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CONTENTS

OCTOBER 1997
Vol. 22 No. 10



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On the Cover
Soldier Of Fortune, Inc., a big-budget SpecOps adventure series, infiltrates TV land this fall. See story, page

42

FEATURES

ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS

Jim Hooper

Death comes quickly in the mile-long kill zone of a south Sudan ambush.

38

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, INC.

Dan Gagliasso

A multinational cast teams up with a major Hollywood producer and a real-deal ex-SEAL in this new TV series.

42

BASIC INSTINCTS

Mark H. Milstein

SOF gets a weekend pass *inside* a Russian military-training base.

46

DOGS OF WAR

Andy Darby

French soldiers train with four-legged recruits at Europe's largest military kennel.

50

A LONG RACE IN A HOT PLACE

Robin Postell

International athletes hot-foot it through a 140-mile marathon in the Sahara.

54

RIDDLE OF STEEL

Bill Bagwell

Here's an inside look at some of the finest big-blade training in America.

58

BLUEPRINT TO A RESCUE

Bill Salisbury

SOF in Peru gets an exclusive after-action report on the most successful hostage rescue of our time.

60

WALTHER P99

Peter G. Kokalis

The legendary German family of semiauto pistols enters the 21st century.

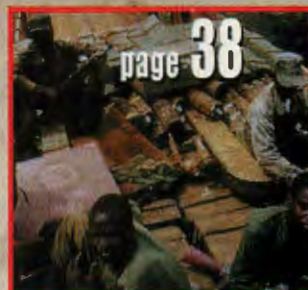
67

GIs IN THE GULAG

"Cicero"

Did Soviet intelligence services grab U.S. pilots shot down over Korea and Vietnam? Part 1 of 2.

72



Jim Hooper



Andy Darby

COLUMNS

Command Guidance	4
Bulletin Board	6
Photo SpooF Triggers	
SWAT Raid	
World Sitrep	12
Full Auto	14
Jeff Cooper's	
<i>The Art Of The Rifle</i>	
Slick Willie Watch	16
That Silver-Tongued Devil ...	
I Was There	20
Desefalo's Run	
FLAK	25
Aussie Angst	
Adventure Quartermaster	32
Steyr Scout Rifle	
Supply Depot	88
Advertisers Index	92
Classifieds	93
Sound Off	98
Bosnian Mission Creep	

Robin Postell

COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Robert K. Brown

Lingering Doubts

This is the 23rd Anniversary Issue of *Soldier Of Fortune*, and I would like to take this opportunity to address some startling new developments in an arena that has been of considerable importance to the magazine editorially, and me personally, for those 23 years.

Information has been developed during the past weeks that both excites, and infuriates, me.

Recent materials have crossed my desk that convince me of the fact that dozens — if not more — Americans were, indeed, flown from North Vietnam to the Soviet Union for mind-demolishing, drug-induced interrogations. Whether these men were summarily executed by overdosing them in a cell in Moscow or by rifle fire against some isolated Siberian wall is not my focus.

What is my concern here, and what drives my outrage off the scale, is when I'm confronted with evidence that our brothers-in-arms were first ignored by our government, and then simply scratched off the roster by these same people as if they never mattered; their sacrifices made for their nation regarded as paltry by the "suits" who conceived and implemented the disastrously dubious military and political policies from which they, their sons, and families, remained immune thousands of miles away.

Our men and women in uniform bore (and bear) the curse of the folly of charlatans who, like Robert McNamara, shed pompous public tears of remorse because of their deliberate lies, blunders, and utter waste of American, Australian, Canadian, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian lives.

Retired Colonel Fred Caristo, while serving as a case officer with SOG (Studies and Observation Group) in South Vietnam

during 1968, perused some telling documents; reports confirming that "American fliers" — likely USAF and USN pilots — were interrogated and then executed in the Soviet Union, the nation that our current president then so gleefully visited while squandering his "tour of duty" as an aspiring Rhodes Scholar.

"Cicero," the author of this month's feature "GIs In The Gulag," discovered that documentation on these pilots existed in Russia. Furthermore, it appears that the Clinton administration, on the verge of discovering the truth, sold out the families of these missing pilots to pacify his new Russian friends. Somewhere lies corroborating information.

In an effort to discover the truth, I announce that *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine will offer a cash reward publicized both here, and in our Russian edition, for ver-

ifiable documentation or evidence that shows American POWs were transported to the former Soviet Union from anywhere in Southeast Asia or Korea.

In Moscow's, Hanoi's — and Washington's — vast archives are some answers. Somewhere in Russia, Vietnam, the United States, or elsewhere, a man or woman, perhaps a researcher, historian, maybe a former military officer or NCO, has access to data which would assist us.

I strongly urge anyone — regardless of his/her nationality — to come forward with solid information to break the decades-long impasse of silence and roar of speculation.

We can be contacted at:

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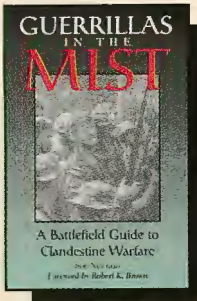
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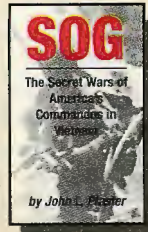


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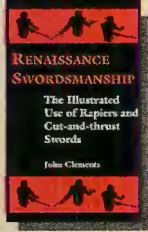
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SURPRISE, SURPRISE, SURPRISE

Pentagon sources now say that up to 80,000 U.S. GIs may have been exposed to low levels of toxic chemicals in March 1991, when U.S. troops demolished the Iraqi chemical-weapons stockpile at Khamisiyah, Iraq. After initial denials of any exposure to chem/bio agents by U.S. troops, defense officials have said of late that perhaps 20,000 service personnel had been subjected to possible exposure. Computer-generated models, however, indicated that a much larger number of troops could have been exposed.

Ultimately, DoD conducted a test at Dugway Proving Ground, Utah, the end of May to reconstruct the scenario at Khamisiyah where chemical weapons such as sarin nerve agent and mustard gas — and possibly other agents — were stored, and destroyed, in open pits.

Public announcement of the computer-model results was delayed, Pentagon sources said, while defense officials deliberated on the consequences of the new information. A memorandum pre-

pared for Secretary of Defense William Cohen warned him that the pending announcement could generate significant costs from performing medical exams on troops who are now considered to have been exposed, although there is little evidence that low-level exposure to the reagents in question causes serious health problems.

Sources who had read it told *Army Times* reporter Rick Maze that the memo to Cohen also warned defense officials to expect renewed questions regarding whether the government is telling the whole story [this time], since the new estimate of exposure is so much greater [400%] than previous statements.

MORE TORTURE BY U.N. TROOPS BEING INVESTIGATED

The United Nations is investigating fresh allegations of crimes committed by U.N. peacekeepers in Somalia. The Italian magazine *Panorama* recently published photos of Italian troops allegedly torturing Somali men and women. The magazine also published an interview with a former soldier who said Italian troops “habitually resorted to torture” to extract information on hidden arms caches and on small Somali factions battling U.N. troops.

Noted Bernard Miyet, U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, “We are in the process of reviewing all the measures to be taken to improve the organization’s standards and the behavior of troops,” in response to reports that Italian troops participating in UNOSOM had raped and tortured Somalis in 1993 and 1994.

A Belgian army court has acquitted two members of the Paracommando Brigade who had been accused of torturing a Somali boy over an open fire in 1993; trials are pending against other members of the brigade accused of misconduct during that mission. A Canadian government-appointed commission has reported on its investigation on the misconduct of Canadian peacekeepers in Somalia, concluding that problems which lead to the beating death of one Somali and the shootings of two others “was profoundly one of leadership.”

Meanwhile, six German army reservists and one active-duty soldier have been charged after a video tape was shown on television of them committing mock displays of sexual assault, beatings and executions during training for deployment in Bosnia.



Courtesy: The Continental Hotel Casino and Resort

This is the place! The Continental Hotel Casino and Resort at 4100 Paradise Road in Las Vegas is a Headquarters Hotel for the 1997 SOF Convention and Arms Expo, October 1-5. Conventioneers get a discounted rate of only \$40 plus 8% tax per night, which includes two free breakfasts per room (one time only). The Continental features a 63x30-foot pool in a courtyard nearly 200 feet square, with plenty of room for SOF’s nightly bar and music, pugils, etc. Refurbished rooms, ’50’s decor, nightly shows, camaraderie around the pool. Make your reservations early by calling The Continental at 800-634-6641 or 702-737-5555; fax: 703-791-5423.

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ALL MEDALS APPROVED FOR SALVO VETS

As of 27 June, U.S. veterans of service in El Salvador are eligible for consideration for all decorations, including medals of valor. Last year, the Defense Authorization Act enabled eligible vets to receive the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal — a victory for veterans groups and legislators such as Rep. Bob Dornan of California.

Now, veterans may be able to receive individual combat awards, such as the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Air Medal and Army Commendation Medal.

CW4 John J. Wendland of the military-awards branch at the Total Army Personnel Command noted that individual awards for valor would be processed no differently than for any other veterans, "with the exception being that we are past the Salvador era.

"Once an individual is recommended by a comrade, a supervisor, whatever, the same process will apply. Recommendations will

be documented and reviewed on a case-by-case basis," Wendland told the *Army Times*. "Once we receive the recommendation, the process could take anywhere from 60 days to much longer for a higher award."

The approval process for medals takes into account the soldier's unit of assignment, the actions taken by the soldier, eyewitness accounts, sworn affidavits and any other documents that can confirm duties performed in El Salvador. Army veterans may now obtain recommendation forms from local military installations or by writing to the Military Awards Branch, Suite 7507, 200 Stovall Street, Alexandria, VA 22332-0471.

PHOTO SPOOF TRIGGERS SWAT RAID

Rex Biteng of Rohnert Park, Calif., is a student at San Francisco State, and publishes an on-line magazine *Dead Fish*. A former Guardian Angel, Biteng has applied to join the San Francisco Police Department. Biteng and two other former Guardian Angels, Robert

Candelaria and Mike Miller, thought it would be a hoot to pose in various uniforms with Mike's [legally owned] guns for satirical photos for *Dead Fish*.

Wrong.

Employees of Costco in Santa Rosa, Calif., where they took the film to be developed decided the activity in the photos "looked illegal" so they called the police. Sergeant Robert Douglas, supervisor of the multi-agency gang enforcement team (incorporating Rohnert Park, Santa Rosa and Cotati PDs) said the photos showed people practicing home-invasion robberies.

On basis of this improbable cause, warrants were issued and raids carried out at the homes of Biteng and Candelaria at 0700. Police phoned them and asked them to open the door. Candelaria, who came to the door in his shorts, said "I thought it was a joke at first ... I saw these guys with Kevlar helmets and riot shields. They told me to get on my knees, then walk backwards on my knees toward them." The masked men, armed with riot shields, helmets, shotguns and submachine guns, were from the Sonoma County SWAT team. The subsequent searches and interrogations were conducted by the gang enforcement team. Biteng was interrogated for more than an hour.

"They came in, handcuffed my uncle and my brother and manhandled my grandfather," said Biteng. "We went in to obtain information to see if there was additional information to prosecute people for potential [sic!] crimes," said Douglas.

"This smacks highly of Gestapo tactics," said Biteng's attorney, Dana Drenkowski of Fairfield. "For police to base a raid on those photographs is unconscionable." "Everybody went home, and it worked out real good," commented Sgt. Douglas.

The case has been suspended since no evidence was found to prosecute Biteng or Candelaria on weapons charges, but the local police continue to drive by, and park in front of, Biteng's house.

Moral: If it's a shotgun wedding, don't take any photos.

In a related story, the Wo/Men's Alliance for Medical Marijuana in Santa Cruz, a legal organization chartered under California's recently passed Proposition 215 to grow marijuana for prescribed medical use, took photos



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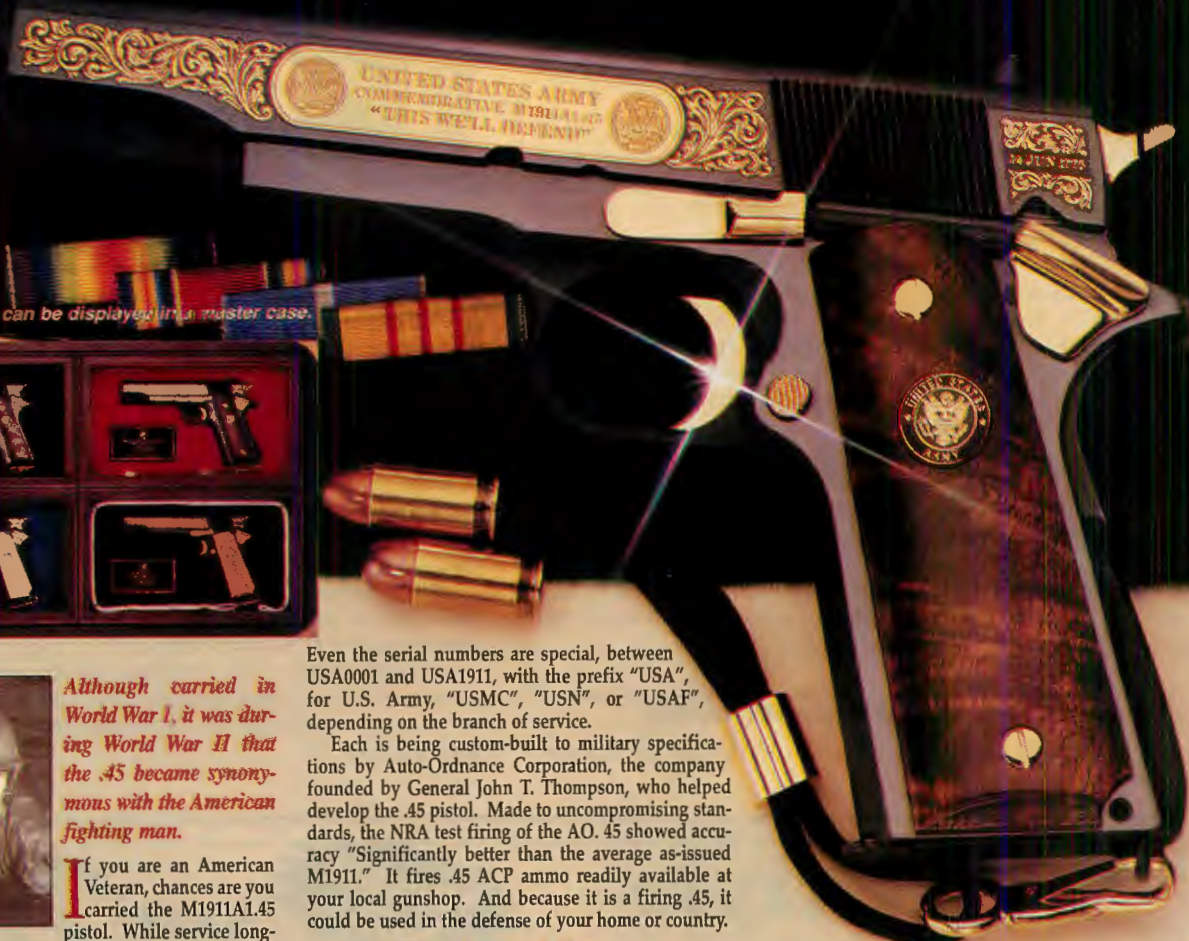
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Although carried in World War I, it was during World War II that the .45 became synonymous with the American fighting man.

If you are an American Veteran, chances are you carried the M1911A1 .45 pistol. While service long-

arms have come and gone, "Old Slabslides" is the symbol of American military valor in the 20th century.

The .45 is the most powerful military sidearm in world history, and for over 75 years America's enemies have bowed to its signature roar. Today, the .45 has been almost completely replaced in our nation's arsenal by the 9mm M9 Beretta. But, although the M1911A1 .45 and the Veterans who carried it in America's wars may be passing into legend, they must never be forgotten.

Now, The American Historical Foundation proudly salutes the American Veterans of the ".45 era" by issuing a separate, firing, commemorative .45 in honor of each of the four American armed forces that carried it.

24-Karat Gold Plating

Each hand-built .45 features extensive coverage of 24-Karat Gold plating for lasting value and beauty. As a proper memorial to your service branch, patriotic symbols and inscriptions are deeply etched and 24-Karat Gold plated across the slide. Ten components — the trigger, hammer, slide stop, magazine catch, magazine catch lock, safety lock, and grip screws — are plated with 24-Karat Gold.

The grips are of select exotic wood and are custom-fitted to your pistol. Inset in the grip is a cloisonné medallion, featuring the official seal of your service branch. And to make your pistol a lasting, personal memorial, your name or that of a family member can be engraved on the reverse side of the slide along with other data.

Limited Edition; Fires .45 ACP

The worldwide edition limit is only 1,911 pistols, in honor of the year this legend was adopted by the American military. This highly restricted edition limit guarantees immediate rarity and collector value.

Even the serial numbers are special, between USA0001 and USA1911, with the prefix "USA", for U.S. Army, "USMC", "USN", or "USAF", depending on the branch of service.

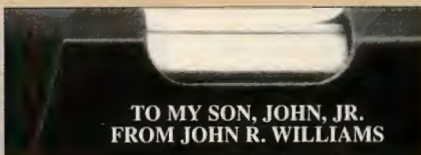
Each is being custom-built to military specifications by Auto-Ordnance Corporation, the company founded by General John T. Thompson, who helped develop the .45 pistol. Made to uncompromising standards, the NRA test firing of the AO .45 showed accuracy "Significantly better than the average as-issued M1911." It fires .45 ACP ammo readily available at your local gunshop. And because it is a firing .45, it could be used in the defense of your home or country.

The Armed Forces Commemorative .45 Collection

Each has different exotic wood grips, historical etchings, medallions, lanyards and case liner colors and serial number prefixes appropriate to each service branch, to make all four .45s distinctive. Matching serial numbers for all four pistols are available, as is a master case that displays all four cases shown above.

Satisfaction Guaranteed

The U.S. Armed Forces Commemorative .45s are available exclusively through The American Historical



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FROM JOHN R. WILLIAMS

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S208

of its members and growing operation, and took the photos to Costco for developing. When a friend of club director Valerie Corral went to pick up the photos, a Costco employee told her the equipment was broken and to wait 10 minutes ... while she phoned police. Local police questioned the friend for 20 minutes, before confiscating photos of marijuana plants, which were forwarded to the Sheriff's Department narcotics unit — who promptly returned the photos.

PENTAGON PLANS FOR NORTH KOREAN "IMPLOSION"

Senior U.S. and RoK military officials are analyzing several scenarios for the "collapse and implosion" of starving North Korea. A combined group run by U.S. Major General Frank Libutti, director of plans, strategy and policy of the Combined Forces Command, hopes to provide viable military options for the south if necessary in scenarios where famine or a widespread refugee crisis could lead to disorder in the north and "loss of control from the center." The group will also assess how the North Korean armed forces would react to various "implosion" scenarios, in particular a famine-induced crisis, and what military response would be appropriate were there North Korean provocations such as a buildup along the DMZ.

Pentagon officials are also planning for the possibility of a wave of refugees fleeing starvation in North Korea. Noted Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon, "for most of the time the U.S. military has been stationed in [South] Korea, it has planned for the possibility of a military attack" but now is broadening its contingency plans to include "what could happen if there is, in fact, massive starvation, massive health problems, in North Korea that could lead to perhaps an exodus from North Korea. ..."

U.S. BASES FACE HIGH TERRORIST THREAT

Some 566 U.S. military installations worldwide are currently

Y RECRUITING



being assessed for their vulnerability to terrorist attack, announced Brigadier General James Conway, Joint Staff deputy director for combating terrorism. Tests and evaluations are being conducted by specialists from the Defense Special Weapons Agency and personnel from the various armed services. Sixty of the installations are considered to face a "high" terrorist threat; 48 in Central Command, 11 in the European Command and one in the Southern Command.

Following a solicitation to industry for technological ideas, DoD has established an online catalog for commanders, of suitable anti-terrorist technology and equipment available as commercial shelf items. More than 170 industry responses were received to this DoD solicitation.

During September, some 340 pieces of counterterrorism equipment such as sensors, alarms and sophisticated fencing will be demonstrated at Quantico, Virginia.

Even the Pentagon has undergone a recent anti-terrorist safety assessment, including an assessment of its vulnerability to weapons of mass destruction, especially when distributed through the air-filtration system. ☒

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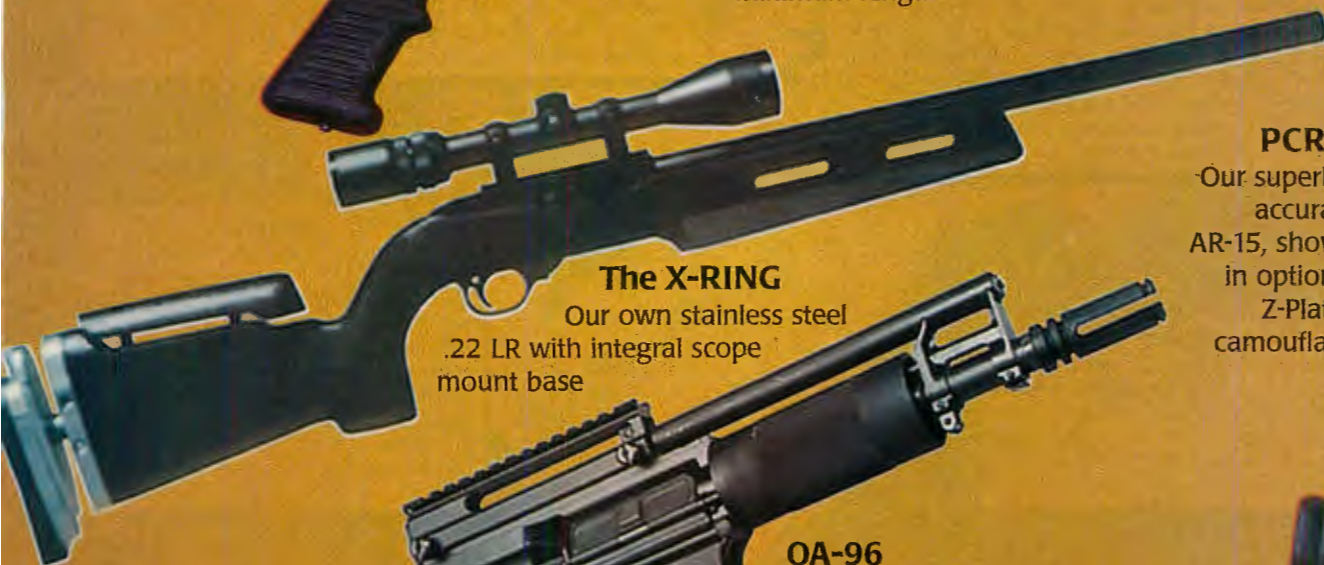
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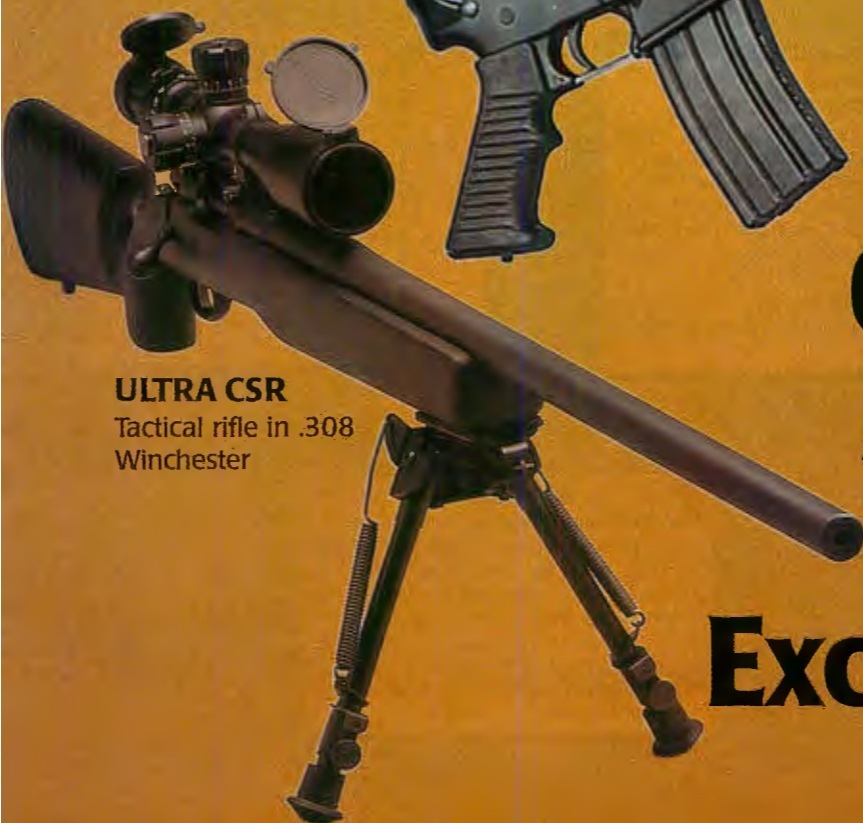
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WORLD SITREP

1 UNITED STATES

Congress vs. China: Senate resolution, non-binding but significant, prods Clinton administration to enact trade sanctions for China's sales of cruise missiles to (terrorist state) Iran. Meanwhile, House committee orders Pentagon report, by 15 March, on China's strategic ambitions and weapons-modernization goals, urges White House and DoD's caution in sharing of military-cooperation information with Beijing. • **"Year 2000 computer problem":** Civilian experts warn that DoD underestimates threat of military computers' "crash" upon end of 1999 (from industry's shortsighted use of 2 digits, instead of 4, to represent calendar year in software and databases); \$1.3 billion budgeted for prevention probably is inadequate. • DoD concludes it was unlikely a Russian trawler used laser range-finder, off Washington state, to harass Canadian/U.S. naval helicopter crew (reported in World Sitrep, Sept. '97). • **Disaster reaction:** Marines' Chemical/Biological Incident Response Force, 375-member unit at Camp Lejeune, N.C., expands capabilities to include decon response to terrorist use of radioactive materials.

2 RUSSIA

Recent poll suggests 70% of military officers will not re-enlist, and 29% live in poverty. • **High-level corruption:** Former chief of naval staff is accused of diverting revenue from sales of 64 ships to provide better housing for nearly 300 relatives and friends. • **Worse than China?** Moscow is warned by U.S. Congress to stop assisting Iran's ballistic-missile and nuclear programs or see U.S. economic aid (\$225 million projected for '98) cut. • **Kremlin conflict:** Warning of military's "eventual ruin," several (former) top generals and their allies in *Duma*, lower house of parliament, launch public campaign against Yeltsin's reform plan that would include downsizing (200,000 troops to be discharged by end of '97). Defense Minister Sergeyev defends president's plan, says choice is between large and incapable military or smaller but combat-ready force.

8 PERU

Early-summer poll suggests 40% of citizens regard President Fujimori as "dictator" (while much of world holds him in high esteem for his handling of embassy-hostage crisis). • **Tracking terrorists:** Elite infantry battalion is assigned to remote Ayacucho area to track "Shining Path" field commander Ramirez. • **Will do her time:** High court rejects American freedom-fighter-wannabe Lori Berenson's appeal of life sentence (for participation in MRTA plot against government).

7 COLOMBIA

Government says FARC and ELN rebels terrorize town councils that are not sympathetic to them. Army reports FARC continues to use land mines despite earlier pledge not to. • **Costly shoot-down:** Helicopter carrying \$530,000 cash, from state-run bank, is shot down by rebels and looted.

9 SENEGAL

Pro-Western government receives 60 U.S. Special Forces advisers for battalion-level training of local troops in regional peacekeeping and humanitarian-aid ops. (Similar U.S. contingent is dispatched to Uganda under U.S. "Africa Crisis Response Initiative.")

10 DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

President Kabila's government (in the former Zaire) will retrain and integrate into a new army the soldiers of the former Mobutu government. Kabila denies U.N. and U.S. charges his rebel troops massacred civilians. • **Return to normalcy?** Organization of African Unity promises aid in rebuilding of Democratic Congo's economy. Meanwhile, U.N. officials plan the voluntary repatriation of some 100,000 Zairean/Congolese refugees.

11 VIETNAM

Cautious rapprochement: U.S. Ambassador Peterson says gradual strengthening of U.S.-Vietnam military ties ranks second only to resolution of POW/MIA issues. Exchange of senior military officials is tentatively scheduled for mid-1998. (Reconciliation of the two former enemies is seen by politico-military experts as *careful* process, partly because neither wants to arouse China's suspicions.)

13 BURMA

In the absence of warlord Khun Sa, production of heroin from Golden Triangle opium has resumed under the control of his rival, the (communist) United Wa State Army.

14 MONGOLIA

Move to military reform: Major legislative proposals before parliament would lay groundwork for post-Cold War reorganization, to include greater emphasis on frontier security; eventual integration of Border Guards into the army (from the interior ministry); strengthening of civilian-political command of armed forces; and, allowance for alternative duty for conscripts objecting to military service.

3
EGYPT
Terrorism 'info superhighway,' cont'd.: Interior ministry assembles group of specially trained agents, using latest technology, to uncover Internet comms by criminals and Islamic terrorists. • **Washington warning:** Citing Cairo's chilly relations with Tel Aviv, (perceived) weakening support of Middle East peace process, and growing economic/political ties with Libya, U.S. congressional subcommittee recommends cutting some \$200 million from economic and military aid (annual total: \$2 billion) and giving it to Jordan. Cairo officials and some Western analysts say Egypt remains committed to troubled peace process.

4
ISRAEL
Public pessimism: Poll suggests 2/3 of Israelis believe Prime Minister Netanyahu's hard-line government is drifting to war with Arab neighbors, particularly Syria. Government officials talk openly of possible conflict. Likely flash point: Golan Heights, which Syria wants back • **Super hawk:** Controversial ex-general/defense minister Ariel Sharon returns to government as finance minister (and member of security cabinet), likely ensuring increased military budget — and heightened tensions with Palestinian Authority and Syria. • **United Nations** says Israel must pay \$1.7 million for April '96 shelling of U.N. refugee camp at Qana, south Lebanon, that killed 102. (See " 'Hez' Hunters," Sept. '96 *SOF*)

5
IRAQ
China signs \$1.2 billion deal to develop oil field in southern Iraq (which also gives Baghdad a major ally on U.N. Security Council). Russian Duma passes resolution for renewed trade with Iraq. • **Coming back:** Army (which includes 6 Republican Guard divisions) is steadily rebuilding; air force, some 300 aircraft, has resumed limited night flying — U.S. Central Command report. • **Shell game:** Senior U.N. arms inspector says Baghdad continues to hide weapons of mass destruction (likely SSMS with HE or chemical/biological warheads). • Eight Arab nations, including Syria and Egypt, condemn Turkish army's summer offensive against Kurdish rebels it pursued into northern Iraq.

6
INDIA
Sub slump: Navy's 16 diesel-electric submarines — mostly Russian *Kilo-* and *Foxrot-*class — badly need upgrades as well as overdue basic maintenance; six now in dry dock. Local shipyards seem incapable of massive overhaul program, cannot readily obtain spare parts from Russia.

12
NORTH KOREA
Collapse and implode? Response by North Korean military to exodus of starving refugees headed south is one of several crisis scenarios under analysis by senior U.S. and South Korean military officers.

15
TAJIKISTAN
Peace accord signed with rebels to end 4-year civil war that left industrial base in ruins and heavily armed gangs — rebel, criminal, or military — in control of highways. Some 22,000 refugees reportedly are in war-torn Afghanistan.

16
NORWAY
Tax protest: Thousands of peacekeeping troops stationed in Bosnia and Lebanon threaten mass resignations when finance ministry in Oslo announced a new tax on soldiers' overseas-duty pay. The new tax was canceled a week later.

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.

Jeff Cooper's *The Art of the Rifle*

The Art of The Rifle by Jeff Cooper. Paladin Press, 1997, 104 pages, illustrated. \$29.95. Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306; phone: 800-392-2400.

Jeff Cooper's most highly anticipated work has finally arrived. While to many Cooper is principally noted for his lifelong, and largely successful, efforts to turn the handgun, most notably the M1911 .45, into a weapon demanding respect, Jeff Cooper, to those who know him best, is the consummate rifleman. As such, this book becomes nothing less than Holy Scripture on the subject of its title: the art of the rifle.

