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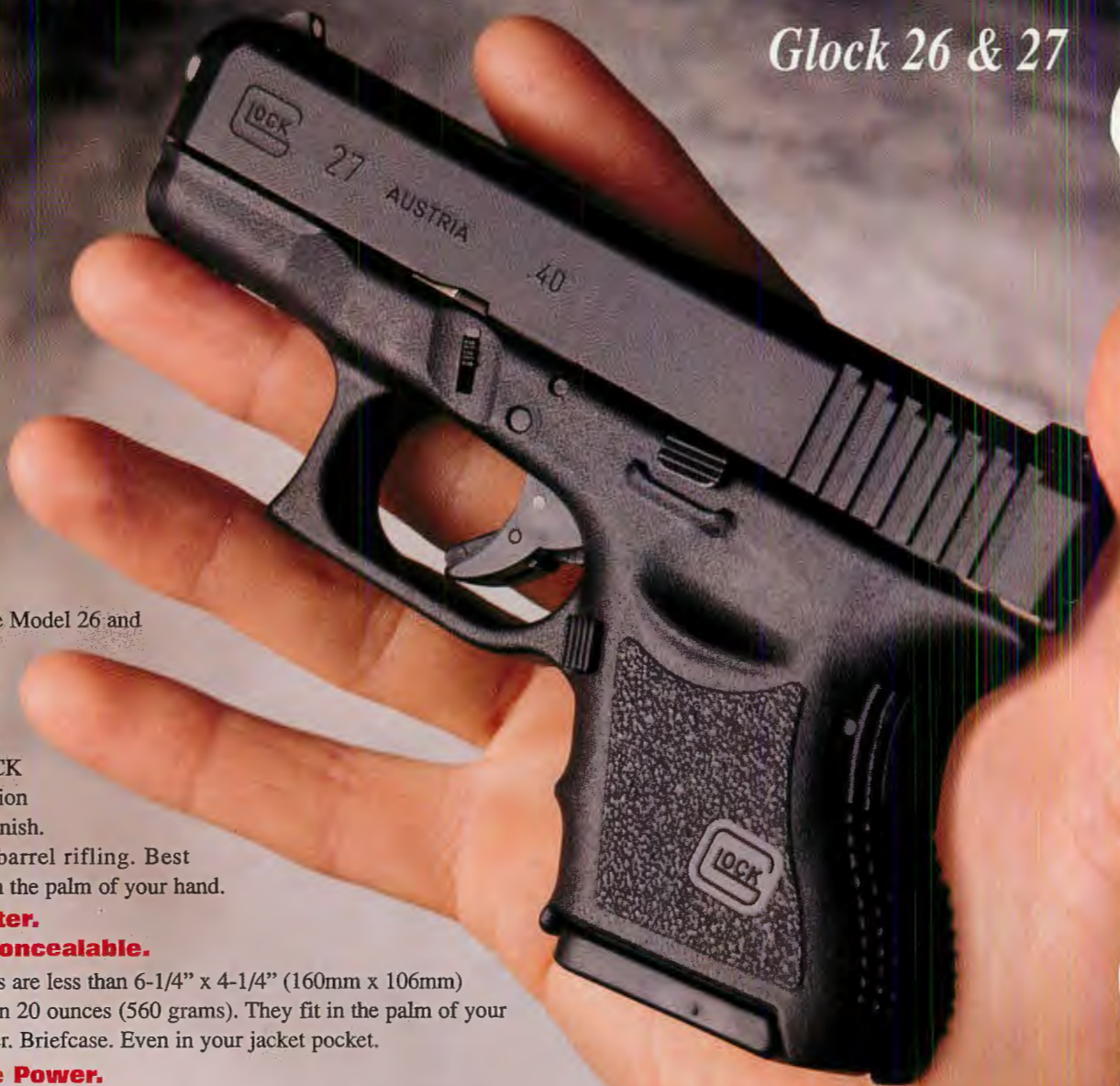
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courtesy
Lockheed Martin

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courtesy FMC

COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

Taking Care of Business

If you are a long-time reader of *Soldier Of Fortune*, you've noticed the new look of the magazine in the last few issues. This is a direct result of the work of our new art director, Bix Bigler. Bix comes to *SOF* from *GUNS*, which has been the class act of general firearms magazines for a long time. We are frankly ecstatic with what Bix has done for *SOF* in a few short months. Initial reactions from you, our readers, have been just as positive.

World SITREP, long one of our most popular columns, is now much easier to read quickly. Military personnel and vets will appreciate the "briefing map" approach. One reader, an Air Force ROTC professor, told us that he now posts it on the classroom bulletin board as a fun-to-read monthly "geography lesson." You may also notice subtle changes in the editorial mix. *Soldier Of Fortune* owns the military action-adventure genre, but we have long been criticized by our Navy, Air Force, USMC and Coast Guard readers for being too focused on U.S. Army actions.

Well, with a publisher who commanded a Special Forces A detachment in Vietnam, a managing editor who graduated from West Point, an SF Vietnam medic, an Airborne Ranger linguist and an ex Army MP NCO running the editorial shop (and a former SF engineer/intel NCO running advertising), this was probably bound to happen. We are now consciously trying to get a better mix of the entire spectrum of military action into *SOF*. Besides, we think F-16s and Zodiacs are pretty cool.

To all of you who responded to our last reader survey, thanks. Your feedback is largely responsible for these changes. We

are running behind on acknowledging your response and mailing your back issues. Thanks for your patience; if you have not yet received yours, it will arrive shortly. One thing that puzzled me about the survey results is the large number of you who have read the magazine for years, and yet do not subscribe. Listen to the Old Man; this is not smart! If you subscribe, you'll save at least



half over the newsstand price. There are a couple of subscription cards in this issue, mail one in (or call 1-800-877-5207) today. As an extra incentive, one of our advertisers (Chase-Durer company) is offering any new or current subscriber a \$50 discount on their Legionnaire Combatant watch. Check out their ad on the back cover of this issue.

A quick word about advertising: We have a number of quality new advertisers on board, and I hope you will consider purchasing their excellent products as your mission requires (and your budget dictates). Please let them know you read about their products in *SOF* - merchants and manufacturers want this feedback so they know where their advertising dollars are paying off. Magazine advertising is expensive, and a decision by a merchant to advertise in *Soldier Of Fortune* is very important to me. It should be just as important to you.

Many of our story leads and intel arrive unsolicited from our readers. Consequently, we intend to tap this source more aggressively. In a future issue, we will explore gang activity in all branches of the service. If any of our readers have any information on the subject, please contact us. We will ensure your confidentiality.

In the meantime, keep up the good fight. We will. ☘

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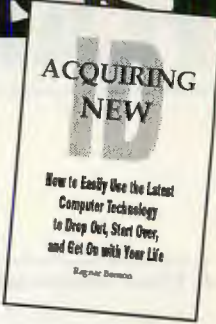
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ACQUIRING NEW ID

How to Easily Use the Latest Computer Technology to Drop Out, Start Over, and Get On with Your Life

by Ragnar Benson

Traditional new ID books – most of which were written 10 or 15 years ago – fail to take into account the way that computer technology has changed the process of obtaining new ID. If you expect to start fresh by using the old "dead-baby's-birth-certificate" routine, you're in for a rude awakening. Everyone knows that trick, including the Social Security Administration, driver's license bureaus, passport offices and child-support enforcement offices. What you need is a new plan that not only avoids the high-tech traps that these agencies use to detect attempts to get new ID, but one that also puts computer technology to work for you . . . making your own identity documents on your home computer. In this comprehensive escape plan, Ragnar shows you how. *For academic study only.* 5 1/2 x 8 1/2, softcover, photos, illus., 152 pp. **\$20.00**



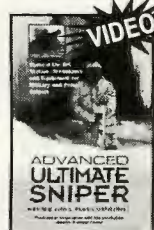
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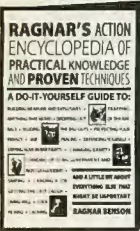
THE OFFICIAL SKS MANUAL

Translation by Maj. James F. Gebhardt (Ret.)
This Soviet military manual, originally published in the Soviet Union and now available in English for the first time, covers instructions for use and maintenance of perhaps the most widely distributed of all weapons produced by the arms factories of the former Soviet Union: the ubiquitous 7.62mm Simonov self-loading carbine (SKS). 8 1/2 x 11, softcover, illus., 96 pp. **\$15.00**



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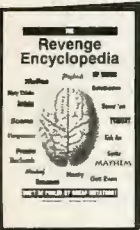
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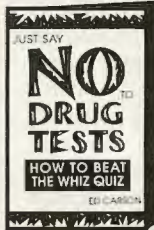
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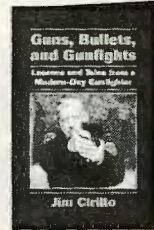
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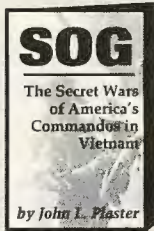
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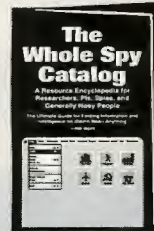
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A Merc Remembers

Greetings from the United States' very own "Banana Republic" ... Louisiana. I am also sending Season's Greetings to yours and the entire Staff at SOF.

My name is Steve Hedrick and I am one of the members of the infamous "Rio 8." It was 10 years ago this month, that you and your magazine assisted in our escape of that Hell Hole in Brazil. I am sending this e-mail to thank you again! If it had not been for you guys, things could have been a lot rougher for us. I sincerely wish to thank you for sending us the MREs, T-shirts (that really won us a lot of favors with the guards!), medical supplies and most of all, The Support! If it had not been for you and your Staff caring about us ... well, who knows what would have happened to us. Thanks again!

Once again, Season's Greetings and a BIG THANK YOU!

Steven W. Hedrick
via e-mail

P.S.: I am sure that you have heard that J.E. has been taken "hostage" in the Sudan. Tim is trying to find out which group is holding him and pay them a large sum of money ... to torture him! See Ya!

Yer welcome, Steve — glad to have been of help. Steve is referencing SOF's efforts a decade ago to provide creature comforts for and eventually facilitate the

release of eight mercs arrested by Brazilian authorities. They were aboard the freighter *Norbistor*, steaming toward the West African state of Ghana, laden with materiel for a coup (see "Soldiers of Misfortune" April, May, June '87) when busted by Brazilian authorities: It was an epic of high-level intrigue involving American mercs and an exiled Ghanaian businessman, Hong Kong Banking and gambling interests, the New York City Chinese Mafia, the Israeli Mossad, Argentine arms dealers, the FBI and the CIA — you couldn't have put together a better cast of players if writing a made-for-TV series. The "J.E." referenced by Steve was believed to have compromised the operation: Alas, our last reports from the Sudan were that he had been released.

Abandoning AARP

Enclosed you will find copies of letters I have written to AARP [American Association of Retired People] and *Modern Maturity* magazine [AARP's magazine]. Due to their anti-gun position I felt obligated to inform you, in the event that you were not already aware of this. Unfortunately, we were not aware of their stand when we became members, believing that they had the best interests of the people on their agenda. With this new knowledge, of course, we can no longer support the organization. We thought that

some of your other readers might not be aware of this and with this in mind, please use the letters to inform them.

Terry L. Bowman
Hereford, Arizona

"Executive Director, AARP:

We hereby request that you cancel our membership with AARP, having recently learned of your position on gun control in the November-December issue of *Modern Maturity* magazine, "AARP Perspectives, page 87. It is totally unacceptable to us that you take the position that law-abiding citizens should not be allowed to defend themselves and/or their loved ones in their own homes, that right being granted by the Constitution of this great Nation. If we are not allowed these rights, then indeed, the only people with guns will be the criminals and the innocents will continue to be the sufferers. It is abhorrent that an organization with the supposed best interests of older citizens in mind would support such a philosophy, which would leave them vulnerable to the criminal element.

We request that you remit any unused portion of our membership fee upon receipt of this letter. — Terry and Joan Bownan, Hereford, Arizona."

Little Legionnaires?

Your magazine is not one I normally read, but the article in the December issue was most interesting. The picture of the sappers in parade dress is particularly intriguing. There is at least head's difference between the two halves of the line, but they are apparently standing next to each other on the level parade ground. Trick of the camera? Coincidence? Just the way this group turned out?

It would be nice, when you have an article on historic units such as the French Foreign Legion if you had a list of related books in case people would like to learn more about their history.

Elizabeth Redman
Kalispell, Montana

They're on level ground, no camera tricks. Legionnaires, as other good soldiers, come in all sizes: France has a history of fielding some extraordinarily good small ones, such as Napoleon Bonaparte. As for good books on the French Foreign Legion, they abound. One classic to ask for at your library would be *The White Kepi*.



Now, You Can Destroy Any Attacker Using Never-Before-Seen "Killing" Techniques

Creator of Official U.S. Navy SEAL Combat System Releases Brutal New Gun & Knife Sections Of His Instructor Qualification Fighting Series

Can you disarm a man holding a knife to your throat? What if a car-jacker sticks a gun through your window — and your wife, girlfriend, or child is sitting beside you?

In an often brutal yet professionally direct approach, Jerry Peterson's new video series shows you how to destroy these attackers, while taking you to the ultimate level of fighting.

The culmination of a 2-year transformation from actual SCARS military archive techniques, his Instructor Qualification Series offers you the opportunity to learn what until now was taught to military Special Operations forces (SEALS, Rangers, Green Berets, etc.).

It's been called "the most brutally effective fighting system ever seen."

Before explaining more about this system, here's how Jerry Peterson, the creator of this system, became the first — and only — civilian ever to standardize, license and teach a hand-to-weapon fighting system to the United States military.

In 1989, Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWC), the group which controls all SEAL activity, was looking for ways to standardize hand-to-weapon combat techniques. After an exhaustive review, they had rejected every single martial art form in the world.

They found each completely unworkable in combat-oriented fighting situations where SEALs were in full gear, carrying 100# packs, and often knee-deep in water.

Amazing Scientific System

Then a SEAL NSWC officer (with black belts in 3 martial arts) saw Jerry Peterson's scientific fighting system. What he stumbled on wasn't martial arts. In fact it was unlike anything he'd ever seen before.

The SEAL officer watched in disbelief as a class of inexperienced students threw real punches for virtually 1 full hour, never repeating the same sequences. In one session he witnessed more fighting than most martial arts students see in a year.

Later, two top brass at NSWC saw the officer demonstrating moves he'd learned. But intrigue turned to doubt when they learned the originator was an ex-Army enlisted man.

Still they met with Jerry, as much out of admiration for his Vietnam record as anything (he spent 15 months as lead point for Charlie Company, the 173rd Airborne — one of the most decorated units of the war). As Vietnam vets, the SEAL officers figured Jerry at least would understand their needs.

Easily Defeats Decorated SEAL

But they were totally unprepared for what happened. To prove his system, Jerry Peterson and a highly-decorated SEAL Officer (and at 240, 100 pounds heavier than Jerry) went toe-to-toe — but at half speed. To the Officer's amazement he was instantly disabled and dropped to his knees.

Only then did he realize — had he not been talked out of going full speed by others who knew the awesome power of Jerry Peterson's system, his false confidence in his martial arts training and in his sheer size advantage would have left him with an arm broken as easily as a match stick!

In 5 short minutes these SEAL officers — men who had seen everything in the way of brutal fight-

ing, and who had virtually unlimited budgets to develop the SEALs into the world's best — were blown away by Jerry Peterson's Autoknematic™ fighting system.

Officially Required SEAL Training

Following a pilot program at Command headquarters all SEALs began receiving this training. Still, hardheaded, cocky, non-believing SEALs, many with extensive martial arts backgrounds, constantly tested Jerry:

□ SEALs are the most proficient combat swimmers in the world. Yet 40-year-old Jerry (who wasn't a particularly good swimmer) "drowned" SEAL after SEAL in training. His scientific principles apply on any terrain.

□ SEALs are trained to run 20 miles in soft sand. But Jerry (who really wasn't in great shape) had them gasping just 5 minutes into his first workouts while he participated effortlessly. He used breathing techniques others had never seen (techniques he can teach you in minutes).

□ In Europe Jerry challenged a deployed SEAL platoon to pin him against a wall. All thought it a joke. Yet he escaped — from the grasp of 14 of the most proficient fighting men in the world (then showed it was no trick — simply physics, and easily learned).

Today SEALs use all these scientific techniques and many more. Since 1989, Navy SEALs go through a minimum of 40 and up to 600 rigorous hours of Jerry Peterson's training prior to deployment (often in intense, 24-hour a day sessions).

Top Government Officials Amazed

His system was demonstrated to Navy Admirals, a 4-Star General, and Congressional leaders — as well as the Secretary of the Navy and the U.S. Secretary of Defense!

Jerry was even called in prior to Desert Storm to brief the military on using Neural Offensive Linguistics™ (a cornerstone of his system, it defines a mind set which eliminates all defensive thinking, allowing anyone, even you, to make instantaneously correct decisions in the midst of any hostile environment).

Devastating Power Gives You An Unfair Advantage

In his HCS video course Jerry Peterson introduced you to his revolutionary system.

Now, with the publication of Jerry Peterson's SCAR-HCS Hand-To-Weapon fighting system, Jerry leads you into the never-before-seen world of brutal, no-holds-barred gun, knife and club fighting — material you've never seen (unless you were in elite Special Operation forces).

You'll learn the same hand-to-weapon techniques, the same mental approaches, the same 'kill' sets Jerry developed for over 200 SEAL SCARS instructors. (These SCARS instructors now teach this system to all branches of the military Spec Op forces — Army, Navy and Air Force).

You'll know how to defeat, seriously disable and, when necessary, kill anyone threatening your life or the life of a loved one or friend!

Guaranteed To Work In Your Most Nightmarish Hostile Situation

Everything in his system was proven in the most intense war lab of the past 30 years — Vietnam!

But this isn't a course to impress friends at your Karate studio. The Instructor Qualification Series is Jerry Peterson's complete professional fighting system.

And professional fighting has but one objective: to defeat an attacker incredibly fast. In 29 years Jerry's longest fight lasted but 5 seconds!

This system is only for those who need a powerful yet amazingly simple system (simple because it's based on quickly-mastered scientific principles not a difficult art form) to protect them in life-threatening situations.

No Navy SEAL has ever lost in hand-to-hand combat when correctly applying Jerry's system! And they never will (nor will you) because ... his system is undefeatable!

This Totally Integrated System Enables You To Destroy Any Attacker — With Absolutely No Fear Or Hesitation!

Cheap imitators advertise fighter after fighter after fighter — a hodgepodge of unrelated, nonscientific moves. Now they even lie, hoping to con you into believing SEALs would lose to these guys. But they know. No one beats a Peterson-trained SEAL.

These 'wanna-bes' teach one move if an attacker swings a fist at you, another if he's got a knife.

But Jerry Peterson's scientific system teaches you why you MUST use the exact same techniques — with a weapon or without! What everyone else teaches is wrong. Just ask the SEALs!

The imitators claim they've trained Navy SEALs. But Jerry Peterson is the sole creator of the official hand-to-hand and hand-to-weapon combat fighting system used by the SEALs today.

He's the only civilian with a Naval Special Warfare course number (SCARS-CFC# K-431-0096) plus a new \$2.5 million military facility predicated solely on his SCARS training.

The Navy SEAL 'wanna-be' trainers? They've got nothing — no official status, no course number.

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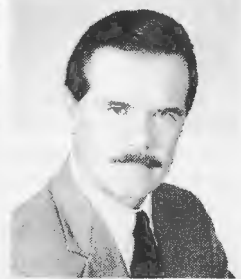
Jerry has created a Free special report revealing the amazing details about his scientific weapons fighting system — the system which has made the Navy SEALs an undefeatable fighting force.

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Official SEAL SCARS-CFC
Creator Jerry Peterson

Equal Protection

A letter to the editor of my local paper today posed an interesting question. The author asked "If the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment requires all 50 states to recognize Hawaii's gay marriage licenses, how come it doesn't require them to recognize my Texas concealed handgun carry license?" What do you think about this question and how would you answer it?

J. Degenhardt
via e-mail

Well, I guess if sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander as far as marriage licenses, then we think it should apply to other licenses (such as it does for driver's licenses) as well, to include concealed carry. So far, only individual states, like Florida, have enacted reciprocity statutes that recognize another state's concealed carry. Proposed federal legislation has never made it through. We think it would be a good thing if it did.

And we expect Hawaii to surpass Nevada in the number of marriage licenses sold to out-of-state-"couples," followed by renewed volcanic activity.

Merc Work

I am interested in writing to the South African based organization called Executive Outcomes. Having read the August edition of *Soldier of Fortune*, I was wondering if

you could help me by supplying their address? Where I work, I have found it hard to find out anything more than the fact that they are based in South Africa.

M.M. Cruickshank
Kamp Sepurine, Zadar
Republic of Croatia

Experienced, professional soldiers with an excellent CV and a clean record only need apply: Executive Outcomes, Recruiting Officer, Private Bag X-105, Hennopsmeer 0044, South Africa; phone: 0111 27 12 666 8429/7005.

Big Al Update

As someone who has known Mr. Woodbridge for many years and who is very familiar with his case, thank you for your coverage. I feel as if I had written the article myself. As an aside, my children and I were turned away last Christmas when we went to visit "Big Al" at Sheridan Federal Prison.

Steve Bach
via e-mail

We just talked to Al, and as we go to press he's still hoping to get to spend at least part of Christmas with his family. He particularly wanted us to express his family's thanks for the outpouring of moral and financial support from SOF readers after his story was published. Most of the financial help was sent anonymously, he noted — a

sad commentary on the state of affairs when people must fear retribution for helping.

Ask The Camel

Keep up the good work. I enjoy the issues covered, especially on the s— that's happening in D.C. And, of course, what comes out of it! Thanks for the intel. One question: when is enough enough? I do not look forward to armed conflict, but how long will it take before that is the only option? God only knows, in the mean time, keep the faith. I will not give up my freedom for anything! *de oppresso libre.*

B.B.
via e-mail

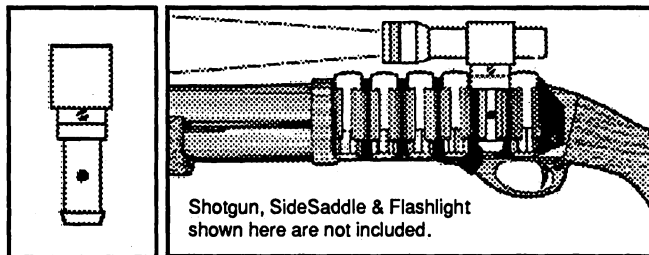
Evidently, the American electorate has not yet enjoyed all they can stand of the Clinton agenda, as the small percentage who bothered to vote returned him to office. (You did vote didn't you?) As for when enough is enough, that depends on the camel and how much straw is available. Two things are for certain: If the battle ever gets to the streets, all parties concerned have lost; and the time has demonstrably not come as long as you have a free press and a vote — and exercise it. Should it ever come to pass that freedom of speech and the right to vote are denied, then it might be enough-enough. Untoward interests are already gnawing around the edges of the Bill of Rights, and your best defense at this point is

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your active participation in the political process. But keep your powder dry: Thomas Jefferson noted, "The strongest reason for the people to retain their right to keep and bear arms is as a last resort to protect themselves against tyranny in government."

Kudos To Bix

The January issue of *SOF* was great. Its new upscale look is a great improvement. Reviewing the Command Guidance by R. K. Brown over the past several months, it is obvious that Slick Willie and his left-wing pinheads in Congress are trying an end run on private gun ownership. We must start to ask ourselves at what point we as private gun owners are willing to resist (in whatever form) the obvious creeping Fabianism of the gun grabbers? It is obvious that they will never be satisfied with what they have, but are striving to chip away at our right to own weapons of any kind. As a 24-year retired military member, WIA x2 in Vietnam, I knew who my foreign enemies were: I am finally recognizing who the domestic enemies are — it's Slick Willie and his minions in the White Castle at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Keep up the great work that you are doing with *SOF*, a true light in the darkness.

Garry Wells
via e-mail

Glad you like the new look: It's largely — if not wholly — the work of Bix Bigler,

our new art director, who is as good as it gets. As for when to resist, resist now! The founding fathers set things up so that if anyone would try to take away your guns, you could protect your guns with your vote. And when they try to take away your vote, they fully intended that you protect your right to vote with your guns. Resist vigorously with the first option now, to preclude ever having to exercise the second.

Canadian Agreement

RE Aaron Kfir's letter, January '97: A parliamentary committee found only 7,000 pointed-end soldiers in the CAF in 1995. Although forces will be reduced to 60,000+, they recommended no less than 63,000. The Army must already employ reservists to fill depleted battalions for U.N. ops, and despite U.N. commitments, defence budgets are cut.

Air forces were cut four squadrons, leaving only four, plus one training, the rest mothballed or cannibalized.

However, commitments required many new weapons: C-7 rifles, C-9 LMGs, C-6 MMGs, Eryx AT missiles, plus LAV-type APCs and trucks. The Leopard I tank will be upgunned. The Navy has 12 new frigates, but canceled chopper replacements.

It's been a long time since the government — or general populace — has supported our armed forces. Despite this, we

serve with pride and a sense of duty to our compatriots.

Mark Hughes, Reservist (Highlander)
Westville, Nova Scotia

And, cousin, you have served the cause of peace very well.

Terrorists or Guerrillas

The difference between terrorists and freedom fighters (reference Page 55, February issue)? Tactics. Although those in control will always vilify rebels regardless of their actual motives/beliefs or tactics, simply examine their actions to judge if they are terrorists or guerrillas.

Guerrillas attack only military/police targets, trying to minimize civilian casualties. A military installation would be a valid target, but terrorists will avoid military/police areas because they are cowards! Terrorists will instead bomb perfume counters at stores, or daycares or ... you get the idea!

FMJ556
via e-mail

Your assessment is probably a workable definition, remembering that one man's terrorist can be another man's freedom fighter. The chivalrous concept of not involving non-combatants will always be at odds with the "all's fair in love and war/the end justifies the means" rationale. Mad bombers are always terrorists. ☒

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The monsoons were winding down by November but there was still enough rain in Chu Lai to make life miserable.

I was attached to one of the three Marine F-4 Phantom Squadrons and this month it was VMFA-115's turn to man the "hotpad," the Air Group's answer to a quick-reaction force. My call sign was "Goose" and in my backseat was Johnnie "Cool" Brewer, a close friend and a damned good RIO (radar intercept officer). Our flight leader was "Dagger 11," an

PHANTOM STRIKE

experienced captain on his second tour. Johnnie and I had flown more than 40 missions together in as many days and I was on my third month in country. It was 1500 hours. Three more to go and our shift would end and we'd shed the G-suit, torso harness, survival vest, and grab some sleep.

The hotpad was a small trailer right next to the flight line of F-4s, two of which we had checked for our flight. There were no windows, but we did have 30-year-old metal bunk beds, an ace-deuce game board, the ever-present pungent odor of sweaty clothes stuffed too long in a locker, and a telephone that would send us into combat at its best: close-air support.

Somewhere in the Que Son Mountains, about 50-60 miles west of Chu Lai, a battalion of the Army of South Vietnam (ARVN) soldiers was in major contact. A large, veteran communist force from the North had bagged the smaller force in an ambush leading to a nasty firefight with all the trimmings: automatic weapons and mortars.

The NVA were dug deeply into bunkers and fighting positions and time was not on the side of their inexperienced, fledgling adversaries, toward whom they felt nothing save seething contempt.

The ring of the scramble phone split the silence of the hotpad. Dagger's RIO lunged forward to answer. He gathered information on the target, weather and location from the airborne controller, "Cowboy." Dagger, Johnnie and I sprinted to the F-4s loaded with 12 of the 500-

pound bombs. I initiated the start procedure and the big General Electric J-79 engines rumbled to life.

After pre-taxi checks for leaks, working control surfaces, and brakes, we called for taxi. The rain surged down as Dagger led us onto the runway and started his take-off roll.

As he lifted off, I lined up on the centerline, held the brakes momentarily as I checked the engine gauges and then kicked the throttles into after-burner. The acceleration was always a rush as it took only seconds to get airborne and head to the target.

Once at altitude, we decided that with the storm as bad as was reported between here and the target, our best option was to find a way underneath the weather.

We screamed west under a 2,000-3,000-foot ceiling, dodging walls of rain, the eerie hills hooded with mist and fog and handlike elevation changes that reached up to squeeze us against the clouds. Upon arrival on station, Cowboy came up on the radio. "We have NVA to within 300-500 meters of friendlies.

"Your attack heading will be 270 degrees with a left-hand pull off target. Expect *intense* enemy fire. Stand by for my mark."

The FAC cruised at low altitude, usually in a single-seat propeller aircraft, in a position to see enemy and friendly movement. He had low-frequency radio comms to the grunts and high-frequency comms to the Phantoms. He was an integral part of the air/ground team the Marines believed in. On his wings he carried white phosphorous ("Willie Peter") rockets which on impact would raise a plume of brilliant white smoke easily identifiable by the F-4s.

Cowboy fired his first rocket.



Johnnie (right) and I had flown more than 40 missions together in as many days.

"From my smoke, the target is 50 meters at 3 o'clock," he instructed, as I followed Dagger into the pattern.

I rolled the Phantom up onto its wing, let the nose fall to 20 degrees below the horizon and leveled into my attack. Cool started to call out altitude and dive angle as we shrieked in at 450 knots toward the valley floor. Enemy fire shot up at us but there was no time to pay it any attention. I released and quickly pulled the stick back to 5 Gs.

My feet turned to lead weights on the deck and my oxygen mask started to slide down my face. Blood pooled out of my eyes giving me gray tunnel vision. As I got the aircraft headed back up, I was immediately faced with the cloud bank. It was then back into a 2- or 3-G turn to stay out of the mountains and within sight of the target. It wouldn't get any easier.

I looked across the pattern for Dagger and glanced down at the target. Our previous run added smoke, dust, and debris to the rain and increasing dankness and enemy fire. Cowboy put in another mark but I could hardly see it. When I reached the roll-in point, I started my run but was already into our own smoke. I could hear Johnnie breathing harder as we broke out. I lost the mark. Better to go around than take a chance on nailing some ARVNS.

After Dagger's hit, Cowboy noticed hostile fire from a bunker about 50 meters to the west. He came up, "Goose, from Dagger's hit, go another 50 meters at 12 o'clock."

As soon as the Phantom was "wings level" I headed down. But now I was behind in speed and dive angle. I added power but had to adjust the dive angle with altitude at the bottom. I released and pulled out very low with high-velocity tracers following me.

The bomb's hit added a huge secondary explosion. The grunts caught a shower of hot shrapnel on that one. They hunkered down and kissed the ground.

