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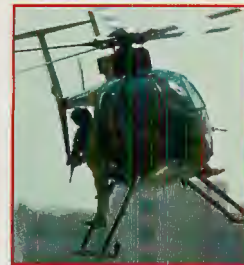
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SOF

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE MAGAZINE

Support the Troops!

SEPTEMBER 2004 ✂ VOL. 29 NO. 9



AFP Photo/Patrick BAZ

On the Cover

Helicopter belonging to the U.S. private security company Blackwater flies over Baghdad 17 April 2004. Private security firms are now third-largest international contributor of forces to the war effort in Iraq — after the American and British troops. See page 30 for story on PSCs in Iraq.

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Samuel M. Katz



courtesy Sergeant Michael A. Lozano

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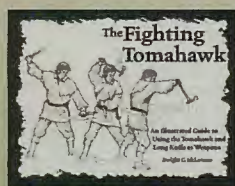
Running Recon

A Photo Journey with SOG Special Ops Along the Ho Chi Minh Trail

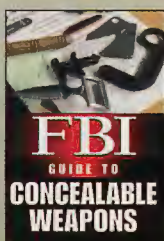
by Frank Greco

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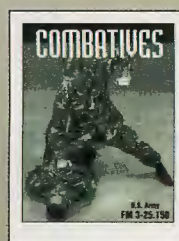
Foreword by John Plaster



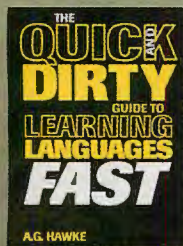
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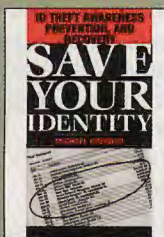
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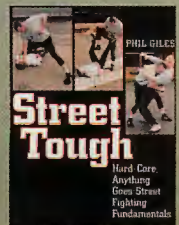
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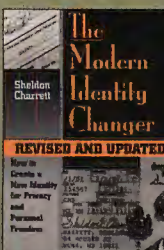
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COMMAND GUIDANCE

BY N.E. MACDOUGALD

Grassroots Grit Vets Versus John Kerry

It's no surprise that John Kerry is experiencing significant pushback from many veterans. His strident anti-war activism after being discharged, and his failure to support most bills regarding military expenditures makes him vulnerable. What is a surprise is that the majority of hostility stems from individual Vietnam vets, not columnists, talking heads or power brokers. Some vets, usually those who served in the same unit, have united to form anti-Kerry Web sites. They maintain that Kerry does not have the right stuff to be commander in chief of the armed forces.

On 4 May, in Washington, D.C. Swift Boat Veterans for Truth (www.swiftboatveterans-fortruth.com) spokesman John O'Neill called on Kerry to authorize release of all his service records, including medical records. O'Neill, who took command of Kerry's boat after Kerry rotated out of Vietnam, said, "... We resent very deeply the false war-crimes charges he made coming back from Vietnam. ... We think they are unsupportable. We intend to bring the truth to the American people. ... We believe that based on our experience with him, he is totally unfit to be commander in chief."

Swift Boat Vets Demand Photo Retraction

On 17 May, 11 of 19 Vietnam Swift Boat vets who are shown in a group photo in John Kerry's presidential campaign material demanded that he stop misrepresenting them as supporters. According to a spokesperson for Swift Boat Veterans for Truth, a demand letter to cease and desist with the ad went out to the Kerry campaign on Monday, 31 May.

"Many of us don't want to be included

"Many of us don't want to be included in that picture because we have a rather unsavory feeling about this fellow ... We regard the fact that he rallied the American public against his fellow comrades in arms as basically a betrayal of all of us."

in that picture because we have a rather unsavory feeling about this fellow," Swift Boat vet Bob Elder told nationally syndicated radio host Linda Chavez during an interview.

Listing Kerry's anti-war activities after he returned from Vietnam, Elder said to Chavez, "We regard the fact that he rallied the American public against his fellow comrades in arms as basically a betrayal of all of us."

In an open letter to Kerry accompanying the press release, the group stated: "We did not give permission for you to use a photo including our image, nor do we support you. ... We join our fellow Swifties who believe that someone who heaped scorn and lies on his own unit for his personal

Continued on page 81

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE
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Hey, Hey, JFK!

A few weeks ago the *Pensacola News Journal* published an article that related how the local community was pulling together to build a home to meet the special requirements of a young Florida National Guard infantryman, SSGT Dustin Tuller, who lost both legs in a fire in Iraq. This brave young noncom was recently honored by his hometown community when he and his family came home from Walter Reed, where he had been convalescing for many months and getting fitted with prosthetic limbs.

In the newspaper account of that homecoming event was a quote that I find notable because it says so much about Americans and what an America at war is really all about. When asked about the construction of the home by community volunteers, Tuller's father, said, "they're driving those nails in that house with one thought in mind. And that's their freedom and what it means to them."

Reading that made me wonder how many seriously injured Vietnam veterans were denied this kind of community support because of the vicious and calculated lies perpetrated by John Kerry and that sorry-ass, ragtag bunch of scumbag, pseudo-soldiers he led. How many sacrificing, honorable warriors were left alone, isolated and embittered with their grievous wounds, rejected by an ungrateful nation, because of the manipulative, purposeful deceptions of a scheming, ambitious politician.

And now this shameless jerk, who, more than any other single person, created this unwarranted image of Vietnam veterans, wants us to join his Band of Brothers? Band of Brothers my ass! More like Band of Mothers to this veteran who will never, ever forgive John Kerry's contemptible, destructive use of good and honorable soldiers to further his own selfish ambitions.

Remember the scumbags chanting, "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many babies did you kill today?"

Well I say, "Hey, hey, JFK, how many lives did you ruin on your way?"

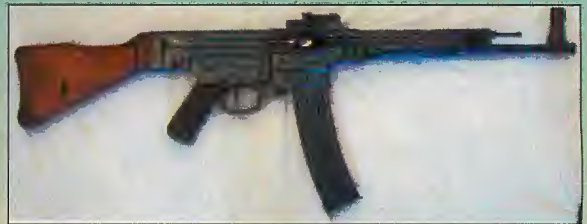
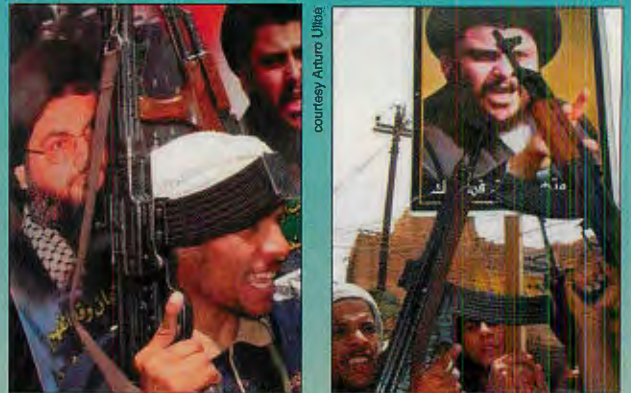
Remember the ubiquitous "FTW!" emblazoned on VVAW posters and banners?

Well this old soldier believes that "FJK!" is a more appropriate acronym for these times.

Russ Vaughn
2d Bn, 327th Parachute Infantry Regiment
101st Airborne Division
Vietnam 65-66

57 Varieties of Outsourcing

I couldn't help but laugh in disgust as I read the letter entitled "Jobs First" in the Flak section of the most recent issue. (July 2004) It strikes me negatively every time I see



Panamanian correspondent Arturo Ulloa forwarded these pictures, of followers of Muqtada al-sadr in Iraq. How, he asks, did this WWII German MP-44 assault rifle circa 1945, end up in Iraq, in the hands of Al-sadr gunmen in 2004? Hmmmm. The condition suggests there may be a museum missing part of a display, but the real question is, what are they shooting in it?

ignorance in action. Let me educate those who feel the — NRA hating — John "Hanoi" Kerry understands outsourcing jobs. Oh, he knows about outsourcing too, but don't look for him to change a thing. His wife's company (Heinz) has around 65% of its manufacturing capability outsourced overseas!

Gary D. Dowdy
Rome, GA

Re-Czecking the Facts

In your response to Jan Benes you state "...surprise is that the Czech Army would waste overseas training on such a credulous individual..."

My question is: how much did the U.S. Navy waste on Lt. John Kerry?

Just wondering. Keep up the great work.

Thomas Poulin
Via e-mail

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Saddam's Interrogators



Black, the interrogator — 14715, the interrogator, and Richard Davidson of the U.S. Army, the man of black hair. They are surrounded by other soldiers. They are looking at the man on the ground. They are looking at the man on the ground. They are looking at the man on the ground.

And Their
Techniques
To Make
Him Talk

BY GORDON THOMAS



Interrogator (top) and soldier (bottom) in Iraq. The man on the left is the interrogator. The man on the right is the soldier. They are looking at the man on the ground.



Interrogator (top) and soldier (bottom) in Iraq. The man on the left is the interrogator. The man on the right is the soldier. They are looking at the man on the ground.

will it take to realize an enemy has declared war on all Americans, military and civilian. They don't want our country, our land, or our homes. "They" want us dead! If we do not rise as a nation in the wake of this murder, and voice our demand for justice and protection to our very being as Americans, Nick Berg and all others before him, will slip away from our memories as we as a nation continue on with our eyes wide shut!

rogueagent@cox.net

A D-Day Message from England

This morning, June 6th, I talked on the phone with my dad, who lives in London. We discussed at length the 60th Anniversary celebrations of D Day and the allied landings in Normandy during WWII, and also the current situation in Britain where the socialist government under Prime Minister Tony Blair is determined to make Britain a satellite state of the Common Market and the ruling bureaucracy in Brussels. The phrase "Country of Europe" is even being used over there now.

Then Dad said to me: "Europe isn't our friend, America is our real friend. They have been for a hundred years. If it weren't for the Americans we'd have lost WWII. I remember as a boy riding my bicycle over to the local airfield and watching the American B17s take off on their thousand bomber raids and talking to the Yanks at the base. America has always been a friend to us and we need to side with them more and forget Europe. I want you to tell all your friends 'over there' how much we appreciate what the Americans did for us."

Sincerely,
John Higgs
on behalf of Derek Higgs (RAF)

Yes, the Lion and Her Cubs: we be mates.

Operation Fortitude

This may be an off the wall question, especially considering current events, but whatever became of all those inflatable decoys of W.W.II? (Shermans, 6x6s, etc.) I imagine the need for rubber would have caused their demise after the Normandy invasion, but I've never seen anything in print describing their disposition. Anybody know?

Thanks for a great magazine!
John M. Denny

This is an interesting point, as we have never seen them again, either — not offered as surplus, or overhead in the Macey's parade. Best guess would be that they, being expendable and lightly built to conserve resources, didn't last long — and if they served their intended function well, they got the day-lights bombed out of them!

This disinformation-and-decoy business is part and parcel of a war effort, from the "Quaker" cannons built from logs in the Civil War to the successful Serbian decoys that suckered a lot of bombs out of the USAF more recently in the Balkans.

Our favorite example was the complete, elaborate airfield — with runways, revetments, hangars and wooden planes — that the Nazis built in Holland. RAF recon flights spotted construc-

SOF: Keepers

I'm the 1BCT, 4ID CSM in your April issue with my BDE CDR COL Hickey [pulling Saddam out of his hidey hole]. I have tried to get a copy of the April issue, but have failed. Would like to know if you would send a copy to [home address]. I would appreciate this very much and will gladly pay for the April issue. Would like a copy for a keepsake. Thanks.

CSM Lawrence Wilson
1BCT, 4ID, Tikrit, Iraq
RAIDERS

Top, your money's no good here. We're pleased to send some to pass around to the folks back home. Pass around the High Fives, and bring your boys home safe, and that's all the pay we need.

Apologize from Iraq — Sorry for Nick's Family

I don't represent all Iraqi people but at least I represent many people [and] want to share with Nick's family their loss. I want to console them from deep [in] my heart and telling every one "that is not our religion."

[I am] sorry again, although I know my words would not bring him [a]live

[Good] bye
Shylan Sarmed
via e-mail

Don't Look Away

In regards to the Nick Berg murder: As Americans we can no longer look away. We can not "hide our eyes" and forget to believe we are targeted and if caught, will be killed: 9/11, USS Cole, Kobar Towers, David Pearl, our Kenya embassy, and Nick Berg happened! We, as a nation, need to wake up. Recent polls reflect the country disapproves of the Iraq situation. "We're tired of hearing about it," "We have no right to be there," etc.

We have every right to be there! Our right is to protect our nation, ourselves from those who wish to harm or destroy us. Guess what, America: "They" do wish to harm and destroy us! "They" have used us in words and actions. What else



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tion at the onset, and noticed that the planes never moved, although new ones appeared. And they never drew fire when they flew over it. The Brits monitored it for months, and shortly after it was "completed" with dummy barracks, wooden fuel trucks, a tower and windsock, the RAF flew in low and slow in an antique plane and dropped ... a wooden bomb.

We're Happy, Too

I am happy to say that I am no longer a subscriber to your magazine. While I was enjoyed it very much in the past, it's quite clear to me now that you've become anti-American. Many soldiers from the United States have been charged with rape of teenage girls in Iraq, yet you fail to ever have any news articles about this outrage in your publication. (<http://www.militarycorruption.com/maddox.htm>)

Perhaps you are simply cowards, or maybe you support terrorism. Raping a female is AN ACT OF TERRORISM!! Whether she's American or Iraqi, a female is a female. I've never been more ashamed of the United States soldiers ever in my life. The worst part about all of this is that you support the rape of these Iraqi girls. I pity you. If you really cared about USA, you'd start telling the truth about the Iraq war and what's REALLY going on there.

Shame on you,
"Infinity" ("Kris R")
kyrodon@yahoo.com

So, what did you do with the money you saved on your subscription, start buying hard drugs? We clicked on the link you

gave, and although it was a worthwhile site, the story was about a sailor (not a soldier), stationed in Italy (not Iraq), and the charge was molestation (not rape, although, contrary to what your obviously ravaged mind has decided, we abhor both).

Pity you were not a regular reader, you might have noticed the series we ran exposing the sex-slave trade, when no other international military media would address the issue. And as for your assertion that we "support the rape of Iraqi girls," you might bear in mind, in the unlikely event you are ever at arms length, that this is what the law calls "fighting speech." And that being a moron is no protection.

Preponderance of Somalians

In the July '04 issue of SOF, "Bulletin Board" had a paragraph entitled "From the 'Dish to Iraq," retailing how the Marines had been finding a "preponderance of Somalians" in their AO. That tracks with the following from *The Federalist.com* newsletter No. 04-21 of 28 May 2004.

One can only hope that the al-Queda et al enjoy their new home in the lands of Ebola, aids, malaria, etc.!

Jesse R. Harris, Jr.
Alvin, Texas

[following excerpt courtesy thefederalist.com]

From warfront with Jihadistan...

Now disheveled and under threat of eviction in the Middle East, al-Qa'ida has taken up residence in a lawless, largely



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photos: courtesy of militarymorons.com

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unpopulated portion of sub-Saharan Africa extending from the Horn of Africa to the Sahara Desert's Atlantic edge. The terrorists responsible for the 11 March train bombings in Madrid, killing 191, are believed to have originated from this vicinity. Responding to the threat, the U.S.-led war on terror is making Africa its latest front, which U.S. military commanders call the new Afghanistan. Taking lessons from Afghanistan and Iraq, military planners are dispatching U.S. Special Ops forces to the region to train and equip indigenous soldiers in counterinsurgency operations.

Keep It Up

I'm a state law enforcement agent in California and former Marine (0311 & Forward Observer) who's been faithfully reading your mag for more than 10 years. *SOF* continues to do an outstanding job telling the stories that aren't covered in the *San Francisco Chronicle* or on CNN. As a former member of the military, I really look forward to your first hand reporting on the situations in Iraq and Afghanistan. I'm sure I'm not the only one who noticed that *SOF* was there first outlining the explosive growth of independent contract security personnel in Iraq ... in fact, I already had my May issue read as CNN was breaking the news over ex-Navy SEAL Scott Helvenston and the other Blackwater operators who were killed and desecrated in Iraq. Your eyes and ears on the ground provide the kind of first-hand reporting that keeps me going to the mailbox each month.

To answer your question on the July cover, "will the M9 fire twice?" Maybe, but certainly not if that Lt. from 10th Mountain doesn't take the safety off first! And that Otis ad

that has been running inside the cover of the last few issues... they may have the most "advanced gun cleaning system on Earth," but they need to learn how to spell Marine Corps. Kudos, gents and keep up the good work.

S.S.

We forwarded your comment to Otis, and you'll have to forgive them. Even with that glitch, their ad guy would probably be a better writer than we would be a maker of cleaning systems. At least they didn't spell it "corpse," like we saw in the regular press once. As for the good lieutenant, we suspect he's following SOP with that safety on, so we don't want to say anything that would have a bad effect on morale and discipline.

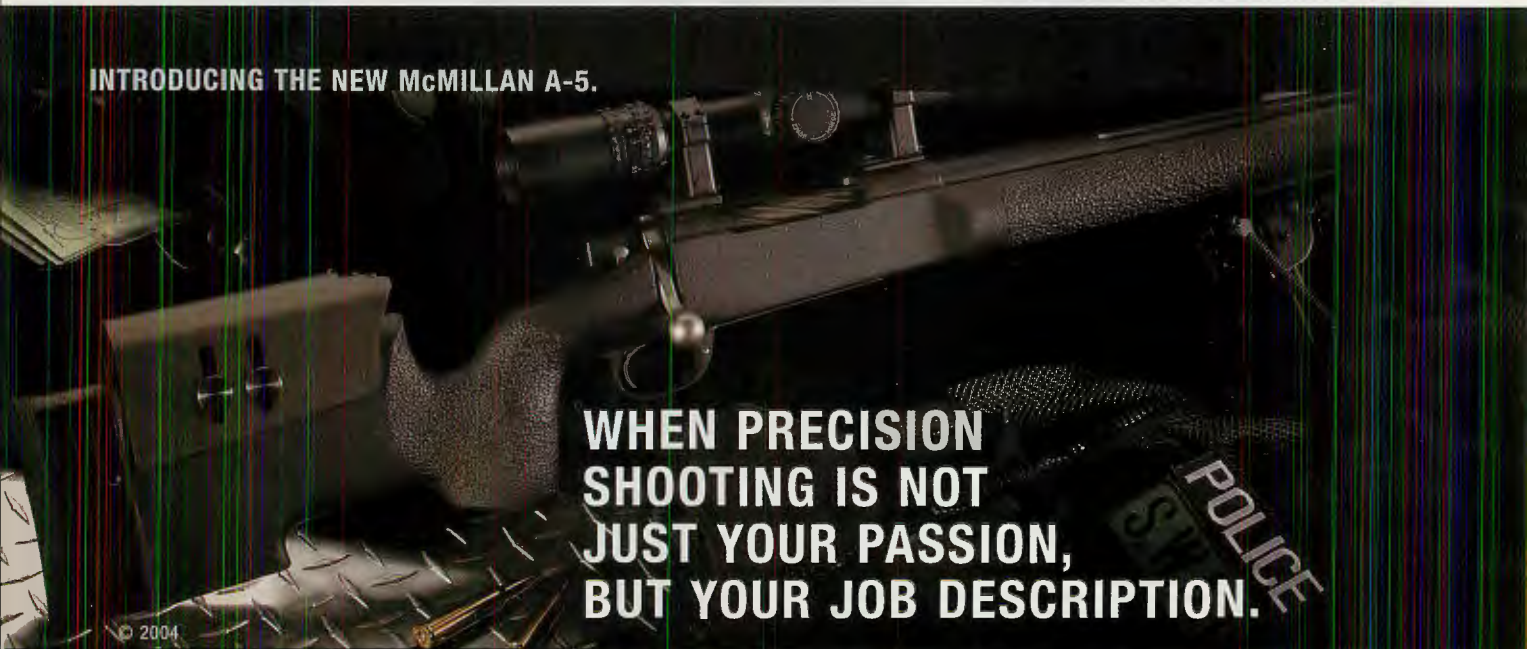
Family Friendly? Us?

I just wanted to tell you guys "Thanks!" for a fine magazine that our whole family enjoys. I'm a working-mom of a four-year-old little boy. My father subscribes to your magazine; once he's finished with an issue, he passes it along to our family. My husband pours over each issue as well, and shares many of the articles with me. We also find at least one article in each issue that can be shared with our little boy. He loves to see pictures of the weapons and vehicles and he especially enjoys looking at pictures of American soldiers interacting with children.

Anyway, thanks again for telling the "whole" truth and putting out a mag we can all benefit from!

Sandy McCarley

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AP WORLDWIDE

MEET THE BOYS FROM R&D

U.S. Special Forces, Navy SEALs, and the FBI are just a few of the professionals who depend on our flashlights and weapon-mounted lights. But they're not just our customers, they're also our research and development team. Based on their combat experience — and our breakthrough engineering — we've evolved a class of lights that are smaller, tougher and brighter than anything you know as a flashlight. So how do you make a light that measures up to the men who use it? You start with up to 33 times more power than a standard two D-cell flashlight, add a shock-isolated lamp built to withstand the recoil of a 12-gauge shotgun, use 10-year shelf life lithium batteries, and then wrap it all up in aerospace-grade aluminum with an ultra-rugged MilSpec finish. Whether you need to clear a bunker or simply find your way in the dark, you'll never regret having the best tool for the job. SureFire. No other light compares.

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Handguns

As a marine possibly deploying to the Middle East in the near future, I enjoy the articles on tactics/happenings in Afghanistan and Iraq. Anything that can give the good guys an edge when it comes to what to expect is appreciated. All in all, yours is the only magazine I buy every month without fail. I'm sure my wife will forward it to me if/when I deploy. Keep up the great work!

"Combat Weaponcraft" was a bit critical of the Ruger Semi-auto Pistol. I have carried one of the original P85 models and owned most of their other P series pistols since 87. It has never failed, will eat anything you feed it, is accurate, dependable and can perform equally with any of the high-dollar pieces on the market. As far as being hard to handle well if you handle it like a wuss, it will recognize you for the wuss that you are. I have fired some 5,000-plus rounds through it, and I would encourage Ruger to promote their P series to the military for its next sidearm for all the right reasons.

I have used and own a few of the SIG line and they are the next level of excellence. As far as the Beretta it's *crap* (the USMC experienced total slide failures in 1988, thus proving the point) and your May 2004 issue in FLAK column: the SF NCO on Beretta M9 is right. The HK is too bulky (USP series) or to high speed (P7 model), the Glock is fast but I could not get used to the feel. Last and not least is any of the S&W junk. These thoughtful and hands-on experience(s) are real. [My original purchase of the P85 was based mostly on the SOF article, "Ruger's P-85 Another New Pistol for America's Military." This article is accurate in its presentation of the characteristics, function and reliability of the Ruger P85.]

I have been a reader of your publication since its begin-

ning and have used your article(s) and pictures for morning briefs on several occasions: You were able to get the best and up to date "information" on many subjects of interest.

Sgt. R. Anderson USMC (EAS:92)

Strykers Strike Out?

I was very disappointed to read this in a magazine that I have been reading for some 24 years. As a member of the Stryker BDE, I can say that it was the most inaccurate thing I have ever seen from SOF. If we are such a flop how did roll up more "bad guys" in the two weeks we operated in Sammarra than the 4th ID did in the previous three months? Why did the locals give us the nickname "ghosts"?

We lost one victor in Sammarra from an IED hit with no injuries to the crew. Since then we have survived numerous other IED's and RPG hits losing only one victor here in Mosul only because a fuel can ignited. Again, no injuries. The article stated we are too big for the back streets of Mosul. I only know of one street in my sector we couldn't go down and that was because there were two semis parked side by side.

As far as us learning the ropes ... well, our one BDE replaced three from the 101st here in Mosul and we've been most assuredly holding our own while being tasked out to other areas of the theater as well. What a let down. Come on SOF, get it right!

Spc Mike Lafferty
B-Co, 1/23 Inf, 3/2 SBCT ✕

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During the opening celebration at the NRA's 2004 convention in Pittsburgh on 16 April, dozens of U.S. service personnel, overwhelmingly veterans of Iraq or Afghanistan, were recognized as part of "Honoring our sons and daughters in the

front lines." Members of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, as well as law-enforcement agents, were included. "Oooh-rah for the NRA," commented SOF Editor/Publisher Bob Brown. "and for the troops!"

