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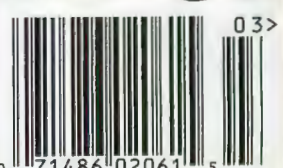
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# SOF

## SOLDIER OF FORTUNE MAGAZINE

MARCH 2001 ✕ VOL. 26 NO. 3



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### On the Cover

It's been 10 years since our victory in the Gulf War. Read how Marine armor liberated Kuwait. See story, page 48.

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 Refugee Relief International, Inc.'s medical teams have braved hostile fire, disease and shoestring budgets for nearly 17 years. Read about two of 2000's MEDCAPS: a near-lethal trip to Burma and nostalgic journey to Vietnam.
- M16 MILLENNIUM MODIFICATIONS** by Peter G. Kokalis 42  
 While other offerings in the global armaments bazaar compare favorably, they're no match when it comes to potential upgrades geared to today's M16.
- TASK FORCE RIPPER** by D. B. Cooper 48  
 Celebrate the Gulf War's 10th Anniversary by liberating Kuwait with elements of the 7th Marine Division who used guts, firepower and Divine intervention to bag their victories.
- OMEGA PROVING GROUND** by Peter G. Kokalis 54  
**The Bulldog**  
 Charter Arms' Bulldog Pug wheel gun, chambered for the .44 Special cartridge, is one of the very finest handguns for back-up — or primary-carry.
- 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL SOF SPRING THREE-GUN MATCH** by Matt Flaherty 57  
 Last Memorial Day, the NRA Whittington Center, in picturesque northern New Mexico, opened its formidable shooting facility for *Soldier Of Fortune's* world-class match.
- ATOMIC JIHAD** by Al J. Venter, in Washington, D. C. 60  
 Saddam's determination knows no limits when it comes to adding a nuke to his inventory. Read this vital update for the latest developments from Iraq — and why it's still a foe to be feared.
- BATTLE BLADES** by SOF Staff 66  
 Bill Bagwell thunders back in a major way to the pages of *SOF*. Bagwell trained SF in the use of the Bowie knife. And check out his new book, *Bowies, Big Knives, and the Best of Battle Blades*. Next month we resume Bill's regular column.
- THE ILK HUNT** by Col. Mike Peck (Ret.) 70  
 Male-bonding is both a familiar yet curious phenomenon. Find out how an extremely eclectic group hung together on the latest *SOF* high-country hunt in the Colorado Rockies.
- BAD STREETS OF BLOODY BOGOTA** by Rob Krott 74  
 Hop in with *SOF* for a tense ride-along through the violent avenues of Bogota — the world's worst — where the murder rate is way over the bar.
- LOW PLAINS DRIFTER, Part II** by Col. Mike Peck (Ret.) 80  
 Back to heady days of the past: wartime South Vietnam — hot lead — hotter LZs — and the daily battle to survive.



Peter G. Kokalis



SOF staff



Al J. Venter

## COLUMNS

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# COMMAND GUIDANCE

by Cmdr. Chip Beck, USNR (Ret.)

## Democratic Committee Member Insults Veterans

**T**his is a lengthened version of Chip's letter which appeared in *The Washington Times*, of 6 December 2000. Though the election is now history, we should remain mindful and unforgiving of the shoddy treatment accorded veterans and active-duty personnel by the Democratic Party, which attempted to disallow their legally cast ballots. Thank God, Al Gore and his anti-military minions will have at least four years to savor the acidic aftertaste of their pathetic and larcenous attempt to deprive members of our military of their sacred right. — Robert K. Brown

In the wake of the 7 November national elections, lawyers and loyalists for the Democratic Party fanned out over key Florida counties to overturn Governor George Bush's victory. One of the tools by which they sought to accomplish this plan was to reject Military Absentee Ballots coming in from not only overseas, but from within the U.S., having arrived before the election.

In all, approximately 20,000 to 30,000 absentee ballots were targeted for elimination by various legal schemes and protests.

No one who has ever served in uniform, regardless of their political background, could have felt comfortable with the thought that nicks, scratches, and bumps on ballot cards in West Palm Beach were receiving more attention and claims of validity than were the signed, sealed, and delivered votes of men and women who are today serving on active duty and protecting our nation and its democracy.

In protest, many veterans for George W. Bush and their civilian supporters from 14 November thru 11 December demonstrated and protested this assault on military voting rights by letting their views be known, heard, and seen in front of Al Gore's vice presidential residence at the Naval Observatory grounds in Northwest Washington, D.C.

This horrified some Democratic Party functionaries in neighboring Arlington, who apparently felt that street demonstrations

were not constitutionally allowed for either the GOP or the military veterans.

Over the Thanksgiving holiday, Ingrid Morroy, of the Arlington County Democratic Committee, sent an email to local Democrats that I found to be insulting to America's veterans, be they disabled or able-bodied. She did not know that one of her own shocked Party members forwarded the offending in-house message to a veteran.

In her message Morroy stated: "A group of right-wing veterans (among them disabled veterans, obviously to provide photo ops ...) will demonstrate in front of the Vice President's residence. ... This is clearly part of the organized Republican effort to intimidate Democrats and discourage the legal manual vote recount in South Florida."

As a leader of Virginia Veterans for Bush, many of whom participated in the ongoing protests in front of the Naval Observatory, I find it insulting that Ms. Morroy would label veterans as "right wing" when she obviously knows nothing about our individual backgrounds. Veterans for Bush includes Democrats, Independents, and Republicans, and our political outlook is as varied as our experiences. We simply did not view Mr. Gore as a sincere or competent leader. Our demonstrations were grass-roots in nature, voluntary, and not directed by either the RNC or the Bush-Cheney campaign.

Dismissing disabled veterans as "photo opportunities" was also condescending to all service personnel, just as excluding military votes in favor of dimpled anomalies is anti-military and anti-democratic.

Morroy's comments smacks of discriminatory stereotyping of disabled veterans and borders on slandering their genuine concern for their rights. Morroy further displayed her ignorance as to what was being protested. Veterans do not protest legal votes. What Virginia, District, and Maryland Veterans were protesting was the "exclusion of legal votes," namely valid Military Absentee Ballots that were targeted specifically by the Gore political apparatus. ☞

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EDITOR/PUBLISHER

MANAGING EDITOR Dwight Swift

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ASSISTANT EDITOR Thomas D. Reisinger

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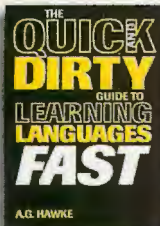


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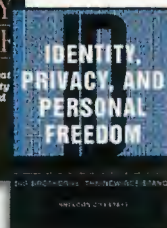
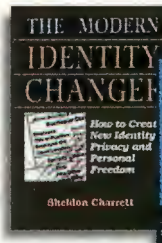
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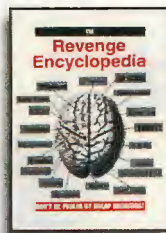
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# BULLETIN BOARD

## Bill Ruger Retires; New Management Team Formed

Sturm, Ruger & Company, America's largest producer of firearms, has announced at a regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting that William B. Ruger has retired as Chairman of the Board of Directors, CEO and Treasurer. Bill Ruger has been the guiding light of the company since its incorporation in 1949 through its current position as the nation's largest producer of sporting firearms. A unique feel for what American shooters wanted has kept Sturm, Ruger one step ahead of the industry — and growing during a period when other arms makers were dying off or going through repeated reorganizations trying to stay afloat.

During 51 years at the helm of the company, Bill Ruger pioneered not only the successful reintroduction of styles "they" knew the market no longer wanted — e.g. single-action revolvers, single-shot rifles — but pioneered the use of such innovative production techniques as precision investment castings to keep top-quality products within the reach of the average hunter and shooter.

Fortunately, Bill Ruger plans to remain on the Board as Chairman Emeritus and as a director, and will continue to serve as a consultant.

The Board also announced that William B. Ruger, Jr. has been elected as the new Chairman and CEO, and Erle Blanchard was elected as Vice-Chairman, President and Chief Operating Officer at Sturm, Ruger. Noted Bill Ruger of the new management team, "I'm

confident that this company's original conception, and its current philosophy, will continue. It is that thread of the arms collector and user, or having insight into what the market asks of firearm designs and being successful in giving our guns the attributes people like. To the extent this is maintained, our business can only succeed and become stronger as the years go by."

We wish Ruger the man, and Ruger the company, every good thing in the future.

## In Harm's Way, Unarmed

*The Arizona Republic* has reported that the sailors on sentry duty aboard the *U.S.S. Cole* when it was bombed last October did not have ammunition in their rifles, and were not authorized to shoot unless fired upon, according to members of the ship's crew. Even if the sentries had recognized the threat from a small boat approaching their guided missile destroyed in a Yemeni Harbor last 12 October, the rules of engagement would have prevented them from firing without first obtaining permission from the *Cole's* captain or another officer.

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craft, so when back in 1957 a bunch of fun-loving history buffs founded an organization to restore and fly WWII-vintage aircraft, they named themselves the Confederate Air Force. An easy name — and an easy outfit — to love.

They've gotten to be big time — some 9,000 members in 27 states and three countries who restore, fly, and archive some 140 historic war birds — and teach new generations an appreciation of the heroes who flew these planes in defense of liberty.

At the organization's last general membership meeting at CAF HQ in Midland, Texas, of 2,201 members voting, some 1,782 (82%) voted the change their organization's name. To what is yet to be decided, but the new name is slated to take effect as of 1 January 2002.

Hmmm. Our favorite socio-political observer Richard Rongstad observed on *Sun Tzu's Newswire*, "Half the glamour of the CAF comes from the absurd and fun-loving name 'Confederate Air Force' where almost everybody can hold the rank of colonel. Who would want to join now? Not me. I can make myself a colonel in some organization that respects itself ... I hope that 'The Confederate Air Force' is one of the recommended [new] names ..."

Suggestions for a new name are being solicited, and a committee of seven members is to be appointed to cull these to four names, which the General Staff will place before the membership via a referendum at the annual membership meeting of October, 2001. The CAF Constitutional amendment authorizing the procedure said the committee of seven members is "to review suggested new names for the organization" but did not specify that suggestions come from the membership. If you have an appropriate suggestion, you may contact them via e-mail at [publicrelations@cafhq.org](mailto:publicrelations@cafhq.org), by snail mail at P.O. Box 62000, Midland, TX 79711-2000; by phone at: 915-563-1000; by fax at: 915-563-8046. The contact person is Ms. Tina Corbett.

If "The Confederate Air Force" gives offense to some, we might suggest it be changed to "The Confederate Navy."

## CCOPS

Speaking of politically correct ... not ... check out the web site: [www.ccops.org](http://www.ccops.org) sponsored by Concerned Citizens Opposed to Police States, Inc. (CCOPS). Or if you're not wired into the net, you can call them at: 262-670-9920; fax at: 262-670-9921; or snail-mail them at: P.O. Box 270205, Hartford, WI 53027. The name says what they're all about, and the bigger the state, the bigger the threat they perceive from it becoming a police state. A case in point is the UN, and CCOPS has available both targets and rolls of pre-printed toilet paper to eloquently express concern over a list of American constitutional rights deemed in jeopardy to agreements with, or subservience to, a UN oligarchy (you can order the targets @ \$12.95 for 50, or the TP for \$9.95, each postpaid).

The TP is good to have in store when your worthless, liberal brother-in-law comes to mooch, or for stimulating conversation at your next open house. Not to be used for TP-ing the neighborhood at Halloween.

## Raising Bar For Bronze Star

In the wake of a flap over the USAF awarding some 246 Bronze Stars to troops who had not served in the combat zone during the Operation Allied Force air war over Yugoslavia — many had never even left the United States — Rep. Steve Buyer, R-Ind., has succeeded in raising the standard. Under the new law, incorporated in the 2001 defense authorization bill which was signed into law 30 October, only service personnel who are receiving imminent danger pay at the time of their event for which they are nominated, can receive the bronze star.

"I did it because this is a big deal to soldiers and veterans," Buyers said. "The medal should mean something, and it does not if you can get one for serving at your desk in the Pentagon." The Pentagon had investigated the Air Force decision to award the medals to personnel who had not served in the combat zone, but

decided that under then-existing regulation such awards were permitted.

## Recount This

In the aftermath of the counting, recounting and discounting of votes by various no-count individuals in the recent election a set of unvetted but interesting statistics crossed our desk: counties won by Gore, 677 — counties won by Bush, 2,434; population of counties won by Gore, 127 million — population of counties won by Bush, 143 million; square miles of country won by Gore, 580,000 — square miles of country won by Bush, 2,427,000; states won by Gore, 19; states won by Bush, 29. Further, according to the report, Professor Joseph Olson of the Hamline University School of Law in St. Paul, Minn., researched the crime stats by county and tabulated the average murder rate per 100,000 population in counties won by Gore as 13.2; the average murder per 100,000 residents in countries won by Bush — 2.1.



Four Canadian light infantrymen of the Loyal Edmonton Regiment take 10 from their duty as OPFOR vs. the U.S. Army 2/75th Rangers during Exercise Northern Venture at Wainwright training facility in Alberta, to peruse some recent issues of SOF.

## Buying Time

In a fund-raising scheme, Turkey's military has raised the equivalent of \$494 million by letting conscripts buy back their civilian status. The Turkish Defense Ministry said more than 71,000 Turkish draftees had taken advantage of an option presented to them whereby they could reduce their obligatory service time from 16 months to as little as four weeks by paying the government a little less than \$7,000. Hmmm. Has the GAO heard about this? Now let me see, you could use the money you get to train new recruits to replace the G.I.s you lost. And if you didn't get enough, you could draft the rich, easy ones twice.

## Spending Money

With the op-tempo up and military budgets down under the past Clinton administration, taxpayers and service personnel alike are grinding their teeth over a report that SecDef William Cohen spent some quarter-million dollars on his own "hail-and-farewell" bash in Hollywood, but that paltry sum pales in comparison to the \$65 million price tag NewsMax quotes for Clinton's "greetings-separated-comrades" trip to Hanoi.

Colonel David Hackworth reports Cohen's Deep DoD Pockets bucks went to fly in nearly 100 military musicians, entertainers, a drill team and color guard, and for 17 each \$400 a night rooms at the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills. Tipped-off to the story by brass who would rather have seen the funds go to defense readiness, the troops, the old soldier's home or something besides the outgoing



SOME MEN ARE BORN TO BE HEROES.



JOSEPH FIENNES

JUDE LAW

# ENEMY AT THE GATES

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SecDef's job search, Hack's queries to the Pentagon were stonewalled for several days. Then the Pentagon put out a press release that bash was really to honor Bob Hope and the USO for decades of unselfish contributions to entertain the troops. Hack checked with Hope's inner circle and nobody knew anything. One close to the great entertainer said, "Why? He'd have to be brought in on a stretcher, and believe me, he wouldn't remember a thing."

Queried on this point, the Pentagon responded a week later with another press release, saying the SecDef's party was really to "honor Jack Valenti with a Citizen Patriot Award."

But a NewsMax wrapup of Clinton's trip to Hanoi puts the Cohen abuse of funds in its meager context: Even bearing in mind that Clinton has traveled far more miles than any President in history — and spent far and away more taxpayer dollars to do it — his recent junket would make a fine legacy in itself. Quoting a figure of some \$65 million, NewsMax reported an unofficial tabulation of air assets from a disgruntled USMC official as 26 C-5 transports, 33 C-17s, four C-141s, 10 KC-10s to keep the foregoing fueled, and one C-130. What particularly had the leatherneck steamed was that the air assets were needed for regularly scheduled training with ROC Marines, and the "non-availability of lift in the theater has severely retarded the deployment of [even] a single reinforced infantry battalion."

### Recounting The Money

Hanoi Jane Fonda, beloved among veterans for her propaganda speeches from Radio Hanoi, for calling U.S. POWs "liars and hypocrites" and other red-wing political machinations during the Vietnam War, is reported to have donated some \$100,000 to the Gore-Lieberman Recount Fund last November. Election observers in Florida say they do not believe Fonda wanted her donation to help recount military absentee ballots ...

Fonda was one of nine donors giving \$100,000 or more. Screenwriter Stephen Bing reportedly gave \$200,000.

No report yet as to how much the Chinese donated.

### Lifestyles Of The Rich And Sub-Marine

We didn't get one for Christmas (Santa routinely discards any requests stapled to a Neiman-Marcus catalog), but no doubt readers who got a check from home for Christmas or are retiring Clinton Administration officials will find this of interest: The most pricey item in their Christmas Book last year was a \$20 million

Continued on page 14



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## **WHAT IS SCARS?**

It is a mathematical blueprint of the human species for the purpose of physical and physiological control in both non-lethal and lethal confrontation.

## **WHERE DID IT COME FROM?**

It is a subset of Dominate Process Systems™ released in part to the United States Navy SEALs in 1988 under the project name SCARS. Its purpose was to set a standard above all known fighting systems of hand-to-weapon combat. The results were above and beyond what the US military expected. It was tested, officially approved and implemented.

## **ARE MARTIAL ARTS USED IN THE MILITARY?**

Absolutely, and they are effective programs for teaching confidence and coordination building skills along with limited defensive skills.

## **IS SCARS A PART OF THOSE PROGRAMS?**

NO, the military does not consider SCARS a form of martial arts, SCARS is solely for real world combat application.

SCARS is not just hand-to-hand combat, but the totality of modern combat utilizing movements, weapons and protocol that are simply restricted to the civilians and base line units. They will not engage the enemy under the same conditions as Tier-1 units.

## **IS SCARS STILL IN USE?**

Yes!

## **WHERE?**

In various branches of the Specops community and within deployed NATO troops.

## **CAN THE PUBLIC ACCESS SCARS?**

Yes, it was declassified in part and exposed to the public in 1993, under the name Hostile Control for non-lethal use. It was later combined with more lethal information under the name of SCARS IQS.

SCARS IQS was put together from archive information from the original Military SCARS Project to form a complete system for the public so they could possess both non-lethal and lethal fighting skills to protect themselves in the real world of street crime.

IQS Level-I is broken down into several study and training videos just like the SEALs program, covering every aspect of conflict, all weapons, guns, knives, clubs. The IQS Level-II covers ground fighting using the system of compression geometry.

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SCARS, unlike martial arts, doesn't have a beginning. It is a process that is immediate from the start. Soldiers do not have years to learn to be functional fighters, they have only a few weeks to get ready to fight for their lives.

SCARS is easily learned and applied. However, the public tend to want to learn in stages so we have developed specially designed packages of fighting knowledge so you can train at your own pace.

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**CAUTION:** The systems discovered by Jerry L. Peterson and the Direct Action Corporation "Dominate Process Systems™" are based on a cold, calculated system of new sciences that are intended for extreme life-threatening circumstances. They are brutally effective, highly aggressive and absolutely lethal. "Dominate Process Systems" in its totality has never been revealed. SCARS is a subset of this system and remains the **Number One** protection system in the world.

SCARS has never been intended to replace martial arts or other "so called" systems of defense. SCARS is not defensive, therefore it is not suitable for children; you must be 18 years or older to purchase SCARS video products.

There are millions of martial arts schools that train children and young adults. The SCARS Institute is working on a new induction process that will be suitable for children and young adults, but until then, the SCARS system is intended only for adults.

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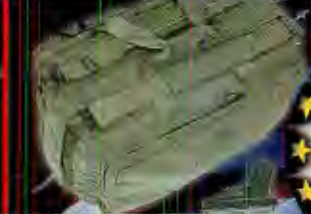
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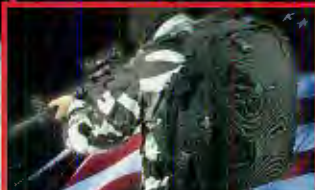
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To humor the tire-kickers, U.S. Submarines has a number of web sites to provide answers to frequently asked questions, give specifications and color brochures on the various models available. Start at

their basic web site, <http://ussubs.com> and click on the links from there. Even Robin Leach would be amazed.

## Guns Not Fashionable?

The latest urban pea-brain publication to jump on the anti-gun bandwagon is the rag *Marie Claire*, published by Hearst. Its January 2001 issue featured plugs for anti-gun lobbying organizations such as Handgun Control Inc., the Million [sic] Mom March, et al. Wrote Editor In Chief Glenda Bailey, "We asked celebrities ... to join us in our campaign for sensible gun laws."

"Sensible," of course, is the pseudo sophist's argot for "prohibition." The article featured quotes from such intellectual luminaries as Brit rock star Sting saying "use your imagination [what else] and imagine a world without guns" and from film director Spike Lee, who once suggested Charlton Heston should be murdered by someone using a handgun.

If you would like to read more about *Marie Claire's* campaign against the Second Amendment, and don't care to buy a copy, you can log on to [www.marieclaire.com/](http://www.marieclaire.com/).

## Spielberg/DreamWorks Sued

Former Green Berets Keith Idema and Jim Morris, along with investigative producer Gary Scurka and his wife Kathy Wolff (anchor for Fox Network News), have filed a \$150 million lawsuit against Spielberg and others, alleging that they engaged in a conspiratorial enterprise for the purpose of stealing Idema's real-life story. The plaintiffs allege that Spielberg's movie *The Peacemaker* was based on materials they had submitted to Amblin, Spielberg's production company, saying that *The Peacemaker* is strikingly similar, and in many instances it is identical to, the Keith Idema story — so similar that the suit alleges numerous violations of the Lanham Act, theft of personality. ✕


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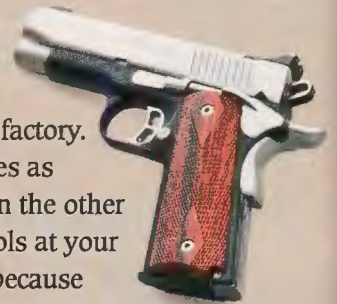
three dot night sights, stainless steel slide and small parts, checkered front strap, ambidextrous safety, Premium Aluminum match grade trigger, hand-checked double diamond rosewood grips and special Custom Shop markings.



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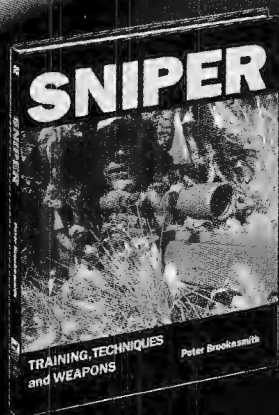


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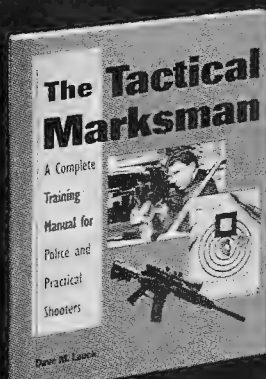


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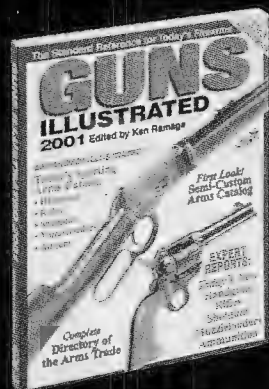
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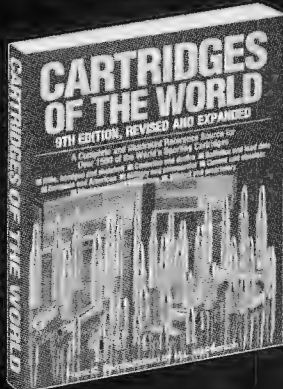
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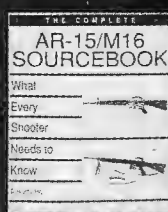
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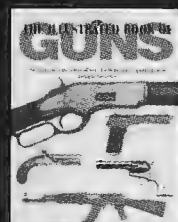
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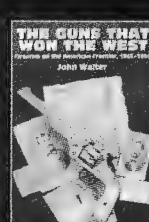


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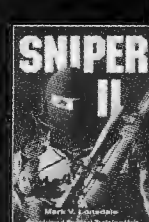


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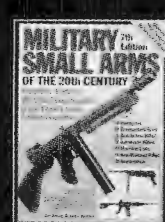
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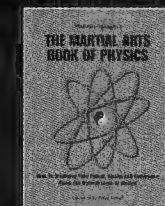


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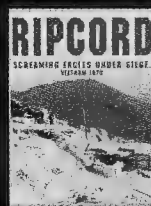
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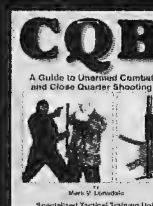
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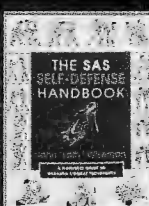
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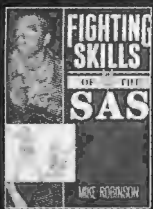


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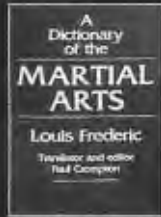




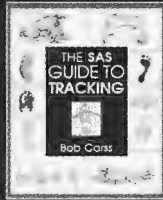
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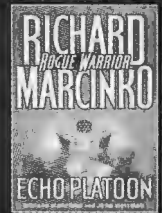
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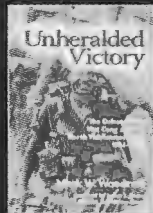
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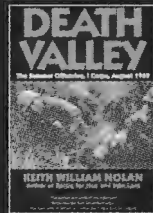
3160 \$22.95 25c



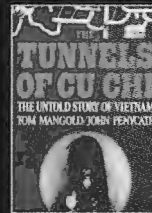
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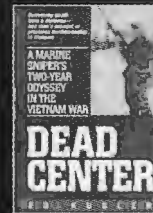
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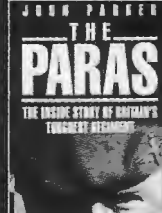
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# I Was There

by Daniel S. Bones

## If It's Too Good To Be True ...

We had been in the air for over 20 hours when the Captain announced that we were approaching Bahrain.

I was hoping that we would have a chance to get out of the aircraft and stretch our legs. But no such luck. The steward told me that we would be on the ground for 45 minutes but would not be able to exit the aircraft.

I watched as most of the other passengers got off the plane; most of them Arabs, Indians and Pakistanis. After 45 minutes of layover we had about another 40 minutes of flying time before we would reach our final destination.

There were five of us who had come over together from the States: two former Marines and three ex-Army troops. We were not mercenaries, since we'd been recruited by a major defense contractor in Texas to provide security at a military installation in the Middle East.

The methods used by major defense contractors to attract quality people to a job in a hot, miserable, dusty environment and to have these men (women hires are a no-no) work 12 hours per day, four days per week, are often questionable.

I know a lot of *SOF* readers look for this type of employment and have either worked at similar jobs or know people who have. But let all potential employees beware.

The defense contractor who had hired me on had had this contract for two years — time enough to get things squared-away. Well, things *weren't* squared-away.

The management of this particular military installation was made up of a bunch of cronies who had served together in the U. S. Army Military Police Corps, and they had screwed this place up beyond belief. Morale was bottoming-out, and the project manager was at war with many of his employees.

I hoped that my .50 cal. machine gun was more dependable than my employer. (right) With no nightlife, women or booze, how do lonely Americans employed by a defense contractor spend their off hours?



Prior to being hired, I saw the ad for the position in a major West Coast newspaper. It called for former or retired Military Policemen to work in a Middle Eastern country for \$42,000 per year — tax free — with a one-year contract required. The Texas-based employer would provide tailor-made uniforms, housing and round-trip transportation.

I sent off a résumé detailing my military and law enforcement experience over a 20-year span. Then, about two-and-a-half months later, I received a positive reply which stated that I would be hired as a security guard provided I could pass an in-depth background check and met the other company employment criteria.

Days later, a package arrived at my house via courier with the formal application form, law enforcement profile, psychological evaluation form, job description, medical evaluation form, 9mm pistol qualification form, and background paperwork for a Secret-level security clearance, etc.

I completed the paperwork, qualified with the pistol, applied for a visa from Bahrain and had my doc give me the once-over. Also, I passed the required oral review board conducted by off-duty police officers and flew through physical and agility tests.

At this point, I assumed things were going go like clockwork and that I was going to work for an A-1 outfit. Who would have thought any differently? The orientation reception in Texas was impressive; good hotel, good food, good company.

After deplaning at our employment destination, we were driven to the company offices for processing. The supply man took us to a dingy supply room, pointed to a rack of wrinkled uniforms and told us to "try to find something that fits."

A couple of the other guys I'd come over with and I wondered out loud what had happened to the custom-tailored professional-



looking uniforms the recruiter in Texas had crowed about. Luckily, I was issued a *new* pair of boots, unlike several other new arrivals. No big deal, but my impression of my new employer was getting a bit shaky.

We soon discovered that the company had a *very* large per-

sonnel turnover, perhaps due to those new hires' not being able to adapt to the 12-hour workdays and 100-115-degree heat. Or, maybe many of these gents felt they'd been screwed over and that 42 grand wasn't sufficient compensation for a year in the boonies.

The one-per-day worksite "hot meals" guaranteed by our friendly recruiter was a myth. "You're on your own, boys," was the new maxim. We knew we were going to be in for a long year.


My contract did provide for per diem, and you can eat well off that amount of money — if you had the time to hunt up a decent restaurant in fairly close proximity to your work area, in our case not an option.



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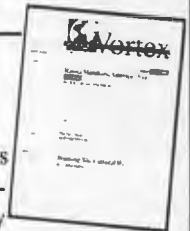
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## Model 1917 "U.S. Enfield"

**W**ith today's tendency to rely on technology, and what appears on the surface to be an attempt by modern operators to trade technology for competence, it may help to take a look back and see what was accomplished with your grandfather's battle rifle.

With America's entry into World War I it quickly became apparent that there was a shortage of military rifles available to be issued to the American Expeditionary Forces going "over there." The current standard-issue battle rifle of that era was the remarkably popular Model of 1903. The Springfield '03 was highly regarded by the common foot soldier that used it, but in plain fact only about 600,000 of these rifles existed at the time of America's entry into the fray. These Springfield '03s were being manufactured at the national armory at Springfield and at the Rock Island Arsenal.

At this time three other American firearms plants were under contract to the British government to produce the Pattern 14 Enfield. The British Enfield was manufactured at Eddystone Arsenal in Pennsylvania, by Remington Arms in New York and Winchester Arms in Connecticut had been developed as an extension of the

British experimentation with the "Rifle, Enfield, caliber.276, Pattern of 1913." The .276 was dropped in favor of the universal .303 round — as when teetering on the brink of war is a poor time to be changing calibers. The British arsenals were tooled up to produce the Lee-Enfield rifles.

As the war came to full value and the demand for rifles for front-line troops increased, the British decided to retain the Lee-Enfield in .303 to be manufactured in English plants and contract with the three aforementioned American firms to produce the new Pattern 1914 Enfield. By July 1917 over 1,200,000 of these .303 Enfields had been produced in America.

All three manufacturer's versions of the U.S. Model 1917 Rifle: (top) Eddystone, (middle) Remington, (bottom) Winchester.





With American entry into the war and the crucial shortage of rifles in American arsenals, the question of the day was: What rifle to arm the American Doughboy, and where to get them? In a remarkable decision (considering government bureaucracies and pork barrel politicians) the United States War Department opted to use the tooling and trained work force at the three American plants to produce the rifle soon to be known as the Model 1917 "U.S. Enfield" rifle.

It was decided that the "U.S. Enfield" was to be made in caliber .30-06 instead of .303 to reduce ammunition logistical problems. There were some minor (compared to starting from scratch) modifications to the design and the "U.S. Enfield" was born.

The official designation is the U.S. Rifle, Caliber .30 Model 1917 with the more common designation of U.S. Enfield, .30/06, Model 1917. The rifle weighs approximately nine pounds with an overall length of 46.3 inches.

The five-groove barrel is 26 inches long with a left-hand twist. Since the rifle was and has been around for a long time, some versions arsenal reworked or refitted for World War II were rebarreled with two- or four-groove barrels. In the early versions the five-groove barrel was designed for the 150-grain .30 caliber projectile producing a muzzle velocity of approximately 2,700 to 2,800 feet per second.

The front sight is a protected blade with adjustment for windage by manually drifting the front dovetailed blade. The rear sight is aperture type adjustable for elevation but not windage. The battle sights for this piece are regulated to a range of 400 yards. On the Remington version tested the rear ladder sight is marked to 1,600 yards of elevation adjustment. Manuals list 800 yards as effective range and maximum at 3,500 yards.



The Model 1917 magazine being loaded from the five-round stripper clip. (left) Front sight with driftable front sight for windage.



Compared to the other rifle of the era, the '03 Springfield, the front and rear sights were better protected for the rigors of daily trench life and combat.

