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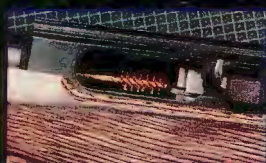
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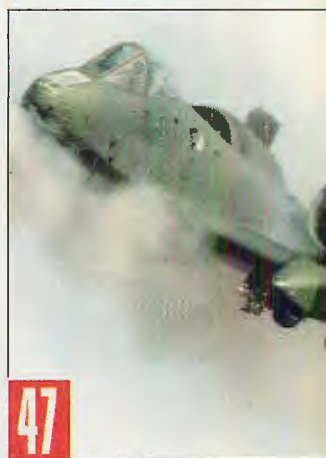
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On the Cover

U.S. Army soldiers from A Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, secure one of Saddam Hussein's palaces damaged after a bombing in Baghdad Monday, 7 April 2003.



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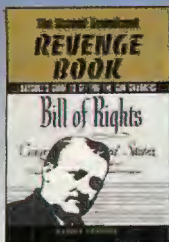
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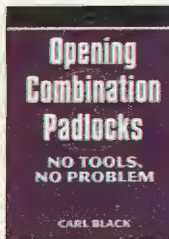
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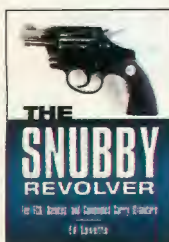
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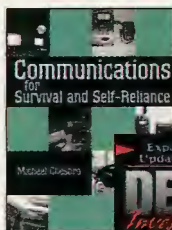
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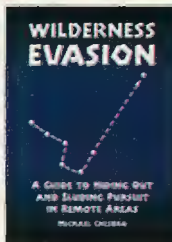
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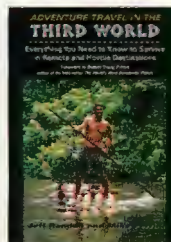
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Command Guidance

BY LT. COL. ROBERT K. BROWN, USAR (RET.)

Gun-Haters Introduce Biggest Gun Ban Ever What Are You Going To Do?

If you are like me, you've started counting the days until the federal "assault-weapon" ban expires on 13 September 2004. When it does, you'll once again be able to put a flash-suppressor and a retractable stock on an AR15 carbine, or a pistol grip and extended tubular magazine on a semi-automatic shotgun. You'll also be able to buy standard-capacity ammunition magazines for rifles and handguns, without paying a collector's-item price.



Sure, putting a service rifle or a shotgun into a configuration better-suited for defensive purposes makes sense from a practical point of view. So does equipping your gun with the kind of magazine it was designed to use, instead of some arbitrarily reduced-capacity 10-shot rig that can reduce your ability to defend yourself and your family. After all, the right to arms is preeminently *the right to self-defense*.

Like the NRA told Bill Clinton, "the Second Amendment isn't about duck hunting."

But the fact that the right to arms is about self-defense is only part of the point. The other part is principle. Bill Clinton didn't understand that word, or at least he didn't agree with its substance, which is part of the reason he signed the assault-weapon ban into law

in the first place. But principle still counts in America and it's a very big reason that H.R. 2038, the biggest gun ban ever introduced in Congress, must be defeated.

More to the point, because principle demands it, H.R. 2038 must be defeated *overwhelmingly*. It must be defeated as overwhelmingly by political means as our armed forces used military means to defeat the Taliban and al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, and the Republican Guard and Feyadeen Saddam in Iraq.

And that's where you come in. If you put the heat on your U.S. Representatives and Senators, this bill won't just get nudged aside when it comes up for a vote. It will be blown out of the water!

That'll send a message, not only to several dozen die-hard gun-haters in the liberal wing of the Democrat Party who are sponsoring this bill, but to the gun-prohibition activist groups who are clamoring for the bill's passage. It will send a message to the ultra-liberal news media all across the country, who are already publishing editorials and running stories trying to convince everyday Americans into going along with the bill.

Continued on page 73

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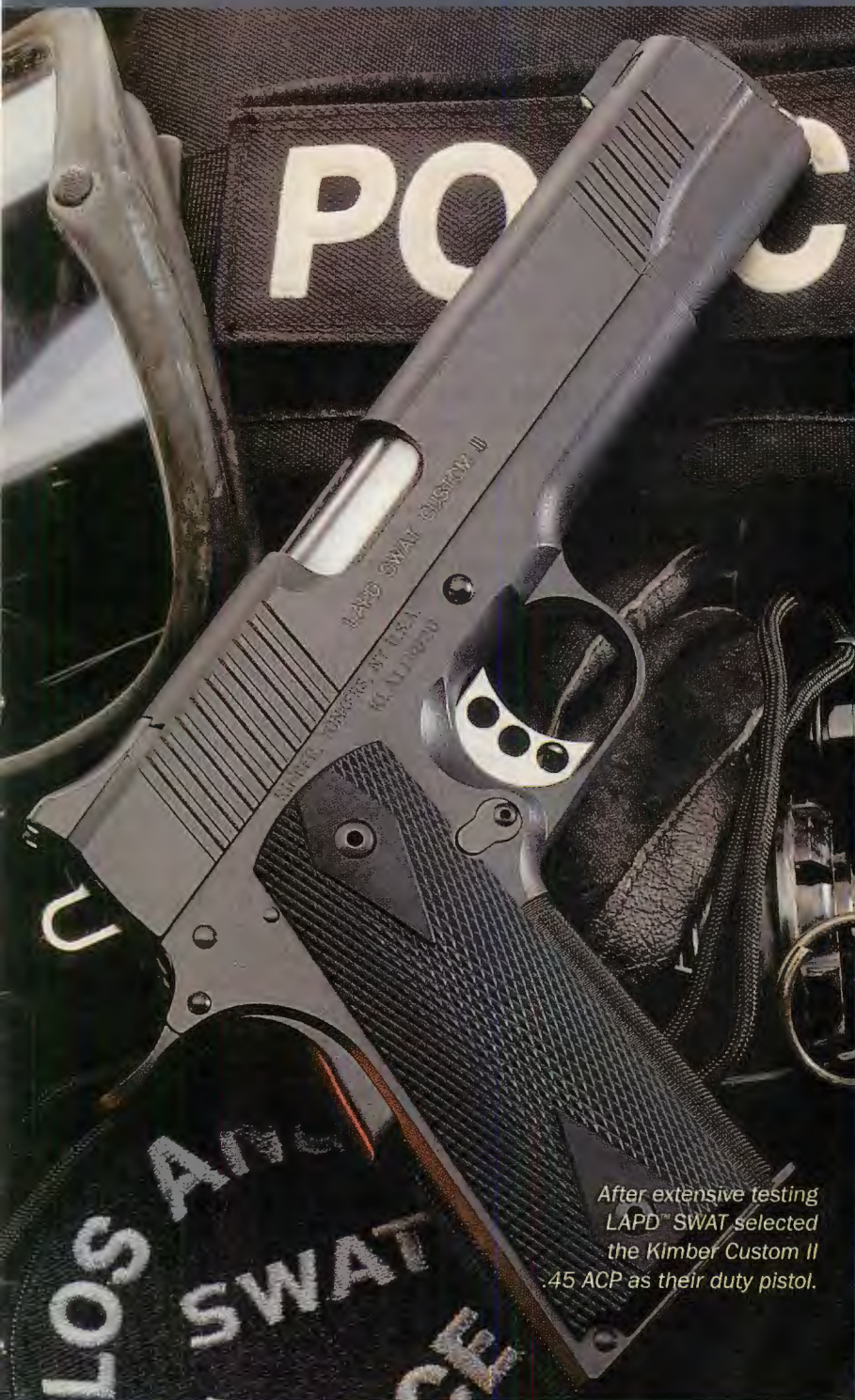
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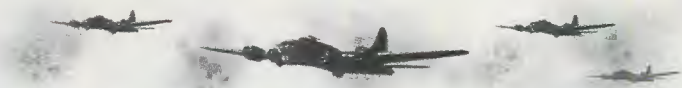
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Continuing The Legacy



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A Letter To Senator Byrd

Senator Byrd,

As a retired Naval Officer, with two Gulf carrier deployments under my belt, I find your criticism of President Bush's visit to the *Lincoln* offensive in the extreme! This is the first time that the Commander-in-Chief took time out of his busy wartime schedule to pay a visit to thank those who served in the line of fire, in a way that was both dramatic and meaningful to those on the carrier. Perhaps if LBJ got off his fat ass to do something similar, our troops' morale in Vietnam might not have been so low.

As a Naval officer, I am extremely sensitive to styles of leadership. That is, after all, our stock in trade. And it was not lost on me that the President spent about thirty seconds shaking hands with the Admiral, CO, and CAG (If you don't know these abbreviations just look them up in your Funk & Wagnells!). He then spent the next 45 minutes putting himself at the disposal of the people who make that ship work, the yellow shirts, the green shirts, the purple shirts, the chiefs, the sailors. If you don't know the significance of those colored shirts, look it up in your Blue Jacket's Manual. Not dressed out in formal uniform (I understand at Bush's request), but in their

greasy, smelly, sweaty working uniforms ... working a flight deck is hot, hard work. And yet he, in his flight suit, put himself at their disposal, this was their moment for 19-or-20-something-year-old kids a few years out of high school, to get a picture of themselves with the President of the United States, his arm draped around their shoulder.

That is a moment that those kids never dreamed would ever happen to them, maybe not even when they knew he was coming aboard. Surely, he would see the brass, not the troops. But it was the troops to whom he gave his time ... and it was the most natural moment in the world. You might have thought it was a family reunion, and in a way, it was ... Bush is one of them, the common man, and while he is still the most powerful man on the planet right now, he hasn't lost his touch for them.

Was it a political moment? What moment of a president's life is NOT a political moment? Was it grand-standing, to come in to an OK pass to a 4 wire, a bit high in close, correcting, left of centerline? Well, hell, he didn't fly the approach anyway, though I understand from the pilots who flew him that he did a pretty good job at formation flying, tucked in close for a lead change. You can always tell a fighter pilot, you just can't tell him very much. And apparently after 30 years, it all comes back, with a little coaching, I am sure. Frankly, I would have liked to see him come aboard in an FA-18, but the Secret Service vetoed that, and Bush accepted their judgment ... again, a mark of a good leader.

If you had spent some time in the service, instead of the Klan, you might understand the significance of that moment to all the men and women aboard the *Lincoln*, and indeed to all the men and women in the service who shared that moment vicariously. But you chose the bed sheet instead of the uniform, and so you don't.

I am half-tempted to move to West Virginia just so I could vote against you in your next election.

Lewis F. McIntyre
CDR, USN (Ret.)
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Very well stated, Commander, thanks for sharing this. See also the pieces in "Bulletin Board" this issue.



Thanks for you guys' support. Just wanted to let you know, thanks. Staff Sgt. Shorey (top), Staff Sgt. Clarke (right), Staff Sgt. Johnson (left), 410th MPCO, Qatar.

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Inter-Service Rivalry?

Normally, I would not respond to a published letter like the one from "name withheld" which you named "Inter-Service Rivalry," but "name's" misconceptions need addressing. First of all, despite all the pageantry and traditions of the Marine Corps, I don't ever recall a Marine unit inviting press coverage. It was not the Marines' decision to imbed reporters. "Bravado" is not usually attributed to Marines either.

Well, at least not those that have been active for more than a year or two. Granted, there certainly are those gung-ho Jarheads screaming "oo-rah," but no more than there are Rangers and other soldier going around shouting "hooah" from time to time. It is true ignorance to categorize all Marines as glory-seekers.

As for statements about Mr. Lowe's article, I have no comment; I wasn't there, so I won't pretend to know the facts. Since the contributor's name is withheld, I will give him or her the benefit of the doubt that he knows the facts better than I and, perhaps, even Mr. Lowe. But USMC Recon has always tried to live up to the label "silent professionals," and I think they do a good job of it. The SOCOM Marine team will not simply say that they are a valuable option for special operations, but they will demonstrate it to the command. Give them a couple years and we'll see what they make of it. I have the utmost confidence in my Marines; to fail is not something they know how to do. I will concede one point about the Marines inability to truly be "silent professionals": No Marine will ever be completely anonymous except when in the field. We

don't hide who we are or that we are Marines.

Name not withheld,
Michael Cantelon
Inactive Marine

P.S. Then again, a "TEXAS 17" painted over the control tower isn't exactly "silent" either.

Time Well Spent

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the article about the Corps joining USSOCOM, and I believe that these motivated warriors will provide an excellent asset to the community. I do have a question as to why these experienced Marines will have to go through a six-month training cycle. Each one of these Marines is an experienced operator within his former unit. The men of Force Recon, Anglico, Scout Snipers have all gone through schools to become qualified within the units they are leaving, to join the Marine contingent with USSOCOM.

v/r Elman Martinez

It's simply to get everybody on the same sheet of music, such as when non-Army personnel join Delta. It's not like anybody thinks they need housebreaking or anything.

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cer, we have become engaged in a national debate about the use of torture to gain critical information from captives. Shockingly, an AOL poll a few days ago indicated a large majority of Americans would endorse the use of torture as did some talk radio hosts and TV program guests.

... let us not stoop to the direct or indirect use of savage, physical, pain inflicted on a human being under our control, no matter how despicable the person or terrible his deeds or the desire to prevent more deaths.

To do so debases us, the nation that much of the rest of the world looks to for inspiration and example. The end does not justify the means. That view is a slippery road to a hell of our own making. We are Americans. We are better than that.

Let us not become a Saddam Hussein or the medieval inquisitors or Spain nor the Imperial Army of Japan in Nanking or Bataan.

Torture ... No!

Maj. David E. Baskett, U.S. Army (Ret.)
Santa Maria, California

This national debate is just beginning. Be sure to catch the SOF series on the subject, starting Page 58.

The Israeli Shooting Techniques

Thank you for the article on the "Israeli" method of shooting. Mr. Shults is right on target about how bad this system is. Many of my Israeli friends find the idea of keeping a gun unchambered to be as stupid as Mr. Shults does. It should also be noted that in the book *Secrets of Street Survival* —

Israeli Style by Eugene Sockut, he also spends a fair amount of time detailing just how bad an idea it is to keep a gun unchambered. Worse than bringing a knife to a gunfight is bringing an empty weapon to one.

Thank you

Andrew Friedman
Silver Spring, MD

Tell Mr. Shults don't hold back! Let us know how you really feel about the Israeli shooting techniques. (ha ha) That was one of the best articles I have seen in a long time.

About the time you do all that dancing with the Israeli technique described, I'd have my .45 custom ripping about six rounds in the chest. After they fell backwards one round would go to the forehead.

I also found the interview with General Safi very interesting. Definitely a different view than what we are used to coming across the ol' boob tube. I have the feeling that the General's story is a much closer accounting than what we are only supposed to hear.

I'm glad to see the SitRep back. It gives me a quick reference of what is happening before I sit down and seriously read *SOF* which I think is the best damn mag on the news stand.

You and everyone involved with *SOF* seems to do a great job at what you do. Great job covering Iraq!

How did Geraldo make it out there? I'm surprised he wasn't considered a collaborator and dealt with accordingly. Could it be possible to do a feature article on Geraldo and what a jackass he is? Airborne should have stapled a diaper to his

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head and sent him running across the desert, I'm sure somebody would have popped him.

Keep up the good work,

JC
Stow, Ohio

In your June edition of *SOF*, Mr. Jim Shults finally tells the truth about the "Israeli shooting techniques." It was necessary that your publication, famous around the world, showed the "bullshit" of using a empty chamber and some "CQB martial arts" in their

training sessions (that are not cheap and, in Brazil, charged anyway in U.S. dollars), to make many people here in Latin America see the truth about untrue gun-gurus.

Here in Brazil these "experts" are a plague, and sometimes their "specialties" appears on TV, once with a group of "students" drawing their guns with empty chambers, of course, and maneuvering the slides in front of cameras, as if it was the ultimate combat technique.

I'm an IPSC shooter with almost 10 years of experience on competition, and shooting (plinking) since the age of thirteen and, at 31, I've seen some tech-

niques and instances and the most equivocal is probably the Israeli since is no "practical" or "tactical" or logical to have a gun with a empty chamber, no wasting words about shooting immediately using no sights with the pistol put down horizontally, just as the movies shows.

I'm very worried about this since some people in Brazil are being instructed with that "technique," worried simply because the right to keep and bear arms here is very restricted (and with no reduction in violence at all, as you know). And the bad use of a weapon can ban the tools of self-defense of the honest citizens including me (of course, with no impact on criminals).

Congratulations for you courage to say the truth and disturb the "carpet-baggers" of the shooting world. "Guns are the fangs of the Freedom."

Daniel Mendelski
Porto Alegre, RS, Brazil

Because of the interest this article has stirred up, our Connecticut Yankee in Israel, David Stone, has promised us a counter-point article in due course.

Hack Attack

I've been a subscriber to *SOF* for a number of years now. I might recommend that you "retire" David Hackworth. I've been watching him on TV during this recent Iraq conflict, and I've read his column frequently (as I'm accustomed to reading my subscription of *SOF* cover-to-cover). My impression is that he's just a "loose cannon," and his opinions often seem unsubstantiated by fact or rational thought processes. I feel that he detracts from the credibility and integrity of the *SOF* publication.

Sincerely,
T. Martin

Get rid of Hackworth! — he is dragging *SOF* down — this clown doesn't know where he stands. I found his reference to "poor" soldiers being expendable and "poor" soldiers being wasted because they were from poor families a total crock of shit. More often than not he sounds like one of the left and his constant bragging about what he would do or what he has done to be self-serving and more than a little shallow — his reference to 10,000 GI deaths from the gulf war



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and 200,000 casualties is an insult to anyone with a brain. Do something good for *Soldier of Fortune* Mag. get rid of Hackworth!

Via e-mail

Keep Hack

Keep your magazine military-minded and pro-American! I've been an avid reader of SOF mag since about 1982. My wife has read SOF off and on for about 15 years. Keep up the good work and LET'S ROLL!!!

PS: Keep Hackworth and Ollie North on your payroll! We love Hack!

Via e-mail

Creators Of Taliban And Al-Qaeda

Reference the article, "Afghan Mistakes" in the June 2003 issue.

As I am currently reading a book, which very clearly gives the history of the Islamic sect from which Osama bin Ladin and most al-Qaeda have sprung, I take exception to the notion that the United States "created" them.

There is certainly no denying that the U.S. has committed some serious blunders in its relations in that part of the world. But the Wahhabi sect of Islam has been a fount of hatred and violence against all (including other Muslims) for

hundreds of years. Not because of any maltreatment, either imagined or real at the hands of anyone. They hate because of their twisted, radical, militant interpretation of the tenets of the Islamic faith.

This sect is the official state-sponsored religion of Saudi Arabia. The Saudis are the ones who established and supported "academies" in Pakistan to recruit, indoctrinate, and train al-Qaeda and Taliban fighters. Read: *Hatred's Kingdom*, by Dore Gold.

If the Saudis are our friends, we certainly don't need enemies.

Dave H.

NY's Finest Reads The Finest

I wanted to let you know how much I enjoy reading your magazine. The articles are very interesting. I am a New York City Police Officer, and I like your pro-military, and pro-police stance. At this time in our country's history this is most important. I can tell you that your magazine is read, and enjoyed by many New York City Police. Keep up the good work.

Joe Sixsmith ✂

SOF Welcomes Letters To The Editor.

Letters may be edited for space considerations. Please address correspondence to: Editor, SOF Magazine, 5735 Arapahoe, Ste. A5, Boulder, CO 80303; or E-Mail to: editorsof@aol.com.

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Bulletin Board

The New Tailhook “Scandal”

War is not a humorous business, reflecting as it does a complete breakdown of the human social contract, but the adjunct sideshows to wars can often be great comedy. As an example, the reactions of nay-sayers who have never been able to accept that the American military machine comprises the best-trained, -motivated and -equipped force in the world today. It really disappoints these people that because our folks in uniform are very, very good at what they do, they have been able to inflict entirely disproportionate casualties on the enemy. And do it swiftly, and with very little support from most of our traditional “allies.” And if the sour-grapes crowd is obliged by position, such as being a U.S. senator, to be supportive of the troops, they have to try and find fault with the Commander in Chief, whose leadership and support have in no small measure enabled our forces to achieve swift and decisive victory in Iraq.

An example that illustrates just how little the opposition has to say, has been the energetic pettiness over W’s tail-hook landing on the U.S.S. *Lincoln* to greet homecoming service members. Comments from the wrong side of the aisle have varied from supercilious to super-silly. Mostly the latter. And cynical, self-serving and hypocritical as well.

SOF’S ENDURING FREEDOM/ IRAQI FREEDOM PHOTO CONTEST

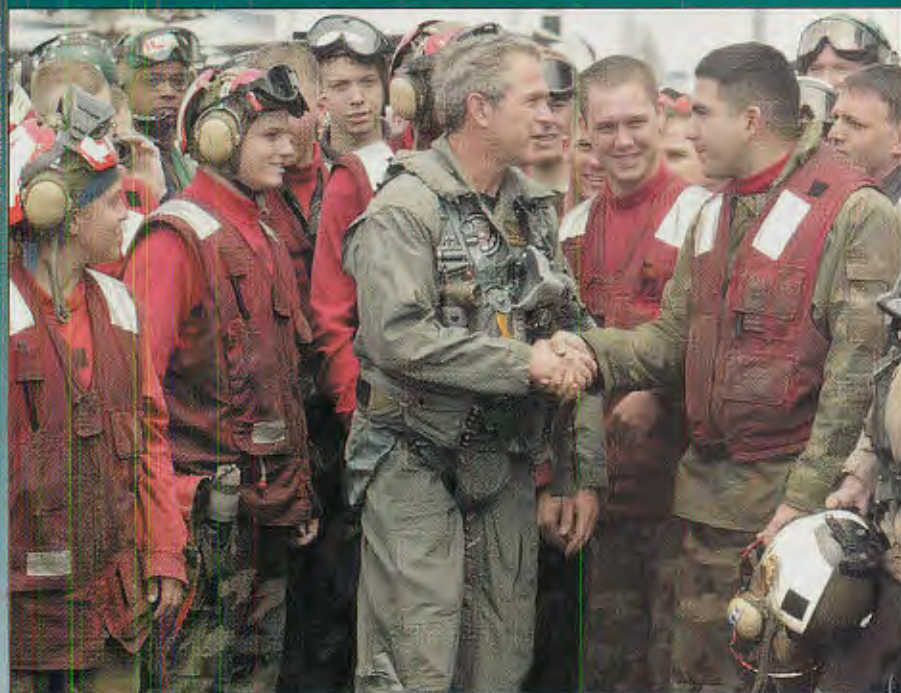
For nearly three decades, SOF has gotten its best stories from men with a rifle in one hand and a camera in the other. During the “last” Gulf War, the SOF Photo Contest was a resounding success, and once again we invite those deployed to the various sandboxes and mountain lairs of the Middle East to take their best shot — and send it to SOF.

Thousands of dollars worth of premier guns, optics, knives and gear await the top winners — but to win, you have to enter.

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Each submission needs to be accompanied by the basic who/what/when/where of what’s in the photo. All submissions must have name and address of photographer (preferably on the item) to be returned, and all winning photos become the property of SOF magazine. We can accept prints, slides or digital images on CD.

See next issue for all the details, and keep your cameras rolling. Submissions should be sent to SOF Photo Contest, 5735 E. Arapahoe, Unit 5-A, Boulder, CO 80303.



President Bush shakes hands with a group of ordnance mates aboard the U.S.S. *Lincoln* as she steams towards homeport in San Diego. The President’s visit to military personnel was appreciated — because he let them know they were appreciated.

Once Sen. Byrd — called by some “the Senate’s Crazy Old Aunt in the Attic” — launched his attack on the President (see John Weisman’s commentary, next), the Dems seemed to think maybe they had an issue, promulgating a news release headed “shameless” in large red type, and citing the “nerve required to delay the return of 4,000 sailors to their families after 10 months at sea in order to stage [a] photo-op.” As far as we know, no one polled the men and women aboard the *Lincoln* to see if they were glad for a homecoming greeting by first President we’ve had in a while who cared about the troops, but we’ve reviewed many versions of film of the visit, and the faces on the *Lincoln* sure reflected a happy ship to us. And that, we submit, is what really got the Dems wrapped around the axle: W loves the troops, and the troops

love W. because he gives them the respect and support they deserve. He does not "loathe the military," as did our last token attempt at having a Democratic president.

According to *The Hill* newspaper in Washington, since the first of the year some 25 congressional staffers, including some 12 solons, have landed on American aircraft carriers this year alone. Even Slick Willy did it four times, although his receptions were never as tumultuous as that given President Bush. Presidents have been visiting capital ships since Tyler. It's not news, and it's not an issue. So here's a highly cerebral counterpoint to those who can find nothing of substance over which to criticize the President: get a life.

Guest Commentary by John Weisman

Now let me get this straight. A one-time member of a terrorist organization blasts President Bush for the "flamboyant showmanship" of his hoo-ah! tailhook landing and rousing speech on the U.S.S. *Abraham Lincoln* last week. And nobody complains.

Now let me get this straight. A one-time white supremacist who once wrote that he would never fight in a U.S. military "with a Negro by my side" accuses the president of using the military for political gain. And nobody calls him on it.

No, I'm not talking about David Duke. Nor the head of the Aryan Nation. Nor the National Socialists.

