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# SOF

## C O N T E N T S

DECEMBER 1997  
Vol. 22 No. 12



Robert Constance  
Courtesy: [unreadable]

### On the Cover

Today's Navy SEALs owe a lot to the men who went before them in WWII, the early years of the Cold War, and Vietnam. Some of that remarkable history is explored in articles beginning on pages **38** and **52**.

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courtesy Roy Boehm



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# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by **Charlton Heston**

## America's First Freedom

— *National Press Club, Washington, D.C., 11 September 1997.*

Today I want to talk to you about guns: Why we have them, why the Bill of Rights guarantees that we can have them, and why my right to have a gun is more important than your right to rail against it in the press.

I believe every good journalist needs to know why the Second Amendment must be considered more essential than the First Amendment. This may be a bitter pill to swallow, but the right to keep and bear arms is not archaic. It's not an outdated, dusty idea some old dead white guys dreamed up in fear of the Redcoats. No, it is just as essential to liberty today as it was in 1776. These words may not play well at the Press Club, but it's still the gospel down at the corner bar and grill.

And your efforts to undermine the Second Amendment, to deride it and degrade it, to readily accept diluting it and eagerly promote redefining it, threaten not only the physical well-being of millions of Americans but also the core concept of individual liberty our founding fathers struggled to perfect and protect.

So now you know what doubtless does not surprise you. I believe strongly in the right of every law-abiding citizen to keep and bear arms, for what I think are good reasons.

The original amendments we refer to as the Bill of Rights contain 10 of what the constitutional framers termed unalienable rights. These rights are ranked in random order and are linked by their essential equality. The Bill of Rights came to us with blinders on. It doesn't recognize color, or class, or wealth. It protects not just the rights of actors, or editors, or reporters, but extends even to those we love to hate.



That's why the most heinous criminals have rights until they are convicted of a crime. The beauty of the Constitution can be found in the way it takes human nature into consideration. We are not a docile species capable of co-existing within a perfect society under everlasting benevolent rule. We are what we are; egotistical, corruptible, vengeful, sometimes even a bit power-mad. The Bill of Rights recognizes this and builds the barricades that need to be in place to protect the individual.

You, of course, remain zealous in your belief that a free nation must have a free press and free speech to battle injustice, unmask corruption and provide a voice for those in need of a fair and impartial forum.

I agree wholeheartedly ... a free press is vital to a free society. But I wonder: How many of you will agree with me that the right to keep and bear arms is not just equally vital, but the most vital to protect all the other rights we enjoy?

I say that the Second Amendment is, in order of importance, the *first* amendment.

It 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. It alone offers the absolute capacity to live without fear. The right to keep and bear arms is the one right that allows "rights" to exist at all.

Either you believe that, or you don't, and you must decide.

Because there is no such thing as a free nation where police and military are allowed the force of arms but individual citizens are not. That's a "big brother knows best" theater of the absurd that has never

*Continued on page 82*

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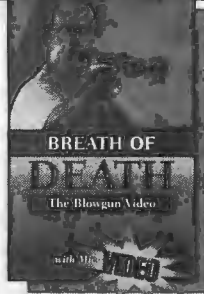
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## BREATH OF DEATH

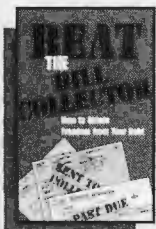
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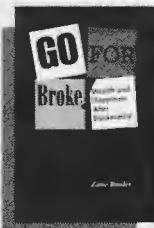
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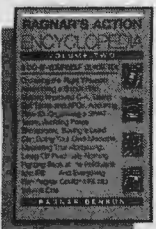
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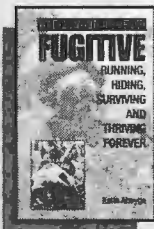
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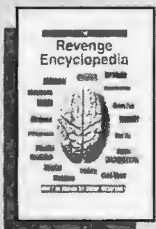
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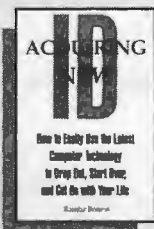
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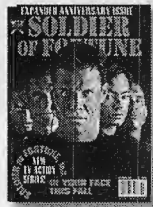
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## SOF Selling Out?



Congratulations on selling out! *Soldier Of Fortune* was my only unbiased world conflict news source, concise and broad ranged. Writers who knew the difference between an AK and an RPG. Reporters who knew a Putsch from an internal struggle.

I know that soldiering is an "action" lifestyle but I feel that another unrealistic action show just injures your journalistic integrity. I fear that you have fallen for the Hollywood head-trip. While bragging how realistic the show will be you show a production shot of a sniper team exposed, uncammied and nice shiny chrome muzzle brakes.

If the show is so groundbreakingly unpolitically correct I'm sure that you will show the real horrors of war. Grown men with hideous gut wounds and no legs screaming for Mommy? I don't think so. Bruckheimer's idea of realism is changing clips every once in a while.

I regretted to see a four-page advertisement waste of space and reading time instead of the excellent reporting I was used to.

I hope that you do not find out this "grenade" of a show explodes in your face, as it will severely injure the credibility of a magazine that has worked very hard to be taken seriously.

My deepest regrets.

Still reading because there isn't an alternative,

O. Ritterband  
New York City

Dear Mr. Ritterband:

Rest easy — SOF magazine is not about to change. There has not been, nor will there ever be, a "sellout." When we licensed the name *Soldier Of Fortune* for the *Soldier Of Fortune*, Inc. TV show, we didn't leave the combat reporting business to "go Hollywood." SOF magazine has not changed a bit — but wouldn't it have been pretty rude of us not to give the new TV series bearing our name a plug, especially when it promises to be a cut-above the rest?

Regards "realism," even the most "realistic" fiction can never be true-to-life. How, for instance, would you film tactical night ops? Ask the viewer to sit and watch a black, silent TV screen (how'd you like to have to sell ads to sponsors for that segment)? That wouldn't be TV — that would be radio.

True-to-life films about soldiering would tend to only reflect the "days of excruciat-

ing boredom relieved by moments of stark terror" and be of little interest to most viewers. And as for bringing the true horrors of war into American living rooms, that is neither technically possible nor esthetically desirable. You remember what a gut-shot buddy sounded like — do you remember what he smelled like? Not even a documentary could ever do justice to the abominable reality of war, and that is not the purpose of an entertainment medium.

So, lighten up and enjoy the show. It's entertainment, not a training film. (And remember when you see that pretty gal with the less-than-adequate-cammo paint, that it was done that way so you could see her at all.)

## Kriminal History

Peter Kokalis' article describing the Walther P99, in the Oct. '97 issue of *SOF* mentions a "PPK (*Polizei Pistole Kriminal*)".

Is the PPK intended for sale only to criminals?

Actually, the "K" represents the word for "short" which in German is "kurtz." [sic]

Just as the Colt Commander is a shorter version of the 1911 [sic] Colt, the Walther PPK is a shorter version (.6 inch shorter slide and barrel) of the PP.

Sincerely,  
James A. Hill  
Parma, Ohio

P.S. See the attached clipping from the 1992 *Shooter's Bible*.

Jim, sorry you cut up your *Shooter's Bible* to make your point, because the idea that the "K" in "PPK" stands for "kurz" is an incorrect nugget of folklore that just never seems to die. This logical, but wrong, assumption may stem from the fact that the "k" in "Kar98k" (carbine 1898 short) stands for "kurz" (short), but in the case of the Walther PPK pistol it is wrong no matter how often it is repeated. The Walther PP was specifically developed for the European police market (*Pistole Polizei*), and when I was an MP in Germany in the early '60s, that was what every German cop carried. The PPK was developed as a more concealable pistol to be carried by detectives — "*Polizei Kriminal*." Thus: *Polizei Pistole Kriminal* — PPK.

## Korean War Vets in USSR?

Just got your October issue and as usual your editorial is well and succinctly stated. The communists have done similar atrocities since 1917: let's not forget there were lost Korean War vets as well. Bureaucrats and politicians always seem to be more ready to smile at these despots than to take a moral stand. [Their mentality] will not change unless they are held accountable. Let's face it: the latest generation of KGB et al. are still blowing smoke about Raoul Wallenberg.

Sincere admiration on surviving 23 years. You've come a long way since you sold the magazine from the trunk of your car.

Bill McCutcheon  
Calgary, Alta.



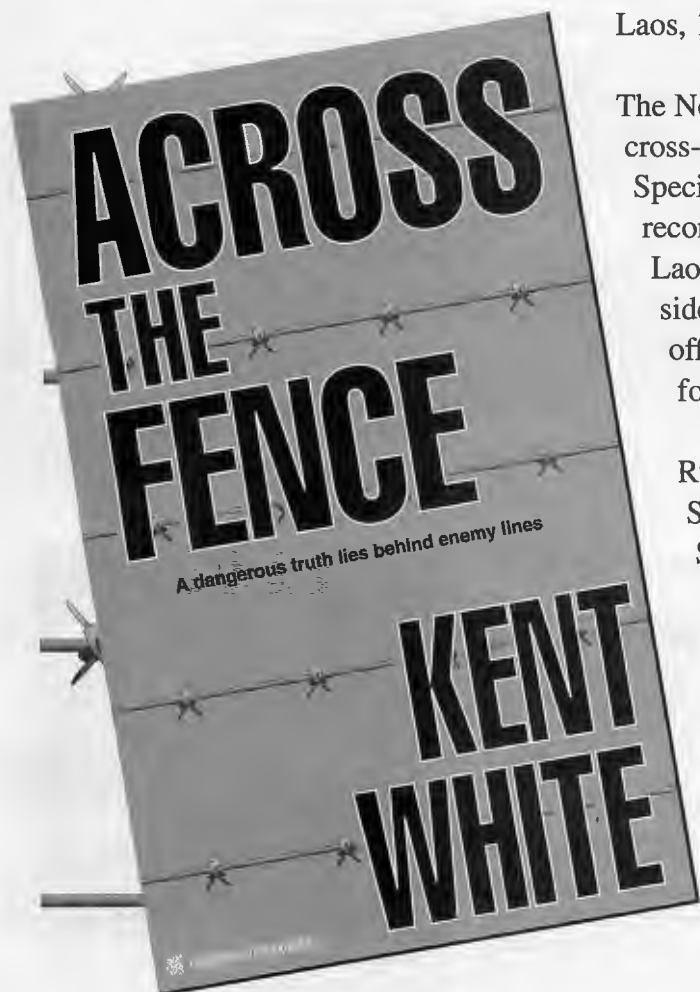
"Tell me, Senator . . . why are people so cynical about politics in America?"

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Laos, 1969.

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### Bounty Hunter Brouhaha

From the stories you have done on it, it has been my understanding that bail-enforcement officers are more likely to be off-duty or retired cops than off-duty or semi-retired criminals. Since I had never seen an incident regards legitimate "bounty hunters" make the news, I was surprised to read about the episode in Phoenix where a swat-like gaggle of "bounty hunters" broke into a house, tied up the women and kids and blew away a couple in bed. Newspapers and TV said it was a bounty-hunt gone bad. Didn't sound right. Then I heard your Richard Sherrow being interviewed on the radio, saying it was more probably a home-invasion robbery, as real bail-enforcement agents don't operate that way.

Guess what, now there is a small back-page news item in the paper saying it was a robbery attempt, using "bounty-hunting" as a cover if they got caught.

You people were the only ones to get it right the first time (again). Ever think about doing a TV news show?

Mike Sandhurst  
Portland, Oregon

*No. We're all too ugly for television.*

### One Man, One Donation?

To paraphrase an old philosopher, money corrupts — and political money corrupts absolutely. If we're ever going to clean the bottom feeders out of the swamp we call Washington, D.C., we're going to have to stop feeding them.

How to do this? The principle of one-man, one-vote seems to have gained wide acceptance, why not be realistic and consider that since money and (not ideas and principle) wins elections today, we need to apply a restriction of one man, one donation. And cap the donation to \$10 per man. No donations from political action committees, labor unions, big (or small) business, "professional" organizations and especially absolutely no donations from any foreign interests such as communist China, Indonesia, or any of their minions or surrogates.

Make it a felony with mandatory penalties involving hard time — no fines to also be paid by your "defense fund."

Besides, if a candidate can't tell me why I should vote for him on \$10, he probably doesn't have anything worthwhile to say to me — or anybody else.

Jeff Honnecker  
Aguila, Ariz.

### Wrong Picture?

Concerning the enclosed [newspaper] item revealing that the FBI agents at Ruby Ridge won't face prosecution ... It appears that federal law enforcement officers enjoy an astonishing immunity to prosecution.

Not so long ago the Los Angeles police

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officers were brought into federal court for using excessive force on one Rodney King. They didn't kill him ... They just beat him up. So the feds prosecuted and convicted the two cops for violating Mr. King's civil rights.

But it seems that an FBI sniper can shoot and kill a woman holding a child ... And no one's civil rights have been violated? What is wrong with this picture?

Hollis E. Proper  
Lovelock, Nevada

*There's a lot wrong with that picture. Local prosecutors are now planning to prosecute federal officials who allegedly broke local law in that debacle. We'll see*

*how far toward justice these local efforts go. Local press in Idaho is clamoring for prosecution of the ivory-towered officials in Washington who set the stage for that tragedy, but that is unlikely to happen since Idaho has scant jurisdiction in Washington.*

### Kudos

Kudos to *SOF* and Jim Pate for another insider tip on Waco! A few years back, *SOF* reported that, in its February 28, 1993 Waco raid, ATF had employed special bullets designed to penetrate bullet-resistant vests. The bullet, designated "Cyclone," was described as a 9mm hollow-point with a sharpened steel liner inside the nose cavity.

For two years now I've pursued a Waco-related Freedom of Information Act suit against ATF and FBI. After considerable stonewalling, they've begun to cough up documents. Among these is a report of intelligence obtained through "bugs" planted inside the Davidian building. According to this report, on March 12 Koresh is overheard telling another Davidian that "he was hit by a hydroschock [sic] bullet." But what he describes is no Hydroschock: "Koresh describes this as a hollow point, steel-lined, high-velocity 9mm bullet."

(Other interesting intercepts: The government claimed they had massive water supplies inside, yet on March 15, it'd overheard Koresh ... rationing it at one ladle daily per person. Later the same day comes a message the government obviously finds of unique concern — all other intercepts are just reported, while this one is worried over: "Koresh tells Schneider to get some pictures of the bullet holes in the Compound. It is unable to be determined whether Koresh currently contains [sic] photography equipment and wishes the bullet holes at the compound to be photographed by Schneider or if Koresh is requesting Schneider to obtain photos through some other means. Koresh does not elaborate.")

Name Withheld  
Via e-mail

### A National Revival

The reason that I write is that from what I have seen so far in *SOF* the content of the magazine is outstanding, but what I have not seen in any publication is the fact that even Americans [who] are [prepared] to die hard for their country (myself included), all fail to see that our land is in terrible condition itself. I am a sailor for the United States and damn proud to be! I am also young and strong and dependent on no man, just out of high school and know the only thing I know is that I don't know it all. But I have seen kids killing kids like guerrilla warfare in today's public school systems. I have seen gangs try to have as much power as the Mafia, and with gangs they have no honor. Though I may piss a lot of people off, this letter is to say we need to raise our nation ... to the point that it once again is immortal and untouchable, clean and pure. It's time to take the bull back by the horns by any means necessary.

Prophet  
via E-mail

*We tend to agree with you, but remember that we don't want to do the wrong thing for the right reason — in other words, the means to a worthy end is part of that end, a concept that seems to be lost on many people today in business, government and politics.*

*Have something to say? Send letters to Flak, PO Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, or via e-mail at editor@sofmag.com*



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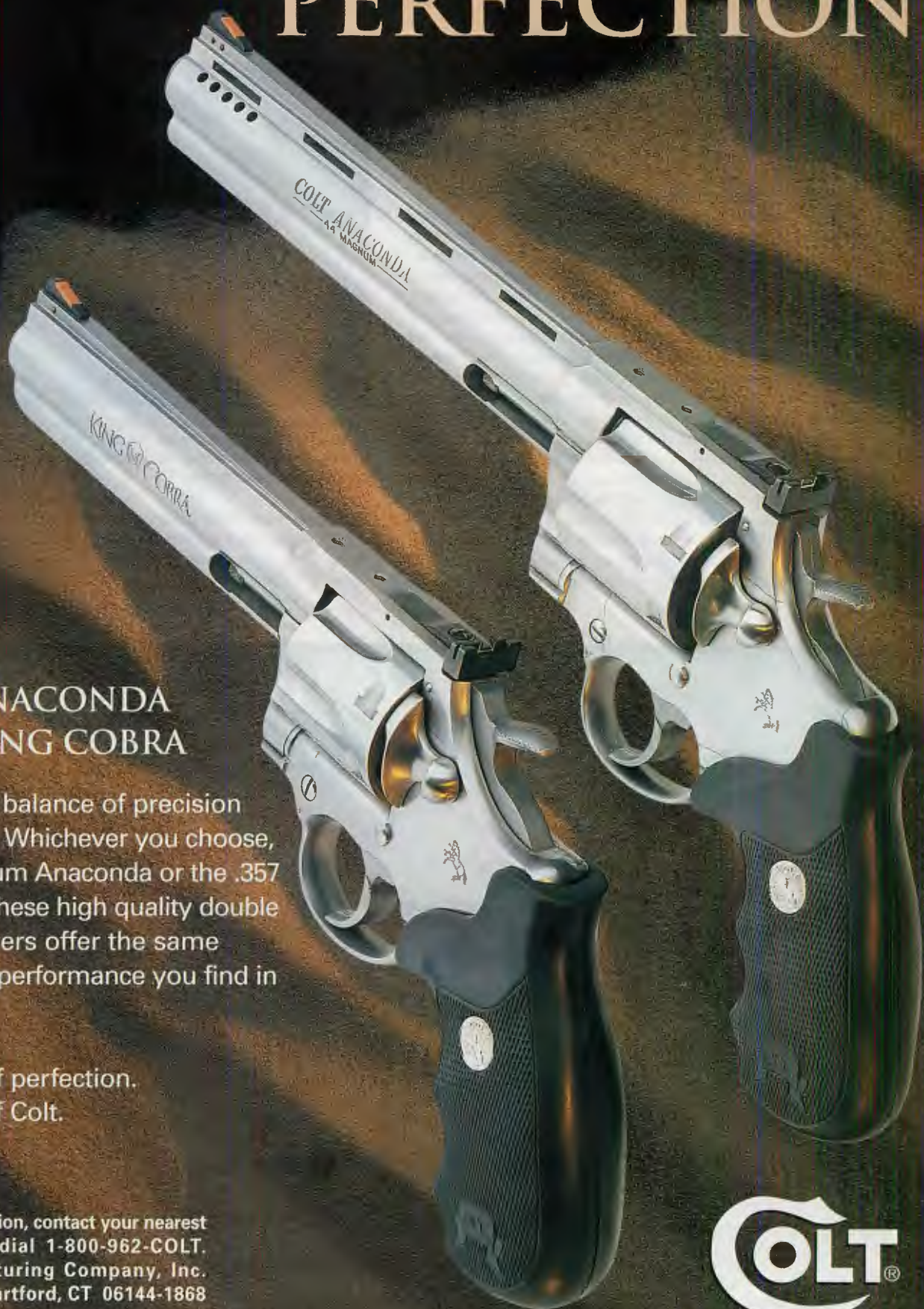
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# BULLETIN BOARD

## KOKALIS JOINS GSGI

*SOF's* Technical Editor, Peter G. Kokalis, has recently joined the staff of Global Studies Group, Inc. (See "From Brown Water To Silver Screen", July '97) as an adjunct firearms instructor, with a principal focus on automatic weapons. He will continue with his full-time responsibilities at *SOF*. Headed by former U.S. Navy SEAL Harry Humphries, GSGI specializes in worldwide law enforcement and security training programs and numbers among its clients allied governments, municipal police departments and multinational corporations. GSGI is comprised mainly of former U.S. Navy SEALs and senior law-enforcement personnel, who are recognized as leading authorities in a wide range of military and law-enforcement disciplines. The company provides training and technical support in the following areas: special operations training, executive protection, asset protection and operational security audit. Training programs include firearms marksmanship and tactics with handguns, shotguns, tactical carbines, countersniper systems and automatic weapons; knife fighting; martial arts; military and law-enforcement HRT tactics, guard-force operations, border-intrusion and insurgency operations; counter-terrorist driving; and technical security services and counter measures. All of GSGI's training programs are presented in a high-speed, low-drag manner by an instructor staff widely acknowledged as an elite among the elite.

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Chris Mayer

Harry Humphries, former U.S. Navy SEAL and technical adviser to the TV series, *Soldier Of Fortune, Inc.*, with *SOF's* Technical Editor, Peter G. Kokalis, who recently joined Humphries' GSGI as an adjunct instructor.

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Amazing Scientific System

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

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

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

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

### Easily Defeats Decorated SEAL

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

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

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

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

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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.

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

These 'wanna-be's' 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.

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Official SEAL SCARS-CFC  
Creator Jerry Peterson

## Washington State Faces Gun Registration

Washington gun owners face an onerous proposal this fall which, if it isn't stopped in the Evergreen State, could spawn dozens of similar initiatives across the country.

*Initiative 676* would require every handgun owner in Washington to take an eight-hour safety course and/or pass an equivalency test, then purchase a \$25 "Handgun Safety License" in order to legally retain their handguns. Sponsors of the measure say it's a child safety program but buried in the 3,000-word initiative are provisions for handgun confiscation, owner registration and a section that allows police access to a gun owner's medical history.

The National Rifle Association Board of Directors, spurred by an appeal from Directors Irv Benzion and Dave Workman (both Washington residents), vote unanimously to use whatever resources necessary to beat I-676.

Workman warned his colleagues, "It's better to fight the barbarians on the outskirts of the realm (in this case, Washington State), than to wait until they're at the castle gate (Washington, D.C.)."

Opposition to I-676 is led by an umbrella group, Washington Citizens Against Regulatory Excess (WeCARE). They're getting plenty of high-profile support from major law-enforcement groups in the state.

Lining up against I-676 are the Washington State Council of Police Officers, Washington State Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors Association (unanimous), the Everett Police Officers Association (unanimous), Deputy Sheriff's Guilds in Chelan, Clark, Douglas, Okanogan and Pierce counties, the Northwest Region Border Patrol Council, and individual top cops. Spokane Police Chief Terry Mangan, Snohomish County Sheriff Rick Bart and Grant County Sheriff Bill Wiester are on the WeCARE Advisory Council, and Thurston County Sheriff Gary Edwards has

also announced his opposition. At the national level, the Law Enforcement Alliance of America and American Federation of Police also oppose the initiative.

With that much law-enforcement opposition, I-676 supporters refused to publicly debate their issue before a state Senate panel in mid-September. Instead, they remained outside the hearing room, alleging that the hearing was unfairly rigged by Chairwoman Sen. Pam Roach (R-Auburn).

The WeCARE effort is spearheaded by retired Marine Joe Waldron, considered by many in the gun-rights movement to be one of the more effective — and credible — lobbyists in Washington's capitol, Olympia.

Waldron noted that I-676 would require creation of a large new handgun-owner licensing bureaucracy within the state's Department of Licensing. It would cost taxpayers millions of dollars, he's contended.

If passed, I-676 would require trigger locks to accompany every handgun sold or "otherwise transferred" although it does not actually mandate that the locks be used. Other tenets of the measure that alarm gun owners:

—The initiative allows police to seize handguns from unlicensed individuals. Since Washington is a community property state, spouses of handgun owners would also have to be trained and licensed, or face penalties if, for example, they have a handgun in the home when the actual gun owner is away.

—I-676 may be unconstitutional under Article 1, Section 24 of the State Constitution, which reads: "The right of the individual citizen to bear arms in defense of himself and the state shall not be impaired, but nothing in this section shall be construed as authorizing individuals or corporations to organize, maintain or employ an armed body of men." The U.S. Supreme Court has already held that it is unconstitutional to require citizens to pay fees before they exercise a constitutional right.

—Handgun owners would surrender their privacy rights, so

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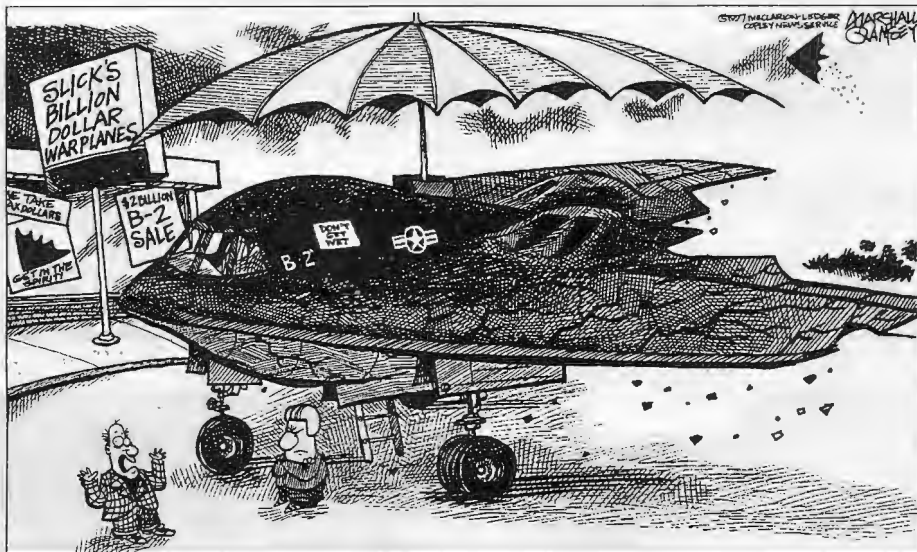
### BOGUS BOUNTY HUNTERS

On 31 August, the national press was awash with the story of a pre-dawn "bounty hunter raid gone bad" in Phoenix, Ariz., resulting in the murder of an innocent couple as they slept.

As expected, there has been an immediate hue and cry from the press and many politicians, damning the bail-enforcement profession and demanding nothing short of a national public lynching of all "bounty hunters."

From the beginning, this case bore the signature more of a home-invasion robbery than a bounty-hunter operation. For one thing, no bail-enforcement agents I know of wear black ski masks and carry rifles. Nor, do they tie women and kids up with flex-ties and beat them with Mag-Lites. Nor, do they search for DWI bail-jumpers — armed with five-year-old, *rescinded* bench warrants — in a residence where there was no evidence the subject (or even anyone he knew) had ever been. And these points only scratch the surface.

As *Soldier Of Fortune* digs into this case we find that one of the leaders of the "bounty hunters" who blew the heads off the innocent couple in their bed, one Michael Sanders, has, for the past 10 years, actually been a paid snitch for the FBI, BATF, DEA, Phoenix Police Department and the Maricopa County Attorney's Office; and whom, while in their various and collec-



tive employ, has committed numerous crimes, to include armed robbery — while his handlers looked the other way. In fact, one local attorney even claims to have in his possession a videotape showing Sanders plotting with FBI agents to kidnap a man in Mexico who is wanted for the shooting of a Phoenix police officer. Further, other lawyers say they have evidence of an FBI agent committing perjury and the County Attorney's Office withholding exculpatory evidence — all to protect their snitch, Sanders.

As more facts pointing away from "bounty hunters" emerge in this case, we are seeing the national media drop coverage like a hot potato. *Soldier Of Fortune* will continue to dig. Stay tuned. — Richard L. Sherrow ✕

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1923-1998



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## South African Sound Suppressors



As an empty case spins out of the ejection port of a Micro UZI submachine gun, back pressure caused by a South African GMS sound suppressor forces propellant gases out of the ejection port as well.

If pistols, Smith offers muzzle units for bolt-action rifles such as the Brno, Remington, Marlin and Krico and pistols like the Beretta Model 71 and Walther PPK.

Smith makes 9mm Parabellum sound suppressors for the Micro UZI pistol, Heckler & Koch SP89, Glock Models 17 and 19, Browning High Power, Czech CZ75, SIG P210, Ruger P85 and numerous others. He has also designed a "can" for the caliber .40 S&W Glock Models 22 and 23 (a caliber just now becoming popular in South Africa). Caliber

While repressive gun-control laws that would be totally abhorrent to U.S. gun owners have been in effect for many years in the Republic of South Africa, South Africans have never viewed sound suppressors as the sinister deadly devices that they have been perceived to be in the United States. In South Africa they are not considered to be firearms. They carry no serial numbers and no license or registration is required to own one. They are used for hunting and culling game, indoor target shooting, by those with sensitive hearing, teaching young shooters (sound suppressors can reduce recoil by up to 75%), for more rapid target reacquisition in long range shooting and as an accuracy enhancer.

Without doubt, Gavin Smith (GMS Suppressors, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 30485, Tokai 7966, Cape Town, Republic of South Africa; phone and fax: 27-21-702-2141) is South Africa's premier sound-suppressor designer. Starting developmental work in 1985, Smith, who is qualified as both a tool maker and gunsmith, commenced full-time work in the design and manufacture of sound suppressors in 1990.

Smith has designed a substantial number of both muzzle type and integral sound suppressors for a much larger array of weapon types and calibers than U.S. designers. Smith's .22 LR muzzle units are maintenance-free for about 5,000 rounds. Filling the unit with diesel fuel and letting it set for two or three days will loosen the built up fouling. While caliber .22 LR integral sound suppressors are available for the Browning semiauto and Ruger 10/22 rifles and the Ruger Mark I and

5.56x45mm sound suppressors are available for the Colt AR15, Ruger Mini-14 (both integral and muzzle types) and the South African R4, R5 and R6 series of assault rifles. Other rifle calibers for which Smith can supply sound suppressors include 7.62x51mm (.308 Winchester), .303 British, .22-250, .243, .30-06,

7x57mm, 7mm Remington Magnum and .300 Winchester Magnum. Fully 90% of Smith's centerfire rifle sound suppressors are used for game culling operations. Smith also produces sound suppressors for 12-gauge shotguns, .45 ACP units mostly for M1911-type pistols, but also for the SIG-Sauer P225 and the MAC10, and a wide variety of .32 ACP (7.65mm) and .380 ACP (9mm Kurz) pistols.

