



101st Airborne Murders

# SOLDIER OF FORTUNE

SEPTEMBER 1991

48493

**GANDER AIR CRASH  
COVER UP OR NOT  
IN THIS ISSUE OF  
SOLDIER  
OF FORTUNE**

## Assassination

### Should We? Could We?

### War at the Top of the World

### SOF Salvo Sniper School

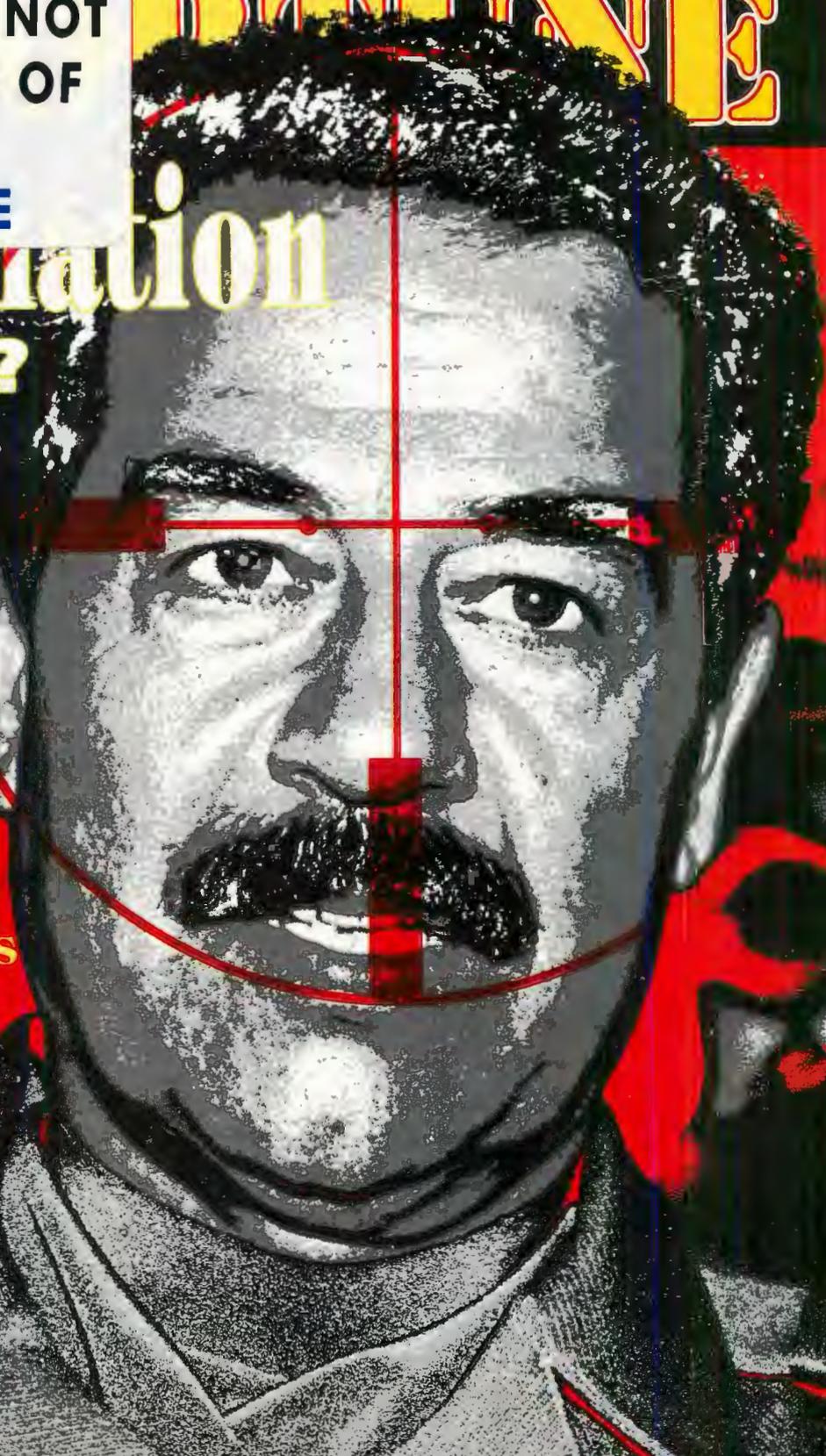
### SOF Interviews Hanoi Hannah

### COPS: Reality of Brutality



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SOLDIER OF FORTUNE  
SEPTEMBER 1991





# 1991 SOF CONVENTION & EXPO

September 18-22, 1991

*Dedicated to the Men & Women of Operation Desert Storm*

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*Battle of the Blades involves cutting a carpet, free hanging rope cut, ballon stab-thru 1/2" drywall, chop thru plywood to reach potato to peel, board pry, hose cut, 2x2 chop, ball stab in water and sharpen pencil signout and knife then must cut paper. Event is timed). Complete information on this event will be forwarded to you prior to Convention.*

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C991

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# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

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**T**HE communist regimes of East-  
ern Europe have collapsed and  
the Soviet Union is disintegrat-  
ing. Liberal Democrats are fin-  
ished as a national political force in this  
country. Sociology departments of Ivy  
League universities are next. Death to  
intellectual tyrants!

Fresh winds of change are blowing  
through the stinking swamp of this  
country's intellectual  
community at long  
last. We need about  
a Force 9 gale to  
really clear it, but 20  
years of stagnant  
"politically correct"  
liberal doctrine is fi-  
nally being ques-  
tioned in such fo-  
rums as *The New  
York Times*. It's  
damn time — SOF  
has been a lonely  
voice questioning  
leftist dogma for 16 years, and we  
appreciate the company. Welcome  
aboard, NYT.

In the past year, such leftist dogma  
as the unilateral disarmament of this  
nation, sanctions against the Republic  
of South Africa, the continued ap-  
peasement of Third World dictators and  
the basic leftist notion that Western  
civilization is intrinsically evil, have  
been increasingly challenged.

Nowhere is new thinking more  
needed than in the gun control debate.  
For years, proponents of gun control  
stated as fact the idea that gun laws  
would reduce crime. This was accepted  
by the media despite hard evidence to  
the contrary. Those fighting gun control  
weren't much stronger intellectually;  
the NRA attacked gun control princi-  
pally as a threat to hunters.

But the Second Amendment has  
nothing to do with hunting and every-  
thing to do with protection against  
tyranny. The intellectual community is  
beginning to recognize this. News pho-

tos of freedom fighters in Lithuania,  
pitifully armed with single-barreled  
shotguns against Soviet Black Berets  
— paratroopers ordered to battle by the  
man who just won the Nobel Peace  
Prize — made the point better than a  
thousand well-reasoned arguments.

The fact that the U.S. Constitution  
protects the right of individuals to keep  
and bear arms for use by a well-  
regulated militia —  
meaning military  
weapons to me —  
must be emphasized  
in the ongoing gun  
control debate. With  
tremendous ad-  
vances in small arms  
technology on the  
horizon, there will be  
an ever-widening  
gap between the  
weaponry available  
to civilians versus  
those available to



military and police forces.

You may think your HK-91 or MP5 is  
real high-speed, but compared to an  
advanced combat rifle firing caseless,  
frangible ammunition at Mach 1 cyclic  
rates, it's pretty tame.

Our military and police forces clearly  
need and deserve the best weapons  
available, because these are the tools  
by which they live or die. But this  
country's long tradition of civilian pos-  
session of military weapons, with some  
obvious and sensible exceptions, is  
fast ending. I'd like to have a Stinger,  
but I understand why I can't.

What I can't accept is the outright  
banning of contemporary individual  
small arms. These are the tools of  
freedom. We must hold the line here. If  
the Brady Bill passes in the Senate, the  
next move at the federal level will be  
against semi-automatic battle rifles.

Pray that we don't end up with a  
president who wins the Nobel Peace  
Prize. ☒

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identified. Payment will be made at rates current at time of publication. Editorial office phone number is 303-449-3750.



## FEATURES



Pakistan — Page 56

Photo: Galen Rowell

**BRUTALITY REALITY** ..... Paul Danish  
When a photographer videotaped L.A. cops beating Rodney King, a chain reaction was set off that will affect law enforcement for years to come. Thousands of good cops tarnished by the incident will, unfortunately, suffer longer — much longer — than Rodney King **24**

**LAW ENFORCEMENT ALLIANCE OF AMERICA** . Paul Danish  
Tired of the criminal justice system not working, law enforcement's "silent majority" gets tough **27**

**FINE ART OF LOOTING** ..... Robert K. Brown  
Not since the *blitzkriegs* of World War II have soldiers been exposed to the volumes of booty left behind by the fleeing Iraqi army. Our own editor/publisher shares the finer points of how to properly plunder your vanquished foe **29**

**"MAGNIFICENT BASTARDS"** ..... Bob Newman  
Iraq's huge army, seasoned by eight years of war with Iran, turned out to be the proverbial paper tiger when faced with stopping the advance of the "Devil Dogs" of the 2/4 Marines **30**

**HANOI HANNAH** ..... Don North  
Dragon lady? Psy-warrior extraordinaire? A journalist and a Marine return to Saigon to interview propoganda radio personality Hanoi Hannah, North Vietnam's version of Tokyo Rose **36**

**ASSASSINATION: COULD WE HAVE HIT SADDAM?** . . . . Neil Livingstone  
One well-placed bullet could have saved more than a hundred American — not to mention hundreds of thousands of Iraqi — lives. Here's why we couldn't do "the obvious" **40**

**DEADLY HOMECOMING** . John Landers  
Arrow Air flight 1285 killed 248 members of the 101st Airborne Division when it crashed in Gander, Newfoundland. Many details of the crash are still a mystery. Why is the government covering up the details of this tragedy? **44**

**SNIPER SCHOOL** . . . . . Peter G. Kokalis  
SOF's technical editor returns to his favorite stomping grounds in El Salvador to train its Special Reaction Team in the finer points of sniping and countersniping **48**



Shot Show — Page 68

Photo: Galen Geer

**SOF HOW TO: FIRING YOUR RPG** . . . . Peter G. Kokalis  
Having trouble hitting what you shoot at with the ol' RPG? It could be your technique is off. SOF's tech editor, using a variant captured in Salvador, instructs on the proper way to fire this ubiquitous weapon **52**



**COLUMNS**



Gander Air Crash — Page 44  
 Photo: J.L. Atlan/Sigma

**PALE SHOOTERS** . . . . . John Kreiger  
 Bob Brown, commander in chief of dubious humor, was worried Peter Kokalis wouldn't let him blow away the nearby microwave relay towers; Kokalis, head disciplinarian, was worried about Bob Brown. It was ... well ... four days in machine-gun hell **55**

**WAR AT THE TOP OF THE WORLD** . . . . . Gary Speer  
 American mountaineers climb into a war zone in Pakistan's towering Karakorum Range, where altitude proves as deadly as armies surrounding them **56**

**BOMBS FOR TOTS** . . . . . Steve Salisbury  
 FMLN improvised *Tepescuintle* "mortars" indiscriminately kill dozens of civilians in El Salvador. The latest toll includes several children **62**

**UPDATE: NAMIBIA ONE YEAR AFTER** . . . . . Jim Hooper  
 One year after independence, Namibia's democratically elected president — a rarity in Africa — has brought his country to the edge of financial ruin. His solution? Muzzle the press so they can't print the truth **63**

**KAWTHOOLEI RECON** . . . . . Peter Bussian  
 On patrol with Karen freedom fighters in the jungles of Burma **64**

**ARMED AND DEADLY** . . . . . Morgan Tanner  
 What does it take to become a DEA agent? Quite a lot, and SOF gives you the details **66**

**SHOT SHOW AND TELL** . . . . . Galen Geer  
 SOF T&Es some of the world's newest and best hunting and outdoor equipment at our annual hunting camp **68**

**FLAK** . . . . . **4**  
 H'mongs in trouble

**Bulletin Board** . . . . . **8**  
 MiG over Key West

**In Review** . . . . . **12**  
*War In Korea*  
*Clash of Steel*

**World SitRep** . . . . . **14**

**Battle Blades** . . . . . **16**  
 Cold Steel's SRK

**Combat Craft** . . . . . **21**  
 SOF "supergun"

**Supply Locker** . . . . . **88**

**Advertisers Index** . . . . . **91**

**Classified** . . . . . **92**

**COVER**

**COVER:** How different would the world be if Adolf Hitler had been assassinated in July 1939? How different would the world be if Saddam Hussein had been assassinated in July 1990? We'll never know — but you can bet the option was *seriously* considered. This month, long-time contributor Neil Livingstone gives us an analysis of the *Saddam Option* — should we have knocked off the Hitler of the Middle East, and could we have done it? If nothing else, our cover this month should give Saddam food for thought: It's never too late, old boy. Photo: Chip Hires/Gamma Liaison



Law Enforcement — Page 27

Photo: Stephen Ferry/Gamma Liaison



**EPW HERDING ...** In the Persian Gulf, my company's mission was to handle enemy prisoners of war (EPWs), and we really handled a lot of them. At our first temporary holding cage, we had more than 1,500 Iraqis detained — all had surrendered.

On the way to our second site, the landscape was a picture of hundreds and hundreds of blown-up and burnt-out T-62s, T-55s, BMPs, trucks and jeeps. Our military had literally annihilated the Iraqi forces. At our second site, we processed more than 3,500 additional EPWs, 70% of whom were Saddam's "elite" Republican Guards, although they didn't look very "elite" to me.

The Iraqi soldiers didn't look famished or starved, but they did look ragged in their motley assortment of uniforms. I honestly couldn't say which one of them was wearing the "correct" uniform. Seeing this made me think of how important uniformity and discipline are on the battlefield.

I want to thank the SOF staff for its support for us while we were in the Persian Gulf.

Sgt. Earnest D. Fletcher, AUS  
218th MP Company,  
14th MP Brigade

**TIME-LIFE BUCKS ...** In the April '91 issue of SOF, I was shocked and disappointed to see the full-page ad

Perhaps on their way to see Sgt. Fletcher and his cage, Iraqi EPWs march west to a safer lifestyle — escort: courtesy 82nd Airborne. Photo: Yves Debay/Agence Ernout Features

placed by Time-Life Books Inc. Both *Time* and *Life* magazines have run entire issues espousing strict gun control; never have they offered an issue or an article allowing an opposing point of view or rebuttal.

Time-Life Inc. owns both magazines, Time-Life Books, Time-Life Video Libraries and *Sports Illustrated*. This corporation is one of the most anti-gun corporations there is; they are totally dedicated to the philosophy that no private citizen should be allowed to own any kind of firearm for any reason.

Your readers should know that when they buy any of Time-Life's products, they are supporting gun-control by further enriching that corporation.

If SOF considers the support of Second Amendment rights a priority, I would not expect to see any more ads from Time-Life in your magazine, regardless of how militarily oriented the subject matter is.

Dennis E. Barbre  
Detroit, Michigan

Since running Time-Life ads in our March and April '91 issues, we have

received numerous letters condemning this decision. SOF has never wavered on its position regarding the Second Amendment — we strongly believe in the right of every individual to keep and bear arms. However, we owe our readers a brief explanation regarding why we decided to accept Time-Life's advertising, and especially that company's money.

SOF donates literally tens of thousands of dollars annually to pro-gun organizations and causes. By accepting money from Time-Life for advertising in SOF, we are able to turn that money right around and use it to help defeat those causes that Time-Life supports. In essence, then, Time-Life, through SOF, is donating thousands of dollars to the pro-gun movement.

SOF will continue to take money from "the other side," but be assured that that money will be going to support causes SOF believes in, most certainly including one of our highest priorities, the Second Amendment.

— John Bressemer,  
SOF Advertising Director

**LOUDER THAN WORDS ...** On behalf of the Buffalo Creek Gun Club of Broomfield, Colorado, I wish to extend thanks to Colonel Robert Brown for his donation of 2,500 rounds of 7.62 PMC ammunition to our 1991 Colorado Junior Highpower Rifle Team. Your gift will definitely make a dent in our ammunition needs.

We now have 17 youngsters who appear to have the skill to make a respectable showing at the national shooting championships to be held at Camp Perry, Ohio, in late July and early August of this year.

Once again, thank you for your continued support.

Jim Starr  
Broomfield, Colorado

**BRENDAN'S BLARNEY ...** I just received the June '91 issue of SOF, and feel compelled to respond to Brendan McCrudden's FLAK letter. It is a great pity, but it would seem this chap has spent too much time reading IRA propaganda and believing it.

The IRA may be fighting for a "united" Ireland, but "free" and "democratic" are two words which cannot be used to describe its campaign.

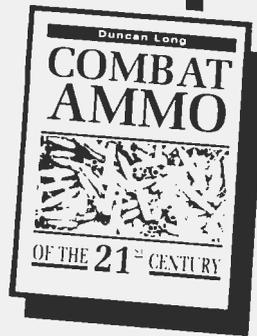
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## COMBAT AMMO OF THE 21st CENTURY

by Duncan Long

You don't have to be in uniform to face combat. Any encounter that could result in injury or death to you or those you wish to protect is combat. It could be in the streets, on the battlefield or in the middle of the night in your own home. Helping you to win these armed showdowns is what **Combat Ammo of the 21st Century** is all about. Duncan Long – one of the world's foremost authorities on weapons and ammunition – has conducted an exhaustive study of modern ammo based on *actual* case studies of their stopping power on the streets (where it really counts) as well as in state-of-the-art labs to update what had been considered the definitive ammo reference, **Combat Ammunition: Everything You Need to Know**. Take a look at the new lighter, more powerful cartridges that promise to dominate well into the next century: the hot new .40 S&W, the 10mm Auto and the stealthy subsonic 9mms. Follow simple, step-by-step instructions and make your own exotic tracers, flechette and sabot rounds, caseless ammo and fragmenting bullets. 8 1/2 x 11, softcover, photos, illus., 216 pp. **\$30.00**



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### GET EVEN

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by George Hayduke  
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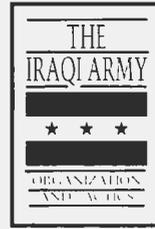


**SEALS**  
UDT/SEAL Operations in Vietnam  
by T.L. Bosiljevac  
The definitive book on U.S. Navy SEALs' role in Vietnam. Accounts of combat missions reveal incredible acts of skill and valor by SEAL troops under fire. 5 teen pages of rare photos show SEALs in training, on patrol in VC territory and moving up canals in the Mekong Delta. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, photos, 272 pp. **\$26.95**



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by Peter Alan Kasler  
Here is a practical and realistic assessment of which modern bullets work best in which handguns to get the job done in a life-or-death situation. From the truth about wound ballistics to the debate over the most effective calibers, this book holds nothing back. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, photos, illus., 200 pp. **\$22.95**

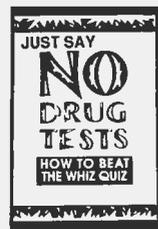


### THE IRAQI ARMY

**Organization and Tactics**  
From SCUD missile units to the elite Republican Guard, here's the most up-to-date tactical handbook on every aspect of the Iraqi army recently decimated by U.S.-led coalition forces during Operation Desert Storm. This manual provides valuable insight into the U.S. military's doctrine of quick and violent attack that will shape the face of modern warfare into the next century. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, illus., 192 pp. **\$15.00**

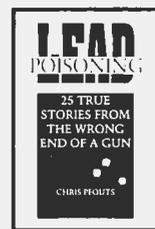


**MANSTOPPERS**  
Selecting the Right Double-Action Pistol  
This video will help you select the right double-action auto pistol for your personal defense needs. Technical advisors Col. Rex Applegate, Wiley Clapp, Tom Campbell and Chuck Karwan contributed to the evaluations of the latest autos from Colt, S&W, Ruger, Glock, SIG-Sauer and others. From the right caliber to the right safety, this video covers it all. Color, approx. 60 min., VHS only. **\$59.95**



### JUST SAY NO TO DRUG TESTS

**How to Beat the Whiz Quiz**  
by Ed Carson  
Urinalysis is a blatant violation of human freedom and dignity, and now you can fight back! Ed Carson, who handled drug testing for a large U.S. military base, reveals how the tests are done and how to beat them. He did it *successfully* for eight years using the exact methods outlined in this book. Find out how to preserve your life-style and keep your job. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, 48 pp. **\$10.00**



### LEAD POISONING

**25 True Stories from the Wrong End of a Gun**  
by Chris Pfouts  
Everyone, including you, runs the risk of being shot, either by intent or by accident. By reading what these shooting survivors have to say about their experience – the preceding signs, the lessons learned – you can learn how to avoid a bullet in the first place. An extraordinary book. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, 184 pp. **\$21.95**



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McCrudden's idea that a united Ireland is "the only solution" is simplistic crap. He and other IRA sympathizers would do well to remember that the Sinn Fein/IRA mafia gave support to Saddam Hussein during Operation Desert Storm. Also, the assistance Ireland begrudgingly gave to the Coalition was miserable. Meanwhile, American and British servicemen fought side by side to defeat the tyrant of the Middle East. Thanks to SOF for the view of the RUC's operations here in Northern Ireland. We only get the left-wing media's IRA view of things, and only token criticism of IRA atrocities.

Kenneth Gilmartron  
Northern Ireland

**ON ANGLICO ...** I would like to correct an error which appeared in the story "SOF Invades Kuwait" in your June '91 issue. In the story, Colonel Brown writes, "It was Marine Recon who called in Marine air and artillery support ... for the battle of Khafji."

It was not Marine Recon, but rather Marines from the 1st and 2nd Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO), 1st Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Intelligence Group, who called in the support. (Don't feel bad, even the Marine Corps Public Affairs office got it screwed up.)

Also, ANGLICO teams attached to the Eastern Province Arab Coalition (EPAC) led the way into Kuwait City. But ANGLICO teams rarely are credited with their deeds. More often, their actions are attributed to Recon, Special Forces or other elite units. Please give credit to these fine Marines.

CWO Thomas G. Tomka  
2nd ANGLICO (3rd Det.)  
Long Beach, California

**LINCOLNSHIRE CALLING ...** I am the admin officer for the Vietnam Historical Research Group in Great Britain, and would like to correspond with Americans who spent time in Vietnam. Maybe we could swap stories, photos and other items that would be of use to our group.

As a Vietnam research group, we exhibit all of the equipment that is owned by our members at various public displays. We are people from all walks of life who are very interested in

many different aspects of that war.

Keep up the good work with your mag, and congratulations, America, for a superb result in the Desert Storm conflict. Our boys were proud to have served alongside your boys.

Robert Timmins  
No. 1 Tennyson Ave.  
Mablethorpe Lincolnshire,  
LN21HF, England

**GOING, GOING ...** Thank you SOF for your coverage of the H'mong Chao Fa struggle in Laos. No one knows or cares about this group's situation, least of all the media. I've been working privately on getting the Chao Fa some publicity, but it will take a few more



*Courtesy of the Thai government, 1,709 Chao Fa men, women and children are being forcibly repatriated to Laos near the village of Mound Phieng. Pathet Lao troops have already attacked several returning villagers with chemicals; when the majority are marched back, a massacre is possible. SOF is there — stay tuned. Here, a victim of a previous chemical attack with Thai soldier. Photo: SOF file*

months, plus saving my pennies, to develop. Thanks to SOF, the Chao Fa struggle against the Pathet Lao government hasn't yet completely vanished from sight in the United States.

Also, thanks for coming of age, SOF. You have the right stuff.

Peter Kessler  
Bronx, New York

**THE OLD DEBATE ...** Here we go again — the old debate of armor vs. mobility ("Marines For All Seasons," July '91). In my view, building an infantry fighting vehicle for the Marines would be an extremely difficult task.

It has been determined that an armored vehicle impregnable to modern antiarmor missiles and heavy guns would have to weigh something like 100 tons, and need a 2,000-3,000 hp engine just to move it. After making such a vehicle capable of carrying troops, equipping it with a heavy enough gun, and protecting it with sufficient armor, it would be too heavy. There are other possibilities, however. The GM Canada/MOWAG type LAV-25 8x8 is one versatile design, although I feel its 25mm gun is insufficient. The military seems to realize this, too, and is considering a 35mm gun, which fires the Oerlikon 35x228mm round, as well as a new 50mm round.

In my view, the Marines should upgrade the LAV-25 with a bigger gun, and also procure a highly mobile fire-support vehicle which would use a large tank-type gun. The latter vehicle ought to be a heavy-wheeled 8x8 similar to the OTO Melara 6638 G Centauro, or the new South African Armscor AFV-76.

The AFV-76 is very fast (75 mph), weighs about the same as the Bradley IFV, and has armor capable of withstanding hits from Soviet Zu-23 23mm automatic guns.

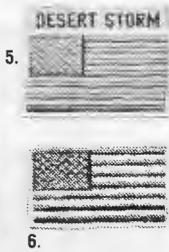
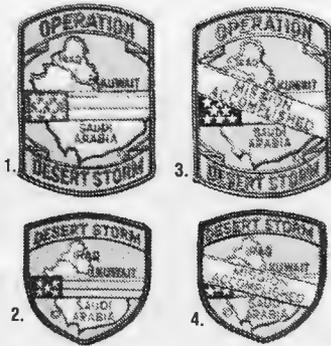
Brian P. Dumas  
Easton, Connecticut

**Something on your mind? Write and tell us about it. We reserve the right to edit for content and brevity. Send letters to: FLAK, c/o SOF, PO Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306 ✉**



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Kaufman's has meticulously reproduced the original 12 PSYOPS Propaganda Leaflets. We have printed them in exacting detail and send them complete with English translations. Several of the leaflets share the same front, a full color counterfeit of the 25 Dinar (Iraqi currency) because the Iraqi soldier could be shot for possessing propaganda from the enemy. This way, the soldiers could fold the leaflet in half and it looked like a regular bill! Also included in the set is the now-famous Safe Conduct Pass.

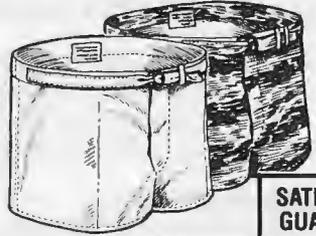
Read for yourself the powerful, psychologically compelling arguments that convinced tens of thousands of Iraqi troops to lay down their arms rather than fight!!

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# BULLETIN BOARD



and shot it down when it refused to heed a radio warning. U.S. media accepted this version; NBC even made a TV movie starring Angela Lansbury as a grieving mother who blamed the U.S. government for using a passenger plane on a spy mission.

In interviews published 24 and 25 January, Lt. Col. Bennadi Osipovich, pilot of the plane that shot down KAL 007, admitted that he was ordered by his superiors to lie about the details: he now admits that he knew the plane he shot down was not a reconnaissance plane; he did not try to contact KAL 007 by radio; he did not fire any warning shots; and KAL 007 was flying with its lights on, unthinkable for a reconnaissance mission.

What about some reaction from the *New York Times* and networks that were so quick to accuse the U.S. of causing the death of 269 passengers?

## RIVERBOAT CAPTAINS

American expatriates in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, are offering to commission any returning Desert Storm troops or journalists as Arabian riverboat captains in their organization, The Notable Or Anyway Honorable Society of Arabian Riverboat Captains (N.O.A.H.S. A.R.C.).

The fact that there are no rivers or streams in Saudi Arabia hasn't stopped such notables as Colin Powell from accepting a commission.

Privileges include "authorization for navigation on all rivers between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf, free tugboat service in the event of mirage grounding, priority over ships of the desert at highway crossings, and access to all legal alcoholic beverages during off-duty hours" (there are no legal alcoholic beverages in Saudi Arabia).

For your commission, send self-addressed, stamped envelope to N.O.A.H.S. A.R.C., 48 Los Palos Drive, San Luis Obispo CA 93401.

## SOF KNOWS PUBLISHING EXCELLENCE

For the second year running, SOF was a finalist in *Magazine Week's* publishing excellence awards in the category of "men's lifestyle," against such competition as *Playboy*, *Men's Health* and *Private Clubs*.

## FORMER FRENCH LEGIONNAIRES, NOTE ...

Former members of the French Foreign Legion now residing in the United States are to have their own association. Membership requirements include: *engages volontaires* for at least five years unless service interrupted by wounds or sickness; *engages volontaires* for 1914-1918 or 1939-1945 wars and service with a *Regiment de March* of the Legion or in a unit of foreign volunteers; widows, direct descendants or ascendants of officers, NCOs or legionnaires who have died in direct service to France.

Any person resident in the United States who meets the above qualifications should contact John A. King, PO Box 1147, Laramie, WY 82070. Please state your qualifications and, if possible, enclose a copy of your *Certificate de Bonne Conduite*, your *matricule* or other documentary evidence.

## MIDDLE EAST EMPLOYMENT

According to *The Fischer Report*, the cost of rebuilding Kuwait could easily top \$100 billion and take from seven to 10 years. Many companies are already on site: Bechtel Corp. has a contract for rebuilding the oil industry, Turner International is restoring the royal palace and the ministerial complex, and many companies hold con-

tracts with the Kuwaiti government directly.

If you want more information on employment in the Middle East, write or call: Group Fischer, Manlink Services, 110 Newport Center Dr., Suite 150, Newport Beach, CA 92660; phone (714) 759-3374; fax (714) 760-1972.

## THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

SOF Publisher/Editor Robert K. Brown was re-elected to the NRA board of directors for another three-year term, garnering the third-highest number of votes of all candidates.

## AFGHANS ABANDONED?

Conspicuously absent from the 1992 budget request from the Bush administration to Congress was continued funding to support the Afghan freedom fighters. Nationalist Chinese ... *contras* ... *mujahideen* ... *who's next?*

## MURDER OF KAL FLIGHT 007

According to *Accuracy in Media*, the U.S. press and TV networks have refused to react to astounding Soviet revelations in *Izvestia* about the shooting down of Korea Air Lines flight 007 in September 1983. At the time, the Soviets claimed they mistook the civilian airliner for an American spy plane

# A "Cut Above" The Rest!

## Introducing the new Gryphon M30A1

A knife is only as good as the materials from which it's made, and from point to pommel, the new Gryphon M30A1 is unsurpassed! It should be—it was designed by world famous knife maker Robert Terzuola. Absolutely no compromise has been made to bring you the M30A1—the finest combat knife money can buy. You will feel the quality of the M30A1 the first time you pick it up. It's produced by skilled craftsmen in Seki, Japan. Nestled in the mountains, Seki has been Japan's sword-making capital for centuries.

## The best blade money can buy

The M30A1's razor-sharp 6 1/4" blade is made from ATS-34 steel, the choice of most premier custom knife makers in America—and what a blade it is! The massive full-length tang extends to, and becomes part of, the lanyard hole for maximum strength. Each blade is double hollow-ground by hand, expertly sub-zero quenched and double tempered for added durability and edge retention. Each blade is Rockwell tested (Rc 58-59) to assure perfection. The Rockwell test mark is clearly visible on the blade of each M30A1. But that's only the beginning.

## A handle you can hold onto

Without a properly designed handle, your knife is next to worthless. The Gryphon M30A1 has a handle designed to fit anyone's hand comfortably. The handle is made from durable DuPont Zytel which has been UV and heat stabilized—the result, a handle that is impervious to the elements. You'll get a secure grip in any position because the handle is lightly checkered and slightly ridged for a positive, non-slip grip. The low top guard allows you to place your thumb on the back of the blade for maximum control and extra leverage when cutting.

## A sheath truly worthy of this knife

A knife as fine as the Gryphon M30A1 deserves a superior sheath. Gryphon Knives realized the importance of a top-quality sheath and teamed up with renowned sheath-maker Blackie Collins to create something special. The result of Blackie's handicraft is a fantastic Cordura sheath, made specially for the Gryphon M30A1. It's stitched with heavy thread and quadruple-riveted. It's lined with a thick rubber welt to protect the user and the knife blade. And it's finished off with a sturdy snap closure which keeps your knife secure in its sheath. A Bianchi military-spec belt fastener is included for use with G.I. pistol belts. A handy leg tie-down keeps the sheath doubly secure.

## An ironclad guarantee

Each Gryphon knife is backed in full by an ironclad lifetime guarantee against defects. We know you'll love your Gryphon M30A1. But just in case you don't, we'll take it back, no questions asked. Just try it for 30 days. Use it. See how it performs for you. If you're not completely satisfied the Gryphon M30A1 is everything we claim, simply return it for a prompt, courteous refund.

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GRYPHON  
KNIVES

### GRYPHON M30A1 SPECIFICATIONS

Blade steel .....	ATS-34
Rc hardness .....	58-59
Blade length .....	6 1/4"
Length overall .....	11 1/4"
Blade thickness .....	3/16"
Weight, knife .....	8.4 oz
Weight, sheath .....	6.8 oz
Made in .....	Japan

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# BULLETIN BOARD



## SOF SCOOP

Defence magazine noted that a recent technical symposium of the Small Arms Systems Division of the American Defense Preparedness Association featured SOF's tech editor Peter Kokalis giving an expose of the 7.62x62mm Soviet low-signature cartridge, unearthed November 1989 in El Salvador by SOF correspondent Ed Bishop (see "Mystery Bullet," May '90 and "Silent Killers" sidebar to "Com-Bloc Connection," July '90). The world reads it first in SOF.

## FREE OLLIE

The Supreme Court let stand an appeals court ruling that vacated all convictions against Oliver North in the Iran-Contra affair. North was convicted of accepting an illegal gratuity, aiding and abetting obstruction of Congress, and destruction of documents. The ruling was that his conviction in a lower court may have been affected by witnesses being allowed to refresh their memories by listening to North's congressional testimony, after his having been granted immunity from prosecution for his testimony.

Independent Counsel Lawrence Walsh said he will proceed with a hearing that will try to determine whether the conviction was the result of tainted testimony. If it is found that the testimony was tainted, the conviction and perhaps the indictment will be thrown out of court.

## LOST CHANCE

A military sniper from an elite SpecOps unit had Saddam Hussein in his crosshairs during a secret mission last October, but opted to shoot the Iraqi president with a camera instead. According to information checked out by Seattle television station KIRO-TV, the sniper was roughly 800 meters away from Hussein as the Iraqi leader came through the Kuwaiti airport. "I nudged my buddy and said, 'Does that look like who I think it is?' And he didn't know so I put up my scope and looked at him."

The sniper, who spoke on the condition that his unit not be identified, said his team's mission, which took place months before the actual beginning of the Gulf War in January, involved gathering intelligence and photographs of Iraqi weapons and positions.

SOF spoke with KIRO, and came away satisfied that the story is true. Why didn't the sniper take his shot when he had the chance? "If I would have done it," the sniper told KIRO, "a lot of people would have been happy even if I did flub up my mission. But (the) mission comes first and I wasn't told to do it (take out Saddam)." Too bad ...

## MiG OVER KEY WEST

Major Orestes Lorenzo Perez, formerly a pilot in Castro's air force, defected to the United States on 20 March 1991 by flying his supersonic

MiG-27BN Flogger from Cuba to Key West. His daring, low-level escape flight was apparently undetected by American air defense radar, and the Cuban pilot had to circle Boca Chica Naval Air Station several times while waiting for permission to land. Unable to establish radio contact, Perez flew with his landing gear extended to signal his peaceful intentions. After getting a green light to touch down, the pilot received a warm welcome from Navy personnel, who treated him to fast food from McDonald's (or was that MiGDonald's?) and a six-pack of beer. NORAD officials, who admit that no attempt was made to intercept Maj. Perez's MiG, are still trying to explain why the air defense network failed to notice the high-speed defection.

## VIOLETA FAILS TO DELIVER

According to the National Center for Public Policy Research (NCPFR), a Washington, D.C., think tank, Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro has failed to implement reforms she promised during her campaign. Her pledge to expand democratic freedoms and human rights, place the Nicaraguan military and police under civilian control, and institute sweeping economic reforms to foster free, competitive enterprise and encourage foreign investment were largely responsible for the \$300 million aid package the U.S. had to send to Nicaragua last year.

Dissident members of her UNO (National Opposition Union) party have claimed that her government has entered into a secret alliance with the Sandinista party, moving it away from a reform agenda. They cite as evidence Chamorro's veto of legislation approved by the UNO-dominated National Assembly that would have cut \$19.6 million from the Sandinista military budget.

The NCPFR has called for the U.S. to suspend further support for the Nicaraguan government until Chamorro makes a "determined effort to implement exigent military, economic and political reforms ... U.S. aid to Nicaragua should serve as a hand-up, not a hand-out." ☒

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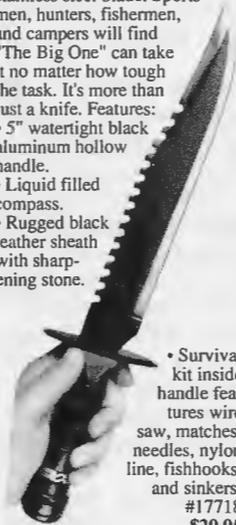
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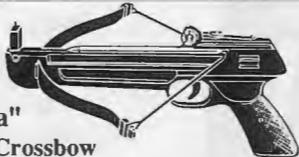
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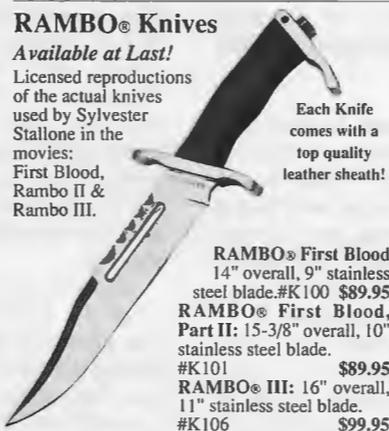


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# IN REVIEW

**T**HERE seems to be a small reawakening to the fact that 41 years ago the United States led other countries of the United Nations in a vicious no-quarter war against a communist aggressor which took the lives of 33,629 Americans.