I looked out at the grim picture: Smoke and rain obscured *everything*. I couldn't see the valley floor and worried about the mission and the safety of the ARVN troops.

We made another pass and held at altitude. Cowboy knew better than we did that any more work in close would be too dangerous. He rolled in for one last mark about 200 meters back from the target area. These hits could catch NVA troops retreating from our firestorm. Good thinking, Cowboy.

Dagger was on his way out of the valley. As I pulled up, I looked back for the last time and radioed thanks to Cowboy for a job well done.

Now, some 26 years later, I look at the Distinguished Flying Cross on my wall and remember vividly that miserable, risky, life-saving mission in the Que Son Valley: "As a result of the flight's devastating attacks ... the hostile force was routed, enabling the ARVN soldiers to advance unopposed and occupy the enemy's positions." ✕

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SOF CONVENTION SLATED FOR OCTOBER, 1997

The new *SOF* Convention, featuring at least three new events plus the classic attractions of the World Championship Three-Gun Match, the Trade-Consumer Arms Expo, the legendary firepower demo and insightful seminars, is slated for Las Vegas the first week in October, 1997!

Shooters in the *SOF* World Championship Three-Gun Match register Tuesday 30 September and shoot Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Conventioneers register Wednesday, 1 October and start having a good time immediately. Exhibitors at the Arms Expo set up Thursday, 2 October and the fabulous arms expo runs October 3, 4, and 5. For more info as a conventioneer or exhibitor, contact *SOF* Convention, Inc. at P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306; fax: 303-444-5617; phone: 303-449-3750, #8 on the telephone tree.

Join us again for fun in the sun and shooting in the sand — plus three new events!

IWO JIMA REUNION

SOF readers who believe America's wealth is measured by its heroes past and present should take note of the Iwo Jima Reunion, sponsored by the Iwo Jima Survivors Association of Texas, a national all-services organization. The reunion will be held 20-24 February 1997 at Irving, Texas. Marine Iwo vets from the 5th Amphibious Corps and the 3rd, 4th and 5th Marine Divisions will be joined by Iwo survivors from the Navy, Army, Air Corps and Coast Guard at the Dallas-Ft. Worth Harvey Hotel in Irving.

Some 20,000 Japanese defended that strategic island; 6,281 Americans died taking it, 21,865 were wounded, and only 1,083 Japanese survived — but this staggering butcher's bill bought the lives of countless thousands of U.S. airmen. The first emergency landing on Iwo occurred three weeks before the island was finally secured, and during the next four months before the end of the war 2,400 crippled and running-on-empty 20th Air Force bombers carrying 27,000 crewmen had made unscheduled landings at Iwo.

This year's guest list includes Brig. Gen. Paul Tibbets USAF (Ret.), pilot of the *Enola Gay* who, flying from Tinian, dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Tibbets will celebrate his 82nd birthday among the Iwo vets, and will present an award to the Marines in gratitude from the 20th Air Force. Also present will be Maj. Gen. David Jones, USAF, (Ret.) of the Doolittle raid in 1942, who was later shot down over North Africa and became a POW in Germany. Jones will pay tribute to surviving Pacific-theater former POWs, whose comrades died at a rate approaching 40% under Japanese imprisonment, compared to 1.2% who died under Nazi custody. Also present will be Chuck Lindberg, one of two survivors of the flag raising on Mt. Suribachi. Many other dignitaries such as Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Charles Krulak and Navy Commander Jim Lowell will attend, and there will be a USO show and big-band dance, luncheons, celebrity breakfast and tours.

For more information contact Cy Young, P.O. Box 1657, Bowie, TX 76230; or call: (817) 845-3261. —Richard Rongstad

FBI OFFICIAL PLEADS GUILTY IN WEAVER CASE

Senior FBI official E. Michael Kahoe has entered a plea of guilty to charges of obstruction of justice, before U.S. District Judge Ricardo Urbina, and agreed to cooperate with prosecutors investigating other FBI officials involved in the Randy Weaver case, and whether they were involved in a cover-up of the FBI's



A GI retires in the south of France: perfectly restored old Dodge command car, the work of Eric Euillades (6, Rue Gambetta, 12300 Decazeville, France), who would like contact from WW II 82nd Airborne vets.

handling of the siege at Ruby Ridge, Idaho that resulted in the death of Weaver's wife and young son.

Federal prosecutors had charged that Kahoe destroyed documents to keep them from attorneys representing Weaver. As head of the FBI's violent crimes and major offenders section, Kahoe was responsible for preparing a critique of the FBI's conduct at Ruby Ridge, and a factual summary of the case against him stated that Kahoe first refused to turn over certain documents to the U.S. attorney's office in Idaho, which prompted the Justice Department to intervene. The FBI had earlier been censured by the court for tampering with evidence in the Weaver case.

The highest ranking of four suspended FBI officials still under investigation in the incident is former FBI deputy director Larry Potts.

DOMESTICALLY VIOLENT COPS, TAKE NOTE

Provisions of the "Omnibus Consolidated Appropriations Act of 1997," which amended the Gun Control Act of 1968 (aka Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968), make it illegal for any person convicted of a "misdemeanor crime of domestic violence" to ship, transport, possess or receive firearms or ammunition. There are no published exceptions: It includes police. For instance, in the local county sheriff's office that serves Denver, Colo., some 15 deputies will be affected.

As far as we know, this disability only applies to convictions, not incidents such as throwing an ashtray or Bible at your spouse while cussing him out.

NO MORE UNION JACK THE RIPPER

People used to joke that if the control freaks in England don't lighten up, it won't be long before a Brit can't even have a sharp

Continued on page 16

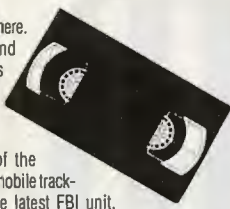
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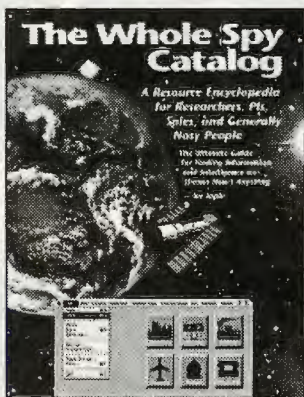
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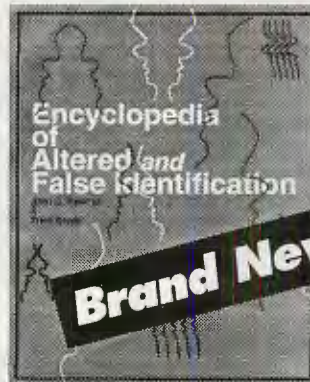
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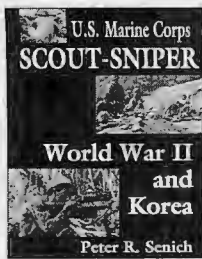
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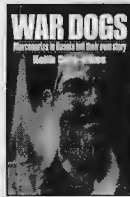
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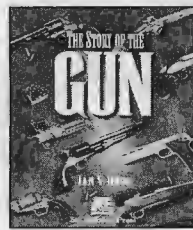
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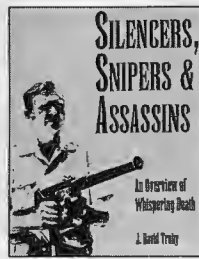
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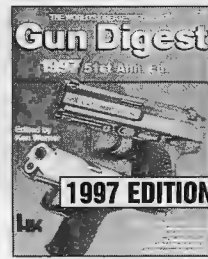
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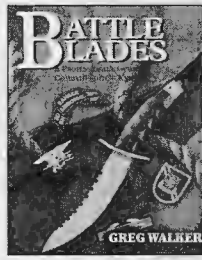
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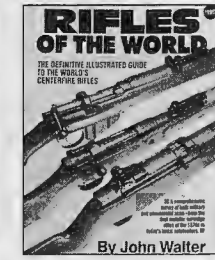
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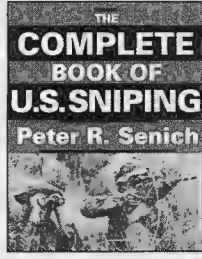
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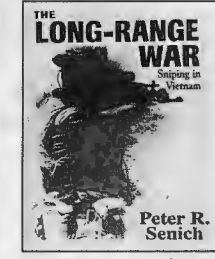
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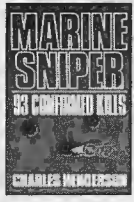
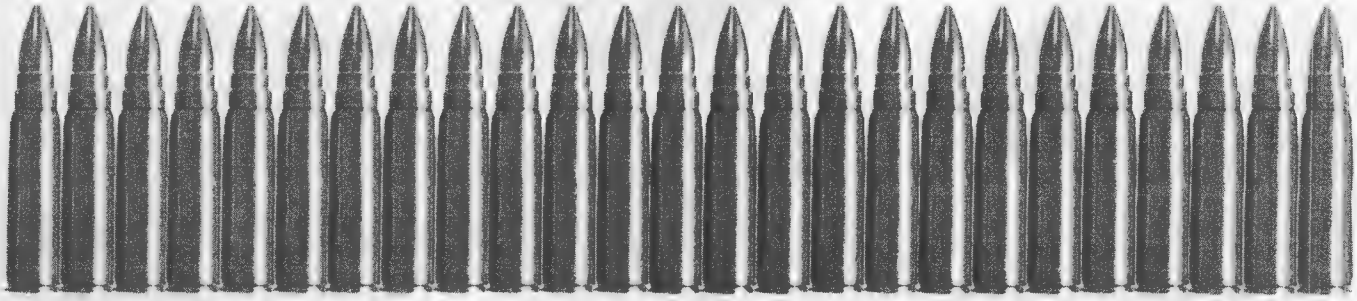


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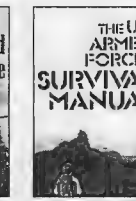
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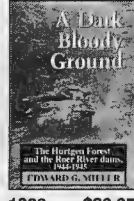
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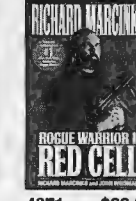
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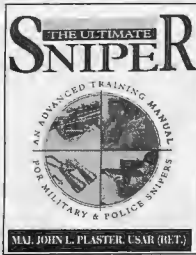
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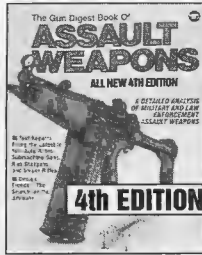
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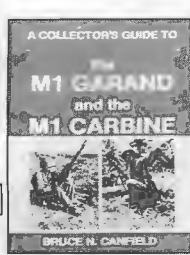


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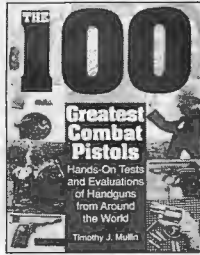
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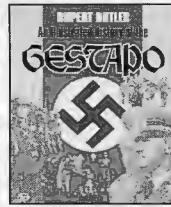
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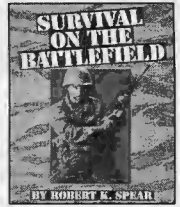
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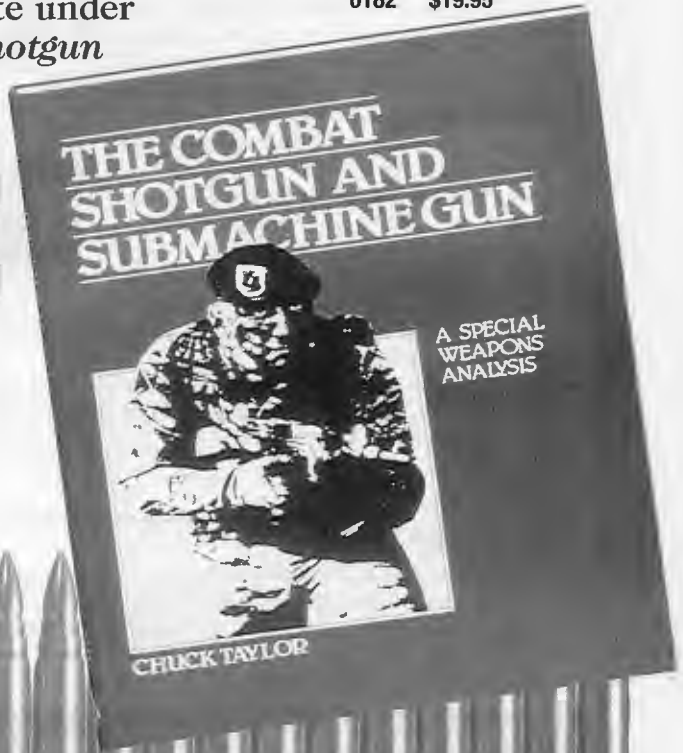
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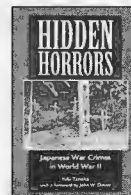
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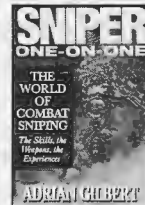
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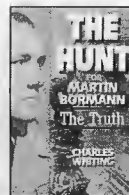
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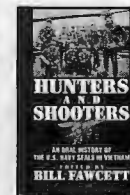
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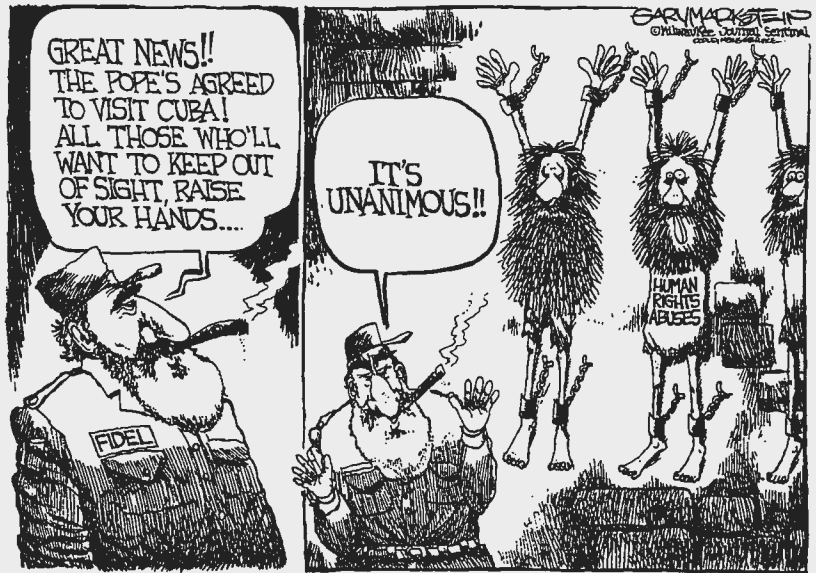
stick to defend himself. Well — and we're not making this up — that literally may be about to happen.

The Police Superintendent's Association of England and Wales has said it will mount a political offensive, lobbying politicians to back creation of a new offense "selling or supplying a knife which could be used as a weapon." The PSA wants police powers that go beyond current government proposals to ban the marketing of knives in ways that suggest they could be used for aggressive purposes. PSA President Brian Mackenzie said they also want "increased powers to be able to use targeted discretion to stop and search for knives."

Further, the PSA also called for the 1988 Criminal Justice Act to be widened to ban "blades and pointed articles without lawful authority or excuse."

Under the prohibition of "blades and pointed articles," one would have to prove such were possessed for "a legitimate purpose, either for business, sport or religious purposes, or as part of a national costume."

Here's a dangerous pointed article: The heads under those tall blue PSA hats. Our advice? Buy stock in Crayola of Great Britain — pens and pencils have to be next.



and mentioned the first death of one of the program's officers: "In Lake Charles I met with that officer's widow and two beautiful, beautiful young sons," Clinton recounted solemnly, "and I thought to myself, 'You know, if people like these folks are going to put their lives on the line for us, the least we can do is tell them if they put on a bullet-proof vest, it will protect them from being killed.' That's the least we can do for them."

Neither a bulletproof vest nor a ban on imaginary "cop-killer" bullets (yet to kill a cop), however, would have saved the officer whose untimely death was being shamelessly prostituted by Clinton: Officer Jerome Seaberry was responding to a radio call for backup when, according to Lake Charles Police Chief Sam Ivey,

ARMOR-PIERCING TREE?

During a campaign swing through Louisiana, flanked on stage by nearly 20 uniformed officers, President Clinton boasted about legislation he promoted to "put 100,000 more police on the streets"

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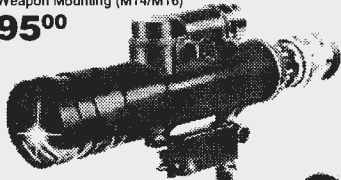
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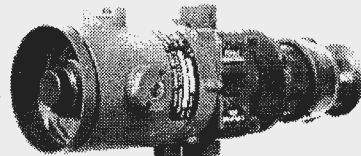
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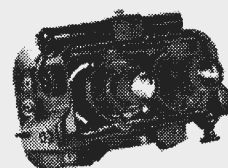
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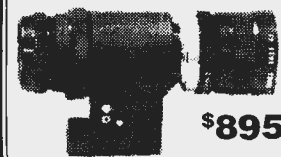
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French Foreign Legionnaires from Guyana parade at Fort Monroe, Virginia commemorating D-Day in Normandy.

"he lost control of his vehicle, going too fast ... hit a tree head-on and the vehicle burst into flames. Armor-piercing [sic] bullets," Ivey said, "had nothing to do with it."

MEDALS OF (DIS)HONOR

H.L.I. Lordship Industries Inc., sole contractor to supply Medals of Honor to the Defense Department, has been fined \$80,000 after pleading guilty to selling 300 bootleg Medals of Honor. Additionally, they paid the government the \$22,500 they received for illegally selling the bogus medals at memorabilia shows from 1991 to 1994. Noted U.S. District Judge William Bassler at sentencing, "True Medal of Honor recipients and their families have a right to be outraged at [Lordship's] conduct." The family-owned company could lose its status as a government contractor; that decision will be made by the U.S. Defense Logistics Agency. In the 134 years since the Medal of Honor has been authorized, 3,401 have been awarded — most posthumously — for risk of life in combat above and beyond the call of duty.

BIG BIRD, BARNEY — AND FIDEL

Representative Lincoln Diaz-Bolart of Florida is steamed: President "Radical Chic" Clinton has appointed Mr. Alan Sagner, founder of the "Fair Play For Cuba Committee" (who appointed JFK's assassin Lee Harvey Oswald to head one of the Committee's chapters back in the early '60s) to head the tax-supported Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Characterizing the Fair Play for Cuba Committee as one of "the most active pro-Castro groups in the history of the Castro regime," Diaz-Bolart noted that Sagner "formed the pro-Castro defense group during the worst moments of Castro's mass murders and confiscation," calling Clinton's appointment of Sagner "shameful."

As for Sagner, he claims the Fair Play

For Cuba Committee was "just a group dedicated to letting small countries resolve their own internal problems without undue influence by the United States." It simply boggles the mind.

ACADEMIC "FREE SPEECH"

Net surfers looking for the web site of the 10th Brigade, New York Guard are having a rough time finding it. Seems the unthinking leftists (so often they are) at the University of Iowa falsely identified the outfit on-line as a right-wing, para-military organization (it's not, of course; it's an element of the Division of Military and Naval Affairs of the State of New York). The 10th had to discontinue their web site last fall after a barrage of harassing, often obscene e-mail resulting from the University of Iowa's bum information. The University of Iowa, however, refuses to withdraw the grossly misleading information that is carried on one of its www.uiowa.edu servers.

Along with freedom of speech comes responsibility; a trait that liberals so often denounce — or ignore.

AIRBORNE AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS MUSEUM

The Airborne and Special Operations Museum Foundation has taken on the mission of building a world-class museum to tell the comprehensive story of United States Army Airborne and Special Operations forces, their genesis and their involvement over the past five decades. At this time, the most appropriate donations are of funds and pledges to get the ball rolling. Later, exhibit artifacts and documents will be appropriate. For more information contact AASOME, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 89, UCB Building, 316 Green St., Suite 200, Fayetteville, NC 28302-0089; phone: 910-483-3003; fax: 910-433-2594. ✕

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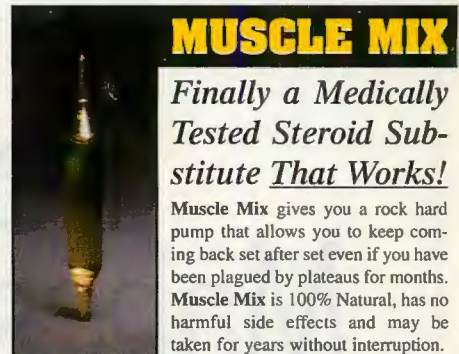
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legs	57.78 lbs	24.6 lbs
TOTAL	135.05 lbs	59.2 lbs
Average girth size		
increase in inches	2.84 in	.4 in
Average muscle mass	5.84 lb	1 lb
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Overall Results: The average muscular strength and muscle mass of Muscle Mix users increased at twice the rate of non-users.

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ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

Carlos Hathcock's Drag Bag

When the legendary USMC sniper, Carlos N. Hathcock II, endorses a product, everyone in my loop takes heed. Carlos' *imprimatur* is not given lightly. BlackHawk Industries, Inc. (Dept. SOF, 1133 Executive Blvd., Chesapeake, VA 23320; phone: 804-436-3101; fax: 804-436-3088) recently announced their formal alliance with Carlos to further their on-going goal of presenting armed professionals with "quality from experience."

Carlos' first suggestions were concerning their already well-known Long Gun Pack Mat (catalog #20PM00). This unique piece of equipment can be used as a scoped sniper rifle carrying case, backpack, jungle drag bag and an excellent shooting mat complete with removable notebook, spare cartridges, cleaning kit and bolt carrying pouches. Equally important, it has an outer utility pocket for the famous CamelBak Hydration System. When compared to a canteen, this hands-free drinking apparatus provides numerous advantages. It conforms to the body, is silent, soft-sided and slosh-free, has a patented no-mess bite valve, is fully insulated (keeps liquids hot or cold), holds up to two quarts and is 20% lighter than canteens. Carlos had BlackHawk



add a tube routing system for the CamelBak in the Long Gun Pack Mat's utility pocket.

Made of 1000 denier Cordura nylon, the Long Gun Pack Mat features full wrap-around carry handles made of heavy-duty webbing for superior weight support and closed-cell foam construction with a hard-plastic crown protective cover also lined with closed-cell foam. All the compartments are closed by #9 YKK zippers and sliders with HawkTabs. Fitting all rifles up to 50 inches in length, the fully-padded backpack harness straps and belt are concealable and include a sternum strap that is elasticized for a comfortable fit. Carlos also requested the addition of HawkTex non-slip material in the frontal area of the shooting mat where the elbows rest when firing from the prone position.

Normally supplied in black, camouflage and O.D. are available on special request. When in the backpack mode, the dimensions are 28"x14"x4". This superb piece of equipment carries both the BlackHawk and Carlos Hathcock White Feather logos. The price is \$249 and a generous portion of this goes to Carlos, who is seriously ill. At his behest, an instruction guide is also included. The CamelBak Hydration System (catalog #17100001) costs \$43.95. A padded scope

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THE ERNEST EMERSON DESIGN MODEL 975SBT WITH BLACK POCKET CLIP

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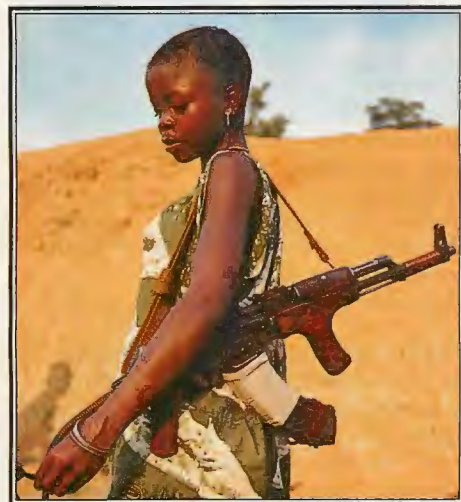
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BILL, 29, FLIGHT ENGINEER, CANADA

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NEW YORK TIMES, MONDAY, DEC. 11, 1995

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H.J., JOURNALIST

"Having served in the Italian Bersaglieri Corps, I read the article 'Sarajevo Olympics' with great interest. Thank you."

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"We would very much like to acquire a copy of the manual 'Psychological Operations in Guerrilla War' which you recently printed."

J.B., Curator, Latin American Collections, Stanford

"As a Navy diver and Corpsman, I look forward to the articles on underwater operations, SEALs, etc."

PETTY OFFICER C., FLORIDA

"I just missed my first issue in 10 years. Maybe I should subscribe?!"

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and receiver cover (catalog #62SP00), also endorsed by Carlos Hathcock, is available for only \$29.95. It can serve as an elbow or ground pad as well. All of BlackHawk's products carry a lifetime guarantee.

TACT'L-Ear

The single most important piece of equipment in your shooting kit, whether you are a police selected marksman or a tin can plinker, is hearing protection. Most shooters of my generation, including myself, have serious — and permanent — hearing losses. When I was in the U.S. Army (sometime after the Spanish American War), we used either no hearing protection of any kind or, at best, stuffed cotton in our ears. The sergeant on the machine-gun range told me the ringing in my ears would go away *eventually*. It did, but so did my hearing. Ear muffs interfere with your acquisition of a proper cheek weld and are uncomfortable in hot weather, and while inexpensive foam ear plugs



provide surprisingly superior protection, they prevent you from hearing range commands and could prove actually dangerous in a real tactical environment.

A new hearing-enhancement and protection device has been recently introduced by Walker's Game Ear, Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 1069, Media, PA 19063; phone: 800-424-1069) that possesses both of these seemingly dichotomous qualities.

Walker's TACT'L-Ear is a new hearing enhancement device that amplifies sounds nearly six times above the sound pressure level required for normal hearing — enough to hear even the slightest noises during stakeouts, surveillances and special

response team operations. The device fits comfortably on the back of the ear and weighs only 0.12 ounces. Its design permits omnidirectional (360 degrees) hearing. In addition, it provides maximum hearing protection, with its specially designed ear plug delivering a noise reduction rating of 29 to 33 decibels. A special safety circuit shuts off the TACT'L-Ear when a firearm is discharged. As it fits in only one ear, the user can either protect the other ear with an efficient foam plug or employ a communications ear plug. The cost is \$219.95 (+ \$3.95 p&h).

Reach Out And See Someone

Binoculars are another essential component in the sniper's kit. When scanning for targets over unfamiliar terrain or during the observation portion of a reconnaissance patrol, the scope on your rifle just won't do. While at Thunder Ranch I was able to test and evaluate two pairs of binoculars, both made by Leupold & Stevens, Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 688, Beaverton, OR 97057-0688; phone: 503-526-5195, fax: 503-526-1475).

In 1992 Leupold introduced the first binoculars made in the United States in more than two decades. The Golden Ring I.F. (Individual Focus) compact binoculars are available in two magnifications: a 9x25mm and an only slightly larger 10x28mm. They have a body of light-weight magnesium, rubber armor, a waterproof guarantee, a flat field-of-view, and extremely crisp resolution. In spite of their compact envelope, they provide an outstanding image that is certainly up to professional standards. Once you have precisely focused for each eye, you rarely have to refocus because of their extraordinary field-of-view.



However, even more impressive are the brand new full-size Golden Ring binoculars. Available in 8x, 10x and 12x magnifications. They are constructed to withstand G-forces that go far beyond military specifications for ruggedness and meet or exceed milspec for thermal extremes, corrosion-resistance in salt water environments and for resisting the effects of dust and sand. They're 100% waterproof and backed by Leupold's full lifetime guarantee.

Resolution and clarity of image are exceptional. Designed for use over extended periods without causing eye fatigue, an important requirement for both military and law enforcement users, Leupold developed its own computer-controlled vision system that automatically aligns the optical channels to precise tolerances previously unknown.

The eye relief is more than adequate, with or without eye glasses, and the eye cups can be folded down. The body is machined from 6061-T6 aircraft-grade aluminum and covered with a tough rubber armor. There is an ergonomically-located center focus knob and the right ocular also has diopter adjustments.

These are the best binoculars I have ever used. They're as tough as a main battle tank and have the image crispness and quality of an astronomical telescope. The full-size Golden Ring binoculars belong in everyone's drag bag, backed up by a pair of the compacts in the side pocket of your LBE. ☒

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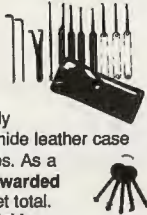
Specifically designed to pick tumbler locks. Designed over thirty years ago to aid law enforcement agencies. Consists of tension wrench, three needles and Lockaid "Gun." Prices include a copy of the book "Lockpicking Simplified."

Lockaid \$69.95



PIX MODEL 13

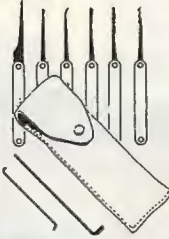
This deluxe yet compact kit features 11 of the most commonly used tools. Comes in a slim cowhide leather case for discreet undercover operatives. As a special bonus, a 5-piece set of warded picks is included. A 16-piece set total. Also included, a copy of "Lockpicking Simplified." Receive all this at a low price of Pix 13 \$42.95



PXP 8

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- Has 8 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.
- All Picks with Metal Handles.
- Copy of Lockpicking Simplified.

PXP 8 \$24.95



PXP 10

- Shirt Pocket Size.
- Top Grain Cowhide Leather.
- Has 13 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.
- All Picks with Metal Handles.
- Copy of Lockpicking Simplified.

PXP 10 \$34.95



PIX-EZ All-In-One Pick-Set

100% American Made! As convenient to carry and use as a pocket knife! Only 4 inches long, half inch square, weighs under five ounces, works fast and opens pin and waster tumbler locks quickly, with very little effort. Six tempered spring steel picks, tension wrench.

\$34.95



WKS PICKS

Made of the finest blue tempered spring steel, this 5-piece padlock pick-set is a must in every locksmith's tool box. This set will pick open most every warded padlock made today. \$9.95



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RECEIVE A COMBINATION SET INCLUDES — 5 ITEMS

1-MD-16 DELUXE SET	\$59.95
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ESP-13

This handy new pick set is the most popular set among professional locksmiths today. This kit consists of 12 different tools housed in a handsome black leather case designed for a shirt pocket. Included in the price, you receive a 5-piece warded key set and a copy of "Lockpicking Simplified." 17-piece set total.

ESP-13 \$45.95



SESAMEE DECODER

This tool was designed to decode the exact combination of a sesame padlock without damaging the lock. Detailed instruction included.