Nope. We are talking here about the senior senator from West Virginia, one Robert C. Byrd. You know who. It's the shaky, white-haired guy on CSPAN who looks like a TV version of a televangelist and emotes as if he's trying out for the God role in the remake of *The Ten Commandments*."

Byrd, who used to be a bona fide sheet-wearing, cross-burning Kleagle of the anti-black, anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, anti-American anti-everything KKK stood on the Senate floor to "question the motives of a desk-bound president who assumes the garb of a warrior for the purpose of a speech."

Let's bypass the obvious fact that it's hard to ride the co-pilot's seat of a Navy jet in a business suit. Let's bypass the obvious fact that President Bush is a former military pilot. Let's bypass the fact that Byrd is a doddering relic of a bygone age; a has-been; a fossil; a pismire; a speechifying blowhard known to many on Capitol Hill as the King of Pork. And those are his best qualities.

Wake up, Senator Bob. President George W. Bush assumed the garb of a warrior because he IS a Warrior.

Unlike some other recent commanders in chief, who talked tough but did nothing, Bush talked tough — and then acted tough. G.W. Bush made the toughest decision a CINC can make: whether he would be spending the lives of those who would pay the ultimate sacrifice wisely, or whether he would be squandering those lives in something meaningless.

The president decided that the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were just — and that the lives that would be lost were worth the final goals. And he never looked back.

That is Leadership with a capital L. Indeed, if British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had the guts to make the same sort of tough decisions in 1938 that G.W. Bush made in 2001, we might have been spared many of the horrors of World War II.

Yet, here comes Sen. Byrd, who worked against the resolution advocating force in Iraq, to pillory the president for disrespecting the men and women in uniform by making an appearance on the carrier. I don't know what TV channel

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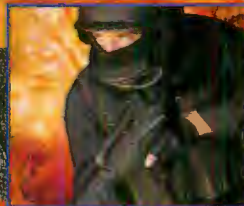
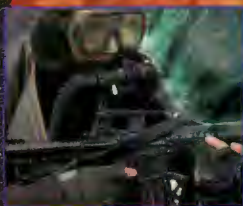


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On September 11, 2001, war came to America. Today we confront an evil army of fanatics with a resolve not seen since World War II. Fighting this enemy is a new breed of heroes – our military units, police officers, firefighters, EMT's and other dedicated public safety professionals.

brave warriors, protecting the hands of freedom and enabling the weapons of the American operators and those of our allies.

As we prosecute this war, our professionals will have available a new class of top quality tactical gloves: HellStorm™ by BlackHawk® Industries. We are proud to be equipping these

Beneath the rubble in New York and Virginia and in the charred ashes of Pennsylvania lay our brothers, sisters and friends – the most recent American victims of this monstrous evil.

For those who committed these ghastly crimes, your days are numbered. We will find you and bring you to justice or before your God. Our cause is righteous and our courage unmatched. Be warned. We're coming for you.



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Byrd was watching, but the crew of the *Abraham Lincoln* seemed to be awfully happy that their CINC had so much respect for them that he showed up to deliver a "Bravo Zulu" in person, as opposed to sending an all-hands message to be read on the speaker system.

But then Byrd obviously doesn't know much about respecting the men and women in uniform. Let me quote from the letter he once wrote explaining why he would never serve in the military with a black person. "Rather [than serve with blacks]," Byrd wrote, "I should die a thousand times, and see Old Glory trampled in the dirt never to rise again than to see this beloved land of ours become degraded by race mongrels"

There is a wonderful "urban-legend" composite photo making the rounds on the net these days. The picture shows a car being launched off the catapult of an aircraft carrier, with a caption that reads something to the effect of, "Today, the U.S. Navy returned four al-Qaeda terrorists to Afghanistan after debriefing"

Maybe Sen. Byrd deserves a carrier take-off. But only if he wore a business suit. Because for him to wear Warrior garb would be to dishonor it.

— ©2003 John Weisman (first appeared in *Military.com*, used by permission).

Plan Colombia

"While America's attention has been firmly fixed on the Middle East, Afghanistan and the Philippines, a brutal and growing conflict is being waged in our own backyard. The narco-fueled war in Colombia has been simmering with lit-

tle notice, but expect to hear more about it, here in the pages of *SOF*.

Colombia, long washed in its own blood, seems to have become numb to the ever-growing violence that kills tens of thousands of innocent people each year.

Colombian National Police records show that more than 50,000 people have been killed in the past decade in this narco-fueled civil war — double the number killed in Bosnia and Kosovo, where we sent more than 20,000 U.S. troops.

The February shoot-down of a CIA "contract" aircraft, where the American pilot was assassinated and three "spooks" were taken hostage by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) narco-terrorists, was basically ignored by the U.S. press. A month later, the crash of another spy aircraft, which killed three other "spooks" also drew little press attention due to the ongoing war in Iraq. Within another week following that crash, one more U.S. aircraft was lost in a crash, killing another American contractor.

With a \$2.5 Billion Dollar aid package, largely controlled by more than 400 U.S. civilian contractors, called "Plan Colombia" the facts about this war seem to be hidden by the U.S. State Department. The U.S. Embassy in Bogota has been accused by noted journalist Robert D. Novak, of covering our operations in Colombia with "secrecy and inattention."

"The death toll on U.S. contractors and American citizens in general, is going up, and nobody seems to notice," says Georgia Congressman Bob Barr. He's been proven correct, as official documents show that more than 25 American citizens have died in our war on drugs and terror in Colombia since 1998, when the effort began.

With these questions being posed, the State Department's answer is to transfer the U.S. Ambassador Anne Patterson



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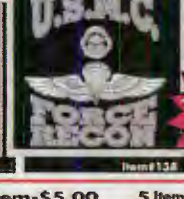
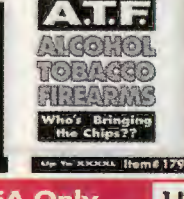
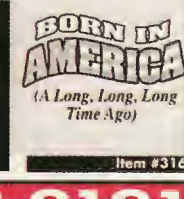
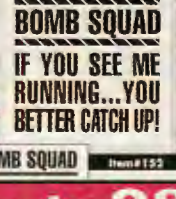
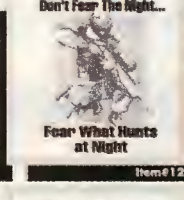
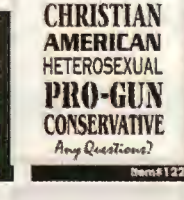
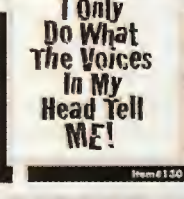
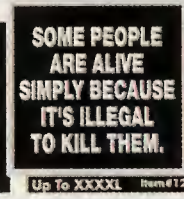
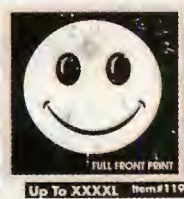
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(appointed by former President Bill Clinton), out of Bogota, as soon as possible! So, as usual, SOF asks the question: who is accountable for "Plan Colombia?" Our readers are going to find out.

SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown paid a visit to this beleaguered nation in conflict, where he met with Colombian Military and Police officials in order to get the straight scoop. A series of investigative articles will be featured on this "war" that has been long ignored.

Wish We'd Thought Of It

Hot on the trail of the monumental-ly successful Wanted Iraqi playing cards, is a deck of "Weasels" playing cards, featuring a rogues gallery of naysayers, "celebs," peaceniks, self-serving politicians and others of no great significance who thought they would manage to be a stumbling block to the triumphal march on Baghdad. For full information, go to: <http://www.news-max.com/weasels/98.shtml>.

Air Commandos To Meet

The Air Commando Association/Special Operations Annual Reunion will be held in Fort Walton Beach, FL, 10-12 October 2003; tel: 850-581-0099; fax: 850-581-8988; E-Mail: aircommando@aol.com; or web page: <http://home.earthlink.net/~aircommando1/> for more details.

It's Time In Zimbabwe

Walter Kansteiner, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs, is scheduled to meet with British Foreign Minister Jack Straw next week in Botswana to discuss regime change in Zimbabwe, Africa News reported 6 May, citing well-placed sources. U.S. officials say Straw will proceed with a tour of the region and Kansteiner will visit South Africa, reportedly in an effort to garner support for political reform in Zimbabwe.

The United States is now actively pursuing efforts to dislodge Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe from power. Rather than simply levying economic and political sanctions against Mugabe, as it has in the past, Washington now is lobbying other African leaders to press for his ouster.

The U.S. efforts — which comes amid a lack of serious effort by leaders in southern Africa to effect regime change, as well as Mugabe's weakening political grip — likely are part of a two-pronged approach involving Britain as well.

Mail For The Troops

Check with your local postmaster for the latest dope, but mail, books and small thank-you gifts cannot simply be addressed to "any sailor, soldier, marine, airman, etc." as in times past, due to the potential problem with terrorist machinations. Mail to troops now service overseas in, umm, *warm, sandy climates* must be addressed to a real person.

It will also expedite gifts for the troops if they are mailed under the auspices of your patriotic or veterans' group.

Here's some great guys we'd like to see get some mail, and they'll pass it around the troops:

Maj. Getchel (XO)
3/187th Infantry (101st Airborne)
Unit # 96083
APO AE 09325-6083
(That will go to battalion TOC)

Unit #96085 (B Co. Cpt. Kidd)
Unit # 96086 (C Co. Cpt. Teutsch)

New U.S./Bosnia Pact Protects U.S. Troops

Bosnia has signed an agreement with the United States to exempt Americans on its territory from prosecution by the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Sarajevo agreed not to hand over U.S. citizens to the newly established tribunal, which has been opposed by the United States because it could expose Americans to politically motivated prosecution.

Bosnia is the 35th government to sign such an agreement with Washington, although most of the 139 signatories at the ICC's founding, including all 15 European Union members, have resisted similar pressure from Washington.

Bosnian officials had earlier said that, despite a wish to follow the EU position on the ICC, they had little choice but to accept the U.S. demands because Washington had threatened to pull out troops and sever various types

Continued on page 28

Are these high-level combat skills too powerful for the public?

The Shocking Story of How the Feds Are Trying to Prevent You From Getting This Elite Combat Training!

When we brought together former Navy SEALs and DELTA Force soldiers to teach their spec-op level armed and unarmed skills to a small group of ordinary civilians for 4 intense days, word quickly got back to Washington — *and the whole thing sent shockwaves throughout the entire Defense bureaucracy!*

Top-level government “higher-ups” started asking serious questions and even conducted “private” investigations. 3 different privately owned training locations suddenly “clammed up” and said we couldn’t rent their facilities for our Camp!

It was clear that the “Powers That Be” didn’t want us “sharing” such highly-valued military-level skills with ordinary civilians. *But we did it anyway!*

There will never be another *DELTA/SEAL Training Camp* at any price! The “Powers That Be” simply made it *impossible!*

However, they didn't stop us from videotaping the entire Camp. Now those tapes are available to *Shooting Times* readers for a very limited time. **TAKE NOTE!** Once the “Powers That Be” hear about this, it could be ending soon...



Former DELTA & SEAL Team Commandos came together to offer civilians elite “spec-op” level armed and unarmed combat training... and it will never be repeated again!

Please don’t set this article aside. *Seriously.* Tomorrow may be too late to respond!

If you are finally ready to become 100% certain you’ve done *all you can* to protect your home and family from *any* assault from *any* type of criminal scum... and *quit* being a walking target for the robbers, rapists and psychopaths prowling your streets...

Then This Will Be The Most Important Message You Ever Get!

Here is what it's all about: This message is going to *outrage* some very important (and very *dangerous*) people... people who would very much like to see me go away and never again mention the words “Delta/Seal Training Camp” ever again! You see, my company, TRS, put together a series of elite combat courses that were hosted by actual Navy SEAL and U.S. Army DELTA veteran trainers (with *real-life combat experience*)... who, for 4 incredibly intense days, shared *everything* they knew about close-quarters weapons and unarmed combat. And they shared it all with *civilians* like you... the *ONLY* time in the history of the U.S. military that this kind of high-level training was revealed to *anyone* not already *inside* the Special Forces!

These training camps will never be held again! They cost \$3,750 just to attend... and everyone who came *raved* about what they learned and came away with. The camps were the *most complete training* in “elite level” military hand-to-hand and firearm expertise *ever* offered to *anyone* outside the Special Forces. It was a dream come true for anyone who *ever* wanted

to learn (and *master*) the inside secrets of brutally-efficient hand-to-hand combat and expert-level handgun training... the kind of knowledge that will make even the *craziest* streetfighter think three times before trying to take you on... and, if he *does* come after you, he will suddenly (and painfully) realize...

He’s Made A Very Serious Mistake!

We went way out on a limb to offer these camps... and we made a lot of people *very* angry.

And now it’s over. These amazing camps will *never, ever* be held again. (We were *banned* from 5 of the country’s major gun ranges at the last minute, under *very mysterious* circumstances, before finding the courageous California range we finally held these camps at.) Now, even that opportunity is *gone forever...*

Slammed Shut By Outside Forces We Simply Cannot Fight Anymore!

That means you can *never* attend a DELTA/SEAL training camp like this yourself - even if you have the \$3,750 each attendee paid just to get in... plus the *hundreds of dollars* in airfare... plus hotel costs... vacation time off... food... and equipment. By even conservative measures, *most* attendees shelled out over \$5,000 to come. Yet, even at that outrageous price, they considered it *the bargain of a lifetime*. **Four days of intense, personal training** in combat-tested hand-to-hand fighting tactics... plus the *complete mastery* of “elite military level” handgun shooting skills. Taught by the *most respected trainers* on the planet - actual combat veterans from the ranks of the Navy SEALs and the U.S.

Army DELTA Special Forces!

But *you* can experience the **same training** - through a hyper-intense video package of the *actual minute-to-minute training* at the camps - and, even better, the price is a mere *fraction* of what everyone else had to pay! Not even a **significant percentage** of the cost... *less*, even, than what the attendees used up in 9mm and .45 bullets during a *single day* of these adrenaline-charged camps!

You read that right - these tapes are available to *you* for what amounts to *spare change* compared to the outrageous costs the attendees had to shell out! No matter how you look at this... it’s the *greatest bargain* you’ll ever come across... for what will *instantly* become...

The Most Important Fighting Skills Of Your Life!

Just like the attendees, you are going to *witness the highest level* of training instruction, direct from the best teachers in the world. In fact, because of the **advantages** of better camera angles, professional editing, up-close shots of whispered advice, and your ability to *rewind* and go over any point until you “get it”... **you have an even better opportunity to learn than many of the attendees did!** Just by studying these sophisticated, “executive-level” training sessions, you will learn:

· **Incredibly-effective fighting techniques you can master overnight...** skills that give

you the *devastating ability* to instantly take down even a steroid-enraged street punk twice your size!

• **Simple defense strategies** for “arming” your family and loved ones with the skills, know-how and awareness to *avoid 90% of the crime* that ruin other people’s lives (carjacking, rape, assault)... and to *reverse* any attack so you come out the *winner* and *never* the victim!

• **Expert “elite military level” handgun shooting skills** that will instantly put you among the most respected “weapons savvy” people on the planet!

And what’s so great about this training you’ll see is, it’s all “packaged” to be learned fast (*overnight*, really)... even if you’ve never trained in anything before! In fact...

• **You don’t need any previous training or skills at all** - most the attendees had no military experience, no gun-handling and no self-defense training before coming to these camps!

• **You don’t need to be in good shape** (or any kind of shape at all) - this was *not* a bootcamp based on survival skills! In fact, many of the attendees were “desk jockey” types, including executives from **Fortune 500 corporations** (aged 50 and over)... and others were young students *from every walk of life* and occupation imaginable!

• **In fact, all you really need to get the most from these training tapes is the simple desire to change your life, quickly...** to *stop walking in fear*, and instead, give yourself (and your loved ones) the **immediate, totally-devastating skills** necessary to control *every potentially-violent situation* you could ever encounter in this increasingly-dangerous world!

And the best part is, **you’ll learn it all very fast** - because you have the *very best trainers in the world*, right there, teaching you in the hottest training available anywhere! This high level of training is almost *impossible to comprehend* without witnessing it for yourself. It’s all given and overseen by **Tom Carter and Frank Cucci...**

Without Doubt, The Most Respected “One-Two” Team In The Country For This “Real Combat” Training!

Tom Carter spent 17 years in active service, first in the **Green Berets**, and then as an “Alpha One” team leader with elite **DELTA Special Forces**. (He was *one of just 5 men* to complete the required selection course - 95 others couldn’t hack it!) He and his men were in some of the **heaviest firefights** (against Russian-trained Cuban storm troopers) of the **Grenada** invasion - *five* of the six **Blackhawk** choppers carrying them were too shot-up to fly again! In **Haiti**, protecting **President Aristide**... in **Peru**, Tom was *handpicked* to help their Navy go after the notorious **Shining Path** terrorists (the *bloodiest butchers* of this century)... private ops in **Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Equador** and **South**

Africa... he has been written up in magazines on 3 continents (including **Newsweek**)... his corporate clients include **Solomon Bros. World Trade Center** headquarters in New York, plus various **U.S. Senators and ambassadors** overseas (as security supervisor). Serious stuff.

This illustrates the **astonishingly high level of instruction** you get with these tapes.

Frank Cucci has an equally interesting history. For *12 years* he was one of the **top Navy SEALs** - a member of the “elite-of-the-elite” **SEAL Team Six** (which has had about a *dozen* books and movies dedicated to them), where he saw mortal combat. These are the “**first in, last out**” soldiers in any action... and they get very “unusual” freedom in how they do their jobs in the field because of their *spectacular success* in “black bag” operations. Frank was the **creator and Chief Instructor** of the **Naval Special Warfare Unarmed Combat Course**... and the techniques he brought to the **SEALS**...

Have Been Used In Every Recent U.S. War And Engagement!

Frank is a nice guy... but when it comes to hand-to-hand combat, he’s absolutely the *last* man you’d want to come across. He teaches incredibly-effective (and *brutally vicious*) fighting secrets that come from his training in **Jeet Kune Do** (where he studied with the famous **Dan Inosanto, Bruce Lee’s** training partner) and the respected Thai boxing master **Surachai Sirisute**. Frank is a professional who *knows* how to impart serious training secrets **FAST!**

Just *watching* these videos will literally **transform** you... because once you’ve witnessed the **inside secrets and tricks and special training** that can be yours (and so easily), you will be a *different man*. The kind of man who can hush a room just by walking in... with a **sense of calm confidence and centered power** that shines like a searchlight in your eyes.

Here’s a “taste” of what you’ll learn:

• **Incredible “military tricks”** that can take you from absolute rookie to a **master** of the handgun in *just a few short hours!*

• **Insider fighting secrets** that *only the most elite soldiers* who have faced *real* combat could ever share with you!

• How to handle a weapon *better* under **overwhelming stress** than most people can in the calm serenity of an empty firing range!

• **The 8 huge mistakes almost all men make with firearms...** and how to handle *your* weapon like an expert overnight! (Even if you’ve never picked up a gun before in your life!)

• Where to strike your opponent to **end any fight instantly**, no matter how big he is, or how surprised you are by the attack!

• **The 12 “tactical” survival rules you must know** to win an armed encounter with any attacker - including the horrendous “**Hollywood**” mistakes *most people make* that get them seriously hurt or killed! (Some of the most “normal

tendencies” you have are **100% wrong!**)

• **The one “basic” mistake even some cops and soldiers make** (despite their expensive training) that *erases their training advantage* in a streetfight! (You’ll *never* fall victim to it yourself!)

• Why a simple change in your “**mindset**” will mean the difference between being a victim... and being *safe!*

• **How to handle pepper spray!** (A great tool that even the most deadly soldiers now consider *an important part of their self-defense package* - but you **must** know how to handle it correctly!)

• **Single takedown moves that require no strength whatsoever!** (*Perfect* to teach your kids and wife... or to use when you’re hurt or attacked by bigger men!)

• **How to immediately win a fight** if you find yourself on the ground, on your back, with a *bigger opponent* on top of you!

• **Why untrained shooters often pick the wrong targets 100% of the time!**

• How to cancel out the **7 most common ways** criminals surprise families *inside their own homes!*

• **The 2 “warrior-tested” combat secrets of winning a fight every time!**

• **How to unleash the “animal secret” within you** that can *turn around* any situation where you are horribly outnumbered and surprised! (A *40lb. wolverine* uses this secret to drive off whole wolf packs from their *own* kill!)

• **The fastest way for even a gentle, never-in-trouble man to instantly bring up the necessary aggressive response to attack!** (This secret is often *all you need* to force back an assault, since most criminals are *not prepared* for expert, aggressive counter measures!)

• **How to control the “shakes” and super-hot adrenaline dump that occurs during tense, violent situations!** (You’ll be *cool, smooth and effective* no matter how confusing things get... just the *opposite* of how most men react!)

• How to “finish” a complicated situation with clever (yet simple) pain-compliance tactics that will guarantee you have complete control over your opponent!

• **Plus**, how to fight (and win) *barehanded* against clubs and knives... how to choose the **right gun for you**... how to teach your wife and kids the **basics of self-defense** (so they will never be surprised by an attacker)... and *more*.

So much more, it would take me a **dozen more pages** just to outline it all!

What you get in this package is **7 complete video tapes** - over *9 solid hours of intense training and insight into real combat skills you can learn quickly!* These tapes were painstakingly edited down from **over 245 hours** of

raw footage... so what you get is **ONLY** the "down and dirty" important stuff. All the meat, all the secrets, and all the "hot" info is there for you in a *super-condensed*, easy-to-watch (and *master*) format.

And you get *everything* the attendees received, too - *nothing has been held back*. In *addition* to the 7 video tapes, you also get the same **Manual of Self-Defense Tactics** the attendees got. This heavy manual is *packed* with information and details on home security, gun safety, secrets of effective shooting, tips on handling attackers, *everything*. Corporations have **paid over \$800** a piece for this manual (the exact one you will receive)... *and it is not available anywhere else in the world for any price!*

And the best part is... it is all *yours*...

For A Ridiculous Fraction Of What Everyone Else Had To Pay!

So here's what you need to do now: Call my office right away at **1-800-899-8153** (Ask for Dept. DS-43). Tell whoever answers you want to get your copy of the "**Boot Camp Video Package**" sent to you immediately. You can use your credit card. The cost for this amazing package is **just \$177**, plus \$12 shipping and handling (it's a *huge* package!). Once we get your order, your package will be **rushed** out to you by return mail - all 7 videos, plus the Tactics manual, *everything*.

That **outrageously-low** price is going to send *shock waves* through the country when word of it finally leaks out! (It's *less than 6%* of the total costs nearly all the attendees had to pay to come to the camps - you aren't even paying what the attendees shot up in shells *in a single day of training!* Their *hotel bills alone were higher than that!*)

Your satisfaction is 100% Guaranteed. If, after examining these videos for a full 6 months, you aren't happy... simply return them... and I will refund every penny of your purchase price. No questions asked. This is the most generous guarantee ever offered for this kind of elite level training. You risk absolutely nothing.

My friend, if you are even *remotely* interested in learning the honest secrets of hand-to-hand combat and handgun shooting - as taught by and for the **Special Forces** - then this deal is the **absolute bargain of your life**. Corporations like the big oil companies and financial giants in New York pay *thousands of dollars* in fees to Tom and Frank for their advice... but even for all that money, those executives and big-wigs *don't even begin to see the detailed secrets and inside stuff you will get with these videos!*

You need to call **RIGHT NOW!** As soon as word leaks out that we are selling these tapes...

The Same "Powers That Be" Who Shut Down The Training Camps Will Attempt To Halt These Videos!

The DELTA/SEAL Training Camps are now *history*. I don't want to go into the details, but the

end was a messy affair. Even though *every single police officer* who visited the camps (and there were many) *liked* what they saw... even though *every news media person* who came by raved about the quality of the training (and discovered there was nothing even remotely "strange" about the corporate execs and business owners and students and blue-collar people who attended)... even though the *government agencies* who investigated found *nothing illegal* or even "quasi-legal" going on... even though there were no rednecks, no skinheads, no neo-Nazi's, no one with wild-eyes to be seen anywhere... *despite* all this...

We Still Were Stopped Cold!

I would *love* to tell you there is another camp coming up soon you could attend personally... but there isn't. *They are never going to be held again*. Not for \$3,750... not for a *million* dollars.

I would also like to tell you to relax about getting these tapes... but that would be wrong, too. I **absolutely cannot guarantee** a set of tapes will be here for you tomorrow! Too much has happened that has ruined my faith in the "future". If you want these tapes...

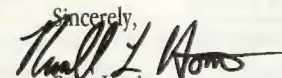
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I'm *serious*. The money, really, is *irrelevant*. (The manual you get *alone* is worth twice the purchase price of the entire video package.) What you pay for these tapes doesn't even amount to much more than a few lessons at the local karate club... or a new handgun... or a couple of hot nights out on the town. **Yet, what you get is worth so much more**. The *confidence*. The *skills* to repel attacks, and *win confrontations in seconds*. The *sudden lack of fear* you will feel just going out on the streets... and the *in-*

credible feelings of safety you can offer your family and loved ones.

But you must order right now - while the opportunity to get these amazing tapes *still exists*. And while you are still "hot" with the knowledge that - truly - **your life is about to change in fantastic ways...** as soon as a few short days from now!

