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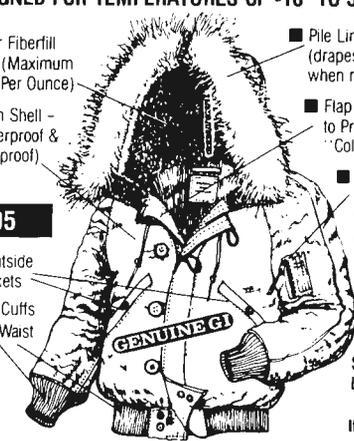
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# SOF

VOL. 17 NO. 4 APRIL 1992

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Photo: Eric Micheletti

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COVER

"Adventurers" worldwide have journeyed to Croatia to join its international brigade. Some come on ideological grounds, some for money, some just for the hell of it. The Croatian government welcomes *experienced* volunteers, but offers only high risk and low pay — for some, that's enough. Photo: Yves Debay

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Photo: Edward Rasen

# BULLETIN BOARD



Operation Just Coke: while the Pineapple lolls on pension in a U.S. prison charged with being a narco, here's some evidence submitted by one of *SOF's* straw prosecutors. The weapons and bags of coke were confiscated by these troopers in a building named *Ancon Deni* during a sweep made during Operation Just Cause. Didn't the media report there were no drugs found by military troops?  
Photo: Anonymous

## THE RIGHT JUICE ...

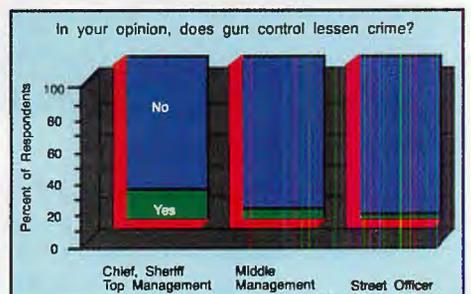
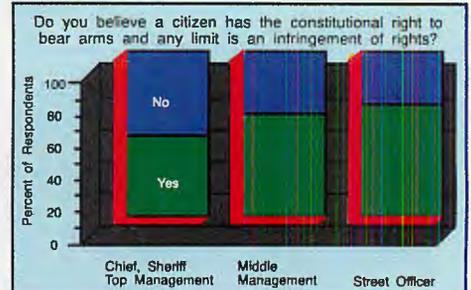
U.S. Army brass have gone on record as favoring a liquid propellant for the high-priority Advanced Field Artillery System (AFAS), citing longer possible ranges (40km), less expense over the long term, greater safety (less likely to set off a chain reaction if hit, as in the turret of a tank) and greater accuracy (the exact amount of propellant can be metered to hit a specific target). Development of the second-choice XM 230 "Unicharge" solid propellant will continue, in the event that technical problems related to liquid propellants prove to be insurmountable. General Electric and the Army are currently testing a liquid propellant gun, the "Defender," at Yuma Proving Grounds, Arizona.

And looking toward the day when guns will use electrical "juice" as a propellant, the Pentagon's Joint Electric Armaments Committee is struggling to coordinate efforts by the various services and their various contrac-

tors who are developing electric-powered artillery. Pentagon researchers and defense contractors are presently pursuing two types of electric guns for tanks and shipboard use: electrothermal cannons, which use hot gases and high-energy electrical charges to propel rounds farther and faster than existing methods — and electro-magnetic launchers ("rail guns"), which greatly enhance the velocity of a metal projectile, improving its ability to penetrate armor or hardened targets.

## SOF BACK ON THE RACK WITH BARNES & NOBLE ...

Look for *SOF* on racks served by International Periodical Distributors, a division of Barnes & Noble. In a FLAK response of October 1988 we noted that *SOF* had been pulled from B. Dalton Bookseller's magazine racks, also owned by Barnes & Noble. We asked our readers to write and give them what-for. The Barnes & Noble rep writes us: "... B. Dalton Booksellers did not delist your magazine due to political reasons. B. Dalton has never had a 'censored' list. *Soldier of Fortune* was delisted from the 'National Approved List' because it was not a title that sold in all 800 of our stores, and only titles selling in all of our stores are approved through wholesalers."



Next time Handgun Control Inc. (HCI) or some limp-wristed journalist tries to tell you the nation's police would like to see the citizens they serve be disarmed, here's some hard information to hit them with. The data is extracted from a detailed poll taken by *Law Enforcement Technology* magazine and Horizon Research Inc.

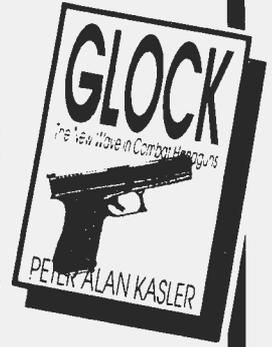
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## GLOCK The New Wave in Combat Handguns

by Peter Alan Kasler

Since its U.S. debut in 1985, the Glock pistol has been the subject of considerable controversy. Was it really sold to Libyan terrorists? What are the advantages of Polymer 2, the "space-age" plastic of which it is made? Do its plastic parts really allow it to pass undetected through airport security systems? How many different Glock models are there, and what calibers are they offered in? Does the Glock's light weight make it "kick" more than a heavier gun? How safe is its unique "safe-action" trigger system - does it increase the chances of accidental discharge? In this book, firearms instructor and long-time Glock owner Peter Alan Kasler debunks the myths, lays to rest the rumors, and, through photos of a special cutaway Glock that clearly display its inner mechanisms, demystifies the design and operations of what is the most innovative handgun to be introduced in some time - and possibly in the history of firearms. 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, hardcover, photos, illus., 304 pp. **\$25.00**



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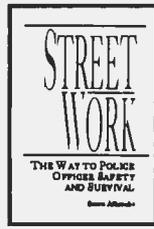
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### ARMY WANTS MAGIC BULLET ...

The Commander, U.S. Army Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center, Procurement Directorate, ATTN: SMCAR-PCW-D, CPT J. Stringfield, Bldg. 10, Picatinny Arsenal, NJ 07806-5000 is soliciting information on small-caliber ammunition for use in confined operational environments such as buildings, ships and aircraft.

They want it to (at ranges of from 5 to 15 meters) be capable of delivering sufficient energy to be considered lethal after having penetrated a conventional bulletproof vest — but *not* to

penetrate background material such as walls, doors or thin metal — or present a ricochet hazard at ranges over 25 meters (misses, or after going through the target). This magic bullet should also be compatible with the M16A2 rifle and the M4 carbine. Information solicited can be regarding such a product you just may have on the shelf, ideas you may have for modifying existing components to give the desired performance, or ideas for conceptual designs that may require varying degrees of development. Write them — not us.

### AMERICA'S CUP, OR TIN CUP? ...

Two Soviet, or Russian, entries showed up to enter the America's Cup yacht races in San Diego, both delivered by air. The huge Antonov that delivered the second yacht *Age of Russia* was in turn loaded with 70 tons of relief supplies at Lindbergh Field before it departing. Relief supplies were donated by Zey Enterprises, Park West Children's Fund and Knight and Carver Yacht Center of San Diego. As we go to press, it was undecided if the first candidate, the *Red Star*, or *Age of Russia* would be the race entrant.

### FRATRICIDE QUICK FIXES ...

Friendly fire casualties in the Gulf War gave rise to a special U.S. Army Positive Combat Identification Task Force. To thoroughly test promising ideas is a long-range project that may take up to seven years, but in the interim a number of quick-fixes with potential for early deployment are to be tested this spring at Fort Bliss, Texas; the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California; and at additional TRADOC (Army Training and Doctrine Command) posts.

All devices to be tested in this immediate program are related to the use of night-vision goggles or thermal-

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imaging sights, as used on the Bradley fighting vehicle and Abrams tank. They include:

— Thermal tape, to be placed on the outside of a vehicle to present a "cold stripe" across the heat seen by a friendly's thermal-imaging equipment

— "Budd Light," a nine-volt device emitting a slowly pulsating light, which can be seen up to five miles away by friendlies looking through night-vision goggles

— DARPA light, developed by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, which emits an infrared light to identify Army forces to friendly aircraft

— GPS (Global Positioning System) which uses satellite navigation to let a soldier pinpoint his location on a map, keeping him from getting lost and wandering in front of friendly forces

The Budd Light and GPS were both available for Desert Storm, but neither was feasible for widespread deployment. One aspect of the current research programs is to establish protocols for efficient use of such anti-fratricide devices in varying tactical situations, to match varying enemy capabilities.

The Army and other services plan testing of more sophisticated devices that use sight, laser, radar or sound over the next seven years. Cost estimates for developing more sophisti-



cated systems vary from \$23 million to \$500 million.

### PSYWAR SOCIETY ...

Psywar/Psyops entail a great deal more than dropping propaganda leaflets, but the study of this interesting facet of war is the forte of the *Psywar Society*, based in England. They describe their organization as "an international association of psychological warfare historians and collectors of aerial propaganda leaflets." They publish a periodical named *The Falling Leaf*. Write to them in care of Keith B. Moore, Publications Manager, 7 North Park Ave., Dept. SOF, Leeds LS8 1DN, England. ✕

Ready to go into production is this new 7.62mm version of the M16 rifle. Designed to fulfill a USMC requirement for a 7.62x51mm sniper rifle similar to the M16, the SR-25 design employs over 60% existing M16 parts. Upper receiver is flat-topped, allowing a variety of sighting options; handguard is attached only at rear, leaving a free-floating barrel whose zero is not affected by attaching bipods. Length is 44 inches, weight, empty and without scope, is 10.75 pounds; accuracy is less than one MOA. For further info, contact Knight's Armament Co., Dept. SOF, 7750 9th St. SW, Vero Beach, FL 32968 ... and watch for a complete rundown on this new weapon in a future issue of *SOF*. Photo: courtesy Knight's Armament Co.

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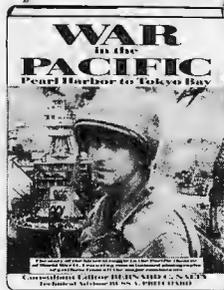
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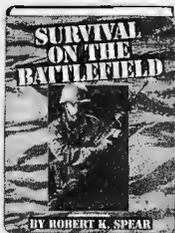
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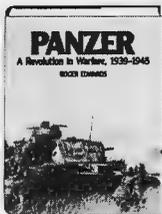
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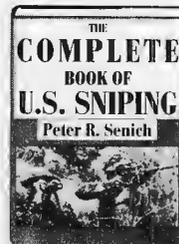
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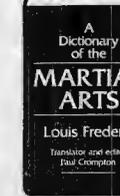
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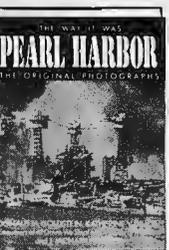
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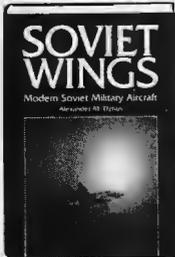
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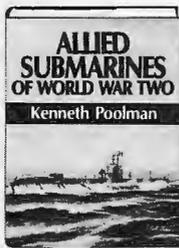
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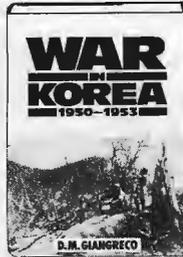
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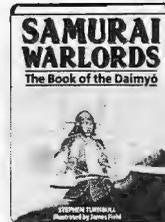
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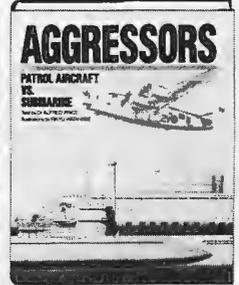
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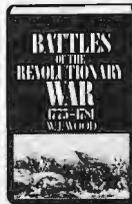
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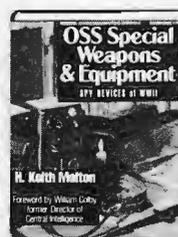


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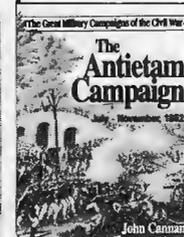
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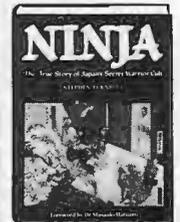
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SOF 4/92

## SUPPORT LEBANESE FORCES ...

Thank you for everything you have published in support of the Lebanese forces, the Christian resistance in my country.

These days the Lebanese forces are in head-down position, avoiding all possible "sniper fire" from the pro-Syrian government currently in control of the whole country. They are backed by the Syrian occupation army, except that there are no Syrians in the territory which was under control of the Lebanese forces.

Thanks to the stupid General Aoun, we got this asshole government. The army now is overwhelmed by Moslems. The Lebanese forces sent their weapons abroad and the Moslems and Druze hid most of theirs.

The Christian resistance will survive. Stay with us boys, keep up the good work.

Christian Akhrass  
Paris, France

## SOF MATCH SAVES LIVES ...

This letter is to thank your staff for holding the "Three-Gun Match" at each convention.

I am a career police officer with over 20 years in the so-called "criminal justice system." I've experienced approximately one dozen "close encounters of the vicious variety" during that time.

Within two weeks of the 1989 Three-Gun Match, I killed an armed hostage-taker in a hallway in an apartment complex. The hostage-taker was instantly dispatched with two .357 Magnum HPs, one through his heart and one through his "running lights." As a result, the three hostages walked out without a scratch.

My point is that the realistic training received at the annual match is a fine supplement to routine instruction given by my department.

Thanks again to you, Michael Horn and to your staff.

James Joyce  
Ridgefield, Washington

## UNPREPARED CROATIA ...

Your readers might be interested to know why the Croatian national guard finds itself so unprepared to fight the Yugoslav federal army.

Since World War II, the communist- and Serbian-dominated leadership in Belgrade has systematically prevented Croats from obtaining licenses for private weapons. While most any Serb could obtain a gun permit, only Croatian communists or people of known political loyalty could acquire weapons in Croatia.

A year or two ago, the federal leadership demanded disarmament of the Slovenian and Croatian territorial armies, entities roughly equivalent to

our National Guard. The Slovenians kept their arms and dealt a decisive defeat last July to the federal army.

Due to the complicity of communist elements in the previous Croatian government, and a lack of weapons in their homes, the Croatian people were not able to prevent the confiscation of their arsenals.

Having spent several months at the front in Croatia, let me warn any of your readers who may wish to assist the Croats that it has become quite lethal on the front lines. The federal army has tremendous amounts of artillery and mortars, and simply pulverizes towns before foot soldiers show up to finish the job. A Dutch paratrooper friend of mine (Erwin van der Mast) was killed by a tank within two weeks of his arrival in Croatia. To my knowledge, he was the first NATO [-country native] volunteer to die in the war.

Name Withheld  
Sutter Creek, California

## INTERNATIONAL BRIGADE ...

I need an address to contact the "Croat International Unit" (foreign nationals assisting the Croats).

Devin Benson  
Chicago, Illinois

*Very simple. According to our sources, go to Zagreb and ask the first soldier you see where the International Brigade reception center is located. However, be advised that by the time you read this, the situation may have changed. To the best of our knowledge, there are no recruiting centers in the United States.*

— RKB

## HERITAGE FOUNDATION Q & A ...

Enclosed is a letter I sent to the Heritage Foundation and the response that I received:

Dear Sirs,

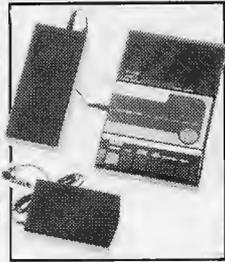
I am a contributor to the Heritage Foundation. I presume you are familiar with the article in the latest *Soldier of Fortune* magazine, about the foundation's activities concerning gun control. I would like to know what the foundation has to say.

Terrence J. Quinn  
Eagle, Colorado



"The only thing we don't have a shortage of is useless rhetoric from Castro."

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and then the recorder will automatically start and stop, keeping a record of every sound. Ideal for taping hands-free notes as you walk or as a security room monitor. Transmitter comes complete with a clip-on microphone and belt clip for use as a body wire. See warning.

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Complete Set **\$165.** (Ship \$7.50). Optional Alligator clip adaptors enable you to attach the unit anywhere along your phone line. **\$10.** (Ship \$3.50) See warning.



Recorder Only EP-10 VOX **\$125.**  
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Dear Mr. Quinn:

I regret that I wasn't as eloquent as I should have been many months ago when I spoke to the person who wrote the *Soldier of Fortune* article. The Heritage Foundation, as a conservative organization, firmly supports the right to keep and bear arms, as guaranteed by the Second Amendment to the Constitution.

The question policymakers have to answer is whether there are any reasonable limits on that right. In other words, whether the Second Amendment guarantees the right to keep and bear any type of arms, including sub-machine guns, Uzis, bazookas, and heaven knows what else. It is this concern that Dr. Feulner was attempting to address.

Cheryl A. Rubin  
Director of Public Relations  
Heritage Foundation

*Quite obviously, in this wishy-washy reply, the key is who decides what is "reasonable" regarding Second Amendment rights. Heritage screwed up and doesn't have the balls to admit it.*

— RKB

#### USE LAWYERS, NOT BUNNIES ...

Commenting on your animal terrorists article, I want to relate the following from a comedian I saw on television:

"I find it disgusting that animals are used for drug and cosmetic testing when there are so many lawyers still out there."

Benn E. Scherzer  
Melbourne, Florida

#### DID I DO MY PART? ...

I have a problem I hope you can help me with. I feel guilty because I didn't go to Saudi Arabia with my unit. I was released because of a medical profile due to a motorcycle accident two years ago. I like to think that my five weeks of active duty with my unit counts for something. Do I have the right to say I served for part of Desert Shield?

Sgt. Greg Smith  
Arlington, Wisconsin

*Many reservists were frustrated when called to active duty for Desert Storm, only to fill stateside slots. However, those who remained stateside played an important role in contributing to our magnificent victory. Frustrated, yes; ashamed, no.*

#### AMMO CACHING ...

You asked for reader input on your pieces on weapons caching. I would like to see some space devoted to long-term ammo storage — both methods of storage and what types of ammunition, primers, etc., can be expected to have the longest storage life.

I have seen grungy-looking surplus ammo that looked like it had been salvaged from a sunken ship, but worked perfectly. And as-new commercial stuff that was 98% dead primers.

I don't know if this is attributable to storage methods, types of primers or some other factor. It would be helpful to know what types of ammo to purchase, how to store it, what storage life to expect, and so on.

Name Withheld  
Hill City, Kansas

*Reader input would be appreciated. Names will be withheld — or write anonymously.*

#### BLUE BADGES OF HONOR ...

In response to the highly interesting article, "Blue Badges of Honor" by Greg Walker, we at the Veterans of Foreign Wars would like to underscore the organizations's support for veterans of El Salvador. That support has been demonstrated in *VFW Magazine* (see "War in the Shadows," Sept. 1989).

According to member-passed by-laws, the VFW extends eligibility to those veterans who have been awarded a campaign medal (that includes the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and Navy/Marine Corps Expeditionary Medal). Award of the



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Navy Department's Combat Action Ribbon also qualifies.

Any changes to the membership bylaws must be initiated by the members. That means introducing a resolution at the Post and having it approved at the annual national convention by the delegates.

For instance, if a VFW member introduced a resolution saying any veteran who received "imminent danger pay" (El Salvador vets did) should be eligible for membership and it was approved, then the bylaws would be amended. But such a resolution must originate at the grass roots.

The VFW recognizes the dangerous duty performed by U.S. advisers in El Salvador and would be honored to have them as members. Still, only the members can make this decision.

Richard K. Kolb  
Editor in Chief  
VFW Magazine

#### MORE ON KARENS ...

Some of your best articles over the years have covered the Karen freedom fighters in Burma. At the risk of repeating some points, I think your readers should know the following:

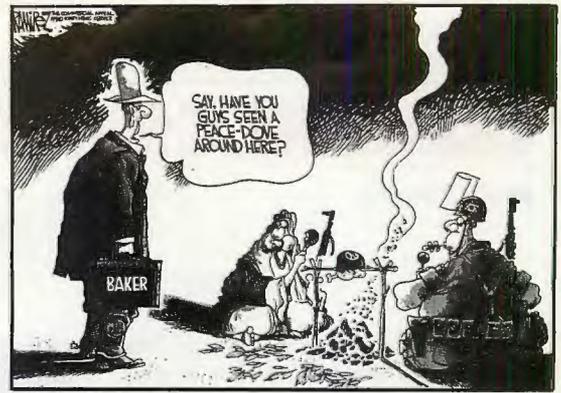
After having fought for the British against the Japanese during World War II, the Karen sent a delegation to London to ask for independence, but the incompetent government of the

day turned them down flat. After a massacre of Karen civilians, ex-British army Karen took up arms and started a resistance movement. They were then singled out by the Burmese army. There have been many atrocities, including beatings, burnings, shootings and even alleged cannibalism against Karen freedom fighters and civilians; many documented by Amnesty International.

The Karen are mainly a farming community and live by what they can grow and get from bartering. Much of their income is derived from taxing Burmese traveling through Karen territory to sell their goods in Thailand, not from selling drugs like many of their neighbors.

They are fighting against a government with appalling human rights violations against its own people, aside from minority groups. I know there are people reading this who have the right connections and influence to get badly needed military aid to them. In particular, anti-aircraft systems are needed to combat the Hind helicopter gunships recently purchased by the Burmese army from Poland.

There must be some blowpipes in someone's inventory after upgrading to new systems? Another source that

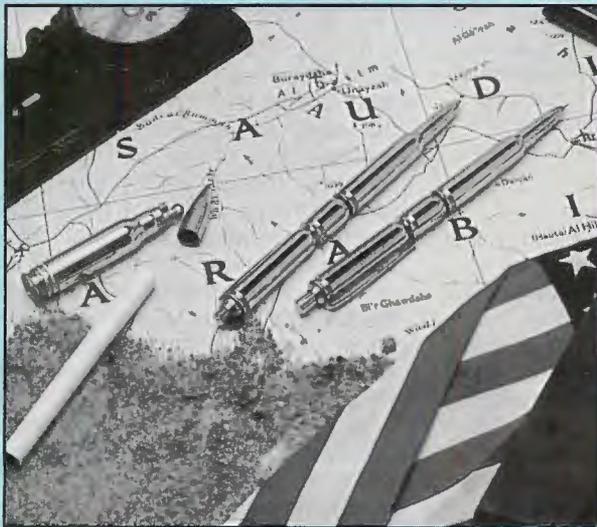


springs to mind in Southeast Asia is ex-U.S. military equipment, much of it in good condition, being sold in Vietnam, recently covered in an article by SOF.

Could you please publish an address for donations to the Karen, and more articles if possible?

Mark Bower  
Bristol, Great Britain

*Because of U.S. law, we are precluded from raising funds for the Karens other than for medical supplies. Donations (tax deductible) may be sent to Refugee Relief International (Karens), P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306. We will be publishing an update on the Karen's struggle in the near future.*



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# COMBAT CRAFT

by Vic Vincent

## Shooting The Stinger

**S**tinger — This is the weapon that turned the tide for the Afghan *mujahideen* in their guerrilla war against Soviet occupation. Rumor has it that the Croatian resistance has now acquired black-market Stingers to defend their homeland against MiGs of the Yugoslav air force. Most of us know what a Stinger looks like and what it can do, but how many U.S. troops could pick one up and fire it if necessary? Unless you belong to an Air Defense Artillery (ADA) unit, it's tough to get Stinger training.

This article is no substitute for thorough training, but if you understand and rehearse the following procedures, you should be able to pick up a Stinger from a fallen ADA soldier to bring down an attacking aircraft.

First, let's look at the weapon. As issued, a Stinger missile system consists of an expendable missile round/launch-tube assembly, a gripstock assembly, and at least three BCUs (Battery Coolant Units). It's easily differentiated from the similar Redeye system by the rectangular folding IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) antenna at the right front of the weapon, which the Redeye lacks. Stinger also has a much more sophisticated tracking system.

The reusable gripstock is secured to the missile round by a clip and pivot pin. BCUs are housed in a circular well, forward of the grip, and screw into this housing. A fresh BCU is required for each missile firing or tracker activation. The sights are housed in a folding assembly on the upper left side of the gripstock, just to the left of the launch tube.

To ready a Stinger for firing, pick up the weapon and place it on your right shoulder. Screw a BCU into the well if one isn't in place, and open the IFF antenna by pulling the upper edge of it toward the launch tube and then lifting and opening the array to the right. Open the sight assembly with a firm upward motion of the left hand, making sure it snaps into the open position.

Look through the sights. Center your



The greatest equalizer since Colt's revolver, the Stinger allows small units — especially properly trained irregulars — to take back the skies. Here, Afghan muj prepares U.S. supplied Stinger for firing. Photo: Michael Graber

target in the circular range ring. If the target is a fast-mover coming at you, don't fire if its wingspan is greater than the range ring's diameter. Now you're ready to interrogate your target. (Skip this step and go straight to the firing procedure if the aircraft is involved in a hostile action.)

To interrogate, keep the aircraft centered in the range ring and press the interrogation button at the rear of the gripstock. You will hear one of two tones from the IFF system. A series of strong, slow beeps indicates the aircraft is friendly, while a rapid-fire string of fast beeps indicates unknown or hostile. A Stinger team normally includes a team chief with binoculars who will confirm the aircraft's identity before a fire order is given.

### Firing Procedure

Once the decision is made to fire, the infrared tracker is activated by pressing forward and then releasing a hinged tracker switch at the upper left

of the grip. Continue to hold your target in the range ring. You will hear a steady tone change its pitch noticeably when the tracker has locked-on the target.

When you have the right tone, "uncage" the Stinger by pressing in with the thumb of your left hand on the rectangular switch at the front left of the launch tube. This readies the missile round for firing, and locks the tracker to the heat source. It will now follow that particular source, even if stronger heat sources, such as decoy flares, are encountered.

At this time, raise ("super-elevate") the weapon on your shoulder, so that the three open-sight notches below the range ring come into view. The center notch is rectangular, while the left and right notches are semicircular. You want to lead the target, just as if you're duck hunting with a shotgun, by centering the target in the appropriate notch.

If your target is a fast-mover coming at you, use the center notch, but if it's a prop- or rotary-wing aircraft hovering or moving toward or away from you, center it in the right semicircular notch (i.e., lead it to the left). This is necessary so the missile will turn into the target, generating enough centrifugal force to arm the warhead.

Now you're ready to fire. Pull the

trigger and hold it in for at least three seconds. Ignition of the booster charge isn't always instantaneous, and a quick pull-release as you would use with a rifle may cause a misfire on the Stinger. As the missile leaves the tube, you will feel its weight going off your shoulder, but little else. The main solid-fuel rocket motor kicks in once the round is sufficiently clear of the tube to not endanger the gunner.

If you decide not to fire after activat-

**To interrogate, keep the aircraft centered in the range ring and press the interrogation button at the rear of the gripstock. A series of strong, slow beeps indicates the aircraft is friendly ...**

ing the tracker, you will need to replace the BCU before another fire attempt. To do this, unscrew the old BCU (carefully — it may be hot) and replace it with a fresh unit, making certain your new unit is screwed completely in.

After firing, remove the gripstock assembly from the now-empty tube, replacing it on a new missile round. Destroy the expended launch tube by crushing. If you scored a hit — and chances are you did — your buddies now owe you many beers.

#### Firing the Redeye

There are still some Redeyes out there. Should you encounter one, a Redeye works much the same way as a Stinger, except it has no IFF capability and it can't engage targets coming head-on. You have to wait until the target passes over you or is moving away. Also, the grip stock and launch tube/missile round is a single expendable assembly (like the LAW) and its BCUs are smaller than the Stinger's. Just open the Redeye sights, center your target in the range ring, activate the tracking (which isn't as sophisticated), wait for the tone, super-elevate, then pull-hold its trigger.

Don't think you're as good as a trained ADA man by reading this, but if your battlefield survival depends on firing a Stinger, don't be afraid to try. It's an amazingly forgiving weapon. And it sure worked for the *muj*.

Vic Vincent is a Special Forces NCO. 



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# WORLD SITREP

**3 ARGENTINA**  
 Eleven officers convicted for role in 1990 rebellion; 15 previously convicted, 300 other military personnel, civilians await trial ... Argentines, Brits to hold talks on mineral rights around Falkland Islands ...

**4 BOLIVIA**  
 U.S. State Department inspector general charges patrol boats supplied to Bolivians for drug war lack radios, spares, fuel capacity to be effective, and that weapons have been diverted; U.S. Ambassador Bowers labels inquiry highly inaccurate ...

**5 BURKINA FASO**  
 One opposition leader killed by bomb thrown from passing motorcycle; shortly thereafter, leader of another opposition group shot and critically wounded ...