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MINI PICK TUBULAR

The most effective tubular pick on the market, unlike the larger picks with long handles or screwdriver handles. The longer the tool, the more pressure needed which causes easy breakage. The advantage of the Mini Pick is it is so short, you only use your thumb and index finger. With a little practice this tool will open a tubular lock in less than a minute. A. Your Choice: (1) Center (2) Offset left (3) Offset right; B. "Segal" 8 pin tubular; C. 5-pin Tubular; D. 6-pin Tubular; E. 8-Pin Ace.



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Electric Picks



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MD16

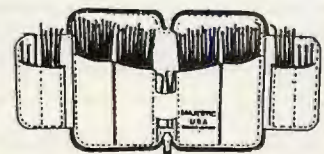
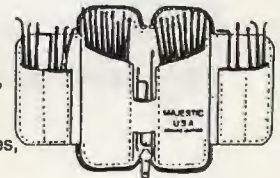
Shirt Pocket Size, Top Grain Cowhide Leather, Zippered Case, has 16 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.

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Hip Pocket Size, Top Grain Cowhide Leather, Zippered Case, has 32 picks, Tension Wrenches, Broken Key Extractor.

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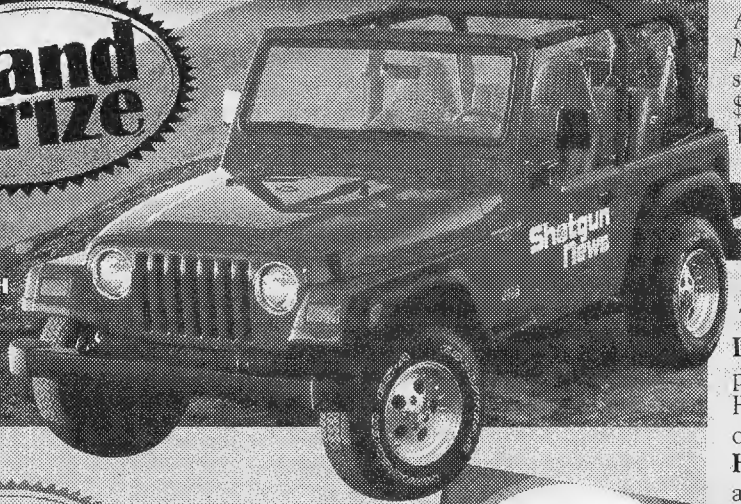
SWEEPS



Shotgun News is celebrating its 50th Anniversary... and they want you to share the excitement.



1997 Jeep Wrangler
OR \$15,000 CASH



As part of the festivities, Shotgun News is holding a giant year-long sweepstakes with prizes valued at over \$27,000. Monthly prize winners will be announced throughout the year. Grand Prize and First Prize winners will be selected in March, 1997.

GRAND PRIZE—1997 Jeep Wrangler or \$15,000 cash.

TRIP PRIZE—Five-day, Four-night Luxury Vacation for up to four people in a restored seventeenth century Hacienda at Alamos, Sonora, Mexico or Five-day, Four-night Dove Hunting Trip for up to four people at one of Mexico's top hunting lodges in Navajoa, Sonora.



Luxury Vacation in Mexico or Dove Hunting Trip in Mexico



MONTHLY PRIZES—Eleven monthly drawings with First and Second Place Winners of rifles, shotguns, handguns or accessory kits.



First and Second Place Winners each month

Monthly prizes include rifles, shotguns, handguns, or accessory kits.

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- TO ENTER:** Each time you begin or renew a subscription to Shotgun News during the months of March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, November or December 1996 or January 1997, you will be automatically entered into a drawing for that month's prize (and subsequent monthly prize drawings) and for the Grand Prize/Trip Prize drawing to be conducted at the close of this program. (Note: If you begin or renew a subscription to Shotgun News between 2/1/97 and 2/4/97 inclusive, you will be eligible for the Grand Prize/Trip Prize only.)
- TO ENTER WITHOUT PURCHASE OR SUBSCRIPTION:** On an Official Entry Form only, available by mail as indicated in Rule 2A, hand print your name, address, (including zip code), daytime and evening telephone numbers. Residents of the State of Washington only, need not affix postage to return envelopes.
2A. For each Official Entry Form you wish to be sent by mail, send a separate, self-addressed, stamped #10 envelope to: SHOTGUN NEWS ENTRY FORM REQUEST, P.O. Box 5081, Blair, NE 68009. Requests must be received by 2/11/97. Limit one request per envelope. Completed entry forms must be received at the address listed on the entry form by the last day of each month indicated in Rule 1 to be eligible for that month's prize drawing (and subsequent monthly prize drawings) and/or by 3/11/97 to be eligible for the Grand Prize/Trip Prize drawings.
- RANDOM DRAWINGS:** Monthly winners will be selected in a random drawing on or about the 20th day of the month following the month of drawing eligibility from among all eligible entries received by D.L. Blair, Inc., an independent judging organization whose decisions are final on all matters related to this program. Grand Prize and Trip Prize winners will be selected in a random drawing conducted on or about 3/12/97 from among all eligible entries received throughout the duration of this program. Winners will be notified by mail. Odds of winning will depend upon the total number of all eligible entries received in a given month for monthly prizes and/or over the course of the entire promotion for the Grand Prize and Trip Prize.
- PRIZE & APPROXIMATE RETAIL VALUE:** (1) Grand Prize consisting of a Shotgun News model new Jeep Wrangler with optional soft-top & doors, AM-FM radio and 5-speed transmission, (\$15,000) or \$15,000 cash; (1) Trip Prize — A 5-day, 4-night deluxe hunting expedition (White Wing & Morning Dove) in Mexico for four, including air transportation (from major U.S. city), lodging at the "Hacienda Cazadores" (three meals per day, guide and transportation to hunting areas, (Shells, licenses, gun permits, guns, etc. not included) (\$6,000) OR a 5-day, 4-night Mexican vacation for four in a restored 300-year-old Hacienda, includes air transportation (from major U.S. city), two meals per day, Fiesta, sightseeing and Jeep tours (\$6,000). Monthly Prizes: March: (1) 1st Prize — Isthmopolis 2 A Rifle plus a Wobly & Scott Brass Flare Pistol (\$279.90); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); April: (1) 1st Prize — a Browning Hunter Gold, 12 gauge self-loading shotgun (\$700); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); May: (1) 1st Prize — Schofield Revolver (\$795); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); June: (1) 1st Prize — Model 308 Guardia Civil Spanish Mauser, Caliber: 308 Win, complete with sling and muzzle cover in Special Select Condition, plus a Model 98/29 Persian Mauser Caliber 7.92 mm (8 mm Mauser) complete with bayonet & leather sling in Special Select Condition (\$459.90); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); July: (1) 1st Prize — a 1911 A-1 Springfield, 45 Caliber (\$459); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); August: (1) 1st Prize — Isthmopolis 2A Rifle plus a Model 98K Mauser WWII carbine Caliber 7.92 (8 mm Mauser) with Winter Trigger guard in Special Select Condition (\$399.90); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); September: (1) 1st Prize — a Browning Hunter Gold, 12 gauge self-loading shotgun (\$700); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); October: (1) 1st Prize — a 1911 A-1 Springfield, 45 Caliber (\$459); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); November: (1) 1st Prize — a Browning Hunter Gold, 12 gauge self-loading shotgun (\$700); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); December: (1) 1st Prize — Parker Knife Collection, Kentucky Derby set of 12 knives, engraved blades each with a different Derby winner, bone handles, framed under glass (\$450); (1) 2nd Prize — a Shooter's Vise Ultimate Pack (\$127.98); January 1997: (1) 1st Prize — a Classic Buffalo Hunters' Sharps Rifle in 45/70 caliber with a 26" heavy octagonal barrel with tang sights recreated by Navy Arms Company, Inc. (\$875); (1) 2nd Prize — Cotech Gun, side-by-side, 12 gauge Steeger IGA (\$400).
- GENERAL RULES:** Open only to U.S. residents who, as of February 28, 1996, are 21 years or older. Employees of Snell Publishing Co., Inc., Shotgun News, their affiliates, subsidiaries, advertising and promotion agencies and the immediate family members and/or those living in the same household of each are not eligible. Void where prohibited by law. Winner may make no substitution or transfer of prize. All federal, state and local laws, insurance, licensing, registration and title fees are the sole responsibility of the winner. All federal, state and local laws and regulations apply. Potential winners must execute any required Affidavit of Eligibility/Release of Liability/Prize Acceptance Form within 15 days of attempted notification. Noncompliance within this time period may result in disqualification and an alternate may be selected. Return of any prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification and an alternate will be selected. Sponsor reserves the right to substitute prize of equal or greater value. Limit one prize per household (with exception of Grand Prize and Trip Prize). Acceptance of prize constitutes permission to the sponsor and its agencies to use winner's name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising and trade without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. (Note: If hunt expedition is selected by Trip Prize winner, hunt trip must be taken during November 1997. If vacation is selected by trip prize winner it must be taken in November 1997 or between January 2, 1998 and March 31, 1998. Trip Prize must be taken on dates specified by sponsor. Travel blackout dates will apply.) All traveling companions must be 21 years of age or older and will be required to execute a release of liability prior to departure. No mechanically reproduced entries permitted. All firearms will be transferred to the respective winners through federally licensed firearms dealers. All winners must be eligible for firearm possession under all federal and respective state laws. In the event the sponsor is prohibited from awarding prize to winner as a matter of federal/state/local law or for any reason whatsoever (e.g. felony conviction, licensing requirements, etc.) prize will be awarded to an alternate winner. Not responsible for lost, late, postage due, illegible, damaged or misdirected mailpieces or entries not forwarded to prize headquarters in time for the random drawings. By participating in this promotion, entrants agree to be bound by the Official Rules and the decisions of the judges.
- For the names of the winners, available after May 31, 1997, send a separate, stamped, self-addressed (#10) envelope to: Shotgun News Winners, P.O. Box 5082, Blair, NE 68009.

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SLICK WILLIE WATCH

Fourth-Estate Follies

"The liberal news media are biased, and they've treated Bill Clinton and his scandals with kid gloves." How many times have SOF readers heard that complaint, or words to this effect? Plenty. Maybe biased reporters and editors *did* help this gun-grabbing, Constitution-crippling yuppie — one of the most wiretap-friendly presidents yet — remain in the White House.

But then, maybe the effect of biased reportage wasn't all *that* great compared to voters' apathy, Dole's lackluster campaign, a national decline in moral and ethical standards (and, conversely, growing tolerance for sleaze), and an economy that was OK. It's easy to blame the mainstream news media for what sometimes seems to be a conspiracy to coddle Slick Willie. A *conspiracy*, though, requires a master plan and willful collaborators — unlikely in the slam-bang, deadline-driven (and frequently cutthroat) daily news business.

Granted, since 1992 there have been examples of overt bias among Clinton apologists in the Fourth Estate; indeed, in the weeks before November's election the media — and especially television — *did* seem to emphasize the negative about cranky old Bob Dole whenever possible.

But the bias we're talking about here is subtle, often inconsistent, and sometimes even subconscious. It occurs at the personal level.

Down-And-Dirty Demographics

The men and women who carry the notepads, microphones, and cameras, or occupy the all-important *gatekeeping* (news edi-



tors') slots back in the newsrooms — and at this point, we mean big-city media — are no great mystery. Believe it or not, a few SOF staffers have worked in mainstream news (yes, it's true), so we have a pretty good idea. They are, generally speaking:

- Predominantly white, despite ongoing and appropriate efforts to hire minority reporters and editors.
- Mostly male, although the gender gap is slowly closing. (Young military guys who are "short" and college-bound should know that campus-newspaper staffs are a magnet for smart, career-



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minded young women who *can* get tired of socializing with pretentious frat boys and sensitive '90s girlymen...)

- Overwhelmingly college-educated; typically, at least a four-year liberal-arts degree in journalism, communications, or English. Most have little blue-collar job experience of significance.

- Urban- or suburban-born and raised; usually ignorant of rural/farm life and often somewhat contemptuous of *hayseeds* (and especially the hicks' non-PC notions of individualism and gun ownership).

- Almost *never* have served in the military or worked in law enforcement. (And guess what: Some liberal college professors likely tried to drum *Vietnam was a bad war; our soldiers are killers — despise them* into their heads.) Collectively they are, with few exceptions, baffled by the U.S. military's *real* purpose — as is Clinton — and skeptical, even hostile, toward its traditions and culture. (This credibility gap, however, means there always will be a demand for a savvy, alternative news medium like *SOF*.)

Put it all together and you have a well-meaning, but not especially *well-rounded*, middle-income, white-collar urbanite who is *comfortable* with four more Clinton years.

Further, media research does support suspicions of a pro-Clinton bias in the Fourth Estate. An opinion survey of editors at 100 big-city newspapers across the country reportedly showed some 60% voted for Clinton in 1992 and 22% for Bush. A '95 survey reportedly suggests that about 75% of "younger" news hounds (presumably entry-level or just above) preferred Democrats — and hence, Slick the "MTV president" — over Republicans (and Dole, a relic from a period of *ancient* history: World War II). Various other surveys suggest even stronger preferences for Clinton among voting journalists.

But does that translate into media bias? Possibly.

Smelling The Stench

Many journalists, even some who should know better, cling to a Utopian ideal of *unbiased journalism* — that a journalist's personal beliefs can be fully pushed aside, ignored, when it comes to

informing the public. Bravo Sierra.

Honest, ethical journalists (and they are out there, folks) know that personal bias *always* exists and can come into play at any time. Even the way a reporter (or *SOF* correspondent) approaches a news event — prioritization of facts, choice of diction in reportage — is the result of background, education, and experiences. The good ones acknowledge their prejudices, political or otherwise, and compensate, working hard to get all sides of a story. They don't mix in their personal opinions, either. They are, in a very real sense, public servants.

And slowly but surely (although too late for the '96 election) members of the national press are waking up and smelling ... no, not the coffee, but the stink of scandals surrounding our deceitful president.

Matters Swept Under The Rug

Here are some pearls of clear thinking from our much-maligned news media, beginning with *Time* news magazine — not exactly a bastion of conservatism.

"Clinton didn't comment specifically on the new developments [in the Democrats' fund-raising scandal] while on vacation, but he did try self-pity as a general defense," it reported on 2 December 1996. "He even likened himself to Richard Jewell. ... 'One of the things I would urge you to do, remembering what happened to Mr. Jewell in Atlanta, remembering what has happened to so many of the accusations that over the past four years have been made against me that turned out to be totally baseless.'

"It's true that Richard Jewell is no longer a [Olympic bombing] suspect. But then, he never changed his story," *Time* concluded pointedly. Ouch.

Surprised at this barb? Don't be.

In the same issue, another *Time* correspondent — a woman — had some blunt things to say about the First Lady: "She does not want to repeat the mistakes she made during her husband's first two years in office, when she alienated many Americans not because

Continued on page 70

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nalists tour Afghanistan; ELITE UNITS — Crests tell background of French Foreign Legion units.

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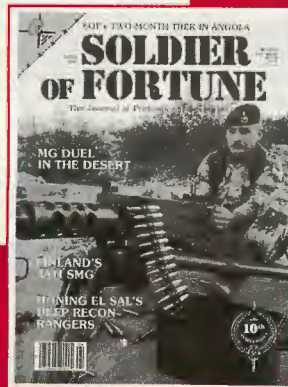
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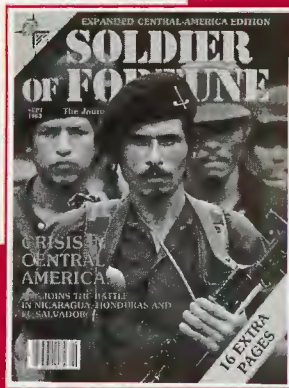
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WORLD SITREP

1

UNITED STATES

No more Desert Storms: High-level Air Force wargame, hypothetically pitting U.S. and allies against Iranian invasion of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in 2010, predicts little time for U.S. buildup in theater; divisive diplomatic bickering; enemy use of ballistic missiles with unconventional warheads, and precise GPS navigation in hit-and-run desert maneuvers; and protracted fighting. • Pentagon's 55 R&D labs are 35% over capacity, wasting millions of dollars, GAO reports. Office of the Secretary of Defense, staffed by more than 7,000 in 35 organizations, wastes billions from redundancy, should itself be "downsized," influential critics say. • Navy sees severe shortage of surface warships by 2010: post-Cold War missions will require 150 vessels, but budgets will fund only 120 or less by then. • Lockheed Martin proposes conversion of older F-16A fighters to "unmanned combat aerial vehicles" for remotely controlled, anti-ballistic missile flights of lengthy duration.

2

RUSSIA

Citing social upheaval, military's discontent, and rise of organized crime, CIA reports say Russian nuclear weapons' security (against unauthorized launch or theft) are weakening. Moscow disagrees, saying safeguards are adequate; Clinton administration concurs. • All Soviet-made nuclear weapons now are in Russia, following removal (partly U.S. financed) from former Soviet republics. Defense Minister Rodionov, condemning NATO's expansion, hints at future need to re-target some missiles against eastern Europe. • Russian Army today (functional active-duty divisions): 12 armor, 28 motorized-rifle; 5 airborne, 4 "static-defense," and 4 artillery. • Presaging renewed conflict, Chechen rebel leader says he never will drop demand for independence from Russia; meanwhile, President Yeltsin orders Moscow officials to halt public arguments over Chechnya.

7

SAUDI ARABIA

Wealthy Saudi dissident Osama Bin Laden (hiding elsewhere in Middle East) has taken credit for two bombings of U.S. bases here, boasts he will strike again, U.S. intel services claim. • To end four-year dispute — occasionally violent — over land and maritime borders, Saudi Arabia and Qatar hire French experts to demarcate and map their common border.

6

AFGHANISTAN

Criticized even by Iran, Taliban rebel movement — battling alliance of regional forces — rejects international demands to soften its hard-line brand of Islamic law. • U.N. observers report at least 10,000 Afghans have fled into Pakistan to escape the battle for Kabul.

9

KUWAIT

Manpower shortages prevent army from absorbing newly purchased tanks, combat vehicles, and heavy weapons (a logistically awkward mix of U.S., British, Russian and Yugoslav equipment). Government planned to modernize and expand ground and air forces, now totaling 15,000 troops, to 40,000 by year 2002; that now appears impossible.

10

LIBYA

Tripoli offers to host peace talks, mediate between Philippine's government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front guerrillas opposed to recent peace treaty (which was approved by rival Moro National Liberation Front). Manila accepts offer. • Government claims nearly 4 years of U.N. sanctions have cost it \$19 billion and deaths of 21,000 citizens.

14

BRITAIN

Scientists suggest certain pesticides, chemically similar to nerve gas and used heavily in Coalition areas of Kuwaiti theater of operations, might cause some symptoms associated with "Gulf War Syndrome."

15

FRANCE

Infamous Cold War terrorist "Carlos the Jackal" (Venezuelan-born llich Ramirez Sanchez), now in custody, files lawsuit in Paris to block publication of book about his exploits; claims it will violate his presumption of innocence.

16

MALTA

Victorious leftist Labour Party immediately reverses political course of tiny nation, canceling applications to join European Union and NATO Partnership for Peace.

3

BOSNIA

Clinton's "one year" deadline for U.S. participation in IFOR passes as 1st Armored Division and attached units withdraw; second NATO force (up to 30,000 troops), takes shape for 18-month "peace consolidation" mission. Elements of U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division, nearly 5,500 troops, arrive: 1 mech-infantry and 1 aviation brigade; support command of air-defense, signal, logistics and clerical units; and additional elements from artillery, engineer and intel battalions, and an MP company. (America pledges 8,500 troops to "IFOR 2"; Britain, up to 5,000; and France, 2,500.) • NATO official estimates first year in Bosnia cost IFOR allies more than \$6 billion total. During that time, 50 NATO troops died, none from hostile fire; most, from land mines or vehicle accidents.

4

JORDAN

Recently declared "major non-NATO ally" by Washington, Jordan seeks increased U.S. training and equipment in King Hussein's ambitious program to modernize military (now 100,000 troops, to be trimmed to better-equipped 60,000). Washington to transfer 16 F-16A/B fighters, 50 M60A3 tanks, 18 UH-1 helicopters, 1 C-130 transport, and 250 trucks; more equipment likely to follow.

5

CHINA

Tensions with India decrease: Military headquarters on both sides of previously disputed border establish commo link for early warning of peacetime maneuvers; also, Beijing cancels advanced medium-range ballistic missile that could have delivered two-ton warhead into central India. • China to deploy advance force, possibly 300 troops, to Hong Kong ahead of July's takeover; meanwhile, British army recalls battalion of Gurkhas.

8

ISRAEL

Army needs \$1 billion to prepare for war with Syria; meanwhile, defense minister hints Jerusalem *might* consider giving up part of Golan Heights for peace with Damascus. Worried officials say Syria — with Russian help — now produces quantities of sarin and VX nerve gases and anthrax, deliverable via improved Scud missiles. (However, Russia's foreign minister, in Middle East trip, says Moscow would *not* support Syrian attack.) • Elite heliborne unit, created in '95 and code-named *Egoz*, is dedicated to anti-*Hezbollah* ops. Based in southern Lebanon, operators already have 20 confirmed (and 75 or more unconfirmed) kills.

13

NEPAL

Nearly 100 people have been killed in Maoist insurgency that began in early '96 in western district of Rolpa and eventually extended into Jajarkot, Rukumkot, and Salyan districts, the government reports.

12

COLOMBIA

Army reports seizure of 13,000 pounds of cocaine at facility run by Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (*FARC*). This apparently confirms U.S. suspicions that the leftist rebels no longer merely guarded other groups' drug sites, but had themselves become a cartel. • Army agrees to withdraw, for 11 days, from 14,000-square-kilometer area of jungle in order to obtain release of 60 soldiers held captive by *FARC*.

18

MEXICO

President Zedillo identifies narcotrafficking as greatest threat to country's security; blames problem on high demand for illegal drugs in United States.

11

SWITZERLAND

Ending decades of militarily enforced neutrality, Bern announces intention to seek membership in NATO's "Partnership for Peace" program.

17

ITALY

Florence to host headquarters of "Eurofor": 20,000-man rapid-deployment force assembled by France, Italy, Portugal and Spain for peacekeeping and humanitarian mission in Mediterranean area. The organization (similar to 4 nations' "Euromarfor" naval force) could act independently of, or as part of, NATO or Western European Union force. Libyan leader Khadafi condemned Eurofor as provocation for war.

World SitRep is compiled in part from the biweekly newsletter *For Your Eyes Only: An Open Intelligence Summary of Current Military Affairs*. Published by Tiger Publications, P.O. Box 8759, Amarillo, Texas 79114-8759; subscriptions are \$70 per year (26 issues), \$74.38 in Texas. Sample issue available for \$3. Those interested in reliable world intel are encouraged to subscribe.

COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

Text & Photos by Frank W. James

When Targets Shoot Back



In the carjacking scenario, ATG cadre members play two armed criminals, the carjacking victim, and a passerby in a wheelchair. The two contestants, as police officers, try to control the situation and disarm the criminals. Gunplay is highly likely.

Among the many advances in law-enforcement training during the past few years, none has more potential than simulated gunfights.

Nothing imprints on the brain and memory like stinging pain; the welt left by a low-velocity pellet is still sufficient to get anyone's attention and punish improper behavior. A new group devoted to improving gunfight tactics uses pain as a teaching tool — and uses it well.

The Advanced Tactical Group (P.O. Box 510, Dept. SOF; Lafayette Hill, PA 19444; phone: 610-825-4245) is the brainchild of former Secret Service agent Walt Rauch, who is also a retired felony-fugitive squad officer with the Philadelphia Police Department. Besides his training business, Rauch stays busy as a licensed private investigator and gun writer.

ATG's mission is to analyze the tactical environment of deadly-force encounters, in either a civilian self-defense or law-enforcement situation, and improve on those tactics.

Traditionally, training for a gunfight has centered around mastery of a firearm. Usually, for civilians and police, it is the handgun; for the military, it mainly has been with the assault rifle. The inherent problem with this approach is simply that the targets *don't shoot back*.

Granted, it is possible to achieve a measure of an individual's marksmanship by scoring the paper or cardboard target, and through the use of timers a quantitative judgment can be made about his reaction time. None of this, however, places priority on the use of proper tactics.

Advanced Tactical Group, while utilizing traditional live-fire exercises with conventional targets, also employs handguns modified to shoot only Simunitions ammunition: a dye-marking round that uses a colored-soap projectile from a semi-conventional case. Participants wear visored helmets, lightweight Kevlar vests, and gloves.

The advantage is that the guns are *real*, not the toy-like paint-ball guns used in recreational contests. Because the Simunitions-modified pistols are real guns, all of the scenarios must be carefully and completely controlled for safety. The ATG training is constantly scrutinized by several supervisors.

Because the course is a beneficial means of training law-

enforcement officers to survive a gunfight, ATG was invited to the U.S. Secret Service training facility near Beltsville, Md., to host a side event during the annual Secret Service Pistol Match.

The ATG's event during the pistol match consisted of only two stages: a simulated carjacking on a city street, then a domestic dispute between two male homosexuals at an apartment complex. Both scenarios provided plenty of excitement and adrenaline (and sometimes humor) as contestants endured role players' taunts, challenges, and threats.

The role players are actors. Because the training scenarios were judged as a competition, the role players had to respond in exactly the same way for more than 50 different competitors. That is easier said than done.

Having themselves survived a number of gunfights, the role players routinely proceeded through these scenarios in what can only be described as half-speed; if the veteran role players had been allowed to go full-bore it is doubtful any contestant would have "survived."

I "died" and "survived" a number of these encounters and came away with much food for thought.

Rauch had instructed all role players to remain in a "cognitive" state and observe what the contestants were doing throughout each scenario. When moving at half-speed this was easy, but one time my reactions took over and I went full bore when my partner was eliminated from play. The moment he went down, I became aware of only two things: my sight picture and my target (who was the police officer). Once my partner was gone, my adversary became my sole focus. Just like in a real gunfight, I experienced tunnel vision that focused only on the immediate threat. So much for my cognitive state.

During the three days of ATG competition at the Secret Service facility, three different types of modified handguns were used: a Sig Model 226, a Glock Model 17, and a Smith & Wesson Model 10 revolver. (The Glock and the S&W revolver became the preferred weapons.) I've used S&W revolvers for decades and, although the Glock is newer to me, I have certainly shot my share with one.

Yet, it was only with the S&W wheel-gun that I remembered each sight picture after every shot. With the Glock the only sight picture I could remember after the event, was the first one. It was not the fault of the gun, but rather my relative inexperience with this brand of handgun compared to one I've been shooting since my



In ATG's domestic-disturbance scenario, two male "lovers" are having a violent quarrel in a mock apartment building. Police officer responds and immediately must identify the threats: Man at the door is only two steps from a pistol, on the floor; his buddy (left) is holding a small revolver.

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teenage years.

I came away from the ATG training with several questions.

A common observation is that it takes 3,000-5,000 repetitions of a technique to train someone in complex motor skills. But in analyzing my own performance, I questioned whether it actually might take 10 times that many repetitions. Practice — lots of it — *does* make perfect.

The ATG Match cadre filmed each competitor for review and analysis later. The video camera doesn't blink. Watching myself, I noticed that in the closing stages of each shoot-out, when either my adversary or I were closing the distance, I always fired with *one* hand. Some *SOF* readers might say "he needs more training." The fact is, in the last three years I've had a hell of a lot of training — and I still did it.

At the climax of this (simulated) confrontation, I *knew* I should use two hands to guarantee accuracy, but one part of my brain told me I didn't have time and I could make the shot (which I did) with one hand. The real revelation came upon viewing other shooters' tapes: *Every* competitor, at close range or when an opponent was charging him, used only one hand to fire the pistol. It was a universal and standard response.

Is this a training problem, or merely survival instincts demanding speed over precise aiming when getting off that all-important first shot? When the threat is close, few shooters have the discipline to use two hands to guarantee the shot will be placed *exactly* where it needs to be. Most do have the skill to hit center of mass with a one-handed shot, and that's what they use. This raises another question, in recognition of this observed behavior: Should defensive handgun training concentrate more on one-handed shooting at short distances rather than the standard two-handed drills?

Discussions with ATG's veteran role players turned up another fine point of gunfighting worth reconsidering.

Trainers for years have taught defensive tactics in which you focus your vision on a potential opponent's hands. But once the threat is identified and confirmed, do you continue watching his hands? No.

Watching the hands is useful only if you are unsure whether he has a concealed gun, knife, or club. Once that question is answered in the affirmative, you are better served defensively if you watch his eyes: Eye movements will "telegraph" the opponent's next move.




The last point I want to make, and it is reinforced by ATG's special brand of training, is that gunfights occur *very* quickly. In these lifelike scenarios, combat occurs in fractions of a moment — and at shorter distances than any IPSC match I have ever shot in.

The truth is that for most of us, our only hope of survival in a close-range gunfight is by reacting instantly and correctly. That's what the Advanced Tactical Group is all about: finding out what it takes to survive when the targets shoot back. ☒

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“EAGLE CLAW”

by Col. Michael E. Haas USAF (Ret.)

**Desert One:
Delta's
Fortuitous
Failure?**

Ballooee! . . . a blue fireball ballooned into the night . . . the flames were reaching 300 to 400 feet in the sky.” Fueled by thousands of gallons of exploding jet fuel, the stunning inferno described by Delta force commander Colonel “Chargin’ Charlie” Beckwith consumed in seconds the lives of five Air Force and three Marine Corps airmen. It was late in the Iranian night of 24 April 1980.

The immediate cause of the explosion was brutally clear: The Marine pilot of a 25-ton RH-53D Sea Stallion, the largest helicopter in the U.S. inventory, had

become disoriented in a dust cloud as he hovered to reposition away from an Air Force EC-130H Hercules transport. Blind, the giant helicopter slammed down atop the Hercules, its fuel tanks rupturing to spill a wave of exploding jet fuel over the transport underneath.

Either to escape or perhaps assess the damage above and behind his position, the transport’s navigator apparently opened the egress hatch above his position, inadvertently bringing a stream of liquid fire down onto the flight deck. In the same instant, all seven of the helo’s main rotor blades, each nearly 40 feet long and driven through a

massive transmission by two, 4,380 shaft horsepower engines, thrashed wildly into the -130's body to set off the giant, secondary inferno.

The hellish noise at the refueling site defied description. Silhouetted against the exploding flames the three remaining C-130s drove a dozen screaming turbo-prop engines, while the engines from the remaining four helicopters added a deafening 32,000 horsepower above the sound of their thrashing rotor blades.

The total cost of America's failure to rescue 53 of its citizens, taken hostage in their own embassy by Iranian "militants" in November 1979, was incalculable. The immediate cost alone entailed the loss of the previously mentioned airmen as well as millions of dollars worth of aircraft destroyed or abandoned as the rescue force raced from Iran; all without a single hostage rescued or enemy soldier even encountered. But more, much more, was also lost.

