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GUERRILLA HUNTERS



# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

The Journal of Professional



**DESERT SHIELD:**

**KUWAIT'S TOP GUNS**

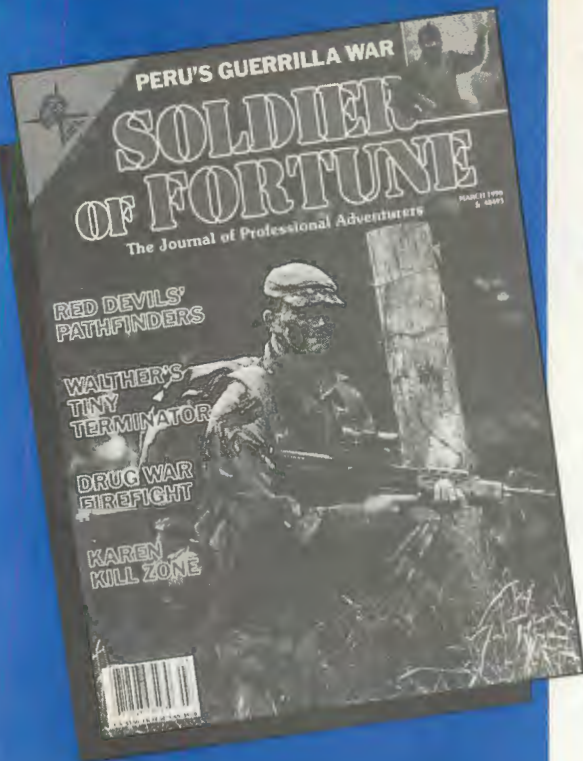
**COBRAS OVER KUWAIT**

**U.S. CASUALTY  
COMMAND POST**

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AFRICA'S FORGOTTEN WAR  
CASTRO'S COCONUT**



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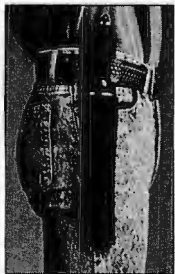
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Stainless**  
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Blade steel:	8-A
Rc hardness:	57-59
Blade length:	9"
Length overall:	14 1/2"
Blade thickness:	3/16"
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Weight, sheath:	4.7 oz
Made in:	Japan

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## FEATURES



Free Fall Firefighters — Page 36

**SAMURAI DIRECTOR** ..... Dan Gagliasso  
Like his macho movie characters, John Milius is one of a kind in Hollywood **29**

**SMALL VICTORY IN A BIG WAR** ..... Tom Marks  
Chief Foreign Correspondent Tom Marks is there as the Philippine army rolls back the Red tide on Negros Island **30**

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**DESERT SHOOTOUT '90** ..... Bill Burris  
SOF's Three-Gun Match brings best shooters back to Las Vegas for tough competition, top prize money, and a bit of the SOF wild side **40**

**DATeline DESERT SHIELD: SOF IN SAUDI ARABIA** ..... Ross Simpson  
SOF correspondent Ross Simpson landed in Saudi Arabia in early November, and we received his articles sent by fast camel just as we went to press. From the area of operations: **44**

**COBRAS OVER KUWAIT** — U.S. Marine attack helicopters stand ready to dust Saddam Hussein's tank corps

**KUWAIT'S TOP GUNS** — An air force-in-exile, Kuwaiti fighter pilots are waiting their turn to strike back

**CASEVAC COMFORT** — If the balloon goes up, friendly casualties may reach 20,000. The Hospital Ship Comfort stands ready in the Gulf to take 'em aboard

**POLICE BEAT: MEDELLIN** ..... Steve Salisbury  
Up against drug dealers and murderers, with bounties placed on their heads by Colombia's drug lords, cops in Medellin have one of the most dangerous jobs in the world. **50**

## AFRICA'S LOST WAR

..... Frank Noble  
We've all heard about the famine, but what about the thousands of Eritrean freedom fighters whom Ethiopia's Red Emperor continues to kill? SOF went to the front lines of Africa's longest running — and most ignored — war **56**

## "WE KILL FOR FUN"

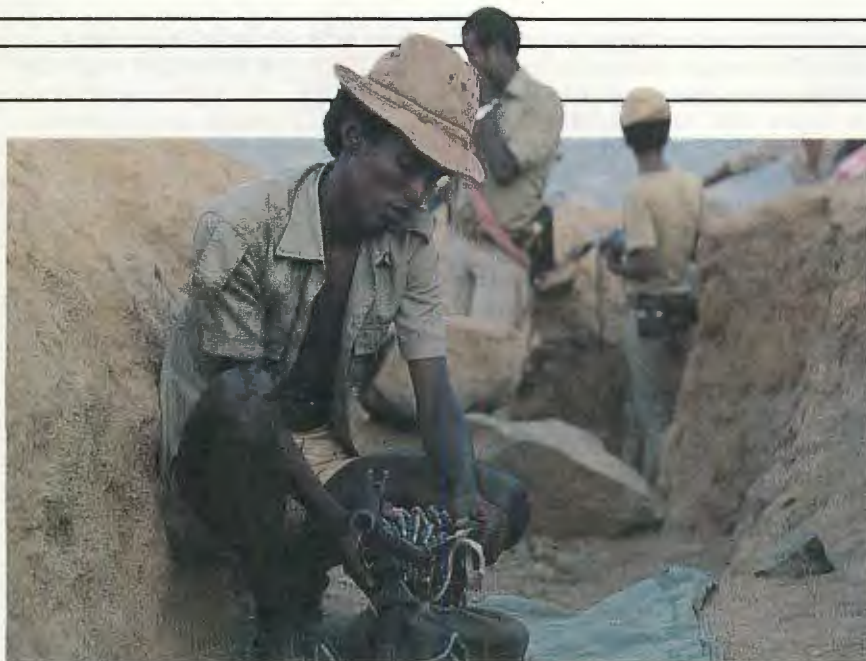
..... R.B. Anderson  
So sayeth Charlie Rangers in Vietnam. It may sound cold, but these hardcore fighters had to be in order to survive. They're now the stuff of legends — with good reason **62**

## GREAT COCONUT CAPER

..... SOF Staff  
Innocent-looking cans of coconut packaged in Havana, then sent to Central America, held a lot more bang than a quick sugar buzz. We caught Fidel red-handed on this smuggling caper — check out the evidence **64**

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**BIG BOOMER** ..... Peter G. Kokalis  
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**READER SURVEY**  
 We want to know what you want to see in *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*. A few minutes of your time will help us shape the SOF of the '90s 71

Dateline Desert Shield — Page 44



**COVER**

As we go to press, more U.S. troops are pouring into Saudi Arabia, the war of words is heating up — and *Soldier of Fortune Magazine* correspondents are on the ground. In his first week in the Gulf region, long-time contributor Ross Simpson patrolled the Kuwaiti border with Marine helicopter jocks, hooked up with the Kuwaiti air force-in-exile, and became a "casualty" aboard the Hospital Ship *Comfort* in the Persian Gulf. His on-site reports begin on page 44. Photo: Durand/Syigma

**INSET:** For the time being, the Philippines remain the strategic U.S. outpost along the Pacific Rim. But will the communist New People's Army make the rent too-high to pay? Maybe not — if the island of Negros is an indicator. Chief Foreign Correspondent Tom Marks went on patrol with the Philippine army and found that, while the government may be in disarray, the grunts on the ground have the NPA on the run. Check it out, beginning on page 30. Photo: Tom Marks

# BULLETIN BOARD



SOF Publisher Robert K. Brown is presented with a first edition of *Combat Marksman* by publisher/editor Andy Stanford. *Combat Marksman* is the quarterly journal of the Military Marksmanship Education Foundation, a new organization dedicated to the continual improvement of U.S. military combat marksmanship. SOF supports the goal and the organization. Further information available from MMEF, Dept. SOF, 731 W. Wasp, Ridgecrest, CA 93555.

**DEMAGOGUES DECIMATE THE DCM ...** The Senate/House conference committee that debated the differences in the Senate/House versions of the Defense Authorization Act gutted the Civilian Marksmanship program by cutting funding to \$4 million next year, and providing that the *entire* DCM office and marksmanship program must be totally supported by "user fees" within two years. In addition, military-owned arms (air rifles and .22s for kids, M1 Garands, National Match M14s, etc.) currently issued to clubs *must not be removed from military reservations!* Pushed through in the name of "economy" by Congressman Fortney Stark (D-CA), these cuts will effectively kill the DCM program if not turned around. To put it in context, the "savings" netted will amount to a \$5 bill for every \$250,000 in the defense budget. To put it in focus, Congress spent \$6.1 million looking for extraterrestrial life, but couldn't find \$5.6 million to maintain a national reservoir of trained shooters for the military to draw on in a national emergency.

This must be corrected. There is time

to correct this with additional legislation in the 1991 session. But it won't happen without vocal support from the American voters. See "American Militia Under Fire," SOF, Jan. '91, for background on the Civilian Marksmanship program, and *write and call your elected representatives, tell them why the DCM program has been a critical and most cost-effective part of American military preparedness since 1903, and that you want it reinstated.*

**SHOOTIN' SHOW ON SATELLITE ...** January 18, 8 p.m. CST is the debut of Johnny Rowland's *The Shootin' Show*, which promotes gun ownership by showing normal folks doing normal things with guns, and will also feature segments on safety, tests, competition and historical information. If you have a dish, catch them on Telstar 301, Channel 19, Down Link Frequency 4080 MHz, and Audio Subcarrier Frequency 6.8 MHz. Cable companies can access the show for free taping by contacting Johnny Rowland, Dept. SOF, 554 Kings Hwy., Shreveport, LA 71104; phone (318) 222-8515.



SOF is collecting books for the troops in Desert Shield. SOF staffers Lynne Manchester, Robert K. Brown and Carole Hayden pack up books for shipment to Saudi Arabia. In addition to paperbacks, SOF is sending 2,000 free magazines every month. Photo: SOF staff

**AMAZON JUNGLE SCHOOL ...** The International Association of Airborne Veterans is sponsoring a two-week Amazon Jungle School this July, to be held under the auspices of the Brazilian army. Contact Michael Doyle at IAAV, Dept. SOF, Suite 181, 606 West Barry St, Chicago, IL 60657 for information.

**THIS MAY BE NEWS THAT WILL SHATTER THE CURRENT U.S. GOVERNMENT ...** or maybe it won't. A reliable SOF source, who has proven his worth in the past, tells us that the North Vietnamese government is soon going to release seven U.S. turncoats from the Vietnam War.

That's right.

After all these years of everyone saying there ain't nobody left (well, we'll qualify that: The official line has been that the North Vietnamese, Laotians, Cambodians, Chinese, et. al., haven't held anyone *against their will*) it turns out that there are. Our source goes on to say that there are actually 22 breathing U.S. bodies still in South Asia (who allegedly chose to stay of their own volition, for whatever reasons); the seven purportedly coming home are Army types while the others are mainly Navy and Marines. If true, the questions that'll be raised are mind boggling. Two to ponder: If even one guy comes out whom the government had moved from MIA status to a "presumptive finding of dead," then what about others so categorized? Did anyone in Foggy Bottom really bother to check, or did they just rubber-stamp someone's life out of existence? Second, will these seven guys have anything to say about other Americans they may have run across after 1973, when Dick Nixon said that *all* of our POWs have been released? Think about it. We'll keep you posted.

**SKI WITH SOF ...** Com' on, you mogul mashers - here's your last chance to ski with the SOF team. Mark off the week of 3 February and get ready to head to the Rockies for seven days with our ski-bum Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown and other SOF ne'er-do-wells. Starts with an opening night get-together, builds to a championship race on Friday, and ends with a Saturday night bash. For more information and to reserve your spot on the team call us now at (303) 449-3750.

**SUPER SURVEY ...** Look on page 71. You've told us you like the changes in SOF so far, and we want your continuing input. *Thanks!* ✎

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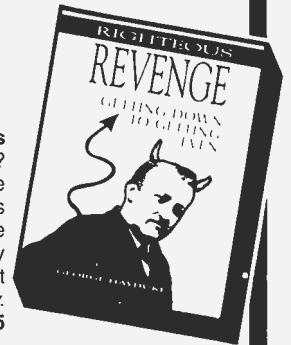


## RIGHTEOUS REVENGE

Getting Down to Getting Even

by George Hayduke

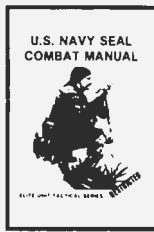
George Hayduke and his merry band of pranksters have returned, and in **Righteous Revenge** they take Hayduking to a new level. Have you got a score to settle with someone? Did your ex-lover screw you financially or emotionally? Have you been ripped off by some mercenary merchant? Does your neighbor's dog dump on your lawn? Fight back with modern tools of revenge, including fax machines, credit cards, Call Forwarding, computers and other cutting-edge equipment. Or do you prefer a more personal touch? Reach out and strike someone with roadkill, Krazy Glue, varmints, bumper stickers, trash, pornography, chicken parts and other creative weapons. Find out how to get even without getting caught. Bullybusting was never so much fun! *For entertainment purposes only.* 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, 240 pp. **\$19.95**



### HOW TO GET ANYTHING ON ANYBODY

by Lee Lapin

Get the goods on others with this encyclopedia of advanced investigative and surveillance techniques. Here are expert ways to secretly bug any target! Info on lock-pick technology, how polygraphs and voice lie detectors can be tricked and much more, including more than 100 sources for spy equipment. 8 1/2 x 11, softcover, illus., 272 pp. **\$30.00**



### U.S. NAVY SEAL COMBAT MANUAL

One of the rarest FMs in the field of military collecting, with special emphasis on underwater demolition techniques and explosives. Equipment and tactics employed by this elite fighting force are covered, as are SEAL weapons, communications, diving, infiltration and exfiltration, survival and more. 8 1/2 x 11, softcover, photos, illus., 240 pp. **\$19.95**



### SEALS IN VIETNAM

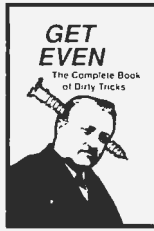
An Inside Look

In the jungles and canals of Vietnam, U.S. Navy SEALs waged a war of terror against the Vietcong. This action-packed video shows SEALs in training, preparing for missions and hauling in terrified VC prisoners. Voice-overs of SEAL veterans tell you what it was like to go out on deadly excursions deep into enemy territory and the special skills it took to get back alive. Color, approx. 30 min., VHS only. **\$29.95**



### GET EVEN

The Video of Dirty Tricks Finally on film, George Hayduke's greatest revenge tricks, showing you how to turn the tables on bullies, bureaucrats, big business and other bad guys. More than 100 uproarious, ingenious schemes make getting even easier, safer and more fun! Rated "R" for revenge. *Get Even is for entertainment purposes only.* Color, 40 min., VHS only. **\$29.95**

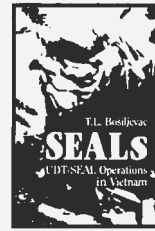


### GET EVEN

The Complete Book of Dirty Tricks

by George Hayduke

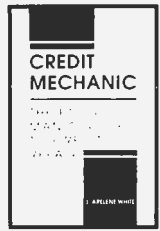
A hilarious overview of the methods people use to get even with big business, government and enemies. These dirty tricks range from the simple to the elaborate, including more sophisticated schemes devised by CIA and Mafia members and political dirty tricksters. *For entertainment only.* 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, 208 pp. **\$19.95**



### SEALS UDT/SEAL Operations in Vietnam

by T.L. Bosiljevac

The definitive book on U.S. Navy SEALs' role in Vietnam. Accounts of combat missions reveal incredible acts of skill and valor by SEAL troops under fire. Sixteen pages of rare photos show SEALs in training, on patrol in VC territory and moving up canals in the Mekong Delta. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, photos, 272 pp. **\$26.95**



### CREDIT MECHANIC

The Poor Man's Guide to Credit Repair

by J. Arlene White

This step-by-step guide is organized in workbook fashion to help you fix your credit yourself, without the help of expensive credit repair clinics. Inside tips on credit repair (some found nowhere else) show you how to turn bureaucracy in your favor and wipe the slate clean for good. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, illus., 68 pp. **\$10.00**



### COMBAT RIFLES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Today's assault rifles are soon to be made obsolete by a deadly new breed of combat firearm currently being produced for the U.S. armed forces. Here is an exclusive look at cutting-edge futuristic designs and exotic ammo from Colt, H&K, Steyr and others. 8 1/2 x 11, softcover, photos, illus., 88 pp. **\$15.00**



### EXPERT LOCK PICKING

State-of-the-Art Lock Picking Secrets

Let one of the best lock pickers in the business demonstrate the fastest ways to open locks. Special see-through locks show how picks, rakes, snap guns and electronic picks exploit the weaknesses of everything from simple wafers to complex pin tumbler. This video is a must for professional locksmiths. *For information purposes only.* Color, approx. 60 min., VHS only. **\$59.95**



### U.S. NAVY SEALS

World War II - Korea - Vietnam Middle East - Grenada - Panama Elite warriors of stealth, sabotage and silent missions of death, SEALs have been the U.S. military's shock force in 50 years of global conflict. In this new video release, you'll see rare footage of SEALs in action from WWII to today's "dirty little wars." Much of this material has never been available to the public... until now. Color, approx. 35 min., VHS only. **\$29.95**



### MODERN WEAPONS CACHING

A Down-to-Earth Approach to Beating the Government Gun Grab

by Ragnar Benson

The time to prepare is now. In the race against the firearm roundup in the U.S., gun owners who refuse to give up the freedoms that are their birthright must take their weapons underground—bury them—before it's too late. Ragnar will show you how to do it right. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, photos, 104 pp. **\$14.00**



### MINI-14 SUPER SYSTEMS

by Duncan Long

If you want your Mini-14 to fit your body, needs and pocketbook, here's the authoritative source on customizing this inexpensive, reliable rifle into an exotic super system. Find out how to boost your Mini-14's firepower (legally) so that it will not only generate a lot of double takes, but also deliver—at the range, in the field or in critical moments of self-defense. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, photos, illus., 200 pp. **\$16.95**

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**SWEDEN**

Buying Italian Whitehead torpedoes until Type-45 torpedo is available ... Saab behind on delivery of new JAS-39 Gripen aircraft.

**NORTHERN IRELAND**

IRA killed seven, injured 35 in attacks along border; Irish police arrested six, British troops killed top IRA assassin Dessie Grew.

**ČECHO-SLOVAKIA**

Government proposal to glom all communist party property ... success for magazine aimed at new entrepreneurs, *Profit*, published by ex-SOF staffers Tom Bates and Bill Guthrie ... exiting Sov forces ahead of schedule.

**ROMANIA**

Devalued currency by half, removed subsidies ... offered resorts to U.S. troops going to/from Gulf.

**REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA**

Formal proclamation declaring its independence from the USSR ... promises private property, free speech/press/conscience, separate legislative/executive/judicial, multi-party system.

**ITALY**

Increasing ships in Gulf to four, plus eight IAF Tornados.

**FRANCE**

Sending eight Mirage F-1 fighters to Qatar.

**LITHUANIA**

To hold talks on independence with Soviets.

**NETHERLANDS**

Sent 50,000 CW suits to Turkey, other countries bordering Iraq.

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF BOULDER**

NCAR scientists, studying hothouse effect of flatulent methane emissions, bench marked average cow at 14 cu. ft. per day; SOF editors not gauged.

**CANADA**

18 RCAF CF-18 fighters from 409 TFS in Germany to Gulf.

**SWITZERLAND**

Ruled out MiG-29 for fighter program, leaving Mirage 2000-5 and F/A-18 as contenders.

**CUBA**

Took over training of Arab terrorists who were in East Germany ... Soviet paper reports Castro has five children, 32 houses, 9,700 bodyguards.

**SYRIA**

Pledged 11,000 more troops, 3,000 tanks and offered open-ended commitment to increase at Saudi's request.

**CHILE**

Test fired joint British/Chilean Rayo rocket.

**GUYANA**

Coup plot; 10 people, senior police officer and ex-army lieutenant under charges.

**ARGENTINA**

Sending destroyer *Almirante Brown* and frigate ship *Spiro* as contribution to blockade in Gulf.

**TURKEY**

Denied Dutch permission to send F-16s in support of UN gulf embargo ... customs officials turned back ship with over 200,000 pounds of German cyanide bound for Iran.

**COLOMBIA**

Bomb in Medellin coke factory killed nine, injured 75, (nope, wasn't us).

**IRAN**

Fistfights in parliament when radicals accused Khamenei of rigging elections ... buying \$6 billion in arms from USSR.

**PERU**

Patrols killed 24 guerrillas in Huallaga River Valley ... Fujimori refuses to negotiate with leftist guerrillas ... rejected \$35 million military aid package restricted to war on drug-gies.

**SAUDI ARABIA**

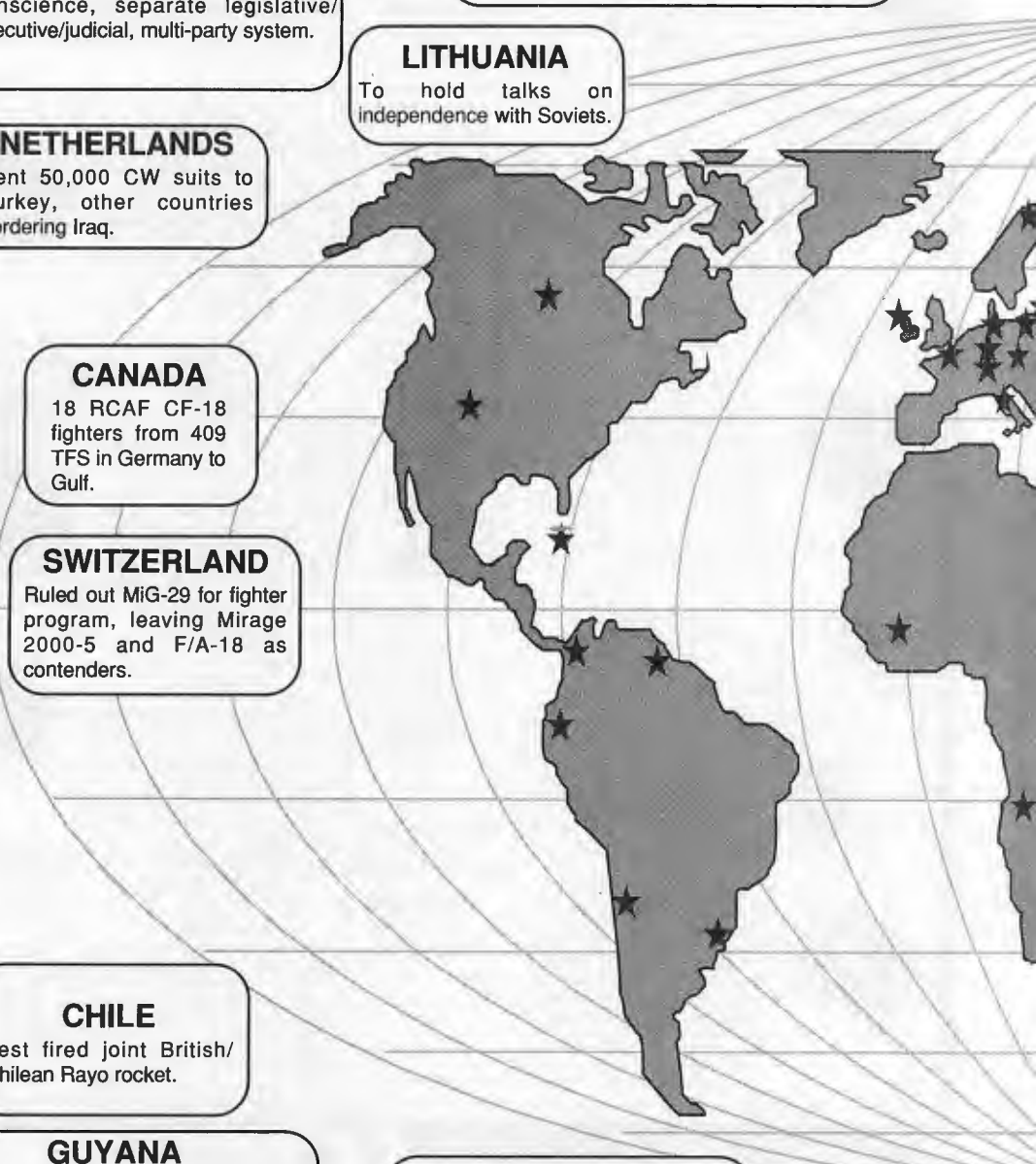
Escaped Kuwaiti pilots training at Khalid airbase to spearhead air strikes aimed at dislodging Hussein from Kuwait.

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Homemade bomb exploded outside residence of U.S. ambassador.

**UGANDA**

20 rebels killed in attack on government troops at Soroti, 310 clicks north of Kampala.



### LATVIA

Giving Iraqi naval personnel "defensive" training.

### LEBANON

Hrawi dismantling green line to unify Beirut after Lebanese, Syrian troops crushed General Michel Aoun in eight-hour assault that killed 160, wounded over 800.

### USSR

Denies nukes removed from restive ethnic areas ... Sov trade organizations asking Japanese for hundreds of millions in loans ... Sukhoi Design Bureau, Gulfstream Aerospace to cooperate on USSR/U.S. supersonic (Mach 2) business jet ... ethnic Russians fleeing Tuva as Tuvans assert sovereignty.

### BHUTAN

Many killed during demonstrations by dissident Nepalese.

### GERMANY

More arrests of spies for communist bloc ... policy turn-around: MiG-29 Fulcrum fighters will be in new air force ... nine companies under investigation for helping Iraq with chemwar ... Soviet soldiers selling weapons for newly-available hard currency ... ships of E. German navy slated for virtual extinction.

### PRC

New diplomatic relations with Singapore ... record grain harvest ... hijacked plane hit two others at Canton, killing 127.

### MONGOLIA

New non-communist VP, head of the legislature.

### GEORGIAN S.S.R.

Non-communist parties swept elections.

### JAPAN

Opening banks in Vietnam ... looking for way to send troops to Mideast within constitutional constraints ... developing new SAM system to replace U.S. Hawks.

### BULGARIA

Has offered to send 400 ground troops to Saudi Arabia.

### BURMA

New Chinese munitions mean SLORC won't step down.

### CAMBODIA

Khmer Rouge received 24 Type-59 MTBs from China ... "agreement" but no cease-fire.

### PHILIPPINES

Mutinies, threats of coup, growing chaos ... negotiations on U.S. bases, no agreement yet ... military action on hold against rebels in areas worst hit by earthquake.

### GREECE

Confiscated two Iraqi supertankers laid up in Piraeus; claims they owe \$153 million to Greek armaments companies.

### SRI LANKA

Government forces smashed siege of Jaffna Fort by Tamil Tigers

### RWANDA

Rockets, artillery turn back rebels at Kigali ... foreigners evacuating, under security by French, Belgian, Zairian troops.

### BAHRAIN

UK troops sandbagging Muharrarq air base ran out of sand, had to import more.

### HONG KONG

Chicom party moving to restructure media empire (five papers, book publishing/distribution), has accelerated surveillance of local media and journalists.

### ANGOLA

MPLA using toxins, WP against civilians in Moxico Province.

### INDIA

Expiration of 20-year-old military aid treaty with USSR ... 17 civilians killed, 400 houses torched in Handwara after ambush by Moslems.

### IRAQ

Air delivery of supplies by Libya, North Korea, Sudan, Yemen, Algeria ... claims new long-range missile *Al-Hijara* (Stone) ... Hussein executed five Presidential Guard officers.

### TAIWAN

Reduced term for all military conscripts from three years in navy and air force to two years for all ... pledged \$100 million for U.S. deployment in Gulf.

### EGYPT

20,000 troops in Saudi Arabia; tanks, APCs air defense systems.

### LIBERIA

Shakey cease-fire holding; Nimely overrun by West African peace-keeping force, clearing way for interim government.

### INDONESIA

Locals in Sumatran province chafing at military's heavy-handed suppression of rebels.

### PAKISTAN

Bhutto lost election, charges rigging ... riots in wake of her trial.



**THE FALLEN NOT FORGOTTEN ...** I was admiring your new format in some of your recent issues when I noticed some names conspicuous by their absence from the "in memoriam" section of your masthead. Why are the names of George Bacon, Mel Tappan and Mike Echanis missing? Surely, if as Jim Graves writes in his memorial to Craig Nunn, "all we can ask is for our enemies to celebrate and friends to regret our passing," these men should be remembered. I also was going to mention Larry Dring but memory does not serve me as to whether he was an official member of your staff.

Was this an oversight or was some other criteria used for listing the fallen?

Ira Abrams  
San Francisco,  
California

*Fallen staffers and friends of SOF are never forgotten. Unfortunately, however, because of what we do and where we do it we lose a lot more staffers than others of the print media. Although our departed comrades — and all who fall in the pursuit of truth or liberty — are remembered, space limitations prevent us from running an indefinite memorial on our masthead. The decision was made to keep memorial mention of Barry Sadler because of his long-standing relationship with SOF, and of Lance Motley and Craig Nunn because they were more than staff — they were family.*

**ROTTEN APPLES ...** If there's any place where a few rotten fish can make the whole barrel smell, it's the U.S. military. These kids who have relatives trying to lobby and protect their kid from going to war should all immediately receive dishonorable discharges.

These people who volunteered for a free ride, but when duty calls say "I won't go," are the scum of a free country and should be labeled so up front for all to see! *Damn these little brats piss me off, 'cause they hurt the*

whole military.

A.M.S.  
Tucson, Arizona

**SOF TO THE POINT ...** I just wanted to send you a quick note thanking you for sending us the back issues of your magazine that contained the series of

have nothing but praise and thanks to the IAAV. Mike Epstein and Mick Doyle put together a package that was virtually flawless in execution. The Thai people were extremely friendly and hospitable, and the Thai Special Forces are exacting professionals who gained my utmost respect and confidence.

Sure, it cost a good chunk of money, but I highly recommend the services of the International Association of Airborne Veterans.

1LT Randall  
L. Koehlmoos  
82nd Airborne  
Division

*We think IAAV is a good outfit too, and we're happy to give them a plug now and then. You'll probably find of interest the note in Bulletin Board this issue outlining what they are doing now for those who never fell out*



of an airplane but are interested in jungle warfare. When you come home dehydrated from your current assignment, maybe you'll be ready to try IAAV's humid jungle trip.

Best of luck with your task at hand. Kick ass, keep your head down, and return safely.

*Best of luck with your task at hand. Kick ass, keep your head down, and return safely.*

of excellent articles on Sri Lanka. My boss, LTC Johnston Beach, recently returned from a trip to Sri Lanka, and LTC Beach asked me to tell you that he appreciates your generosity in sending this material, and that it provided a valuable reference source during his visit.

As an aside, you might be interested to know that your magazine is maintained at the USMA library, and the periodicals librarian tells me it is one of the most popular magazines there. SOF is also one of the few magazines sold at the USMA bookstore. And it seems to me quite reasonable that your magazine should be so respected here, since SOF consistently provides an excellent source of information and insight into military conflicts around the world.

Thanks and keep up the good work.

Capt. David A. Grossman

West Point, New York

**IAAV OK ...** I was pleased to read Robert MacKenzie's article on the IAAV jump in Thailand. I had the honor of meeting him and his wife Sibyl on that trip, "Operation Siam," last May.

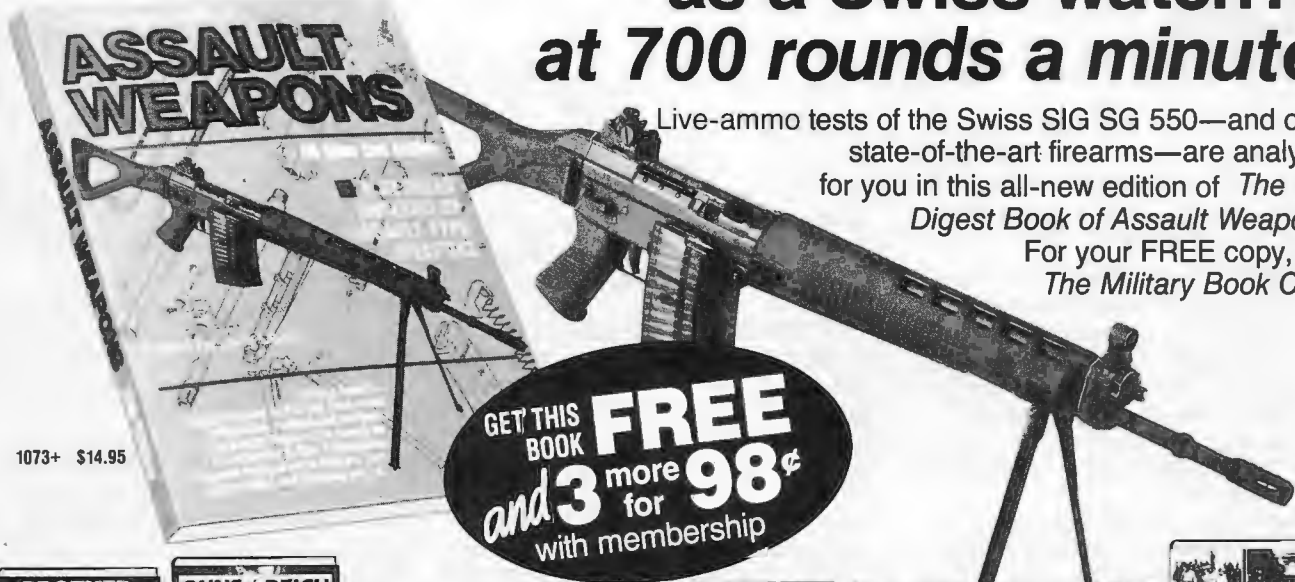
As for the tour and the jump itself, I

**AND A GOOD FIVE-CENT CIGAR ...**

Being a reader of your magazine for three years now I am very impressed with your pro-gun stand. However, I would like to point out that although the antigun fruitcakes have not banned semi-autos (yet) they have succeeded just the same. Let me explain. When President Bush banned the import of "assault rifles" in 1989 prices went through the roof: For example, AR15s (regardless of condition) \$1,000 and up, UZI carbines (assuming you found one) \$1,200 and up, and AK-47 look-alikes at least \$1,000. For those of us who work two jobs and barely make ends meet every month, those guns might as well have been banned even though they weren't. With inflation chewing up our paychecks more every day (never mind taxes), your middle-class person's chance of owning an

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# FLAK

EA15A2 or an H&K SR9 is just a dream.

That brings me to the point of all this: what we need is a bargain basement (about \$175 retail) semiautomatic rifle. This rifle should be in .223 caliber and use common components such as surplus M16 barrels and magazines as well as stamped receivers and reinforced plastic stocks and a simple direct gas system.

Can such a gun be made at such a price? I think so and believe it should be. Such a gun (remember it need not be pretty, just work) would not fail to find buyers among us "working poor" as it were. Such a gun might also become another tool in the fight against gun control, as these new owners would have a concrete reason to make their voices heard.

S.J.M.  
Seattle, Washington

*It's a great idea, but I'm afraid economic realities would dictate that a \$175 retail semi-auto in today's market would be a piece of beer-can ordnance a la the Volksturm rifle. I'd welcome it in a heartbeat, but be surprised to see it. Close as we've come in recent times was the "Bushmaster" that used a lot of surplus M16 and sheet-iron parts, marketed first as a grotesque pistol then as an economy rifle. It failed in the market simply because there was no real demand for cheap junk — what sales they did have were probably to ardent collectors who must have one of everything no matter how strange. If I had only \$175 to defend myself, I'd get a good-condition surplus bolt-action rifle or a pump shotgun and a pile of ammo. Better a reliable repeater any day over a semi-auto that shoots sometimes. But then, if I could scrape up \$175 today, I'd put it in the piggy bank knowing I was well on the way toward getting something of quality like a Ruger Mini-14.*

*Sadly enough, one of the salient programs of the Director of Civilian Marksmanship — now under fire from the antis on Capitol Hill — was the distribution of surplus U.S. military rifles and pistols to the shooting public to promote shooting skills and assure an armed citizenry. If we don't jump in our*

*elected representatives' faces over the DCM, that whole program may go out the window for want of \$5 million.*

**SOF: POPULAR MAGAZINE IN MAGAZINE ...** I'm a Vietnam-era veteran and my father is a Korean war veteran. At the end of your November issue article "Numbah One Story" you gave a brief history of the 2nd Infantry Division. My father was in the 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, and saw action at the Punchbowl and Heartbreak Ridge. I would like to see a story on one or both of these battles in future issues of SOF. We cannot forget the



brave men who defended the freedom of South Korea.

I enjoy reading SOF. Your reports of freedom fighters and trouble spots around the world are second to none. Keep up the good work. Remember our POW-MIAs.

Sin Loi,  
Phillip L. Cox  
Magazine, Arkansas

**STRIKE WHILE THE IRAQ IS HOT ...** Whatever the President plans to do with Saddam Hussein, he had better act quickly. Already the liberals are beginning to question whether we have any business sending troops to Saudi Arabia. If and when the first soldier dies in combat, they will attack like a pack of crazed coyotes.

Liberals seem to be incapable of learning anything from history. If the world would have acted as decisively when Hitler began his grab for power as they have now with Hussein, Hitler

would have been stopped. Would liberals have us sit idly by and wait until Hussein gets his hands on atomic weapons? Of course, according to liberal doctrine, if we act real nice to him, he would never use them against us.