**6 CHINA**  
 Seventy percent of Taiwanese companies who invested in the PRC report losses ... Mayor of Beijing bans *flies* from all government offices, hotel/hospital dining rooms, airports, train stations, tourist spots, army barracks and schools; calling on citizens to kill flies ... Three Canadian parliament members roughed up, deported by police after meeting with Chinese dissidents ...

**7 COLOMBIA**  
 Medellin cocaine cartel threatens violence against rival Cali cartel, raising prospect of new war between main drug-trafficking groups ...

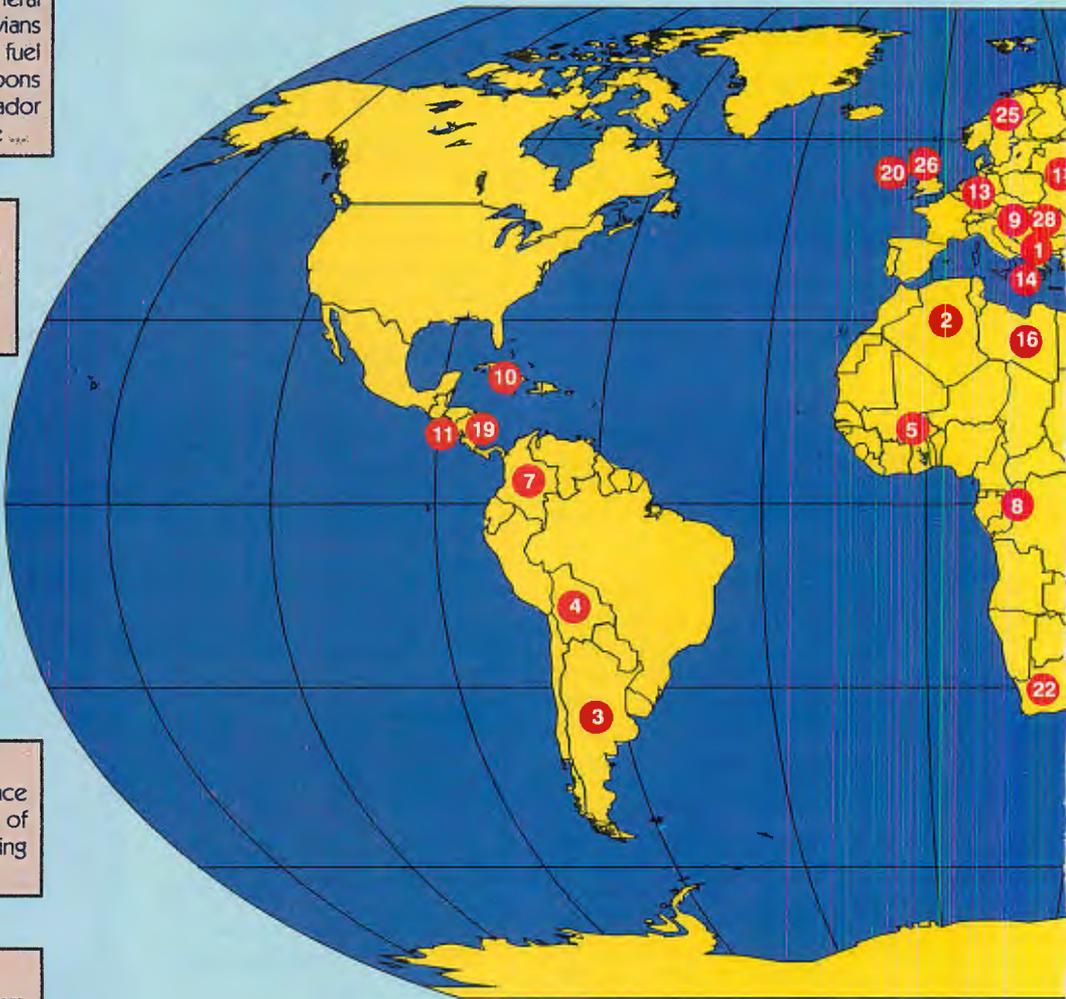
**8 CONGO**  
 Rebel soldiers surround army headquarters and seize state radio station; ruling council meets to consider demands ...

**9 CROATIA**  
 Granted recognition first by SOF, then Germany, then the Vatican, then the EC ...

**10 CUBA**  
 Three Cuban expats from Miami captured landing in Cuba with weapons; sentenced to death by firing squad; one executed, two to serve 30 years ...

**2 ALGERIA**  
 Results of first democratic election in decades, which swung in favor of Iranian-style Moslem "fundamentalists," voided amid charges of voter fraud/intimidation; serving president resigned, replaced by interim government headed by exiled Mohamed Boudiaf ... Moslem leaders call on Moslems, including soldiers, to resist military-backed government, claim Moslem leaders being arrested ...

**1 ALBANIA**  
 Dozens killed when fire broke out after hungry crowds stormed food warehouse ...



**11 EL SALVADOR**  
 War officially over; rebels to disarm, military to be halved, land reform, sweeping changes to judicial/electoral process planned ... U.N. authorizes 1,000 peace-keepers to be sent there ...

**13 GERMANY**  
 Two former East German border guards convicted by German court of shooting man escaping over Berlin Wall ... Violent attacks on foreigners increased 1,000% in 1991; police to crack down on neo-nazi gangs ...

**12 GEORGIAN REPUBLIC**  
 President Gamsakhurdia leaves briefly for exile in Armenia after ouster by military junta; returns to muster his own forces, country on brink of civil war ...

**14 GREECE**  
 Court convicts Palestinian Mohammed Rashid, hands down 18-year sentence in connection with bombing of Pan Am jet en route to Hawaii, which killed one, wounded 15 ...

28

**YUGOSLAVIA**

Five EC "peace" monitors killed when their unarmed chopper shot down by federal air force; Yugo defense minister resigns over flap ...

25

**SWEDEN**

After decades of indignant denial, Sovs finally admit they shot down Swedish military DC-3 over international waters in 1952 ...

27

**VIETNAM**

Bush administration lifts ban on U.S.-organized travel to Vietnam; no U.S. flights, including charters, permitted ...

26

**UNITED KINGDOM**

Women will be allowed to serve as fighter pilots in RAF ...

24

**SOUTH KOREA**

President Roh announces all U.S. nukes have been removed ... Joint S. Korean/U.S. spring military maneuvers called off as gesture of reconciliation to North ... U.S. U-2 spy plane crashed in sea off DMZ due to engine failure; pilot killed, body recovered by S. Korean navy ...

22

**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Philadelphia grand jury has indicted seven South Africans and 10 Americans, plus three South African companies including the state-owned Armscor, on charges they smuggled weapons and technology to South Africa — some of which was sold to Iraq and used against U.S. troops in the Gulf War; case will be one of largest in U.S. history, alleging a \$1 billion fraud, money laundering and arms smuggling ... South African Airways (SAA) has resumed direct flights between Johannesburg and JFK Airport in New York ...

23

**RUSSIA**

Prosecutors formally charge 12 — including former Soviet PM, KGB chief and defense minister — for conspiracy in last August's coup attempt ... Pro-Communist rallies in Moscow, other cities drew thousands of demonstrators unhappy with current path from Marx to Mammon, calling for return to state control, subsidies ...

21

**PHILIPPINES**

Imelda Marcos running for president (without shoes); government bans carrying of guns, sets up mobile checkpoints, bans private armies to avert violence on May 11 election ...

20

**NORTHERN IRELAND**

IRA bomb killed six construction workers; British PM John Major flies there, sends in 600 more troops ...

19

**NICARAGUA**

Thirteen creditor governments agreed on package of three alternatives to ease Nicaraguan debt by as much as 50% ...

15

**KENYA**

President Moi under pressure; rumors are he will turn power over to army, avoiding free election; authorities arrest former VP and businessman, accuse them of spreading rumors Moi will resign ...

17

**LITHUANIA**

Republic of Lithuania has legalized purchase/possession of shotguns and ammunition by citizens or permanent residents for their self-defense ...

18

**MONGOLIA**

The People's Republic of Mongolia will be known as *The Republic of Mongolia* when new constitution is ratified ...

16

**LIBYA**

Requested a special session of the U.N. General Assembly to discuss abolition of international terrorism [?!] ...



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**Edited by  
Peter G. Kokalis**

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# Machine Gun Magic

by Peter G. Kokalls



**MACHINE GUN MAGIC** Produced by Mike Dillon; Dillon Productions, Dept. SOF, 7442 E. Butherus Drive, Scottsdale, AZ 85260; 800-421-7632. 1991. 68 minutes. VHS format, \$19.95; European PAL format, \$34.95; both + postage.

Very few of us will ever own or even see a 7.62x51mm General Electric Mini-Gun or a McDonnell Douglas Chain Gun. But, for less than 20 bucks you can have them blazing away in your living room for more than an hour.

And I mean blazing away. My old machine-gun cohort, "Mad Dog" Dillon, has never been known for his fire discipline in the more than 15 years we have spent together spewing lead out of fast guns. This is the same jasper that invented the superb Dillon progressive reloading equipment, just so he could feed his Tommy Guns, M16s and Browning belt guns.

He claims he collected tracer ammo for a decade to make this film, but I don't believe it. He never seemed to be saving any caps all the *beaucoup* times I've watched him send belts of green and red downrange.

Be that as it may, Mike Dillon has put together an impressive show filled with incredible sounds and packed with exciting visual effects that rival a Cecil B. De Mille production.

Starting out with a visit to Stembridge Gun Rentals (where we sample some of Hollywood's bizarre noise makers), Dillon then leads us through a brief history of rapid-fire classics such

General Electric caliber 7.62x51mm NATO Mini-Gun, attached to World War II-vintage quad .50 mount, lights up the sky blazing away in Mike Dillon's dazzling *Machine Gun Magic* video. Photo: courtesy Dillon Productions

as the original Gatling Gun, Vickers water-cooled MG, Thompson SMG, BAR, Russian RPD, British Bren, Stoner 63A, FN Minimi (M249 SAW) and the World War II/Korean War-vintage Quad .50.

During a tour of the McDonnell Douglas facility, we're exposed to the Chain Gun in both 7.62x51mm NATO and 25mm versions. This is followed by scenes of the caliber 7.62x51mm NATO G.E. Mini-Gun.

At the Champlin Fighter Aircraft Museum, we glimpse a Jap Nambu Type 92 machine gun, a German FG42, and the world's first submachine gun, the Italian Villar Perosa. More important, Doug Champlin explains how you go about legally acquiring a machine gun, and both he and Mike Dillon stress that they are "the most well-behaved class of firearm in America."

*Machine Gun Magic* goes a long way toward dispelling the media stigma about full-auto weapons. Even the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms (BATF) is quoted as admitting they are not the criminals' weapons of choice.

Don't expect to see proper burst-control techniques or the correct firing

# FULL AUTO

positions demonstrated in *Machine Gun Magic*. It's a visual and sound effects spectacular. At that, nothing surpasses it. The final half of this machine gun masterpiece literally explodes with the sights and sounds of radio-controlled drone aircraft weaving and dodging at night through unbelievable torrents of tracer bullets fired from the G.E. Mini-Gun, Chain Gun, M249 SAW and every other gun on the firing line with a rock 'n' roll switch.

An incredible rush and absolute must for full-auto buffs. The only thing missing is the smell of cordite. Guaranteed to infect every gun enthusiast with incurable machine-gun fever.

**MACHINE GUN DEALERS BIBLE** by Dan Shea; Lane Publishing, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 761, Hot Springs, AR 71902; 501-623-4951. 1991. 281 pages including ATF forms, illustrated. \$49.95 + \$3 p&h.

Here is everything you ever wanted to know about wheeling and dealing machine guns, but were afraid to ask your local BATF agent. With good reason, we learn, as Dan Shea (technical editor of *Machine Gun News*) leads us through the macabre and twisted BATF labyrinth that must be mastered by those of us who own and sell Title II firearms. The BATF's bureaucratic chamber of horrors is frightening enough to produce a cold sweat on J. Edgar Hoover's embalmed corpse, and Shea's book may even serve to dissuade some from becoming Class 3 dealers.

Despite that, this is an exhaustive and incredible compilation of information on the ins and outs of the civilian machine gun business.

As with the book of Genesis, Shea begins at the beginning, i.e., with definitions, such as "firearm" and "armor piercing ammunition." Lest you smirk, be advised that BATF terminology does not necessarily correspond with common usage, common sense or Webster's dictionary. Shea's definitions are followed by a list of acronyms and abbreviations encountered among those who speak machine gun.

Chapters on getting a license and federal regulations governing firearms in general and Title II weapons in particular precede a sobering section entitled, "Things That Get You In

Trouble." These include such horrendous crimes as having both M16 parts and a semiauto AR-15 in your possession. Laugh not, the BATF has prosecuted (or is it persecuted?) people for this type of violation and shunted them to the palace of justice for a decade.

Some of the situations covered are just plain old common sense. Like, you don't touch, buy or acquire an unregistered machine gun (i.e., the receiver) from anyone, ever. However, few would be expected to know that the gun gestapo has ruled that putting a vertical H&K MP5K foregrip on an H&K SP89 pistol mysteriously turns it into an "any other weapon" (a controlled Title II firearm!).

Shea wisely follows with a chapter entitled, "Dealing With NFA/BATF" (almost never my idea of fun). More mundane chapters include "Record Keeping and Doing Business," "Security & Traveling," "Law Enforcement Business," "Individual Ownership," "Licensed Collectors and the Curio & Relic List," "Class 3 Dealers," "Class 2 Manufacturers" and "Import/Export." The chapter on "Activities" covers gun shows, machine-gun shoots, shooting ranges and getting together with friends.

In the chapter on "Machine Guns," Shea highlights — without evaluation — the MAC, M16 series, Thompson submachine guns and the M60 GPMG; focusing on who made what, when and where, and what's usually available to collectors, shooters and dealers. Chapters on "Machine Gun Accessories and Loaders" and also ammunition are equally light treatments of complex topics.

The sections on sound suppressors,

ers, gunsmiths, parts suppliers, shooting ranges, museums, etc.) and an excellent annotated bibliography of periodicals and books provide valuable sources for fast-gun enthusiasts at all levels.

A series of charts detailing NFA (National Firearms Act of 1934) weapons inventories and registration activity by year and state reveal, among other interesting bits of information, that exclusive of destructive devices (most of which represent munitions and most recently, law-enforcement stun grenades) there are about 365,000 registered Title II firearms in this country, of which almost a quarter-million are machine guns.

*Machine Gun Dealers Bible* ends with precise instructions for execution of all required BATF forms, followed by reproductions of all the forms. The book's format is that of a large 3-ring binder, which may be amended or enlarged. The front pocket contains a dealer's "Bound Book" for acquisitions and disposition.

Highly recommended for anyone who wants to own a machine gun, whether he only covets one for himself or contemplates dealing in them. ✕

**You don't touch, buy or acquire an unregistered machine gun (i.e., the receiver) from anyone, ever.**

short-barreled shotguns and rifles, destructive devices (such as the M79 and M203 40mm grenade launchers) and "any other weapons" (which include such esoterica as pen- and cane-guns) discuss definitions and the procedural aspects of their acquisition and transfer. A resource directory (accessories, ammunition, dealers and manufactur-



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# BATTLE BLADES

Text & Photo by Greg Walker

## Pointed Questions

Questions about combat cutlery come in all forms. Some folks want to know what the best knife may be, others are concerned about carrying the knife they own. In this month's column, I'll provide some commonsense answers to a variety of the most asked questions regarding battle blades:

**Q: What is the oldest pattern of fighting knife?**

**BB:** Perhaps the oldest and most effective fighting knife is the double-edged dagger. This pattern offers two cutting edges, which work inside the wound to effect greater tissue and organ damage. Although the most recognized blade from this category is the Fairbairn-Sykes fighting knife, the Randall No. 2 and also the Ek "M" and "P"-series blades are premier examples of modern double-edged fighters.

**Q: Is there any method to prevent carbon steel blades from rusting/discholoring?**

**BB:** Yes — custom makers have long applied clear wax to their blades prior to shipping them off to eager customers. Turtle Wax works exceptionally well; simply apply a coating as you would to your car. The wax sets up a protective barrier between gunk and the blade's surface. Be sure to clean your blade in warm, soapy water prior to waxing.

**Q: How restricted were knives during the Gulf War?**

**BB:** Hundreds, if not thousands, of battle blades were successfully sent to the Gulf during Desert Shield/Storm. Through *Fighting Knives* magazine, an entire Special Forces company from the 5th Group was outfitted with nearly \$10,000 worth of donated specialty cutlery prior to their deployment.

The U.S. Army's SFOD-DELTA likewise received a package of knives from one specialty company for evaluation. Contrary to popular belief, blade restrictions in-theater were mandated by local unit commanders, not all service branches. It all depended on how uptight your OIC was regarding anything other than an M7 or M9 bayonet hanging from your combat harness.



*"Too much glamour and fantasy have been associated with the use of the 'fighting knife' ... a sharp blade has always been able to slash deeply, when backed by a person who knew its possibilities."*

— Captain George Bird Metcalf,  
commanding officer,  
U.S.M.C. Raider  
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**Q: Where is the best place to wear a combat knife?**

**BB:** There are actually two locations for a combat knife. If worn on the harness, the knife should be situated where you can unsnap and draw it without restriction. Normally, this means left-hand, right-hand; or cross-draw carry systems are employed, using sturdy, well-designed sheathes. A second combat blade may be worn on the fatigue pants belt, should your harness become separated from your body. Most often this is a smaller knife, which may be either a fixed blade or folder, depending upon your taste.

**Q: When is a combat knife most needed?**

**BB:** As Bo Randall said, "During missions where secrecy and silence are necessary. In close combat and in dense cover; where friend and foe are

too closely intermingled to permit the use of bullets or grenades."

**Q: What should I look for when selecting a combat knife?**

**BB:** Sharp and sturdy edge(s); a balance point that feels good in your hand; a knife that is easy to manipulate and maneuver in close quarters. There are no magic steels, secret heat treatments, preferred handle materials or "best" blade patterns out there. Look for precision construction: A clean finish with properly aligned grind lines, a guard of some sort and a decent price.

**Q: How long should my combat knife's blade be?**

**BB:** A minimum of 5 inches; a maximum of 9.5 inches.

**Q: What kind of handle do I want?**

**A:** The handle should allow you to grip the knife effectively, period. A guard should be present to prevent your hand from sliding up onto the blade's cutting edges. Butt caps and skullcrushers are optional, according to taste and one's fighting style. Many of today's combat knives use synthetic rubbers or plastics for their handles — Kraton and Micarta, to name two of the most popular.

**Q: Is there a "best" blade and tip/point pattern for a combat knife?**

**BB:** Better put, is there a "most practical" blade format for the combat knife? If restricted to carrying just one blade, select either a clip or spearpoint blade pattern. Either flat or hollow grinds are perfectly acceptable; look for a fair amount of steel up front, leading to the point.

**Q: Does a Rockwell rating have anything to do with a knife's strength, edge-holding ability, or use as a tool/weapon?**

**BB:** No. Presented by itself, a knife's Rockwell rating means nothing in any of these areas. Recently, *Fighting Knives* magazine conducted extensive professional testing on 10 popular production knives. We found all but one blade to possess no less than three individual Rockwell ratings. These were taken at the blade's forward edge, at its shoulder, and from

*Continued on page 70*

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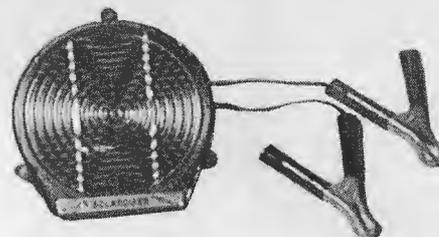
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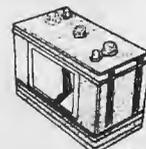


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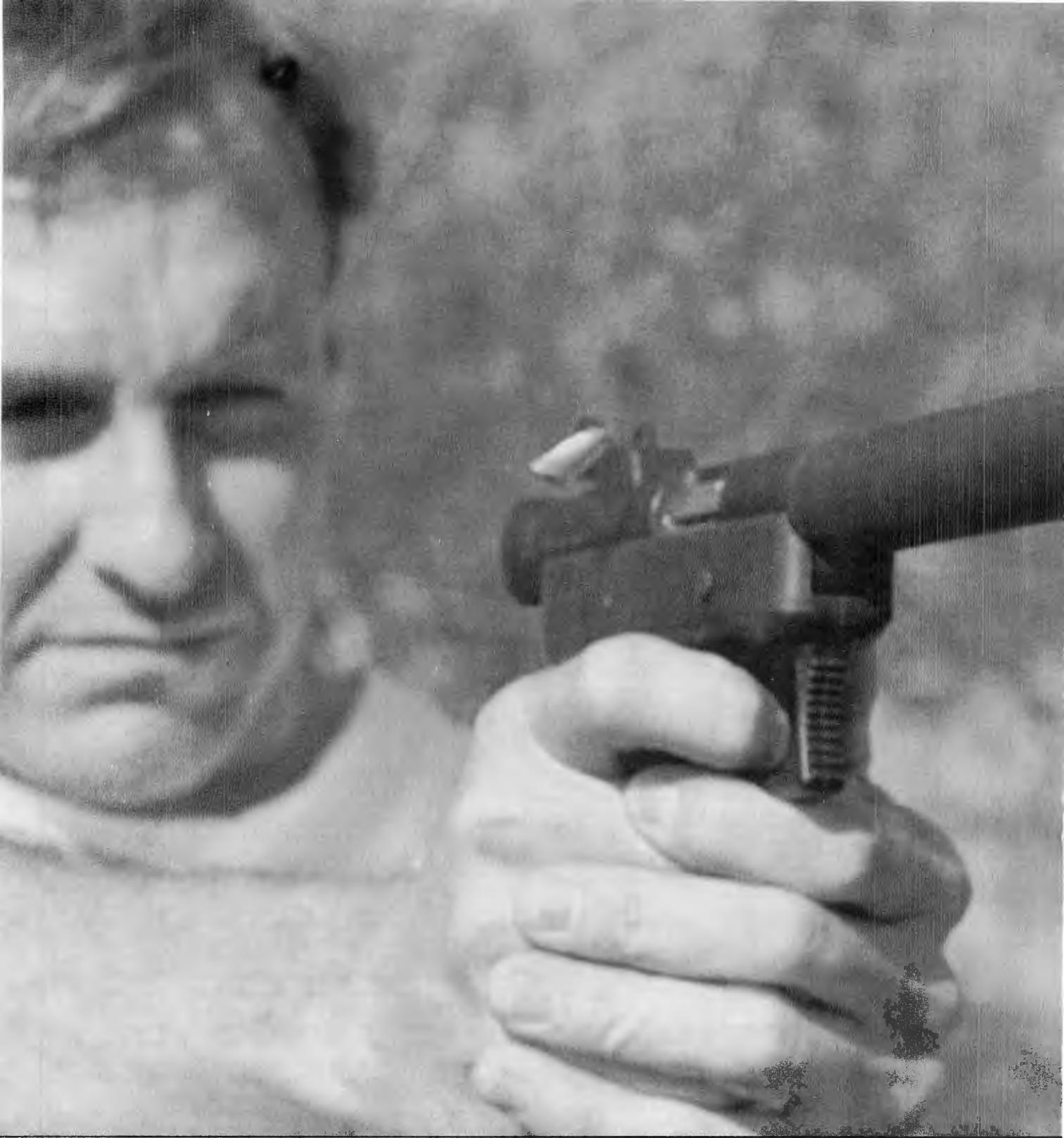
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**T**here's really nothing new about attaching "plastic" parts to firearms. During the late 1950s, so-called "high-impact" plastic furniture, such as buttstocks, pistol grips and handguards began to appear on military small arms like the FN FAL and Eugene Stoner's AR-10 rifles. Also, few Vietnam veterans will ever forget the original "Black Rifle" — the M16.

In 1970, Heckler & Koch created only

yawns when it introduced the P9S pistol (See "H&K's P9S," May '86). Its frame was composed of two components: a plastic trigger guard/front strap and a sheet metal receiver featuring a one-piece plastic grip.

About a dozen years later, Glock's pistol (See "Plastic Perfection," Oct. '84) — although by weight 83% steel — stirred up a feeding frenzy by anti-gun cranks who contended, incorrectly as usual, that it was invisible when passed through airport X-ray screens. By this time, to avoid a

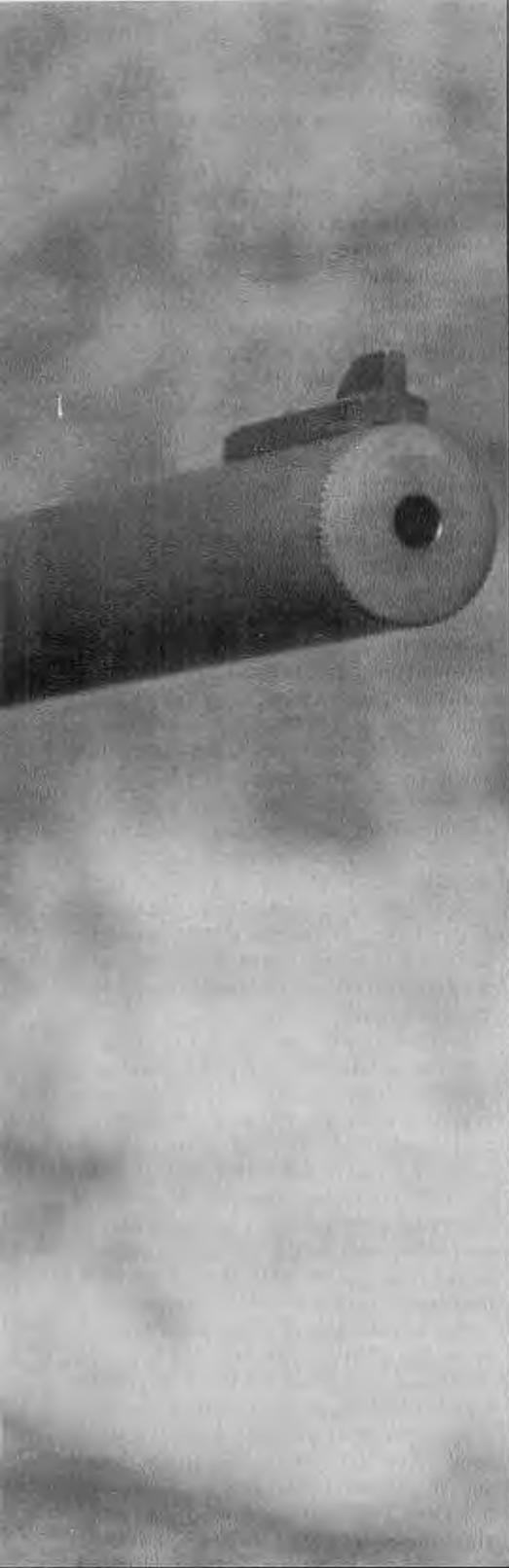
stigma apparently attached to words like "plastic" and "synthetic," the term "polymer" had come into vogue.

Two years ago, Ram-Line Inc. (Dept. SOF, 10601 West 48th Ave., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033; 303-467-0300), a company previously well-known only for its aftermarket large capacity rifle or pistol magazines and rifle stocks — largely manufactured from polymers — announced a new .22 LR semiautomatic pistol called the Syn-Tech Exactor. Computer designed and making extensive use

# SILENCE IS POLYMER

## Ram-Line Exactor A Stealthy Side Arm

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



When mated with lightweight Ram-Line Exactor pistol, which features a polymer frame and tubular aluminum receiver, the Stealth sound suppressor provides amazing sound-pressure level reduction with no compromise in the system's accuracy potential.

of polymer components, the Exactor pistol, with its space age appearance and unique qualities (such as the use of so-called Vulcan "Conforce" springs) was quickly labeled as an upscale, target-

grade plinker by the popular gun press.

SOF rarely reviews sporting firearms. They're usually not our cup of tea. However, we recently learned that sound suppressor designer John D. Leasure of Precision Arms International — also known as Silent Options Inc. (Dept. SOF, Route 17, P.O. Box 456, Saluda, VA 23149; 804-758-2690) — was offering a sound suppressed version of the Ram-Line Exactor called the Stealth. Now that is our bucket of blood.

We obtained one for test and evaluation, along with standard and target versions of the Ram-Line Exactor. Before we wax sinister about the Stealth, we need to take a close look at the Ram-Line Exactor series of pistols, which are loaded with interesting innovations.

Excluding options and interchangeability, there are two basic models in the Exactor line: the standard model with a 5.5-inch barrel, and a target model (RPT 2238) with an 8-inch barrel. The weight, empty, of the standard model is only 21 ounces. Add two more ounces for the target model. Overall lengths of these pistols are 9.75 inches and 12.3 inches, respectively. At its widest point, the grip area, the standard model measures about 1.3 inches in thickness. The target model is just slightly thicker. Heights vary from 5.9 inches to about 6.5 inches, depending upon which magazines and rear sights are employed.

