal was as well conducted as the landings. The last helo-stick arrived on the dew-glistening flight deck of *Arromanche* as she was already hull down on the horizon and steaming west at 20 knots with the mountains barely visible. Another display of fine timing and close coordination.

The exercise "wash-up" was difficult to follow as it was conducted in colloquial military French. I was naturally at the back of the crowded briefing room and hardly within earshot of the participants. The

*Continued on page 76*

# WE CAN KEEP YOU FOREVER

**U**NITED States service personnel prisoner, missing, or unaccounted for in Southeast Asia as of December 1988:

- Vietnam ..... 1,747
- Laos ..... 547
- Cambodia ..... 83
- China ..... 6

Where are these men? Are they still alive? If so, why haven't they been released?

These questions have haunted us since March 1973 and Operation Homecoming, when 591 U.S. servicemen were set free by the North Vietnamese and came home to America.

"All Americans held POW throughout Indochina will be released," then President Richard Nixon told us.

But were they? **We Can Keep You Forever**, a Lionheart Television — BBC in America 75-minute video documentary,

takes one of the best shots we've ever seen at investigating that question. Does this documentary come up with any answers? None definitive, but it lays out a riveting and convincing chain of evidence gathered during a year's worth of research and interviews that will at least plant a seed of doubt.

"We shall under no circumstances abandon our POWs and MIAs, wherever they are." — Richard Nixon.

But did we? Jerry Mooney, a former National Security Agency intelligence analyst, was tasked with monitoring and analyzing enemy radio communications. Mooney tracked air crew who had been shot down and survived by monitoring enemy frequencies and conversations. His list of downed pilots and crew grew to more than 300 — men who Mooney says he could confirm had been alive and taken POW.

Yet during Op Homecoming, Mooney states, only a small number, perhaps 10 or 12, of the men on his list surfaced. What happened to the others? Mooney believes that many air crew, because of their specialized training and expertise in highly sophisticated weapons and flight systems, were kept for just that reason.

Mooney would mark a code — "MB" — next to many of the names on his list. "MB" stood for "Moscow Bound." Perhaps, as one could speculate, the Soviet Union and China wanted this hi-tech expertise. It's happened before.

Mooney, who has no doubts that men were left behind, is an important and convincing player in this documentary, but there certainly are others.

Take the case of Swedish engineer Lars Arvling who worked in a paper mill in Viet-

**RIGHT:** In March 1973, 591 U.S. POW were released by the North Vietnamese and returned home during Operation Homecoming. But did all the prisoners *really* come home? Many senior U.S. military and political officials say no. Photo: AP/Wide World

**BELOW:** "All of our courageous POWs have been set free and are here back home in America," Richard Nixon said on 19 May 1973. But Nixon offered \$3 billion to the North Vietnamese in reparations; one aim was to secure the release of Americans still thought to be held. Photo: courtesy Lionheart Television



**RIGHT:** President Ronald Reagan vowed not to close the book on those still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia, yet during his eight-year term of office, not one live U.S. serviceman surfaced. Photo: courtesy Lionheart Television

**ABOVE:** Presidential adviser and Former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, our chief negotiator during the Paris peace talks, "did not exclude that in Laos ... that some [Americans] might be left behind." Kissinger did not trust the North Vietnamese and confronted them with strong evidence of Americans still held in the North and in Laos. He was stonewalled. Photo: courtesy Lionheart Television

# U.S. Servicemen *Still* Held in Southeast Asia?

by John Coleman



How many men did we leave in Southeast Asia? National Security Agency analyst Jerry Mooney says he *knew* of 300, and Defense Intelligence Agency chief General Eugene Tighe put the total higher. Photo: courtesy Lionheart Television

nam. Next to the mill was a prison camp. Arvling saw what he believed were two Americans held in the camp. He was arrested and interrogated by the Vietnamese and only released after he signed a document — written in Vietnamese, which he did not understand. Presumably, the document was a promise to keep quiet, as the Swedish ambassador warned Arvling that he could get into serious trouble if he talked about what he saw. Another Swede in Vietnam was arrested and interrogated by the Vietnamese, his captors believing he was an escaped American.

Then there's the case of the former North Vietnamese Foreign Ministry official, having since left that country, who, after Operation Homecoming, says he saw American POW still living in Hanoi. When he asked why they were still there, he was told, "They will be valuable to us, later."

Is that the reason those listed as missing are still being held? Nixon had promised reparations of \$3 billion to North Vietnam; one main focal point of the payment was to ensure the return of every U.S. serviceman still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia. The payment never came to pass — nor did any missing Americans surface.

"It's no strange bargain to them [the North Vietnamese] that they could trade . . . We've got lots of records that they expect to get specifics in return for pilots returned. A factory . . . for various kinds of Americans who were held captive," says Lieutenant General Eugene Tighe, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency, the agency charged with primary collection of data on missing Americans in Southeast Asia. Tighe, certainly in a position to know, believes Americans were left behind at Op Homecoming.

"Many did not come back that we ex-

pected to come back," he says. His estimate of the number of those who should have come back but didn't — some 400 to 500 — was even higher than NSA analyst Mooney's.

Also convincing, but not provable, are the thousands of reports from Vietnamese refugees fleeing their homeland, a "tidal wave of human reporting" as Tighe calls it. One man tells of seeing two blacks cutting down trees in the U Minh forest. Another says he was in a prison camp with two Americans. Still another says he came across an American on the run from a prison camp. Others say they saw Americans in POW camps or working in fields. Vietnamese witnesses also claim they saw 20 to 25 Americans in prison uniforms in Hanoi in 1974. All after Operation Homecoming, all after President Nixon, on 19 May 1973, said, "All of our courageous POWs have been set free and are here back home in America."

Perhaps the strongest aspect of **We Can Keep You Forever** focuses on America's secret war in Laos, where some 100 air strikes a day were sortied. More than 600 air crew were lost, and best evidence indicates that at least 200 survived and were taken prisoner by the Pathet Lao — although the latter only ever officially admitted to having nine.

"No American prisoner held in Laos was released from Laos . . . it continues to be a black hole," Roger Shields, former chairman of the Department of Defense's MIA/POW Task Group says. Even former National Security Adviser and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, our chief negotiator during the Paris peace talks, "did not exclude that in Laos . . . that some might be left behind."

The evidence was so overwhelming, in fact, that Admiral Jerry Tuttle, then with the DIA, "became convinced of the possibility of Americans in Laos as late as May '81" and organized a clandestine mission into Laos to photograph a compound where Americans were believed to be held. That the results were inconclusive does not beg-

the fact that senior officials in a position to know *believed* there was enough firm evidence to support such an operation in the first place.

The question that seems to haunt senior U.S. officials — and the rest of us, really — is why, if the Vietnamese and Pathet Lao *still* hold live Americans, they haven't surfaced them as bargaining chips. When the French pulled out in 1954, the Vietnamese returned only half of their French prisoners. Over the next 16 years, for millions of dollars in ransom per year, some 1,000 *live* prisoners were released.

So why not Americans? As Kissinger puts it, the Vietnamese may have been afraid of retaliation by Nixon should any have surfaced *after* Homecoming, when the Vietnamese had categorically denied holding any more Americans. Yet, would that really deter the pragmatic Vietnamese from linking the return of American MIAs to money, aid and recognition, indeed to all their goals in Indochina?

That question seems to overshadow — and perhaps make moot — what appears to be incontrovertible evidence that Americans are still being held in Southeast Asia: Bargaining chips are valueless unless you play them.

Yet the evidence just won't go away. There's too much of it from thousands of different sources, and it's too tantalizing to ignore.

As Gen. Tighe sums it up: "Some people could come to the conclusion that it's all a great big show and that there's no truth in any of the reports that you get . . . that somehow somebody's manipulating a large body of people all over the world to contrive to have them all report out that they've seen Americans at the same time or on a continuing basis.

"I find it very difficult to believe anybody could orchestrate that kind of proposition."

So do we here at SOF.

But that's for you to decide. Order **We Can Keep You Forever**, watch it, show it to your friends and family; show it down at the VFW or American Legion or your local club; have it shown at the local schools. Give this documentary the airing it deserves, then get your letters off to your representative in Congress and to President Bush. Ask them what *they're* doing about Americans still missing in Southeast Asia.

Even if there's only one man left alive, don't we at least owe him that much? ✕

## HOW TO ORDER

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# SOF THREE-GUN MATCH

## Survival of the Fittest With Rifle, Shotgun, Pistol

by Ken Hackathorn

**A**FTER nearly a decade on the *Soldier of Fortune* Three-Gun Match staff, I decided to sign up as a competitor. The 1988 match would give me a chance to see the other side of the score card. After years of watching friends and acquaintances enjoy

**Top Seven Shooters — Back row, left to right: Rep from HK, Bob Rychman (7th Place), Joe Gaines (6th Place), Jerry McCulek (5th Place), Mike Voight (4th Place), Lee Souter (3rd Place), Doug Boykin (2nd Place), Rep from Glock. Front row, left to right: Rep from Poly Technologies, Robert K. Brown, Gold Medal Winner James E. Clark Jr., Rep from Springfield Armory. Photo: Duane Hall**

themselves competing in the SOF event, I felt that it was my turn to get in on some of the fun. On Tuesday evening, 13 September, I was in the crowd of more than 200 shooters who attended the match briefing. *Soldier of Fortune* competition is always a calculated surprise, and only at the briefing do contestants get their first idea of what the matches are about. After the usual greetings, Match Director Mike Horne got down to business. The chief range officers were introduced and proceeded to explain their specific events.

SOF Three-Gun Matches have two stages for each type weapon. Rifle, pistol, and shotgun present each shooter with different problems to solve. One of the best features of the SOF Three-Gun is the fact that Mike Horne and his staff have designed stages that are based on or relate to the real world. While the SOF format is paramilitary, many of the problems that participating shooters face

**Top Female Shooter awards, left to right: Match Director Michael Horne, Lorraine Ferns (second place), Al Mar (event sponsor), Carmen Anderson (third place), Sharon Kimbrel (first place), and Robert K. Brown, flanked by unknown woman. Photo: Duane Hall**



### SOF — THE MATCH TO MATCH

At an NRA Convention in Kansas City during the late 1970s, Ray Chapman, Dick Thomas and myself were talking to Bob Brown about the idea of a "Modern Warrior" shooting match. The idea was based upon the popularity of the new IPSC "practical" shooting discipline. Combat pistol shooting was going great guns, but the "Modern Warrior" match would broaden the concept to include rifle and shotgun competition. The pistol was important, but for the

soldier, a service rifle is far more critical. For a police officer, the shotgun is the support weapon. We discussed the idea of a match that would test skills with each of these weapons. Bob Brown was interested and admitted that he was considering a convention that would be billed the *Soldier of Fortune* Convention. A chance to gather those who were readers and followers of his *Soldier of Fortune* magazine seemed like a great idea.

Ray Chapman had recently opened his Chapman Academy Range near Columbia, Missouri, and it was reasoned that his range could host the Modern

Warriors Three-Gun Match, and the city of Columbia would be the site of the convention. Bob Brown said he liked the idea and would think it over. We would have a chance to try our plan of a three-gun competition, and Brown could have his convention. Thus, the first *Soldier of Fortune* Convention and Three-Gun Match was held in Columbia, Missouri. I designed the courses of fire, while Ray Chapman and his staff ran the match. It was a great time, and provided everyone with something to talk about.

It was also a media circus, so plans were made for the second SOF Con-  
ven-



also apply to police or private sector incidents.

The SOF match is quite different from other types of "practical" shooting, however. Clearly, the goal of practical shooting is to test skills and techniques that would be valid in real-life scenarios. To a large degree, however, much "practical" shooting (International Practical Shooting Confederation — IPSC — as an example)

Top Law Enforcement Award winners, left to right: Robert K. Brown, Mike Dalton (third place), Joe Gaines (second place), Lee Souter (first place), and Dick Swann (representing Atlantic Research and Marketing Systems, award sponsor). Photo: Duane Hall

Dave Burns takes aim with AR15 during rifle competition and carries customized government model on hip. Photo: Duane Hall

has become oriented toward the idea that all that matters is the furthering of the "sport." Along the way, the original goals of practical shooting have faded into a sunset of "only winning scores matter." Most of the new wave in IPSC regard competition as simply a game, with winning the only goal. Any piece of equipment or technique that can be used to accomplish this end is considered acceptable. From the first days of the SOF match, the goal was to test the shooter

with equipment and shooting problems that relate to survival in an armed confrontation.

An example of the SOF concept is clearly illustrated by the choice of weapons. Pistols must be service type and must fire service-type ammo. There is no power factor as in other disciplines, but whether you use a 9x19mm or .45 ACP, full-power service ammo is required. Pistols can be no more than two ounces over issue weight; barrels can be no longer than 5 inches for autos and 6 inches for revolvers. Extended sights are not allowed. The pistols must be carried in the same holster and position for each stage of the match. If the pistol is dropped or lost during any phase of the competition, that contestant is disqualified from that event. IPSC competition-type holsters are thus rare at the SOF Three Gun. Rifles used in SOF competition must be a service type or civilian equivalent. These rifles cannot weigh more than one pound over the issue weight. Caliber 5.56mm and 7.62 NATO rifles are the norm, with a few 7.62x39mm Kalashnikovs. Shotguns must be 12 gauge, pump or semi-auto. Both buckshot and slugs are required. Most contestants wear clothing and foot gear suited for the rugged terrain of the Nevada desert. The site of the SOF match in Las Vegas is the Desert Sportsman's range, and this facility offers excel-

Top Veteran Over 45 — (left to right) Robert K. Brown, winner Paul Miller, and Dave Holleman Rep from Unigrafix, event sponsor. Photo: Duane Hall



tion. Scottsdale, Arizona, was the site. SOF shooters traveled to the nearby Black Canyon shooting range for the three-gun match. A great time was had by all. Charlotte, North Carolina, was next, and I helped design the pistol and rifle stage. Jake Jatras came up with a fine shotgun event. It became clear that there was a need for a convention site which could handle the *Soldier of Fortune* Convention and all its activities. Las Vegas was a natural.

