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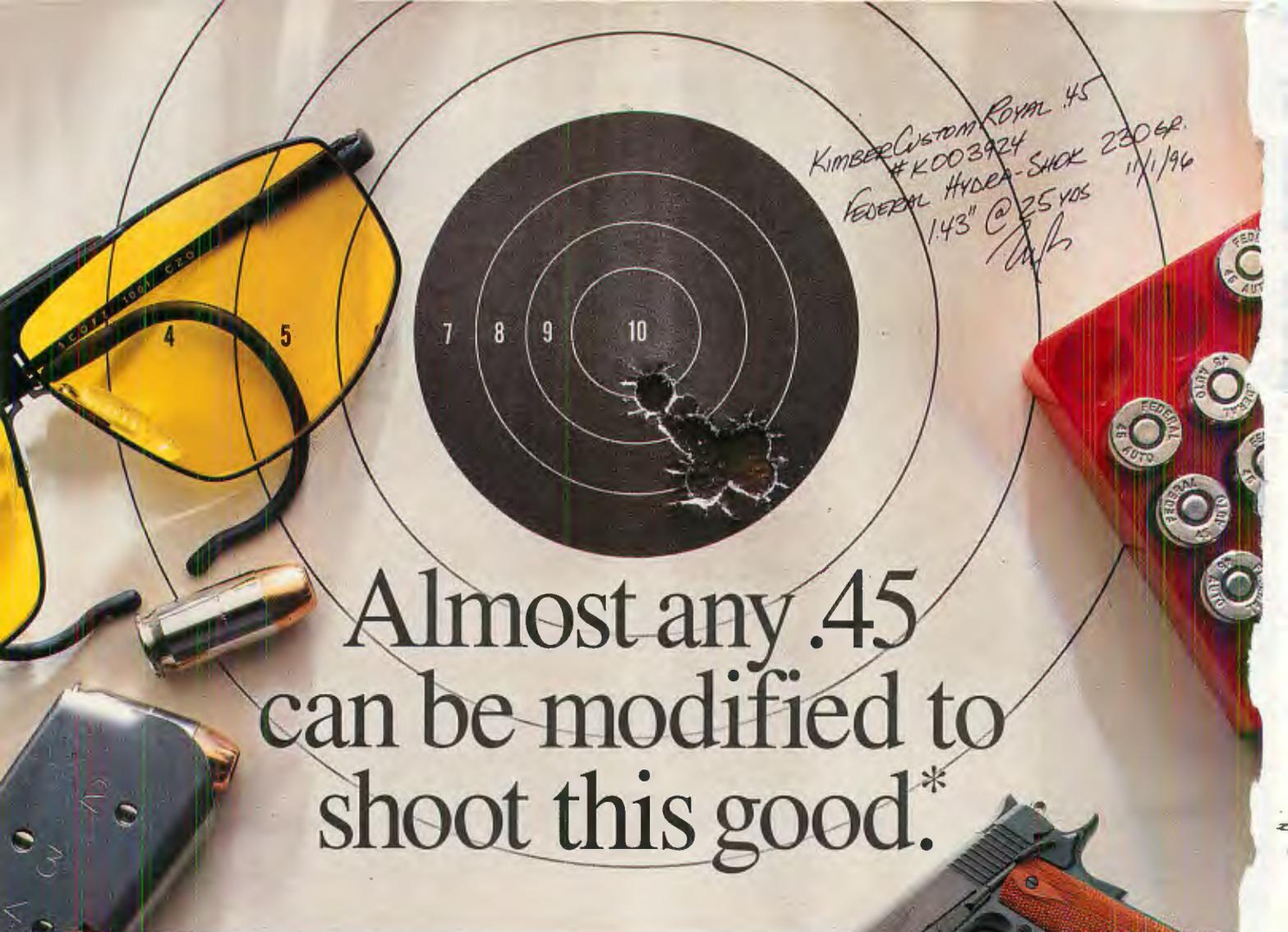
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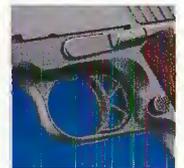
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SEPTEMBER 1997

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Courtesy Bill Scambray

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COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

Been There, Done That

Nineteen ninety-seven so far has been a kick-butt-and-take-names year for *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine. And the 18th annual SOF Convention and Consumer/Trade Show, 3-5 October in Las Vegas, promises to maintain that brisk operational tempo.

Highlighting this year's event, based at the Sands Hotel, is an auction of some of the guns used by Los Angeles cops to defeat two heavily armed and armored bank robbers in a February shoot-out. (Re-read our June report, "Firepower From The People," if that LA firefight has already faded from memory.)

The following items — among the arsenal loaned by B&B Guns of North Hollywood to brave but outgunned members of the LAPD — will be on the SOF auction block: four Bushmaster XM 15-E25 .223-caliber semiauto rifles and two Remington 12-gauge, model 11-87 semiauto shotguns. Proceeds, above the cost of the auction and price of these combat-proven weapons, will be donated to the LAPD Memorial Fund benefiting the families of slain officers. A "surprise" Hollywood celebrity and ex-Navy SEAL Richard Marcinko are slated to be the auction's presenters.

Hundreds of loyal exhibitors will return to this year's Consumer/Trade Show and be joined by newcomers including Colt, Brownell, and Hornady. Representatives of the editorial staff of *SOF* will be on hand to discuss ongoing projects with our readers.

Of particular interest will be a panel discussion, "SEALs in Vietnam: Tactics, Techniques, and Firefights." A distinguished panel of former U.S. Navy commandos will include *Good to Go* author Harry Constance, Hollywood technical adviser Harry Humphries (profiled in "From Brown Water To Silver Screen," July *SOF*), Marcinko (*Rogue Warrior* author), and the most decorated SEAL of the Vietnam War, Frank Thornton, Jr. Two more entries in the been-there/done-that arena are retired ATF agents Robert Sanders and Jim Jorgensen, two of the bureau's most knowledgeable critics.

They will conduct a seminar, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know about the ATF — But Were Afraid to Ask."

Elsewhere at the convention, experts in hand-to-hand combat, close-quarter battle, and other esoteric skills will conduct classes for conventioners (for additional fees). More participatory events are being planned. The SOF Convention might lay in for jump training and escorted skydives if conventioners sign up in advance. (Scared? Look on page 26: If ex-President Bush, 72, can skydive, then you adrenaline-seeking chairborne rangers can, too!)

The world-famous SOF 3-Gun Tactical Match will be held just outside Las Vegas at the Desert Sportsman's Range. As of this writing, companies donating prizes to the event include ADCO, Armalite, Benchmade, Black Hills Industries, Blackhawk Industries, Boker USA, Chase-Durer, Colt, DPMS, Glock, Intertech, Maxsell Corp., Olympic Arms, and Springfield Armory.

The 3-Gun Match awards banquet will feature a distinguished keynote speaker (as yet to be selected). Past speakers have included Gen. William Westmoreland and radio commentator G. Gordon Liddy.

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Changing topics, I want to say this in observation of the mainstream news media's *very fair* coverage of National Affairs Editor Jim Pate's expert-witness testimony during the penalty phase of the McVeigh trial in Denver: With time, most — if not all — stereotypes crumble.

Pate did a helluva job testifying about *SOF's* investigation of the Waco tragedy and its relevance to any anti-government movement. What I read, saw, and heard out of Denver suggest that mainstream media should, or already do, *read* this magazine. Welcome aboard. ✕

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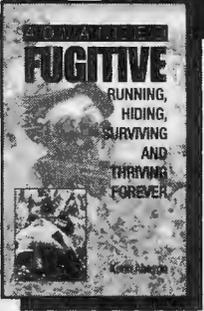
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ADVANCED FUGITIVE

Running, Hiding, Surviving, and Thriving Forever

by Kenn Abaygo

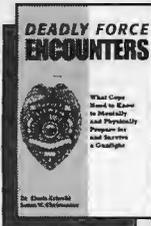
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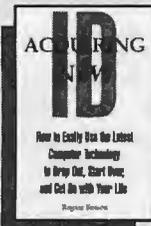


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SOF THE TV SERIES



I just saw a story on the *Soldier Of Fortune* TV show that *SOF* magazine has also been plugging. Although the exposure is nice, in the long run I believe that it will do more harm to *SOF*'s reputation than good.

SOF has always had the reputation for journalistic integrity. The TV show seems to lack the hard realistic edge that I expect from *SOF*. The *SOF* TV show will do for the professional soldier, what *Baywatch* and *Chips* have done to lifeguards and cops.

Byron Lee
Via E-Mail

Byron, prepare yourself to be pleasantly surprised. A key technical adviser for the series Soldier of Fortune, Inc. is Harry Humphries, former SEAL and real-life trainer of SWAT teams (see "From Brown Water to Silver Screen," July '97). The world of action-adventure TV, like all TV, is necessarily a fantasy world, but this show is shaping up to be a credible and enjoyable action series. If a story were genuinely true to a soldier's life it would be a narrative of long periods of excruciating boredom punctuated by brief interludes of sheer terror, and probably wouldn't draw a lot of viewers. But when the story focuses on the periods of action and adventure, in convincing scenarios and with attention to technical detail, it can be good viewing. Check it out this fall.

WANTED: METEOR SHOWER

Reference your July 1997 article "Falling Star."

As I read the article I was not shocked that this was allowed to happen, because I have seen this before.

As a federal employee, I have worked for the Department of the Interior and the military.

What I have seen in the past 30 years is appalling. What went on at the ATF goes on all over the Federal Government. There is a Good-Old-Boy system in just about every part of the Federal Government. Management is always covering up for management. When it is reported, the reporter is treated like a criminal. I know. I have been there.

Richard C. Evey
Havelock, NC

SEA KNIGHTS AND CHINOOKS

Caught you in a mistake. The helicopter shown on page 43 of the July 1997 *SOF* is incorrectly identified as a CH-47 (Chinook). It's actually a CH-46 (Sea Knight). A real CH-47 Chinook is shown in the same issue on page 32.

The way to tell the two similar models apart is by the landing gear; the bigger-heavier CH-47 Chinook has four sets of gear. The Sea Knight has three sets.

Steven C. Brunt
El Cajon, CA

Good catch, Steve. Our thanks to you and all the other sharp-eyed readers who caught it. (Well, thanks at least to those who were civil about our error.)

BOWIE PLAUDITS



The pleasure of reading Mr. Bagwell's "This Is A Knife" was delayed by the pressures of legal practice, another type of knife fight. Mr. Bagwell denigrates the knife skills of modern Special Forces compared with ante-bellum Mississippi toughs: My own Special Forces knife training consisted of counting the bayonets in the arms room, and mulling the claim that a regulation (which I never found) forbade them to be sharpened.

The lower Mississippi has a long history of knife fighting. About 1790, the last Spanish governor of Natchez legislated against the practice by forbidding the wearing of any weapon made of metal. The next day, peddlers sold hardwood spikes.

Pepperbox pistols were developed at the same time as Bowie knives, and Colt revolvers shortly thereafter. However, court records, media, and legislation of the period considered the Bowie more deadly than guns. Weapons legislation of the day always referred to Bowie knives, but did not always mention guns. The Bowie was the "assault weapon" of the age, the weapon of choice of criminals, useful only for murder; or so they said. Some states banned their possession outright, Alabama placed a \$100 tax on an item which might have cost a dollar at retail. There was no effect on the murder rate.

Many commentators believe that the Bowie was singled out because it was the weapon of the poor. It seems more than coincidence that these laws started in slave-owning states — and never stopped.

Kevin L. Jamison,
Attorney At Law

GULF WAR LEACHES?



I am a Persian Gulf veteran, who before I went to the theater of operations had a very promising military career. I was senior gunner of convoy security for an M.T.O. unit.

Also an armorer, my job was to "clear" an area before the convoy went through, i.e. abandoned vehicles, compounds (which always has all kinds of neat military items), artillery emplacements, etc. When we cleared an area we would neutralize any equipment that could be repatriated and used against us. We guarded convoys of captured enemy equipment that was being sent stateside, but Lord only knows what I could have come into contact with!

I got back to the real world and then my medical nightmare began: There is a laundry list of maladies, such as migraines to the point I can't stand light or sound, a severe tremor in my right hand (I am right handed), 35% short-term memory capacity, chronic fatigue, hip problems, etc. etc. I am not attempting to get any sympathy, I just want my health back — Uncle Sam can keep his disability check, I want my health back or at least a VA doctor to treat me as a person with a true medical problem and not as a "leach jumping on the band wagon!!!!" (That was a quote from an actual doctor from Wade park VA in Cleveland, Ohio. That was totally uncalled for!)

I truly respect the 'Nam vets for what they have dealt with for the last 20-25 years. I am writing this to you for the simple reason we Gulf Vets who have problems need to unite and let our government hear us as one mighty sound, not just as a few "belly-achers" jumping on the band wagon for that measly disability check.

Sir, I salute you and *SOF* for printing the truth. Anyone who would like to write to me can do so at cjcpall@juno.com.

Gunny Jeff
Via E-Mail

KUDOS, CORRESPONDENTS

I would like to thank Richard Sherrow for a good article and those nice pictures. A tanker myself, I'm very pleased to know someone specializes in armor on my favorite magazine's pages. If I can be of any help, I'll be glad to do so.

Al J. Venter's article on South Lebanon is good and accurate. Nice to know that somebody cares about any part of this coun-

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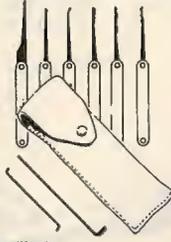
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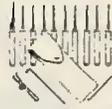
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ESP-13

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



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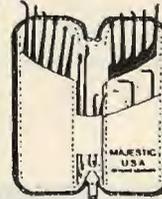
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MD16

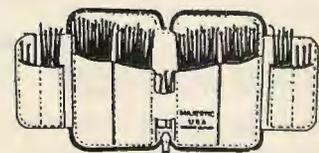
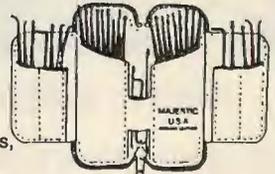
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MD32

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Top Grain Cowhide Leather, Zippered Case, has 60 picks, Tension Wrenches, Broken Key Extractor and Warded Master Keys. \$109.95

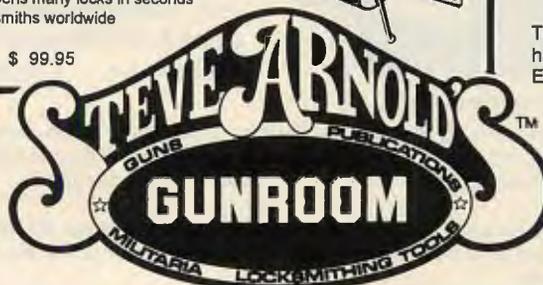
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try, which is still "in war." Thank you, Al. Keep the good work all the way.

Last but not least, Mr. Dale B. Cooper has always enriched *SOF* with plenty of good articles. Correspondent Cooper has kept us in close contact through the Gulf War.

As of the picture on page 55, I would like to Help Mr. Sherrow with some of the items shown: No. 3 — 105mm projectile APDS, used by the Brit L-7 tank gun fired on many tanks (M60A1/A3, M48A5, Centurion, Merkova I and II and so may as the Leopard 1 series...); No. 4 — AP 100mm Russian T-54/55 tank; No. 6 — maybe an 85mm anti-tank gun; No. 14 — an antipersonnel PG-7 rocket; No. 17 a Russian rifle grenade used by an AK-47 and so on.

Thank you for every correspondent and editor and employee in *SOF*, from top to bottom, for a good magazine.

Said Akmrass
Beirut, Lebanon



HONG KONG LONG GONE?

I am Sam Fong. I was born and raised in China. My grandfather was a general in the Army of the Koumintang. He was murdered by the communists and all males of my family were sent to forced-labor prisons. As a young man I escaped three

times, but was only captured two times, and went to Hong Kong. I went to mine phosphate rock in the Gilbert Islands in the daytime and caught flying fish at night. I saved my money. I returned to Hong Kong, married, and started a plastics factory. I have a son.

When you read this letter, Hong Kong will not be a free state with liberties for the people and free enterprise. It will be only a puppet at the whim of the Communist Government of China.

If the Englishmen who turned Hong Kong over to the Communists had lived in

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the Communists' slave camps, maybe they would have not given Hong Kong and its millions of people to the Communists.

Sam L. Fong
Kowloon, Hong Kong

REQUESTS HARUKU INFO

I am looking for information on Haruku Island during Japanese occupation in WWII. My father was a prisoner for two years (1942-1944). He and other prisoners there built an airstrip on the side of the mountain on Haruku. It is my father's last wish before he dies, to know if there is any war memorial erected to the many British prisoners who died in this camp on Haruku; secondly if the airstrip is still visible on the island. It is my intention to travel to Haruku Island in hope of finding this site. If there is any information available (war museums, photo archives, other survivors, etc.) I would be exceedingly grateful.

John Butler (Brit, residing in Norway)
E-Mail: faglab@mimer.no

MAINSTREAM NEWS IS OLD NEWS?

Last Sunday, CNN's Christiane

Amanpour, alias Ms. Death, did a half-hour telejournal story on Arkan Raznatovic and the Tigers' doings in Croatia and Bosnia during 1991 and 1992. Oh man, it really cracks me up to see how long it takes CNN and the rest of the media establishment dorks to find and report what has been old news to SOF readers for over three years now.

Jose-Pierre Fernandez
Ville D'Anjou,
P.Q. Canada

Well, for one thing, it's always a lot safer writing about such madmen as history. A number of Western reporters, including SOF's intrepid Senior Foreign Correspondent Mark Milstein, have gotten shot while reporting in that theater and timeframe.

DRAW A CIRCLE TO TAKE HIM IN

The other evening, I was stopped for a routine traffic violation by the Foster City Police (Foster City is an upper-middle class community 20 miles south of San Francisco).

Everything was going along fine (except that I was getting a ticket!) until the back-up officer asked if he could pat me down. I know this is S.O.P., so I agreed to let him.

The trouble started when the nice officer came across my ID card for the local indoor pistol range. Total change of attitude: instant Gestapo.

He proceeded to accuse me of being a "militia member," and of having "hand grenades, bombs and bazookas" hidden in my car!!! After thoroughly searching my car, finding nothing of interest of course, and about 45 minutes of giving me a hard time, i.e. trying to get me to say I was a militia member and tell them where I have my bazookas stashed, they finally decided I wasn't plotting against the city and let me go. All that for just belonging to my local shooting range?!!

They wonder why us honest citizens are learning to distrust and fear our police forces... Here's a perfect example why.

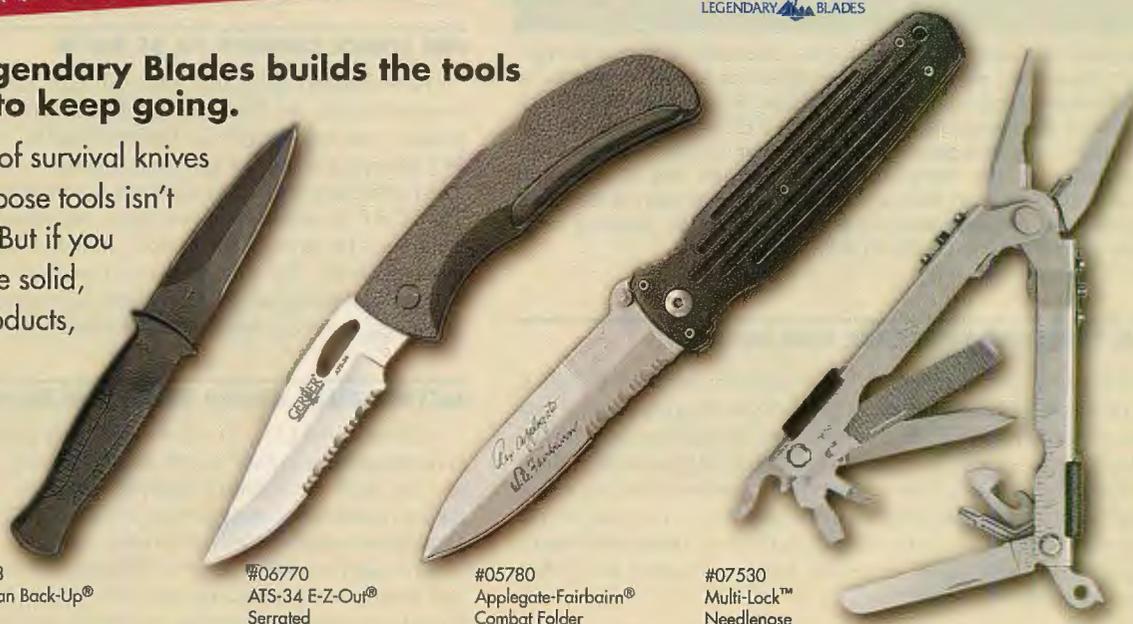
Lee French
San Mateo, CA

The best way to deal with ignorance — and we have to admit this does sound like ignorance of a pretty high order — is to educate it. Next time get their badge numbers and see to it they are given personal invitations to the pistol range. It's not easy being a cop these days — it's important they know who their friends really are. ☒

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Peter W. Kuyper

If ever in the Scottish highlands near the town of Spean Bridge, don't miss the Commando Museum at the hotel. Proprietor is Mr. Alastair Ferguson (Spean Bridge Hotel, Inverness-Shire PH34 4ES Scotland, UK, phone: (0397) 712250.) Our spies tell us that the fishing and deer hunting in Spean Bridge are excellent; hospitality at the hotel is without equal; the Commando Museum is excellent and would like to contact any Americans (or families thereof) who received Commando training near there at Achnacary Castle in WW II.

FAX FIGHTERS PRESERVE GUN RIGHTS

We have just passed the third anniversary of the NRA-ILA FAX Alert, the electronic Paul Revere of the Second Amendment. If you have an auto-receive FAX machine, you should sign up with the NRA-ILA Grassroots Division (1-800-392-8683), and every Friday receive at no cost an update of what politicians are up to regarding your Second Amendment rights. It's efficient, it's free and it's the fastest way to keep up-to-the minute on the most immediate threats to your gun rights. Give 'em a call today, and when the FAXes come in, spread the word.

RIGHT-TO-CARRY SUCCESSSES

According to the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, Kentucky's right-to-carry law has been a resounding success. Since Kentucky's 24,500 permits were issued 10 months ago, authorities in three counties have not recorded a single incident involving a permit holder. Campbell County Sheriff John Dunn said, "I've changed my opin-

ion of this. Frankly, I anticipated a certain type of people applying to carry firearms, people I would be uncomfortable with being able to carry concealed weapons. That has not been the case. These are all just everyday citizens who feel they need some protection." Lt. Col. Bill Dorsey, Covington's assistant chief of police, and earlier critic of the law, agreed, "We haven't seen any cases where a permit holder has committed an offense with a firearm." The experience in Kentucky has been mirrored in some 30 other states nationwide who have passed right-to-carry laws.

FBI, CIA NET LANGLEY GUNMAN

FBI Deputy Director William J. Esposito and Acting Director of Central Intelligence George J. Tenet have announced the apprehension of Mir Aimal Kansi, who had been on the FBI's top-ten fugitive list, suspected as the gunman who killed two CIA employees and wounded three others in an attack outside CIA headquarters near Langley, Virginia in January 1993.

Through more than four years of unrelenting effort characterized by excellent interagency teamwork between local authorities, Justice Department and Central Intelligence authorities, and the articulate use of foreign assets and American assets overseas, Kansi was located and delivered abroad to the custody of U.S. authorities by Afghan individuals. Agencies and offices involved included the FBI Washington Field Office, the FBI Hostage Rescue Team, various FBI legal attaches and personnel assets abroad, the CIA, the Department of Justice, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Fairfax County PD and District Attorney's office.

Kansi has been transported to the United States, where he will stand trial in Fairfax, Virginia.

AIR FORCE CHIMPS TO BE RIF'D

Just when the aging *SOF* editorial staff thought they had found a second career, the Air Force has announced it is closing down its primate research complex at Holloman AFB, New Mexico. Some 143 chimps, ranging in age from infants to old troopers in their mid-forties, have been classified non-essential and are to be surplused. The USAF is entertaining bids from individuals or organizations "who may be seriously interested" in the chimps and the primate research center. The chimps, who all are descendants of the original five purchased in 1959 for space flight research, may only be bought for scientific research or for retirement with adequate care.

ACTIVE-DUTY GREEN BERET HOLDS FBI JOB

Colonel John Ellis, an active-duty Army Special Forces soldier, is on assignment to the FBI, where he is serving as the FBI's deputy section chief for domestic counter-terrorism. Col. Ellis has line authority and supervisory power, as well as FBI credentials, Justice Department and Pentagon documents indicate.

"I thought we had learned an important lesson from Ruby Ridge and Waco, not to militarize the FBI," said U.S. Senator Charles Grassley, raising the question of whether the assignment of a uniformed military officer to a civilian law enforcement job is not a violation of the Pose Commitatus Act, which ostensibly prohibits military personnel from enforcing civilian laws.

"If we learned that lesson," posed Grassley, "why in the world would the FBI put an active-duty Special Forces colonel in the number-two slot for domestic counter-terrorism?"

Grassley, who chairs the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on

Administrative Oversight and the Courts, raised the issue with Attorney General Janet Reno, saying both the Department of Justice and the FBI have been "unresponsive" to legitimate requests for information for which Grassley's panel has oversight authority.

Citing "repeated leadership failures" within DoJ and the FBI, the Iowa Republican criticized both for "institutional arrogance and a focus on empire building... Clearly, more aggressive oversight is warranted... Recent fiascoes have shaken the public's confidence in the FBI... The civil liberties and the protection of every American are at stake..." - James L. Pate

DOWNIZING FROM WITHIN

This year the Army will recruit 87,900 soldiers: within three years 33,189 of them will be missing from ranks if current trends continue. Three of every ten males and five of every ten females will fail to complete their first enlistment — more than 10,000 a year. That's two divisions above the 10 active-duty divisions the Army is sweating to keep on line.

Of these, the reasons for early separation break down this way: misconduct 21.1%, other disciplinary 13.2%, unsatisfactory performance 12.9%, body fat 10%, physical disability 10.6%, hardship 6.3%, courts-martial 6.1%, pregnancy 5.1%, promoted to officer 4.5%, personality disorder 2%, homosexual .4%, unspecified 7.7%

FROGWATCH

According to *Jane's Defence Weekly*, U.S. Defense and aerospace industry reps going to the Paris Air Show were briefed by U.S. Intelligence agencies on the potential threat of economic espionage and counterintelligence by French industry and the French government. Reps of the FBI, State Department, Defense Department, CIA and the National Counterintelligence Center briefed some 60 industry personnel at Davis Monthan AFB on 19 May. Industry officials were advised to be exceptionally cautious about leaving materials in

their hotel rooms, especially anything to do with commercially sensitive or proprietary information, and to assume their phones were bugged. Classified information cannot legally be carried to such a show outside of a controlled environment.

Such briefings are regularly given to industry reps traveling to visit friends and allies in France, Israel, South Korea and China.

EMBARRASSING ITEM #1: FBI

A Suburban load of FBI HRT agents, on a training detail in Arkansas, parked their vehicle in front of a motel in East Memphis, Tenn., for the night. When they awoke the next morning the vehicle — and 16 shoulder-fired weapons including M16s and MP5s, 8,000 rounds of ammo, body armor, flash-bang grenades and commo gear — was missing. The vehicle was subsequently found by local police, burned out and missing the toys. An FBI spokesman said it was felt the perpetrators were merely garden-variety car thieves, who were having a very good night.

EMBARRASSING ITEM #2: USMC

Who do the Marines call? In this case, the Army. Two Marines were the last Americans left at the U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone after a the recent coup plunged the country into bloody chaos. With armed locals surrounding the embassy, the leathernecks radioed for help, and a two-man Army SF team managed to slip through several rebel checkpoints and sneak the Marines out through a back alley to safety.