The rifle is loaded through the top of the open magazine well by single rounds or the use of the five-round stripper clip of the same design as the stripper clip for the 1903 Springfield. The internal magazine well will hold six rounds. The 1917 does

not have the magazine cut off as found on the 1903 Springfield rifle. The action of the 1917 is a solid massive design and the bolt han-

*Continued on page 89*

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## LEAA and SOF



On behalf of the Law Enforcement Alliance of America (LEAA) and its more than 65,000 members and supporters nationwide, I would like to thank you for creating one of the most patriotic, intuitive and uncompromising periodicals in the country.

In more than two decades of publishing *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine, you have given the American public a straightforward and hard-hitting view of events around the world.

I commend you, your staff and your readers on your no-compromise stand with regard to our rights as Americans. Thank you for your strong belief in our Constitution and the tribute you pay to our military — those who have put down their lies in defense of our beliefs.

Congratulations on the success of *Soldier Of Fortune*, which will hopefully continue to carry the message of freedom through the next century.

Jim Fotis  
Executive Director, LEAA

## NABEA Kudos

On behalf of the members and staff of NABEA, I wish to express our most profound thanks for allowing us to hold our 2000 Bail Enforcement Agent Convention in conjunction with your celebration.

Our members are still calling us telling us how absolutely fantastic this year's convention was ... Everyone spoke so highly of you and your staff's hospitality and generosity.

It's nice to have a group of people such as you and your staff who we can call "family." Again, our deepest and most profound thanks for allowing us to share in your celebration of 25 fantastic years, as well as celebrating the freedom provided to us by our nation's true heroes such as Col. Mike Peck, Col. Millet, Gen. Aderholt, Gen. Singlaub, and the many other veterans who were there.

Mel Barth, Executive Director  
National Association of Bail Enforcement Agents

## Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Bob



Colonel Brown, wanted to let you know that the other day I was talking to my sons (ages 8 and 11) about true friendship and the Scripture verse that says "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down

his life for his friends" (John 15:3). I had your October issue handy and decided that the "Against All Odds" article about the SOG teams in Vietnam would make a great illustration, so I gathered my men close by and read the whole thing to them... they were very impressed. They especially loved the part about the SOG team that held hands and jumped off a cliff! Colonel Brown, my sons are home schooled and I can assure you that selected portions of *SOF* will now be a part of their curriculum (mother is a little concerned, but she'll get used to it).

*SOF* is now part of a library that includes the Holy Bible, Shakespeare, Tolkien, Gilbert & Sullivan, Hawthorne, C.S. Lewis, Cooper, LeCarré, Melville, London, Gen. Hal Moore, Churchill and Eisenhower. I wonder if that constitutes child abuse?

Dennis G. Coates, MA  
via E-mail

## Overseas Work

I've been a big fan of the mag since 1984: I love it and never miss an issue. I've been following the articles on what's been happening in Sierra Leone. I have been trying to find a way to get into the action whether it be in Sierra Leone or South Africa. How could a person with 10 years in the U.S. Army, and six years in law enforcement (police officer four, deputy sheriff two), get involved and do more than read your magazine. This may sound weird or crazy, but I am serious. Any help would be appreciated.

Brian Moore  
Mansfield, Ohio

*When a man with a good CV and clean record wants to apply his skills overseas, it doesn't seem weird to us at all. The military*

*market in Southern Africa is presently glutted, and the U.S. Army SF is now training Nigerian troops to keep a lid on things in Sierra Leone in the name of the United Nations, so we'd not expect much soldiering opportunity there. However, the brouhaha in Sierra Leone is all about the diamond fields — coveted by many disparate factions — and there may well be security work there for whomever presently holds the fields, for a troop who has a background in both the Army and law enforcement.*

*If you don't mind a cooler climate, your military and law enforcement experience might stand you in good stead in the Balkans, where various U.S. agencies are supplying police training cadre on a contract basis. We'd suggest searching the web, starting with the State Department site, for announcements of job openings.*

*One shortcut to the proper desk at State might be to call the Federal Information Center at 800-688-9889. Once you get off their telephone tree you'll get to talk to a real information specialist, and they are good: Tell them you want the POCs for the various U.S. agencies hiring police or police cadre for overseas work. As many of these functions are supplied through contractors, ask them also for the names of these various civilian contractors. And before you sign a contract with anybody, be sure to read I Was There on page 20. Good luck.*

## Yer Welcome

Thank you very much for sending me the replacement magazine. I have never had to ask for anything like it and to have one come so quickly surprised me very much.

I have enjoyed your magazine for many years (I'm almost 80), but yours suited me since I first started reading it. I'm a member of the "silent majority" and like your thinking.

Respectfully,

N. E. Berke  
California

*You are more than welcome: We do our best to take care of our subscribers, as they mean a lot to us. Sometimes mail handled by automatic machinery gets lost, and more often it gets stolen. When it does, the buck stops here!*





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## Congrats ... For Life

Just wanted to add my congratulations on the last 25 years. I first saw *SOF* peeking out of my local newsstand, with a cover of Chuck Taylor in white camo with a Mac-10. I've been with you guys ever since. I've stopped being amazed at all the information that no one else has. It's now just part of my normal reading. I jumped at the chance to get a lifetime subscription, so *Soldier Of Fortune* will be with me at least another 25 years. I did notice that my sub will run out in February of 2026 — I'll be around 73 then, so I am not sure if you know more than I do or making it for 25 years instead of saying lifetime was easier. Either way, if I'm not here in 2026 I can count on *Soldier Of Fortune* still being out there "leading the way."

Sincerely,

Jim Gleim  
Via E-mail

*"Lifetime" means for your life or ours ... whichever ends first. The 25-year code is because the labeling computer has to be told something or it gets confused.*

## Bleep You Very Much

11:00 A.M.

First, (bleep) cops and law enforcement and the United States of America and I here [sic] these days they gotta couple of gay and transexual pigs out west especially, and second, (bleep) your MIAs, I hear your stupid (bleep)ing asses are still crying over a bunch of buffalo wings getting marked back from your so-called "punic war" of Vietnam.

You (bleep)ing (bleep)damn faggots and your country are always laying claim to a little more something that I don't find hardly believable, presence of anything but a (bleep)ing bunch of (bleep)damned punk mother(bleep)ing bleeding (bleep)damned hearts who're gonna (bleep) around and piss off somebody other than some (bleep)ing raghead mother(bleep)ing (bleep)-suckin moslem like Saddam Hussein and get your (bleep)ing feelings hurt. (This is, by the way, your faggot-(bleep)ed country as a whole, you niggers, crackeres, wetbacks, and gooks, etc.).

You're [sic] holy Roman faggot shower stall-(bleep)ed country can (bleep) my (bleep)in' (bleep).

Mark A. Charles  
Milwaukee, WI 53233

*We noted you put the time of your letter at 11:00 A.M. Here's hoping that by noon you finally got your medication straight.*

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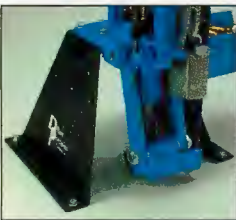
RL 1050

SL 900



Please Note: All loading machines are pictured with optional accessories.

## Strong Mounts: a New Level of Excellence!



Increase the stability of your reloading bench with Dillon's Strong Mounts. All mounts come with all the fasteners necessary to mount your machine.  
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Works on the Square Deal 'B', the RL 550B and the XL 650 when equipped with Strong Mounts, and a separate kit is available for the RL 1050.  
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.44 Spl./Mag.	A23-14403	49.95
.45 ACP	A23-14404	49.95
.45 Colt	A23-14405	49.95
9x25 Dillon	A23-14601	103.95
.357 SIG	A23-22083	103.95
<b>Dillon Rifle Dies (Three-Die Sets)</b>		
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.270 Winchester	A23-22013	49.95
.308 Winchester	A23-15574	49.95
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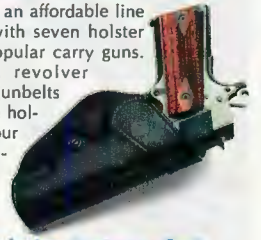
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## The Clinton Corps



Just read the latest issue, especially the editorials. Makes my blood boil. I have a brother-in-law who has dedicated his entire adult life to the military. He's had an exemplary record, many awards and personal commendations from people such as former President Reagan and Bush. He was involved with our drug interdiction programs in Central and South America and served honorably. Then as a "promotion" he was forced into being a recruiter. Not what he was trained to do, not what he wanted to do. Now, after 17 years, he's being forced out for not meeting his quota. Because of Clinton's "gay pride," sensitivity-trained, pathetic military, recruiting is way down. Because my b-in-law can't lie as well as his Commander-in-Chief can, he's being tossed. His CO was smacked down for coming to his defense and the colonel booting him has threatened him with a dishonorable discharge if he dares talk with JAG. How much more pathetic can things become?

Andrew Fralick  
Via e-mail

Andrew Fralick  
Via e-mail

With a new Prez and former SecDef Cheney as Veep, we hope this situation will turn around.

## Garand Boxes

Have you ever heard of or seen a BAR mag conversion being done to a Garand. A friend had mentioned it to me, and it seems much more intelligent to convert to an easily and cheaper (as in cost) magazine, the BAR mag, than to change so much of the Garand to go to .308 and M14 mags. Any help would be welcomed and, oh yes, you guys are the truth!!

Chris Powers  
Via e-mail

Trying to fit a BAR magazine to an M1 Garand has been tried by many, starting with Army Ordnance during WWII. The problem is that you have to remove too much meat from the Garand receiver and floorplate to get a BAR magazine in. The Army soon decided a detachable box magazine was a good idea but trying to farm-rig a BAR magazine was a bad idea, and one of the first steps in the evolutionary chain to the M14 was the T20 — a Garand modified to take a new magazine that looked very much like the later (and more common) BM59 magazine in that it was stepped down in the front, but still in .30-06 caliber. The later T44 eventually became the M14/M15 rifles. Some years back, an "M11" was commercially marketed that utilized re-welded Garand receivers and

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M14 magazines, and there was the Erquiaga conversion that used M14 or FAL mags but I have only seen one successful Garand-to-BAR-mag conversion, and it utilized a modified BAR mag. Converting a .30-06 Garand to a .308 is cheap and easy with a permanent chamber bushing (the Navy converted a lot of theirs back in the '60s).

## What A Blast

I'm a long-time subscriber who needs some advice on how to dispose of blasting caps. This is not a joke. I'm hoping that there is someone around your office who is old enough to know what I should do.

Yesterday I learned that an old guy in my neighborhood has a couple hands full of aging blasting caps stored in a glass jar in his garage. He has had them for years, maybe 20, maybe more. The caps have got to go. The obvious solution is to call the bomb squad. Unfortunately this old guy just will not deal with the focal constable, period. In his defense, if we do the smart thing and call this in, the media and the police will show up in force, helicopter buzzing around, flashing lights, etc. It'll be a comic opera.

What I am hoping is that I can contaminate the caps with some liquid, i.e., penetrating oil or whatever, let that soak for however long is necessary, then either bury the things or burn them one at a time.

I am no expert on blasting caps, I just know enough to leave them alone. The caps appear to be old, and are non-electric (not like the ones from Vietnam), maybe they are the fuse type.

Is it possible, using the utmost care, for me to dispose of these without great risk of blowing my head off? I'm not stupid, if this is just nuts, I'll blow the whistle.

Neal  
Via e-mail

*The one thing more dangerous than trying to give gunsmithing or medical diagnosis through the mail is trying to give EOD advice on a device one has never even seen: Blasting caps have been in production in one form or another for generations, in uncountable variations and all with different properties, and if anybody would tell you sight-unseen what to do they'd obviously be too ignorant to listen to. If they were about 20 years old, and had been in a clean, sealed glass jar at moderate temperature all this time, they might be safe to handle — but somebody who is familiar with them is going to have to give them a visual before deciding what to do. If the fellow who has them is amenable to getting rid of them but is wary of the blue suits we hire to tend to such matters, you might locate a local construction outfit and talk to their powder monkey. Even if they are not a particular item he has worked with, he would be familiar*

*enough with what they can — and cannot — do to be able to take them off your hands. Modern caps have a good shelf life if properly stored and can be safely handled — but you don't know but what they're 50 years old. Just because they do not have wires doesn't mean they are fuse initiated: They were making cap-fired, tin-coated det cord long before I was born, and they could even be a relic of that era. Do not count on pacifying the explosive composition with penetrating oil: Although light oils do tend to kill cartridge primers, there are a number of other considerations. First, you do not know if there is access for the penetrating oil to the compound. If there is, you do not know what the compound is, and whether the oil will kill it, sensitize it, or even cause it to detonate.*

*Our only advice would be not to mess with it: Take the time to locate someone familiar with these toys, either through a local construction company or a local seller of such items. There are too many variables and unknowns in this equation to predict any outcome but bad. And while you're finding such a technician who wouldn't spook the old geezer who has these, don't get in a panic. They might sit quietly in the same jar for another 20 years, although you're right in your concern since, even though they aren't likely to blow the wall out of his garage, some adventurous kid might find them (like you did) and lose some fingers or eyes or start a fire. ☒*

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# WORLD SITREP



1

## UNITED STATES

**Supremes A Hit With Bush:** The Supreme Court's decision that Florida did not have standardized procedures for recounting election results nixes last-ditch Gore recount challenge and results in George Bush victory. • **"Action" Jackson:** The Rev. Jesse Jackson asserts that come Inauguration Day, D. C.'s streets will be jammed with protesters against everything from the WTO to the recent Supreme Court's ruling granting the Presidency to Bush. • **Timothy McVeigh Opts To Die:** From his Terre Haute, IN, prison cell, where he's under 23-hours-per-day lockdown, McVeigh seeks to halt his attorneys' court appeals and requests that date be set for his execution. His tell-all biog. is due out in April. • **Perhaps Impropriety Pays:** Whether by design or coincidence, President Clinton helps old ally by signing executive order to protect 1.7 million acres of land in southwest Utah, which includes coal-rich Kaiparowitz Plateau. Two other recognized areas where mining could turn a profit are in Colombia, and in Indonesia, headquarters of the Lippo Group, the \$5-billion conglomerate which funneled millions into Clinton/Gore election coffers. • **Pollard Revisited:** Pressure reportedly is being exerted on U. S. government by Israel to free convicted spy Jonathan Pollard, who passed on secrets to Israel. • **China Watch:** Bill Gertz, at *The Washington Times*, says General Henry Shelton states that China bears watching and "may emerge as a Soviet-like superpower."

4

## TAIWAN

Believing that President-elect Bush will be more receptive than his predecessor, Taiwan plans to request hardware aimed at fending off an attack from the Mainland. Nation remains wary of hostilities by Mainland China.

5

## COLOMBIA

**Outsourcing For Military Assistance:** *St. Petersburg Times*, 3 December 2000, reports that the 250 U. S. military personnel now in Colombia are involved strictly in anti-drug activities. For molding a first-class military capable of defeating the Leftist insurgency, and revamping the National Police, Military Professional Resources, Inc., of Alexandria, VA, has snagged the \$6-million contract. MPRI personnel reportedly do not engage in battles against rebel forces.

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## YEMEN

**American Might Be Involved:** A U. S. citizen, Jaed Hijazi, now in custody in Jordan and who has ties to Osama bin Laden, might be a suspect in 12 October 2000 terrorist attack on *U.S.S. Cole*.

11

## CHINA

**Taking Care Of Our "Buddies":** Newsmax.com reports that elements of U. S. military are getting rather chummy with their Mainland counterparts. After viewing training at an American Army post, Beijing *Junshi Wenzhai* reports that Chinese returned home "loaded with valuable information about how U.S. would engage PLA in event of a war." • **Certain Churches A No-No:** Wenzhou authorities have destroyed some 200 "illegal" churches, many of which are said to have been associated with underground Roman Catholic Church. • **A Wedge Between Allies:** China is attempting to separate U. S. from regional allies, such as Japan, since China believes U. S. presence and influence in Pacific Basin might short-circuit its own future political and economic interests.

12

## ZIMBABWE

**Whites, Still Unwelcome:** President Mugabe's White-owned ranches confiscations are proceeding with absolutely no protest from UN or any other world bodies sensitive to human rights.



2

**ISRAEL**

**No Confidence:** Prime Minister Ehud Barak resigns following "No confidence" vote. Recent and ongoing violence contributed to his undoing. New elections to be held in February 2001.

3

**PERU**

**Fujimori Out:** President Alberto Kenyo Fujimori, a first-generation Japanese considered an upstart by many of the old political guard, is tossed from office. Some believe his refusal to adopt a PC stance vis-à-vis permitting Marxist terrorists to hold public office precipitated his ouster by more "progressive" adversaries. • **Release Likely:** Convicted terrorist Lorene Helene Berenson might soon be CONUS-bound, thanks in no small measure to CBS's favorable piece on her life and crimes. • **Gracias, CIA:** September 1992 capture of Shining Path G honcho Abimael Guzman was in part financed by Agency funds and equipment.

6

**MEXICO**

**Bribery, No!** President Vicente Fox vows to end bribe-taking by border customs officials who prey upon returning Mexican citizens who've found things better in the U. S. • **Border Skirmishes?** Plenty of rumors, but no solid evidence, about alleged firefights between Mexican and American Border Patrol agents, particularly at California and Laredo, Texas, crossing points.

7

**IRELAND**

**Farewell Jaunt:** President Clinton makes his final plea for lasting peace throughout Ireland. Some speculate that the soon-to-be former Prez [at press time] will make a run at becoming first American-born UN Secretary-General.

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**RUSSIA**

**Land Of Putin:** Reports indicate that civil liberties crack-downs are on the rise and that elements of previously state-controlled media are hopping mad.

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**AUSTRALIA**

We received the following comms from Down Under: "It has now been 12 months since gun owners in Australia were forced by new law to surrender 640,381 personal firearms to be destroyed by our own government, a program costing Australian taxpayers more than \$500 million. The first year results are now in: ... homicides up 3.2%; assaults up 8.6%; ... The Australian experience proves it. Guns in the hands of honest citizens save lives and property and, yes, gun-control laws affect only the law-abiding citizens. ..."

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**JORDAN**

Wraps up free-trade deal with U.S. which links free trade to protecting workers' and environmental rights.

World Sitrep is compiled by the SOF staff with information from various media and correspondents.



# ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

## Patio Poltroon

Some sage — probably a wife — observed that boys never grow up, their toys just get bigger. Or at least louder.

When this writer was a kid, if you sold enough copies of *Grit* or picked enough strawberries or dinged out enough chicken coops, one of the enduring fun things you could buy with the proceeds was a miniature, firing cannon. That one got away, and every Fourth of July and often in between, we always missed it, even though it was a very modest implement of crudely cast iron.

A major step up from the little cast-iron poppers of yore in quality and dimension is Loose Cannon Company's new Patio Poltroon — more of an entry-level thunder-boomer for those contemplating a new gig as a serious cannoneer.



Well-designed after the esthetic of an 1880s' Enfield field gun, the Patio Poltroon is entirely made from modern carbon steel, has a threaded breechplug and a fully jacketed breech. There are no aluminum or pot-metal castings, and the only cast steel is the wheels, which have roller bearings and solid rubber tires. It is finished in black Parkerizing (manganese-iron phosphate). Although it weighs nearly 15 pounds and is more than 21 inches overall, the manufacturer recommends firing it tethered, as it still bucks and snorts from an inexpensive charge of FFG. Elevation is adjusted by a threaded capstan.

As a muzzle-loader, the Patio Poltroon is much cheaper to shoot than the old Winchester signal gun — pennies as opposed to dollars a shot — and it's also about half the price to buy. It is fuse or linstock fired, and the threaded flash-hole liner is replaceable. It's made to be shot, and shot and shot.

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doubt the most quality-made cannon you'll ever buy for the money. The standard Patio Poltroon costs \$295, plus \$10 crating and shipping in the U.S.A. It comes with loading and firing instructions. (An unregulated pyrotechnic device under federal code, miniature muzzle-loading signal guns may come under local restrictions, so check your state and local laws. The Patio Poltroon is not suitable for — and is not sold to — minors without adult supervision.)

Signals, celebrations, Sunday afternoon picnics and sporting events all beg a wee cannon. We don't think you'll find a better one for the money. No artilleryman's gun room should be without one.

Loose Cannon Company, Dept. SOF, 1254 Gay Street, Longmont, CO 80501; e-mail: ENKA05@AOL.COM; on the web: www.loose-cannon-company.com .

## Gunsmithing Kinks

Every generation or so, someone who starts out as a journalist ends up with an honest job, although the reverse is much more common, where legions schooled in an honest trade or legitimate profession can't cut it, and end up as journalists.

One man trained as a journalist who readily comes to mind for his exceptional accomplishments in another field was Bob Brownell, late founder of Brownells, Inc. Aside from his impeccable reputation among customers and peers for square dealing and service as good as it gets, Brownells's towering success in his chosen field of service to gunsmiths can probably be attributed at least in some measure to his considerable talents as a journalist. His ability to communicate made his catalogs the most user-friendly around — and user-friendly gets used. He also put on the market some of the best gunsmithing/metalworking books ever to see print.

Being a G.I. or police armorer can be challenging, but once you learn the tricks for the dozen or so guns you are likely to encounter, you're in good shape. A civilian gunsmith, however, has uncountable different designs to deal with, and by the time he's learning most of

the kinks, he's retired. The shared experiences and advice of those who have been-there-done-that can be worth their weight in gold, and it was Bob Brownell who first really began to accumulate this science into books, with his best-selling volume *Gunsmithing Kinks*. That was decades ago, and as working gunsmiths — Bob's customers — continued to write him with specific solutions to specific problems, *Kinks* grew through volumes II and III. They were workbench wisdom at its very best. Such insider advice and proven techniques have meant the difference for a generation of gunsmiths doing a difficult job right the first time, profitably. You will find these volumes on a shelf over the bench of anyone who works metal.

We have good news: The long-awaited Vol. 4 (Vol. III came out in '93) of *Gunsmithing Kinks* is rolling off the press in mid-February. This new tome has more than 560 pages, filled with 706 kinks, instructions and stories; lavishly illustrated with 332 illustrations. As user-friendly as technical works can get, Vol. 4 is not only indexed, but cross-indexed with volumes I, II, and III, more than 5,000 cross-index entries. And well seasoned with jokes and cartoons, to keep you smiling when your necktie is wound up in a four-jaw chuck.

As the other volumes, the nuggets of wisdom in Vol. 4 cover the general (machining tricks, brazing/soldering, drilling/tapping, polishing/finishing), the type specific (handguns, rifles, shotguns, sights) and the mission-specific (how to fix the wigdet on the Mk I Watchmacallit, how to adjust the front sight on a '04 Winshotter, how to do a trigger job on a Fosbury automatic revolver). And lots of practical business tips to help your bottom line, from setting up your shop to drumming up your business.

The collective knowledge contained in the *Gunsmithing Kinks* series is the institutional memory of the gunsmithing profession. If you work with, or even just tinker, guns these are the basis for your smithing library. Volume 4 is \$27.75, and the first wrinkle you use will pay for the book — the rest is gravy. Rid your profession of ankle-biters the easy way: Consult the real experts, those with their hands on.

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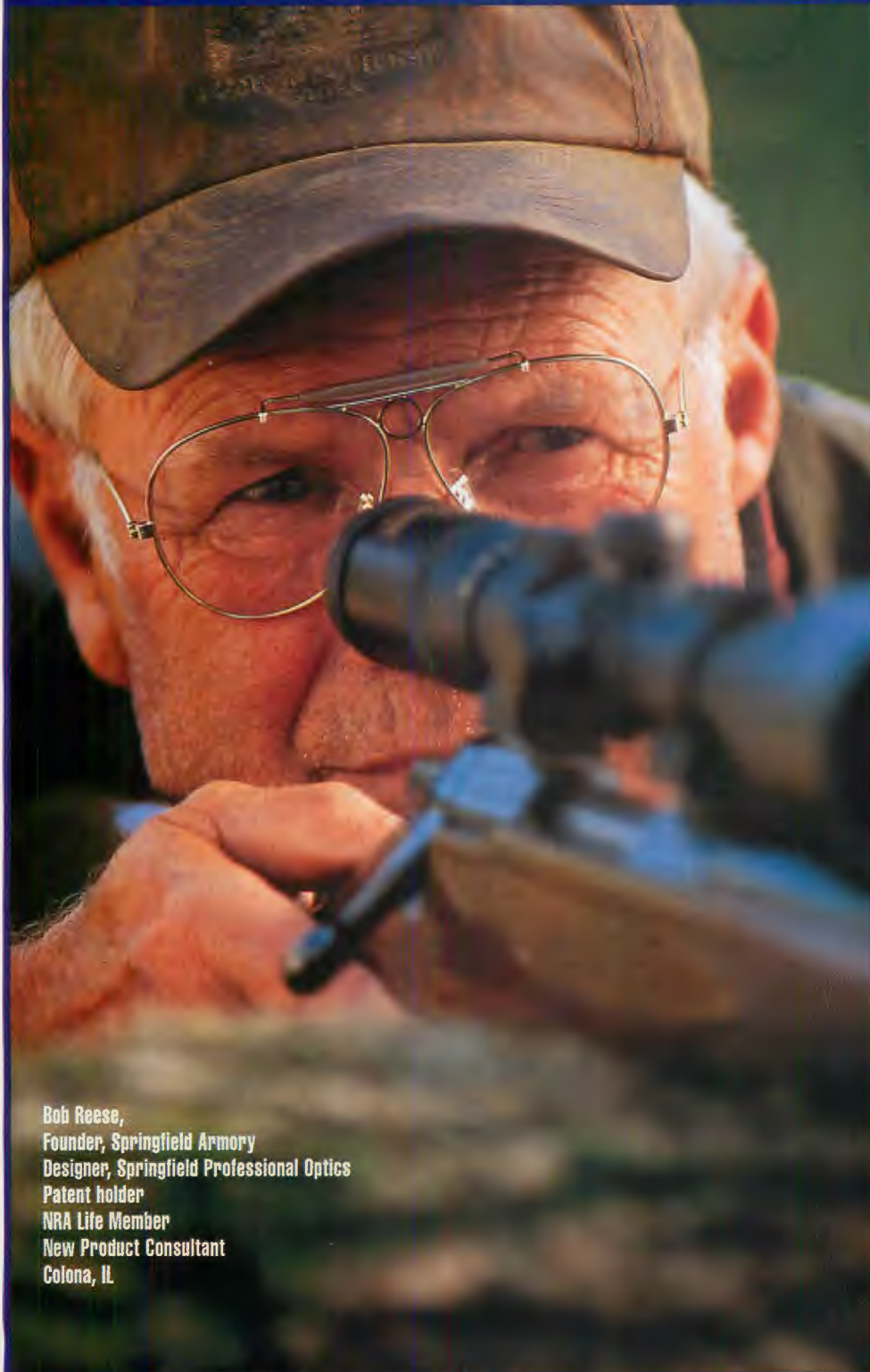
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# Doctors Under Fire

## Refugee Relief International Provides Aid In Harm's Way

BY SOF STAFF

PHOTOS COURTESY ROB KROTT

Refugee Relief International, Inc. continues to send unpaid volunteers into war zones to provide medical relief where they are needed. In their recent fund raising letter, they outlined their completed missions for 2000:

### April 2000

A team of R2I2 volunteers (surgeon, family practice specialists, nurse, engineer) went again to a small village of Karens (La Twee Tha) on the Moie River at the Thai/Burma border to treat the sick and wounded as well as fit prostheses for those who have lost limbs to artillery and mines. R2I2 is unusual in the field of medical relief work in that its missions are often conduct-



ed right in the heart of combat zones and occasionally right in the middle of combat itself. The April 2000 mission proved to be one of the more dangerous when Burmese government troops captured a wood-cutter and learned of the presence of the nearby Karen troops and the R2I2 medical team.

The Burmese troops then attacked the village of La Twee Tha, where they burned the hospital to the ground and took a number of captives with them, including one nurse. The R2I2 team escaped unharmed

and continued the mission, which met all of the preplanned objectives. Extensive U.S. newspaper coverage of this mission was published in the *San Jose Mercury-News*, meeting enthusiastic reception in the Silicon Valley area.

### July 2000

A small team of two R2I2 volunteers were sent to Central Vietnam (Quang Tri Province) to inspect five hospitals which had requested a large medical aid package (\$4



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Rob Krott administers tetanus vaccination near tailgate of his vehicle. In the field, you treat where you can.









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million) of X-ray, surgical, diagnostic and laboratory equipment from a private U.S. organization. Quang Tri Province was the hardest hit area in the Vietnam War and is still barely recovered from the devastation. The team visited the hospitals, met with the staffs and surveyed the medical capabilities of the facilities. They drafted a complete report of their visit, which was critical to the authorization of the much-needed equipment. The team will go back to Quang Tri Province to monitor the shipment and placement of the equipment as well as instruct the local physicians in the use of modern laproscopic surgical equipment that has been generously donated by Stryker Corporation, a large U.S. surgical equipment manufacturer.



John Padgett examining wound dressing during recent mission to Burma. R2I2's dedicated personnel go where many others can't — or won't.

### August 2000

A two-man team from R2I2 was sent to a hospital ("Dr. Cynthia's Hospital") in the town of Mae Sot along the Thai/Burma border for the purposes of introducing to the local physicians a new low-tech prosthesis for amputees. The American Orthopedic Supply provided the leg systems for demonstration and the Odd Fellows Lodge of Upland, Calif. committed to funding the project for the prostheses. After demonstration by prosthesis technician Steven Hall, the Karen's chief prosthetic-maker, Saw Mun Kay, took to the system immediately and began modifications to meet local requirements, the latter mostly of a cosmetic nature. In one case, less than an hour after being fitted with the prostheses, one local Karen man was playing soccer.