Good Book: History

American Soldier, by General Tommy Franks, with Malcolm McConnell, ReganBooks, HarperCollins, August 2004, 512 pp, with Maps and Photo Sections, \$27.50.

The Commander-in-Chief of the United States Central Command from July 2000 through July 2003, General Tommy Franks made history by leading American and coalition forces to victory against the Taliban in Afghanistan and Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq — the two decisive battles that launched the War on Terror.

Now, in this extraordinary memoir, General Franks retraces his journey from a small-town boyhood in Oklahoma and Midland, Texas, throughout his three decades of military service — including his heroic tour of duty as an Artillery officer in Vietnam, where he was wounded three times. In accepting the position of CENTCOM Commander, Franks became the chief American military officer in the most dangerous region on Earth. But he could not know quite how dangerous it would be — until 11 September 2001, when a terrorist threat born in the Middle East struck the United States. In that moment, Franks knew it would be his mission to plan and execute the American response — a swift and massive pair of military actions that would destroy two terrorist regimes. In moment-by-moment detail, Franks provides a riveting account of each campaign — from strategy sessions with President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and others, to the challenge of mobilizing and directing 21st Century fighting forces through an ancient and forbidding theater of war. He also offers a frank assessment of American foreign and mili-

tary policy, the principles of leadership, and the future directions of the United States in the world. Candid and revealing, *American Soldier* will be the publishing event of 2004.

Good Book: Fiction

Jack In the Box by John Weisman, William Morrow Publishers; \$24.95.

Filled with cutting-edge tradecraft and grounded in real-world CIA operations, *Jack in the Box* revolves around a long-term Russian covert plan to penetrate and compromise America's intelligence community, while the United States is distracted by the Global War on Terrorism and the invasion of Iraq. "How good is *JIB*? Damn good. How close does Weisman get to the real thing? Damn close!" says SOF Editor/Publisher R.K. Brown. John Weisman is SOF's Roving Contributing Editor.

Bay Area Voters: New Choice

Claudia Bermúdez, daughter of slain Nicaraguan Contra leader Enrique Bermúdez (Commandante 380) is opposing California Progressive Rep. Barbara Lee (District 9) in the November election. Claudia's father was assassinated by "political rivals," after he signed a ceasefire agreement in 1980. Claudia says the Sandinistas have assassinated more than 700 Contra leaders since the ceasefire. According to www.Issues2000.org, Barbara Lee is a Hard-Core Left Liberal and member of the Congressional Progressive Caucus with the likes of Socialist Congressman Bernie Sanders (VT).

Lee's voting record includes "no" on: military border

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patrols to battle drugs and terrorism; authorizing military force in Iraq; emergency \$78B for war in Iraq & Afghanistan; permitting commercial airline pilots to carry guns; \$266 billion Defense Appropriations bill; deploying SDI; shortening gun-show purchase waiting period from 3 days to 1 (with instant background check).

The tax-happy Lee also voted "yes" to pay the United Nations, but voted "no" on: making the Bush tax cuts permanent; \$99.5B economic stimulus of capital gains/income tax cuts; tax cut package of \$958B over 10 years; eliminating the "marriage penalty;" repealing the estate tax ("death tax"); \$46 billion in tax cuts for small business. To learn more how a staunch anti-communist and entrepreneur stands on these issues, go to: <http://www.goclaudia.com> — Richard Rongstad

Atta Boy Militec!

The Defense Logistics Agency has purchased several hundred thousand bottles of MILITEC-1 Firearms Lubricant and although it is — at least in theory — available to troops via the supply system, there have been a lot of times troops could not access it in a timely fashion. And in the dusty, gritty environs of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, when you need it, you need it.

Not to worry. Although Militec is a for-profit company in the finest tradition of our free-enterprise system, if a GI can't get MILITEC-1 through channels when he needs it, then Militec will send him a bottle for free, to help ensure he/she comes home. Now that's the American way of doing business: troops first, profit second. Militec has shipped some 30,000+ bottles at their own expense to right where their excellent product is needed.

We'd tell you to check out Militec just because their gun oil is as good as it gets — but in light of the way they treat our troops, we recommend you buy a barrel. And if you are looking for something to send in that CARE package, think of MILITEC-1.

GIs: you can email them at militec@militec-1.com. Consumers, their web site is www.militec-1.com.

Safe Handling Starts With, Learning Arabic?

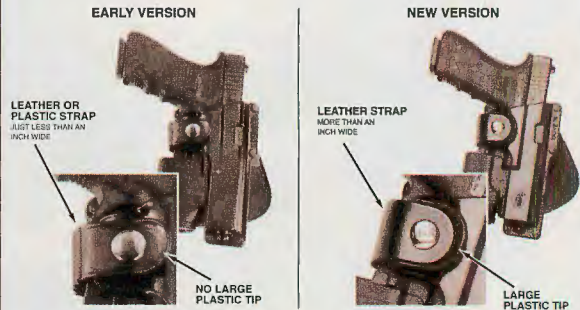
The USAF Special Operations School at Hurlburt Field was test-firing a Dragunov SVD sniper rifle that had been policed up during Operation Enduring Freedom — and good for them, they were doing it the right way by firing it remotely, in a vise. The test round blew the handguards off the rifle, and inspection revealed an approximate 3mm hole had been drilled in the barrel, which was hidden by the handguards. The rifle was to have been used in familiarization training for a course entitled "the Dynamics of International Terrorism."

Subsequent investigation noted that on the stock — in Arabic — was written "Training Weapon." Other weapons from the same cache were subsequently examined, and more were found to have been so modified. The important lessons are obvious here: be cautious of a battlefield weapon, if you did not personally see the previous owner go down shooting. And be wary of battlefield souvenirs in general, since those who would be in a position to see the previous owner go

SAFETY RECALL

Fobus USA GLT 17 & GLT 19 Series Gun Holsters

Glock handguns may accidentally discharge when inserted into the early versions of the Fobus GLT Series 17 and Series 19 gun holsters purchased through March 2003. The width and relative stiffness of the holster strap of the early versions create a potential that the strap could be inserted through rather than over the trigger guard.



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or contact Fobus USA's web site at: www.fobusholster.com.

Safety recall on Fobus USA GLT-17 and GLT-19 series pistol holsters: Glock handguns may accidentally discharge when inserted into the early versions (left) of the Fobus GLT Series 17 and Series 19 holsters purchased through March 2003. The narrowness and relative stiffness of the holster strap of the early version create a potential that the strap could be inserted through, rather than over, the trigger guard. This holds the potential to cycle the trigger of the Glock, causing an unintentional discharge.

Note the difference in the early version (leather or plastic strap less than an inch wide, seen in photo on the left), as opposed to the new version (seen on the right, which has a leather strap more than an inch wide, with a large plastic tip). To arrange to receive a FREE new holster, call Fobus USA between 0900/1700 EST at: 866-508-3997, or go to Fobus USA's web site at: www.fobusholster.com.

down shooting are seldom in a position to be picking up souvenirs, more often done by those who pass by later.

Figures Never Lie, But...

Gun Owners vs Doctors

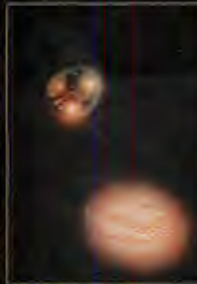
- A. The number of physicians in the U.S. is 700,000
 - B. Accidental deaths caused by Physicians per year are 120,000
 - C. Accidental deaths per physician is 0.171 per year
- Now consider this:
- A. The number of firearms in private hands in America is 80,000,000.
 - B. The number of accidental gun deaths per year (all age groups) is 1,500.
 - C. The number of accidental deaths per gun owner is 0.000188 per year.

Continued on page 80

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Accuracy	Within ±20 seconds per month under normal temperature (+5°C to +35°C). Depending on surrounding temperature, this range may be exceeded during charging.
Operating Temperature Range	-5°C to +55°C
Storage Temperature Range	-10°C to +60°C
Other	Overcharge protection; low battery alert
Battery Life	Approximately 1 month (on a full charge, one dial illumination and external illumination operation per day). Actual battery life depends on operating conditions.
Illumination (LED)	Dial illumination: Approx. 5 seconds External illumination: Approx. 20 seconds
Driving System	Stepping motor
Battery	Secondary Li-ION batteries
Watch Weight	7.0 oz
Dimensions	45 mm (W)

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THE NO BULL LIST

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY
SFC DILLARD J. JOHNSON

Mission-Essential Gear For Troops Headed Back To Iraq.



courtesy DoD

IT

is the second year after my unit, 3/7th CAV of the 3rd ID, fought its way from Kuwait to Baghdad during Operation Iraqi Freedom (see "Chariots of Firepower" Jan.-June '04), and major fighting was declared over.

OIF may be over, but the war in Iraq has merely changed faces and is going as strong as ever. Army and Marine units who spearheaded OIF have either returned to, or have been given a heads-up for redeployment to, Iraq.

I will be heading back over to Iraq shortly. The following is a critique of what equipment worked for us there that we will be sure to take back, and what gear we could have put to good use, had it been available, that we will take with us this time, for sure. Old friends from Iraqi Freedom and I tested and talked up a lot of new items on the market for the fighting GI — the good, the bad, the ugly. We will only mention the good stuff here — the items that we would need to take back with us this time to help accomplish the mission

and return home to our families. We salute the many fine manufacturers who serve the GI, and to them we award our No Bull War Prize.

SSG John Williams, a fellow soldier in OIF, suggested that we add items that the first-timers would need, as well. If you have a loved one heading over to Iraq for the first time, here are some bits of gear you may want to consider. If you are in the armed forces, Uncle Sam has issued almost everything that you will need, but not everything. The first thing you will want to do if you're not married is go out and make a lot of girlfriends: Remember, the more girlfriends you have, the more mail you get. Mail is your only real link with home. You can hold it and keep it next to your heart.

Be sure you check all your issued equipment. If it has the smallest damage, turn it back in to CIF. Your equipment will have to last you. You do not want to start off in the hole. There are many more things to buy on your own that will help ensure a safe return back home to your loved ones.

NO-BULL LIST OF WHAT YOU WILL NEED IN IRAQ.

ARMOR: If you only buy one thing to take with you, make it body armor. It can cost up to \$1,500 for the best, which is made by Point Blank, the same company that makes the Interceptor for the U.S. Army. You can also choose to buy a small, concealable vest for around \$250, but remember you get what you pay for. You can get your vest online at www.interamer.com, and don't forget to tell them your chest size. You will need a good fit for your vest to work right.

HEADGEAR: I know, the Kevlar helmet is heavy and not as comfortable as a ball cap but if you don't want to have a hole in your head the size of a golf ball, spend the money. Better to have and not need than need and not have. You can get your police or Army style Kevlar helmet on line at www.tamiami-armor.com.



PVT Lewis Correa shows how Wiley X goggles fit under Kevlar helmet: You need 'em both.

EYE PROTECTION: Don't leave home without it. Wiley X has a national stock number for the SG-1, our workhorse for the military during OIF-I. They also make the CQC tactical goggle, which has a low profile and a one-year warranty. The CQC fits under your

Kevlar. They also come with a headband so you can wear them with your CVC. I'm taking them back to Iraq with me this time. Wiley X is a soldier-friendly company that takes their product's reliability seriously. I highly recommend them for any job. Eye Shield System (ESS) and Blackhawk special operation tactical goggles are all a good investment also. You can order all three of these quality products at Brigade Quartermaster www.actiongear.com.

BOOTS: There is no substitute for a good pair of boots. Nike doesn't make boots for Iraq. Military issue, Bates and Original Duty boots are about the best you can get for Iraq. However you will want to have the soles replaced on your military issue boots with ripple soles. Ripple sole are softer on your feet and will give long life to your boots. You can buy Original Duty boots with the ripple sole already on them for around \$60. They have triple layer insole for long lasting comfort, come in half and wide sizes and are \$25 cheaper than military



Original Duty boots, with ripple soles that are easier on your feet, and your boots.

issued ones, at Armed Forces Merchandise Outlet (AFMO). I ordered a pair of the Original Duty from AFMO to see if they would live up to their promise of quick response. My boots arrived less than 48 hours later. You can order Original Duty boots at

www.afmo.com or call 800-82-3327. A good deal anyway you look at it. If you're a civilian, you will want to get the Enforcer by Bates. They have been in the boot-making business for years and stand behind their boots. Bates are as close as you can get to running shoes and still be boots: www.bates-footwear.com. And don't go cheap on your socks. Fox River makes probably the best socks on the market. There is extra cushion built in and they even make PT socks: www.foxsox.com.

GLOVES: You will need a good pair of gloves. Most gloves that are military issued won't stand up to the conditions in Iraq. My issued Nomex gloves didn't make it past day three of the war. Luckily, I had packed away in my rucksack two pairs of gloves: One pair of Craftsman mechanic's gloves and one pair of Hellstorm Assault Gloves. The Craftsman gloves worked very well for the price of around \$19 a pair, but after two months of everyday use they started to fail, so I pulled out my Hellstorm Assault gloves by Blackhawk. I used my Hellstorm gloves every day and they held up to everything I put them through. Then when I was Medivaced to Walter Reed, I gave them to my gunner SPC Sullivan, who gave them to his replacements in August and just like the pink bunny, the Hellstorm gloves just kept going and going. Hellstorm gloves can be ordered at www.hellstorm-musa.com. Your hands will thank you.

PACKS: On your way over to Iraq or moving around inside Iraq you will need a good backpack to carry your gear. I took with me to Iraq a three-day assault back pack that I had purchased for about \$100 at Ft. Bragg N.C. years ago. The backpack was made by Blackhawk



Spec Ops Brand's three-day assault pack, designed for easy access.



Some great products from Spec Ops Brands include Mamba sling, HUMP pack, SOB and (below) Pack Rat organizer.



Industries. Blackhawk makes some of the best soldier gear on the market. My backpack still works like new. It will be making its second trip to Iraq with me. I checked the price of my assault pack with Blackhawk and in eight years the price has only gone up \$20. You can get your Assault backpack/gear at www.hellstorm-musa.com. If you've ever had to dump your gear out to find something small, then the Spec-Ops Pack-Rat drop-in organizer is for you: It will hold all your small gear where you can get at it. Spec-Ops also makes great backpacks with their multiple platform system: You can mount anything on them. Get yours at www.specopsbrand.com or call 866-773-2677.

HYDRATION SYSTEM: You will need a hydration system. There are only two on the market that I know of — Hydrastorm and Camelbak. They cost about the same and both have Gas mask adapter kits. Hydrastorm has a larger drinking tube but harder bite-valve than Camelbak. Camelbak drink-



"The first of things is water." Camelbak, left, and Hydrastorm, right, will keep you going in the heat.

ing tube is smaller but the bite valve is softer. Just make sure you have one or the other. One thing you will need to get is the hydration utility multiple platform (HUMP) by Spec-Ops Brands (above). It will fit any Hydration system and attaches to your LBV or interceptor vest — a great idea that works. You can order all three of these on-line at www.actiongear.com.

WATCH: Everyone will need a good watch. Chase-Durer makes some of the toughest watch-cases in the world. 1SG Broadhead still has his hand thanks to his Chase-Durer watch. Casio G Shocks and Timex are always a good choice also. Make sure you take a back up watch.

MULTI-TOOLS: A good Multi-tool can save your life and make the difference between a good day and a bad day. They range from \$35 to \$170 in price. In this case, you get more than what you paid for, as the Gerber Multi-Plier 600 costs around \$35. It is an easy, one-handed-opening unit and Gerber stands behind their product. You can order on-line at www.actiongear.com. If you break it, send it back and Gerber will fix it or send you another one.

Also Good Gear to Have

Now that we have the what-you-need list, here is the stuff that is nice to have. First, the GPS Magellan Sportrak; not only will it let you know where you are, you can also download city maps like Baghdad or other Iraqi towns. Magellan is the best GPS on the market. I have the old 2000XL model and it still works like a new one. Don't forget to get a good case. Spec-Ops Brands makes a case to fit them all.

FLASHLIGHT: There is only one name. SureFire and the G2 model — it

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

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



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

The list is always the same.

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

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

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

They're always the one being choked.

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

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

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

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

What went wrong? Just this. You ASSUMED he only wanted the wallet. After all, why would anyone stab someone over a few measly bucks? YOU certainly wouldn't do that if you were robbing someone.

And that IS the problem. With thinking like that...

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

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

You stroll around thinking 15 years of martial arts training or that 6-week self-defense course or some reality fighting video gives you the edge you need against someone like this. Wake up!

You are hopelessly training techniques (then praying they work) against someone who isn't "training" for you. How many criminals in federal pens spent years sweating through JKD workouts before committing their crime? How many are Jujitsu experts?

Not a one! They excel at just one thing: doin' it. No training, no practice, no techniques. And certainly no 'rules'. So why squander years fooling yourself with something that only works "if everyone plays by the rules"?

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

Larkin trains you from the get-go how to kill, if necessary, to survive a life-or-death confrontation.

He doesn't advocate violence. TFT just demystifies it. He's often quoted...

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

Look... others in Soldier of Fortune try to impress



Tim Larkin, creator of Target-Focus Training

you with how bad they are; their accomplishments in the "secret world" you aren't privy to; their guru status.

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

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

No bones about it: Larkin's record is impressive. He trains units from all the top echelons of federal law enforcement and military special operations groups. It's

not surprising since he comes from that world and is well known there. But everyone in Soldier of Fortune tries to claim this so you'll rarely hear him talk about it.

He's an awesome communicator and trainer, and is amazingly approachable for someone with his abilities and credentials. And he's trained 1,000's of CEOs and others in high-risk positions around the world — all very real people.

But why is this so important? Why is TFT being sought out in all these other arenas?

Because it works! Because you "get it" immediately. Not after weeks or months or even years of training... but **right now**... as soon as you experience it. And...

Not Only Is It Usable... Instantly... But Just Like Riding A Bicycle It Stays With You Forever... Even If You Never Practice It Again!

Here's why: the key lies in the fact this is the only system based totally on the PRINCIPLES (not techniques) that determine the outcome of any physical confrontation. Combine these with three supporting methodologies that form the foundation of every fighting system on the planet and you have a complete system usable by ANYone for handling ANY violent confrontation. With this information you can look at anything out there... including your own training... and know immediately if it's worth keeping.

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

Last year Larkin trained over 600 CEO's in Europe. This year he'll spend 57 consecutive days training others in England, the Far East and Asia, and India. These folks are eating his stuff up because TFT principles and methodology are as effective in the 'combative' world of business as they are in a truly lethal fight, and for the exact same reason... **RESULTS.**

Think about this: If these people can get this much from his material, imagine how much more you can learn... a dedicated reader of Soldier of Fortune magazine who is really into finding and applying a system that is quickly learned and deadly effective. If all these folks are seeking him out, shouldn't you be too?

Look, Larkin is swamped and realizes he can't begin to reach everyone. While he'd love to have you as a member of his organization and to take part in his live training, he realistically understands few will be able to do this. Bootcamps run \$1,500.00, international events start at \$9,500.00, and personal training for small 2- to 4-person sessions is \$10,000.00 and more.

That's why, in a daring move with potentially serious ramifications, he's released a new WEAPONS-focused

version of his TFT system that shows you how to defeat a violent criminal in a **WORSE-than-worst-case scenario**. After seeing his program... a life-or-death confrontation in a dark alley is a piece of cake.

Not only does this new series take you inside the criminal mind, it goes way beyond... showing you how and why you must first learn to USE a weapon... if you ever hope to defeat a criminal using it against you! Highly unconventional and extremely controversial it teaches you how to get your focus off the weapon... and onto defeating the REAL threat.

Some foolishly feel this stuff is too violent, totally ignorant of the fact you don't always have to push it to the levels shown on these tapes.

It's Very Easy To Ramp This Down To Fit A Lesser Situation But It's Impossible To Ramp Up And Kill Someone If You've Never Trained For It!

Some will be shocked, dismayed, offended and **outraged that anyone would dare show this stuff**. They'll raise a stink... and do everything possible to get this yanked. But better you see this on video than experience it first-hand on the street!

Everything you'll see here is vintage TFT. You learn to hurt someone very quickly (every sequence shows killing movements right from the start). There's no size, speed or quickness required. Anyone can learn this because it's based on principles not some guru's skills.

Guys that have been in the trenches for years are blown away by the simple brutality and effectiveness of this system and the competence of Larkin's instructors, including their knowledge of anatomy and how to inflict trauma on the human body.

Each averages 10 years of training and surprisingly most aren't 'jocks'. Many have advanced degrees; five hold PhD's! His advisory board includes two medical doctors who assure everything you see about inflicting trauma on the human body is totally accurate.

"With this system: 1) You will learn what Larkin says you will learn, and 2) The course is exactly as advertised — intense, targeted, focused training designed to produce immediate results." Mark D. Fabiani, Crisis Mgt Consultant, La Jolla, CA

Let's cut to the chase: this program is extremely controversial and NOT for everyone. If you'd never consider killing someone threatening your life or if you're hoping to see lots of useless predetermined techniques or cool setup moves — you can stop reading here. This is only for those who want to learn to defeat a criminal in a life-or-death situation.

Listen. I understand you may find this hard to believe. That's how I felt too until I saw the videos. Unfortunately there's not room here to adequately describe the **shocking reality of what Larkin has created for you**. That's why he's not asking for a penny of your money now. Instead he'll spend his own cash to put a 17-page Special Report into your hands that will prove everything you've just read and explain why this program is so DIFFERENT from anything you've seen before.

All you need to do to get his **FREE** report is pick up the phone and call **888-811-9347**. There's a short message and then you can leave your name and address so the report can be mailed to you. It's voicemail so you can call **24-hours a day, 7 days a week** and no one will hassle you.

Don't fool around and miss this opportunity. It doesn't cost you a thing. Call now or go on-line at www.targetfocusweapons.com.

only costs about \$30. If you already have a loved one in Iraq, send them a SureFire light — it will make their day. SureFire lights have even survived mortar attacks (see “Chariots of Firepower” Feb. '04).

KNIFE: Gerber has teamed up with Blackhawk and together they have come out with the toughest knife/sheath combo on the market: the Silver Trident and Blackhawk's double-locking sheath, which can be positioned anywhere, thanks to their new and clever design. The Silver Trident is a knife you will love from the first time you pick it up. I don't recommend you do this, but I put my Trident through a car hood. Other than the paint being scratched, the Silver Trident still looks and works as good as new. Buck knives



Gerber's Silver Trident is one tough combat knife; Blackhawk makes one tough scabbard for it.

are still as dependable as ever. I have carried the Buck T-119 for years — two combat tours — and from deer hunting to self-defense, it has never let me down. Smaller knives will be needed for everyday use. You will want to get an inexpensive knife that keeps a good edge on it, like Gerber's Ridge Knife for \$24 or Bucks Ecco 2.25 for \$28. You can get all your knife needs at www.onestopknifeshop.com.

HOLSTERS, MAGS, SLINGS: If you are a GI, there is something you will need that Uncle Sam didn't issue you: If you have an M9 9mm, you will want to get a drop-leg holster from Blackhawk. I still have the one I took to war in OIF. They are very comfortable and heavy-duty. Even though you were issued magazines, go out and find some original pre-ban mags that won't get you killed by failing to feed your ammo, like mine did. You should be able to find them at any gun show. For your M4 or M16, you will want to get a



This Blackhawk drop thigh holster carried my M9 through Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom and is going back with me. Get some OEM Beretta magazines to take with you, as well.



Spec Ops' ammo pouch keeps a full magazine right on the stock of your weapon; they have models for M4 as well.



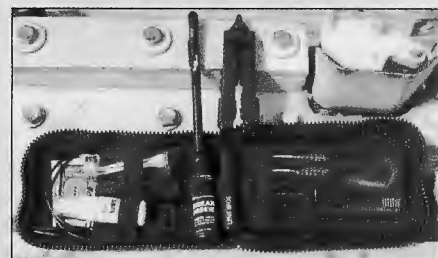
Spec Ops Mamba Combat Fighting Sling is as good as you'll ever need.

good sling and no one makes them better than Spec-Ops Brand. I have tried them all and the Mamba fits the bill. The Mamba is comfortable, quiet and allows you freedom of your hands. Spec-Ops also makes a great butt pack for your LBV. I used one during OIF and it is still working today. If you are going to be in a Forward Operations Base (FOB) or air base where you will be able to downgrade your uniform, you will want to get their buttstock magazine pouch. It fits right on your M4 or M16 stock and keeps one maga-

zine of ammo with you at all times. Everything that Spec-Ops makes is made in the U.S.A. You can order all your Spec-Ops needs at 866-773-2677 or www.specopsbrand.com.