USA Vs. T. McVEIGH: PAST OR PROLOG?

Now that accused OKC bombing suspect Timothy McVeigh has been found guilty and sentenced to death, what will be the fallout? The issues involved continue to divide those on both the so-called "left" and "right."



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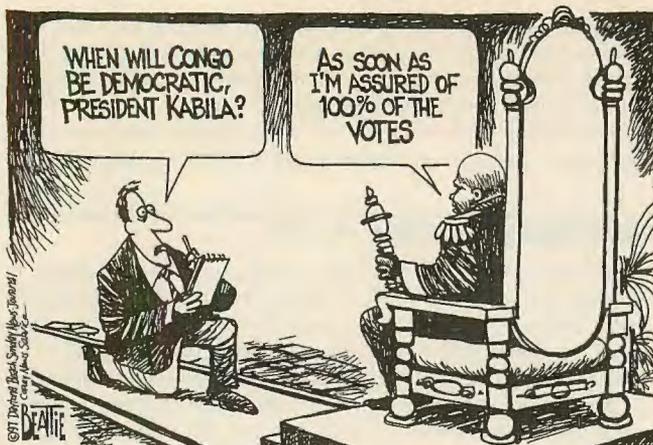
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Although McVeigh was not a militia member, since the bombing, left-leaning the likes of Charlie Schumer, Morris Dees, and most of the main-stream media have attempted to connect every criminal act from adultery to zoophilia with militias and the so-called patriotic right. At the same time, many on the "radical right" continue to blame New-World-Order inspired conspiracies as the prime, root cause of all the nation's ills.

Appearances are that neither of these extremes would be satisfied until one destroys the other ... But is that really their goal? It is more likely, as borne out by a look at the bank balances of these groups, that there are those on both sides profiting handsomely from the growing market in paranoia, peddling to their respective audiences.

Such pandering of paranoia for profit may well cost the nation more than it can afford.

One can't help but wonder what the political climate would have been, i.e. how broadly based a market the pimps of paranoia would have found, had congress shown some backbone after the Ruby Ridge and Waco hearings and prosecuted those agents and officials

who lied to congress and conspired to obstruct justice in those cases.

The nation can't tolerate any more Oklahoma Cities ... nor can it tolerate any more Ruby Ridges or Wacos. — R.L. Sherrow

GORILLA WARFARE

Studies by Lee White of the Wildlife Conservation Society have noted that logging activity in Gabon's Lope Wildlife Preserve, wherein only 8% of the tree canopy is removed (which is not enough to disturb gorillas, monkeys, elephants and mandrills), has devastating effects among the chimpanzee population. In areas thus logged, some 80% of the chimpanzees are gone within a few years — not from loss of habitat or food, but because this minimal loss of habitat seems to trigger turf wars among the chimps for the 90% that's left, and they fight to the death over it.

That's to be expected, we assume, in any animal whose DNA is so close to man's.

AIM LOW, SCORE HIGH

Robert Jordan, of New London, Conn., completed an exam to become a New London cop, but he wasn't called back for an interview ... because he scored too high. We're not making this up, folks. Jordan has filed a federal suit alleging discrimination based on intelligence. Jordan scored 33 on the test (for a rough IQ equivalency of 125), and New London only interviewed those with scores between 21 and 27. Said City Attorney Ralph Monaco, "We're looking for bright people, but we're not looking for people that are so bright to an extent that they're not going to be challenged by the job." Noted Frank Landy, author of *Psychology of Work Behavior* and an expert in the field of industrial psychology, "The notion that the individual is too bright is goofy." We agree.

Whaddya want to bet that the city attorney and police chief scored right in the middle of the "comfort zone"? ❧

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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 Autokinematic™ 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.

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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, non-scientific 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.

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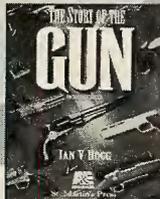
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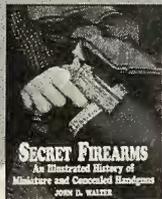
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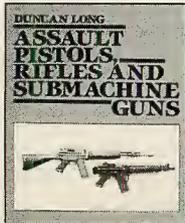
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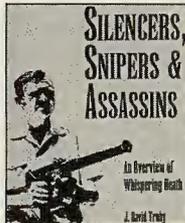
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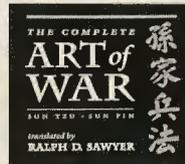
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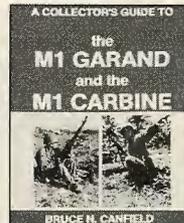
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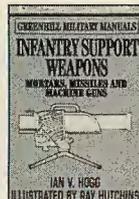
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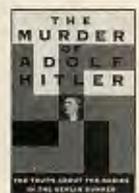
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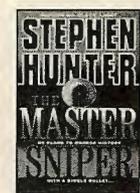
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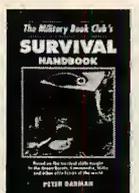
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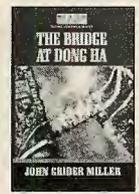
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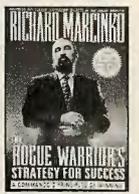
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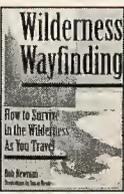
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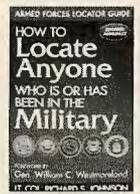
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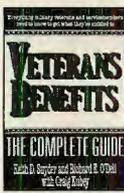
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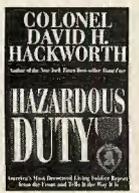
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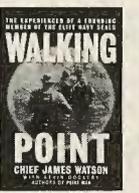
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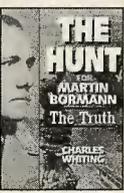
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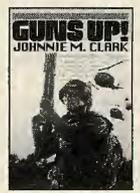
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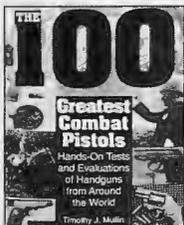
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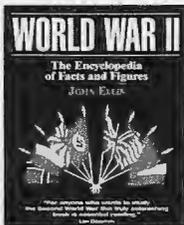
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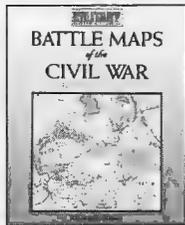
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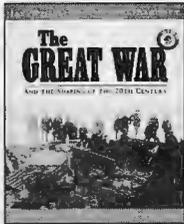
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SLICK WILLIE WATCH

In The Great Fly-Over

Package Check II

Shucks, Denver got mentioned bigger 'n blazes on the front-page of that high-roller New York City paper, *The Wall Street Journal*. "A G-7 summit ended after a Denver session attended by Russia's president," it said in late June. Leaders of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and Russia joined President and Mrs. Clinton for world-class problem-solving and partying in the world's favorite cowtown. (It used to be Dallas.)

Seems more 'n more folks from Washington and the Big Apple are flying into the Mile High City — which they used to only see at 35,000 feet on their way to LA — what with this summit and before that, the Oklahoma City bombing trial. And remember that A-10 pilot who flew into the Rockies?

The Clintons certainly needed a break away from DC. With the heartland help of national Democratic apparatchik and Colorado governor Roy Romer and the Democratic mayor of Denver, the Clintons and visiting dignitaries did it up right — even down to buffalo steaks and microbrewed beer. Used to be that folks out here in the Great Fly-over thought that really important things only happened on the East or West Coast (that's what the national news media kept telling us, anyway). But then, it *used* to be that the sexuality of

the president and first lady were taboo for public discussion.

Boy howdy, times have changed.

Only days after the Supreme Court's decision in favor of Paula Jones' sexual-harassment lawsuit, two disc jockeys at Denver's KRFX classic-rock station interviewed Gennifer Flowers, who has courted publicity as an ex-mistress to Bill Clinton. These DJs modestly call themselves "the Masters," have an affinity for Harleys, and are buds with bowhunter/rock-guitarist Ted Nugent. They asked Flowers over the phone about her relationship with the then-governor of Arkansas. "Is Hillary a cold fish?" asked one.

Flowers carefully replied that the Clintons, at least in their Little Rock days, had an agreement in their "political relationship" (marriage): Bill could cheat with other women, and Hillary could cheat with other men — and women. There was a rumor around Little Rock, Flowers continued, that Mrs. Clinton was *involved* with another woman, a state-government employee. The next time Flowers was with the governor, she urged him to "get to the bottom" of that rumor.

"He just laughed really big ... [and said] 'Let me put it this way: She's eaten more of that than I have,'" Flowers said on Denver radio. Ooops. In a re-broadcast of that R-rated interview, the Masters reported that Flowers' lawyers had since told her to "shut up."

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If Flowers is telling the truth, the Clintons must have had the perfect '60s-style marriage. (The movie version would cast Jane Fonda as First Lady — a mature Barbarella with a law degree and anti-Nixon Watergate investigator on her resume.)

The Grapes of Wrath, 1997

Mrs. Clinton and her husband really ought to read a new non-fiction book, *Harvest of Rage* (Westview Press; 304 pages, hardback; \$24) for a better understanding of the "antigovernment movement." Maybe they will, maybe they won't. Author Joel Dyer is not a think-tank sociologist with a Harvard Ph.D., just a Colorado newspaper editor who got his degree (late '70s) from Oklahoma State University.

Dyer has years of firsthand research in Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas, talking to people who literally had lost the farm. Such people seldom appear on national TV, so imagine a lean man, graying hair, honest face — say, a mature Henry Fonda — sitting in a pickup truck sadly watching an auctioneer sell off his family's land, machinery, cattle, and house at a fraction of their worth. Always sure that the USDA and his banker would stick by him, the farmer had followed their advise: Borrow more money, buy more land, farm "fence-row to fence-row."

Harvest of Rage offers a frightening thesis. The farm crisis of some 15 years ago — a Washington-sanctioned restructuring of the agricultural economy in favor of multinational corporations — wiped out tens of thousands of family farms and crippled countless rural communities. Ultimately it was far more damaging than the worst of tornadoes. Nowadays, many of the survivors of that catastrophe are a large and bitter audience for anti-Washington groups and their NWO conspiracy theories laced with racism and Christian Identity. Add to that common-law courts and the "sovereignty" movement, a growing acceptance of armed militancy, the Internet, and the approaching end of the millennium.

"As if to underscore rural America's second-class status and Washington's lack of understanding of the people who live there," Dyer writes, "President Clinton — during his 1997 State of the



Union address — used the word 'urban' no fewer than one dozen times. The word 'rural' came up only once and only then as a symbolic gesture. The president proposed idea after idea on how to fight the problems of urban America. Not once did he even acknowledge that problems exist in rural places. ...

"We should learn to view crazy antigovernment conspiracy theories as a warning rather than as joke material. If people can, in all sincerity, believe that Jewish bankers have ordered the United Nations to attack their farms in order to control the food supply of Christians and if people can believe that the government has inserted microchips into their bodies so that satellites can track their every move, then they can also believe that they are supposed to blow up a building full of kids," the book adds.

It is a phenomenon that defies an easy TV sound-bite explanation — like trying to get an Okie to predict his wheat crop *and* the weather. It isn't just about cities, crime and guns, and militias. ✕

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WORLD SITREP



1

UNITED STATES

Army buys 31 Russian-made Scud-B missiles and 4 launcher vehicles last year from Eastern Europe for theater missile-defense testing; 2 already destroyed by Patriots in Pacific test range. • **Quadrennial Defense Review:** DoD report to Congress, on reorganization/modernization into 21st century, recommends 61,700 troops cut — Army: 15,000; Navy: 18,000; Air Force: 26,900; Marines: 1,800 — leaving active force at 1.36 million. QDR urges 54,000 cut from Reserve and National Guard (mostly Army) and 80,000 from DoD civilians, plus 2 more Base Realignment and Closure rounds. Existing aircraft orders overall would be decreased; Navy would lose 12 of 128 surface warships, 23 of 73 attack subs. Savings to help buy new weapons including Air Force's F-22 fighter, 3-service Joint Strike Fighter, and Army's digitized "Force XXI" corps. Eyeing North Korea's chemwar arsenal, SecDef Cohen urges \$1 billion extra for CW defense. • **Terrorism 'info superhighway'?** Bomb-making information on Internet increases domestic-terrorism threat — Cohen.

2

RUSSIA

Kremlin housecleaning: President Yeltsin fires Defense Minister Rodionov for "doing nothing" about military reform, appoints successor: Gen. Sergeyev, chief of Strategic Rocket Forces (which, under current first-strike doctrine, are backbone of national defense as other branches decline). Sergeyev reportedly is non-political, favors further nuclear-disarmament negotiations with U.S., and considers restructuring military into 3 major services instead of 7. He is 3rd defense minister in 1 year. • **Now the hard part:** Euphoria over (final) "end of Cold War," upon spring signing of NATO-Russia pact, quickly yields to controversy over implementation: Moscow wants veto in NATO issues, particularly concerning NATO expansion and its relations with Baltic states and Ukraine. • During crisis, Russian ICBMs could be re-targeted against America in 5 minutes, CIA director-designate tells Senate. • Yeltsin halts controversial plan to downsize Airborne Troops (46,000 to 34,000) and subordinate them to Ground Forces.

7

NICARAGUA

Contra holdouts: Last rebel unit, "Northern Front 3-80," signs peace agreement with government: disarmament in exchange for land and job training.

9

SPAIN

New round of violence: Defense ministry heightens security at military posts after *ETA* (Basque separatist) rebels plant 2 bombs at infantry base in northeast; 1 exploded with no casualties, the other was defused. Bombing is first *ETA* attack against army bases in 6 years. Spring terror campaign in Basque region has killed 1 policeman and 1 paramilitary guard.

10

ANGOLA

Back to civil war? Government troops launch offensive against (former) *UNITA* rebels; renewed fighting in diamond-rich northeast threatens power-sharing agreement to end years of fighting. Rebels were to relinquish occupied areas to new government, but *UNITA* leaders objected to army advances into their territory (estimated at nearly 70% of Angola). Peace process also complicated by partisan support of opponents in neighboring Zaire's civil war.

13

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

EO out: Government offers Bougainville rebels a peace plan: increased autonomy and decreased military presence on mineral-rich island. Meanwhile, investigators complete government-corruption probe of (canceled) \$36-million contract with London's Sandline International to provide (Pretoria-based) Executive Outcomes' mercs as counterinsurgency advisers to PNG army. Australian government closely follows EO affair.

14

INDONESIA

At least 300 civilians, soldiers, and rebels on Borneo and Timor die in violence preceding parliamentary elections; 130,000 soldiers and police officers are deployed during polling. Indonesian troops crack down on East Timor independence movement, arresting suspected activists.

15

INDIA

Really big thirst: Rampaging elephants plunder stocks of rum, flour, and sugar at supply base in eastern Bengal, army reports. Elephants breach base's electrified fences with uprooted trees and douse barrier fires with water.

8

FRANCE

Verdict in air massacre: Judicial investigator concludes that brother-in-law of Libyan dictator Khadafi ordered the bombing of a French *UTA* airliner in 1989. Explosion over Niger killed 171 aboard the DC-10.

11

SOUTH AFRICA

Trimming muscle: In warning to Parliament, defense minister denounces ongoing budget cuts — now about 59% since 1989 — as detrimental to border security, military support of police (now fighting crime wave), and nation's involvement in regional security. Badly needed equipment purchases are delayed or canceled and (short-service) contracts of nearly 7,000 troops will not be renewed.

3

AFGHANISTAN

Islamist juggernaut: Collapse of (and partial mutiny by) forces of Uzbek warlord Dostum, member of anti-Taliban alliance, plus Taliban gains in northern Afghanistan prompt Tajikistan and Uzbekistan to reinforce borders against incursions and flood of refugees. (Gen. Dostum flees to Turkey.) Moscow, fearing regional spread of Taliban militia's Islamic ultra-radicalism, watches warily. • **Muj missiles:** Pushed from Kabul by Pakistan-backed Taliban, mujahideen leader Massood (defense minister under President Rabbani) reorganizes forces in Panjshir Valley stronghold. Massood also has 25-30 Scud-B missiles (conventional high-explosive warheads) and 2-4 launcher vehicles at 2 sites. No reports yet of Scud use against Taliban. • Taliban closes Iran's Kabul embassy on charges of spying.

4

CANADA

Laser harassment: Military pilots receive special training, laser-resistant goggles, after incident off Washington state: Canadian CH-124 helicopter crewmen and U.S. Navy officer suffer eye injuries while observing Russian (spy) trawler as it tracked U.S. submarine. Photos reportedly show red dot — probably from laser range-finder — on Russian ship's bridge. Earlier incident: During late '80s, U.S. Army helicopter crewman is nearly blinded by laser from Soviet Mi-24 Hind flying along East German border.

5

MEXICO

Clashes between army and EPR rebels in Guerrero (southern) state have killed about 30 troops in the last year. • **Gringo air:** Government to receive 4 U.S. Air Force C-26 turboprop surveillance planes and 73 U.S. Army UH-1H helicopters for counterdrug missions. Human-rights activists warn such equipment will be used against rebel groups instead.

6

CUBA

Fidel mellowing? Havana no longer actively supports armed struggle in Latin America (or elsewhere) and likely did not sponsor terrorism in 1996, but remains a refuge for international terrorists and maintains contact with Latin American leftist insurgents — U.S. State Department. • Navy has only a few operational patrol boats; larger vessels rust at anchor.



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SIERRA LEONE

Nearly 5,000 troops from Nigeria and Guinea occupy key governmental and infrastructural sites after military coup topples President Kabbah's year-old elected government and kills nearly 100. British and Middle Eastern airliners remove hundreds of foreign civilians; later, French troops (including legionnaires) and U.S. Marines conduct separate helicopter evacuations. • Renegade RUF rebels renew fighting in violation of '96 cease-fire.

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JAPAN

Defense officials suspect U.S. intel agencies overestimate range of North Korea's *Nodong-1* ballistic missiles — at 1,300 kilometers — to compel Tokyo into funding anti-missile programs. (With error radius of up to 4 kilometers for 770-kilogram HE or chemical warhead, missile is considered a "terror," rather than strategic, weapon.) • **Downsizing's impact lessened:** Government approves plan creating 15,000-member reserve force for front-line deployment in crisis. This partly offsets reduction of 40,000 ordered for Ground Self-Defense Force (currently at 185,000).

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, Dept. SOF, Amarillo, Texas 79114-8759; subscriptions are \$70 per year (26 issues), \$74.38 in Texas. Sample issue available for \$3. Those interested in world intel are encouraged to subscribe.

COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

by Clint Smith

Cutting Corners

One of the unfortunate but immutable results of construction is that it produces a series of structures that are tactically unsound. One of these results is corners. Whether in homes or offices, or even trenches and bunkers, elements of design produce angles of varying degrees to enclose structures, and constrict and direct traffic flow. Corners can be found in halls, up or down stairwells, overhanging landings, and doorways that produce two corners: one on either side of the opening.

In a tactical application, corners are a danger area because they force you to conform to their intended purpose: traffic constrict. Consequently, there is a tendency for the person clearing them to work in an area that is confined or compressed as well as in close proximity to potential threats.

Corners generally come in 90-degree formats. They are generally vertical, but can also be horizontal. Do not overlook the overhang in a stairwell, landing or balcony.

In clearing corners the same general tactical guidelines covered before still apply. Make every attempt to maximize the physical distance between yourself, the threat and the threat's muzzle, and the potential threat area.



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Ask yourself a question. What is the farthest point in this room from the corner I am trying to clear? Even in a worst case scenario, when clearing an area that is tight with a doorway that opens into a corner into a room, you should make every attempt to maximize the distance.

Also attempt to minimize myself as a target. What is the most amount of the threat I can see while at the same time exposing the least amount of me? This is the M&M rule: *Maximize* distance to the threat and *minimize* yourself as a target.

This concept was recently approached by Frank James in an article about Thunder Ranch ("Long Barrels, Short range," Sept. '96) and the tactics taught here. A problem occurs when a right-handed shooter must clear a corner by shooting from the left side of the corner or barricade. Here, Frank and I differ. I still believe the best approach for most of us "non-experts" is to keep the weapon in the strong hand while firing, even if it means violating the M&M rule. But keep in mind, by clearing off your strong side you will expose yourself in some corners.

Here is my reasoning: Most of us don't practice enough from the strong side, where are you going to get the time to practice with the weak hand? By the time I trade sides, reacquire the sight plane, roll out, mount, clear and prepare to move, (and that is if I don't have to fire) I am really going to confuse the mental and physical issue.

You may say, well the SpecOps guys can do it. Yes, I would hope so because you, the general public, are the ones paying their

way as they shoot and train, not to mention buying all their ammo. I have seen two people in 20 years who could switch from strong to weak side without breaking stride. You can do anything well if you have enough time and ammunition. Do you have enough time and ammo?

If you have the time and the money, by all means learn to shoot from both sides equally well. You should make every attempt possible to develop an opposite-side skill

because your life may depend on it. It may not be easy, but if it was then everybody would do it. But be realistic about your capabilities.

Regardless of which side you shoot from, as you move around the corner (from the farthest possible location and exposing as little of yourself as possible) visually slice the area you are clearing. Some refer to this as "slicing the pie." Methodically, but quickly, slice and look as far into the danger area as possible.

Use any objects in the room that can help you clear it: reflections from windows, mirrors, and light fixtures. Don't just look for intruders. Look for toes, bellies, hat brims, arms, legs and yes, especially muzzles sticking out from where they don't belong.

A good exercise is to have someone hide a full-length dressing mirror in your house and hunt it down. More so with corners than any other obstacle, you'll get your money's worth right away. What you see in the mirror is exactly what the threat will see. And they will probably shoot at what they see as well.

Another variable to always consider is the difference between cover and conceal-



As you move around the corner (from the farthest possible location and exposing as little of yourself as possible) visually slice the area you are clearing. Some refer to this as "slicing the pie."

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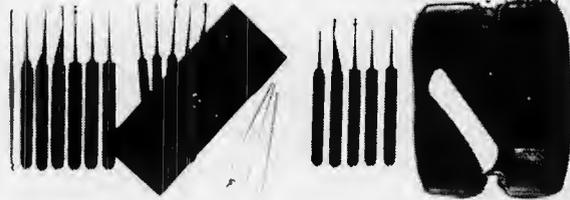
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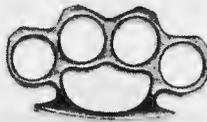
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ment. Corners provide concealment; they rarely provide cover. Rounds will probably come through that good old sheet rock!

In your home you should run dry exercises that address specific problems. Practice now clearing and searching. How will I search my own house? If you have a tactical problem in your own house, it is your fault. Clear bad corners and halls by placing mirrors, chrome-plated vases, or additional lighting where needed. Send in the dog if you have to.

Practice now shooting around corners from all directions. Work on positions that reduce your exposure to the threat. Your biggest enemies are leading with the muzzle, projecting yourself into the room before you are ready, working in too close proximity to a threat, and exposing yourself as a target to your opponent. Always remember, we don't learn tactics because we want to use them, we learn tactics in case we have to use them!



Methodically, but quickly, slice and look as far into the danger area as possible.

Inside your own home you should have available a telephone for communications, a fire extinguisher and first-aid kit. Remember the basics of fighting. You must be able to shoot. And that means hitting, since only hits count. You must be able to move to the threat or away from it. And you must be able to communicate with the threat and more importantly with people on your side. If there is a violent action in your home, there may be a fire or there may be one of your loved ones who are injured.

When most of my students come to the ranch for the first time they are already mentally acclimated to the thought process that if there is a fight and they bring their gun to bare, leaves will wilt, trees will fall and the sky will turn black. When they hear from us that what they plan to do may not work; that they or one of their children may be shot, the room grows quiet. Train on as many formats as possible with many potential outcomes. Expose yourself to as many variables as possible. Shoot right, left, in the dark with the flashlight and without it. Whatever you are absolutely the best at won't happen. As with most things, fighting doesn't always play out the way it is planned.

Ask General Custer. ☒

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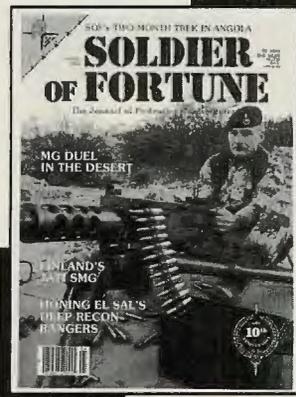
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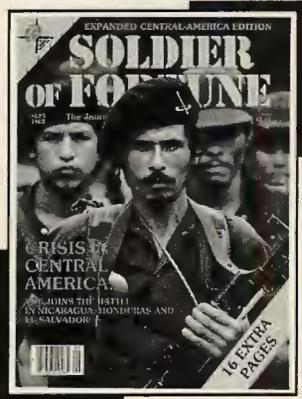
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THE NAPOLEON

Belts, butt-packs, briefcases, book-type organizers and bogus beepers — even faux wallets and crotch or ankle holsters have been used for concealed carry. But such gun carriers are now suspect as they are increasingly common, and it is obvious you are carrying something — a weapon?

Few of the above rate well on the comfort scale. Some of the ones that do conceal well are slow to access. Conventional “conceal” rigs are sometimes difficult to conceal when climate or style conventions dictate a minimum of clothing.



What is needed is a discreet, thoroughly concealing, comfortable, quickly accessed concealed carry that would never look out of place. Something one could always wear, with a holster as handy as a shirt pocket.

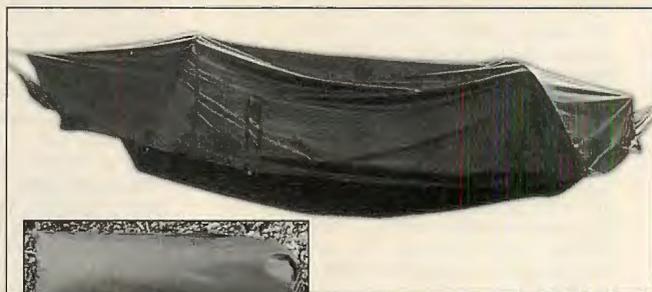
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SLING SOME SHELTER

When tired, it's time to halt the trek and hit the sack, and whether hunting or patrolling, the last thing a tired trooper needs is a hassle getting his shelter system together. Something you have with you is good — if it's lightweight enough to have with you — and something that goes up about as fast as you can tie two bowline knots around two trees would be great. Especially if it offers full protection from all nature of bugs — and thunderstorms.

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We wanted to see if this unit was Ranger-proof in time for those who might need one this fall. Our token in-house Ranger was otherwise occupied so we did the next best thing: used a seven- and a nine-year old, who put it together while Pappy read the instructions. All Pappy had to do was help with bowline knots to the trees. It went together in seven minutes. The unit is designed for deep wilderness, but we fudged and set it up in the backyard — just in time for a series of gully-washing thunderstorms (serious storms: three neighboring towns had tornadoes). It was swinging in intermittent but violent wind and rain for more than a week *and not one drop of water got inside!* The rain cover goes on or off in seconds, in case you want to watch the stars.

It came down and stowed in minutes. The full-coverage nylon bug screen was 100% effective, and getting in and out was easy. The unit is as comfortable as any hammock, and when in terrain with no trees (or in a hurry) it can be used on suitable ground as a pop-tent. Aluminum end-poles and overhead ribs are strung on elastic inserts that keep them from getting lost, as when breaking camp in the dark. Once you see the unit together, you could readily put it up in the dark: all the hassles have been designed out of this superbly effective, lightweight unit. Forest green color; camouflage and white/blue available soon.

This is far and away the best-engineered hammock we've seen, at an incredible savings in weight. Every time we examined the unit, we were impressed by thoughtful design features we hadn't noticed before. Anyone used to the old GI hammocks will have to get one of these (some SpecOps units already have). Having been guinea-pigged on the troops, when you read this the Newell Blue Ridge Camping Hammock will be in Alaska on a caribou hunt with SOF's M.E. (when slung high enough [12 feet], this hammock is also bear proof).