Jake Jatras designed and ran the first SOF match held in Las Vegas. The following year (1984) I ran the SOF match.

The courses of fire were straight forward and went as smoothly as I had designed them. I realized that the logistics of running a match like the SOF would require someone who had the range staff and organization to handle this three-gun event. Mike Horne was an old acquaintance from the first days of IPSC and the early Gunsite family. We agreed that "practical" shooting was rapidly becoming anything but. In 1984 I asked Mike Horne to be my XO for the match. When it was over, I asked him if he was interested in taking over the design, staffing, and administration of the *Sol-*

*dier of Fortune* Match. Mike was ready to give it a try. He has done well. Not only have he and his staff done a fine job, but each year's match keeps getting better. The SOF Three-Gun Match is copied by many other shooting clubs and contests. While many of these new Three-Gun clones are fine events, none equal the *Soldier of Fortune* original. If you enjoy the challenge of a Three-Gun competition, the best time to be had in 1989 will be at the Desert Sportsman's range, September 19-23.

— Ken Hackathorn

lent areas to present a number of shooting scenarios.

Mike Horne and his staff set up a fine array of matches for the '88 competition, and one of the most interesting was the first stage of the rifle event. This stage was called "Elephant Valley" and called for 200- and 400-yard rifle shooting. The firing positions were prone at a dusty, rock-covered point, then next to a wall of lava rock, then finally from a sand-bagged pit. Each of the three positions was designed to be awkward and uncomfortable. The contestant was given a maximum time of 180 seconds to fire eight rounds from each position, for a total of 24 shots.

## WEAPONS CHOICES OF THE TOP 10 SHOOTERS

PLACE	NAME	RIFLE	PISTOL	SHOTGUN
1.	James E. Clark, Jr.	Mini-14	Gov't 9mm	Benelli 20"
2.	Doug Boykin	Daewoo	Gov't .38 Sup	REM 1100 19"
3.	Lee Souter	M1A	P-35	REM 1100 25"
4.	Mike Voight	M1A	Gov't .38 Sup	REM 1010 21"
5.	Jerry Miculek	AR15 A2	S&W 28 .357	REM 1187 26"
6.	Joe Gaines	AUG	9mm P-35	REM 1100 21"
7.	Robert Ryckman	AUG	Gov't .45	REM 1100 20"
8.	Mike Dalton	MJA	Gov't .45	Win Super X 22"
9.	Joe Hamilton	AR15 A2	Gov't 9mm	REM 1187 26"
10.	Garth Games	AUG	AT84	REM 1100 21"

## CHOOSE YOUR WEAPONS

The *Soldier of Fortune* Match is a three-gun event which requires the competitors to use a rifle, pistol and shotgun in a variety of stages. Each shooter must choose the weapon best for him. The match is a semi-surprise event. Realism is the key to this match, and anticipating the scenario may prove "fatal."

Weapons used in the 1988 Match were as diverse as the firearms marketplace. Of the 209 competitors, 102 used government-style 1911A1s in .45 ACP, and 20 fired government-style 1911A1s in 9mm or .38 Super; there were three Colt Commanders, 12 Browning Hi-Powers, 13 Beretta 92Fs, 12 Glockes, 12 Sig Sauers, one Bernardelli, five Taurus 9mms, six HK P-7s, three Detonics, three CZ 75s, 14 S&W autos, and two S&W revolvers. The shotgun stages featured 70 Remington 1100s, 20 Remington 870s, 10 Remington 1187s, 69 Benelli Super 90s, 10 Winchester Super Xs, four Winchester Defenders, five Browning A-5s, four Mossbergs, four Spas, three Ithacas and four miscellaneous.

Rifles were equally diverse: 89 Colt AR15s, 28 Springfield Armory M1As, 18 Steyr AUGs, 19 HK 91s, 13 HK 93s, 11 Ruger Mini-14s, nine FNs, five Action Arms Galils, three Daewoos, three Garands, four AKs, and one AR-180.

Jim Clark, 1988's overall match winner, chose for his arsenal a Colt Government Model 9mm, a Ruger Mini-14 and H&K's Benelli shotgun with a 20-inch barrel. The fact that he used these particular weapons is not necessarily a recommendation that everyone should shoot these same firearms. Each person should choose his weapons on the basis of what works best for *him*. For example, many of the established shooters who feel the need for a little extra magazine capacity switch over to a Colt 9mm, since it is so similar to the Colt .45 with which they are already familiar.

Each of the stages offered challenges

which favored one weapon over another. In the shotgun "Slug Assault," it was evident that a good set of fast, visible sights were needed. The rifle-type sights found on most slug guns were accurate, but slow. Open express sights or ghost-ring apertures were more effective. Semi-auto shotguns dominated the match and were faster to use. The shotgun stage's "Kruger Straat Raid" proved to be an interesting reloading exercise since all the spare ammunition had to be carried in a musette bag. This came as a surprise to most shooters who had never practiced this technique, and only knew how to load from their own personal systems. The Remington 1100 and HK's Benelli Super 90s were the most common choices.

The pistol stages required a number of reloads if the shooter used a single column magazine, and at least one reload with a double column magazine. This would lead one to believe that a shooter could not be competitive without a large-capacity pistol. While the double column magazine may have been advantageous, it was more important to use a handgun with which you were comfortable and competent, as evidenced by the fact that one revolver shooter finished in the top ten overall. The various types of pistols performed generally well in these stages with only a couple of notable exceptions. The HK P-7s did not seem to take down the reactive plates as well as the rest of the 9s. The 9mm carries its energy in the form of velocity rather than mass, and the short barrel of the P-7 appeared to lose some of its needed punch. All of the government-type 1911A1s and similar type pistols performed well except when they had been tinkered with too much. As an example, one pistol shared by a husband and wife continually had the magazine fall out while the wife was firing. Examination revealed the magazine catch spring had been lightened and an extended release button installed. Even with the weak spring replaced, she still had problems with it. It seems her grip on the weapon

impinged on the oversize button and recoil jammed the button into release. This is a good example of how some modifications can cause more trouble than they are worth.

One interesting note in the pistol stage was the continued good showing by the Glock pistols. Last year Dave Vining reported that the Glock was the only pistol that did not malfunction after going through his infiltration crawl in a sand pit. The Glock performed equally well this year, proving that it is a design worthy of note.

As can be seen in the rifle statistics, the AR15 varieties are by far the most popular rifle design in the match. This year's SOF rifle event had been intended to create a balance between the "5.56" and the "7.62." There was one stage, "Headquarters Assault" in which the most distant targets were about 100 meters and time was the score, while the other stage, "Elephant Valley," had two scored targets at 400 meters and two scored targets at 200 meters. It was anticipated that the 5.56 would dominate in the HQ Assault and the 7.62 M1As, 91s, FALs and such would perform better in Elephant Valley. This just didn't happen. As expected, the 5.56 weapons performed quite well in HQ Assault and also did just as well as the 7.62s in Elephant Valley. Had the usual windy conditions occurred this might have changed, but as it was, the dominant factor was shooter skill and not rifle weight or caliber. It should be noted that the better-performing Mini-14s on the long range did have longer, custom barrels which proved effective.

Modifications are allowed in this match but there are restrictions to keep such mods from getting out of hand: Pistols can weigh no more than two ounces over stock and rifles equipped with a sling may weigh no more than one pound over their stock weight. These restrictions serve to keep the weapons more equal and within the service-weapon orientation of the match. —

Michael K. Horne, Match Director



The Desert Sportsman's range is famous (or infamous) for its afternoon winds. Normally around 1100 the wind comes up, and by late afternoon it's a serious problem for rifle shooters. Most competitors felt that this match would be a 7.62 rifleman's favorite, as desert winds have been known to be very hard on the 5.56 variety. For the first time in my many trips to the range, however, the winds did not arrive. The ranges were unusually calm, and when the final scores for "Elephant Valley" were posted, former Marine Lou Gosnell, firing a 5.56mm Steyr AUG, was the winner. The top five winners in this long-range event were all using 5.56mm weapons.

The second stage of the rifle event was "Headquarters Assault." This phase required the contestant to engage a total of 17 steel knock-down targets at ranges from 25 to 100 yards, during which the shooter moves to five different shooting positions to engage the various targets. The shooting scenario was set around the concept of a raid on an enemy base camp. The 5.56mm rifles had a definite advantage with their larger

Top Female Shooter and a three-time winner, Sharon Kimbrel of Elgin, South Carolina, takes aim during pistol stage event. Photo: Duane Hall

magazine capacity and faster shot-to-shot recovery. Jim Clark, Jr. won "Headquarters Assault" with a modified Ruger Mini-14. Jim's Mini-14 had a Douglas premium-grade match barrel that was longer than standard but turned down to keep his rifle within the weight requirement. The barrel was fitted with a Choate flash hider and front sight. The action was glass bedded to the stock, and a crisp light trigger job rounded out this custom Mini-14. This rifle event was based upon a 180-second total time limit. To place well in this stage, contestants had to not only move quickly, but also engage their targets very quickly.

Stage three was Dave Vinning's "Hunyani Rescue" pistol event, which placed the contestant in the role of a reaction force member trying to save innocents about to be overrun by terrorists. The match was

set up in a big ravine and had 21 knock-down steel targets mixed in with 18 no-shoot targets. The time it took the shooter to move through the course and knock all the shoot targets was the score. A no-shoot target knocked over added 20 seconds to your score. This was a fun match, and most challenging. Arizona pistolero Lee Souter won this stage, shooting a Browning 9x19mm P-35 Hi-Power.

A "Houseclearing" exercise made up stage four. This was a close-quarters shooting stage that required the contestant to use cover and move through five shooting positions to engage four steel knock-downs, plus three cardboard silhouettes. Doug Boykin used his M1911 in .38 Super to win this stage. The steel targets in the "Houseclearing" were a newly designed "MRW Dropper" reactive target. They proved to be foolproof and challenging. Use of steel reactive targets on the pistol match makes for very rapid scoring and thus makes the time between shooters go faster. All these steel targets are calibrated to drop or fall when hit with even a 9mm ball round. Natur-



ally, many of the top scores in the pistol matches were posted by IPSC shooters.

"Kruger Straat Raid" was the title of the stage five (shotgun) match. This was a buckshot-only stage in which the contestant had to grab his shotgun from a storage rack and a bag of shells from the shelf, then repulse an attack on his security post. Fourteen steel knockdown targets were placed in different positions. Some of the targets were behind a car and others in windows. This was not only a test of fast shooting, but one that also made dexterity of loading the shotgun under stress a major factor. The speed at which some of the contestants could load and engage their targets was quite impressive. Jim Clark, Jr. used a Benelli Super 90 to win this buckshot stage. For years the Remington M1100 shotgun has been the favorite at SOF, but the H&K-imported Benelli 90 is quickly becoming the new favorite.

The final stage of the shotgun match was the "Slug Assault." The shooter moved forward and engaged three IPSC silhouette

Shooter fires AR15 from mortar pit during "HQ Assault" phase. Photo: Michael Horne

targets from five different shooting positions. The need for a shotgun with slug sights was obvious in this stage, and those shooters with just bead sights suffered. The distances varied from approximately 30 to 80 yards. Only five rounds could be in the shotgun at the start, so quick reloading was required if all 15 rounds were to be placed on target in a competitive time. The firing positions were a test of tactics, and one barricade made weak-side shooting necessary. Many a shooter lost slugs off target as a result of a strange, contorted weak-side firing stance.

Everyone who attended the 1988 *Soldier of Fortune* Three-Gun Match enjoyed themselves. The SOF Three-Gun has the reputation of being fun; the spirit is always that of having a good time. Shooting well is certainly a goal, but unlike many of the other big-money shooting events, SOF is de-

signed to provide an enjoyable experience. Most shooters coming to Las Vegas for the SOF match come with friends, and the enjoyment of being with shooting buddies in an event as different and challenging as SOF is unique for most individuals.

Over the years we have watched Al Mar of knife fame come down from Oregon with a gang of his buddies, compete in the match and enjoy themselves immensely. They wear black utilities and shoot H&K weapons. The SOF match staff began to call them "Team Mar." It was noted that if Al Mar and his shooting buddies could have such a great time, maybe a team event was in order. Thus, in 1988 SOF began a team category. Teams were classified as sponsor, police/military, and open. The turnout for teams was very good, and the Al Mar Knives Team One took high overall. The top police/military team was from the Idaho Department of Energy. First place open class team was the Southern California Sharpshooters. Team events for SOF look

very promising, and I am sure in 1989 we'll see more interest in this approach. The opportunity to bring your buddies to Las Vegas, shoot together in a big three-gun match, and have an all-'round great time is hard to beat. Some adjustment will be made to the "open" class to ensure that team members are in fact from the same geographic area.

Shooting the SOF Three-Gun Match was one of the most enjoyable competition events I have ever been in. I plan to go back again in '89 ... as a shooter. ☒

## 1989 INFORMATION

• **SOF THREE-GUN MATCH:** 19-23 September, Desert Sportsman Rifle & Pistol Club, Las Vegas, Nevada. For information and application, send an office-sized, self-addressed, two-stamped envelope to Michael Horne, 408 E. Harding, Bakersfield, CA 93308.

• **SOF CONVENTION AND EXPOSITION:** The 1989 *Soldier of Fortune* Convention runs from 20-24 September, and the SOF Exposition from 22-24 September, at the Sahara Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada. For further information, contact Convention and Expo Director Bill Brooks at (205) 244-1916. For exhibitor information write SOF 1989 Expo, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. See you there!

