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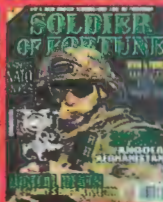
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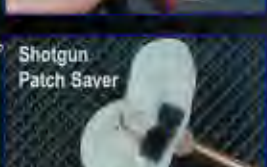
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SOLDIER OF FORTUNE MAGAZINE

Support the Troops!

DECEMBER 2003 ✂ VOL. 28 NO. 12



Sergeant First Class Paul Avallone

On the Cover

Special Forces ODA 2520 operators go guns-up during ops in Jalalabad, Nangarhar Province, Afghanistan.

AMERICA AT WAR

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| THE GUNS OF AFGHANISTAN by Paul Avallone Special Forces operators go "treasure-hunting" for giant arms caches and come up with a unique collection of storied weapons. _____ | 20 |
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Polish Ministry of Defense



Greg Mathieson/MAI



Gary Paul Johnston

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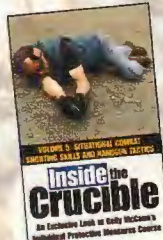
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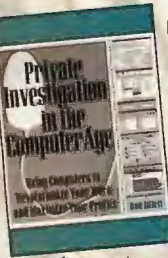
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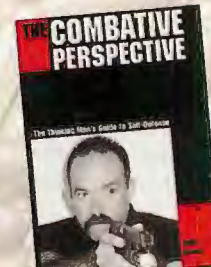
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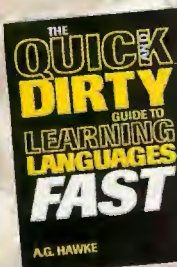
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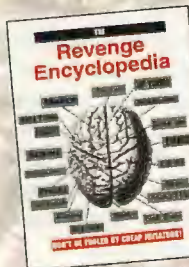
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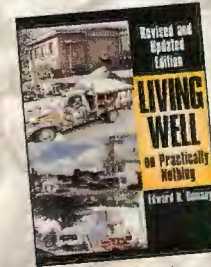
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—President Clinton, 4 Feb. 1998

"If Saddam rejects peace and we have to use force, our purpose is clear. We want to seriously diminish the threat posed by Iraq's weapons of mass destruction program."

— President Clinton, 17 Feb. 1998

"Iraq is a long way from [here], but what happens there matters a great deal here. For the risks that the leaders of a rogue state will use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons against us or our allies is the greatest security threat we face."

— Madeleine Albright, 18 Feb 1998

"He will use those weapons of mass destruction again, as he has ten times since 1983."

— Sandy Berger, Clinton National Security Adviser, 18 Feb. 1998

"We urge you, after consulting with Congress, and consistent with the U.S. Constitution and laws, to take neces-

sary actions (including, if appropriate, air and missile strikes on suspect Iraqi sites) to respond effectively to the threat posed by Iraq's refusal to end its weapons of mass destruction programs."

— Letter to President Clinton, signed by Sens. Carl Levin, Tom Daschle, John Kerry, and others, 9 Oct. 1998

"Saddam Hussein has been engaged in the development of weapons of mass destruction technology which is a threat to countries in the region and he has made a mockery of the weapons inspection process."

— Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), 16 Dec. 1998

"There is no doubt that ... Saddam Hussein has reinvigorated his weapons programs. Reports indicate that biological, chemical and nuclear programs continue apace and may be back to pre-Gulf War status. In addition, Saddam continues to redefine delivery systems and is doubtless using the cover of a illicit missile program to develop longer-range missiles that will threaten the United States and our allies."

— Letter to President Bush, Signed by Sen. Bob Graham (D-FL), and others, 5 Dec. 2001

Continued on page 80

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| New BDU Pants (XXXXL) | \$29.95 |
| Used BDU Hats | \$1.95 |
| Used Field Jackets (XS-MED) | \$12.95 |
| Used Field Jackets (L-XL) | \$24.95 |
| New Field Jacket (S-XL) | \$49.95 |
| New Field Jacket (XXL-XXXL) | \$54.95 |
| New Field Jackets (XXXXL) | \$64.95 |
| New Leather Field Jacket | \$124.95 |
| New Leather Police Jacket | \$119.95 |
| New ECW Parka Complete | \$39.95 |
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| Used Gore-Tex Pant Liners (Bear) SM-MED | \$14.95 |
| Used Field Jacket Liner (S-LG) | \$7.95 |
| Used Poncho Liners | \$12.95 |
| New Poncho Liners | \$24.95 |
| New Nomax Gloves | \$29.95 |
| Used Nomax Coveralls (Pilot) SZ 36-44 | \$39.95 |
| Used Nomax Coveralls (Tanker) | \$29.95 |
| Used Nomax Balaclava | \$12.95 |
| Used Kevlar Helmets | \$69.95 |
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| New Ripple-Sole Jungle Boots (BLK) | \$49.95 |
| Used Jungle Boots | \$14.95 |
| Used Combat Boots | \$14.95 |
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| Used Poncho | \$14.95 |
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| Used Old Style PT Suit | \$9.95 |
| Used "Army" PT T-Shirt | \$1.95 |
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| New "Army" PT T-Shirt (SM-MED) | \$3.95 |
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Rules of Engagement: Guns Up

I am a military policeman in Baghdad, Iraq. I wanted to respond to the "Command Guidance" in the October '03 issue. I am unaware (at least here in Baghdad) of any MP or soldier that isn't allowed to carry their rifles or machine guns. I am also unaware of any "restrictive" rules of engagement. We have a R.O.E. [copy enclosed]. We must abide by it. It hasn't changed since I left Kuwait five months ago.

Army convoys *do* display weapons, no convoy that I've seen thus far hasn't had "guns up." I work the MSR's, ASR's and back streets of Baghdad — all Army units run "guns up" — it's our policy here.

I've also worked check points (we don't call them "road blocks"), I've never heard of, nor have I been ever ordered not to handle any machine gun at said checkpoint.

Army soldiers may also carry more than two magazines — no ammo is locked up — ever. I personally carry four in a leg pouch (*thanks*, Tactical Tailor), one in a stock pouch and two in an Israeli mag clamp in my rifle. My team also has extra mags, and belted ammo for the SAW in the HUMVEE. That's not including our 9mm, and spare ammo for it.

I'm sure that your info is off the mark — let me assure you. Thank you, gentlemen. Keep up the good work.

(Name and unit withheld)

Sarge, thanks for sending us the straight poop, from the ground.

MPs Need Love, Too

Been reading your mag for years: Keep up the great work!! I do, however, have a question: Why the hell is there no coverage of MPs? Our son is with the 204th MP Co. (519th MP Bn.) out of Ft. Polk, La., and we have searched absolutely everywhere on line and cannot find jackshit on his unit! I understand why Army and Marine infantry get the lion's share of coverage, and my hat is off to them. But the way I see it, the MPs are also in the middle of the shooting. Just read the command guidance column in Oct. 2003 issue. That really pissed me off! Put young men and women in the middle of a combat zone with minimal weapons and ammo along with restrictive ROE's and expect them to come out unscathed. Give 'em weapons and ammo! Maybe whoever gave that order should walk the streets with nothing more than a club by himself and see what happens: I don't think they would like it!! Again, I thoroughly enjoy SOF and the *real* coverage you guys give our military. Keep up the good work! Hope to see MP coverage soon!

Yer right, of course. Don't know what the current stats are, but in WW II, MPs had a shorter life expectancy than grunts; combat photographers had the shortest. Probably because nei-

ther job description includes "laying down a base of fire to make the other guys duck." One reason we haven't run a story on MPs is, half our editorial staff comprises former combat MPs, and we don't want to be accused of nepotism. The other reason is, no one has sent one in. Regards the ROE and working guns-up, see the above letter: Apparently the problem is not theater-wide.

Bradley Jock Checks In

I am just writing to inform you that the cover photo of this issue is of myself. I am a Bradley Platoon Sergeant, although during the war, I was a platoon leader due to the removal of my platoon leader.

My name is SFC Timothy Terpak and I serve with Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 15th Infantry of the 3rd Infantry Division serving out of Ft. Stewart, GA. My company was attached to 1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment for Operation Iraqi Freedom

I just wanted to say thanks for putting that picture on your cover.

Sincerely,
SFC Timothy Terpak

Sarge, thanks for checking in: Glad you made it from one end of Iraq to the other OK. And thanks for some excellent work!

Bradley Story

I can tell you for a fact that the article in the October issue by "anonymous" is definitely not true. How do I know? It's easy, really. Not once did this guy whine about how useless his Beretta 9mm and puny M4 mouse gun were! He just used them to kill a bunch of people.

Now, obviously, if this article is true, it would mean that the man behind the gun may be just as important as the caliber, and we know that can't possibly be true. If it is, then those of us who don't feel inadequately armed with a high-capacity nine and a 5.56mm carbine might not have anything to feel ashamed of!

Sincerely,
Frank L. Richmond

Glad you enjoyed that heart-pounder. As we noted with the story, it came to us anonymously having passed through several hands and we were unable to vet it, but it smelled right. We did get one real chicken-shit letter slamming us for printing Tom Clancy-ish fiction, though. Yeah, well, listen up, troops: We were fortunate enough to have established comms with SSGT Johnson, who was the subject (not the author) of the piece, and not only was the story fairly un-garbled for having passed through many hands — the story as told was just half

Home Defense Rule No. 3: Identify Your Target

Using a bright light to identify and momentarily blind things that go bump in the night is always a good idea. Who knows, you might even get a chance to ask Santa about upgrading your present—after all, you need another tie like, well, another tie. But another SureFire high-performance flashlight you could use. Especially one like the E2e Executive Elite, the smallest light SureFire has ever made that qualifies for tactical use (60 lumens or brighter). At just over four inches long and weighing about three ounces, this mighty mite sets a new standard for real power in an ultra concealable package. With a Military Specification Type III hard-anodized finish, the E2e can take some serious abuse. So this Christmas when you hear a bump in the night, go downstairs and tell Santa what you really want, a new SureFire.

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(if that) of the story. SSGT Johnson and his team-mates have graciously agreed to tell us the whole story as soon as they get clearance. To the incredulous fellow who asserted we should be ashamed for making it all up, we'd like to note that literally while we write this, SSGT Johnson and his buds have gone from Walter Reed to Ft. Stewart, where they are today receiving their decorations — Johnson is getting a Silver Star and a Purple Heart. The Army Historical Section has already debriefed them, and a great deal of the action they were in is going into the record books, not just history books. Stay tuned, to read it here first.

Dane Deigns to Disagree

I would like to comment on the subject from the 12-year-old brat from Denmark. First of all, we are still many, who appreciate what the U.S. did for us during WWII. We still celebrate every May 4th. Second, we and apparently the young brat, suffer from political correctness. I don't know what the liberal teachers have told him, but as you say, hope he'll grow up.

Third, we are many, who are totally behind our prime minister supporting the Coalition, and we are also disgusted by the French.

United We Stand.

J.N. Bang former Danish Army, Denmark

PS: We still honor the 13 Danish troops who gave their lives 9 April 1940, before the liberal cowards in parliament gave up our country.

Rakkasans Rule!

I am a Vietnam Vet, having served with "C" Company, 3/187th Inf., 101st Airborne, in 1969 & 70. While I am proud of my "service" as a former member of the Rakkasans, I feel my work pales in comparison to today's Rakkasans. I am so impressed at the work, the dedication, and the range of abilities these new Rakkasans possess.

I read with pride what our young men have been doing in Iraq and J.S. Mosby made me wish I was 22 again, just so I could be with these fine young men. Not for any glory, as I'm sure those guys would trade that for a quick end to this part of the mission, but just to serve with such hard working and dedicated professionals these new Rakkasans appear to be.

To the Troopers in today's 101st, and specially to those "C" Co., 3/187th Rakkasans, THANK YOU for the work you are doing for America, and may God grant you safety and success in Iraq. Get back home safe to your families, and know that we are proud of you.

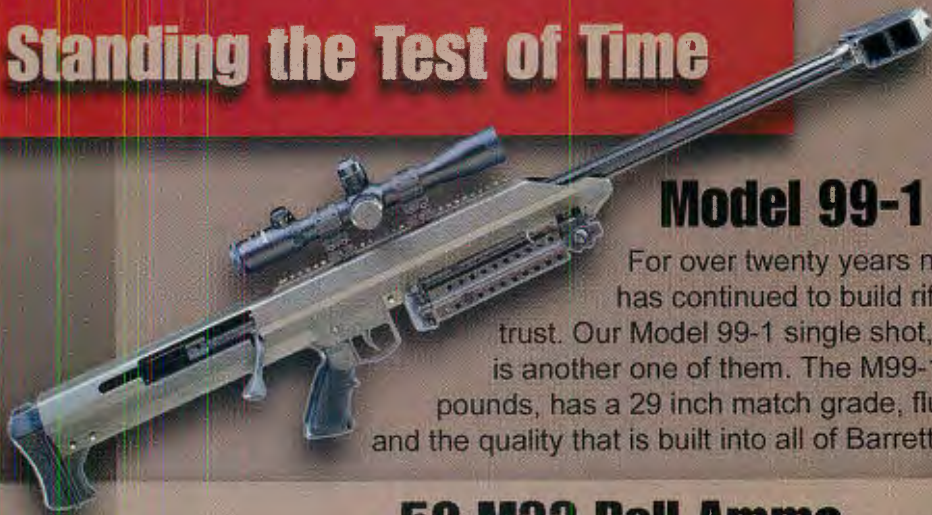
From a former old Rakkasan,
Dan L. Bayes
Manhattan, Kansas

Silencing, And Jumping, The Gun

As a life-long reader of your magazine, I was extremely disappointed in the article "USMC's new SpecOps Silencer," October '03 issue.

Detachment 1 has not adopted the SureFire FA can. As a

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mater of fact, it was not "extensively tested" until July 03, during the Weapons and Tactics Package — which may have been well after the story was written.

During this four-week assessment, operator feedback was that the FA can was unsuitable in its current configuration.

SureFire is an excellent company with an excellent reputation, and Barry Dueck is without a doubt an excellent designer. There is no doubt that this can, will be a success.

However, it was not adopted by the Det at this time.

While an author's opinion is his, facts must be verified from other than a single source. In this case, the author had no access to the users — the Det — just the vendor.

There are other errors as well. While relatively minor, these errors are below your usual standard for accuracy. The misspelling of the C.O.'s name was surely a typo, but the name of the Det — Marine Corps Special Operations Command Detachment 1 is abbreviated MCSOCOM Det 1 rather than MARSOC.

Also, the Det is not made up entirely of Force Reconnaissance personnel. The Marines and Sailors assigned to the Det are all there for a reason, but they are not all 0321's.

Patrick Rogers

Full SOF Jacket

On August 16, I attended a Garand Collector's Association convention in Reno, Nevada. After listening to a great speaker (Walter Ehelrs, 2nd Lt. USA, WWII), the GCA leadership raffled off a number of items that had been donated to GCA

by firearms-related businesses and organizations.

SOF donated a USAF flight jacket that was made in the USA. I was the fortunate recipient of that jacket.

I'd like to thank SOF for the gift, the fact that it was a "Made in the USA" product and for your continued support of this organization.

Bill Ruppert, member GCA
Truckee, CA

Poor-Man's Artillery

As an old gunny, I have a request: [a lot of] those troopers getting killed, are getting killed by RPGs. We used to see something like this in Vietnam called the B40. I don't know about RPGs but I know they are lethal, is the RPG-7 an evolution or an upgrade? What does the Iraqi force have at their disposal, I would like you to have an article to explain to the troops about RPGs and lethality capabilities, what they are facing, [there are probably many who don't] have a clue ...
Semper fidelis.

Via e-mail

The RPGs are a different critter than the B-40, which was more of a barrage rocket. The RPGs are a series of shoulder-fired rocket launchers first developed for use against armor, but as they have evolved along with more sophisticated warheads, have become effective poor-man's artillery. They are all over, being made by many nations whose ordnance is influenced by Russian design. ✕



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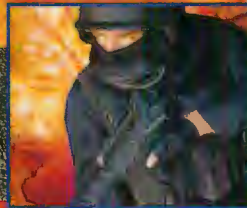
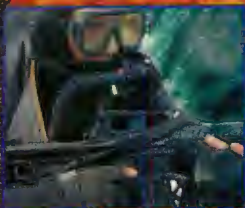
Note: Airsoft G36C, M249, and M4 SIR pictured

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Cool Idea

Here's a grass-roots For-The-Troops idea that's really working out, thanks to the untiring efforts of one Frankie Mayo, of Newark, Delaware. When she asked her son, an MP soaking in the hot sands of Iraq, what he'd like her to send him (as in: home-made fruitcake, some dry sox, shaving gear, box of fudge — the usual suspects), he replied, "Well, we sure could use an air-conditioner, ha, ha." He shouldn't have said that, because Frankie got one from Home Depot, boxed it up and sent it to him. In fact, this hard-charger went on to organize a non-profit outfit and has shipped some *two thousand* air conditioners to troops sweating it out in the Gulf. And tons of medical supplies, and comfort items for the troops. Rush Limbaugh, who is a pay grade or two above Frankie but has a good heart, paid for half of a chartered DHL jet to take a load of air conditioners straight to the troops in Baghdad. And thousand of folks just like us have come up with the goods and the cash for Frankie Mayo to make this program work.

Now, they're shipping miniature heaters (winter is coming, even in Iraq), and the full gamut of comfort and morale items. They need bucks for postage — always handy, even when all your worker bees are unpaid volunteers — and the following comfort and morale items, in no particular order: baby wipes and powder, non-aerosol shaving cream, toothpaste and brushes, shampoo, liquid soap, bar deodorant, non-aerosol bug-spray, games, DVDs, pre-sugared Kool-Aid and Gatorade, non-melting candy, feminine hygiene items, pens/pencils/paper/envelopes, disposable cameras, mosquito coils, playing cards, VHS's, beef jerky, nuts, gum, foot powder ... Remember, it's the stuff *you* needed when *you* were deployed. Aerosols, flammable liquids, things that melt in the heat are a no-go. Everything must be in new sealed containers. Sturdy boxes of between 40-50 pounds are better than a lot of little boxes, so get together with your Legion, VFW, church or civic group and fill some boxes. And remember, your tax-deductible check or money order is always welcome as well, as they have to reship these items to individual recipients. Send to: Operation AC, Dept. SOF, 560 Peoples Plaza, Box 121, Newark, DE 19702

Paperback Books:

Those legions of SOF readers who have asked us, will be pleased to know that Operation AC also has gotten in gear to send paperback books to the troops. *There are some ground rules:* wholesome paperback books only. Again, one larger box is better than several small boxes. *But the box must not be more than 50 pounds in weight, and its size cannot be more than 130 inches, length and girth combined. This time, do NOT send books to SOF: Send directly to Operation AC. They can receive parcels only by United Parcel Service (not the mail), and only at: Operation AC, Inc., Dept. SOF, Storage USA, 121 Ruthar Drive, Newark, Delaware, 19711.*

More information is available at: www.operationac.com —

and watch for a feature on this organization in an upcoming issue. These folks are getting the job done: Give 'em a hand!

Germany-Based Divisions: Headed CONUS?

According to *the Army Times*, Army units stationed in Germany who have been deployed to Iraq may subsequently return to the United States. The Wiesbaden-based 1st Armored Division, currently deployed to Iraq, is slated to return to Germany early in 2004, but Pentagon sources told *the Times* they may only stay long enough to pack their gear. The story is the same for the 1st Infantry Division, now in Wuerzburg but slated to deploy to Iraq in 2004. Possible Stateside posts that could absorb these units include Ft. Lewis and Ft. Riley. Moving American units from Germany to other new-NATO nations such as Poland, Romania and Bulgaria has also been discussed.

Waco-Killers' Defender Found Dead

Former federal prosecutor, U.S. Attorney J. Michael Bradford, who defended the U.S. government in a lawsuit filed by surviving Branch Davidians, was found dead of an apparent self-inflicted gunshot wound, by a police officer checking an "abandoned" vehicle. "He found a BMW, which was unusual, because it's a nice vehicle and it was parked out in the woods ... it had a briefcase in it, clothes and a sports jacket in it, so he started looking around," Hardin County Sheriff Ed Cain told reporters. The officer found the body and a shotgun about 75 feet from the car. Cain said it appears the gunshot wound to the head was self-inflicted. "We have no indication of foul play, he said."

According to investigators, Bradford had been reported missing for about a day. Cain said Bradford had left behind a note that indicated he planned to kill himself. Bradford represented the federal government in the 2000 trial of a \$675-million wrongful-death suit filed by surviving Branch Davidians and family members, in the wake of the inferno that ended the Branch Davidian standoff near Waco in 1993. Bradford had been in private practice recently with a Beaumont law firm. He was appointed U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Texas in 1994. He served until May 2001. He is survived by his wife, daughter, and son.