Contact Chris Lawson, Newell's Hammock Co., Dept. SOF, Box 12602, Raleigh, NC 27605; phone: 919-829-7076; fax: 919-829-9527.

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COMBAT READY

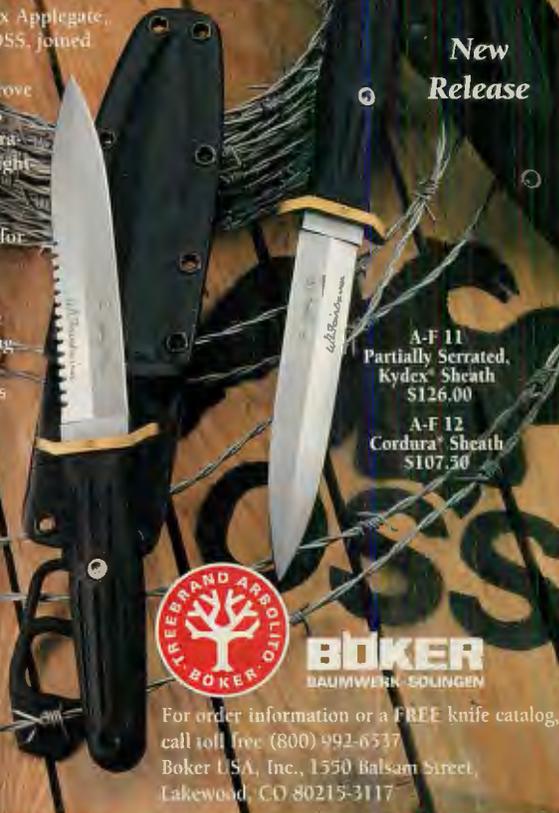
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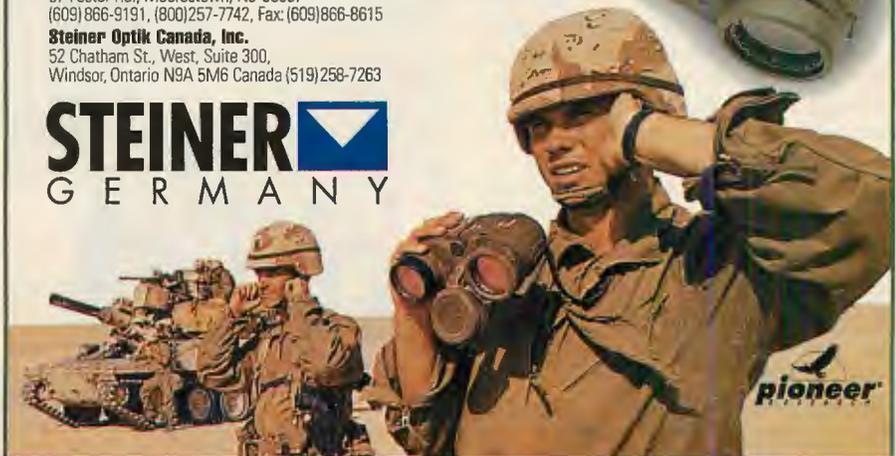
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I Was There

Text & Photos
by K. Kassens



Free Falling With The **PREZ**

Yuma Proving Ground, Ariz., is a desolate and obscure outpost in the extreme southwest corner of the state, 15 miles from the Mexican border. There's not a lot to do in Yuma, but then, it wasn't designed to be a large-scale military installation like Fort Bragg or Fort Hood. Instead, it's just a very good location to test, research, and develop Army equipment ... and to jump out of airplanes.

Every winter, thousands of people flock to the desert Southwest because of the great weather. Yuma Proving Ground, or YPG, has also been the winter home for the United States Army Parachute Team, the Golden Knights, for nearly 25 years for the same reason: clear blue skies, light winds, and warm temperatures.

On 25 March 1997, YPG was also the ideal place for history to be made. Former President George Bush made the second parachute jump of his life; *this* one scheduled. For Bush it was a lifelong goal he had set for himself more than a half-century earlier after he bailed from his U.S. Navy torpedo



bomber over the Bonin Islands in the Pacific during WWII. And for me, it was also an historic event, one that I will not soon forget.

As a veteran of the Persian Gulf War, I respected President Bush, my commander in chief, and have always held him in very high esteem. To have the opportunity to jump with him was an honor. But this was a special honor for me because it was actually the second time I was able to jump for the president: In 1989, three teammates and I jumped into the opening ceremonies of his inauguration.

When I first learned that I was selected to take part in this jump I was already at YPG training and photographing the two demonstration teams of the Golden Knights. I was one of three free-fall photographers for the president's memorable jump. Civilian photographers Joe Jennings and Tom Sanders would join me above, below, and around Bush at 120 miles per hour documenting with both still and video cameras.

We began the preparation several days prior to the president's arrival at YPG. Three days before he showed, we



After making a "non-voluntary" jump during World War II, former President George Bush relishes his second parachute jump: an 8,000-foot, 120-mph, 45-second free fall over the desert of Yuma, Ariz. The Prez showed no fear during his jump: Wouldn't have been prudent.

conducted several practice jumps and tested the equipment he was to use. I photographed and shot video of the practice jumps that was later used in his training. We even had a "presidential stand-in" for the practice jumps. It was a thrill to see the excited look on the president's face while he watched the video.

President Bush then began his five-hour accelerated training for the free-fall jump. The training went smoothly and his instructors, Sergeant 1st Class Andy Serrano, a member of the Golden Knights, and Glenn Bangs and Chris Needels from the U.S. Parachute Association (both former members of the Knights) were satisfied that Bush would do well on his jump the next day.

I was particularly impressed with the level of confidence Bush displayed throughout the training. It wasn't until later that evening at dinner that I learned why, at the age of 72, he was so confident that all would go well on his jump. "I have complete and total

Continued on page 71

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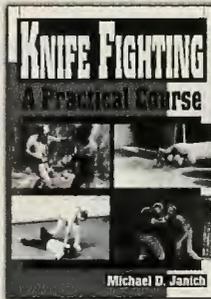
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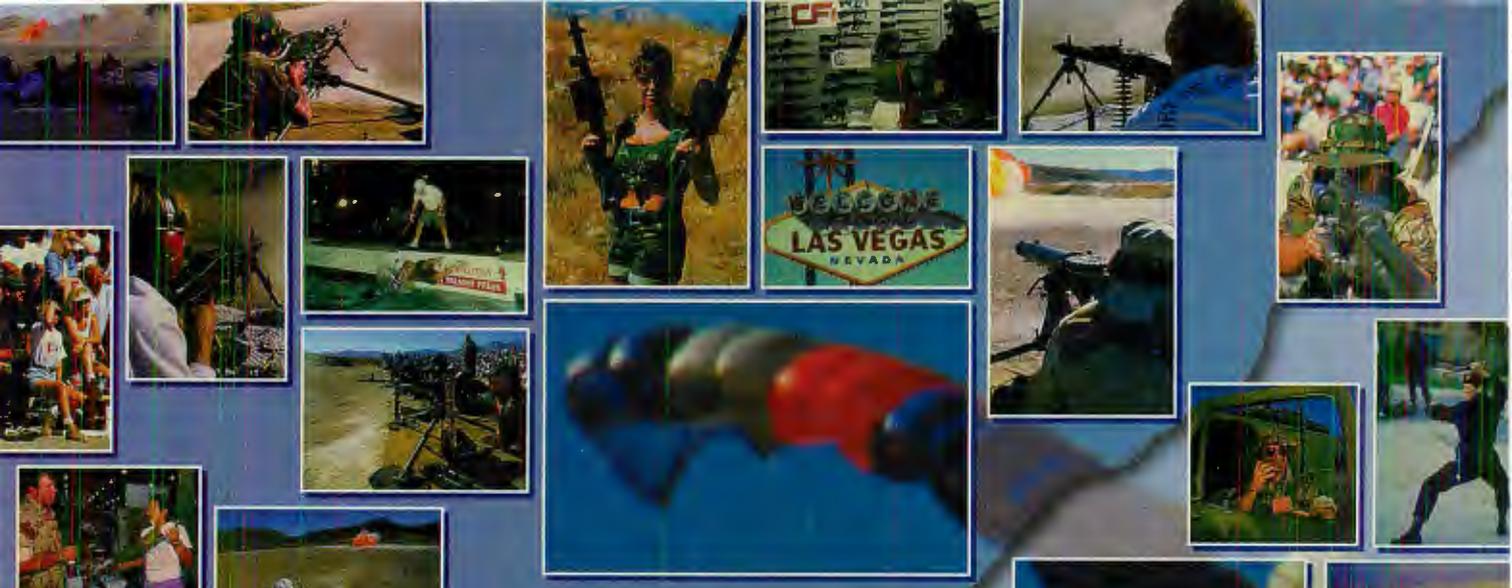
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On a jarring ride in the back seat of a South Korean army jeep, you begin to appreciate how tough it was to fight over these hills nearly a half-century ago. The jeep bounces up a road carved into dirt and rock in a series of hairpin curves from a narrow coastal flatland that belonged entirely to North Korea before the communists crossed the 38th parallel into South Korea on 25 June 1950. By the time you get to the top of Kunbong

Mountain, "Hill 911" in military parlance, 911 meters above the East Sea, you're amazed that South Korean troops ever captured this region in the extreme northeast of what is now the Republic of Korea — and then held on to it through three long years of the Korean war.

Lieutenant Colonel Chun In Bum is waiting to greet me and my interpreter when the jeep finally grinds to a halt outside his command bunker. Chun's battalion guards

these hilltops and ridgelines that run for a few miles (he won't say how many) along the "demilitarized zone" that stretches for 155 miles across the Korean peninsula.

"You have achieved something not many American soldiers and no civilians have been able to do," he tells me in fluent American English as we walk to the top of the GOP (general observation post) from which you can see the shimmering sea to the east and the glowering heights of Mount



South Korean troops man .50-caliber M2 HB Browning machine gun atop Hill 911.

Holding The Line ON 911

Text & Photos by Donald Kirk



***SOF Patrols South Korea's
Secret Outpost***



South Korean soldier hefts K2 rifle which has long since replaced the M16.

Keumkang, Diamond Mountain, across the DMZ a few miles to the north.

"You have hit the jackpot. You are the first reporter to come here in 47 years," since the outset of the Korean war.

The colonel talks of the obstacles to getting here with the pride of a career officer to whom this piece of turf is as valuable as it was during the war — a barrier to North Korean and Chinese units pushing south down the eastern side of the peninsula while aiming their main thrust in the center and west. I tell him that I wrote a letter to the Korean Overseas Information Service saying I wanted "to describe the activities of South Korean soldiers" as they faced the North Koreans "from anywhere along the DMZ except the Panmunjom area."

My reason for excluding Panmunjom was that I have visited the place at least a dozen times since first coming to Korea 25 years ago. The "truce village" where the Korean war armistice was signed on 27 July 1953, is a tourist attraction. You can go there on a tour bus from any major hotel in Seoul, the sprawling capital 20 miles to the south, get an American military briefing and stare at North Koreans soldiers who stare back at you from their side of the line. Until North Korea re-invades the South, igniting the dreaded "second Korean war," Panmunjom is a non-story.

Seldom, however, do South Korean authorities, who control the rest of the DMZ

on their own, permit reporters to visit South Korean army outposts beyond the range of America's 37,000 troops in Korea, including the Second Infantry Division south of Panmunjom. When reporters do go elsewhere along the DMZ, it is usually to areas over which American and allied units fought some of the toughest battles of the

war in the central region. The focal point of such trips often is one of the infamous tunnels dug by the North Koreans, eventually discovered by the South Koreans and displayed to the world as evidence of North Korea's desire to sneak men and arms into the south in a brand new attack.

Restricted-Area Privileges

This time, after the Korean Overseas Information Service relayed my request to South Korea's ministry of national defense, authorities mysteriously decided I could go somewhere different, to an area not even American military liaison officers have seen in recent years. Possibly, they liked my description of myself as "a free-lance journalist with a long-standing and well-known interest in Korea" — and my promise to "offer uniquely interesting material that would help to publicize the daily struggle of ROK (Republic of Korea) troops along the world's most sensitive front line."

About all the ministry of national defense asked was that I bring along an interpreter. A young woman named Chang Sung Hee was glad to take time off from a boring office job in one of those new high-rise towers in downtown Seoul for a look at a part of her country she's not, otherwise, likely to see.

As it turns out, however, Sung Hee does not have that much to do. One reason the ministry of national defense has chosen this lonely outcropping to visit is that Col. Chun, having spent nearly five years in New York as a kid and another six months at the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Va., speaks American-English like a native. Sung Hee's main duty is to translate my questions and the colonel's answers to a burly master sergeant from the defense security command — sent along to shadow us and make sure I don't take pictures that might give away South Korean positions.

The security people need not have wor-



Sign marks "South Boundary of DMZ;" barbed wire forms Military Demarcation Line. Guard posts within 4km-wide DMZ fly U.N. flag.

ried about Col. Chun's reliability. Almost from the moment we shake hands, he wants me to know the special place of this particular region in Korean War history. "Before the Korean War, all this used to be North Korean territory," the colonel tells me as we survey the landscape of craggy hills and valleys through the hazy midday sunshine. "Only Korean troops fought here. All the major battles were fought by Koreans against the North Koreans and the Chinese."

It was the South Korean army, Col. Chun gives me to understand, that pushed the North Koreans back to the north in this sector after their thrust southward to the Pusan perimeter in the first months of the war. It was the South Koreans, with U.S. arms and air support, who then staved off the Chinese when they came to the rescue of their North Korean comrades. It was the South Koreans who clung fiercely to the territory all through the negotiations at Panmunjom. "The North Koreans and Chinese never held this area very well," Chun explains. "Even when they went south, our troops were ambushing them constantly."

We walk down the other side of the slope from the GOP, toward an M4 tank of World War II vintage. It's sunk into the earth. The 85mm cannon, probably not fired since 1953, points away from the hills above the DMZ where North Korean troops are perpetually waiting to strike from the other side of the line. "We lost a lot of men, but we got this terrain," says Chun. "We're only about 40 kilometers south of the 39th parallel. It's some of the roughest terrain in the country."

The result of back-and-forth fighting during the negotiation period made a shambles of the scheme devised during World War II for dividing the peninsula along the 38th parallel. The artificial line was established by the Americans and Russians in talks at Yalta and Potsdam and more or less maintained until the Korean War began. South Korea's Thunderbell Division, including Colonel Chun's battalion, now controls a jagged corner of South Korea that juts far north of the 38th parallel on the east coast; the North controls well south of the 38th on the west.

Naive Americans "Lost" Kaesong

That's because the Chinese and North Koreans, devastated militarily, bamboozled naive Americans and their "United Nations Command" in 1951 into negotiations in the ancient capital of Kaesong, just below the 38th parallel. While talks were dragging on, U.N. forces, mostly Americans, were reluctant to launch an all-out offensive toward Kaesong. Thus, the Americans foolishly accepted a line south of the 38th parallel as the western portion of the DMZ and lost



Lt. Col. Chun In Bum, 3rd Battalion's commander. Another day on the cutting edge.

Kaesong, a strategic railhead and commercial center within eyesight of Panmunjom.

The success of proud South Koreans in keeping the eastern sector to themselves may partly explain their refusal, until my visit, to admit any foreigners except for occasional officers from the U.N. Armistice Commission who are given pro forma briefings in the command bunker and sent on their way. Colonel Chun also appears anxious to maintain an atmosphere of war-time tension. He feels that is the only way to rev



Republic of Korea (South Korean) flag flies proudly on side of Hill 911. In background is headquarters complex.

up the troops manning a couple of major guard posts inside the South Korean half of the 4-kilometer wide DMZ as well as a series of bunkers along the barbed wire that forms the southern "Military Demarcation Line." "It's my job to prepare for war," he says. "I have to prepare for the worst."

'What hunger?'

A conversation Chun had with a North Korean army sergeant who defected in October 1996 did not exactly imbue him with the feeling that North Koreans were giving up or even getting discouraged. To the contrary, the sergeant, Kwak Kyong Il, gave the impression his erstwhile comrades north of the DMZ were members of an elite sliver of society that would survive even while the rest of the people were starving. "He was really sure of himself," Chun said. "He certainly wasn't starving, and he wasn't lacking in training. They conduct training for infiltration right in the DMZ. He gave a picture of how great is their military."

Astonishingly, Sergeant Kwak even demolished the notion that North Korean soldiers, like so many of their countrymen, are short on food. "Sergeant Kwak said, 'What hunger? Yes, our rations were cut from 800 to 700 grams a day, but it was too much anyway.'"

Why, then, did Sergeant Kwak cross the line — a dangerous mission in which he first had to elude his North Korean buddies, who fired at him as he was leaving, and then make sure he wasn't shot by South Koreans? The reasons were apparently personal. "He was discontented with a late promotion," says Chun. He was also in deep trouble. He had bought some ballpoint pens while on a mission in search of supplies in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang. "It turned out the pens were made in South Korea," says Chun. "He got in a whole lot of shit." He was lucky to have gotten out alive. "While he was coming over, the North Koreans were coming after him. He had an accomplice with him. The accomplice wanted to turn back to the north so he killed him."

Kwak, who had been with a reconnaissance unit, had one advantage over civilians who might want to come over in large numbers — that is, if they knew how to get through two electrified fences built by the North Koreans the length of the DMZ. The first of the fences carries a 200-volt charge — enough to give a severe warning shock but not kill you if you're lucky. The second one carries a lethal 2,000 volts. Kwak was aware the North Koreans, in an effort to save electricity, shut down the power through the fences in day time when they figure their troops can spot people trying to get through them. He sneaked through in daylight, then waited for night to try to go the rest of the way — and waved his arms and declared himself a defector at dawn the

next morning after crawling within sight of the South Korean side.

Since Kwak's defection, only two other North Koreans have made it through the fences to the south along the 15-kilometer stretch covered by Thunderbell's troops. One of them, a 26-year-old woman, weighed 80 pounds when she showed up in front of a South Korean bunker in February. She looked as if she were nearly starving. "They seem to have fortified their defenses since then," says Chun. "Probably the next guy is having it done. They're working all the time. We see trucks and people. They have artillery nearby in tunnels, right in the Zee" — the DMZ.

Life On The Zee

For South Korean soldiers, however, the worst enemies are not exactly the North Koreans. The terrain, the weather and boredom all conspire to make a tour here a rough ordeal for young soldiers, most of them draftees serving a mandatory 26 months. A typical battalion puts in only a few months up on the Zee, then rotates to easier duty down the slopes.

Colonel Chun estimates 99% of them have high school or at least some college education — and half of them have finished college. He complains, however, that his men don't stay in long enough. "They do 26

months and they're out," he says. "That's a problem. The North Koreans say after three years their soldiers finish their rookie period. They have an expression: They say after three years they 'change their fur.' They have to stay in for 10 years." Technically, he adds, the North Korean army is an all-volunteer force. "The worst punishment a North Korean high school teacher can threaten a delinquent student is to say he won't be able to get into the army. If he doesn't go in the army, then he can't join the communist party. If he isn't a member of the party, he can't get a job. He's nowhere in that society."

Chun and I, along with the omnipresent master sergeant from security, jump in a jeep for a ride down the ridgeline from the GOP to another guard post.

Interpreter Sung Hee rides behind us in another jeep with a couple of junior officers detailed to monitor my visit. We drive

along the fence that forms the southern boundary of the DMZ, then get out and walk down a slope to a platoon-sized barracks. It's past noon and the troops are cleaning their rifles — 5.56x45mm K2s, made in Korea, with three-burst and automatic capability — in preparation for an afternoon of training and a long night at their posts. The master sergeant gives the go-ahead to photograph the troops as long as we were inside the barracks.

"We have TVs, VCRs, radios," Chun says as the troops snap to attention the moment we enter the low concrete structure. A year or so ago, running water and flushing toilets were installed, and barracks are heated in winter against temperatures that sometimes drop to minus-20 centigrade — minus-40 counting the winds that whip across the mountains. Chun doubts if the North Koreans even have refrigerators to preserve their food. "They know we live better than we do, but they consider us a semi-colonial state, and it's their duty to 'liberate' us." You can't hear their loudspeakers up here, but day and night, in the lowlands by the sea, the message blares across the DMZ.

They'll Pay A Heavy Price

To an outside observer, the defenses,

Korea. One is to infiltrate by small boat anywhere along the long coastline. That method, though, may be as dangerous as crossing the DMZ. No one forgets the episode last September in which a small North Korean submarine went aground off the coast about 60 miles south of here. A taxi driver spotted the marooned sub at night, then saw the crew and its contingent of special troops looking bewildered as they crouched by a dark road. In the end, 24 died. Some killed each other. Others committed suicide rather than risk capture. One surrendered.

Colonel Chun figures the North Koreans "are getting smarter." They can always send spies armed with South Korean or foreign passports into the country by commercial passenger plane. One way not to enter, he firmly believes, is through the hills and valleys defended by his battalion. Proudly, he cites Thunderbell division's record in stopping infiltrators. "They tried coming through here seven or eight years ago," he says. "We got two or something. They haven't tried that way again."

Chun has learned to expect the unexpected from the North Koreans, and he's not



(above) An assault on 911? These machine gunners will respond — with their .50-cal. (left) Lt. Col. Chun In Bum (on left) in front of abandoned American-made M4 tank, dating from World War II. South Korean troops got tank to the top of the hill during the Korean war, and used it as an artillery piece.

whatever the morale of the defenders, look thin. Gazing through the barbed-wire mesh of the fence, across the hills, you see the Nam River forming the dividing line between North and South in this sector as it flows toward the East Sea. (Koreans never call it the Sea of Japan, the country that ruled the Korean peninsula as a colony for 35 years until the end of World War II.) You wonder how tough it would be for a sizable, determined force to cross the stream and make its way through the heavily forested valleys below us before the South Koreans could muster the infantry, armor and airpower needed to stop them.

"My mission is to delay and warn," says Chun. "We don't have electricity running through our fences like the North Koreans, but we have lights and everything. If they come, they'll pay a heavy price."

There are other ways to get into South

letting his guard down amid talk of peace talks and pleas from Pyongyang for rice, much of which everyone knows goes to North Korea's privileged military establishment, not the starving civilians.

Eschewing headquarters-type duty, Chun took over the battalion two years ago after serving in the special warfare command in Seoul — doing just what, he won't say. "I volunteered for this job," admits Chun, a graduate of the Korea Military Academy with 18 years in service. "I love what I'm doing here. I hate desk jobs. I always feel there could be a second Korean war. If I didn't feel that way, the whole purpose of being in uniform would be lost."

Donald Kirk has devoted several decades to being a war-zone correspondent, along the way picking up numerous awards for his outstanding coverage. ✕



Indonesia's Festering Conflict

The Complex State Of East Timor by Dale Andradé



Dale Andradé



Ira Chaplain / ZUMA

(top) Indonesia army squad double-times in PT session in East Timor town during tense spell in early 1992. Soldiers are shouldering their Indonesian SS1-V1 5.56mm assault rifles (in series of licensed copies of Belgium's FN-FNC rifle), with stocks folded. Rifles do not appear to be loaded; troops might have ammunition in magazines tucked into cargo pockets, just in case. (inset, above) Woman sells goods at central market in Dili. (bottom) Truckload of Indonesian soldiers, lacking any *visible* weapons, rolls through East Timor town.

East Timor isn't exactly a tourist stop, though with a little work it could be. Dili, the capital, sits nestled on the northern shore, its placid beaches shielded from the prevailing winds in tropical splendor. The town is small and quiet, the perfect place for tourists who want to get away from it all. But since most descriptions of East Timor usually include words like "war zone," "ravaged," and "oppressed," it's a good bet that tourists will avoid it. For the

past two decades the media have painted this little backwater on the eastern edge of the Indonesian archipelago as occupied territory; a captive people crushed under the boot of a cruel military occupation. On the list of world conflicts it does not rank very high, yet continuing unrest in East Timor casts a shadow over Jakarta's relations with much of the rest of the world. Small though it is, this festering conflict will not go away, a fact amply demonstrat-



Indonesia



on the sixteenth anniversary of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, then-Portuguese President Mario Soares accused Jakarta of carrying out "a real genocide" of the East Timorese. In 1992, Amnesty International claimed that Indonesia's occupation of East Timor was "among the world's worst cases of human rights violations" with atrocities running the gamut of "political executions, systematic tortures, mysterious disappearances in the middle of the night, beatings, imprisonments, and unfair trials." Actor Mike Farrell, of *M*A*S*H* television fame, said the Indonesian military "has tortured and killed tens of thousands of innocent Timorese." And recently, the U.S. government's annual report on human rights strongly criticized Indonesia's actions there.

It doesn't take a seasoned foreign correspondent, however, to realize that some of this simply is hype — as is the Indonesian government's claim that everyone in East Timor is happy to be ruled from Jakarta.

As in most disputed regions around the world there are plenty of bad guys on both sides of the issue. The Indonesian presence

ed when last year's Nobel Peace Prize went to two activists from East Timor.

(See accompanying article.)

I did not know what to expect as I stepped off the plane in Dili. After all, everyone has heard stories about Indonesian troops strutting around the island, taking what they wanted and harassing the locals. But that's not what I saw.

What I did see was a poor land full of friendly people. Fishermen take their canoes out on the placid sea, people come and go as they like, and the Indonesian military — definitely a presence there — tries to stay in the background.

A Complex Issue

"We only wear uniforms on post," said Lieutenant Colonel Sunarko, commander of the Dili garrison. "People get nervous when they see green uniforms." He also points out that his soldiers are taught to respect local customs and are punished if they don't. Something as mundane as a driver running over a pig can result in penalties to the soldier to ensure that the locals aren't offended. These are small things, but when it comes to taking concrete steps toward bettering lives, Jakarta has backed its words with action.

In 1974, 90% of the population was illiterate, a legacy of Portuguese colonial rule. There were almost no local doctors and few teachers. Almost all of the land was owned by Portuguese, along with most businesses. Indonesia, on the other hand, has provided schools and clinics. Most obvious is the network of roads built throughout East Timor — even in places where there are almost no vehicles. And electricity, once a luxury reserved only for the colonial masters, is in virtually every house and hut.

However, the peacefulness of East Timor nowadays masks real problems. The reality of the situation in East Timor is much more complex than either side in the debate would have us believe.

Indonesia claims to have done more for the well-being of East Timor than for any other province in its vast archipelago. Activists advocating independence counter that these advancements are all just tools to make the occupation more secure. And thanks to an extensive propaganda network, especially on the Internet, it is the activists' position that is most readily heard. There has been a great deal of foreign rhetoric, too.

During a visit to East Timor when it was first opened to visitors in 1989, the then-Episcopal bishop of New York called it "the most repressive place I had ever encountered — and I'd been to South Africa, Nicaragua, and the former Soviet bloc." In 1991,



Lt. Col. Sunarko, commander of Indonesian garrison in Dili, poses behind Portuguese howitzer captured from Timorese rebels.

Dale Andrade

has not always been benevolent, but the left-wing guerrillas of the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (the Portuguese acronym is *FRETILIN*) are a brutal group looking for power under the guise of nationalism.

Power Through Firepower

Jakarta's occupation of East Timor was not simply a case of greed and expansionism, but rather a reaction to political realities.

In August 1975, after electing a left-leaning government at home, Portugal ran out on most of its colonies, including East Timor. Although there were several nationalist groups vying for power, the Portuguese left their weapons, including artillery, to *FRETILIN* guerrillas. By no means the largest independence movement or even the most popular, *FRETILIN* rose to the fore on the strength of their Portuguese guns. After weeks of bloody fighting, *FRETILIN* defeated its rivals, killing an estimated 3,000 people in the process. On 25 November 1975, it proclaimed the birth of the Democratic Republic of East Timor.