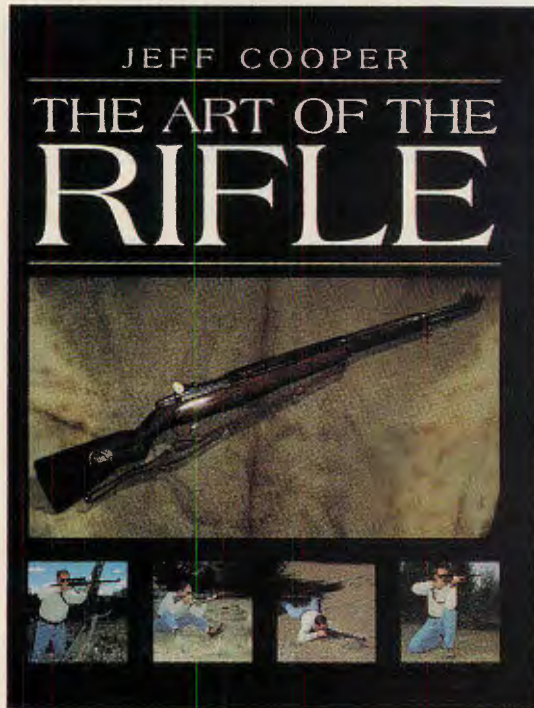
And I do mean the "art" of the rifle. Don't look for trajectory tables, descriptions of operating mechanisms, arguments about cartridges or types and makes of rifles or wound profiles. Jeff is speaking to us from a far loftier plateau and this is, if you will, a treatise on the philosophy of shooting and rifles and a richly detailed compendium of how to employ them with success, whether on the game field or in battle.

Just as many consider the infantry to be the queen of battle, to Jeff Cooper the rifle is the queen of personal weapons. He is quite correct, for it has been my own experience that no item of issue looms with greater importance or more mystical affection than a soldier's rifle. All else, from boots to canteens, pales to insignificance when compared to this personification of personal power. Cooper concludes, with a great deal of justification, that the rifle is still the only sure means of resisting tyranny.

Cooper defines a master rifleman as one who can, upon demand, shoot up to his rifle. He offers us the somewhat arcane example of Stewart Edward White, an American novelist and adventurer during the 1920s and 1930s. No matter what the stress level or environment, White's shot always struck within 2 inches of his point of aim. Under all circumstances, White could do what needed to be done with his rifle.

Cooper presents his usual strong argument for the "general-purpose" rifle, which by his definition must be powerful enough to kill any living target with a target mass of up to 1,000 pounds. The .30-06 and .308 Winchester will certainly suffice. He opts for a turn-bolt with an overall length no greater than 1 meter and a weight that permits the shooter to hold it in a firing grip, shoulder high, at arm's length, muzzle vertical for 60 seconds. Jeff advocates a scope of no more than two to four power and the three-point "Ching Sling." I concur with both propositions, and I have this sling attached to no less than four of my bolt-action hunting rifles. Jeff also points out that it is far better to have a relatively inaccurate rifle with a good trigger, than a match-grade rifle with a bad trigger. How true, and the more you shoot, the more trigger sensitive you become.

Every possible aspect of shooting that is required to reach profi-



ciency with the rifle is covered in great detail with the rich prose and fascinating anecdotes that only Jeff Cooper can provide. Cooper says it all in chapters on gun handling, sighting and aiming, the general concept of trajectory, the standard firing positions, the supported firing positions, the shooting sling, breathing, snap shooting, zeroing, reloading and the ready positions, the effects of wind and the techniques of testing and evaluating marksmanship.

He provides information found nowhere else, to my knowledge, in his chapter on the hand and the finger, discussing not only the firing grip, but the three types of triggers: single-stage (or shotgun), two-stage (the classic U.S. military trigger) and the single and double set trigger. While set triggers have traditionally been found only on European rifles, they have, in recent years, become increasingly more popular in this country — as they have concurrently been improved significantly.

The chapter on sights and the eye is a masterpiece. I remember clearly a

highly charged argument I had many years ago with Mike Dillon over the open notch rear sight versus the peep aperture. I argued then, as does Cooper, that the aperture sight is much faster, since it permits the shooter to concentrate on the front sight and the target. Cooper agrees and has long been known for his advocacy of the so-called "ghost ring" rear sight, a variation on the peep aperture concept. While stating that the scope is still the most satisfactory sighting system available for rifles, Cooper is not afraid to openly discuss its limitations. All of this is but a prelude to his cogent discussion of the "hunter's eye" and target analysis. This chapter alone is worth the price of admission.

Jeff believes that while the hunter should generally pass up a running shot, the soldier is not proscribed by the same bounds of sportsmanship. He explains clearly that follow-through is the single most important factor in the engagement of moving targets. As an example of Cooper's often exceptionally dry wit, he informs us that the lamentable policy of shooting a fleeing animal in the rear is known in Africa as the "Portuguese Brain Shot."

Saving some of the very best for last, Colonel Cooper, in chapters on the mind of the rifleman and the mystique of the one-shot kill, informs his readers that the rifleman's state of mind at the moment the shot is discharged, is the single most important element in success. He also indicates that while the concept of the one-shot stop is a worthy goal, the time will come when the target is hit squarely, but fails to drop. You must always be ready for a follow-up shot.

Throughout, the author illustrates his message with incidents from a life filled with hunting and adventure. One of the greatest firearms instructors the world have ever known has given us his priceless legacy on the very real art of the rifle. Recommended without reservations of any kind, this book belongs in the library of everyone who aspires to mastery with this great tool of power. ❧



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That Silver-Tongued Devil ...

President Clinton is a master of the spoken word — he used to be a law-school professor in Arkansas, after all — but his pronouncements do not always agree with reality. For example, Clinton has claimed that “there is a not a single Russian missile pointed at America’s children.”

Huh?

Some people probably just responded “BS!” to such touchy-feely nonsense. Caspar Weinberger, defense secretary under Ronald Reagan, was a bit more articulate, though.

As reported this summer in the authoritative *Defense News* weekly newspaper, the old Cold Warrior, at a conference of the Center for Security Policy in Washington, D.C., remarked, “This is probably the single most demagogic, incorrect, and basically misleading statement that this president has made.”

And that’s saying a lot.

Reality vs. Rhetoric

Clinton’s record as president is tarnished by (among other things) his unfortunate habit of conveniently ignoring facts and reality in favor of nice-sounding phrases or



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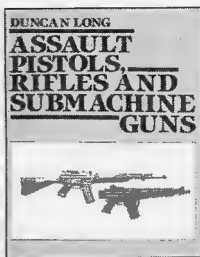
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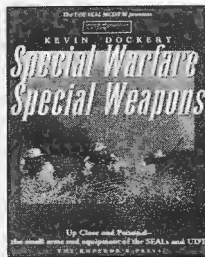
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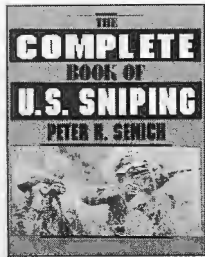
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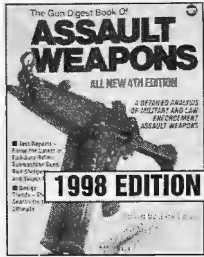
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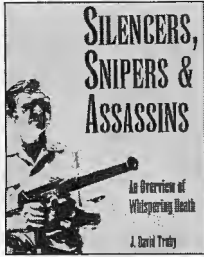
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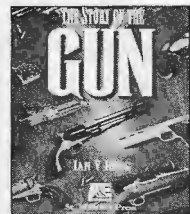
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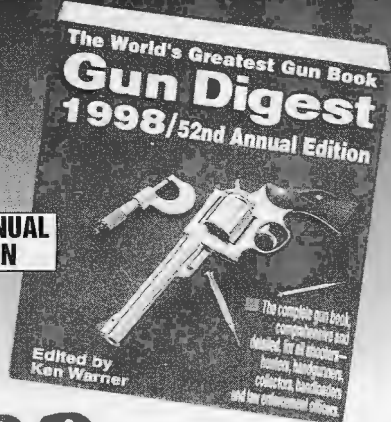
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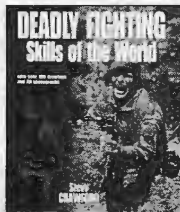


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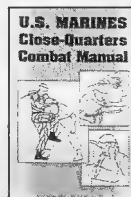
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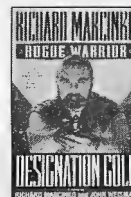
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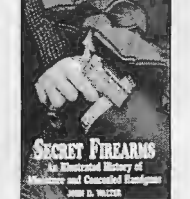
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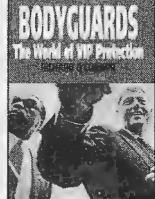
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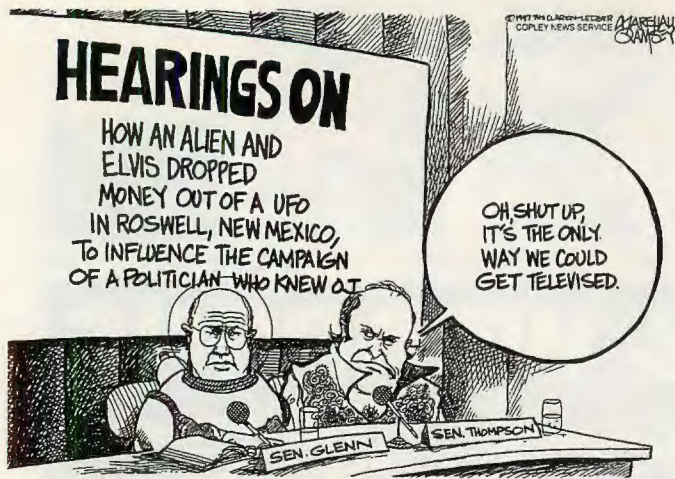
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just bald-faced untruths. But he seems to get away with it. If Ronald Reagan was the “Teflon president” (nothing, it was said at the time, could stick to him), then Bill Clinton might be called the “Vaseline-enhanced-Teflon president.”

Even a few members of Clinton’s own party see him for what he really is — even if the American public largely doesn’t care. As Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey — former SEAL officer, Medal of Honor recipient, and likely presidential candidate for the year 2000 — once pointedly observed, Clinton is a very good liar.

Clinton’s “Vietnam”?

And then there’s Bosnia. Did Slick Willie lie to the American public about the IFOR deployment of U.S. troops to the Balkans — or was he just profoundly stupid in assessing that age-old ethnic blood bath?

On the same Op-Ed page as Weinberger’s remark there appeared an editorial headlined, “Finish the Job in Bosnia.” It

tersely noted: “Clinton pledged in 1995 that the Bosnian peace-keeping mission would be over before Christmas 1996 and would cost \$2 billion. It has lasted longer and cost much more.” (It is worth remembering that the White House steadfastly refused to admit to this underestimation until safely *after* the ’96 election.)

The editorial noted the president now is “waffling on his second self-imposed deadline for U.S. troop withdrawal — June 1998” and that the House of Representatives “wants to micromanage” that mission by cutting funding after that date.

“This debate is bound to be emotional,” *Defense News* continued, “questioning the value of spending nearly \$8 billion [emphasis added] and placing U.S. troops at risk in a mission that increasingly is becoming risky as peacekeepers step up efforts to corral indicted war criminals.” For America to pull out before stability is established in Bosnia would waste a great deal of money “and create a much greater risk for Europe and the world,” it added.

Still The World’s Cop

And what about using SFOR troops to track down and arrest suspected war criminals, some of whom — the “big fish” — are protected by large, heavily armed detachments? As of this writing, President Clinton is under considerable domestic political pressure to sanction such Balkan manhunts. This pressure is not just from Democrats, but also from no less than war veteran and GOP patriarch Bob Dole. (For an opposing viewpoint, read David Hackworth’s column, “Bosnian Mission Creep,” in this issue.)

In late July, Clinton warned Bosnian Serbs “it would be a grave mistake” to avenge the seizures of war-crimes suspects (one of whom, a former police chief, had just received a hero’s funeral after resisting arrest by British troops). It was an ironic choice of words, all things considered.

If U.S. troops in SFOR do suffer a *mistake* in their continuing role as global cops, it won’t be Clinton’s *grave*. Remember Mogadishu, Somalia? ☒

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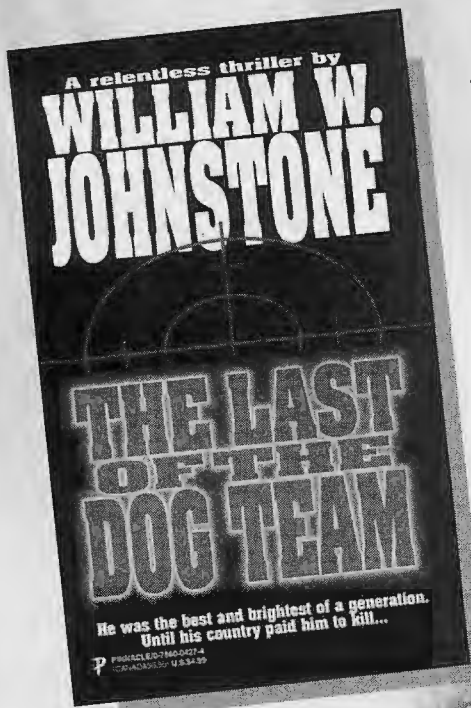
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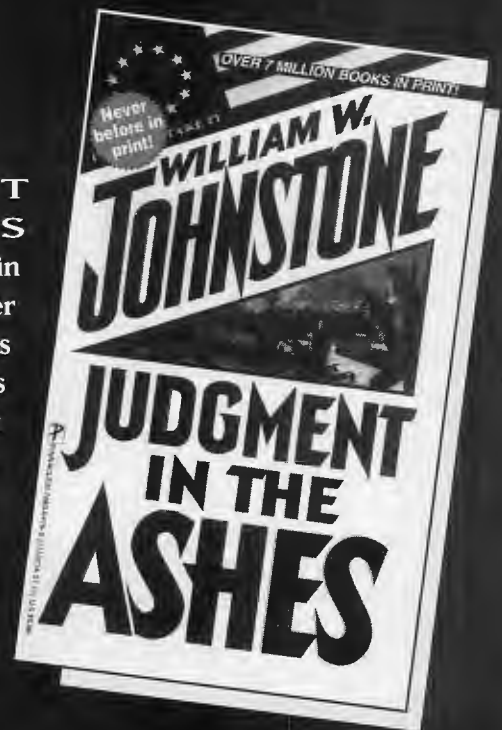


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Desefalo's Run



Iraqi soldiers of the 45th Infantry Division surrendered in droves throughout TF 2-82's area of operation. (inset) Convoy of humility, Iraqis on the road toward an unknown destiny.

They came in droves. Marching in file, at times as many as 40 men in a row. The only similarity among these men, besides having their arms thrust skyward for fear of being shot, was the terrified look in their eyes.

As individuals, they were dressed in a mishmash of uniforms, most had facial hair in the form of a beard, mustache, or just stubble, and they included both enlisted and officer ranks. As a group, they were scared and afraid, frankly, we didn't blame them.

We gathered up the surrendering Iraqis at various points along MSR (Main Supply Route) Texas. After being bound so they couldn't escape, they were seated in the sand. The guarding soldiers gave them water and MREs (presumably not a ham product, but not insulting them wasn't the top priority). They had no weapons, but were allowed to keep their protective masks, helmets, other protective equipment, and personal belongings, such as wallets.

In basic training, every U.S. soldier learns that when capturing a prisoner it is imperative to perform what is known as the five Ss: search them, segregate the enlisted and officers, silence them, safeguard them (feed, water, and protect), and speed them away from the battlefield. Each step was done in a picture-perfect manner, but as time progressed, we started having problems with the last one—speed to the rear.

We were rapidly moving forward, so there was no transport available to move the prisoners to the collection points. Quite frankly, there were more EPWs (Enemy Prisoners of War) than anyone expected. It's true that a unit should be prepared for any contingency, but there was no way of foreseeing a whole division surrendering at once. And that's what happened here.

The Iraqi 45th Division was organized into the 841st, 842nd and 843rd Infantry brigades and the 17th Border Guard Brigade. They were not short of manpower, but each of its units was systematically defeated and, in turn, surrendered.

As the paratroopers approached Iraqi sol-

diers for the first time, there was clearly some apprehension about approaching an enemy that had been trying to kill them for the past 35 days. Of course, what we wanted to do, and what seemed reasonable, was to punish them for causing us to be there so long in the first place. A soldier would day-dream many times during Desert Shield about getting an enemy soldier in his rifle sights and take vengeance on him for the Iraqi aggression. So it was with much awe that the leaders observed how professionally and correctly the paratroopers accepted the surrender of the Iraqi Division. Any early uncertainty by the paratroopers quickly dissipated as they cleared the bunkers and accepted the surrender of increasing numbers of enemy soldiers. General George S. Patton, Jr., once said, "No sane man is unafraid in battle, but discipline produces in him a form of vicarious courage." As the ground war progressed, the unit leaders got a sense of satisfaction from knowing that the years of discipline instilled into their soldiers paid big dividends when the chips were down.

Another encouraging factor was that the TF leaders, from Colonel Rokosz to the lowest-ranking team leader, were out front leading the way, instilling discipline by setting the example. Many times, as we moved the brigade assault command post, we would come across enemy positions, and Rokosz and the more senior and experienced NCOs, particularly Staff Sergeants Joe Hafner and Hillman Dufour, led the way in searching the bunkers and taking prisoners. Another comment by Gen. Patton was, "If you want an army to fight and risk death, you've got to get up there and lead it. An army is like spaghetti. You can't push a piece of spaghetti, you've got to pull it." This insight was supported by the command climate that Col. Rokosz set for his subordinates, and it proved successful.

Finding transportation to move the EPWs to the collection points started to become a real problem. After a time, we just left the Iraqis in small, temporary collection points alongside MSR Texas, or sent them

south to the 82nd Airborne's 1st Brigade and Team EPW could pick them up. But in the early hours of G-Day, we were determined to evacuate each EPW as fast as we could.

Our EPW-transportation problem led to one particularly memorial event. On G-Day, Captain Charlie Flynn, the brigade logistics officer, was told that there were 89 EPWs in need of evacuation. Capt. Flynn didn't have any trucks available for the mission, so he sent Staff Sgt. Juan Desefalo (not his real name) forward in Graves Registration's white refrigerated van to do the job.

We had had no friendly casualties thus far, so it was safe to assume that the van wouldn't be needed in the meantime. Flynn gave Desefalo strict instructions to keep the air conditioning on but turned down low, to give the EPWs ventilation but not freeze them to death. His last instructions were to get it done fast, since he didn't cherish the thought of using the van for this mission. It happened to be near the EPWS so I agreed to link Desefalo up with them when he came forward.

In the meantime, a battery of 155mm towed howitzers crowded the road near the hastily arranged collection point. There were four 155mm battalions in our sector, assigned to the 18th Field Artillery (FA) Brigade: the 1-39 FA (ABN), the 3-8 FA, and the 5-8 FA, all from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and the 1-201 FA, from the West Virginia National Guard. I don't recall which unit was blocking the road, but the 1-201 was self-propelled and the battery blocking the road wasn't, so it had to be one of the Fort Bragg units. Whoever it was, this battery moved in, and the road was blocked.

I kept looking for the refrigerated van, but it didn't come as fast as I expected. Then all of a sudden, the 40-foot, white van came barreling along the MSR, found an

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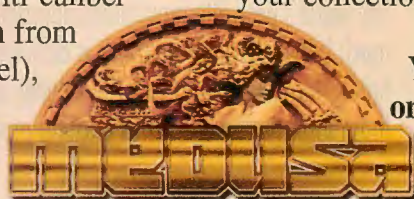
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opening, and went right past the howitzers, past the prisoners, past me, and went on north toward enemy territory. Paco and I, temporarily without our vehicle, chased the van on foot but we couldn't get Desefalo's attention. We watched as he crossed the ridge in front of the FLOT (Forward Line Of Troops) and entered Iraqi territory.

Fifteen minutes later, we saw the great white van in the distance, coming back down the MSR. I was instantly relieved, but for some reason the battery commander thought Desefalo's van was an enemy vehicle. The commander immediately had his unit lock and load on the van as it approached, and prepare to open fire. Paco and I raced over to tell him that the van was a friendly vehicle. After all, it had passed his position not 15 minutes before, and what did he think the van was, anyhow? The world's largest car bomb?

Desefalo is not very tall and could barely see over the steering wheel. But as he approached our position, we could see his eyes bugging out of his head and his shocked face seemed to fill the cab. Driving into enemy territory and then being almost shot by friendlies was a lot of excitement for any man in one day. But the adventure wouldn't end here.

After the prisoners were loaded onto the van, Desefalo took them south to Capt. Flynn's Forward BSA (Brigade Supply Area) location. Along the route, he heard loud pounding and yelling from the back of the

van, and it increased as they approached the BSA. When Flynn heard the commotion, he was concerned that the Iraqis were going to retaliate once the doors were opened.

Captain Flynn had the van surrounded by paratroopers standing at the ready since he didn't know what to expect. As the doors opened, the Iraqis leaped out. Startled, Flynn couldn't help noticing that the Iraqis were butt naked, gasping for air, and yelling, "too tight, too tight!" Apparently, on the return trip from the FLOT, the air conditioning had broken and not only was it swelteringly hot inside the back of the van (it was at least 80 degrees Fahrenheit outside), but they were also suffocating due to the lack of ventilation. The screams of "too tight!" were caused by the plastic hand cuffs they wore. Some soldier had tightened them so much that some of the Iraqis' hands were turning purple. How they got undressed with their hands tied behind their backs, we'll never know.

As General S. L. A. Marshall wrote in his book, *Men Against Fire*, "Sixty percent of the art of command is the ability to anticipate; forty percent ... is the ability to improvise." Flynn definitely showed the ability to improvise by using the van that day, and in the end, except for a few naked and terrified prisoners of war, he was successful.

Major Dominic J. Caraccilo is a 1984 graduate of West Point and holds an M.S. from Cornell University.

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A IS FOR AFRICA AND ALBANIA



As First Squad Leader with 3rd Platoon B Company, I was with the first platoon to land in the LZ at the ambassador's compound. A couple of corrections to your story [see "From Bad To Worse" July '97]: Yes, there was a tank at the embassy, but no Marine fired at it in any way, shape or form. Our Rules Of Engagement were very clear and believe me, there were many situations during that operation that a lesser-disciplined force would have fired first and asked questions later. The roadblock incident involved Albanian nationals acting on their own, and basically a car ran one roadblock, but got blasted by about five guys with AKs: They walked up to the vehicle, put the bodies in the trunk and drove away.

The hardest part for us at the compound was the American Embassy staff's insistence on maintaining an "image" of order at the compound, at our expense. After digging in the first night (my squad was along the back row of houses that ran down from the ambassador's house to the front gate), we had to sit there the entire night with every light in the compound burning. NVGs were useless, all because the recon and security officer didn't want to give the appearance that we had a "siege" mentality! Tell that to my SAW gunner who was getting sprayed every few hours by guys we couldn't see (therefore under the ROE could not shoot!). Also, we were not allowed to dig in certain places, and a large tree in the middle of the LZ (a serious navhazard) did not get cut down until a Brit CH-47 almost took it out, because the ambassador in all her wisdom just did not see why we had to cut that tall, beautiful tree down to evacuate a horde of foreign nationals.

I gotta go, but there is a lot more to this story. I've been reading your mag since '86 and if you're interested, I'd love to tell the real story without a PAO puke standing by to whisk you away at the first mention of something not politically correct. Zaire/Congo was my company also (OP Guardian Retrieval). Africa sucks.

Semper Fi
Via E-mail

THE TRUE HEROES

Did you notice how, when McVeigh got the death penalty, every newspaper, news-magazine and program in the valley made a

point of mentioning the highly irrelevant fact that McVeigh was a Gulf War Veteran who won the bronze star?

It is times like these that everyone should be thankful for *SOF*, because *SOF* makes a point of informing the public of true heroes like Scott Fales and Tom Wilkinson, the two Air Force SecOps pararescuemen who won the Silver Star in Somalia ("Fast Rope to Hell").

Way to go, *SOF*!! Once again, you have demonstrated a sense of editorial responsibility unheard of among the prime time networks and the big-ass newspapers and magazines.

Thank you,
Jose-Pierre Fernandez

As Rudyard Kipling noted in Tommy Adkins, the soldier [or veteran] is seldom appreciated until he is desperately needed, usually to correct a grave error on the part of the politicians who do not appreciate him. And it's a particularly sad state of affairs when military service is somehow regarded as contributing to antisocial actions after that service, and when heroes are acknowledged only when it affords the opportunity for some draft-dodging politician to bask in reflected glory. But, that just goes with the territory. Be proud you served.

AUSSIE ANGST

Good day to you. I am in Australia and the [gun turn-in] amnesty is finished.

Stick up for your rights now! Speaking out is easier than what we now face here.

Gun owners who did not comply with the new regulations in Australia are now faced with the fact that their name is flagged on Government computers; they are liable for

four (4) years imprisonment and a fine that is about the cost of an average house. Those with firearms licenses and those who did not hand in their weapons are liable to search of person or premises without warrant. People cannot organize because what the Government has done is now legislated, enacted law.

Therefore, any attempt to communicate or organize is liable to the charge of subversion. If an individual says to another "I would suggest that you do not hand in your firearm" the speaker may be charged with subverting another to commit a criminal act.

They have started mounting raids to retrieve firearms and this is likely to intensify.

Whatever you guys do, for God's sake don't register your weapons. It is really happening, and it seems to be global.

U.S. brothers, watch your six. If you don't with the politicians, then you will have to watch it for real against your own troopers.

Australia to America: God Bless you, and pray for us poor bastards down under.

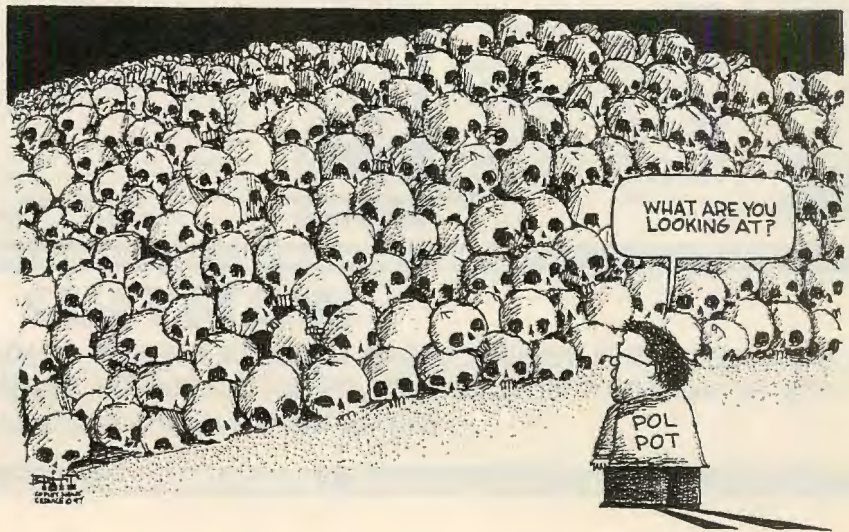
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FROM MOBUTU TO POL POT?

Re. your article "Apocalypse Africa" by Rob Krott in the June issue, since your article appeared, Kabila took over [see "French Mercs' 'Rumble In The Jungle'" Sept. '97]. The mercenaries of Mobutu led by Christian Tavemier of Vise, Belgium have dis-



Continued on page 28



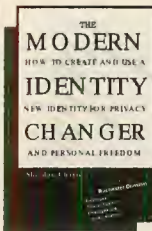
TESTING THE WAR WEAPONS

Rifles and Light Machine Guns from Around the World

by Timothy J. Mullin

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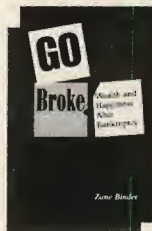
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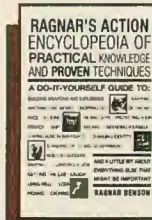
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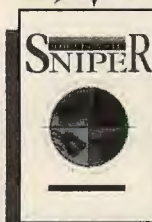
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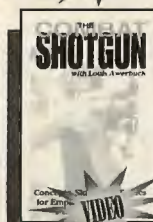
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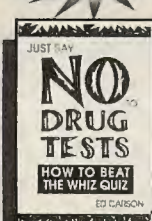
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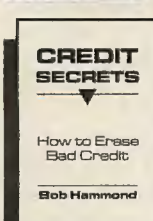
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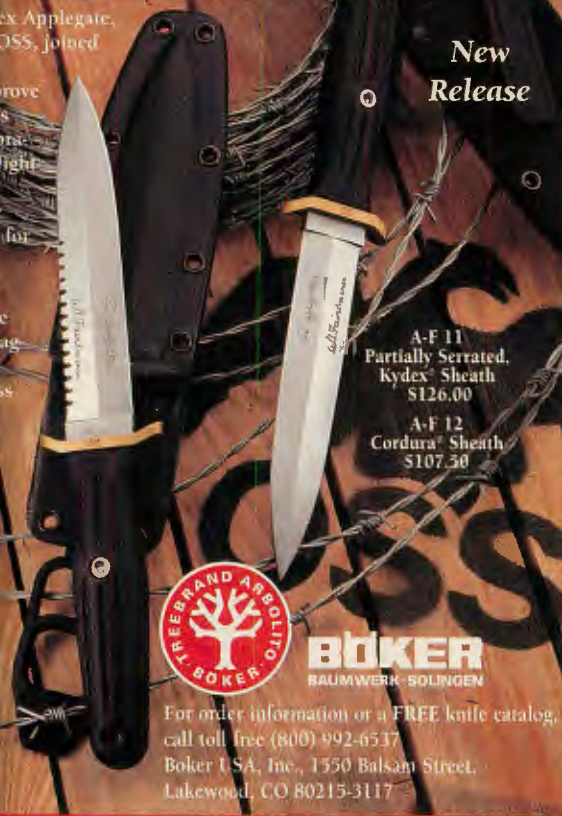
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appeared. Tavernier, a former officer in the Belgian Army, was the leader of the "Group Noire" based in Jadotville in the former Katanga during the secession war. Later he showed up in the Simba revolution as head of the 14th Commando in 1964. At that time he alienated (read: pissed off) most of the people who worked with him by stealing the gold from the Kilo-Moto/Watsa mine and not paying — or as rumor goes — eliminating many of the participants.

Thus when he was called to the help of Mobutu there were very few takers in the established mercenary/soldier of fortune community of Europe who were willing to join up with him. Tavernier reached out to untried semi-military forces in the former Eastern Bloc who have never been in a combat situation in Africa. Tavernier, now in his late 50's speaks French, Dutch and some English. This is not very conducive to leading Serbs, Croats and other East Europeans to combat.

The U.S. withdrew support from Mobutu for the first time in 30 years and supported Kabila (who is an avowed Communist even today). He was part of the Simbas in 1964, killing anybody who was an "intellectual" — meaning they were teachers, clerks or in some cases they were killed simply because they wore glasses.

At any rate, we now have a new dictator in the Congo — this one did not steal billions yet. Nevertheless, he did exactly the same things in the Congo as his contemporaries did in the "killing fields of Cambodia."

My information comes first-hand, from 5 (five) tours of duty in the former Belgian Congo, Zaire as a mercenary.

Bela Szabados
Salt Lake City, Utah

SOF: TRAVELER'S FRIEND

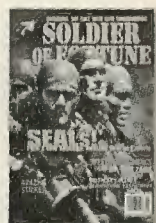


Your August '97 issue is one of the most interesting issues I have read since I started reading SOF many years ago.

It was fun, informative, entertaining and exciting. I travel a lot and always check SOF to find out about the country that I am traveling to.

Victor D. Subia
Via E-mail

NO FLAK FOR HACK



Col. David H. Hackworth (Ret.) "sounds off" monthly for a very popular magazine that is also distributed worldwide. His opinions are usually pretty "tart." However, it's refreshing to hear someone speak who is not giving you a bunch of B.S. His case is not like Adm. Boorda's. Give

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Hackworth his due: the man has eight purple hearts from his country and was a devoted soldier and not a dope-smoking draft dodger.

Larry Mazur
Bosnia

THE WRONG STUFF

[Regards the L.A. bank-robbery shootout] The second Gunman in the white car was not carrying an AK-47 when shot down in the street by SWAT. He had an AR-15 with Beatamag [sic] shooting full auto. I thought you people knew about guns! Try getting it right, and viewing footage of the end of shootout.

Mark Shoemaker
Via E-Mail

Writer Sherrow did not have available for review film footage of the demise of Gunman No. 2, but the reports he was furnished by the LAPD were very specific about the gunman carrying a Type 56 Chicom (full-auto conversion) when he was brought down. In response to your E-mail, we queried the LAPD and were told the initial report had been corrected and that the gunman had in fact put away his AK and was using a .223 Bushmaster (professionally converted to full-auto). Interestingly, Gunman No. 1, who did himself in with a head shot, was carrying an HK 91, which had been disabled by a police bullet to its receiver. In about three weeks from this writing, the LAPD is scheduled to release the full report on the weapons and high-tech body armor the crooks had equipped themselves with. On 5 October, the weapons that Bob's Gun Shop loaned to the LAPD, so they could compete with the crooks on even ground, will be auctioned off at the SOF Convention in Las Vegas for the benefit of the LAPD Memorial Fund benefiting the families of slain officers (for more info, call 303-449-3750, Ext. 8).