In the jubilant streets of Tehran the failure further consolidated the power of the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, one of America's most implacable enemies. In the mean streets of Washington Secretary of State Cyrus Vance resigned in bitter protest against the mission, and the presidency of Jimmy Carter began its final slide towards terminal political irrelevance. And in the embarrassed corridors of the Pentagon the Joint Chiefs of Staff launched a damage-con-

trol operation to protect individual careers from public accountability for the debacle.

What really caused this American rescue force to self-destruct in Iran? Was it really just a combination of bad luck and bad weather, as the official Pentagon report would claim? And, largely unquestioned to date, what would have happened had Delta actually gotten into our embassy in Tehran? If the official answers to the first two questions are hard to believe, the answer to the third is downright frightening.

The Iranians

When the Ayatollah's Revolutionary Guards seized the American embassy on 4 November 1979 with the enthusiastic blessings of Khomeini, they came to stay. The Ayatollah demanded the U.S. return the deposed Shah of Iran for trial (The cancer-stricken Shah was in the United States for medical treatment.), or the embassy hostages suspected of being "spies" would be put on public trial. President Carter subsequently banned all U.S. purchases of Iranian oil and froze \$5 billion worth of Iranian assets in America.

Returning the compliment, Khomeini publicly mocked Carter and escalated his hate rhetoric against the "Great Satan." Stalemate ensued, with the American press howling in full bay for President Carter to "do something." Under this intense media pressure Carter did do something. He picked

up the telephone and called The Honorable Harold Brown, his secretary of defense.

This in turn started a chain of events that led the Joint Chiefs' Chairman, Air Force General David C. Jones, to form a scratch force of Army-Navy-Air Force-Marine elements into an ad-hoc Joint Task Force (JTF) dedicated to rescuing the hostages. The scratch force was the only option available in 1979 as the Joint Chiefs had allowed America's once-potent special-operations forces to wither away in the post-Vietnam era. The planning and rehearsal phase of the mission was code-named Rice Bowl, and the execution phase dubbed "Eagle Claw."

Rice Bowl

Within a month of its initiation this JTF had roughed out an initial rescue plan. Elements of that task force were in fact already rehearsing their individual roles in the plan at various locations in the United States. But even by this early stage, the root causes of the mission's ultimate failure were already firmly imbedded in the JTF structure, leaving only fate to decide when and where "Eagle Claw" would come unraveled.

The critical problems began when Gen. Jones selected *two generals with no special-operations command experience* to command this classic, high-risk special-operations mission. Or did he select only one general?

Jones selected Army Maj. Gen. James Vaught to command the Joint Task Force, but his nominal deputy for air operations, Air Force Maj. Gen. Philip C. Gast, was never formally in the JTF's chain of com-

Aftermath: Thirteen dead and injured servicemen and one presidency were two of the most prominent casualties resulting from the aborted rescue attempt in the Dasht-e-Kavir Desert.



Corbis-Bettmann



US Navy

RH-53D *scapegoats* aboard U.S. aircraft carrier. These Navy Sea Stallions were branded the cause of the mission's failure.

mand. In fact, the ex-fighter pilot was assigned to Headquarters Tactical Air Command (TAC) and promoted to lieutenant general midway through the Rice Bowl phase. Though he then outranked the two-star JTF commander, he continued to function in a capacity subordinate to Vaught that was never clearly defined.

Confusion at the senior JTF leadership level had predictable effects as it spiraled downward. General Vaught's deputies for ground and fixed-wing air assets, Col. Beckwith and Air Force Col. James H. Kyle respectively, provided the senior special-operations experience, but not the flag-officer clout to "wave the bullshit flag" when questionable mission-training judgments were made or accepted by Vaught or Gast. The downward-spiral effect continued still further into the guts of the organization.

The all-critical helicopter component was commanded by Navy Captain Jerry Hatcher, a specialist in ocean-going, helicopter mine counter-measure operations. He was soon replaced by Marine Corps Col. Charles H. Pitman, an authority in ship-to-shore amphibious assault tactics. Vaught accepted the Marine colonel's authority (as he had with Gast), despite Pitman having no formal position in the JTF's command

structure. Neither Hatcher, Pitman, nor their Navy/Marine helo aircrews were volunteers and in fact, did not know until their transfer to the JTF what the mission entailed.

As Rice Bowl planning moved forward it quickly became evident that flying Delta

into and out of Iran was going to be a major, perhaps *the* major challenge of the overall mission. And while history shows that in the end the challenge proved simply too much to overcome, it is equally true that from the beginning of mission rehearsals the telltale warning signs of failure were there for all to see.

After the mission failure, the Pentagon's Holloway Report (The "Holloway Report", as it is generally referred to, was the Pentagon's official after-action report for Operation Rice Bowl/Eagle Claw. Admiral J. L. Holloway, III, (USN, Ret.), presided over a panel of five other flag-rank officers from the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps.), would list *unexpected helicopter failure and low-visibility flight conditions* as the two direct causes for aborting the mission. It was like saying "guns kill people" without mentioning the role a human plays in turning an inert piece of metal into a killing instrument. And it was no coincidence that these findings precluded the possibility that any service or individual would be held culpable for the debacle.

An encapsulated description of the plan (see map) envisioned aerial infiltration of the rescue force into Iran on 24 April by six Air Force C-130 transports. Three of these would carry Delta's troopers. The remaining three carried internal rubber fuel bladders for refueling the helicopters at Desert One, the JTF designation for a remote site located some 200 miles southeast of Tehran. The same night eight RH-53D Sea Stallions would lift off from the carrier *Nimitz* and, flying a parallel route in a formation of four pairs, land at Desert One a half-hour after the C-130s.

After delivering Delta and topping off the helos, the C-130s would return to their departure point, Masirah island off the coast of Oman, while the Sea Stallions airlifted Delta to a hide-site two hours by air closer to Tehran. Finally, the helos would then move another 50 miles away to yet another hidden site and remain under camouflage



SOF files

"Chargin' Charlie" Beckwith, here in Vietnam, '65, described the inferno in the Iranian desert: "Balllooe! ...a blue fireball ballooned into the night ... the flames were reaching 300 to 400 feet in the sky."

netting throughout the next day.

That night (25 April) operatives already placed in Iran would lead 118 Delta troopers (and two former Iranian generals) through Tehran in six Mercedes trucks to the embassy. Near midnight the force would slip unnoticed over the embassy walls, *neutralize* (the military has long since learned not to use the "kill" word in public) any guards, secure the hostages, and call for helo extraction either from the embassy or a soccer stadium adjacent the compound. Orbiting overhead, two heavily armed AC-130H gunships (having flown to Tehran from Wadi Kena, Egypt) would be ready to do some more "neutralizing" should any Iranians attempt to block the extraction.

In the early morning darkness of 26 April the extracted force would then be flown 35 miles south to Manzariyeh airfield, already secured by a company-sized Ranger force. Once at the field, the hostages would be flown out of Iran in two C-141 jet transports with the Rangers following in C-130s.

Simple, the plan was not. But as Col. Beckwith notes in his book *Delta Force*, it was a lot saner than many of the other proposals offered up by the Pentagon's wannabe commandos. Having evolved over a period of months, the plan gave the various JTF components a clear focus for their specific

training tasks. But even before this final plan evolved, the JTF leadership got its first glimpse of a problem that, if left uncorrected, could only bring the whole show to a sudden and decidedly unpleasant stop.

The problem was the helicopter component of the plan, or to be more precise, the *non-volunteer* source selection of the helicopter pilots themselves. The JTF's selection of the Navy's RH-53D was based on its

dragged a huge, mine-detection sled across the surface of the ocean by a cable trailing from the rear of the aircraft.

The mine-sweeping helo crews took their own particular risks at sea, but these risks had virtually nothing in common with the requirements for Eagle Claw. In his book *The Guts To Try*, Col. Kyle recalls his unsuccessful attempts to motivate the Navy pilots' leaders, who seemed more worried about violating Navy regulations than mastering the difficult night-flying skills demanded by the mission. By mid-December 1979 the issue came to a head, with most of the Navy helo crews deemed unsuitable for the mission and replaced; their RH-53D's remained with the JTF.

In searching for pilot replacements, the JTF commander took the problem to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, who reportedly maintained a strong, hands-on approach to managing Vaught's command. The chairman's Deputy for Operations, Marine Corps Lt. Gen. Phillip Shutler, also became involved. Shortly thereafter, Marine Corps H-53 pilots trained and organized for (primarily) daylight, ship-to-shore amphibious assault operations were sent to the JTF as replacements.

Shutler's Marine replacements were

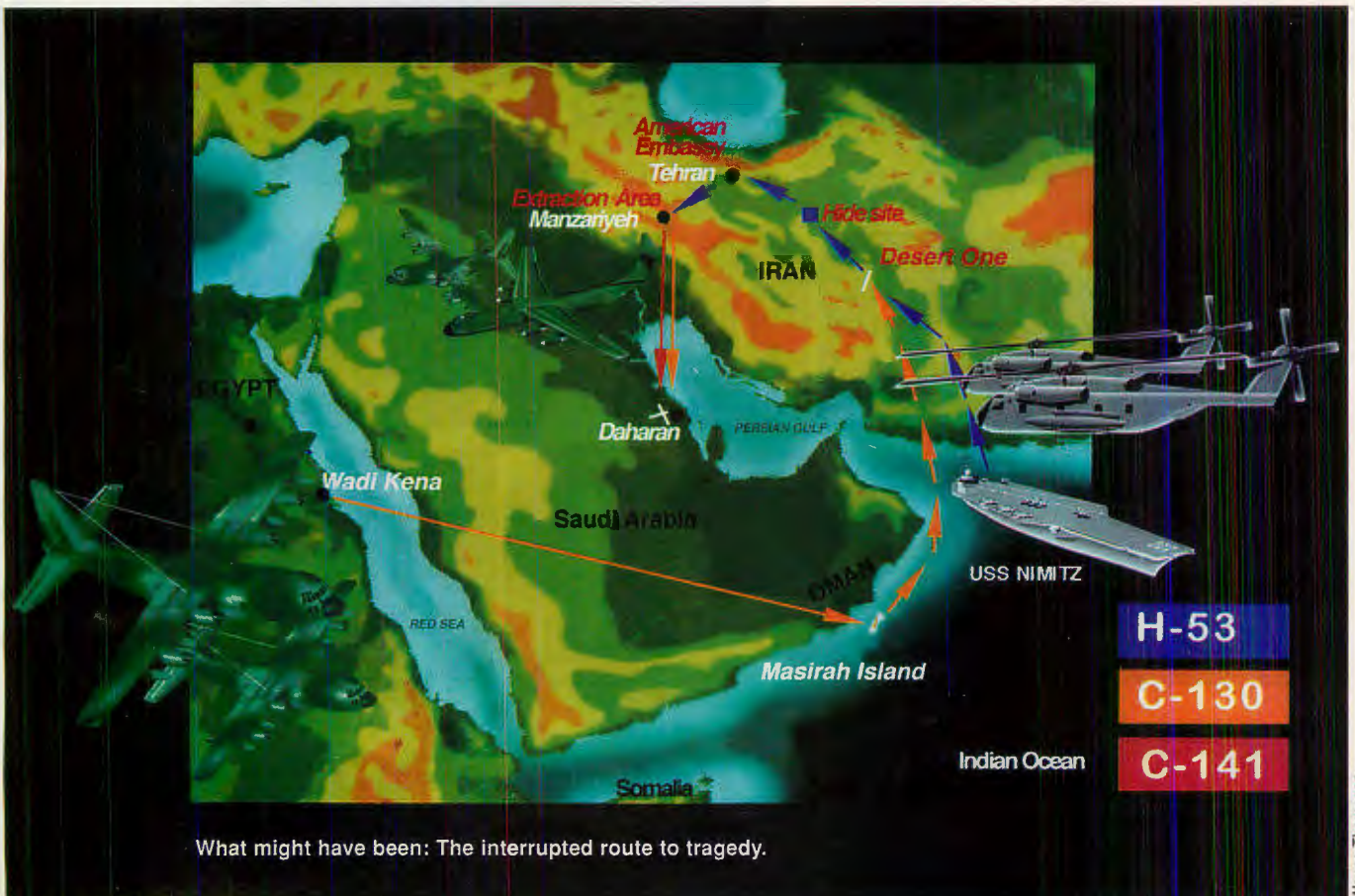
Continued on page 70



Jim Kyle

The Air Force used its superb C-130 tactical transports to deliver Delta and refuel the Navy helicopters at Desert One, the forward-area refueling point located more than 600 miles deep inside Iran.

payload (6,000 lbs more than USAF's HH-53), and the fact its rotor blades could be folded back (unlike the USAF version), an option that allowed carrier ops at sea without drawing undue public notice to the secret force. But the Navy helo aircrews had been trained for one specific mission: single-ship, daylight-only, mine counter-measure operations during which the helo



Wayne Thompson

In dealing with the BATF, you are dealing with an agency which has been found by Congress, by various federal judges and juries, by other federal and local law-enforcement agencies, and even by some Presidents to be inept, indifferent to citizens' rights, and capable of the most outrageous abuses of the law.

Here, BATF director John Magaw shows a congressional committee investigating the Ruby Ridge debacle a normal shotgun, and sawed-off shotguns — but not shotguns sawed off a mere 1/4" short at the request of a BATF informant as was the case with Randy Weaver. Magaw's predecessor, Steven Higgins, was sacked in wake of Ruby Ridge/Waco.

“There is no wholly satisfactory substitute for brains, but silence does pretty well.”

—Anonymous

BY

JAMES H. JEFFRIES, III



AP/Wide World

APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

***Your Rights And Responsibilities When
The ATF Comes Calling***

Probably one of the least favorite events for any Federal Firearms Licensee (hereafter "FFL") is a visit from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (hereafter "BATF"). This can occur in one of at least six very different ways and your legal rights and recommended responses vary accordingly.

For purposes of the following discussion I will assume that you are a law-abiding licensed dealer or collector who tries to comply honestly with the federal firearms laws. If some of the discussion below seems excessively cautious, or even hostile to BATF, it is based on real-world experience with an agency which has been found by Congress, by various federal judges and juries, by other federal and local law enforcement agencies, and even by some Presidents to be inept, indifferent to citizens' rights, and capable of the most outrageous abuses of the law.

BATF operates under the rationale of requiring you to comply with the law. I operate under the rationale of requiring BATF to comply with the law. I required this of BATF as a federal prosecutor for almost 30 years, and I require it as a private citizen and as a lawyer. You should require it as an FFL or citizen.

A non-licensee has no legal duty whatsoever to talk to or otherwise cooperate with a BATF agent. It is a sad commentary on our times and the state of our federal government (and especially BATF) that the appropriate legal advice from a defense lawyer to a non-licensee can be distilled to a single sentence called *rule one*: Silence is golden; or what part of "no" don't you understand? If you are an FFL, however, additional considerations come into play.

The Tracing Center Inquiry

Most active dealers have had a telephone call from BATF's Tracing Center at some time or other inquiring about the disposition of a firearm whose serial number traces to the dealer. This is usually an inquiry concerning a third party and does not implicate the dealer. It should normally occur during your listed business hours, although emergency traces in high-profile matters could occur at any time of the day or night. These inquiries are authorized by law in official criminal investigations and as a licensee you have a duty to cooperate by furnishing the requested information.

Be aware, however, that the Tracing Center is a part of BATF's

criminal enforcement apparatus whose function (and principal interest) is to put people (including firearms dealers) in jail. You should always obtain the full name and telephone number of the caller and note it in writing. An entry in your bound book alongside the entry for the firearm involved would not be inappropriate. If in doubt about the caller's identity, you should terminate the call and call back before giving any information. Cooperation would include supplying copies of any related documents. Never surrender an original document or legally-possessed firearm (or other property for that matter) except in response to a summons, subpoena, or court order — and then only after obtaining legal advice.

When faced with the prospect of providing information to the government, keep in mind that there are only two legal options: silence or complete truthfulness. Lying (even by partial truths or literal but misleading true answers) is never an option. A false statement to a federal officer in his official capacity is a felony akin to perjury, and usually much easier to prosecute and prove than the matter being investigated. If you cannot speak truthfully without incriminating yourself, then remember *rule one*.

If the inquiry is about a Title II firearm, you should attempt to determine if the trace was initiated by local law enforcement. If it was, you should remind the caller that the information requested is privileged tax information and that it is a federal felony for BATF to disclose the information outside the agency. Your interest in this aspect is that you do not wish to aid and abet the commission of a felony — even one committed by a federal official.

Occasionally a tracing inquiry will be made in person by one or more special agents. They are, of course, purely criminal investigators whose only function (and interest) is to put people (including firearms dealers) in jail. Write down the names and badge numbers of all present. If anyone present is not a BATF special agent, inquire why that person is present (and later note the response in writing). If there is more than one agent, inquire why. If anyone refuses to display official identification direct them to immediately leave the premises. If they refuse, call the local sheriff or police and make a trespassing complaint.

Do not allow anyone to search your records, premises or inventory for the information or items being sought. You or your

employee do the searching, retrieving and copying. The same rules apply with respect to refusing to turn over original documents or items of personal property. If an agent should physically insist on taking custody of an original record or legally-possessed firearm or other item of property, resist verbally and vigorously, but not physically. Advise him calmly that your first call after he leaves will be to your lawyer and *his* first call will be to the Inspector General of the Treasury Department.

Successive calls will then also be made to BATF's Office of Internal Affairs, the agent's SAC (Special Agent in Charge), the United States Attorney, the FBI and the sheriff — the latter three to report the theft of your property by a federal agent. Then do it. In short, if an agent is stupid enough to violate your Fourth Amendment right to be secure in your papers and effects in front of God and everybody, then he needs to have his whole day ruined.

A tracing inquiry is usually directed at a third party recipient of a firearm which has passed through your hands at some point and gen-

**...a private individual,
has no legal duty whatsoever
to talk to or otherwise cooperate
with a BATF agent. It is a sad
commentary on our times and the
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(and especially BATF) that the
appropriate legal advice from a
defense lawyer to a non-licensee
can be encapsulated in a single
sentence called Rule One:
Silence is golden; or what part
of "no" don't you understand?**



AP/Wide World

A high percentage of non-violent federal gun crimes committed in the United States ... are manufactured by BATF — they would never have happened if BATF had not planted the idea and created the opportunity... Your response should be precisely the same whether it ultimately turns out that you were speaking to a government microphone or to the village idiot. You should firmly, but not politely, advise the proponent that what he/she is proposing is illegal and that he/she is no longer welcome ... politeness is not called for when someone is either intentionally or ignorantly soliciting you to commit a federal felony.

If Randy Weaver had told the BATF agent provocateur to go to hell when solicited to saw-off two shotgun barrels a quarter-inch short of legal, his wife and son would be alive today. Here the media and various officials mill about Weaver's back yard, examining his "arsenal."

erally is not targeted at you. However, if you sense that the inquiry is, in fact, targeted at you, you should immediately terminate the inquiry, ask the agents to leave the premises (after which they are legally trespassers), request them to put their inquiry in writing, and seek legal counsel. Remember *rule one*.

Failure to cooperate in a tracing request can put your license at risk, but loss of a license (or the expense of defending it) compares very favorably with a prison sentence (or the cost of defending a criminal indictment). And your license is not realistically at risk if BATF is trying to further a criminal investigation of you through a pretext tracing inquiry. The majority of all inmates talk their way into prison; you have no legal obligation to help put yourself there. This type of confrontation is an IQ test. Don't flunk it: Remember *rule one*.

Clients occasionally inquire about taping their telephone or in-person conversations with BATF employees (and others). This is legal under federal law so long as one party to the conversation (you) knows of the interception. However, state laws vary on the issue and you should be certain that such consensual recording is legal under the law of the state where the recording is taking place. You should never record a conversation (telephone or otherwise) where no party knows of the interception.

This is a felony violation of the federal wiretapping statute, and you are creating the very evidence needed to prove it. You can, of course, legally tape-record any transaction in any jurisdiction when all parties are aware of the taping.

The Third-Party Inquiry

A third-party inquiry is broader than a simple tracing inquiry, but otherwise involves the same principles and recommended reactions. It could be a telephone call, but will ordinarily be a personal visit by one or more special agents who are after more detailed information than just the acquisition and disposition of one or more firearms which have passed into or through your inventory. All other factors remain the same and your responses should be the same as for the in-person tracing inquiry.

Needless to say, if the inquiry is not about a third-party transaction but rather is directed solely at you, invoke *rule one* and seek legal counsel immediately.

Remember, refusing to talk to federal criminal investigators and seeking legal counsel are not admissions of guilt or signs of a guilty conscience. They are manifestations that you are an American citizen aware of your legal rights and an individual who will not be bullied, coerced or frightened into giving up those rights. The agents already believe you are guilty; their job is to prove it. Your job is to avoid helping them prove it.

The Undercover Solicitation

This may be a contact by BATF which, if you are fortunate, you never learn was made. It is a sad fact that a high percentage of non-violent federal gun crimes commit-

ted in the United States (perhaps even a majority) are manufactured by BATF — crimes that would never have occurred but for the fact of an offer from or solicitation by a BATF informant or undercover agent to an unwitting citizen. Technically, most of these BATF-sponsored offenses do not rise to legal entrapment. But they would never have happened if BATF had not planted the idea and created the opportunity. This is done for the simplest and ugliest of all bureaucratic reasons: agent and agency self-preservation and budget and case statistics.

Sometimes you will know you are being shopped — perhaps by recognizing the agent or perhaps by the sheer stupidity of the approach. You are probably also being recorded, possibly even videotaped. Your response should be precisely the same whether it ultimately turns out that you were speaking to a government microphone or to the village idiot. You should firmly, but not politely, advise the proponent that what he/she is proposing is illegal and that he/she is no longer welcome on your premises or at your table. Then remember *rule one*. Do not engage in a discussion of the law or alternative solutions to the “customer’s” proposal; terminate the conversation. Politeness is not called for when someone is either intentionally or ignorantly soliciting you to commit a federal felony. And your politeness on a federal tape recording in a subsequent criminal prosecution can often be construed as acquiescence in or lack of strong feeling about committing a crime.

Some of my bolder clients, who are truly tired of being harassed this way, are fully prepared to make a citizen’s arrest in such circumstances and then call the local sheriff to come collect the offender (attempts and solicitations to commit an offense are also crimes under federal and state law). If this appeals to you, make sure first that the law of your state permits a citizen’s arrest. Know the amount of legal force you can use to effect such an arrest. Then cuff the son-of-a-bitch and give him a taste of what he’s probably trying to do to you.

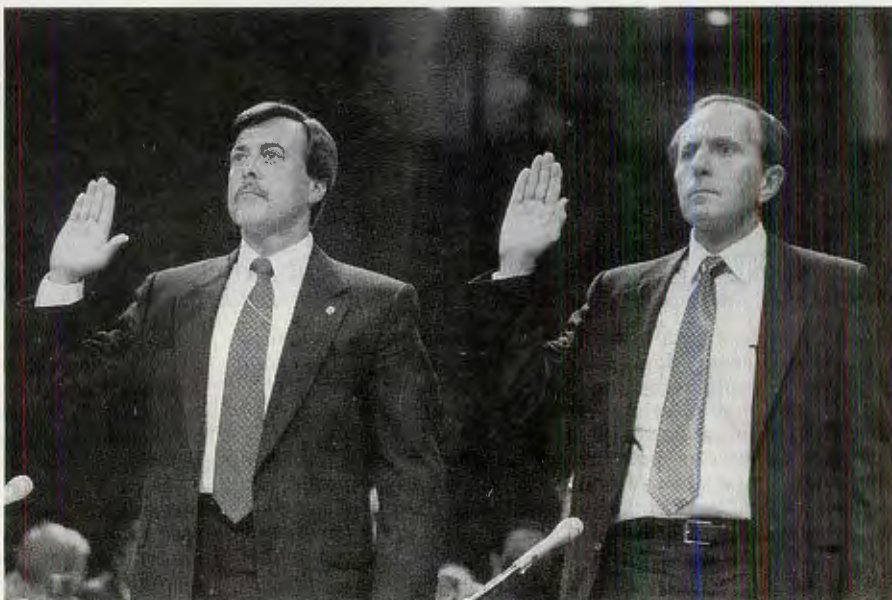
A criminal solicitation by someone you’ve known for years, and who you know cannot be an agent, is especially dangerous. It probably means that your acquaintance has gotten his own tail in a crack and is now making cases for BATF in an attempt to lighten his own load. Finally, bear in mind that an undercover approach may be made by a female agent or by a mixed couple.

The Compliance Inspection

Compliance inspections are conducted by inspectors of the regulatory enforcement branch of BATF. These individuals have no criminal law-enforcement authority — or training (although they have recently been issued badges, perhaps in an effort to bolster morale or create an appearance of authority for low-paid personnel). Theoretically, inspectors are charged with the civil and regulatory aspects of firearms law. They do not have the power of arrest or the authority to serve subpoenas or warrants. Nor may they

make seizures of any kind. I say “theoretically” because in some recent instances inspectors have been observed accompanying special agents on raids and even illegally carrying firearms. In short, there are some cop wannabes among the inspector force whose intrinsic suspicion of firearms dealers as criminals must be guarded against.

The legally-authorized purpose of compliance inspections (and pre-licensing inspections) is to ensure that the firearms statutes are generally being complied with by the firearms industry. The true job of inspectors is to spot and correct discrepancies in compliance with federal firearms statutes, to establish the qualifications of license applicants, and to enforce and collect the excise tax on the manufacture and importation of firearms. If an inspector discovers evidence of a criminal violation he is supposed to make a referral to the criminal enforcement branch of BATF (the special agents).



AP/Wide World

Author notes there is no circumstance where you want an ATF agent in your home. Indeed, you probably wouldn’t even want to talk to one, considering how their ranks are riddled with bald-faced, highly-dangerous liars. Here agent Herb Byerly, right, prepares to perjure himself before the congressional committee investigating Ruby Ridge, claiming numerous lies about Weaver in official documents attributed to him were “typographical errors.” Liars can be tolerated in a fishing camp — but in law enforcement they get innocent people, and good cops, killed.

As a licensee you are required to display your license on your licensed premises, to maintain certain required books and records accurately, and to submit to a compliance inspection of your licensed premises, your inventory and your required records as often as once annually.

The only firearms records which you are required by law to maintain, and to submit for inspection, are an acquisition and disposition book (your bound book), original BATF Forms 4473, *Firearms Transaction Record* for each firearm sold, and your retained copies (copy 4) of BATF Forms 3310.4, *Report of Multiple Sale or Other Disposition of Pistols and Revolvers* for each multiple sale of handguns. Special occupational taxpayers may also be

required to produce their Forms 2, 3, 5, 6 and 10 for firearms on hand. There may be additional state-law records required of a dealer, but BATF has no jurisdiction over these records and arguably no jurisdiction to inspect them.

When a BATF inspector shows up for a compliance inspection, require credentials to be displayed by everyone present and note the full name of the inspectors in writing. Never permit a special agent or a state or local or non-BATF federal official to participate in a compliance inspection. These individuals have no authority under the inspection laws, and are there for some different (and more ominous) reason. A state official might have independent state-law authority to conduct an inspection or investigation, but he has no right to do it in tandem with a BATF compliance inspection. You should require other inspectors or investigators to get in line so that you can

deal with them at a separate time. If they refuse to leave, call the sheriff and swear out a trespassing complaint. If a BATF special agent, a firearms specialist from BATF’s Technology Branch in Washington (part of the criminal-enforcement branch), or other criminal law-enforcement type is present, this is not an ordinary compliance inspection and you should immediately terminate it, direct the individuals to leave and contact legal counsel.

BATF inspectors can inspect at any time during your listed business hours, without prior notice or appointment. If they do not give you advance notice then restrict their inspection activities to your listed hours. If you are subjected to an unannounced inspection, be on guard. You may be under



When a raid team shows up at your premises and announces (usually by breaking down your door, sometimes by killing your dogs and throwing flash bang grenades at your women and children) ... that they have a federal search warrant, you must ... attempt to stabilize the situation until some of their law-enforcement adrenaline (the most dangerous drug on the street) has bled off. If only a search warrant is involved, you must... Try to note and record the identities of as many participants as possible... Ask for a copy of the warrant... Disable ... your telephones and fax machines... Gather your family, children and pets and leave the premises...[and] Call your lawyer.

A federal search warrant authorizes only the search of a

specified premises and only the seizure of specifically described items... A search warrant does not authorize agents to arrest you or anyone else on the premises ... and it does not authorize them to handcuff you, restrict you to a particular place or prevent you from leaving... There is no useful purpose your remaining on the premises can serve.

Even if David Koresh had possessed contraband and ultimately been arrested, had he followed the above advice, more than eighty people would still be alive today. Here, a military helicopter buzzes the Branch Davidian compound at Waco on day 25 of the siege and standoff that ended in a conflagration and dozens of needless deaths.

suspicion or you may be dealing with one of the cop wannabes. If the inspector has the courtesy to advise you ahead of time of an intended inspection you are free to, and should, accommodate the time, date and hours of inspection to the inspector's convenience. You should never consent to more than one compliance inspection in any twelve-month period: Require BATF to obtain an inspection warrant and immediately seek legal counsel.

Under general principles of law a compliance inspection must be "reasonable" in terms of time, duration, scope, number of inspectors, lack of disruption to your business, etc. If the inspector is reasonable and professional, you should be too. The process does not have to be adversarial or antagonistic. If the inspector is not reasonable or professional, keep in mind that your license does not require you to talk to him, or to provide him access to your copy machine, rest room, etc. If you are dealing with an idiot, remember *rule one* — and let

him bring his *own* copy machine. Also remember that he has no right to use your electricity.

The inspector is legally entitled to inspect all your required records, your business premises, and your firearms inventory. He is legally entitled to inspect nothing else. You should not permit inspection of non-required records unless there is a satisfactory explanation of why it is desired (such as inspecting a purchase or sale invoice for the correct serial number where the bound book and the Form 4473 show different serial numbers for the same firearm).

You should not permit inspection of non-business portions of the premises when your home is the licensed premises. (When your business is conducted from your home, you should carefully delineate that portion dedicated to the firearms business and confine the business strictly to that portion of the premises.)

You should accommodate the inspector by making copies of any records desired

(within reason). In an compliance inspection, never permit original records (or firearms or other property) to be removed from the premises without a summons, subpoena or court order, and without seeking legal counsel. The inspector has no power of seizure and may attempt to bluff his way into removing original records or may try to obtain your consent. Do not be bluffed and do not consent. Inspections should be conducted on your premises. (If you store firearms off premises, the inspector is also entitled to inspect such storage facilities.)