Numerous other missions and projects are under active consideration by R2I2 staff. Activities are limited only by funding, which is in chronic short supply. R2I2 is a 501 (C) (3) organization, which means all donations are *fully* tax-deductible (Refugee Relief International, Inc., Dept. SOF, 1393 Santa Rita Road, Suite B, Pleasanton, CA 94566; phone: 925-734-0100; email: info@refugeerelief.org). Access their website at [www.refugeerelief.org](http://www.refugeerelief.org) to follow past and future missions. ✕

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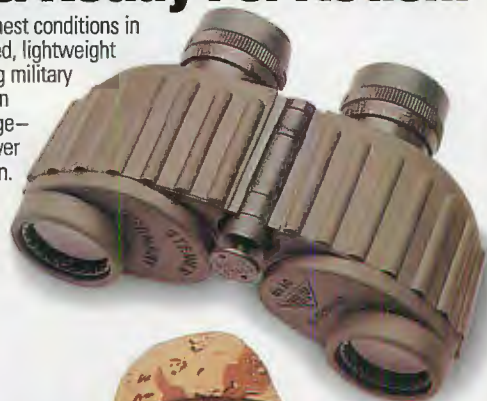
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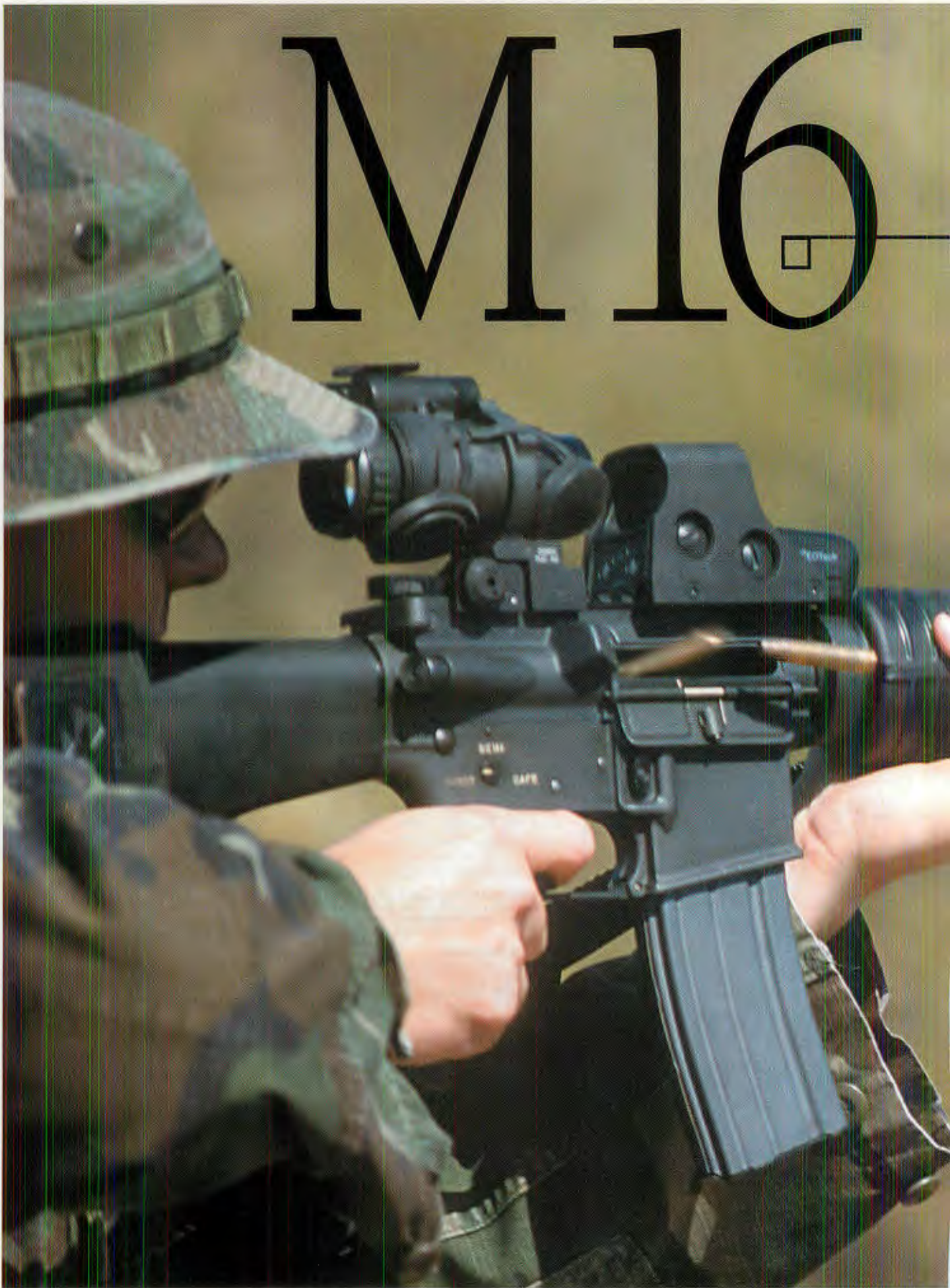
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# M16





# MILLENNIUM MODIFICATIONS

## Enhancing The Black Rifle

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



**T**he M16 series has quite a bit of competition, supposedly. There are a number of different caliber 5.56x45mm NATO assault rifles in service throughout the world. A brief survey would include the Austrian Steyr AUG, Belgian FNC, French FAMAS bullpup, the new, and as yet unproven, Heckler & Koch G36, Israeli Galil (essentially a Kalashnikov), the dreadful British L85A1 bullpup, and a number of AKs now chambered for this round. None of them have come even close to developing the almost bewildering array of potential improvements and enhancements that can be attached to, or modified on, today's M16. In service now for almost three decades, no other modern infantry rifle (actually in service) offers to an operator the amount of sophistication provided by the latest improved M16s. M16 enhancements are evolving with alarming speed. What follows is a detailed look at some of the cutting-edge technology currently available to those deploying with an M16/AR-15.





(top, inset) The M3 Tactical Illuminator weighs only 3.3 ounces with batteries. Yet, using a tungsten halogen, xenon-filled bulb and two standard DL 123A 3-volt lithium batteries, the unit delivers an amazing 80-90 lumens of white light. Shown here attached to an M16A2 by means of a GG&G mount. (left) Right now, the hottest optical sight combination available for the tactical M16/AR-15 series may very well be the new EOTech Model 500 Holographic Diffraction Sight with a Litton M983 night vision scope mounted to the rear.

### Illuminating the Goblins

No accessory you can add to your urban rifle, shotgun or sub-machine gun is more important than a flashlight specifically designed for use with fighting firearms. Flashlights attached to a shoulder-mounted weapon or used in conjunction with a handgun should be powerful—very powerful. Goblins like to move at night, and not necessarily when the moon is full.

Lights of this type are most definitely not aiming devices. They do not replace the weapon's sights. These lights are used to illuminate the target and permit proper target discrimination, to prevent popping a family member or fellow officer. They backlight the weapon's sights and permit their proper use. If powerful enough, they can also be used to momentarily blind your opponent. Self-luminous tritium sights do not assist target discrimination in total darkness.

Common sense is required in the tactical application of flashlights. They should be turned on only long enough to identify a potential target—fire, if required—then turn the light off and move. In the presence of potential danger, these devices should never be used as searchlights to visually clear an area. They will only serve to compromise the mission and draw fire if used indiscriminately.

The most meaningful measure of the power of a flashlight for comparison purposes is the total amount of light it produces, which includes both the focused and wide-angle portions of the beam produced by the flashlight. This is measured by an instrument called an "integrating sphere" and given in "lumens."

Recently surging forward in this area is Insight Technology, Inc.

(Dept. SOF, 3 Technology Drive, Londonderry, NH 03053; phone: 603-626-4800; fax: 603-647-7234; web sites: [www.insightlights.com](http://www.insightlights.com) [manufacturer] or [www.streamlight.com](http://www.streamlight.com) [distributor of all Insight products]) whose tactical illuminators and Laser Aiming Module (LAM) are gaining distinct prominence in law enforcement and military circles. Their M3 Tactical Illuminator weighs only 3.3 ounces with batteries and measures but 3.4 inches in length and about 1.5 inches in height and width. Yet, using a tungsten halogen, xenon-filled bulb and two standard DL 123A 3-volt lithium batteries, the unit delivers an amazing 80-90 lumens of white light. Made of lightweight polymer materials, the M3 features both momentary and steady-on switches and a focusable beam. Suggested retail price of the M3 Tactical Illuminator is \$149.95. Usually mounted on handguns or shotguns, GG&G (Dept. SOF, 3602 East 42nd Stravenue, Tucson, AZ 85713; phone: 520-748-7167; fax: 520-748-7583; e-mail: [gggz@aol.com](mailto:gggz@aol.com)) has introduced a mount for the tiny M series Tactical Illuminator that adapts it to the M16/AR-15. The price is only \$25.

Similar in configuration, but much more robust in construction to the M3 is Insight Technology's Model 100 LAM, which is available to law enforcement agencies and military organizations only. It weighs 5 ounces with batteries and measures 4.5 inches length, 1.6 inches in width and 2 inches in height. This is a state-of-the-art LAM in every regard. Waterproof (at a depth up to 66 feet with submersion for two hours) and powered by two 3-volt lithium batteries, it can be attached or removed from the weapon in less than 15 seconds. More important, 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 also both a focusable visible flashlight (facial recognition out to 25 meters) and infrared illuminator (with a range of 50 meters or less). The Model 100 sent to SOF for test and evaluation was designed to be mounted on either a Glock or MilStandard 1913 rail. Other models in "00" series are intended



for attachment to either the H&K USP or MK-23 pistols. A model with a rail-grabber interface is also available. Units with infrared capability are available to the military and law enforcement only. Models in the "50" series, with a visible laser and flashlight only, can be purchased by the public and are offered with the same attachment interfaces as the "00" series. The Insight Technology LAM is issued with an operator's manual and remote switch.

Operation of the LAM is straightforward, but requires study of the manual and some practice. A mode selector on the side of the unit has two visible light positions, two IR positions and an OFF position. The "VIS" position enables the visible laser aiming point. The "VIS/ILL" position enables both the visible laser aiming point and the 60 lumens visible flashlight. When the knob is rotated to "IR," the infrared laser aiming point is enabled. At "IR/ILL" both the IR laser aiming point and the IR flashlight are enabled. A long, easily manipulated toggle switch provides either momentary or steady-on modes when toggled to either the right or left. A laser inactivator switch at the rear of the LAM permits the operator to inactivate the visible laser aiming point while in the "VIS/ILL" mode. The two IR positions are, of course, intended for use with night vision equipment. Insight Technology's LAM is without doubt the most sophisticated of its type available, and is presently preferred over any others by all law enforcement and military special operations groups deploying with this type of equipment.

Holsters Plus (Dept. SOF, 25727 Coeur d'Alene River Road, Wallace, ID 83873; phone: 208-682-9435; fax: 208-682-4536; web site: [www.holstersplus.com](http://www.holstersplus.com)) makes Kydex light holders for the M3 Tactical Illuminator that provide storage on the operator's belt and easy access when the unit is not mounted on a weapon. SOF was provided with test specimens of their L100 Classic, which offers full protection for the light's bezel at only \$30, and the abbreviated L102 Clip-On unit for \$39, which was designed for environments in which the light is not carried full-time. Both of these holders match the superb quality of the M3.

### EOTech's New Model 500 Series Holographic Diffraction Sight

Weapon sights using an illuminated reticle pattern, often a red dot, and mounted on the Colt

M16/AR-15 series now prevail in both law enforcement and military circles. The U.S. Army purchased 80,000 Aimpoint Comp M electronic reflex sights in 1997 for their M16A2 M4 assault rifles. There is, in my opinion, a far better alternative.

EOTech, Inc. (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 134010, Ann Arbor, MI 48113; phone: 734-994-1200, ext. 3661; fax: 734-741-8868; e-mail: [vdonohue@hotmail.com](mailto:vdonohue@hotmail.com)) developed and now markets exclusively to law enforcement and military personnel and agencies, the amazing Holographic Diffraction Sight (HDS) Models 510 and 550. A Model 500 HOLOSight was introduced for the civilian market at the 2000 SHOT Show. The HDS features advanced technology previously encountered only on the heads-up displays of weapon targeting systems found in the cockpits of modern fighter aircraft.

Holography is the technique of producing visual images by means of wavefront reconstruction, especially by using lasers to record on a photographic plate or screen from which a three-dimensional image can be projected. A hologram, or holograph, is the pattern or image generated in this way. EOTech's revolutionary HDS uses a hologram of a reticle pattern recorded on a heads-up display window. When illuminated by laser (an acronym which stands for "Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation") light, the holographic image becomes visible at the target plane, where it remains in focus with the target and provides instant target acquisition.

EOTech, Inc., which was founded in the summer of 1995, is a subdivision of the Environmental Research Institute of Michigan (ERIM). ERIM, a non-profit R&D organization, is now 50 years old.



(above) Insight Technology's Model 100 LAM is state-of-the-art in every regard. A mode selector on the side of the unit has two visible light positions, two IR positions and an OFF position. A long, easily manipulated toggle switch provides either momentary or steady-on modes when toggled to either the right or left. (left) Using Black Hills caliber .223 Remington 68-grain Match Hollow Points, SOF staff was able to shoot consistent groups under 2 MOA at 100 yards (off the bench). That's outstanding, as the EOTech Model 550 HDS is equipped with a 1 MOA center dot, and more important, no illuminated reticle pattern sight can match the clarity of a standard optical scope's crosshairs. (below) GG&G's MAD (Multiple Aperture Device) BUIS (Back Up Iron Sight) was mounted to the rear of the EOTech HDS. It features both a large and small aperture on the same plane and thus can be zeroed to the same point of impact.





For the first 25 years of its existence it was part of the University of Michigan. With 425 scientists on its staff and a support staff of two to three hundred, ERIM conducts core research and development for the U.S. Department of Defense, NASA, and the intelligence community (NSA and CIA). ERIM concentrates on image processing and sensor technology, and more recently, battle surveillance equipment.

ERIM is a think tank, which develops and conducts feasibility studies, but does not manufacture equipment. Ninety percent of their work is classified. Holography was invented at ERIM in 1962 by Dr. Emmett Leith. The original Holographic Diffraction Sight was developed under contract with Wright Patterson Air Force Base (the Air Force's R&D center) for deployment on helicopter gun ships in Vietnam and for anti-aircraft weaponry. At that time the unit cost approximately \$800 and had a 4x5-inch window, which made it unfeasible for small arms applications.

This holographic technology was shelved and then revived in 1994. An agreement was reached in 1996 with Bushnell for the commercial market. In 1998 EOTech introduced the archery equivalent of the HDS and about a year later they entered the law enforcement and military arena. GG&G (Dept. SOF, 3602 East 42nd Stravenue, Tucson, AZ 85713; phone: 520-748-7167; fax: 520-748-7583; e-mail: gggaz@aol.com), which makes rear sights for the M16A2E4 and M4 flat top receivers that cowitness with the HDS, is an EOTech distributor.

Manufactured entirely in the United States, the EOTech HDS is a transmission-type hologram and thus projects what appears to be an illuminated reticle pattern directly on the target. Yet no forward light is actually projected. To me, the HDS's most important salient feature is the operator's ability to acquire the target without regard to a cheek weld or consistent alignment of the shooter's eye, the sight's reticle pattern and the target. No matter how you move your head and eye about, the reticle pattern will always remain in exactly the same place on the target. This is an incredibly important phenomenon, especially when rapid and accurate target acquisition under stress becomes literally a matter of life and death during a gunfight.

Mud or other obstructions do not affect the operator's ability to effectively see the reticle pattern and engage targets, even if the display window is almost completely covered. The heads-up display window is 3/8-inch thick, with 3 panes of glass bonded together to form a shatterproof laminate. The two outside panes have an anti-reflective coating. The Model 550 HDS sent to us for test and evaluation was equipped with the standard reticle, which is a two-dimensional ring (65 MOA in diameter) with tick marks and a center 1 MOA dot. Custom reticles are available. The exit aperture is 45 degrees.

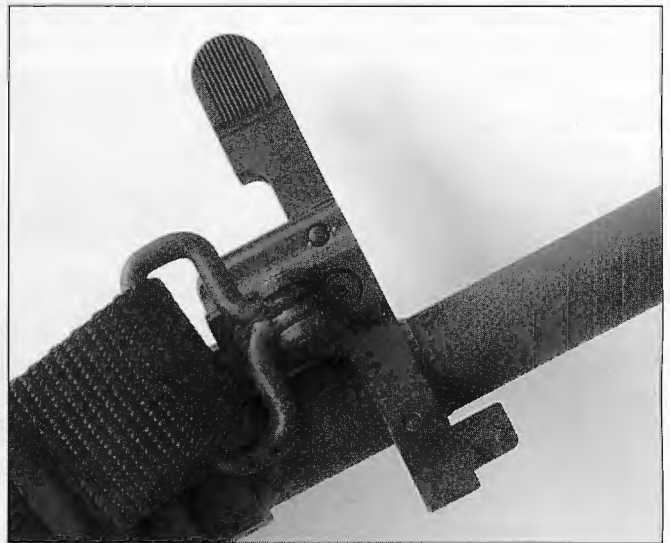
After adjustment of elevation and windage zero, you simply look through the sight assembly's window; place the reticle image on the target, and fire. The eye relief on the Model 550 HDS is an incredible 1-inch to infinity. Both the elevation and windage adjustments are in 0.5 MOA click increments.

In a tactical environment the operator's peripheral vision is almost unlimited and up to 50% on each side of the target. That's because there is no tube, the reticle window remains close to the eye, and the large reticle pattern neither covers up nor obscures the target. As no light is cast upon the target, there is no signature to compromise the operator's position. Glint screens are not necessary.

The Model 550 HDS has 20 levels of brightness adjustment in the normal visual spectrum. When the sight is turned on, the brightness level is automatically set at the factory to level 15. The user can program the sight himself to turn on automatically at level 1 (minimum brightness setting) or level 20 (maximum brightness setting), but he must do so each time the sight is turned on or the sight will move back to the factory default setting. There is also an auto shutdown mode and the unit will automatically shut itself off eight hours after the last push-button control has been pressed. The user can also program the HDS for a two-hour shutdown mode. Two commonly available Type N 1.5-volt batteries power the HDS. As the batteries run down the reticle brightness will remain at the set intensity and then shut down abruptly.

Recoil testing equipment at the EOTech plant simulates the recoil of the .454 Casull (3,500 Gs for 0.5 milliseconds). The first 22,000 HDS units produced were all cycled on this test bed.

Key advantages of the new Model 500 series are a significantly reduced price and a 33% reduction in weight and length. The original Model 400 series HDS was 6 inches in length and weighed 9.1 ounces. The new Model 500 series units are 4 inches in length and weigh only 6.4 ounces. The reduction in length now permits night vision equipment to be more easily mounted in back of the HDS —



(above) GG&G's folding sight is now equipped with a spring-loaded locking detent to prevent accidental lowering of the unit. Further, the sight now comes with a standard 1½-inch, ambidextrous sling swivel.

(left) Precision shooting is often required in the law enforcement applications into which an enhanced M16/AR-15 is placed. In that scenario there is no bigger equipment-related distraction than a heavy or creepy trigger pull. GG&G's set-trigger fire-control mechanism offers the operator two significantly different pull weights.



an important consideration for law enforcement and military end users. In addition the brightness range has been increased from a ratio of 2,000:1 to 28,000:1, a 14X increase in the dynamic range and a very dramatic increase in low light environments. The battery cap is now toolless; battery life has been increased by 40% to 70 hours; a built-in sun shield added as well as a filter for night vision compatibility that has a quick engage on/off feature. The unit is submersible to 8 feet indefinitely and will withstand almost any conceivable tactical environment. The battery check indicator is now automatic at start up.

The basic difference between the law enforcement/military Models 510 and 550 is their respective night vision compatibility. The Tactical Law Enforcement Model 510 can work coincidentally with Gen II and some Gen II+ night vision gear, but only at Level 1 and maybe at Level 2. Furthermore, the operator must scroll down to the night vision spectrum. The spectacular Model 550 has been designed to work with Gen III, Gen III+ and the soon to be released Gen IV night vision equipment. This unit has a third switch on the membrane pad that instantly drops the unit to the NV spectrum. There are 10 settings within the NV spectrum. This is critical due to varying tube sensitivities, user's eye sensitivities and ambient light scenarios. Neither of these two units emits any muzzle side light signature. The agency price of the Model 510 is \$299, while that of the Model 550 is \$339. EOTech's Model 550 HDS leads the pack and no other illuminated-reticle-pattern combat sight, at this time, even comes close.

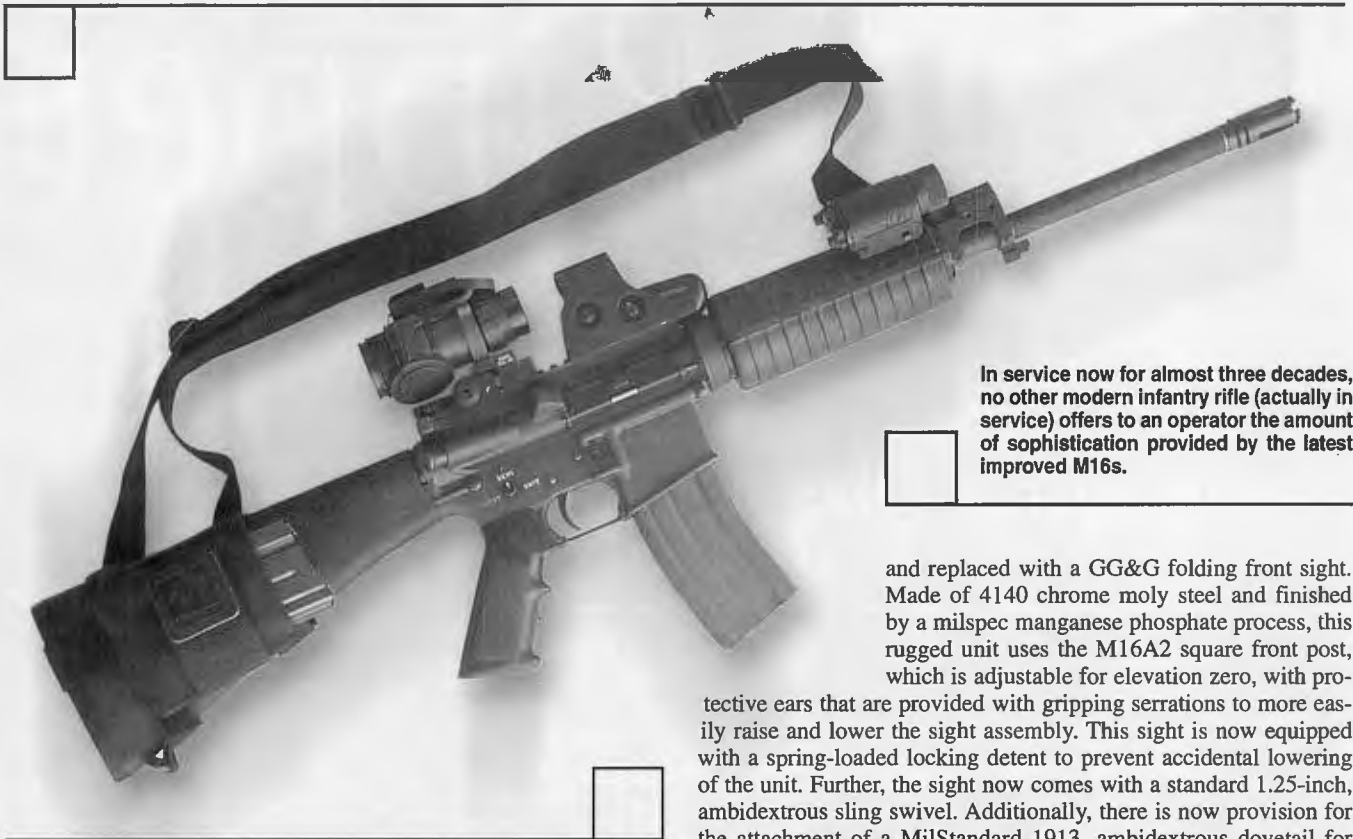
Using Black Hills Ammunition (Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 3090,

heavy barrel (chrome-lined with 1:9-inch twist) and removable carrying handle. A GG&G MAD (Multiple Aperture Device) BUIS (Back Up Iron Sight) was mounted to the rear of the HDS and, together with this upper receiver's GG&G folding front sight, zeroed at the range for cowitness with the HDS.

The MAD was originally developed to fulfill a request from Naval Surface Warfare for a back up iron sight that provided both a large and small aperture on the same plane and would thus be zeroed to the same point of impact. The MAD has four apertures, two of each size (so that rotating the aperture in either direction will bring the next size into view). The small aperture diameter is 0.073-inch and the large aperture is 0.199-inch in diameter. It uses the standard Colt windage knob and windage screw. One click of the windage knob provides approximately 0.48 MOA change when mounted on the M16A2E4 rifle and about 0.65 MOA on the M4 carbine.

The MAD mount body is manufactured from 6061 T6 aluminum, hard anodized per milspec. The stem and aperture disc are made from 4140 steel, black magnesium phosphated per milspec. The MAD overhangs the rear of the receiver by 0.200-inch. This provides a lip so that the sight can be easily deployed even with a gloved hand. The unit locks in the up and down position with a positive detent. It sells for \$141.

Whether you're deploying with an EOTech Holographic Diffraction Sight or an Aimpoint red dot sight, what you most certainly do not want in the center of your image is the M16's front sight. The answer to that dilemma is to have it completely removed



In service now for almost three decades, no other modern infantry rifle (actually in service) offers to an operator the amount of sophistication provided by the latest improved M16s.

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) caliber .223 Remington 68-grain Match Hollow Points, we were able to shoot consistent groups under 2 MOA at 100 yards (off the bench). That's outstanding, as the EOTech Model 550 HDS is equipped with a 1 MOA center dot and more important, no illuminated reticle pattern sight can match the clarity of a standard optical scope's crosshairs.

### MAD

The HDS Model 500 series can be mounted for cowitness with emergency iron sights. We attached the Model 500 to an M16A2, equipped with an upper receiver (from the Colt law enforcement AR-15A3 Tactical Carbine, #AR6721) that features a 16.1-inch

and replaced with a GG&G folding front sight. Made of 4140 chrome moly steel and finished by a milspec manganese phosphate process, this rugged unit uses the M16A2 square front post, which is adjustable for elevation zero, with protective ears that are provided with gripping serrations to more easily raise and lower the sight assembly. This sight is now equipped with a spring-loaded locking detent to prevent accidental lowering of the unit. Further, the sight now comes with a standard 1.25-inch, ambidextrous sling swivel. Additionally, there is now provision for the attachment of a MilStandard 1913, ambidextrous dovetail for mounting flashlights, LAMs and other small accessories onto to gas block base. The cost of the GG&G folding front sight is \$191, installed.

GG&G now markets these components under the overall umbrella of what they call the "FIRE" (Fully Integrated Rifle Enhancement) System. This includes any or all of the following as required by the end user: MAD or A2 folding emergency rear sights, folding front sight, standard or "Scout" (extended 2 inches beyond the receiver) interface rails, and standard or cantilever Aimpoint rings.

Precision shooting is often required in the law enforcement applications into which an enhanced M16/AR-15 is placed. In that scenario there is no bigger equipment-related distraction than a heavy or creepy

*Continued on page 85*



# GULF WAR SPECIAL:

From a purely numbers perspective, the odds seemed to be stacked against Task Force Ripper, the first allied ground unit to assault Kuwait.

"From the intel estimates we had, we were way outnumbered, and figured it would be a pretty tough fight," said First Lieutenant Brian C. Hormberg of Houston, Texas. Hormberg was XO of Alpha Company, 3d Tank Battalion, the armored unit that plowed safe lanes through two Iraqi minefields in Kuwait on G-Day, 24 February, the day the ground war began against Iraqi troops occupying the tiny state on the Persian Gulf. "But looking back at what happened, numbers didn't mean a damn thing in the end," said Hormberg.

Before the air war began on 17 January, the ratio of Iraqi troops to allied troops was estimated to be a whopping seven to one. Enemy tanks had a projected numerical advantage of at least four to one. And since Central Command did not make public the number of Iraqis thought to be killed by Allied bombing, no one was certain what was waiting for the Marines beyond the two minefields.

On the eve of the ground war, 7th Marines' Chaplain, Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Matoush quoted from Shakespeare's *Henry V*,

# Task Force Ripper

BY DALE B. COOPER

## Marine Armor Liberates Kuwait



courtesy Brian Hornburg

1st Lt. Brian Hornburg (left) and crew of Sagger Magnet after battle in Kuwait: to his left, gunner Lance Cpl. Mark Craft, driver Lance Cpl. Shane Paynter, loader and FAC 2nd Lt. Dennis Sullivan.



# 10TH ANNIVERSARY

author's files

"We few ... we happy few ... we band of brothers. For he who sheds his blood with me shall be my brother." Then pausing at Ripper's final staff meeting, the chaplain said, "If Shakespeare were alive today, he'd probably add, 'Let's go kick some ass.'"

When the fog of war cleared after a three-day *blitzkrieg* in Kuwait, Task Force Ripper had not only kicked ass, but also destroyed 176 enemy tanks, hundreds of other armored vehicles, and captured more than 10,000 enemy soldiers. All at the unbelievable cost of no KIAs, and only 11 WIAs, all of whom returned to duty.

"We were looking at casualty figures in the vicinity of 10%, which would have come out to be about 600 or so," said Colonel Carl Fulford, commanding officer of Task Force Ripper. Fulford told *SOF* his men dodged the bullet thanks to Divine intervention. Early on in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Fulford told his subordinates Iraq's will to fight would determine how fierce the coming fight would be. "He [Saddam Hussein] certainly had the equipment to make it [the war] very deadly," Fulford said, "but as we watched our rounds hit his tanks and explode into balls of fire and turrets go flying off, we couldn't help but think what would have happened to our

aluminum-hulled Amtracs containing 18 to 20 Marines, had one Iraqi missile or tank round hit those AAVs."

## Help From Above

Enemy rounds went flying through advancing Marine units, but none hit. "It was as if we were up against the Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight," said Lieutenant Colonel Jim Mattis, CO of 1st Battalion, 7th Marines who watched an AP SABOT round from an Iraqi tank go bouncing harmlessly through his battalion without hitting a soul. Luck? "No way," said Fulford, "I think the Man upstairs had something to do with that."

Ripper's lightning thrust deep into Kuwait was conducted by two reinforced battalions of infantry, 1st Bn, 5th Marines and 1st Bn, 7th Marines. The infantry was backed up by 3d Tank Bn, 3d Bn, 11th Artillery Regiment, 1st Combat Engineer Bn

and other supporting units. A couple of weeks after these units arrived back at the Marine Air and Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, California, they talked with *SOF* about their involvement in the "100-Hour War" that raged the previous February.

For an infantry officer like John Anderson, this was the chance of a lifetime. As a "Butter Bar," fresh out of the Infantry Officer Course at Quantico, Virginia, the 24-year-old political science major from Cal State-Fullerton was given a chance to lead men into combat. Anderson took charge of 2nd Platoon in Bravo Company just three days before shipping out for Saudi Arabia.

When it came time to select the lead assault platoon, Anderson likes to think he was chosen for his leadership abilities, and not because he was the first Marine through the breach might suffer heavy casualties. "Being a Marine, I wanted to go in first," he said. "And have everyone else mop up." Besides, after eating sand and swatting flies for six months, he and the 69 men in his platoon were ready to get the show on the road. "We knew the sooner we drove the Iraqis out of Kuwait, the sooner we'd go home."

Lance Corporal Mark Maxheimer, a

Lance Cpl. Mark Maxheimer



Table B Cooper



Lt. Brent E. Wilhoit

(above, left) The Victors: B Co., 1st Platoon, 1/7 outside Kuwait City. (above, right) Then SecDef, now Vice President, Dick Cheney stands atop only 3d Bn tank to subsequently run afoul a mine while assaulting into Kuwait, to give pep talk to men of 1/7. (right) Poster of Saddam Hussein captured by 3d Platoon 1st Engineer Bn at Al Jaber Airfield. Red tape signifies "marked for destruction."



rifleman from Meriden, Connecticut, wishes he could have fired a few rounds. "It would have relieved some of the anxiety ..."

"It was pretty intense inside the tracks as bombs and artillery shells exploded outside," recalled Private First Class Greg Guyumdzhyan, a machine-gunner from Los Angeles who watched a dog run through the minefield. "We all bet he wouldn't make it, but he did."

Private First Class Cody Ernst from Morehead, Minnesota, was pleasantly surprised when Iraqi soldiers surrendered instead of fighting. Ernst was especially relieved when he approached a line of trenches with a jammed M16.

Just before dark on 23 February, members of Task Force Ripper donned their MOPP chemical suits and laced up their protective rubber boots. Infantrymen from 1/5 and 1/7 climbed into their Amtracs, Amphibious Assault Vehicles. More than 20 men to each AAV. "We were packed inside like sardines," said one Leatherneck who said his track had 24 men in it.

## The Desert Box

Farther back in the darkness, tankers from 3d Tank Bn made one last check of their mine plows and newly installed, Israeli-made mine rollers on their M60

tanks. Cannon-cockers from 3d Bn, 11th Marines moved their M198 155mm howitzers into what their CO, Lt. Col. Mark Adams called a "Flying Box" formation, a concept he read about in the *Field Artillery Journal* a couple of years earlier. Making some alterations in the battery-sized concept, Adams was able to move his battalion *en masse* in formation like fighter planes across the desert at 40 miles per hour.

From front to rear, Headquarters, India, Hotel, Golf, and Echo Batteries stretched one mile. The width of the "Flying Box" varied. There were times when Adams would come up on the radio and order his company commanders to close it up. At those times, five-ton trucks pulling howitzers would be side by side. When visibility improved, the "Flying Box" would be expanded like an accordion to 300 meters wide.

"Ripper could not have moved as fast as it moved, and gotten to the airport [Kuwait International] as soon as it did, if we hadn't been right behind them," said Adams.

In the inky darkness of northern Saudi Arabia, Task Force Ripper was uncoiling like a giant version of the desert's brown viper. With H-Hour confirmed, 1/7 began moving to the Line of Departure at 0515, crossing it a short time later. About 0600, Tiger 3 [tanks from Alpha Co.] reported the

minefield was close to their front. Lieutenant Hornberg in "Sagger Magnet," nicknamed for six antennas on his command tank, watched as three platoons of four M60s each approached the breach. (A Sagger is a wire-guided AT-3, anti-tank missile, and Hornberg figured his tank bristling with communications equipment would attract Sagers like a magnet, but it came through the war without a scratch.)

As the sun began to peek over the eastern horizon at 0620, Captain Rick Mancini, commanding officer of Alpha Co., and Capt. Craig Baker, commanding officer of Bravo Co., popped a red star-cluster indicating they had found the minefield. Obstacle Clearing Detachments from both teams, Team Tank and Team Mech began the task of breaching the minefield.

Team Tank fired their Mk 58 single-shot line charge, 1,100 pounds of C4 on a chain, into the minefield, but it failed to detonate as advertised. When combat engineers were unable to prime it manually, Mancini called one of his Mk 154 three-shot line charges forward. It fired, but had to be fused and fired manually. Following in the tracks of a plow-equipped M60 tank the length of the first blast, another charge was fired to complete the breach. Repeating an event that would become routine by the end of G-Day, the OCD once again sent an engineer out to manually prime the charge. By 0644, Lane 4 was clear.