Both models operate by means of unlocked, pure blowback. That's quite conventional, but the pistols themselves are anything but. Their two main assemblies each consist of (1) a two-piece, injection-molded polycarbonate frame, which contains the trigger mechanism and

magazine-well within the grip, and (2) the barreled receiver, which holds the reciprocating bolt group.

The barrels are pinned to receivers fabricated from aircraft-grade aluminum alloy tubing, which has been hard-coat anodized matte black. Exactor barrels consist of chambered-and-crowned steel liners embedded in injection-molded polymer bodies. The Ram-Line and Exactor logos are molded into the left side of both barrel liner housings, and "Wheat Ridge, Co. U.S.A." is found on their right sides. Their six-groove riflings have a right-hand twist of one turn in 16 inches.

Both polymer barrel bodies have integral-ventilated raised ribs, which have no effect on performance and are, in my opinion, extremely ugly. The target model also has an integral accessory rail located under the barrel's front half, to accept counterweights (from 3 to 10 ounces) or mounts for attaching lasers (a gimmick), or small flashlights (occasionally useful).

The front sight blade (approximately 0.120 of an inch wide) on the standard model is integral and has a sharply serrated rear edge. Front sight blades (about 0.125 of an inch wide) on the target model are retained by two pins and can be removed. An optional set of black, white and orange target-model blades is available as an accessory for the wizards who find magic in such nonsense.

Two rear sights will be encountered on Exactor pistols. The standard rear sight is an unprotected open square notch, which may be drifted in its dovetail for adjustment of windage zero only. The target model's rear sight, an open square notch with protective ears, can be adjusted for both windage and elevation, and except for

## RAM-LINE EXACTOR SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Caliber:</b> .....	.22 LR.
<b>Operation:</b> .....	Unlocked, pure blowback — bolt group reciprocates in tubular receiver. Unique constant-force sear spring. Manual safety blocks sear spring and hammer, and moves trigger's transfer bar out of engagement with the sear.
<b>Weight, empty:</b> .....	Standard: 21 ounces; Target: 23 ounces.
<b>Length, overall:</b> .....	Standard: 9.75 inches; Target: 12.3 inches.
<b>Width:</b> .....	1.3 inches for dynamic contour frame, standard contour frame slightly more.
<b>Barrel:</b> .....	Chambered-and-crowned steel liner, embedded in an injection-molded polymer body with an integral, ventilated raised rib. Six-groove rifling with a right-hand twist of one turn in 16 inches.
<b>Barrel length:</b> .....	Standard: 5.5 inches; Target: 8 inches.
<b>Feed Mechanism:</b> .....	15- and 20-round, single-column, detachable box-type magazines with polycarbonate body, follower and floor plate, and innovative constant-force follower spring.
<b>Sights:</b> .....	Standard: integral blade-type front (0.120 of an inch wide) with sharply serrated rear edge, square-notch rear sight, adjustable for windage zero; Target: black, white or orange removable front sight blades; fully adjustable target-type rear sight.
<b>Finish:</b> .....	Black polymers and matte black, hard-coat anodized aluminum-alloy receiver tube.
<b>Price:</b> .....	Standard: \$199.97; Target: \$279.97; with Stealth sound suppressor: \$595.
<b>Manufacturer:</b> .....	Ram-Line Inc., Dept. SOF, 10601 West 48th Ave., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033; 303-467-0300. Stealth sound suppressor: Precision Arms International, Dept. SOF, Route 17, P.O. Box 456, Saluda, VA 23149; 804-758-2690.
<b>T&amp;E Summary:</b> .....	Space age plinker with only two major subassemblies; injection-molded, polycarbonate frame and barreled receiver. Reliable. Accurate. Reasonably priced. Lightweight with minimum muzzle whip. Stealth suppressor provides exceptional sound-pressure level reduction.



Ram-Line Exactor .22 LR pistol with Stealth sound suppressor, fieldstripped.

its springs and attaching screw is constructed of injection-molded polymer. All Exactor receiver tubes are drilled and tapped for Ram-Line's tip-off or Weaver-type scope bases.

The surface of the steel bolt body has been "jeweled" on the target model, and surface-polished only on the standard

model. Attached to the rear end of the bolt body by a roll pin is an oval-shaped, polymer cocking knob with flared gripping serrations. All of the other bolt group components are made of steel.

The spring-loaded firing pin has a typical chisel-shaped tip associated with firearms chambered for rimfire cartridges.

It's held in the bolt body by a pin that passes through an oval cutout in the firing pin shaft, which permits only the required protrusion. The extractor, held in place by a roll pin, is made of bent spring steel. Both the recoil spring and its guide rod ride in cutouts in the bolt body, above and to the rear of the firing pin. A fixed ejector is retained in the bottom of the receiver tube by an allen-head screw. A bolt stop pin at the rear of the receiver tube has a threaded, sloped hole 90 degrees to its axis, to accept the allen-head takedown screw that (along with a hooked protrusion on the under side of the recoil lug) holds the barreled receiver to the grip/trigger housing group.

The injection-molded polycarbonate frame was available in two distinct configurations. The first shape marketed was the so-called "dynamic contour" grip, originally encountered on the standard model Exactor pistol. Incipient horizontal lines surround this frame (a two-piece molding) in the areas of the trigger mechanism and grip. The grip portion of the frame tapers downward, but is swollen in the area of the palm. As a computer-generated design, whatever it gained in human engineering was picked up at the expense of aesthetics as it was, in my opinion, incredibly homely.

The dynamic-contour frame has been dropped from Ram-Line's 1992 product line as a consequence of overwhelming consumer preference for the conventional contour frame.

Introduced with the target model, but now issued with the standard Exactor as well (Model RC 2225), Ram-Line's "conventional contour" frame is intended to approximate the feel and grip-to-frame angle of the Colt M1911A1, at which it succeeds admirably. Once again a two-piece molding, it features molded checkered side panels and horizontal serrations on the front and back straps. The front of the trigger guard is curved and serrated.

When will designers learn that those properly trained to fire from the Weaver position do not place the index finger of their support hand on the front of the trigger guard? It prevents wrapping this hand completely around the firing hand and, in any event, does nothing to steady the grip. This small and easily ignored criticism aside, Ram-Line's newer frame configuration is certainly more appealing than that of the original dynamic-contour grip.

All three operator controls are located on the left side of the frame, and can easily be manipulated by the thumb of the shooting hand without shifting the firing grip. The magazine catch/release button is located directly in back of the trigger guard's bottom. When depressed, the magazine will drop freely away from the frame.

There were problems with early magazines. Although Ram-Line advises against the use of ammunition with trun-



cated-cone-shaped bullets, even standard round-nose bullets often failed to feed reliably. This has been corrected, and we experienced only two failures to feed during our 1,000-round test and evaluation of these pistols.

There are four different magazines available for Ram-Line Exactor pistols — all single-column, detachable box-type. First, there are 15- and 20-round capacities for either type of frame. Then, the floor plates differ on dynamic and conventional contour magazines; according to Ram-Line, they are not interchangeable.

Exactor magazine bodies are molded from a translucent polycarbonate. Two vertical rails on the front of the magazine-well, together with protrusions on the magazine body, keep the magazine in correct alignment as it is inserted. The followers are made of red plastic. A red plastic pin on the left side of the follower protrudes through a slot in the magazine body and permits the follower to be drawn downward by hand. Totally unique, Ram-Line follower springs are of the Vulcan constant-force (Conforce) type and look like a rolled steel tape. Unlike a conventional coil spring, conforce flat-coiled springs are designed to provide a uniform force of restitution throughout their extension or contraction. The floor plates can be easily removed for cleaning and maintenance, but the follower and Conforce spring should never be removed from the magazine body.

The red plastic pin protruding from the left side of the magazine follower also operates the bolt's hold-open mechanism after the last shot has been fired, by lifting up a spring-loaded sheet-metal bar inside the frame to block the bolt's forward movement. A button, approximately an inch above the magazine catch/release button, can be moved downward to permit the bolt group to move forward after the empty magazine has been removed and a

loaded one inserted. As an alternative, the cocking knob on the end of the bolt body can be pulled back slightly (permitting the spring-loaded hold-open bar to drop downward) and then released.

To the rear of the hold-open release button is the manual safety lever. This lever must be first pushed down and then forward, which will expose a red dot and place the system in the "fire" mode. When pushed to rear and up, the following occurs: (1) The trigger's spring-loaded sheet-metal transfer bar drops down to block the Conforce-type sear spring. (2) This in turn prevents rearward rotation of the sear, and release of the hammer. (3) The trigger's transfer bar is moved out of

all three of the Ram-Line Exactor's operator controls are located on the left side of its frame and can be easily manipulated by the thumb of the firing hand, without shifting firing grip. Magazine catch/release is directly in back of the trigger guard's bottom, with bolt hold-open release directly above it, while safety lever is to the right of the hold-open release button.

When fired from an unsuppressed Exactor, Federal Hi-Power 22s were close to the speed of sound at the time of our test



engagement with the sear (this also occurs whenever the bolt group moves more than 1/8-inch out of battery to the rear). Finally, (4) the hammer's forward rotation is completely blocked. Once the safety mechanism is engaged, the Exactor pistol will not fire — presumably even if thrown from the Eiffel Tower.

Because of the Conforce-type sear spring, the trigger's pull feels constant until it breaks. The polymer trigger, which rotates on a steel axis pin, has a smooth and rounded surface on standard model Exactors and a wide, flat surface on the target model. Trigger pull weights were extremely light, with crisp breaks, on all three of our test specimens. They were 2.75 pounds on the target model, 3.25 pounds on the standard version and only 2.25 pounds on the Exactor equipped with the Stealth sound suppressor.

The sound-suppressed version of the Exactor, or Stealth as manufactured by Precision Arms International, features an 8-inch aluminum tubular housing of the same diameter as the Exactor's receiver tube, and hard-coat anodized matte black to match the finish on the Exactor's receiver. A non-adjustable, target-grade front sight blade has been attached to the suppressor housing by a single screw. This unit's weight, empty, is exactly that of the target model Exactor, a remarkable 23 ounces.

The suppressor housing surrounds a 5.5-inch Exactor barrel liner, which has been ported approximately 2 inches from the chamber. Nineteen 1/16-inch-diameter holes were drilled around the barrel at this point by Electro Discharge Machining (EDM), which was pioneered in the firearms industry by the Mag-na-port process and leaves a sharp, clean hole without burrs. In front of the barrel are four baffles, fabricated from 7075 T6 aircraft aluminum alloy, with diversion passages set at different angles on each side of the hole though the center of the baffle.

The 19 ports in front of the chamber reduced the muzzle velocity of the five types of ammunition used in our test and evaluation by 13-15% from that generated by the standard model Exactor. All of the ammunition was reduced to subsonic velocities. These ports also divert the majority of the gas produced into the chamber between the barrel and suppressor housing, where it expands and cools. The so-called "slant"-type baffles both delay the gases' forward travel and initiate turbulence.

Caliber .22 LR ammunition used in SOF's test and evaluation of the Stealth sound suppressor and Ram-Line Exactor pistols included the following: Federal Hi-Power 22s, Remington Pistol Match, Remington 22 High Velocity, Winchester Super-X High Velocity and Winchester T22 Standard Velocity. All of these have 40-grain, round-nose lead-alloy bullets.

When fired from an unsuppressed Exactor, Federal Hi-Power 22s were close to the speed of sound at the time of our test



A so-called "conventional" contour grip (on the left), which approximates the feel and grip-to-frame angle of the M1911A1, has replaced the Exactor's original but now obsolete "dynamic" contour grip (on the right), which apparently proved to be too avant-garde for the public.

(ambient temperature was 77 degrees Fahrenheit — speed of sound was approximately 1,135 fps) at an average 1,128 fps measured 10 feet from the muzzle. At 1,167 fps, Remington's High Velocity round was clearly traveling above the speed of sound. The other three loads were subsonic prior to sound suppression. All velocity measurements were made with a PACT MKIII Championship Timer/Chronograph.

## DISASSEMBLY AND MAINTENANCE PROCEDURES

While simple enough, Exactor disassembly procedures are unconventional. Remove the magazine and clear the chamber. Place the bolt in the battery position (forward). With the 1/8-inch hex wrench provided, remove the allen-head takedown screw at the rear of the frame. Separate the barreled receiver from the frame. Remove the bolt stop pin and then the bolt group from the receiver tube. Lift up the rear end of the recoil-spring guide rod, then withdraw it and the recoil spring from the bolt body. No further disassembly is usually required. Reassemble in the reverse order, making sure the bolt stop pin is aligned to accept the takedown screw (i.e., the threaded hole must slope upward toward the muzzle).

Because there are so many polymer parts in the Exactor, you are well advised to avoid cleaning solvents such as "Perc" or trichloroethylene, which will often crystallize synthetic materials and result in their complete disintegration. Ram-Line suggests use of isopropyl (rubbing alcohol), gun solvents like Hoppes No. 9, or mild lubricants (WD-40, for example) to clean the Exactor and its magazine, followed by blowing out with an air hose. Teflon-based lubricants such as Break-Free CLP should be avoided, as they will eventually gum up the works.

— P.K.

When fired through a standard model Exactor with 5.5-inch barrel, the sound signature of the ammunition used in our tests varied from 150 to 151 decibels (dB). This is about 4 dB lower than the sound-pressure level generated when ammunition of this type is fired through a Ruger pistol.

When fired through the Stealth, Remington Pistol Match and Winchester T22 Standard Velocity ammunition produced the lowest sound signature at about 112 dB each. The sound signature produced by the Federal Hi-Power 22s was slightly higher at about 113 dB. Winchester and Remington High Velocity ammunition produced 114 and 116 dB, respectively. This is outstanding performance, with a net sound reduction of between 34 to 39 dB. The sound of the Exactor's reciprocating bolt group traveling forward into battery and chambering a live round was 110 dB. Which means the Stealth reduced the muzzle blast of the firearm to no more than 2-4 dB. The Stealth sound suppressor also totally eliminates the firearm's flash signature.

The cocking knob on a Ruger .22 LR pistol is steel, so when it impacts against the steel receiver tube at the end of the counter-recoil stroke it surely produces a higher sound-pressure level than when the Ram-Line Exactor's polymer cocking knob bounces against its aluminum receiver tube. This undoubtedly explains the lower sound level of the Exactor's action alone, and certainly assists the Stealth sound suppressor's impressive reduction in overall sound-pressure level.

Slant-type baffles will often adversely affect the system's accuracy potential. Firing five-shot strings from a sandbag rest at 25 yards, the target model Exactor will produce 0.5-inch (Remington Pistol Match) to 1.5-inch groups (Federal Hi-Power 22s) with the issue sights. The Stealth sound-suppressed Ram-line Exactor produced the same results with the same ammunition. Again, this is outstanding and well within the MENS (Mission Essential Need Statement) for any special operations group. The rest of us will only be busting beer cans, so this type of match-grade accuracy will more than do. Be advised, though, that the BATF gun gestapo does not recognize "plinking" as a legitimate "sporting purpose" for any firearm.

Maintenance of the Stealth sound suppressor consists of no more than occasional flushing with solvent or hot soapy water. The manufacturer estimates life

Looking inside the Ram-Line Exactor's frame assembly, the unique Conforce-type sear spring can be seen to the left. It provides a light trigger pull that feels constant until the moment it breaks.

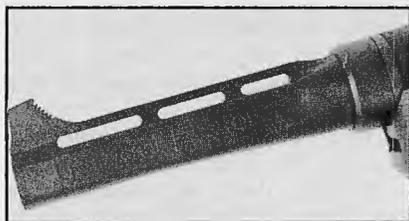


span to be approximately 10,000 rounds.

We had only five failures during our 1,000-round test. Three of the 200 Federal Hi-Power 22s we fired failed to discharge and required a second strike from the firing pin. Others have reported hard rims and difficult ignition with this ammunition. Two rounds of Remington Pistol Match stubbed against the breech face and failed to feed.

Although incredibly lightweight, the Exactor pistols, in any configuration or barrel length, exhibit no greater muzzle whip than .22 LR semiauto pistols weighing twice as much. Most of the SOF staff preferred the conventional contour frame.

These pistols represent remarkable values. A standard model Exactor with a 5.5-inch barrel (either dynamic or conventional contour frame), one 15-round magazine, a factory test target and a plastic storage box carries a suggested retail price of only \$199.97. Add another 80 bucks and you can have the target version. Extra 15-round magazines cost \$21.97 each. High capacity 20-round magazines sell for



Ram-Line Exactor barrels consist of a chambered-and-crowned steel liner, embedded in an injection-molded polymer body.

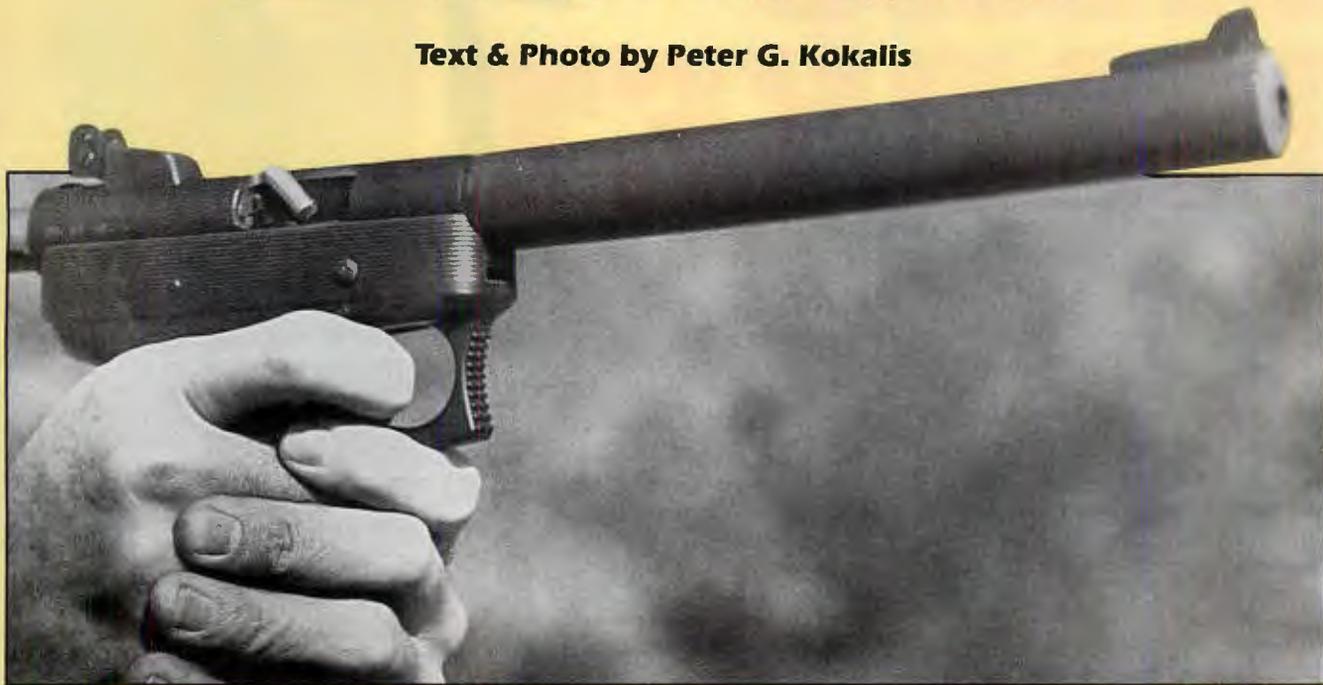
\$24.97. Precision Arms International will build a Stealth sound suppressor onto your Ram-Line Exactor for \$420, or provide both the pistol and can for \$595.

Like it or not, you're going to see greater and greater use of plastic/polymer/synthetic/polycarbonate material — or whatever else you want to call it — in the firearms industry. It's simply more cost-effective. Computers can generate an infinity of designs that may be easily and quickly produced through injection molding processes. Both Ruger and Heckler & Koch are poised to introduce pistols with a substantial number of polymer components. You can be sure others will follow. Ram-Line is not exactly sitting on its hands either, as they have developed a compact model to appear this summer, and are also manufacturing a bull-barreled model distributed by Magnum Research under their Desert Eagle line of handguns.

Atavistic individuals (who proudly refer to themselves as "traditionalists") will, as usual, resist these developments and be dragged, kicking and screaming, into the 21st century. As for me, more often than not I pack a Glock (albeit in .45 ACP) for serious social purposes, and from now on you can expect to find a Ram-Line Exactor with a Stealth sound suppressor in my picnic basket. ☒

# Deadly Decibels

Text & Photo by Peter G. Kokalis



**H**iram P. Maxim patented the first truly successful sound suppressor in March 1908. The physics of sound remains the same today as at the turn of the century (and before there was anyone on the planet to actually hear sound waves, for that matter). Elastic (longitudinal or compressional) waves through a gas are, of course, responsible for sounds that reach the ear.

The sound produced by a firearm is principally composed of three components. They are: (1) the muzzle blast created by shock waves generated from the sudden expansion of hot propellant gases as they encounter the atmosphere at the muzzle end of a gun barrel; (2) the miniature sonic boom or "crack" produced by a bullet traveling downrange at a velocity above the speed of sound (1,087.5 fps at 32 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level—the speed of sound through an ideal gas varies directly as the square root of the absolute temperature, and inversely as the square root of the atomic weight); and (3) in the case of a semiautomatic or full-auto weapon, there is the noise of the action itself (i.e., the reciprocating slide or bolt group). If the projectile travels downrange at subsonic velocity, it will produce no

sonic boom as it passes stationary objects. There is little that can be done about the sound produced by the firearm's reciprocating parts.

It is the muzzle blast to which all sound suppressors, successful or not, address themselves. They do so by use of a single formula from physics known as the general gas law. Applicable to all ideal gases, the equation states that pressure equals temperature multiplied by a constant divided by volume. As muzzle blast is a consequence of relatively high-pressure gases exiting the barrel, reduction of this pressure immediately before exit, by either increasing the volume or decreasing the temperature (cooling), or both, will reduce the sound.

Sound suppressors are usually evaluated and compared by a logarithmic ratio called the decibel (dB). The logarithmic nature of the dB is important to keep in mind, as a 3 dB drop in sound is 1/10 of the original sound-pressure level, while a 20 dB decrease is 1/100 the original level. However, because the sensitivity curve of the ear is also logarithmic, decreasing the sound energy to one-hundredth of its value halves the apparent sound. For comparison purposes, quiet conversation is about

Stealth sound suppressor reduces sound-pressure levels by 34 to 39 dB, depending upon ammunition, as it drops the system's muzzle blast to no more than 2-4 dB.

55 dB, a handclap 65 dB, a jackhammer about 120 dB, and an M16 rifle 165 dB.

Sound levels also diminish as the observer goes further from the sound source. The sound level drops according to the "inverse square law" (i.e., the sound decreases with the square of the distance from the source). A unit that sounds fairly loud within the confines of a small room, may not even be heard by an observer when fired from a distance of 25 meters outdoors, and from behind cover and concealment.

The sound signatures of the ammunition fired through both the unsuppressed and suppressed Ram-Line pistols were measured by means of a Bruel and Kjaer Type 2209 Impulse Precision Sound Level Meter, with a 1/4-inch No. 4135 microphone placed 1 meter away from the front, and to the left, of the muzzle at an angle normal (90 degrees) to the barrel's axis. The meter was calibrated both before and after these tests. No instrument drift was noted. All of this is as per U.S. Milspec.

# ZAGREB MERC MARKET

by Tony Rogers

*"I saw what was happening on the telly and thought I could help them a bit ... It's also probably the last war against communism that you're going to get in Europe. You've got to get in while the chance is there."*

**D**ave, who recently returned to England from Yugoslavia, related his story over a beer in a London pub. He told me that in 1984, five years after leaving the Royal Navy, he had joined the French Foreign Legion. He went AWOL a couple years later because, he said, "I got bored with it."

In August 1991, Dave eventually found the action he so obviously craved. The conflict between Croatia and Serbia was then two months old, but already the first foreign volunteers were arriving to offer their "services."

When Dave reached the Croatian capital, Zagreb, he was directed to the ZNG ("Zengee" — National Guard) headquarters. Nobody there spoke English. So, Dave decided to take a train southeast toward the front lines. At Sisak, he was pointed toward nearby Petrinja, and accepted into MUP — the police. His most memorable action was the capture of a Yugoslavian federal army radar installation.

"There were about 15 of us, all MUP," Dave recalled. "We got there along irrigation ditches. The plan was for an armored car to drive through the front gate as we were attacking. It was supposed to arrive at 7 o'clock, but by 7:30 [p.m.] there was no sign of it. So, we crawled right up to the perimeter fence and this dog started bark-

ing. I got everybody down, brought up my sniper's rifle and saw this Yugoslav officer looking through his binoculars in the direction the dog was pointing. I could have shot him but, the thing was, everybody was sitting about, a stone-throw from the base, just picking their noses. What can you do?

"If I shot him — well, we could have been right in it. We didn't know the strength of the base or what weapons they had," he added. "I had a LAW [Light Antitank Weapon] and my mate behind me had an RPG-2. He wanted me to go on. But there was a bunker with a 20mm cannon. He wanted me to go up there, but I wasn't going to risk that, because they'd already got on to me. So he got his RPG ready and we stood up. He fired his RPG and I tried to fire the LAW — three times. Nothing. I threw it away and that was it.

"Then we just let them have it for about three hours. We couldn't see anything — just throwing grenades and firing 'trombones' [rifle grenades], shooting at them — and they radioed in for a plane. By now it was quite dark and foggy, and the plane

Funeral procession at Sunja. Croatian national guard bury their dead.  
Photo: Eric Micheletti

INSET: National guard forces patrol highway between Zagreb and Belgrade in BTR-60. Photo: Eric Micheletti



# High Risk, Low Pay For Professional Soldiers In Yugoslavia



came over and dropped his flares and bombs, but he was about a kilometer off, and as it went over, they fired a flare from the base — they did it the wrong way 'round. So, we were lucky," Dave said.

### Regroup For Another Go

"The Croats withdrew and returned the following day — this time with 10 times as many troops and three vehicles. An armored car approached the camp entrance and the commander demanded that the garrison surrender. The Serbians promptly requested air assistance and, soon after, two MiGs roared in, firing rockets and machine guns," Dave continued. "Somehow, the Croats and their vehicles escaped being hit, but their commander still at the gate was fatally wounded by a mine, probably detonated as he dove for cover into a ditch."

Eventually, the Croats again withdrew. A couple of days later, Dave was one of 10 men who returned in time to witness the evacuation of the garrison: "Two helicopters and five MiGs came over. The helicopters came in and fired and cleared a landing zone. They flew over us, landed and picked up the blokes and then flew low right over. My mate stood up and let rip with an AK. I yelled, 'get down!' — the helicopters scared me. With a MiG, if you're spread out, he's not going to see you. But a helicopter can just hover and sit on you; I was shitting."

When the choppers departed, the MiGs turned their attention on Petrinja. Later, the village was also attacked by tanks.

**I**n the meantime, Dave and his mates were able to enter the army base, where they took possession of a few anti-aircraft guns and more than 50 AKs.

The Brit remained in the Petrinja/Sisak area for six weeks before becoming a lieutenant in the "Special Battalion," based at Kumrovec, northwest of Zagreb. By November, however, Dave had had enough. He left because of "the money, basically. I don't mind being shot at, but at least I've got to get some money for it." As an officer, Dave was paid 16,000 dinars a month — about £140 (\$256).

Most of the guys who opt to serve in what is now the Croatian army are lucky if they receive 11,000 dinars. But this doesn't deter the flow of eager volunteers. Dave told me about 23 Croatian-Americans, who had arrived from New York. "They each brought two uniforms and a helmet. They had seven walkie-talkies and three home-based radios. Each man had a knife, boots, SWAT vests ... "

### Ad Hoc Press Corps

Within two weeks of interviewing Dave, I was en route to Croatia. When I had first visited the country in July, I was told by some "Chetniks" (Serbian irregulars) that the Croats were already employing "mercenaries." But apparently the Serbs were now also accepting foreigners into their ranks. Dave claimed



Mortars — poor man's artillery. Croatian trooper sends a message of defiance toward enemy lines. Photo: Yves Debay

plastered all over it — had asked at hotel reception about us.

It was an amazing coincidence, and a great break for us. After being in Zagreb less than an hour, we had already met two of the people we had come all this way to find. Subsequently, Karl accompanied us to Karlovac, where we were introduced to a half-dozen internationals who lived in a farmhouse about 2km from enemy lines.

Most were quite willing to talk to us. One, 19-year-old Andrew from Cornwall in southwest England, echoed a sentiment shared by all the internationals we would meet: "We're definitely not mercenaries," he said, "I mean — strange mercenaries, with no money — well, about a hundred quid a month."