Most of Smith's sound suppressors are made with 304 stainless-steel bodies, with the exception of his innovative SRLB sound suppressor. Those with steel bodies are available polished, bead blasted or with a heat-resistant black paint finish. The .22 LR units are built with a rear expansion chamber followed by six aluminum spacers (three of one dimension, three of another) between seven stamped steel, cadmium-plated baffles. A similar design is used for centerfire rifle suppressors, except that some of the baffles are ported (to avoid the gas-relief valve found on early Vietnam-era Sionics sound suppressors). The .22 LR baffles are flat; the centerfire rifle baffles are cone-shaped. The number of baffles varies in the centerfire models. Smith's submachine gun sound suppressors also include wire-mesh cages. The mesh cages help cool the large volumes of gas generated by full-auto burst sequences. Smith does not



(above) South African GMS SRLB sound suppressor attached to a Glock Model 19. Lower portion of the unit is a gas expansion and recoil chamber, which provides the reservoir of gas required to reliably cycle the pistol. (below) Gavin Smith .22 LR muzzle-type sound suppressor attached to a Beretta Model 950B .22 Short rimfire pocket pistol.



believe in porting the barrels on his integral sound suppressor units, as this requires the use of high-velocity ammunition since the power loss is too great if subsonic ammunition is fired through a ported barrel.

By far Smith's most innovative sound suppressor is a muzzle-type unit for pistols called the SRLB (Short Recoil Locked Breech). The housing for this unusual suppressor was originally machined from aluminum bar stock. It is now injection-molded from Nylon 6, a tough but flexible synthetic. This further decreases the weight and reduces the sound pressure level, as the aluminum body resonated slightly (picked up a "ping"), while the Nylon 6 body does not.

Offset so that it does not interfere with the pistol's sights, the SRLB suppressor features four chambers on top with four aluminum spacers and four rubber wipes. The unit is supplied with three sets of wipes, which are good for a total of 300 rounds. Each set costs about US\$1.70. There is a steel-adaptor bushing to the rear of this chamber into which the threaded barrel muzzle goes. Underneath this is a gas expansion and recoil chamber, which provides the reservoir of gas required to reliably cycle the pistol. With an overall length of 4.3 inches (110 mm), a height of 2.2 inches (56 mm) and a width of 1.2 inches (30 mm), the SRLB weighs only 4.8 ounces (135 grams). When attached to a Glock Model 19, the SRLB sound suppressor will drop the sound pressure level by an average of 29 dB.

Smith's sound suppressor for caliber 7.62x51mm bolt-action rifles has an overall length of 11.8 inches (300 mm), a diameter of 1.6 inches (40 mm) and weigh only 1.9 pounds (850 grams). When attached to a Sako rifle firing subsonic ammunition it will reduce the sound pressure level by 31 dB. An early Dater suppressor in this caliber weighs 3.5 pounds. Smith's caliber 5.56x45mm suppressor will reduce the sound pressure level by 33 dB when fitted to a Sako bolt-action rifle firing standard military ball.

Smith's .22 LR pistol muzzle unit has an overall length of 6.5 (165 mm) inches with a diameter of 1.1 inches (28 mm) and weighs about 6.4 ounces (180 grams). When attached to a Walther PPK firing Ely subsonic ammunition, this sound suppressor will reduce the sound pressure level by about 30 dB.

In the United States, sound suppressors have never been a real factor in criminal activities. They became stigmatized as sinister devices as a direct consequence of the NRA's attempt to prevent handgun registration in 1934 and offer, instead, restrictions on so-called "gangster" weapons such as machine guns, short-barreled shotguns and rifles and "silencers." That sound suppressors continue to be viewed as frightening tools of the assassin is largely a result of Hollywood movies, the mainstream left-of-center media and, of course, anti-gun politicians. A pity, as throughout the rest of the world they are largely considered to be no more offensive than lawnmower mufflers. ☒

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# WORLD SITREP



1

## UNITED STATES

**Good for the economy:** America once again is top arms supplier to developing countries; in 1996, sold \$7.2 billion, compared to Russia's \$3.9 billion — U.S. congressional researchers. Responding to defense industries' lobbying and Peru's purchase of Russian MiG-29s, White House will allow advanced-weapons sales in Latin America on "case-by-case" basis. Several countries want F-16s. • **Unwanted downsizing:** Air Force's pilot retention drops to only 32% (of those eligible for re-up) so far this year. Last year, 498 pilots left; as of this August, 626 had left (likely for better-paying, less-stressful airlines). Biggest pilot shortages in fighters and C-130s. • Defense Special Weapons Agency acknowledges nuclear weapons remain viable options for special targets, such as use of newest penetrating munition against underground NBC facilities. • **Hercules on water?** Money crunch endangers Navy's plan to equip some C-130 transports with 87-foot pontoons for amphibious landings. • Theater High Altitude Area Defense missile suffers more test failures. Project will increase by \$1.4 billion to \$7.7 billion; Army deployment delayed by 2 years, to 2006.

2

## RUSSIA

**Quieter, deadlier:** Nuclear-submarine fleet escaping budget crunch. Best captains are retained; modernization — of variants in classes *Akula*, *Delta*, *Oscar*, *Typhoon*, and *Victor* — continues; and construction of next-generation attack and ballistic-missile subs proceeds. Russian subs now only 1/3 as noisy as a decade ago, U.S. analysts report. • **Playing hardball:** Moscow is warned by Washington (responding to Israel's fears) not to proceed with deal to upgrade Syria's 2,000 T-55 tanks (to T-72 level), nearly 1,000 BMP-2s, and 40 MiG-29s. Diplomats threaten cut in U.S. financial aid to Russia. (Syria already deploys first installment of 200 Ukraine-upgraded T-55s in forward positions near tense Golan Heights.) • President Yeltsin authorizes major reorganization of state-owned arms exporter, *Rosvooruzhenie*, to improve competitiveness. Russian arms sales are expected to bring in \$4 billion this year.

8

## SOUTH AFRICA

**Truth emerges:** Bright flash off coast, spotted by U.S. satellite in Sept. '79, was a nuclear-weapons test, Mandela government admits. (Carter administration readily accepted Pretoria's denial at that time.)

7

## KENYA

**Anti-government violence:** In late-summer rioting, mob torches police station in seaport Mombasa; 6 cops and 7 civilians die. Army intervenes as dozens of houses and hundreds of vendors' stands are burned; 40 more die before riots are quelled. Police conduct house-to-house search for weapons.

9

## BRUNEI

The Sultan's 2,000-man (paramilitary) Gurkha Reserve Unit, of former British soldiers from Nepal, is disarmed — reportedly for disciplinary reasons — and 11 Gurkha officers fired. The unit guards governmental buildings, is outside Brunei military authority, and is viewed as the Sultan's private, anti-coup force.

10

## ISRAEL

**Escalation in the Zone:** Heliborne commando unit *Egoz*, volunteers from army's elite Golani Brigade, successfully ambushes several *Hezbollah* squads infiltrating into south Lebanon "security zone" (buffer to northern Israel). *Hezbollah* then resumes heavy use of Katyusha — and possibly longer-range — rockets, heavy mortars, and roadside bombs against Israelis and South Lebanon Army (Israeli-funded militia). Meanwhile, Israeli air force and SLA gunners pound suspected guerrilla sites in Lebanon, causing some civilian casualties.

11

## IRAN

**Islamic drug smuggling?** Revolutionary Guards Corps conducts large live-fire exercises near border with southwestern Afghanistan — thinly veiled warnings to Kabul's ultra-fundamentalist *Taliban*. Tehran accuses *Taliban* movement of exporting large quantities of opium to finance its ongoing civil war.

13

## MEXICO

**Media ban:** Military personnel are ordered to avoid all contact with news media after national magazine publishes expose on relations between army officers and drug traffickers. Reporters banned from bases. • Analysts estimate Mexican drug profits at \$15 billion annually; 5% of gross domestic product.

14

## PANAMA

Panama and Washington negotiate the creation of a civilian-run "Multilateral Counter-narcotics Center" at Howard AFB for intel and communication activities supporting Latin American drug interdiction.

3

### CHINA

**Final solution:** Government has executed more people, since 1990, than all other nations combined, Amnesty International reports. • **Old school vs. New:** Ideological dispute rages in highest echelons of Communist party over nation's direction: "capitalist" faction wants free-market economy, while "socialist" wants state-directed economy. (Neither advocates relaxation of personal and political freedoms, however.) • **Surprise, surprise:** Hong Kong's Beijing-appointed governor announces new election plan: 2/3 of legislature will be picked by business and professional groups — not by citizens' vote. Beijing tells London to halt public criticism of its actions in Hong Kong.

4

### GERMANY

**New era:** Following successful German participation in Bosnia and Albania peacekeeping, *Bundeswehr* sends 75 *Jaeger* (ranger) troops to joint infantry training at French commando school in Gabon — first German deployment in Africa since WWII. • **Weeding out the bad:** Defense minister wants new procedures barring neo-Nazi and racist recruits. New legislation would allow greater scrutiny of recruits' criminal records. (Such concern not unique to Germany: At Fort Lewis, Wash., soldiers are examined for hate-group tattoos.)

5

### FRANCE

**New priorities:** New Socialist government plans defense-budget cuts of 10% despite warnings by defense minister of decreased military and military-industrial effectiveness. Paris to reduce troop strength in Africa, now around 8,500, to 5,000 within 3 years. Two bases in Central African Republic will be closed (although capital's airport to remain staffed), while bases in Chad, Djibouti, Gabon, Ivory Coast, and Senegal will remain open.

6

### CONGO

**Regional peacekeeping?** Fighting in capital Brazzaville and in north between government troops and rebels (only months after French troops evacuated foreigners) sparks plan for intervention. President Kabila of Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire) offers mediation, proposes peacekeeping force of troops from DRC, Angola (itself drifting back to civil war), Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Rwanda, and Uganda. Presidents of Uganda and Rwanda reportedly agree.

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### PAKISTAN

Major artillery duels and almost daily small-arms clashes with Indian army along disputed boundaries of northern state of Jammu and Kashmir threaten ongoing peace talks and raise specter of another war.

9

17

### ARGENTINA

Federal police create special unit to investigate acts of possibly international terrorism, such as 1994's bombing of Jewish cultural center (in which 85 died) and 1992 attack on Israeli embassy. Neither crime has been solved, prompting criticism of government by local Jewish leaders.

15

### HAITI

**Same as the old boss ...** Despite the U.N.'s protracted (and U.S.-led) peacekeeping effort, the new government and police here appear to be about as brutal and corrupt as their predecessors, observers report.

16

### COLOMBIA

**Complicated situation:** United Nations warns that peasant self-defense groups, formed against left-wing guerrillas (who increasingly are involved in drug trafficking), might have links to right-wing death squads. • State-owned oil company cannot meet export contracts this year because of continual sabotage of its 480-mile main pipeline by *ELN* and *FARC* guerrillas. Army reportedly needs another 20,000 troops to protect oil infrastructure.

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.

# I Was There

by Jeff Nelson



courtesy Jeff Nelson



# EJECT!

I rolled out of my bunk at 1000 with a headache from last night's party. We had toasted a pilot who was rotating back to the "world," having made it through one year — and 200 missions.

He would leave behind Marine Air Group 13 and the whirling sands of Chu Lai, South Vietnam. That'll be me in two months, I thought, lighting a cigarette, if I can maintain my plan of one takeoff and one landing for each mission! My backseat radar operator, Johnnie "Cool" liked to say of me, "'the Goose' will keep you loose." Yeah, hopefully not *that* loose.

My mission, Lovebug 026, was scheduled for a 1200 take off.

No sweat, I'll pick up "Cool" and a sandwich on the way out. The "Bear," a huge, hirsute Marine, would be on my wing today. The situation sometimes got hairy. That's why I brought him along.

We went through briefing and walked to the hangar to suit up: G-suit, torso harness and survival vest. I could do it in my sleep. Some days I did. Picking up helmets, oxygen masks and knee boards, we headed out to the aircraft. The Phantom was *suiting* up, too, with wing tanks, missiles and twelve 500-pound bombs. Somebody was going to have a real nasty day.

We strapped in and cranked up. "Cool" made the call to taxi and we tooted out of the revetments to rendezvous with "Bear" at the runway. We went down our takeoff checklists quickly, but carefully. "Bear" shot me a thumbs up and I added power, moving the 25 tons of terror onto the runway centerline.

I held the brakes momentarily and ran the engine to 80% power.

The F-4 shuddered under its own awesome power, straining to get free. Checking the engine gauges, I let it go, up into afterburner. In seconds we were airborne. I lifted the landing gear handle and felt the *thunk* of each wheel lock into place. I pulled the flaps up and we began to haul ass.

Then, the unthinkable: Fire warning lights from both engines lit up big and bright! No wimpy bulb flickers here, and not one but *both* engines. A cold knot tightened my gut as a wave of adrenaline kicked in. I radioed "Cool" with a voice an octave higher than my own, "Johnnie, we've got fire on both sides, no smoke that I can see. I'm going to dump everything in the water and try for runway one-niner!" "Cool" concurred and relayed our intentions to the tower.

I had immediately pulled the throttles out of afterburner, keeping enough power

on to fly but trying not to feed the fire. I hung a 90-degree turn toward the ocean 7 miles away and leveled off at 1,500 feet. Both generators were coming off line, making the F-4 a screaming bitch to fly.

"Bear" arrived on station and reported fire coming from the aircraft's belly. We were in deep shit. I couldn't control and the 18,000 pounds of fuel could blow.

I yelled something to "Cool" I'd hoped I'd never have to say: "You'd better get out, Johnnie!" There was no hesitation, he knew it was time. I watched in my mirror as he reached over his head, yanked down the ejection ring and exploded out of the aircraft. A 350-knot gale crashed into the empty cockpit, shooting stinging sand and debris off the deck into my face and neck. Time to split. I yanked the D-ring and ejected cleanly from the crippled, spastic F-4; the violent explosion beneath my seat and incredible Gs of force ripping me from the cockpit, and blacking me



courtesy Jeff Nelson

Part of "strapping in" is to make certain your ejection seat is armed. (top inset) I make a 90-degree turn toward the ocean to jettison my tanks and bombs.

out, a big-time difference from that piss-ant little "training seat" back at Pensacola.

I came to almost immediately, tumbling in the seat as my parachute, filling with air, jerked me into space. The opening shock slammed my chin against my chest sending a fiery shot of pain down my spine and into my legs.

Very suddenly, there was silence. Unbelievable silence. My senses caught up with me hanging there in my chute, my body and mind peaceful, almost restful, until I spotted my beloved Phantom burning in its death throes far in the distance.

I guessed I was now below a thousand

*Continued on page 71*

# Professional Locksmithing Tools

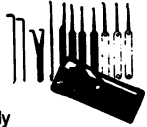
## LOCKAID

Specifically designed to pick tumbler locks. Designed over thirty years ago to aid law enforcement agencies. Consists of tension wrench, three needles and Lockaid "Gun." Prices include a copy of the book "Lockpicking Simplified."  
**Lockaid \$69.95**



## PIX MODEL 13

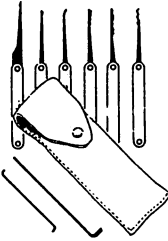
This deluxe yet compact kit features 11 of the most commonly used tools. Comes in a slim cowhide leather case for discreet undercover operatives. As a special bonus, a 5-piece set of warded picks is included. A 16-piece set total. Also included, a copy of "Lockpicking Simplified." Receive all this at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



## PXP 8

- Shirt Pocket Size.
- Top Grain Cowhide Leather.
- Has 8 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.
- All Picks with Metal Handles.
- Copy of Lockpicking Simplified.

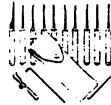
**PXP 8 \$24.95**



## PXP 10

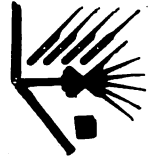
- Shirt Pocket Size.
- Top Grain Cowhide Leather.
- Has 13 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.
- All Picks with Metal Handles.
- Copy of Lockpicking Simplified.

**PXP 10 \$34.95**



## PIX-EZ All-In-One Pick-Set

100% American Made! As convenient to carry and use as a pocket knife! Only 4 inches long, half inch square, weighs under five ounces, works fast and opens pin and waster tumbler locks quickly, with very little effort. Six tempered spring steel picks, tension wrench.  
**\$34.95**



## WKS PICKS

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



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1-WKS PICKS .....	\$ 9.95
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<b>A VALUE OF \$147.75</b>	

**AT A LOW PRICE OF \$89.95**

Lockpicking Simplified	\$8.50
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Involuntary Repression	\$10.95

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Combination Locks	\$8.00
Keys by Impressioning	\$8.00
Key Casting Manual	\$8.95
Locks, Picks, Clicks	\$10.00



## ESP-13

This handy new pick set is the most popular set among professional locksmiths today. This kit consists of 12 different tools housed in a handsome black leather case designed for a shirt pocket. Included in the price, you receive a 5-piece warded key set and a copy of "Lockpicking Simplified." 17-piece set total.  
**ESP-13 \$45.95**



## SESAMEE DECODER

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



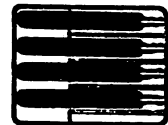
**\$17.95**

## MINI PICK TUBULAR

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



**\$79.95**



## DOUBLE SIDED DISK TUMBLER PICKS

Set of 4 picks designed to be used on the most popular double-sided disc tumbler, showcase, cam and padlocks.

**\$29.95**

## Electric Picks



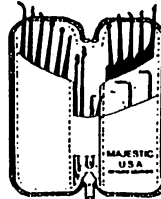
The best single tool for most pin tumbler locks • Opens many locks in seconds  
 High quality aluminum construction • Used by locksmiths worldwide

E100C (3 volt) ..... \$ 99.95

## SCHLAGE WAFER

The most fantastic tool you will ever use. This set consists of two base keys and pick. Complete instructions included.

**\$29.95**

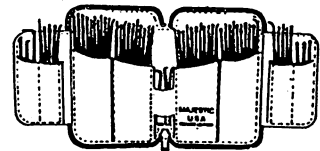
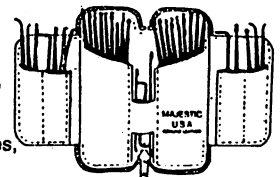


## MD16

Shirt Pocket Size, Top Grain Cowhide Leather, Zippered Case, has 16 Picks, Tension Wrenches and Broken Key Extractor.  
**\$59.95**

## MD32

Hip Pocket Size, Top Grain Cowhide Leather, Zippered Case, has 32 picks, Tension Wrenches, Broken Key Extractor.  
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## MD60

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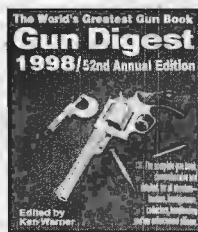
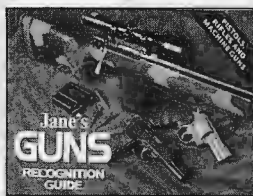
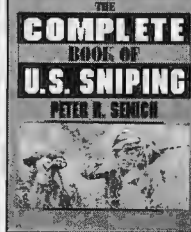
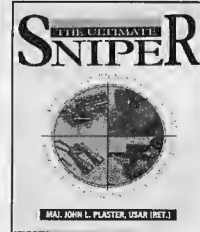

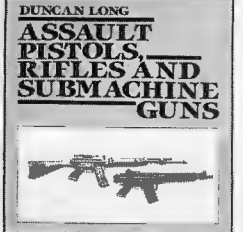
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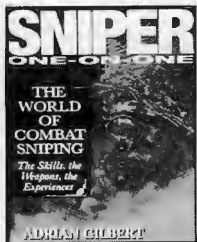
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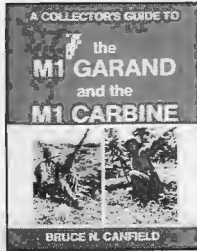
															
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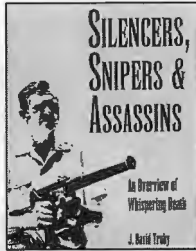
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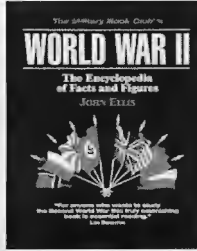
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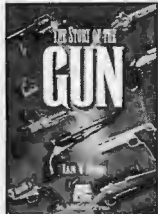
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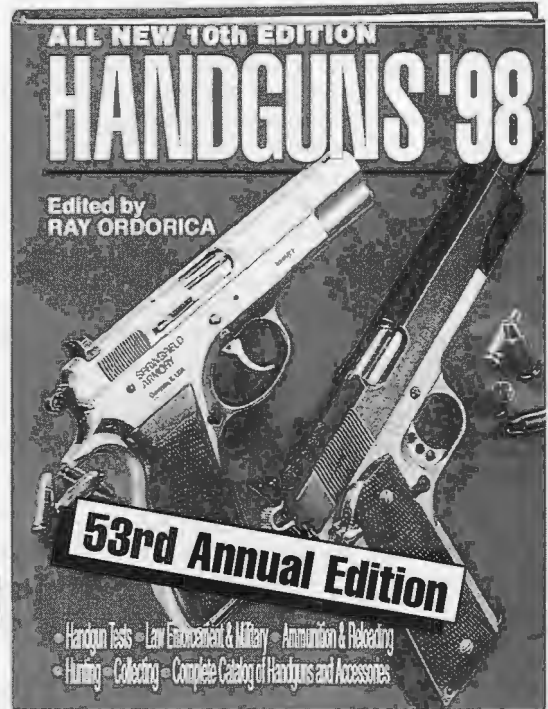


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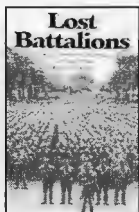
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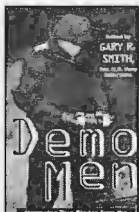
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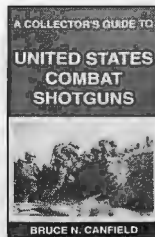
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# SLICK-WILLIE-WATCH

## Surviving This Commander In Chief

The subordination of the U.S. military to elected *civilian* leaders is one of the necessary cornerstones of this country's form of government. You only have to look around at the Third World to see the horror of military-run governments. And as long as the U.S. commander in chief — even somebody like Bill Clinton, who desperately avoided military service during Vietnam — listens to competent advisers who have worn the uniform and maybe even smelled the smoke and seen the bodies, chances are our troops wouldn't get misused. Were that only the case ...

A profoundly disturbing pattern has taken shape in the Clinton administration. *SOF* editors have voiced concerns, as has our *been there, done that* columnist, Col. David H. Hackworth (Ret.). But you don't have to believe us.

"President Clinton's national defense team has fewer veterans on it than any other in modern times, partly because of the appointments Defense Secretary William S. Cohen has made in his first seven months in office," *Army Times* reported this summer. "Clinton, Cohen, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright and Deputy Defense Secretary John J. Hamre did not serve in the military. They will be the prime decision makers in the executive branch on questions ranging from the U.S. military role in Bosnia to [military] pay raises. ... Not since Congress established the [DoD] in 1947 has its hierarchy been so bereft of people with active-duty mil-

itary service." The analysis also noted that the majority of the members of Congress have *not* served in the military, either.

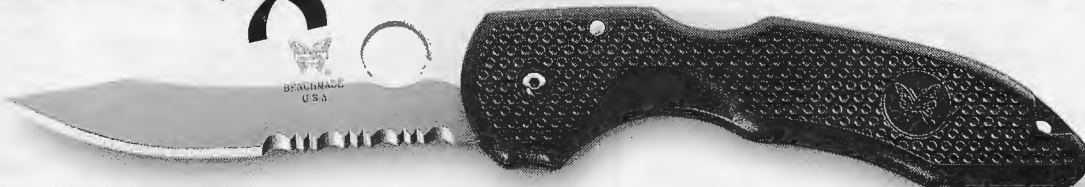
Clearly, the generation of major political leaders who *came of age* during WWII or Korea is passing on. Now it's the Vietnam generation's turn to lead. It's ironic, all things considered, that the point man for this political generation would be Slick Willie Clinton.

By now, his policy in Bosnia — which many Americans couldn't care less about (after all, the economy is good!) — has become another exercise in foreign-policy *damage control*.

It's not that *SOF* doesn't support the nearly 11,000 Bosnia-deployed U.S. *troops*: the zoomies, admin pukers, grunts, treadheads, MASHers, cunning linguists, motor-pool grease monkeys, even the REMFs. It does. *SOF* staffers have ventured into disputed places like Sarajevo, Pale, and Brcko to get the facts firsthand. A couple of its editors probably would be there right now, M16A2s in hand, had they stayed in the Army. Moreover, *SOF* abandoned journalistic "impartiality" last year by mailing 21,000 paperbacks, donated by the public, to American IFOR units. (Even the most self-righteous of the politically correct "mainstream" journalists — including NBC's Bryant Gumbel, a White House favorite — couldn't badmouth us for *that*.)

The commander in chief, on the other hand, has richly earned our contempt.

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Clinton's naïve do-gooder belief in — or arrogant miscalculation of — a relatively quick *peace in our time* in the Balkans, along with other U.N.-approved nation-saving/building missions, translates into a serious drain on our war-fighting capability. The original date for termination of U.S. involvement in Bosnia was December 1996. The current one, which SecDef Cohen maintains he will honor — but his boss already is waffling on — is June 1998.

Ending centuries of ethnic warfare in the Balkans is a mighty challenge to the post-Cold War (and expanding) NATO, which still is led by the United States. Bosnia, however, has *nothing* to do with U.S. national-security interests. You might think so, judging by its costs. Recent figures place the cost of U.S. participation in the IFOR-turned-SFOR mission so far at \$6 billion — and rising at some \$2 billion a year.

Then there's military morale — something Bill "I Share Your Pain" Clinton couldn't begin to appreciate: Throughout the downsized DoD its overworked troops, ever fewer in number but trying to do more with less, are losing enthusiasm for duty to an extent not seen since right after Vietnam. Many are saying "To hell with it" and getting out.

Maybe, the next time around, a "Vietnam generation" commander in chief will honestly give a damn about the men and women in uniform. Could happen. ✕

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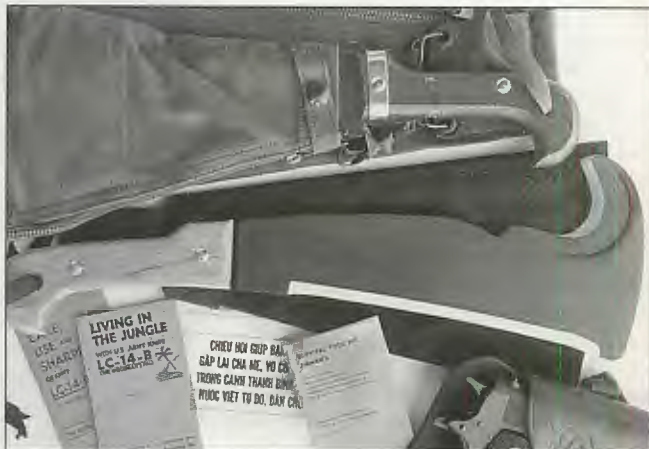
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Looking very much like a combination of a machete and brush hook, the Woodman's Pal was designed by Frederick Ehram, a Swiss national, and originally manufactured by the Victor Tool Co. in Reading, Pennsylvania. Its initial applications were in forestry, agriculture and horticulture. However, the U.S. Army Signal Corps quickly recognized its potential. In its military configuration it was first equipped with a leather handle and steel handguard and I have owned several of that type.

By the time of the Vietnam War, the handguard was deleted and the leather handle replaced with one shaped from a single piece of American hardwood, cemented and riveted to the tang with a steel reinforcing band around the forward end. In that era it was referred to as the "SURVIVAL AX TYPE II MIL-S-8642C." I have a specimen from that time frame that is part of an airman's survival tool kit in a two-compartment canvas pouch which also includes a



sharpening stone, burning lens, and survival saw kit with grip, wood-saw blade, hack-saw blade and scraper. It remains a permanent part of the survival gear on my 1957 Utica Bend 2 1/2-ton 6X6 military truck.

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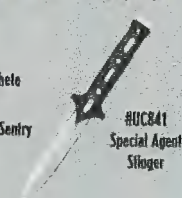
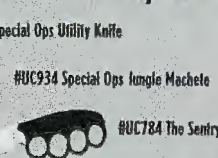
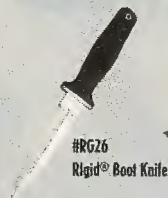
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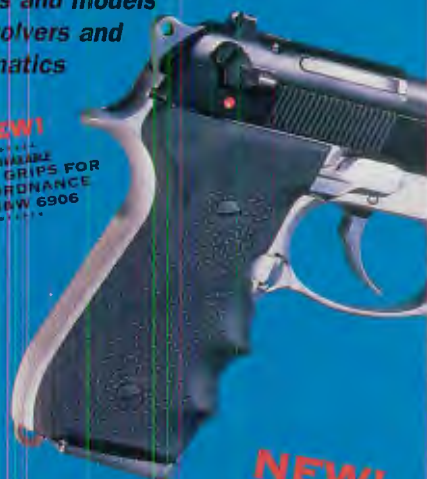
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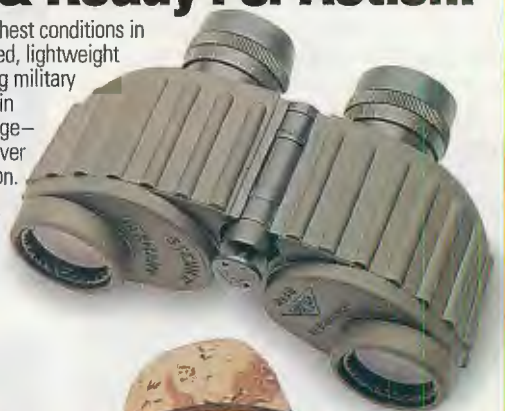
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The U.S. Seals have just completed a (uh, this is kind of classified, please don't tell any of your Russian friends) a Secret Site in Southern California (sounds like a song, doesn't it?) known as Seal City.