CLEANING KITS: You will want to put together a good one to last you the year you will be there. Gerber and Otis have put together a good one that has an NSN so your unit can order it for you. They come from 5.56mm to 12 gauge. If you have to pay out of pocket go to www.otisgun.com. They will give you a good price, around \$25, and a great product. Guys, clean your weapons every day. It will keep you and your buddies alive.

You will need to get a good sleeping



Otis cleaning kit, Gerber 600 Multi Pliers: two items worth their weight in gold, but reasonably priced.

bag — one that will compress to a very small size, is comfortable and lightweight. I recommend the Coleman Crescent Sleeping bag. It only cost \$41, it is light weight, comfortable and a very good product for the price. For entertainment you will want to get a Game Boy Advance. If you have a little more money to spend, buy yourself a Lap Top computer. HP makes a good, reliable PC. SSG John Williams took one with him during OIF, and the only thing he did to protect his laptop was place it inside a pelican waterproof case —and he still uses them to this day.

If you have been reading this for ideas of what to send a loved one in a care package, you can always send pre-sweetened Kool-aid, Gummy Bears and a DVD of their favorite movie. War is hell, but you do not have to be totally miserable while you are there.

I hope that this has given you some ideas for worthwhile kit, and that you come home safe. Remember, “if you are willing to do what your enemy is not, you will be victorious!” Troops, thank you for your service to this great country.

Author of the six-part series “Chariots of Firepower,” SFC Johnson serves with 3/7 CAV, 3rd Infantry Division. ✖

Puts functional strength into every fiber of your being...

"The #1 Total Body Fitness Program on the Planet - Turns You Into An Unstoppable Butt-Kicking Machine... Damn Near Instantly"

Follow the Legendary Routine That Simultaneously Catapults Your Strength, Endurance and Flexibility to record levels. Feel the results that tens of thousands are raving about worldwide...

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. Mahfous -
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 NHB 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**

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SOF 09/03

Security contractors are encountering more and more action along Iraq's highways, and in the streets of Baghdad, Fallujah and Ar Ramadi.

Operators from Cochise Consultancy, a Valrico, FL company, run by former Special Forces Colonel Jesse Johnson, provide convoy and site security for U.S.A. Environmental (USAE), an EOD company with a piece of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Captured Enemy Ammunition contract. A Cochise/USAE convoy was ambushed at approximately 0845 in Jabal Makhul, at the base of Hamrin Mountain, near a bridge crossing the river.

The convoy was driving through dense fog when Iraqi insurgents hit it with a well-planned ambush, initiated with two RPG rockets. The first RPG passed, at hood level, between the armed lead vehicle and a USAE vehicle carrying

“At the bridge I made the easy decision to continue with the mission. I received a quick ACE report from all vehicles, and we continued on as planned. We received no injuries, no vehicle damage, and no equipment lost.

“The fog concealed the enemy, but also hindered their attempt.”

Armed Operators

Cochise estimates that eight to ten insurgents engaged their convoy, which carried only seven armed operators. According to the Cochise operators almost all of the tactical advantage was on the side of the enemy. They commanded the high ground, had the element of surprise, had crew served weapons, and had superior numbers, as well as firepower.

COMBAT CONTRACTORS' DEADLY CONVOYS

*Civilian Contractors Wage War
On the Dangerous Roads of Iraq*

BY E. LEE SHIPPEY



unarmed EOD contractors. But the rocket didn't explode.

The second RPG missed the rear vehicle, detonating behind it. After firing the RPGs — a common Iraqi insurgent technique — the bad guys opened up with Kalashnikovs and a Russian BKC heavy machine gun. The Iraqis fired hundreds of rounds. The Cochise operators returned fire from the lead vehicle, covering the escape of the trail vehicle. The trail vehicle fired back, which covered the getaway of the unarmed USAE vehicle. The Cochise operators expended sixty rounds of 5.56 ammunition and fifteen rounds of Kalashnikov 7.62x 59.

According to the Cochise convoy commander, Tom Carter. “Once contact was made, all information was relayed to all vehicles. We immediately picked up the speed of the convoy, and broke contact. Once our vehicles got to the low ground, firing from the enemy ceased.

“We continued at a fast pace to cross the bridge. Once exposed, we received fire again. Rounds impacted around the trail vehicle. At this point the rear gunner, in the back of the trailing SUV, laid down suppressive fire.

Cochise was fortunate, the RPGs missed. They blasted out of the kill zone at high speed as soon as contact was made. And they immediately put suppressive fires on the enemy positions.

Unfortunately Tom Carter's luck didn't hold. On April 25th the 49-year-old former Delta Force operator was killed in action near Bayji, in northern Iraq. Carter, along with another Cochise operator, Vince Foster, 31, was providing convoy security for a USAE EOD team when an IED was detonated beneath their vehicle. Another contractor was also seriously wounded in the ambush.

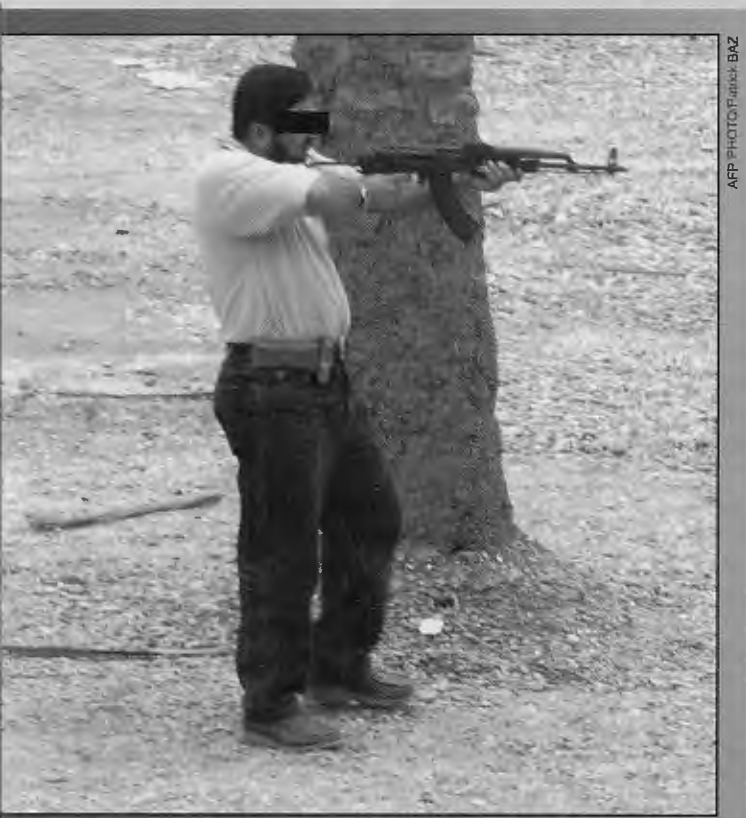
Other security contractors have suffered casualties in contacts with enemy insurgents. In January two Steele Foundation operators were killed in an ambush on their convoy about thirty miles north of Baghdad. They were protecting a group of American construction executives.

A Canadian and a British operator were killed March 28th while en route to Mosul with General Electric employees.

On April 6th, five private security contractors with Hart Group Ltd. of London, UK — including the company's Iraq

coordinator, Nick Edmunds — were involved in a two-day-long siege, after their residence in Kut came under fire. One was killed, bleeding to death from wounds. The other four were also wounded. They called U.S. and Ukrainian units for help, until their cell-phone battery expired. The help came, but not in time.

Not only do the security companies take casualties themselves, but sometimes they also fail to protect their client. In November, in probably the first incident involving contractors killed in action in Fallujah — the most recent being the ambush on four Blackwater operators — a four-vehicle convoy, carrying employees of EOD Technologies (EODT) of Knoxville, TN, was driving through Fallujah, when it was hit by an IED, shortly after passing a group of several hundred young Iraqi men.



AFP PHOTO/FABRICK BAZ

A foreign security adviser (left) trains an Iraqi private security guard at an improvised shooting range in central Baghdad. Private security firms are now the third largest international contributor of forces to the war effort in Iraq — after the U.S. and British troops.

The driver and passenger of the EODT Ford F-350 were killed.

While security personnel couldn't protect them from the IED attack, they managed to recover the bodies, and commandeered an Iraqi vehicle to transport them, when one of the other convoy vehicles broke down from damage sustained in the attack. EODT learned its lessons over the next few months, as it found itself in more shooting situations.

Ambushes are sometimes prevented by pre-emptive action: On 14 February at about 1145 hrs, Dave S., a GS-12 Security Specialist working for EODT as a direct hire, rode in the last vehicle of a three-vehicle convoy, en route from Camp Buckmaster, near Tikrit, to Camp Ironhorse.

The EODT convoy was on the Ammunition Supply Point

Road, going toward the intersection of Iraqi Highway 1 in Tikrit. There had been plenty of IED detonations at this intersection before, and there had been casualties from them.

Road Block

According to Dave, "I was in the front passenger seat, armed with an M16A2. Security Specialist Chris D. sat in the rear passenger seat, behind the driver, armed with a Squad Automatic Weapon. Security Specialist Dan M. drove. He was armed with an M16A2." The lead vehicle entered the highway, and blocked the southbound lanes, while the second vehicle turned onto the highway after the roadblock.

Recent intelligence reports indicated a possible VBIED (vehicle borne improvised explosive device) aka "car bomb" attack on coalition forces, by enemy using a 1991 red pickup truck.

As Dave S. recounts the incident: "My vehicle proceeded into the southbound lanes of Highway 1, when a red truck sped past the road block, approaching our vehicle at high speed from left to right. Dan M. braked suddenly to avoid a collision with the red truck.

"Believing that an enemy attack was in progress, and lives of EODT personnel were in immediate danger, I yelled to Chris D. to open fire. He engaged the enemy with a ten-round burst from the SAW, striking the vehicle in the front engine and passenger compartment. He ceased fire as the vehicle passed in front of our vehicle, and out of his field of fire. The vehicle continued into my field of fire. I fired two three-round bursts from my M16A2, striking the passenger compartment and the rear wheels.

"I ceased fire as the red truck continued past vehicle number two, which had slowed. The red truck stopped in the first lane. Both occupants slowly raised their hands. The passenger was slumped in the seat, and the driver appeared ambulatory.

All convoy vehicles crossed the median and turned northbound on Highway 1, tactically exiting the area of any further potential ambush."

In an incident that could have been prevented by the presence of heavily-armed and aggressive security operators, two CNN employees, both Iraqis, were killed, and another slightly wounded, when their two-car convoy was ambushed on the outskirts of Baghdad, on January 28th.

Translator/producer Duraid Isa Mohammed and driver Yasser Khatab died of multiple gunshot wounds. Cameraman Scott McWhinnie was grazed in the head by a bullet. CNN correspondent Michael Holmes, producer Shirley Hung and a security adviser were in the same car as McWhinnie and were unhurt.

The CNN crew was returning to Baghdad from an assignment in the southern city of Hilla when they were ambushed. The vehicles were traveling north towards the Baghdad suburb of Mahmudiya, when one car, a rust-colored Opel, came up behind the lead CNN vehicle.

A single gunman, using the "sun-roof shooter" technique opened fire with an AK-47 on the rear of the lead vehicle. Although hit at least five times, it escaped. The CNN employees, and their security advisor, watched the Opel U-turn on the median of the highway, as the second CNN vehicle, carrying Mohammed and Khatab, went off the road. When a U.S. Army quick-reaction force arrived they found that Mohammed and Khatab were dead in their car.

E. Lee Shippey has fought in, reported on, and worked as a contractor in wars all over the world. ☒

A Show Of HANDS

Some Iraqis Think the American Invasion Was A Great Idea

BY DON NORTH

The tape was shocking. In the clinic of the Abu Ghraib prison, nine Baghdad merchants were undergoing surgery to remove their healthy right hands, on the orders of Saddam Hussein. It wasn't hard, in Baghdad, to find the victims shown in the video. The incident was well known and the tape widely shown, to terrorize other merchants who might dare to deal in foreign currency.

From the moment I saw this gruesome video I knew it would be central to the story. Nothing shows better the depth of cruelty and inhumanity of the Saddam regime. Iraqis often say, "Cruelty is the tyrants art." And Saddam takes his place

among history's cruelest tyrants.

Of the nine who lost their hands in 1995, six were still in Baghdad, one had died, one escaped to Germany and one to Holland. I tracked them down and proposed a documentary that would incorporate the brutal amputation scenes, and tell their story to the world.

Suspecting that their severed right hands had been buried in the prison yard, six Baghdad merchants assemble at the main gate of Abu Ghraib prison. Left to right they are: Qasim Kadhim, Salah Zinad, Nazar Joudi, Laith Aggar, Al'aa Shubber, Basim Al Fadhly.



They agreed. They were not unique in Saddam's Iraq. In his thirty-five year reign of terror, Saddam and his Baathist cohorts had punished its citizens by cutting hands, ears, tongues, feet, or simply executing them. Thousands more were mutilated and lost limbs in Saddam's senseless wars with Iran and Kuwait. As many as three million Iraqis may have been eliminated during the Saddam years, and are now turning up in mass graves throughout the country.

Saddam and his sons, Uday and Qusay Hussein, often used videotape to document the punishment of those who were not enthusiastic supporters of the regime. An Iraqi General who fled to Jordan received a videotape showing the rape and torture of his wife and daughters. Uday, the eldest son is reported to have taped his pet lions killing and eating two young Iraqi men that Uday considered rivals for the affection of a woman he was interested in.

Such tapes are scarce now and were probably destroyed as Baghdad fell last April 9th.

Mukhabarat

A knock on the door at midnight brought Saddam's secret police, the Mukhabarat, to the Baghdad video studio of Sahib Bazoum in 1995. "Make ten copies of this twenty-minute VHS tape," demanded Saddam's henchmen. "We are watching you, so don't try to make any copies for yourself." But, risking his life, Bazoum flipped a switch and activated



Marvin Zindler, Houston's most famous broadcaster, chats with Al'aa Shubber from Baghdad in the Methodist Hospital, Houston recovering from the surgery necessary before prosthetic hands could be fitted.



Al'aa Shubber following surgery to prepare for a bionic hand greets documentary producer Don North, Doctor Joe Agris who performed the surgery and veteran broadcaster Marvin Zindler who brought the four together in Houston.

a secret recorder.

He kept the copy for eight years, hoping that someday the cruelty the tape portrayed would expose the madness of Saddam's regime.

An Iraqi journalist friend brought me the tape and urged me to make a documentary. I was aware that incorporating such grizzly scenes could limit distribution, or make it unusable to many TV stations throughout the world.

As a TV journalist who has covered over fifteen wars since starting as a reporter for ABC News in Vietnam, a great many of my stories are about suffering. Putting a spotlight on heart-breaking conditions, crimes and injustice always left me with hope the story would have an effect. As I was often working freelance, every story put on the air represented a battle with yawning editors, and budget conscious accountants.

Entrusted by Fate

The stories seemed to vanish as they faded from the screen, disappearing into the vast indifference of a public that didn't really watch, listen, or care. I had been a witness in Vietnam, Cambodia, El Salvador, Afghanistan and Iraq, to things historic and terrible, entrusted by the Fates with the truth. But I was left with the realization I had somehow failed to deliver the message.

This time it would be different. As I began production of the documentary "Remembering Saddam", I also started looking for doctors and hospitals who would be willing to undo Saddam's brutal surgery. It would be months before the documentary would be finished or on the air anywhere in the world, to bring a spotlight on the amputees plight. In mid-June in a Baghdad restaurant, sitting with journalist friends and brainstorming loudly, "Where in the world can I find doctors to help the amputees of my documentary?"

Roger Brown, an oil engineer from Houston TX, overheard the conversation and came forward with a suggestion. "I'm from Houston," said Roger, "I'll bet Marvin Zindler at KTRK, Channel 13, might help you out."

Bordello Crusader

Within days Roger had put me in touch with the legendary

Continued on page 76

COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

FARNAM'S GUNSLINGER DIARY ♦ BY JOHN FARNAM

Who Dares, Wins... *On Seizing the Initiative*

From A Friend In The UK:

"The SUN today reported that British soldiers in Iraq killed nearly every member of an insurgent unit during the British Army's first bayonet charge since the Falklands War, twenty-two years ago! Twenty Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders charged Iraqi fighters after being ambushed in their Land Rovers. The Brits decided to fix bayonets on their SA-80 rifles and charge at once. They did, and between rifle fire and bayonet attack, killed thirty-five insurgents and captured nine.

"Interestingly, analytical geniuses among UK's war planners had originally left off bayonet lugs from the SA-80 rifle, considering bayonets 'obsolete.' I suspect those people are extremely quiet about now!"

Lesson: An instant, explosive, and violent counterattack is the very last thing most predators either expect or plan for. Predators mostly dither and ultimately deal with it poorly, as these Iraqis did. Fearless men and cold steel still frighten the snot out of the lowlife of this world. God bless the British!

Confrontation, From An LED Friend In Australia:

"Late last month I was informed three thugs were out front of the local hotel beating a woman to death. Since I am the 'local police,' I got out of bed, 'armed' myself with a cell phone, jumped in my personal car, and drove up to the hotel.

"Sure enough, outside were three of the biggest thugs I'd ever seen, with a half-clothed, bleeding woman lying at their feet. As my headlights shone on her she reached toward my direction and pleaded, 'Help me!' As soon as I got out of the car, all three blokes started walking toward me. The smallest one outweighed me by at least fifty pounds. The biggest was well over six foot, skin-headed, bare-chested, covered in muscles, and full of tattoos, including a Nazi swastika on his left chest.

"I was not in uniform, as there was no time to put it on. I had no gun, OC, or baton. As I instruct martial arts locally, I did have a 'boken' (long, hardwood staff) in my car. I retrieved it and confronted them squarely. 'Hello boys, what's going on here then?' I obtained the eloquent reply, 'Who the f___ are you?' I replied that I was the local, f___ policeman, and again asked what they were up to. They looked at each other and then said that they were just 'helping' this woman. I replied that their definition of 'help' was curious

indeed. As we talked, the woman crawled over and begged me to rescue her.

"Swastika boy then got too close. I showed him my boken and told him to go sit down on the curb while we waited for the other nice policeman to arrive. He ignored me and kept coming, so I said, 'Let me put it another way: take another step and I'll start using this.' His aggressive demeanor instantly changed as he backed off with his hands in the air, mumbling that he really didn't want to fight after all.

"The next sound was the defining 'crack' made by the boken at it struck this guy's right leg, above his knee. It sounded like a pistol shot, which caused the local pub to empty out ..."

"Then, Godzilla decided to have a go. He comes at me, and I tell him the same thing. He stops, grins, utters the statement of the night, 'Mate, your not good enough to use that!' He then bunches up his fists and moves in on me.

"The next sound was the defining 'crack' made by the boken at it struck this guy's right leg, just above his knee. It sounded like a pistol shot, which caused the local pub to empty out. Godzilla hit the ground with a crash, clutching his leg, and screaming that it was broken. The other two quickly backed off, became suddenly docile and compliant, and sat down on the curb as I had originally asked.

"The woman was taken off to hospital. She recovered. All three thugs were arrested without further incident. Godzilla's leg was not fractured, but my boken was, split down the middle.

"I learned my lesson. No matter how much of a hurry I'm in, next time I'll be sure I have all my gear with me. I was lucky this time."

Lesson: Aside from the obvious, when you're confronted by multiple people who indicate they mean you harm, select the biggest/most aggressive/closest and take him out decisively, emphatically, and without warning. In most cases, the fight will be over at that point, as it was in this case. If you fail to take out the biggest one, first and fast, your situation will deteriorate rapidly. If there must be a fight, the best kind is the short kind! ✕

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BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

AMERICA AT WAR

1. UNITED STATES FIRST MILITARY TRIBUNAL begins, with Australian David Hicks charged as "unlawful combatant." Hicks, captured in Afghanistan in 2001, refused to cut deal. Charges include membership in Lashkar e Tayyiba, terrorist group in Kashmir, aiding al Qaeda and Taliban, conspiring to kill civilians and commit terrorism, attempted murder of U.S. and allied soldiers in combat.

2. PHILIPPINES ABU SAYYAF attempts to stow 30,000 non-electric blasting caps, detonating cord a mile long and 2.4 miles of timing fuse aboard passenger ship. Bomb-sniffing dog exposes explosives. Ferry Blast 26 Feb 04 kills more than 100; 500-mile strait between Malaysia and Indonesia is major artery between Middle East and Asia. www.stratfor.info.

3. COLOMBIA AQUITTED: Three Irishmen accused of membership in IRA terrorist group and of training Colombian insurgents are acquitted. Intelligence sources in Ireland insist major IRA training ops in Colombia had "transformed FARC from a peasant army into a very sophisticated unit" *Telegraph*.

4. UNITED KINGDOM TAKING A GAMBLE: Potential 9-11 operative, British Pakistan Muslim Niaz Khan who trained to be hijacker for bin Laden and was in the United States to join 9-11 attackers lost his money in Atlantic City gambling casinos then turned himself in and confessed in April, 2000. INFORMANT Khan warned FBI of planned 9-11 attacks, and that pilots would take over a plane and fly to Afghanistan or blow up the plane. Former FBI agent claims agency believed Khan but were ordered to return him to London. FBI denies allegations. A 10-AIRPLANE attack had been prepared for execution on 9-11, intelligence reports say.

5. RUSSIA SAUDI PRINCES funnel tens of millions of dollars to encourage breakaway Islamic Republic of Chechnya. SAUDI WAHABIS largest group in Arab insurgent units in Chechnya. LEADER Abu Walid directed attacks, including 1999 bombings in Russia.

6. LIBYA ASSASSINATION OF SAUDI crown prince plotted last year. U.S. Muslim leader in jail in Virginia, reveals plot by Libya's Gaddafi.

7. ISRAEL SEARCHER, UNMANNED air vehicle detected bombs placed in alleyways and streets in Rafah. An Apache AH-64A attack helicopter fired missile to destroy bombs.

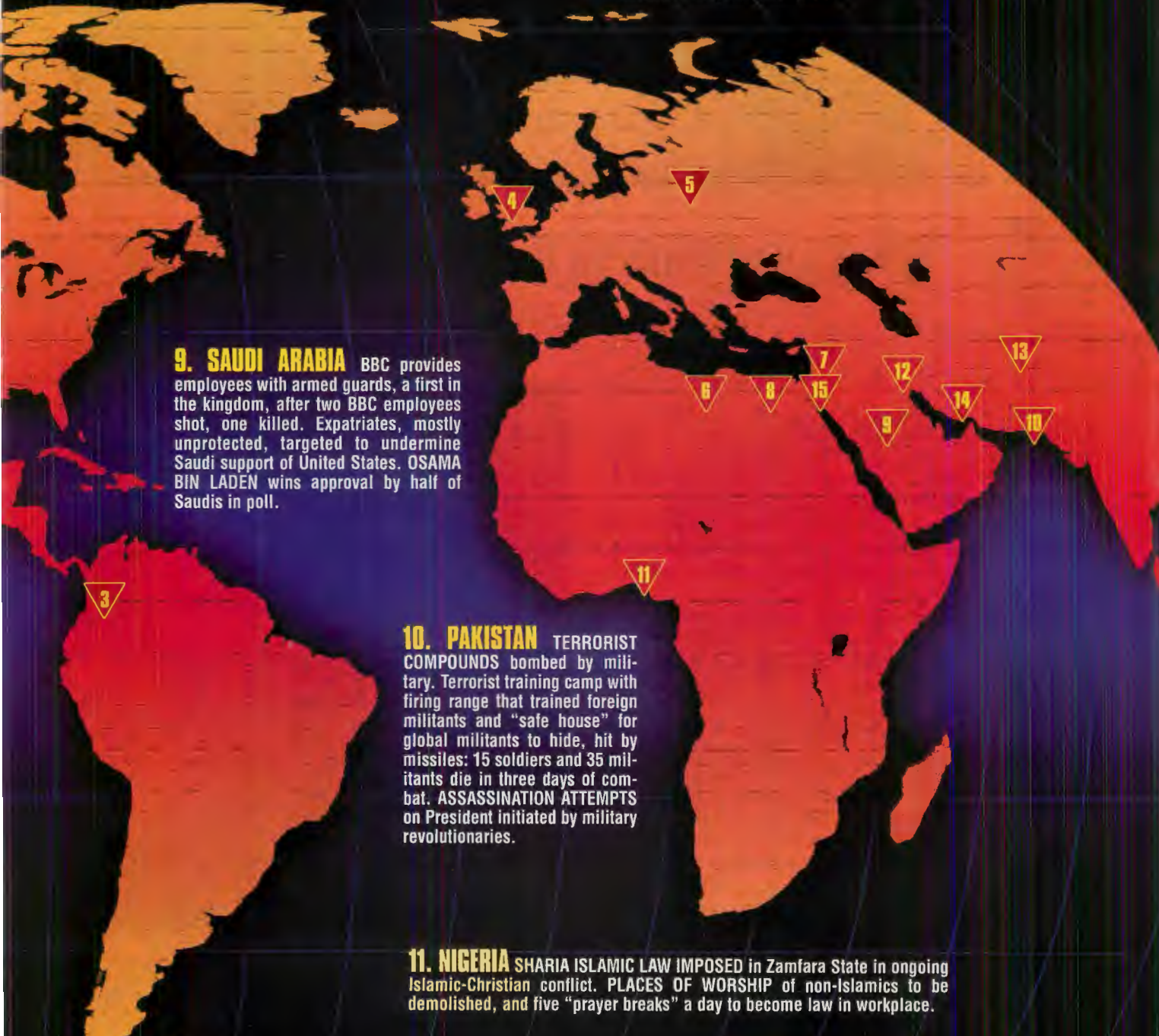
8. EGYPT WORLD MUSLIM SCHOLAR CONFERENCE calls for incorporation of Sharia Islamic Law into International Law. "Islam, is best of international systems that could achieve peace," according to these Islamic International law scholars.