RUGER RESEARCHER

I am compiling a book on the Ruger 10/22, specifically highly modified examples that have been customized into exotic configurations.

I invite your readers to contact me if they have such a Ruger, all replies will be treated in the strictest confidence.

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ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER



Col. Jeff Cooper (right) at his Arizona digs puts Steyr's new Scout Rifle through its paces off the bench. Steyr Scout Rifle will also feature an adapter that accepts a nine-round magazine. Scope, sling, bipods are part of the system.

STEYR SCOUT RIFLE

It is not uncommon in the field of weapons development for all components of a Very Good Idea to exist in some unrelated form or another for a considerable time, until a man with the practical overview born of experience conceptualizes these various components together in an optimum form, or recognizes and delineates defining characteristics of a "new" genre.

Rifle scopes with medium-to-long eye relief have been around for some time, favored by those with fading sight who wanted optics on a Model 94 or wanted to scope a surplus GI bolt-action without the expense of turning down the bolt handle. Bipods have been used for decades by varmint hunters and snipers, varying in design from adapted military units to homemade rigs, to a recent plethora of commercial designs. Virtually indestructible synthetic stocks that eliminate the shrinkage/warpage/wandering-zero considerations of wood stocks have become increasingly popular in the past 20 years also. Likewise, excellent and proven calibers such as 7.62x51mm have been available in strong and reliable actions for plenty of time to dispel any possible questions of the ability or accuracy of the action or caliber.

Now commeth Col. Jeff Cooper, perhaps best known worldwide as a pioneer of practical combat handgunning, but who is also a consummate rifleman. (see "Full Auto" this issue for a review of Cooper's new book *The Art of the Rifle*).

Based on a lifetime of experience afield with a rifle in military or game-taking activities, Cooper has for the past several years been developing the concept of an optimum weapon that he calls the Scout Rifle. It is an intriguing — and well thought out — concept.

A serendipitous liaison between Cooper and Steyr has resulted in his Scout Rifle concept being executed in a purpose-built adaptation of the Steyr SBS (Safe Bolt System) action. The result is a light (seven pounds empty, with five-round magazine), strong and accurate rifle that is comfortable to carry but will be up to any task when you need it.

The Steyr Scout Rifle has the uncluttered, clean esthetic of a polished and practical design. With metal parts finished black and the Zytel-type synthetic stock an attractive grey it is a handsome rifle. It carries — built in — the only good-looking bipods, with the exception of the Parker-Hale, this writer has yet seen.

The first thing one notices on the Steyr Scout Rifle is the scope, a longer eye-relief Leupold, which is mounted forward of the receiver. Mounted here, the scope does not interfere with ejection or loading through the receiver, and the bolt does not interfere with the scope — and the scope can be mounted lower, closer to the axis of the bore. The 19-inch barrel has longitudinal flutes to lessen weight.



The Scout Rifle is to be marketed through Gun South, Inc. as a package that includes the 2-1/2 power Leupold scope and a Ching sling. It will be available in 7.62x51mm (.308), with the possibility of additional "purely-sporting" calibers such as 7mm-08 in the future, for jurisdictions where "military" calibers are *verboden* to civilian shooters.

Magazine options include as standard a detachable four-round magazine, and an adapter will be available that accepts a nine-round magazine, giving five and 10 rounds with one in the chamber. Emergency iron sights include a flip-up rear sight and a front sight under the objective lens of the scope, which are adjustable for windage and elevation.

The Scout rifle is sold as a package, although you can (if you must) mount your own scope, or night vision equipment, and the synthetic rail (like a short SSG rail) will accept other bipods, although you aren't likely to find any that look as good or function as well on this rifle.

The Scout Rifle is scheduled to go on sale around the first of the year, for around \$2,695. For updated information on availability contact GSI at 800-821-3021.

Although the Steyr Scout Rifle is a very specific package, Cooper defines a Scout Rifle as a rifle that is a suitable tool for a man working alone. The original, he told us, would probably have been the M1903 6.5 Mannlicher-Schoenauer for which specifica-

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tions were stipulated by Franz Joseph. It was a design that was very favorably received by civilian hunters and adventurers such as Ernest Hemingway. Another familiar example is the ubiquitous Winchester Model 94 that has graced saddle scabbards and pickup gun racks for more than a century. The central design feature of a Scout Rifle, Cooper notes, is *handiness*. A strong bolt action and a capable caliber such as .308, plus optical sights and a sling and bipod serve to make this handy rifle more effective. Thus, by Cooper's definition, or any other, Steyr's new offering will be the quintessential Scout Rifle.

Many a campfire discussion has centered around the conundrum "if you could only have one rifle/caliber, what would it be?" The Steyr Scout rifle is the first ever to seriously accept the challenge of being a genuine rifle for all seasons. The thoughtful sophistication (as opposed to bells and whistles) of the design are seen in such things as the stock being adjustable for length and its rounded heel for quick mounting; in a slanted trigger guard adapter as for English shotguns so it doesn't hammer your fingers — even such unique features as a two-position magazine detent that allows top feeding, to hold the magazine in reserve. Thoughtfully designed for diversity and practicality, the Steyr Scout Rifle may well be the first to lay claim to being a "universal" rifle.

— D.M.

MICRO NOTEBOOK HOLSTER

There are some tactical environments in which carrying a handgun on your body is either inappropriate, or possibly even dangerous. Unfortunately, belt-type pouch holsters and soft briefcases with hidden holsters have become so common as to be almost passe. Experienced gunslingers can "make" you with gear of that type from 50 yards away.

Sam Andrews (Andrews Custom Leather, Dept. SOF, Rt. 4, Box 48, Alachua, FL 32615; phone: 904-462-0576 — send \$2 for catalog) has developed a unique notebook holster for those who need to pack concealed and yet want no steel hanging from their anatomy.

I have been toting one of Andrews'



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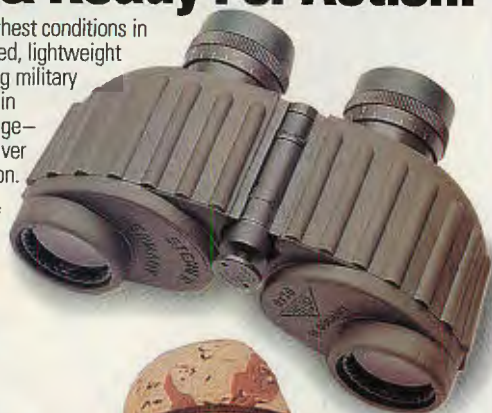
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standard-size notebook holsters for more than seven years. It's perfect for business wear or "shirtsleeve" weather of the type all too common in Arizona. However, over that time-frame handguns chambered for effective cartridges have grown more and more compact.

With that in mind, Sam recently sent me one of his Micro Notebook Holsters to test and evaluate. Only 7 inches long, 6 inches wide and 2 1/4 inches thick, it can still hold a pretty potent package. On the inside of the front cover is a pouch that appears to be made for a calculator, cellular phone, and other odds and ends. The pouch's flap is retained by an L-shaped strip of velcro.

Inside the pouch is a hand-molded suede holster, also held in place by velcro. This holster can be removed and substituted with those configured for other handguns. We were provided holsters for the Glock Models 26 and 27, SIGARMS P230 .380 ACP pistol, and the Smith & Wesson "J" frame series of 2-inch .38 Special revolvers. A leather strap with a dot fastener holds the notebook closed. A leather strap on the spine is provided for carrying and to anchor the notebook during the draw stroke. Held to the notebook holster by so-called "Chicago" brass screws and nuts, either of these straps can be removed, if desired. There is a single pen holder on the inner spine. The inside of the notebook's back cover holds a 4-inch x 6-inch spiral notebook.


In use, grasp the spine of the notebook with the left hand under the strap. With the thumb of the right hand flip open the notebook's closure strap. Open the notebook with the right hand. Then slide the right hand over to the holster pouch's flap and pull it open. Withdraw the pistol. At the same time, drop the notebook holster to the ground. Complete the presentation by moving up onto the target from the Weaver position. Fast? No, but sometimes the element of surprise can compensate for a lack of speed.

This is exceptionally high-quality equipment designed for armed professionals. The Micro Notebook Holster costs \$185. Andrews has been crafting custom combat holsters for 21 years. Located in north central Florida, near Gainesville and just one hour south of the Georgia border, his customer base circles the globe, with a significant percentage of law-enforcement personnel and now an even larger clientele of civilians, as a consequence of the spate of concealed carry legislation passed throughout the United States in the last several years.

Sam uses only number-one grades of oak-tanned cowhide. All of his holsters are hand-molded and stitched with heavy bonded nylon thread, which is sealed to protect against the environment. Many of his holsters and belts feature a suede lining. All of his leather work can be recommended without reservations of any kind.

— Peter G. Kokalis ✕

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One tire climbed a rock and our Toyota pickup leaned precariously on its way down the riverbank. "They managed to destroy the bridge here three days ago, but didn't get any farther," Commander George Athor of the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) said as we lurched up the other side.

A decomposing body, stripped to its underwear, lay near the road. "That was the Sudanese battalion commander, a lieutenant colonel," Athor said grimly. Our truck stopped. Athor led me along the bottom of a ridge line. Six or seven bodies sprawled in hastily prepared defensive positions. Athor stopped and pointed at one: "He was too light-skinned to be Sudanese. We're sure he was Iranian or Iraqi." After three days, though, the bloated corpse had blackened beyond recognition.

"We captured a Farsi speaker, probably an Iranian," Athor continued, back in the pickup. "He'd been badly wounded in the thigh. We tried very hard to save him, but he died. Too bad. He would have been proof that the government is using [Islamic] fundamentalists from other countries to fight their *jihād*."

Ten minutes later we were at the steep bank of another river, this one defining a line 40 miles south of the southern city of Juba. Along the road were well-camouflaged heavy weapons: twin-barreled 23mm towed guns and 82mm and 106mm recoilless rifles. Two SPLA tanks squatted under teak and mango trees, their 100mm guns pointed north; in that direction sat three burned-out T-55s. Athor's deputy, Cmdr. Thomas Cirillo, briefed me as we walked down to the trickle of water.

"What you saw south of here was the result of an infantry battalion trying to flank us on the left. They had no idea we were waiting for them. Here" — his arm swept across the battlefield as we crested the bank — "they tried an end play: Two battalions with armor were sent beyond our right flank as a diversion, then turned west to surprise us. We had our tanks waiting to the east. When the enemy passed, our armor crossed their tracks and swung around to hit them from behind. When they turned to face the threat, we hit them from here with antitank weapons."

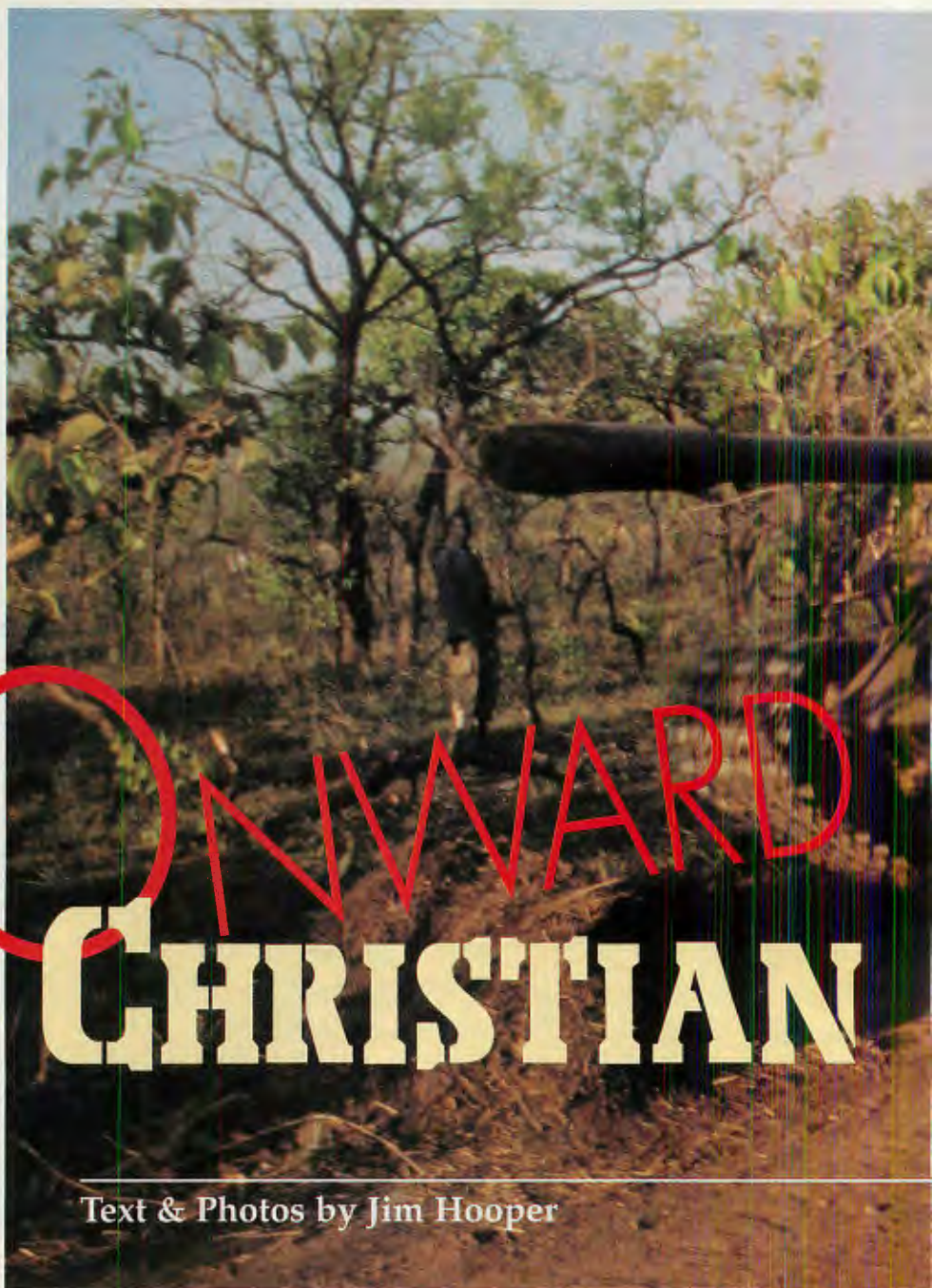
Half of a human body lay next to an equally dead tank; beyond it were more corpses. "It was a massacre," Cmdr. Cirillo concluded with professional pride.

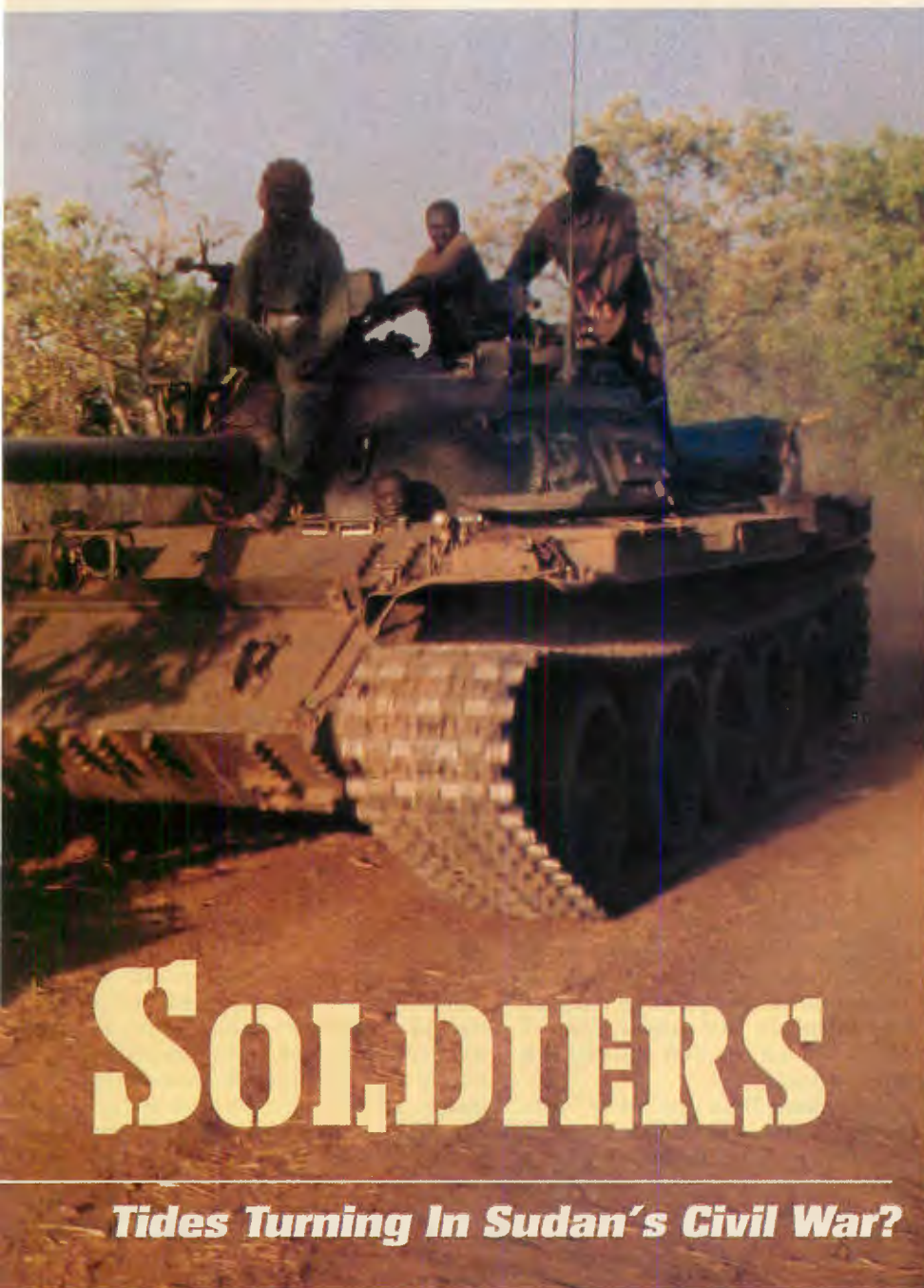
Not Dead Yet

The SPLA, as of this writing, looks poised to capture Juba. If that important city falls, a racist and religious conflict between the Islamic north and the black Christian and animistic south will be nearing its end.

Though its roots lie in the pre-colonial Arab slave trade, the rebellion's first armed chapter began in the 1950s, when disaffected southerners formed the *Anyanya* guerrilla movement to fight for political equality.

A peace agreement was reached in 1972,





SOLDIERS

Tides Turning In Sudan's Civil War?



but a decade later the imposition of Islamic *Shari'a* law by Khartoum saw thousands of southerners join the new SPLA led by Dr. John Garang de Mabiior, a former colonel in the Sudanese army.

Since then the SPLA enjoyed, and subsequently lost, the support of the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia; suffered internal dissent; won and lost battles against the Sudanese army; and, has regularly been written off by Africa experts — obviously, prematurely.

In October 1996 the SPLA was joined by an ally, the National Democratic Alliance: *Muslim* opposition parties ousted in 1989 during General Omar Hassan El Bashir's military coup. The anti-Khartoum forces then launched an offensive toward Damazine in the east, immediately followed by a second offensive in the north that threatened crucial rail and road links to Port Sudan on the Red Sea.

Bashir's National Islamic Front (NIF) government, desperate to prevent the capture of Damazine and the hydroelectric dam supplying 80% of Khartoum's power, began drafting high-school and college students, throwing them ill-trained into battle.

Something Big

Earlier this year, when the Sudanese army's manpower and assets had already been stretched to defend the northern and eastern fronts, the SPLA launched its southern offensive. It was my second trip to southern Sudan in less than two months.

The first had anticipated (prematurely) the SPLA's major offensive in the south: With successful campaigns already being waged in the east and north, military logic dictated that a southern campaign had to start before the beginning of the rains.

Observing good opsec, Chief of Staff Salva Kiir Mayardit had revealed nothing, however. I did learn that more than 15,000 recruits had been trained in the previous eight months. At the SPLA's training center west of the Nile River, I watched new troops engage in offensive exercises. At another base, armor supported by infantry was being put through its paces.

The chief of staff for SPLA logistics revealed that barges were ready to move tanks and artillery across the river, and that captured bulldozers were ready to make roads where no infrastructure existed.

A few days later I crossed the Nile to a well dug-in SPLA position bristling with heavy weapons manned by youngsters who clearly knew their job. Though separated by dense forest from the government of Sudan (GOS) battalion at Kit, I could hear the Muslim soldiers being called to afternoon prayers. SPLA troops smiled grimly at the

(clockwise from top) T-55 tank, captured from Sudanese army, moves out during SPLA's Operation Thunderbolt southern offensive. Kill zone of a major SPLA ambush south of Yei is filled with burned-out government vehicles and remains of nearly 2,000 enemy troops.



SPLA commanders George Athor (left) and Thomas Cirillo (right) share grim joke with staff beside government tank destroyed in ambush.



SPLA crew mans 14.5mm ZPU-4 occupying high ground at base north of Ugandan border.

Arabic words filtering through the trees, some drawing fingers knife-like across their throats.

The SPLA now was a well-disciplined, semi-conventional force led by an experienced officer corps that knew the terrain and enemy and had a solid grasp of command, control, and communication. Each time I asked about the coming southern offensive, however, the officers merely smiled politely and changed the subject. I returned home to Europe, frustrated. Something big was up.

A few weeks later, I was alerted by a phone call: The southern offensive had kicked off a week earlier. The call sent me scrambling for a return trip.

I arrived in the northern Ugandan town of Arua and made my way across the border to Kaya in Sudan. From there, an SPLA letter of accreditation allowed me passage on a series of heavy logistical vehicles carrying tons of captured ammo northward. Troop morale, high during my previous visit, was now stratospheric — and for good reason.

On 9 March 1997 the SPLA launched “Operation Thunderbolt” with three rein-

forced brigade-sized columns that struck GOS positions at the border-area towns of Kaya, Alero, and Yei.

Like A Bolt Of Thunder

The southern axis, under Cmdr. James Wani Iga, scored first. Attacking Kaya at 0530, his forces routed the GOS brigade’s headquarters and pursued the survivors as they fled toward Yei, 56 miles to the north. The central axis, commanded by Cmdr. Geir Aluong, simultaneously interdicted the road 12 miles below Yei after seeing its five T-55s bog down in unexpectedly soft ground. While efforts were made to extricate the tanks, Aluong’s infantry — supported by mortars, truck-mounted heavy machine guns, and 107mm multiple rocket launchers — began clearing GOS outposts south of Alero, which had one GOS brigade and a platoon of tanks.

The northern SPLA axis, led by Cmdr. Agustino Jadallah, struck Gumunu, several miles northeast of Yei. He was a few hours behind schedule after losing one tank to mines. The attacks overwhelmed the GOS company guarding the northern approach to

the town. The SPLA force then split, with commanders Athor and Cirillo leading half of it northward to block any attempts to reinforce Yei while Jadallah turned south.

Crossing the bridge under fire from two GOS companies at an old National Tobacco Company compound, the lead SPLA T-55 tank slid off into the river bed. Two more got stuck attempting to ford the river. While SPLA engineers worked to free the armor throughout that night and the next day, a Sudanese counterattack destroyed one tank before being repulsed. By now, the Yei garrison had reinforced its northern perimeter, forcing Jadallah to dig in under heavy defensive fire.

In the meantime, the southern axis was maintaining constant pressure on the retreating enemy. Due to inadequate troop transport, most of the GOS troops were on foot, forcing the accompanying wheeled and tracked vehicles to stay with them for mutual protection. Though they gained strength as outlying GOS garrisons and some 4,000 insurgents of the West Nile Bank Front (Khartoum-supported Ugandan Muslim radicals) joined the rout, the proximity of SPLA



(left) Strategy session during Operation Thunderbolt involves (left to right at map table) SPLA commanders Jadallah and Aluong, Chief of Staff Mayardit (in civilian clothes), and Deputy Chief of Staff Ajak. (above) At another base, Mayardit leads members of his staff to a graduation ceremony for newly trained troops.

forces prevented the destruction of any of the bridges crucial to the SPLA.

Make Or Break

By 11 March, hungry, exhausted, and thoroughly demoralized elements of the Sudanese army and its Ugandan-terrorist allies had but one aim: reach Yei alive. On that day Jadallah's northern axis finally freed its armor.

The next morning Aluong, his five T-55s operational again, turned north to capture Alero, nine miles south of Yei. By now the combined GOS/WNBF forces, swollen to nearly 10,000 men, were three hours away. Outnumbered more than three to one, Aluong knew that to stand would mean being overrun, while retreating northward would see his force sandwiched between the approaching enemy and a reinforced brigade in Yei.

The success or failure of Thunderbolt now hung in the balance. For Chief of Staff Mayardit, it was a crucial moment. Weighing the tactical situations to the north and south, at 1700 hours he ordered Jadallah to attack.

In less than an hour Jadallah's men had overrun Yei's northern perimeter and captured the barracks. Resistance crumbled and the defenders escaped to the west. And there was a lucky break for the SPLA: The panic was so complete at the GOS compound that no radio message was sent reporting the fall of this second-largest town in the south.

Surprise And Overwhelming Fire

The threat from the south was still approaching, however. That afternoon first contact was made by a small SPLA holding force, which withdrew after suffering a number of casualties as well as one tank captured. It rejoined Aluong's central brigade, which retreated northward on the morning of 13 March to meet Jadallah's brigade coming out of Yei.

Still outnumbered at least two to one in troop strength, they nonetheless held the advantage in heavy weapons. The flat, forested terrain on both sides of the road also favored them.

First blooded as guerrilla fighters, the SPLA officers understood the shock value of massed firepower. They hurriedly set an L-shaped ambush on wooded areas north and east of the road, deploying eight T-55s supported by 12.7mm DShKs, 14.5mm ZPU-2s and -4s, and 23mm ZU-23-2s in the direct-fire role and large numbers of anti-armor weapons.

Less than an hour after the trap had been set and camouflaged, a huge column of enemy troops and vehicles approached, limping toward the presumed safety of Yei. The ambushers held their breaths and eased the guns' safeties off.

The order came and a wall of steel exploded from the bush. In the kill zone, trees and men fell and fuel tanks and ammunition boxes exploded in an inferno.



SPLA recruit fires 82mm recoilless rifle during training. (inset) SPLA infantrymen, in a mix of uniforms, occupy fighting position less than a mile from a Sudanese army battalion in the town of Kit.



A few hundred Sudanese government troops and West Nile Bank Front terrorists await processing at POW camp.

Thirty minutes later, nearly 2,000 enemy troops lay dead and more than 1,000 had surrendered; the balance abandoned armor, artillery, and dozens of wheeled vehicles and fled west.

Corpses And Korans

It was a "smelly place," the young logistics officer seated next to me in the truck explained. The SPLA's hugely successful ambush had occurred 12 days ago.

Three miles south of Yei the truck stopped. Tying a bandanna across my mouth and nose, I stepped down from the truck with my SPLA bodyguards. Glutted carrion birds took heavily to the sky. I immediately noticed the litter of books, pamphlets, and ordnance amid scorched vehicles and abandoned equipment. The awful scene stretched a mile into the distance.

Then the stench penetrated my bandanna. My stomach started to churn as shriveled, dark objects come into focus wherever my eye settled: on the road, the shoulders, and deeper into the undergrowth. Bodies — hundreds and hundreds — lay where they had fallen.

Dead men's eyes that had escaped incineration had been plucked out by the birds. Many of the GOS and WNBF troops had died singly, but under a large tree to my left at least 20 rotted where they had apparently

sought safety in numbers. I stepped over an unexploded mortar shell as I photographed the kill zone.

Just beyond the tree, a dry stream bed disappeared under the road. The culvert was jammed with remains of those who died scrambling desperately for cover. A few paces more and I found a semi-skeleton: a white skull with black scalp rests against the war-head of an RPG. Next I spied a 50-foot-wide swath of small trees and saplings, scythed down by gunfire along with another dozen men. One desiccated body, rigidly straight, reclined at right angles to the road, the man's head broken loose and resting at his ankles.

Scattered everywhere were piles of small-arms ammunition, machine-gun belts, mortar shells, artillery shells — and hundreds of small copies of the Koran, the Islamic holy book. Here and there a page turned idly in the gagging breeze.

As I lowered the camera the only sounds were from the carrion crows, who scolded us for the interruption.

Retreat Under Air Cover

The SPLA truck ground to a halt in front of the Yei headquarters. Climbing the cracked steps I sensed an unalloyed confidence among those coming down to greet me.

The immediate news was of an attempted government counterattack that was smashed that very morning at Mile 40. Details of the action were still sketchy, but three enemy battalions had been thrown back with heavy losses in men and tanks.

The SPLA's losses, it was explained with jubilant candor, are seven dead and 15 wounded. My camera trigger finger began itching. How far from here? Sixty miles. Can I go there? At the moment it's too dangerous: The enemy has been attacking with gunships and MiGs to cover the withdrawal of their ground forces. Perhaps in a day or two.

Under a mango tree behind the head-

Continued on page 84

Somewhere in Serbia ...

A Special Forces major waits in darkness, peeking out between the scrub trees. He adjusts his balaclava to better sight in on a wounded team member. A steady experienced hand, he checks the magazine of his MP5 and hand-signals a nearby crouching NCO.

A Serb sniper is spotted with night-vision gear and a suppressed shot dumps the shooter from his treetop perch. The major and the sergeant sprint to their fallen comrade, shielding him as radio contact is made for a quick extraction. More Serb sniper fire rips the ground around the Americans and we hear the roar of a Black Hawk helicopter swooping in from overhead. A SPIE harness quickly drops to the SF team members while Serbian gunfire lights up the forest. The Americans lock into their harness and are suddenly and violently jerked toward the sky as the evacuation chopper lifts off into the night.

So begins "Genesis," the pilot episode of the new major-independent action-adventure series based on the title of *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine.

SOF publisher Robert K. Brown is excited over the series, "We look forward to a series with the guts to be politically incorrect and which will provide an upbeat and positive perspective on the U.S. military and the United States' role in the world. 20,000,000 weekly viewers in the U.S. alone for a big-budget series with top national sponsors will be a boost for all involved in the project."

"We want to bring to the television screen the same kind of high-impact action that you see in so many feature films today," action-



Series lead Brad Johnson, flanked by Mark Sheppard and Melinda Clarke. (below) Jerry Bruckheimer (second from left) and Harry Humphries (third from left) trade laughs with cast. When all's looking bright, what's to sweat?



SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, INC.

film producer Jerry Bruckheimer (*Con Air*, *The Rock*, *Crimson Tide*, *Top Gun*) stated to Catherine Humphries (the wife of Harry Humphries, his head technical advisor) prior to the start of production on the TV project, *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.*, back in April.

Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.'s media teaser states bluntly: "In a world where there are no obvious bad guys, where governments engage in secret wars and illegal activities that threaten the security of every individual and nation on the planet, a group of highly trained covert military operatives have joined forces. They are *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.*, an elite crime fighting unit, led by retired Major Matt Shepherd. *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.* ventures where governments

From Ink To "Inc."

by Dan Gagliasso

PHOTOS COURTESY RYSHER ENTERTAINMENT, INC.

cannot and will not tread, to protect national — and international — interests and to maintain the balance of power. Even with the New World Order, people are still up to some old tricks."

Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.'s cast is headed

by Brad Johnson (*Flight of the Intruder*, *Rough Riders*) as team leader Major Matthew Shepherd; Tim Abell (*Executive Command*, *Steel Sharks*) as sniper and weapons specialist Benny Ray Riddle; Melinda Clarke (*Spawn*, *Return to Two*



Moon Junction) as intelligence expert Margo Vincent; former stuntman Réal Andrews (TV's *Lonesome Dove - The Series, The Sentinel*) as hand-to-hand combat expert Chance Walker; Mark Sheppard (*In the Name of the Father, The X-Files*) as

ex-SAS trooper and explosives master "C.J." Yates; and David Trout (*White Squall, Mighty Ducks III*) as *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.*'s version of *Mission Impossible*'s "Mr. Phelps," Xavier Trout.

Soldier Of Fortune, Inc. took a long and

circuitous route to finally emerge on the world's television screens. A small partnership that included TV-movie producer Neil Russell, long-time *SOF* contributor Neil Livingstone and Chairman of the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation, Peter Kuyper,

along with Bob Brown, first formulated the series' concept several years ago. With story lines taken from today's headlines, episodes will deal with international terrorists, the Russian Mafia and shadowy drug lords, among other threats to peace and security.

This group of investors eventually approached action-film maestro Jerry Bruckheimer with the concept. Bruckheimer jumped at the idea and the group was soon in partnership with Rysher Entertainment as a major partner. Based upon the credibility of the project, its title, and Jerry Bruckheimer's attachment to it, Rysher was able to do the nearly impossible: sell 22 one-hour episodes without a frame of film exposed!

