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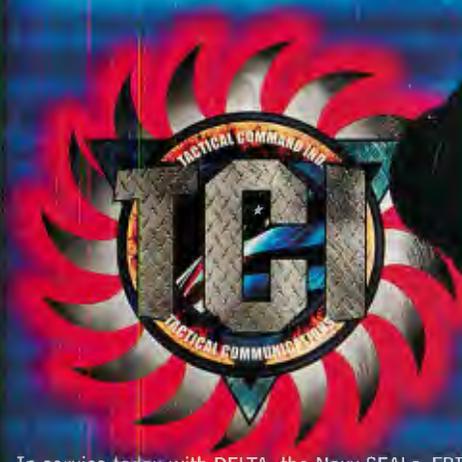
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On The Cover

Keeping the peace in another country can be a thankless job – just ask the French about the former "pearl of Western Africa," the Ivory Coast.
Photo: Yves DeBay



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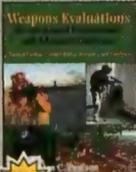
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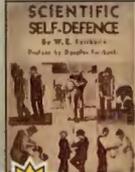
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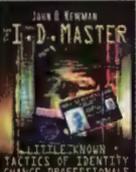


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Robert K. Brown, Editor/Publisher



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Canadian Snipers in Afghanistan

My son became one of your subscribers last year and sends me his copies when he has read them. It is nice to see positive well-written articles about what the troops in both of our countries and those of our Allies are doing to try and keep us safe. I can only imagine how proud the troops feel when they see the support and thanks mentioned in the SOF articles.

In Canada we see few positive publications about the efforts of our troops in Afghanistan, let alone showing support and thanks for what they are doing. But in *Maclean's Magazine* dated 15 May 2006 there was an article by Michael Friscolanti called "We were abandoned," it was about the Canadian Sniper Team that supported U.S. troops during Operation Anaconda in the Shahikot Valley of Afghanistan in 2002. As you will remember during this operation the Team in question were recommended for the Bronze Star by their American commanders "for heroism on the battlefield." Unfortunately all of the good things the Team did were washed away by unsupported accusations of desecrating an enemy corpse. The way the team was treated by the National Investigation Service and Canadian Military is hard to believe. This treatment has caused three of the Team to leave the Canadian Military, destroying the hopes, dreams and mental well being of the Team Leader.

If you have an opportunity to read this article, you would find it very worthwhile.

You have a great magazine!

Dennis Blake

SOF Website

Two comments: 1) I like the current look of the website a lot better than those of the past; 2) I think SOF is getting better all the time. Great stories, news, commentaries. Now... If you could just put it out twice a month!

Dan L. Bayes
Hillsboro, TX

Dan: Thanks for the kind words...but, once a month is quiet enough, thank you very much. Don't forget to vote...regards;

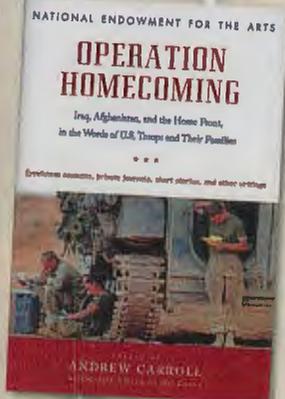
Lt.Col. Robert K. Brown, USAR (Ret.)
Editor/Publisher, Soldier of Fortune Magazine

Psy War

Thank you for printing SSG Jack Lewis' piece, "Psy War" in the February 2006 issue. It is one of the best-written stories I've seen in SOF. I encourage you to seek more from this author, and we all should look forward to his book.

Mike Fogarty
San Francisco

Yeh, we like his work, too. You'll be pleased to know the book *Operation Homecoming* is now in print, and available from Random House (ISBN 1-4000-6562-3 @ \$26.95). For more information on the book project, go to www.OperationHomecoming.gov. But don't get the book if you have anything else planned for the day it will arrive. It tells the human side of the sandbox wars like no other has thus far, and you won't be putting it down. ▶



John Kelleher (advisor Thu Duc Dioc)
San Francisco

John: Hearing from you is great...about knocked my socks off...will make a point of getting to S.F. so we can chew the fat...what are you doing? What happened in Thu Duc after I left? What have you been doing for 30 years? I recently got a letter from Sinton, one of the lads with the Radio Research project or what ever it was named.

Lt.Col. Robert K. Brown, USAR (Ret.)
Editor/Publisher
Soldier of Fortune Magazine ✉

Subject: "Respect for Service" by LTC Drenkowski

LTC Drenkowski's article hit the nail on the head and I have an answer as to why the Corps is different. The Corps has an institutional memory. The honored traditions of Corps provide the very last reason for a warrior to struggle on when all other reasons have failed. I can not speak to the Army's failings but I sure as hell know the Air Force's.

The Air Force has no respect for history. There is only limited leadership and lip service to core values. This is due to the fact that the Air Force primarily consists of support personnel. No matter how close to the "tip of spear" they claim to be, the reality is of air conditioned offices and safe flightlines. They have no understanding of warrior values and events that forge such men.

When people ask if I served in the military, I always tell them no - I vacationed in the Air Force for six years instead. If I could go back and change that, I would.

MB

Marines!

LTC Dana Drenkowski, USAR, hit the nail on the head. I was Army for a short time in 1969. I learned then Marines do it better. Since that time, I have continued to observe and learn Marines do it better. I am an aerospace R&D engineer and had the privilege to work on DoD combat survivability engineering research projects. Everytime the Marines were involved, the Marines did everything better. I have several friends who are Marines, some close, and know all Marines do it better. And finally, when I and a very close companion helped with Marine recruiting at Tucson gun shows for a few years, I saw the Golden Hearts and Souls of Marines!

As a retired Marine Colonel once told me, with a small tear in the corner of his eye, "We know the value of life, ALL life."

Semper Fi from a former Army guy,

Milton Schick
President/CEO
Infinite Space Systems, Inc.

Congratulations

Bob: Congratulations on "30 years of raising hell for freedom!" Who would have guessed when we were fighting the good fight back in Thu Duc, that the S2 for 2/18 would be publishing for over 30 years. Hope this finds you in good health.





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◀ Sgt. Daniel Dunlap, from the Military Integrated Transitional Team, 101st ABN, gets familiar with the operation of a PK3 9mm sub-machine gun during a live-fire exercise at FOB Dagger, near Tikrit, Iraq. Photo: U.S. Army by SSG Russell Lee Klika

▶ A B-17G Flying Fortress of the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston, flies formation with a B-52 Stratofortress from the 2nd Bomb Wing at the 2006 Defenders of Liberty Airshow at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. This was the first time in history these two Fortresses ever flew formation together. Photo: USAF by MSG Michael A. Kaplan



Support the Grand Gals Who Support Our Troops!

Grand Gal No. 1:

Laura Brown, of Cody, Wyoming has been hand-making necklaces, which she sells, and holding raffles of donated prizes to gather laptops with webcams, which she places with cooperating GI medical facilities such as Walter Reed and Balboa Naval Hospital. Her own son returned safely home from the war, but this Grand Gal whose smile lights up the southern half of Wyoming has dedicated herself to helping those returning troops who have a layover in the hospital before they are finally home.

You can contact Laura Brown, or mail a tax-deductible donation of cash, a refurbished laptop, or computer games at 1526 19th St., Cody, WY 82414; phone: 307-587-9371; or via email to ohiobuckeyesfan@bresnan.net.

Or, if you want to see that famous smile, check out the website at: www.laptopsforthewounded.com as it has lot of good stuff, and links to other selfless helpers.

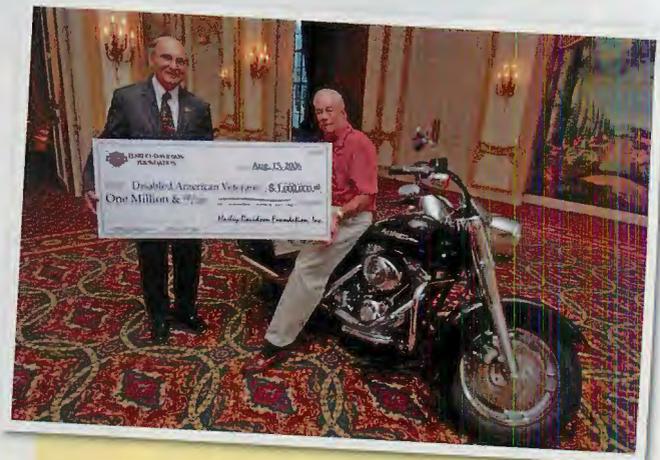
Grand Gal No. 2:

Mary Harper, of Belleview, Florida operates Operation Shoebox, which specializes in sending snacks, much-needed personal care items and lots of loving support to the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. And she helps guide others who want to do the same and needs a little advice. Operation Shoebox is also registered as a non-profit, so you can easily send her outfit a tax-deductible donation to help them with postage. You can contact her at P.O. Box 1465, Belleview, Florida, 34421; phone: 352-553-9362. Check out her web site at www.operationshoebox.com for a world-class selection of gorgeous troop pictures and many links to the like-minded.

Grand Gal No. 3:

Meet Jeanette Cram, another good-lookin' Mamma with a world-class smile, affectionately known among her beneficiaries as The Cookie Lady. And, having served more than 67,000 it's not an honorary title. I wonder if Guinness knows about her? At any rate, this no-bull sweetheart may well be the reigning expert on making, baking and getting cookies to the troops, and her web site is a mine of information on how to do it efficiently and what else to chuck in the box that the troops really can use... and where to get it for free from local medical professionals, how to do the customs forms and etc.

Check out her web site at www.TreatTheTroops.org for information that works, links to the usual suspects, and, of course, a peek at that world-class smile. You can email her at cookielady@TreatTheTroops.org or send some tax-deductible help (her postage is running a thousand bucks a month) to Jeanette Cram, 22 Wing Shell Lane, Hilton Head, South Carolina 29926. If you phone (843-682-3783) remember you may be taking her away from the mixing bowl when she's working on preparing the second batch of 160,000 cookies.



▲ Ride On! At this summer's Disabled American Veterans (DAV) national convention in Chicago, Harley-Davidson announced a \$1 million gift from the Harley-Davidson Foundation, Inc. to the DAV in support of the services DAV provides to America's veterans.

The gift extends the Company's long-standing relationship with the military, which goes as far back as World War I when the company produced more than 20,000 motorcycles for the war effort. During World War II, Harley-Davidson shifted its entire production to military support and the Motor Company received five coveted Army-Navy "E" Awards for excellence in wartime production.

Here, Arthur H. Wilson (right), national adjunct and CEO of the DAV accepts the check from Jim Ziemer (left), Harley-Davidson, Inc. president and CEO, on behalf of the Harley-Davidson Foundation, Inc. to help bolster the support the DAV provides to nearly 1.3 million disabled American veterans. ✎

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"Virtual" Fence: America's Maginot Line?, Part 2

Is It Star Wars, Global Hawk, or Google Earth?
By Dr. Martin Brass



"We have increased funding for border security by 66 percent, and expanded the BP from about 9,000 to 12,000 agents. By the end of 2008, we will increase the number of BP officers by an additional 6,000 - doubling the size of the BP since the President took office. At the same time, we will construct high-tech fences in urban corridors and build new patrol roads and barriers in rural areas. We will create a virtual fence that employs motion sensors, infrared cameras, and unmanned aerial vehicles to detect and prevent illegal crossings." - Office of the U.S. President

The Administration figured that much out, but they couldn't quite figure out how to do it. So they set the multibillion-dollar program up for grabs.

They got the usual takers.

The company execs gathered their electronic geeks and asked them to figure out a program that sounded better than that of the competition. The *Washington Post* researched their high tech proposals.

Northrop decided that military technology, including drones, would keep out all the illegal aliens. The Global Hawk Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) would scan large areas and the Killer-Bee would hone in on intruders in low altitudes and specific target areas.

Ericsson rejected the Star Wars idea and wants to give all the Border Patrol (BP) agents their wireless video equipped cell phones so they can go post haste for the chase. Tall towers lining the border would provide border surveillance.

Lockheed wanted to put unmanned blimps in the skies with electronic

devices that can detect the intruders. The agent would launch a paper-airplane-like UAV to survey the area and Predator drones and tethered balloons would fly above the personal UAVs.

Boeing also wanted hundreds of spy towers along the border and agents floating miniature Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) flying from the back of their trucks as the agents race down the roads chasing illegals.

And Raytheon wanted the agents to get addicted to one more gadget, as they chase druggies in their trucks—Google Earth. A satellite powered screen in each vehicle would detect illegals in the vast desert and mountainous border.

And of course, all would love to provide contractors for big bucks to help or replace the Border Patrol Agents. **STOP PRESS: And the winner is Boeing.**

When bad weather comes, contractors carefully lock the aerostats down. The systems behave like huge weather vanes in strong winds.



So What's New and Going to Cost More?

We queried two Texas icons that had survived years of the 'war zone' at the U.S.-Mexico Border and had suffered through Washington's ordained fences, both real and virtual, all a flop.

The two lean, towering, rugged Texans are personifications of the American 'true grit' that Hollywood tried to capture in the movies of the Wild, Wild West.

Joaquin Jackson is a charmingly rough and tumble, no bull spokesman who served nine years as a State Trooper and is a twenty-seven veteran of the legendary Texas Rangers (1966-1993). Sporting his traditional trademark cowboy hat and boots, he proudly carries a bit of Texas with him and symbolizes America at the height of its untamed glory.

That's part of why Nick Nolte modeled his lead role in the movie *Extreme Prejudice* on Jackson's colorful character.

Jackson describes the centuries old tradition of the Rangers' in his book *One Ranger* as "partisans out for blood for as long as it took to get it or die trying".

Chief J. William Carter is a thirty-year veteran of the BP who served as Chief and Deputy Assistant Commissioner. Chief Carter, looking like the hard charging Washington pro he is, has learned to navigate the political game after years of experience with lobbying Congress.

For four decades, the two law enforcement officials had witnessed and endured towers, UAV, blimps, cameras, and other new fangled gizmos.

Funnel the Illegal Aliens Along the Fences

We started out by asking Robert K. Brown, *Soldier of Fortune* magazine publisher's pressing question:

"Why can't we build a physical fence along the 2000 mile border, why settle for just a virtual border?"

"We can get by with a high tech 'virtual fence', but I think a physical barrier is better," Carter seemed to agree.

"We've got triple fencing in San Diego and it worked. Other fences are scattered along the border.

"You pick a major port of entry, you decide how far east and west you need to go with fencing. Then you decide on

heavy crossing areas like Eagle Pass, El Paso, Del Rio, and Laredo. If you have 25 miles of fence that they can't penetrate, you sit at the end of each fence.

"You fence each side of the river area so BP can sensor and that pins the illegal aliens down to a small area.

Leave the Hole in the Fence Alone

"When I was in the BP," Carter reminisced, "there were holes in one border fence that illegal immigrants were constantly perpetrating. We got some money at headquarters for the fence repair and we got all excited.

"We always got excited when funds were promised, because we never have money," Jackson piped in.

"We don't want it", the BP chief told us," Carter continued.

Surprised, we asked him 'why?'

"Because that's where the illegals are coming in," he said. "We know where the hole is, so we are going to be sitting there waiting for them."

Its a Horse, No, Its a Person, No, Its a Cow?

"Virtual fence" technology has been around for a long time, detecting illegal immigrants and drug smugglers. It started in 1972 in the Yuma Sector when we received Vietnam era seismic sensors," Carter said.

"Problem is, they didn't tell you anything other than 'it' crossed. Is 'it' a horse, a person, a cow? Technology in place today literally tells you, there are three people and six cows, and one vehicle," Carter said.

By 2000, 13,000 sensors were deployed countrywide, according to the Social Science Research Council. The motion and seismic sensors can detect motion and heat within a 50-foot radius and the metal sensors have a 250-foot range. Remotely controlled video cameras that have a five mile radius were also used so that BP agents could detect clandestine entries, train cameras on illegal immigrants and smugglers, count the number of the intruders, and detect any weapons they might be carrying.

The problem is that by late 2005, the Integrated Surveillance Intelligence System had been deployed along only 4% of the border, with 10,500 sensors operative. The sensors were sensitive to various weather conditions and they still can't tell the difference between animals and humans.

Agents wasted their time on goose chases, and animals were counted as well as illegal immigrants.

'Fat Albert', A Big Unmanned Spy Balloon

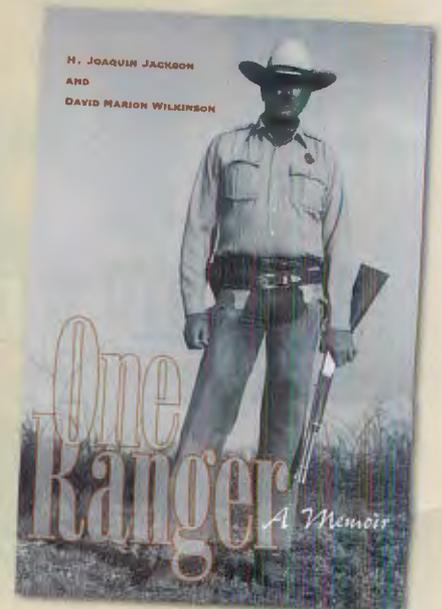
"And we've had Aerostat technology—the Tethered Aerostat Radar System, for years. It's a big unmanned helium balloon with radar equipment twice the size of the Goodyear Blimp. It tethers from the ground by a cable, hovers up to 15,000 feet and monitor any movement up to 150 miles away," Jackson said.