12. IRAQ BAATH PARTY Sunni terrorist tactics escalate in struggle to restore Baathists to power. Two mid-level government officials, deputy foreign minister and senior official in Ministry of Education, killed.

13. AFGHANISTAN Al Qaeda gives training in global locations, disbursing after invasion of Afghanistan. Intelligence finds parallels between Islamic terrorists in Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

14. IRAN "WORLD ISLAMIC MARTYRS AND FIGHTERS" STAFF HEADQUARTERS, suicide terrorist training center, established. Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps plans strategy to support Islamic insurgencies worldwide. NUCLEAR BOMB developed, say Russian officials.

15. JORDAN Al Qaeda operative Abu-Musab al Zargawi admits plan to demolish Jordanian General Intelligence Building, denies chemical weapon attack plot.



9. SAUDI ARABIA BBC provides employees with armed guards, a first in the kingdom, after two BBC employees shot, one killed. Expatriates, mostly unprotected, targeted to undermine Saudi support of United States. OSAMA BIN LADEN wins approval by half of Saudis in poll.

10. PAKISTAN TERRORIST COMPOUNDS bombed by military. Terrorist training camp with firing range that trained foreign militants and "safe house" for global militants to hide, hit by missiles: 15 soldiers and 35 militants die in three days of combat. ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS on President initiated by military revolutionaries.

11. NIGERIA SHARIA ISLAMIC LAW IMPOSED in Zamfara State in ongoing Islamic-Christian conflict. PLACES OF WORSHIP of non-Islamics to be demolished, and five "prayer breaks" a day to become law in workplace.



REUTERS/Ceerwan Aziz

Tracks or Treads on the Mean Streets of Iraq?

BY JOHN HIGGS

MARCH 2nd 2004, BAGHDAD. A U.S. soldier was killed and another wounded when Islamist terrorists attacked a convoy and threw an incendiary device into their armored M1114 High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV— pronounced “Humvee”).

March 25th 2004, Fallujah. A Humvee was burned and destroyed by a rioting mob after a shootout between Islamist terrorists and a U.S. Army convoy.

March 28th 2004, Mosul. Islamist terrorists fired two Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPG) at a U.S. Army Stryker armored vehicle as it patrolled a side street. Despite the Stryker's additional anti-RPG slat-armor, one RPG ignited the external 5-gallon fuel cans. The resulting fire and ammunition cook-off destroyed the vehicle, without injury to the occupants.

March 31st 2004, North of Fallujah. An armored Humvee was up-ended by a powerful explosion, killing the five U.S. soldiers inside.

Is the Army's newest armored vehicle — STRYKER — sufficiently well protected for duty in the dangerous neighborhoods of Iraq's cities? Or should U.S. troops be riding in Vietnam-era Armored Personnel Carriers (APC)? Our troops are being killed and wounded as they patrol the streets of Baghdad, Mosul, and Fallujah, in soft-skinned unar-



EPAINABEL/MOUNZER

(top) Unarmored Humvees like this one are easy pickings for any terrorist with a Molotov cocktail and an AK47. Note the absence of doors on the vehicle. (above) Islamist terrorist with RPG searches for a target at the entrance to Fallujah

mored or under-armored Humvees, trucks, and up-armored M1114 Humvees.

Terrorists in Iraq have adopted the tactic of throwing grenades through the windows of cars, SUVs and Humvees to kill the occupants before dousing them with fuel and setting them on fire. In an attempt to mitigate such a serious problem, the Army is beginning to up-armor Humvees, and medium and heavy trucks, by bolting or welding on armor plate and bullet resistant glass kits, at costs of up to \$150,000 per vehicle (The Humvee itself costs around \$62,000).

But the program will not be complete until 2005 at the earliest. In the spring of 2004, another part of the Army's solution was to deploy to Iraq the first of six Stryker Brigade Combat Teams (SBCT). The Stryker, a version of the General Motors Canada manufactured LAV III 8x8 Light Armored Vehicle (LAV) is an eight-wheeled armored vehicle designed to carry nine troopers in addition to a crew of two.

It certainly sounds like an improvement over the four-wheeled Humvee, so why is it mired in controversy, and why do the Stryker's opponents — who range from Vietnam vets to some members of Congress — champion the forty-something-year-old M113 "Gavin" APC instead? First, we have to understand the Army's plan to revamp our forces to

and their troops and support infrastructure rapidly by air to almost any location in the world. This requires a fleet of U.S. Air Force C-130 tactical airlift aircraft. It also requires fighting vehicles that are armored heavily enough to survive on the battlefields of the world, be it jungle, desert, temperate forests, or urban settings, and that the vehicle must be able to roll into combat directly from the aircraft.

This last requirement means that the vehicle has to fit into a C-130 without having to be partially disassembled.

Back to Iraq. Who is our enemy and how do they fight? In places like Fallujah, our enemy seems to be largely a mix of Iraqi and non-Iraqi, anti-coalition Islamist militants, former regime holdouts, and common criminals. Followers of Shiite Muslim Cleric Muqtada al-Sadr have attacked occupying troops in Baghdad and Najaf. Other enemies include politically motivated insurgents from countries like Syria and Iran.

As Mao said: "A terrorist is a fish in a sea of humanity." In Iraq, Islamist terrorists organize crowds of supporters to surround an army or civilian vehicle, and then attack it with grenades or incendiary devices, sometimes turning it over. The ubiquitous RPG-7 is often used to fire on Army and coalition patrols as they drive through narrow streets and similar choke points.



U.S. Army

Lead elements of Stryker Brigade deploy in the desert. The eight-wheeled vehicles have been criticized as too heavy to deploy by air, and prone to sinking into soft sand and mud.



AFP PHOTO/KARIM SAHIB

A U.S. Military trailer burns on the road to Baghdad as an armored M113 speeds by. M113A3 model has external fuel tanks to better protect passengers from fire.

fight a three-dimensional war instead of the traditional two-dimensional format.

Shock and Maneuver

This requires rapid aerial deployment of mechanized armor to support ground troops. This Rapid Deployment concept of combining Infantry, Aviation, and Armor for shock and maneuver originated in Russia before WWII and was later championed by US General James M. Gavin.

Jump forward thirty-four years and we come to [then] U.S. Army Chief of Staff (CSA) General Eric K. Shinseki's 1999 vision: "The Army will develop the capability to put combat forces in Brigade Combat Teams anywhere in the world ninety-six hours after liftoff for both stability and support operations, and for warfighting. We will build that capability into a momentum that generates a warfighting Division on the ground in 120 hours and five Divisions in thirty days."

For the Shinseki Initiative to become a reality the Army must be able to transport a large number of armored vehicles

Since it first appeared in 1962, the Soviet designed hand held RPG-7V (*Ruchnoi Protivotankovoy Granatomyot*) Rocket-propelled Anti-Tank Grenade Launcher has appeared in almost every war zone in the world from Viet Nam in the 1960's, to Afghanistan in the 1980's, to Iraq in 2004. The launcher is simplicity itself, comprising a tube with forward mounted pistol grip and trigger assembly, second handgrip, and a stadiametric optical sight.

The rocket or booster motor section of the Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) fits inside the launcher tube while the warhead protrudes from the muzzle of the weapon. This feature allows warheads with various diameters greater than the bore size of the launcher to be used.

To load and fire the RPG typically takes a two-man team comprising the operator and his Assistant Gunner (AG). After firing, the team will quickly relocate to another firing position before the heavy cloud of smoke from the launch gives away their position. Teams who fail to shoot 'n scoot often don't live long enough to regret it. The RPG is simple

enough for almost anyone to use, and for its size and portability packs a huge wallop. And thanks to Saddam there are lots of them in Iraq.

The "Gavin"

Unofficially known as the "Gavin" after WWII General James M. Gavin, a longtime proponent of Airborne Warfare, the M113 Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) is a tracked vehicle designed in the late '50s to carry troops and supplies cross-country over rough terrain, along highways at higher speeds, and on amphibious operations in lakes and rivers. The latest version of the M113 Family Of Vehicles (FOV) is the A3, equipped with the RISE (Reliability Improvements for Selected Equipment) package.

This features an improved drive train with 275 HP turbocharged Detroit Diesel 6V53T, upgraded electrics, new power brakes, and conventional steering controls which allow the vehicle to turn in its own length by making one track turn forward while the other track turns in reverse (neutral steer).

The M113A3's fuel tanks have been relocated externally to the rear of the vehicle giving an additional sixteen cubic feet of space inside while also reducing the risk of fire in the crew compartment. Composite Spall suppression liners for additional crew protection are fitted inside the lightweight aircraft aluminum armored hull.

An additional (14.5mm thick) bolt-on armor kit is available.

RPG-7V Hand Held Anti-Tank Grenade Launcher	
Manufactured in:	Russia, China, Iran, Iraq, etc.
Bore diameter:	40mm
Weight:	19.6 LBS
Warhead diameter:	Various, 73 – 93mm
Warhead Fuze:	Electric
Armor Penetration:	260 – 500mm depending on type of warhead
Max Effective Range:	300 meters
Muzzle Velocity:	110 - 140mps

This is not your father's M113. The M113 cannot be driven if it breaks a track. Emerging Band Track technology would replace the segmented metal tracks with a continuous steel reinforced rubber band — think of it as a single steel belted radial tire stretched over the sprockets.

The Band track is only 50% the weight of a traditional steel segmented track, which translates to better acceleration and braking, lasts about 4000 miles, reduces noise and vibration, and creates less wear and tear on roads. There is little or no maintenance, although changing the band in the field takes longer than the standard track.

One drawback to rubber, however, is that it burns just like tires. The Gavin's original manufacturer, United Defense Corp (formally United Defense Limited Partnership), has prototypes of modernized hybrid (electro-mechanical) M113A4 Gavins that are even more capable than the A3.

The current Gavin is small and light enough to be transported in a Hercules C-130 transport aircraft; it is also amphibious, and can be air-dropped onto the battlefield. The Army's Modernization Plan requires computerized communications and data transfer systems to enable battle command on the move. The current M113A3 digitization program will apply installation kits for hardware and software into the A3's by 2006 to bring them in line with other vehicles.

There are approximately 13,000 Gavins in the Army's


STRYKER



U.S. Army

Manufacturer:	General Dynamics Land Systems - Canada.
Weight:	38,000 lbs.
Length:	276 inches.
Width:	108 inches.
Height:	102 inches.
Power train:	Eight wheels (ground pressure more than 20psi).
Speed:	62 mph.
Range:	over 300 miles on highway.
Amphibious:	No.
Airdrop by C-130:	No.
Personnel capacity:	9 infantry personnel plus driver and commander.
Armor:	Steel hull .5 inch thick. Additional appliqué ceramic/composite 14.5mm thick panels are available for protection against mortar and artillery fragments and machine gun rounds.
Armament:	Additional Slat armor for protection against RPG. Mk 19 40 mm grenade launcher, .50 cal Browning machine gun, 7.62mm machine gun, 4 smoke grenade launchers.
Number in fleet:	300.
Cost:	approx \$3.3million each.

"GAVIN" M113 SERIES Armored Personnel Carrier



AFP PHOTO/Nicolas ASFOURI

Manufacturer:	Anniston Army Depot (Anniston, AL); United Defense, L.P. (Anniston, AL).
Weight:	27,000LBS (31,000LBS with external armor kit).
Length:	192 inches.
Width:	106 inches.
Height:	87 inches.
Power train:	tracks Steel single pin, detachable rubber pad 15 inches wide (ground pressure 8.6 psi).
Speed:	M113, M113A1, M113A2: 37 mph, M113A3: 41 mph (Swimming: 3.6mph).
Range:	300 miles.
Amphibious:	Yes.
Airdrop by C-130:	Yes.
Personnel capacity:	11 infantry plus driver and commander.
Armor:	Hull, 5083 aircraft aluminum, 1.5 inches thick, Additional Slat armor for protection against RPG.
Armament:	Primary: .50 cal Browning machine gun with 2000 rounds.
Secondary:	7.62mm machine gun.
Number in fleet:	Approximately 13,000.
Cost:	Conversion of existing A2 to A3 \$400,000.

**COMPARISON OF THE NEW STRYKER LIGHT ARMORED VEHICLE
WITH EXISTING M113 ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER**
DESIGN

STRYKER: Light Armored Vehicle, eight wheels.
M113: Armored Personnel Carrier, caterpillar tracks.

PERFORMANCE

STRYKER: Speed 62mph, range 300 miles(highway)
M113A3: Speed 41mph, M113A4 Speed 50mph, range 300 miles

ARMOR

STRYKER: .5 inch Steel. Additional appliqué ceramic/composite 14.5mm thick panels available for protection against mortar/artillery fragments, machine gun rounds. Slat armor cage available as protection against RPG rounds.
M113: 1.5 inch Aluminum. Latest model(A3) Composite Spall suppression liners for additional crew protection fitted inside aluminum armored hull. Additional bolt-on armor kit (14.5mm thickness) available. Slat armor cage available as protection against RPG rounds.

ARMAMENT

STRYKER: Mk 19 40 mm grenade launcher, .50 cal machine gun, 7.62mm machine gun
M113: .50 cal machine gun, 7.62mm machine gun

PERSONNEL CAPACITY

STRYKER: 9 infantry plus 2 crew
M113: 11 infantry plus 2 crew

AIR DROP BY C-130 AIRCRAFT

STRYKER: NO (Weight:38,000LBS)
M113: YES (Weight:27,000LBS)

AMPHIBIOUS

STRYKER: NO
M113: YES

INVENTORY

STRYKER: 300+
M113: 13,000

COST

STRYKER: \$3.3Mil
M113: upgrade \$400,000

Speed and stealth are two of the Stryker's strengths. But it can't be air dropped, or driven off a C-130 ready to fight.



U.S. Army

The U.S. Army defines the Stryker's mission as: "[To] fulfill an immediate requirement in the Army's current transformation process to equip a strategically deployable (C-17/C-5) and operationally deployable (C-130) brigade capable of rapid movement anywhere on the globe in a combat ready configuration. The armored wheeled vehicle is designed to enable the Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) to maneuver more easily in close and urban terrain while providing protection in open terrain."

Modeled after the Light Armored Vehicle-3 (LAV), the Stryker comes in two main variants: Infantry Carrier Vehicle (ICV) and Mobile Gun System (MGS). All vehicles are equipped with a central tire inflation system. The ICV has a Kongsberg Remote Weapon Station with four M6 smoke grenade launchers and a universal soft mount cradle for either a MK240 7.62mm belt-fed machine gun, .50 caliber Browning M2 heavy machine gun, or a MK19 40mm Grenade Launcher.

A digital communications system — the FBCB2 (Force XXI Battle Command Brigade and Below) allows vehicle commanders to communicate with each other and with the Battalion using text messaging and a video map system where commanders can mark enemy positions on the map for the other commanders to see. This "tactical internet" utilizes a Raytheon AN/TSQ-158 Enhanced Position Location Reporting System (EPLRS).

The commander can also access seven M45 periscopes and a combination video camera and thermal imaging display screen. The driver has access to a Raytheon AN/VAS-5 Driver's Vision Enhancer (DVE) and three M17 periscopes. In Iraq the Strykers are being fitted with add-on slat-armor for protection against RPG attack.

The slats are designed to detonate an incoming warhead before it contacts the vehicle's half-inch thick steel hull. But there is a limit to how much weight (armor) can be added to a wheeled vehicle before it begins to sink into soft terrain such as sand or mud. At 38,000LBS the

Stryker is 11,000LBS heavier than the M113A3. This is due in part to the basic design of the armored vehicle, which requires wheels, axles, suspension, and a transmission.

The hull is fabricated from steel instead of aircraft aluminum — as used in the M113 — and this also adds to the weight. Space must be provided for the front wheels to turn in order to steer, and for all the wheels to travel up and down on the independent suspension. This prevents the use of armored skirts to protect the wheels from incoming ordnance, which means that the areas of the hull behind the wheels are vulnerable.

Oddly enough, while the South Africans fielded various armored vehicles in the '70s and '80s such as the Casspir and Wolf, both of which had a v-shaped armored hull to deflect the blast from driving over a land mine, the floor of the Stryker's hull is flat. Critics charge that the Stryker's additional weight

Operational Inventory, of which about 3-4000 are A3s. The M113 is much cheaper than the Stryker, which means the Army can put more of them in country quickly. Some strategists advocate more technologically complex vehicles like the Stryker, with advanced electronic communications packages even if the high cost dictates that fewer of these vehicles will be available to go into battle.

But in the Normandy campaign of WWII, the technically superior German Panzer V Panther and Tiger tanks were overwhelmed by the large numbers of less capable U.S. Sherman tanks. On the other hand, Operation Desert Storm demonstrated how well a technically superior tank, the M1 Abrams, could do against massed groups of Iraqi T62 and T72 tanks.

Continued on page 78

SOF'S ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI

THE WINNERS ARE IN!

FIRST PRIZE OVERALL



"Dead Soldier," by Ranger Mike McDonald

Mike wins this
Special Operations Forces .308 Carbine, by ArmaLite, Inc. (www.armalite.com)



FREEDOM PHOTO CONTEST

For the next few issues, *SOF* will take pride in publishing the winning entries of the Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom Photo Contest. We would like sincerely to thank the sponsors of this contest, who have demonstrated their generous and patriotic support for our men and women in uniform and in

harm's way, by donating prizes of "the right stuff" as a tangible example of our national appreciation. This good-as-it-gets gear is a suitable "Thank You" to our troops who have given the very best of themselves. Prizes awarded will be showcased with winning entries, as a "thank you" to our generous sponsors.

SECOND PRIZE OVERALL



**"Fallen Hero,"
by SSG Brian Sipp**

Brian wins this
Tactical Custom II .45 Pistol,
by Kimber (www.kimberamerica.com)



The patient team of operators picked their way slowly through the thick underbrush, careful not to let their camouflage smocks catch on the thorny, dried scrub. The trek from the starting-off point, toward the observation post, had been a good three-hour crawl, across some very inhospitable terrain. Speed, however, wasn't a factor this afternoon. Stealth was.

The operators' only concern was "Duke," the three-year-old Belgian Malinois, whose growls could not be muzzled even by the leather harness that sheathed his lethal jaws. The five men were equipped as if on a combat assignment deep behind enemy lines. Their faces were painted with vertical stripes of green, brown and black. They carried enough ammunition for their M4 carbines to hold off a battalion of infantrymen, and if they were spotted by the enemy and challenged, they were prepared to respond with devastating firepower.

The operators, however, members of the Israel National Police Border Guards' newest counterterrorist unit, were not crossing a frontier to execute a mission deep behind foreign lines. The five-man team was tasked with support this balmy August afternoon — maintaining visual contact on the targeted location half a kilometer down the road, and ensuring that the terrorist-cell commander targeted would have no

Israelis would require guile, deceit and well-armed audacity. The five-man team in camouflage was providing eyes-on-target support for the operation's strike force, a team of undercover operators who spoke Arabic like a native and who carried Jericho 941 automatics and Mini-Uzi submachine guns under clothing designed to make them look like Arab men and even women. The undercover team would enter Taibeh in unmarked vehicles and would enter the butcher shop innocently enough in search of chicken wings for a barbecue. Once the operators identified the subject as the man wanted by the Shin Bet, they would pull out their weapons, snatch the subject, and toss him into an awaiting vehicle to speed out of the area for the journey back to a holding cell at the unit's home base, and a subsequent Shin Bet interrogation.

To back up the operation, nearly two-dozen heavily armed Border Guard policemen, wearing body armor and specially trained for lightning-fast responses, deployed to a staging area just outside of town, ready to move in the moment gunfire was heard. Speed, for the response force, would be crucial. They moved in specially modified, bullet-resistant jeeps: The operators on the ground, in camouflage and undercover, did not. In case a firefight erupted, seconds would become minutes. Minutes, especially for a wounded officer, could be eternal.

Supervising the entire mission, from inside an unmarked

DOGS OF WAR

PART 1

Inside the Israel National Police Border Guards' Spearhead Counter-Terrorist Company

possible route of escape.

The target was a 23-year-old man wanted by the Shin Bet, Israel's domestic counter-terrorist and counterintelligence agency, on a terrorist warrant. An Israeli citizen, the wanted man was a mid-level operations officer in Hamas and had been responsible for facilitating several terrorist attacks in the region. The man worked in a butcher shop during the day, and facilitated the orders of the Hamas hierarchy by night. The wanted man was a top priority, but snaring him would be no easy matter. He lived — and operated — in Taibeh, an Arab city of 30,000 inside Israel.

Taibeh was not safe ground for police vehicles. The town was controlled by criminal gangs — often working alongside Palestinian terrorist factions — who were able to smuggle guns easily across the hills from Arafat-controlled territory in the town of Tulkarem. The last time Israeli counterterrorist forces had any business there, it took the police national hostage-rescue force and the IDF's elite undercover unit an entire day to battle it out with Hamas gunmen in a furious firefight to the end.