A war memorial to Korean veterans is finally going to be located in Washington, D.C. — although the artistic bureaucrats there are delaying completion by hand-wringing arguments about just how “warlike” it ought to be.

TV commentators and newspaper editorial writers discovered, some to their surprise, that the Persian Gulf War wasn't the first to be fought under auspices of the U.N. There is even the occasional bumper sticker (usually on a pickup truck): “Korea Vet And Proud Of It.”

Now, D.M. Giangreco, an editor for the U.S. Army professional journal *Military Review*, has produced a pictorial history of that bloody conflict. Although the author is not a Korean War veteran, his work furnishes an eloquent depiction of what it meant to be a fighting man on that Asian peninsula.

Giangreco has done a superb job in text and photo selection alike. His photos are not the tired old familiar shots from the commercial sources so often seen as Korean War illustrations. Most of these were taken by unsung Army or Marine combat photographers, some of whom died doing their jobs. Others come via Navy and Air Force aerial cameras.

Also, this author names specific units and often identifies the men and circumstances. “Privates Robert Smith and Carl Fisher of the 25th Infantry Division fire on communist troops from their ridgetop position 500 yards west of Haman, Monday, 4 September (1950),” for example.

Korean War veterans, when examining this book, will remember their youth — and where they left it in that land of extremes.

But Giangreco has accomplished more than serving up poignant memories to aging participants of a war long forgotten by most who did not serve in it. The Korean War will one day be recognized as one of the great turning points of history. Soviet Union-inspired international communism came to a



great thundering collapse in 1989-1990, much to the world's surprise.

But that collapse began in 1950 when the U.N., under American leadership, met the challenge of brutal armed aggression by a communist invader of a peaceful neighbor. Korea can be compared to the Civil War battle of Antietam: a tactical standoff, but a tremendously significant strategic victory for freedom. And this book both commemorates and immortalizes those who paid the price to achieve that triumph.

*War in Korea 1950-1953* by D.M. Giangreco, published by Presidio Press, 1991. \$40. Reviewed by Bob Poos.

**I**F Bo Jackson knows football and baseball, L.H. “Bucky” Burruss knows Special Ops. There is no novelist in the world today who has a more thorough, complete, and intimate professional knowledge of this particular subject, as Burruss' second novel very impressively demonstrates.

After serving four straight tours with Special Forces, including two years with the Nha Trang Mike Force in Vietnam, Burruss later completed the British SAS course and was one of the first two officers recruited by Colonel Charlie Beckwith to form the original nucleus of Delta Force.

As the S-3 (operations officer) of Delta, he participated in the attempted rescue operation in Iran, and, as the deputy CO of Delta, later participated in the Grenada operation. Since his retirement as a lieutenant colonel in

1986, he has written three books: his own autobiography, *Mike Force*, and another novel, *A Mission for Delta*.

The fact that he is not yet a particularly good novelist does not seriously detract from the unique value of his stories for those real connoisseurs of this sub-genre of the adventure novel. For sheer authenticity based on extensive, insider knowledge, plus an unequalled network of former comrades-in-arms to call on, if necessary, to get all the little technical details just right, Burruss already ranks with the likes of J.C. Pollock in a special class of authors.

Unlike the technical authenticity of Tom Clancy's stories, most of this kind of information is simply not available in public libraries. Burruss has personal knowledge both of the kind of people who excel in Special Operations, and of the kind of detailed planning and training on which such operations are based. He thinks like an S-3 of Delta Force, and when he is thinking about the detailed nitty-gritty of what it actually takes to make a real-world, real-time Special Forces operation work properly, he writes the way a Special Forces' S-3 thinks.

*Clash of Steel* may not be great literature, but it certainly is a great read for those hypercritical SOF readers who are themselves combat veterans of real Special Forces units, whether Army, Navy, Marine or Air Force. Reading this story is like being inside a restricted area listening to a classified briefing and brief-back for a special mission so hairy that no one would even believe it, if they hadn't already seen comparable ones in other circumstances.

Specifically, *Clash of Steel* is about what the 10th Special Forces Group has been trained to do for the past 30 years, if Mother Russia and her Warsaw Pact allies had ever decided to try to rush the Fulda Gap: stay behind and fight them to the death in small teams with some very sophisticated antitank and antiaircraft weapons. Burruss' story is set in Iran, but there is no doubt about the original theater for which these special tactics and technology were developed.

*Clash of Steel* by L.H. Burruss, published by Pocket Books, 1990. \$4.95. Reviewed by James McLeroy. ✎

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# WORLD SITREP

3

## ANGOLA

Peace accord signed in Portugal by President dos Santos and Jonas Savimbi, ending 16 years of internal war. U.S., Soviet representatives in attendance.

2

## AFGHANISTAN

Exiled King Zahir Shah proposes plan for peace that includes free elections and parliamentary system; embattled communist President Najibullah offers truce to rebels, to give U.N.-sponsored peace plan chance to work.

1

## ALBANIA

General strike involving nearly a half-million workers paralyzes all main industries during dispute with communist government over wages.

4

## BOLIVIA

First of 112 U.S. military advisers arrive to assist in training armed forces in counter-drug operations.

5

## CUBA

Daily bread ration cut to 3 ounces per person ... Remaining 2,000 troops withdrawn from Angola ... Plans to withdraw its 1,500-man force from Congo, deployed there since 1975.

6

## CSFR

Last Soviet tank in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic — part of a Prague monument honoring Soviet soldiers — is repeatedly painted pink, the last time by 15 anticommunist lawmakers protesting charges against student for "cultural desecration."

7

## ENGLAND

Introduces heavily armed antiterrorist vans to patrol capital round the clock, react immediately to any terrorist attacks; "armed response vehicles" to be operated by Scotland Yard's tactical firearms unit — cops on beat usually unarmed ... Royal Air Force considering a buy of F-117 stealth attack craft.

8

## ETHIOPIA

President Mengistu flees as rebel troops take capital of Addis Ababa; rebels topple Marxist government, now seek to restore order ... Anti-American protesters shot by rebels ... Eritrean rebels say they will form independent government ... Officials appeal for help to feed 1 million refugees from neighboring Somalia and Sudan.

9

## GERMANY

Terrorist Susanne Albrecht sentenced to 12 years for killing banker, attempted assassination of Gen. Alexander Haig when he was NATO commander.

10

## INDIA

Former Prime Minister Gandhi assassinated by terrorist bomb in Tamil Nadu State during elections, ending Gandhi/Nehru dynasty that ruled India since independence and partition; confusion, violence in wake of assassination ... India Congress Party asks widow Sonia to be new chief; she declines ... Tamil woman arrested for bombing.

12

## ITALY

Four Lupo-class frigates and six Assa'd-class corvettes originally built for Iraq (valued at \$2.5 billion) seeking a market since the embargo on Iraq; probably will go to Algeria.

11

## ISRAEL

To receive F-15 fighters and funding for development of Arrow missiles ... Has sold Python air-to-air missile technology to PRC for PL-8H naval air-defense system.

13

## KUWAIT

Cost of rebuilding oil industry now estimated at \$40-\$50 billion.



25

**YUGOSLAVIA**

Croatia declares itself an independent state in document signed by republic's president, Franjo Tudjman ... Army reserves called up after defense minister declares that a civil war has begun.

24

**USSR**

Georgia's nationalist leader, Zviad Gamsakhurdia, wins landslide victory in first direct presidential election in Soviet history; he pledges his secessionist republic "is now a democracy" ... Rioting in Armenia described as "civil war" by Soviet authorities.

23

**TUNISIA**

More than 300 arrested, including 100 soldiers, for taking part in alleged fundamentalist Islamic plot to overthrow President Ben Ali.

22

**SURINAME**

Caretaker President Johan Kraag, installed in bloodless coup last December, says he welcomes remark from Pentagon official that U.S. invasion not ruled out in event of no democratic elections; folks want closer ties with Netherlands, but army likely to maintain its grip.

21

**SRI LANKA**

Ruling party of President Premadasa wins elections by large margin; balloting canceled in northern and eastern areas embattled by Tamil secessionists.

20

**SPAIN**

Car bomb rocks civil guard barracks in northeastern Spain, killing nine people including four children, injuring 50; government blames Basque separatists.

19

**SOUTH KOREA**

Large-scale antigovernment demonstrations — more than 200,000 protesters fight riot police in Seoul.

18

**SOUTH AFRICA**

Traditional spears banned in 13 black townships ... Approximately 1,000 Zulus attack squatter camp, hacking/burning to death more than 25 people.

14

**LEBANON**

Lebanese army on high alert after Israeli jets blast guerrilla base, killing official of Syrian-backed Amal militia and two visiting Palestinian rebel commanders.

16

**NEPAL**

Nepali Congress party wins first democratic parliamentary elections after three decades of absolute monarchy; in opposition will be a communist alliance ... Interim Premier Bhattarai quits after losing his legislative seat; King Birendra accepts resignation, asks him to stay on until new government formed.

17

**PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA**

Trials of dissidents at highest level since 1989 crackdown ... Bush administration continues most-favored nation trading status with PRC ... Amnesty International claims summary executions, torture, arbitrary arrests have increased sharply since Tiananmen Square massacre.

15

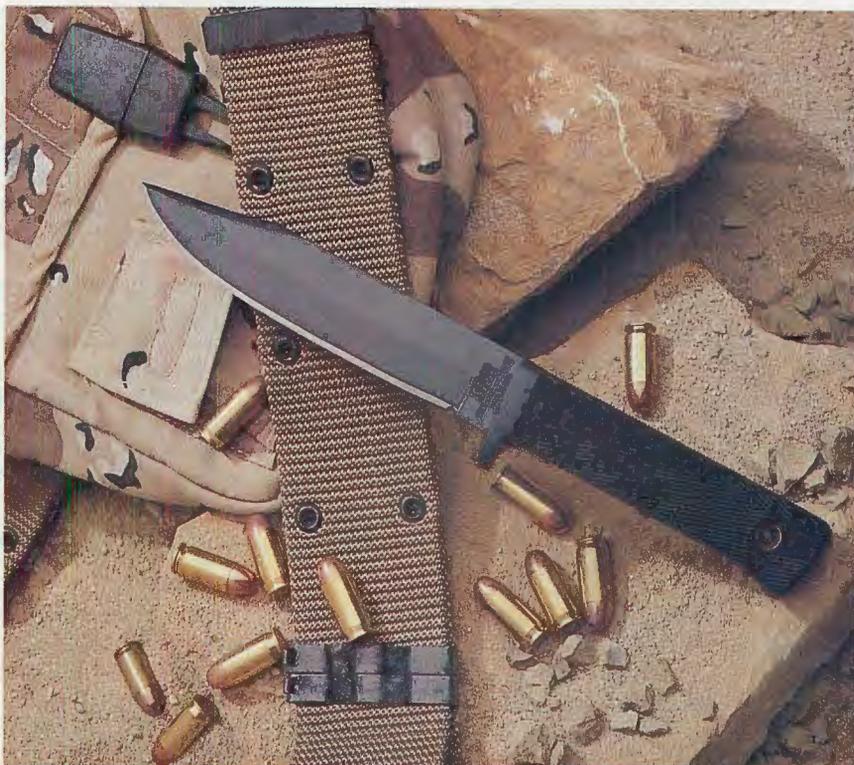
**MEXICO**

Drug gangs at Matamoros prison clashed, ignited riot, in which 18 inmates were killed; *Federales* called in.



# BATTLE BLADES

by Greg Walker



**C**OLD Steel, the company that introduced the Tanto 10 years ago, has recently added a new product to its fine line of cutlery — the Survival-Rescue Knife (SRK).

The SRK concept provides the serious knife user with an incredibly sturdy cutting instrument for less than \$75. Cold Steel determined it could produce such a blade by offering the best materials possible in a simple, yet functional, design.

Lynn Thompson, Cold Steel's chief executive officer, working closely with custom knife maker and Cold Steel employee Dan Maragni, elected to rely on the firm's selected Carbon V steel as the basis for the blade. As with the Tanto, we see Kraton, a rubber synthetic, used in the handle's fabrication.

Thompson is the first specialty-knife entrepreneur to use this new material in a production knife. Maragni's cutlery acumen is clearly demonstrated in the wonderful simplicity of the knife's lines and proper edge geometry. Relying on the classic clip-point pattern of the Bowie knife, the SRK offers a flat-ground cutting edge of 5 1/2 inches.

First-generation knives were ground

Lynn Thompson's SRK was available for immediate deployment to Operation Desert Storm — SpecOps personnel report the knife performed beautifully.

quite thick, making the edge difficult to sharpen, as reported by Special Forces personnel carrying them into Kuwait. Cold Steel has already revised the primary grind on its second-generation knives with a finer, sharper edge. This change does not weaken the SRK blade's ability to withstand severe lateral stress.

Carbon steel will discolor, rust and pit more readily than its stainless cousin. Therefore, Cold Steel provides the SRK with a "nightfinder" surface coating which is baked onto the blade.

**M**DS epoxy is an excellent rust/corrosion preventative, and is a wise choice as far as protective coatings are concerned. It does wear somewhat along the SRK's ridges, spine and blade tip with use. Also, it can be scratched during chopping and scraping applications, or if you're not particularly adept at sharpening. When this happens, thin lines of rust will appear unless the blade is cleaned and oiled in a timely

## Cold Steel's SRK

fashion.

The knife's Kraton handle is molded around the full tang, with the brass-lined lanyard hole positioned just below the SRK's butt. Recent field tests conducted by *Fighting Knives* suggest that Kraton may be the best rubber synthetic available for knife handles.

Kraton is resistant to petroleum-based products such as gasoline and insect repellent, and holds its shape even under the intense heat of the desert. Dan Maragni sculpted an extremely comfortable handle, offering side checkering and grooves for an enhanced grip. The knife utilizes a single lower guard which is integral to the handle.

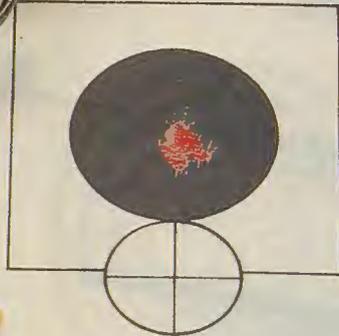
The SRK's sheath takes the form of a black Cordura scabbard. Although the coarse nylon is one of the most abrasive sheath materials in terms of affecting a knife's finish, its toughness makes it quite durable in the field. The SRK is held in place by a single snap 'n' strap security system, and the wide belt loop will easily accommodate the issue military web belt. A leg tie-down is provided for additional security during airborne/waterborne operations.

Field testing of the SRK here in the States shows it to be a tough and reliable companion away from home. The knife becomes an extension of one's hand due to the wonderful ergonomics of the design and the use of Kraton in the handle. The knife's weight is forward, making it ideal for light to medium splitting and chopping tasks. The SRK's 6-inch blade (overall length) is easily maneuvered, resulting in a knife that is ideal for basic infantry/camp applications, as well as close-in fighting.

First to use the SRK was the military, specifically those units which were deployed to the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Shield/Storm. I know of at least 12 SRKs that went to SpecOps forces in September 1990.

In terms of combat, the SRK performed at the highest level, according to one Green Beret from the 5th Special Forces group. Both knife and sheath withstood the rigors of desert deployment well. The cutting edge demonstrated an expected inclination to rust due to the carbon steel's "raw" exposure to the elements. Again,

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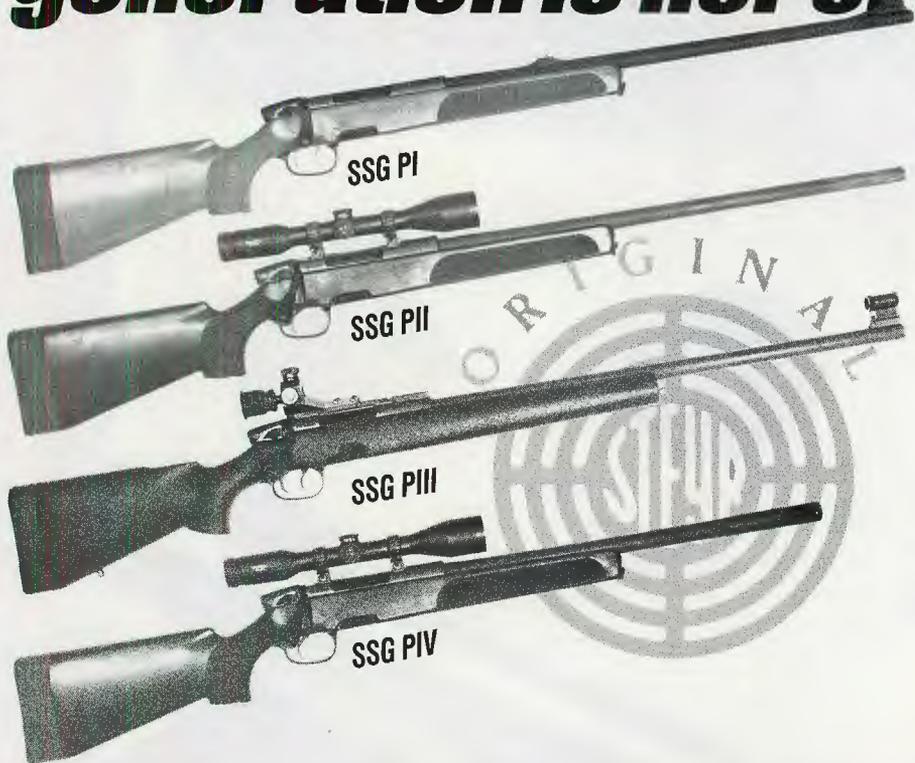


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proper cleaning and oiling will solve this problem.

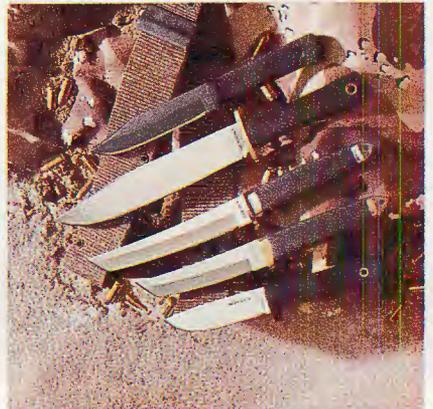
No breakage or bending of the tip was reported, even under earnest prying efforts by the owner. One surprise was some troops' preference for throwing the SRK, something it was not designed for.

One thing you cannot use the SRK for is hammering, due to the all-Kraton handle/pommel. As there are few times one would have to rely on a field knife for such an application, I don't think that this is a serious concern.

A final note on the finishes — Cold Steel is also offering the SRX, a high-end version of the SRK, featuring a lustrous satin finish and rolled edge.

A nice option available for the SRK is a custom-built Kydex sheath offered through the Cutlery Shoppe (1-800-231-1272). Kydex, a plastic synthetic, is molded around the knife so that a precise fitting is attained for your specific blade. The retention system is integral to the sheath, doing away with the conventional methods associated with knife security.

I recommend the SRK highly. It is a first-rate battle blade at an affordable price. User-friendly due to careful design and exacting manufacturing standards, Cold Steel's latest offering is a



Cold Steel witnessed a number of its knives go overseas. These included (from top to bottom) the SRK, Trail Master Bowie, Magnum Tanto, Tanto, and Master Hunter. One Marine hot-wired an Iraqi officer's jeep with his Tanto during the push into Kuwait.

worthy complement to their now-legendary Tanto, a knife I feel is the perfect fighting tool. The SRK earned its battle streamers in both Kuwait and Iraq, a fitting testament to Lynn Thompson's ability to support the troops with the very finest "cold steel" available.

For further information, contact Cold Steel (1-800-255-4716). Also ask the staff about their Special Projects catalog. A new division of Cold Steel, Special Projects offers a host of excellent products at a tremendous value for your hard-earned dollar. ✕

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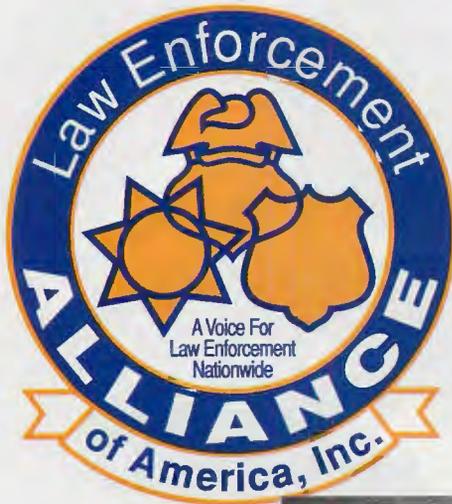
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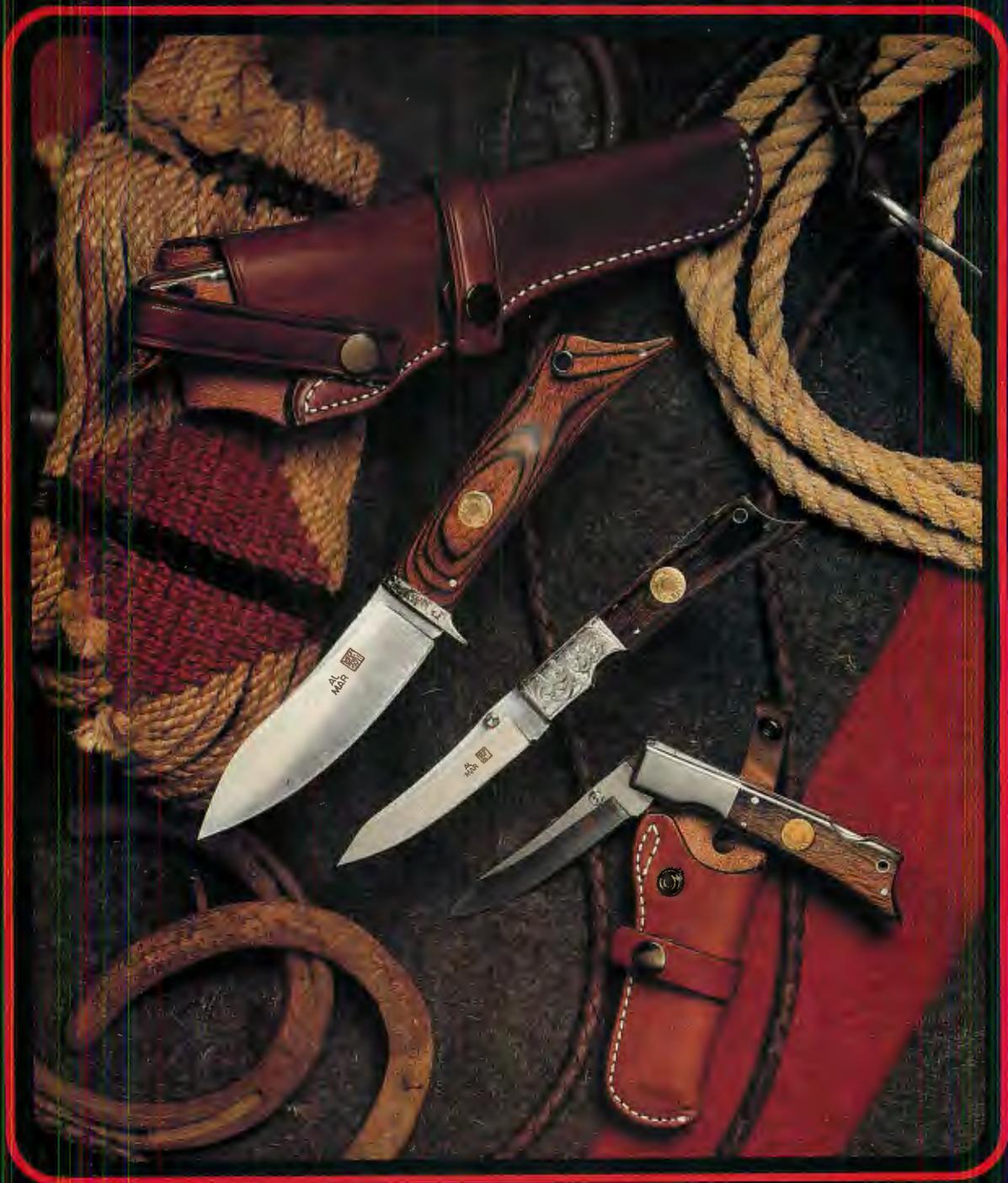
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SF-91

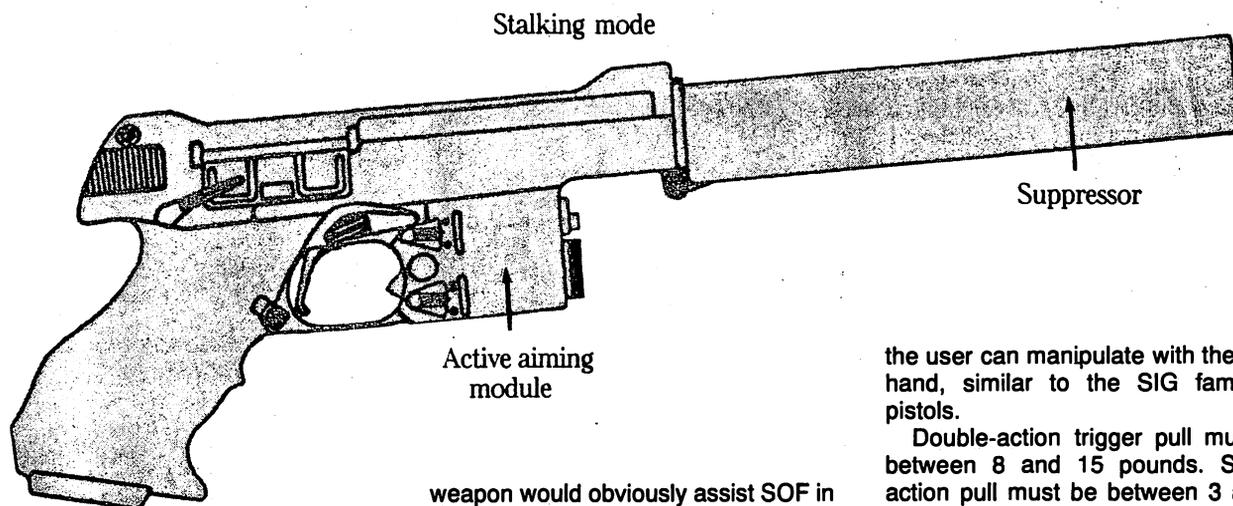
# GUNSTOCK



Al Mar Knives 5755 SW Jean Road Suite 101 Lake Oswego Oregon 97035 USA 503/635-9229



by Jack Sampson



**T**RADITIONALLY a defensive weapon, the handgun has been a badge of authority in the United States military. The only notable exception to this were 19th century cavalrymen who used large-caliber revolvers for mounted close combat.

For today's Special Operations Forces (SOF) however, the handgun is more than a defensive weapon. Accordingly, the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, has submitted a Joint Service Operational Requirement (JSOR) for the development and fielding of an offensive handgun to U.S. Special Forces, SEALs, Rangers and Delta Force.

Requirements for this weapon may make it a significant leap in the evolution of the fighting handgun. First and foremost, it is to be chambered for the (you guessed it) .45 ACP cartridge. While 9mm and 10mm fans may scream that this is a step backward, the requirement is based on the need for near instant incapacitation from a single torso hit. Wound effects tests conducted by the Department of Defense indicate that this is best accomplished with large bullets.

This new handgun is to be used for silent sentry removal and for close quarters battle (CQB). Growing urbanization throughout the world (especially the Third World) has increased the requirement for SOF to be able to effectively conduct urban CQB. This

weapon would obviously assist SOF in their counterterrorist mission.

Sentry removal has long been recognized as a tactical problem often encountered in SpecOps. It is also a frequent cause of mission failure because of the high probability of compromise when neutralizing sentries. The new offensive handgun is envisioned to meet these needs and assist SOF in conducting strike or direct action missions and in unconventional warfare.

There are two modes of use for a handgun called for in the requirement: the stalking mode and the assault mode. The stalking mode will configure the weapon with its suppressor and detachable sight package in place. The assault mode will not include the suppressor, but will include the laser sight package. Empty pistol weight must not exceed 3 pounds. Pistol weight with a 10-round magazine and suppressor attached must not exceed 5 1/2 pounds. Pistol length without suppressor cannot exceed 10 inches — 16 inches with suppressor in place — and pistol height is to be a maximum of 6 inches.

To allow manufacturers maximum design flexibility, the method of operation was not specified. Trigger operation must allow single-action and double-action operation at the discretion of the user. The pistol must have an ambidextrous external manual safety that fully blocks the trigger, allowing condition one (cocked and locked) carry. "Safe" must be up and "Fire" must be down as on the M1911A1 .45 pistol. The weapon must also have a frame-mounted decocking lever that

the user can manipulate with the firing hand, similar to the SIG family of pistols.

Double-action trigger pull must be between 8 and 15 pounds. Single-action pull must be between 3 and 5 pounds. Obviously, single-action firing would allow for precise shot placement in sentry removal situations, and rapid, accurate follow-up shots. Double-action carry would be very safe and leave the pistol ready for instant use if necessary.

Further requirements are that the weapon be magazine-fed and hold at least 10 rounds of .45 cal. ammunition. This will probably require a staggered column magazine and a well-designed grip if the weapon is to be comfortable for shooters with small hands. The weapon must fire with the magazine removed.

**A**nd the weapon's safety, decocking lever, magazine release and slide stop/slide release must all be ambidextrous and be operable with the firing hand alone.

The "supergun" is to have two separate sighting systems.

First is the standard square front post and rectangular notch rear that the world's competition shooters use. Iron sights must be adjustable and be capable of accepting Tritium inserts in the popular three-dot pattern if the shooter desires.

Also, the pistol is to be equipped with a detachable sight package that should provide the user with fantastic advantages in a night close quarters gunfight. This sight package will be similar to the compact laser sights now commercially available, with some significant improvements. The sight must project a standard red dot on a black target visible at a range of at least 25 meters under normal light conditions.

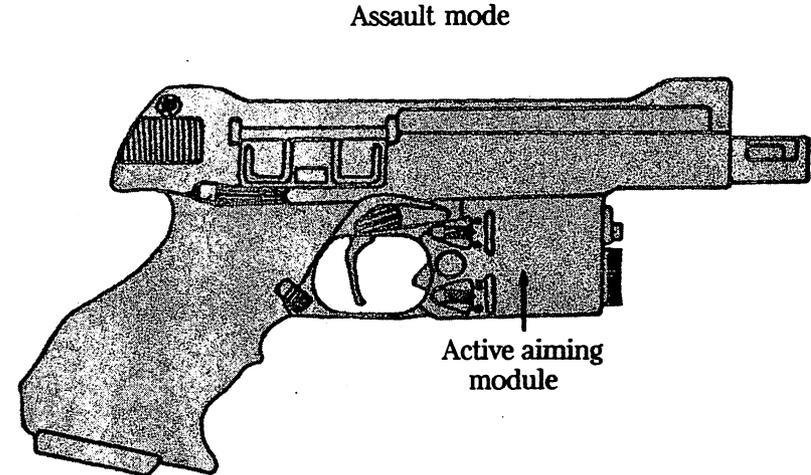


The sight package must also project an infrared laser beam that is invisible to the naked eye but can be seen with the current issue night vision equipment used by the U.S. military (AN/PVS-4,5 and 7). It must project a dot visible at 25 meters on a moonlit night to a user equipped with night vision goggles (NVGs). Finally, the sight package must have a flashlight with an adjustable beam that will allow an operator to identify a face at 25 meters in total darkness. The sight package must be small, and cannot interfere with the use of the iron sights or suppressor. The sight package must be adjustable for windage and elevation and give a 3-inch group at 25 meters. It must also be waterproof and shock resistant.

**A**s stated earlier, the weapon is to come with a detachable sound suppressor and an integral slide lock mechanism. The specifications for the sound suppressor are as follows: the suppressor must reduce the muzzle blast to a level not detectable by human ears at a distance of 50 feet or more; further, muzzle blast must be less than the noise of bullet strike, the strike of the round must not be altered by more than 2 inches after attachment of the suppressor, and the suppressor must be attachable or detachable without tools in less than 15 seconds.

By utilizing the suppressor and the slide lock mechanism, the weapon would be nearly silent because both the noise of the muzzle blast and the noise of the mechanical operation of the weapon would be reduced or eliminated. The only drawback of the slide lock mechanism is that it by nature makes the weapon a single shot repeater, thus imposing serious tactical limitations. The pistol must also be usable in the suppressed mode with the slide lock off.

The JSOR is quite specific concerning ammunition. "Of the many calibers considered, the .45 ACP will cause the most rapid human incapacitation with a body cavity strike when using projectiles that are legal under the law of land warfare for use against combatants." Game, set, and match for the Cooper/Hatcher school of defensive handgun cartridges. The basis for the JSOR selection of cartridges was wound



ballistics research that indicated that incapacitation was most reliably produced by large bullets producing large tissue cavities resulting in massive trauma and circulatory collapse.

As for the 9x19mm, the JSOR specifically states that with shooters in intense CQB situations, "The 9mm NATO cartridge, which trades off trauma-producing capability for ease of operation by average individuals, NATO inter-operability, and cost," is inadequate.

**I**n addition to requiring the "supergun" to fire .45 ball (FMJ) ammunition, the JSOR outlines a need for new, improved ammunition that complies with law of war ammunition requirements (i.e., only ball ammunition on combatants), but gives a statistically significant improvement in one-shot performance over current FMJ rounds. This will be achieved by designing and procuring a high velocity .45 cartridge (1250-1400 fps) with an improved projectile shape and/or construction. The "supergun" must be able to withstand the increased chamber pressure of the new round for 30,000 rounds with a 99% reliability rating.

A second ammunition requirement is for a non-FMJ expanding bullet, presumably for use against targets not covered by the law of war (i.e., terrorists). This round is to have maximum impact on target and should not shoot through the target. The usefulness of such a round for hostage situations

(particularly inside aircraft) is obvious. **O**ther types of ammunition called for include a plastic training round and an armor-piercing round capable of defeating type III body armor. With all four types of ammunition called for in the JSOR, U.S. SOF would be well equipped to deal with just about any currently envisioned tactical situation.

Any weapons designer and manufacturer that can meet or exceed the performance requirements specified for the offensive handgun will have indeed built a "supergun." The 99% reliability rating mentioned above will mean that the gun will have a higher mean rounds between failure than any currently existing handgun tested by the U.S. military. The weapon must be compatible with current parachuting techniques and equipment (both static line and freefall), and place no limitations on combat swimmers. Finally, its performance must not be degraded by the harsh environments in which SOF typically operate. The JSOR calls for prototype procurement in the spring of 1992, and procurement of up to 9,000 weapons in late 1993 or 1994.