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Sincerely,

Russ Horine

P.S. One more thing - *it's important*. I thought you might like to see what the people who attended these camps had to say about the experience. Here's some of their comments:

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"I now have a tremendous ability and self-confidence in the use of a firearm." **Richard Sands** -

"I was skeptical at first. Every expectation I had was by far exceeded. Thanks!" **Brady Patrick** -

"Just the confidence of knowing that you're trained by the very best, most knowledgeable soldiers in the world makes this camp mandatory for anyone who's serious about protecting himself and his family!" **Briant Tennant** -

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of assistance. The United States has some 1,500 peacekeepers in Bosnia, and has played a key role in helping the country rebuild after the 1992-5 war.

Under the agreement, all Americans in Bosnia as well as third-country nationals working for U.S. military missions, cannot be extradited to the ICC, but third-country nationals working for other American institutions, as well as Bosnians working for any U.S. employer, can be prosecuted by the ICC.

USAF Sergeant Wins
Vanguard Award

Staff Sergeant Gabriel Brown is the Air Force's 2003 recipient of the annual Vanguard Award for heroic action. Sergeant Brown, currently assigned to the 720th Special Tactics Group. On 4 March 2002, at Shah-e-Khot Valley, Afghanistan, during a mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Brown's brave and calm direct actions saved the lives of 26 service members.

Be Patriotic:
Hogtie A Lawyer

A new website worth your examination has been put up by Citizens for Reducing the Impact of Lawyers on America: <http://www.cfrila.org>.

CFRILA believes that the legal system has, over time, been perverted from its original goals much to the detriment of American society. CFRILA plans multiple, sustained campaigns to fix this problem, and plans to "lead the reformation of a legal system gone dangerously wild." Check 'em out. And if that doesn't work, we're perfectly willing to consider a bounty program.

Kabul's First Speakeasy

On a secluded side street in Kabul, if you're a Westerner or other *ferengee* (the locals allow no locals inside) once you step inside the Irish Club you're greeted by Irish music and the smell of cold beer and a bar fully stocked with lively spirits. Noted the pub's owner Sean Martin McQuade, "we wanted to keep a low profile, so we don't advertise whatsoever." Good idea, and of course, no need as the thousands of Westerners in town were developing a powerful thirst there in Taliban country. ☒

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"Picture Two People, Locked In Mortal Combat, One Strangling The Other. Now, Imagine Yourself In This Scene And Tell Me... What Would You Do?"



(Hint: Whatever Your Answer, The Odds Are... It's Wrong!)

Kick him in the groin." "Strike the arms or punch the solar plexus." "Grab the hands." "Stomp on his instep"

The list is always the same.

Unfortunately... each answer put your life at risk in the face of a life-or-death assault.

Why? Because invariably when Tim Larkin asks students this question at his *Target-Focus Training*™ bootcamps...

No One—Not Even Trained Martial Artists—Sees Themselves As The One Doing The Choking

They're always the one being choked.

But think about it... couldn't this have been the scenario?

You are surprised by two attackers. You've completely disabled the first and now have control of the second and are about to put him totally out of commission...

Possible? Of course. It's just that no one sees it this way. It's human nature. We shy from victory, from domination. It's the way most of us are built... unless you're a criminal...

Here's the problem: A thug comes up, places a knife to your throat and demands your wallet. Taking him at his word you give him the wallet. He then proceeds to stab you repeatedly leaving you in a pool of your own blood, astonished you've been stabbed.

What went wrong? Just this. You ASSUMED he only wanted the wallet. After all, why would anyone stab someone over a few measly bucks? YOU certainly wouldn't do that if you were robbing someone (by the way... when WAS the last time you robbed someone and put a knife to their throat?).

You see, that IS the problem...

You've Just Transferred Your Own Moral Code To A Sociopathic Killer... And With It, Quite Possibly, Your Life.

See, nothing bothers him. He's certainly not bound by your morals. With a total disregard for society and it's rules, he has no regret whatsoever in cramming a blade into your gut... if that's what it takes to get what he wants.

You stroll around thinking 12 years of martial arts training or that 6-week self-defense course or the latest flavor-of-the-month fighting video gives you the edge you need against someone like this.

Wake up!

You are hopelessly training techniques (then praying they work) against someone who never "trained" for you. How many criminals in federal pens spent years sweating through JKD workouts before committing their crime? How many are Jujitsu experts?

None. They excel at just one thing: doin' it. No training, no practice, no techniques. And these criminals certainly follow no 'rules'. So why squander years fooling yourself with something that only works "if everyone plays by the rules"?

These are the facts: 98% of us, caught in an unavoidable violent attack (even those with years of training), would never consider doing "whatever it takes" to survive — like gouging our attacker's eyes — even if they were the only targets available, and... even if it was the only means of saving our own life.

That's why TFT teaches both mind and body to act in unison, training you for the real threat in your

life... criminal violence.

It shows you how to deal with the ultra violence of a life-or-death confrontation (understand it's very easy. to ramp this down to fit a lesser situation but it's impossible to ramp up to a "killing-set" if you've never trained for it. By the way, is this you?).

Make no mistake... Larkin doesn't advocate violence. TFT just de-mystifies it. He's often quoted...

"Violence Is Rarely The Answer. But When It Is... It's The Only Answer."

Look... others in Soldier of Fortune try to impress you with how bad they are, their accomplishments in the "hidden world" you aren't privy to, their guru status.

TFT isn't about that. **It's not about an individual, a personality... or a guru.**

It's about a system... one focused totally on you!

Make no bones about it: Larkin's track record is impressive. He's currently training units from the top echelons of federal law enforcement and military special operations groups. It's not surprising since he comes from that world and is well known there. But since everyone in Soldier of Fortune tries to claim this you'll rarely hear him talking about it.

He's an awesome communicator, fabulous trainer, and amazingly approachable for someone with his abilities and credentials. And he's trained 100's of CEOs and others in high-risk positions around the world — all very real people.

But why is this so important?

Why is TFT being sought out in all these other arenas?

Because it works! Because you "get it" immediately... as soon as you experience it. There's no waiting. It's usable instantly... and it stays with you forever, even if you never practice it again.

Take fear. Others say they will make you 'fearless'. But it's a total lie! **Fear is hardwired into our brains.** TFT instead quickly and easily reprograms your muscle 'software' enabling you to take deliberate action... despite your fear (by the way it's not magic, you've got the ability inside you right now).

Here's what TFT is about: the key to the system lies in the fact there are two... and only two... overriding principles that determine the outcome of any physical confrontation. Combine these with three supporting methodologies that form the foundation of every fighting system on the planet and you have a complete system for handling any violent confrontation. With this information you can look at anything that's out there... including your own training... and know immediately if it's worth keeping.

"It was the most effective five days of training in hand-to-hand and hand-to-weapon that I and everyone else had ever experienced." Brian (last name withheld), US Border Patrol

Larkin just got back from talking to over 600 CEO's in Europe. These folks are eating his stuff up because **TFT principles and methodology are as effective in the 'combative' world of business as they are in a truly lethal fight, and for the exact same reason... RESULTS.**

What really excites Larkin is the fact that if these people can get this much from his material, imagine how much more someone like you can learn... a dedicated reader of Soldier of Fortune magazine who is really into finding and applying a system that is

quickly learned and deadly effective. If all these other folks are seeking him out, shouldn't you be too?

Look, Larkin is swamped and realizes he can't begin to reach everyone. While he'd love to have you as a member of his organization and to take part in his live training, he realistically understands few will be able to do this. Bootcamps run \$2,000.00 while international events start at \$10,000.00. And personal training for small 2- to 4-person sessions is \$20,000.00 and more.

That's why he's created a special Guide called *The Two Key Principles Used To Win Every War, Battle And Streetfight... And How You Can Exploit Their Devastating Power Today.*

Not some sales letter in disguise, this is truly a way for you to take at least a step towards learning the basics of **TFT** and applying its principles today.

In the Guide, Larkin covers things like:

- **The secret to success in any confrontation or fight. Understand this principle... and you win. Without it... you lose. It's as simple as that.**
- **Why it's a huge mistake to train as if you can predict your attacker's next move... even though everyone keeps trying to do it.**
- **Why focusing on a technique or methodology hands the sociopathic criminal an overwhelming advantage... each and every time.**
- **Why defeating an assailant has nothing to do with your size, strength, speed, sex, stamina or athleticism... and nothing whatsoever to do with years of practice or difficult movements.**

"I've ordered video's from names like (withheld) and respect them and their ideas. But you have given me a logical system that I can train and do despite an artificial hip and other chronic injuries as a result of 33½ yrs of firefighting." John Carmody, Norfolk, VA

- **Why you can't learn a hodgepodge collection of lethal techniques and expect to recall even one of them (let alone the one you need) in a life-or-death struggle.**

If you've spent years training techniques but still aren't sure of what might happen face-to-face with an assailant, if you can't imagine why physical skills are not critical to success in a determined sociopathic attack, if you long ago realized those silly fighter-of-the-month techniques weren't the answer to anything, then you owe it to yourself to get his Guide.

Here is how you can get one: Larkin is distributing 250 of these Guides. You may request one Free copy by calling toll-free **(888) 803-0504** and leaving your name and address on his voicemail. He'll have the Guide sent to you the very next day. Since it's voicemail you can call 24-hours a day, 7 days a week. Additional copies of the Guide are just \$9 plus shipping. But again, he'll send you one copy FREE.

Look. A lot of folks will blow off this offer as just another in the endless stream of secretive, technique-based, guru-led programs. Don't make that mistake. It doesn't cost you even a cent to prove to yourself the validity of what you've just read.

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Inside

The Ring

BY BILL GERTZ AND ROWAN SCARBOROUGH

China's Missile Buildup

China's military is stepping up the buildup of short-range missiles opposite Taiwan. Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Stokes stated in a recent briefing that China's military now has 450 missiles opposite Taiwan and that the number is expected to reach 600 by 2005.

Col. Stokes said the Chinese are adding 75 new missiles a year.

Several years ago, the Pentagon estimated that Beijing was adding 50 new missiles a year.

Col. Stokes, one of the Pentagon's top specialists on the Chinese military, also said the Chinese missiles, primarily CSS-6 and CSS-7s, are getting more accurate. The missiles use U.S. Global Positioning System satellites for midcourse guidance correction.

Col. Stokes also said the Chinese are expected to deploy a new land attack cruise missile before 2005.

China's "growing arsenal of conventional and land attack cruise missiles pose [the] most significant [Chinese] coercive threat to Taiwan," he said. A copy of his briefing slides to the U.S.-Taiwan Defense Industry Conference, held in Texas, was obtained by us.

"Taiwan has limited ability to defend against [Chinese] ballistic missiles today," Col. Stokes said in an appeal to Taiwanese military officials to buy and field missile defenses.

"Taiwan's senior political and military leadership must commit to defending against ballistic and land attack cruise missiles."

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DEALERS WANTED



Taipei is under pressure from the United States to purchase U.S. Patriot PAC-3 antimissile systems, and defense officials say a purchase is expected sometime this year.

Marine Firsts

The Marines Corps seemed to be everywhere in Operation Iraqi Freedom ... [during which] the Corps managed some firsts. It was the first war where the primary means of communication between the battlefield and the United States was e-mail. The Corps also saw its first black women pilots fly helicopters over the war zone. Nine in 10 munitions were precision-guided, compared with 10 percent in the 1991 Persian Gulf war.

Intelligence Failures

Richard Haver, until recently the special assistant to Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld for intelligence, said there have been "dozens" of U.S. intelligence failures.

Such comments from a U.S. official, made during a speech to the Institute for World Politics on Tuesday, are rare. U.S. government intelligence officials are loath to talk about intelligence failures and lapses are rarely, if ever, acknowledged, or played down if they are.

Mr. Haver spoke to a group of intelligence specialists about the problem of avoiding intelligence surprise, like what happened at Pearl Harbor and on September 11. "Our job related to surprise [is] to either eliminate it, or to mitigate it; to reduce the probability of surprise and, in particular, when surprise would have strategic effect.

"Intelligence failures are rarely caused by immediate problems," Mr. Haver said. "If there are difficulties in intelligence, they probably stem back five to 10 years."

Mr. Haver said the Bush administration is "paying the price for decisions made in the middle 1990s," when intelligence funding and resources were cut sharply during the Clinton administration.

"I've been asked to go back and review dozens, literally dozens, of major intelligence failures, and when you get down to the nubbins, you always find the same problem: A lack of analytic rigor that didn't understand what were the missing pieces.

"Well, they understood what all the pieces that they actually had were, but they didn't array the puzzle correctly; they didn't understand what was missing. That's the problem. Whether it's in

the readiness of the Iraqis, or the degree to which the Saddam Fedayeen were going to put up resistance, we could go on and on and I think we'll find the same root cause."

Mr. Haver, a veteran intelligence official, lost his position as a result of the administrative shake-up that created the new undersecretariat of defense for intelligence. "I am presently ambassador without portfolio" within the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence. Other defense sources said Mr. Haver likely will leave the Pentagon in the near future.

Gingrich's E-Mail

Well before his publicized speech critical of the State Department, [former House Speaker Newt] Gingrich was weighing-in behind the scenes on a number of top issues, including whether the Army should buy the family of armored vehicles called the Stryker.

From his "Thirdwave" e-mail address, Mr. Gingrich sends his views to, among others, Mr. Rumsfeld, Mr. Rumsfeld's assistants, Gen. Peter Pace, the Joint Chiefs of Staff vice-chairman, Victoria Clark, assistant secretary of defense for public affairs, and the office of Vice President Dick Cheney.

Some of Mr. Gingrich's e-mails from last year showed he fought passionately to have Mr. Rumsfeld cancel or curtail the Stryker vehicles. In one Internet mail, Mr. Gingrich said the vehicle will not fit in the C-130, the military's workhorse tactical cargo plane.

"This requirement has to be non-negotiable and the Stryker simply fails to meet it. Stryker should either be cancelled or limited to one test brigade that will never be air-transported but that could be used to test the new electronics, etc. [...] It is impossible for this system to be funded in the next budget at levels requested. It has failed in ways which are not, repeat NOT correctable."

In the end, Mr. Rumsfeld opted to fund the Stryker in the Army's drive to get to foreign hot spots faster.

Russian Germ Weapons

U.S. intelligence officials said Russia is secretly continuing to build deadly biological weapons in violation of an international treaty.

"Their BW production is actually increasing," said one official with access to reports on the issue.

Moscow for decades denied that

Continued on page 77

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2003 SHOT Show Review

BY GALEN L. GEER

PART I

The SHOT Show (which this year was in Orlando, Florida, 13-16 February) was where retailers, manufacturers, distributors and the shooting press shopped, looked, and listened. Twenty-five years ago, in St. Louis, Mo., the first SHOT Show's total attendance was fewer than six thousand; last year's total attendance topped thirty-one thousand. This is staggering growth in an industry that is bombarded by moral Philistines wallowing in anti-gun/hunting mania.

During SOF's "walkabouts" on the massive show floor, we looked for those products that would most appeal to SOF readers. Some gear is for the military, other is for law enforcement and there's a lot for shooters and hunters — and everywhere was the new and interesting.

OPTICS

Bushnell has always supported SOF "projects" by donating products for our causes, ranging from anti-poaching ops in South Africa to Artic bear hunts, so I sought them out first. I wanted to find how they are blending two technologies — optics and lasers with mini-computing power — to create a laser rangefinder with a quality porro-prism binocular. The Yardage Pro® Quest™ has a field of view of 340 feet @ 1,000 yards, and will accurately provide ranges of +/- one yard out to a distance of 1,300 yards. The unit is capable of ranging moving



targets and it operates on one 9-volt alkaline battery delivering more than 10,000 range readings before needing replacement. The unit's weight is somewhat heavy at 32 ounces, but tolerable because it combines two ideal products into one unit.

Bushnell Firefly™

Low-light shooting is the anathema of successful hunting, and equally troublesome to law enforcement. This problem has spurred hundreds of products from optics companies trying to develop the ideal shooting scope for low light conditions. Several years ago, Bushnell offered an LED scope that I carried for years after field-testing it in an SOF hunting camp in the mid-1980s. That scope didn't survive

when the rifle



was loaned to a friend who dropped it from tree stand. This year, Bushnell is introducing a new scope for low light — the Firefly™ — and is promising greater accuracy and quicker shot-placement. Unlike past illuminated reticles, the Firefly uses the simple approach of coating the reticle with photo-luminescent materials that will glow in the dark. The shooter merely shines a flashlight beam into the eyepiece for one or two minutes an hour before dusk or before dawn. After a few minutes of glowing brightly, the reticle will fade to black. In the field, under low-light conditions when most scopes become useless, the Firefly reticle glows a slight green by gathering the ambient light, solving the shooter's problem without stepping-up to night-vision devices.

The Firefly is available on Bushnell's Elite 3200 scopes with variable magnification of 3-9x40, 3-9x50, 3-9x50 (30mm tube) and 1.5-4.5x32. The Elite line features a permanent water-repel-

lant coating and the body is nitrogen-purged then O-ring sealed. For more information contact: Bushnell, Dept. SOF, 9200 Cody, Overland Park, KS 66214-3259 or phone: 800-423-3537.

Wind River® Spotting Scope

Wind River® Wilderness Optics, imported by Leupold & Stevens, has introduced the Sequoia™, a new 15-45x60mm spotting scope designed for hunters and target shooters.

The Sequoia is available in two models, one with a straight eyepiece and the other with a 45-degree angled eyepiece for use from a variety of positions, including the prone. Magnification range on the scope is 15-45x, while retaining a wide field of view, and it has long eye-relief (16.5-13.0mm) with roll-down eyecups so the scope is comfortable for users who wear glasses. Field-survivability is assured by the rubber, shock-absorbing armor and the scope is nitrogen-filled and sealed against water. The lenses are fully multi-coated for maximum light transmission, the focus dial is located on top the scope for ease of adjustment and a built-in tripod adapter allows easy installation on any standard-thread tripod head.

For more information, contact Wind River Wilderness Optics, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 688, Beaverton, OR 97075-0688; phone: 503-526-1400; or, to locate a Wind River dealer, call 800-929-4949.



Affordable Binoculars

A young company that has made quite a splash in the last two years is Alpen Optics. Alpen's founders recognized that many people need good binoculars and spotting scopes but lack the disposable income for more expensive name brands. This year, Alpen has introduced the Apex binocular line that combines the best in optical performance with a lightweight, composite body. Apex binoculars use fully multi-coated BAK4 glass, PXAphase™ coating, and HR™ (high-resolution) metallic prism coating and AquaShield™ coating on both the eyepiece and objective lenses to allow clearer viewing in rain. The binoculars are nitrogen-filled, shock-resistant, waterproof, dustproof, and guaranteed not to fog.



Apex binoculars are available in four ergonomically styled models, 8x42mm, 10x42mm, 10x50mm for use in low light; and a 12x50mm — and all of them include a durable carrying case and extra-wide neck strap. They feature long eye-relief and twist-up eyecups for eyeglass wearers. Alpen's Apex line includes a lifetime warranty and retails between \$400 and \$450. For more information contact: Alpen Outdoor Corporation, Dept. SOF, 10329 Dorset Street, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730; phone toll-free: 877-987-8370.

Laser Devices

SOF has frequently supported anti-poaching operations in South Africa by providing tactical training programs with specialized equipment. One of the most successful programs was a special laser-sight training program conducted at the Songimvelo Game Reserve. Long-time SOF supporter and friend, Heinz Thummel, founder of Laser Devices, donated all the lasers for that program. Over the years, Thummel's Laser



Devices has been leader in laser-sighting technology and this year Heinz has introduced a product that will be on the "wish list" of a lot of SOF readers — the Multi-Operational Laser Aiming Device or MOLAD. With this highly versatile system, Thummel is taking the laser sight world to new levels.

The MOLAD is waterproof to 20 meters, has a tactical white-light, a visible aiming-laser, an infrared aiming-laser, and an infrared illuminator that will light up a 10x10-meter room. A rotary mode-switch allows the user to select the desired combination of sight and illumination for each situation encountered.

Thummel's tactical combination on the MOLAD will fit the Glock, Walter P99, HK USP, HK USP Compact, HK 2000, SW 99, TSW Series, Springfield TRP Operator, Mil-Spec and XD, New SIG P220ST, Beretta VERTEC, IMI Barak and Jericho, and it also fits the NATO 1913 Rail. For more information contact: Laser Devices, Inc., Dept. SOF, 2 Harris Court, Suite A-4, Monterey, CA 93940; phone: 831-373-0701 or 800-235-2162.

Crimson Trace Improved Lasergrip



The Crimson Trace grip-mounted laser aiming-device has won the loyalty of law enforcement, self-defense experts and target shooters, but the company hasn't been satisfied and has introduced an improved Lasergrip for the Beretta 92/96 pistols.

The new Lasergrips have a slim-line design, rubber overmold construction, wraparound configuration and an ambidextrous activation of the laser that is comfortable to grip and use. The Beretta 92/96 Lasergrips are equally natural to right- or left-hand shooters, because there are instinctive activation sensors on both sides of the grip, eliminating the need for switches or levers.

Also being introduced with the new Beretta models are Lasergrips to fit these pistols: 1911 Government & Officers, Ruger P-Series, Sig 220 and the Browning Hi-Power. For more information contact: Crimson Trace, Dept. SOF, 8089 Southwest Cirrus Dr., Beaverton, OR 97008; phone: 800-442-2406; or visit www.crimsontrace.com.

KNIVES

Benchmade Axis Automatic

An important mission for SOF at the SHOT Show is to ferret out products that step beyond tradition and provide readers with a reliable survival edge in any tactical environment. Benchmade built a reputation for this sort of prod-



uct with the introduction of their AXIS locking system. The latest Benchmade AXIS is an automatic knife that incorporates a coil spring that is activated when the locking bar is pulled back, creating a locking knife that will lock open even if the coil spring fails.

Travis Noteboom, Benchmade's Marketing Coordinator, explained the operation of the Model 5000 AXIS to me, and then illustrated the knife's

ambidextrous "extra" feature — the knife lock can be actuated with either hand and the blade can be closed just as easily.

"This means that if an individual's primary arm was injured they would still have an operable knife available for immediate use," Noteboom said, adding, "this also means that law-enforcement

officers can carry their knife on their weak side and be confident that when they need it, they can get at it.

For more information on this or other quality Benchmade products, contact Benchmade Knife Company, Dept. SOF, 300 Beavercreek Rd., Oregon City, OR 97045; phone: 800-800-7427.

Columbia River Knife & Tool Company

The two weapons that clashed in the closing years of the Cold War were the AK-47 and the M16, so it is fitting to include in the "edged" coverage a look at a knife carrying the M16 moniker — the M16-13SF from the Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT) Company.

The M16-13SF incorporates design features requested by a military-procurement specialist. The blade edge has a Tanto-style dual grind for maximum strength. The knife has an open design incorporating two Carson Flippers for a true hilt design. The blade, frame and hardware are all finished in non-reflective black.

Like all folders in CRKT's "For Those Who Serve" line, the M16-13SF features the company's patented Lake And Walker Knife Safety (LAWKS®), which transforms the folding knife into a fixed-blade knife when actuated, by positively blocking the accidental release of the knife's liner lock regardless of how the locking liner may be pressed.

When folded, the M16-13SF is only 4.63" long and weighs 3.5 ounces. It features sure-grip contoured handles of textured, black, hard-anodized 6061 T6 aluminum, stainless steel locking liners with friction grooves, and the blade is AUS 8 stainless steel with non-reflective black titanium-nitride coating. For information contact Columbia River Knife and Tool, Dept. SOF, 9720 S.W. Hillman Ct., Suite 805, Wilsonville, OR 97070; phone: 503-685-5015 or 800-891-3100; fax: 503-682-9680. ✕



Bokker And Kalashnikov

When the Cold War ended during Reagan's watch, who could have predicted that in a few years one of the heroes of the now-defunct Soviet Union would embrace the capitalist route to personal wealth? Mikhail Kalashnikov, inventor of the AK-47, one of the greatest small arms of the Cold War, and its hot battlefields, was in Orlando, promoting the AK-47 knife and the AK-47 Kalashnikov Precision Wrist Watch.

The AK-47 knife was actually designed by Dietmar Pohl, inspired by the original AK-47 bayonet. There are two versions of the AK-47 knife available: The production knife has a 4-inch, partially serrated 440C stainless steel blade with a satin finish. Handles are made from 6061-T6 and are designed to provide a firm grip with inlays of G-10 materials.

A Limited-Edition version of the AK-47 knife features Snakewood inlays and the blade is non-serrated with a mirror polish and serial numbered in a worldwide run of 2003 knives.

Both knives and the AK-47 wristwatch are destined to become collectors' pieces as the world continues to evolve. For now, the switch from "comrade" to "capitalist" is interesting. For more information contact: Bokker USA, Inc., Dept. SOF, 1550 Balsam St., Lakewood, CO 80214-5917; phone: 303-462-0662.

Galen L. Geer



Mikhail Kalashnikov holding the knife named after his world-famous assault rifle, the AK-47. Also pictured is the AK-47 watch.

EXCLUSIVE:

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Combat

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BY JOHN FARNAM

FARNAM'S GUNSLINGER DIARY

Making Audacity Work, With Humility

Eighty-seven years before Operation Iraqi Freedom, April 1916, British soldiers in Basra and Kut had fleeting success in an audacious march toward Baghdad, but the campaign tragically fell upon the horns of their commander's crippling ego.