"U.S Senator Dennis DeConcini Ariz (D) got appropriations to put up twelve or fifteen of them from San Diego to Brownville Texas, several hundred miles apart and to be deployed in different stages. He had subcontractors working on those things and he was raking in a bundle for his campaigns on that deal.

"When Customs got that thing, I heard that they cost \$15 million per aerostat.

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) exposed the Senator in 1993, and put a price of \$18 million on each aerostat. Parry and Romani, a company closely tied to Sen. DeConcini lobbied for four new aerostats. The company's client, a company called TCOM, in turn 'won the lion's share of the contract, worth more than \$100 million'.

The Newscast ripped into the Senator's claims that "that radar system detects anything that is moving, all the way from Florida to San Diego" and that the Fat Alberts were up 70% of the time, claiming that 40% was more like it. The Federation of American Scientists said that the balloons were up an



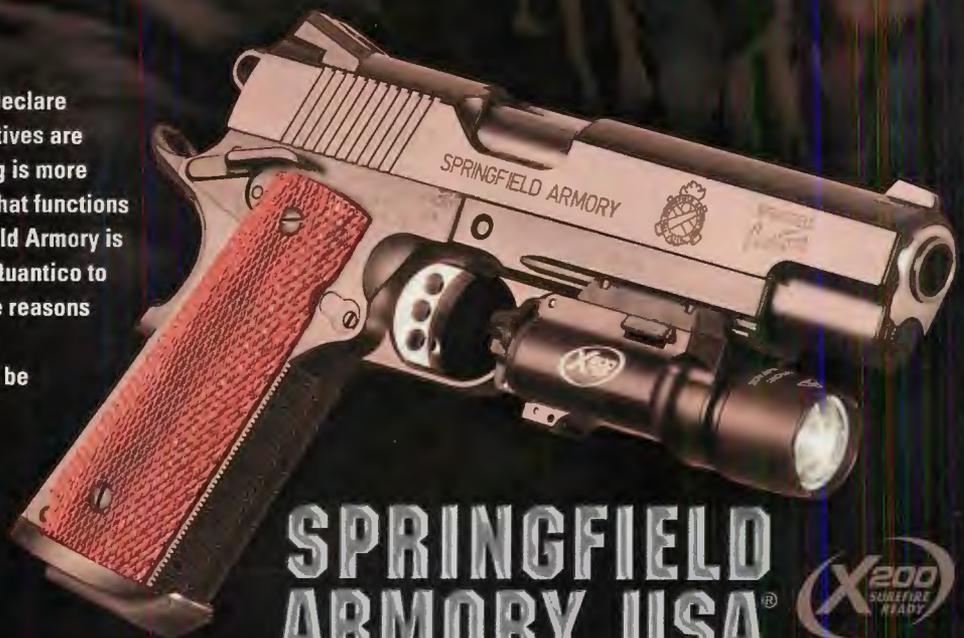
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Staff Sgt. Brian Lavigne checks the aerostat's internal gear while the balloon is anchored on the pad. Contractors handle daily operations at the pads — Lavigne reviews their work.

average of 59% of the time.

Let's Make Sure the Druggies Get Away

"The big problem with the balloon was that those bastards in Washington were sitting up there and couldn't figure out how to use the intercepts to pick up ground traffic. Where they placed the intercepts drives you crazy," Jackson said in disgust.

"I called the whole aerostat program a joke," Jackson, who shoves political correctness aside with his big boots, said.

"When they first were installed, the U.S. Customs operated them to pick up incoming aircraft from Mexico which would be potential drug smugglers. Their operation went like this: they would call Sacramento, Calif., U.S. Customs headquarters, then California would call U.S. Customs sector in Houston, Texas, who would call air intercept for the Marfa area which was in San Angelo, Texas, some 300 air miles from the Border, meaning the Rio Grande, or as the Mexicans call it the 'Rio Bravo'.

"The aerostat is North and West of the river some 30 to 50 miles depending on the direction, positioned so air intercept could react to the call in San Angelo in time. But the fastest aircraft they had at the time was a King-Air twin engine with cruising speed of about 300 mph. By the time the interceptor arrived, the smuggler air craft would have flown into the U.S. to a clandestine strip on some ranch or

a deserted farm, off load their drugs, marijuana or cocaine, and be back into Mexico before the intercept arrived.

"The solution would have been simple—they should have put the aircraft in Fort Stockton, close enough to intercept the druggies, and they should have called Houston directly instead of going around in circles. The druggies figured out right away that they were safe from Customs's flopped policy.

"They never picked up any one like that to this day, maybe one light aircraft with 4-500 pounds of marijuana that crashed up in New Jersey or somewhere like that," the Ranger said fatalistically.

Now You See It, Now You Don't

"The aerostats were doomed for failure," Carter said. "The slightest wind in the desert brings it down.

"You see it down more than you see it up. The thing is up, its down. The smugglers illegal aliens, or drugs smugglers know when its up.

"They cranked them up, then pulled them down in poor weather conditions.

In Cudjoe Key Florida, Fat Albert broke away during bad weather in 1984. A navy jet had to shoot the wild Fat Albert down.

In Marfa, high winds tore an aerostat into four pieces in January 1992. In Rio Grande City, strong winds snapped the tether of another. Repairs cost \$1 million. In Eagle Pass, one broke free and crashed 40 miles away, according to PBS.

Cold War Boondoggle

The Pentagon had developed the aerostat design during the Cold War in 1969 when a Cuban pilot landed his fully-armed MiG at Homestead Air Force Base in Florida, PBS reported.

No one had a clue that the pilot had infiltrated until he radioed the control tower, asking in Spanish for permission to defect. An embarrassed DOD quickly ordered an aerostat to detect intruders.

Drug traffickers flew low into U.S. territory because it was 'cheap, easy, swift, and convenient' and took advantage of unmonitored air space. While the Coast Guard and Customs Service were ill equipped to deal with the incursions, the military focused on the threat of high altitude, high speed So-

viet bombers.

The first anti-drug aerostat went up in 1985 at High Rock Grand Bahama Island.

"The first one dedicated for Customs use was at Fort Huachuca, Arizona in 1987," Jackson said. "They are radar equipped to work with U.S. customs to detect air smuggling from Mexico. The Air force has them now."

The aerostat system that detected low flying aircraft was supposed to plug the holes in the detection system.

But the holes just moved further west.

"Fat Albert" Still Flies Over Marfa

"Aerostats use the FLIR system at night. They could effectively install them in places like Marfa, that flat open country. I checked on the aerostat West of Marfa and it is still in operation and run by the Air Force. You could easily see people moving across that country with the Forward-looking infrared cameras (FLIR)," Jackson said.

"FLIR are capable of scanning the horizon, making them a valuable tool inside of night stalker aircraft.

Infrared thermal imaging devices make electronic images out of emissions of invisible heat. Unlike thermometers, which require direct physical contact, thermal-imaging devices such as the long range infrared "cameras" can "see" at a distance and precisely measure differences in heat. The thermal-imaging devices can see through rain, snow, fog, heavy cloud cover, and at night. It can see through oil, coolants, large bodies of water, buildings, and even through the surface of the earth.

An Infrared Camera Tells the Truth

One enlisted man involved in spotting illegal aliens at Ft. Huachuca owes his freedom to an infrared camera. When one of his apprehensions included three females, two of the females accused the trooper of raping them. Just as he was about to be convicted, he was saved by a videotape of the incident as recorded by an infrared camera aboard the aerostat. The recording proved that the enlisted man came no closer than two feet to the female illegal aliens. He was cleared of all charges. ✕

NEXT: Chief Carter and Ranger Jackson tell us what they think of the deployment of the National Guard at the Southern Border, and if they believe the border can be secured.

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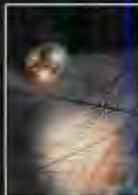
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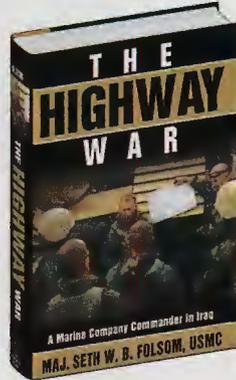
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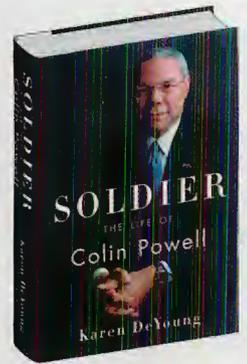


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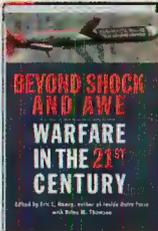
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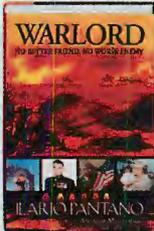
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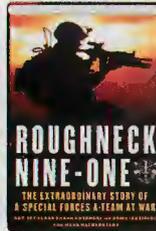
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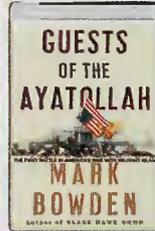
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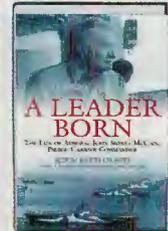
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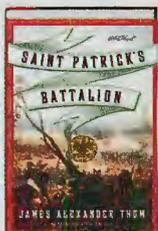
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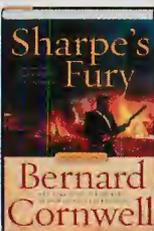
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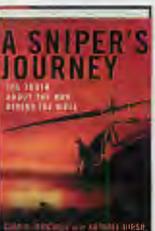
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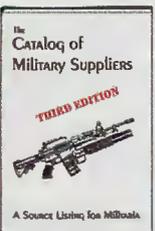
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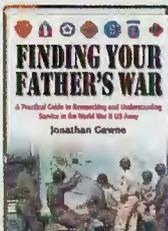
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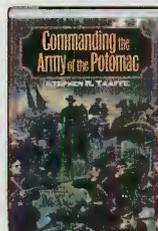
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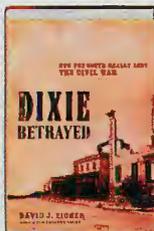
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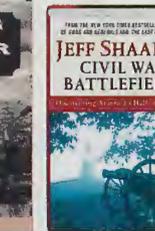
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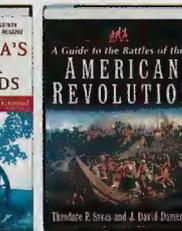
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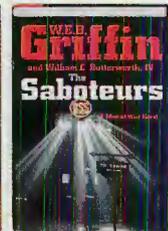
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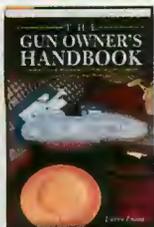
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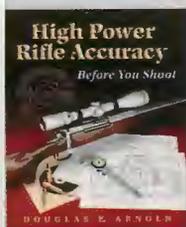
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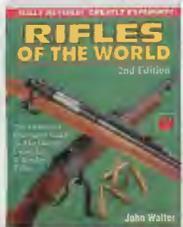
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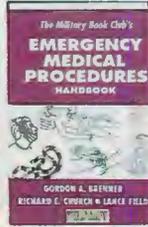
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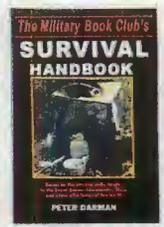
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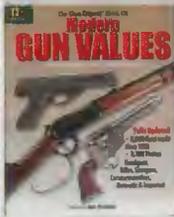
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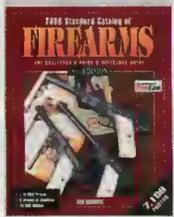
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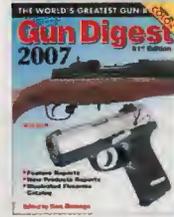
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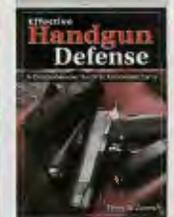
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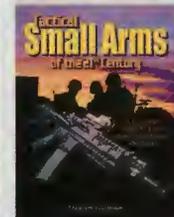
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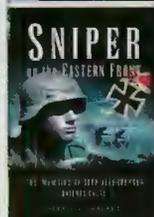
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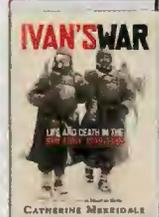
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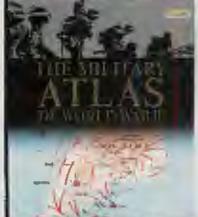
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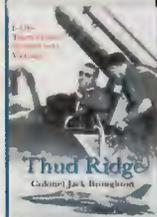
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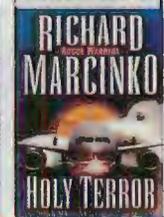
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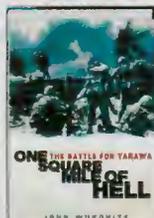
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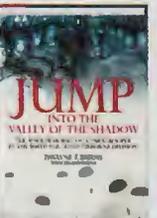
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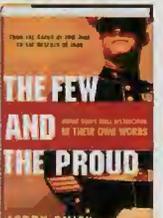
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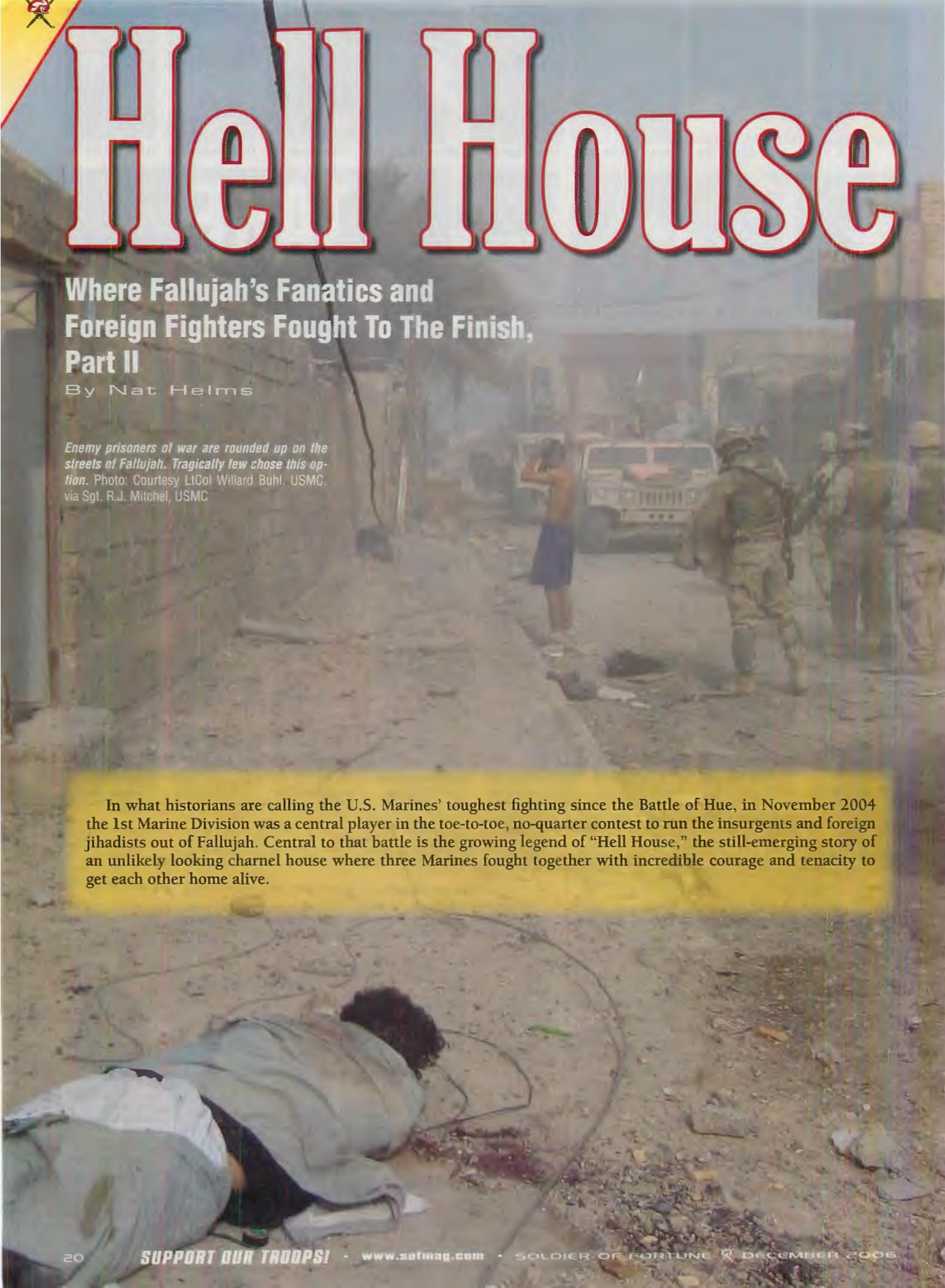


Hell House

Where Fallujah's Fanatics and Foreign Fighters Fought To The Finish, Part II

By Nat Helms

Enemy prisoners of war are rounded up on the streets of Fallujah. Tragically few chose this option. Photo: Courtesy LtCol Willard Buhl, USMC, via Sgt. R.J. Mitchel, USMC



In what historians are calling the U.S. Marines' toughest fighting since the Battle of Hue, in November 2004 the 1st Marine Division was a central player in the toe-to-toe, no-quarter contest to run the insurgents and foreign jihadists out of Fallujah. Central to that battle is the growing legend of "Hell House," the still-emerging story of an unlikely looking charnel house where three Marines fought together with incredible courage and tenacity to get each other home alive.