Requirement: A SEAL's Approval

A major contributor to whatever is unique and accurate about *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.* is chief technical advisor, and former U.S. Navy SEAL, Harry J.

writers, producers, and directors *also* take live-fire training to give these often technically film-oriented individuals a feel for the *real* thing.

"Marksmanship is one thing and gun handling is another. Brad Johnson is a genuine outdoorsman and hunter ... proficient in certain firearms. He only needed some coaching on the military side of weapons. Tim Abell is a former U.S. Army Ranger. He needed minimal training and shows it," says a proud Humphries.

In fact, perhaps his most apt pupil was the least experienced, the show's lone female team member. "Melinda Clarke picked up from zero firearms training and has just excelled in jujitsu. She has no problem throwing men three times her own weight."

And actors Andrews and Sheppard's enthusiasm and athletic abilities ensured them a fairly smooth go of the training, as

"*Soldier Of Fortune* [magazine] is known around the world. It's a reality-based show; real men in dangerous and dramatic situations," he adds.

Brad Johnson is, likewise, no stranger to the pages of *SOF*. He expertly portrays the frustration of restricted Navy A-6 pilots during the final months of the Vietnam War in *Flight of the Intruder* (see "Flight of the Intruder," Aug. '90) His actor's interpretation of one of the key cowboy troopers in John Milius' recently shot and critically acclaimed *The Rough Riders* mini-series has shown Johnson to possess the kind of talents necessary to convincingly portray a former SF officer enduring extreme combat perils.

Johnson is also someone whose appreciation and admiration of American servicemen/women are from the heart. There's no Hollywood pretense about this down-to-



Brad Johnson and Melinda Clarke gear up to return fire. (right) In your face on 22 September, *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.* Maybe an emerging global phenom?



Humphries (see "From Brown Water To Silver Screen," July '97). Unlike many film technical advisors who are content to take the money, trot into the setting sun, and rubberstamp many filmmakers' often out-of-orbit fantasies, Humphries isn't hesitant to point out glaring inaccuracies and push for more plausible story lines.

Says *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.*'s lead, Brad Johnson: "It's great having a guy whose 'been there and done that.' It's an over-used phrase, but it applies here. Harry is a great liaison between the military side and our business, which is made up of illusion and often a lot of professional bullshitters." (Humphries, Johnson accurately notes, is neither.)

Humphries was entrusted with training the five stars in firearms safety, military-style weapons handling with live ammo, and hand-to-hand combat techniques. He took this smart strategy one major step further by suggesting that the show's main

well. Humphries is making sure that the weapons and gear are correct for the time, place, and situations. Due to story lines, weapons most often must be unidentifiable and widely available on the international market, as opposed to the American-made M16. A team like this obviously wouldn't want its armament easily traceable to U.S.-manufactured sources.

Humphries also decided on gear based more upon police SWAT clothing unless their specific involvements dictate camouflage of different types. The show's Progressive Technologies' body armor is the same type now in use by SEAL Team 6. Ernie Emerson's well-known Raven knife and folding knives, as well as Ka-Bar's newest, are the selections for the show's edged weapons.

Executive Producer Jerry Bruckheimer says of Humphries' major contributions, "Harry is a reality check and a creative partner who keeps the show authentic because he has real-world experience.

earth ex-rodeo cowboy. "Major Matthew Shepherd" will do the genuine American special-operations community proud.

Between the actual A-6 pilots and real SEALs and Force Recon types, Johnson's impressed with the elite small-unit mindset. "The guys we portray have been cast aside, but they can still be needed in the private sector. We're just barely scratching the surface with this show. There's a reservoir of story lines out there."

Tim Abell co-stars as former Marine sniper and firearms expert Benny Riddle. His character's official biography closely parallels his own military background. Directly from high school in Maryland, Abell enlisted into the Army, eventually serving in the elite 2nd Ranger Battalion. After active duty he spent another five years

in the reserves while attending the University of Maryland, where he discovered his calling as an actor.

Abell is a friendly, easy-going soul who still projects the kind of professionalism he honed during his Ranger days. After paying his dues in the fast-paced world of formula low-budget action films, *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.* is a major step up for Tim's burgeoning career. His character, "Benny Ray," is a grad from MCRDC (Marine Corps Development Command) sniper school and BUD/S (Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL) who finally crosses swords with a "blue-hat" U.N. Task Force superior and is quietly bounced from the Corps.

The real Tim Abell has been a major asset, especially during the hectic initial

is someone who had never before handled firearms and was better known for her soap opera and musical theater experience. "I am determined to *dance* in at least one episode of this show," she laughs.

Clarke openly points out that her initial experience firing a Benelli Super 90 shotgun during her training was unique for her. "I've never been more sore in my entire life."

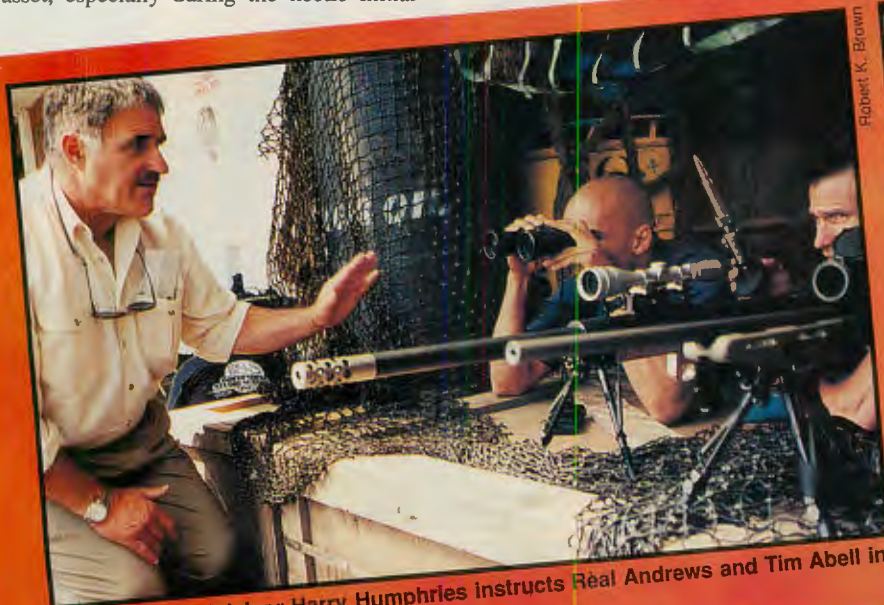
Trainer Humphries ambles up behind her and chuckles, "Just remember, pain is really weakness leaving the body."

Her attitude on firearms has radically altered. "Now that I've been through Harry's training, I completely understand the idea of weapons as a sport. And Harry made training enjoyable or else I wouldn't have been able to get

Here is another actor who has changed his firearms attitudes and now is an avid shooter who has his own personal Glock 27.

Réal Andrews has to this point made his career portraying psychotic bad guys in a number of shot-in-Canada television shows including *The Marshal*, *The Sentinel*, and *Viper*. The young actor's outstanding athletic abilities enabled him to break into the business as a stuntman while his serious Tae Kwon Do regimen has kept him physically peaked, enabling him to pursue the rigors of full-time acting.

Andrews has become another firearms convert and has a Glock 21, Sig 226, and a custom M1911 Colt.



Key Technical Advisor Harry Humphries instructs R al Andrews and Tim Abell in sniper/spotter coordination.



days of filming. Harry Humphries appreciatively recalls: "We had a fake piton withdrawal scene over a cliff. We needed an actor coming up over the cliff in the shot to make it all work. Tim was definitely up to doing it himself, just like he'd come right off of a mountain course."

As Abell, himself, points out casually: "I think my training in the Army has served me well as an actor. I've never worried about how to pay the bills in between my early acting jobs. I've worked as a carpenter and a waiter." His military experience has also led him to occasionally assist with training for one of southern California's reserve Special Forces detachments, based in Los Alamitos.

Actress Melinda Clarke, who is cast as the Romanian-born former CIA case officer, laughs at her unique situation. "You know, I'm going to have two action figures coming out of me this year!" Besides the miniature plastic rendition of her team character, she will also be seen in *Spawn*, a sci-fi action film.

Melinda has managed to smoothly mesh with her action-oriented male co-stars. Here

through it. Now, this action stuff is just a blast."

No Rambos Here

The rest of the cast is rounded out by Mark Sheppard's demolition man and R al Andrews' close-in combat expert.

Sheppard is particularly gleeful that his character's greatest contribution is that "I get to blow things up." Born in Great Britain, he has a particular affinity for the English military, including, as he says, "The Regiment." To a former inhabitant of the British Isles that can only mean the Special Air Service. He fondly reveres the opportunity to portray a former member of that elite unit. "I sleep better at night knowing there are those kind of real people protecting us. There are a lot of similarities between the SAS and Harry's SEAL team."

Interested Sheppard to play the instant outsider of *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.*'s team. He thinks there's far too much fantasy in most film depictions of the contemporary military. He also hopes that all of the team's characters "become more complete, since this is an educated action show. We are not Rambos, we're a team."

Soldier Of Fortune, Inc. has been inserted into the high-risk world of major independent television programming where its competition will likely be popular adolescent action fare like *Xena*, *Hercules*, and *Baywatch*. Jerry Bruckheimer's lead influence, however, insures that the show's look will be big and flashy, and probably boast a great soundtrack. But it's on the strength of interesting and realistic stories that the series will drown or make it big with worldwide viewers.

With the hard work and influence of former SEAL Humphries and actors like Johnson, Abell, and the rest of the cast, there is a wide range of story and character possibilities that can raise *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.* to the level of a classic — and long-running — action drama.

Remain on alert for *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.* — going operational 22 September.

Screenwriter Dan Gagliasso is the closest thing SOF has to a Hollywood correspondent. ✕



BASIC INSTINCTS

SOF Joins the MVD

Text & Photos
by Mark H. Milstein

Sofrino Barracks, Moscow

There was only stony silence around the table when, between shots of vodka, I joked to a bunch of Russian Ministry of Interior (MVD) drill instructors that my visit to their camp, quite ironically, coincided with the anniversary of Hitler's invasion of Russia more than a half century before.

In fact, my presence at Sofrino Barracks, home of the MVD's 3641 Battalion, had quickly become a fish bone in the windpipe of certain elements of the camp's cadre.

The Cold War, I learned, was far from over. America was still the enemy, and this

part of Russia's armed forces, although better off than most of the regular Russian army in terms of material needs, suffered from what Western observers would term a lack of accountability and discipline, and still viewed conscripts as fair game for extortion, an endless supply of free alcohol, cheap labor, and suitable cannon fodder for brush-fire wars such as Chechnya and the guerrilla insurgency in Tajikistan.

For insight, *SOF* had "joined" the Russian armed forces. Russia has not just one armed force, but 17, including the MVD's 23,000 troops and the border forces' 100,000, as well as the army's

460,000. The MVD troops have mostly been paid on time, as have some elite troops such as the strategic rocket forces, the paratroops in Tula, and a division southwest of Moscow that acts as sort of an imperial guard for the Kremlin.

We Are Better

"You are the first American we've ever had at this base," Colonel Matsupa Victor Jakovlevitch, the 3641's commanding officer, told me. "I think you will find the Russian armed forces a bit different than your American or NATO armies. We are better. I am quite proud of my officers and

men. You should feel free to call on me if you need any help."

"You will be assigned to Lieutenant Oleg's company," Col. Jakovlevitch continued. "He's our most Western-thinking officer and I think you two will get along."

Colonel Jakovlevitch's adjutant, Lt. Yepifanov Anatoliy Alexandrovitch, quietly jotted down some notes, made a quick telephone call, and then escorted me outside the administration building to await Lt. Oleg and his first sergeant.

I was sweating. While thrilled beyond description to have swung an OK to spend two days at Sofrino Barracks, nothing guaranteed that all would go according to plan.

I was especially so since my original request to undergo a week of basic training at *Tyoply Stan*, a Russian army base south of Moscow, had been dealt a deadly blow by unfriendly elements within the Russian presidential-security service.

According to Tamara, our fixer in Moscow, the deputy chief of the Russian presidential-security service, General Rogozin, had personally promised to arrange for all of the required payments, paperwork, and wheel-greasing to get me on base, in uniform, and assigned to one of the Russian army's most feared drill instructors for a week of living hell.

It was all in the bag. Set. A done deal. All I had to do was get my butt to Moscow and Gen. Rogozin would do the rest.

Four hours after leaving *SOF's* European base in Budapest, Hungary, I was sitting in our temporary Moscow HQ at the Hotel Rossiya noisily slurping my way through a second Jack Daniels and water, staring in disbelief at Tamara who nervously told me that Rogozin had done the best he could, but that an underling, a "red colonel," as she called him, had put the brakes on our plans.

"The general," Tamara explained, "was called away at the last moment and couldn't be here today. He asked this colonel to handle it, but for some reason he decided to stop you from going to *Tyoply Stan*. He asked me if I worked for the CIA, and said that it was dangerous for me to be working for Americans."

"Was this guy for real?" I asked. "Didn't he know that Joe Stalin and his henchman Beria were dead? Heck, even Richard Nixon is no longer with us. The Cold War is over. What is the problem?"

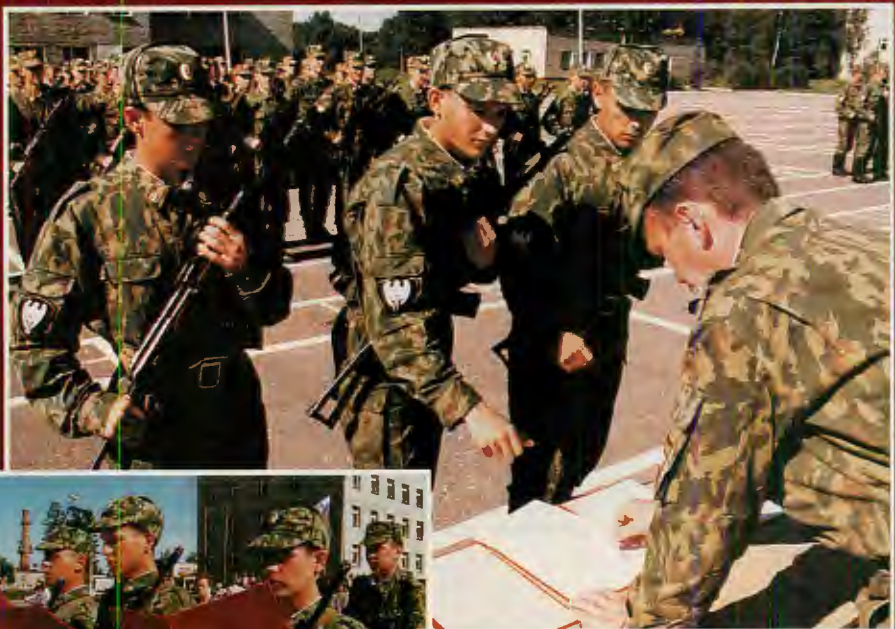
No, We Wouldn't ...

Visions of KGB-type thugs breaking into my room and dragging both of us away to Lubyanka prison danced in my head. (Would the *SOF* staff mount a rescue mission to get me out if all diplomatic efforts failed?)

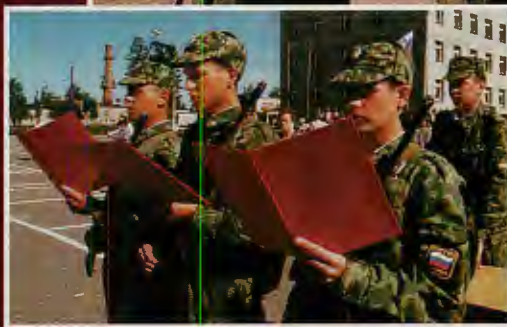
"No," she went on, "it's nothing like that. It's more like jealousy. You see, after my divorce I became friends with the general and at this time I needed him for certain things. I have two daughters. You can understand. This colonel is jealous, and so he is



Parade ground at Sofrino, as at all training bases in all armies, is busy. Here, troops still march "in seven-league boots."



Having completed six weeks of basic training, MVD recruits sign up and (inset) take the oath. (below) Base commander Col. Jakovlevitch and Lt. Oleg personally supervise remedial arms training for slow recruits.



looking to destroy anything I do. I am sorry."

SOF's efforts had been dealt a deadly blow by a Russian love *troika*. It was time to rethink the mission and open new channels to the army. First stop was the Ministry of Defense, where a kind but less than enlightened press-office captain told us that we would have to make arrangements for such a visit months in advance and from our home countries. "Yes," he agreed, "the U.S. and Russia enjoy warmer relations and things have changed, but regulations are still regulations. Sorry."

At the foreign ministry things were much the same. Was it really so hard to join the Russian army? Two more days of telephone calls and a suggestion to our fixer that she employ all of her charms if necessary to get me onto a base, any base, netted me nothing more than a headache and accusations that I was trying to pimp her to sat-

isfy my editors.

My only hope, it seemed, lay with Sergei Panasenko and his team at *Soldat Udachi*, the Russian-language edition of *Soldier Of Fortune*. Although *Soldat Udachi* is not technically a part of Omega Group Ltd., the company that publishes *Soldier Of Fortune*, Sergei and his staff of reserve officers and Afghan-war veterans quickly went into action to save this correspondent's reputation and help SOF get the story.

"Give me a day or so," Sergei, *Soldat Udachi's* publisher, said. "Veniamin Olshanskiy, my second in command, knows some people at this MVD base about an hour north of Moscow and I think he'll get you in."

I was saved. It was time to go out and enjoy some Moscow nightlife.

The 300 or so prostitutes who normally swarm around the Hotel Intourist on Ulitsa Tverskaya were gone, moved to a quieter

place along the Moscow River so as not to offend the attendees of some international mayors' conference. Getting over there was going to be too much trouble, so I decided to enjoy the company of two Australian ballet dancers touring Europe with a Dutch dance troupe I had met the afternoon before on Red Square.

I could have drunk another five bottles of cheap Romanian wine, but realized I had to be at *Soldat Udachi's* offices at 0800 the next morning.

The Ministerstvo Vnutrennikh Del (MVD) Beckons

"OK," Sergei beamed, "Veniamin was able to get you permission to visit a small MVD base one hour north of Moscow called Sofrino. He knows the commander and you should go to Gate 2 and announce yourself. Enjoy yourself."

I quickly grabbed my kit from the hotel and three hours later was trying to convince an MVD conscript manning the gate that I really had an appointment with the base commander and that he should call him.

"I don't know where he is," said the 18-year-old recruit. "Who did you say you are?"

The old adage that a good commander always puts his least intelligent soldier at the gate so as to obey orders without interpretation and confound anyone trying to enter the base, certainly was in effect at Sofrino Barracks.

"Look, comrade, this man is a foreign visitor, why don't you see what you can do to find the commander." Tamara said with her best authoritarian voice. With nearly 20 years of Communist Party membership and a dozen years with the Moscow mayor's office under her belt, she easily came across as someone to be reckoned with. Her 175-pound girth and tree-trunk thick forearms didn't hurt matters either.

Ten minutes later we were standing in the office of Col. Jakovlevitch exchanging SOF Convention T-shirts and ball caps for permission to spend a weekend being abused by Sofrino's drill instructors and getting a taste for what it means to be a MVD recruit.

Lieutenant Alexandrovitch was quick with the introductions and Lt. Oleg, who refused to be called anything else, soon took charge with a quick history of the battalion and a summary of what my 48 hours at Sofrino would entail.

"The 3641 was formed on September 27, 1988," Lt. Oleg explained, walking me through the camp's small but interesting museum. "It was originally part of another unit that was disbanded shortly after the Second World War. This battalion has served proudly in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Gorno-Karabakh, and Tajikistan."

"Heroes Of The Motherland"

"We've produced two Heroes of the Soviet Union," Lt. Oleg continued. "Maybe you noticed the monument at the camp gate. That picture is of Lt. Oleg Babak, the



(top) MVD troops of the 3641 Battalion hit the chow line at Sofrino barracks: rice, noodle soup, and boiled pork chunks. (above) KP — the same in every army, although Russian mops are bigger. A privileged recruit, author (inset) managed to escape KP duty.



greatest soldier to ever serve in this unit. Everyone loved him. Every soldier tries to be like him. Lieutenant Babak died on the 7th of April in Ngorno-Karabakh. After saving his men from an ambush, Lt. Babak held off an entire company of bandits and killed many of them. He fought until his last bullet."

I took notes, nodding and commenting how important it is for each unit to have its heroes, and remembering the face of Lt. Babak — which reminded me of Steve McGarrett from *Hawaii Five-0*.

"After Lt. Babak died," Lt. Oleg went on, "the 7th of April has become our, how do you say, bad-luck day. In Chechnya we lost two other soldiers on this date."

My history lesson complete, we headed over to Oleg's barracks where I was introduced to the two dozen or so men who couldn't get passes off base this weekend.

"Go ahead," Oleg said, "ask them anything you want. Look around. Relax. We eat in an hour."

Being a Saturday, Sofrino's regiment was a bit toned down, but later this afternoon a small ceremony was scheduled for a number of recruits who were scheduled to take their oath to the Motherland, officially marking their completion of basic training. Families and local officials were expected on base.

Every recruit must endure six weeks of basic, which includes harsh doses of physical and weapons training. All recruits, I was assured, receive their \$22-\$45 per month as allotted by the Kremlin. After basic, troops who show aptitude can choose their unit and assignment; those who don't are sent to pull guard duty in Chechnya or along the Iranian border. Everyone must serve a minimum of two years.

Soldier's Lament

Drill sergeants make about \$100 per month, and officers who agree to fulfill their first service contract of five years make a bit more, with a monthly \$70 food allotment for those with families. There are few rich men in today's Russian armed forces.

"Look at me," Oleg explained as he plucked at an old wooden guitar in his office. "I've got a wife and children, live in army housing but still have to use my car as a taxi some nights to make extra money. I've been in 12 years, but even though I'm not rich I love the army. It's



(left) Lt. Oleg shows the barracks. (above) Col. Jakovlevitch talks with 3641 officers, and dresses down two Dis (right) while his adjutant looks on.

my life. It was my father's and his father's, too. In another eight years I'll retire at half salary."

At noon the soldier standing guard at the barracks entrance called for chow and with a clattering of canteens and mess kits the two platoons of troops in the barrack stood at attention at the door and awaited Lt. Oleg's orders to move out for the cafeteria. I was right behind them.

Five scruffy, malnourished recruits were doing KP duty as we marched in and opened our mess kits so that two heaping spoons of pasty rice could be dumped in our direction. A cup of greasy noodle soup, three pieces of thick, coarse black bread, and a teaspoon of fatty beef were then passed over the steam



table. Soon we were seated and munching through a meal that would pass muster only with the very hungry. Contrary to anything you might have heard, the Russian armed forces do not eat well.

Thank God there was an amply supplied PX on base selling everything from Lay's potato chips to Coca Cola — all at greater-than-market prices! Being in today's Russian armed forces didn't seem to bring with it access to cheap goods.

"I can see by your face you didn't like the food," Lt. Oleg said. "You should have told me. I would have taken you to the officers' mess. They feed better."

I offered a weak smile and asked for some fruit compote to wash down the stringy piece of pork gristle that was stuck in my throat. I was going to endure this no matter what, I told myself.

Spartan, But Clean

"We're taking a group of my men out to the firearm-safety cage near the administration building later to go over gun safety. They all failed a weapons safety course last month and have to go over the fine points once more," Oleg added.

During the two hours of free time after lunch I got a chance to walk around and see what made Sofrino tick. The base is home to nearly 1,000 men, 200 of whom are recruits and 100 who are *Spetsnaz*. By Russian standards the barracks, training centers, and facilities are some of the best the Kremlin has to offer. By U.S. or NATO standards, Sofrino Barracks resembled a place any



Mess hall at Sofrino features mural of Cheka (precursor to the KGB) founder Felix Dzerzhinskiy, a Pole. (below) Entrance to base at Sofrino features monument to fallen 3641 Battalion hero Lt. Oleg Babak



Continued on page 76



he bite of an attack-trained dog can transmit as much as 250 pounds of agony into the flesh of its human victim. The sheer thought of such pain is enough to make even the toughest of men cringe. As an item of military "equipment" the trained dog has no peer in certain duties. No machine can detect the range of substances that a dog can; few listening devices can signal perimeter intrusion as effectively as the dog; and, in the civil-disturbance scenario, the deterrent factor of a bite is superior to any other — short of imminent threat of gunfire.

Text & Photos
by **Andy Darby**

The French army, like armed forces around the world, long has appreciated the value of the military working

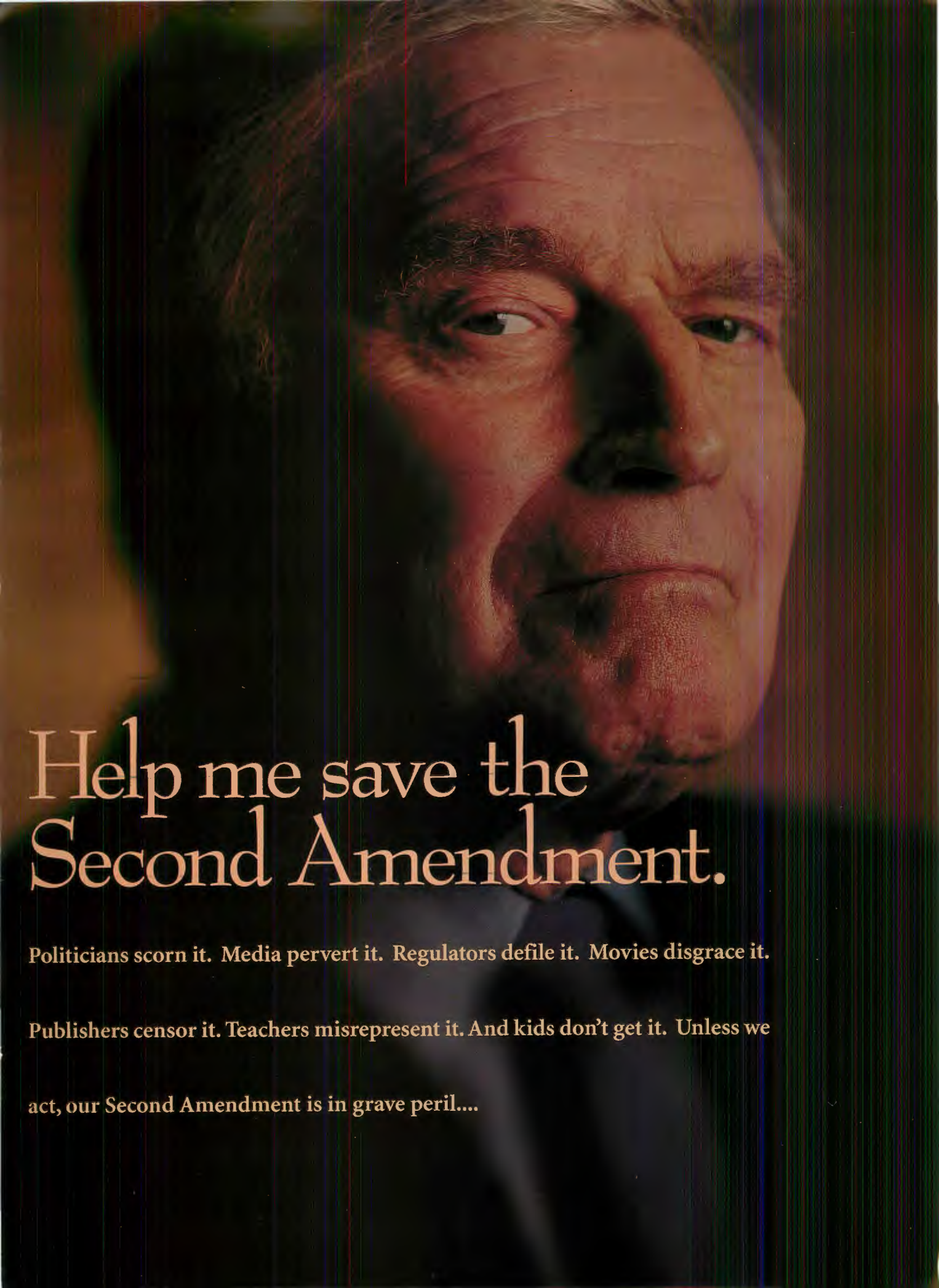
dog. Situated some 150 kilometers (about 90 miles) east of Paris, just outside the picturesque town of Suippes, is the *132 Groupe Cynophile L'Armée de Terre (132 GCAT)*, the military dog-handling regiment. Here dogs are trained to function in various roles in the French army.

There are, of course, rules for the release of dogs for attack just as there are rules of engagement for soldiers in a combat zone. But the role of the dogs is not just tearing bad people "limb from limb"; they also are used to detect and signal the presence of explosives and drugs, as well as aiding searches for missing people or escaped prisoners.

Competition to serve within this unit is fierce. Those soldiers who are lucky enough to serve here are passionate about their animals. The dogs are bought in from all over France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, and Great Britain. A team of four men conducts wide-ranging searches for exactly the right sort of dog for service within 132 GCAT. The French army will buy about 400 dogs per year, pay-

Dogs of War

French Canines: More Fight For The Franc

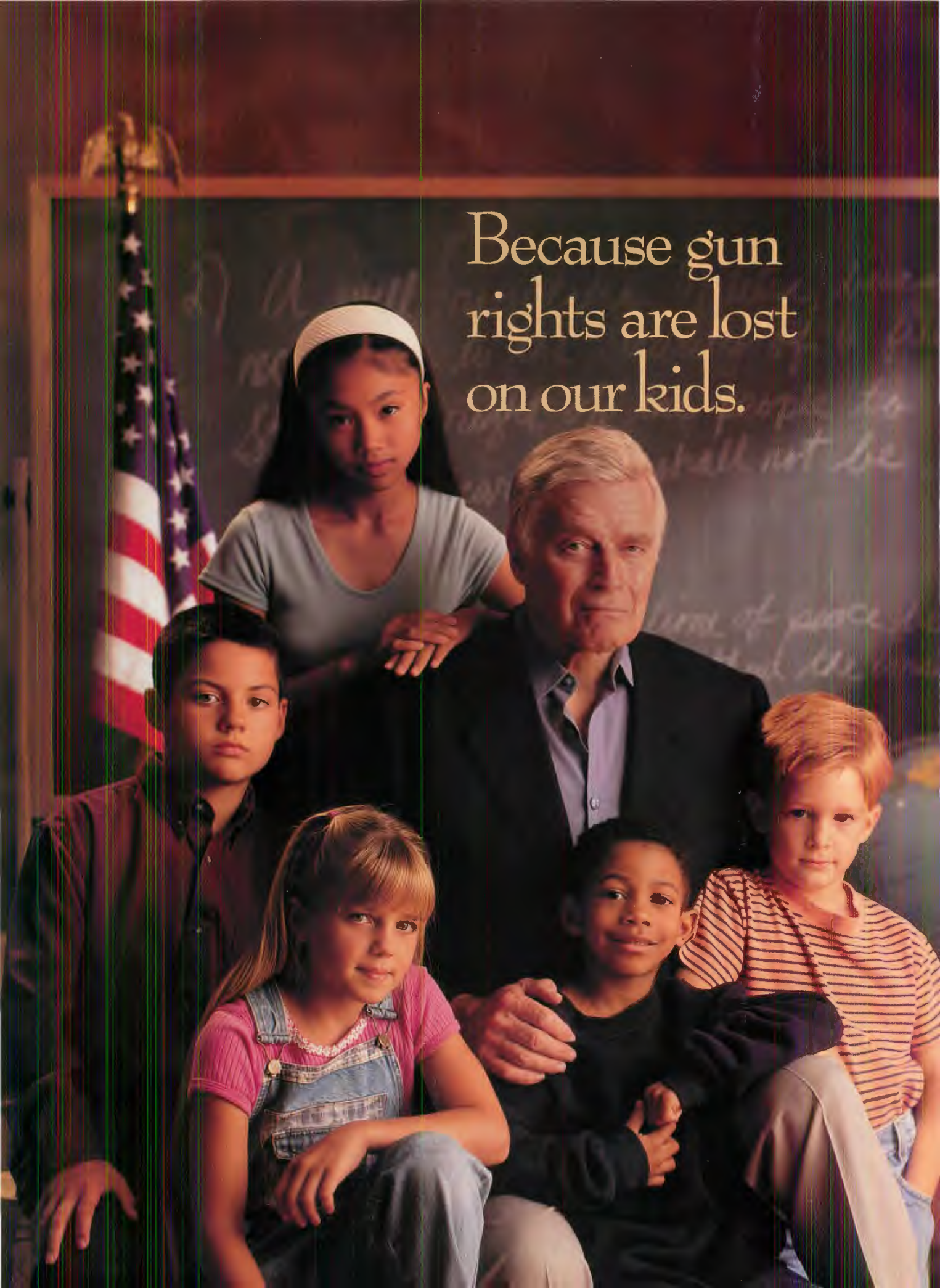
A close-up, high-angle portrait of a middle-aged man with short, graying hair. He has a serious, almost stern expression, looking slightly to the right of the camera. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows on the right side of his face, highlighting the texture of his skin and the intensity of his gaze. He is wearing a dark suit jacket and a blue tie.