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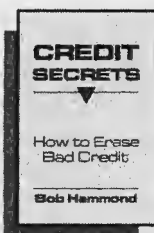
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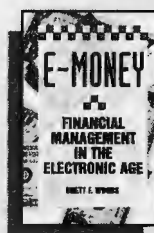
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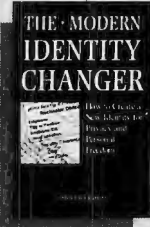
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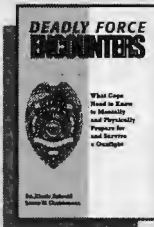
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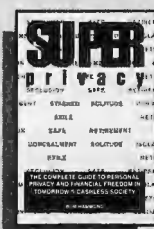
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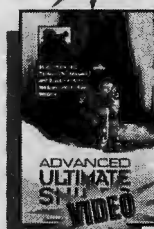
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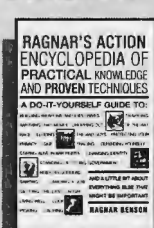
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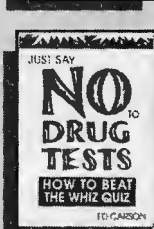
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**T**he two-paragraph letter to FBI Director Louis J. Freeh got right to the point: It expressed grave concerns about "counterintelligence and espionage matters" at the secretive Army Research Laboratory (ARL) at Aberdeen Proving Grounds in Maryland.

Dated 26 December 1995, the letter was written by Kurt D. Fickie, once a highly touted computer prodigy who oversaw the Army's state-of-the-art supercomputers in

ARL's Simulation Technology Division. Enclosed with his letter to Freeh was a copy of a letter Fickie had sent a week earlier to Lieutenant General Jared L. Bates, the Army's Inspector General.

By that time, Fickie, a GS-14 civilian researcher, had spent four months going methodically up the chain of command with allegations that high-level Army civilian scientists had passed restricted U.S. military

technology to Iraq and China. As a result, two investigations had been initiated — *both of them targeting Fickie, and three civilian colleagues who supported his claims.*

Until then, Fickie, who had worked at ARL for 12 years — five as an Army officer and seven as a civil servant — had been the laboratory's golden boy of supercomputing, the scientist who routinely demonstrated the Army's \$25 million Cray II when VIPs came to see what was then the world's fastest and most complex data processor, capable of processing billions of bytes of data per second.

Suddenly, when he became a whistle blower, he and his staff were labeled security risks. On 24 August 1995, soon after Fickie's command at Aberdeen learned that he had contacted federal law-enforcement agencies with his allegations, his security clearance was revoked and he was locked out of his own office. Its contents, including a personal library, records, photographs and other documents he says would substantiate his allegations, were confiscated. His three colleagues were also locked out of their offices, their security clearances lifted, too. Fickie was fired on 26 July 1996.

The allegation by Fickie involves two long-time civilian scientists who worked for the Department of the Army. While these allegations are a source of grave concern for Fickie and many others, it remains unknown if the acts alleged were part of a covert policy to aid Iraq or if they were undertaken for personal illegal profit.

Fickie told Freeh he was writing directly to the head of the FBI, the nation's lead agency for counterintelligence, because "I suspect the Army finds the matter very embarrassing, given the nature of the allegations. The inspector general seems more concerned about protecting the Army's reputation, instead of cooperating with the appropriate federal agencies.

"The CIA," Fickie cautioned Freeh, "went through the same machinations in the [Aldrich H.] Ames case, which resulted in damaging delays."

Ames was a high-ranking CIA case officer whose betrayal cost the lives of at least 10 double-agents. Despite longstanding suspicions that Ames, a heavy drinker who led a conspicuously lavish lifestyle, might be a traitor, the CIA failed to act until forced to do so by the FBI. Ames is *now* serving life in prison.

### **Fratricide In The Gulf**

Like the Ames case, deaths may have resulted from the alleged security breach at Aberdeen. Unlike the Ames case, though, these weren't the deaths of foreign nationals friendly to the U.S. — these were the deaths of troops from America's heartland.

Perhaps the most startling allegation by Fickie is that ARL's supercomputers at Aberdeen were used in the two years leading up to the Gulf War, when Saddam Hussein was a favored individual of the United States, to extend the range of liquid-

# The by James L. Pate MOTHER Of All Cover-Ups?

## **Saddam's Aberdeen Connection**

Iraqi Scud-B missile that tore through U.S. Army barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, in February 1991, killed dozens and caused the Army more than a third of all casualties and deaths from hostile action during the Gulf War. (inset) In the aftermath, a light colonel tries to get on his LBE and console a distraught trooper. How distraught would they be if they thought the Scud's range had been enhanced through work done at the Army Research Labs at Aberdeen?



AP/Wide World



fueled Scud missiles in Iraq in 1988-90. In essence, Fickie says two Aberdeen scientists provided hard-to-get data to Saddam Hussein's government to enhance the range of missiles that were later used against our own troops and those of our allies.

Although the military trade press, most notably *Jane's Defence Weekly*, had reported that Iraq was trying to extend the range of its liquid-fueled Scud-B missiles during the 1988-90 time frame, many experts were skeptical. That skepticism vanished in smoke and rubble when Iraq's Scuds, designed to fly less than 200 miles, began hitting targets more than *three* times that far.

Of the 93 Scuds launched by Iraq in the Gulf War, the most deadly, by far, was the one which hit a U.S. Army barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on 28 February 1991. It landed in a rear-echelon area that had been believed to be relatively safe. Almost 100 U.S. soldiers were wounded, and 28 were killed.

That single missile resulted in a fourth of all U.S. military deaths from enemy action in the Gulf War, and a fourth of all U.S. troops wounded by hostile fire. It caused more than a third of all the U.S. Army's wounded, and 36 percent of all U.S. Army deaths, from enemy action.

"It surprised everyone, including the analysts that supposedly keep track of these things," said Fickie, a former Army officer. "I know for a fact that calculations performed on the supercomputers ... at Aberdeen were being used to increase the accuracy and the range of the Iraqi Scud missiles, and their heavy artillery. The data was developed on the Cray supercomputers and then was either leaked or sold to agents representing Saddam Hussein."

In the same letter to Bates in December 1995, Fickie also named two scientists "from Communist China [who] are still operating without interference at ARL facilities ... I fear the nuclear [blast] code called 'CTH' has already been smuggled to China ..."

Author



Former Army computer whiz Kurt D. Fickie was sacked after he blew the whistle on suspected irregularities involving the Army's Cray 2 supercomputer at ARL.

"We are the third group of Army researchers to report the ARL-China connection," Fickie wrote to Bates. "Franz Lynn attempted to get the word out in 1985, but the Army used the same 'security investigation' in reverse to isolate the messenger. Robert Deas, the world's premier interior ballistics at the time, took a second run with the Inspector General's office in 1987, to no avail. I never took their stories too seriously at the time. Now, I strongly recommend reviewing those files."

Lynn and Deas were closely associated in their research into interior ballistics at Aberdeen, and were also close friends. Lynn was found dead in his apartment near Aberdeen in 1986. Investigators later ruled it a suicide. Deas died in a one-car accident while returning alone from a trip to Canada in 1988.

The ARL command, through its civilian

public affairs staffer, Randi J. Vachon, has strenuously denied all of Fickie's allegations, labeling him a "disgruntled former employee" out for revenge. His claims have been "thoroughly investigated," Vachon said, and are "completely unfounded."

The FBI hasn't reached that conclusion. Special Agent Larry Foust, an FBI spokesman in Baltimore, told *Soldier Of Fortune* in mid-October that Fickie's allegations are "still a pending case."

But questions remain about the vigor of the FBI's probe. A key document identified by Fickie as crucial to verifying his allegation concerning technical aid to Iraq — the supercomputer logs — has not been requested by the FBI, according to an ARL employee who is custodian of that record.

The employee, Denise Brown, said that logs for only one of eight financial quarters in 1988-89 remain. (These are the same group of computers from which selected entries from the Gulf War chemical incident logs were mysteriously deleted.) Although ARL apparently documents computer user time to the ten-thousandth of a second, Brown said the lab command does not keep user logs after a couple of years.

And neither of two high-ranking civilians at Aberdeen named by Fickie as alleged culprits has been contacted by the FBI, they told *SOF*. Both declined to be interviewed on the record. One said Fickie's allegations are "baseless."

A confidential informant with the FBI's investigation said one of the two is quietly cooperating with investigators, but *SOF* has been unable to verify that.

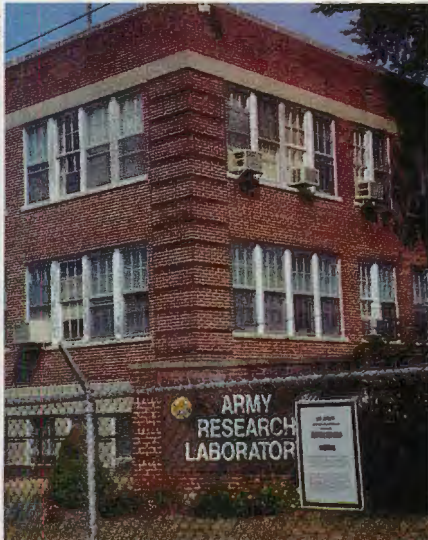
Fickie's charge, which also has come to the attention of the House Intelligence Committee, comes at an especially inopportune time for the U.S. government. The State Department, which is encouraging such nations as North Korea to join in a treaty to restrict the flow of missile technol-

Author



Fickie noted thousands of unusual computer hours logged on this \$25 million Cray 2 supercomputer at the Army Research Lab (at right). The type of calculations in question were compatible with ballistic studies for liquid-fuel rockets carrying liquid payloads.

Author





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ogy, might find its bargaining position untenable if it were proven that U.S. military scientists had helped a rogue dictator such as Saddam Hussein enhance his missile arsenal.

While Fickie said he is certain that ARL's supercomputers were used to do just that, he said he has no way of knowing if such technical assistance was part of what is now a well-documented covert ethic of the 1980s, when the U.S. government publicly supported a military arms embargo against Saddam Hussein — and secretly provided him military assistance for his war with Iran.

### My Enemy's Enemy

"The official policy of the government of the United States, from the White House down, was to avoid the transfer of any goods that could bolster Saddam's war machine," author Alan Friedman wrote in *Spider's Web: The Secret History of How the White House Illegally Armed Iraq*.

"The reality was decidedly different," motivated by what Friedman described as "the politics of oil ... Even as [former President George] Bush basked in the glory of leading Operation Desert Storm, he was presiding over a systematic cover-up in order to avoid being embarrassed politically."

In an interview with ABC's *Nightline*, Steven Bryen, a former deputy undersecretary of defense conceded that "the administration's policy was to support Saddam Hussein and not to look backwards, not to look sideways, look straight ahead and give him what he wanted. We coddled him, we supported him. He was our guy. Just because he was building missiles, or just because he had a nuclear potential — the CIA warned us about that — it didn't matter. They simply didn't care."

U.S. military assistance included Army Special Forces training teams from Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Uncle Sam even provided a high-tech downlink near Baghdad for receiving U.S. satellite imagery, and intelligence officers to interpret the photographs. It included the covert shipment of arms, ammunition, cluster bomb technology, spare parts, aircraft, defense electronics, high-tech computer work stations — and, says Fickie, supercomputer calculations.

"Without a fair, impartial, thorough and unflinching investigation, there's no way to tell if the supercomputer data generated at ARL for Saddam was one part of an overall covert policy," Fickie said, "or if it was done on a freelance basis, using that covert policy as a cover for personal profit."

Fickie said he had a growing awareness of "something odd" in 1988-90, when it became increasingly difficult to get supercomputer time on ARL's Cray II. Two high-ranking scientists were racking up "thousands upon thousands of Cray II computing hours," Fickie said.

### Holidays Are For Computing

"You don't usually see somebody of that rank running codes themselves," he said. "I

AP/Wide World



Canadian-born, but a U.S. Citizen by an act of congress, Gerald Bull was at the time of his death acknowledged as probably the world's leading authority on high-altitude, long-range artillery. He was found assassinated in his Brussels apartment complex with \$20,000 in cash in his pocket. Bull was developing this large bore Supergun at Jabal Hamryn, Iraq when the Gulf War broke out. (below)

Henry Arvidsson UNSCOM, courtesy Al J. Venter



was also a heavy user at that time. ... They have subordinates they usually turn to."

Another thing caught his eye — the priority status used which enabled two ARL employees to, in effect, jump to the front of the line of people seeking time on the supercomputers. But the high-priority access costs more money — about \$2,000 an hour for each of four central processing units, or CPUs.

Most unusual, though, was the type of calculations being run, Fickie said.

"They were stability calculations of liquid-filled missiles," Fickie said, "that would have liquid-filled payloads. You end up changing the entire flight characteristics of the missile itself ... When you have something that is filled with a liquid and it's spinning, it flies differently than if it were solid and it were spinning ...

"They were computing so finely, they were almost building a set of ballistic tables for liquid-filled projectiles under all these different conditions. That would be the kind of thing you would need if you wanted to target a new missile," he said.

"Those type of calculations, on liquid,

spinning, coning projectiles, are extremely unusual for the U.S.," said Fickie, because such liquid payloads in a missile would usually indicate a chemical or biological warhead, which the U.S. had already started phasing out at the time. Nor did the U.S. military have any liquid-fueled missiles in its arsenal.

But Saddam Hussein did — the relatively short-range Scud.

"It's actually very difficult to extend the range," Fickie said. "They needed access to super-computing assets. During the time in question, ARL was one of the few facilities in the world capable of computing the ballistic trajectories of Scud missiles" with liquid payloads.

Fickie said he downloaded a copy of the user logs for the supercomputers, a document which shows who is using the Cray, and for how long — logs which were later confiscated when he was locked out of his office.

In a background briefing at the Army Research Laboratory Command in Adelphi, Maryland, ARL staff said no hours were logged in the 1988-89 timeframe by one of the scientists named by Fickie, ARL spokesman Vachon said. The other scientist had "less than six hours" of Cray time, Vachon said at first, but at the background briefing she acknowledged "more than 300 hours." That figure, of course, represents only three out of 24 months.

According to Fickie, the two logged thousands of hours and the tempo increased toward the end of 1989, when Fickie said he saw them logging time through weekends and the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. He said the calculations in question stopped abruptly in late March 1990, five months before Iraq invaded Kuwait — 11 months before Operation Desert Storm.

### Dr. Gerald V. Bull

On 22 March 1990, Dr. Gerald V. Bull, a Canadian scientist who was widely recognized as one of the geniuses of 20th century aeroballistics, was assassinated outside his apartment door in Brussels, Belgium. Topping the list of the prospective killers of Bull, who was found with more than \$20,000 in his pocket, are Israel's Mossad and Iraq's secret police. The murder was never solved.

*Jane's Defence Weekly* would report a few months later that Bull, who also held U.S. citizenship, "was involved in the Iraqi program to upgrade ballistic missiles."

In 1952, at age 22, Bull became the youngest Canadian ever awarded a doctorate degree. He is probably best known for his High Altitude Research Program, or HARP, which experimented with using specially adapted 16-inch gun tubes to launch projectiles into the upper atmosphere. Bull's goal was to use such "superguns," as he called them, to launch satellites into space.

Bull's ties to U.S. Army scientists date to 1956, when Bull attended a ballistics conference at Picatinny Arsenal in New Jersey. The meeting began Bull's longstanding

# Well, FOIA You Too, Charlie

It was almost quitting time at the end of a work week. Knowing there was virtually no way to verify "facts" or reach anyone by phone, the Army's diligent spin doctors were still hard at work, "leaking" a "scoop" to an Associated Press reporter covering the Pentagon.

"The FBI has found no evidence to substantiate charges of espionage leveled by a former employee of a computer lab at the Aberdeen Proving Ground, senior defense officials said Friday," stated the lead paragraph on an AP wire story that moved at 1800 hours on 25 July.

Referencing in the second paragraph "a series of charges ... including that missile performance data were sold to Iraq," the story stated in the third paragraph that "The FBI has sent the Army a letter saying its preliminary investigation has found no substance to the charges."

"They said what?" an FBI spokesman said, laughing when a reporter read him the dispatch. "All I can tell you is that this is an active investigation, so we can offer no further comment."

The next week, *Soldier Of Fortune* filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) letter requesting, among other things, the FBI's letter to the Army. The Army has been unable to produce such a letter.

The AP story, citing the same unnamed "senior ... officials," said that "Army counter-intelligence and criminal investigators also examined the charges and found no substance to allegations of espionage or illegal technology transfer."

Fine. If such investigations are closed, the findings should be released under FOIA.

"... We wish to inform you that we have conducted ... a search of the U.S. Army Investigative Records Repository to determine the existence of Army intelligence investigative records responsive to your request," came the polite reply from the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command in Fort Meade, Maryland. "We have been unable to locate any records identifiable with your request."

Now, if you don't believe that the Army would lie to a reporter, how about to a United States senator?

"This responds to your correspondence of October 30, 1996, on behalf of Mr. Kurt D. Fickie concerning the allegations of ... the transfer of sensitive military technology to foreign agents ..." said a letter, dated three weeks later, to U.S. Sen. John McCain of Arizona.

"The allegation Mr. [Aberdeen scientist named by Fickie] improperly transferred weapons technology information to foreign agents was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation," said the letter to McCain, signed by Colonel Osborne K. Walls Jr., chief of the investigations division for the Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG). "The [FBI] investigation established that the offense ... did not occur ..."

Interesting. FBI Special Agent Larry Foust, a spokesman for the FBI's Baltimore office, who also debunked the claim by "senior defense officials" in the AP story, told *SOF* in mid-October that the FBI's investigation into Fickie's allegations about the transfer of restricted U.S. military technology to Iraq and China, did not begin until "about a year ago," or about the time when Colonel Walls told Senator McCain that the FBI had finished its probe.

"I assure you that this case has the highest priority," Colonel Walls concluded his letter to McCain.

Foust's admission is interesting in itself. That means the FBI did not begin looking into Fickie's allegations until at least 10 months after Fickie wrote FBI Director Louis Freeh.

Finally, just so you don't think the Army would deliberately deal in bad faith, or is perhaps incapable of making fair and impartial decisions concerning media requests for information, consider the many duties of an overworked civilian Army attorney, Sam W. Shelton III. He is the cagey barrister assigned to defend the Army Research Lab against Fickie's administrative-law claim that his ARL bosses abused their authority in concocting false accusations against him in revenge for his blowing the whistle on apparent wrongdoing.

In July, Shelton filed a request for a gag order to prevent Fickie from "... discussing with the press ..." his case against the Army. Shelton specifically referenced "*Soldier Of Fortune* magazine, the [ABC] television program *20/20*," and/or a freelance reporter associated with" both organizations.

On 25 August, almost a month after *SOF* filed its FOIA, the U.S. Army Research Laboratory sent a nice letter to this reporter, informing him that his request had been duly received and an action officer assigned to locate requested documents.

"The action officer working on your request is Mr. Sam Shelton," the letter said. "Any questions regarding your request may be referred to the action officer at (301) 394-1635."

Now, I'm not a lawyer, but either this is a conflict of interest or the most subtle "buzz off" letter I've ever received. Clearly a legal opinion is in order. Maybe we should call Mr. Shelton and ask him.

— J.L.P.

relationship with the U.S. Army — and led to many Pentagon research contracts through the 1960s and 1970s.

One of Bull's benefactors and closest friends was the late Lieutenant General Arthur Trudeau. When Bull met him in the early 1960s, Trudeau was the head of the Army's research and development branch. In 1984, when Bull's son, Michel, incorporated his Space Research Corporation of Maryland, which was located near Aberdeen, Trudeau witnessed the articles of incorporation.

Over three decades, Bull became a familiar and highly respected figure at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, where he regularly visited and sometimes lectured. Congress even passed a private bill bestowing U.S. citizenship upon Bull, a rare act afforded to only a small handful of people in history, such as the Marquis de Lafayette and Sir Winston Churchill.

But as his contracts diminished, Bull grew disenchanted with the Pentagon. His continued research with long-range artillery — and his need for funding — got him in legal trouble. He was sent to federal prison for six months in 1980, after he and an employee pleaded guilty to a violation of the U.S. International Trafficking in Arms Regulation (ITAR). Bull's company, Space Research Corporation, developed an artillery system for the Republic of South Africa, then the object of an arms embargo, that is still in use today.

An Aberdeen scientist identified by Fickie to the FBI and the Army IG was involved with the South Africa case, said retired U.S. Customs Agent Larry Curtis, who headed the investigation that sent Bull to prison.

In an interview in August at his home in Derby Line, Vermont, where Curtis was struggling with lung cancer, he confirmed the name of the Army scientist as one who was involved in the South Africa case. Curtis said the man assisted Bull in getting shipments of artillery parts and ordnance from Vermont to Florida, and aboard U.S. military vessels bound for Bull's facility on the Caribbean island of Antigua, where they were loaded on commercial ships bound for South Africa.

## White House Intervention

Curtis said a last-minute "inside deal" was struck in which Bull and one of his employees pleaded guilty to a reduced count. "I was never consulted, I just got a call one night and was told to be in court the next morning," when Bull and his employee pleaded guilty.

"I asked 'why?'" Curtis related, saying he talked to then-U.S. Attorney Bill Gray, who died two years ago of leukemia. "I asked about the other suspects. He told me we'd worry about them later. Then, later, he told me there had been a call from the White House, that this deal had been sent down from the Justice Department — He seemed as surprised about it as I was. I raised the issue of political interference, that this sounded like political interference in a crim-



Former customs agent Larry Curtis headed the investigation that sent Gerald Bull to jail for violating the U.S. International Trafficking in Arms Regulation when he designed artillery for then-embargoed South Africa. At the time, Curtis was also investigating the Army scientist accused by Fickie — but a prosecutorial deal was cut on orders from the White House.

inal matter. He said that was probably true.”

(A move began soon after to close Curtis' U.S. Customs office in Derby Line, and then headquarters began an effort to terminate his job. Were it not for the direct intervention of Gray, who had since moved out to a Justice Department job in Washington, Curtis said he would have been fired prior to retirement.)

Out of prison in 1981, Bull bitterly denounced the U.S., saying he had been betrayed by the CIA, who engineered his deal with South Africa. He vowed never to return. However, Bull did return on a few occasions. Although now a convicted arms dealer, he had the distinction of being invited to lecture at Aberdeen's ARL, and at the Defense Armament Research and Projects Agency (DARPA), despite his status as a convicted felon, as confirmed by several senior scientists at Aberdeen's ARL.

While in prison, Bull was contacted through an intermediary — some say it was one of his many contacts at Aberdeen — by the People's Republic of China, which invited him to lecture and eventually awarded him a contract for a new artillery system. He was also invited to visit Iraq, which turned out for Bull to be a road of no return.

### Gerald, Saddam, And Sarkis

Between 1982 and 1986, Saddam Hussein spent \$31.7 billion building up his military, making Iraq the world's biggest arms importer of the decade, according to the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in Washington, D.C. And Hussein's number-one weapons broker in this time frame was a Turkish-born Lebanese citizen named Sarkis G. Soghanalian.

In an interview with *SOF* in his Paris penthouse in July, Soghanalian said he is “more or less retired.” During the 1980s, though, he was one of the world's biggest

arms merchants, with billions in annual sales, and his main client was Saddam Hussein.

As a result of his arms dealing with Iraq, Soghanalian spent two years as a “guest” of Uncle Sam, he acknowledged, when he was a “neighbor” of former Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega. But Soghanalian's federal prison record was later expunged.

Soghanalian said he first met Bull in 1964, at Bull's sprawling estate straddling the international border of Vermont and Quebec. In 1981, soon after Bull's release from federal prison in Pennsylvania, Bull came to see him in Rome. Soghanalian said he hired Bull as a consultant, and in 1982, Bull made his first trip to Baghdad, where he engineered the upgrade of Iraq's 130mm Warsaw Pact artillery system to Bull's longer-range 155mm system.

Bull's expenditure of money eventually became a problem, Soghanalian said. Among other items, Bull wanted money to buy computers, but the type of equipment he wanted was too expensive, Soghanalian said. Bull “started to come up with some [computer] numbers and I said, ‘Where did you get this?’ He said, ‘I have a connection in Aberdeen.’ He had somebody there.”

Later, Bull brought an eventual total of six engineers from the U.S. and Canada, Soghanalian said. But trouble started between Bull and Soghanalian when the subject came up of extending the range of Iraq's SCUD missiles.

“I had an argument because of him with the Iraqis,” the arms dealer said. “He presented the possibility of increasing the range of the SCUDs. He said if the missiles had a longer range, it would be better than the artillery. And, of course, the Iraqis were interested.”

### Silicon Valley to Baghdad

Iraq's military “start[ed] to buy everything that Jerry Bull would put in their brain,” Soghanalian said. “The whole idea, I think, was to have a connection between Iraq and Aberdeen.”

Among the many purchases made by Iraq were two Silicon Graphics 380 high-speed work stations. Silicon Graphics was a new supercomputer company then, but was already carving out its niche, second only to the Cray company. It was so new, in fact, that only a few Silicon Graphics high-speed mainframes existed. One of the first production models delivered went to the Army Research Lab at Aberdeen.

The sale of the two SG-380s to Iraq was opposed at the time by the Pentagon, but the military was overruled by the White House after intercession by the U.S. Commerce Department. The two work stations were located during Gulf War mop-up operations and “were carted off by U.S. intelligence,” a Pentagon source told *SOF*.

Shown photographs of two civilian scientists at Aberdeen whom Fickie says provided Bull with supercomputer power, Soghanalian immediately identified one by name — the same one named by retired



During the 1980s, Iraq spent more than \$30 billion on arms, much of it through Sarkis Soghanalian. As a result, Soghanalian spent two years as neighbor of Manuel Noriega — but his record was later expunged. Interviewed in Paris, he corroborated identity of ARL scientists — accused by Fickie and Curtis — as having been together in Geneva and Baghdad.

U.S. Customs Agent Curtis as being allegedly mixed up in Bull's illegal South Africa deal.

“I saw him in Geneva with Jerry Bull,” said Soghanalian. “They were [at] lunch the first time I saw them. Then I saw him again. He stayed two or three days in Geneva ...”

Soghanalian said that a few days later the same U.S. Army scientist flew with Bull to Baghdad aboard Soghanalian's private jet. Although Bull worked for Saddam Hussein up until the time of his death, Soghanalian quit working for the Iraqi government in 1989.

“Jerry Bull told me he was one of the best guys ... for evaluating and testing weapons. I said to Jerry, ‘You're involving too many people. This is supposed to be a secret operation.’ He said, ‘No, I trust him fully. He is a great help to me.’”

Soghanalian said he has not been interviewed by the FBI or any other federal investigator about the computer links between Iraq and Aberdeen Research Laboratory — which raises questions about just how hard Louis Freeh's agents are working on the case. The G-man's standard “no comment” is presumably designed to prevent untimely revelations on cases that are active, but the Second Coming is also “pending.”

And, unfortunately in this case, “no comment” just as easily conceals a curiously moribund disinterest.

Next month: The China connection.

*SOF's National Affairs Editor James L. Pate has spent the past year investigating chronic management and security problems behind the fence of the Army Research Laboratory at Aberdeen Proving Ground. This past summer he worked as co-producer for the ABC news magazine 20/20, which aired a story in September on ARL's alleged computer links to Iraq.* ✕

# First SEAL

## SOF Interviews Roy Boehm

PHOTOS COURTESY ROY BOEHM

U.S. Navy Lieutenant Commander Roy Henry Boehm (Ret.), the legendary founder of the SEALs, was interviewed a few months before the release of his autobiography, *First SEAL* (co-authored with Charles W. Sasser; published by Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1997; hardback, 308 pages; \$23).

The book chronicles the Long Island, N.Y., native's remarkable career: at age 18, a gut-wrenching dive in 1941 at Pearl Harbor to recover bodies from the USS Arizona, then gunnery duty in the Pacific on an ill-fated destroyer, the USS Duncan; entering Underwater Demolition Team train-

ing in 1954 as an "old man" of 31; creation, in '61, of a naval unconventional-warfare unit — by order of President Kennedy; strategic recon in Cuba during the Missile Crisis; UW training with Special Forces soldiers; a CIA-ordered assassination in '62 in the Dominican Republic; and, jungle and riverine combat in Vietnam.

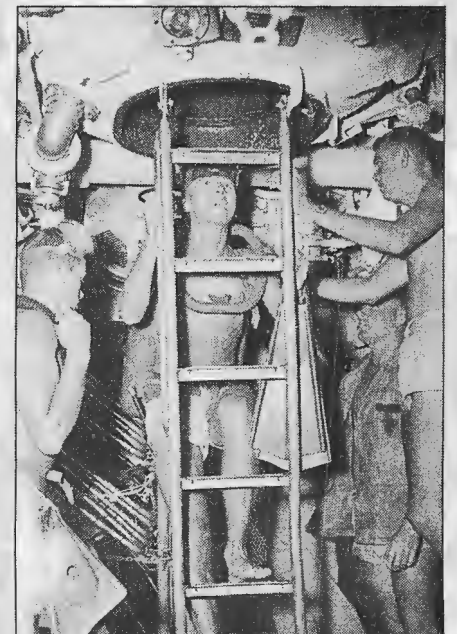
SOF contributor Gary P. Joyce, a Vietnam veteran of the Army LRRPs, interviewed Roy Boehm at the UDT/SEAL Museum's "Muster" in Fort Pierce, Fla.



that if you say "Go" — there's no disputing it, they'll follow you. If they don't have that much faith in you, then they gotta know you're the meanest son-of-a-bitch in the world and they should be more afraid of you than of any mission they're going on. When you got those criteria going on, you got your basic leadership.