► The saga of First Sergeant Brad Kasal and men of the Thundering Third was first told in the May, 2005 SOF. Now here's the rest of the story of heroism in that knock-down, drag-out battle that resulted in more than one participant receiving the Marine Corps' second-highest medal for valor.

Last month we left a squad of Marines from 3/1 Marines – the Thundering Third – just inside Hell House, duking it out with jihadists who had them outnumbered, outgunned and pined down as they entered a dark room where everyone fired simultaneously.

“The guy in front of me was on my right side. I fired at him and he opened up on me. He had an AK. He shot me through my right leg and right wrist. The fire that hit me all came from the right side. As soon as that happened I knew we were in a shit sandwich.”

Now disarmed, Staff Sgt. Chris Pruitt went outside to bring in the two Marines he had posted for flank security: One of them had a SAW. Inside the dark house, the two remaining Marines were blazing away at the insurgents illuminated in the muzzle blasts of their weapons. One of the jihadists was hit so many times his chest rig caught on fire. He kept coming until chopped down by a full mag of nine mil.

Outside, Pruitt was rethinking his plan to bring the two flankers into the fight. One of them was already shot by a jihadist firing from the roof and the Marine with the SAW was pinned down. Pruitt had run into a buzz saw.

“Then the S.O.B. started shooting at me from the roof. He was behind a foot-or-higher wall on the roof,” Pruitt recalled. “I sprinted from right there to the gate, the whole time taking fire.”

Pruitt made it outside the gate in time to see Lance Cpl. Alex Nicoll, Corporal Robert Joseph (“R.J.”)



Mitchell, and 1st Sgt. Bradley Kasal heading his way.

“I could see Nicoll 60 or 80 yards away from me, he was point. His eyes were all big. He was trying to figure out what was going on,” Pruitt says. Mitchell, Kasal, and a handful of Marines were behind him. Kasal pulled Pruitt out of the line of fire and got a report on what was happening.

The news was grim. Pruitt told him at least three Marines were inside the house with an unknown number of foreign fighters who knew how to fight. All of the Marines were probably hit, Pruitt said. Meanwhile Mitchell and Kasal gave him first aid.

Mitchell radioed 1st Lt. Jesse Grapes what he found out from Pruitt. After a quick conference Mitchell and his fire team rushed through the same gate Pruitt had just stumbled out of to get help. Kasal went with them as a rifle-



(above) A Navy Cross medal, the United States' second-highest award for battlefield heroism, sits on a podium before a ceremony aboard Camp Pendleton, Calif., 28 July 2006. Minutes later, the Navy Cross was presented to former Marine Sgt. Robert J. Mitchell for his heroism during the battle for Fallujah, Iraq in November 2004. Photo: USMC by Cpl. George Hruby

man. For a moment it was very quiet except for someone screaming in agony. The Marines formed into a four-man stack and cautiously entered the house, Mitchell said.

Young jihadist disrobes as he surrenders to unidentified PSD in Fallujah. Photo: Courtesy LtCol Willard Buhl, USMC



"We knew there was a casualty and we had to go in there and get him. I could see two doors and a stairwell. Beyond the second doorway I could see a Marine's boots. Then we just headed inside," Mitchell says.

Kasal, with Nicoll covering his back, moved into the house and turned left, he said. The Marines started fanning out thru the house.

To protect their rear, Kasal grabbed two unidentified young Marines who had showed up and directed them to lay security on the stairwell and keep it secure. Then he and Nicoll moved across the room to the far doorway to search the room, Nicholl recalls.

Almost immediately Kasal encountered a jihadist.

"I emptied 8-10 rounds into his chest before he finally went down and as he fell to the floor I noticed him still moving so I placed two more well aimed shots into his forehead to make sure." Kasal says.

Kasal then called out to the two Marines covering their rear. He got no response. They, for reasons unknown, had disappeared. He called again and got a response he did not expect: An insurgent opened up on full automatic with his AK-47 and ripped a burst across the back of both Marine's legs. Kasal's right leg was nearly severed from his body and Nicoll's leg was shattered to pieces below his left knee. Both men fell to the ground, Nicoll says.

Meanwhile Mitchell and his partner had moved through the second room searching for the wounded Marines they knew were inside. They could see one of them lying on the floor to their immediate front. When Mitchell reached his side he discovered several more Marines in the room he was unaware of, he recalls.

"It was Carlisle lying on the floor. He was lying face down and was bleeding from his leg. I started to apply direct pressure to stop the bleeding. I felt his bones shift. He screamed and I stopped. I was afraid I would do more damage and cause him more pain." Mitchell recounted.

"That is when I think I heard Nicoll and First Sergeant get hit. Shooting was going on everywhere. Somebody fired an AK and I heard a scream. I think it was Nicoll screaming in pain although I am not 100 percent sure. I decided to go back to where Kasal and Nicoll were," Mitchell recounted.

Nicoll said he never understood where the burst of fire came from that took them out. All he knows is that one second he was standing and the next he was laying on the floor. Kasal was lying next to him. Both men started crawling towards the cover of the little room off to the left, they said. They knew they had to get out of the line of fire or die, he said.

"As rounds were still impacting all around as I laid there I started crawling inside of the room I just cleared in order to find some cover," Kasal recalls.

"Lance Cpl. Nicoll then fell inside the doorway and I looked back and saw rounds still impacting around him and then he winced and grabbed his stomach and I saw blood coming from between his fingers."

Kasal grabbed Nicoll and started dragging him toward the cover of the small room. Inside was the dead man Kasal had shot moments before. The corpse was still twitching, Kasal says.



Then-Cpl. Robert J. Mitchell, of Omaha, Neb., talks with a Marine combat correspondent as he prepares to depart Iraq 24 November 2004, less than two weeks after receiving his fourth battlefield wound in Fallujah during Operation Phantom Fury. Mitchell, a squad leader with 3rd Platoon, Company K, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, received most of these wounds during a close quarters fight for an insurgent stronghold where his deeds would later earn him a Navy Cross. Photo: USMC



From left, the Custom CDP II™, Desert Warrior™ and Team Match II™, each in .45 ACP. Also pictured, the new Kimber LifeAct™ Guardian Angel™ non-lethal self defense device.



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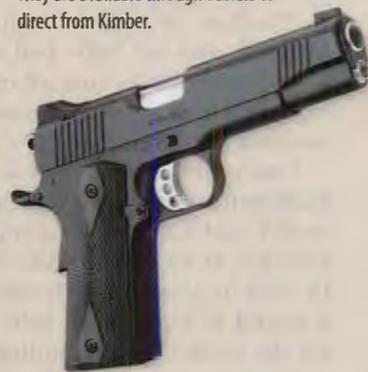
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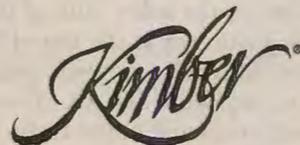
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Continuing the Legacy



Lt. Gen. John F. Sattler, commanding general of the I Marine Expeditionary Force, congratulates former Marine Sgt. Robert J. Mitchell on his receipt of the Navy Cross during a ceremony at Camp Pendleton, Calif., 28 July 2006. Mitchell, who was wounded four times during his two tours in Iraq, received the medal, the nation's second-highest award for battlefield heroism, in recognition of his actions during the battle for Fallujah, Iraq in November 2004. Photo: USMC by Cpl. George Hruby

As soon as Kasal and Nicholl settled in the room Kasal discovered Nicholl was bleeding from multiple wounds. Disregarding his own desperate medical situation he began bandaging the young Marine with his pressure bandage.

"Because we both could bleed to death and we both had multiple wounds I decided to use all our dressings on Nicoll so that at least one of us could live," Kasal says.

Concerned that follow-on Marines might mistake their movement for the enemy and come in shooting, Kasal used his M-16 to mark the doorway. He said he knew that Marines seeing it would at least pause before spraying the room. Then he pulled out his 9mm pistol and waited for what was to come, Nicoll says.

Simultaneously Mitchell was making his move, he says. He knew Kasal and Nicoll were trapped in the small room on the other side of the house. The insurgent at the top of the stairs saw Mitchell moving and started spraying with his AK. The 7.62mm slugs impacted around Mitchell with sharp cracking explosions, he said.

Kasal was unaware Mitchell was coming. His attention was drawn to a fragmentation grenade an insurgent had just rolled into their hidey-hole.

"I heard a noise hit directly to my right. I rolled half over to get ready for whatever was next when I looked down and saw a pineapple grenade ly-

ing about three feet away from me on the floor. So I rolled over and pushed Nicoll down and lay on top of him using my body to shield him from the grenade blast," Kasal says.

The grenade wounded Kasal in 44 places on his legs, buttocks, and lower back. The explosion also left him momentarily stunned and nearly deaf as well. The explosion went off while Mitchell was running toward the room.

"I had to cross that danger area for four or five feet in that middle room," Mitchell said. "An insurgent on the roof had it covered through the skylight. Bullets were hitting all around me. I just remember small arms explosions until I got into the room with Nicoll and First Sergeant," he says.

Kasal was still trying to shake off the concussive effects of a grenade exploding three feet from his prone body, he said.

"Then all of the sudden out of nowhere Sgt. Mitchell came bursting into the room. He stopped in the doorway and immediately enemy fire began impacting all around him. He was immediately hit with some of the shrapnel from the exploding rounds as they hit the wall. He managed to get out of the way and joined us in the room.

"In my opinion and I'll say this to my grave, Sgt. Mitchell is the true hero that day," Kasal insists.

Mitchell has another point of view.

"Kasal was being 1st Sgt. Kasal. He told me, 'We need help.' He didn't sound excited or out of control, he was strictly business. He gave me a strict assessment of the situation. To me it was like getting an order from the First Sergeant when I came into the room. He told me I needed to concentrate on saving the lives of as many Marines as I can, save Nicoll, and then get the hell out."

"I didn't even really remember the grenade explosion, but I still got seven pieces of grenade shrapnel in my left leg. I guess it happened when I was running across the main room. It was only five or six steps. Kasal asked me if I was hurt and then when I saw the blood on my leg. It really didn't hurt that bad. I looked down and saw blood. I saw I was peppered with some pretty good sized pieces. My adrenaline was going strong so I didn't feel too much. Every wound I got was like that. It never hurt me until later and then it caused me some pain," Mitchell recalls.

Mitchell was more worried about a satchel charge or fragmentation grenade arriving air mail from somewhere outside the door, than dying from wounds, he says. He figured that Kasal had the door and as long as Kasal could hold a weapon nobody was going to get past him.

"That is when I found out my weapon got shot through the bolt. Even though it worried me I had to laugh," he says. "I had to laugh because the way I found out was pure Alex Nicoll, he was always making fun of a bad situation. Out of the blue he says, 'You know Mitchell, your rifle is screwed.' I look at it and there is a hole in the bolt. It was shot to shit, useless. I had to laugh, it wasn't what he said, it was the way he said it," Mitchell remembers.

About the same time Mitchell suddenly remembered he had a radio and called Grapes, he says. Up until then he had forgotten about it.

"I got on my radio, a PRC-148 about the size of a cell phone. I let Grapes know that Kasal, Nicoll and me were wounded and pinned down in the little room off to the left of the main entrance."

Mitchell's call for help galvanized Grapes into action to get them out. For the next hour he tried several ploys to reach the trapped trio, he said. None worked because the house was built like a fortress. Its design gave the insurgents a clear field of fire

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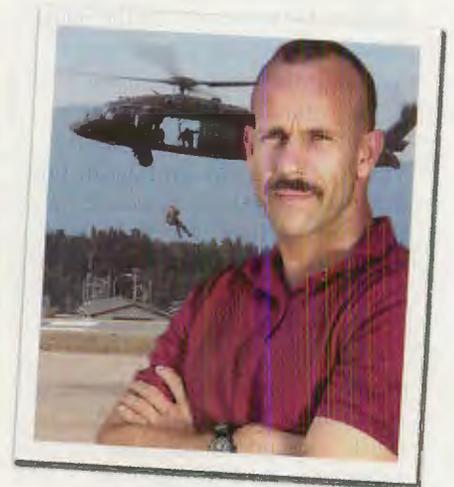
Can't reveal what happened next, though. Classified. But you can pretty much guess. Dale's still here, still training operatives, FBI agents, SWAT cops and a few lucky civilians. He went into battle, did his job (and earned his Star)... and after 10 years, he's now ready to teach you.

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Jim Curley

P.S. Remember, you don't risk a penny by ordering today. You have 9 full months to decide if this training is really for you. If you're not happy, you will have not paid a cent for checking it all out for yourself. P.P.S. I almost forgot... I have a special FREE BONUS for you here. It's an audio CD interview with Dale on "Thinking Fast Under Stress - Combat Stress Secrets". This is VERY cool "insider" info that only the top soldiers and operatives ever get. The reason why so many black belts get

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TRS should be commended for providing such well priced, well produced videos that offer TRULY cutting edge technology for personal and professional security. They are on the cutting edge of what's out there. - Mohsen Hafiz, Gig Harbor, WA

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Lance Cpl. Alex Nicoll strikes a pose for the folks back home with his M203 a few days before the Hell House episode. Photo: Courtesy Alex Nicoll

in every direction. It was impossible to reach the trapped Marines without exposing other Marines to immediate danger, Grapes says.

Eventually Grapes and the Marines with him came upon a plan to cut through the bars of a window on the side of the house that would allow them entry without exposing themselves to immediate fire. Once they were inside they could try and pin down the insurgents while more Marines rushed the room where Mitchell, Kasal, and Nicoll were holed up. It was a desperate plan – but it worked.

Grapes and Pvt. Justin Boswood stripped off their gear and squeezed through the opening. Grapes and Boswood knew approximately where the three wounded Marines were holed up but until they got inside the house they couldn't be sure exactly where

everything was.

Outside the room Boswood dragged a dead insurgent out of the doorway. When the opening was clear Grapes slid on his back into the main room with his weapon pointed up at the stairwell. Boswood knelt over him with his weapon pointed skyward as well. At the same time Lance Corporals Christopher Marquez and Jonathan Schaffer got ready to run through the kill zone and extract the three wounded Marines. Inside the room, Kasal was wondering if he was going to remain conscious. He knew he was bleeding at a prodigious rate, he said.

When everybody was in position Grapes gave the order to fire. Simultaneously all the shooters opened up on the stairwell, forcing the insurgents back while Marquez and Schaffer sprinted across the kill zone. In seconds they appeared in front of Kasal.

"As they grabbed me I kept hold of my 9mm pistol, thinking if the enemy started shooting then at least I could fire back and hopefully get them first as I was now worried about the two young Marines who were helping me," Kasal recalls.

Still under the suppressive fire laid down by Lt. Grapes and Pvt. Boswood, the two young Marines carried Kasal to the outside door without incident. When they came out the door Read snapped his famous picture of Kasal.

After recovering Kasal, the two young Marines made two more trips to bring out Mitchell and Nicoll. Meanwhile the Marines at the back of the house made their escape through a steel-shuttered window they had pulled open with the help of a Humvee.

Mitchell said he came out under his own power. "I didn't go back to the BAS (Battalion Aide Station) until two hours later. One of the Docs gave me a Percocet and I went back to the firm base. I told Lt. Grapes I had work to do. He said I didn't and that I had done enough and needed to go the BAS. When I got there I got a shot of morphine. They sent me to Bravo Surgical Team and then I went home. I had been wounded four times. I always thought three Purple Hearts was an automatic ticket home. That ain't true. I got to go home but not because I had four Hearts; because I was hurt bad enough," Mitchell says.

After Mitchell and the other Marines escaped, the insurgents had the little yellow house to themselves. It was a Pyrrhic victory. Shortly thereafter the house was destroyed with a 20-pound satchel charge. After the blast toppled the house the last surviving jihadist defiantly tossed a grenade from the rubble. Several Marines sent him to Allah with bursts of M-16 fire. Immediately afterward the debris was bulldozed into a shapeless pile of crushed debris. Inside were the remains of the jihadists.

Nicoll and Kasal were almost immediately evacuated back to the States. Nicoll ultimately lost his left leg below the knee. He retired from the Marine Corps as a Lance Corporal. Today he lives with Mitchell's family in Phoenix, Arizona and attends motorcycle technician's school with Mitchell. As soon as he graduates next year the pair plans to open their own shop making custom choppers.

After a two-year ordeal to save his leg, Kasal returned to active duty. On 1 May 2006 he was awarded the Navy Cross and promoted to Sergeant Major. He is currently on recruiting duty in his home state of Iowa.

Mitchell was evacuated back to the States shortly after Nicoll. While he was in the hospital he learned he had been meritoriously promoted to Sergeant. On 28 July 2006 he was awarded the Navy Cross. It wasn't enough to keep him in the Corps. Today he makes his home in Phoenix with his wife and infant son "R.J." He likes it that way. ☘

Nat Helms is a frequent contributor to SOF.