A compliance inspection of a special occupational taxpayer will begin with the inspector attempting to reconcile his NFA Branch printout of Title II firearms shown as registered to you in BATF's records with the actual Title II firearms in your possession. He will be unable to do so because of the abysmal state of the national registry. Have mercy on him and help BATF untangle its records. Try to refrain from thinking about whose records and recordkeeping

should really be under audit here. The inspector will also likely need your technical expertise in identifying anything more esoteric than a rifle, pistol or shotgun. Try to conceal your contempt for a "federal firearms inspector" who probably doesn't know a wipe from a baffle, or a lightning link from a drop-in sear, and who may think a Mauser broomhandle is something used by a German *hausfrau*.

If you are a firearms manufacturer or importer, an inspector may plan to conduct an excise tax audit at the same time as a compliance inspection. The authority for these two types of inspections/audits derive from entirely different legal authorities and they involve entirely separate legal considerations. You should insist that either the audit or the inspection be conducted first and separately. The reasons are expanded on below.

Curio and relic (collector) licensees have the legal option of bringing their records and firearms to the nearest designated BATF office for a compliance inspection. Although I am unaware of any compliance inspection of a collector, this is an option to be considered seriously.

The simple truth is that you never want a BATF employee in your home if it can be avoided.

In summary, the firearms regulatory process does not assume you are a criminal, but rather seeks to ensure that dealers generally are complying with the requirements of the law. If bona fide, the process does not require invocation of your various rights to notice, counsel, warning, non-self-incrimination, etc., which all come into play when you are the target of a criminal investigation. Unfortunately, BATF sometimes attempts to avoid these constitutional "inconveniences" by illegally using the access of civil inspectors to further a criminal investigation without alerting the targeted dealer. You should never cooperate in such a subterfuge.

The Excise Tax Audit

If you are simply a dealer in firearms or ammunition, you will have no occasion to undergo an excise tax audit. However, if you manufacture or import firearms or ammunition you are subject to audit by the regulatory enforcement branch of BATF.

The manufacturer's excise tax on firearms and ammunition is one of the most complex and least understood federal tax statutes. It is said that only three people in the world completely understand it: one is dead, one went mad trying to explain it, and modesty prevents me from naming the third. Suffice to say, however, that BATF, which acquired jurisdiction over the tax from IRS in 1991, is hopelessly inept in administering it.

An excise tax audit is governed by the general principles of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and not the National Firearms Act of 1934 or the Gun Control Act of 1968.

You are required to maintain the same records any other taxpayer/return filer is required to maintain: whatever records are

necessary to support the figures on your return. There are no records specifically required by law to be maintained such as those required of dealers by the Gun Control Act. And, absent tax fraud or evasion, there are no criminal penalties for failing to maintain such records. Therefore, the only penalty for failing to keep excise tax records, or to produce them, is that BATF could choose to treat all your sales as taxable events.

As a practical matter, a logbook of operable Title I firearms manufactured by you plus any BATF Forms 2 (Title II firearms manufactured by you), and a file of BATF Forms 6A, operable firearms imported by you, accompanied by your bound book showing the same firearms sold by you and sales invoices showing the sale price, would be all the records required for a proper



AP/Wide World

Remember when dealing with the BATF, that they even lie to and about each other... Agents Chojnacki and Sarabyn, shown here trying to explain to congress what went wrong at Waco, knew the raid had been compromised, but lied to their own agents about knowing their cover had been blown and let them jump into the biggest law-enforcement disaster in U.S. history. They tried to blame the one agent who begged them to call it off. Canned, threats of exposing higher-ups got them back on the salary. This is how they treat their associates, and their oath of office: how would you expect them to treat you?

excise tax audit (in addition, perhaps to your retained copies of excise tax returns filed). You should decline to produce any other records for an excise tax audit unless you have an alternative pricing issue under the excise tax regulations or tax-exempt sales (to a government entity, the military, or for export).

You should also be aware that the definition of "firearm" under the excise tax statute is different from other statutory definitions of "firearm." Excise-taxable firearms are only those complete, portable, firearms which go bang.

The tax does not apply to crew-served weapons, silencers, frames or receivers, conversion kits, parts, most destructive devices, etc., etc. The tax only becomes due on a sale or its commercial equivalent. A transfer of a complete Title II firearm which goes bang is not always a sale and does not always trig-

ger the excise tax. Even when it is a sale, it is not taxable if the Title II transfer tax is being paid (a Form 4 transfer). There is also no excise tax due on the manufacture or importation and sale of blank ammunition. I cover these points because BATF inspectors are generally excise-tax illiterate and much excise tax is asserted and collected which is not legally due and owing. If you are a firearms manufacturer or exporter, you should have competent tax counsel.

The Raid

This is an event which means you are in deep, serious trouble. It is the execution of a judicially-issued search and seizure warrant (and occasionally also an arrest warrant) by BATF special agents, frequently accompanied by agents of other federal or local agencies, on premises owned, occupied or inhabited by you.

When a raid team shows up at your premises and announces (usually by breaking down your door, sometimes by killing your dogs and throwing flash-bang grenades at your women and children) that they have a federal search warrant, you must instantly do several things. You must first of all mentally assimilate the fact that they are law officers rather than a rampaging motorcycle gang (which they often resemble in both appearance and behavior). Having identified them as law rather than outlaw, you must freeze in-place in a non-threatening posture and attempt to stabilize the situation until some of their law-enforcement adrenaline (the most dangerous drug on the street) has bled off. If only a search warrant is involved, you must then recover your wits sufficiently to do the following:

- (A) Try to note and record the identities of as many participants as possible, by name, agency, badge number, and physical description.
- (B) Ask for a copy of the warrant.
- (C) Disable — not unplug, *disable* — your telephones and fax machines.
- (D) Gather your family, children and pets and leave the premises.
- (E) Call your lawyer.

You may be prevented from doing some or all of the above things by legally illiterate agents, but that will simply lay the foundation for your own day in court.

A federal search warrant authorizes only the search of a specified premises and only the seizure of specifically described items. Corollary to the execution of a warrant, the law permits the agents to make a forcible entry if that becomes necessary after knocking and announcing their identity and purpose, to control the premises, and to take reasonable precautions for their own safety — such as a pat down for weapons of those persons present and assigning an agent to watch over and accompany anyone moving about on the premises. The law authorizes the agents to prevent the destruction of evidence or contraband and it protects them

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Text & Photos
by Dr. Tom Marks

It is an upbeat H'mong resistance patrol that moves into our position in Xaignabouri Province, Laos.

The operation has gone well. Decimated first by the blast from a homemade claymore, then hit with small arms, the communists suffered four dead. The patrol lost no one. More importantly, it captured two rifles, and more than 160 rounds of ammo.

Of such small successes are guerrilla wars won — especially in Xaignabouri.

The Lao have set their energies to the elimination of another way of life — that of the tribesmen who cluster about on my ridgeline. These are the H'mong. Small, tough people who stick to the hills, they fight a lonely battle for survival.

“The Lao government tells their people to kill us, and they do,” says a diminutive soldier, less than 5 feet tall. “They come to kill us because we are H'mong. We do not want to fight, but we must — to save our culture, our writing, our beliefs, our language. These are important to be human, to be a person of the world.”

He speaks with passion, as “Group 2,” led by Pang Chang Her, 30, begins to relax. It has been a hard two weeks. As they go through their debriefing, combatant after combatant mentions the key role played by Xiong Por, 34. He was everywhere, the men recount, even after he was wounded.

The more they describe him, the more I know this is a man I must meet. Word is out to the patrol that there's a foreign photographer looking for some good shots, and eventually an Asian Charlie Brown

Contact! Lao RPG attack pounds H'mong patrol as Pang Chang Her gives the alarm. (below) Blast from communist PG round nails Xiong Por, knocks author flat. (inset) Before author could refocus, Xiong Por was returning fire with RPGs, grenade launchers, small arms — everything his comrades would hand him.



sidles up, grins and says, “You want action, you come with me.”

“This can't be Xiong Por,” I'm thinking. “Xiong Por the Brave? Xiong Por the Fierce? Xiong Por the Terrible-in-a-Fight and Xiong Por the Thank-Goodness-He's-On-Our-Side?”

Yet it is. And a more mild-mannered fellow you could not hope to meet. Soft spoken, kind, considerate ... in the village, the model citizen. But can he fight! I saw him, weeks later, go down as a Lao RPG-7 round blew up, it seemed, right in his face. I went over backwards myself from the blast.

He was up before I could get the camera focused again. Blood streaming down his face, he threw back everything but the kitchen sink. The other troops literally fed him weapons as he pumped rounds into the communist positions — RPG,

SOF H'MONG FRIENDS

**Saga of a
Heroic Resistance**



grenade launcher, rifle. He probably would have thrown my camera, had I handed it to him!

All the while his expression barely changed. He just did it. Later, as we raced through the bush, mortar shells and RPG rounds going off all around, machine-gun fire to the rear, Pang Chang Her asked him if he was all right.

"I think they hurt me," was all he said.

Pang Chang Her kissed Xiong Por's forehead. I gave him my first-aid wrap, which he gratefully accepted — and put in his pocket! Off we went.

It was many hours before Xiong Por was treated: They put some iodine on the shrapnel. There was no way to extract it. He never said a word. And afterwards, safe in camp, he had only one request:

Would I tell his wife in the States that I had seen him and that he was fine? I said I would be honored.

What motivates such a man? One evening, by a flickering fire in a smoke-filled bamboo hut, he tells me: "I joined *Chao Fa* [the resistance movement] in 1976, because the Lao, after the Vietnam War, said the H'mong and the Lao could live in peace. But then they started to round up all our leaders who had fought with Vang Pao [the H'mong leader enlisted by the CIA]. Plus, because we have different customs, they kept trying to kill us. That's why we fight."

Struggle for Survival

What more noble cause can there be? A brave race, the H'mong, struggles on amidst the near-total silence of the world. "We want to

know why no one helps us," says Yang Ching Cheng, son of a farmer from Xiengkhouang Province. "Why do some countries have programs to save natural resources, trees, and plants, even animals, but not for H'mong lives? Are we not as important as the trees or the animals?"

It is a question that lingers, like the mists that shroud the hills at this time of year, the rainy season.

The largest of the roughly 100 ethnic minorities who inhabit Laos, the H'mong once tallied more than 300,000 in a national population of only 3.5 million. Their numbers within Laos itself have dwindled to less than a third of that.

And now, the H'mong fear for the survival of their way of life. Thus, though their conflict is often portrayed as a remnant of the Second Indochina War — the communist Lao settling old scores with their most tenacious foe, the so-called CIA "Secret Army" of Vang Pao — it is not ideology but the specter of genocide that drives the resistance movement of the "Chao Fa" (literally "God's disciples" but translated by the H'mong themselves as "Sky Soldiers") against the Lao government.

Says Yang Teng, 39, Secretary General of the Ethnic Liberation Organization of Laos (ELOL), the umbrella body created by



Back in camp following earlier ambush, Xiong Por shows off Russian AKM and Chinese SKS captured from Lao troops. No longer receiving support from Chinese, Americans or Thais, H'mong build their resistance army one rifle, one ambush at a time.



In base village, H'mong workers laboriously build packing crates for munitions and supplies by hand, from native wood. Canisters for improvised explosive charges are built the same way.



Greeted by pot-bellied pigs and pot-bellied progeny, H'mong patrol returns to village. Kept small and kept moving, villages, as patrols, become vulnerable if they reach significant size. Will these H'mong children have a future as H'mong? "Why do some countries have programs to save natural resources, trees, and plants, even animals, but not for H'mong lives? Are we not as important as the trees or the animals" they ask?

Chao Fa to encourage other minorities to fight with it, "We have forgotten all about Vietnam. We have forgotten about communists or capitalists. We do not fight for these things but for the H'mong. We have our own culture, our own social structure, everything different from other people. We want to live our own lives. We do not want to destroy Laos or the Lao government. That's someone else's problem. ... What we want is to be H'mong. We have our own culture and letters [language]. That is the goal for which we fight."

As patrols armed with a bewildering array of modern weapons leave for "the front," communicating by ICOM radio, aged holy men labor to produce thick, hand-lettered and illustrated volumes of H'mong folklore and customs. The script is not romanized characters, adopted by missionaries to the H'mong tonal language, but the Sanskrit-like writing of the H'mong themselves, a unique script invented by an illiterate farmer, Yang Shang Li. The drive to record what is known before the memories vanish is all-encompassing.

Birth of Resistance

Best evidence indicates that it was the communist threat to this vision of cultural identity and survival that prompted the original H'mong resistance in the immediate post-World War II years. Then, Ho Chi Minh and his Viet Minh made their base in the Vietnamese northwest and Lao northeast, rugged hill country all. In the process, they gained some H'mong converts, but even more H'mong enemies.

"The H'mong custom is democratic," relates Nou Tou Kue, 31, a former primary

school student now working to procure supplies — and whose father, 53, still shoulders a rifle. "You can do whatever you want ... The communists tell us we must stop everything ... So the H'mong join with the Americans in [the] Vietnam [War]."

Vang Pao, a H'mong officer in the Royal Lao Army, served as the vehicle to rally virtually the entire H'mong populace in support of the Allied war effort. But even before Vang Pao's American-assisted rise to prominence, the H'mong resistance movement already existed, as did the core of the Chao Fa movement, though it is unclear that it was called such at the time. When the Americans offered the hill revolt modern arms to resist "the Vietnam," as the H'mong invariably term the foe, the tribesmen accepted with alacrity. For it was the Vietnamese communists, rarely the inept Pathet Lao, who did the fighting in Laos.

However, when communist victories in the other two Indo-China states, Vietnam and Cambodia, insured that Laos, too, would fall, Vang Pao and the senior "Secret Army" leaders agreed to leave the country. In return, the H'mong were promised amnesty.

They did, in fact, demobilize and return to their clearings in the hills; but the Lao, controlled by their Vietnamese "advisers" were unwilling to let bygones be bygones. They set spark to tinder by launching a campaign of murder and arrest against former "Secret Army" personnel. Clan loyalties being what they were, they soon faced a conflagration: Chao Fa.

Hence, the present struggle stems principally from post rather than pre-1975 events. Recounts Chao Her, a soldier working with the cadre organizing the populace, "My

father was a soldier in General Vang Pao's army. He was a soldier, only a soldier ... But in 1982 the Lao Army came to kill my father. They killed him in the fields with my older brother ... So I joined Chao Fa. I have three younger brothers. We all joined."

It is a story that has been repeated in myriad versions. For, faced with resistance, the communists unleashed an all-out assault on the H'mong people. It was then that the "yellow rain" attacks began.

Communist Chemical Warfare

A persuasive body of evidence, to include signals intelligence, supports the contention that the communists utilized chemical warfare, particularly in attacks on H'mong strongholds deep inside Laos. That the precise agent continues to elude analysis by specialists remains a source of considerable frustration for all concerned with the issue — more so since the attacks apparently continue, having been witnessed on at least one occasion by Thai military personnel.

For the H'mong themselves, there is no question. Asked to comment on the theory that "yellow rain" is, put bluntly, bee droppings, Yang Ching Cheng grows quite animated. "We've been in Laos more than a hundred years," he exclaims, "and we've never seen the bees dropping on us. Only since 1976 to now. We don't care who believes, but we know we have never died before from bee droppings. We've always eaten bee products. Why does this stuff only drop where we are? Such attacks always precede by one or two months the communist ground assaults on us.

"These chemical weapons have caused much sickness for us. If the drops go on your skin, and you wash, you're OK. But if you don't, in a few hours you will feel weak, eyes running, nose running, dizziness, headache, pain in the eyes like they



Yang Teng, (left) Secretary General of the Ethnic Liberation Organization of Laos (ELOL), an umbrella body created by the Chao Fa to encourage other downtrodden minorities to fight with it, and author in editor's uniform. Notes Yang, "We do not want to destroy Laos or the Lao government. That's someone else's problem ... What we want is to be H'mong."

will come out of your head. You get nausea, hard to breathe; watery diarrhea comes very quickly."

Questioned in Bangkok on the condition he not be named, an official attached to the U.S. Embassy confirmed the presence of apparent chemical weapons casualties in the Nan Hospital. The medical personnel there, in fact, were convinced chemical agents were being used, and they initially talked freely with several Western reporters and observers. But when articles appeared,

quoting the personnel, they were ordered not to give any further interviews.

As for the U.S. reaction, the official observed laconically, "No one cares in Washington. Word is, it's not happening — so it isn't."

His demeanor, of course, hammers home the obvious: *It is*.

Previously a combatant, now assigned the task of administering to sick and wounded, "Dr." Lor Chong Blia has no formal medical training — he has never even been out of the hills. Yet he proceeds with astonishing knowledge and skill, even while asking if I can get him a book on surgery.

"I need that very much," he states matter-of-factly, "because I do not know how to fix these [he points at the mass of torn tissue on a 16-year-old soldier]. Most wounds I have seen like this heal in about two months. We put traditional medicine on, and the skin [tissue] grows back together.

"It all depends upon the herbs that are available. Some are very strong, others not so good. Some places we can get a lot, others not so much. The ones in this place are not very strong. But he [the youth] has no fever, and there is no puss. With no infection, he should recover.

"We wanted to take him to a hospital in Thailand," he continues, "but he said no. He is afraid. We try not to use the Thai hospitals, because their way of dealing with everything is to cut it off. Even a wound in the hand or the foot, they cut off the limb."

While "yellow rain" may be the most sensational killer in the communist arsenal, more common — and no less deadly — is good old-fashioned slaughter. The Lao attempt to deal with the guerrilla fish in the popular sea by draining the whole ocean: Rather than going after the guerrillas, whom they cannot catch, they directly attack their host population.

Recounts a H'mong combatant, "The communists always try to kill the villagers, to massacre them. We have no money for cameras to show what they do. We only have the eyes to see. Yet what I say always happens, always."

Adds another, Moua Pa Kao, a farmer now in charge of a support base area just inside Laos, "I am from Phu Bia. In 1980 the Lao government attacked my village. I have now five children, four sons and one daughter. I had ten — three more boys and two more girls — but the Lao soldiers killed them.

The Lao Army killed many of us before we could move [scatter] to many places." Neither chemicals nor the wholesale massacre of Villages, however, has succeeded in snuffing out H'mong resistance. It continues in all of the traditional areas of H'mong settlement in Laos.

Uncertain Future

Yet the future can only be viewed with disquiet. Having cut recent deals with Burma and Laos — better relations in

Continued on page 65



In human terms, the resistance is very costly — but not to resist Laotian attempts at genocide would be suicide. Gassed by their government, ignored by the world, short of everything except heart and courage, H'mong casualties receive only the most basic medical treatment. Here, self-trained doctor administers folk medicine — leaf poultices and condolences — to young soldier. Medicine available in Thailand is not favored by H'mong as treatment usually entails cutting off the limb far above the problem (inset). Amputation is hard for H'mong men, who live to support their families.

AVENGING GOOD BOMBS, PART 2 EAGLES

Balkan Blitz Leads To Ceasefire

by Jack Devlin

On 28 August 1995, sunlight bathed Sarajevo's Mrkale market.

At 1021, a 120mm mortar shell tore into the crowded area. Smoke from the awful explosion cleared, revealing a ghastly scene of limbless torsos and headless bodies. Thirty-eight men, women, and children died; 85 more thrashed in agony.

In his Naples headquarters, U.S. Admiral Leighton Smith, Jr., NATO's southern commander, angrily clenched the *Flash* message. He contacted U.N. Protective Force (UNPROFOR) headquarters in Zagreb.

As soon as it was certain whether the Bosnian Serb Army had fired the mortar, Smith said, he would recommend unleashing Operation Deliberate Force. French General Bernard Janvier was on leave, so British Lieutenant General Rupert Smith in Sarajevo held UNPROFOR authority.

"I concur with your recommendation, Admiral," he replied.

General Smith needed time to remove peacekeepers from outposts behind Bosnian Serb lines. He also wanted to maneuver his rapid-reaction armor and artillery on Mt. Ingram, above Sarajevo, so they could pound BSA gun emplacements around the city.

That night, UNPROFOR intelligence assets determined "beyond any reasonable doubt" that it was a BSA mortar round.

The order came jointly from UNPROFOR and NATO: "Execute the operation."

Just after midnight on 30 August, American F-16C Fighting Falcons taxied down the runways of Aviano Air Base in Italy. On the way to an aerial tanker above the Adriatic Sea, the F-16 pilots saw lines of anti-collision strobe lights, each marking a NATO plane carefully "stacked" at different altitudes. Spanish, French, Dutch, British, German, and Turkish planes soon would join in.

Spoofing and Shooting

After refueling, the F-16s flew a holding pattern off the Balkan coast. They waited for "Magic," the big AWACS plane orbiting over southern Hungary, to send them onto their targets that included BSA command, control, and communication (C3) sites in the mountains around Pale.

The strike pilots expected a 15-minute delay for



AFP/Bettmann

Mangled bodies cover Sarajevo's Mrkale marketplace following Bosnia Serb 120mm-mortar attack, 28 August 1995, that killed 38. Incident provoked NATO's ambitious air campaign, Operation Deliberate Force, that savaged the forces of Gen. Ratko Mladic.



AFP/Bettmann



Reuters/Bellman

U.S. Air Force F-15 Eagle from Aviano Air Base in Italy patrols Bosnian skies, enforcing U.N. "no fly" zone over former Yugoslavia. On the ground, multinational peacekeepers often came under fire during the bloody civil war.

the Suppression of Enemy Air Defense (SEAD) mission. Specially equipped U.S. Navy A-6 Intruders and German Tornados could detect and jam BSA surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites. And, if the fire-control radar of one of the mobile SA-6 batteries tried to lock onto a NATO plane, F-16C "HARM shooters" would launch radar-homing missiles.

To spoof the SAM sites into using their radar, A-6s and F/A-18 Hornets unleashed waves of Tactical Air-Launched Decoys: small, jet-powered drones transmitting powerful radar "signatures" of fighter-bombers. But the BSA had to "light up" its SAM radars — a mistake rarely made — in order to become a target.

Tonight was no exception. The SEAD leaders were frustrated: BSA units only used their search radar in one-second spikes and left off their fire-control radar.

After 20 minutes the F-16Cs received a radio command. "This is Magic," a British voice intoned. "All aircraft to remain 'feet wet,'" jargon for "hold off the coast."

Here comes the 'cancel' order, the pilots thought. But the delay was brief.

"All aircraft are cleared 'feet dry,'" an American voice announced.

Night-Flying Birds Of Prey

The strike pilots rolled southeast. Vectoring from one GPS steering point to another, the F-16Cs flew in loose formations to pass northeast of Sarajevo.

Pilots saw orange flashes ahead: explosions of "preemptive" HARMs fired by the SEAD aircraft as SAM crews briefly illuminated their radar. None of the HARMs found a target, but their detonations near the radar antennas scared the BSA troops from using fire-control radar.

The Americans used their forward-looking infrared (FLIR) scopes to mark initial points and begin their attacks on C3

targets near Pale. Once they positively identified their aiming points, pilots started their automatic lock-on sequences and waited for targeting computers to release GBU-10 laser-guided bombs. They recalled their instructions by U.S. Lt. Gen. Michael Ryan, commander of NATO's southern air forces: "Unless you're absolutely certain of your target, don't drop your bombs."

Countdowns reached zero. F-16Cs lurched as 2,000-pound GBU-10s streaked down invisible laser beams and into windows and air vents of C3 targets.

Ryan sat in the commander's chair in the dimly lit Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) in Vicenza, Italy, watching colored symbols glimmer on wall-mounted situation screens. Officers hunched at computer consoles, speaking into headsets. Sitreps streamed in: More than 90% of the aircraft had hit their targets. More than 40 NATO planes had bombed targets protected by SAMs, but not a single missile had been fired at them.

The long night passed without losses. Now came Deliberate Force's riskier daylight strikes.

SAM Up The Pipe

That afternoon Dutch Lieutenant Colonel Jonke Eikelboom led four F-16As against an arms depot near Sarajevo. NATO aircraft flying SEAD missions continued neutralizing the mobile SAMs, but as Eikelboom leveled off from his bomb run he looked back to see bursts of flak matching his altitude.

The Serbs are waking up, he thought grimly.

Shadow 2-1, another Dutch F-16A flying nearby, had a closer scrape. The jet dove steeply to drop two 2,000-pound



AP/Wide World

Bosnian Serb Army ammunition bunker, 20 kilometers west of Sarajevo, explodes during NATO air strike in Operation Deliberate Force.

"dumb" bombs onto a munitions bunker. As the pilot climbed to safety, his headphones crackled.

"Flare!" his wingman radioed. "SAM 7!"

A shoulder-fired missile had locked onto Shadow 2-1. Breaking violently right, the pilot rolled into the path of another SAM. He released a cascade of bright flares and dove. Streams of 23mm tracers then lashed toward him. Somehow, the F-16 escaped undamaged.

In the Vicenza CAOC, Ryan heard the frantic warning of an A-10 "Warthog" pilot: "F-16 taking SAMs south of Sarajevo!" As Ryan had feared, daylight attacks were proving hazardous.

Two hours later, a shoulder-fired SA-14 blazed toward a French Mirage 2000 over Pale. Captain Frederic Chiffot and weapons officer Lt. Jose Souvignet had only seconds for countermeasures. But the advanced SAM already had locked on. As Chiffot rolled hard, the missile exploded in the Mirage's tailpipe. The crewmen ejected.

"Mayday," Chiffot called on his survival radio as he hung below his parachute. "Ebro-33 is down."

Bosnian Serb farmer Petar Cosovic watched in fascinated horror as the plane spun down in flames. Gripping a Luger pistol he captured as a boy during World War II, Cosovic dashed toward the two parachutists. He found Souvignet in the grass with a broken leg; Chiffot was hurriedly bundling parachutes.

"Halt," Cosovic yelled, firing over their heads. Souvignet fired back but missed. Cosovic leveled his pistol again; Chiffot ordered his comrade to cease resistance.

Minutes later an angry crowd came panting across the meadow waving hatchets and scythes. Just then, a squad of Bosnian Serb police arrived

and roughly dragged the Frenchmen into their vehicle. As the van drove away the policemen examined the airmen's gear; they laughed as one activated the radio beacon.

Reports reaching the CAOC were fragmentary: Ebro-33's wingman spotted parachutes, and other pilots heard a survival beacon's brief transmission. But a German recon Tornado, dodging anti-aircraft fire to photograph the valley, detected nothing.

Allied Air South headquarters feared the worst. The French *already* had bombed Pale on their own initiative in July after BSA troops, posing as Legionnaires, murdered two officers; a Mirage dropped a laser-guided bomb on BSA headquarters, almost killing General Ratko Mladic.

Ryan assured his French counterpart, Brigadier General Bernard Guevel, "We'll do everything we can to rescue your men."

Stalling For Time

That afternoon, UNPROFOR commander Janvier contacted BSA Gen. Mladic via a mediator, Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic: Air strikes would not end until BSA guns threatening Sarajevo were removed — or had been "eliminated."

Because U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke was to discuss a

cease-fire proposal with Milosevic, Janvier also demanded a cessation of hostilities. Milosevic asked NATO to stop bombing so Janvier and Mladic could discuss the ultimatum. Janvier concurred, much to the chagrin of NATO South Headquarters.

Ryan reluctantly set the halt for 0400, 1 September.

But when Janvier met Mladic, the BSA commander swaggered drunkenly, claiming NATO had killed hundreds of innocent civilians. They negotiated all night. When Janvier met Adm. Smith the next morning, neither was hopeful Mladic actually would honor the agreement. But Janvier was restrained.

"Mladic needs time to assess his situation," Janvier said. "It's not reasonable for him to move his heavy weapons into the open unless he's sure we won't bomb him. Let's give them a chance to comply."

"I'll concur," Smith said, "but I need your commitment that if we resume the bombing, we hit them hard."

Janvier asked that NATO continue to spare BSA barracks so the alliance would not be accused of blatantly taking sides in the war. Despite the pause in bombing, rapid-reaction troops continued to fire on BSA trenches, and UNPROFOR convoys partially broke Sarajevo's siege.

The halt, after only two days of bombing, outraged NATO Secretary General Willy Claes. It had taken all of his skill to negotiate consensus on Operation Deliberate Force. "You are dealing with old-fashioned Communists," Claes shouted over the phone at Janvier.

By 4 September there was no sign of a BSA pullback.

Admiral Smith's intel staff studied images from Predator unmanned aerial vehicles showing *no* BSA movement away from the Sarajevo area. As Claes had predicted, Mladic merely was moving his tanks and artillery into nearby villages, not out of the exclusion zone.

Smith called Janvier: "I recommend we resume bombing tomorrow morning." Janvier agreed.

By midday on 5 September, NATO fighter-bombers were pounding BSA targets. As Ryan had feared, the pause wasted good weather. Now the typical overcast and storms of the Balkan autumn returned; NATO planes nightly flew through turbulence and fog. But the message to Mladic was clear: Comply or see your munitions depots destroyed.

In Rain And Dark Of Night

Increasing the pressure, Ryan authorized NATO aircraft



JoMarie Fecci

As 1995's Operation Deliberate Force gave way to NATO's 1996 operation, Joint Endeavor, evidence mounted of mass executions of civilians. Here, U.N. investigators unearth grave, (above and right) likely of Muslims executed by Bosnian Serb soldiers. Balkan atrocities, however, are nothing new. Cave discovered west of Zagreb (below) contained 9-foot-deep pile of adult and child skeletons: Croats slaughtered immediately after World War II.



Drago Havranek/ courtesy Nick Dodich



JoMarie Fecci

to bomb "Option 2" bridges on which Mladic's forces depended for mobility and resupply from the Serb Republic across the Drina River.

The night of 7 September, U.S. Air Force Col. Charles Wald and Captain T.O. Hanford flew F-16Cs from Aviano to destroy an important bridge southeast of Sarajevo. The weather was marginal.

To obey Ryan's order to avoid civilian casualties, any pilots bombing Drina bridges had to ignore normal procedures. Usually the best way to achieve "good bombs" was to line up on the bridge's axis and drop either "dumb" bombs or GBUs. But most Drina bridges were flanked by villages; the F-16Cs had to attack *perpendicular* so misses would not hit civilians. The tactic wasted bombs and exposed pilots to BSA air defenses.

On this night the far end of the bridge was free of buildings; Wald and Hanford could line up on the southwest end of the target and drop toward the northeast. But the weather was uncooperative.

Rain clouds dipped below the high ridgeline forcing pilots to fly within range of light air-defense fire. Fortunately, the BSA had not redeployed truck-mounted 23mm cannons to the valley.