### SOF THREE-GUN MATCH

Place	Overall Scores	Name	Rifle Combined Scores	Pistol Combined Scores	Shotgun Combined Scores
1	5.7885	Clark Jr., James E.	199	182	197
2	5.6417	Boykin, Doug	176	191	198
3	5.2227	Souter, Lee	162	194	166
4	5.1049	Voight, Michael	146	183	182
5	5.0620	Miculek, Jerry	175	159	173
6	5.0204	Gaines, Joe	179	156	168
7	4.9901	Ryckman, Robert G.	171	160	168
8	4.9894	Dalton, Mike	164	172	163
9	4.9109	Hamilton, J. Joe	144	167	180
10	4.9090	Gaines, Garth	181	145	166
11	4.9029	Morton, Larry	183	149	159
12	4.8961	Miller, Paul	162	171	157
13	4.8417	Erickson, Jim	185	133	166
14	4.8025	Yost, Tom	147	168	163
15	4.8009	Siciliano, Mark	137	172	171
16	4.7973	Carnahan, Scott	146	167	167
17	4.7901	Rhodes, Eddie	136	166	177
18	4.7839	Gosnell, Lew	192	140	146
19	4.7557	Wall, Jim L.	148	162	165
20	4.7327	McCarney, Angus J.	138	159	177
21	4.6637	Watson, David	151	148	168
22	4.6504	Harper, Richard W.	159	133	173
23	4.6423	Zitta, Allan	173	133	159
24	4.5996	Chmiel, Joseph W.	157	157	146
25	4.5988	Furbee, Daniel R.	135	171	155
26	4.5857	Horii, Chris	138	161	160
27	4.5834	Hockwitz, Mel	159	149	151
28	4.5538	Zorn, K.	164	148	144
29	4.5322	Bumgardner, Rich	133	156	165
30	4.5269	Fillinger, Ronald	154	150	148
31	4.4732	Griggs, Jim	158	136	153
32	4.4679	Johnston, John B.	148	136	162
33	4.4625	Anderson, Scott E.	143	159	144
34	4.4520	Putman, Charles	139	149	157
35	4.4512	Boruck, Alan A.	150	129	166
36	4.4316	Wilson, Stewart	124	158	161
37	4.4292	Sharp, Ron	132	153	158
38	4.4222	Reed, Paul	135	162	145
39	4.4219	Shockley, Ben	142	143	157
40	4.4085	Abel, J.R.	143	146	152
41	4.3939	Palazzolo, Bill	138	156	145
42	4.3550	Brault, Ron	151	137	147
43	4.3487	Wheeler, David L.	103	171	160
44	4.3461	Marsh, Jon	140	134	161
45	4.3255	Cooley, B.	153	129	150
46	4.3157	English, Don	130	152	150
47	4.3054	Smith, Daniel E.	139	136	155
48	4.2876	Haughn, Neil	150	151	127
49	4.2743	Lauck, David	102	160	165
50	4.2487	Solheim, John	135	142	148
51	4.2452	Vaughan, Samuel E.	125	140	159
52	4.2310	Morrison, Sam	129	145	149
53	4.2051	Tapp, Ken	142	144	134
54	4.2050	Hall, Allen	161	145	114
55	4.1925	Hackathorn, Ken	126	137	156
56	4.1910	Wood, Craig	131	140	148
57	4.1678	Larsen, Larry S.	138	136	143
58	4.1664	Staskel, Edward J.	142	133	141
59	4.1410	Chapman, Guy	123	152	140
60	4.1353	Dela-Cruz, Mark C.	118	153	142
61	4.1237	Keezstra, Neil	133	150	129
62	4.1103	Nixon III, William P.	135	150	127
63	4.0820	Kimbrel, Roy A.	141	116	151
64	4.0691	Jason, Alec	125	135	147
65	4.0298	Basaraba, Paul	143	124	137
66	4.0217	Trapp, Cory	100	148	154
67	4.0141	Albright, Jim	121	140	140
68	4.0085	Springstun Jr., Charles D.	112	140	149
69	4.0052	Doiron, Richard J.	121	135	145
70	3.9959	Salter, Bob	120	138	141
71	3.9918	Britt, Keith Duane	134	124	142
72	3.9813	Taflinger, Joseph W.	133	132	134
73	3.9709	Austin, Dave	108	156	133
74	3.9706	Baugues II, Sammy	111	142	144
75	3.9505	Hubbs, Ken	115	139	141
76	3.9233	Christiansen, Ned F.	116	134	143
77	3.8970	Houghtby, Alan	121	148	122
78	3.8943	Cook, Joe	140	117	132
79	3.8858	Semm, John	138	99	152
80	3.8844	Miller, Richard K.	144	105	134
81	3.8603	Elgin, Scott A.	128	126	132
82	3.8595	Martineau, Glen	141	123	122
83	3.8437	Duckett, Larry	109	132	143
84	3.8394	Jones, James L.	112	129	143
85	3.8352	Waldo, Dwight L.	102	135	146
86	3.8177	Slater, Patrick B.	104	140	138
87	3.8084	Askeland, Tore	105	130	145
88	3.8080	Blankenship, Warren T.	113	153	115
89	3.7986	Kostelic, John T.	111	121	148
90	3.7589	Kimbrel, Sharon	125	134	117
91	3.7492	Knudsen, Richard	114	124	137
92	3.7414	Jenkins, Wayne	124	147	104
93	3.7413	Karst, Richard	101	143	130
94	3.7310	Novak, Wayne	99	129	145
95	3.7310	Thorburn, Robert	139	103	132
96	3.6907	Mork, Johnnie L.	89	141	139
97	3.6902	Foster Jr., Charles L.	129	132	108
98	3.6891	Randolph, Jim	102	133	134
99	3.6873	Spees, Wayne	104	130	134
100	3.6847	Colombo, Jim	133	119	116
101	3.6761	Appel, John C.	85	133	150
102	3.6652	Crossman, Doug	117	125	124
103	3.6571	Lose, Timothy	149	106	110
104	3.6397	Burns, David	136	120	109
105	3.6389	Showers, Russell	97	120	147
106	3.6335	Allen, Eugene R.	96	138	130
107	3.6202	Noval, Joseph R.	121	119	122
108	3.6158	Dompa, C. Charles	94	132	136
109	3.6145	Struke, William	136	87	139
110	3.6062	Richter, Paul S.	108	112	141
111	3.6050	Dust, Gregory P.	93	143	125
112	3.5952	Thomas, Dick	108	121	130
113	3.5791	Wostium, Edd	112	124	122
114	3.5715	Carpenter, Andrew B.	129	129	99
115	3.5503	Potter, Steve	110	124	121
116	3.5449	Nolan, Thorpe E.	113	120	121
117	3.5432	Heffington, Robert B.	111	128	115
118	3.5422	Finn, Edward	106	101	147
119	3.5337	Sauzek, Robert	115	129	109
120	3.5186	Anspach, Mark	120	136	96
121	3.5135	Hampe, Tom	103	112	136
122	3.5052	Burris Jr., William Earl	96	113	142
123	3.4738	Gaskin, Dwayne D.	90	107	151
124	3.4648	Deater, Sean R.	109	96	141
125	3.4642	DeKrugger, David	101	105	140
126	3.4556	Mascia, Louis	120	80	145
127	3.4502	Tobias, Jim	116	105	123
128	3.4358	Hoffman, Daryl K.	98	124	121
129	3.4052	Bridwell, Terry	109	108	123
130	3.3988	Holleman, Dave	109	120	111
131	3.3730	Hagler, Glen	102	123	112
132	3.3603	Thomson, Bob	106	106	124
133	3.3572	Vallejuli, Kenneth E.	90	124	121
134	3.3338	Stone, Michael	121	133	79
135	3.3135	Daugherty, Bill	123	90	118
136	3.2734	Brossia, Robert J.	120	100	108
137	3.2402	Young, Gregory R.	99	118	107
138	3.2317	Comer, Chris L.	80	120	123
139	3.2301	Wiedmann, Ted S.	86	127	110
140	3.2297	Oliver, Tim	55	127	140
141	3.1999	Bullene, Richard B.	91	85	144
142	3.1857	Sullivan, Mark	82	119	118
143	3.1646	Redding, David L.	87	96	133
144	3.1612	Esrada, Al	80	119	118
145	3.1349	Francisco, Jerry L.	94	92	128
146	3.1107	Dryer, Jim	108	100	103
147	3.0994	Keck, V. David	81	108	120
148	3.0980	Acosta, Alan	87	122	100
149	3.0975	Gwozdek, Richard	103	89	118
150	3.0808	Koloscha, Michael J.	77	94	137
151	3.0796	Hotsko, James	83	106	119
152	3.0783	Reed, Henry	63	133	111
153	3.0716	Joyce, James	113	88	105
154	3.0680	Dhalliwal, Scott S.	48	123	135
155	3.0438	Markber, Michael	108	76	120
156	3.0370	Publicheim, Richard	79	112	112
157	3.0146	Rubin, John	59	113	129
158	3.0145	Goad, Douglas	109	110	83
159	3.0122	Jones, Robert G.	77	110	115
160	3.0034	O'Neal, Robert	110	87	103
161	2.9607	Donohue, Chris	86	105	105
162	2.9455	Lenehan, Ralph	89	103	103
163	2.9435	Ferns, Lorraine	74	120	100
		Marie-Martha			
164	2.9322	Silk, John P.	54	113	126
165	2.9320	Anderson, Carmen N.	85	98	110
166	2.9238	Vaughan, Beverly J.	86	93	113
167	2.8896	Nance, Chet A.	87	96	106
168	2.8546	Alvarez, Stanley	79	109	98
169	2.8542	Bergmann, Rudy	47	143	96
170	2.7920	Maycott, George D.	55	118	106
171	2.7917	Bloore, Robert	73	91	116
172	2.7200	Groseclos, James	82	64	126
173	2.7120	Consear, Allen	124	59	88
174	2.7106	Smith, Robert E.	69	92	110
175	2.7001	Beken, Robert A.	67	92	111
176	2.6914	Papworth, Brett	112	114	42
177	2.6467	Hersey, Fred	69	93	102
178	2.6031	Mowery, W.A.	79	71	110
179	2.5646	Wostium, Leanne	82	68	106
180	2.5394	Mar, Al	56	85	113
181	2.5390	Menane, Wes	84	77	93
182	2.5090	Delay, Bill	55	84	112
183	2.4879	Earl, Una	105	69	75
184	2.4840	Feurt, John	63	80	105
185	2.4546	McQuate, Eric D.	77	69	99
186	2.4522	Buxton, Don	77	62	106
187	2.3763	McLees, Morris J.	66	99	72
188	2.3712	Shattock, Thomas	74	77	86
189	2.3227	Wagner, Joseph	90	74	67
190	2.1398	Porto, John	70	40	104
191	2.1337	Peters, Jeff	53	87	74
192	2.1230	S. Khalsa, Sat Bachan	28	87	97
193	2.0801	Lafleur, Jon	46	92	69
194	2.0726	Brokaw, Jim	54	68	86
195	2.0421	Burgess, Robert Dean	52	100	52
196	1.9601	Carter, Paul E.	48	64	84
197	1.8894	Cupples, Paula	59	51	79
198	1.6737	Hack, Robert J.	63	32	72
199	1.5883	Graf, Carl	90	23	45
200	1.0950	Flores, Cal	5	101	4
201	0.7295	Jones, Randy	64	5	4
202	0.6661	Toler, Charles	58	5	4

# CONGO HORROR

## Peacekeepers Journey Into the Heart of Darkness

by Alan Stuart-Smyth

*Editor's Note: For those readers familiar with the violence that frequently erupts in central Africa, this article, which from the author's first-hand knowledge depicts the wanton, vicious savagery of tribal warfare, will hold no surprises. For others, its graphic brutality may come as a shock. But above all, it's true. It is Africa.*

OUR orders from United Nations headquarters in Leopoldville came as a surprise to callsign Holdfast three-two. We were an assault engineer unit specially selected for our expertise in demolitions and booby traps, and although we were all infantry-basic trained, it had been one helluva long time since I had tiptoed through the tulips. Nevertheless, orders were orders, and in the summer of 1963 we had become accustomed to strange occurrences. In the Congo the unusual had become the usual.

At first I thought it would be difficult to convert Holdfast three-two to infantry, but the opposite proved to be true. After tasting victory at Bridge 19 the soldiers were eager to see more action. Besides, there was the matter of Willy the Pig. Someone had to pay for what happened to Willy. But those are other stories. Our current orders told us that our trip upriver would probably turn out to be a public relations junket more than anything else, but we were hoping for something more.

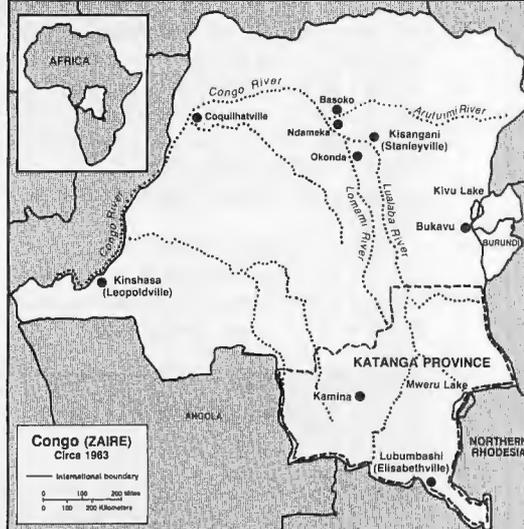
We didn't receive any additional training due to time constraints, but we were issued better weaponry than engineers were accustomed to. We were broken down into standard infantry sections, 10 men per section, and three sections to the platoon. Lieutenant Bumbry commanded, and a tough old Queen's Own Rifles sergeant, John MacAuliffe, was his second-in-command (2IC). The original Holdfast three-two was split up and absorbed into the new com-

mand, together with odds and sods from the Royal Canadian Signals Corps, a couple of artillery guys who were attached to United Nations Operations in the Congo (ONUC) as general duties stiffs, and some other engineers from the field squadron. Together we comprised a new U.N. assault force, callsign India one-one. Hardly a professional infantry organization, but better than anything the enemy could throw at us, and our spirits were high. I was a lance corporal, 2IC of 2 Section, Corporal Thomas Edger-ton commanding.