GI armor clusters up on Route Henry as 3-1 Marines maneuver around Army's 2-7 Cavalry, and the battle for Fallujah is about to be enjoined. Photo: Courtesy LtCol Willard Buhl, USMC



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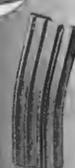
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If You Hyperventilate,

One-One Brokhausen Learns That Loving Oneself Is Important Even Under

By Nick Brokhausen

At the time of the Vietnam War, MACV-SOG (Military Assistance Command Vietnam – Studies and Observations Group), was one of the lesser-known of the many open secrets associated with that conflict. It was also one of the most effective fighting units ever assembled with a kill ratio exceedingly high – and a life expectancy exceedingly low. Many books have been written chronicling SOG's exploits, and many more are sure to come. The excellent new volume *We Few* by Nick Brokhausen, however, does not remind us that these men were heroes, as that is a given. It reminds us they were human, and as Brokhausen notes, "I hope it will convey the incredible strength and macabre sense of humor that one needs in order to survive." This volume, from which we are pleased to publish four excerpts, does this very well, indeed. Enjoy.

As we lift up the side of the mountain, I can see into the bowl which has eroded into a saddle between two peaks about two hundred yards across, sloping up to their tops from the trail in the center. It looks good from here: no ground fire. Everyone must be concentrating on the phantom team below. We know they have trail security elements. Covey spotted one of their bunkers at the far end of the saddle and the Cobras worked it over coming in. Yep, there it is. All

that remains is a smoking hole in the ground with torn up logs and parts of a human body lying just outside the burned area.

Mac is going in. I see the lead bird touch with the back of the skids. As it rolls forward, the nose dips and by the time the front of the skids are on the ground the back is already lifting. I see Mac and the four Yards with him bail out both sides. The last one leaves the aircraft about six feet in the air because he was slow, but they are all on the ground. Then it's our turn.

We aren't even on short final when I hear the pilot screaming, "Abort!" "Abort!" I look down where Mac landed and get sick to my stomach. He is lying on his back and right next to him is the trap door to a bunker concealed right at the crest of the trail. He has fallen on it and plugged the door.

There are two NVA trying to crawl out of a side entrance and the Yards shoot them. Worse yet, I can see about 15 other likely bunkers up-slope on the opposite side. I am standing on the skid and I feel the ship start to gain power. I instinctively know that they are going to abort and pull up, which will leave Mac with too few men to save himself. I slam the barrel of my CAR-15 in the back of the pilot's helmet and scream into the mike, "Put this bird down where he is, NOW!" He chops power. We slam into the slope and we all jump or are thrown clear. I land heavily. When I

hit the ground my ears feel like I just ripped them off. I still had the headset on when I jumped. The bird screams loudly as it winds up and is gone.

Immediately I get the Yards in some sort of fighting perimeter where we can at least hold on or fight our way to better ground. I run up in a crouch and Mac says, "Why did you land? I told them to abort."

"There are bunkers all over the hill to our right and eight of us can fight a lot harder than five," I yell back.

He grabs the radio handset. "Go tie in the team and let me bring in some air." I work my way down-slope when I see Xam Pot stand up and fire methodically six times like he's on the rifle range. He is standing upright, just like we did at the range; it is almost amusing, because he looks like a poster child for the NRA. I think he's shooting at nothing. He is new on the team and this is his first mission. I yell at Bop and Thua to see what he's firing at. A grenade goes off over by where Thua is and he yells at the team because he thinks one of the team has thrown it and it fell short. I run over to where Xam Pot is and down the trail I see the crumpled bodies of three NVA with a load of canteens on bamboo poles lying amongst their bodies. They had just walked up the trail; he just stood up yelled something like "Hey!" and dropped all three. That's pretty good discipline, or he just got lucky. We are starting to take ground

Napalm Ain't So Bad...

Dire Circumstances...

fire now and the tempo is picking up. I run back up-slope. Well, I *trudge* up-slope. I need the team to tie in closer and I am working my way back up to where Mac is beside the bunker.

Nearby I can see a group of NVA in green khakis break from cover by some rocks to his left front. They start to try to flank him. Cuman and Bong drop all but three, who make it into a small wash below Mac. Cuman throws a grenade down into it just as a stick grenade comes lofting out of the wash and lands where Mac is and explodes. I hear Mac scream, "Damnit!" Panicked, I push to get up the hill. I can't see anything lying on the ground, and I'm trying to get everybody in tighter. I get to Bop and he is firing the grenade launcher uphill at what looks like a platoon, plus, group of NVA setting up to fire and maneuver down toward us. I dump three magazines at them and between the two of us we make them go to ground.

I have to get to the radio. If Mac is down I'm going to need to get Covey in here as fast as possible and get us some air. I get to within about 10 yards of Mac and I can see him. He is on his back with his pants down to his knees and he has the handset cupped in the crook of his shoulder. I can't see any blood, but he has his genitalia cupped in both hands. The little pervert! This is the coolest and craziest man I have ever seen. We are in a world of hurt and he is masturbating?

I get up to him and he looks up at me and yells that I am drawing fire. Is there some reason I am walking around? Right. We've got more problems than my running around in plain view while you worry about damage to your nut sack. I can see that he is bleeding inside his left thigh. Obviously the shrapnel from the grenade had nicked him. He looks at me like, "Well, I'm wounded..." as if that was

an excuse to have his pants down. I take the handset from him and I can hear Covey asking for a sit-rep. I yell into the handset that we are in a hornet's nest, but they will have to wait because my One-Zero is busy playing with himself and it looks like they shot one of his balls off. He grabs the handset, frowns at me like I told on him, and starts giving Covey the situation whilst trying to pull up his



They were indeed "We Few," with few companies having more than 30 U.S. soldiers, accompanied by Hmong, Chinese Nung, and Vietnamese mercs – and yet they provided the bulk of the good ground intelligence from behind enemy lines. Photo: Author's collection

britches.

We both look up-slope to our east and the platoon we had driven to ground has been joined by about 10 more stalwart lads and is getting ready to assault us. The Yards are dropping them like they were ducks in a shooting gallery, but the small arms fire isn't slacking off at all. We are getting heavy fire from both slopes now and I can count at least six bunker openings with muzzle flashes. Some of them are only 40 yards away. Mother McRae, this is bad, bad, bad. We are tucked into a wash so they can't really get at us, but if they can lay enough fire on us they will be able to make us keep our heads down. Then they will hit us with B-40s and rush us. That will be the end of RT Habu, the end of my dreams of becoming President, and any dreams I have of ever becoming a porno star.

Mac yells down at me, "The guns are on the way and the slicks are about 10 minutes out. Hang on!" Oh no, Red Ryder, I think I will just give up. Maybe they won't put me in a tiger cage with someone who is more interested in his future as a breeding stud.

Crump! Crump! The high explosives go off to the west about 50 meters. Oh great, someone brought a mortar to the party! How novel, now we are really screwed. They can reach us in the wash with that. I'm trying to figure some great tactical wizardry that will allow me to get out of this alive, but all I can come up with is becoming invisible. I look over at the torn bodies of the two NVA we shot coming in. I am wondering if I can fit into one of the uniforms and slip away in the crowd.

I have my URC-10 emergency radio on and I can hear Covey talking to another ship that has been hit and gone down. The crew is out and slicks from the package are dropping in to pick them up. The Cobras bank up and to the right and a pair of Spads come in, guns chewing up the real estate.

"Get down! Nape!" Mac yells. I didn't see the canister drop, but then a rolling fire storm erupts in front of us and envelopes any of the survivors of the assault force who were splashing into the bunkers. There is a blast of heat behind me and I can hear someone screaming. It is too far away to be one of us. Fry, you little rice-eating ant. Napalm sucks oxygen out of the area making it hard to breathe. I don't notice because when I'm scared spit-

less I have a tendency to hyperventilate, so oxygen is not yet a problem. The mortar has stopped so maybe we got lucky.

Mac yells out over the ground fire, "Choppers coming, short final. Take the first bird, get everyone on. Covey says there are a lot more of them moving up the slope behind us. We gotta go." Now that is an understatement.

The first slick comes in and slams down about 10 yards from me. I run toward it and start throwing little people onboard. I am about to dive in when it is suddenly up and gone. I stand there, momentarily, with feelings of despair, betrayal, and a big "oh shit." However, I haven't got time for hurt feelings. I have to get back to where Mac is or they will leave me here and all these pissed off people will blame me for ruining their lunch hour. I run over to Mac and the second bird slams into the ground almost on top of us. We dive inside, Cuman lands on top of us, and we start to lift.

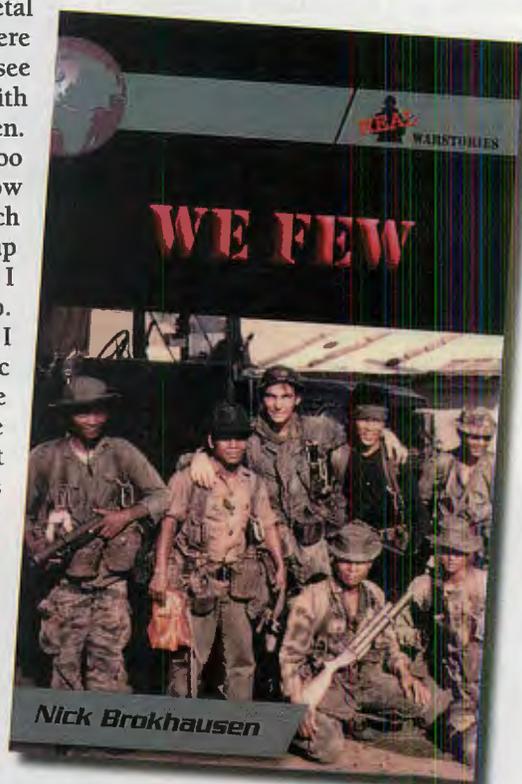
The door gunners on both sides are burning their guns out on full auto and they have plenty to shoot at. The NVA are trying to get right on top of us because the guns and the Spads are killing everything except what is about 20 yards from the chopper we are on. You can feel the rounds hitting the chopper, a staccato metal thunk, thunk, thunk. From where I am lying on the floor, I can see an NVA officer running at us with a pistol and yelling at his men. This boy must have watched too many war movies. I wonder how he can run that fast, having such big balls. I can't get my gun up because I'm half laying on it, so I just pull the trigger and let it rip. We are lifting and I can't see if I got him. A grenade flies in. Mac kicks at it and it tumbles out the side of the bird. Another grenade bounces off the gunner's helmet and falls out. The gunner swats at his face with one hand, like he was shooing away some nasty bug, but keeps burning up the gun with one long, continuous burst. The engines are screaming up to full power and I can see rounds chewing up the overhead and the inside of the bird. Then we are up and away. There is another sudden rush of hot air from ordnance going off real close, and the chopper jumps up from the concussion. But we are still gain-

ing altitude, pulling free and getting some sky, getting up and beyond the 12.7mms and all those other weapons trying to pull us back down.

I look back and the mountain is alive with explosions going off. In the distance you can see more jets and aircraft stacking up for their chance. Every fighter jock in Southeast Asia that has both ordnance and fuel is coming over for a drop. Some of them are down to minutes of airtime so Covey is working them first. As we get farther and farther from the battle, I look back at the half moon shape of the caldera we had been in. It is getting pasted from the air by everything from Cobras to F-4s and Skyraiders. The zoomies will need a couple of extra hands each to tell this story at the club tonight. There is enough aircraft zinging around up there to create a traffic jam.

I am half-lying on the floor with my back braced against the stanchion behind the pilot, watching this entire tableau recede. Mac has the headset on. All our people are out. We hear Covey say that they got the crew of the gunship that was knocked down and they are starting to get secondary explosions in the calderas and the surrounding area. Marvelous. Blow the whole bloody thing up.

40 minutes, plus, and we are



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sweeping over the Fifth Mech base and then wallowing into short final until we are down. We had been on the ground for about an hour and change. The first person I see is Mudhole and he is sitting under a brightly colored beach umbrella. He is naked except his boots and a panama hat, beer in hand. Then I see Pappy and Slatten heading our way with the medic.

Mac is calm, cool, and collected, like always. Pappy hands him a beer and holds out two steel ball bearings, big ones. "Here, you might need these. Your One-One says they shot your balls off." That's right, pamper the little gator excrement. While we were out there about to get turned into victims, I distinctly heard Mac, the Combat Midget, on the radio. At the height of every pissed off Nguyen in the world shooting at us, Covey was asking if we were declaring a Tactical Emergency. Mac's response? "How does it look from where you're at?" I'm going to shoot him.

Read the rest of Nick Brokhhausen's *We Few*, available at www.realwarstories.com — or catch excerpt No. 3 in next month's SOF. ✕

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U.S. Army Pfc. Kieth Collins, a gunner from 3rd Battalion, 325th Field Artillery Regiment, 101st Airborne Division. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Teddy Wade)

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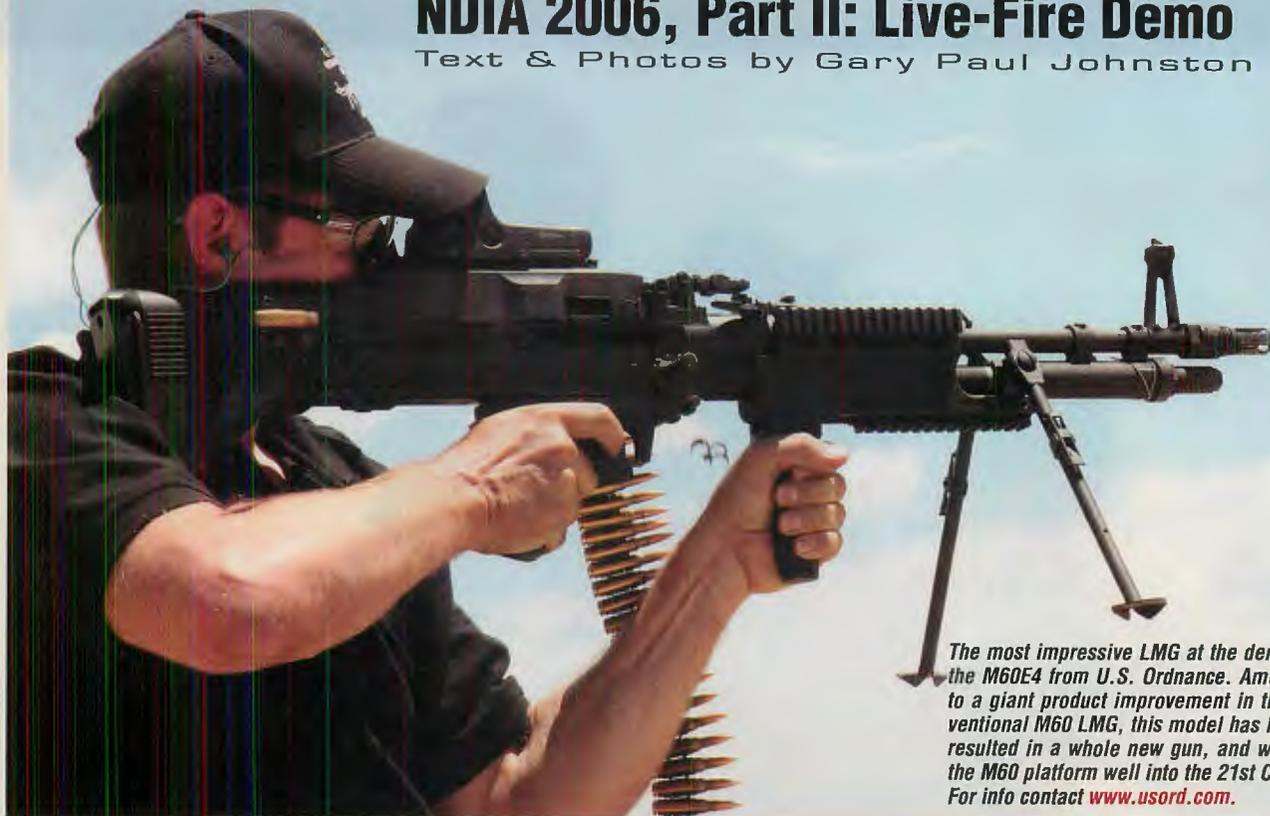
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NDIA 2006, Part II: Live-Fire Demo

Text & Photos by Gary Paul Johnston



The most impressive LMG at the demo was the M60E4 from U.S. Ordnance. Amounting to a giant product improvement in the conventional M60 LMG, this model has literally resulted in a whole new gun, and will take the M60 platform well into the 21st Century. For info contact www.usord.com.

Every year, the National Defense Industrial Association, which traces its history to the American Defense Preparedness Association (ADPA) founded in 1919, and the National Security Industrial Association (NSIA) founded in 1944, holds a get-together that can be described as a SHOT Show of products with either exclusive or special military application. A non-partisan, non-profit educational association, the NDIA is headquartered in Arlington, Virginia, and is dedicated to keeping America strong, free and safe – as in, Peace Through Superior Firepower. (For information, contact the NDIA at: 705-522-1820 or www.ndia.org.)

In the summer of 2006, the NDIA Show, awards ceremony and lectures were held in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The public does not get invited to attend these functions, so we were pleased to be a surrogate shooter for SOF readers interested in the leading edge of arms development. The last day reserved time for live-fire demonstrations at a local range.

One of the first things to catch my

eye was a ground robot equipped with an FN M240B LMG. Being remotely operated, the tracked robot was about 100 feet away from the operator, who sat at a picnic table in the shade, to the rear of the firing line. I watched and photographed as the man in charge gave orders over a wireless commo system to the operator: “Go forward, stop, traverse, OK, fire single shots at targets of choice, fire bursts at target of choice,” and etc. The device worked fine and I snapped photos between 100-round belts of ammo, for about 500 rounds worth.

Moving down the line I fired a host of small arms that had been displayed at the NDIA Show. However, along with other companies whose weapons were not ready to be demonstrated, Heckler & Koch and FN did not participate in the demo, so I was unable to test fire these firearms. By noon busses filled with spectators arrived at the range.