Help me save the Second Amendment.

Politicians scorn it. Media pervert it. Regulators defile it. Movies disgrace it.

Publishers censor it. Teachers misrepresent it. And kids don't get it. Unless we

act, our Second Amendment is in grave peril....



Because gun
rights are lost
on our kids.

I BELIEVE THE SECOND AMENDMENT is America's First Freedom, the one right that protects all the others. Among freedom of speech, of the press, of religion, of assembly, of redress of grievances, it is the first among equals. The right to keep and bear arms is the one right that allows "rights" to exist at all.

Frankly, I don't choose this. At 72 I am perfectly happy to make movies and romp with my grandson. But just as duty called in 1963 when I marched with Dr. Martin Luther King, freedom now summons me to stand and serve.

The Second Amendment – the supreme freedom that guards all others – is in danger. The right to keep and bear arms is being rendered useless ... as if it could be repealed by Congress.

Kids view gun owners not with respect but with suspicion. Our schools teach First Amendment rights while Second Amendment rights are at best disfigured and at worst omitted. Our President condemns a lawfully owned firearm in the hands of youth as "a crime or accident waiting to happen." Shooting clubs vanish from campuses and plinking nears extinction as if riflery were a wicked interest. Movies profiteer on blood-splattered gun violence. TV journalists choose stories based on "if it bleeds, it leads." All while national news media offer no shooting supporters, just critics who imply that lawful gun owners must be a little nuts.

We can't put up with this, or our grandchildren will curse us.

I say the doorway to all freedoms is framed with muskets. Without the Second Amendment, the Bill of Rights is but a promise on paper. The right to defend our lives and our land is not a dried-up idea in some dead man's

MARCH WITH ME NOW

SAVE AMERICA'S FIRST FREEDOM: THREE GOALS IN THREE YEARS.

Our mission is to deliver into the twenty-first century a Second Amendment as pure as the one we were entrusted with a century ago. This means all gun owners must unite to:

1

Elect A Pro-Gun President

The Bill of Rights demands we begin the next century with a President whose character and conviction will defend every single one of its freedoms.

2

Elect A Pro-Gun Congress

Your membership helps ensure that the U.S. Congress hears your voice and is populated by pro-gun lawmakers, our last line of defense against anti-gun forces.

3

Educate A Pro-Gun Generation

NRA will devote tens of millions of dollars to an unprecedented campaign to educate young people. We must enter the twenty-first century with a generation that understands the necessity and sanctity of the Second Amendment.

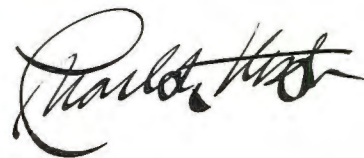
brain but a liberty now gasping for life, and we must save it.

Wayne LaPierre has asked me to lead a three-year crusade, before the twenty-first century arrives, to restore the Second Amendment to its rightful place as America's First Freedom. Together we will march, all the way to the Supreme Court if we must, demanding that the Second Amendment come first again. We will challenge the arrogant, educate the ignorant and reclaim any allies we've lost along the way. We will preach an old truth to a new generation: We Are Free.

It will take an army of believers and a war chest of a hundred million dollars to fight for the minds of the new era. But I pledge a Scotsman's stewardship of every penny and minute of your support.

This is no time for shirkers ... the sunshine patriots and the summer soldiers. If you only care about your freedoms today, not those of your grandchildren tomorrow, then step aside.

But if your passion leads you as mine does me, come with me now.



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First Vice President
National Rifle Association of America



WAYNE LAPIERRE
Chief Executive Officer
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**THE
SECOND AMENDMENT
AMERICA'S FIRST FREEDOM**



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ing up to (the equivalent of) about \$1,100 each. The 132 GCAT buys dogs between the ages of one and three years.

Each "recruit" must fit certain criteria: It must be fit, healthy, and willing and able to bite; must not be panicked by gunfire; and, most importantly, must be well balanced in its temperament. It does not have to be pedigreed — that civilian distinction is irrelevant here.

German shepherds make up the largest number of dogs in the regiment but are not the only breed. Also favored are Dutch shepherds and the Belgian shepherds, two breeds that, at an average 45-55 pounds, are lighter than German shepherds yet large enough to carry out an effective attack. Further, they are light enough to rappel with or to carry away when injured. (The dogs even can be parachuted into an area of operations — a rare requirement, but one that has been tested and can be done if necessary).

In addition to these three breeds there are a few others, such as the Rottweiler and the Labrador retriever, and a few mixed-breed "Heinz 57s."

Teaching Dog And Handler

The 132 GCT not only trains the army's handlers but also those from the French Foreign Legion, the Municipal Police, the French navy, and other governmental bodies that use working dogs.

The regiment has a history that dates back to 1870, as an infantry unit. Dogs were introduced in 1955 and the unit formally became known as 132 GCT in 1977. When the use of dogs was decided upon, there was an important choice to be made: male or female? A combination obviously would cause problems, so the unit chose male dogs

for their greater size and strength. To maintain the level of aggression required to do such work, these dogs are not neutered.

Upon arrival at the unit the dogs are kept in a restricted area for a month for further testing of their bone structures, with special attention to any early signs of hip dysplasia (a particular concern with larger breeds). During this period the recruits also receive inoculations and have a service number tattooed on the inside of the ear. The dogs will be watched continually for any serious character flaws that so far have escaped notice. When they are deemed fit to start their training, they must await the arrival of their new master, the handler.

The first stage of training lasts five weeks, covering in depth the basics that would be covered in a typical civilian dog-obedience class. (As any trained dog owner will attest, a basic obedience course is as much for the human's benefit as the dog's.) In the next phase of training the dog is taught to attack a human, and to search an area of ground off the leash: basically, to sweep a controlled area for any unwanted guests and alert the *maître* (handler).

Controlled Aggression

"Attack" training takes five weeks and comprises of a series of progressive stages. At the outset, dogs are kept on a leash, held by the handler, and provoked by another man, the #2 handler. This initially is in the form of teasing with a rag or cloth being flicked in the face of the dog, who eventually is allowed to bite the cloth and tear at it.

This soon progresses to the use of a heavy-duty cloth tube with handles on each end for the second handler to hold while the dog is encouraged to attack. Although the

dog is teased, it always is allowed to vent its anger. It would be extremely unwise to have 700 dogs wandering around with pent-up aggression.

The next phase involves attacks on a reinforced sleeve that is offered on the arm of the #2 handler. Again the dog chews, bites, and pulls with as much encouragement as possible by the handler. At each attack the dog hears the command word and learns to associate the action with the command. Eventually there is no requirement to excite the animal at all; a spoken command is all that is required to transform a placid pooch into a seething mass of teeth and blurred legs.

The final stage in the attack training involves the #2 handler putting on an attack costume: a thick, reinforced suit that is puncture-proof and weighs about 40 pounds. From here the dog is excited by use of a rattling stick and plenty of noise. The dog is trained to go for any part of the target's body: leg, shoulder, arm, or back, depending on which angle of attack is open. The dog also must learn to release on command — not always easy, particularly if the victim is screaming. (By contrast, in Germany dogs are trained to attack only the arms. This means that if the subject keeps his arms firmly behind his back and continually turns to face the animal, the dog will have to circle until it can get at an arm.)

In practical application, the dogs and their handlers sometimes are used to assist police in clearing demonstrations and unruly crowds. Here they are employed in a less

The 132 Groupe Cynophile L'Armée de Terre has the largest military kennel in Europe and is home to 700 working dogs.





(inset) 132 GCAT handler in attack suit provokes "trainee" with a rattle stick. Elsewhere, another dog bites and shakes French soldier in similar costume. Although these suits are puncture-proof, the pressure of dogs' bites can leave bruises on the handlers.

lethal manner by sporting an attack muzzle, which prevents the use of teeth but will itself form a hard object for impact. The muzzle is reinforced with a metal plate at the front for harder strike effect and has a soft bit inside for the dog to bite on; when the muzzle hits the target the dog feels no discomfort to the nose. When a dog is released and has adequate distance, a full-speed impact with attack muzzle could break a man's ribs.

A Dangerous Game

Over the past few years the dogs have been used by the French army to great effect in Bosnia and Africa. Their primary role in such situations is that of a deterrent, particularly in crisis-stricken areas of Africa where theft of military supplies is rife. In Bosnia they have been used to find missing persons, search for explosives, and perform security sweeps in advance of the arrival of diplomats.

In order to train the animals to carry out any of these tasks, it must remain a game in the mind of the dog, whether searching for people, drugs, or munitions. But there is one major difference: Dealing with explosives

can be a very unforgiving "game." Here the dog must not become excited; upon discovery of a suspected device, he must signal its presence — but without any noise or disturbance to the location. In fact, the dog must become even more quiet than he was during the search itself and very gently sit down in front of the suspicious object. The reason is that some devices can be detonated by sound; the bark of a dog could spell disaster. So, on finding all of the possible charges, the dog is removed from the site and given praise and a reward at a safe distance.

Explosives detection is so difficult for the dog to understand that a specialty in this area requires completion of a seven-month course. Every type of explosive has a different odor. The dog will have to learn as many different types of explosive as possible, usually at a rate of two or three new ones each week. At the end of the course the dogs will have memorized about 40 different types of explosive.

At the start of each search the dog will have a harness put on which signifies to him that he is in "search mode" and must go to work. There are two types of search: "free,"

and "systematic" in which the dog is guided all around the area to be searched — under, over, and inside everything — by the handler. This has proved to be the more effective method. (During training the dogs always will find a sample of a real explosive at the end of the exercise.)

The Nose Knows

Although difficult to accurately gauge, experts have estimated that a healthy dog has approximately 200 times the power of smell that we humans have. They, therefore, think in smells. And compared to explosives detection, other types of dog work are far easier for the animal to learn.

It is natural that a "seek and find" game should end in fun for the animal, so — in the absence of the threat of explosives — the dog's natural excitement is allowed. A search for illegal drugs is conducted in basically the same manner as explosives: free or systematic. The only difference is that the dog is encouraged to search even harder once he is on the scent trail of contraband, which in reality can be hidden in highly unusual places. To train a dog to find drugs



(left) This bomb-sniffing dog, practicing on a car in the 132 GCAT compound, saw real-world duty in Bosnia. Dogs trained to locate illegal drugs sometimes assist civilian police in raids and occasionally aid contraband searches on military posts.

takes an initial 10 weeks for the variety of basic "soft" drugs (including marijuana and hashish), and a further five weeks to learn the harder drugs such as cocaine and heroin.

The army's *Companie D'Instruction et D'Intervention* also assists civilian police in searching for people who are missing or have escaped from imprisonment. Although there is not really a course as such to follow, these dogs learn the art of man-tracking in an ongoing manner; it normally will take a year before a reasonable level of competence has been attained. Although the perfect time for a dog to pick up on a scent would be within 10 hours after the subject's passage, a well-trained dog is capable of picking up the same scent up to two days after the person has passed through the area, depending on the terrain and weather conditions.

The dog's sense of smell is so sharp that he thinks in smells and forms what is referred to as the "scent picture." This is made up of ground scent and air scent; every man, woman, and child has a different scent. The perfect conditions for a clear scent picture might be medium-length grass with a scent that is as recent as possible and with little wind; a little bit of rain might also help. A cool, overcast day reduces the evaporation of scents. On the other hand, the most difficult area for the dog and handler to follow would be on hard ground (no visible tracks) during hot weather with a strong wind dissipating the air scent.

If an evader, for example, tries to confuse or destroy the dog's sense of smell by leaving pepper compounds or other non-lethal agents behind, it ultimately will only help the dog: Once the dog has stopped sneezing and snorting, his mucous membranes will have been cleared and the sense of smell will be even sharper than before. Moreover, the handler — who by then might be doubting his search route — now will have confirmation that he and his canine partner are on the right track.

In tracking humans, the working dog's progress always depends on his partner: If the handler is physically unfit, progress will be slow. Likewise, if the handler misinterprets the dog's behavior, the search suffers. As in all areas of dog work, when the dog finds his quarry, he must be rewarded: Usually the handler lets the dog chew on his favorite ball or gives him a food treat — whatever makes the dog happy.

Like Stink On ...

Military-historical accounts report that Viet Cong guerrillas tried to evade American dog teams by walking in narrow streams. But contact with vegetation along the streams left ground scents that the dogs often were able to pick up with little difficulty.

Further, it used to be widely thought that, in an evasion scenario, one's scent picture could be masked by covering yourself with malodorous substances. However, it now is known that, in a dog's mind, a man covered in cow manure simply smells like a man covered with cow manure. The only thing that might be of some use in thwarting the dog's



(above) In the field, military working dogs are sentries, combatants, and loyal friends. (below, left) French army dogs in the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Bosnia have their own photo ID cards, which their handlers carry. (below, right) 132 GCAT veterinarian replaces (anesthetized) dog's worn-out fang with metal tooth.



"scent picture" are what is known as "anti-sudorific compounds" that will help lessen the amount of a human's sweat, thus reducing the intensity of the scent picture. Even these aids, however, are of marginal benefit when up against a well-trained dog's nose.

A tactic of some effectiveness in evading a tracking dog is to sow seeds of doubt in the mind of the handler, who will tire well before his four-legged partner. Although far from perfect, one technique is to deviate from an evasion route by abruptly and sharply changing directions in and around trees or other large objects, or by entering and then carefully exiting a running stream some distance later. Better still, entering a populated area where there are many human scents makes the dog's work harder.

Despite all of this cunning, the odds still remain in the dog's favor.

Canine Care

Most of the medical problems affecting the dogs in the 132 GCAT are heat exhaustion and dehydration, particularly during the summer. Other ailments include respiratory problems and parasites. The dogs are the responsibility of their handlers in all respects, including hygiene and grooming.

Although the dogs are tough, hard-work-

ing animals who live in outdoor kennels (they never are allowed out of the camp except on assignment) and are all attack-trained, it is touching to notice that they become sheepish and stay close to their handlers upon entry in the 132 GCAT's veterinary facility — just like civilians' pets.

As might be expected, the teeth of a dog serving in the 132 GCAT take a considerable amount of wear during his career; after several years the incisors sometimes are little more than rounded lumps in the mouth. This may mean that a dog will require replacements with metal "teeth" — although not for any reason other than the fact that the dog is unable to bite as well as it should.

Even with the cost of dental surgery and other health care, the four-legged soldiers of the 13 GCAT are incredibly inexpensive to support — no salary or pension, just simple food and housing — yet their value is beyond measure. The working dog clearly has found its niche in the armed forces of France.

Britain-based Andy Darby is a photo-journalist specializing in European military affairs. His new book, The French Foreign Legion: A Guidebook to Joining (\$29.95), can be purchased with credit card by phoning 011-44-1822- 854770. ✉

A Long Race In A Hot Place



Adventurers Brave Sahara In Morocco Marathon

Text & Photos by
Robin Postell

There are no illusions about the dedication and stamina required to finish a marathon foot race in the world's most famous desert.

Runners in the French *Marathon des Sables* (Marathon of the Sands), in its 12th year in Morocco, covered some 140 miles in a week in the Sahara. In April, the heat would be lethal: 120° F., by early afternoon, then dropping 60° at night as runners slept in nomadic bivouac.

The 358 men and women, from 23 countries, were issued 9 liters (2.4 gallons) of drinking water daily, and carried light packs with food, bedroll, extra clothing, and survival kit. Medevac was in place; support vehicles and fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft were on station; event staff members stood ready at water/medical/logistical sites along the west-to-east route. And the Moroccan army provided a constant and benevolent presence.

In many races, time alone is the enemy; here, the great Sahara was the foe. Each runner had paid a (U.S.) \$2,400 entry fee to battle this course in the Sahara's northwestern edge. It wasn't the prize money that drew them: about \$5,500 for first place.

Many had military experience with its attendant rigors and hardships. The majority of the civilian competitors had run in countless marathons, Iron Man triathlons, and various adventure-sport competitions. But nobody, civilian or military, was naive enough to think he or she was fully prepared simply because of past accomplishments.

Only three years before, a perfectly healthy young man of 23 became dehydrated, went into shock, and died of a heart attack. In another race, Italian Mauro Prosperi went off course and was lost for 10 days. He was found traveling with a group of desert nomads, 40 pounds lighter. After writing a book about his experience, he was back this year.





Some would do it to be able to tell friends and family they had participated in and finished the “world’s toughest race.” Britain’s Chris Moon, a 34-year-old ex-military officer who had lost a leg and hand clearing mines in Mozambique, ran for reasons most could never fathom.

Altogether, the reasons were legion.

The Desert Runners

After a long day of administrative work and general milling about, competitors relaxed out of the sun in their black, burlap tents (provided by the Marathon). There were several active-military teams. The British army has a long tradition of desert maneuvers in North Africa. Nowadays, “adventure training” is branding this oven with the best runners in your unit.

“There are various aspects similar to the military — especially in that we are constantly rushing about and then hanging around,” commented Gareth Hicks, a young officer of the Royal Regiment of Wales. “That’s very similar to the British military. We’re looking forward to starting.” His teammates were Sergeant Paul Cooper and Private Lee Conlon, both 27. “This is a bit of change from being the Queen’s bodyguard,” added Hicks, whose unit is assigned to Buckingham Palace.

Three men from the Royal Regiment of Ireland made tea on their portable stove. Already, an annoying penalty: During equipment inspections that day, one Irish soldier got an hour tacked onto his race time for lack of a mirror and whistle. (See packing list.) But their mission was not specifically to win, just *finish* — and return to the regiment healthy. Everybody respected the Sahara. “Each of us has done marathons before,” said Private Andy Marshall.

With military precision, backpacks were loaded. “We’re concentrating mostly on food and rehydration when we pack,” explained Captain Martin Newnham. “If you’re dehydrated then you can suffer from heatstroke, exhaustion, any number of things as a result of it.” (In the desert, food choice also is important: rations high in protein require more water in digestion.)

And what marathon in the Sahara would be complete without a contingent from the French Foreign Legion?

Four soldiers wearing the legion’s trademark high-and-tight haircut sat on the floor of their tents, packing and repacking, singing French songs, and smoking cigarettes. Several journalists already had requested interviews and photographs. The legionnaires, from Djibouti, Africa, flatly refused. A few copies of *SOF* got me in, though, for a chat.

“We have had no training for this event,” said Captain Bruno Carpentier, sitting by the small campfire. “None. In Djibouti we always work. Our job is not running. We are not prepared for this race.” One advantage, though: Djibouti is closer to the equator and even *hotter*.

“Living in Djibouti is good training,” he continued. “But we didn’t prepare for this race to win. We think that coming here is a victory, first thing. After that, victory for us is running together. In the legion, solidarity is something very important. ... Each legionnaire is your friend, your brother. ...” He added, “We wanted to come here because it is the desert.”

His teammates, Sergeant-Chef Kamal Harzallah, Corporal-Chef Housseine Hira, and Corporal-Chef Olivier Coppin, remained reticent, casting sideways glances my way. At least they liked the magazines.

There also were “professional” adventure racers who did these



(above) Moroccan army provided constant support to Marathon des Sables. (right) Lahcen Ahansal of Morocco would win with a cumulative time of 17 hours, 19 minutes, 58 seconds.



kinds of things for fun; grandparents, mountain climbers, and some executives from the San Miguel beer company in Spain (who were determined to finish last); a policeman from Rome; Royal Air Force members; and Boyd Matson, a representative of National Geographic television. A British police investigator from Hong Kong, Justin Shave, shared a tent with the team from Wales. "This is vacation for me," said Shave. In another tent, Chris Moon removed his prosthetic and joked with his tentmates. (See accompanying article.)

Of the 358 runners, only 12 were Americans. The majority were French. Although mostly men, the pack included some tough, determined women.

For Starters, 16 miles

At 0600 sharp the Berber workmen began to break down the camp. Land Rovers began buzzing about. Many racers had tea and coffee. All checked their packs again. All started drinking water: the single most important consideration for desert survival. (Avoiding sunburn and the excessive loss of sweat through evaporation helps, as does limiting or avoiding caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol.)

Around camp, racers paced, stretched, jogged in circles. In a few moments they gathered at the starting line under the huge *Marathon des Sables* banner. Then they were off, moving in one mass for the first leg of the race.

He Ain't Heavy ...

Runners had to carry first-aid, emergency, and personal-comfort items — plus food and spare clothing — throughout the 7-day race. Marathon cadre issued a total of 9 liters of drinking water daily to each runner, who had to calculate how much to carry between resupply points. Rules specified each backpack weigh 12-30 pounds. Some items were *mandatory*: sleeping bag (temperatures fell to 60° or less at night), flashlight with extra batteries, 10 safety pins, compass, lighter, knife, salt tablets or rehydration packets, topical disinfectant, anti-venom pump (for scorpion or viper bite), whistle, and signal mirror.

Runners also carried a survival kit issued by the Marathon containing a "pocket" survival blanket, flare gun with extra flares, and a luminous signal stick.

—R.P.

Sixteen miles for most of these runners wasn't much. But it would be a long race. At the first checkpoint, race organizers and staff waited with bottled water and clipboards to check time and equipment. Front runners wore masks of utter focus. They barely stopped, gulped water, and threw the bottles onto the sand as they jolted off.

Russian engineer Andrei Derkson finished the 16 miles first. At his heels was Marco Gozzano, a Roman cop. Within seconds, Moroccan Lahcen Ahansal, Frenchman Hassan Sebtaoui (who took first place in 1989-91), and Spaniards Jesus Corredor and Javier Medrano arrived.

Day 1 behind him, Derkson, who had won the previous three years, retired silently to his tent. He carried little food, eating only a Snickers bar for breakfast, a dehydrated meal for lunch, and another Snickers for dinner; 1,800 calories, he said, was all he needed.

Legionnaires Coppin and Hira arrived within two seconds of one another, in 24th and 25th places. "It was a bit hard," commented Hira. "I was running without water. It's my fault." Carpentier and Harzallah would come in at 70th and 77th place, only seconds apart as well. The Royal Regiment of Wales completed the leg in just under 3 hours.

Dust Devils, Dead Lake

Day 2 would mark the beginning for what would become, for many, a most difficult experience. Along the 19-mile leg would be a first encounter with sand dunes, then the dried bed of Lake Iliqi: a major body of water until drained by the highlands city of Ouarzazate.

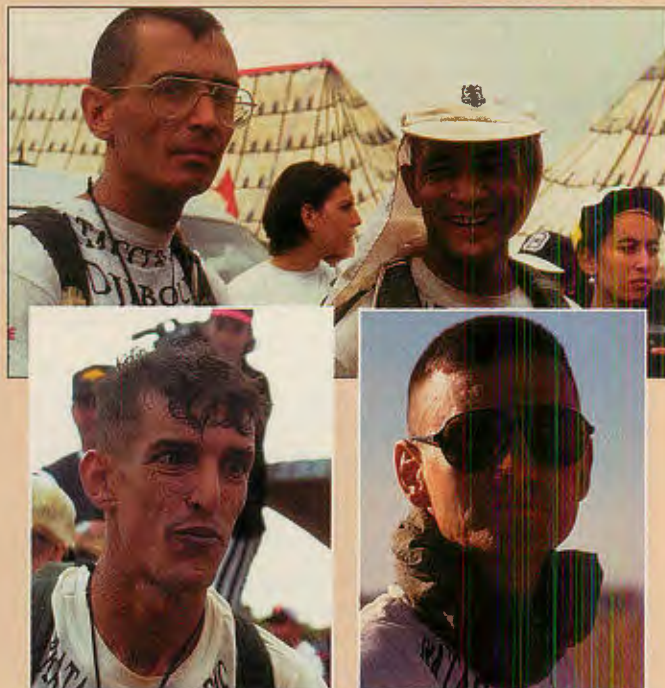
All of the runners felt the dead lake's wrath along the nearly 7 miles of monotonous, hard bed. The temperature soared to 120 degrees F. In the distance, dust devils swirled and mirages shimmered.

Throughout the day, runners collapsed at checkpoints, drank water, and rubbed their sore legs. Many had crawled up the dunes or slid down them. Again, frontrunners barely slowed. Derkson again crossed the finish line first, but it had been a fierce contest between him and Gozzano. In the furious heat the two chased each other across the dry lake bed.

The Russian made his way to the medical tent. Others soon would join him.

A few runners dropped out. Further, penalties were assessed against those overheated competitors needing intravenous replacement of fluids: One IV brought a one-hour penalty; two IVs, disqualification. No race is worth dying for.

The medical tent was a scene of mild carnage. Moans could be



French Foreign Legion team comprises (clockwise, from top) Corporal-Chef Olivier Coppin, Sergeant-Chef Kamal Harzallah, Captain Bruno Carpentier, and Corporal-Chef Housseine Hira.



heard as blisters were treated and toenails removed. Runners hobbled around on makeshift sandals constructed from cardboard boxes and string. Personal appearance and hygiene suffered. Modesty ceased as people dropped their shorts to tape their backs or inspect rashes. A locker-room stench prevailed; showers were a luxury none would know for days. Their water was for drinking.

The Welsh regiment's team remained in average standing. In their tent, an exhausted Hicks held his feet in the air marveling at the lack of damage — so far. "First you powder them, then you tape them," he explained. "You remove the tapes at night and replace them before your run."

Weary runners were preoccupied with decreasing their loads; ounces made a difference out here. Shave, the Hong Kong cop, discarded a paperback; others ditched cameras, cut the ends off toothbrush handles, and clipped labels from the insides of clothing — anything expendable.

Meanwhile, the legionnaires relaxed over cigarettes, recovering shakily from the day's treacherous leg. They maintained the first-place ranking among military teams. However, Carpentier's mouth had begun to break out in fever blisters; he confessed he had been sick for several days and was taking antibiotics. The team would press on.

Great Ocean Of Sand

Day 3: day of the dunes. Marathon lore had it that if a competitor finished the third day, he might make it all the way through. Adventure racer Robert Nagle offered three rules for negotiating dunes: Avoid them if you can. If not, run on virgin, unbroken sand. And, look for wind ripples that could indicate a hard crust. But other than that, suffer.

Runners faced some 15 miles of trotting up and down sand dunes

100 feet high in damnable heat. For many foreigners, such terrain had been only the stuff of *Lawrence of Arabia*.

After negotiating the first dunes, some discovered shortcuts. The Moroccan runners, familiar with the desert, found roads eventually leading to the bivouac area; many followed. Frontrunners Derkson and Gozzano, with no one to follow, got lost. By the time they realized their mistake and rechecked their compasses, 10 crucial minutes had been lost. Moroccan runners Mahamed Ahansal and his brother Lahcen held the lead and finished at just under 2 hours — amazing.

At that day's camp, runners generally agreed the dunes, although formidable, were not as bad as they had feared. In the legionnaires' tent, Carpentier was pleased: "I said I would make it in 3 [hours] 30 [minutes] and I made it in 3:28." Private Jeremy Martin, of the Irish regiment, stood beside his tent, proud to have a team still intact without any serious injuries. "Have you seen the medical tent?" he asked. "Guys are getting their blisters scooped out with their hands over their

faces, screaming. And have you seen who is over there? Eh?" The Irishman pointed: two legionnaires awaited medical attention. Already there was competition among the military teams.

On Day 3 runners were ready for new spines, nipples were nearly rubbed off from packstraps, and feet were bloody. First-time runners now knew what veterans already knew: Feet swell — wear shoes one or two sizes bigger.

One French runner cut off a blood-soaked sock; flesh came with it. Cartilage and fat poked out of the side of his foot and he stuffed it back in with the tip of an antiseptic bottle before bandaging. The tips of two toes were completely gone, exposing nothing but tiny balls of bloody

Continued on page 78



Female runners included American Cathy Tibbetts (left) and a housewife from Italy.



Never Say "Impossible"

Two years before the 1997 *Marathon des Sables*, former British army officer Chris Moon was in a wheelchair.

After leaving military service he had embarked on humanitarian work through the HALO Trust, which provides aid in the Third World. Moon led a mine-clearance teams in Cambodia for two years, then was sent to Mozambique to help train local people in mine clearance. "So, in effect," Moon said, "we would make ourselves redundant."

In March 1995, after helping clear 20,000-30,000 mines in Mozambique without a casualty, Moon was walking through a "safe" area. There was a loud bang. An antipersonnel mine, buried too deeply to be detected, tore off half of his right leg and mangled his right hand. "I was holding a mine prodder in my hand at the time," said Moon. "This was only a small mine, a mini-



mum-metal-content mine. It was something that rarely happened."

A helicopter operated by the U.S. Agency for International Development provided medevac as an African medic struggled to get an IV started. Moon survived — barely. British doctors said he would never run again. One year to the day of the nearly fatal accident, Moon ran a marathon. A year after that — *Marathon des Sables*.

"The problem for me is going to be the wear on the stump, the abrasion," said Moon, 34, in a pre-race interview. "They say it's impossible for an amputee to do it. This is what the doctors in the UK are saying, but we'll see. The challenge here is to see how much the stump can endure under arduous conditions with sand, and also my personal administration regarding hygiene, all with one hand."

Moon ran in Morocco to raise money for aid for amputees from the Vietnam War. He finished the *Marathon des Sables* at 208th out of 358 competitors.

— R.P.



RIDDLE OF STEEL

**American Fighting Bowies -
In A Class By Themselves**

TEXT & PHOTOS BY BILL BAGWELL

28 May through 1 June 1997 was the time. The place was historic and beautiful Hell's Canyon on the Snake River, three hours by jet boat above Lewiston, Idaho, at Beamer's Cooper Creek Lodge. The event was nothing less than four days of some of the finest knife combat training and technique instruction held in the United States since the turn of the century.

Hosted by Combat Technologies Inc. of Walla Walla, Wash., the 1997 "Riddle Of Steel" was a signal event for several reasons, each noteworthy in and of itself. Those in attendance were unanimous in agreeing that the training and staff were not only solid and professional, as one would expect, but the expanded curriculum which for the first time included American Bowie Knife and dagger techniques was a real eye opener for many of the participants.

And participants there were, with students and instructors coming from all parts of the United States, Canada, and France. Knifemakers Wendell Fox and Ernest Mayer displayed their work, and I was on hand to give a seminar and cutting demonstration with my Bowie Knives. Paris, France sent the French master knifemaker and knife fighter, Fred Perrin. To see Fred work his dynamic poetry at its best and his demonstration of skills were nothing short of awesome.

Senior Comtech player and knife designer Laci Szabo was in attendance. Laci has movie star looks and a heart of gold, but don't let that fool you. The man knows blade

technique, and is the driving force behind Szabo, Inc. Always willing to help with instruction, Laci was seen time and again showing and demonstrating subtle technique to those who sought his advice.

Dr. Micheal E. Kaye of the Penn State martial Arts Group, World Tang Soo Do Association, gave a demonstration of Asian cutting exercises. Dr. Kaye's exercises develop focus, edge alignment, follow through and targeting. While Dr. Kaye makes difficult cuts look

easy, he has taken his personal skill to a level of science and self-protection. He is currently streamlining his weapons training and fighting concepts. Dr. Kaye and I had an in depth discussion about edge types and application to say the least.

While attendance was international in nature, and the individual participants were for the most part skilled and in many cases noteworthy, the aspect that made this training venue such a landmark event in American



(top) The place was historic and beautiful: Hell's Canyon on the Snake River. The event was nothing less than four days of the finest hand-to-hand knife combat training and technique instruction held in the United States since the turn of the century. **(left)** Laci Szabo with Hell's Belle. The ongoing search for superior blade technique may have at last brought the American Bowie Knife in its proper application face-to-face with the knives and techniques of other cultures.

combative training was the course of study itself. Knife training in this country has for the last 35 years or so, been based largely on the Asian arts. This is due in part to the aura of mystery and the allure of things exotic that surround these arts. And, lets face it, the Asian arts have an extensive public relations campaign with TV and movies selling everything from Ninja Turtles to Ninja skateboards.

Serious knife methodology has been short-changed in this commercial shuffle. Comtech President James Keating realizes this and has taken note of the fact. The emergence of a truly landmark fighting Bowie Knife (the Hell's Belle) and the subsequent telephone conversations between Keating and myself concerning proper Bowie technique (in the historical venue as well as today's tactical application of this knife) were enough to convince him that the time was right to devote a significant portion of the curriculum and training at this year's Hell's Canyon event to the proper application of the fighting Bowie. This portion of the program was so well received that the New Orleans Riddle Of Steel, to be held 31 October to 1 November, at the Landmark Hotel will be a true celebration of American blade techniques, focused almost entirely on the proper employment of the Bowie and the Arkansas toothpick. The fact that much of this knowledge was lost in the decades following the Civil War and is becoming available again after more than a century of neglect is a major plus for those who are serious about staying alive and winning a knife fight.