In Jakarta, President Suharto watched these events with trepidation. An avowed anticommunist, Suharto would never



Indonesian governor's mansion sits in splendor on Timor island.

allow a leftist government on his flank, no matter how inconsequential. Combined with simple political geography — the western half of the island, a former Dutch colony, already belonged to Indonesia — it should have come as no surprise that Suharto would eventually bring the rest of the island under his control.

On 7 December 1975, Indonesian troops struck. *FRETILIN* gunners met the invasion on the beaches, sinking a handful of landing craft as they surged ashore. (Their rusted carcasses still rest in the gentle surf on Dili's north shore.) *FRETILIN* forces put up fierce resistance, but after several days were forced out of the city

and into the interior mountains. On 15 July 1976, East Timor was "incorporated" as Indonesia's twenty-seventh province.

The differences between East Timor and Indonesia, however, were legion. For better or worse, 300 years of Portuguese rule had left East Timor with a unique language and a distinct cultural identity, not to mention a Catholic faith.

Civic-Action Emphasis

East Timor falls under Indonesia's Military Regional Command (*Kodam*) IX, whose headquarters is in Bali. Direct com-

mand of the troops in East Timor belongs to the provincial commander, who has control of 10 battalions: Eight rotate in from other parts of the archipelago while two, the 744th and 745th, are located in the province and made up largely of soldiers recruited in East Timor.

In 1994, Jakarta removed some of its troops from East Timor and vowed to remove all of its outside battalions by the end of 1995. This has not happened, and current estimates place Indonesian troop strength on East Timor at about 9,000, with about two-thirds of them coming from outside the province. There are also about 3,000 police officers.

Nobel Winners Strange Bedfellows

"Belo OK, But Horta? No Way!" exclaimed the official newsletter of the Indonesian embassy in Washington, D.C., after the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize had been awarded to two activists from East Timor. The two, Jose Ramos-Horta and Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, are strange bedfellows indeed.

At first glance the focus on East Timor for last year's Nobel Peace Prize seems a good way to start a new discussion of this problem. But the opposite is true: It confuses the issue further. Ramos-Horta and Belo are so far apart in their outlooks that their only common ground is a desire to rid East Timor of Indonesian control.

Ramos-Horta is a textbook militant. He has a long past in the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (*FRETILIN*), the leftist organization that took power on the heels of Portugal's 1975 withdrawal and provoked an Indonesian invasion. A former journalist, he was just 25 when the group came to power in 1975 but his leftist credentials garnered him a job as *FRETILIN*'s secretary for foreign affairs. One of the first "accomplishments" of this new government was the wholesale slaughter of members of rival political parties in the post-colonial anarchy. When



AP/Wide World Photos, Inc.



(top) Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo, right, shakes hands with Indonesian President Suharto during 1996 ceremony in Dili. (bottom) Jose Ramos-Horta, representative of the Australia-based *CNRM*, displays photos of Timorese victims of police torture.

Indonesia invaded, Ramos-Horta joined other party officials and fled the island, taking refuge in Australia.

Today he is the "special representative" of the National Council of the Maubere People (*CNRM*), an Australia-based umbrella organization of Timorese resistance groups that is sometimes referred to as a "coalition government in exile." Ramos-Horta steadfastly endorses *FRETILIN*'s "peace plan," which calls for a two-year pullback of Indonesian troops and an eventual U.N.-sponsored referendum on self-rule.

"We, the East Timorese, are offering an olive branch to Indonesia," he said, claiming that this proposal will offer Jakarta a face-saving way to regain the respect of the rest of the world. The Peace Prize, Ramos-Horta said, should have gone to imprisoned *FRETILIN* leader Jose "Xanana" Gusmao.

Belo, a Roman Catholic bishop, is cut from a different cloth.

It is perhaps appropriate that he received the news of his award while saying Mass. His position in the church has allowed Belo to remain aloof from the political parties that helped bring about virtual anarchy yet speak loudly in the interests of the people. Unlike Ramos-Horta, Belo remained in East Timor since 1975.

This is a formidable force, but none of the battalions is slated for combat; their sole mission is civic action. Divided into small units, most no larger than a platoon, these soldiers are scattered throughout the province. They live among the population, wear civilian clothes, and run small-scale civic programs.

Indonesia has all but wiped out the insurgency — a term the army refuses to use, instead calling it a “security-disturbance movement.” All that remains is a force of perhaps as few as 100 guerrillas confined to the hills in the province’s center. The guerrilla movement was all but decapitated in 1992, when an elite counterterrorist unit captured FRETILIN leader Jose “Xanana” Gusmao in a house in Dili.

During the past few years the guerrillas have laid low, only occasionally leaving their tangled hideouts in the island’s interior to make their presence felt. The army has offered a general amnesty for resistance members who surrender their arms, and has begun a program of releasing captured guerrillas rather than trying them in court. According to the official Indonesian news agency, *Antara*, after a recent operation that captured three guerrillas the military commander in East Timor said they would not be charged under Indonesian law since they



Ira Chaplain / ZUMA

Indonesian naval ship, patrolling just off East Timor coast, is glimpsed through wreck of old Portuguese vessel.

were not high-ranking members of the insurgency. Instead they would be granted amnesty if they “show regret and want to be educated.”

But most of the guerrillas don’t want to be “educated.” And despite its small numbers, FRETILIN recently showed that it takes only a handful to keep the revolution alive.

Taking advantage of unrest preceding parliamentary elections in East Timor, in late May a rebel team managed to infiltrate the area around Baukau, East Timor’s second-largest city, and ambush a police truck, killing at least 18. Unofficial reports say at least 50 police officers and soldiers have died in six sep-

arate attack at about the same time.

The army maintains active combat patrols only in sparsely populated areas. This mission is performed by a brand-new unit known as *Rajawali*, formed in mid-1995 specifically for the insurgency in East Timor.

These “hunter” units are organized into self-contained companies with local Timorese serving as pathfinders. The *Rajawali* troops are trained in airborne, naval-infantry, and special-forces skills, with some cross-training, and organized in teams. There are 12 *Rajawali* companies, each with up to 300 soldiers, spread throughout East Timor; most are divided into 12-man teams operating away from population centers.

If terrorism ever becomes a problem, the army has a special-forces counterterrorist unit known as Detachment 81; there also is a counterterrorist police unit called *Gegana*, quietly based in Dili. Like their U.S. counterparts in Delta Force, the Detachment 81 troops have relaxed grooming standards: civilian clothing and longer hair. As of this writing, and as far as is known, neither force has been called on to use its skills.

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Between 1976 and 1989, the church was the only intermediary between the Indonesian government and the Timorese people, with Bishop Belo often the only voice from within this formerly closed province. A constant critic of Jakarta’s East Timor policy, particularly its ongoing plan to bring non-Timorese migrants to the island, he has publicly called for the United Nations to support a referendum on the problem. After the Santa Cruz massacre in 1991, he also demanded a committee of inquiry to punish Indonesian officers responsible for the killings.

His vocal protests have angered Jakarta. Belo claims that the Indonesian military has twice tried to assassinate him, in 1989 and again in 1991. Yet the mild-mannered bishop is the closest thing to a moderate to be found in East Timor. He condemns FRETILIN for the massacres of 1975, placing the blame squarely on Gusmao. Belo believes this savagery is neither forgotten nor forgiven by the East Timorese and will haunt the FRETILIN.

While Belo supports a referendum, he often wonders aloud how the vote will turn out, predicting that many people question FRETILIN’s mandate to rule and might instead choose a continued union with Indonesia. Since such a referendum could turn violent whatever the outcome, Belo believes that East Timor would be best served if Jakarta declared it a province with special autonomy.

True to his unfailing sense of justice, the bishop called the Nobel Prize “a great responsibility” and said that he was “accepting the award in the name of all victims of the East Timor conflict” as well as “in the name of the people of Indonesia and those in the world fighting for freedom, truth, justice, and peace.”

Jakarta refuses to consider any sort of talks on the province, and has condemned the Nobel awards as meddling in Indonesia’s internal affairs. President Suharto refused to even acknowledge the awards. Foreign Minister Ali Alatas said he was “astounded” and wondered what effect it will have “on the value of earlier Nobel Peace Prizes given to such illustrious people like Mr. Mandela and Mr. Arafat who have brought peace to real conflicts.”

Antonio Freitas Parada, a member of East Timor’s Regional

House of Representatives, said he was “shocked” by the Nobel awards. While not thrilled by Bishop Belo’s recognition, he was outraged by the selection of Ramos-Horta. “Nonsense if it is said that he defended the human rights of the *Timtim* [a local word for the natives of East Timor] people,” Parada said. “It was exactly he who fanned the war which took thousands of *Timtim* people who died suffering.” Further, the military deputy governor of East Timor said he does not “take Nobel Prizes seriously. ... This is just a conscience massage for the liberal West.”

To make matters worse, the Nobel-award announcement came at an inopportune time for Jakarta.

President Suharto would have preferred to stay well away from the issue, but he had to make a long-planned appearance in East Timor to dedicate a new 56-foot marble statue of Jesus Christ just outside the capital of Dili. The statue is a controversial sign of religious tolerance in Muslim Indonesia. There was no way for Suharto to avoid meeting with Belo. On 15 October, four days after the Nobel announcements, Suharto shook hands with Belo during a public meeting. The strongman leader made no mention of the Peace Prize or the 21-year-old conflict.

The Nobel Peace Prize is anything but apolitical. As if to prove this point, last December — in an ill-advised capitulation to Australia-based East Timorese independence groups — the Nobel committee invited the sister of Gusmao, the imprisoned FRETILIN leader, to Oslo to present the Nobel award.

Indonesia refused to allow her to attend and announced that its ambassador to Norway would boycott the ceremony. Then Indonesian officials seized the passports of Bishop Belo and his entourage as they were being greeted at the airport by a Norwegian delegation.

This is the sort of heavy-handed intimidation that lends credence to critics’ charges against Jakarta. It also has undermined any real reforms made by the government during the last five years. Indonesia clearly has a lot to learn about public relations.

— D. A.

HELD HOSTAGE! PART 2

Seven hours from Dallas on 31 December, we were wheels down at Jorge Chavez International Airport in Lima, Peru, at 0200. If I could con, cajole or bribe my way in on an expired passport, I'd celebrate New Years Eve with my Peruvian SEAL mates. Maybe I could feel, at least for awhile, as if I were again in Peru of the '70s, when terrorism was a problem for other places.

But terrorism had come to Peru. First was *Sendero Luminoso* (SL), led by the murderous Abimael Guzman. From 1980 until Guzman's capture in 1992, SL had brought Peru, a nation of 23 million, to the brink of economic and political collapse. Thanks to serious counterterror ops by the "forces of order" — including Peruvian Navy SEALs (*Fuerzas de Operaciones Especiales* — FOES) SL had been contained if not eradicated. Guzman now serves a life sentence without parole (Peru has no judicial death penalty).

I felt good about that success because I'd assisted in the birthing process of the FOES, while serving with the U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group to Peru from 1972-1976. Nine of the 10 Peruvians I'd sent to Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL (BUDS) training in Coronado, Calif., had completed this mother of all SpecOps courses at a time when less than 30% of U.S. trainees could hack it.

These Peruvians returned home to estab-

SOF On Site: Prelude to Rescue

by Bill Salisbury

lish their version of BUDS, that may well be more grueling than the original. The training has been validated repeatedly during combat in the world's most devastating guerrilla war of the past 15 years.

Another group, *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru* (MRTA), has busied itself since 1982 with assassinations, kidnappings, bank robberies and extortion rackets. (Tupac Amaru was a *mestizo* who led an Indian uprising against the Spaniards until they drew and quartered him in 1781.) The government, having imprisoned most MRTA leadership by 1995, judged MRTA to be an insignificant threat. This foolish optimism became painfully evident on 17 December 1996 when 20 MRTA terrorists seized about 500 dignitaries celebrating the Emperor's birthday at the Japanese ambassador's residence in Lima. It was a *coup de main*, netting cabinet ministers, supreme court justices, foreign businessmen, several

ambassadors, army and police generals, and a retired admiral.

Terrorist leader Nestor Cerpa vowed to hold his hostages until Peru released nearly 400 MRTA prisoners, including their founder, Victor Polay. Peru's hard-line president, Alberto Fujimori, rejected this demand, and Cerpa soon freed all but the 74 most-valuable captives.

I had come to Peru because one of the remaining hostages was an old friend. Vice Admiral Luis "Lucho" Giampietri had been my counterpart more than 20 years ago when we created the core of the FOES (pronounced *fo-eighs*). We'd remained tight through the years; Lucho and his family had most recently been my guests during the annual SEAL reunion in Coronado. Lucho distinguished himself many times fighting SL, but had never fought MRTA. In fact, he had served as military aide to former President Alan Garcia, a close friend of MRTA's Polay. MRTA despised SL as a competitor over lucrative protection rackets in the coca region of the Upper Huallaga Valley.

As I pondered Lucho's predicament and the astonishing security lapse that caused it, the plane rolled to a stop. I was back in-country. Almost.

A Hostage of Jorge Chavez

The cat-eyed immigration official frowned. "Sir," she said not unkindly, "this passport expired two years ago. I'm sorry but you cannot enter Peru. You must go

back to the United States without delay. The return flight to Dallas leaves in one hour.”

“Can’t we,” I pleaded, “make some arrangement? Let me pay a fine for my stupidity.”

“I am truly sorry, sir, but your own embassy has insisted that U.S. citizens not enter Peru without valid passports.” Nor could I bribe cat-eye’s boss. Bureaucratic morality seemed to have come to Peru along with terrorism. I did convince the boss to allow one phone call.

Pocho’s sleepy voice sharpened when he understood my situation. He said, “*eres completamente jodid, gringo*” (“you’re all screwed up”). I gave the counter-sign, “but *contento*.” Pocho laughed. “Let me speak to the *jefe*.”

After a whispered conversation with Pocho, the boss returned the phone. Pocho said, “he can’t let you pass, but I convinced him to let you stay in the departure lounge until the 1700 flight — we’ll have 15 hours to make something happen.”

“Fifteen hours,” I groaned. Pocho, hardcore BUDS grad that he was, had no sympathy for the whiner. “Think of Lucho,” he growled, “wouldn’t you rather be the hostage of Jorge Chavez [airport] than MRTA? I’ll be in touch.”

The “Good” Terrorists

From the departure lounge I watched a summer dawn come to the southern hemisphere. The sky brightened and blue began to bleed through the gray sea-mist Peruvians call *la garua*.

The newsstand opened and I bought several Lima papers and magazines. Garish, multi-colored headlines in *El Chino*, Lima’s most popular tabloid, quoted Nestor Cerpa as warning, “We’ll kill them all!”

El Comercio, the *New York Times* of Peru, was more subdued and carried a backgrounder on MRTA. The terrorists were not aping Castro as widely and erroneously reported in the United States — especially by the *Times*’ Calvin “Cuban-inspired” Sims. MRTA was homegrown, an offshoot of the socialist party *Alianza Popular Revolucionario de America* (APRA). APRA had been making mischief for Peruvian oligarchs since 1924, long before Fidel marched from the Sierra Maestra to shitcan Batista and send moneyed Cubans streaming to Miami. Consider these planks in the APRA platform of 1924:

“(1) Action against Yankee imperialism; (2) The nationalization of land and industry; (3) The solidarity of all Peoples and all oppressed classes.” Who inspired whom?

Victor Polay’s MRTA was merely the latest vehicle for dissidents who believed the party leadership had strayed from its revolutionary origins. Before leaving the ranks of APRA, Polay had been tapped by the aging party founder, Maya de la Torre, as heir apparent together with another rising star, Alan Garcia. APRA paid for both men to receive extensive educations in Europe. Polay and Garcia roomed together in Spain and France.

Garcia became Peru’s first APRA president in



(top, right) God loves the pointman — especially in Peru’s FOES, where He gives him a South Korean autoloading 12-gauge with drum magazine. (right) FOE trainees scramble to escape vile waters of the “snake pit.” The lesson? *Teamwork* will get you all out. (inset) Combat swimmer with French OXY-NG by Spiro-Technique, a closed-circuit oxygen rebreather scuba.



1985; Polay became a twice-imprisoned terrorist. In 1990, he and other MRTA inmates tunneled out of a maximum security prison less than a month before Fujimori succeeded Polay's old running mate, Garcia, as president. *Oue coincidencia!* cried the cynics. But in 1992 luck and a \$300,000 reward sent Polay to the newer, nastier, and more secure slammer he now shares with Abimael Guzman, hard by the FOE compound in Callao.

Caretas ("Masks"), a slick magazine similar to *Newsweek*, carried an article by the liberal novelist, anti-militarist and former presidential candidate, Mario Vargas Llosa. Vargas condemned the U.S. media for portraying MRTA as "good terrorists." "This distinction between good and bad terrorists," Vargas wrote, "is false ... a close friend was a victim of MRTA, the 'good' terrorists. They kept this elderly man for months in a small cave — a so-called 'Peoples' jail' — where he could not stand, could not see, and had only rats and roaches for company. MRTA tortured his family psychologically with daily phone calls and tape recordings to destroy their nerves and extort their savings.

"This family survived but many have

not. If these are the actions of 'good terrorists,' what could be those of bad? Perhaps Sendero Luminoso works on a grander scale, but the number of terrorist crimes doesn't determine their vileness, especially for each victim and his family."

Vargas, hardly a reactionary, admitted to a certain bias against MRTA: They tried to kill his wife and children during a 1990 campaign stop in the jungle city of Pucallpa.

I enjoyed a story in the anti-government daily, *La Republica*, debunking the specious reports in the U.S. press about how the terrorists had crashed the emperor's party as waiters with weapons hidden under the sushi: In reality, they'd breached a garden wall with demo and gone hey-diddle-diddle right up the middle.

As I reached for another paper I sensed a presence at my side. Pocho beamed down at me in the company of *el jefe*. I jumped to my feet and Pocho left me gasping with *un abrazo fuerte*.

"You smell like a hostage. Let *el jefe* stamp your passport. Luggage is outside. Don't worry about customs."

This was the Peru I knew and loved.

The eclectic troops get the eclectic weapons: FOES pose with (left to right) Singaporean Ultimax 100 light machine gun, South Korean 12-gauge autoloader, South African AGL 40mm grenade launcher.

The Roadshow

Few FOES attended the New Year's Eve party. Most, including Pocho, remained on station and ready. I did hook up with another BUDS graduate, Rafo (class 137), who said he could get me into the press area a block from the Japanese residence.

"I warn you," he shouted above the pulsing beat of a salsa favorite, *La Latina*, "it's a real goatf**k. Lots of religious freaks, street peddlers, nervous cops who barely recognize the business ends of their weapons, and journalists fighting over ladders and tree limbs to get a better view."

What Rafo termed the MRTA road show was in full swing. In an intersection a block from the *residenceza* a gaggle of journalists teetered on stepladders as they aimed telescopic lenses toward what experts grimly called the "crisis point." Teen-age cops with



FOES in FAV patrol Peru's 1,400-mile coastal desert, stretching from Ecuador in north to Chile in south.



FOE uses Armson OEG collimating-type sight to find range of target for South African Mechem MGL 40mm grenade launcher.

riot shields lounged between the journalists and the crisis point.

I was distracted by an incident taking place across the intersection that said much about Peru's woes since the 16th century: Two elegantly attired women had squared off against a small band of Quechua shamans sacked out in the colorful ceremonial dress worn to exorcise demons. The women screamed at the Indians, brandishing bejeweled crucifixes as if warding off vampires.

I noticed two young cops with a German shepherd and a Rottweiler. The boys grinned and nodded when I asked to photograph their charges. The Rottweiler took offense and lunged at my throat. His handler mercifully yanked the beast back.

Rafo and I moved off toward a squad of DINOES (*Direccion Nacional de Operaciones Especiales*), forming up across the intersection after having dispersed the quarreling religious groups. DINOES had snatched Abimael Guzman during a brilliant, bloodless op in another Lima neighborhood four years ago; however, this bunch didn't inspire confidence despite the black berets, body armor and other SWAT accouterments. I couldn't find a hard-eyed veteran among them and their sergeant probably hadn't seen his belt buckle in a long time.

Rafo, in great shape despite losing a leg in a parachuting accident, stationed himself by the sergeant and motioned me to take a photo. He raised a trouser-leg to expose his cammie prosthesis. I took the shot, — then smiled while Rafo photographed me with the squad. What fun. Just like Buckingham Palace.

I was startled to see a foxy Asiatic lady in a mini-skirt close by, speaking earnestly into a TV camera. "Is that lovely TV lady Japanese?" I asked Rafo.

"Oh, no. That's 'La Monica,' Monica Chang. She's one of Peru's best-known reporters. Works for *Frecuencia Latina*. Knows lots of FOES. Want to meet her?"

Monica posed with the old gringo in front of her station's logo. After the photo I reluctantly sounded a serious note: "When and how," I asked, "do you think the crisis will end?"

Monica's *garua*-gray eyes flattened and her smile faded. "We'll be here a long time. As for how it will end, who knows?"

Suddenly the whole thing made me feel pretty bad. There I was smokin' 'n' jokin', and having the time of my life while Lucho and 73 other poor souls, not all in good health, languished in two rooms rigged with C-4 ready to crank by kamikaze terrorists toting SMGs, anti-tank rockets, flame-throwers, and grenades. To paraphrase my former Ranger guru, the late Charlie Beckwith, shame on me.

I thanked Monica for her time and grace and said to Rafo, "Let's go, compadre, I've had enough."

Rafo handed me off to Fritz for my visit to the FOES. I'd sent Fritz to Coronado in



FOES patrol Ucayali river near jungle settlement of Pucallpa in Amazon basin. Assault craft is powered by twin Evinrude 140s. (below) Flanked by military brass, President Fujimori, in red-and-white sash of office, watches FOES pass in review on Peruvian Independence Day.



1974; he was a FOE plank owner (a member when the unit was first commissioned). Now retired, he manages several successful businesses and has kept in touch with his active-duty mates. As we crossed the narrow, stinking Rimao river where it emptied into the Pacific, Fritz pointed out impressive additions to the FOE compound since my last visit: an obstacle course dominated by a soaring cargo net just as at BUDS; a 25-meter pool; a parachute training area with a 34-foot tower, swing land-trainers, PLF platforms, and suspended harness.

Training, Arming The Elite

We drove by double-timing FOE trainees in greens with knot-tying lines secured to belt loops. The trainees wore



War is hell (sometimes): author interviews Monica Chang, TV reporter for Peru's leading station, *Frecuencia Latina*, in press area near Japanese Ambassador's residence.

green helmet liners, a white stripe running fore and aft to identify officers. Seven-man inflatable boats swayed atop the helmet liners. We were close enough to glimpse agony etched on exhausted faces. Training wasn't getting any easier in Peru than in Southern California — the only truly easy day remained yesterday. Hoo Yah!

The FOE admiral, with whom I'd played basketball for the Peruvian Navy 20 years ago, met us outside a complex of single-story buildings painted in camouflage colors, constructed around a common area. I flashed back to the same construction around the grinder in the team area on the Coronado beach. (Our buildings were haze grey — the camouflage was a nice Peruvian touch.)

The admiral briefed us on the organization and deployment of the FOES as we drank thick black coffee in his office beneath the ubiquitous portrait of Admiral Miguel Grau, hero of Peru's war with Chile that ended badly for the Peruvians back in 1883.

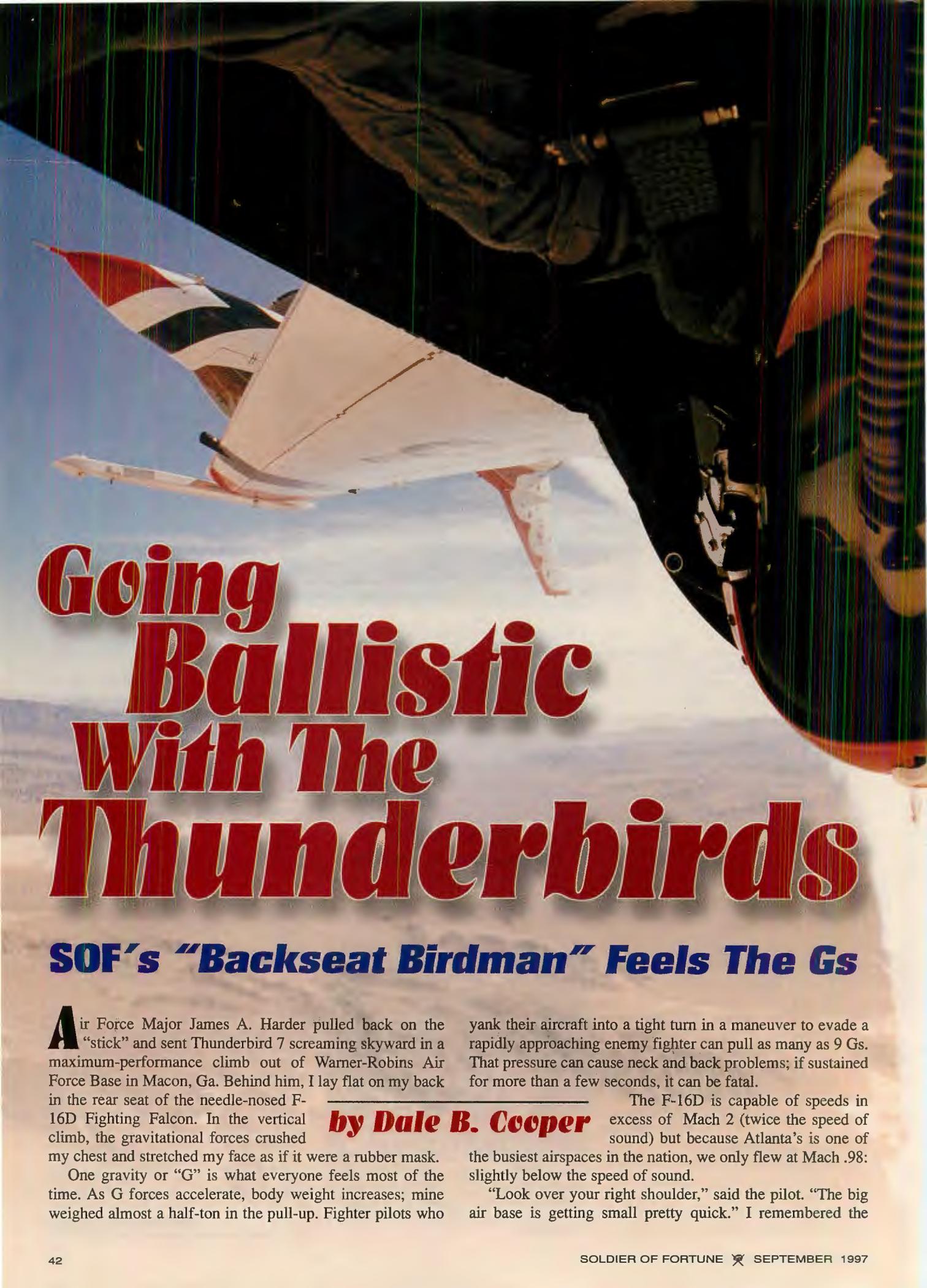
Chile was no longer the threat that drove FOE missions and tasking. "We're faced with both conventional and unconventional enemies," the admiral said. "Ecuador continues to challenge us on our northern border, and of course the terrorists remain a serious problem in the Upper Huallaga Valley and the Amazon region of the Ucayali River. The crisis at the Japanese residence is also serious but limited. This city is generally peaceful.

"We have 12 combat platoons with 16 men each, organized just as your SEALs. The Central Group in Lima has eight platoons, the Eastern Group in Pucallpa — a city on the Ucayali — has two, and the Northern Group in Piura — a city near the Ecuadorian border — has two. The Pucallpa platoons deploy for two months, then rotate to Piura for another two months before returning to Lima. We've increased our training classes and have 20 platoons programmed for the year 2000.