While the following photos will tell the rest of the story, one incident stood out early on at the demonstration. This involved the remote con-

trolled robot with the M240B mounted on it, a 300-pound device running on two caterpillar tracks.

Caution: Suribachi Shot Coming...

Since I had earlier taken a dozen photos of this robot moving and firing, I didn't bother to do so after the crowd arrived. However, this time at least 200 people were standing between the remote operator and the man communicating to him via radio.

I had been standing at the right side of the firing line near Master Sgt. Steve Holland, of 5th Special Forces Group (ABN). Sgt. Holland is a weapons expert and Master Sniper Instructor based at Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, and like other military personnel present was dressed in his full Army Camouflage Uniform (ACU). I watched as a 100-round belt of 7.62mm NATO ammunition was loaded into the M240 LMG. However, wanting to get some photos at the other end of the line, I moved to a location about 35 yards to the left of Sgt. Holland and the robot, about 10 minutes before its turn came to fire.

Global War on Terrorism

(right) Many rounds of standard and medium-range 40mm practice grenades were fired through the MGL-140. Its great range and accuracy were impressive, but the weapon is relatively heavy when fully loaded. (www.Milkor.com)

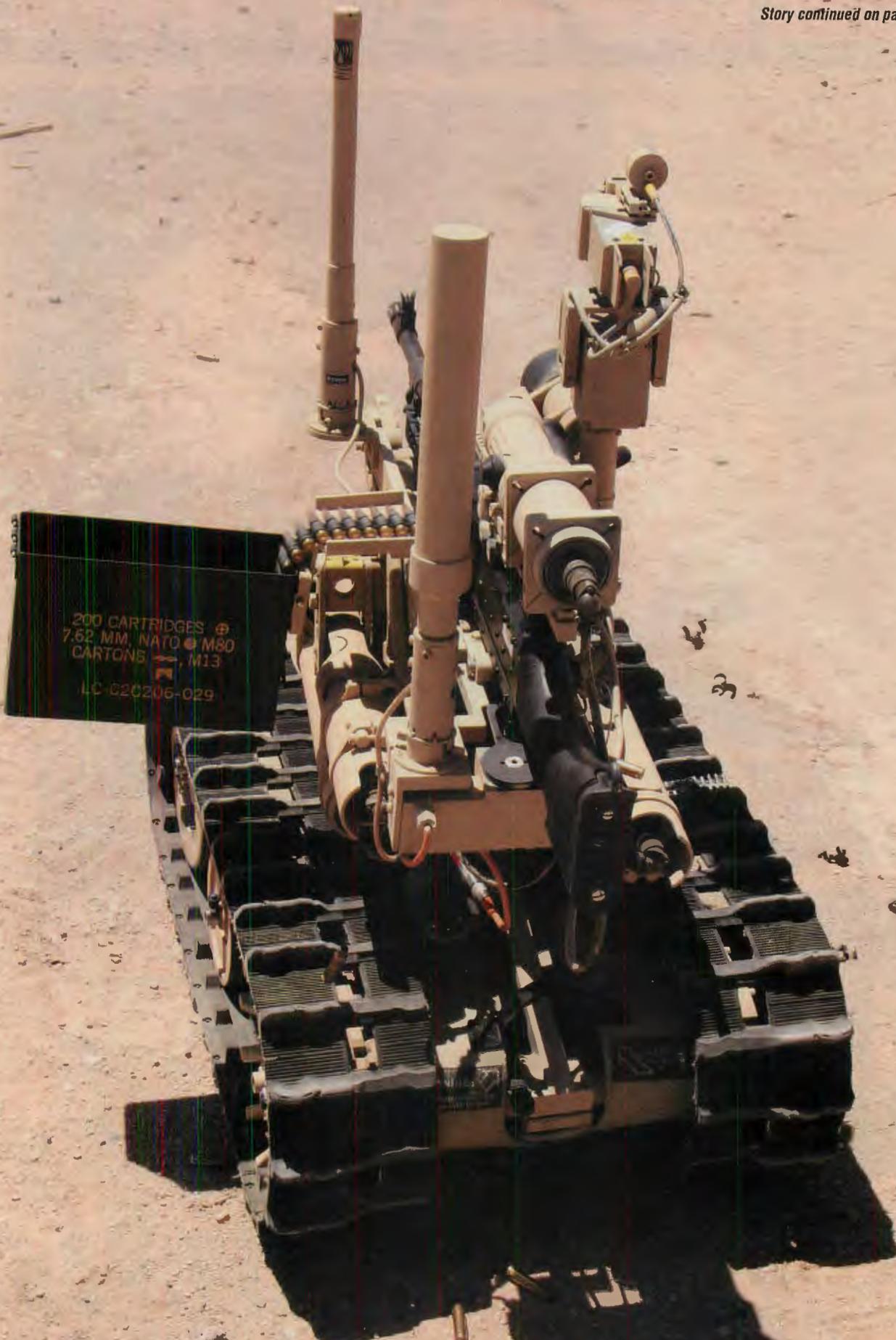
(below) This industry member demonstrates a 7.62mm NATO Minigun mounted on an armored car. This is small-arms firepower at its best. (www.DillonPrecision.com)



(left) Colonel David Lutz, USMC (Ret.), demonstrated fast hits with Knight Armament's new M110 (at left) and Mk 11 rifles, with and without suppressors mounted. Leupold Mark IV Sniper scopes are mounted on both rifles. (www.knightarmco.com)

Here the M240B equipped robot is fired from 100 yards. It worked perfectly, before the crowd arrived.

Story continued on page 80



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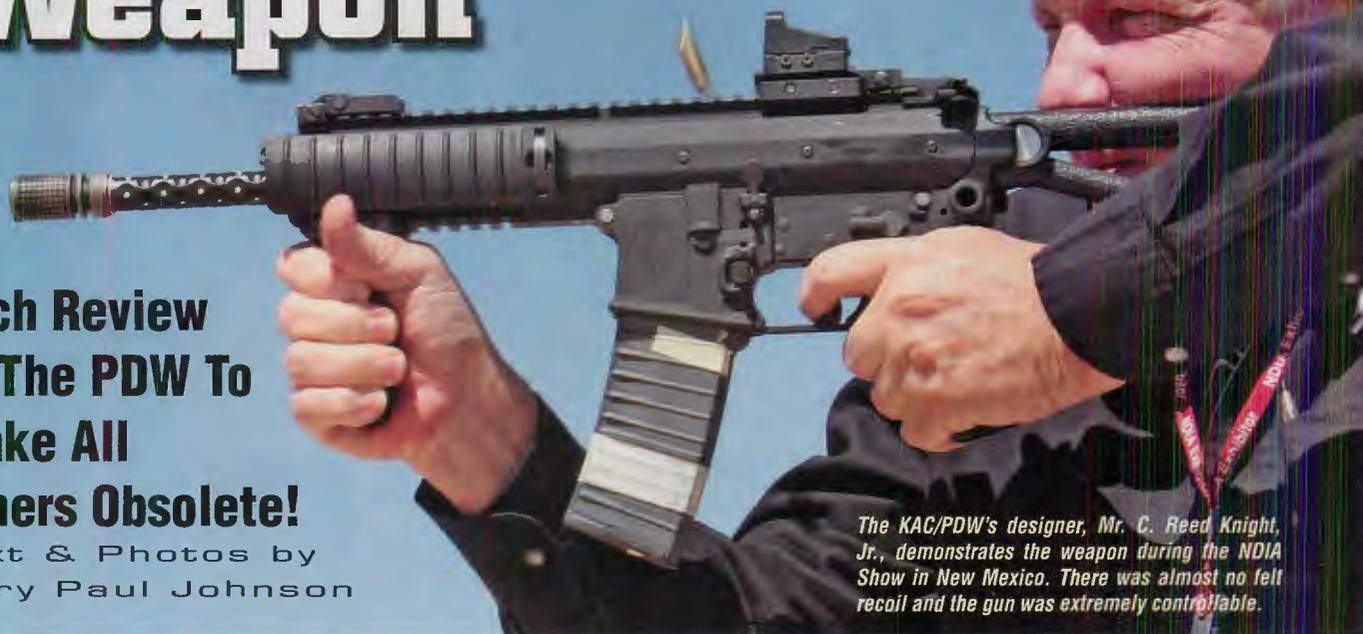
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KAC's New Personal Defense Weapon

Tech Review Of The PDW To Make All Others Obsolete!

Text & Photos by
Gary Paul Johnson



The KAC/PDW's designer, Mr. C. Reed Knight, Jr., demonstrates the weapon during the NDIA Show in New Mexico. There was almost no felt recoil and the gun was extremely controllable.

Long recognized as one of the world's great arms designers, Mr. C. Reed Knight, Jr., President of Knight's Armament Company (KAC), has designed and produced a great variety of firearms, sound suppressors, ammunition and accessories. Many of these products are standard issue with the U.S. military and others.

In the late-1980's, Mr. Knight entered into a partnership of sorts with his close friend, Eugene Stoner, who designed the renowned 7.62x51mm NATO AR-10 rifle while at the original Armalite Division of Fairchild

Company, in Costa Mesa, California. As an aside, although the AR-10 was not adopted (for political reasons) Mr. Stoner never dropped his original idea, and in 1991 designed a variation of it that incorporated some parts commonality with the 5.56x45mm NATO caliber AR-15 (M16) rifle. The result was the Stoner Rifle - 25 (SR-25), 25 being the sum total of adding 10 and 15.

The SR-25 was such a success that a special version of it was later adopted by the U.S. Navy SEALs as the Mk 11 Sniper Rifle. In 2005 a variation of the Mk 11 was submitted to the U.S. Army's Semi-Automatic Sniper System Program as the XM110. After exhausting tests,

the KAC XM110 candidate was officially adopted as the M110 in early 2006, along with a KAC designed sound suppressor. The entire package including its Hardigg hard carrying case is finished in the Army's new Flat Dark Earth (FDE) color in order to help defeat enemy thermal imaging devices.

To digress a bit, KAC also designed and produces an entire line of AR-15/M16 variants in its SR-15 family of rifles and carbines. Amounting to a highly refined AR-15, the SR-15 is specially tailored for top performance and accuracy using the finest materials available. This brief history is intended to bring the reader up to speed not only with KAC's experience in producing AR-10/M16 style weapons, but also to set the stage for the latest defensive weapon from this innovative company.



The KAC/PDW bore the logo of TSWG - Technical Support Working Group - the new agency set up to bring leading-edge technology to bear in the Global War on Terrorism by facilitating the development and issue of new tools for specialized tactical forces trained for assault operations. The Tactical Operations Subgroup supports counterterrorist operators such as special forces, FBI-HRT, DOE nuclear security teams, Department of State, and the Secret Service.

The Personal Defense Weapon

For the past 20 years or so there has been an accelerated movement to develop a modern shoulder-fired weapon for close-range defense, a weapon offering easy concealment, good range and great terminal ballistics. Of course such a concept is not new and began a century ago with the stocked pistols and early submachine guns. Many similar contemporary weapons also fire "pistol" cartridges and were designed to fill the same role in mind. In between came the U.S. 30 Carbine, M1 & M2, which fired a cartridge that looked like a pistol round, but performed more like a light rifle cartridge, and had an effective range of 200 meters.

It was this type of performance that inspired the more recent developments, which have spawned the title of Personal Defense Weapon (PDW). Unlike the assault rifle, which was developed to both protect a position from assault and also be capable of assaulting an enemy position, the role of the PDW is to protect against an assault, especially when a VIP is involved.

The problem has been that most of the contemporary PDW's have either been chambered for a true pistol cartridge, or a small caliber, short, bottlenecked cartridge, such as the 7.63x25mm (.30 Mauser). While resembling a rifle cartridge, the performance of these rounds is relatively limited. Worse is that the weapons that fire them do not seem to have been designed to be held or fired by an average size human being.

One of the main problems of some of these weapons is they are different from what most of the free world's warriors are used to fighting with. I can sum it up with the terms "ergonomic" and "user friendly." Most of today's free-world fighters insist on weapons with controls similar to those of M16/M4 weapons.

Knights Armament Company

For the past several years, Mr. Reed Knight has been actively involved in conceiving, designing and developing the "perfect" PDW. The catalyst for this was a growing discontent with the submachine gun, as well as a lack of both mechanical and political support, but especially from a performance standpoint.

With the requirement for a 300-meter accurate and effective range, it

was clear that the performance of the 9x19mm cartridge was nowhere close to meeting it. In addition, the SMG weighed about seven pounds, and the maximum weight of a new PDW was set at 4.5 pounds. The SMG was finally on its way out. While a number of new PDW rounds were tested, they could not perform to the 300m threshold in which operators commonly live, fight and die.

At the 2006 SHOT Show in Las Vegas, Nevada, Reed Knight took me aside to show me a new weapon he had developed, but not before he swore me to secrecy. The gun he showed me was an extensively tested prototype of his new KAC/PDW.

A descendant of one of the designs Reed Knight submitted to the Special Operations Forces Combat Assault Rifle (SCAR or SOFCAR) Program, the KAC/PDW bears a remarkable resemblance to the M4A1 Carbine, and is, to a large extent, a

Specifications: Knight Armament Company Personal Defense Weapon

Country of Origin:	USA
Designer:	C. Reed Knight, Jr.
Caliber:	6x35mm PDW (.243)
Muzzle Velocity:	2425 fps (739m/s).
System of Operation:	Short Stroke Gas Pistons (2).
Method of Locking:	Positively locked 2-lug rotating bolt (AK-type).
Type of Fire:	Selective: Semi-automatic, burst and full automatic.
Barrel Length:	10-inch (254mm) and 8-inch (203mm).
Overall Length:	(10-inch bbl.); (stock extended) 28-inches (711mm). (stock folded) 19.5-inches (495mm). (8-inch bbl.); (stock extended) 26-inches (660.4mm). (stock folded) 17.5-inches (444.5mm).
Weight:	(gun only with 10-inch bbl.) 4.5 pounds (2.05 kg).
Rate of Twist:	6 grooves, 1-in-10-inch (254mm) RHT.
Feed Device:	30-round box magazine.
Safety:	3-position safety selector.
Rate of Fire:	600 rounds per minute.
Sights:	(front) Flip-up post adjustable for elevation. (rear) Flip-up aperture adjustable for windage. (optics) M1913 top rail accommodates any optical sight system.
Stock Furniture:	Matte black polymer.
Finish:	MilStd and hard-anodized matte black.
Price:	To be announced.

miniature of that weapon. With a standard barrel length of 10-inches (8-inches optional), the KAC/PDW has an overall length of just 19.5 inches with its folding stock folded



Here a cartridge comparison includes (from right to left) the 9x19mm, .45 ACP, 4.3mm H&K/PDW, 5.7mm FN/PDW, 6x35mm KAC/PDW, 5.56x45mm and 7.62x51mm rounds.



(top) The 254mm barrel and 203mm barrel KAC/PDW's are seen together for comparison. (middle) The 245mm barrel KAC/PDW (below) is seen with the KAC 5.56x45mm M4 style carbine. (bottom) Here the 203mm barrel KAC/PDW is seen with its sound suppressor mounted, compared with the 254mm barrel model above.

and 28 inches with it extended. The unloaded weight of the 10-inch barrel model is 4.5 pounds.

Some of the reasons for the KAC/PDW's ultra-light weight are its specially machine-lightened barrel, its skeletonized buttstock and its bolt group. Unlike the bolt group of the M4, that of the PDW is kin to the Kalashnikov. In the KAC/PDW the AK style bolt group is semi-captive in its own sub-unit framework, and comes out of the upper receiver assembled as such with its own recoil spring. The bolt group is lighter than that of the M4, but this is one of the elements of the KAC/PDW I was not allowed to photograph.

One thing I was (with some hesitation) allowed to photograph was the special logo of the U.S. Government entity for whom the KAC/PDW was developed, the new Technical Support Working Group.

Unique Muzzle Brake

On its unique combination muzzle brake/flash hider either of the KAC/PDW's barrels will accept a KAC sound suppressor. This flash hider is one of the secrets of the PDW's high degree of controllability and it reminds me of the device designed by Gene Stoner on the early AR-10 prototypes, and later on his FARC-3 rifle. This early somewhat complex device appears to have been patterned after the muzzle brake on the WW II German FG-42 rifle, but on the KAC/PDW it is quite simple in operation if not in manufacture.

With a restricted front end this muzzle brake acts as a baffle to halt forward moving high velocity gasses behind the bullet. This gas then pushes forward against the baffle to dampen felt recoil, with the gasses then vented out through one hundred or so tiny exhaust holes in the sides and top of the brake. In addition to further controlling muzzle flip, these holes break up

muzzle flash.

Dual Short-Stroke Gas Pistons

Operating the PDW's bolt carrier are dual short-stroke gas pistons, each with its own spring, which are activated from dual gas cylinders off each side of the gas block/front sight base. I was not allowed to photograph these either, but all recoil and piston springs are housed inside of the gun. With the exception of the right-side-folding stock, all other aspects of the KAC/PDW are pretty much true to M4/M16 configuration. However, because of the AK-style bolt group and role the KAC/PDW was designed to fill, there is no ejection port cover on the upper receiver.