Procurement and fielding of the offensive handgun will make U.S. SOF the best armed close quarters shooters in the world. This gun, combined with their superior training, will give U.S. SOF a distinct advantage in a close quarter fight, and it will be an even more formidable weapon in defense of U.S. interests in any future conflict. ☒

# BRUTALITY

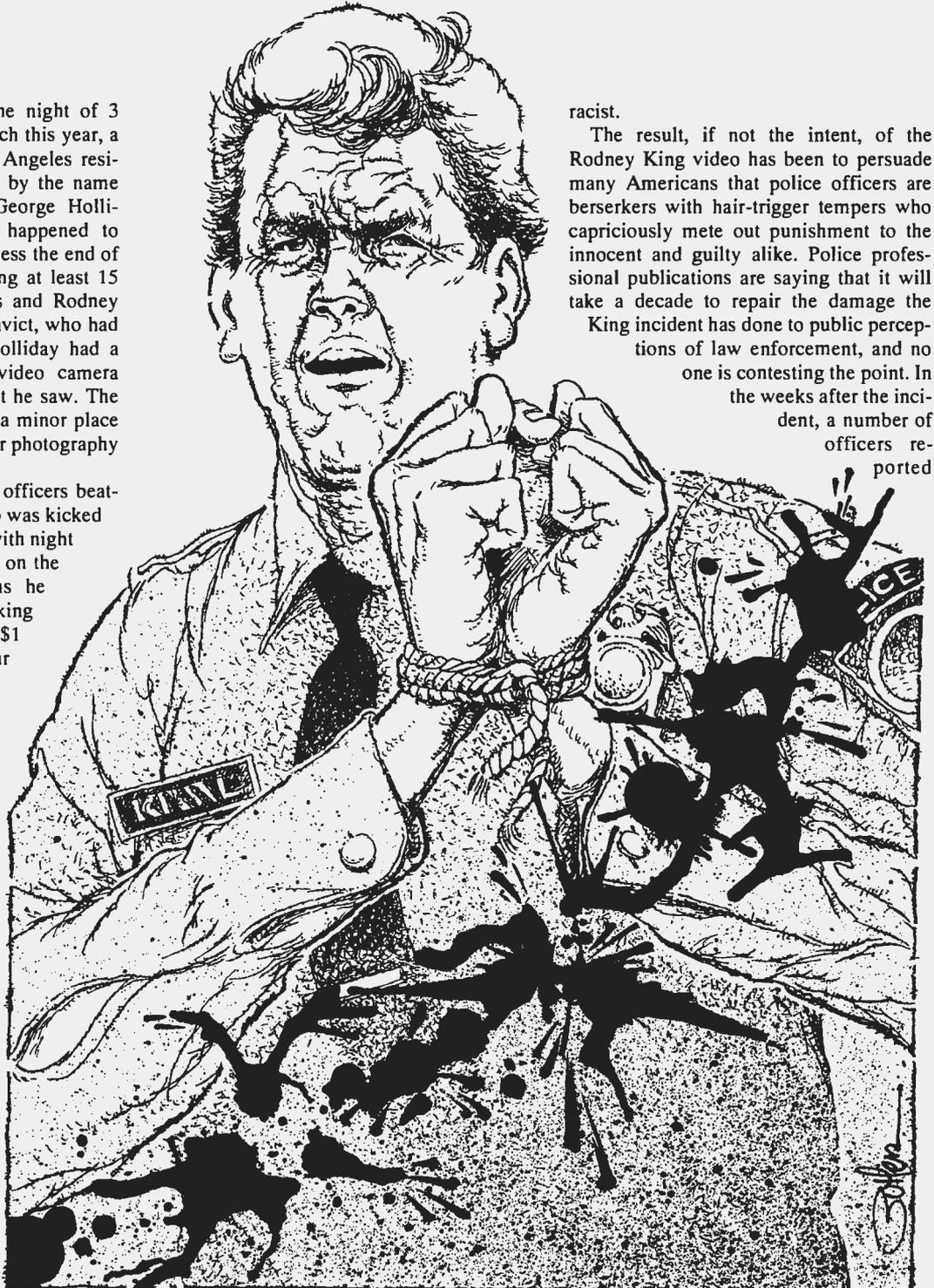
## Law Enforcement's Use of F

by Paul Danish

**O**N the night of 3 March this year, a Los Angeles resident by the name of George Holliday happened to witness the end of a high-speed chase, involving at least 15 Los Angeles police officers and Rodney King, a recently paroled convict, who had served time for robbery. Holliday had a recently purchased home video camera with him, and he taped what he saw. The 2-minute tape has won him a minor place in the history of both amateur photography and law enforcement.

The tape showed several officers beating the shit out of King, who was kicked and struck numerous times with night sticks while he lay prostrate on the ground. (His lawyer claims he was hit 56 times and is asking \$56 million in damages, or \$1 million a blow.) At least four officers appear to have been directly involved in beating King; the others present made no attempt to stop them.

The liberal media spent more than a month last spring endlessly rebroadcasting Holliday's home video of Los Angeles cops beating Rodney King. For the left, the tape was the "smoking gun" they had been looking for more than 20 years. The law enforcement community has been unanimous in condemning the conduct shown in the King tape, but that has not stopped leftists from asserting that the tape shows normal police conduct, rather than aberrant behavior — and that normal police behavior is both gratuitously violent and



racist.

The result, if not the intent, of the Rodney King video has been to persuade many Americans that police officers are berserkers with hair-trigger tempers who capriciously mete out punishment to the innocent and guilty alike. Police professional publications are saying that it will take a decade to repair the damage the

King incident has done to public perceptions of law enforcement, and no one is contesting the point. In the weeks after the incident, a number of officers reported

# REALITY

## Force in Perspective

being asked by citizens they had stopped for minor offenses if they intended to beat them up "like the guy in L.A."

There is, however, another side to this story and as usual, the media has chosen not to present it.

The police side of the story is that while Rodney King certainly appears to have been the victim of a grotesquely excessive use of force, he isn't exactly nature's little nobleman. King had been convicted of and served time for robbery, a crime of violence. The incident that ended in his beating started when he was stopped for speeding by a female California Highway Patrol officer, and he responded by attacking her and fleeing in his car. King was stopped after a high-speed chase, a situation that can be as dangerous as a gun fight for an officer but can endanger a lot more bystanders as well.

### They Usually Want To Fight

One veteran California police officer says an officer in a chase has anywhere from one to five near-collisions for each minute it goes on.

**"T**he guy you are chasing is running with total disregard for the safety of anybody on the street," he said. "All they are concerned with is escape. All you are concerned with is trying to stay with him, to catch him, and not run over some kid, some old lady, or T-bone some citizen or family's car in an intersection, or not hit another policeman, or not just lose it on a corner and broadside into a pole or something. You chase this idiot for however long the pursuit may last .... and at the termination point they usually jump out and run like quail in all directions .... and they usually want to fight if you manage to catch them."

Cops involved in chases are pumping as much adrenalin as anyone involved in combat. That doesn't justify beating the suspect to a pulp after he has been subdued, but it does begin to explain how such a thing can happen.

Beyond that, what the media really hasn't shown is the context in which those officers, and American law enforcement officers generally, have to perform their duties. That is a story that is told with statistics, not sound bites, and the media should have its nose rubbed in them.

**I**tem: According to the FBI, American law enforcement officers made more than 14 million arrests in each of the last two years, including more than 685,000 a year for serious crimes of violence. In 1989, the latter included 22,000 for murder, 39,000 for rape, 165,000 for robbery, and 459,000 for aggravated assault. In addition, there are more than 978,000 arrests for simple assaults, more than 776,000 for disorderly conduct, and 3.2 million for drunkenness, drunk driving, and liquor law violations, which, like the more serious crimes of violence, have the potential of turning into

those assaults involve firearms, knives, or other dangerous weapons.

Item: Every year more than 500,000 Americans are convicted of a felony, and approximately one in five of those convictions represents a crime of violence. Astonishingly, fewer than 50% of those persons convicted of felonies are sentenced to prison.

Item: As for those convicted felons who do see the inside of a prison, law enforcement officers can look forward to doing business with them in the future. A Justice Department study of 16,000 convicts released from state prisons found that 25% of them had been re-arrested after six months and that more than 62% of them had been re-arrested after three years. It also found that each of those who were re-arrested were charged with an average of four new offenses. Nor was it just a case of the cops picking on ex-cons, either; two



life-threatening incidents for the officer.

Item: Every year, approximately 150 law enforcement officers are killed in the line of duty. Every year approximately 60,000 are assaulted (more actually, since the statistics cover less than 75% of the population and 70% of the nation's law enforcement officers). More than 9,000 of

**Plainclothes and uniformed Miami police confuse one citizen's head for a bowling ball. How much force is too much? Photo: Brian Christopher/Gamma-Liaison**

out of three who were re-arrested after three years were subsequently convicted of



**Police confront an angry and emotional New York crowd protesting the beating death of a black youth, Yosef Hawkins, by whites during the dog days of summer 1989. Photo: Stephen Ferry/Gamma Liaison**

another serious crime and wound up back in state prisons.

**I**tem: In 1988, the Los Angeles Police Department had to deal with more than 300,000 serious crimes, including 736 homicides, 2,006 rapes, 26,182 robberies, 37,812 aggravated assaults, and 233,995 property crimes. And as big cities go, Los Angeles — gangs and all — was a relatively safe place to be; its crime rate of 88.4 per 1,000 population ranked 32nd among the 50 largest U.S. cities. (Atlanta, with a crime rate of 176.1 per 1,000 population, was first.)

#### **A Quarter-Million Assaults On Police**

American law enforcement officers, in other words, have to deal with an unremitting cascade of criminality, including millions of incidents a year which have a real potential of endangering their lives and the lives of innocent third parties if they fail to use an appropriate amount of force.

Out of the millions of incidents in which officers must use force to make an arrest, how often do they use an inappropriate amount of force? Following the King incident, the U.S. Justice Department reviewed some 15,000 cases of alleged police brutality that had been reported to it in the previous six years. Fifteen thousand cases may seem like a lot, until you realize

that it took approximately 80 million arrests to generate them. The average number of arrests in each of the last six years was 13 million; the average number of excessive force complaints to the U.S. Justice Department in each of those years was 2,500. If the officers were in the wrong in all 15,000 cases, which they weren't, there are about 19 incidents of the use of excessive force for every 100,000 arrests. Law enforcement professionals will readily say that one is too many, but the fact remains that a misconduct rate of less than two-hundredths of a percent is not persuasive evidence that Americans are being brutalized by their police. During the same six-year period, there were approximately a quarter-million assaults on police officers.

**T**he foregoing arithmetic should begin to put the King incident back in perspective. So should at least two other considerations.

First, the decision as to how much force should be used in making an arrest is not always an obvious one. An officer who uses too little can endanger both himself and innocent citizens; an officer who uses too much can hurt or kill a suspect. The decision as to how much is "enough" is a judgment call on the part of an officer, and one that very often has to be made in less than a second in circumstances in which his or her adrenalin level is surging. The remarkable part is that in the overwhelming majority of cases, they make the call correctly.

Moreover, what appears to be "excessive" force to a bystander or a television camera may in fact be the proper

level of force to use. One law enforcement consultant recently pointed out that even if arresting officers use precisely the correct amount of force, most people would be uncomfortable watching it happen. Physical force is a way of making a person do something he or she otherwise would be disinclined to do — such as quit struggling or submit to being handcuffed, either by physically overpowering the suspect or by subjecting the suspect to an unendurable amount of pain if he or she resists (as in the case of a come-along hold). It isn't a pleasant thing to watch — particularly for someone who has no real understanding of how much is enough.

**A**nd the number of people who don't is surprisingly large. Recently, a police department arranged a "hands-on" demonstration for members of the press of how much force is needed to arrest even a small person who chooses to resist. Three large male reporters were asked to handcuff a 95-lb. female officer who was to resist their attempts to do so. They couldn't do it. Second, the King video is shocking not only because it is violent, but because it is unusual. The 80 million arrests over the past three years have produced only a handful of video tapes or photographs showing law enforcement officers supposedly using excessive force. When the producers of network news shows go looking for footage of police brutality, they don't have much to choose from. In the past three months, network news has produced no more than four or five tape sequences or photographs of alleged police brutality. The most commonly aired were

the King tape and a tape shot by NBC News allegedly showing an officer shoving the head of handcuffed suspect through a plate-glass window. A trial of the officer involved in the latter incident ended in a hung jury. Considering the number of video cameras in the country, to say nothing of the number of still cameras, and the interest in both law enforcement generally and police conduct in particular, the paucity of photographic evidence of excessive use of force is remarkable.

#### Several Bystanders With Cameras

And it is all the more remarkable when you consider that a lot of people have been beavering away trying to get more. In Houston, Officer J. R. D'Eugenio was trying to arrest a man who appeared to be intoxicated. When he told the man he would have to go to jail, the suspect refused and turned around and pushed D'Eugenio.

"At that time, I noticed another [man] standing behind me with a video camera, filming the whole thing," D'Eugenio reported. "It was an obvious setup." And



**Indicted Foothill Div. Sgt. Stacey Koon (left) and Officer Timothy Wind plead innocent to charges of assault and using excessive force during their videotaped beating of Rodney King. Photo: Roger W. Vargo/L.A. Daily News**

a dangerous one at that. A crowd of between 75 and 100 gathered at the scene and began throwing rocks and bottles. D'Eugenio said he heard four or five shots fired as he drove away.

The incident took place in a section of the city with such a high level of drug- and gang-related violence that officers have been ordered not to enter it without

backup. According to Police Chief Elizabeth Watson, drug dealers in the area are trying to push officers into doing something to arouse anti-police feelings to divert pressure — something like a local version of the King video. In San Diego, officers were attempting to cite a resident for littering when the individual started to fight. The officers on the scene called for backup, and when the backup units arrived they found several bystanders with cameras and video recorders photographing the incident. Not surprisingly, a complaint of excessive force has been filed and an investigation is underway.

There are some consequences that will flow from the King affair and the media's treatment of it. Most are predictable. At least one may be unexpected.

There will be renewed and louder cries for civilian review boards, and for giving them sweeping control of hiring, firing and discipline.

There will be more vigorous prosecution of officers accused of using excessive force — and probably more

## LAW ENFORCEMENT ALLIANCE OF AMERICA

**T**HE silent majority of America's 700,000 law enforcement professionals may be about to find their own voice.

Frustrated by the failure of "political" police chiefs to accurately reflect, or even address, the real concerns of the majority of working law enforcement officers, some of those officers have founded a new organization, the Law Enforcement Alliance of America (LEAA). It intends to fight for such issues as the right of law abiding citizens to keep and bear arms, victims' rights, mandatory sentencing for violent and repeat offenders, and sufficient funding for prisons to end revolving-door justice. It also intends to stand up for the First Amendment and other fundamental rights of law enforcement officers.

"We always hear of criminals' rights," says Brenda Maples, president of the Alliance and a Memphis, Tennessee, police lieutenant. "But we want to be sure that the rights of law abiding citizens, victims and law enforcement officers are also respected."

"We've experienced political chiefs," adds Leroy Pyle, LEAA's executive director. "We will defend officers' First Amendment rights." Pyle has first-hand experience in that regard. A former San Jose, California, police officer who spoke out in favor of gun ownership, he incurred the wrath of San Jose Chief Joe McNamara, who spent years unsuccessfully trying to shut him up.

For years, a handful of "political" police chiefs have presumed to speak for the law enforcement community. Chiefs like Daryl Gates in Los Angeles and McNamara in San Jose loudly espouse gun control and liberal sociology as the way to combat violent crime in America — and then claim they reflect the thinking of the majority of law enforcement professionals. They don't, and the men and women on the street who are actually trying to enforce the law are

increasingly coming to resent it, particularly since the political chiefs haven't hesitated to stifle dissenting views from officers within their own departments.

Pyle says anti-gun "political policemen" like McNamara and Gates put their political interests at the top of their agenda and ignore the real issues that are favored by the taxpayers who pay their salaries. "As a result, they're driving a wedge between the honest citizen and the law enforcement officer, creating distrust," he says. "We intend to represent those people, private citizens and police officers, whose rights are being trampled on and violated. We want to be sure that the victim retains his or her right to self-defense. We would also like to see legislation that devotes as much time and effort to protecting the victim it does for the criminal."

In San Jose, McNamara's anti-gun views led him to decree that an officer couldn't recommend a gun for self-defense to a citizen if he were asked to do so either on or off duty. Pyle says that sort of regulation shows disrespect for officers' First Amendment rights as well as citizens' Second Amendment rights.

The LEAA was founded last year by "a whole bunch of cops who got tired of the criminal justice system not working," in the words of LEAA board member Richard Beckman, a Cloverdale, California, police department sergeant who was *Parade Magazine's* Officer of the Year in 1989. It has already attracted more than 5,000 members.

Maples says that the Alliance is the first group of law enforcement officers who are taking up the cause of victims' rights, and that making contact with victims' advocacy groups will be one of its first orders of business. So will representing the pro-Second Amendment views of the overwhelming majority of rank-and-file law enforcement officers.

"We believe that any law-abiding citizen should have a right to own a firearm," Maples says. "The criminals will obtain their guns illegally, just as they obtain their drugs illegally, and they will continue to obtain their guns regardless of waiting periods and stricter laws."

"The general public is being fooled into thinking a waiting period will keep the criminal from obtaining guns. It will simply make the law-abiding citizen wait longer before he or she can obtain a legal gun," she said.

**A**s an alternative to waiting period legislation, the Alliance supports instantaneous background checks, such as the one currently operating in Virginia and the NRA-backed Staggers bill that anti-gun liberals in the House of Representatives killed last May in favor of the Brady Bill's seven-day waiting period for handgun purchases.

Maples says she thinks police officials who favored the Brady Bill instead of the background check did so because they have a position they must maintain.

"Many times these officials will use the issue of gun control because they have no answers of their own" to soaring crime rates, she said. "This is a typical quick fix which they throw out" and portray as a police position "... when it in fact is not the position of the rank and file."

Law enforcement professionals interested in joining the LEAA can do so by calling (703) 847-2677, or by writing Law Enforcement Alliance of America, Center Tower, 7700 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church, Virginia 22043. Include name, rank, and address; membership dues are not yet being assessed for active officers. Sympathetic members of the public can also join the organization, but must pay a \$20 membership fee. [See LEAA's ad on page 19 of this issue.]

— P.D.



**The phenomenon of gang violence crosses all racial lines. Here, L.A. cops read Asian gang members the riot act before slapping on the cuffs. Photo: Bob Riha/Gamma-Liaison**

convictions. Thanks to the King affair, Americans who have traditionally believed that the police enforce the law fairly are having doubts.

By the same token, there will be an explosion in excessive force lawsuits.

There will be an avalanche of bills regarding police misconduct introduced in Congress and state legislatures, and they will pass, because even those politicians who have been generally supportive of the police won't have the intestinal fortitude to oppose them.

There will be more calls for improved police training and more rigorous screening of applicants.

And above all, officers can expect to spend a lot more time on candid camera.

Within the next 10 years, video cameras will become as common as Instamatics are today. And thanks to the King case, a lot more people will be pointing them at cops.

**T**he result will be more Rodney King-type videos; if you roll the dice often enough, eventually you are going to crap out, and cops roll them more than 35,000 times a day. Worse, the larger number of videos will also result in many more officers being called upon to justify their actions in administrative proceedings, even when no misconduct has occurred. That is because once a video record of a contact has been made, the temptation for defendants to lodge a complaint will be overwhelming. They have nothing to lose and a lot to gain.

#### Cops Will Look Away

All of which could lead to an unexpected consequence — one that those in the media should think about long and hard. Cops, like ordinary citizens who

suspect a crime is taking place, may increasingly choose not to get involved. Recently SOF asked a West Coast police officer with more than 20 years experience — whose identity will not be revealed for obvious reasons — if the media's treatment of the Rodney King incident had affected the way he did his job.

His answer is worth quoting at some length:

**W**hat they've served to do is lessen the level of service and interest to the public, because I know I'm doing my best to avoid confrontations — which simply means I don't stop sometimes when circumstances might warrant it, because I just don't want the hassle .... You still gotta' do what you gotta' do. If you get someplace and there's a big fight going on, there's no way around it, you gotta' wade in there and work on it. If you start chasing a car that happens to be stolen,



**Man in the hot seat. L.A. Police Chief Daryl Gates, a long-time gun control advocate, is now under pressure from many community groups, as well as L.A. Mayor Tom Bradley, to resign over the Rodney King affair. Photo: Douglas Burrows/Gamma-Liaison**

well there's no choice. You've got to continue to chase it .... you do what you do

because you're a cop and that's what you're supposed to do .... but there's a lot of avoidance you can do too .... I roll on most fights, but I don't drive real fast. I'm older and I'm not apt to drive over my head. It's my opinion that at least the more experienced officers are going out of their way to avoid some of these confrontational situations if they can. The young ones, they're still stupid..."

A "less confrontational" police force, in other words, is one that is less likely to be there when you need it. Those who continue to demand unrealistic levels of accountability from police, may, if they keep it up, get their wish.

What can police departments do about all this? Obviously they can continue to improve screening and training, and continue the effort begun more than 20 years ago to become more professional. But that does not address the central question raised by the Rodney King affair: How do you enforce the law when everyone with a home video camera is out to second guess you?

In at least two ways:

First, police can start using cameras themselves. The "other side" of the



**Two members of a Los Angeles C.R.A.S.H. (anti-hoodlum patrol) unit brandish their 12-gauge riot shotguns. The proliferation of gangs and the violence they perpetuate in their battles for control over territory to sell crack cocaine has turned many neighborhood police patrols into "search and destroy" missions. Photo: George Rose/Gamma-Liaison**

Rodney King story that the public needs to see is the reality of what cops have to deal with day in and day out year after year after year. It's only when they see the river of shit cops wade through that they can start making an informed judgment of how much force constitutes excessive force.

**T**his doesn't mean police departments have to start mounting video camera arrays on top of patrol cars (although doing so would probably convict a couple hundred felons for every internal affairs investigation in triggered) but it does mean that departments should ask the media to give more air time to the miles of tapes shot by bank and store security cameras showing crimes in progress.

Not long before the Rodney King video

*Continued on page 87*

# THE FINE ART OF LOOTING

by Robert K. Brown



SOF Special Projects Director, Alex McColl (left), wears Iraqi police hat, belt and holds Iraqi police patches. He wears a stylish Iraqi army jump suit with lieutenant's shoulder boards. His accomplice poses with Iraqi wool pullover with shoulder boards, Iraqi belt and Iraqi combat helmet. On his back is Soviet RPG-7 carrying pack. In background is Kuwaiti flag presented to RKB by Kuwaiti Resistance. Above items will be auctioned at SOF Convention in September. Photos: Tom Slizewski



Kuwaiti tank commander poses with Iraqi binoculars picked off battlefield. Photo: Robert K. Brown

**L**ooting. A time-honored military tradition as old as warfare. And I certainly planned to do my best to do my part to follow said tradition when we invaded Kuwait.

I'd had a little experience in Vietnam but nothing really exciting. Grenada proved more productive. Picked up brand new Soviet web gear and the communist New Jewel Movement flag that flew over the Grenada Defense Ministry, as well as several pounds of interesting documents shortly after the U.S. invasion (see SOF February '84). Afghanistan provided a few odd goodies; Panama was picked clean by the time I got there.

However, Desert Storm proved to be a bonanza for the quick-thinking, sharp-sighted vandal.

Upon moving into the Iraqi defensive fortifications, the Saudi armored calvary paused to let the troops look, see and grab. Advice to the looter: First, look for a backpack, suitcase or other container, as large as possible, to carry looted items. Size of the container may be limited by amount of space you are allotted in the vehicle you are traveling in. If you are hoofing it with the troops, weight and volume will be determined by your strength, stamina and greed.

Fill container with first items at hand and upgrade containers contents as you find more valuable gear. For example, replace dirty Iraqi underwear surrender flags with cheap berets and badges.

Always allow indigenous troops to go into bunkers first to detonate the odd booby trap. If you are properly equipped (I was not), you will have 100 feet of parachute cord and a small grappling hook. Gingerly attach hook to item of interest, proceed to an area providing cover from fragments, and pull. Do not consider something that has the protective capability of a bamboo wall as satisfactory cover. Of course, if the bad guys have been clever and wired a 122mm arty shell or 500-pound bomb: you lose. However, these small risks always enhance the looting experience. No pain, no gain — no risk, no return.

**A** small flashlight is needed to peer into the cracks and crevices of bunkers — to determine which uniforms are with or without blood and/or bullet holes, depending on your requirements. You may have limited time, and a light will help determine which bunkers to focus on.

I followed the above procedures but threw all the shit away during the second phase of my looting.

Upon entering Kuwait City I was befriended by a Kuwaiti family who put me in touch with the Kuwaiti Resistance who chauffeured me around the AO. We found a horn of plenty (plenty of burned-out and shot-up Iraqi armor, trucks and stolen Mercedes) on the Highway of Death from Kuwait City to Basra, where U.S. forces interrupted the fleeing Iraqis and blew the dog shit out of them.

In this 200-acre junkyard, a sharp pocket knife to cut open locked duffel bags or suitcases full of personal gear proved invaluable.

A 2-foot piece of iron pipe to break handles on locked CONEX containers or a set of lock picks would have let me access God-knows-what. Oh, well, next time.

Do not waste your precious loot space with items you think might be appreciated by girlfriends or female office personnel. Out of a stolen Mercedes, I rifled a carton of cologne, vintage unknown, and packed it all the way back to Boulder — and they barely sniffed it. Our typesetter, Deborah, used it to freshen her kitty litter box. I mean, but it was from the battlefield! The bottles weren't cracked, the boxes weren't scratched. And to think I could have brought back another half-dozen Iraqi belts.

Next war, I'll be better prepared. ☒

# “MAGNIFICENT



## 2/4 Marines Pursue and Exploit Saddam

Text & Photos by Bob Newman

**K**UWAIT was burning. From my vantage point in the northern Saudi Arabian desert, I could see the menacing glow of the Kuwaiti oil wells. They had been set ablaze via dynamite and TNT charges placed by the maniacal Iraqi hordes, who were preparing for a quick escape back to their mangled homeland. We would later learn that many of these highly touted forces were already heading

home, with no intention to face the two Marine divisions to their south. The Marines were anxiously waiting, straining at their tethers to cut loose on the thieves, murderers, bandits and hoodlums of Saddam Hussein's doomed army.

Sewn among the fiery oil fields were elaborately built and supposedly well-defended obstacle belts. These defenses were composed of complex systems of trenches, minefields, reinforced concrete "hardpoints" and barbed wire that Saddam's distraught henchmen hoped would

slow the inevitable, devastating assault of the renowned 2nd Marine Division. Their plan was to make the ornery leathernecks vulnerable to Iraq's South African-made, 155mm G-5 howitzers, widely believed to be the world's best.

The howitzers could — and most of the world thought probably would — lob chemical munitions such as Sarin, an incredibly deadly nerve agent, and other nasties like mustard gas at the charging "devil dogs."

This information, plus the fact that

# BASTARDS”

*Amtracs await their cargo of Marines and small arms.*

*INSET: Retreating Iraqis abandoned this howitzer in such haste that there was still a live round in the chamber.*



## m's Ragtag Army

Iraq's huge, seasoned army had been able to sustain a brutal, eight-year war with Iran, despite tremendous losses and a bankrupt economy, steered us for the battle. In a few short hours, we would be smack dab in the middle of it.

For weeks, the Marines of the Camp Lejeune-based 2nd Marine Division had been playing a shell game of sorts, in the vast expanse of wasteland south of the Saudi-Kuwaiti border. Shifting from place to place, we got a feel for desert life and operations. Our constant movement kept

the Iraqis guessing as to our exact whereabouts and tactical disposition. Our brothers of the 1st Marine Division from Camp Pendleton in Southern California, were up to the same tricks and ruses. Come G-Day, they would cover our right flank all the way to Kuwait City.

### Payback Is A Bitch

As I stood in the timeless sands of the ancient desert kingdom on that chilly February night, I couldn't help but laugh about how quickly and radically my life

had changed. Less than five months had passed since I left the infamous Navy Survival-Evasion-Resistance-Escape (SERE) School, deep in the pristine Blue Mountains of Western Maine.

I had spent three fascinating years there, as a SERE instructor. During that most memorable of tours, my comrades and I taught "high risk of capture" Navy and Marine personnel (such as Navy SEALs and Marine Force Recon), the art of staying alive and out of enemy hands. The course included wilderness survival and



A Marine motorcycle messenger studies his map before departing to his destination toward the front.

The amtracs, waiting high and dry in the desert, now came to life, ready to take us on our imminent journey into hell.

evasion, resistance to interrogation, indoctrination and exploitation, and escape policies and procedures. Now I was facing the ultimate survival course, ground combat in the desert, as a member of a Marine infantry company — after a 14 year warm-up period.

In the gloomy pre-dawn darkness, the word was passed down the line to mount-up. Hastily donning our familiar vestments of war, we clamored aboard the rumbling amphibious assault vehicles, known to Marines as “amtracs.” Wearing Kevlar helmets and flak jackets, our web gear was loaded down with horrendous amounts of rifle, pistol, machine-gun and grenade launcher ammunition, plus our chemical protective masks, personal

firearms and knives.

The amtracs, waiting high and dry in the desert, now came to life, ready to take us on our imminent journey into hell. This was our hot, long overdue date with a dictator who needed to die in a big way. The men of 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines, were just the folks to provide Saddam with the chance to perish in a glorious manner.

Taking my seat beside the trac’s lowered ramp, I looked at my mortar section leader, Sergeant Joe Negron.

“What goes around comes around, Neg,” I said.

“Yeah, it does,” came the unsmiling reply. “Payback is a bitch.”

The ramp was raised and, with a lurch, the metallic beast roared ahead, bent for a

freshly blown gap in the Saudi “berm.” This was the 12-foot-high wall of sand the Coalition forces had built to keep prying Iraqi eyes from seeing the preparations their enemy was making for a serious “butt stompin.”

After a few minutes, the amtrac crewman in the rear of the “havg” heard the words come through his headset. These were the words that we had been waiting to hear since our arrival in Southwest Asia on New Year’s Eve. “Lock and load!” he shouted, over the roar of the vehicle’s engine. The sound of bolts going home never sounded so sweet — nor so ominous.

#### Brazen Soldiers Of The Sea

“We’re through the berm!” he bellowed, moments later. And then: “We’re in Kuwait!”

This bit of news had the expected effect on the gyrenes crammed in around me — they went nuts.

My men exchanged the traditional high fives and loud “Oooh-raahs!” I looked at them and thought about how different they appeared to me now than when I first met them only four months earlier.

On that warm October morning when we had our first face-to-face, they struck me as being far too young to be in the Corps. Now, looking at them in the light of war, their once fresh, unmarred faces reflected the strain and hazards of desert combat. I couldn’t see them being anywhere else but in our jinking war chariot. I knew then that these Marines — the latest in a long line of brazen soldiers of the sea — would keep me alive, and I them.

Peering out the tiny slit of a window set into the trac’s ramp, I could see another amtrac nearly identical to mine, about 40 yards behind. Beyond it, I knew there were



Iraqi troops caught in the open were vulnerable to accurate bursts of white phosphorus.

dozens more, all filled with Marines.

A fast-approaching dot on the horizon appeared and I soon recognized it as an A-10 “Warthog,” loaded for bear and heading for the hunting grounds to our north. Slung beneath its wings and fuselage were various pieces of ordnance,



A Coalition forces .50 cal. mounted on a pickup truck races past a tank en-route to Kuwait City.



Indeed it does! As the crew of this Iraqi T-62 tank discovered when it was hit with an armor-piercing shell.

left. The round's whistling steel created a brilliant shower of sparks as the shrapnel bounced off the front of the vehicle. The trac continued on as if nothing had happened, its covey of Marines safely tucked away inside.

Our artillery retaliated, and the Iraqi mortar position was never heard from again. After the war, I tried to find out if the enemy rounds had been detected and traced by our counterbattery radar, but I



They don't make T-62s like they used to. The burnt out wreckage of this Iraqi tank gives silent testimony to the effectiveness of the Coalition air campaign.

never received a definite answer.

After this encounter with the not-quite-ready-to-quit Iraqis, our assault slowed down as we allowed our forward-deployed antitank forces and supporting M-1 tanks to clear the area ahead. Little trouble was found.

Night fell with the "Magnificent

The round's whistling

steel created a brilliant

shower of sparks ...



Capt. Schlaepfer (left) and author crouch in front of entrance to bunker that yielded dozens of Iraqi EPWs.

Bastards" of 2/4 still in the attack, again eating up ground at a quick pace. The "Dox" Company Commander, Captain Drew Schlaepfer, spotted one of our regimental objectives through his night vision goggles. He quickly asked for the go-ahead to take it, which he got almost instantly.

The objective was a widely scattered group of buildings of various sizes, believed to be part of a migrant workers

## FORBIDDEN SOUVENIRS

The Iraqis brought one hell of a lot of weapons with them to the "Mother of All Battles," although they displayed little willingness to use them. Most fell into the hands of the good guys. However, the U.S. Army's weapons souvenir policies of previous wars were not extended to the Gulf War.

Our quest at SOF to find the rationale — or lack thereof — for the new, more restrictive souvenir guidelines boldly took us where no magazine has gone before — to the final frontier: Army bureaucracy.

The Department of Defense claimed the order was initiated by Central Command and advised us to direct our inquiry to them. Central Command insisted the order originated from DoD and told us to get back to them.

After enough long distance calls to rival the phone bill of any teenage girl, Lieutenant Commander John Jendro of the Navy was the first to help us.

He confirmed that the order was indeed initiated by U.S. Central Command and was sent to all of the component branches. It was up to each branch to interpret and enforce the directive.

General Order-1 has four parts:

1. All captured firearms are to be evaluated for intelligence value.
2. All captured firearms are property of the U.S. Government.
3. No captured firearms are to be retained by the troops.
4. Permitted to be kept are helmets, canteens and bayonets ("properly packaged" and not transported on the soldier's person or kit bag).

When asked why this policy prevented troops from keeping firearms that were consistent with BATF guidelines, no one, including Lt. Cmdr. Jendro, had a definitive answer. Nor was anyone able to explain why this policy had been changed from the Vietnam War, where soldiers were allowed to keep weapons such as SKS rifles and Tokarev pistols — both weapons conforming to BATF guidelines.

Lt. Cmdr. Jendro said that "the number one priority and overriding concern was the safety of the troops," and therefore they were not allowed to take back any firearms. He went on to say that allowing soldiers to keep such weapons "would impact negatively on the safety of the troops."

When pressed as to why a more restrictive policy was adopted than in previous wars, Jendro said, "Somewhere up the line a decision was made ... Beyond that, I don't have an answer."

Neither do we.

The BATF has announced an amnesty whereby any Desert Storm soldier who discovers some nasty Iraqi weapon in his or her gear can turn it in without getting spanked. If previous gun amnesty programs are any indication of how this one will work, the boys at the BATF will be lonelier than the Maytag repairman.

— Bob Glass

camp. As we overran the area, the captain decided that we should take a closer look around. Sergeant Negrón deployed one of his 60mm mortars and had the mortar men run an illumination mission. Just as the first round lit up the night sky, the radio inside the trac came alive with chatter. The place was crawling with Iraqis! I ran back for the high explosive (HE) rounds, but never had the opportunity to get them out. They were surrendering!

We fired our remaining illumination rounds, and then sped over to where the enemy prisoners of war (EPWs) were being rounded up. One of the tracs had come to a stop near a small opening in the desert floor that led to a large underground bunker where most of the Iraqis had been hiding. Only a handful of the 38 Iraqis we rounded up had been found wandering around nearby.

The grenadiers were firing their illumination rounds over the outlying buildings, and the EPWs were bathed in the lights from the "Hummers" and amtracs. A hasty interrogation of one of the Iraqis told us that a tank had left the position a few hours earlier. He said that a ZSU 23-4 anti-aircraft gun was also somewhere in the vicinity, which may have explained the gigantic crater beside the Iraqi bunker, obviously put there by a slightly off-target pilot. Judging by the size of the crater, though, I would say he definitely got their attention.

In the bunkers and buildings nearby, we uncovered tremendous caches of weapons, including hundreds of SA-7 surface-to-air missiles, and untold numbers of AKs and other firearms. The following morning we turned the EPWs over and pressed on, taking up a pursuit and exploitation phase, which meant that we had them by the balls. So far, we had come through the obstacle belts of Saddam's much-publicized "death trap" unscathed. And we were now leaving the region known to aviators as the "ice cube tray," a name it received because of its likeness to the same when viewed from the air.

As we rolled on toward Kuwait City, the procession occasionally was held up so the hard-nosed riflemen could clear a trench or bunker, or take a prisoner or two. Just after sunset we hit the sprawling United Agriculture Research Facility, which had until very recently been home to the Iraqi 3rd Armored Brigade, who fled at the sight of us.

This vast region is adjacent to a major artery leading to Kuwait City, and is lined with trees and shrubs. The interior was used before the war for agriculture experi-

mentation, and was quite lush compared to the desert.

We took up a hasty defensive position beside the highway in a grove of trees. We would soon learn that this area contained one of the most staggering collections of weapons and ammunition I had ever encountered. We found crates and crates of RPGs, grenades, surface-to-air missiles, Sagger surface-to-surface missiles, rifle, machine gun and pistol ammunition, and so on.

We occupied this area until our extraction to Saudi Arabia in May, but were rewarded with a memorable sight as the war drew to a close: the triumphant entrance of the Coalition forces into Kuwait City. Saudi, Egyptian, Kuwaiti and other Arabic forces were given the honor of taking back the once-beautiful city. I didn't know it at the time, but as I stood beside the road, taking in the historical sight, this magazine's

This area contained one of the  
most staggering collections of  
weapons and ammunition I had  
ever encountered.

publisher, Robert K. Brown, was among the cheering throngs of soldiers.

Today, Kuwait is again free — a fact that puts every tyrant on the face of the earth on notice: their days of oppression are numbered.

*The events described in this article are a matter of historical record. The opinions and views of the author are his own and should in no way be construed as those of the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy or the U.S. Marine Corps.*

*Marine Gunnery Sergeant Bob Newman served as the weapons platoon sergeant in "Fox" Company, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines, during the Gulf War. A recon Marine parachutist and diver, he has served with various units in Europe, the Far East, Africa, Australia and now Southwest Asia.*

*A naturalist, outdoors writer and photographer, he is founder of L.L. Bean's Public Clinic Program's 'Wilderness Survival' seminar. Newman has been published in numerous magazines and is a former columnist for The Maine Sportsman.*

*The gunny is a licensed instructor for the National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR). He lives in North Carolina with his wife, Susan, and daughter, Britta. ✂*

# Hanoi



# Hannah

## A 20-Year Reunion with Vietnam's Tokyo Rose

Text & Photos by Don North

**W**E called her Hanoi Hannah. She called herself Thu Houg, the fragrance of autumn. But her job was to chill and frighten, not to charm and seduce.