We departed Leopoldville at 0400 hours on 28 July 1963, moving quietly into the big bridging boats Canadian engineers used for floating-bridge construction. There was no sense in announcing our departure to the prying eyes of enemy sympathizers. The big rebel push was coming out of Katanga Province in the south any day now, and Katangese insurgents were attacking civilians, government posts, hospitals, and settlements all down the Congo River. Their aim was apparently to terrorize into submission whatever vestige of civil authority remained along the main axis of the forthcoming attack. A subdued populace makes the advancing army's job that much simpler.

Each boat held 27 fully equipped infantrymen and enough materiel to keep them fighting for a week. India one-one was a standard platoon of 30 men, a platoon commander, his 2IC, and a radio operator. We had four Boats Bridge Erection (BBE) in our flotilla and thus plenty of room. Each of the three boats in the platoon mounted an

Canadian military policeman leads children of the Baluba chief of the Kabalo District of northern Katanga down the gangway of a aircraft at Leopoldville Airport. The chief put his entire family under U.N. protection after some of his sons were wounded in clashes with Katanga police. Photo: AP/Wide World





FN general purpose machine gun (GPMG) on the bow. The belt-fed 7.62mm weapons gave the platoon a fair amount of waterborne firepower. In addition, each rifle section carried one FNC2, a heavy-barrel FAL bipod. The fourth boat was a transport for the evacuation of civilians, which was our mission. Should we evacuate a settlement, the fourth boat would transport the refugees to the nearest U.N. camp, and then return to continue the trip in its support role.

The BBEs were 30 feet from stern to bow, powered by two 165-horsepower Chrysler six-cylinder engines, and constructed of heavy-gauge steel. They were fine, reliable machines, and I felt comfortable knowing of the protection they afforded in terms of speed, maneuverability and now firepower.

We proceeded upriver to Coquilhatville uneventfully, passing on the U.N. commander's request for evacuation to the European villagers and workmen we encountered along the way. The Europeans we

### FRONTLINE PEACEKEEPER

Colonel Alan Stuart-Smyth (a *nom de plume*), a Canadian/American dual national, joined the Royal Canadian Engineers at age 16 and later volunteered for United Nations' peacekeeping duties in the Congo, where this incident took place. Seriously wounded in a subsequent action, he was evacuated and later reassigned to duty in the Republic of Cyprus during its 1964 war, where he served in intelligence and commanded a counterterrorist unit. He continued on in counterterror operations, serving in Gaza until the Israeli advance in 1967, and was involved in counterterror operations in every United Nations theater of operations thereafter.

He served 23 years as a U.N. peacekeeper, progressing in rank from sapper to full colonel. Among his commands were the Beirut International Airport Dignitary Protection (responsible for Yasser Arafat's personal security for one year), and the then top secret U.N. Counterterror Force (otherwise known as Johnny Unit One), which had the mandate for the total eradication of terrorism in U.N.-controlled areas. He was the only American ever to command those elite units.

Wounded twice, Colonel Stuart-Smyth was awarded the U.N. Medal, a Mention in Dispatches, the Canadian Decoration, and the Distinguished Service Order.

After his retirement in 1986 he was offered, and accepted, a full professorship at a major American university where he taught criminology for two years.

He's currently writing a book about his years as a U.N. peacekeeper, and we welcome his first contribution to SOF.



met believed the danger in Leopoldville and Equateur provinces to be slight. Besides, many were armed with automatic weapons and argued that they were capable of protecting themselves against small bands of outlaws without U.N. intervention.

They were probably right. Leopoldville and Equateur provinces had been quiet for some time now. The real threat was to Oriental and Kivu provinces, the two most remote provinces in the republic and some of the wildest country in Africa. It didn't help that both provinces were under the control of Third World U.N. armies — specifically the Ethiopians, Nigerians, and Malaysians, whose professional reputations were less than noble.

On the 13th day out of Leopoldville we ran into trouble. We were by now some 800

**An Indian soldier of the United Nations Katanga force checks identity papers of Katangese at a roadblock outside Elisabethville on the road to Jadotville shortly after U.N. troops had captured that town. Photo: AP/Wide World**

## COLONEL "BLACK JACK" SCHRAMME

Soldier of fortune Jean Schramme, perhaps best known for his military exploits in what was then called the Congo, died at his farm near Rondonopolis, Brazil, late last year.

Colonel Schramme entered the hospital on 6 December 1988. Surgeons opened him up and found cancer, which they diagnosed as too far developed to be operable. They sewed him up and the next day dispatched him home by car. During the journey to his farm Schramme started to hemorrhage; by the time the vehicle reached Schramme's farm he was unconscious. He recovered consciousness once the following day and died surrounded by his family. Because of the poor treatment Schramme had received at the hands of the press, family members kept the death a secret until Schramme's brother in Ostend released the details to the Flemish publication *Gazet van Antwerpen*.

Jean Marie Joseph Antoine Thomas Schramme was born in Bruges, Belgium, in the 1930s but was too young to participate in World War II. His family was involved in law and medicine, and his sister married a foreign diplomat in Paris, but life was not to be so settled for Jean, who enlisted at age 18 in the *Regiment Para-Commando*. After basic training at Marche les-Dame near Namur, he was posted to the Belgian Congo and assigned to one of the regiment's *Compagnie Etranger* which was engaged alongside the local *Force Publique* in counterinsurgency campaigning.

After two-years' service with the Regiment at Kamina and Kitona, Schramme purchased a coffee plantation some 60

kilometers northeast of Stanleyville near Bafwasende on a tributary of the Lualaba River. His colonial lifestyle was shattered when in June 1960 the Congo was granted independence from Belgium. Political and tribal factions in the country quickly became armed mobs of looters, and Schramme's home for 10 years was put to the torch.

At this time, African leader Moise Tshombe led the province of Katanga to independence from the rest of the warring Congo. Tshombe's new republic was besieged by primitive Baluba tribesmen, the undisciplined hordes of the Congolese national army, and also had to deal with the foreign invasion of Irish, Swedish, Ethiopian and Indian troops under the banner of the United Nations.

In the face of this avalanche of U.N. troops, Tshombe turned to white soldiers to fight the invaders. An Irishman, Mike Hoare, was given command of 5 Commando; Frenchman Bob Denard given command of 6 Commando; and Schramme of 10 Commando. Whereas Hoare's and Denard's commandos were comprised of white mercenaries, Schramme's *Kansimba "Leopard"* Commando were mainly black Katangese with Belgian officers. Throughout his life Schramme objected to being called a mercenary. His commando comprised 10 whites and 60 blacks and operated in northern Katanga. Schramme was nicknamed "Black Jack" because of the large number of native Katangans in his unit.

Schramme was amongst the 400 mercenaries arrested by U.N. forces in February 1961. He escaped from a Congolese military prison, later rejoining the Katangese and leading mercenaries and Katangese troops into exile in neighbor-

ing Portugese Angola. When Katanga rejoined the Congo, Schramme was asked to return with his men to fight the Simba terrorists. Schramme marched 8,000 men back from Angola and joined the ANC (*Armée National Congolaise*). A coup brought Mobutu to power, and this heralded an end to the mercenary era of the Congo.

Schramme's life subsequently was not tranquil. He murdered in cold blood a Belgian emissary of the exiled Tshombe and then lied about the murder. This incident was to have severe repercussions in later years. In 1968 Schramme was repatriated to Brussels along with three black children whom he adopted as sons. A subordinate of Schramme's, a mercenary called Rodrigue, tried to blackmail him about the murder of the Belgian emissary. When he didn't cooperate, Rodrigue went to the dead man's family and Schramme was arrested. Intervention by the Ministry of the Exterior arranged Schramme's release in return for silence on Belgian involvement in the Katangese and Congo war.

Schramme moved to Oliveira do Sol in Portugal, where he started a chicken farm. In February 1974 he emigrated to Brazil, where he settled down. In 1976, the original murder complaint was pursued through the Belgian courts by the dead man's family. In 1984, an extradition warrant was issued by Belgium against Schramme and the Brazilian authorities arrested him in October 1984. However, as a result of having Brazilian-born children, Schramme beat the extradition attempt. He wrote his memoirs, *Le Bataillon Leopard*, but most informed observers didn't accept his version of events.

— Jim Shortt

miles upriver and heading south on the Congo in Oriental Province. We had maintained steady radio contact with ONUC through relay stations and had been resupplied numerous times at U.N. camps along the river. It was at one of these camps, Basoko, that a Ghanaian company commander reported that gunfire had been heard that morning coming from the vicinity of a small fishing village about a mile up the Arutuimi River. The Ghanaian officer didn't investigate because he didn't have the manpower to spare, or so he claimed. As the Arutuimi was a tributary of the Congo, Lt. Bumbry left the transport boat at Basoko and led the rifle sections up the smaller river to the tiny village of Ndameka.

The bush was heavy on the river banks, and for the sake of expediency we approached the village by boat, taking full tactical precautions. Besides, it was so damn hot and humid that our asses would have been dragging down to our ankles by the time we made the village on foot. As it was, my small pack was soaked through from the sweat running down my back, and I was sitting immobile in a boat without expending any energy whatsoever. Most of the guys packed their rations and spare socks in plastic bags before putting them in their packs. Ordinary hardtack is difficult enough to stomach, but when soaked in your own sweat . . . ! August on the Congo is an experience I wouldn't want to repeat.

Ndameka appeared to be deserted at first, but as the villagers saw U.N. flags flying from the bow of the boats they spilled out of their ramshackle mud huts onto the creaking dock, shouting and waving. You could always tell when terrorists had been there first. The only people left were old men and women and the children. Always the children. Terrified, crying, clinging to their grandmothers or a neighbor, or screaming for their mothers. But the mothers and fathers were never there. They, being young and healthy, had run off into the bush, leaving their young and aged behind to bear the brunt of the terrible inhumanity to come.

One of the old men could speak broken French, and from him we learned that the rebels had come that morning, but had left a

couple of hours ago, heading down river toward the Congo. That meant the Ghanaians could have easily engaged them at the junction of the Arutuimi and Congo — that is, if they had the guts for it. The old man led Lt. Bumbry to the village church.

When the colonial powers of the 19th century departed Africa in the early '60s, they left behind open mining pits, untended plantations, a few partially productive farms and factories, and a string of white man's churches of various denominations. Nearly every village on the Congo River had its church and resident missionary of some faith, diligently cultivating the black man's soul. Very few Africans I met ever fully embraced the concept of Christianity, and many resented the intrusion of this foreign power into traditional tribal society.

Ndameka's resident priest was a young Belgian who had done some good work with the water supply system and the general hygiene of the village, but who now lay quite dead near the door of his small, mud and dung church. At least, most of him lay by the church.

Rebels had stripped him of his clothes, hung them from a makeshift scarecrow in the church compound, and impaled his head

on top. His hands had been cut from his body, and they too were impaled at the ends of the sticks serving as the scarecrow's arms. Blood had dripped down the long neck of the scarecrow to stain crimson the cleric's collar of the black frock. Flies covered both the scarecrow and the human remains.

The villagers would not approach, for the scarecrow stood in the center of a ring of blood poured into the dusty earth. Neat bundles of white chicken feathers were placed around it at even intervals. The French-speaking man whispered to Lt. Bumbry that it was a curse on all who listened to the white priests and that no one would enter the church from now on. Besides, he said, the rebels had chopped off the Father's hands before his head went, but his screams could be heard reverberating inside the church long after they had cut off his head. The place must surely be damned by now.

**The 38th Irish Battalion of the United Nations forces in the Congo advances into Kpushi in Katanga Province, 30 December 1963, in its push against Katangese separatists led by Moise Tshombe. Photo: AP/Wide World**



## U.N. ACTION IN THE BELGIAN CONGO

The United Nations Operation in the Congo (formally known as *Operation des Nations Unies au Congo*, or ONUC) occurred from July 1960 to June 1964. It was the largest international peacekeeping venture ever undertaken by the United Nations (with the exception of the Korean "Police Action"), involving 22,000 combat troops in the major offensive.

United Nations forces were comprised mainly of Third World armies, which soon proved incompetent to the task, leaving only regiments from Canada,

Ireland, India, and Indonesia to carry the brunt of the fighting, supported by the highly capable Swedish air force.

The Belgian Congo (now Zaire) comprised an area as large as western Europe, and had been a Belgian colony for many years. Full independence was granted to its 14 million inhabitants in June 1960, and straightaway local politics degenerated into tribal warfare, bringing death and destruction on a massive scale. Simultaneously, Katanga, the southernmost province (and the richest), declared its independence from the new nation and allied itself with Western nations interested in its vast mineral wealth.

The situation was, by then, politically untenable, and the Zairean government

called for United Nations intervention to restore law and order. But, between independence and the call for U.N. help, Katanga, with its ready reserves of money, had hired large numbers of European mercenaries to train and lead its 25,000-man army and air force.

The U.N. Security Council, realizing the hopelessness of the situation, authorized offensive action for the purpose of bringing the nation under the rule of law. At this point the Katanganese crossed their border in force, the Congolese National Army (ANC) advanced against United Nations' forces, U.N. forces advanced against everyone — and the war was on.

— Alan Stuart-Smyth

Inside the church we found two young black girls, both stripped completely naked and tied to tabletops. Both were dead now, but it was plain to see what had happened. They had been raped repeatedly by the rebels, and when all had had their fun, someone broke the legs off a chair, sharpened the ends, and rammed them up the victims' vaginas to the hilt. The villager said he could hear the priest screaming for a long time after he had been decapitated, so it must have taken the girls some time to die. The old man said the girls had served as helpers and youth leaders for the priest. Their parents had not come out of the bush since the Katangese had left, and he didn't know where they were.

India one-one conducted funeral services for the priest and the two girls in the church where the natives would not go and buried them in the small plot at the rear of the church. Then we proceeded downriver at speed. There were many more villages and many more priests.