In 1915, there was no nation of Iraq. Iraq did not become a sovereign nation until 1932. All of Mesopotamia was then part of Turkey, and its inhabitants were all "Turks." Turkey had allied itself with Germany after the Great War broke out, and England suddenly had a direct interest in oil and oil

pipelines in what was now enemy territory. All the real action was, of course, in France and other parts of Western Europe, but military backwater campaigns, such as this one in Mesopotamia and the ill-fated and simultaneous Gallipoli Invasion (also against the Turks), were seen as crucial to the success of overall war effort.

Unfortunately, as with most military sideshows, both campaigns proved disastrous debacles.

Sir Charles Townshend had gained minor notoriety in 1895 when his command held out for two months against

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native tribesman at Chitral on the western Indian frontier. Despite his personal ambition (noted by all who knew him), his reputation still did not suffice to get him assigned to a line unit in the main battle area in Europe with the onset of the Great War. In fact, his disappointment at being shunted off to a military backwater like Mesopotamia was the subject of many bitter conversations with contemporaries.

However, trying to make the best of a disappointing assignment, Townshend, with his British 17th Infantry Brigade, charged northward from Basra, up the Tigris River. Turkish resistance was weak and disorganized. Turkish units mostly retreated without firing a shot.

Within a month, Townshend was already halfway to his goal, Baghdad, with only light casualties. In mid-1915, British victories elsewhere were scarce, so, when the news reached England, Townshend became an instant hero.

Noting Townshend's success, the German Kaiser sent Field Marshall Colmar van der Goltz to organize the Turkish resistance and defend Baghdad. Van der Goltz was no amateur! Immediately, and for the first time, Townshend encountered effective resistance at Kut as he resumed his march north. He also started taking significant casualties. Kut was finally taken, but at a heavy price.

Townshend's superior, General Nixon (back in Basra), apparently jealous of Townshend's success, did little to support the advance. He obviously did not want to see the arro-

gant Townshend promoted. Fresh troops and supplies were thus not moving north.

Townshend continued pushing north anyway, as far as the ancient Persian battlefield of Ctesiphon (affectionately called "pissed upon" by his troops).

Ctesiphon had marked the southern limit of the ancient Roman Empire (under General Belisarius) many centuries before. Ctesiphon, as fate would have it, was also to mark the northern extreme of the British advance.

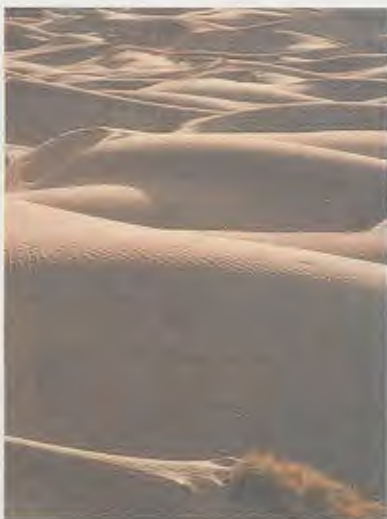
Turkish resistance was now so heavy, that for Townshend to continue on to Baghdad without substantial reinforcements, was out of the question. Townshend had no choice but to fall back.

At this point, Townshend's contemporaries note that he began to suffer a nervous breakdown. With a great "Victory at Baghdad" now a rapidly fading fiction, Townshend's hoped-for "place in history" began fading away too. His overblown personal vanity couldn't handle it. As a result,

Townshend began to fall apart mentally.

The smart thing to do would have been to retreat all the way back to Basra, which could have been accomplished in relative safety and with comparative ease. Once there, Townshend could consolidate, reinforce and resupply, get competent medical care for his many casualties, and confront Nixon face to face. However, Townshend's faltering ego wouldn't allow such

Continued on page 74



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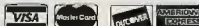
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AMERICA AT WAR

SOUTHEAST ASIA PIRACY TRIPLES in 10 years. Fear of ecological disasters from terrorists targeting warships, cruise-liners, tankers, port facilities, offshore oil and gas rigs and energy pipelines.

UNITED STATES MESSAGE FROM AL-QAEDA: "Don't think you've gotten rid of us, not by a long shot," quotes former assistant Secretary of State. HIZBOLLAH ("Party of God") cell in N.C., "One of the most sophisticated terrorism-fundraising cells." Hundreds of Hizbollah members in U.S., outnumber al-Qaeda members. (Hizbollah, Shi'ites, killed 241 Marines in Beirut in '82.) WHERE HAS ALL THE INTELLIGENCE GONE? "Egregious errors" in lack of communication of intel from FBI-Congress might have avoided World Trade Center and 9-11 attacks. CIA failed to place 9-11 bombers on watch-list despite intel. CLINTON officials politicized intel; relied on fabricated evidence for "string of intel failures" in U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya, Tanzania. "UNDERSTAFFED Terrorism Task Forces lack analytical expertise." *USA Today* cites government report.

PHILIPPINES REBEL RAIDS: Moro Islamic Liberation Front kills more than 50 and injures dozens. Attack meant to force government to withdraw from MILF areas and drop murder charges against members. ABU SAYYAF GROUP bombs market place: 13 dead, 26 wounded.

COLOMBIA FATAL HOSTAGE RESCUE: 10 of 13 hostages executed by FARC, forewarned by helicopter engines. HOMICIDES around 30,000 per year in decades-long war. HOPE DYING for three hostage Americans. FARC BOMBS Pacific shipping docks; three killed 20 wounded.

BRAZIL THIRTEEN MILITARY BASES to be established to fight out-of-control infiltration of narco-traffickers and narco-terrorism on borders of Colombia, Peru and Venezuela according to Stratfor.com info.

CANADA "MAGNET FOR JIHADISTS and breeding ground for anti-American terrorism," Michelle Malkin of *Insight On The News* reports, 75 al-Qaeda operatives "on the loose;" 50 terrorist organizations hosted.

CHECHNYA FEMALE SUICIDE BOMBER kills 13 in attempted assassination of Moscow's local administrator. TRUCK BOMB rips Federal Security Service, Russia's intel, kills 59, wounds 200.

ITALY ANSAR EL-SALAM operators arrested — planned to replace Kurdistan as al-Qaeda base before U.S. blew-up base in Iraq.

BELGIUM GENERAL TOMMY FRANKS charged with war crimes [sic] in complaint filed by Iraqi civilians.

NETHERLANDS FOURTEEN TERRORISTS — who met in Amsterdam to plot 9-11 — awaiting trial.

ENGLAND UNITED KINGDOM SHOCKED by first British suicide bombers, members of Al-Muhijaroun based at Finsbury-Park mosque in London — three dead, 55 injured in Tel Aviv.

PALESTINE BLOODY INTAFADA more than 2,000 killed in occupied territories and in Green Line since 09/02; more than 370 minors; more than 650 Israelis; more than 40 minors (Israeli Information Center for Human Rights in the Occupied Territories).

ALGERIA ALGERIA COMMANDO RAID on Islamist Salafist Group for Combat and Prayer hostage camp frees 17; 15 still missing. "ONE-EYED BANDIT" chieftain believed to have al-Qaeda ties. RECRUITING CENTER for al-Qaeda.

SAUDI ARABIA TRIPLE CAR BOMBINGS on Western interests including Vinnell Compound, home of ex-GIs training Saudi National Guard, 34 dead, 200 wounded. U.S. ACCUSES Saudis of failed security after al-Qaeda warned of "spectacular attack." Saudi admits months of surveillance of suicide cell. \$75,000 BOUNTY for capture of 19 al-Qaeda, 17 Saudis. ASSASSINATION PLOT against Prince Nail and Prince Sultan foiled.

KENYA UK suspends flights due to al-Qaeda threats. TERRORISM attacks vs. Americans warning issued.

HORN OF AFRICA TASK FORCE apprehends terrorist operatives on 12-day maneuvers coordinated from U.S.S. *Mount Whitney* command ship.

IRAQ SUNNI Moslems regroup, fight U.S. troops. Iran-backed Shia resistance attacks U.S. troops. CAPTURED: MRS. ANTHRAX #1 biological weapons expert, trained at Texas Woman's U.

KASHMIR FIVE HUNDRED RAMPANT ATTACKS kill more than 600 in India-Pakistani proxy war in six months. FIREFIGHT between Indians, Paks kills 40, wounds 120.

AFGHANISTAN LAND MINES kill or injure 100 a month. HALF-DONE JOB by U.S. says *NY Times*. Feuding warlords control most of country, 100,000 armed — only 4,500 of 70,000 national-army troops have been trained by U.S.

IRAN INVESTIGATED for complicity in Saudi terrorist attacks. Al-Qaeda FUGITIVES Saif al Adel, No. 3 Chief, and bin Laden's Son, Saad. MASSIVE INFILTRATION of Iraq by 2,000 Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, planning to control Iraqi cities. "FIERCE" BIOWEAPONS have delivery systems.

SYRIA HAMAS, ISLAMIC JIHAD and POPULAR FRONT FOR THE LIBERATION of PALESTINE terrorist offices shut down.

PAKISTAN 300 POUNDS of high-explosives confiscated: ARRESTED Six al-Qaeda suspects. U.S. WARNS of al-Qaeda attack on U.S. Consulate.

INDIA COMBAT TRAINING CAMPS to train 2,400 Hindu radicals by World Hindu Council. MARKETPLACE SLAUGHTER kills dozens of non-tribal migrants.

PENTAGON PAYBACK

101st Takes Down Saddam's Ministry of Defense

TEXT & PHOTOS BY J.S. MOSBY

"Damn, that's a tough wall. I'm gonna nail it with a TOW," said the Bradley-gunner as he dropped down into his turret and buttoned-up. The wall in question had already soaked up a blizzard of AP rounds from his 25mm Bushmaster cannon, followed by HE to open the holes to little effect. In Iraq, almost everything has a wall around it and the one around Saddam Hussein's Secretariat for Defense and adjoining barracks was being particularly stubborn. Eventually it took four TOW missiles, every LAW that B & C Company had and uncounted rounds of 25mm AP and HE to blow a hole in the concrete and steel beam "Mother of all walls." When it was finally breached, B Company flowed through, clearing the Secretariat buildings under fire, followed closely by C Company who assaulted through them and into an adjoining barracks complex. All told, it took two-and-a-half days of con-

stant contact to eliminate the die-hard defenders inside. Not a single Rakassan was killed and the two minor casualties incurred were returned to duty. The Iraqi defenders were for all practical purposes wiped out.

What had started out as a simple Relief-In-Place (RIP) had turned into the biggest conventional, combined-arms fight the 3/187th "Rakassans" of the 101st Airborne were to see in Iraq. But, as they say, getting there was half the fun.

"North-Bound And Down, Loaded-Up And Truckin'"

When orders came down for 3rd Battalion of the 187th to

Troops spoke highly of the M240, the .308 GPMG replacement for the aging M-60. Easy to maintain and fitted with quality optics, the "Two-Forty" provides plenty of punch at the platoon level.





A machine-gun section from B Company, 3/187th "Rakassans" (101st) takes up a covering position during operations in southern Baghdad.

before on the route 3/187th was on. What was believed to be the same group responsible for that attack was to be in for a nasty surprise.

"They initiated with an RPG but they missed. I forgot I had a camera and opened-up on the guy nearest our truck with my M-4," Specialist Robert Woodward, a military journalist reservist from Los Angeles, recalled. "I don't think they saw the Bradley and the trucks full of infantry must have come as a surprise. Everyone opened up on them at the same time and they just seemed to disappear, vaporized." So much for soft targets. Apparently, the same seven Fedayeen who had shot-up the earlier convoy saw a column of LMVTs (the Army's new 2.5-ton truck) coming and figured they had some more supply types rolling-in.

Their mistake proved fatal when their initial fire brought down almost a battalion's worth of 5.56mm, 40mm M203, .308

move north and attach itself to 3rd ID, there was some grumbling. The movement was to be executed by truck in a Ground Assault Convoy, commonly referred to now as a "Gack," and not by helicopter assault, the 101st Airborne's accustomed mode of insertion. "We've never had so many vehicles until we came here," said Major David Beachman (S3) told *SOF*. "All these Humvees, that's new to us. It's always been insert-by-chopper and hump from there."

But troops do as troops are told to do and they loaded into the trucks, locked-and-loaded, faced outboard and rolled out north along the highway to Baghdad. With Saddam's Fedayeen militia playing hit-and-run all along Iraq's road net, the trip would not be uneventful. With plenty of small arms and RPGs at their disposal, the Fedayeen had proven a major annoyance ever since U.S. forces hit the area around Nassiriya. U.S. supply and maintenance units were soft targets and the Fedayeen hit them whenever they could, making for some embarrassing incidents in the early days of the war. Light trucks decked-out like Somali technicals were their preferred mode of transportation. Even with 2/7th Cavalry of the 3rd ID cleaning-house around Baghdad's airport, they were still popping-up and lighting-up rear-echelon-types, hitting a fuel tanker and supply truck the day

M240 machine-gun fire and 25mm HE from a Bradley bringing up the rear. All told, the engagement lasted little more than seconds. We were told that little was left to pick up. Shortly thereafter, the 3/187th arrived at Baghdad International and moved to relieve 2/7th Cavalry from their positions.

Baghdad Blowup: Combined-Arms Showdown at Saddam's MOO

When we went up, 2/7th Cavalry was in contact," Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Fetterman, commander of the 3/187th, told *SOF*. "When we went up to recon the area we were to take over, they were firing up some vehicles, so we moved directly into a fight." Over the next two days, that fight would grow in intensity. Because the regime collapsed so quickly, the battle for the Secretariat became the only major, combined-arms fight the 3/187th found itself in, involving armor, artillery, Close-Air Support (CAS) and a conventional infantry assault. By all accounts, the battalion acquitted itself

Saddam's Fedayeen Militia converted anything that could roll into a gun truck for use in their hit-and-run escapades as the American's closed-in on Baghdad. Here, a new-model Chevy truck was fitted with a heavy machinegun and multiple 122mm rocket tubes but consigned to the scrap heap after a close encounter with American forces.



admirably despite the confusing situation of touching off a major firefight during a delicate relief maneuver.

The first unit on the scene, just as darkness was falling, was Delta Company, a quasi-reconnaissance element equipped with armored Humvees. Astride vehicles mounted with .50-caliber Brownings and Mk19s (40mm), they have become a defacto rapid-maneuver element for the battalion. They arrived first and set up the base of a defensive perimeter behind the Cavalry.

Immediately after, the line companies came up and established their positions. Once in place, the Cavalry began to pull back. "As we replaced them, all we can figure is that the Iraqis saw all those vehicles moving, figured something was up and went to ground," Fetterman said. "After the vehicles left, I guess they thought they had a clear shot and about a hundred tried to make it to the airfield. I don't think they realized we were there because we were dismounted." It would prove a costly error with A Company killing 10 or so; two or three getting blown-away hopping the wall by the Delta gunners and C Company getting into a stiff firefight with a platoon-sized element, killing 12.

Caught before they could settle into a proper defensive position, C company's fight got hot, fast. "I'm so proud of my men," said company commander Captain Christian Teutsch, of Richmond, Mass. "I really didn't have to do that much. We've trained for this for so long, the guys just knew what to do. We actually fought our way into position and the squad and platoon leaders really made it happen." In short order, Teutsche's main body was digging in and the lead squads were leapfrogging back in preparation for the wrath of god that was to follow.

"Whatever we didn't kill ran off," said Lieutenant Gene Palka, a fire-support officer with C Company. He started working the radios and in short order had the company 60mm mortars and battalion 81s landing all over the Iraqis. Soon after, he called in 155mm Paladin artillery and CAS which sent the Iraqis to ground and kicked-off an 8-10 hour firefight as B Company moved up through some desultory mortar fire and joined in.

At the same time, A and D companies got involved in a small engagement that also quickly brewed into a major fight as more than 50 Iraqis tried to infiltrate past them towards the airfield from a presidential site south of the Secretariat complex. In a short but sharp fight, the two elements killed an estimated 40 and scattered the rest. The remainder of the night was spent improving the positions



Lieutenant Colonel Patrick Fetterman, commanding the 3/187th "Rakassans," directs his maneuver elements during operations in southern Baghdad. A soldier's soldier, he is a skilled combat leader and universally respected and liked by his men.

and softening-up the target with indirect fire. "I called in my first Maverick from 100 meters out, it was the coolest thing I ever saw," recalled AIC Ryan Cornelis, an Air Force Tactical Air Controller attached to B Company. And so it went throughout the first night, the next day and the second night as the troops skirmished with Iraqi snipers and infiltrators.

Snapshots And Battle Shorts

Small fights popped and sputtered across the front, each a microcosm to the troops engaged, each man SOF spoke to recalling some small piece of his particular fight.

- A sniper blown out of a distant tower with Abrams and 155mm Paladin fire. A truckload of Fedayeen rushing up to the back of the compound with an RPG squad, only to be engaged by the Scout/Sniper section from a rooftop before fleeing.

• Sergeant Eric Doolittle laying-down cover-fire for his buddy, Sgt. Steven Woods, as Woods' squad fell back. Woods spinning to return fire as he ran, but tripping-up just as burst chattered past where he would have been standing. A "Hollywood move" he said of it later. Doolittle chalked it up to angels.

- Specialist Robert Woodward getting bounced-off

the deck every five minutes as the 155s pounded the interior of the compound. "I didn't get much sleep that night," he recalled. "I've been in contact twice now. Once you've been through it it's like everything else in life, the fear of the unknown is gone."

- A dead-calm Major David Beachman soothing the nerves



Iraqis scavenge for parts from a U.S. supply truck destroyed in an ambush south of Baghdad during 3rd Infantry's advance on the city. Fedayeen loyalists found soft targets to their liking, but discovered that GACs, such as one full of infantry from the 3/187th of the 101st Airborne, were positively deadly.

of a jumpy Bradley crew as A-10s worked over the rooftops “Danger Close” saying, “Just stay with us, don’t move. We do this all the time.” Hunting for a particularly annoying sniper. When he couldn’t be located and taken-down with a TOW, A-10s were called around to try and pick him up on thermal. When they couldn’t get a heat signature, one of Beachman’s Delta gunners looked down and suggested an area fire with the Mk19. *Whap, bap, bap* — no more sniper.

- Specialist Marcus Spalding, of D Company, taking-down first three — and then two — infiltrators with single bursts of Mk19-fire after popping a flare over some movement on the wall. “A lot of people don’t realize the kind of firepower Delta has,” he said afterwards. “It was ludicrous. All they had to do was raise their hands, come over to us and they’d have been treated well. Instead ...”

- Cutting the wall in half with the Bradley’s 25mm and then blasting it with a TOW, only to have the top half slide down into the dust of the lower half and having to breach it again from scratch. It started out 20 feet tall, then we cut it in half and the top comes sliding down on top like a trap door. Now it’s 10 feet and there we go again,” recalled Maj. Beachman.

- The 155s running out of “White bags” (their pre-measured powder charges) and trying to improvise with “Red Bags.” To be on the safe side, they tried a ground-impact smoke round first, but it almost land on B Company. Thus, for fear of a real fratricide incident, their participation ended.

- A Company lighting up a large group of infiltrators with a flare the first night and mowing them down with extended bursts of machine-gun fire. Captain John Bryant shouting over the radio, “Haven’t you guys heard of 6-9 round bursts?!” Troops pausing during the lulls to dig fighting holes in the eerie light cast by artillery flares.

Through The Breach

After two nights and a day of skirmishes and preparatory fire, 3rd Battalion made ready to assault and seize the complex. At first light on the third day, B Company made ready to move in. Ammo loads were checked, final fires called and lifted and the troops poured through the breach made by the Bradley in what Col. Fetterman termed as a “Classic enter-and-clear operation.” As the initial assault elements entered the grounds, they took fire from Iraqis who had rushed to the rooftop. An A-10 swept them clean. Then, room-by-room, Bravo cleared each level of the complex, eliminating what sporadic contact and holdouts they encountered. Now it was C Company’s turn.

Passing through Bravo’s position, they assaulted south, into the barracks complex. No sooner had they cleared one section, than they hit another wall similar to the first. Time ticked by as it too was battered into rubble and breached. “Choppin” got moving again. “We cleared something like 400 rooms,” Capt. Teutsch recalled. “I just got my guys pointed in the right direction and they took off. I’ve never seen any-

thing like it. Clockwork. I didn’t have to lift a finger; they just went to work and rolled the place. I can’t tell you how proud I am of them.” The few holdouts in that complex were dealt with as well and soon the entire complex, both Secretariat and the barracks, was in U.S. hands.

All that remained was the only notable terrain feature in the entire area, Spiral Hill, a low hill that dominates the surrounding countryside. This fell to what boiled down to a cavalry charge by Delta in their armored Humvees. What few Iraqis there were on the top didn’t survive the hail of .50-caliber- and Mk19-fire they laid-down on the way up. Once there, several Iraqis made the mistake of firing on them from a house to the south. This amounted to suicide by 155mm and thus the battle ended.

Soldier’s Soldier

As the dust settled and the troops began to police up the battlefield, it was discovered that what they had engaged was a reinforced garrison of Special Republican Guard troops. Their loyalty to a doomed regime had cost them dearly. “They had fought tenaciously, but didn’t appear to be particularly skilled,” one trooper recalled. “They could move and shoot, but they couldn’t hit what they were aiming at.”

During all of it, Lieutenant Colonel Fetterman strolled through the scene, a steadying influence on all who saw him.

“When the shit hits the fan, he’s the guy you want in charge. He’s a great combat commander,” Said Specialist Justin Day. “He’s down at the company level, mingling with the “Joes” while all this is going on. He knows everybody’s name. He really does.”

“Colonel Fetterman visualizes the battlefield well. He articulates what he wants done and picks the right people to pull it off,” recalled Maj. Beachman. “He put the plan together in 30 minutes, got everybody oriented in the right direction and let them take it from there.”

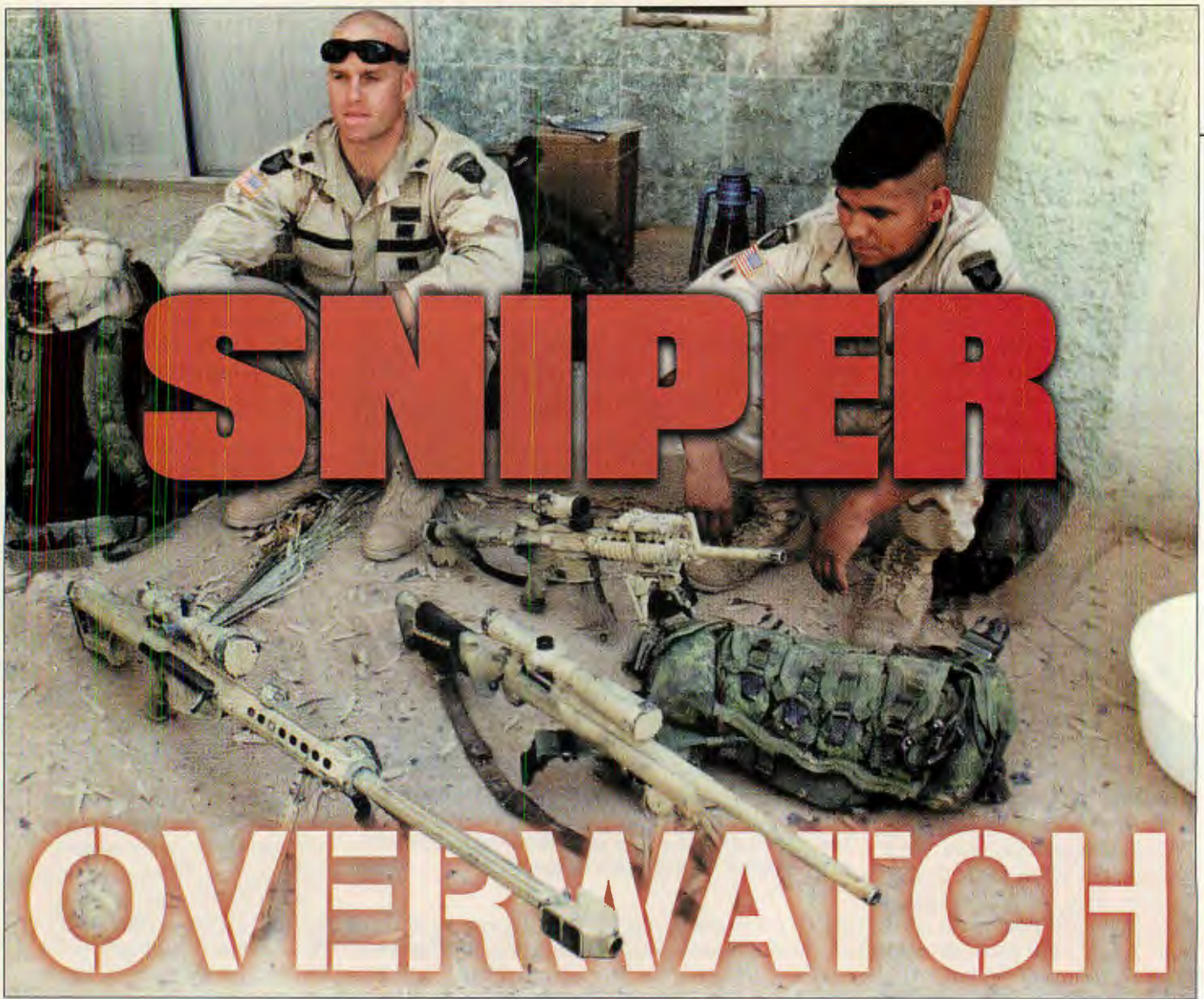
Fetterman, being the leader he is, of course gives the credit to his junior leadership. “I’m very proud of my company commanders and especially their subordinate leadership at squad and platoon,” he said later. “The squad, team leaders and individual soldiers just got in there and did it right under some very difficult circumstances, so I look at those guys and say I’m proud of you and you should be proud of yourselves. We seized some terrain that was critical to operations at the airport, inflicted a significant number of casualties on the enemy, yet took none ourselves. We did something meaningful and did it well.”