*"How are you, GI Joe? It seems to me that most of you are poorly informed about the going of the war, to say nothing about a correct explanation of your presence over here. Nothing is more confused (sic) than to be ordered into a war to die or to be maimed for life without the faintest idea of what's going on"* — Hanoi Hannah, 16 June 1967.

The wartime words of Hanoi Hannah, part of the loud soundtrack for the Vietnam War. It may have been the first war fought to a rock 'n' roll background, but for American GIs, along with the beat came the message: disinformation from the enemy in Hanoi and misinformation from the U.S. Army in Saigon. Even so, radio brought music and messages with a familiar sound to soldiers who thought the war was the end of the earth, and to many it didn't matter who was broadcasting — Radio Hanoi or U.S. Armed Forces Radio.

I returned to Vietnam a few weeks ago for the first time since the war, and mixed with the list of economists, generals and journalists I asked to interview, was Thu Houg, the lady we knew as Hanoi Hannah. The meeting was arranged. We would meet on the roof cafe of the Rex Hotel in Ho Chi Minh City for coffee at 1000 hours.

As an ABC News correspondent during the war, I tuned to her broadcasts regularly. Radio Hanoi's broadcasts in English

Hanoi Hannah, or Thu Houg, the fragrance of autumn. Interviewing her was like Dorothy parting the curtains hiding the Wizard of Oz. The great and terrible Hanoi Hannah turned out to be a mild-mannered announcer who read *Stars and Stripes*.

were just another source of information or disinformation to be checked out and sorted in the communications pudding of the Vietnam War. Some days on Radio Hanoi you just might hear useful information, such as a message from an American

pick up. On U.S. Armed Forces Radio even a major battle could sound like a minor skirmish if it didn't favor U.S. or Vietnamese government forces, but you learned to read between the lines of the newscasts. Sometimes you would hear your own TV or radio reports from Stateside broadcasts, picked up and rebroadcast over U.S. Armed Forces Radio, as long as they didn't mention American setbacks or were critical of Washington policy.

Radio could be heard in most areas of South Vietnam, particu-

larly at night, and I would often join groups of American GIs having a few beers before bed and setting the dial for Hanoi Hannah for a few laughs.

The GI's radio was, after the rifle, his most valuable possession. Like his rifle butt, the radio was usually wrapped in frayed black tape for protection. They would laugh and hoot over Hannah's attempts to scare them into going home or her suggestions to frag an officer. If their unit was mentioned, a great cheer went up and they pelted the radio with empty beer cans.

We would ask each other how the hell she could know the stuff she knew. Inevitably, the stories of her insights and military intelligence grew with each telling, and she was often credited with broadcasting Viet Cong offensives in advance and within hours of battles, knowing the names and hometowns of dead American soldiers.

*"Now for the war news. American*



An old Marine (Ken Watkins), an old journalist (Don North), and an old broadcaster meet on the roof of the Rex Hotel, Saigon.

POW or the first hint of a policy shift in Hanoi's politburo, but mostly it was highly exaggerated reports of the war and curious messages to American GIs from Hanoi Hannah.

**"A**merican GIs: Don't fight this unjust, immoral and illegal war of Johnson's. Get out of Vietnam now and alive. This is the Voice of Vietnam broadcasting from Hanoi, capital of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. Our program for American GIs can be heard at 1630 hours. Now here's Connie Francis singing, 'I Almost Lost My Mind' " — 12 August 1967.

In Vietnam, you habitually tuned to whatever newscasts your transistor would pick up. NBC was the first choice for radio news and most reliable, but often hard to

casualties in Vietnam: Army Corporal Larry J. Samples, Canada, Alabama ... Staff Sergeant Charles R. Miller, Tucson, Arizona ... Sergeant Frank G. Herrera, Coolidge, Arizona ..." — 15 September 1967.

**F**ormer U.S. Marine Ken Watkins joined me on the roof of the Rex for the meeting with Hanoi Hannah. Ken is now a counselor at the Vietnam Outreach Center in Houston, Texas. He had returned to join a group of veterans from Garberville, California, to build a health clinic in Vung Tao. Ken had been confronting many old ghosts of his Vietnam duty in the past weeks. Hanoi Hannah would be yet another phantom to encounter face to face.

Ken was a regular listener of Hannah's during his time as a corpsman with the U.S. 1st Marines based at Marble Mountain in 1966. "The signal was pretty good around Da Nang," Ken recalled, "and we would tune in once or twice a week to hear her talk about the war, a war I was beginning to question and wanted to hear discussed."

"U.S. Armed Forces Radio didn't talk about the war really; they ignored the issues or public attitudes at home. Hanoi Hannah didn't necessarily

make sense, and there was a certain awkwardness; she used American English but really didn't speak our language in spite of her hip expressions and hit tunes, even tunes that were banned on U.S. Army radio. The best thing going for her was that she was female and had a nice, soft voice."

"Any of her broadcasts you particularly remember?" I asked Ken while waiting for Hannah to arrive.

"Whenever she named our unit, the 1st Marines, and where we were, that always stands out in my mind. Some of us thought she had spies everywhere, or a crystal ball"

"Do you still feel anger toward her, Ken?"

"Sure, some antagonism; add it to the Vietnam list. But this trip back is about coming full circle on a lot of things and she is another voice from the past I want to confront in person."

So an old Marine and an old journalist waited that sunny Saigon morning on the roof of the old Rex for the real Hanoi Hannah to appear, waiting for reality to sweep away years of bitter old images in the mills of our minds.

Dragon Lady? Prophet? Psy-warrior par excellence, or what? Like so many of the phantoms encountered in Vietnam, she was not what she seemed.

She was no phantom, she didn't look like a dragon lady, and she was on time. A pleasant looking woman, slim, well-groomed and attractive, showed up at 1000 hours sharp on the Rex roof accompanied by an escort from the External Affairs Press Office.



Hanoi Hannah broadcasts from Radio Hanoi during war. Much of the music she played was donated by American anti-war protesters. Photo: courtesy Don North

The wartime sounds of Radio Hanoi came flooding back. "We gotta get out of this place, if it's the last thing we ever do. We gotta get out of this place, surely there's a better life for me and you" — an Eric Burdon song, regularly heard on Radio Hanoi, banned on U.S. Armed Forces Radio.

**D**on: Thu Houng, you played a lot of American rock music. Where did you get it?

**Hannah:** Yes, yes, we bought the music from progressive Americans who came to visit Hanoi. We also have our own music, but I think that the GIs like to listen to American music. It's more suitable to their ears.

**Don:** What prompted your government to begin your broadcasts to American soldiers?

**Hannah:** It wasn't a new idea. During the war against the French we had this kind of broadcast for the French soldiers.

**Don:** What about the foreigners who helped you during the war?

**Hannah:** The Australian journalist Wilfred Burchet helped us from time to time and a French woman, Madelaine Riffaud. We did several interviews with Cora Weiss and Jane Fonda. We asked Jane Fonda if she would like to meet American pilots in Hanoi, but she refused, she didn't want to. I saw the pilots sometimes and we broadcast statements but I never interviewed them either. They were authorized to listen to our broadcasts. And we broadcast tapes sent to us from Americans against the war. These were most effective I believe. Americans are xenophobic. They will believe their own people rather than the adversary, even a friendly enemy voice.

**Don:** Did you ever evaluate the effects of your broadcasts?

**Hannah:** No, during the war it was difficult to get feedback except through foreign news reports, but we knew we were being heard.

**Don:** What were your main aims?

**Hannah:** We mentioned that GIs should go AWOL and suggested some fringing, or, that is, fraggging. We advised them to do what they think proper against the war.

**Don:** But there were few, if any, defections of Americans. Did that surprise you?

**Hannah:** No, we just continued our work. We believed in it. I put my heart in my work.

**Don:** Many American soldiers think you received excellent intelligence on their unit positions and battle readiness and casualties. What was the main source of your information on U.S. troops in Vietnam?

**Hannah:** U.S. Army Stars and Stripes. We read from it. We had it flown in every day. And we also read Newsweek, Time and several newspapers. We could also intercept the AP and UPI wires and of course we had the news from our Vietnam News Agency and we rewrote it. We had many sources of news. We took remarks of American journalists and put it in our broadcasts, especially remarks about casualties ... high casualties. There was the list of missing in action, and those who were

killed on the battlefield. We read the news with the native place (hometowns of GIs).

**Don:** Sometimes the North Vietnamese army, when they killed Americans, would find letters to their families. Did you ever get such letters and read them?

**Hannah:** No. Maybe the army, but not our radio station.

**Don:** Do you remember any articles in particular that you used?

**Hannah:** Yes, Arnaud de Borchgrave in *Newsweek*. I remember we used his articles. And Don Luce about the tiger cages in South Vietnam. We would often say to the GIs that the Saigon regime was not worth their support.

**Don:** Did you ever announce attacks before they took place? Many soldiers in Vietnam thought you did.

**Hannah:** No, but, um ... I don't think ... For example, if we made a sum up of war news maybe the GIs would guess something. I don't know. We never informed that such and such a battle would take place. That we would not do.

**Don:** You never gave any hints of what would take place?

**Hannah:** Well, in our talks we said that if they were in Vietnam, how could they avoid the war zone and maybe they will get bad change, maybe killed. But it's not that such and such a battle took place.

Mike Roberts, 41, from Detroit, Michigan, remembers Hanoi Hannah. Mike was a Marine in a Hawk missile battalion just outside Da Nang through 1967 and 1968.

**“A Vietnam black GI who refuses to be a victim of racism is Billy Smith. It seems on the morning of March 15 a fragmentation grenade went off in an officer's barracks in Bien Hoa Army Base killing two gung ho lieutenants and wounding a third. Smith was illegally searched, arrested and put in Long Binh jail and brought home for trial. The evidence that clearly showed him guilty of all charges and specifications was this: being black, poor and against the war and the Army and refusing to be a victim of racism.”** — 30 March 1968.

Mike Roberts summed up the black veteran's attitude to Hannah's broadcasts. “I remember June 1967. I was sitting in a tent with about 13 guys from Charlie Company. We were all on mess duty and we were gambling, drinking and having a good time shootin' craps, talking about the world, listening to music, and you know, one guy kept saying, ‘Shhh, shhh, be quiet,’ and everybody said, ‘What? What?’ and he said ‘There's a riot in Detroit!’ And everybody stopped.

“U.S. Armed Forces Radio was sayin' yeah, there's a riot in Detroit. I guess the governor called in the troops ... there was some loss of life. There was no feeling of, you know, what were they rioting for? What possibly could they want? We all knew what they wanted, you know what I'm sayin.' So of course we would feel some sort of empathy for the folks back home ... the guys in the street who were



U.S. Marine casualty loaded into chopper at Dong Ha. Within a few days, his name would be read by Hanoi Hannah over Radio Hanoi.

struggling or rioting.

“Hanoi Hannah came on soon after that, and she knew what guard unit was called in, what kind of weapons were used ... you know what I'm sayin.' That's when it started to hit home...

“We knew what kind of firepower and what kind of devastation that kind of weapon could do to people, and now those same weapons were turning on us, you know, our own military was killing our own people. We might as well have been Viet Cong ... you know what I'm sayin'?” It was just bad news, but Hanoi Hannah picked up on it and she talked about it.

“And clearly if she knew about it, Armed Forces Radio did, too. They knew more than they broadcast. That was really the first time I started hearing Hanoi Hannah call upon blacks to rethink their situation there. ‘Why are you fighting? You have your own battle to fight in America.’ We were smoking herbs, you know, and listening to Hanoi Hannah.

“Now, most of the guys that I hung out with didn't stay up all night waiting for Hannah to come on. But there were times when ... like during bunker watch at night ... we wanted to listen to Hanoi Hannah ... to see what she had to say. But we didn't really see her as our friend ... somebody who is looking out for our best interest and would keep the Viet Cong from killing us if they had a chance.”

**T**om Wallis spent eight years in Vietnam and Thailand with U.S. Army Special Forces. During his time in the Central Highlands, Tom particularly remembers one broadcast.

“We had a young lieutenant who had just turned 22 years old and we wanted him to come down and celebrate his birthday at headquarters. He got a sampan with a couple of security guards and they started down the river. One of the enemy reached out and handed them a grenade and killed two of them in the boat. We found the boat later, and there was a birthday card bought at an American PX pinned to his chest that said ‘Happy 22nd Birthday, Lieutenant ... this will be your last.’ A day or two later, we picked up Hanoi Hannah saying that, uh, congratulations to Lieutenant so and so, it's too bad he won't make his 23rd birthday.”

Jim Maciolek served at Lai Khe with the

1st Division in 1966. “When we heard Hannah mention our unit we would give a toast to her and then throw our beer cans at the radio. If she knew where we were, so did everybody else. But Armed Forces Radio was on constantly, too. It was run by the U.S. military so we heard what they wanted us to hear. I think I would have liked to hear about the opposition to the war that was being staged back home. That way I would have been better prepared when I got back home ... seeing hippies, people chanting slogans, people with black arm bands ... that was all new to me.”

Hanoi Hannah could always be assured of at least one captive audience, the American POWs “authorized” to hear her broadcasts in the Hanoi Hilton. A speaker wired into every room made Hannah's commentaries impossible to ignore, although some tried. Lieutenant Commander Ray Voden, of McLean, Virginia, endured her broadcasts for almost eight years after being shot down over Hanoi on 3 April 1965.

**“H**anoi Hannah's broadcasts often stirred up arguments among the POWs; there were near fist fights over the program. Some guys wanted to hear it, while other guys tried to ignore it. Personally, I listened because I was never influenced and usually gleaned information reading between the lines.

“They always exaggerated our aircraft losses, often claiming hundreds of U.S. planes shot down around Hanoi when we had not heard antiaircraft fire for weeks. Once they piped in the BBC news by mistake and for once we really heard what was going on in the world. The music was the best part of Radio Hanoi and sometimes they played American tunes that were supposed to make us homesick, but they had the opposite effect. One time they played ‘Downtown’ by Petula Clark and everyone started dancing and yelling for an hour ... just went wild. Another one that gave us a hoot was ‘Don't Fence Me In,’ by Ella Fitzgerald, I think.

“I taped Christmas messages for Radio Hanoi a few times, most of us did ... It was no big deal, but they would make life miserable for you if you didn't. I've no hatred for them now. They were doing their job and I was doing mine. But, no, I wouldn't go out of my way to meet Hanoi Hannah if I were given the chance today.”

Gerry Clark, from Detroit, had been in country just two weeks when he heard Hanoi Hannah. “After welcoming our unit, Hanoi Hannah said she had a surprise for us. She said that in honor of Ho Chi Minh's birthday, there would be an enemy attack. Just then I heard small arms fire in the distance. It grew steadier and louder until it became a full-scale attack on the Da Nang Air Base.”

George Hart, from Boston, remembers Hanoi Hannah's broadcasts that men-

*Continued on page 86*

# ASSASSINATION:

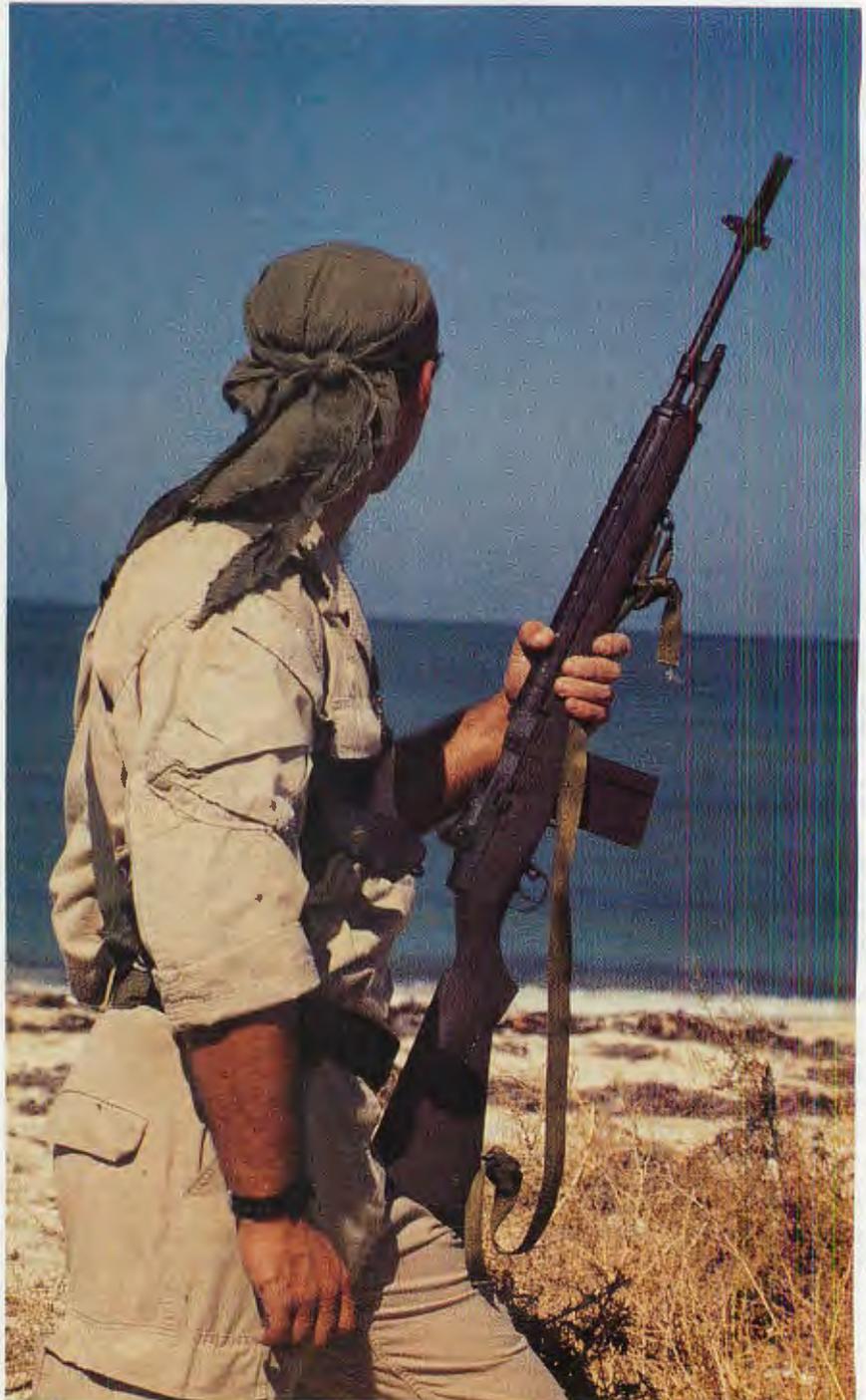
**T**HREE-hundred-seventy-six American servicemen and women died, along with scores of Coalition soldiers, in the recent Gulf War to defend Saudi Arabia and oust Saddam Hussein's forces from Kuwait. Yet the man who started the war, who pillaged Kuwait and torched its oil fields, who held American hostages as "human shields," who used weapons of mass destruction against his own people and sent Scud missiles hurtling toward Israel, who twice in a single decade launched wars of aggression — is alive and well and remains in power in Iraq. He is engaged in a crash program to rearm and revitalize his shattered military and, according to recent reports, much of his chemical, biological, and nuclear capabilities remain intact.

The U.S. public is not happy about Saddam's resilience and recent polls indicate that most Americans believe that Saddam's downfall should have been the chief goal of the Bush administration, regardless of U.N. resolutions calling only for the removal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. The ruthless suppression of uprisings in northern and southern Iraq, and the resulting suffering of the Kurds, is seen as the inevitable result of stopping short of ousting Saddam from power.

Some observers go even further. Why, they ask, was it necessary to go to war with Iraq when our problems were chiefly with one man? Wouldn't it have been better, they want to know, to have killed Saddam than to have sacrificed so many fine young Americans on the battlefield?

Humorist Dave Berry agrees. He has suggested that the State Department be abolished and in its place, there would be the "Department of a Couple of Guys Named Victor." Instead of "sending hundreds of thousands of our people to fight hundreds of thousands of Iraqis all because of one scuzball, I'd say, 'Victors, it would not depress me to hear that Saddam Hussein had some kind of unfortunately fatal accident in the shower.'"

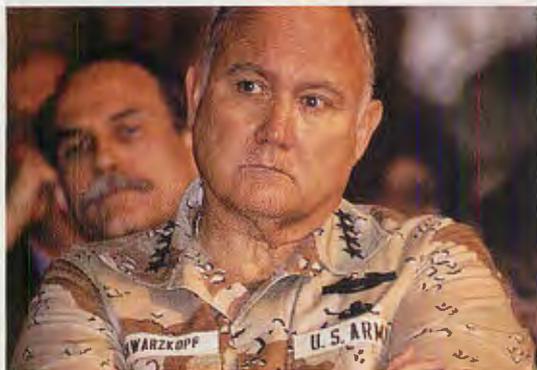
President Bush, for his part, has made it clear that our problem was not with the Iraqi people, but rather with their leadership. On 21 January, he even called it the "war against Saddam." There is little question that we were fighting an individual instead of a nation. Iraq is by every



A Navy SEAL in the Saudi Desert with his M14 rifle. This rifle, a descendent of John Garand's original masterpiece, when properly bedded and scoped, makes an exceptional sniper rifle, although one was never tried on Saddam. The U.S. military ordered a number of these rifles with hand-honed triggers, special barrels and other modifications, and they are now known as the M21. Photo: courtesy Dale B. Cooper

# COULD WE HAVE HIT SADDAM?

by Neil Livingstone



General Norman Schwarzkopf noted on 20 January 1991 that the U.S. does not have "a policy of trying to kill any particular individual." Photo: DoD



In place of the State Department, some have suggested a new agency be created, the "Department of a Couple of Guys Named Victor," to deal with people like Saddam Hussein. Photo: R. Sachs/Sygma

standard an out-and-out dictatorship, characterized by a cult of personality that hasn't been seen since Mao Zedong. Saddam's portrait graces virtually every home. From billboards to government offices, T-shirts, wristwatches, and even the country's currency — you can't escape his smiling visage. Monuments to him dot the landscape, and much of the country's infrastructure — or at least what's left of it — is named after him.

## To Kill Or Not To Kill

A few public figures, such as Senator Alfonso D'Amato (R-NY), wondered aloud why we didn't go after Saddam. The Bush administration, by contrast, took the position, even after the war started, that Saddam was not a specific U.S. target. The United States, announced General Norman Schwarzkopf on 20 January 1991, does not have "a policy of trying to kill any particular individual." This, of course, was in direct contrast to statements made last fall by Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Dugan, who told several reporters that, in the event of war, the United States would attempt not only to target Saddam, but his family and mistress as well. Dugan was fired by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney for his indiscreet remarks.

Despite overwhelming evidence that our problem was with Saddam and that his removal from the scene would, in all likelihood, have resulted in an Iraqi pullout from Kuwait and a more benign regime in Baghdad, little effort was made

to target him directly, either before or after the onset of hostilities. Many reasons were cited for such restraint, including the existence of a presidential ban on assassinations. But in reality, the problem was far more complex and involved practical issues as well as legal, moral, and political ones.

Could we, from a purely operational point of view, have "taken out" Saddam? Not necessarily. While the United States is the only superpower in the world today, without equal in terms of its military power and intelligence capabilities, it is clear that Saddam was, and remains, a formidable target.

In order to kill Saddam Hussein, it would first have been necessary to locate him, and that would have been no easy task. The Israelis, who keep close tabs on all Middle Eastern leaders, regard Saddam as the most difficult Arab leader to track. In contrast to those like Yasir Arafat, whose every move they closely monitor, Israeli intelligence sources say that prior to the war they could locate Saddam at best three times a week, and even then, not with precision. Since the Gulf War, they said, he has nearly dropped out of sight.

The Coalition allies were also hampered by the fact that they had few agents in Iraq, and thus little hard intelligence about Saddam or his movements. Once the war started, the situation became even worse because the U.S. jamming of Iraqi communications made it difficult, if not impossible, for deep-cover agents to stay in contact with their governments. As a result, fixing Saddam's whereabouts was largely a hit-and-miss proposition.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir observed that, "One of the first lessons that most Arab rulers learn is the

connection between secrecy and longevity." One of the most secretive leaders on earth, Saddam Hussein has made paranoia an art form. The Iraqi strongman is nothing if not unpredictable. He adheres to no fixed schedule and often changes his itinerary spontaneously. His rare public appearances are never announced in advance. He avoids regular hours, and often fails to show up at scheduled events, even those in his honor.

## Elusive Scuzball

Indicative of his unpredictability, on 17 January, the morning after the war began, he was filmed touring a neighborhood where several targets had been hit. He stepped out of his car for a quick photo opportunity and greeted passers-by on the street, who seemed genuinely surprised to see him. Unlike so many other Middle Eastern leaders, whose movements are major productions, Saddam appeared to be traveling with only a few highly trusted bodyguards in one or two unmarked sedans. By moving around this way, Saddam certainly reduces the chances that there will be a breach of security or that anyone can lay a trap for him.

Saddam, moreover, is no tourist. The last time he is known to have traveled outside the Arab world was a 1975 trip to France, three years before becoming leader of Iraq. This does not mean, however, that he spends very much time in the same place. He's always on the move and rarely sleeps in the same bed for more than a few nights. He employs many ruses and his movements around Iraq are masked by phony communications traffic. Most of the time he spends hunkered down in a vast network of heavily guarded palaces and bunkers throughout the



Sgt. Ryan sits with heavily camouflaged sniper rifle nestled in his lap. The weapon is an M40A1. It starts out as a Remington 700 bolt-action rifle and is fitted with a heavy stainless steel barrel, hand-tuned trigger, fiberglass stock, a fixed 10-power magnification scope and a sound suppressor. Photo: courtesy Dale B. Cooper

country. According to one source, he has 83 palaces and residences at his disposal.

**H**is personal Praetorian Guard is 5,000 strong, and they are the most highly rewarded and coddled troops in all of Iraq. They swear personal loyalty only to Saddam, not to the state or even his Ba'ath party. But even they are not completely trusted. To guard against plots hatched within the Iraqi government, Saddam wrapped himself in layer after layer of competing and often overlapping security, each layer charged with spying on the layers around it, and all watched over by a pervasive secret police establishment. Saddam's inner circle is composed largely of men from his home village of Takrit, many of whom have blood and kinship ties to him.

Saddam responds in kind to the devotion of his bodyguards. When his eldest son, Uday, killed one of his favorite bodyguards (and chief food taster) in a drunken rage (the "official" version says the man was playing his stereo too loud), Saddam reportedly had him arrested and imprisoned, only later commuting the sentence to exile because of the "insistent demands" of the murdered man's family that he show leniency. Uday is now back in Iraq, but no longer is being groomed as his

father's successor. Actions like that impress bodyguards and instill loyalty.

**T**hose with appointments, including foreign leaders, are never certain until the last minute where, or even if, they will meet with Saddam. After his 1990 trip to Baghdad, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly said that the Iraqi dictator had the most extensive security that he had ever witnessed in a quarter-century as a diplomat. Although riding in an official car and accompanied by senior Iraqi foreign ministry officials, Kelly and his party were stopped at three separate checkpoints at gunpoint and allowed to pass only after their documents were checked and their identities verified. During the entire meeting with Saddam, Kelly said that the Iraqi dictator was surrounded by armed bodyguards. Saddam's personal interpreter was so frightened, presumably of making some kind of inadvertent mistake, that his hands trembled throughout the meeting, Kelly recalled.

As war approached, Saddam's ordinarily strict security became even more rigorous. CNN correspondent Peter Arnett, who covered the war from Baghdad, was offered an unexpected interview with Saddam after the beginning of the air war. As a precondition to the interview, he was strip-searched, with the Iraqi security men inspecting "every pocket and seam of my clothing. My wallet, watch, pen and notebook, handkerchief and comb were put into a plastic bag and taken away. They were even reluctant to return my trouser belt

until I objected," Arnett recalled.

Arnett was allowed to put his clothes back on and he then had his hands immersed in some kind of disinfectant. Finally, he was ordered to remain in the lobby of his hotel and not touch anything or talk to anyone until his escort arrived, some hours later.

#### Squirt Gun Assassin

Saddam is, after all, a former assassin, and he knows most of the tricks of the trade. It was his assassination, while still a teenager, of a prominent supporter of former Iraqi strongman Abdul Karim Qassem that first brought Saddam to prominence. As a reward for his derring-do, he was asked to lead an assassination squad charged with killing Qassem himself. Owing to a breach of security, Saddam and his confederates knew the route of Qassem's motorcade, and the Iraqi leader narrowly escaped their trap. It is a lesson Saddam has never forgotten.

**S**addam, on the other hand, was not the most successful assassin in the world. His operation to kill Qassem has been described as "a fiasco." A member of Saddam's team, who was supposed to block Qassem's limousine and the accompanying escort vehicles with his car, couldn't find his car keys at the last moment. An argument ensued among the plotters over what to do next, which was interrupted only when Qassem's convoy appeared in the distance. Saddam and his men broke off the argument and opened fire on the Iraqi leader's car. In the fierce gunfight that followed, Saddam and one of his confederates were wounded, and they

fled from the scene without having accomplished their mission.

Five years later, Saddam was chosen to lead another assassination attempt, this time against one of Qassem's successors. But like the first plot, this one also came a cropper. Nevertheless, Saddam celebrates his role as an assassin, and his murderous exploits have been embellished and incorporated into the national lore.

**A**nd he's still at it. In 1971, for example, Saddam asked an Iraqi religious leader to wear a tape recorder underneath his robes during a meeting with Kurdish leader Mustafa Barzani. He was instructed to push a button to start the recorder as the meeting got underway. However, unbeknownst to the Mullah, the tape recorder was in reality — you guessed it — a bomb. The Mullah dutifully followed his orders and pressed the button just as tea was being served at the outset of the meeting. The tea server absorbed most of the blast, along with the hapless Mullah, and Barzani escaped with only minor injuries.

It is hard to get the drop on a man with such a diabolical mind. Nevertheless, there have been more than a dozen serious attempts on his life since he took power, including those in 1982, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1989, and perhaps even one during the recent Gulf War. Most of the plots have been hatched by those closest to him. Accordingly, even Saddam's cabinet ministers reportedly must hand over their personal sidearms, or at least their magazines, to his bodyguards while in the "great man's" presence.

Some of the plots, however, have been carried out by the fundamentalist Shia Daawa Movement. In 1989, for example, they narrowly missed killing Saddam, along with Jordan's King Hussein and President Mubarak of Egypt, who were visiting Iraq at the time, when a truck loaded with explosives was discovered before it could be detonated.

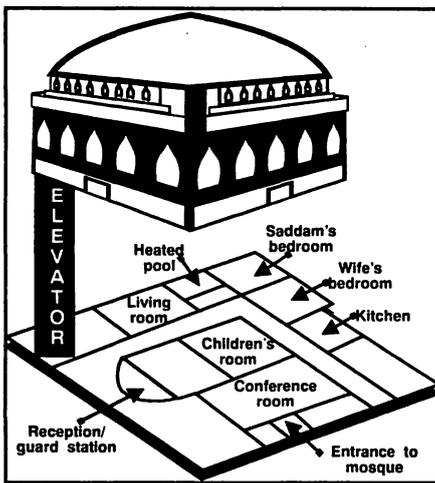
During his bloody rise to power, Saddam came to believe that compassion is weakness, and that an enemy not liquidated is an enemy who may one day liquidate you. He is absolutely ruthless, and moves against suspected foes at the first sign of disloyalty. Even his own brother-in-law fell victim to his paranoia in a helicopter "accident," which was strangely similar to a number of other chopper crashes that removed potential rivals from the scene.

### Saddam: Good To His Word

Then there is the famous story of Dr. Riyadh Ibrahim, the former minister of health. Dr. Ibrahim was the only member of the Iraqi cabinet foolish enough to give an honest answer when asked by Saddam, in 1982, if he should step down from power in order to win a cease-fire with Iran during the protracted war between the two countries. Saddam thanked the doctor for

his candor, then had him escorted to another room. There, Saddam drew his sidearm and executed his health minister on the spot. Dr. Ibrahim's wife appealed to the dictator to release her husband, and Saddam promised that he would return the doctor to his wife the following day. Good to his word, Saddam sent Dr. Ibrahim home in a small black bag; he had been cut into pieces.

Torture is institutionalized in Iraq and no one is immune. Iraqi torture chambers also flourished during the occupation of Kuwait. After the Iraqis fled the country, authorities found a large inventory of instruments used to torture Kuwaitis. These included wood planes used to shave away skin, pliers for pulling fingernails



All the comforts of home — heated pool, mosque, kitchen — in reinforced concrete and hundreds of feet below the ground. The 4,700-pound penetration bomb, designated the GBU-28, or "bunker buster," was not delivered into the Iraqi theater of operations in time to threaten Saddam.

and toenails, power drills, blow torches, bats and truncheons, razors, knives, bottles used to rape women, and devices for administering electric shocks.

**T**hus, anyone considering a plot against Saddam must consider the consequences if it does not succeed, not only to themselves but to their families. In the past, Saddam has wiped out the entire families of those who conspired against him. In view of his extraordinary security and his vicious response to anyone opposing him, Coalition intelligence services rated the chances of some kind of internal coup or assassination, prior to Iraq's military defeat, as extremely remote. Similarly, they discounted the possibility of "turning" a member of his Praetorian Guard involving that person in a plot to kill Saddam, since it would have required someone with a death wish.

Military planners discussed the possibility of the so-called "silver bullet" option, where Saddam would be killed or incapacitated by a lucky shot, simply

because he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. They held out at least some hope that U.S. or Coalition forces might hit him in one of the many command-and-control centers that were on the priority target list, or that they might catch him out in the open, perhaps in transit between two locations. According to some reports, this nearly happened during the air war when Saddam's 50-vehicle convoy was blasted by U.S. warplanes on the highway between Baghdad and Basra. Unfortunately, he escaped without a scratch.

**A**lthough snipers could have infiltrated into Baghdad, there was little prospect that they would have gotten close enough to Saddam either to shoot him or target one of his aircraft with a surface-to-air missile. Coalition planners finally concluded that the only place where there was any real likelihood of nailing him was in one of his bunkers, especially the \$80 million underground bunker built by the West Germans beneath the presidential palace in Baghdad.

They examined a number of methods of attacking the bunkers, including cruise missiles and so-called "smart" munitions. But most of the weapons did not pack enough punch, concluded military analysts, to rip through the tons of concrete shielding the bunkers. The U.S. had 15,000-pound bombs (BLU-82s), so-called "daisy cutters," in its arsenal, and used them against Republican Guard fortifications in southern Iraq. But such bombs could only be delivered by lumbering C-130s, and were far from surgical weapons.

In order to attack Saddam's bunkers, military engineers launched a crash program to develop a new bunker-buster, which arrived in theater only days before the war ended. The powerful new 4,700-pound penetration bomb, designated GBU-28, was created by boring out old 8-inch artillery barrels, welding them together, and filling them with high explosive. Equipped with fins and a laser-guidance system, the bombs were tested in Nevada before being shipped to the Middle East. One of the test weapons, say Air Force officials, drove so deep into the desert floor that it has not yet been recovered.

### Inadequate Info

Special operations forces also could have been sent to attack Saddam's bunkers, either with explosives or by pumping chemical agents into the target bunker's ventilation system. But such operations would have been extremely risky and would have required more real-time intelligence about Saddam's movements than was available.

In summary, from a purely operational point of view, the United States had a number of options for "taking out"

*Continued on page 96*

# DEADLY HOME

Were 248 U.S. Paratroopers Killed by

by John Landers

*Home for the holidays — 248 tired soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 502nd Infantry, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) are on the last leg of their long journey home.*

*They have just completed a six-month tour of duty with the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) in the Sinai and now, with Christmas just two weeks away, are flying back to Ft. Campbell, Kentucky.*

*It's been a long flight from Cairo, Egypt, stopping first at Cologne, Germany, and now Gander, Newfoundland, for refueling. On board the chartered Arrow Air DC-8 the mood is cheerful; the men are looking forward to spending the season with their families and friends.*

*At 0543 Gander time, Arrow Air flight 1285 is cleared for departure. The "Big A" DC-8 roars down the runway, its four engines at maximum thrust, and takes off into the cold, early morning air.*

*And then something terrible happens.*

*The aircraft suddenly levels off. Low and losing airspeed, it starts to veer to the right and then, too quickly, the DC-8 goes down, crashing into a densely wooded ravine barely a kilometer from Gander International.*

*There will be no survivors. All 248 soldiers on board, as well as the plane's eight crew members, have been murdered.*

**F**IVE years have gone by since the worst aviation disaster in Canadian history. During that time, the families of the victims have buried their dead, several official "investigations" have been conducted, and the parties responsible for the deaths of 248 American servicemen remain free and unaccused.

While many of the details of this tragedy may never be known, the facts uncovered so far clearly indicate that the Arrow Air crash at Gander on 12 December 1985 was no accident, and neither was the ensuing cover-up. Canada's Aviation Safety Board (CASB), which handled the initial probe of the crash, chose to ignore overwhelming evidence of terrorist involvement and instead blamed the disaster on "excessive wing icing."