Mexican Soldiers Apprehended In Texas

In early July, a U.S. Border Patrol agent spotted six intruders north of the Rio Grande and gave chase: Four ran back to the river, fleeing into Mexico. The remaining two, both armed with rifles and dressed in military fatigues, did not make it to the river in time. The Border Patrol officer got out of his vehicle, and seeking cover, ordered the two

Continued on page 79

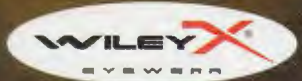
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The War In IRAQ

What Worked — What Didn't

TEXT & PHOTOS BY DALE B. COOPER

U.S. armed forces go into battle with the best equipment money can buy, but they soon learn that some of the stuff in their “tool box” isn't worth the big bucks the Pentagon paid for it. Such was the case in Iraq.

A team of three officers from the Marine Corps Systems Command [MCSC] traveled the battlespace interviewing Marines who used the gear. Their findings are disturbing, and makes one wonder what would have happened had the Iraqi Army showed up — and fought.

For Example:

M16A1 Rifles: They're too long and cumbersome in urban fighting. That's why several Marines opted to use captured AK-47s. Kalashnikovs with collapsible stocks were highly prized by Marines who operated mostly from vehicles like LAVs and HUMMWVs.

Smaller weapons, like M4 carbines, would have helped tremendously when mounting or dismounting. But they still have some maintenance challenges to overcome.

M249 Squad Automatic Weapons: SAWs are worn out. They had problems with takedown pins breaking or falling out of the weapons. A SAW gunner told *SOF* a wounded buddy saved his bacon during the Battle of Baghdad on 10 April when he found the takedown pin that fell out of his M249 at the height of the battle — when every gun counted. Despite a painful wound that kept him off the firing plat-

form of their armored-assault vehicle, the young Marine who was shot in the shoulder felt around in the darkness until he found the pin, reassembled the SAW and handed it back to his buddy.

Sidearms: The 9mm Beretta sidearms carried by officers were unreliable. The magazine springs were so weak and worn rounds fell out of the magazine when removed from the weapon.

Shotguns: Not enough 12-gauge M1014 Joint Combat Shotguns were issued to each infantry battalion for breaching in urban combat. Operators need at least one 12-gauge per squad with slugs — not 00 Buck — to blow the locks off doors.

Goggles: Too large, did not seal properly, and the lenses often popped out of the frames. That's why many Marines wore non-issue, commercially made, ski goggles they bought in the States before they deployed to Iraq.

MOLLE Gear: The pack moves too much when Marines are on the move. The plastic frame is “cheap” and broke on numerous occasions. This was especially true when Marines tied their packs to the outsides of LAVs, tanks and HUMMWVs for transport.

Sleeping Bags: Standard-issue bags are too short for tall



Marines. They told the Marine Corps Systems Command liaison team they need bags a foot longer.

Gas Mask Carriers: Need to be a bit larger with more compartments so loose nerve-gas injectors, etc. and extra filters don't fall out when the masks are removed.

QuikClot: Ineffective on arterial bleeding. An LAR Marine died when shot in a femoral artery. Pressure from the blood caused the QuikClot to be pushed out of the wound.

Communication, Communication, Communication — The Name Of The Game In War

Just like location, location, location, which is the name of the game in real estate, communication is the name of the game in war. But Marines who carried MK148 handheld radios say the Corps should "deep-six" them and find a replacement.

During 60 days of combat operations in Iraq, the MK148s demonstrated that they were not "user-friendly." The radios had too many buttons and modes. Buttons were often accidentally pushed when the radios were being carried, thus changing their modes or functions. Many times the Marines carrying the MK148s were unaware of what had occurred. The speakers were also fragile and broke easily.

When MK148s were left in the sun, they would overheat and shut-down. The rechargeable battery life was 3 — 5 hours, causing a constant headache of resupply. Even though rechargers were located at the company level, runners had to be sent to the rear for resupply. Excessive movement along the front lines raised concerns about force-detection.

The liaison team comprised of Captains Patricia Dienhart, Shannon Roos and Mike Howard were also told that Marines were overwhelmed by the varied communications equipment they were expected to use.

As the Operations Officer from 1st Light Armored Reconnaissance [LAR] stated, "The system is broken."

With units constantly moving over changing terrain, LOS, or Line-of-Sight radio communications, were impossible. The only reliable means of communication was Blue Force Tracker "SATCOM" and Iridium satellite phones. The media, some 167 reporters and camera crews that embedded with the First Marine Division, had more satphones than the military.

Infantry commanders like Captain Kevin E. Yeo, of Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Marines, Lieutenant Jamie P. Murphy, the executive officer, Lieutenant W.A. Hefty, com-

mander of 3rd Platoon, and two subordinates, 2nd Lieutenant Charles F. Benbow and 2nd Lieutenant J. Michael Jones, were also asked to evaluate some of the equipment their men carried into battle, and some of the techniques they employed.

Getting Back To Basics

It doesn't matter whether Marines are cooks or cannon-cockers; they are riflemen first and foremost. But Captain Yeo found the M16A2 service rifle didn't give his Marines the biggest bang for the buck.

SOF obtained a copy of Yeo's analysis of the M16A2: "During sixty days of operations in Iraq, this unit engaged enemy personnel from ranges of 20m-to-400m in various types of terrain. The 5.56 ball ammunition proved incapable of penetrating hasty enemy positions within buildings," wrote Yeo.

The average building in Iraq is made of brick and plaster with walls that are 12-to-16-inches thick. Interior walls are also made of brick and each house usually has a brick-perimeter wall. They look like fortresses from the outside. The only weapon that could punch a hole through the thick-walled structures was the M2 .50-caliber heavy machine gun that was mounted on each AAV in E Co.

"Ma Deuce" is the only machine gun in the Marine Corps that fires SLAP ammunition. Saboted Light Armor Penetrator ammo first saw combat during Operation DESERT STORM. It uses a reduced-caliber, heavy metal [tungsten] .30-inch diameter penetrator wrapped in a "plastic" sabot or "shoe" of a .50-inch diameter. This produces a very fast round with a very flat trajectory which enhances the probability of a hit.

Gunners in MNWS, like the one this reporter rode into battle, fired more than 1 million rounds of ammo in the M2HBs, some of it the new SLAP and SLAP-2 [tracer] sabot rounds that can make Swiss cheese out of an Iraqi T-55 tank. At \$7.50 per pop, it doesn't take long to spend a chunk of change with a .50 cal.

In addition to not being able to penetrate brick walls, the men of E Co. also discovered that 5.56 ball ammo at times *over-penetrated* [Editor's italics] enemy soldiers. The only sure way to ensure the enemy didn't keep on running was shoot him in the head.

The day after Marines invaded southern Iraq, enemy

Continued on page 68



DEAD-ON TARGET



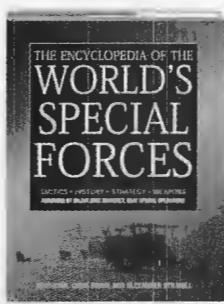
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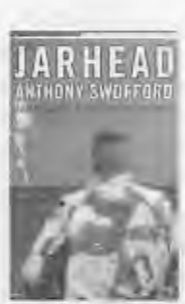
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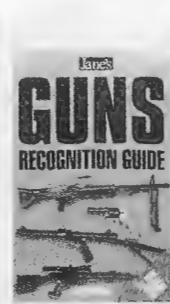
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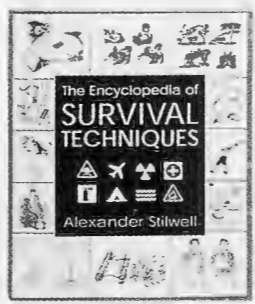
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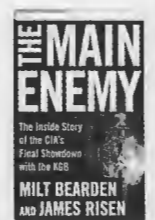
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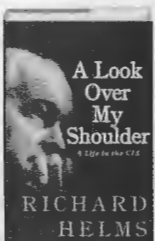
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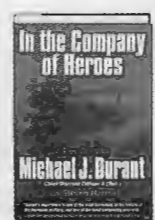
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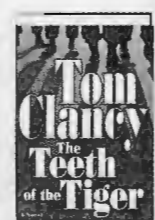
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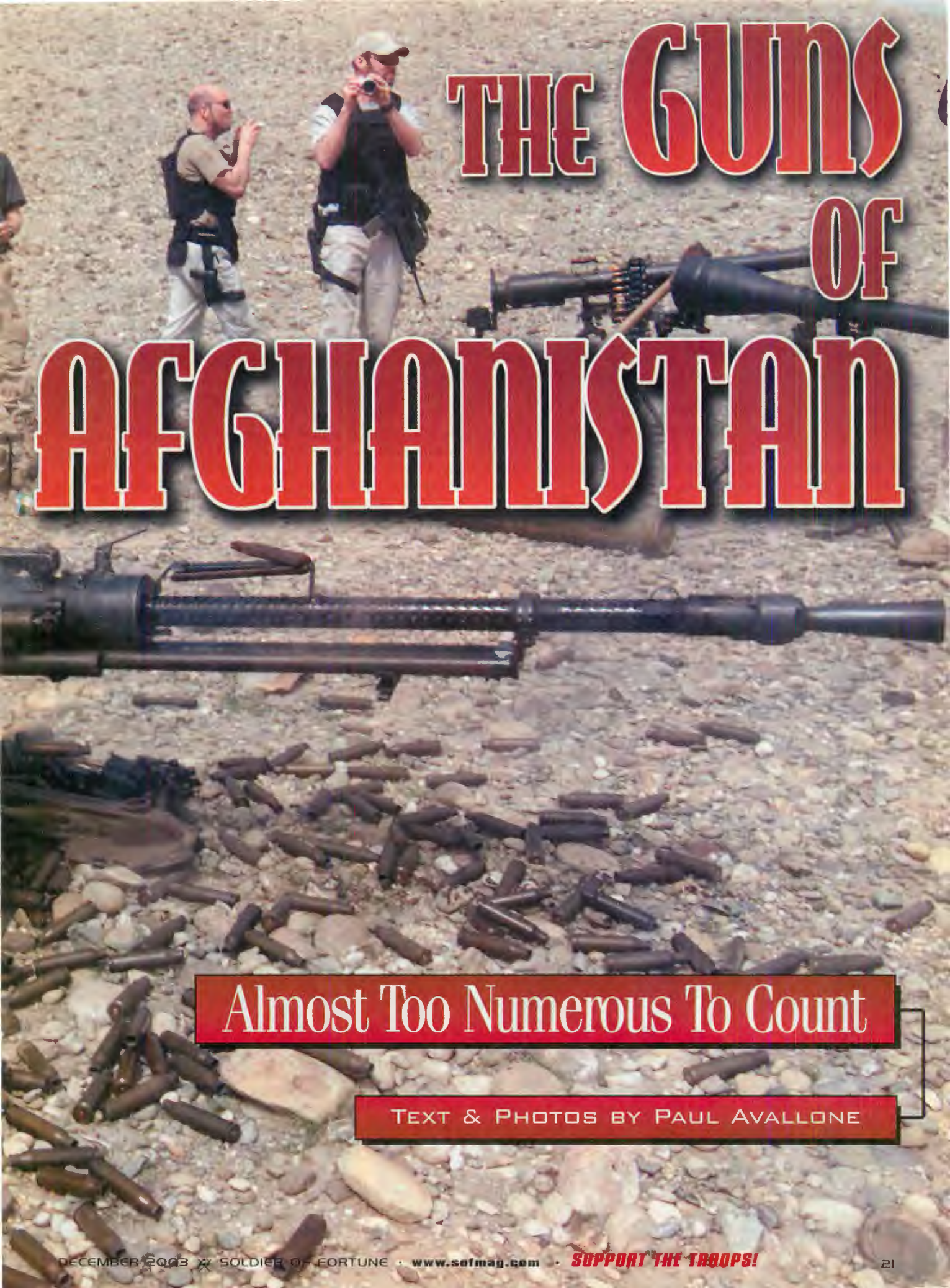
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An MRF soldier fires an AA gun during range-fire. This gun was among a wide variety of Chinese and Soviet weapons and ammunition captured by the ODA in raids on hidden Taliban arms caches. The ODA subsequently employed many of the weapons and ammunition with its own Mobile Reaction Force (MRF), the hundred-strong militia the ODA equipped, trained and led during its seven-month deployment to Afghanistan.



THE GUNS

OF

AFGHANISTAN

Almost Too Numerous To Count

TEXT & PHOTOS BY PAUL AVALLONE

S

ince returning Stateside from Afghanistan, I have shown photos to friends, and the question that often comes up is, "Just how many guns are there, there?" Actually, it's as much an exclamation as a question. "They're everywhere," I've answered, but a better response might be, "You know what they say about the stars in the sky and grains of sand on earth?"

Of course, it is not accurate to say there are as many guns in Afghanistan as there are grains of sand on earth, but this much is true: Just as one could never count all the stars in the sky, the same could be said for guns in Afghanistan.

Even if you stripped every gun from every soldier, every militiaman, every bodyguard, small-time bandit, farmer, taxi

driver, and every single man and boy (down to the age of 8) and thought you had the country laid barren of anything that fired a projectile, there'd be some duty-bound Afghan patriot (if that's not an oxymoron) who would come to you and for a small reward, say a hundred or two hundred American dollars cash, tell you of a weapons cache somewhere.

That cache might be said to be in a cave in the remotest mountains or in a poppy farmer's rural compound, anywhere, and the odds are, if you can get there before the munitions are moved, you're going to hit upon a nice little stash — from the standard AKs and RPGs to Dashika machine guns, anti-aircraft guns, mortars, and maybe even an SA-7 surface-to-air rocket launcher or two. And on top of the weapons, throw in

tons of ammunition, from cases and cases of AK and Dashika ammo to mortar and recoilless-rocket rounds.

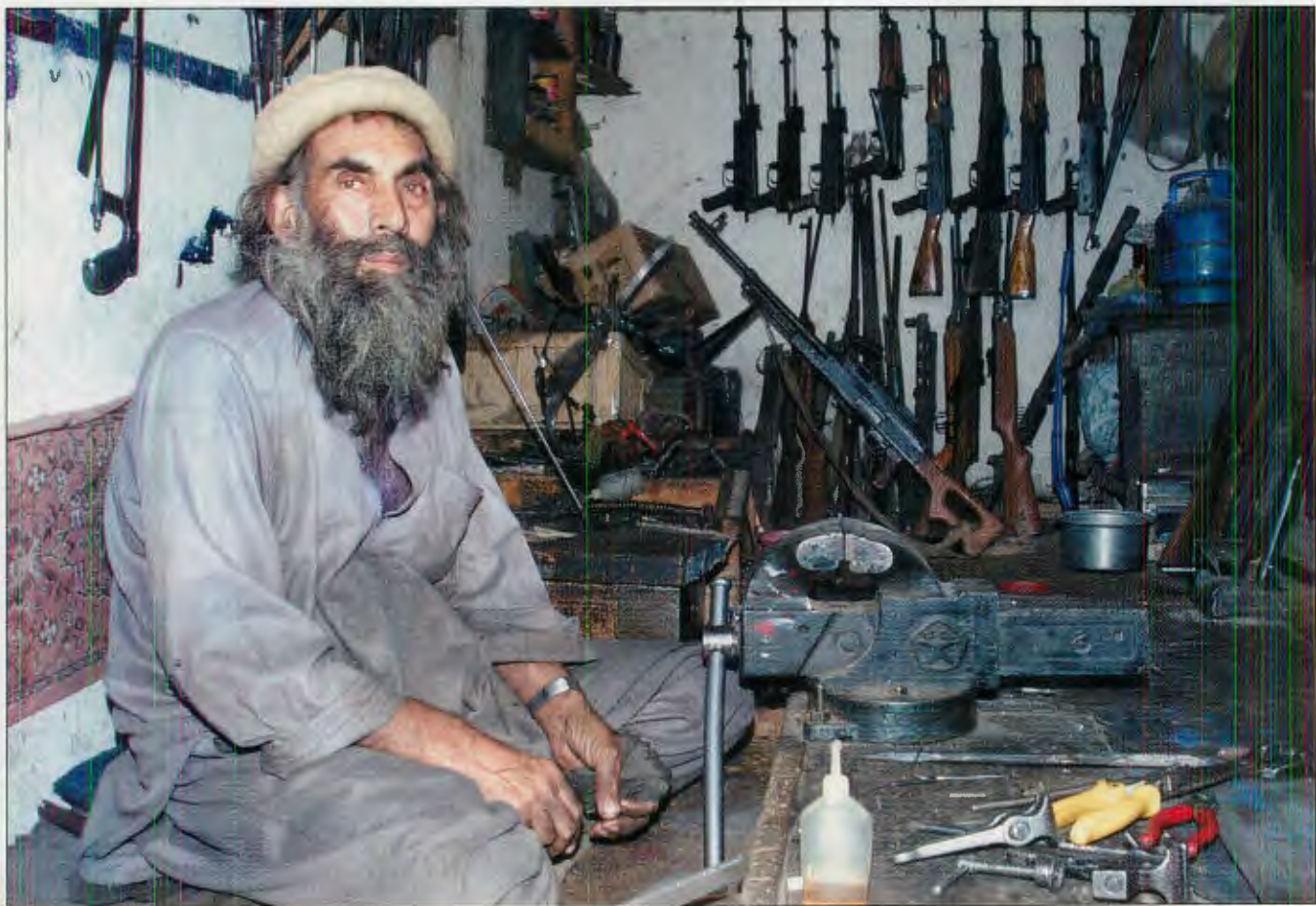
That's pretty much the way it was during the tenure of my Special Forces detachment in its seven months operating out of Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan. Part of our job was to take the arms and ammunition out of the hands of those who wished for a return of the Taliban, or at least were supporting the downfall of the newly U.S.-installed and -maintained central government, which is strong in Kabul, but tenuous at best in much of the rest of a country where tribal affiliation is many times stronger than any tie to the country.

After A While, We Stopped Being Surprised ...

We uncovered many caches, capturing hundreds of tons of ammunition and the weapons to go with them. Some of the weapons are shown on the photographs on these pages. After a while, we stopped being surprised at what we would find. The surprise, in fact, would be when a suspected cache would turn out to be a dry hole.

Recovered weapons we put to use with our own MRF militia army or turned over to higher HQ in Bagram for use by the newly formed Afghan Defense Forces. As for the captured ammunition, the same was true. And that ammunition that could not be used we destroyed. We seized so much ammunition that several times we had to call in Explosive Ordnance Detachments and their thousands of pounds of C-

A variety of guns line the walls of a local gunsmith. Gunsmithing is a valuable trade in Afghanistan because of the tradition of men bearing arms and because, with the poverty of the country, many men use antique weapons that the gunsmiths keep functional.





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4 to destroy the materiel. (See "Blowing It Up" in next month's SOF.)

In the same sense, at one time we had accumulated so many neglected, non-functioning weapons, partially assembled weapons, and parts of weapons in boxes and crates that we invited a local gunsmith in to clean, fix and assemble as many as he could, promising him \$15 (U.S.) for each that he made functional. He worked for three weeks and managed to restore nearly 50 weapons — from British Brens to Chinese SGMs to

PKs to Dashikas to mortars to AA guns. For his effort he earned in those three weeks about what the average Afghan makes in a year. And we had ourselves a store-room of working guns,

from what had been heaps of indistinguishable parts.

With so much weaponry to be had in Afghanistan, one could not be faulted for being tempted to sneak a couple of AKs or Makarov 9mms into a footlocker or kit bag and to bury them on a pallet to be shipped back to the States — except for the strict regulations the military has established on bringing arms into the United States. Sure, since when have regulations ever stopped SF before? That said, our command assured us that all pallets and gear would be broken-down and inspected by Customs before shipping and promised the threat of courts-martial for violators caught. More than a few of the guys expressed a longing for the good-old-talked-about days when our fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers brought back war-trophy weaponry sou-

venirs from both world wars, Korea and even Viet Nam.

There is no restriction, though, on bringing into the United States pre-1898 firearms, and there are plenty of those antiques today in Afghanistan. Generally speaking, one would not find the old weapons in arms caches, as they don't have much worth for soldiers today when AKs are cheap and plentiful countrywide. But the more seasoned Afghan veterans still talk of originally using the old Enfield breechloaders to fight the Russians in the early 1980s. It was after the rebels captured Russian weapons that they put aside the antique British rifles that, in a sense of irony, their great-great-grandfathers had first captured from the British during those wars a hundred years earlier.

Early on, we put out the word through our MRF and terps (interpreters) that we would buy old rifles, pistols, swords, sabers and knives, and we gathered quite a collection locally in our rural province. Then we learned that those same types of antique weapons are better available and cheaper in Kabul, where a market has built up since the end of the war. There, right in the center of the city is Chicken Street, on which there are a number of shops that sell antique arms.

Continued on page 77

A local gunsmith shows off a Czech ZB-30 machine gun that he put together and made functional for ODA 2025. This gun was among a variety of weapons that the ODA confiscated in a raid on the rural compound of a Taliban sympathizer. Most of the weapons were in parts, in boxes and crates. The ODA hired this local gunsmith to make as many weapons functional as possible.