The Hell's Canyon event gave 37 participants the opportunity to see for the first time in a teaching environment three of the reasons a Bowie excels in combat: power, speed, and the unstoppable backcut. The power aspect of the Bowie was demonstrated during my presentation when I used a Bowie to cleave a 2-foot section of 2x6 floor joist lengthwise with one stroke.

A Bowie is properly deployed in what is called a flow, or series of cuts. The backcut is the quickest of these, and is usually launched in a three, five or seven part series of cuts. If even one of these cuts in a series lands, it is usually fatal. In an incredible demonstration of speed and technique, Senior Instructor Rob Langford of Comtech delivered a five-cut backcut series with a Hell's Belle Bowie in .59 seconds. That's 59 one hundredths of one second for five fatal cuts from a knife with a blade 11 inches long. He was timed with a quartz chronograph and did it not once, but twice, so it was certainly no accident. While not everyone is this fast, it does illustrate what is possible (and yes, Comtech does have it on video tape).

There is no doubt that Comtech is at the forefront of blade training today. Their solid background in Filipino, Asian and Indonesian methodologies and techniques gives a unique perspective and an opportunity to test and compare one form of combat to the other. This ongoing search for superior blade technique by Comtech has at last brought the American Bowie Knife in its proper application face-to-face with the knives and techniques of other cultures. American history tells us that in the time and place of its most widespread use, no knife was as effective as the Bowie in combat. Today's training as taught by Comtech is showing that the true fighting Bowie, correctly deployed, is in a class by itself.

Hell's Canyon 1997 may well be looked back upon as the event that gave today's blade enthusiasts a small glimpse of the past, and a window into the future of American blade training. Personally, I can hardly wait for New Orleans.

Bill Bagwell will be at this year's 1997 SOF Convention and Expo. For information on New Orleans' Riddle of Steel, contact Comtech, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 142, Walla Walla, WA 99362; phone: 541-938-2175. ✉



(above) Dr. Michael E. Kaye (left) and author explore sharpening techniques at the "Riddle Of Steel." The Hell's Canyon event gave 37 participants the opportunity to see for the first time in a teaching environment three of the reasons a Bowie excels in combat: power, speed, and the unstoppable backcut.



(left) Senior Instructor Rob Langford, of Comtech, delivers a five-cut backcut series with a Hell's Belle Bowie in .59 seconds. That's 59 one hundredths of one second for five cuts with a blade 11 inches

long. And did it not once, but twice, so it was certainly no accident (and yes, Comtech does have it on video tape).

(below) Master French Knifemaker and fighter Fred Perrin (left) spars with senior Comtech player Laci Szabo (right). Today's training as taught by Comtech is showing that the true fighting Bowie, correctly deployed, is in a class by itself.



BLUEPRINT

To A

RESUE

On 17 December 1996, 14 well-armed and experienced terrorists seized the Japanese Ambassador's Residence in Lima, Peru, where nearly 500 dignitaries had gathered to celebrate the Emperor's birthday. The terrorists, members of a group calling itself *Movimiento Revolucionario Tupac Amaru (MRTA)*, demanded the release of 400 MRTA prisoners in exchange for the hostages they now held.

Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori offered the terrorists safe passage to a third country such as Cuba or the Dominican Republic — but refused to release any prisoners. Negotiations stumbled along for more than four months. During this time the terrorists released all but 72 of the most important hostages: civilian and military members of the Peruvian government, the ambassadors of Japan and Bolivia, and several Japanese businessmen.

Among the military hostages was my friend of 25 years, Vice Admiral (Retired) Luis "Lucho" Giampietri Rojas. Our friendship dated from 1972 when I was assigned to the U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group in Lima. As a U.S. Navy SEAL,

one of my duties was to advise a recently formed group of Peruvian naval commandos. Lucho Giampietri, then a lieutenant commander, founded and served as the first commanding officer of this force that is now called *Fuerzas de Operaciones Especiales (FOES)*.

At 1523 hours local, on 22 April 1997, a joint-services commando unit comprising Peruvian Army officers and Navy personnel stormed the Japanese Ambassador's Residence and rescued all but one of the hostages. Vice Adm. Giampietri, Peru's top SEAL, played a key role in the rescue. The following is an account of that role and how the rescue, which often teetered on a dangerous edge, was planned, rehearsed, and superbly executed.

I talked at length with Giampietri at his home in Lima shortly after the rescue. I also interviewed other former hostages and several commandos to obtain firsthand information of what truly occurred during the rescue. The ground rules for conversations with the commandos prevented taping or note-taking. For this reason, certain details such as the num-

Peru's Finest Hour

by Bill Salisbury

Reuters/Archive by Silvia Izquierdo



AP/Wide World by Eugene Hashiko

(left) The rescue is the payoff: Dazed hostages held on second floor, some injured, are quickly gathered and brought to stairs; (above) hustled and helped down a gauntlet of shielding commandos, captives are guided to safety; (right, inset) at ground level, former prisoners of terrorists bolt for freedom, where they were classified, rushed to hospitals.



Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori is a hands-on leader, personally reviewing and observing rehearsal for rescue operation. Here Fujimori is on scene for dramatic liberation of the hostages.

AP/Wide World by Martin Mejia



Reuters/Archive, by Silvia Inquierto

ber and deployment of the commandos during the assault may not be precise; however, I believe the overall description is essentially accurate, except perhaps for the account of how the last surviving terrorist, "El Arabe," lost his life. This account comes second- and thirdhand rather than from any commando or hostage.

Light At The End Of The Tunnels

"Luz Verde!" The 48 commandos of the assault group in their fan-cooled, carpeted tunnels alerted like dogs on point when they heard President Fujimori give them the green light. But they'd heard the same order relayed over the hardwire comm of the tunnels the day before and nothing followed except word to withdraw. *Abre Boca!*

But today would be different. Today they would not withdraw through the four main tunnels up into the houses just beyond the walled compound of the Japanese Ambassador's Residence in the posh Lima suburb of San Isidro. Today, within the next two minutes, they would open the mouths

of branch tunnels and scramble onto the parched lawns surrounding the residence where the hostages were held.

The men, led by Lieutenant Colonel Juan Valer Sandoval, leaned forward, gripped their Belgian P-90s, German MP5s, Israeli Galils, and UZIs. A few snapped on halogen flashlights secured to their gun barrels with rigger's tape.

Men of the support group in the branch tunnels yanked lanyards releasing plywood dikes holding the less than 6 inches of topsoil that separated the commandos from fresh air, success or failure, life or death.

Several tunnels failed to open. The topsoil, unwatered for months and baked hard by the hot sun of a Peruvian summer, refused to collapse. Men sweating heavily beneath helmets, balaclavas, and body armor battered the unyielding earth with flat-headed mining tools called topos or "gophers."

The men succeeded in punching the gophers through the topsoil of all but one tunnel. This failure would cause a fatal delay of eight seconds for the assault on the

second floor of the residence.

"Entrando al Bravo!"

On this order to enter the objective area, a commando at the junction of three branch tunnels running beneath the residence bent over a heavy-duty car battery and prepared to close the circuit that would detonate four and one-half kilos of C-4 in each of the tunnels.

The commando, a marine, had placed the charges beneath a hallway, the dining room, and kitchen of the residence. Cables connected the charges to the battery. In case the charges failed to blow electrically, the Marine had double-primed them to fire mechanically.

"Cinco, cuatro, tres, dos, uno: Fuego!" All charges went high-order. The ground trembled and bucked as if Lima were suffering yet another monster quake. Assault-group teams fought through dust and debris to daylight.

The most successful hostage rescue of our time, or perhaps of any time, was underway.

Four months earlier, Lt. Col. Juan Valer Sandoval had settled into his chair

Gutsy team of commandos breaks hey-diddle, diddle right up the middle with a sheet of greased Flex-X to blow down armored front door; pole is to hold it in place, duct tape to secure it. (inset) While teammates blew front door, tunnel rats emerged inside compound and stormed second story, other entrances.

AP/Wide World by Eugene Hoshiko



Comercio



Comercio

and steeled himself for yet another stupefying day as a student at the Army Command and General Staff College in the Lima suburb of Chorrillos. Today, just a week before Christmas, would be particularly trying, because he'd been up all night to follow the startling events of the MRTA attack on the Japanese residence. He and fellow officers of the Army's Special Forces (DIFE) watched the TV in disbelief as terrorists went about securing the residence, displaying their flag from a second-story window, and issuing their first of many communiqués condemning the government and demanding the

release of their imprisoned comrades.

Volunteers

"Carajo!" shouted one of the officers, capturing the fierce emotion of the group with that most Peruvian of expletives. How, they wanted to know, had a second-rate bunch of disaffected socialists supported by naive jungle-dwellers managed such a bold stroke?

Now as Valer retrieved his notebook for the morning lecture, he briefly considered the question and promptly dismissed it as irrelevant. The relevant question was how to dislodge the *tucos* and free the hostages.

"Firmes, ya!"

Under orders to rescue Foreign Minister Tudela and Ambassador Aoki at all costs, commandos storm second-story bedroom, extract hostages, begin hustling former captives off patio. Former FOE commander Giampietri is right of center, rolling toward steps. (below) Terrorist "Tito" reached MRTA armory between master bedroom and pantry, began throwing grenades down hall; within seconds a Marine and an Army commando placed two-kilo mat charge of Flex-X on roof; secondaries from blast — grenades and PG rounds — blew away terrorist, ignited fires.



Kyodo News Service

The students snapped to attention expecting to see their instructor stride to the raised podium at the front of the lecture hall. Instead, a lean, bronzed *coronel* wearing Special Forces and Airborne insignia told them to take their seats.

Valer recognized the officer as second in command of DIFE, which was headquartered in a sprawling, walled complex not far from the school near the Air Force base at Las Palmas.

The *coronel* asked all but SF officers to leave. As the last nonqual departed, the *coronel* spoke quietly and without preamble to the dozen or so men who remained.

"We are," he said, "forming a unit at this moment to rescue the hostages. Planning for the rescue has already begun and training commences tonight. We will be rehearsing and evaluating potential plans within days, not weeks. The size of the unit has yet to be determined, but we expect to need at least 100 special-forces officers."

The *coronel* paused as the officers shifted in their chairs, then continued: "We've asked the Navy to provide an additional 50 men from the FOES and LJEC, the Marine special-combat unit. I know the staff college is essential for your career and if you do not complete it now you may fall behind your fellow officers for promotion. I do not expect you to volunteer for a mission that may never be executed. But I give you the opportunity."

Valer did not hesitate: It was as if his soul had been freed to soar like an Andean condor. A few others got to their feet with him. Most remained seated.

Situation, Mission, Concept

It was now early April and they'd been isolated for nearly four months within the DIFE complex. The plan had long ago been selected, organization set, missions assigned, and seemingly endless rehearsals undertaken. The 140 commandos had been divided into four groups: assault, support, security, and snipers. Some 100 commandos were SF officers; the remaining men were Marine officers and NCOs from the *Unidad Especial de Combate (UEC)*. FOES could not participate because of previous tasking for missions along the Ecuadorian border and in the Amazon Basin — but their retired commander, now being held hostage, was to play a crucial role in the ultimate rescue of the hostages.

The army and marines were fully integrated, although most of the snipers and demo men were Marines because of their training, experience, and equipment. Lt. Col. Valer was officer in charge of the assault and would be senior man on the ground.

The concept called for Peruvian soldiers to dig a network of tunnels from adjacent houses, into the compound and under the residence. Following the detonation of three

explosive charges beneath the residence, 91 members of the assault, support, and security groups would flood the residence and its surrounding grounds from these tunnels. Other commandos in a neighboring office building of the Unique Perfume company would sprint through the main driveway, off a street passing in front of the residence, Avenida Thomas Edison. These commandos would blow the armored front doorway and go hey-diddle-diddle, right up the middle. Another assault team would storm the rear of the residence through the breach in the wall opened by the terrorists during their December attack.

Eighteen commandos armed with bipod-mounted 7.62x51mm sniper rifles would wait in the prone position on rooftops overlooking the Japanese compound to take out any terrorist who presented a clear, unmistakable target.

Good G-2 = Good Plans

Intel drove the plan and intel was good. Most of what the commandos knew of the situation within the residence came from within the residence, via miniaturized video cameras and pea-sized microphones that agents had planted three days after the takeover. The agents had entered the residence



No Waco here: Fires ignited by terrorists' grenades, secondaries, or commandos' entry charges were quickly extinguished by auxiliary troops so trained and equipped.

AP/Wide World, official Video via APTV



Smile, Comrades — you're not in charge, you're on camera. Camera hidden by Peruvian forces shows MRTA leader Nestor Cerpa Cartolini, right, smugly talking with Roli Rojas (center) in Japanese Ambassador's Residence. Overconfident, incompetent terrorists did nothing more than move hostages to second story when press announced government forces were digging tunnels.

AP/Wide World

as part of a gaggle of reporters President Fujimori allowed to interview the terrorists and hostages on 20 December.

The National Intelligence Service (SIN) led by Fujimori's shadowy adviser, Vladimiro Montesinos, continued to introduce microphones by concealing them in material the unsuspecting Red Cross and Catholic Church delivered to the hostages — the place became infested with bugs in crucifixes, bibles, statues of saints, mattresses, paintings, water and food containers, and even coffee thermoses.

But the biggest intel coup came at the beginning of March. As SIN agents monitored the bugs from nearby houses and high-rises, they were startled to hear a hostage say, "This is Admiral Giampietri. If you read me, play *La Cucaracha* over your loudspeakers."

When tunneling began in January, government loudspeakers outside the residence blared music from sun-up until sun-down to cover the sounds of excavation. The morning after Admiral Giampietri's message, the neighborhood awakened to the lively rhythm of the Admiral's favorite Mexican tune. From that moment until the rescue, Admiral Giampietri provided the commandos with essential elements of information such as where the terrorists kept, and how they treated, the hostages; how the terrorists had booby-trapped the residence; how they were armed; how they usually deployed; and — most importantly — how they scheduled their time.

The Admiral also told his listeners how the terrorists rehearsed the execution of the hostages several times a week and sometimes held "people's trials" to condemn hostages who were senior government officials. Francisco Tudela, Peru's foreign minister, was a favored defendant.

At first, Admiral Giampietri moved from microphone to microphone to send his vital information. Other hostages who saw him mumbling into bibles and crucifixes thought he was either exceptionally religious or simply going mad. Then the government convinced the terrorists to let the hostages receive several guitars and board games to pass the time. One of the guitars, concealing a transmitter, was for the admiral; he now had mobile comm! Although the admiral could only send voice messages, he could receive brief written messages through a digital read-out on a pager another military hostage had hidden from the terrorists.

AP/Wide World

No Help From The Fourth Estate

But not all went smoothly. About the time Admiral Giampietri began sending his messages, news reporters surrounding the neighborhood noticed closed police vans entering and departing houses near the resi-

dence every night. They discovered — and broadcast for the world to know — that these vans carried fresh earth from tunnels being dug beneath the houses. Incredibly, when the terrorists learned of the tunnels they did little more than move all hostages to the second floor and temporarily suspend negotiations with the government.

Moving the hostages solved a key problem for the commandos: how to calculate the explosive charges so that terrorists on the ground floor would be killed, without harming nearby hostages. The commandos knew that eight of the 14 terrorists usually played *fulbito* — soccer in a small area — between 1400 and 1500 most days. They went through the kitchen into the dining room. Other terrorists watched from the hallway. Some hostage Japanese businessmen were held in adjoining rooms.

To calculate the appropriate charge, the commandos had detonated various quantities of C-4 beneath a replica of the residence in their Chorrillos complex. The replica had the same foundation and marble flooring of the residence. The commandos also placed dogs and cows in the target rooms to gauge the killing power of each charge.

They experimented without undue loss of animal life until they found that four and one-half kilos of C-4 would kill the cows but not the dogs. This, they believed, was close enough for government work. Nevertheless, the commandos were relieved to learn the terrorists had very helpfully moved the Japanese to the second floor with the rest of the hostages.

More than four months had passed without any clear indication the commandos would ever carry out their mission. In fact, it appeared as if President Fujimori would accede to many of the terrorists demands — largely because of increasing pressure from Japan for a peaceful solution no matter the cost.

Fujimori had recently visited Cuba, where Castro agreed to provide sanctuary for MRTA just as he had more than 15 years earlier for Colombian terrorists who had seized the Dominican Republic's embassy in Bogota.

Disinformation

Then, in mid-April, matters changed dramatically. President Fujimori, his intelligence adviser, Vladimiro Montesinos, and the Chief of the Joint Command, Army General Nicolas de Bari Hermoza Rios, arrived early one morning at the DIFE complex and ordered the commandos to conduct a timed dress rehearsal. Thirty minutes later before the smoke from the explosions had vanished into a hard blue sky, the president told the commandos they were superb and would soon fight for the glory of Peru.



The aftermath: President Alberto Fujimori passes body of Marxist leader Nestor Cerpa on stairs of Japanese Ambassador's Residence, as he surveys damage after successful rescue of hostages.

"Watch," he told them, "for certain moves on the political scene that will mislead the terrorists into thinking we have lost our resolve and will not attack."

Within days Fujimori had fired the commanding general of Peru's National Counter-Terrorism Directorate (DINCOTE), together with the interior minister. The press immediately speculated that Fujimori's government was in disarray with no firm plan to solve the crisis.

On Friday, 18 April, the 140-man rescue force began inserting six to eight at a time into three houses south and behind the residence and into the Unique Perfume building to the east. These were the objective rally points; the houses were also the main tunnel entrances.

The support group inserted first and the remaining commandos wore police uniforms over their cammies and hid themselves in vans that entered garages attached to the houses and office building. The drivers coordinated their arrivals with the changing of the watch for the police who were securing the neighborhood. When dawn broke over Lima Sunday morning on 20 April, the rescue force was in place.

To Dwell Forever In The Mansion Of Heroes

Tuesday morning, 22 April, Lt. Col. Valer prepared a breakfast of scrambled eggs, ham, toast, and fresh orange juice for the men of his assault team just as he had on Monday. He wanted them well-fed and strong for what would surely be the green light today for the rescue. And, he wanted above all to avoid the near disaster that had occurred on Sunday — when the entire assault group came down with the diarrhea after eating stale field rations. Lomotil, antibiotics, and fresh pizza had plugged them up; he wanted to be sure the plugs stayed in place.

At 1100, Valer ordered his men into the tunnels. Four hours later the code, "*Luz Verde*," crackled through their earphones followed by "*Abre boca, entrando a*

Bravo," and the *cuenta regresiva* or countdown. The C-4 went high order at 1523.

Valer led the four men in his branch tunnel through the choking dust from the explosions. They hoisted themselves to daylight through a hole 10 meters to the west of the residence, where an outer stairway led to a second-floor patio off the Ambassador's master bedroom. They knew Ambassador Aoki and Peruvian Foreign Minister Tudela would be in this bedroom. These senior hostages were to be saved whatever the cost.

The plan called for Valer's team to follow four others who were to enter from a tunnel that opened immediately below the stairway. Valer didn't hesitate when he saw the first team was

unable to punch out as scheduled; he and his men sprinted up the stairway to the patio. They were already eight seconds late for their assault on the second floor.

As Valer reached the top steps, he encountered an elderly white-haired man gasping and crawling toward him. He grabbed the man whom he recognized as Aoki and passed him down to the next commando. Valer then scrambled up and onto the patio with his FN Herstal P-90 ready for an aimed burst of four. But he was unprepared for the sight that confronted him.

Crawling crab-like toward him less than two meters away was the balding Tudela in a white shirt. And above Tudela appeared a grenade tossed by a green-shirted terrorist who was now about to fire a killing burst with his AKM from across the patio.

The 7.62x39mm rounds ripped through Valer's cheap Israeli body armor as he launched himself atop Tudela. One of the rounds struck and broke Tudela's ankle. The grenade bounced harmlessly off the back of the mortally wounded Valer. In the confusion of the moment, the terrorist had pulled the pin but neglected to remove the tape securing the spoon. Commandos would later find four other such unexploded grenades where terrorists had flung them into rooms filled with hostages.

Guiding Hostages To Safety

An officer behind Valer lifted him off Tudela and into his arms — a splash of Valer's arterial blood blossomed like a red flower on the back of Tudela's white shirt.

Two other commandos hosed down the terrorist with their MP5s, then trampled the body as they ran through the open double-doors to clear the smoke-filled bedroom.

Commandos from other tunnels now streamed up the patio stairs and guided Tudela and more hostages to safety. Breaching charges on the main door and walls of the residence exploded with deafening effect. More smoke and fire erupted from windows as secondary explosions

AP/Wide World, official Video via APTV



(above, left) All's well that ends well: author, right, with old comrade-in-arms Vice Admiral Giampietri at FOE fiesta after his rescue. (center) President Fujimori congratulates Giampietri, and (right) Giampietri strums high-tech, talking guitar with which he relayed continual stream of vital information on situation in Japanese residence.

from booby traps and propane tanks sprayed shards of glass, metal, and wood. Most of the hostages still within the residence remained safely face-down on the floor, as Admiral Giampietri had instructed three minutes before the attack. The only hostage killed was a Supreme Court justice who stood behind a closet door that a terrorist had raked with an AKM.

Suffocating smoke from explosions and small fires thickened throughout the residence. Although the initial C-4 shots killed several terrorists, others — including the MRTA political leader, Nestor Cerpa — survived and were now stumbling up the main stairs to kill the hostages. At the same time, commandos who had entered through the demolished front door were also groping their way up these stairs. One of the commandos glanced down through the smoke and glimpsed bare legs and Nikes beside him. The commando brought his UZI to bear; Cerpa was dead before he hit the deck, along with another terrorist who had been playing fulbito.

On the second floor at the rear of the residence and opposite the master bedroom, an assault team led by Lieutenant Raul Jimenez Chavez encountered what all commandos feared most: a labyrinth of *caza bobos* — booby traps. They'd barely begun to climb ladders and a back stairway toward the cook's pantry when Semtex and shrapnel began severing arms, legs, and blowing out eyes. Lieutenant Jimenez took a piece of steel through his throat and died instantly. He and Lt. Col. Valer would be the only two commandos killed during the op, although several were gravely wounded and permanently disabled. After the rescue a Lima newspaper would publish a sketch of the fallen officers drifting skyward above a caption that read: "They Will Dwell Forever in the Mansion of Heroes."

Quick Kill To Save The Hostages

But for now the order of the day within the residence was survival and payback, not heroism. As support personnel brought fires under control with large portable extinguishers (no Waco incompetence here), commandos hunted terrorists down like rats

and killed them before they could kill the hostages. The plan allowed no time to hesitate: The mission was on the tightest of schedules to rescue hostages, not capture tucos or *tucas*.

But one terrorist known as "Tito" managed to reach the MRTA armory on the second floor, in a room between the master bedroom and the cook's pantry. Tito was Cerpa's military adviser and knew very well how to use the RPG-7s and the generous supply of grenades now at his disposal. He immediately began pulling pins and rolling grenades right and left down the passageway outside his door. He did not forget to untape the spoons.

Shrapnel struck a commando in the buttocks and legs as he fell back around a corner. Tito, for the moment, was in charge. But that soon changed. Within seconds one army and one marine commando crossed the rooftop of the residence until they were directly above Tito's armory. In less than a minute they capped into a two-kilo mat charge of Flex-X on the roof and cranked it off with a 9-volt battery. The detonation caused secondary explosions from RPG-7s and grenades. What was left of Tito wouldn't fill a jungle boot.

The time was now 1602: The commandos had secured the residence in less than 30 minutes. Two commandos had died, another 12 had been wounded, and all but one of the 72 hostages saved.

A commando raced to a front corner of the roof, snatched the MRTA flag from its pole, and flung it to earth while other commandos shouted "Vivas!" A slight, fox-faced officer clenched his fist and pumped his forearm, piston-like bringing to mind Jimmy Connors celebrating a passing shot. Victory seemed complete ... but was it?

To Sleep With a Grenade

Commandos and former hostages with whom I spoke denied knowing anything about the cold-blooded killing of terrorists. And I believe them. But rumors persist. Here's one such rumor.

After all freed hostages had assembled on the lawns of the residence for processing and transfer to a nearby military hospital, commandos counted bodies, and body

parts, of the dead terrorists. The count totaled only 13 terrorists: *One was missing.*

After thoroughly checking the residence a final time, two commandos went outside to survey a group of hostages, most of whom were dazed and unsteady on their feet.

Months of viewing photos and video of the terrorists paid off for the commandos. There in the midst of the hostages, his face averted in a futile attempt to avoid the commando stare, was the last tucos, Rolly Rojas aka "El Arabe," for the terrorist training he had received in Libya.

"Oye, *cojudo*. Ven aca," said one of the commandos. El Arabe moved his head ever so slightly. "Yes, asshole, you" repeated the commando. "Come here."

The commandos reportedly frog-stepped El Arabe inside the residence where he was promptly executed with two 9mm rounds through his heart.

Commandos then hauled his body face-down onto the second-floor landing where MRTA boobytraps had butchered Lt. Jimenez and his men. All but one of the commandos returned downstairs. The remaining commando pulled the pin of a grenade and gently placed it beneath the shirtless body. El Arabe, so the rumor goes, slept forever with the grenade.

"Home Is The Sailor ..."

Admiral Giampietri relaxed opposite me on a sofa in his study, while FOEs patrolled his heavily guarded home somewhere in Lima. We'd just returned from a FOEs' fiesta in his honor. The admiral looked fitter than I'd seen him in years.

"I lost 13 kilos as a hostage and did more calisthenics than I care to recall."

"You look great, Lucho."

"Yes," he said, "*no hay mal que por bien no venga.*" (There's no bad without some good.) "But I don't recommend my experience as the best way to lose weight." We spoke of his experience and of the rescue. "The rescue was a military marvel," he said, "but also a tragedy. Cerpa had the benefit of exceptional political and diplomatic advice from such men as Ambassador Aoki and

Continued on page 82

WALTHER P99

The Legend Continues ...

Over time few handguns have qualified as the stuff of legends. My list contains only six entries. Certainly both the Colt Single Action Army revolver and M1911 pistol belong on any list of classic handguns. The Browning High Power and P.08 "Luger" surely qualify as well. And so do two Walther pistols, the PPK (*Polizei Pistole Kriminal*) and the World-War II-era P.38.

Carl Walther established his workshop in 1886 in the Thuringian town of Zella-Mehlis

to make sporting arms. Walther's first handgun was a caliber 6.35mm (.25 ACP) blow-back pistol. There followed a series of blow-back pistols chambered for either the 6.35mm or 7.65mm (.32 ACP) cartridges, with the exception of the unsuccessful 9mm Parabellum Model 6. The PP (*Polizei Pistole*) was introduced in 1929 and followed two years later by the PPK. Both of these pistols remain in production. Manufacture of the 9mm Parabellum P.38 (*Pistole 38*) commenced in 1939. It was designed for mass

production and replacement of the complex P.08, but because of Germany's involvement in World War II, production of the Luger pistol did not cease until 1942.

Subsequent to World War II, Walther's principal achievements have included the P5 pistol, derived from the P.38 and intended for use by the German police, the highly successful TPH, a .22 LR or .25 ACP pocket pistol very much in favor as a backup by armed professionals and the P88, a pricey but superbly built 9mm Parabellum pistol.

Text & Photos
by Peter G. Kokalis



Carl Walther Waffenfabrik has launched itself into the 21st century with the introduction of the P99, a pistol which contains more than its share of clever innovations.



(above) The P99's polymer frame provides exceptional strength and durability. This locked-breech, short-recoil-operated pistol has a double-action trigger system with a unique decocking bar on the slide. (right) Walther's line of famous handguns have included (top to bottom): the PPK (*Polizei Pistole Kriminal*), TPH .22 LR/.25 ACP pocket pistol, World War II-era P.38 and its post-war derivative, the P5 Compact.



Carl Walther Waffenfabrik (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 4325, D-89033 Ulm, Germany) has recently launched itself into the 21st century with the introduction of the P99, a pistol which may on the surface appear to be little more than an amalgamation of several other designs, but in reality contains more than its share of clever innovations. *Soldier Of Fortune* was sent a specimen of the P99 for test and evaluation. All Walther products are imported and distributed by Interarms (Dept. SOF, 10 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; phone: 703-548-1400; fax: 703-549-7826).

Available at present only in 9mm Parabellum, the P99 will shortly be chambered as well for the .40 S&W cartridge. The method of operation is locked-breech, short-recoil with a so-called double-action trigger system and locking in the manner of the SIG-Sauer. The single locking lug milled above the barrel's chamber uses the slide's ejection port as its locking recess. This precludes cutting recesses into the slide's interior and risking a compromise of its structural integrity.

After ignition of the primer and propellant charge, the slide and barrel recoil rearward together a short distance until a cam slot milled into the lug on the barrel's underside contacts a steel locking block in the polymer frame,

which draws the barrel downward, unlocking it from the front lip of the ejection port. By this time pressures have dropped to a safe level. The front contour of the cam slot on the barrel's underside lug has been cut square to direct counter-recoiling forces up and forward into the barrel itself. The cam slot on early Browning High Power pistols was cut round and resulted in eventual fracture of the lug as the unlocking forces were propagated downward into the weakest portion of the lug.

Overall length of the P99 is 7.09 inches (180 mm). The barrel length is 4 inches (102 mm). The six-groove button-rifled barrel has a right-hand twist of one turn in 10 inches (254 mm). The barrel's integral feed ramp has been polished and the chamber mouth throated to enhance reliability. The height is 5.31 inches (135 mm) with a width of only 1.14 inches (29 mm). This latter dimension compares favorably to many pistols with only single-column magazines. Weight of the P99 is 24.7 ounces (700 grams), with an empty magazine. The overall envelope is that of a moderate-sized service sidearm.

A primary objective in the P99's development was the polymer frame, which is molded from Polymer 12 reinforced by fiberglass. This material provides exceptional strength and durability, as well as resistance to wear, abrasion and most chemicals associated with firearms maintenance. Other advantages to polymer frames, by now well established in the firearms industry, are a lighter weight, a thinner grip area and greater shock absorption to significantly reduced the perceived recoil impulse. However, don't let anyone tell you otherwise, the single greatest attraction to polymer frames is their cost effectiveness. No handgun marketplace provides fiercer competition than the United States. Price is a key factor in successfully marketing a pistol in this country. Handguns that carry a suggested retail price of more \$1,000 often receive rave reviews in the popular gun press, but rarely sell to price conscious consumers.

Human engineering played a significant role in the development of the P99's frame, which was designed by Cesare Morini, an internationally respected free-pistol and grip designer. His distinctly avant garde creation features broad serrations and incipient finger swells on the front strap, an attractive, but quite useless, re-curved and serrated front trigger guard, small raised dimples on the sides and back strap and thumb rests on each side directly to the rear of the trigger. The trigger guard is quite large, presumably to accommodate an operator with gloves.

An undercut at the rear of the trigger

The Operating Mechanisms

The P99 is a hammerless design that is striker fired, but only vaguely in a manner approaching that of the Glock or Kahr pistols. Striker-fired handguns provide fewer components, significantly faster lock time and the absence of an external hammer which might snag on clothing.

Although "double-action" and "single-action" are not entirely satisfactory terms to use in conjunction with hammerless, striker-fired pistols, nevertheless they serve to indicate that two distinctly different trigger-pull weights are available to the operator. Under normal circumstances, the first shot will be fired in the so-called double-action mode and all subsequent shots will be fired with the lighter single-action pull weight. *SOF's* test specimen featured a fairly smooth double-action pull weight of about 8.25 pounds and a really crisp single-action pull weight of 4.75 pounds.

The trigger system consists of the articulating trigger unit, a transfer bar, a fire control assembly and several small springs. When the firing mechanism is in the double-action mode, pulling the trigger will move the transfer bar rearward to drive the striker (firing pin) back and compress the spring wrapped around its shaft. At the end of the trigger pull, the transfer bar moves downward releasing the striker to fly forward and ignite the cartridge's primer.

With subsequent shots, the striker is held back by the fire control assembly that is released by the transfer bar. The function of a disconnecter is achieved by a projection on the transfer bar that rides in a cam track in the slide. During the recoil stroke, the slide cams the transfer bar down, disconnecting it from the fire control assembly. The trigger must be released about 2 mm before it can be pulled fully rearward again.

The pistol can be placed back into the double-action mode by depressing a spring-loaded, serrated, steel decocking bar on the left side of the slide just in front of the rear sight assembly. This is best accomplished with the thumb of the support hand. A pin at the bottom of this decocker panel drives the fire control assembly's actuating lever to the rear tripping the single-action sear and releasing the firing pin, which cannot move fully forward because of the firing-pin block in the slide and the decocker panel itself.