"In addition to our combat platoons, the FOE organization includes salvage divers and an EOD unit. The terrorists keep EOD busy and now we must deal with thousands of cheap toe-poppers that the Ecuadorians planted when they invaded our territory in 1995. We drove the *monos* back but they left their little Chicom presents. EOD is clearing those few mine fields they can locate, with bangalores. The *monos* left few maps and mudslides have scattered the mines."

We finished our coffee and the admiral introduced me to his chief of staff, one of the youngest, fittest four-stripers I've ever seen. The CoS, whom I'll call Lobo, had graduated from a BUDS class in 1981. He and several other Peruvians had been sent to Coronado by Commander Dave Strong, who had followed me to Lima as the FOE adviser. Lobo offered to show me around.

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Going Ballistic With The Thunderbirds

SOF's "Backseat Birdman" Feels The Gs

Air Force Major James A. Harder pulled back on the "stick" and sent Thunderbird 7 screaming skyward in a maximum-performance climb out of Warner-Robins Air Force Base in Macon, Ga. Behind him, I lay flat on my back in the rear seat of the needle-nosed F-16D Fighting Falcon. In the vertical climb, the gravitational forces crushed my chest and stretched my face as if it were a rubber mask.

One gravity or "G" is what everyone feels most of the time. As G forces accelerate, body weight increases; mine weighed almost a half-ton in the pull-up. Fighter pilots who

yank their aircraft into a tight turn in a maneuver to evade a rapidly approaching enemy fighter can pull as many as 9 Gs. That pressure can cause neck and back problems; if sustained for more than a few seconds, it can be fatal.

by Dale B. Cooper

The F-16D is capable of speeds in excess of Mach 2 (twice the speed of sound) but because Atlanta's is one of the busiest airspaces in the nation, we only flew at Mach .98: slightly below the speed of sound.

"Look over your right shoulder," said the pilot. "The big air base is getting small pretty quick." I remembered the



launch scene in the movie *Apollo 13* and how fast the Cape disappeared as the astronauts rocketed into space.

"It's the same acceleration and same G forces," commented Harder, operations officer for the U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron known worldwide as the Thunderbirds.

One minute and twenty seconds had elapsed since Harder toed the brakes at the end of the runway at Warner-Robins, punched in the afterburner, and roared down the runway. The Fighting Falcon quickly accelerated to about 500 mph. My body was able to absorb the 4G liftoff and I was able to talk coherently to Harder up front, although I was breathing pretty hard and gulping oxygen.

Pocketful Of Barf Bags

Having flown before in an F-14D Tomcat and an F/A-18 Hornet, I knew beforehand there would be a physical price to pay after an hour or so of "pulling Gs." For days afterwards, it is difficult to bend over at the sink and wash my face. My neck muscles are as taut as guitar strings after supporting a helmeted head that weighs nearly 200 pounds in a high-G turn.

No. 7 jet is used as the primary spare for all Thunderbird demonstrations, and is used for VIP flights. Any F-16 really scoots when it is not carrying ordnance.

"Our zero-to-60 time is not all that good, but our 60-to-600 time is pretty phenomenal," said Harder, now in his second season with the "Birds."

A member of the ground crew, Staff Sergeant Terrell Murray, earlier insisted I stuff a couple of barf bags in the knee pouches of my G-suit just in case my stomach erupted — not that I really would need them. I knew better than to chow down before climbing into a fighter aircraft. Frequent fliers like Harder could eat an Italian sub sandwich with onions and hot peppers for lunch and then go flying, but common folks like me should only eat a few saltine crackers before such a flight.

As I walked to the F-16D after Harder's pre-flight briefing, I couldn't believe how new the eight-year-old aircraft looked: almost in showroom condition. "Just driven on Saturdays and Sundays," the pilot said with a chuckle. "But at high speed."

Some Macon firefighters were on the flight line for instruction on removal of a pilot from a disabled F-16. While Harder and I waited for his ground crew to finish its work, we chatted with the firemen, one of whom desperately wanted to take my place.

"I got a Gold Card right here," he said, "and I'll buy the ride right *now*."

When I asked him what it was worth to him, he replied, "I got a \$10,000 limit. Name your price." Another man joined the bidding war: "I'll write you a check, any amount you want." I politely declined the offers. I told the first fireman his wife probably would kill him if he maxed out his Gold Card, and the second that his check probably would bounce higher than we were going to fly.

U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds, based at Nellis AFB, Nevada, practice their world-famous precision flying.

Harder could not believe I turned down \$10,000. I explained there are some things in life that are not for sale, and this was one.

Mother-Hen Crew Chief

One of the Thunderbird's most memorable performances occurred last year in the skies over Atlanta during opening ceremonies of the Summer Olympics. The Birds performed their famous "delta formation," a six-jet flyby, at dusk during the national anthem. The F-16s flew wing tip to wing tip — a scant 18-24 inches apart — over the stadium as the orchestra and chorus reached the crescendo.

No one was any more excited about the assignment than Lieutenant Colonel Ronald A. Mumm, the leader of the pack and the pilot of Thunderbird 1.

"There's no way I can describe the level of excitement you experience when you've been invited to participate in the opening of the Olympic Games. It's a worldwide event. It's also a first for the Thunderbirds," Mumm recalled. "Any time you have heads of state watching your performance, including your commander in chief, you want to do the best you can."

The Birds' demonstration season is long: March to November. The winter months are spent training at the home base, Nellis AFB, Nevada. Twelve officers serve a two-year assignment with the squadron, while the 130 enlisted personnel in support functions serve three- to four-year tours. Nearly half of the team is rotated every year.

The Thunderbirds perform 88 shows annually. Since the team was formed in 1953, more than 280 million Americans and citizens of 55 foreign countries have watched the demonstration flights.

The Thunderbirds have never canceled a performance due to maintenance difficulties, a tribute to the skill and dedication of the men and women who maintain the aircraft. Without a doubt, there is a lot of pride on the flight line.

"This is my baby," said No. 7's crew chief as he brooded over his aircraft like an old mother hen. "I spend most my day with this jet making sure it's ready to do what it's supposed to do."

As Staff Sgt. Murray strapped Maj. Harder into the cockpit, he joked, "Us maintainers like to think it's our jet: We just loan it to these guys to fly around for an hour or so. The rest of the time, it's ours."

In Case Of Emergency ...

Major Jeffrey W. Fiebig, who flies the No. 4 aircraft in the delta formation's slot position, and Major Scott E. Cerelli, who flies the No. 2 position as left wing, flew combat missions during the Persian Gulf War.

Fiebig flew 33 missions as an F-4G "Wild Weasel" flight leader and package commander. Cerelli flew 36 combat missions with the 33rd Fighter Squadron. After sitting in the hot sun for four months, Cerelli recalled, it was a relief when the air war finally began in January

Air Force photographer Staff Sgt. Jack Braden captures right turn in low-altitude "diamond" formation.

Staff Sgt. Jack Braden





1991, even if it meant facing surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft artillery.

"SAMs were launched toward us, and lots of AAA," said Cerelli, "but no close calls for me."

Two other Thunderbirds, captains Anthony J. Seely, right wing, and Matthew M. Modleski, opposing solo, flew after the Gulf War: Seely flew 64 missions in an F-117 "stealth fighter" as part of Operation Southern Watch in Iraq, while Modleski logged more than 120 combat hours patrolling a U.N. no-fly zone over northern Iraq. The remaining pilot, Capt. Russell J. Quinn, lead solo, is a graduate of the Air Force Academy.

Then there are the occasional "backseat birdmen." These guests will spend an hour or so just getting suited up. Once you are custom-fitted for your anti-G suit, Senior Airman Warren Hensman laces up the waist, thighs, and calves. Hensman can make even the paunchiest passenger look like a 21-year-old stud. "I can take you from a 42 waist to a 30-inch waist," Hensman said with a laugh.

Next come the helmet (custom-painted in "Thunderbird red"), oxygen mask, parachute harness, and life-support equipment.

To counter the effects of accelerated gravity, fighter pilots wear G suits that include garments resembling a cowboy's chaps but with five bladders that automatically inflate under pressure, forcing blood out of the legs and lower abdomen when the Gs begin. Pilots are trained to flex their muscles as they go into each high-speed turn, squeezing the blood out of their extremities and back into their heads. (In tapes of aerial-combat maneuvers, pilots grunt like grizzly bears and breath in short bursts.)

Hensman spends a fair amount of time explaining emergency procedures to the guests: In the F-16, the ejection handle is between your legs. Once clear of the aircraft after ejection, the first order of



Soldier Of Fortune's correspondent, Dale B. Cooper, in self-portrait in F-16D.

business is to make sure you have a properly deployed parachute. "Problems like this occur only once in a million times," Hensman said.

When you climb into the F-16D and strap in, one of the first things you do is push a button that lowers and reclines the seat's angle to 30 degrees, which increases comfort and G-force tolerance — and allows the canopy to close. The F-16's trim lines and high-visibility bubble cockpit make a passenger feel as if he is sitting on the tip of a javelin.

Amateur Hour

"Atlanta Center, Thunderbird 7; level one-five thousand,"

Harder radioed as we leveled off and headed toward Bulldog Military Operating Area, a restricted airspace south of Warner-Robins where fighter pilots do not have to worry about intrusions by commercial aircraft.

The F-16 is a "fly-by-wire" aircraft: Electrical wires relay commands and have replaced cables and linkage normally associated with flight controls. For easy and accurate control of the aircraft during high G-force combat maneuvers, a side-stick controller is used instead of the conventional center-mounted stick. Even the slightest pressure on the side stick sends electrical signals to actuators of flight-control surfaces such as ailerons and rudder. In a roll, the more pressure applied to the stick, the faster the aircraft screws itself into the sky.

"All right," Harder said to me, "you've got the aircraft. Roll right, then roll left."

No problem; a piece of cake.

"Point the left wing toward the ground," he continued, "and you can see wherever you let the stick go, the aircraft will stay in that attitude."



photos: Staff Sgt. Jack Braden



Dale B. Cooper



Dale B. Cooper



Dale B. Cooper

(top) Whether flying in formation over Nevada desert or off Daytona Beach, Fla., Thunderbirds' wing tip-to-wing tip intervals allow no room for error. (above) Data flash on heads-up display of SOF correspondent's Falcon driver, Maj. James A. Harder, during takeoff from Warner-Robins AFB, Ga. (right) Thunderbird 7's course: 087 degrees; altitude: 14,880 feet; air speed: 450 knots (518 mph). (left) Beside backseat birdman's left leg is plaque thanking passenger for flying "Thunderbird Airlines."



Ground crews performing maintenance and repairs to the F-16Ds are the unsung heroes of the Air Force demonstration team. Here, Technical Sgt. Carey Shoff makes final check of F-16D's landing gear. (right) Thunderbird pilots and senior ground crewmen await the start of another breathtaking performance.

Talk about fingertip control, this was it. Very little pressure is needed to turn the F-16 on a dime. As we cruised toward the restricted airspace, Harder sounded like a father teaching his son how to drive.

"You can look at all of the gizmos back there," he told me, "but don't touch anything."

Under Pressure

What a great day for flying. The clouds billowed up to 20,000 feet. The sky was blue and the sun was bright. Moisture streaked off the wing tips as I jinked through the canyons of clouds like a fighter pilot trying to shake an enemy plane off his tail.

"Drop-dead gorgeous is what it is," said Harder, who has logged more than 3,300 hours in the F-16. After giving me three or four minutes to blow the dust out of my head by rolling up on the wings and letting the nose drop, Harder demonstrated a few combat maneuvers.

A full 360-degree aileron roll will get the juices pumping. As we transitioned into a tight left-hand turn, I felt the four Gs pump up the gear I was wearing.

Harder executed a couple of turns of 5 or more Gs to test our bodies and got the adrenaline flowing for more demanding maneuvers.

Picking a line on the ground, he executed a loop. Turning on the smoke, Harder pointed the Falcon's nose up into a 4G pull. It felt like my abdomen was being run over by a Humvee as the "chaps" automatically inflated and shoved my stomach into my chest cavity. I really felt the load as we went straight up before easing off and going inverted (negative G) before screaming down the backside



and cutting the smoke trail.

Looking down I could see the smoke as we sliced through it. Doing a high-speed loop is not as difficult as it looks as long as the pilot does not lose sight of the smoke as he accelerates down the backside.

The clouds flashed by even though we were flying at only subsonic speed in the restricted air space. After Harder's maneuver I picked out one particularly tall spire of clouds off in the distance and put about 30 degrees on the nose and drove us through God's car wash. The effect was like punching a hole in the cloud (a beautiful sight to see on the flight videotape the Thunderbirds give each backseat birdman).

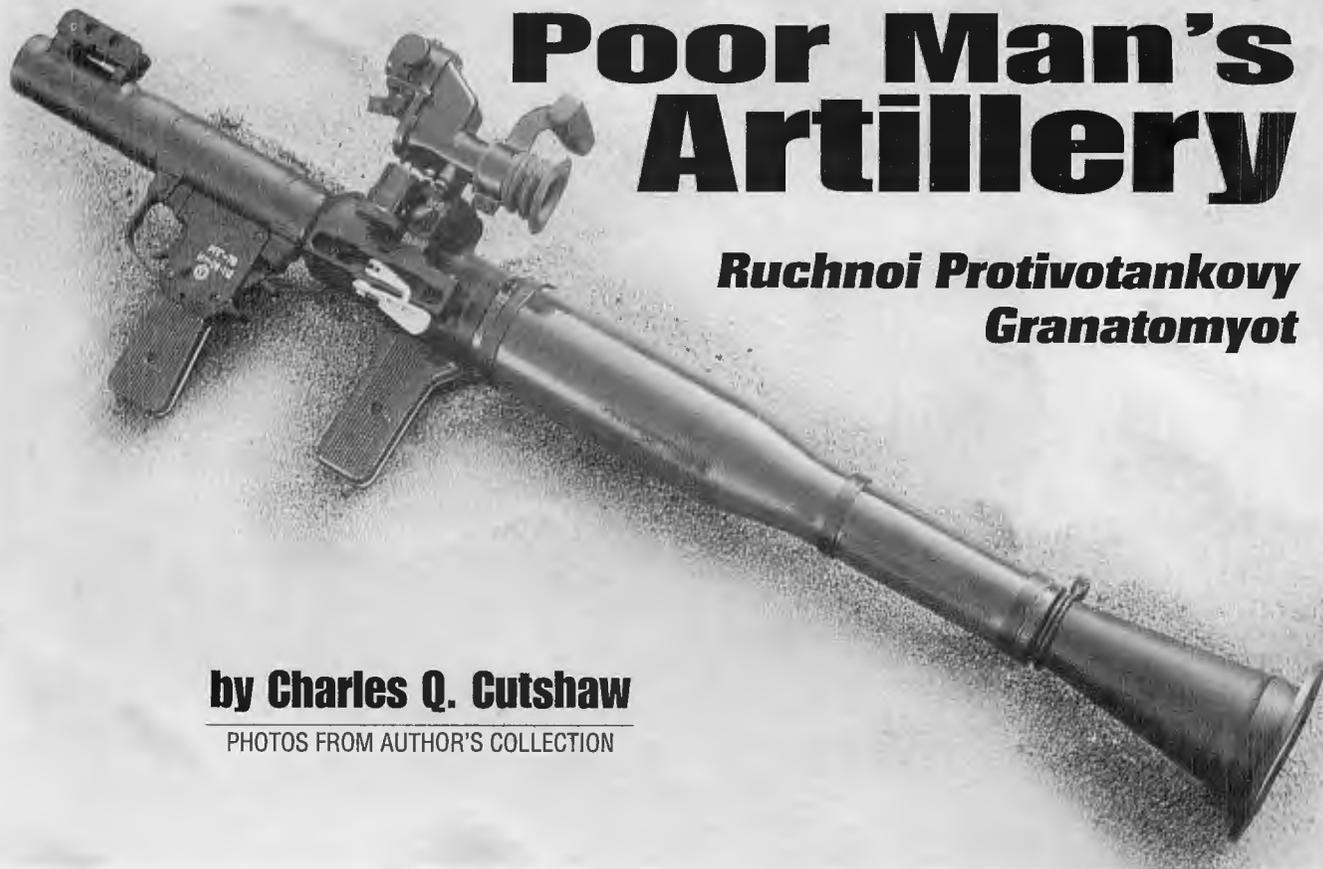
As our F-16 slid into the landing pattern ahead of a U.S. Navy P-3 patrol plane, I could not help but recall the firefighter who offered me \$10,000 to take my place. The way I felt when the F-16 pulled back into its assigned space on the flight line at Warner-Robins, I would not have sold my seat for *any* amount of money.

Dale B. Cooper is a long-time contributor to SOF. His areas of coverage have included the Persian Gulf War. ✕

RPG-7

Poor Man's Artillery

**Ruchnoi Protivotankovy
Granatomyot**



by Charles Q. Cutshaw

PHOTOS FROM AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

THE ubiquitous RPG-7 has been with the world's military and paramilitary forces since 1962. Rarely in modern times has a weapon enjoyed such a long service life, and such widespread use. Indeed, the RPG-7 has been a party to virtually every conflict on the globe since its introduction.

During the Vietnam unpleasantness, we put up wire mesh screens to detonate PG rounds fired by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces. The chain link fencing was effective not only against rounds from the older RPG-2 (Chinese Type 56) used by our adversaries, but also the RPG-7 of the time. The chain link fence either detonated the warhead or caused it to dud by shorting the firing circuit. Needless to say, this fault in the PG-7 warhead was corrected long ago.

Despite its shortcomings, we found the RPG-7 to be a serious threat in Vietnam, not only against ground targets of all types, but against helicopters, as well. A typical VC or NVA tactic was to wait until the chopper flared to land, and then fire an RPG at it. This was Very Bad News.

The Soviets learned the same lessons in Afghanistan when the Mujahideen turned RPG-7's into antihelicopter weapons. Twenty-five years after we faced it in Vietnam, the RPG-7 still soldiers on in front-line service, not only in the

Russian military, but in armed forces world-wide. Why the RPG has remained viable over the years and how it has evolved to meet modern armor threats is the subject we will explore.

The RPG-7 was an improvement on the earlier RPG-2, which itself was derived from the World War II German *Panzerfaust* antitank weapon. The concept is simplicity itself: The launcher is little more than a tube with gripstocks and a sight. The RPG-2 was fitted with rudimentary iron sights, but the RPG-7 improved upon this by adding a stadiametric optical sight to aid in hitting moving targets. Loading and firing the weapon is as simple as the overall RPG concept. Its cardboard booster tube is screwed onto the rocket grenade base and the assembly is then inserted into the launcher tube from the muzzle end. An index notch on the launcher's muzzle engages a stud on the grenade's rocket motor to ensure that the booster primer is aligned with the launcher's firing pin. The firing mechanism is mechanical with a single-action hammer that must be cocked to fire the PG-7 grenade. The hammer strikes a firing pin, which impinges on the booster's primer, firing it by the age-old percussion method.

Once the booster fires and ejects the grenade from the launcher, the rocket motor ignites after the grenade has traveled about 10 meters downrange and carries it to its

The RPG-7 (*Ruchnoi Protivotankovy Granatomyot* — Hand-Held Anti-Tank Grenade Launcher) here with optical sight, is actively exported by its Russian makers, and various other former Warsaw-Pact countries.

maximum range, which varies depending on the type of round being fired. Most RPG-7 rockets have a maximum range of approximately 500 meters, but are effective only to about 300 meters, given a competent gunner. Most rounds self-destruct after five seconds. Because the warhead itself is external to the launcher, its diameter is not critical as is the case with weapons like the M72 LAW which have the entire rocket inside the launch tube, thus restricting the warhead diameter to the inside diameter of the launcher. Weapons like the RPG-7 can use a warhead of almost any reasonable size, as we shall presently see.

The original RPG-7 launcher was slightly different than current versions, but it was modified shortly after its introduction and redesignated the RPG-7V. It has continued without further significant modification to this day. In 1968, an airborne version was introduced. This version could be disassembled when the airborne gunner jumped and is designated the RPG-7D (*Desanti*). Both the RPG-7V and RPG-7D will be found

worldwide. The only real difference between the two variants is that the RPG-7D can be broken down for jumps.

Standard Variations

Both have a bore diameter of 40mm and both are the same length in firing mode. The latest version of the RPG-7 is the "modernized" version, designated the RPG-7V1. The folding airborne version is designated the RPG-7D1. Just how these weapons differ from their predecessors has not been made clear by the Russians. Presumably, the new versions employ modern materials for increased reliability and possibly to fire new types of ammunition. Lengths and weights for both new and old versions are identical and the older RPG-7V and RPG-7D continue to be listed in Russian catalogues alongside the new weapons. The new launchers fire all earlier PG-7 warhead variants, lending credence to the theory that they are intended for new types of ammunition.

The overall simplicity and excellence of the RPG-7 design is reflected by the fact that it has been produced not only by Russia, but by Bulgaria, China, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan and Romania. It is in such wide-

spread use throughout the world that listing the countries and conflicts where it might be found is pointless: The RPG-7 may be expected anywhere in the world. It continues in production today and is available for sale by virtually any of the many manufacturers listed above, not to mention gray and black markets.

An "improved" version of the RPG-7, the RPG-16, showed up in a few Soviet units in the early 1980's. The RPG-16 has a launch tube diameter of 58mm which probably gives it somewhat greater range than the RPG-7, but just how valuable more range would be for a weapon of this type is questionable. Time of flight of the warhead is also probably somewhat reduced, but again, it probably is not significantly better than the PG-7 ammunition. It is no surprise then, that the RPG-16 has not supplanted the RPG-7 either in Russian or foreign military use. The RPG-16 has never been produced or marketed outside Russia. The RPG-7 continues to be actively marketed by the Russian defense industry along with improved warheads. No such activities have been observed regarding the RPG-16, which may well no longer be in production

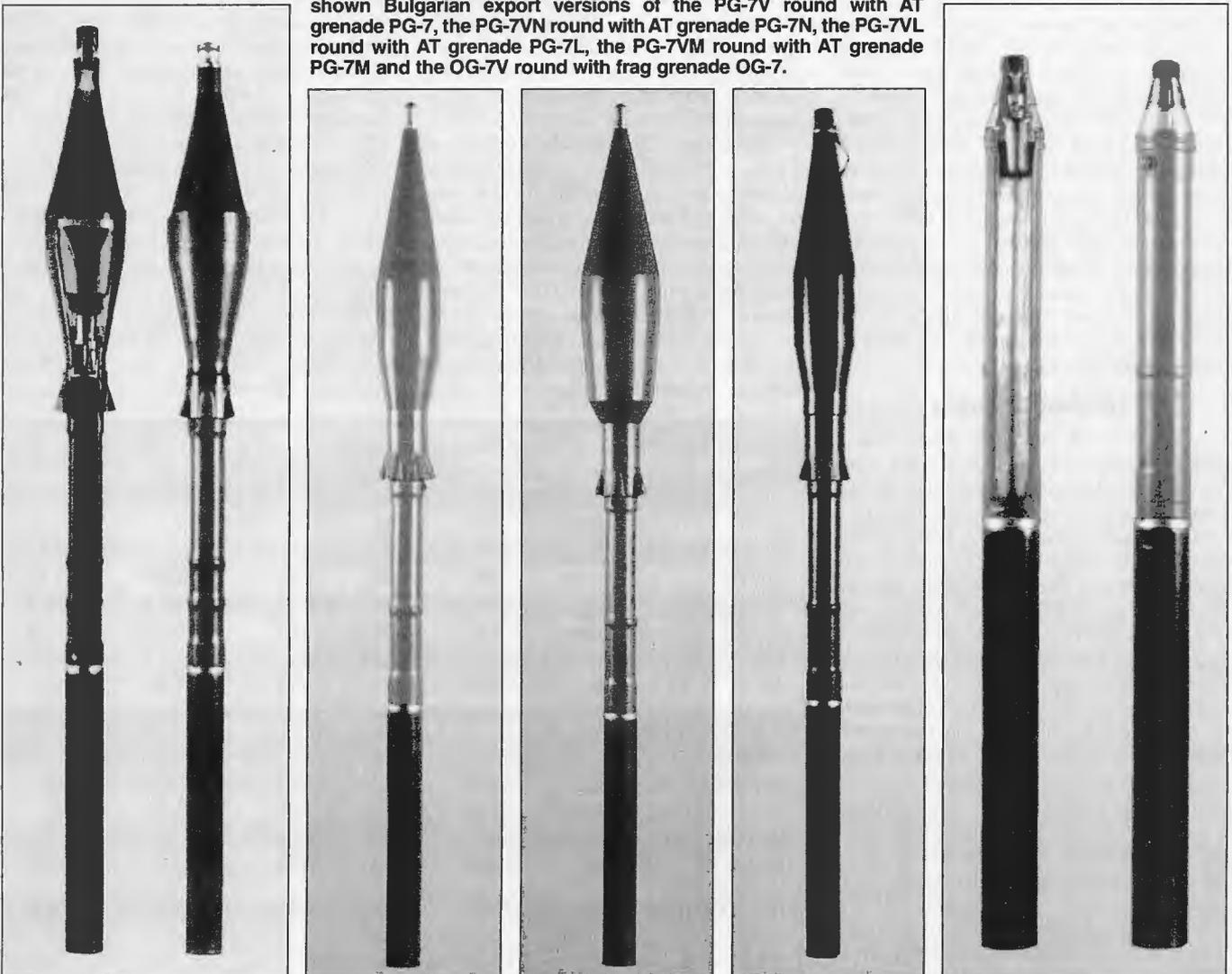
as it is not shown in the recently published Russian Defense Catalogue, a comprehensive listing of every weapon available from the Russian military-industrial complex.

Up-Gunning A Classic

The original PG-7 high explosive anti-tank (HEAT) rounds for the RPG-7 had a diameter of 85mm. By the late 1970's the original PG-7 round had become ineffective against modern tanks and was supplanted by the PG-7M round. Although this improved round had a smaller (73mm) warhead diameter than its predecessor, its performance against modern armor was greatly improved.

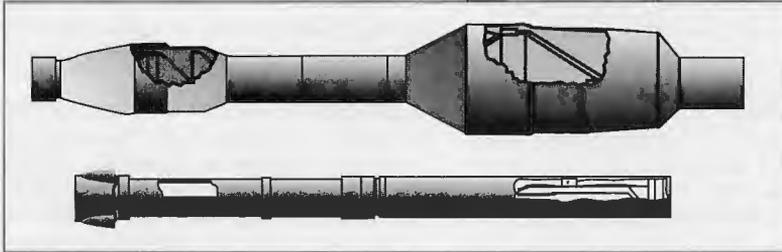
The PG-7M warhead was itself updated in the 1970's with new explosive and fuzing to give even greater armor penetration. This improved round was designated the PG-7N. At about the same time that the PG-7N reached troop units, a new propelling charge was also introduced. This new propellant raised the initial velocity of the PG-7M/N to 140 m/sec. During this time, the versatility of the RPG-7 was becoming appreciated by the Soviets, as they began fielding other types of warheads for the weapon. One of

The salient feature of the PRG-7 is its ability to fire a variety of ammunition to accomplish a variety of missions. From left to right are shown Bulgarian export versions of the PG-7V round with AT grenade PG-7, the PG-7VN round with AT grenade PG-7N, the PG-7VL round with AT grenade PG-7L, the PG-7VM round with AT grenade PG-7M and the OG-7V round with frag grenade OG-7.



these is the OG-7 antipersonnel round. This round can easily be distinguished from HEAT rounds by the fact that the blast-fragmentation warhead is the same diameter as the launch tube — 40mm. This antipersonnel round has a range of 1000 meters and carries a charge of 210 grams of hexogen. The OG-7 continues in production by the Russians and Bulgarians.

In the 1980's, though, armor developments on both sides of the iron curtain made even the PG-7N round obsolete.



The TBG-7 thermobaric round (top) and PG-7V round comprise leading-edge upgrades. The TBG-7's FAE is an effective weapon on buildings and bunkers; the PG-7V two-stage round is intended to defeat new developments such as reactive armor.