There is an unwritten code in the British military system that you don't mistreat civilians and prisoners. Soldiers fight soldiers, and anything less is considered cowardice. If an enemy soldier surrenders to you, regardless of his reasons for doing so, it is your duty to house and feed him, provide medical care when needed, and generally treat him honorably. The code does not apply, of course, when you need information, or have to make a statement to the enemy still fighting. Ndameka dashed that code in our faces. Many of the younger soldiers simply could not stand tall in the face of what they had seen, and a good number of them lost their cookies on the spot. I think many of the young men in my unit changed forever on that day. I know it was the beginning of change for me. The rules of conventional warfare, both written and unwritten, went out the window at the sight of those two little girls, and all I wanted was to get my hands on the throats of the bastards who did it.

Three days after the Ndameka massacre we made contact with the rebel band responsible, and I killed my first man in close quarters combat.

For three days and two nights we had followed the rebels' trail of mayhem up the Congo to the fork of the Lomami River, the last major river to join the Congo before Stanleyville, where the Congo changed its name to the Lualaba. Villagers reported that the rebels had passed by not more than 30 minutes before, heading up the tributary toward the village of Okonda. India one-one prepared for action.

Okonda could have been Ndameka's sister village but for one difference. The terrain surrounding Okonda was not as heavily wooded, and a platoon could easily traverse the river bank and gain the high ground to the rear of the village. Lt. Bumbry opted to use the entire platoon as the assault section. He retained the boats in harbor downriver, prepared to rush the dock area and act as a firebase for the rifle sections. As the village was located on a point of land jutting into

the river, the firebase could neutralize the docks and still fire into the village itself at right angles to the advancing rifle sections.

India one-one approached the village through the low brush, looking for the advantage of surprise. Fully camouflaged, rounds up the spout and bayonets fixed, we were chomping at the bit to meet the enemy head on.

Number 2 Section led the assault. When we reached a position where we could see the village through the foliage, I noted that the church was directly in front of me, about 30 meters away. As our orders were to proceed with stealth until we made contact, Cpl. Edgerton signaled me to take one man and clear the church. Lieutenant Bumbry spread the rest of the platoon out so as to cover the village and suppress enemy fire, if necessary.

As I approached the building the sound of moaning, punctuated by deep laughs, was clearly audible. The rear of the church contained two small, dirty windows at eye level, through which I looked. Although the interior of the church was dark by comparison with the blazing outdoors sunlight, I could pick out the forms of two naked black men torturing a young white woman whom I assumed to be a nun or teacher. She had been stripped naked and was stretched out in the aisle of the church, arms pulled tightly over her head by one of the rebels, while the other knelt on her stomach and repeatedly touched her nipples with a burning cigarette. She had burn marks on her face and neck as well. Uniforms of the Katangese Gendarmerie were thrown over the back of a pew, and female garments were scattered near the door. A Soviet-made Mosin-Nagant M1944 carbine lay in the aisle beside the young woman. Another rifle had been left leaning against the wall near the uniforms. There appeared to be no one else present in the church.

I pointed to a small door adorning the wall of a lean-to attached to the church, and my number two man slowly tried the knob. It was unlocked. We entered as quietly as possible, not yet sure that other rebels were not present. I could see a neatly made-up cot against the wall and a wash stand and shaving gear on a table in the corner. This was obviously the priest's living quarters, and sure to form, there was another door leading into the church proper. From this room the priest should enter his church, appearing before the congregation near the altar. I crawled to the inner door and gently pushed it open a crack with the business end of my SMG. Fortunately, there were no other enemy in the altar area. On my signal we burst into the cathedral, our weapons on full auto.

**Withdrawal of U.N. forces — including these Swedish soldiers on guard duty in Katanga — from the Congo was viewed with relief and some misgivings. The United Nations rid itself of a costly operation, but there was great doubt that the country could hold itself together. Photo: AP/Wide World**





"Stand still," I bellowed. "U.N. troops; you're under arrest." I didn't want to do it that way, but damn it, I was still a soldier, and subject to Queen's Regulations and Orders.

The rebels bounded to their feet to face us, eyes staring wildly. I was carrying a Sterling 9mm SMG with the bayonet fixed, which I leveled at the two naked men. We were no more than 15 feet apart.

The one who had been holding the nun's arms was visibly shaking with fear, his eyes flying uncontrollably about the room. In a second they rested on the rifle lying in the aisle. The nun had rolled onto her stomach, clutching her breasts and rocking from side to side, moaning in pain.

"Don't be a fool, man," I cautioned. But he did it anyway.

In a burst of panic he emitted a loud, piercing wail and dove for the rifle. Landing on his knees he grabbed the weapon, and turning his terrified face to mine, attempting to bring the weapon to bear. My first burst caught him in the face, the second full in the chest. He was dead before he fell over, a body missing most of its head.

The second terrorist began to wave his arms frantically up and down, like a featherless black bird attempting to take flight. His eyes kept flitting back and forth between the muzzle of the Sterling and his own weapon, which was leaning against the wall a good 10 feet away. By now the whole village had erupted into battle, with the loud "rrup, rrup, rrup" of the rifle sections' LMGs dominant.

"Don't do it, don't do it," I ordered. But he emitted a loud "Yaaa . . .," and scrambled for the rifle. I warned him again but he grabbed the weapon, worked the action to place a round in the chamber, and began to swing the muzzle toward me.

"KILL HIM, GODDAMIT," screamed Cpl. Edgerton, who had by now entered the church behind us, "KILL HIM, NOW!"

The rebel terrorist was now fully facing me, desperately attempting to swing the long barrel of the bolt-action rifle across his body to align it with my chest. His eyes locked on mine — wild, frantic eyes surrounded by fields of white. They never left mine, not even when the powerful SMG rounds tore into his stomach, walked up his chest, and cut the carotid artery on the left side of his neck. His body hit the floor with a thud, blown apart by the blast of the Sterling, and still the eyes remained riveted to mine. Then his body relaxed and the eyes dilated, blind in death.

At this moment the BBEs rounded the bend in the river and began firing at the rebels who were trying to escape by boat. The rip of the GPMGs was a welcome sound. I heard Lt. Bumbry shout "Charge" as the platoon closed with the enemy, and soon shouts of the soldiers, driven by hatred and bloodlust, faded into the distance as India one-one pursued the enemy into the bush. But Africans could traverse the bush better than any Westerner, especially when

*Continued on page 74*



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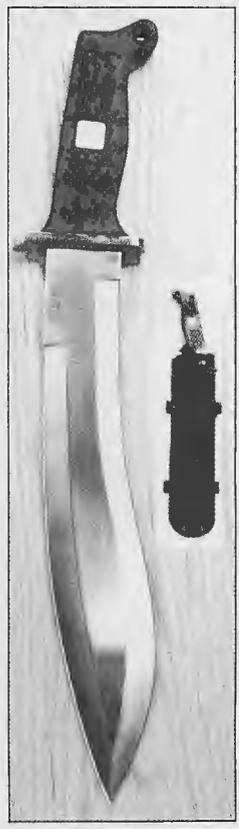
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## DEVIL'S LOTTO

Continued from page 33

hoping my captors would think me dead or unconscious.

I smashed into the ground with the impact of hitting a wall at 40 miles per hour. My captors held me in a spread-eagle position on my back with my arms over my head. One of the peasants was standing on my ankles. I opened my eyes and pleaded with him to get off my injured foot. He yelled and pointed my .38 at me. They ripped off the 'chute harness, my survival vest, even my boots. The pain in my ankle was intense. They tied my wrists with cable from my life vest and forced me to sit up. Shocked and dazed, I waited for the thrust of the bayonet. I still wore gloves and my watch. A peasant in a ragged shirt and short pants appeared and knelt beside me. His beady eyes were full of hatred, a young man about 30 years old. He pulled off my gloves, unbuckled my military watch and then jerked on my wedding ring. Should I close my fist and refuse him my band or would he cut off my hand for the prize. I left my hand open; he pulled off the ring and disappeared.

A soldier appeared in front of me with a red star on his sun helmet — a scene from a propaganda movie. His rifle was aimed right at my head. With a jolt the realization hit me: I would not be going back to Takhli today, perhaps ever.

The capture took less than five minutes, yet every detail is seared in my mind for eternity. The next 24 hours proved the fulfillment of every nightmare I had ever had. Terror was my constant companion. Less than 30 minutes after my capture I saw Norm being led away, arms tied behind his back, blindfolded, stripped to his underwear.

I heard a scream. Larry's voice. My God, what were they doing to him? The next day I heard a bang against the wall a few cells away and an American voice. It was Ed demanding water. Now I knew four from our crew of six were alive.

Two weeks of isolation, night and day interrogation, left me completely demoralized. I welcomed death. I searched in my mind for a clue. Why was I here? Why me, God! My burns were healing, and I could limp on my leg. For the first time my mind was free of the pain and some of the terror.

I remembered the Big Six in the sky, an image that mesmerized. I recalled all the sixes in my life. God, did that mean I'd be here six weeks? I had just survived six days. Six weeks of solitary confinement vanished, and I had not yet communicated with any other Americans. Larry was in the next cell. We tried to talk to each other but were caught and threatened with death. I didn't want to be tortured again. The hole in my left arm had not healed and I was afraid if they put me into the ropes again I might lose my arm or die of infection or gangrene. I couldn't survive six months if that was what the Big Six meant.

Seven weeks of solitary and I was moved

into another cell with Ed, the navigator from my crew. I told him of the Big Six and he regarded me with a look that said: another POW off his rocker. But I persisted. Maybe it meant we would be going home in six months. He simply shook his head.

Again trying to exercise my injured limb, I was preoccupied with thoughts of home, Kay and the kids. What were they doing now? I had fathered four children and they were growing up, living some of the most crucial years of their lives without me, with the entire burden on Kay. Did they know I was alive? All of the evidence suggested I was killed in the crash. Guilt and regret sometimes threatened to consume me. I asked myself what forces, what fate propelled a young Minnesota boy, son of a horticulturist, on a course that would end in a dirty, Godforsaken cell in an alien country, an ignominious dot on the world map. Before I left home, a man said to me, "Oh, you're going to Korea?" He had never heard of Vietnam.

As the weeks passed into months, I fought terror that threatened to choke me like a malignancy. As I paced back and forth in my cell, I toyed with the symbolism of the figure six: six members in my family, six members on my crew, two sixes in the current year, our 60th mission. My preoccupation with the image startled me, since I had never been particularly superstitious. At that time New Age thinkers were not yet prevalent, and I attached no satanic significance to the number.

I sought catharsis for my depression in rebellion against my captors — a smart mouth during interrogation, taking everything they said and twisting words, playing stupid and naive. I bragged about paying taxes, two cars, a large house with four bedrooms. I invented so many expensive material possessions they started salivating. I taunted them with all the anti-war activities in the United States I could remember, reminding them that only free people could protest against their government and not be imprisoned.

All of this resistance to their brainwashing found me on 2 December 1966 in solitary for the second time. I worked out a routine, composing imaginary letters to Kay and the kids, playing games with them, telling them stories. In my mind I relived my life over and over again. I extracted every memory of youth, nurturing it, enlarging it, filling it with details, changing things to what might have been instead of what was. To maintain sanity I held on desperately to everyone, everything once precious to me as I painted pictures in my mind.

Prisoners communicated with each other by tapping a code on the walls of our cell. I learned the names of more than 300 prisoners and was memorizing them to take home, so we would make sure no one was kept behind.

Six months following my capture I was still in solitary. Depression and loneliness overwhelmed me. I thought of suicide, but knew I owed my family more courage than that. Scuttlebutt said our crew was killed in action. Desperate to send a message to Kay,

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I volunteered for the famous *Life* magazine photograph. Though some disapproved of this decision, my first concern was my family and letting them know I was alive.

Bombing raids were increasing in intensity, and the guards and interrogators were showing more hostility and cruelty at each meeting with us. I took this as a good sign; maybe they'd give up their aggression against the South.

In March 1967, I was again returned to a cell with two others after three and a half months of solitary. I kept talking about the Big Six and told them maybe it meant six years. My cellmates hooted and heckled. They weren't too happy with my prediction, nor my sense of humor.

The years passed, but confinement without release in view was a slow death. The story of Perkins and his Big Six was making the rounds of the camps for humor. I learned to take the ribbing. Somehow we made it through, year by year, overcoming the deprivation, degradation and humiliation forced on us by a cruel and inhumane enemy. We could manage thinking only in six-month blocks of time; perhaps release either at Christmas or the Fourth of July. Maybe there'd be an exchange of prisoners now that Ho Chi Minh had died. Maybe we'd just say we achieved our objective and go home.

May 1972 saw a resumption of U.S. bombing of North Vietnam. The climax before the end, I thought. The rapid increase in

activity over the North surely meant the war would end soon. The Big Six was right on target. Six years.

I was moved along with 200 others to a camp near the Chinese border — near a town called Cao Bang. Six years came and went. We all had bets on the day the war would end. I decided that no matter what its import, the Big Six had been something to think about and had kept me entertained for six years. Now I forgot about it. I was thinking that I might spend 10 years or more in prison. The rest of my life?

January 1973. We were trucked back to Hanoi, certain we were going home soon. The enemy confirmed our hopes, reading to us the news about the signing of the ceasefire and provisions for our release. We were really going home.

Someone shouted in my window as I packed my few provisions. "Hey, Perkins. Guess what! From the day you were shot down until the signing of the cease fire, it's six years, six months and six days." The Big Six hadn't failed me.

In 1986, 13 years after my release, I went to purchase a license plate for my van. On the spur of the moment I asked the clerk, "Do you have a plate with any sixes on it?" She regarded me like an escapee from the netherworld, but I got the plate.

Only after I returned to the states did I find out that "666" was the sign of the antichrist. My Christian Science upbringing had protected me from that bit of lore. It was

exactly then I remembered the call sign for our aircraft the day it was shot down — Devil 01! ✕

## CONGO HORROR

*Continued from page 71*

they had dropped their packs and weapons. Bumbry soon returned, and we set about helping the villagers as best we could.