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WITHOUT RESOLUTION

Colombia's War A Stalemate — At Best

BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

PHOTOS COURTESY OF COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE

This is the last in a four-part series reporting on the war in Colombia. I cannot call it a conclusion, because there is none. Comparing the Colombian Civil war to the Vietnam War is superficial, as the guerrillas in Colombia have no popular support and a central government exists and has effective control of 60% of the territory. The Colombian Civil War is a one of money, drugs, greed, corruption, and misperceptions, fueled by the U.S. public's insatiable appetite for nose candy and other drugs. Unlike what occurred during the Vietnam War, ideologies appear to be a farce.

"It's a nightmare from which you can't awaken," a U.S. military advisor heavily involved in the Colombian situation for a decade, said. "There is no end in sight. And the Colombian Civil war is going to get a lot worse before it gets better," he continued.

Conflicting allegations by the military, the guerillas, the paramilitaries, and the police, human rights organizations, U.S. advisors and contractors has hopelessly muddied the situation.

Up In Smoke II: The Colombian National Police Junglas torch a jungle coke lab.





Solvents used in extracting coca base go up in smoke as remote coca lab is destroyed in situ by Colombian National Police.

Whom Do You Believe?

The guerrillas and paramilitaries both have made enormous profits. All of these groups have taken big hits, but civilians are by far the greatest victims. Hundreds of underpaid soldiers and police without backup have been killed in the half-century civil war, which has claimed 40,000 lives and displaced at least that many. Dozens of human-rights workers and missionaries have been slaughtered. Fifty hostages are currently being held by the FARC.

Liberal-minded players, many of them no doubt idealistic, are influenced and guided by charismatic and clever guerrillas seeking to eliminate "social inequities," according to beleaguered and frustrated military officials we spoke to in Colombia. The military's alleged "fatal alliance" is with the AUC, said to be responsible for 62% of human rights violations (1,220 victims last year), including massacres and disappearances — plus 40% of the drug trade in Colombia, according to Peter Clark, Senior Associate in the U.S. Office on Colombia in Washington. An estimated 3,500 civilians die yearly.

A No-Win Situation

President Alvaro Uribe, frustrated with the United Nations for its inaction and with the outcome of the Plan Colombia under the Clinton Administration, holds outside deadbeats as well as interveners partially responsible for the out-of-control deterioration of the situation. UN officials have refused Uribe's request for peacekeepers in Colombia without a signed peace agreement. Former President Pastrana's peace agreement with the FARC was seen as a complete failure.

The Clinton Administration cut off funds to the Colombian military for alleged human rights abuses, but

continued funding the National Police. The police, we were told by a native Colombian political analyst, "are not an obstacle for the FARC — the army is." Uribe, trying to build up the military, believes that the refusal of the U.S. to offer intelligence, training, and support to the military has contributed to the current mess.

For the hardliner President Uribe, it's a no-win situation.

Uribe considers the FARC and ELN, the major guerrilla groups, to be hardened criminal terrorists. Uribe's father was murdered by the guerrillas, according to some accounts. Uribe, emboldened by the tough stance the U.S. has taken against terrorists, has attempted to crack down mercilessly on the Marxist guerrillas and right-wing paramilitaries. He is being criticized in certain political circles for his draconian measures, although he enjoys widespread support in Colombia.

On the one hand, he has been accused, by a report made by dozens of human-rights groups, of collapsing the Colombian constitution and due-process rights with excessive military force. Uribe aims to give military forces the power to make summary arrests and arbitrary searches.

The Uribe administration responds, saying that they know where the terrorists are, and where their arms were being stored, but they could not move in because of constitutional restraints. Defense Minister Martha Lucia Ramirez, according to AP, said that in at least eight cases this year, government troops knew where arms were being stored or where rebel commanders were living, but were unable to act.

"We Know Who They Are"

"We know who they are," Uribe reportedly said. "Overseas, they are [known as] politicians, and in Colombia they are terrorists."

On the other hand, Uribe is being lambasted for seeking amnesty for murderous heads of the AUC combatants, letting them get off the hook for years of atrocities and massacres. His proposed peace talks with the AUC are seen by

critics as an opportunity for war criminals to go free. Although it is premature to make a judgment on the ceasefire agreed to with the leader of the AUC (Carlos Castano, leader of 11,000 of the 20,000 paramilitary AUC confederation), the *Washington Post* calls it a "land grab." The AUC, is "seizing farmland and houses at gunpoint in an effort to consolidate its hold on strategic regions across the country before beginning negotiations to disarm, according to military officials, Western diplomats and witnesses."

Uribe, however, considers these human rights groups as supporters of terrorists.

The police, taking advantage of the Clinton Administration's refusal to fund the tainted military, effectively played the political game and received significant U.S. funding. Without backup by the military, their major efforts of drug eradication and busting drug lords became a dangerous game.

This Is War

U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, putting all niceties aside, rejects the position that this is a drug war. He, too, is under fire. The Bush Administration, who is supporting Uribe and releasing funding to the Colombian military, is accused by critics of promoting human-rights abuses. Under Plan Colombia, U.S. aid has been expanded to counterinsurgency efforts, including anti-terrorist training, helicopters, and real-time intelligence. The U.S. Congress has limited direct U.S. personnel involvement to 800. Many of those are involved in providing training to military, police and pilots.

Shoot To Kill

The U.S. policy of resuming the policy to shoot down drug-running planes is especially under-fire.

The program was nixed after the tragedy in 2001 when a



Drug-production facility burns on horizon as Colombian National Police stand guard.

Peruvian Air Force Pilot, relying on U.S. intelligence, downed a plane — killing a U.S. missionary and her child.

Between 1995 and 1999, 123 planes were shot or forced down under the program, according to the *Los Angeles Times*. Under the program, U.S. and Colombian radar sites pinpoint suspected drug flights, then relay that information to the Colombian Air Force, which has the authority to shoot down the planes.

Skittish U.S. contractors providing intelligence to Colombian planes are demanding immunity from any legal liability for mistakes. Training of pilots, crew, and ground personnel has been ongoing in an attempt to prevent further accidental tragedies. Air-traffic-controller training was completed in May and pilot training in June. But as the *L.A. Times* reports, critics, including Sanho Tree, director of the Drug Policy Project at the Institute for Policy Studies, are outraged:

"You can't just shoot people out of the sky if they don't pose an imminent threat," he said

Jose Miguel Vivanco, executive director of Washington-based Human Rights Watch — Americas, is especially vocal, calling the anti-terrorist measures unacceptable, as they "allow a wide margin for action that can lead to very serious abuses."

Some we spoke to in Colombia in the military accuse the highly influential Vivanco of self-serving methods and profiteering by collaborating with the guerrillas.

Hunting "Narco-Ts"

A high-ranking DEA advisor in Colombia, an acquaintance of SOF, is optimistic about the increased U.S. involvement. "In October and November, we will be hunting Narco-Terrorists and labs with about 800 of our most-well-armed friends of the National Police, Colombian Army (COLAR) and Colombian Marines (COLMAR). They are "a kick-ass and get-the-job-done group," he said. The U.S. Department of State funding, along with the DEA funds, he said, will be available to them after they are vetted, which should be no problem, since they are not tainted with human rights violations.

The military does not have the expertise of the counter-drug police, he said, but the Army is not completely coop-



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EXPOSED!

World Kung Fu Champion And Combat Conditioning Expert Speaks Out And Reveals The Truth About That Combat Fighting System Trainer, Tim Larkin, Who Advertises In This Magazine All The Time.

Yeah, I read the ads in this magazine about Tim Larkin's *Target-Focus™ Training* system and WOW, you'd think he was offering the holy grail of fighting.

For example: You find yourself in an unavoidable violent confrontation—and he says size, physical condition and so on, don't matter. He says that whether you're fast or slow or uncoordinated, or as old as my dead grandmother, you can defend yourself—even brutally destroy—some street thug. And if that's not enough, you can learn this system in HOURS because it's not some martial art. Uh-huh!

My name is Matt Furey and I'm well known for being outspoken and controversial. I'm still the only American ever to win a world kung fu title in China and my book *Combat Conditioning* sells in over 75 countries worldwide. You can see my stuff at www.mattfurey.com.

Truth is my success allows me time to search for and write about anyone who is the real deal—or the big-time phoney. I'm known for my "politically incorrect, kick butt-take names" style, so if you're a fraud or quack I let everyone know that, too.

Well, with my background I'm pretty confident if someone is stupid enough to grab me without a weapon. But what about a blade? Don't know about you but I don't like a knife pointed at me. So after reading Larkin's ad for at least the 20th time, I had to see if it was all he claimed or just another round of bull-shit. Same line, different character.

First thing I researched was his background; all that Military elite trainer stuff. Everybody and their damn dog claims to have "trained" the SEALs. It's the perfect pitch.

Success brings contacts and I'm able to find out stuff you probably can't. So I was surprised to find Larkin's background to be even MORE impressive than he leads on.

Fact is, Larkin was on his way to graduating near the top of his SEAL class when he blew his ears in a diving accident. That got him medically disenrolled but he was so damn good Admiral LeMoyné pulled him directly into Naval Special Warfare Command as a Junior Officer (LeMoyné is the guy who founded Naval Special Warfare Command in Coronado, CA, and was it's first commander in charge of all SEALs).

Larkin worked directly with senior SEAL Officers on mission specific spec op programs, the biggest of which was to develop a more effective hand-to-hand and hand-to-weapon combat training.

He was a driving force in completely rewriting the way the SEAL and Spec Op Community learned to fight and the system he helped institute ultimately became the Navy's "Combat Fighting Course" and the basis for his *TFT* system.

So he checked out there. But training SEALs isn't the same as training me. Figuring I would never know unless I at least looked at the program, I ordered the videotapes of Larkin's Las Vegas training. 13 tapes, a fat manual and some other stuff.

I've got tapes from all sorts of guys in this mag. My wife hates it because I've got 'em stacked everywhere. Most aren't worth a damn. In a real threat situation there's no way I'm gonna be doing the stuff they show. I think you know what I mean. I just want to know that if some asshole sticks a knife in my back, I'll know what to do.

Anyway, first couple tapes and it's obvious this material is very different from all the crap out there. And, the principles are just as Larkin describes—it's not about strength or size or speed or conditioning; and there's nothing to memorize. Larkin drills that point, saying, "It's about learning principles that work in any situation. You can't possibly memorize enough



Matt Furey's success on and off the mat let's him call the shots -- regardless of what others think.

techniques to handle every situation you might face."

But what I *really* wanted was the tapes dealing with weapons. When I found them I was in absolute awe. On these tapes Larkin and his instructors show the same movement first without weapons, then WITH them. And guess what—NOTHING changes! The movements are identical. Everyone else teaches "Do this for hand-to-hand and something entirely different if you're staring at the business end of a knife or gun."

That sold me—and I did something I never do— I signed up to attend someone else's bootcamp.

Jump to early summer, Dallas, Texas. Not where I'd like to be, especially since I knew some of the training would take place outdoors. But I'm there with 35 others.

Our group ranged from highly experienced martial artists to ordinary folks with no training at all. Even a couple of women, one a former FBI agent who was furious to find she learned more in the first hour than during her entire FBI training at Quantico, Virginia.

Before this training, I never thought an average person could learn to apply lethal techniques in a one-weekend training (every combination Larkin teaches ends with a lethal movement.) Yet amazingly by the end of the 2½ days everyone knew how to take someone out with ease. Sure, some attendees had more athletic skills, but everyone was competent. If some creep came by and grabbed any one of us at the door on Sunday, he would have made a huge mistake.

Why is Larkin's training so effective? What's the secret? A couple things:

First, simplicity. The principles and movements involved are so easy anyone can do them—exactly as advertised. Yet because they're grounded in science not some ancient dogma or guru's theory they're devastatingly effective against any assailant—and work every time.

All our lives we've been taught anything truly great or different has to be difficult to learn. But this is a bias that is not true. The best things in life are often the easiest. Look, if you want to struggle for years learning the hard way—go ahead. But if you want to KNOW how over-complicated and flat-out worthless almost everything else is in comparison to Larkin's method—then you'll do what I did. You'll check him out.

Larkin's method is incredible because the techniques are literally programmed into your subconscious mind while you train. The benefit of this is you'll have instant recall when some criminal tries to take your life, or the life of your loved ones.

The other reason Larkin's method is so effective is this: The sole focus of the training is "life-or-death." Are you fighting for all the marbles or for your life? That is the question. Everyone but Larkin mixes sport with life-or-death, and this is a major mistake with disastrous results.

Can you learn Larkin's stuff? Hell yeah! I expected to come away a LITTLE more comfortable with weapons but instead wound up escalating my skills to an entirely new level. If I can do that with my skill level think of how much more you'll get if you just give it a try.

Before I got Larkin's videos and attended his training I'd heard about his stuff costing too much. Give me a break. Look at the alternative. What's it worth to know you can save your life or the life of someone you love in the face of a violent confrontation? Not only that, but if you can quickly learn to blow right through the typical martial artist who has paid for years of training—isn't that worth a bit more than a nickel and a swift kick in the ass?

Remember the saying, "If you think education is expensive, try ignorance." If you think learning this is expensive, ask someone who's been a victim of real violence; who has a dead relative; or someone who needed months to survive the horrors of a knife attack. Ask someone who once thought, "It'll never happen to me." But then it DID! Guess what they'll be telling you? Same thing I am. Shut up and get the program.

Larkin is giving you a proven system that you can learn literally over the weekend. A system you can use regardless of your size, strength, conditioning or speed. And one that's 100% guaranteed.

Money's not the issue. It's a fact Larkin doesn't offer much live training, and most is for private clients who pay him \$2,500.00 a day. That's why you need his videos. And while the set I initially bought is great I'd recommend his brand new series on Weapons Fighting. That's the part that I like most.

These are completely new and different videos, and Larkin holds nothing back—making them unlike anything you've ever seen before. There's not room to describe them here but he's personally written a report describing in detail what's included and whether or not they're right for you (they're definitely not for everyone—it's explained in the report). You can get your copy by picking up the phone and calling **360-850-1093**. There's a short recorded message and then you can leave your name and address so the report can be mailed to you. If you prefer you can get this report online at www.targetfocusweapons.com

Still wondering if this is legit? Listen, nobody tells me what to do. I march to my own drummer and I'm damn proud of it. And I'm not about to put my reputation in jeopardy for anyone.

One more thing: I haven't been paid a penny to write this. I'm the one who's spent his time and money on Larkin's training. His stuff so impressed me I wrote this as my way of saying thanks for taking my confidence and ability to face a criminal on the street to another level. And it's not just me. When you get the report, Larkin will include a long list of comments and stories from others who've benefited from his training, some from my own group in Dallas.

I've got the *TFT* principles and training. Now it's your turn. Do it. That's all I've got to say.

Matt Furey
Tampa, Florida

P.S. Please don't call or send me a bunch of emails with questions about *TFT*. I'm far too busy to take calls directly anymore and only answer emails in my newsletter. I've told you what I know. Now it's up to you.

erating with DEA yet. The lack of back-up by the military is improving.

Available funds will also be used to entice informants. "As you know," he said, "money is what brings in the informants down here. Ex-FARC members, tell of joining the FARC because the alternative was becoming their target. Most left because they were never paid in 10 years. The FARC, informants tell the DEA, tell you what you will grow, who you will sell the coca base to and at what price. The FARC also say when and where you can go."

"Nets of human intelligence get assistance from more sophisticated ELINT (electronic intelligence). U.S. dollars pays for collaborators, as much as \$4,000, which is a couple years pay for most Colombians," he said. "First, there is a rigorous interview process with 40 some questions. A mission can include two DEA agents, a Narc assisting, three gringos, 60-80 cops. Then the informant is thrown on an airplane for an over flight. Equipped with a sophisticated electronics package, the operators launch a mission, targeting five or six labs in one operation, going for the biggest targets.

The element of surprise is almost impossible — 98% of the time they are forewarned by the sound of the choppers and flee their camps. Occasionally, the guerrillas oppose the security forces with small arms and RPGs.

"It's guerrilla warfare. In one instance, the FARC was floating down the river in canoes, flying white flags. Once they got close to their objective, they disappeared in the jungle and attacked. The fire-fight lasted eight hours with lots of casualties with no reinforcement or air support.

"There is no negotiating. All they understand is violence," he said.

"We hit over 60 labs last year along with the retaking of 120 towns in Colombia with police/army presence," the DEA agent said. They are keeping us busy, just what you would expect from the Mecca of the drug world. August 20th started a month of operations to retake 40 more towns, and in September [at press time], we will restart more laboratory operations," he said.

Plan Colombia — Great Design But No Architects

Former Representative Bob Barr took a Congressional delegation to Colombia the end of 2002, to assess the situation. SOF was there at the same time.

In an interview, Barr said that the Plan Colombia is sound in substance but lacking in administration or oversight. His report to the Congress revealed the lack of a reliable computer-assisted system to track, organize and identify the dynamic supply needs of the aircraft supplied by U.S. The Colombian Air Force cannot sustain its 10 C-130 aircraft, which serve as the backbone of tactical mobility. Less than 20% of 110 U.S.-supplied helicopters are functional: 19 USG-titled aircraft were lost due to pilot error in five years. The Colombian military reports to the commander of the armed Forces and the National Police report to the Minister of Defense. When Police headquarters are attacked, the military cannot provide backup. The Narcotics Assistance Section at the U.S. embassy is ill-equipped, lacks technical knowledge, experience and continuity to administer Plan Colombia, according to Barr. Pilots operating UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters using 50-year-old .50-cal. ammo for the Gau-19 self-defense weapons systems reported jamming of the weapons during life-threatening situations, according to the Barr report.

"The underlying problem is that the U.S. State Department is administrating Plan Colombia when, in fact, it should be administered by the U.S. military," Barr told us.

Of a list of agencies to administer the plan, Barr said, "The State Department is not even near the top of the list to run the Plan Colombia."

Leadership Needed

What is needed is "real leadership and involvement by the White House," he said. "But I'm not terribly optimistic. There is a need for a complete overhaul at the State Department, which is still largely run by a bunch of bleeding-heart liberals. Folks who don't understand the tough world out there and are more concerned, like the Senate is, with being senatorial or being diplomatic than they are about actually getting the job done, that being to move U.S. national security interests forward. Part of it is the fact that very few in Congress understand the perplexities of the drug war overseas and the need for regular and aggressive oversight to make sure it works well. The military has not really asserted its leadership the way it should. The blame has to rest with the White House for not really taking the bull by the horns and making it work. It's a good plan. It's a good idea. It isn't that we need more troops down there or money. We're putting sufficient money into it. The plan is simply not being administered well.

"Our interests are so focused elsewhere right now, that no one is paying attention.

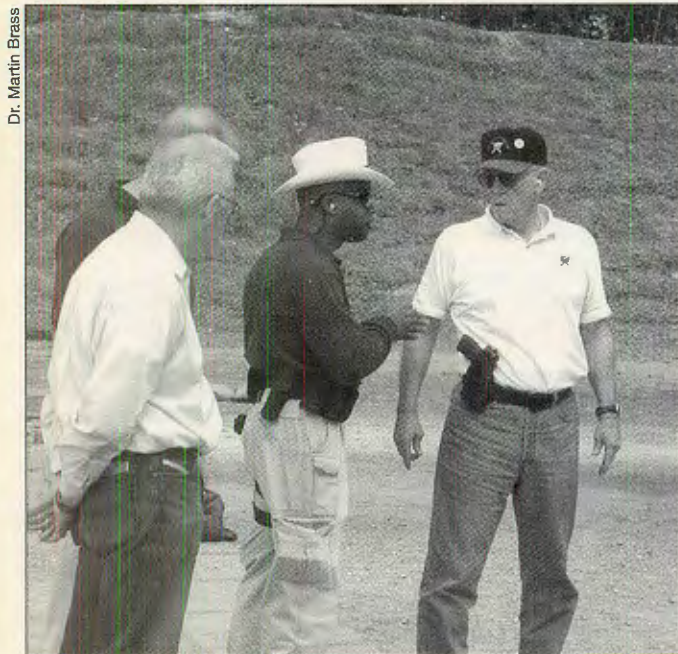
"The Plan has been the red-headed stepchild for quite some time. [The] Clinton Administration fought efforts to fund the plan for many years," Barr said.

The situation in Colombia is indeed complex. Both the United States as well as President Uribe have shifted focus from a drug war to a counterinsurgency.

But the two are inseparable.

As one DEA agent told SOF in Bogotá, "If Americans would not buy the coke, there would be no war."

An international lawyer who has made many trips to Colombia, Dr. Martin Brass is a frequent contributor to SOF. ✕



Dr. Martin Brass

Congressman Bob Barr (left) and SOF Publisher Robert K. Brown discuss pistol-handling techniques at a Colombian national police range.

COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

BY JOHN FARNAM

Avoiding The Appearance Of "Evil"

A customer stopped at a 7-Eleven after leaving my shop and a subsequent desert shooting exercise with his prized DSA FAL, which he placed in his Chevy Blazer between the seats, sticking straight up in plain view. Someone at the Seven-Eleven saw it and called the police. As he left the 7-Eleven, he discovered a police roadblock waiting for him. No one was hurt, but it was exciting. They cut him loose after several hours."