Also interesting is the arrangement and number of the cross pins in the KAC/PDW's fire control group. There are three, one for the hammer and one for the trigger, as in the M16, but in the PDW there is an additional pin

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R.J.GODLEWSKI, AUTHOR AND NOVELIST



(left) This close-up illustrates the detail of the PDW's barrel machining and unique muzzle brake/flash suppressor. (right) Here the retainers for the PDW's fire control pins is seen. There are three pins instead of the M16's two.

for the auto sear, and this arrangement appears to be similar to that of the FN-FAL, due to the PDW's very short bolt carrier. The pins also have heads and enter from the left side of the receiver. A steel retainer on the right side of the receiver holds the pins in place.

When folded, the stock is secured by a steel stud implanted in the right side of the lower receiver.

There is some small parts commonality with the M4 and the receiver sections are made of 7075T6 aircraft grade alloy. The KAC/PDW has ambidextrous QD sling mounts front and rear as well as three locations for a

single point sling, such as those offered by Wilderness Tactical, Boonie Packer, Sling Systems, Blackhawk and others.

Other Tactical Additions

Coming standard with an M1913 MilStd flattop upper receiver, the KAC/PDW has a monolithic rail hand-guard system and uses KAC's flip-up BUIS. On the top rail can be mounted any optical system including the Aim-point Comp, Eotech and Trijicon that are already in the system. The side rails will accommodate KAC hand-guard panels, lights and lasers, and the bottom rail will mount the KAC

vertical foregrip. However, on the bottom rail I would opt for the GPS GripPod, which instantly becomes a robust bipod while adding only 7 ounces to the gun.

Also in development by GPS is an offset M1913 mount that will mount its own lightweight polymer M1913 rail at either 5 o'clock or 7 o'clock. This rail will place a push-button end cap light in the ideal location for the thumb of either support hand and do away with wires and all the problems they bring to a mission. One of the best of these lights is SureFire's new lightweight Scout Light.

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stowed in the smallest of places, the M16A2 pistol grip has been highly modified by thinning and shortening its length. However, the weapon will also accept any after-market pistolgrip such as those from ERGO, Magpull, TangoDown and others.

Instead of being fluted, the barrel's exterior is machined with alternating depressions in a patented process developed by KAC. The result is a barrel that is at least as strong as fluting, and with the same cooling features and weight reduction. However, there is yet another reason for the KMC/PDW being lighter than the M4.

6x35mm PDW

Designed entirely around a brand new short .243 caliber cartridge made by Hornady exclusively for KAC, the receiver/magazine-well section of the KAC/PDW is 1/3-inch shorter than those elements of the M4 and that



This close-up shows the PDW's folding stock mechanism and sling mounts.

includes the magazine. This because the overall length (OAL) of the KAC/PDW 6x35mm cartridge is .32-inch shorter than that of the 5.56x45mm NATO cartridge.

The 6mm Hornady bullet fired by the KAC/PDW is of the open tip match (OTM) type and weighs 65 grains. This bullet is loaded in front of a proprietary propellant that was designed especially for the cartridge by Mr. David Emary, Chief Ballistician for Hornady Mfg. The 6x35mm

PDW cartridge is based on a modified .221 Fireball case, which itself is a shortened derivative of the .223 case.

Fired from the 10-inch barrel, the 6x35mm sends its 65-grain bullet at 2,425 fps with an impressive 848 ft. lbs. This is almost as fast as the 5.56x45mm NATO bullet from a 10-inch barrel and has 74 additional ft. lbs. of energy. Compare this with 310-ft. lbs. for the 4.6x30mm cartridge and 390-ft. lbs. for the

5.8x28mm round. The 6x35mm PDW is a totally useful cartridge out to 300 meters. The 6x35mm cartridge can use virtually any .243/6mm bullet.

Currently, 20- and 30-round magazines exist for the KAC/PDW in prototype, and all have been completely machined from solid blocks of aircraft quality alloy in two halves and then welded together, and they are of unbelievable quality. However, production magazines will be molded from translucent polymer.



If you have to ask Who?

R.J. Godlewski /god less key/ n. 1a novelist 1b author of *The Gatestrian Knights* 2 counterterrorism advocate and author 3 patriot 4 veteran 5 international risk consultant 6 Founder of the International Nuclear Emergency response Team (INERT)

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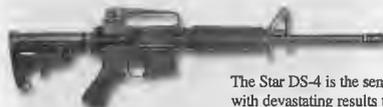
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Downrange

Reed Knight formally introduced the KAC/PDW at the 2006 National Defense Industry Association in Albuquerque, New Mexico in May, 2006. After the meetings, Reed and Trey Knight prepared to demonstrate the guns to NDIA spectators at a local Albuquerque gun club range. Arriving early, I was able to watch the two fire hundreds of rounds through the two sample guns, as well as test fire it myself.

Not only did I notice that the guns had virtually no climb when fired by Reed and Trey, but I had the same experience when I fired it. I would estimate that the KAC/PDW had roughly 75% less recoil than a 5.56x45mm NATO M4A1 Carbine. For me it felt more like firing a pellet rifle or an M4 with Simunition cartridges. No targeting was possible due to the 25-yard range we were using, but Reed and Trey Knight, and others who have tested the PDW report the guns to be capable of minute of angle (MOA) accuracy.

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capitalized the word "DEFENSE" in Personal Defense Weapons.

While the KAC/PDW will be available in semi-automatic only, burst-fire and standard selective fire, there are no plans to make a 16-inch barrel "civilian" version at present, but with this new cartridge and platform, the sky is the limit. You can expect to see a proprietary hard case for the KAC/PDW from Hardigg and I predict that you can also sit back and watch the 6x35mm cartridge live a life all its own. In the meantime, for information on all its superb products, contact

Knight's Armament Company, 701 Columbia Blvd., Dept. SOF, Titusville, FL 32780; phone: 321-607-9900, on the web at www.knightarmco.com.

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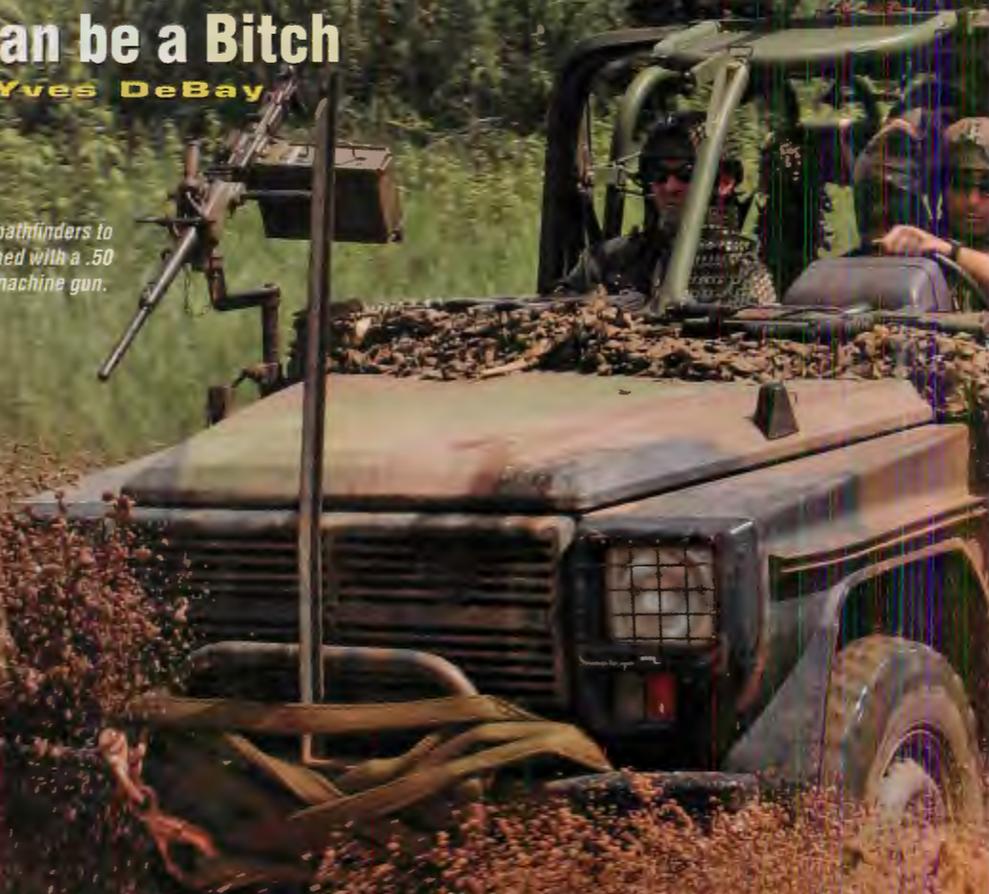
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Bush and Chirac Have Something in Common: Exit Strategies Can be a Bitch

Text & Photos by Yves DeBay

Specially modified Peugeot P-4 4x4s are used by pathfinders to patrol, here in the Bangolo area. The vehicle is armed with a .50 Ma Deuce, and an ANF-1 7.62mm NATO medium machine gun.

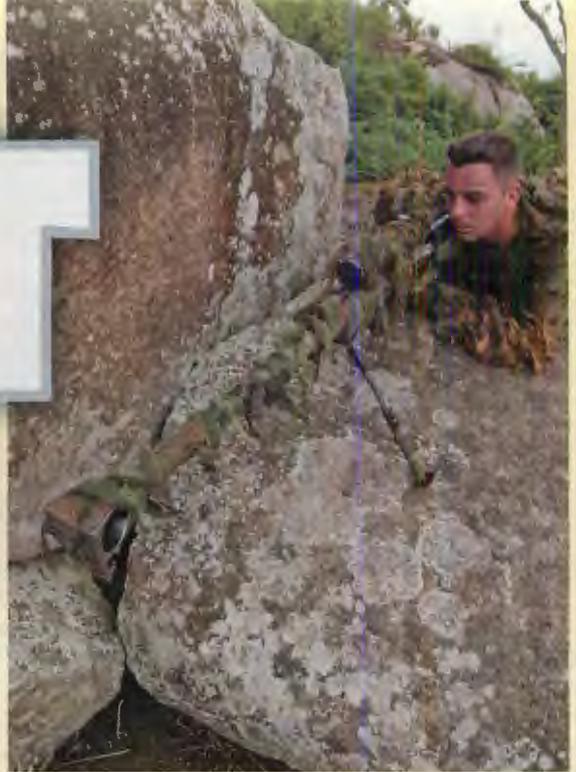


COAST



The former colonial powers of Europe who had split the African subcontinent among themselves in the 18th and 19th Centuries, found themselves turning political power back over to indigenous peoples during the 20th Century. Some, such as Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium and Portugal were simply not in a position to do anything else. The major colonial powers of England and France found themselves in a similar position, the major difference being one of magnitude.

Divestiture was not an easy process, but political realities overwhelmed the financial considerations that had driven the colonial powers to help themselves to Africa's bounty in the first place. Due to the inevitable incoming tide of history, with a boost from liberation movements sponsored by the former Soviet Union, the best the old colonial powers could hope for was to leave in place, regimes that would want to continue to trade their



The men of the 4th Company sniper team operate as true snipers, as opposed to the designated marksmen at the combat group level. They are divided into four teams of two men each: one observer and the sniper. Weapons include the FR-F2 7.62 NATO caliber rifle, and the PGM HECATE anti-materiel rifle in .50 (12.7) Browning. Ghillie suits are often improvised or modified by the troops themselves.

natural resources for European currency and technology, and humanitarian aid.

The success of this strategy has been spotty at best, as the colonial powers had no early interest in building stable governments that would compete with them for control, and thus left the former colonies largely adrift in a sea of anarchy, where the most common islands of stability were merely what was imposed by one spe-



One of the weapons used at the company level is the ERYX, a powerful AT missile with a range of 600-800 meters, which can be fired from enclosed places.



French troops are supported by the ALAT (Aiation Legere de l'Armee de Terre) Puma and Gazelle helicopters. The AT Gazelle shown here can mount the HOT missile, which are usually stored at the base. They are primarily used as an observation platform, with the all-weather/night VIVIANE camera, mounted here on the cockpit roof.

cific leader in a parade of warring, self-serving tyrants.

History will probably judge France to have been the more successful in returning what had become known as Francophone Africa to its own people, and this may well be because they had the common sense to either leave in place, or return when needed, with

French military forces that could keep the lid on while the locals tried to sort themselves out. History is still at work in sub-Saharan Africa, and only time will reveal the outcome of this French strategy, but it would appear that it has been less unsuccessful than some others. A case in point would be the Ivory Coast.

Preserving the Pearl

After having developed into the "pearl of Western Africa" under the rule of the Father of the Nation President Houphouët Boigny, the economy of the former French colony of the Ivory Coast started to decline in the latter part of the 1980s. During the 1990s after the death of Boigny, the country began experiencing multiple problems, including ethnic clashes and a military coup that put in power General Guei.

In 2001, Guei was forced to retire and President Laurent Gbagbo was elected. In September 2002, a military revolt erupted and rebels seized the north of the country. In the major port city of Abidjan, the minister of Interior and General Guei were assassinated, and there was an attempt on the life of the minister of defense.

As the old colonial power in Ivory Coast, still in-country as a stabilizing influence, France launched operation *Licorne* (Unicorn), which firstly was to facilitate an evacuation of endangered foreigners, and grew into establishing a "zone of confidence" between

Continued on page 58

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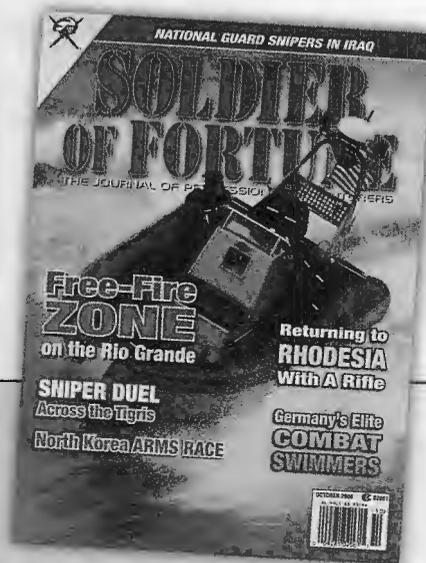
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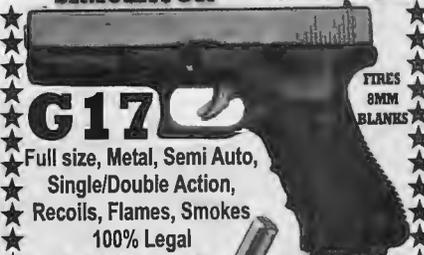
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rebels and government forces. Several times, both rebels and government forces tried to enter or breach the zone, and clashed with French Forces.

The worst-case scenario came about in November 2004, when a government Sukhoi SU-25 rocketed a French Army position in Bouake, killing nine soldiers and one American civilian. In retaliation, soldiers of operation Licorne destroyed the entire Ivoirian air force, which led to anti-French riots in Abidjan. The actual mission of Operation Licorne was to protect the blue helmets acting as peacekeepers in the *zone de confiance* and to monitor any restarting of the hostilities, as well to protect the civilian population who were constantly rocketed by both warring factions.

Operation DDRE (the nation-

The support section of the company has the sniper team, one VAB with a 20mm cannon as seen here, two MILAN AT missile launchers, and two 81mm mortars.

al program of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration) died before it was to have been completed last June. This was disappointing, because on 1 June the staff of both belligerent parties had agreed to the powers in the capital city of Yamoussoukro, to start the disarmament of the opposing parties, including militias.

There are relatively few chances for fighting to restart in the *zone de confiance* monitored by UN under protection of French troops. However, especially in the South, the nuisance value of militias should not be underestimated. Leaders of militias close to power know that their days will be numbered if peace and a stable central government return – and some have reason to worry about judicial proceedings against them for their past acts.

So, playing on a policy of rumor-mongering and disinformation, always effective in Africa, they have managed to stir up confusion in Abidjan and cause small incidents to escalate, blocking any chance of peace. Properly exploited, a simple ethnic fight can be enough to launch the country back into chaos. In 2006 when Operation Licorne began under Mandate N°12, the various players looked like this:

The FDSCI

Commanded by General Philippe Mangou, a hard but honest man close to power, the FDSCI (*Forces de défense et de sécurité de la Côte d'Ivoire*) formerly FANCI (*Force Armée de Côte d'Ivoire*) is organized into five groups: the West, Central-West, the South-West, the South, central-East, and East, each under the responsibility of a colonel or major. These groups are subject to the orders of Lieutenant Colonel Goury Gouede, theater commander. At the beginning of the crisis, the strength of 6800 soldiers was distributed in three battalions of infantry, an armored battalion, a group of artillery, a paratrooper battalion, a battalion of marine commandos, an anti-aircraft group and a company of engineers. In addition there was the police force, one of the "pillars" of the South and which would count 5000 to 6000 people. Hated by the rebels, many policemen falling into their hands were massacred. Before the conflict, the Presidential Guard counted 1000 people, of whom a number joined the rebels.

Before the current war, armor in-

Continued on page 64

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By Dr. Martin Brass

AMERICA AT WAR

 **1. CHINA** "HUMAN RIGHTS" IS EXPENSIVE, but has great rewards. **LETHAL INJECTIONS** for death row convicts cost up to \$375, while executions cost the price of a bullet. But payback is high -- Police, hospitals and doctors are involved in the illegal organ trade that reaps tens of thousands for each organ: 1,770 to 8,000 prisoners were executed in 2005, 40% by injection, *USA Today* reports.

 **2. THAILAND** **ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISTS ATTACK SCHOOLS** if the curriculum does not advance Islam. **ECONOMY PROFITS** from 9-11 as Thailand becomes the new playground for Saudis and rich Arabs since U.S. restricted visas for Middle Eastern citizens. Rich Arabs boost the economy.