Over in Lane 3, things were looking up

Lt. Col. Jim Mattis, commander 1st Bn 7th Marines, briefs "Devil Dogs" before they cross into Kuwait.



Dale E. Cooper



as a one-shot line charge detonated properly, but as Sergeant Scott Helms' tank was half-way through "proofing the lane" with a mine roller, he struck what is believed to be an Italian-made double impulse mine. Luckily, the blast caused no injuries to the crew, but damage to the left tread and roller arm was enough to create a mobility kill.

Ironically, the tank was the same M-60 Defense Secretary Dick Cheney stood on in Saudi Arabia before the war began and gave the "Devil Dogs" of 1/7 a pep talk. "Next time, we wish he would stand on the enemy's tanks and jinx them," said Helms, who missed all of the action by the time his tank was repaired and he rejoined Alpha Company outside Kuwait City.

### More Help From Above

Helms had a ringside seat at the first obstacle belt as planes from 3d MAW [Marine Air Wing] attacked in waves of two planes each every seven minutes. From his position, he could also watch fellow tankers provide support through indirect and direct fire so engineers could blast a path through the mine belt for 2nd Platoon.

But Lt. Col. Mattis did not call Combat Engineers forward until 3d tanks had fire superiority. "If they [Iraqis] wanted to stick their head up and shoot an engineer, we made it very lethal for them to do it," he told



Lt. Col. Jim Mattis gives sitrep to Delta Company at Kuwait International Airport.

Sgt. Maj. Dwight Walker

created a few "Maalox Moments" for Wilhoit's men who had to dismount from their tracks and go forward to light 40-second fuses.

"The first time we got out was when Helms' tank became disabled in the middle of the minefield," said Cpl. James Chapman, who had to clear mines around the tank so Helms and his crew could abandon the tank and move safely to the rear. "I wished I was a butterfly," chuckled Chapman as the 220-pound Marine recalled gingerly putting one foot in front of another in the minefield.

*SOF.* Mattis worked out a "horseshoe-shaped" fire support plan so that the Iraqis could not even bring in reinforcements once Col. Fulford chose the breaching point.

First Lieutenant Brent Wilhoit, from Johnson City, Tenn., and 24 members of Charlie Co., 1st Combat Engineer Bn became frustrated when seven of nine line charges failed to detonate properly. Twice, arresting cables snapped, breaking the continuity of the electrical circuit in the line charge, but Wilhoit says the rest of the malfunctions involved fuses not arming in flight. Needless to say, the malfunctions

As Chapman and his squad leader crept forward, they asked the tank commander to verify where the anti-personnel and tank mines were located. "As we got closer, we could see them laid out in neat little rows on top of the sand," said Chapman who counted 11 mines around the tank. Once he knew where the Italian-made mines were located, the butterflies disappeared and Chapman did what he was trained to do. Disarm them. It wasn't until Chapman returned to his the safety of his Amtrac that he broke out in a cold sweat.

"It was frustrating when the charges failed to fire," said Cpl. Mike Zamantakis,

Golf Battery, 3d Bn, 11th Marines takes a break between fire missions in support of Task Force Ripper.



Dale B. Cooper

Lt. Brent E. Wilhoit



who was in charge of a three-shot track. Although Alpha Co. was keeping Iraqi heads down with tank and machinegun fire, the last thing Zamantakis wanted to do was go for a walk in a minefield.

Mattis says every engineer who ran out to prime charges manually is "Bronze Star material." It's a good thing the engineers trained for situations like this, because there were more malfunctions at the second minefield, 34 kilometers inside Kuwait.

Resistance also stiffened at the second obstacle. Advancing Marines from 1/7 took light indiscriminate 82mm mortar and artillery fire. "I could hear shrapnel hitting the side of my Amtrac," said Lt. Anderson who said "Snowstorm" [incoming fire] certainly gave him a reality check. "You knew at that point this was for real."

## Again Into The Breach

"I think they thought it would take us 24 hours to reach the second breach," said Mattis, "giving them enough time to move guns and reposition ammunition supplies, but they guessed wrong. It took 1st Bn 40 minutes to clear the first minefield, but only eight minutes to make it through the second breach. "That was twice as fast as we did during rehearsals," said Mattis, "And this was with the added pucker factor of 82mm mortar, 122mm artillery and machinegun fire."

Before the invasion, Marines from First Reconnaissance Battalion walked 18 clicks from the Kuwait border into the first minefield, and then crawled through it. The Recon Marines spent two nights in Indian country, following enemy patrols and reporting back to Task Force Ripper by satellite. "They were by far the best intel I received," said Mattis, "Even better than satellites in the sky and reconnaissance aircraft." Thanks to Marine Recon, Mattis knew exactly what was facing him.

Judging by the small number of Iraqi soldiers defending the first minefield, it's safe to assume the Iraqis used the first minefield to determine within a few degrees where the Marines would hit the second breach, but Task Force Ripper was through the breach by noon on the first day before Iraqi artillery could "turn tubes" and bring fire to bear on the narrow gap in the so-called "Saddam Line."

Advancing Marines from 1/7 did take light indiscriminate 82mm mortar and artillery fire at the second minefield, but the Iraqis failed to mass their artillery fire on the narrow breach.

3d Tank Bn accounted for some cata-

strophic kills of T-55s, T-62s and T-72s — about 59 tanks total. "One SABOT hit the frontal arc of the turret on a T-72," said Lt. Hornberg, XO of Alpha Co. "It went through the turret, engine and out the ass-end." No question about the ability of M60 main guns [105mm] to defeat Iraqi armor, and unlike the heavier gunned [120mm] M1A1 which Alpha Company has transitioned to since the war, M-60s can fire WP [white phosphorous] rounds and be fitted with dozer blades, something the Abrams main battle tank cannot."

Colonel Carl Fulford who commanded Task Force Ripper hated to see the M-60s replaced by M1A1s. "We're spending all of our procurement money to buy 220 of

was so dense, tank commanders like Staff Sgt. David Stefanko opted to keep the hatches open so he and his loader could see where they were going. As a result, Stefanko and Lance Cpl. Craig Biernitzki were hit while moving forward with Team Tank's obstacle clearing detachment. Biernitzki was medevaced to the Regimental Aid Station, but his bloodied tank commander who took a piece of shrapnel in the shoulder refused to be evacuated until the "Devil Dogs" made it safely through the second obstacle belt. Sporadic enemy machinegun fire from the right flank was quickly squashed by M60 main gun and .50 fire. Two 82mm mortar crews were also taken out by 105mm tank fire. Batteries from 3d Battalion, 11th Marines dumped

552 rounds of high explosives on pre-planned targets on the far side of the breach. The fusillade took only 22 minutes.

It takes a good battery 5 to 10 minutes to set up its howitzer and fire. "If they take more than 10 minutes, they're too slow for me," said Lt. Col. Mark Adams, the CO of 3/11 who was responsible for providing fire support for 1/5 and 1/7, the two reinforced infantry battal-



2nd Lt. John Anderson next to captured Iraqi APC outside Kuwait City. APC was of Chinese manufacture.

them, which is way fewer than we need," he observed.

## A Kill At Two Clicks

Most of the tanks destroyed by Alpha Company had been abandoned, according to 2nd Lt. Daniel Smith, 1st Platoon Commander in Alpha Co. — some of the dug-in tanks he hit burned for hours. One of the longest shots was 2,200 meters, which killed a ZSU 23-4, an AA gun mounted on a tank chassis. "But most of our shots were 500 meters or less, just over the berm," said Sgt. Kevin Kessinger, TC (tank commander) on the Battalion Commander's M60.

Going through the minefields with a plow-equipped M-60 was a hair-raising experience for Sgt. Carlos Graham. He snagged a mine going through the second minefield, but no one aboard "Bad Moon Rising" was hurt.

Only two members of Alpha Co. were wounded in action when a mortar round hit the fender on their tank, and they wouldn't have been hurt had they been buttoned up, but the smoke from nearby burning oil wells

ions in Task Force Ripper. They couldn't advance until his batteries were in place.

Prior to G-Day, Echo Battery was working with Task Force Troy about 60 clicks northeast of Ripper. Troy's mission was to deceive the Iraqis into believing that the ground due south of the Al Wahfrah refinery was still occupied by the 2nd Marine Division. By the time Echo Battery began firing, the Grunts were gone. In fact, Echo Battery fired the first artillery rounds of the conflict shortly after noon on 18 February. Before rejoining Ripper, Eight guns in Echo Battery destroyed a number of Iraqi positions, including one observation post, four bunkers and six buildings.

## The Black War

Adams is still amazed at how his cannon cockers fought in virtual darkness. "I can recall one day at noon it was pitch black, blacker than the blackest night," said Adams. "What we had was enemy shooting at us that we couldn't see because of burning oil wells." Golf Battery, commanded by Capt. Cal Swaim, fired in support of 1/7. Swaim says he'll never forget trying to



move around in total darkness. Golf Battery moved its eight howitzers six times during the brief war, firing between three and four hundred rounds in three days of shooting.

Lance Cpl. Jesse Patch was the No. 1 cannoneer on his howitzer but a down and dirty artillery duel with the Iraqis didn't materialize. Adams credits aerial bombardment of Iraqi positions in the Phase Three (last two weeks) of the air war leading up to G-Day with negating the threat.

"After being hit day after day, they were too scared to come out and shoot." Lt. John Scott interrogated some of the captured Iraqi soldiers, trying to glean bits of information his boss in 3/11 could use. "The ones we took told Kuwaiti interpreters they didn't want to be there," said Scott, "They were forced to fight."


Although the Gulf war was pretty much one-sided, Iraqis put up token resistance at times, but paid dearly for it. "A couple of Iraqi rounds exploded near our position wounding a cannoneer and an ammo tech," said Lance Cpl. Michael Tate. Lance Cpl. Rosendo Diaz tried not to think about incoming as he rammed 155mm projectiles into the tube at the rate of four rounds a minute. "Every shot we fired was my ticket home," said Diaz. The round of choice on Gun No. 5 was DPICM (Dual Purpose Improved Conventional Munitions), a round that saturated the battlefield with 88 grenades which exploded a couple of feet above the ground.

The Gulf War had to be the weirdest war ever fought by young Marines whose fathers and grandfathers had to engage in bloody, protracted hand-to-hand combat in Vietnam, Korea and in World War II. Diaz is still dumbfounded by the hordes of Iraqi soldiers passing his truck as he pulled his gun north. "They were waving, smiling and flashing 'V' for victory signs," said Diaz, "What kind of a war was this where the enemy can't wait to surrender?"

Moments after the second minefield was breached at midday on 24 February, hundreds of Iraqis waving white flags began to crawl out of bunkers and trenches. In the process of rounding up the EPWs (enemy prisoners of war) and herding them south, Lt. Wilhoit and his combat engineers uncovered a cache containing RPGs and blew it in place. "The Iraqis had enough ammo in that bunker to put up a helluva fight had they wanted to," said Wilhoit. "All they had to do was open up and it would have been like Iwo Jima all over again." In addition to stockpiles of ammunition, some of the bunkers the intel people entered looked like looted hardware stores, with TVs, home appliances, air conditioners, fire alarms, and even carpet samples.

"Some of the bunkers were well constructed," observed Lance Cpl. Carlton Scott. "In fact, they had better living quarters than we had." Some of the bunkers had

*Continued on page 90*



Cobra gunship from "Scarfaces," Marine Light Helicopter Attack Squadron 367, flies on flank of Task Force Ripper.



# omega PROVEN ground

## the bulldog

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



**d**ouble-action revolvers still have their aficionados and lethal applications. They have several advantages. In the incredibly rare instance that a round fails to fire, just pulling the trigger will rotate another round into the firing position. Ammunition can be stored for a long, long time in a revolver's cylinder. A semiauto pistol's magazine follower spring will take a set if not periodically relieved of its ammunition load. For the novice, a revolver remains by far the best choice as there is never a chance of a round being left in the chamber after a magazine has been removed. And, there are usually no manual safety mechanisms that must be manipulated. Revolvers are less ammunition-sensitive than semiautos. Revolvers can be had in very small, compact envelopes. And, for those who care (such as government-sanctioned covert operators or those who feel gun owners may soon face Gestapo-like repression from the federal government), no brass is left on the

ground to tell any tales.

Admittedly there are disadvantages to wheel guns. For concealment purposes they are not as flat as semiauto pistols. Their capacity is almost always less than a semiautomatic pistol. Revolvers are more difficult to reload than magazine-fed pistols. This later deficiency can loom with great importance in a gunfight. Nevertheless, I still frequently carry a wheel gun, often as a backup to a backup to a large caliber semiauto pistol. This has usually been a so-called "snubnose" chambered for the .38 Special. There is a better alternative.

Charter 2000, Inc. (Dept. SOF, 273 Canal Street, Shelton, CT 06484; phone: 1-203-922-

1652; fax: 1-203-922-1469; website: [www.charterfirearms.com](http://www.charterfirearms.com)) recently sent *Soldier Of Fortune* a Bulldog Pug revolver chambered for the famous .44 Special cartridge for test and evaluation. It has a number of innovative and unique features.

The Charter Arms Bulldog Pug revolver is available in either a blued version made from chrome-moly steel or from aircraft quality 416 stainless steel using CNC machinery. The stainless steel variant can be ordered with either a standard or bobbed hammer (catalog #74422). We chose a stainless steel Bulldog with a standard hammer (catalog #74420) that carries a suggested retail price of only \$300. Although shooters should be programmed to fire revolvers of this type almost exclusively in the double-action mode, the ability to quickly cock the hammer for a careful single-action release at a target beyond the normal gunfighting distance of less than 7 yards is sometimes desirable.



The Bulldog's one-piece frame has no side plate. That's fine. We'll take all the structural support we can get in a light revolver to absorb the pounding of the .44 Special cartridge. Weight of the Bulldog, empty, is only 21 ounces. The length is 7.25 inches and the height is 5.25 inches. Barrel length is 2.50 inches. The one-piece barrel has an integral shroud to protect the ejector rod. The 8-groove, broach-rifled bore provides flatter trajectory, higher velocity and better accuracy than conventional 6-groove bores. The rate of twist is one turn in 18 inches and to the right, with a minimum groove depth of 0.003-inch.

The Bulldog locks up at three places, instead of the usual two: at the hand, the cylinder stop, and the ejector-rod collar. The five-shot cylinder rotates to the right in the Colt manner. Cylinder-to-forcing-cone gap on *SOF's* test specimen is 0.008-inch. The industry's generally accepted tolerance range for this dimension is 0.003 to 0.008-inch. Both lateral and fore-and-aft cylinder play are minimal. There is no longer a stud on the side of the frame to hold the cylinder in place when opening and this allows speed loaders to be used more effectively. Another enhancement over older Charter Arms revolvers is that the cylinder and ejector rod used to be manufactured as a matched set but they are now fabricated separately as completely interchangeable components.

A coil-type mainspring offers maximum strength and longevity. An almost unbreakable beryllium copper firing pin, loaded rather than fixed, can be dry-fired into infinity without damage.

When the hammer is cocked, either manually or during the double-action stroke, a small steel bar moves up between the firing pin and the hammer. Continued pressure on the trigger holds this steel bar in its raised position. The falling hammer then strikes the steel bar, which in turn impinges against the firing pin, discharging a cartridge. The bar is not raised unless the hammer is cocked and the trigger is pulled completely to the rear. If the finger is removed from the trigger while the hammer is falling forward, the bar will drop downward and ignition will not take place. Trigger pull weights on our test specimen are 10.5 pounds at double-action and a crisp single-action stroke of exactly 4.0 pounds.

The sights are fixed which is appropriate for a hideout combat wheel gun. The open square-notch rear sight was milled into the frame's top strap. The ramped and serrated front sight blade is virtually snag-proof.

In 1907 Smith & Wesson introduced the .44 "New Century Model" revolver. It was chambered for a new round intended to improve upon the .44 Smith & Wesson Russian. Still depending upon black powder, the case was lengthened to provide for 3 more grains (for a total charge weight of 26 grains). The 246-grain bullet was retained. The desired gain in velocity was achieved. However, with the introduction of smokeless propellants, the muzzle velocity of both rounds was established at 770 fps. The bore size is 0.429 inches.

What became known as simply the .44 Special cartridge was both accurate and powerful, although it never reached its full potential with factory loadings. It remained for Elmer Keith and others to bring the .44 Special into prominence. Prior to the introduction of the .44 Magnum, from which it was derived, Keith considered the .44 Special to be the best of all revolver cartridges. To Keith it was the most accurate revolver round in existence, and when handloaded properly, the most powerful. With modern Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) bullets, weighing about 200 grains and designed to expand at moderate velocities (such as the Speer Gold Dot), the .44 Special remains a superb choice for those who fight with a wheel gun. Remember, once we've achieved the desired penetration in living tissue, bullets that make big holes do more damage.

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) catalogs a .44 Special cartridge with the 200-grain Speer Gold Dot JHP bullet. We used this ammunition for our test and evaluation of the



The Charter 2000 Bulldog holds five rounds of the potent .44 Special. Best choice is the Black Hills cartridge loaded with the 200-grain Speer Gold Dot JHP bullet. Derry Gallagher's "ADS Scabbard" (below) is a very comfortable front and rear belt slot design that holds the Bulldog very close to the body for maximum concealment.



Bulldog Pug. Ten feet from the muzzle it travels downrange at about 800 fps with a standard deviation of 20 fps. This is fast enough and at this velocity the Gold Dot JHP bullet will not over-expand and inhibit the penetration we need to crush, cut and break through the human body's vital structures and organs. At 7 yards from an offhand position this ammunition shot about 2 inches low, but provided 1 to 2 inch groups — more than adequate for gun fighting purposes. Perceived recoil was quite moderate. No doubt the excellent, hand-filling black neoprene-type grips are a significant factor in taming this snubnose .44 Special. That's good because you need to practice often with a double-action revolver to program the necessary fighting skills peculiar to a handgun of this type.

The Charter 2000 Bulldog Pug .44 Special revolver is an outstanding little handgun chambered for a proven man-stopping cartridge at an exceptionally attractive price. It's an ideal backup or even primary carry gun. It can be recommended highly as a best buy in a defensive wheel gun.

This splendid little hideout revolver deserves to be stuffed in a concealment holster of equal quality. A number of custom holster makers use horsehide, but not many take the time to achieve the highly detailed molding that Derry Gallagher (P.O. Box 720536, McAllen, TX 78504; web site: <http://www.dgallagherholsters.com>) does. Derry's material of choice is vegetable-tanned horsehide.

Horsehide is more expensive, lighter, and denser and takes significantly more time to work and bone into a good custom holster than steerhide. Although harder to work, horsehide doesn't lose its hand-molded configuration as easily as steerhide. In fact, some maintain that horsehide will maintain its retention qualities by a ratio of 6-to-1 over steerhide.

All of Gallagher's custom leather goods are available in black, brown or tan. He offers a carefully selected range of holsters for armed professionals to include a pocket rig; the "JEFFEE," a belt slot and tunnel loop design that's very secure and concealable and quite fast; another belt slot and tunnel loop type which is an abbreviated beltslide type holster called the "JEFFEECITO," the "TUCKABLE," an inside-the-waistband style; and a wide range of cowboy rigs.

Derry made what he calls the "ADS Scabbard" for our Charter 2000 Bulldog Pug. Named for the late Armand D. Swenson, this is a very comfortable front and rear belt slot design that holds the Bulldog very close to the body for maximum concealment.

The workmanship and overall quality exhibited by the "ADS Scabbard" sent to *SOF* for test and evaluation was impeccable and of the highest possible quality. Be advised that Gallagher's holsters are precisely hand molded, off body and without belt tension, and as a result require a break-in period, as do his belts. ❧









**COME SHOOT WITH SOF!**  
**7-9 SEPTEMBER 2001**

# 1<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL **SOF** SPRING **THREE-GUN MATCH**

## Hot Lead Flies on Memorial Day at NRA Whittington Center

BY MATT FLAHERTY

PHOTOS COURTESY AUTHOR

While the rest of the planet has finally caught up with practical shooting, top shooters have known for years that the *SOF* Three-Gun Match is as close to the real thing as it gets. For the last two decades shooters from the military, law enforcement, and civilian sectors have competed side by side during the annual Soldier Of Fortune Convention for fabulous prizes and a year's worth of bragging rights. Since its inception this match has been the standard by which all pretenders to the combat crown must aspire. Last Memorial Day weekend *SOF* added a new chapter to the long and vibrant history of this world-class match.

As *SOF* already has the most high-speed, low-drag match in the field, moving to the finest shooting facility in the world was the only



NRA 1st Vice President Kayne Robinson addresses shooters at the awards banquet Saturday evening.

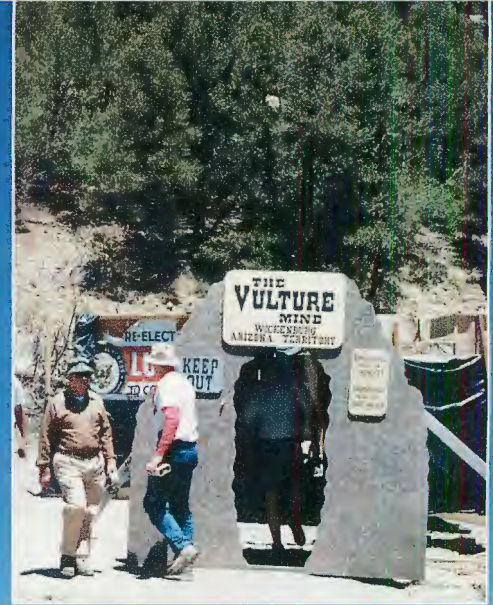
way to make this great match even better. Located just outside of the sleepy town of Raton, on the Colorado-New Mexico border, the NRA Whittington Center boasts 33,000 acres of the largest and most comprehensive shooting facility that is open to the public. Guests can eat, sleep, shower, and of course, shoot, right on the property. First-time visitors typically suffer from sensory overload and immediately begin planning future trips. One thing is for sure: One visit is never enough. Shooters can take advantage of the Whittington Center year-round. No matter what trips your trigger, the Whittington Center has

got you covered. It is no wonder that *SOF* and the Whittington Center would team-up for the best three-gun match of all time.

Brad Schuppan, Events Coordinator for the Center, designed 10



SOF's Robert K. Brown checks out one of the rifle stages on the first day in the Kawasaki Mule. The Whittington Center, located astride the Santa Fe Trail, provided an "Old West" for the match.



**2000 SOF SPRING  
THREE-GUN MATCH  
OVERALL WINNERS**

JERRY MICULEK  
 TODD SALMON  
 EDDIE RHODES  
 JIM CLARK, JR.  
 KURT MILLER  
 TAWN AGERIS  
 JAKE KEMPTON  
 DON BEDNORZ  
 ERIC MILLER  
 BLANE WEST

(left) Einer Hoff, of GSI, Rich Wyatt, from Gunsmoke Custom Gunsmithing, and Robert K. Brown raffle off a Steyr SBS Tactical rifle to this lucky shooter.



(left) The Vulture Mine stage allowed competitors to use both shotgun and pistol to clear the area of hostiles. Range officers in this photo have reset the steel and are ready for the next victim. (below) The author and Carole Bateman call hits on steel targets during this deceptively tricky rifle stage. Shooters fired from cover around hard corners at 20 steel targets down range. (inset, below) Brown, Einer Hoff of GSI, and Grover Norquist, NRA Board Member and Executive Director of Americans For Taxpayer Reform, get some last-minute instruction from Rich Wyatt, of Gunsmoke Custom Gunsmithing, before engaging helium-filled moving targets with the Steyr Scout Rifles.



stages that challenged even the most seasoned competitor. The Whittington Center offered *SOF* shooters a new setting and the many stages would prove to be very taxing. Distances, terrain and schedule would be farther, more difficult and faster than ever. New rules for this match included allowing any rifle that could be found in a military or police inventory and any style of optic, provided it did not require a battery. The no-compensator rule was finally amended to allow post-ban rifles. This is an open match — any advantage or disadvantage would be predicated on the shooter's own equipment. Although these changes allowed more latitude for weapon selection, the tone of the match was more practical than ever.

Even with these amendments to the standard *SOF* rules, most of the equipment was easily predictable. Competitors using a 1911 and some variation of the M16 dared to be exactly the same. Remington and Benelli shotguns continued to be popular in both pump and semi-auto models. Naturally, most of the competitors had personalized each piece of gear to match their own shooting style and custom modifications ranged from mild to wild. Match directors are still scratching their heads, however, as to the total absence of Colonel Jeff Cooper's ideal rifle and hope to see more of the Steyr Scouts, *the little rifle that could*, in the future.

Match contestants had the option of shooting a Precession Rifle Side match, held on the 1,000-yard line. Shooters were instructed to collect all the necessary gear and begin walking the 800 yards to the first shooting position. One cold-bore shot was fired from 100 yards at a 1-inch plastic tube to honor the late Carlos Hathcock. Shooters who did manage to place a shot through the simulated scope were rewarded with a special White Feather logo prize, compliments of Blackhawk Industries. The remainder of the stages included hostage targets designed in part by Major John Plaster (Ret.), and unknown-distance targets from a two-story tower and other shooting positions that would require a variety of shooting positions.

### New Manufacturers And New Gear

Shooters would also be treated to several manufacturers displaying new and exciting gear. GSI sponsored two such events and gave away both an SBS Tactical and a new M-Series Pistol as prizes. Einer Hoff, from GSI, and Rich Wyatt, of Gunsmoke Custom Gunsmithing, released helium balloon reactive targets as part of the rifle contest. Shooters found these unpredictable, wind-sensitive, targets easy to engage with the new Steyr. In a unique El Presidente Drill, John Mullins demonstrated just how close you can get to the steel with his line of Longbow frangible ammunition and the Steyr M-Series pistols. Brian Reynolds gave shooters a sneak peek at the new carbine version of Robinson Armament's M-96 Expeditionary Rifle. B. Jones Sight Systems, D.S. Arms, McCann Industries, The Smoking Gun Shop and S.C. Hines were all on hand to display their products with the competitors.

Modest competitors will always state emphatically that the real reason for a match of this type is to improve skill at arms and gauge one's own ability against other shooters. Phrases like "warrior code," "preservation of liberty" and this nation's "legacy of freedom" protected by an armed society may also be used to describe the importance of competitive shooting. No one can deny these claims, but everyone looked forward to the awards celebration and the prize table. Many manufacturers donated thousands of dollars worth of prizes: Bushmaster, Dillon, DPMS, Emerson, Glock, Gunsite, Olympic, Ontario Knife Co., Robar, Robinson Armament

*Continued on page 87*





# Iraq On The Brink Of A Nuclear Breakthrough: AGAIN!

by Al J. Venter, in Washington, D.C.

*Iraq is a special case. It is the only country forbidden to possess separated plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU), yet it has them both. Under UN Security Council resolution 687 of April 3, 1991, Iraq was required to pledge not to acquire or develop nuclear weapons. But right now, there is every indication that right now, it is doing so.*

— David Albright, President, Institute for Science And International Security, Washington, D.C.

Iraq has been attracting a lot of attention 10 years after the Gulf War. With the release of Saddam's Bombmaker, the book that details Saddam Hussein's efforts at building an atomic bomb, written by the Iraqi nuclear defector Dr. Khadir Hamza, there have followed a spate of press conferences and news reports regarding Iraq's potential for joining the nuclear club.

Though specifics are obscure, there is a consensus among some observers that Saddam Hussein could be within months of exploding his first nuclear test device if Iraq

were to get illegal fissile material from Russia or on the international black market. Without that, said Dr. Hamza, Iraq would need to rebuild many of the factories destroyed during Operation Desert Storm.

"He would have to do that to produce weapons grade uranium and any action of that nature might take two or three years," he added.

Steven Dolley, research director at Washington's Nuclear Control Institute told *Jane's* that the issue was critical. "Only kilogram quantities of highly enriched uranium (HEU) or plutonium stand between

Saddam Hussein and a working nuclear bomb. Further, Vienna's International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) acknowledges that even if Iraq allowed inspectors to return, it would be virtually impossible to detect such small amounts of nuclear material being smuggled into Iraq." Dolley was of the opinion that Iraq's nuclear bomb program continues, not least — quoting former UNSCOM chief Richard Butler — "because Saddam Hussein had recently 'recalled' his nuclear weapons design team."

That, coupled to the fact that Iraq never surrendered its bomb design information to the IAEA nor ever presented any evidence to support its claim that all nuclear bomb components had been destroyed, worries a lot of people. "Still missing are the explosive lenses needed to trigger a nuclear explosion. Also, Baghdad never turned over a full-scale mock-up of the bomb that was constructed by Iraqi nuclear scientists before the Gulf War," Dolley declared.

## Even More Bombs Than Bugs

Earlier, in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Paul Leventhal, President of the Nuclear Control Institute said that the threat from Iraq's nuclear capability could very well be greater than its chemical, biological and missile efforts. He went on: "Vital elements of Iraq's nuclear weapons program remain in place today. More than 200 Ph.D.s con-



tinue their work on unknown projects, with no supervision by UN inspectors for almost two years. Iraq operates a worldwide network to procure foreign technology and most trucks entering Iraq from Turkey are not even stopped for inspection," Leventhal told the committee. (See sidebar)

Leventhal's report was sobering. It included the fact that almost all Iraq really needed for the project to reach fruition was "cores of enriched uranium" to make 20-kiloton nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, Iraqi agents are known to have been implicated in several attempts to smuggle fissile material out of Former Soviet Union (FSU) countries. What is of immediate concern here, is that the only time that the West hears about such things is when the people involved are caught and, significantly, there have been dozens of those. It is reasonable to assume that some could have gotten through.

While the CIA does not comment on such issues, the consensus within the international intelligence community is that Iraq appears to have used the ongoing impasse with the United Nations to enlarge its arsenal of chemical and biological weapons. As one operative put it, "Saddam Hussein's quest to dominate the Middle East continues, and with considerable vigor."

Claims by Baghdad that it had destroyed all its biological weapons (BW) unilaterally were never verified. Nor has Iraq accounted for 17 tons of BW growth material that went missing after the Gulf War. Also, according to Eric Croddy of Monterey's Chemical and Biological Weapons Nonproliferation Project, "Saddam continues to maintain the technical expertise and equipment to resume production quickly of anthrax, botulinum toxin, gas gangrene and a variety of other deadly pathogens."

Similarly, questions continue to hang over Iraq's ability to produce agents that could be used in chemical warfare (CW). Monterey pointed out that Saddam Hussein retained an extensive stockpile of CW munitions including special chemical/biological Al Hussein missile warheads, together with sufficient precursors to produce hundreds of tons of mustard gas, sarin, VX and other nerve agents.

While the West is aware of all these developments, it lacks specifics — even though attacks on American and British embassies, personnel, warships, military barracks and other assets alerted them all long ago to the threats related to this kind of international terrorism if it were to remain unchecked.

### Preparing For The Mix

Clearly, if weapons of mass destruction were added to the equation, the implications would be further intensified. Thus, it is no secret that during the past two years, dozens of American cities have conducted mock chemical and biological warfare attack drills for that eventuality. The U.S. Army Chemical and Biological Defense Command (CBDCOM) established the program, and procedures remain classified.



Now excluded, UN monitoring team (above) as seen at a hydrolysis plant near Baghdad for the destruction of chemical agents. (below) Technicians take air samples inside a monitored chemical plant: All such UN inspection work has ceased, and Saddam is on his own.





Low-key, unobtrusive, but involving an array of government and private security and emergency services, such exercises — involved in countering a fictional anti-government group named *Sui Juris* — have taken place in New York, Washington, Chicago, San Francisco and elsewhere and will eventually encompass more than 200 of America's major population centers. That trend has now moved across the Atlantic.

While Baghdad's threats have raised fears in the West about what might be going on in Iraq, the scenario is viewed in neighboring Iran as positively alarming. The real fear in Tehran is that with nobody looking over his shoulder for the past two years, Saddam has continued developing a variety of weapons of mass destruction that could ultimately be used against them.

Issues are compounded by the fact that Iran continues to be haunted by the conse-

**"Had Iraq been able to produce an atom bomb while still fighting against Iran, there was a more than even chance that first device would have landed on Tehran and not on the people of Israel."**

quences of the horrific seven-year war that ultimately resulted in a million casualties: The Iranian Army was at the receiving end of the first ever use of a nerve agent in a modern war.