Without exception, it seemed, foreign volunteers preferred to be known as just that — *volunteers*.

Andrew's experience in enlisting was similar to others' I interviewed. "I was at Tushkinatz [ZNG receiving center in Zagreb] on a Friday, and everything stops for the weekend. So it wasn't until Monday that I got my uniform," he said. "I went down to Vinkovci on Monday and was at the front line for two days before I got issued with a rifle. I got 1,400 rounds, seven full magazines, a knife, three hand grenades, a 64 [66mm LAW] and one Osser [90mm rocket launcher] ... "

Others who signed on with HOS reported that *experienced* military men were absorbed immediately. The Croatian army and ZNG were less selective.

Men with a common language — if any — are often put together, where possible. But there are many nationalities and many languages represented among the volunteers, so this is not always possible.

that an Australian reporter had mentioned seeing two Irish Republican Army men at Glina. An interesting situation.

During my trip, I was accompanied by Alan — a big Australian along "for the experience" — and two former Royal Marines, Ronnie and Jim. The latter were keen to video any "internationals" we came across. As soon as we arrived in Zagreb, we headed for the headquarters of HOS — Dobroslav Paraga's extreme right wing party — where we chatted briefly with Reg, a former British soldier. After arranging to meet up again later, we checked into the nearby Hotel Central.

We hadn't even located our rooms when a ZNG soldier approached, and in a broad Birmingham accent introduced himself as Karl. He explained he had just returned from the front at Karlovac, and noticing our British registered van — with "TV"

National guardsman fires at Serbian position in Komarevo-Sisak area. Photo: Eric Micheletti





Wars go better with Coke: national guard special forces on Zagreb highway. Photo: Eric Micheletti

These men migrating toward the action from all compass points have usually shown up with full kit, less weapons, but do not report being hassled passing customs in neighboring countries, although the purpose of a man carrying uniforms and gear into Croatia is self-evident.

**B**en, who had been in the country six weeks, provided a brief rundown on the armor and weapons in use on both sides: "Tanks being used are T-34s — antiques — T-55s, T-72s and T-84s. The T-84 is really bad. I won't go up against one of them, no way. They range in on you and you've got just seconds to get out of there.

"We use the Russian equivalent of the 66 [LAW]: the Osser, which is a 90-mil' rocket — it's like a bazooka — makes a nice bang; Kalashnikovs — the Serbian one, which is very good. It's supposed to be better than the Russian one, and a damn sight better than the Romanian version; Makarov pistols ... a lot of Croatians also get weapons through the Austrian black market," Ben noted.

### Small Arms Of The World

In fact, an amazing array of firearms could be had in Yugoslavia. By the end of my second visit, I would see a variety of shotguns and hunting rifles; several types of AKs; Mausers, Thompsons, MG42s (complete with German factory markings), Skorpion SMGs and all kinds of handguns. As Ben commented, "It's a funny war. It's like a mixture of the first and second world wars and Vietnam. Strange."

Among those at Karlovac, the main spokesman appeared to be John, who at 33 was also probably the oldest and most experienced soldier. He expressed concern at the lack of information available to those at the front — the internationals in particular.

"We're worried about the political situation ... these guys won't tell us anything. All we can pick up is what's on the Croatian news, which is highly censored. So, we're very, very nervous about that," he said.

Paraga, the leader of HOS, had recently been arrested and imprisoned after being accused of fomenting an armed rebellion against Croatian President Tudjman's government. The incident had increased speculation that a clash between HOS and Croatia's army was inevitable.

"We certainly don't intend to get involved in a civil war," John told me. "But the thing is, we could find ourselves not knowing about it."

"None of us have any civilian kit. It's all in Zagreb, because they took that away — so, if the worse comes to the worst, we'll try to march into Slovenia, which is only 25 kilometers away, and then double back around and nip into Zagreb. But we're in a situation now where we don't know if we can leave," John added.

He held up a Croatian army ID card, noting, "Yesterday, for the first time ever, they gave us these."

**W**hen we left Karlovac, Karl came with us. After less than six weeks, he had become disillusioned and had no intention of returning to the front. Nobody tried to stop him. Later, Karl asked me to dispose of his uniform. I kept the padded jacket — just the thing for an English winter.

Back at Zagreb, I took the opportunity to interview Reg. He vehemently condemned the West's reluctance to recognize Croatia's plight.

### A Lonely War

"It just sickens me about what's going on. Our government won't get off its arse and do anything. Everyone in the outside world knows what's going on over here — or they're incredibly stupid and naive," Reg said.

"Where is our fucking government? I voted Tory all my life and I am now

ashamed of my government's lack of action. This isn't bloody Africa or the Far East," he exclaimed. "This isn't the other side of the world. This is part of Europe. This is, or was, a civilized country."

"The Serbians seem intent on genocide. There is no reason to start whacking old men, women and children — they're not military targets — unless you are intent on eradicating an ethnic or cultural group from a particular part of a country," Reg went on.

Had Reg actually witnessed any atrocities, I wondered?

"I've seen bodies. Whacked at close range [by the Serbs]," he said. "You can see the powder burns around the holes. Most of them are either under the chin, or back or side of the head at point-blank range. It's not a case of accidental shooting."

Reg also told me about a Croatian friend who was wounded and captured by the Serbs just two days before. The incident clearly distressed the Englishman, who spoke about it in a deceptively unemotional monotone.

"They cut his eyes out and they cut his arms off, and then they cut his throat to finish him off."

Later, I would hear similar accounts, related by other soldiers on other sectors of the front. Reg told me indications were that such atrocities were being perpetrated by special forces.

"In conversations with other people who have worked up and down the country, the picture is pretty much the same," he said. "These units, or unit — it might be one, it might be more — seem to go into an area for maybe a week, hit it, do something like this and disappear again."

Few Croatian soldiers were in any doubt about their fate if captured. The ZNG, Reg maintained, "absolutely crap themselves." But those in HOS, it seems, are made of sterner stuff. Certainly, there was a noticeable difference between the Croatian army and Paraga's troops. The latter had a distinctly sinister air about them, and the sort of arrogance common to elite units everywhere. It was easy to understand why President Tudjman was concerned about the threat — imagined or otherwise — that HOS presented.

### War Within A War?

Yet, when I asked about the problems between Tudjman's party and HOS, Reg ridiculed the notion that Paraga had any intention of encouraging an armed insurrection.

"Where are the guys who are doing it?" he demanded. "There are, like, about 20 guys over at HOS headquarters and all the rest are fighting at the bloody front."

Most who serve in HOS do so without pay. "The HOS guys are ideologically motivated," Reg explained. "They genuinely believe in what they're fighting for."

"The problem with Zengee [ZNG] is,



"Bob," an American, waits with an MG3 machine gun, while "Frenchie," a Welsh veteran of the French Foreign Legion, scopes for a target with his sniper rifle. Photo: Yves Debay

it's politically interfered with. Tudjman still hasn't declared bloody war, and yet his people are being slaughtered wholesale. He's more intent on political suppression in Zagreb — he's tied up hundreds and hundreds of very fit fighting men and their extremely efficient high-tech weaponry in Zagreb for his own political machinations, instead of sending them to the front where they can at least defend the bloody country," Reg said.

Curiously, there are relatively few foreigners serving with HOS. The reason, Reg noted, is that HOS is interested only in those with military experience — a policy the Englishman clearly believed in.

"Tell the fucking kids to stay at home," he said. "We've been telling this to all the journalists, and yet it hasn't appeared in

The 1st Special Forces battalion of the Croatian army is a small but efficient unit, led for the most part by Croatian former Legionnaires. In addition, a good number of Yanks, Australians, Canadians and Argentines of Croatian descent serve with the 1st SF. They are armed primarily with the Argentine-made FAL Modelo Para III folding-stocked rifle. Members of the 1st SF usually wear the green beret of the Legion with the red and white Croatian checkerboard badge. Photo: Yves Debay

one paper. Do us a favor: Just tell the kids to stay at home."

A few days later I visited eastern Croatia, where I interviewed several more Brits. I was a little surprised to find one youngster with an armored unit. "Mr. X" explained that he was, in fact, AWOL from the Irish Hussars. This was his second war. In the Gulf War, he was an NCO in an armored brigade. Now, the 21-year-old was driving a Soviet-built tank.

"Obviously, I'm not impressed with the T-55," Mr. X told me, "But it's better

than nothing, and all these guys have got."

Mr. X had been in Croatia just three-and-a-half weeks. Like most of those I spoke with, he had experienced no real action other than the interminable shelling — which continued regardless of any so-called cease fire then in effect.

"I can show you where we were hit last night," Mr. X offered. "We were actually hit with MRLS — their version of Stalin's Organ — and it's pretty shitty for us because we can't fire back. The commander is pretty strict about us not





being allowed to retaliate unless we come under direct fire."

#### Many Volunteers, Many Reasons

When I queried Mr. X on his reasons for being in Croatia, he initially maintained that he was there simply because he was AWOL. When pressed, however, he admitted he harbored a great deal of sympathy for the Croatians.

"These people are getting fucking massacred," he stated with feeling and gestured at those listening to our conversation.

**"S**ome of these guys have been soldiers for only two months. They have no ideas of basic battle discipline, or anything, and yet they're getting out there — their intention is good — but they're just dying needlessly and they have to be helped," Mr. X said.

Another Brit was 19-year-old Neil, who had come to Croatia partly because of his dislike for communists. In spite of his lack of previous military experience, he seemed to be bearing up well after serving for five weeks in a location that was shelled day-in, day-out. I asked if he had had any firefights.

"We've had a couple of little scraps, but nothing major," he replied modestly. "Once, a couple of us went out in the middle of the night, because they had a sniper and a machine gun there, and we

just went 100 meters up the road from our guard post, and the sniper was very close to us so we had a good shot at him for two minutes. I had a LAW, so my mate gave me covering fire from the side of the road. I was behind this concrete box between the pavement and the road, so I jumped to the side of the road to get a clear shot.

"The sniper was only 70 meters from us but I think he was sort of distracted by some other guy. He was shooting at him, and the machine gun, which was about 150 meters away, was also shooting at him," Neil said.

"Because it was raining, the LAW failed to work. I tried for about 20 seconds, moved back, dried it off, jumped to one side again and tried it again. Then I moved back and ran over to my mate, gave it to him and said, 'You try it, I'll cover you.' He did the same and it didn't work.

"While he was doing that, the sniper jumped out the window and ran down the road. I don't think we got him. We had a go at the machine gun shooting at us, but couldn't get a clear field of fire because of the trees. And, since then — about two weeks ago — we haven't had any snipers come close to us. They're still shooting at us, but at too great a range," Neil said.

"And The Rest Of My Life To Do It ..."

Brian, a former Australian SAS trooper, was a complete contrast to Neil or any

**"Their intention is good — but they're just dying needlessly and they have to be helped."**

ABOVE LEFT: Karl, 23, from Birmingham, England, who introduced author to the "internationals," in position behind wasted T-34. Three other Englishmen and a Japanese volunteer brought their own tank to Osijek, under siege from three sides, but were unable to employ it as none spoke Croatian. Photo: Tony Rogers

TOP: Author (left) with "Batman" and T-55 driven by British volunteer "Mr. X" in a village in eastern Croatia. Photo: courtesy Tony Rogers

MIDDLE: Ben (front), 22, from Brighton, England, and Andrew, 19, from Truro, England, patrol village south of Zagreb. Photo: Tony Rogers

BOTTOM: Andrew in a contemplative mood in an appropriate setting — a cemetery. Photo: Tony Rogers

other international volunteer I met in Croatia. At 51, this gray-haired warrior had already seen his fair share of action around the world. He had put in two tours in Vietnam, had been in Sarawak with the British Greenjackets and had served in Aden. Now, he was serving with HOS in a beleaguered village just 1km from the Serbian lines.

"I'll stay as long as they want me," he said, adding fatalistically, "I've got nothing else to do. Nothing to do, and the rest of my life to do it in."

*A former Royal Marine, Tony Rogers has been a photojournalist since 1985, and has contributed to SOF under the pseudonyms Frank Terrell and Frank Noble.*

# SAVE OUR SERE

## Army Survival School Can't Escape Budget Ax

by Regnad Kcin

Dear SSG Kcin: On behalf of the SERE Division of SFS IMA, I wish to inform you that your resume was received and read by myself as well as by LTC Rowe. It was indeed impressive. We have decided to select you to the SERE program in the capacity of Sr. Instructor, Grade authorization SFC E-7. Due to your many qualifications, we feel you would be an asset to this organization ... welcome to SERE Division SFS IMA. Leroy N. Carlson, MSG (P) SGM SERE Division

**A**s it turned out, my 1982 request for assignment to SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance & Escape) would be disapproved. However, Colonel James "Nick" Rowe, its founder, and I would meet several times over the next few years, and I observed his enthusiasm for SERE, nurturing the program's growth and success. In April 1989, Rowe would be assassinated in the Philippines. It remains unclear whether his killers were from the leftist New People's Army (NPA), or from the hard military right wing struggling for power.

The U.S. Army's SERE program is easily the finest of all the services'. For a number of reasons, however, it is in danger of being lost. It is hoped those responsible for the continued development of Rowe's legacy to the Army will place the survival of SERE above individual political considerations or organizational loyalties.

Declared by President Bush to be "the

highest national priority," the issue of American POWs remains one of the most confusing and hotly debated matters of the last 20 years. In September 1991, the U.S. Secretary of Defense promised a 38% increase in personnel assigned to work on resolution of the POW issue. This translates as 102 additional people, augmenting some 150 personnel already committed to the POW task force.

A new staff position was created — the Deputy Assistant Secretary (DAS) for POW/MIA Affairs, working for the Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs. In short, the highest office in the land is appearing to lend direction, resources and emphasis to a national-pride issue that demands more than just lip service.

A portion of this newfound resolve to become pro-active should be attributed to the resignation of firebrand Col. Millard A. Peck, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency's (DIA) special office for POW/MIA affairs. Peck, a former Green Beret with three tours of Vietnam, tacked his "Request for Relief" to the door of his office on 28 March 1991.

Peck's memo was blistering in content, essentially charging those responsible for seeking solutions to the issue with "knavery, ... stalling, ... suppression," and noting "the mind-set to 'debunk' " was "... alive and well ... at all levels ... "

Six months after Peck's charges were published, Secretary of Defense Dick

Cheney made his own dramatic announcement of a new fire being lit under the issue. If nothing else, Peck must know he did indeed accomplish his mission, albeit through his own professional sacrifice.

### Ignoring Lessons Learned

The above illustrates the "big picture," in terms of our national consciousness and expectations regarding American POWs. From World War II, more than 78,750 soldiers are still recorded as being either missing in action or as prisoners of war. From the Korean War, there are 8,177 personnel unaccounted for, along with some 2,331 missing from the Vietnam War. According to a recent article by H. Bruce Franklin ("The POW/MIA Myth," *Atlantic Monthly*, December 1991), nearly half (1,101) of the missing Vietnam servicemen "... were never considered to be either missing in action or prisoners of war."

Franklin states those 1,101 soldiers are known to have been killed in action (KIA), although their bodies were not recovered for any number of reasons. His article bears reading, and is important because it





The exploration of SERE by the Army began as early as 1978, when military intelligence officer Lieutenant Colonel Edward N. Meserve conducted a review of then-existing SERE courses. Meserve, the Army's SERE project officer, was challenged to develop "a comprehensive task list for SERE training." To do this, he visited the 3636th Combat Crew Training Wing (CCTW) at Fairchild AFB in Washington state. (Meserve noted that the Navy conducted its program at a facility in Maine, although it appears he did not visit with the Navy's SERE instructor as part of his initial study.)

Meserve discovered the Air Force had created a specific career field for their SERE instructors. This directly influenced the "dedication and professional knowledge" Meserve observed at Fairchild. Their instructor course was six months long, with a 50% attrition rate. After graduation, the newly certified instructor then began training in survival, fieldcraft, survival academics, resistance academics, and the resistance laboratory.

According to Meserve, "Without a similar career field in the Army, it is highly unlikely that courses of this caliber could be realized within the various TRADOC [training and doctrine command] schools and centers, or within the major FORSCOM [forces command] units."

Meserve noted how the Air Force

LEFT: Airmen train with helicopter hoist, used to extract survivors from rough terrain. Photo: 3636 CCT/PA

reflects a renewed — and general — public awareness of the POW/MIA situation that has followed attention to the issue from the president and secretary of defense.

However, despite the public's demand for answers and the government's announced commitment to resolution of the POW/MIA issue, the Army appears to be abandoning its fledgling survival, evasion, resistance and escape program begun in 1982. According to an exclusive set of interviews granted *U.S. Veteran News and Report* last August, "the Army's SERE program to train soldiers for possible capture by the enemy ... is facing extinction." Sources close to the program claim SERE has experienced devastating cuts in both funding and personnel.

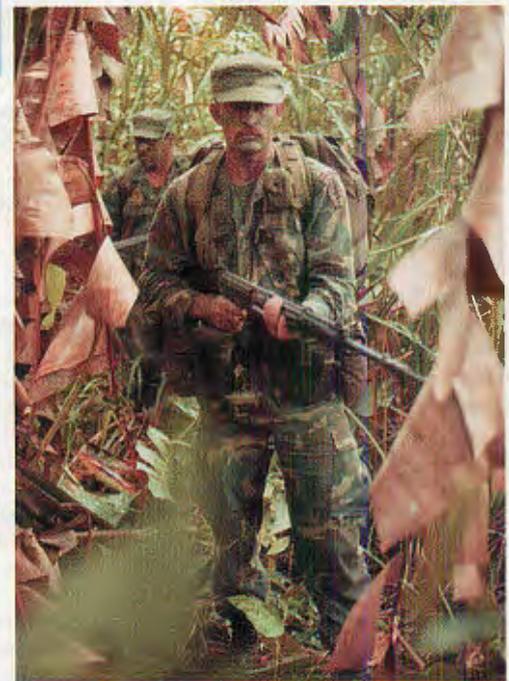
Operating on a paltry \$100,000 per year, SERE is currently capable of graduating only 25 soldiers every two weeks. Despite being an Army school, only special operations forces are being given slots, due to the limited student space available. SERE proponents fear the entire program is in danger of being flushed from the Army system, perhaps to be assumed by either the Air Force or Navy, both of which

have long offered their personnel extensive SERE training. In fact, of the POWs captured during Operation Desert Storm, only those from the Air Force and Navy had SERE training. No Army personnel taken prisoner had attended the court at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, despite it being an Army-wide school.

Is the Army allowing SERE to die a quiet death, despite the congressionally voiced and supported need for such a program?

#### A Long Time Coming

Conventional Army units were slower than the Air Force in developing a SERE program, although such training did exist in individual units. There was an unstated concern about "training soldiers to be professional POWs" and a general feeling that regular troops would be less subject to capture than a downed aviator.



Although an Army-wide school, SERE primarily trains special operations personnel to survive in different environments. Photo: Author's collection

provided academic instruction prior to placing their personnel into SERE stress situations, whereas the Navy provided no academic preparation, although extreme physical fatigue was introduced prior to the POW experience conducted at the Navy's "laboratory."

The colonel came away with an impression that the 3636th CCTW would be "an ideal vehicle to provide SERE training to high-risk Army personnel" to include Special Forces (SF), Rangers, air crews and airborne units. Further, Meserve recommended, "Air Force instructors be utilized to the maximum extent possible in any Army-developed resistance laboratory, unless the Army can provide dedicated civilian instructors or establish an enlisted career field for SERE instructors."

### Enter Nick Rowe

Having been a prisoner of the Viet Cong for five years, Nick Rowe held the distinction of being the only officer to successfully escape from captivity, in December 1968. Rowe was promoted to major and assigned to the Army General Staff Office, where he worked on POW/MIA issues. In 1974, he resigned his commission to run for political office. Although Rowe lost his bid, he went on to author several books while remaining affiliated with the SF community through the 20th SFGA (Reserve).

On the heels of Meserve's SERE recommendations, Rowe was approached in 1981 about returning to active duty. His mission would be to establish an Army-wide SERE training program. Rowe accepted, and his commission was reactivated. Seen as the only man who possessed the knowledge, drive, determination and personality needed to create such a program, Rowe became father of the Army's SERE Department at Fort Bragg. He would also sponsor the soon-to-be-formed Antiterrorism Division program.

Rowe began by developing his department's instruction programs to include facilities and instructors. Given the requirement to train 10,000 Level-C personnel, he submitted a formal paper outlining his goal of five Level-C courses to be run at as many U.S.-based facilities, including Fort Bragg. Beginning in 1988, the plan called for 32 officers, 20 warrant officers and 385 enlisted personnel to staff the sites. This manning roster was projected until 1993.

Civilian staffing was put at 135 personnel, including education specialists, writers/editors, secretaries and clerks. Each location would be tasked to run 20 classes of 100 students each per year, in order to attain the 10,000 qualified Army SERE personnel required. SERE centers would be supported by existing mess and transportation assets at the assigned military installations. If such services did not exist they would be contracted for.



Photo: Author's collection

*I was filthy and stinking and I hurt. I thought of an aspirin; how much I wanted one aspirin! I thought of water and how much I wanted a taste of cool, clean water. I thought of how different all this would be if Dave and I had escaped, and felt myself biting my lip to keep from crying out.*

— Colonel James "Nick" Rowe, from his book *Five Years to Freedom*

Rowe saw each SERE center consisting of a headquarters, supply area, classroom, billets/mess area, vertical and horizontal obstacle courses, and local training areas for such challenges as escape and evasion lanes.

Level-C subjects included training in the code of conduct, evasion techniques, survival medicine, survival food procurement, field-expedient weapons/tools, direction finding, sea survival, evasion movement techniques, dog and visual tracker evasion, cross-culture communications, resistance to exploitation, armed/unarmed combat, and escape planning.

Rowe emphasized that "SERE training for high-risk personnel cannot be met without [the] expansion and resourcing outlined." The existing facility at Fort Bragg could only train 2,000 personnel per year, which meant the Army's requirement

for 10,000 qualified graduates needed to be addressed by the additional SERE centers Rowe planned for.

In addition, SERE was tasked to train Army-wide instructors certified to teach Level-B SERE subjects at their local units. In 1988, no Level-B courses were programmed. Local units were tasked to instruct their courses using a training support package approved by TRADOC. The decision to eliminate the Level-B courses was made without any input from the Special Warfare Center (SWC), which — although asked for such input — simply elected not to respond to the Department of the Army's inquiry.

According to Rowe, "lack of training can have a serious impact on survivability of personnel, once mobilized." By 1988, the SERE program was already being cut short in terms of accomplishing its missions given by the Army in 1982. SERE's founder would find himself promoted to full colonel and offered an assignment in the Philippines as the ground forces director for the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG). Although out of the country, he would prove not to be absent from the SERE community.

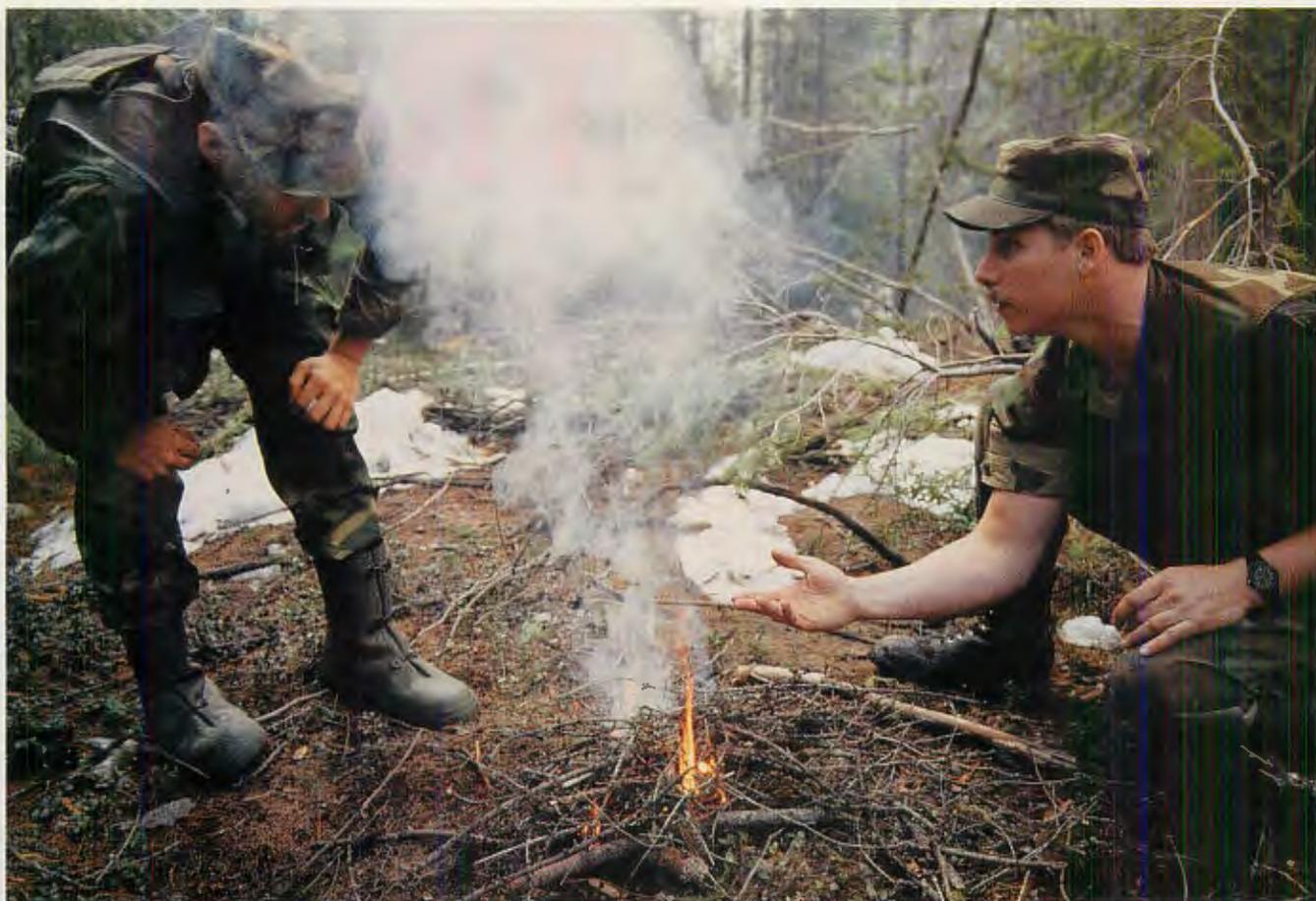
Largely because of his personal stature, Rowe wielded a great deal of influence in both military and political circles. Although physically absent from SERE, he knew the appropriate people to contact when it came to applying or releasing pressure concerning SERE matters.

Strong rumor held that Rowe was in line for his first star, with SOCOM being his command assignment when promoted. Therefore, he was someone who could wheel and deal at Fort Bragg despite being "only" a colonel. At JUSMAG, Rowe was responsible for acquisition, shipping, accounting and distribution of U.S. aid to the Philippines military. He was also directly involved in the counterinsurgency program — a matter of public record in the Philippine media but downplayed in theater, due to Philippine sensitivity about being their own masters.

### Red Hats, Staff Cuts, Reorganization, Death

In October 1988, Rowe was deeply engaged combating the NPA insurgency in the Philippines. Still, he kept tabs on the program he'd been instrumental in developing. Changes were taking place at SERE that alarmed the colonel. "It concerns me that critical decisions are being made by people who don't have the [SERE] background to make them, and I'd feel much better with some more experience in the organization," he wrote.

Staffing was a particular worry to both Rowe and the seasoned SERE veterans he'd brought into the organization with him. "Are ... 'Red Hats' ... getting dumped on SERE ...?" he asked in a letter. The term "Red Hat" referred to airborne-qualified personnel who wore the



paratrooper's maroon beret. Red Hats were now being assigned to the Special Operations Command, despite many of them lacking any special operations background. Rowe felt SERE needed "Green Hats" at the helm. "Keep me up on the situation and I'll stick pins in appropriate balloons," he offered.

Sadly, Rowe was assassinated on 29 April 1989; it was a serious blow to SERE, which now had no one of any influence inside the military protecting its interests. Suddenly, the SERE department became Company E, 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne). From having a colonel in charge, the command structure was changed to a major's slot. Rather than having a sergeant major as the senior NCO, the job became that of a master sergeant.

Today, the SERE company can only field 14 instructors — as opposed to the 26 directed. The Resistance Training Laboratory (RTL) possesses only 35 of a required 67 instructors for its vital operations. These numbers are a far cry from the 300 instructors Rowe had envisioned SERE centers as having available to the Army.