A Surgical Extraction

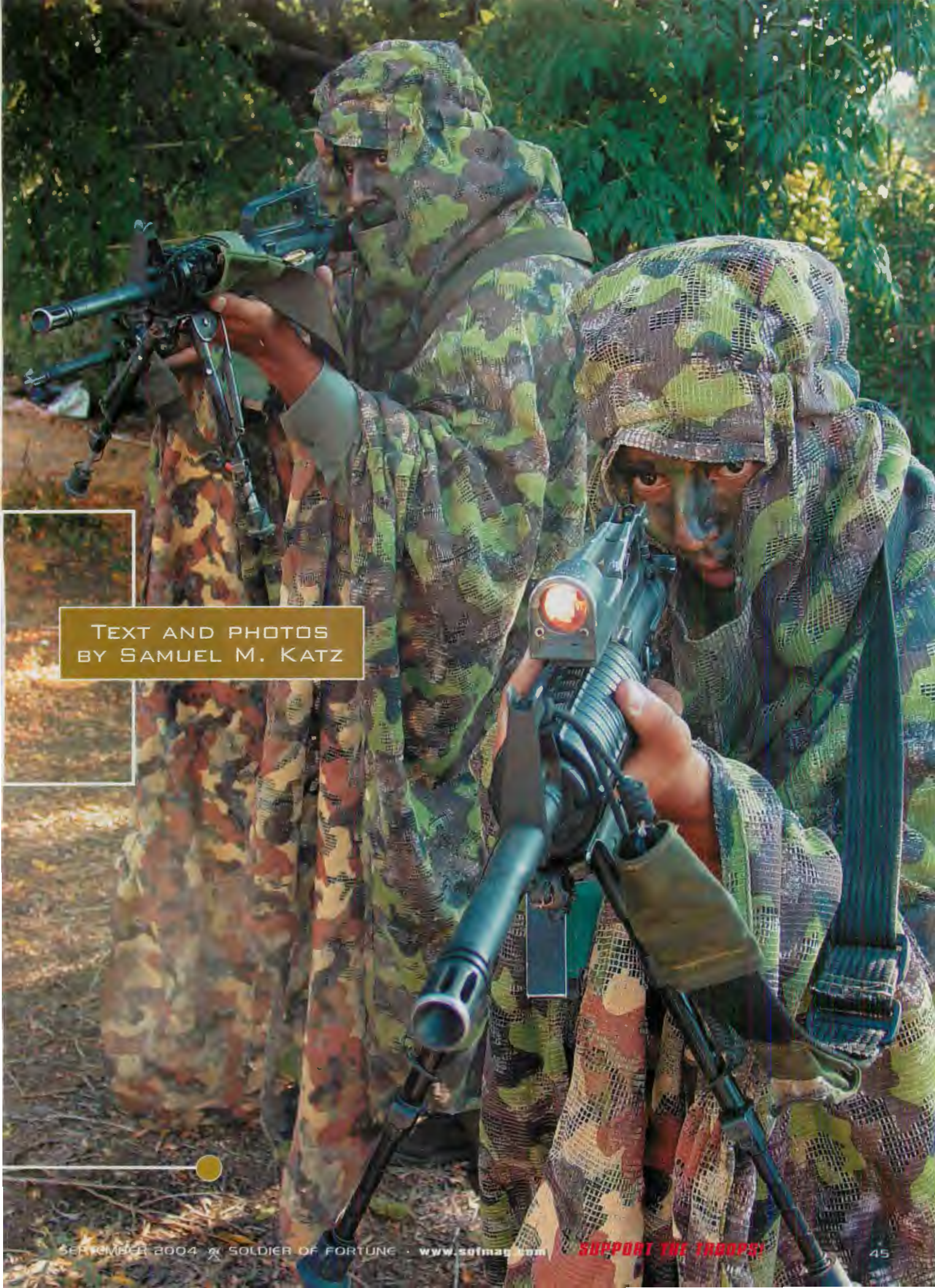
To snare the wanted man in a place like Taibeh, the

Toyota pickup, was the unit's commander, Superintendent Kilo, a man who has been battling terrorists for more than a decade and who knew the complex dangers involved in undercover snatches. In Gaza, years ago in the close-quarter hell that was the war against Hamas inside alleyways and crowded apartment blocks, Kilo had seen how even the best plans of veteran counterterrorist commanders can erupt, like a fragmentation grenade with its pin pulled, and explode into indescribable — and uncontrollable — destruction.

Kilo, a solid block of exhaustion at 5'8" with a graying beard and tired eyes, was known in the ranks of the Border Guard as a visionary planner. He could dissect an operational challenge and form it into a battle plan utilizing the most innovative — and audacious — thinking. But the safety of the men in his command came first in his planning.

Watching the operation unfold from behind tinted win-

In camouflaged overwatch positions, long-range reconnaissance operators prepare to move in on a targeted individual near Israel's lines opposite the Palestinian city of Tulkarem. Note M4 carbines with Harris bipods, rifle on right with ACOG reflex sight.



TEXT AND PHOTOS
BY SAMUEL M. KATZ

dows, monitoring a dozen radio frequencies at once, was the definition of angst-ridden command and control. Kilo disseminated orders in coded cop-speak, moving human pieces on a dangerous chessboard, coordinating the snatch that he hoped would end without a shot being fired. "Any time that an operation can be executed and its objectives secured without a trigger being pulled can be considered nothing less than total victory," Kilo would comment — the words of a man who had been in too many firefights to remember. But Kilo knew all too well that in an operation like this, a million-and-one things could go wrong. Mistakes cost lives.

The Snatch

Kilo watched the butcher shop as if his eyes were glued to the doorway leading into the sparsely lit store promising the best prices in town. He noticed the beat up sedan carrying half of his undercover team circling around the block, and he saw the other undercover policemen, masquerading as motorists looking under the hood of their jalopy, in front of the butcher shop. Kilo watched and waited anxiously, until the street around the shop was clear of pedestrians and the last housewife bargaining with the wanted man was out of the shop. "Target is clear," Kilo spoke softly into his

Motorola radio. His camouflage reconnaissance force, monitoring much of the target area in search of any terrorist activity, responded with "Observers in place, target is clear." The force of uniformed officers at the entrance to the town, body armor fastened and weapons at the ready, also responded that they were ready. Finally, the undercover snatch team, circling the block, turned the corner to pull up just in front of the butcher shop. "Snatch team in place," the assault force commander said in Arabic into a talk-piece hidden on his shirt collar, "we're good to go." Looking at his watch, Kilo grabbed his M4 and ordered his men inside. The reconnaissance element moved into assault position just in case the undercover force needed backup; Duke, muzzle now off, was poised just in case the targeted individual ran. The cover force in their jeeps now ploughed into town at full throttle, ready to pull the entire assault force out of harm's way if need be.

The operation was the textbook definition of coordination, training, and luck. Two undercover operators entered the butcher shop without a care in the world, telling the suspect that they needed ten kilograms of chicken wings for a barbecue they were throwing for a friend's bachelor party. The suspect, chuckled at how his customers were joking about, and turned his back to remove the wings from the freezer. Before he could react, he found himself subdued by four men in plain clothes; the barrel of a Jericho 941 was jammed deep into his neck. As he was carried out of the store, people on the street began cursing at the operators,



A K-9 squad poses by one of unit's ATVs — an innocent-looking yet highly successful pursuit tool when chasing a terrorist suspect over terrain not suited for foot or vehicular pursuits.

The Spearhead Company's intelligence officer assists a dog handler in applying camouflage paint. The art of being invisible in paths that the terrorists use frequently is a major part of the unit's ability to interdict infiltrating suicide bombers. Working dog "Duke" patiently waits for mission to begin.





During a tactical exercise, Spearhead Company operators dressed as Palestinians in the West Bank stand in between targets, before a strike force of undercover policemen move in to attempt a snatch. Confusing? So is their theater of operations.



Spearhead Company operators conduct a vehicle stop along the road between Tira and Taibeh, searching Arab motorists who might be ferrying a West Bank resident. The majority of suicide bombers striking east of the seam line have been driven to their targets by residents of the triangle — who received hefty fees for their transport services.

throwing garbage at them and dialing numbers of their cellular phones.

Yet before the snatch could turn ugly, the reconnaissance force came down from their perch with weapons at the ready; Duke, barking wildly, was more than enough to contain the assembled crowd of angry residents and curious onlookers. Border Guard jeeps lined the city streets so that the undercover force and the reconnaissance operators could extricate themselves without incident. By the time word of the snatch became the main topic of conversation in Taibeh, the suspect was inside a secure room at the Border Guards' base, answering questions to a group of very inquisitive Shin Bet agents.

When the al-Aqsa Intifadah began on 28 September 2000, Arafat, Fatah, and both Hamas and the Islamic Jihad were determined to achieve two tactical objectives — to render Jerusalem as an unlivable city by subjecting its citizens to incessant suicide bombing attacks; and, to turn Israel's coastal population center, from Haifa in the north to Tel Aviv in the south, into battlefields. Nearly half of Israel's population lived along the coast — the majority living in and around Tel Aviv. Yet for all the glamour, excitement, and economic vitality that Tel Aviv and its periphery of suburbs and smaller towns provided to the State of Israel, one could drive from the heart of Tel Aviv to the heart of Qilqilya, one of the West Bank's largest cities, in less than 20 minutes. All that separated the Palestinian Authority and Israel's primary population centers

Continued on page 72

THE MONOLITHIC RAIL PLATFORM

*Finally, a Quick-Change
Barrel System for the M16!*

TEXT AND PHOTOS BY
GARY PAUL JOHNSTON



(above) Boasting a one-piece receiver/forend, the Lewis Machine & Tool Carbine/CQB and Rifle Monolithic Rail Platforms also use the first successful quick-change barrel system for the M16. Both the Carbine (top) and full-length MRP's are seen here with a spare 14.5" barrel. (left) On full-automatic, the Carbine/CQB MRP fired at the rate of about 750 rounds per minute. Both units functioned perfectly with a variety of .223 caliber ammunition.



They said it couldn't be done — even I said it couldn't be done. When asked for my opinion a few years ago during the USSOCOM's search for a quick-change barrel system for the M4 Carbine, my answer was that the M16 already has a quick-change barrel capability.

To change the barrel on any M16 or AR-15, simply push out both receiver pins, remove the upper receiver group and replace it with one having a new barrel, or a different barrel configuration. This component comes pre-headspaced and can be already sighted in. SOCOM decided to do just that, not because I said so, but because others also shared that view.

Changing the upper receiver group on the M16 is as valid today as it has always been, and the practice is in wide use throughout the world. My main point in refuting the possibility of quickly changing the barrel of the M16 was that the configuration of the M16's aluminum upper receiver and gas tube arrangement simply didn't lend itself to a quick-change system, but I was thinking inside the box.

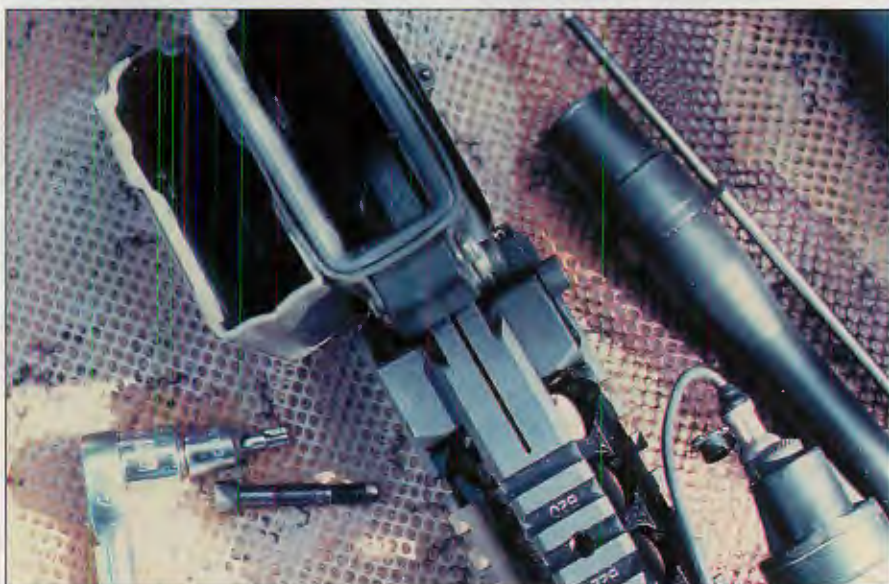
Mr. Carl Lewis, owner of Lewis Machine & Tool (LMT), rarely thinks inside the box, and conceived of a method for a quick-change M16 barrel several years ago. After extensive experimentation and development, LMT has released the system, but it doesn't stop there, not by a long shot.

Called the Monolithic Rail Platform (MRP), LMT's new system appears far more conventional than it is. Beginning life as a 2'X4"X4" 7075 aluminum alloy forging, the 8 pound billet is placed in a CNC mill where 95 percent of it is machined away. What remains is a one-piece upper receiver with an integral forend. On this integral forend are four M1913 rails, the top one running uninterrupted from the rear of the upper receiver to the front of the forend. The other three rails are located on both sides and the bottom of the forend. Hence the term, Monolithic Rail Platform.

In order to accommodate a variety of mission-specific needs, two forend lengths are offered. One is a longer rifle version and another intended for use with carbine or CQB length barrels, all of which can be removed and replaced in



The secret of the MRP's quick-change barrel system is the two TORX bolts seen forward of the dust cover along with a TORX head wrench.



The bottom of the MRP receiver is slotted to provide a tightening capability for the barrel extension.



about two minutes. However, the differences in forend lengths don't necessarily require the barrels intended to be used with them. This is because the barrels are essentially independent of the forend and are totally free floating. For example, the 18" rifle barrel can easily be used in the short "carbine" MRP, but will protrude more. The same is true with the 14.5" barrel being used in the longer MRP, and even the 10" CQB barrel could be installed in the longer MRP if necessary.

Four barrel-lengths are currently offered for the MRP including 10", 14.5", 16" and 18". While the three shorter barrels use the short gas tube, the 18" uses a gas block positioned mid-length on the barrel, or about 2" farther forward of the short gas block, and about 2" to the rear of the standard gas block on the 20" barrel M16 rifle.

The term gas block is especially appropriate for the MRP, as it is only a gas block and not a front sight base as on the M16/AR-15 rifles. The MRP's gas block also differs in that it uses a perfectly straight gas tube rather than the curved one of the M16, and so the front end rides higher in the gas block. Forward of the barrel extension is a rigid positioner that holds the gas tube in line with its portal in the upper receiver, during installation. As for open sights, they are mounted atop the rail, as are any variety or combination of optical sights.

Mil-Spec

Did I forget to mention accessories? Having four M1913 Mil-Spec rails offers an unlimited platform on which to mount optics, sights, lights and more. Measuring the MRP's rails revealed that they were right on the money, and mounting A.R.M.S. ThrowLevers on the rails confirmed it. If a rail isn't MilStd M1913, an A.R.M.S. ThrowLever will either not clamp, or will be too loose. This is because Mr. Richard Swan, of A.R.M.S. designed the rail standardized as the M1913 (sometimes erroneously

Each MRP barrel comes with its own gas tube mounted. Shown here are the 18", 14.5" and 10" barrels and the two upper receiver MRP's tested.

referred to as the "Picatinny" rail).

Using A.R.M.S. ThrowLever Rings, I not only mounted the Leupold MR/T, but also the Leupold Close Quarter/Tactical (CQ/T) the Aimpoint Comp ML2, Eotech, Trijicon's Tri-Power and 4X ACOG, and the Meprolight Reflex Sight. I also mounted a SufrFire MD Tactical Weapon Mount using an A.R.M.S. ThrowLever Mount with a Falcon Industries vertical foregrip and a SureFire M900 Tactical Light, and I mounted a Harris Bipod with an A.R.M.S. ThrowLever Adapter.

More proof that the MRP rails are MilStd is that Dark Parts handguard panels from Excalibur Arms fit them perfectly. These unique panels were designed by David Luke, formerly a systems analyst with Knight's Mfg. Co. For a more slender forend where heat is not a problem,

wrench. At the front of the upper receiver above and forward of the front hinge the receiver is reinforced, and along the middle of the bottom it is slotted. Through the side of this reinforced section are two holes that accept two hardened Torx-head bolts. On the right side where the bolts enter are recesses for their heads and on the left side two steel nuts are recessed.

The front Torx-head bolt passes through both the upper receiver and a rounded notch in the bottom of the barrel extension, and the rear bolt passes through the receiver just beneath the barrel extension. With the barrel in place both bolts are tightened to 90 inch-pounds. Both bolts draw the slotted section of the receiver together for a few thousandths of an inch to rigidly tighten the barrel extension in the

should have a wrench set to break at 90 inch-pounds available by the time you read this. Operating much like the gas cap on your vehicle, this simple wrench will tighten only to 90 inch pounds and then ratchet, but will loosen the bolt even if it is tighter.

The quick-change barrel capability is, in my opinion, the MRP's best-kept secret and is of much greater value than the monolithic rail itself. Even more important is its ability to return to and retain zero. Removing and replacing the same barrel will duplicate the point of impact, and replacing one barrel with another of the same configuration will move point of impact no more than about 0.5". Changing to a barrel of different length can result in a slight change in elevation due to the difference in velocity.

Trigger Time

In addition to all of the above optics and accessories, the MRP's were tested with lower receiver groups fitted with the REDI-MAG from Boonie Packer Products and both the Magpul Ind. buttstock used by the USMC, and also the VLTOR ModStock with its spare battery tubes. The carbine version of the MRP was also used with Boonie Packer's excellent new two-Point Sling, the simplest tactical sling I've yet used.

Using high quality Match Grade .223 Remington caliber ammunition, both upper receiver groups produced accuracy of 1 MOA or better, with the 18" heavy barrel shooting the best groups. All accuracy tests were conducted using Leupold's new Mid-Range/Tactical (MR/T) 30mm scope. Identical to Leupold's TS-30A2 Sniper Scope made especially for the USSOCOM's Special Purpose Rifle (SPR) used in the Global War On Terrorism (GWOT), the MR/T is a 3-9X40mm scope with an illuminated mil-dot reticle. The only difference is that it is designated MR/T instead of TS-30A2. This scope was mounted in a set of A.R.M.S. 30mm ThrowLever Rings also standard on the SPR.

Changing between the 14.5" barrel and the 10" CQB barrel in the carbine MRP naturally produced some difference in elevation, but windage stayed inside of one inch. This repeatability can be summed up in two words - QUALITY CONTROL, two words that have come to be synonymous with Lewis Machine & Tool. This is the reason so many companies who have sud-

Continued on page 57



The full-length MRP (top) has the Leupold MR/T Scope and Harris Bipod mounted with A.R.M.S. mounts, and Dark Parts Handguard Panels. The Carbine MRP has the 10" barrel with a SureFire M900 Tactical Weapon Light, the new desert tan VLTOR ModStock, and Falcon ERGO Grip and Low Profile Handguards in the same color. Both magazines also use Magpul protectors.

Falcon Industries' Low Profile handguards fit just as well. What's more, heat is not a problem with the MRP, as the barrel remains totally free floating and touches no part of the forend.

Although LMT's open sights are in development as this is written, I borrowed a set of pre-production flip-up sights from ArmaLite and mounted them on the MRP Carbine upper receiver as can be seen in the accompanying photos.

Barrels In About Two Minutes

Although LMT's "MRP" is its namesake, the heart of system is its quick-change barrel. Utterly simple, this capability is also just about foolproof. All one needs is an inch-pound torque

wrench, and the front bolt locks the barrel from moving forward.

To remove/change the barrel, first put the safety ON, then remove the magazine, make sure the chamber is empty and lock the bolt to the rear. Now loosen the rear Torx-Head bolt and remove the front bolt from the receiver. Then simply pull the barrel from the receiver and forend and replace it with another. Although the barrel extension is a close fit in the loosened receiver, it and its gas tube can easily be slid into place. Now replace both bolts and tighten to 90 inch-pounds each and, presto, you've installed a new barrel in about two minutes.

Although I used a standard inch-pound adjustable torque wrench, LMT

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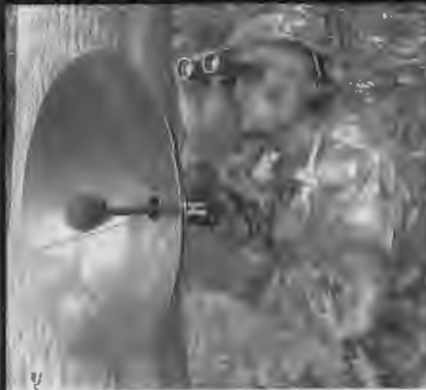
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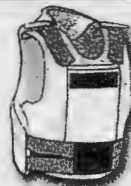
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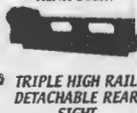
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Continued from page 51

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What about variations of the system? The MRP seen here is in full production and, while I can't comment on other possibilities at present, don't be surprised if you see different versions of the system offered in the future. In terms of caliber, as this is written, the MRP is only available in .223, but by the time you read this LMT should also be offering the system in 6.8mm Remington SPC, a caliber that is increasingly being requested by the military in the Global War On Terrorism (GWOT). There's a good argument to have a quick-change barrel system for the M16 and it also satisfies one of the requirements of the Special Operations Forces Combat Assault Rifle (SOF CAR, formerly SCAR) program.

Obviously LMT's MRP isn't for everyone, but for those who must have the capability the system provides, nothing can compare with it. For the

latest information on the MRP and all of LMT's superb products, contact Lewis Machine & Tool, Dept. SOE, 1305 West Eleventh St., Milan, IL 61264, 309-787-7151. ✕

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The U.S./Mexican Border Has Become:

A SIEVE OF DEATH

Illegals Face a Gauntlet of Doom: The Border Patrol Faces Dopers, Terrorists, and the Desperate Victims of Coyotes.

BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

The 2,100 mile southern border of the U.S., with its treacherous mountain ranges, canyons, rivers and deserts, has become an uncontrollable stretch of violence, death, rape and exploitation.

Over a decade ago, SOF rode with Border Patrol Agents in Arizona when the situation already seemed out of hand. One of those agents, now retired, recently contacted SOF with a disturbing and frustrated update, reflecting the deterioration of the Mexico-United States border.

"In my career, spanning three decades, many of my friends and partners were killed on duty, enforcing immigration laws, and are listed on our honor rolls. Their deaths, and devotion to duty, are beyond politicians' ability to understand, it seems, and are without meaning. This past year the Patrol has arrested a million illegals, with twelve to fourteen million in country, home free. Mexican military incursions, escorting narcotics, are commonplace. Rival alien smuggling organizations thrive in Arizona, and politicians pander, and grovel to Mexico's demands, in a time of war."

Vulture-like smugglers, drug gangs, entrepreneurs, and corrupt officials cash in on human smuggling into the United States, which has become a multi-billion dollar business.

Refugees from Mexico, and worldwide, come by foot, across blistering hot sand, and are then crammed into trucks and trailers. They wade through the New River, the most polluted river in the United States, to avoid immigration agents. They swim through raw

sewage, slaughterhouse remains, and pesticide runoff. They are stuffed in suitcases. Hundreds have died in the Rio Grande.

The more fortunate ones take the faster route, buying their own tickets in Mexico for around \$200. Others are flown in by coyotes, and trafficked throughout the United States. Mexicana, the Mexican state-owned airline, opened a direct flight several years ago from Oaxaca to Hermosillo, with a stop in Mexico City. With three flights a day, Mexicana station manager Jorge Carrillos estimates that half of 290 daily passengers are heading for the United States.

Three other airlines, originating in Vera Cruz and Chiapas, fly illegal immigrants (mojados) to the United States. Migrants tell of being assaulted, robbed or overcharged because they are thought to be carrying lots of money," says the *Arizona Daily Star*.

CNN reports that in the year 2000, during one of many illegal immigration crackdowns at Sky Harbor Airport in Phoenix, and at McCarran Airport in Las Vegas, within just a few hours, one hundred INS agents apprehended a hundred illegals being smuggled to Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas and the East Coast.

Unfortunate Pilgrims

The flood of humans includes many other than Mexican (OTM). Apprehensions of OTMs have increased 42 percent according to Border Patrol



via Newscom.com/Jane Woolldridge

spokesperson Rene' Noriega. Migrants come from El Salvador, Cuba, Haiti, the former Soviet Union, Asia, and the Middle East. Most illegal aliens pay their trafficker, from \$1,500, up to \$50,000 for their journeys.

A Border Patrol agent confirmed, to Warriors for the Truth, that nine Yemenis attempting to enter the United States after 9-11, "can't get a coyote to transport them, and they are offering



a car," says veteran Border Patrol official J. William Carter.

Illegal immigration busts have doubled this year in Arizona. Two thousand and thirty-eight are being apprehended daily. Yuma agents have captured more than 43,000 this year, a one-third increase over last year.

Witnesses express their outrage and disgust at the destruction left behind by the endless parade of illegal migrants.

Take a border town in Arizona, Whetstone, near the "epicenter of an invasion of contraband and humanity that is unrivaled throughout the western world. Trails are worn into the earth by tens of thousands of human travelers. Landowner fences are either cut by illegal migrants and their smugglers, or bent over and torn down completely.

"So heavy is the illegal smuggling traffic in some parts of Whetstone, Arizona 'suburbs' that local residents have constructed roadblocks made of scrub brush and branches. The smell in many areas is overwhelming, especially in the heat of the summer. The amount of refuse is astounding," says wnd.com.

Elsewhere, in the backcountry, "the foot traffic is so heavy it has the ambience of a garbage dump and smells like an outdoor privy. In places, the land is littered a foot deep with bottles, cans, disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, panties, clothes, backpacks, human feces, used toilet paper, pharmacy bottles and syringes," reports Warriors for the Truth.

Silent Invasion, Deadly Consequences

"This is a sad, continuing story, particularly in those states that border on Mexico, where we witness a steady, silent, pervasive invasion of the United States by an unarmed army carrying an assembly line of diseases into the heart of America," George Putnam reports in Newsmax.com. He cites "Immigration's Silent Invasion, Deadly Consequences", researched by a registered nurse and a former U.S. Army Medical Service Corps officer. The research presents a "frightening study of how the hordes" of illegals invading our nation have reintroduced tuberculosis, leprosy, smallpox and Chagas disease. Chagas, a parasite, kills 50,000 annually and has infected 18 million people in Latin America. It damages the heart and intestines and

may infect through blood transfusions.