Apart from murdering his own Kurdish people with chemical weapons, the deadly nerve gas Tabun (GA) was dropped on Iranian soldiers at Al Basrah in March 1984 and at Hawizah Marsh a year later. When Tabun and Sarin were delivered in a succession of aerial bombings at Al Faw in February 1986, the Iranians are said to have taken 10,000 casualties.

It is perhaps to be expected that the Iranian people are more fearful than the West of any long-term Iraqi weapons development programs. Indeed, it is the view of David Albright, President of Washington's Institute for Science and International Technology (ISIS) that Iran was fortunate that the war ended when it did.

"Had Iraq been able to produce an atom bomb while still fighting against Iran, there was a more than even chance that first device would have landed on Tehran and not on the people of Israel," he told *Soldier Of Fortune*.

### Close In 1992 — Closer In 2001

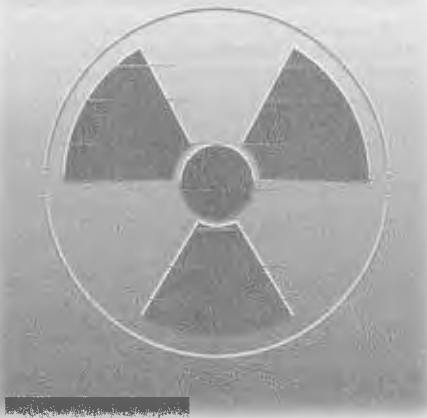
To understand the implications of these developments, it is essential to examine what Saddam had achieved by the time that he expelled UNSCOM weapons inspectors and severely restricted the activities of the

IAEA at the time of Operation Desert Fox, in December 1998. Details were provided by a U.S. Government White Paper titled *Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction Programs* and are as follows:

- Iraq had a comprehensive nuclear weapons development program before the Gulf War that was focussed on building an implosion-type weapon and was linked to a ballistic missile project, which was the intended delivery system

- Iraq admitted experimenting with seven uranium-enrichment techniques and was most active pursuing electromagnetic isotope separation, gas centrifuge and gas diffusion

- Baghdad planned to build a nuclear device after the start of the Gulf War using



IAEA-safeguarded highly enriched uranium from its Soviet-supplied nuclear reactors

- UNSCOM and IAEA inspections hindered Iraq's nuclear weapons program but Baghdad's interest in acquiring them never diminished

- Iraq continues to retain a large cadre of nuclear engineers, scientists and technicians who are the foundation of its nuclear program. The U.S. Government has concerns that while the impasse goes on, Iraqi physicists are free to pursue theoretical nuclear research that would ultimately reduce the time required to produce a weapon should Saddam acquire sufficient illegal fissile material.

- Until UNSCOM was expelled, Iraq continued to withhold information about enrichment techniques, foreign procurement, weapons design, weapons hardening (for delivery by aircraft or missile) as well as the role of Iraq's security and intelligence services in obtaining foreign assistance and concerning postwar concealment.

- Baghdad has never fully explained the interaction between its nuclear program and its ballistic missile program

Dr. Hamza's book has spurred the latest round of conjecture about developments in Iraq because, as one of Saddam's top

nuclear physicists, he is regarded as having been seminal to the development of almost all these weapons programs. Moreover, his case is not unique. There have, over decades, been many students from Arab states who have trained academically in the United States, Britain, Europe and elsewhere. Some of these people subsequently turned their skills to weapons production. What has changed is that present generation of foreign students in the West, do not have the kind of unfettered access to sensitive issues that might have been enjoyed by their predecessors.

Dr. Hamza arrived in the United States in the 1960s where he attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Florida State University, ending with a doctorate in nuclear physics. After teaching at American academic institutions, he returned to Baghdad in 1970 and was immediately ordered to apply his knowledge to the then-basic building blocks of Saddam Hussein's Iraqi nuclear weapons program.

It was a crucial time for the Iraqis, he recalled. The Arab community was aware that the Israelis were producing nuclear weapons. They were also frustrated that there was little that they or anybody else could do to stop them: Certainly, he comments, Washington wasn't going to help the Arab cause.

He disclosed that about then, Palestinian informants spoke of the Jewish state having built 14 bombs, including some that were thermonuclear. He was aware, too, he stated, that their final production target was 200 nuclear weapons, though he failed to explain how these figures were arrived at.

### Saddam Gears Up

Saddam's first step in trying to achieve nuclear parity was to send Hamza to Paris in 1974 to buy a 40-MWth materials test reactor called the Tammuz-1. The French constructed it at Osiraq, near Baghdad. I was a prelude to building a plutonium bomb.

Hamza: "It was a long-range project because the reactor was subject to inspection by IAEA. The French would be there as well. But by then we had told Saddam that 'we would be able to cheat on both parties.'" Then, just prior to the reactor's initial operation, Jerusalem made what Hamza refers to as "a bad mistake." The Israeli Air Force destroyed the Osiraq reactor in June 1981 because the Mossad believed — correctly, as it subsequently transpired — that it would be used to provide plutonium for nuclear weapons.

Subsequent disclosures in this regard are significant: Iraq declared that Osiraq had the potential of producing about 2 kg of unsafeguarded plutonium a year: French estimates put it at about double that and Israeli intelligence figures were four times as high. The most important consequences were twofold: First, it relieved Saddam of any problems that he might have had with any Nonproliferation Treaty restraints. More salient, the secret bomb program, almost overnight, became decidedly more ambitious.



This is reflected directly in staffing levels. Before Osiraq, there were about 500 people working in nuclear research in Iraq. The program eventually involved 7,000 people and that increase was made in the first five years. In his Washington press conference on 2 November, Hamza said that he believed that there might be as many as 12,000 people involved in the nuclear program today. A good question right now, must be: Why?

Initially, he suggested that the thinking in Iraq was that because Israel was a tiny country, it could be threatened or destroyed with two or three atom bombs. "So, when we started, we believed that the plutonium that we would acquire from Osiraq would give us enough bomb power for about five or 10 years. But with that facility suddenly destroyed, Saddam demanded that we achieve the ability of producing 100 kgs of highly enriched weapons grade uranium a year which is an enormous amount of fuel."

The Iraqi leader, Dr. Hamza stated, "wanted Baghdad's position to be the center of high power and unity in the Middle East." Things went quickly after that. By 1985, Dr. Hamza, as adviser to Iraq's nuclear energy program, had begun advance planning for an atom bomb. "We believed that we had a sense of direction in designing and building it. Two years later I was appointed head of the Iraqi nuclear weapons program. Then, gradually, things started to unravel.

### Of What Use, If Not Used?

"We did not understand exactly how Saddam intended to use these weapons that we were supposed to produce or how we were going to test, or even which testing site would be used. Not long afterwards, a nuclear center for atomic weapons was established about 80km southwest of Baghdad and matters seemed to be in hand again. But then, overnight, came the invasion of Kuwait.

"A new vision became apparent when we entered Kuwait. Saddam had begun to regard an atomic bomb as part of his arsenal of war. He wanted a device that could be mounted on mobile rockets, yet we did not have a complete weapon and that placed us in great difficulty. For several reasons."

First, he said, the Iraqis had only enough nuclear fuel for a single bomb and they still had no concept of how to finalize it all. Then things started going off track. Internally, Iraq's scientists began to face other, more serious problems, some of them personal. While Saddam's security services ensured that many professionals who had studied abroad were returning home, many of those already in the country were subjected to different and often discriminatory levels of security.

"That made us look more like hostages: with our families — hostages in our own country. Gradually the whole program shifted into a type of terror system. We were told: 'if you do not work, then you go to jail.'" For instance, he elaborated, the man who was in charge of the plutonium level was jailed for

11 years for refusing to answer a question from Saddam on plutonium.

Dr. Hamza categorized developments as something that had begun well enough, fueled as it was by national pride, but that had subsequently turned sour. As he explained, it was a sort of "forced confining of scientists." One of the immediate consequences was that people who were sent abroad on assignment, simply didn't bother to come back.

"We just never heard from them any more ... most of them feared for their families." Then, when the Chief of Purchasing was suspected of having bank accounts abroad and that somebody thought that he might defect, he was murdered on his farm. His body was thrown into a ditch and that was how they found him, Hamza recalled. "That was right next door to where I had my property. I knew then, that I had to get out."



Following the defection of Dr. Hamza to the United States in 1995, David Albright and other ISIS staff, including Kevin O'Neill, spent months debriefing the Iraqi nuclear physicist about the clandestine methods that Iraq had used to obtain classified material in the West. Hamza has admitted that one of the strongest factors working for him and his staff in their efforts to create a secret nuclear weapons program was that many of the items involved had a dual-use application.

CIA director George Tenet, in an address before Congress, explained it this way in June 2000: "Our efforts to halt (nuclear) proliferation are complicated by the fact that most WMD programs are based on technologies that have civil as well as military use. Though U.S. intelligence is increasing its emphasis and resources on many of these issues, there is continued and growing risk of surprise. We focus much of our intelligence collection and analysis on 10 states (including Iraq) but even concerning those countries, there are important gaps in our knowledge.

### A Proliferation Of Proliferators

"Moreover, we have identified well over 50 countries that are of concern as suppliers, conduits or potential proliferants," he declared.

Backing Hamza's statements, he added that Iraq or Iran could quickly advance their nuclear aspirations through covert acquisi-

tion of fissile material or the relevant technology. "Acquisition of any of the critical components of a nuclear weapons development program — weapons technology, engineering know-how and weapons-usable material — would seriously shorten the time needed to produce a viable weapon."

Focussing on surprise and the risk that it entailed, Mr. Tenet said there were four main reasons and all had a bearing on countries like Iraq and Iran eventually producing nuclear bombs: The first and most important, he said, was that proliferators were showing greater proficiency in the use of denial and deception. Second, there was a greater availability of dual-use technologies in making it easier for proliferators to obtain the materials they sought. Third, "the potential for surprise is exacerbated by the growing capacity of countries seeking WMD to import talent that can help them make dra-

**According to Dr. Edwin Lyman, "There were enough low-enriched uranium stocks left behind to produce over 45 kgs of bomb-grade HEU, or enough for two atom bombs."**

matic leaps on things like new chemical and biological agents and delivery systems. In short, they can buy the expertise that confers the advantage of technological surprise." Scientists, he said, with transferable know-how continued to leave the former Soviet Union, "some potentially for destinations of proliferation concern. Plugging that brain drain was a key U.S. goal," he added.

"Finally, the accelerating pace of technological progress makes information and technology easier to obtain in more advanced forms than when the weapons were initially developed."

During his Washington debrief, Dr. Hamza disclosed that the first and most comprehensive help that he received in his bid to build an atom bomb was "a gift from the U.S. Atomic Energy Project — library copies on the 1940s Manhattan project." One of only three or four nuclear physicists in Iraq in the 1970s, he says that he found the reports at Iraq's atomic energy library "in a corner with piles of dust on them ... sitting there telling me exactly what I needed to do." The Manhattan Project was the crash U.S. government program in which scientists developed the atomic bombs that were dropped on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki to end World War II. He did not know how the Iraqi library got the reports, which like so much other nuclear information is readily available around the world now.

One of the prime tasks that Hamza initially set for himself and his staff was



# The Turkish Connection

The 17 incidents are listed in reverse chronological order

(For sources and further details, see Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey <http://cns.miis.edu/research.wmdme/flow/turkey/index.htm>)

Material(s) Seized	Origin of Materials	Reported Destination	Location of Seizure	Suspects
A certificate for the Purchase of U-235 Container with U-235 (Exact quantity not reported)	Moldova	Not reported	Dounav Most, (Bulgarian/Turkish border)	1 Turkish national
100g of enriched uranium	Azerbaijan	Greece	Bursa, Turkey	4 Turkish nationals
4.5kg 'non-active' solid uranium and 6g 'active' plutonium	Russia or Ulba Plant in Kazakhstan	Not reported	Istanbul, Turkey	4 Turkish nationals, 3 Kazakhis (incl a Kazakh army colonel+ an Azerbaijani)
13 cylinders of uranium marked APAT UKA3 M8	Iran	Istanbul	Van, Turkey	5 Turkish nationals and 1 Iranian
850g uranium dioxide	not reported	not reported	Bursa, Turkey	4 individuals (nationality unknown)
Osmium (quantity Not reported)	Romania	not reported	Turkey	3 individuals (nationality unknown)
509g 'raw' uranium	Georgia	not reported	Ipsala, Erdine, Turkey	3 Turkish nationals
17g low-enriched uranium	Golcuk, Kocaeli, Turkey	not reported	Antalya Turkey	11 individuals (nationality unknown)
20kg uranium	Russia	not reported	Antalya, Turkey	5 Turkish nationals
1.2kg uranium	Georgia	Libya	Yalova, Turkey	2 Turkish nationals
12g highly-enriched uranium	Georgia	Libya	Zurich, Switzerland	1 Turkish national
750g weapons-grade or enriched U-238	Baku, Azerbaijan	Turkey	Istanbul	1 Azerbaijan national
12kg uranium	Unspecified FSU state	Not reported	Istanbul	7 Turkish nationals
Uranium (quantity Not reported)	Not reported	Russia	Istanbul	1 Turkish national, 1 Azerbaijani + 1 Russian
4.5kg uranium	Not reported	Not reported	Bursa, Turkey	3 Georgian nationals
2.5kg uranium enriched to 2.5/3.5 percent U-235	Russia	Iran	Gayrettepe, Istanbul, Turkey	4 Turkish nationals + 4 Iranians (suspected secret service agents)
6kg enriched uranium	Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Istanbul	Not reported	Not reported





(above, left) Remote camera picture as transmitted in real time to UNSCOM's monitoring and verification center. Now, nobody is looking over Saddam's shoulder — and he could be up to anything. (above, right) This large compound in Baghdad once housed the now-defunct UNSCOM monitoring and verification center. (right) After the Gulf War, ubiquitous UN inspectors were everywhere, trying to keep tabs on Saddam's antisocial activities. With them kicked out, neighboring Iran is as worried as we are what Saddam may be up to with his weapons of mass destruction.

searching open literature and getting close to people in the U.S. who had classified information. Specifically, Iraqi students in America combed university libraries for bomb-making information. Concurrently, Iraqi agents and scientists collected data at scientific conferences and elsewhere.

Although Iraq's nuclear weapons program plan which was established in 1988 had the objective to produce a small arsenal of atomic bombs — with the first device being produced in 1991 — the three main components, namely the production of highly enriched uranium (HEU) from a domestic source of uranium, the design and production of a viable device and the development of a (missile) delivery system had not progressed equally to meet the planned schedule.

### The Missing Link In Saddam's Monkey Business

A paper titled *Iraqi Nuclear Weapons* produced by the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) detailed this progress. It is of interest because it reflects progress at about the time of Operation Desert Storm. Conclusions reached were that the weapon design component was making the best progress. With the solution of the few problems remaining in January 1991, the PC-3 Fourth Group (Weaponization) group was confident that the finalization of a viable design could have been achieved close to schedule.

In contrast, production of HEU by the enrichment of domestic uranium, pursued through the two parallel lines of electromagnetic isotope separators (EMIS) and gas centrifuges was lagging far behind. In January 1991, EMIS was years away from comple-



tion of the plant and the centrifuge enrichment was still at the stage of single machine testing. Iraqi interest in the long, super-critical centrifuge machine clearly went beyond the stage of efficiency calculations.

Finally, design and development of the delivery system progressed through several meetings and detailed technical exchanges during the second half of 1990, between the nuclear weapons and missile groups. A modification of the Al Hussein missile was being designed with a separate warhead to deliver a payload of 1 ton over a distance of 600 kms and it was expected that this development could have been completed within six months.

Shortly before, according to FAS, Saddam had initiated his "crash program" to build a nuclear device. Launched in the late summer of 1990, it was planned to comprise the secret chemical processing of both unirradiated as well as irradiated research reactor fuel that had been placed under IAEA safeguards. The idea was to recover enough HEU to make a single atom bomb.

Also planned were measures such as the fabrication of the implosion package and the selection and construction of a test site. According to an estimate made later by Iraqi scientists and reported by the now defunct UNSCOM, any complete assembly of the device could not have been possible

before the end of 1992. Certainly, looking back on developments as they developed, it was, as Scott Ritter told this writer, a pretty close-run thing.

Of significance at this time, according to the Nuclear Control Institute, was the fact that late 1991 or early 1992 — totally against the accepted logic of the day — Vienna's IAEA decided to allow Iraq to retain 1.7 metric tons of uranium enriched to 2.6% U-235 (low-enriched uranium). It also permitted the retention of some 13 tons of natural uranium stocks.

The Gulf War ceasefire resolution, meanwhile, required that Baghdad surrender all of its nuclear weapons-usable material and not "acquire or develop" such material in the future. All Saddam's bomb-grade HEU was airlifted out of the country by February 1994 along with other uranium with enrichments as low as 10%.

According to Dr. Edwin Lyman, the NCI Scientific Director, "There were enough low-enriched uranium stocks left behind to produce over 45 kgs of bomb-grade HEU, or enough for two atom bombs." Over a greater length of time, he reckoned Iraq's known stocks natural uranium could be converted into an additional 70 kgs of HEU, which meant another three or four bombs.

*Continued on page 86*



# Battle Blades

## Bragg Adopts The Bowie?

by SOF Staff

*With this feature, we welcome back our monthly column, "Battle Blades" authored by Bill Bagwell. The rise in prominence of the fighting knife, in general, and the Bowie, in particular, along with readers' comments have led to this decision. Next month, Bagwell will begin his column with a definition of a fighting knife. Let us know your thoughts.*

## BOWIES, BIG KNIVES, AND THE BEST OF BATTLE BLADES



**BILL BAGWELL**

## Bowies, Big Knives, And The Best Of Battle Blades

Reviewed by Jerry VanCook

*Bowies, Big Knives, And The Best Of Battle Blades, by Bill Bagwell. 2000. Softcover, 175 pages, black and white photos. \$30. Published by Paladin Press, P.O. Box 1307, Boulder, CO 80306; phone: 800-466-6868; fax: 303-442-8741; web site: [www.paladin-press.com](http://www.paladin-press.com); e-mail: [service@paladin-press.com](mailto:service@paladin-press.com).*

No one who knows Bill Bagwell ever accuses him of being wishy-washy. Whether he's making knives, teaching the art of knife-fighting, or writing, the man's got an opinion. In this day and age of waffling, side-stepping, playing both sides against the middle, and burning the candle at both ends, that's one of the things I find refreshing about "The Bagster." You know where he stands. He tells it like it is. Or at least the way he sees it.

*Bowies, Big Knives, And The Best Of Battle Blades* does not deviate from the Bagwell philosophy of hard-hitting, straight-from-the-shoulder articulation. It's not one of those books you read, then drop in your lap, and say, "I wonder what he meant by that?" Read this book, and you won't have any doubts about what Bill Bagwell believes. Maybe you'll agree with him, and maybe you won't; that doesn't matter—you'll learn a lot either way.



Special Forces soldiers mix it up during Bowie knife-training at Ft. Bragg. Today's Special Forces troops training in pre-Civil War knife tactics? America's elite fighting units adopting blade technique used in New Orleans, Natchez and Vicksburg in 1840? In a word, yes.



Bowie knives at Ft. Bragg? Today's Special Forces troops training in pre-Civil War knife tactics? America's elite fighting units adopting blade technique used in New Orleans, Natchez and Vicksburg in 1840? After a fashion, yes. This is something of a departure from the usual *SOF* update and briefing, but this has not been a conventional program in the general sense, and reaction to it has placed constraints on the available information about the program itself. While we can now tell you what happened, we cannot reveal the time the training took place, what units received it, or any specific information about the techniques used in the training program.

Ontario Knife Company and Bill Bagwell were asked to demonstrate Ontario's Bagwell-designed "Hell's Belle" fighting Bowie knives to a selected group of Special Forces soldiers. Ontario Knife Company stepped up in a big way, furnishing the Hell's Belles and other material needed for the demonstration and subsequent training program. Bagwell was called on to travel to Ft. Bragg and personally demonstrate the knives and provide the instruction in the fighting techniques that established the Bowie Knife as the world's premier

edged weapon.

Bowie technique in its advanced forms can and does have movements and articulations that require lots of practice and commitment to muscle memory. Like any of the martial arts skills, one can devote years to the study and methods of deployment of the implement. However, Bagwell realized that the Bowie is that rare weapon that can be totally dominant with the mastery of a few, easily taught core techniques. With this in mind, Bagwell then developed a streamlined and simplified system of Bowie instruction tailored to the

A major portion of this book (36 of its 40 chapters to be exact) is a compilation of the *Battle Blades* column Bagwell wrote for *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine from 1984 to 1988. But there's more to this book. Much more. The introduction and first few chapters are all new, and you need to know that ahead of time in order to pick up on a very important message which comes out between the lines. There has been little, if any, alteration to the basic philosophy Bill Bagwell first presented almost two decades ago. In a nutshell: "Big Knives are better fighters than small knives, and Bowies are the best big knives of all."

I began reading *Bowies, Big Knives, And The Best Of Battle Blades* during the drive home from the 2000 Soldier Of Fortune Convention. I was scrunched into the rear of Jeff Randall's car with backpacks, pamphlets, magazines, and other gear falling on my head each time we slowed down or sped up. My hearing—the result of too many rounds fired during the years before hearing-protection was taken seriously—was a decimal or two below what would have been necessary to take part in the conversation going on in the front seat. So I pulled the Bagwell book out of my briefcase and settled in.

My first reaction was the recollection that Bill Bagwell is not only a remarkable bladesmith but a very talented writer as well. The text was clear, precise, and easy to understand—as all good writing

should be. I had been trying to reread *On War* during the drive to the convention, and any of you who have struggled through Von Clausewitz a time or two can imagine the relief I experienced at clean, clear-cut sentences and well-presented ideas. It didn't take too many miles before I caught myself grinning at the recently written introduction and first few chapters. Like I said, Bagwell's philosophy regarding knives hasn't changed much over the years,

and neither has his attitude. He's still not afraid to step on a few toes if he needs to in order to get his point across. He does this, however, in a way that I do not find offensive, and unless you're one of those people who perceives all disagreement as a threat, then you aren't going to be offended, either. On the flip side of that coin, Bagwell is every bit as willing to praise those who deserve it as he is to lay blame on those who perpetuate the many ill-conceived convictions currently

permeating the world of edged-combat and -weaponry. Notable knife fighting authority James A. Keating, and bladesmiths Jerry Fisk, John Smith, and Howard Faucheaux are credited, and thanked, for the work they have done in the field. Photographs throughout the text also demonstrate that Bill Bagwell is not trying to hog the whole show for himself, either.

As I finished the newer chapters and moved on into the old, I







"When I looked out across the classroom as I began the lecture portion of the program, I was amazed, even slightly awestruck at the quality and seriousness of purpose of the group of men seated in front of me. I realized I had never been in the presence of men more dedicated, confident, and focused than these selected Special Forces soldiers."

these selected Special Forces soldiers." They proved to be especially apt students as well. When the time came for full-speed sparring, the engagements rapidly progressed to the point where they became exercises in tactics and proper execution rather than attempts at slash and thrust. By the end of the first day, the eyes of bruised men began to shine with the light of recognition and understanding of the method of using this thing called a Bowie knife. Each of these men now knew that with a Bowie knife there are killing moves that are so quick and

needs of the Special Forces.

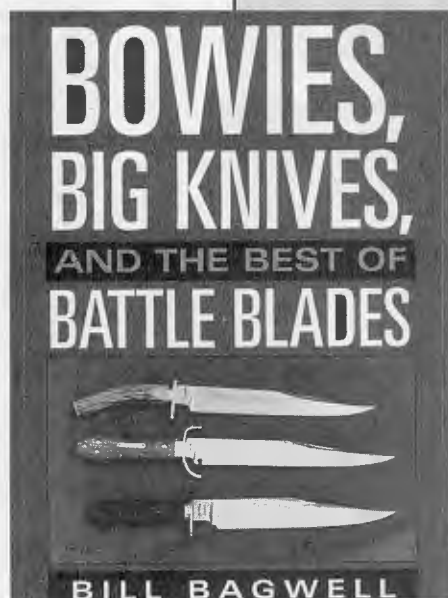
During the planning for Bagwell's visit to Ft. Bragg, he was asked by the Battalion Operations Officer if a week would be an adequate time frame for the planned Bowie training. Bagwell said that he thought two days would be sufficient for the program that he had developed. This time frame proved to be perfect for the program.

Bagwell remarked, "When I looked out across the classroom as I began the lecture portion of the program, I was amazed, even slightly awestruck at the quality and seriousness of purpose of the group of men seated in front of me. I realized I had never been in the presence of men more dedicated, confident, and focused than

subtle that the eye cannot see them and the body cannot avoid them, and each man now knew how to utilize these techniques on his own behalf.

As training resumed on the second day, it was obvious to Bagwell that these men had spent the night reflecting on the previous day's lessons. Questions from the men were thoughtful and specific as they developed both their tactics and techniques. Sparring sessions became exercises in skill rather than a hit or miss proposition. These men had become shockingly good very quickly, and professional soldiers that they are, they realized it. In relating an anecdote connected to the program, Bagwell said, "The second day, I had lunch with a Major and a Master Sergeant who

## Bowies, Big Knives, And The Best Of Battle Blades



continued to find myself smiling. Memories of "Battle Blades" columns read long ago, and now only half-remembered, began taking full shape once again in my mind. A strong feeling of nostalgia swept in as I not only recalled certain concepts expressed years ago by Bagwell but even remembered exactly where I'd been sitting, what clothes I'd had on, and what had been going on in the rest of my life when I'd first read specific columns. I was reminded once more from where much of my own philosophy concerning blades and blade work stems, and how we human beings so often retain the wisdom which is presented to us but relegate the source of that wisdom to the "back burners" of our brains. While we are often accused of "killing the messenger" of bad tidings, we are more often guilty of simply forgetting the bearer of news which is good, and beneficial to us.

Specific chapters within *Bowies, Big Knives, And The Best Of Battle Blades* stand out in my mind as, perhaps, the "Best of the Best." In the introduction, we learn that Bagwell instructed Special Forces soldiers at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, in the art of Bowie fighting, and that they were impressed enough to permanently incorporate the program into their close quarters combat training.

Chapter One, "The Bowie: A Closer Look" does exactly what it promises to do by exploring what a Bowie is, and isn't. The fact that this blade shape—alone among all others—is capable of slicing, chopping, and penetrating as well or better than specialty designs is brought out. But Bagwell not only states his case, he offers proof, and explains the dynamics of that proof in easy-to-understand detail.

Have any of Bill Bagwell's convictions about knives changed over the years? Well, yes and no. If anything, he is now in favor of *even bigger* knives than he promoted during his tenure as a contributing editor to *Soldier Of Fortune*. But, as he himself makes quite clear, that is only because when writing "Battle Blades" he did not yet have the knowledge, expertise, and equipment to enter the 11-inch-plus blade realm. He suspected that realm existed, and that edged steel between 11 and 13 inches would substantially outper-



Bagwell's training program for the Special Forces marks the first time in 140 years that elements of this country's military have received the most effective knife fighting training available. It is apparently so good that they want to keep it to themselves.

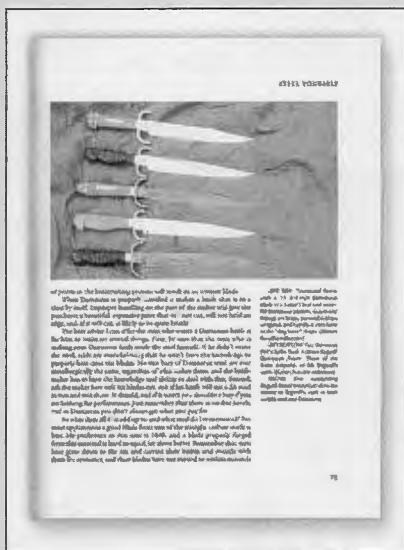
were both taking the course. The Major asked the Master Sergeant what he thought of the Bowie knife and the course to that point. The Sergeant replied, 'Major, I have studied martial arts of one kind or another and taken courses in hand-to-hand combat continuously for more than 20 years. This is the only program I have seen that will neutralize 20 years of training and make it useless in two days.'

The feelings of this Master Sergeant concerning the Bowie knife and the two-day training program presented by Bagwell are apparently held by others at Ft. Bragg. Bagwell has a letter from the Department of the Army written by a Battalion Operations Officer from which we are allowed to quote "As for the actual knife fighting training — I can tell you that it was the best I have ever seen. It combined lightning speed, absolutely devastating lethality, utter simplicity, and a brutally effective implement (the Fortress Hell's Belle), with Army Special Forces soldiers to create what I believe are the deadliest knife fighters on the planet. Possibly the greatest aspect of this was that it all took place in only two days of training! The ease and speed with which Mr. Bagwell's techniques can be learned is one of their most important attributes.—I ask that Mr. Bagwell and Ontario limit the availability of this training to help us preserve our edge."

Developed in the 1830s the fighting Bowie knife offered a level



of performance that surpassed other edged weapons of that period. The proper techniques for its use were quickly developed and refined, and the resulting synthesis of implement and proper application produced a system of close quarters combat that has yet to be eclipsed or even equaled. Very few people today have any idea of the effectiveness of a Bowie knife in a combat environment, and fewer still have had the opportunity to see firsthand how utterly unstoppable this knife is in its combat role. Bagwell's training program for the Special Forces marks the first time in 140 years that elements of this country's military have received the most effective knife fighting training available. It is apparently so good that they want to keep it to themselves. ☒



form the more common 9½-inch blade. But like most significant discoveries, certainty was achieved in slow experimental increments rather than giant leaps of luck. Like Bowie knives themselves, validation came in inches rather than miles.

For anyone who believes that Bill Bagwell's expertise is limited to Bowie knives, or has heard the rumor that he has no use for small knives whatsoever, Chapter 23 should be an eye-opener.

The truth is, Bagwell promotes both large and small steel. It's the middle range of knives for which he finds little use. He is more than willing to admit that no single blade is perfect for all chores. But he is also quick to point out that a large Bowie paired with a 4-inch utility blade should take care of most combat and survival needs. This is a philosophy with which I heartily agree.

So was there anything in this book with which I did not agree? Sure. Bill Bagwell and I are two different people, and no two human beings view the world exactly the same. But by far the vast majority of exceptions I would take with the contents of *Bowies, Big Knives, and the Best of Battle Blades* fall into the area of personal preference. One such example can be found in Chapter 22, "More Blade, Less Sheath." Bagwell promotes carrying large knives either

inside, or outside, the pants using a simple stud (sometimes called a frog). I find this an excellent way to tote a Bowie on the outside of my pants but when carried concealed for any length of time it's one of the most uncomfortable methods I've ever found. I can, however, attach one of Bagwell's Hell's Belles to a shoulder-riq, easily conceal it with either a light jacket or even a loose T-shirt, and go about my business without a care in the world. Bagwell also disdains the exposed belt loop carry, especially with the thong tie-down—a method of open carry which I find ideal. What our differing opinions actually boil down to here are all concerned with individual body shape, and like I said before, fall under the category of personal preference rather than "right and wrong."

I finished reading *Bowies, Big Knives, and the Best of Battle Blades* with about a hundred miles left on the return trip from the

2000 SOF Convention, and to kill the last couple of hours, I read parts of it again. I've got to tell you, it was one of the most informative and enjoyable books I've read in many years, and I'd recommend it to anyone. In fact, I'll give Bill Bagwell the best compliment I can give another writer, and one I reserve for very special achievement:

"It made me jealous, Bill. I wish I'd written it myself."





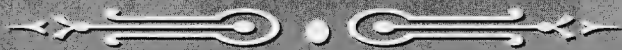
**M**ale-bonding is a curious phenomenon. The anthropologists say that it evolved as a group-survival technique several hundred thousand years ago, give or take a century or two, during the early ontogenesis of the human species. These same scientists also maintain that Man is not really a natural predator: He has no fangs, no claws nor talons, and no protective fur; he has a terrible sense of smell, is fairly puny, and cannot run very fast. Notwithstanding,

he like all of his primate cousins — still living in the bush, primarily as a vegetarian, escaping and evading the professional predators, meaning the lions, tigers, hyenas, wild dogs, and large snakes that we still fear with a visceral and atavistic terror. Some experts, such as Robert Ardrey, firmly maintain that it was the necessity to band together and use external weapons in order to become successful hunters that led to verbal communication and the enlarged brain — not *vice versa*.

Interestingly enough, though, since we did not start our evolutionary journey as natural predators, we seem to have been lacking the built-in restraints of the truly lethal animals, which rarely fight a member of their own species to the death. Being territorial, and having eventually evolved as skilled, cooperative hunters, our oversized, imaginative brains soon made the small leap from hunting animals for food to hunting each other for fun (or other high-minded reasons). Thus, being a warrior, as well as a hunter, was the natural mode, for many thousands of years.