There is more than one explanation for the SERE Department becoming a company. The most obvious reason is that when Special Warfare Center (SWC) became a formal training group, it needed to reflect a group's organizational structure. This in turn allowed for majors

Students at USAF Survival School, Fairchild AFB, Washington, learn fire-starting skills. Photo: 3636 CCT/PA

and senior NCOs to garner their command time as company commanders, first sergeants and so on. Under the old structure, being assigned to SWC had made it impossible to log such time, which affected both morale and promotion.

As a company command, SERE simply fell into line under the new organizational structure. Personnel-wise, everyone is short in special operations these days. Manning a full A-team can be a challenge, not to mention attempting to man training committees at Fort Bragg.

Funding critical to SERE operations was also affected, with only \$1.6 million accounted for of some \$2.8 million set aside by Congress in 1982. The legislation providing those funds was sponsored by the late Rep. W.C. "Dan" Daniels (D-Va.). Another congressional supporter was the late Rep. Samuel S. Stratton (D-N.Y.), a high-ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee. With Rowe assassinated and SERE's congressional supporters deceased, the door was open for the program to begin floundering.

Where did the remaining funds go? Sources who insist their names and ranks not be used point to parachutes for the High Altitude-Low Opening (HALO) committee being purchased with SERE monies, as well as new motors for the

SCUBA school in Key West, Florida. These purchases were reported to have taken place in 1985-86. The same sources add that other projects were more than likely supported by funds redirected from SERE's original appropriation.

"With Colonel Rowe gone, and no friends in Congress, SERE has no one to turn to when it comes to making sure the program is carried out as Congress intended it should be," noted a former SERE founder.

#### Hanging By A Thread

"No Army personnel captured during the gulf war were SERE-trained," lamented an SF instructor. "Melissa Nealy (one of five Army personnel taken prisoner by the Iraqis and later freed) could have been educated in how to have better weathered her captivity, had the Level-B instructor program been operational back in 1988/89. SERE is not a special operations school. It is an Army-wide school, although all we're training these days are S.O.-types."

Indeed, no Army aviator shot down and captured was a SERE graduate. In reverse, all Air Force and Navy pilots downed in Desert Storm had been schooled by their respective services in SERE. At the current rate of 25 students every two weeks, only 600 Level-C graduates are being trained at Fort Bragg per year — a far cry from what the 1988 Army requirement

*Continued on page 73*

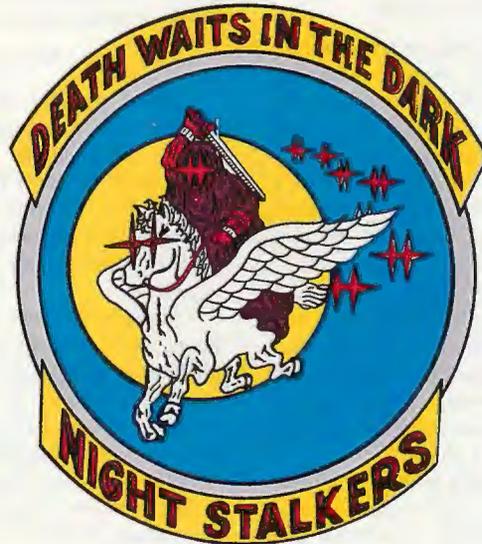
# TRAPP



## Incredible Rescue Road To Baghdad

MSGT. Sims, in center, flanked by SSGT. Tehran and SGT. 1st Class Torbett, engage enemy on highway 60+ meters in front of them, while a USAF F-16 drops 1,000-pounders and improved cluster bombs on the Iraqis. Illustration: CW2/Rob Wentz

# ED IN IRAQ



A few hours before the Allied Coalition uncoiled in the Saudi Arabian desert like a sand viper and struck Iraqi-occupied positions in Kuwait on 24 February 1991, several teams of U.S. Army Special Forces were inserted deep inside Iraq. Their mission was to observe and report enemy troop movements that would meet the Allied thrust.

Two of the Special Forces teams were discovered, ironically, by children.

Although these two teams, a three-man unit and an eight-man group, were almost 50 miles apart, their camouflaged positions were discovered in almost the same manner at about the same time. Both teams had to fight their way to exfiltration points, against seemingly insurmountable odds.

What you're about to read are eyewitness accounts of three Green Berets in Operational Detachment Alpha-532 who fought on the ground and the Army helicopter crew who came to rescue them.

United States Central Command (CENTCOM), headed by General Norman Schwarzkopf, made a big deal out of daring rescues of downed aircrews by special operations forces in the Gulf War, but CENTCOM made no mention of the rescue of these two SF teams. Nor did the Pentagon mention these rescues in its "Report to Congress on Conduct of the Persian Gulf Conflict." But the rescues occurred — they have become legend in the SF community.

**“W**e crossed the border [into Iraq] an hour after dark, about 2100 local, on the night of 23 February,” said Master Sergeant Jeffrey W. Sims. The team was airlifted by helicopter more than 200 nautical miles into Iraq and dropped off about 30 miles north of the Euphrates River, near the town of Quasam al Hamash.

Sims recalled it as a nice night for flying, even into enemy territory. “Clear. No enemy activity. Real light. Moon up — 85% illumination.”

Sims and fellow team members Sergeant First Class Ronald Torbett and Staff Sergeant Roy Tabron were following close behind another MH-60 Blackhawk that

carried another team of Green Berets.

The insertion went like clockwork. The “hawks” hugged the deck to avoid enemy radar as they flew toward a pair of “X”s on a map.

About 50 miles before reaching their respective LZs, the Blackhawks broke formation and each headed alone into Indian country. Sims and his team were tasked to cover the northern end of Highway 8, near Baghdad. The other unit would monitor troop movements on the southern end of this highway.

When Sims and his team jumped off their Blackhawk, dogs in a nearby village began barking. “It sounded like 50 million of them,” Sims recalled, but no one in the village came to investigate.

## On The

by Dale B. Cooper



### Kind Of Like Kansas

Instead of barren wasteland, the terrain along Highway 8 was irrigated farmland. "Kind of like Kansas farmland, cut up into 100-meter squares," said Sims, raised on a farm in Camden, South Carolina.

**A**fter caching their emergency radios about 900 meters from where they were inserted, Sims and his two comrades passed by a field of green grass. "It looked like winter rye, about 3 inches high," recalled Sims, who was awestruck by the sight of green grass after staring at Saudi Arabian light brown sand for almost seven months. "I'm an old country boy, and it was good for us to see something green for a change."

Sims and his buddies took a 30-minute security break at the field's edge to make sure no one was trailing them. They also used this time to adjust their loads and update contingency plans, in the event they might get hit en route to the final destination.

Sims chose a concrete-block building as a rendezvous point, should the team be separated in a firefight. This building would be easy to find. It was the most recognizable feature in the area.

The loads Sims, Torbett and Tabron humped were heavy. Sims, who claimed to weigh 179 pounds on a good day, carried 175 pounds.

Sims said carrying so much weight is mind over matter, "And mind doesn't matter," laughed the stocky Green Beret. "It's your body that counts, and everyone in SF is expected to carry a heavy load."

Each team member carried a double basic load of 5.56mm ammo — about 420 rounds — and a couple of grenades. They also carried 10 quarts of water and five days' rations each — broken-down versions of MRE's (Meals Ready to Eat) — proteins and carbohydrates. Each man also carried 25 desert candy bars for a sudden burst of energy in case he had to hightail it.

The bulk of their 175-pound loads consisted of the so-called "hide kit" that Sims and his team used to cover a 9-by-9-foot hole, which they dug 5 feet deep into the side of an irrigation ditch overlooking Highway 8.

The kit contained a piece of camouflaged canvas tarp, to be stretched over an umbrella-like structure made from 5-foot sections of galvanized electrical conduit. Its center support was a piece of 1.25-inch pipe. Commo gear, including LST-5, PRC-90 and PRC-126 radios, and a secure

SATCOM [satellite communications] radio with a folding dish added to the load the men carried.

Preplanning called for five hours of walking and four hours' digging. While Sims set up the SATCOM radio and got his commanding officer on the horn, Torbett and Tabron dug the hole.

Thirty minutes before daylight on G-Day, 24 February, as the Persian Gulf ground war kicked off, Sims, Torbett and Tabron climbed into their hole.

### Good Morning, Iraq

"About daylight, it was like Grand Central Station around the hole," said Sims, "as hundreds of Iraqi civilians began heading for the fields to work."

One man wearing bright red pants passed within 4 inches of an observation port, causing Torbett to jump like he'd been shot.

Twenty to 30 times over the next eight hours, Iraqi civilians passed by the hide kit. Shortly after 1400, a young girl and her grandfather strolled by the hole.

The girl stopped and looked. Apparently she didn't like what she saw.

Although Sims had brought along different colors of paint to camouflage the canvas tarp, he later observed that it's hard to put something in someone's backyard and not have them notice it.

Suddenly, the little girl and her



Jim Crisafulli describes aggressive, bold maneuver his Blackhawk made to go up and over power lines like an Olympic high jumper. Photo: Dale B. Cooper

grandfather sat down at the edge of the hole. That's when Sims turned to Torbett and told him to get them.

"He and I both busted out and dragged them into the hole before they could scream," Sims said.

While Sims and Torbett pulled the old man and his granddaughter into the hole, Tabron was on the radio telling Lieutenant Colonel Roger Watson, the SF liaison with XVIII Airborne Corps at SOCC (Special Operations Command and Control Element), that their position had been compromised. Tabron asked headquarters to send an emergency exfiltration team, on the double.

In the meantime, Sims and Torbett had

their hands full trying to calm the old man down. "I also had to calm all of us down," said Sims, "because we were ready to kill him."

Speaking to him in Arabic, Sims asked the shepherd where the Iraqi soldiers were. The old man replied, "About a klick down the road," but Sims knew better. Intelligence placed enemy troops about 15 to 20 miles down Highway 8.

By the time Sims got the old man calmed down, a crowd of about 20 people had gathered around the hole.

"The Americans, they're here!" shouted the old man. At this point, Sims said he realized there was no sense in slaughtering civilians. This wasn't what he was sent into Iraq to do, so he let the old man and his granddaughter go.

### Now What?

"All we wanted to do was pack up and get out," Sims recalled. But the old man wouldn't let them just walk away.

Fifteen minutes after Sims let him go, the shepherd had hurried back to his village, gotten a hunting rifle, returned and begun firing at the Green Berets as they moved down a ditch trying to make it to their extraction point.

**“W**e wanted to run, but there was nowhere to run to," Sims remembered stopping about 600 meters from the hide site. He had turned to his buddies and said, "Boys, we're going to defend this property."

The irrigation ditch was about 3 feet deep, with berms on either side. "Defensible," Sims pronounced, surveying what would become a bloody battlefield.

To the south of the three Green Berets was an Iraqi village. To their rear, or north, was what Sims called "the killing field," about 2,000 meters of open land, over which no one in their right mind would run. To the left, or west, were a series of buildings, scrub brush and ditches. About 600 yards to their right, or east, was Highway 8, a high-speed avenue of approach. It was to the north and east that Sims deployed his men to wait.

Thirty minutes after the old man began taking pot shots at them with a hunting rifle, a bus began off-loading Iraqi soldiers on the highway in front of them. Sims knew his team was dead if the Iraqis reached a pair of ditches that lay running toward his position; he ordered his men to open fire.

Some enemy soldiers never knew what hit them. Sims is a Class A sniper, and a graduate of almost every school the military has to offer; he in turn had trained his men well in long-range sniping. Torbett killed one Iraqi soldier by putting the crosshairs of his 4X Blits telescopic sight on the man's head and squeezing the trigger. Most of the Iraqis were dropped dead in their tracks at 600 meters or more.

Sims cautioned his men to make every shot count.

Despite murderous fire being directed against them, the Iraqis managed to get on line and tried to come up the two ditches at Sims, but the enemy lacked leadership.

### Only Iraqi Legs

“If an aggressive squad of 82nd Airborne soldiers had been coming up those ditches, they would have had us in about 15 minutes,” Sims noted, “but their [the Iraqis] heart just wasn’t in it.”

**J**ust when it looked like Sims, Torbett and Tabron were improving their odds of survival, two more busloads of Iraqi soldiers arrived on the scene; however, this time help was overhead.

“Thirty minutes after the shooting started, we had an F-16 dropping 1,000-pounders [bombs] and improved cluster bombs on the Iraqis,” Sims said. “He [the pilot] killed at least a platoon — 50 or 60 Iraqis who were trying to use shepherders as human shields.”

When the F-16 was forced to depart the area low on fuel and out of munitions, the Iraqis regrouped and moved in for the kill. “There was one guy who got up on a building behind us and started waving his hands like a traffic cop, directing troops toward our position,” Sims recalled, “but he didn’t last long — I took him out at about 500 meters.”

It was clear to the trio that if they were to have any chance of survival, they would have to kill the Iraqis’ leaders before enemy troops could be organized and deployed effectively.

“If they had ever gotten in those two ditches, they could have gotten us,” Sims said. But the enemy never reached the ditches. The SF snipers began stacking up dead Iraqis like cordwood.

Why did the Iraqis keep coming in the face of certain death? Sims thought later they were spurred on by a bounty offered for American soldiers, dead or alive.

The battle at Quasam al Hamash began in broad daylight and lasted until almost dark (1630 local), when Sims’ team was successfully extracted by helicopter under heavy enemy fire.

### We Own The Night

“We had to hold out until dark,” Sims said, “because we owned the night.” Even though Iraqis outnumbered the Americans 50-to-1, they weren’t stupid. Sims figured they would back off after dark.

When Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jim Crisafulli, 38, a veteran Army aviator from Baraboo, Wisconsin, got word an SF team was in trouble, he was under his Blackhawk, the *Lady Godiva*, with wrench in hand at Rahfa, a small fixed-wing staging field on the Saudi-Kuwaiti border.

His crew had flown an ACROSS-FLOT (Across Forward Line of Troops) mission on 23 February, the night before, so they

didn’t expect to be tapped for another mission until the following night; but suddenly, a lieutenant in the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) came running across the pad yelling, “We’ve got a mission! We’ve got to go now ... no time for preplanning.”

Crisafulli hopped into the cockpit of his Blackhawk with his flight suit unzipped and tied around his waist. Along with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Randy Stephens from Savannah, Georgia, Crisafulli began pre-flying his ship. Just down the pad, First Lieutenant Mike Miller and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Chris Durkin began spooling up their Blackhawk, but smoke began belching from its No. 1 engine, so it had to be shut down.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Richard Detrick, ground-security team leader for the emergency exfiltration mission, wasted no time hopping off the crippled bird and jumping into Crisafulli’s ship.



**Crisafulli and crew left Rahfa in an instant**

**to penetrate some 200-plus nautical miles**

**into Iraq and rescue Sims’ SF team, pinned**

**down at their traffic monitoring site at**

**Quasam al Hamash, near Baghdad.**

“It was SOP that all rescue missions were two-ship flights. However, that wasn’t the case this time,” Detrick said.

Crisafulli’s crew was told they would have an A-10 protecting them through their entire flight, but the Warthog never showed up, “and we wound up with everything hanging out, just like the recon team we were going after,” Detrick recalled.

There were three other men in the back of *Lady Godiva*, including Sergeant First Class Gordon Hopple, a ground-security team member, who like Detrick not only

provided additional firepower with his M-203, but also was to assist any wounded on the ground.

“Gordie and I each carried a double basic load for our M16s and 9mm pistols, plus four fragmentation grenades each. Gordie also carried extra 40mm ammo for his 203. Our combat vests weighed more than 45 pounds with everything on them. In our ‘butt packs,’ which were attached to our vests, we carried an IV kit just in case someone needed it. Under our desert BDUs we wore our flak vests,” Detrick noted.

Prior to launching, Hopple and Detrick removed four windows from the aircraft so they could have unobstructed fields of fire during the flight.

### Lashing Down For The Firestorm

Because they knew their pilots would be making some radical moves, Rich and Gordie tied themselves to an anchor point in the helicopter’s floor with a 12-foot rope sling, so they wouldn’t be thrown out of the open windows and doors.

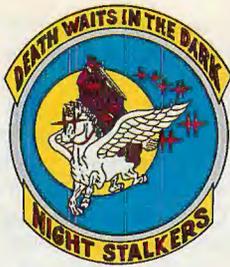
The two other men in the chopper’s rear were crew chiefs, Staff Sergeant Bruce Willard and Private First Class Todd Diffenderfer; both manned six-barreled 7.62mm mini-guns.

On a rescue mission like this one, it’s comforting to know you’ve got additional firepower. “When these people [ground security teams] are put on a weapon, you know their target is going to fall,” said Crisafulli, who was glad Detrick had come along. “We were expecting fire at the border [Iraq], because the night before [23 February] we had been shot at pretty heavily during the ACROSS-FLOT mission.”

When *Lady Godiva* crossed the border, she was belly down on the deck, about 10 feet off the sand traveling at about 145 knots, or 170 mph. “Nine-seventy-one [tail number of the aircraft] couldn’t go any faster,” remembered Crisafulli, who ran yellow cubes on the engine, pulling the limits of its power. On the flight “in and out” of Iraq, Detrick and Hopple covered the blind spots.

“As the pilots approached suspected danger areas, they would call out a clock position, and those of us in the back would train our weapons in that direction,” Detrick said.

The crew saw several enemy vehicles as they blew across the border, but no one remembers taking hostile fire. *Lady Godiva* was going so fast they couldn’t have heard gunfire anyway. And besides, tracer fire is hard to detect during daylight hours. “We knew we had a long ways to go [240 nautical miles, with zigzags around known enemy concentrations], and didn’t have a lot of ability fuel-wise to jog around any unanticipated bad guys,” Crisafulli recalled.



**T**his mission was very personal for the crew, because they knew Jeff Sims and his men. Crisafulli's unit, the 160th, had worked with guys from 5th Group before, so the trapped team members were well known by the "Night Stalkers" who rushed to their rescue. While Crisafulli flew the bird, Stephens punched in the numbers needed to make their flight as rapid as possible.

### Best Chopper Pilot In The Army

"Randy's the best chopper pilot in the Army," Crisafulli said. "He did the thinking while I did the flying." Before hostilities broke out, Crisafulli and Stephens had practiced carrying each other a half-mile on their shoulders. "We knew we had to get that far away from our helicopter, in case we were ever shot down or forced down behind enemy lines."

Stephens, at 6 feet 4 inches, had gotten the better end of the deal. He had no problem picking up his little buddy, but Crisafulli was ragged out after hauling his 200-pound friend, the "Beastman," only 200 yards. Fortunately, neither Crisafulli nor Stephens had to carry each other this time.

The flight from Rahfa on the Saudi-Kuwaiti border was supposed to take one hour and 45 minutes, but when Crisafulli and Stephens heard the SF team was about to be overwhelmed, they took a huge shortcut.

"We knew there was enemy in the area

we were cutting across," Crisafulli said, "But we just hoped they weren't quality enemy who could successfully engage us." The crew could see the bad guys straight out their Blackhawk's windows as they cut across the desert on the deck. "Bizarre as it may seem, we could also see people [Iraqis] waving at us as we flashed by. However, most of the people dived to the ground."

Crisafulli had a close call. His helicopter almost collided with a donkey as he dropped over a sand dune at a height of about 5 feet. But *Lady Godiva* had to climb to 20 feet when she crossed the Euphrates, because of water spray the Blackhawk's blades were sucking up from the river.

The chopper descended to 10 feet as it approached the spot where Sims and his team were fighting for their lives.

The team was pinned down on the north side of some high-tension wires. At first, Crisafulli thought he could fly under them, but when Stephens yelled, "Small wires underneath!" Crisafulli decided to go up and over the wires like an Olympic high jumper. An aggressive move, but a good one.

When you're doing 135 mph in a cyclic climb, it can really shoot a helicopter high, so Crisafulli dropped power and decelerated as he approached the wires, and then rotated the fuselage over the wires — which threw everyone in the back to the ceiling.

### They're Shooting At Us!

Willard and Diffenderfer were screaming in the intercom, "They're shooting at us! They're shooting at us!"

Detrick remembers seeing muzzle flashes and thinking, "This shit is serious." Willard was trying to

bring his mini-guns to bear on the enemy below, but negative Gs had him pinned to the ceiling. Diffenderfer was hanging onto his gun, halfway in, halfway out of the starboard gunport.

**H**opple poked his M-203 out the port side, trying to nail a vehicle shooting up at the ship, but the evasive maneuvers Crisafulli was taking prevented Hopple from taking a shot.

"As we cleared the wires a second time, Gordie and I shoved open both doors, and pushed our survival rucksacks aside," Detrick said.

Sims saw the Blackhawk coming down the road rolling up and over a pair of 100-foot-high power lines: "He was ballet dancing with the chopper."

At that point — the Iraqis now within 35 meters of his men — Sims fired his last pen-flare to mark his location.

The white flare arcing upwards at him caused Willard to shout, "Missile, port side!" Stephens reacted by punching chaff until a relieved Willard called out, "No, it's a flare."

On the ground, as added insurance, Sims stood up in the midst of the firefight flashing an orange panel at the helicopter. He didn't want its crew to miss him in the middle of the mayhem.

"The man's got huge balls to do something like that," recalled Crisafulli, telling of how he pulled up *Lady Godiva's* nose, rolled her back over the wires again, and plummeted to where Sims' team was trapped.

Crisafulli knew time was running out. He had to slam his Blackhawk down as close to the irrigation ditch as possible if the Green Berets were to get a chance to scramble for safety.

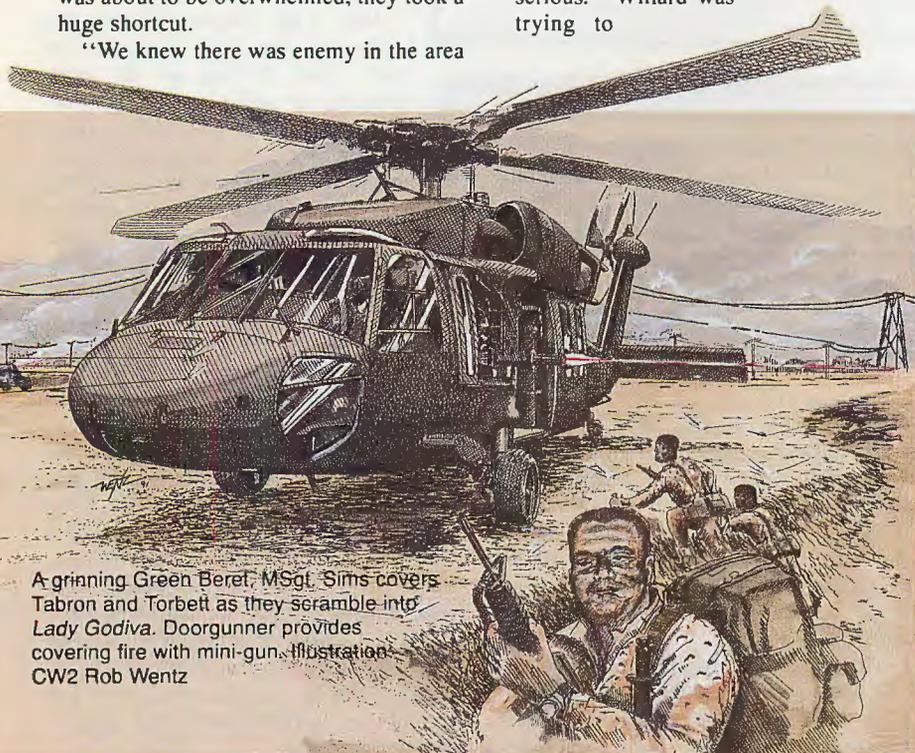
"If we weren't able to literally land on top of them, there was no way they would have made it," said Crisafulli, who put the left front tire of his Blackhawk on the lip of the ditch.

### Movies Make Rescues Like This Seem Easy

War movies make rescues like this seem so easy, but this one was hard on Crisafulli's crew, because the SF team was about 200 meters on the wrong side of the wires from where they were supposed to be, grid-wise. This allowed Iraqis to bring fire to bear on the Blackhawk as it crossed the wires one more time, diving toward the ditch at 120 mph.

The roar of gunfire was deafening as Willard and Diffenderfer turned their mini-guns on the Iraqis and hosed them down. The guns can fire 2,000 or 4,000 rounds per minute each, depending on which rate of fire is selected.

Once on the ground, *Lady Godiva* was a sitting duck. She sustained multiple hits as she provided a sort of shield for the men she came to rescue. The aircraft shuddered as flight controls, main rotor blades, fuel system and fuselage were all damaged by gunfire. Someone blasted what looked like



A grinning Green Beret, MSgt. Sims covers Tabron and Torbett as they scramble into *Lady Godiva*. Doorunner provides covering fire with mini-gun. Illustration: CW2 Rob Wentz



a shotgun slug into the flight controls on the rotor mast, blowing a hole right through the collective pitch.

One of the rounds also passed between Diffenderfer, Stephens and Crisafulli, although no crewmen knew it at the time.

"We found out later that one of the rounds missed Gordie's fully loaded 203 ammo bandolier by a couple of inches. Had it hit one of those 40mm rounds, we all could have been history," Detrick said.

The situation was even worse outside the aircraft. Leaving the relative safety of their fighting hole was a leap of faith for the three Green Berets. Sims noticed Iraqis were churning the ground up with fire as Torbett and Tabron scrambled for the Blackhawk.

"Torbett got up and took approximately three large steps and dived into my side of the aircraft," Detrick said. While Torbett ran a gauntlet of fire to safety, Detrick and Diffenderfer provided covering fire. As soon as Detrick pulled Torbett into the aircraft, he turned around and resumed firing his M16.

"If you had paid attention to the bullets being fired at you, you would have never gotten on the chopper. You would have never tried to run for it, because I had to focus on the bird to go to the bird," Sims recalled.

He and his buddies had made their peace with God earlier that day, and had also made peace with themselves. They were prepared to deal with whatever faced them.

Photo taken 26 February 1991 at KKMC Airfield, Saudi Arabia, after successful rescue mission. Extraction occurred at approximately 1630 on 24 February. Standing left to right are: CW3 Rick Detrick (ground-security team leader), CW4 Jim "Monk" Crisafulli (pilot), CW3 Randy "Beastman" Stephens (pilot), PFC Todd "Diff" Diffenderfer (crew member and mini-gunner), Sgt. 1st Class Gordon "Gordie" Hopple (ground security team member); SSgt. Bruce Willard (crew chief and mini-gunner). Kneeling, left to right, are: MSgt. Jeffrey Sims (recon team leader), SSgt. Roy Tabron (recon team member), Sgt. 1st Class Ronald Torbett (recon team member). Rescue aircraft: MH-60 Blackhawk Tail No. 971. Photo: courtesy CW3 Richard Detrick

But they still wanted to live.

#### Having One of My Guys Die ...

"Having one of my guys die, that's my worst nightmare," noted Sims, who would rather be shot himself than lose one of his men. But he didn't need the SATCOM antenna acting like an anchor as he scrambled from the ditch and began to run toward the chopper.

After seeing Torbett and Tabron make it safely to the helicopter, Sims had crawled out of the ditch with a rucksack full of sensitive material slung over one shoulder, dragging the SATCOM radio with his free hand and firing his M16 while he crouched and ran for the Blackhawk.

As Sims cleared the port side mini-gun

and dived through the open door, he saw three Iraqi soldiers rushing the chopper's rear. He shouted to Willard, "Take 'em out with the meat cleaver!"

The 7.62mm mini-gun was appropriately named, because Willard then literally chopped the Iraqi threesome in half at their waists, also riddling a gun jeep bearing down on the Blackhawk's blind side.

Hopple leaped out of the aircraft with an M16 on his hip, shooting an Iraqi soldier in the chest at point-blank range, just off the tail on the right side of the helicopter.

Although Stephens said it took only 42 seconds from the time Crisafulli rolled their Blackhawk over the high-tension wires until he slammed it down next to an irrigation ditch and picked up Sims, Torbett and Tabron — it seemed like days.

It's been over a year now since the dramatic rescue in Iraq, but Crisafulli has no difficulty recalling minute details of the mission. Even the smile on Sims' face when he climbed out of that ditch and ran for the chopper.

"He was dragging, ducking, shooting and grinning all the way," said Crisafulli. "The smile on Sims' face was as big as the chin bubble on my Blackhawk."

Although she was riddled by gunfire, with several systems shot out, *Lady Godiva* lifted off the ground and carried her crew and three grateful Green Berets safely to KKMC — King Khalid Military City — in Saudi Arabia, where everyone

*Continued on page 67*



# NO MORE SELLOUTS

## Hanoi — What Happened To Our POWs?

by Colonel Millard "Mike" Peck, U.S. Army, Ret.