This here "turn the other cheek," *political-*

(left) Seaman Roy Boehm began his Navy diving career in a "hard hat." (below) Early-day SEALs prepare for lock-out exercise aboard submarine.



**SOF:** How did the idea for the SEALs evolve?

**R.B.:** I was told by my commanding officer in UDT-21, Bill Hamilton, he wanted me ... I always bitched about the UDT being idle. I said, "This damn Marine Corps won't allow us past the berm line — which we're violating all the time anyway. We have the greatest capabilities in the world." I said, "Turn us loose."

Bill Hamilton — seeing what came down the pike ... he never asked you to do anything, he told you — he says,

"Give me an outfit that'll go anyplace, do anything; I want the roughest, toughest bunch you can imagine." I says, "What kinda guidelines?" He says, "You train 'em and if they don't meet with my approval, you're gonna answer to me." So that was the guidelines ... and so I had to train them for everything. Everything.

Let me tell you about leadership. Leadership comes in one part. The only thing you really need to know is two words: "Follow me." Once you get that, there're two criteria for that "Follow me." The men have gotta have enough faith in you to know

ly correct [military] ... that's all fine — but it don't work. It don't make what is needed: for a man to go in there and get the job done. That's my opinion. In leadership ... it's not the good guys, it's not any of that. It's, "Are you good enough to have the men follow you? Do they respect you enough to do what you say regardless of the consequences?"

My men covered me. Where I failed, they filled in and covered me. All my missions were successful because of my men. Not because of me. They had enough faith to follow. The other thing: They feared me enough to know ... don't wire-brush me — like shitting on a wildcat and not having anything to defend yourself with!

**SOF:** Did all of the original SEALs come from UDT-21?

**R.B.:** Yeah. Into SEAL Team 2. The bad part was ... on the West Coast they had [Underwater Demolition] teams 11, 12 and 13 they could draw from. We just had Team-21. And I could not strip Underwater Demolition Team 21 to satisfy my requirements. Therefore ... I had 75% of the team trained. I got together with the commander of 21, and I was too much sailor to strip 21 — we knew this was from whence we [SEALs] came — and I knew what I'd need in order to support my SEALs. I needed people in sub ops, I needed people to train people coming up to replace the people I was gonna burn out. That's why we only started with 50 originals. But I had to leave 'em where we was until we had a nucleus we could build on. The other problem was that no one knew what we were doing [because of secrecy]. ...

I went into Vietnam just before the SEALs went in there to check out the "junk force." I sent "Lump Lump" in — H.R. Williams, he's dead now. He was my closest operator. Him and [James] Tipton and ... read *Brave Men, Dark Waters* and you'll see some of them in Cuba — but I was tasked with operating immediately.

Then I had Cuba. And then I had the missile crisis. Then I had a problem in the Dominican Republic which was related to Cuba ... and you'll love that. I'm not gonna tell you about that. You'll have to read the book to find out about that. ...

This is the strain that was put on us. The reason I became the bastard that I did is because I wasn't getting the equipment that my men needed to get a "round trip." Don't give me a gun today and tell me to be an expert tomorrow! I needed the gun now so that I could train the people, make them proficient so they'd make a round trip. Then I'd have [sailors'] wives: *What's my husband doing gone all the time?* "Lady, I'm giving your and your kids a husband and a father that'll come back to them. The only way I can do that is with training. So if you don't see him for a year look at it this way: You still got a husband. If I let him stay home and

play hanky-panky you ain't gonna have a husband after the first operation we go on."

My men ... even when I got the equipment ... I'd train 'em in everything, then take it away from them. And I figured when they could do that operation with nothing, then they were ready to do it with everything I gave them. So I was hard on them. I don't think that any of these people that have ever worked for me ... I was tough on them. But I brought them round trip.

The same with the river-patrol boats. I put 8- to 9,000 of those people through [training] in PBRs. I designed them to support the SEALs and downed pilots. To go with their [fiber]glass boats where no one else would go. ... When they come up to me and say "Do you remember me, Roy?" I'd say, "I didn't want to remember you. I was sending you in to throw rocks at guys [while you were] riding a 'glass boat. It was enough to train you and maybe get you a round trip, but I didn't want anything personal." I had enough with my own team, where I knew every single man.

**SOF:** Why did UDT and the SEALs coexist for so long? [UDT wasn't deactivated until 1983.]

**R.B.:** In 1962, when I went into Cuba on

a recon, I said there shouldn't have been any differentiation between UDT and SEALs; we're all trained to do the same thing. There should be no difference. I fought this so hard. When it came time for the Cuba mission I took ... three UDTs and three SEALs. ... I was trying to prove to that bunch of hind ends, those *conventional* suckers, "Hey, there is no difference between the UDT men and the SEALs." And I told my SEALs, "The first one of you to look down on UDT, from whence you came, you're gonna be riding nine knots on one those things that looks like a shoebox."

**SOF:** I don't understand the "shoebox" ...

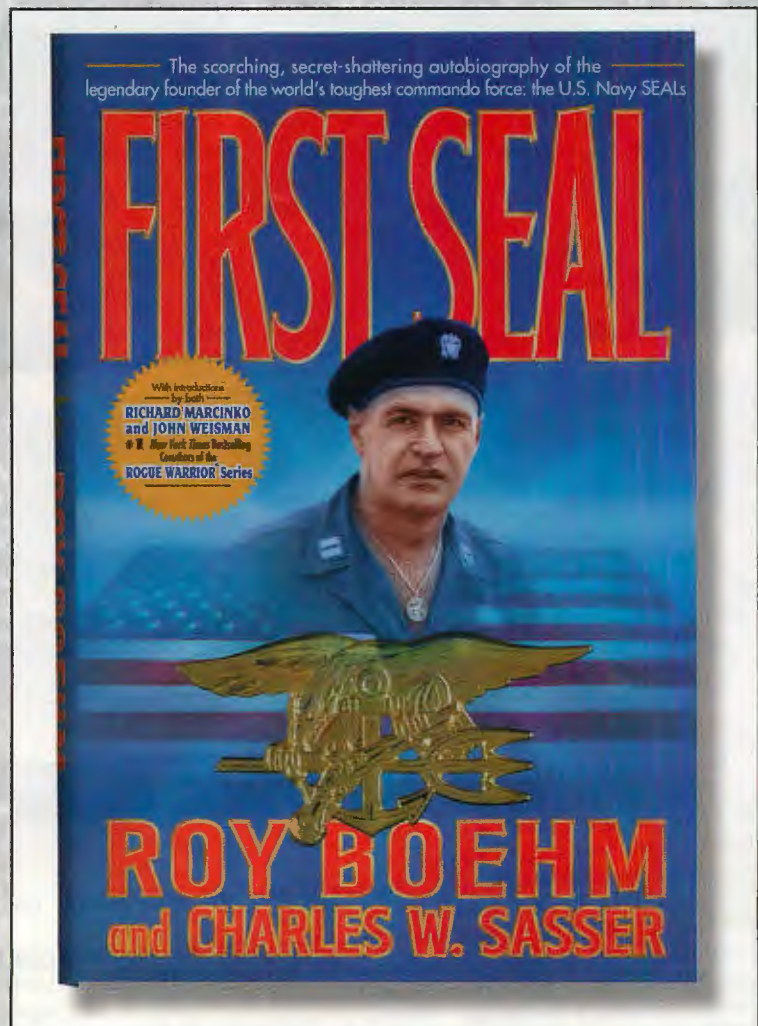
**R.B.:** You Army?

**SOF:** Yeah

**R.B.:** Blanket-head, huh? We'll forgive ya. [On Richard Marcinko, original commander of counter-terrorist SEAL Team 6:]

**R.B.:** When you surpass the master you have paid him his wages. And "Rotten Richard" has surpassed the master. That son-of-a-bitch is beautiful. Say what you want, we never was Jack Armstrong, the all-American boy. That's what they want to do in re-writing history; they want to make us

*Continued on page 72*





# Oklahoma City Update

# PRIOR WARNING

## ATF Shoots Their Messenger

# PART 2

AP/Wide World



After a personal tragedy led former Tulsa, Okla., debutante Carol Howe to contact local racists, abuse by them, in turn, led her to work as a confidential informant for the BATF — at considerable risk and for \$25 a day — on investigations relating to racist and terrorist activities centered around Elohim City. Howe testified she forewarned the feds of proposed attacks on the Murrah Building. After the feds wasted that priceless intelligence and more than a hundred lives were lost, it became necessary to discredit Howe: She was charged with “conspiracy, making bomb threats and possession of explosive materials.” She was, of course, acquitted on all accounts — and the bidding war is on for TV rights to her tragic story. Here, Howe leaves the Tulsa Federal Court Building for a lunch break with her parents during 28 July 1997 trial.

*Until now, senior federal officials, supported by local politicians, have been largely successful in concealing important facts surrounding the OKC bombing. Last month we raised the question of federal law enforcement having prior warning/prior knowledge of threats to the Murrah Building, and strong evidence of a wider conspiracy than Tim McVeigh and Terry Nichols, reporting that the shroud of federal secrecy was severely rent earlier this year during a federal trial in Tulsa of former ATF confidential informant Carol Howe, who was found innocent.*

*We continue the exposé of how Carol Howe was prosecuted on*

*bogus charges to discredit her knowledge and testimony that the feds had been given prior warnings of the impending OKC disaster, how they dropped the ball at the cost of innocent lives, and have engaged in a CYA exercise ever since — at the expense of justice.*

*Howe had even reported to her ATF handler that local racist Dennis Mahon and “Nazi” German visitor Andy Strassmeir had made three trips to case “the federal building in Oklahoma City” as one of three potential targets. If this isn’t “strategic warning,” what is?*

**T**here is new, credible information that Howe gave BATF Agent Angela Finley written information that the “Morrow” [sic] Building in Oklahoma City was a target. The document containing this information is among those suspected of having been removed from Howe’s official ATF file and subsequently destroyed.

There is reportedly an investigation into the circumstances surrounding the disap-

## by Roger G. Charles

pearance of this and other records from Howe’s CI file.

Two days after the bombing, FBI Special Agent James R. Blanchard, II submitted a report of his and Special Agent Finley’s interviews of Carol Howe in

Oklahoma City.

The 22 and 23 February 1995 entries in Finley’s monthly report on CI-183’s (Howe’s) investigation — discussed in detail last month in these pages — confirmed beyond any doubt that the FBI had muscled the ATF out of the investigation of armed radicals at Elohim City, and stopped ATF’s planned arrest of Andy Strassmeir, an illegal alien in possession of firearms. It then becomes obvious why FBI director Louis

Freeh, Attorney General Janet Reno and the Clinton White House were anxious to announce that the OKC bombing had been solved and the perpetrators apprehended. Within 50 hours they had done so, notwithstanding serious gaps and contradictions in the case against McVeigh and Nichols. Most disturbing, however, is their certain knowledge that "others unknown" were centrally involved — and remained at large.

Blanchard's report is worth a detailed examination. But first, we should note some spelling anomalies: Carol Howe is referred to as "Carol;" Robert Millar is referred to as "Bob Lamar;" Dennis Mahon is "Dennis Mehaun;" Andy Strassmeir is "Andy Strasmeyer;" Elohim City is "Elohm City;" the 19 April anniversary for Waco is stated as "April

18th;" and Hitler's birthday of 20 April is listed as "April 19th." With these clever "errors," any key-word search of the automated database containing this record would not register hits on the intentionally distorted versions of these names and dates — and such obfuscation would permit subpoenas to be effectively ignored without being legally disobeyed.

Andreas Strassmeir was listed on this State Department Protective Intelligence Bulletin — after he had left the country — as not to be allowed entry to the United States. Tough luck for any independent grand jury who might want to talk to him.

### Who Called Whom - And When?

The first sentence of Finley's report contains one of two major "facts" strongly disputed by Carol Howe: *On April 20, 1995, this agent [Finley] was contacted by CI-53270-183 [Howe's full CI designator] in regard to the bombing in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.*

Howe claims that Agent Finley contacted her within hours of the bombing and requested a meeting. Is it believable that for hours after the bombing, Finley just sat by the telephone, waiting until the next day for informant Howe to call her ATF case officer?

Even if Finley would have overlooked this obvious lead, someone in the ATF hierarchy would have remembered Howe's reports. In addition to Finley, Finley's supervisors in Tulsa, Dallas and Washington, D.C. (with several layers of desk jockeys leading to the ATF Director, John McGaw), were familiar with the case of their CI who had infiltrated Elohim City. Howe had been the key to the ATF's planned arrest of Strassmeir in late February 1995. That the plan had to be called off after the FBI ordered the ATF

to shut down Howe's activity at Elohim City two months before the bombing would only make CI-183's case all the more memorable to ATF *aparachniks*.

It remains unclear whether Strassmeir was a real neo-Nazi; playing the role of a double agent with his U.S. and German handlers; or was an honest-to-God *pretend-Nazi*, serving both countries at great personal risk and sacrifice; was a trash-talking fantazoid — or was an *agent provocateur*.

### John Doe II: Who Is He, And Who Says So?

The second major point of contention revolves around what Howe communicated about John Doe II. Blanchard's report said, "CAROL has seen an individual named 'TONY' resembling the composite of UNSUB #2. [unknown subject #2, i.e., John Doe II]." And in her ATF report dated 22 May 1995, Agent Finley claimed, "CI-183 stated that he/she believed suspect #2 resembled one of the residents of Elohim City, Tony Ward."

Yet, Howe told two journalists in January of this year, John Cash of the *McCurtain County Gazette*, in Idabel, Oklahoma, and Donald Thrasher, a producer with *ABC News 20/20*, that there's "not a doubt in my mind Brescia is John Doe II." The news that Michael Brescia was John Doe II, coming from a reliable informant with key knowledge of the

Elohim City players, must have been seen as a threat to the hastily constructed explanation that the lead perpetrator was Tim McVeigh, and that he and Terry Nichols were the only active participants in the conspiracy to blow up the Murrah Building.

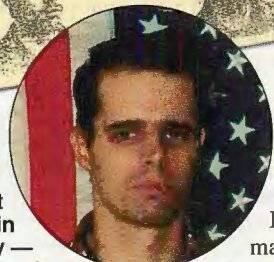
Brescia had roomed with Andy Strassmeir at Elohim City: If Brescia were allowed to be officially designated a subject or a suspect, Strassmeir would also have become a central figure to the investigation — and so would members of the band of bank robbers known as the "Mid-West" bank robbers. This group claimed to be part of the "Aryan Republican Army" and in various combinations has been charged with sticking up some 22 banks. Brescia is currently in federal custody, awaiting sentencing for his participation in at least one of the 22 bank robberies. He was engaged to one of Millar's numerous granddaughters.

The 21 April report noted that "CAROL learned that ... EC's Security Officer is ANDY STRASMEYER [sic], an illegal alien from Germany, who is a former West German Infantry Officer." Blanchard's 21 April report went on to synopsise much of what Carol Howe had told her ATF handler in the period September 1994 - March 1995. The key points were: *STRASMEYER has talked frequently about direct action against*

*the U.S. Government. He is trained in weaponry and has discussed assassinations, bombings and mass shootings. ... STRASMEYER frequently talks about direct action against the U.S. Federal Government. ... CAROL described EC residents as being ultra-militant white separatists. ... There is much required reading at the compound such as Mein Kamph, The Silent Brotherhood and The Turner Diaries. The Turner Diaries is a book which described the idea of driving a delivery truck loaded with explosives into the delivery area of a federal building and detonating it at 9:30 a.m. ... MEHAUN [sic] has talked with CAROL about targeting federal installations for destruction through bombings, such as the IRS Building, the Tulsa Federal Building and the Oklahoma City Federal Building. ... MEHAUN and STRASMEYER has [sic] taken three trips to Oklahoma City in November, 1994, December, 1994, and February, 1995. ... April 18th [sic] is the anniversary of the WACO raid and April 19th [sic] is HITLER's birthday. CAROL said EC residents are very conscious of these dates. ...*

Two days after the bombing, the above report was filed with the OKCBOMB Task Force. Some 26,000 plus reports of investigation were filed (many initiated by estranged relatives and "friends," especially mothers-in-law) on suspect John Doe IIs. These leads were literally pursued all over the world — but Andy Strassmeir, close at hand, was not.

Strassmeir sat at Elohim City until August 1995 and Dennis Mahon, sat in



Richard L. Sherrow



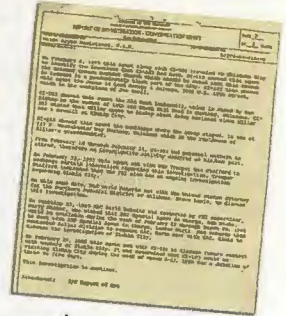
AP/Wide World

Dennis Mahon, Tulsa's favorite white supremacist, talks to media last July, preceding his appearance before the Oklahoma County Grand Jury investigating the OKC bombing. Going in, he expressed sympathy for Glenn Wilburn's death. Wilburn, who lost two grandsons in the bombing, had led the fight for a grand jury investigation to determine if feds had prior warning. Mahon told reporters he pleads the fifth amendment when asked about his knowledge of the bombing, had earlier bragged he blew up a truck with a fertilizer bomb. DA Investigator Larry Dellinger, who was escorting Mahon, waits patiently for his charge to wind down.

... On February 22, 1995 this agent met with OHP Trooper Ken Stafford to exchange certain information regarding this investigation. Trooper Stafford indicated that the FBI also had an ongoing investigation regarding Elohim City.

On this same date, RAC David Roberts met with the United States Attorney for the Northern Judicial District of Oklahoma, Steve Lewis, to Discuss this investigation

On February 23, 1995 RAC David Roberts was contacted by FBI supervisor, Marty Webber, who stated that FBI Special Agent in Charge, Bob Ricks, would be available during the week of February 27 through March 03, 1995 to meet with ATF Special agent in Charge, Lester Martz. RAC Roberts then contacted Dallas Division to request SAC, Martz meet with SAC, Ricks to discuss the investigation of Elohim City. ...



Author's files

Tulsa. Numerous associates were busted, yet, neither were interviewed about the Oklahoma City bombing until Strassmeir was safely out of the country, and was interviewed by trans-Atlantic telephone on 30 April and 1 May 1996! The resulting report of that interview is noteworthy for its insipid tone.

### State Department And "Andy The German"

On 27 April 1995, a special agent of the Diplomatic Security Service called the American embassy in Bonn to request German police intelligence and criminal-history checks on Strassmeir. The U.S. Ambassador cabled that initial reports gave Strassmeir a clean bill of health, but military record checks and Berlin police record checks were pending, and would follow. These last two record checks were *never* provided to McVeigh's defense team.

Following this message to Washington,

there is a several-months gap where few federal government records are available on the imported Nazi, until after he returned to Germany in January 1996.

### Once More Into the Breach

Finley disclosed in her May 1995 monthly report of Howe's investigation that the ATF and FBI had jointly "determined that CI-183 would be sent to Elohim City to obtain any intelligence relating to the bombing." This most interesting document went on to relate that: On May 1, 1995 CI-183 traveled to Elohim City and stayed for three [sic] days. ... On May 3, 1995 this agent met with CI-183 and debriefed him/her. This agent then took CI-183 to Oklahoma City to meet with ATF and FBI agents for further debriefing ... CI-183 did speak to an individual who stated, 'There is a big secret out here.' ... On May 13, 1995 this agent met with CI-183 to discuss returning to Elohim City in order to determine what the 'big secret' is and to attempt to identify suspect #2 [John Doe II].

This last sentence gives lie to later federal law-enforcement efforts to distance themselves from CI-183 by depreciating her performance. Subsequent claims that Howe produced nothing of value in her first post-bombing trip to Elohim City are flatly contradicted by the ATF-FBI plan to send her out to Elohim city for yet a second undercover visit.

### Hostile-Fire Pay: \$25 A Day

Howe had been receiving \$125 per week from the ATF as pay for her work as a CI until deactivated in March 1995 (probably at the demand of the FBI). She demanded, and received, a substantial pay hike for her two-day visit to Elohim City \$400 per day. Although Finley and the FBI had been anxious for CI-183 to make an immediate post-bombing visit to Elohim City, showing again that mission comes first and CI's are expendable, Howe had the good sense to refuse an immediate visit, noting that it would be suspicious if after a two-months' absence, CI-183 shows up right after the Oklahoma City bombing.

Before returning Howe to Millar's lair, the ATF had to reactivate her as CI-183. According to Finley, this was accomplished via telephone calls ... the paperwork followed. On 18 May, in a "Request of Use of

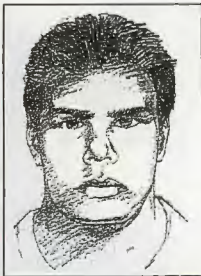
ROI filed by BATF Agent Angela Finley to SAC of Dallas Field Division cites ongoing ATF/FBI/Oklahoma State investigation of persons associated with Elohim City via informant Carol Howe, before OKC bombing. Howe testified she warned feds of proposed attack on Murrah Building. Document: Author's files

Confidential Informant," Finley wrote: *This is a request to re-activate CI-53270-183. It is requested that CI-53270-183 be returned to the active informant roster in order to aid in the Oklahoma City bombing investigation ... It has been established through several prior meetings with the informant, that he/she is stable and capable of working in this investigation.*

Nearly a year later these same ATF agents, Finley and her supervisor (Roberts), gave credit to Howe in a formal Threat Assessment (dated 22 April 1996), compiled

Continued on page 67

AP/Wide World

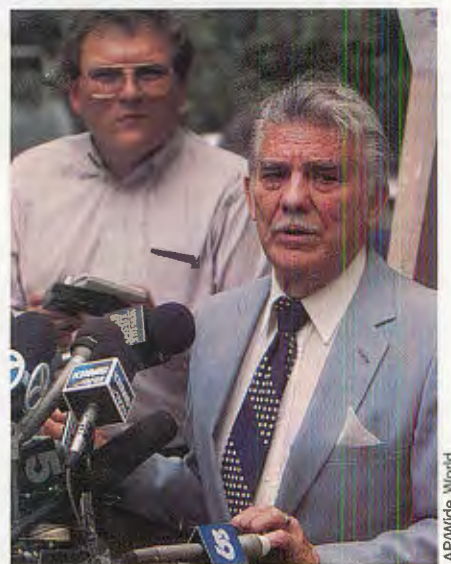


FBI

Carol Howe told two journalists, John Cash of the *McCurtain County Gazette*, in Idabel, Oklahoma, and Donald Thrasher, of *ABC News 20/20*, there was "not a doubt in my mind [Michael] Brescia is John Doe II." If, according to a reliable informant with key knowledge of the Elohim City players, Brescia is John Doe II, this would threaten the hastily constructed explanation that McVeigh and Terry Nichols were the only active participants in the conspiracy to blow up the Murrah Building.

Currently in federal custody awaiting sentencing for participation in at least one of the 22 bank robberies by "Aryan Republican Army" aka "Midwestern Bank Bandits," Brescia was former roommate of Strassmeir at Elohim City. Acknowledge a role by Brescia, and Strassmeir — and "Aryan Republican Army" — become central to OKC investigation.

At left is Brescia in high school year-book; at right is one of FBI composite sketches of "John Doe II."



AP/Wide World

Sans usual beard, Canadian expatriate and Elohim City leader "Rev." Robert Millar called a press conference in May 1995, to dispute claims Tim McVeigh made calls to Elohim City in weeks preceding OKC bombing. White separatist guru denied he is an FBI informant when questioned last July, but said he has cooperated with various police agencies. FBI testified Millar was a "source of information."

# Islam A-BOMB

## PART 2

### Russia's Nuclear Garage Sale

by Al J. Venter

*Last month, the author examined the men, motives and potential for rogue states to either develop or procure nuclear weapons. In the second half of this important feature, he examines international efforts to contain the spread of nuclear arms, and weighs the possible impact on civilization if they fail.*



SOF Files



AP/Wide World

Saddam Hussein had no qualms about unleashing the worst he had, conventional Scud-B missiles, against the Saudi capital of Riyadh during the Gulf War. Here, Saudis examine the rubble of a government office building. (insets) Ground zero of Iraqi Scud with conventional war-

head that hit U.S. military barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, during the Gulf War, compared to ground zero of crude but effective U.S. nuke that ended WW II in Japan. Which toys would assorted Saddams, Khadaffis — or their terrorist surrogates — prefer?

Missiles that have been acquired by Iran are mostly short and medium-range and of Russian, Chinese and North Korean origin. Tehran has recently taken delivery of Chinese cruise missiles, the first of which were test-fired in the Persian Gulf, in June this year. Some of these can carry a payload of a ton or more. Scud missiles are traded by North Korea for Gulf petroleum in a convoluted

exchange whereby it is refined by China.

Judging by developments in Iran itself (and the kind of equipment that has been obtained abroad) it would appear that the Iranian nuclear program is double-pronged. Primary attention is being accorded to the more basic implosion and gun-type weapons systems. The latter is the same bomb that was detonated over Hiroshima in August 1945 and caused 100,000 immediate deaths and another 40,000 fatalities

within the next six or eight months.

It is interesting that South Africa, too, followed this path: The seven-odd fission weapons built by the South Africans were gun-type. According to a document provided to the author by the Atomic Energy Corporation, their yields ranged from four kiloton (@ 80% enrichment) to 20 kiloton (@ 96% enrichment).

With tritium, which Pretoria acquired from Israel in exchange for an unspecified



AP/Wide World

**Notoriously inaccurate, many Scuds such as this one outside Riyadh, were intercepted by Patriot antimissile missiles and fell harmlessly outside target area. However, in horseshoes, hand grenades and Hiroshimas — close counts.**

quantity of uranium ore, these yields could have been boosted to about half a megaton (half a million tons of TNT). No doubt the Islamic nations would like to follow suit.

Iranian underground opposition groups also maintain that since the Persians have shown an unusual interest in the acquisition of red mercury (*International Defense Review*, June 1994) it is not implausible that Tehran is devoting time and effort towards trying to build its own pure fusion (enhanced-radiation) bomb that could be fired by a conventional field gun. Israel is said to have developed such a weapon, fired by 155mm artillery. This was the type and yield (about 3 kilotons) of blast that a U.S. Vela ballistic early warning satellite spotted

in September 1979 in the South Atlantic near South Africa's Prince Edward Islands. Again, in classic style, the Israelis neither admit nor deny anything. Such a device is referred to in the trade as a "tactical" battlefield nuclear weapon, comparable in application to the U.S.-developed nuclear artillery or Davy Crockett rounds.

Increasingly, Russia's role in assisting Iran to achieve partial nuclear parity is viewed with alarm by many, not only in the West, but also in some CIS states. They are all at risk if one of the Muslim countries acquires nuclear capability, it is argued. Even backward Algeria has shown interest in getting the bomb. Until February 1992, Algeria was secretly building a Chinese-

supplied reactor at Ain Oussera, a remote site in the Atlas Mountains south of Algiers.

Looking at the broader picture and based on some remarkable financial considerations, it makes about as much sense providing Tehran's mullahs — Iran is a CIS neighbor state — with the wherewithal to build a crude nuclear device as it would for the Americans to equip Cuba with ICBMs.

### **Lonely Moscow Buying Friends?**

Certainly, Moscow is today viewed with great suspicion by many Islamic countries. This was the result, largely, of the way the Kremlin handled the Chechen crisis. It was mainly Muslims that were targeted, and that in a conflict that was based as much on Islamic principles as it was a demand for independence. However, even Yeltsin has acknowledged to the Americans that such a weapon, ultimately, could be turned on his own people. But, as one former Soviet strategist has declared: "It is better to assist these people, our neighbors, now, so we know what they are doing, rather than to let them venture into uncharted terrain in the future."

The basis of the Russian argument rests with the fact that not only does Iran have the right under NPT provisions to a full range of safeguarded fuel-cycle facilities, but that the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency), with Russians present, will do what it needs to, in order to ensure that none of these facilities are misused.

This is an interesting premise in the light of what has previously happened in Iraq, whose case history is regarded as a catalogue of duplicity and deceit. As one observer noted: "From day one, the Iraqis lied with great fluency."

More important, dealings with Baghdad have resulted in skepticism in some quarters as to whether the IAEA is really capable of doing the job for which it was intended. There has been much criticism of Hans Blix, the IAEA's departing director general who is a lawyer, not a nuclear scientist. He has consistently been accused of being naive in his optimism that his organization can stem the spread of nuclear weapons.

The case for this argument was most forcefully put by *The Washington Post* in April 1995. It said: "Blix knew that while some officials in Washington saw his agency as part of the solution to emerging nuclear threats, others regarded the IAEA as part of the problem." The newspaper reminded its readers that after the Gulf War had ended in 1991, the U.N. went on to discover that Saddam Hussein had pursued a \$10 billion secret nuclear weapons program under the noses of IAEA inspectors. At best, there were more than 10,000 people employed in the program.

Based on confidential interviews with returning inspectors, a 1993 study by the Pentagon's Defense Nuclear Agency concluded: "Iraq often successfully manipulated the inspections. The lesson here is that any potential violator in the future may be able to out-wait the inspection process

through delays and denials.”

*The Washington Post*: “Several Americans who had worked at the IAEA publicly attacked Blix’s inspectors as weak-kneed, milquetoast U.N. types. Some U.S. nuclear weapons scientists returned from IAEA-supervised missions to Iraq grumbled that Blix wouldn’t know a nuclear bomb if he tripped over one.”

To be fair, there is, at present, a French nuclear weapons designer working full-time with the group. He took over from an American nuclear specialist.