Since the fall of the complex and Spiral Hill, Baghdad International Airport has received no direct or indirect fire. As this goes to press, the airport has become one of the busiest strategic airlift hubs in the region, with C-17s, C-130s and C-5 galaxies make multiple trips in and out daily.

J.S. Mosby is an insurgency and counterinsurgency specialist who has covered numerous conflicts from the Balkans to southern Russia. He was embedded with the 101st Airborne in Iraq. ✕



Iron Rakassans from B Company, 3/187th (101st) form up to move on their objectives in Baghdad. Distinctive helmet netting not only builds esprit de corps, but helps prevent fratricide because it is immediately recognizable.



Scout/Snipers in Baghdad

TEXT & PHOTOS BY J.S. MOSBY

“We really didn’t have a need for a ghillie suit in the desert,” Private First Class Jesus Medina told *SOF* while waiting to jump-off with Charlie company, 3/187th onto the mean streets of Baghdad. “The best thing we have found is to take a regular Tyvek suit and paint it tan. If you have to go into an urban area, then you can just paint straight edges on it.”

Medina, the .308 man and former Marine rifleman, is into his first year with the 101st Airborne at Fort Campbell, Ky. The .50-cal. man, Specialist Izaac Ross, agreed as they sat outside the Charlie company HQ, giving *SOF* an exclusive briefing of their activities thus far in Iraq.

“The Barrett is a great rifle, but the optics are a major problem,” Ross said. “We need a scope that’s made for something more than deer-hunting. The Leupold is good, but it’s too light for the .50. We work with it the best we can, but it gets reticle

whiplash and there’s no bullet-drop compensator. Where I have only one or two clicks to adjust with a .308, I have to really crank it on this, 30 to 40 clicks. It’s just not practical. Trying to remember how many clicks to shift from 300 meters to 1,000 is hard enough, trying to count them off in combat? Impossible. This is a second-generation system. The first came out in Afghanistan, we had some problems chambering, but that’s been fixed. For what I’ve done here, it works well. I can reasonably engage out as far as I really need to here but not with the kind of precision this rifle is capable of.”

“They Need To Listen To The Shooters ...”

Indeed, billed as an “Anti-materiel” rifle by a public relations-conscious Army, the .50-cal. shooters with the 101st weren’t even issued match-grade ammo; standard out-of-the-can rounds being deemed sufficient for taking-out a light

(opposite) Scout/Snipers Specialist Izaac Ross (left) and Pfc. Jesus Medina, scout/snipers with 3/187th (101st), wait for the jump-off into southern Baghdad. With a Barrett anti-materiel rifle, Remington M-24 and their spotter's M-4, the section provides a flexible response in the shoot/no-shoot world of urban occupation.

truck full of Fedayeen militia. Match-grade was also deemed too expensive by a Pentagon bureaucracy that thinks nothing of spending billions on high-tech toys that wind up doing the same job, namely, taking-out light trucks full of Fedayeen militia. "They need to listen to the shooters," Ross said as he worked the action over with a dust brush.

No such complaints about the M-24. "That's my baby," Private First Class Medina said, flipping open the Butler Creek scope caps on his optics to check for dust. "I'm running 186-gr., fire-formed Lake Ridge match through it. No problems whatsoever. I can drill your teeth with this rifle."

Around since before Vietnam, the M-24 has proven it's worth over and over. A Harris bi-pod and vintage leather USMC Springfield sling round out Medina's platform. "She's definitely my baby," he said again.

But every sniper has a dream rig and Medina had his. "A Swarovski scope with a Christmas-tree reticle would be perfect. And what I could really use is a Monoloc system to work with my NODs. It's great, they just lock-on and you're good. No need to swap-out scope packages and screw-up the zero, not to mention carrying around a second scope. The ANPVS 10 night scopes are getting old, and the older they get the harder it is for them to hold a zero. One bump and it's out of whack. We're trying to get the ANPVS 13 thermal unit, but there isn't the funds."

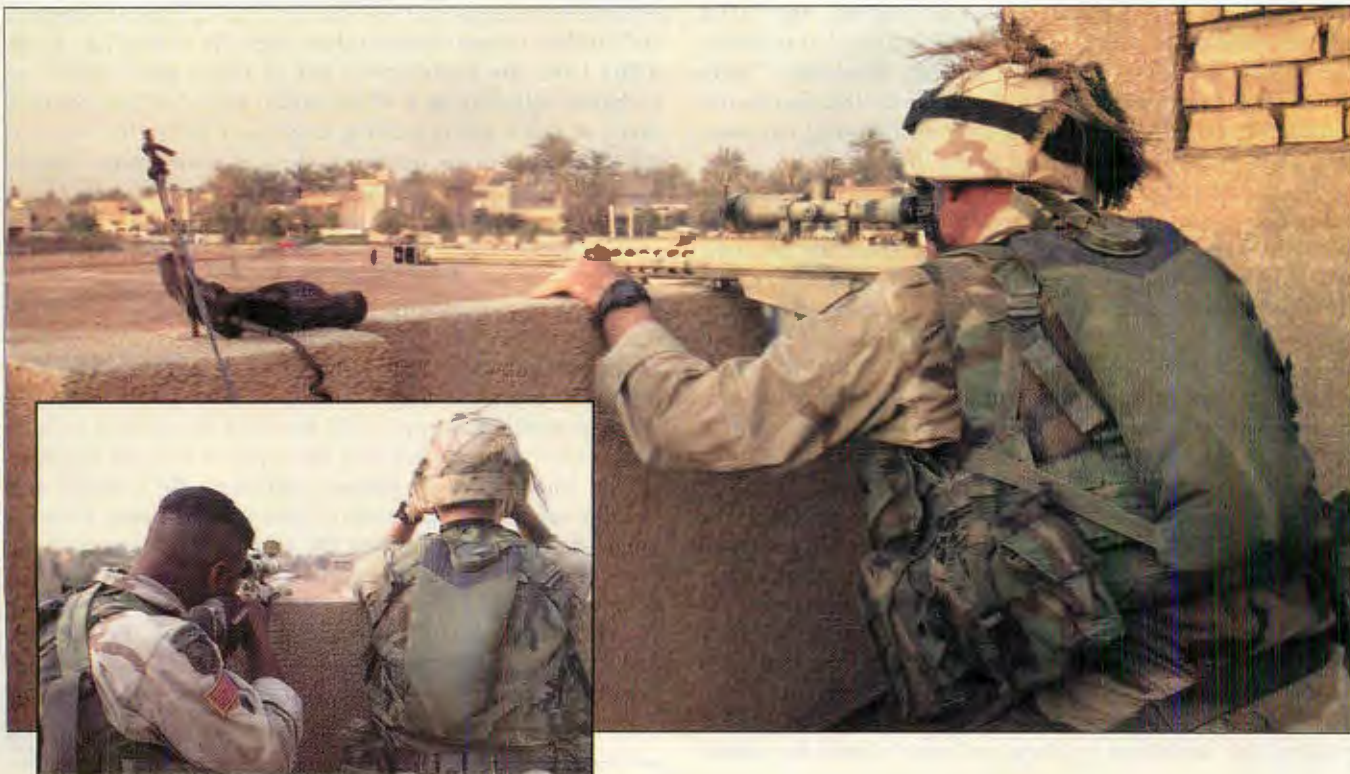
Funding is always a problem as the scouts are organic to a light-infantry battalion and not part of the SpecOps community. But the scouts are given great leeway in their choice of personal equipment and they make do, even when most of their custom kit comes out of their own pocket.

Private First Class Medina, for example, uses the new

USMC RAC gear for his tactical LBE, preferring it over the Army's issue TAC Vest or "Molly" gear (The new Army system where magazine pouches, etc., clip directly to a soldier's ballistic vest, eliminating the need for the old-style web belts and suspenders). He likes the RAC outfit better because he finds it more versatile with its big, multi-use pouches and across the chest configuration similar to an AK-47 magazine carrier. On a Pfc.'s pay, that was no small choice at almost a hundred bucks on the open market. The same holds true for the Blackhawk bags both shooters use; definitely no small change. A Camelback or Hydrastorm goes without saying. Such is their dedication to the trade.

In terms of off-the-shelf, U.S.-issue kit, the pair also spoke favorably of the new SpecOps helmets used by Delta and the cut-down SF K-pots. (The Delta helmets resemble bicycle helmets and the SF K-pot is a cut-down version of the standard-issue Kevlar helmet. Both dispense with the lower flange and have better suspension systems.) "You have to take the regular K-pot off, it totally screws with your eye-relief and slides forward onto the scope every time you shoot," Ross said. "Delta helmets would be great, but once again it's not in the TOE for light infantry. Same for the body armor. The RBA (ranger body armor) is great for a SAW-gunner or a rifleman, but it makes it impossible to seat the rifle into the pocket of your shoulder consistently and that, of course, throws off your cheek weld. What we'd really like to see is the vests the Air Force has. They're made to keep your

(below) Specialist Izaac Ross, a Scout/Sniper with the 3/187th (101st) provides overwatch with his Barrett "Anti-materiel" rifle. Long range and a powerful punch make the Barrett ideal for interdicting possible car bombs in Baghdad's urban setting. Better optics are needed, however, to match the rifle's potential. (inset) Scout/Sniper Pfc. Jesus Medina, from the 3/187th, provides urban overwatch as the line platoons move onto their objectives in southern Baghdad. In what quickly became a civil-affairs operation, Snipers provided the surgical precision necessary in an environment where collateral civilian damage is a no-go.





squads at bay. Perhaps word spread about the first set of bushwhackers or remaining groups pulled back towards Baghdad. Either way, the convoy reached its objective unharmed.

Shortly thereafter, they began to “RIP,” or Relieve-In-Place, elements from the 7th Cavalry who were in blocking positions across from Saddam’s Ministry of Defense, known simply as “The Secretariat.” As the Iraqi defenders in the compound watched the heavy armor of the Cavalry start to pull back, they made their move, perhaps thinking they were catching the Americans during a withdrawal.

We will never know for sure as there were few, if any, survivors from what developed into a four-day-long, combined-arms assault that resulted in the complete destruction of the garrison. While a small part of the overall engagement, the Scout/Snipers, nonetheless, stayed busy.

“We took up overwatch positions and our main mission was to keep the rooftops clear while the line grunts did their job,” Medina recalled. “At the same

Snipers came into their own when the conflict in Iraq evolved almost overnight into a civil-operations mission. With patrols in close proximity to friendlies and children, Baghdad’s urban setting calls for solid nerves and precision shooting skills. (right) Find the bad guy. Traffic jams of Iraqi looters clogged access roads to palaces and other sites during a spree that saw most of Saddam’s palaces cleaned out. Such crowds make convenient cover for insurgents hoping U.S. forces will overreact and injure innocents. Scout/Snipers mitigate that threat.



shoulders free because of the five-point harness they have in airplanes.”

Hard Targets

Due to the lightning U.S. advance and the shattering collapse of Saddam Hussein’s regime, the 101st Airborne didn’t get a lion’s share of the action, but nonetheless got its licks in. When the 3/187th “Rakassans” were detached and sent north to help 3rd Infantry Division secure Baghdad International Airport and the surrounding environs, the Scout/Snipers were on-hand to ply their trade.

Their first hammer-down came on the “GAC” north, or Ground Assault Convoy, in an area along Highway 8 that had been the scene of Fedayeen ambushes. Over the previous days, these militiamen, whose loyalty to Saddam exceeded their common sense, had shot-up a fuel truck and some other rear echelon-type soft targets. As a column of 2-1/2-ton trucks approached, they must have figured they’d have a field-day again. More supply trucks, or so they must have thought. What they didn’t bargain for was trucks full of Airborne Light Infantry on the alert for just this sort of thing and spoiling for a fight.

“It happened pretty fast, but I got off two shots with the M-24,” recalled Medina. “There were seven or so of them and the whole line of trucks opened-up on them the minute they fired. I snapped-up and got a sight picture just as we cut loose. He looked mighty surprised there for a moment.” After the convoy raced out of the kill zone, leaving the Fedayeen assailants shredded by the roadside, the scouts went into active counter-sniper mode, using their optics and skill at reading the landscape to keep any more would-be suicide

time we were keeping an eye out for CAS (Close-Air Support) and artillery targets. None of them tried the roof option, so we didn’t have any shots there, but at one point a bunch of Fedayeen rolled-up in a white Nissan truck and we engaged them. It was a pretty fleeting target and we’re still not sure what they were up to, but we cranked-off some errant rounds from the .50 at them and then they were gone. The rest of the time we were spotting.”

Urban Ops: Shoot, No-Shoot

Shortly after that battle and when the airport was secured, the 3/187th moved into southern Baghdad to take up their zones of occupation. This is where the Scout/Sniper became especially useful, if not essential, because of the situation where potential bad guys could mix with the civilian population. This drastically reduced the types of support available to the line platoons. Almost overnight, the JDAMs and Paladin support available at the Secretariat became a no-go. Single-shot-precision became the name of the game and the Scout/Sniper sections, organic to battalion HHC, were detailed out to the companies.

When SOF caught up to them again, Ross and Medina had established themselves on a rooftop near a mosque. Below us and across a large field, the line platoons moved on

Continued on page 73

The start of Operation Iraqi Freedom came down to two men. Air Force Lieutenant General T. Michael Mosley stood in the U.S.'s high-tech Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) situated in the barren Saudi Arabian desert. It was the middle of the night, 20 March 2003, in the Gulf as Gen. Mosley talked on a secure line to the White House. There, another Air Force general, Richard B. Myers, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman, relayed the big news.

Intelligence sources inside Baghdad reported that Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, and his two powerful sons, Uday and Qusai, was inside the Dora Farms bunkered complex in south Baghdad. One direct hit could kill the war's No. 1 target and perhaps

AIR WAR

Pilots And Tacticians
Combine For The Big Win In Iraq

BY ROWAN SCARBOROUGH

AP Photo/Sue Ogrocki



Commonly known as "bunker-busters," 2,000-pound penetrator bombs are stored on pallets in a bunker at the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant. The bunker holds about 400 of the 8-foot-long bombs.

REUTERS/Faleh Khelbat

achieve a regime change without another shot being fired. The discussion was intense. General Myers relayed the intelligence and target information. General Mosley, the top Air Force officer in U.S. Central Command, checked available packages of strike and support aircraft. As they talked, President Bush weighed a decision to approve a strike and, thus, start the war two days early.

"This was when Baghdad was still a super-missile engagement zone of the highest order," said an allied officer, pointing out that Gen. Mosley needed to pick an air package that could penetrate dense air defenses before bombers had a chance to take them out. The president approved the strike around dinnertime on 19 March, Washington time.

General Mosley had made his decision too. He picked two F-117A stealth fighters, the same aircraft that invaded downtown Baghdad in Operation Desert Storm, to drop four one-ton bunker-buster bombs on the site, followed by a waves of Navy-launched Tomahawk cruise missiles.

The pre-down strike was a success. The stealth planes hit their target and escaped. At this writing it is still unclear whether Saddam and his two henchmen sons were killed. On 7 April, Gen. Mosley directed a second anti-Saddam strike, this one by B-1B bombers on a building in the Mansur neighborhood of west Baghdad. The U.S. does not know for sure if Saddam survived or was killed in either the 19 March or 7 April bombing.

But one aspect of the strikes is known. They were part of the first ultra-modern air campaign of over 46,000 individual missions, or sorties, involving nearly 2,000 aircraft. Of more than 27,000 munitions used in four weeks of bombing, about seven in 10 were "smart" — that is, they were guided by satellites, lasers, optics or terrain-following technology. This compares to one in 10 in Desert Storm 12 years earlier. In that war, only 15 percent of strike aircraft was capable of dropping smart bombs. In Operation Iraqi Freedom, all of them could, from Navy F-14 and F-18 fighters to Air Force F-16 and F-15E fighters and B-2 and B-1B bombers.

Air Force Colonel Mace Carpenter, a key air-planner inside the CAOC, dubbed his plan "mass precision."

"We put more precision firepower on the enemy than in any point in history," he said.

Although the air war began in a unique way, it eventually took on a classic pattern: Hit air defenses, and command and control centers first; then shift more strikes at fielded enemy forces. The all-out air war began 21 March in what was billed as a "shock and awe" bombing. Heavy bombers, and waves of Tomahawk cruise missiles, bombarded Baghdad in a fierce attack. Explosions glistened against the Tigris River along Saddam's Palace row, and flames sprung high into the sky.

A Degrading Enterprise

By 28 March, air-planners believed they had sufficiently degraded key strategic targets and started putting more firepower against four Republican Guard Divisions. Saddam's best ground forces were the only obstacle between the Army's 5th Corps on the west and the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force on the east moving toward Baghdad. General Mosley's planners divided Iraq into 30-mile-by-30-mile "kill boxes." CAOC strategists dubbed this part of the campaign KICAS, for "kill-box-interdiction close-air support." Swarms of tacti-

cal jets and heavy bombers patrolled them 24-hours a day. If a Republican Guard tank or vehicle moved from cover, it got hit. "We laid on these people," Gen. Mosley told reporters on 5 April, the same day the Army first entered Baghdad. "I find it interesting when folks say we're softening them up. We're not softening them up; we're killing them."

General Mosley's goal was to degrade each division by 50 percent of its tanks, artillery pieces and armored personnel carriers. He did better than expected. Some brigades were so battered from the air they had less than one-fifth their assets when the smoke cleared. Many troops laid down their arms and fled. The Army's 3rd Infantry Division quickly took Baghdad International Airport on 4 April, and the next day, a brigade swept into Baghdad, only encountering rag-tag opposition.

This was the moment Marine Corps Major Mike Cederholm had been waiting for.

Plucked from a desk job at the Quantico, Va., Marine base, the F-18



An air-to-air left-front view of a 25th Tactical Fighter Squadron A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft firing its 30mm gun.

"Top Gun" pilot began work in Tampa, Fla., on a plan for something not done often by American airpower: urban close-air support. When he left Central Command's U.S. headquarters and landed in Saudi Arabia, he carried a thick addendum to the traditional air campaign. He decided the war over Baghdad would have a layered look: levels of spy drones, heavy bombers, tactical jets and air-controllers who would sit atop the city and wait to be called in by ground troops to hit pockets of resistance. Major Cederholm gave every building a number, be it an ornate Saddam family palace or a Shi'ite slum.

This way, when a strike was needed, an air-controller would call out the building's number and bombers immediately knew its exact location. "I knew Baghdad almost like the back of my hand more than I ever wanted to," he said. "We knew where the cultural centers were. We knew where the schools were. We knew where hospitals were. And we avoided them. We were extremely cognizant of where they were."

Added Col. Carpenter, "We always believed from the start the center of gravity was Baghdad and the regime in Baghdad."

Major Cederholm gave one example of how urban close-air support worked.

Marines securing a section of Baghdad came under fire from a lone sniper in an apartment building. Ground troops could not get at him. An air-controller radioed the enemy's position, and the major picked an A-10 and its 30mm gun to take-out the sniper.

"We could have dropped the building, but we didn't," Maj. Cederholm said. "We didn't want to do urban renewal. We wanted to do close-air support. Our goal was to have a layered response capability resident over Baghdad 24 hours a day, with near-instant enemy targeting ability."

There was one mistake in a near-perfect air campaign. On 24 March, as the Army's 5th Corps moved to within 100 miles of Baghdad, the Army launched its first strike against Saddam's Republican Guard. Lieutenant General William S. Wallace, Corps commander, picked the Germany-based 11th Aviation Regiment and its advanced AH-64 Apache Longbows to attack the Guard's Medina Division.

About 30 helicopters at night and at low-level sprung a deep strike to take out tanks and armored vehicles. But there were two problems.

First, an Iraqi general in the



town of Najaf in central Iraq learned of the launching from a desert base and used his cell phone to alert Medina troops. The division responded by unleashing a barrage of ground-fire from guns and anti-aircraft artillery. The bullets pierced and nicked the Apaches to the point where commanders called-off the strike and retreated back to base. One helicopter was downed. The second problem, according to Air Force officers, was that the 11th did not have air cover. There were no A-10s or other tactical aircraft aloft that could be called in to suppress the ground-fire. "As a result of that experience, we conducted an after-action review with the pilots and commanders involved in the attack, and we altered our use of our attack aviation based on that information," Gen. Wallace later told reporters. "I would suggest to you that we learned from our mistakes, we adjusted and adapted based on what we learned and we still used the Apache helicopter in a significant role during the course of the fight."

"... Redundancy Into Redundancy ..."

Generals Wallace and Mosley and other field commanders were aided by another new tool they did not have in Desert Storm: drones, or, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). The Predator and other tactical drones allowed war-fighters to see

the enemy over the next hill or in the next town. Once the bombing subdued Baghdad's air defenses, the CIA and Air Force launched a number of armed Predators over the city to try to spot Iraqi leaders, including Saddam himself. In one strike, planners chose the Predator and its Hellfire missile's relatively small warhead to take-out a satellite dish broadcasting Iraq's propaganda-laced television signal. The Air Force used the Hellfire, instead of a bigger warhead, to cut the chances of civilian casualties. "We're still trying to take Iraqi TV off the air," a senior allied officer said at the time. "He's been preparing for something like this for 12 years. He's got redundancy into redundancy. But it's getting harder and harder for him to bring it back."

Perhaps the most valuable UAV was Global Hawk, a high-flying aircraft launched from the United Arab Emirates that could give Gen. Mosley in the CAOC a hundred-mile-wide view of the battlefield — or a soda-straw view of one tank. Global Hawk is still in development and only one was operational for the war. Still, one Air Force officer believed the 44-foot-long pilotless plane found so many targets it shortened the conflict.

"From the very beginning we've had Predators up in the vicinity of Baghdad and from the beginning we've had Global Hawk over the top of Baghdad, and today we've got Global Hawk over the top of Baghdad in an orbit that runs as far north as Kirkuk and Urbil, and as far south as Baghdad,"

Gen. Mosley said. "They're amazing systems and they provide a capability and a set of options for the air commander and for the CINC and

the other component commanders that's just outstanding.

We're at a threshold of something very very

exciting and very

very new with

unmanned aerial vehicles,

whether they are unmanned

combatant aerial vehicles or whether

they're reconnaissance."

The expanded use of spy planes, the speed at which aircraft can maneuver, and the emergence of multiple types of precision-guided munitions have spurred military analysts to rethink the concept of decisive or overwhelming force.

Secretary of State Colin Powell, while Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman in the first Bush administration, said decisive force must be used when America deploys forces into battle. Back then, "decisive" stirred images of massive numbers of ground troops. Now, with technology enabling commanders to take-out enemy units from the air, decisive force can mean limited ground forces, but an overwhelming ability to collect and act on intelligence, air power and intense psychological warfare campaigns.

"It's ... The Impact ..."

"People still have the tendency to measure the decisiveness of their organization by the number of people or the number of airplanes," said retired Air Force Col. John Warden, a Desert Storm air-planner. "But the right measure is how quickly you can impose the desired effect on your opponent. If you can do that with 10 airplanes, you put 10 airplanes over Iraq. It's not the numbers of people or things, but the impact they have and that's gotten pretty darn effective."

Rowan Scarborough writes for The Washington Times. ✕

WASHINGTON'S NEW African Offensive

Red Sea SpecOps Prepares For Anti-Terrorist Ops

BY AL J. VENTER

If the Iraqi war was anything to go by, Washington's intentions in the Near East are likely to be even more determined, especially after a spate of bomb blasts killed a number of American and British foreign residents in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in mid-May (just prior to *SOF* going to press).

In a bid to start the pacification process, select American military contingents, including elements from the U.S. Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and several intelligence bodies have established several operational bases in East Africa. The majority is deployed in strength in or near the former French colony of Djibouti, a pint-sized desert enclave smaller than Massachusetts at the southern entrance to the Red Sea.

Objectives, a Washington source told *Soldier Of Fortune*, are to prepare for a series of region-wide anti-terrorist operations that are likely to be launched now that Coalition Forces have taken Iraq.

The U.S. Navy component is the hi-tech warship the U.S.S.

Mount Whitney, a floating headquarters and intelligence base for the Combined Joint Task Force — Horn of Africa or CJTF-HOF — stationed permanently in Red Sea waters.

Major Stephen Cox, a spokesman for CJTF, told *Jane's* that the U.S. was 'working with host nations to deny the re-emergence of terrorist cells and activities.'

Earlier, Major General John Sattler, the force commander, stated that areas under scrutiny included the entire Somali region as well as coastlines in Africa and along the Arabian Peninsula. He stressed these operations were not independent of host nations but were conducted in coalition with regional states.

In addition, U.S. Marines have established in Djibouti a maritime detachment to patrol areas now regularly used by American naval and air assets.

The U.S. Army High Speed Theater Support Vessel-IX, a strike craft seen several times in recent months entering Djibouti, possibly to refuel, backs this force. Its main task is to restrict al-Qaeda movement throughout the region and to prevent attacks on shipping like that launched on the

American destroyer *Cole* in Aden and on a French tanker off the Aden coast late last year.