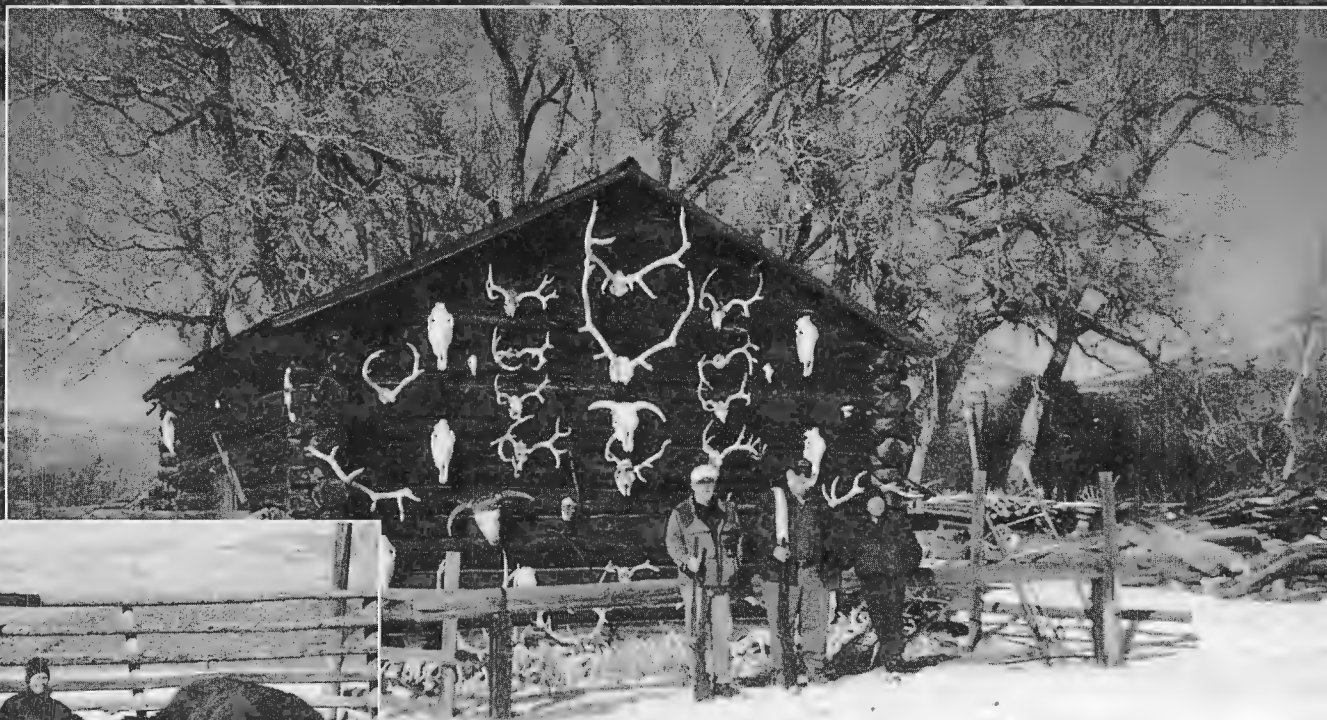
Although it appears to be losing ground in some of the "more civilized" places in the world, our bonding instinct of still seeing "us" as warriors in the fight against

# T·H·E ILK HUNT



by Col. Mike Peck (Ret.)  
Photos: SOF Staff

he has surpassed even the great white shark and tyrannosaurus rex as the planet's most accomplished killer. However, were it not for the all-for-one/one-for-all mechanism that developed down through the millennia, we could never have become successful hunters, and *homo sapiens* would probably



(left) Bill Bagwell, with a Navy Arms imported Pedersoli Sharps Buffalo Rifle and Brown with a Sharps Sporter Rifle, try to convince Debi Rudibaugh to allow them to take a pet buffalo since they were unsuccessful in their elk hunting endeavors. Debi and Rudi Rudibaugh, owners of Fossil Ridge Guide Service, have been outfitters near Morrison, Colorado, for three decades. Their prices are unusually competitive and they can provide guided hunts or spike camps. During the summer, they run survival camps for teenagers.



alized nations have infiltrated into almost all of the traditional male occupations (except for the infantry), true bonding rarely takes place anymore in the work environment. Today, it more often than not expresses itself vicariously, as a group of guys go to a sports match or get together in front of a TV set with beer and snacks to cheer on their favorite champions and preferred teams.

Perhaps the last bastion of the male bonding mystery (although it is also under assault by the social engineers) is where it all started in the first place — the ancient art of hunting. Even for those of us who no longer have to hunt to put meat on the table, or defend our territory from the Viet Cong or the Iraqis, the ancient bonding instinct is still intact, and you can feel it the minute you join a group of guys of the same ilk with a rifle in your hands. There are times when it is even stronger than the hunting instinct itself. This was certainly the case just recently, when a group of seasoned hunters and weathered warriors set out for the high-country near Gunnison, Colorado, to do battle with the marauding bands of elk that were obviously threatening all the veg-

gins and fair animals of the mountainside.

The leader of the venture was a man

press, Robert K. Brown, who was assiduously assisted by one of his more colorful accomplices, Paul Fanshaw, whose biography reads like something out of Terry and the Pirates. The rest of the crew was a rather diverse assortment of characters from disparate professions and backgrounds. The common thread among us, stronger even than our collective interest in rifles and hunting, was our appreciation of unblemished nature in its pristine state and good fellowship around a campfire.

The rat pack included Paul Danish, a personable but obviously no-nonsense County Commissioner from Boulder; Bill Bagwell, who hand-makes high-end Bowie knives and teaches an elite few how to use them; and myself, a former soldier, turned security consultant. What brought us all together initially was that we were all FOB (Friends of Bob), but within an hour or so, we had become long-lost brothers, sharing a very remarkable experience at a remote campsite at almost 10,000 feet in Colorado's Rocky Mountains. Everyone present was either an experienced hunter, a former soldier, or both.

What proved most interesting about the trip, however, was that this cross-section of men, each with their own way of using their

combined skills to sweep the mountains of their elk herds, seemed content to relive past hunts and former battles with each other. Within this fire-hardened group no one seemed to have much to prove anymore, either to themselves or to the world at large, and there was no longer the obsessive competition among us, or with the other camps, to shoot the firstest, fastest, biggest elk ever. Once everyone's credentials were established, rather than huffing and puffing up and down the hills from dawn until dusk like the Big Bad Wolf, we found our own company even more interesting than terminating an elk that was out minding his own business and trying to survive in that sub-zero environment. Because everyone came from a different background, each person had his own collection of stories and anecdotes to tell, a little like a more modern version of the *Canterbury Tales*.

Amid all the B.S. and general mayhem, we did do a certain amount of hunting, but at a moderate pace and as a collective group effort. Fanshaw and I generally teamed up with Paul Danish, while Bob and Bill Bagwell hunted together. Paul carried a Ruger Model 77 Mark II in .308 caliber, triggered-out with a 3X9 power telescopic sight. He was feeding it a diet of Black Talon







**SOF's Edged Weapons Contributing Editor, Bill Bagwell, demonstrates his Bowie knife-ighting technique to Boulder, Colorado, County Commissioner Paul Danish (left) and Paul Jones, Colorado Division of Wildlife Officer. Bagwell's Bowie, nicknamed, "Hell's Belle", manufactured by himself, has a 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch blade and sells for \$1,100. A similiar factory model produced by Ontario Knife Company, and designed by Bagwell, goes for \$275.**

180-grain cartridges from Brown's private stash. Paul also had a Smith and Wesson Model 686 with a 4-inch tube, a stainless .357, which he kept in his sleeping bag for uninvited varmints of whatever type or proclivity.

Phil and I were acting primarily as spotters and beaters, so I carried only a S&W Model 53 with a 6-inch barrel, stoked up with Sierra 40-grain jacketed hollow-points crimped over 11.5 grains of 2400 in a fairly experienced Remington case. I brought this along because it was unique and since it will also fire .22 long-rifle cartridges through the use of steel auxiliary chambers, which look like hollow .22 Jet cases. There is a dog on the hammer that flips up or down to shift from center to rim fire. Kinda neat. I thought that if we got bored we could always shoot at tin cans, using the .22 LR feature. The .22 Jet is much too light for elk, but I figured the load I had cooked up would deliver about 350-foot pounds of energy at close range, and would put a bear down for the count with a solid head shot. There is a lot of blast, but no recoil, so follow-up shots are easy. The Jet is a tricky little number, though, and you have to clean out the chambers with alcohol (not Jack Daniels) or acetone so they are completely dry, otherwise the cases might set back and jam the cylinder when firing max loads. I am told that is why the round became obsolete, although I have never had any trouble with it.

### The Eyes Of A Lynx

Fanshaw is in exceptional shape and has the eyes of a lynx, so he was the primary spotter for our outings. Unfortunately, because of his uncanny vision, he would spot elk in the open that were nothing more than tiny dots on the countryside — real far away. We would then stalk them, but usually they were so distant that by the time we worked our way over that mountainous terrain, through a foot of snow, and across fair-

ly dense cover to their location, they were somewhere in the next county. No problem, though. Paul is a native of Colorado with good wind, and I am in decent shape, so we always chalked these jaunts up as a lot of fun, as well as good workouts.

Bob and Bill were more into the ambush mode, and judiciously concealed themselves on game trails and natural lines of drift. The downside to this technique was that the temperature hovered between 0 and 13-below. Even dressed up like the Michelin Man, about two hours was all a person could remain in one spot without moving. They usually pushed the limit and came back to camp frozen solid. Bob's pri-

mary armament was a Steyr Scout in .308, acquired on the recommendation of Colonel Jeff Cooper, and was loaded up with the 180-grain Black Talons. It was outfitted with a Burris 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -power Scout Scope, which was characterized by exceptionally bright and clear optics. I have always found the little Scout rifles rather odd-looking, but they are unquestionably utilitarian, and Bob is a deadly shot, a skill I have witnessed firsthand on a number of occasions. For over 200 yards he carried a stainless Ruger M77 Mark II All-Weather, the one in the lightweight, black synthetic stock, which was topped with a rugged and field-proven Burris 3X9 Signature telescopic sight.

The truly interesting rifles, however, were those used by Bill Bagwell. In keeping with his expertise and renown with a Bowie knife (which he carried constantly), Bill had two reproduction Sharps Rifles, one in .45-70 and the other in .45-90. He rolls his own ammo, and sticks generally to the original black powder loads. For the .45-90 he loads a 549-grain hand-cast bullet (30:1 lead/tin) over 90 grains of Goex 1Fg. In the .45-70 he uses 70 grains of Goex Cartridge Grade to push a 420-grain cast bullet at a moderate velocity out to extreme ranges with amazing accuracy. As a true traditionalist, he uses open sights exclusively. One of the reasons for this is that he too has exceptional vision, and, like Phil, can spot game at great distances.

After Paul was obliged to head for home, Fanshaw and I worked with Bob and Bill. We would climb to the top of the mountain where we were hunting and move down, working back and forth along the fingers and ravines, so as to drive the elk to where Bob and Bill were waiting. The Colorado elk are no fools, though, and they would usually move to the flank, then position themselves in an open area just out of range. If you attempted to



**(left to right) Danish, with a Ruger Model 77, Mark II, in .308 caliber and a 3X9 Burris Signature scope, author and Brown with a .308 Steyr Scout outfitted with a Burris 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -power scout scope. Brown took a cow elk a year ago last January with one heart-shredding round at 180 yards. On the hunt, Danish and Brown used Bushnell Yardage Pro range finders to determine exactly how far out of range the elk were. Brown also carries a pair of Bausch and Lomb 10x42 binoculars.**





In the course of testing various products in conjunction with our hunt, author (above) couldn't resist volunteering to sleep in 15 degree-below weather in a new Single Person Bivi Shelter, developed by Wiggy's, Inc. When used with any Wiggy's bag (in this case, Peck borrowed Brown's Ultima Thule bag) the Bivi allows the bag to be used in temperatures 20 degrees lower than what the bag is rated for. Peck, not only lived, but did not freeze. Brown says, "Anyone who is considering purchasing serious winter outdoor gear is a damn fool if they don't get a Wiggy's catalog. To the best of my knowledge, Wiggy is the only sleeping bag manufacturer who will repair or replace your bag at no charge if a seam opens, the zipper breaks, or the insulation deteriorates. That's somethin'!" Paul Jones (below, right) demonstrates his pocket-size, collapsible, dog dish, which sells for \$17.95, and is called "Hank's Bowl" to ex-Foreign Legionnaire Paul Fanshaw (below, left). Fanshaw was indispensable as the indefatigable camp majordomo. Watching Fanshaw, who left the legion after 13 years as a First Sergeant, run the camp made one almost to tired to hunt. Good excuse as a



move in for a decent shot, they would amble leisurely away — keeping a healthy distance between you and them. Their antics made a good case for a Browning .50 — but only if you were really serious.

### Chef RKB

In addition to the entertainment of the sometimes mildly exaggerated war and hunting stories around the camp stove, watching Brown cook for this bunch was worth the price of admission. After our initial doubts, protests, ragging, and insults, it turned out that RKB is a rather gifted and versatile field chef. He whipped up such culinary delights as scrambled eggs and fresh sausage complete with *sautéed* garlic, onions, and other assorted spices of his choosing. He sometimes substituted ground elk for the sausage, which was just as good, when the hot sauce and "the Colonel's secret ingredients" were added. Finger-lickin' good! His *spécialité de la maison*, however, was his own version of Sloppy Joe's, made of shredded elk meat and laced with a special formula of garlic, peppers, plus other less identifiable, but savory, additions to the pot. Bill Bagwell made some really great Texas chili, which you could use to start a fire with, and it, too, magically disappeared.

Amidst all the extraneous pandemonium, there were several councils of war concerning the advisability of crawling out of our Wiggy "Ultra Thule" sleeping bags at some unearthly hour to actually togeth-up in the dark, go out in the -13 degree pre-dawn chill, implacably hunt-down and kill an elk, then dress and carry him back to camp. Such discussions usually started out very enthusiastically, but quickly lost their allure: too many late nights in Vietnam in the jungles; too many early



## Product List

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### Ontario Knife Company

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331 East 8th St., Greeley, CO 80631  
Phone: 888-228-7747  
Fax: 970-356-8702  
Website: [www.burrissoptics.com](http://www.burrissoptics.com)

### Wiggy's

Box 2124  
Grand Junction, Co 81502  
Phone: 970-241-6465  
Fax: 970-240-5921

### Hank's Bowl

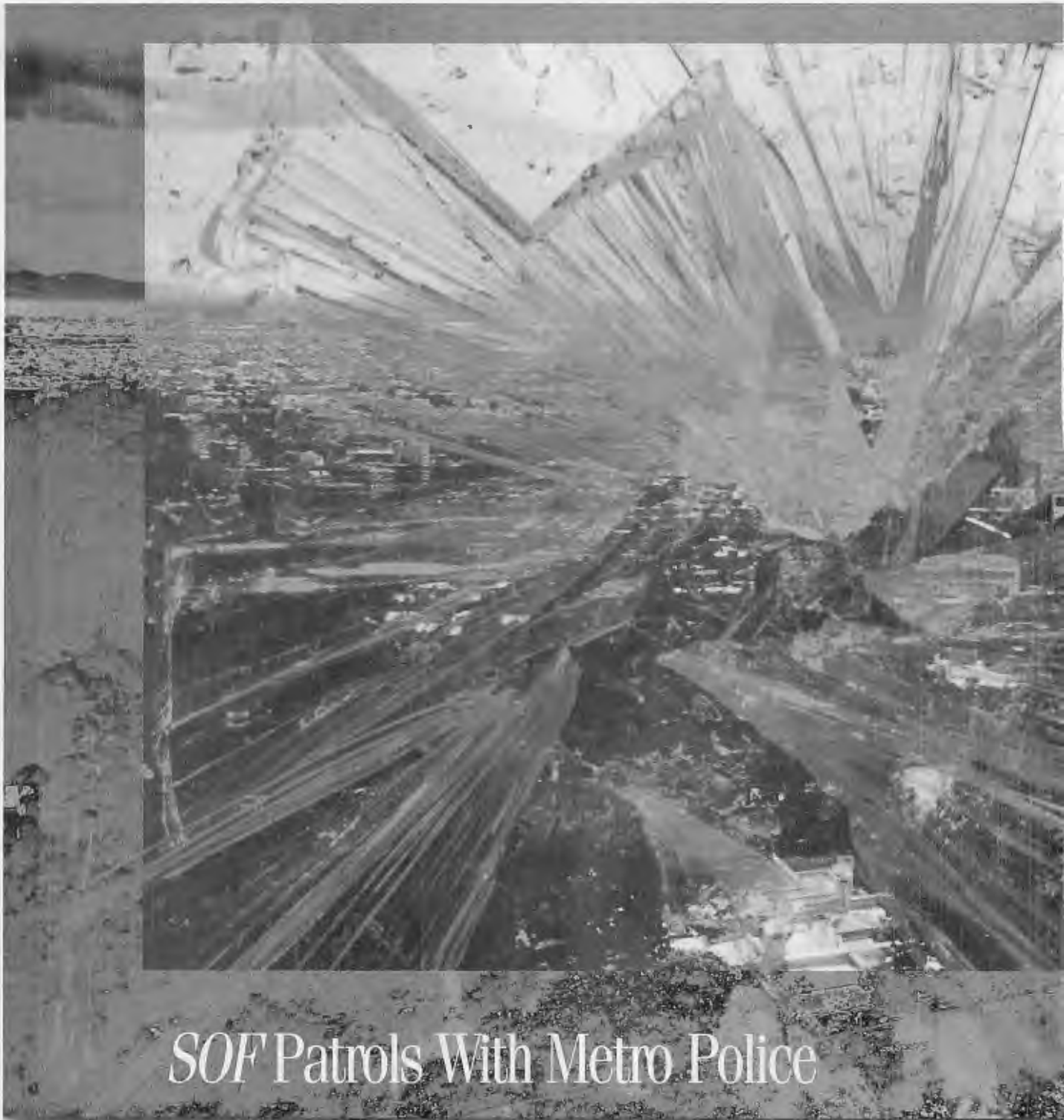
Box 16, Gunnison, CO 81320

mornings in Africa on the Veldt; too many other places where we had stalked and hunted (or been hunted) — or maybe we had all simply seen too many things fall down over a rifle sight. For whatever reason, we always seemed to decide to let the elk sleep-in, concluding that we would give them their morning walk once they were up and around.

It was after such discussions that we came to the realization that, perhaps because the shadows were growing longer, we had bonded not only with each other, but, like the ancient artists in the Grotto of Lascaux and the American Indian tribes, we had reached that level of *samurai shibumi* (the warrior's placid understanding) where we had melded into and bonded with Nature, as well. No one got an elk. But then no one cared. Nevertheless, we all enthusiastically concluded that it was a great hunt — we all found good comradeship and kindred souls — and are all looking forward to next year's adventure in a similar setting.

*Col. Mike Peck (Ret.), a highly decorated Vietnam veteran, was previously director of DIA's POW/MIA office in Washington, D.C. Presently, he is an international security consultant.* ✕





## SOF Patrols With Metro Police

**I**bailed out of the undercover cop car. The driver and Detective Captain Manuel Escobar, their Mini-UZI sub-machine guns at the ready, were already running down the street. Bogota's *Grupo Anti-Pirateria Terrestre* (Anti-Vehicle Hijack Unit) was in action and about to whip ass.

I had arrived at the Bogota Metro Police station at 1830 hours, just in time for the night shift. The cops of the Colombian capital's *Policia Metropolitana* had just killed two thugs sticking up a gas station. I hadn't even had a cup of coffee, eaten a donut, or

### Text & Photos by Rob Krott

put a roll of film in my camera and the night was already off to an interesting start. There was a Police Vigilance Meeting — basically an hour-long commander's meeting — where all 19 of Bogota's zone commanders were busy coordinating the night's activities. Every eight days they meet to discuss the crime situation, report on problems and successes, and devise and coordinate strategy. I checked in with the station's press rep-

resentative, Sergeant Alberto Cantillo. Arrangements were made to hook me up with a routine patrol. My night would be anything but routine.

I'd spent a few days in Bogota already and, expecting the worst, had been pleasantly surprised to find a yuppie nightclub area such as San Salvador's *Zona Rosa*, affluent suburban neighborhoods, and an upscale business district. Official travel advisories tell the other side of the story:

"Bogota has one of the highest crime and murder rates of any South American city. Violent crime, including armed robbery,





# Bad Streets Of Bloody Bogota

murder, carjacking, and kidnapping for ransom, plagues the city. However, while street crime is omnipresent, most of the more serious crime is confined to the southern half of the city and in the far northern suburbs. Police are generally unable to control crime and violence due to a shortage of manpower, inadequate training and lack of technical expertise. They are subject to corruption and some are involved in criminal activity."

This was the side of Bogota I was here to see. While the Bogota *policia* may have their problems the ones I saw were certainly professional. As for corruption, well, we

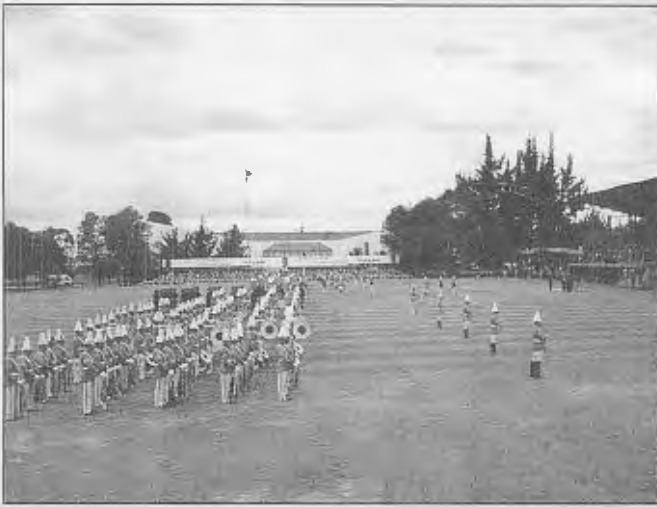
all know about past problems in Los Angeles, Miami, and New Orleans. I don't know what scale of corruption may exist in Colombia's police force, but is there a police force without corruption?

I wasn't concerned about such problems. I was interested in seeing how Bogota's finest fights crime, but since nothing was going to happen with my "ride-along" arrangements for an hour or so I went off to dinner with Captain Fernando Buitrago. Earlier in the week Buitrago had been instrumental in getting me on a police heli-

**A largely beautiful city (inset), and peaceful when viewed from the mountains, Bogota has the world's highest murder rate. Contrary to the common wisdom, only 15% of the murders are related to drug-trafficking.**

copter for a raid on a drug lab near the Venezuelan border (see "Colombia's Counter-Cocaine Cops," Oct. 00). I'd already seen the tactical boys, the Counter-Narcotics airmobile units, in action in the bush and now I wanted to see some big city cops busting bad guys, kicking in doors, taking names ... Fernando said sure, but first we should enjoy our dinner. We had some





The corps of cadets prepare to pass in review before President Pastrana during their graduation ceremony at the Santander Police Academy.



Front reception desk at precinct headquarters in Bogota sets the tone for a police organization with a distinctly military flavor.

good traditional Colombian food at Sanalejo Restaurant while I pumped Fernando for some basic information on the Colombian Police.

### The National Police

The National Police has about 110,000 cops in uniform (about 10% are female) with nearly 9,000 assigned to the Metro police in Bogota. It takes a year of training at one of the country's 15 police academies to graduate as a constable and three years to graduate as an officer (second lieutenant) from the General Santander National Police

Academy where the motto is "The Force, the Service, the Law." The officers are "commissioned" in the same manner as military officers (the Colombian National Police has a military-like rank structure and organization). The two principal professional schools for members of the National Police are the General Santander Academy and the Jimenez de Quesada Noncommissioned Officers School, both located in Bogota. Noncommissioned officers are required to complete a five-month course for every advancement in rank from corporal to sergeant major. The National

Police also operates seven smaller police schools in various locations throughout the country. These schools offer a five-month basic training course for recruits as well as in-service training, and coursework includes subjects as diverse as Colombian history and riot control.

While an army private (conscript) receives about U.S. \$35 a month, a police constable will make U.S. \$300 per month. A captain like my friend Fernando makes about U.S. \$500-\$600 a month and a *policia* general with well over 25 years of service can make between U.S. \$1,500-\$3,000. Not

Colombia's first national police force, an estimated 450 men, was organized in 1891 with the assistance of a commissaire of France's National Police.

Over the ensuing decades, the national police acted as a Liberal counterbalance to the Conservative dominant influence within the Colombian military. During the 1950s, the government moved the force's jurisdiction from the Ministry of Government to the Ministry of National Defense. This was done both to eliminate the remaining Liberal sympathizers within the force and to bring the force under stricter government supervision.

In 1962 the National Police assumed administrative and operational control over the separate police forces maintained by each of the country's administrative divisions. During the 1980s, Colombia's National Police remained directly subordinate to the minister of national defense. Officers holding military rank filled key posts within the National Police. Their uniforms and insignia of rank, however, were different from those worn by members of the country's military forces. Having passed through the police force's own professional training institutions, these men were dedicated to a professional law enforcement career. These career officers did not alternate between military and police service, as was customary with some Latin American armed forces.

In 1969, National Police personnel were estimated to total about 42,000. Recruitment plans announced during the mid-1970s projected an increase in the size of the force to some 75,000 personnel by 1980. Yet despite the increased challenges to internal security, the size of the force did not increase significantly and remained relatively constant at some 50,000 between 1974 and 1984. In 1988



the size of the National Police was estimated at approximately 55,000, of whom approximately 10 percent were civilians.

The headquarters of the National Police is located in Bogota. The force's organization appeared to parallel the military's headquarters command; it was divided into separate functional departments, including personnel (F-1), intelligence (F-2), operations (F-3), and logistics (F-4). Personnel not attached to the headquarters staff were deployed in each of the country's administrative departments, in which a police commander served as the ranking police officer. Bogota was treated as a separate police section.

In addition to his own staff, the departmental police commander supervised police personnel assigned to the various districts, stations, substations, and police posts maintained throughout the department. The departmental commander was responsible to the director general for police operations and administration. The departmental commander was, however, subordinate to the departmental governor with respect to the manner in which law enforcement policies were implemented. Mayors and civil magistrates also were reported to have a say in law enforcement matters. During the late 1980s, some observers contended that the control exercised by these political officials was a corrupting influence within the National Police.

In addition to the force's primary charge to handle common crimes, its major responsibilities included narcotics interdiction, some counterinsurgency work, participation in civic action in rural areas, and riot control in the country's urban centers. Other duties included enforcement of traffic regulations, supervision of public recreation areas, provision of security at gold and emerald mines,



a lot of money by American standards. The lure of easy drug money could easily be tempting for some.

A Colombian cop has a tough beat. Colombia is one of the most dangerous countries in the world. With a per-capita murder rate of 77.5 murders per 100,000 inhabitants, Colombia has the highest murder rate in the world — eight times that of the U.S. — with nearly 30,000 homicides annually. While narcotics and guerrilla-related violence account for part of this (perhaps 15% of the murders today are directly linked to civil war or cocaine trafficking), common criminals are responsible for an estimated 75% of the reported murders. Those common criminals are finding the streets to be a dangerous place as well. According to social welfare workers, every month on the Bogota streets 30 or 40, sometimes more, muggers, beggars, petty thieves, street kids, dopers, glue-sniffers, and prostitutes are systematically murdered in what human rights activists call “social cleansing campaigns.” Some blame the police for this, while others point the finger at local businessman and vigilantes.

### And Indigenous Refugees

Hundreds of thousands, if not more than a million, of Bogota's residents are refugees from rural violence perpetrated by the communist guerrillas, the *narcotraficantes*, and the right-wing militias known as *autodefensas*. The *desplacados* (displaced persons) live in squalor without the benefit of basic

## Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia

### *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia*

FARC, the largest, best-trained, and best-equipped insurgent organization in Colombia, has well-documented ties to narcotics traffickers, principally through the provision of armed protection for coca and poppy cultivation and narcotics production facilities, as well as through attacks on government narcotics eradication efforts. Established in 1964 as a rural-based, pro-Soviet guerrilla army, it has approximately 8,000-12,000 armed combatants and an unknown number of supporters, mostly in rural areas. Organized along military lines, it includes several urban fronts. FARC has been anti-United States since its inception. The FARC agreed in 1998 to enter into preliminary peace talks with the Colombian Government. The Pastrana administration demilitarized five large rural municipalities to meet FARC conditions for peace talks. This resulted in a Switzerland-sized demilitarized zone or *Distension Zona* with its “capital” at San Vicente del Caguan. It has been nicknamed *FARC-landia* by journalists and proponents of U.S. military aid. FARC carries out armed attacks against Colombian political, economic, military, and police targets. Many members pursue criminal activities, carrying out hundreds of kidnappings for profit annually. Foreign citizens often are targets of FARC kidnappings. FARC also began a bombing campaign against oil pipelines in 1998. FARC and a smaller guerrilla group, the National Liberation Army (ELN), have been designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the U.S. Secretary of State. FARC often uses explosives-filled gas cylinders to launch attacks on police stations in rural towns.

— R.E.K.

provision of security in the transport of valuables between government banks and on the national railroads, and administration of and provision of guards for the country's prison system.

A number of special police units functioned under the overall jurisdiction of the headquarters' operations command. They included the Radio Patrol Group, the Antimugging Group, the Private Surveillance Group, the Highway Police, the Tourist Police, the Juvenile Police, the Railroad Police, and the Operational Group Against Extortion and Kidnappings. The Anti-narcotics Police were important not only in the seizure of narcotics and the arrest of those involved but also in helping search out and destroy the concealed air landing strips and processing laboratories used by the narcotics traffickers.

The National Police's *Carabineros* were a special rural police force that carried out counterinsurgency missions, frequently in conjunction with army units. Headquartered at the department and national territory capitals, they were maintained in squadrons that were separate from those of the regular police; They wore distinctive uniforms and often traveled as mounted units. The National Police also administered and manned the country's fire departments. In support of these various police units, the National Police maintained a small air section equipped with some 30 light helicopters and one HS-748 airplane.

During the 1980s, the National Police reportedly also assumed control of the Directorate of the Judicial Police and Investigation (*Direccion de la Policia Judicial y Investigacion — DIJIN*). This law enforcement organization — commonly referred to as the Judicial Police — was formerly under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice. The national Criminal Statistics Archives (*Archivos de Estadistica Criminal*) and the Judicial Police represented the principal repositories of information required for the prosecution of criminal cases. The Criminal Statistics Archives also was transferred to the National Police and integrated as a section of the force's investigative division. Although located in Bogota, the

Judicial Police maintained its headquarters in a location separate from that of the National Police.

During the mid-1980s, the Judicial Police came to play an important role in Colombia's National Anti-narcotics Campaign. Its responsibilities reportedly included carrying out criminal investigations and continuing to assist in the preparation of court cases against narcotics traffickers. Members of the Judicial Police were assigned to duty with various law enforcement and justice-related organizations, including the Office of the Attorney General and the federal government's Administrative Security Department (*Departamento Administrativo de Seguridad — DAS*).

Members of the Carabineros were required to undergo a special three-month training program at the National School of Carabineros, also located in the national capital. During the mid-1970s, this specialized instruction included courses in horsemanship, basic veterinary medicine, and civic action.

In addition to the National Police, two other organizations — the DAS and the Customs Service (*Servicio de Aduana*) — had important law enforcement responsibilities. The DAS was the principal organization responsible for enforcement of laws relating to national security.

This organization had a national role comparable to that of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States. The formal responsibilities under the DAS's mandate included investigating crimes against the internal security of the state, fraud against the state and its financial institutions, breaches of the public faith, and crimes affecting individual liberty and human rights. The DAS also was responsible for screening and maintaining records on foreigners who entered the nation and for enforcing immigration laws. To carry out its mission, the DAS had both investigative and intelligence-gathering responsibilities. Like the minister of national defense, the chief of the DAS reported directly to the president of the republic. — R.E.K.



services. They add to the inner-city crime problem. Like any major city, Bogota has sections where you just do not go. I was told that the area around Cartucho Street was one of these. "Seedy part of town" would be an understatement. It's these dangerous, crime-ridden sections of the city where many of Colombia's disenfranchised attempt to eke out a living. The city has a population of at least 7 million with only 9,000 cops to go around. Many of those are engaged in administrative tasks leaving even fewer men on the streets. Divide that number by three separate eight-hour shifts and the numbers get thinner. But they do what they can.