Lesson: The public is being incessantly conditioned by pinko politicians to believe gun owners are criminals; that self-defense is immoral, and that being deliberately defenseless is a virtue. We are supposed to want to be victims, and when we refuse to go along with that mendacious line of thinking, we are vilified. All of us who are unapologetically not defenseless are thus increasingly viewed with

suspicion and apprehension. Accordingly, our guns need to be out of sight and absent from casual conversation, always. The stealth existence offers the only real protection.



And, protects your weapons from thieves, and saves law-enforcement time better spent elsewhere. — Eds

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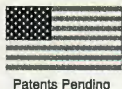
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one of our students used an AR-15 with a three-dot, night-sight setup similar to what one finds on pistols. It was an abomination!

The two rear dots are too close to the shooter's face to do anything but compromise his night vision. The front dot was nearly impossible to see when it was superimposed on our steel targets (illuminated by road flares). This student, who shot well during the day, was unable to hit with any regularity at night. He is getting rid of the dots!

Another student used an ACOG. Again, the red crosshairs in the center of the reticule disappeared when superimposed on steel targets at night. The scope was mounted on the carrying handle of this student's AR-15, making a normal cheek-weld impossible. He had an aftermarket cheek-piece installed in order to solve this problem, but it continuously interfered with the normal operation of the charging handle. Again, this student's equipment was more a hindrance, than a help.

Another student's rifle was equipped with a close-eye-relief, 4X scope. As we have come to expect, he continually got targets mixed up. He could usually hit; he just kept hitting the wrong target, because he got lost in his scope. Students with conventional, iron sights did best, because their equipment didn't get in their way. They learned to develop a symbiotic synergy with their rifles instead of naively expecting that some attached miracle-gadget would magically substitute for personal competence and common sense.

**Students
with conventional,
iron sights did
best, because
their equipment
didn't get in
their way.**

Light Rails:

"Light rails" ("accessory" rails) on pistol frames are all the rage these days. Police departments insist on them, even when they have no specific plans to mount flashlights (or lasers) on pistols. Accordingly, many departments are now ordering holsters designed to accommodate pistols with flashlights attached. For patrol officers, I suggest

this is a bad idea.

Without a flashlight affixed to the pistol, the holster's snatch-resistance is crucially compromised. Thus, when SureFire comes out with a new flashlight six months from now, and the department orders them, new holsters will have to be ordered also, in order to accommodate the new flashlight. In the interim, officers dare not holster their pistols without (the old) flashlights attached.

A regular holster works much better.

**All of them had
'customizing' and
aftermarket parts.
All 1911s experienced
feeding and ejection
problems ...**

The flashlight can usually be attached to the gun after it is drawn and removed prior re-holstering. SWAT officers may want a flashlight attached all the time. Most of us others don't.

Tinker's Trouble:

From a friend who just attended a weeklong pistol course at a well-known school:

"We shot 1,000-1,200 rounds during the course of the week. Most students brought 1911s. All of them had 'customizing' and aftermarket parts. All 1911s experienced feeding and ejection problems, some chronic. Several broke parts and went down after the first two days.

There was a single Taurus pistol. It fell apart the first day.

A SIG 220 ran well all week, as did a G21. Both were 'out of the box.'

This school likes 1911s, but the performance of the ones in this class was less than inspiring, particularly those that had been 'customized.'"

Lesson: The 1911 system is inherently sound, but its devotees will not be dissuaded from tinkering with it. Usually a bad idea, as we see.

Those interested in practical, personal firearms training are encouraged to contact John Farnam at: JPFarnam@aol.com. SOF endorses his instruction without reservation. ✕

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by Frank Sherrill

I was the total skeptic. Not only had I lifted weights for years, but after 21 years in the martial arts and several more in the military, I thought I'd seen it all. So I just didn't believe **Matt Furey** when he said you can get kick-butt fit with bodyweight calisthenics, that I figured I went through in bootcamp. Besides, I could bench 400 and squat 625. So there's no way I was going to fall for a routine that I figured I already knew. Been there, done that!

But I couldn't shake this feeling that Furey might be right. I had read about the **Great Gama** of India, a wrestler who followed this program and was unbeaten in 5,000 matches. In terms of size and strength, he was amazing. He was 5'7" and 260 pounds of streaming steel. And that was in the early 1900's - long before steroids.

I had heard that **Bruce Lee** did the exercises Furey teaches, too. And we all know about Lee's incredible ripped, lean, muscular look. Not to mention how lightning fast and fluid he was.

I had heard that **Herschel Walker**, a Heisman Trophy winner and All-Pro Running back did 500 pushups and situps each day. So that made me think even more.

And then the final straw was when I started to read all the testimonials that Furey had collected from fellow military (I have included several of them in this article).

And then, of course, there is Furey, the author of **Combat Conditioning** and the man GRAPPLING magazine dubbed "The King of Catch Wrestling." Furey has been featured in major martial arts magazines around the world, has been on the cover of several - and is certainly no slouch when it comes to having and using functional strength. He was a world champion in Shuai-chiao kung fu and a national collegiate champion wrestler. Something told me he had to be telling the truth.

I figured the only way I would ever know for sure would be to get the program and use it. I told myself that if what I was reading was nothing but marketing hype - I would not only be angry - but I would let everyone in the world know about it.

So I bought Furey's **Combat Conditioning** book and read it. In the book he challenges the readers with a test. 100 Hindu squats, followed by 50 Hindu pushups, then a one-minute back bridge.

Figuring this would be easy, I got started. At 40 Hindu squats my thighs were blitzed. It took about 90 seconds; not long compared to my squat routine at the gym.

Next, I tried the Hindu pushups. Funny thing is my legs were still shaking. I dipped down and pushed back. At 15 my arms were throbbing. This couldn't be. No way. I could bench like there's no tomorrow and this exercise was nuking me. I gave up at 27 reps. This took about 1.5 minutes, so my workout had only been 2.5 minutes long.

Then the bridge. After three unsuccessful attempts of ten seconds, I gave up. The next day my legs, chest and arms were sore, but in a good way. I thought my legs got 10 times more work with weights, but I was wrong.

Over the course of three months my body changed big time. In fact, I've made a list of 12 of the most amazing benefits that I and thousands of others all over the world have gotten from the **Combat Conditioning** program. I'm betting these are important to you, too:

1. I blow-torched off my excess body fat so quickly that I could eat more than I normally did and still look better than ever.
2. I packed and chiseled functional muscle onto my legs, chest and back that I've never had before, even from weights.
3. I simultaneously doubled my strength and flexibility - and did so without needing separate workouts for each.
4. I quadrupled my endurance inside of 30 days. Just think how much this helped my sparring. No matter what, I NEVER get tired.
5. The chronic back and shoulder pain I had from years of heavy squats, deadlifts and bench pressing went away within a couple weeks. And much of that pain had been with me for nearly 10 years. It's GONE now.

6. I sleep like a log. Eight hours of deep sleep is no longer a goal. It's automatic. As soon as I hit the rack I'm out like a light.
7. My self-confidence knows no bounds. Especially when I got compliments from people who hardly paid attention to me before. I honestly believe there is nothing I cannot do. I'm on top of the world.
8. I can train anywhere. I don't need more than a few square feet of carpet or pavement and I'm all set. I have absolutely no excuses and my body is loving me for it. I don't need any equipment. Just my own bodyweight.
9. I get a kick-butt workout done in 15 minutes or less. Sure, I could do more - but I've gotten incredible results with this amount - so why ruin a good thing?
10. I've turned back the clock. My friends tell me I look 5 - 10 years younger. Awesome!!
11. I have an explosive type of strength that weights couldn't give me. My movements are super fast even when I'm just screwing around.
12. My muscles are like a pliable and powerful tiger - ready to pounce on prey in a heartbeat.

So there you have it. The 12 reasons why **Combat Conditioning** is the best fitness program on the planet. But forget about me.

Take a look at what some others in the military have to say about this program:

Matt, I am a US Marine stationed overseas. I am also a wrestler/judoka and the Marine who developed the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program. I use your courses regularly. I like your no-nonsense approach. Particularly as I get older, bodyweight exercises are quick, flexible, all-encompassing and convenient. Keep up the good work!

Lt Colonel George Bristol - USMC

Mr. Furey,

We have been applying the principle of 'mastering your own body weight' to our football program and have been pleased. A 12 - 1 championship season last year was our reward. Thank you sir.

**Bonner Cummings
Yosemite, CA**

Dear Matt,

When I got your book, I changed my whole way of thinking about how one should train for Combatives. I am now totally off the weights, and, to tell you the truth, I have never felt better or been more flexible in my life. I feel great and have lost no size, strength, or muscle mass... as a result I scored the maximum number of points on the Army Physical Fitness test. HOOAH! You are doing great things, and I and the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School owe you a lot.

TREAT'EM ROUGH!

**CPT Judd D. Mahfouz -
Infantry**

Dear Mr. Furey,

*Let me say I have benefited a lot from both your **Combat Conditioning** and **Combat Abs** book. I am a Marine stationed on Okinawa, Japan and I do a lot of kickboxing and NFB fighting on the side. Your exercises have given me a tremendous advantage and combined with my other routines (shadowboxing, sparring, bagwork, wind sprints, and grappling drills) have gotten me into the best shape of my life.*

**LCpl Sandor Devenyi -
United States Marine Corps**



Matt Furey, author of the best-selling **Combat Conditioning**.

Dear Matt,

*Being a U.S. Marine in a field unit, I spend much of my time in Physical Training, and I'll admit, I thought that I was in peak physical condition. 2 months ago I began your **Combat Conditioning** program and quickly realized that I had been missing something. While platoon PT consists of mostly running and incorporates some bodyweight exercises (i.e. pushups, pull-ups, crunches) I had been spending the bulk of my personal training time in the weight room, lifting heavy. It embarrassed me the first time I tried to do a reverse pushup and couldn't. I haven't set foot in the weight room in the last 2 months. My 3 mile run time has dropped to below 18 minutes, I've lost a good 10 lbs and my body fat has dropped 4%. You can see the difference and God knows, I can feel the difference. I've introduced the rest of my squad to your program. Thanks for helping us kick ass and take names in a hellish and unforgiving manner.*

**D "Bubba" Byng - LCPL, USMC
"Golf" Co, MCS Battalion**

Matt Furey's **Combat Conditioning: Functional Exercises for Fitness & Combat Sports** has 48 super effective bodyweight exercises along with seven different programs that will get you into kick-butt shape fast. Be one of the first 25 people to order and you'll receive 3 free **Special Reports** on how to eliminate knee, back and shoulder pain.

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BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

AMERICA AT WAR

UNITED STATES *FBI manhunt results in new warnings of al-Qaeda hijackings and plans to poison food and water in U.S. Al-Qaeda developing plans for hijacking airlines transiting U.S. Osama planning "unbelievable" terror attack involving biological weapons, Taliban source tells Newsweek. Terrorist Watch List includes 110,000 names. Suicide bombings globally from 1980 to present reach more than 180, according to Robert Pape. U.S. Administration seeks U.N. force in Iraq.*

INDONESIA *U.S. "Terrorist King" for attacking Iraq, according to Vice President Hamzah Haz.*

CUBA *GUANTANAMO BAY SPIES IN THE CAMP. U.S. Army Muslim Chaplain Captain Yousef Yee and Air Force translator Ahmad I al-Halabi arrested for suspected terrorist complicity. Al-Halabi charged with 32 crimes of espionage and aiding and abetting enemy. Conspiracy suspected.*

COLOMBIA *FARC at to renew peace talks w to restore tarnished im*

CHECHNYA Soldiers act as foot soldiers for Saudi/Iraqi bosses, taking orders from Wahhabi Saudi extremist Jamaa al Salfiyeh. Kept hush-hush for fear of antagonizing President Putin. Putin accuses Saudis of supporting Chechen uprising.

LIBYA Moammar Gadhafi becomes U.S. ally/strange bedfellow, sharing info about al-Qaeda activities.

SWEDEN Foreign Minister Anna Lindh assassination eerily mirrors unsolved assassination of Prime Minister Olaf Palme in 1986, by Turkish PKK member, ordered by leader Abdallah Ocalan. Lindh stabbed to death while shopping in department store just before Ocalan, in prison, announced resumption of his revolt. *Canceled attendance by Colin Powell* after threats on foreign ministers planning to attend her funeral.

IRAQ Casualties — three to four daily. Raids on Ba'ath bases largely peaceful. U.S. troops contradict journalist's reports of constant violence. *Rewards:* \$250 for illegal AK-47s and \$500 for RPG launchers and rockets. *Arrested:* 12 Iranian intelligence agents preparing bomb attacks. 101st Airborne launches ops against Syrian Saudi tribes harboring terrorist suspects in camps, capture chief Sheikh Ibrahim Hanjari.

AFGHANISTAN Osama dead or injured? U.S. Intelligence finds evidence leading to such speculation. *Taliban-Drug Gang* alliances flourish. *Pakistani ISI* intelligence agency accused of supporting Taliban. *Renewed civil war* feared from tribalism and drug mafias. *Two-hundred Taliban* killed in two-week period during U.S. ops.

IRAN Al-Qaeda operatives "imprisoned" in posh accommodations, several accused of terror attacks in Riyadh on expat housing. *Arrested:* 12 Iranian intelligence agents preparing attacks in Baghdad.

SYRIA & IRAQ

Syrian army pulls out after three decades, after U.S. demands. U.S. accuses Syria of allowing dozens of rebels to cross into Iraq.

MOROCCO "Emir with Blue Eyes," Frenchman tried for terrorism against tourist installations and plot to overthrow Moroccan monarchy.

SAUDI ARABIA *Splitsville?* Washington and Monarchy at odds over funding of fundamentalist terrorists by government and religious gurus. Documents taken by SpecOps from Saudi infiltrators in Iraq provide evidence of money-laundering to guerrillas fighting U.S. troops in Iraq. *Prison fire kills 300*, more than half al-Qaeda captives. Some 15,000 military-trained Saudis join Iraqi combatants.

LIBERIA 15,000 peacekeepers authorized to be deployed by UN to enforce ceasefire and disarm rebels. Peacekeeping mission, UNMIL, launched 1 October.

SUDAN Shaky ceasefire holds, extended for two more months despite dozens of deaths. SPLA rebels begin "ethnic cleansing" to drive northerners from the South.

PAKISTAN

Mysterious bomb blast, in trash can on 10th floor of office building in Karachi, claims no casualties.

YEMEN Smuggled missiles capable of bringing down planes, taken to Saudi Arabia.

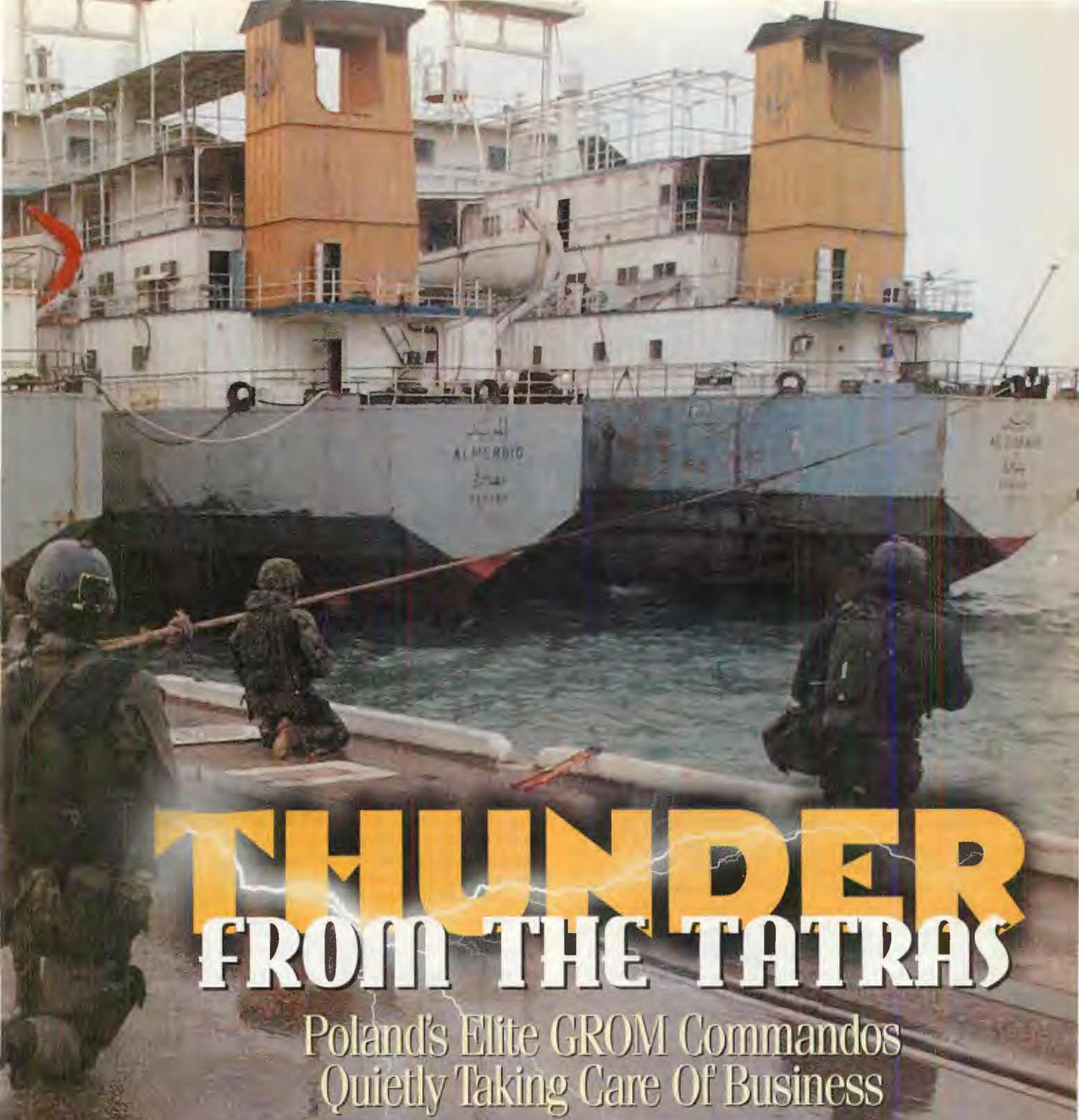
INDIA Fifty killed in bomb attack. Four Indian Muslims arrested. Fundamental Islam spreading fast, being embraced by scientists and intellectuals.



BY DON MCLEAN

Friends among nations are like friends among men. A friend is someone who will help you move. A *good* friend is someone who will help you *move a body*. So it is among nation-friends. Nation-friends will help you when called upon, or when bound by treaty, but *good* friends will help you at personal risk, at great cost to their national treasury, and out of principle in what may not be a popular international undertaking.

So it is with Poland, a nation still struggling to shed the shackles of a centralized socialist economy, but with a history of friendship with the United States that dates from our Revolutionary War, when the brilliant Polish artilleryman General Kazimierz Pulaski taught the revolutionaries how to fight for freedom with big guns and cavalry. Add to that more



THUNDER FROM THE TATRAS

Poland's Elite GROM Commandos
Quietly Taking Care Of Business

than a century of intense Polish immigration to the American heartland and it was totally predictable that the bonds between Poland and America would easily survive nearly half a century of estrangement when she was locked behind the Iron Curtain. After all, if they could forgive us for selling them out at Yalta, they can forgive the worst of our sins.

It is no surprise, then, that when a Coalition of the Willing was being formed by the United States with the internationally unpopular task of ridding the planet of the Saddam Hussein regime, Poland not only sent troops, but she very quietly sent her very best — the GROM.

GROM means thunder in several Slavic languages, but in

the case of Poland's secretive and elite special operations troops we should note that this is a thunder that is seldom heard, as the men of GROM typify the term "quiet professional." Outside the SpecOps community, few have heard of GROM, although they have been deployed on many interna-

Polish GROM SpecOps forces take a defensive posture during boarding operations in the port of Umm-Qasr on 28 March. The GROM played an important role in mine-clearing ops and helping clear the waterways of rogue vessels that might hamper bringing in relief supplies to the port — and securing petroleum resources before they could be torched.



tional operations during the last decade. Not until controversial photos appeared in the media showing GROM troops posing under an American flag, as well as with SEALs turning over Iraqi prisoners on Operation Iraqi Freedom, did the public become aware that the Poles even had a SpecOps capability — let alone one that is totally world-class, and widely experienced. The controversial photo caused some consternation at home among officials who considered that if the secret cadre were going to be photographed in the open, it should at least have been under a *Polish* flag! And then SecDef Rumsfeld and the Commander In Chief himself further breached OpSec when they expressed heartfelt thanks to this secret Polish unit for dangerous work very well done — including, specifically, securing the offshore oil platforms. Defense Minister Jerzy Szmajdzinski noted on Polish State radio that, “it is not good when a politician — even if his name is George Bush or Donald Rumsfeld — talks about the actions of special forces. We are happy with the high grades given to Polish troops. But ...” Ahem. Well, after the fact, we would note that it can be easy to get a case of loose lips bragging on your favorite brother when he does well. But GROM’s emergence upon the world stage was probably only a matter of time, as it’s unlikely that any unit can be as active, and as successful, as GROM has been and remain unknown indefinitely — although their exploits have been an open secret at home for more than a decade.