Gene Downing  
Warrenton, Missouri

**WANTS YOUR WAR STORY ...** I am researching the Battle of Dong Ha (27 April/16 May 1968). Units involved were BLT 2/4, 9th MAB, and 1/3 Marines, 3rd MarDiv, at Dai Do; 3-21 Inf, 196th LIB, at Nhi Ha; TF Clearwater USN on the Cua Viet River; and the 1st ARVN Div near Dong Ha. I would greatly appreciate the opportunity to interview any veterans of this action. Please write or call anytime: (314) 645-1867 or 961-7577.

Keith William Nolan  
220 Kingsville Court,  
Webster Groves, MO 63119

*Keith Nolan has written Battle for Hue, Into Laos, Death Valley, and Into Cambodia.*

## SOF THROUGH YOUNG EYES...

Dear Colonel Brown: I am writing you concerning an incident that happened to me a few weeks ago. I bought a .22 semiautomatic pistol from one of my friends. I went camping on my property near the edge of our 4.5 acres and a kid went into my medic's bag and found the gun with three magazines and a box of ammo. Well, these kids called the police and the police came and took my gun without me even knowing it, along with my butterfly knife and medic's bag.

When my mom found out she asked the police to come and talk to me, and when they came my friend and I were reading *Soldier of Fortune* magazine. The police officer asked to see the magazine and I gave it to him and he asked why a kid was reading this magazine, so I told him it was a good magazine and that it tells me about what people are going through in the wars in other countries. He asked me if I wanted to be a soldier and I said yes I did, that I wanted to be in the Special Forces, and he said that was a strange goal. I said it was a harder goal than being a cop and he didn't answer. He told me no ordinary kid reads these

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magazines, and I said the rest are a bunch of pansies and don't have a sense of adventure.

Well, he took the magazine to read it, and melted down my gun and asked me why I had a medic's bag, and I told him you never know when somebody is going to get hurt, and when you need medical supplies they are a life saver. The reason I am writing this is to tell you how people look at kids who want to be soldiers and that are military enthusiasts.

Jesse Moore, 15  
Columbia, Missouri

*Jesse, we're glad SOF fills you in on what's happening around the world, and we're glad you are thinking about channeling your appetite for adventure into a career soldiering, especially in Special Forces, which was my outfit. Soldiering in defense of freedom is an honorable profession.*

*I sure don't have any problem with a young man your age reading SOF, or taking a gun, or a knife, or a medic's bag camping. But let me tell you where you made a wrong turn: until you reach the age of majority, you should have asked your mom first, and there's a reason for this. First, she's responsible for you so she has a right to know before you do something — or to tell you not to if she doesn't think you should. Second, there are certain rights of citizenship, like owning a gun, voting, driving a car and so on that are reserved until you reach an age where you should be able to handle the responsibility. In the meantime, such things as carrying a gun, learning to drive and so on should be done under adult supervision.*

*When you've saved up enough to buy another gun, do it this way: tell your mom you want to learn how to use guns safely, and go through an NRA gun/hunter safety course. Your state game department can tell you how to link up with one. While there, I'll bet you'll have no problem finding an adult shooter/hunter who would be glad to have a kid such as yourself along on his shooting or hunting trips. State laws vary as to whether minors carrying a gun must be under parental permission or direct adult supervision, but in any case it is important you get your mom's permission and proceed within whatever regulations exist in Missouri. Then when you've reached adulthood, perhaps when you're home on leave from Ft. Bragg, it will be your turn to teach a kid safe and responsible firearms ownership. Best of luck.*

Col. Bob Brown, Publisher  
Soldier of Fortune Magazine

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# I WAS THERE

by Tom Borner

## Border Patrol Punch-Up

**WORKING** patrol duties out of the La Mesa office of the United States Border Patrol is usually a pretty routine affair. But one day last fall I ran into a character who made me wish for another boring day.

I was on the 0600 to 1400 shift that Tuesday morning, and I was not looking forward to the day ahead — probably because I had been assaulted the previous day. An illegal alien had taken me out by hitting me in the face with a tree branch. I'm sure if I hadn't been wearing my sunglasses I would have lost my eyes. My face was cut up, I was sore all over and just not in the mood for anything exciting.

My boss assigned me to do some sign cutting (checking for tracks left by illegal aliens) down south along the southern boundary of our area. Great, I said to myself, I need a cake day just to get my head together.

I loaded up my gear into the Blazer and away I went. I wondered if I would get sympathy kisses from the girls at the local bar that night — hopefully the cuts on my face would be good for something. I made the regular stop for coffee at the 7-11 off Highway 94 in Jamul, made sign cuts on all of the pole line trails along Honeysprings Road and didn't come up with anything at all. That was fine with me. If I did not see an alien that day I would be happy.

I made my way around Japatul Valley Road toward this little spot I know where I was going to take a break, drink my coffee to get warm and maybe pull out a salami-and-cheese sandwich for a snack.

The sun was out, but that didn't make it warm. It was a cold, late November day, cold in the way you only find in the coastal mountains. The wind was wet and bone-chilling, blowing steadily at about 35 miles an hour, with gusts picking up dust and debris. The dirt road in this part of the national forest is lonely. It overlooks the interstate and you can sit up there and watch the people fly by, all wrapped up in their own little world.

As I headed toward the dead end, I spotted a guy walking down this road to nowhere. He seemed a little out of place to me. We were in the national forest but he didn't have a backpack on. As I approached, I could see he was wearing a field jacket with the hood up

and some blue hospital pants. There was some writing on the back of his jacket. Finally the buzzer went off in my head — this guy was probably an escaped convict. As I stopped and got out of my car he realized that I was there and started to turn toward me. I saw that one of his hands was bloody. When he saw who I was, he rapidly jammed his hands into his jacket pockets. I may have been slow to start with, but I caught on quick. My gun was out and covering him before I was even aware of drawing it.

"I'm a federal officer so don't screw me around. Get your hands out of your pockets," I commanded. He did as he was told, for now.

"What are you doing out here?" I asked.

"Just going for a walk."

I figured that was very unlikely.

"Where did you get your jacket and pants? They don't look like they fit you very well," I said.

"I found them." He answered in a monotone voice, as his face took on this blank, scary shadow.

At this time I was wishing I had called in the stop — things were turning from bad to worse.

"Move around to the back of the truck," I commanded. If I could just get him in the vehicle I could call for back-up. We both moved to the back of my ride. I dropped the tailgate and told him to get in.

He looked at me and said in that same weird voice, "I have done nothing wrong, you can't shoot me and I am not going with you." With that he turned and started to walk away.

I looked at my gun and thought to myself: You've got this all wrong, I've got a gun and you're supposed to do what I say. He had other ideas. I was at a point where I either let him walk or it was time to fight.

I ran up behind him and executed a textbook-perfect Akido take down. It worked like a dream and he went down on his face. I grabbed his left arm and attempted to put it into an arm bar, so I could put the cuffs on him. He straightened his arm out like I wasn't even holding on, then pulled my hands underneath him. I had no choice then, the fight was on. I was doing everything that I could to get hold of his hands so I could cuff him. I must have hit him 20

times in the kidneys, but it didn't bother him at all.

"Put your hands back," I kept telling him.

"Why are you doing this to me?" he asked over and over. "I have done nothing wrong. Please stop hurting me," he said as he elbowed me in the chest repeatedly.

I was becoming frightened, just trying to hold on. I managed to get my radio out, but he covered the mike with his bloody hand every time I tried to talk. We struggled for the radio and he got it away from me and threw it. I picked him up in the air and slammed him down. I ran for the radio, and managed to get back before he recovered. Finally I got the call out; the nearest units were 20 minutes away.

He made a grab for my gun; I was ready for it. I covered my pistol with my right elbow. I stopped it with a blow to the small of his back. I told myself all I needed was a little rest, but if I was resting so was he. From behind I scraped sand into his eyes, nose and mouth. I threw more punches into his kidneys and bloody hand; nothing seemed to work. I reached up and pulled off his hood. He had long dirty hair. I grabbed it with both hands. It was now or never — I didn't have much left. Kneeling in the middle of his back pulling with all my strength, I started to bend him into a "C," telling him once more to put his hands behind his back. He did, and the fight was over.

I got him into the Blazer and got on the radio to let them know that it was all over. I was sitting there worn out, sore, every bone in my body screaming, when the first back-up unit arrived. The guy got out, came around, took one look at my face, screamed and headed toward the back of my ride with his baton out. I was cut up from the day before, and had the blood from the bad guy's cut all over me. The agent thought that he had done this to me and was going to get him for it.

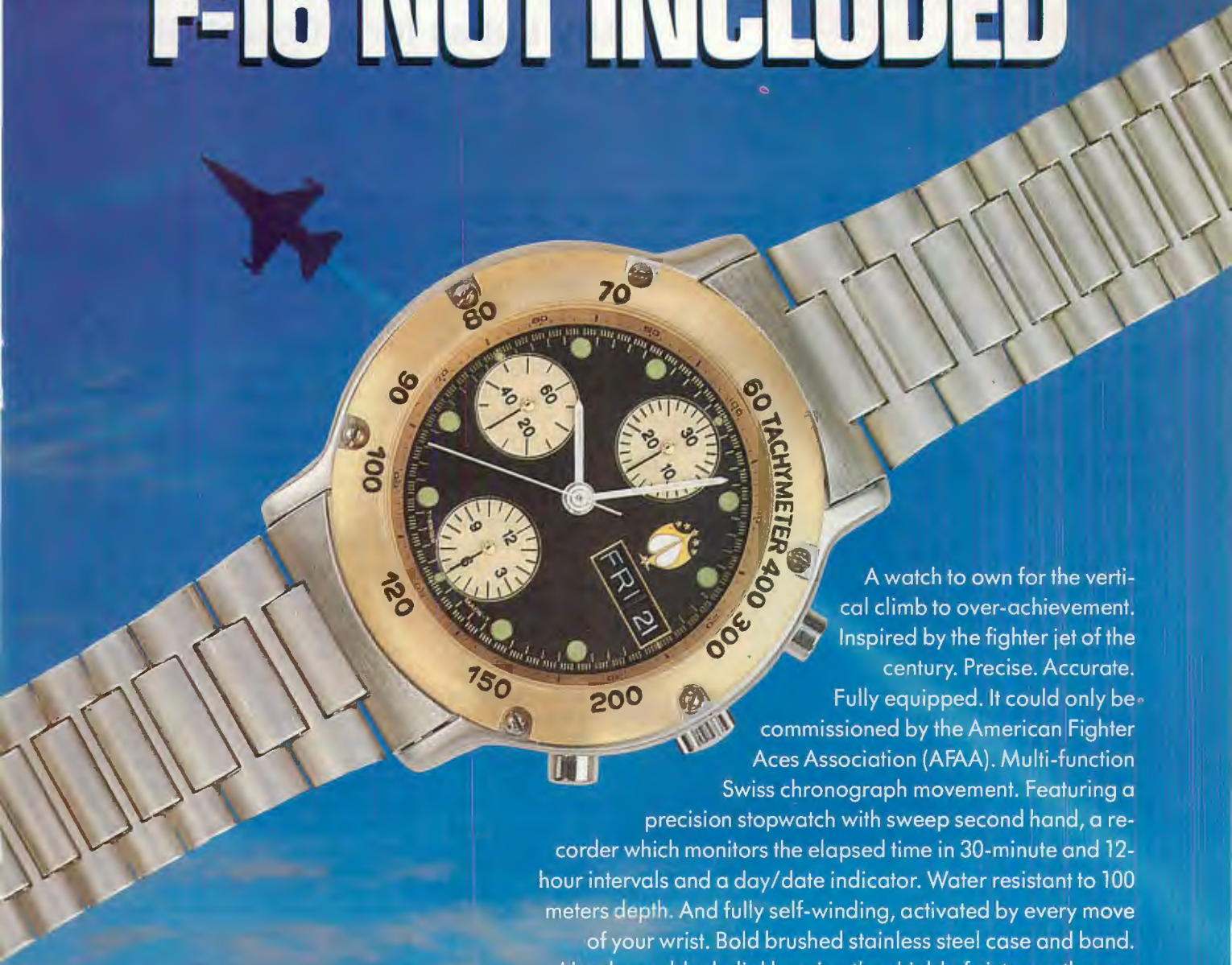
"No, most of this is from yesterday," I yelled.

"Yesterday?" he asked.

"Yeah, it's a long story."

Tommy John Duncan was an escaped convict who was awaiting trial for battery on a peace officer, among other things. He went back to jail and I'm glad that I put him there. ☒

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# COMBAT CRAFT

## Dry Lubes for a Desert Shield

by Chuck Fremont

Your squad is maneuvering against an Iraqi force in the Kuwaiti desert. With the overwatch team providing suppressive fire, your fire team readies for a dash to the cover of a wadi (dry gulch) to your front. On your team leader's signal, you sprint ahead, firing three-round bursts from your M16A2. Eyes focused on Iraqi muzzle flashes, you don't see an outcropped rock, and you trip and fall, breaking your fall with your weapon. The dust cover over your M16's firing port, of course, is open. Silty, salty desert sand, which will cling to even the most lightly oiled surface, now coats the exposed portion of the bolt carrier. But with Iraqi bullets kicking up the sand at your feet, you don't notice the sand in your weapon as you resume fire at the enemy muzzle flashes. One round — the one already chambered — fires, and the weapon jams. You hit the forward assist. The bolt carrier moves incrementally forward on a partially chambered round, jamming even tighter. The rear of your bolt carrier is stuck in the buffer tunnel in the butt stock, so you can't even open the weapon to clean it. You now have a problem.

**ANYONE** who has experienced the type of malfunction described above is understandably nervous about operating the M16A2 in dry, sandy environments. SOP for such situations is to wipe all operating surfaces dry after cleaning, since a weapon will operate more reliably dry than it will when fouled by a paste of dirt and oil. The dry option

is an obvious choice in this either/or scenario. But firing an unlubricated weapon — especially a modern semi or full-auto weapon — will lead to rapid wear and may cause malfunctions.

The M16 family of weapons is particularly ill-suited to firing without lubrication. These weapons are machined to relatively close tolerances, making seizures possible if the weapon overheats. And the large contact area between the steel bolt carrier and the aluminum-alloy upper receiver is closed to outside air, unlike a Garand-type action, allowing high temperatures to build up. The multi-lug bolt head needs lubrication. (Ever have to clean the carbon from an M16 bolt and chamber after the weapon was fired dry?) And

M16s don't tolerate dirt, either. Fortunately, there is a third option: *dry lubricants*.

Though seldom issued by the U.S. military, dry lubricants are widely used in the commercial and scientific communities for lubricating sensitive equipment and mechanisms in dusty, sandy environments. They are also used in extreme cold environments that cause traditional lubricants to thicken and gum up. Some of the earliest research into such lubricants was driven by the need for a reliable machine-gun lubricant for high-flying jet interceptors in the 1950s, because standard military weapons lubricants were not compatible with the sub-zero temperatures of the upper atmosphere.

### What They Are — And Aren't

Lubricants work by separating sliding

surfaces, thus reducing friction and the heat that would otherwise build up. This separation may be accomplished by continuous injection of liquid between those surfaces, by coating with an oily film that separates the surfaces, by permanently bonding a coating of a slippery substance like Teflon, or by coating the surfaces with a solid substance that has friction-reducing properties.

Dry lubricants reduce friction between surfaces without coating those surfaces with a viscous (oily or greasy) substance. Since an oily surface coating also serves as a rust inhibitor, dry lubricants may not be the best choice if a preservative is desired. And since the Army seeks one all-purpose substance that will serve as a cleaner, lubricant and preservative (CLP), this may explain why the Army has been reluctant to issue dry lubricants to field troops. Experience in the Middle East may cause rethinking of this policy.

There are two types of dry lubricants: naturally occurring substances (for example, graphite powder and molybdenum disulfide) and synthetic micro-powders (e.g., Teflon). Graphite and molybdenum disulfide — MoS<sub>2</sub> or "moly" for short — work by forming



Operation Desert Shield field conditions call for use of dry lubricants that will not retain desert silt and sand. Dry lubes are also a good choice for winter ops, since ordinary lubes may thicken or gel at low temperatures. Photo: U.S. Army by SGT Roman, 49th PAD

### DRY TERRAIN = DRY LUBRICANTS

Military units address the problem of dust retention in desert environments in various ways. French forces have been carrying their FAMAS rifles in nylon bags. Major General Charles Murray of the Army's Materiel Command said in an interview in the October 1990 *Armed Forces Journal* that the Army simply recommends that weapons be kept "bone dry." A Marine Corps paper *Effects of Climate and Environment on Forces in SWA [Saudi Arabia] with Emphasis on Ground Equipment*, noted that fine "sand and dust can cause malfunctions as well as accelerate wear ... particularly of the M16, the 9mm pistol, and other weapons whose tolerances between moving parts are relatively tight." Some fixes, according to the USMC Research Development and Acquisition Command, are to "Select and use appropriate dry film lubricant vice liquid types, e.g. graphite."

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microscopic plates that slide easily over one another, while Teflon or other PTFE (Polytetrafluoroethylene) products function as tiny ball bearings that reduce contact between surfaces. Graphite, moly and Teflon are commercially available in various forms, but not all are equally suited for weapons lubrication.

### When To Use Them — And Why

Dry, dusty conditions require a lubricant that will adhere to weapon surfaces without the aid of a viscous carrier. Graphite and moly work well in dusty conditions for this reason. In NASA tests, MoS<sub>2</sub> lubricants performed very well in the extremely cold, dry environment of outer space. Pure graphite powder can be applied from a squeeze bottle, and an old-fashioned carpenter's pencil with a thick, soft "lead" may also be used. A commercial graphite lubricant like "Lock-Ease," which uses a solvent carrier to transport the graphite, works well for getting into tight areas.

"Dri-Slide" is the most widely available commercial product using MoS<sub>2</sub>, and it is packaged in aerosol spray cans and small plastic squeeze bottles. Dri-Slide forms a durable and water-resistant dry, gray film on metal surfaces, consisting of moly and graphite in a 2-to-1 ratio, and this film seems to resist rubbing off better than pure graphite. The moly has better extreme-pressure characteristics (100,000 psi) while the graphite holds up better at high temperatures (1,200 degrees F). The "Military Specification" referenced on the Dri-Slide container, according to Dri-Slide engineer Steve Traxler, is not a current milspec. Dri-Slide, Inc. contributed large quantities of their product to GIs during the Vietnam War, and it was very popular with grunts.

I use a spray can of Dri-Slide's "Multi-Purpose Lubricant Professional Formula" for coating operating surfaces after cleaning and prior to field use, and I carry a squeeze bottle of it in my cleaning kit. Dri-Slide contains a corrosion inhibitor that has passed

50-hour salt spray tests, according to the manufacturer. However, it is primarily designed as a lubricant. There are probably better choices if corrosion protection alone is required.

Teflon is used in a number of commercial, military and industrial lubricants, either to enhance the lubricating properties of a petroleum or synthetic-based lube, or as the primary lubricant. Teflon lubes have excellent high-pressure characteristics. "Break Free" (military CLP) uses Teflon, but is not a dry lube. Also, the Teflon in Break Free tends to settle out of suspension.

Teflon is also available in dry powder form (Hob-E-Lube's "Dry White Lube with Teflon"), and suspended in light solvent bases that evaporate after application, leaving a Teflon film behind (Elmer's "Slide-All"). Hob-E-Lube is sold in small plastic tubes that will fit easily in a GI cleaning kit, while Slide-All is sold in a not particularly tactical orange-white-and-blue spray can.

A relatively new Teflon-enhanced product, "Super Lube," uses synthetic bases of

various viscosities, ranging from light oils to greases. Super Lube isn't a dry lube, but it has been tested by Special Forces teams for use in extreme cold and maritime (salt-water) environments, and it works quite well in those conditions. It has excellent corrosion-preventing properties.

Another new product using PTFE is "Tetra Gun." No hard operational data is available on this product, so we can't recommend it at this time, but the manufacturer claims that it will function as a dry lube when applied and then wiped dry. According to FTI, manufacturer of Tetra Gun, the PTFE "ball bearings" are smaller than those of Teflon powders, allowing better adsorption into the porous metal surfaces of a weapon, thus giving the product a superior coating ability. We intend to test this product in a variety of environments. If it works as claimed, it could be good stuff.

"LPS 1 Greaseless Lubricant," like Super Lube, is not a true dry lube, but it is a light lubricant and a good choice for

getting into tight places. It leaves a clear film of synthetic "oil" (no Teflon, PTFE or silicone) on coated surfaces and is "cleaner" appearing than Dri-Slide. The packaging refers to U.S. military specification MIL-C-23411, an outdated corrosion-protection spec. Because of its solvent carrier, LPS 1 will also work as a cleaner. LPS 1 comes in aerosol cans too large for carrying in a GI cleaning kit, but 1- and 5-gallon containers are available, and individual bottles can be filled from these.

### How Should They Be Used?

If you anticipate deployment to a dry, dusty environment, your weapons should be thoroughly cleaned of conventional lubricants (automotive parts solvent or dry cleaning fluid work well if you don't have access to a solvent dip; use with good ventilation so you don't end up with kids that look like mutant turtles), allowed to dry, and then re-lubed with the appropriate dry lube. I recommend Dri-Slide Professional Formula for all parts that dust may get to: trigger groups, bolt carriers, operating rods, slides and barrels of pistols, M16 upper receivers, etc.

Dri-Slide is also effective for internal parts operating at high speeds and temperatures and not exposed to dust — e.g., the bolt of an M16. Gas pistons and cylinders of M14/M21/M1A weapons and M60 machine guns are not to be lubed.

Teflon products in powder form and light aerosol bases (Hob-E-Lube and Slide-All) aren't as long-lasting under field conditions as Dri-Slide, LPS 1, and oilier varieties of Teflon-enhanced products, so you will need to add lube more often if using them. They are dry, though, and cleaner-appearing than moly and graphite products.

Once your weapons are prepared this way, avoid unnecessary cleaning in the field. Keep your weapons clean, of course, but you'll do your weapon no good by disassembling it under field conditions more than necessary. Because many officers these days have no knowledge of weapons beyond limited military experience, your platoon leader may not understand dry lubricants. Educate him — a good officer will listen. Be patient with him and offer to share your dry lube with the rest of your squad. It might keep some of them alive.

One important point for military users: since moly and graphite-based lubes — the most effective true dry lubes in my experience — work by depositing a mineral film on metal surfaces, the old inspection technique of sticking a finger into the chamber or receiver will result in a dirty-appearing finger. Although this will not remove significant lube from your weapon, it may bother people not familiar with



SOF tested all lubes for dust retention by applying them to metal surfaces and dusting with sand/dirt mix. Least amount of dirt was retained by Slide-All, most by Break Free. Photo: SOF staff

such lubes. Explain this to whomever is inspecting your weapon. If he is a real knucklehead and insists on his finger coming out of your weapon clean, you may want to use LPS 1 or Slide-All. (LPS Labs is working on a "clean" moly lube, which SOF hopes to test soon.)

#### Procurement

##### Military purchases:

If you have a good S4, supply NCO or armorer, he may be able to procure dry lubricants through "local purchase" procedures, though this can be very difficult. First, someone will have to write a "Staff Study" or "Mission Essential Needs Statement" explaining what dry lubricants are, why they are needed and what the cost will be. If you're trying to procure quantities for more than one rifle squad, you'll probably need a general's signature. Then you have to identify potential sources of supply, who must prove that they meet Congressional requirements for selling products to the military. This process, in my experience, generally takes about one year.

##### Private purchases:

If you're in a hurry, good hardware stores, gun shops, camera shops and bicycle shops should stock some or all of these products. Industrial lubricant suppliers also supply them, though not always in retail quantities.

*Note: As we go to press, the Dri-Slide Company informs us that they have shipped (free of charge) 2,000 4-ounce bottles (shipping weight about 850 lbs.) of their "Professional Formula" to a Defense Department depot for transshipment to Saudi*



SOF staff tested all lubricants for functioning in military weapons. Dri-Slide lasted longer than other dry lubes during function tests, adhered well to operating parts. Photo: SOF staff

## SOF RECOMMENDATION

Dri-Slide Multi-Purpose Lubricant, "Professional Formula": Dri-Slide, Inc., Guardsman Products, Dept. SOF, 411 N. Darling St., Fremont, MI 49432.

COST: \$6.99.

REMARKS: Temperature range: -50 degrees F to +750 degrees F; excellent all-purpose lube; spray or squeeze bottle.

Arabia. That's the good news. The kicker is that DoD is transporting the lubricant to Saudi Arabia by surface ship, which will take about 30 days.

##### References:

*Synthetic Lubricants*, Gundersen and Hart. Reinhold. New York. 1968.

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Chuck Fremont is an Army Reserve Special Forces NCO. ⚡

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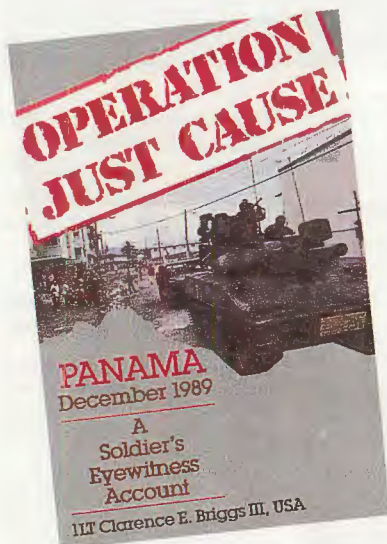
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# IN REVIEW

by John Coleman



**READY** for an ancient history quiz? Here goes: What major U.S. military operation took place in December 1989? Up until August 1990 and our deployment in Desert Shield, the answer would have rolled off your tongue. But our massive build-up in the Middle East has turned Operation Just Cause — the invasion of Panama — into military history, a mere limited incursion now overshadowed by greater events and relegated to footnote status.

Too bad, because there are lessons to be learned from that military foray into Central American politics by U.S. forces that are applicable to our current situation in the Middle East.

I'm not talking about grand strategies and incisive tactical doctrine, but rather about the training and readiness of our troops today, the ability of their officers and NCOs to organize and lead them in a combat environment, and how the military program actually works under fire.

**OPERATION JUST CAUSE — Panama, December 1989 — A Soldier's Eyewitness Account**, by 1LT Clarence E. Briggs III (Stackpole Books, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 1831, Cameron & Kalker Streets, Harrisburg, PA 17105; phone: 1-800-732-3669; \$10.95 plus \$2.50 s&h) does just that.

I doubt if Briggs (XO of Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 504th PIR, 82nd Airborne Division, during Just Cause), set out to write this book with those major goals in mind, but his first-person description of the day-to-day activities of his company (and those around it)

and his analysis of the rules of engagement under which American forces operated make it evident that Just Cause wasn't the major, unhindered, success the military's public affairs office would have you believe.

By that, however, I don't mean to imply that everyone screwed the cat, so to speak. But if you've got a military background, some of this will sound familiar: combat troops bumped off aircraft for Division and Corps combat-patch seekers, troops jumped into swampy drop zones, friendly troops firing at each other, friendly aircraft shot down, lack of solid enemy intelligence, troops freezing under fire, support aircraft refusing to come in low enough to be effective, accidental discharges of weapons, squad leaders "losing" their troops, OpSec breaches, lack of coordination between units. Et cetera.

On the flip side, though, a lot of things went right, and you can credit that to people who really give a damn and who take their job as soldiers seriously. That's an area often over-

**CAUSE** is the first good book of its type I've seen since the Vietnam War that takes a grunt's-eye view of how things *really* happen down on the ground, when you transition from the it-ain't-real-it's-training way of thinking to a shootin' war. (OK, purists contend that Panama wasn't a war. Fine. Tell that to the dead bodies.)

I think it's vital right now for all of us to understand our military at this level because, after all, that's the level where the bullets will fly and the blood will flow. It's far from perfect down there in the trenches: there are screw-ups minor and major, but there's commitment and dedication (and some real live ass-kickin' heroes) too. **OPERATION JUST CAUSE** gives us the human side of what went on in Panama and, a year later, I can guarantee not much has changed. At this juncture in history, I can think of no better book to read.

If reading's not believing then seeing certainly is, and Harvey Schuster's **TAXIS OF CONFLICT - The Helicopter War** (Image Productions, Dept.



looked: Not every person wearing a uniform is a misfit who can't hack it on the outside. And further, as Briggs relates, there exists that percentage who will always go above and beyond the call of duty. That's what makes the program work, even given the SNAFUs.

So why is this stuff important in the grand scheme of things? Magnify what happened in Panama, say, about 10 or 20 times, and that's what's happening (or what will happen) in Saudi Arabia/Kuwait/Iraq. **OPERATION JUST**

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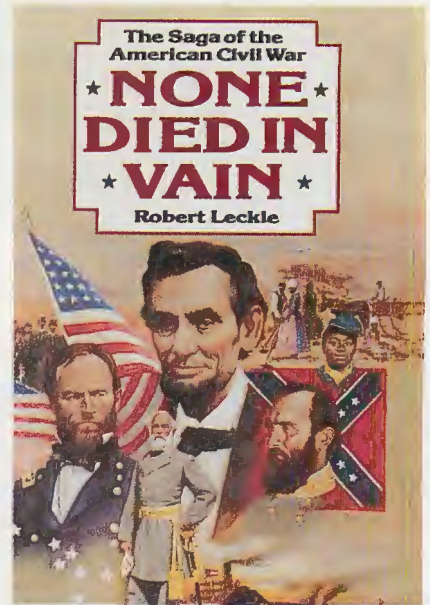
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without political/military fictionalization and/or revisionism. What you'll see in **TAXIS OF CONFLICT** are men at war and, regardless of whether it's Vietnam or the Middle East, they'll fight — and die — in much the same way.

So far we've been "spared" the "horrors" of combat in Grenada and Panama by a government and military crucified in the public affairs arena of Vietnam; the idea of body bags and bodies shown on the six o'clock news frightens them to death. (Whether that's good or bad depends on your point of view.) Regardless, war and death are quite real, and **TAXIS OF CONFLICT** is a stark reminder of that reality.

Finally, 120 years ago Americans were involved in the greatest military struggle they would ever face. The War between the States, the Civil War, the War of Secession, the War of Rebellion — it shattered the Union but reforged it in combat, creating the society in which we live and the ideals by which we function today.

In a grand work, historian Robert Leckie chronicles this upheaval in **NONE DIED IN VAIN — The Saga of the American Civil War** (Harper-Collins), from the causes to the aftermath.

Again the question: Why is this book important now? Compare the scale of combat in the Civil War (in the Gettysburg campaign of June-July 1863 alone, Union casualties ran 23,000 while Confederates had 25,000 killed or wounded) against what U.S. forces may face in the Middle East (estimates run from 10,000 to 50,000 casualties), and you may get some idea of the immensity of the task we face in Op Desert Shield. This is no Panama or Grenada; we may be in for the biggest punch-up since the German-Soviet battles of World War II. ☒

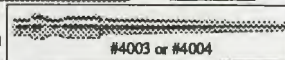


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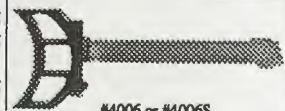
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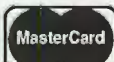
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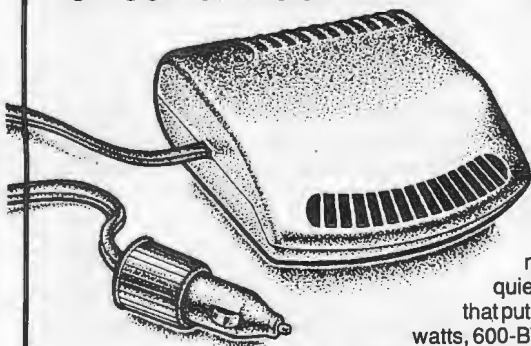
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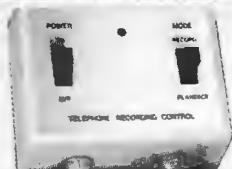
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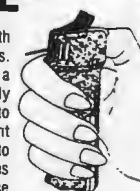
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# FULL AUTO

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

## Subsonic at Warp 6



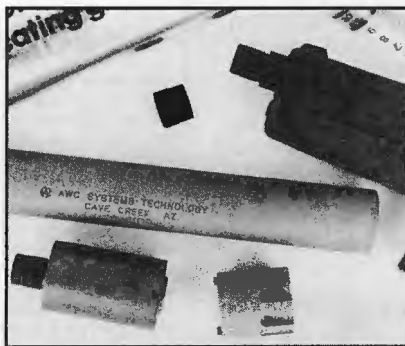
AWC's compact and lightweight Warp 6 sound suppressor for 9mm Parabellum pistols has been designed by professionals at the cutting edge of current technology for operators who can accept no compromise to their mission through equipment failure.

**SOUND** suppressor technology has surged forward at warp speed in the last decade.

Hiram P. Maxim patented the first truly successful suppressor in March of 1908. While current offerings' external housings are still cylindrical in shape, suppressors produced by today's design leaders such as AWC Systems Technology (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 41938, Phoenix, AZ 85080-1938 — catalog free to Class 3 dealers and legitimate government agencies, \$5 to individuals) bear little resemblance to Maxim's pioneering efforts.

There is no dearth of would-be suppressor designers and it almost seems that anyone with access to a drill press, metal tubing and the \$500 required for a Class 2 manufacturer's license can stuff some washers into a tube and market it as a "state-of-the-art silencer." There is also a great deal of confusion concerning the sound levels of these junk "cans" because the absolute sound level measurements will vary with how far the microphone (usually attached either to a voltmeter or oscilloscope whose linear responses

are then converted into the logarithmic ratio, which is the decibel [dB]) is placed from the firearm. Although the absolute sound level will vary with distance, the ratio or degree of suppression will be constant regardless of the distance. That is why it is more meaningful to talk



To obtain the highest level of sound reduction, the Warp 6's environment cells must be kept wet. Lithium-base grease is best for this purpose. To assure positive functioning, the Glock series and some others require a supplementary recoil boost, which is provided by the unique AWC recoil regulator device.

about the degree of suppression rather than the absolute sound level of the suppressed weapon. Legitimate suppressor manufacturers now almost universally make their sound level measurements 1 meter to the side of the

weapon and state their measurement criteria and conditions.

AWC's Warp 6 sound suppressor was designed specifically for operations requiring high efficiency, compact size and maximum sound suppression of caliber 9mm Parabellum pistols; their unit represents sound suppressor technology in its most advanced form and has been designed by professionals at the cutting edge of current technology for operators who can accept no compromise to their mission through equipment failure. Constructed entirely of non-magnetic 304 stainless steel, the Warp 6 contains no mesh packing or wipes. Its baffles cause the main propellant gas jet to move away from the bullet and enter specially designed environment cells where the gasses are cooled at an increased rate over conventional designs.

In order to obtain the highest level of sound reduction, the Warp 6's environment cells must be kept wet. For this purpose AWC recommends a lithium-base grease (Mobil synthetic lubricating grease), a tube of which is packed with each Warp 6 suppressor unit. A fresh change of lubricant is usually required at 15-20 shots. When recharging the unit, approximately one tablespoon of the lithium-base grease should be placed into the first chamber inside the threaded end of the suppressor. You can use an ice cream bar stick to do this, but the best device for this purpose is a 10cc plastic syringe minus the hypodermic needle.

Overall length of the Warp 6 is 6.75 inches with a diameter of only 0.98 inches. The weight is just 6.7 ounces, and the standard finish is optically flat matte. Properly charged with lithium-base grease, the Warp 6's sound reduction approaches 35 dB, truly astounding for a unit of this size and weight. In addition, its small diameter permits use of standard factory-installed sights.

Since the Warp 6 is constructed of 100% 304 non-magnetic stainless steel, disassembly is not required for cleaning or maintenance, and the can's end-caps have been TIG-welded to the tube. The lubricants used to provide a wet environment in the suppressor also prevent carbon from baking onto the internal components. However, the unit should be periodically rinsed with non-

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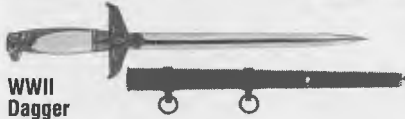
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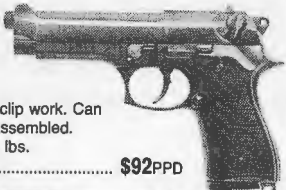
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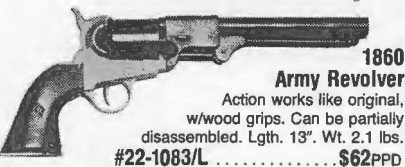
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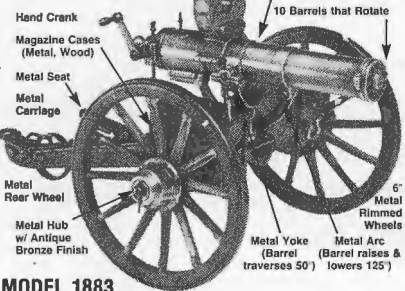
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flammable solvent or hot soapy water. Compressed air can be used to blow the interior dry.

There is now an additional benefit to a completely sealed sound suppressor that some may be unaware of. In an attempt to interdict the assembling of unregistered suppressors by obtaining the housing from one source and the internal parts from another (a legitimate concern), the Firearms Owner's Protection Act as approved on 19 May 1986, contains the following definition: "The terms 'firearm silencer' and 'firearm muffler' mean any device for silencing, muffling or diminishing the report of a portable firearm, including any combination of parts, designed or redesigned, and intended for use in assembling or fabricating a firearm silencer or firearm muffler, and any part intended only for use in such an assembly or fabrication."