One of these was explosive reactive armor (ERA), fielded by the Israelis and a few other countries to some extent, but enthusiastically adopted by the Russians. ERA has been fitted to every type of tank in the Soviet/Russian inventory and it defeats all unitary shaped charge warheads. ERA was one of several Soviet "nasty surprises" for the West when it appeared in the Group of Soviet Forces Germany (GSFG) in 1984. It rendered every NATO HEAT warhead obsolete overnight and caused a panic development of countermeasures such as TOW-2B. Of course, technology is a double-edged sword, and the ERA that the Russians put on their tanks also made all of their unitary shaped charge warheads obsolete as well, including the PG-7M/N. The other armor improvement that forced the Russians to develop new ammo for the RPG was the introduction of "Chobham" high-performance laminate armor in the West on vehicles such as the M1 Abrams and Leopard II tanks.

Tandem Trouble

One way of defeating ERA with a shaped charge is to employ tandem warheads. In this type of warhead, there are two shaped charges, a small precursor or "tip" charge, usually about 50mm diameter, followed by the main charge of substantially greater diameter. The RPG tandem warhead for use against tanks and other vehicles with ERA is the PG-7VR. This ungainly appearing warhead is also claimed by the Russians to be effective against advanced armors, such as that on the U.S. M1A1 main battle tank. This claim is questionable, but the PG-7VR will probably defeat standard ERA, such as Israeli Blazer. The tandem warhead functions by having the tip charge detonate the ERA, followed "very shortly" (a matter of microseconds) thereafter by the main charge. Contrary to popular myth, ERA does not function by "breaking up" the shaped charge jet; it works by throwing "flyer plates" up into the jet's path, essentially making the jet have to cut its way

through a continuing mass of metal, thus dissipating its energy before it can get through to the main (base) armor of the vehicle. The tip charge not only cuts into the flyer plates, but also detonates the ERA, which causes them to get out of the way before the main charge detonates. The Russians publicly state that the overall armor penetration of the PG-7VR is only 325mm behind ERA. This is puzzling, as both the RPG-27 and RPG-29, which use a 105mm tandem warhead that is apparently identical to the PG-7VR achieve a armor penetration of 650mm "behind" ERA.

The 650mm figure for the RPG-27 and 29 may be optimistic, but 325mm is extremely poor performance for a modern shaped charge warhead of 105mm diameter. Current shaped charge technology can easily deliver four to five "cone diameters" of armor penetration, thus the PG-7VR should reasonably deliver at least 450 to 500mm penetration behind ERA: 325mm penetration from a 105mm warhead is no better than the original PG-7V round in terms of

shaped charge performance and is suspect, especially in light of other PG-7 ammunition developments discussed below.

A second new RPG-7 warhead is the PG-7VL, a 93mm unitary shaped charge for use against tanks without ERA or M1-type special armor, armored fighting vehicles and bunkers. The Russians state that the PG-7VL will defeat some 600mm of armor, approximately six cone diameters. For a grunt weapon, this is very impressive performance if the claims are true. One of the tradeoffs of increased diameter, however, is increased weight, and the PG-7VL has an effective range of only 250 meters, 50 to 100 meters less than the older PG-7V and PG-7M/N warheads.

However, the PG-7VL is claimed to penetrate 500mm of steel armor, a 200mm increase over the PG-7M and 100mm better than the PG-7N. This new addition to the RPG weapons family has seen extensive service by both sides in Chechnya, along with the PG-7VR. These two new warheads were so effective against Russian tanks that

DESIGNATION	ARMOR PENETRATION, RHA	EFFECTIVE RANGE (meters)	MAX RANGE (meters)	MUZZLE VELOCITY (m.p.s.)•	WAR HEAD DIAMETER	CONE DIAMETER PENETRATION
PG-7V	260mm	350	500	120	85mm	3.06
PG-7VM	300mm	300	500	140	73mm	4.11
PG-7VN	400mm	300	500	140	73mm	5.48
PG-7VL	500mm	250	300	112	93mm	5.37
PG-7VR	550mm*	200	300	110*	50/105mm	5.24*
OG-7	N/A	165	1,000	152	40mm	N/A
TBG-7	N/A	350*	700	110*	105mm	N/A

BULGARIAN RPG AMMUNITION

(All performance data estimated)

PG-7LT HEAT	550mm	200	500	120	50/100mm	5
KO-7 HEAT/Frag	250mm	300	500	140	50mm	5
OG-7V HE-Frag	N/A	300	400	120	85mm	N/A
OG-7VE HE (Thermobaric?)	N/A	250	300	120	90mm	N/A
OG-7BG HE-Frag	N/A	300	500	140	50mm	N/A

• Meters Per Second
* Estimated

At international arms bazaars, former Warsaw-Pact manufacturers hawk a wide variety of rounds for the RPG-7; this display was from a Bulgarian company (also offering furnaces, ball-bearings, and grinding wheels).

Marshal Grachev, Chief of the Russian General Staff publicly stated that Russian tanks were junk! While the marshal's statement may be somewhat overblown, the fact remains that these warheads make the RPG-7 lethal against modern tanks. Neither will probably defeat an M1A1, Leopard II, or for that matter a T-80U across the frontal armor, but if the grunt uses good tactics and engages from the side or rear, even an M1A2 will probably fall to the PG-7VR.

One Weapon, Many Missions

But antiarmor is only part of the picture relative to the versatile RPG-7. For some time both the Russians and other former combloc countries, especially the Bulgarians, have produced antipersonnel warheads for the ubiquitous RPG-7. One such warhead is the OG-7 discussed above. Another is the TBG-7 thermobaric warhead. This is a late addition to the RPG ammunition family and is currently produced only by the Russians. The TBG-7 has not received the widespread advertising of the other warheads on the international arms market, but it has shown up at a few arms shows, and should be a very effective antipersonnel/antimateriel round. The warhead is based on the RPO-A category 3 fuel-air explosive (FAE) concept that was used with great effect by the Soviets in Afghanistan. A category 3 FAE weapon creates its own fuel front as the deflagrating cloud expands, and while its overpressure is less than conventional explosives, its "duration" is much longer, thus making it far more effective in enclosed spaces than conventional-blast



warheads. This characteristic makes a thermobaric warhead capable of destroying bunkers or entire buildings with a single round. With the TBG-7 warhead, thermobaric weapons are now available to anyone with access to RPG-7 launchers.

Aside from the Russians, probably the most innovative producers of RPG-7 upgrades are the Bulgarians. The Bulgarian SOPOT Company has been showing a number of advanced warheads for the RPG-7, most of which are unique. SOPOT markets a tandem warhead for the RPG-7 which they designate the PG-7LT. We have already discussed how tandems work, but the PG-7LT is different than the Russian PG-7VR. First, the main charge appears to be identical to the 93mm PG-7VL with an approximately 50mm tip charge added to clear ERA. Estimated performance figures for this round may be found in Table 2.

The remainder of the Bulgarian RPG-7 rounds are antipersonnel or dual-purpose. The KO-7 is an approximately 50mm HEAT/APERS round which combines shaped charge and fragmentation warheads. This round is probably intended for use against light armored vehicles and bunkers where the shaped charge penetrates the armor, allowing the explosive warhead to enter and then detonate inside.

Against troops in the open, a similar round is the OG-7BG HE-Frag. This appears to be nothing more than a KO-7 warhead without the shaped charge. The



The RPG-7V, left, and the RPG-7D, right, in production by many armories, became the ubiquitous small-unit "heavy" weapons during the past few decades. Thanks to their adaptability, they will soldier on well into the 21st Century.

Continued on page 70

COOL-HAND KEITH

Police-State Tactics Keep Ex-SF NCO In Federal Slam

by Jim Morris

Photos courtesy Keith Idema

AS you read this, Keith Idema may be on the street or dead. More likely, however, he probably remains incarcerated in Milan Federal Prison, Milan, Mich., convicted of wire fraud (an offense he insists he did not commit and for which nobody does this much time) by elements of an out-of-control federal agency which knows damn well he is innocent (see "Loose Cannon On Target," March '95 and "Spiking a Loose Cannon," April '95).

He's enduring the fourth week of a 55-day hunger strike protesting not only his confinement, but also the appalling prison conditions (for all inmates) which he states include "severe and prevalent human rights abuses, constitutional violations, health risks, overcrowding, and brutality."

At a time when the Bureau Of Prisons is bending backwards to jettison murderers and career drug dealers onto America's streets, Keith Idema has been denied his early out for entirely specious reasons.

Idema screwed with the system; the federal law-enforcement and investigative agencies tasked to investigate and prosecute treason. He walked into a storm when he reported that Russian nuclear-smugglers, ex- and active-KGB types and hardcore Russian mafiosi had moles inside CIA and FBI.

Keith also developed active KGB sources in Russia who told him that both CIA and FBI counterintelligence were infiltrated. Mind you, Gary Scurka, then a CBS producer, has Keith on tape with these claims before Aldrich Ames or Earl Pitts, the former CIA and FBI counterintelligence agents who were KGB infiltrators, were arrested.

"What We Have Here Is A Failure To Communicate"

Keith could have walked at any time by giving the FBI his full



The monument at the Special Forces Chapel at Fort Bragg, a gift from John Wayne, 1968. To Keith Idema, more than words cut in stone.

cooperation. They wanted the names of his assets who knew the extent to which CIA and the FBI had been infected. Idema refused, believing that within the FBI lurked traitors who would get his people killed. Had he ratted them out, the KGB officers with the courage to warn the West about nuclear weapons proliferation from pilfered former USSR stockpiles would have soon received nocturnal visitors with murder on their minds.

For that "crime," Keith has sacrificed six years of his life, his marriage, and \$400,000 of his family's money battling bogus criminal charges in a valiant effort to save the FBI from its cancer within. Gratitude and plaudits, however, were not handed out. What Idema got was a federal groin kick, in spades.

Idema was the Special Forces soldier responsible for a *US News & World Report* story detailing North Korean, Iraqi and Iranian receipt of Russian nuclear contraband. (This piece was awarded the Investigative Reporter's Association's '95 award.)

60 Minutes did a culmination segment on nuclear smuggling, broadcast on 15 October 1995, the information coming almost entirely from Idema, via his assets.

Prior to ace-mole, Aldrich Ames, being unearthed, Idema warned CIA of Soviet penetration and fingered the FBI as having been infiltrated.

60 Minutes Of Elusive Fame

Keith, however, did not originally give this story to CBS entirely from the goodness of his heart. He had a selfish (if not understandable) desire: Get the hell out of jail. He wanted assurances that they would do his story as well as the nuclear-smuggling exposé. He hoped this would result in his being released without giving up his sources. But, after shining him on with vague implications of guarantees that his bio would be aired, *60 Minutes* stiffed him, fear-

ing his imprisonment (albeit on trumped up charges) would destroy his credibility and muddy the waters of their true focus and interest: nuclear smuggling.

One might expect the FBI to spring him from prison, let him develop his contacts for them, and utilize them to ferret out other infiltrators. But, apparently, that isn't the way this bureaucracy operates.

Rather, they have decided to break the guy, and the mere fact that he's been proven right time after time is not enough to alter their thinking. The key players who led the charge to put him in jail and keep him there have, themselves, been transferred and demoted. But the FBI and the Bureau of Prisons are still trying to crack him, maybe out of inertia, maybe because the story is so embarrassing that it threatens the very existence of the FBI; maybe because the "I" and Agency know there are other moles within their ranks.

No doubt about it, Keith is a hardass, but a true patriot, a man of courage and inviolable honor. He has taken his stand because — he *thought* — it was in the interests of the United States that he punch the alarm button.

Crime Lab Follies

Keith is the perfect poster boy for the FBI crime lab investigation. The lab is organized in four branches, and botched tests on Keith's case in all four; not merely botched, mind you, but falsified. The tests clearly proved his, and his wife Dawn's, innocence. FBI Special Agent John Strong went on the stand and testified that either they proved his guilt or were inconclusive.

At issue was a fingerprint on a 3x5 card. Special Agent Strong testified that the print proved Keith's involvement on the wire fraud charge. Keith testified that he only touched it when Strong asked him to identify it after his arrest. The test, if evaluated properly, would have shown that Keith only touched the card when Strong gave it to him.

Another test centered round a signature on a letter, of which the FBI had only a photocopy. An FBI witness claimed that Dawn had signed it. Then Strong testified that the lab couldn't prove who had signed it because it was only a copy. Keith had it tested by the most respected independent lab in the country, run by the former chief investigator for the Treasury Department. That lab's conclusion was that clearly Dawn had not signed the letter — and there was an 85% chance that it was signed by the witness against her.

He can also prove that faxes sent by the real perps did not come from his machine, as the FBI claimed.

Finally, during the entire time of the alleged perpetration of wire fraud, Keith's business was under ATF surveillance, and wire-tapped. They were desperate to put him in jail for something. This surveillance and wiretap elicited no evidence of wire fraud.

Why are they doing this? Why did they put Keith on "diesel therapy," running him around from prison to prison faster than he could get phone privileges, or get his stuff together to pursue his freedom?

He called me once from the pen in El Reno, Okla. As it happens, the Dean of the OU Law School, David Swank, is a former major in the Special Forces reserves. He called the pen for an appointment. Keith was gone by the time he got there. This went on for months.

Are they just trying to break him now? That's what I think. But he's not afraid of pain, and he's not sweating death. It's never occurred to the guy to yield; never crossed his mind.

I suppose the issue is that the FBI wants to keep a lid on the nuclear-smuggling story.

If Keith is right, Saddam Hussein has six backpack nukes, each of which would easily fit in a bus terminal locker in any major city and pulverize 50 city blocks. The North Koreans have another six. The Lithuanians intercepted another shipment of six.

But as horrific as that is, it pales beside the fact that the land of the free and the home of the brave is fast being converted into another Third-World hellhole with an out-of-control secret police.

Almost every reader of *Soldier Of Fortune* has at one time taken the oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. That remains Idema's sole mission.

Major Jim Morris (Ret.) has authored the books War Story, The Devil's Secret Name and Fighting Men. Currently, he's involved in motion picture screenwriting and production. ☒



An American at St. Basil's, Red Square, Oct. '91, three months before the red flag came down. (below) Keith Idema conducts a management seminar (note Special Forces crest on left lapel) before his world crashed and burned. Though wounded, he's still fighting in the arena.





FRENCH MERCS'

Text & Photos by Thierry Charlier

Heavily laden commercial Andover belonging to *Filair* and piloted by American Vietnam vet "Gordon" lands at Nagero in eastern Zaire with supplies for merc-led Zairean forces.

I should never have left Montauban ..." Waist deep in the muck of a Zairean swamp, bitten by mosquitoes through his heavy Yugoslav BDUs, under mortar fire and pursued by Laurent-Desire Kabila's rebels, the French merc forged onward as best he could. He was heading straight north for Faradje near the Sudanese border, as far as he knew not yet in rebel hands, to rendezvous with other merc-led Zairean government units.

He had been at Watsa, an outpost off the road from Kisangani to Bunia, which was being held by three French mercs, Alex, Titi and Carlson, along with some 150 Katangan troops they were shepherding.

The rebels had infilled Watsa before the Europeans were aware, and they attacked at noon, on 30 January. Encircled, the government force was able to withdraw to the nearby town of Durba, held by the rest of Group Alpha comprising 14 mercenaries led by Charles, one of Bob Denard's associates, and some 150 Zairean paratroopers.

Predictably, the rebels appeared at the gates of Durba that evening.

The mercs tried to organize a defense, by regrouping the 150 routed Katangans, then trying to keep in the fight as many as possible of the fleeing Zairean paratroopers.

For themselves, the mercenaries moved out to hold the airport.

The "Experts In Warfare"

The engagement of these "experts in warfare," as they were dubbed by the Zaireans, began in France before Christmas, recruited through the old-boy network. Rendezvous points were in bars, restaurants and even at the monkey cage of the zoo. Most knew where they were going and what was expected of them. Some, including some pilots, however, were told of an operation to save the white rhinoceros.

All were told to move with the highest discretion. "Bring the minimum kit, and nothing military. Everything will be provided!"

On 26 December 1996, one group of French mercs left Brussels for Kinshasa via air, followed by a second which routed from Brussels through Lisbon. Both flights were to arrive the next morning about three hours apart. On the tarmac at Kinshasa, Zairean soldiers tried as best they could to spot the French mercs and get them discreetly onto a bus.

This operation was repeated a few hours later with the arrival of the flight through Lisbon. At 1000 hours local time, the mercs boarded an Antonov with Russian pilots, for the 3-1/2-hour flight to Kisangani. At Kisangani they refueled and took off again for the one-hour flight to Watsa. At Watsa, unarmed except for 17 just-issued and still-greased AKs on the floor of the aircraft, the 19 mercs, still in civvies, deplaned under the bewildered stare of local villagers and soldiers. Alex, a French mercenary, and Floribert M'Poyo, a Zairean army colonel who had been sent ahead to reconnoiter (*sans* radio) informed the new arrivals that rebel forces were close, and they should not

“Rumble In The Jungle”

**Francophones’
Last Stand
In Zaire**



hang around — whereupon the Russian pilots lost their nerve.

The runway being too short and the aircraft too heavily loaded to take off, the mercs’ supplies — rations, ammo, weapons, spares, cooking equipment — were abandoned. “The enemy can have quite a party,” remarked one merc.

The now-empty Antonov was rushed by hopeful passengers — Zairean soldiers (officers in front, with wives) leading the charge. Finally, only the mercs and several Zairean officers with two wounded boarded for Kisangani.

During the first operational phase, French mercs under Belgian Colonel Christian Tavernier (see sidebar) used Kisangani as their main base. They subsequently retook Watsa, which they held until 30 January.

Arms From Serbia And Egypt

When the French mercs arrived in Kinshasa, Zaire was still under an arms

embargo. Nevertheless, on 29 December, the first cargo plane, a Boeing 707 belonging to the Skyair company, landed at Kisangani with a load of military gear, arms and ammunition. A steady stream of aircraft followed, from Serbia and Egypt, delivering arms and ammunition of all types: M70B1 and M70AB2 rifles (Yugoslav versions of the AK47); Serb heavy sniping rifles (the *Snajperska Puska Kalibra* 12.7mm); M53 machine guns (Serb copy of the MG-42); Serb-made Dragunov-type sniper rifles; 60mm mortars; RBR-M80 64mm LAW and RPG-7-type rocket launchers; CZ Zastava 9mm pistols and appropriate munitions.

From their commander, Charles, the French mercs



With very little functioning infrastructure, air routes offered only remaining supply for merc-led forces, and even this was complicated by uncertain fuel stocks and sporadic payment for commercial flyers and their aircraft. Here, all hands hustle to unload supplies from a Filair Andover at Nagero.



received green berets with badges from the Comoran Presidential Guard era of Bob Denard, with the motto "*Orbs Patria Nostra*" ("the world is our homeland") — a crib on the legion's "*Legio Patria Nostra*" ("the Legion is our home").

The mercs were short of wheeled transport, having only three license-built Indian Mahindra Jeeps (one red and two white!). Since promised Unimogs never arrived, they commandeered locally whatever they needed.

The first group of French mercs to arrive in Zaire were designated Group Alpha — Denard's men, most of whom made the 1995 Comoros *coup*. Since Denard and Marquez, his number-two man, were forbidden by court order from leaving France, Charles, another Denard associate, was in charge. This group began with 17, and ended up with 23. All were French, except for one Italian.

Cheap Labor

Their salary was 30,000 French Francs (\$5,280 U.S.) per man, per month, on a three-month contract, all payable in advance. By comparison, Serbian mercenaries hired by Zaire were paid \$1,000 per month. "Strike-breakers!" concluded a French merc, "At that price, they will soon be the only ones on the market!"

On 24 January 1997, the 10 mercs of Group Bravo arrived, commanded by Pierre with the help of Belgian merc Roger Bracco — same salary, same contract. Aside from one Portuguese and one Chilean, they were French. The groups' mission was to orga-



Katangan Tigers were armed predominantly with Chinese small arms, wore typical African mix of uniforms: (inset) NCOs and officers typically wore improvised red-ribbon rank designators.

nize and lead the Zairean army and, if things got ugly, to fight — something they had to do many times after the routs of the Zairean army and the Katangan "Tigers" [sic] — Angolan troops hired by the Mobutu regime, even while Angolan and Rwandan governments were lending substantial support to Kabila.

More than once the mercs found themselves alone in the field against Kabila's rebels. The rebels suffered heavy casualties in the action against mercs at the Nzoro bridge in early February, with the mercs' 60mm mortars and Dragunovs decimating the rebels, but to their surprise this did not prevent the well-disciplined rebels from continuing their steam-roller advance.

Through binoculars and rifle scopes the mercs watched rebel soldiers without weapons come from behind, take weapons from the dead and continue the advance. This atypical reaction by the rebels was

unexpected and, threatened with encirclement, the mercs withdrew.

Having decades of experience as a guerrilla fighter (he was a former associate of Che Guevara), and with considerable outside support, Kabila and his forces repeatedly proved they were well-trained in combat techniques. The French were repeatedly ambushed. Twice their leader, Carlson, barely escaped: One bullet tore off the brim of his cap, another cleanly cut a strap on his LBE. With a fatalistic smile he told me, "That wasn't my day."

RPG Vs. Andover

Meanwhile at Durba, on 30 January, rebel mortar shells fell throughout the night. At dawn, on 31 January, Group Bravo commanded by Pierre — eight men plus two from Group Alpha — left Nagero on a Pilatus headed for Durba. The plane hit a tall, adobe-like termite hill on take-off and damaged the port landing-gear. Because of the damage the pilot returned to Nagero, crash-landing on the runway.

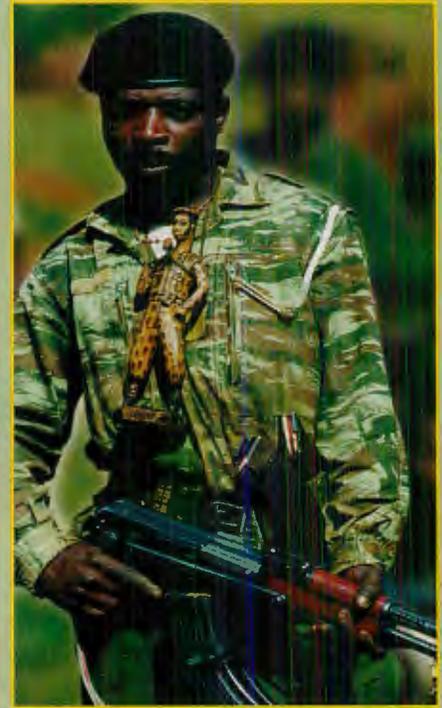
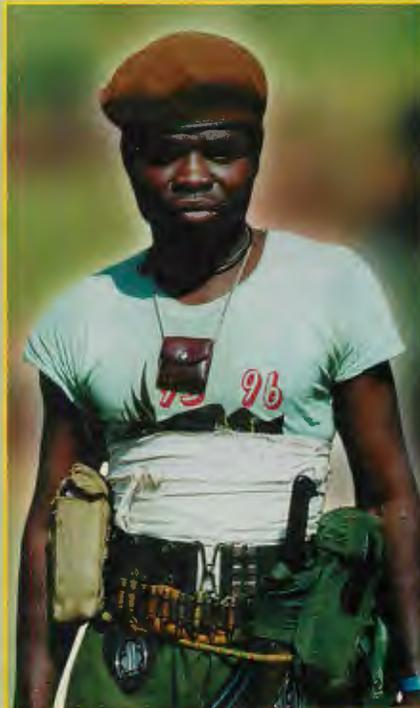
The plane was out of action but no one was hurt. The only air assets available to the mercs were this Pilatus Porter and a civilian Andover belonging to the Filair company, that had been hired to ferry cargo and materiel to various bases occupied by the French mercs during their short stay. Up

until this accident, the Pilatus Porter had been the maid of all work, used for recon, troop transport, freight — even bombing.

Pilot of the Andover was an American Vietnam vet and former chopper pilot named Roland. Although not a merc and not connected to the French merc forces, his service to them was more effective than that of the Serbs who had been hired to provide military air support. Early that afternoon, the Andover arrived at Durba with 35 Zairean soldiers of the Military Action and Information Service (*Service d'Action et de Renseignements Militaires* — SARM) lead by Marc, a French mercenary of Group Alpha. They drew fire — several AK rounds — as they landed.

Next, the Andover went to Nagero to get the eight men from Group Bravo and the two from Group Alpha. In the late afternoon, with these 10 mercs on board, the Andover circled the field at Durba. It appeared calm — no incoming rounds — so the mercs on the ground were assumed to be still there.

As the plane touched down all hell broke loose. With rounds flying all over, Roland tore the plane off the runway, and just as he banked to the left he saw an enormous ball of fire in front of the plane — they he had drawn fire from an RPG!



Common uniform gear worn by Katangan Tigers was the *gris gris* amulet about the neck to ward off misfortune such as incoming rounds. The common version is at left; at right is a stylized model depicting a soldier. (below) Zairean Army "regulars" strike a pose with Colts, Kalashnikovs and a Chinese-made 75mm recoilless rifle.



Merc Work Zaire

The media lounging in Kinshasa's hotels greatly exaggerated the number of mercs in Zaire. In fact, there were never more than about a hundred Serbian mercs, all based at Kisangani, and 33 mercs of French and other nationalities (Italian, Chilean and Belgian). Although merc forces were training in South Africa for use in Zaire (on which side is not clear), they were not committed, and there were no South African mercenaries involved. Israelis running the DSP were not really mercs but long-time military allies of the Mobutu regime.

Among the French mercs, all former soldiers, were a great variety of personalities. For most this was not the first contract. Most had already "made" the Comoros — more than once. Others had met in Burma. Most were on their third, fourth or fifth contract in all latitudes, like Martin who had made Rhodesia, Benin with three times on the Comoros; or the famous Titi, who came from Burma to the Comoros by way of Cambodia and is considered one of the most competent of mercs.

They were to find out after they were already in country that they were not on the side of the "good guys" (i.e. of Laurent-Desire Kabila), but with the "bad guys." Having said this, as they had all repeated many times and as all who had been present when the French forces intervened and shut down the Comoro coup in October 1995, had sung: "*Non, rien de rien, nous ne regrettons rien!*" ("No, nothing of nothing, we regret nothing!") — T.C.



(left) French merc instructors and Zairean soldiers unload Yugoslav AKs and RBR M-80 LAWs from license-built Indian Mahindra Jeeps — promised Unimogs never arrived, so transport was supplemented by commandeering locally. (below) Colonel Floribert M'Poyo, of the Zairean Army, was sent ahead to reconnoiter Watsa (*sans* radio), informed mercs on arrival that rebel forces were close, and they should not hang around — whereupon the Russian pilots lost their nerve.

Nine rounds zipped through the fuselage — no casualties — as Roland headed for Kisangani. That was the good news; The bad news was the rebels were already in Nagero in force, and the runway was encircled when they had attempted to land.

If the plane had not returned with Group Bravo and if the rebels had not opened fire at the moment of landing, the mercs there would not have known of their presence. This mistake by the rebels saved the mercs awaiting pickup, who immediately headed straight north toward Faradje through the swampy lowlands.

In scattered groups, avoiding main roads, the mercs, Zairean paratroopers and Katangans moved on foot, under the fire and the ambushes of rebels for four days and four nights. The 18 mercs, dead-tired but with good morale, got out.

On 3 February, they linked with Group Bravo, coming overland in vehicles to get them. By 1000 hours on 4 February, everyone was back at Nagero, the main base.

Ghost Town Nagero

Under continuing pressure, towns fell, one after another, generating a flood of civilian and military refugees — choking the roads and carrying off everything possible.

At Nagero, civilians had evacuated several days earlier, to seek refuge in the bush. The huts were all empty. A few days before, local authorities had arrested two men not recognized as locals, on bicycles.