"The most serious is multi-drug-resistant TB, spread through the air by an infected person. Each TB patient is said to infect ten to twenty others. More than 7,000 new cases of leprosy have been diagnosed in the U.S. in the past three years. The Queens, NY Health Department diagnosed eighty-one TB cases among illegals, and concluded that foreigners have an eight-fold higher incidence of TB, and that two-thirds of imported cases come from Mexico, the Philippines and Vietnam," reports [Newsmax](http://Newsmax.com).

"The Dying Season" began in the deserts in the spring of 2003, just as it does every spring, when eighteen Mexicans and Central Americans were found by Native Americans of the Tohono O'odham Nation on their reservation in Southern Arizona," their report concludes.

"The pilgrims begin their journeys, or return to the United States, after holidays in January, February and March, when the Border Patrol prepares for the biggest influx.

"They drown, they die of the desert heat, they die of hypothermia" Miguel Reyes, a protection officer for Mexico's foreign ministry in south Texas told Reuters.

"There is a belief that if you cross in the desert that the snakes will not cross the railroad tracks" Reyes said.

Six Mexican immigrants who believed that sleeping on railroad tracks would protect them from poisonous snakes were crushed by a freight train near Norias TX in 1998. Their mangled bodies, smashed with cans of beans and tortillas, were unidentifiable.

The tales are endless.

Thirteen immigrants nearly suffocated in a sweltering 140 degrees inside a boxcar in San Antonio TX before they could struggle out. The rotting bodies of seven of them were found under a tree a week later.

Smugglers hire truck drivers to smuggle their human cargos over the border, and from state to state. A passerby on U.S. Highway 77, outside of Victoria TX, called the police to report a hand, waving a bandana out of a hole in the back of a white 18-wheeler, in 2003. "A flood of human beings" spilled out, said U.S. Attorney Michael Shelby. Eighteen out of 100 Mexicans, El Salvadorans, Guatemalans and Hondurans were asphyxiated in a trailer abandoned by three traffickers. The trailer was registered to Tyron Williams of Schenectady, NY, who was later arrested.

\$30,000 per person with no takers."

"The further the smuggling route, the higher the fee. Smugglers often guarantee success for the high prices they charge, promising to give passage back into the United States to those who are apprehended in route and sent back. Some keep that promise while other smugglers let the customers die in a box car or in the trunk or under the hood of

Lone Coyotes and Syndicates

Felipe de Jesus Preciado Coronado, head of Mexico's National Immigration Institute told the *Washington Post* that the government has identified at least 57 organized smuggling bands. Jim Chaparro, head of the anti-smuggling office at U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, INS — abolished in March, 2003 and incorporated into the Department of Homeland Security — said that the small and informal smuggling business has evolved into a powerful web of "literally hundreds of syndicates, some at a low level and some at the kingpin level... Gangs are ripping off aliens from other smugglers and holding aliens captive until they sell them to a buyer." Drug smugglers have turned to alien smuggling.

Prices for transport have increased dramatically, partially to pay for high-tech equipment. Encrypted radios, cell phones, and the internet, used for warning of patrolling U.S. agents have replaced the flashlights that were once used to cross the Rio Grande.

Those that charge the most offer computer generated fake documents, or stolen visas and passports. Migrants from Asia and Europe pay far more than Mexicans — upwards of \$50,000 to get in U.S.

"The flow of illegals has become much more organized, and that has opened the opportunity for these groups to market their services to non-Mexicans," Armand Peschard Sverdrup, director of the Mexico project at the Center for Strategic and International Studies told the *Post*.

Arrests of coyotes have been publicized for years. A cursory examination of the records of Office of the United States District of Arizona alone reveals numerous arrests monthly this year.

Four Smugglers were arrested after a four-month investigation of the Raul Green and Jose Humberto Marquez human trafficking organization in February 2004. Cesar Balderas-Grandos, a Mexican citizen was convicted of trafficking after a U.S. Border Patrol agent saw the knees and elbows of humans bouncing in the bed of his truck.

Grandos refused to stop. He was arrested after a multi-Border Patrol unit high-speed chase. Eleven undocumented aliens were in the bed of the truck and fourteen in the cab of the truck. The defendant had previously been deported from the United States.

Jose Guadalupe Chairez-Jauragui was indicted in February for smuggling 65 illegal aliens. A canine, conducting a routine sniff around his trailer, made the alert. Border Patrol agents had to remove pallets stacked in the back of the trailer and found the smothering aliens. Also in February Alonso Ruiz Avila was indicted in Arizona for transporting 50 aliens in a Freightliner tractor-trailer. The aliens were stowed behind crates of citrus.

Maria Christina Baez and Laura Gastelum were arrested for smuggling five children. The women were paid \$50 for each child and were to turn the children over to a stranger. They did not even know who the children were.

In March, Breton Rodriguez, an illegal alien, attacked a Border Patrol agent, and grabbed the agent's Beretta from his holster. The gun discharged, striking the agent in the groin.

Push Here, Pop There

El Paso TX, and San Diego CA, were the two busiest gateways in illegal immigration crossings. The crackdown began. Operation Hold-the-Line was initiated in El Paso in 1992, Operation Gatekeeper in San Diego in 1994, and Operation Rio Grande was established in 1997 in the McAllen sector in South Texas. In that program, agents at the border were tripled.

Operation Hold-the-Line strategy included installing fences, and the use of sophisticated technology, including monitoring devices. The San Diego border had become violent, and Border Agents were struggling to control the "chaos" and anarchy" in the nightly riots. Mexicans across the border threw rocks at them and fired shots, then dash across *en masse* in "banzai runs."

"The Border Patrol has absolutely no jurisdiction over the Mexican side of the border. The Mexicans can stand there and taunt the Patrol, and there's nothing we can do, until they cross into the United States," Carter confirmed.

Operation Gatekeeper more than doubled Border Patrol Agents and vehicles at the fourteen-mile San Diego border, installed lighting, infrared scopes, underground sensors and Computer IDENT system to track illegal immigrants.

"Due to efforts in the nineties, entries into the United States decreased. The flow of illegal aliens at those fortified borders where additional agents were placed, such as San Diego CA and El Paso TX, apprehensions decreased significantly.

"During that time the Clinton Administration, and Attorney General Janet Reno, were very supportive of the Border Patrol. They went to Congress with the numbers, and asked to increase our resources. They had no choice but to approve. In 1972, there were 2,250 agents.

When I left two years ago there were over 10,000 agents," Carter told us.

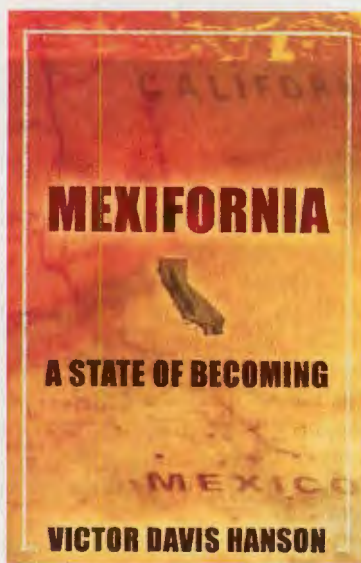
"It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out they will go east or west of El Paso, and through the rougher routes and rugged terrain, knowing they were taking a greater risk.

"Lots of things have to be considered to create an effective barrier. There are the natural barriers. You have the Rio Grande. In Del Rio, TX, you open up the dam and they can't get across. Rugged mountain terrain makes it impossible to cross. Big Ben country is very rugged country. Marfa, Alpine, Presidio, the Rio Grande, and the high canyons are desolate, hot and miserable. Natural barriers there slow down illegal immigrants," Carter said.

"Most Americans are opposed to any kind of fence. Remember, we knocked down the Berlin wall. The original barriers in San Diego consisted of landing mats (pierced-steel planking), metal that was welded together and buried a couple of feet in the ground, leaning towards Mexico. It was pretty successful.

"Then the Mexicans started to butt holes in it. You can drive down and see the three layers of fencing that were put up in San Diego for border control.

"When the fence was built in San Diego, the border patrol had to develop a strategy. Push the balloon here, it pops up there. From San Diego to Tucson, all the way down the bor-



Author Victor Davis Hanson expresses concern of America's hemorrhaging borders and its impact on the United States and Mexican immigrants.

der, a strategy had to be developed in such a way that the flow could be controlled." Carter continued.

Migrants were diverted into dangerous territories, many getting lost.

The Border Patrol was forced to shift its efforts from patrolling to rescuing victims," Patty Mancha, Border Patrol spokesperson told *visalaw.com*. "They are spending as much time searching for victims as they are doing their regular job."

For two days in May 2001, migrants were lost during Arizona's hellish heat season. Helicopters and four-wheel-drive vehicles, searching for survivors transported eleven injured to local hospitals. Two others were found after an all-night search, but footprints showed that three others were missing.

"We intend to work this until we've made sure there is no one left out there," Border Patrol spokesman Maurice More said. Coyotes who smuggled victims through the rugged terrain of the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge promised to return with water, and told the migrants to walk for "a couple of hours" to a highway. The highway was fifty miles away. Five were able to walk far enough to find agents in the scorching 115-degree heat, reports the *Washington Post*.

The Border Patrol got lots of grief for their role in the crackdown.

"What's causing it (the deaths of illegal immigrants) is the deadly strategy of the Border Patrol that has forced people into the most hazardous area of the desert," said the Rev. John Fife, Tucson pastor who helped build a watering station for immigrants in Arizona, the *Post* continues.

U.S. Rep. Tancredo (R-CO), supportive of the crackdowns, reacted after an agent was shot at by Mexicans in a humvee, five miles north of the U.S.-Mexico border in 2001. "I cannot in good conscience stand by and watch another incursion along our border take place.

"Unless we open our eyes and recognize that what's happening along the U.S./Mexico border is real, one of our guys is going to get killed. "As far as I am concerned, that (incursion) should be an act of war," reports the *Sierra Times*.

Dozens of Border Patrol Agents have died since the organization of the Agency in 1924. Twenty-one have been killed since 1992.

Dumping Ground

U.S. Border Control Chairman Edward Nelson, outraged by Mexican consuls-general and Foreign Ministry officials' criticism of Operation Rio Grande, responded angrily, "America has become a favorite dumping ground for Mexicans their own government cannot, or chooses not to, care for. These diplomats are total hypocrites. Illegal migration is not 'a natural phenomenon' as the Mexican government would have us believe. It is, instead, a serious crime and a clear violation of American sovereignty."

The Mexican government does nothing to stop illegal migration because it is in their economic interests to have millions of their citizens go to the United States, especially those with no job skills and no money, or those with serious long-term health care problems," reports *Usbc.org*.

"Mexico," Nelson said, "even refuses to take back Mexican criminals that have been caught and convicted in our country (see future parts of this series). These diplomats are well aware of the fact that their citizens are being exploited, robbed and even murdered by the coyotes. They are aware that many are carrying drugs into America that will wind up in the veins of American children.

"Our border patrol, which has suffered more than 200 cross border attacks recently, should worry less about being

'sensitive' and more about being bushwhacked by the drug cartels killers who now control our southern border and most immigrant traffic.

"We've been called racists, imperialists, and most recently, murderers," the *Usbc.org* report continues.

Mexican Response

In 2001, the Mexican Government announced its plan to distribute 200,000 survival kits as part of a broader program to instruct illegals in what to expect "tips on maintaining self-esteem, and on Asian meditation techniques, to combat depression, stress and anxiety in a country they have entered illegally and without speaking the language," says the *Orange County Register*.

The survival kits include first aid kits, rehydration tablets, dried foods, and snake bite antidotes. U.S. officials criticized the plan as further risking the lives of the Mexicans and the Border patrol. "It gives the perception to our U.S. public that the Mexican government is encouraging people to break U.S. laws by entering the country illegally," said Hipolito Scosta, INS district director, to *CNN*.

America's Palestinians

Glenn Spencer, host of the popular talk show *American Patrol*, and immigration expert, produced a video "Conquest of Aztlan" in which he warns that a radical group, self-named "America's Palestinians" declare the goal of reclaiming the American Southwest, including California, Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and parts of Colorado and Texas. The area is named "Aztlan" by Hispanic activists, or the mythical place of origin of the Aztec people, says *Shop Net Daily*.

H. Millard, in the *Sierra Times*, cites a Zogby poll, which found that 58 percent of Mexicans in the Southwest believed that the U.S. rightfully belongs to Mexico, and that 57 percent of Mexicans believe they have the right to enter the U.S. without permissions. He quotes Mario Obled, founder of the Mexican American Legal and Defense Fund (MALDEF), "California is going to be a Hispanic state, and anyone who doesn't like it should leave. They should go back to Europe."

MALDEF, according to Frosty Wooldridge, teacher, author and overpopulation specialist, reporting in the *Washington Dispatch*, is one of the most anti-American advocacy groups in the United States and is bent on returning Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California to Mexico as part of their 'Aztlan Reconquista'.

Three hundred more Border Patrol agents were deployed by June 1.

In spite of all these efforts, and after a four-year decline, illegal immigration from Mexico has spiked this year as several thousand migrants a day rush the border. U.S. Border Patrol told AP that detentions rose 25 percent, to 535,000, in the six months prior to March 31 compared to the year previous. Seventy-five percent are Mexican.

"And there's no way to determine 'got-aways'", Carter told us. "I have no idea where anybody's getting those numbers, except in unsophisticated ways—border patrol agents in the desert, working a trail of aliens, don't report 'got-aways'. Then you have those areas and trails that are not worked and no-one to detect the immigrants."

No telling how many 'got-aways' are running loose in the United States, uncounted.

Then there are the many bodies that are never found.

Dr. Martin Brass is an International Lawyer and longtime contributor to SOF. ☒

MIAMI'S MAD MAX

Marines

PART 2

FIRE AND MOVEMENT

Marine Reserves Cream The Baddies
In An All-Day Running Firefight.

BY DONALD SCHUTT

PHOTOS BY SERGEANT MICHAEL A. LOZANO
& THE MARINES OF TOW/SCOUT MIAMI

Last month the Marine Reservists of Miami's TOW and Scout Platoon went to Kuwait, geared up, entered Iraq, had their first firefights, and sustained their first casualties.

2 April — First Battle — Tigris River Crossing

The Tigris River was a key piece of defensive terrain. The bridges crossing the major river had to be seized and crossed. The Iraqi military leadership was obviously aware of this fact. However they did not blow the bridges prior to the Americans making good their crossing. Why? Maybe the Iraqi commanders feared being branded "war criminals" in the post-war Iraq.

However, in all probability the key to success for the

Americans was the rapid movement that 2nd Tank Battalion had made by moving on the hardball road. The U.S. Marines arrived before the Iraqis had gotten themselves organized for battle. The Iraqis never quite got their act together defending the bridge.

Although the Iraqis were behind the power curve, and mounted a confused defense of the approaches to the bridges, there were plenty of Iraqis, mostly from the elite Republican Guard, dug-in to do the job. These selected Iraqi soldiers put up a sustained if ineffective fight.

The Iraqi city of An Nu'maniyah stood between the Marines and the bridge, more than four kilometers of urban and semi-urban terrain. Single-story homes and businesses were intermixed with larger concrete buildings up to four stories high. Concrete walls surrounded some areas.

Some of these walls and buildings were directly adjacent to the hard surfaced road that the Americans would use. The topography of the town allowed the Iraqis to engage the Marines at literally point-blank range.

The 2nd Tank Battalion moved toward the Tigris river bridge with Scout's Tiger section in the lead. Then came Alpha, Charlie, and Delta Companies with their tanks. Copper Section followed escorting the AAVs of Fox Company 2/5. TOW Platoon followed with Bronze, Silver, and Gold Sections.

The Combat Trains, carrying the bare minimum of vehicles needed to refuel and resupply the combat elements, came next. Steel Section was intermixed in with the Combat Trains, protecting them. At the rear of the formation were the Scouts of Panther Section acting as a rearguard.

First Lieutenant Zummo, in the second vehicle in the Battalion's column, led the way into An Nu'maniyah. He commanded the Scout Platoon. As the Scout's leader he placed himself with Tiger Section, which was leading the march. He started up the highway into the town.

Sergeant Michael was in the passenger seat of Zummo's HUMMV. Sergeant Michael was a school trained Forward Observer. He had been trained at great expense in how to call in artillery to support a Marine unit. The problem was he had no radio. The lack of communications gear in the

battalion had left him without the one piece of gear that he needed to perform his job.

63-Grain Bullets

With a radio he could bring forth tons of ordinance upon any target he wished. Since he had no radio he could only bring the firepower of his M16 upon the enemy as a replacement for the artillery. Instead of the 95-pound shells of the 155mm cannons he could only hit the enemy with the 63-grain bullets of his 5.56mm rifle.

There were two radios in the vehicle. One linked the Scout Platoon Commander with the Battalion Commander and Company Commanders. The other linked the Scout Platoon Commander to the vehicles in his platoon. The Lieutenant needed both to do his job. Michael would have to borrow one if he was asked to do his.

Sergeant Michael explains the action: "There was the first section leader (Sergeant Langlois), he was in vehicle in front of us. We were right behind him. He radioed back that he saw enemy, that they were standing there with rifles, but they weren't shooting. What happened was the Iraqis didn't expect us that far forward.

"That happened on a few engagements, the Iraqi troops kind of stood looking at us not knowing who we were. They just weren't expecting the American forces to

Iraqi T-62 Tank knocked out by the M1A1's of 2nd Tank Battalion near the Tigris river crossing. (inset) Wreckage of Iraqi supply vehicles caught by 2nd Tank Battalion just North of An Nu'maniyah after the Tigris river crossing. The Commanding General of the First Marine Division, Major General Mattis, had fainted forces along the direct route to Baghdad and then sent his main forces across the Tigris along route 6.



be that far north yet. At first the Iraqis stood dumbfounded. Then some Iraqis opened fire from a building on the left side of the road. Tiger Section Leader saw them in the building and he engaged.

"Then, on the right-hand side, more troops started popping up, so we engaged them. We stopped about 3,000 meters from the bridge. There we waited for the Scouts from Panther section, and let the tanks pass by us toward the bridge."

The lead Scouts of Tiger Section had reached the point where there was a "Y" in the road ahead. Their job was to prevent the rest of the battalion from making a wrong turn at the "Y." It would have been an easy mission if they had not been receiving fire. The Scouts had to sit stationary at the intersection waiting for the rest of the Battalion to pass.

Iraqi gunners located Northwest of the intersection were firing their AKs at the Scouts from buildings located a mere fifty meters away.

The Marines set up defensively in a low spot just off the road in the crotch of the "Y." They returned fire and waited for the battalion to pass. The road was somewhat elevated. Since the Marines were sitting in low ground their return-fire was skimming the surface of the road.

The Scouts were forced to cease firing momentarily every time a tank or other American vehicle rolled by, blocking their line of fire. Lance Corporal Fabio Manotas, along with Pvt. Webb, continued to fire their weapons in order to suppress the Iraqi fire. The Iraqis were firing from buildings located on the left side of the road.

Faulty Missile

Corporal Keller, with Tiger section, attempted to engage a pickup truck technical he saw across the road to South of the "Y." He requested and received permission to fire his TOW. However, when he fired, the missile proved faulty. The missile left the tube when the launch motor kicked-in, but the flight motor did not fire-off.

The faulty missile fell to the ground a short distance from where it was launched without exploding.

As the last of the big American tanks of Alpha, Charlie, and Delta Companies passed the Scouts toward the bridge things began to pick up. The Iraqis were deathly afraid of engaging the M1A1 tanks. The American tanks are nearly indestructible and are equipped with a devastatingly effective 120mm cannon.

In a scenario to be repeated many times over the next three days of battle, the majority of the enemy bided their time as heavy armor rolled by. Once the big tanks passed, and only then, would they attempt to destroy the "soft-skinned" vehicles that were sure to follow. Whether this tactic was part of a preconceived plan or the result of rational respect for the M1A1 tank is not known.

Staff Sergeant Zamora, the leader of Copper Section which was escorting the Grunts of Fox Company 2/5, saw a single BMP driving through town about 500 meters to the South. He called out the information on the radio causing much of Copper Section to look right. The BMP drove out of sight before it could be engaged.

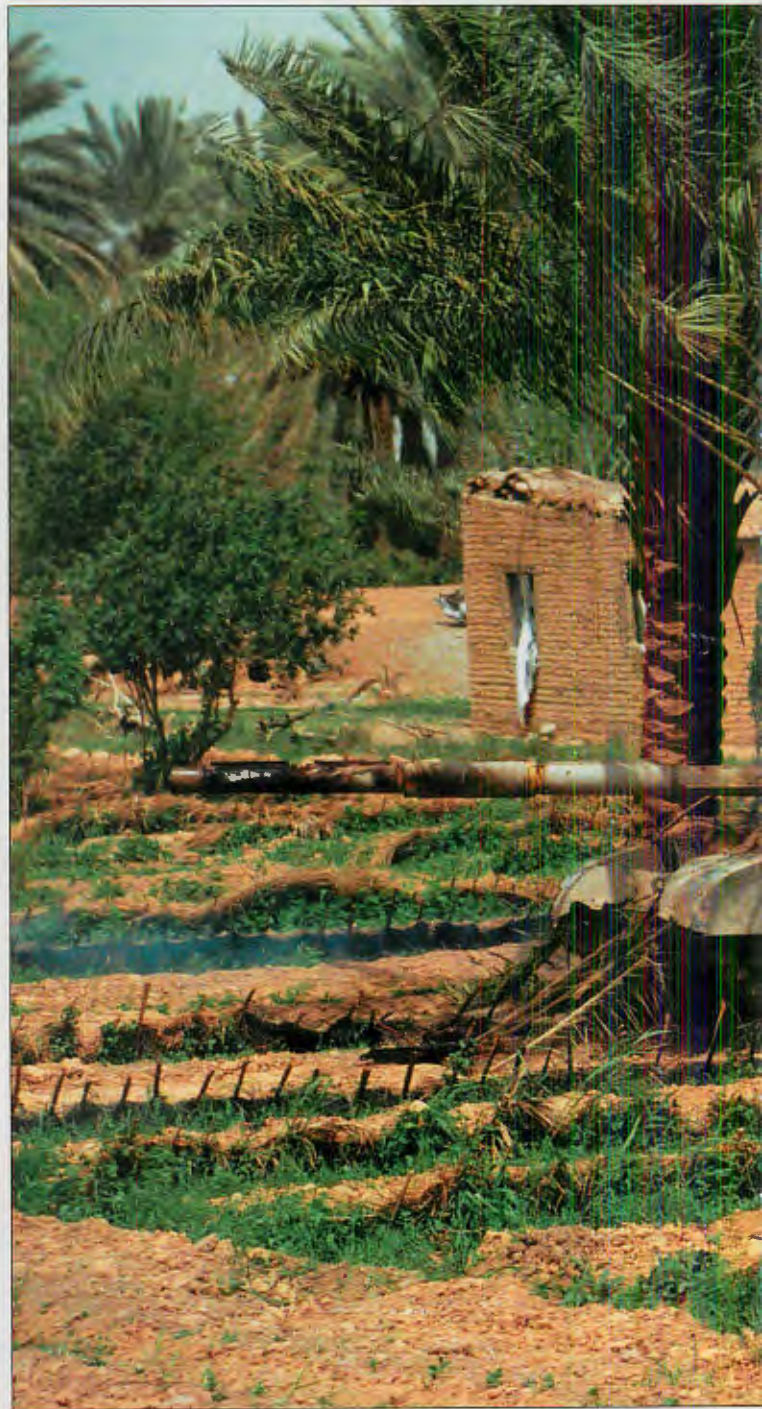
A Cobra helicopter, making a rocket-run on another BMP traveling on a road about 150 meters left and parallel to the one the Marines were on, rolled in at high speed and launched a volley of rockets, as the BMP tried to evade.

Sergeant Anthony Martinez, with Copper Section, was about 500 meters past the "Y" when the explosion of multiple rockets brought his immediate attention to the left. He saw a building burning and a BMP about 150 meters left of the road.

The Cobra helicopter had missed its target. The rockets impacted into a house just beyond the BMP. The house started burning as the Iraqi BMP crew made evasive maneuvers. The terrified Iraqi crew made a hard right turn to get out of the line of fire of the Cobras. The Iraqi driver button-hooked his vehicle around the corner and up onto the sidewalk out of sight of the Cobra.