The BATF, forever seeking arrests that do not endanger their agents, has interpreted this to mean so much as a single neoprene disc that could be used as a wipe. Thus, if you have a "Hush Puppy" type suppressor, you cannot inventory spare wipes unless you are a Class 2 manufacturer. After you have fired this device the dozen or so times it takes to degrade sound suppression, you must transfer the suppressor back to the manufacturer for replacement of the wipes. Spare wipes or other internal sound suppressor components can, and already have, resulted in a trip down the river — as, of course, ignorance of the law is no excuse.

Attaching a sound suppressor to a pistol with a recoiling slide and barrel places an added mass, no matter how slight, on the rearward moving components that may retard their rearward travel and result in an incomplete recoil cycle with failures to properly eject empty cases ("stove pipes") and failure to feed. Some semiauto pistols are more recoil-sensitive than others.

Heckler & Koch's P9S operates by means of delayed blowback and the additional burden of a sound suppressor does not affect its reliable operation. Short-recoil types such as the Beretta M9/92F, Taurus PT series and Walther P5 will also function reliably with the added mass of a sound suppressor (providing its weight does not exceed 8 ounces) and do not require a supplementary recoil boost. However, the Glock series, SIG-Sauer P226, Ruger P85, Browning High-Power and Smith & Wesson 9mm pistols (all locked-breech, short-recoil operated) usually require some recoil assist when a suppressor is attached to their barrels to insure positive functioning.

For this purpose, AWC Systems Technology has designed a unique regulator device that interfaces between the barrel and suppressor.

Measuring just 1.75 inches in length and 1.075 inches in diameter, the device is also constructed from 304 stainless steel and weighs 4.7 ounces.

This four-component unit consists of a spring-loaded piston in a cylinder. The piston is precision fitted to the cylinder with aerospace grinding equipment and is lubricated with the same lithium-base grease used in the suppressor. It should be disassembled, cleaned and re-lubricated after approximately 100 rounds. A spanner wrench is provided for this purpose.

Within milliseconds after a round has been fired, propellant gasses drive the piston and suppressor forward and compress the heavy coil spring wrapped around the piston's shaft. As a consequence of the compressed spring, the suppressor and piston return almost immediately to provide the added recoil thrust required to reliably carry the barrel (and slide to which it locked) through a complete recoil cycle.

We chose to mate our Warp 6 test specimen with a Glock 17, a pistol for which I have the highest regard. As I had a Glock 17 long-slide 6-inch barrel without compensator slots on hand, AWC cut it back to approximately 5 inches, threaded the muzzle end and provided it with a knurled thread protector cap. AWC can also TIG-weld a sleeve on the standard Glock 17/19 barrel and thread it to accept the Warp 6 for those without access to the long-slide barrel.

All testing was performed with Black Hills 147-grain JHP subsonic ammunition. Since the Warp 6 is a muzzle suppressor, there was no reduction in muzzle velocity, which remained at about 970 fps.

There was no degradation of the pistol's accuracy potential, which remained at under 1 inch for five-shot groups fired at 7 yards from the Weaver stance. Sound suppressors employing disposable wipes usually exhibit increased group dispersions.

With the recoil regulator device in place, the Glock 17 performed with its usual high degree of reliability. There were no stoppages of any type throughout the course of SOF's test and evaluation. There was, however, a noticeable increase in perceived recoil as a result of the increased rearward push initiated by the recoil regulator device. The time required to reacquire the front sight was not affected as recoil thrust on the Glock series is mostly straight back.

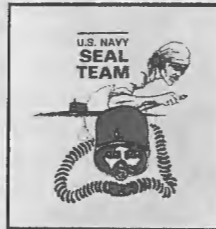
Our qualitative assessment of the sound reduction was that it was equal or superior to most of the "Hush Puppy" types we have fired.

The vast majority of sound suppress-

Continued on page 80



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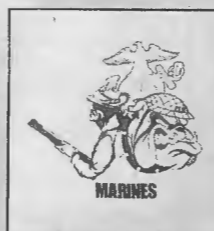
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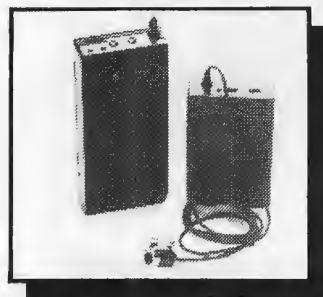
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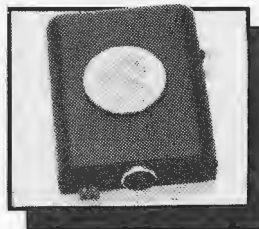
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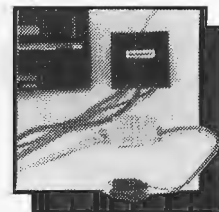
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# SAMURAI DIRECTOR

## Hollywood's John Milius One of a Kind

by Dan Gagliasso

HE has been called the "Samurai Kid," Generalissimo Milius, Hollywood's resident anarchist and even a self-proclaimed Zen fascist. John Milius is the last of a breed of screenwriter/directors like John Ford and John Huston, who can live up to Errol Flynn's epitaph of being a colorful character in a drab world.

His interest and knowledge in all manner of things military is legendary in a vocation where no one is interested in anything except making money. This is the man whose screenwriting career was started by his original script of *Apocalypse Now*.

He then went on to put the .44 Magnum in *Dirty Harry's* hand and showed us Teddy

Roosevelt seizing the Moroccan government at bayonet point in *The Wind and the Lion*.

"They wouldn't tell them to surrender. If you're going to take a government, you take it! Ask them to surrender and while you're negotiating, they might open up the doors and turn loose a couple of Maxims on you," Milius declares.

He then brought *Conan the Barbarian* to the silver screen and even dared to have Soviet Spetsnaz troops invade the United States in *Red Dawn*. His latest military excursion, *Flight of the Intruder*, heads back to Vietnam with the pilots of the A-6 bombers who dare to go "Downtown" over Hanoi for some unauthorized payback.

While surfing was and still is a major part of Milius' life, it has been surfing with a military flavor. He used to practice with his Kendo sword on the beach in Malibu and named his various longboards after famous German battleships, the *Graf Spee*, *Bismark* and others.

Milius counts among his friends many ex-Special Forces people, including novelist Kent Anderson (*Sympathy for the Devil*), screenwriter Fred Rexor (*Extreme Prejudice*) and SOF's own publisher Robert K. Brown. In fact Milius once quipped to Brown that the only real mercenaries he'd ever met would have to be the females in Hollywood.

He's much more at home shooting trap and skeet with a group of paralyzed veterans than he is hobnobbing with stars at a film company gala. His tongue slips in his cheek as he talks about the proposed People's Sniping Unit that he would love to organize to go after anyone with obscene amounts of cash who have ripped off the little guy. Keating and Trump should beware.

John Milius has never been one to hide his opinions. He doesn't raise his political antenna to see which way the prevailing wind is blowing; he doesn't care what Hollywood thinks is politically correct. If he can't make films that interest him personally then he'd just as soon go off and write historical novels. Lucky for us he can still get his types of films made. Indeed a look at Milius' possible films in the future

include an 1870s' Texas Ranger raid into Mexico, the Carlos Hathcock sniper story, the gunfight at OK Corral and a much cherished Viking saga of epic proportions.

Rumor has it that while shooting aboard the aircraft carrier *USS Independence* a few tongue-in-cheek suggestions were made to the ship's captain. Milius was commenting one night on the bridge that with Eastern Europe and the USSR out of the way there were hardly any communist countries left worth declaring war on. Suddenly his eyes lit up and he grinned as he realized that the People's Republic of Santa Monica lay within striking distance of the carrier's planes. In fact he suggested that they should plot and launch an attack that very night. Someone (SOF isn't pointing fingers) as-

certained that the obvious structure to deem the capital of said communist stronghold was Comrade Jane Fonda's personal domicile!

A look at Milius' unique style of film-making never ceases to reveal his military and firearms interests. His original opening for *Dirty Harry*, that was never filmed, started out with Clint Eastwood's now famous detective showing a series of slides of dead police officers to an academy class. He then begins their instruction in the



John Milius. Photo: B. McBroom

use of various weapons. First he extolls the virtues of the .45 automatic: "You can shoot a fleeing felon with it and come back in a half hour and know he'll still be on the sidewalk waiting for you." Then Harry pulls out his now famous .44 Magnum and after shooting the hell out of a group of makeshift targets informs the police recruits that "The .44 Magnum was developed for hunting and police work; if you really want to go hunting get your badge."

Yet Milius recognizes that armed conflict is the last resort, though one he finds ultimately fascinating. His films often reveal the balance between the incredible horrors of war and the necessity for a code of honor and conduct among those who must fight. Antiwar films are a contradiction to him.

"It's going to rain whether we like it or not, and nothing ever really changes until the guns come out and the drums begin to

*Continued on page 78*





**B**LOOD suckers are all around — in one form or another. Leeches are every soldier's least favorite thing. (As if you didn't have enough to worry about!) Get in a heavily infested area, and you better walk around with a rubber on 24 hours a day. One of those evil mothers gets into the urethra and ... But on this trip we're looking for the real thing: elements of the communist New People's Army (NPA) of the Philippines.

Hunched around me, their eyes straining to discern approaching shapes in the darkness are Rangers of the Philippine army's 7th Infantry Battalion (7 IB). We've finally made it to our rally point in the southwestern portion of Negros, near the town of Candoni. It took a two-hour drive down the coast from Bacolod, the provincial capital, another two hours of bouncing inland and a further four hours on the ground to get here.



The NPA used to own this ground; now it's ours. We will sit through the night without a contact, as will a dozen other patrols. Our negative results aren't a product of NPA cleverness. The communists are reeling and can't come to town.

My companions belong to Delta Company, the quick reaction force for 7 IB, which as a whole is right in the middle of what was once a communist stronghold. The unit has been giving the communists a tough time, which is why I'm here. Predictably, it's pouring buckets again. Amazing how bugs don't take time off, even from the rain. I'm being bitten by everything, it seems, and itch like crazy. At least there aren't any leeches.


Let me take a moment to explain how the business we're about basically works. The communists have armed units for the purpose of protecting their political organizing effort (they tell the people to join — "or else"). To bust an area, the government comes in with its own troops and chases away the communist troops. Then it sits on the area while it uncovers and dismantles the communist infrastructure (which consists of all the people who have secretly enlisted in the communist cause). Simultaneously, a government intelligence net is set up, and citizens are organized into militias to defend the area.

Each militia detachment (about the size of an understrength platoon) guards its village and is controlled by a couple of regular soldiers from the battalion. Eventually, when security has been re-established, government officials come in to supervise normal functions and development efforts. The militia continues to perform security

# SMALL VICTORY IN A BIG WAR

## Philippine Army Routs Communists on Negros

Text & Photos by Tom Marks



and patrol duties throughout the day and night. Just in case the communists try to return in force, part of the battalion is kept at all times in reserve as a strike force. Ultimately, formal control teams from special forces take over handling the militia, and the battalion moves on to the next area to be won back. It's all very time-consuming and tedious — but necessary.

The men understand this as we move stealthily from the rally point to our ambush position. We've been on the go since early evening. Come morning, another unit will sweep the area out front of us, hoping that any communist unit that has been operating there will move away from the sweep and into our trap. Whether they're running or fighting, the communists can't perform their mission. We're using but a fraction of our manpower; the bulk continues the pacification chores.

Hours before, we had jumped off under a sky filled with stars. Our departure was delayed, because we were waiting for the monsoon to lift, if even for a moment. The deluge was so thick it reduced the world to pitch blackness. Our route across very broken terrain required at least some navigational aids. When a break came in the sheets of liquid, and points of light appeared, we seized the opportunity and were off.

Above, swirls of mist up high blocked out the thin sliver of moon, so the stars had

the heavens all to themselves. An incredible lightning storm went on continuously. I counted flashes roughly every five seconds. There were no streaks, only blazes which lit up the sky as they reflected about the swirling mist. Each time the lightning struck, the stars would reflect the blaze, like the twinkling of decorations on a Christmas tree.

As we approached the hill upon which we were to set up, I could have sworn I had fallen into a scene from "The Ten Commandments." We were Moses, and ahead of us loomed Mount Sinai. We toiled upwards, dark silhouetted figures standing out against the reverberating backdrop. The closer the crest became, the more the brilliant crescendo seemed to come from the peak itself.

Higher we climbed, lightning flashing all around, rain again pelting down. The troops were impassive. If God had chosen to join us, so much the better. Virtually all were prepared, whatever the eventuality, wearing crucifixes and religious medallions for protection.

A ridge, at last. In position, we hunker down to wait. Lookouts are posted; others attempt to grab a few hours of shuteye. Soaking wet, muddy, reclining on volcanic rock, there is no chance I will actually sleep. I pull my poncho over my body in an effort to ward off the mosquitoes. But this only causes the moisture from my wet

clothes to be trapped inside. My private rainstorm breaks as I shiver. Still, the cold is worse when the body is exposed directly to the wind — and the bugs become unbearable. Thus I lie in my soggy cocoon, teeth chattering, shifting position, trying to think of home.

Comes the dawn. All are up, alert. We munch on crackers, some rice. Far off in the distance, we catch glimpses of other patrols conspicuously making their way through the area. We wait, but no targets come our way. Eventually, we pack up and move off.

Meandering our way through mud and streams, continually immersed and reimmersed, we move back to the company. I'm beat, so I lie down for several hours. Can't sleep — too strung out — so I daydream. In the field, my visions are always X-rated.

Get up and take a couple aspirin. My uniform, hung outside, hasn't dried a bit. Even when the rain pauses ("stops" would be a most inaccurate word), the humidity keeps everything sopped. No matter. In a little while it will be dark, and we'll be out again. So it goes, day after day.

### Grounds for Optimism

At least the onerous duty has its rewards: we're making progress. Given current Philippine realities, that's quite an achievement. Being in Negros — or any other Philippine combat area — has become a study in contradictions. The

reason is simple: even as the Philippines, in many respects, seems to be falling apart, things are going relatively well in the field. If revolutionary theory held up, either "ours" or "theirs," that's not the way it's supposed to be. But it is.

Looking at the big picture, it's a trying time in the far-flung archipelago. Increasingly fragmented, the country has since December 1989 been rocked by two attempted coups and a devastating earthquake. Social inequity remains a depressing reality, and the government of Corazon Aquino has entered a version of political gridlock, seemingly incapable of managing even a

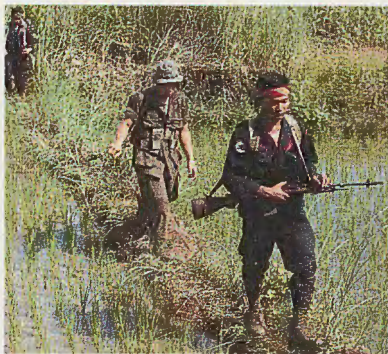
disaster relief effort, much less dealing with the country's assorted woes. Manila, the capital and nerve center of the Philippines' mushrooming population of 61 million people, has decayed to such an extent that observers have begun to mention it in the same breath with Rangoon, Burma, another legendary illustration of government incompetence and neglect. In the streets, assassinations by the NPA are at a high.

Faced with such disorder, residents of Manila tend to lean toward despair. Rural folk, more often, are angry. "Those in the government are not fit to rule us," observes Staff Sergeant Virgilio Regalado, 53, a leathery 19-year veteran of the problem-plagued Philippine Constabulary (PC), who is based in Negros Occidental, the more populated province of Negros Island. "As soon as they get in power, they forget completely about the people and just take care of themselves."

It seems paradoxical, then, that in such an atmosphere security officials are exuding an air of confidence. "If we can maintain the democratic system," observes Lieutenant Colonel Victor Corpus, 45, "the Communist Party of the Philippines [CPP] is indeed a spent force."

A better source than Corpus for such an opinion would be difficult to find. In 1970, as a junior officer in an elite PC unit, he created a sensation by defecting to the CPP. He was instrumental in making the fledgling NPA a going concern. Six years later, disillusioned with the party, he returned to the fold, only to be imprisoned for 10 years. Released when Ferdinand Marcos was ousted from power

by popular upheaval in February 1986, and later reinstated in the military, he became a key force in radically reorienting Philippine counterinsurgency strategy away from a fruitless emphasis upon military operation. Instead, the weight of effort went to socio-economic-political development.



Rangers of Philippine army's 7th Infantry Battalion patrol on island of Negros.

years since the ouster of Marcos, the CPP, according to its own count, has contracted from 73 to 56 "fighting fronts" (these are the most significant tactical echelons of command and control for the CPP/NPA/NDF forces and combine political with military authority). In some areas, such as Negros, a Visayan island the size and population of Connecticut, long the linchpin of the movement, communist documents reveal a 50% loss of "mass base." Key CPP/NPA/

Coming as it has within the context of a return to democracy, the revised strategy has thrown the communists for a loss. Increasingly, they find themselves unable to replace lost manpower or to generate a viable strategic approach capable of dealing with what Filipinos term "democratic space." Already, in the four-plus



Normal eating procedure in the field — rice is prepared, dumped on banana leaves, something is thrown in to go with it and everyone just reaches in and enjoys.



Unit waits in a hamlet, where pickup will occur for return to base. Civilians are usually friendly and rarely show any fear of the troops.

NDF leaders have been captured with such regularity that the Politburo and Central Committee have gone deep underground, even declining to give their customary briefings to the foreign press.

Realities such as these have officials cautiously optimistic. "We don't ask ourselves whether

we're winning or losing," analyzes Colonel George Vallejera, operations officer for the army's 3rd Infantry Division, which has seven battalions operating on Negros. "We have to be careful. We have been victims of our illusions before. There is no concrete way to determine how far we have gone, how far we have damaged the CPP/NPA. It's best to look at their [the

CPP's] own assessments. And from those, we know we have been pretty successful."

He continues, "We'll never see them surrender to avoid annihilation. But we have had that withering effect. We are damaging them."

Operationally, this is visible everywhere. In the southwest corner of Negros, the so-called CHICKS area (the acronym is formed by the first letters of the names of the main towns in the region), previously the CPP's stronghold on the island, 7 IB and 10 militia companies now hold sway. The populace is free to move about, day or night, and the narrow dirt road joining the main center, Candoni, with the coast, teems with traffic, previously forbidden by the communists.

Two questions leap out from such a reality. First, given the overall mess things are in, how can progress be happening at the local level? Second, given that it is happening, how come we never read about it? The answers to the two are not unrelated.

Someone once wrote, "We do not see things the way they are: we see them the way we are." There is an implied warning here that more observers should heed, particularly when it comes to the insurgency in the Philippines.

Over the years, many of us have grown accustomed to viewing the profound socio-economic-political inequities of the archipelago and, from these, extrapolating insurgency. Negros is a prime example.

How many times have journalists written of the island's "feudal structure" brought on by the "hacienda culture" of the "sugar plantations"? The very words conjure up images of slave owners with bullwhips. When the price of sugar all but collapsed some years back, data on obscenely low wages was published in tandem with pictures of malnourished children as emaciated as any in Ethiopia. There was invariably a quote from Bishop Antonio Fortich of Bacolod denouncing the military and the government's lack of concern for "his flock." It was tear-jerking stuff. Given the misery and the injustice, wrote the papers, of course the CPP is growing.

Unfortunately, reality has turned out to be fundamentally at variance with this scenario. Most disturbing, analytically, is the fact that the major bastion of the CPP on the island, throughout the insurgency, has

After ascertaining that communist forces have been driven out of the area, 7IB patrol moves out of the hills and heads for home.





been CHICKS. It is disturbing, because CHICKS has minimal land planted in sugar (hence no feudal landlords); it is not inhabited by former sugar workers; and its most salient feature vis-a-vis the government has been a legacy of virtual neglect. So much for repression.

True, the area is poor — virtually the entire population is below Manila's official poverty line — but as Asian hinterlands go, it's hardly a basket case. The CPP, in fact, was able to use it for a "production base" until recently. And this, according to residents, was because there simply was a surplus to be expropriated. It wasn't because of a jump in output due to communist input.

This reality leads to discovery of another: the principal areas of "exploitation" on Negros — by leftist definition, those planted in sugar — are not now and never have been the source of most CPP manpower. Neither are the most infiltrated villages to be found in these areas, areas to which journalists have been consistently steered by human rights and church sources. Too many reporters have been slow or unwilling to learn that individuals such as Bishop Fortich are neither impartial nor particularly accurate sources. Hence, the press is continually taken for a ride.

This does not mean that poverty, injustice and repression have not been important factors in the past growth of the CPP. They have. But it does mean that there is not a necessary connection between them and communist presence.



Unlike a few years ago, now most soldiers are in uniform, including boots, but helmets are never worn due to the heat and the lack of any imperative to do since the enemy makes no use of heavy weapons.

To be sure, many individuals, despairing of a better life, do throw in with the communists. Soon, however, they find themselves enmeshed in an organization which has an agenda and prerogatives all its own — often divorced from the local grievances which led to enlistment in the first place. What to do? The average peasant cannot simply opt out of the movement, though there have been reports

Patrols chase communists out of an area, then hold it while they uncover and dismantle communist infrastructure.

in the past of individual CPP members being allowed, in effect, to take a permanent leave of absence. For the mass base, however, the only option is sullen acceptance — and a life of terror.

#### A Reign of Terror

Hence we come to the answer to our first question. Things are "getting better" for a simple reason. While the administration, taken as a whole, may have improved only marginally, its elements in direct contact with the people during counterinsurgency operations, particularly the military, have improved a bit more. In contrast, the communist forces have deteriorated dramatically in both their immediate conduct and in whatever message of hope they were once able to offer.

It is significant that the linchpin of the government's newly restored hold on the CHICKS area is the militia of the CAA: CAFGU (Citizen Armed Forces Geographical Units) active auxiliaries. Controlled by regulars, paid by the government, and subject to military rules and regulations, these minutemen take time out from their regular concerns to defend their villages. Virtually all are peasant farmers. A far cry from the cult rabble so favored by sensationalist stories that seek to attack the militia concept, CAFGU are natives of their area. Backed by regular forces such as the patrol I accompanied,

they seek to defend their homes.

Their motivations for risking their lives are basic. "I don't like the communists," relates Rolly Lahaylahay, 43, father of six and owner of four hectares upon which he plants rice and corn. "I want freedom. The communists were just fooling people [when they promised us democracy]. They took our farm products; only a few were left behind. There were so many [people] killed and captured by them."

Of more than a dozen individuals I interviewed, every one, like Lahaylahay, could give, by name, at least five personal acquaintances who had been killed. A majority had witnessed at least some of the killings.

While interviewing individuals and noting the names they gave, I attempted to cross-check identities. Otherwise, all I had was a list of unknown validity. Who were these people who were being liquidated? Why did their deaths have such an impact upon the populace? It soon became clear to me.

Asked why he joined the militia, youthful Tachico Tabano, 19, a peasant who is one of 11 siblings, responded simply, "The communists took my father away, claiming he was a counterrevolutionary. I will avenge the death of my father. We were a very close family." Several of his brothers have also joined the militia, with the others waiting in the wings to do so.

At times there seems no end to such stories. I ask a relatively high-ranking former party official about the coincidence of last names between his and one of the victims he has named. Did he know him? Yes, he answers. I don't push the point. Later, a contact points out that the man was the party official's brother.

Summarizes William Labrador, 48, a farmer with "one week of grade one" education and a single child, "Under the communists, I could not do other work to support my family. I was only a robot. The communists told us what work we could do. If you're not cooperative, they kill you. Also, anyone caught close to the military is suspected of being an agent or a sympathizer of the military [and killed]. There was no court. It was completely arbitrary. I actually saw three people stabbed to death by the [CPP] district leader. I saw this. I pitied them. But we could do nothing, because we had no arms."

Now they do. Labrador's views are doubly potent for he, as with many others now in the militia, was previously a member of the CPP's clandestine apparatus. Now the communists' worst nightmare has come to pass. The people have weapons and have risen up — on the government side. The fish have been left without a sea, to paraphrase Mao. In the Candoni area alone, there are twice as many militia under arms as there are regular troops.

But perhaps more crucial than the

## KIDNAPPING FOR THE CAUSE

On 29 May 1990 CPP/NPA guerrillas kidnapped Japanese aid worker Fumio Mizuno. They followed this up by leading away U.S. Peace Corps volunteer Tim Swanson on 13 June. Anxious to get its citizen back unharmed, the United States, while not directly interfering, nevertheless quickly convinced Manila that Washington had its priorities backward.

To many Filipinos, the excessive concern the Americans displayed for Swanson's safety was in dramatic contrast to their normal response when Filipino lives were at stake (a distressingly regular occurrence, with troops often being told that if they're foolish enough to surrender, they can expect no bargains to get them out). The U.S. Embassy's credibility, in any case, had already been seriously eroded as it had elevated its own mission security concerns to top priority, all but paralyzing normal business.

A particularly resented move was the 27 June suspension by the embassy of all Peace Corps operations in the country. The decision apparently was reached and announced without consulting or forewarning the Aquino government.

It's difficult to fight a war when your biggest concern is the safety of your own ass. Stated a Philippine army colonel bluntly at the time, "The U.S. has really turned cowardly. They've lost all sense of proportion."

Added a U.S. Embassy official succinctly, "We're losing it [our influence here]."

What the Filipinos — and many Americans — could see was that Swanson and Mizuno were but pawns in a larger bid for strategic advantage. Providing the hostages did not meet with an unforeseen accident (there was never any chance they would be killed), the communists were engaged in a no-risk play. They sought, on the one hand, to widen the emerging gap between the Filipinos and their American allies; on the other, they intended to spook the numerous private aid organizations (mainly American and Japanese) whose projects have become essential to the ongoing development effort in Negros. Additionally, with luck, the communists felt they could embarrass

the Philippine government mightily and perhaps advance a step further toward their longstanding goal of achieving belligerency status.

Widening the gap between the allies could be accomplished very simply — all the CPP had to do was let the U.S. Embassy go on auto-pilot once the kidnapping had been carried out. An apparent attempt to nudge the process along failed. Retired Catholic Bishop Antonio Fortich, who is either a witting or unwitting agent of influence, was head of the group negotiating for the aid workers' release. He requested that the embassy open up a direct line of communication with the rebels, bypassing the Philippine government. Fortunately, the Americans had the good sense to reject the offer out of hand. Had it become reality and been exposed — which it would have been — the CPP would have scored a major propaganda victory by pointing to "U.S. interference" in Philippine affairs.

It would have been a major victory, too, had the CPP been able to conduct its "prisoner exchange" as it desired. What it sought was the presence of international representatives to the exclusion of government personnel. Thus it would set a precedent and move closer to being able to claim that two contending sovereign authorities (i.e. belligerents) existed in the Philippines. (The legal status of "belligerency" is important to the rebels for the rights it confers to them under international law).

Though they were unable to effect this ploy, either, the communists were more successful in spooking aid groups, a number of whom announced, even before resolution of the affair, that they were pulling out of the island. Naturally, the whole business left Manila looking foolish. Only the grace under pressure of the Americans on the scene, sent to man the embassy's reaction cell, together with the Filipino officers responsible for coordinating the search, partially redeemed the situation. Yet they were unable to prevent the diversion of valuable human and material resources away from the war effort.

— T.M.

additional forces provided by the militia is the intelligence net that has been put in place and now warns of impending guerrilla actions. It is this intelligence net which has the communists most concerned tactically. Already, not only the leader of the Southwest Party Committee, the CPP element responsible for the CHICKS area, but also the head of the Negros Region Island Party Committee (NRIPC) himself, have fallen prisoner to the government as a result of information provided by informants. These high-ranking prisoners have provided information which, combined with that contained in the documents they were carrying, confirms the difficult straits in which the CPP finds itself.

In particular, the documents note the fact

that, assisted by the people, the overwhelming majority of all encounters are being initiated by the government. It is the guerrillas who are frequently blind as they seek to conduct operations.

Too, repeated failures begin to breed mistrust. "Efforts to keep cells intact fail due to lack of trust between members," laments an entry in the notebook of Federico Guanzon, the NIRPC leader just mentioned, captured last year on Cebu.

Thus it is in numerous areas throughout the Philippines. Enhanced intelligence and militia recruitment are integral parts of what the government terms its "SOT" (Special Operations Teams) approach. It uses time-tested counterinsurgency

*Continued on page 76*

# FREE FALL FIREFIGHTERS

USFS Smoke Jumpers Lead the Way

by Robert MacKenzie

Photos courtesy U.S.F.S.



Born-again bomber drops a load of fire-retarding sodium borate slurry on fire; red dye is to mark area for next drop. Yes, smart firefighters lie down when the slurry is dropped.



The battle is the payoff. Once on the ground, it's hard, grueling work dry-mopping a fire — and quitting time is when you're done.

**H**E crouched in the rear of the Twin Otter, peering out its open door, searching the ground 1,500 feet below for a drop zone. Thick white smoke billowed up from burning trees and underbrush to partially obscure his view, but finally the spotter located a small clearing and threw out a streamer to test the wind. It showed 400-500 yards of drift, and his men couldn't jump. Winds greater than 15-18 miles per hour are too dangerous for the jumpers, increasing their chance of injury and the ever-present danger of "tree-ing up."

Banking sharply between the mountainous ridges on either side, the plane circled for a second pass and this time the streamer showed an acceptable wind. Smiling at the

first jumper, whose familiar face was vaguely discernible behind the heavy metal grill of his protective face mask, the spotter got ready to tap him on the leg as the plane once again neared the DZ. The first of a two-man stick, the jumper squatted in the door, one heavily booted foot already on the metal step outside the plane. His teammate stood behind him, hooked up and ready to follow immediately. Forest Service Smoke Jumpers always put two-man sticks out of a Twin Otter, and even DC-3s only drop three men per pass. Over the years, experience has taught them that smaller sticks work better to get everyone on the ground, close together, on tiny DZs that may be only 300 yards from the fire.

Precision is essential for jumps under fire conditions, because of unpredictable winds, irregular terrain, and possible direction changes of flame fronts that pose additional dangers to parachutists. The spotter gave a tap and the first stick leaped out.

Three more passes and all eight men were gone. Having checked to see that all were safely on the ground, the spotter signalled his pilot to do a low pass for a cargo drop. Twin engines roaring, the Otter powered down to 300 feet in a steep descent, while the spotter hooked up paracargo boxes. Normally each box contains shovels, Polaskis (a combined axe and mattock), or if terrain is suitable hazel hoes and McClouds (a hoe/rake hybrid tool) for



trailing the fire, food for two days, first aid supplies, sleeping bags, and crosscut saws. Sometimes chainsaws are dropped, although their use could be restricted in wilderness areas. Water was ready in separate 5-gallon containers called "cubies." Knowing that the jumpers relied on him to get their supplies on the ground, not hung up in trees, the spotter took particular care with his cargo drops. Drops completed, the plane returned to base to stand by for subsequent missions of resupply or reinforcement, or to respond to other fires. On the ground the jumpers, now firefighters, started to do battle with the flames, smoke, heat and exhaustion.

### Dry and Hot

Mid-May to early October is fire season in Region Six, home of the Forest Service's Northern Cascade Smoke Jumpers, presently 26 men and women based near Twisp, Washington. They stand ready around the clock, seven days a week to respond to fire calls in Washington and Oregon, and even further afield when necessary. I visited the base, located between the small towns of Twisp and Winthrop in northern Washington state just east of the Cascade Mountains. July had been dry and hot, and four fires were burning on the early August morning I arrived. Doug Houston, the base manager, was off dealing with one of them, so I talked first with Steve Reynaud, the second-in-command and a 25-year veteran smoke jumper.

Steve told me that the Northern Cascade Smoke Jumper Base was the birthplace of smoke jumping. In 1939 Forest Service firefighters and employees of the Eagle Parachute Company made 58 jumps to test the concept of putting firefighters on the ground by parachute. They used silk chutes and jumped from a single-engine Stinson, and soon proved the concept. Francis Lufken and Glen Smith made the first fire jump in the Pacific Northwest on 10 August 1940, 50 years ago. Now, of the 10 Forest Service Regions in the United States, regions 1, 4, 5 and 6 have smoke jumper bases, with a total of 350 to 400 firefighters during the summer. These regions cover the states of Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah, California, Oregon and Washington. Alaska also uses airborne firefighters, but they are employees of the Bureau of Land Management, part of the Department of the Interior. Forest Service smoke jumpers are part of the Department of Agriculture, but the two departments work well together when deployed on the same fire. All the smoke jumpers I talked to reported excellent cooperation with their Bureau of Land Management counterparts.

The Northern Cascades Smoke Jumper Base is typical of most bases in having only three full-time employees while most of the men and women are temporary, working other jobs in the winter months. Students and school teachers comprise a significant number of these, working as GS 5s and 6s, for about \$8 an hour. An extra \$2 an hour is

given for hazardous duty, but only when fighting a fire declared "uncontrolled." Obviously the excitement, camaraderie, and an average of 15 "hot" jumps per season, not just dollars, motivate jumpers to return summer after summer. A part-time firefighter typically works six or seven seasons before settling down to a normal job, house, kids, etc.

Their mission is a fairly specialized one, usually dealing with small fires of less than 100 acres to prevent them from growing larger. As a quick response resource, they can act on reports from many sources, including aircraft, lookout stations, and telephone calls from motorists, among others. Once committed, they are airborne in less than seven minutes from the alarm. In really big fires, smoke jumpers don't parachute, but may help out as air coordinators because of their familiarity with equipment and techniques. Otherwise they are kept as a reserve force for other fires.

### Can You Cut It?

Dave Colbert, a recent college graduate in geology who was doing his third summer tour, showed me around the base. They receive 250 applications nationwide each year, he said, and choose the most suitable for basic training at a center in Redmond, Oregon. Rookie training is a strenuous five-week program combining lessons on fire fighting techniques with lots of PT. Previous parachuting experience is not required, but seven pull-ups, 25 push-ups, and 45 sit-ups are, to be accepted into the program. In addition you have to be able to run 1 1/2 miles in 11 minutes or under, and carry 110 pounds for 3 miles in 90 minutes on the flat. Applicants must be 18 years old and weigh at least 120 pounds, and not more than 200. Women are encouraged to apply, but they must come up to the same standards as the men. The Northern Cascades base has two female smoke jumpers, one first-year and one second-year.

Trainees do seven to 10 training jumps to qualify before being assigned to a base. Annual refresher training is required each spring, including ground training and a few jumps. Dave showed me their training tower which, to my military-trained eye, really looked peculiar — sort of like a deformed power pylon. It was actually quite functional, however, combining many training functions into one erector-set monstrosity. A cable slide, harnesses, and doorway for exit and flight drills was near the top, along with a helicopter mockup for rappelling practice. The inside of the tower was equipped for practicing "let-downs" from trees, to prepare for the eventuality of being snagged in the top of one of the Northwest's 150-foot firs, and PLF platforms of various heights were built into the base of the tower — altogether a practical training device.

Quonset huts serve as barracks, showers, latrines, and gym, and since the mess hall burned down a couple of years ago, it has been replaced by the newest building on the

base. A two-story building called the paraloft contains facilities for rigging, storing, and repairing parachutes, and is where jump suits are kept on individual racks for rapid donning when an alarm sounds. An ops room and a warehouse make up the balance of about a dozen buildings on this base.

Forest Service parachutists use a round, 36-foot canopy with steering gores which allow a 360-degree turn in seven seconds. Bureau of Land Management jumpers have recently started using high-performance Quantum parafoils, which provide more maneuverability and lighter landings. These chutes, however, require a free fall exit from 3,000 feet, trailing a drogue for stability, and a manual ripcord pull after five seconds. Also, there are still some problems — usually packing — with the Quantum that cause occasional malfunctions, while the Forest Service has not had a malfunction since 1976 with its round canopies. The Service is now studying whether to give up on a good thing and retrain for Quantum chutes, or not.

Three-quarters of the jumpers at the Northern Cascades base are qualified to pack main canopies, eight of them being licensed master riggers who look after the reserve chutes. Overhead in the tall loft are sewing facilities for repairing damaged parachutes. I asked whether they sustained much damage from tree jumps, and Dave answered that 90% of their landings were actually on the ground, a surprising statistic given the density of the region's forests. He allowed, however, that the other 10% could be tricky.

### Ready, Set ...

When the siren goes, firefighters from all over the base sprint to the loft — their equivalent of sliding down a pole in a firehouse. There they don the protective Kevlar suits and parachutes that wait on the quick-suit rack. All the smoke jumper has to do is step into his waiting suit and zip up, fasten three clips on his parachute harness, and hook on a reserve chute. Motorcycle-type helmets equipped with thick wire face screens to keep out passing branches, and heavy, cleated boots complete the jump uniform. A personal equipment bag attached to the parachute harness supplements enormous pockets on the suit, which bulge with bright yellow Nomex fire resistant clothing, emergency fire shelters, signal panels, gloves and a 150-foot let-down rope for the occasional "treeing-up." Team leaders carry a ground-air radio. Other equipment, such as food, water, fire-fighting tools, sleeping bags, first aid supplies, and "climbers" for getting up trees, is dropped after the men are safely on the ground.