That the U.S. government simply accepted this verdict and refused to conduct an independent inquiry is both remarkable and disturbing. It has become increasingly clear that there are a number of people who are hoping, for various reasons, that the entire matter will be forgotten. For the families of the victims, however, and for those who care about the men and women that protect our nation, forgetting is impossible.

The soldiers killed at Gander were mostly members of the



# COMING

## Terrorists?

101st Airborne who had been temporarily assigned to the Sinai-based MFO. Created to enforce the terms of the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian disengagement treaty, the MFO was considered a prime target for terrorist attack at the time of the crash.

Just 10 months earlier, on 14 February 1984, the MFO's American director-general, Leamon Hunt, had been shot to death by terrorists in Rome, where the force is headquartered.

### Message from Islamic Jihad

Shortly after the crash in Newfoundland, a French news agency in Beirut received a telephone call from a man claiming to represent Islamic Jihad, the pro-Iranian Shi'ite Moslem terrorist organization.

The anonymous caller boasted that Islamic Jihad was responsible for the crash, having placed a bomb on board the aircraft to prove their "ability to strike at the Americans anywhere." Limited news of the Gander crash was already being broadcast around the world, but the caller seemed to have detailed knowledge of the plane's passengers and flight plan that had not yet been made public.

In addition, he claimed that the bomb had been set to explode when the DC-8 was over the northeastern United States. An unexpected refueling delay in Cologne had put the flight so far



Some of 248 dead troops from Arrow Air flight 1285 arrive in U.S. for a sad holiday homecoming.  
Photo: J.L. Atlan/Sygma

behind schedule that the plane went down in a relatively unpopulated area instead.

In Gander, meanwhile, eyewitnesses from around the airport were telling both investigators and the media that the Arrow Air plane had exploded *before* it hit the ground. Others described seeing fire coming from the aircraft as it was taking off.

Cecil Mackie, who was driving a truck along the Trans-Canada Highway when the doomed jet passed overhead at less than 100 feet, told reporters that "there was a flame on the bottom" of the aircraft, and that, "It seemed like there was no engine noise ... just a rumbling."

Despite numerous reports that some sort of fire and/or explosion had occurred, the U.S. government immediately tried to dismiss the possibility that the crash had been the result of a terrorist attack. At a hastily organized news conference, White House spokesman Larry Speakes told the

feet into the air." Some testified later that they had been cautioned about live ordnance, possibly even chemical munitions, being scattered throughout the area.

Other firefighters were instructed to search the wreckage for certain pieces of the plane's cargo. Of special interest, it seems, were a number of large wooden crates — contents unknown — and a satchel containing, according to different reports, a "mid-month payroll," "pay vouchers," or a considerable amount of cash.

In the middle of this confusion, a Canadian Forces Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team appeared at the scene. The officer in charge, Lieutenant Colonel T.C. Badcock, later authored a book, *Broken Arrow*, about his role at the crash site. He claimed his unit was ordered to gather up military ordnance, which had evidently been part of the plane's cargo,

general.

By mid-afternoon in Gander, most of the fires from the crash had been brought under control. Though much of the wreckage would continue to burn well into the next day, a preliminary investigation of the crash site could soon be conducted.

A firefighter finally located the missing money satchel; he later estimated that it weighed at least 75 pounds. Where the bag and its contents went after they were turned over to authorities at the scene remains uncertain. The mysterious wooden crates, or whatever was left of them, were apparently never recovered.

#### Who's Calling Whom About What?

The U.S. Army response team, which was already at the site, was busy relaying details of the situation back to Washington. A report, compiled afterwards by the Union of Canadian Transport Employees (UCTE), revealed that "within the first 24 hours of the crash, more than 500 telephone communications were made between American officials at Gander and the U.S. State Department, Justice Department, and Pentagon."

A subsequent request from the CASB for information about these conversations was denied by the U.S. government.

Late in the day, Crosby met with representatives of the CASB, the FAA, the NTSB, McDonnell Douglas and Pratt and Whitney at an organizational meeting. The RCMP was put in charge of the site, and, in accordance with international civil aviation law, the CASB was tasked with investigating the cause of the crash.

Afterwards, according to Crosby, Canadian officials went with him "just prior to sunset" to see the wreckage. "Because of the risk of disturbing evidence at the crash site," he maintains, "no other member of my team was allowed to visit the site." Firefighters, as well as other personnel, continued to work in the area throughout the night, though, so it's doubtful the scene could have been accurately preserved.

In any case, access to the site was now being controlled, in a curious fashion, by the RCMP. The FBI's legal attache, who had been sent to Gander at the request of Canadian authorities, would never be allowed to visit the crash site.

Two representatives from Arrow Air, Ross Mallery and Michael Mendez, who arrived on the morning of 13 December, also received a peculiar reception. Initially, neither was allowed access to the crash site or the investigation command center. Nine hours later, after watching members of the Army, the NTSB, the CASB, and the news media tramp in and out through the police line, Mendez was finally escorted out to the crash scene.

Mendez later reported some of the day's other events in an internal memo which was sent to an Arrow Air executive. In the memo, he stated that, "The NTSB representative, George [Seidlein],

## The U.S. government immediately tried to dismiss the possibility that the crash had been the result of a terrorist attack.

press that there was "no evidence of sabotage or an explosion in flight."

Robert Simms, the Pentagon's chief spokesman, told reporters that there were "no indications of explosions prior to the crash or of hostile action." A spokesman for the Defense Department joined the chorus, stating that there was "no evidence of sabotage." Officials aggressively ignored Islamic Jihad's claim of responsibility.

Just four hours after the crash, an entry was made in the Pentagon duty officer's log: "Suspect icing of the wings as the cause of accident."

#### Evidence In Flames

The wreckage was, of course, still burning. Rescue workers had been rushed to the crash site. Fires, fed by thousands of gallons of jet fuel, were out of control. The scene grew even more chaotic as airport officials, military personnel, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) began to arrive. Firefighters struggled to get their equipment to the scene, and the police began to cordon off the area.

Rescue workers who were at the crash site that morning recall being rocked by dozens of "unusual" explosions while they tried to battle the flames. Many of these blasts were powerful enough to cause "mounds of rubble to lift several

even while the DC-8's wreckage was still blazing.

Badcock maintains that the munitions, some of which appear to have been live light antitank weapons (LAW) rounds, were quickly and carefully removed from the scene. Other objects, which he declines to describe due to national security concerns, were also supposedly recovered and taken away. Predictably, no official records of such actions have ever been made public.

Back in Washington, officials were huddled in emergency meetings, trying to organize some sort of response to the disaster. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), along with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), immediately dispatched a group of advisers to the crash site. The FBI, at the invitation of Canadian authorities, sent an explosives expert, a member of the FBI disaster team, a metallurgy expert, a legal attache, and a forensic photographer to Gander.

In the Pentagon, the decision was made to send a team to the scene as soon as possible, ostensibly to assist the RCMP in recovering the victims' remains. The Army team was under the command of Major General John Crosby, the Army's assistant deputy chief of staff of personnel, who has since retired as a lieutenant



Although members of the news media trooped through police lines, Canadian officials allegedly controlled the crash site so tightly that they didn't grant the FBI permission to conduct an investigation. Photo: SteveLiss/Gamma-Liaison

mentioned that Crosby wanted to bulldoze over the crash site immediately."

This, he added, "was also understood by the claims adjuster for AAU [Associated Aviation Underwriters], Bruce Mally." Crosby has, at various times, attributed the bulldozing request to Canadian officials, claimed he was quoted out of context, and denied ever making such a statement.

On 14 December, the FBI's team of experts quietly departed from Gander. The FBI claimed afterwards that they "had not been granted permission by the Canadian government to conduct any investigation of the crash." Furthermore, their involvement in the matter was unwarranted, since "there was no indication that the crash was caused by an explosive or destructive device, or other criminal act."

As the investigation of the crash developed, Canadian authorities appeared to be determined to blame the crash on wing icing. This one-tracked approach is puzzling, given the fact that no ice formed



Rescue workers and firefighters were instructed to search wreckage for some large wooden crates and a satchel containing either "pay vouchers" or a large amount of cash. Photo: Joe Traver/Gamma-Liaison



on the wings of a Boeing 737 which took off from Gander airport just minutes prior to the Arrow Air crash.

Another Boeing 737, which landed at Gander shortly after the DC-8 went down, also showed no signs of wing icing. Furthermore, the experienced ground crew that refueled the Arrow Air flight, the men who pumped fuel into the aircraft's wings just before takeoff, testified that the plane was completely free of ice when it taxied out to the runway.

The CASB's obsession with wing icing also totally discounted the many reports of an in-flight fire or explosion. Harold Marthinsen, director of accident investigation for the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA), noted that the board's bias toward icing was plainly evident during the questioning of witnesses.

#### When Evidence Isn't Evidence

At one point, the CASB's chief investigator, Peter Boag, went so far as to tell reporters that, "There is no evidence to support [the eyewitness accounts]." Since eyewitness testimony is generally

accepted as *being* evidence, it's clear that Boag decided to ignore facts that didn't support the wing icing theory.

The possibility that the DC-8 was downed by terrorists was never seriously investigated by the CASB. Even though an international aviation terrorism alert was in effect at the time of the Arrow Air crash, and in spite of the fact that Islamic Jihad had claimed responsibility, the leaders of the Canadian board repeatedly refused to hear or examine evidence that suggested foul play.

Bitter disagreements about the nature of the investigation soon erupted between members of the CASB. One of the board's 10 members, Roger L. Lacroix, a former fighter pilot and brigadier general in the Canadian Forces, publicly resigned. Four others on the board eventually refused to sign the CASB's draft report on the crash, and instead published their own dissenting

Troops of 101st Airborne stationed in Egypt mourn their dead comrades at a ceremony in Sharm el Sheik. Photo: M. Elkoussy/Syigma

opinion.

The five remaining board members released their official findings on 8 December 1988, almost three years after the DC-8 went down. To no one's surprise, the report declared that wing icing was the "probable cause" of the Arrow Air crash. "The balance of evidence," according to the CASB, "did not support the occurrence of a pre-impact fire or explosion, either accidental or as a result of sabotage." Boag proclaimed that the CASB's investigation had been "extensive, detailed, and very thorough."

The U.S. government immediately gave its stamp of approval to the board's verdict. Ronald L. Sheed, chief of the NTSB's major investigation division, found "no substantive problems with the draft report." The deputy assistant director of the FBI, Nicholas O'Hare, also supported the CASB's findings,

*Continued on page 76*



SOF Technical Editor, Peter G. Kokalis, armed with East German MPiKMS-72 and wearing Eagle Industries load-bearing vest, with Salvadoran SRT members carrying Soviet Dragunov, Steyr SSG 69 and M16A1s with M203 40mm grenade launchers. Photo: Chris Mayer

**S**OLDIERS, usually expert shots operating from concealment, who selectively engage individual enemy targets, have, since the late 18th century, been called snipers in the British army.

During the Civil War, both Union and Confederate troops employed large-caliber percussion rifles, weighing up to 40 lbs. and often equipped with scopes of high magnification and limited field of view, to record kills at distances considered incredible even by today's standards. They were called "sharpshooters."

Over the last decade the term "sniping" has taken on a sinister tone with definite terrorist, or at least criminal implications. As a consequence, it is

now fashionable to refer to law enforcement personnel equipped with scoped rifles as "countersnipers." This tautological silliness aside, rifles with optical sights permit trained police

*Armed with heavy-barrel M1A, ERE countersniper fires from drainage ditch during field exercise. SOF trained 14 members of the elite ERE in sniper tactics and marksmanship.*



*ERE countersniper maneuvers through heavy brush with Steyr SSG 69 during field exercise which emphasized cover and concealment.*

marksmen to obtain the precise target discrimination so often required in hostage situations. Countersnipers are commonly an integral component in the composition of a law enforcement

special reaction team (SRT).

#### Back To El Salvador

Even as the SOF training team was departing from El Salvador in June 1990, after conducting an intensive five-day training course in the handgun, H&K MP5 submachine gun, combat shot-

gun and M16A1 rifle for the *Equipo de Reaccion Especial* (SRT, or ERE) of the *Policia Nacional* (National Police — PN — see November '90), I was determined to return and provide countersniper training for this unit.

Consisting of 50 enlisted personnel and one officer, their mission includes sniper incidents, barricaded terrorists with hostages, VIP protection and counterterrorist operations in general. In

# SNIPER

# SCHOOL

## SOF's Technical Editor Trains Salvador Special Reaction Team

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

In addition, the ERE continues to raid Farabundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN) safe-houses on an almost daily basis, capturing terrorists and large caches of weapons, munitions and explosives. All of these scenarios provide potential applications for highly skilled marksmen with scoped rifles.

Three different sniper systems are inventoried by the ERE. They have one captured Dragunov (SVD). Although the serial number on the bolt carrier was obliterated with a center punch, that of the receiver ground off and all the Cyrillic markings on the PSO-1 scope windage and elevation turrets crudely gouged out, the origin was clearly Soviet.

Gas-operated and firing from the closed-bolt position, the semiautomatic-only Dragunov employs the same rotary bolt system as the Kalashnikov assault rifles and RPK squad automatic. There is a two-position gas regulator, for normal and adverse conditions, that can be rotated using the rim of a 7.62x54R cartridge. This rifle operates by means of a short-stroke piston which is not attached to the bolt carrier as it is on other Kalashnikovs.



ERE countersniper fires Steyr SSG 69 using roll bars of PN pickup truck as support.

The carrier and the bolt go back together, the recoil spring is compressed to drive the carrier forward again. As the bolt is rotated into locking, the carrier trips an auto safety sear before firing can take place.

The Dragunov magazine holds 10 rounds and since this is a rimmed cartridge, care must be taken that the round on top is in front of the rim of the cartridge beneath it.

The four power PSO-1 scope features battery-powered reticle illumination. But the batteries are of a type unique to this unit. A rubber eyecap provides the correct eye relief of 2.72

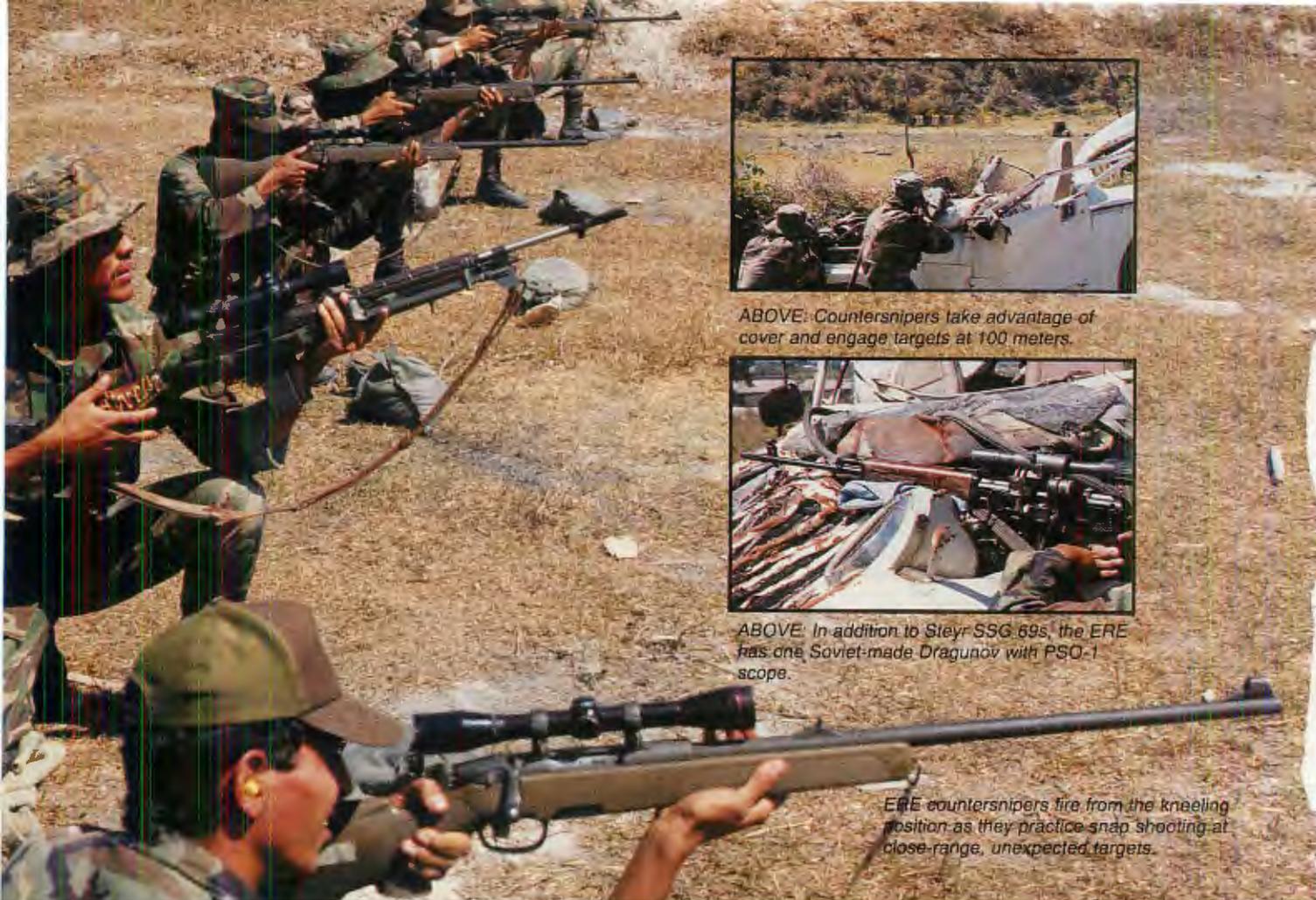
inches. Field of view is six degrees. There is an excellent rangefinding reticle pattern that has been adapted from the RPG-7V's optical sight. The PSO-1 is a fine piece of glass.

However, in my opinion, the Dragunov has been vastly overrated by Western authorities. It is a mass-produced, field-issued, selected-marksman rifle. It is not a sub-MOA, precision tool intended for surgical kills at distances of 800 meters and greater. There are just too many parts twisting and turning in any Kalashnikov-type firearm and few Dragunovs will shoot better than 2 MOA at 100 meters. At best, trained operators can only expect first-round capability at 500 meters or less. Overall length is 49 inches and it weighs about 9.5 lbs., empty, with scope. The skeletonized, wood-laminate buttstock does little to minimize the sharp recoil of this full-power rifle cartridge.

Furthermore, standard-issue Soviet 7.62x54R Type LPS ball ammunition is capable of only mediocre accuracy. When introduced after World War II, it was identified by a silver or white tip on its steel-cored, 148-grain boattail bullet. In recent

ERE countersniper fires Steyr SSG 69 from PN substation rooftop.

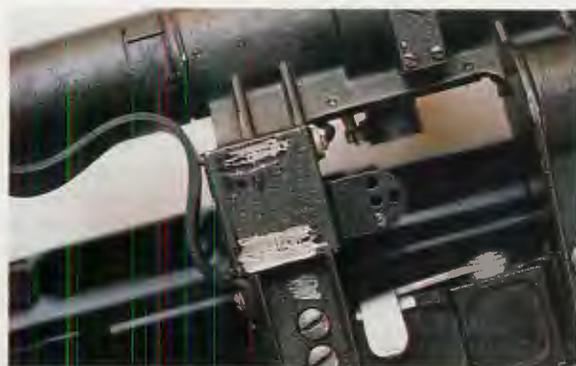




ABOVE: Countersnipers take advantage of cover and engage targets at 100 meters.

ABOVE: In addition to Steyr SSG 69s, the ERE has one Soviet-made Dragunov with PSO-1 scope.

ERE countersnipers fire from the kneeling position as they practice snap shooting at close-range, unexpected targets.



Cyrillic markings on Dragunov PSO-1 scope adjustment turrets were obliterated to disguise origin which, nevertheless, was obviously the Soviet Union.

years the color code was dropped, as stocks of the older yellow-tipped Type L 149-grain and 182-grain Type D ammunition were exhausted. Soviet 7.62x54R match-grade ammunition has a 200-grain boattail bullet loaded into a brass case.

I encountered none of the latter among any of the captured ammunition I examined. I selected Type LPS ball manufactured in 1983 and 1987 with factory code "188" for use in the course. This Soviet factory purportedly produces match-grade ammunition and given a choice, the freshest stocks are always to be preferred.

almost always shoot at least 0.5 MOA at 100 meters. It has a number of outstanding features, with few deficiencies. Overall length is 45.6 inches and the weight, empty, hovers just over 10 lbs. with a scope.

SSG 69 barrels are manufactured

Fortunately, the highly-regarded Steyr-Mannlicher SSG 69 (Scharfschützengewehr, Model 1969) bolt-action sniper rifle predominates in the ERE inventory. The standard sniping rifle of the Austrian army and numerous other law enforcement agencies and military units, it is, in general, a superb off-the-shelf choice for this application.

When fed match-grade 7.62x51mm NATO ammunition, the SSG 69 will

by cold hammer forging, a process originally developed by Steyr. The billet is fixed on a mandrel with the rifling raised in relief. A series of hammers force the rifling onto the bore and simultaneously form the barrel's exterior contours, work-hardening both the bore and exterior surface. Steyr does not remove the oval-shaped hammer marks on the exterior surface and this lends a distinctive appearance to their rifle barrels.

While Steyr's sporting rifles mate the barrels and receivers by the standard threading method, the SSG 69 is mated by a shrink-fit process that involves fitting a cold barrel to a heated receiver. After cooling, a 10-ton press would be required

to separate the two components. All of this is intended to enhance the barrel's harmonics and improve the inherent accuracy potential. The barreled actions are phosphate-finished and rest in a green ABS Cylolac synthetic stock which can be adjusted for length-of-pull by adding or remov-

Urban and rural environments intermingle on the outskirts of San Salvador where ERE countersnipers fire Steyr SSG 69s from hilltop. Buttstock has been camouflaged with ranger tape.



ing buttpad spacers.

**B**olt lift is a very short 60 degrees. The bolt handle is also distinctive with a configuration of the butter-knife type. The bolt itself is of two-piece construction with a body and bolt handle sleeve. On this short sleeve are the six rotating locking lugs, symmetrically arranged in pairs. Rear locking of this type permits shorter bolt travel than the front locking '98 Mauser system, but, in theory, is less desirable since the entire bolt, not just the head, is compressed when locked in battery and the receiver has been weakened somewhat by the cut-out on the right side in front of the locking shoulders. Steyr has compensated for this by both strengthening and lengthening the receiver so the barrel is seated with its chamber within the receiver walls.

The extractor is of the Italian Carcano type and can be easily removed. Complete disassembly of the bolt for replacement or cleaning of the striker assembly, although periodically required, is somewhat complex and best left to those with an SSG 69 armorer's manual. The one-piece firing pin is long and spares are advisable, although their protrusion must be initially adjusted by an armorer.

Both single and double-set triggers are available. Most are well-advised to opt for the single trigger, which can be adjusted for length and pull-weight. The alloy trigger housing, which fits in a recess in the receiver and is held in place by two pins, also contains the bolt stop mechanism. The bolt body is grooved to accept the bolt stop as it not only limits the bolt's rearward travel, but prevents the bolt body from rotating when the bolt handle is lifted. To remove the bolt from the receiver the trigger must be pulled fully to the rear.

The safety is on the right side of the receiver. When slid to the rear it locks both the sear and bolt. Slide it forward to fire the rifle.

The trigger guard/magazine-well is a complicated, single piece of molded black plastic. The five-round, Steyr-Mannlicher-type rotary magazine fits flush within the stock and is also made of plastic. It is, in my opinion, the weakest link in the SSG 69 system and is prone to breakage. A plastic, 10-round box-type magazine is also available, but it extends beneath the stock and is even more fragile.

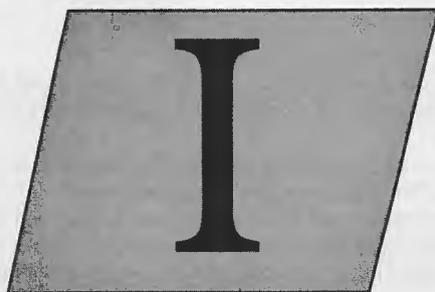
Emergency iron sights have been brazed to the barrel. The front blade, protected by a sheet-metal hood, can be adjusted for elevation zero. The open, square-notch rear sight can be adjusted for windage zero. But this is a sniper rifle and a scope is mandatory. A longitudinal rib machined onto the receiver accepts Steyr quick-release, lever-operated clamp mounts.

Two of the ERE SSG 69 rifles were equipped with Redfield 3-9X variable scopes. The ocular's focus adjustment ring on one of these scopes was inoperative. The other seven rifles were fitted with

scopes marked "Mannlicher 6X." They were built by Burris in substantial quantities in the early 1980s for Steyr of America. They are not MilSpec, but rather a commercial scope produced for a Steyr-Mannlicher sales promotion. One of these Burris scopes had broken cross hairs.

#### Awful Ammo

With the U.S. M118 Special Ball ammunition issued to the ERE, we were never able to reach the SSG 69's true accuracy potential and the very best groups were no better than 1.5 MOA. Headstamped "LC 87" with NATO cross in circle, this ammunition was manufactured at Lake City Arsenal in 1987. The 173-grain FMJ M72-type bullet (the old .30-caliber match bullet) was produced on Lake City's very tired bullet-forming dies that have seen better days by far.



In the U.S. Army, M118 has been relegated for practice only and replaced by the M852 match round which uses the superb Sierra 168-grain MatchKing Hollow-Point Boattail (HPBT) bullet. This latter ammunition is almost equivalent to Federal's famous 308M match ammunition (which uses the same bullet). Because the M852 round has a hollow-point bullet, "Not For Combat Use" has been stenciled on the .50-cal. ammo-can containers. Yet this bullet was designed for accuracy, not expansion. You figure it out.

**T**he ERE also has one M21 sniper system and one heavy-barrel (stainless steel) Springfield Armory M1A. The screw that interfaces the Leatherwood ART scope to the M14 was missing, so the M21 was not used. The M1A had a camouflaged synthetic stock with a leather cheek piece, an M14E2 bipod and was in almost new condition. While overly heavy, it performed without stoppages and with accuracy almost approaching that of the SSG 69s throughout the course.

An intensive three-day course was designed for the ERE that would provide level 1 training in basic marksmanship, maintenance and the urban tactics required of police countersnipers. Chris Mayer, a police officer with 17 years experience with a major Southern California law enforcement agency, was selected as my co-instructor.

The vehicle assigned to us during our stay with the PN was a 1970s-vintage Nissan Sunny four-door sedan. Used for undercover operations, it was a classic example that driving the streets of San Salvador can be more lethal than a firefight with the FMLN. With both bumpers hanging on by a thread and the body crushed by an infinite number of fender benders, we were far more likely to be taken for urban terrorists than police instructors. The springs were shot and the chassis bottomed out with every rut and bump in the road — of which there must have been millions. Our translator, Rene Serrano, seemed bound and determined to add to this woeful car's battle scars as he smashed abruptly against every curb we parked by.

We were presented with the option, on the first day of the training cycle, of either riding back and forth to the range facility

*Immediately after our arrival we were each issued a Kalashnikov with seven magazines*

— once again located at the PN substation in San Marcos, about 6 clicks south of the PN HQ in San Salvador — in the Nissan or in one of two pickup trucks assigned to the troops. Inviting targets that two pickup trucks loaded with armed, uniformed soldiers would be, we opted for the trucks.

#### Around Town Kalashnikov

Immediately after our arrival we were each issued a Kalashnikov with seven magazines. Mayer was given a captured North Korean Type 68 AKM. A rarely seen variant, the Type 68 differs in numerous ways from the Soviet AKM. Although it has a stamped sheet-metal receiver, there is no anti-bounce device. The mahogany-stained and varnished wood furniture is typical of all North Korean Kalashnikovs.

The muzzle device, barrel diameter (smaller on the Soviet AKM), gas block, front sling swivel, buttstock and its means of attachment to the receiver body are all those of the AK-47. The front sight assembly has lightening holes on the sides — a peculiarity of North Korean AKs. There is a roller on the rear sling swivel and the receiver rivets are of the Eastern European type.

At my request, I was issued an East German MPiKMS-72 with side-folding stock. In anticipation of this, I brought with me a load-bearing vest designed by

*Continued on page 73*

# SOF How To: Firing Your RPG

Text & Photos  
by Peter G. Kokalis

**W**hoosh ... As the rocket sails downrange, the "RPGist" and his assistant turn into a blur of motion and then momentarily disappear in a cloud of smoke and powdery volcanic dust from the range at San Marcos, El Salvador.

After a bright flash produced by ignition of the rocket's booster, the warhead can be seen heading toward the target, a 55-gallon drum in front of the entrance to a small cave, 80 meters away. There's no mistaking the sound of the impact of the PG-7 grenade's shaped-charge. The drum vaporizes.

When we first worked with the *Equipo de Reaccion Especial* (ERE, or Special Reaction Team) in June 1990, I was distressed to learn that during the November 1989 FMLN offensive, the ERE was thrown into the line as infantry armed with nothing more than M16A1s (some equipped with M203 40mm grenade launchers), 12-gauge shotguns and Heckler & Koch MP5A3 submachine guns.

Prior to our arrival in February 1991 to conduct Level 1 countersniper training with this unit (see "Sniper School," this issue), I attempted to obtain several Soviet PKM GPMGs for use as support weapons. They were not available, but when we arrived I discovered that the ERE had access to three captured RPG-7Vs — two of Bulgarian origin (as evidenced by the "10" in circle marked on the left side of the trigger assembly) and one of unknown origin with bipod and wooden launcher-tube insulator.

All of the RPG-7Vs that I have examined in El Salvador have had the right and left sides of the large, conical-shaped blast shield at the rear end flattened. Although I am not certain, I believe this is an attempt to compress the weapon's envelope for storage in a vehicle's hidden compartment when the weapon is smuggled into the country.

The RPG-7 (*Reaktivniy Protivotankoviy Granatomet*: rocket antitank grenade launcher) was introduced in 1962 and modified shortly thereafter to the RPG-7V. It remains in use, in one form or another, throughout the world. It weighs only 19.6 lbs., and provides good hit probability at ranges of 300 meters and less. Designed principally for use against armored vehicles, it can be employed as well against fortified bunkers and buildings.

## Firing The RPG

Anyone can master the procedure for firing an RPG-7V in just a few minutes. Here's how it's done, step by step:

- 1) Inspect and, if necessary, clean the launcher tube interior, i.e., remove any paper or other



Improvised clinometer attached to left side of RPG-7V by FMLN for the slant range computation required to effectively employ 81mm mortar bomb mated to PG-7 rocket motor.



Top to bottom: product-improved PG-7 grenade with improved fuzing, ignition and motor performance; U.S. 81mm bomb mated to PG-7 rocket motor; OG-7 antipersonnel fragmentation round. Standard PG-7 grenade can be identified by fluted warhead; and PG-7 boosters of assorted ComBloc origin.



debris from the booster.

2) Check the firing pin protrusion.

3) All grenades should be carefully examined for external damage (especially the fuze, nose and nozzle tube) and more important, for evidence of tampering, as captured munitions can be sabotaged. Look for unusual markings or crude

marks that appear to have been put on the grenade after manufacture. Check the wax-like sealant on the warhead for evidence of removal.

4) Remove the plastic shipping cap from the end of the rocket. Also examine the end of the rocket for evidence of tampering. Check the rocket and booster threads to see that they are clean. Attach the booster element by screwing it clockwise until it's hand tight. There is sometimes a bent spring washer at this interface.

5) Assume the firing position on the left side of the launcher with the hammer uncocked (up) and the cross-bolt safety on.

6) The operator (or "RPGist" as he is called in the Israeli Defense Force) then places his firing hand on top of the launcher tube and indicates to his assistant gunner (commonly referred to as the "AG" or "No. 2") that he is ready.

7) Number 2 positions himself on the right side of the launcher and wipes the rocket with his hand from the venturis rearward to remove any debris.

8) Keeping his body to the right of the launcher and away from the front of the tube, No. 2 inserts the grenade into the launcher tube.

9) Number 2 rotates the grenade while pushing firmly until the slotted-head indicator stem, located to the rear of the venturis, moves into the notch on the top edge of the launcher's muzzle. This is absolutely essential to insure alignment of the firing pin and primer — failure to do so is a primary cause of misfires.

10) Number 2 checks the rear, as this weapon is almost as dangerous to the rear as it is to the front. The backblast danger area stretches 20 meters to the rear and 8 meters in width.

11) Number 2 then removes the safety cap retained in the grenade's nose by pulling the tape attached to it and taking the cap off. They should be retained in case the round is not fired. The safety cap should not be removed during a heavy rain



RPG-7V training device — barrel is exposed when dummy nose cone is unscrewed. Screws are turned in or out to adjust windage and elevation zero by bending the barrel one way or the other.

sights on target.

16) Hold your breath and squeeze the trigger slowly. Felt recoil is almost imperceptible. Stay on target.

17) After firing, run like hell to another firing location, as the RPG-7V's smoke signature will immediately disclose your position.

### Tips On Tactics

While the prone position is the most stable, it's also the least comfortable as the elbows must be placed on the ground and the body pivoted 45 degrees away from the launcher's axis to avoid the backblast.

You must also make sure the muzzle is at least 6 inches above the ground, otherwise the stabilizing fins will strike the ground after they extend and deflect the rocket.

When there is sufficient cover, the kneeling position should be employed, as it is both stable and permits the team to

move quickly after firing a round. When firing from the kneeling position over a wall or window ledge, there must again be at least 6 inches of clearance for the fins. If

you are firing from inside a building (which I do not recommend as the blast is deafening), you need at least 6 feet of clearance to the rear to prevent injury from the backblast. Strong head winds will drop the RPG-7V rocket's point of impact, while tail winds will raise the point of impact. Compensate accordingly by aiming either higher or lower. However, crosswinds are even more detrimental to the RPG-7V's performance. Crosswinds affect the stabilizer fins more than the nose so that the head of the rocket, and thus the flight pattern, are invariably turned into

or hail, as the piezo-electric fuze may short circuit.

12) Number 2 taps the RPGist on the head and informs him that the weapon is loaded.

13) Cock the hammer by applying downward pressure with the thumb.

14) Push the cross-bolt safety to the left.

15) Press the right cheek against the insulator and align the

the wind.

No optical sights were captured with these weapons and that was just as well, as they are too complicated. Stay with the iron sights, and in climates like El Salvador's, the higher secondary front sight must be rotated into position. Adjust the rear sight for range and hope you get a second shot for correction if there are heavy crosswinds.

Munitions of four different types for the RPG-7V have been encountered in El Salvador. Most common is the standard PG-7 grenade, which has a maximum diameter of 85mm. Its fluted nose cone has a diameter of 73mm. This 5-lb., rocket-assisted, fin-stabilized, shaped-charge HEAT (high-explosive, antitank) round is muzzle-loaded and percussion fired.

A piezo-electric fuze produces sufficient voltage to activate an electric detonator at the rear of the round when the grenade's nose is crushed against an inner skin. After ignition of the explosive charge, the explosion is focused by the cone shape of the outer shell into a super-hot gas jet. This jet punches through armor plating with enough residual energy to expand inside a vehicle after penetration and initiate a secondary explosion. Subsequent to this, the copper cone collapses, forming a thumb-sized, teardrop-shaped, momentarily molten slug which passes through the hole in the armor plate as a solidified projectile.

The warhead arms after 5 meters of flight. Initial velocity is 580 fps, but the booster motor ignites after the rocket has passed 10 meters from the muzzle and the velocity is increased to 965 fps. Soviet PG-7 HEAT rockets will self-destruct at 920 meters if not detonated prior to this range. Soviet PG-7 rounds can be distinguished by a bright red tracer element that burns as brightly as a highway flare.

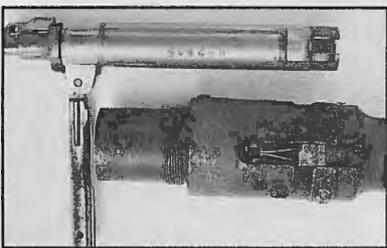
### RPG AP

I also examined several Soviet OG-7 antipersonnel fragmentation rockets,

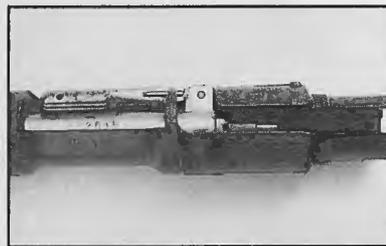
which employ the 0-4M impact fuse used in their 82mm mortar series. Even more interesting were several specimens of the new product-improved Soviet HEAT round which can be distinguished by its warhead — identical to that of the SPG-9 recoilless antitank gun. Its cone

diameter has been reduced to 70mm, but the fuzing and ignition systems, as well as the motor performance, have all been improved. The nose cone is not fluted and is slightly longer than that of the older PG-7 so that it appears to be thinner.

Continued on page 83



RPG-7V training device with bolt handle unfolded and bolt group removed from action. Note spring-loaded trip lever on action which releases the device's striker when driven upward by firing pin.



RPG-7V training device with bolt handle folded and chambered cartridge ready to insert into launcher tube.