In Djibouti itself, the U.S. Marines detachment — mostly hand-picked from the Small Craft Company, HQ Battalion, 2nd Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina — uses Camp Lemonier, the original French Foreign Legion headquarters in Djibouti, as a base. Operations include vehicle and surveillance patrols throughout this tiny state that remains Ethiopia's only major outlet to the sea.

Though specifics remain classified, other countries linked to this largest security operation outside the Middle East and Asia include Ethiopia, Kenya, Eritrea and Uganda. Some missions conducted so far, range well beyond the geographical boundaries of Djibouti.

Last November, for instance, the CIA used the port city as a base to launch a 'Predator' unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) over Yemen. Using coordinates

phoned in by a Yemeni intelligence source, the drone launched a laser-guided Hellfire air-to-ground missile, which destroyed a car, said to be carrying al-Qaeda suspects. All six occupants were killed and the UAV returned to Djibouti.

Washington has since been accused of several extra-judicial killings in the region. This is said to have included targeting suspects without bringing them to trial. The Bush Administration denies the charges, even though one of the first bills pushed through Congress once the Republicans achieved power was to again allow its intelligence community to make tactical hits on any real or perceived enemy. 'Wet jobs' in the argot — these are 'terminal strikes' on individuals (or groups such as al-Qaeda) that might be regarded as a threat either to America, its Allies or to American interests abroad.

It would probably have denied the Yemeni drone strike as well, except that the Pentagon made a media spectacle of its success.

It is no mystery why the Djibouti President Ismael Omar Guelleh, leader of one of Africa's smallest countries — with a population of only 700,000 — has embraced the American



ideal. Recently cemented relations with Washington included a red-carpet visit to the American capital where he spent half an hour in the Oval Office with President Bush.

Enter A Pragmatic Islamicist

A former policeman, President Guelleh — a staunch Islamicist — is regarded by both his friends and adversaries in the words of an American observer as 'smart and wily in an extremely volatile region.' He served as *chef de cabinet* for two decades under the country's first independent leader, Hassan Gouled Aptidon.

Interestingly, Guelleh — while navigating cautiously within the Muslim world — is on record as opposing the invasion of Iraq. But he is also enough of a pragmatist to use the occasion to Djibouti's economic advantage, especially since it is among the 10 poorest of nations with a population that is both impoverished and illiterate. Almost all its food is imported and, until recently, jobs were scarce. The fact that most of the adult population also chews the narcotic *qat* (flown in daily from the Ethiopian Highlands) does not help either.

Notwithstanding a political alliance that is viewed with disapprobation by most of the Islamic world, Guelleh is popular at home, having won three-quarters of the vote in a 1999 election that, though criticized internally, was declared 'free and fair' by international observers.

Djibouti On The Anti-Terrorist Fast Track

U.S. aid to Djibouti has risen exponentially from \$3m to more than \$10m in 2003, much of it being spent on upgrading Djibouti's international airport which is likely to be used to stage air strikes on Iraq once the invasion takes place.

The main reason for Djibouti's popularity is both its location at the head of one of the busiest international waterways as well as its colonial history.

Created artificially by Paris more than a century ago, Djibouti became the major bunkering port for ships serving France's colonies in the Indian Ocean and Far East. With the growth of air travel, Djibouti soon established itself as the most important civil and military airport in the region. Its value as a territorial asset has not been lost by its three immediate neighbours — Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia — all recently emerged from bloody conflicts of their own.

For a start, Addis Ababa has long coveted Djibouti's deep-water port. Somalia, in turn, maintains that historically — or at least until the French moved in — Djibouti was part of 'Greater Somalia.' For decades, Mogadishu campaigned at the UN and elsewhere to incorporate the tiny enclave within its borders. It still claims that Djibouti's territorial significance is reflected in one of the five points of the star that features prominently on its national flag.

Djibouti also became a factor during the recent war between Eritrea and Ethiopia after President Guelleh sided with the more preponderant Addis Ababa government. Ethiopia used Djibouti to keep its armed forces supplied. Indeed, Addis Ababa made it clear from the onset that if Djibouti sided with Eritrea, it would take its port city by

Evelyn Hockstein/KRT



U.S. Marines train at Camp Lemonier in Djibouti, 9 January 2003. Camp Lemonier houses about 900 personnel who are part of the Combined Joint Task Force for the Horn of Africa.

force. The only working railway in the region that connects the Ethiopian capital with the sea underscores Djibouti's value to Ethiopia.

Throughout, Djibouti's ties to Addis Ababa rankled deeply in Eritrea. The issue became critical enough for Ethiopia's prime minister Meles Zenawi to warn Eritrea's President Issaias Afewerki several times that it would brook no presence of his forces on Djibouti soil.

For its part, France has always maintained strong military ground, sea and air forces in the enclave and these assets stayed put even after independence in December 1977. Consequently, internal security and the task of patrolling one of the most desolate frontiers on earth have always been the prerogative of the French Foreign Legion. Indeed, for generations the Legion was regarded as the enclave's first line of defence.

Now American forces guarantee Djibouti's security, which could be a reason why the U.S. Ambassador to Djibouti, Donald Y. Yamamoto, recently stated that all these factors together, 'made the country an island of stability in a tough neighbourhood.'

Meanwhile, the Americans have moved into Djibouti in force. While numbers are classified, one Washington authority put the total of U.S. forces at about two thousand and growing.

Each month sees resident Marine Corps Expeditionary Units (MEU) conducting full-blown exercises using heavy weapons and live ammunition in the barren interior usually (but not always) in conjunction with the minuscule Djibouti Army. Several remote mountain areas in the northeast of the country near Eritrea have similarly been set aside for use by the U.S. Air Force.

Continued on page 75

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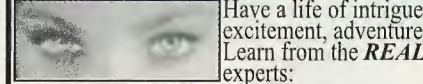
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Torture Today:

How Inflicting Pain For Information And Pleasure Has Evolved Into The 21st Century

BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

"If this is not evil, then evil has no meaning," said an outraged President Bush at the reports of the gruesome sights and images Coalition troops had uncovered in Saddam Hussein's chambers of horror.

Corpses of Iraqis with necks slashed, eyes gouged out, and mutilated genitals were piled up in one prison. Commandos found rubber tires, hooks and cables in torture cells that reeked of human excrement. Live electric cables were strewn about and hooks used for hanging prisoners as they were beaten mercilessly for days, hung from the ceilings.

The razor-wire nooses in the Abu Ghraib Prison shrieked the gruesome fate of some of the victims who had carved their names into the walls while they awaited execution, to leave some trace for their families.

"You say bad words about Saddam, they take you in there and you never come out," an Iraqi told *USA Today*.

"I was beaten, refrigerated naked and put underground for one year because I was a Shi'ite," another said. One recalled being beaten, his eyelids pulled back and his temples and genitals given electric shock. Ten subjects would be crammed into spaces that allowed only two to sleep at one time.

WorldNet Daily further describes the horrors: Black Wednesday had been the day for executing prisoners. Bleak Thursday was the day some families anticipated

with horror, dreading that invitation to buy their relatives bodies for as little as the price of the executioners' bullets. That perverse act of mercy spared the families the anguish of not knowing the fate of their loved ones.

After Saddam's assassins had been killed or driven out by the liberators, those who had refused to accept the fatal outcome of their missing scrambled frantically through the ruins and tunnels in the hopes of finding them alive in some dungeon.

The Marquis de Saddam

Many of the victims were political prisoners. Some had been Americans. The nightmares of 17 U.S. military personnel captured in the Gulf War who were beaten, starved, frozen, subject to electric shock, cigarette burns, mock executions and threats of castration are well documented by the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Others were sports figures, also victims of Uday, Sadaam's maniacal, disfigured oldest son, who had been crippled by an assassination attempt in his Porsche in 1996. Uday, *The New York Times* reports, "inflicted pain and death for pleasure."

Habib Jafer, national soccer team star, recounted his and his teammates torture to *The New York Times*. Torture contraptions included a sarcophagus with long nails that punctured and suffocated those whose performances had



Jailers kept records of torture and death, including this photograph of one victim found among the files in the building.

unleashed Uday's wrath. Another contraption was used to wire the victim for electric shocks, or thrashings with electric cables until they bled. Others whose performance displeased the first begotten monster were forced to kick concrete balls in 130-degree heat, or endure 12-hour grueling fitness sessions while wearing heavy military fatigues and boots.

At the same time President Bush was expressing his outrage over Sadaam's atrocities, grasping for rationale for the invasion of Iraq that had not yet produced any smoking-gun WMD, others were equally shocked and horrified at reports of torture by U.S. military and intelligence officials, of apprehended terrorist suspects.

Torture charges levied against U.S. officials include physical abuse, keeping prisoners in conditions like a meat locker, holding them indefinitely without charge or right to defense.

But what suspects may suffer at the hands of U.S. officials pales compared to the treatment they get from the countries to which they are extradited by U.S. officials, without any legal protections.

Kenneth Roth, executive director of Human Rights Watch, wrote to President Bush: "The allegations, if true, would place the U.S. in violation of some of the most fundamental prohibitions of international human rights law ... Torture is never permissible against anyone, whether in times of peace or war. Any U.S. government official who is directly involved or complicit in the torture or mistreatment of detainees, including any official who knowingly acquiesces in the commission of such acts, would be subject to prosecution worldwide ..."

The Bush Administration denies any accusations of torture, which can be punishable by death or life sentences.

From "Shock And Awe" To "Stress And Duress"

The war against terrorism, in all of its theatrics including the spectacular "Shock and Awe," has labeled the treatment of suspects as "Stress and Duress." A *Washington Post* article triggered a fury of disbelief, outrage and denial when it exposed the extent of torture, after interviewing numerous former intelligence and current U.S. national security officials. Each of the current officers defended the use of violence against captives as "just and necessary."

More than three thousand prisoners apprehended by the United States and its allies in the war against terrorism often have been "packaged" for transport with black hoods or spray-painted goggles, gagged and bound to stretchers with duct tape. "Take-down teams" which might include Special Forces, FBI agents, CIA case officers, and locals "softened-up" suspects that had been "blindfolded and thrown into walls, bound in painful positions, subjected to loud noises, standing or kneeling for hours and deprived of sleep" until they collapse physically and psycho-

logically from extreme fatigue, according to the *Post*.

"After 9-11, The Gloves Came Off"

Although the more than 600 suspects at Camp X-Ray in Guantanamo Bay may have access to lawyers, those at Bagram Base, Afghanistan, at Bagram, Diego Garcia, and other off-shore secret detention centers are secluded, with no rights to lawyers, and off-limits to the Red Cross or family.

True to form, the CIA declined to comment to the *Post*. National Security Council spokesman Sean McCormack told the *Post* "The United States is treating enemy combatants in U.S. government control, wherever held, humanely and in a manner consistent with the principles of the Third Geneva Convention of 1949.

"We are not aware of any torture or even physical abuse," said one official, denying any wrongdoing.

Alan Dershowitz, one of the attorneys who represented O.J. Simpson, scoffs at such deception, demanding that torture must be admitted since it is being done. Torture could be justified, he said, but with legal restraints, such as a court-ordered torture warrant backed by facts proving necessity.

Cofer Black, Director of the CIA's Counter-Terrorism Center from 1999 to 2002, gives a guarded response, said Inter Press Services, "This is a very highly classified area, but I have to say that all you need to know is that there was a period before 9-11 and another after 9-11. After 9-11 the gloves came off."

"If you don't violate someone's human rights some of the time, you probably aren't doing your job," an official told the *Washington Post*.

"Our guys may kick them around a little bit in the adrenaline of the immediate aftermath" another admitted.

Two prisoners who died in U.S. custody at Bagram, U.S. officials said, died of natural causes — one of a pulmonary embolism and another of a heart attack. A pathologist classified the death of 22-year-old Dilawar as "homicide" and held that he had died from "blunt force injuries to lower extremities complicating coronary artery disease" according to *The New York Times*. The 30-year-old Mullah Habibullah's death certificate listed "homicide as cause of death and ruled that he had died in part from blunt force injuries" according to the *Post*.

Abu Zubaida, chief al-Qaeda member, who was shot in the groin during his capture, cooperated when his painkillers were administered "selectively." Medical care and pain control is a "very subjective thing" one U.S. official told the *Washington Post*.

Dr. Martin Brass is an international lawyer who frequently writes on military topics for SOF.

Next month: How Saudis, Syrians, Jordanians and Moroccans interrogate. Plus, SOF interviews victim of torture at the hands of the FARC in Colombia. ✕

Out-Sourcing Torture

One Hundred uncooperative suspects have been "rendered" to countries such as Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco and Syria, where methods of information extraction are more traditionally Mid-Eastern. CIA officials, in some cases, observe the interrogations through one-way mirrors and often feed questions to the foreign-language-speaking investigators.

If a country offers information gleaned from such interrogations "we can use the fruits of it" one official told the *Post*.

"We don't kick the shit out of them. We send them to other countries so they can kick the shit out of them," another affirmed.

"I do it with my eyes open," one U.S. official who was involved in renditions said.

CIA director George J. Tenet told the interviewers that overseas interrogations have "yielded significant returns." One-third of al-Qaeda leaders have supposedly been captured as a result of information extracted during the interrogations. The Saudis are proving increasing important support to our counter-terrorism efforts from making arrests to sharing debriefing results," he said.

— M.B

The Calm



Cranking-Up For The Invasion Of Iraq

TEXT & PHOTOS BY DALE B. COOPER

“Weapons Company will do much of the killing of Iraqis who decide to go down swinging.” That’s what Major General James N. Mattis told Captain Pete Farnum and members of his company.

The Commanding Officer of the First Marine Division

made a special trip to the base camp of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines in the Kuwait desert about 30 miles below the Iraqi border in mid-March.

Just like he did as a Lieutenant Colonel in charge of 1/5’s sister battalion [1/7] 12 years ago, in Saudi Arabia, Mattis

Before The Inferno



Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, load-up ammunition at a supply point below the Iraq border.

and Harriers at the largest U.S. air base in the Gulf area, will destroy many of the Iraqis in the hours leading up to H-Hour.

"You'll be able to see the airstrikes in front of you as move into Iraq," said Mattis who assured the grunts they weren't going in alone.

"I have layers of air support at my disposal, and I intend to use it to chop up the enemy before you make contact. But get ready, because you will make contact," Mattis said.

Twenty-seven radio and TV correspondents, reporters for newspapers and magazines and camera crews will cover the 5th Regimental Combat Team in the event the President decides to invade Iraq.

Before some 60 reporters and camera crews who are covering 1MarDiv left Kuwait City on 11 March, Captain Joe Plenzler, the division's public affairs officer, gave them one last chance to back out gracefully. Fifteen did so before the final offer. But no one else declined to go to the front lines.

Edging Close To War

After a one-night stay at Camp Matilda, where Mattis is headquartered, the combat veteran wished us well as we departed for individual units in his command.

"From here, it's all downhill," said Mattis, "Hot showers will be a luxury," he said. So will hot food when assault forces move to their tactical assembly area before heading for the line of departure. Each Marine and war correspondent will be issued a box of MREs, 12 meals. Enough for three days.

This reporter, who has known Jim Mattis since he was in the Gulf War, is one of 27 journalists assigned to 1/5, the most decorated battalion in the Marine Corps.

Arriving at the 5th Regimental Combat Team where one-third of the division's strength is concentrated, we met the commanding officer,

Colonel Joe Dunford, briefly before being taken to individual units like 2nd Tank Battalion, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines, and, in my case, Counter Mech, a unit of hardshell Humvees mounted with .50-caliber machine guns and Mark 19 grenade launchers.

This reporter will ride into battle with "Gun-1," one of 18 "Hummers," that will sweep the front of 1/5 in search of enemy armor or infantry.

Asked if they were frightened at the prospect of running into Iraqi T-55 or T-72 tanks, most Marines admit they have

told Weapons Company what he expected of them.

"I expect you to kick the Iraqis hard, and keep on kicking them," said Mattis, whose Marines kicked the Taliban out of Kandahar in southern Afghanistan last year.

Mattis told the company the Iraqis have moved substantial numbers of men and weapons into southern Iraq. Mattis believes Iraq has some of the "dumbest" generals on the planet, because they are moving their troops into "kill boxes" where coalition aircraft, including Marine fighter squadrons from aircraft carriers in the region and ground based Hornets



pre-game jitters, but believe the butterflies will disappear when they crank some rounds at the enemy.

Corporal Jeremy Mahon, a machine-gunner in "Gun-1," the lead Hummer in Counter Mech, said if he can't kill them, he can cause them to button-up. And then TOW or Javelin gunners in weapons company can finish them off.

Buddies refuse to ride with Mahon. They believe "Fate's Choice," the name of Mahon's Hummer, is cursed and will be destroyed in combat. Mahon doesn't share their gallow's humor. He says the Iraqis will make a "fatal mistake" if they tangle with his crew.

"They can make fun of him if they want to, but Mahon is the kind of Marine you want in the battalion's lead vehicle," said Staff Sergeant Bryan Jackway, who has worked with Mahon for a year-and-a-half.

"Being lead is a very dangerous job," said Jackway, "but he's confident, cocky, strong-willed and proud." Those are the kind of qualities that commanders want in their warriors.

Throughout weapons company you find some of the same bravado that has been expressed by others who have never seen combat. But there is a quiet sense of pride and enthusiasm. The Marines in 1/5 are ready to live up to their battalion's rich history from the killing fields of France in World War One to the liberation of Kuwait during Operation Desert Storm with intermediate stops at places like Peliliu in the South Pacific and the landings at Inchon during the Korean War.

Make Peace Or Die

General Mattis expects some Iraqi soldiers to fight, but also expects thousands of them to surrender like they did during the Gulf war. He remembers standing in his command track and waving hundreds of Iraqi soldiers to the rear.

"Word of how they were treated as enemy prisoners of war made an impression on many of them," said Mattis, "and I think they will surrender again and choose not fight to the death."

The choice is their's to make. The motto of 1/5, "Make Peace or Die," is screened onto the backs of green T-shirts that Marines wear during their morning calisthenics 3-mile runs in the desert and.

Counter-Mech Platoon Sergeant Pat Kiester watching his men load-up ammo.

In keeping with DoD ground rules on embedding correspondents with front-line units, Lieutenant Colonel Fred Padilla, (tactical call sign "Hondo") Commander of 1/5, promised to tell correspondents when Encom, emission conditions, would permit them to power-up their portable satellite phones and tell the American people, and Saddam Hussein if he's listening, that U.S. Marines from the First Division have just kicked-in his back door and are headed to Baghdad. But Padilla and Dunford both concede there will be various levels of restrictions imposed on the media during the first 72 hours of the war.

Going To The Front — First-Class

I have been assigned to "Gun-3," a Hummer that sports a turret-mounted Mark 19. The gunner, Sergeant Steve Oldham from Portland, Ore., and his driver, Corporal Ryan Gillard, from Tri-Cities, Wash., helped me install a Radio Shack 12-volt power inverter that will provide a constant flow of juice to my satellite phone, and also provide power to recharge my laptop, TV camera, and digital still camera.

Working with the crew, I should be able to be "on the air" at the Associated Press Radio Network within one minute of jumping out of the hardshell Hummer, unfolding the split screens on the NERA satellite phone and punching in the numbers back in Washington. I also have the capability of streaming "Live" video of the invasion. But all night-vision TV cameras that are equipped with IR [infra-red] sensors must be turned off. With night-vision goggles, my Sony Night Shot stood out like a shiny silver dollar in the darkest of nights. Were camera crews to activate their IR systems, the Iraqis, who have some NVG capability, could put a tank or artillery round nearby and possibly kill or injure the TV crew or nearby Marines.

Marines and journalists have been told by division that they can expect to cross the line of departure in MOPP-2 gear, protective clothing and rubber boots. M-40 gas masks are worn on a Marine's hip. Protective gloves are put in the pockets of his chemical warfare suit. All of which will be worn in MOPP-4.



Corporal Jeremy Mahon, Commander Gun-1, with a .50-caliber SLAP-1 armor-piercing round. (below) Major General James M. Mattis, Commanding Officer, 1st Marine Division, briefs Weapons Company at Camp Coyote.

"We expect Saddam Hussein to use chemical or biological weapons against us," said Staff Sergeant Keith Lattman, the division's NBC [Nuclear, Biological and Chemical] expert. Lattman helped decontaminate the Hart Office building on Capitol Hill with anthrax-laced mail. He says anthrax is deadly when unleashed on unprotected troops, but General Mattis says the 1st Division is prepared to "fight dirty" if they get "slimed" by chemical or biological weapons.

"Fighting dirty" simply means Marines will continue to advance in contaminated clothing until they achieve their objectives, and can stop long enough to be decontaminated and change into a second set of Mission Oriented Protective Posture [MOPP] clothing, masks and gloves.

Journalists were issued only one change of protective clothing, and if they get slimed, the ballgame is over for them. They'll be moved to a rear area where they and their professional equipment

will be decontaminated.

Chief Warrant Officer Phillip Ross, the battalion's NBC [Nuclear, Biological and Chemical] expert, is confident he can not only decontaminate those who are slimed," but also can decontaminate electronic gear, including tape recorders, laptop computers, digital cameras even if they aren't sealed in Zip-Loc freezer bags. Foam-rubber wind screens for microphones cannot be decontaminated.

Will Saddam Hussein use chemical or biological weapons? Most officers in weapons company, including First Lieutenant Pat Henry, Commanding Officer of the 81mm mortar platoon, fought in the Gulf War, and believes Saddam will strike early with chemical weapon in hopes of inflicting enough casualties to cause Americans to demand an end to the war.

Ross is not worried. He has worked with 1/5 for more than a year-and-a-half and believes it is the "best NBC-trained battalion in the division."

Ross was not too excited when more than a dozen pigeons showed up at the weapons company. "Give me a rabbit or some other animal to detect gas, but not a pigeon," said Ross. Some NCOs in the company were not enthusiastic about the



pigeons that are known to carry lice.

If Saddam orders his generals to launch a chemical attack on 1MarDiv, General Mattis says the Iraqi leader will wish he had never been born.

Awaiting The Word To Move Forward

With the exception of daily "Gas Drill," training for the assault battalions in 5 RCT has ended. Marines are spending their final days writing letters home to loved ones, playing soccer, or just relaxing in their tents. Some reporters assigned to 1/5 are allowing grunts to use their satellite phones to call loved ones back home.

Almost a dozen young men stood in line at the Humvee I will ride into battle if war breaks out. Eight of them hadn't received any mail or been able to make any calls home since arriving in the Kuwait desert in early February.

You only had to look at their facial expressions as they made contact with wives, mothers, fathers and girlfriends. Some said the wait for a chance to use the DSN line in camp could last eight hours with no guarantee of getting through. The wait at the A-P sat phone was only a few minutes.

Ruben Moreno, the First Sergeant of Weapons Company, sought out the young men who have had no contact since being here. Unselfishly, he passed the phone to each of his men, before calling his wife in southern California. Gunnery Sergeant Gregory Hudson insisted that every man in the company get their chance to touch base with their families before he called his back at Camp Pendleton.

Captain Farnum was gratified to see what was happening outside his tent. He believes this is the best weapons company in which he's ever had the pleasure to serve and looks forward to becoming the company's executive officer after the war is over.

A Wake-Up In A New World

For a civilian who is used to living in five-star hotels while on assignment in the Persian Gulf, living with Marines in the field is like living in another world; a world of constant dirt and dust.

The night journalists joined the 1st Division, a violent thunderstorm swept the division's living service areas. The next night, a massive sandstorm struck.

One moment the officers and non-commissioned officers of Weapons Company were reading books, watching a movie, *The Bourne Identity*, on Farnum's DVD, or just relaxing when, suddenly, the 40 x 100-foot tent began to shudder and shake.

The left wall of the tent collapsed in gale force winds, bringing Weapons Company and Charlie Company in the other end of the tent to their feet.

While some Marines like Staff Sergeant Thomas Russi, an 80mm section leader in the mortar platoon, grabbed the sidewall and kept it from bringing the roof down, other Marines rushed outside in the dark to assess the damage.

Before Farnum decided it would be best to retreat to the mess tent, his Marines shored up the sagging side with pieces of plywood sheeting and boards.

The trek to the mess tent was miserable. The storm drove sand into our eyes and swirling dust filled our lungs. Weapons Company had a restless night on the floor of the mess tent. Men coughed and hacked all night like they had croup.

You could write your name in the dust on table-tops when daylight arrived, but Weapons Company got on its feet and carried its gear back to their tent. The next day broke clear and sunny with a gentle breeze. What a difference a day makes.

I can't speak about the other armed services and how they are treating embedded journalists, but I can say the treatment in 1-5 has been superb.

Continued on page 81



Corporal Michael Copher, Commander Gun-6, with a .50-caliber-equipped Humvee.

atomic Digital Technology

Atomic accuracy in any U.S. time zone

Atomic digital watches keep absolute time and date accuracy by tuning in to the official time transmitter

The world has become a smaller place in the past few decades. Transactions take place across the world in an instant. Having a timepiece that can not only keep perfectly accurate time, but also keep track of the time zones can be really helpful and convenient. Now there is a watch that scientifically gives the right time in all zones within a 2,000 mile range of the F-1 Fountain Atomic Clock.