All this has relevance to what is happening in Iran today. Following the disclosure, late 1989 by Reza Amrollahi, Iran’s Deputy President for Atomic Energy, that uranium deposits had been discovered near Saghand in the east of the country, he said soon afterwards that additional deposits had been found in 10 other locations. Amrollahi also announced that Iran would be opening a uranium processing plant to make the country self-sufficient in uranium dioxide concentrate (yellowcake), which can be further processed into reactor fuel or enriched into HEU.

Enter the IAEA: Following reports that Iran might be developing an unsafeguarded supply of enriched uranium, the organization made a cursory visit to Saghand and five other suspect nuclear sites. There were nine more uranium mines mentioned by Amrollahi that were given the all clear without *in loco* inspections. Nor did IAEA inspectors ask to be shown other locations near Saghand where a milling plant might have been located. Yet two years before that, a report from the Iranian Majlis had given details of a “uranium bullion plant” that would employ 800 people and was to be established in the Saghand area.

According to an American publication *Iran Brief* (1 June 1995) Amrollahi told a Tehran radio interviewer that Iran would open three more yellowcake milling facili-



AP/Wide World



AP/Wide World

**At the end of the Gulf War, Iraq pledged to help UN destroy Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Here, UN inspection team leader Dimitri Perricos of Greece, right, and Anne Wiles of Britain confer in Manama, Bahrain, after 10-day mission in Iraq. Noted one observer, “From day one, the Iraqis lied with great fluency.” (right) When UN inspection team uncovered documents describing Iraq’s nuclear weapons program, they were detained in Baghdad by Iraqis.**

ties in addition to the one at Saghand. Two of these sites were identified as Bandar Abbas and Bandar-e Lengeh, both of which are on the Gulf.

In spite of protests to the contrary, there is every indication that the Russians are likely to continue to play a seminal role in any future Iranian nuclear program. Moscow continues to discount involvement in weapons development, which does not make sense since all evidence points in that direction, including missile weaponization.

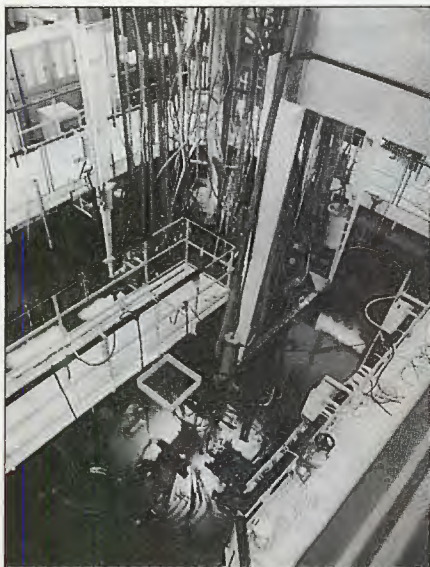
The United States has repeatedly asked President Yeltsin to cancel its deals, including one for the construction of a moribund nuclear power plant. Washington maintains that with access to such high technology, Tehran could use the reactor to bolster its nuclear infrastructure and as a cover to obtain sensitive nuclear technologies and equipment critical for producing separated plutonium or HEU.

Adding to suspicions that the Iranians are moving in this direction, are the signings of secret protocols between Tehran and Moscow, jointly declaring their commitment to negotiate additional contracts for research reactors, to build a gas centrifuge for enriching uranium, to train Iranian scientific personnel at Russian academic institutions (10 to 20 a year) and to develop more uranium mines.

Already, there are hundreds of Russian technicians and scientists working at the Bushehr and other sites in Iran. So great is the concern over the potentially dangerous pool of unemployed former Soviet nuclear scientists spreading nuclear weapon technology, some members of the U.S. Congress proposed the government help former Soviet nuclear scientists find work in the West. Senator Sam Nunn, D-Ga., chairman of the Senate Armed Forces Committee, noted “we have the potential for the greatest proliferation in history of weapons from the world’s largest military arsenal to Third World countries, to terrorist groups and to the Saddam Husseins of the future.”

Moscow does make much of the fact that any Russian-supplied reactor would be painstakingly safeguarded by the IAEA. Plutonium-laden spent fuel, it says, will be returned to where it originally came from. However, as David Albright — who has been in Iraq with IAEA Action Teams and has much practical and scientific knowledge of all the implications — points out, a large power reactor (or reactors) would eventually discharge great quantities of plutonium in spent fuel. This raises the possibility that some of this sensitive material could be diverted for weapons use if Iran chose to abrogate its Non-Proliferation Treaty commitments. Considering that Tehran strenuously denies being involved in developing nuclear weapons — when all evidence points to the contrary — how can their assurances be accepted at face value?

Albright says, “Russia has the largest uranium-enrichment centrifuge program in the



AP/Wide World



Henry Arvidsson, UNSCOM

**The French built Iraq a clone of this Osiris research reactor at Baghdad named “Osirak” — but it was destroyed by Israeli bombing raid days before its commissioning in 1981.**

**UNSCOM recovered missile guidance and control parts from canal, dumped by Iraq in disingenuous attempt to pretend they didn’t exist.**

*Continued on page 64*

# Public

# Defender

**H&K's USSOCOM Pistol Goes Public**

Photos courtesy of Heckler & Koch

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

**Y**ou can own the same handgun and sound suppressor used by our elite special operations units. Heckler & Koch (Dept. SOF, 21480 Pacific Blvd., Sterling, VA 22170-8903; phone: 703-450-1900) has produced a limited quantity of the MK23 MOD O .45 ACP pistol for civilian consumption that differ only by virtue of the absence of U.S. government markings and a magazine that holds only 10 instead of 12 rounds. Called the Mark 23, this hefty pistol carries an equally hefty \$1,995 suggested retail price, complete with two magazines and a spiffy woodland-camouflage-pattern cordura carrying case that will not only accommodate the pistol, but two spare magazines, the sound suppressor and the Laser Aiming Module (LAM).

The U.S. Special Operations Command



Operating by means of short-recoil with breech locking, based on a linkless modified Browning system (ejection port barrel-locking block), the H&K Mark 23/MK23 MOD O provides both single- and double-action modes and an ambidextrous manual safety lever that permits carrying in "condition one" (a round in the chamber, hammer cocked and safety on).

(USSOCOM) is the umbrella organization for the Navy SEALs, Army Ranger Battalions and Special Forces, Air Force Special Operations and several other unspecified clandestine operations groups. A detailed history of the development of the Special Operations Forces (SOF) Offensive Handgun and Suppressor project appeared in the June '93 and October '95 issues of *Soldier Of Fortune*.

Heckler & Koch's SOF Offensive Handgun is to a large extent based upon their USP (Universal Self-Loading Pistol). It operates by means of short-recoil with breech locking, based on a linkless modified Browning system (ejection port barrel-locking block) Weight of the pistol, with an empty magazine, is 2.66 pounds (1.21 kg). The pistol with a full magazine of 12 rounds of .45 ACP ball ammunition, together with the sound suppressor, weighs 4.22 pounds (1.91 kg). The length of the pistol is 9.65 inches (245 mm). With the suppressor attached, the overall length of the system is 16.56 inches (421 mm). Height is 5.9 inches (150 mm), and at its widest point this pistol measures 1.53 inches (38.8 mm). This is a large, heavy handgun by today's standards.

The barrel, 5.87 inches (149 mm) in length, has Heckler & Koch's well-known polygonal rifling with six twist lines and a constant right-hand twist of one turn in 15.98 inches (406 mm). Polygonal rifling provides a better gas seal, more consistent velocities, superior accuracy, ease of maintenance and increased service life. The commercial Mark 23 features a barrel manufactured to SAAMI headspace specifications.

Both variants of this pistol are capable of firing +P .45 ACP ammunition.

The injection-molded, two-piece polymer frame has been reinforced with a 15% microscopic glass-fiber content. There are four short steel guide rails (two on each side of the frame) for the slide interface. The grip's front and rear straps are deeply cross-checked with pointed tips, while the grip side panels have a rough, stippled texture and feature the H&K escutcheon on the left side and a U.S. patent number on the right side. Injection-molded polyamides are super industrial-strength synthetics well-known for their resistance to high temperatures, corrosion, wear, chemicals and radiation. Lighter than steel, they have a higher tensile strength than aluminum. The grip angle (defined as the angle between the front leading edge of the grips and a line drawn normal — perpendicular — to the bore's axis) is 17 degrees, exactly matching that of the Colt M1911A1 Government Model.

Both single- and double-action modes are provided. The ambidextrous manual safety lever permits carrying in "condition one" (a round in the chamber, hammer cocked and safety on). Trigger-pull weight on *Soldier Of Fortune*'s test specimen in single-action was about 5 pounds. This increased to about 11.25 pounds in double-action. Unlike the USP's smooth trigger, the Mark 23/MK23 MOD O trigger carries vertical serrations.

A separate decocking lever has also been provided to silently lower the cocked hammer (it's not very silent on our test pistol). Both the magazine catch/release, which is ambidextrous, and the slide-release lever are located in conventional positions that permit manipulation without adjustment of the firing grip. There are three safety features: 1) the manual safety lever, 2) a spring-loaded firing-pin block, which is controlled by a

lever in the hammer mechanism that rotates upward at the moment of firing to depress the plunger in the slide and permit the striker to travel forward, and 3) the passive disconnect safety. The safety lever is wide enough to permit the operator to obtain a secure purchase with gloves. It is at this location that the pistol has its greatest width.

The spring-loaded steel slide-stop lever is mounted on the left side of the frame and can be easily manipulated with the thumb of the firing hand by a right-handed shooter. When the last round has been fired, a shelf on the magazine follower forces a projection on the slide-stop lever upward to hold the slide in the rearward position. The slide-stop lever also serves as a dismounting lever to separate the frame and slide groups.

The Mark 23's trigger guard is large enough to accommodate gloved operation in cold weather. The front of the trigger guard is re-curved with horizontal serrations, even though few armed professionals place the index finger of the support hand in this area. Furthermore, in this instance the trigger guard is so long as to make the use of this ridiculous fetish even more awkward. There is a threaded nut molded into the front of the trigger guard for indexing and retaining the Laser Aiming Module (LAM) and other accessories. The bottom of the trigger guard is flared to protect the ambidextrous magazine catch/release and prevent accidentally dumping a magazine on the ground at an inappropriate time. There is a polymer grip extension insert with lanyard loop that holds the hammer strut and spring in place. To prevent deformation and/or accidental discharge if dropped, the hammer spur has been made of hard rubber molded onto a metal projection on the hammer. A heavy, steel fixed ejector is mounted in front of the hammer mechanism on the left side.



While large and heavy for a handgun, the H&K Mark 23/MK23 MOD O is more compact than shoulder-mounted weapons and has legitimate tactical applications in confined environments. (below) The military-issue holster for the MK23 MOD O was designed by Bill Rogers and is manufactured by Safariland Ltd. Molded from a Kydex-type synthetic with a black suede lining, this hard-shell, low-riding, SWAT-type holster has an adjustable elastic leg strap with a fastex buckle. Available commercially as the Model 6004, its most salient feature is locking hammer strap with a spring-loaded thumb release tab.







(above) Overall length of the Mark 23/MK23 MOD O, with the sound suppressor attached, is 16.58 inches. The weight with a loaded 12-round magazine is 4.23 pounds. (inset) All of the Mark 23/MK23 MOD O controls are close at hand. From left to right: slide-release lever, decocking lever and ambidextrous manual safety lever.

To release a magazine, the catch/release must be depressed down instead of inward. This takes a little getting used to for those of us trained on the M1911 series. Magazines, either full or empty, fall freely away when the catch/release is depressed. The magazine catch/release is somewhat difficult to reach with the thumb without shifting the firing grip. I find that the trigger finger is better positioned for this purpose. There is no magazine safety and the Mark 23 can be fired without a magazine in place.

The staggered-column, single-position-feed, detachable box-type Mark 23 civilian-issue magazines have a capacity of 10 rounds to conform to the current ban on the

production of firearms' "feeding devices" of greater capacity. Military magazines for this pistol hold 12 rounds as previously stated. Mark 23 magazine bodies are made of stamped sheet-metal. There are numbered indicator holes at the rear of the magazine body. Both the magazine floorplate assembly and the follower are made from injection-molded polymer. These magazines are quite easy to disassemble.

Deep channels molded parallel to the bore's axis on each side of the frame in front of the trigger guard provide mounting points for the LAM. It was designed by Insight Technology Incorporated (Dept. SOF, 10 Tinker Avenue, Londonderry, NH 03053; phone: 603-626-4800; fax: 603-626-4888)

for the U.S. Special Operations Command. Weighing only 5 ounces (with batteries) and with incredibly compact dimensions for a unit with its features — 4.5 inches in overall length, 1.6 inches in width and 2 inches in height — this is a state-of-the-art LAM in every regard. Waterproof and powered by two 3-volt lithium batteries, it can be attached or removed from the Mark 23/MK23 MOD in less than 15 seconds by means of a large knurled wheel attached to its retaining screw. More importantly, it features not only visible (usable out to 50 meters in daylight and more than 700 meters at night) and infrared (usable out to more than 200 meters) laser beams, but both a focusable visible flashlight (facial recognition out to 25 meters) and infrared illumina-



## Disassembly Procedures

Fieldstripping procedures parallel those for handguns with this method of operation. Remove the magazine and clear the weapon by jacking the slide and inspecting the chamber to make sure it is empty. Retract the slide rearward until the slide stop's axis pin is aligned with the disassembly notch on the left side of the slide. Push the axis pin to the left from the right side and withdraw it completely. Push the slide group forward and separate it from the frame. Remove the recoil spring/guide rod assembly and the barrel from the slide. Mark 23 magazines are easily disassembled by pushing down on the post in the center of the floorplate while at the same time squeezing inward on the floorplate's locking tabs on each side of the magazine body. Pull the floorplate, locking insert, follower spring and follower out of the magazine body.

After cleaning and lubrication, reassemble in the reverse order. Make sure that the angled locking surfaces on both the underside of the barrel and rear end of the recoil-spring guide rod are properly aligned.

— P.G.K.

## The Cutting Edge of Silence

Designed by Doug Olson of Knight's Armament Company (KAC, Dept. SOF, 7750 9th Street S.W., Vero Beach, FL 32968; phone: 561-562-5697; fax: 561-569-2955), the sound suppressor for the MK23 MOD O .45 CAL. ACP PISTOL, can now be purchased by any qualified individual. It represents the cutting edge of sound suppressor technology in all regards.

Constructed entirely from stainless steel with a black oxide finish, the KAC sound suppressor weighs only 1 pound (0.454 kg), with an outer diameter of 1.38 inches (35.0 mm). The overall length is 7.5 inches (191 mm).

The design is highly unusual. There are a total of five baffles, each of which is in the shape of a six-pointed star. The baffle stack does not fit flush within the suppressor body. Instead, dimples were formed in the suppressor body to keep the outer tube concentric with the baffle stack. The suppressor body has been welded to the baffle stack at each of these dimples. In addition to maintaining the proper alignment of the components, this physically ties the baffles to the outer tube and permits heat to transfer quickly to the suppressor body where it then dissipates into the atmosphere. There are also several important reasons for the clearance between the baffle stack and the inside of the suppressor body. The thin space between the baffle stack and the suppressor body allows gases to travel through, but not a flame. While this helps to eliminate the flash signature, most importantly, the more quickly you can extinguish the flame, the less gas the system has to deal with. And, finally, structurally a tube within a tube is very strong, almost like a double-hulled ship.

An interesting feature of this sound suppressor is its ability to be loosened and then indexed to ten different positions by means of an indexing cap with ten indexing tabs that interlock to notches on the suppressor body. This permits the operator to move the shot group obtained with the suppressor in place to within 2 inches of the unsuppressed shot group. With the suppressor firmly tightened on the barrel, an orientation mark on the suppressor body should be more or less upper-dead-center when commencing to index the suppressor to the sights with live fire. Indexing the suppressor to change the point of impact takes only a few minutes.

The suppressor's indexing cap also provides a close-fitting and center-support bearing surface for the piston assembly at the rear of the suppressor body. It also acts as a buffering spring during final recoil of the suppressor. This piston assembly and an inner coil spring serve as an all-important "recoil booster."

Attaching a sound suppressor to a locked-breech, short-recoil-operated pistol with a recoiling slide and barrel places an

added mass, no matter how slight, on the rearward-moving components that may retard their rearward travel and result in an incomplete recoil cycle, with failures to properly eject empty cases ("stove pipes") and failures to feed. To insure positive functioning, some recoil assist is required when a sound suppressor is attached to a pistol like the MK23 MOD O.

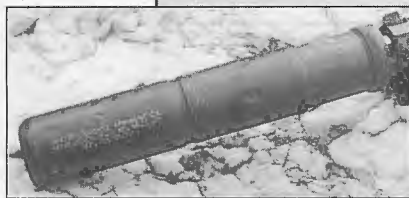
The recoil regulator employed in the KAC sound suppressor operates as follows. As the bullet enters the suppressor it's followed by rapidly expanding propellant gases and still unburnt powder granules, which continue to expand and burn, creating an over-pressure situation. Oxygen trapped inside the suppressor accelerates the burning process and adds to the build-up of gas pressure. As a result of the recoil-booster mechanism, the gas pressure within the suppressor drives the suppressor forward and the barrel rearward. This distribution of momentum enables the recoiling barrel and slide to obtain their normal recoil velocity, overcoming the additional weight of the suppressor. The inner coil spring of the piston assembly is compressed at this time, storing the energy required to return the suppressor to its proper place for the next shot.

This suppressor was designed to operate either dry or wet. No more than 5 cc of water inserted from the chamber end is necessary to significantly enhance the its performance for about 50 rounds before refilling is required. Using standard velocity milspec 230-grain FMJ ball ammunition, the reduction in sound pressure levels is 26 dB dry and 36 dB wet. The sound pressure level generated by the MK23 MOD O with the suppressor in place is 132 dB dry and 122 dB wet.

Inserting water inside the suppressor retards the flow of propellant gases through the unit by lowering their temperature and reducing their expansion (and thus the pressure). As the water is turned to steam, it adds to the weight of the expanding gases, creates additional turbulence and further restricts the gas flow.

To purchase a KAC sound suppressor for your Mark 23 pistol, you must first live in a state that permits the private ownership of Title II firearms, which the National Firearms Act of 1934 considers a sound suppressor to be. Unless you have an FFL, transfer to you must be via a Class-3 dealer in your state. The process requires an ATF Form 4 transfer which includes a \$200 transfer tax, fingerprint cards, passport-type photographs and local law enforcement certification. All of this usually takes no more than 90 days. In this instance, it's well worth the effort to obtain a suppressor for your Mark 23 pistol that differs from the actual USSOCOM unit only by the absence of U.S. government markings.

— P.G.K.



nator (with a range of 50 meters or less). This LAM will be available for sale by the end of 1997. Units with infrared capability are available to the military and law enforcement only. A module with a visible laser and flashlight only can be purchased by the public. The LAM is issued with an operator's manual and black cordura nylon case that attaches to LBE.

Another example of an accessory retained by the threaded nut in the front of the Mark 23's trigger guard is the Aimpoint 5000/Comp mount manufactured by G.G.&G. (Dept. SOF, 3602 East 42nd Stravenue, Tucson, AZ 85713; phone: 520-748-7167; fax: 520-748-7583). Machined from a solid billet of 6061 aluminum and black hard anodized, this sturdy milspec mount permits concurrent use of the Knight suppressor. A knurled knob at the end of its mounting screw is used to secure it to the trigger guard.

A black, corrosion-resistant maritime coating, called "KTL" is used on the one-piece machined steel slide and other components. While used by the German navy, in my experience it scratches quite easily.

Left-side slide markings on the government version of the pistol are "HK MK23 USSOCOM Cal. .45" followed by the serial number. Those of the commercial variant state "HK Mark 23 Cal. .45 Auto" with the H&K Oberndorf proofs, date of manufacture code and serial number underneath.

The spring-loaded extractor, installed in a slot on the right side of the slide, pivots around its retaining roll pin in the conventional manner. There is no barrel bushing; the barrel passes through a hole bored in the front of the slide.

The blade-type front sight, 0.146-inch in width, with a single white dot, is mounted in a dovetail on the slide. The open square-notch (0.135-inch wide) rear sight, which has a white dot on each side of the notch, can be adjusted for windage zero by first loosening its retaining screw and then drifting it to the left or right in its dovetail on the slide. The rear sight must be removed and replaced with a higher or lower unit for adjustment of elevation zero. The three white dots can be replaced with self-luminous tritium inserts. The sights are high profile, so that they can clear the suppressor. The sight radius is 7.76 inches (197 mm).

To further enhance the accuracy potential, Heckler & Koch has brought the locking block to close tolerances with the slide, without compromising the pistol's reliability. In addition, a rubber O-ring, just to the rear of the threaded muzzle, interfaces between the slide and barrel. This O-ring has withstood 30,000 rounds without failure. All of this can produce 5-round groups as tight as 0.45-inch (i.e., a single hole) and a group average of 1.3 inches of extreme spread at 25 meters from a test fixture designed by Heckler & Koch.

There is a mechanical recoil-reduction

The Special Operations Forces (SOF) Offensive Handgun and Suppressor will most often be used to complement more conventional military weapons, such as the M16A1/2 with M203 40mm grenade launcher.

system, also found on the USP, that buffers unlocking of the barrel and consists of a heavy, captive coil spring around the full-length guide rod. The recoil spring itself is also captive to the guide rod. This makes the pistol easier to disassemble and reassemble. The recoil-reduction system reduces measured recoil forces by as much as 30% and significantly diminishes perceived recoil. A hooked locking block at the end of the guide rod stops the barrel's rearward travel during the latter part of the recoil stroke.

The military-issue holster for the MK23 MOD O was designed by Bill Rogers and is manufactured by Safariland Ltd., Inc. (Dept. SOF, 3120 East Mission Boulevard, Ontario, CA 91761; phone: 909-923-7300; fax: 909-923-7400). Molded from a Kydex-type synthetic with a black suede lining, this hard-shell, low-riding, SWAT-type holster has an adjustable elastic leg strap with a fast-buckle. Available commercially as the



Model 6004, its most salient feature is locking hammer strap with a spring-loaded thumb release tab. The belt loop will accommodate a standard G.I. pistol belt. To enhance the holster's service life, it is equipped with a tension screw that can be adjusted with the allen wrench provided.

This is an excellent piece of equipment.

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) provided all rounds used to test fire our Heckler & Koch Mark 23. Three types of Black Hills .45 ACP ammunition were used: 230-grain Full Metal Jacket (FMJ) roundnose with a muzzle velocity of about 850 fps, 185-grain Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) with a muzzle velocity of about 975 fps and 230-grain JHP with either the excellent Hornady XTP or Speer Gold Dot bullets driving out of the barrel at approximately 880 fps. The 230-grain FMJ will over-penetrate in soft tissue, but this type of bullet is mandated by the Hague Convention for military operations. The 185-grain JHP will over-expand and under-penetrate. For law enforcement personnel or civilians who want to go into a really "offensive" mode with the Mark 23, I recommend the Black Hills 230-grain JHP, which will expand to almost .70 caliber and penetrate in soft tissue well past the minimum 12 inches required for effective performance.

The H&K Offensive Handgun was

## The Physics of Silence

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

The sound produced by a firearm is principally composed of three components. They are: (1) the muzzle blast created by shock waves generated from the sudden expansion of hot propellant gases as they encounter the atmosphere at the muzzle end of a gun barrel; (2) the miniature sonic boom or "crack" produced by a bullet traveling downrange at a velocity above the speed of sound (1,087.5 fps at 32 degrees Fahrenheit at sea level — the speed of sound through an ideal gas varies directly as the square root of the absolute temperature, and inversely as the square root of the atomic weight); and (3) in the case of a semiautomatic or full-auto weapon, there is the noise of the action itself (i.e., the reciprocating slide or bolt group). If the projectile travels downrange at subsonic velocity, it will produce no sonic boom as it passes stationary objects. There is little that can be done about the sound produced by the firearm's reciprocating parts, other than to install a slide lock which prevents the slide from traveling rearward at the expense of turning the weapon into a single-shot device.

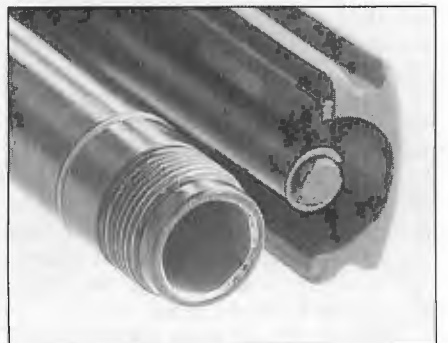
It is the muzzle blast to which all sound suppressors, successful or not, address themselves. They do so by use of a single formula from physics known as the general-gas law. Applicable to ideal gases, the equation states that pressure equals temperature multiplied by volume. Any gas behaves as an *ideal*,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

Sound suppressors are usually evaluated and compared by a logarithmic ratio called the decibel (dB). The logarithmic nature of the decibel is important to keep in mind, as a 3 dB drop in sound is 1/10 of the original sound-pressure level, while a 20 dB decrease is 1/100 the original level. However, because the sensitivity curve of the ear is also logarithmic, decreasing the sound energy to one-hundredth of its value halves the apparent sound. For comparison purposes, quiet conversation is about 55 dB, a handclap 65 dB, and an M16 rifle 165 dB.

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

— P.G.K.

To further enhance the accuracy potential, a rubber O-ring to the rear of the threaded muzzle interfaces between the slide and barrel. This O-ring has withstood 30,000 rounds without failure. Note full-length recoil-spring guide rod.



designed to fire a minimum of 30,000 rounds of +P ammunition (5,000 with the suppressor in place), without any major parts failure or replacement. The slide and frame were designed for a minimum of 60,000 rounds. These were project requirements. It passed all of the many exhaustive tests it was subjected to by the U.S. military. Any so-called "test and evaluation" by *SOF* or the popular gun press would represent the height of unjustified arrogance.

Nevertheless, after firing several thousand rounds through this pistol I have established a number of observations. Reliability under even the most severe operating environments has been taken to the highest level possible for a semiautomatic pistol. Even with the sound suppressor in place, the Mark 23 is not as unwieldy as its physical dimensions would indicate, providing a strong two-hand Weaver hold is employed. As I have large hands, I have no trouble reaching the trigger when the hammer is down. However, were I to deploy with this pistol, it would invariably be in the "cocked and locked" mode. Principally because of its mass and the mechanical recoil-reduction system, perceived recoil is about as low as it's ever going to get with a caliber .45 ACP handgun.

It's quite conceivable that, even in law-enforcement scenarios, there could be indoor tactical settings where this pistol might be more maneuverable than a shoulder-mounted weapon. But, few police agencies would be able to justify the price and it's obvious that Heckler & Koch has targeted the not inconsiderable number of collectors who specialize in U.S. martial arms with the Mark 23. ✖

## Method of Operation

The Mark 23 method of operation is short recoil, locked breech. The quite conventional locking system is a modification of the Browning dropping-barrel method as encountered on the SIG-Sauer P226, the Ruger P90 and on some others. A large, rectangular lug over the barrel's chamber engages the slide's ejection port in the locked position. When a cartridge is fired, chamber pressure drives the cartridge case back against the breech face.

Locked together, the slide and barrel recoil rearward for about 3 mm, after which a shaped lug on the underside of the chamber engages the hooked locking block at the end of the steel recoil-spring guide rod (which is held in place by the slide-stop lever's axis pin) to lower the rear end of the barrel and disengage it from the barrel.

The locking surface on the front top of the barrel's locking lug is tapered with a forward slope. This tapered surface produces a camming action, which enables the Mark 23 to enhance its reliability in high-dust environments or after extensive firing has introduced severe fouling in the system.

— P.G.K.



Retained by the threaded nut in the front of the Mark 23's trigger guard, the Aimpoint 5000/Comp mount manufactured by G.G.&G. permits concurrent use of the Knight sound suppressor. Weighing only 5 ounces, the Mark 23/MK23 MOD 0 LAM was designed by Insight Technology Incorporated. As seen in this first published photo, the unit as adopted by USSOCOM features not only visible and infrared laser beams, but visible and infrared flashlights as well.

## SPECIFICATIONS

### Heckler & Koch Mark 23

- Caliber: .45 ACP (including +P)
- Operation: Short-recoil with breech locking, based on a linkless modified Browning system (ejection port barrel-locking block). Both single- and double-action modes are provided; a ambidextrous manual safety lever permits carrying in "condition one." Separate decocking lever also provided to silently lower the cocked hammer.
- Weight: (empty, with magazine): 2.66 pounds (1.21 kg)
- Length, overall: 9.65 inches (245 mm)
- Width: 1.53 inches (38.8 mm)
- Height, with magazine: 5.90 inches (150 mm)
- Barrel: polygonal rifling with six twist lines and a constant right hand twist of one turn in 15.98 inches (406 mm)
- Barrel length: 5.87 inches (149 mm)
- Feed mechanism: Staggered-column, single-position-feed, detachable box-type magazine with 10-round capacity for commercial sales and 12-round capacity for military or law-enforcement applications only.
- Sights: Fixed, high-profile blade-type front blade with a thickness of 0.146-inch and containing a single white plastic plug; open square-notch rear, 0.135-inch wide with a white plug on each side of the notch. Rear sight adjustable for windage zero; elevation zero adjustment by replacement with a higher or lower rear sight assembly. Self-luminous tritium night sights available.
- Finish: Black polymer frame; slide and other components finished with a black, corrosion-resistant maritime coating, called "KTL."
- Price: \$1,995, complete with two magazines and a woodland-camouflage-pattern cordura carrying case.
- Manufacturer: Heckler & Koch GmbH, Dept. SOF, Postfach 1329, D-7238 Oberndorf/Neckar, Germany
- Distributor: Heckler & Koch, Inc., Dept. SOF, 21480 Pacific Boulevard, Sterling, VA 20166-8903; phone: 703-450-1900; fax: 703-450-8160

## Suppressor

- Length: 7.5 inches (191 mm)
- Diameter: 1.38 inches (35.0 mm)
- Overall length: (with pistol attached): 16.58 inches (421 mm)
- Overall weight: (with loaded pistol — 12 rounds .45 ball): 4.23 pounds (1.92 kg)
- Manufacturer: Knight's Armament Company, Dept. SOF, 7750 9th Street S.W., Vero Beach, FL 32968; phone: 561-562-5697; fax: 561-569-2955
- Laser Aiming Module: Combination visible/invisible (infrared) laser aiming device and a flashlight.
- Manufacturer: Insight Technology Incorporated, Dept. SOF, 10 Tinker Avenue, Londonderry, NH 03053; phone: 603-626-4800; fax: 603-626-4888
- T&E summary: Proper caliber for "offensive" handgun applications. Passed extensive milspec testing. Large and heavy, but more compact than shoulder-mounted weapons with legitimate tactical applications in confined environments. Expensive. Sound suppressor represents cutting edge of current technology.



f all of the stories from the Vietnam War that should not remain untold, the account of the actions of Navy SEAL Team Two's 7th Platoon during the Tet Offensive in 1968 is at the top of the list.