Work really begins after reaching the fire. Removing their heavy jump suits, the firefighters break out shovels, saws, and axes from paracargo boxes and start clearing firebreaks. Once a fire trail is dug all the way around a fire, they start "dry-

mopping" it up with dirt, or with water from "Indian Can" backpack pumps. They stay on site until all flames are extinguished and there is no smoke from the ashes. Another fun part of the job, known as a "pack-out" comes when the fire is out. Stowing their parachutes and other gear into massive backpacks (average weight 100 pounds), the smoke jumpers trudge back to the nearest road. Depending on the location of the fire, a pack-out can be as long 20-25 miles, and of course ladies carry their own kit. About 25% of the time, jumpers get some helicopter assistance with the gear, and every now and then they actually get a ride out—but mostly they walk.

If a fire gets out of hand, additional airborne resources in the form of water or sodium borate slurry bombers or "helitorch" helicopters can be called in. Using a burner suspended on a long cable, a "helitorch" starts lots of small back-fires that burn toward the main conflagration and deprive it of fuel, while various types of planes drop water or retardants onto hotspots.

Since the Forest Service has very few planes or pilots of its own, most aerial requirements are met by lease or charter. Pilots are on call 10 hours a day, most serve year after year, and considerable experience is necessary even to apply. Because the smoke and updrafts from fires create really bizarre flying conditions, applicants must have a minimum of 1,500 flying hours, 200 of them in mountain flying, multi-engine and IFR ratings, and be prepared to undergo further training before becoming operational. A veteran smoke jumper riding in an "air attack" (command & control) plane coordinates air efforts with ground requirements much the same as a military commander will take to the air to conduct his battle.

Doug Houston, Northern Cascades base manager, had cleaned up his fire and was back on base for the second day of my visit. Chatting with me outside the mess hall, he told me that the average stay on a fire is two or three days, but that he once spent nearly three weeks on the ground on one fire, and

five weeks as an air coordinator on another. He also said that during wintertime the few regular smoke jumpers in the Forest Service may travel all over the country to reinforce small groups at other bases.

Doug demonstrated a life-saving device called an emergency fire shelter. Wryly known as "Shake 'n Bake bags," they are issued to everyone on a fire line as a last-resort measure in case a fire turns

One firefighter died because he didn't have his gloves and couldn't hold his bag to the ground around him. It lifted off and kited away in the firestorm. I didn't find out how long a person can survive 550 degrees in the bag, but I'm sure even a few minutes would give you a glimpse of that eternal barbecue awaiting SOF editors. Fortunately, the emergency shelters are rarely needed—the Northern Cascades jumpers have never had to use one.

I asked Doug, an 18-year veteran, about the worst fire he'd ever been in. He scratched his head a bit and thought and then said, well, there'd been one fire that fooled him. Doug had gone out of the plane first, and it had looked easy. Innocent little wisps of smoke curled gently at the bottom of a sage-brush and timber slope. Before his eight-man team was on the ground, though, great evil black columns of smoke were darkening the sky. Doug met the last jumper as he landed, told him to get out of his suit, and "RUN!" From the precarious sanctuary of an already-burned area, they watched as the fire ripped out of the little valley and in seconds greedily consumed all their chutes and gear, and then a cabin, as it headed for its eventual spread of 2,000 acres.

Finishing my interviews, I was just leaving when the loudspeaker alerted the base of a possible fire. People emerged from various buildings and ran toward the paraloft. Before they got there a "stand-by" was announced, and for eight minutes or so it seemed like a false alarm. Then the siren went off and the game

was on. Eight men first on the ready list leapt into their waiting suits and chutes, and grabbed their equipment bags. Pausing to be inspected for fit, and to confirm essentials were stowed in his pockets, each jumper was soon standing outside the Twin Otter. With the pilot and co-pilot already strapped in and props turning, the eight men plus a spotter climbed into the plane. Paracargo boxes were already on board, so the plane headed off down the 4,500 foot runway and was airborne in well under the

*Continued on page 82*



USFS Smoke Jumper hits the silk over a smokey hell in the northern Cascade Mountains.

Jumpmaster/spotter scouts for DZ from door of Twin Otter.

"Damn, Jack, that one's got our chow in it..."

Not friendly terrain for jumping under best circumstances; rugged mountains covered with burning forests are a hot DZ.

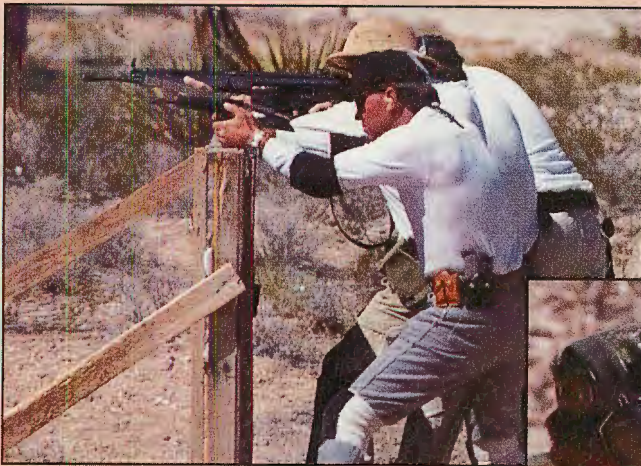
nasty. Made of aluminized fiberglass material, they are designed to withstand 550 degrees of heat. The bag is simple to use. First you clear a space about 8 feet long down to mineral soil. Then you open up the silvery, three-sided bag, drape it over you and lie down on your cleared space. Holding your high tech marvel down with gloved hands, you say a prayer, twist around, and get ready to kiss yourself goodbye. Then you just wait, feeling like a TV dinner in a tinfoil pouch, and hope fervently that the flames pass over you quickly. Gloves, by the way, are essential.

# DESERT SHOOTOUT '90

## SOF's Three-Gun Match Brings Best to Vegas

by Bill Burris

Photos by Duane Hall



Weapons used are shooter's choice as long as they meet spec.

Team events at the SOF Three-Gun Match require true teamwork. Slackards, duplicated effort costs points.



Settings, scenarios are realistic. Only the top shooters survive.



Mike Horne and staff kept it all flowing smoothly.

**T**HE word is definitely out: Soldier of Fortune's World Championship Three-Gun Tactical Match is the classic test of skill for shooters drawn to the challenge of realistic, survival-oriented competition. This year's match was a sellout. Those not

registered by early August had to be turned away.

The success of this international event springs from the dedicated commitment of many people, but begins with the commitment of Robert K. Brown to establishing a

world-class shooting event to be run in conjunction with the annual SOF Convention.

Match sponsors provide valuable and numerous prizes for individual- and team-category (police, military, sponsor, open



Gold Medal Winner Bruce Piatt is congratulated by Robert K. Brown.



Top five and match sponsors are (front, L-R): Charles Putman, 5th Place; Mel Hockwitt, 4th Place; Eddie Rhodes, 3rd Place; Bennie Cooley, 2nd Place; Bruce Piatt, 1st Place; Michael Horne, Match Director, and (rear, L-R): Al Mar, Al Mar Knives; Cindy Wong, Armscorp; Tom Boyle, SIGARMS; Robert K. Brown; Paul Reed, Navy Arms; Jim McNally, Glock, Inc.



Top Female Shooter Awards, Sponsored by Al Mar Knives, show (L-R): Ann Livingston, 5th Place; Una Earl, 4th Place; Carmen Anderson, 3rd Place; Leanne Woslum, 2nd Place; Lorraine Wheeler, 1st Place; Al Mar.



Sponsor Team Award went to Al Mar Knives Team No. 1. Shown (L-R) are Paul Basaraba, Richard Bumgardner, Larry Duckett, Al Mar and Ron Fillinger.



Sponsored by SOF, the Top Law Enforcement Awards went to (L-R): Mike Katseanes, 5th Place; John Appel, 4th Place; Eddie Rhodes, 3rd Place; Bennie Cooley, 2nd Place; Robert K. Brown; Bruce Piatt, 1st Place; Match Director Michael Horne.



Tyro Awards, sponsored by Armscorp of America went to (L-R): Allen Bauder, 5th Place; Gary Britt, 4th Place; Craig Kerns, 3rd Place; Roger Read, 2nd Place; Robert K. Brown; Bob Morrissey, 1st Place; Cindy Wong, Armscorp's rep.



Top Law Enforcement Team Award, sponsored by Springfield Armory, was DOE Idaho. Shown are (L-R): Allen Hall, Bennie Cooley, Howard Hall, Mike Katseanes, Match Director Michael Horne.



Top Military Awards (Active Duty), sponsored by Navy Arms, went to (L-R): Bill Gates USA, 4th Place; Tracey Leavell USMC, 3rd Place; Robert K. Brown; Navy Arms Rep Paul Reed; Allen Bauder USN, 1st Place.



Top Military Awards (Reserve), sponsored by Mr. Mark Carson, show (L-R): Bob Brossia USANG, 4th Place; David Velleux USANG, 5th Place; Jim Erickson USANG, 2nd Place; Robert K. Brown; Mark Carson; Bob Mahler USANG, 3rd Place (not pictured); Wayne Walusjak USANG, 1st Place.



Top Foreign Shooter Award winners, sponsored by MILARM, were (L-R): Edward Defontcuberta, 5th Place; Ken Boymook, 4th Place; Duncan Murray, 3rd Place; Richard Richter, 2nd Place; Robert K. Brown; Larry Besplug, 1st Place; Michael Horne, Match Director.

**TEAM STAGE WINNERS  
SPONSOR TEAMS CATEGORY**  
NAVY ARMS: Hockwitt, M.; Piatt, B.; Pollack, S.; Reed, P.

**OPEN TEAMS CATEGORY**  
COLORADO RUDE DOGGS:  
Cox, B.; Putman, C.; Rhodes, E.; Ryckman, B.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT TEAMS**  
DOE IDAHO: Cooley, B.; Hall, A.; Hall, H.; Katseanes, M.

# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 1990 THREE-GUN MATCH

PLACE	NAME	FINAL	CATEGORY	PLACE	NAME	FINAL	CATEGORY
1	BRUCE PIATT	554.74	P	106	CORY BIZZELL	338.57	T
2	BENNIE COOLEY	543.33	P	107	DAVID REDDING	337.09	P
3	EDDIE RHODES	542.88	P	108	MICHAEL JOYCE	335.06	T
4	MEL HOCKWITT	523.26		109	DAN SMITH	334.95	
5	CHARLES PUTMAN	509.07		110	GARY HILL	334.45	T
6	BOB RYCKMAN	507.49		111	JAMES JOYCE	333.98	P
7	DAVID WATSON	495.91		112	RICHARD THOMA	333.22	T
8	JAMES SMITH	495.72		113	T.J. JOHNSTON	332.08	T
9	JOHN APPEL	494.11	P	114	GARY FADDEN	327.94	
10	RONALD FILLINGER	487.16		115	JAMES BOWER	327.95	TP
11	MIKE KATSEANES	483.34	P	116	JOSEPH TAFLINGER	327.80	
12	CHRIS HAMMER	477.07		117	EDGAR SUTER	326.19	T
13	DANIEL FURBEE	476.56	P	118	DAVID MILLER	324.74	T
14	BART COX	475.54		119	CARMEN ANDERSON	324.41	W
15	JIM RANDOLPH	473.75		120	DARYL HOFFMAN	324.26	P
16	ROBERT MORRISSEY	472.88	TP	121	UNA EARL	322.30	W
17	ANGUS McCARTNEY	471.49		122	DAVID POWELL	322.15	T
18	LARRY BULLOCK	461.64	P	123	KEN COHEN	319.90	TP
19	JOHN COOK	461.29		124	DAVID RAMSAY	318.72	
20	SAMUEL VAUGHAN	458.49		125	SCOTT DUNN	315.73	
21	DAVE LAUCK	456.37	P	126	DAVID VELLEUX	315.22	TR
22	ANDY STANFORD	455.57		127	RICHARD SUMRELL	314.20	TR
23	TORE ASKELAND	446.70		128	JOHN SCHWARTZ	312.95	
24	ROGER READ	442.93	T	129	WAYNE DODEN	312.13	P
25	ALLEN HALL	442.64	P	130	ROBERT HEFFINGTON	311.95	
26	DAVID WHEELER	441.50	P	131	ANN LIVINGSTON	310.88	W
27	JOE CHMIEL	441.04		132	CHARLES DOMPA	310.44	
28	WILLIAM STRUKE	439.35	P	133	DAVID JONES	307.59	T
29	WILEY GREENWOOD	438.76		134	DALE LAND	303.61	T
30	ERNEST HANSON	437.32	P	135	GLEN HAGLER	302.87	P
31	PATRICK SLATER	436.13		136	SCOTT DHALLIWAL	302.73	
32	WAYNE JENKINS	431.21	P	137	GREG PARROTT	302.09	TP
33	KEN HACKATHORN	430.46	P	138	R. KIRBY REED	301.47	TP
34	RICH BUMGARDNER	430.06		139	KEN BOYMOOK	301.32	TF
35	BOB SALTER	425.00		140	WILLIAM HOLLEMAN	299.63	T
36	ED WOSLUM	423.58		141	EUGENE ALLEN	298.50	T
37	CRAIG KERNS	423.34	T	142	STEVEN FORD	296.59	T
38	LARRY DUCKETT	423.30		143	RON BRAWLEY	295.79	T
39	RICK SIMPSON	422.65		144	RON PROUDLOCK	293.32	P
40	SCOTT ANDERSON	422.28	P	145	TERRY BRIDWELL	292.43	
41	JOSEPH D. HART	421.97		146	DAVID MAZUREK	291.33	TP
42	GARY BRITT	421.96	T	147	PAUL PETERS	290.60	TP
43	ALLEN HECKART	421.24	P	148	ROBERT O'NEAL	289.10	
44	R. KEITH MILLER	420.53		149	RONALD GROSHELLE	287.60	TP
45	PAUL BASARABA	419.88		150	DAVE STARNES	287.22	T
46	PAUL REED	415.74		151	EDWARD DUTKIWICZ	283.39	
47	LARY MORTON	412.82		152	HERB COWAN	283.34	T
48	ALLEN BAUDER	411.54	TPM	153	TRACEY LEAVELL	282.50	TM
49	WAYNE WALUSIAK	409.93	TR	154	KATIE BUSH	282.47	TW
50	LARRY BESPLUG	408.71	F	155	GREGORY NEDURIAN	279.99	
51	TONY KANALEY	408.47		156	GREGORY DUST	278.22	P
52	ROBERT BUCKWALTER	403.82	P	157	BRUCE KELSEY	277.11	
53	WAYNE NOVAK	402.32		158	CHARLES SEAMAN	275.45	T
54	EDWARD FINN	400.05	P	159	MARK SORENSEN	272.63	T
55	MARK MUSSER	398.46	T	160	THOMAS STAYONOFF	272.28	P
56	JOHN MARKWELL	398.34	P	161	DAVID KECK	271.59	T
57	BILL PARMELEE	396.69	TP	162	SHIELA KOENIG	270.84	TWR
58	HOWARD HALL	395.33	P	163	RUSSELL BRISTOL	270.48	P
59	DAVID WEST	395.29	T	164	THOMAS SHATTOCK	267.26	
60	JACK FURR	394.31	P	165	ALLEN CONSEAR	266.56	
61	JEFF NICKLER	393.73	P	166	STEVEN ECONOMOU	265.70	
62	BRIEN JONES	390.03		167	W.A. MOWERY	261.82	P
63	L. ROSCOE LIVINGSTON	386.22		168	STEVEN GOLDA	261.65	TPR
64	PAUL RICHTER	385.28		169	LARRY MCALLISTER	261.40	TPR
65	THOMAS PERRITT	383.50	P	170	BEVERLY VAUGHAN	257.05	W
66	STEVEN POLLACK	383.12		171	HADDON STEIN	254.46	TP
67	DAVID BRIDGMAN	380.23	TP	172	TOM DEAN	254.03	TP
68	RICHARD HADDAD	379.40	T	173	TED CAZEL	252.74	
69	JIM ERICKSON	379.23	R	174	JOHN CARVER	251.12	T
70	RICHARD RICHTER	379.19	F	175	MICHAEL GROGAN	251.04	T
71	ROBERT MOUNT	379.13		176	RICHARD GWOZDEK	249.05	PR
72	ROBERT BEKEN	378.11		177	EDWARD A. DEFONTCUBERTA	244.99	TF
73	SEAN DEXTER	377.56	P	178	ROBERT E. SMITH	241.95	
74	DAVID BONNELL	377.34	TP	179	DAVID SODEN	235.24	T
74	BOB MAHLER	377.34	TPR	180	FRED HERSEY	234.96	
76	ROBERT THORBURN	373.24		181	GENE EMERY	229.32	T
77	JAMES JONES	373.07		182	RICK DUNSING	228.41	TP
78	WILLIAM BURRIS	370.78	P	183	AL MAR	226.65	
79	STEPHEN LEW	368.41		184	JOHN CAMPBELL	226.45	
80	JAMES ANGLEMIER	367.82	TP	185	MICHAEL O'REILLY	225.76	TM
81	RICHARD THOMAS	367.26	P	186	ROBIN DONAHOU	223.58	TP
82	SCOTT SANDERVILLE	364.52	P	187	MIKE CANDIANIDES	222.52	T
83	DENNIS BOBBY	362.82	TP	188	CHARLIE BIRDWHISTLE	221.98	TP
84	MICHAEL O'NEILL	361.86	T	189	VARDEN BRENDSEL	216.60	T
85	WALTER VOTTA	361.04	TP	190	TIM HOLT	214.55	T
86	DAVE GENTZVEIN	360.64		191	BILL SHILLIG	210.48	
87	DAN RUFF	357.91	T	192	WILLIAM GATES	210.14	TM
88	JAMES BURKE	357.06	TP	193	LARRY FORRESTER	208.92	
89	TOM LASHBROOK	356.15	P	194	DAVID JACQUES	208.42	T
90	KELLY JONES	354.81		195	HUGH BETTS	204.67	
91	THORPE NOLAN	352.94		196	JOE ANDREWS	197.91	P
92	DUNCAN MURRAY	352.04	T	197	JIM BROKAW	185.50	P
93	HANS KNOEPFLE	349.40	T	198	BEVERLY ANDREWS	184.37	T
94	WALTER SHANKEL	345.82	TP	199	CATHY TOLLEY	179.84	TW
95	LORRAINE WHEELER	345.65	PW	200	JAMES GROSECLOS	177.29	
96	KENT SPENCER	344.88	TP	201	CARLOS PINHO	175.07	TP
97	PERRY TURNER	344.76		202	EDWARD COLEMAN	174.26	TP
98	SCOTT MILLER	343.57	T	203	GARY SELF	162.72	TP
99	ALEC JASON	342.20		204	BARRY TAYLOR	150.44	T
100	RICHARD KNUDSEN	341.59	P	205	RICHARD DAY	143.10	T
101	DARREL CARTER	340.84	T	206	JOHN MCGOVERN	120.57	T
102	ROBERT BROSSIA	340.13	R	207	ALBERT SEIP	103.86	
103	BRETT PAPWORTH	339.80	P	208	HENRY LINES	101.34	T
104	LEANNE WOSLUM	339.71	W	209	ROBERT SANDGREN	93.33	T
105	JOHN SOLHEIM	338.92	P				

CATEGORIES: T=TYRO; P=POLICE; W=WOMEN; F=FOREIGN; M=MILITARY; R=MILITARY RESERVE; S=SENIOR 2

class) shooters.

Much of the credit belongs to the shooters themselves, most using their limited vacation time and personal resources, in order to come together in the desert and compete. The terrain and climate are harsh, the shooting stages purposefully challenging, and the level of sportsmanship and camaraderie would be remarkable for any competitive event.

The match staff and the Desert Sportsman's Club, which provides the facilities, received special assistance this year from the Carpenters Joint Apprenticeship Training Center of Las Vegas, Local 1780, which provided target structures, as well as Sunrise Towing of Las Vegas, which provided vehicles for use in the stages.

Special recognition is due the dedicated staff of the Match Director, Michael Horne. Without their commitment to quality — and just plain hard work — this match would not be the premier event that it is. They make this effort so they may be a part of something that is the best of its kind, and they succeed. Individually, they do not seek recognition, yet the knowledgeable observer passing through their ranks will see faces that may be remembered from such places as Vietnam, Rhodesia, Gunsite and various law enforcement organizations. Their knowledge and experience create the special character of each shooting stage. There were six stages this year, with two additional "team stages" required for each shooting team.

Stage 1, "Sniper," was a response to numerous requests in the past for a shooting problem approximating the work of a sniper, or "countersniper" as we call it in the sanitized parlance of police work. The purist was perhaps disappointed in that the prohibition against scoped rifles was maintained for this event, but, as was pointed out by Michael Horne, the logistical and economic burden of requiring another rifle for each contestant was considered impractical. Most shooters seemed to agree.

The shooter's problem consisted of 20 steel knock-down plates, each of 10-inch diameter, beginning at 100 yards and arrayed at 20-yard intervals out to approximately 400 yards. The shooter would start from a free-style standing position and, at the signal, would assume a prone position, firing through one of two adjacent shooting ports built into a bunker position. The targets had to be engaged sequentially from front to rear, and two consecutive misses required the shooter to change his position to the alternate shooting port. The shooter had 20 rounds of ammunition, and 150 seconds at his disposal in which to complete the exercise.

The most difficult aspect of this stage was that once a shooter entered the bunker, his ability to judge the desert wind was severely handicapped. The target plates were centered in wood boxes, which effectively eliminated any dust signature from the bullet strike. In addition, much to our chagrin, the wind direction was highly

erratic.

Stage 2, "Rifle Exercises," was a pure test of the shooter's ability to make multiple hits on two or more targets under very demanding time restrictions. There were four strings of fire within this stage, requiring rapid assumption of firing positions (time limits varied from 28 seconds down to five seconds) while engaging both near and far targets, from 5 to 300 yards. There were no surprises here, other than the number of contestants who found themselves penalized for "overtime" shots. The key to success was the ability to shoot well and fast.

Stage 3, "Pistol Mini-Assault," consisted of five stations from which the shooter engaged multiple targets as he moved into, through, and out the back door of a small building. From each station, the shooter was required to put two rounds into each of two cardboard targets, as well as knocking down a metal target.

A precariously balanced metal no-shoot "hostage" in front of the cardboard targets ruined many a shooter's day. From the second firing station, the right side of a doorway, the shooters (who were obliged to maintain cover) were so off balance that many stumbled while shooting. The ability to pass my pistol over to my left hand and fire with reasonable accuracy saved me (and the hostage) some grief in this stage.

Stage 4, "Pistol Exercises," involved four strings of fire, each of which engaged two cardboard targets.

String 1 was performed 50 yards from the targets. The shooter began prone behind a short stack of tires, and was required to maintain cover throughout the exercise. At the start signal, the shooter loaded his empty pistol, and fired two rounds at each target from one side of the tires, and then one more round at each target from the opposite side of the tires. The time limit was 20 seconds.

String 2 fired from 25 yards. The shooter stood behind a simulated vehicle, and at the start signal, fired two rounds at each target from over the hood, followed by one round at each target from under the vehicle. The time limit was 12 seconds.

String 3 was fired from 15 yards. The shooter began standing with pistol holstered. At the signal, he would draw and fire two rounds at each target, reload, and fire two more rounds at each target. The time limit was nine seconds.

String 4 was fired from 7 yards. At the signal, the shooter fired two rounds at each target, and then transferred the pistol to his "weak" hand and fired one round at each target with that hand only. The time limit was six seconds.

Stage 5, "Hallway," was a combination rifle/shotgun event with 15 knockdown targets and a stop plate. The shooter began by entering a hallway with his shotgun. As he moved through, various targets presented themselves through small apertures. Emerging from the end of the hallway, the shooter recovered his (slingless) rifle from

the ground. He then carried the rifle with him, engaging multiple targets with his shotgun, as he proceeded up a steep ravine toward the final firing position. Once there, after all the knockdown targets were eliminated, the shooter loaded his rifle, and engaged a single stop plate located 100 yards away from, and considerably above the shooter. The maximum allowable time was 180 seconds.

Stage 6, "Detroit Trio," possibly this year's most difficult stage, was a rifle/shotgun/pistol combination stage, involving a total of 25 targets. The shooter began from a position of cover, behind a vehicle, with his shotgun. At the start signal, the shooter engaged various knockdown targets from the rear and front-door areas of the vehicle. The targets were liberally interspersed with "no-shoot hostage" targets, all inconveniently located, particularly for shotgun work.

When the last of eight available shotgun rounds was fired, the shooter secured his shotgun in the first vehicle, engaged any remaining hostile targets with his pistol, and moved out to two more vehicles in turn, each with its own assortment of hostile and "no-shoot" targets. There were enough targets and decision-making requirements so that a shooter could become confused, and many did.

Proceeding beyond the final vehicle, the shooter engaged several more targets along the way before reaching his rifle, which was positioned next to a "wounded good guy." Retrieving his rifle, the shooter then engaged six more knockdown targets and a stop plate located approximately 200 yards out. The maximum time allowed was 180 seconds.

Stage 7 was a "team stage" and was only for those entered in a team category. Two team shooters would fire the stage simultaneously. Starting each with one foot in a marked square, the shooters would face a wall approximately 20-feet wide with five firing ports interspersed along its face. On the other side of the wall were interspersed 18 targets, and a stop plate. One team shooter would be equipped with a shotgun and pistol, the other with his pistol only.

At the start signal, the two shooters would engage the six targets available from the shooter's square. When those were eliminated, the shooters would fan out from each other and move to two new squares, each somewhat closer to the wall. From there, each shooter would engage three more available targets, and then move out to the final square, located at each extreme end of the wall.

This last square required kneeling shots, fired from beneath cover, at three more available targets per shooter. With all available targets down, both shooters concentrated on shooting the stop plate. The rub was that you could not see your partner's targets, and any targets left up at the time that the stop plate was knocked

*Continued on page 82*

# COBRAS OVER KUWAIT

## Marine Attack Helicopters Poised to Dust Saddam's Armor



Veteran SOF correspondent Ross Simpson is with the troops in Saudi Arabia, and files this three-part report on those who wait for the balloon to go up: USMC chopper jocks, Kuwait's air force-in-exile, and American hospital

ships sailing off the coast.

**I**F fighting breaks out in the Persian Gulf, as most American fighting men expect it will, SuperCobra gunship pilots like Marine Captain Ken Loy of Carson City, Nevada, will have a ringside seat.

Loy, a member of HMLA-367, the infamous Scarface Squadron, the first Marine aviation unit to get its hands on the Cobra during the Vietnam War, likes being out front going "eyeball to eyeball with the bad guys."

Anticipating close air-support missions for Marines strung out along a defensive line south of the Saudi-Kuwait border, Loy chuckled, "There's not a better seat on the battlefield than the one I'm sitting in."

Scarface is one of three SuperCobra gunship squadrons stationed at an air base in eastern Saudi Arabia that is principal home to Marine Air Group 16. Lined up alongside the SuperCobras are CH-53 Sea Stallions, CH-46s, Hueys and some British Puma helicopters. A handful of French-built Aerospatiale Gazelles with Kuwaiti markings are to be seen at the far end of

Not yet in desert camo, early-arriving Marine SuperCobra patrols near Saudi border with Kuwait. Photo: Capt. Ken Loy, USMC



Nest of Cobras at Saudi airfield in Eastern Province, where two squadrons share space with Hueys, Sea Stallions, British Pumas, and Free Kuwaiti Gazelles. Photo: Ross Simpson

the tarmac.

Together with the Gunrunners (HMLA-269) and the Gunfighters (HMLA-369), Scarface will be tasked with destroying thousands of tanks and armored vehicles Saddam Hussein has dug-in up to their turrets in southern Kuwait. Marine Capt. Carl Frost of Richfield, Connecticut, says Scarface is more than up to that task.

### Pop Up ... Fire and Forget

"The Cobra is a mobile SAM platform that hugs the terrain and hides behind sand dunes — popping up just long enough to launch a Hellfire or TOW missile at an Iraqi tank, and then disappearing," noted Frost as he and his rear-seater climbed into their camouflaged SuperCobra (AH1W).

"That's why we call Hellfires the fire-and-forget missile," added Frost as he strapped into the front seat and prepared for liftoff.

Hellfire is a third-generation airborne antiarmor weapon that homes in on a laser spot that can be projected from ground observers, other aircraft or the Cobra itself.

The TOW (Tube-launched, Optically tracked, Wire-guided) missile is the most powerful antiarmor weapon used by infantry. It weighs some 38 pounds less than the 99-pound Hellfire missile.

When a TOW is fired, a

sensor in the launcher tracks a beacon in the tail of the missile. Frost and other front-seaters in Whiskey model SuperCobras (the type Scarface flies) need only keep their crosshairs on the target. A computer in the launcher corrects any deviation of the missile from the crosshair aim point and sends corrections to the missile via two extremely thin wires that deploy in flight. But don't think that the SuperCobra is only a tank killer.

Captain Frost pointed out that "we can also defend

against enemy fixed-wing aircraft." With AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, the SuperCobra can shoot down an Iraqi MiG fighter should he choose to come down on the deck and dance.

"The choice is up to him whether he wants to press the fight, or butt out," chuckled Frost. But if any Iraqi pilot feels the urge to get up close and personal with Scarface, he's going to get snake bitten.

The SuperCobra is a high-performance attack helicopter. Like the AH-64A Apache, the Army's primary attack helicopter, the SuperCobra is highly maneuverable on the battlefield and capable of flying at 150 knots, or sneaking up on enemy armor at less than 40 knots.

### USMC Sticks With The Snake

Although the Apache is more heavily armed with its 30mm chain gun in a chin turret instead of the SuperCobra's 20mm cannon, and is all-weather rated, the Marine Corps is apparently going to "stick with the snake," stated USMC SuperCobra pilot Capt. Randy Hammond of Temecula, California, whose father is a retired Marine Corps fighter pilot.

The Apache was designed as an antitank aircraft, whereas Cobras can perform a variety of missions, including escort duty from ship to shore. But it's not the Hellfires, TOWs, 20mm cannon, AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles, or an assortment of 2.75- and 5-inch Zuni rockets that make the SuperCobra the "baddest boy on the block." It's the night vision goggles



ABOVE: Business end of Marine SuperCobra sports three-barreled 20mm cannon, but craft is primarily a mobile missile launcher, carrying Hellfire, TOW and AIM-9 Sidewinder missiles for whatever it meets on land or in air. Photo: Ross Simpson

ABOVE LEFT: Hot, dusty, featureless environs of Saudi Arabia require chopper jocks to keep off the deck as much as possible to help save equipment for the main event. Photo: Ross Simpson

LEFT: "Here's looking at you, Saddam," grins Captain Randy Hammond through third-generation night vision goggles. Photo: Capt. Ken Loy, USMC

(NVGs) the pilots wear.

The Marine Corps began issuing night vision goggles (AN/AVS6) to its air squadrons in 1982, because on today's sophisticated battlefield, night vision goggles are critical to operations after dark.

"With the plethora of hand-held systems used by Iraq, night seems to be the only



time we want to fly," stressed Capt. Keith Sweeney, a weapons and tactics officer with MAG-16.

"The Iraqis have limited night-fighting capability at best," confirmed Capt. Hammond.

### War Will Begin After Sundown

Conventional wisdom among military observers in the Middle East is that war with Iraq, if it comes, will begin after sundown.

The United States began its highly successful invasion of Panama in the middle of the night on 19 December 1989, and given the distinct advantage over Iraqi forces in night-fighting capability, bets are that the balloon will go up after dark in Kuwait.

The U.S.-led multinational force in Saudi Arabia plans to exploit that weakness to the maximum. That's why Hammond and other Scarfaces spend 25 hours a month in the saddle at night.

"I've flown so many night missions the past couple of years," Hammond said, "that switching from day to night ops is like switching on the lights in my living room back home."

The new night vision goggles that were handed out recently to helicopter crews in the Persian Gulf have improved visual acuity, or sharpness, and are less susceptible to failure.

Depth of field, a major complaint among pilots, especially "runnin' and gunnin'" Cobra crews, is limited because of technology. Pilots are still peering through a monochromatic television system. Peripheral vision, however, has been improved by cutting the frame that connects the night vision goggles to the pilot's helmet.

Before Hammond headed for the flight line, he took me into the head and handed me his helmet. In total darkness, I could read his leather nametag at 10 feet as clearly as if someone had turned on the lights.

Light is magnified through 1.5 million microscopic glass tubes inside the goggles and can transform the murky black desert terrain into an almost daytime beachlike glow. Tiny points of light on the horizon become large spotlights through the goggles. The image is a bit grainy and greenish, but provides a distinct advantage for the high-tech warrior of today.

Don't let anyone kid you, though. NVGs can be harmful to your health if you're not careful. When you're operating with night vision goggles, you have to slow down and give yourself a little more room between the aircraft and the ground.

### Biggest Problem is Dust

In the desert, the biggest problem is dust. It's so bad you can't see a helicopter land at a distance. It disappears in a cloud of dust. Just imagine how spooky it can be from inside the cockpit.

Marine Brigadier General Granville

Amos, assistant commander of the Marine Air Wing, told SOF that early in October MAG-16 adopted an "absolute minimum" 200-foot altitude requirement for Marine helicopters using night vision goggles in the Persian Gulf Theater of Operations. Without NVGs, the minimum altitude is 500 feet.

Amos said the principal reason for the restriction was to "get up out of the dust" at low altitudes, which causes erosion of helicopter blades and engines, adding that safety was "also a factor."

Amos noted that Marine helicopters are flying fewer missions now than earlier in their deployment. Asked why, Amos declared, "We don't want to burn up everything and not be ready on game day."

## Flying in the desert is different from any other kind of flying.

Flying in the desert is different from any other kind of flying. The featureless terrain gives pilots fewer reference points than other terrain. But there are some advantages. While tall grass reflects 18% of the light that strikes it, sand reflects about 40%, making the image through the NVG lens brighter and sharper.

However, the field of view through night vision goggles is limited to about 40% of the eye's natural field of vision, requiring pilots to keep their heads in constant motion.

The goggles also distort vision, making distant objects look much larger and the ground much nearer than they actually are, a potentially dangerous situation for landings.

Another nuisance is that a bright light on the horizon, such as a gas or oil fire, or even bright landing lights at a desert airfield can temporarily "wipe out" a pilot's night vision, leaving him unable to see anything through his goggles.

### USMC — No Crashes with NVGs

Overall, however, pilots such as Randy Hammond discount concerns over the safety of goggles and say they feel far safer using them at night than flying without them, and it is worthy of note that the Marine Corps has had none of the land-based helicopter crashes with pilots using night vision goggles experienced by the Army.

"NVGs have gotten a lot of bad press in the past due to a number of fatal accidents involving pilots wearing night vision goggles," agreed Hammond as he adjusted his helmet and stared at me through the evil-looking hi-tech eyes. They were a

cross between Darth Vader and RoboCop as the glass lens in the NVGs caught a shard of sunshine that turned the lens an icy blue. The sinister sight sent a shiver up my spine. You can imagine how an Iraqi tanker will feel when a Cobra suddenly rises from behind a hummock in front of him.

In addition to slowing down and flying higher, helicopter units are also returning to the buddy system. In the United States, Cobra crewmen, both of whom are pilots and have controls in their tandem cockpit, rarely fly together. There's a lot of "seat swapping" in the States, but in Saudi Arabia the Marine Corps has adopted a "combat crew concept" where front-seaters and rear-seaters fly exclusively together. This enables them to develop more coordination. In a sense, they become like Siamese twins.

The "guy in the back" flies the ship and flips all of the switches for the weapons system while the "guy in the front" navigates and fires a mix of four Hellfire and four TOW missiles that hang from racks on both sides of the bird. The reason is simple for this so-called "division of labor" when you look at the front seat. The guy up front has a field of view that extends 110 degrees on either side of the reference line of the aircraft.

A chin-mounted, triple-barrelled 20mm cannon is point-and-shoot technology. A little rail on top of the pilot's helmet slaves the gun to port and starboard as the man up front turns his head side to side looking for targets of opportunity on the ground or in the air.

### SuperCobras Survive

SuperCobras that are flying in Saudi Arabia have a more powerful engine pack than previous models, which allows the "Whiskeys" to pack more punch. That's what sold the Marine Corps commandants, past and present, on the souped-up Cobra. They felt Judgement Day was coming in the Middle East and they wanted a helicopter gunship that could not only dish out more than it would receive, but also survive a hostile environment where searing heat and blowing sand can do as much damage as enemy ground fire.

Marine Corporal Eugene Eddy, an aviation technician from Orr, Minnesota, judged that the SuperCobra weapons systems have tolerated the desert heat pretty well, but some black boxes have overheated, "screwing up the avionics."

SuperCobras are not heavily armored. The only protection pilots have is the armored seat they sit in, and chicken plates (chest protectors) they wear. Their survivability depends on their maneuverability. Captain Loy hopes to use the desert terrain to his advantage in the event of hostilities.

"We'll stay down low as long as we can," grinned the young pilot, "...before we pop up and shoot."

So ... Saddam, here's looking at you.

— Ross Simpson ✕

# KUWAIT'S TOP GUNS

## Air Force-in-Exile Waiting to Strike Back



**C**OMPARED to the Americans with their F-15s, the British with their Tornados and the Royal Saudi air force with a mix of both, the Kuwaiti air force, with its aging fleet of 24 A-4 Sky-

hawks and 36 fighters (before the invasion), looks like a flea on an elephant's behind. But according to an American and a Canadian working the flight line in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, where Kuwaiti pilots sought refuge after Iraq invaded their country on 2 August, "the Kuwaiti air force may be small, but it's not just size that counts."