The Soviet designed armored vehicle now sat at a forty-five degree angle up on the sidewalk on a street that ran directly into the one being used by the Marines. The Iraqi vehicle commander started to rotate the turret to aim his 73mm cannon at the Americans. The Marines were in plain sight 150 meters away.

Sergeant Martinez stopped his Hummer and readied his TOW launcher for action. He placed the cross hairs of his sight on the Soviet designed armored vehicle and fired.



Friendly Rocket

Lance Corporal Monotas witnessed the action: "We saw Cobras hitting the buildings on our right side and at the same time they had a better shot at the BMP. One of the Cobras shot a volley of the rockets and missed the BMP. Completely missing, totally missing. That's when we noticed that we were receiving fire on the left, but it was just a friendly rocket from the Cobra. And that's when we noticed the BMP. We thought it was a dead BMP, but then we saw the turret moving.

"That's when Sergeant Martinez, at that time he was Copper One (the lead vehicle in Copper Section), he went ahead and took the shot, cause he called it on the radio, it wasn't even five seconds after he made the call that he took the shot and made the impact." The BMP was destroyed.

Sergeant Martinez continued with Copper Section toward the bridge. The road up to the bridge was elevated above the

surrounding terrain. Staff Sergeant Zamora looked up the road to the bridge as they approached it. An American M1A1 tank was sitting near the entrance, obviously disabled from enemy fire.

On the right side of the road there was a public park complete with benches and statues. The park was crawling with Iraqi soldiers moving from position to position. Iraqi fox-holes and trenches were apparent on both sides of the road that lead up to the disabled M1A1 and the bridge beyond.

Iraqi T-72 burning in palm grove. Palm groves were often the source of resistance. Only in relatively open areas such as palm groves could Iraqi officers keep control of their men and put up an organized resistance. In urban areas officers had a poor time keeping control of their troops resulting in many hiding instead of fighting. Note the white flag in the mud hut.





Burning Iraqi armor littered the road almost from the Kuwaiti border to Baghdad. It was a worse traffic hazard than potholes.



This burning truck was off the road and out of the way, but sent clouds of billowing smoke to foul the air.



A Cobra fired on this BMP and missed, but the Miami Marines nailed it with a TOW. From the open door it would appear that at least some of the crew got out.



Marines of TOW Platoon pose in front of HMMWV with TOW system mounted. The TOW system proved of limited use in the tight urban terrain. For the most part the TOW men fought as infantry.

The bridge was a key military objective and the Iraqis had prepared positions to defend it.

As the Copper Section Marines approached closer to the bridge they saw numerous Iraqi Soldiers with AKs popping up from foxholes hidden in the saw grass on the right side of the road.

Since the road was elevated, the Iraqis on the sides of the road were below the line of sight of some of the Marines driving up to the bridge. Corporal Mauricio Gomez dismounted his vehicle to get a better angle downward to shoot. He began firing at the Iraqis running around the park on the right. Iraqi soldiers began firing back.

Out of Ammo

As Corporal Gomez engaged the enemy with his M16 he heard his bolt lock to the rear. His weapon was out of ammo. He dropped the empty magazine and started to reload. Gomez then noticed the Iraqi soldier only ten meters away popping-up behind him. The other Marines were fixated on the targets on the right side of the road. The Iraqi started to aim-in on Corporal Gomez as he fumbled with his rifle magazine. He knew that unless he did something quick he would be dead.

Gomez screamed to his turret gunner: "Boitel! Left!"

Sergeant Danny Boitel could hear the terror in his comrade's voice. He spun around in the HMMWV's turret and saw an Iraqi aiming in his AK at Gomez. By now Corporal Gomez

had completed reloading. The two Marines unloaded their weapons into the Iraqi simultaneously. The Republican Guard Soldier fell dead.

Sergeant Kent Padmore of Miami, Florida, was in a vehicle behind Boitel. He saw that the saw grass on the left side was full of targets. Iraqi soldiers were in positions all over the saw grass right off the road. He swung his weapon around to the left and began to fire up the numerous Iraqis popping up amongst the saw grass.

Sergeant Boitel had just emptied his magazine into the Iraqi who had been trying to kill Gomez. He sighted an Iraqi gunner in the saw grass about twenty feet off the road. He reloaded. "This guy is popping-up here, and I don't know if Padmore can see the guy. I aim in on him, right on his head. Then click. Nothing."

The bolt on his M16 hung up and the round didn't chamber. He pulled back the bolt on his rifle in order to properly chamber a round. As he did this Corporal Gomez started driving forward with the vehicle. This caused the Iraqi to drop below his line of sight. Sergeant Boitel was unable to engage his target. The guardrail on the left side of the road blocked his view.

Sergeant Boitel: "That was one lucky Iraqi. He did his prayers that morning."

Corporal Johnson was standing in the turret of his HMMWV. He looked forward and saw Corporal Watson, the .50-caliber gunner, firing his big gun toward him. "I'm won-

dering who he is shooting at. I'm thinking maybe he done lost his mind, that he is shooting at me. I turn around and I'm following his rounds, he had the tracer rounds. I see an Iraqi right next to my vehicle." Corporal Watson's rounds tore apart the Iraqi who had been only fifteen meters off the road and aiming in on Johnson.

As the Copper Section Marines drove forward they found it difficult to fire on the Iraqis directly below the steep embankment on the shoulder of the rising road. They did the best they could by leaning way out to the left and holding their weapons pointed downward. In this manner they were able to shoot over the guardrail as the road continued to elevate. It was the only way they could continue to fire on the enemy.

Killer Accountant

Sergeant Moreno (an accountant in civilian life), with Bronze section, was manning the 50-caliber gun atop Staff Sergeant Torres's HUMMV. As he passed the Scouts position at the "Y" the vehicle came to a stop. The grunts of Fox 2/5 were halted blocking the road with their Amtracks. "We find ourselves behind Fox 2/5 who is standing still. We have rounds kicking-up dirt in front of our vehicle. Probably we are out of range or they are not aiming, as they should. We start seeing people running — civilians for the most part, but also Iraqi soldiers.

"Some of these Iraqi soldiers had friends who were civilians who would tell them where we are. Then the Soldiers would pop-up for a few seconds and take a well aimed shot at us and then go back down for cover."

Sergeant Moreno saw multiple muzzle flashes coming from some houses located to the right side of the road. He returned fire in a deliberate manner picking his targets carefully. The .50-caliber API (Armor-Piecing- Incendiary) had no trouble penetrating the buildings to find its targets.

The Cobras, which had been covering Fox 2/5, dropped south to cover the Marines in the HUMMVs. They continued to circle about the town. These helicopter gunships were buzzing about at will taking out targets of opportunity with their 2.75-inch rockets and 20mm cannons. Their efforts helped prevent the Iraqis on the flanks from making an organized effort to cut the column. Their presence vastly aided the advance of the Battalion.

The Amtracks of Fox 2/5 started to move again. The forward progress of Bronze Section was no longer blocked. They too started to move out. The Miami Marines continued up the road toward the bridge. They passed a concrete warehouse that was being pummeled by the Cobras.

Further down the road they came upon the city park just shy of the bridge on the right side of the road. It had a fountain and some murals of Saddam.

Sergeant Moreno: "Everybody started rolling real fast. We felt we were doing one of those organized crime drive-bys that you see in the movies. We drove, and drove, and drove until we got to another intersection right before the bridge.

"Once we got to the intersection we started seeing a lot of foot soldiers and I was able to see a bunch of T-55s to both the right and left of the intersection. Some of them had caminetting on them so the aircraft wouldn't pick them up. We started seeing soldiers running around.

Murals of Saddam

"On the right hand side of the intersection was a park. It

had a bunch of trees, benches, a little fountain, and some murals of Saddam Hussein. It had a bunch of statues, a fountain, and whatnot. Soldiers were running back and forth in between taking cover.

"I shot some of them but I couldn't fire too much because we were moving and I didn't want to rotate the gun back toward our guys as we passed by."

As Bronze section passed over the bridge they got a better observation angle on what was hidden below the structure. Numerous Iraqi tanks had been hidden in the shadow of the bridge. The Iraqis thought that the Americans would not risk bomb damaging the bridge in order to get to the tanks. They figured wrong.

Bronze Section watched as the Cobras picked up the targets and began to destroy the tanks one by one with their TOW and Hellfire missiles.

As the last of the Battalion rolled by Tiger Section at the



Staff Sergeant Zamora, the Paderewski of the Fifty Cal, strikes a pose by his instrument of choice.

"Y" Panther Section bringing up the rear joined them. The now complete Scout Platoon moved out together toward the bridge still taking and returning fire from various Republican Guard positions.

As they moved to within 1200-meters of the bridge some of the Marines began taking fire from a concrete warehouse located within a walled compound on the right side of the road. The walled compound had been attacked earlier by the Cobras and was silent when Copper Section had passed by a short time before.

Now with most of the American tanks long down the road and across the bridge some Iraqis had moved back into the structure and began to shoot at the Americans in their HUMMVs.

Sergeant Michael, Tiger Section's artillery observer, recalls the close range nature of the incoming fire: "They were aiming out of the windows of the buildings that were facing the street. So it wasn't like they were way back off. They were like right there hitting us with sustained fire"

Next month the Miami Marines discover that their TOWs are pretty much useless on this highway of death.

Donald Schutt is a Lt. Col. USMCR. He is a Desert Storm veteran, and former OIC of TOW/Scout Miami. He is an airline pilot. ✂

Affordable, Instant Accuracy:

CMC's Drop-In Super-Match Trigger Group for the M16/AR-15

BY N.E. MACDOUGALD
PHOTOS BY CHIP MCCORMICK

Most experts agree that improving a rifle's trigger is the single best way to enhance accuracy. How about a drop-in, match-grade trigger group that accurizes an M16/AR-15 for less than \$200? Chip McCormick Corp. (CMC) makes one. The big buzz at the 2004 SHOT Show concerned this new and innovative trigger group, so *SOF* sent us to investigate.

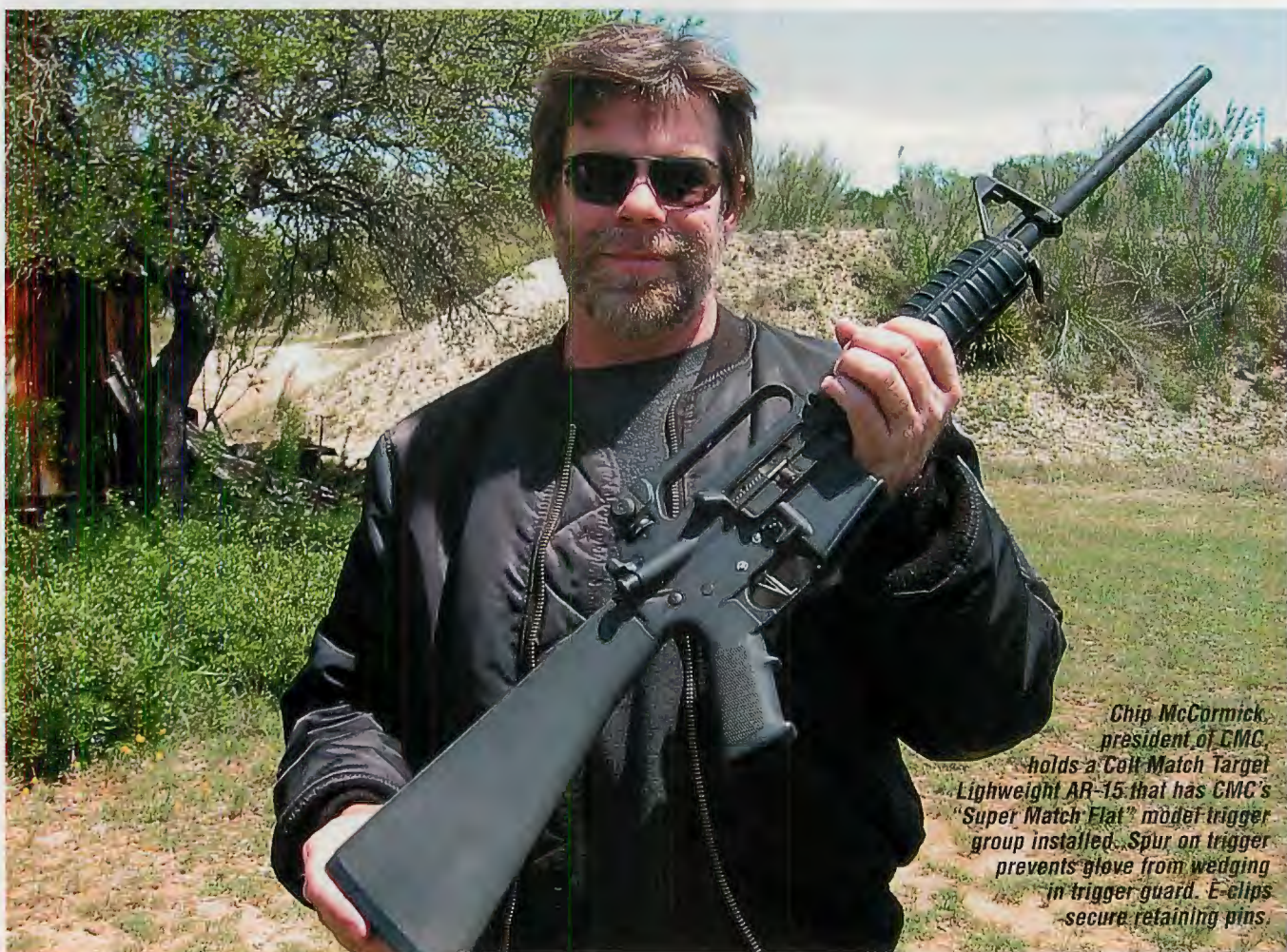
Developer Andy Dunagan and manufacturer Chip McCormick have impressed many with this ingenious innovation. They engineered the enhanced trigger components into a module, so that it doesn't require a gunsmith to install or tune. The complex geometry of trigger, sear, hammer, etc. remains intact because it's held rigid. McCormick conceived of and patented the trigger group. Dunagan refined it and created the prototype.

We traveled to Texas to T&E this new trigger group. Dunagan and McCormick met us at the Hill Country Rifle

Range about five miles from Dripping Springs, near Austin. Dunagan's built like a blacksmith and shakes hands like one. McCormick moves like an athlete and wears an easy smile.

We outlined the test procedure: We'd shoot a standard trigger group as a benchmark, then replace it with a McCormick product to compare performance. All other constants—rifle, scope, ammunition, and distance to target—would stay the same. The results at 100 meters spoke for themselves. But the real difference was subjective: We could shoot faster because we didn't have to wait for the creepy, heavy factory trigger to release (it weighed about 8 pounds). The CMC trigger groups average 3.5 pounds, with a crisp release.

McCormick makes both single-stage and two-stage triggers in curved (conventional) or flat configuration. We chose the two-stage Super Match Flat Trigger because we have large hands. The CMC "Flat" trigger extends the trigger, to



Chip McCormick, president of CMC, holds a Colt Match Target Lightweight AR-15 that has GMC's "Super Match Flat" model trigger group installed. Spur on trigger prevents glove from wedging in trigger guard. E-clips secure retaining pins.

improve ergonomics for people with larger hands, and to lower the point of pull to increase leverage. A spur at the trigger's bottom prevents the trigger finger from dragging on the trigger guard, or a gloved finger from wedging.

Standard Trigger Versus Super Match

The smallest group we shot at 110 yards with the standard trigger group was slightly more than an inch in diameter (with one flyer, which we called). The McCormick trigger broke crisp at 3.5 lbs. and enabled us to shrink the group to about .80 inch. While this may not seem significant at first glance, consider what the results would be at 200 or 400+ meters. Bottom line: The McCormick trigger would mean the difference between dinner and hunger. In a life-or-death confrontation it would make a more crucial difference.

Removal And Replacement

The following sequence describes a typical trigger group removal and replacement. Use a punch to drive out the two retaining pins that secure the standard trigger group in the receiver. Use a screwdriver or hex wrench to loosen the pistol grip. Remove the thumb safety. Drop in a McCormick unit. Insert the CMC pins using a leather mallet or the butt of a screwdriver. (Note: CMC pins are slightly oversize to ensure a precise fit. Standard-diameter pins are available for non-match-grade applications.) That's it. No fumbling with puzzle-pieces, no frustration, and no waiting for a gunsmith, although a CMC flyer states in fine print, "These parts are designed to be installed and safety checked by professional gunsmiths." The fine print also ensures satisfaction with a simple money-back guarantee.

Civilian and Military Implications

McCormick's simple, elegant solution has implications for both civilian and military marksman. For civilians, it means a relatively inexpensive, turnkey solution to greater accuracy. For the military, it can enable NCOs or company-grade officers to provide sharpshooters with an accurized trigger group—only snipers or designated marksmen currently have access to tuned triggers. It also eliminates the need for a weapon to be out of service while an armorer works on it. This ability to improve a battle rifle's trigger almost anywhere can empower team leaders with flexibility, a priceless commodity in a fluid conflict.



Installation starts by using a punch or drift to drive trigger-group retaining pins from AR-15 receiver.

McCormick Super Match Trigger Group T&E Data

CONDITIONS AND RANGE

Location: Hill Country Rifle Range, Dripping Springs, Texas
 Temperature: 15 degrees C
 Dew point: 04 degrees C
 Barometric pressure: 29.99
 Wind: 9 m.p.h. gusting to 19
 Elevation: 1,122 feet above sea level
 Barrel warm-up: 5 rounds
 Distance to target: 100 meters — 110 yards

EQUIPMENT

Weapon: Rock River Arms A4 flattop with 3,000+ rounds
 Scope: Leupold 2X to 7X scope on maximum magnification
 Ammunition: Cor-Bon Sierra Blitzking 55 gr. FMJ, 3,200 f.p.s. nominal
 Standard trigger pull: 8 lbs. 5 oz. (measured by Lyman digital scale)
 Standard trigger shape: Curved
 McCormick trigger pull: 3 lbs. 8 oz. (measured by Lyman digital scale)
 McCormick trigger shape: Flat



Standard trigger group components (left) are all replaced by Super Match Trigger Group with retaining pins and e-clips. Stainless-steel box keeps trigger-group geometry precise.

Manufacturing Details

While pre-production units (see photos) remain in the white, production models will feature a black-oxide coating. Crafted from S7 tool steel (similar to D2 or H14), the components reside in a 410 stainless-steel box. CNC (computer numerical control) machining ensures that production tolerances stay within .001-inch in critical areas and .004-inch in non-critical areas. Retaining pins are centerless-ground drillrod. All materials and production are American. Patents are pending.

What's Next?

After our shooting session, Dunagan confided that he and



Use screwdriver or hex wrench to loosen pistol grip.



With pistol grip loosened, remove safety.



Insert Super Match Trigger Group into trigger-group pocket.



Secure Super Match Trigger Group by inserting new retaining pins with punch or drift. E-clips secure retaining pins.

McCormick are developing another product. He wouldn't say what it is, but he had a gleam in his eye when he said: "It'll have tactical applications." When it's time, Dunagan said he will disclose details to SOF. Contact Chip McCormick Corp., Dept. SOF, 1715 W. 1626, Ste 105, Manchaca, TX 78652; phone: 512-280-4280, or on the web at www.chipmccormick-corp.com for more information.

Dunagan also offers trigger groups for many factory ARs tuned to a specific rifle, including Colts with auto sear blocks. Cost is \$200 including trigger group, plus shipping.

He offers this service for rifles with mil-spec trigger pockets. He charges extra for rifles that require modifying the receiver. Visit customtriggerconversions@hotmail.com.

N.E. MacDougald is a former SOF senior field editor. He served with the 519th M.I. Bn MACV in 1966 and was a participatory journalist in Cuba and Rhodesia with SOF. He shoots and writes in Colorado's mountains with his wife, daughter and dogs. ☒

The Men Behind the Trigger

Born in Austin, Texas, Chip McCormick grew up in Corpus Christi, then returned to his birthplace at the beginning of high school. "I was given my first rifle and began shooting when we [were] five. We had a subscription to *Guns & Ammo* magazine. Looking back, we made firearms and hunting my passion way back." In 1979—when he became old enough to buy and own—he began buying and trading guns, and hand reloading for each of them. He traded guns to discover how different calibers performed on game.

In 1981 he went to Hill Country Rifle Range and discovered an IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) competition in progress. McCormick had a .45 and wondered if he could be competitive. He turned up at the next I.P.S.C. competition and met several Gunsite graduates. He shot well his first time out. "I smoked 'em good," recalls McCormick with a chuckle. After about three months of watching his pistol prowess, several club officials asked him to represent the club at the forthcoming IPSC nationals. In the spring of 1982, McCormick entered the World Speed Shooting Championship at Mission Hills, Calif., finishing in second place. In 1983, pistol manufacturer Devel sponsored him. He was the first to load the .38 Super cartridge to I.P.S.C. major-caliber ballistics, with a few unpleasant explosions in the process, and compete with it. In 1985, McCormick finished third in the World Speed Shooting Championship, and the following year won the prestigious event. Also in 1986, he finished second in the SOF Three-Gun Shoot, and founded Chip

McCormick Corp. The company's first product was an eight-round magazine for the M1911A1 .45 pistol. In 1988 he won the World Speed Shooting Championship in Corona, Calif., the first shooter to win it twice, and finished second in the 1988 IPSC World Championships in Caracas, Venezuela. McCormick met Dunagan through a mutual friend. They formed a joint venture to produce the Super Match Trigger Group and forthcoming products.

Andy Dunagan also grew up in Texas and has accomplished a great deal in a short time. He earned his high school diploma from New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell in 1987. He joined the Army, but despite being built like a beer truck, suffered recurring shoulder injuries and received an Honorable Discharge for medical reasons in the same year. In 1995 he earned a B.S. in marketing from the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas. He speaks fluent German, and won the 1998 World Beer Cup international brewing competition — extraordinary for an American.

Dunagan earned an Associate of Applied Science degree, with honors, in gunsmithing from Trinidad State Junior College in Colorado in 2000. With his gunsmithing skills honed at Trinidad, he founded P-Cross Customs in Fort Stockton, Texas, repairing and building a variety of firearms. In 2002 he received an M.B.A. in international trade from SulRoss State in Alpine, Texas. In 2003 Dunagan founded OEM Research, Inc. in Fort Stockton, Texas, as the base for his design, prototyping, and engineering innovations, including the Super Match Trigger Group, a joint venture with Chip McCormick. All this, while just into his thirties. —NEM



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Continued from page 47

was an invisible frontier, known as the seam line, that provided little, if any, barrier to terrorists determined to cross over from a West Bank town into an Israeli shopping center wearing 30 pounds of Hamas-produced TATP.

The Imaginary Line

Without a physical fence, one with antipersonnel mines, tripwires, electronic sensors and enough height to counter snipers, the seam line was an indefensible boundary. Even with the planned and under-construction first links of the concrete-and-steel barrier that has begun, most of the line that separated Palestinian lines from the State of Israel was invisible, porous and easy for suicide bombers to cross.

The terrain in and around the seam line consisted of hills, thick underbrush and steep ravines; Even in areas where the Israel Defense Forces had established fences and barriers, smugglers and terrorists found means around and under them. The distance from Qilqilya to Kfar Saba, an affluent Tel Aviv suburb, was less than 500

meters. The area separating the two towns was agricultural, and the thick, lush fields afforded easy access. To walk from Tulkarem, a major Hamas stronghold, to the road leading to Netanya, one of Israel's largest coastal towns, took less than 15 minutes.

The terrorists had used the proximity of their towns and villages to the seam line to their advantage. But far more important to the terrorists' plans were the four indigenous towns, inside Israeli territory, that straddled the seam line and constituted a security grey zone that the Israelis termed "The Triangle." The residents of these four towns, such as Kfar Qassem and Taibeh, were Israeli citizens through and through, though because they were Arabs, they did not have to serve in the military. Still, however, they were supposed to pay taxes and all 18-year-old citizens had the right to vote in regional and national elections.

Each resident of these four towns could work anywhere in Israel, move freely throughout the country, and travel overseas with an Israeli passport. Yet many inside the towns identified with the plight of their Palestinian brothers; and, because of the proximity of their towns to the Palestinian areas, the

economies of these four towns was totally dependent on the smuggling of stolen cars, narcotics, weapons, and, even suicide bombers. Many of the suicide bombers who struck against buses, cafés, and shopping malls in Tel Aviv and along the coastal plain, made it to their targets courtesy of "facilitators" living inside the towns of the triangle who drove the terrorists to their targets.