Born Out Of Need

The last time Poland had an elite SpecOps unit was in WW II, when the “*Chichociemni*,” which translates roughly to “the dark, silent ones,” took on missions the other Allies

When the smoke clears after a successful operation, you pose with your buds for a team shot under the flag, right? Unfortunately, the flag at hand was American, and the guy taking the happy snaps was a photog for Reuters. The brass at home did not mind that the faces were happy, but that they were shown — and noted that if they were going to pose under a flag, a Polish one would be good, too. Fortunately, Polish flags are now very easy to find in Iraq.

were unable or unwilling to tackle. During the years under communist domination, Poland was encouraged to have good military forces — but not so good so as to be a threat to Moscow or Soviet puppet regimes.

At the beginning of the last decade, Poland was a facilitator in the secret emigration of former-Soviet Jews into Israel during Operation Bridge, and as a result, Polish intelligence informed then-Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki that Poland faced threats from terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (General Command). At this juncture the newly free nation had the choice of doing something French and expedient, or doing the right thing. They chose to do the right thing: continue to help former-Soviet Diaspora get home, and gird their national loins against terrorism.

Mazowiecki gave the go-ahead to then-Colonel Slawomir Petelicki who conceived such an elite anti-terrorist force, and under a Top Secret directive GROM was formed, under tutelage of existing British and American SpecOps units, as part of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, on 13 July 1990. It was the first time the new government of Poland had cooperated with the U.S. Army, and fortunately for American interests, it would not be the last. The acronym by which the unit is

known stands for *Grupa Reagowania Operacyjno Mobilnego* — Operational Maneuver Reconnaissance Group. In its mission, and in its relationship to government authority and to the conventional military forces — particularly in its ability to draw personnel from wherever the talent may be found — GROM is very much like the American Operational Detachment Delta.

Typically, GROM recruits personnel from units such as the 6th Air Assault Brigade, the 1st Ind. Special Regiment, Polish Navy UDT, the anti-terrorist squads of police and UOP [equivalent to the FBI] units, and intelligence organizations. New personnel are usually in their early 30s, and married: These are not cannon fodder, and men who have a reason to return to their families are deemed more stable. Some three years and nearly a million dollars are spent training a GROM operator, and Mother Poland wants them to come home, as



Polish Ministry of Defense

ARMING AN ELITE

As eclectic as their training, is the armament available to GROM. Individual weapons training and marksmanship is stressed, and in a wide variety of weapons. It would be a safe guess that any weapon from any source would be available for a specific mission, but below is a short list of what they are known to have in inventory:

■ HANDGUNS:

Browning Hi-Power (P.35), CZ 75, Glock 17 and 17T; HK USP, USP Expert, USP Tactical, SOCOM; SIG 226

■ SUBMACHINE GUNS:

HK MP-5, Uzi, Glauberyt PM-84 (indigenous machine pistol), ONYX (Polish version of AKS-74U, incorporating three-round burst selector, side-fold stock, mounts exotic sights)

■ ASSAULT RIFLES:

AKM, AKMS, HK G36, HKG36k, SIG 551, M4A1, TANTAL (Polish version of AK-74S with burst-fire selector, synthetic furniture, side-fold stock, various optical sights)

■ SNIPER RIFLES:

Mauser M86, PSG-1, Hecate II .50, SVD Dragunov, Remington M700

■ MACHINE GUNS:

Standard Soviet designs

■ GRENADE LAUNCHERS:

Carl Gustav, Pallad D (indigenous, AK-mounted), HK 69A1 (MZP-I), M203 on M4A1, RPG-7

■ SHOTGUNS:

Remington 870

Other equipment from vehicles (Toyota pickups, Hummers, Mercedes "G" jeeps) to boots reflects an eclectic selection of the best that is on the market. In short, they have the men to do the job, and lack of tools will never hamper their mission.

Polish Ministry of Defense

Truly a world-class force, GROM is selected, equipped and trained in a totally eclectic manner — upwards of a million dollars in invested in the training of each GROM operative. Average age is early 30s, and retention is exceptionally high. All training is live-fire. Trainees in this early photo (left) fire H&K MP5SD submachine guns, carry Browning Hi-Power pistols, wear a mission-specific mix of gear such as Nomex overalls and Pro-Tec helmets.





Polish Minister of Defense Jerzy Smajdzinski and Gen. Romana Polko, Commander of GROM, hold a news conference in Warsaw on 2 May, to explain just who were these extraordinary Polish troops that SecDef Rumsfeld had been thanking so profusely, and outline what their mission was, and would likely be, in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Note Polko's Ranger tab.

well. In 12 years of successful operations, only four GROM operators have been lost.

There are also female GROM operators, primarily used for intelligence work, surveillance and similar missions. Of those who apply, between one and five percent become GROM operators. Virtually all GROM are fully SCUBA trained (GROM is the only Polish unit trained to make free-fall jumps into water), and some 75% are certified EMTs or male nurses, a skill of considerable use in hostage-rescue missions.

All training is done with live ammunition, and in hostage-rescue training, the unit's commander is the hostage. GROM operators train for missions in all settings, from mountainous to urban, from desert to jungle to marine and even submarine environs. Cross-training with Allied SpecOps forces is common, as is in-theater training for specific missions, such as was conducted with U.S. Special Forces in Puerto Rico prior to GROM's deployment to Haiti. All are expected to know at least two additional languages. GROM operators are trained, equipped and supported to deploy to any point they are needed, on a moment's notice — and have. The basic operational unit is a four-man team. GROM support units are often comprised of former operators, retired because of age or injury, whose expertise in areas such as intelligence analysis, EOD work and various technical specialties is not limited by physical considerations.

Although originally formed under the Ministry of the Interior,

An intense but low-key commander, Col. Roman Polko has a solid SpecOps background and the collegiate ability to lead a unit that at the same time handles covert operations and is a flagship for Poland's new military as they join NATO and are involved in other international missions.

after considerable debate GROM was deemed, as a military unit, to be more appropriately organized under the Minister of National Defense, and there less likely to be used inappropriately for police or political missions. This was also more in line with common practice among other NATO countries.

Always In the Thick Of It, But Discreetly

For a unit of its size (a few hundred) and recent inception (less than 14-years-old), this new kid on the SpecOps block has been busy. There are a number of well-known international missions where GROM has been specifically requested by non-Polish outsiders, who were aware of this unit's singular abilities and focused audacity: the rescue of American officials during Desert Storm, the VIP protection and other missions in Haiti, VIP protection and war-criminal snatching in the Balkans, etc., but insiders assure us that these missions are but the tip of an iceberg.

Subject to correction or poker-faced denial, from various sources here is a compilation of GROM missions from their inception to date. Although our sources could be considered cognoscenti, they are not at this time associated with GROM, so even this listing of their exploits may not be complete (and, as is always possible when reporting in an arena where no one is talking, some may be apocryphal):

- 1991: Rescue of American CIA operatives from Iraq
- 1992: Escort duty during the "Macierewicz briefcases affair" (an interesting time in newly-democratized Poland when the process of natural selection was playing out)
- 1992: Assault on residence, arrest of criminal syndicate boss
- 199X: Various classified operations against the Russian mafia in Poland
- 1994: Operation Restore Hope (Haiti)
- 1994: Rescue of four Polish engineers taken hostage in Angola
- 1995: Rescue of two Polish officers taken as human shields by Bosnian Serbs
- 1996: UNTAES mission, eastern Slavonia, arrest of





Polish Ministry of Defense

After a hard tour in Afghanistan with Operation Enduring Freedom, Polish forces deplane and form up to receive awards and welcomes from Polish officials — and (inset) after months of mutton-rice-and-chai, the pork-potatoes-and-pivo that had been laid out for their arrival. But instead of a face full of hometown cooking they got a face full of newsies' microphones. Fortunately, even hungry Poles are world-class good sports, and took it all in good grace.

Slavko Dokmanovic)

- 1996: Bodyguard duty, U.S. Ambassador Walker's mission to Kosovo and Macedonia
- 1997: Arrest of Polish Prime Minister Jozef Oleksy (charges subsequently dropped)
- 1998: Rescue of five Poles taken hostage in Chechnya
- 1999: Bodyguard duty, U.S. Ambassador Walker's mission to Kosovo and Macedonia
- 2000: Classified mission in Northern Ireland
- 2001: Hunt for war criminals in Kosovo
- 2001: Reconnaissance mission, Afghanistan, prior to arrival of Polish regulars
- 2002: From fall forward, cross-training and early ops, Operation Iraqi Freedom
- 2003: Operation Iraqi Freedom, with British SAS and U.S. SEALs

There were, of course, other missions as well. But a noteworthy point here is not how busy GROM's has been since its inception, but its high level of operational success.

From GROM, the men deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom comprised less than five-dozen, but included men from the specialized sub-unit GSP (*Grupa Specjalna Pletwonurkow* — special combat group) commonly known as "Formoza," specializing in UDT ops. These men, working out of the *Czernici*, took part in maritime interdiction operations for some time prior to the beginning of hostilities. The Allied task force based in Bahrain included the *Czernici*, Australian Royal Navy Frigates HMAS *Anzac* (F150) and HMAS *Darwin* (F04), and the American ships U.S.S. *Paul Hamilton* (DDG-60) and U.S.S. *Reuben James* (FFG-58). Hitting the water along side the SEALs, the GROM troops switched from interdiction to the crucial work of securing the Port at Umm-Qasr at the onset of hostilities. Umm-Qasr would be the pipeline through which logistical and humani-

tarian support must flow north in support of advancing ground troops and the well being of Iraqis who had lost necessities such as food and water. It was there that GROM troops were photographed working with SEALs, handing over EPW taken during the securing of the port and nearby oil platforms before they could be sabotaged. This mission probably represented participation in their largest operation thus far, and although such intimate cooperation among international units presents many opportunities for things to go awry, interoperability was essentially seamless.

Such smooth interoperability is about to be tested as Polish military forces take charge of nearly 10,000 Coalition troops from more than a dozen countries, who will administer a third of reconstruction-era Iraq, which we will examine in more detail in a later issue.

Leadership: The First Element Of An Excellent Elite

The man who foresaw the need, and who was responsible for the solid yet innovative nature of GROM, was its original commander, Brigadier General Slawomir Petelicki, something of a military renaissance man. Born in Warsaw in 1946, Petelicki was educated in law at Warsaw University, and has more than 30 years service in the military and scouting service. He was an intelligence officer from 1969 to 1990, including a top-secret tour in North Vietnam in 1971. He spent more than 10 years working outside Poland, including a hitch in New York City on counter-intelligence ops, and time in Sweden, and working economic intelligence duties.

Before he was assigned GROM commander, he was head of the security department in the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs. In 1990 he formed, and subsequently commanded GROM until 1995. In the middle of 1996, he was detailed as special representative of the Prime Minister, responsible for fighting the organized crime that had burgeoned with the collapse of the former communist police state. At the end of

Continued on page 74

AMBUSH



What Goes Up the Road — Must Come Back Down

IN IRAQ

PART 2

TEXT BY J.S. MOSBY

IMAGES BY
GREG MATHIESON/MAI

Having driven through the teeth of an Iraqi mechanized battalion of Republican Guards, Team Zulu had pulled off into a clearing to get their bearings. Bad intel, and a blocking position that didn't, had almost spelled the destruction of all concerned. As they reloaded and watched hundreds of Iraqis closing in, the news would get worse. In addition to the force they had just driven through, there was more waiting to the north. It wasn't such a tough decision to make; those who had come up the road would now have to go back down.

AS the convoy rolled to a stop in the field, everyone immediately started donning their body armor and helmets, something they had not bothered with since they had been in the Army's rear. The major running the group FSB and the team's captain got on the horn to find out what was going on, and get some support lined-up. Bill W. started tearing-down his temperamental Mk19, the .50 gunners did the same. The team's Air Force FAC requested some A-10s to get on-station. Meanwhile, the Iraqis were now quite aware that they only had a small, soft-skinned convoy on their hands, and started gathering in the distance like jackals.

"I looked across the field and they were pouring in from the north," recalled Jason D., as he stripped and cleaned his .50 cal. "Truckloads of 'em started coming in, piling-out, blocking the road. Civilians were pulling up in POVs and dropping guys off. 'This is not cool' I said to myself."

Just as he got his M2 reassembled, a bold enemy contingent fanned out across the field in their direction. Bill W. gave them a searing dose of his now-functional Mk19, scattering them and sending them scurrying back the way they had come.

Apparently the cause of the weapon's problem had been its fragile linkage system that holds together the belts of

Special Forces operators with their HUMVEEs take a break from chasing Al-Ansar guerrillas in the mountains of Iraq near the Iran border — and the area of Halabja, where an estimated 500 Kurds were gassed years ago by an Iraqi aircraft. The operators were also investigating caves for intel, and searching for evidence of WMD.

40mm grenades. He swapped-out the old can of rounds for a fresh one, and the weapon was back in business.

After some time on the radio, the team's captain called everyone together. No, 3rd ID (Infantry Division) hadn't cleared either Masayyib to the south, which was obvious at this point, or Iskandariyah to the north. The A-10s reported nothing but canals and ditches to both the east and west, a no-go for the wheeled vehicles of the convoy.

"Well, fellas," the CO said, "looks like it's back the way we came." The group got real quiet and everyone just nodded. They reported later that it was odd how calm they were, the choice having been made for them by circumstance. "You know," the team's CWO told SOF, "it was funny how no one was freaking-out on the radio or yelling anything unnecessary. Everyone just sort of locked-on and the training took over, I guess."

Greg turned to Dave and said, "It's been good working with you," shook hands and mounted-up. The group made ready to roll back down the way they had come. The pause to regroup had lasted little more than an hour.

For the return trip, the convoy was rearranged with two gun trucks in the lead, two bringing up the rear and the FSB sandwiched in the middle. This time, they had gunners with M240s in the rear of the pickups, where AT-4s had been tied to the roll bars.

"There's always a bit of sting between the A-Teams in the field and the B-Detachments with FSB supporting from the rear," said Greg, driving the lead gun truck. "But I gotta hand it to the guys in the back of those pickups on the way back down. It was bad enough riding through that shit storm in the cab of a truck, but to stand up there bold as brass in the open like that, well, here's lookin' at ya."

As they nosed back onto the highway, the crew of one of the Toyotas frantically scrambled with their CD player for just the right song. They settled on *Jesus Christ, Superstar*. Greg eased his Humvee out first and floored it.

"Where The Hell Is That Goddamned A-10?"

"We had the lightest of the trucks," Greg recalled. "I started to outpace everyone because they were pulling out onto the road. The captain breaks in over the radio and tells me I've got to stop. I'm already a good piece down the road and I tried to tuck in like a rabbit behind this piss-weak palm tree. I'm thinking what asses we must look like when they caught up. I was damn happy to be rolling again."

GPS records showed an alarming speed increase from that point on. By the time his gun truck crested the bridge, it was going nearly 70 mph.

"Going up was bad," affirmed the CWO, "But the run back down was unbelievable, 10,000 times the amount of fire! They had us in a spot and knew it, just waiting."

As they approached the gas station, it started up again. As they cleared the last part of the roadside tree line, clouds of tracer came out to meet them. Looking ahead, a large group of Iraqis had gathered in front of the gas station. Before anyone could even register, Bill W. sent a long, arching stream of 40mm from the Mk19 parallel to the lead vehicles and they disappeared in a flash of impacts and dust. Like a starting gun, the fusillade from the speeding vehicles again cranked-up.

As the lead truck pulled even with the station, driver Greg saw a group of Iraqis sprint away from the spray of 40mm that was tearing-up their friends and duck into a large, concrete culvert, obviously panicked. "I looked over and saw a stream of .50-cal. tracer just pour in there after them. Jason was just laying it in, no letup," he recalled. "That's one round in five, just streaming in. I can't imagine the carnage that took place in there." Without pause, gunner Jason shifted to the muzzle flashes blinking from the windows of the station, panning the gun as they raced past.

As the other trucks sped by the station, Dave L. remembered thinking, "Where the hell is that goddamned A-10?" He needn't have worried.

As soon as the thought crossed his mind, the lead ship



Heavily loaded-down HUMVEE and SF operators on the move in Iraq's mountains searching for Al-Ansar guerrillas. The mounted gear provides minimal protection from shrapnel and small-arms fire but maximizes load capacity. Located was a small bomb factory with 50 pairs of shoes outside, meaning that the Al-Ansar personnel had quickly E-and-E'd.

made his gun run, tearing the building apart with its 30mm Gatling. At the same time, one of the shells must have penetrated an underground gasoline storage tank, no doubt at least half-full of fuel and vapor. The resulting explosion was direct from Hollywood special effects.

"I will never forget that sight as long as I live," he said. "The whole place went up, this guy passed over, kicked it in the ass and climbed out vertical. I was so glad to see that. In Afghanistan no one wanted to come down low."

The convoy raced on, headed for the bridge at break-neck speed.

Target-Rich Environment

Halfway there, Greg went neck-and-neck with some idiot driving bobtail in the cab of a tractor-trailer rig, who had inadvertently bumbled into the situation from a side road. Wild-eyed with realization of what was happening, the driver tried desperately to outpace the fire-spitting gun truck in his rear-view mirror. "I thought he was going to try to block the road but at the last minute he pulled off headed east and almost rolled it."

They had avoided that potential disaster, but the chaos of the moment would produce another road hazard; a runaway horse and wagon. "Don't hit the fuckin' horse!" the Chief screamed as his gun truck barreled down on it.

Again, fate smiled on the Americans as the terrified animal bolted and jerked the wagon across the road and into the brush, its elderly driver hanging on for dear life.

Then a guy on a dirt bike roared up. Almost everyone saw him. Gunning it up to the edge of the road, he realized what was going down, and laid his bike over in a panicked, dirt-spewing 180 as he attempted to haul ass. More than one of team remembers thinking what a ballsy bastard he was and hoping he would make it. But a burst from a .50 ended his great escape.

The lead vehicles continued their put-it-to-the-floor surge onto the bridge.

"We looked up as we crested the rise of the bridge," gunner Wess remembered. "They were down in the low ground waiting for us and the berm was swarming — nothing but muzzle flashes and tracer." Greg's truck was just approaching the intersection and about then Leo, the team's intel/commo guy, pitched a smoke. In addition to the groups on the berm and in the low ground in front of it, another group had positioned itself on the other side of the road and were trying to erect a barricade across it. Luckily, they were throwing it up across the way the Americans didn't want to go, toward downtown Masayyib.

About then, mortar-fire and a shower of RPG rockets began to rain in.

"I'll Never Forget The Look On His Face."

Despite their surprise and the amateur-hour, spray-and-pray blizzard of small-arms fire they were throwing at the column, a few Iraqis had the presence of mind to snatch-up their favored weapon — the RPG. Then, rocket trails started to crisscross the roadway.

"About the time we hit the intersection, I looked down and this guy brought up an RPG no more than 20 feet from

me," gunner Greg remembers. "Our eyes met, I leveled-off on him, he leveled-off on me, and he pulled the trigger. Click. Nothing, a misfire! I'll never forget the look on his face."

Greg dropped-hammer and the rocket man never made it to the horrible-realization stage.

Then, Greg's gun truck barreled into the turn and headed back south the way they had come. Greg swung around the big .50 and started laying fire into the buildings where they had first seen the runners in the alleyways. Iraqis had crowded into the courtyards and were sticking their AKs over the walls, spraying blindly.

The rest of the convoy took the turn in a similar manner, the haze from Leo's smoke was beginning to obscure the scene, masking the vehicles as they thundered through. Everyone concerned kept up steady bursts of aimed fire at whatever clusters of scrambling Iraqis appeared. They were



HUMVEEs with SF operators near an Iraqi village near the Iran border. The Americans also discovered a building where Kurds had been tortured by Al-Ansar Gs by hanging them on ceiling hooks. Farther into the mountains they ran across a number of dead Al-Ansar guerrillas with their ears missing. Somebody got some revenge.

almost clear as Dave, Jason and Jeff's gun truck, second to the last, headed into the end zone.

Just as they started into the turn, three rockets struck simultaneously. One sailed across the hood of the Humvee, so close Dave could clearly see its dull green color. Another struck a concrete light pole just as they were passing it and a third impacted near the front right tire. The one that took out the light pole detonated with such force that gunner Jason was knocked senseless and suffered the effects of concussion.

The one near the front tire kicked-up the Humvee, already grossly overloaded at 13,000 lbs., onto its opposite two wheels. Somehow, Dave held on and took a *Dukes-Of-Hazard*-careen, tires screaming so loudly that the lead vehicles could hear it over the din.

Nothing Short Of A Miracle

"I can't explain the joy I felt when I saw Dave's truck burst out of the smoke!" Greg exclaimed. "It was like something out of a movie." With Bill, Dave and Chief hot on their tail,

Continued on page 66

Bush Administration Blows It In Sudan

Should Have Sought Military Victory Over Radical Islamist Terrorists
Whose Genocidal War Has Killed More Than 2,000,000 People.