There had been two nuns at Okonda: the young one we saved, and an older one we didn't. When I first entered the church I was standing slightly behind the altar, and off to the left side. From that position I couldn't see the front of the altar, a rather large affair made of rough-hewn wood with a cross towering above it. Perhaps it was a good thing I could not, for the rebels had used the altar to butcher the old nun.

They had stripped her naked, but had not assaulted her sexually, probably because she was elderly, and obese. Instead, they sat her upright with her back to the altar, and nailed her hands to it in apparent mimicry of the crucifixion. Then they cut off her breasts with a bayonet and, in a final act of savagery, drove the bayonet through her mouth into the altar behind, impaling her in an upright sitting position. Evidence of a struggle showed that she had not died instantly from the bayonet wound, but had probably succumbed to the loss of blood



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from the wounds on her chest. She had a white man's penis and testicles shoved partially up her vagina. Her severed breasts were not present.

We found the owner of the male genitalia tied spread-eagle in the middle of the village compound, with the nun's breasts attached to his chest with sharpened sticks. He was still alive but had lost much blood. We had no means of transfusion, so we stopped the bleeding as best we could. He died two hours later. The rebels had partly completed a scarecrow in the compound. The priest's smock was draped over the frame, which had been prepared for his head and hands with razor sharp spikes. I thought they were simply waiting for him to die.

Lieutenant Bumbry counted eight enemy dead, including the two in the church, but no wounded. I don't think the guys were in any mood to take prisoners. The platoon had managed to capture one Katangese prisoner during the pursuit from the village, and this man Lt. Bumbry proposed to take into Stanleyville to stand trial for murder. Neither the villagers nor the troops were pleased about this, both parties preferring to butcher him alive, but Bumbry stood fast. It was his duty, as a commissioned officer, to bring law and order to this so-called country (that was the whole U.N. mission in the Congo), and the execution of prisoners without benefit of a lawful trial was not the way to do it.

We understood this, but I must say that without the strong tradition of British discipline inherent in India one-one, the prisoner would have been barbecued alive. I was willing to do it myself.

Prior to Okonda, I had not killed a human being. That is, I did not know for sure that I had killed. When one is firing at moving, shadowy figures in the confusion of battle one cannot be certain of the results. At Bridge 19 I had killed many men when I detonated the charges, blowing an enemy convoy to kingdom come, but somehow the incident was not psychologically close. They were a long way off, and the cover of night hid their shapes and movements, their very humanity. But here at Okonda it was different. The two men I killed were practically within arms reach; I could see their facial expressions clearly, even hear their breathing, see their fear, and smell their body odor. And the funny thing was *I didn't feel a damn thing!*

Before we departed Okonda the young nun asked to meet the soldier who had saved her life. She was clothed now, and had cleaned up a little bit with the help of our medic. I was surprised by how young she was — early 20s or younger. What's the church doing sending a kid like this to Africa, I wondered? Don't they know white women are highly desirable to these half-assed revolutionaries? And here we are, U.N. soldiers fighting and dying to correct the errors of some idiot bureaucrat who, for all he knew about Africa, might as well be living on another planet. It was a familiar theme that I would witness time and again over the next 20 or so years of U.N.

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peacekeeping.

The nun was evacuated to Stanleyville to get proper treatment. She required a number of sutures in her vagina, and would need burn treatments as well. I didn't admire her decision to remain in enemy territory when she was given ample opportunity to leave, but I did admire her spunk. When we met she looked me straight in the eye and said, "Thank God you came." She had been badly beaten, but not defeated.

As for me, I had turned 19 only two days previous, and still suffered from the naive upbringing of a good Christian family. I lost a lot of that upbringing at Okonda. There was no honor here, no virtue. The standards of behavior taught in the homes, churches, and schools of America had no place in battle. They were mythical concepts good only for the raising of children, to be cast aside forever from this moment on. No, I didn't feel guilt, shame, or remorse at killing my fellow man — I felt pride! ✕

## CORSICAN CAPER

Continued from page 57

general opinion was that it had been a success, which was hardly a surprise. Despite some practices which to my "fresh-from-training" mind were unusual, it had been efficient from beginning to end. Of course, I

was to discover soon enough that safe training standards are necessary, but in the field, risks, daring action, improvisation, initiative, practical common sense and real adrenaline are the prime movers.

We arrived back in time for the weekend. This was fine for most of my brother officers as they either lived ashore with their families or in well-appointed quarters. For me there was a new complication. During our brief absence from Toulon the venerable *Deux Mondes* had been towed across the harbor to a floating dry dock close to the town. The "French" sanitation, ventilation and cooking facilities were suddenly even more "French" (if that was possible) and I felt that my decision to live ashore in the officers' club was a justified expense to the British Crown. In fact I was to be seldom there, for another intensive period of training began that Monday.

In those days all French *Commandos Marine* were parachute qualified, with much of their training taking place at a naval air station close to St. Tropez. It seemed like an opportunity not to miss, not that my French hosts were going to let me!

I stayed in the naval air station wardroom; the weather was glorious and the Riviera beckoned although, in practice, we did not get "ashore." The mess was very lively.

All commandos had to complete 10 jumps before being allowed to free-fall, and although this was not a required military

skill most did qualify. That Monday we mustered at the airfield, were issued with parachutes and our drills checked. It was then that I had to admit that I was not para trained. The French had assumed that, like themselves, all British commandos had attended a basic parachute school. I was keen to jump; indeed I was on line for a course in England, but at that precise moment had not done so. There was much discussion. I appealed to their apparently relaxed interpretation of regulations, but there was to be no bending of this particular rule and on this matter they were determined. However, I was allowed to watch the training from the aircraft and was instructed (with a wink) to remain fully kitted, "In case you fall out!"

The Nord Atlas 17 circled the field as I watched the novices jump — all faultlessly — before we climbed to a better altitude for the free-fallers. As soon as the aircraft was empty we landed, and those who had jumped packed their own 'chutes before jumping again. Everyone completed three jumps. There was, on that day, no tactical setting but just straight-forward parachute training. That night was different with a jump into a DZ deep in *Les Alpes Maritimes* — the mountains to the north. My abiding memory was the low-level flight between the mountain peaks guided only by the faint light from the moon's first quarter. Again, it was an impressive, if hair-raising perform-

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ance, for the untutored passenger in the rear of the aircraft.

We returned to Toulon for the final two phases of my brief but crowded look at *Les Commandos Marine*. I immediately accepted an invitation to attend a *Combatant nageur* [combat swimmer] course for here was a skill in which I was already reasonably proficient and I was certain that my participation, this time, would not cause embarrassment.

Their divers, unlike our Special Boat Squadron who used closed-circuit oxygen sets, were using new equipment called (if my memory is correct) the DC55. It operated on compressed air, but to prevent tell-tale bubbles breaking the surface the exhaled air was forced through thousands of tiny holes in an outer glass fiber casing. One of the main advantages was the greater operating depth, 10 meters being the limit for oxygen.

This course was immense fun, the water beautifully clear and not cold. The French were masters at eating on the march, as it were, and would often peel off from a line of swimmers to grab a tasty Mediterranean crustacean and then swim back in line munching behind their mouthpieces.

We carried out beach surveys, ship attacks across Toulon harbor, and bottom searches. Days of swimming in Toulon and the surrounding waters spoilt me for any further military swimming. The muddy, slimy and cold waters of Plymouth, England, never

quite matched those of the Riviera.

My final attachment of the tour was to a Commando Group in an anti-guerrilla patrolling exercise across *Les Alpes Maritimes*. For this four-day "yomp" I was attached as a supernumery rifleman to one of the platoons of *Commando Joubert*, and it was here that I met my first and only disappointment of the sojourn.

All the movement was on foot, unsupported by supply back up, and designed to practice the confrontation of rural terrorists on their own terms and using their own tactics. But there were many occasions when we had to go "non-tactical" to sort out minor and low-level problems that should not really have occurred.

I never quite got used to the lighting of fires at night, especially when in open country and in likely contact with the enemy. Much movement was along the hillsides or even on the crests; we did not use scouts ahead or to the sides, nor did we picket the heights when moving through the valleys. And I certainly never understood the necessity of urinating on the camp fires to douse them before we moved on. The steam and smell would have attracted any worthwhile enemy from miles around.

Nevertheless it was an instructive period enlivened by the French military humor, the ration packets to which I had quickly adapted, and the sudden snow storms and frosts which (although by no means rare on

the Mediterranean coast) caught us by surprise and without adequate equipment. However this was a good test of personal endurance for each man.

On return to base at Toulon I was bold enough to mention my surprise at the sudden difference in standards from the previous weeks. The explanation was Gallic. They had recently returned from arduous active service in Algeria, were at home for a rest, and the turn-round of conscripts was due. The exercise was really a method of filling in time and was not to be taken too seriously — after all it was November.

With sadness I returned my stores (except the beret badge I had been proud to wear) and began my farewells before catching *Le Train Bleu* for Paris and England.

But I'd yet to learn the most important lesson of my visit. On returning to Toulon and whilst preparing to take my leave of the CO, I was asked if I would like to accompany the next Commando on a tour in Algeria. Of course I would. For appearances sake I was already used to wearing the cap badge and uniform of *Les Commandos Marine*; I spoke French; I had begun to know the men and their officers, and I understood their *modus operandi*. I would not have had any official or executive function, but I would be passed off as a French officer. In an internal security situation it was rare indeed for any country to accept foreigners, but they seemed to enjoy my company as much

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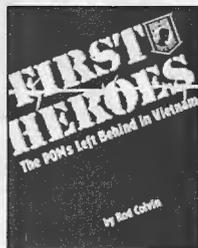
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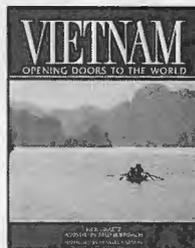
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as I enjoyed theirs and they were keen for me to see them on active service.

It was then that I made one of the more naive decisions of my life. Algeria was very much a French problem (although it had been granted independence in July 1962) and it was clear it would not have been diplomatically excusable for an Englishman to serve there, so I felt that a telegram to my adjutant in England would appear insolent. I declined their offer without even checking, in a guarded manner, with friends at Poole.

Back with the Royal Marines I waited a few days before choosing a suitable moment in the officers mess to broach the subject of Algeria. Instead of receiving thanks from the adjutant for not putting him in an embarrassing position I was rounded-on for not taking an opportunity that many officers would have given an arm for. Sometimes it is difficult not to lose!

I resolved there and then that in the future I would always (when prudent) act first on the premise that it is less painful, and takes less time, to receive retribution after an action than it is to obtain permission in the first place! ✂

## M60 FIXES

Continued from page 51

punishment under Article 15 of the UCMJ (Uniform Code of Military Justice). This practice exposes the cartridges and M13

links to dirt, corrosion, damage and misalignment of the link tab and cartridge extractor groove (an automatic stoppage under any circumstances).

The AG serves two important functions, and he should be proficient in both. Not only does he feed the gun with ammunition, he is responsible for fire re-direct, as the gunner — positioned directly behind the weapon — often cannot see the impacting rounds.

Everyone in the crew should be responsible for inspecting the M60 GPMG before you step out of the barracks. If you follow the check list below, you can be reasonably certain the M60 will not fail you. Let's examine the entire weapon by component groups.

### Barrel Group

Visually inspect the bore. It should be clean and dry and the rifling lands must be sharp. The Stellite liner must be free of chips and cracks. The liner expansion gap must be less than 1/8 inch, as measured with the M8 barrel erosion gauge.

Inspect the front sight. It should be visibly straight. To reduce glare, use flat black spray paint along the top surface of the barrel and front sight post.

Inspect the flash suppressor. While slight rotational movement is permissible, there should be no vertical or horizontal movement.

The bipod leg extension latches must lock the extensions when pressure on the latch is released and must permit the extensions to slide freely when depressed.

Inspect the piston. Check that the gas piston moves freely by rocking the barrel

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back and forth. The gas piston and gas cylinder must be free of all lubricants. The piston's bore must face frontwards, the polished piston face must face back toward the operating rod. All exterior surfaces on the piston, including the grooves for self-cleaning, must be free of carbon deposits. Severely pitted pistons should be replaced.

Inspect the gas cylinder nut and the gas cylinder extension key washers. All three retaining lips on each washer must be intact and symmetrical, and the ratchet tongue must be intact and firmly engage the ratchet teeth at each end of the gas cylinder.

When the gas system is reassembled, the gas cylinder extension key washer and gas port plug must be safety wired. Aircraft-grade stainless steel safety wire (.030"-.032" diameter) installed with a safety-wire pliers is preferable, but even hand-wound copper wire is better than nothing. A new gas port plug has been adopted with a built-in lock washer that supposedly eliminates the need for safety wire. I don't believe it.

Inspect the locking recesses of the barrel socket for excessive wear and chipping. Check the locking collar for cracks and make sure that the stake pin securely holds the collar in place.

#### Bolt Group and Operating Rod

Inspect the bolt body. The locking lugs should be free of chips or excessive wear. Chips or burrs can be removed by the unit armorer with a stone. This component will not last more than 20,000 rounds. Barrels and bolts should be mated and checked frequently for excessive headspace.

Inspect the extractor claw. It should not be chipped or cracked and must be free of debris. A strengthened extractor was adopted in 1986.

Inspect the ejector, which protrudes from the bolt face. Depress to test spring tension. The ejector spring must be strong or ejection will not take place. Sometimes carbon deposits will bind up the ejector; proper cleaning and lubrication will usually restore its operation.

Inspect the bolt plug retaining pin. I have seen soldiers substitute toothpicks or wooden match sticks for this component — not a good idea. If possible, carry spares. Without this pin the system will shut down after fewer than fifty rounds.

Inspect the cam actuator roller. It should be replaced if it's chipped, bent or exhibits excessive play.

Inspect the firing pin group, watching in particular for proper assembly. The firing pin spring must be to the rear, with the front of the spring fitted into the cupped portion of the firing-pin spring-guide, and with the pintle on the base of the firing pin inserted into the small hole at the front of the spring guide. The pointed end of the firing pin must be visible through the hole in the bolt face. When joining the bolt group to the operating rod, be sure the operating rod yoke is between the two firing-pin spools. Installing the operating rod yoke behind the rear firing-pin spool will turn the M60 into a fixed firing-pin, straight blowback-operated weapon capable of firing but one shot.