And they seem to be busy. While kidnappings, carjackings, and bank robberies are the high profile incidents the most common

crimes in Bogota are domestic violence, gang violence, and felonies with the additional problem of armed robberies, kidnappings, and assassinations by the urban communist guerrillas of the FARC/ELN (see sidebar). Urban guerrillas present enough of a problem that the police actually have a Counter-Guerrilla Group. The urban guerrillas are not only better equipped and funded than your average run of the mill crook, but they're also well trained. Some FARC guerrillas receive training abroad from Cuban, Vietnamese, and North Korean operatives. In the past they were trained by the Soviets, East Germans, and Nicaraguans. There also is evidence that FARC guerrillas have received advanced training from renegade Israeli and British ex-special forces soldiers turned mercenaries.

Now, with the FARC's government-sanctioned demilitarized zone (basically a safe haven) they have a permanent training and support area for these urban guerrillas or terrorists. The FARC's urban guerrilla/terrorist cells with their training and weaponry are considered a serious threat and a real problem for the Colombian police. Later that night I'd get my chance to see an elite squad of Bogota cops take down the hideout of an urban guerrilla cell.

### Mean Streets

After dinner we cruised through part of Bogota's red light district: a sleazy, central neighborhood, jammed with hot pillow joints and scummy bars, the streets littered with the discards of *basuco* — the crude local version of crack — and discarded plastic bags oozing the residue of an intoxicating yellow glue. Street kids, 9-, 10-, and 11-year-old gamins, loitered and smoked *basuco*, while barely pubescent girls stood near alleyways hoping to turn a \$3 trick. We rubber-necked at the derelicts, prostitutes, street scum, and petty criminals which are the bane of any cop's existence.

Next stop was the radio control room at the National Police Headquarters. There, dozens of dispatchers handled calls. The headquarters also housed a bank of close-circuit TVs. They were being monitored by dispatchers alert for criminal activity. The police have placed the cameras at various intersections and high crime locations around the city. We watched tapes of several muggings and assaults captured on video by the hidden cameras. Some of the tapes ended with the police arriving before the criminals could get away. We were soon on our way back to Fernando's unmarked 4x4 and the police station when he fielded a call on his cell phone. Something was happening and we sprinted for the car. I was told we'd link up with the Anti-Vehicle Hijack Unit since they were running a stakeout and a carjacking had just been reported.

It was nearing 2300 hours and the night looked promising, action-wise. We caught up with the cops of the Anti-Vehicle Hijack Unit at a gas station where two carloads of plainclothes cops were jacking freshly checked magazines of 9mm rounds into Mini-Uzi submachine-guns and Jericho automatic pistols. There was obviously some mainlining of adrenaline going on as well, but everyone looked calm and professional. LTC Jose Contreras heads the Grupo Anti-Pirateria Terrestre. He has a captain, two lieutenants, three sergeants, and 15 men with which to combat carjacking in this sprawling city of hostile neighborhoods and labyrinthine shantytowns.

### A Bust

The unit had a stakeout on a chop shop. An informant had indicated that a recently



Captain Manuel Escobar, OIC of the takedown, with mini-Uzi in one hand and radio and paperwork in the other — a sign of the times in Bogota.





Control room and central dispatch at National Police headquarters reflects the move toward modern tools and technology for the police profession in Colombia. Surveillance cameras in high-crime areas also bring police to the scene in real-time. (right) SIJN plainclothes squad prepares for a raid on suspected FARC safe house.



carjacked Toyota Landcruiser was on its way. I climbed into the back of a Mazda with Captain Escobar. My job was to jump out of the car, get into position, flip on the illuminating spotlight on my Sony DSR300 TV camera, and film the bust as it went down. Yeah, okay, and I'd just left my brand new Second Chance Body Armor (800-253-7090) ballistic vest at the station because "we're only going to dinner." Well, maybe the light would blind the bad guys if they started shooting in my direction. Captain Juan Carlos Rojas holstered his Jericho, gave the "let's go" to the others and we were off.

It went down pretty smooth. Our two unmarked vehicles (one was a taxi-cab) eased through the side streets towards the chop shop. We actually pulled around the

corner to see the Toyota Landcruiser stopping at the locked gate to the chop shop driveway. The driver, in his late 30s and wearing a tan campus jacket and blue jeans tastefully accessorized (as we later found) with a 7.65mm Beretta pistol, got out to open the

## DISASTER AT MIRAFLORES

On 3 August 1998, the joint Colombian Police and Army base at Miraflores bore the brunt of a nationwide rebel offensive. Killed in the attack were at least 64 police, soldiers and civilians. Miraflores is a small settlement of about 4,000 to 8,000 people in the vast savannas of eastern Guaviare state, a region thick with FARC guerrillas and coca farms. Miraflores, 275 miles southeast of Bogota, was a hub for U.S.-financed coca-field fumigation effort. The joint police-army base, which normally housed 150 to 200 anti-narcotics agents and soldiers, was attacked by between 500 and 1,000 guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The guerrillas overran the base in a prolonged attack (nearly 24 hours)

with rockets and mortars. Accessible only by air and serviced by a dirt airstrip, Colombian government efforts to reinforce and counterattack the beleaguered base were hampered by poor weather. The Army's Counter-Guerrilla Battalion Nr. 7 retook the base area on 6 August. The base was completely destroyed. The U.S. Congress was subsequently asked for a special appropriation of \$2 million for reconstruction of the base at Miraflores.

— R.E.K.

gate. A younger guy wearing a black leather jacket and ski mask was slouched in the passenger seat. As he opened the gate the driver punched the Mazda's accelerator and it was pretty much over except for the yelling and screaming. The mutt with the 7.65mm Beretta didn't cause much of a fuss as Captain Escobar bounced him off the house and then screwed an Uzi barrel into the back of his neck. He was cooperative.

Back at the station I watched them get booked and tossed into holding cells. There was the usual hooting and catcalls from the other inmates, especially towards the younger one. Something about taking a shower ... I had a feeling he was going to regret his brief carjacking career long before a jury sentenced him. Later I witnessed him under interrogation. He was trying to tell the detective he wasn't even at the scene and that they had the wrong guy. While the detective smiled I played back the videotape for the young thug. He didn't look too happy.

Next stop for the night's festivities was at the SIJN station house. It looked like the usual scene with some young cops milling around the coffee and soda stands down the street and getting their caffeine and sugar fixes. But inside it was a different story.

Continued on page 88

## KIDNAPPING

There is a greater risk of being kidnapped in Colombia than in any other country in the world. More than a dozen U.S. citizens were kidnapped in Colombia in 1999, twice as many as in 1998. Some have been individual incidents and others have involved large group-hostage situations. In some cases, the victims have been murdered. Most kidnappings of U.S. citizens in Colombia have been committed by guerrilla groups, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), which were both designated as Foreign Terrorist Organizations by the Secretary of State in October 1997. Three U.S. citizens kidnapped by the FARC were killed in March 1999, and three other U.S. citizens kidnapped by the FARC have been missing since January 1993. All U.S. citizens in Colombia, either residing there or visiting, should consider themselves potential targets.

Kidnapping for ransom occurs throughout Colombia. Since 1980, the U.S. Embassy in Bogota has learned of 112 U.S. citizens kidnapped in Colombia and adjacent border areas. Although the majority were released, 14 were murdered, one died from malnutrition during captivity, and the whereabouts of several others remain unknown. U.S. citizens of all age groups and occupations have been kidnapped, and kidnappings have occurred in all major regions of Colombia. Because of widespread guerrilla activity and U.S. policy that opposes concessions to terrorists, including payment of ransom in kidnapping cases, the U.S. government can provide only limited assistance in these cases.

— R.E.K.



# LOW PLAINS

## Hot Lead, Hot LZ

BY COL. MIKE PECK (RET.)

Photos Courtesy Author

*In June of 1968 I was the CO of Charlie Company, 2nd of the 39th Infantry (1st Brigade, 9th Division), conducting operations in the Plain of Reeds. I was out doing a RIF (Reconnaissance In Force), when Colonel Hank Emerson, my Brigade Commander, showed me the location of a VC way-station on the map — just to make sure I stayed away from it, since it was located inside Cambodia just south of the “Parrot’s Beak.” That night I took my outfit on an extended patrol, and must have gotten lost, since just before dawn we discovered that we had ended up a little to the west of the way-station. Sadly, we had to go through them to get to our side of the border, and, as politely as we could, shot them all to shit. Of course, I got caught, and no one at Division managed to see the humor in it all. To make amends, I then “volunteered” to air assault into a vegetated area about 12 klicks or so west of Tan An to retrieve an unidentified object, dropped in a small clearing by a couple of Cong that had been killed by a LOH (Light Observation Helicopter).*

*The Plain of Reeds is a huge swamp, generally devoid of vegetation other than high grass except along the streams and canals. The area where the OH-64 had nailed these dudes, however, was covered with scrubby vegetation, not unlike that found in some of the swamps in Florida and Georgia. There was no LZ, so we had to hang from the skids and drop in. We landed in a large base camp/logistical facility that had been cleverly concealed by the Viet Cong. Since both sides were taken totally by surprise, there was an initial hiatus, during which I attempted to collect all my widely scattered guys together before attempting a break-out. I had almost succeeded when the enemy opened up on us, and I got hit in the first fusillade. I managed to kill the guy who shot me, then got his buddy, before being dragged back to the company perimeter, such as it was. It was in the middle of the VC ammunition dump. That morning we had captured a number of Chicom weapons, as souvenirs. That may have been what ultimately saved us.*

*Even though I was out of artillery range, in the middle of a VC reinforced battalion, and was running out of blood, I was still fairly optimistic. Then everything turned to shit ...*

**I** soon gathered that Colonel Emerson had the entire 1st Brigade mobilized into action. They were setting up artillery firing platforms on barges in the swamp and pulling units out of other operational areas to rush to the scene of the action, and, of course, the inevitable command and control helicopters were swarming overhead by now. Everybody up the entire chain wanted a personal SITREP (Situation Report). After a while, I began to notice that talking on the radio had become a chore — as had the very act of breathing.

The appearance of all the helicopters inspired me to have the guys hack out a makeshift landing zone for a possible





# DRIFTER

PART II



Waiting for the Hueys to pick us up for another air-mobile assault. Happiness was *never* a hot LZ.



# LOW PLAINS DRIFTER

medevac, using knives, the few entrenching tools which we had, and everything but G.I. spoons. We had several men who were hit fairly hard, and I wanted to get them out if we could, although at this point I was beginning to fade a little, myself. My whole right side felt like it was made of jelly on the inside, and I could feel the blood collecting in my abdominal cavity from the sitting position which I had assumed. Also, I found that my fingers and toes were going numb, making it hard to move around or even fire the .45 with any degree of accuracy. It was totally smeared with blood, and since I had brought it with me to Vietnam, I did not want to ruin the finish. I finally cleaned it up as best I could and put it back into the holster, turning things over to First Lieutenant Nolan (my XO), Sergeant First Class Williams, and Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Moon, all of whom could do little but attempt to improve our defenses and report back anything interesting or anomalous. God, I was tired.

ing into the man next to you is even worse; I started to roll out and take my chances on the ground, but decided to try to get someone's attention instead. I grabbed the doorunner on my side, who was unable to fire because of the friendly troops scattered all around, and pulled his leg. In a nervous reflex, he kicked me in the face for my efforts; at that point, I jerked his left trouser leg out of his boot and bit him as hard as I could, which made him look down; I held up seven fingers and vigorously shook my head, then held up six and nodded frantically.

At first he did not get it, but finally the light went on — too late. As he was swinging his helmet mike close to his mouth to call the pilots, a bullet caught him right in the face. Goddamn! Oh, Goddamn! I was attempting to lever myself out the door, since the VC were in the process of converting the helicopter into a large colander, when those incredibly courageous pilots decided they had done their best and pulled pitch out of there.

No sooner had we lifted-off than everyone knew we were not going far. The Dinks had hit the engine or the transmission and something was making a gawdawful grinding, metallic sound. I was still weakly trying to get back in, and did not have time to brace for the subsequent crash, which occurred fairly soon after take-off. We did, however, manage to clear the battle area and slam down into the open terrain outside of the vegetation.

The force of the crash caused the skids to collapse and the helicopter to pitch forward onto its nose, which hurled all the wounded into the armored pilots seats, which we could have all done without. Filled with adrenaline once again, I grabbed the guy nearest me and we rolled out, timing our subsequent scuttle under the wildly gyrating rotor blades like little girls in school used to do when jumping "double Dutch" in the playground.

The guy I got out with was Sergeant Parker, another of my super soldiers, who had been hit through the shoulders. We crabbed away from the wreck and were waiting to see if the rotor would stop so we could go back and

drag out some more of our guys when the whole thing went up in a billow of black smoke, typical of a petroleum-based fire.

We moved about 75 yards away, to escape the heat and to stay out of range if the whole thing were to explode. I noticed that my bandage had shifted and that now I had a bunch of shattered ribs protruding out of my side. What next? I felt absolutely dog-tired, and rolled over on my back in the water, to stare at the fluffy white clouds, forming intricate and ever-shifting patterns overhead. Parker was in a sitting position, since he did not want to get his bandages any muddier than they already were — something which I understood completely.

Neither of us said anything for a long time until Sgt. Parker broke the silence with the cheery news, "Hey, 'Charlie 6,' looks like about a squad of Dicks comin' over to see how we're doin'." ("Charlie 6" was my radio call sign prefix, and was what most of the troops called me.)

"You're kidding me, of course."

"'Fraid not, Boss. What now?"

"Ohhh, for Christ's sake; I can't believe it." The clouds looked so peaceful and I continued to stare at them, idly looking for Rorschach patterns as symbolic scapularies of the very immediate future. Finally I asked, "Could you tell if anybody else got out of the crash? Maybe somebody with a weapon or two?"

"On the other side, maybe, but its hard to tell for all the smoke. Anyway, the Dicks are headed over here, not over there. You don't think they're comin' over to say they're sorry, do you?"

## Manna From Heaven!

"Probably not. By the by, how are your legs? If they still work, why don't you worm your way over to the other side of that fire, then show those little dick-birds the bottoms of your feet so often



My helmet, hit on the right side, as well as on the left, just in front on the chin-strap loop. The detainee cards and memoranda show the rounds' damage as does the map of Vietnam — with long-ago blood, mud and sweat on them forever.

After what seemed like a long time, Willy and Sgt. Moon crawled over and told me that I was going to be evacuated along with the worst of the wounded. I immediately began to protest vehemently in my most authoritarian command voice, but was truly surprised that what came out was not much more than a whisper. They grabbed me and dragged me over to the unbelievably small and inadequate LZ that had been scraped out, and I was powerless to do much more than *woof* about staying with my men.

The first attempt to get a bird in was disastrous, but a second team of pilots insisted on coming in almost immediately after the first try. This time we laid down a base of fire to cover them. They had removed all my equipment, including my harness with the pistol, which I was attempting to retrieve when the helicopter came in low over the trees and literally crash-landed into the LZ, with the rotor clipping off the tops of the vegetation. That scared the Dicks more than our covering fire, and not a shot was launched by any of them. The initial medevac request called for 7 guys to be evacuated, but in the intervening time, prior to the Huey getting in, two of the men had died and I was substituted. As a result, only six of us were tossed aboard, and no one thought to inform the crew of the change. Had they taken off immediately, the whole operation would have been a stellar success, but they sat there for what seemed like eternity awaiting the last evacuee.

By this time, some of the VC had regained their nerve and began popping away at the helicopter, hitting some of the guys who were supposed to be evacuated. When a bullet hits the skin of a helicopter, it makes an awful sound, but the smack of a bullet impact-



they'll think you're layin' down and might not bother chasin' you? Somebody from our side is bound to come check out the crash sooner or later, and, in the meantime, my Vietnamese is pretty good, so I'll try to convince these clowns that I am Ho Chi Minh's prodigal son, from his time in New York, and am ready to repent."

I continued to lie on my back simply because I could not bring myself to roll over in the muddy water — although the holes went all the way through. Just as I asked Parker how close they were, a "Charlie" model gunship came in over the trees; overflew the scene; checked it all out; turned left in a long, arching sweep to pick-up some altitude; then dove in on the VC, with its four 7.62x51mm machine guns and a salvo of 17-pound rockets. He rolled away from the treeline, made another strafing pass, then overflew the area to make sure he had not missed anybody. We were waving at him when he hovered over us and dropped a ground-model M60 machine gun and one of the monster 1,500-round boxes of ammo. Manna from Heaven! The guy who dropped it did a pantomime of pointing to his watch, then they flew off, probably to rearm, since it seemed like they had shot off a helluva bunch of rockets.

I used my legs to scoot myself, still on my back, over to where the gun was, and dragged it back to the ammo box, which had landed almost on top of Parker and myself. After folding down and adjusting the legs, I wrestled the box and machine gun around to where I had the bipod legs hooked over the bottom of the giant ammo can, with my shoulders braced against the can and my head resting on it. M60s are not as easy to load as the old .30 Caliber Browning 1919A4s and A6s I had used in Special Forces, since you have to pull the bolt back, open the top cover, and position the first cartridge in the feed tray, then close the cover — which is difficult to perform when you are doing it downside-up. I finally got the damn thing loaded, with Parker making smart-ass comments about inept, dumb-shit captains.

The fact of the matter was that my fingers were going numb again, now that my adrenaline high was wearing off. We made a pretty pair, both of us shot to shit, with me lying on my back alongside the gun, holding the buttstock between my knees, with my right hand as a traverse and elevation mechanism (T&E) and my left hand wrapped *bassackwards* around the grip; I had my thumb on the trigger and was looking in the wrong direction, while Parker was sitting cross-legged, Indian-style, behind the weapon, all hunkered down to make a smaller target, ready to direct fire.

"Wanna try some practice shots, Sir?" he offered.

"Not really. Maybe if we stay still and behave ourselves, they'll forget about us and go find something more interesting to do." I hopefully replied.

"No, I mean do you wanna fire a few rounds at *another* bunch of Dicks movin' this way out of the treeline — just to see if we can work this thing?" he clarified.

"Christ, Parker! Why the hell are those guys so goddamned interested in a couple of shot-up G.I.s? You must not be livin', right, Stud."

I "aimed" in what I thought was the general direction, looked at Parker and said, "Call 'em," then triggered off a short burst, which was surprisingly easy to control the way the gun was set up.

He vectored me in. "Higher! Higher! You're hittin' the ground about 10 meters out. No! No! Too high! No! You're gonna shoot down a Mig, for Christ sake! Yeah! OK! OK! Left! Left! No, goddammit, Sir! Your other left! Yes! Yes! A little higher! Yes! More! More! To the right! Yeah! OK, sweep back and forth! A little more! Oh, yes! Oh, yes! You little motherfuckers!"

I was watching Sgt. Parker's face, which was quite interesting; he was really animated, although he had lost as much blood as I had. Good troop! After a while I could anticipate his fire directions from watching his eye movements, and once we worked through the adjustment signals we made a deadly little team. After our initial feeding frenzy, I got a grip on my excitement, and confined my efforts to short bursts, since I could feel the gun heating up on my

face, and not want to burn out the barrel or have it start jamming.

After we beat back the second assault, they continued to take pot-shots at us from the woodline, and, although they were really dog-shit marksmen, the whine of shots wide of the mark and the crack of the close ones was disconcerting. It seemed like we had been out there a long time, and Parker's voice began to sound like he was talking from the inside of a 55 gallon drum, very hollow and resonant, a situation made worse by all the spots that started floating in front of my eyes.

Finally the gunship returned, and Parker and I got back into business, stitching the woodline with a stream of 1-in-5 tracers to mark the target for the warbird. Nothing slow about those guys, and they shot the ever-lovin'-livin'-shit out of that entire corner of the woods, while Parker and I tried to cheer, in what came out as feeble squeaks and whispers.

Then, to our chagrin and consternation, they flew off again.



(above) Dust-Off at Tan An. Ideally, wherever they were hit in South Vietnam WIAs were no longer than 20 minutes by air from a medical facility. (left) Here, I have a *real* combat rifle — an M14. At FSB Moore with my best friend and ally. (below) My company CP in a nipa palm grove along a canal. You can make out the bullet scar on my head from my first tour, with SF.





# LOW PLAINS DRIFTER

"Now what, Captain Marvel?" Parker quipped.

Just as our morale began to plummet, a slick flew over to the crash site, keeping the smoke between itself and the trees, apparently to check out the bird that was still burning furiously. It was hard to see through the smoke, but it looked like it had landed, so I ordered Parker to get his ass out of there, and see if he could get evacuated. He protested like the great soldier that he was, but finally said he would go over and get them to come back and pick me up. I reluctantly rolled over and got behind the gun, which I suppose I could have done in the first place.

I was puzzled that he drew no fire as he awkwardly ran toward the smoke, bent over and staying low. The VC had to have seen him, but since it appeared that he needed no covering fire, I turned over on my back again, facing the wreck, and watched him go. He disappeared on the other side, and, after a while, the slick lifted off and began to hover over to where I was. Naturally, as soon as he came around the smoke, all the VC in that part of Southeast Asia opened up on him, and before I could drag myself into position and get the machine gun back into action, the helicopter rolled east and booked out of there.

Angry at my own stupidity, I ran off a long burst at the Dicks, which only succeeded in jamming the M60. While I was trying to keep my guts in with one hand and clear the gun with the other, the gunship appeared once again and tore up the woodline with machine guns and rockets. I assumed that the slick reported having taken fire, and now it was payback time. After a couple of runs, it came back, landed about 15 meters away, and the doorgunner on my side jumped out and ran over to grab up his (my) machine gun. I hung on to it gamely, however.

## Well, On Second Thought ...

"Hey, Man, you can have this back only if I get a ride outta here — package deal." I croaked over the noise of the turbine.

"No way, Cap'n!" he shouted back, "Gunship policy is to not take passengers. We're over-grossed as it is. We'll get a slick in here for you."

He succeeded in wrestling the gun away, but in so doing dragged me to my feet. Once upright, I was able to stumble over to the pilot's door, where I lifted up my bloody fatigue jacket to show him the tips of my ribs protruding from the now jagged holes, and put out my thumb in a hitchhiking gesture. He got a startled expression on his face and looked like he was going to get sick, but like every other helicopter pilot I ever met, he was a good guy. With a jerk of his thumb he motioned me aboard, and I clambered in. The effort brought back the little floaters in front of my eyes, and it felt like my head was filled with cotton candy.

The next thing I remember, some guys were pulling me out of the warbird at Tan An, and I was on a stretcher with an I.V. in my arm. A medic cut off my fatigue jacket and patched me up with a proper dressing. Now, if I could just stay alive long enough to get to a hospital. I lay on the stretcher watching the clouds, which were turning purple in the advancing twilight. I thought they were actually quite lovely, and sort of got religion right there on the spot. Like all the other former "atheists in foxholes", I vowed to change my ways if I got out of this one. Even if I didn't, though, the clouds were pretty, and no one could have asked for a more fitting shroud;



Receiving a valor award during a ceremony at the 9th Division base at Dong Tam, 1968.

the rain would be good for the rice crop this year, especially since the ground had been anointed with so much sacrificial blood.

## Enemies No Longer

Finally, at about dusk, I found myself aboard a medevac chopper rigged up with stretchers on the way to Saigon. It was an interesting ride, since about half the guys aboard were VC, probably from the same action that I had been in. At that point, however, we were not combatants nor even enemies, and in broken English and Vietnamese we all tried to verbally encourage the worst cases — on both sides — not to give up.

A VC next to me had managed to hang onto his canteen, which

he passed over. I thanked him and took a long pull. Bitter and awful, but highly appreciated. My guys had refused to give me any water all afternoon, since they did not know the nature nor extent of my injuries, and, although I had an I.V. in me, I was still dehydrated from losing so much blood. There seemed to be something like white radishes mixed in with the water, which he finally was able to explain to me was their version of purification tablets — some kind of herbal root. We actually got on fairly well in French and Vietnamese, with a few good old English universal profanities mixed in.

It was a bizarre and delirious "conversation", but as long as we continued to try, we knew we were still alive. We tired very quickly, though. Night had fallen by now and the helicopter had gotten deathly cold.

I only vaguely recall arriving at the 93d Evacuation Hospital in Saigon, and remember bits and fragments — as from a dream — with everything taking on a surrealistic, out-of-body aspect: the noise of the chopper; the light flashing off the blades, actually quite interesting, since I usually did not see them from that angle; more lights, blue, I think; people shouting and scurrying; my VC friend grasping my hand and giving me a grin from the horizontal and a "thumbs-up"; me reciprocating, glad that he was still alive; losing him in the jostle of my stretcher being unlatched and unloaded; still more lights, which now hurt my eyes; concerned faces, annoyingly concerned, looking at me like I was in the bottom of a well.

Then being lifted off the stretcher and onto a gurney; a quick x-ray; a nurse swabbing my side with what seemed to be some kind of brown liquid; me idly thinking that the fact I could not feel her hands was probably not good; another nurse cleaning enough mud off my left hand, which was stretched out palm down, to jam an incredibly long needle into the back of it; noting with irritation that I sure as hell felt that.

A doctor appeared and looked down; rather formal introductions under the circumstances, with me noting forever that his name was Dr. Gordon Gutman; me trying to grin while asking him, in a voice so weak that it scared me, to make all the hamburger look good for the girls; feeling something cold running into the back of my hand; looking over to see some guy in a cap and mask rigging up what looked like another I.V. bag; him asking me to count to 10, from somewhere in outer space; and my last thought before the anesthesia did its magic: Wow, I think I'm gonna make it!

*Col. Mike Peck (Ret.), a highly decorated Vietnam veteran, was previously director of DIA's POW/MIA office in Washington, D.C. Presently, he is an international security consultant. ✕*



## Millennium Modifications

Continued from page 47

trigger pull. GG&G's set trigger fire control mechanism offers the operator two significantly different pull weights. Without initiating the set mechanism the pull weight on my personal M16A2 stays at a crisp 6.5 pounds. Retract the operating rod to draw the bolt rearward and cock the hammer. Rotate the selector lever to the line etched between "SAFE" and "SEMI." Pull the trigger to the rear to set the mechanism. The sear release is then dropped to only 2.5 pounds. Rotate the selector back to "SEMI" and nail him. This is perfect for experienced operators who need to fire one shot from an M16/AR-15 with the greatest possible precision. The GG&G set trigger fire control mechanism costs \$95, installed.

### Night Vision Equipment

Adding a night vision scope to this setup provides the operator with both a critical tactical edge over his opponent and the capability of surgical accuracy in the dark — the very environment in which most contact with the enemy occurs. And that's why the envelope compression of the new EOTech Model 550 is so important, as it was designed to be used in conjunction with night vision equipment. Modern night vision devices are ultimately judged by how far out they permit the end user to detect, recognize and identify potential targets. A brief description of how night vision equipment works is in order.

In both second and third generation systems, the objective lens collects light that cannot be seen with the naked eye and focuses it on an image intensifier. A photo cathode inside the image intensifier absorbs this light energy and converts it into electrons. Passing first through a micro channel plate that multiplies them thousands of times, these electrons are drawn toward a phosphor screen. When this highly intensified electron image strikes the phosphor screen, it causes the screen to emit visible light. Since the phosphor screen emits this light in precisely the same pattern and intensity that the light was collected by the objective lens, the bright image seen in the ocular corresponds exactly to the scene being viewed. Third generation night vision equipment uses gallium-arsenide for the photo cathode. The micro channel plate is coated with an ion barrier film to increase tube life. The very best third generation equipment provides very good to excellent low-light-level performance and long tube life. In addition, recent milspec-quality tubes feature no perceptible distortion.

The image intensifier resolution of state-of-the-art night vision is often measured by a unit known as "line pairs per millimeter" (lp/mm). This is usually determined from a 1951 Air Force Resolving Power Test Target. All the horizontal and vertical lines and the spaces between them must be distinguishable to qualify for a particular pattern. The higher

the number of line pairs per millimeter, the better the unit's ability to provide a sharp image. Most Russian-made night vision will provide no more than 20-30 lp/mm. The very best American-made night vision features resolution of 45-64+ lp/mm.

There are several other parameters that influence the quality of night vision equipment. One is the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR), which is a measure of the light signal reaching the eye divided by the perceived noise as seen by the eye. A tube's SNR determines the low-light resolution of the image tube. Thus, the higher the SNR value, the better the tube's ability to resolve objects with good contrast under low-light conditions. Another important factor is photosensitivity, or the ability of the photo cathode to produce an electrical response when subjected to light waves (photons). The higher the value, the better the ability to produce a visible image under darker conditions.

An additional important concept is the system gain. Gain is the number of times a night vision device amplifies light input. System gain is measured as the light output divided by the light input and is what the user actually sees. This value is usually in the thousands and U.S. military night vision equipment operates in the 2,000 to 3,000 range. The higher the value for system gain the better, up to a point. Russian night vision devices frequently increase the gain far too high in order to achieve a brighter (but never clearer) image at the expense of tube life.

Two currently popular pocket night vision scopes used by military and law enforcement organizations are the ITT 6015/PVS14 and Litton M983. Both feature 45 lp/mm third generation tubes of very high quality. They both feature standard 1X magnification and a 40-degree field of view. Highly effective for short to medium range surveillance, in totally dark environments, an integral IR light-emitting diode provides illumination for map reading and other close-range observations. The ITT 6015/PVS14 uses two AA alkaline or lithium batteries, while the Litton M983 requires only one.

The ITT is a \$3,600 unit. The Litton M983 costs \$3,900 and comes standard in a goggle mode. It can be flipped up out of the way or quickly detached from the face mask or an optional helmet mount. Both of these units can be purchased from G.G.&G., as well as the adaptors required to integrate them to the G.G.&G. FIRE system.

With regard to the constantly evolving M16 system, technology continues to move rapidly. The U.S. Military's special operations community is taking a close look at the new EOTech Model 500 Holographic Diffraction Sight. Many in this loop already feel the EOTech Model 500 HDS offers significant advantages over the Aimpoint. I personally feel it's the best of the entire spectrum of illuminated reticle pattern sights. GG&G's MAD rear sight and folding front sight will be found on a substantial number of the M16s within the special operations community, as will both the ITT and Litton pocket night vision scopes. ✕

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### Bombs Before Butter: Way Before!

Following the UN embargo on Iraq, there have been questions raised about whether Saddam has the resources to tackle another bomb program, considering the expense involved.

He has made a very public issue of his country having been bankrupted. Starving and emaciated children — and the graphic TV images of these victims — have been used as a powerful argument against sanctions. The campaign has had an effect: The popular view is that there is no way that anybody would allow such suffering if it could be avoided. That the Iraqi dictator might be involved in such work again is beyond the pale: Nuclear weapons cost billions of dollars to develop and Iraq is destitute. Were the international community dealing with a rational man, that might be true. As it now emerges, however, all that is wishful thinking.

In a submission to the U.S. Senate Armed Services Committee, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Walter Slocombe suggested last September that Saddam had made a lot more money from his oil sales than he had been given credit for. In 1989, the last full year before the invasion of Kuwait, Slocombe told the Washington gathering that Iraq earned \$15 billion from its oil exports. Of that, Saddam had spent \$13 billion on his military.

"In the year 2000, Iraq is projected to earn \$20 billion from its oil exports authorized under the oil-for-food program," he stated. And while Slocombe cautioned that these resources could not be used for military purposes, many more billions of dollars were being funneled into Iraq's coffers from some of the most sophisticated illegal smuggling operations anywhere. Those involved with monitoring such matters have intimated that at some time or other (depending on the political climate of the time) most of Iraq's neighbors have been involved in the subterfuge.

It says a lot that one of the observations made to the editor of a major British publication in Cairo last October, was that for all the rhetoric about so-called UN-imposed penury, the average Iraqi today is a lot wealthier than the average Egyptian.

Certainly, if, as evidence shows, Saddam has launched another nuclear weapons program, he is not short of cash.

### Reported Nuclear-Trafficking Incidents

The question being asked most often in the West is whether it is possible that Iraq might eventually obtain enough nuclear fuel to complete the construction of one or more atom bombs. Certainly, with the breakup of the Soviet Union there have — as the record shows — been multiple opportunities. A few recent examples will suffice, and what is important here is that while none of these

incidents were geared to any Iraqi WMD initiative, they very well could have been — and others, undetected, may have been.