"Pilot for pilot," said Michael Barclay, of Sidney, British Columbia, "they're probably as good as any pilots in the international force. The Kuwaitis also know the terrain well."

Barclay and Mark O'Connor, of Troy, New York, are part of a team keeping a squadron of Kuwaiti A-4 attack planes ready for action. The New Yorker considers himself an "American Kuwaiti," having spent five years working with the Kuwaiti squadron.

As O'Connor gave an A-4 pilot the go sign on the line, the first thing my eyes caught were the words "Free Kuwait" stenciled on the engine cowling. I saluted and the pilot returned my salute with a thumbs up.

If war comes to the Persian Gulf, how will the Kuwaiti pilots perform in combat, I asked O'Connor. "They'll hold their own against the Iraqis if any of them get airborne," he said flatly.

"I've been in aviation for 25 years and these pilots are no different than American pilots," he added. "They have the fighter jock ego, are mentally sharp and very professional."

When Saddam Hussein rolled into Ku-

wait more than three months ago, the Kuwait squadron scrambled. Since the invasion it's had to operate without its sophisticated computerized maintenance system. This has forced O'Connor and his crew to revert to paperwork. So far that's gone well. They've kept their birds in the air.

O'Connor has about 70 maintenance and administrative personnel under his wing. A typical U.S. fighter squadron has about three times that number. But O'Connor says his people are motivated and more people would only cause him headaches.

Barclay, who along with his wife and three children were among the first Canadians to escape into the desert from Kuwait, is responsible for overall administration.

Before "bugging out" for sanctuary in Saudi Arabia, Barclay says the Kuwait air force did a number on Iraqi tanks rolling into Kuwait.

Kuwaiti pilots couldn't use the runway. Iraqi jets had cratered it with bombs, so they taxied onto a nearby road and flew to meet the enemy.

"These guys are good," Barclay said. "All of our planes landed safely in Saudi Arabia. None were shot down by the Iraqis."

Every member of the Kuwaiti squadron lives on base in barracks at Dhahran, so they are close to their planes. "If something happens," said O'Connor, "we want to be ready."

O'Connor, who served with the U.S. Navy in Vietnam, added, "I don't see a big

threat from a rocket, ground or air attack this deep in Saudi territory; we're about 200 kilometers south of the Kuwait border."

Having flown over Dhahran and the port of Jubail to the north, Saddam would be insane to send his air force this deep. Trying to get through the maelstrom waiting in the form of Patriot and Hawk antiaircraft



Kuwaiti jet gets the go from American ground crew members at Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, where Kuwaiti squadron is temporarily based. Photo: Ross Simpson

missiles would be like trying to go "down-town" over Hanoi at the height of the air offensive against the North Vietnamese capital.

"Suicide, absolutely suicide," said a Patriot technician. "They can run, but they can't hide from these mothers." Their battery was set up on a parking lot near the seaport.

Barclay began his second tour in Kuwait five months before the invasion. Both he and O'Connor came to Kuwait the first time for the money, but fell in love with the country. They are both anxious to see Kuwait liberated.

Until then, they're working 12 hours a day, seven days a week to keep the Free Kuwait air force flying.

— Ross Simpson ✕

# CASEVAC COMFORT

## U.S. Hospital Ships Stand By to Save Lives



**A**SK any soldier or Marine who has ever stormed a beachhead and they'll tell you how comforting it is to go into battle knowing that if they get hit, they're only a hop, skip and jump from a hospital ship.

USNS *Comfort* and her sister ship, USNS *Mercy*, are on station in the Persian Gulf, standing by to minister to thousands of American servicemen who may get hurt in the event of war in the Persian Gulf. According to Navy officers, the ships rank as the ninth largest hospitals in the world.

British experts estimate the U.S.-led multinational force could suffer 20,000 casualties in a 60-day campaign against Iraq, but a spokesman for U.S. forces in Saudi Arabia says any war with Iraq "ain't gonna last that long." On the other hand, a command spokesman who requested anonymity told me, "It's going to be bloody."

Since the *Comfort* and *Mercy* arrived in the gulf in mid-September, the mammoth white ships (both converted supertankers that used to haul crude oil in these troubled waters) have been tested only once.

In October, a steam pipe ruptured on the helicopter carrier USS *Iwo Jima*, burning 10 sailors. Six of the seamen were DOA, dead on arrival at *Comfort*. Four others died within eight hours.

"It was horrible," said a Navy nurse who responded to the mass casualty call, the civilian equivalent of a Code Blue.

"The young men were grotesque when they were carried on stretchers from the helipad to the mass casualty receiving bay below deck," reported Lieutenant JG Denise Villemarie of Burlington, Vermont, who is still visibly shaken by the experience.

"There was really nothing we could do for them," added a colleague, who told of watching surgeons relieve the swelling by making incisions from wrists to armpits and crotch to ankles on one sailor.

Captain Chester McLaughlin, an orthopedic surgeon from Bethesda Naval Hospi-

tal in Washington, D.C., says one of the young men he treated was burned over 90% of his body.

"Only his genitalia were untouched." But McLaughlin says none of the sailors medevaced to *Comfort* suffered. "They were anesthetized, and simply slipped away in a deep drug-induced sleep," said McLaughlin.

There was nothing that could be done to save *Iwo Jima* victims. "Unfortunately, their burns were so severe, it was impossible to have the outcome turn out any differently," said McLaughlin. "Most of the burns were 90% and above. Statistically, these individuals have no chance to survive."

As sad as it was for the *Comfort* crew to watch the men die in the ship's ICU, it prepared them for what might lie ahead.

### Bloody Practice

Although *Comfort* and *Mercy* have yet to be "bloodied by battle," their respective crews of 900 each have been working around the clock to prepare for their wartime mission of treating mass casualties. Since arriving in the Persian Gulf, both of the 894-foot-long floating hospital ships have been conducting mass casualty drills. I was asked to participate in one of them.

The white paper tag taped to my chest read STOMACH WOUND. LOWER LEFT ABDOMEN. SEVERE BLOOD LOSS.

As the Army helicopter approached the helipad at *Comfort*, a public address announcement blared on deck.

"Flight Quarters, Flight Quarters. This is a drill. We've got a Black Hawk inbound with six litter patients from the field. Two minutes out."

Thanks to some red cake coloring to simulate blood, black carbon dust from a copier machine to simulate the grime of battle and some surgi-lube to give us that sweaty look, the six volunteers, including myself, looked like runaways from "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre."

One of the crew members aboard *Comfort* who volunteered to play the part of patient had been horribly burned like the *Iwo Jima* victims, another had both arms blown off at the elbows, another was shot in the neck, and yet another had fallen on a grenade to save his buddy.

"I don't think I could deal with losing both arms," said the young woman who volunteered to have her arms taped to her chest and elbows painted with cake coloring to look like bloody stumps.

In the event of war in the Persian Gulf, patients would be brought to *Comfort* and *Mercy* by helicopter or small boat. Nobody can predict the kind of casualties these ships will see. The injuries could be medical as well as traumatic in nature.

Initial triage is performed by the flight deck chief as soon as medevac

choppers land on the helipad. Once at the elevator, another triage officer decides which patients are taken to the morgue, which are "walking wounded" and can be cared for by Navy corpsmen, and which are to be hustled downstairs for immediate care.

On our way down to mass receiving in the elevator, Commander Gage Ochsner, a former medical officer with the Marine Corps 2nd Tank Battalion at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, and the physician who wrote the protocol for handling mass casualties in the Gulf, instructed us to add a sense of realism to the drill by screaming



Hospital ship *Comfort* at anchor in Persian Gulf. Photo: courtesy Ross Simpson

and yelling when the elevator door opened.

"In a real life situation, few victims are silent. Only those who are unconscious," said Dr. Ochsner who patterned some of the syllabus he wrote after procedures he observed during a two-year stint at MED-STAR, a shock trauma center just east of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

"A 9mm gunshot wound in D.C. isn't as bad as an AK-47 wound or shrapnel from a grenade, mortar or artillery round," confessed Ochsner, "but the same principles of treatment hold true."

### Speed is Everything

Speed is everything in trauma cases. It often spells the difference between life and death. Concerned about the shortage of combat-experienced doctors in the 20 years that have passed since Vietnam, the military recently began lending doctors like Ochsner to urban hospitals hard hit by the drug wars.

The program offered military doctors training in treating bullet wounds and other warlike traumas, while helping short-staffed urban emergency rooms. The Washington Hospital Center was among the first civilian hospitals to participate.

In order to expedite treatment of the injured brought from the battle, Dr. Ochsner instituted several measures in the mass casualty receiving bay. Medical forms, bracelets and vials for blood are pre-packaged in a plastic bag by number so that patients can be tracked from the time they arrive on board until they are taken to the morgue or one of 16 wards aboard *Comfort*.

Ochsner also borrowed a management technique from aircraft carriers which call for deck crews to wear different colored T-shirts to differentiate between ordnance-men (red) and refuelers (purple) by requiring hospital personnel to wear different colored baseball caps.

Since it's so noisy in the bay during a mass casualty call, Ochsner has equipped each treatment area with equipment to provide continuous monitoring of a patient's vital signs, blood pressure, etc. With this equipment, there's no need for a nurse to "cuff" the patient and check his blood pressure. With a selector switch, the attending physician can dial up BP and heart imaging at one, two or three minute intervals. No need to add to the confusion by shouting, "Patient's BP 120 over 90." Vital signs are displayed digitally on monitor screens.

In the event *Comfort* and *Mercy* were swamped with battlefield casualties, there would not be enough doctors to go around. As in past wars, hospital corpsmen would perform tasks some thought impossible. Doctors would be left to treat life-threatening cases.

Seeing the need to rotate doctors from workstation to workstation where expertise was urgently needed, Dr. Ochsner, a trauma surgeon at Bethesda Naval Hospital, developed yet another color coding scheme.

Ochsner wrapped orange arm bands around posts at work stations. In the event a doctor is urgently needed, a corpsman would simply slide up the armband, much like a red flag being raised. A senior nurse stationed on the floor is charged solely with keeping track of the orange armbands and dispatching physicians to calls for help.

### Chemical Warfare

Saddam Hussein's threats of using chemical warfare are being taken seriously by *Comfort's* crew. Extra time is spent each week on training to handle patients contaminated by poisonous gas.

The ship is using a process invented by Lieutenant Commander Alison Mueller several years ago that allows a medical team to quickly decontaminate injured service personnel exposed to poisonous gas. The goal is to decontaminate patients in 15 minutes, but the number one goal is not to contaminate the ship.

When contaminated patients enter the hospital ship, they are taken to one of five decontamination units where crew members wearing protective gear cut away contaminated clothing. Next the patients are taken to a second room where they are washed down with a bleach solution and a soft sponge and brush. Air inside this room is changed six times a minute to keep it as clean as possible. From there, patients are sent on for further medical care.

### Range of Services

*Comfort's* wide range of services makes it comparable to a big city medical center. Among other things, the hospital ship features:

- 12 operating rooms and up to 1,000 beds, including four intensive care wards with 80 beds.

- A Navy staff which is 30% female, that consists of 500 physicians, dentists, nurses, health care administrators, medical and dental technicians. Another 400 non-medical personnel handle other duties such as administration, supply and personnel services.

- A range of specialized care services such as two dental surgery rooms, four dental examining rooms, prosthetics, testing laboratories, four complete radiology suites, blood banks containing 3,000 units of frozen blood, a brain scanner and a pharmacy.

The staff of both *Comfort* and *Mercy* were assembled in less than a week, mostly from military medical and dental clinics on the East and West coasts. The staff also includes a nine-member surgical team from the Canadian forces.

"In Canada, we don't have a hospital ship like this, so this is a brand new experience for me," said Lieutenant Red Hamel, a nurse from the National Defense Medical Center in Ottawa, and member of the Canadian Navy. "I'm used to working under canvas in field hospitals."

Like U.S. ground-based forces in the Persian Gulf, the *Comfort's* crew seems

less concerned about the possibility of war than by the tedium and uncertainty of the future.

Captain Paul Berry, the *Mercy's* skipper, said jokingly, "Surgeons pace the passage-ways looking to take out each other's appendix."

The biggest treat of the day comes after dinner when officers carry the beach chairs they bought in Rota, Spain, on the way across the Atlantic Ocean to the mass casualty receiving bay and watch movies, compliments of a video outlet in Washington, D.C.

### Get a Real Job

As I lay flat on my back and was prepped for "simulated surgery" to remove a slug from my stomach, I thought how real this exercise was. Especially when I closed my eyes and listened to the litany of orders being given by doctors such as Perry Stafford, a former Marine Corps pilot who flew more than 500 combat missions in an A-4 Skyhawk.

Why did Stafford give up a glamorous job as a jet jock and become a pediatric surgeon?

"I had to grow up and get a real job," laughed the guy who nurses in the surgical suite call the "Quack."

The director of nursing services aboard *Comfort* is a Vietnam veteran. Captain Jewel Lockney honed her skills on hospital ship *Sanctuary*. Lockney says it's rare to see both of the Navy's hospital ships side-by-side in the Persian Gulf; perhaps an omen of what's to come.

USNS *Comfort* and USNS *Mercy* fly the flags of both the Red Cross and its Arabic equivalent, the Red Crescent. If war does come to this region of the world, Gage Ochsner says it is possible an American Marine and an Iraqi soldier might be treated in the same bay.

"No one," says Cmdr. Ochsner, "will be refused medical treatment, not even our enemy." Navy policy.

Healed of my make-believe wounds, I joked with the staff about looking like Clarabelle the Clown who had been run over by a Mack truck. But this drill was no joke. Those who participated in it were deadly serious. The trauma they suffered when 10 sailors from USS *Iwo Jima* were brought aboard a week ago was too fresh. The shock had not worn off yet.

Walking to the helipad for a flight back to the mainland on a CH-53, a helicopter from Desert Duck Airlines, a Navy squadron, I heard the *Comfort's* skipper come on the ship's PA system and compliment his crew on their performance.

"Our experience with the *Iwo Jima* incident only solidifies the importance of these drills," Captain Roger Pentzien said. "When the real thing feels like a drill ... only then are we truly ready. That is all."

*Comfort* and *Mercy* are ready to live up to their names.

— Ross Simpson ✎

# SOF Staffer on Mean Streets of Colombia's Murder City



Colombian policeman in Medellin armed with UZI submachine gun.

# POLICE BEAT: MEDELLIN

Text & Photos by Steve Salisbury

**“THEY** were between 13 and 16 years old,” the agent of Medellin’s Metropolitan Police said, describing his three would-be assassins. The crusty 35-year-old cop — whose leathery face and gray hair made him look a decade older — glared angrily as he recalled the attempt on his life last July.

“It was lunchtime. I just got off duty and was only a block away from my house when they attacked. They opened fire close behind me with pistols and a shotgun. Birdshot ripped into my back and hip and I dropped to the ground. They were going to finish me off, but I drew my Smith & Wesson .38 and they fled. I recognized one. He was from my neighborhood.”

The agent hobbled away supporting himself with a cane; he probably never would walk well again. But he was lucky to be alive. According to police statistics, from March through July 1990, 215 cops were gunned down by kids, allegedly hired in most cases as hit men by the Medellin cocaine cartel.

At the end of July the cartel declared a suspension of their assassination war against police in an effort to win goodwill from an incoming government. Yet police continue to be killed at a terrifying rate — even taking into account the nearly 60% drop in police homicides — due to Medellin’s crime epidemic. Being a cop in Medellin, Colombia, has to be one of the most dangerous jobs in the world.

Medellin is a city at odds with itself. Its inhabitants pride themselves as being hard-working, honest citizens; yet Medellin is notorious for being the capital of the world’s illicit cocaine trade. Medellin’s 2.2 million residents are among the friendliest people you can meet; however, with 3,377 of its inhabitants murdered in the first six months of 1990 alone, it can claim to be the world’s murder capital, easily surpassing the homicide rates of San Salvador, Beirut, Johannesburg, Kabul and New York.

The common ugly sight of mutilated corpses in the streets stands in stark contrast to the loveliness of Medellin’s gorgeous ladies. And the explosions of car bombs have blemished the folkloric beauty

of this picturesque city nestled in the Aburra Valley, surrounded by an offshoot of the Andes Mountains.

Medellin is so dangerous that the U.S. government has officially placed it off limits to its personnel — including Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and CIA agents — an American embassy official closely involved in the drug war told me.

This summer I had the rare opportunity to catch an intimate glimpse of both the good and the bad of Medellin when I accompanied the Medellin Metropolitan Police Department’s uniformed and plain-clothes agents on their emergency and undercover operations. What I found was an overburdened, understaffed, under-equipped, grossly underpaid force of men and women who often labor seven days a week, 16 hours a day, trying their hardest to combat the world’s largest drug mafia — the Medellin cocaine cartel — and an out-of-control crime epidemic unimaginable anywhere else.

Despite all the hoopla about America’s contribution of Apache helicopters, radars and other pricey, publicity-grabbing aid to assist the Colombian security forces in their battle against the drug lords and their private armies, the 3,800 agents fighting in the front lines of the drug war are still scandalously short of the less glamorous, though essential, materiel to put the cartel out of business, according to Lieutenant Colonel Luis Alfredo Rodriguez, commander of Medellin’s police operations.

“We first need materiel resources: vehicles, motorcycles, technical elements for recordings and radars, scanners to register the conversations of the narcos, telephone interceptors, technical assistance incentives for our police who sacrifice and who stand out in their service,” Lt. Col. Rodriguez said. “For example, extra pay for the bomb squad. We need bullet-proof vests.” The list of needs goes on and on and doesn’t even consider that the Medellin police have barely begun to computerize and still depend on decrepit typewriters and antiquated filing cabinets. Until recently, many cops went off-duty unarmed for lack of

department handguns.

While Lt. Col. Rodriguez spoke very highly on the record of relations between the Colombian security forces and DEA, some of his subordinates, who wish to remain anonymous for security reasons or fear of official reprimand, complained of the absence of DEA agents in Medellin.

“The Americans only go to Bogota [Colombia’s capital] and stay holed up in ‘secure areas’ because they’re scared of getting killed,” explained an agent bitterly.

“All they are interested in is taking advantage of our women, drinking our liquor, collecting pay and benefits they wouldn’t get in the United States, and then go home bragging about what a dangerous assignment they’ve had here, when in reality we’ve been the ones who have been bleeding and dying,” added another officer. “But they don’t come here to Medellin to see our desperate needs. And the money the gringos send to Bogota doesn’t arrive completely to the communities in need — like Medellin. There have been a few cases of corruption in the Colombian forces, and the DEA isn’t immune. We’ve had to inform the Americans of DEA agents we suspected were dealing with the narcos.”

He didn’t elaborate on this accusation, but a knowledgeable U.S. government source, who wishes to remain anonymous, denied it, though he stated a DEA agent was sent home a couple of years ago for “poor judgment” that gave a bad appearance.

While it may be painful for American law enforcement officials to hear this criticism, this attitude among Medellin police should be understood in the context that so many of their comrades have been murdered with scarcely the opportunity or wherewithal to defend themselves. In many cases the criminals are much better armed and equipped than the police.

## Man, You Got To Be Crazy

I had been warned at the U.S. Embassy in Bogota that the Medellin cartel had been murdering journalists. *Los Extraditables*, the Medellin cartel’s armed wing, was

## “Man, you got to be crazy. Are you sure you want to join us?”

recently blamed for kidnapping six journalists. Just my nationality could make me a target. It wouldn't be the last warning I would receive.

“Man, you got to be crazy. Are you sure you want to join us?” Agent Efer Solis, a photographer for the mobile laboratory of the Medellin police, asked me. [I have changed the names of the police I accompanied on operations at their request.] It was a logical question. The mobile lab is always called to the scene of violence. And was there ever violence! It was mid-July and the peak of the cartel's cop-killing campaign.

According to Lt. Col. Rodriguez, the cartel was paying its hired assassins, known as *sicarios*, up to \$4,000 for every cop killed. Almost every day for the past four months cops were being murdered in cold blood. Scarcely a day would pass where there wouldn't be a crowd of mourners in the chapel of police headquarters grieving over two, three or four caskets containing the bodies of bullet-riddled policemen. Some days as many as seven policemen would be gunned down; once over a dozen cops were killed when alleged narcoterrorists blew up a truck the police were traveling in.

“The sicarios will think you're one of us and follow you home to kill you,” Solis said with a macabre laugh. It was a chilling thought, for I was staying in the home of newfound friends in an impoverished barrio terrorized by sicarios.

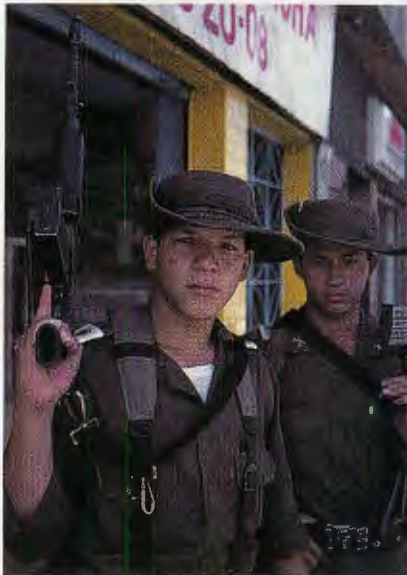
Police grunts could only afford to live in these barrios on an agent's monthly salary

No place is safe in Medellin. Hits are performed even in crowded markets like this.



of around \$140 — including hazardous pay — if they chose not to live in crowded, dingy barracks at their stations. As Lt. Col. Rodriguez would passionately tell me in a later interview, “The salaries aren't enough for police to live in better sectors and therefore they have to end up in the same communities, the same sectors, same areas where the criminals and sicarios live. The vast majority of assassinations of police are committed when they are in their homes or go to — or return from — work ... because they [the killers] are their own neighbors.”

Just minutes after joining agent Solis and the other three members of one squad of the mobile lab, we received an emergency call.



Beat cops Medellin-style. Rougher barrios are patrolled by two-man police teams armed with Israeli Galil assault rifles.

A bomb had exploded in front of the municipal administration building of Sabanetas, a small working-class town on the outskirts of Medellin. “You want action? You'll see plenty of action before the night is over, gringo,” said Agent Wilfredo Bantona as we piled into the white jeep emblazoned “Policia Laboratorio Movil Criminalistico” in big black letters.

Agent Bantona was the senior member of the squad, a few months shy of retiring at 20 years on the police force. In any other police department he would probably be a sergeant. But in Colombia rank is decided by passing academic tests, as well as by years of service. This hefty agent has no time for school tests. His school has been in the streets where he has proven himself a leader. A highly decorated veteran who claims to have received a certificate from



the White House a couple of years ago for distinguished service — including being point man of a patrol that rescued Bogota's kidnapped mayor — Agent Bantona has commanded the respect and admiration of his peers and operates with the mobile lab as its technical adviser.

Corporal Jose Molina was the squad commander. He was larger than most Colombians and his long legs seemed cramped as he sat in the front seat and talked on the radio trying to get information about traffic. But even with our driver, Agent Geraldo Espada, adeptly dodging through the congestion of vehicles, it took us 45 minutes to arrive at our destination.

### Bomb in a Fruit Cart

A large crowd surrounded the bombed city hall. We descended from our jeep into the glare of television cameras. Conscious of the warning about the danger of being recognized with the police, I covered my face with my hand. However, this was probably unnecessary with all the kids hamming it up in front of the cameras. As Agent Espada stood guard over the jeep with an UZI slung over his shoulder, the rest of the squad inspected the area.

A bomb of maybe 5 pounds of dynamite had been hidden in a fruit cart on a street



running alongside the building. Its blast blew out half the balcony of a second-story room and shattered windows for a couple of blocks, including those of a police station around the corner.

According to police statistics, at least 86 grenade, arson and bomb attacks — including six car bombs that killed 62 people and wounded 316 — terrorized Medellín in the first six months of 1990. The vast majority of this terrorism is attributed to the Medellín cartel, as was this incident.

“The narcos have been finding it harder to park car bombs near government buildings with the heavier security, so they’ve been using other, less conspicuous means like this mango cart. Thank God only one person was slightly injured by the glass,” said Cpl. Molina.

“If the Cartel really wants to kill you, there’s a good chance they will kill you,” said Agent Espada, over a cup of coffee at a beverage stand as we waited for another call. He looked like a stocky, dark-skinned Al Pacino and spoke like him too. “It might take some time, but they’ll probably kill you no matter how much security you have.” His words rang with authority. A year ago he was the sole survivor of an ambush that killed a judge and her

bodyguards. “We were intercepted by a Mazda and Renault just a few blocks from our office,” he remembered. “I braked and veered onto the sidewalk. About eight sicarios strafed us with UZI fire. I instinctively opened the door and rolled onto the sidewalk as they fired. The bodyguards tried to respond, but it happened so fast they didn’t have time. I was hit in my wrist and arms and they were both broken. A bullet hit me in the back and pierced my lung.” Agent Espada said a single sicario was killed, but the rest got away.

#### Another Cop Murdered

We had barely finished our coffee when we received another call. A former cop had been murdered. As we were on our way, we also received a call to go to a police outpost that had been attacked by assailants hurling homemade explosives from a car. No one was hurt during the outpost attack, so we continued driving to a clinic where the homicide victim had been taken.

Again the radio burst to life. “In pursuit of suspicious armed individuals,” a voice crackled. I couldn’t hear all the details, but undercover detectives were engaged in a car chase. “Agents under fire in need of assistance!” shouted the voice desperately

For unmatched mobility street cops get around Medellín on motorcycles.

through a storm of static. Another car had pulled up behind the detectives and strafed them with submachine gun fire. No one was wounded but the assailants escaped.

At the clinic, a woman wearing a blood-splattered purple dress was wailing. She futilely tried to dry her tears with her long black hair. She was the girlfriend of the dead cop. Agent Bantona tenderly questioned the young lady, while Cpl. Molina talked to doctors and checked the body. She could hardly speak as she related how a young gunman shot dead her boyfriend — with whom she lived — before her eyes. Another young woman and a boy appeared at the clinic entrance. They were either relatives or friends. “What happened? What happened?” they asked anxiously.

“He’s dead!” the girlfriend screamed and they all cried in unison. The victim was apparently murdered because of an old feud with neighbors. The girlfriend started to argue with the boy and he tried to sneak away. “He knows something! Stop him!” she screamed.

We had hardly finished with this incident when we were on the road again. A call to



## LIVING IN THE CULTURE OF DEATH

"It was the first time I ever fired a gun," recalled Vampire, describing his use of a 12-gauge, sawn-off shotgun the first time he murdered a human being in cold blood. He was then 16 years old.

"When he saw me, he didn't have time to run. I put the first shot into his back. Pow! The man flew through the air because it's a gun with a very powerful blast. Ooowee, it scared me a lot and I managed to hear the shout [of my lookout] to finish him off. He was slick; I turned him around when he was hopping away and, tack, I put another blast into his chest. There he stayed. We left running. My lookout had a motorcycle and we flew."

Vampire knew little about his victim, just that he was 19, named Enrique, and that Vampire's boss — a drug dealing farmer — wanted Enrique dead because he was sure Enrique had murdered his brother. The drug dealer offered to lend Vampire one of his motorcycles if he killed the 19 year old.

Vampire accepted the offer without asking any questions. "Brother, the truth is, one doesn't hesitate for anything," the 18-year-old with only a grade school education told me. "One executes the job and stays with the payoff and doesn't ask questions."

When Vampire went to inform his boss that he finished the "job" and returned his shotgun, the drug dealer — who had returned to his native Colombia after having served two years in an American prison for cocaine trafficking — not only happily lent his motorcycle to Vampire, but tipped him about five dollars, which Vampire "gave to his mama." Vampire fared better than the other sicario who was hired to kill Enrique more than two

years earlier but failed, though shooting his victim five times. "That man is dead. They condemned him," said Vampire. "In this business there's no forgiveness."

"In this neighborhood there are about 15 sicarios," he said, "including one from the Medellin cartel who is the boss of everybody. The majority of the people who kill [in this town] are paid by the people of the Medellin cartel."

"All the boys want to have their stories. Everybody wants to be celebrated." However, they seldom tell their stories to outsiders for fear of self-incrimination. And it's even rarer that journalists seek sicarios for interviews. Sicarios have even taken to killing journalists, allegedly on orders from drug lords.

Their perverse pride in murder is the foundation of what's known in Medellin as "The Culture of Death" — a culture where sicarios aspire to become "professional" by murdering many people. "This quantity will grant [a sicario] prestige at the standard of his movement, leadership within it and the possibility to climb positions in its surrounding world," writes Father Julio Jaramillo, a Catholic priest, in his study on sicarios.

Sicarios don't associate murder with evil in their situations. They see killing as their job. "It isn't rare that they ask the Virgin Mary to help them so that the 'job' they are going to do goes well for them," laments Father Javier Tobon, a priest who works rehabilitating sicarios and gang members in Medellin. "Their values are twisted."

As long as this is the case it's hard to imagine how Colombia will ever find peace.

— S.S.

jewelry and cash. The mobile lab found no clues that would put them on the trail of the bandits and Agent Bantona told the homeowner a follow up would be made by other agents, but that the chances of catching the thieves and recovering his family's possessions and money were slim.

"Yeah, I know," lamented the man, his breath reeking of vodka. "At least I wanted to report the robbery." He thanked us and we left. It was a small victory in a way for police to receive a call for assistance from residents in El Poblado for it proved there are people who trust them for help in areas supportive of the cartel where some residents would take justice into their own hands by contracting sicarios.

### Dying to Defend the People

I was dog tired. Everyone was tired, but there was no time for coffee. An off-duty cop was murdered while he was with his girlfriend in a municipality on the edge of Medellin. When I heard the municipality's name I cringed; it was where I was living.

It was after midnight, but I took no chances on being recognized and lowered the brim of Agent Bantona's straw hat over my eyes and stayed in the car with Cpl. Molina and Agent Solis as Agent Bantona asked for information in the local police station, just a few blocks from where I was lodging. The municipal police

had already taken care of the matter and furnished Agent Bantona with the details to take back to base. I felt relieved when we headed back to Medellin.

It was our last call for the night. At 0700 our shift ended. I stayed home that night, wishing to have a respite from the violence, yet there was no escaping it. Gunfire could be heard through the walls and windows and by sunrise between 11 and 25 people had been killed in my municipality, depending on what reports you choose to believe. At 0700 I rejoined Cpl. Molina and his crew. "Hey, you should've been with us last night. There was a lot of dead," the departing shift told us as we got into the jeep.

"Oh, don't feel like you missed anything. There is going to be a lot of killing today," said Agent Bantona, pointing a finger sporting a gold and emerald ring. It was 20 July, Colombian Independence Day. "Holidays are always the most violent."

We were taking a breather at a tourist site brimming with souvenir shops on a hill with a gorgeous view of the city when news of another murdered cop ruined our sunny day. On the way to the clinic, where the body was taken, a speeding compact car

check out a robbery in El Poblado, one of Medellin's wealthiest districts.

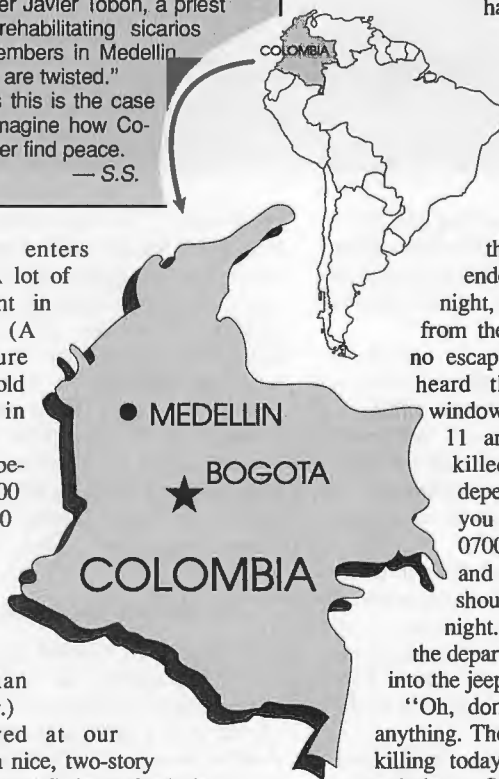
Graced with beautiful red brick high-rise condos, a five-star intercontinental hotel and elegant restaurants and nightclubs, El Poblado is a monument to drug dealers. We cruised by a huge property surrounded by a 10-foot wall adorned with flowers. I couldn't see behind the wall, but the squad claimed inside was a breathtaking mansion that authorities confiscated from Pablo Escobar, reputed godfather of the Medellin cartel.

Pablo Escobar and other reputed drug lords once openly socialized here. Now fugitives in hiding, they could still be in El Poblado and people probably wouldn't turn them in. "The narcos are responsible to a great extent for the development of El Poblado and many people sympathize with them for that," said Agent Bantona. This could be said of almost anywhere in Medellin — especially the impoverished barrios where residents are particularly grateful for the largess of drug lords.

According to an article in the Colombian weekly *Semana*, citing statistics from the British publication *Latin American Newsletters*, \$1.5 billion of the \$7 to \$15 billion dollars Colombian drug dealers net

each year enters Colombia. A lot of that is spent in Medellin. (A kilo of pure cocaine is sold wholesale in the United States for between \$10,000 and \$12,000 and more than double that in Europe, according to a Colombian police officer.)

We arrived at our destination, a nice, two-story home that would fit in perfectly in any middle-class American neighborhood. Its tall, blond owner met us at the entrance and led us inside. His wife and children were crying among what appeared to be the ruins of a barroom brawl. The house was completely ransacked. While the family had been away, the burglars apparently forced their entry through the roof and made off with about \$1,000 worth of



carrying three young men veered in front of us.

"Hey, stop that car!" shouted Agent Bantona, suspecting they might be fleeing from a crime. Agent Espada hit the siren and accelerated, overtaking them in seconds. Both cars screeched to a halt. The squad members barreled out of the jeep, training their UZIs, Smith & Wessons and a Colt .45 at the suspects. "Out of the car, hands in the air!" they ordered. To some American police, this would seem to be premature drawing of firearms. But in Medellin it's best not to take chances; some cops have died for not responding in similar circumstances.

The boys were clean and released with a reprimand. "You just never know when you'll stumble on a criminal," said Agent Bantona, speaking from experience.

We encountered another heartrending scene at the clinic. "My brother always said he had to die to defend the people. But not this way. Shot in the back, not face to face," wailed a brother of the off-duty police slain about 45 minutes ago in front of his family. His pale face was contorted in anguish as he sat at the entrance. The pain of seeing his brother gunned down by a kid firing an UZI was so overwhelming he was oblivious to the wound in his own knee, caused by a stray bullet. Ignoring his injury, he had helped carry his dead brother to the clinic. Typical of a sicario hit, the trigger man and his teenage companion who posted watch escaped. They fled in a waiting car. "They're cowards," cried the surviving sibling, pulling his white T-shirt, stained by the blood of his brother, over his face to wipe away his tears.

Three bullets in the back and one in the back of the neck (exiting from the mouth) ended the life of the 28-year-old policeman; he is survived by a wife and two small children. His corpse was a mess, but the



Colombian motorcycle cops going on patrol. Driver armed with UZI, passenger has folding-stock Gaill.

gathered around it in the orange afternoon glow and were told to step back by green-uniformed cops already on the scene. Shirtless boys playing soccer nearby in the alley were too immersed in their game to pay attention. Inside the house, illuminated by the dim glow of candles and adorned with crucifixes, portraits of Jesus and other Catholic relics, lay the body of the dead old lady. Her brains were splattered on the floor. The police photographed the corpse, then dragged it outside for closer inspection in the sunlight.

According to witnesses, two boys posted watch while a third shot the woman dead with a pistol. Corporal Molina calculated three bullets were fired into her head, one into her buttocks, one into her thigh and one into her arm. He thought the murder weapon was a .38 caliber pistol. There was no apparent robbery and it was a mystery

*Continued on page 73*



Armored car stands watch at police HQ — a prime narcoterrorist target.

body of the next murder victim we saw that afternoon was even more gruesome.

### Even the Old Aren't Immune

An old lady was gunned down in the impoverished barrio of Aranjuez, a hotbed of sicarios in the northeastern part of the city. Aranjuez, with its crumbling cinder-block hovels, pot-hole streets and stench of contaminated water and garbage heaps, is

the complete opposite of El Poblado, except that many of its residents are hostile to the police. I noticed the mobile lab got some dirty looks in this neighborhood.

Driving down a winding dirt alley we found the victim's humble two-room house in a grassy ravine. A curious crowd had



# AFRICA'S LOST WAR

## Red Emperor's War Machine Devours Thousands in Eritrea

Text & Photos by Frank Noble

**I**n the Horn of Africa famine and drought are not the only causes of death on a huge scale, but until very recently you'd never know it by reading the international press.

After liberation by the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF), the coastal town of Massawa received a series of aerial attacks by the Ethiopian air force. In a shrewd move, the EPLF released a horrific video showing the carnage wrought by one of the raids. Excerpts were aired by television stations throughout Europe, the United States, Canada and Australia. The publicity paid off. Not only did the EPLF manage to explain their plight to the world, but the Ethiopians promptly suspended their bombing of the town. In fact, the video played my interest enough to want to have a look for myself.