Hanford led. Both F-16Cs were blacked out; the pilots had to maintain strict speed and separation to avoid a collision. Three times Hanford had the iron-trestle bridge locked in his FLIR scope, but before he could start the automated countdown, rain clouds scudded into the path of the laser beam.

He doubled back, dodging the mountains. Hanford released his bomb. The blinking "L" in his FLIR scope winked out six seconds before impact: A cloud had



AFP/Corbis-Bettmann

Two leaders in Operation Deliberate Force, French Gen. Bernard Janvier (left) and U.S. Adm. Leighton Smith, Jr., share lighter moment following press conference, January 1996, in Sarajevo.

disrupted the laser beam. Missed. Wald was equally frustrated: His two bombs already had missed.

One bomb remaining, Hanford rolled onto the target. He held his breath as he watched the FLIR's black-and-white image clarify. Hanford released the bomb and rolled quickly left, allowing the laser optics to track the target. Four seconds later the GBU intercepted the laser beam.

Hanford's FLIR scope maxed out in a blizzard of white as the bomb detonated at the center of the span. No BSA tanks would be crossing there anytime soon.

Looking For Downed Pilots

A secret drama was unfolding. Predator UAV images and aerial-recon photos suggested the French Ebro-33 crew

still might be loose in hills near Pale. A German Tornado photographed an arrow sign, made of limestone chunks, near the spot an American U-2 detected the thermal images of two men. Other NATO pilots heard fleeting transmissions after calling for the Frenchmen on the emergency channel. Then a Predator transmitted intriguing evidence: the letters E B R, followed by a possible O, formed with branches in a pasture.

Ryan showed Guevel the UAV film. For days the French contingent in Vicenza had been preoccupied with the airmen even while dutifully coordinating Mirage and Jaguar fighter-bomber missions. NATO doctrine precluded combat search-and-rescue (CSAR) attempts unless downed airmen had been positively identified by voice or visual contact. But Ryan could not ignore this evidence.

"I'm recommending a CSAR reconnaissance," he told Guevel. The Frenchman thanked him. Both knew the BSA might be preparing a "flak trap" for rescuers.

In the misty darkness of 7 September, two U.S. Air Force MH-53 Pave Low helicopters clattered fast and low across a rolling valley east of Mostar. Captain Mark Harmon, pilot of lead chopper Knife 4-3, studied the terrain ahead through night-vision goggles. Each helicopter carried an Army Special Forces team and a French commando. Two A-10s, two F/A-18s and an AC-130 gunship orbited unseen.

"Heads up, guys," Harmon said as the lights winked out in the village ahead. "Let's be ready to get shot at."

The night before, they dodged flak and heavy machine-gun fire each time a hamlet doused its lights at the sound of their

Continued on page 68



Amid devastation of Sarajevo's Grbavica section, 12-year-old boy plays on wreckage of Bosnian Serb Army vehicle, a Soviet-made T-55 tank.

AFP/Corbis-Bettmann A

Sniper Boot Camp



PAIN & GAIN

At Thunder Ranch

Hardcore Tactics and Training

by Peter G. Kokalis
Photos by Chris Mayer

Thunder Ranch's Precision Rifle 1 course is designed to provide the student with an introduction to the type of training required to produce qualified law-enforcement-selected marksmen and military snipers.



Pulsating stabs of excruciating pain are shooting up and down your neck and back. Insects are crawling over your eyelids. Your mouth and throat are cracked with thirst. You have severe cramps in both legs. Your eye twitches uncontrollably as it stays glued to the ocular of your rifle scope. You've been lying in the prone position for more than 30 minutes and the target, 100 yards downrange, must still pivot one more time. When it does, you'll have just 3 seconds to make the hit. Your suffering has almost reached the unbearable. But, guess what? No one cares.

That's because you're at Thunder Ranch on the third day of Precision Rifle 1 — the new, politically correct title for the course previously called Countersniper 1 — and Thunder Ranch is definitely not a convent for the mercy sisters. The first of a sequence of three, this course is designed to provide the student with an introduction to the type of training required to produce qualified law-enforcement-selected marksmen and military snipers. As with all courses at

Thunder Ranch, the pace is distinctly high speed and low drag. Principally because that reflects honcho Clint Smith's personality, but also because three weeks is a highly compressed time frame in which to even approach accomplishing what the Marine Corps takes three months to do in its sniper training program at Quantico, Va. The Precision Rifle series should most certainly not be taken lightly, as they are among the most physically exhausting and mentally demanding programs presented at this unique training facility.

Thunder Ranch (Dept. SOF, HCR 1, Box 53, Mountain Home, TX 78058; phone: 210-640-3138, fax: 210-640-3183), which opened in 1993, is located 96 miles west of San Antonio, Texas, and 46 miles to the east of Kerrville in the rolling-hills karst topography of southern Texas on a total of 2,400 acres. This region, once known principally for Texas Longhorn cattle, is now a center for exotic game ranches.

Thunder Ranch's physical plant is world class throughout. There are four ranges.

Both the Red Range and Orange Range are 50x50-yard square ranges. Red Range is the base range for all handgun-related classes. This 20-position facility has turning, stationary, wobbler and interface target potential with "cover" structures when required.

While the Orange Range also has stationary and wobbler target potential, its most prominent facets include a unique "charger" system that represents threats closing quickly on the student. In addition, it also has a two- or four-target setup for high-speed lateral running targets with an 80-foot range of operation.

The Yellow Range measures 50x100 yards and has IPSC body-style armored and disc-type resetting targets. The target options include steel, paper, hostage, stationary, wobbler and movers. This 20-position range is the base range for preliminary work in shotgun and some pistol courses.

Also holding 20 positions, the 50x100-yard White Range — base range for the Precision Rifle courses — has stationary, wobbler and high-speed turning targets available. Its numerous portable barricades represent protective cover and/or concealment. Throughout all of his courses, Clint frequently emphasizes the important difference between cover and concealment. *Concealment* will keep you from being seen, but not from being hit. *Cover* will stop or impede both direct and indirect fire.

The two-section Black Range has a 20-position conventional rifle range in 100-yard increments out to 300 yards. The other portion is a field range for target engagements from 400 to 1,200 yards for both known and unknown distance applications. A significant amount of time is spent at the Black range during Precision Rifle 1.

The most visually impressive facilities at Thunder Ranch are the Tower, Thunderville and the infamous Terminator. The Tower is a monolithic four-story structure with its own tactical simulator that permits live fire in all rooms and stairwells. Problems of both internal and external entry can be addressed. The stairwells vary in dimensions and geometry. All of the window ports can be plugged. The Tower is a key ingredient in the Precision Rifle courses.

Thunderville is an elaborate, day or night, in-depth facade over 200-feet in length representing a two-sided street setting. It's used in all of the rifle programs that present dynamic scenarios. With over 60 target options, as well as movers, hostages, runners and wobblers, Thunderville features computer-controlled lighting, doors, movement, timing and hit documentation. This simulator has been designed to test decision-making and target identification under maximum stress. The Terminator, which we did not utilize in Precision Rifle 1,

can simulate home, motel or office environments with over 400 floor plan options and targets that emphasize identification and selection prior to engagement. This building is covered by a free-span roof for training under all lighting or weather conditions.

Clint Smith and his supporting cast of instructors parallel the quality of the incredible physical facilities available at Thunder Ranch. Clint himself is a Marine Corps veteran with two infantry tours in Vietnam. His experience includes seven years in law

Tower. Included in the wide range of topics were the elements of rifle marksmanship — proper aiming, holding and squeezing — and the seven most important factors that affect consistent shot delivery from a shoulder-mounted weapon: 1) bone-to-bone contact in firing positions such as kneeling or sitting; 2) uniform placement of the buttstock into the shoulder pocket with a rearward press; 3) uniform placement and pres-

on the effects of wind) and terminal (o wound) ballistics were also discussed. Record keeping is an important aspect of precision rifle shooting, whether it be benchrest competition or in a law-enforcement/military countersniper application. All students were provided with a Thunder Ranch log book into which the number of



Students firing a "wall drill" from barricade positions work as teams.



Precision Rifle 1 student fires from a barricade kneeling position with his camouflaged M1A and Leupold scope during a "wall drill."

enforcement, during which time he served as head of his department's FTU (Firearms Training Unit), as well as the senior countersniper on the SWAT unit. He was Operations Officer for Jeff Cooper's API, started and served as director of Heckler & Koch's training services division and with his wife, Deborah, founded International Training Consultants, Inc., a highly regarded mobile training program. Rangemaster for our course was Terry Risner, currently a Captain for the Jasper County, Indiana, Sheriff's Department. Guest instructors were Larry Jones, a 24-year veteran of the Orlando, Florida Police Department and my old friend of more than 25 years, Jim Swanson, who recently retired from the U.S. Department of Energy, where he was instrumental in the development of advanced firearms and tactical training for the courier branch of the DOE. All of these men made their bones years ago and are well-known in the circle of armed professionals in which I travel.

Courses Of Fire

The morning of the first day of this five-day class was spent in the classroom being exposed to the important concepts we were to apply during the next four-and-a-half days on the ranges, in the field and in the



SOF's Technical Editor, Peter G. Kokalis, fires from the prone position behind a barricade with his Steyr SSG PIIK sniper rifle equipped with a Hensoldt scope at a lateral moving target.

sure of the firing hand; 4) strong elbow placement to support the shoulder pocket; 5) a consistent stock weld; 6) breathing and 7) a relaxed body without exterior movement. Interior, exterior (with an emphasis

rounds fired each day and the cumulative total of rounds fired were recorded, as well as the type and lot number of the ammunition, zeroing information at various ranges, target type and weather conditions, such as light, temperature mirage and wind. The

sniper's range card, military sketch and observation log were also explained.

To engage targets in the field, you must first find them — this becomes a greater challenge at greater distances. Clint Smith places a great deal of emphasis on the fun-

material) when firing from the prone.

This was followed by firing at 25 yards from the standing offhand, braced kneeling, sitting and prone positions (without a

rifle I have and I was forewarned that we would be shooting from positions other than the prone. There was also one Ruger M77 police countersniper rifle, one Springfield Armory M1A, one AWP sniper rifle with a Schmidt and Bender variable-power scope and one Browning bolt-action rifle with a "Boss" adjustable muzzle device and a Shepherd dual-reticle scope. The other 10 rifles were all based upon the Remington 700 action. Three were made by Robar, one by AWC Systems Technology. Twelve of the scopes were made by Leupold & Stevens: four were 10X Mark 4s, of which two were M1 types (ergonomic elevation and windage knobs with 1/4-minute click stops) and two were M3s (bullet drop compensator elevation knob with 1/2-minute click stops). The other eight Leupolds were all Vari-X III tactical scopes. It's quite clear from this representation and my personal data base that the Remington 700 action and Leupold scopes completely dominate the countersniper arena in the United States.

The second day commenced with firing a "cold zero" shot at the White Range from 100 yards. This concept cannot be stressed too much. More often than not, a sniper will be presented with only one shot and it will be fired from a cold barrel. He must know



Customized rifles with Remington 700 actions, such as this Robar sniper rifle with Leupold Vari-X III tactical scope, predominated the Thunder Ranch Precision Rifle 1 course.



Shown here being firing from a proper sitting position was the only Browning bolt-action rifle with a "Boss" adjustable muzzle device and a Shepherd dual-reticle scope that was used in the course.



Instructor Jim Swanson, aka "the Duck of Death," illustrates the USMC squatting position, which is often referred to as "rice paddy prone."

damental target indicators in all his courses. They are: sound, movement, reflection (or shine), contrast and outline.

The afternoon of the first day was spent on the White Range, where everyone zeroed their rifles at 100 yards from the prone position using a front rest or bipod. I also found it useful to employ a butt bag (a cloth bank coin bag filled with styrofoam packing

bipod). Moving back to 50 yards, we fired again from the same positions. The day ended firing at 100 yards from braced kneeling, sitting and prone with a bipod.

There were 15 students in this course, of which about half were law-enforcement personnel, with an interesting, but revealing, mix of weapons and scopes. I brought my Steyr SSG P11K, equipped with a Hensoldt 10X MilDot reticle-pattern scope, principally because it's the lightest sniper

exactly where that shot will strike. If you're lucky, it will hit to the same point of impact as succeeding groups fired after the barrel has heated up. But, it may not and one way or the other this information is almost always absolutely essential to a successful countersniper operation. This was followed by two five-shot groups, also fired from the prone position off the bipod. The moly bullets were starting to work as predicted (see sidebar) — one of my groups measured 0.6 MOA.

Moving to the Black Range we fired

200 yards at IPSC cardboard targets using the prone, sitting and braced kneeling positions. Try these latter two positions at ranges of 200 to 300 yards with a 16-pound sniper rifle and your perspective about the importance of a sniper weapon system's weight in the real world will be altered drastically. After lunch, it was back to White Range to fire for zero at 50 yards and then a so-called "wall drill" using barricade positions at that distance. Returning to 100 yards to confirm zero we then fired the "175 stress drill" which involves running back and forth from the 100-yard line to a

in up to a 60-minute time frame) described in the opening paragraph.

After lunch we confirmed zero at 25, 50, 75 and 100 yards. Remember, a law-enforcement-selected marksman will, on the average, engage targets at distances of no more than 80 yards in urban environments. Shifting to the Black Range, we fired from prone, sitting and braced kneeling at 200 and 300 yards.

Thursday starts late and ends late in Precision Rifle 1 as that is the day of the

of observation: awareness, understanding recording and response, were discussed in detail and all of the students participated in a KIM's (Keep In Memory) exercise that involved observation of a tray of objects and then drawing a picture of them later. While some shooting hobbyists may fail to understand the significance of this in a rifle class, all of the law-enforcement and military personnel participating were already aware that the observation and sub-



Students engaging assigned targets in Thunderville from various Tower ports. The target appeared in a window five times for three seconds at random intervals.



SOF's Technical Editor, Peter G. Kokalis, fires from a Tower port at a steel silhouette 500 yards away.

prone firing position at 75 yards with one round of ammunition five times. This was followed by a 95-yard wall drill using five different barricade positions. We ended the day in the Tower, where we fired an 11-stage drill from various firing ports into a 6-inch square 43 yards away in Thunderville. It was required that everyone run up and down the stairs to a confusing sequence of ports that ended with a final shot from the top of the tower.

Black And White

Wednesday morning we began at the White Range with a cold zero and five-shot groups from the prone at 100 yards. Moving up to 50 yards we fired head shots at a wobbler target covered by a hostage from the prone. This was followed by firing at a hostage-scenario wobbler with the added complexity of an innocent bystander in front of it from five different barricade positions. There is one consistent factor in every course I have taken at Thunder Ranch: Every day is more physically and mentally demanding than the day before. A barricade wall drill from barricade positions was next, with the morning ending with the infamous, but standard, sniper exercise called the "4-60" drill (four shots

night exercises. We began with a discussion of camouflage and the documentation of information to be obtained during a concealed observation exercise that lasted several hours. There are three elements to successful camouflage. They are first of all the successful use of cover or concealment to hide yourself from observation or incoming fire. Of equal importance is the use of the surrounding environment to blend yourself into the area in which you are deployed. And finally, deception through the use of other objects or materials to draw attention away from your location.

The fundamentals of camouflage include the use of natural concealment such as vegetation or shadows; alteration of your equipment's and body's outline and form; protection from observation from all angles of view; conforming to surrounding colors and patterns; avoidance of conspicuous over-camouflage; procurement of camouflage materials from a wide area instead of stripping your concealment area; disposal of excess material over a wide area; guarding against reflection off the scope's or binoculars' objective lenses; following the "military crest" of the topography; staying in the shadows; and reduction of movement to a minimum. Few of the students survived the observation reconnaissance undetected.

Prior to the exercise, the four elements

sequent detailed documentation of information are vitally important aspects of the countersniper's mission.

The afternoon was filled with more firing from prone, sitting and braced kneeling at 100, 200 and 300 yards on both paper and steel. The afternoon ended with 10 shots on a steel silhouette from 400 yards.

At twilight we fired head and center of mass shots from the prone position at 100 yards. The failing light drill, which was next, commenced at 1930 hours with one shot from the prone at 100 yards every five minutes until the shooter could no longer distinguish the target clearly. I was forced to stop about 15 minutes before the others as I had equipped my scope with a glint screen. While these honeycomb-shaped diffusers, which slip over the scope's objective lens, will prevent position disclosure in the daylight, they will adversely affect light transmission at twilight and should be removed at that time.

The Stalk

Friday morning began at 0800 hours with the infamous "stalk." All of the students are dropped off with their rifles and gear in staggered pairs at the entrance gate to Thunder Ranch. It's approximately 2.5 miles to the Tower and you're given three hours to slap the wall of the Tower undetected. There are spotters on top of the

tower and every instructor and employee of the ranch, all equipped with walkie talkies, are actively engaged in attempting to "bust" the students before they reach the Tower. Only five of us made it. Chris Mayer and I by means of a flanking maneuver that added another mile or two to our stalk. Most of the younger police officers went "high diddle,

diddle, straight up the middle." They got caught somewhere along the direct line route from the gate to the Tower, demonstrating to me once again that youth is wasted on the young.

After the stalk, we fired three shots from

the tower at steel silhouettes placed at 200, 400 and 500 yards, respectively. After the lunch break each of us was assigned a specific target in Thunderville which we engaged from a firing port in the Tower. This exercise was similar to the "4-60" drill. The target appeared in a window five times for about three seconds at random intervals. With my usual share of good luck, I drew a port that required the prone position on the bare concrete. While I lay there without my knee or elbow pads, I could get an occasional glimpse of other students sitting in chairs waiting for their targets to appear. But, I was at Thunder Ranch and no one cares.

After this we moved to the Orange Range to fire at high-speed lateral running targets from barricade prone, resting on a garbage container, on top of the range house roof and from the driver's window of a bus. The rest of the day was spent firing from steel silhouettes at 200 and 300 yards, interrupted only by a Tower exercise that required running up several flights of stairs to fire a single shot from braced standing at a steel silhouette 300 yards away.

Thunder Ranch provides a facility without equal, combined with instruction without peer. Pushing students to their physical and mental limits, a training certificate from Thunder Ranch has come to indicate achievement respected by armed professionals throughout the world. ✕



Jerry Matsumura works the bolt of his Remington police model rifle under the watchful eye of rangemaster Terry Risner as he engages steel silhouettes from the Tower.

Thunder Ranch's Precision Rifle 1 course provided me with an opportunity to run an extensive test and evaluation on the latest hot trick among precision high power shooters: moly-coated bullets. Originally developed and patented by NECO (Nostalgia Enterprises Company, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 427, Lafayette, CA 94549; phone: 510-450-0420; fax: 510-450-0421), this process involves

Magic Bullets

impact plating bullets with molybdenum disulfide and a protective coating of wax. Moly-coating produces a protective surface in the barrel with a number of important benefits.

Metal fouling is significantly reduced and less maintenance is required. While students firing standard ammunition had to clean their barrels after every 10 rounds, I did not clean the bore until the end of each day, after more than 100 rounds had been fired. However, the cleaning procedure differs radically from the norm. First, pass the cleaning rod through the chamber guide and out the muzzle. Then attach an undersize bronze bore brush (caliber .270 for a .308 barrel) and wrap a clean patch around it. Wet the patch with Rem-Oil or Shooters' Choice FP-10 lubricant and pull-push two times to remove the powder fouling. Replace the patch and wet it with Rem-Clean bore cleaner. Pull-push 10 times to remove the copper fouling. Replace the patch and cover it with J-B Cleaning Compound. Again, pull-push 10 times. Then two passes with an oiled patch, followed by two more passes with another oiled patch and two passes with a dry patch. All of the cleaning materials required can be obtained from Brownells, Inc. (Dept. SOF, 200 South Front Street, Montezuma, IA 50171; phone: 515-623-5401; fax: 515-623-3896).

Moly-coated bullets will also reduce both chamber pressure and muzzle velocity because of the reduction in the coefficient of friction. Increasing the propellant charge weight will bring the

muzzle velocity back up. When fired at identical velocities, moly-coated bullets will provide flatter trajectories at long range than untreated bullets. Accuracy is also significantly enhanced. Many shooters are reporting an improvement of 10-20% with match-grade projectiles. This is partially a consequence of the improved uniformity of muzzle velocity. The standard deviation is normally reduced by about 15%. Especially important is the incredible almost twofold increase in barrel life. Barrels that will normally maintain match-grade accuracy up to 3,000 to 3,500 rounds will last at least 6,000 rounds when moly-coated bullets are fired through them exclusively.



Except for those using moly-coated bullets, students cleaned their bore after every 10 rounds in Precision Rifle 1.

You can purchase the process and materials for moly-coating bullets from NECO, or better yet, buy loaded ammunition with moly-coated bullets from Black Hills Ammunition (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 3090, Rapid City, SD 57709-3090; phone: 605-348-5150; fax: 605-348-9827 — call for information about purchasing direct at retail if there is no Black Hills distributor near you), who is now employing this process under license from NECO. Black Hills is loading .223 with 52-grain and 68-grain BTHP (boat-tail hollow-point) moly-coated bullets and a .308 match round with a 168-grain BTHP. A .308 match load with 175-grain BTHP moly-coated bullets is also available on special request. I used this latter ammunition in Precision Rifle 1 as it has recently become popular with those wishing to reach out and touch someone at long ranges. It provided outstanding results and I intend to use Black Hills' moly-coated ammunition exclusively in all of my sniper rifles in the future.

Black Hills was just awarded a contract for 5.56x45mm match ammunition for the U.S. Army's Marksmanship Unit (AMU). The Army stipulated an average group size of no more than 2.25 inches for five shots at 300 meters (about 0.68 MOA). Black Hills moly-coated ammunition surpassed that requirement to beat out all of the other bidders.

— P.G.K.

“In this area, you have homicide, assault, robbery and immoral acts,” Deputy Inspector Aleida Linares explained as she sat beside Robert K. Brown and me in the back seat of a Salvadoran police car. We were cruising along a creepy alley in the evening darkness. *Soldier Of Fortune’s* publisher and I looked at each other with raised eyebrows.

“What do you mean ‘immoral acts’?” I asked her, as if murder, assault and robbery weren’t immoral enough.

“Ah, you know — the usual indecent stuff: sex acts in public,” replied the pretty

under a full moon, too.

Being a police officer in El Salvador is very dangerous work.

From March 1993 to July 1996 approximately 140 agents of the fledgling 14,000-member PNC were killed and nearly 800 injured in the line of duty, PNC Director General Rodrigo Avila told us. Just during the first seven months of 1996, 31 cops were killed, with shootouts averaging 13 per day. In this Massachusetts-sized country of some 5.7 million inhabitants, police officers themselves represent an unusually high percentage of murder victims, compared to

gangs sometimes armed to the teeth with stolen small arms and even hand grenades and LAW rockets. One such group, known as the *Ex-Combatientes*, was an assortment of some 80 ex-soldiers, ex-guerrillas and civilian thugs clad in military-style uniforms. Appearing in 1995, they were accused of as many as 17 murders and other violent crimes in rural hamlets in western Sonsonate province. Fortunately, police arrested all of these predators in 1996.

On the other hand, the peace accords *did* create the Civilian National Police to replace the old National Police — widely seen as

San Salvador BLUE

SOF Rides The Mean Streets With Central America’s Top Cops

by Steve Salisbury

23-year-old policewoman with flowing black hair tucked in a ponytail under a blue cap. “You see legs sticking out of car windows, or you find someone on top of someone. People like to do that here.”

Brown, *SOF* Technical Editor Peter G. Kokalis, California police officer Chris Mayer, Dr. Bill Adkins, and I were “touring” the sleaziest streets of prostitution and crime in downtown San Salvador. Our adventure had begun that evening when the media director of El Salvador’s Civilian National Police (PNC), Jose Avedano, picked us up in a police Land Cruiser.

Avedano smiled as he pulled Smith & Wesson model 6906 compact 9mm pistols and 12-round magazines from a bag, passing them out cheerfully as if they were Halloween candy. If attacked, it was good to know we “tourists” had weapons. And being attacked was certainly possible.

Our mission that evening was to accompany “emergency 121” police patrols, the Salvadoran version of “911” response.

New Cops, New Times

We knew that on an average day there were 13 shootings between police and criminals. Moreover, tonight wasn’t any old night: It had a full moon. As any cop anywhere will tell you, things can get weird



Police SWAT members (of *Grupo de Reaccion Policial*), armed with 9mm Heckler & Koch MP5 sub-machine guns, train for urban emergencies in post-civil war El Salvador.

other countries. The negotiated end to El Salvador’s vicious 12-year civil war is a major factor in this crime wave.

After the government and the *FMLN* guerrillas signed peace accords in 1992, tens of thousands of guerrillas and soldiers — many of whom were young peasants who know nothing but war — were demobilized, returning to an economy already stricken with high unemployment. Some of those unwilling or unable to find jobs turned to crime; others went a step further, forming

corrupt, abusive and antiquated. In March 1993, the first PNC contingent of about 400 deployed in the war-torn northern province of Chalatenango; by December 1994, the PNC had been completely phased in nationwide.

The peace accords specified that 20% of the original PNC members were to be former guerrillas, 20% from the old security forces, and the rest neutral civilians. There initially were concerns about how this mix would get along.

“We’re all police,” said Deputy Commissioner Darwin Arevalo Magana, who once was in the old police force. His boss, director Avila, explained that if there has been any friction at all, it mostly has been between ex-guerrillas of different factions. Eventually, the percentage of former combatants will diminish as people who were too young for the war fill police ranks.

The greatest challenges for the PNC are modernization and professionalization.

Unlike its predecessor, the PNC is separated constitutionally from the armed forces. Its budget has burgeoned to a level 2 1/2 times more than the military’s. The increased police funding has brought forensic labs, a fleet of some 1,300 vehicles, a Police Air Group of four helicopters and an observation plane, a well-equipped Order

Maintenance Unit (UMO) for crowd control, and a Police Reaction Group for SWAT ops. The PNC also has received a steady stream of law-enforcement advisers from the United States, Chile and Europe.

Further, salaries have been raised (the base pay is a respectable \$345 a month), and director Avila points out that acceptance requirements now are tougher: no personal history of drugs or crime, and a high-school degree. A cadet has to pass eight months at the police academy, then receive three months of on-the-job training. Then there's a psychological examination. And once on the force, periodic performance evaluations are administered at least annually.

Still, there are bad apples. "One of the

main problems in Latin America is corruption among the police," said Avila. To combat this problem the thirty-something director, who earned an industrial-engineering degree in North Carolina, has instituted computer-assisted internal investigations. As many as 300 officers have been purged so far for misconduct, and about 50 have gone to trial. Avila must have been doing something right, having survived *two* assassination attempts. In one, he pulled his 9mm Browning High Power and shot it out on a residential street with two hit men, mortally wounding one.

Back On Mean Streets

Our group rode in Avedano's Land Cruiser over pothole-covered streets, past

shacks and nice homes to the southside Montserrat police station. There we received a detailed briefing from Deputy Commissioner Magana, chief of the "121" patrols, before splitting up to board three white police cars marked with blue and yellow trim.

Bob and I teamed up in the car commanded by Deputy Inspector Linares, one of few female police to have that job. At 2118 hours we hit the streets. Our first stop was near the Hula-Hula park, scene of a small riot.

Broken glass and stones littered the pavement; food and clothing stands were overturned. The stink of burning trash hung in the warm night. A small group of onlookers stood outside a line of dark-uniformed



courtesy PNC



courtesy PNC



Chris Mayer

(top) Order Maintenance Unit (UMO) officers practice in smoke-grenade haze for non-lethal confrontations with rioters. (above) Trained by French anti-riot police, UMO officers frequently have been called out to quell civil disturbances.

Like police the world over, PNC patrol officers must listen to conflicting accounts after a common street fight. In this incident, observed during SOF's tour of San Salvador after dark, one of the combatants was drunk and another probably high on drugs.



Chris Mayer

Armed with 9mm pistols, Chilean SAF submachine gun and 12-gauge shotgun, patrolmen watch warily as bomb-disposal agents search for explosive device near a city park. The bomb threat, however, was a hoax.



Chris Mayer

Civilian National Police Director General Rodrigo Avila (right) reviews his units during parade attended by Salvadoran Public Security Minister Hugo Barrera (center).

UMO riot police who had been called in. The incident began a few hours earlier when street vendors tussled with police over what they saw as the unjustified arrest of a couple of their members. (Having gotten sick in the past by eating greasy, fly-covered street "cuisine," I would not have been surprised if the disturbance actually had been started by a customer who got food-poisoned.)

It was, of course, a convenient excuse for street punks, drug addicts, and other antisocial elements to join in the melee, which some street vendors said was a neighborly example of solidarity. Unfortunately, in the crossfire of tear gas and hurled objects, some innocent bystanders, including children, had been hurt.

We would have loved to stay and enjoy the stench of rotten fruit and the lilt of insults from drunks, but our car received a radio call: police search for an explosive device. We piled back into our Chevy Corsica and sped down Juan Pablo II Boulevard.

The driver slammed to a halt behind a row of police vehicles in front of Contenaria

Park. As we milled about in our civilian clothes among police wearing bullet-proof vests, white shirts and blue pants, agents from the Division of Weapons and Explosives checked the park and looked under parked cars. Cops packing Smith & Wesson 9mm pistols, shotguns, and Chilean SAF submachine guns posted security.

Reports were that either somebody was threatening to throw a grenade or that a bomb had been hidden. Tense minutes passed. The police search turned up nothing. False alarm.

We moved on, only to be flagged down a kilometer away by a couple of young men at a dark street corner. Their faces seemed perplexed and pained in the glow of an officer's flashlight. They complained about a body shop where they had left their pickup truck that day; nothing strange about that. What was strange, though, was they happened to find their pickup parked in this area, a strange barrio across town from the repair shop. A quick radio check showed the pickup had been reported stolen from the garage.

After sorting that out, the cops stopped a passing taxi cab. The car had a broken tail light — nothing special — but as a precaution the passengers were asked to get out and submit to a search. The four young men, all with crew cuts, protested the search as unjustified. Police officers, however, say routine checks of minor infractions sometimes lead to arrests of dangerous criminals. This time, though, there were no bad guys.

Gender Roles Reversing

Salvadorans call it simply *La Avenida*. It is the lowest, basest strip of prostitution in the city. It is a filthy, depressing stretch of crumbling adobe facades and doorways where emaciated prostitutes stare out with gaunt eyes from behind iron gates.

Continued on page 64



courtesy PVC

Heavily armed Salvadoran SWAT officers stand by, out of sight, as mediators successfully negotiate hostages' release and gunmen's surrender after attempted bank robbery in 1995.



courtesy Steve Salisbury

Recovery from 12 years of civil war has been difficult for some former combatants. SOF correspondent Steve Salisbury (right) presents \$500 check to clients and staff of *Taller de Artesanias El Detalle*, a workshop providing care and work for disabled veterans. Ex-soldier Ernesto E. Bermudez (second from left) manages the San Salvador facility. Charitable contributions — checks only, to "Taller de Artesanias El Detalle" — may be sent to Refugee Relief International Inc. (P.O. Box 693, Boulder CO 80306) for forwarding to the workshop.