Even in the SEAL community, 7th Platoon's exploits during that period are nothing short of legendary, and it is only the recent publication of the memoirs of retired SEAL Chief Petty Officer Harry Constance, *Good to Go* (William Morrow and Co., publisher; 351 pages, hardback; \$24) that has resurrected memories of one of the most remarkable feats of urban combat in U.S. military history: the engagement at My Tho.

I don't know why somebody (like me) never bothered to sit down with former 7th Platoon members and piece together the story for *SOF*, but, until Harry shared the story with his co-author, Randall Fuerst, *Tet '68* in the riverside town of My Tho was just another memory for those who were there. Over the years, I had heard about many of the incidents occurring during the temporary Vietcong occupation of My Tho, and I knew I should write about them, but it took a recent visit by Harry to put wheels on my good intentions.

As of 30 January 1968, midway into its six-month deployment to the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), 7th Platoon had experienced only a

# Good to Go

**7th Platoon  
at My Tho**

by Capt. Larry Bailey, USN (Ret.)  
Photos courtesy of  
Harry Constance



Harry Constance, of SEAL Team Two's 7th Platoon, inspects firearms and ordnance at the "hooch" at My Tho in late 1967. (inset) A drum-fed Stoner 63 automatic rifle was his primary weapon in field ops.

frustrating modicum of combat. The unit, led by Lieutenant Bob Peterson, had some of the best operators Team 2 ever produced: "Pete" himself, Master Chief Petty Officer Bob "Eagle" Gallagher, and Harry Constance. They were spoiling for a fight. Nor were the rest of the SEALs in the platoon a shabby lot, either, including Chuck Jessie, Roy Dean Matthews, Erasmo Riojas, Mike Boynton, and Fred Keener.

By the end of the first week of February, however, everything had changed. The platoon had prevented the Viet Cong/North Vietnamese forces from completely overrunning My Tho, a medium-sized town on the banks of the My Tho River, a tributary of the Mekong. The price paid by the VC/NVA for their poor planning was enormous: hundreds of main-force troops killed, thousands wounded, and a veritable mountain of equipment and weapons captured.

The battle for My Tho began as the SEALs were preparing to take advantage of a formal three-day cease-fire negotiated between the South Vietnamese government and the Viet Cong in observance of the Lunar New Year. A few of the SEALs were planning to head to Saigon to party and do the other things sailors did when they were in the big city. Most of 7th Platoon, however, decided to stay in My Tho and do their partying "in place." When the combined VC/NVA forces suddenly assaulted the city, a nearly full-strength 7th Platoon was not only in My Tho but fully loaded for combat.

### The Sixth Sense

It is a military axiom that plain blind luck is often a key factor in determining the success or failure of a particular campaign. However, 7th Platoon's luck was, in a very real sense, the direct result of the intuition — call it "foresight" — of Master Chief Petty Officer Gallagher, who was already becoming a SEAL legend. (There is consensus among East Coast SEALs that "Eagle" had some sixth sense with which he sometimes amazed even himself. Harry Constance avers that this ability was the reason he and many other SEALs are alive to gather at UDT/SEAL Reunion every year.)

Several weeks before the Tet offensive, Gallagher told his men to start keeping their weapons and equipment back at their living quarters in an old French-built four-story hotel. This building was about 3/4 mile from their "hooch," or staging/ammo-storage area, where the platoon's weapons and ammo normally were kept. Had 7th Platoon not had an ample supply of weapons and ammunition stored in the hotel, which would have been the case only weeks before, it is certain that the SEALs and the entire Navy contingent at My Tho would have been overrun during the first assault.

As the Tet holiday began, 7th Platoon gathered on the roof of the hotel/barracks to celebrate in time-honored SEAL fashion: eating, drinking, and telling sea stories. Adding to the merriment was the prospect of fireworks, which are an even more integral part of the Asian New Year celebration than they are of our own.

Lounging in their lawn chairs and on their poncho liners, the men awaited mid-



Posing with an NVA flag captured in 1968 during night raid are (left to right) Ming, a Vietnamese Scout, and SEALs Richard "Hook" Tuure, Jack Rowell, Bob "Eagle" Gallagher, Roy Dean Matthews, and (kneeling) "Doc" Riojas.

night and the start of the expected light-and-sound show. They were not disappointed; tracers of various colors — white, red, and green — soon began to light up the sky a couple of miles away.

It was turning into quite a show, and it was with some enthusiasm that the SEALs noticed that the fireworks/tracers were coming closer — first to within a mile or so, then a half-mile. It was with less enthusiasm that they realized that the tracers were not part of anybody's Tet festivities; they were an indication that My Tho was under attack, despite the "truce."

Calmly, the platoon removed its party supplies and lawn chairs from the roof. It was now about 0300. Peterson, the platoon's commander, then called the Navy men together and confirmed their suspicions: The Viet Cong had launched a nation-wide offensive in violation of their own cease-fire. It was only a short time after this briefing that the hotel came under direct attack.

### Filling The Kill Zone

Harry was the platoon's "Stoner man," packing the SEALs' trademark Vietnam weapon: the Stoner 63 automatic rifle that ate belted 5.56x45mm rounds. He recalls: "I looked out to the front of the hotel and saw what looked like hundreds of VC — they were everywhere! Then I stuck my Stoner out the window and opened up, as did Curtis Ashton and 'Hook' Tuure and all the guys. Grenades, M16s, M14s — anything available was put into use. For four hours or more we smoked them with everything we

had, but they still kept attacking. It was incredible. The bodies were piling up like cordwood on the street in front of the hotel."

Finally, around 0700 the firing died down and the platoon began to see the damage they had done. There were literally hundreds of bodies in the kill zone, according to Harry, who estimates that he personally fired more than 4,000 rounds during the battle. Add to that the cases of grenades and other weaponry used by the SEALs and the other Navy personnel who were operating under the SEALs' supervision. The VC must have thought there was an infantry battalion dug in at the hotel.

It was during this lull in combat that Gallagher realized that 7th Platoon was going to need all the ammunition it could get. He selected four "volunteers" — Constance, Matthews, Keener, and Ashton — to drive the 3/4 mile to the SEAL hooch to pick up as much ammo as they could load onto two jeeps. Arriving at the Navy compound where the hooch was located, they loaded case after case of M26 and white phosphorus ("Willie Peter") grenades, LAAW (Light Anti-Armor Weapon) rockets, and 5.56x45mm and 7.62x51mm ammo onto the jeeps.

### Bullets, Beans, And Brew

Racing back to the hotel under relatively light enemy fire, they screeched to a halt with the badly needed ordnance, to the delight of the SEALs and other sailors in the building. The men quickly formed a human chain to offload and store the precious cargo. Harry clearly recalls the dramatic boost in the morale of the non-SEALs occasioned by this acquisition of a seemingly unlimited supply of ammunition. The fear that was so evident the previous night was replaced by a more confident attitude.

Harry recounts this in *Good to Go*: "Morale went up exponentially. Most of these sailors hadn't fired a gun in-country. ... [They] were excited about getting hardware and ammunition to effectively fight." Gallagher's organization of the hotel's defenses involved fully half of the non-SEALs who were determined, upon the next attack, to show their mettle.

"Minutes later, main force NVA attacked," Harry wrote in his book. "We received a full, World War II-type ... attack. ... Rockets exploded into brick walls of nearby buildings. ... Fifty-caliber machine guns rattled furiously. M60 machine guns were going off. The main push came at us."

For the next hour or so, the NVA threw everything they had at the hotel, and the Navy men threw everything they had back at the NVA. Finally, at sunset, fighting tapered off. The 7th Platoon and its non-SEAL allies were able to take a breather, of sorts.

The next morning Gallagher observed that the Americans were getting low on



Matthews and Constance inspect one of 7th Platoon's SEAL Team Assault Boat docked at My Tho. (inset) On a Mike boat heading home after a mission are (left to right) Curtis Ashton, Matthews, Mike Boynton, VC prisoner, and Fred Keener, who assures the frightened POW that he will not be harmed. (Mike boats were converted LCM Mark 6 landing craft heavy with armor, M60 and .50-caliber machine guns, 7.62x51mm miniguns, and even recoilless rifles and mortars.)

food and water. In classic Eagle fashion, he called for "volunteers" (Harry, Curtis, Roy Dean, and Fred) to dash on foot to the nearby Navy administrative offices in search of food and drink. Hitching up their rucksacks, the four made a mad scramble from the hotel to the admin building, which also housed the chow hall and the Red Dog Saloon, the Navy "watering hole" in My Tho.

Arriving at the compound, the four SEALs entered, cut the locks off the dining facility's refrigerators, and loaded up as much food as they could carry — about 60 pounds each. After hightailing it back to the hotel, they unloaded their cargo and prepared to catch their breath. It was not to be.

Gallagher was thirsty. He asked for four more "volunteers" to go to the Red Dog and bring him a beer. So it was that Harry, Curtis, Roy Dean, and Fred went back to the Red Dog, shot off the lock, and made multiple trips back to the hotel laden with every conceivable type of liquor and beer. It was, after all, a *holiday*.

### Winchesters and LAAWS

Morale, needless to say, increased even more dramatically with these provisions. Harry recalls that the hotel's defenders had more liquor from the Red Dog than bologna and cheese from the chow hall. The non-SEALs, in particular, got a major psychological lift from being able to partake of a cold brew along with genuine American sandwiches.

A major annoyance during the siege of the hotel was the threat posed by the VC/NVA snipers holed up in the buildings around the hotel. Lieutenant Peterson finally had enough. He ordered Harry and Chuck Jessie to go up on the roof and ameliorate

the threat. Taking their sniper rifles and a few cases of LAAWS, the two lost no time in spotting their first two snipers and removing same with a well-aimed rocket.

For the next three days Harry and Chuck spent many hours on the roof countering the snipers and killing other VC/NVA troops with their .270 Winchester bolt-action rifles at ranges of up to 600 yards. At one stage, during another major assault, the two rained down rockets on the enemy until the attack was beaten back. "Thank God for the LAAWS," says Harry today. "We'd have been lost without them."

On the fifth day of the Tet campaign came good news. Peterson announced that the offensive seemed to be petering out, with the enemy having taken heavy casualties. "Fortress My Tho" had held, and 7th Platoon not only had survived but played a major part in disrupting the largest enemy offensive of the war.

A SEAL platoon reinforced with non-quals had emerged virtually unscathed from what was undoubtedly the most ferocious infantry combat involving Navy SpecOps in the entire Vietnam conflict. What enabled a handful of (admittedly, well-trained) Navy men to withstand the best efforts of a large, well-equipped, and determined enemy force over so many days? Harry Constance gives predominant credit to the leadership provided by Lt. "Pete" Peterson and Master Chief "Eagle" Gallagher, both of whom are highly respected in the SEAL community to this day.

Knowing both men (and having worked closely with each of them), I don't find that surprising at all. The combination of Pete's tactical sense and Eagle's uncanny ability to smell out a situation enabled a small but determined group of men to withstand the best a determined enemy could throw at them. Unfortunately, for the latter, the SEALs were just a tad more determined and significantly better trained.

### Running With The "Reefer"

In almost every tale of combat there is an element of humor. The story of the siege at My Tho is no different. After all, it was *the* Tet Offensive. Think about it: During that frenzied week, U.S. and allied forces slaughtered VC and NVA troops in huge numbers — a decisive victory — yet the press corps in Saigon, through the wonders of television, was convincing the



American public that we had lost the war right there and then. The irony is so deep, you have to laugh.

During the My Tho siege, even the sniper ops became a game, with Harry Constance and Chuck Jessie doing a "Mutt and Jeff" routine to determine who got the next shot. The funniest episode of My Tho, however, involved a refrigerator. Mind you, this was no ordinary "reefer" — it was the Central Intelligence Agency's refrigerator. Harry Constance recently told me the whole story.

"On the third day of Tet, on an excursion out of the hotel to check on other friendly military positions in My Tho, we decided to check out the CIA 'safe' house, which certainly was less than safe at that time," he recalls.

"We arrived at the house and found all the doors locked and in good order, but with nobody in sight. We forcibly opened one of the doors and quickly observed that the house was in good order — nothing had been disturbed. No sign of a desperate, last-minute departure," Harry says. "That could mean only one thing: Our *friends* in the Agency knew about the Tet offensive beforehand, and they hadn't told us or anybody else. They had simply 'cut a chogie,' and what we were thinking wasn't pretty.

"Well, what could we do to pay 'em back, under the circumstances? One thing came to mind: help ourselves to whatever we wanted," the ex-Stoner man recalls. This included booze, sardines, chocolate, grenades, and other delights.

"While we were loading ourselves up with this booty, Gallagher reached into a brand-new refrigerator and pulled out a cold beer. Staring balefully at the rest of us, he wrapped his arms and legs around the reefer and stated simply, 'Mine!' We could see it coming — his 'volunteer' pitch was coming. Sure enough, here it came: 'Keener, Ashton, Constance, Roy Dean, carry this thing back to the hotel.'

"I couldn't believe it; here we are right in the middle of a fired-up enemy and Eagle wants us to carry a mega-million-cubic-foot refrigerator back to the hotel! Gallagher says, 'Up, boat! Shoulder carry, march!' — just like in SEAL training! So the four of us

lifted that big kluge onto our shoulders and, with Gallagher and 'Hook' Tuure running point, proceeded back home at as much of a run as we could muster. In retrospect, I only wish that I could have been an observer at that bizarre scene! Can you imagine six idiots trying to navigate the streets of an enemy-occupied town while carrying a 400-pound piece of refrigeration and dodging AK-47 fire? It was wild!

"Let me tell you something else — it was no Boy Scout hike, with bullets flying everywhere and us about to pass out from our efforts. Somehow, though, we ricocheted off walls and burned-out cars and managed to get back to the hotel. As we rounded the final corner, we heard cheering from the SEALs and sailors. Just as we did, though, some bad guys behind us opened up on us," Constance continues. "I'm convinced to this day that they [VC] wanted to put a hole in the reefer just to make Gallagher mad.

"Anyway, the guys in the hotel saw what was happening and laid down a base of M60 fire that would have done credit to a Marine Corps line company prepping an enemy position. When the VC/NVA fire ceased, we made a mad dash for the front door and deposited the reefer. Not good enough for Gallagher, though: 'Don't stop here! Get it up the stairs so it doesn't get shot!'

"Well, we finally got that thing up to the third floor, and I thought sure Eagle was going to send us back for a second refrigerator we had seen in the CIA house. To my everlasting satisfaction, though, he didn't.

"Looking back, as crazy as the whole thing was, it turned out to be worth the

effort, because we were able to keep our food and liquid supplies cool for the duration of the siege. At this stage of my life, I think it was one more case of Eagle anticipating a requirement and disguising his solution as an outrageous mission," Harry concludes.

## Eagle, SEALs, And Spooks

There's a postscript to this story. Once My Tho was "re-pacified," the CIA guys returned to their quarters to find their fabulous refrigerator missing. The best information the agents could obtain indicated that some Americans had gone into the house during the offensive. Not surprisingly, the spooks figured the SEALs had something to do with the reefer's disappearance, and they dispatched an emissary to inquire about it.

Upon arriving, the CIA guy was referred to Gallagher. The CIA operator asked if the master chief petty officer knew anything about the "disappeared" refrigerator.

Leaning against the purloined item's door, Eagle calmly informed the officer that he did not, but that he would surely let him know if he found out anything about it.

As best as can be recalled, the CIA man then expressed his appreciation for the favor and returned to his safe house. Under the circumstances, it was the most prudent thing the spook could do. After all, who knows when he might have wanted to visit Eagle and 7<sup>th</sup> Platoon and enjoy a cold beer?

*Retired Navy Captain Larry Bailey is SOF's contributing editor for UDT/SEAL affairs.* ✕



Constance, Keener, and (left) an unidentified U.S. Army Ranger beat the bush south of My Tho as Chuck Jessie (inset) brings up the rear.





# Leader of the Pack

## Pioneer Patrols Iraqi No-Fly Zone

Text & Photos by  
**Dale B. Cooper**

**F**er tactical call sign is "Tally" — short for *tallyho*, a term fighter pilots use when they first see the "bad guys." U.S. Air Force Captain Jeannie Flynn was given that handle because she has the "eyes of an eagle." Flynn is the nation's first female fighter pilot; she also is the Air Force's first female F-15E Strike Eagle pilot.

It was hot and noisy as I watched Flynn's training sortie roll onto the active runway, four abreast, and await clearance to takeoff from Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. There was an eerie howl coming from eight massive Pratt & Whitney engines as the pilots of the supersonic aircraft waved "goodbye" with their twin vertical stabilizers.

The bright, summer sun reflected off the bubble canopy of each Strike Eagle as it rocketed down the runway under full afterburner. The roar was deafening as each bird clawed its way into the clear blue sky at 20-second intervals.

Captain Flynn, 30, has been flying an F-15E with the 336th Fighter Squadron for the past three years. The "Rocketeers" are one of four F-15E squadrons based at Seymour Johnson, known as "Strike Eagle Country" and home to the 4th Fighter Wing. Two squadrons can be deployed worldwide on short notice. The other two train Strike Eagle crews.

Considered to be the most advanced tactical fighter in the world, the F-15E is the fifth-generation Eagle to come off the McDonnell Douglas Aerospace assembly line in St. Louis, Mo. — Capt. Flynn's birthplace.



**Captain Jeannie Flynn of the 336th Fighter Squadron: the U.S. Air Force's first female F-15E pilot.**

Able to fly more than 2,400 miles with low-drag conformal fuel tanks, the F-15E is a dual-role fighter that can evade enemy missiles on its way to a target (reaching air speeds of Mach 2.5 plus), destroy ground targets with precision-guided munitions, and then fight its way out with its 20mm Gatling gun and Sparrow, Sidewinder, or AMRAAM air-to-air missiles.

### Life In The Fast Lane

Jeannie Flynn chose F-15Es because she wanted to soar with the eagles.

The F-15E has an astounding climb rate of 15,240 feet per minute. In addition to being the most effective multi-role strike fighter/bomber in the Air Force today, the Strike Eagle is also the first fighter to go supersonic in the vertical, an important capability in the three-dimensional world of air combat. Two Pratt & Whitney turbofan engines provide sufficient thrust to enable the F-15E to accelerate in a turn, even when flying straight up.

Being an Eagle driver is not a job for the timid.

Besides being a natural-born aviator and a "brain," Flynn also has "the ability to think on her feet and adapt to changing conditions in the air," said Major Mark Houtzer, a veteran weapons systems officer (WSO: pronounced *wizzo*). Houtzer is looking forward to flying with more female Strike Eagle pilots "as long as they measure up as well as Flynn."

Other members of the 336th feel much the same way.

"It's just like flying on the wing of anyone else," said 1st Lieutenant Dave Otto. "You're flying with a member of your

U.S. Air Force

Dale B. Cooper

squadron, and that's as far as it goes."

Another backseater, Capt. John Simmons, agrees. "We always have this tendency to put everything into nice little containers or categorize everything with a label. But it makes zero difference to me whether it's a man or woman at all."

### From College To Cockpit

Flynn's first love obviously is flying; she lives and breathes it. Raising horses runs a close second. After graduating from the University of Texas with a Bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering, Flynn earned a Master's degree in aeronautics and astronautics at Stanford University. She has wanted to fly as long as she can remember, but didn't take her first flight until she was 18.

Flynn's love of flying began when she was a sophomore at UT-Austin; she decided she didn't want to *design* aircraft, she wanted to *fly* them. It wasn't until she entered the Air Force ROTC and got a few orientation flights in F-16s that Flynn knew she really wanted to fly fighters. There was only one thing standing in her way: the so-called "risk rule."

In the spring of 1993, then-Secretary of Defense Les Aspin changed the rule to allow women to fly combat aircraft.

As of this writing, only 15 women are flying combat aircraft in the Air Force. Five are flying A-10 tank-killers; there were six in the "Warthogs" until Capt. Amy Svoboda was killed in a crash during a training flight in Arizona (on the same day *SOF* was interviewing Capt. Flynn in North Carolina). Two women are flying F-16s; four are flying F-15Cs; and two are flying B-1 bombers. The first woman to fly a B-52 bomber, 1st Lt. Kelly Flinn, left the Air Force this year after a widely publicized controversy.

As of this summer, two more female pilots were nearing completion of their Strike Eagle training at Seymour Johnson. Two other women were concluding their training as WSOs. One of them, 1st Lt. Mary Lauraine Melfi, told *SOF* that her dad worries more about her safety than does her mother. Melfi, whose call sign is "Scary," says the day is coming when there will be an all-female F-15E Strike Eagle crew. The physical therapy major from Rutgers University was to have been "mission-qual-

ified" by Thanksgiving, but full proficiency will take another six to eight months.

### A Novelty, At First

Somebody would blaze the trail. In May 1993, Flynn became the first woman to enter "fighter fundamentals" training at Holloman AFB, N.M. Four months later she entered F-15E training at Luke AFB, Ariz., and was graduated the following February. Completing the Combat Survival Training Course at Fairchild AFB, Wash., in March 1994, she packed her bags and headed for Seymour Johnson.

Looking back, Flynn said she was a "novelty" everywhere she went.

"When I went to fighter lead-in training and fighter upgrade training, it was a lot to deal with," said Flynn. "There are women going through training now and it's not a big deal. But we're still very much a minority, and somewhat a novelty depending on the bases where we are stationed, and I think it will continue to be that way for some time. However it is not as much a novelty as it was. It's not a big deal to see a

woman flying a Strike Eagle, as much as it used to."

Of the 14,500 pilots in the U.S. Air Force, only 321, or 2.2%, are women. It only is a matter of time until some members of that small group are engaged in actual aerial combat. Flynn already has flown over hostile territory.

### Aftermath Of Gulf War

The 336th was among the Air Force's first units to deploy to the Persian Gulf area in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990. Had Saddam's armored columns continued south across the border into Saudi Arabia, it would have been the 336th's mission to stop them.

In 1997, the U.N.-mandated "No Fly Zone," in effect in southern Iraq since the cease-fire in 1991, extends almost to the outskirts of Baghdad. It bristles with "threat rings" of surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) and air-defense artillery (ADA) batteries. This summer, Capt. Flynn returned to the zone. She already had flown 10 sorties in the zone between December 1995 and



U.S. Air Force



F-15Es patrolling the No Fly Zone in southern Iraq rendezvous for refueling with KC-135 tanker.



(above) At Seymour Johnson AFB, Capt. Flynn posts information for aircrews' pre-flight briefing. (below) In ready room, pilot dons flight suit. (right) On flight line, Flynn inspects F-15E's landing gear. She and weapons systems officer, Capt. Gene Anderson, prepare for last training flight before summer '97 deployment to Saudi Arabia.



Dale B. Cooper

February 1996 in support of Operation Southern Watch. Such missions are logged as combat flight time.

Unlike her first trip to the desert as an inexperienced pilot, Flynn would return as a seasoned veteran. Since flying as a two-flight lead over Iraq in late 1995 and early 1996, Flynn has been upgraded to a four-ship lead and instructor pilot. Flynn also is a mission commander.

Speaking prior to that Southern Watch deployment, neither Flynn nor Lt. Colonel Larry Coleman, commander of the 336th, were overly concerned about Iraqi air defenses in the zone.

"If someone shoots at Jeannie," Coleman said, "she will take the appropriate

countermeasures to defeat the missile just like any other member of my squadron."

"Hammer," as Lt. Col. Coleman is known to his wingmen, is the first WSO to command an F-15E squadron, having begun his career as an enlisted weapons mechanic. He is the only member of the 336th to have flown F-15Es during the Gulf War, in which he flew 57 combat sorties, racking up 235 combat hours in the Strike Eagle. He knows firsthand the awesome capability of that aircraft.

### Eagles In Action

Operation Desert Storm began with a vengeance in the early hours of 17 January 1991 when a dozen U.S. Army Apache and

Air Force special-operations helicopters destroyed two early-warning radar installations along the Saudi-Iraqi border. Turning back toward their staging areas in Saudi Arabia, the choppers were passed in the night by eight F-15Es sneaking into Iraqi airspace to destroy the nearest air-defense command center and open a corridor for other Coalition aircraft.

During Operation Desert Storm, F-15Es attacked high-value targets at night and in bad weather while maintaining an unparalleled average mission-capability rate of 95.5%. By the end of the war, the 336th had flown 1,100 combat sorties, logged 3,200 hours in the air, and dropped 6.5-million pounds of ordnance on targets in Iraq and

Kuwait, including fixed and mobile Scud-missile sites, Republican Guard mechanized units, and bridges and airfields.

Lieutenant Col. Coleman vividly remembers spearheading nighttime strikes, and one in particular. "We approached the target [a huge ammunition stockpile] from the side at 20 or so miles away. I used the ground-mapping function of the radar and commanded the computer to produce a high-resolution map of the area. From there I slewed the targeting pod of the LANTIRN system toward the ammo site," he said.

Considered the cream of the avionics crop, the Low-Altitude Navigation and Targeting Infrared for Night system comprises two pods attached to the exterior of the aircraft. The navigational pod contains terrain-following radar for low-altitude flight; the second, the targeting pod, contains a laser designator and a tracking system that marks an enemy for destruction from as far away as 10 miles. Once tracking starts, data are automatically fed to infrared air-to-surface missiles or laser-guided bombs.

Coleman initiated a lock on the target as the F-15E began to roll in from 25,000 feet, eight miles out. Once inside the delivery parameters, he released the laser-guided bomb and turned the laser on. "When it [bomb] hit, all hell broke loose," said Coleman. "It was the biggest explosion I have ever seen. It completely blotted out the targeting pod. The heat was intense, and we had all kinds of unguided ordnance coming up at us."

He added that a couple of young lieutenants in the number-two Strike Eagle aborted their bombing run, thinking the big fireball was from a SAM launch.

Seymour Johnson's 4th Fighter Wing lost two F-15Es in the war: one to ADA down low and one to a SAM up high. For fighter pilots, these are occupational hazards.

### Avoiding Publicity

With the exception of a few photo ops at Holloman and Luke during the past 4½ years, Flynn has not granted a formal interview. She has avoided publicity.

"I told them [public affairs officers] up front I really didn't want the publicity. It was just going to make it more difficult for me to become the first female fighter pilot," said Flynn. She granted *SOF* the first formal interview of her career, a few days before deploying again to the Persian Gulf.

"I also told them it's going to make it more difficult to be incorporated into the squadron the more I'm highlighted," said the petite blonde pilot who drives a 1985 Chevy Blazer — when she's not screaming across the sky. (Flynn revealed that she plans to trade that beat-up Blazer for a new pickup truck — a fitting vehicle for a University of Texas alumna.)

A certain amount of "must" appearances were required during her training, because of the significant change in DoD policy. Now that training is behind her, and she has been incorporated into the

336th, Flynn is happy to see that women who followed have not been highlighted the way she was. For that reason, she feels like a pioneer in military aviation.

"Timing is everything," she said. "There was a lot of publicity when I was the first woman to go through fighter-pilot training. I would have preferred to have been the 43rd — where no one cares — because what I want to do is fly fighters. Once I got the chance to back off from the publicity, that was exactly what I wanted, because I didn't want to be highlighted anymore. I wanted to be part of the squadron and no different than anyone else."

### "Common-Sense Test"

*SOF* broadened this project to include interviews with two highly visible male *pro-*



Diehl B. Cooper

Among those women following in Capt. Flynn's footsteps is 1st Lt. Mary Lauraine Melfi, a WSO candidate attending Strike Eagle training at Seymour Johnson AFB.

ponents of women in U.S. combat aviation.

Ironically, Colonel Billy Diehl flew with the 336th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Seymour Johnson in 1975-6, 13 years before the "Rocketeers" became the first operational Strike Eagle squadron. The transition from the F-4E, which Diehl flew, to the F-15E which Captain Flynn flies, was completed in July 1991 after the Gulf War, making the 4th the first operational F-15E fighter wing in the Air Force.

When 1st Lt. Diehl shot down a MiG-21 over North Vietnam in 1972, the thought of women flying combat aircraft was the farthest thing from his mind.

"We didn't even talk about it back then," said Diehl, vice commander of the 347th Fighter Wing at Moody AFB, Ga., and an F-16C flyer. "Not that we didn't think they'd [women] be good enough. Some studies have shown that women are better instrument pilots than men because they are more detail-oriented. But as far as being aggressive enough to fly fighters, I would have probably questioned that back in 1972."