When I visited Massawa in August 1990, it was still enjoying a peaceful interlude. From 6-8 August, the EPLF launched an offensive near Decanere, south of Asmara. On 14 August, the day I arrived at Port Sudan, the EPLF began another two-day offensive west of Decanere. They claimed over 11,000 Ethiopian troops were killed or wounded in these battles, with 200 captured. In addition, eight tanks were de-

stroyed and another two seized intact, along with a vast quantity of small arms and light support weapons.

By the time I was ready to depart for Eritrea, where the fighting was, it had subsided and conditions at the front were reported as being "quiet." This meant there was no actual combat taking place — merely routine shelling. I crossed the border on 20 August.

I have journeyed across some inhospitable terrain in my time, including the African bush and the Libyan desert. Neither could compare with the 10-hour trip to Eritrea, however. Before we left the Sudan, we had to work in sandstorms to free our Toyota pickup from sand drifts. Later, as the desert gave way to the mountains of Eritrea, we were obliged to negotiate the roughest tracks I have ever encountered. Some were actually rock-strewn riverbeds. And the heat of the day was terrific, transforming our vehicle into a mobile sauna. Our supply of water, ice-cold when we set off, was soon unpleasantly warm. But we drank it all the same.

As a *de facto* government in areas it controls, the EPLF has its own ministries or departments necessary for the day-to-day

running of any country. The morning after my arrival, I met the chief of the protocol department, Girma Asmerom, who briefed me on the overall situation. Like other Eritreans I would talk to, Girma was quick to counter the widely held Western notion of the EPLF being a predominantly Marxist movement.

"The EPLF mandate is to ascertain the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination... We have our democratic rights, like any other people in the world," Girma told me.

"I am an Eritrean. I want to remain an Eritrean. I want to die an Eritrean. Nobody can change that."

Later in the day I was assigned a guide, Geytom Asghedom, deputy head of protocol, and Kasai, our driver, would be my escorts throughout the next couple of weeks.

Because the risk of air attack prevents daylight travel, driving is supposed to take place between dusk and dawn. In the afternoon the three of us climbed aboard our Toyota for the first leg of our journey to the front. We pulled into Nakfa seven hours later. Once a thriving residential area with a population of nearly 7,000, Nakfa is now a

bombed-out heap of rubble. I was taken to a mouse-infested bunker built into a hillside on the edge of town and advised to get some sleep. It seemed I had hardly closed my eyes when it was time to leave. It was still dark, and we had to reach Afabet, the next town, before sunup.

### A Human Skull, A Box of Bones and a Foot

The route south from Nakfa begins with a series of twisting turns that lead to the Hidai Valley. The rough road has been cut out of the mountainside and is strewn with rocks. As we lurched along, our headlights illuminating the way ahead, my attention was suddenly drawn to what at first looked like an exceptionally smooth white stone. It was different from the thousands of others scattered along the route and, as we drove past, I saw why.

"We just passed a human skull," I mentioned to Goytom, who shrugged.

"This was the front," he offered by way of explanation. (Later, when we returned the same way, I was surprised when we paused at this spot so that Goytom could bury the remains.) Shortly after, I glimpsed a 122mm shell in the mud on the roadside. Minutes later, we passed the first of several destroyed vehicles. The sky was turning pink with the approaching dawn by the time we reached Adishrum, where a single track wound its way through a ravine before ascending to a plain a few kilometers from Afabet. It was here that the Ethiopians suffered one of their most grueling defeats.

In March 1988, the *Nadew* (Demolish) Division was in the process of withdrawing from the Nakfa area in order to assist in the defense of Afabet, the army's Eritrean general headquarters, which had been singled out for attack by the EPLF. As the leading tank climbed toward the plain, an EPLF tank in hot pursuit of the armored column fired a shot that crippled the Ethiopian T-54/55, thereby blocking the narrow road. Unable to proceed, and prevented from turning back, the vehicles looked as if they would fall into EPLF hands. And they would have, were it not for the air force.

Faced with an impossible situation, the Ethiopians called upon their own MiGs to bomb the valley and whoever was slow in taking cover. By the time the MiGs departed, the area was littered with Ethiopian corpses. Amidst the carnage, individual Eritreans risked everything to salvage what vehicles they could. One man managed to save a BM21, the first to be captured intact by the EPLF. Some 70 or so tanks, trucks and armored cars, however, had to be written off.

Kasai paused at the head of the valley so I could photograph the rusting wrecks. The majority were concentrated in one area. There were so many that the Eritreans had been forced to cut a new road, bypassing the tons of twisted steel.

It is easy to look at such a spectacle and to simply see a burned-out tank or a



Ethiopian armor destroyed while withdrawing from Nakfa area to assist at Afabet. Eritreans have left a lot of their enemy's equipment in this condition in their 29-year struggle.

bullet-riddled Gaz truck. But, look closely and one is reminded that there was also a tank crew and a truck driver. A scrap of uniform hung in the innards of a smashed T-54/55; an empty, charred wallet lay on the roadside.

By the time I finished taking my pictures, the sun had risen above the mountains. By now, those with any sense would be under cover, concealed from aerial observation. Goytom was impatient for us to get going. We reached Afabet 20 minutes later. Afabet is in the process of being rebuilt but, as in other Eritrean towns, little is achieved during daylight hours. Respect for the Ethiopian air force has resulted in a land that comes to life only after dusk.

We spent our day at Afabet vainly attempting to catch up on lost sleep. The intense heat made this impossible, however. The climate and, no doubt, our diet, began to take their inevitable toll. By late afternoon, I was feeling sick and lightheaded. Before long, I had developed a horrendous case of diarrhea. Par for the course, I told myself, but a six-hour drive to Massawa did not help matters. It must have been obvious to Goytom that I was ill, for the next day he

suggested that our visit to the front be postponed for 24 hours. At least we could pass the time in air-conditioned luxury at the Dahlak Hotel — a battered relic of the battle for Massawa (see "Bloody Battle for Massawa" sidebar).

By 23 August, I felt well enough to stroll around the hotel grounds. Evidence of the war abounded: AK-47s and magazines, webbing, an Ethiopian combat jacket and high-leg combat boots littered the place. With so much still lying in the middle of a busy town, I couldn't help but wonder what was to be seen in the more remote, outlying

areas. Later in the day, Kasai and Goytom drove me to the outskirts of Massawa. On our way, we passed the town square on which an Ethiopian MiG dropped a cluster bomb among civilians returning from the countryside. Luckily, the square sheltered them from the air attack.

Eventually we stopped at a solitary tree surrounded by sheets of corrugated tin. Clambering through a gap, I was confronted by a stack of wooden crates filled with human bones. Ethiopian dead, explained Goytom. Apparently the site had existed for several years, guarded by two Ethiopian sentries. The Eritreans were



Ethiopian carnage often surrounded the remains of Eritrean attacks. Here, author nearly steps on someone's dismembered foot.

explained Goytom. Apparently the site had existed for several years, guarded by two Ethiopian sentries. The Eritreans were



Ethiopian army awards ceremony. Objects on table are awards; white guy handing them out probably is a Soviet adviser.

unable to offer a satisfactory explanation as to why the skeletons had been gathered at this spot. Popular opinion is that they were the remains of executed soldiers. I wasn't so sure, but a tentative suggestion that it might be some kind of shrine for those killed during the fighting here in 1977-78 provoked a negative response.

"We think they were executed," I was flatly told.

When we crossed the causeway en route back to Massawa, I asked Kasai to pull over so that I could photograph two knocked-out T-54/55s. Afterward, as I returned to where Kasai was parked, I detected the unmistakable stench of decaying flesh. I paused and looked around, and then down. In front of me, protruding from some rubble, was a human foot. I had almost trodden on it.

During our stay at Massawa, Goytom had been meeting with local commanders of the Eritrean People's Liberation Army (EPLA) — the military wing of the EPLF — in order to discuss our visit to the front. It was originally proposed that we head for

Decamere, but now it was decided that we forego the 12-hour journey in favor of a much shorter trip to Ghinda. In the prevailing situation, one bit of the front would seem like another.

The route from Massawa took us across wide open plains dotted with wrecked tanks and Ethiopian corpses. There were no Eritrean bodies to be seen. During combat, EPLF casualties are dealt with immediately. The wounded are attended to on the spot and then casevaced to the rear. Those killed are quickly buried in unmarked graves. Nobody will say how many casualties have been sustained by the EPLF, but the EPLF estimates Ethiopian losses at around 300,000 over the past 15 years. That's probably close, but nobody will ever know the actual figures.

Goytom, myself and a fighter we had picked up headed toward the front early the next day. Nobody said anything. We just gathered our belongings and resumed our walk. The Eritreans set a brisk pace, heading west along the unused Massawa-Agordat railway line, a relic of Italian

EPLF fighter blasts away at Ethiopian army during the battle for Massawa.



## BLOODY BATTLE FOR MASSAWA

At 0100 hours on 8 February 1990, the EPLF launched a coordinated attack along the 200 kilometers of the Ethiopian defense line stretching from Keren in the south to the Ras Kobai, 40 kilometers short of Massawa. The Eritreans quickly overran the Ethiopian army's 6th Divisional Headquarters, capturing its deputy commander, Lieutenant Colonel Aferwerke Teclé.

By the following day, the mechanized infantry of the EPLF had advanced as far as the Asmara-Massawa road, where they took Dog'ali. At the same time, EPLF seaborne assaults were carried out against the Ethiopian naval base at Massawa. On the plains just north of the city, a vastly superior Ethiopian tank force was defeated by the EPLF, whose fighters advanced ahead of their armor in order to get to grips with the enemy. On 11 February, the Eritreans dispatched a message to Brigadier General Teshome Tesema, OC 6th Division at Massawa, asking him to surrender or, at least, release 3,000 civilians being held hostage.

Convinced that Asmara would soon send reinforcements, Tesema refused both offers. Concentrating his forces at the end of the causeway that was the entrance to the city, he awaited the inevitable EPLF onslaught. When it came, it came from two directions. In a remarkable amphibious operation, the EPLF had quietly landed troops behind the Ethiopian defenses. EPLF casualties were therefore relatively light. Although the first tanks into Massawa were knocked out, they were followed by others, supported by infantry who, together with those deployed along the coast, quickly crushed Ethiopian resistance in the city. Tesema was killed, and the majority of the hostages were saved.

On 12 and 14 February, the Ethiopians mounted two seaborne assaults in an abortive effort to retake the port. The air force also carried out a number of raids, inflicting numerous casualties among the civilian population. The eight-day battle cost Mengistu dearly. A conservative estimate places Ethiopian losses at one mechanized, three motorized and four infantry brigades (including about 100 tanks, 75-80 of which were captured intact); six or seven BM-21s; half-a-dozen 122mm artillery pieces and 10 antitank guided missiles. Nine (some sources say 12) warships were sunk and two (possibly five) were captured. The EPLF also claims to have shot down two MiG-23s and one MiG-21. Up to 8,000 prisoners were taken. At the time of this writing, Massawa is still in EPLF hands.

— F.N.

colonial rule. After a few kilometers, we left the railway line and began to climb a very steep, granite hill. Severely weakened by my recent illness, I was soon experiencing some difficulty in keeping pace. Al-

though it was still cool, I was already saturated with sweat. Angry with myself, and embarrassed lest my guides should notice my predicament, I somehow found the will to keep going. Just when I felt I would surely collapse, Goytom turned and asked, "Shall we rest?"

The brief respite and a couple mouthfuls of water enabled me to continue toward the summit. We were welcomed by the OC of the EPLA's 1st Battalion, Ghilai Tewelde, and his 2IC, Berhane Habte. Ghilai has been a member of the EPLF for 17 years. Like Berhane, he was a taciturn individual who answered my questions without wasting words.

I learned that the present front line was established in February, and now reached to within 3-5 kilometers of the Ethiopians in nearby Ghinda. Both side's trenches ran roughly parallel and, in one sector, were just 50 meters apart. This particular area had been relatively quiet since the end of May when the Ethiopians attempted a breakthrough to Massawa. The attack failed, as did another, in the Kubay sector in July. The enemy was currently in defense, attempting to hold on to Asmara to



ABOVE: When the EPLF liberated Massawa, they invited the locals to help themselves to Red Cross-supplied foodstuffs stockpiled by the Ethiopians.

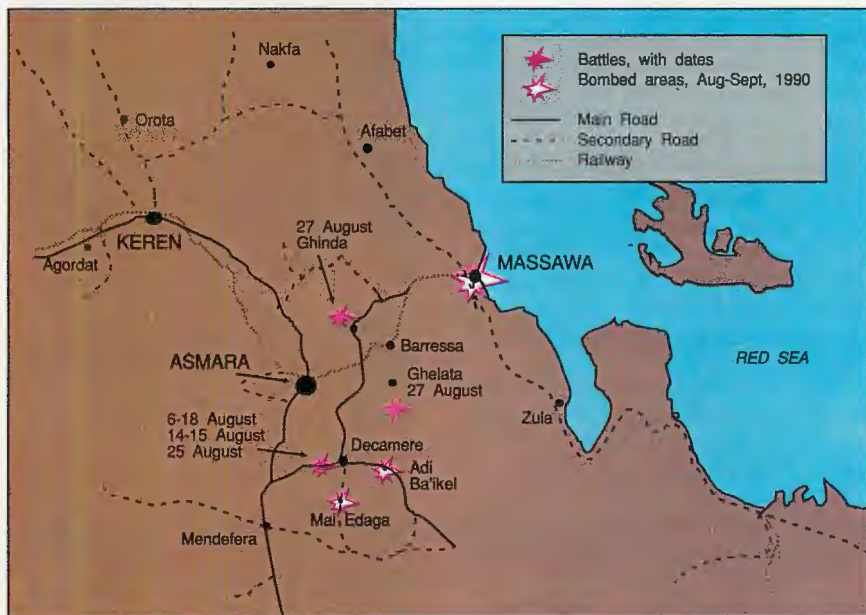
the north.

Goytom asked whether I still wanted to visit the forward area. I assured him that I did.

"Then we must be quick," he told me. "If there is fighting or shelling, we cross over in minutes." He smiled when he said this, but I knew he was being serious. During our descent into the valley that



ABOVE: Only 17 clicks from the city, Ethiopian army relics litter the landscape after the Battle for Massawa.



ABOVE: Eritrean firing from the Ghinda front. EPLF would usually harass Ethiopians with automatic weapons, while Ethiopians would harass EPLF by lobbing over an occasional shell.



LEFT: Marxists no more. Near Massawa, author entered a shack and found boxes of former Ethiopian fighters. Eritreans say they were executed.

## THE REBEL PROVINCE

The rebel province of Eritrea borders northern Ethiopia, entirely separating that country from the Red Sea. It is an ancient land, with a history of invasions and internal strife. During the 1880s, the region was colonized by the Italians, who remained until their defeat by the British at Keren in 1941. Britain maintained a presence until September 1952, by which time the United Nations had adopted Resolution 390A(v), declaring Eritrea "an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown."

Emperor Haile Selassie subsequently deployed his armed forces in Eritrea under the guise of protecting the federal entity. Soon, however, Eritrean independent institutions and political parties were subverted and freedom of speech, press and assembly suppressed. In 1961, the Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF) was formed. In the face of mounting opposition, Ethiopia declared the federation to be null and void, and Eritrea as "the 14th province of the Ethiopian Empire." Eager to maintain valuable local bases, the United States supported Selassie by providing military hardware and training.

By 1970, problems with the ELF led to the formation of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF). In 1972, it was obliged to contend with both the Ethiopian armed forces and the ELF when an ugly civil war flared between the liberation movements. It lasted 2½ years. In September 1974, Selassie was deposed by elements from within his own infrastructure. His successor lost no time in mobilizing thousands of troops in an effort to crush Eritrean resistance, now represented by an uneasy alliance between the ELF and EPLF. But the government's offensive failed.

Ethiopia faced another set-back when the Carter administration, citing the country's poor human rights record, decided to suspend all further military aid. Ethiopia's response was to close several American installations while simultaneously turning to the Soviet Union for assistance. Shortly after, the United States terminated its relationship with Ethiopia.

With Soviet and Cuban help, Ethiopia's Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam was able to launch a massive invasion of Eritrea in 1978, at a time when the ELF/EPLF held most of the countryside, many towns and provincial capitals. Both liberation fronts were forced to conduct a series of "strategic withdrawals" that heralded the end of the ELF as an effective fighting force. The EPLF, however, was able to fall back to its stronghold base areas in the north from where it was able to recover and, in time,

recapture much lost ground.

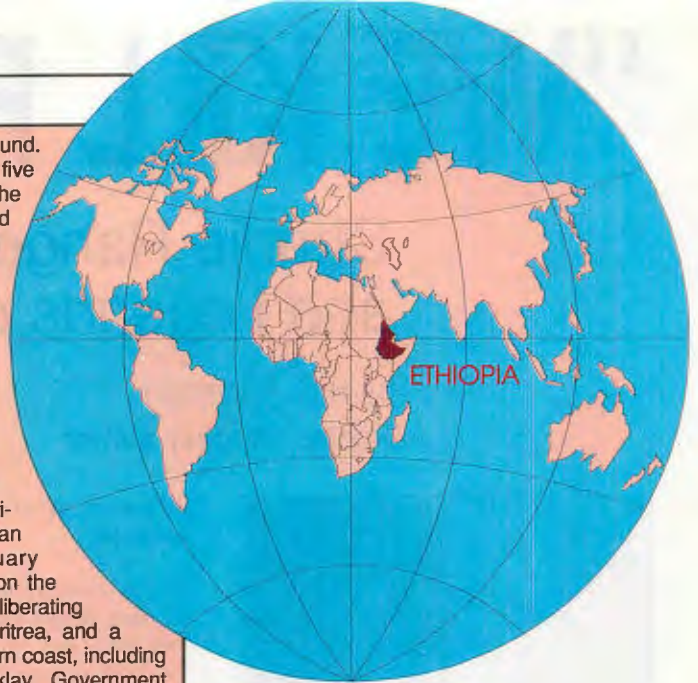
Mengistu conducted five campaigns to 1981. The sixth, operation "Red Star," began on 15 February 1982 and continued into March. It involved some 130,000 troops, 40,000 of whom were reported killed or wounded, and 1,300 captured. The seventh offensive, fought during March-April 1983, resulted in an estimated 7,000 Ethiopian casualties. In January 1984, the EPLF went on the offensive, eventually liberating Tessenai in western Eritrea, and a large area of the northern coast, including the port of Mersa Teklay. Government losses are believed to have exceeded 8,000, including 3,100 captured.

In the summer of 1985, the EPLF took Barentu in the southwest. Subsequently, an Ethiopian counterattack on four fronts drove the Eritreans from previously won locations, including Tessenai and Barentu. The cost, according to EPLF sources, was more than 11,000 Ethiopian casualties. In October 1985, the government's "Red Sea" offensive pushed the EPLF back to defensive positions outside Nakfa — a town destined to become a symbol of Eritrean resistance. On 19 March 1988, the EPLF won a crucial victory at nearby Afabet, thus relieving the pressure on Nakfa after a decade of bitter contention.

Meanwhile, in neighboring Tigre, the Tigrean People's Liberation Front (TPLF) was equally successful in opposing Mengistu's occupation of their land. Although at loggerheads since 1985, the TPLF and EPLF have now managed to reconcile their differences in order to defeat their common enemy. In February 1990, the Eritreans captured the vital port area of Massawa, cutting off Ethiopia's access to the Red Sea. It was a devastating blow to the already demoralized Ethiopian armed forces.

With the Soviets' increasing reluctance to maintain Mengistu's collapsing military machine, it should be only a matter of months before the fall of Asmara and Keren — Ethiopia's last remaining bastions of defense in Eritrea. With Asmara in their hands, say the EPLF, Mengistu's fate will be sealed.

— F.N.



The whole area was pitted with bomb craters. Goytom cheerfully indicated a cluster of fragments. He didn't have to. I had already noticed it, along with the fact that the jagged steel shards were so recent, they hadn't yet had time to rust. Thankfully, the Ethiopians were uninterested in wasting precious ammunition on an insignificant target such as ourselves. I wondered if they even saw us.

We soon reached the relative safety of the valley. Water parties, each person effortlessly carrying a full jerry can, passed us and headed up the steep incline, which we also had to ascend before arriving at the fighters' positions. I was thankful that I had left behind my heavy photo-vest. Even so, I was sweating profusely by the time we reached the first bunkers. We were greeted shyly by youngsters, the mailed fist of the EPLF. Some of the girls were truly beautiful. It seemed ridiculous that they should be toting AKs.

The hillside was alive with activity. This was where the fighters lived when not on duty in the trenches, a short distance away. I photographed a group clearing some ground, assuming it was intended for some kind of emplacement.

"They are making a volleyball court," Goytom corrected me.

A volleyball court? Well, why not...?

Elsewhere, people were preparing their evening meal. Others cleaned weapons or checked equipment. A few just sat and talked. A girl was squatting on her haunches, holding the hand of the young man standing behind her. They gazed at the distant mountains, toward the liberated areas in the east, each of them lost in thought. It was a poignant scene, incongruous under the circumstances. But it was also a forceful reminder that this was a people's war — a popular phrase among Eritreans.

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separated us from the forward area, we would be in full view of the Ethiopians. However, I judged the risk to be minimal. Neither side was keen to stir up the other. The Ethiopians seemed content to lob shells over occasionally, none of which came close, while the EPLF satisfied themselves with sporadic bursts of small arms fire.

We alternately chatted and dozed until

late afternoon, when Berhane announced that it was time to go. It was still extremely warm, so I discarded my bulky camera vest in favor of a lightweight top and just two cameras.

"Ready?" asked Goytom. I nodded, and we left the safety of our bunker and cleared the crest that sheltered us from enemy observation. Below us lay a valley and, beyond that, another hill — our objective.



# “WE KILL FOR FUN”

## Charlie Rangers — Lessons and Legends of Vietnam

by R.B. Anderson

Photos courtesy author



The author on “cook” detail.

*R.B. Anderson's Vietnam war experiences could fill a book (which he claims would be called Alone, Naked, Unarmed, and Dangerous). We decided to reproduce excerpts from his account starting with his arrival in Southeast Asia and through his first year in combat and then pick up his story in December 1969 when his unit became the first Ranger company in Vietnam.*

On 16 July 1968 President Johnson asked Congress to give 18 year olds the right to vote, Nelson Rockefeller lambasted his Republican rival Richard Nixon, Harvard professor Dr. Henry Kissinger continued his tour of NATO countries, Fidel Castro visited Marshal Tito in Yugoslavia, and Mrs. Anderson's redneck boy arrived in Vietnam.

Except for the departing old-timers, who jeered, there wasn't a welcoming committee. We were loaded on buses headed for the compound at Long Binh. The ride was uneventful and ... I was slightly disappointed that we weren't attacked by a grenade-tossing 10 year old.

A sergeant came over and told us he needed men for a Long Range Patrol (LRP — pronounced Lurp) unit. He said that they worked in small groups deep in enemy territory, that it was extremely dangerous, and that they only took

volunteers. What did I do? I was the first volunteer.

Just to make us feel better the veterans told war stories along the way. The one that really got my attention was about the NVA having an intense hatred of Lurps. Recently, the remains of a captured 4th Division Lurp team were found where they had been staked out spread-eagle and skinned alive.

The only two LRP units in Vietnam differed from Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (LRRP) units in that LRP's ran combat patrols as well as recon patrols. Westmoreland wanted special teams that could conduct ambushes, raids, POW snatches, and would be available for cross-border ops.

Units from all of Vietnam, including Force Recon Marines and SEALs, sent their “Sneaky Petes” to the Lurp finishing school. The curriculum was basically the same as Pre-Recondo but much more advanced. Again it was necessary to complete a 7-mile run loaded down for war, but the conclusion of this three-week course was a cadred combat patrol using NVA as training aids.

NVA were pushing heavily laden bicycles up the trail and the trail was flooded with the weaving motions of moving flashlights. The rule of thumb for counting NVA at night was three to each flashlight, but they were so numerous (and I was so nervous) that I couldn't keep count. Even to a greenhorn like myself, it was obvious that we faced at least a battalion.

The NVA spent the next 15 minutes throwing large rocks down our hillside. I was baffled by this performance but later learned that they were listening for the sound of a rock striking metal or the moan of a rock striking a man.

We “stood fast” but were ready to bolt at a second's notice. After what seemed to be an eternity the flickering lights stopped moving along the trail

and the happy campers above us settled down for a long Central Highlands nap.

At the end of the airstrike, we were asked to go back up the hill and investigate the damage. Again Chambers wisely refused. The best delivered air strike will not completely destroy a ground unit. We had just stirred up a battalion-size hornet's nest and it would be stupid for five guys to blunder back into it. Nevertheless when we returned to Tuy Hoa, Chambers found himself in hot water and only his previous kill-crazy performance saved him from serious trouble. I learned the lesson that “brave” not only meant “closing with the enemy” but standing up to stupidity as well.

This first patrol was not the hairiest mission I experienced but for me it was the worst. It was the worst because I didn't know what to expect or how to act. After a couple of more patrols I became field adept and by the time I had 10 missions I was fairly proficient at patrolling.

I pulled 33 missions during my first tour in the 'Nam.... and I can tell some terrifying, toenail curling tales of my behind-the-lines adventures (some of these stories are even true). These fables must have grown even better after I departed 'Nam, because years later I learned, to my great surprise, a few of us old-timers had become Charlie Ranger legends.

IN December 1969 word came down that the Army was reactivating Merrill's Marauder outfit, the 75th Infantry. A and B companies were to be located in the States and our unit would have the honor of being the first Ranger company designated in Vietnam. We would become C Company (Rangers), 75th Infantry (Airborne). Although we later became proud of our new scroll patch, the change was not initially popular with the troops. We were proud of the accomplishments of E Company and of our singular designation, LRP. We didn't care to be lumped together with LRRP units into a new designation. But, like so



Medal of Honor winner David C. "Mad Dog" Dolby (right) and Terry "Crazy" LeMunyon (center) with the author. This picture was taken during Mad Dog's fourth tour (he had five) when visiting Anderson and LeMunyon upon their return to Vietnam.

many things in the military, it happened anyway.

#### "We Kill For Fun"

Specialist Four Steve Henton gets the credit for originating our unofficial motto, "We Kill For Fun!" (Officers from other units would look at us strangely when we saluted with a loud, "Kill For Fun, Sir!") The truth is we did kill for fun. "Charlie" Rangers was a "max macho" unit and we lived a Hemingway type of existence — the more kills a man had, the greater his prestige. Since a team's pointman was almost always the first in action, men bickered and argued over who would walk point. Team 1-3's point, Sp4 Terry "Crazy" LeMunyon, was one of the best and smartest killers in the unit and he could have had his own team anytime he desired. But fortunately for me, team leaders weren't allowed to walk point, and LeMunyon condescended to stay with 1-3 as assistant team leader.

Besides kills, prestige was gained by the lengths one would go to get to the field. A member of my team received non-judicial punishment (Article 15) for slipping out on the first sergeant's work detail and going on a mission. One Ranger, who was wounded and about to be evacuated to Japan, went AWOL from the hospital and reported back to his team for duty. In order to examine different patrolling techniques, another Charlie Ranger went on a mission with November Rangers when he was supposed to be on R&R in Bangkok.

We were young, bold, and attracted to combat the way moths are attracted to a flame. I have spent 20 years wondering why. Why were we so eager to put our lives on the line? The best explanation I can muster is the unit attracted thrill-seekers and thrill-seekers reinforce their kind. We were more like a tribe than a unit, a tribe with its own passage-rites and

brutal mores.

#### 50:1 Kill Ratio

Sociologist Joseph Monane maintains that a soldier will often work hard because "the fear of being thought unmanly by one's buddies can be as powerful an enforcer as the fear of the guardhouse. When these informal controls coincide with the formal, the Army has begun to build a soldier." In Charlie Rangers, the informal control (blood lust) coincided with the formal (body count) and the result was an uninflated 50:1 graveyard dead, kill ratio.

The need for acceptance was certainly the strongest determiner of R.B. Anderson's behavior and I was proud to win the approval of the band of cutthroats known as Charlie Rangers. Like a young buck Indian, I relished the hunt. The ultimate "big game" is heavily armed men and there is nothing more manly than stalking enemy soldiers.

The attraction wasn't only adventure but power too. I'm only 5'7" but give me an M16 with 26 loaded magazines, a sawed-off grenade launcher with 30 rounds, a S&W .38 snubbed-nose pistol, two claymore mines, 10 feet of detonation cord, two CS grenades, and six frag grenades — I'm badder than the entire Chicago Bears.

Our leaders told us Charlie Rangers had the highest *ground-to-ground* kill ratio in Vietnam. One month, it was reported that our company had more kills than the entire 4th Division (in defense of the "Fighting Fourth," most of its units were on a stand-down that month). I

have no way of substantiating either claim. I can attest that over a six-month period the 1st Platoon's kill ratio grew to nearly 110:1 before a couple of mishaps brought the numbers back down to 50:1.

Although I'm sure that we would have made the ground-to-ground playoffs, I have always wondered if we were indeed the kill-ratio champs. Since many people (even West Pointers with engineering degrees) had trouble correctly counting enemy dead, there's no way of knowing. There were certainly ground units who killed more commies than we did, but they also took many more casualties.

We had a number of advantages. We could "hit and run" and didn't have to fight "toe to toe" like conventional units. We

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Drawing by Peter Badcock

# GREAT COCONUT CAPER

## Castro Caught Red Handed in FMLN Smuggling Op

by SOF Staff

**A**T SOF we run across a fair amount of strange and unusual things. And while we often have our suspicions and theories about where something came from, who manufactured it, what its purpose is, etc., rarely is something either solidly verifiable or so blatant on its face that it's worth sharing with our readers. The cans of "Grated Coconut" pictured on this page fall into the latter category. SOF's Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown first heard of these peculiar "canned goods" at last year's Covert and Operational Procurement Exhibition (COPEX) held in Baltimore. Our source later came through with photos and a letter outlining what he had found. His letter and our Tech Editor's evaluation follow:

Bob,

After our conversation in Baltimore at COPEX, I finally got something together. Enclosed you will find nine (9) color photographs of grenades that were obtained in Honduras. These I inerted in the field and brought back in 1988, so they (the grenades) were moving or started moving 1988 or earlier.

As you can see by the photos, the writing is in both Spanish and English. I was unable to weigh the components, but the weight of 15 oz. on the can is accurate. Each can contained one grenade and one blasting cap (non-electric), sealed with two corks in a copper tube, and a four-second delay fuse. To keep the items from rolling around and making noise in the can, they were packed in vermiculite. Additionally, when the can was shaken it produced a sound. It should be noted that the fuse, even though it is painted "training blue," is a live fuse. To activate you must unscrew the ball position and pull, at which time a string attached to a wire (twisted wire friction type fuse) will start the fuse burning (four seconds approximately). The case of the grenade is light metal (tin can thick) and won't produce as many lethal fragments as a standard U.S. grenade. Explosive inside the grenade had

started to react to the metal and was changing color from a mustard yellow to a bloody/rusty red. The explosive seemed to be packed/pressed in as opposed to cast.

According to the people I talked to the grenades came through Nicaragua and possibly Panama for further shipment throughout the Americas. These were found in Honduras on their way to El Salvador, presumably.



Nothing suspicious about these 15-ounce cans of "Grated Coconut" headed through Honduras to El Salvador. Mixed lots featured both English and Spanish labels and weight given was accurate.



Surprise inside was East German manufactured hand grenades complete with friction igniter. These were canned in Cuba and likely en route to El Salvador's FMLN.

**Tech Editor Peter G. Kokalis reports:**

The grenades inside Castro's coconut cans are relics of another era. Most probably originating in East Germany, the Eierhandgranate 39 (egg-type hand grenade, Model 39), together with the better-known Stielhandgranate 24 and PH 39 stick grenades (known as "potato mashers") were employed in large numbers by the German Wehrmacht during World War II.

The Eierhandgranate 39 can be immediately identified by its egg-shaped, two-piece, sheet-metal body (0.02-inch in thickness) which has a raised rib around the middle and a blue knob with a wing nut protruding from one end.

This is an "offensive" grenade, designed for use where fragments might endanger the user. Grenades of this type and era usually have thin sheet-metal, fiberboard or plastic bodies with no internal fragmentation sleeves. Their effectiveness depends on a substantial explosive charge and the concussive effect of its blast. The German Eierhandgranate 39 has a total weight of approximately 8 ounces, of which 50% represents the explosive filler.

Offensive grenades have a small casualty radius and can be thrown from unexposed positions during the final assault. They are especially effective in enclosed areas and are commonly employed in urban fighting.

The Eierhandgranate 39 is initiated by a detonator with a friction igniter and has a four- to five-second time delay. The wire loop of the friction igniter is connected by a short cord to the blue metal cap screwed on the end of the grenade body.

These are later versions of the Eierhandgranate 39 and the added ring on the bottom of the grenade body was used to attach the grenade to an object when using it as a booby trap.

After it has been armed by insertion of the detonator onto the proper end of the blue knob and screwing of the armed fuse back into the grenade body (using the wing nut to tighten the fuse), just unscrew the blue knob and pull the igniter. ✕

# SHADOW VOICES



## Tapping Clandestine Short-Wave Radio Nets

by Gerry Dexter

**T**HEY speak of unrest. They demand change. They call for revolution. They are radio stations quite unlike anything you hear on an ordinary AM/FM radio. They are radio's shadow voices broadcasting on the short-wave bands — covert stations practicing an art almost as old as radio, yet as contemporary as tomorrow's headlines.

Wherever there is a sore spot or an open wound on the face of the planet there is usually at least one clandestine radio station rubbing salt on the wound.

These secret stations take several forms, some more secret than others. The classic is one run by a rebel group operating in or near the territory of a government it seeks to overthrow, broadcasting from easily moved, transportable facilities. In other cases, antigovernment broadcasters may operate from distant but still secret locations and be backed by groups not directly involved in the revolutionary effort. Often as not, no revolution is even underway — the broadcasts may simply seek to stir up the population and help create a climate for revolution.

Sometimes hostile governments will provide aid to an existing opposition group's propaganda efforts. In other cases, the opposing government may take on the job itself, creating a front group that exists in name only, behind which it can hide.

Some groups only have a recording studio and are given time on stations controlled by governments sympathetic to their cause. Some even buy time on commercial short-wave stations.

"Black" clandestine radio was common in World War II and Vietnam, but is less in evidence now. A black clandestine sounds as though it is speaking for one side but is actually run by the opposition. Their purpose is to sow misinformation and to pull listeners away from the real and more strident opposition broadcasts.

Over the past three decades several



Mujahid with a small FM transmitter. These were used by the Mujahideen's Radio Free Kabul early in the Afghan war. Photo: courtesy author

clandestine stations have gained some notoriety. The CIA operated Radio Swan (later Radio Americas) as an anti-Castro effort for several years, operating from Swan Island, off the coast of Honduras. During the Bay of Pigs invasion the station broadcast a stream of fake coded messages ("The fish will rise tonight") in an attempt to make Castro believe the island was crawling with agents and saboteurs. E. Howard Hunt, of Watergate fame, was the author of the cryptic messages.

"Argentine Annie" played the Beatles for British troops as they sailed toward the Falklands, trying to convince them their cause was lost. Her Majesty countered with Radio Atlantico del Sur (Radio South

Atlantic).

There is no shortage of clandestine radio activity today. Although the shipboard Voice of Democracy which was to beam to China from the South China Sea never materialized, other anti-Beijing voices are on the air. The Voice of June 4th, affiliated with the Independent Alliance of Chinese Students in the USA, originates programs in Chicago and broadcasts them via short-wave from Taiwanese government transmitters. Taiwan and/or the USSR is behind a series of stations that broadcast to China only occasionally. Such stations as Radio Spark, October Storm and others air broadcasts of only five or 10 minutes before they vanish.

The PLO produces the Voice of Palestine which airs over Radio Damascus and other Arab stations. The African National Congress uses its Radio Freedom broadcasts over government stations in Southern

Africa as an antiapartheid tool. A variety of stations operated by Iran and Iraq claim to speak for the Kurdish population in the other country.

UNITA guerrillas in Angola run the Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel, with U.S. money believed to be backing its operation. The same holds for the Voice of the Khmer, run by a portion of the Cambodian resistance.

### Sponsors Big and Small

The U.S. government's Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty air "Radio Free Afghanistan," and RFE/RL has produced programs calling for a change in government there. The mujahideen run the Voice of Unity which broadcasts from government transmitters in Egypt.

A Croatian independence group, headquartered in Canada, airs Radio Libertas, a daily one-hour program calling for Croatian independence from Yugoslavia. They buy time on religious short-wave station WHRI in Indiana.

Nicaragua and El Salvador have been hotbeds of clandestine broadcast activity for years. Although depleted in strength, the Nicaraguan contras continued to operate Radio Quince de Septiembre (15th of September) right to the end. Another station, Radio Miskut, still broadcasts support for the cause of Nicaragua's Miskito Indian population. The FMLN of El Salvador have used their Radio Venceremos very effectively, even instructing listeners on the finer points of making Molotov cocktails. This station took delight in the NASA Challenger disaster, labelling two of the lost astronauts "war criminals" (they had served in Vietnam).