WEAPONS BIZARRE

**Black Sea
Hillbillies
Rebuff
The Bear**

Text & Photos by
Thomas Goltz

In neighboring Georgia the brief civil war, between the then-government forces of ousted President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and putschists paving the way for the return of Eduard Shevardnadze, produced "the Georgian tank": a dump truck covered by inch-thick steel plates with shooting ports blow-torched in the sides.

When I saw this "tank" I thought it quite ingenious — until the two forces actually closed for the brief battle of Zugdidi. The armored vehicle I had seen on the side of Gamaskhurdia's troops reappeared later in the hands of victorious putschists. An evil-looking powder bruise now marred the steel plating. (Only later, in the summer of '92,

did both sides square off with Soviet-made armor and artillery.)

In the war over Abkhazia in 1993, the redoubtable commander Shamil Basayev (later to gain great fame in his native Chechnya) created his own air force out of several superlights. The tiny planes took off around evening to benefit from updrafts off the Black Sea. Pilots cut engines, silently glided over Georgian positions on the Gumista River, and dropped grenades.

All of this ingenuity, however, paled in comparison with that of the Chechens.

Mothers of Invention

My first encounter with their unconventional weaponry and tactics was in February 1995 in the doomed town of Samashki, which would become the Russian army's Chechen *Mylai*. One of the local commanders, a farmer by the name of Hussein Javadkhanov, befriended me.

Samashki had previously been one of the

As the war in Chechnya apparently concludes, military observers worldwide continue to ask themselves: How the hell did guerrillas fighting in landlocked terrain with no significant outside "friends" manage to defeat the Russian army on home turf?

A major factor, of course, was the state of the Russian army: chaos, and corruption all along the chain of command; lack of purpose and poor morale among the front-line grunts, many of whom were obliged to beg or pillage for food; and, drunkenness, dope-addiction and desertion (see "Diesels, Drunks and Devastation," May '96 *SOF*.)

Two important Chechen components were morale and imagination. It might show real balls to stare down a Goliath with only a slingshot in your hand — but you still have to put a pebble in the sling in order to do any good. Accordingly, the "pebbles" wielded by the Chechen underdogs were a weird mixture of weapons cannibalized from disabled or destroyed Russian vehicles; large ordnance, including at least one missile warhead, ingeniously adapted as mines; and rockets stripped from crashed helicopters and turned into homemade "Stingers" whose only guidance system was the operator's eyes.

Necessity is a relentless general, as the diverse fighters in the lands of the former Soviet Union quickly learned.

In the early days of the war in Mountainous (*Nagorno*) Karabakh in Azerbaijan, for example, the "heavy artillery" was the *ALAZAN*: a projectile used to "seed" clouds and make rain. It pretty much was a joke — unless it hit you. Then you were dead.



Chechen rebels retrieve Russian-made antitank mines for use elsewhere. The mines are TM 57s, which can blast a track off a main battle tank or destroy a lightly armored vehicle such as a BTR troop transport.

many "neutral" pockets in the north Chechen plain. In exchange for remaining above the conflict then raging in and around Grozny, the town elders had secured a guarantee from the Russian army command that Samashki's neutrality would not be compromised (which would turn the residents into *de facto* collaborators). But in mid-January someone in the Russian command, or possibly just a local commander, decided to take a short cut through the town. Instead of moving his column of BTRs down an alternative highway, he plowed straight down the main road. (Another version of the story is that the *nachalnik*, or commander, was on a spontaneous forage for food and vodka.)

"Word spread, and so the men in town formed defensive groups," Hussein recalled. "The problem was we didn't have any proper weapons. So we took out shotguns, got in real tight, and started blasting at a lone BTR at zero range."



Chechen fighters move their *bayagolovka* ("warhead") from a minefield to their truck for emplacement elsewhere in a straw bale. *SOF's analysis:* The device likely is the warhead to a long-range surface-to-air missile, the Russian SA-5 (NATO name: "Gammon"). The SA-5 can carry a conventional blast/controlled-fragmentation warhead weighing approximately 300 pounds. Used as a command- or trip wire-detonated ground munition, such a warhead could kill dismounted infantrymen at up to 200 meters and incapacitate armored-vehicle crews at 50-75 meters.



The BTR driver, probably drunk, got so confused that he drove off the side of the road into a ditch. Immobilized, the BTR then was easy prey for other means of attack such as Molotov cocktails crammed down the hatch as hapless troops inside peeked out. Hussein and his small cadre were soon in possession not only of the small arms that once belonged to the crew but to the heavy machine gun in the turret as well.

Two 14.5mm machine guns from wrecked BTRs were then taken to the local blacksmith, a fellow by the name of Alkhazur. His task was to weld together 5-foot stands from old pipes and tractor rods, replete with swivel heads made from tire

rims, that would allow the gunner to cover both land and aerial targets. Although the stands were put to good effect in the mountains, particularly against helicopters and reportedly even Su-25 ground-attack jets, my friend Hussein preferred to employ his 14.5mm gun without the stand, level with the ground, from a foxhole. Ammunition was in short supply, so he often fired only one round at a time.

Once, when he and I were out on an ambush together, sitting in weeds along the edge of a field behind a thicket of thorn trees, Hussein disabled a distant transport truck with a lucky shot. The BTRs in the Russian convoy then turned and began

returning fire — which in turn attracted even more gunfire from Russians at a nearby roadblock. A friendly-fire melee ensued, destroying at least two vehicles. (We sat back in our cover, laughing madly.) I don't know the final toll because Hussein wanted to leave and let the Russians continue doing his work for him.

Mine ... All Mine

A much more interesting device in Hussein's arsenal was a sinister, vaguely daisy-shaped object measuring about 3 feet in diameter and standing (on end) about 4 feet high.

The first time I saw it was one evening when Hussein took me out on an expedition to re-lay his mine field. (The mines, of course, had been acquired from the Russians.) After collecting and then re-distributing the anti-tank mines — their location committed to memory, not paper — we jumped in Hussein's truck and drove to the far, exposed edge of the village. Hussein parked the truck.

Four men connected heavy cables to something tucked beneath a shattered bail of hay. It then took five men to push the heavy metal object up a ramp into the back of the truck. When it began to slip and threatened to roll back down the ramp, I abandoned my VCR camera and *impartial* journalism and jumped up to help, terrified at what might happen if the weird device hit the ground too hard. It must have weighed a few hundred pounds.

"What is that thing?" I asked Hussein, once back in the cab of the truck.



A Chechen weapons crew opens fire with a heavy machine gun likely taken from a wrecked Russian vehicle.

"Bayagolyka," he replied, as if every fool knew. "It can blow a column of tanks into the sky."

I had never heard of a *bayagolyka*. Then it hit me: a Chechen version of the word *bayegolovka*, Russian for "warhead" — as in high explosive for a surface-to-surface or maybe a big surface-to-air missile. Bouncing down the deeply gouged road to the new mine site was not the time to talk about it. Hussein still had to conceal the damned thing and attach whatever kind of detonator (trip-wire or command-activated) went along with it. But that evening back at his farm house I asked again. Hussein explained with the aid of a simple drawing.

The "daisy" device was a conventional missile warhead stolen from one of the several Soviet-era missile bases in Chechnya, most likely the Russian rocket base-turned-Chechen stronghold of Bamut.

"How did you get it?" I asked. Hussein brought a finger to his lips and merely smiled: It was a secret.

I am not sure if Hussein ever got to detonate his missile warhead in anger, or even if he is still alive. But acquisition and ingenuity was by no means unique to him and his Samashki group.

In two instances I know of, so-called "suicide commandos" hijacked trains and simply drove them into the middle of the towns they meant to temporarily conquer — and then got back out again. Shamil Basayev and Salman Rudayev, two top commanders, made their reputations through their ability to infiltrate large groups of men across the lines in Chechnya and then beyond, making deep penetrations into Russia proper to launch their "actions."

Last August the stunning assault and reconquest of Grozny brought together all of these factors: motivation, mobility, and ingenuity. One example was Suleiman Khadjimuradov, a middle-aged Chechen fighter, who was discovered by my friend, war correspondent Lawrence Sheets, with a rather interesting anti-aircraft weapon in his hands: an approximately 6-foot-long rocket salvaged from a downed *Krokodil* attack helicopter — either the snouted Mi-28 (NATO nickname: "Havoc") or an Mi-24 "Hind."

"When a helicopter is coming in at low altitude it's not so difficult to bring it down with one of these," Khadjimuradov told Sheets. "Each time we can shoot one we get a chance to salvage more of them. They can easily take out a tank too."

To hold the weapon in position while firing, the gunner built a homemade shoulder launcher complete with wooden handle. He bundled up in heavy clothing, lest the flame from the rocket's engine incinerate him. "You have to wear this or you can be burned up instantly," he added, showing a thick rubber mask with flameproof material on the outside.

Khadjimuradov said he and others so equipped had shot down nine Russian helicopters — most, probably, were Mi-8 troop transports — in the course of the massive assault on Grozny. Front-line observers such



Welder tests action of his homemade shooting stand supporting a Russian-made heavy machine gun, probably a 14.5mm KPV.

as Sheets agreed: The Russian military's recognition that it no longer really controlled the air was a factor in Gen. Alexander Lebed's biting the bullet and, as Moscow's (then) emissary, opening negotiations with Chechen chief of staff Aslan Makhsadov.

A Child Shall Lead Them

Where does this Chechen ability to figure out new and unique means of employing weapons come from? It is hard to say exactly. However, familiarity with guns does start young — really young.

One night at my friend Hussein's farmhouse I watched his two nephews stitch together their own flak-jacket/bandoleer vests to hold a "chest plate" of extra AK-47 magazines. I walked into the kitchen to find Hussein's younger brother, Ussam, teaching his son, 2, and daughter, 6, how to insert magazines into their father's Kalashnikov rifle. At one point, as might be expected, the boy, Osman, pinched a tiny finger in the magazine-release mechanism. He let out a sharp yelp. His finger began to bleed.

"Don't cry!" ordered his father. "You are a Chechen!"

The other family members in the room began clapping their hands and singing a

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Turret and part of main gun are all that's left of Russian tank destroyed in engagement with Chechens.



A 15-year-old Chechen fighter shows off his hand-me-down weapon, an aged Mosin-Nagant 7.62mmx54R rifle held together with electrical tape, that he used to snipe at Russian BTR crewmen.



Chechenski dukh ("Chechen spirit"), as demonstrated by these infantrymen, was one factor in the rebels' success against the Russian army.



“No-Tell” INTEL

***Digging Under Cover-Ups For The
Truth Of Gulf War Syndrome***

by Dale B. Cooper

With the help of a captured semi load of Russian-made C-3, myriad bunkers of the 25-square-mile ordnance complex at Khamisiyah in southern Iraq were blown up on 4 and 10 March 1991. Blown skyward were millions of pounds of explosive ordnance — and tons of organophosphate nerve gas and mustard gas. Combat engineers thought they were safe at 3 miles away — until live rounds and debris began raining on them. Photo by Dale Cook

After the guns fell silent in the Gulf War, soldiers from the Army's 37th Combat (Airborne) Engineering Battalion blew up 100 bunkers and 43 warehouses full of what they thought were conventional munitions at *Khamisiyah*, an ammunition storage depot in the southern Iraqi desert. It was a dramatic event, but at the time there was no indication of the sinister drama that would unfold in its wake.

"During the confusion of all the 155mm arty rounds raining down on us and exploding everywhere, chemical alarms went off and some of us got our mask and suits on, but I did not mask up or suit up because of all the explosions around us," said Darin Hardwick, an engineer who helped blow Khamisiyah. "We jumped on our trucks and hauled ass." Hardwick had no idea the explosions on 4 and 10 March 1991 would change forever the lives of his buddies and perhaps thousands of other American Gulf War veterans.

The second blast was twice as big as the first series of explosions that destroyed 33 bunkers, but no one was able to photograph it because this time they had pulled back several miles to avoid "cooked-off" rounds. During a subsequent tour of the complex, Iraqis told U.N. inspectors that coalition troops had destroyed *chemical* weapons there, but because of continual Iraqi deception, inspectors were skeptical.

The Pentagon admits it first learned of chemical weapons there a month after U.N. inspectors identified 122mm Sarin/Cyclo-Sarin [GB/GF]- filled rockets and 155mm mustard gas rounds in or near Khamisiyah in October 1991, months after it was destroyed.

The CIA, the State Department and the White House Situation Room were also privy to the U.N. report in 1991, which was relayed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to American military commanders around the world. But details did not filter down through the ranks.

A Pentagon spokesman says, "The full relevance of the report was not recognized at the time, because no one had identified the malady that became known as 'Gulf War Syndrome.'" It wasn't until 21 June 1996 that the Pentagon announced at a hastily called news conference that there may have been exposures to chemical warfare agents in Iraq.

According to the 1991 U.N. report, circulated at the highest levels of government, Saddam had stored thousands of tons of conventional and chemical artillery shells, rockets and bombs in the 25-square mile Khamisiyah complex. Although the CIA was informed of the report five years ago, it claims that not until an inspection by U.N. experts in May 1996 could it confirm that Bunker 73 contained remnants of 122mm artillery rockets carrying Sarin/Cyclo-Sarin [GB/GF] nerve agents.

Corporal Patrick Hopper remembers seeing hundreds of 122mm rockets in two bunkers he wired for demolition, but didn't know they contained nerve agents. "I didn't know what to look for," Hopper told *SOF*, "But I did ask if there



Proud, poisoned troopers of the 37th Combat Engineering Battalion (Airborne) pose before a rising column of smoke from demolished bunkers at Khamisiyah, unaware that they had just blown up tons of nerve gas. Left to right back row: Bob Wisenant, Michael Ewert, Travis Wressler; left to right front: Jeffrey Liqwitz, Patrick Hopper.

Dale Cook



Sgt. Darin Hardwick

Line Dogs of the 37th unload demolition charges at the Khamisiyah bunker complex. First test shots brought little results, so they upped the ante with tons of liberated Russian C-3, loading alternate bunkers and hoping for collateral damage and sympathetic detonations to do the job: it did.



Sgt. Darin Hardwick

One of the first bunkers destroyed along with another 32 on 4 March. Inside, the bunkers were "big as a Wal-Mart and stacked to the ceiling" with all nature of explosive ordnance — and unbeknownst to the troopers — deadly chemical agents.

were chemical munitions in the bunkers." Hopper was assured by superiors that NBC personnel had cleared them.

Several hundred 122mm rockets containing nerve agents were also found in a pit about 1 klick from the main storage area. The destruction of Khamisiyah sent clouds of smoke thousands of feet upward, causing brass to dub it the "largest demolition operation" in Army history.

The Question Begging An Answer

Congress wants to know why it took the government five years to piece together what occurred at Khamisiyah. The CIA is still trying to determine the number of rockets destroyed: Eyewitnesses like Hopper can only say the bunkers were full. Iraq has never said how many rockets were there, but officials told U.N. inspectors they moved 1,000 rockets from Bunker 73 to a pit south of Khamisiyah, to avoid contamination of the bunker: The rockets had started leaking

when transferred from the Al Muthanna Chemical Weapons Production and Storage Facility — attacked several times before the ground war began. Iraq also revealed the transfer of 6,000 155mm mustard-gas rounds to Khamisiyah, from another storage facility 16 miles away at An Nasiriyah. The rounds were camouflaged with canvas and dirt to avoid destruction by coalition aircraft.

Once the CIA determines the number of rockets at Khamisiyah, it will computer-model probable hazardous

areas from the massive 10 March explosion. Although Iraq amassed a considerable stockpile of chemical weapons, the CIA concludes Iraq did not use them during the war, or deploy them to Kuwait — concluding that nerve agents were released as a result of "inadvertent" postwar demolition of chemical rockets at Khamisiyah's Bunker 73 and the nearby pit.

One Shaft Of Light

Announcements regarding demolition operations at Khamisiyah have spurred the VA to focus on possible effects of very low-level exposures to chemical agents.

Dr. Claudia S. Miller, of the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio, has studied low-level chemical exposures for eight years. Miller says there is accumulating evidence linking organophosphate compounds such as Sarin with chronic illnesses and new intolerances. "Many of these individuals now avoid fragrances they once enjoyed; no longer ... drive because exhaust fumes make them feel ill, or have given up favorite foods like pizza and chocolate," said Miller.

Millions have been budgeted for new basic science projects in this area, but the VA



Brian Martin

Line Dogs of the 37th had reason to be pleased with their work, especially since many bunkers, such as these, had been bombed by the Air Force but remained intact. In this instance, two solid bomb hits had been duds.

told Congress in September "answers to research questions will take time."

Bad Vibes

It was during the cease-fire on 3 March 1991 that Lieutenant Colonel Robert Holcombe, commander of the 37th, received orders to take a detachment of combat engineers, drivers and heavy equipment operators to Khamisiyah and destroy the massive complex. Approximately 150 soldiers from the 37th arrived 3 March and chased away hundreds of Kurds and Iraqi rebels who were scavenging ammunition.

On 4 March, GIs returned, placing explosive charges at 33 bunkers. "I had a real spooky feeling when I saw those bunkers," recalls Chris Tullius, one of the engineers.

Before going into the bunkers, engineers were told to "be careful and be prepared for booby traps." Tullius says they were also warned of possible chemical weapons in the bunkers, but no one saw anything suspicious. "At no time did we fear, or have reason to fear, chemical exposure," said Brian Martin (Holcombe's driver), who like Tullius suffers from a host of illnesses including Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, Decreased Uptake and Defusion of the Temporal Lobe due to chemical exposure, Inflammatory Bowel Disease, and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.

"One of the bunkers was about half the size of a Wal-Mart store with inner and outer walls and stuffed floor to ceiling," said Tullius. The 37th wouldn't have been able to complete its mission in the allotted 216 hours if it hadn't found a semi load of Russian C-3 and det cord. "We didn't have enough C-4 to do the job..." said Tullius, who still wonders why the Army was in such a "big rush" to destroy the complex.

"We had less than four hours to get our gear together and get up there. The mission was just thrown together. ..." Tullius doesn't think there was a conspiracy involved, as "things happened too fast for anything like that. We got the mission, we did the job."

Tullius, his wife, and two small children born since the war, are suffering the mysterious maladies collectively known as "Gulf War Syndrome," illnesses that the Pentagon is avoiding like the plague itself. Before the war, Tullius was physically fit — a PT monster — but was a wreck after the war. "I'm up the creek," Tullius told *SOF*. Like many other soldiers in the battalion, he had to leave the Army for medical reasons, has had nine major operations in the past 19 months, and is no longer able to work his landscaping business.

Anatomy of A Coverup

On 28 August 1996, the Pentagon acknowledged that numerous government officials were advised in November 1991 that chemical weapons were stored at Khamisiyah. On the eve of the fourth and final hearing by the House Subcommittee on Human Resources and Intergovernmental Relations, the Pentagon admitted that as many as 5,000 U.S. troops (not the original "150") could have been exposed to nerve gas at Khamisiyah.

In early October, a Pentagon spokesman appeared to be laying groundwork for ratcheting up the numbers when he said, "We've got to start thinking in terms of *big* numbers." How big? More than 15,000 — he would not rule out 100,000 troops exposed to chemical agents blown south. Air Force computer imagery obtained by *SOF* indicates these clouds covered Kuwait, much of Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

With five years to coordinate their stories, the DoD and CIA are still singing from different sheets of music. A few days before this Pentagon revelation, a White House



Lt. Col. Robert Holcombe, CO of the 37th Combat Engineering Battalion. No one on site, not even the Old Man, was aware the bunkers the men of the 37th were tasked to demolish contained deadly nerve agents or mustard gas.

panel estimated that more than 1,000 troops may have been exposed to nerve gas. Even this number is nearly five times that previously estimated, and could climb higher if computer models corroborate a cloud of nerve gas spreading into Saudi.

The contractor which predicted that U.S. air strikes on Iraqi chemical plants would not cause dangerous fallout on allied troops, is now being asked to assess whether its assumptions were wrong. In light of alleged contamination in rear areas as far south as Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) has been asked by the CIA to restudy whether chemical and biological fallout from the bombings blew over coalition troops. During the war, one of SAIC's directors was John M. Deutch — now director of the CIA. William

J. Perry, now [outgoing] Secretary of Defense, was also then on SAIC's board of directors. Gulf War veterans say the CIA chief has a conflict of interest and should disqualify himself from further consideration of whether fallout harmed U.S. troops.

Representative Christopher Shays (R-Conn), chairman of a congressional panel investigating Gulf War related illnesses, says it is "unacceptable" for SAIC to evaluate its own work. "The stakes are too high. An independent study of the fallout is needed."

One thing is certain: The debilitating illnesses among Gulf War veterans are not "in their heads," but in their bodies — the result of some kind of contamination.

Now You See It, Now You Don't

The 1991 U.N. Report concerning chemical weapons at Khamisiyah — relayed globally by the Joint Chiefs to American commanders — remained hidden in files at the Pentagon and other agencies, even as DoD was issuing statements suggesting it had no information of large numbers exposed to chemical weapons.

A sanitized version of the November 1991 intelligence report, marked "Priority," was put on the Pentagon web site at <http://www.dtic.dla.mil/GulfLINKL> in July 1995, with hundreds of other declassified documents — which were removed in February 1996 after disputes between DoD and CIA over possible security breaches.

What A World-Wide Web We Weave

In late October 1996 Bruce Kletz of Insignia Publishing put 200 of the documents on his Web site. Declining to say how he got the documents, Kletz said he decided to publish them because he was convinced officials are "trying to hide the documents to avoid political and personal embarrassment."

Kletz has slated a book by former CIA analyst Patrick Eddington, who accused the agency of "sitting on classified documents that showed American troops were exposed to Iraqi chemical weapons during the war."

"There's no way you can even begin to get a complete picture of what happened over there unless and until they declassify every single unit log," says Eddington, who resigned from the CIA last year. During the war, Eddington analyzed satellite photos of Iraqi troop movements. Later, he and his wife, Robin, who also resigned as a CIA analyst, began collecting information privately about Saddam's possible use of chemical weapons.

"The idea that the Defense Department

Continued on page 67

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San Salvador Blue

Continued from page 56

I didn't know whether prostitution technically is legal in El Salvador, but practically speaking, it would seem so: Whorehouses abound and some even advertise in newspapers. But public sex acts are illegal. One almost occurred before our eyes as we entered an offshoot of La Avenida.

In a dimly lit doorway a guy stood with his legs spread. He was pulling the head of a prostitute up towards his crotch as the woman sat on a concrete stoop outside. A quick flash of a floodlight stopped them before they gave grounds for arrest. The light also revealed, under the prostitute's gobs of makeup and flimsy dress, the unmistakable features of a *man*. As we slowly drove by, more transvestite prostitutes appeared in the glow of our headlights and preened.

"Oh, my God," shouted Brown (no sheltered innocent himself) with disgust. But the nauseating spectacle didn't seem to bother the half-dozen or so macho customers laughing, swilling beer, and flirting with the "ladies."

"Lots of guys like this sort of thing," said our police driver. "It isn't uncommon."

"Yeah, guys come here in their BMWs," said the agent sitting beside him.

"And you know those university students," chimed in Deputy Inspector Linares. "Those little devils have fun here, too." The Spanish of our police *amigos* clicked furiously like castanets between roars of laughter.

Women With Guns

If prostitution is such a problem, I asked, would Deputy Inspector Linares want to volunteer for undercover duty? Not particularly, she replied: With only 7% of the officer ranks and 4% of enlisted ranks made up of women, she already had seen enough *machismo* in her line of work. Even so, she continued, policewomen are steadily overcoming traditional prejudices. "The Civilian National Police opens space for women," she said, smiling. "It gives us an opportunity now in a stage of our history."

Our night shift with the patrolmen passed with little in the way of violence or excitement. But we saw enough to give us positive impressions about El Salvador's new police.

"The same old police work — doesn't matter much where you are," commented Mayer, who has spent 28 years in California police jobs ranging from homicide investigator to canine handler. "It's pretty much the same. But these people do a good job."

The Salvadoran public's mistrust of police is far from over, but many have noticed progress.

"The PNC is an improvement, and it's getting better," a taxi driver later told me. "At times, it's heavy-handed, but not often. It's definitely an improvement from the old National Police."

SOF Senior Foreign Correspondent Steve Salisbury is based in Guatemala. ✕



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Weapons Bizarre

Continued from page 59

dirge. The tiny boy turned in circles, dancing a *Zikr*, or pious jig, in remembrance of the dead. Then Osman came back to his father, grabbed the gun and tried to put the strap over his shoulder. He could barely stand under the weight of the weapon, but wanted to let the grown-up guerrillas know his mettle.

"Allah ul Akhbar (God is the greatest)," crowed little Osman, raising one fist in the air before he fell over under the gun. It was the Chechen battle cry (and a surprisingly effective "friend or foe" identifier), learned and memorized at the ripe old age of two.

The one "secret weapon" in possession of the Chechens — the one that made the use of all other weapons against the Russians so effective — was *chechenski dukh*, or "Chechen spirit": their obsessive commitment to their cause.

The Chechens were fighting for a clearly defined objective on their home soil, determined to turn back the historical clock to avenge collectively remembered wrongs. Add to that the motivation by a religion they believe in.

"Let Ivan come and try and kill us all," said Hussein as we walked through the main cemetery in Samashki a day after a burial for one of his men. "He can destroy our bodies, but not our spirit. Only Allah can take that from us. The body? That is easy, but the spirit... Let him try. He will not succeed."

Especially with the help of a little Chechen imagination and ingenuity.

Montana-based freelance writer Thomas Goltz specializes in coverage of conflicts in the region between the Caspian and Adriatic seas. He has guest-lectured at the Central Intelligence Agency and several universities. ☒

SOF H'Mong Friends

Continued from page 43

exchange for trade, the right to invest, and a free hand in plundering natural resources — Thailand, in May 1991, forced the large H'mong concentration in its Nan Province to move back into Laos.

There, H'mong families are again exposed to attack and live in often appalling conditions. Disease is rampant, the diet a bland mix of cucumbers and rice. Some camps have been reduced to catching rats for food. And, like food, ammunition is low.

Amazingly, the H'mong continue to hold their own. Intimately familiar with the terrain, they travel at will, moving as far afield as Yunnan in China in their search for aid. "I went to train in China in 1982 and spent two years there," explains Thao Bee Jou, a member of the Chao Fa Central Committee. "In fact, I have now been there twice."

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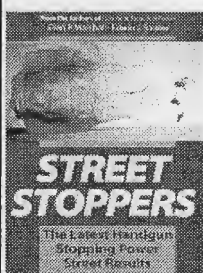
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When I exclaim that the journey must have been quite a hike, he reflects for a moment, then responds, "Yes, a long walk. It takes almost one month, but sometimes it takes a month and several weeks. It all depends on the military situation."

Thao Bee Jou continues, "We went there [in 1982] to do military training. China would help the H'mong [then], because it was fighting the Pathet Lao and the Vietnamese ... They gave us weapons, and we got to keep them when we came back [to Laos]. "But now the politics have changed again, and the Chinese will not help us. Just like the others, it's only people-to-people assistance."

For a time, the Thai seemed willing to pick up where the Chinese left off. Locked in a cold war with its communist neighbors, a cold war that sometimes grew quite hot, Bangkok wanted to keep the H'mong forces viable as an insurance policy of sorts. Consequently, it gave them some arms and ammunition, together with limited quantities of other necessities.

A warming of Thai-Lao relations, though, ended the arrangement. It is the H'mong who have been left out in the cold. "The most important thing we need is ammunition; next is medicine. We would like other groups to help [financially]. We can get the weapons and supplies. And if we get, then we can control a larger area and protect our families."

"Our main goal, always, is to seize weapons and ammunition. We launch constant small ambushes, putting out security elements to protect the ambush group. We have much experience by now. We have learned many lessons in Laos. If we mass, for instance, we cannot find food. So we stay in groups of six to ten families. This allows us to move freely, to escape.

"We use many small troops and move everywhere. If we bring together a big force, the Lao Army can use heavy weapons and chemicals. This way they cannot strike us. They can shoot their mortars and artillery, but they don't know where we are."

It's an uneven fight, but one the H'mong wage with considerable skill and daring. Their quiet demeanor and soft spoken ways tend to obscure the determination of the warriors.

One day after a hot fight with the communists, Xiong Bliang Yang, a 42-year old Central Committee member, tells me, "Because the Lao soldiers have many, many big guns, and we do not, it is very hard to fight them. They have a government that gives them supplies. We have no government, but we are not alone."

Echoes Xiong Por, in our last conversation before I leave, "My wife and family are already gone, but I still fight, because the H'mong should have their own small country. Everyone pushes us out, the Lao and now the Thai. Yet as long as I am living, I will fight for the H'mong."

And with that, he picked up his rifle and walked into the mists.

I should have yelled, "But how will you

live, Xiong Por?"

He probably would have called back, "Day by Day..." — but I know he would have added, "... for the H'mong."

A West Point grad, Dr. Tom Marks has covered world hotspots for SOF for more than a decade — always from ground level and with a keen appreciation of the subject combatants. ✕

"No-Tell" Intel

Continued from page 63

has engaged in any sort of conspiracy to cover up any information regarding Gulf War illnesses is simply not true," said Pentagon spokesman Brian Whitman, adding, "we have nothing to hide. As we learn new information, we provide it as rapidly as possible."

"All of the information Mr. Eddington brought forward was looked at by the CIA and provided to the Presidential Advisory Commission," said Mark Mansfield, a CIA spokesman.

In a 3 May 1995 DoD memorandum, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and the Assistant Defense Secretary for Health Affairs expressed concern over potentially sensitive reports or documents on GulfLINK.

The Deputy Secretary directed that declassifiers forward documents to the Investigation Team prior to release on GulfLINK. "The purpose of this procedure is not to stop any declassified or unclassified documents from going on GulfLINK," reads the memo, "But to allow the Investigation Team time to begin preparation of a response on particular BOMB-SHELL reports." Declassifiers were directed to watch for five types of information:

[a.] Documents that could generate unusual public media attention.

[b.] All documents which seem to confirm the use or detection of nuclear, chemical, or biological agents.

[c.] Documents which make gross/starring assertions, (i.e., a pilot's report that he saw a "giant cloud of anthrax gas").

[d.] Documents containing releasable information which could embarrass the Government or DoD. Statements such as "we are not to bring this up to the press" fit that category.