PART I

BY JOHN LOFTON

PHOTOS COURTESY PERSECUTION PROJECT FOUNDATION



“Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them.”

— President Bush, State of the Union address,
21 September 2001

“We cannot put our faith in the word of tyrants, who solemnly sign non-proliferation treaties, and then systematically break them. We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst tyrants before they emerge.”

— President Bush, West Point, 1 June 2002

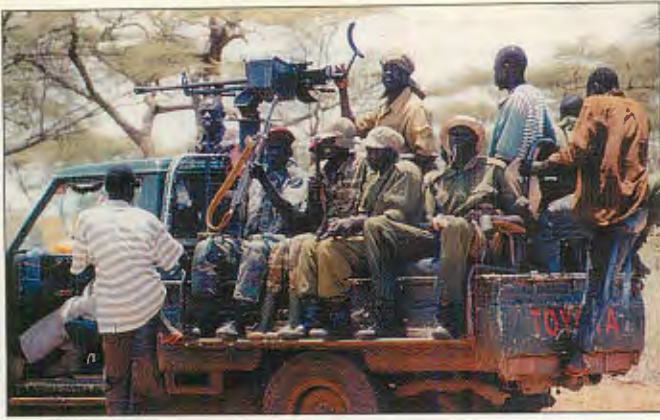
“To assume this regime’s good faith is to bet the lives of millions and the peace of the world in a reckless gamble.”

— President Bush, United Nations, regarding
Saddam Hussein’s regime, 12 September 2002

If ever there was a regime of treaty-breaking terrorists who deserve to be overthrown by military force, it is the murderous, genocidal, tyrannical Islamists who run the government of Sudan. Their crimes-against-humanity dwarf anything Iraq’s Saddam Hussein ever did. In the jihad/Holy War started and continued by the government of Sudan more than 2,000,000 people have been killed, 4,000,000 have been displaced and 500,000 have been made refugees. As Rep. Donald Payne (D – N.J.) has noted: The equivalent of these numbers in the U.S. population would be 64,000,000 killed, 128,000,000 displaced, and 15,000,000 refugees.

Just how dangerous to the U.S. are the terrorist thugs running the government of Sudan? Well, on 29 October 2002, President Bush himself continued for one year Executive Order 13067 which declares a “national emergency” with respect to Sudan. This Order says it is to deal, in part, with “the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States constituted by the actions and policies of the Government of Sudan, including continuing concern about the presence and activities of certain terrorist groups.”

Brad Phillips (left), President of Persecution Project Foundation, beside a pro-Christian soldier, with his former Soviet-designed 7.62mm RP-46 company machine gun, in the Sudan bush.



Pro-Christian troops (left) readying to move-out, on a stripped-down over-loaded pick-up mounting a heavy machine gun, and (right) on-foot, following a briefing.

And these terrorist groups include al-Qaeda. *The Financial Times of London* (22 March 2002) has reported: "In Sudan, there is strong evidence of al-Qaeda links dating back to the mid-1990s, when Usama bin Laden used the country as a sanctuary." In filing its case against Zacarias Moussaoui — the so-called "20th hijacker" — the United States noted: "Usama bin Laden and al-Qaeda also forged alliances with the National Islamic Front (NIF) in the Sudan ... for the purpose of working together against their perceived common enemies in the West, particularly the United States." An important point: *The radical Islamist terrorists who welcomed al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden to Sudan are still in the NIF leadership today.*

In December of 2001, in a statement before the Senate Subcommittee on International Operations and Terrorism, J.T. Caruso, Acting Assistant Director of the FBI's Counter-Terrorism Division, listed Sudan as one of the countries where, by 1990, al-Qaeda "was providing military and intelligence training in various areas." He said al-Qaeda was headquartered in Sudan until about 1996. In May of this same year, FBI Director Louis J. Freeh, testifying about the threat of terrorism to the U.S., before the Senate Committees on Appropriations, Armed Services and Select Committee on Intelligence, noted that Sudan was listed by the State Department as one of seven countries that were "state sponsors of terrorism, or countries that view terrorism as a tool of foreign policy."

In his book *Sword Of Islam: Muslim Extremism From Arab Conquests To The Attack On America* (Prometheus Books; 2002), John J. Murphy, Jr., a military historian who co-authored two confidential reports on international terrorism for the CIA, says the forces of militant Islam made their dramatic debut in the U.S. on 26 February 1993, when terrorists set off a bomb under the World Trade Center in New York City. Murphy says a Muslim newspaper, the Paris-based *Al Watan al-Arabi*, reported this act of terror was orchestrated by Shaikh Omar Abdul Rahman who was "specially ordered by Tehran and Khartoum (the capital of Sudan) to carry out offensive operations within the United States."

"Sudan Is A Gathering Place For All The World's Terrorists ..."

In 1989, Rahman was arrested in Egypt for his part in the assassination of that country's President Anwar Sadat.

Murphy says: "Rahman had become an important supporter of the Turabi regime in Sudan, and would become an important player in Turabi's game plan to export militant Islam ... Among the services Turabi performed for the Islamic cause, he was instrumental in obtaining Sudanese passports for Shaikh Omar Abdul Rahman and the then virtually unknown Osama bin Laden." The reference here to "Turabi" is to Hassan al-Turabi, the prime architect of Sudan's National Islamic Front, the real power behind Sudan's President General Omar Hassan al-Bashir.



Brad Phillips with pro-Christian forces inside Sudan, where more than 2,000,000 people have been killed and 4,000,000 displaced.

the real power behind Sudan's President General Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

In his book *Warriors Of The Prophet: The Struggle For Islam* (Westview Press; 1999), Mark Hubbard, the Cairo correspondent for London's *Financial Times*, quotes Saleh Keki, Eritrea's foreign minister, as saying: "Sudan is a gathering place for all the world's terrorists, and they are going to destabilize us with any means. They have intentions for the whole region." Hubbard says this view was echoed along the length of the Nile valley.

Last, and certainly not least, former CIA Director R. James Woolsey, is quoted in the Winter, 2003, issue of the *Journal Of Counterterrorism & Homeland Security International*, as saying: "Iran, Iraq, Syria, Sudan and Libya sponsor and assist terrorism in one way or another; and all five are working on weapons of

mass destruction of one type or another."

Despite this well-documented involvement of the government of Sudan in terrorism, President Bush told Congress in April of this year that this same government is "negotiating in good faith" to end the war they started. Such an assertion, however, is preposterous. In an interview, Smith College Professor Eric Reeves, who has worked for the past five years as a fulltime researcher and analyst on Sudan, says: "It's a historic fact that since 1989 Khartoum has never, ever kept any signed agreement. They have violated at least a dozen consequential agreements."

And Khartoum has shown anything but "good faith" regarding the current "peace" negotiations. A case in point: the vehement rejection, in mid-July, 2003, by Sudan's President Omar al-Beshir of a proposal presented to him by

the Kenyan-based mediators known as the Inter-Governmental Authority On Development (IGAD). This was a proposal which a State Department official tells me had been agreed to by all parties, including the U.S., as a valid document to discuss, a proposal this official says was painstakingly put together “after a lot of shuttle diplomacy by mediators going to the South, North, many conflict areas — all over the place for weeks.”

So, what did President Beshir say about this “peace” proposal? He said that if it was insisted on, “let IGAD and those behind it go to hell.” He demanded that the Kenyan mediators “come up with a reasonable alternative, otherwise they have to dissolve the document in water and drink it.” Calling Bashir’s intemperate outburst “abundant diplomatic impudence,” the publication “Africa News” (7/21/03) observed: “Apparently Mr. El-Bashir doesn’t want peace.”

Well, no. President Bashir is not a man with whom one would normally associate the word “peace.” Writing about him in his book *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (Oxford; 1999), John L. Esposito, Professor of Religion and International Affairs and Director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at George-town University, notes that after three years of democracy in Sudan, Bashir seized power in a military coup in 1989. His government then “suspended parliament and all political parties; imprisoned leaders of the major religious-political parties.”

And there are numerous other examples of a lack of “good faith” by the government of Sudan. Professor Reeves says they have “wildly violated” the 4 February 2003, agreement to surrender all areas taken since the cessation of hostilities agreement signed 15 October 2002. This agreement specified no redeployment of significant assets. And Khartoum grounded the Civilian Protection Monitoring Team (CPMT) from 7 March to 11 April 2003, “a huge violation” of a signed agreement, according to Reeves.

Why was the CPMT grounded? The UN’s Integrated Regional Information Network (7 April 2003) quotes Muhammad Ahmad Dirdeiry, a spokesman for the Sudan embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, as saying that Sudanese intelligence had discovered that the CPMT was verifying alleged violations of the agreement on the cessation of hostilities. Therefore, the Sudanese government “denied it permission to verify such violations.” Thus, the reason the government of Sudan wants to stop the CPMT from doing its job is obvious — because the government of Sudan wants to continue terrorizing and murdering innocent civilians.

But, sad to say, instead of confronting these murderous Islamist tyrants, and doing battle to defeat them, to liberate Sudan, President Bush and his State Department have sought to have them sign a “peace treaty” even going so far as to say they are negotiating in “good faith.” As Brad Phillips, President of the Persecution Project Foundation, observes correctly: “The State Department has been accommodating and appeasing an evil regime that’s exporting terrorism and

practicing it internally against its own people.”

A truly astounding and disgraceful example of such appeasement are the comments of Secretary of State Colin Powell who said, in late May of 2001, at a press conference in Nairobi, Kenya, about the bloody conflict in Sudan: “We are not against any side. I’m not trying to express pleasure or displeasure toward anyone.”

And State Department spokesman Richard Boucher has made statements just as idiotic. On 22 February 2002, the *New York Times* reported the State Department was suspending its efforts to mediate a peace in the war in Sudan to protest a rocket and machine gun helicopter attack by the Sudanese military on about 4,000 civilians gathered at a food distribution site in the village of Bieh in southern Sudan. This attack murdered 17 people. Catherine Bertini, executive director of the UN’s World Food Program (WFP), said this was the second such attack in less than two weeks. On 9 February 2002, a Sudanese government airplane dropped three bombs on the town of Akuem, an area where the WFP has just finished distributing food to 18,000 people. Two children were murdered by this attack.

Incredibly, in response to these blatant acts of terror, the *Times* paraphrased Powell mouthpiece Boucher saying that they “have raised questions about the government’s seriousness in seeking peace!” Boucher is quoted directly as saying, presumably with a straight face: “We have asked for an explanation of how one part of the government can negotiate with the United States an agreement to end attacks against civilians while another part of the

government is deliberately targeting civilians.”

Well, let me see if I can help you out here with an explanation, Mr. Boucher. *One part of the government of Sudan can “negotiate” about “peace” while slaughtering innocent civilians because the government of Sudan is run by lying, terrorist-murderers who are not negotiating in good faith! Wake up, please!*

Or, as Anthony Shadid, Cairo correspondent for the Associated Press, puts it a little more gently in his book *Legacy Of The Prophet: Despots, Democrats, And The Politics Of Islam* (Westview Press; 2001): The Islamists in Sudan “[say] habitually one thing in English to the West (that they supported democracy, that they sought coexistence with the Christian world and that they saw religion as having no role in the war in the south) and another thing in Arabic to their own people (that Islam was the answer ... and that the war in the south was a jihad.”

“Good Faith” Ambiguous?

A State Department source working on the Sudan issue says, yes, Professor Reeves is correct; the government of Sudan has violated every agreement ever signed. But, this individual — who will talk only on the condition that he is not named — says this time “things are different.” When asked how the government of Sudan — this time — is showing “good faith,” he replies, with a sigh: “That’s an ambigu-



Troops take a break to read SOF. RPD light machine gun is typical of arms captured from government forces.

ous term really, to try to determine what that really means. Good faith means that there's a good attitude or at least a good sense that both sides are making progress. There are a lot of ways to measure if that's happening."

One of the important things the White House and State Department could have done to severely cripple the ability of the government of Sudan to continue waging war is do everything possible to stop foreign oil companies from operating in that country. Such sanctions would include denying these foreign oil companies access to U.S. capital markets. Representative Spencer Bachus (R-Ala.), who has sponsored legislation to do this, says:

"Oil is fueling the Islamic government's war of genocide and enslavement against Christians and other religious minorities in the Sudan. Under our laws, if an American company operates in Sudan, they are fined and their officials can be thrown in jail. But we now allow foreign companies to operate there without penalty ... we must do all we can to stop it."

Among the foreign oil companies operating in Sudan are: The China National Petroleum Company (CNPC); Lundin of Sweden; Petronas of Malaysia; Austria's OMV; and France's TotalFinaElf. Randolph Martin, Senior Director of Operations at the International Rescue Committee, has estimated that oil from southern Sudan is earning the government of Sudan "well over a million dollars a day." In a report for the European Coalition On Oil In Sudan, Diane deGuzman notes that one of the reasons the government of Sudan bombs and strafes civilian populations in the south is for the express purpose of clearing these areas so oil-drilling work can start or continue.

On the Web page of the China National Petroleum Company, its President, Ma Fucai, says about his company: "We ... strive to promote the harmonious development of society." The Petronas Web page says this company is "a responsible corporate citizen" that seeks "a better quality of life." And the Lundin Web page says it is a "socially responsible" company with "high standards of corporate citizenship." But, by helping finance the war being waged by the government of Sudan these countries have the blood of hundreds of thousands of innocent people on their respective hands.

And make no mistake about it. Millions of dollars in foreign oil company revenues *are* helping the government of Sudan continue this brutal slaughter. *Africa Confidential* quotes Sudanese Army spokesman General Mohamed Osman Yassin as saying, on 30 June 2000, on the anniversary of the National Islamic Front's 1989 coup, that "thanks to its growing oil industry" Sudan was "manufacturing ammunition, mortars, tanks and armored personnel carriers."

But, incredibly, despite the overwhelming evidence that foreign oil company revenues are fueling the mass murder being committed by the government of Sudan, the State Department adamantly opposes any legal sanctions to deny these companies access to U.S. capital markets. In testimony before the House International Relations Committee on 5 June 2002, Walter Kansteiner, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, said, in effect, to those who care about this issue: Drop dead!

Repeatedly, Kansteiner made it clear he was "very opposed" to what he called "political interference in capital markets." He said he has gone all over Africa telling political leaders "please divorce politics from your economic policy." He added: "When you start interfering directly in your capital markets, you're playing with fire." This caused an out-

raged Rep. Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) to reply: "Are you living in this world, Mr. Kansteiner?"

As for playing with fire, Lantos added that, no, what we're playing with here is "slavery" and "the death of millions of people." To which Kansteiner replied that the oil revenue question is one "to be negotiated." He said passing laws to deny foreign oil companies operating in Sudan access to U.S. capital markets is "a detrimental precedent" that would send "all the wrong signals ... around the world." But this is pernicious nonsense. What is "detrimental" or "wrong" about sending a signal to the world that you will be denied access to American capital markets if you're a foreign oil company whose revenues are funding a genocidal, terrorist, war against innocent people?

Also outraged by Kansteiner's appalling comments, Rep. Tom Tancredo (R-Colo.) wondered if there was *any* action so heinous that it would cause him to favor denying a foreign company access to U.S. capital markets? For example, suppose there had been a company selling the gold teeth of victims from the Nazi death camps? Would it be appropriate to deny *this* company access to our capital markets?

Kansteiner ducks this specific question saying only that he's sure there is some action that might make him approve denying a foreign country access to our capital markets. But, on the particular issue of what's happening in Sudan, "this isn't it." Amazing, no? As previously noted, in a war started and continued by the government of Sudan — and made possible by foreign oil company revenues — more than 2,000,000 people have been killed, 4,000,000 have been displaced and 500,000 have been made refugees. But, for Walter Kansteiner this is not a sufficient reason for legally cracking down on these companies and denying them access to our capital markets!

In one of the great understatements of the century, Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) says he finds Kansteiner's position as "odd" since the government of Sudan "is exploiting our markets to procure money that is then used directly to sustain and even expand the killing ... this oil-facilitated military machine continues to expand. We all know that this war was at a stalemate, may have even ground to a halt a few years back, until the massive infusion of oil revenues got the Khartoum government off its life support militarily and now is a very potent military machine."

When President William McKinley refused to rush to war with Spain because the American ship the U.S.S. *Maine* blew up in Havana Harbor on 15 February 1898, Teddy Roosevelt accused McKinley of having "no more backbone than a chocolate éclair." But, whatever has replaced the spine of Walter Kansteiner makes a chocolate éclair, by comparison, seem like tungsten steel.

Next month, in Part 2 of how the Bush Administration blew it in Sudan; The Big Lie about there being no slavery in Sudan; how Islam is the motivating force behind this genocidal slaughter; and the truth about the possibility of a military victory in this war-torn nation.

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John Lofton has been a commentator on the Mutual Radio Network and a Presidential campaign advisor to Pat Buchanan. Currently, he writes a monthly column on the Federal bureaucracy for Howard Phillips' Conservative Caucus. ✖

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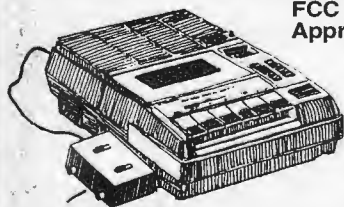
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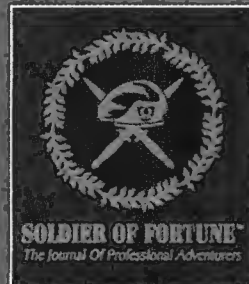


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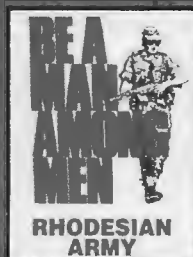


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Many thousands of dollars worth of premier guns, optics, knives and gear await the top winners — but to win, you have to enter. (NOTE: Photos can also be submitted on behalf of deployed personnel (with their permission), by their at-home families and friends.)

Entries can be on any subject, and will be judged for action, artistic properties, human interest, technical merit or a combination thereof. Decisions of the judges are final.

Each submission needs to be accompanied by

the basic who/what/when/where of what's in the photo. All submissions must have the name and address of photographer (*preferably on the item*) to be returned, and all winning photos, except as noted below, become the property of SOF magazine. We can accept prints, slides or digital images on CD (please *do not* write on the back of prints with ball-point pens).

SPECIAL CLASSIFICATION: Special awards will be given to combat photos taken by GI Combat Photographers. (NOTE: As photos taken at government expense by personnel whose MOS is “photographer” or “historian” are in public domain, SOF will lay no claim to ownership of such winning photos. All photographs submitted by GI photographic personnel, must have been cleared for publication.)

Because the necessities of ongoing campaigns have caused various tour extensions for troops, we decided the fairest thing for all entrants is that the SOF Photo Contest be extended as well. The contest will now close and judging of entries will commence on 1 January 2004. If you have entered the contest and subsequently have a PCS, please forward your new address to us. If you have a permanent point of contact Stateside, it might be a good idea to include that with your submission. (NOTE: If we loose track of you due to a PCS, and your award notification is returned to us as undeliverable at the address you gave us, we will have no choice but to make the award to the next-best entrant.)

The decisions of the contest judges are final on all matters. Submissions should be sent to SOF Photo Contest, 5735 E. Arapahoe Avenue, Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303, and must be received by Christmas Eve, 2003.

Keep your heads down and your cameras rolling.

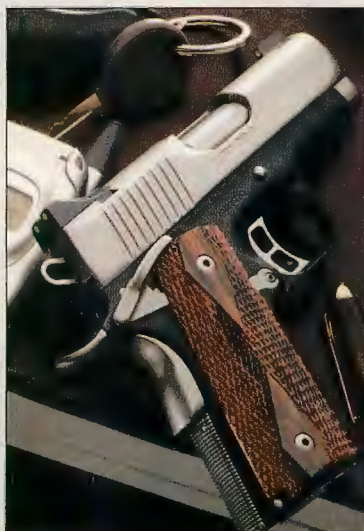
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See below for a partial catalog of the cornucopia of prizes, and watch subsequent issue of *SOF* for two-page spreads showing all prizes and listing all the awards.

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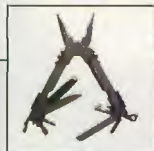
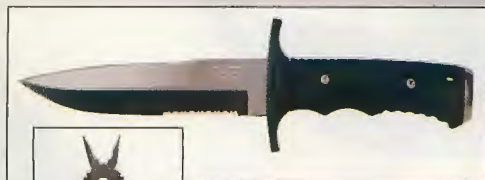
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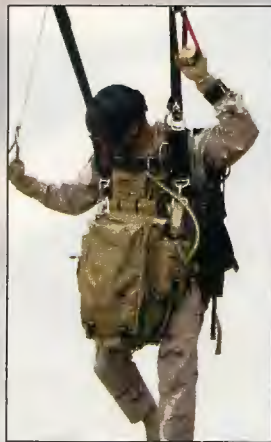
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Two Descendants Of The Queen Of 1911-Type Pistols

World-renowned for his many outstanding small-arms designs, John M. Browning continues to live on in his timeless .45 ACP caliber Model of 1911 pistol. Now less than a decade short of being a century old, the pistol that is Browning's finest hour is more popular than ever before. However, as great as Browning's first 1911 was, the many refinements made to that pistol through the years are what has kept it so popular.