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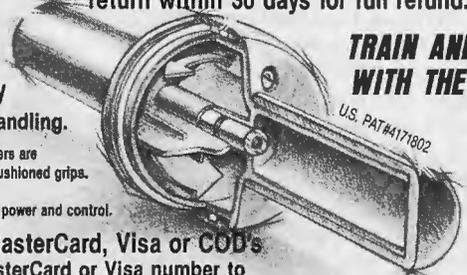
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Inspect the operating rod yoke, roller, roller pin, face and retaining pin. Check for burrs, cracks or chips. Chips and burrs on the operating rod yoke are best removed using sandpaper and a circular stroke. Take care to maintain the original curvature. Examine the sear notch for excessive wear. In 1986 a new operating rod was adopted. It can be identified by the presence of two sear notches (to permit sear engagement in the event of short recoil). It also incorporates a new roller, yoke and pin.

Inspect the mainspring. If the multiple-strand coils show numerous flat spots, the recoil spring should be replaced. Note that the new single-strand mainspring, adopted in 1986, must be used with the new, one-piece guide rod.

Inspect the mainspring guide rod. If the stop (press-fit and induction-brazed onto the rod) is loose, replace the guide rod.

#### **Trigger Housing Group**

Inspect the leaf spring that retains the trigger housing to the receiver. If the hooks are broken, the spring must be replaced.

Inspect the neoprene-coated trigger guard and make sure it has not been dented upward so as to impede movement of the trigger.

Inspect the trigger spring. Its rear portion should not be bent or broken, and it must be installed so that it is under the trigger housing's channel surface.

Inspect the sear. It must be assembled with the sear projection to the rear. Be sure the sear plunger has been placed on top of the sear plunger spring. If not protected by the plunger, the plunger spring will bend to

one side, the sear will not be driven upward when the trigger is released and the gun will not stop firing.

#### **Feed Cover**

If the anodized finish has worn off the top cover to expose the bare aluminum, blacken the surface with flat black spray paint to minimize position disclosure.

The feed cover hinge plate should be firmly attached to the feed cover. Inspect the lever and pawl assemblies. The front lever assembly notch must hold the roller pin of the pawl assembly. The assembled lever must be under tension from the circular spring under the lever, with one spring hook under the left side of the feed cover slot, and the other hook around the left front side of the lever assembly to hold the lever assembly firmly against the right side of its range of travel.

Examine the front and rear guides and pawl assembly for strong and uniform spring tension.

Inspect the feed cover locking latch. Spring tension should be firm; bearing surfaces should not be excessively worn, and the latch should hold the feed cover firmly.

#### **Feed Tray**

Inspect the feed tray for burred, cracked, loose or missing parts. Check rivets of the feed pawl assembly for looseness on the feed tray.

Check the fit of the tray on the receiver.

Inspect the feed pawl for proper functioning and spring tension.

Before firing, all lubricants must be removed from the feed tray's top surface.

#### **Receiver Group**

Inspect receiver, operating rod and guide tube. They must be clear of all carbon deposits. Check the trunnion and bridge for looseness.

Inspect receiver rails for burrs and wear. Make certain the six receiver-rail rivets are tight and secure.

Examine the cocking-lever-guide-screw. It should be securely tightened. Use Loctite, if available. Replace screw if missing.

Inspect the cocking lever. It should be undamaged and have adequate free travel.

Examine the rear sight assembly. The elevation adjustment screw must be securely attached to the rear sight's main frame. Make certain the rear sight scale is not bent, broken or illegible. Replace if necessary.

#### **Buttstock Group**

Inspect the buffer. Early buffers can be identified by a) green sealant, b) the marked admonition "DO NOT OIL INTERIOR," and c) a bright finish. Early buffers should be replaced with a current-issue buffer, identifiable by dark, phosphate exterior finish.

Check buttplate for looseness.

After you have performed the above inspection, you're ready to lubricate the M60. Don't use Break-Free CLP. If not constantly shaken, the Teflon beads, upon which Break-Free's lubricating characteristics depend, will remain in the bottom of the container and never reach the weapon. I recommend All Weather Weapons Lube (available from Thiem, Division of National Starch, Dept. SOF, 5151 Denison Avenue,

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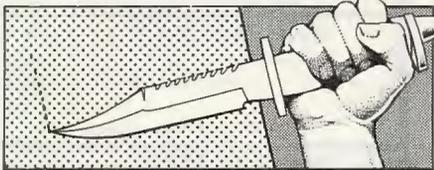
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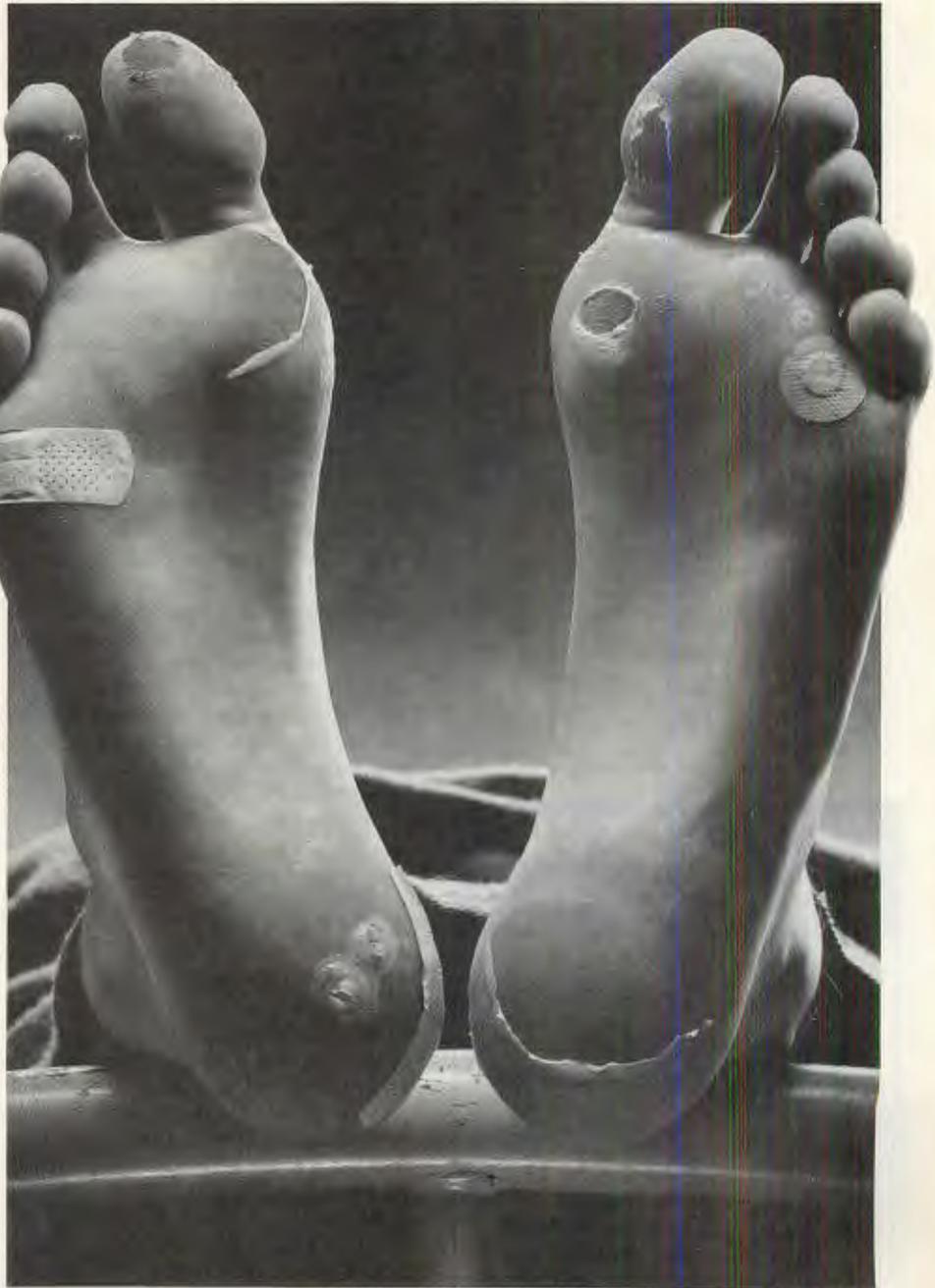
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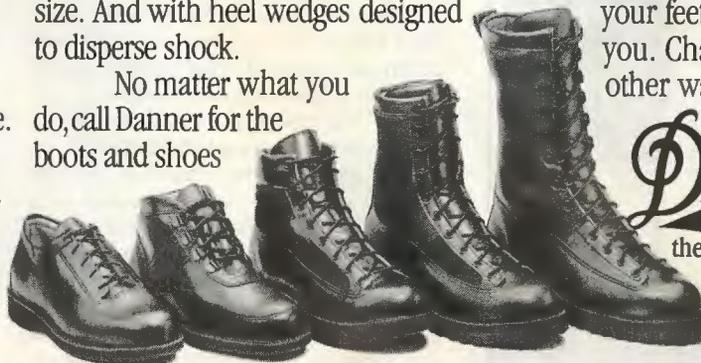
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Cleveland, OH 44102; phone 216-651-2010), applied lightly to the following areas: bolt cam and lugs, bolt actuator roller, feed arm in cover, outside surface of the mainspring, mainspring guide rod, bearing points on the rear of the operating rod, castle and roller on the operating rod, bolt runways in the receiver and locking lug cams in the barrel socket. Use G96 Gun Treatment (G96 Design Tech, Inc., Dept. SOF, 100 Sixth Avenue, Paterson, NJ 07524; phone 201-523-1907) on all of the other components except the gas piston, interior of the gas cylinder, and the feed tray's top surface.

All barrels, including spares, should be zeroed to the gun in the following manner. Pace off 10 meters exactly. Put a 1-inch square target paster on the target. Flip up the rear sight and center the windage by eyeballing. Fire single shots only, from either the bipod or tripod positions, adjusting the elevation knob up or down until the shot impacts on the paster. When the shot group impacts on the paster, without moving the elevation adjustment knob, loosen the screw on the graduated range scale. Slide the scale up or down until the rear sight is set for 500 meters. Lock down the graduated range scale's set screw. The M60 has now been zeroed for all ranges with one barrel only. In theory, each barrel change requires the gun to be re-zeroed. In practice, with some judicious mix 'n' matching between other gun crews you can avoid this insanity.

It's incredible that we adopted a machine gun requiring such elaborate maintenance procedures. But we did, and so we must pamper it until its presence within our midst is no more than a bitter memory. ☒

## ABDUL HAQ

*Continued from page 47*

while campaigning on the Frontier 90 years ago: "Except at times of sowing and harvest, a continual state of feud and strife prevails throughout the land. Tribe wars with tribe. The people of one valley fight with those of the next. Khan assails Khan, each supported by his retainers. Every tribesman has a blood feud with his neighbor. Every man's hand is against the other, and all against the stranger."

Haq is a realist and heads a movement among commanders calling for a *Loya Jirgah*, the traditional Afghan method of electing a leadership. "We need a broad-based government, with all ethnic groups, not just Pushtuns (Pathans). It is important to save human lives and stop unnecessary bloodshed — too many people have died."

How does he see his future role after the war? "I don't want to be a general or a minister — unless the people need me, or ask me. I would like to go home to my farm and perhaps go back to school. But the need of the country is in reconstruction, and there may be a role for me there." It may be a quixotic wish, but Afghanistan has always

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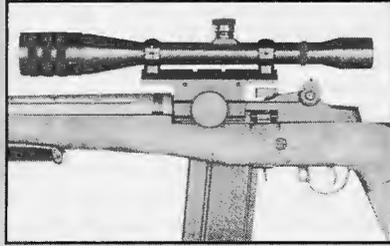


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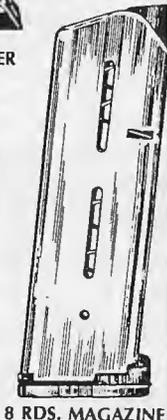
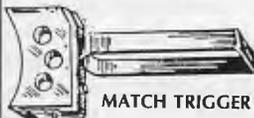
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been a nation of dreamers, though rarely has there been one who has achieved as much as Commander Haq. ✘

## DEVIL'S BODYGUARD

*Continued from page 35*

OSS, as well as acting as Gen. Fredrick's personal bodyguard during the campaign for southern France. After the successful southern France landings Fredrick was transferred to the 45th Infantry Division. Duff was sorry to see him go, but though Fredrick offered him the chance to come along, he declined. As much as he admired the general, he couldn't give up his jump wings and join a "leg" unit.

"This decision was very difficult to make," Duff said. "To us he wasn't just a goddamned officer, he was a legend."

Though wounded several times during hazardous operations, Duff didn't take the easy way out and get shipped home. Besides, at war's end there was money to be made. During the occupation of Berlin, Duff made a small fortune by selling the Russians watches and cigarettes at hugely inflated prices. Eventually he was forced to return stateside and mustered out of the Army to pursue civilian concerns.

Once out of the Army, Duff completed his college education and soon became a big name in the insurance and surety business. Connections in one business led to other opportunities and Duff's company, Matson International, at one time owned the exclusive rights to all Union Carbide waterfront liquid nitrogen units in the United States, as well as some overseas.

"I've sold many millions of dollars worth. I'm probably the biggest salesman of these units in the history of the company," he says. His bonding and surety company, Matson Surety and Bond, now managed by his oldest son, also named Duff, is still going strong.

His love for airborne troops hasn't waned since the war years. Though now a civilian, he helps out the Army when he can. I was in Florida to cover the training exercise he sponsors on his own land in the Everglades. Operation Gator (previously Alligator) has taken place irregularly since 1984 and the 100 or so soldiers privileged enough to attend praise the program.