 **3. PHILIPPINES** **MILITARY OFFENSIVE** against terror group Abu Sayyaf takes out six gunmen. Subsequent military offensive failed, two soldiers killed and 17 wounded.

 **4. NEW ZEALAND** **MERCENARIES RECRUITED** for understaffed Air Force and SAS, as military members join the Special Forces of Solomon Islands and Timor.

 **5. CANADA** **PRO-HEZBOLLAH RALLY** attended by Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe: **DUCEPPE** taken to task for demonstrating with the supporters of a terror organization outlawed in Canada.

 **6. CUBA** **THE INVINCIBLE CHIEF, FIDEL**, says crises is over and hosts leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement of 116 developing nations: America-bashing is on the agenda.

 **7. COLOMBIA** **LATINO CAIN AND ABEL?** DNA from skeleton dug up from grave confirmed to be that of Drug Lord Carlos Castano, father of the Paramilitary AUC for two decades. Paramilitary gunman confessed to murder in 2004. Castano's older brother Vicente accused of ordering the hit for fear that his brother would spill the beans on his drug trafficking. **CHILD SOLDIERS** forced into FARC control.

 **8. GUYANA** **TERRORISTS STORM NEWS AGENCY**, killing six, as prisoners riot before general elections in the former Dutch and British colonies.

 **9. UNITED KINGDOM** TERROR SCHOOL, JEMAAH ISLAMIYAH FAITH SCHOOL, uncovered training secret army. MI6 reveals that Continuity-IRA, Irish extremist group linked to Hezbollah and Iran's Revolutionary Guard, provides explosives, infrared triggering devices, and training. AL-QAEDA EUROPE HEADQUARTERS in U.K. says Scotland Yard. "Most sophisticated terror manual" in U.K. history distributed to 2,000 sleeper agents, reports Joseph G2 Bulletin. RYANAIR SUES government for \$5.6 million for overreacting and imposing tedious security measures after terror scare.

 **10. NETHERLANDS** WEAPONS CACHE, believed to belong to Hofstadgroup Azzouz, including a Czech Skorpion found in a cellar in the Hague, the cornerstone of peace. HOFSTADTGROUP OPERATIVE Rachid Belcaceem found dead, authorities believe he was poisoned. Belcaceem aided Al Issar, Syrian founder of the group, to escape.

 **11. SERBIA** TWO-AND-HALF-TONS OF RADIOACTIVE URANIUM, PLUTONIUM, ingredients for "dirty bomb," stored in vulnerable "world's most dangerous" nuclear site, leaving easy access for terrorists.

 **12. CYPRUS** NORTH KOREAN WEAPONS systems, including a mobile air defense system and missile launcher parts aboard ship heading for Syria, captured after alert from Interpol.

 **13. SYRIA** TERROR ATTACK by Islamic gunmen with grenades, automatic weapons and explosives-laden vehicles against U.S. Embassy foiled by officials. Americans unharmed, one Syrian guard killed.

 **14. LEBANON** HEZBOLLAH WAR EXPOSES CHINESE C-802 cruise missiles in Hezbollah arsenal. Iranian jet with missile launcher and eight C-802 missiles forced to turn back after CIA warned Syria and Turkey that the "medical relief" plane that sought rights to fly over their airspace carried the lethal payload.

 **14. ISRAEL** HEZBOLLAH CHIEF HASSEN NASRALLAH is more believable regarding the Second Lebanon War than Israel's Minister of Defense, according to survey by legit research group.

 **15. AFGHANISTAN** NATO TAKES CONTROL of combat forces from United States for the first time in its history. EMBATTLED PRESIDENT KARZAI asks Pakistan to help fight resurgence of Taliban and al-Qaeda as NATO mission falters after five years in country. DRUG-LORD-SUPPORTED Taliban chiefs pay recruits double or triple what military pays its troops.

 **16. PAKISTAN** TERRORISM PREVAILS as military pulls out of terrorist-controlled border with Afghanistan, giving terrorists effective control: 700 soldiers have been killed since Pak military was deployed to border. DÉJÀ VU -- PAKI-TALIBAN rule "Talibanistan" with Islamic iron fist, barbers cannot shave beards, music is forbidden and TVs are banned. Women must always be escorted. INTER-SERVICES INTELLIGENCE (ISI) accused of supporting Paki-Taliban.

 **17. SUDAN** KILLING FIELDS UNPOLICED AS AFRICAN UNION withdraws and President Omar Hassan al-Bashir refuses 20,000 UN peacekeepers. SAVAGE THREE-YEAR WAR kills hundreds of thousands and creates two million refugees.

 **18. SOUTH AFRICA** ANTI-MERCENARY LAW forbids citizens from serving as soldiers under a foreign flag. Goal is to protect democracies in Africa: 700 SOUTH AFRICANS already serve in U.K. military and 4,000 serve in Iraq.



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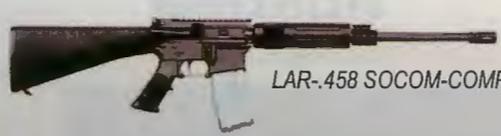
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theater included five French AMX-13, seven ERC-90 Sagaie, 16 AML 60/90, 16 Panhard M-3 and 16 VAB. There were a further 10 South-African Mambas, but a lot of this armored ordnance was destroyed during fights or is now non-operational due to the lack of maintenance or spare parts. At the beginning of the crisis, Angola offered a dozen T-55 tanks and BMP fighting vehicles, plus 23mm twin-barreled AA guns and 16 20mm guns, plus 60 Bofors 40mm guns.

New deliveries of materiel from Eastern Europe have taken place but it is naturally difficult to obtain details. BTR-80 and especially BM-21 armored fighting vehicles have been seen and it is certain that the BM-21 is the object of an attentive surveillance by Licorne. Since the destruction of the Ivorian Mi-24 and Sukhoi SU-25 aircraft by the French forces, aviation is reduced to an Mi-8 helicopter and to a presidential jet.

It is likely that new materiel, including aircraft, was bought in 2005 and stored in a nearby country to beat the embargo.

The FAFN

The "former rebels" have in 2004/2005 made great efforts to prove that the MPCJ could govern conquered zones as a state, with functioning administrations and public services. Under General Soumaila Bakayoko's command, the North of Ivory Coast under rebel control was organized in 10 military districts commanded by a man who generally had been an NCO who was a leader at the beginning of the uprising. Some showed themselves brave in combat and gave evidence of certain military talents. Certain rebel leaders are also jealous of their privileges and have trouble accepting centralized authority. Some rebel leaders are Moslem but not fundamentalist as in Nigeria and the "gri gri" (charms) remains an important factor (including to the government soldiers).

Armed gangs from Liberia have tried to destabilize the Big West as they did in Sierra Leone, and also to loot natural resources. Their weapons with the exception of some 14.5mm heavy machine guns, comprise mor-



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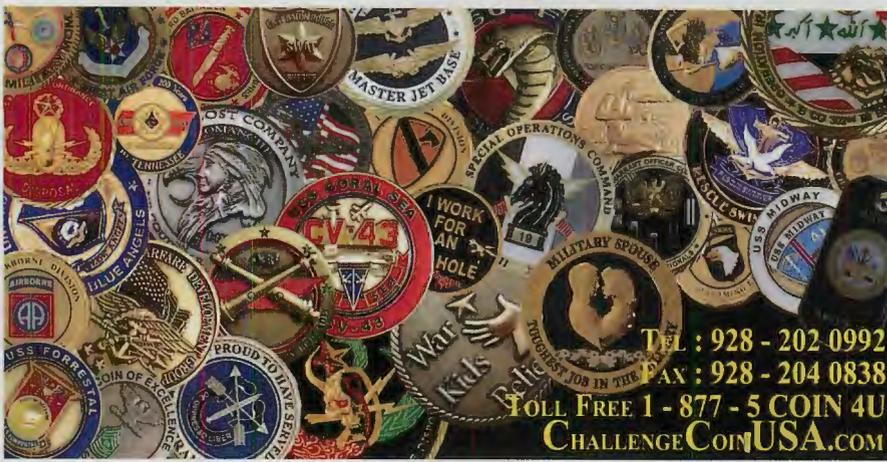
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ed. Stocks of light weapons and 4X4 vehicles have been distributed to some militias.

Local Press

"The Frenchmen gas the patriots," "36 French soldiers killed by the FANCI while they installed a radar to spy on the presidency," "The Frenchmen destroy fighter" (with a MiG-29 photo confused with the Chasseurs of the 16^{ème} BC)... Such headlines are typical of what one will find on the front pages of much of the Ivory Coast press. Although certain daily newspapers are professional, many of the "blue newspapers" are characterized by their grotesque sensationalism and lack of factuality. It is inescapable that dailies such as *Time* or the defunct *Friend of the People* played no small part in fomenting the riots that periodically rock the capital. The African considers that "if the newspaper said it, it is true."

The French 11th Airborne Brigade La 11ème Brigade Parachutiste

Today's French Army doesn't have a rapid reaction force as it did during
Continued on page 70

tars (badly served) and RPG-7 rocket launchers, and quantities of light weapons mostly of soviet manufacture or recovered from FANCI. It is very difficult to judge the strength of rebel forces. With good NCOs, however, the rebel leaders know how to train their people. We observed the equivalent of two companies jogging through the city in two separate groups: The first apparently consisted of veterans, the other of the young recruits in training. There are two rebel armies, the troops who man checkpoints, who often have only a few rounds in their weapons,

and the guards of the communications zone, who received better equipment.

Militias

They are doubtless one of the pivotal players. Mobilizing with itchy trigger fingers, perfectly orchestrated, they were at the heart of confrontations with the Bangladeshi blue helmets, when these UN peacekeepers tried to disarm militias in the Department [state] of Guiglo. In Abidjan, the nuisance value of *Blé Goudé* (Marshal of the Youngs) and its young "patriot people" should not be under estimat-

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THE WAR ON THE STRINGS

by Officer James J. Fotis (Ret.), Executive Director, LEAA

Victory In California!

LEAA has been aggressively working to fight against gun control in the Golden State, and we've had two significant victories to be proud of. First there was the legal fight to overturn San Francisco's Prop B, a citywide handgun ban that would have applied to all San Francisco residents, from law abiding citizens to law enforcement officers. The Judge presiding over the NRA and LEAA backed lawsuit noted that the measure was harmful to public safety, and by banning off-duty law enforcement officers from owning handguns, it violated the state's pre-emption law against local gun control measures and should be overturned.

Then LEAA scored another victory with the defeat of AB 352, a so-called "microstamping" law. The bill, which could have only been sponsored by a legislator from Hollywood who had seen way too many movies, would have required all semi-automatic handguns sold in the state to be equipped with an as yet imaginary technology that would imprint the gun's make, model and serial number onto a spent shell casing.

LEAA argued strongly against the foolishness of this measure when it was first introduced in 2005. In the final days of this legislative session, when the bill quietly passed the California Senate and was on its way to the Assembly to be passed into law, we stepped up our efforts, educating legislators about the dangers of a bill that would have declared that every semi-automatic handgun currently used by California law enforcement to be "unsafe". In the trial lawyers' paradise of California, this would put police agencies across the state in significant legal jeopardy.

The battles in California underscore LEAA's core belief, "gun control is not crime control." Our mission is to make it clear that the agenda of the gun grabbers is not just anti-gun, but anti-cop as well. But with this victory, it is no time to celebrate, only a reminder of how much harder we need to fight to preserve our liberty and safety. Two big threats to our rights and safety loom in the guise of wolves in sheep's clothing.

This fall's Congressional elections will serve as a pivotal moment in the fight for our freedoms. Control of Congress is up for grabs, and a change in party control of less than 4% of the seats



in Congress could send the ultra-liberal Nancy Pelosi of California into the Speaker's Office. Across the country, Democrats are seeking to gain control of the House by winning a few competitive seats with candidates running as mainstream moderates. However, wins by these Democratic "moderates" will benefit the most extreme and radical faction of the Democratic party, under the leadership of Nancy Pelosi.

The second wolf in sheep's clothing comes from a new organization billed by the mainstream media as "a hunter and shooter's alternative to the extremist NRA". The newly conjured "American Hunters and Shooters Association" is nothing more than the gun ban lobby's latest attempt to use lies and deceit to rob law abiding Americans of the right to keep and bear arms. The leadership of this so-called pro-gun group reads like a who's who of the anti-gun establishment, from a former Brady Campaign hired gun to a Boston liberal who heads up a Massachusetts gun grabbing organization. Don't be fooled by the camo-clad photo ops, the AHSA is a circular firing squad for shooters and hunters. ❌

LEAA is a national, non-profit association of over 75,000 members and supporters. Unlike other police-based groups LEAA's membership is open equally to law enforcement, crime victims AND pro-law enforcement citizens who support the Second Amendment. For more information, or to join in the fight, please go to www.leaa.org

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the "Cold War." With the formation of a professional volunteer Army, any unit can be designated to send forces to a threatened country. The system is based on a modular design and the troops needed are pulled from a reservoir of forces comprised of the eight combat brigades of the *Armée de Terre* (land army). These brigades consist of two armored, two mechanized, two light armored, one marine, one mountain and one airborne. This later has, of course, the mission to be the first on site, due to its deployment by air.

As all Infantrymen (the *Armée de Terre* units), the 11th Airborne Brigade works on a 16-month cycle divided in four months, alert; four months, operational deployment; four months, reorganization; four months, operational training.

Today the eight Brigade units, with the exception of the 2nd REP, are based in the South West of France in the Toulouse area, which is a perfect departure base for world intervention. Recently the red berets have deployed to Chad, Ivory Coast, Congo and Afghanistan.

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Due to its defense agreements with the Republic of Gabon, two airborne infantry companies are permanently deployed in the country. From this strategic place they can intervene in less than 24 hours to any African country. Gabon offers the paras realistic operational conditions for training, especially with the Jungle Commando Training Center.

It is from Gabon that the 2d Company of the 1er RCP (Régiment de Chasseurs Parachutistes) deployed to the Ivory Coast theatre in October 2002.

The 11ème Brigade Parachutiste is organized as follows:

- Brigade Headquarters
- The 14ème CCTP (Compagnie de Commandement et de Transmission Parachutiste) Airborne Command and signal Company
- Four Airborne Infantry Regiments:
 - 1er RCP (Régiment de Chasseurs Parachutistes)
 - 3ème RPIMa (Régiment Parachutiste d'Infanterie de Marine)
 - 8ème RPIMa
 - 2ème REP (Régiment Etranger de Parachutiste) - Foreign Légion Paras)

Continued on page 74

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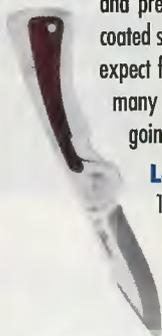
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Leatherman Tool Group now has four robust and innovative hunting knives. These new fixed and folding models will offer bone saws (fixed models), gut hooks and premium stainless-steel blades. All models include a diamond-coated sharpening rod with fine-point work capabilities. As you would expect from the visionary who invented the multi-tool, there are too many features to list here. If you want more information we suggest going to the Leatherman website.



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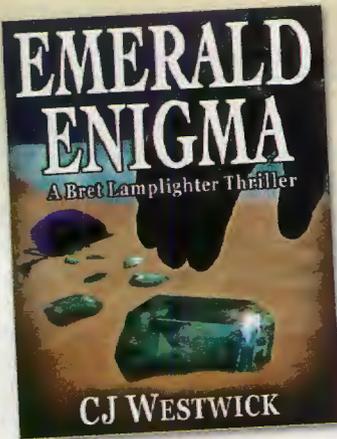
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EMERALD ENIGMA BOOK

When an American buyer of precious gems is murdered on the Caribbean island of Anguilla, his recent purchase of eleven million dollars in emeralds turns up missing. His killer then turns up on the bottom of the bay with an empty jewel pouch. Multistate Insurance hires Bret Lamplighter, a private detective, to help them retrieve the stolen gems before they have to pay out on the loss. All Bret has to do is to locate the emeralds...nothing else. Nothing, except for reliving all those bad things that happened the last time he was in the Caribbean — and which, oddly, seem to be happening all over again. Nothing is as it appears, and intriguing plot twists keep the reader guessing throughout. The only thing that's certain is a string of bad luck seems to follow the emeralds. For Bret Lamplighter, and anyone else who touches the stolen gems, green is the color of trouble: www.emeraldenigma.com.

NEW BLACKHAWK® ANNUAL MAGAZINE

BlackHawk Products Group's new annual magazine hits newsstands nationwide. Features include behind-the-scenes development of two of the most popular BlackHawk knives; M.O.D.'s Beshora XSF-1™ and BlackHawk! Blades™ Crucible, to training with Night-Ops' Gladius™ and Dynamic Entry's top-of-the-line breaching tools. The battle proven HydraStorm® packs take to the White Mountains of New Hampshire and prove that what works for the military, works for the outdoorsman. Boots to luggage to the highly successful SERPA holster, the magazine is jam-packed with stories and features from around the globe. A special-section buyer's guide in the back of the magazine features all the BlackHawk brands to include Dynamic Entry®, BlackHawk Tactical®, Warrior Wear™, HellStorm®, M.O.D.®, BlackHawk! Law Enforcement™, CQC™, and HydraStorm. For more information on the BlackHawk magazine, log onto www.blackhawk.com/magalog07 or drop an email regarding what you want to see in upcoming issues to: magalog07@blackhawk.com.