Cuba has been a favorite target for clandestine broadcasters since before Castro came to power (Castro had his own clandestine stations). Any number of Cuban freedom groups have used amateur radio equipment to make anti-Castro broadcasts. Most are eventually closed down by the FCC. Cuba Independente y Democratica's "La Voz del CID" is on the air round the clock. The Cuban

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### ADDITIONAL READING

Despite the esoteric nature of the subject, there is considerable literature about clandestine broadcasting. The best book going is *Clandestine Radio Broadcasting* (Soley and Nichols; Praeger, NY: about \$40). A regular clandestine column appears in *Popular Communications Magazine*, available on many newsstands. An extensive compilation of past and current data about times, frequencies and locations is available in *The Clandestine File* (Tiare Publications, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 493, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. \$27 ppd).

### A SAMPLING OF CLANDESTINE BROADCASTERS

Station/Backer	Broadcasting To:	Shortwave frequency	Time (EST)
Flag of Freedom (pro-monarchist)	Iran	9.045, 15.565	10:30 p.m.
Voice of the Libyan People (National Front for the Salvation of Libya)	Libya	11.825, 15.700	midnight
Radio Venceremos (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front)	El Salvador	6.340, 8.835 (variable)	7 p.m.
Radio Caiman (unknown)	Cuba	9.965	evenings
Voice of Unity (Muslim Mujahideen of Afghanistan)	Afghanistan	11.490, 12.230, 15.685	7 a.m.
Radio SPLA (Sudan People's Liberation Army)	Sudan	9.550, 11.710	8 a.m.
Radio Miskut (Pro Miskito Indian)	Central America	5.560	6 p.m.
Radio Libertas (Croatian Independence)	North America	7.315, 9.495	11 a.m.
Voz de Fundacion (Cuban American National Foundation)	Cuba	7.315, 9.495	7-8 p.m.
Voz de A-66 (Alpha 66)	Cuba	7.315, 9.495, 11.790	evenings
Voz de CID (Cuba Independente y Democratica)	Cuba	9.940, 6.305	6:30/7 p.m.



Guerrilla worker at the FMLN's Radio Farabundo Marti, sister station of Radio Venceremos. Photo: courtesy author



# BIG BOOMER

S&W Model 4516-1  
.45 Gets It Right

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

**T**HE .45 ACP cartridge remains ever popular, for good reason, with those who walk in harm's way. Colt's single-action M1911A1 has traditionally provided the envelope into which the great pumpkin ball has been stuffed. Aficionados carry the Colt in "condition one" (a round in the chamber, a full magazine seated in place, the hammer fully cocked and the thumb safety engaged).

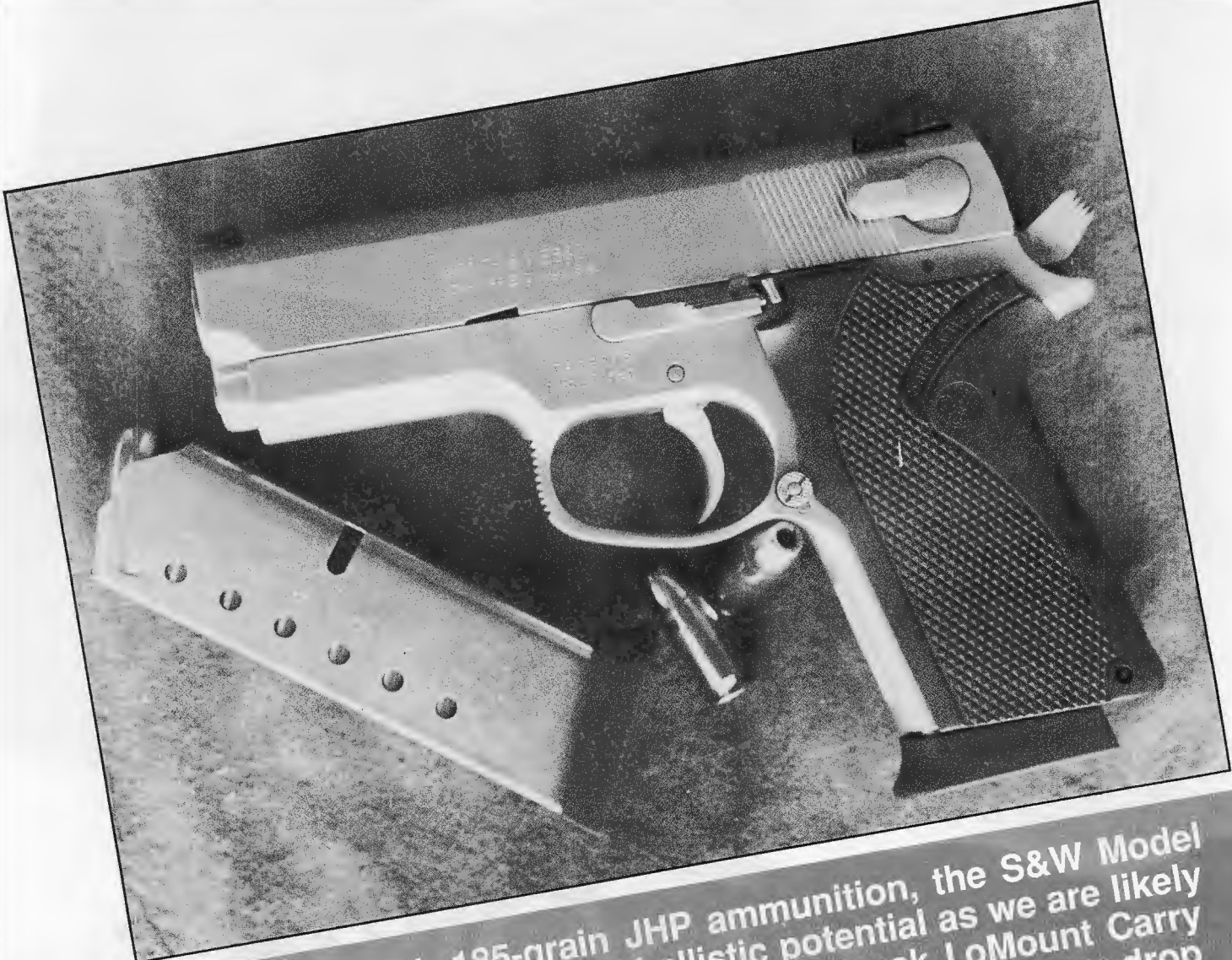
While acceptable for experienced pistoleros, few law enforcement agencies permit personnel to carry a single-action handgun in this mode. Furthermore, it is difficult to recommend a pistol that, as currently manufactured, requires almost \$600 worth of custom work before it can be carried with confidence.

Smith & Wesson's first .45 ACP double-action semiauto, the Model 645, was a clunker in my opinion. Every bit as large and heavy as Colt's Government Model, its handling characteristics approached that of a brick. However, Smith & Wesson, a company

very much on the upsurge, now has its so-called "third generation" line of semiautos and among them is the Model 4516-1, a compact .45 with significant potential right out of the box.

Although it weighs in at a substantial 34.5 ounces, empty (actually only a half ounce more than the stainless steel Colt Officers ACP), the Model 4516 has an overall length of only 7 1/8 inches (Colt OM: 7 1/4 inches) with a height of about 5.4 inches (Colt OM: only 4.9 inches, but the magazine holds one round less) and a width at the grips of approximately 1.1 inches (Colt OM: 1.27 inches).

The Model 4516-1's method of operation is short recoil, locked breech. The barrel and slide are held together by a single rib on the barrel which engages a recess in the underside of the slide. In a manner reminiscent of the Tokarev TT-33 pistol, the barrel's locking rib appears to have been machined around the entire circumference of the barrel, which permits turning the rib on a lathe



When loaded with 185-grain JHP ammunition, the S&W Model 4516-1 offers as much wound ballistic potential as we are likely to obtain from a handgun. Note superb Novak LoMount Carry rear sight, bobbed hammer, slide-mounted safety/hammer-drop lever and finger extension on seven-shot magazine.

and much simplifies this operation. That portion of the rib not required for locking has been mill-cut away.

When a cartridge is fired, chamber pressure drives the cartridge case back against the breech face. Locked together, the slide and barrel recoil rearward a short distance until a shaped lug on the underside of the chamber and in front of the feed ramp engages a projection on each side of the frame to lower the rear end of the barrel and disengage it from the slide. The barrel's rearward travel ceases while the slide continues backward to complete extraction and ejection of the empty case before rebounding, by means of the recoil spring, to strip and chamber another round from the magazine.

The Model 4516-1's frame and slide are mill-finished drop forgings made from a proprietary stainless steel alloy. The barrel, slide stop, safety levers, and numerous other small components are also made of stainless steel. Both the hammer and trigger are hard chrome plated. All exterior sharp edges have been radiused and rounded off by a special tumbling process. The matte finish found on all major parts is produced by vapor blasting.

The six-groove barrel has a right-hand twist of one turn in 15.24 inches (about standard for this caliber). Barrel length is 3 1/2 inches,

just 1/8-inch less than that of the Colt OM. In my experience, you can expect to lose no more than 50 fps in muzzle velocity from that obtained by a 5-inch barrel. This is insignificant and not enough to affect a bullet's wound ballistic potential. The muzzle end of the barrel has a pronounced ring around its circumference which mates with a fixed barrel bushing (a third generation characteristic), swaged and press-fit into the front of the slide.

Early prototypes of this pistol were equipped with nested double recoil springs. The inner coil of a double spring system can "snake" up inside the outer coil and result in a serious stoppage. SOF's test specimen was fitted with a single coil spring riding a full-length guide rod made of aluminum alloy tubing. The guide rod's steel end cap is staked in place and retains a spring-loaded rod which protrudes from its center hole and a hole in the frame just in front of the trigger mechanism to help secure the slide stop. A spring-loaded plunger on the end of the slide stop further retains this component by pressing against a sheet-metal piece under the grip panel on the left side, called the sideplate assembly. A hooked projection on the slide stop protrudes through the frame and is forced upward by a shelf on the magazine follower to hold the slide rearward after the last round has been fired.

More important are the sights with which the Model 4516-1 has been equipped. The fixed Novak LoMount Carry rear sight is superb. Without a doubt the finest combat-type rear sight ever attached to a handgun, it was designed by Wayne Novak (Novak's .45 Shop, Dept.

SOF, P.O. Box 4045, Parkersburg, WV 26104, phone: (304) 485-9295) — one of the most highly regarded combat pistolsmiths in this country — and is produced under license by S&W. Rounded and radiused in all the right places, it will not impede the important “tap, rack, bang” drill. The rear sight’s open square-notch has a width of 0.125 inch and this matches the width of the front sight blade. An S&W design, the front sight can be removed and replaced by blades of different height to adjust for elevation zero. Novak’s rear sight can be moved in its dovetail on the slide to adjust the windage zero. Both the rear and front sights are black-oxide-finished to reduce glare and improve visibility. The front sight carries a single white dot. There is also a white dot on each side of the open notch at the rear. Just ignore them or paint them black. They are of no assistance to those who practice stress shooting and employ a flash front sight picture.

All three of the Model 4516-1’s safety mechanisms are located in the slide. A firing pin safety consisting of a spring-loaded steel plunger is driven upward by the firing pin safety lever in the frame when the trigger is pulled to the rear. This permits the spring-loaded firing pin to move forward after impact by the hammer.

A spring-loaded, white plastic plunger opposite the firing pin safety, called the “ejector depressor plunger” operates the magazine safety disconnecter. When the magazine is removed, this plunger presses the ejector downward which in turn drives the trigger mechanism’s disconnecter downward to disengage the trigger from the hammer. When a magazine is inserted the left feed lip holds the ejector upward and the trigger and hammer remain engaged. Removal of this plastic plunger and its spring will permit the trigger to be pulled without a magazine in place. This, of course, voids the warranty. You decide. Third generation S&W pistols delivered to the U.S. armed forces do not have this dubious feature — which has remained unwanted by pistoleros since it was introduced on the Browning High-Power 55 years ago.

The safety/hammer drop mechanism, also mounted on the slide, is ambidextrous. When the levers are pivoted downward, the trigger is disengaged from the hammer and a steel block rotates between the hammer and the end of the firing pin. If the hammer was cocked, it will fall forward. To fire the pistol (double-action for the first shot) after engaging this safety, the lever must first be rotated upward, exposing a red dot on either side of the frame. I don’t like this. A spring-loaded, frame-mounted, hammer-drop lever is superior as it requires only a single downward manipulation and the pistol remains ready to fire in the double-action mode once the hammer has been dropped and the lever released.

In my opinion, the Model 4516-1 should be carried with the hammer down and the safety lever off (in the upward position).

## S&W MODEL 4516-1 SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Caliber:</b> .....	45 ACP.
<b>Operation:</b> .....	Locked-breech, short-recoil, semiautomatic, double-action trigger system with slide mounted, ambidextrous safety/hammer-drop levers.
<b>Weight, without magazine:</b> .....	34.5 ounces.
<b>Length, overall:</b> .....	7 1/8 inches.
<b>Height:</b> .....	5.4 inches.
<b>Width:</b> .....	1.1 inches (at the grips).
<b>Barrel:</b> .....	Six-groove, right-hand twist with one turn in 15.24 inches.
<b>Magazine:</b> .....	Single-column, detachable box-type with Delrin finger extension and seven-round capacity.
<b>Sights:</b> .....	Fixed combat-type; front: black oxide blade with single white dot, 0.125-inch thick, can be removed from its dovetail and replaced by blades of different heights to adjust elevation zero; rear: black oxide Novak LoMount Carry with two white dots and open square-notch, 0.125-inch wide.
<b>Finish:</b> .....	Vapor-blasted stainless steel with all exterior sharp edges rounded off by tumbling.
<b>Price:</b> .....	\$714, complete with two magazines.
<b>Manufacturer:</b> .....	Smith & Wesson, Dept. SOF, 2100 Roosevelt Avenue, Springfield, MA 01102-2208; phone: (413) 781-8300.
<b>T&amp;E Summary:</b> .....	Accurate and reliable. Compact, although somewhat heavy. Equipped with the superb Novak LoMount Carry rear sight and a replaceable front blade sight. Overall excellent human engineering. Magazine safety disconnecter and slide-mounted safety/hammer-drop are dubious features.



Smith & Wesson Model 4516-1, field-stripped.

After firing, if you want to come down into the Weaver ready position and drop the hammer, rotate the lever down and then immediately up so that you can come back up to fire again without having to remember to manipulate the safety lever. The firing pin safety is sufficient to insure against an accidental discharge as the firing pin can travel forward only after the trigger has been stroked to the rear. The trigger

finger should be removed from the trigger and out of the trigger guard after you are off the target — always, and without exception. However, if, under stress, you fail to do so, the Model 4516-1 safety lever can still be rotated upward, although you will momentarily have to release the trigger before again stroking it rearward to fire.

The Model 4516-1’s hammer is of the “bobbed” type and is not exposed when in



the uncocked position. If you want to fire the first shot single-action, you must carefully and slowly pull back on the trigger until the serrated top of the hammer is exposed. Hold the hammer with the thumb of the support hand and release the trigger. Then bring the hammer to full cock. If your thumb should slip off the hammer, the firing pin safety will prevent discharge (providing you have released the trigger). If you don't like this method (I don't), any competent pistolsmith can install an S&W spurred-type hammer as they are completely interchangeable.

Trigger pull weights on SOF's test specimen were a surprisingly light 8 3/4 pounds in double-action and a fairly crisp, but heavy 5 3/4 pounds in single-action.

Although deeply checkered in front, the trigger guard is rounded and this is aesthetically more pleasing than either a squared-off or dished configuration.

The frame's front strap is serrated and has been relieved directly under the trigger guard. This latter feature permits the hand to ride up higher and thus closer to the bore's axis — a desirable attribute as it helps to reduce muzzle climb and hence the time needed to reacquire the front sight for subsequent shots.

Manufactured from a thermoplastic alloy of exceptional durability, the grips are of one-piece wraparound design and are dark blue-gray in color. They are adequately checkered, shaped with a flat, non-arched backstrap and provide comfort with a satisfactory grip-to-frame angle.

The magazine catch/release, a finely checkered button, is positioned just forward of the left grip and in back of the trigger guard — a traditional location for U.S. semiauto pistols and ergonomically correct. When pressed, the magazine falls freely away. The magazine-well has been modestly beveled to assist in the insertion of magazines during tactical or speed reloads.

Holding seven rounds, the magazine is a conventional single-column, detachable box-type. The steel magazine body has six indicator holes on each side, numbered from two through seven. The follower is made of yellow plastic, which is quite colorful, but to what end? Manufactured from black Delrin, the magazine floorplate is of the extended type and provides support for the small finger of the shooting hand.

Conventional procedures are used to disassemble the Model 4516-1. First remove the magazine and inspect and clear the chamber. Rotate the safety lever upward into the "fire" position. Retract the slide rearward until the slide stop notch on the left side of the slide is aligned with the forward, rounded portion of the slide stop. Press inward on the slide stop pin from the right side and withdraw the slide stop. Move the slide forward and withdraw this group from the frame. Remove the recoil spring and guide rod by pressing them forward and releasing the guide rod from the small radial undercut in the barrel lug. Pull the barrel rearward

and lift it up and out of the slide. No further disassembly is usually required. If you want to remove the wraparound grips, you must first drift out their retaining pin. Then place the pin in the hole at the heel of the grips and carefully pry them off the frame. Unlike Colt's Double Eagle, no components will fall to the ground after you have done so.

After cleaning and lubrication, reassemble in reverse order. When you run the slide back onto the frame, you must depress the ejector, sear release and firing pin safety levers down into their respective frame slots in order to draw the slide rearward so that its slide stop notch is aligned with the slide stop hole in the frame. Insert the slide stop and allow the slide to return to the battery position.

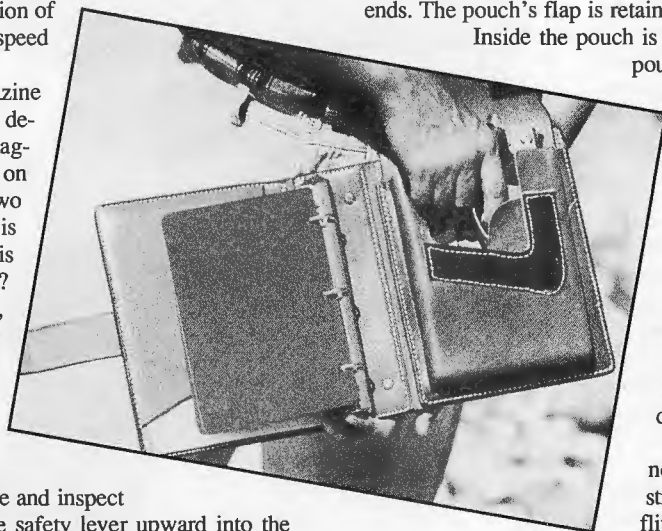
Holsters and/or the method in which the handgun is to be carried —concealed or exposed — are every bit as important as the weapon itself. Anyone wearing a jacket in the lower Sonoran desert when it's 120 degrees is either brain dead or attempting to conceal a weapon. That type of environment eliminates a shoulder rig and mandates use of a Hawaiian-style shirt if a belt holster is worn. You cannot stuff a pistol the size of the S&W Model 4516-1 into an ankle holster.

There is another alternative. Sam Andrews (Andrews Custom Leather, Dept. SOF, 1040 Southwest 11th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32601, phone: (904) 376-8809 — catalog \$3), a custom holster maker who I can recommend without reservation, has designed a unique notebook/holster for those who need to pack concealed and yet want no steel hanging from their anatomy.

The notebook's three-ring binder accepts medium-sized note paper and dividers. A slip-pocket inside the notebook's back cover holds loose papers. On the inside of the front cover is a pouch that appears to be made for a calculator, pens, pencils, and other odds and ends. The pouch's flap is retained by an L-shaped strip of Velcro®.

Inside the pouch is a suede holster and spare magazine pouch, both of which are also held in place by Velcro®. They can be removed and substituted with those configured for other handguns. A leather strap with a dot fastener holds the notebook closed. A leather strap on the spine is provided for carrying and to anchor the notebook during the draw stroke. Held to the notebook/holster by so-called "Chicago" brass screws and nuts, either of these straps can be removed, if desired.

In use, grasp the spine of the notebook with the left hand under the strap. With the thumb of the right hand flip open the notebook's closure strap. Open the notebook with the right thumb holding down on the note papers and back cover. Slide the right hand over to the holster pouch's flap and pull it open. Withdraw the pistol. At the same time drop the notebook to the ground. Complete the presentation by moving up onto the target from the Weaver position. Fast? No, but sometimes the element of surprise can compensate for a lack of speed. Belt-type pouch holsters and soft briefcases with hidden holsters have become so common as to be almost passe. Experienced gunslingers can "make" you with gear of that type from 50 yards away. To date, no one we have shown the Andrews' notebook/holster to has come close to intimating a handgun was hidden



TOP: Sam Andrews' unique notebook/holster conceals the S&W Model 4516-1 and telegraphs no hint of its real contents.

Drawing from the Andrews notebook/holster cannot compete with the speed of a belt holster. However, the element of surprise can sometimes compensate for a lack of speed.

*Continued on page 82*

# READER SURVEY

Dear Fellow Adventurer: **SOF NEEDS YOU!**

In our continuing effort to keep you up-to-date with some of the most accurate and timely combat/military reporting in the world, I'd appreciate your assistance in filling out this brief questionnaire. It should only take a moment of your time, and will give us vital information about what you think of the magazine. Thanks for helping us give you what you want in SOF!

Cordially,  
Robert K. Brown  
Editor/Publisher

1. If you purchased SOLDIER OF FORTUNE off the newsstand, what motivated you to pick this magazine up? (check as many as apply):

- A. COVER
  - B. BLURBS ON THE FRONT
  - C. EDITORIAL CONTENT
  - D. PREFER TO PURCHASE AT THE NEWSSTAND VS. HAVING HOME DELIVERY
  - E. ADVERTISING
- COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

2. For each of the following SOLDIER OF FORTUNE editorial areas, please indicate how often you read about:

- |                                   | ALWAYS                   | SOMETIMES                | NEVER                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. POLITICAL "THINK" PIECES       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. GENERAL MILITARY HISTORY       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. MILITARY & CIVILIAN SMALL ARMS | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. THE AMERICAN DRUG WAR          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. OVERSEAS COMBAT/FIGHTING       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. MERCENARY ACTIVITIES           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. U.S. MILITARY UNIT PROFILES    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. FOREIGN MILITARY UNIT PROFILES | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J. GUN RIGHTS SUPPORT/INFORMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| K. ACTION-ADVENTURE ARTICLES      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| L. FIRST-PERSON VIETNAM ARTICLES  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What part of the world generally interests you the most in SOLDIER OF FORTUNE Magazine's reporting:

- |                                       | HIGH INTEREST            | SOME INTEREST            | NO INTEREST              |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. WESTERN EUROPE, such as N. Ireland | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. MID-EAST, such as Lebanon          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. SOUTHEAST ASIA, such as Vietnam    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. SOVIET UNION                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. AFRICA, such as Namibia and Angola | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. SOUTH AMERICA, such as Peru        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. CENTRAL AMERICA, such as Nicaragua | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. SOUTH ASIA, such as Afghanistan    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. EASTERN EUROPE, such as Yugoslavia | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J. PACIFIC BASIN, such as Fiji        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| K. UNITED STATES                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

4. If it were necessary to eliminate coverage of three of the above which would they be?  
 A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  J  K

5. Please indicate your feelings about the editorial content of SOF. For each item, be sure to check the box that best reflects your opinion:

- |                             | AGREE                    | DISAGREE                 | NO OPINION               |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. GOOD WRITERS             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. BELIEVABLE               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. TOO CONSERVATIVE         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. TOO DRY                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. TOO SERIOUS              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. ENTERTAINING             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. INFORMATIVE              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. ACCURATE                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. TOO "AGGRESSIVE" IN TONE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J. TIMELY                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| K. TOO DETAILED             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| L. NOT SUBSTANTIVE ENOUGH   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Indicate your feelings about the physical make-up of SOLDIER OF FORTUNE:

- |                                 | ABOVE AVERAGE            | AVERAGE                  | BELOW AVERAGE            | NO OPINION               |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. COVERS                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. PHOTOGRAPHY                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. TYPE READABILITY             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. LAYOUTS                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. PHOTO CAPTIONS               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. USE OF COLOR                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. USE OF CHARTS, GRAPHS & MAPS | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

7. Are you satisfied with the current mix of photos and text in SOF?  
 Yes  No  More Photos  More Text

8. Of our feature articles this month, please indicate your level of interest in each:

- |                                     | HIGH INTEREST            | SOME INTEREST            | NO INTEREST              |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. PERSONALITY PROFILE: JOHN MILIUS | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. PHILIPPINES                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. SMOKE JUMPERS                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. MIDDLE EAST                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. MEDELLIN COPS                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. ERITREA                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. RANGERS IN VIETNAM               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. GRENADE SMUGGLING                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. SHADOW VOICES                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| J. SOF 3-GUN MATCH                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| K. SMITH & WESSON .45 CALIBER       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. If it were necessary to eliminate coverage of three of the above which would they be?  
 A  B  C  D  E  F  G  H  I  J  K

10. Indicate your interest in SOF staff coverage of:

- |  | HIGH INTEREST            | SOME INTEREST            | NO INTEREST              |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. SOF training teams                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. Freedom fighter assistance                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. SOF's staff coverage of combat situations | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

11. Which COLUMNS do you read and enjoy the most in SOLDIER OF FORTUNE?

- |                     | HIGH INTEREST            | SOME INTEREST            | NO INTEREST              |
|---------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. COMBAT CRAFT     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. IN REVIEW        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. I WAS THERE      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. FLAK             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. WORLD SITREP     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. BULLETIN BOARD   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| G. COMMAND GUIDANCE | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| H. AQM              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I. FULL AUTO        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12. What KINDS OF WEAPONS would you most like to see SOLDIER OF FORTUNE Magazine evaluate in the future?

- |   | HIGH INTEREST            | SOME INTEREST            | NO INTEREST              |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| A. SELF-DEFENSE HANDGUNS                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| B. COMBAT SHOTGUNS                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| C. MILITARY-TYPE RIFLES                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| D. FULL AUTO WEAPONS                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| E. SPORTING & HUNTING FIREARMS                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| F. MAJOR MILITARY SYSTEMS (aircraft, armor, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

13. Overall, do you think SOLDIER OF FORTUNE's weapons evaluations have been (check one):

TOO TECHNICAL  ABOUT RIGHT  NOT TECHNICAL ENOUGH

14. What are the one or two main things that keep you as a valued reader? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

15. If you had to think of one or two things that SOLDIER OF FORTUNE is simply not doing very well, what would they be? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Any other advice or suggestions? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your city \_\_\_\_\_ Your state \_\_\_\_\_

Thanks again,

*Robert K. Brown*

FIRST FOLD DOWN ↓

---

SECOND FOLD UP ↑

---

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

**SOF Survey  
P.O. Box 693  
Boulder, CO 80306**

**Fold twice and tape to seal. DO NOT STAPLE.**

## POLICE BEAT

Continued from page 55

why this woman, who stayed to herself, living quietly alone, would be brutally murdered.

"Sometimes sicarios have to kill someone at random, or even a family member or friend, as a test before they are contracted to do a hit. Maybe this was the motive here," speculated a uniformed agent.

As I took notes, a wiry man with glasses and curly black hair berated me. "You gringos only watch. But you don't do anything to help us. You colonial imperialists just want to exploit us while our people die," he said, seething. "Why don't you give us the resources to put an end to this." This man was a judge's secretary also investigating the murder.

"Please help us stop these boys," begged an old lady to me, referring to the sicarios, as the body of the murder victim was taken on a stretcher to an ambulance.

"Come on, let's go," Cpl. Molina said, putting his arm around my shoulder. "We see this every day. It's tough. But someone has to do the job," he told me.

The next day I accompanied plainclothes detectives searching houses and suspects for drugs and weapons in poor and working-class barrios, but we found nothing. What we were looking for were small scale mom and pop "kitchens" and distributors who cater to consumers of basuco, the Colombian version of crack that sells for as low as 35 cents per cigarette on the streets of Medellin.

But it seems that the cartel is now shifting part of its production operations from big jungle labs, which have been increasingly located and destroyed by security forces, to small labs in Medellin's urban wilderness to keep the authorities off balance. Many mom and pop kitchens will likely be incorporated.

In the last couple of years record seizures of cocaine have been made. But it remains to be seen if the war on cocaine is being won. One point cannot be denied: The Colombian security forces have hurt the drug cartels.

"Despite [the fact] that the national police have lost a considerable amount of their men, the same has happened with the elements working for the cartels," says Lt. Col. Rodriguez. "They have felt considerable casualties, important captures. They have been dislocated a little in their operations. And, at least, they don't carry on as they used to do, showing off their properties, their luxury vehicles, imposing their own rule."

Steve Salisbury is SOF's Senior Foreign Correspondent. He lives in Guatemala and has filed numerous stories from Central and South America for SOF. ✉



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## PHILIPPINES

Continued from page 35

techniques — but methods essentially reinvented by Filipino officers themselves through trial and error — to “clear, hold, consolidate, and develop” an area. Largely self-explanatory, these facets of the military’s campaign have spelled trouble for the CPP.

Furthermore, as bad as things are in the Philippines, the functioning of democracy has meant the CPP has been unable to exploit the depressing socio-economic situation. People point to the fact that there is some movement in the right direction, and they are loath to risk their lives for what a ballot can achieve.

This has forced upon the party an increased reliance upon terror and political action, especially on the international scene. The kidnapping drama that was occurring on Negros even as I sat in wait with my ambush patrol must be seen in this context (see “CPP/NPA Kidnapping for the Cause” sidebar).

“It is normal for the enemy to be increasing his use of terror,” Col. Vallejera opines, who has himself survived several NPA assassination attempts. “He [the enemy] is trying to hit back. He must answer back. Unfortunately, the CPP/NPA goes for our weaker links. You cannot expect normal people, or even the police or CAFSU, to be thinking all the time about guerrilla war. They get sloppy, get killed, and the CPP/NPA appears strong.”

Indeed, the communists have specifically sought to hit the militia and leading figures in counter guerrilla mobilization. Only days before my arrival on Negros, the NPA ambushed and killed Ike Ballesteros, an important leader in the “Sugar Development Foundation” (SDF), a planter-funded self-defense fund with a \$3 million per year budget. After Ballesteros’ assassination, his assailants tied his body to his jeep steering wheel and set it ablaze.

“Why would they do that? What was the point?” asks another planter, rhetorically. “Their point is to influence our minds. They are going after those who are active in the SDF, because they need to make it [the SDF] fail. They need people to perceive that it has failed so that they will abandon it.”

This would be quite a blow to the government effort, because the SDF finances virtually one-third of the militia effort. Its 18 “Special CAFGU” units, often savaged by leftists as little more than hired thugs, are now controlled by the army’s elite special forces. They are highly effective, and their loss would cripple the overall militia structure. That, of course, is the CPP’s aim.

### Is Robin Just a Hood?

It may be their aim, but it seems clear that a good many people are willing to risk

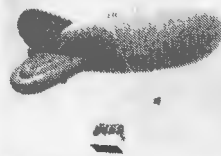
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all to fight the communists. How is it that we never read much about them? This returns us to our second question asked some pages ago.

At the root of the problem lies the widespread acceptance by journalists of what may be termed the "Robin Hood Syndrome" compounded by the "Myth of the Noble Savage." Western culture — hence, Western journalism — is steeped in the first of these: the people of Nottingham revolted only because the evil sheriff drove them beyond endurance. Robin, their champion, took from the rich to give to the poor. Peasant rebellion, it is felt, must be of the same genre. All we need do is find the evil sheriff, and we will have our villain. Need it be said that it is invariably the government that is so singled out?

Added to this is another Western element, one which seems particularly strong in America, that of the "noble savage." Drawing its roots here, in large part, from romantic notions of the American Plains Indians, this body of thought holds that those who live on the land are a finer specimen of humanity than the rest of us. They exist, so we are told, in harmony with nature, husband scarce natural resources, and are possessed of profound wisdom. Consequently, if these individuals (read, peasants) are in revolt, something must be rotten.

Combined, these two ideas would be witch's brew enough. But in the Philippines the product has achieved further potency

due to the cultural role played by Christianity, in particular aspects of liberation theology which view all differences of income distribution in structural terms. Inequity, it is claimed, is necessarily evil and *should* spark revolt.

Interpretation of reality, therefore, becomes not a matter for objective judgment but a morality play. To deny the image of the crucified peasantry is to deny the search for justice. The analyst is all but precluded from asking whether Robin is just a hood, or whether the savage is really noble. More fundamentally, could he be just savage?

At no time has this question been so important as now, because the CPP — as I have already noted — is not only engaging, tactically, in widespread terror but is also, strategically, on the ropes. The immediate bloodshed obscures the more long-term, lasting change for the better.

Though development in all its facets is proceeding fitfully, what keeps the process going is the democratic structure, with officials in an admittedly imperfect federal structure striving to meet the demands of their constituents. While structural inequity remains a profound reality — and an underpinning of the Robin Hood/Noble Savage analysis — imperfection matters little in the popular mind so long as there is a perceived movement toward justice. As the residents of the CHICKS area can give witness, all things are relative. The CPP has demonstrated conclusively to many that it

has become but a group of hoods who are savage.

Tom Marks is SOF's Chief Foreign Correspondent. ✕

## SHADOW VOICES

Continued from page 66

American National Foundation's "Voz de Fundacion" airs over WHRI in Indiana, which also airs "La Voz de Alpha 66," the program of the Alpha 66 movement (see "Alpha 66," SOF, Nov. '90). One anti-Castro broadcaster is a mystery: Radio Caiman (alligator) is a professional operation, with transmitters believed to be in Guatemala. It never names the organization behind it.

Another mystery station was Radio Impacto, supposedly a legitimate commercial broadcaster in San Jose, Costa Rica. Radio Impacto aired few commercials, but devoted much time to anti-Sandinista and anti-Noriega programming. The station closed down in 1990, saying it had accomplished its mission. Many who follow the clandestine broadcasting scene believe it was CIA funded, if not actually CIA operated.

Other clandestine broadcasters are active in and near such places as Sri Lanka, Burma, Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Libya,



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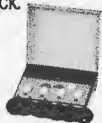
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The Soviet Union has recently reduced its involvement in clandestine radio. The departure of the Pinochet government in Chile brought the end of two anti-Chilean government programs that had aired over Radio Moscow. Earlier, support was removed for broadcasts of the Turkish Communist Party. The USSR's efforts with anti-China broadcasts also has been cut back.

### As a Spectator Sport

Readers with shortwave receivers can tune in on a number of these broadcasts and get a varied earful of this never-ending war of the airwaves (see "A Sampling of Clandestine Broadcasters" sidebar). Many clandestine broadcasters can be heard in North America only occasionally, and few broadcast in English.

No matter what the orientation of a clandestine broadcaster and its backers, all such stations play an important role in achieving their goals. They provide information (and disinformation). They build morale for their side, and sow discontent and confusion among the enemy. Sometimes they fail and slink away, perhaps vanishing forever, or perhaps only until their cause is strong enough to try again. Sometimes arguments are settled and the broadcasts cease. And sometimes they win, to emerge from the shadows and ride with the victors into the capital.

Either way, these secret voices play a serious game, a game unconcerned with commercials or call-in contests. They are concerned with who's going to end up running a nation. Radio's power to help those on the outside get to be king of the hill has been demonstrated endlessly through the last 50 years. And it will continue to be.

When the nightly news tells us about the world's newest hot spot, you can be sure there are already voices there, speaking from the shadows.

*Gerry Dexter is a Wisconsin-based freelance writer who specializes in radio and covert operations.*

## SAMURAI DIRECTOR

*Continued from page 29*

beat," he said. Milius acknowledges that ultimately history is usually written only in military terms.

In *Intruder* this becomes patently clear when the all out bombing of Vietnam is not ordered until the renegade pilot, Jake Grafton, stages his own private attack on the infamous SAM City missile area.

Milius always looks at both sides of the conflict though. His agent once asked him what he thought of the Colombian cartel causing so much armed upheaval. After

first suggesting sending in the Marines and mopping up the survivors with bombers, he paused thoughtfully and grinned. "But you know I kind of like these guys in a way. I don't like what they do, selling dope. But I like their panache. I mean they were just a bunch of peasants who found a way to make an incredible amount of bread and now the rest of the world wants to take it away from them."

This looking at both sides of battling warriors is often reflected dramatically in Milius' films. The Cuban colonel in *Red Dawn* who understands the American resistance and only wishes to return to his wife and home. The obvious similarities between President Theodore Roosevelt and the Berber chieftain Raisuli, in *The Wind and the Lion*. Milius's Roosevelt makes a wonderful admission that often your enemies are the only real luxury a political leader may have.

Hopefully we will be seeing John Milius's brand of film making for years to come, that is unless his one nightmare catches up with him. It seems he dreamed he was on trial for war crimes. Perhaps Jane Fonda was the prosecuting attorney and liberal film critic Pauline Kael the judge, God knows who was on the jury. Genghis Khan spoke on his behalf and friend Spielberg was brought to the stand as a character witness. In the end, however, the jury found him guilty anyway. Perhaps he was sentenced to endlessly view Comrade Fonda's films until the end of time. Milius smiles at the thought, like the prisoners in *The Great Escape*, you know in his dreams he'll break out to fight back with film on another day.

## AFRICA'S LOST WAR

*Continued from page 81*

I was taken to the forward positions. There, snipers patiently waited in trenches and dugouts for movement from the other side. One youngster had accounted for 57 kills over the past three months.