# PALE SHOOTERS

by John Krelger

Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

**I**t was something I had always wanted to do, but I never had quite the right tools, quite the right opportunity. Now, everything was right ... everything was painfully right.

Memories began to creep into my head. I recalled a day last month when my screeching clock went off at something like 5:00 a.m., blasting me and my mind from warm quilts and visions of sandy beaches and smiling Malaysian females. Then there was the night last week when Jack Daniels came to visit — all I could hear the next morning were nonstop, ear-piercing electronic tones and beeps, viciously penetrating into my skull.

Revenge may be a dish best served cold, but out here, in the desert near Phoenix, revenge would be served under a glaring sun with three sticks of dynamite and a caliber 7.62x51mm NATO L4A2 Bren light machine gun.

Everything was in place. The alarm clock was taped to the dynamite on a small wooden stake ... the Bren, feeling better than ever, was loaded to the top of the magazine and ready to thunder ... my memories were starting to get to me. Finally, there was nothing more to do but aim, squeeze the trigger, and say bye-bye.

"Bye-bye," I whispered, after which everything 150 feet away went reaching for the sky in an incredible explosion of wood, dirt, tape, rocks, 7.62x51mm metal and alarm clock. Debris was still falling to the ground 15 seconds later. I just sat there and watched it fall. Somehow, a great event had just taken place. I felt free. In the back of my mind, I was thinking I would never have to wake up early again.

I got up and smiled back to camp, where Peter Kokalis, SOF's technical editor, sat listening to the rest of our motley crew tell jokes about Iraqi women and their unsound sexual ways. Peter was there in body, but his thoughts were more likely focused on the MG42 GPMG, with a new configuration and a rate reducer in the bolt body which has reduced the cyclic rate of that gun from a healthy 1,300 rounds per minute to only 850.

Bob Brown, SOF's publisher, was snoozing away in Peter's van: 50 feet away, someone had decided to crank up "Ma Deuce," Peter's .50 cal. Browning ... someone else began firing a Kalashnikov. Then there were three: mixing in with this came the low-pitched thumping of the Marlin Model 1914 "Potato Digger" ... then a Stoner 63A — everything on full

auto. More exploding dynamite ruptured the desert air. Bob lay there, sound asleep, the happiest man I'd ever seen. The louder it got, the more relaxed he looked. And I thought I had seen strange things before.

Gathered down here with "Dr. Death" Brown and "Pantera Rosa" Kokalis, were the rest of Kokalis' "Emma Gees" — "Cookie" Foster, "Big Bear" Mayer, "Pig Boat" Kramer, "Weasel" Whitmore, "Court Jester" Underhill, "Blind Pew" Pastika, "Smily Deily" Sandige, "Skid Row" Dodd, "Door Gunner" Butler, "Big Al" Noredeen, "Dildo" Dillon, and myself, "Sailor Boy" Kreiger, for some fun in the sun with a bite.

I was there to better acquaint myself with firing various machine guns — something I needed to do if didn't want to find myself lethally surprised on some jungle trail while working as a correspondent for SOF. Everyone else was just there to shoot and have fun. Conditions for this were right: scattered around our camp were perhaps 50 of the most interesting and most exotic machine guns ever made.

For four days in the Arizona sun, we relaxed, soaked up rays, told totally stupid jokes to one another, ate bizarre concoctions of food, drank beer and exaggerated stories around fires at night. More important, we shot — as in thousands and thousands of rounds.

**B**ob Brown could not understand why he couldn't waste the nearby microwave relay towers. Peter patiently explained to Bob that the towers were American — not Iraqi or Soviet or Cuban or Vietnamese — that they were ours, so he couldn't take them out. Bob, slowly sliding into a relaxed, more laid-back state of mind, eventually agreed. The towers are still there.

As for this novice "Emma Gee," I



"Dr. Death" Brown, SOF's publisher, fires .50 cal. Browning, "Ma Deuce," at 600-meter targets. "Pantera Rosa" Kokalis would not allow him to shoot at nearby microwave relay towers.



With a single squeeze, author realizes sweet revenge on merciless, beeping alarm clock. Caliber 7.62x51mm NATO L4A2 Bren LMG and three sticks of dynamite proved perfect for the task.

landed in Phoenix a pale, stressed-out mess. After firing the first few hundred rounds, however, I became a study in (sunburnt) relaxation. Blasting away for hours under the hot sun, everything began to look and feel *just fine*. Together with a better understanding of automatic weapons, I left Arizona with a decent new prescription for stress: take two aspirin, two Kalashnikovs, a Swedish "K," and call me in the morning.

When I got back to Colorado, reality began to set in, and I had to buy a new alarm clock. But I can live with it ... until next time. ☒

# War At The Top Of The

Mountaineers Climb  
to Destruction in Pakistan

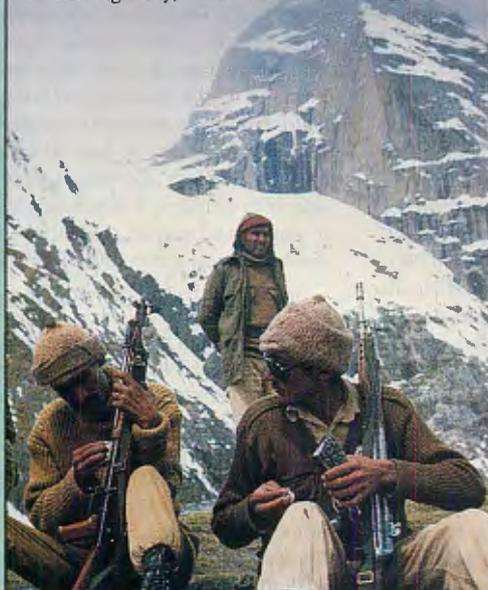
by Gary Speer

Photos by Galen Rowell



# World

Soldiers clean ice-cold rifles below an unclimbed peak in Chulung Valley, Baltistan. Photo: Galen Rowell



**B**OOM! We looked around, expecting an avalanche. Nothing moved in the vertical rock and ice of the Karakorum Himalaya. BOOM! Again we scanned the hanging glaciers and steep snow nearby.

“Don’t worry,” Major Kahn, our liaison officer, said. “It’s only mortar shells being fired — there is no avalanche.”

Relief filled our weary minds. Nature’s destructive powers had given us a reprieve. We had, instead, only incoming mortar rounds and bullets to worry about.

It is a war at the top of the world. High in the remote vastness of the Western Himalayan range — a place properly known as the Karakorum mountains — rages a slow-motion border war between India and Pakistan, slugging it out like punch-drunk fighters in the 12th round. Soldiers on both sides are dying, but seldom because of enemy fire. Out of every 10 who are killed, eight die because of the harsh mountain hazards: altitude sickness, crevasses, avalanches and bitter cold.

The second highest mountain in the world — K2 — looms only a few miles away from where the fighting takes place. And directly above the Pakistani encampment is the eighth highest mountain in the world — 26,420-foot Hidden Peak (or Gasherbrum I).

Though the region is one of the most spectacular mountain areas in the world, it has virtually no use. Impossibly severe storms, temperatures that reach minus 60 degrees in the winter, and its



Porters carrying loads for mountaineers toward Hidden Peak. Eventually, porters felt \$8 a day was not enough for their work — and went on strike. Photo: Gary Speer

location (more than 100 miles from the nearest road), make it one of the most inhospitable regions in the world.

**B**ecause, however, some of the world's highest mountains are there, and its beauty is so compelling, climbing expeditions have been drawn to Karakorum since the 1800s. In the past five years, despite the increased tensions of this smoldering border war, as many as 20 expeditions a year have tried to climb peaks in the vicinity of the Siachen Glacier, where most of the fighting is taking place.

In 1958, an American team was the first to climb Hidden Peak — called "Hidden" because it is out of view until one gets very close to it, as it is surrounded by the other Gasherbrum Peaks. In 1988, I led an expedition that hoped to commemorate that climb — a "30 year" anniversary expedition tribute. Our team had no idea of

the fighting that was going on in the very place we intended to set up a base camp.

#### Veterans Of A Different Stripe

No one in our very small American team had ever experienced war, though several in the group were old enough to have served in Vietnam. At age 36, I organized the expedition as a kind of "warm-up" for a planned attempt on Mt. Everest. Though I had climbed 20,000-foot Mt. McKinley, by a new and difficult route, and had been up many dozens of high mountains, it was only in the Himalaya that one can attain extreme altitude, and it was that kind of experience I felt was crucial for 29,028-foot Mt. Everest — the highest mountain in the world.

The other members of the expedition had all climbed for many years, but their experience was limited to the relatively tame challenges of the North American continent. They were: Gary Silver, a 40-year-old entrepreneur of exceptional athletic talent, despite his encroaching middle age; Phil Boyer, a computer

analyst at Washington State University; and Dr. Chip Woodland, a 32-year old emergency room physician from Boulder, Colorado.

**A**fter paying \$2,000 for a permit to climb Hidden Peak, we received official permission from the Ministry of Tourism — an agency of the Pakistani government based in Islamabad. The months before the expedition's planned departure date — 20 May — were spent in daily training, phone calls, buying or borrowing equipment, and generally organizing the food and other necessities of high-altitude expedition mountaineering.

Along with 2,000 pounds of gear and food, the team arrived in Islamabad on 20 May, and was assigned a liaison officer — Maj. Mohammed Ali Kahn. One quickly learns that in this Islamic country, every third man is likely to be named "Mohammed," "Ali" or some combination thereof. Because "the major" (as we decided to call him) was about 30 pounds overweight, and our trek to the base camp would be exceptionally arduous, he became the object of considerable derision from my teammates. In actuality, we were wondering whether he would be able to complete the approach march at all.

The team added a *sirdar* (guide) to help with various logistics, and in particular, assist with organizing and leading the Balti porters who would carry our loads to base camp. Our group, which was then comprised of six members, flew on to Skardu in the northern reaches of the province known as Baltistan. We were taken to the K2 hotel, near the white sandy delta of the Shigar and Indus rivers. Above the confluence of these two mighty rivers is the old Skardu Fort, its stone and clay crumbling in the dusty winds of the region.

For centuries, the Karakorum and its sister range Himalaya were so remote and impenetrable that many people and villages became islands of primitive life, immune to the changes evolving outside. Baltistan — the northernmost part of what is today Pakistan — was often protected only by its high and vast isolation. In the late 16th century, a legendary leader rose to power and gained control over much of the surrounding mountain kingdoms.

#### Torturous Journey Through Time

He married a princess from India named Mindok Gyalmo and continued his exploits. The leader — Ali Sher Khan — went back to command his army in further conquests. Meanwhile, his wife imported sculptors, engineers and other artisans from Delhi in her Indian homeland. During Khan's long absence, Queen Mindok built great aqueduct systems and a road to the fort that still overlooks the city.

When Ali Sher Khan returned, he told her: "You have built an aqueduct, and for that you should be rewarded. But you also

constructed a path for my enemies to my fort, and for that you should be hanged!" Queen Mindok was spared her life, but not her heart: the king's reaction to her "good deeds" broke her heart and she died soon after.

In 1841, the Balti people of Skardu were conquered by an army of Dogra invaders from Jammu and Kashmir in the south. With the help of the Dards from Hunza in the east, the Dogra army was able to overcome Baltistan's natural defenses by building bridges long enough to span the wide Indus and Dras rivers. After a long siege at the Skardu fort, the Balti defenders finally surrendered.

Beneath the fort, the Balti people were forced to gather in a great circle and watch their leader — Rahim Khan — die a torturous death. Rahim was bound and laid out in the middle of his followers' circle. First Rahim's right hand was chopped off, and then, to cauterize the wound, his bleeding stump was splashed with boiling ghee (a kind of cooking oil still used throughout the region).

His ear was cut off next, then his nose, then his tongue. Each amputation was followed by the painful cauterization. After enduring hours of the unbelievable torture, Rahim was hacked to bits in front of the crowd, and his blood drained into Skardu's parched earth.

Today, the Balti are a peaceful but proud people. The conflict in the region has less to do with them and more to do with obscure national boundaries of the two countries that were once one. Because of the inherent differences between the Hindu and Moslem religions, Pakistan claimed independence in 1947. It was then that Baltistan's geographic isolation again played a part in history's unfolding.

The area was so remote, untamable and vast, details of the Pakistan-India severance left it unknowing, disputing, or simply unconcerned about its ownership. India wanted to claim the area, which had been under both Indian and British rule for nearly 100 years. But because most of the Balti people had been converted to the Moslem faith, the people of Baltistan decided to join Pakistan instead.

### High Stage For Conflict

In Skardu, Maj. Kahn gave this explanation: "As Moslems, they were very definite about not being part of India. Pakistan waged a war of liberation against India in 1948. Our brave army defeated the invading armies of India."

The people of Baltistan territory, for the most part, consider themselves citizens of Pakistan, though the residents of some villages are so far from civilization that even the concept of "nationhood" may be hard for them to fathom. Also, there is some resentment among Shi'ite Moslems (often devout followers of the Ayatollah and his successors), and despite Pakistan's claim to the region, resident Baltis are not yet allowed to vote.

Our expedition hired several four-wheel drive trucks, loaded ourselves and all our gear into them, and proceeded 30 miles by road to a village called Dasso. It is the end of the road, and where we planned on hiring the 40 porters who would carry 25-kilogram loads for us on the 120-mile journey to the Gasherbrum base camp.

Though previously concerned about being able to find enough Balti men from which to select strong porters, my fears were soon allayed. As we arrived in Dasso, there was a large crowd of men — perhaps over 100 — who were waiting for us. Word had somehow spread from Skardu, and since \$8 a day is more than three times the daily wage for most, the crowd had grown both in size and in determination. Rugged, work-hungry men milled about the dirt road or sat on rocks above the area. Some had traveled as far as 30 miles

His ear was cut off next, then his nose, then his tongue. Each amputation was followed by the painful cauterization.

hoping to be selected.

When they learned I was "leader," they assailed me with their record booklets — some forged — that told of their good performances as porters for other expeditions. Overwhelmed, I ordered them to line up at the gate to the village's military compound, which we were given permission to use. Not knowing a word of Balti, I yelled and screamed in English, all the while gesturing with my hands. A dozen or so lined up, but the vast majority still anxiously sought my attention in the hopes of getting on as porters.

The major, too, was assailed, and in frustration, banded about a big stick, yelling at the men in Urdu (Pakistani) and swinging wildly at them. Great waves of laughter rolled through the crowd as the major flailed away, and from my vantage point it appeared as if he were doing a stand-up comedy routine for the villagers. He did, however, manage to clear an area about 50 feet wide, and this gave us space to show the men what we expected. Eventually, we had them in a line, and our team physician, Chip, began a preliminary inspection of each man's general fitness, or lack thereof.

Before the 1950s, expeditions to the Karakorum faced a month-long, 360-mile trek from Kashmir. Even in the '60s and '70s, expeditions hiked from Skardu to Dasso, nearly 300 miles round trip. They had to raft across the Shigar River, usually using inflated goat skins, or *Zahks*.

Mostly because of the army's efforts to

extend the road, expeditions today face only a 12-day, 120-mile trek to the Gasherbrum base camp. The dirt road begins a tortured path toward the small Balti villages and, eventually, the "capital" of Karakorum — Askole. The army had hoped to build a road all the way to Askole, some 35 miles farther toward the Siachen Glacier, but soon found that the Braldu River Valley was as awesome a foe as any human power. The canyon rises up at more than a 50-degree angle for most of its 8,000- to 10,000-foot rise to the high mountains.

The Braldu, especially during the months of June through August, when the winter snows melt, turns into a raging, flooding torrent. Having grown up in Idaho, where some of North America's wildest rivers (such as the Salmon and the Snake) challenge rafters of all abilities, I

can say that the Braldu makes both of Idaho's wildest look like pathetic creeks. The Braldu River, and its steep canyon, made the road dead-end only miles from Dasso. If the Braldu is someday tamed by dynamite and jackhammers, it will be a marvel not only of engineering, but also of highway maintenance.

### Mecca For Mountaineers

The further into the Karakorum we journeyed, the further back in time we went. The Braldu Gorge had once been the small Balti villages' best defense against invasion. And until the completion of the road to Dasso, had also been a defense against the invasion of Western culture, and concurrently, medicine and technology. The average lifespan is about 35 years. Waterborne diseases run so rampant that roughly one out of five infants die during their first year from diarrhea and dysentery. Balti villagers live in stone-and-mud huts heated by choking wood fires. Askole, Chongo, Chokpo and other villages remain locked in medieval time capsules.

Over these ancient, anachronistic Balti villages came the intrusive chop-chop of French-made helicopters on their way to the Siachen Glacier with fresh supplies. Two or three times daily we would see choppers overhead going in or out, and the major began to unveil some of the mystery, or at least as much as he knew, of the conflict.

In terms of altitude, this is the highest



In one of the most remote and primitive parts of the world, supply helicopters occasionally flew in.

war in history. Soldiers' fingers freeze to their triggers. Death from high-altitude pulmonary edema is common. So is death from hypothermia, crevasse falls, avalanche, and on rare occasion, mortar fire. The rules of engagement are clear: if there is a target — fire. Consequently, much of the fighting is done by guessing about enemy positions, then lobbing mortar shells over high passes, or pounding howitzers into the cobalt blue sky over the high mountains.

"It is very difficult to move around," the major said, knowing full-well that he would soon be there to feel the effects for himself. "A soldier cannot run more than a few feet without becoming breathless."

**P**ursuing one of the few strategic military reasons for climbing a mountain, both Pakistani and Indian forces rushed to reach the top of a 21,200-foot high peak that commanded an area near the Chumic Glacier. Apparently, the rationale was simply to be the "first on top" — as if any real advantage was to be gained. It was the Indian army that was in the lead on this ascent, and the Pakistan army decided to play a dicey game of catch-up.

In the icy, howling winds, the Pakistanis tied two soldiers to the chopper's runners and hoisted them to the summit from the base camp. The gamble, obviously, was whether or not these brave men would even survive such a precariously exposed ride without dying from exposure. They lived, however, and landed on the summit just in time to hold off about a dozen Indian soldiers on the verge of overland success.

#### Good Help Is Hard To Find

We began to have trouble holding off problems of our own. The porters, almost from our first day trekking to the base camp, seemed dissatisfied. There was a lot of talk among them about money and pay, which was confusing to me as leader, since we were clearly going by government pay standards: 150 rupees (\$8) per day. (Now, carrying 55 pounds of someone else's gear 10 miles a day over treacherous terrain may sound like a job that should pay more than \$8 an hour, but keep in mind that Pakistan is a very poor country — we were paying better wages than could be found by any of the Balti men elsewhere.

Near the halfway point, one of the porters became ill with altitude sickness, a possible forerunner of something more serious — like death. Our doctor, Chip, felt that he should be paid and sent back down



Despite appearances, Indian-Pakistani war in Baltistan claims few lives in combat — most die because of altitude or weather.

the Baltoro to lower altitude, since he was just beginning to get symptoms and could easily make his way back. We paid him, and sent him on his way. Word soon spread, however, about how much we had paid him, and porters began a restless

rumble of conversation. That night, at a camp 60 miles (or halfway) into the Karakorum, our team began to feel uneasy about the porters. It was a troubled sleep.

The next day, the porters refused to move. Tensions were high as the major and our sirdar tried to negotiate with the "leaders" of the porter strike. Gary Silver grabbed his ice axe from one porter's load, expecting a confrontation. We were 60 miles from any legal authority, in a

pay them one-third more than the \$8 a day — not the \$16 they were demanding. Disgruntled but willing to compromise, the porters picked up their loads held together with crude rope and tree branches, and continued up the Baltoro Glacier.

Part of our problem in negotiating was language. The porters spoke Balti, an obscure and unwritten dialect of Tibetan. The Pakistanis spoke Urdu, as foreign to Balti as Japanese is to English — and

miles from Dasso to the base camp), and a small heliport. Faces blackened by constant exposure to high-altitude sunshine, the soldiers apprised the major of the situation.

The major came to me, and somberly related the situation. It seemed that the Pakistani army was occupying the very spot where we had intended to place our base camp. Not only that, but the commanders were apparently not allowing any non-army personnel near the area of the camp. To do so, they believed, would make climbers targets for the Indian army's mortar shelling.

"Well," I replied, "you are a major; it's likely that you outrank any commander here in the field. You can override that order, right?"

"Ah, this is not so easy," the major replied. "Those orders come from very high up. I cannot override orders like this."

"We'll just have to see what happens when we get there," I said, somehow feeling confident there would be no problem. After all, climbing Hidden Peak — the eighth highest mountain in the world — would likely be as dangerous as most wars — maybe even more dangerous. At any rate, we hadn't traveled halfway around the world, endured a 120-mile approach march, porter strikes, and risked cholera and amoebic dysentery to be turned away by warring nations.

Two days later, we arrived at the site where several other expeditions were trying to climb peaks in the region. It was the main base camp for Gasherbrum II, only 2 miles away, and within view of the Pakistani encampment, our hoped-for base. The other expeditions had liaison officers too, and they informed us it would be an impossible task to persuade the army to allow us to climb anywhere near Hidden Peak, or to have a base near them.

Still determined, I asked the major, who by then was near exhaustion, to please go see their commander, and explain that we had permission from the Ministry of Tourism — as though the mortars would stop firing simply because of that letter of permission.

"It is my job to ensure your safe travel, and that you accomplish your goals," the major said, "but I cannot stop a war. Besides that my friend, I cannot move one inch from this place."

"Fine," I said, "we will make base camp here, with the other expeditions. And Ali (our cook, who had been in the military) will go on to meet with the commander."

The major wrote a very official-sounding letter, and sent it with Ali, but it was to no avail. After three days, we realized that there was nothing we could do. Meanwhile, the mortars continued to be fired, and we could see the lonely

*Continued on page 83*

## It seemed that the Pakistani army was occupying the spot where we intended to place our base camp.

wilderness where the only code was that of survival. There were 40 porters, six of us, and the potential for a real massacre, if the porters felt that the sack full of rupee notes Phil Boyer was carrying was worth the disappearance of a few crazy Americans.

Seeing no other way out of our predicament, I told the major to tell them we were carrying only enough money to

English, of course, is what we spoke. By the time our English made its way to Urdu, and then Urdu into Balti, the messages were likely garbled.

It's amazing that we managed to get anywhere, let alone 120 miles through some of the most savage mountains on earth, carrying some 2,000 pounds of gear, with a major war in Afghanistan going on



Pakistani soldiers armed with Kalashnikovs tell mountaineers they have hit the end of the road.



Not the friendliest of environments in which to fight a war, locals can at least appreciate incredible views of the Karakorum Range.

30 miles to the north — and a border conflict that we were unknowingly headed right into.

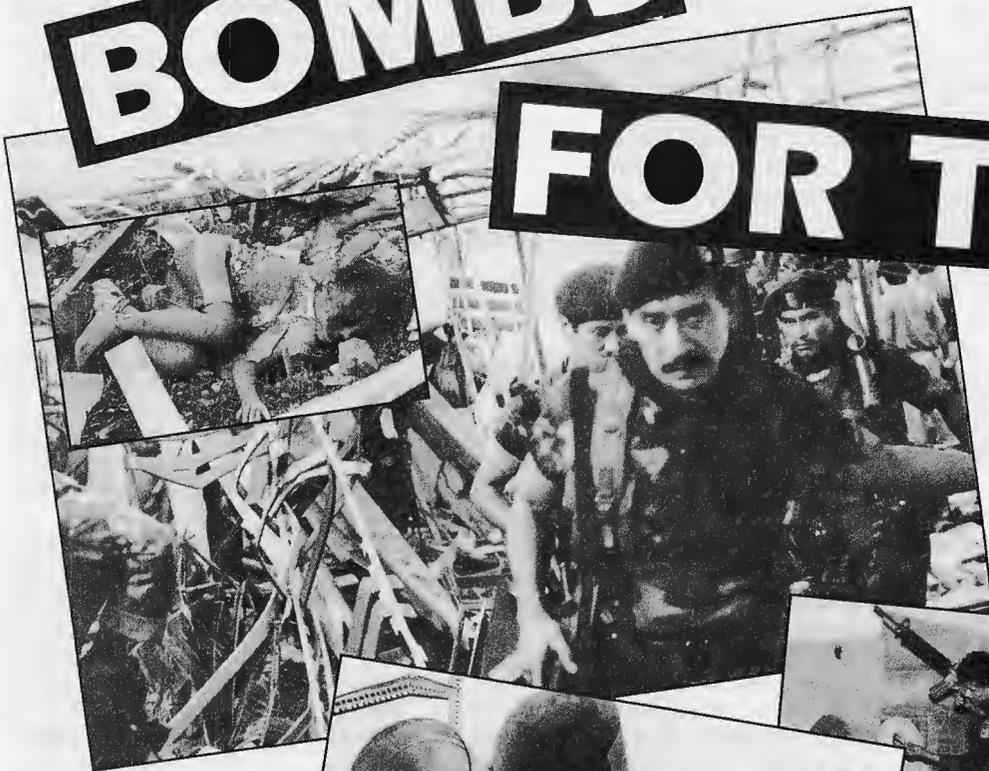
### Don't Climb Over Our War

We began to see what was going on when we arrived at a place called Concordia, at the junction of several huge glaciers — one of the most spectacular mountain vistas in the world. From the Concordia confluence one can view Gasherbrum IV, Mitre Peak, Mustagh Tower, and the second highest mountain in the world, the icy pyramid of K2.

But also at Concordia was a Pakistani outpost, where several soldiers manned a small Quonset hut, a telephone (wired 120

# BOMBS

# FOR TOTS



**LEFT:** Salvadoran officials comb through wreckage left when FMLN *Tepescuintle* "mortar," fired at Estado Mayor, missed and hit civilian home. There's a reason they look grim: victims were an eight-year-old girl and her 17-year-old brother.

*Tepescuintles* are usually fired in a salvo in the manner of barrage rockets from an improvised support such as these cobbled-together metal frames.



**ABOVE:** Salvo soldiers inspect captured *Tepescuintle* components. At right are LPG tanks modified to be launcher tubes; center are smaller LPG tanks that comprise explosive projectiles; at left are improvised plywood obturating discs, propellant charges, and bags of cement used to stabilize tubes for firing.

When a *Tepescuintle* round does hit its target, the nearly 80 pounds of explosives it carries is capable of considerable destruction, as shown by the remains of this car, hit at Ilopango Air Base.



by Steve Salisbury Photos Courtesy Salvadoran Armed Forces

**W**ITH an improvised and inaccurate — but deadly — weapon that incorporates features of a mortar and a fougasse, but is often employed as a poor man's multiple rocket launcher, the Farbundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN) has upped the ante in civilian lives for its terrorist war on the government of El Salvador.

Pictured above are various forms of the *Tepescuintle* "mortar" presently being used by the communist FMLN to wreak havoc near and around — seldom on — government installations. The "tube" of the device is simply an LPG or propane tank with one end cut off. The end, left intact, serves as the chamber, into which four sticks of explosives, which act as a propellant, are inserted. On top of this sits a circle of plywood that serves as a rough obturating disc, necessary because of the incredibly sloppy fit of the projectile in the oversize bore.

The HEAC (high-explosive, anti-child) projectile is a smaller propane tank that has been filled with roughly 80 pounds of high explosives. Electrically fired, the weapon system features an RSD (random, self-determining) terminal guidance system, engaged when the weapon is optimistically pointed in the direction of a target.

Unfortunately, the RSD guidance system has shown a preference for civilians, children in particular. The range varies from 600 to 800 meters. By any standards, the weapon is inaccurate, but close counts with a warhead that contains nearly 80 pounds of high explosives, in a terrorist war where human life is of no consequence. ✕

# UPDATE: Namibia One Year After

by Jim Hooper

**T**O the Kaiser it was German South West Africa. To the South Africans, who snatched it from Imperial Germany during World War I, it became simply "Southwest." To the new, popularly elected government headed by President Sam Nujoma of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), it's the U.N.-approved Namibia, land of milk and honey. To many others, however, it's a once-viable country being sucked dry, the vacuum filling with banana republic paranoia.

Armed and trained by Cuban "Internationalists" in Angola, SWAPO guerrillas fought a 27-year (and largely ineffectual) insurgency war against South African forces in northern Namibia. By the mid-1980s, Pretoria, recognizing the low-intensity conflict as a political and economic millstone, began casting about for a face-saving solution. In 1989, as part of a delicately balanced agreement with Havana that called for a staged withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola (which was Fidel's own millstone), South Africa agreed to U.N.-supervised elections. The irony is that Nujoma, a Marxist revolutionary who vowed to continue the war if he *didn't* win, emerged from the subsequent political battle as that rarest of African luminaries — a democratically elected head of state.

Given SWAPO's success under Western-style elections, and the recent failure of Nujoma's East-Bloc comrades-in-arms, one assumes he's learned a thing or two. Wrong. Although rigor mortis already may have stiffened the body dialectic of Marxism elsewhere in the world, SWAPO seems determined to bring it to life in Namibia — bankruptcy and all.

A year after independence, the coffers of diamond- and uranium-rich Namibia are bare. Yet, in a country where the mean annual income is barely \$800, a president with a sixth-grade education enjoys a tax-free monthly salary of \$6,500, guaranteed for life. Dozens of old cronies enjoy similar bloated salaries, and drive new German luxury cars as recompense for their years of struggle in exile. Yet they don't drive as much as they like; the prime

minister's long motorcade stopped at a gas station in the dusty town of Otjiwarango to fill up, but were refused service because the government's account was six months in arrears. That, however, didn't stop Nujoma from announcing soon thereafter the formation of two new government ministries at an annual cost of \$650,000.

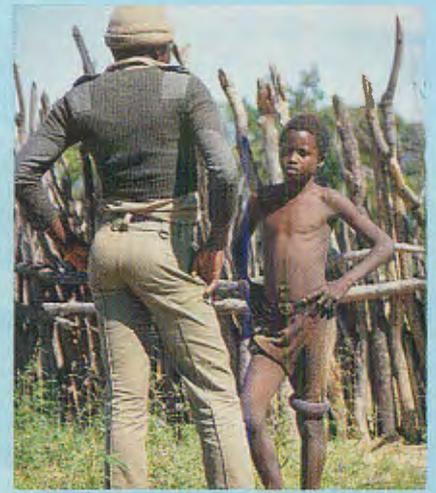
But fleecing the treasury isn't Nujoma and Co.'s only agenda. As with most paranoid Third-World politicians, they've also started sharpening their pangas for the traditional beheading of the watchdog free press.

According to *The Namibian* newspaper, Deputy Information Minister Danny Tjongarero recently announced that "the media at present provides no information that is relevant to the lives of ordinary people." Media attempts to embarrass and find fault with the government, Tjongarero said waspishly, "are creating the impression of chaos, corruption and mismanagement."

SWAPO, therefore, has been forced into "formulating a national policy to deal with the extent to which freedom of the media is protected, the pattern of media ownership encouraged, and the degree to which it could foster the country's cultural awareness." The government has launched its own newspaper, *New Era*, staffed by foreign journalists — Nordic, Zimbabwean, even liberal South African — whose politics have been deemed impeccably correct. The next step, according to Mr. Hans Feddersen of the fiercely independent *Allgemeine Zeitung*, could be the licensing of journalists.

"For those who dare to criticize SWAPO, you can be sure their applications will come under careful, slow scrutiny," Feddersen said. "And until you've lived in Africa, my friend, you don't know what slow is." An editorial in the *Windhoek Observer* dryly noted that "*New Era* will provide a mouthpiece [for] the government ... which the free press has apparently failed to do. So to counter this apparent failure, the taxpayer must cough up."

That's where it gets sticky, you see, for out of a population of 1.63 million, the



This young Namibian is now enjoying the benefits of Marxist-Socialism, while the former police counterinsurgency operator has seen his benefit check go to the ANC. Photo: John Coleman

country has less than 65,000, mostly white, taxpayers. And it's fiscal mismanagement of government revenues that has been one of the chief targets of Namibia's free press. To outsiders, tales of ineptitude raise eyebrows and chuckles; seen through the eyes of the few tax-paying Namibians, each story is another nail in the coffin of a once-viable country.

Example? Pretoria transfers millions in pension and medical funds to SWAPO for the thousands of black Namibians who fought under South African leadership against SWAPO guerrillas. Nujoma, in a fit of comradely solidarity, donates more than \$550,000 of it to the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa.

Example? President Robert "Comrade Bob" Mugabe of Zimbabwe announces he's to make an official state visit. The Namibian Defence Force (NDF) scrambles to find a few cannons to fire an official welcoming salute. The NDF has plenty of Russian cannons — free ones — but almost a year after independence they're still in Angola, no one having thought to bring them down. So the NDF goes to Armscor, South Africa's state-owned arms manufacturer. Armscor's cut-rate price on four obsolete cannons is a deal they can hardly refuse, but it doesn't do much to diminish SWAPO's blatant disregard for U.N. sanctions against South Africa, which Nujoma continues to demand of the rest of the world. As it was, Mugabe delayed his visit.

And tourism — particularly from South Africa and Germany — has always been one of Namibia's major sources of revenue. No longer. President Nujoma's 100-man bodyguard, ever on the alert for spies and assassins, has done a marvelous job of dissuasion. A German near the seaside resort of Swakopmund, understandably confused by shouting soldiers, armored cars and the anti-aircraft cannons surround-

*Continued on page 87*



Karen soldiers head out on what could be a final patrol — the Burmese army most likely will attempt to destroy their HQ at Mannerplaw this year. Photo: Peter Boczar

# KAWTHOOLEI RECON

by Peter Busslan

**A**T Mae Sam Laep, the Salween River takes a big bend and you can see the long, motorized canoes clattering up and down for miles. I meet up coincidentally with a Karen female general who has spent 25 years fighting against the Burmese.

We head down river in one of the canoes — the dense jungle on both sides strikes me since I never saw anything like it in rape-the-land Thailand. The female general talks the whole two hours we're in the canoe: I'm listening, but also worried about getting permission to get into Mannerplaw, the Karen National Union (KNU) base camp. After a Karen major in a grass hut radios around and signs some papers, however, I'm on my way. After arriving at Mannerplaw, I spend four days trying to get permission to go out on a patrol. So my overriding question is: What the hell is going on? Getting anything done here is like pulling teeth.

(Weeks later, I came down with cerebral malaria in Bangkok, and finally realized what the problem was with the Karen: Their brains are totally shot from running around the jungles with no antimalarial drugs. I have a single case, which takes up to a year to fully heal. I can't imagine getting the disease every year, which many Karen do. After four months, I'm just now getting my memory back again ... Life in the Burmese jungle.)

But, like getting permission to enter Mannerplaw, I finally

get permission to join a patrol. The next day, I head out with about 12 Karen soldiers. It's hot and we do about 10 miles the first day, settling under a large canopy of teak the first night. We eat the usual meal of rice and fish paste.

I'm with a resupply outfit. We're loaded down, but there doesn't seem to be any real plan except to hook up with the soldiers fighting at the front.

We continue moving for two more days. I keep hearing stories of attacks by the Burmese. In this dense jungle, you can be 10 or 20 feet away from the enemy and not even know it. It's nearing the dry season, and our biggest danger is being spotted by the Burmese, who are in control of several hills along our route.

Several of the Karen soldiers speak some English. They all tell me that they're particularly worried this year, as the Burmese have just purchased some Mi-2 attack helicopters from Poland, F-7M fighters from China, and G-4 ground-attack aircraft from Yugoslavia.

Mannerplaw was bombed last year without this increased firepower; that it will be bombed this year seems inevitable, only this time it probably will be destroyed.

The next day, we're tromping up another hill when everyone suddenly takes cover in the bushes, me tagging along, but not knowing why. The guy next to me grabs my arm hard and pushes his grimy hand in my face. I twist around with the direction of his grasp and there they are: The Burmese army camped on a hillside, 500 meters away.

We sit there a long time, a few Karen communicating using hand signals. The rest of us just sit. And sit. And sit. And don't say a word. Everyone knows we're dead if they see us, especially me — the Burmese are notoriously hard on journalists (see "Killed In Action," November '89).

Come nightfall, we head out. Most of these guys know the trail, and there's a little moonlight to guide us. Nevertheless, I stumble a couple of times and get some pretty sour looks. We walk a good part of the night; I can't remember ever being so exhausted.

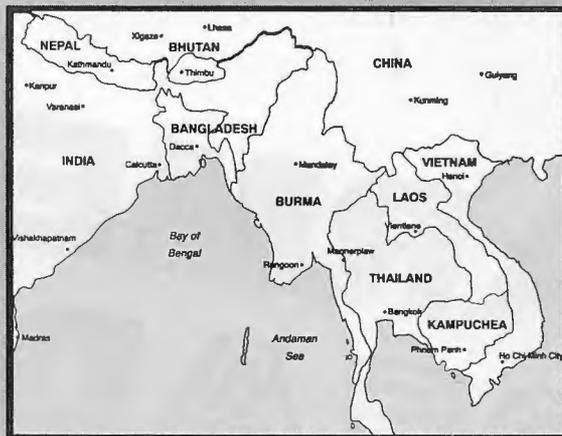
Later, we reach a small ravine with a creek in the bottom. We follow the creek for about 2km and meet up with a group of about 40 more Karen soldiers. Most are asleep; two or three are wounded. I find out the group has also lost a couple of men after tangling with the same group of Burmese we passed on our way here.