If you travel this watch is a necessity. The Atomic Digital Watch from LaCrosse Technology is radio-controlled, maintaining its incredible accuracy by automatically tuning into the official standard frequency and time transmitter in North America. This WWVB radio signal gets its time from the most precise clock in North America based in Colorado, and transmits its signal over a 2000-mile range. The Atomic Digital Watch gives you a selection of 24 time zones, from GMT+12h to GMT-12h with special U.S. time zones displayed with three characters (ATL, EST, CST, MST, PST, ALA, and HAW). This ultra-accurate radio-controlled timepiece has a perpetual day and date calendar, signal reception indicator and is powered by a 3-volt lithium battery expected to last up to three years.

Radio wave technology

Does anyone really know what time it is? Well, the U.S. Government wants to, so they created the National Institute of Standards and Technology, a component of the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Time and Frequency Division, located in Boulder, Colorado, maintains the F-1 Fountain Atomic Clock, the nation's standard of time. This clock neither gains nor loses a second over a 1 million-year period. This clock is used to create an international time scale, which NIST distributes through its radio stations.

Wrist-worthy. Now, advanced Radio Frequency (RF) technology is featured in a wrist-worn timepiece for use at home, at the office or on the road. This watch is the next best thing to having your own atomic clock, because it automatically displays the precise accurate time thanks to its improved radio-signal reception. With a 12 or 24-hour time mode capability, it automatically adjusts itself for daylight saving time (also with an "OFF" feature) and leap years and it features a variety of practical and convenient features to fit your lifestyle.

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“Without Warning,

Canadian Sniper Concentration

TEXT & PHOTOS BY ROB KROTT



Sans Remords”

The spotter gave instructions and made corrections to the sniper as the crash and thunder of long-rifle fire echoed from the buildings and the wooded ridge nearby. The sniper was just engaging more targets when attacking infantrymen popped up only 50 meters away. Just another day at the Canadian International Sniper Concentration.

The Canadian International Sniper Concentration (CISC), part competition and part training exercise, is open to Canadian law-enforcement agencies and invited teams from foreign armies. The CISC, hosted annually by the Combat Training Center's Infantry School at CFB Gaagetown, New Brunswick, tests such skills as stalking, field firing, navigation, advanced shooting, and



(clockwise from above) CPL "B" (on right) and his spotter, CPL "T" from 1st Battalion, The Royale 22e Regiment "Vandoos" placed third. Two Canadian snipers engage popup targets at Austere Village. A Canadian sniper with the issue Parker-Hale rifle engages targets on the last station of the stress-fire. Canadian sniper checks his "shooting dope."

communication. Each sniper team competes in a series of realistic events and is expected to analyze each situation and select an appropriate course of action.

Canada's Master Snipers

There are only about 150 qualified snipers in the Canadian Forces and competition is tight for the handful of training slots. Less than a third of those who start the 45-day sniper's course at the Infantry School pass the final exam. The sniper cell oversees all sniper courses in the Canadian Army. In charge of the CISC was the current head of the sniper cell, WO Rick Hills. With Hills was WO Len Murphy, the CISC Coordinator, and CPT Jon Herbert, the OIC of the Sniper Cell. Also assisting over the eight-day event was Master Warrant Officer Stu Hartnell. Hartnell ran the Sniper Cell from 1997-2000. He's never missed a Sniper Concentration — this was his sixth.

There were 26 participants (13 teams) at this year's CISC. Coaches were allowed to observe only. Teams came from various Canadian infantry regiments and police agencies. There were two foreign teams at the CISC: British Army sniper instructors from the infantry training center at Brecon, Wales, and an American team representing 1/501 Airborne Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army.

On Wednesday, the sixth day of the CISC, I ate breakfast with the sniper-cell cadre, all wearing their black windbreakers with the sniper cell logo and bi-lingual motto "Without Warning, *Sans Remords*" (Without Regrets), and the teams, before riding out to the range with them. At 0815 the teams received their op order brief — and conditions and standards for the exercise — from WO Jean Marc Riendeau.

Long Guns And Longer Days

After WO Riendeau's briefing I looked over a variety of sniper weapons. The Canadians were using the C3A1 7.62mm Sniper Rifle — a highly modified Parker Hale M82 fitted with a Unertl 10x optic, firing Norma Match 7.62mm ammunition loaded with the Sierra Match King 168gr HPBT (M) bullet. The British Army team was using an Accuracy International L96 .308 (similar to the AI AW civilian) mounting and a German Schmidt & Bender 3-12x50 riflescope. The Americans were firing a U.S. Army-issue M24 .308 sniping rifle, with a Harris benchrest swivel-bipod, a tactical intervention specialist's sling, and mounting a Leupold M3A scope. Their spotter's weapon was an Armalite AR-10T .308, bought off the shelf, with a Badger Ordnance charging handle and mounting a Nightforce NXS Extreme 3.5-15x50 scope on Badger Ordnance rings. It was also dressed out with a Harris benchrest swivel bipod, a tactical intervention specialist's sling, and a Tactical Solutions stock extension.

The Ontario Provincial Police SWAT were using a SIG 551-P SWAT .223 and were also field-testing a SIG Commando 552-2 P. Other Canadian teams had a Leupold 3.5-10X and an ANPEQ-2 night sight with infrared painter mounted on their issue C-7 Diemaco rifles, along with a modified Harris bipod. Some of the weapons also mounted the general issue ELCAN 3.4-power optical sight.

The first two days were meet and greet, briefings on the competition, and Vendors' Day. On Vendors' Day, rifle, scope, and equipment manufacturers displayed their wares and the competitors took the weapons to the range for a familiarization fire. The snipers from 3 PPCLI, veterans of Operation Anaconda, also presented an informal "Lessons Learned" program concerning their real-world sniping missions in Afghanistan. It was an informative and well-received Q&A.

Day three was weapons zeroing, day and night. The next day it was again all range time from 0800-2400 hours. That's 16 hours of intense shooting with breaks only for meals. On day five of the concentration things got interesting as the teams went through a counter-sniper stalk beginning at 0500, a long-range shoot, and another counter-sniper stalk. This made for long days, up at 0600 — prepare equipment, eat breakfast, load vehicles for transport to ranges, and arrive at the training area no later than 0750. At the end of the day the snipers had to clean and maintain their equipment, clean weapons, and get some rest for the next day's activities. Day Six was an urban-rural sniping exercise in the "Austere Village," Gagetown's MOUT (Military Operations Urbanized Terrain) training site.



Welcome To Austere Village

While half of the teams went through that station, the others were involved in an offset-shoot exercise. The teams flipped after lunch. The weather, which the day before had been a scorching 100°, dropped to about 35° with winds and rain courtesy of Hurricane Gustav. This, along with the vicious bugs, made the shooting conditions less than ideal. The winds, gusting unpredictably as Hurricane Gustav hit the Maritimes, eventually became a real problem for the shooters.

I followed the Montreal SWAT team through the woods. They began shooting from a bunker position built in a jumble of concrete rubble between two houses. The initial threat (target) was 570 meters away in the woods on the opposite side of the valley. The target was a steel silhouette. There was



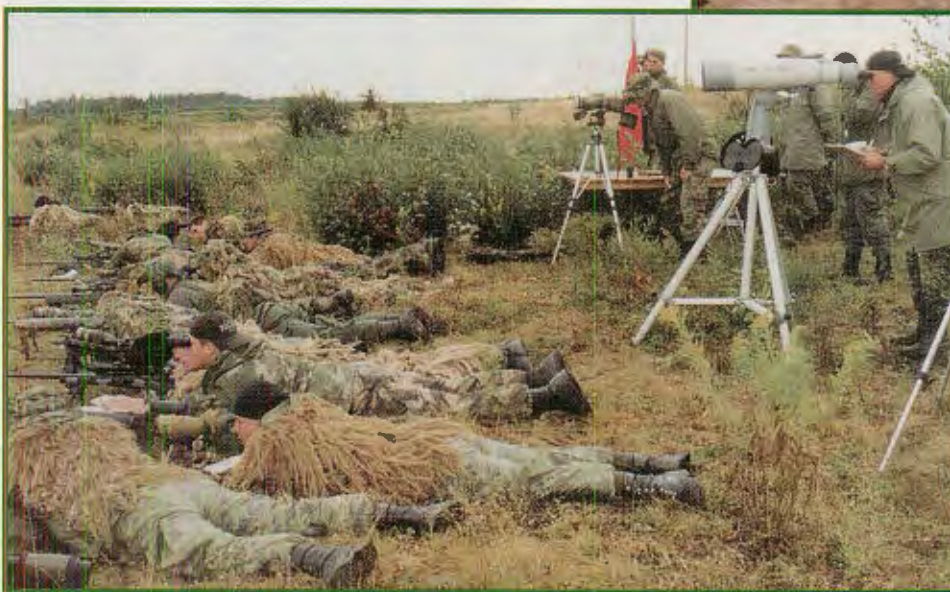
a 12-minute time limitation to set up, get the shooting dope, and make the shot. Staff instructors with spotting scopes scored the shots. Other targets, pop-ups and mechanical silhouettes, were electronically recorded / scored. The team from 3 Vandoos failed to shoot. "The snipers are not given location of target — they just get the mission scenario.

"It's up to them to find the target. These guys were looking too close and wasted their time," said Hartnell, remarking on the non-shoot. Hills chimed in with, "This is what separates the professional shooters — the tactical snipers from range shooters." The first scenario evolved into a second scenario. Hearing calls for help they then had to run around a building to investigate. There they encountered role players: one soldier shot in the leg and bleeding, while another point-

(top, left) Role-play scenario at Austerre Village: Canadian snipers engage pop-up targets while two Infantry School students play the part of friendly troops. (top, right) America's Top Snipers? Staff Sgt. Justin Shaffer and Sgt. 1st Class Cameron Nix (right) took second overall, but scored tops in several categories. Shaffer took first place with his off-the-shelf Armalite AR-10 T .308, bought off the shelf, with Badger Ordnance charging handle, mounting a Nightforce NXS Extreme 3.5-15x50 scope on Badger Ordnance rings. It was also dressed-out with a Harris bench-rest swivel bipod, a tactical intervention specialist's sling, and, at night, a Tactical Solutions stock extension. (above) Shaffer and his Armalite scores hit at 2002 Canadian International Sniper Concentration.

ed out enemy positions. The sniper and spotter then went to work engaging long range, intermediate and close pop-up targets. The spotters had to engage multiple pop-up silhouettes in a house at 330 meters, as ammo for the primary sniping weapon was limited. Both team members had to shoot and communicate and they also had to call for a medic for the wounded soldier.

During many of the shooting scenarios the sniper-cell cadre lobbed artillery simulators and smoke grenades to add realism, and during the night they built fires to impede night-sight shoots. At one point, Hills grinned at me as he tossed a simulator and said, "We try to make things interesting." Hartnell told SOF that the Canadian Army's success in producing top combat snipers is largely due to the sniper cell's realistic training: "It's as close to combat conditions as we can make it. We try to simulate as closely as possible the fleeting nature of a sniper's target on the battlefield. People are diving for cover, running full tilt, only popping their heads up for a second, all sorts of stuff. They aren't standing up facing you, or jogging along one step at a time. So we made our targets



(above) Engaging the ambush: Pop-up targets surprise a sniper contestant on the stress fire. Good form ... and that looks like a hit to us! (left) Spotters call the shot while team coaches and the cadre observe, as competitors shoot timed-fire exercise. Weather at Combat Training Center's Infantry School, CFB Gagetown, New Brunswick, was "realistic."

smaller, we moved them along faster and we only showed them for a second at a time. Our targets are realistic, they work, and while the guys complain about them, when the course is finished they all admit: "Yeah, you were right."

That afternoon a constant drizzle fell on the course. While it may have soaked the competitors' ghillie suits it didn't dampen their spirits. That night it was back to Austere Village for a classic urban second-story shooting scenario. The ranges, out to approximately 330 meters, presented a good nighttime, urban-shooting exercise. The Canadians were using their "maxkits" — the Simrad KN-203-FAB (Field Adjustable Boresight) GEN III OMNI-IV Night Vision Weapons Sight. It is a lightweight night-assist weapons sight that basically pares up with the Canadian Elcan. The Americans were using an AN/PVS-14 monocular with a Tactical Solutions MonoLoc adapter.

Day seven was the Multiple Engagement, Unknown Distance Shoot, and Alternate Positions events. Range-firing kicked-off with the "multiple engagement" of targets at 310 to 850 meters. The spotters, given the shooting angles and mission by a cadre member, then ran back into position to direct the shooter. A timed event, the shooters didn't have all day to set up the shot. They had to adjust their firing position, get the dope from their spotter, and take the shot in four

.308 sniper rifles. The unknown-distance shoot tested the teams' ability to gauge distance across the low-rolling terrain. The alternate position shoot included shooting from rooftops, mouse holes, truck seat inside the cab of two-ton truck, and buddy-supported position. WO Moss commented that some of the positions in the alternate positions might be strange, but that was the purpose — "to get you (the snipers) away from belly shooting, which is what you've mostly been doing for the last week."

American Rifleman

The U.S. Army team, representing HHC, 1/501st Airborne Infantry Regiment of Ft. Richardson, Alaska, comprised Sergeant First Class Cameron Nix, sniper, and Staff Sergeant Justin Shaffer, spotter. The American shooters paid their own way: Justin was on permissive TDY while Cameron was on PCS leave. Sergeant Shaffer, a former sniper school instructor, paid for his flight in from Alaska where he is a sniper section leader and Sgt. 1st Class Nix, assigned to JRTC, drove up from Ft. Polk, Louisiana. The two NCOs were former classmates at sniper school. They both knew they were facing some stiff competition. Shaffer told SOF that the Canadian

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I first met John Coleman in the early 1980s. My politically incorrect, struggling screenwriter instincts told me that the handful of Americans who had served in the Rhodesian Army in Southern Africa during the hard-fought guerilla war of the 1970s were fertile fodder for a movie script. I never finished the script, but I made a number of friends researching that project and John Coleman became one of the closest. Another American Rhodesian combat veteran, Tim Carmody, had suggested I look up Coleman advising, "He's the real thing."

And that's certainly what John Coleman was; a Vietnam vet who had been involved in the Lam Song 719 invasion of Laos in 1971 and served in the U. S. Army from 1969 to 1975. After U.S. involvement in Vietnam ended in 1972 Coleman went to Ranger School with every intention of becoming a career Command Sergeant Major. He also later served in the 2/3rd Mechanized Infantry, but by then, now in his mid-twenties he decided that he didn't want to be part of an at-the-time dispirited American Army that suddenly decided that it "... wanted to join you."

Not that Coleman was a hardass. Anything but, because the John Coleman I knew reveled in being charmingly irreverent with a style that always suited his ever-present Hawaiian shirts, bush shorts and "Mr. Cool" Ray Ban sunglasses. Then there was the parrot tattoo that he acquired on his left chest, not in Southeast Asia or exotic Africa but in sunny Santa Barbara while working on his Masters Degree in Modern European History with a focus on the Cold War, U.S. foreign relations, just a few short years ago.

In the mid-1970s the romance and adventure of Africa beckoned along with the not-so-fleeting idea that taking on the murderous terrorist guerrillas of Marxist leaders Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo in then Rhodesia might help even the score for Vietnam. Coleman braved the toughest of British colonial basic training to find himself a sergeant with "3" Commando of the Rhodesian Light Infantry along with ex-Royal Marines, former legionnaires, an Italian count and a handful of Americans over the three years that he served. Americans were all but disowned by their own late-1970s' government that ignorantly considered their participation in the Rhodesian conflict tantamount to being racist mercenaries. Never mind that these Americans were fighting side-by-side with a Rhodesian Army made up of eighty percent high-

ly motivated black Rhodesians who also weren't particularly fond of a torturing, murdering enemy trained and armed by North Korean, Chinese, Russian and Cuban advisors.

Coleman knew all this and more, for Rhodesia provided him with one of his life's defining moments when he rushed into a water-hole ambush to rescue one of his downed troopies, only to suddenly be seriously wounded himself. Of course "seriously wounded" doesn't quite accurately describe the situation since Sergeant Coleman had been shot *five times* in one burst from an AK-47. Miraculously, none of the slugs hit any-

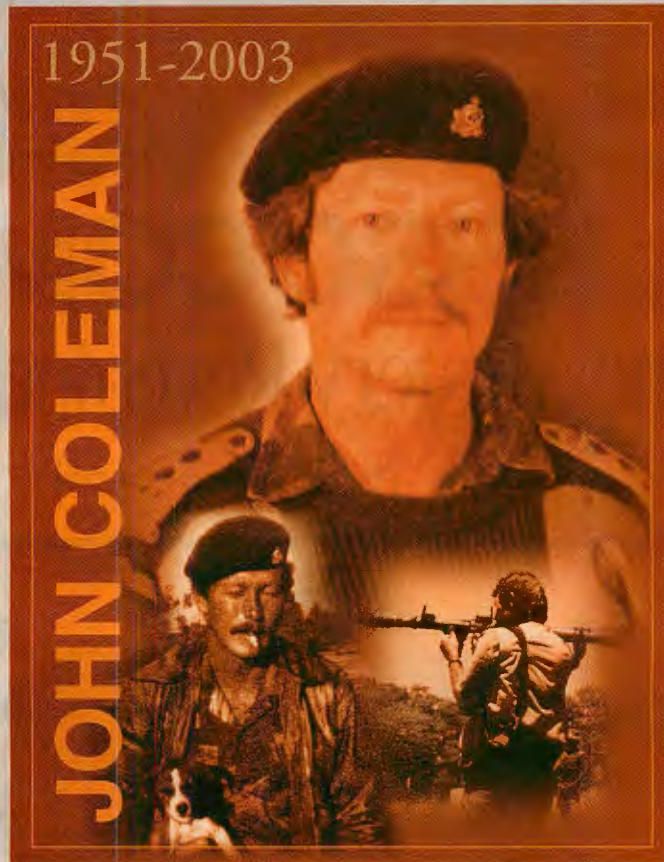
thing vital though he would have bled to death had his men not gotten an emergency MEDEVAC chopper in to get him to the nearest hospital. The troopie he had attempted to rescue wasn't so lucky; he died on the scene.

Rhodesian Army commander, Lieutenant General Peter Walls later visited Sergeant Coleman in the hospital and promoted him on the spot to lieutenant. Tim Carmody told me he once asked John if he had any regrets about his service in Rhodesia. Coleman had laughed and said only one, "I wish I had checked-out those bushes where that *terr* who shot me was hiding a lot closer."

John wrote about his experience in one of his first pieces for *Soldier Of Fortune*, "Shot Five Times With An AK," which eventually led to his journalism career with this magazine. Once after Coleman became an editor at *SOF* he and I were standing near the back-issue racks at one of the Las Vegas *Soldier Of Fortune* Conventions in the late 1980s. Suddenly a cammo-be-decked wannabe scooped-up that particular issue with

John's harrowing personal story in it and started to proclaim that *he* was indeed *that* John Coleman in the article and proceeded to autograph the story for passersby! I was ready to back-up John's play whatever that might be, for all the good I might have done when he stopped me and laughed. "It's no big deal. If that's what this guy needs to make him feel important, let him have at it."

I met a lot of great and fascinating people because of John Coleman. There were those great Rhodesian-style *breis*, or barbecues, that John and his first wife used to throw at their little house in the San Fernando Valley. John attracted a number of interesting people, often from a former military walk of life. Former *SOF* managing editor, and



Soldier, Adventurer, Journalist And Former *SOF* Editor

BY DAN GAGLIASSO

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SOF PROVING ground

The New USSOCOM Stock The Mystery Revealed!

BY GARY PAUL JOHNSTON



During the past year, SOF forwarded me a number of photographs of U.S. Special Operators in Afghanistan armed with specialized variations of the M4 Carbine, and asked me to identify them. Although the copies of the photos I received were poor, I was able to report on various enhancements of the weapons. These included the Rail Adapter System (RAS) produced for the Military by Knight's Armament Company, the Aimpoint Comp M Red Dot Sight, PEQ-2 Laser Designator, REDI-MAG spare magazine carrier, OPS, Inc. Sound Suppressor, etc.

However, in many of these photos appeared a retractable buttstock that was unusual. Instead of having a simple round top, this version appeared to be in a shape that was not only rounded, but also triangular. To further confuse the issue was that virtually every one of these buttstocks had a white plastic

The new SOCOM stock is seen here on the M4 Carbine with the standard retractable stock removed. The SOCOM stock holds spare batteries for the Aimpoint Comp M2 sight mounted on the carbine, as well as other electronics. (inset) Here the SOCOM Stock is removed from the M4 in order to access its spare battery tubes. Each of the two tubes can hold a variety of spare batteries to power electrical sights and lights.

strap, commonly referred to as a "flex-cuff," running around it.

One rumor that circulated identified this strange stock as being a wound compress that was strapped to the stock, and that also served a dual purpose in providing a "cheek piece." Although skeptical, I reported on this speculation, but we

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Command Guidance

Continued from page 6

And here's what the liberal news media are not telling the public: H.R. 2038 has numerous, overlapping gun-ban provisions that ban millions more guns than the Clinton law. It bans every AR15, M1A, M1 Garand, Ruger Mini-14, Mini-30, and Ranch Rifle, and M1 Carbine, regardless of whether the gun has a pistol grip, folding stock, flash suppressor, or bayonet mount.

It bans every other semi-automatic rifle that uses a detachable magazine. Every semi-automatic center-fire rifle that uses a fixed magazine of more than 10-rounds. Every semi-automatic shotgun. Every semi-automatic rifle or shotgun an Attorney General one day claims isn't "sporting." Every frame or receiver for any of these guns, plus any repair parts that could be used to assemble one of them. It bans the importation of standard-capacity magazines and makes it a crime to sell a legally owned "assault weapon" with a standard-capacity magazine.

Since anti-gunners do not consider self-defense a legitimate reason to own a gun or ammunition magazine, they talk only about crimes committed with guns, and they pretend this bill will stop crimes. And to do so, they have to conceal yet another fact: So-called "assault weapons" are used in only a small percentage of crime, a fact made clear by state and local law-enforcement agency reports, and a study that Congress required of the Clinton gun-ban law, which found that assault weapons "were never used in more than a fraction of all gun murders."

Credit goes to the National Rifle Association and its members for working hard to put a pro-gun President in the White House and a pro-gun majority in both houses of Congress. If H.R. 2038 is crushed as hard as it deserves to be, credit will go to individual gun owners like you for calling, E-Mailing, faxing and writing President Bush and your Members of Congress and making your opinions respectfully — but unwaveringly — known.

To contact your respective U.S. Senators and Congressmen, please call, write or E-Mail them at:

U.S. Senate: Tel.: 202.224.3121; Web Site: <http://www.senate.gov> ;

U.S. House of Representatives: Tel.: 202.225.3121; Web Site: <http://www.house.gov> . ✉

Sniper Overwatch

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their objectives while scads of civilians and children stood by or mingled with the troops.

"Third building left from the corner at 12 o'clock," Medina's spotter said as we stood there, his voice almost a whisper.

"Top floor, second window from the right."

Arrayed before us was a vast panorama of windows, doorways, balconies, rooftops and a host of other nooks and crannies where a sniper or ambusher could ensconce themselves. With cool deliberation, the scouts picked the landscape apart with their Steiner Commander binoculars and rifle scopes, looking for any threat, anything out of place.

Medina swiveled the big .308 over a few degrees and settled-in, gazing intently through the scope. "It's just a couple of women, next," he said. Another spot in the urban landscape before us was pointed out. The same procedure. Look, establish, determine. Shoot, or no-shoot; again and again as the platoon 300 yards away filed down the street. Very discrete, but ready to drop-hammer on anyone with bright ideas about popping an RPG from a rooftop or cracking-off a round from a balcony. And so it went. Whenever patrols moved out, watchful eyes kept a silent vigil over them.

Police-Plus

During our time in Baghdad, other imaginative uses for the Scouts were put to the test. In one instance, a woman reported to the battalion that a group of hooligans calling themselves the "Committee for a Democratic Iraq" had summarily evicted her and her children from their home at gunpoint. The battalion sent over a squad of troops and told them in no uncertain terms that they were to clear-out — and stay cleared-out. For good measure, and to make sure they stayed away, Medina and Ross were stationed in the house across the street with orders to shoot the miscreants if they were so foolish as to return.

It was later reported that after the troops had left the area shortly before nightfall, the hooligans pulled up in a car down the block and started back towards the home. Before they could get there, however, someone came out and informed them of the presence of the Snipers. Upon hearing this bit of

unwelcome news, they piled back in their vehicle and hauled ass, never to be heard from in that area again.

As a tool for urban-security and pacification, Scout/Sniper detachments are worth their weight in gold. While it is impossible to station a rifleman or a squad on every street corner, the very nature of how Scouts visualize and use the terrain enables them to cover a large area with great precision. Just the sight of the scouts moving around the AO seemed to have a pacifying effect on the locals. With their scoped rifles and professional demeanor, word seems to get around very quickly that trouble-makers can, and will, be handled with extreme prejudice, and most likely they'll never hear the shot that drops them. In an urban setting like Baghdad, you know they're in the area, but you can't see them. The PsyOps effect of this is incalculable.