Diehl flew a total of 230 combat missions over Vietnam as a WSO in an F-4 Phantom. Years later, in the Gulf War, he led the opening day's air strike on a MiG airfield on the outskirts of Baghdad as commander of the 17th Tactical Fighter Squadron.

Since the Gulf War, his career path again has crossed with his old Vietnam bud, Brigadier General Lawrence D. ("L.D.") Johnston, now commander of the 347th. Johnston and Diehl, as lieutenants in Vietnam, flew several combat missions together in 1972 as Forward Air Controllers with the 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron based in Thailand.

In 1990, on the day before Iraq invaded Kuwait, Col. Johnston checked in as com-

**Continued on page 66**



courtesy Col. Billy Diehl

One supporter of women in combat aviation was Col. Billy Diehl, shown here in 1972 as a lieutenant and WSO (right) with his F-4 pilot, Maj. Lon Holtz, following their shoot-down of a North Vietnamese MiG-21. Diehl used an AIM-9 Sidewinder missile.



## Think Like A Terrorist, Fight Like A Commando

*"Spartans don't ask how many of the enemy there are, only where they are."*

—Engraved on a plaque hanging at GSG-9 headquarters in St. Augustin, Germany, courtesy of the U.S. Army's 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta.

**A** Bell-212 chopper, adorned in the green scheme and markings of the *Bundesgrenzschutz*, approaches, flying so close to the tree tops that its landing skids almost touch the leaves. At a clearing the chopper swoops down sharply behind a speeding Mercedes and four men, wearing green overalls, black face masks and camouflaged helmets, unsling assault rifles and swing open the side door of the fast-moving helicopter. As the Bell-212 makes a low-level pass at the Mercedes, the team leader, a *Polizeikommissar*, who for reasons of security can only be known as "K," issues the signal and rows of sharp red laser beams dart from the chopper's cargo hold. A dozen 7.62x51mm rounds cut into the Mercedes, but only two of the *passengers* (mannequins, actually) are hit: the two terrorists.

### Gone Are The Good Old Days

The days when the unit pursued East German intelligence operations and Soviet

### Text & Photos by Samuel M. Katz

*Spetsnaz* teams who routinely set up observation posts around NATO bases are over, as are the days of the Red Army Faction and of Abu Nidal. *Polizeikommissar* "K" never thought he would find himself leaping from a police van in the middle of a neo-Nazi demonstration in the Köln suburb of Solingen busting heads with a baton, nor did he ever envision himself assaulting a barge on the Rhine carrying smuggled cigarettes by Serb-organized crime figures armed with assault weapons and grenade launchers sold to them by departing Russian troops.

"K" had never heard of Chechnya, nor did he think that there was such a thing as the Chechen Mafia, the Uzbekistan organized crime syndicate, and other violence-steeped criminal entities emerging from the former Soviet Union.

*Polizeikommissar* "K" never thought that the day would come when the federal government would not sufficiently fund GSG-9, when a serving officer would have to buy his own equipment or that he would

have to worry about his unit's long-term existence.

Since its inception in 1972, GSG-9 has earned for itself a reputation as being the world's best. Even though it can be argued that Israeli units have had far more work than GSG-9 in the last few years, and the British Special Air Service (SAS) has been writing the book on undercover counterterrorist operations in Northern Ireland, a certain mystique — a halo of excellence — still surrounds GSG-9. According to an officer in the U.S. Army's *ultra-elite*, *ultra-secretive* 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta, a unit known by its moniker, "Delta Force," "GSG-9 is the unit that is lavished with the finest equipment, runs its men through the most exhaustive and psychologically advanced selection process available, and performs its training and its ops with unequaled professional skill. It is still the unit that all other forces around the world aspire to become."

### Of Late, More Questions Than Accolades

At home, however, GSG-9's recent reputation has sown more controversy than accolades. Its very mandate — and some say, very existence — is under fire in the reunified Germany. Since each German

state and city now maintains its own *Spezialeinsatz Kommando*, *SEKs* or SWAT units to counter heavy-duty criminal problems, GSG-9 has become the "Dirty Harry" of the nation's special-operations forces — given assignments that no other unit wants to — or can — carry out. Today, they are enmeshed in combating the invading hordes of heavily armed Eastern European crime gangs and political extremists and doing a lot of work with the *Bundeskriminalamt* (or BKA), Germany's "FBI." Because of the enormous economic burden of national reunification and caring for a population of immigrants, the once-endless GSG-9 budget has evaporated, transforming this recent one-time aristocratic force of counterterrorist commandos into virtual orphans.

GSG-9 was conceived out of one fateful — and failed — ambush at Furstenfeldbruck airport, near Munich, in September 1972. Inside the charred remains of a helicopter were the corpses of the nine Israeli athletes seized at the Olympic games; quite dead proof of Germany's non-preparedness to deal with hostage situations. The Bavarian police's attempt to pick off the terrorists on an open tarmac was an impudent assault against men trained to kill in an instant and all-too-ready to die in an explosive flash. The terrorist attack at the Munich Olympics was a devastating blow to Germany's solar plexus and its gallant attempt to revamp its post-war image. The fact that German policemen attempted — and failed — to save the lives of Jewish hostages did not soothe the critics.

Originally, the German army wanted responsibility for fighting terrorism but creating an elite military unit that might have to turn its weapons on its own citizens was too reminiscent of the *SS* for the government to stomach. So, Interior Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher was given permission to form a special group within the Federal Border Police to combat terrorism. The unit would be paramilitary and had complete national authority and international responsibility for safeguarding German diplomats — and installations — in trouble-spots. The man tasked with bringing this notion off the ground was Ulrich Wegener, a counterterrorist expert and 15-year veteran of the *Bundesgrenzschutz* who had built extremely close links to Israeli special forces and the *Shin Bet* General Security Service. Using *Sayeret Matkal*, the Israel Defense Forces' elite General Staff Reconnaissance Unit, as his working model Wegener was able to make GSG-9 operational in less than a year. Although odd for an Israeli unit to be the inspiration behind a force of German commandos, Wegener realized the significance of this new force if

Germany was ever to erase a part of her past.

## That Shining Moment

GSG-9's shining moment, the operation that cemented its elite reputation, was the 17 October 1977 assault on a hijacked Lufthansa jet at Mogadishu International Airport in Somalia. Using special "flash-bang" diversionary grenades developed by the SAS, the assault force managed to enter the aircraft, surprise the four Palestinian ter-

rorists and kill them with dead-on spurts of gunfire. In a few seconds, a desperate scenario far from the German frontier ended in absolute victory. Eighty-six hostages were freed unharmed and GSG-9 became a force of national heroes to a nation devoid of such figures since the end of World War II.



courtesy GSG-9



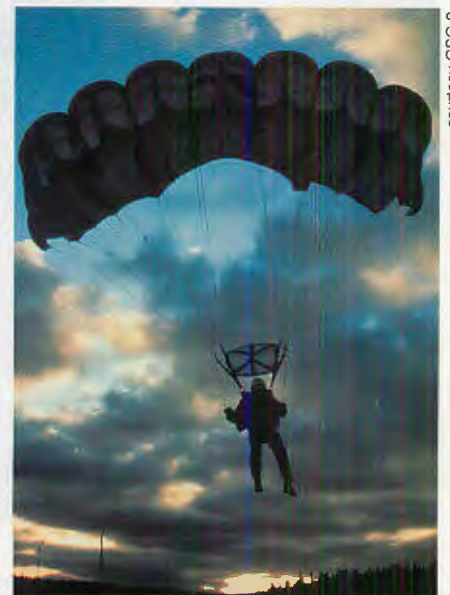
(left) With their MP5s at the ready, GSG-9 operators prepare to fire at a target from their low-flying *Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe* Bell-212. (above) Inside its immaculate hangar at St. Augustin, a *Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe* SA.332 Puma sits sheltered from the winter's elements. (below) A *Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe* Bell-212 chopper supports a GSG-9/2 counterstrike operation in the North Sea.



courtesy GSG-9



courtesy GSG-9



courtesy GSG-9

(above) GSG-9 operators free-fall at 7,500 feet from their *Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe* Bell-212. (right) Operator from GSG-9's Combat Unit 3 (GSG-9/3) nears touch down on DZ following training jump.

## The Deluge - Then, A Fortuitous Remedy

On the night of 27 June 1993, approximately 30 GSG-9 operatives and BKA agents found themselves on stake-out at the train station in the eastern village of Bad Kleinen. Their targets were Birgit Hogefeld, 37, and Wolfgang Grams, 40, two of the most wanted members of the renegade Red Army Faction (RAF). Because of the typical German bureaucracy involved in such undercover operations, officers from several federal state and local police agencies had to be involved in the operation. BKA and GSG-9 knew that confusing mix of varying police officers, uniforms, techniques, and radio frequencies would court disaster. How correct they were. While police arrested Hogefeld, Grams whipped a weapon from his jacket and gunned down one GSG-9 operator and wounded another before he was shot on Track 4 of the poorly lit station. The incident might have ended there, were it not for a series of investigative leaks to the vibrant and ravenous German tabloid press. Eager for a scandal "Bad Kleinen" became a feeding frenzy and GSG-9 was served up to a national audience eager for whatever sounded enticing. Tabloid magazines uncovered nearly two dozen eyewitnesses who swore that a member of GSG-9 had shot Grams in cold-blood as he lay stiff on the tracks. The ensuing scandal exposed the inner workings of the BKA's campaign against the almost-dormant RAF, as well as intruded into the clandestine machinery of GSG-9.

Before a full investigation of the incident could be conducted by authorities, GSG-9

was tried and convicted by the press. Interior Minister Rudolf Seiters, Chief Federal Prosecutor Alexander von Stahl, and the head of the government's counterterrorism office, Rainer Hoffmeyer, resigned over the deaths at Bad Kleinen. In an attempt to save their own political standings, many in Chancellor Kohl's inner circle publicly called for the reformation — or disbanding — of GSG-9. Outraged, Kohl paid a highly publicized and emotional visit to the unit to praise and eulogize the dead GSG-9 officer and to express his outrage that a murderer had been transformed into a martyr.

However, on 17 August, a KLM flight from Tunis to Amsterdam was hijacked to

Düsseldorf by a lone Egyptian, a follower of fire-branding Egyptian Sheikh Omar Abdel Rahman, who demanded the cleric's release from his incarceration in New York. GSG-9 was called to the scene and an assault squad of operators gained entrance to the aircraft and subdued the hijacker without firing a shot. The rescue in Düsseldorf was a fitting footnote to the Bad Kleinen controversy. Even the German press hailed GSG-9's skill and restraint in dealing with the KLM hijacking. An editorial in the usually critical *Aachener Volkszeitung* stated, "The incident at Düsseldorf proved that the men of GSG-9 know their craft and are not blood-thirsty or trigger happy."

### Only Serving Policemen Need Apply

Because of the past troubles with leftists, GSG-9 candidates had always been screened for any possible political affiliations toward leftist and communist causes. Today, a candidate displaying questionable right-wing leanings is likely to be dropped from the course. "Right-wing fools," as GSG-9 calls the neo-Nazis, are not considered major threats to German internal security, but they are threats to Germany's image. They embody everything that can go wrong in a united Germany, and have the potential to snowball into a violent underground — far less sophisticated and disciplined than the Baader-Meinhoff gang in the late 1970s, but far more prone to acts of indiscriminate violence.

Before the last Russian troops left the former East Germany, they sold just about anything and everything that wasn't nailed down — from small arms to anti-tank rockets.

Many officers in GSG-9 openly fear what lies ahead in the coming years as Germany redefines its identity.

One cannot simply volunteer into Grenzschutzgruppe 9 — not regular local, municipal or state policemen; not military personnel or even agents in the BKA. Only serving policemen in the BGS (the affectionate acronym for the *Bundesgrenzschutz*) are allowed to submit their paperwork, and only those who have undergone an exhaustive security examination and psychological testing are even allowed into the selection process. The unit is a melting pot of German society, made up of upper-class university graduates, sons of middle-class workers, sons of farmers and even those from the slums of Berlin and Hamburg.

Numbering approximately 300 operators, GSG-9 is divided into three operational sections or "Combat Units." Combat Unit 1, believed to consist of approximately 100 men, is composed of a fire team, and one conventional/unconventional counterterrorist hostage-rescue assault unit. Each assault unit is divided into 10, five-man *Sonder-Einsatztrupp* or SETs (Special Combat Teams), the smallest operational detachment in GSG-9. Commanders deploy their units in terms of combat teams, which consist of machine gunners, riflemen and a sniper.

Unit 2 is trained in naval special war-



(above) The GSG-9 wings and patch. (below) During a stealth-like assault on a building besieged by terrorists, GSG-9 operators hone their assault skills.



courtesy GSG-9

fare and maritime counterterrorism. Trained by the Germany Navy's elite naval commando force, the *Kampfschwimmers*, many are EOD-qualified. If a river barge on the Rhine or Elbe would be hijacked, if a dangerous smuggling gang would be operating along one of Germany's waterways, or if a dangerous hostage or criminal situation developed in the North Sea, Unit 2 would get the call. Unit 3, the smallest of the three combat units, is the free-fall parachutist-qualified GSG-9 combat unit. GSG-9 carries primarily German-produced Heckler and Koch submachine guns, assault rifles, pistols and sniping rifles (considered around the world the "Rolls Royce" of SpecOps weaponry).

### Superb Air Assets

Supporting virtually all GSG-9 deployments are the pilots and helicopter of the *Bundesgrenzschutz's Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe*, or flight group. Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe pilots are considered among Germany's best, trained to land on a coin and fly through the most harrowing of urban and rural obstacles. They are considered the finest chopper pilots in Germany. Many consider them to be Europe's best. According to one officer in the Italian Carabinieri's *Groupe Interventionale Speciale (GIS)*, "they have the high-speed skills of a Ferrari race-car driver, the low-key temperament of an accountant, and the delicate hands of a brain-surgeon." According to a U.S. Army Special Forces NCO, with years of special operations and counterterrorism experience, "These flyers are as skilled as they are daring, as talented as they are professional and capable of performing far beyond what the manual permits their choppers to perform."

Stationed only a few hundred meters from the unit's barracks at a sprawling mini-airbase, the Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe is formally the property of the Bundesgrenzschutz, and fulfills all duties required by the Federal Border Police. In time of emergency, however, these are the aerial taxis that GSG-9 uses to reach their objectives and, as a result, Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe pilots are trained to be Germany's best — even better chopper drivers than exist in the German Air Force — for the stable of aircraft including the Aerospatiale SA.332 Super Puma, the Aerospatiale Alouette (mainly for one-man insertion and reconnaissance) and the GSG-9 workhorse, the Bell-212 (UH-ID).

### Grand Prix "Qualifiers"

GSG-9 also deploys a fleet of vehicles that transport them to targets or operations close to their home base at St. Augustin consisting primarily of the Mercedes Benz 280 SE high-performance passenger car, a Mercedes Benz 280 GE cross-country personnel vehicle (as well as a specially armored version of the 280 GE that is equipped with firing slots for the passenger

seat next to the driver), and a mini-fleet of Volkswagen mini-buses. According to one Italian counterterrorist officer who trained with GSG-9 and who prides himself of having reached a speed of 100 mph in the twisting mountain roads of Sicily, "GSG-9 drivers can out-maneuver, out-smart and simply out-drive the best formula-one racer at Le Mans, and the wildest speedsters at the Indy 500. Terrorists don't have a chance



with these operators behind the wheel."

The GSG-9 barracks at St. Augustin, near Bonn, is considered a Mecca to the world's counterterrorist forces. In the days when funds were endless, GSG-9 was a "have submachine gun, will travel" organization. They regularly visited units all over the world, but because of a lack of funds that every government body is enduring since reunification, GSG-9 has put its travel bags away. The travelers have become the hosts as any unit worth its salt sends some of its men to St. Augustin for a visit, a peek, and a chance for joint-training. The walls of the command center and barracks compound are adorned with plaques and souvenirs from these contacts — framed offerings of thanks, appreciation and friendship from Britain's SAS, the Australian and New Zealand SAS, the Spanish GEO, the Italian Carabinieri's GIS, Norway's *Deltatropen*, France's GIGN and, of course, Austria's *Gendarmerie Einsatzkommando Cobra* — one of GSG-9's closest allies.

Although a distraction to the day-to-day rigors of training and preparation, these contacts are invaluable tools for gathering intelligence, sharing techniques and finding out what is new and different in the world of counterterrorism. Operators always like to know what the next guy is doing, carrying and deploying, whether it be what communications device the IPD's "Cherry" commandos are using in the West Bank, to the

new entry device used by officers in the New York City Police Department's Emergency Service Unit or LAPD SWAT.

### The Big Brutal Picture

What GSG-9 personnel see around them is a Germany evolving into a microcosm of the ills that plague a new and changing Europe — open borders and an uncontrollable growth of heavily armed, overly violent Eastern European organized crime syndicates. GSG-9 operators, disgusted by what they see and by what their country is slowly becoming, often liken the unified Germany to a cross between the decadence of the Weimar Republic and the unbridled violence of the American Wild West.

As was the case following Bad Kleinen, they are only a lawmaker's signature away from being disbanded. In order to differentiate between new duties sought out for GSG-9 in the new Germany's war against organized crime and political violence, and Germany's geopolitical interests, the German Ministry of Defense has recently created a military response force of commandos and expert aviators capable of traveling to the four corners of the globe to rescue German citizens in harms' way. Until

**A BKA terrorist wanted poster, posted at the Grenzschutz-Fliegergruppe headquarters at St. Augustin.**

recently, German troops were not allowed to operate outside the NATO, and were forbidden to be deployed outside Germany. But police units, like GSG-9, did not fall under those restrictions, so when Germans were threatened overseas, such as in Mogadishu or more recently, in April 1994 in Namibia, it was German police and even custom service agents that were allowed to act.

In September 1996, the *Bundeswehr* officially announced that a military special-operations command unit, known as the KSK (*Kommando Spezialkräfte*) would be created for cross-boundary rescue and recovery operations. The KSK, based at Calw, south Germany, is only months into operations and is slated to have four commando companies and one LRRP company; nearly 1,000 soldiers, all volunteers from various airborne and mountain units. Their duties will be evacuations, antiterrorism and hostage-rescue, and other SpecOps.

Officially, the KSK is not a replacement for GSG-9, but rather an enhancement of Germany's overall abilities. Some GSG-9 operators, though, view the creation of the KSK as a direct threat to their existence and their international mission. Others, however, veterans of the dirty war against terrorism that the unit has fought brilliantly for the last 23 years, conclude that GSG-9 must adapt to the times, the scenarios, and to the ever-altering whims of politicians.

*Sam Katz's recent books include The Illustrated Guide to the World's Counter-Terrorist Forces (Concord).* ☞



## Islam A-Bomb

Continued from page 45

world. Iran's attempt to buy a plant from Russia has alerted many Western governments of the possibility that Iran might covertly seek out centrifuge assistance from Russian companies and experts, many of whom are desperate for business and may be willing to evade weakly enforced national export control laws. Because Russian centrifuges are subcritical models that are relatively unsophisticated (compared to the most modern European machines) they may be easier for Iran to develop and manufacture. In addition,

Russia built millions of them, raising the possibility that Tehran could somehow acquire large numbers of surplus machines."

Western specialists add that once Iran has acquired this expertise, there is nothing to stop it from passing classified material on to other interested parties such as Pakistan, Syria, Libya or even Iraq. In June this year, *The Wall Street Journal* pointed to the possibility of a new-found Syrian-Iraqi-Iranian Axis pact as a result of frustration with stalled Mid-East peace talks.

### Holy War, Strange Bedfellows

Though Syria and Iraq fought on opposite sides in the Gulf War and Iran and Iraq despise each other, there is a resurgence of

cooperation between all three countries. And while any form of nuclear cooperation between these former adversaries might be anathema now, Iraq has enough expertise to create a nightmare scenario should they ever get their heads together.

All three countries (and Syria, especially, since it says it is now almost surrounded by hostile powers) also fear the consequences of an Israeli-Turkish alliance, already *de facto*. The hostile perception Muslim nations hold for Israel in this regard was enhanced in 1981 when pre-emptive Israeli air strikes destroyed a French-built 70-megawatt research reactor outside Baghdad, on the premise that its fuel could be used to make nuclear weapons.

Beijing, too, has entered the picture. U.S. officials now believe that China has constructed a uranium hexafluoride plant as part of a secret nuclear cooperation agreement signed in 1991. This allows yellowcake to be transformed into 93% pure HEU using gas ultracentrifuges, and is coupled to reports in the Russian media of a shipment of uranium hexafluoride gas going directly from China to Iran, late 1994. Significantly, not long afterwards, in March 1995, *Iranfax*, quoting government sources, reported that "Iran is now capable of producing uranium hexafluoride gas in research installations run by AEOL."

More recently, China inked a sales agreement with Iran to build two Quinshan-class 300-MW power reactors at Darkhovin, where the French company Framatome had initially planned to build four nuclear plants in the late 1970s. They are expected to cost almost \$1 billion.

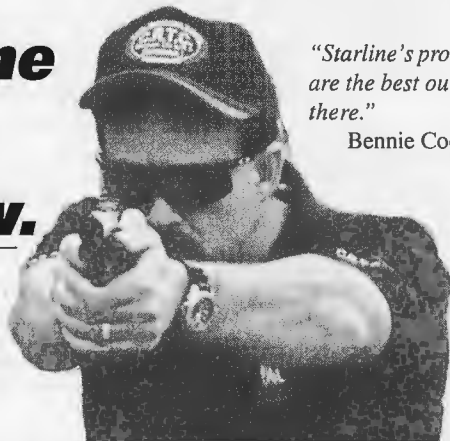
With all these developments in mind, there are people on both sides of the Atlantic who are asking the obvious: Why is Iran attempting to acquire nuclear weapons?

It is no secret that the average Iranian perceives Israel as a threat to the long-term security of his country. Add to that, the gnawing suspicion that Iran might still harbor territorial designs, especially since there is not a family in Iran who was not touched by that eight-year war, and, Iranian apologists say, Tehran has good reason to seek the ultimate deterrent. It is Albright's view that had the Iran-Iraq war gone on long enough, the Iranians would most certainly have been at the receiving end of the first of Saddam's primitive atom bombs.

There is also a real fear in Tehran that the United States, ultimately, could involve itself in the same kind of military stratagem against the Iranians that eventually crippled Iraq. Though neither of these scenarios are practical, they have been the subject of endless debates in the Iranian Majlis. These themes are touched on daily in the Iranian media and on television.

What one cannot ignore is that there is in Iran today, a wellspring of subliminal animosity towards the West. It is deep-rooted and bitter. Whatever the reason, history has proved often enough this century that such attitudes hold great danger for the future. The Islamic equation is also an issue. With

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44 SPECIAL	\$ 48.00	\$ 91.00
41 MAGNUM	\$ 48.00	\$ 91.00
45 AUTO	\$ 46.00	\$ 86.00
45 AUTO+P	\$ 56.00	\$104.00
45 SUPER	\$ 60.00	\$111.00
45 COLT	\$ 50.00	\$ 93.00
45 WIN MAG	\$ 66.00	\$119.00
10MM	\$ 49.00	\$ 92.00
40 S&W	\$ 48.00	\$ 91.00
10MM MAGNUM	\$ 63.00	\$117.00
445 SUPER MAG	\$130.00	\$228.00
414 SUPER MAG	\$130.00	\$228.00
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the end of the Cold War, there is evidence that Iran sees itself at the cutting edge of a more forceful international role that could involve the country dominating a good part of the Muslim world and the Indian Ocean. And while not yet challenging the hegemony of India in the region, there have been some notable gains.

### Expansionist Iran?

Agreements that allow the Iranian Navy access to military bases have been signed with a number of countries including the Sudan (20-year treaty) as well as with Mozambique and Madagascar, further to the south. The same has happened in South Africa, though the ANC cabinet denies this — as it does just about everything relating to closer links with the mullahs.

There is no doubt that South Africa has been successfully targeted by Iran, again with the help of the powerful Islamic parliamentary lobby. Obviously there is a lot going on.

In April 1996, for instance, Israel lodged a *demarche* with South Africa over the alleged existence of five Hezbollah military training facilities in the county, most of them in Natal. Initially the ruling ANC Government denied the existence of any camps. It later acknowledged their presence, saying that they would be closed. And even in the relatively open-minded society of South Africa, it is not wise to go poking about in such things. There have been at least a dozen murders of people (and in several instances, their families) involved in red mercury transactions.

There is also some evidence to show that former members of South Africa's special forces have been involved in training Hezbollah guerrillas, which could be a reason, says Jerusalem, why the combat ability of the guerrilla movement has improved so much in the past year in its south Lebanese operations.

Observers of that war have noted that Hezbollah has suddenly acquired quite remarkable expertise in land mine warfare. It must have come from somewhere. It is possibly coincidental that South Africa — as a consequence of its border wars of the seventies and eighties — is regarded as a world leader in land-mine and counter-mine technology.

On the nuclear front — and in a small country like South Africa these issues are sometimes inter-linked — existing South African nuclear bureaucrats could be replaced by an ANC *apparatchnik* tomorrow.

Already there have been discrepancies within the Atomic Energy Corporation. Around 130 barrels of enriched uranium waste were recently stolen from a facility in South Africa.

### A Weak Link In South Africa?

In another direction, Iran is known to be eager to acquire some of the systems developed by Kentron, the missile development component of Armscor which has

made considerable progress (with massive Israeli input) towards developing intermediate and long-range delivery systems. Although this research has been placed on the back-burner, it exists. Even China has expressed interest in acquiring this technology for its own programs.

Relations between Pretoria and Washington became strained last year when the South Africans agreed to stockpile millions of tons of Iranian oil, very much against the wishes of the United States. The Americans offered the South Africans much-needed naval patrol boats, at no cost, if they were to desist. The offer was rejected even though the South African Navy is desperate for replacements for its aging fleet.

In the meantime, every day brings the world closer to the point when would-be nuclear terrorist states are able to either re-create the 50-year-old wheel of crude-but-effective bomb technology, or cobble together materials and components from irresponsible nuclear-club members, or buy completed nukes from desperate rogues within the ashes of the former Warsaw Pact. With every day that passes, the more inevitable this point becomes.

The deterrent theory of mutual-assured destruction, which kept the peace during the Cold War, has no bearing on madmen.

*Al J. Venter is SOF's Contributing Editor for Africa.* ✕

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## Leader of the Pack

Continued from page 59

mandant of the U.S. Fighter Weapons School at Nellis AFB, Nev., the Air Force's counterpart to the Navy's famed "Top Gun" aerial-combat school. Johnston shocked a lot of his colleagues in 1992 when he came out in favor of female fighter pilots — not a popular idea then in the elite, macho world of combat aviation.

Johnston explained: "How can you have a country that is based on equality, and sends its warriors to do battle for righteous

causes, and yet exclude some of its people from doing that which they are qualified and capable of performing? It just didn't pass the common-sense test."

### Back To The "Sandbox"

A lot has changed since Capt. Flynn flew 10 combat sorties over southern Iraq and earned an Air Medal. Old rotations of "3 months gone, 6 months home" have been replaced by 90-day deployments every 15 months. A new squadron is operating out of Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia, formerly Al Kharj (or "Al's Garage," as some members of the 336<sup>th</sup> jokingly refer to the desert airfield).

Before suiting up for a final hop prior to deployment, Flynn talked about the dangers of taking new guys into the tense No Fly Zone. She had just returned from a training mission over North Carolina: high-speed intercepts, and bombing runs at a range near Cape Hatteras. Her F-15E scored multiple bulls-eyes.

"The last time [in southern Iraq], we were very heavy on experience," said Flynn. "The last time I went, I was a new two-ship flight lead. But this time I'm going back as an instructor and I will be teaching the new guys what we do and how we do it when we're 'no kidding' over in-theater."

F-15Es in Operation Southern Watch can be employed in air-to-ground missions as well as combat air patrols.

Captain Flynn declined to say whether her aircraft ever had been "painted" by Iraqi air-defense radar, but she is not afraid to fly into the danger zone. "We have on-board systems that tell us when someone is 'lighting' us up, either surface radar or airborne radar," she explained. "Around here the so-called RWR systems [Radar Warning Receivers] go off all the time when people are locking you up, but once you're in southern Iraq, you're very sensitive to that RWR because friendly aircraft are not going to lock you up."

Flynn's commander, Lt. Col. Coleman, had no doubt that "Tally" would meet the new challenges. "She'll not only be leading a four-ship [package], but will also be tasked as mission commander of a 30-ship package of F-15Es, F-16s and A-10s," he said.

It is possible that Iraqi signal-intelligence operators might intercept aircraft radio transmissions and determine that an American woman is leading such a flight. This might raise a few eyebrows in Baghdad — not that it matters.

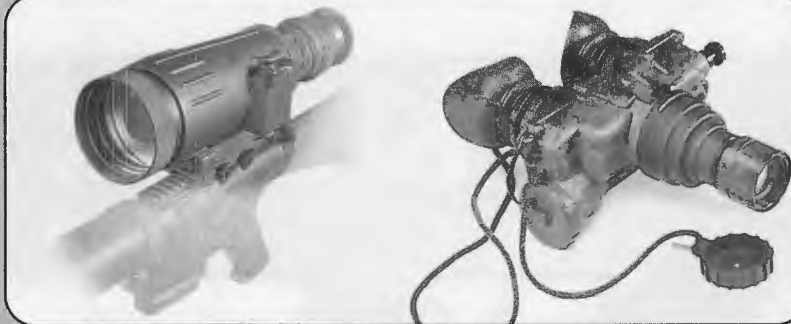
"If the Iraqi pilots think that they're getting a break because there's a [U.S.] female flight lead out there, they've got another think coming," said Flynn's WSO, Capt. Gene Anderson. "Cause if they come and do something to her, she'll just wax 'em."

Given the difficulties women have had from the get-go, Anderson says, Flynn feels she has to do it better than most aviators. "She cannot afford to be less than average, because she's in the public's eye," he said. "She can't afford to make mistakes. None of us really can, but for her it goes doubly."