The fighters were lightly equipped with captured Soviet AKs and four or five magazines apiece. (In battle, they carried an additional 200-300 rounds.) Many carried sidearms and stick grenades in a belt manufactured from Ethiopian army boot leather. Some sported Soviet bush hats and Ethiopian combat jackets. Others were dressed in khaki shirt, shorts and canvas gaiters. Everyone wore locally produced black plastic sandals — the only concession to uniformity that I could see.

There was little point in our hanging around. As dusk approached, we made our uneventful way back to the fire support line.

Apart from a few incoming shells which landed somewhere on our right flank, 25 August would pass peacefully — or so we thought. We left the area late in the

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## 7 Ways Slick 50 Can Save You Money and Increase Reliability

Although individual results may vary, tests have shown that Slick 50 effectively:

1. Reduces gas consumption.
2. Prolongs battery life by decreasing drag on starter, resulting in less amperage being required for start-up. (Makes cold weather starts faster and easier.)
3. Helps extend the life of internal metal, mechanical engine parts.
4. Lowers peak engine operating temperatures, helping to prevent overheating and oil breakdown even under the most demanding conditions.
5. Increases horsepower and compression (especially important for small economy cars and large RVs).
6. Lowers maintenance costs, reduces repairs, and minimizes or eliminates costly overhauls.
7. Makes an automobile last longer and keeps its resale value high.

## How to Conquer Your Engine's #1 Enemy—Lubrication Starvation

Slick 50 is a metal treatment that bonds actuated PTFE to all mechanical moving engine parts, creating a strong, durable, lasting, dry-film protective coating that provides full-time lubrication even when there is insufficient oil on the parts like at start-up and when engine heat has broken down the oil. Instead of metal rubbing against metal, PTFE glides against PTFE, reducing friction and wear. It is this unique ability of Slick 50 to dramatically reduce friction that's responsible for its cutting engine wear by 50% or more.

## Most Often Asked Questions About Slick 50

### How is Slick 50 applied?

Slick 50 is easy to use. At your next oil and filter change, simply substitute one quart of Slick 50 for one quart of new oil being added. Drive the car for 30 minutes, and leave Slick 50 in the crankcase. As the engine operates, the oil will carry Slick 50 throughout the engine where it bonds to the porous metal surfaces.

### Does it have to be used with every oil change?

Certainly not. One treatment with Slick 50 provides anti-wear protection for more than 50,000 miles. It remains bonded to the engine parts no matter how many times the oil is changed.



- INCREASE POWER
- IMPROVE PERFORMANCE
- SAVE THOUSANDS OF \$\$\$ ON REPAIR BILLS, MAINTENANCE & OVERHAULS

■ The premiere EPA-recognized engine and lubricant testing lab in the U.S. conducted a strictly-controlled experiment using industry standard ASTM procedures. They found that a Slick 50-treated engine showed 50% less engine wear than an untreated engine and fuel consumption was reduced. To our knowledge, it is the only product of its kind to pass the punishing wear reduction tests conducted by an EPA-approved lab using nationally accepted ASTM standard procedures.

■ The Automotive Services Council for Pennsylvania torture-tested Slick 50 and televised the astounding results on WTVE. Three cars, with 75,000 to 129,000 miles on their odometers, were treated with Slick 50. Six months later, the oil was drained from each vehicle, and the cars were driven, without the oil plugs, for about a half hour. The water temperature never rose, and the engines sustained no apparent damage.

## Testimonials

### ■ Increased Power Wins Races

*Dirt track champion, winner of over 40 modified stock car feature racing events and recent winner of 11 races in 15 starts, says: "We've tested lots of products and found Slick 50 to be the best there is. It allows us to push the car to the limit and not be worried about hurting the motor."*

Andy Belmont, NASCAR "Rookie of the Year"  
National Champion NASCAR  
Charlotte/Daytona Dash Series

### ■ Increased Gas Mileage by 20% ■ Fewer Repairs & No Major Breakdowns in 200,000-Mile-Plus Fleet Vehicles

*"Our newspaper has a fleet of 65 vehicles that have been completely treated with Slick 50 products, including engines, automatic or manual transmissions and differential drive gear boxes. As a result of the treatment, gasoline mileage increased by 20%, and engine breakdown decreased tremendously."*

### ■ Eliminated Repairs on Police Cars ■ Fuel Savings

*"Thank you for the cost-effective, budget-saving benefits of Slick 50 engine treatment. I bought the product about four years ago for treating our city police cars. Since that time, we are happy to say, all car engines have been virtually trouble free. They haven't needed any repairs at all. Also our fuel savings have been noticeable."*

## Money-Back Guarantee

Now your car can run better, faster, quieter, smoother, and last longer than ever before. And you could easily save thousands of dollars in gasoline, maintenance, and repair bills. Find out for yourself why over 15-million people are excited about Slick 50. We're so sure you'll be excited too, that we offer a 100% money-back guarantee. Call or write today.

### 100% Money-Back Guarantee Order Form

Yes, I want to extend the life of my engine, improve performance, and save money. Rush me risk free:

One quart of Slick 50 at \$29.95 plus \$3.95 shipping & handling.  
 Two quarts of Slick 50 at \$59.90. Free shipping.

Enclosed is my:  Check  Money order  Visa  MasterCard  
 Please make your check or money order payable to SLICK 50. California residents add \$2.02 per quart sales tax.

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

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### Does Slick 50 have any affect on automobile warranties?

No. The use of Slick 50 does not in any way affect a car's warranty. Petrolon, the manufacturers of Slick 50, has letters on file from automobile and engine manufacturers to document that fact. Slick 50 carrier oil meets or exceeds all specifications that Detroit applies to products added to an engine. New engines need at least a 3- to 4-thousand mile burnishing-in period. Slick 50 should not be added until the first oil change.

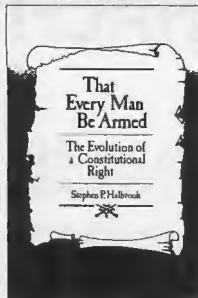
## Internationally-Recognized Labs Unanimously Agree on Slick 50 Benefits

■ **Consumer's Digest Magazine** in the March/April 1982 issue, stated: "We were somewhat skeptical at first, but it turns out that Slick 50 does exactly what Petrolon, the manufacturer, claims it does. In fact, the more we looked, the more facts stacked up on the product's side. The substance does, in fact, suspend the oil and will adhere to engine parts. The process by which this is accomplished is a closely-guarded secret.... Slick 50 does reduce engine heat and ordinary wear, and our informal tests indicate that it will improve gas mileage by about 2 or 3 miles per gallon."

■ **TUV, the West German equivalent of our Underwriter's Laboratories and foremost automotive testing authority in Europe**, found substantial increases in both gas mileage and horsepower resulting from a reduction in friction.

■ **Nordisk Motor Test Center, Sweden's most advanced motor-testing facility**, reported a 10% to 17% decrease in fuel consumption and attributes to Slick 50, "better sealed engines, performance increases and cleaner exhaust."

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afternoon, unaware that the Ethiopians had mounted an offensive to recapture lost ground west of Decamere (our original choice of destination). According to an EPLF radio bulletin, the Ethiopians lost 1,800 men. While this was going on, the air force bombed two villages south of Decamere, at Mai Edaga and Adi Ba'ikel.

The next day, we visited the coastal region of Afta, Zula and Foro so that I could take some pictures of everyday life, away from the front. On the way to Foro, near a village called Ungha, we were obliged to head across country to get to an elevated road. When it was discovered that the incline was too steep for the Toyota, Goytom decided to climb the slope and wait until we found a way to the road. We drove several kilometers before finding an opening. Later, the locals politely inquired whether or not we knew that our route had taken us through a mine field. Goytom must have been possessed by some kind of sixth sense. That, or he had a very sick sense of humor.

### Celebration and the Long Road Home

After Foro, we headed north, pausing again at Massawa before continuing to Afabet, Nakfa and, finally, Orot, which we reached on 30 August. While at Orot, we learned that on the 27th the Ethiopians had thrown four battalions against the EPLF at Ghinda, either side of where we had stayed just two days previously. EPLF radio claimed that 200 enemy died, while another 250 were wounded. More than 100 "light weapons" were seized.

On 31 August, Eritrea prepared to celebrate the 29th anniversary of its struggle. At midnight, amidst much dancing and singing, countless AKs were fired into the air, the red tracer arcing lazily over the moonlit hills ringing Orot.

I left Eritrea soon after. Six days of extreme boredom followed in Port Sudan. Sudan Air was unable to provide a single aircraft to transport a growing crowd of very disgruntled ticket holders to Khartoum. Someone claimed that mechanical problems had grounded all but one machine, which was required for external flights. Others blamed fuel shortages due to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

Whatever the reason, I was left with no option other than to purchase a seat on an antiquated, dangerously overcrowded bus for what should have been a 12-hour trip. It took 24 hours, and was one of the most frightening journeys I have ever experienced. The bus had a twisted chassis that made it seem as though we were aiming directly at oncoming vehicles, some of which obviously had their own chassis problems. I was genuinely surprised when we finally reached our destination.

As soon as I was booked into a hotel, I contacted the Eritrean Relief Association (ERA) for an update on the war situation. I already knew that the Ethiopian air force had bombed a food convoy at Tessenei in western Eritrea on 31 August, damaging

one vehicle. I was also aware that on 4 September, Massawa had been bombed. I was becoming used to hearing about events I had missed. I was dismayed, however, when told that on 8 September, while I was kicking my heels up in Port Sudan, that the Ethiopians had launched a major offensive along the Asmara front. Five days later, the battle was still raging.

Had I known in time, I could have been back in Eritrea within 24 hours. Now, there was nothing I could do. The next "scheduled" flight to Port Sudan was not until 18 September. By the time I arrived in Eritrea, the action would probably be over. Regrettably, I had to accept that I was not destined to witness what may be one of the big offensives of the war.

I later discovered that the Ethiopian offensive which began on 8 September lasted several days before it was crushed. Then, at the end of September, the Ethiopians again attacked Decamere, this time with three divisions. This attack also failed, with Ethiopian losses estimated at 11,000.

A few days later, however, I did manage to get within 6 or 7 miles of Asmara. I was in a Boeing 707 at the time, overflying the city en route to Harare. As I gazed at the mountains far below, it was difficult to believe that I had driven and walked across that very same terrain. It was even harder to imagine that a vicious war was being waged down there. From where I sat, it all looked so deceptively peaceful.

The other passengers barely glanced at the passing scenery. To them, it was just another range of mountains somewhere in East Africa — unrelenting, monotonous and hardly worth a glance. I know a few thousand Eritreans who would beg to differ.

*Frank Noble is an Australia-based photo-journalist. He previously served with Britain's Royal Marines and has published numerous articles.* ✕

## FULL AUTO

Continued from page 24

sors are not used for clandestine operations, although they unfairly still carry the public stigma created by the National Firearms Act of 1934 — as do machine guns. Most are employed by those would like to shoot without ear protection and others who wish to shoot indoors or in outdoor areas where noise will disturb either neighbors or game animals. They can be obtained without regulation or restriction throughout most of the world.

Compact, lightweight, easy to maintain and possessing a high degree of sound reduction efficiency, the Warp 6 establishes itself as the 9mm sound suppressor against which all others must be judged. ✕

# ANOTHER PEACETIME CASUALTY.

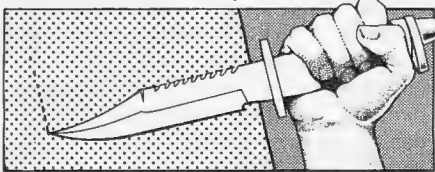
You don't have to be in the service to appreciate a good boot. But it helps.

*We don't cement our EVA midsoles and Vibram® outsoles to the uppers, we stitch them. That way they can be resoled some day.*

Thirty-mile forced marches, maneuvers in Alaska—it's familiar territory to a company that began outfitting loggers and trappers 54 years ago.

So we weren't surprised to hear a while back that some lieutenants from Fort Lewis were buying our boots and dyeing them.

"Why don't you make these in black?" they asked.



*Our 1000 denier Cordura® nylon insets have ten times the tensile strength of leather. And less than half the weight.*

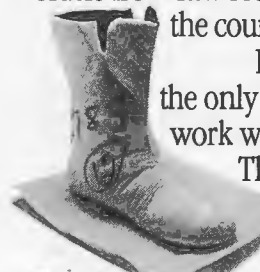
That sounded like an order to us, so we had our full-grain leather tanned black inside and out (that way it doesn't show white at the seams), cut it



*One firefighter said our "insulate" insulation was so good he couldn't tell his boots were on fire.*

two inches taller at the top (so you can tuck your pants in), and added D-rings (for dress wear).

And now we're even taking orders from raw recruits. All over the country.



*We were the ones who invented the waterproof Gore-Tex™ liner seven years ago.*

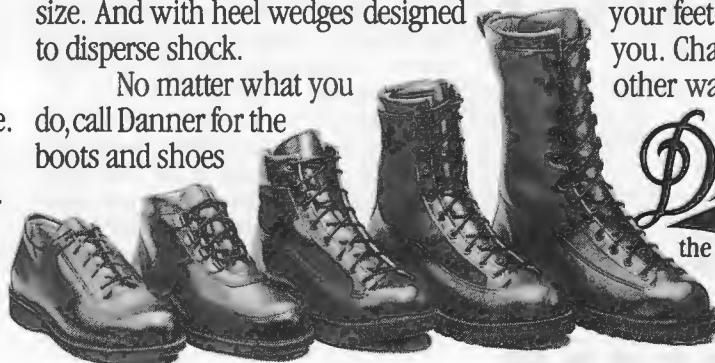
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## SMOKE JUMPERS

Continued from page 39

allotted seven minutes.

My drive home took me near the fire site and from the road I could see billows of smoke rising from a steep hillside. I spotted the DeHavilland returning to base, and saw an "air attack" plane circling. Now knowing what to expect, I waited a bit and then saw a PBY Catalina lumbering toward the blaze. It vanished into the smoke, and then emerged, dumping thousands of gallons of water onto the flames. Churning back to the nearby Columbia River, the PBY found a straight stretch and went down, scooping up thousands of more gallons without stopping, and then headed back for a second pass. I couldn't see them, but I assume that the eight smoke jumpers from the Northern Cascades base were on the ground, digging their fire trails. The hillside was very steep and nasty looking, and I hoped that none of them had "treed-up" or come to grief on landing. At least, I thought from my roadside vantage point, they won't have a long pack-out.

*Applicants must meet the physical criteria mentioned, complete form SF 171 which is obtainable from Forest Service offices or from a Post Office, and send it to a regional personnel officer — address also obtainable from the Forest Service. Applications must be made between 1 December and 15 January of each year.*

*A veteran of many African wars, Contributing Editor Bob MacKenzie spends a great deal of time covering world hotspots for SOF. This assignment gave him an opportunity to cover a "hotspot" in his own Northwest backyard. ✕*

## DESERT SHOOTOUT

Continued from page 43

down, would have a most adverse effect on your score. The ability to coordinate your efforts was decisive at this stage.

Stage 7 was another team stage, straightforward in concept and devilishly difficult to pull off without a hitch. All four team members positioned themselves behind a wall, about 6-feet wide by 4-feet high. Three men were equipped with rifles and one man with his pistol only. On the other side of the wall were numerous knockdown targets (10-inch plates), situated in groups located between 50 and 200 yards from the wall. I can't tell you how many targets there were, but it was a substantial number (as somebody probably said at the Little Big Horn, "It's your job to shoot 'em, not count 'em"). At the start signal, all team members would pop up from behind the wall and engage the targets as rapidly as possible. A stop plate concluded the stage.

What would ensue rapidly upon the start

of firing was an impressive cloud of dust, capable of obscuring the targets totally. Teams that failed to assign a specific area of individual responsibility got into trouble, and were forced to waste valuable time waiting for the clouds of dust to dissipate before re-engaging their targets. It was all too easy to shoot the stop plate while a target remained upright. This stage demanded teamwork and was truly worthy of the name "team stage."

All of the stages were excellent, and the whole match just gets better with each passing year. The one downside to this match was the forced absence of several military teams whose members have been deployed to Saudi Arabia. We missed their participation, but we have no doubt that they'll be winners in their present assignment.

All of the SOF Convention activities are open to match shooters, including seminars, special events, and a products exhibit you have to see to believe. Those individuals who claim that there is "no legitimate sporting use" for certain types of firearms should get their heads out, and into the sunshine of Las Vegas this coming September to witness an event that brings together law enforcement, military and top-ranked civilian shooters from around the world. For those of you who enjoy great shooting competition, don't miss the World Championship Soldier of Fortune Three-Gun International Tactical Shooting Match. It doesn't get any better than this!

*Bill Burris served in Vietnam as a medic and clinical specialist, in El Salvador as trainer for Refugee Relief International, and now works as a Pierce County Deputy Sheriff in Washington state, where he also conducts firearms training statewide for the Criminal Justice Training Commission, as well as under the auspices of his own company, Delta International. He has participated in the last five SOF Three-Gun matches. ✕*

## BIG BOOMER

Continued from page 70

between its covers.

Andrews' quality and craftsmanship are top drawer. The quality of the leather, cutting, shaping, stitching, embossing, carving and finishing are all above reproach. Sam also has a superb line of western rigs, shoulder holsters, IPSC rigs, and combat belt holsters. I predict he will shortly be highly regarded by those who pack professionally.

SOF's test and evaluation of the S&W Model 4516-1 included firing more than 1,000 rounds of assorted .45 ACP ammunition. The lots assembled for this test were Black Hills 185-grain Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) and 230-grain Full Metal Jacket (FMJ), GI 230-grain FMJ (head-

stamped WCC 42), commercial 230-grain FMJ of 1930s vintage (headstamped REM-UMC 45 AUTO) and reloads with 230-grain cast roundnose bullets propelled by 6.3 grains of Hercules Unique. Cartridges travel from the Model 4516-1's magazine into the chamber almost in a direct line, leaving the magazine at the conventional approach angle but with the bullet's nose well above the barrel's feed ramp. There were no stoppages of any type during SOF's tests of this handgun. Empty cases are ejected to the right through the slide's large ejection port and generally fall to the ground 4-5 feet from the shooter.

All of the ammunition used in our test shot to the point of aim and no adjustment of the sights was required. When fired from the Weaver stance at a distance of 7 yards the Model 4516-1 will print five-shot groups with a dispersion of no greater than 1 inch. "Hammers" (or "double taps" as they are also called), fired with the first shot double-action, consistently resulted in two torso hits not more than 2-3 inches apart whenever the shooter maintained a proper Weaver hold and re-acquired a correct "flash" front sight picture. Perceived recoil is no greater or less than that generated by any other handgun in this weight class chambered for the .45 ACP cartridge.

Roundnose FMJ .45 ACP bullets do not yaw more than about 5 degrees in soft tissue and will penetrate to a depth of more than 26 inches without expansion. A better choice for those not constrained by the

Hague Convention is the 185-grain JHP available from Black Hills Ammunition (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 5070, Rapid City, SD 57709, phone: (605) 348-5150). Averaging only 900 fps out of the Model 4516-1's 3 1/2 barrel, this bullet will penetrate from 14 to 17 inches of soft tissue, depending upon the amount of expansion, which varies from .57 to .68 caliber (as expansion increases, penetration decreases). That's exactly the kind of performance we are looking for from an effective handgun bullet and I recommend the Black Hills 185-grain JHP .45 ACP load highly.

Those committed to both double-action semiautos and the .45 ACP cartridge would be well served by Smith & Wesson's robust and reliable Model 4516-1. I have only minor criticisms of this handgun, some of which can be corrected by the user. For deep concealment I would like to see S&W offer this pistol with a lightweight aluminum alloy frame. The suggested retail price is \$714, complete with two magazines. ✕

units, all our missions were combat (not recon) patrols. We also had an advantage over Special Forces patrol units. Although we had similar missions, ours were less "hairy" because we worked closer to our air support and we had fewer language/ethnic/training barriers to overcome with indigenous personnel.

I'm sure there are readers who have just as good reasons why their unit was number one and maybe it's best that we'll never really know who had the highest kill-ratio — it'd deflate our war stories. But, I must confess that I still suffer from unitcentric pride when it comes to Charlie Rangers — we were the very best; the bravest of the brave. I also readily admit we did far more damage by calling in our big brothers from the sky than we did ourselves. The most important point is our techniques were effective and worth sharing.

### Find, Fix, Kill and Exfil

Patrolling is a lot like hunting: sometimes you get the bear, sometimes the bear gets you, and many times you don't get anything at all. Actual combat isn't like anything from Hollywood — real war is tense boredom interrupted by bursts of intense excitement. Nevertheless, we always went hunting loaded for bear; our job was find, fix, kill and exfil(trate).

Our area of operation (AO) normally consisted of six "grid squares" (square kilometers) of rugged mountains that were often blanketed by dense triple-canopy

## "WE KILL FOR FUN"

Continued from page 63

moved around more than our sister Ranger companies and this meant we didn't overwork areas and lose the element of surprise. In addition, unlike most Ranger

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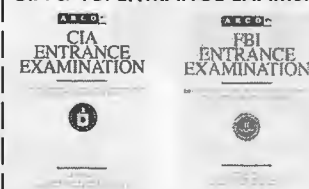


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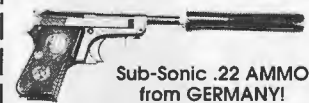
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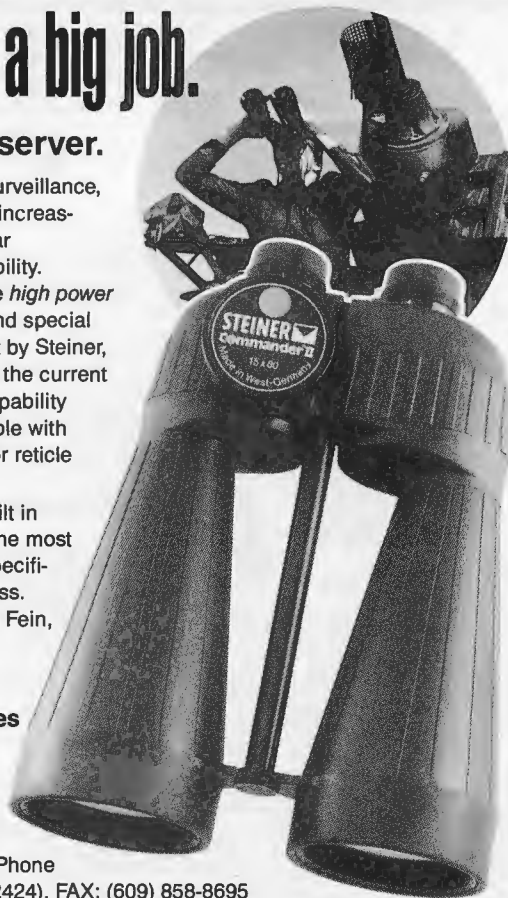
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jungle. We were required to recon the AO for three days and then were permitted to set up an ambush. We searched areas in which Americans had not operated in years, if ever. Sometimes we found the enemy but sometimes there was no enemy to be found. When we did find him, we almost always had the element of surprise.

The NVA made a habit of hiding in deep hollows that had the convenience of water. LeMunyon and I made a habit of killing them at their watering spots. By infiltrating (infilling) high on the mountains and then moving down toward the valley streams, we back-doored the northern invaders. This technique usually enabled us to surprise the enemy. It also made for ease of movement, added distance to grenade throws, and gave us a dimension for escape — up. The disadvantage, of course, was running uphill. The grenade toss advantage compensated for this and it is better to run back up than to run down a valley where there is a strong likelihood of meeting more enemy.

We were camoed to the max: our camouflage-painted hands and faces were complemented by camouflaged uniforms; even our weapons were camouflaged. The pointman carried a CAR15, a smaller version of the M16 rifle. The rest of us had M16s; one had a silencer that fired “subsonic” rounds. Most of us carried backup pistols. One man wore a makeshift holster that contained an M79 grenade launcher with the sights removed and the stock sawed off at the grip.

Even with 80-pound loads, we moved like athletes on a playing field. Deliberate and sure, we weaved and glided through the undergrowth. In the jungle, sound is more important than sight; both to predator and to prey. And like a pride of stalking carnivores, we moved in predatory silence. The NVA were quite noisy in areas they deemed safe and it was easy to find them and then fix and kill them with ambushes, air strikes, or artillery. Sometimes regular infantry would be brought in for a “pile on” exploitation of our contacts.

We never, ever traveled on trails unless we were looking for trouble or seeking an ambush site. We liked to travel through thick stuff; no one ever got ambushed in a briar patch. We always spent the night in the worst place possible; no one found us by accident.

We could call long range air strikes and artillery with impunity but since we had only five or six men, we usually ran after visual contact. The NVA often chased us and we used CS grenades to break contact. CS is a riot control agent that causes tears, choking, and sometimes vomiting. To inhibit pursuit after ambushes, CS grenades were also daisy-chained to the claymore mines in the security zones. On rare occasions it was also used in the kill zone. The gas is heavier than air and hugs the ground. Anyone fortunate enough not to be killed in the ambush is guaranteed to be breathing hard and CS will make a man

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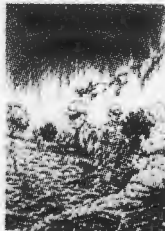


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involuntarily bolt and thus easy to shoot. We had to be careful because the wind can cause the gas to "return to sender."

We also used white phosphorus (WP) grenades to break contact and sometimes employed them in ambushes. WP grenades burst into small fragments that continue burning until they run out of oxygen. "Willy Pete" will make a man stand up and holler.

We regarded each man as a future team leader and as a patrol leader. I took my job as teacher quite seriously. The turnover rate in any war is high. In Vietnam, it was horrendous (12-month tours being one cause). If a soldier had any talent at all, he'd be some kind of a leader by the end of his tour. Lessons learned had to be passed on or mistakes would be repeated.

## Hell's Angels

In the field, we were disciplined and professional but in the rear, we were more like Hell's Angels than the Long Gray Line. Between missions we drank, whored, fought, and stole. We enjoyed fighting "legs" (non-jumpers) so much that most leg bars were off-limits to Charlie Rangers. Our best fight was an all-out brawl with November Rangers to prove who was the toughest. The Military Police busted the fight before a winner could be determined and both Ranger units united to fight the MPs.

We stole everything we needed from leg units: a bar, mess hall ice boxes, a jeep, building materials, and many other essentials. We did have some integrity; we never robbed individuals and we never took from field units. Whenever possible, we "requisitioned" from the Air Force (those REMFs had more than they needed).

We were unkempt. Many of us had long hair and mustaches and none of us ever shined our boots ("salty" boots were the mark of a field soldier). We wore any type of uniform we desired as long as it was sterile (no name, rank, or identification). Some Rangers proudly displayed necklaces of ears and the collection of knives, daggers, and guns at our formations would have made Pancho Villa blush. Our leaders may have felt about us the way the Duke of Wellington felt about his troops, "I don't know what effect these men will have upon the enemy, but, by God, they frighten me."

Perhaps our leaders were somewhat frightened of us but I think they tolerated many of our antics because we produced body count; killers could be forgiven. It is true that haircuts, starched uniforms, and spit shine have no correlation to fighting; even in defeat, Robert E. Lee's unshod "ragamuffins" outkilled their well-dressed foes 3:1. Nevertheless, Lee insisted on discipline and because Confederate Rangers lacked "order and behavior," Lee had all Ranger units, except Mosby's partisans, disbanded. Unconventional outfits have always attracted rowdys and that may be why, until the Cold War, they



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were only tolerated during conflicts.

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The off-duty appearance and behavior of the "beer and body count" boys certainly didn't bring great credit upon Charlie Rangers nor did it endear us to conventional soldiers. Our leaders tried to bring us in line with fines, reduction in rank, and even 10 days "cool off" time in the slammer. What did we care? We were already in Vietnam.

### Reflections

Since I've become an officer and Christian, I've always wondered what I'd do if fate gave me command of a unit of headhunting hoodlums like Charlie Rangers (a fitting punishment). Killing certainly wouldn't have the same gusto but now I'd fight with greater purpose and would still thrill to the hunt.

As for discipline, I'd use the method of John Mosby, the Gray Ghost: at the slightest infraction — ship 'em out. The one option our leaders never used was to kick us out. The shame of not making the grade is a great enforcer in elite units. Also, in war a man's unit is his home and to be thrown out is to be homeless until he is accepted into another unit. After experiencing the camaraderie of the best, who'd want to go to a conventional outfit? Mosby only had to send a few of his wayward troops back to the trenches and the rest got the message.

I'd be proud to be associated with another unit like Charlie Rangers. In fact, I came back into the Army and have spent a career trying to find something that is a glimmer of C-75. It has been estimated that all the Ranger patrols in Vietnam resulted in 10,000 enemy deaths and that the average ground-to-ground kill ratio of Ranger units was 22:1 (much higher than conventional units); Charlie Rangers kill rate was nearly double the average. We attacked the commies on their own turf and out-guerrilled the guerrilla. After 22 years, my prized possession is still the statement, "I was with Charlie Rangers."


*Major R.B. Anderson was the patrol team leader of Team 1-3 of Charlie Rangers in 1968-69. He later served in Vietnam as an infantry squad leader with C Troop, 7/17 Air Cav. Since his commission in 1974, he has served in a variety of command and staff assignments, including executive officer of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces (Airborne). His awards include: Bronze Star with Valor Device, Combat Infantryman's Badge, Senior Parachutist Badge, Ranger Tab and Special Forces Tab.*

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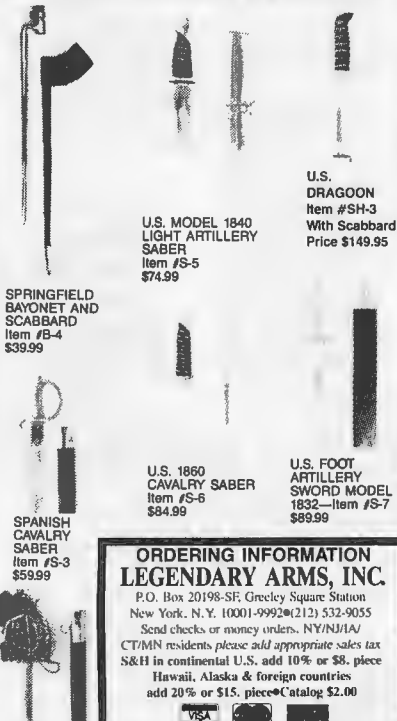
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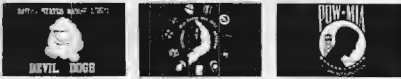
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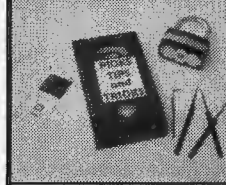
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  3. Beretta AR-70 (SC-70)
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  9. Heckler & Koch HK-91, H-93, HK-94 and PSG-1
  10. MAC 10 and MAC 11
  11. SKS with detachable magazine
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  13. Springfield Armory BM59 and SAR-48
  14. Sterling MK-6 and SAR
  15. Steyr AUG
  16. Valmet M62, M71S and M78
  17. Armalite AR-180 Carbine
  18. Bushmaster Assault Rifle (armgun)
  19. Calico M-900 Assault Carbine
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  22. PJK M-68 Carbine
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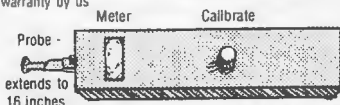
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#111 January 1987: WEAPONS: French FA MAS Bullpup; CENTRAL AMERICA: Tales of a combat correspondent; PHILIPPINES: In the bush with the New People's Army; VIETNAM: Op Apache Snow, the taking of Hamburger Hill; AFRICA: South Africa's native trackers.

#112 February 1987: MARINES: Carlos Hathcock, super sniper; AFRICA—Ethiopia's Eritrean rebels; WEAPONS: H&K clones go full auto; Hungarian AKM; HISTORY—Singlaub with the OSS in the CBI.

#113 March 1987: COMBAT: On the front lines in Mozambique; SOUTH AMERICA: Peru's elusive Shining Path guerrillas; VIETNAM—Lam Son 719, ARVN solo op; WEAPONS: Colt's SMG; Smith & Wesson's big bore .45.

#114 April 1987: MERC OPS: American mercs target Ghana; DOMESTIC AFFAIRS: Bounty hunting in the USA; AFRICA: Elite police unit tracks SWAPO; WEAPONS: Galil's new sniper rifle; ComBloc bayonets; Arcane weapons shoot-out.

#115 May 1987: MERC OPS PART 2: American mercs set sail for coup in Ghana; USA: Modern-day Minutemen battle bureaucracy; VIETNAM: Submarine surface ops support special units; WEAPONS—Colt Cobra .357; Benelli's Super 90.

#116 June 1987: MERC OPS PART 3: Busted and jail bound in Brazil; SOUTH AMERICA: Merc work in Suriname; VIETNAM: POW/MIA private citizen rescue attempts; WAR IN THE SHADOWS: Running guns to Khadafi; WEAPONS: Hungarian High Power; Fighting with folding knives.

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#118 August 1987: COMBAT REPORT: Burmese attack Mon army; SOUTH AMERICA: SOF at rebel HQ in Suriname; CENTRAL AMERICA: On patrol with Guatemalan army; HISTORY: The making of America's 10th Mountain Division; WEAPONS: Ruger's P-85.

#119 September 1987: COMBAT REPORTS: Contra Redeyes down Sandinista chopper; SADF Pathfinders shoot it out with SWAPO; Brit officer corners Omani rebels in Dhofar; WEAPONS: Brits new SA80; SOF T&Es Chinese weapons Pt. 1: Small arms.

#120 October 1987: COMBAT REPORTS: Deep desert raid in Ethiopia; MIDDLE EAST: Motley trains Christian commandos in Lebanon; CENTRAL AMERICA: Guatemalan paras; U.S. Army reserve in Honduras; Invading Nicaragua; WEAPONS: Reeve's superknife; SOF T&Es Chinese weapons Pt. 2: Heavy machine guns.

#121 November 1987: COMBAT REPORTS: Soviets destroy Afghan village; Rhodesia Fireforce callout; USA: Drugs, feds and 'freelancers' in California's emerald triangle; Police battle Indians at Wounded Knee; WEAPONS: Ruger 77/22 with sound suppressor; SOF T&Es Chinese weapons Pt. 3: Submachine guns.

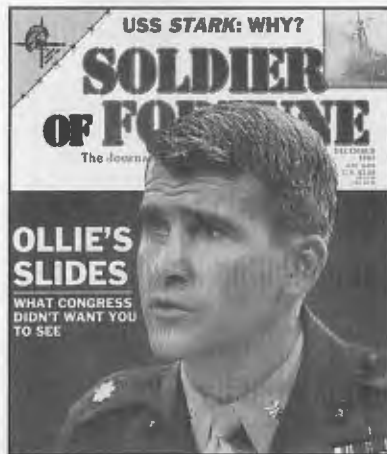
#122 December 1987: USA: Ollie North's secret slide show; ELITE UNITS: British SAS; Spike team in Laos 1968; SOUTH AMERICA—Legionnaires AWOL in Suriname; WEAPONS: Colt .45; Chinese knife pistol; Mossberg M500 shotgun; .38 Specials.

#123 January 1988: USA: Spetsnaz invade America; U.S. Army's 9th Infantry Division; VIETNAM: America's missed opportunity to

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#124 February 1988: AFRICA: Eritrea's fatal females; ELITE UNITS—U.S. Navy SEALs in Libya; VIETNAM: Spike team shot out of Laos; SPAIN: "Foreign" legion for nationals only; WEAPONS: Sandinista foot-poppers; Army's M9 bayonet; SOF T&Es Chinese weapons Pt. 5—General purpose MGs.

#125 March 1988: CAMBODIA: Walking through two ambushes; Living off the jungle; SRI LANKA: Indian troops fail to keep the peace; VIETNAM: NVA meets American secret weapon; Little Larry Dring the great scrounger; WEAPONS: SOF T&Es Chinese weapons Pt. 6: Type 63 rifle and new grenade launcher.



#126 April 1988: AFGHANISTAN: U.S. media spreads disinformation; Four battles that turned the tide; Endgame: Soviets and muj jockey for position; ARA-BIA: Royal Marine leads Omanis through ambush alley; VIETNAM: Two-tour vet flies his last mission over North Vietnam; WEAPONS: SOF T&Es Chinese weapons Pt. 7: Pistols.

#127 May 1988: COMBAT REPORTS: Siege in Angola; On patrol in Philippines; Night battle in Afghanistan; DRUG WAR: Soviets import drugs to western Europe; Bekaa Valley drugs fuel endless conflict; USA: Bragg's Scout Recon and Surveillance Course. VIETNAM: Spectre gunships over Laos.

#128 June 1988: COMBAT REPORTS: Direct Hit on Afghan militia fort; Cleaning up Philippines murder city; American adviser with Salvadoran paras during strike on Guazapa; VIETNAM: la Drang aerial ambush; WEAPONS: Most often used handguns; .45 vs 9mm; Last chapter in SOF's look at Chinese weapons, Pt. 8: hand grenades.

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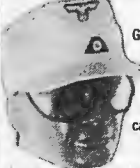


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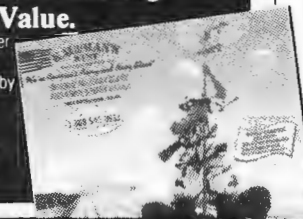
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