Although relatively new in the world of 1911-style pistols, one of the foremost, cutting-edge developers of the system continues to be Para-Ordnance Mfg. Co., Inc., of Canada. Well known for its major design advancement of the 1911, in 1986 Para-Ordnance pioneered the high-capacity magazine system for the pistol that no one else had thought of



Crimson Trace's LaserGrips worked perfectly on the new single column CCW LDA. (right) The new Para's come with full-length recoil-spring guide-rods, but can easily be converted to standard length if desired.

attempting. Most important, it worked!

Using state-of-the-art production methods and the finest materials, Para-Ordnance's President and Chief Designer, Ted Szabo, not only designed and created a high-capacity magazine, but also a slim-line frame to house it. The result was a 1911-style pistol with a 14-round magazine and a grip that was only a fraction of an inch wider than John Browning's original design. Called the P-14, Para-Ordnance's original pistol is not merely a high-capacity version of the Model of 1911, but also incorporates a number of improvements over Browning's original gun — not the least of these being the firing-pin safety system as used in the standard Colt Government Model, but Para-Ordnance's improvements didn't end there.

Available in all-steel, or with a frame of lightweight aircraft alloy (9 oz. less), Para-Ordnance pistols also use an improved sear design that provides a markedly improved let-off. In addition, a Commander-style hammer has been standard on all models.

Supported Chamber

Instead of the two-piece feed ramp that has been used in original style 1911 pistols for more than 75 years, Para-Ordnance designed and produced a feed ramp of one piece. Integral with the barrel, this feed ramp is similar to that used in the 9mm Browning P35 Hi Power pistol, and most modern pistols since then. Not only does the one-piece ramp provide a single plane for more reliable feeding, but also gives better support to the web area at the rear of the cartridge case. A hallmark of Para-Ordnance pistols, this feature is only one of the many selling points of these guns.

Following the introduction of Para-Ordnance's full-size P-14, the company introduced its 16-round .40 S&W caliber P-16, probably the most comfortable shooting .40-caliber autopistol ever. The company then moved toward more compact versions in .45 ACP such as the P-12 and P-13 models.

With their shorter grip sections, these pistols magazines hold 12 and 13 rounds, respectively.

The Queen of 1911s

While the P-12 is similar in size to the Colt Officer's ACP pistol, the P-13 has a slide group the length of the Colt Commander, with a grip frame the same length of the Officer's ACP. However, since it has a high-capacity magazine well, the P-13's magazine holds 13 rounds of .45 ACP ammunition. The result is a marriage of what I always thought was one of the best ideas nobody ever seemed to think of, combining the Commander slide group with the Officer's ACP frame.

I was so enamored with Para-Ordnance's P-13 pistol that I sent mine to Wayne Novak in the mid-1990s to have it customized. One of the custom features I wanted on the pistol was a set of Novak Ghost Sights that I had designed. I still consider that P-13 to be one of the finest 1911-style pistols in the world, the Queen of the .45s.

New Light Double-Action

After almost two years of research and development, Ted Szabo perfected a double-action system for Para-Ordnance pistols the likes of which the world could never have imagined. Called the Light Double Action (LDA), this new DA-only design may have created a 1911 pistol for all seasons, combining John Browning's perfection with what is probably the most advanced double-action system ever. Here's how it works.

Using what amounts to a two-piece hammer system, the LDA has an inner hammer and an outer hammer, the latter looking like a conventional 1911 Commander-style hammer from the outside. Even though both the hammer sections ride on the same axis pin, and are interdependent, only the inner hammer is directly connected to the mainspring, and it acts semi-independently from the outer hammer. When the Para-Ordnance LDA's hammer is pushed to the rear by the slide it carries with it the inner hammer, and cocks it. Never staying in the rear, normal cocked position, the outer hammer follows the slide forward via its own light torsion spring, leaving the internal sear element of the inner hammer fully cocked.

Unlike the standard sliding 1911-style trigger, that of the LDA rotates on a cross pin through the frame similar to that of the Browning Hi Power. The reach to this smooth, rounded trigger is about the same as that of the standard long 1911 trigger preferred by most shooters. Connected to a draw bar instead of the Model 1911's conventional trigger yoke, the LDA's trigger also has its own torsion return spring.

Located on the right side of the magazine well, the draw bar necessitates a short portion of the right rail being removed. Nevertheless, both heavily reinforced ends of the standard rail are retained, and the ends have always been the most important part of the rails of any auto pistol. On the rear of the draw bar is a raised portion that serves as the disconnect-



Disassembly was pretty much a cinch using just the polymer bushing wrench supplied with each gun.

SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber: .45 ACP

Velocity: 900 fps

Operation: Browning short recoil, semi-automatic, double-action only

Barrel Length: 5"

Overall Length: 7-5/8"

Weight: (Tac-Four) 35 oz.

(CCW) 34 oz.

Feed Device: (Tac-Four) 10-shot, or 13-shot box magazine
(CCW) 7-shot magazine (or any 1911 magazine)

Safety: Thumb safety, grip safety and firing-pin safety

Sights: (front) Dovetailed combat blade with white dot
(rear) "U"-notch drift adj. for windage

Grips: (Tac-Four) Checkered black polymer
(CCW) Large Diamond checkered coco bolo with gold-plated medallion

Finish: Brushed stainless steel

.45 ACP brass flies as Gil Angelotti puts the Tac-Four through some routine drills.



tor when the slide travels rearward over it to cam it downward. Next to the draw bar is a redesigned lever to activate the firing-pin safety.

When the LDA's double-action trigger is pulled it causes the outer hammer to move to the rear against the relatively light pressure of its torsion return spring. The result is an unprecedented smooth and light double-action trigger pull that culminates with the draw bar reaching the sear. Here, a slight continued pressure trips the sear to release the pre-cocked inner hammer component. The inner hammer now rotates forward taking the outer hammer with it to fire the pistol. Thus, the outer hammer cocks the inner hammer, and the inner hammer carries the outer hammer forward.

Three (+1) Safeties

With the LDA's hammer in its normal forward position, the thumb safety can be applied to prevent the pistol from being fired. Here the trigger can be pulled, but nothing happens, as the drawbar is disconnected from the outer hammer. Only with the thumb safety down in the FIRE position is the pistol operational. The grip safety and firing-pin safety perform similar functions as on a conventional 1911-style pistol, but the grip safety goes a step beyond. If the grip safety is not fully depressed, the outer hammer is locked forward, preventing any action within the gun other than removing the magazine.

In addition to the thumb, grip, and firing-pin safeties, the longer travel of the trigger serves as an additional safety. Having to press the trigger through a full double cycle before a pistol can fire is in itself a form of safety mechanism, as not

only is the trigger farther from sear contact, but it also gives the operator more time to change his or her mind to fire. If you're thinking that all true double-action handguns have this feature, you're right. Revolvers fired by double-action have always been considered safer than those fired by single-action.

The Queen In LDA

Now Para-Ordnance has introduced what amounts to a custom version of its P-13 in LDA. Called the Para-Ordnance Tac-Four, this new stainless-steel beauty comes standard with a number of custom-grade features including a hammer spur and grip safety that are both totally bobbed. It also comes with Para-Ordnance's combat sights, both of which are dovetailed into the slide, and a full-length recoil-spring guide-rod.

Although the Tac-Four is issued with a post-ban 10-shot magazine, it comes with a coupon that allows the new owner to purchase two pre-ban 13-shot high-capacity magazines. This is an unbeatable deal, but while Para-Ordnance is the only producer of a true double-action 1911-style pistol, the company no longer offers only wide-body high-capacity LDA 1911-style pistols.

A Single-Column LDA Queen

Having introduced a number of stainless-steel custom-grade LDA 1911 pistols with single-column magazines during the past two years, Para-Ordnance unveiled a new version along with the Tac-Four. Called the Para CCW, this new .45 ACP pistol is apparently a companion to the Tac-Four, as other than its single-column frame and checkered coco bolo

grips with 24-karat-gold-plated Para medallion, it mirrors it. Along with its Commander-style slide group, the CCW has grip frame dimensions that are identical to those of the Colt Officer's ACP pistol. However, the CCW comes with a magazine that holds seven rounds of .45 ACP ammunition. Oh, yes, while the Tac-Four comes with vertical serrations on the front strap, the CCW is smooth. Like the Tac-Four, the CCW comes with a full-length recoil-spring guide-rod, but without a high-cap magazine coupon, as it will accept virtually any 1911 magazine, and a variety of compact size grips.

Crimson Trace LaserGrips

Speaking of grips, I tried Crimson Trace's new compact size LaserGrips on the Para-Ordnance CCW LDA and they worked perfectly. Designed for Officer's ACP-size frames, these checkered grips are wrap-around in front with a master ON/OFF switch and pressure pad on the left side. With a powerful, but petite laser diode at the top of the right grip, the laser beam is about 3/4" away from the center of the bore at 5 o'clock, and is fully adjustable. Just a slight amount of pressure with your normal grip will activate the laser that is visible out to 300 + yards in the dark.

Disassembly

Fieldstripping the Para-Ordnance Tac-Four and CCW LDA pistols is almost the same as for standard single-action Para-Ordnance pistols, but for three important differences. After removing the magazine and making sure the chamber is empty, allow the slide to go forward. Now, using the barrel wrench provided, depress the recoil-spring plug, turn the

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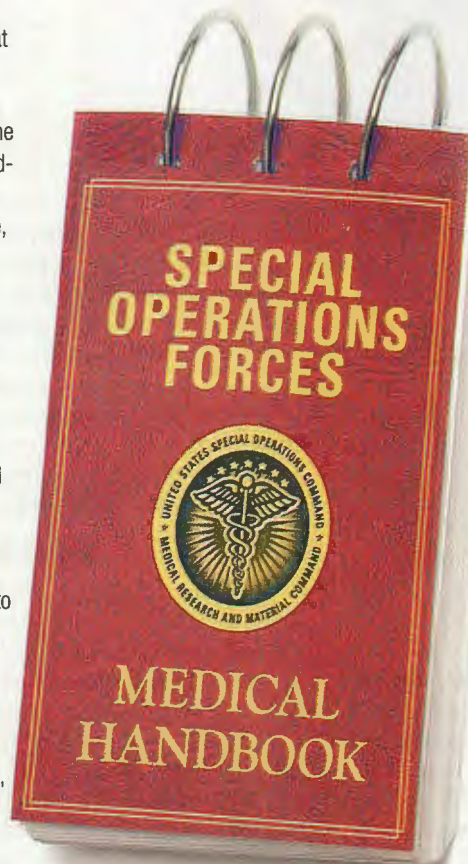
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barrel bushing counter-clockwise in order to free the recoil-spring plug, and allow the plug to come out under the strong pressure of the recoil-spring (use caution in letting the plug out slowly). While twisting the recoil spring, pull it off the guide rod and out of the slide.

Now, while depressing the grip safety, retract the slide until the disassembly notch on the left side is lined up with the protrusion on the upper rear of the slide stop. Then push the slide-release pin out from the right side of the frame to the left and remove it. Now pull the slide group off the front of the frame and remove the recoil-spring guide-rod from the rear. Finally, rotate the barrel bushing clockwise and remove it and the barrel as normal. Although the pistol can be further disassembled, its mechanism is more complex than that of a standard 1911-type pistol, and such disassembly should not be attempted other than by a trained armorer.

Reassembly of the LDA is in reverse order with two exceptions. The inner hammer must remain cocked even though the outer hammer remains forward. If the inner hammer has been uncocked during disassembly, re-cock it by depressing the grip safety and bringing back the outer hammer manually and releasing it to go forward. Also make sure the front end of the double-action draw bar is engaged with the trigger. Then, while depressing the grip safety and replacing the slide on the frame, make sure the firing-pin safety lever is pushed down to allow the slide to pass over it.

Shots Fired

Both our sample Tac-Four and CCW LDA pistols performed flawlessly and recoil was mild, especially with the Tac-Four with its wider grip. Both guns produced 5-shot groups of about 3" to 4" hand-held at 25 yards. Both pistols were comfortable to carry in a Milt Sparks Nelson Classic holster.

Is The LDA For Everyone?

So what's the big deal with the Para-Ordnance LDA? Well, it's certainly a more user-friendly pistol, and with its hammer down far less debris gets into the pistol's mechanism. It's also simpler than a conventional 1911-style pistol for some users, and for many, it's potentially a safer pistol.

Ordinarily used as a straight pull-through to fire, the LDA's trigger can be staged for longer-range shots calling for great accuracy. This is accomplished by

simply taking up the slack of the long, smooth first stage, and stopping just before the sear is tripped. This is a feature found on no other autopistol that I know of, and is found only on some double-action revolvers. While many 1911 fans will prefer to stick with the more conventional Para-Ordnance single-action models, the LDA will certainly appeal to those who want a true double-action rendition of this design, especially when it's the best double-action autopistol in the world. In my opinion, that's just what the LDA is.

Next From Para-Ordnance

What can we look for from Para-Ordnance in the coming year? While I've been sworn to secrecy on one exciting new LDA development, I can tell you about another, and that is a new extractor. Because Para-Ordnance is dedicated on preserving the original appearance of the 1911 pistol if possible, this new extractor is not external as is now in vogue, but has the benefits of an outside extractor. Consisting of a sub-assembly, this extractor unit is assembled into the pistol as usual, and provides not only a wider, more robust extractor, but also one that will allow the slide to be closed on a chambered round.

If you're in the market for an advanced 1911 pistol in the most advanced double-action system you've ever seen, check out Para-Ordnance's new LDA family. For information, contact Para-Ordnance Mfg., Inc., Dept. (SOF), 980 Tapscott Rd., Scarborough, Ontario, Canada M1X 1C3; (416) 297-7855.

To keep your Para-Ordnance and the rest of your guns, JOIN THE NRA and VOTE! ❖

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they sped out of the main kill zone and past the outskirts of town. The worst was over and the convoy pulled in to an abandoned compound to assess their damage. The whole thing hadn't lasted more than an hour and 15 minutes, including the hour to regroup in the field. No one had been wounded.

"It's nothing short of a miracle," Chief commented. "I have never in my career seen such a volume of fire and no one got hit."

It was true, no one had been hit. Not one of the SF troopers had so much as a scratch, except for Jason's ringing head. The vehicles, however, were another story. As the guys walked around counting holes, their amazement grew. The LMVT, largest of the group, was a rolling wreck. After pulling into the compound and shutting it down, it refused to start again, its engine pouring oil onto the dusty ground. In the driver's side door, two bullet holes were found that straddled the driver's leg perfectly, one in front, and one behind. Had one of those rounds hit him it would have produced a ghastly wound. The bed of the vehicle was riddled and fuel leaked freely from the drums inside. No one bothered to count the holes, they were too numerous. Why the fuel hadn't exploded, no one will ever know.

With the lighter vehicles, it was the same story, although they remained operational. Few of the Toyotas had any windows left, but they ran. In the one that the major commanding the FSB had been riding in, pieces of an RPG rocket tail fin had sheared-off and embedded in the dashboard. The rocket itself had skipped in the passenger side window and across the steering wheel before sailing out the driver's side glass.

In the bed of another one of the pickups, they discovered that one of the AT-4 anti-tank rocket tubes was empty. Tied crossways to the roll bar, a machine-gun round had apparently entered the rear of the tube and set it off, sending the projectile sailing off to God-knows-where. "I guess that's what knocked me down," the operator who manned the machine gun in back commented. In the hailstorm of ordnance, no one had even noticed. The gunner had gotten right back up and had kept firing. Bullet holes were found all over the bodies of the other vehicles.

Nor did the gun trucks escape damage. On Wess', a round had skipped-off the hardened glass of the left rear passenger door. Had it penetrated, it would have hit his driver square at the base of his skull. The various holes through the hood and truck bed elicited no comment in light of that. In Greg's truck, what appeared to be a .50-caliber round had plowed through the 5-gallon metal fuel cans lined-up across the back. It continued through the tailgate and another row of fuel cans, finally disintegrating inside the spare tire. Had it penetrated, their Air Force Forward Air Controller would have been killed instantly.

The Little Blocking Position That Didn't

As the group stood by inspecting their vehicles and trying to figure out how they were going to get the LMVT running again, they looked up, horrified to see another U.S. convoy driving past, rolling straight into the hornet's nest they had stirred-up. The blocking position that had waved to them as they drove through was still apparently not bothering to block. This time, however, the convoy was from a rear-echelon

maintenance unit who had been sent that way to recover a broken-down trailer. Someone had passed them some bad information, as well.

While some of the team raced towards the road screaming at them to stop, Greg jumped into a Toyota and tore-out of the compound, cutting-them-off as they approached the edge of the town where the whole mess had started. The very, very grateful group of mechanics fixed the team's LMVT that night and departed the next day, thankful to be alive. Had they driven into the hot area they would have been massacred. A severe tongue-lashing was reserved for the Bradley crews who had so utterly failed to do their jobs.

It later transpired that what they had ran into was no mere group of Iraqis who were waiting for the Americans to come and round them up. The unit that the team had driven through, and severely mauled, was none other than the 14th Mechanized Infantry Brigade of the Medina Republican Guard Division. Had they continued north to Iskandariyah, they would have encountered the 2nd Armored Brigade of the same division and no doubt been wiped out. As it was, they believe that they had driven through at least a full battalion, posted to guard the bridge.

Train Hard — Play Harder

Since that day, the team has gone over the events in their minds again and again, trying to make sense of the event and how they had survived.

"The only conclusion I can come to is training," Jason commented as he looked out across the river running past the team's safe house near Baghdad. "Over and over again. Failure drills and instinctive shooting. In the end, I guess it was a bunch of dudes pouring-out effective fire, doing a job they train for almost every day on the one hand, and amateur-hour by the Iraqis on the other."

Gunner Greg, also one of the team's medics, stated, "Like we said, they were like a bunch of deer in the headlights and we beat them to the draw. It sounds clichéd, but it really did boil down to violence, speed-of-action and surprise. We push so hard in training. We're all PT studs; we do shooting drills at the range and burn up thousands of rounds of ammo. We practice and keep our wits about us. It's not because we're some kind of super soldiers. It's because we're senior soldiers. Every guy in this team has an average of 12 years active duty."

There is truth to that statement. While the Iraqis, for the most part, appeared to simply spray with their weapons, forsaking aimed fire for blind luck, the Special Forces operators had utilized controlled fire. It left a telling mark. A Battle Damage Assessment team (BDA) had later returned to the area and estimated that the Iraqi's brush with the team had cost them more than 262 soldiers killed. No one knows how many perished later from wounds.

The Special Forces soldiers referred to in this article are sometimes called upon to do counter-terrorism work of an undercover nature. In order to protect their identities, first names and middle initials only have been used. As was pointed out to this journalist, "If I'm ever captured, my cover story about being a medic in the 101st isn't going to hold up real well when they pull out a copy of some magazine with my name and picture in it." We thank the readers for their understanding.

Freelance war correspondent J.S. Mosby has witnessed and participated in conflicts from the Balkans to Baghdad. ☒

Continued from page 17

soldiers shed their green fatigues and slipped into the civilian population where they are currently carrying-out guerilla attacks on convoys with deadly effect. Since the enemy changed uniforms, it was extremely difficult to tell who were the bad guys at ranges farther than 100 meters. For that reason, Yeo suggests Marine riflemen should have optic sights of at least 3X mounted on M-16s. Some grunts showed this reporter 4X Weaver scopes they bought at Wal-Mart before they deployed to Iraq.

A Confidence-Builder

One of the great success stories coming out of the war was the M16A4, the so-called West Coast "SAM" rifle. The Squad Advanced Marksman rifle with a fixed 4-power ACOG sight enabled Marines to identify targets at long distances under poor conditions, while at the same time, quickly identify targets in room-clearing environments. Paired with AN/PVS-14 night-vision equipment, SAM was AWESOME. Distribution among battalions varied. One battalion received six; other battalions received one per rifle squad. Regular M16A4s with no optics were sent to theatre to replace M16A2s. However, they arrived too late to be distributed and are now stored in Kuwait.

The SAM rifle not only built confidence, but it was a force-multiplier. On the first day of use, a Pfc. made two, 1,300-yard hits on a man-sized target. In the hands of expert marksmen, this weapon was used very effectively on the battlefield.

Night-vision equipment was another bright spot. Operators would like to have one set of night-vision goggles [NVGS] per

man, but would settle for one set of AN/PVS-14s per fire team.

The AN-PAS-13 was amazing. Operators were able to see clearly out to 10-plus kilometers under good conditions; and nearly 8 kilometers in mild dust. Operators were also impressed with ANIPVS-17B and C models of night-vision equipment. They particularly liked the red-dot reticle for point-and-shoot capability.

Selected individuals also carried SMAWs and AT-4s slung over their backs. But the Shoulder-launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon was the "weapon of choice" when it came to reaching out to 500 meters and destroying light armor, bunkers or concrete buildings. Echo Co. assault teams fired 8 to 10 rockets at various types of enemy positions with deadly results. By having a specific person designated to employ the SMAW, it was used more frequently than the AT-4 which was only fired by someone who had received previous training.