Each carried a bundle of rags on their baggage racks — and inside were two disassembled AKs. Such was the rebels' technique of infiltration: arrive in civvies, arms disassembled, and mingle with locals, explaining they had fled the rebels (nevertheless, noting that in the places occupied by the rebels, people get paid, that there is food to eat, etc.). Having infiltrated enough fighters, at the appropriate moment they appeared under arms and by then it was often too late.

With advancing rebels from Manbasa and Wamba in the south, and from Faradje in the east, the mercs' main base at Nagero was indefensible. The road north to Central African Republic was the escape route of choice. Going to Sudan was out of the question, as the Sudanese of John Garang's SPLA

were hostile over aid given the Khartoum regime, which enabled them to bomb SPLA rebel positions in southern Sudan.

In the end, Roland and his Andover once more pulled the mercs' chestnuts from the fire. In two lifts — the runway at Nagero was too short to take off with everyone — the Andover brought the men to Isiro. From there, the runway being longer, Roland boarded all 33 mercs. They first headed for Bangui, but aborted when Paris forbade the mercs from landing in the Central African Republic. This left Gbadolite, Mobutu's "Versailles," as their destination — but the Presidential Guard (DSP), and even Mobutu, contacted by telephone, was disinclined to let them stay in his fief, probably because their presence might complicate negotiations for his eventual abandonment of the kleptocracy he had run for decades. They finally went to Kisangani, the third largest city in Zaire after



Following The Finances

Merc operations in eastern Zaire were on a limited budget. Planes chartered from commercial companies were kept on the ground more than once under pretext of repairs, sometimes for several days, until overdue bills were paid by those running the operation.

Money didn't flow, it dribbled. The powers that be were not stingy with purchases, but such were made by people without experience on the ground and who never consulted the users, resulting in enormous waste. For example, no doctors or medics were recruited — but a cook, complete with white jackets, chef's caps and white gloves, was.

As to where the money came from, there were many theories: money from Kuwait in thanks for Zaire's support during Iraqi invasion? Mobutu's money? From Mr. Jean Bemba Saolona, the leading businessman in Zaire and owner of airlines and major businesses? From Seti Yale, rich businessman and member of the presidential circle? Of his financial involvement there is no doubt, but it is also clear that acting alone he could not have supported an operation of this size and type.

Rumors and press reports abound of involvement by French intelligence on one side, and by multi-national interests on the other. The truth? Probably all the above.

Informed speculation points to at least partial funding of the French Mercs by the French DSGE (*Direction General de Securite Exterieur*e, equivalent to the U.S. C.I.A.). The Mercs' stealthy exfil/infil via Belgium was because the French DST (*Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire*, equivalent to the U.S. F.B.I.) did not approve of the Merc involvement, and was also the agency sensitive to Comoros vets not staying in France as per court order.

As for the Serb mercenaries, groundwork for their involvement began when two French flyers were shot down over Bosnia. The Serbian colonel who became the French DSGE contact during negotiations for the flyers' release was to be the contact for DSGE to arrange for Serbian mercs, aircraft, pilots, weapons, uniforms and ammunition to be delivered to Zaire to protect French and — where they were coincident — Mobutu's interests.

Cherchez la femme? No: Cherchez la buck.

— T.C.



One of two Pilatus Porters available to French mercs crash-landed at Nagero after having struck a concrete-like termite mound on takeoff. There were no injuries, but mercs' transport situation was made even worse by loss of plane.



(above, left) French mercs test-fire Yugoslav caliber 7.92mm M53 GPMG. Nearly all arms supplied were made in Serbia; ammo came from Egypt. (right) French merc checks out Zairean soldier on new-in-the-box Yugoslav M76 sniper rifles. New weapons, new leadership proved of little avail in stopping well-disciplined rebels.

Kinshasa and Lubumbashi.

Kisangani was nearly abandoned: Women and children had already disappeared, and the few remaining civilians were hurrying to wind up affairs. Zairean soldiers were everywhere, with barricades and check points. They had also commandeered all civilian aircraft.

Serb-Zairean Relations Strained

The two airports at Kisangani, civil and military, were held by roughly a hundred Serbians who had arrived on 14 January. Commanded by a colonel, they took orders from Zairean headquarters (General Mahele) and not Christian Tavernier, head of the French mercs.

The Serbs' mission was to protect airports at Kisangani and everything on them, and to provide air support.

About 25 January, an Mi-24 helicopter, with several Serb mercs aboard, put down at Walikale while trying to recon the front lines. On exiting the men came under rebel fire — even though Zairean HQ said the place was still in government hands. The butcher's bill: one Serb killed, two wounded. Thereafter, the Serbs kept their distance from the Zaireans.

A clear animosity grew between them, and a number of Zaireans found themselves with a pistol at their head for straying too close to the Serbs' hangar. Even though the Serbs came with full logistics — they lacked nothing, especially alcohol, *stivovitz*, of course — they were not spared local diarrheas and malaria (early February, the Serb

colonel was hospitalized with malaria).

As for providing air support for French mercs, the Serbs were mostly noted for their absence. Zairean headquarters promised the French mercs air support in difficult situations, but these air strikes never happened, even though the Serbs had access to three Mi-24 Hinds and three single-seat Aermacchi MB-326 K light-attack aircraft.

Unfortunately, the Serbs and the Zairean army had a miscommunication over fuel supply. During the battle for Nzoro, while French mercs were holding the bridge against Kabila's rebels, the French requested an air strike. Zairean headquarters finally authorized the Serbs to intervene with their Aermacchi. They were supposed to take off from Kisangani and refuel at Isoro, but it didn't work out — the airport at Isiro did not have facilities to start the Aermacchis after they were refueled.

In addition to almost never having air support, the French mercs' task was further complicated by events quite predictable in this type of conflict, but which had not been considered. Radio equipment provided the mercs didn't work well. Batteries ran down very quickly and there was no recharging apparatus. They had improvised antennas, a transmitting radius of only five kilometers — and then on frequencies everyone could intercept, with no encryption.

Not the least handicap were the Zaireans alongside whom they were fighting: Most Zairean soldiers only loved to strut around in military uniform, new if possible, dis-

Continued on page 67

Support Your Local F.A.Z.

The Zairean Army was a paper tiger, even at a strength of 100,000 (military and paramilitary, including 25,000 Civil Guards for security and riot control). Many troops had not been paid for eight months. Even when paid, they didn't get much: A lieutenant in the FAZ (*Forces Armees Zairoises* — Zairean Armed Forces) gets three dollars a month (a pack of local cigarettes costs a dollar).

Without fuel and transport, materiel did not reach troops at the front, leaving soldiers to fend for themselves — the cause of looting and rackets. Communication barely existed, troops felt abandoned. Officers were no longer obeyed. Morale was low. All the troops wanted was peace, and to get back to their families.

The Zairean is not a warrior. To motivate and raise morale, Zairean HQ hired French mercs to lead. New weapons and uniforms were issued, and rations; troops were finally to be paid.

Tons of weapons, ammunition and other materiel were delivered to the Zairean army and the Katangans at Watsa and Durba, but with the rebel advance the Zaireans and Katangans cleared out and left everything behind.

All the rebels had to do was take, and use.

The "Elite" Units

SARM

(*Service d'Action et de Renseignements Militaires* — Military Action and Intelligence Service) a force of several thousand, comprised Mobutu's Praetorian guard.

SNIP

(*Service National d'Information et de Protection* — National Information and Protection Service).

DSP

(*Division Speciale Presidentielle* — Presidential Special Division), formerly BSP (*Brigade Speciale Presidentielle*) — comprised 12,000, trained and led by Israelis, represented Mobutu's only truly operational troops. The DSP was recruited from the Ngbandi, a tribe from the Equatorial Province (Gbadolite), home province of President Mobutu.

The DSP were particularly well paid, while the regular army was severely neglected — poorly paid or not paid at all, and often without arms and ammunition. The base at Tshatsi (near Kinshasa) was HQ for the DSP. Commanders were all closely connected to Mobutu's family — the DSP was thus an elite force committed to guarding Mobutu. Israeli instructors were paid directly by the Office of the President; also source of pay for DSP troops. — T.C.

WEAPONS EXCLUSIVE

VEST-POCKET ARTILLERY

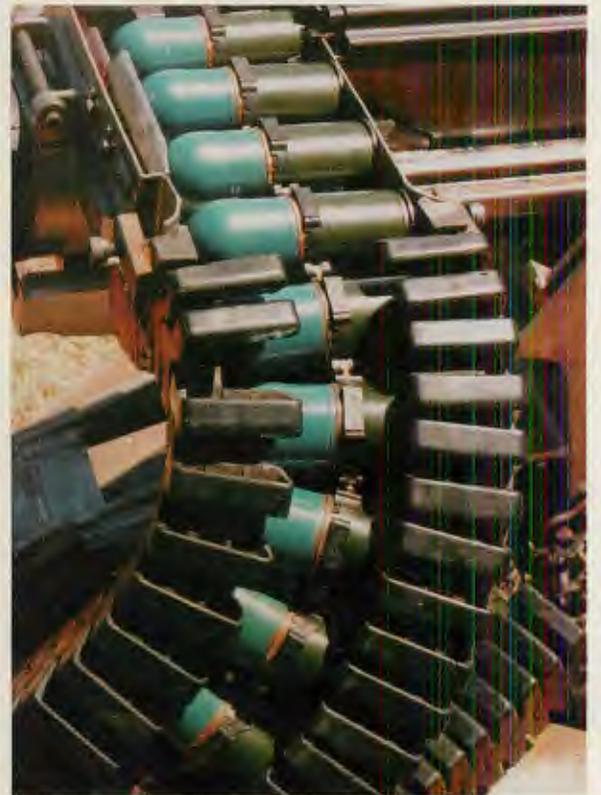
**One "Striker"
And You're Out**

**Text & Photos by
Peter G. Kokalis**

Automatic grenade launchers were almost an unknown commodity prior to the Vietnam War. Their development was closely related to the increased use of small boats and helicopters in that conflict. The 40mm Mark 19 machine gun was developed at the U.S. Naval Ordnance Station, Louisville, Ky., during 1966-1967 to provide the Navy with more effective firepower for riverine patrols in Vietnam. Its high-velocity grenade was based upon the high-low pressure round developed for the shoulder-mounted M79 grenade launcher. While literally tens of thousands of M79 and M203 shoulder-fired grenade launchers were employed during the Vietnam War, only 810 of the Mark 19 Mod 0 version were produced, although they were used in combat with impressive results.



Vektor's new Striker 40mm AGL was designed to provide the infantry with an integral component in the modern army's small-arms mix.



(top) When employed in the ground role, the Striker will usually be mounted on the M3 .50-caliber Browning machine gun tripod. Note the test-bed cradle interfacing the AGL with an M3 tripod. (above) The Striker's direction of feed can be varied from the left or right in the field by simply replacing the feed assembly. (left) When required, the Striker can operate reliably from a vertical position. The last-round hold pawl was designed for this purpose.



A Product Improvement Program (PIP) resulted in the Mod 1 and 1s in the early 1970s. Both Israel and South Korea have produced the Mark 19. Other high-velocity 40mm grenade machine guns were designed during this time frame by Honeywell, Philco-Ford, Maremont, Hughes Tool Company, Aerojet and the Naval Ordnance Station, but were never placed into series production. The Mark 19 Mod 3 version appeared in 1980. A contract was awarded to Saco Defense in 1983. By now, more than 15,000 have been produced. However, the design is complex and thus somewhat difficult to produce.

The Russian response to the Mark 19 was the AGS-17 30mm grenade machine gun introduced in 1975. It achieved prominence during its employment in Afghanistan (see "Raiders Of The Lost Grenade Launcher," Feb. '83). However, the AGS-17 does not use a high-low pressure round. The Chinese make a version of this weapon, as well as the Type W87 grenade machine gun which is smaller and lighter than the AGS-17, but fires a larger 35mm round from a drum magazine. Russia recently introduced a much simpler and lighter 30mm automatic grenade launcher called the TKB-722K, which appears destined to replace the AGS-17. There is also a Romanian grenade machine gun, derived from the AGS-17, but firing an odd bottlenecked 40mm round.

As grenade machine guns have by now been incorporated into the weapons array employed by infantry throughout the world, a number of high-velocity 40mm grenade machine guns, known as Automatic Grenade Launchers (AGLs), have been developed in recent years. Santa Barbara's LAG 40 SB-

M1 AGL is currently in service with the Spanish and Portuguese armed forces. Chartered Industries, of Singapore, developed the CIS 40-AGL, which is fielded by the Singapore armed forces and by Indonesia, where it is made under license. Heckler & Koch's 40mm GMG (Grenade Machine Gun) has only recently reached the advanced prototype stage. Both Germany and the Netherlands have expressed interest in the GMG.

One of the most intriguing of the new 40mm AGL designs is the South African

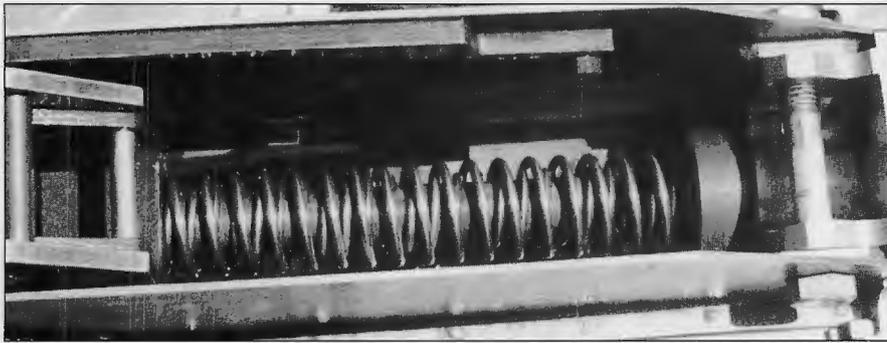
When deployed from either vehicles or in the ground role, the Striker 40mm AGL is commonly equipped with a manual trigger and spade grips.

Striker 40mm AGL, which I was able to test and evaluate during my most recent trip to South Africa. This weapon was originally developed as the AS88 by ARAM (Pty) Limited of Pretoria and introduced in prototype only in 1992. The patent rights for the original AS88 were purchased from ARAM by the LIW division of Denel. All of LIW's

STRIKER 40mm AGL

SPECIFICATIONS

- Caliber:** 40x53mmSR high-velocity, high-low pressure grenade.
- Operation:** Long recoil, locked breech. Fire from the open-bolt position.
- Feed:** Belt-fed from either right or left side with linked belts of 20 rounds. Disintegrating links stay with cartridge case and are ejected with the empty case after firing.
- Firing mechanism:** Manual trigger with spade grips or solenoid.
- Cyclic rate:** Maximum of 425 rpm.
- Weight:** 64 pounds (29 kilograms).
- Length, overall:** 33.9 inches (860 mm).
- Height:** 9.8 inches (250 mm).
- Width:** 15.8 inches (400 mm).
- Barrel length:** 11.8 inches (300 mm).
- Barrel:** 18-groove with square-cut rifling and a right-hand twist of one turn in 48 inches.
- Sights:** Iron, optical, laser or night vision available.
- Manufacturer:** Vektor division of LIW, Dept. SOF, 368 Selborne Avenue, Lyttelton, P.O. Box 7710, Pretoria 0001, South Africa; phone: 27-12-620-2103; fax: 27-12-620-2407.
- T&E summary:** A weapon type now considered to be an integral ingredient of the modern infantry's small-arms' mix, exhibiting the excellence of design execution and reliability customary of all LIW defense products.



(above) The bolt is now driven forward by a single multi-strand spring, not the two nested recoil springs shown on this test prototype, wrapped around a guide tube and the buffer assembly. (below) The barrel recoil mechanism is wrapped around the Striker's barrel. There is also a finned barrel protector, made from an aluminum extrusion, over the barrel spring tube.



small-arms products, from handguns to automatic cannons, are marketed by their Vektor division (368 Selborne Avenue, Lyttelton, P.O. Box 7710, Dept. SOF, Pretoria 0001, South Africa; phone: 27-12-620-2103; fax: 27-12-620-2407).

The Striker 40mm AGL fires the same ammunition as the Mark 19 Mod 3. Weighing about 64 pounds (29 kilograms), the Striker has a barrel length of 11.8 inches (300 mm). Made from rolled stock, its EN24 (a high-quality ordnance steel) barrel has an 18-groove bore with a right-hand twist of one turn in 48 inches. The barrel's rifling is of the square-cut type, whereas that of the Mark 19 Mod 3 is of the so-called "saw-tooth" type. Overall length of the Striker is about 33.9 inches (860 mm), with a height of only 9.8 inches (250 mm) and a width of 15.8 inches (400 mm).

The Striker's direction of feed can be varied from the left or right in the field without requiring additional components. The maximum rate of fire is 425 rpm. When ground-mounted on the M3 .50-caliber Browning Machine Gun tripod or on a vehicle, the Striker AGL is provided with spade grips and a manual trigger. However, these components can be removed and replaced with a firing solenoid for aircraft/helicopter applications.

The method of operation is long recoil and locked breech, although firing is from the open-bolt position to inhibit cook-offs. During the recoil stroke, the barrel and bolt stay locked together until they impinge upon the recoil buffer at the rear of the receiver body. Both move slightly forward, then the sear engages the unlocking mechanism on the bolt, which releases the barrel.

The barrel is then driven forward by a

process has been completed, two springs under the feed plate return it to its original position. Meanwhile, the bolt is still in the rearward position and the grenade is in the extract position on the feed tray, which is above the feed plate.

When the barrel is fully forward, a lever at the bottom of the receiver body depresses to release the left-hand sear in the trigger box. However, the bolt remains in the open

breech face is still a short distance away from the grenade on the feed tray. The bolt and barrel then continue to move forward a short distance until the recoil stroke commences. This important design feature both absorbs forward inertia and reduces rearward inertia. As a direct consequence, the Striker's recoil impulse is relatively soft. This, in turn, enhances the system's accuracy potential. In addition, there is also a barrel buffer that stops the barrel's forward movement and dampens the forward travel of the bolt.

When the grenade and its link are pulled from the belt, a slide running in the center of the bolt is pushed downward by a lever which moves in the top cam slot on the right side of the receiver. This pushes the grenade about one-third of its way downward toward the chamber. At that point the bolt is still on the recoil buffer. The bolt's forward travel forces the grenade down the final two-thirds of the way as the lever moves now in the bottom cam slot. The grenade is then in alignment with the firing pin. Toward the end of the lever's forward movement in the bottom cam slot, both it and the slide are forced upward again.

Two hooks on the bottom of the breech face prevent the loaded grenade from dropping down through the ejection port when the bolt is open. When the bolt is released from the sear carrier, a spring-loaded toggle in the bolt pulls back the two hooks and the empty case is ejected. As the new round is brought down, the two hooks move forward again to grab the rim. — P.G.K.

Method Of Operation

barrel spring housed in a tube which guides the spring and has a threaded collar that interfaces with threads on the outside of the barrel. This barrel recoil mechanism is wrapped around the barrel. There is also a finned barrel protector, made from an aluminum extrusion, over the barrel spring tube.

The feeding of another round takes place during the recoil stroke. An actuator roller on top of the barrel engages the feed plate's first guide groove, at which time the first one-third of the feeding process is accomplished. During this sequence of events, as the barrel and bolt reach the buffer, the actuator roller pushes the feed plate away and momentarily stops. As the feed plate returns to its original position, the barrel unlocks from the bolt. During the counter-recoil stroke, the actuator roller travels forward through the second guide groove on the feed plate, at which time the final two-thirds of feeding process occurs. Once the feeding

position until the trigger is pressed. At that moment, the right-hand sear is released and the sear carrier pivots downward into the trigger housing, releasing the bolt. The bolt is driven forward by a multi-strand recoil spring wrapped around a guide tube and the buffer assembly. When the bolt moves forward and its locking lugs engage the locking recesses in the barrel extension, the firing pin protrudes from the breech face and strikes the grenade's percussion primer.

In parallel to breech locking, the bolt depresses the last-round hold-pawl (which was designed for vertical firing of the weapon), so the grenade and its link are released from the belt for (bottom) extraction. The extractor claws on the bolt are then forced open and snap over the case's rim.

The grenade drops downward for chambering during the recoil stroke. The firing pin actually ignites the primer while the

The Striker used in *Soldier Of Fortune's* test and evaluation was equipped with iron sights that, in my opinion, will provide an effective combat range of no more than about 1,500 meters. However, optical, laser and night-vision sight options will be available.

As both mortars and AGLs are area-target weapons now commonly deployed with the infantry, a comparison is in order. In general, mortars are high-trajectory weapons in which the recoil force is passed directly to the ground through a base plate. They are mostly muzzle-loading, smooth-bore and fire fin-stabilized bombs.

Maximum range of the 40mm high-velocity grenade is about 2,200 meters. Light mortars will reach out to about 1,800 meters. Most 60mm light mortars weigh about 40 pounds. Medium mortars (such as the 81mm), which have a maximum effective range of about 5,500 meters, weigh between 75 to 150 pounds. The Striker AGL weighs only 64 pounds, however, the M3 tripod on which it must be mounted for infantry deployment weighs 44 pounds. Mortar bombs, which weigh considerably more than 40mm high-velocity grenades, provide, even in the smallest envelopes, a greater casualty radius.

While the Striker AGL can be fired effectively from a vertical position, the mortar's high-trajectory munition makes it more suitable for firing from defilade. In fact, indirect-fire capability is one of the mortar's most salient characteristics.

While the ease of loading a mortar provides for a high rate of fire, even a mortar platoon cannot match the firepower of a single belt-fed AGL firing at 425 rpm. Clearly, within the limitations of its effective range, an AGL provides greater suppressive fire. Because mortars transmit their recoil impulse directly to the surface under the base plate, they cannot usually be successfully mounted in helicopters (furthermore, their high-trajectory and manual-loading precludes such an application). Early on in Vietnam, 81mm mortars mounted, at first, on the decks of small riverine craft played havoc with both the boats' decks and hulls. Although mortars have been successfully mounted in such military vehicles as the M113 APC, AGLs can be attached to armored fighting vehicles with far greater versatility.

Automatic grenade launchers have become an integral ingredient in the modern infantry's weapons' mix. The South African Defense Force is keenly anticipating an early conclusion to the Striker's final developmental stages and the trials process, as they are eager to adopt an AGL. No defense contractor on the face of the earth has a more well-deserved reputation for excellence of design and reliability of product — over an array ranging from pistols to self-propelled artillery — than LIW. Their new Striker AGL is destined for a favorable reception far beyond the continent of Africa. ☒

40mm High-Velocity High-Low Pressure Ammunition

Development of low-velocity high-low pressure ammunition began in the early 1950s under the U. S. Army Ordnance Department, headed at that time by the infamous Colonel Rene R. Studler. His deputy, Jack Bird, created a crude, spring-loaded launcher with which he proceeded to fire golf balls in the center courtyard of the Pentagon. Since the golf ball's trajectory was reminiscent of that produced by a No. 9 golf club (the so-called "niblick"), Bird suggested the project be called "Niblick," and that, indeed, became its code name.

An unusual high-low pressure system was employed to launch the new warhead developed for this project at the U.S. Army's Ballistic Research Laboratories (BRL) at Aberdeen Proving Ground. The launching method itself had been developed in Germany during World War II. An aluminum cartridge case with a brass powder-charge cup in front of the percussion primer is used to hold about five grains of M-9 flake-type mortar propellant (an enhanced, fast-burning Bull's-eye-type powder). The propellant/high-pressure chamber has six sealed holes around its circumference. When the launcher's firing pin strikes the primer, the resulting primer flash ignites the powder within the high-pressure chamber.

The burning propellant creates a pressure of close to 35,000 pounds per square inch (psi) within the chamber, forcing the gases to rupture the vent holes and bleed into the larger (low-pressure) chamber of the cartridge case itself. When the gases enter the larger chamber, the pressure drops to no more than 3,000 psi, which is sufficient to propel the grenade through the launcher's barrel and to the target, and yet generate a low enough recoil impulse to permit firing from a shoulder-mounted weapon. The projectile's muzzle velocity is only 250 fps; rounds can easily be seen sailing down range.



Swartklip high-velocity 40mm grenades are supplied in M16A2 linked belts of 20 rounds, with a pitch of 55.5 mm. The links stay with the cartridge case and are ejected with the empty case after firing.

The launcher's rifling imparts a spin of about 3,700 rpm on the grenade to provide the required accuracy and to arm the impact-type fuze.

This low-velocity round is known as the 40x46mmSR (Semi-Rimmed).

The high-velocity M384 40mm grenade round developed for use in the Mark 19 automatic grenade launcher was the result of research conducted at Picatinny Arsenal and elsewhere in the 1960s. The overall design and operating principle of this munition remain the same as that employed by the 40x46mmSR grenade. However, the cartridge case of the high-velocity equivalent is longer (53mm) — to prevent chambering in a shoulder-mounted grenade launcher and more robust to safely accommodate the larger propellant charge weight which drives these grenades at a muzzle velocity of 794 fps (242 m/s) to a maximum range of 2,200 meters. Initial pressures for this round are between 45,000 to 50,000 psi, dropping to 16,000 psi in the low-pressure chamber. While the U.S. series of high-velocity 40mm ammunition can be employed in the South African Striker AGL, initial testing and developmental work was conducted with 40mm high-velocity grenades supplied by Swartklip Products, a Division of Denel (Pty) Limited (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 977, Cape Town, 8000, South Africa; phone: 27-21-376-6702).

Swartklip high-velocity 40mm grenades are supplied in M16A2 linked belts of 20 rounds, with a pitch of 55.5 mm and fed from either an ammunition box or feed chute. The links stay with the cartridge case and are ejected with the empty case after firing. There are four munition types available with an accuracy potential that will place 25 out of 30 shots through a 300mm square at 150 meters. The standard High Explosive (HE) grenade consists of three components: the cartridge case, fragmentation assembly and the fuze. The projectile, which has copper driving bands, is spin-stabilized by the launcher rifling, which also provides the setback and rotational forces needed to arm the fuze (arming distance is 14 to 61 meters). On impact, the firing pin initiates the detonation train which causes the main charge of HE to detonate and fragment the projectile. The explosive employed is 45 grams of RDX and the casualty radius is 12 meters. While principally an anti-personnel round, it is also effective against light vehicles.

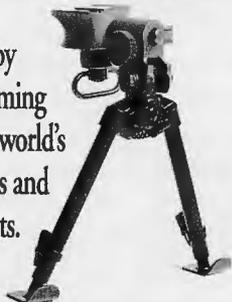
The HE Hollow Charge round includes a copper cone for penetration purposes and will penetrate a minimum of 50 mm of armor plate. It has an explosive charge of 32 grams of RDX with a casualty radius of 5 meters.

The Practice round launches an inert aluminum projectile with ballistic characteristics similar to those of the HE and HE Hollow Charge rounds. There is also a Target Practice round carrying a projectile with an arming mechanism that upon impact sets off a flash composition charge in the projectile body that produces a visible flash with smoke and an audible bang.

— P. G. K.

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Indonesia's Conflict

Continued from page 37

A Brutal Reputation

A military presence is only part of the security picture. Since the early 1980s, Jakarta has poured money into East Timor, paving roads, bringing electricity to rural villages, and building schools and housing. More developmental money has been spent per capita in East Timor than in any other province. The fact that these improvements *alone* have not eased the ill feelings of many Timorese irritates Indonesian officials.

"They [officials] honestly believe that civic action will turn the East Timorese into their friends," says a former military adviser. "My response is that building roads and irrigation projects is fine, but the psychological problem is still there, and it will take a long time to heal."

Make no mistake about it, Indonesia does have a sometimes well-deserved reputation for brutality, and this will indeed color the situation in East Timor for a long time to come.

The U.S. State Department recognizes that the Indonesian government "continued to commit serious human-rights abuses" in East Timor as well as in the rest of Indonesia. This is an important point to remember: Jakarta has a human-rights problem *throughout* the country, not just in East Timor.