One peculiar consequence of this system is that the striker can be fully cocked again by merely retracting the slide approximately 3/8-inch. While the trigger will remain forward in the so-called double-

action position, no more than 1.5 pounds of force is required to bring it back to the single-action position. The rear end of the striker is painted red and it pro-



P99's rear sight has two white dots and can be adjusted for windage zero. Note rear end of the striker which protrudes from the polymer retaining plate to indicate that the striker is fully cocked. Decocking bar on the slide can be seen just to the front of the rear sight.

trudes through a hole in the polymer retaining plate at the back of the slide to indicate that the striker is fully cocked.

While there is no manual safety, the P99 has a number of

effective safety features. The previously mentioned firing pin block is of the by now conventional type. A spring-loaded plunger in the slide blocks the striker's forward movement while it's in the down position. Another projection on the trigger's transfer bar pushes the plunger up and out of the striker's path when the trigger is pulled to the rear.

When there is a round in the chamber, the tail end of the extractor pivots inward to expose an oblong red dot on the slide which serves as a visual loaded chamber indicator. Personally, I find such devices to be of little use, as Jeff Cooper taught us many years ago to press check the pistol and observe the chambered cartridge. In the case of the P99, retracting the slide slightly will, as stated, fully cock the striker assembly.

Another feature billed as a safety feature is of even more dubious value, in my opinion. There is a rearward projecting tail on the left side of the trigger. If the articulated, polymer trigger is pulled with the finger in a normal position, this tail will enter the trigger's cutout in the frame. However, if pressed high up, at its hinge point, the trigger moves directly rearward and this tail will impinge against the frame preventing the trigger's complete rearward travel. Under stress, the operator could grip the pistol incorrectly during the drawstroke, with potentially disastrous results.

— P.G.K.

guard places the firing grip closer to the bore's axis and thus serves to moderate muzzle jump during the recoil stroke. One of the P99 frame's most innovative features are the three interchangeable backstrap inserts provided to accommodate a large variety of hand sizes. Made of a more flexible, shock absorbent material than the polymer frame itself, these inserts can be replaced by the removal of a roll pin at the butt end of the frame. Always use a roll pin punch of the correct size, not a flat-faced

drift, to remove this, or any roll pin. The fixed, stamped sheet-metal ejector is also mounted in the frame in a manner similar to that found in the Glock pistol. The frame is largely devoid of controls, with only a sheet-metal slide stop on the left side, a takedown catch on each side — above and forward of the trigger — and the ambidextrous magazine catch/release. There are accessory rails on each side of the frame at the front to accommodate tactical flashlights or laser aiming modules.

Disassembly Procedures

No rocket scientist is required to fieldstrip the P99. Remove the magazine and then clear the chamber by manually retracting the slide. Decock the striker by depressing the decocking bar on top of the slide. Grasp both sides of the polymer takedown assembly on the frame and pull it downward about an 1/8-inch. This will drop a steel locking stud, which is pinned to the takedown assembly, away from its engagement on the front lip of the barrel's underlug and permit the slide group to be pulled forward off the frame. Lift out the recoil spring/guide rod and the barrel. To remove the striker unit, hold down on the decocker bar and at the same time push inward with a drift on the retaining lug. Then, with your third hand slide the retaining plate down and out of the slide. Withdraw the striker unit from the slide. Slowly ease the decocker up and out of the slide, retaining control of it at all times to prevent this spring-loaded component from flying into the sunset. Do not attempt to disassemble the striker assembly. Use the magazine disassembly pin that is provided and insert it in the magazine's floorplate to reach and depress the follower spring so you can slide the floorplate off the magazine body. No further disassembly is recommended except by factory-trained armorers. Re-assemble the pistol in the reverse order. The decocker unit must be installed before you slide the striker unit back into the slide.

— P.G.K.



Walther P99, fieldstripped.

In a manner definitely reminiscent of the Glock, there are two steel rails on each side of the frame, 0.395-inch in length and about 0.06-inch thick, that interface with the slide's channels. The slide has been machined from billet steel and carries a black anti-corrosion proprietary finish called *QPQ*. This finish increases the slide's surface hardness as it is applied during the heat treatment process and penetrates the outer layer of the steel. The slide's large ejection port has been beveled to further enhance reliability. There is a longitudinally serrated, slightly raised rib on top of the slide, obviously intended to reduce glare.

The recoil spring has been made from flat wire instead of conventional round wire. This permits a greater number of coils in a given length and thus provides more compression energy. This spring is held captive to a full-length, polymer guide rod.

The blade-type front sight and open square-notch rear sight are interesting in both design and execution. Both the front and rear sights are made of a plastic material said to be more wear and deformation resistant than steel. I hope so. The plastic sights on the Glock series are a major criticism, as the front sight will wear downward with repeated drawstroke practice. Both front and rear sights are sloped forward to prevent snagging in a holster during the presentation. The rear sight's square notch is 0.177-inch (4.5 mm) in width. The rear sight is adjustable for windage zero by rotating a detented screw on the right side that provides approximately 1/16-inch of adjustment for each click (1/4-turn) of rotation. There are two white dots on each side of the rear sight's square notch. Rotate the screw clockwise to move the point of impact to the left and counter-clockwise to move it to the right.

The front sight blade is 0.148-inch (3.75 mm) in width. Four different front sight blades of varying heights are issued with the P99 to ensure elevation zero with almost all types of 9mm Parabellum ammunition. Altogether they permit a total change of impact of about 5 inches at 25 yards. A small Allen wrench is included to unscrew the small screw that holds the sight in place. The front sight blades each contain a single white dot. Self-luminous tritium night sights will soon be available.

The P99's ambidextrous magazine catch/release lever must be pushed downward to release the magazine, which will fall freely away. These levers are flush with the trigger guard to prevent accidental release. Pushing down on either lever pivots a spring-loaded polymer plate forward to disengage its steel tip from the conventional slot in the magazine body. The firing grip must be shifted to depress the lever with the thumb. I found that the firing grip remains undisturbed, if the trigger finger is employed to depress the magazine catch/release lever, although you must consciously program yourself to do this.

Capacity of the staggered-column, detachable, box-type magazine is 16



Because of the rearward projecting tail on the left side of the trigger, the trigger must be pulled rearward at its midpoint or this tail will impinge against the frame and block further travel. Note polymer takedown assembly on the frame above and forward of the trigger. Magazine catch/release lever must be pushed downward to release the magazine.

rounds, except in the United States, where the bizarre 10-round limit remains in effect. The magazine bodies are made of steel, which permits a thinner width and superior strength to contain the follower spring. Magazines intended for sale in the US have a 1.2-inch polymer block as a floorplate to limit their capacity. Both the follower and follower spring floorplate are also injection-molded polymer components. P99 magazines are manufactured by MEC-GAR, an Italian firm that provides high-quality magazines for a wide range of European pistols, as well as Pachmayr and Springfield, Inc.

All testing was conducted with Jacketed Hollow Points (JHPs) from Black Hills Ammunition (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 3090, Rapid City, SD 57709; phone: 605-348-5150 — call for the location of your nearest dealer, if there is none, Black Hills will ship to you at retail). Any handgun intended for serious social purposes must be able to feed and function reliably with expanding ammunition. Full Metal Jacket (FMJ) ball ammunition in caliber 9mm Parabellum



P99 frame was designed by Cesare Morini, an internationally respected free-pistol and grip designer. One of the frame's most innovative features are the three interchangeable backstrap inserts provided to accommodate a large variety of hand sizes.

over-penetrates to an undesirable extent. A minimum of about 12 inches of penetration in soft tissue up to a maximum of approximately 18 inches is the desired range. That's exactly the penetration performance range designed into the superb Hornady XTP bullets used in Black Hills 147-grain 9mm Parabellum ammunition.

All firing for accuracy was conducted off-hand from a strong Weaver hold at a dis-

tance of about 7 yards. Most gunfights with a handgun take place at this distance or less. Accuracy was excellent and the group dispersion was less than an inch.

Service-size 9mm Parabellum pistols usually do not generate a significant recoil impulse. The P99's grip design, the shock-absorbent polymer frame and the fact that the bore's axis is close to the firing hand all minimize the recoil impulse to an even further extent. This is a very comfortable pistol to shoot, as it exhibits the highest possible levels of human engineering.

Reliability is also of a high order, and there were no stoppages of any type during SOF's 1,000-round test and evaluation. I experienced no problems with the trigger binding against the frame during firing sequences, since I am accustomed to pressing a trigger directly rearward at its midpoint. However, having to pull the trigger from its double-action position, albeit with no more than 1.5 pounds of force, after it has been fully cocked by slightly retracting the slide, takes some getting used to.

An incredible amount of effort went into the P99's design. It deserves widespread recognition and acceptance. With a suggested retail price of \$799, including two magazines, three backstrap inserts and four front sight blades, the P99 is competitive with both the Glock and Heckler & Koch's USP series. Carl Walther Waffenfabrik demands our respect, not only for its illustrious past, but for its plunge into the future. ✕

Walther P99

SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber: 9mm Parabellum.

Operation: Locked-breech, short-recoil, semiautomatic, trigger-cocking system with no thumb, grip or magazine safeties but with passive firing-pin block. Double-action and single-action firing modes with unique decocker bar on the slide.

Weight, empty: 24.7 ounces (700 grams).

Length, overall: 7.09 inches (180 mm).

Height: 5.31 inches (135 mm).

Width (at the grips): 1.14 inches (29 mm).

Barrel: Six-groove, button-rifled with a right-hand twist of one turn in 10 inches (254 mm).

Barrel length: 4 inches (102 mm).

Magazine: 10-round (16-round for law enforcement), staggered-column, detachable box-type with a 1.2-inch polymer block for a floorplate.

Sights: Four different front sight blades (0.148-inch in width), with a single white dot, provided to adjust elevation zero. Open square-notch (0.177-inch in width) rear sight with a white dot on each side of the notch, adjustable for windage zero. Optional self-luminous tritium night sights.

Finish: Black polymer frame; black anti-corrosion proprietary QPQ finish on slide.

Price: \$799, complete with two magazines, three backstrap inserts, four front sight blades, adjustment tool, polymer cleaning rod and storage case.

Manufacturer: Carl Walther Waffenfabrik, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 4325, D-89033 Ulm, Germany.

U.S. Distributor: Interarms, Dept. SOF, 10 Prince Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; phone: 703-548-1400; fax: 703-549-7826.

T&E summary: Polymer-frame pistol with superb human engineering that propels Walther into the 21st century. Accurate and reliable.

Moscow, 9 May 1997

Victory Day morning was a bright surprise after the sleety gales that battered Russia earlier that week. I leaned against the limestone embankment wall, watching the troops march past the Rossia Hotel across the Moscow River and up wide asphalt approaches to Red Square. The cadence beat of the drums and tromping boots sounded thin in the sunlight.

No tanks in this year's parade, and the traditional fly by of new combat planes had also been scrubbed. "Everything's downsized," a Western military attaché had told me. "After the army got its ass kicked in Chechnya, Yeltsin knew a big parade would be politically incorrect."

There was only a handful of faithful civilian spectators clumped on this side of the river, gazing wistfully at the russet brick and gilded domes of the Kremlin, dreaming of the Red Army's faded glory. The security cordon around Red Square ran north and east of the old GUM Department Store — now a trendy free-market bizarre of credit card boutiques and bistros.

Up on the bridge, Interior Ministry OMON anti-terrorist squads manned a roadblock. They were tough-looking kids in



Mark H. Milstein

PART 1

GIS IN THE GULAG

American POWs Held In The Soviet Union?

by "Cicero"

gray-and-black cammies, AKMs with plastic magazines slung across their flak jackets. They seemed wary that some Islamic zealot from the Caucasus might ruin the parade by sniping at VIPs reviewing the troops from atop Lenin's Tomb.

Or, maybe they were just worn out from moonlighting as bodyguards for the various mafiosi who had staked out their competing turfs throughout Moscow's commercial center. Word on the street was that OMON had the contract to protect one faction of Mafia dons, while the Saturn Group of the new Federal Security Agency

(*Agentsvo Federalnoy Bezopasnosti*) — the Grupa Alpha of the former KGB's Seventh Chief Directorate — supplemented their income by guarding another. As someone who'd taken the Soviet military and "Organs of State Security" seriously most of my life, the realities of the New Russia were a little disconcerting.

Hard Evidence

But these new mercenary conditions also presented intriguing opportunities. I'd learned that retired officers' meager pensions were late yet again this month. And



Mark H. Milstein

There were no tanks in this year's May Day parade. "After the army got its ass kicked in Chechnya, Yeltsin knew a big parade would be politically incorrect."

my source today was a retired general officer whom I'll call "Ivan Pavlovich" to protect his identity. Through common associates, General "Pavlovich" had dangled the tantalizing suggestion that he had *hard evidence* on the fates of American aviator prisoners of war who'd disappeared into the concentration camps of the Soviet Union during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Thanks to *Soldier Of Fortune*, I had a modest stack of crisp new Franklin \$100 bills in my money belt ready to swap for hard information. If the general was as broke as most of his peers, I might make some progress.

But in the 20 years I'd been researching this subject, I'd interviewed a dozen similar sources. They'd all heard the same rumors, but none had ever been able or willing to provide detailed, first-hand information. However, during these years, several Soviet and Warsaw Pact sources had presented compelling evidence that either the Soviet KGB and/or GRU Military Intelligence had taken American prisoners from North Vietnamese control in Indochina for interrogation and eventual execution in the USSR.

By now, the reality that Soviet Intelligence had snatched American POWs from prison camps in North Korea — especially those with critical skills and technical information — was indisputable. In fact, it had been the official Pentagon confirmation that U.S. prisoners in Korea had disappeared into the dark maw of the Soviet Gulag during the 1950s that had sparked my renewed interest in the probable Soviet exploitation of U.S. POWs during the long Indochina war.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Boris Yeltsin's non-Communist government and the United States formed a Joint Commission to investigate Soviet abduction of American POWs during the Korean and Vietnam Wars. Over the next two years, Task Force Russia (TFR), the Defense Department's investigative body supporting the Joint Commission, made incredible progress.

The Atrocity Of The "Several Hundred?"

Task force Russia released its first — and only — unclassified report, "The Transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union" in November 1993. Although the Pentagon stated the report was based on "working papers," that had not been confirmed by the Russian members of the Joint Commission, the intent was obviously to shine the light of public scrutiny on what had been discovered so far, while implying that a lot more information was still locked up in former Soviet archives. If you're interested in reading the report, visit the POW/MIA collection at the Library of Congress; it's indexed as *U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs Working Group Paper on Korean War POWs Released to the Public, Department of Defense POW/MIA UpDate, No. 4, November 9, 1993.*

TFR investigators conducted lengthy interviews of former Soviet advisors to the North Korean Communists, with retired Soviet intelligence officers, and with former guards and inmates of Gulag "corrective labor" camps. The investigators also tried to systematically study Soviet intelligence archives, but were eventually stymied by their uncooperative Russian counterparts. Nevertheless, the report was dramatic, citing ample evidence that:

"The Soviets transferred several hundred U.S. Korean War POWs to the USSR and did not repatriate them. This transfer was mainly politically motivated with the intent of holding them as political hostages,

subjects for intelligence exploitation, and skilled labor within the camp system."

The report revealed the sea and rail routes of these American POWs from North Korea to Siberia and then on to Gulag camps in the Komi-Perm National District of the Russian Federated Republic. To me, the most relevant part of the TFR report to the issue of the Vietnam War was the section called "The Soviet Hunt for F-86 Pilots." In the last 20 months of the Korean War (1951-53), the F-86 Sabre was the world's only combat plane with an operational radar gunsight. This radar sight — and the training of the pilots who used it — gave the F-86 Sabre a big advantage over the Soviet MiG-15, which was often flown by Soviet "volunteers," not North Korean pilots.

The Soviet Air Force (*Voyenno-Vozdushniye Sily*) sent intelligence teams to Korea, tasked to identify captured American F-86 pilots for transfer to the USSR. This highly classified and selective operation was intended to obtain this advanced American technology. Soviet Military Intelligence, the GRU, ran the actual transfer operation.

TFR statistical analysis proved that, although most American pilots who survived the brutal North Korean and Chinese prison camps were repatriated, there was "blatant evidence" that highly skilled F-86 pilots were the exception.

Fifty-six F-86 Sabres were shot down during the war, with approximately 47 pilots ejecting safely. But only 15 F-86 pilot POWs and one pilot's remains were repatriated during Operation Big Switch in 1953. Thirty-one F-86 captured pilots who had been seen alive on the ground had simply disappeared in North Korea.

The TFR investigators in Russia developed compelling evidence that these 31 pilots were among the estimated 200 American POWs transferred from North Korea to the Soviet Union. Aside from aviators, many non-critical-skill GIs were also

abducted so that Soviet military intelligence operatives could completely absorb their identities for later agent insertion into the U.S. and Canada in "deep cover" operations.

But acquisition of advanced technology was the principal goal of the operation. The Soviets had a parallel equipment collection operation that eventually transferred a large quantity of American hardware, including a largely intact F-86, to the USSR.

According to witnesses, the Sabre pilots were interrogated for technical information by GRU military intelligence. Some were then turned over to the Sukhoi and MiG aircraft design bureaus to assist in developing new Soviet fighters and weapons systems. Still other captured American airmen (including B-29 radar operators and bombardiers) were shipped to special prison camps within large Soviet military research centers such as the facility at Sary Shagan to help develop Soviet surface-to-air missiles that could overpower American electronic counter-measures.

Russian sources also reported that Soviet intelligence made it amply clear to the American POWs that they'd been "absorbed" into the Soviet Gulag system, that repatriation was out of the question. They were then persuaded to cooperate by a combination of coercion and privileges, which included better food and liquor dispensed in "special houses" within the larger camp complex or intelligence center. The POWs were given Slavic names and no record of their captivity as Americans was located in former Soviet archives. When the TFR investigators probed for the eventual fates of these Americans, they received the lame excuse that the files were "incomplete." But, as Ambassador Malcolm Toon, co-chairman of the Joint Commission, noted when the report was made public, "There is no doubt that further research is essential."

From here on the Moscow River embankment, I could just distinguish the top of the distant *Lubyanka's* sandstone



SOF Archives

"We needed to analyze your new technology and tactical doctrines. Some prisoners were selected, according to their skills." "How many were taken?" I continued. He shook off an impatient frown. "Probably about thirty during the entire war."

facade. The former KGB headquarters housed still-classified intelligence archives that were so vast and compartmentalized that the "Organs of State Security" had successfully concealed the complex prisoner-transfer and exploitation operation for four decades. But today I might get lucky.

My interpreter, Boris, was 10 minutes late for the meet. "Sorry," he mumbled, "they were checking papers in the Metro."

"Let's take a taxi," I suggested, nodding toward the rank of Mercedes sedans at the swank Balchug-Kempinski Hotel.

Boris, a thin, retired academic with nice manners and rimless glasses, flinched at the suggestion. The \$20 fare north of the Garden Ring — paid up front, in green, thank you — equaled a good chunk of his monthly pension, now that inflation had driven the ruble down to almost 6,000 to the dollar. Instead, we bought plastic *jetoni* for the equivalent of nine cents and took the Metro to the Izmailovskaya Station.

Boris was right about the extra security in the Metro stations for this holiday. At the exit of the echoing, ornate marble hall, four *militsiya*, backed by a pair of OMON in combat gear, had set up a steel grate check point and were scrutinizing everybody's ID card or internal passport. They spotted me for a foreigner right off. Boris interpreted while the senior *militsiya* officer pulled the gray computer-print-out visa from of my passport and studied it closely.

"*Amerikanski prof 'essor*," I said with a broad grin. On this trip, I had delivered a pep-talk on the Internet to the English language club at an institute, so my business visa listed me as an academic.

"*Da*," the cop replied, handing back my papers. "*Spaseeva bolshoya*."

"Stars 'n Stripes? No, Never!"

I wouldn't have been treated so politely if I'd been a dark-skinned Georgian or Chechen. While the policeman was reading the fine print of the visa, the OMON waved through a group of bemedaled old vets and their wives, probably coming back from the wreath-laying ceremony at the Kremlin Tomb of the Unknown. The stooped old

people, dressed in the ubiquitous polyester of Andropov's Moscow, scowled at me and beamed at the tall young anti-terrorist troopers in black berets. The brief encounter was illuminating: Seven years earlier, when the Soviet Union was sliding into final collapse, the OMON had been widely portrayed as the bad guys, responsible for massacres of civilian protesters in Georgia and the Baltic republics. Today, after a spate of ineffectual car bombs and shootings by swarthy Islamic terrorists, the media presented OMON as the last bulwark of civilization.

Scratch a Russian, I reminded myself, and you'll find a Russian chauvinist. It was a lesson that was clearly relevant to my investigation. In October 1993, a weird cabal of politicians from the Old Left and New Right staged a bloody, but comically inept, parliamentary coup attempt. They dismissed President Boris Yeltsin and his fumbling government and installed their own men. Then, for about 30 hours, Russia had competing presidents and ministers of the Interior, Defense, and State Security. But the Army hung back, even after Yeltsin ordered the commanders of the tank units brought in from Tula to shell the White House parliament building where the rebels were holed up. In the end, it was OMON troops from Interior and Border Guards from State Security who rallied to Yeltsin, shaming the Army into supporting the constitutional government. About 200 rebels were killed in the White House bombardment and retaking the Ostankino television complex. It was obvious that Yeltsin owed his political life — and probably his neck — to the old Organs of State Security.

And it soon became clear that democratic public scrutiny policies, which had just begun to expose the Soviet-era abuses of the KGB and the Interior Ministry, had been put on indefinite hold. "Russia needs order," Yeltsin told the nation. Translation? He would leave Interior and State Security alone, so long as they gave him unlimited support. That renewed political partnership went a long way toward explaining the military disaster in Chechnya, which was initially an Interior Ministry show.

According to a Task Force Russian officer I'd spoken with, it became clear after the failed October 1993 coup that any semblance of cooperation from his Moscow counterparts had "completely dried up."

"Coat Of Many Paranoias"

While the *militsiya* were checking my papers, I saw Boris discretely scan the Cyrillic computer script on the visa, verifying my identity. That was why he'd insisted on taking the Metro I realized, as we trudged up the broad marble staircase past the heroic bronze sculpture of Red Army soldiers advancing against the Nazi juggernaut. Boris might appear a timid retired teacher, but like most Russians of his generation, he wore paranoia like an invisible raincoat.

Outside, we were dwarfed by the white monoliths of the Izmailovsky Hotel complex. This high-rise cluster had been built to luxury standards for the 1980 Olympics, a party to which damned few free-spending foreigners came. I figured that was where my source was staying for this holiday weekend. But I was wrong. We skirted the complex and walked north to a prefab concrete apartment house, halfway down an anonymous rank of similar *kruschoba* buildings thrown up in the 1970s. I'd seen better construction and maintenance in South Bronx housing projects. I wasn't surprised to find a dark entrance hall and elevator landing, stinking of piss and spilled garbage. Although Moscow officially had no homeless people, scavengers had stolen the light bulbs and rifled the trash bags for vodka and mineral water bottles that would fetch a few hundred rubles of deposit.

Boris did not explain why the general was meeting us here, and, as we rattled up in the rancid little elevator box, I politely did not ask. Fortunately, the small apartment was clean, bright, and well-ventilated. Unlike most Russians, General "Pavlovich" liked fresh air; the double doors to the narrow balcony were open to the spring sunshine. He was a wiry little guy with a well-coiffed shock of white hair and lively, pale blue eyes with the oval shape of a Tatar or Siberian tribal ancestor. That faint ethnic trait spoke volumes: "Pavlovich" was in his late 60s and came from a generation of Stalinist military officers, in which "half breeds" rarely made flag rank. He must have earned his stars, either through combat prowess or professional skill.

The general's Russian was precise, slightly nasal, the Moscow accent of the old *nomenklatura*. His handshake was firm, but not macho. Like Boris, he had good manners, and showed me to the place of honor on a divan draped with authentic silk Tazik carpets. The antique *samovar* on the fir sideboard was real sterling, and the crystal liqueur decanter and glasses beside it appeared authentic. Whoever owned this apartment had not yet been reduced to peddling the family heirlooms on the sidewalks of the *Arbat*, as had so many once-wealthy Moscovites.

THREE DAYS IN MOSCOW

In 1968, I perused a document concerning a plan that was formulated by the KGB to get specifics on tactics and electronics from downed American pilots. Two sources, one from CIA; the other from military intelligence, reported seeing 18-20 pilots taken from a Hanoi prison to a waiting Russian military aircraft and then lifted off for Moscow. Unrelated sources in Moscow stated that these prisoners were taken directly to KGB headquarters where they underwent interrogations utilizing sophisticated mind-altering drugs. Once the information was extracted, they were overdosed and their bodies cremated.

The American prisoners were interrogated at KGB headquarters in Moscow for three days. There was no gulag and no stints in Siberia. The entire operation was conducted in Moscow by the KGB, who did not trust or believe the GRU to be capable of orchestrating a mission of this magnitude.

This report was released through SOG (Studies and Observation Group) channels and, to my knowledge, was never acted upon. Like so many of the important documents from the Vietnam War, the above document simply disappeared.

Within two weeks after this incident, the North Vietnamese anti-aircraft units completely changed their tactics and started to shoot down more U.S. aircraft.

—Col. Fred Caristo (Ret.)

850 Years And Still Can't Get It Right

General "Pavlovich" offered us an almost-cold bottle of Russian champagne, bearing the silver-edged label commemorating Moscow's upcoming 850th anniversary. That cost 25,000 rubles, about five bucks at today's exchange rate, one more sign the guy was not a pauper. And the spread of *zakuski* hors d'oeuvres included salmon roe and both smoked sturgeon and pickled herring, not caviar, to be sure, but expensive hospitality for a pensioner.

I was glad he wasn't serving vodka because I wanted to keep my head clear. After the obligatory toast to The Great Victory Against Fascism, "Pavlovich" unbuttoned the coat of his dark suit and sat back in his chair. "How can I be of service?"

I glanced at the twin World War II Victory Medals (Europe and the Far East) and the Order of the Red Banner on his coat, then explained the exact nature of my investigation. "So far," I concluded, "there has been ample evidence, but no solid proof. We know American prisoners were taken to the Soviet Union, but we don't know their fates."

Boris had a problem translating "fates."

"What happened to them?" I said. "Are any still alive?"

"Pavlovich" nodded sharply, showing he understood. "Almost certainly not," he said emphatically.

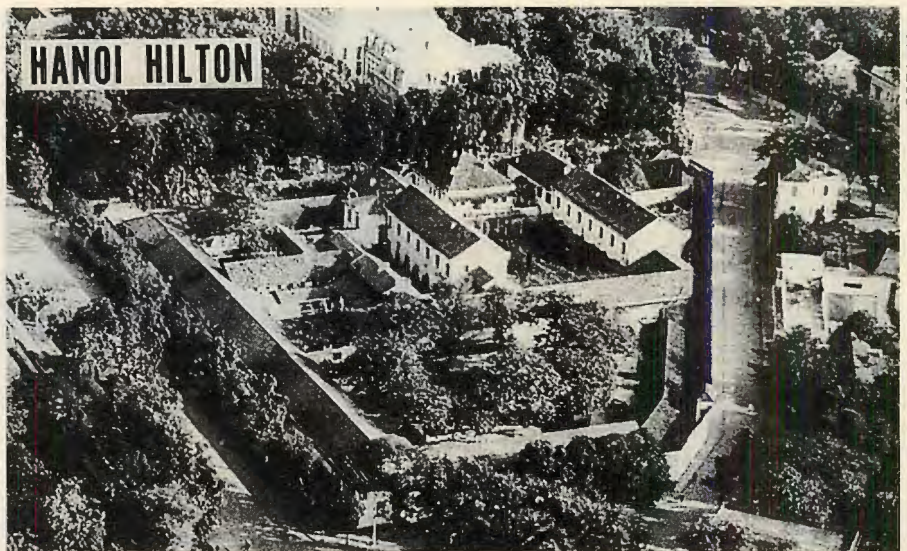
"How can you be sure?"

He rose and withdrew a leather-bound notebook from a weathered briefcase. "My logbook from the nineteen-sixties," he said.

But, before he consulted his notes, "Pavlovich" briefly outlined his career. A teen-age pilot cadet in the Red Air Force, he saw the "last few weeks" of combat on the Eastern Front, flying an IL-2 Sturmovik fighter-bomber against German armor facing Marshal First Ukrainian Army Group in southern Prussia. He was then transferred to the Far East and trained in the Bell P-39 Kobra, a vintage Lend Lease fighter that the Soviets used effectively as a ground attack plane against the Japanese in Manchuria.

"Pavlovich" transitioned to the MiG-15 jet fighter when the Soviet Air Defense Force (*Voiska Protivovozdushnoy Oboroni, PVO*) became a separate branch in 1948. He then served as an "advisor" to the North Koreans, operating out of a forward airbase near Vladivostok during the Korean War. After Korea, he was trained to fly the supersonic MiG-21 and became a PVO advisor in Hanoi during the Vietnam War. He finished his career at various "closed" Soviet military-industrial proving grounds, including the big desert test and training base at Mary in the Turkmen Republic, and the Akhtubinsk R&D test center near the Volga delta.

"Thirty-six years service," "Pavlovich" said, "an interesting career." It sure was, I thought. He'd served with Communist forces in both Korea and Vietnam and later became heavily involved with Air Defense Research and Development. His assign-



SOF Archives

No returning American POWs have positively identified fellow living prisoners who were seen alive in the central prison system but who were not repatriated or known to have died in captivity. That meant that either the North Vietnamese had a secret, parallel prison system into which they shunted likely candidates for Soviet abduction, or this selection was made quickly at Hoa Lo Prison ("The Hanoi Hilton") before the unlucky prisoner's presence became known to his comrades.

ments were with units that would have directly benefited from the intelligence yield extracted from American POWs.

"Pavlovich" opened his logbook and scanned some notes written in neat Cyrillic block letters, in what appeared to be groups of acronyms, which had been almost an obsession with the Soviet military. "You said that you're familiar with the exploitation of American personnel from Korea?" he asked, showing some discomfort as Boris translated.

"I've read the reports," I replied, trying to keep my voice neutral.

"Pavlovich" flipped pages. "That program continued to a certain extent during the War of American ... "He corrected him-

self, interrupting Boris in mid-phrase. "... during what I believe you call the Vietnam or Second Indochina war."

He'd been about to call it the "War of American Imperialist Aggression." Old habits die hard.

"What was the nature of the program?"

"The same," he answered. "We needed to analyze your new technology and tactical doctrines. Some prisoners were selected, according to their skills."

"Where were they exploited?" I leaned forward on the divan, trying to get a better look at his notes.

"I don't know all the details," he admit-

Continued on page 85

Return Address Unknown

After retiring from a police department in greater Boston, due to an injury, I became heavily involved in the POW issue and served as one of the only non-MIA-family members on the Board of the National Forget-Me-Not Association, an organization of which retired Air Force General Harry C. "Heinie" Aderholt (a longtime *SOF* contributing editor) is especially fond.

With the help from a member of Amnesty International, I was put in touch with a well-known Moscow journalist, Artyom Borovik, who had broken the truth to his people about Afghanistan. In addition, during 1988-89 I interviewed numerous individuals that American and Allied prisoners from WWII had been brought to the Soviet Union. Little, however, was said about POWs from Korea — or Vietnam, which was then my true focus. Nearly all, however, agreed that it was extremely likely — even probable — that Americans from those conflicts were incarcerated.

If memory serves, during 1990-91 a story appeared in *Komesant*, by Yuri Pankov, detailing the transport of an American pilot from Vietnam to Kazakhstan, and giving the date and coordinates of his shootdown. Yuri had the POW's name but refused to give it up thinking I was going to rip off and cash in on his story. I wrote down the man's suspected name, however, as Yuri looked at the note in disbelief. James Kelly Patterson.

The flight engineer from whom Yuri had got the story, had in a signed statement alleged that *other* Americans were flown to the Soviet Union from Vietnam.

An associate of mine, a former POW in North Vietnam, months later received a gift in the mail, the envelope having no return address: Patterson's military ID card.

Are Americans being held? Very well could be. But the answers will not come via government to government, but from people to people.

—Tom Flaherty

Basic Instincts

Continued from page 49

WWII vet would fondly remember. Life is spartan, but clean. It is hardy, but also fraught with abuse, according to a candid conversation I had during a barracks tour of the *Sokol* ("Falcon") Unit, Sofrino's resident special-forces company.

"I've never had any problems," said Viktor, an intense-looking 27-year-old Spetsnaz veteran of Chechnya. "But from what I heard a lot of the infantry recruits have trouble with some of the officers: beatings, and they try to get money from them."

"There are some that like to make the weaker soldiers' lives hard," a bunkmate of Viktor chimed in. "I'm not going to give names, but I know there are some drill instructors that know which recruits to single out and take money and alcohol from."

Lieutenant Oleg sent one of his better soldiers to pick me up and walk me to the gun-safety cage.