Unseen Eyes Are Upon You

SOFers remember well the feeling of such unseen eyes upon us in places like Sarajevo and the effect it has on one's decision-making process. In the case of Baghdad today, this effect is a force for stability and peace, despite the heebie-jeebies the uninitiated still have about men who can shoot-down someone with one shot at great range. As a cost-effective means of establishing and maintaining security and civil stability, there is probably no other weapons system that achieves so much for so little when used in conjunction with walking infantry. At the same time, in the age of *Al Jazeera* where every televised civilian casualty becomes a mob scene on the streets of the Middle East, Scout/Sniper detachments are really the only viable response when the hands of the infantrymen are tied by rules of engagement and artillery and air is simply out of the question.

So here we are in the age of the Internet, GPS and cruise missiles. Despite all, on the gritty streets of places like Baghdad, Khandahar or Pristina, it still boils down to the walking infantryman backed-up by the Scout/Sniper, where a trained eye guides a steady hand, holding a bolt-action rifle that dates back to the turn of the century. Some things will simply never change; nor should they.

J.S. Mosby is an insurgency and counterinsurgency specialist who has covered numerous conflicts from the Balkans to southern Russia. He was embedded with the 101st Airborne in Iraq. ✉

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Combat Weapon Craft

Continued from page 37



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an ignominious retrace of his once-glorious advance. He unwisely decided to dig-in at Kut, where he was quickly encircled by Turkish forces. Any possibility of significant resupply and reinforcement was expeditiously eliminated by the Turks. Townshend naively thought he could hold out at Kut until he would be relieved by a column coming north from Basra.

Salvaging his personal reputation now occupied him completely. Perhaps the newspapers in London would make him a hero after all, comparing him to Gordon at Khartoum.

No such luck! Adopting the tactic of slow strangulation, the Turks brought in German artillery and began what they calculated would be a long siege. Townshend's sanity deteriorated rapidly. He became giddy and whimsical, secluding himself most of the time and issuing conflicting and illogical orders on the rare occasions when he came out. He should have been relieved.

He made no effort to break out from Kut, and an overdue relief column from Basra, despite heavy casualties, was unable to break through from the other direction.

On Saturday, 29 April 1916, Townshend surrendered his entire command at Kut to the Turks. Townshend's men subsequently endured a brutal captivity in Turkish POW camps. Most, succumbing to starvation, disease, and murder at the hands of Turks, did not survive to return to England. Townshend himself was meanwhile wine and dined in Constantinople as a guest of the Turkish government (who apparently regarded him an intriguing curiosity), all the while caring nothing for the lot of his men.

Townshend was eventually returned to England where he vainly attempted, for the rest of his life, to justify his conduct. His attempts fell on deaf ears, particularly those of the few survivors of his ill-fated command.

Lesson: Personal vanity has ultimately disgraced the careers and reputations of more than one commander. Custer, Townshend, and Percival all suffered from "delusions of grandeur" so burdensome that they literally lost their minds when they saw it fading away. A sound mind carefully combines humility and audacity. Tilt too far in either direction, and disaster awaits, as we see from the foregoing. ✘

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America's elite 24 MEU also arrived three months ago. Its components started immediate training exercises in urban warfare.

Meanwhile, onboard the U.S.S. *Mount Whitney* off Djibouti late February, Major-General Sattler was asked by the BBC's Frank Gardner whether developments in the enclave were the first step towards the Pentagon gearing up to go into Somalia and Yemen. The correspondent referred specifically to the al-Qaeda presence in these states.

The American CJTF commander was evasive. Rather, he said, America would prefer that the host countries pursued these terrorists themselves.

'But now that the U.S. has Special Forces troops here on the ground, it does have the ability to react extremely quickly,' he concluded.

There is already some evidence that America is getting involved in some of the regional spates, especially where these might involve monitoring groups with possible ties to al-Qaeda. Several reports in recent months have spoken of U.S. Special Forces, using Ethiopia as a base, having probed deep into Somalia.

One report said that the Ethiopian Prime Minister Meles Zenawi had admitted sending his troops into Somalia to attack members of a militant Islamic group al-Ittihad. Zenawi told BBC's 'Focus on Africa' program that al-Ittihad was linked to Osama bin Laden and that his forces has captured tons of documents that proved the al-Qaeda connection. Another source has indicated to this writer that the raids were both planned and coordinated by CJTF and that U.S. planes had been used both for infiltration and exfiltration.

'Several Afghan Arabs had been killed in the most recent raid on an al-Ittihad training camp near Mogadishu,' He declared.

Somalia's TNG President Abulkas-sim Salat Hassan has denied Ethiopia's claims and maintains that his government has no links with Islamic extremist groups.

At press time, the Army News Service announces: CAMP LEMONIER, Djibouti — A 10th Mountain Division company from Fort Drum, N.Y. , arrived in Djibouti May 4 to support Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa. ...

AlJ. Venter's articles have appeared in SOF for more than 25 years. ✕



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John Coleman

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now well-known movie technical advisor Captain Dale Dye, was a regular. Then there was *Los Angeles Times* reporter Terry McGarry, who, against his editor's better judgment, had taken a sincere interest in the Rhodesian Veterans Association that Coleman had helped to co-found. And there were plenty of those ex-Rhodesian friends at these gatherings, too.

In one corner you might find that crazy little digger of a former British South African Police tracker from down under, Mick Doyle, doing the "dying cockroach," right next to John's great friend, Dick Delaney, an American who had so skillfully flown helicopters in the Rhodesian Army. There would also be other colorful types hanging around like Bob MacKenzie, the quiet, serious Yank who was an ex-major in the tough and secretive Rhodesian SAS; former SF Major, journalist and novelist Jim Morris, and another former SF officer, and later Rhodesian Cavalry troop commander, Mike Williams.

Coleman at a party was a sight to behold. The previously mentioned *Los Angeles Times* reporter Terry McGarry, at Coleman's urging, invited me to his annual St. Patrick's Day formal, but quite unstuffy, blow-out. While the rest of us, including a large number of young and very liberal *Los Angeles Times* types, held forth in tuxedos with our ladies in evening gowns Coleman had decided to slightly stretch the invitation's directive of "dress mess and medals for serving officers." Of course no longer a serving officer, he still created quite a stir — and one hell of a dashing one — in his perfectly tailored Rhodesian Light Infantry green dress officer's uniform complete with proper Sam Brown cross belt and beret.

As the night wore on and McGarry's hired bagpipers began to play Irish tunes, Coleman and I downed a few extra pints and John begin to inquire of the pipers, "Can you play *Men of Harlech* on those bagpipes?" *Harlech* was the regimental song of the 24th Regiment of Foot at Rorke's Drift, immortalized by the movie *Zulu* and was a personal favorite of both John's and mine. The pipers could indeed play it quite well, and though it was a Welsh martial tune instead of Irish, for the rest of the evening John delighted in making it his own version of *Melancholy Baby*, demanding continu-

ally, of the put upon pipers to "Play *Men of Harlech!*"

When our mutual close friend, Tim Carmody, found himself in a shit-hole Brazilian prison with seven other American vets in what became known as the "Nobistor Affair" it was John Coleman who uncovered the story behind the story on the pages of *SOF*. It was also John who went to publisher Bob Brown and got him to buy Carmody and the other eventually-on-the-run-through-the-Amazon escapees their plane tickets home, once they had crossed over into the relative safety of Bolivia. Then Coleman hopped the plane to La Paz to contact the fugitives at their safe house and deliver the tickets in person. I always knew that if I somehow found myself in bad spot in a foreign land and there was any way that Coleman could help he would be there; he was always there one way or another for his friends.

About once every couple of years I could always count on John for a late night slightly inebriated phone call from the NCO or Officer's club at Fort Benning, Fort Lewis or some other stateside army base where he was doing a story. John knew I was a fan of the American Indian Wars, particularly that little skirmish on the banks of the Little Bighorn known as Custer's Last Stand. As the phone would ring and I would answer, Coleman always launched into the same request: "Hey, Gagliasso. It's Coleman. I got a bet at the bar with this bloke. Now where were Captain Benteen and Major Reno when Custer ... " The conversation would go on well into the night probably on Bob Brown's dime without John ever seemingly going back to collect on his bet. That was vintage John Coleman

And so were John's final words that he had carefully chosen to E-Mail out when he finally succumbed to pancreatic cancer this last March, after having fought Hodgkin's disease into remission some 10-odd years ago.

John Coleman's last admonishment was from the classic western *Lonesome Dove*, where in the dying but still irrepressible former Texas Ranger Gus McCrea comforts his old friend Captain Call who sits deathwatch by his bed, "My God, Winslow, it's been quite a party, ain't it."

That's the John Coleman I'll always remember. Vietnam veteran, decorated Rhodesian officer, loyal friend, talented journalist and always a man with that great glint of irreverence shining about of his eyes. ✕

its military had any offensive biological weapons.

Then, in 1992, Russian President Boris Yeltsin stated that both the Soviet Union and Russia had top-secret offensive germ-weapons programs.

The arms programs violated the 1972 Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, which banned such munitions.

Mr. Yeltsin issued an edict that called for Russia to eliminate the biological weapons programs.

However, recent intelligence from Russia makes it clear that the Russians under President Vladimir Putin are continuing the banned germ-weapons programs. ...

Clinton's Military

Some in the military are chuckling over assertions by former aides to President Clinton, who say his military won the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Never mind the fact that he had eight years to get Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, say some rank-in-file members who contacted us. In the late 1990s, the military's combat-readiness had reached such a low point that Republican senators had to threaten the Joint Chiefs of Staff to come to Capitol Hill and testify about the sorry state of affairs. Their testimony led to a big influx of cash.

A longtime Army officer tells us: "Jokes within the military during Clinton's reign reflected the 'Meals on Wheels' mentality. We dreaded the 'Snacks on Tracks' and 'Green Beret Buffets' missions. The bottom line is that had Clinton had his way, the military would have been decimated and marginalized. The truth is that the military fought him tooth and nail every step of the way. The military that prevailed in Afghanistan and Iraq did so in spite of Bill Clinton. I have been in the military since President Nixon and all I can say is, thank God for President Reagan's vision and the way President George W. Bush has revived it."

Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough are Pentagon reporters. Mr. Gertz can be reached at 202/636-3274; or by E-Mail at hgertz@WashingtonTimes.com. Mr. Scarborough can be reached at 202/636-3208; or by E-Mail at rscarborough@WashingtonTimes.com. ©2003 News World Communications, Inc. All rights reserved. ✕

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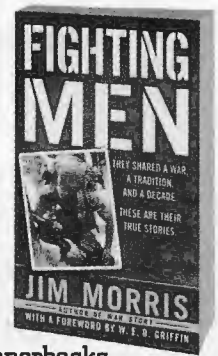
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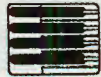


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USSOCOM Stock

Continued from page 72

now know it was totally incorrect.

The stock pictured in many wire photos was actually a special new retractable stock designed and produced by the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) as part of the Special Operations Peculiar Modification (SOPMOD) program. This program encompasses the Enhanced Carbine that has been described in *SOF*.

Amounting to a product-improved stock for the M4 Carbine, this one houses two tubular battery-storage units, one on either side of the triangular cheek piece. To access these tubes, the stock must first be removed from the recoil spring tube assembly. The battery tubes can then be freed by turning their waterproof caps from the front in order to free them from the stock assembly. The tubes are then pulled forward and out where the caps are removed out to access the batteries.

Several types and sizes of batteries can be stored in the tubes to replace those of various electronic devices on the carbine including Aimpoint Comp M Red Dot Sights, Eotech Red Reticle Sights, C-More Reflex Sights, SureFire Weapon Lights, and others. The sample I've received has rubber washer-like cushions between each battery.

The new SOCOM stock has a non-slip rubber butt plate and several provisions for attaching slings or sling mounts along with one forward mount that remains somewhat of a mystery, but what about the white plastic strap visible in the AP wire photos? Although I have no verification as to its purpose, I believe it was a field-expedient sling-mount with those furnished being either incomplete, or unsatisfactory.

Although only a few hundred of these stocks were made and issued by SOCOM, it has now licensed the design for manufacture to A.R.M.S., Inc. As this is written, it is uncertain whether or not the original design will be improved, as its wider cheek piece is not compatible with a gas mask, and it must be removed in order to access the spare batteries. In addition to being produced for SOCOM, the stock will reportedly also be available commercially.

For information on this and its entire line, contact A.R.M.S., Inc., Dept. SOF, 230 West Center St., West Bridgewater, MA 02379; tel.: (508) 584-7816. ☒

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"Without Warning"

Continued from page 70

snipers are among the best he has seen. "They have an excellent program here. These guys are very, very good," Shaffer said he has learned a lot from the Canadians. "There's always a lot of knowledge [and] techniques to share. Canadian snipers are definitely ahead in a lot of ways." Last year Canadian snipers took first, second, fifth, and sixth places at the U.S. Army Sniper School's competition at Ft. Benning, and first, third, and seventh at the 10th Special Forces Group's sniper competition at Ft. Carson, Colo. The first-place shooter at Benning and Carson, Corporal "B" from 1st Battalion, The Royale 22e Regiment "Vandoos" was here. I was talking to Shaffer and Nix in the barracks when the Canadian champion stopped by to chat with the Americans. Nix was beat out at Benning in 2001 by Corporal "B" and they were friends. As Nix told SOF, "You go to these (sniper competitions) and you see the same faces."

Friday the 13th was the "stress-fire," the final event in the competition, and it would prove to be a very unlucky day for some. The standings were close. There was no particular team running away with the competition, as the top four or five teams were all competitive for first place, dependent upon their scores in the stress-fire. This last shoot would determine the winning team. Equipped with two pistols with 20 rounds, a sniper rifle with 10 rounds, the number two rifle with 25 rounds, and any ancillary equipment they chose to carry, the snipers would have to negotiate a hellacious course of fire devised by the sniper cadre. The stress-fire course would include simulated automatic fire, role-players, pyrotechnic "booby traps," a high-tech near ambush of Lockheed Martin automated pop-up targets, a house-clearing scenario, and a long-shot scenario (770 meters). Both team-members would have to shoot from: a hide site, building positions, a rooftop, and a rest position in a building façade, as well as negotiate a near-ambush and engage targets on the run, clear a house with their pistols, and interact with role players. All in less than 17 minutes.

The competitors had to wear their "ghillie suits." The first station was a "cold bore" limitation shoot with the first shooting position from the hide. There was a 17-minute time limit to do

the stress fire or the team would be disqualified. While I understood the time limit parameters, some of the teams supposedly didn't, as they made clear after the competition. This would have serious ramifications for the American team. Staff Sergeant Shaffer had demonstrated his ability to finish "in the money" taking top pistol and placing third overall the year before, and taking top shooter in 2000, and it looked like he and Sgt. 1st Class Nix were going to win this year. I shadowed Shaffer and Nix through the stress fire, dogging their trail, but always staying about 50 meters behind them on the run. Because I didn't want to intrude upon their "bubble" or distract them in any way, I closed the gap when they got into position to shoot to take photos from behind them.

I watched all of the teams through at least part of the course, usually the near-ambush and the house clearing. Most of the teams engaged the pop-up targets (after tripping a ground flare) that appeared to their left, with their pistols. I even watched one spotter drop his rifle and fumble to draw his pistol. One of the cops had the best engagement of the near-ambush, in my opinion, dropping the targets rapidly with his semi-auto rifle. The Americans dropped the targets quickly with their pistols, with U.S. Army issue M9 Beretta 9mm's in Tactical Tailor drop holsters, advancing as they fired — standard U.S. Army.

The Americans were the sixth team to shoot the stress-fire and their time was 15:59 — not the fastest, but their score would prove to be pretty damn good. Nix's chief competition, CPL "B," the sniper from 1 Vandoos, didn't make the time limit. He shot a good score of 64, but finished at 18:08, so technically he was disqualified. This would create a bit of controversy later, as that team would finish third overall under the revised scoring. Some of the teams later claimed they didn't understand that breaking the 17-minute time limit meant a complete disqualification on the stress fire — only disqualification of any targets knocked down after 17 minutes. Therefore, the cadre ruled, scores would stand. The pistol scores were not added to the overall score as in past competitions. Unfortunately, under either scoring method, 17-minute disqualification rule or use of pistol scores, the Americans would have placed first. Sergeant Rattray, RCR dropped from third to fourth.

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Top Guns

After the stress-fire, the sniper-cell cadre and support staff were addressed by the Combat Training Center commander, Colonel Michael J. Ward, and awarded the commander's coin in appreciation of a job well done. That night the snipers were feted at an awards banquet in the Sergeant's Mess.

First place, overall, went to CPL Scott Nickerson and his spotter, Master Corporal (MCPL) Kevin Esterbrooks from the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Canadian Regiment (2RCR). They received their names on the CISC team trophy for 2002 and MCPL Esterbrooks' name and unit was inscribed on the "Treger Trophy" (a mounted Parker-Hale sniping rifle) in memory of legendary Canadian sniper WO Grant Anthony Treger. Previous winners of the Treger Trophy were 3/75th Rangers Staff Sgt. Humphries (1999), USA Sniper School Staff Sgt. Justin Shaffer (2000), and 2 /22eR "Vandoos" Corporal C. Fortin (2001). Overall second place went to Shaffer and Nix, representing the 1/501 Airborne Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army; and CPL "B" and his spotter, Corporal "T" the 1st "Vandoos" placed third.

In the top shots category, for sniper it was, again, Corporal Nickerson, 2RCR. The Diemaco Trophy, top shot with a number-two rifle, went to Staff Sgt. Justin Shaffer. The Americans also took first place in alternate position shoot, first place in unknown distance, and were leading in first place up to the stress shoot. They were edged out of first place by only 20 points. The McMillan Trophy was awarded to the Ontario Provincial Police team of constables Kelly and Howells as the best Long-Range Sniper Weapon Team (.50 caliber rifle). Top Team Pistol went to WO "T" and SGT "Mac" of the Western Area Training Center, Wainwright, Alberta, receiving their names on the pistol trophy (a mounted Browning Hi-Power 9mm) sponsored by Tetragon-Tasse Distributors. In 2001, the first year the pistol trophy was awarded (as an individual event), Sergeant Justin Shaffer won it.

Lieutenant-General Mike Jeffery, Chief of the Land Staff, presented awards and addressed the snipers: "The quality — not the quantity — of this army is what will take us forward. The snipers play a key role in that. We went through a period where many armies lost these skills, but they've been kept alive in the Canadian army

by a very select few. We've seen a resurgence in the importance of the sniper, here, in the Canadian Army. The Afghanistan experience has secured the sniper's rightful place in the very small but professional Canadian Army for some time to come and established their reputation nationally and internationally. The sniper is a special kind of individual ... requiring special attributes ... to work independently and in small teams. You are the silent elite!"

Editors' Note: Staff Sgt. Justin Schaeffer competing as the number two (spotter-observer) and his partner, Sergeant (E-5) Mike Hensley took three first places: top team; top spotter; and top gun at the 2002 U.S. Army Sniper Competition at Fort Benning, GA.

Soldier Of Fortune congratulates all members of the "silent elite" who participated in the year's CISC — they're all winners.

SOF Chief Foreign Correspondent Rob Krott writes often on sniping topics. ✕

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Calm Before The Inferno

Continued from page 64

Individual members of Weapons Company have helped me get squared-away. The XO, First Lieutenant Jay Lappe, who will coordinate close-air support and artillery fire for the company, used one of his black socks to make a cover for my dust goggles so they wouldn't shine in the moonlight. Gunny Hudson, who fought in the Gulf War as a TOW gunner, gave me his old load-bearing vest. Lappe took time to

The storm drove sand into our eyes and swirling dust filled our lungs.

properly attach my two canteens, first-aid kit, and digital TV camera pouch. Guess they were tired of seeing me walk around in the tent with my pants being pulled down by the load.

Special Perks

Originally, Lieutenant Colonel Rick Long, Public Affairs Officer for the First Marine Expeditionary Force, said each of the correspondents who would cover Marine units during any war with Iraq would be made honorary Corporals. But upon reaching 1/5, First Lieutenant Joe Shoemaker, the unit's public affairs officer, announced that each of the correspondents in his battalion would be accorded privileges of a Major in the United States Marine Corps. Not bad. Going from E-4 to O-4 in two days.

War correspondents were also given a Fleet Post Office number and allowed to send mail "Free" through the Military Postal Service. Although there's been some complaints about mail, some grunts like Staff Sergeant Bryan Jakway have received care packages full of goodies from home in nine days.

While the embedding process is unprecedented in relations between the media and the military, one wary member of the Fifth Estate remarked, "I hope we don't get any Christmas cards."

Dale B. Cooper is a longtime contributor to SOF. His combat-in-Iraq articles will continue in subsequent issues. ✕

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Sound Off

BY COL. DAVID H. HACKWORTH, USA (RET.)

No Light In The Afghan Tunnel

Operation Enduring Freedom — launched in Afghanistan a month after 9-11 — is now officially over. But despite Pentagon spin to the contrary, our casualty count from that war-torn land won't be winding down anytime soon.

Last month [April 03], the increasingly bold Taliban forces took and held two district towns along the Pakistan border for a week — right under our commanders' noses — and now a day doesn't pass without terrorists assaulting Afghans, international aid workers or soldiers. In the past month alone, four American warriors were killed in Afghanistan, bringing our occupation terrorist-inflicted combat losses to 30 deaths.

The dollar tab is mounting, too. The bill for 8,000 U.S. military personnel running what the Pentagon euphemistically calls "stabilization operations" is costing the U.S. taxpayer \$9 billion a year.

Many of our troops pulling duty over there say their big concern is that the situation might well develop into a long-term running sore.

And they see ominous similarities to the pitiful attempts at pacification that turned the Vietnamese people off during that 20-year, guerrilla-driven war.

Then there's the parallel of the same indiscriminate use of the big U.S. firepower hammer that killed hundreds of thousands of innocents in Southeast Asia. A recent U.S. airstrike in eastern Afghanistan that was meant for the terrorist bad guys killed 11 civilians from one family alone. As we keep learning the hard way, these sort of errant explosives are major recruiters for the insurgents.

In Afghanistan, as in Asia, our forces are finding that their vastly superior superpower advantage — firepower, mobility, electronic intelligence gathering and communications — can't do the job against a lightly equipped, hit-and-run guerrilla force with the cunning to attack only when it believes it can win and that knows the ground like Cameron Diaz knows her body.

More bad news is that there's ample evidence that Mullah Omar, Osama bin Laden's good buddy, is making a big comeback in southern Afghanistan. The Taliban thugs under Omar might no longer rule the land, but they're still in the terrorism business and have the run of a fair chunk of the countryside, especially along the wild and woolly border Afghanistan shares with Pakistan.

A Special Forces soldier says, "When I first got here five months ago, the attacks were patchy, but today it's a



whole new ballgame."

A recent Taliban attack on a U.S. platoon actually occurred during broad daylight. The terrorists boldly killed two U.S. soldiers and wounded five others before scooting across the border to their safe haven in eastern Pakistan.

And while the Taliban are displaying renewed guerrilla prowess, our forces seem to be getting nowhere fast. Six weeks ago, a large and costly short-term exercise in futility — Operation Valiant Strike — was launched to hunt down and destroy the terrorists. At the end of this op, when cost was weighed against return, we were way in the red.

Civilian aid workers have even become targets. A Red Cross representative was shot and killed several months ago after being stopped by a terrorist gunman. A Taliban commander said the terminate-with-extreme-prejudice order came from Omar himself and was aimed at destabilizing the U.S.-supported government. Since the murder, more than a dozen international aid agencies have pulled out because the risk of operating in that area is simply too high. No aid workers means no aid — except what those friendly folks from the Taliban provide.

"What's more disturbing is that our senior commanders will not press attacks against the Taliban out of fear of U.S. casualties," says another Special Forces warrior. "Our forces are under guidance to only attack when there's the least amount of risk to U.S. personnel. For the most part, we sit on our bases and get sniped at and rocketed.

"U.S. cash and food are given to the warlords to keep their allegiance," he says, "but they use it to finance the private armies with which they run this country. And the only way the warlords will give up power is if they're killed."

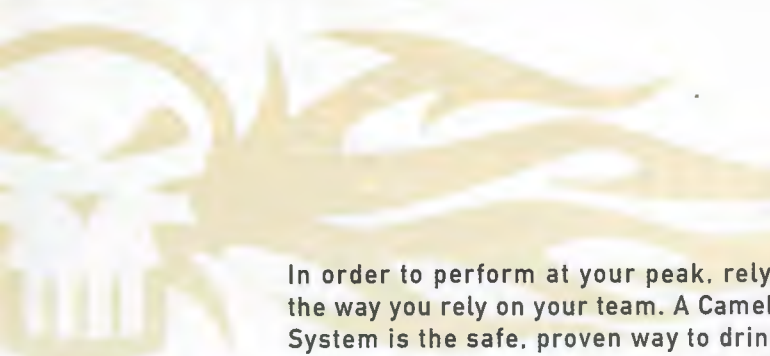
"War" or "stabilization," Afghanistan is our tar baby, and we're stuck fast. Too bad the policy-makers who put our soldiers at risk didn't brush up on their Brit/Soviet/Afghan History 101 beforehand.

Let's hope Iraq doesn't become Harsh History Lesson II, even though it, too, sure seems to be moving in that direction.

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

Sign in for the free weekly *Defending America* column at his Web site. Send mail to P.O. Box 11179, Greenwich, CT 06831. His newest book is *Steel My Soldiers' Hearts*.

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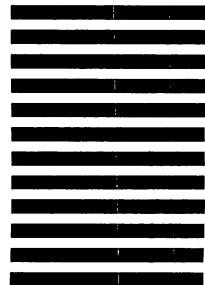
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