[e.] Documents which shed light on issues with high levels of media interest such as the November 1995 *Life* magazine article on birth defects among Gulf War veterans' children.

Since every coalition government knew Saddam had chemical weapons, it's hard to understand why "bells and sirens" didn't sound when evidence of chemical weapons was found at Khamisiyah. The Pentagon notes: The report was marked "Priority," a designation assigned to intelligence of only moderate importance, and

not relayed to troops. A Pentagon spokesman hints someone might have paid closer attention had the report been stamped "Immediate," or "Flash."

Pentagon officials claim much of the material contained in the November 1991 report was obtained from U.N. inspectors, who traveled to Iraq after the war and found evidence of chemical weapons at Khamisiyah. The question no one has been able to answer is, when did the U.N. inspectors first learn of chemical weapons at Khamisiyah? Was it in October 1991 as the CIA claims, or was it earlier? Because the war ended on 27 February, it's unlikely U.N. inspectors would have had time to inspect Khamisiyah, only one of 34 suspected chemical storage sites.

An Engineer's Wet Dream

According to highly sensitive documents obtained by *SOF*, Bunker 73 contained at least 30 crates of FAB-500 HE aerial bombs, as well as at least eight large gray packing crates. One of the crates was split open. Numerous shipping documents were scattered on the floor. Yellow "end labels" for the aerial bombs were also found, and a hand-written Arabic note described symptoms for nerve agent poisoning. Andrew Reibly, a combat engineer at Khamisiyah, does not believe his CO knew about chemical weapons in the complex, nor did anyone with them.

"The Old Man wouldn't have been there if he knew, but I think somebody knew, DoD and CIA knew what was there," said Reibly, "and they let us blow it up." Reibly believes concealing the information from the troops was criminal. Like other members of his unit, Reibly is "not right physically."

A couple of test shots were conducted before the first 33 bunkers were destroyed on 4 March. Tullius finally resorted to a combination of C-4 and Russian C-3, and brought the house down like a deck of cards. Tullius and other "war dogs" from 2nd Platoon, Alpha Company were assigned to blow the 70- and 80-series bunkers at Khamisiyah. They wired every other bunker, hoping for collateral damage.

In all, more than 5,000 metric tons of TNT (U.S. and Russian) were used to destroy Khamisiyah. "It was an engineer's wet dream," said Tullius, "until cook-off rounds and rockets started falling on us."

Troopers from the 37th who had retreated 3 miles from Khamisiyah would see rounds falling on them just as the first mail in three weeks was being handed out. "What a sight," says Tullius, "we had guys reading mail and running around ducking rounds at the same time." He and a buddy ducked just in time to avoid being hit by a 155mm round that buzzed over their heads and rolled under their HUMMVEE without exploding.

Several members of the 37th went into the bunkers with a video camera and took turns filming the crates of rockets and ammunition. They found Jordanian, Russian and Italian ammunition, but the most shock-

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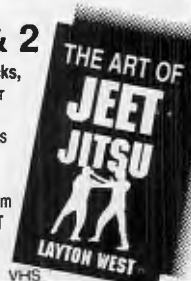
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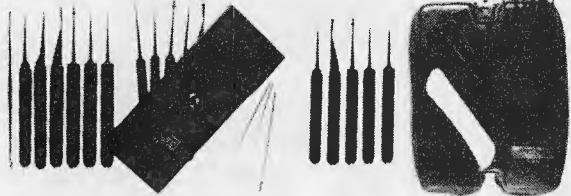
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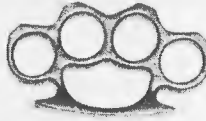
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[Next month SOF will examine specific incidents of exposure and the devastating effect on individuals and their families, the continuing government cover-up — including harassment of GWS activists, and exclusive photos from inside the bunkers.]

A frequent contributor, Dale B. Cooper covered the Gulf War from in theater, and subsequent developments, for SOF. ✕

Avenging Eagles

Continued from page 47

engines. Fog turned them back, so Gen. Ryan ordered them to return tonight for a thorough search.

Harmon knew what returning to the same valley, under a full moon and without concealing fog, meant.

On A Dangerous Mission

As the big helicopters avoided power lines and barns, side and tail gunners intently watched for any glimmer of a survivor's infrared strobe — or the muzzle flash of a BSA ambush.

On the second MH-53, Knife 4-5, tail gunner Diz Chambless felt a blow on the back of his leg. Perched on the open ramp with his .50-caliber machine gun, the master sergeant thought somebody had tripped and struck him with a rifle butt. Then he heard a *clang* as another bullet pierced the deck and Kevlar blanket and ricocheted in the cargo bay.

"Sir," he called to the pilot, Capt. Mike Moncreif, "We're getting shot at!"

In his goggles Moncreif saw men with machine guns crouching behind a farmhouse on a hillside to the right. Machine guns opened up from a second farmhouse. Moncreif banked hard right — a dangerous maneuver with the 79-foot-diameter rotors so close to the ground.

Moncreif's starboard gunner, Staff Sgt. Billy Breedlove, realized they were silhouetted against the moon. He fired a long burst from his 7.62mm miniguns at the two houses. Another BSA 12.7mm machine gun opened up, completing the crossfire.

Rolling through steep evasive maneuvers, Harmon radioed the mission commander in the orbiting gunship: "No sign of survivors. We're just out here trolling for flak." Harmon recommended withdrawal.

Climbing the steep escarpment, the CSAR troops saw streams of red tracers weaving toward their two aircraft from the dark valley behind. As they passed over a final group of farmhouses, they thought they had escaped — until Knife 4-3's belly clanged as if from a sledgehammer. In the dim bay, French and



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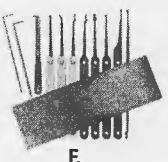
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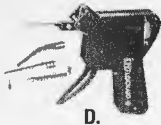
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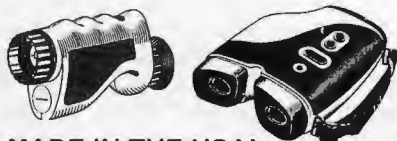
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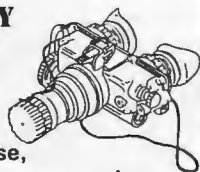
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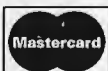
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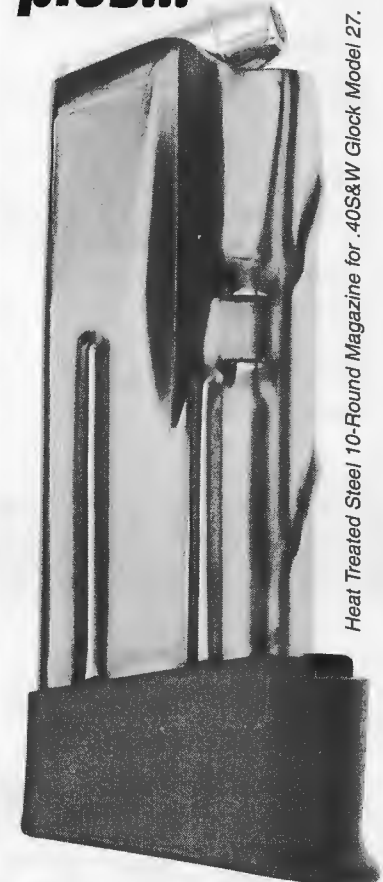
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met with Serb President Milosevic in Belgrade. After hours of typical stalling, Milosevic handed Holbrooke an agreement to abide by the U.N. cease-fire ultimatum, which Mladic finally had signed.

That evening, NATO and UNPROFOR agreed to a "suspension" of Operation Deliberate Force.

The next day, recon flights monitored more than 200 BSA heavy weapons leaving the exclusion zone.

After 40 months and more than 10,000 civilian dead, the siege of Sarajevo finally ended. The peace accord signed two months later in Dayton, Ohio, brought a formal end to the long civil war.

Freelance writer Jack Devlin specializes in coverage of European military affairs. ✂

Slick Willie Watch

Continued from page 24

she was a *powerful woman* [emphasis added] but because she seemed not to realize that the citizenry expects its powerful leaders, male *and* female, to show the humility befitting those whose authority is merely on loan from the people."

The Hillary Rodham Clinton fan club's favorite excuse — *She's an intelligent, powerful woman, and men resent that* — might play well among NOW members but decreasingly so in the media. After all, reporters and editors resent arrogant, Ivy League-yuppie lawyers as much as any of us do.

Also in December, two other national magazines, *Newsweek* and *Editor & Publisher*, carried pointed remarks by some media heavyweights who called Bill Clinton all but an outright liar.

And a week before the election, columnist David Broder, the "dean" of national-political writers, noted: "It would be good to believe that Dole and Perot are just hyperventilating — but there is too much evidence of serious matters being swept under the rug by the President and his supporters not to raise alarms. Second terms have been marred far too often by scandals and few re-elected president would have more buzzards circling than Bill Clinton."

As one Washington-based correspondent recently told *SOF*, "We're expecting it to get very hot beginning in February."

Buzzards Circling The White House

First, in 1997 there's the possibility this sitting president *will* have to defend himself in court against Paula Jones' accusation of sexual harassment in Little Rock. Next, special prosecutor Kenneth Starr's investigations into scandals — Whitewater, the 900 "secret" FBI files, White House travel office, Democrat fund-raising — will be concluded sometime. There *might* be indictments. And then there's a Republican-con-

trolled Congress, waiting to draw blood.

The buzzards *are* starting to circle, even if Slick is sitting fat and sassy at the outset of his second term.

The national news media might very well be heavy with liberals, Democrats, Clinton apologists, etc., but keep this in mind: There's no *juicier* news story in America than the self-destruction of a presidency.

Stay tuned. ✂

"Eagle Claw"

Continued from page 33

thus subjected to the demands of a night-formation, low-level infiltration flight 600 miles into hostile territory, to arrive at a pinpoint refueling site out in the middle of a desert. Colonel Kyle appealed Gen. Shutler's decision, opting instead for special-operations-qualified HH-53 pilots then available from the Air Force. Neither Vaught nor Gast saw fit to push Kyle's appeal, and the Marines stayed.

In sticking to their choice for Marine assault pilots the Joint Chiefs' chairman and his deputy bypassed a pool of nearly 200 Air Force HH-53-qualified pilots, 96 of which were current and another 86 of which had, according to the Holloway Report, "fairly recent Special Operations experience," (i.e. precisely the type of flying demanded by the "Eagle Claw" mission). For apparently "political" reasons, one lone Air Force HH-53 co-pilot was assigned to the helo component and took part in the flight to Desert One.

As the field rehearsals progressed into early 1980 the various components increased their skill and confidence levels, again with the exception of the helo pilots who reportedly seemed not to share the enthusiasm that was gripping other JTF members. Marginal improvements in their night-flying skills were noted, but published recollections of the period frequently end with a vague, nagging question mark hanging over the performance of the helo crews. As the training pace quickened and the exciting prospect of a real mission approached, everyone wanted to give the Marine pilots the benefit of the doubt. As Beckwith himself asked later "If not them, who? If not now, when?"

Beckwith's doubts and his evident desire to give the Marine pilots the benefit of those doubts reveals something else that was steadily eating away at the professional judgment of the senior JTF officers; something that would cost them dearly in the end. By March 1980, the senior leadership had grown increasingly convinced the exercise was a waste of time; Jimmy Carter would never actually give the "Go" signal. Gast's transfer to Hqs TAC during Rice Bowl merely heightened their perception. This outlook created a mission mentality in which obvious problems (e.g., helo-pilot

performance) were accepted with the rationale that the mission would not likely go, but if it did the pilots would somehow come through in the end.

By March the only man in the world capable of disbanding this JTF was in the White House, and by then he was in no mood to do anything but pull the corral gate open and leap out of the way. In fact, he had already let one special horse run free, all the way to Desert One a full three weeks before the mission was to take place.

Blue Major, Black World

An obvious requirement for the entire plan was that the heavily laden C-130s be able to land at Desert One without their 75-ton weight driving the Hercules through the desert crust. And the only sure way to ensure against that calamity was to send someone in advance to the site to take soil samples. As a secondary mission, he would also plant special landing-light beacons that would remain off and thus undetectable until activated by the lead Combat Talon on mission night.

The CIA got the infiltration mission; the Air Force got the "volunteer," a certain Major John T. Carney, Jr. At the time the major commanded a Combat Control Team, the modern-day Air Force equivalent of WWII's famous Army Pathfinders. More important, he was already known and trusted by Beckwith.

The reader might suppose our spooks have planes everywhere in the world, and

therefore Carney was flown to the Middle East in some standard military or commercial transport before being put aboard a pre-positioned CIA plane for the secret flight into Iran. If so, the reader would be wrong, at least as far as Carney's adventure is concerned.

The 6-foot 3-inch former Air Force Academy football coach made the entire trip from the United States to Desert One in a horizontal position, laid out like a cold salmon atop a huge rubber fuel bladder stuffed into the back of a twin-engine, propeller-driven Twin Otter. If the leg room was adequate and the pee tube conveniently nearby, the service was definitely spotty; the in-flight menu limited to only the occasional sandwich handed back by one of the pilots. Rumors that the Agency has no sense of humor may be exaggerated, as this reconnaissance mission to Iran was scheduled for April Fool's Day.

Whatever their drawbacks as cabin staff, the Agency pilots knew their business well enough to get the major to Desert One, allow him to take the critical soil samples, plant the discrete beacons, then return to a nearby country without being detected. With soil-filled metal tubes hidden in his jacket he was escorted by said spooks through various airport security stations until he reached England. Unknown to Carney, the Pentagon had put the highest priority on getting him (or more likely the soil samples on him) back now.

In London his two agent handlers proved they understood *now*. Fishing out hundred-dollar bills at the airport as if they were somebody else's money (which of course they were), they bought three tickets on the supersonic British Airways Concorde flight to Dulles International. Rumpled, filthy, and cranky from days of abnormal living, Carney was escorted by his handlers to the Concorde's plush waiting lounge where his upper-crust flying companions welcomed him with the warmth normally reserved for plague carriers.

With nowhere to run at 30,000 feet, the Concorde's impeccable stewards did everything they could to make his trip pleasant. Not one to offend, the major allowed them to do their best and eventually the precious metal tubes ended up wherever it was they were supposed to go. Shortly thereafter, Desert One was approved as the refueling site. End of mission?

Carney couldn't know then that in three weeks he'd be going back to Desert One.

Next month, SOF will describe the fatal mission in Iran, and the little-known plan for a second rescue attempt.

Col. Michael E. Haas, USAF (Ret.) served in Army SF, logging nearly a thousand combat hours as flight platoon commander in Vietnam. During his Air Force career, Haas served with SpecOps aviation and commanded the Pararescue Squadron. ✕

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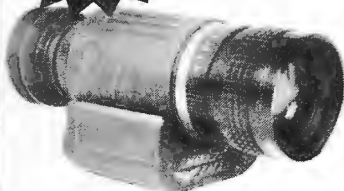
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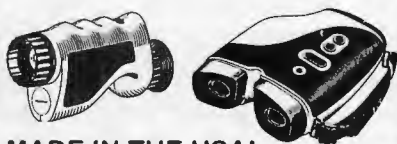
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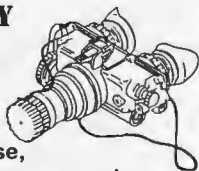
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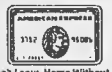
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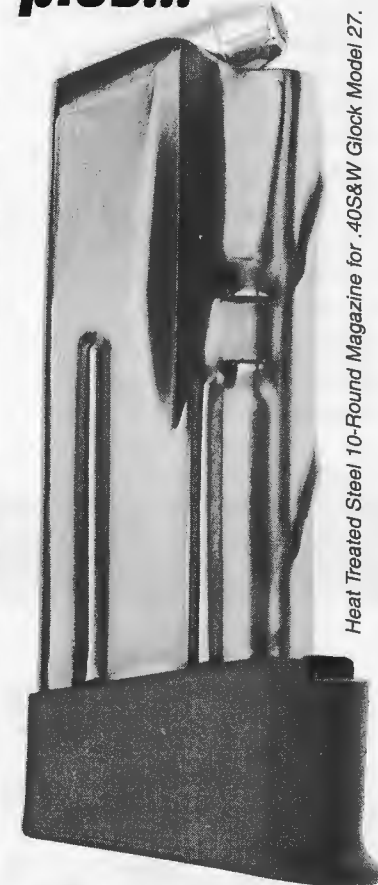
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met with Serb President Milosevic in Belgrade. After hours of typical stalling, Milosevic handed Holbrooke an agreement to abide by the U.N. cease-fire ultimatum, which Mladic finally had signed.

That evening, NATO and UNPROFOR agreed to a "suspension" of Operation Deliberate Force.

The next day, recon flights monitored more than 200 BSA heavy weapons leaving the exclusion zone.

After 40 months and more than 10,000 civilian dead, the siege of Sarajevo finally ended. The peace accord signed two months later in Dayton, Ohio, brought a formal end to the long civil war.

Freelance writer Jack Devlin specializes in coverage of European military affairs. ✂

Slick Willie Watch

Continued from page 24

she was a *powerful woman* [emphasis added] but because she seemed not to realize that the citizenry expects its powerful leaders, male and female, to show the humility befitting those whose authority is merely on loan from the people."

The Hillary Rodham Clinton fan club's favorite excuse — *She's an intelligent, powerful woman, and men resent that* — might play well among NOW members but decreasingly so in the media. After all, reporters and editors resent arrogant, Ivy League-yuppie lawyers as much as any of us do.

Also in December, two other national magazines, *Newsweek* and *Editor & Publisher*, carried pointed remarks by some media heavyweights who called Bill Clinton all but an outright liar.

And a week before the election, columnist David Broder, the "dean" of national-political writers, noted: "It would be good to believe that Dole and Perot are just hyperventilating — but there is too much evidence of serious matters being swept under the rug by the President and his supporters not to raise alarms. Second terms have been marred far too often by scandals and few re-elected president would have more buzzards circling than Bill Clinton."

As one Washington-based correspondent recently told *SOF*, "We're expecting it to get very hot beginning in February."

Buzzards Circling The White House

First, in 1997 there's the possibility this sitting president *will* have to defend himself in court against Paula Jones' accusation of sexual harassment in Little Rock. Next, special prosecutor Kenneth Starr's investigations into scandals — Whitewater, the 900 "secret" FBI files, White House travel office, Democrat fund-raising — will be concluded sometime. There *might* be indictments. And then there's a Republican-con-

trolled Congress, waiting to draw blood.

The buzzards *are* starting to circle, even if Slick is sitting fat and sassy at the outset of his second term.

The national news media might very well be heavy with liberals, Democrats, Clinton apologists, etc., but keep this in mind: There's no *juicier* news story in America than the self-destruction of a presidency.

Stay tuned. ✂

"Eagle Claw"

Continued from page 33

thus subjected to the demands of a night-formation, low-level infiltration flight 600 miles into hostile territory, to arrive at a pinpoint refueling site out in the middle of a desert. Colonel Kyle appealed Gen. Shutler's decision, opting instead for special-operations-qualified HH-53 pilots then available from the Air Force. Neither Vaught nor Gast saw fit to push Kyle's appeal, and the Marines stayed.

In sticking to their choice for Marine assault pilots the Joint Chiefs' chairman and his deputy bypassed a pool of nearly 200 Air Force HH-53-qualified pilots, 96 of which were current and another 86 of which had, according to the Holloway Report, "fairly recent Special Operations experience," (i.e. precisely the type of flying demanded by the "Eagle Claw" mission). For apparently "political" reasons, one lone Air Force HH-53 co-pilot was assigned to the helo component and took part in the flight to Desert One.

As the field rehearsals progressed into early 1980 the various components increased their skill and confidence levels, again with the exception of the helo pilots who reportedly seemed not to share the enthusiasm that was gripping other JTF members. Marginal improvements in their night-flying skills were noted, but published recollections of the period frequently end with a vague, nagging question mark hanging over the performance of the helo crews. As the training pace quickened and the exciting prospect of a real mission approached, everyone wanted to give the Marine pilots the benefit of the doubt. As Beckwith himself asked later "If not them, who? If not now, when?"

Beckwith's doubts and his evident desire to give the Marine pilots the benefit of those doubts reveals something else that was steadily eating away at the professional judgment of the senior JTF officers; something that would cost them dearly in the end. By March 1980, the senior leadership had grown increasingly convinced the exercise was a waste of time; Jimmy Carter would never actually give the "Go" signal. Gast's transfer to Hqs TAC during Rice Bowl merely heightened their perception. This outlook created a mission mentality in which obvious problems (e.g., helo-pilot

performance) were accepted with the rationale that the mission would not likely go, but if it did the pilots would somehow come through in the end.

By March the only man in the world capable of disbanding this JTF was in the White House, and by then he was in no mood to do anything but pull the corral gate open and leap out of the way. In fact, he had already let one special horse run free, all the way to Desert One a full three weeks before the mission was to take place.

Blue Major, Black World

An obvious requirement for the entire plan was that the heavily laden C-130s be able to land at Desert One without their 75-ton weight driving the Hercules through the desert crust. And the only sure way to ensure against that calamity was to send someone in advance to the site to take soil samples. As a secondary mission, he would also plant special landing-light beacons that would remain off and thus undetectable until activated by the lead Combat Talon on mission night.

The CIA got the infiltration mission; the Air Force got the "volunteer," a certain Major John T. Carney, Jr. At the time the major commanded a Combat Control Team, the modern-day Air Force equivalent of WWII's famous Army Pathfinders. More important, he was already known and trusted by Beckwith.

The reader might suppose our spooks have planes everywhere in the world, and

therefore Carney was flown to the Middle East in some standard military or commercial transport before being put aboard a pre-positioned CIA plane for the secret flight into Iran. If so, the reader would be wrong, at least as far as Carney's adventure is concerned.

The 6-foot 3-inch former Air Force Academy football coach made the entire trip from the United States to Desert One in a horizontal position, laid out like a cold salmon atop a huge rubber fuel bladder stuffed into the back of a twin-engine, propeller-driven Twin Otter. If the leg room was adequate and the pee tube conveniently nearby, the service was definitely spotty; the in-flight menu limited to only the occasional sandwich handed back by one of the pilots. Rumors that the Agency has no sense of humor may be exaggerated, as this reconnaissance mission to Iran was scheduled for April Fool's Day.

Whatever their drawbacks as cabin staff, the Agency pilots knew their business well enough to get the major to Desert One, allow him to take the critical soil samples, plant the discrete beacons, then return to a nearby country without being detected. With soil-filled metal tubes hidden in his jacket he was escorted by said spooks through various airport security stations until he reached England. Unknown to Carney, the Pentagon had put the highest priority on getting him (or more likely the soil samples on him) back now.

In London his two agent handlers proved they understood now. Fishing out hundred-dollar bills at the airport as if they were somebody else's money (which of course they were), they bought three tickets on the supersonic British Airways Concorde flight to Dulles International. Rumpled, filthy, and cranky from days of abnormal living, Carney was escorted by his handlers to the Concorde's plush waiting lounge where his upper-crust flying companions welcomed him with the warmth normally reserved for plague carriers.

With nowhere to run at 30,000 feet, the Concorde's impeccable stewards did everything they could to make his trip pleasant. Not one to offend, the major allowed them to do their best and eventually the precious metal tubes ended up wherever it was they were supposed to go. Shortly thereafter, Desert One was approved as the refueling site. End of mission?

Carney couldn't know then that in three weeks he'd be going back to Desert One.

Next month, SOF will describe the fatal mission in Iran, and the little-known plan for a second rescue attempt.

Col. Michael E. Haas, USAF (Ret.) served in Army SF, logging nearly a thousand combat hours as flight platoon commander in Vietnam. During his Air Force career, Haas served with SpecOps aviation and commanded the Pararescue Squadron. ✕

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Appropriate Response

Continued from page 39

against being assaulted or interfered with. It is a serious federal crime to assault a federal officer or to obstruct execution of the warrant. Don't turn a *possible* later indictment into a sure one.

A search warrant does not authorize agents to arrest you or anyone else on the premises (although assaulting the agents or forcibly interfering with the execution of the warrant will justify a warrantless arrest) and it does not authorize them to handcuff you, restrict you to a particular place or prevent you from leaving.

You have a perfect right to leave the premises and should do so immediately. If you are physically prevented from leaving, you have just been falsely arrested in violation of the Fourth Amendment and will have your recovery later in court as well as taking some of the other retaliatory measures promised above. You must get yourself and your family out of the house for several reasons:

(A) to avoid the personal insult, humiliation, provocation and indignities which many agents seem to enjoy;

(B) to avoid a potentially life-threatening situation;

(C) to avoid creating evidence against yourself (*rule one*). There is no useful purpose your remaining on the premises can serve; if the agents are going to plant evidence or destroy property, they will do it whether or not you are present.

You will need as much information about identities, badge numbers and descriptions as you can manage in the minutes before you leave. These will be useful later when you assert or defend your rights. But they are not a reason to delay leaving the premises promptly. You are legally entitled to a copy of the warrant, but do not remain on the premises if you are refused.

You should disable your telephones and fax machines before leaving in order to prevent the agents from illegally seizing evidence (calls and faxes) which might come in while they are on the premises. Such items did not exist when the warrant was signed and cannot possibly be covered by the warrant. Their seizure will therefore be illegal; but it is better to prevent such seizures from even happening. If you are physically prevented from disabling your own property, go somewhere else and place incoming calls to all your lines and keep the circuits open.

Now, call your lawyer.

The author is a retired U.S. Department of Justice lawyer and a retired colonel in the Marine Corps Reserve practicing firearms law in Greensboro, NC. He is a 1959 graduate of the University of Kentucky and a 1962 graduate of the UK College of Law, where he was Note Editor of the Kentucky Law Journal.

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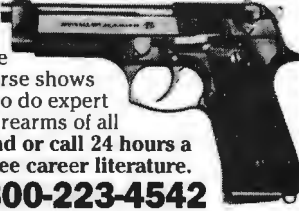
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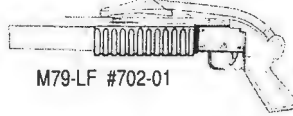
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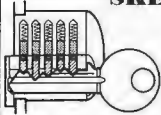
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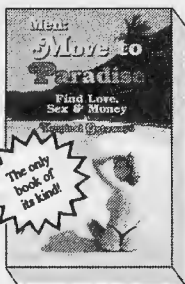
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Busting the Trust

A midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis recently wrote, "We now get tons of lectures on 'walking the straight and narrow.' But I'm not sure if the Navy is targeting the right audience. From what I read, our senior brass could use the instruction a lot more than we middies."

This future officer is on target. Fact is, the Pentagon inspector general has been investigating top brass misdeeds for years. Most trespasses are hushed up, and the culprits are quietly retired, unless the media get hold of the story. Then it's a 30-second sound bite: "Admirals rip off Norfolk base post exchange."

But there have been scores of misdeeds by top brass in all the services during the last few years — from adultery to misappropriation to lying to Congress — that seldom hit the news.

Some are big dishonors such as when in 1988 retired Adm. William Crowe lied to the American people over whether a U.S. warship was in Iranian waters when it shot down an Iranian passenger jet.

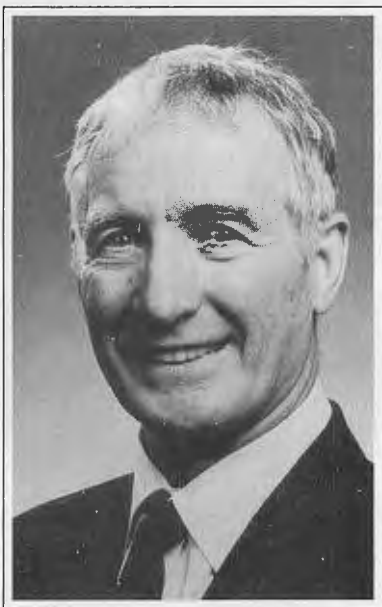
Others deal with millions of your tax dollars wasted on harebrained fancies like beautifying a tank park or painting every building on an Air Force base the general's favorite color.

And some deal with petty cash stuff such as Army Maj. Gen. LeRoy R. Goff's recent phony car trip at taxpayers' expense from his base at Fort Hood, Texas, to his daughter's college in North Carolina. He dropped her and her car off and then flew commercially to Fort Bragg, N.C., to do "official business." But his side trip with his kid clipped you \$267.70 for mileage and hotel per diem.

I asked "Rip Off Goff" why he went to Bragg. He says he was trying to find ways to save the Army money so it wouldn't be cut another 20,000 personnel spaces. I told him if he really wanted to save the Army dough, he should've stayed home.

Once Goff found out I was writing about his two-bit travel scams he suddenly paid the Army back the money he shouldn't have taken in the first place for this and other padded-up trips.

The visit-the-kid-in-college-on-the-taxpayer's-tab scam is a common high-brass trick. Two army generals were recently investigated for flying their VIP jets to their kids' graduations. Unlike Goff, they covered their tracks by the standard ploy: giving the local ROTC detachments a little pep talk. Neither general got burned. But flying thousands of miles on a big VIP jet with running costs of about three grand an hour to talk to 100 cadets is a bit much.



Col. David Hackworth (Ret.), also writes a syndicated weekly column titled "Defending America." "Hack" doesn't pull any punches and many liberal rags won't carry his writing. If your local paper falls into that category, call the editor and let him know you'd like to see "Defending America" on the Op-Ed page. It's syndicated by King Features, 235 E. 45th St., New York, NY 10017.

Another high flyer is Adm. Richard C. Macke, who was recently nailed for using his VIP aircraft to fly from Hawaii to California

It's up to the Pentagon's top civilian leaders, and the senators who confirm these guys for stars, to hold them accountable to at least the same standards as the enlisted folks.

to visit his two uniformed girlfriends (one was a Marine lieutenant colonel, the other a Navy lieutenant commander).

Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, says Macke also ran up "in excess of \$6,000 worth of unauthorized charges that were billed to and paid by the taxpayer." Most of these costs were for 850 long-distance phone calls to one of his paramours.

Macke still hasn't been billed for the \$6,000. At least when Gen. Joseph W. Ashy misused a VIP aircraft to fly his wife to Washington, D.C., he had to pay \$5,500 — the cost of the flight — and he was retired early.

Such conduct violates the public trust and destroys our confidence of all of those who are in charge, even those who haven't

violated the honor code.

Such behavior must stop! Officers are endowed with "special trust and confidence." These are the words that appear on their certificates of commission. The higher the brass hats, the more trust we citizens place in them. They hold the security of our nation in their hands, and they determine how billions of our dollars are spent.

Integrity is the basis for an officer's authority to lead. That's why it's stressed so strongly at commissioning schools like Annapolis.

The middle is right! But a few lectures to the top brass won't do the job.

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