Duff's large Everglades retreat is uniquely suited for military training. For starters, he has the only legal machine-gun range located within a national forest. There's ample room for tents, cots and equipment. The natural flora and fauna make any exercise interesting, as do the numerous reptiles — particularly snakes.

Snakes and airborne troops (well any troops for that matter) don't mix well. While I was there at least a half-dozen water moccasins and rattlesnakes were caught and killed by on-the-prowl parachute types. I didn't get the final score, but when I left the count was Airborne: 6, Snakes: 0.

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If what you've read about Duff Matson has intrigued you enough that you want to learn more, I suggest obtaining a copy of his biography, *The Devil's Bodyguard*. This independently-published book, written by SOF contributor Jim Phillips, is part biography, part war story and a good dose of personal philosophy.

Within the 400-odd pages you'll find ample anecdotes, from Duff as well as Allen Pope, General Yarborough and others, numerous photographs and a unique outlook on success, failure, life and death. Phillips has written a first-hand account of a relatively unknown, quiet, poetry-writing American hero. The kind of person who today is too often overlooked.

*The Devil's Bodyguard* was written in close cooperation with Duff Matson and therefore lacks the objective edge required in a hard-hitting biography. But what the book lacks in this regard it makes up in sincerity and earnestness.

*The Devil's Bodyguard — Prisoner, Paratrooper, Pirate and Patriot* is available for \$19.95 plus \$3.00 shipping from Phillips Publications, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 168, Williamstown, NJ 08094. ✂

## GUN GRAB

*Continued from page 18*

✓ Write letters to the editor. It is important that gun control advocates don't dominate letters to the editor columns in newspapers. It is especially important that when they do write in that they are rebutted point by point. Take it on yourself to do so. If you don't, who will?

✓ Ask your newspaper to print both sides of the gun control issue. Many newspapers have been printing the emotional outbursts of gun control advocates without giving the other side a chance to respond. If yours is one of them, call them on it, either by writing a letter to the editor or by calling the editor and suggesting they get in touch with spokespeople for the NRA or gun owners.

✓ When gun control is the subject on radio talk shows, don't let the gun-grabbers dominate the air waves. Call in and answer them.

✓ Sooner or later gun grabbing public officials have to run for election. When election time rolls around, make sure their records are known — and that their opponents have the campaign funds they need.

✓ If you're not already a member, join the NRA. If you are, send it a special contribution. The Great Gun Grab of 1989 is a nation-wide assault, and defeating it will require millions of dollars and the efforts of millions of patriotic Americans. The time to get involved is *now!* ✂

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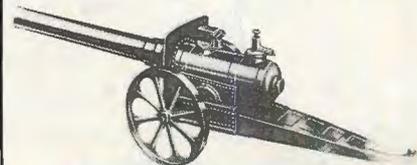
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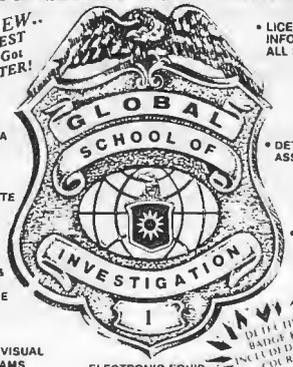
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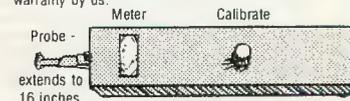
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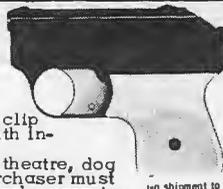
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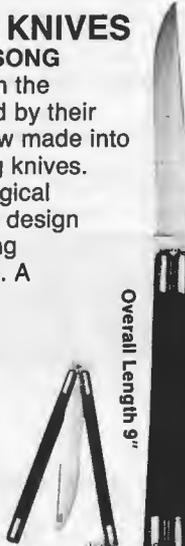
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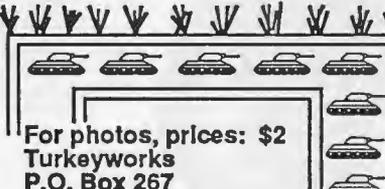
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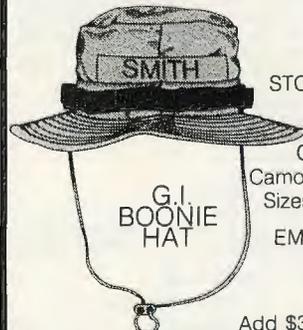
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## PARTING SHOT

by Lt. Col. William H. Rees,  
USAF (Ret.)

### Lies, Great Lies & Foreign Policy

**“LIES”** is a word frequently and sanctimoniously spoken by so many these days — whose own purity is not so apparent — that we need to look deeper into the question of lies in government and foreign affairs.

Lies are essential defense mechanisms of most life forms on this planet. A great many species survive only with aid of their deceptive mechanisms. Regretfully, the human species is no exception. It has been said that all war is based on deception, that the mission of diplomats is to lie for their country, and that politics and romance would be impossible in a world of perfect truth.

Humans have no problem with lying to a mortal enemy. We have no great problem with lying for some obvious good, such as avoiding social unpleasantness or persuading a kidnapper to give up his captives. We have little problem with lies so long as we agree on the nature of the threat or value of the good.

Thus, we all understand that circumstances sometimes justify telling of lies. Whoever has fought in war, or has told a terminally ill buddy that he or she looks great, clearly understands the point. People who lie in such circumstances fully understand what they are doing, and why, and much more importantly, what the truth really is. The larger problem is that lies told for initially good reasons may breed larger lies that eventually obscure vital truths and create “great lies.” These are basic lies upon which great and bad decisions are often based, but which may actually be articulated by no one. It is enough that too many accept, ignore, or fail to refute them.

For example, both Stalin and Hitler founded great malignant empires upon massive piles of great lies. Prince Sihanouk thought his people could live in peace by imagining that North Vietnam was not occupying large chunks of eastern Cambodia. Our antiwar protestors of the '60s and '70s bought the convenient lie that the Viet Cong and National Liberation Front (NLF) offered a better deal to the South Vietnamese than did their government, and then failed to notice that the VC/NLF completely vanished shortly after North Vietnamese tanks and regulars made them superfluous. Oh lord, how many “smart” people have been had by great lies? They are the bane of history.

Great lies inadequately challenged, even when widely recognized for what they are, often take on the character of strategic facts upon which are based great decisions. These then spawn spreading tides of lies that eventually swallow scores, sometimes thousands, of little officials like Ollie North. The Vietnam war provided some striking examples of this process.

For example, as a regular U.S. Air Force officer, I lived illegally in Laos for several months, flying an unmarked aircraft in active combat, wearing civilian clothes, carrying highly warlike weapons and my official USAF identification card. Everybody understands, as I did, that people who engage in non-uniformed warfare are often executed when captured.

The basic lie was that there were no foreign troops in Laos, and it was a monstrous one. On 19 May 1959, the North Vietnamese politburo ordered General Vo Bam of the North Vietnamese army (NVA) to launch, via Laos, a military attack on South Vietnam. By the beginning of 1961, he had in the mountains and jungles of eastern Laos 30,000 troops busily preparing the infiltration system that became the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

President Kennedy seriously considered invading the region but turned instead to diplomacy. In the Geneva Accords of 1962, all parties agreed that all foreign troops would leave Laos under supervision of an International Control Commission (ICC). Seven hundred American advisers left Laos, each meticulously logged out by the ICC, as did about 18 North Vietnamese. “That’s all there are,” said the North Vietnamese.

Of course all diplomats understood that tens of thousands of NVA troops remained (they were literally the dominant population in eastern Laos) but the Accords had provided no mechanism that could prove it. The ICC could act only with consent of all members, one of which was a Soviet satellite. This ratified another great lie: The proposition that an official representative of a government controlled by the Soviet Union might operate objectively and independently. The ICC never investigated a single alleged communist violation of the Accords. The fiction that the Geneva Accords of 1962 had neutralized Laos became still another great and basic lie.

The United States continued to officially operate as if the Geneva Accords were in effect. By about 1968, there were upwards of 70,000 NVA troops in eastern Laos. They were annually running thousands of supply trucks south and aggressively pushing North Vietnamese control westward into regions critical to the Laotian government. The officially neutral Laotian government desperately needed help which, given our acceptance of great lies about the Geneva Accords, could only be provided covertly.

At the peak of the resulting covert operation, 21 USAF pilots, flying in civilian clothes and with uniformed Laotian officers in their back seats, provided a crucial link between Laotian ground forces and U.S. airpower. The United States matched a 70,000-man NVA violation of the accords by committing fewer than two dozen combat pilots, forward air controllers known as “Ravens,” and a few dozen support personnel.

I was one of the Ravens, and we lived in an incredible dream world. We carried State Department I.D. on the ground and USAF I.D. during our combat missions. We were told that if captured we should say that we worked for the Laotian Forest Service, which may or may not have existed. One of us played tennis with a Soviet military attache. Many of us attended diplomatic social functions and rubbed elbows with people from all over the world. Once, while driving my jeep past a large group of school kids; I was cheered as if I were a just-returned Lindbergh, for it was known throughout the land that we had turned the tide in scores of battles and saved thousands of Lao lives.

There was little doubt about who we were and what we were doing, and we had lots of friends. An enemy general fomented an assassination plot against Americans in the town where I lived, but instead the scheme leaked, and we bashed his headquarters with an air strike. We lived in an official dream world, but the war was unquestionably real.

We understood both worlds, if not all reasons for them. We clearly understood that the purpose of our way of life was to cover up great lies of the Geneva Accords, but we also understood that our war was vital to the Lao people.

Would the American public have understood all this, had they been told? Probably — had they been told the whole story. But the USG and other governments probably did not care to admit the glaring weaknesses of the Accords that they’d signed as the easy way out. For all involved free-world governments, it was easier to accept a fiction than to try to carve out a better agreement by the sword. So great and basic lies survived, and a few young Americans were thrust into the breach, like a single finger plugging a massive dike.

Like the Ravens and many before them, Ollie North and other little people have often had to tell or live little lies because great, knowing, and responsible magnates failed to challenge great lies. Someday, I hope we can all learn the importance of challenging these great lies. ✕

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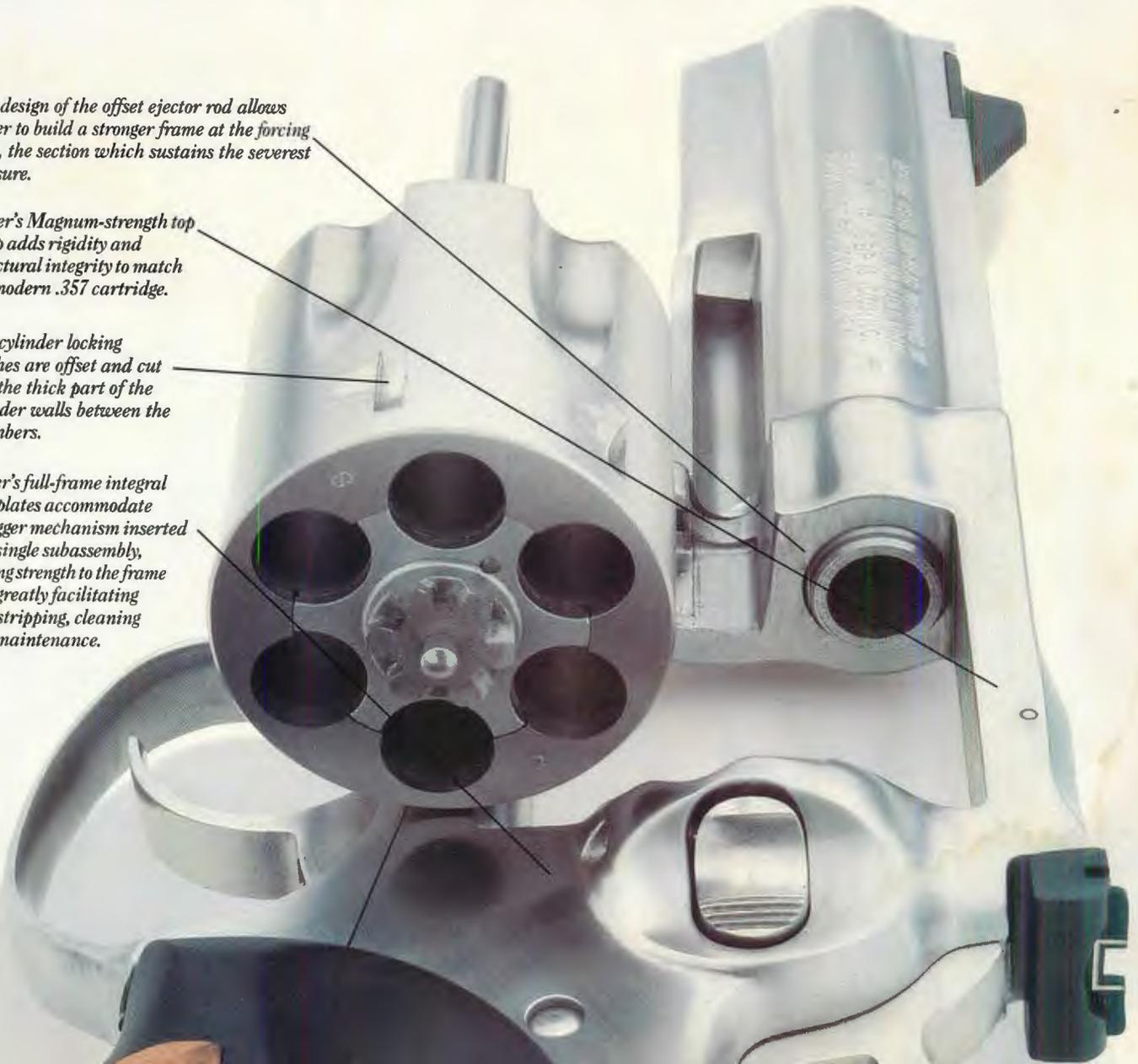
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