In fact, the soldiers on the ground in East Timor are implementing a policy of civic action that exists throughout Indonesia. Rather than doing what armies regularly do — defend against outside aggression — Indonesia's military is designed primarily for internal security. More than two-thirds of its troops are spread throughout the country in territorial units that function alongside the civilian administration. Like police, they maintain public order, but they also keep a watchful eye out for political parties, religious groups, and labor groups that might mobilize in anti-government opposition.

There is a military presence all the way down to the village level throughout Indonesia and it will intervene and squash any potential opponents to the government. This policy is called *dwifungsi*: a weaving of the military into the social fabric. On the one hand, it has allowed Jakarta to extend beneficial "nation-building" to the most remote corners of the archipelago; on the other, it sometimes creates an atmosphere of repression.

Massacre Inspires Reforms

In November 1991, the world saw a glaring example of this when soldiers opened fire on thousands of pro-independence demonstrators at Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, killing dozens. A British news crew was on hand to record the carnage. The videotape was shocking.

The military at first denied there were any killings, then admitted that 60 people died. Human-rights groups put the figure at

closer to 150. But it was the callousness of the military's response — as if it was only natural to kill unarmed civilians — that outraged the world. General Try Sustrisno, Indonesian armed-forces commander, reportedly said in the wake of the massacre that those who want independence are "delinquent people [who] have to be shot, and we will shoot them."

That's hardly the sort of statement that leads people to believe the massacre was an aberration. But underneath Jakarta's defensiveness came the beginnings of meaningful reform.

"It finally dawned on the [Jakarta] government," observed one U.S. State Department analyst, "that there might a better way: One that would get better results on the ground in East Timor and at the same time deflect some of the criticism they were getting in the world press."

Several mid-level army officers were court-martialed for their role in the Santa Cruz killings, and for the first time in its history the Indonesian military held several senior military leaders responsible for their subordinates' actions. This new attitude was not a radical change in the way the Indonesian military operates in East Timor; rather, it was a subtle series of steps which, many experts believe, point to a new phase in Jakarta's pacification program. This is particularly evident in the top officers chosen to command troops in East Timor.

"They have had two commanders in a row now that have been trained in the United States," observed one former U.S. adviser to the Indonesian military. "They both speak English and they both understand the foreign interests and pressures about human rights."

He was referring to Colonel Mahidin Simbolon, commander of military forces in East Timor between 1994 and late 1996, and the man currently holding the job, Col. Harry Pysand. Both are special-forces officers who attended the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College as well as other U.S. military schools. These officers are steeped in counterinsurgency doctrine and they know that the guerrilla war in East Timor will be difficult to resolve completely.

But no matter what happens, Indonesia will never give up control of its newest province. This position was made clear as recently as last December when Konis Santana, the current head of FRETILIN's military wing, told Portuguese radio that "if Indonesia agreed to freeze the ceaseless migration of its nationals to East Timor, and reduced its military presence in East Timor the guerrillas ... would declare an indefinite cease-fire."

Indonesian Foreign Ministry spokesman Ghaffar Fadyl simply replied, "If you talk about a cease-fire there must be a war, but there is no fighting."

Dale Andradé is a long-time contributor to SOF specializing in coverage of elite units. ✕

"Rumble In The Jungle"

Continued from page 59

playing a whole panoply of weapons, the more sophisticated the better, even if he had no idea how to use them.

King Snakes

But after the first shots were fired — most of the time, even just rumors of shots fired — the "soldier," whether paratrooper or commando, dumped his equipment except for his individual weapon (for shake-downs on civilians during his flight, in civilian clothes, in a westerly direction towards Kinshasa).

More than once, men from SARM, SNIP or DSP — the principal "elite" forces (see sidebar) — asked mercs for compasses "so we can go home to the Bandundu!" When the French pointed out that Bandundu is a long walk, they replied, "It's all right if you take three months to get there! Look, all of us came here to Isiro on foot ..."

The third weak point for the mercs was the distances and logistics involved. Zaire is five times as large as France, with no real roads. Existing dirt tracks are in bad shape, impassable during the rains. Air routes are disorganized, with few airfields capable of handling large aircraft. Even for small planes there must be a regular system for refueling and mechanical maintenance, which is cruelly lacking in Zaire. Given the absence of comms and logistical infrastructure, the French mercs had to fend for themselves on the ground.

The mercs made do with one of the two aircraft available, the Pilatus, before it crashed on the runway at Nagero. There was a bombing mission on 30 January, using 120mm mortar shells dropped into rebel positions by hand. Benoit piloted and, in the cabin, Titi dropped the "plums" while hanging out the door with Charles holding onto him. Huddled on the floor, gray with fear and staring at the ceiling, was Colonel Anecho of the Zairean army, sweating profusely. One other time they conducted a bombing mission by dropping hand grenades on a rebel column.

Until the bitter end, the Andover remained the Mercs' guardian angel, carrying supplies and troops, providing radio relay when they were encircled or otherwise in straits, even flying recon missions. The mercs were always glad to hear the arrival of Roland's Andover. His aircrew, Louis, Alain and Christian, were not chatty; Roland even less so. Nevertheless, they were extremely effective and saved the mercs more than once. The Andover's crew were the only ones who dared to go in places where the French were, and did so right to the end of their campaign in late February.

Loyalties Ride The Tides Of War

The rebels were very active in areas they occupied. From the Pilatus, Mercs followed the foot movement of men along the power

lines, and occasional vehicle traffic arriving at the front loaded with fighters, returning empty to get more. Two light 4x4 vehicles had 12.7mm machine guns and didn't hesitate to engage the Pilatus (fortunately, out of range).

The rebel camp, however, had been forged from a sometimes shaky coalition, and loyalties weren't always solid. Thus, the Mayi-Mayi, a tribe of east Zaire, were initially associated with Kabila's rebels, but later broke away and set up a pocket of resistance within the "liberated zones." Further, Commander Claude, Kabila's second in command, was killed by the Mayi-Mayi, who, nevertheless, refused also to join Mobutu.

Also, troops from Uganda took advantage of the Zairean debacle to hunt down a resistance movement composed of supporters of former Ugandan president Idi Amin Dada, who were operating out of Zaire.

The rebels' capture of Kalemie on 2 February blew a wind of panic through the Zairean army at Kisangani, as rebels were now active on two fronts simultaneously. Baffled as they were preparing for the reconquest of the lost territories, the Zaireans took a few days to react.

Zairean response came down on 17 February with the bombing of Bukavu, Shabunda and Walikale by three Aermacchi MB-326 K aircraft with Serbian pilots. Other operations were conducted in the north around Isiro, where the Aermacchi and Mi-24 helicopters used napalm and WP against rebel positions. These operations did not, however, cause the expected panic, as the rebels were habitually well dispersed. Furthermore, given the altitudes at which the aircraft were flown, accuracy was poor.

Rent Some Troops, Buy Some Time

Beginning in mid-February, the French mercenaries were pulled back from the "front" and remained on stand-by at Kisangani. They were later ordered to Kinshasa and from there, discreetly and in small groups, by Air France, Swissair and Sabena, back to France, ending the presence of French mercs in Zaire.

Given the size of Zaire, a small mercenary force would be expected to be of limited significance. However, in spite of limited numbers and armament, they were able to slow advancing rebels, who were dramatically more numerous and helped by outside forces, and to gain several weeks' negotiating space for their ultimate employer, Mobutu's Zairean government.

Applying the standard of what these several weeks could signify on the chess-board of world politics, their presence in Zaire appears to be genuinely consequential.

Belgium-based photo-journalist Thierry Charlier, born and raised in Zaire (then the Belgian Congo), was in Zaire from December 1996 to February 1997. He knew many in this story, via earlier associations from the time of Bob Denard's Comoros coup of 1995 (see "Counting Coups," Feb. '96). He is a frequent contributor to Raids magazine. ✕



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Held Hostage!

Continued from page 41

Our first stop was the ordnance department to view a steel smorgasbord of international weapons. They issue an eclectic mix including Israeli 5.56mm Galil assault rifles; Singapore 5.56mm SR-88 assault rifles (slated to replace the Galil as the FOES basic weapon); Belgian P90 5.7mm personal defense weapons; 7.62x51mm scoped sniper rifles; South Korean USAS 12, automatic 12-gauge shotguns with 25-round drum and 10-round banana mags for point men; South African 40mm grenade launchers (see separate story, this issue); South African Armbrust 60mm AT rocket launchers; Russian RPG-7s.

After the heavy stuff, Lobo displayed a silenced Beretta. I told him it reminded me of the silenced .22 Rugers we used in Vietnam on barking village dogs. "We called the weapon," I said, "a hush puppy."

Lobo laughed and said, "Let me show you our hush puppy." Out came a bolt-action .50-caliber sniper rifle complete with HE-tipped rounds accurate to some 1,500 meters.

Water Warriors

After ordnance, Lobo showed me their commo, boats, and dive gear. The basic FOE manpack radio is the British HF RACAL with burst transmittal and throat mike.

FOES use French inflatables: Zodiac F470a and 380s. They prefer the smaller, four-man 380 because it is fully inflatable, rather than having a rigid component, and accepts air as well as CO₂. The 380 is easier to handle aboard submarines during wet-deck launches. FOES also have a number of four-man ocean kayaks.

FOE combat swimmers use a French Spiro-Technique rebreather but are dissatisfied with its cheap construction. They prefer the Draeger's LAR-V that U.S. SEALs use, but the Spiro-Technique costs half as much. They believe, however, that Peru manufactures a limpet mine and timer superior to the U.S. model. (It was designed by Fritz: The mine impressed SEALs a few years ago and they wanted it, but were frustrated by our "buy U.S." policy.)

I was introduced to officers in charge of FOE basic and jump schools, graduates of BUDS class 143. We'd never met, but I knew of their class: Some 116 trainees including 16 officers started the course and 12 finished. This was an astronomical attrition rate, even for BUDS, and all U.S. officer-trainees quit. Only Zorro and Aguila could hack it.

When I mentioned this, they laughed and Zorro said, "Yeah, that caused some problems for the instructors who use the senior trainee for admin duties. The instructors were pissed because we were the only officers left and they couldn't use — in their words — a 'f**king foreigner' as senior trainee."

I cringed at the instructors' Ugly American comment but Zorro and Aguila didn't seem to take offense. In fact, they delighted in calling each other a "f**king foreigner."

Lobo suggested I tour the training areas with Aguila while Zorro rounded up some operators to show off the gear a FOE platoon uses to shoot, move, and communicate.

I noticed a 4x6-foot concrete pit barely large enough to hold the three trainees who clawed at its slick walls to escape. A foul odor issued from the pit. Aguila passed it without comment. I later learned this horror chamber was called the "snake pit," a purely Peruvian innovation with no BUDS' equivalent.

We came to a more benign and familiar object: a ship's bell gleaming in the sun above a neat row of helmet liners — the infamous quitter's bell that trainees had to ring when they'd had enough. Count the helmet liners, just as at BUDS, to determine the number of quitters in a class.

Aguila said he'd heard BUDS stopped using the bell because some admiral said it was too humiliating, violated the trainee's human rights. "Actually," I replied, "it was a general who removed the bell. SEALs are opcon to a joint command headed by the army."

"Well," Aguila said, "you tell BUDS that trainees in Peru have no human rights."

We paused briefly at the swimming pool where trainees were fending off panic as they suffered the rigors of "drown-proofing."

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With hands and ankles tightly bound, trainees negotiated the length of the pool several times and then floated using controlled breathing. Many trainees nearly drown during drown-proofing. It's a real bell-ringer.

Airborne

As we checked out the jump-school area, Aguila modestly told me something of his background: more than 2,000 free-fall jumps and training in tandem ops at an elite French school. He is a member of Peru's championship skydiving team and has competed in many countries, including the States.

Aguila is proudest of the FOE jump school that has both basic and advanced courses. He designed and supervised construction of the training areas and has been the school's only CO. Students have made more than 4,000 jumps without a fatality or serious injury.

We returned to headquarters to find Zorro with several shooters in full combat gear. I looked beyond the cammie war paint into those machine-gunner eyes and thought, *these sailors are the real deal.*

After a short, good-humored dog-and-pony show Lobo arrived and we met Fritz for a final *foto de amistad* — a photo of friendship. Before Fritz and I left, I gave Aguila, who is Lucho's nephew, a jug of Crown Royal. We agreed the jug would remain unopened until we could share with Lucho. Lucho was the only Latin American I know who prefers Canadian to Scotch whiskey. He was unique in so many ways and I missed him.

I wondered when I would again see him. The hostage situation at the Japanese Ambassador's Residence was deadlocked. President Fujimori publicly and flatly stated the government would never cave to terrorists. In an idiotic episode that reminded me painfully of Waco, the DINOES had blared music at the residence for hours, circling the compound with armored cars while screaming insults and flipping off the terrorists. MRTA ended this dangerous nonsense by bouncing several rounds off the armored cars.

Cooler heads prevailed. The Japanese government, a significant contributor of aid to Peru, pressed for negotiations. Friends of Peru in the international community discreetly offered SpecOps and intelligence assets. While the circus outside the compound distracted the attention of the terrorists and world media, what would become the hostage rescue of the century began to take form under the leadership of Peru's elite, capable FOES.

I returned to San Diego to renew my passport ... and wait. My gut told me it wouldn't be long before Lucho, his fellow FOES and I would split that bottle of Canadian rye.

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"SAFTA: Navy SEAL Fighting System" features step by step instruction using fifty action-filled training lessons. Lew Hicks demonstrates over 150 SAFTA movements that develop the physical skills and "Affirmative Mindset" needed to dominate any violent encounter. Once limited to the Navy SEALs' secret training areas, this proven system has been filmed for the first time. Take an inside look as Navy SEALs train "full contact" using SAFTA, the *unbeatable scientific approach* to dynamic physical control.

- Discover how special SEAL skills and scientific principles combine to make SAFTA the most effective fighting system.
- See the Navy SEALs' premier unarmed tactics instructor expose the mysticism and false promises that surround all other fighting systems.
- Train with the Navy SEALs' best. Learn the "Weapons of the Body" Target Indexing" and "The Three Musts".



Join the SAFTA Team; develop the self-confidence and ability to fight like the legendary Navy SEALs. *This training is not available from any other source. Don't miss this chance - SAFTA is the real thing!* Meditation and psychology won't dispel the fear of being attacked. Only knowledge can conquer fear - by understanding anatomy and how the body responds when the skeletal structure is manipulated. This film is guaranteed to arm you with this knowledge.

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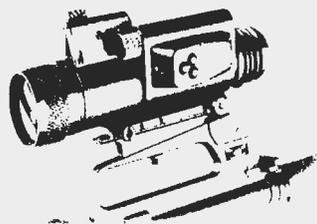
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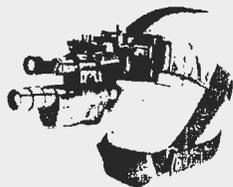
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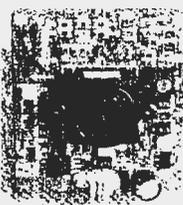
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Poor Man's Artillery

Continued from page 51

warhead is probably preformed fragments and therefore is about as effective as modern 60mm mortar rounds. A larger Bulgarian antipersonnel round is the approximately 85mm OG-7V. This round also incorporates what appears to be preformed fragments for increased antipersonnel effectiveness. The final Bulgarian AP round is the OG-7VE. This round bears a striking resemblance to the Russian TBG-7 thermobaric round and may thus be similar. It is unlike any of the other newly-developed Bulgarian AP rounds, which leads to the conclusion that it may be thermobaric. As with tandem warheads, we have previously discussed thermobaric munitions.

A Weapon For The 21st Century

As to the future, the RPG can easily be converted into a bargain-basement antitank guided missile. The Israelis have already developed a laser guidance system that can be adapted to virtually any light antitank weapon. In the case of the RPG, the standard VP-22 point-initiating, base detonating (PIBD) fuze is replaced with a "smart" fuze which incorporates a thermal battery, a laser detector, a piezoelectric generator and guidance canards. A new laser-designator sight is fitted to the RPG-7 launcher which controls the flight of the PG-7 "missile." All that is required of the gunner is to hold the laser designator on target and the PG-7 "missile" will fly to the point of aim. At 500 meters, the probability of hitting a tank is raised from virtually nil to 80%. At closer ranges, the probability of hit rises. Of course, the probability of kill directly relates to the type of PG-7 warhead being used, but this Israeli development demonstrates once again the innate versatility of the RPG-7 system.

The versatility of the RPG-7, of course, lies in the ability of the weapon to be adapted to virtually any new warhead technology, as demonstrated by the PG-7VR and TBG-7 rounds and the "quick and dirty" ATGM conversion developed by the Israelis. Thus the RPG-7 maintains its viability and effectiveness while other infantry antitank rockets and "bunker buster" weapons are outpaced by technology. Another advantage of the RPG-7 is the fact that every RPG-7 launcher is capable of firing every PG-7 rocket. The simplicity of the RPG-7 concept is not only what has kept it viable for over 30 years, but this simplicity of concept is what will keep it soldiering on into the future, well into the 21st Century.

Former head of technical intelligence for the Marine Corps, Charles Q. Cutshaw is now Associate Editor of Jane's Infantry Weapons, Editor of Jane's Ammunition Handbook, and Contributing Editor for Small Arms at Jane's International Defense Review. ✕

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I Was There

Continued from page 27

confidence in my instructors," Bush said. "The Golden Knights are great."

Tuesday, 25 March 1997, 0800: At this point the level of excitement was increasing. I had checked, double-checked and re-checked my camera equipment making sure everything was ready to go.

President Bush arrived on time. After an additional hour and a half of training he was set to go. In a small room in a hangar at the Army airport at YPG, President Bush and his wife, Barbara, relaxed and waited while last-minute preparations were made to the airplane. In these few minutes before the jump, I seized the opportunity to have a photo made of myself with the former president and first lady. After all, I would be on the other side of the camera during the jump, and I wanted a picture for myself, too.

We boarded the plane and began the ascent to 12,500 feet. Again, I was impressed at the calm displayed by the president. He looked very comfortable and several times laughed and joked with his instructors on the way up.

After one last check of the president's equipment, the instructors stood him up and made their way to the rear of the plane where they would exit. Bangs asked the president, "Sir, are you ready to skydive?"

"Ready to go!" Bush yelled. "Up, down, arch!" and away they went.

I was directly in front of Bush and the first to follow him out the door. Serrano and Bangs held the president by his harness and hands at first but soon released their grip and let him fly.

The president was stable and very much in control. He was relaxed and several times smiled for the cameras.

Bush opened his chute at the appropriate altitude and after a successful descent under the rainbow-colored canopy he touched down softly and landed standing.

When asked by a member of the news media immediately after the jump for a comment, Bush simply replied, "The Golden Knights are the best." Asked how he felt, Bush gave a thumbs-up and said, "Like that."

We returned to the room in the large hangar to watch the video of the jump. The president and Mrs. Bush were both elated. It was clear that the president felt a sense of accomplishment.

Since my 1989 jump at the Lincoln Memorial I have often been asked, of all my jumps, which one has been the best or meant the most to me. I used to say that one — the one for President Bush at his inauguration.

But if asked now I'll say, the jump I made with President Bush onto Phillips Drop Zone, Yuma, Ariz.

Staff Sgt. Ken Kassens is the official photographer for the U.S. Army Parachute Team, the Golden Knights. ✕

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Only the Law Enforcement Alliance of America is devoted to enacting H.R. 218, the Community Protection Act. H.R. 218 would allow qualified retired and off-duty law enforcement officers to carry concealed firearms nationwide. Simply put, LEAA believes that your life and the lives of your loved ones are worth protecting 24 hours a day — wherever you may be.

LEAA — Protecting Your Livelihood

Where were the other national police groups when Congress passed the disastrous "Lautenberg Amendment?" This provision is now forcing many departments to disarm their own officers — on and off the job — for misdemeanor domestic incidents, no matter how long ago they occurred. LEAA was the *only* national police group to vigorously and publicly oppose this misguided law, which is now taking good cops off the street, and in many places, putting cops in the unemployment line — stripped of their jobs *and* their right of self-protection.

LEAA — With You 24 Hours, 7 Days a Week

The fact is, most national police groups aren't very concerned about issues beyond the workplace. How many times have the national bosses stood aside while liberal social engineers enacted another feel-good idea that hit cops the hardest? LEAA says: Too many.

- That's why LEAA is pushing for the "Weight Ban" bill at the state and federal level that bans inmate access to muscle-building free weights, and martial-arts training.
- That's why LEAA is pushing for the "Disarming Bill" at the state and federal level to increase penalties for disarming or attempting to disarm a law enforcement officer.
- That's why LEAA strongly supports "Peace Officer Bill of Rights" legislation, and is also pushing to mandate AIDS/HIV testing for high-risk suspects and inmates.

If you believe that the safety and security of law enforcement — on-duty, off-duty and retired — are more important than playing political games in Washington, it's time for you to join LEAA.



For more information or to inquire about membership, contact:

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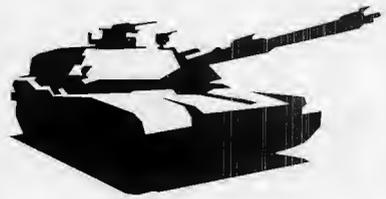
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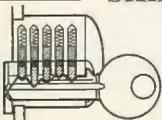
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Requiem For A Ranger Tab

On 16 May I was nuked by CBS's David Martin. He was working a story pegged to the first anniversary of Admiral Boorda's suicide, designed to portray me as guilty of wearing awards I wasn't authorized. Just like Boorda.

Some of you saw that twisted story which was taped and then cut to support Martin's agenda, while many more of you were barraged by the first wave of copycat media fallout that accompanied it.

Fortunately, Dana Priest of the *Washington Post*, asked me for my side of the story, and the *Post's* accurate headline, "Hackworth Says Army Gave Him Two Awards By Mistake," says it all.

And thank God there's been a second wave of stories from truth tellers like radio and TV giant Don Imus, all defending me as I have, for better or worse, always tried to defend America.

Martin's spin was I "wore" two medals I had never been awarded — a Ranger tab and a second Distinguished Flying Cross.

Over a 25-year career in the Army I earned over 90 combat awards including two Distinguished Service Crosses, nine Silver Stars and eight Bronze Stars.

I have never worn or claimed an award the Army didn't issue me. And what would I gain from jacking them up by two?

In 1973, in my pain over Vietnam, I gave all of my medals to a bunch of kids and helped spearhead a campaign against nuclear armament that led to my receiving my most cherished award, aside from my eight Purple Hearts, the United Nations Peace Medal.

In 1988, at General John Howard's request, the Army reissued my awards along with a letter of transmittal listing them. Last year, in response to requests, I published that list on my web site.

Several weeks ago Terry Roderick, an expert on the Ranger tab — the tab is a skill-qualification badge, and to call it a medal as CBS did is like confusing a surgeon for a barber — convinced me that members of the 27th Raiders, my old unit in Korea, were not entitled to the tab, even though Colonel George Sloan had awarded it to us in 1951 for behind-the-lines operations, and even though the Army itself had authorized my tab since 1968 and reissued it in 1988. Nor did my brief service with the 8th Ranger Company when I was officially assigned to the 25th Recon qualify me to wear the tab.

As Dana Priest wrote in her *Washington Post* article, Roderick



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.

"discovered that the Army had given me the right to wear the Ranger tab inappropriately ..." The facts here are that the Army put the tab on my records in 1968 for Korean combat service and I proudly wore the tab until I hung up my soldier suit.

My immediate response to Roderick's study was not only to remove the tab from the list on my web site, but also to verify that list against my actual citations.

When I discovered another possible Army error with regard to a second Distinguished Flying Cross, I promptly removed that award, as well, pending a final Army ruling, even though General Howard says that Warrant Officer Thayer, who had put my 1988 award package together, was the Army's top award expert and such "a stickler for details there's a good chance that Thayer was right in the first place.

The bottom line is that I never wore or claimed an award that wasn't authorized by the Pentagon and the tab and second DFC were removed from my web page by me one week before Martin started his story.

As to Admiral Boorda, on that fateful day last year I fully expected him to say that yes, he had at one time worn several valor awards in error, but when the mistake had been pointed out to him, he had removed them. As indeed he had. For *Newsweek*, the story would have fizzled like a dime sparkler.

Instead, I was shocked by his suicide and not a day goes by that I don't regret it — but no more than I regret the lives of all the brave soldiers who died because of my battle decisions in Korea and Vietnam.

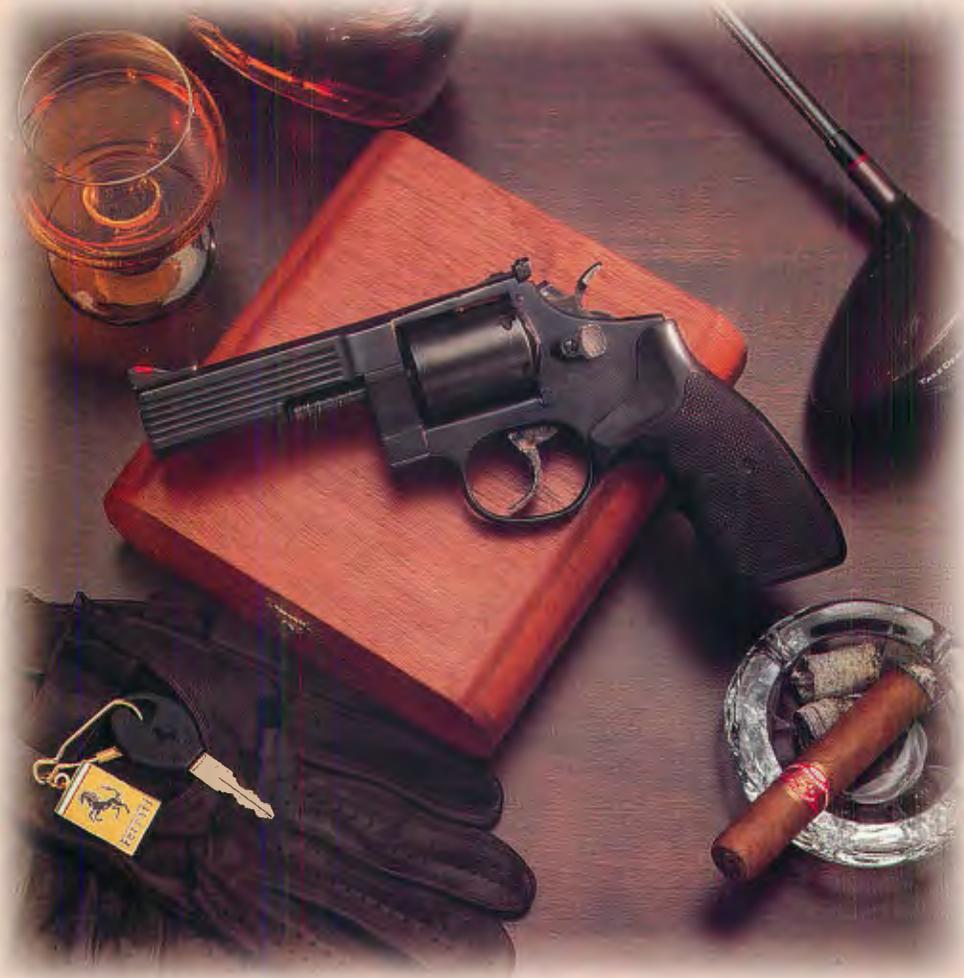
So I live with that and do what I can to stop more dying.

[Http://www.hackworth.com](http://www.hackworth.com) is the address of David Hackworth's home page.

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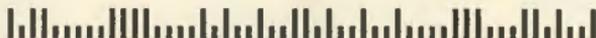
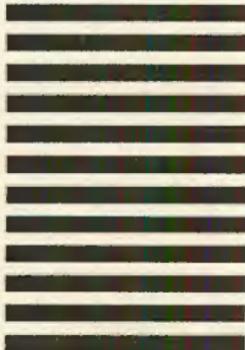
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