We sleep for a few hours and then head back to Mannerplaw, minus our supplies. The wounded soldiers are with us for the return trip.

We make it back uneventfully, although one guy is bit by a snake and I never see him again.

*Peter Bussian is a freelance photojournalist based in Santa Fe, New Mexico.*

## Burmese Road To Ruin



**B**urma received little notice in the Western press over the years until the summer of 1988, when violent antigovernment demonstrations forced the abdication of then-prime minister, General Ne Win.

This triggered a bloody struggle in major Burmese cities between pro-democracy groups and government forces. It also united the "hill tribes" that have fought a guerrilla war against the Burmese government for more than 40 years.

Ne Win, who led the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP), came to power in a coup in 1962 and launched the "Burmese Way to Socialism," which turned out to be the "Burmese Road to Ruin." In short, Ne Win's brutal, authoritarian regime is noted for turning one of the richest countries in Southeast Asia into one of the poorest.

Ne Win is perhaps best known as the head of state who kicked the fender of the American ambassador's automobile to show his displeasure with U.S. policy in the region.

Ne Win was replaced by General Sein Lwin. Nicknamed "the butcher" for his history of violently suppressing Ne Win's opponents, he was forced to step down after government troops fired on unarmed demonstrators in Rangoon, leaving thousands dead.

A new civilian leader, Maung Maung, attempted to cool the situation by promising multi-party elections, but this never materialized because a military coup replaced him that September with Defense Minister Saw Maung. Saw Maung dissolved the government and replaced it with the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which was composed almost entirely of military officers.

Saw Maung positioned SLORC as an interim government pending resolution of Burma's crisis, and

also promised elections. Instead, he delivered a brutal crackdown on opposition groups.

Military units indiscriminately fired on demonstrators and bystanders. House-to-house searches for opposition leaders often resulted in summary executions. Street patrols shot innocent civilians without pretext. And anyone showing sympathy for the protesters, including members of the government, was arrested.

In the second half of 1988 alone, an estimated 10,000 Burmese fled to India, Thailand and Bangladesh. Many took refuge in the mountains with ethnic guerrillas such as the Karen. Some began training in military and political skills.

The government offered an amnesty program to those who fled. However, nearly all of the 3,000 who returned to Burma under the program were soon reported "missing."

In November 1988, the opposition movement took the first step in forming a unified structure that could legitimately challenge Rangoon. Some 22 organizations, including seven ethnic organizations (Karen, Shan, Mon, Kachin, Arakanese, Chin and Karenni), formed the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) to coordinate military and political activity.

**T**he only major group excluded from the DAB was the Burmese Communist Party. Despite a useful armed strength of 8,000 men, it was excluded because of its advocacy of one-party (communist) rule.

The elected chairman of the DAB was Bo Mya, who was also president of the Karen National Union (KNU) and general of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). The Karen figured prominently in the DAB, because they fielded about 50% of its armed military strength of

*Continued on page 75*

# ARMED AND DEADLY

## How to Become a DEA Agent

by Morgan Tanner  
Photos Courtesy DEA

**T**RY this: Pull the trigger on a double-action firearm (without a firing pin) 40 times with your weak hand. Can't do it? You'd flunk training for a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) special agent.

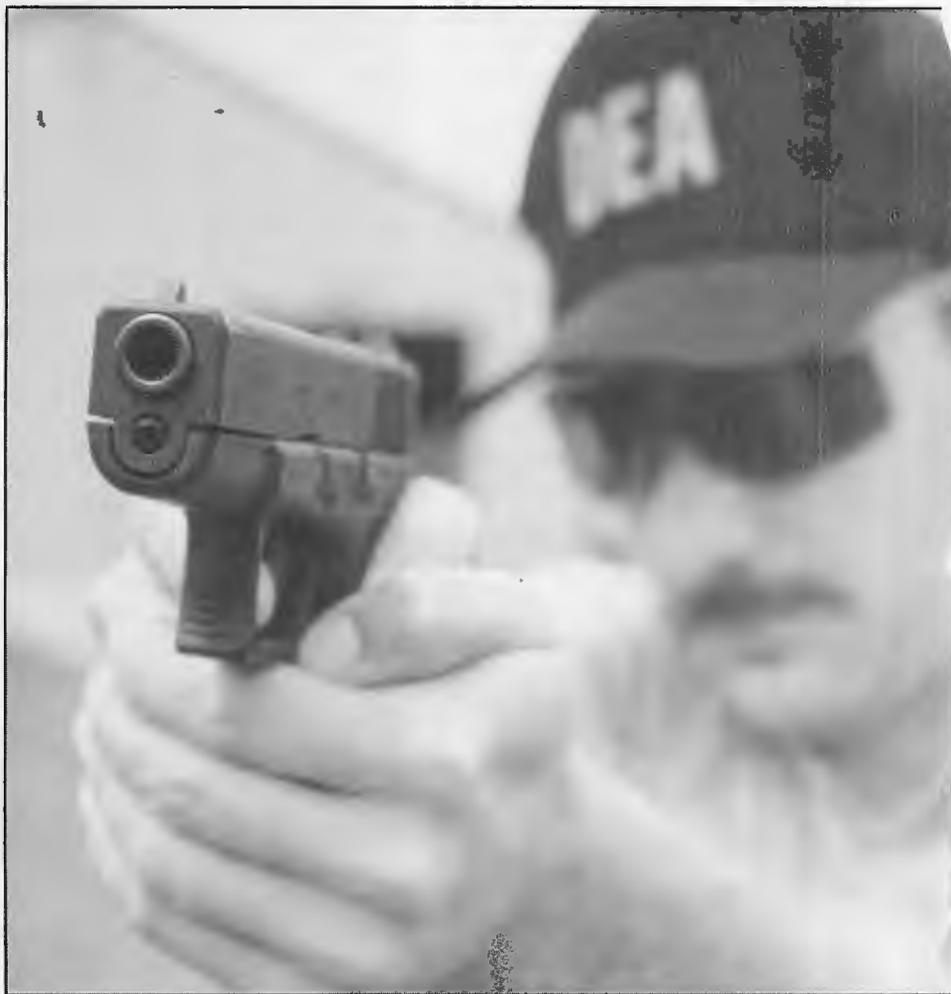
Answer this: *Yakuza* is a) a new type of heroin, b) a crazy informant, c) Japanese organized crime. If you said a or b, you don't know much about drug trafficking.

True or false: An individual, first-time drug offender may be fined up to \$2 million in addition to a prison term. Answer false, and you need to bone up on the law.

Candidates for becoming DEA special agents must pass rigorous requirements for physical and psychological fitness, the firearms "redhandle" test described above, and 17 written tests before they are even accepted for training. When they "earn their bones" at graduation, they have the skills to combat drugs and drug trafficking — essential survival skills for going undercover against seamy dealers with sophisticated weaponry.

"The DEA," says Francis Mullen, administrator of the DEA from 1981-1985, "is the world's premier drug enforcement agency." His book *Drug Enforcement Agent* (Prentice Hall), gives candidates a leg-up on getting hired.

Special agents are the backbone of the DEA, fulfilling its mission to enforce U.S. controlled-substance laws and regulations. Each year, nearly 200,000 people seek employment at the DEA, many hoping to



become one of its 3,538 agents. Today, there are only 271 agent vacancies. Many preferred candidates have experience as cops, narcotics detectives or soldiers.

"The DEA looks for that kind of experience," Mullen explains.

Special agent candidates must be 21 to 34 years old, with good health and a solid background. Drug abuse in any form disqualifies them. They must be U.S. citizens and willing to transfer anywhere in the United States. Foreign assignments are voluntary.

**K**nowing a second language is a plus. The DEA may provide language training, but you have a better chance of becoming an agent if you're already skilled in a second language. Spanish is the first choice, but others are valuable.

Once they are appointed, trainees, "basic agents," learn their tradecraft in a 15-week training program at Quantico, Virginia, sharing facilities at Hogan's Alley with the FBI. Training covers close combat, city and rural combat, night fire, shoot/don't shoot conditions, court procedure, investigative techniques, drugs and narcotics identification, criminology, and practical field problems.

Basic agents undergo firearms training with handguns, rifles, shotguns and automatic weapons. A few years ago, DEA agents carried 58 different varieties of



### SPECIAL AGENT MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- Be a U.S. citizen
  - Age 21-34
  - Excellent physical condition
  - Valid driver's license
  - Have uncorrected vision of not less than 20/200 in both eyes, corrected 20/20 in one eye and 20/40 in the other
  - Able to relocate to another city in the United States
  - College degree in any field (with provisions)
- Contact: Drug Enforcement Administration, Office of Personnel, Special Agent Recruiting Unit, Washington, D.C. 20537 for more information.

handguns. Today, they use four basic 9mm models, using other weapons when working undercover. They must qualify with a 12-gauge pump shotgun, an M16 carbine and a submachine gun.

The training is physically hard, mentally demanding, and stressful — precisely the conditions agents face on the streets. One high-level DEA official estimates that a new agent will have to draw his or her weapon within a week after leaving the academy.

**S**pecial agents are masters of the buy-bust technique and frequently work undercover, which was mandatory until Mullen made it voluntary. Role-playing provides undercover skills. On assignment, they pose as wealthy drug dealers, drug trafficking pilots, money launderers, boat operators, even dishonest cops. But undercover, things don't always go as planned.

In February 1988, undercover DEA agents were attempting to buy 2 pounds of heroin from Thai drug dealers. But the dealers never intended to sell the heroin; their game was to kill and rob customers. Two undercover agents were shot to death. A third agent was shot in the leg, and two drug dealers were killed.

To date, 36 special agents and six clerical staff members have been killed.

While special agents are skilled at protecting themselves physically, other problems prove insidious. One, says Mullen, is temptation — the lure of money and drugs. Therefore, the background investigation is key in recruiting.

There's also the cynicism that becomes a trademark characteristic of narcotic cops

**After being selected as a candidate, which isn't easy, DEA agents must undergo 15 weeks of extensive training with handguns, rifles, shotguns and automatic weapons.**

and agents exposed to society's lowest elements. "That's why you can't leave an agent undercover for too long," Mullen says.

But for a sharp, dedicated agent, the DEA provides a chance to make a difference in the world. In 1990, DEA agents made 21,799 arrests and seized more than \$1.5 billion in assets.

"You seize several metric tons of cocaine, and you've saved a number of lives," Mullen says. "That's the most satisfying aspect."

Pay for special agents with experience tops \$50,000 a year. Starting salary for a GS-7 is \$21,023, for a GS-9, \$25,717; overtime pays a 25% premium. Retirement is mandatory at 55 years old. "An agent has to be quick and alert, and there comes a time ...," Mullen, who retired the day he turned 50, says.

But new special agents don't face running out of work. While cocaine is the current priority, heroin is gaining. The U.S. will always have some level of drug abuse, Mullen says. "I don't think zero abuse is attainable. We are a drug-consuming society. Heroin is making a comeback. It will probably continue because of the turmoil in the Middle East and Asia. Availability of heroin will remain high and that's why enforcement, interdiction, and education are our best answers.

"I don't see the solution coming from other countries. They are not going to solve our problems for us."

Solving the nation's drug problem remains in the hands of DEA special agents, working with other law enforcement agencies.

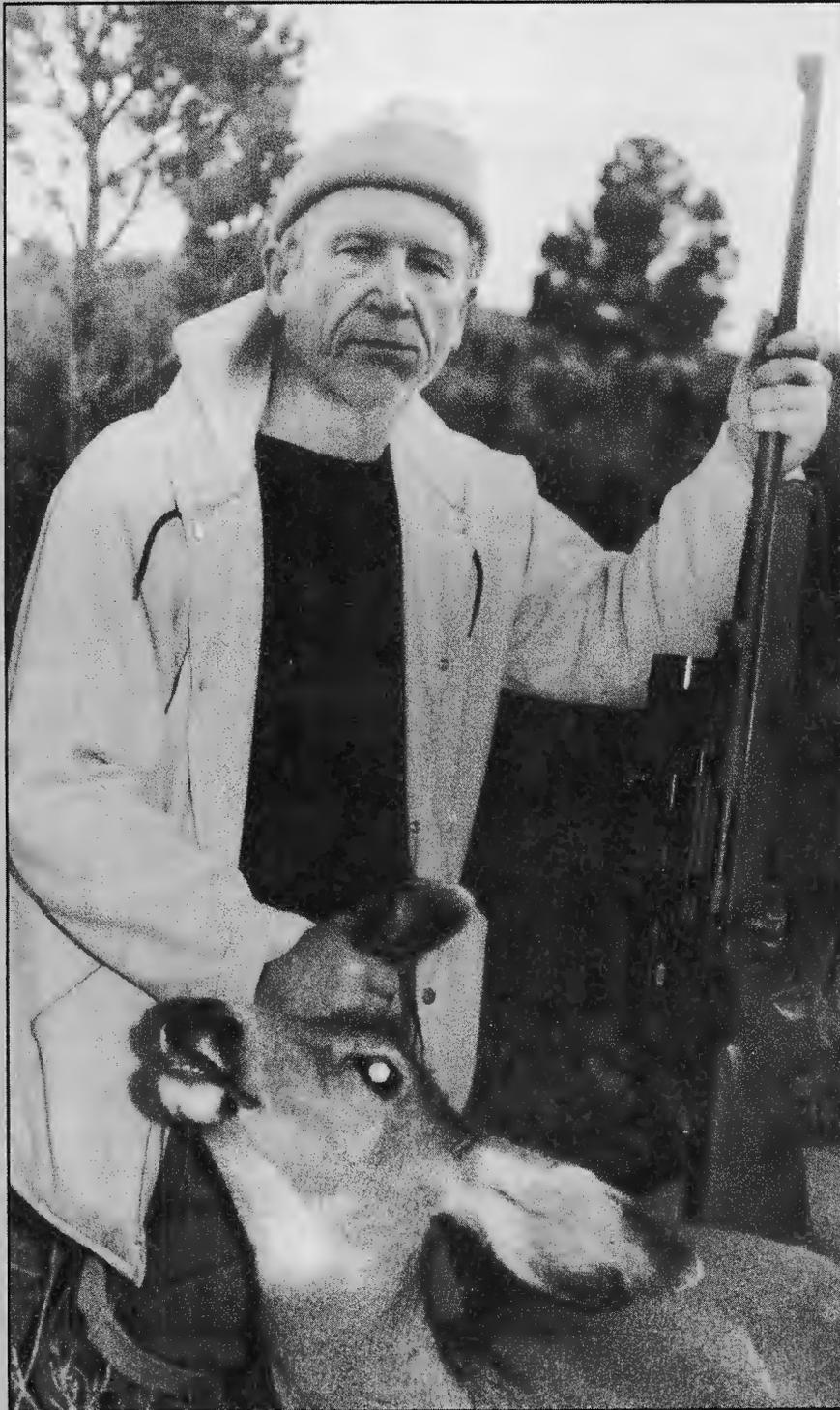
"I hate to think of where we'd be as a nation without DEA's special agents," Mullen says. "We haven't stopped drugs, but think of how much worse it would be without the DEA."

*Morgan Tanner has 10 years' experience covering international conflicts for National News Service and is a frequent contributor to SOF (see "Crack in America," June '89).*

**Ready, aim, fire on slimeball drug lords around the world. In 1990, DEA agents made nearly 22,000 arrests and seized more than \$1.5 billion in assets.**

# SHOT SHOW AND

by Galen Geer



**SOF Publisher Robert K. Brown with doe he dropped at more than 300 yards using the Nikon scope to solve a problem that had troubled him the year before.**

**E**ACH year SOF Publisher Bob Brown, some members of his staff, and a few guests join together for a few days of deer and elk hunting in Colorado. The hunting is for meat, not trophies, and it provides SOF an opportunity to test products from the annual Shooting-Hunting Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show.

We believe the following products will appeal to all SOF readers who enjoy outdoor adventure. All products discussed here were either tested by us in last year's hunting camp or will be tested this year.

## Boots

Temperatures during our last hunt ranged from below zero to 65 degrees. We had snow, freezing rain and mud. I tested a new boot from Northlake Boots made with a Gore-Tex fabric bootie inside and insulated with Thinsulate. I wore the boots through temperature extremes in snow to mud, and my feet stayed dry and comfortable. While mountain hiking, the boots didn't slip. For more information, write: Northlake Boots, 1812 Columbia, Dept. SOF, Franklin, TN 37065.

## Clothing

Walls, of Fort Worth, Texas, manufactures outdoor clothing that appeals to law enforcement personnel, big game hunters and other professionals who work outdoors. One of Walls' newest products is its Tracker jacket with blaze orange on one side for rifle-season hunters and camouflage on the other. For more information, write: Walls Public Relations, Dept. SOF, 219 S. Main St., Fort Worth, TX 76104.

'Hunter's back' is a common malady after hours of big game hunting. Valeo is manufacturing a sports belt designed to redistribute the pressure on the spine by placing it around the torso. The belt helps straighten the spine, which allows the hunter to be more comfortable, even while hiking. Wayne Geer tested the belt during the SOF hunt, and he felt it was very effective. For more information, write: Valeo, Dept. SOF, W229 N. 1687 Westwood Dr., Suite A, Waukesha WI 53186.

## Safety Products

Safety products for shooters and hunters caught SOF's attention at the SHOT Show. Hunters are using safety eyewear more often while hunting although glasses specifically for hunters have not been

# TELL

## SOF Surveys Latest Hunting Gear

widely available. Protective Optics has tints designed to meet the needs of both range shooters and hunters. These lenses are impact resistant and shatterproof. During the SHOT Show, the company demonstrated their lenses' durability by hitting them with a hammer. For more information, write: Protective Optics, Dept. SOF, 23785 Cabot Blvd., Suite 311, Hayward, CA 94545.

Hearing protection is another concern. Action Ear demonstrated an electronic ear protector that also enhances sounds. Hunters who have hearing problems can wear these new ear protectors and enjoy better hearing, yet when a shot is fired, the electronics close down and the noise is not transmitted to the ear. For more information, write: Silver Creek Industries, Dept. SOF, PO Box 1988, Manitowoc, WI 54220.

**S**afety includes knowing where others are, whether hunting or on the shooting range. Communications Group Inc. (CommTech) is offering compact two-way Montana radios. These are ultra-high frequency (460 Mhz) radios that operate on newly released channels with ranges of up to 4 miles. For more information, write: CommTech, Dept. SOF, 441 Donelson Pike, Suite 420, PO Box 148242, Nashville, TN 37214.

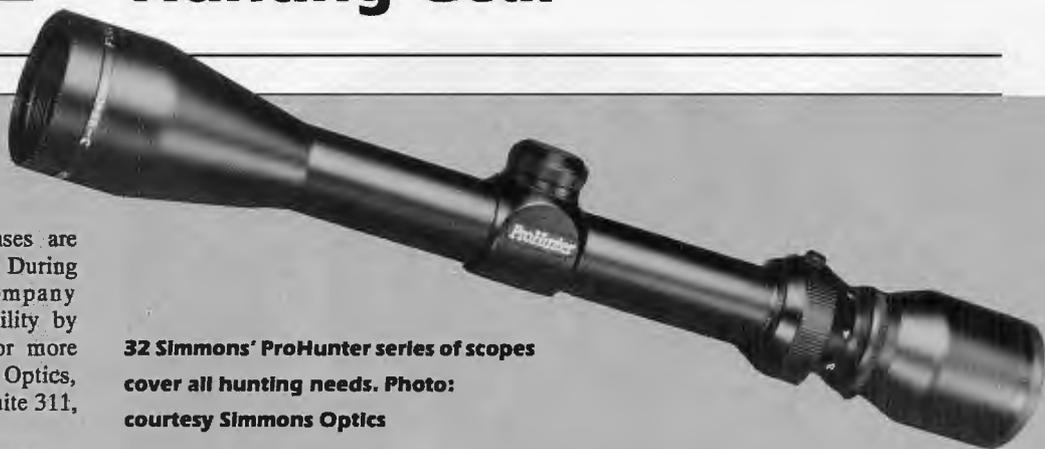
An interesting safety product for SOF readers who own guard or hunting dogs is the Leash O' Life. This patented dog-restraint system allows a dog to be carried safely in the back of a pickup, yet prevents the dog from jumping or falling out. For more information, write: Leash O' Life, 1945 Alvina Dr., Missoula, MT 59802.

### Cutlery

Venison is only as good as the care it receives in the field; it should be skinned and cooled as soon as possible. We killed eight deer during our last hunt, and several of the hunters used knives from the Western Cutlery Hunter Series, the Model R-16 fixed-blade knife, to field dress their deer.

In camp, Western's Model R-14, a skinning knife, was one of the knives used to get hides off of deer as quickly as possible. For more information, write: Western Cutlery, Dept. SOF, 1800 Pike Rd., Longmont, CO 80501.

The SHOT Show is a cutlery showplace, and Gerber introduced a new knife that should be popular with sportsmen: the Gator, a rubber-handled folding knife with



**32 Simmons' ProHunter series of scopes cover all hunting needs. Photo: courtesy Simmons Optics**

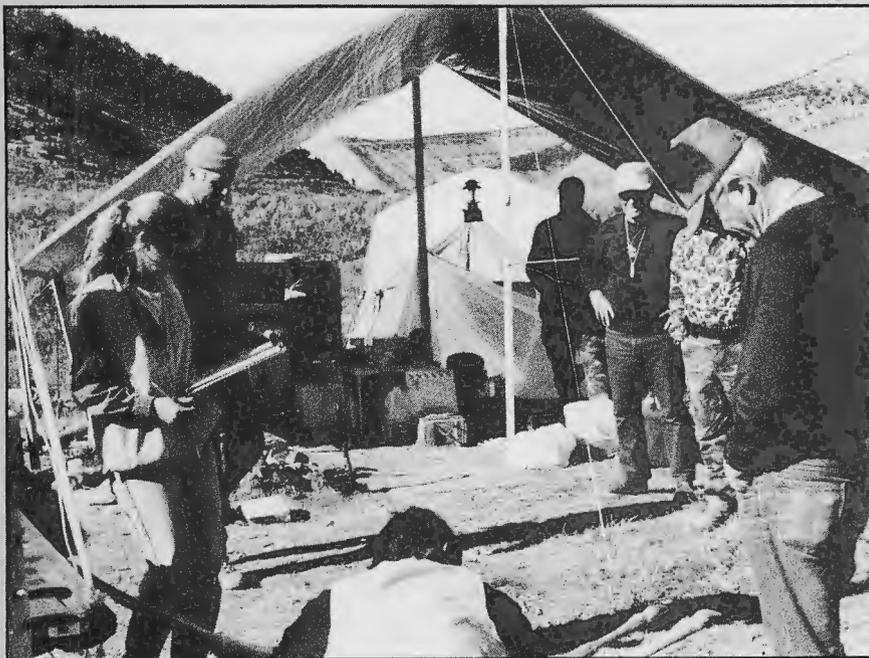


**Jason's new compact 20x portable spotting scope includes a carrying case and tripod. Photo: courtesy Jason/Images**



**Compact laser mount and laser from B-Square is popular with a variety of shooters. Photo: courtesy B-Square**

# "The scope on a hunting rifle can



**Taking high-quality, proper equipment to camp can mean the difference between a good adventure and disaster.**  
Photo: courtesy Galen Geer

a 3 3/4-inch blade. For more information, write: Fiskars/Gerber, Dept. SOF, 14200 SW 72nd Ave., Portland, OR 97223.

Al Mar's Vagabond is also ideal for hunters. This is a knife that can be used by the hunter in the field or for chores around camp, and it has the added attraction of a compass set into the handle. Another Al Mar knife, the Mini Bulldog, answers the need for a sportsman's pocket knife for small jobs around camp. For more information, write: Al Mar Knives, Dept. SOF, PO Box 1626, 5755 S.W. Jean Rd., Suite 101, Lake Oswego, OR 97035.

## Ammunition

**S**porting ammunition is always evolving. For hunting in Africa, A-Square has introduced the .470 Capstick, named for one of today's most prolific Africa hunting writers, Peter Capstick. The .470 ammo is available in three different 500-grain types. For more information, write: A-Square, Dept. SOF, Route 4, Simmons Rd., Madison, IN 47250.

A new hunting bullet from Sierra is the .375 250-grain Sierra Boat Tail (SBT). Although primarily for tougher game, the .375-caliber bullets are proving popular with elk hunters because the bullet's punch

**Onelda Labs' new Strike Eagle bow is an example of the growth in archery technology.** Photo: courtesy Onelda Labs

at longer ranges gives more first shot kills of big game. Sierra also has issued the 3rd edition of its reloading guides for rifles and handguns. For more information, write: Sierra Bullets, Dept. SOF, 1400 West Henry St., Sedalia, MO 65301.

## Optics

The scope on a hunting rifle can make or break the hunt. My son, Chris, killed his first deer using a British .303 equipped with a Simmons 3-10x44. On my Winchester Model 70 .375 H&H, a Bausch & Lomb Balvar 1.5-6x32 was on its debut hunt but did not get used on an elk.

My standard deer gun, a Remington 700 BDL .30-06, is equipped with a Bushnell Banner 3-9x Lite Site that has proved itself year after year. Bob Brown was using a Nikon 3-9x40 scope on his .308 Steyr. The Nikon scope replaced a scope that proved inadequate for Western deer hunting the year before.

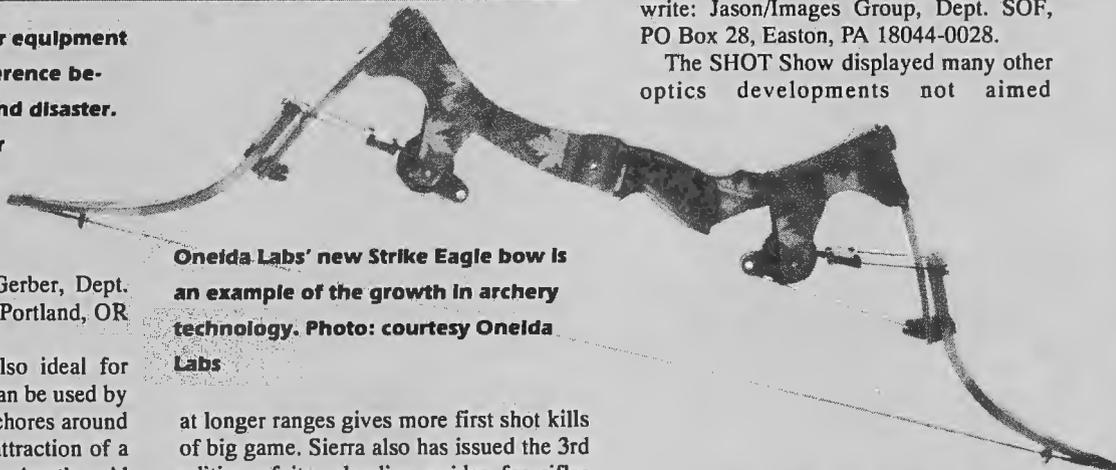
All three scopes proved their worth. Chris brought his deer down at 200 yards using the Simmons scope. At the SHOT

Show, Simmons introduced an entire new line of scopes, the ProHunter Series, to cover all hunting needs. I took one of my deer on a 400-yard shot with my .06 and Brown brought down a deer at 300+ yards using the Nikon scope in falling light. The success of the shooters at various ranges, all of them in awkward lighting, proved the performance characteristics of their scopes.

For more information, write: Simmons Optics, Dept. SOF, PO Box 217, Heflin, AL 36264; Bushnell/Bausch & Lomb, Dept. SOF, 300 N. Lone Hill Ave., San Dimas, CA 91773; Nikon Sport Optics, Dept. SOF, 623 Stewart Ave., Garden City, NY 11530.

**J**ason Optics is expanding its line of scopes and accessories. A recent introduction popular with hunters is a spotting scope window mount. Jason has also expanded its line with a Compact 20x spotting scope kit that includes a carrying case and tripod. For more information, write: Jason/Images Group, Dept. SOF, PO Box 28, Easton, PA 18044-0028.

The SHOT Show displayed many other optics developments not aimed



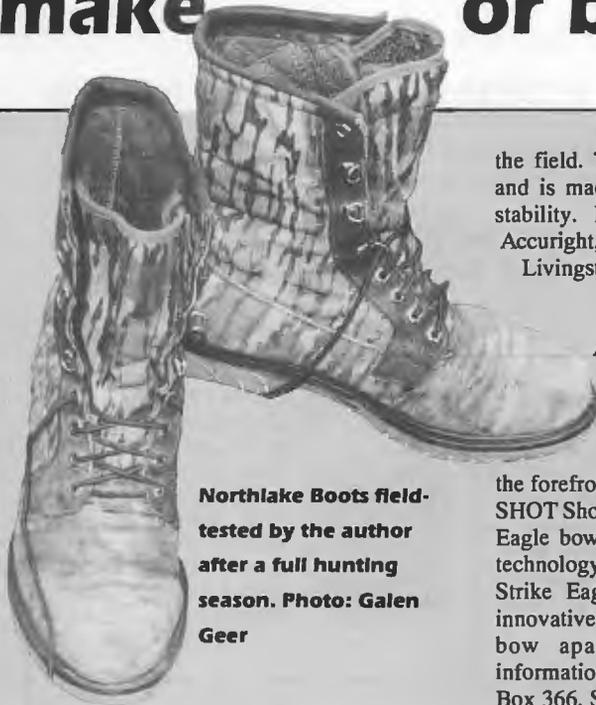
specifically at hunters. One of the most significant was the "Quick-Detachable Laser Mounts" and laser sights developed by B-Square. Designed to reduce the profile of guns equipped with laser sights and to enhance the versatility of autos and revolvers, the mounts are popular with serious shooters of all types. For more information, write: B-Square, Dept. SOF, PO Box 11281, Fort Worth, TX 76110.

## Hunting Aids

One of the more interesting new products is the Backseat, a combination backpack and camp stool. Waterfowlers can use the Backseat in their blind and to carry shells; big game hunters can use it for a day hunting pack. Around camp, the folding stool can be removed from the pack. For more information, write: Lake Country Sales Inc., Dept. SOF, PO Box 239, Elysian, MN 56028.

SOF readers who want a top-quality day

# make or break the hunt."



**Northlake Boots field-tested by the author after a full hunting season. Photo: Galen Geer**

pack should consider the Teardrop Wool Pack or Loon Internal Frame Pack from ScanSport Inc. These are quiet packs made from traditional wool and leather products, and are superior to most "modern" pack fabrics. For more information, write: ScanSport Inc., Dept. SOF, PO Box 700, Enfield, NH 03748.

## Hunting Camp

A hunting camp should be comfortable. Montana Canvas has introduced a new, lightweight, synthetic canvas material that reduces the weight of outfitter tents. According to the company, a 16x20-foot canvas tent weighs more than 100 pounds, but only 40 pounds with the new material. For more information, write: Montana Canvas, Dept. SOF, PO Box 390, Belgrade, MT 59714.

**C**ampfire grills for hunting camp can make camp life tolerable. At our next hunting camp we will evaluate a large grill introduced at the SHOT Show called the Kott Kampgrill. The Kott grill is 3 feet long and 18 inches wide with a warming rack. For more information, write: Kott Manufacturing, Dept. SOF, PO Box 2025, 422 W. Adams, Harlingen, TX 78551.

Getting to and from hunting camp, whether in the Rockies or Africa, can be a chore. Cabela's has developed World Traveler luggage designed for rough handling. For more information, write: Cabela's Inc., Dept. SOF-MM, 812 13th Ave., Sidney, NE 69160.

## Reloading/Sighting-In

The last step taken before going into the field is sighting-in. Accuright manufactures a portable shooting bench that can be used on the range or taken to

the field. The bench rotates 360 degrees and is made from mechanical tubing for stability. For more information, write: Accuright, Dept. SOF, PO Box 1062, Livingston, MT 59047.

## Archery

Archery hunting for North American and African game has been growing in popularity. Oneida Labs' compound hunting bows are at the forefront of archery technology. At the SHOT Show, Oneida introduced the Strike Eagle bow, a prime example of the new technology. The let-off choices on the Strike Eagle are from 50-65%, and an innovative outboard limb system sets the bow apart from others. For more information, write: Oneida Labs Inc., PO Box 366, Syracuse, NY 13201.

The Feather Flex decoy company introduced a new target system for archery hunters who want to practice in their own yard. The targets are made from crosslinked

polyethylene foam with different targets on 12 different foam sheets. Each target has a different center of impact for longer life. The system stops all field points and weighs only 6 pounds, so it is easily carried, even into the field, for practice. For more information, write: Feather Flex, Dept. SOF, Swan Lake Rd., Bossier City, LA 71111.

**C**rossbows, too, are gaining in popularity for big game hunting; two companies active in the crossbow field are Barnett International and Horton. At the SHOT Show, Horton introduced its SAFARI Crossbow, which will appeal to crossbow hunters. For more information, write: Horton Manufacturing Co. Inc., Dept. SOF, Waterloo Rd., Suffield, OH 44260.

*Galen Geer is SOF's Contributing Editor for Outdoor Affairs.*



**Al Mar Mini Bulldog is a pocket knife that can be carried for quick chores.**

**Photo: courtesy Al Mar**



**New two-way radios from CommTech are designed to appeal to outdoorsmen. Photo: courtesy CommTech**





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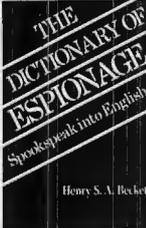
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# SNIPER SCHOOL

Continued from page 51

Eagle Industries Unlimited Inc. (Dept. SOF, 400 Biltmore Dr., Suite 530, Fenton, MO 63026; phone: 314-343-7547). Manufactured to U.S. MilSpec, the LBV-USA was fabricated from 500 Denier Cordura in woodland pattern camouflage to match the Salvadoran-issue cammies. The LBV-USA holds six Kalashnikov magazines in the top four pouches and two grenades or other small items in two lower, utility pouches.

In two long, narrow pouches next to the magazine's pouches I carried my Swiss army knife and a two-cell Legend flashlight. Both sides of this vest, the lower pack panel and the shoulder harness have 2 1/4-inch webbing double stitches for attaching extra gear with military side clips. A standard pistol belt can be attached to the bottom of the LBV-USA to accommodate a holster and canteens. In my opinion, you don't need any more equipment than that for most operations and you can forget about the pistol as well. This excellent vest carries a list price of \$139.95. Eagle Industries also generously donated four cases of holsters, knife sheaths and other law enforcement web gear to the ERE.

As dangerous as El Salvador remains (17 soldiers were killed by a command-detonated mine ambush in Chalatenango during our stay), you cannot walk into a restaurant or stroll down a shopping mall with an AK without turning a few heads. Whenever a low profile was mandated, I packed a Wayne Novak (Novak's .45 Shop, 1206 1/2 30th St., Parkersburg, WV 26101; phone 304-485-9295) modified Browning High Power loaded with Black Hills 147-grain subsonic JHP.

Complete with Novak's superb Lo-Mount rear sight, dovetailed front sight — both with Trijicon self-luminous crystals, stippled back strap, bevel carry package and tuned trigger, this hot setup is called the "Anti-Terrorist Tactical High Power." Sam Andrews, Jr. (1040 S.W. 11th Terrace, Gainesville, FL 32601; phone 904-376-8809 — catalog \$3) provided what I feel is the best shoulder holster available, his Lightweight Rig with special harness system. My backup was, as usual, an S&W Model 640 stainless steel Centennial .38 Special loaded with Federal 158-grain Lead Hollow Points stuffed into one of Bruce Nelson's inside-the-pants Summer Specials.

Chris also carried a S&W .38 Special with Federal's "FBI" loads. As backup he relied on a hammer-shrouded Model 49 "Bodyguard" in a Bianchi inside-the-pants holster. His primary piece was a customized Colt Lightweight Commander (pre-"series 70") with Black Hills 185-grain JHPs in a strongside Gordan Davis holster with rearward muzzle rake.

The day before the course was

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scheduled to begin we inspected the range, zeroed our AKMs and gave a lecture back at the barracks on disassembly/assembly and maintenance procedures for the SSG 69, Dragunov and M14/M1A.

### 14 Countersnipers

The next morning at 0700, 14 men assembled at the range to participate in the course. Among them were the unit commander, First Lieutenant Aristides Merlos Flores, and the first sergeant, whom I had previously nicknamed "Sargento del Almacén" (literally, "Sergeant of the Supply Room"). Four of the other 12 had taken the weapons course provided by SOF in June of 1990. They were "Mafia," "Atlactl," "Cosa Seria," (Serious Matter) and "Guapo," (Handsome). The other eight were known by equally bizarre monikers: "Mala Cria" (Child of Bad Parentage), "Tractor," "Fosforo" (Match —because of his red hair as a child), "Muneco" (Baby Face), "Chindondo" (Lump on the Head), "Caballo" (Horse), "Tison" and "Chivo" (Goat).

I will, of course, forever be known as "Pantera Rosa" (Pink Panther) by the ERE, and Chris was quickly named "Oso Grande" (Great Bear).