As government officials indicate they are ready to being the process of "normalizing" relations with Vietnam, many people familiar with the POW/MIA issue are speaking up to state their opposition to any such move. In a 24 October 1991 press conference held at the SOF offices, Colonel Millard "Mike" Peck, former head of the Defense Intelligence Agency's special office for POW/MIAs, made the following statement:

In a pronouncement made last Wednesday, Secretary of State James Baker indicated that the United States is prepared to begin the process for normalization with Vietnam. He further stated that the pace and scope of normalized relations will be dependent upon Hanoi's cooperation in resolving the POW/MIA issue.

The sad fact is that neither Vietnam, Laos, nor the Vietnamese surrogate government in Cambodia have ever been forthcoming or helpful in solving this mystery for the past 18 years.

Since the end of U.S. military involvement in Indochina, the Vietnamese government has used the POW/MIA issue to further its own strategic and political pursuits, because it is the one issue

Captain Mike Peck, left, with VC he captured in Kai-lag District, Long An province, after Tet '68. Peck was company commander of C Co., 2/39th, 9th Div.

guaranteed to bring the United States back to the bargaining table — since public opinion has forced the government to tout the problem as one of America's "highest national priorities."

For years, the United States has been involved in "joint investigations" with the Vietnamese, in which the crash sites of U.S. warplanes have been excavated and examined by U.S. and Vietnamese researchers. Throughout these joint investigations, which included the "Vessey discrepancy cases," the representatives from Hanoi proved to be duplicitous and dishonest throughout.

They took the U.S. investigators to staged crash sites, withheld key witnesses, introduced sources who had obviously been coached, denied the United States access to nearby museums and military facilities, and generally manipulated the entire effort to suit their own political machinations. Remains that were returned during this period were largely unilateral give-backs, which showed evidence of long-term storage.

The experience in Laos, although advertised as a great success, has been even worse in terms of results. One of the little-known facts which seem never to be discussed is the exorbitant amount of U.S. tax dollars expended in this charade.

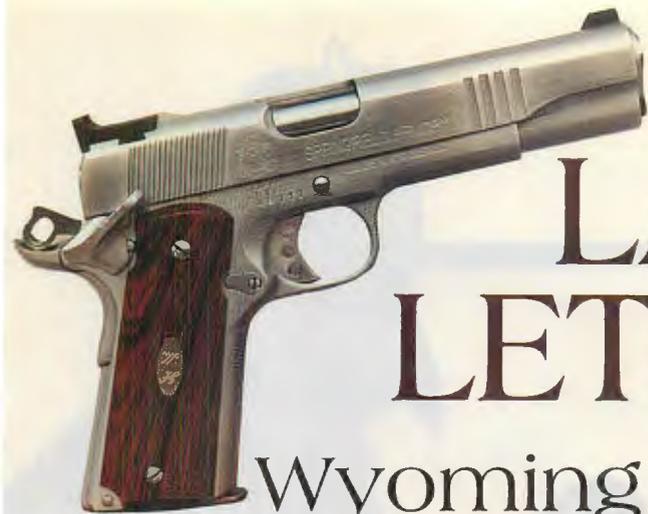
United States intelligence agencies have long known of the existence of a repository containing the skeletal remains of hundreds of United States servicemen, who died at some time while in the hands of the Vietnamese. This facility is dubbed "the Warehouse," and every time the United States does something "nice" or makes a gesture of which Hanoi approves, they reward us by turning over some of their "off the shelf" boxes of remains.

Selling back the remains of an adversary's soldiers is not only contrary to the Laws of War, but contrary to the laws of decency and humanity. Yet, rather than challenging them on this and making firm demands — as we seem so fond of doing to the Iraqis — the United States government has rewarded the gang in Hanoi by opening an "Information Seeking Office" there, to dig around in the archives in an "effort" orchestrated by the same officials who led our investigators around the countryside digging up water buffalo wallows.

Prior to opening this office, which appears to be nothing more than a precursor to a consulate, and then an embassy, the U.S. government turned over to the Vietnamese the salient details contained in the records of all the missing men listed as "discrepancy cases." These documents outlined the extent of our knowledge concerning each case, as well as how we obtained the information.

Accompanying this was a detailed briefing on exactly how the United States conducts POW/MIA investigations and analyses. The rationale for giving away these classified files was to "hold nothing back, so as to gain the trust and confidence of the Vietnamese" — presumably in the hope that they would reciprocate. My question is: Why wasn't that tried in Panama and Iraq? And of course, the answer is that anyone knows such a plan will not work.

Continued on page 70



# LAUCK'S LETHAL .45s

## Wyoming Gunsmith's Custom Combat Conversions

by SOF Staff

**T**HERE are many shingles flapping in the wind for the gunsmith trade, particularly for "custom" pistolsmiths. There are tinkers under shade trees and in basements and garages; there are parts exchangers, and there are hacks and butchers flying blind without a clue how bad their work really is.

Fewer and farther between there are true pistolsmiths with a talent and passion for their work, who not only are proficient technicians in their trade, but who know what good is because they are combat shooters themselves. One of these few-and-far-between combat pistolsmiths is Dave Lauck, proprietor of D & L Sports, in Gillette, Wyoming.

Dave stresses practical machinery first, aesthetics second — but a perusal of any of his work will show both the beauty of functional design and the beauty of talented and careful workmanship. If art is defined as something that has acceptable form, then Dave's metal checkering has to rate as world-class art — but the precision with which he tools the outside of a custom .45 is primarily of interest because it is a reflection of the nearly flawless work-

Optical sights, becoming more popular with competition shooters, are also available from Lauck's custom shop.

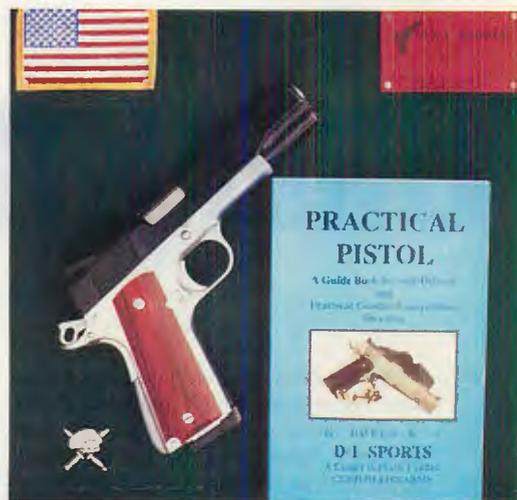


manship he dedicates to the guts of the gun that will never see daylight. A "practical" shooter himself, Dave specializes in the most practical side arm ever — the M1911 Colt and its variants. Lauck is a formally trained, certified armorer with over 20 years experience in that profession. He is also a veteran peace officer, having served as a SWAT countersniper, SWAT team member, and as a SWAT and duty armorer. He has a basket of ribbons from shooting competitions such as the SOF World Championship Three-Gun Matches, the NRA 600-yard countersniper match and the S.D.H.P. Two-Gun Combat Match, and he is a NRA certified instructor for pistol, shotgun and rifle, holding a distinguished expert rating. This combination of technical and practical skill makes Dave a pistolsmith whose advice, and work, is worthy of a customer's trust in an arena where there is no room for excuses.

Dave's shop is a one-at-a-time truly custom operation, offering the whole gamut of custom .45 work, from basic work to enhance accuracy and reliability for street carry, to the wild and exotic specialty rebuilds for special duty or the rapid-fire gong shooting. And all shades in between.

As any accomplished shooter (and gunsmith) will, Dave has his own carefully considered opinions as to what features and options are really appropriate — opinions well worth soliciting — but Dave can custom-build or install whatever the customer wants. And although top-notch work on M1911 pistols is a specialty, it is by no means the limit of what Dave does. Custom versions of the AR15 rifle for practical shooting and countersniping are also grist for his mill, but with reservations: Dave does not work on junk firearms of any kind — handguns or rifles — and he does not work on Title II firearms.

Lauck is also an accomplished author of a number of magazine articles, and of the



Special presentation .45, Dave Lauck's book, presented as awards in SOF 3-Gun Match last September.

book *Practical Pistol, a Guide Book for Self-Defense and Practical Combat/Competition Shooting*. Dave's approach to guns is pretty enlightened. When he shares an opinion, he tells you why he thinks as he does, and his reasoning is based on personal knowledge and experience — refreshing. He leaves room in his reasoning, and gunsmithing, for other options. He, like many of us, favors the .45 Colt autoloader for very specific, practical and sound reasons, not because he is ignorant of anything else.

In short, Lauck's custom pistolsmithing operation is pretty much like the M1911 Colts he specializes in: proven, reliable, honest. No bull. Probably none measurably better.

For information on Lauck's pistolsmithing services or his book, he may be contacted at D & L Sports, Box 651, Gillette, WY 82717; 307-686-4008. ✂



# BLUEPRINT FOR A BREAKTHROUGH

by "Diogenes"



*Editor's Note: The author of this article is an investigator widely regarded as one of this nation's foremost specialists on Southeast Asian cases. He has high-level experience with Congressional investigations, is intimately involved with the U.S. intelligence community and advises at the national policy level.*

*He is fluent on POW/MIA issues (he has recovered identified remains, knows the game and the players), has an insider's knowledge on the status of current Congressional efforts and U.S. policy toward Vietnam, and has traveled in Vietnam within the past 12 months.*

*When asked to informally comment on a "best case" scenario — how he would proceed if asked to investigate POW/MIA cases — he responded by first telling us that, among the small circle of pre-eminent Southeast Asian specialists, POW/MIA cases are the "kiss of death," and the best people in the field "avoid the issue like the plague." Still, he has what he calls a "self-destructive interest" in POW/MIA cases, and when pressed for further details offered his conclusions, which he characterized as a "technical response."*

**S**tripped to their fundamentals, prisoner-of-war and missing-in-action cases arising from America's intervention in Vietnam are properly catego-

## A Professional Looks at How The Senate Select Committee Should Resolve The POW/MIA Issue

riized as a form of archival investigation displaying a significant, unique political component.

By "archival investigation" I refer to the class of investigative effort that seeks to reconstruct events through recourse to collection and analysis of documentary

evidence, forensic evidence and a cycle of interviews with surviving participants.

An investigation becomes archival in nature when the period of time between the target event and the instant investigation encompasses one or more generations of participants. Such investigations are characterized by the attrition of participants, either through retirement, infirmity or death; the generation of records (i.e., "institutional memory"), frequently accompanied by the dispersal of records away from their place of origin; breaks in the chain of forensic evidence; interstitial investigative effort; and, in plain language, a muddy trail that has grown cold.

Each of the delimiting factors noted above present special challenges to the investigator. He meets these challenges by first placing himself back in time and then working his way forward, noting the small troves of information available at each juncture. These troves are then categorized, both as to source and content, and on the basis of these categorizations he builds a fact pattern that ultimately enables him to reconstruct "what really happened."

As applied to Southeast Asian POW/MIA cases, the process should ideally begin with close appraisal of the manner in which prisoners were administered in the several affected locales. Obviously, every prisoner represented intelligence potential.

The captors will have reduced their efforts to exploit this potential to some documentary base, which may or may not be obviously extant. This documentary base will be decentralized and, with the passage of time, fragmented. It will not be uniform, nor will it be chronologically perfected. But it will exist. The investigator's first step, therefore, is to recognize the existence of such a base, locate its components, collate its components and examine their content.

**H**aving collated the baseline documentation, and performed a rudimentary analysis of content, the investigator next seeks to identify the authors and their cohorts. Once identified, he attempts to locate them for the purpose of conducting interviews. Some will be available, some will not. They will vary in credibility and in acuity of memory. Despite the unevenness, a pattern will emerge. The investigator integrates this pattern into his analysis of the baseline data, leading to collateral investigation designed to prove or disprove each investigative postulate.

#### The Next Step

This exhausts the primary data. The investigator now turns to secondary sources. He examines available information and intelligence in other areas or nations, following essentially the same steps he followed in Southeast Asia. He is careful to note contradictions born of operative assumptions at the time the data was generated. He takes careful note of the environment of the times. He factors in the "fog of war." He notes the selective character of the data-collection efforts of the period. He may even wish to attempt provisional grading of his sources and their reliability (an attempt which he does not yet extend to the primary data).

This exhausts the secondary data. The investigator now proceeds to assemble, collate and analyze available forensic evidence. In essence, he wants to see if the forensic traces match the historical account.

For example: The data points to a holding facility that housed prisoners for six months in 1967. The facility was razed in 1976. The site of the facility is known. Is evidence produced through examination of the facility's site consistent with the account of its operation? Digging a crash site is another order of forensic collection, one that is ideally reserved for the concluding phase of an individual investigation which displays gross anomalies with all other available data.

When the forensic collection and analysis are complete, the investigator performs a complete data integration exercise, developing his final categories. Then, and only then, does he break his investigation to individual cases, based on names, dates and places.

We pause to consider that current POW/MIA practice is based on taking an

individual case and, practically speaking, working backward. This is not the way we work cold homicides. This is not the way we work serial killings. This is not even the way we work a garden-variety missing person case. Why then do we work POW/MIA cases — cases that have superficial features in common with those just noted — in such an illogical fashion?

While I am on the theme, I want to raise something that will undoubtedly give some offense. Why do we consider these cases worthy of military attention? True, the events under examination took place in a military context. But I am reminded of a phrase from an old paper generated by the behavioral sciences people at CIA: "The native is the data; he cannot also be the evaluation."

I personally feel these cases would be better served by replacing the specializing military investigators with criminal investigators having homicide experience; permitting the latter to evaluate the former



***This is not the way we work cold homicides. This is not the way we work serial killings. This is not even the way we work a garden-variety missing person case.***



as another source, and filling in environmental or procedural gaps. (Quite possibly a military homicide investigator would represent the best of all choices.)

#### Dealing With Outside Factors

The political component of these cases cannot be ignored. The operational environment is indelibly colored by the "politics of the piece." Southeast Asian POW/MIA-type cases are characterized by extreme levels of interference from individuals and institutions who really have no business near the issue. Some are well meaning, some are not. Taken together, they create a highly counterproductive operational milieu that prevents the professional from going about his tasks in a methodical fashion. Investigations start and stop on political whim, in response to this or that pressure group, personality or institutional agenda.

This really translates to a tragedy for the families involved. We all know that when a dog begins howling in the night, other dogs in the neighborhood began howling in sympathy. Not being well-versed in the language of dogs, we cannot know if they howl knowingly or intelligently. Nonetheless, we hear the dogs howling and we draw our guard, fearing that the dogs know something we do not.

I once had occasion to do some howling

of my own. I developed a lead that led me to recover fragments of the mortal remains of a U.S. Air Force officer. Although the affair was shrouded in secrecy and intrigue, I did what I thought decency demanded and (when I returned from Laos) located the gentleman's wife. I telephoned her and, with some embarrassment, explained who I was and why I called her, and then proceeded to give her a full account of what I had done, why I had done it, and what the result was. Perhaps I am naive, but I confess to being shocked by her reaction.

"Oh, Mr. — — — —," she exclaimed, her voice choked with emotion, "you are the first person who ever told me all of these things. You are the first person who ever explained anything to me like a human being."

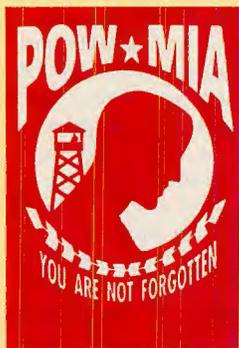
I had done precious little. I merely told her that her husband had been shot down at such-and-such a place; that such-and-such an immediate response was given; that

those efforts at the time were futile; that years later, the crash site was uncovered; that a disingenuous band of indigenous opportunists exploited what they found; that I heard of the matter; that I went skulking across a border or two, grabbed what I could and did the right thing. In Asia, this is the sort of thing one does between drinks, yet it seemed so monumental to the woman, and she was so pitifully grateful, that I began to wonder how well-served by the U.S. bureaucracy are these families of the absent.

**B**y leaping extension, this leads me to the "Blame the Vietnamese Syndrome." The uncouth among us want to raise hell with Vietnam because "Vietnam" is what they remember the fuss was all about. They vaguely know the United States does not have diplomatic relations with Vietnam, and with an equal if not excessive vagueness, believe the Vietnamese are "holding out."

They fail to recognize that the United States has something approaching normal diplomacy with Laos; that the bulk of the most troublesome POW/MIA cases are Laotian-based; that the Lao have a concept of "truth" rather unusual in contrast to our culturally specific conventions, and that in Vietnamese parlance, a "Laotian promise" is market slang for a goddamned lie.

All of the horsepower of big govern-



ment is directed to Vietnam. We could say, with equal measure of grace and truth, that while one is emotionally pre-conditioned to empathize with the notion of "American hostages" — in a very real sense, 60 million Viet-

namese are being held hostage by some 2,000 American families.

**W**e have Vietnam politically linked to Laotian and Cambodian excess, and we are telling the Vietnamese that we won't help them resolve their domestic diplomacy until they help us resolve ours. The current "road map" for U.S.-Vietnam restoration is linked to Cambodian and (to a lesser extent) Laotian misadventure, as if Vietnam were the arbiter of Indochina.

I often wonder why that is — I often

The Senate effort does not contemplate any visits to Vietnam. They have a table of domestically focused categories to follow, and that is as far as they will go. They will hear the whistle-blowers, the defectors, the activists, the "POW/MIA Inc." issuers, the fabricators and the conspiracy theorists. When they are done, all who are of a mind to do so will be able to sit back and say, "We have thoroughly examined the matter and here is the truth."

#### The Role And Reality Of Senate Investigations

If we view this strictly in a domestic light, it will have been money and time well-spent and the issue well-served. We cannot and should not extend that article of belief to the greater notion that we will know anything more about the fate of the absent than we already know. The Senate show is a circular exercise in rhetoric. Nothing more, nothing less.

By all accounts, the Senate investigation is bumping its head on the ceiling of national security; tail-chasing with the obligatory Soviet tale-teller,

tasks myself. (Of course we would need stenographers, transcribers and support staff as well). I would equip the team with cameras, tape recorders, a powerhouse Macintosh computer system with a scanner, and whatever other tools of the trade they might need.

I would decamp to Hanoi with nothing else in hand. No lists of the missing, no extracts of earlier investigations, no political agenda and no preconceptions.

I would set the archivists loose, hunting records I can anticipate the Vietnamese would offer with splendid cooperation. After all, when the POW/MIA issue is disposed of, a U.S. Embassy will magically appear in Hanoi and a Vietnamese Embassy will appear in Washington. (A former legal secretary of some prominence in the POW/MIA issue recently stated that anyone who believes normalization with Vietnam will resolve the POW/MIA issue obviously doesn't know the situation. Really, this woman's ignorance is appalling. One assumes she has a forum because she has a constituency. The 500,000 registered U.S. voters in the Southeast Asian community are also a constituency that can control two [or possibly more] key Congressional districts. While some might agree with her, many do not).

As the records arrived, we would scan them into the computer. My document examiner would have a go at the originals, just to see what he could see. Once the documents were well-managed, we would give the detectives and interrogators freedom of movement. As they conducted their interviews, the anthropologist would be out canvassing the villages or hamlets proximate to the holding facilities.

**E**ach interviewee would be orally questioned, and he (or she) would also be asked to write out a complete statement in longhand. Our linguist would take the written statements and subject them to technical evaluation. Then, as we narrowed our investigation, the archaeologist and our forensic scientist would do their stuff.

#### It Would Take Serious Work

Working 12-15 hours daily, seven days per week for a year, we could probably leave Vietnam with some idea of "what happened over there."

Decamping to Washington, the team would be enlarged with the addition of a dozen or so federal investigators. I have a preference for GAO (Government Accounting Office) investigators and CRS (Congressional Research Service) researchers. I would probably also have a squad from NARS (National Archives and Record Service) involved. They would be expected to lay waste to the extant U.S. records on the issue. We would also scratch Canadian, Australian, British, French, Korean and Soviet materials by way of flourish.

Having collected and massaged U.S.

*In a very real sense,  
60 million Vietnamese are  
being held hostage by some  
2,000 American families.*

wonder how real that is. I often wonder why we don't get awfully stiff with the Laotians who, after all, are facilitating many tons of opium into world markets, who have a spate of unresolved American military deaths, and who historically give very little in the way of satisfaction.

There was a marvelous article by a chap named Gerard Calla (See "POW/MIA," Nov. '91.) — really the best thing I have ever seen — which describes the micro-process eloquently.

The macro-process is quite another thing. We now have a Senate leadership committee thundering on the issue, staffed with an odd assortment of Asia hands, seemingly directed to domestic diplomacy in anticipation of U.S.-Vietnamese statecraft, saying nothing to the meat of the trouble.

We can alternately damn and praise the personalities involved in this — they run the gamut from a Boston prosecutor to a Thai-leavened Peace Corps idealist, to a Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) burn-out case, to a mad historian — but that is tantamount to treating the symptom and not the disease. The issue of *who* looks at this mess is infinitely insignificant compared to the *how*.

heedlessly bashing itself against the glass palace like a disoriented sparrow smashing itself against a windowpane. They cannot, and should not, be expected to resolve any POW/MIA cases.

And if they don't do it, who should? The narrow political component should be confined to what it really is: one of the modalities of U.S.-Vietnamese relations. One assumes that if the Vietnamese were properly approached and appropriately motivated, they could set the entire issue right in a matter of a few months. This in fact is what seems to be happening right now. Whether it is "done right" or "done fast enough" is a matter open to individual interpretation.

#### One Possible Plan

If I were asked to play this game, my first step would be to recruit a 12-man team consisting of two British homicide detectives, two interrogators (civilian, not military), two archivists, an anthropologist, and archaeologist, a forensic scientist, a document examiner and a linguist (not an interpreter, mind you, but a linguist: the reason given below).

I would want to handle any analytical

and foreign records, then integrating the whole, we would not begin examining unresolved individual cases. A trip back to Hanoi would probably be in the cards. I estimate we would wind up with about 10% worth of serious discrepancy cases requiring intensive individual explorations. These we would work much in the manner one works a cold homicide. I cannot predict how much success we would have.

**T**his is not the only way to proceed, nor can I claim outright that this is the best way. This is merely how I would proceed if I had my own way. The model is, of course, specific to Vietnam. Other methods might have to be applied in Laos and Cambodia. I frankly have a better feeling about gaining cooperation from the Vietnamese than from the wily Lao.

I expect there will be many who take offense at these suggestions and the manner in which I present them. Many will no doubt feel I place too much faith in the Vietnamese. Some people harbor bitterness and resentment toward our former enemy — including a number of former prisoners of war who currently speak out on the POW/MIA issue. Although I spent no time in the Hanoi Hilton, I used to agree with them completely.

But that was before I went back to Vietnam and spent some time digging around, testing the limits of their patience. During the course of my career, I have gone toe-to-toe with Vietnamese intelligence managers on more than one occasion, and I am not easily misled. Nor am I easily impressed.

#### A Mutuality Of Interest

I firmly believe the Vietnamese are ready to be cooperative. A number of factors make this a near certainty, not the least of which is the issue of Vietnam's economic survival. A clear indication of their sincerity would be their willingness to accept an investigative effort such as I have outlined.

The United States has investigators in place in Hanoi already, but I am not convinced they are communicating their needs in a way the Vietnamese can understand. Neither am I convinced they have a firm concept of how to proceed. I view the Hanoi operations as "show the flag" and little more.

You cannot walk into these cases with a preconception such as "believe" or "not believe." A professional investigator neither believes nor disbelieves the existence of live American prisoners of war in Southeast Asia. He simply doesn't know until he looks.

You also cannot walk into these cases paying much attention to pressure groups and single-issue noisemakers who infect this issue like a cancer. I have never seen a single constructive accomplishment from any of them; indeed, a few of them have just made the matter all the more difficult to resolve with their meddling.

People who floated money marked with messages, or people who offer rewards are cases in point. You simply cannot imagine how many problems that sort of nonsense causes. Crash sites are disturbed beyond recognition, masses of false information swamp the intelligence system, stretching analytical capabilities to the breaking point, while our allies in the region are horrified.

There is also the fine point about the demands of craft necessity vs. the moral

doubt fell victim to fragmented commands, and after being shunted from place to place were executed by the side of the road somewhere (again, no records). The model individual search along these lines was the hunt for photographer Sean Flynn, conducted through the medium of taking oral histories from available witnesses, recorded for posterity in a fine piece of broadcast journalism.

In the end, you have to accept that war results in many tragedies, and the missing



## Yet, curiously, most great investigators believe that the word "never" doesn't exist.



issue of how one interfaces with the involved families. Any detective who has ever worked a homicide or missing-person case will tell you that the victim's family eats up valuable time with all sorts of speculation and emotional acting-out, while a family activist can be a downright liability.

Both the United States and Vietnam have now rather desperately agreed that any family wishing to visit Vietnam and make its own investigation is free to do so. The Vietnamese in particular have stated families are free to travel anywhere in the country they wish to, without any sort of restriction whatsoever. I shudder to think of the damage that will be done by such innocents abroad. Still, I suppose there may be a healing effect. If I had lost a loved one, I know I would want to see where it happened. I might also find myself unable to resist asking a question or two. But in my business, it is a rule that you never let emotion cloud an investigation. I would have a colleague make any serious inquiries.

**N**evertheless, I believe it is morally wrong to keep these people in the dark. Any humane investigation should have a mechanism in place for keeping the victim's family informed of the basic facts of the case, along with any significant developments. I am shocked that a number of families appear to be genuinely ignorant of what has been done, 17 years after the war's end.

#### And A Bitter Pill

The final point that needs to be made is a bitter pill for some. We will never know what happened to some of these men. Just as U.S. forces, on occasion, summarily executed prisoners (and kept no records), so did North Vietnamese forces.

A man who was shot down, survived the crash and made his way into the jungle may well have died there alone. Some no

man is one of these. No investigator, regardless of his genius, can change this. You can come close; you can catch glimpses; you can erect a best-working hypothesis of what may or might have happened.

**M**any times, hard work and patience pay off splendidly, and you reach the heart of darkness. But not always, and in the Southeast Asian POW/MIA arena there are some cases that will never be solved.

No investigator likes that notion. No great investigator will knowingly begin a case that cannot be concluded. The psychic damage is simply too severe, as a great investigator will never rest until he knows. If he finds he can never know, the frustration will burn like a noxious ember forevermore.

Yet, curiously, most great investigators believe that word "never" doesn't exist. They believe there is nothing they cannot know. While I am by no means to be considered great, I think I can appreciate the feeling.

I once had occasion to seek out the identity of a Vietnamese subject, identified only as "a man who walked with a limp," who figured in a 15-minute conversation that may have taken place in Saigon, Paris or Los Angeles with a long-deceased individual who left no record. It took me seven years to discover the limping man's identity and six months to find him. "How could you possibly know?" he asked me.

How, indeed? To the untrained mind, deserts are deserts and oceans are oceans. To the investigator, deserts are grains of sand — oceans, droplets of water. Every human action leaves its trace. In the macro-investigation of the missing man, we know that we may never know, and that is what we know. The micro-investigation is another, rather nasty piece of work. It lives between the blades of grass in a far-off land. ☒



# TRADING WIT

**M**any Asia watchers suspected President Bush was going to announce renewed trade with the Vietnamese during his recent visit to Singapore, while Congressman Steve Solarz simultaneously visited Hanoi.

However, former top Soviet KGB official General Oleg Kalugin's sensational revelations that U.S. prisoners of war were interrogated by his agents in Vietnam, years after Hanoi's alleged release of all

U.S. POWs in 1973, may have put a damper on such an announcement.

Reportedly, the Bush administration's Vietnam policy is being greased by U.S. oil companies' money. According to Senate sources, large campaign donations have been promised if trade with Vietnam is renewed this year. These sources add that U.S. oil companies have informed Hanoi they are ready to put as much as \$1 billion "up front" for oil exploration rights in Vietnam.

Southeast Asia's oil fields have been equated to the North Sea's, and are considered by some as the world's last-known large untapped oil resources. As such, petroleum giants Mobil, Shell/Hunt Oil, Exxon, Texaco, Amoco, Phillips and Conoco are all interested.

The oil companies aren't alone, for AT & T, along with the Multinational Business Development Coalition are among those pressuring the Bush administration for renewed trade and diplomatic



The Bush administration recently upgraded U.S. diplomatic relations with communist Laos from "consular" to "ambassadorial" because of alleged "excellent cooperation" by that government on the POW/MIA issue. They are about to embark on a similar policy of upgrading relations with the Vietnamese government, based on the same fallacious perception.

According to numerous reports, including one by Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta in the 24 June 1991 *Washington Post*, the so-called excellent cooperation by the Laotian government has amounted to no more than ransoming the remains of MIAs for up to \$1 million per crash-site visit.

So far, the Laotians have allowed only 13 of 253 known sites to be excavated, and traveling just one hour outside Vientiane, the capital city, requires government permission and the company of paid guides.

Insurmountable bureaucracy, corruption and lack of infrastructure make business in any Third World country a risky affair. Normalizing relations won't change this.

Propaganda billboards may come down with communism on the wane, but the Vietnamese communist government shows no sign of changing its hard line.