Four recruits were standing outside the fence watching Oleg and Lt. Alexandrovitch rapidly put two nervous 18-year-olds through the simplest of gun-safety drills: how to safely remove the magazine and check if there are any live rounds in the chamber. Couldn't be simpler. Right? Wrong.

Some young men were never meant to be soldiers, and it was evident after nearly



Memorial bunks for two Spetsnaz killed in Chechnya. In Russia, heroes are not forgotten.

45 minutes of drilling that these two were probably better suited doing something less strenuous like filing papers or painting cammo patterns on trucks.

"Incredible," Lt. Oleg said to me. "Someone's going to get killed by this guy. Look at the way he handles his weapon."

Graduation

The "graduation" ceremony was nearly over when I returned with Lt. Oleg to the parade grounds. About 200 parents, friends, and girlfriends were standing along the sides offering encouraging applause after each speech and oath-taking. Colonel Jakovlevitch put the finishing touches on a canned speech that sounded as if it were written for his grandfather,

sprinkled with "comrade" and "motherland" enough times to satisfy the most serious patriots.

Base regulations prevented me from sleeping over at Sofrino. I was back, however, the next morning to find myself in formation with two squads of recruits marching around the parade ground.

Precision marching with and without weapons was part of the scheduled training this morning, with a trip to the hospital for those with dental problems as part of the afternoon plan.

"I've got to always keep these guys busy," a visibly tired Lt. Oleg said. "If they sit around the barracks they get in trouble."

"Hey you, Pevchesky, let's go. Don't just stand there," Oleg yelled in Russian at a lagging recruit. "Put a little effort into your step. One. Two. Three. Four. Left. Right. Left. Right. Come on."

"Is the U.S. Army like this?" Lt. Oleg asked. "This is a great army. We've got some excellent officers and soldiers. We've got a history, but we've also got a lot of problems. Every year the recruits get worse. Every year our pay is less. Every year our supplies don't come in on time, and every year I wonder what I'm doing here."

Chief Foreign Correspondent Mark H. Milstein has reported on armed conflicts from the former Yugoslavia, Chechnya, Lebanon, and Iraq. He is based in Hungary. (He did not re-up with Lt. Oleg.) ✕

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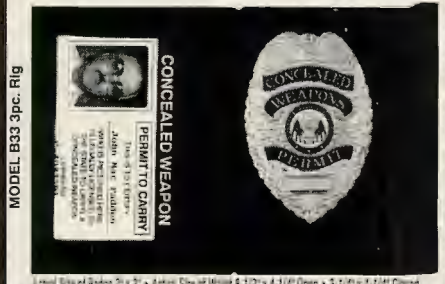


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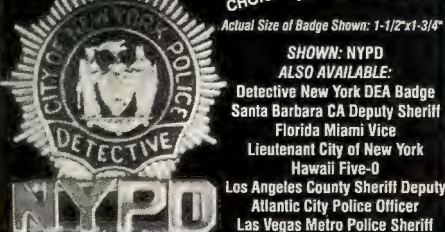
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Long Race, Hot Place

Continued from page 57

meat. It was not an unusual sight.

The 50-mile leg for days 4 and 5 would provide a variety of scenery, at least: more sand dunes, then rocky ground, a village filled with curious onlookers and excited children, and a narrow river to cross. Frontrunners continued their phenomenal speed. Derkson had regained the lead. Rival Gozzano had dropped out from injuries.

In the late afternoon's heat, Derkson began weaving to and fro, unsure whether he was on the right course. Lahcen Ahansal passed the Russian, finishing an hour ahead of him that day. The top 50 runners would end the two-day leg in 7-12 hours total, so they would have time to relax and heal. Others would have to travel through the chilly night.

A huge beacon shown at the bivouac area. It could be seen for miles but was misleading, seeming closer than it was. Some runners recalled thinking they were near the camp — but still had another 10 miles.

Shared Misery

Camaraderie now kept some competitors sane. Irish Capt. Newnham took the 50-miler in stride, having teamed up with American runner Cathy Tibbetts.

"The trouble I go to to firm up my thighs," she quipped as she and her running partner trotted into the bivouac area.

Conlon, of the Welsh regiment, crossed the leg's finish line and made his way back to the line of black tents. "I was thinking about the tent while I was out there," he said wearily. "Couldn't wait to get back to it. Luxury."

Irritability rose. Shave had maintained a buoyant demeanor but now was chiding me about having "parties" every night in our campsite, "drinking and eating" while the racers suffered in their tents, sand flying in at night, rain sometimes — unexpectedly — dribbling in. Members of the Welsh regiment and I argued over which country was best: USA or UK. They started it.

"We are the world's superpower," I replied. "We made you," a Welshman retorted. "We left you because you were all so uptight," I shot back, calmly. "That's okay," said Hicks. "We'll do the thinking, and you can do the spending." They all laughed at this NATO humor as their Union Jack flapped above the tent.

I suggested most of the food in *their* grocery stores probably came from America. They grouched that Americans are "fat."

At least *my* feet weren't bloody meat and I didn't stink of old sweat — or worse.

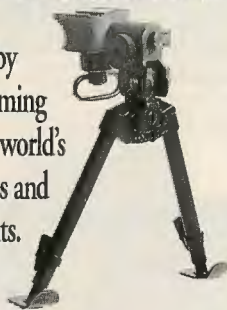
Day 6 brought a 27-mile leg. Many of the runners had little skin left on their feet by the time they stumbled into the final checkpoint. The Sahara was an oven.

"It was carnage out there today," commented an exhausted Cooper of the Welsh regiment. "Boiling."

Amputee Moon finished in 6 hours, 40 minutes. "It was very tough for me," he said,

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Smart Opens—fantastic tools that open most doors regardless of the type of lock, on-site tests of three automatic garage door openers, comparisons of 5 electronic picks, a new pick set that lets you go where no man has gone before, latest tips to improve your picking hit rate, how to pick Ace (tubular) locks, nifty new automobile openers, alarm defeators, security bar opening tricks, plus much more!

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What's New, What's Hot. Where to Get It and How to Use It. **VIDEO II B AND E A TO Z.** Graphics, cutaway views, good stuff. 1 hr 10 min. **\$59.95**

GPS TRACKING IS HERE!!!

Okay, suppose you want to follow any vehicle, anywhere in the world, in real time from the comfort of your office/living room/favorite bar... No kidding, utilizing a covert cellular transmitter and the government's GPS satellite system you can track any vehicle within 25 feet, on any road in the world. Readout includes, direction, speed, stops, all the good stuff. Right out of James Bond, huh?

Intelligence Incorporated Pro Trak GPS

Transmitter—1.1"x5.2"x7.0", weight 20 oz, 9-13VDC power, output 600 mw, DTMF signaling, 6 second update rate. Transmitter powered by 8 alkaline "C" batteries which give an average of several days use (depending on your inquiry rate).

TigerTrax CD ROM software with built-in maps for virtually every US location (IBM compatible, 8 megs RAM 100+ hard drive computer not furnished). Needs windows 3.1 or DOS 5+.

100 unit capability, street level maps with 10 scales, 500 overlay icons. Options include motion sensor (\$100, panic button alarm, Mapix software [worldwide maps included ability to scan in any map you please, add \$400, probably overkill]).

Basic system, one transmitter, software (TigerTrax), warranty etc., \$4500, (second x-mitter \$1800) system. Knock **\$500** off with this ad...



Receive a copy of the video B&E-2 FREE with every Cobra order!

COBRA PRO

The one major improvement over manual lock picking that has surfaced in the last 20 years has been the invention of the "electronic" lock pick.

And the **Cobra Pro** is flat out the best ever...

The **Cobra Pro** has a number of important features not found in lesser picks including an adjustable throw, heavy duty motor, keyhole light, rubber grip, carrying case, etc., and it operates from standard 18 volt Black and Decker Batteries!

How good is the **Cobra Pro**?

I have personally worked a test door with 20 different types of locks mounted on it, including Schlage, with the **Cobra** and opened all of them, some in 2-5 seconds, some in 20+, but they opened under my moderately inept guidance. —Lee Lapin

The U.S. Seals have just completed a (uh, this is kind of classified, please don't tell any of your Russian friends) a Secret Site in Southern California (sounds like a song, doesn't it?) known as Seal City.

Said city is designed to test seals in a variety of both covert and SWAT type entry and building search/containment techniques.

Every so often the various Seal teams are pitted against each other in a direct competition to see who can get in fastest using everything from lock picks to plastic explosive.

We furnished a **Cobra Pro** to one of the teams for use in the last competition. Guess who won?

Cobra Pro sells for \$699, never less. Big sale price—\$599!!!

MULE TOOL

The **Mule Tool** is a deceptively simple appearing idea that inherits years of experimentation and design from a great locksmith and engineer.

The inventor asked himself the age old question, "How can I get any door open with no damage and no picking?" and then spent years refining the original concept.

The **Mule Tool** consists of a number of pieces, the heart being a 3+ foot long rolled steel rod carefully shaped to manipulate a couple of different "tools" to accomplish what has previously been stone cold impossible.

As long as there is a tiny bit of clearance under the door to be opened the MT can slip underneath and inside. At this point a person with a few minutes practice (our secretary opened the front door in about 15 minutes of instruction/practice) can defeat: •Normal key-in-knob locks •Dead bolt locks •Hotel style inside bar locks •In-floor "club" style anti-open, anti-burglar bars •Press style panic bars.

In fact it's just as easy to re-lock interior deadbolts after one exits the premises.

This is the first major breakthrough I've seen in a long time with regard to no-harm, no-foul, covert entry. Deluxe MT works on locks of any height, \$399. Sale price \$299!!

PICK GUN

The snap gun has probably opened more locks in less time than any other single picking device. If you are a locksmith or covert entry specialist and don't own one you should be ashamed...

Our price, \$59.95. Our Sale price \$39.95 while supplies last.



How To Get Anything On Anybody—The Newsletter

For the first time ever the latest techniques, tricks, products and opportunities laid out in a single newsletter! Written/edited by Lee Lapin (author, The Whole Spy Catalog, How To Get Anything On Anybody; Books I and II, The Covert Catalog, Hands-On Surveillance, etc.) This is the only periodical to feature Lee's unique, hard and fast, chocked-full-of-information style.



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Stashing something in a safe "secret" Swiss account? Based in the Bahamas? Placed in Panama? Guess who's already rolled over to U.S. pressure, not to mention who is getting ready to snatch you off...

Too time sensitive for a book, **How To Get Anything On Anybody - The Newsletter** will pay for itself the first time you track down a "ghost," dig out "hidden" information, protect a bank account, safe deposit box, or just give golden advice to a client.

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SAFTA: NAVY SEAL FIGHTING SYSTEM

New Navy SEAL Video Featuring Lew Hicks

Fear No Man! Protect yourself in any situation using the fighting system created by the Navy SEALs' top hand-to-hand expert. Unsatisfied with Black Belts he holds in Okinawan Shorin-Ryu, Aikido, Kung Fu-San Soo, and his mastery of Free style and Greco-Roman wrestling, **Lew Hicks** created for his Navy SEAL Teammates, **SAFTA** – Scientifically Applied Force Training of America. Learn how to command total control using the fighting skills developed for the world's most elite commando force. **"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.

Fear No Man!

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his face a picture of fatigue. "I just pointed myself in the right direction and went because only puffs and faggots stop. I just think about breathing, how to get to the end."

The legionnaires, still the leading military team, used a tactic: The two stronger runners, Hira and Coppin, carried field rations belonging to the weaker runners, Carpenter and Harzallah.

Throughout the camp, weary runners munching carbohydrate bars or trail foods fantasized about *real* meals back in civilization. The Welsh soldiers talked of big "fry-ups" in the officer's mess hall. The legionnaires thought of simple, hot food washed down with French wine. And all of the runners thought of soap, shampoo, and a shower.

Not Over Till It's Over

The last day was a mere bunny hop to the finish line. It would take the runners through increasingly hilly terrain to the village of Ignaoun, then 3 miles across open ground to the village of Tagounite where the finish line had been erected with much fanfare. A heavy cloud covering blocked the sun — a blessing.

Remarkably, only 22 runners had quit by this time. Many others were barely able to walk, let alone run. Several runners had noticed blood in their urine, due to dehydration; one female runner even suffered a prolapsed uterus.

Lahcen Ahansal was the first to cross the finish line — the local favorite. Close on his heels was Derkson. But *cumulative* times would determine the winner: Ahansal, finishing the 140 miles in 17 hours, 19 minutes, 58 seconds, won the purse of French francs. Derkson, in fourth overall with a time of 18:13:32, relinquished his three-year reign as desert champion.

Despite the runners' collective agony, this day was a celebration. *Marathon des Sables* organizer Patrick Bauer presented trophies and draped medals around the runners' necks. Villagers yelled from the sidelines and children happily ran alongside some of the arriving competitors.

Legionnaires Hira and Coppin individually ranked the highest among the military teams. Hira, coming in 29th overall, and Coppin, in 30th, proved that determination and acclimatization *could* substitute for specific training. As a team, the legionnaires (with an average time of 25 hours, 48 minutes) bested the team from the Royal Regiment of Wales (average: 27:96), followed by the Royal Regiment of Ireland's team (30:20).

Georgia-based freelancer Robin Postell's first contribution to SOF was *"Bushwhacking In B.C."* (May '97) on the *Eco-Challenge '96* marathon in Canada. The 1998 *Marathon des Sables* is tentatively scheduled for late March/early April. The American liaison is Mary Gadamis; phone: 804-513-1764; E-mail: mkgadamis@aol.com. Marathon's Web site: www.sandmarathon.com. ☘



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Amazing Scientific System

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

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

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

Still they met with Jerry, with great 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.

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

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

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

Guaranteed To Work In Your Most Nightmarish Hostile Situation

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Free Special Report Reveals GUN And KNIFE Fighting Secrets

Jerry Peterson's system is brutal. It has to be. Yet it's surprisingly easy to learn. It requires NO athletic ability, NO speed, NO conditioning.

And because his videos offer an unprecedented 3 camera angles (including a new overhead shot), you can learn this scientific system in just days; specific techniques often in just minutes.

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

It's easy to get your free copy. Just call

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24-hours for a **Free** recorded message to get your **Free report**. International, call 602-921-8533.

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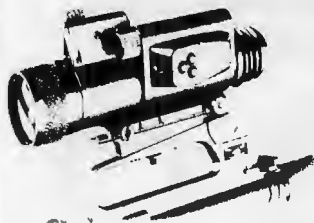
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Creator Jerry Peterson

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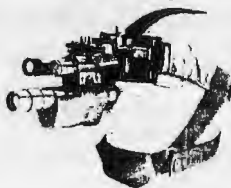
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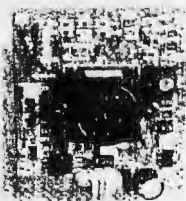
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Blueprint To A Rescue

Continued from page 66

Foreign Minister Tudela, who urged him to take half a loaf rather than none at all. They told him President Fujimori would never release the MRTA prisoners, especially leaders such as Victor Polay.

"For a time Cerpa seemed inclined to accept this advice. We thought he might settle for money and free passage for his group to Cuba. But other terrorists, especially El Arabe, succeeded in convincing Cerpa not to compromise."

Lucho paused to raise a crystal tumbler of Crown Royal. "Salud," I raised my own glass.

We sipped our booze, then he continued: "I felt particularly bad for the younger terrorists, because they were from the Central Jungle near Satipo and obviously knew little of politics or the world. In fact, they bitterly complained as the crisis dragged on. They'd been told by Cerpa that the affair would end within a month and they could return home ..."

**To Cuba On A Bus;
To Hell In A Handbasket**

"That's what they wanted — to return home, not go to Cuba. When they learned they might go to Cuba, they asked us where it was and could they get there by bus. When we told them they would have to travel by airplane, they asked what it was like inside an airplane. But they knew all they needed to know about weaponry and explosives. They were seasoned veterans of jungle combat in Peru. I had no doubt they were quite capable of killing us all."

"How did you know the government had microphones in the residence?" I asked.

"I didn't know for certain, but I assumed this would be a priority for intel. So I began speaking into whatever arrived from the outside. Other hostages thought I was loco. It took a week or so before I found a mike in a Bible."

I said: "My son Mark and I saw you on TV as you rolled across the upstairs patio toward the commandos during the rescue. I told Mark, 'Look, the Admiral is the only one rolling and not crawling because of his military training! He knows he'll present a tougher target that way.'"

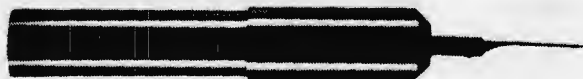
Lucho laughed. "I didn't roll to avoid bullets. I rolled because I couldn't crawl. Thirty years as a FOES has ruined my knees."

I laughed, recalling the sad shape of my own knees.

We continued to talk as Lima's brief twilight settled into darkness. But we spoke no more of the crisis — only of good times past and those to come. After all, what was left to say of the crisis except: "Viva el Peru, Carajo!"

Retired SEAL Commander Bill Salisbury is now an attorney in San Diego, Calif. ✕

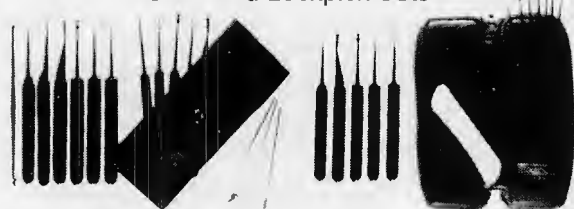
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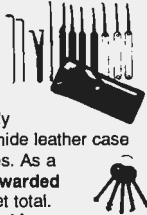
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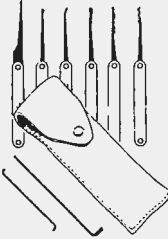
This deluxe yet compact kit features 11 of the most commonly used tools. Comes in a slim cowhide leather case for discreet undercover operatives. As a special bonus, a 5-piece set of warded picks is included. A 16-piece set total. Also included, a copy of "Lockpicking Simplified." Receive all this at a low price of
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PXP 10

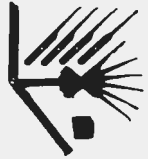
- Shirt Pocket Size.
- Top Grain Cowhide Leather.
- Has 13 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.
- All Picks with Metal Handles.
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PIX-EZ All-In-One Pick-Set

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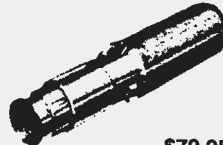
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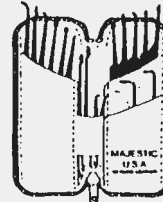


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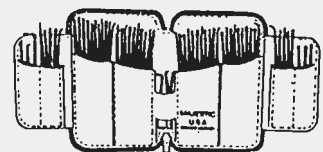
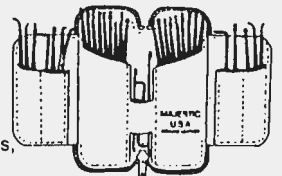


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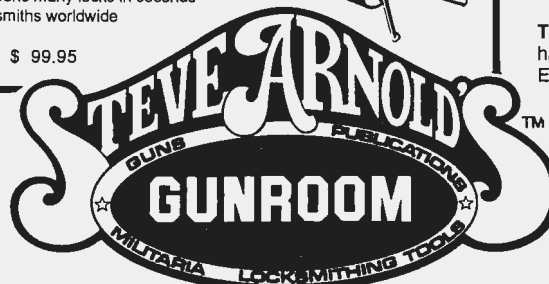
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Christian Soldiers

Continued from page 41

quarters, Chief of Staff Mayardit unfolded a map and briefed me on the progress of the offensive and its objectives.

After the destruction of the enemy force south of Yei, Mayardit reinforced commanders Athor and Cirillo, who had already overrun Lembe and Loka, two major enemy garrisons northeast of the town. Government forces attempted to hold a line at Lanya, but were driven back on 15 March. The next day a second GOS line of defense was defeated at the Mile 40.

The Sudanese air force launched attacks from Juba, some 70 miles to the northeast, with Mi-24 Hind helicopters, a pair of F-6Ms (Chinese version of the MiG-19), and two Antonov-24s used as bombers. One An-24 was downed with a SA-7 missile, the SPLA officer added. Exhausted after a week of heavy combat, Mayardit continued, the SPLA halted at the river and dug in to rest and allow the logistics tail to catch up.

On 23 March the GOS brigade occupying Kajo Keji, on the west bank of the Nile near the Ugandan border, received orders to reinforce Yei. President Bashir, some 800 miles to the north in the safety of Khartoum, still refused to believe that Yei had fallen.

The westbound GOS column was ambushed within sight of its base by an SPLA brigade led by Cmdr. Elias Wayai. The GOS brigade withdrew back to Kajo Keji — and was overrun the next day.

On 26 March three GOS battalions launched a counterattack against Athor and Cirillo's forces at Mile 40, but were thrown back with heavy losses. Commander Wayai and his unit followed the Nile from Kajo Keji northward, reaching the same parallel as Athor and Cirillo on 30 March. On the next day an armor-led force under Deputy Chief of Staff Oyai Deng Ajak and Cmdr. Aluong destroyed a GOS brigade at Rumbek, opening a third axis aimed at Juba.

Pessimistic POW

A few days later, upon my return from the battle scene at Mile 40, I was escorted to a POW camp (formerly a GOS barracks) where I was introduced to Sudanese army Colonel El Tayeb El Hussain.

An engineering officer who had assumed command of the brigade at Kaya only five weeks before the launch of the SPLA's southern offensive, he was not a happy man — but counted himself lucky to be alive.

When I asked if Juba can hold against the SPLA, the Sudanese army officer squinted at a northbound convoy of heavy trucks packed with captured ammunition and cheering troops. He shook his head.

"I don't think so," Col. Hussain replied morosely.

Jim Hooper resides in Britain and is a contributor to both Jane's Defense Weekly and Soldier Of Fortune. ✕

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ted. "But certainly the program was under the control of the KGB, the First Chief Directorate."

"Not the GRU?"

"The GRU were provided with all the information," he said without hesitation, "but they had no control of the prisoners."

"Not Many ... about 30."

Down in the muddy playground kids were kicking a soccer ball. "The GRU personnel were all military officers," he said earnestly. "The Americans were also military men. But the KGB were *osobisti*," he added with evident distaste, referring to the *Osobii Otdel*, the KGB's Special Department. These counterespionage teams were assigned to all Soviet military units, and their members operated under "cover" as regular officers. Even though I doubted very much that the *Osobii Otdel* per se had been the actual KGB department handling American POWs, his use of the generic pejorative term "osobisti" showed me where he stood. "Pavlovich" had been a career military aviator who had fought in at least one war for the Motherland. The captured American aircrew were also career officers. Men like these shared a code of ethics that did not include drug-enhanced interrogations and eventual *liquidation* of prisoners.

"How many were taken?" I continued.

"Not many," he said, scanning his notes.

"Fifty ... one hundred?"

"Fewer than fifty, as I understand the operation."

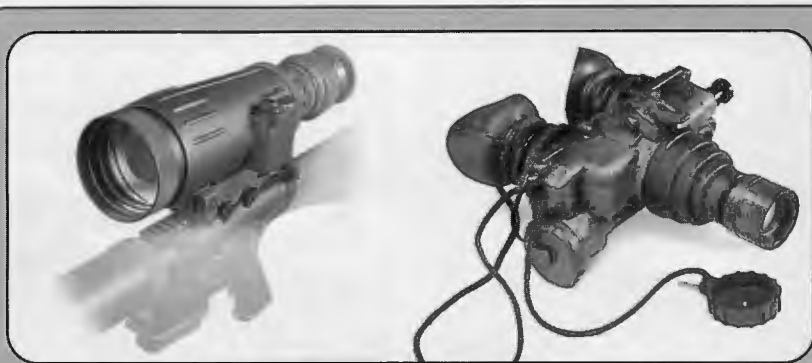
"Well ... " I was trying to probe without sounding too pushy. "Would you say the total was closer to twenty or fifty?"

He shook off an impatient frown. "Probably about thirty during the entire war. The KGB had collection priorities, for specific technology and operational tactics. When the opportunity arose, they took it. But the Vietnamese Socialists were not cooperative. They wanted to use your men as pawns for the Paris negotiations."

That squared with everything I had discovered in the course of my long investigation. But the information also echoed a number of published accounts. Was "Pavlovich" simply running another scam, trying to peddle rehashed information under the guise of original data? As he flipped through his logbook, I reviewed what was and what was not known about the possible numbers of American POWs sent from Vietnam to the Soviet Union.

Next month, "Cicero" vets General Pavlovich with his American "source," and learns how the Clinton administration sold out POW/MIA families to his Russian comrades.

"Cicero" is a former U.S. government official who has studied the Vietnam War POW/MIA issue since the 1980s. ✕



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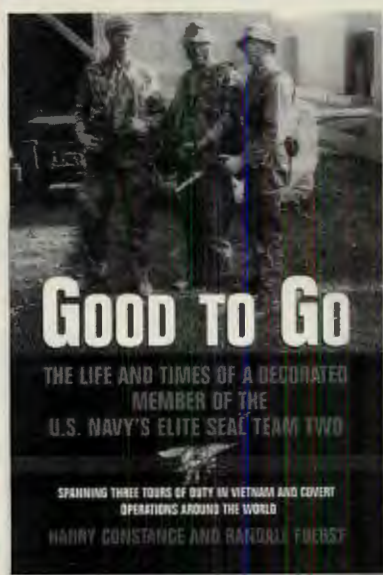
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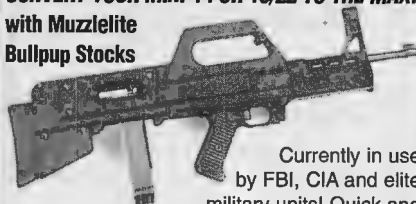
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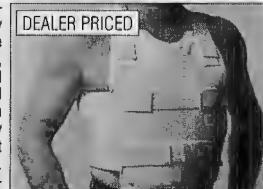
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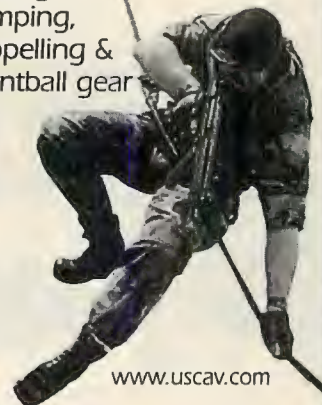
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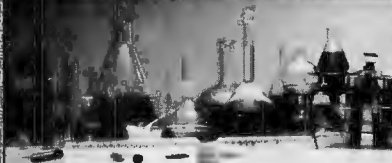
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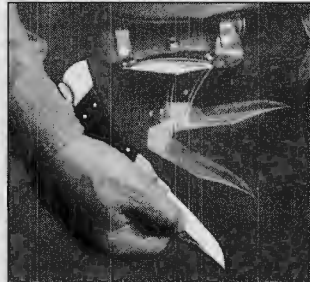
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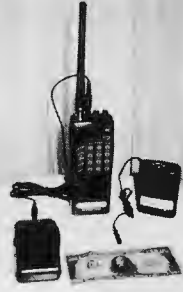
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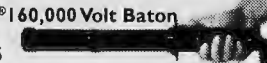


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Aimpoint	22	Greene Military	88	Pearce Grip	78
American Historical Foundation	9	GSI (Parker-Hale)	78	Reinhart Fajen	10
Armalite	29	Gun Parts Corp.	78	RPB	90
Artos	37	Harry Constance	87	S & K Products	90
ATN Night Vision	89	Hoch Hochheim	87	S&K Labs	92
Automatic Knife Resource Guide	30	Hogue Grips	22	Silver Creek	92
Benchmade	76	IRSAIS	84	Silverman's	91
Black Hills Ammunition	15	Intelligence Inc.	79	Skyline Technology	89
Blackhawk Industries	33	Inter-American Security Products	88	SOF Convention	24
Blade Tech	84	Interarms	Cover 2	SOF Subscriptions	35
Boker USA	28	Intertech	91	SOS	91
Brownell's	90	Ironstone	91	Southern Ordnance	82
Bud K Worldwide	88	J & T Surplus	87	Special Air-Sea Services	88
CDSS Inc.	86	Kabar	8	Springfield Armory	36
Chase-Durer	Cover 4	Kensington Publishing	19	Starlight Systems	82
Chrysalis Consulting	90	L.A. Law Enforcers	92	Steiner	36
Cold Steel	34	L.A.R. Manufacturing	86	Steve Arnold's Gunroom	83
Colt	Cover 3	Lile Handmade Knives	90	Tactical Video Security Int'l	89
Custom Wilderness		L.L. Baird	87	U.S. Cavalry	89
Adv ntures	28, 85	LOTI Group Productions	34, 80	United Cutlery	80
Cutlery Shoppe	89	LRRP K-9 Services	91	USI Corp.	90
Delta Press	30	Matthews Police Supply Co.	88	The Wilderness	89
Direct Action Video	81	Maxsell	77	Your Supply Depot	88
DPMS	23	Medusa	21		
Eden Press	89	Military Book Club	17		
Excalibur Enterprises	18	Morovision Night Vision	85		
Gerber Legendary Blades	16	NIC. Inc. Law Enforcement Supply	89		
Global School of Investigation	88	Olympic Arms	11		

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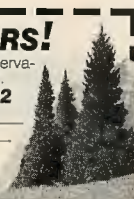
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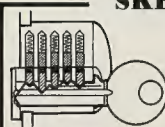
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Bosnian Mission Creep

Last

March, Defense Secretary William Cohen said our troops would be out of Bosnia by June 1998, even though the United States pull out might trigger the rival ethnic factions to once again start "slaughtering each other."

Cohen's wisdom in saying enough is enough and calling for U.S. withdrawal suggests he's been quietly studying Robert McNamara's Vietnam-era Pentagon Papers. Like Vietnam, Bosnia is mission impossible. Bosnia is three separate countries artificially wrapped in one — not the reunited Bosnian pipe dream of the 1995 Dayton peace accord — and each country has its own separate military machine which distrusts and hates the other two.

Our forces there are not unlike the little Dutch boy who stopped the flood by keeping his finger in the dike. In Bosnia, regardless of how long we stay, once the U.S. finger is pulled out, these killers will go at each other again.

Now President Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and other close Clinton advisers are signaling that Cohen misspoke; that America has a vital interest in preventing more violence in the Balkans and that our failure to stand tall would abdicate America's leadership role in Europe.

Funny thing though, during the Vietnam War when most of these hawks, including the prez, were of dying age, they were university-bunkered doves who conveniently loathed war, uniforms, and the chance to serve their country.

It never ceases to amaze me how age, draft status, and proximity to the killing zone help define who's a hawk and who's a dove.

At least in 1997, these 50-ish Vietnam-era draft dodgers aren't talking about the dominos falling or saying "if we don't stop 'em in Bosnia, the bad guys will invade San Francisco." Now their spin is about U.S. interests, the consequences if our leadership blinks, and what will happen if we abdicate our moral responsibility in a thousand-year-old feud among crazies.

Super-draft-dodger-turned-super-hawk Richard Holbrooke, former head Bosnia peace negotiator, argues that America has invested too much politically and militarily to quit the game before we have won all of the chips.

This kind of throwing-good-money-after-bad-money thinking is what greenhorn poker players employ when they are on a losing streak. "Just a few more hands and my luck will turn." Remember, this was LBJ's style in 1965, when the "invincible" South Vietnam Army started to crumble.



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.

A quick scan through the Pentagon Papers will show that in 1964, Robert McNamara said, "I think the number of U.S. personnel in Vietnam is not likely to increase substantially." One year later the force level in Southeast Asia jumped from 30,000 to more than 200,000 military personnel, and by 1968, we had 550,000 soldiers in the bloody pot.

Soldiers serving in the similarly wrong-headed Bosnia mission tell me that not only are they preparing to stay beyond 1998, but that "Iron Princess" Madeleine Albright having finally prevailed over the generals, our forces in Bosnia will move from keepers of the peace to a much more aggressive role.

They say within the next few months American troops will round up almost all of the indicted war criminals still at large. Once these raids happen, the fat will be in the fire. We can expect that the hostility toward our forces — which presently lies just under the surface — will explode.

Already Clinton and hawks have stupidly permitted a basic tenet of peacekeeping to be violated: Never take sides. American mercenaries — former U.S. Army soldiers and Marines led by a retired U.S. Army chief of staff — are training, equipping, and arming the Bosnian Muslim army while the Serbs and Croats seethe.

I hope Cohen will not cave in like McNamara and play the go-along-to-get-along game. He must stand tall and convince Clinton and his hawks that Bosnia is an unwinnable end game, or resign. If the hawks prevail, we'll get stuck deeper and deeper in the swamp and, like Vietnam, in the end we'll leave in failure.

The solution: Give the Bosnian Serbs and Croats the independence they want by cutting Bosnia into three chunks. Then do what we didn't do in Vietnam: Declare victory and get our troops out of that quagmire before the snow begins to fall.

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

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