Those introductions aside, we proceeded to zero all the rifles at 100 meters that were fit for service. Redfield Precision Sight-In Targets were used for this purpose. Throughout the course we

employed Dualatron and Know Your Enemy humanoid-type targets supplemented by balloons. Bores were cleaned after every five shots. Cleaning and maintenance procedures were stressed continually.

The principles of marksmanship were discussed, including breathing, trigger control and follow through, sight alignment and the basic firing positions. While prone, kneeling, squatting, sitting and standing positions were all demonstrated and practiced, particular emphasis was placed on the improvised positions that will most often be required in real scenarios. All shooting during Day 1 was from 80 meters in the prone position from behind a small berm. As we had only six target frames, the 12 students were divided into two-man teams and alternated firing the exercises. Lieutenant Merlos and the unit's first sergeant fired whenever it was possible to do so.

On the second day we started back at the 80-meter line, where we kept all those who could not yet manage consistent five-shot groups in the head (from below the hairline to just under the nose). The others were moved to the hills above the range to fire head shots at 100 and 200 meters. While many expect that sniper training should emphasize shooting at ranges of 500 meters and beyond, the fact is that police countersnipers operating in urban environments rarely engage targets beyond 100 meters, and most often, their

targets are much closer.

Later in the day, after re-zeroing three rifles with loose scope ring screws, 100-meter shooting commenced from behind wrecked cars and inside a bus at paper targets and balloons. They were reminded that whenever you take cover behind a car, you should position yourself in back of the engine block as it provides the best protection from incoming rounds.

This was followed by a field exercise that tested the students' marksmanship skills together with their ability to cope with the improvised firing positions that would be forced upon a countersniper operating in San Salvador. All shooting was from approximately 100 meters. The students were required to run 50 meters to a sandbag bunker and fire one head shot. Using cover and concealment, they then crawled to a ditch and fired two shots using a small steel bridge for support. From there they once again crawled to a small berm and fired another shot. Finally, they ran to a pile of debris and fired their fifth and final shot. No time limit was placed on this exercise, as precise head shots were deemed to be more important than speed.

### Five Torso Hits

Day 3 began with the only long-range shooting of the course, as each student was required to make five torso hits on a 300-meter target. After this, they practiced shooting from the roof of the PN

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substation as this location provides urban countersnipers with an unrestricted field of fire from which they are usually less detectable. Moving up to 25 meters, snap shooting from the kneeling position was stressed, as urban countersnipers can be confronted with unexpected, close-range, moving targets at any time during an operation.

At the end of the day, the graduation exercise was conducted. It consisted of the previous day's field exercise with several added ingredients. Each man was required to exit the rear of the pickup truck to commence the exercise.

Between the small berm and the pile of debris we placed another truck and two shots were fired from the rear of this truck using the roll bars above the cab as support. This increased the total shots fired to seven and everyone was required to reload from behind cover on the bed of the truck. In addition, while they were crawling from the bunker to the ditch, I fired bursts from a Kalashnikov 6 inches over their heads from a distance of only 2 feet. (Note: SOF does not endorse this type of realism as it requires a highly trained shooter firing directly over combat-experienced troops who will not panic.)

All of the students started out very poorly and few of them could consistently place five shots into the designated area of the targets' heads by the end of the first day. Initially, trigger jerking and flinching

were problems for many of them.

However, they are a highly motivated group and most practiced dry firing each evening for several hours in the barracks. By the end of the course all were performing in a competent manner. While the M118 ammunition available to us precluded sub-MOA groups from the caliber 7.62x51mm NATO rifles, almost all shot with acceptable accuracy under the intense stress of the final exercise.

Fosforo received the top award for his performance in the course. Perhaps he had more to prove than the others. A war orphan, Fosforo represents an aspect of

Salvadoran culture that has no parallel in the United States. Adopted by the PN, he was sheltered, fed, clothed and sent to school. During that time he served as an orderly in the *Direccion General de Policia Nacional*. Eventually, he became a police officer and worked his way up to the elite ERE.

There are rumors that the war will soon end in El Salvador. After almost a decade of witnessing that tortured country's anguish, I have my doubts. In any event, the ERE must proceed to level 2 of their countersniper training. SOF will be there to provide it for them. ✕

## ROAD TO RUIN

*Continued from page 65*

20,000 soldiers.

This force was sometimes dismissed as no threat to the 180,000-man Burmese army. However, the DAB claimed it could field a force of up to 100,000 men if it were supplied with arms. To this end, it actively sought government and private funding from Western sources. But to no avail.

In May 1990, under international pressure and threats of losing foreign aid, SLORC conceded to holding general elections. The elections voted SLORC out, but its members declined

to abdicate power. The democratic opposition leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, who won the elections, was put under house arrest.

Then, with world attention focused on the Persian Gulf War, SLORC took the opportunity to step up efforts against pro-democratic opposition groups. Reports chalk up thousands of new arrests, including hundreds of Buddhist monks. This forced the opposition to form a provisional government-in-exile in camps along the Thai border.

Thai logging companies, with tacit Thai government support, are allegedly providing logistical support for the Burmese troops, as the companies

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have reportedly closed deals with SLORC that target teak forests in Karen-controlled areas.

As a result, the Karen are being hit hard by stepped-up military sweeps. The Thai government also is turning a blind eye to Burmese raids on Karen outposts staged from Thailand. Rumors persist of a major offensive targeted against the Karen headquarters at Mannerplaw.

Tragically, the death of the KNU and DAB probably will mean the death of thousands of honorable people, not to mention the death of democracy in Burma. ✕

— Peter Boczar

## HOMECOMING

Continued from page 47

explaining that "no credible evidence has surfaced which would lead us to believe ... that the Arrow Air flight crashed as the result of an act of criminality, terrorism, or sabotage."

### Dissenting Opinion

However, the four dissenting members of the CASB were harshly critical of the official report. In their opinion, which was publicly released on 14 November 1988, they asserted that, "Witness testimony and detailed meteorological evidence establish that the wing of the Arrow Air DC-8 could not have been contaminated with ice during the take-off run at Gander on 12 December 1985."

The CASB's investigation of the crash was, the dissenters maintain, inept and incompetent. Contrary to standard procedures, the aircraft was never reconstructed, and wreckage was not selected for forwarding to the investigation center at Ottawa; it was "bulldozed into piles and discarded."

The members' examination of the physical evidence was further hindered by the fact that wreckage photographs which were "not needed to support the majority analysis were not organized or labelled." Also, a coroner's inquest, which is required by law in Newfoundland for cases of sudden and unexpected death, was never conducted.

The dissenting opinion argues that the Arrow Air crash was caused by an in-flight fire. This assumption is supported by eyewitness accounts and other key evidence. For instance, it is known that the crew discharged at least one of the aircraft's fire extinguishing bottles before the crash. Investigators also determined that the master fire warning light, which must be physically activated by the pilot, had been turned on prior to the moment of impact.

Most important, autopsy reports reveal that many of the soldiers on board were

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exposed to fire in the plane before it went down. Hydrogen cyanide, which is found in smoke generated by the burning of plastics in aircraft interiors, was found in the bloodstreams of many of the victims. This indicates that those who died instantly in the crash inhaled it before the DC-8 hit the ground.

An in-flight fire, not wing icing, is the only explanation for such evidence.

The dissenting report postulates that this in-flight fire was caused by some kind of detonation in the forward cargo bay. During the investigation, Irving Pinkel, an explosives expert, was sent by Arrow Air's insurance company to examine the DC-8's wreckage.

What he found was "a roughly circular hole some 11 inches in diameter in a fuselage sidewall. The hole, located just above the floor line in the passenger cabin, seemed to be punched out explosively ... The partial window frame above the hole seems to be distorted outward as if from an internal blast."

The dissenting opinion also discusses the possibility of terrorist involvement in the crash. They note that Islamic Jihad, which claimed responsibility, certainly had the capability of planting a bomb on board the aircraft. "The organization had demonstrated great sophistication in the use of explosives," the report observes, "and may have been responsible for the terrorist attack that killed 241 American members of the multinational

peacekeeping force at the Beirut Airport in 1983."

### Iran-Contra Connection

Further, the report provides this interesting bit of evidence: "At the time of the Arrow Air accident, the U.S. government was negotiating with the Islamic Jihad for the release of six American hostages." In fact, the Reagan administration's secret arms-for-hostages deal had just gone sour.

Less than a month before the Arrow Air crash, officials in Washington had agreed to send Iran a shipment of improved HAWK missiles in exchange for American captives. Then, for some reason, the administration decided to back out. Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North repeatedly tried to convince members of the National Security Council that such a move would enrage the Iranians and Islamic Jihad.

Three days before the crash, on 9 December 1985, North desperately sent out a memo, predicting that, "U.S. reversal now in mid-stream could ignite Iranian fire — hostages would be our minimum losses." His warning was ignored; the next day the State Department notified Tehran that the deal had been called off.

It's certain that Islamic Jihad also had considerable opportunity to carry out an attack against the Arrow Air flight. The dissenting members of the CASB, and

others close to the investigation, feel that security for the flight was completely inadequate. Testimony at the board's public inquiry revealed a number of unconscionable lapses.

An Army military customs team, which had been sent to Cairo airport to inspect the flight, was not allowed to examine the aircraft, supposedly because officials didn't have time to process ramp passes for them.

According to the dissenting opinion, the soldiers' "baggage and cargo were loaded without military supervision," during which time "the auxiliary power unit failed twice, leaving the aircraft in darkness with only one semi-uniformed guard, believed to be an Egyptian soldier." Also, "It is reported that fighting broke out among the ground handlers beneath the tail of the aircraft, possibly during one of the blackouts."

According to Captain Arthur Schoppaul, who piloted the Arrow Air flight from Cairo to Cologne, "ground security was very poor" at both airports. During the plane's refueling stop in Germany, for example, the DC-8 was cleaned by unsupervised employees of various nationalities. Given such shoddy security procedures, it is sadly evident that any interested terrorist could have planted a bomb on board without difficulty.

### Mystery Crates

Just as disturbing, though, are reports of

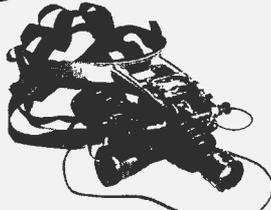
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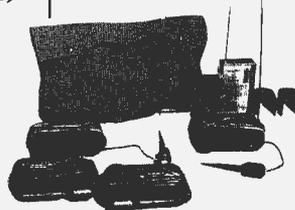
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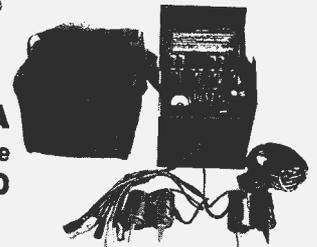
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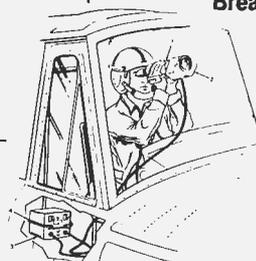
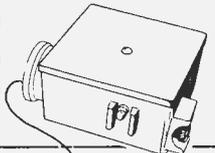


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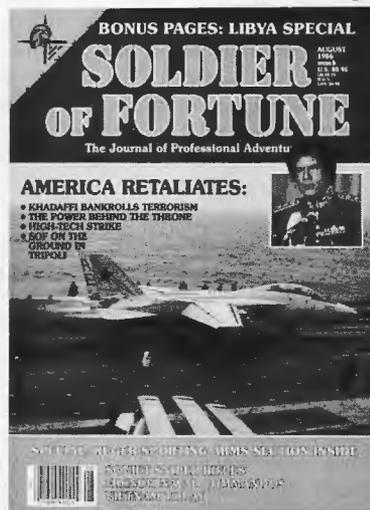
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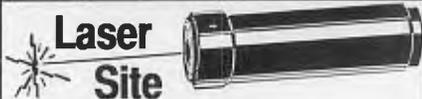
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unauthorized cargo being loaded onto the plane shortly before the take-off from Egypt. In order to make room for the six large wooden mystery crates (each of which was reportedly the size of a telephone booth and weighed hundreds of pounds), 41 GI duffel bags were thrown out of the aircraft's cargo hold and left on the tarmac at Cairo.

Lieutenant General (Retired) Burton Patrick, who commanded the 101st Airborne at the time of the crash, admits that leaving the soldiers' personal gear behind was "highly unusual."

In addition, a report from the UCTE states that four smaller wooden crates, "each weighing approximately 180 pounds, were loaded into the cabin bin. These boxes were sealed and loaded on orders from Colonel Marvin Jeffcoat of the MFO, in charge of the battalion unit. Although the contents were unknown, their dimensions of 6 feet by 2 feet by 14 inches combined with their weight led to the possibility of many types of weapons being stored inside."

Investigators have never been able to discover just what was in any of these crates, because the flight's original cargo manifest has somehow disappeared. The transportation of explosives, flammables and other dangerous substances on passenger-carrying aircraft is strictly prohibited, with good reason, by the FAA, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the Defense Department.

If the Arrow Air DC-8 had been illegally loaded with small arms ammunition, trip flares, or other, more hazardous materials, even a small terrorist bomb could well have been the catalyst for a deadly chain-reaction. The suspiciously thorough post-crash destruction of the aircraft suggests that if a bomb did explode as the plane was departing Gander, it set off something else, perhaps whatever was sealed in those wooden crates.

It's also possible that a volatile piece of undeclared cargo, carelessly carried or loaded on board, simply self-ignited, in which case whoever placed it in the DC-8 should be held accountable for the crash.

Whatever happened, had the flight not been carrying some secret and potentially explosive cargo, 248 soldiers might not have died.

Until we know exactly why Arrow Air Flight 1285 crashed, we are powerless to prevent it from happening again. The various official investigations into the disaster have distorted some facts and ignored others. The only truth yet revealed is that even the most basic security precautions would have prevented this horror.

The aircraft should not have been allowed to leave Cairo without its scheduled military customs inspection. A search of the passengers, their luggage, and the plane's cargo during loading would have uncovered any potential

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danger.

It's tragic that 248 American soldiers have been murdered, either by negligence or intent, and it's an outrage that the U.S. government has so far chosen to be an accessory to the crime — if only after the fact.

By refusing to fully investigate the Arrow Air crash, the FBI, the NTSB, the FAA, the Department of the Army and others have failed their responsibility to the soldiers that serve our nation.

Is there some terrible secret that they feel obligated to protect, or would the truth simply prove too unpopular for certain politicians? Until the cause of the crash is uncovered and those involved are held accountable, the families of the victims can only wonder.

Florida-based freelance writer John Landers is a frequent contributor to SOF.

## PAKISTAN

Continued from page 61

22,000-foot outpost at a place called Conway Saddle. The Pakistanis had managed to place a tiny Quonset hut there, and kept it occupied constantly. At the longest, the men would last a week before the deterioration of high altitude had taken its toll on mind and body, and the troops would have to be replaced with fresh soldiers.

### Failure And Tragedy

The major felt bad that he could not avert the army's intent to keep us away, and in consolation, offered that we could climb any peak in the area we chose. We opted for Gasherbrum II, the second highest in the Gasherbrum group, and another one of the great peaks of the world.

Soon after we began stocking camps for Gasherbrum II, however, Phil Boyer came down with pulmonary edema, and Chip decided Phil had to go back to a lower altitude, and then back home. (Pulmonary edema is a potentially fatal altitude illness where the lungs fill with fluid.) The best treatment is to descend, and that's what was done. It left only Gary Silver and me for the attempt on one of the highest mountains in the world.

When Gary and I were finally ready for an assault, he felt nauseated and decided not to climb. I went up alone. Because Gary was apparently concerned about his health, he decided to make a dangerous descent over a crevasse-filled glacier alone. For reasons I never understood, he badly wanted to get to base camp. After five days of intense solo climbing, I got within a few hundred feet of the summit before I turned back, exhausted from the effort.

On my way back down to base camp — six days after I'd left Gary — I met him

again at 23,000 feet. Surprisingly, he said he felt much better and had joined up with a Swiss mountaineer from a nearby expedition. But soon after we crossed paths, Gary and his partner were caught in a storm at 24,000 feet for three days. Gary fell ill again, and died on the mountain from cerebral edema, another high-altitude illness.

I was left alone. Six porters arrived as we had previously planned, and the major and I began the long hike back out to civilization. Word of Gary's death would have to wait until either the major or I could get to a telephone, and the nearest one was in Islamabad. During the eight-day hike out, I tried to grasp the series of events that led to the tragedy, and how I would tell Gary's wife — and his 14-year-old daughter — what had happened.

Obviously, his body chemistry had been short-circuited by the lack of oxygen. But why hadn't he known? Why him, instead of me? He was, after all, by far the superior athlete. Was it all predestined, as the major had said? Part of some "Great Plan" of Allah's? Or was it that we simply put our head on the chopping block in this dangerous game one too many times?

As we began the hike from the Gasherbrum II base camp, I looked up toward Conway Saddle, where the morning sun illuminated a patch of Quonset huts. A sparkle of light bounced off the metal of the shelter. I thought of the Pakistani soldiers up there, gasping for air, dodging incoming at the same time.

But even war, I realized, cannot overcome the sheer savage power of high mountains. Though slightly bruised from the effects of war, the Karakorum still reigns magnificent. The thunderous rumble of an avalanche, or the windy white-out of a storm, remind me that nature is in command. The war there is as ephemeral as the map-drawn lines over which they fight. The mountains will remain, I realized, long after the effects of man and his wars have disappeared.

Gary Speer is a Seattle-based photojournalist and mountaineer. This is his first story for SOF. "A Ridge Too Far," a video of this expedition, is available for \$22.95 (postpaid) from: Video Presentations, 2326 6th Ave. #230, Seattle, WA 98121.

## RPG

Continued from page 54

Most peculiar was a round jury-rigged by the FMLN which consisted of a U.S. 81mm mortar bomb (probably captured from the Salvadoran army, which issues the U.S. M29A1 81mm mortar), without its tail section, mated to a PG-7 rocket motor and booster. This 9-lb. monster was apparently designed to provide the terrorists with an indirect-fire, man-

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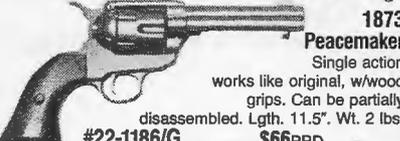
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portable weapon to employ against Salvadoran army personnel, buildings (such as the *Direccion General de Policia Nacional*, PN HQ) and electric power facilities.

The RPG-7V with a wooden launcher-tube insulator had an improvised clinometer attached to its left side for the slant range computation required to effectively employ this round from defilade. To date, what is in effect a short-range (probably no more than 100 meters), lightweight 81mm mortar has demonstrated only mixed results when used against electric power facilities. Nevertheless, I remain grateful that our quarters at the PN HQ are located deep within the building, as this HE fragmentation bomb is capable of inducing severe migraine.

### Bolt-Action RPG

Had it not been for a single defect which precluded its firing, we were provided with a unique training device for the RPG-7V, probably of Soviet origin. It is, in essence, a single-shot, bolt-action firearm, chambered for the 7.62x39mm cartridge and encased within a dummy housing of PG-7 configuration. Fabricated from sturdy milled forgings, the body of this training device was marked with a communist star, the year of manufacture (1976) and the serial number "HP (Cyrillic) 2646." The bolt was matching to this serial number. All components, except the bolt assembly which has been left "in-the-white," have been finished with black baked enamel.

The bolt has two large and opposed locking lugs on its forward end. The front edges of the locking lugs are rounded. When the bolt is in battery, the lugs are horizontal, i.e., to the right and left — in the manner of the Soviet Mosin-Nagant rifle. This is the reverse of the '98 Mauser locking system, where, when the bolt is locked, the lugs are vertical, one up and one down. The bolt handle folds down after chambering a round so the device can be inserted into the launcher tube. It also serves as an additional safety lug at the rear end. The bolt can be removed by depressing a spring-loaded catch/release lever at the rear end of the receiver body. There is a conventional claw extractor on the bolt head and a spring-loaded ejector inside the receiver body.

The device is aligned in the launcher tube in the same manner as a PG-7 grenade. When the RPG-7V trigger is pulled, its firing pin drives up through the hole in the launcher tube to impact on a spring-loaded trip lever on the training device, which, in turn, releases the spring-loaded striker to ignite the cartridge's primer. Trip lever movement is blocked by a spring-loaded safety pin on the side of the device which is depressed inward, to permit upward pivoting of the trip lever, by the interior wall of the launcher tube. This safety pin, either defective or worn,



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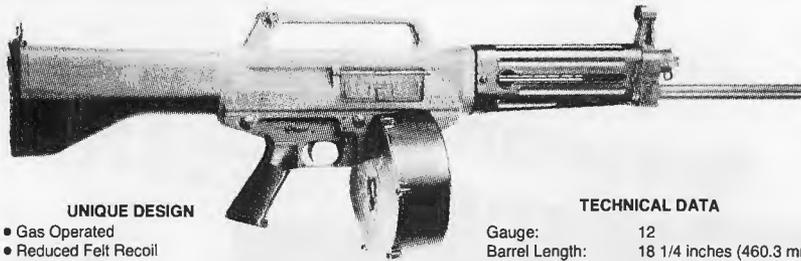
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was too short on our specimen and would not depress sufficiently when the training device was inserted into the RPG-7V to release the unit's trip lever.

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## HANNAH

*Continued from page 39*

tioned specific GIs by name and said their girlfriends were sleeping with someone else back home. A few days later, he remembers the soldiers named got "Dear John" letters from home confirming what Hannah had said.

Today, the "Voice of Vietnam" still broadcasts from the same old ramshackle building at 58 Quan Su Street in central Hanoi. The equipment survived the war years and generations of patient repair. Only the announcers are new. A new staff of Hanoi Hannahs in their early 20s can be heard on Radio Hanoi's English service.

Thu Houng does not like being compared to Tokyo Rose of World War II. Tokyo Rose was folksy and "down home" American in her broadcasts; Hanoi Hannah maintained a friendly, but correct and distant approach with her listeners. There was always a Vietnamese formality just under the surface of her voice as she suggested defection might be a good idea.

Interviewing Hanoi Hannah was like Dorothy parting the curtains hiding the Wizard of Oz. The great and terrible Hanoi Hannah turned out to be a mild-mannered announcer who spoke English and read *Stars and Stripes*.

*Don North's first assignment as a war correspondent was in Borneo with the British Royal Marines and Gurkhas fighting the army of Indonesia. In the 1960s, he was a correspondent in Vietnam and Indonesia. The Mel Gibson role in The Year of Living Dangerously is in part based on North's experiences in Indonesia. In the 1970s he specialized in stories in the Middle East for NBC News. Since 1983, he has produced TV news and documentaries about El Salvador, Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Lebanon. ✕*

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## POLICE

Continued from page 28

was shot, a camera in a 7-11 store filmed the commission of a robbery. Without warning, the perpetrator dropped the female clerk with a flying kick to the head, and then emptied the cash register. I think I saw that tape air once on one network. In light of the attention Rodney King received, I think it deserved considerably more air time than that. Police departments have access to a lot of crime videos, and they should make it a priority to see that criminal violence receives a lot more air time on television — enough that ordinary Americans begin to understand the reality of what cops must contend with.

Second, departments have to educate citizens to recognize what constitutes an appropriate use of force when they see it and what does not. Cameras may not lie, but a lot of people showing home movies do, and if the viewers have no way of interpreting and judging what they are seeing, they are likely to be taken in. And the truth is that while most Americans have been weaned on a diet of make-believe violence on TV, they have very little knowledge of the real thing, because, ironically enough, the media goes to extraordinary lengths to shield viewers' sensitivities.

That is a luxury that we can no longer afford. The video camera is here to stay. Increasingly people are going to shoot home videos of cops doing their job, warts and all, and increasingly television stations are going to run those tapes. The only defense is to make sure ordinary people have the knowledge to understand what they are seeing and make their own judgments about it.

*Paul Danish is a former contributing editor for SOF and a long-time civil libertarian.*

## NAMIBIA

Continued from page 63

ing Nujoma's approaching motorcade, didn't get out of the way quickly enough.

His rental car was immediately reduced to Swiss cheese. That he was hit only once was a miracle, but the limp will be a life-long reminder of Namibia. Last year two South Africans were stripped, strung up by their ankles and beaten to extract confessions of spying. Curiously, tourism seems to have dropped off lately. Must be that people have no real sense of adventure anymore.

Although Nujoma still pays lip service to the democratic process, political

Continued on page 96

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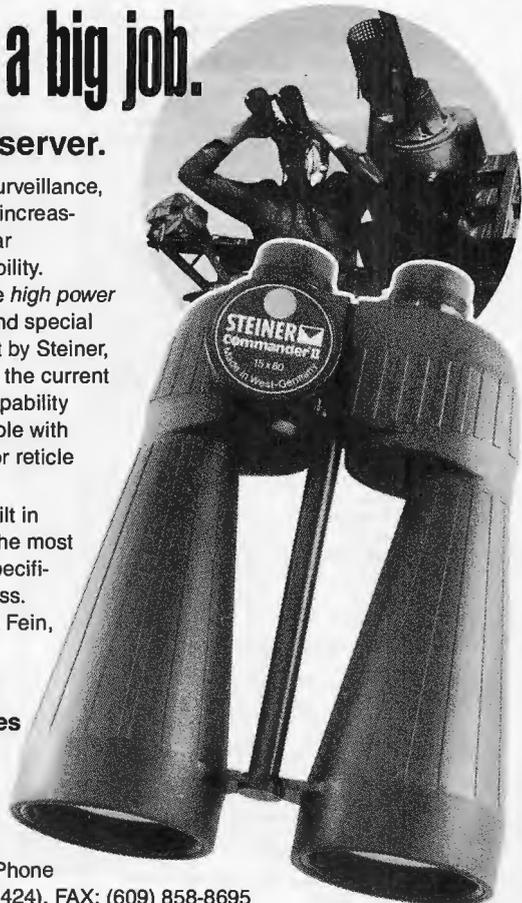
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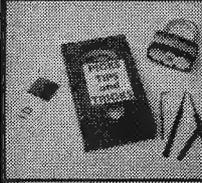
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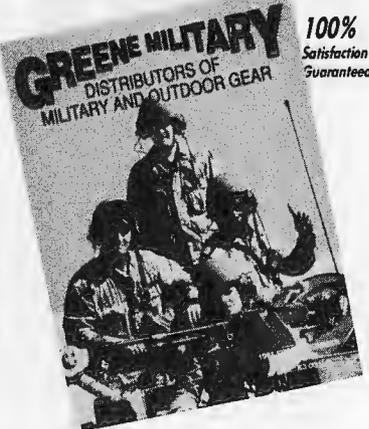
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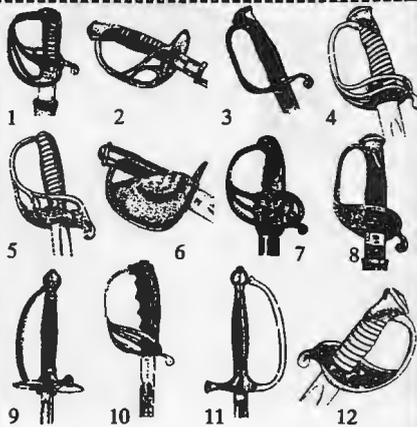


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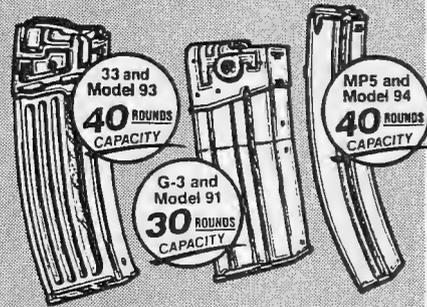
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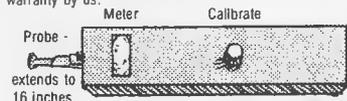
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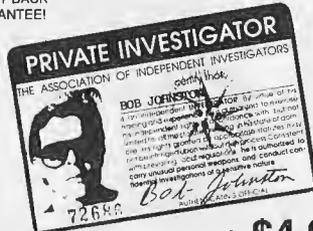
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## ADVERTISERS INDEX

ADVERTISER	PAGE	ADVERTISER	PAGE	ADVERTISER	PAGE
Al Mar Knives	20	Orpheus	18	Cold Steel	89
Amazing Concepts	80	Paladin Press	5	City Video Production, Inc.	89
Benchmade Knife Co, USA	87	Pioneer & Company	87	di Vinci, Ltd.	89
B-Square Co.	84	Practical Survival Magazine	85	E.G. Etc.	88
Central Mobile Communications	75	SOF Back Issues	79	Eden Press	90
ChinaSports, Inc.	Cover 3	SOF Las Vegas Convention	81	Greene Military Dist.	88
Collector's Armoury	83	SOF Bookshelf	72	Gun Parts Corp.	90
Cookson & Clegg, Ltd.	76	SOF		Ideal Studios	89
Cutlery Shoppe	9	Exchange	80,82	Legendary Arms, Inc.	89
Delta Press	73	SOF Desert Storm		Matthews Police Supply	91
Doubleday Military Book Club	Cover 2	Photo Contest	80	Max-Capacity Products	89
Franklin Mint	13	S.T.A.N.O.	78	Nat'l. I.D. Center	90
GSI, Inc.	18	Shotgun News	22	Showdown Creations, Inc.	90
Gilbert Equipment Co.	86	Sturm, Ruger & Co.	17	Survival Books	88
Glock, Inc.	Cover 4	Wan Distributing	74	T-J Jewelry	88
Guardian Products	73	Your Supply Depot	11	U.S. Cavalry, Inc.	91
Kaufman's West	7			USI Corp.	90
L.L. Baston Co.	76			Ventech	91
Mil-Time	86			Westbury Sales	91
National Rifle Association	19				

## SUPPLY LOCKER

Alpha Publications	88
American Schools	88
Auto Ordnance Corp.	89
Brigade Security Forces	88
BushPilot	90

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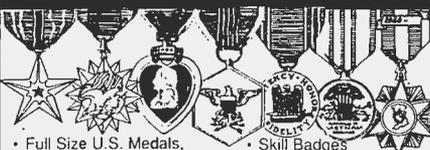
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## NAMIBIA

Continued from page 87

subtlety is not part of SWAPO's lexicon; for the second time since gaining power, a motion of no confidence by the opposition was denied debate by the government. And in preparation for Namibia's first anniversary Independence Day celebrations, President Nujoma invited Fidel Castro, the world's last unreconstructed Stalinist, as the sole guest of honor. *El Lider*, whose history of opposition to democratic pluralism is longer than his beard, sadly declined the invitation, pleading other commitments. His place was taken by President Mugabe, another determined pro-sanctions and one-party-rule advocate.

Comrade Bob, you'll be relieved to know, was able to hear the South African-made cannon salute after all. As an exasperated Hans Feddersen observed in an editorial: "There are no words."

*Jim Hooper, author of Beneath the Visiting Moon: Images of Combat in Southern Africa, has written extensively on the conflicts in Angola and Namibia. He recently returned to Namibia to file his report — and managed to leave one step ahead of the security police.*

## ASSASSINATION

Continued from page 43

Saddam. Whether the effort would have been successful is open to question. The

only certainty is that a real commitment, in terms of intelligence and resources, would have been necessary to get the job done.

Few leaders could have survived the crushing defeat inflicted on Iraq by the U.S. and its Coalition allies. But Saddam has managed to persevere through a combination of tenacity and ruthlessness. Today, Iraq is isolated and still the focus of economic sanctions, which President Bush and other Coalition leaders say will be removed only after Saddam Hussein has been swept from power. Although rebuilding at a furious pace, Iraq owes billions of dollars in war reparations and is still coping with internal unrest.

The Israelis, who base their national defense on a policy of assured retaliation for all transgressions against their country and its people, are not finished with Saddam. Defense Minister Moshe Arens and other senior Israeli officials publicly promised that there would be retaliation against Iraq for the unprovoked Scud attacks on Israel's civilian population. According to Arens, the Israelis will chose the time, place, and method of retaliation. Few can doubt that they intend to carry out their threat or that their target will be Saddam Hussein. Given Israel's capacity to reach far beyond its borders to strike down its enemies, Saddam is unlikely to be sleeping very well these days.

### UPDATE

In recent days, new facts have emerged regarding the "hunt" for Saddam Hussein. In the early 1980s, Saddam Hussein had purchased nine American-made motor homes called "Wanderlodes," manufactured in Georgia. Shortly before the onset of the air war, Saddam had been

photographed inside his vehicle meeting with a group of his commanders.

Saddam Hussein apparently gave several Wanderlodes to favored military commanders, and kept at least one for himself. Unlike celebrity versions, Saddam's motor home apparently had a fairly spartan, though functional, interior. Painted forest green, his private Wanderlodge, as a mobile command-and-control center, was a obvious target for U.S. military planners and became a top priority during the conflict. U.S. commanders knew that if they could just locate Saddam's private motor home they stood a good chance of getting him in the bargain. No one could object, it generally was agreed, because the destruction of a command-and-control center during wartime clearly was beyond the scope of the prohibitions of assassination.

Warplanes were dispatched on a round-the-clock basis to search out and destroy Saddam's rolling home-away-from-home. Methodically, sector-by-sector, they roamed across the skies over Iraq looking for the distinctive green vehicle. Satellite photos were scanned for any sign of it and signals and other electronic intelligence carefully sifted for any clue of its location. Unfortunately, Coalition intelligence never got a real fix on it.

The only time it was in U.S. gunights apparently was by accident. As noted in the accompanying story, U.S. F-16 pilots strafed a 50-vehicle convoy on the road between Basra and Baghdad several weeks after the onset of the air war. Unbeknownst to the attacking pilots, Saddam's Wanderlodge was in the middle of the convoy. According to sources at the Pentagon, both ends of the convoy were chewed up, but the vehicles in the middle survived. This may have been Saddam's closest brush with death during the conflict.

At least two Wanderlodes, presumably used by Iraqi generals, were destroyed during the war, but Saddam's personal command-and-control center on wheels escaped without known damage. And Saddam lived to fight another day.

*Neil Livingstone is an adjunct professor at several institutions, including Georgetown University. His areas of expertise include terrorism and security topics.*

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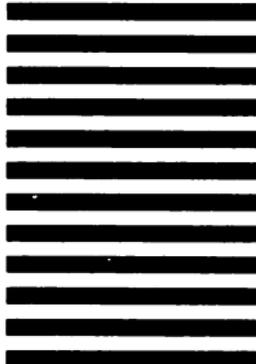




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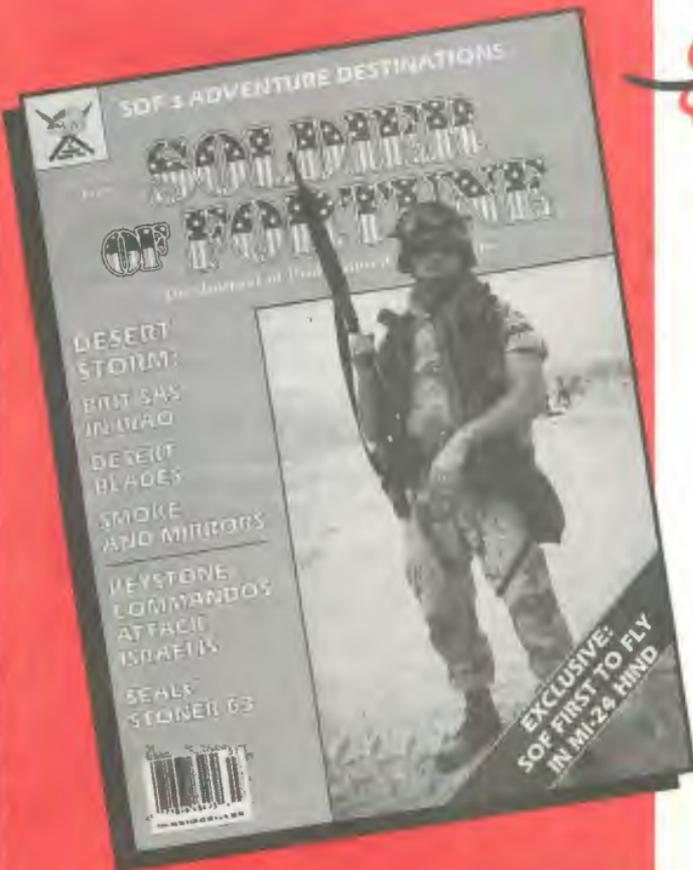
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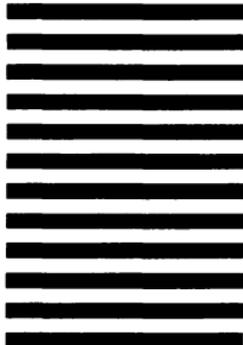
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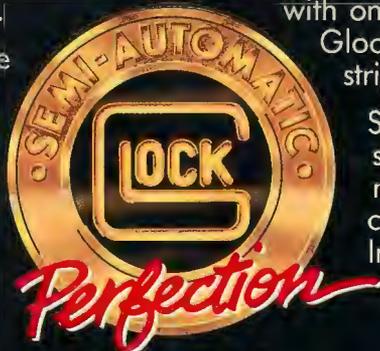
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