This only encourages Hanoi to make the same demands. As with the Laotians, there is convincing evidence that the Vietnamese are stonewalling on resolution of the POW/MIA issue.

#### Coke Bottle Diplomacy

Another justification used for renewing trade and diplomatic relations with Hanoi is the rationalization that communism is dead. And it is, if you believe the new wave of political thinking by many political analysts, including some in the U.S. State Department and the Bush administration.

They rationalize that it is only a matter of time before the few remaining vestigial Marxist-Leninist regimes fall. So, the way to speed up this process is through renewed trade and diplomatic relations,

# H THE ENEMY

relations with Vietnam at the expense of the families and friends of POW/MIAs, and of human rights for the Vietnamese people.

One billion dollars would keep Vietnamese communists afloat for some time, enabling them to remain obdurate as always on the POW/MIA issue. Veterans organizations and the American public in general must demand of the Bush administration that this money be put in trust until the POW/MIA issue is finally resolved.

## Should The United States Normalize Relations With Vietnam?

by Michael Bengé

Photos by Edward Rasen

and by flooding these countries with the "new missionaries of democracy" — capitalistic-minded Americans. When this approach was introduced to China several years ago it was termed "Coke bottle" diplomacy.

However, Coke bottle diplomacy hasn't worked in China, and it won't work in Vietnam. Similar to missionaries who flooded China to convert the heathens to Christianity, the missionaries of democracy are going to show communist unbelievers in Vietnam that the road to salvation is capitalism. And according to Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), these missionaries to Vietnam will also be able to discover the fate of our POW/MIAs in the process.

China's history has either been forgotten or is being ignored; despite centuries of indoctrination by evangelic missionaries, few Chinese converted to Christianity, nor has Coke bottle diplomacy worked there. The present regime is no different from those in the past, and if democratic changes come about in China, or in Vietnam, it will be through attrition of the aging draconian rulers in both countries rather than by contact with Western products.

Communism may be on the wane, but this doesn't translate into democracy — for many, it may just mean substitution of another type of ruthless dictatorial regime for communism, such as the military junta now in Burma.

#### Kalugin's Surprise Statement

Kalugin's surprise statement was made during an interview with Jeff McMullen on Australia's "60 Minutes" TV program. A second KGB agent interviewed on the broadcast revealed that some American POWs may have been taken to the Soviet Union on regular supply flights from Vietnam.

These revelations were supported by retired National Security Agency analysts Jerry Mooney and Terry Minarcin, who said they intercepted Soviet and Vietnamese radio messages indicating 50 to 75 captured U.S. fliers were flown to the Soviet Union for interrogation (*San Diego Union*, 1 December 1991 and *The New York Times*, 8 December 1991).

Furthermore, a third KGB agent interviewed in the Soviet Union stated that nine American POWs he interrogated later had their throats cut, apparently by the North Vietnamese.

Many are wondering why Kalugin would make such claims. Some feel he's just promoting his recently published book, but there is a more plausible explanation. I believe the KGB learned

Vietnamese "Colonel" Bui Tin was proposing to testify before the U.S. Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs in November 1991 that the Soviet Union had interrogated U.S. POWs in Vietnam — something the Soviets had previously denied.

The Vietnamese were piqued at the Soviets for decreased aid and for betraying Marxism-Leninism by recent moves toward capitalism and democracy. As a dog marks off territory, Kalugin preempted Bui Tin's testimony by his revelations, adding fuel to the fire by allowing one of his agents to reveal that nine American POWs questioned by Soviets were later murdered by the North Vietnamese.

This put the onus on Vietnam and took heat off the former Soviet Union, now very vulnerable in that its remnants seek massive aid from the United States. Kalugin knows Americans well, for he served as an undercover KGB agent under the guise of an information/press officer at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, D.C., for several years.

Kalugin was afraid the United States might insist that a prerequisite for aid would be opening KGB files on U.S. POWs moved to the Soviet Union from Vietnam, the Korean War and World War II. A brilliant calculated hard-liner, Kalugin fears democratic-minded reformists in the former Soviet Union might allow this to happen, as it did to some extent after East Germany's collapse.

#### More Than A Colonel

For a colonel, Bui Tin has impressive credentials. He is currently editor of the communist party newspaper, deputy editor of the People's Army newspaper and a high-ranking member of the Vietnamese communist party. He also accepted the surrender of the South Vietnamese government in 1975 and claims to have led the invasion into Cambodia, where he served as highest-ranking officer there for three years. If this is true, it belies his alleged rank of a mere colonel.

Before his testimony to the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs this past November, Bui Tin was incorrectly introduced by Sen. Kerry as a defector from the communist regime in Hanoi. Keep in mind, Kerry was a prominent member of Vietnam Veterans Against the War, has sponsored or co-sponsored considerable Senate legislation favoring Vietnam in the past few years, and is an ardent supporter of Coke bottle diplomacy for Vietnam (but, hypocritically, he disapproves of the

administration's China trade policy).

"Colonel" Bui Tin is no defector, but was sent to the West on a mission. Under the guise of obtaining U.S. support for democratic forces within the Vietnamese government, Bui Tin is trying to con the Senate and the administration into accelerating renewed trade and diplomatic relations, in order to curry favor within the communist party. If Hanoi can be convinced that his advocacy helped speed up this process, he and his particular group of Marxists might gain control of the party.

Kalugin is presently on a Cable News Network (CNN)-sponsored tour of the United States. In appearances before the media, he presents the KGB as a benign research organization composed of choirboys who had no interest in how U.S. pilots, using then-newly developed electronic warfare systems, were able to successfully avoid the sophisticated SAM missile defense of Hanoi — the same system used for primary defense of the Soviet Union.

According to records, a disproportionate number of U.S. electronic warfare specialists known to have survived bailout were never released in 1973, compared to the number of pilots. The most logical explanation is that they were moved into the Soviet Union.

When asked whether U.S. POWs from the Korean War and World War II were held in the Soviet Union, Kalugin flippantly responded there would have been no reason to have done so, as it already had enough people. However, recent releases of French and Japanese World War II POWs give more than enough reasons to disbelieve this KGB disclaimer.

The Senate Select Committee on POW/MIAs received a transcript of the "60 Minutes" interviews of Kalugin and the others this past August, and a tape of the program in October. However, reviewing statements made by committee member — and former POW — Sen. John McCain during the November hearings, he seemed woefully ignorant of the interviews and the claims by Kalugin and his KGB agents about interrogating U.S. POWs in Vietnam after 1973.

#### The French Experience

The committee didn't act on this information until intense media pressure was applied in December, even though Kalugin had stated in his August interview that he would meet with the committee or testify at any time. This negligent lapse gave the acting KGB adequate time to expunge evidence of U.S. POWs from their files. Also, when committee researchers finally interviewed Kalugin in Moscow, it was reported they failed to ask him the names and whereabouts of KGB agents who had interrogated the U.S. POWs in Vietnam. One might wonder if this was a calculated oversight.

There is growing evidence that U.S.

## Coke bottle diplomacy hasn't worked in China, and it won't work in Vietnam.



Relics of America's war in Vietnam still bear grim testimony to our previous involvement.

POWs were taken to the Soviet Union from Vietnam, the Korean War and World War II. It is also probable that Hanoi is still holding live POWs, not in Vietnam but across the border in Laos. According to a January 1969 Rand Corp. report, after the Geneva agreements ended the French Indochina war in July 1954, Vietnamese communists continued to hold 9,537 French POWs confirmed as captured by them in Laos. Reportedly, nearly 1,000 French POWs were returned by the Vietnamese communists after 16 years of claiming they were holding no prisoners, after the French paid ransom in the form of foreign aid. Hanoi expects no less from the United States.

As late as 1982, Hanoi was still selling remains of French soldiers killed in Vietnam to the government of France — 28 years after the communists had agreed to release them. There is ample intelligence on Hanoi's warehousing remains of U.S. MIAs. There is also forensic proof that these warehoused remains are coated to preserve them for later release. This leads one to suspect the Vietnamese artificially age bones of Americans to mask the fact that prisoners were murdered after capture and imprisonment. Possibly among the remains are those of the nine POWs mentioned by the KGB agent.

After the 1973 Vietnam POW release, former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger promised Hanoi over \$4 billion, suspected by some to be ransom for remaining POWs. This money was never given to Vietnam because of its continued violations of the Paris peace accords.

#### Deplorable Human Rights Record

Besides the POW/MIA issue, there are several other reasons why the United States shouldn't renew trade and diplomatic relations with Vietnam at this

time. Vietnam has a deplorable human rights record, probably equaling that of China. The International League for Human Rights, in their July 1990 report, charged the Vietnamese government with violating 17 provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, including the rights to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and freedom of expression, assembly and association.

In June 1991, *AsiaWatch* released a report listing 52 persons imprisoned in Vietnam for expression of religious and political beliefs. Some have since died in Hanoi's harsh prison system.

Vietnam's communist government also practices a form of apartheid against the United States' former allies. Testimony from former U.S. Secretary of the Navy James Webb last year in hearings chaired by Congressman Steve Solarz on renewing trade told how former members of the South Vietnamese government and military, and their families, are treated as non-persons with no rights of citizenship or access to medical care.

Montagnards, Amerasians, religious associates and their families receive similar treatment. When applying for reunification with family members in the United States under the Orderly Departure

Program, the relatives must pay a huge bribe or their application will be put on the bottom of the pile.

In lobbying for renewed trade with Vietnam, AT & T argues that establishing telecommunications with Vietnam will help our former allies and the families of Vietnamese emigrants to the United States. Not so! The greatest beneficiary would be the communist government, much more than the ordinary citizens of Vietnam, for this would enable the government to coerce its population to solicit more American commodities and money.

What AT & T forgets to mention is that a reported 50% tax is levied against people by the Vietnamese government on all goods and money sent from relatives in the United States.

#### Next Best Thing To Being There

Also, the way AT & T presents their argument, one assumes the Vietnamese have a phone in every home, as we do in the United States. Few in Vietnam can afford such a luxury. Only communist party members or businessmen who pay a bribe to the local party would enjoy such a privilege. The common citizen would have to go to the local post office to receive a call from the United States — and this would entail paying a considerable bribe. Establishing an AT & T link to Vietnam would not stop this extortion, and it should not come as any surprise that these phone conversations are monitored by Hanoi's secret police.

Nor are investment opportunities as lucrative as portrayed by the Multinational Business Development Coalition. Besides the almost insurmountable bureaucracy, corruption and lack of infrastructure, the Vietnamese government has no clear property rights or system of fair adjudication — both musts for large-scale investment.

*Continued on page 71*



**T**he future of North American sport hunting is being threatened by an Arizona initiative regarding leg-hold traps on public lands, which many believe is a carefully contrived attack on hunting and fishing.

An initiative drafted by the Arizonans for Safety and Humanity on Public Lands seeking to outlaw leg-hold traps in Arizona will appear on this November's ballot as Proposition 200. Arizona's Game and Fish Department, along with national sportsmen's organizations, have "red-flagged" the proposition because they consider it a cleverly written anti-hunting initiative camouflaged under vague and misleading references to the humane treatment of Arizona's wildlife.

Arizona's state wildlife commissioners drew outrage from proposition supporters and animal rights activists after issuing a public statement charging the initiative "... would establish a state animal rights policy which would threaten the rights of Arizonans to fish and hunt." If the initiative passes, many national sportsmen's groups believe it will create an agenda for anti-hunting groups nationwide.

In a copyrighted 9 December 1991 *Arizona Republic* article, Barry Burkhardt, the *Republic* outdoor editor, quoted Gordon Whiting of Klondyke, Arizona, (who became chairman of the Game and Fish Department this past January) as saying, "It's an animal rights initiative, thinly veiled as an anti-trapping initiative."

Section 2, paragraph 17-301(D); lines 7, 8 and 9 of the proposition specifically outlaws the use of "... any leg-hold trap, conibear-style trap of the instant kill or body-gripping-type design ...," targeting the most controversial equipment used by trappers.

Whiting and others are not specifically concerned about Section 2,

but rather the wording in Section 1 of the initiative; its Declaration of Policy, Paragraph B, where the objective is declared to be "... the intention and desire of the people of Arizona to make our public lands safe and humane for all creatures ... we desire to manage our wildlife and protect our property by humane and non-lethal methods."

Gill Shaw, a Phoenix attorney and chairman of the initiative group, said he was angered by Whiting's and the commissioners' charges that the proposition is an animal rights agenda, and he categorically denied having any connection with animal rights groups.

"We have not received money from these groups," Shaw said, "nor did we use paid signature gatherers. This initiative is aimed at making our public lands safer by removing dangerous traps, and in no way does this initiative ban hunting. In fact, it

specifically states in Paragraph E, lines 14 and 15, that there are no restrictions on the taking of wildlife with guns or other implements in hand."

While Shaw claim-



# TRAP FLAP

**Anti Leg-hold Drive  
Puts All Hunters in Jeopardy**

**by Galen Geer Photos Courtesy Arizona Game and Fish Department**

ed his organization is not anti-hunting, others disagreed. Arizona Game and Fish Commissioner Beth Woodin has warned the public to keep a critical eye on Proposition 200. Woodin's wariness of the initiative is significant to sportsmen because her personal philosophy leans toward animal rights. Before being appointed commissioner, Woodin was involved in the Nature Conservancy and both animal and environmental activism.

**“W**hen I look at this [Proposition 200],” Woodin observed, “I wonder what they are really after. I think there is a hidden agenda that includes court efforts to ban hunting in Arizona.”

Shaw disagreed. When questioned about the initiative's declaration of policy being used as a springboard into court for a ban on hunting, he said that notion is something trumped up by the wildlife department. “Any lawyer who tried to take that into court to stop hunting would be run out of the courtroom,” Shaw said.

Mesa, Arizona attorney Jack Simon, a former president of the Arizona Wildlife Federation, was quoted in the *Arizona Republic* about the initiative's confusing nature, explaining, “Fifty attorneys would look at it and say it doesn't threaten hunting and fishing; the

next 50 would say it does.”

This confusion is what has officials worried. Exactly what will Proposition 200 outlaw? According to Arizona game and fish commissioners, the reference within paragraph (E) “... that no restriction in paragraph (D) shall prohibit the taking of wildlife with guns ...” refers only to paragraph (D) and says nothing about paragraph (B), which is under the Declaration of Policy.

#### No Fishing, Hunting Or Trapping In Arizona?

If Proposition 200 passes, the commissioners noted in their official policy statement, “... enforcement of this animal rights policy to manage wildlife only by ‘non-lethal methods’ would prohibit all recreational fishing, hunting and trapping currently enjoyed in Arizona.”

Shaw said the commissioners are really attempting to cloud the issue because they and the state Game and Fish Department are afraid of losing power and position in Arizona.

“This is not an animal rights issue,” Shaw insisted. “We want to make our public lands safe by eliminating leg-hold traps.” He went on to claim many hunters he spoke with agreed leg-hold and similar traps should be removed from public lands; that traps are the issue, not hunting.

The Arizona commissioners disagreed in their position statement, pointing out “... the drafters of the initiative made frequent use of the words

‘humane’ and ‘inhumane.’ The commission believes these terms are misleading and masking the real issue, which is whether fishing, hunting and all other consumptive uses of wildlife should be prohibited by state policy.”

Such a goal has been the brass ring for every animal rights group. In Arizona, sportsmen believe such organizations may be about to grab it.

Arizonans for Wildlife Conservation (AWC), a committee organized to campaign against Proposition 200, have been joined by pro-hunting groups fighting the initiative. Rick Story of the Wildlife Legislative Fund of America (WLFA) has been working on the issue with AWC Chairman Frank Riggs.

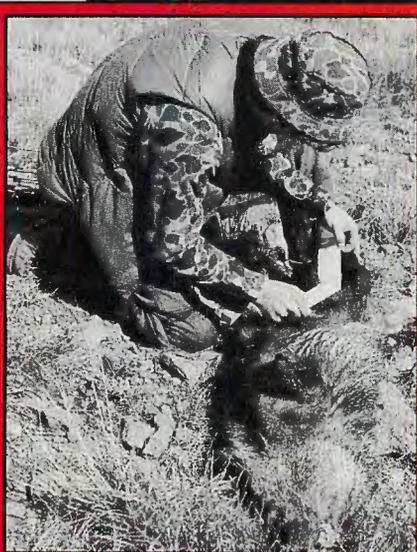
“The WLFA has helped us organize the ground work,” Riggs said, “but there is a lot yet to be done, and then some serious fundraising efforts.”

**T**erri O’Grady of the National Rifle Association has been monitoring this situation, and in December made a full report to the NRA’s Hunting and Conservation Committee, and NRA President Richard Riley. Afterwards Riley issued the following statement for *Gun Week* and *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*.

“Although the initiative surreptitiously attempts to address only trapping, which in itself would seriously impede game management and predator control, its stated purpose is to have wildlife harvested in a non-lethal manner. How can one hunt or use game for food in a non-lethal manner?”

“This initiative would abolish current law and deny professional wildlife managers the ability to sustain and re-introduce wildlife as they have successfully done for generations.”

With the NRA and WLFA solidly behind the Arizona conservation organization, there is hope this initiative will be defeated. Bob Saile, the *Denver Post*'s outdoor editor, wrote about Proposition 200 in his 20 December 1991 column, raising important questions about the veracity of



Hidden barbs in the language of Proposition 200 would threaten all hunting, such as this successful javelina hunt, despite claims that the initiative only targets specific traps.

Shaw's organization. For example, Saile questioned how Proposition 200 supporters can suggest trappers and government pest-control agents catch problem animals by using live-capture baited box traps, followed by relocation of the offending animal, if it's a case of predator control.

Saile pointed out that Shaw's inane concept of non-lethal wildlife management may have "boxed" Proposition 200 into a corner the Arizona voters will not let him out of, come November.



Arizona Game and Fish Commissioner Beth Woodin, an environmentalist and animal activist, said she believes there is a hidden anti-hunting agenda in Proposition 200.

### Animal Rights Hot Spot

Arizona has bounced to the forefront of the animal rights conflict because it is a targeted state. When the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), Fund for Animals, and their splinter groups announced a "hit list" of states in which to seek a ban on trapping and sport hunting, it named Arizona, Colorado, California and Montana. Animal rights groups may feel confident because of the urbanization of these state's populations.

Although hunting has been significant in these regions' past (while still an important rural activity), the concentration of urban residents who may have lost touch with outdoor activities, or moved to Western urban areas from Eastern cities, is having an impact on how state agencies manage their wildlife.

In three targeted states — California, Colorado and Montana — animal rights groups have won significant victories. Mountain lion hunting was banned in California; Montana grizzly bear hunting has been prohibited, and Colorado animal rights groups were able to force their state to begin dismantling the spring bear season.

"We're seeing a trend," Woodin noted, "of urban people who do not have any hunting, outdoor or wildlife background or tradition taking over the management of wildlife through the courts or legislature."

A trend of management through litigation or legislation has already burned the Arizona Game and Fish Commission. In

one of a growing number of confrontations, the Fund for Animals group mounted a successful court action this past October to stop a limited-license elk depredation hunt near Flagstaff, after the hunt had opened. However, Shaw contends that animal rights groups are not very active in Arizona.

"I think a lot of our support is gut reaction to things people find distasteful," Shaw said, adding again that he resented implications of his organization being tied with animal rights groups. He called his group an outgrowth of the efforts of Larry Sunderland, whose dog was caught in a leg-hold trap on public land several years ago. When Sunderland attempted to free his dog, he was also injured. This prompted him to launch a campaign against leg-hold traps in Arizona.

When all of Sunderland's efforts to ban such traps failed, Arizonans for Safety and Humanity on Public Lands (Shaw's group) was formed. They made their first attempt to have an initiative put on the 1990 ballot, but gathered only 90,000 signatures. According to Shaw, the reason they failed was because there were 30 initiatives competing for signatures that year. His group hit the streets again, successfully gathering 170,000 signatures to get it on this November's ballot.

Riggs of the AWC and several members of the state's Game and Fish Department do not believe Shaw's group could gather signatures so efficiently without paid workers. Shaw told *SOF* he used all volunteers. "Our books are available for inspection. We didn't pay anyone to gather signatures," he added.

As a veteran of dozens of similar battles across the country while representing the WLFA, Story was also amazed at how quickly the Arizona group was able to rebound. "My experience has been that once you make a run at an

initiative and it fails, your volunteer help dissolves, and if you want another go at it you need outside help," he said.

### Volunteers Or Employees

At this time, no one on the Arizona commission, or anyone else, has proven Shaw's group used paid canvassers. Shaw maintains the initiative has caught people's attention because it deals with an issue they feel strongly about locally — not because there is an organized animal rights movement in Arizona. A computer check of news stories published in the *Arizona Republic*, however, turned up 55 articles covering animal rights in 1991.

As for links to any out-of-state animal rights organizations, the winter 1988 issue of the *Humane Society News* carried a photograph of "Arizona trapping opponent Larry Sunderland ... enjoys HSUS Vice President John W. Grandy's demonstration of a trap's hold on a pocket comb during their trapping workshop."

Shaw explained Sunderland was at the conference as a guest of HSUS to give a presentation of his efforts to have Arizona leg-hold traps banned, adding there is no link between Sunderland and the HSUS.

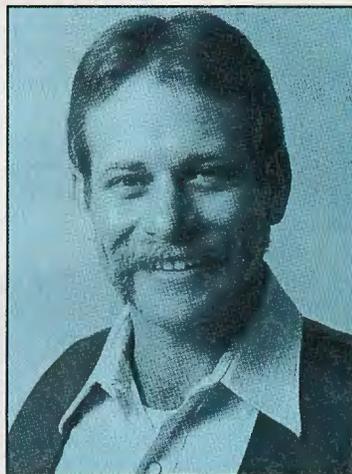
Riggs disagreed, as did some commissioners in Arizona's Game and Fish Department, along with a number of regional sportsmen. They countered that the photograph proved Sunderland and the initiative were linked to national animal rights groups, who want Proposition 200 to open the door and begin court maneuvering for banning all Arizona hunting. Such a move would impact sportsmen nationwide, if anti-hunting activists realize they can bamboozle citizens with cleverly written voter initiatives.

"I am not a hunter, I am not a member of the NRA," Commissioner Woodin told *SOF*, "but this initiative has frightening consequences for wildlife. I am opposed to it, and I don't believe it is only about traps."

The confusion and subsequent battle in Arizona is just starting; the consequences are far-reaching. *SOF* readers who want to help the Arizonans for Wildlife Conservation can mail their donation to:

Frank Riggs, Chairman, Arizonans For Wildlife Conservation, Dept. *SOF*, 346 Verde Lane, Prescott, AZ 86303

Galen Geer is *SOF's* Contributing Editor for *Outdoor Affairs*. 



Arizona Game and Fish Department Chairman Gordon Whiting spoke out against Proposition 200 in an *Arizona Republic* interview, calling the initiative a thinly disguised anti-hunting effort.

**Arizona has bounced to the forefront of the animal rights conflict because it is a targeted state.**

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# POLISH PAL



# ///A

state within a state.”

That’s how one official from Poland’s Ministry of Defense described that country’s counterterrorist forces.

“And within that autonomous state,” he continued, “is a high-walled, opaque castle, home to ‘King’ [Major] Jerzy Dziewulski and his knights. He has never been interviewed — his people have never been photographed.

Those were the rules under the old government. Things might be different now. No one is quite sure what the rules are these days. He values his irreverence. He might talk to you, if only as a playful way of testing the new limits of what is permissible, if you can find him,” he said.

April 1990 was a weird time to be in Poland. The screws had stripped out of the former communist leadership’s monopoly on power, but many of the old guard were still lingering in their offices, waiting to be thrown out, or with any luck, passed over in the confusion. The new democratic government, such as it was, was busy figuring out how a free market economy could breathe new life into the country. Domestic security policy was not high on their list of priorities.

A Polish journalist friend of mine (also a former Solidarity activist in Warsaw) took advantage of this brief power vacuum, cashed in some old favors and arranged for me to meet with Dziewulski. He didn’t want to interview the shadowy

Polish counterterrorist unit at Warsaw’s international airport in characteristic navy-blue berets and 6th Pomeranian Airborne Assault Brigade’s (a division until 1989) camouflage. Armaments shown are Soviet Dragunov sniper rifles and Polish RAK submachine gun.

## Handpicked Counter- terrorist Force Keeps the Peace

**Text & Photos  
by Tom Bates**

# ADINS

Dziewulski himself, because of possible repercussions should the new government decide Poland's press wasn't going to be all that free. But a foreigner didn't run that risk.

We were escorted by an unidentified contact to Dziewulski's obscure office in the baggage handling area of Warsaw's international airport. One look at his desk revealed the latest in East European high-tech communications — it was covered with no less than 11 telephones.

"Ridiculous, isn't it?" Dziewulski said, pointing at the pile of dirty gray telephones. "In a worker's paradise, if you want 11 lines coming into your office, you need 11 phones. I still can't figure out which one is ringing. If all this new government brings to Poland is a modern phone system, I'll die happy."

#### Stacks Of SOFs On The Floor

With all the local mythology about Dziewulski, I'd expected to find an imposing, stolid, uniformed veteran of the Warsaw Pact who would sooner spit on an American than give him the time of day. Instead, I found a garrulous, witty and talkative man in his mid-40s wearing a striped, short-sleeved shirt, worn-out L.L. Bean chinos, and running shoes with no socks. In appearance and character he was a dead ringer for the young Bob Brown, editor/publisher of *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*. Just as I flashed on the comparison with Brown, I actually saw stacks of SOFs strewn on the floor behind Dziewulski's desk.

"I've read that magazine since 1980," Dziewulski said when he saw the curious look on my face. "A contact in London gets me copies. I learned some English so I could read the weapons reviews. I'm always looking for new equipment for my people. I'd kill Khadaffi for one of their T-shirts!"

Go figure.

Dziewulski's casual manner and appearance belied his impressive background. A law graduate from Warsaw University, professional bicycle racer and boxer, Dziewulski was also a former commando in Poland's elite 6th Pomeranian Airborne Assault Brigade (6 *Pomorska Dywizja Desantnowo-Szturmowa*). He was awarded three medals for bravery, including one for his participation in the 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

Paradoxically, he also holds the distinction of being the only officer in the Polish military to have been thrown out three times for insubordination. Each time,

the Defense Ministry reinstated him because of his excellent reputation as a leader and as someone who never failed to achieve objectives in military actions.

He finally left the 6th Brigade for good and joined Warsaw's city police force. Wounded six times by gunfire, Dziewulski rose quickly through the ranks of civilian law enforcement. While recovering from one of his injuries, he was assigned to a desk job at Warsaw's Ministry of Internal Affairs, headquarters for Poland's secret police. It was here he began reading Western magazines and newspapers confiscated in raids, and so learned of international terrorist activities.

#### Ties With The PLO

"It was common knowledge within the Ministry of Internal Affairs," Dziewulski admitted, "that the Polish government in general, and the Ministry in particular, were closely associated with the PLO and other radical, anti-Western terrorist groups. I know many PLO terrorists, if not actually trained in

Poland, were certainly given safe haven here.

"Outside Warsaw, there is a small community of summer homes at a place called Zalesie, owned by high party officials, where many PLO people were allowed to stay," he added. "Surly-looking PLO members rotated in and out of there regularly. They had more freedom of movement than Polish citizens. The unspoken civilian police policy toward these people was strictly hands-off."

According to Dziewulski, looking through the Western news magazines was how he discovered the role various anti-Western groups his government protected had in international terrorism. He claims he concluded that eventually these ties with terrorist groups would come back to haunt Poland.

"From my work in the police, I could see the rising power of Solidarity. Its membership was highly motivated, organized and represented most of Poland's population under the age of 35 ... the future leaders. It was only a matter of time before they would force the government to break away from the Soviet orbit and join the Western nations," Dziewulski noted. "When this happened, Poland would have to sever those ties with anti-Western terrorist groups and become the target of their animosity."

Internecine squabbling among Arab and other West European-based terrorist groups had already caused problems within Poland before the communist government collapsed. Dziewulski said as

far as he was concerned, these people were just troublemakers and would just as soon attack another group's members as they would a Western target. He claims these groups' unpredictable, often violent behavior within Poland was his original rationale for convincing the Ministry of Internal Affairs to establish a special force for handling the problem, since the regular civilian police simply left it alone.

"It was getting like your wild West in parts of Poland. Terrorist group members had what amounted to diplomatic immunity. There had to be an intermediary force that was part of the secret police network to quell the disturbances. The Ministry had the intel on these people; it followed their movements. They were the ones with the leverage to keep them from causing problems," Dziewulski said.

#### SWAT Comes To Poland

Dziewulski based his original conception behind Poland's first counterterrorist force on what he had read about American SWAT teams. The regular civilian police were, according to him, incompetent and the military too heavy-handed and slow to react.