Infiltrating Bombers Through a Void

Up until the outbreak of the al-Aqsa Intifadah, there was no specific Israeli police or military unit tasked with counterterrorism along the seam line — the principle problem in that region had been car theft rings and narcotic traffickers operating in and around the Palestinian areas, and that problem was addressed by regional police and Border Guard units. But the suicidal violence that erupted in September 2000 targeted the seam line with merciless ferocity. Dozens of murderous attacks were launched against Netanya, Kfar Saba and Tel Aviv by Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Fatah Tanzim, the PFLP and the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. The most horrific such attack came on 27 March 2002, when a Hamas suicide bomber from

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Tulkarem was driven across the seam line to Netanya where he blew himself up inside the crowded dining room at the Park Hotel on Passover night, killing more than 30 people, and wounding more than 100 more.

An effective, preemptive defensive strategy was needed to safeguard Israel's population from terrorists simply walking across the seam line and getting assistance from the Arab towns inside the triangle. Israel's response came in the form of the Border Guard's Spearhead Company — or as the terrorists have learned to respectfully call them, the Dogs of War.

The Spearhead Company was the brainchild of Superintendent Kilo, a veteran Border Guard officer who was respected throughout the Israel National Police hierarchy for his insightful and highly innovative solutions to tactical challenges. Kilo had, in the decade preceding the al-Aqsa Intifadah, commanded undercover operators in the close-quarter combat hell of the Gaza Strip, and he commanded a Border Guard SWAT and anticrime force operating in and around the greater metropolitan Tel Aviv area. When the al-Aqsa Intifadah exploded into a full-scale terrorist war in the fall of 2000, Kilo's talents were utilized in

and around Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

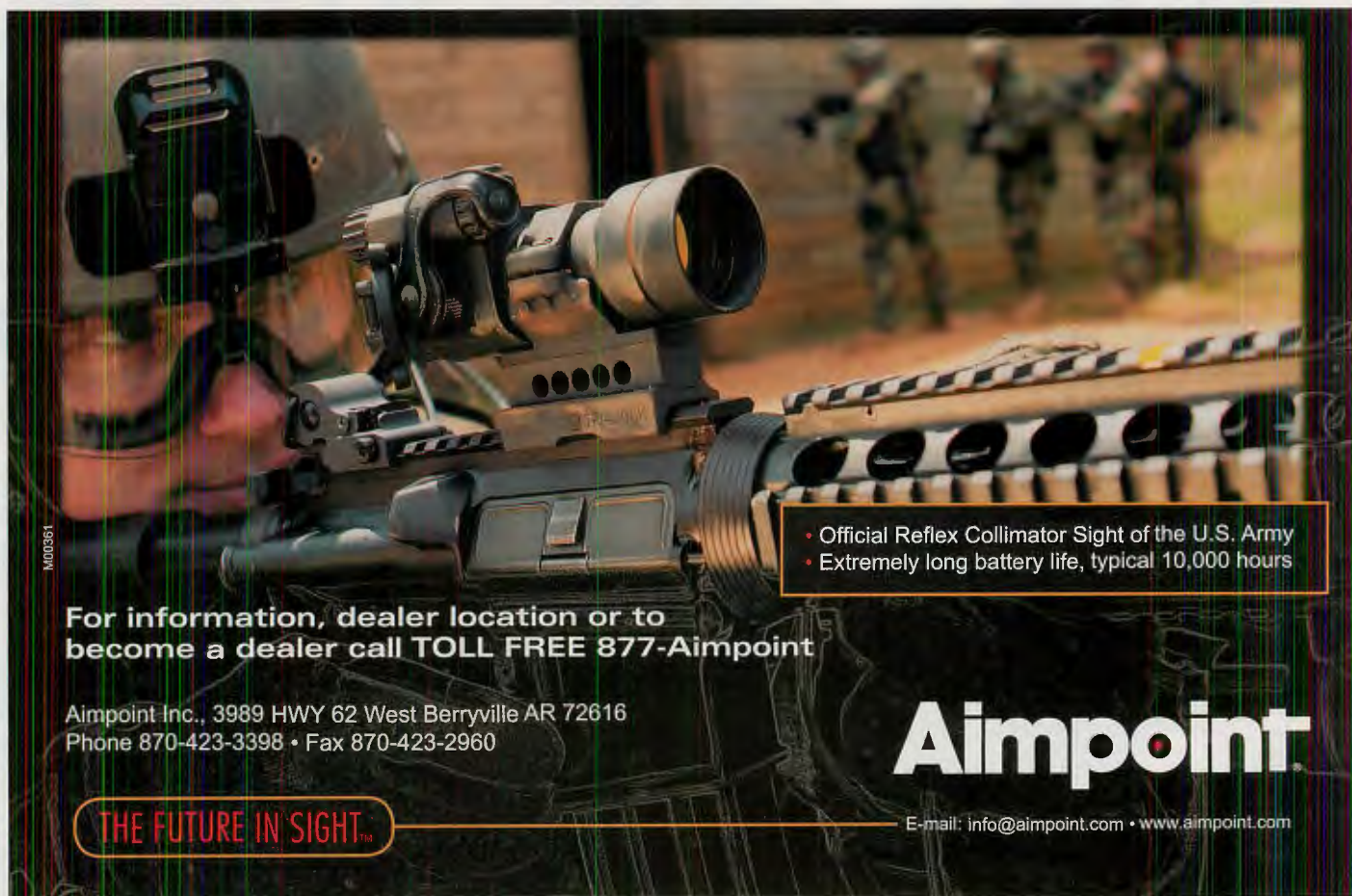
Kilo dissected the security dilemmas facing Israeli security services working along the seam line and inside the triangle, and immediately identified the key to the security nightmare — Israeli police units had left the Arab towns along the frontier alone, allowing an underground economy and lifestyle to develop and flourish. The terrorists had seized on this situation to gain an initiative in the way these towns lived. Kilo's primary mission was to regain this initiative and to reinstate law and order, plus accountability, to "The Triangle."

Seizing the initiative required manpower — lots of it. Kilo realized that the Border Guards' meager special operations resources were already stretched precariously thin as it was, with special operations units deployed on a daily business in and around Jerusalem, in the West Bank and along the frontier with Gaza. To retake the initiative and rewrite the rules of engagement, the Border Guards would have to create a new special operations unit specifically formed, trained, equipped and deployed for operations solely along the seam line. The unit would have to take the most successful element of the Border Guard countert-

terrorist repertoire (paramilitary policemen, undercover operators, and long-range reconnaissance intelligence-gathering forces) and combine them into one cohesive force that was region-specific and mission-focused.

Counter-Terrorism Starts With Intelligence

The centerpiece of this new force was its undercover element. The IDF undercover counterterrorist unit called Duvdevan ("Cherry"), and two of the Border Guard undercover teams, the Ya'mas unit in Gaza and the Ya'mas squad in the West Bank, all operated in areas that were part of the territories occupied by Israel in the June 1967 War; the Jerusalem Ya'mas Border Guard unit functioned inside the Israeli capital as well as in the Palestinian neighborhoods and suburbs of East Jerusalem. There had never been a force tasked with undercover operations inside the Triangle region targeting terrorists among Israel's indigenous Arab population, with counter-terrorist missions. The invisible frontier and political and religious sympathies blurred the distinction between Palestinian and Israeli Arabs. Although Israel's Arab population were full-fledged Israeli citizens the Shin Bet had discovered a growing and disturbing



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trend of Arafat's security services, along with Hamas and the Islamic Jihad, establishing links and support cells inside towns that bordered the Palestinian Authority. "If a certain terrorist apparatus was going to be dismantled, or at least disrupted," Kilo reflected upon returning from supervising an undercover operation, "then we have to be there on target, seeing what's going on and able to respond, with surprise and speed, to keep them completely unbalanced."

Another unique element to the Spearhead Company was its *Matilan*, or intelligence-gathering and reconnaissance, entity. In order to secrete terrorists into Israel proper, the Palestinians would use a series of unmarked routes, often carved out over time through thick forest-like ridges or hilly ravines, that was difficult — and sometimes impossible — to patrol. The intelligence and reconnaissance section would not only be tasked with conducting nighttime ops close to the seam line and even inside Palestinian territory to gather eyes-on-target intelligence, but to ambush terrorists en route to carrying out attacks inside Israel. As a result of their covert and tactical mission, the reconnaissance force was designed — from conception to arduous training — to be expert in camouflage and long-range patrol techniques. The force was trained by the IDF Counterterrorist and Guerrilla Warfare School to be masters at deep-penetration techniques that enabled them to operate for days in the field while relaying information to headquarters. The force was also trained — and equipped — to venture deep into enemy territory to set up lethal ambushes to hit the terrorists on their way into Israel.

"Preventive measures in counterterrorism means hitting the bastards before they even have the slightest chance of hitting you," one of the unit's junior officers said as he applied camouflage paint to a reconnaissance element team leader. When you prepare all of your actions as merely a reaction rather than a precaution, it is the bad guy who dictates events and that is not a blueprint for victory against bastards who want to blow themselves up!"

Next month, the fight against suicide bombers continues with machines, minutemen and munitions in a Mosque.

Author of numerous books and magazine articles on the Middle East, Samuel M. Katz is a frequent contributor to SOE.

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A Show Of Hands

Continued from page 33

Marvin Zindler, and his producer, Lori Reingold, in Houston. He is famous as the crusading reporter whose expose in 1973 led to the closing of the Chicken Ranch Bordello. The story later became the play and movie "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas."

Marvin didn't have to look far to find a doctor willing to work on the guys. At 82, Marvin projects a youthful wrinkle-free image, and admits to more (but better) cosmetic surgery than Michael Jackson. His doctor, Joe Agris, one of Houston's premier plastic reconstructive surgeons, agreed to operate on the Baghdad merchants.

Soon he had also enlisted the Methodist Hospital to provide surgical facilities. Dr. Fred Kestler, a specialist hand surgeon, joined in to work with Dr. Agris in the two-hour operations necessary to prepare the men for bionic hands. Tom DiBello, President of Dynamic Orthotics and prosthetics stepped up to provide the training to help the guys operate the new hands.

The Otto Bock Company, a leading manufacturer of prosthetic limbs

agreed to donate the \$50,000 bionic hands. Next, Houston-based Continental Airlines said they would fly the guys from Europe to Houston. The Pentagon, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), Homeland Security and the U.S. Air Force all combined forces to get the guys traveling papers and fly them out of Baghdad to the U.S. Rhine Main Air base in Frankfurt.

"Is this the hand that threatened Saddam?" asked Basim Al Fadhly, as he watched the tape of his amputation for the first time. "The Coalition doesn't need to find Weapons of Mass Destruction to justify the war."

Meanwhile, a long editing process had produced a final cut of "Remembering Saddam" in both Arabic and English versions. They are currently looking for broadcast opportunities in the U.S. and internationally. True to their word, the Baghdad merchants shared their story with me in great detail in spite of threats from insurgents, for cooperating with American journalists.

I also interviewed their wives, children and neighbors to document the

depth to which their cruel punishment had blighted their lives. Over 15 hours of interviews had to be translated and edited in PAL, the European VHS process, and voiced-over in English.

Brutal Surgery

The footage of the brutal surgery in the prison is used carefully, but in increasingly shocking increments, as the documentary unfolds. In the final

scene, a severed hand is placed on a table with forceps. "Is this the hand that threatened Saddam?" asked Basim Al Fadhly, as he watched the tape of his amputation for the first time. "The Coalition doesn't need to find Weapons of Mass Destruction to justify the war. Saddam killed our children without Weapons of Mass Destruction. They are embedded in his brain."

I re-united with the seven-man "band of brothers" at Rhine Main when

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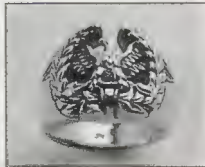
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they flew in from Baghdad on a C-130, and we all flew together to Houston on April 6th. The medical assessments began immediately and the Baghdad merchants were soon confronted with a decision they had not expected.

To properly fit the new bionic hands, and to alleviate the constant pain still experienced in the badly amputated arms, Dr. Agris recommended surgery to repair the nerve endings and trim up to an inch off the arms to accommodate the new state of the art bionic hands. "We showed them a hook, a cosmetic only hand and then the bionic hand," said Dr. Agris. "It became an easy decision for them."

Saddam's "Doctors"

The surgery went well, although some of the men required up to two hours on the operating table to repair the damage of Saddam's "doctors." After only three or four days of healing, the fitting process for the new hands began. It will be followed by four weeks of learning to use the bionic hands to grasp anything from a hammer to a tea cup.

"We showed them a hook, a cosmetic only hand and then the bionic hand," said Dr. Agris. "It became an easy decision for them."

I have been documenting the Iraqi medical odyssey for a second documentary which I may call "Forgetting Saddam". In addition, a weekly news report has been sent back to Iraqi TV in Baghdad by Basim Al Fadhly, a reporter who is one of the amputees.

Not surprisingly my seven Iraqis are supportive of the United States initiative to oust Saddam and put Iraq on its feet as a new democracy in the Middle East. In spite of the current chaos and continued terrorism they say they are optimistic that life in Iraq will stabilize soon and improve. "I ask the whole world not to let this tragedy that happened to us be repeated," says Nazaar Joudi punching the air with the stub of his right arm for emphasis. "The age of tyrants is over, the age of good remains. God willing. Good is coming in Iraq."

Don North is a war correspondent and television documentarian. ✎

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The Killer Ride

Continued from page 41

also prevents it from meeting the Army's requirement of being transportable by C-130 where it can be immediately driven off the aircraft in a battle-ready condition, including its full complement of crew and troops.

Lightly Armored

Although faster than the M113 APC, the Stryker has been criticized by some as being too lightly armored, unable to cope with tough terrain, and too expensive. Contrast that opinion with the vehicle's performance in Summer of 2002 at The National Training Center, Ft. Irwin, California, during the Millennium Challenge. Four Strykers with their infantry detachments deployed to Ft. Irwin by C-130. Each vehicle was unloaded and prepared for action in less than twenty minutes.

In this exercise, and others like it at the National Training Center, various army units are pitted against other army units known as Opposing Force (OPFOR) that have been specially trained and equipped to simulate the battle tactics of some of our potential enemies. This is what the OPFOR force had to say about the Strykers: "The Stryker went places at greater speeds, quieter, with more agility than any vehicle the OPFOR has ever encountered. We had to adjust our tactics."

Speed and Stealth are two of the Stryker's strengths. It is best suited to fast travel on open highways and unrestricted terrain. In restricted terrain and the urban setting of buildings, narrow streets and alleys it loses its advantage. It's overall length and turning radius can often require many forwards and backwards movements in order to negotiate a ninety-degree turn in a narrow street.

Even the M1 Abrams Main battle tank is somewhat vulnerable to attack in such an environment. Unlike the M113, the Stryker's remote weapons station and camera system does allow the gunner to fire from within the vehicle rather than having to expose himself to incoming rounds. But the remote weapon station is handicapped by its narrow field of view and slow slew rate (the camera takes up to 60 seconds to rotate through 360 degrees) to scope the area in all directions. Multiple RPG shooters in a concerted attack from different directions could get off several rounds before the camera can pick up

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In its APC configuration, the Stryker is really a lightly armored bus or taxi to take troops to the front line. But on a non-linear battlefield like Iraq there is no front line and every building or alley may be hiding a tango with an RPG. Is the Stryker better than an up armored Humvee? Probably. It doesn't have open windows through which grenades or Molotov Cocktails can be thrown or dropped. It may be equipped with slat armor for some level of protection against RPGs.

It has twice the number of wheels that a Humvee has, and it is less likely to be tipped over by a crowd. In order to provide some safety in numbers, Humvees typically patrol in groups of four or more, a wise precaution for any lightly armored vehicle in an Iraqi city.

Is the M113 APC the answer? Not entirely. An Improvised Explosive Device (IED) can, if it is big enough, and placed appropriately (particularly directly underneath) blow off a wheel or a track, leaving the crew immobilized in their vehicle. However, in at least one instance in Iraq, a Stryker has continued to maneuver on the remaining seven wheels. We are talking here about increasing the odds of surviving, not eliminating the risk altogether. So where should the Army spend \$3.3 million? Buy one Stryker, convert eight M113A2 Gavins to M113A3, or up armor twenty-two Humvees?

The Stryker does have an obvious reconnaissance or support role on hard roads and trails, and where the terrain is fairly open and not too extreme. In fact, the Marine Corps limits its LAVs to a reconnaissance role. Incidentally, due to unforeseen transmission problems, Strykers will eventually undergo a planned \$111 million refurbishment.

With its sophisticated communications systems and high speed, the Stryker can transmit battlefield intel rapidly and haul ass out of hotspots. But its armor has been criticized as being too thin, and any additions will just add to the problem of trying to deploy it by C-130, which was the original requirement stipulated by General Shinseki.

So is the Stryker better than the M113 in Iraq? Or has it been deployed to a theater of operations that may become increasingly unforgiving, in a peacekeeping role to which it may be unsuited?

John Higgs is a graduate of Gunsite, DTI and Yavapai firearms schools and is an NRA firearms instructor. ✕



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Continued from page 20

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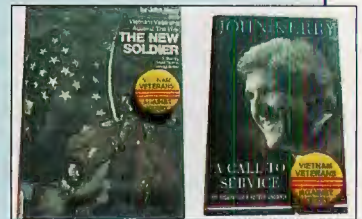
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Candidate Kerry On The Web

Londoners may have Hyde Park, but the rest of the world has the Web. And 'Mericans also have the First Amendment, so if the Fourth Estate doesn't serve their interests they go to the web and sort it out themselves. Here, in no particular order, is our latest collection of Anti-Kerry web sites, with the latest additions listed first. None of these are sponsored by nor vetted by *SOF*, but they will no doubt all be of interest to *SOF* readers.

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Command Guidance

Continued from page 6

political gain is not fit to be Commander in Chief."

Via a spokeswoman, John O'Neill told this reporter "John Kerry's great enemy has always been the truth. To the degree that we can spread the truth, Kerry will lose the election. The truth is Kerry was not a war hero: Instead he was detested as a traitor by most of the people who served with him. He represented the radical fringe of the anti-war movement and met repeatedly with the North Vietnamese while his comrades were in the field. He betrayed them. In addition, it's easy to understand why he threw his medals once you realize how he got them. He was a self-promoter who magnified minor self-inflicted scratches into wounds in order to come home after four months as opposed to the one-year tour served by everyone else. SOF readers should get informed about the real John Kerry and spread the word. ...e-mails and letters to your local papers can help bring this crucial issue to the public."

During an interview with Robert L. Noe, CPT, USA (Ret.), [www.vnsfvetakerry.com] Special Forces veteran Noe stated: "Steve Sherman is hosting a rally in Boston at the time of the Democratic National Convention — a re-enactment of the Winter Soldier's Investigation — but with *real* veterans." Noe also stated that, "Kerry stuck his nose into the treatment of Iraqi POWs [at Abu Grahیب prison outside Baghdad], but most vets don't think he has the moral high ground to comment because he admitted to war crimes during the Vietnam War."

Appropriately, Kerry's own words are damaging his credibility. For example, one of Kerry's gaffs is, "I voted for the \$87 billion [supplemental Iraq War appropriation] before I voted against it." Or his flip-flop regarding throwing his medals or ribbons — take your pick — over the White House fence.

Many agree that Kerry being elected president would be a bad dream. If Kerry continues losing credibility and the Democratic National Committee dumps him so that it can insert Hillary Clinton, that would be a nightmare.

N.E. MacDougald is a former SOF Sr. Field Editor. He served with the 519th M.I. Bn MACV in 1966 and was a participatory journalist in Cuba and Rhodesia with SOF.

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SOUND OFF

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

The Death Wagons of Iraq

In Iraq, a Humvee — the modern military's jeep — is involved in an enemy action or a serious fender bender or rollover almost daily. Lt. Gen. Thomas F. Metz's command has experienced 13 Humvee rollovers, resulting in 17 of his soldiers dying. "Nine of the deaths occurred in the last 90 days," he says.

Gen. Metz says that most rollovers occur when "the driver has lost control of the vehicle." In a letter to his unit, he summed up other causes, such as "aggressive driving, lack of situational awareness, rough terrain, poor/limited visibility, adverse traffic conditions, improvised configurations and failure to wear seat belts."

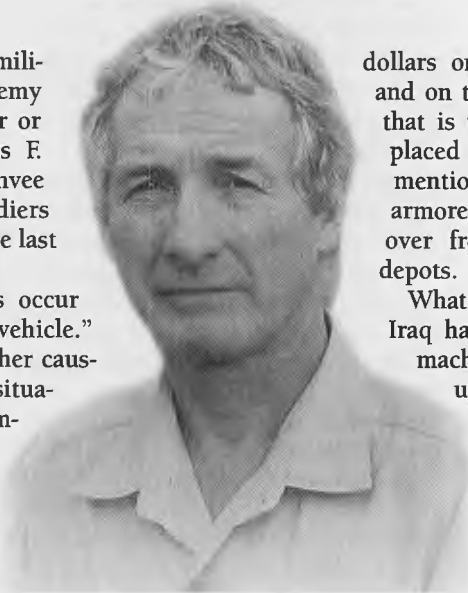
Amen on the aggressive driving. If bad guys are firing rockets and automatic weapons and blowing off mines left, right and center, no one in his or her right mind would drive on the most dangerous roads in the world the way we oh-so-carefully drive by a parked police car on the freeway. As longtime guerrilla-war veteran Lt. Col. Ben Willis (retired) puts it, "The MO would be to put the pedal to the metal."

The problem is that the soft-skinned Humvee was conceived as a light utility truck — not a close combat vehicle. "The Humvee is horribly thin-skinned and underpowered," says Army veteran Scott Schreiber, who drove one for six years. "It should be used in roles that don't call for armor. If the role calls for armor, it's simple: use armor."

At the end of World War II, I was in a recon company in Italy. We started with armored cars — M-8s — but as Terrible Tito's terrorists started using roadside mines and staging ambushes similar to the mean stuff going down in Iraq, our leaders quickly got rid of those thin-skinned suckers and put us in light tanks — M-24s. Within a year, as the guerrilla war with Yugoslavia heated up, we were given Sherman tanks — M-4s — with their even-thicker armor protection. And when a blown mine or ambush slapped shrapnel or slugs against the sides of our 36-ton tanks, we sat safely inside those steel walls, with our weapons turned full-bore on the enemy. Our armor protection gave us the critical edge our troopers should have today.

But here we are in Iraq after 15 bloody months still welding steel plate onto Humvees. Sure, our soldiers gain a tad more protection, but it also turns the vehicles into rollover queens because it shifts their center of gravity.

Meanwhile, we have the Pentagon spending billions of



dollars on irrelevant gold-plated fighter aircraft and on the lightly armored Stryker — a vehicle that is not battle-ried and that the Army has placed in relatively safe northern Iraq. Not to mention the thousands of potentially lifesaving armored personnel carriers — M-113s — left over from the Cold War gathering dust in depots.

What's further wrong with this picture is that Iraq has excellent steelworkers and first-class machine shops that could be put to good use upgrading captured Iraqi equipment into armored vehicles capable of protecting our warriors while also securing our long, exposed supply lines.

Our modern generals might give a lot of lip service to protecting the force, but any way you cut it, what's going on in Iraq is criminal.

Clearly there's a disconnect. The brass need to spend less time in their luxurious lakefront palaces and get down on the ground with the troops.

Maybe then they'll develop a greater sense of urgency about what's really needed on those killer roads the same way the 88th Division commanding general, Maj. Gen. Bryant E. Moore, did with us back in Italy and then again in Korea — where he was eventually killed as a corps commander leading from the front.

And maybe our lawmakers should stop by Walter Reed hospital and get some firsthand skinny from the terribly wounded being treated there about what a death wagon the Humvee has become from the way it's presently being used.

"How many soldiers and Marines need to be maimed or killed by roadside bombs before Congress will get off their tails?" Mary Martino rightfully asks. "My son is serving his country with honor and pride in Iraq ... and has the right to expect that his country will do whatever it takes to protect him in his duties."

— Eilhys England contributed to this column.

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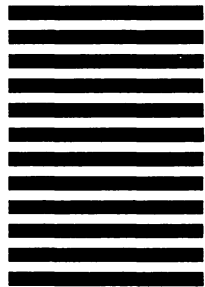
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