Praise for Flynn goes all the way up the chain of command.

"Captain Flynn has evolved into an excellent aviator and outstanding flier with us. As a leader, she does a superb job," said Col. Blake Thomas, deputy operations commander at the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing. "We are very pleased with her performance. We'd like to have them [Air Training Command] send more of her type to us."

Senior Foreign Correspondent Dale B. Cooper's previous contribution to SOF was "Going Ballistic With The Thunderbirds," Sept. '97. ✕



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Continued from page 42

after the FBI indiscreetly identified CI-183 as Carol Howe to the McVeigh defense team: This informant is involved with the Oklahoma City bomb case which is pending prosecution in Denver and was the key in identifying individuals at Elohim City, which is tied to the Oklahoma City Bombing Case. The majority of the associates of CI-52705 [sic]-183 are militia members. ... The FBI is the lead agency on this case, however, many other federal [sic]state and local agencies are involved. Individuals who pose immediate danger to CI-53270-183 are: (1) Dennis Mahon, (2) Members of Elohim City, and (3) any sympathizer to McVeigh, i.e., militias. ... This agent has known CI 53270-183 for approximately two years and can assert that this informant has not been overly paranoid or fearful during undercover operations. This agent believes that s/he could be in serious danger when associates discover his/her identity ...

This was probably the most honest analysis, written by Finley and approved by Roberts, involving their 25-year-old CI. By the spring of 1997, however, the politically correct view required that Finley picture Howe's work as unimportant, unreliable and of little value to the ATF. At Howe's trial Finley obligingly painted a very different picture of Howe's character and conduct.

But back to May 1995, where until the 24th Finley still wanted Howe to make the second post-bombing visit to Millar's neo-Nazi compound, until: ... this agent was informed by RAC, David Roberts that Robert Millar suspected CI-183 of being a confidential informant ... It was determined that CI-183 would not be sent to Elohim City at this time or in the future.

**The Bane Of Cover-Ups - Papers Too Widely Spread**

In Howe's 1997 trial, Finley "apologized," saying she had just noticed, "after reading it a hundred times" that in her report for the month of May 1995, the statement in the preceding paragraph, had been typed incorrectly! Roberts did not tell Finley that Millar suspected CI-183 of being "a confidential informant." Finley had told Roberts of Millar's suspicions. But how did either Roberts or Finley know what Millar suspected? FBI Special Agent Peter Rickel's admission that Millar was an FBI source now makes it clear that Millar was the likely source of the threat to CI-183, relayed via the FBI.

The period from May 1995 until early 1996 was very quiet for Howe and Mahon, and only slightly more active for Andy the German. In August he left Elohim City for North Carolina. By 2 January he was in Port Arkansas, Texas, where SOF staff writer Rick Sherrow had the only media interview Strassmeir granted while in the United States.

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Very shortly thereafter (no later than 10 January according to some reports), Strassmeir left the U.S. and returned to Germany. This date is important because on 11 January he surfaced in an Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) document of more than passing interest: a computer printout from the National Automated Immigration Lookout System (NAIS), used primarily at Ports of Entry and containing names of individuals who may be excludable from the United States, or are of interest to another agency.

The NAIS alert highlighted Strassmeir with this attention getter: "Lookout May Be Armed or Dangerous." His situation was described in these terms:

"SUBJECT IS WANTED FOR QUESTIONING BY FBI, OKLAHOMA CITY. CONTACT SPECIAL AGENT JOHN R. HIPPARD ... OR SUPERVISORY SPECIAL AGENT RICK BAKER ... PLEASE REFER TO FBI CASE NO. 174A-OC-56120. SUBJECT ENTERED IN 1991 AS NON-IMMIGRANT ... SUBJECT IS POSSIBLY ARMED AND MAY BE DANGEROUS. SHOULD BE INTERVIEWED BY INS AND FBI JOINTLY. DETAIN UNTIL ARRIVAL OF FEDERAL TEAM."

On the same day, an INS official released data printouts from Strassmeir's INS file to FBI Special Agent John Hippard. The "Purpose of Disclosure" was stated as "Criminal Investigation."

The day after Strassmeir was safely out

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of the U.S., the ever-vigilant FBI asked for and received a routine data dump of basic information on his five visits to the United States! *It gets better:* The Oklahoma City INS office stated in a Memorandum of Investigation regarding Strassmeir (dated 8 February 1996):

*The writer received a call from OKC FBI SA LOUANN SANDSTROM ... who indicated ... SUBJECT was out of the United States. ...*

*[INS officers] called SANDSTROM and indicated that the SUBJECT was being investigated by the INS via a ... request from [FBI Special Agent] HIBBARD [sic] that if the SUBJECT was encountered, to notify HIBBARD [sic] (and the writer) for further investigation concerning SUBJECT'S possible activity under FBI CASE NO. 174A-OC-56120, and for INS, SUBJECT'S status. [INS officers] indicated that now that SUBJECT is out of the US and not an overstay, it is unlikely INS would have any interest in him. In addition, since the purpose of the lookout was to locate SUBJECT and SUBJECT had already been seen in Germany ... we inquired about whether the INS lookout should remain active. SANDSTROM indicated that the INS lookout should be canceled.*

*Action was taken by this office this date to cancel lookout on SUBJECT. ...*

*The next day a NAILS II LOOKOUT UPDATE went to all INS Ports of Entry with this notice: PER LOU ANN SAND-*

*STROM, SPECIAL AGENT, FBI ... SUBJECT WAS DBO [CONTACTED] IN GERMANY AND THE LOOKOUT SHOULD BE CANCELED ...*

Right. That's what the INS and FBI agreed to do. After Strassmeir had "escaped" the U.S. (following eight months of complete lack of interest in talking with, much less apprehending him), the FBI and INS issued a NAILS LOOKOUT which is designed to catch people entering the U.S. Then, once it's confirmed Strassmeir is safely in Germany, the FBI and INS agree to cancel the lookout notice at INS Ports of Entry. This entire string of documents reeks of CYA, bureaucratic paperwork generated to hide the truth about Strassmeir's bizarre history while in the U.S.

The Department of State now re-enters the story, this time as a full member of the Protect Andy Strassmeir Program: An undated (probably March 1996) Protective Intelligence Bulletin, issued by the Counterterrorism Division of the Diplomatic Security Service of the State Department, shows four mug shots of Andy the German. The bulletin case number shows that it's a "CT" (counter-terrorism) case involving this relatively unknown federal law-enforcement agency.

To round out the Rubenesque battlefield being so carefully painted, on 18 March 1996, Special Agent Paul Brown of the Diplomatic Security Service typed a memorandum for the record, Subject: Strassmeir.

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DOB: 9/3/29  
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BUILD: Medium  
RACE: White  
SEX: Male  
HAIR: Silver/White  
EYES: Blue

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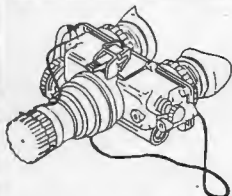
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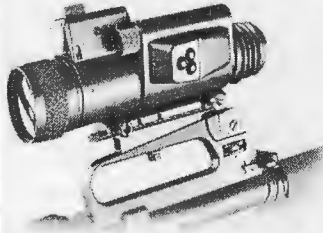
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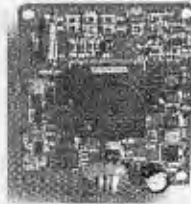
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Strassmeir was a [sic] overstay on his last trip to the US ... is known to have been the military training officer for a white sumpremist [sic] group, 'WAR' (White Aryan Resistance). ... has been the suspect of several investigations for purchasing weapons, and making the weapons fire on full auto. Strassmeir should not be allowed to return to the US.

So at the very time the FBI is pretending to want to apprehend Strassmeir, the State Department, knowing he's safely ensconced in the family's Berlin home, declares Andy a really bad guy who cannot enter the U.S. If there happens to be some independent body such as congress or a local grand jury that wants to talk to Andy, tough luck: He's prohibited from entering the U.S.

But it's the Department of Justice prosecution team in Denver that takes the prize for chutzpah. Joseph H. Hartzler and Beth A. Wilkinson, the two lead prosecutors, sent a 6 February 1997, letter to McVeigh's defense attorney, Stephen Jones, that stated: *At no time did the FBI consider Andreas Strassmeir or Dennis Mahon a subject of the Oklahoma City bombing.*

Maybe Hartzler and Wilkinson are playing word games — they're notorious for doing so. Perhaps Strassmeir was not a "subject" as they define one. But there is zero doubt that at a minimum he had material — and — relevant knowledge about the Oklahoma City bombing, and that several agencies of the U.S. Government went to substantial effort to prevent the justice system of our country from including him in the search for the truth about the Oklahoma City bombing.

*That's called obstruction of justice, and it's a felony!*

### Postscript

In the report of the April/May 1996 Strassmeir telephone interviews, there's not a mention of why Strassmeir overstayed his fifth trip, becoming an illegal alien after 2 August 1991, until he fled the U.S. in early 1996. Or, about his numerous illegal activities at Elohim City. Strassmeir claimed he was "not involved in the planning or execution of the bombing ... nor did he have any foreknowledge of the bombing." Like he would admit it in a telephone call! But, that's good enough for our dedicated investigators — Strassmeir was never a subject of the Oklahoma City bombing investigation.

Maybe, just maybe, that will someday change.

*A retired Marine officer, Roger G. Charles has been a freelance journalist and investigator since 1990, working as assistant producer of ABC's 20-20, and as a defense investigator for attorney Stephen Jones on the OKC bombing trial in Denver. He is presently an investigator for Oklahoma State Representative Charles Key's committee formed to support the independent grand jury now probing the OKC bombing.* ✕

## I Was There

Continued from page 20

feet. Not much time.

Water entry. Think, you idiot! First, get rid of the gloves, great for flying but slippery when wet. I then pulled down the toggles and inflated my survival vest. Drowning is not an option. My oxygen mask was nearly ripped from my face during the ejection, so I dumped it. The survival gear was compacted into a 6-inch deep container still strapped to my seat. Procedure: Pull the handle and the contents spilled out, automatically inflating my life raft. Everything was still attached to me by a 20-foot lanyard.

I waited until I saw the raft hit the water, then reached up and unhooked the parachute fitting and plummeted 15 feet into the South China Sea. The idea was to get clear of the chute to negate the possibility of getting tangled and suffocating under the huge shroud.

I entered feet-first and plunged deep. When I started my ascent I felt around and discovered that one side of my vest had deflated. I began a panicked effort to swim, kick and claw my way towards the light. My lungs began to burn with excess carbon dioxide, my brain screaming at me to inhale a deep breath. I finally broke the surface, inhaling a combination of salt water and air. Coughing and sputtering, I lunged for my raft and pulled myself into it, relishing in the new-found buoyancy. Pain made a comeback to my neck and back as my adrenaline fix was tapering off.

I scanned around and focused on a Huey gliding in after us 10 feet off the water. My gaze lifted beyond the chopper to the white sand, blue water and the shades of green on the mountains. It looked like paradise — from here.

But I had seen its dark side, having spent four months in the bush, humping a ruck with a battalion of Marines, remembering the agony of it; the constant uncertainty, the life-and-death struggles; the miserable companions of jungle rot and booby traps. Flying above Vietnam was almost total pleasure, but humping it was pure tension and pain.

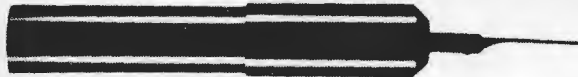
The Huey banked in close and hovered, sending salt spray into my face. An American's hand reached out, and pulled me onto the skid and into the chopper.

As we lifted off, with everything that did and didn't happen, the "Goose flight" was safe again, another mission behind us with just two more months to endure.

The grunts could always put this insanity into perspective with few words. They would say, outside of breathing in and breathing out, the rest of it just "don't mean nuthin'." There it is.

Jeff Nelson, a DFC recipient and Florida-based freelance writer, also authored "Phantom Strike" (see "I Was There," March '97). ✕

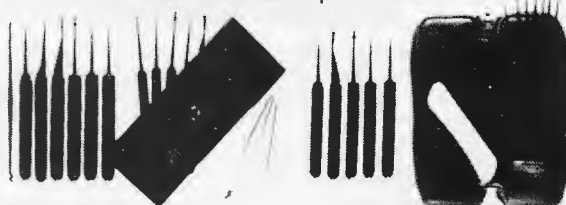
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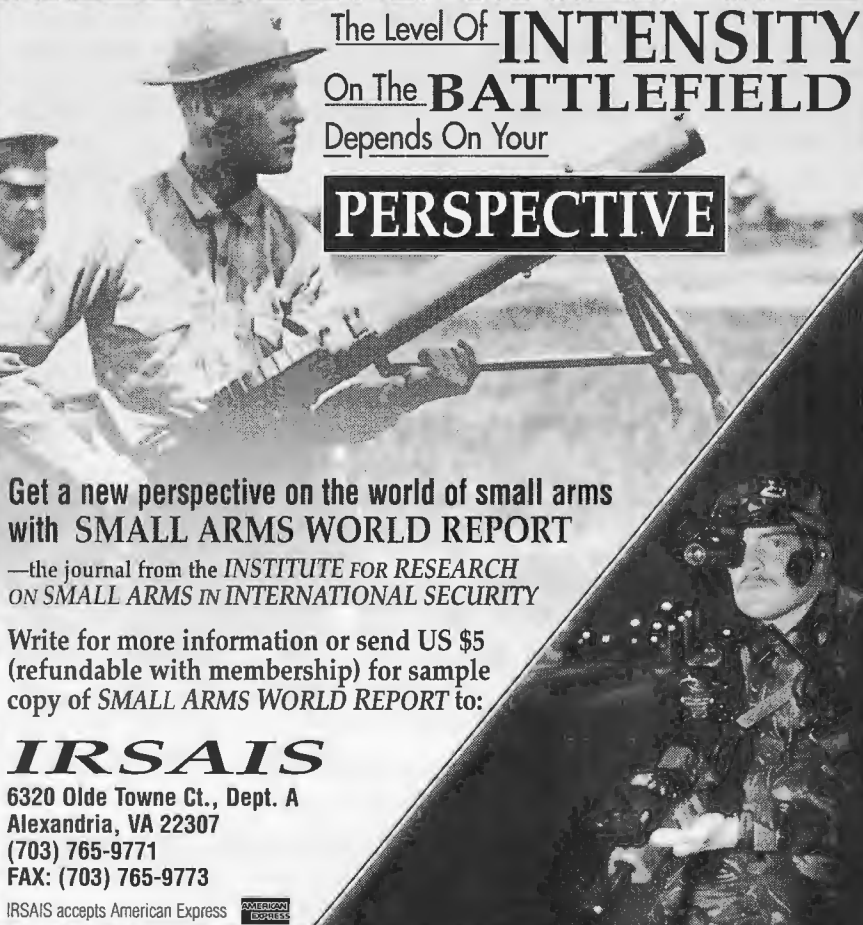


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Continued from page 39

all Wheaties-eaters. In order to change a conventional Navy you had to break the rules. Marcinko and Ace Lyons broke the rules. [Marcinko] went into SEAL Team 6 and broke the rules. He fired more ammunition than the whole Marine Corps put together. The Navy, instead of bitching at him, shoulda said, "Hey, if he needs it, we need it." I admire Dick. He has the two items needed to change a conventional Navy to unconventional warfare. He had balls. Then Ace Lyons came aboard as an

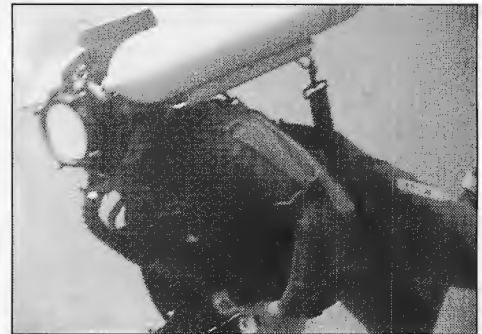


admiral and had the guts to back him at CNO [Chief of Naval Operations] level.

[On Marcinko's next SEAL unit, "Red Cell":]

If they left that in force instead of watering

(left) At the "old" age of 31, Boehm volunteered for and completed UDT training. Here, Trainees crawl toward a sign that says, "It only hurts for a little while." (below) During UDT duty, Boehm experimented with new diving equipment, such as this early mixed-gas rig. Later, his vehement dissatisfaction with gear assigned to his SEALs — often, by non-diving noncombatants — would anger conventional Navy officers.



it down because it was killing other peoples' careers ... if they'd have left that in force we wouldn't have the terrorist problem we have today. Call it the way it is. Anybody can go over that fence, friend. And there ain't nothing ... that can't be broken through.

Basically what Marcinko did ... he paid me my wages for even being around. For the record: Every son-of-a-bitch here [at UDT Muster] ... maybe you might not want to print "son-of-a-bitch." Maybe some of them might have come out from under a rock like I did. Every man here that wears that trident has surpassed me. They're smarter than I was, they have better equipment, they're cleaner-living than I was. They're just as dedicated as I ever thought of being and I'll tell you, there's not a man in here, whether I know them or not, that has *not* surpassed the master. My wages have been paid over and over and over. I'm a very fortunate person to have left that [legacy].

[On becoming an officer:]

**R.B.:** I wanna tell you something. The Navy lost the best damn bosun's mate they ever had when they commissioned me. I was under that dixie cup and I was a damn sharp bosun's mate.

**SOF:** I didn't know you were a "mustang" [enlisted man turned officer].

**R.B.:** You don't think they'd graduate anybody like me, do ya? I got a letter of reprimand — that's in the book, too — it boiled down to: I had the morals of an alley cat, shouldn't have been commissioned, didn't have conduct befitting an officer and a gentleman, and I wasn't good enough to remain in the Navy. It hit high level about the same time a medal came through. My CO said, "Come on up and we'll write a letter of rebuttal." I said, "What's the problem? That's the first thing that son-of-a-bitch has ever written that was accurate!"

SOF contributor Gary P. Joyce is the managing editor of Sport Diver, a bimonthly magazine based in Winter Park, Fla. For subscription (\$19.97 a year), phone 800-879-0478. ✕

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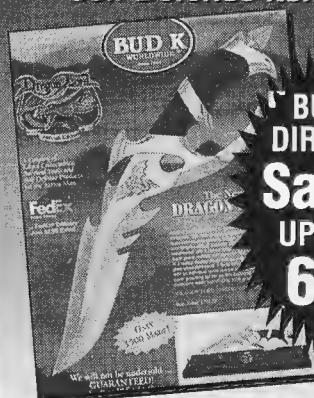
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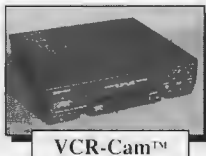
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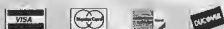
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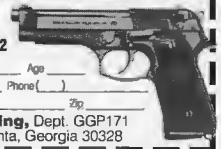
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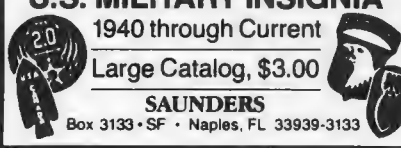
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boded well for the peasant class, the working class, or even for reporters.

Yes, our Constitution provides the doorway for your news and commentary to pass through free and unfettered. But that doorway to freedom is framed by the muskets that stood between a vision of liberty and absolute anarchy at a place called Concord Bridge. Our revolution began when the British sent Redcoats door to door to confiscate the peoples' guns. They didn't succeed: The muskets went out the back door with their owners.

Emerson said it best:

"By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
Here once the embattled farmers stood,  
And fired the shot heard round the world."

King George called us "rabble in arms." But with God's grace, George Washington and many brave men gave us our country. Soon after, God's grace and a few great men gave us our Constitution. It's been said that the creation of the United States is the greatest political act in history. I'll sign that.

In the next two centuries, though, freedom did not flourish. The next revolution, the French, collapsed in the bloody terror, then Napoleon's tyranny. There's been no shortage of dictators since, in many countries: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Mao, Idi Amin, Castro, Pol Pot. All these monsters began by confiscating private arms, then literally soaking the earth with the blood of tens and tens of millions of their people.

Ah, the joys of gun control.

Now, I doubt any of you would prefer a rolled-up newspaper as a weapon against a dictator or a criminal intruder. Yet in essence that is what you have asked our loved ones to do, through an ill-conceived and totally naive campaign against the Second Amendment.

Besides, how can we entrust to you the Second Amendment, when you are so stingy with your own First Amendment?

I say this because of the way, in recent days, you have treated your own — those journalists you consider the least among you. How quick you've been to finger the paparazzi with blame and to eye the tabloids with disdain. How eager you've been to draw a line where there is none, to demand some distinction within the First Amendment that sneers "they are not one of us." How readily you let your lesser brethren take the fall, as if their rights were not as worthy, and their purpose not as pure, and their freedom not as sacred as yours.

So now, as politicians consider new laws to shackle and gag paparazzi, who among you will speak up? Who here will stand and defend them? If you won't, I will.

Because you do not define the First Amendment. It defines you. And it is bigger than you — big enough to embrace all of you, plus all those you would exclude.

That's how freedom works.

It also demands you do your homework. Again and again I hear gun owners say, how can we believe anything the anti-gun media says when they can't even get the facts right? For too long you have swallowed manufactured statistics and fabricated technical support from anti-gun organizations that wouldn't know a semiauto from a sharp stick. And it shows. You fall for it every time.

That's why you have very little credibility among 70 million gun owners and 20 million hunters and millions of veterans who learned the hard way which end the bullet comes out. And while you attacked the amendment that defends your homes and protects your spouses and children, you have denied those of us who defend all the Bill of Rights a fair hearing or the courtesy of an honest debate.

If the NRA attempts to challenge your assertions, we are ignored. And if we try to buy advertising time or space to answer your charges, more often than not we are denied.

How's that for First Amendment freedom?

Clearly, too many have used freedom of the press as a weapon not only to strangle our free speech, but to erode and ultimately destroy the right to keep and bear arms, as well. In doing so you promoted your profession to that of constitutional judge and jury, more powerful even than our Supreme Court, more prejudiced than the Inquisition's tribunals. It is a frightening misuse of constitutional privilege, and I pray that you will come to your senses and see that these abuses are curbed.

As a veteran of World War II, as a freedom marcher who stood with Dr. Martin Luther King long before it was fashionable, and as a grandfather who wants the coming century to be free and full of promise for my grandchildren, I am troubled.

The right to keep and bear arms is threatened by political theatrics, piecemeal lawmaking, talk show psychology, extreme bad taste in the entertainment industry, an ever-widening educational chasm in our schools and a conniving media, that all add up to cultural warfare against the idea that guns ever had, or should now have, an honorable and proud place in our society.

But all of our rights must be delivered into the 21st century as pure and complete as they came to us at the beginning of this century. Traditionally, the passing of that torch is from a gnarled old hand down to an eager young one.

So now, at 72, I offer my gnarled old hand.

I have accepted a call from the National Rifle Association of America to help protect the Second Amendment. I feel it is my duty to do that. My mission and vision can be summarized in three simple parts:

First, before we enter the next century, I expect to see a pro-Second Amendment president in the White House.

Secondly, I expect to build an NRA with the political muscle and clout to keep a pro-Second Amendment congress in place.

Third, is a promise to the next generation of free Americans. I hope to help raise a hundred million dollars for NRA programs and educa-

tion before the year 2000. At least half of that sum will go to teach American kids what the right to keep and bear arms really means to their culture and country.

We have raised a generation of young people who think that the Bill of Rights comes with their cable TV. Leave them to their channel surfing and they'll remain oblivious to history and heritage that truly matter.

Think about it — what else must young Americans think when the White House proclaims, as it did, that "a firearm in the hands of youth is a crime or an accident waiting to happen" No — it is time they learned that firearm ownership is constitutional, not criminal. In fact, few pursuits can teach a young person more about responsibility, safety, conservation, their history and their heritage, all at once.

It is time they found out that the politically correct doctrine of today has misled them. And that when they reach legal age, if they do not break our laws, they have a right to choose to own a gun — a handgun, a long gun, a small gun, a large gun, a black gun, a purple gun, a pretty gun, an ugly gun — and to use that gun to defend themselves and their loved ones or to engage in any lawful purpose they desire without apology or explanation to anyone, ever.

This is their *first* freedom. If you say it's outdated, then you haven't read your own headlines. If you say guns create only carnage, I would answer that you know better.

Declining morals, disintegrating families, vacillating political leadership, an eroding criminal justice system and social mores that blur right and wrong are more to blame — certainly more than any legally owned firearm.

I want to rescue the Second Amendment from an opportunistic president, and from a press that apparently can't comprehend that attacks on the Second Amendment set the stage for assaults on the First.

I want to save the Second Amendment from all these nitpicking little wars of attrition — fights over alleged Saturday night specials, plastic guns, cop-killer bullets and so many other made-for-prime-time non-issues invented by some press agent over at gun-control headquarters that you guys buy time and again.

I simply cannot stand by and watch a right guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States come under attack from those who either can't understand it, don't like the sound of it, or find themselves too philosophically squeamish to see why it remains the first among equals: Because it is the right we turn to when all else fails.

That's why the Second Amendment is America's first freedom.

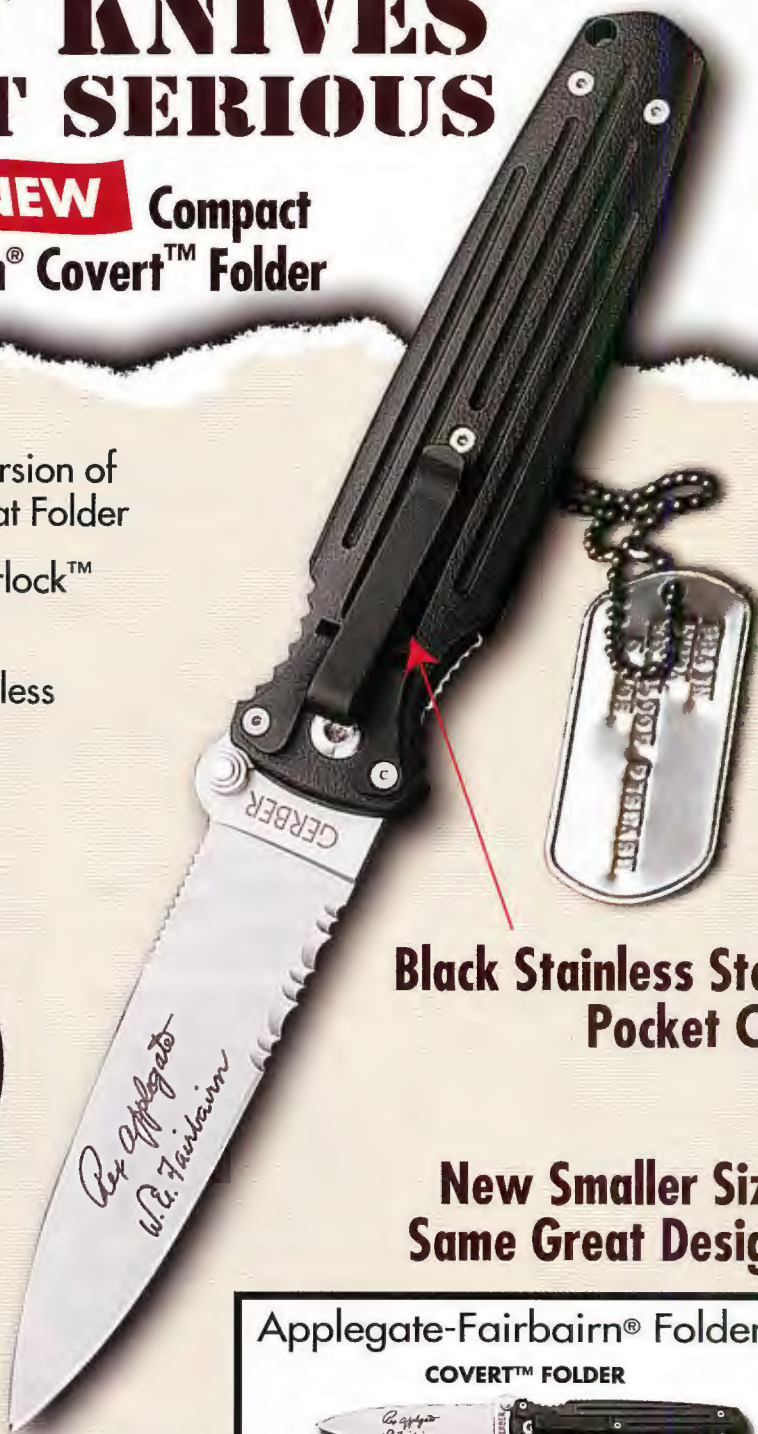
Please, go forth and tell the truth. There can be no free speech, no freedom of the press, no freedom to protest, no freedom to worship your god, no freedom to speak your mind, no freedom from fear, no freedom for your children and for theirs, for anybody, anywhere, without the Second Amendment freedom to fight for it.

If you don't believe me, just turn on the news tonight. Civilization's veneer is wearing thinner all the time. ☒

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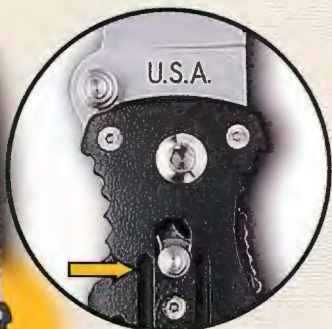
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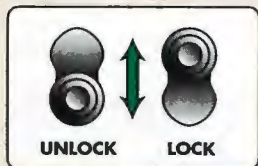
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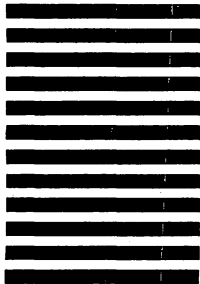
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