As the CIA director, George Tenet declared, Iraq — like Iran — had been adroit in the use of denial and deception in activities related to weapons of mass destruction since day one. Random examples of some of the attempts to acquire fissile material by nations unknown are as follows:

- It was disclosed in Moscow that the chief of the Federal Security Service (FSB) in the Chelyabinsk region told *Itar-Tass* News Agency that two years ago their agents thwarted the theft of 18.5 kgs of fissile material. ISIS's O'Neill told this publication that while he hadn't seen the specifics, he was told on good authority on his last visit to Moscow that the stuff was "radioactive materials used for nuclear weapons production." Another source mentioned weapons-grade HEU.

- According to a submission made to a Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in Washington in January, 1998, a package containing 3 kgs of HEU was seized by the Russian police in St. Petersburg.

- Mayak (where more than 30 tons of weapons-grade uranium is stored) was in the news when former President Boris Yeltsin ordered an overhaul of security measures at the plant that reprocesses nuclear materials for weapons. Mayak handles spent nuclear submarine fuel as part of the Chelyabinsk-65 nuclear complex, one of Russia's main weapons-development facilities. According to Bill Gertz of *The Washington Times*, the CIA told a Senate Intelligence Committee that while nuclear warheads in Russia were relatively secure, declining morale and discipline in the military as well as economic conditions, "raise our concerns about the potential for warhead theft." The report added that "Russian nuclear weapons-usable fissile material — plutonium as well as HEU — are more vulnerable to theft than nuclear weapons or warheads."

- In several instances, in non-Russian republics, after being asked by plant officials to help measure the fissile stocks at their sites, Vienna's IAEA found fissile stocks to be in excess of what was on record. In one area, tens of kilos of fissile materials unexpectedly turned up. Until then, nobody had been quite sure what the tally really was. Even today, says O'Neill, U.S. Energy Department officials and some Russian scientists are concerned that many of the facilities in the FSU lack completely accurate stock records.

- An American team visiting the Kurchatov Institute in Moscow was shown a building that contained 100 kgs of HEU that was had been totally unguarded "for some years."

- A report in the American publication

*Nuclear Fuel* (21 September 1998) stated that the 2.7-kilo cache of HEU grabbed in a car in Prague late 1994 matched the specifics of similar material seized in Germany four months earlier. Following a tip-off, a number of people (including a Russian atomic scientist from the Nuclear Research Center at Rez) were arrested. The report states that the material, found in containers identifying them as from the ex-Soviet Black Sea fleet, had been stolen from a stockpile at Chelyabinsk 65. A correction later said that all of it had originally come from Mayak and was only part of what had been seized in Prague and Germany. A year later, 0.4 gms of the same material was being offered as a sample for sale in Prague.

### The Turkish Crossroads

California's Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Monterey Institute of International Studies has produced a paper which has a substantial bearing on some of the questions surrounding the illegal movement of nuclear material. The Institute observes that again, all of these illegal substances originated in FSU states.

The Monterey report focuses on Turkey in the years 1993 to 1999. Of interest is the fact that there is not a single FSU state — or any country bordering on what was once the Soviet Union — that during the past decade has not reported instances of such illegal activity.

In this study, Turkey is highlighted, if only because it borders on several countries known to be interested in weapons of mass destruction, specifically Iraq, Syria and Iran. Handily, there are several other states that have borders with Turkey — notably the FSU countries of Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Monterey makes a specific point: "The concentration and types of incidents reported in Istanbul, and the lack of reported incidents on Turkey's borders with the three FSU states mentioned are somewhat surprising." Also, the instances cited are only those that the West knows anything about: These involve groups or individuals that were caught trying to smuggle fissile material. Other, more sophisticated attempts, says the Institute, could very well have escaped attention. Obviously, considering that penalties under the Turkish penal system are notoriously harsh, those involved wouldn't be doing it if the returns were not remarkable.

Monterey concludes that the possibility that proliferation — relevant nuclear materials reaching Iraq (and elsewhere) through Turkey — must merit concerted attention. See sidebar for a brief tabulation of incidents involving Turkish nationals or borders.

When one projects this one facet of the nuclear smuggling problem to all the other various possible sources, routes and personalities, it becomes obvious that — if nothing else — the odds are in favor of eventual fissile leakage into Saddam's nuclear cup.

*Al J. Venter is SOF's contributing editor for Africa.* ☒



## SOF Spring 3-Gun Match

Continued from page 59

and Second Chance Body Armor all awarded top-quality products. Other manufacturers gave special awards for shooters in classes not normally recognized. D.S. Arms gave a complete SA-58 rifle package to the top major-caliber shooter and AO Sight Systems prizes went to shooters finishing in the middle, hoping that perhaps they would do better next year with a new set of sights. The top 26 shooters received a cash award and every shooter had at least one trip to the prize table.

The first annual SOF Whittington Center match was a terrific success, so much so that this shooters' paradise will be the new location for future SOF matches. Shooters interested in the next SOF Three-Gun Match are urged to act quickly to ensure a space. The event will be retitled the SOF/Whittington Center 3-Gun Benefit Match. All profits will go to the Whittington Center.

The 2001 match will take place 7-9 September 2001. Shooters should write for application blanks to: *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine, Attn: Match 2001, 5735 Arapahoe Avenue, Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303. ☒

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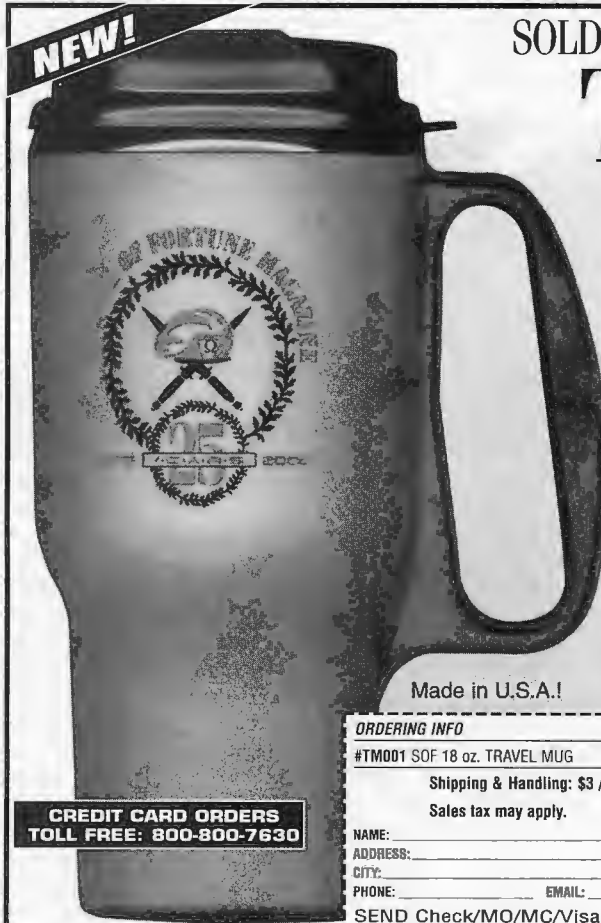
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## Bloody Streets Of Bogota

Continued from page 79

SIJIN stands for *Sectional Inteligencia Judicial Investigacion Nacional*. These guys were the spooks and the undercover operatives of Bogota's police. They had something really interesting lined up for the early morning hours. I was filled in on the op plan by Lieutenant Castro, Captain "Rodriguez," Lieutenant "Rodriguez," and Sergeant "Rodriguez." I suspect a few of the troops were also named "Rodriguez," which must make things interesting when a big-cheese yells, "Rodriguez! Get your ass up here!"

The unit had intelligence on an urban guerrilla cell of six known FARC guerrillas of the *Milicias Boliviranas*. SIJIN operatives had been tracking them for months. Tonight was the night to pay them a visit. They had a safehouse in the northwest part of Bogota. Almost out in the country, it was located in a barrio of urban housing, vacant lots, and small fields.

### By El Libro

At about 0130 hours the cops started arriving for the raid. They were mostly young, lean guys in jeans, boots, and leather jackets. The kind of hardcore professionals you see doing this dangerous, high-adrenaline job in most countries. Guys you don't want to mess with in a bar. It was a plain-clothes raid, so the 15 cops going on the operation just put their Kevlar vests on over their street clothes. Stopping at the armory the SIJIN operators drew 12-gauge shotguns, Uzis, and Jerichos. They all pulled on a green baseball cap with "Policia" embroidered in yellow on the front and the police cap badge on each side. Slung over their shoulders were green raid jackets emblazoned with "Policia" on the back and "SIJAN" in small letters on the front. Lieutenant Rodriguez walked over with his integrally suppressed 9mm Heckler and Koch MP5SD submachine-gun slung from his shoulder. At the time I was wishing I had one of those instead of a TV camera. He asked me if I was ready. Yeah, I was ready. I was on my third soda and had already worked my way through a half a pack of cigarettes. I don't normally smoke cigarettes.

Driving northwest from Bogota we stopped at a local station for coordination. I was introduced to some attorneys from the Colombian version of the DA's office. This would be a by-the-book police raid. Once the cops went in the lawyers would follow to take statements and make sure the bust was a good one that would hold up in court. In a way the police are hampered in their prosecution of a civil war and a war on terrorists by a judicial bureaucracy. Even in the field, guerrillas killed by the army or National Police counter-narcotics units must first be examined by a coroner. He pronounces the death as "killed by gunshot wound fired in self-defense by members of the security forces." It became very obvious

that if the SIJIN got in a firefight and were lucky enough to kill some terrorists the cops would probably drown in paperwork.

After about 30 minutes the SIJAN raid team saddled up and we departed for the targeted barrio where we were met by an undercover detective and a motorcycle cop in a greatcoat. We all clambered out of the vehicles and proceeded stealthily on foot. Well, as stealthily as about 15 men can move at night down unfamiliar streets and alleys. The undercover cop led us in a tight file through the muddy streets of the poor, working class neighborhood. It was a dark night with scant illumination from the occasional dim streetlight. There were no house lights and everything was boarded up and shuttered for the night. As we turned down a trash-strewn alley every mutt for 10 blocks began barking. With nearly a dozen dogs barking the FARC guerrillas were undoubtedly alerted. This kind of commotion in my own neighborhood would certainly cause me to wake up, grab a weapon, and peek out the windows. And I wasn't an urban guerrilla of a terror squad actively fomenting violent revolution in my own country (though some might accuse me of fitting that description).

### A Bridge Too FARC

It took us about 20 minutes of sneaking around to get into position at the suspected guerrilla safehouse on a street full of three-story concrete buildings. As we approached the door of the house in question I was number six in the stack. Barely casting a discernible shadow in the pale yellow light of a nearby streetlight we edged forward along the narrow sidewalk, our bodies pressed close against the house walls. There was some whispering back and forth as orders were passed up and down the line. Everyone checked their weapon one last time. I had my Sony on my shoulder. It was time to rock and roll.

Suddenly the two cops in front began pounding on the front door! This wasn't going to be a dynamic entry. Other cops on the raid team had supposedly covered any other exits. A woman stuck her head out an upstairs window. She was probably surprised to see a dozen or more armed cops in civilian clothes clustered around her front door. I looked up at the windows. Standing here was not a good place to be if somebody decided to drop some grenades, a Molotov, or maybe empty a Kalashnikov magazine on full-auto in the general direction of the front door. Sergeant Rodriguez stepped out into the street and began talking to the lady of the house. Some discussion followed before the door was opened. The raid team bounded up the steps and quickly began tossing the house.

I was eventually allowed inside. There were some women, a young guy in his underwear, and some kids. No armed guerrillas. The apartment was a real rabbit warren and included an upstairs room littered with garbage. I was asked to follow some cops to the third floor — they needed the

spotlight on my camera to illuminate parts of the apartment. Since *SOF* believes in "participatory journalism" I couldn't really say no and it would be just plain rude to refuse my hosts, I flipped on the spotlight. The SIJAN cops professionally and thoroughly tossed the apartment looking for contraband. There were, of course, the usual denials of any involvement with FARC guerrillas. The search found some 12-gauge shotgun shells, eight rounds of 9mm ammunition; 50 rounds of .32-caliber ammunition (in a .38 caliber ammunition box); three ALICE pattern army rucksacks in camouflage, black, and green; a G.I. canteen; two pistol holsters; and two olive drab ski masks.

### No Skiing: Wrong "Snow"

Ski masks in Colombia? Where were the weapons and the guerrillas? Either they'd been tipped-off or they were out on an operation or at another safe-house. The equipment recovered from the house obviously indicated an urban guerrilla connection. There was no excuse for possession of such restricted (in Colombia) items. These "regular civilians" had ALICE rucksacks, ammunition, and military-style balaclavas in their apartment with no explanation. I own plenty of gear and guns, but even in the frozen north where I now live, I don't own a ski mask. The residents were walked out to waiting cars for transport to the local station. Neighbors took charge of the kids with the okay of the cops and the female child services officers.

Downstairs, a mom-and-pop store next door had opened up and was doing a little business selling the police sodas and bags of chips. I sat down as some one handed me a soda. I was suddenly very tired.

Back at the local station the night's police reports were being cranked out and all the evidence was inventoried and photographed. The SIJAN raid team was discouraged with the outcome. Not much of a bust. They'd obviously counted on some serious action going up against as many as six armed urban terrorists. No problem, said Sergeant Rodriguez, we'll get another crack at them and there's another raid planned elsewhere this week anyway. Meanwhile everyone had to get back to the station to clean weapons and turn in equipment. In other words, all in a night's work for the SIJAN unit and the cops of Bogota.

### Epilogue

Shortly after I left Bogota, a drunk returned to a working-class neighborhood bar after a woman refused to dance with him and opened fire with an Uzi, killing nine men and two women while wounding five other people. The bloodbath evoked memories of a 1987 Bogota shooting when a deranged war veteran opened fire in an upscale Italian restaurant and killed 17 people.

*Senior Foreign Correspondent Rob Krott is a former Army officer and honor graduate of the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, Glynco, Georgia.* ❧



## Combat Weaponcraft

Continued from page 25

dle has a distinct "dog leg" bend in it. This bend is believed to have expedited bolt manipulation over the straight-type bolt handles of the era. While firing the range tests I noticed the bolt knob had a tendency to whack the top of the trigger finger upon firing. The bolt does not reciprocate as smoothly, as for example on the 1903 Springfield or the Krag. In part some of the stiffness is probably related to the fact that the 1917 cocks the piece upon closing the bolt.



Rear sight assembly, adjustable for elevation but not windage.

The rifle stock has grasping grooves on the forearm and a shallow pistol grip-type area where the firing handgrip is placed while shooting.

Least one get the wrong idea the 1917 besides being the most prolific rifle used by American troops in World War I did have some strong points. The rear sight was better protected and placed; the safety was better located and easier to operate than other rifles of the period. Although these things may seem to be of small importance while setting in the easy chair near the home fire, in application they may contribute to the survival of combat troops.

The 1917 rifles were equipped with a bayonet bearing a 17-inch blade and an overall length of almost 22 inches. In today's technology oriented world the

application of "cold steel" in combat seems archaic. A subtle point of interest is that of America's three rifles of that era, the Krag rifle with bayonet measured in with an overall length of 61 inches, the 1903 Springfield with bayonet was 55.5 inches and the Enfield with bayonet measured in at 63 inches. So what, you say? Well, consider getting cut by the 2-inch difference. Any place on your body 2 inches is pretty significant.

The Enfield was longer, heavier and considered by some to be more unwieldy than the 1903, but for the trenches of war torn Europe it was workable.

Many of the World War I Enfield's were used in a variety of actions after the "The Great War For Civilization." Some were used in World War II as Home Guard arms issued under the Lend-Lease program as well as being issued to Allied troops on different fronts. There is a quality photo in *International Armament* Vol. I, page 440 of a three-man Chinese patrol circa 1944 working in the China-Burma-India Theater. Two of the Chinese troops are carrying Enfields, bayonets fixed!

Probably one of the best, if not the best, source of correct information on the 1917 Enfield, as well as many other United States military weapons of this era, can be found in Mr. Bruce N. Canfield's currently available book *U.S. Infantry Weapons Of The First World War*.

The Enfield may not have been the most popular service rifle of the Great War, but it served American troops well. On 8 October 1918, near Chatel-Chehery, France, Corporal Alvin Cullium York, a native of Fentress County, Tennessee, won the Medal of Honor. Using an Enfield rifle as well as captured weapons, Corporal York led seven members of his heavily battered platoon in a charge against a German machine-gun nest resulting in the capture of the enemy position as well 132 German prisoners!

Not a bad days work, even for an Enfield. ☒

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beds. Scott and his buddies slept on the ground. Scott's blood pressure shot up when a mortar round landed about 10 feet from the AAV in which he was riding, but it did little damage to the amphibious assault vehicle. "It wasn't as bad as we thought it would be," said Scott who got the impression the Iraqis didn't want to fight.

### Softening Potential Targets

"We did a number of things to lessen their will to fight," Mattis told *SOF*. "We wanted them to know we weren't going to kill them, and when Iraqis hiding in trenches saw their comrades being herded to the rear and the wounded being treated, that lessened their will to fight even more." However, the overwhelming number of EPWs began to bog down Team Mech's advance through the minefield. Elements of the Combat Train had to be called forward to relieve line companies of their task of stripping, searching and shepherding prisoners to the rear.

"Tankers hate to have infantry close to them," said Lt. Anderson who was pressed into service as a "traffic cop" directing Iraqis south. "The amount of EPWs coming my way reminded me of Angel Stadium after a Dodgers home game in Los Angeles," he said. Some of the Iraqis were waving white flags, others were waving "Get Out of Kuwait Free Cards," dropped on them by high-flying B-52 bombers.

One of the passes showed an Iraqi soldier thinking of his wife and two children as he surrendered to an American G.I. In Arabic on the reverse side were instructions on how to surrender:

1. Remove the magazine from your weapon.
2. Sling your weapon over your left shoulder, muzzle down.
3. Have both arms raised above your head.
4. Approach the Multi-National Forces' position slowly, with the lead soldier holding this document above his head.
5. If you do this, you will not die.

Some Marines said the Iraqis were waving white T-shirts that they had saved for the occasion. One group of EPWs approached Anderson carrying a 4-foot by 20-foot banner — but not every Iraqi surrendered peacefully. A couple of Marines were wounded when an Iraqi soldier pulled the pin on a grenade he was carrying under his shirt. From that point on, prisoners were ordered to "strip down to their skivvies."

Bravo Company rounded up five or six hundred Iraqi prisoners on the first day alone. So many were coming forward, Marines simply waved them south as they moved north in their amphibious assault vehicles. "There were thousands of them coming through," said Anderson. So many he couldn't count them.

### The Emir's Farm

Once past the second minefield, Task Force Ripper paused long enough to rearm and re-fuel before attacking the Emir's Farm south of Kuwait City. Artillery was called in and Cobra gunships fired Hellfire and TOW missiles into bunkers, tanks, and anything that posed a threat before Marines formed on line and swept toward a treeline containing a series of bunkers and trenches. By the time the dust cleared, the Iraqis were only too happy to surrender. More than 200 EPWs were flushed from bunkers. There were so many surrendering, Kuwaiti translators used bullhorns to direct the Iraqis south.

When elements broke free from their positions in and around the farm, Marines were awe struck by the ominous pall of smoke emanating from over 50 wellhead fires in the Al Burquan Oil Field. Inhaling fumes from those fires has caused problems for some Marines.

The smoke was so thick, Lance Cpl. Jerome Dudeck, a Dragon AT gunner couldn't see his hand in front of his face. Massive wellhead fires in the oil field caused the commander of Task Force Ripper to turn his back on the fires, thinking no one could survive amid the flames, and race toward Al Jaber airfield before dark, but Col. Fulford's heart almost stopped when he began receiving all kinds of intelligence about mechanized forces preparing for a counterattack on his completely exposed right flank.

Enemy tanks tried to use the smoke to mask an attack on Ripper's right flank, but were stopped dead in their tracks by Cobras with TOW missiles; 50-pound rockets that hurl 8.6-pound shaped charges capable of blasting holes in any known armor at distances of two and a quarter miles. Lance Cpl. Aymond saw an Iraqi tank hit by a TOW. "The turret was ripped off the tank and blown about 50 meters into the air," said Aymond who saw things on the battlefield he had only seen in the movies.

Moving forward, Marines from 1/7 uncovered abandoned tanks in revetments, bunkers and thousands of bomblets from cluster munitions scattered about the tabletop terrain. After the farm, a few skirmishes were fought, but for all practical purposes, the war was winding down for Ripper. Cpl. John Pereira and his fireteam captured an Iraqi tank commander when they stormed a building in which he was hiding. "He was just elated to see us," said Pereira. The Iraqi captain asked Lt. Anderson what took him so long. "We've been waiting to surrender," said the captured officer.

"He said Saddam was an asshole who tricked troops into coming to Kuwait," said Anderson who chatted with the Iraqi officer, a veteran of the eight-year war against Iran. The officer spoke perfect English, telling his captors he was educated at the University of Illinois, majoring in agriculture, "But this isn't my war," said the officer.

After a brief firefight at the Emir's Farm,

Task Force Ripper headed north toward Ahmed Al Jaber airbase where four allied aircraft had taken hits from anti-aircraft guns. By dark, Ripper was poised just outside the airfield near three cone-shaped, German-built bunkers capable of holding hundreds of enemy troops. Smoke poured from one of the bunkers, obviously the target of an air attack.

### Interrupting Iraqi Chow

Many of the bunkers at Al Jaber had been abandoned. "We found candles burning on tables in some of them, and bowls of rice," said Lt. Col. Adams, "That's how fast the Iraqis took off." Dozens of burning oil wells silhouetted Task Force Ripper as it settled down for the night.

On the next day, 25 February, one of Ripper's infantry-laden Amtracs hit a mine. Radios crackled with the dreaded alarm: Gas! Gas! Gas! but no chemical agents were detected, and the "All Clear" was given. Less than a half-hour later, the same thing happened again when chemical detection vehicles took inaccurate readings. The oily smoke was making it difficult to determine if chemical agents were being used. As it turned out, they were not used, despite the discovery of gas shells in bunkers.

On 26 February, G + 2, found 1st Bn, 7th Marines engaged in two simultaneous fire-fights near what was supposed to be an abandoned quarry, but turned out to be an Iraqi ambush of the Combat Train. Cobras had taken thermals on two BTR 50/60's and reported they were cold [abandoned], but when Cpl. Timothy Drake and other Marines in the "log train" drove by, Iraqis inside the armored personnel carriers opened up on them.

Under cover of Lance Cpls. Craig Forsythe and Sean Lentini, 2nd Lt. James Welborn moved in and destroyed one of two BTR 50s with a single LAAW shot; earning a Silver Star for the young officer. The second BTR 50 was destroyed moments later when Pfc. James Wommack, Lance Cpl. Robert Hart and Sgt. Josefo Elisiara provided cover for 1st Lt. David Raynor and Lance Cpl. David Castleman who fired one LAAW and one AT-4 respectively. A section from the Mobile Dragons Platoon also engaged the enemy. While Lance Cpls. Eric Hamilton and Harry Horn kept their heads down with M203 grenade launchers, Lance Cpl. James Grier closed in and destroyed the only remaining machinegun bunker with a single Dragon shot. Drake was surprised to see that the M203s made "Swiss cheese" out of the Soviet-made armored personnel carriers.

### And Into Kuwait City

By three o'clock in the afternoon, visibility was down to less than 200 meters. A series of brief engagements with enemy T-54 tanks were fought as the battalion continued its attack toward Kuwait City with the mission of cutting off Kuwait International Airport. At 2300 hours, a patrol from Team Mech lead by Sgt. Charles



Eckhoff slipped into Kuwait City to scout for enemy activity. Six hours later, the patrol returned having made no contact.

As the sun rose on G + 3, 27 February, Kuwait City stood in front of 1st Battalion. Because of limited visibility the day before, many Marines couldn't comprehend how close they were. Company C awoke to find four fully functional, but abandoned ZPU 23-4 AAA guns in front of its position.

Blowing horns and random shots could be heard throughout the city as jubilant Kuwaitis waved American, British and Kuwaiti flags in celebration of their liberation. A Marine from Company C was struck by a stray round in the upper arm and slightly injured.

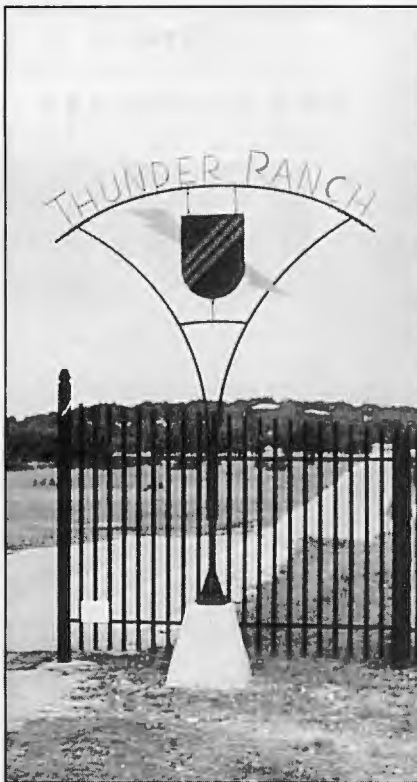
As the war ended, 1/7 found itself in the strange position of protecting Iraqi EPWs from Kuwaiti Resistance Forces, who obviously wanted to kill them in retribution for the atrocities in Kuwait city. Some Iraqis however, did not want any protection. As Company A was conducting a sweep, it came across four wounded Iraqi soldiers. While Cpl. Kerry Lee, a machine-gun section leader from Cottonwood, Arizona, was searching one of them, the Iraqi lunged at Lee and was instantly killed by a Marine covering his section lead.

*In sum, the Devil Dogs of 1/7 destroyed 19 T-54/55 tanks, 18 T-62 tanks, two T-72 tanks, two 82mm mortar positions, one radar dish, 17 trench systems, two BMP AFVs, one APC, one Astros French-made missile launcher, two 531 tracked artillery pieces, 16 BTR 50/60 AFVs, one T-12 100mm anti-tank gun, one multiple rocket launcher, one OP tower, six artillery pieces, and took more than 2,000 EPWS.*

On G + 7, Task Force Ripper began moving south towards Saudi Arabia. Mission accomplished.

Before pinning on his first star and heading across country from Twentynine Palms to Headquarters USMC, Task Force Commander Colonel Carl Fulford said Saddam Hussein made three mistakes when he invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990: "The first mistake he made was not attacking south into Saudi Arabia and seizing the port of Jubail and Dammam. Although that would have extended his lines considerably, it would have taken away our primary port of debarkation for supplies. Secondly, he had no concept on how to fight a modern force with air, and although he had some air of his own and some air defense weapons, he certainly didn't have the ability to coordinate it, and it became clear very early that he was no match for our air assets, and thirdly, I don't think he convinced his own people what they were fighting for and why it was worth dying for, and ultimately, I think that's why the Iraqi soldier was not willing to fight," said Fulford, who at this writing is a four-star general.

*Dale B. Cooper has covered the Gulf War for SOF since before the shooting started. ✕*



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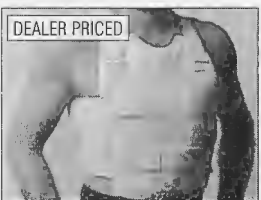
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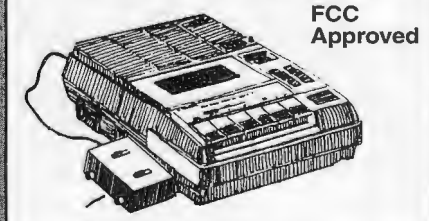
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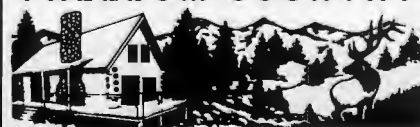
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by Col. David H. Hackworth (Ret.)

## American Soldiers Are Citizens, Too

**R**onald Scott Owens, who hailed from Vero Beach, Fla., recently made the ultimate sacrifice along with 16 shipmates when the *U.S.S. Cole* was attacked in Yemen's Aden harbor.

Now, from what I'm hearing, the ballots of Ronald Scott Owens and almost 700 other Florida military voters may have been deep-sixed for reasons that former President Carter and the Arbiters of Good would already be decrying if we weren't America the Beautiful.

This skullduggery was exemplified in a five-page letter — a tip sheet, really, on how to zap military absentee voters — sent by Florida lawyer Mark Herron to like-minded attorneys who've been storming the Sunshine State.

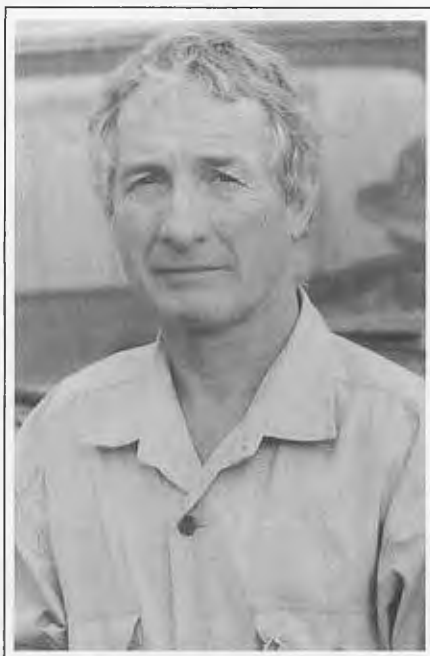
The word is that this injustice took on a life of its own when Democratic Party leaders both in Florida and in Washington did the math and decided the military vote would favor the opposition. Instead of emulating Lincoln's example during our Civil War, Herron and cohorts chose instead to follow Stalin's credo: "It doesn't matter who votes, it only matters who counts the votes." As a result, many of those who risk their lives in dangerous places were flat-out disenfranchised.

Adding insult to injury, according to *The Miami Herald*, "At least 39 felons — mostly Democrats — illegally cast absentee ballots in Broward and Miami-Dade counties."

Felons get to vote, but ballots from G.I. Joe and Jill are tossed in the reject pile over trivia such as the addresses of signature witnesses. Or because envelopes lacked a stamped postmark, even though federal law says one's not required.

Torpedoing other ballots required more twisted logic. For example, according to *The Wall Street Journal*, a ballot bearing "a domestic postmark because a soldier had voted, sent his ballot home to his parents and asked them to mail it in on time, is thrown out. A ballot that comes with a note from an officer explaining his ship was not able to postmark his ballot, but that he voted on time — and indeed it had arrived in time — is thrown out."

In Florida, signatures of our defenders were compared with signatures on registration cards, and if one said Jim Patriot and the other James Patriot, the ballot was trashed. No one seemed to take into consideration that PFC/Sergeant/Captain Patriot's concentration when he voted might have been diverted to scope for terrorists off Aden or land mines in Kosovo or missiles over the skies of Iraq.



*Col. David Hackworth (Ret.) also writes a syndicated weekly column titled "Defending America." "Hack" doesn't pull any punches and many liberal rags won't carry his writing. If your local paper falls into that category, call the editor and let him know you'd like to see "Defending America" on the Op-Ed page. It's syndicated by King Features, 235 E. 45th St., New York, NY 10017.*

Ballots postmarked "Queens, New York" or "Jacksonville, Florida" were denied, although even Disney World's Mickey Mouse probably knows these post offices routinely handle overseas military mail.

I still have letters mailed by me from Italy at the end of World War II and from Korea and Vietnam during those conflicts. Not only are none postmarked, I never did run across a U.S. Post Office out where danger lurked and bullets sang, and I would be happy to testify accordingly.

The same no-post-office rule holds true in the conflicts I've covered as a reporter. Our sailors and soldiers in nasty places like ex-Yugoslavia, Latin America and the Gulf scribbled "FREE" on the envelope as their dads did and stowed their letters in empty ration boxes to find their way from platoon to division and finally on a bird to the USA. It's always been and still is: No stamp, no postmark.

The troops are angry — they feel they're second-class citizens whose votes go uncounted because they don't count. I average 500 e-mails on normal days; this injustice has quadrupled the input, and the fire from those messages has almost melted my computer.

This shameful episode will leave its wounds. Healing can only begin when we truly honor and respect those who lay it all out there for you and me. A good start would be to bring a military voting system that's presently as obsolete as the blunder-

buss into the age of the laser-guided missile.

Of course, we also must set up a fair national standard for the vote — one guaranteed to prevent a replay of what happened down in Florida, a state that's produced more than its share of the heroes who keep our great country on course with their ballots as well as their bullets. ♣

<http://www.hackworth.com> is the address of David Hackworth's home page.

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Hackworth's new book, a novel,  
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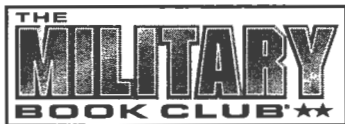


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