By 1975, working entirely on his own, Dziewulski had drawn up a complete proposal for the establishment of American-style SWAT teams, operating under the auspices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to be trained and stationed throughout Poland. He then convinced Ministry officials to adopt the plan, stipulating that he was the only person with enough expertise and initiative (a rare personal quality in Eastern Europe) to put this force together and get it done before the next ice age.

The go-ahead was given in early 1975. By the end of that year, Dziewulski had established a functioning administrative infrastructure for this special police force throughout Poland. He also defined their operational objectives, designed their training program, wrote the training manual, acquired equipment, recruited the people, trained them and had them in place in 17 of Poland's 49 provinces. Thus was born the vaunted "state within a state."

#### Terrorist Backlash

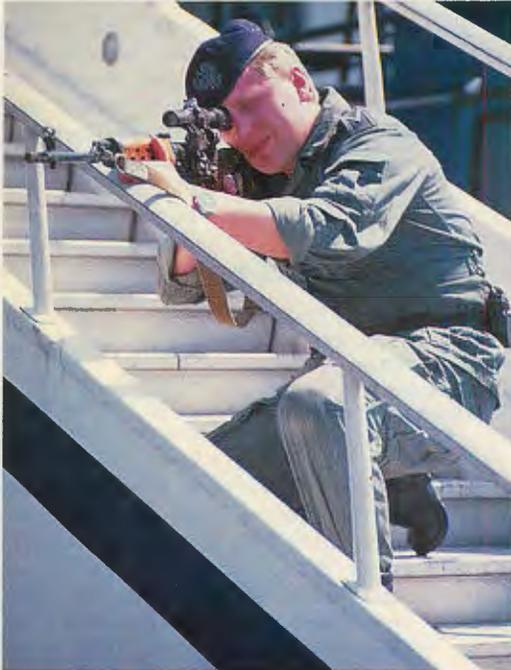
By 1980, Dziewulski had scaled back his administrative efforts and carved a niche for himself as commander of what he considers the most important of the 17 counterterrorist units: security for Warsaw's international airport. Thus was born his elite kingdom within that state.

As of spring 1990, there were still 17 of these counterterrorist units stationed throughout Poland, with a maximum of 25 members per team. While 16 of those units perform essentially the same function as a SWAT team, and are often called in to assist local police forces, the unit at Warsaw's international airport is strictly assigned counterterrorist duties.

It turns out Dziewulski's predictions

**"It was common knowledge ... that the Polish government ... was closely associated with the PLO and other radical, anti-Western terrorist groups."**

about a backlash from various terrorist groups after Poland's communist government fell have come to fruition. While the airport unit had 12 confrontations with terrorists from 1980 through 1989, in the first three months of 1990 his unit foiled seven attempted hijackings. Just two days before my interview with Dziejulski, a group of four suspected Arab terrorists were apprehended at the airport and escorted back out of the country.



Polish counterterrorist unit sniper with Soviet Dragunov. Training drills are borrowed from Israelis, Soviet military and Germany's GSG-9.

Dziejulski attributes this rise of terrorist activities in Poland to two causes: 1) Poland's establishment of friendly diplomatic ties with Israel, while ending friendly relations with the PLO and other Arab states known to sponsor terrorism; 2) The exodus of Soviet Jews to Israel. Warsaw's airport is a common stopover for flights originating from the former Soviet Union, and from major Jewish immigration processing centers in Frankfurt, Paris, Vienna and Rome.

"I'm all for our new above-the-table relations with Israel and the West. Poland will benefit, there's no question. But for right now, there is a lot of bad blood among many Arab groups and our new Western-oriented government," Dziejulski said. "Their terrorist groups have lost what safe haven they had here, and we're supporting their enemy. They're going to make us pay for these new diplomatic policies."

When I asked who "they" were, Dziejulski shook his head, saying there was no way he would mention any names and risk antagonizing any group. "Radical Arabs" was the general phrase he used to describe such perpetrators.

We then discussed, in as much detail as Dziejulski would allow, how his counterterrorist members are selected and trained. Before answering this question, he brought to my attention something I hadn't thought of: Poland's counterterrorist force doesn't have a name or special unit designation. He explained that under the old government, the counterterrorist unit didn't officially exist.

"The old thinking was," Dziejulski explained, "that if they gave us a name, the communist government would have had to admit that terrorism existed in Poland which, officially, it did not."

It is impossible to volunteer for this special unit. Candidates are culled exclusively from the civilian police force by Dziejulski himself, then asked whether they would like to try and join. Desired qualities in recruits are self-control, ability to exercise cool judgment in dangerous situations, courage and personal initiative.

"I don't care if the guy can't shoot straight or run a four-minute mile. I can train him to do those things. I look for personal qualities that no amount of training will give you," Dziejulski said. "With the perverse life that evolved under communism, there aren't a lot of people with the courage to exercise personal initiative, but finding them is pretty easy — they stick out like a waterfall in the desert."

Interestingly, there is no monetary incentive to join this special unit. In fact, members are paid substantially less than veteran police officers. So why join?

Personal autonomy. A rare commodity in most authoritarian states.

#### Absolute Authority

The "state within a state" appellation given the unit is no understatement. While nominally part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Dziejulski's people are not subject to the rigid, bureaucratic policies and oversight that regular police officers or any other government employees were accustomed to under the communists.

According to Dziejulski, once a terrorist threat has been identified by the ministry's intelligence network, he has absolute authority to implement any strategy to neutralize that threat.

Likewise, once one of his personnel physically engages a suspected terrorist, they have absolute authority to do whatever they deem necessary to render that terrorist ineffective.

As Dziejulski bluntly put it, "As far as I'm concerned, the only safe terrorist is a dead terrorist. It's warfare, pure and simple. I don't know how Western counterterrorist units can do their job with all the regulations, all the etiquette they must follow. I and my people have the authority to act on our instincts. God help the unlucky terrorist who tries to step between us and our instincts."

There is no conventional qualification test for candidates. They are simply thrown together with current members and instructed to try and keep up with them as they carry out their daily training regimen. The attrition rate is pretty high, with over 80% of candidates opting to return to their old jobs. Dziejulski has no say as to who ultimately is accepted. Those who stick it out are sized up by veteran unit members. If they are impressed with the new recruit, he is admitted into the fold.

Initiation into the counterterrorist unit is the only standardized task demanded of recruits. Dressed in full uniform (identical to the 6th Airborne commando uniform) carrying side arm and holster, 20-pound pack and three hand grenades, the recruit must jump 20 meters from an Mi-8 helicopter into the Wisla River outside Warsaw. He must swim 500 meters to an island in the middle of the river, then find and blow up a target there with his grenades.

Dziejulski told of one recruit who, after hitting the waters of the Wisla, promptly sank like a rock. Unit members rescued him, at which time the recruit finally admitted he didn't know how to swim.

"I took him into my personal airport unit immediately," Dziejulski said.

Smith & Wesson short barreled revolver by Taurus is side arm of choice by all of Poland's counterterrorist personnel.



"Those who fight terrorists have to be braver than a terrorist. This man proved he had that kind of bravery."

From the outset, training techniques and exercises employed by all 17 counterterrorist units are a collection of drills Dziejulski says he borrowed from his study of Germany's GSG-9, along with Israeli and Soviet military training. Unwilling to provide extensive details of the precise training regimen of each unit, Dziejulski provided some facts about what constitutes a normal day's training schedule for his airport unit.

While half of the approximately 25 unit members are on-call or on surveillance duty around the airport for one 24-hour shift, the other half are expected to maintain an off-duty training regimen including two hours of marksmanship training, two hours of hand-to-hand combat exercise (kick-boxing and karate), one hour of swimming or a 20km run, and timed sprinting drills of 100 to 200 meters wearing full body armor.

Marksmanship practice is carried out at a facility outside Warsaw. It includes a timed obstacle course with pop-up targets at distances of 5 to 100 meters, which members must identify as friend or foe. Headshot accuracy is required to 50 meters with handguns and submachine guns, and up to 100 meters with rifles.

This particular unit has four sniper teams of two members each. These sniper-team pairs work and train together constantly, spending a minimum of two hours per day at a specially prepared sniper range. They are required to devote an equal number of hours each week to daylight, low-light and nighttime shooting practice.

Specific training in helicopter rappelling, demolitions (both plastique and grenades — fragmentation, gas and stun types) and low altitude, single-chute parachuting from 80 meters up are also carried out regularly at a camp near Warsaw. One hostage-rescue technique Dziejulski is particularly proud of is what he calls "The Pope."

This is where one of his people is suspended by rope from a helicopter and quickly maneuvered into place to snatch a hostage from a crowd.

Additionally, members are trained to work as baggage handlers, ground crewmen, flight attendants, ticket agents and other airport personnel. Those unit members on duty for a 24-hour shift alternate every few hours between taking foot patrols of the airport terminal, fully armed in their

**Those who  
fight  
terrorists  
have to be  
braver than  
a terrorist.**

characteristic navy-blue berets and Polish commando uniforms, to working in civilian clothing as airport flight personnel.

All other members of the 16 other units throughout Poland are also trained to take over various civilian airport employee positions. They rotate a few days per month from their assigned units around the country to airport duty, should an emergency ever arise where additional security forces are needed.

Interestingly, there is no canine unit or bomb squad as part of this airport security system. When I asked why, the answer was that Dziejulski's people's mission is to neutralize terrorists, not look for drugs or dismantle bombs. When these threats are suspected, conventional local police are called in. Nor are any of the unit members trained in negotiating with terrorists. Dziejulski alone handles all negotiations with terrorists.

When helicopters are needed, a separate element of the Ministry of Internal Affairs has specially trained pilots that can be called on. They train with all 17 counterterrorist units several times yearly. Soviet Mi-6 and Mi-8 helicopters are the mainstay, though Dziejulski dislikes them intensely. He claims they are too heavy, lacking the speed and maneuverability necessary for the kind of situations he would need to employ them in. Also, maintenance is a problem, since the former Soviets have been slow or unresponsive in supplying spare parts. Now that he is free to shop around for equipment in the West, he plans to acquire new helicopters for use exclusively by his airport unit.



Maj. Jerzy Dziejulski, founder of Poland's counterterrorist forces in 1975, and currently commander of Warsaw's international airport security unit, armed with Polish RAK. Holster is homemade.

#### Western Goodies

While Western helicopters have yet to be purchased, Dziejulski has wasted no time adding some other free-world goods to his armory.

His newest purchase? Short barreled, .38-caliber Smith & Wesson revolvers manufactured by Taurus. He favors the reliability of revolvers over semiautos, though he said he is also interested in buying some .357 Magnum Double Eagle semiautos. Some TEG Swiss body armor and ballistic helmets had recently arrived, too. Walkie-talkies are Japanese 900-channel Yaesu FT-208s. His wish list for new armaments includes Israeli Galils, German MP-5 submachine guns, and Benelli shotguns in semiauto.

The current array of weapons includes Soviet AK-47s and

AKSs (with 65-round magazines made especially for the Polish unit), Dragunov sniper rifles, RPK machine guns and the Polish PM-63 submachine gun. Laser sights are of Soviet manufacture. Night vision equipment, night sights (NSP3) for Dragunov sniper rifles and RPKs, sound suppressors (PPS), fragmentation (Soviet-type RG42) and stun (F10) grenades are of Polish manufacture, while tear gas and smoke grenades are East German.

After our conversation in his office, Dziejulski allowed me to photograph some of his people out near an aircraft boarding area. According to him, this was the first time any of Poland's counterterrorist personnel have ever been photographed.

He explained, "Yesterday the rules were 'no pictures of personnel or equipment,' even if the faces were blackened. Today, who knows what the rules are? I guess this is your lucky day. You'll have to be quick, though. I'll only give you about five minutes."

We proceeded outside, to where a Polish Lot jet was just unloading its passengers. For the next few minutes, in full view of some startled passengers, five of Dziejulski's armed men in full uniform demonstrated how they would react if a known terrorist group were deplaning.

Obviously, subtlety is not one of Dziejulski's strong training points. After giving a short signal over his walkie-talkie, a Soviet jeep raced up and out-jumped three unit members who took firing positions around the vehicle, about 30 meters from the aircraft. About 100 meters away a sniper jumped off the roof of the terminal and took aim at the open door of the aircraft. One unit member then

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ran out from inside the terminal, drew his revolver and took aim at the departing passengers walking down the exit ramp. After a few minutes, Dziewulski gave an all-clear signal over the walkie-talkie, and his people left the area and went back about their business.

If 10 years of work with Solidarity taught them one thing, it was excellent human-resource management skills. Dziewulski was simply too knowledgeable and too well-connected in Poland to be removed from his position, but his days as an autocrat were probably numbered. Yet, he was sure to remain a prominent figure in Poland's evolving counterterrorist capability.

Dziewulski himself said the opening remains for Westerners to come share their ideas with him on the subject of organizing an effective counterterrorist force.

"Because of my country's past association with totalitarianism and with the Soviets," he admits, "my strategy and tactics are unquestionably colored by their example. I'm a practical man. I love my country — I hate terrorists. If someone has new ideas that can make my counterterrorist people more effective, I want to meet them, now."

*Tom Bates, a former SOF editor, is now president of Profit magazine, a journal serving new entrepreneurs of former Warsaw Pact nations.*

## BAGHDAD

Continued from page 47

posed for a picture with "that big beautiful Blackhawk."

The trip home was uneventful. No shots fired. But Crisafulli remembered Sims grabbing his shoulder and squeezing him so hard he thought his shoulder would break. As he banged his helmeted head repeatedly against the armor-plated seat, Sims screamed in Crisafulli's ear, "It's alright! It's alright!"

### Whooping And Hollering

The guys in the back were just as happy as the men up front. "We were whooping and hollering over the comms system, shaking hands and patting each other on the back. Nothing in this great world can compare to that feeling of elation you get when you pull your buddies from the jaws of certain death. We were all a bunch of happy campers," Detrick said.

Hopple and Detrick had served on the same A-team prior to deploying to the Persian Gulf. They had been friends for years. But landing at KKMC, Hopple told his buddy that when the *Lady Godiva* had left on the rescue mission, he didn't think any of them — aircrew or recon team — were going to make it out alive.

Although Hopple and Detrick are both

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assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group at Fort Campbell, they have gone their separate ways, as have most of the members of the rescue team. Hoppie is a team sergeant in one of the battalion's A-teams. Detrick works in the operations office, but they still see each other occasionally, and invariably the conversation turns to that "incredible mission."

Crisafulli and Stephens were awarded Distinguished Flying Crosses for launching their helicopter into known hostile territory, descending into concentrated ground fire from at least one company of well-armed Iraqi soldiers, and snatching three Special Forces soldiers from certain death.

Detrick and Hoppie were awarded Air Medals along with the two crew chiefs, Willard and Diffenderfer.

"But my personal reward from that whole ordeal was the fact that I helped ensure that three fellow soldiers were going home to their families. I'll always have that," Detrick noted.

"They [today's Green Berets] may not have the John Wayne swagger," Crisafulli said, "But they'll put him to shame."

Fifteen minutes after landing at their home base, a team of technicians and aircraft mechanics were hovering over Lady Godiva in a hangar, removing bullet-riddled black boxes and blades. Before the 100-hour Gulf War was over, she was back in the air — this time flying a team of SF soldiers into Kuwait City's U.S. Embassy to secure the compound and defuse any booby traps left by Iraqis.

Currently, Crisafulli is "flying a desk" at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Sims, who is now First Sergeant, D Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group, was awarded the Silver Star for saving his team from disaster. Torbett and Tabron were awarded Bronze Stars with "V" devices for valor.

Sims was one of only two SF troopers in 5th Group to be awarded the Silver Star. The other was awarded to Chief Warrant Officer 2 Richard F. Balwanz, whose eight-man SF team was also compromised deep inside Iraq, and also like Sims' team had to fight for its life.

But that's another story. Stay tuned.

A frequent contributor, Dale B. Cooper covered the Gulf War for SOF, and continues to record events of that conflict. Next month, Cooper will cover the incredible rescue of CW2 Balwanz and his SF team. ✕

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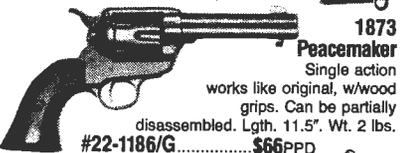
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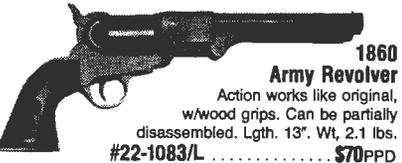
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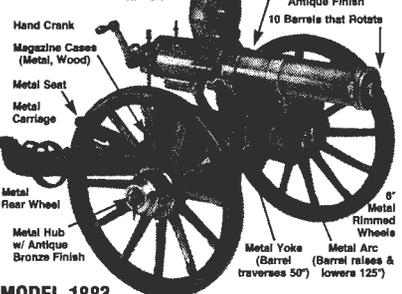
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## POWs

Continued from page 48

There are at least three problems involved with the approach just announced by the secretary of state. First, accountability of bones will never answer the question as to whether or not U.S. prisoners of war were abandoned in Indochina for political expediency, because no one will be able to determine exactly when they died — during the war, or after Hanoi was certain it was going to win everything and no longer needed to use hostages as bargaining chips.

Second, by not pressing for the immediate return of the remains held in the Warehouse, we are tacitly agreeing to buy back the remains of our POWs and MIAs a few bones at a time, until the Vietnamese are satisfied that they have collected the money promised to them after the war.

And third, once we normalize, the game is over: At that point we will have the same choice we had in 1973 after the infamous "peace with honor" — either start the war again to ensure no live prisoners were held back, or write them all off as dead.

As far as I am concerned, the "road map to normalization" which the administration is currently pursuing is tantamount to obstruction of justice, since the issue will be buried once and for all with no chance for a really satisfactory resolution when business as normal resumes.

In the recent announcement signaling normalized relations with the governments of Indochina, I see another spurious "peace with honor" sellout, which will doom the entire issue, and with it any U.S. serviceman who may have survived as a lost and abandoned political pawn for so many years.

*Colonel Mike Peck quit his job as chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency's special office for POW/MIAs in March 1991, stating "the sad fact is that this issue is being controlled, and a cover-up may be in progress." For the complete story of Col. Peck's announcement, see "Puppet Masters," Aug. '91.*

## BATTLE BLADES

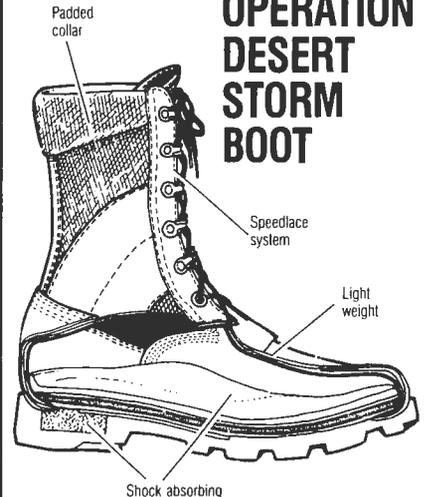
Continued from page 24

the tang. Point separations were as high as "8" from stem to stern. In our opinion, the only place where hardness is a critical factor is on the edge, for obvious reasons.

**Q:** Where can I get a Kydex sheath for my knife?

**BB:** More and more, folks are making such sheathes on an order-per-order basis. Custom makers who work with Kydex normally make such scab-

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**Q:** What would be your quick-picks for field knife, fighter and folder?

**BB:** There are hundreds of exceptional battle blades available today. Both production and custom outlets are producing some of the finest cutlery ever offered, with prices ranging from below \$100 to well above \$1,000. In order to fairly answer this question, Battle Blades will rely upon personal experience as well as the recent input from Gulf War veterans who've shared their experiences with us.

- Field Knife — Randall's No. 1, with 7-inch carbon steel blade, leather washer handle, nickel silver guard and pommel, and brown leather sheath with sharpening stone included. Suggested retail of \$175-\$225, from either Randall Knives (P.O. Box 1988, Orlando, Florida 32802) or Nordic Knives (1634 C Copenhagen Drive, Solvang, California 93463). If it's not Randall-made, it's not Randall quality.

- Fighter — AMK's "Shadow 6104," with AM6 stainless steel double-edged blade, integral guard, synthetic handle and black nylon sheath. Suggested retail of \$140. Contact Al Mar Knives at 503-635-9229.

- Folder — Northwest Safari's "Jumpmaster" custom folder, with 3.5-inch semi-serrated stainless steel blade, liner-lock system and Micarta scales. Write Northwest Safari at P.O. Box 7172, Dept. SOF, Olympia, WA 98507, for pricing and availability. ✂

## VIETNAM

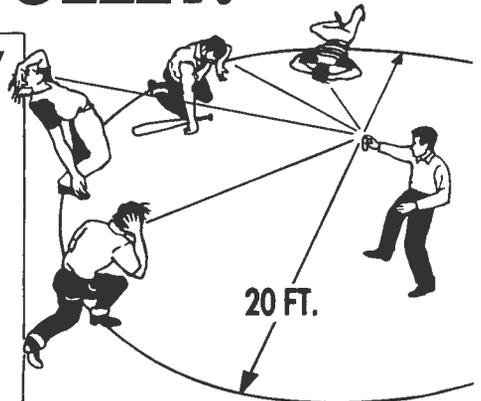
Continued from page 57

One of the primary conditions of renewed trade and diplomatic relations with Vietnam is its withdrawal from Cambodia. Although many believe that

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Vietnam withdrew from Cambodia in September 1989, an estimated 45,700 Vietnamese troops either stayed behind or have since been reintroduced. With massive numbers of troops in Vietnam, the United States couldn't prevent Vietnamese communists from moving at will across the Cambodian border. With a limited number of troops and little access to intelligence surveillance devices, how can the United Nations verify Vietnamese withdrawal? In reality, it can't.

Also, Vietnam has in effect annexed large areas of four of Cambodia's eastern provinces - Mondolkiri, Rattanakari, Stoeng Treng and Kracheh - through the presence of more than 1 million Vietnamese settlers and a militia of 100,000. These facts have been confirmed in the Republican House of Representatives' Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare report - *The Vietnam War: 1990*. Vietnam's continued presence in Cambodia has also been confirmed by several Eastern European diplomats.

I assume the Bush administration does not advertise these facts, nor press the Vietnamese government on this matter for reasons of diplomacy - for if the U.N. Comprehensive Peace Plan is adopted and implemented, the Cambodians will make sure the Vietnamese leave Cambodia. And our only chance to assure that Vietnamese communists comply with the U.N. peace plan is by withholding trade and diplomatic relations until a democratically elected government is in place in Cambodia.

What we face is a Catch-22 situation. Besides the over \$4 billion ransom allegedly promised Hanoi by Kissinger for the POWs' return, the Vietnamese communists want the respect and additional money that renewed trade and diplomatic relations with the United States would bring. However, they're also smart enough to know that aid and relations would be cut if any live POWs were returned. The only way any live POWs would be if the Vietnamese were to enjoy freedom and democracy.

**More Time Needed**

The administration's present timetable for renewed trade and diplomatic relations with Vietnam (possibly in less than six months) doesn't allow adequate time for the Senate Select Committee to competently investigate and draw conclusions concerning POW/MIAs.

As in cases of terrorism, the United States government should never reward the Vietnamese communists with renewed trade or improved diplomatic relations if they have held or executed POWs after 1973. Families and friends of the POW/MIAs, along with all veterans organizations, must voice their opposition to renewed trade relations with Vietnam at this time.

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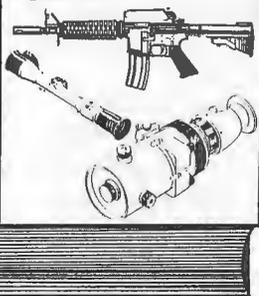
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At the very least, the Bush administration should guarantee that the U.S. Treasury Department will require that oil companies' money (and any similar advances) be held in trust until: the POW/MIA issue is resolved; political prisoners are freed in Vietnam, and basic human rights of the Vietnamese people are respected; when it is proven that returned Vietnamese refugees will not be persecuted; free and fair elections are held in Cambodia.

*Michael Bengé spent 11 years in Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. He is a diligent follower of this region's affairs and was a POW from January 1968 to March 1973. While serving as a Foreign Service officer with the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support program, he was captured at Ban Me Thuot, South Vietnam (Central Highlands) by the North Vietnamese, and held in numerous camps in South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and North Vietnam. For his efforts in rescuing a group of Americans before his capture, he received the U.S. State Department's highest award for heroism.*

## SERE

*Continued from page 41*

for 10,000 qualified personnel demanded. Current and past SERE instructors are fearful the program is being shunted aside, perhaps unintentionally.

"The department was made into a company just so some major could get his command time in," complained one source. Another said SERE's commanders after Rowe had no background in the harsh reality of the program's "real world" impact. "They're plugged into SERE for two years and appear to be primarily interested in leaving with a good evaluation. It takes two years for the cadre to properly educate a new commander as to what SERE is about. By the time they know, their orders arrive and new guy comes in."

Without current friends in Congress or long-term qualified SERE officers, many feel Rowe's work is being slowly whittled away.

### Helping The Survivors Survive

When asked how SERE might be reconstituted to reflect its original mandate, one instructor offered this: "We need positive command emphasis from the top, meaning General Gordon R. Sullivan, Army Chief of Staff. If this doesn't happen, you'll see SERE evaporate over the next few years."

Should the Army's SERE effort become a casualty of misunderstanding, poor funding and instructor defections, Meserve's original recommendation that

the Air Force train Army high-risk personnel might once again be dusted off and reviewed.

"Every student who graduates the course writes it up as the best school they've ever been to," pointed out one source. "We're training people to possibly evade capture, to resist without becoming a casualty if captured, and to rely upon themselves until release. No one is doing this better than the Army today. Nobody!"

Rowe perhaps conveyed the spirit of SERE best when he wrote the following in February 1969, just two months after escaping the Viet Cong camp he was held at: "I don't think people understand that just getting out of there is enough for anyone to be thankful for."

Rowe was the first honor graduate of SERE. His school was an enemy jungle camp where the lessons of captivity were taught firsthand. His was a five-year course. It is hoped his efforts and those of every SERE instructor/student since will not have been in vain. A fully supported Army SERE School is essential if we are to see fewer POW task forces in the future. If our past prisoners are a current national priority, future POW/MIAs should be equally considered.

*Regnad Kcin is a former Special Forces operator and associate of Col. Nick Rowe. He is currently a full-time writer, specializing in military topics.*

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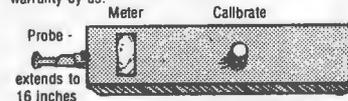
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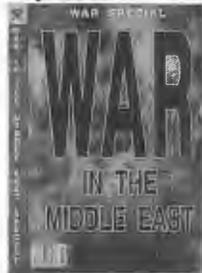


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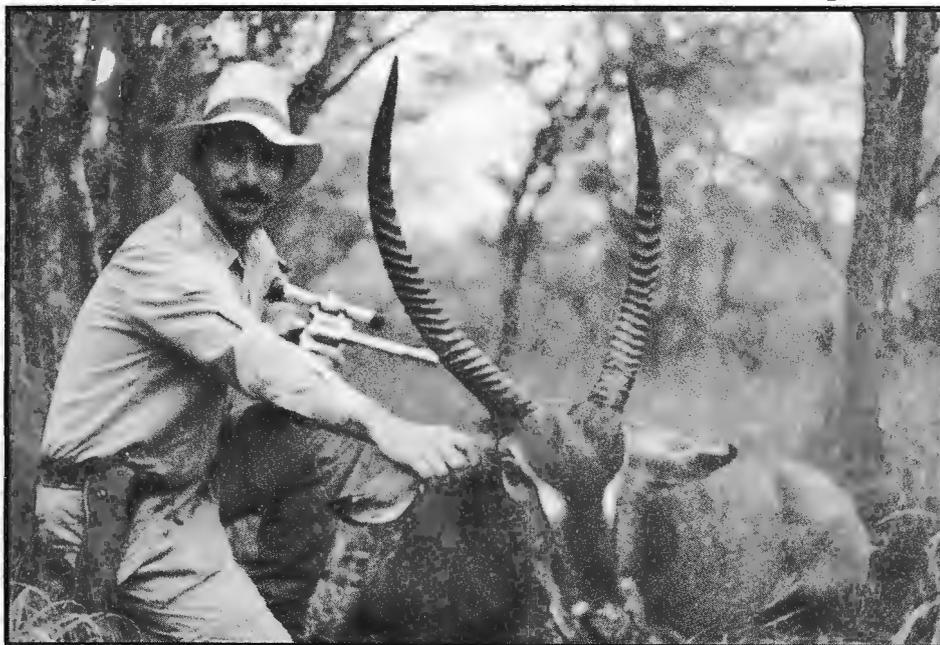
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