While conducting operations in An Nasiriyah, and later in Al Kut, Echo Co. came up against an enemy that was hiding in houses and buildings. The company had all the lethal hardware it could carry, but went into town with only rifle butts and fists. No non-lethal weaponry.

"When the enemy discovers he is outclassed in conventional weaponry and urban tactics," writes Captain Yeo, "he may resort to using unarmed personnel to capitalize on our lack of non-lethal weaponry." Yeo believes units like Echo Co. need to receive training in non-lethal weapons as part of their MOUT training. The urban-warfare training towns at Quantico and Camp Lejeune also need to reflect reality.

Lieutenant W.A. Hefty, commander of 3rd Platoon, Echo Company, says the layout of MOUT TOWN is all wrong. Wide streets with curbs are nowhere to be found in Iraq. Instead, E Co. fought in narrow streets and alleys.



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Travel Light

Most of the sweeps Echo Co. made in Iraq were conducted in daylight with temperatures ranging from 80 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Second Lieutenant Michael Jones, commander of 1st Platoon, says these clearing operations left his men exhausted after three to four hours. One of the main causes was the load each Marine was carrying. Jones says the initial problem is caused by commanders, including platoon commanders, demanding that Marines be prepared for all scenarios. But Jones says all a Marine needs is water, ammo, and breaching tools. The fanny pack should be used to carry only leather gloves, a pair of socks, chem light, 550 cord, baby wipes and not much more. Marines should also carry a field ration in a cargo pocket to eat on the move. By lightening their load, Jones says, the combat-effectiveness of Marines is increased greatly with increase stamina, maneuverability, and mental sharpness; all keys to survival in urban warfare.

Arty Is Still King Of Battle

Cannon-cockers from the 11th Regiment fired the first rounds of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM at 1700Z [2000 hours Eastern Time] on 20 March in response to Iraqi cross-border mortar fire. The regiment responded with two battalions [1/11 and 2/11] firing-for-effect against the Iraqi 51st Mechanized Division and Iraqi III Corps artillery defending the Ar Rumalyah oilfield just inside Iraq.

I remember rolling up to the Kuwait sand berm and watching rounds leave 198s off to the right side of my platoon leader's HUMVEE. It was like the Fourth of July finale on the National Mall, in Washington, D.C.

Lieutenant Colonel Fred Padilla, commanding officer of

1st Bn, 5th Marines, saw firsthand what the M198 batteries did to the Iraqis.

"I came upon an enemy mortar position that has been hit by Arty. All that remained was a red mist that stained the sand," wrote Padilla in his journal that he provided to this reporter. He also saw various body parts scattered around the desert floor, grim evidence of what 155mm artillery shells could do to human beings huddled below in bunkers, trenches and gun pits.

Bad weather and poor visibility on 20 March prevented the Third Marine Air Wing from flying more than a handful of close-air support [CAS] missions, but Major General James F. Amos, commanding officer of 3MAW, says when the weather cleared, his F/A-18 Hornets and AV-8B 11s hit the enemy hard.

The aging Harrier jump jet must have some longevity genes from the venerable B-52. The original AV-8Bs have undergone many upgrades since it was first introduced in 1985. It now has a Lightning 11 targeting pod to deliver GBU-12 [500-lb. laser-guided] and GBU-16 [1,000-lb. laser-guided] bombs with pinpoint accuracy.

Amos told SOF about a mission he flew one night over Baghdad. "I looked down from 23,000 feet and saw an Iraqi soldier half-in and half-out of a truck doing a tuneup. He and the truck disappeared when I put a bomb down his hip pocket," said Amos.

Some of Amos' aviators also dropped laser-guided 500-pound concrete practice bombs on high-dollar targets in urban settings such as Baghdad.

"Had we dropped a 500-pound MK-82 series 500-lb. [dumb bomb] on the target, we might have missed and killed civilians. If we hit the target, collateral damage from the blast could have been heavy," Amos told SOF after briefing a

Practice Makes Perfect



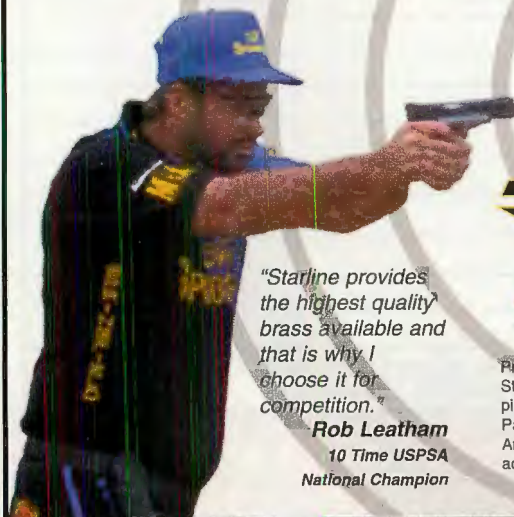
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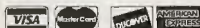
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Thunder From the Tatras

Continued from page 43

1997 he was re-appointed GROM commander and subsequently promoted to Major General eight months later. He served until the fall of 1999, when he was sacked by Special Services Coordinator Janusz Palubicki over "abnormalities" in GROM operations. Although such accusations were never proven, such high-profile charges at a man in a low-profile position effectively ended his career as leader of the capable elite he had founded and built. In 2000 he was named "Gentleman of the Year," and he presently serves as President of the Foundation of GROM Former Members. He is an honorary member of the 5th and 10th Special Forces Groups. He holds numerous and substantial military awards.

Major General Marian Sowinski was GROM commander between 1995 and 1997. Colonel Zdzislaw Zurawski was commander from 1999 to 2000.

Then-Lieutenant Colonel Roman Polko was appointed GROM commander in 2000 and still serves in that capacity as a full colonel. An intense but reserved individual, Polko was commander of the 18th Air Assault Battalion of the 6th AAB. He was also commander of the Polish-Nordic Battalion that served with KFOR in Kosovo. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger school.

Laurels

On their return to Poland 21 May, Colonel Polko reported to the Prime Minister that, "the combat unit has completed all its sea operations and special land operations and suffered no losses during the actions." Prime Minister Miller responded that, "we are proud that Poland has such soldiers, that the Republic has such soldiers who are able to perform the most complex tasks on the modern battlefield." He also noted that thanks to the exemplary performance of GROM, Poland has gained a great deal of prestige. "There were not many of you in Iraq," he told them, "but the advantages Poland has gained are huge."

Recognition and prestige that is well deserved, we might add, and a straw in the wind of what we may expect from Polish participation as they administer and provide security with an international force for a third of Iraq, during the nation-building stages of the Coalition's activity. ✘

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(above) Some of the weapons stash confiscated from a rural warlord. The weapons were in disrepair, with some just boxes of parts. Our trusty local gunsmith succeeded in recovering nearly 40 weapons, @ \$15 (U.S.) each).

(below) Five Dashika machine guns (12.7mm) captured by ODA 2025 during a raid on a suspected Taliban arms cache: These guns, among many other weapons, were a jumble of parts in boxes and crates before our gunsmith rebuilt them.



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Guns Of Afghanistan

Continued from page 24

For one-hundred to two-hundred dollars one can buy an 1850s' percussion-cap British Enfield muzzleloader. Or BSA (British Small Arms Co.) or Tower. Or 1860s' and '70s' models Snider-conversion breechloaders, too. Martini rifles from the 1880s. Or older model flintlocks.

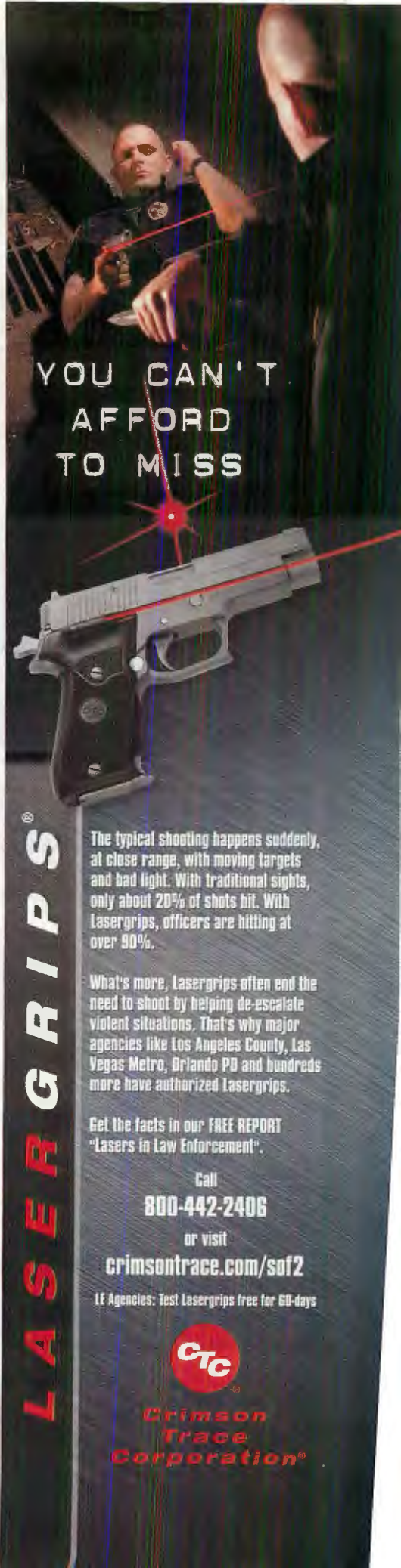
In the same shops one can find a variety of sabers and knives that are hundreds of years old. For pennies to the dollar for what they are worth in the United States. It's capitalism in its purest sense — supply and demand — as American GIs want antique weapons to bring home, and the Afghans want the GIs' money. In the natural order of things, of course, the prices of the weapons are going up, up and up. At the same time, with the Americans' demand for the antiques high, so, too, is the number of forgeries



Staff Sergeant Dean instructs a soldier of the ODA's militia force on the operation of a Chinese-made Dashika machine gun. The gun was among the many the ODA seized in raids on hidden Taliban arms caches, and subsequently employed with its own Mobile Reaction Force (MRF), the hundred-strong militia the ODA equipped, trained and led during its seven-month deployment to Afghanistan.



Master Sergeant Terry fires a Chinese-made SGM — called a "Gerrod" by the locals — during range-training with the ODA's MRF. A wide variety of Chinese and Soviet weapons and ammunition were captured by the ODA in raids on hidden Taliban arms caches.



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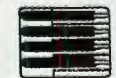


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put up for sale as real.

Rifle forgery comes in two forms. The first is the blatant manufacture of the rifles today, making them appear to be old and used. The second is the original forgery of the rifles back in the 1800s, when the Afghans would get a real British rifle and make copies of it. For the most part, these hundred-years-old fakes can be spotted because of the incorrect stamps in the metal. Illiterate to begin with, or familiar only with the Arabic alphabet, the Afghan forgers had a difficult time with the English letters and numbers. The Enfield marking on a fake, for example, commonly has an "m" for the "n" in Enfield or has the "n" or "f" backwards. Often, also, the stamped date might be correctly written, but shown as the date on the Muslim calendar — not ours.

It's buyer-beware on Chicken Street, but one can't really go wrong, even with the fakes. An 1862 Enfield hung above the mantle at home in the U.S., whether it be real or fake, still looks the part and draws a conversation. As for the sabers, swords and knives, except for the World War I-era bayonets, there are no stamped dates on them, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to place each in a year, let alone a century. One has to just go by what looks good and suits one's tastes.

As American GIs with plenty of money and little to spend it on, (yep, no booze sold in the PX, or allowed) American troops are buying-up the antique weapons and taking them home, and as SF teams throughout the country are uncovering and destroying numerous caches, perhaps someday, unlike the stars in the sky, every gun in Afghanistan will be accounted for.

On second thought, that's not likely. First, because the society is closed, with a deep-rooted thousand-years' distrust for foreigners, and one is never going to be told everything or let in on every secret. Second, because Afghanistan is a warrior/warlord culture in which physical power is most valued, and that power can be most easily be obtained, maintained and wielded with weapons. Guns. So they shall always be in Afghanistan. Everywhere.

Next month: "Blowing It Up." ODA 2025 destroys hundreds of tons of munitions.

Since 1978, Paul Avallone has served with the 7th, 12th and 20th SFGA. ✕

Continued from page 14

border-crossers to drop their weapons. The two intruders threw their weapons to the ground. Back-up arrived and the two intruders were taken into custody. When searched they were found to possess regular Mexican Army identification. Their identities and status as Mexican Army soldiers was confirmed by the Mexican government. The U.S. Attorney of the West Texas District refused to prosecute, and the Mexican soldiers (and their assault rifles), were turned over to Mexican government officials for repatriation to Mexico.

— Rob Krott

Chechen Suicide Attacks To Continue

After the 5 July Chechen separatist suicide bombings at a Moscow rock music festival that injured about 60 people and killed at least 1 including the two female suicide bombers, more attacks are feared. Terrorism experts say there is no longer any doubt that Russia is facing a Palestinian-style struggle with Chechen separatists. The rock festival bombings were the latest in a series of deadly attacks by female suicide bombers, aka "black widows," in and around Chechnya, which have killed nearly 100 people since January. The attacks show that more mainstream separatist leaders, such as onetime Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov, can no longer control more radical militants and marks the latest, dangerous phase in the fracturing of the Chechen rebel movement. Russia withdrew its forces from Chechnya in 1996 — leaving it with de facto independence — after a disastrous 20-month campaign, but then the Russian Kremlin sent troops to Chechnya in 1999 in its second post-Soviet campaign to crush the armed separatist movement. The new suicide-bombing tactic reflects growing frustration among Chechens that the decade-long conflict continues. Russia's Interior Ministry is now stepping up security measures in Moscow, boosting the number of police patrolling the streets and at public gatherings. It also plans to increase the number of spot-checks on roads, railways and flights. This may only mitigate future attacks: The female suicide bombers detonated their charges at the entrance to the rock festival when stopped by security.

— Rob Krott

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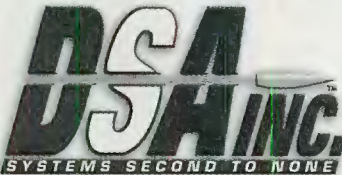
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Command Guidance

Continued from page 6

"We begin with the common belief that Saddam Hussein is a tyrant and a threat to the peace and stability of the region. He has ignored the mandated of the United Nations and is building weapons of mass destruction and the means of delivering them."

— Sen. Carl Levin (D - MI),
19 Sept. 2002

"We know that he has stored secret supplies of biological and chemical weapons throughout his country."

— Al Gore, 23 Sept. 2002

"We have known for many years that Saddam Hussein is seeking and developing weapons of mass destruction."

— Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-MA),
27 Sept. 2002

"The last UN weapons inspectors left Iraq in October of 1998. We are confident that Saddam Hussein retains some stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, and that he has since embarked on a crash course to build up his chemical and biological warfare capabilities. Intelligence reports indicate that he is seeking nuclear weapons ..."

— Sen. Robert Byrd (D - WV),
3 Oct. 2002

"There is unmistakable evidence that Saddam Hussein is working aggressively to develop nuclear weapons and will likely have nuclear weapons within the next five years ... We also should remember we have always underestimated the progress Saddam has made in development of weapons of mass destruction."

— Sen. Jay Rockefeller, (D - WV),
10 Oct. 2002

"He has systematically violated, over the course of the past 11 years, every significant UN resolution that has demanded that he disarm and destroy his chemical and biological weapons, and any nuclear capacity. This he has refused to do."

— Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA),
10 Oct. 2002

"In the four years since the inspectors left, intelligence reports show that Saddam Hussein has worked to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons stock, his missile delivery capability, and his nuclear program. He has also

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given aid, comfort, and sanctuary to terrorists, including al Qaeda members. It is clear, however, that if left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capacity to wage biological and chemical warfare, and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons."

— Sen. Hillary Clinton (D - NY),
10 Oct 2002

"[W]ithout question, we need to disarm Saddam Hussein. He is a brutal, murderous dictator, leading an oppressive regime ... He presents a particularly grievous threat because he is so consistently prone to miscalculation ... And now he is miscalculating America's response to his continued deceit and his consistent grasp for weapons of mass destruction ... So the threat of Saddam Hussein with weapons of mass destruction is real ..."

— Sen. John F. Kerry (D - MA),
23 Jan. 2003

So now many of these same Democrats say that President Bush lied; that there never were any weapons of mass destruction and that he took us to war for his oil buddies? ☒

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SOUND OFF

by Col. David H. Hackworth, USA (Ret.)

Respect Our Reserve Heroes, Too

Citizen soldiers have saved our country since the battle of Concord in 1775, when Minutemen fired “the shot heard around the world.”

Today, such patriots are members of the reserve components — the National Guard and Reserve elements of all services — and our armed forces couldn't defend America without them. Especially since, as in the early stages of almost all of America's wars, our active-duty military is presently stretched mighty thin.

But even though our standing-duty GI Joes and Janes have more missions than troops and gear to fulfill them, the Pentagon is foolishly gutting the ranks of these valiant part-time soldiers.

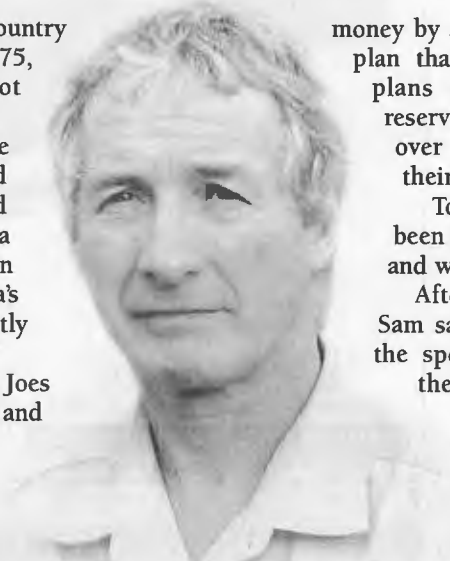
Legendary Marine leader Gen. “Chesty” Puller hit the center of the bull's-eye when he warned, “When war comes, there will never be enough professionals to do the job.”

Since 9/11, tens of thousands of Reserve and Guard soldiers have reported to the colors, responding to the cry, “Call up the reserves!” More than 200,000 of these mislabeled “part-time warriors” have been activated and are serving in the bloody trenches of Iraq and Afghanistan, providing the security, logistical muscle and brains to support our legions around this war-weary globe. And, of course, they're part of the team securing the USA as well.

Our reserve-component warriors have traditionally been a backup team. Whenever trouble strikes, our regulars move to the vanguard and engage the enemy, while the Minutemen gear-up. But since the huge cut in our active forces at the end of the Cold War, so much more of the burden of picking up the slack has fallen on the shoulders of our reserve warriors that they're being treated more and more as regulars and are sometimes rushed into the breach in front of the so-called First Team.

Minutemen are America's original all-volunteer force, dedicated patriots who don't join up because it's a job offering three squares a day and perks such as college tuition after the enlistment runs out. Most already have good civilian jobs and join up for purely noble reasons: love of country and a deep-seated desire to defend the homeland.

Being a reservist is not about playing paintball. It entails long hours, personal sacrifices and weekday evenings and weekends spent on the drill field instead of with loved ones. More than one-third of the 200,000 reservists already called to active-duty are missing civilian promotions and losing



money by serving. Many say the military medical plan that's supposed to replace their civilian plans sucks; thousands of our activated reservists choose their civilian medical plans over the military's and pay for same out of their own pockets.

Too many of the recalled reservists have been finding out that the old axiom “hurry up and wait” is alive and well in today's force.

After dropping everything when Uncle Sam says, “Get here quick smart,” they kiss the spouse and kids good-bye only to find themselves sitting on their duffel bags at

Base X or Y, doing demeaning, keep-'em-busy stuff.

A reserve Army demolition expert with nine years' active-duty blowing things up was called-up and assigned to a post headquar-

ters as a data-entry and filing clerk in an office staffed with civilians. “What happens when we really need reservists?” he wants to know. “Many of my pals have already decided to quit when their current activation is completed. I can tell you now, after my release from active-duty, I'll be leaving, too.”

Many Army reservists are royally upset by active-Army leaders treating them as dumb country cousins who can't be trusted with critical tasks. Even though Army spin is that regulars and reservists are equal, no one's bothered to brief the active-regular leaders in the field — who too often still treat reservists like inferior weekend help. An activated Reserve colonel says, “Believe me, we've seen far more than our share of active-duty bigotry.”

A senior Pentagon officer who's asked to remain anonymous says: “[Secretary of Defense Donald] Rumsfeld and the rest of the Pentagon brass don't have a decent plan to fix these problems. They study the issues to death but don't have a clue.”

Unless wise heads quickly fix these problems, we'll see a huge exodus of reserve-component personnel that will destroy this vital force and place our national security in even greater jeopardy.

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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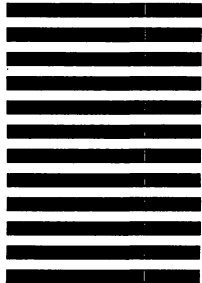
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