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Each airborne infantry regiment has four combat companies, one support company with recon, an antitank and mortar platoon, a command and logistics company, a base company, a training company, and a reserve company.

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Basic Infantry weapons include FAMAS assault rifles, FR-F2 and PGM Hecate sniping rifles, Minimi (aka M249 SAW) light machine gun, AT-4 disposable rocket launcher, LGI light grenade launcher, long-barreled 81mm mortars, plus Eryx and Milan antitank missiles.

There is one light armored regiment, the 1er RHP (*Regiment de Hussard Parachutiste - Hussars Paratrooper Rgt.*) This famous regiment was created in 1720, and is actually the armored fist of the brigade, with four squadrons in ERC-90 armored cars and one recon squadron with the VBL.

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regiment: the 35^{ème} RAP (Régiment d'Artillerie Parachutiste - Airborne Artillery Regiment) with four batteries of RF-1 155mm towed howitzers. These paras are also trained to use 120mm mortars, which can be air dropped or heliborne.

There is one airborne engineer regiment: the 17^{ème} RGP (Régiment de Génie Parachutiste - Airborne Engineer Rgt.) with four combat companies and one support company.

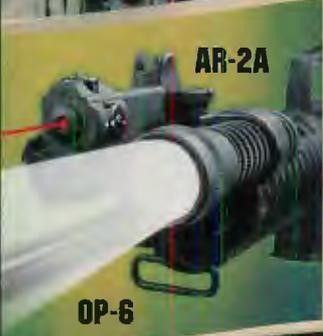
The GCP (Groupe Commando Parachutiste - Pathfinder): Each regiment has two teams of pathfinders. For certain missions they can be grouped in a larger formation. Their main mission is of course to jump with HAHO or HALO techniques to prepare an airborne operation. They are also used for recce and as a "coup de main" for the seizure of an African airport.

With the 6000 red berets (everybody has a red beret except the 2nd REP who wear the green beret of the Legion) of 11^{ème} Brigade Parachutiste, the Armée de Terre has an excellent military tool for urgent operations. ✕

Yves DeBay is editor and publisher of Assault Magazine.

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By Matt Furey

Best-selling author of *Combat Conditioning*

I was the total skeptic. Not only had I lifted weights and run long distance for years, but I had major success under my belt, including a world kung fu championship and a national collegiate wrestling title.

So I just didn't want to believe what Karl, a 76-year old man told me about exercising WITHOUT weights... and WITHOUT long-distance running.

Most importantly, I didn't want to hear that a good exercise program only took a few minutes. Hate to admit it, but I was addicted to the “hard work or nothing” mentality and refused to believe you could get into the best shape of your life by doing LESS... not more.

Let me tell you, when I looked at this so-called “old man's” physique and watched him demonstrate his exercises, I could not look the other way. I had to check them out for myself, even if it meant saying, “Okay, I've wasted a lot of time doing it the wrong way.”

What I discovered shocked me from head to toe!

Before I met Karl I THOUGHT I was strong. I thought I was tough. But the exercises he gave me exploited every weakness that weights and running could not cover. In a matter of minutes, I knew Karl “had me.”

So I gave up the weights and began a routine of bodyweight calisthenics called *Combat Conditioning*. After all, when a man of 76 can do things that a 36-year old cannot do, that tells you that “Yes, there's gold in them there hills.”

The exercises I learned had such a profound and dramatic effect on me, that for six years I have been introducing men and women of all ages and of all backgrounds to this extraordinary program – and the results are shocking, awe-inspiring and PROOF that this system works, and works FAST.

Who is Combat Conditioning for?

It's for the hard-working man or woman who often finds it difficult to squeeze in a quick workout.

It's for the traveling executive who sleeps in hotel rooms more than at home.

It's for those who have trained their whole lives on weights. **It's for** athletes, martial artists and the military.

And... **IT'S FOR** the man or woman who hasn't done a lick of exercise in decades.

Even One Minute a Day Brings Results!

Unlike other exercise program where you are told you MUST do 30 minutes of cardio per day and an hour of weights, to get results, *Combat Conditioning* is totally different. 15 minutes is all it takes to whoop the hard-core trainee. But for the total beginner, he or she can get results starting with ONLY one minute a day. And no, this is not a joke.

Time is not the issue!



Matt Furey

won a national collegiate wrestling title in 1985 and a world shuai-chiao kung fu championship in 1997. Furey has a knack for taking the average and ordinary person and transforming him with his powerful programs. Furey was inducted into the Edinboro University Athletic Hall of Fame in 1998 and spends much time each year traveling

throughout the world, searching for the very best information available to his world-wide audience. His website, www.mattfurey.com, is one of the finest in the world, giving valuable information that changes lives.

Forget all those workouts that take all day. With *Combat Conditioning*, all that's required is your own body and a tiny “get started NOW” decision to DO a little something each day.

The key to your success is in the magical, transformative power of these exercises – not in your belief system about hard work. For many people, just one rep is all they can do at first, and they're shaking like a leaf on a windy day in Chicago. And so, that's all that person should do at first. Even if you think you're not doing enough – the exercises work their magic anyway. Your body has it's own intelligence and will work FOR YOU if you'll simply get out of the way and let it.

When you do, pretty soon you'll be the type of person who can do 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 128 repetitions and feel no fatigue. Instead of tiredness you'll feel exhilaration and ENERGY. You're building strength and endurance from the INSIDE-OUT. And believe me, once you can do more than a few reps, inches of unsightly fat and pounds of excess flab will fly off your body at break-neck speed.

New Results from Forgotten Exercises

Are the exercises in *Combat Conditioning* NEW? Well, not really. They go back about 5,000 years – but for the most part, they got lost in the shuffle when weights, gadgets and gyms came around. So although they aren't NEW, they're “New to YOU!”

Before I learned these exercises, I read about the Great Gama of India, a wrestler who followed this program and was unbeaten in 5,000 matches. I also read that the legendary Bruce Lee did these exercises, too. And we all know about Lee's incredible martial arts skills. Then there was the All-Pro NFL running back, Hershell Walker, who did bodyweight exercises each day. The list goes on and on. The key is in having a proven program with a track record, and *Combat Conditioning* is just that.

Puts You into the Old Clothes You Dream of Wearing Again!

The main reason why *Combat Conditioning* works is because it targets all the weak links in your body. And when all those weak links are given a little attention, your entire body gets stronger, faster, more powerful and more energetic. Spend time each day doing a few functional exercises and the payoff is HUGE.

You get functional strength, endurance and flexibility – all at the same time. Not to mention seeing the excess inches flying off your body, making it easy for you to fit into the clothes you dream of wearing again. Stop dreaming. Start DOING. And get results.

12 Ways Combat Conditioning Will Change Your Life!

Follow this program and your body is going to change big time. In fact, I've made a list of 12 of the most powerful benefits that hundreds of thousands of others all over the world have gotten from the *Combat Conditioning* program. Let's take a look:

1. Cranks up your metabolism so you burn excess body fat a lot, lot faster. This means fitting into the clothes you WANT to wear.
2. Packs attractive and healthy functional muscles (not grotesque) onto your entire body
3. Simultaneously doubles your strength and flexibility – and does so without needing separate workouts for each.
4. Quadruples your endurance inside of 30 days. Never get tired again.
5. Within a couple weeks, it often eliminates chronic back and shoulder pain from years of heavy squats, deadlifts and bench pressing – or other forms of abuse.
6. Sleep like a log. Eight hours of deep sleep is no longer a goal. It's automatic. As soon as you hit the rack you're our like a light.
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10. You'll turn back the clock. Friends may tell you that you look 5–10 years younger.
11. You'll have an explosive type of strength that weights cannot give you. Your every movement will be lively and full of vigor.
12. Your muscles will be pliable and powerful, like a tiger's.

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Combat Conditioning: Functional Exercises for Fitness has 48 super effective bodyweight exercises along with seven different programs that will get you into kick-butt shape fast. Order NOW and you'll receive 3 free Special Reports on how to eliminate knee, back and shoulder pain. Your total investment in this no-nonsense book is only \$29.95 plus \$6 S&H U.S. (foreign orders add \$12). Order online at www.mattfurey.com.

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Finally, with my camera turned off and hanging from my neck, I listened as the robot's introduction was made over the loudspeaker, by the man in charge. Over his head-set to the loud speaker, the man then instructed the operator (whom he could not see) to move the robot forward slowly just as he had done many times earlier. However, to the horror of all present, instead of going forward, only the right track of the machine moved, causing it to begin a slow counterclockwise circle.

The operator yelled over the loud speaker to stop the robot, but the crowd had already started screaming and running. The operator may have been confused, or not heard him, as the robot continued out of control. From the other end of the line, about five seconds into the fiasco, I saw the M240's muzzle approach 9 o'clock only a few degrees from sweeping me. It was at this point that I also saw Sgt. Holland go into action, running at the gun from several yards away.

Now, let me point out that during the practice set-up that morning, I became aware that there was a strict sequence for firing the robot's M240 LMG. After moving back and forth, it went something like "stop," "arm," "traverse," and "fire." Whatever the order of events, the gun could not fire until the electrical circuit was remotely armed to operate the solenoid. Thus, although I was nervous, I did not believe the gun was yet armed. However, such wasn't the case with crowd who was now running and tripping over each other, but there was no place to go.

As the muzzle passed me I concentrated on Sgt. Holland who was now on the gun. Later I would jokingly tell him that he looked like a "bulldogger" at a rodeo trying to take down a steer. By this time the man was screaming over the loudspeaker to "KILL IT!"

For a split second, Sgt. Holland appeared to concentrate on the rear of the gun, but then jumped to its left side, grabbed the barrel of the M240 and gave it all he had like an offensive lineman to push the robot back around

to point down range, just before the operator shut it down.

As I walked down the line to the robot, I saw that Reed Knight was not a happy man. I stopped, shook Reed's hand and told him I would have never thought he could move that fast. He laughed. Everybody was greatly relieved.

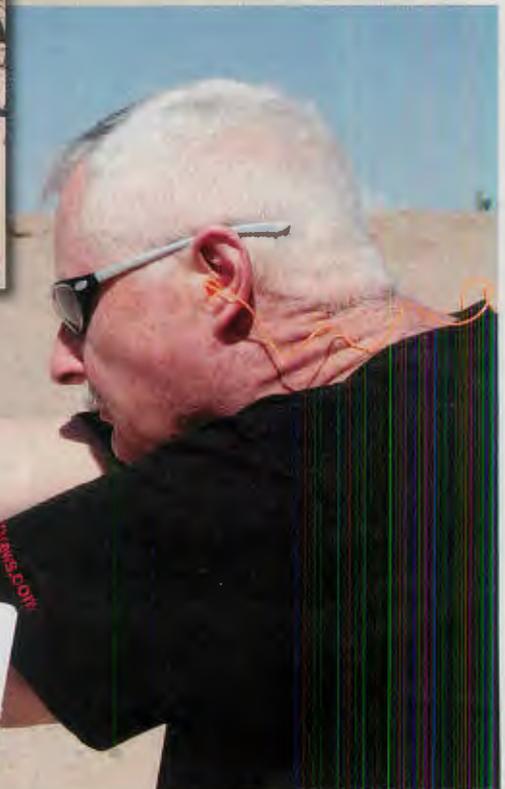
I believe that the presence of the huge crowd between the operator and the robot may have interfered with the electronic commands, especially with a number of video cameras running. When I spoke with Sgt. Holland about it, he said that all he could think of was "open bolt gun," and tried to pull back the cocking handle, but could not get at it, because of the apparatus surrounding the gun, so he went for the gun's barrel. Thus, while others closer to the robot stood frozen in disbelief, Sgt. Holland acted to save the day. Now you know why they call them "Special" Forces. ☒

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Johnston test fires the new 6x35mm KAC/PDW. With this gun, Reed Knight has truly capitalized the word "DEFENSE" in Personal Defense Weapon (www.knightarmco.com).



Johnston put the prototype Taurus Tactical .45 ACP pistol through a few drills in New Mexico. Accuracy was good, as was the trigger pull (www.taurususa.com).



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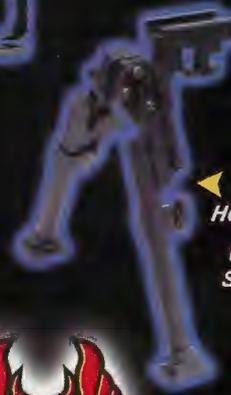


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by Lt. Col. Oliver North, USMC (Ret.)

Oliver North is host of "War Stories" on the Fox News Channel. The opinions expressed below are his own and do not represent the views of Fox News and/or Soldier Of Fortune.

Save The Battlewagons

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On Dec. 4, 1983, 28 aircraft from the USS Independence Carrier Battle Group attacked Hezbollah and Syrian anti-aircraft positions in Lebanon's Bekaa Valley. Two U.S. Navy A-7s were lost on the mission and a third aircraft was damaged. One of the downed pilots died of wounds in captivity and the other, Lt. Robert Goodman, was taken prisoner and paraded before the cameras. Though Lt. Goodman was eventually released, the U.S. Navy had learned a hard lesson.

Ten days later, U.S. reconnaissance flights were fired on again – but this time the response was different. Instead of launching air strikes, the battleship USS New Jersey opened fire – and with just 11 2,700-pound, 16-inch rounds, silenced the anti-aircraft sites. This feat was repeated on Feb. 8, 1984, when Syrian artillery opened fire on Christian West Beirut – inflicting heavy civilian casualties. Less than two hours of fire from the New Jersey's 16-inch guns eliminated the Syrian artillery threat. It wouldn't be the last time the World War II-era "battlewagons" would serve our national interests.

During the 1981-1988 Iran-Iraq War, the Ayatollahs running Tehran decided the best way to influence the outcome of the conflict was to attack Western oil tankers transiting the Persian Gulf – through which passes 20 percent of the world's oil. The United States responded by beefing up the 5th Fleet – and deploying the USS Iowa. The battleship's captain, Larry Sequist, described the effectiveness of the 45,000-ton armored behemoth: "When we would sail the Iowa down the Strait of Hormuz, all southern Iran would go quiet. Iran's Revolutionary Guards were steaming around in boats with rockets, shooting at ships. When we arrived, all of that stuff stopped."

When Saddam invaded Kuwait in August 1990, the battleship Wisconsin was among the first capital ships to arrive in the Persian Gulf. By the time Operation Desert Storm concluded on Feb. 28, 1991, the Wisconsin and her sister battleship, USS Missouri, had delivered more than 1 million pounds

of ordnance on the enemy from their 16-inch guns, Tomahawk TLAM-C cruise missiles and 5-inch gun batteries. Fire from the battleships was so overwhelming that an Iraqi garrison actually surrendered to one of the USS Wisconsin's unmanned aerial vehicles.

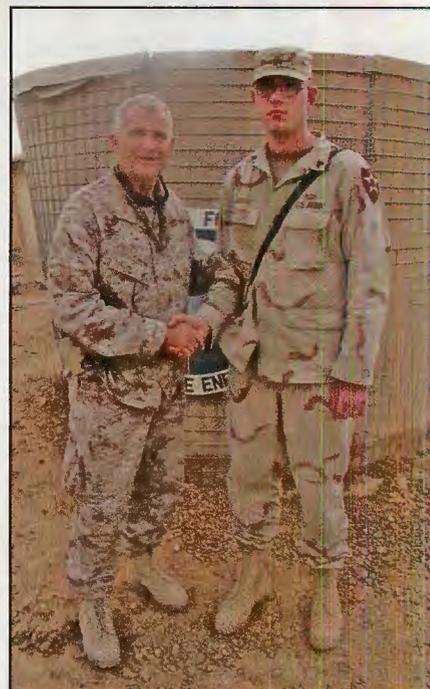
Despite the effectiveness of the vessels in modern warfare – and pleas from the U.S. Marine Corps to retain them for Naval Surface Gunfire Support – two of the four battleships, the New Jersey and the Missouri, were decommissioned and turned into floating museums. Until now, however, Congress has insisted that the Wisconsin and Iowa be maintained in "a state of readiness" for "rapid reactivation" in the "event of a national emergency."

But all that may be about to change. A House-Senate Conference Committee is now considering lifting the requirement that the last two "heavy gun" ships in the allied arsenal be kept ready for action. Apparently the lessons of recent history have been lost on the administration – and perhaps even in the corridors of Congress – despite new threats from Iran to acquire nuclear weapons and interfere with shipping in the Persian Gulf.

Recently, Iranian Revolutionary Guard naval craft attacked a Romanian oil rig, assaulted the offshore platform and briefly took the crew hostage before evicting them. And as President Bush was preparing to remind the world of the threat posed by Tehran, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told a cheering crowd of supporters that "Iran has the ability to control the flow of oil the world needs."

Given the Jihad being waged against the West in much of the Islamic littoral, Iranian "saber rattling" and the lack of any replacement for the well-protected firepower of the Wisconsin and Iowa, turning them into floating museums now seems foolhardy. Yet, according to the green-eyeshade procurement wizards at the Pentagon, the two remaining battleships are too old, too expensive to operate and too costly in crew size to be deployed.

Instead of keeping the heavily-ar-



Sgt. Dorsel B. Boyer, right, with Ollie North, during North's recent trip to Iraq. Boyer, assigned to 2/2 Brigade Combat Team, hails from Coshocton, OH.

mored battlewagons maintained and ready, the brass at the five-sided puzzle palace and big spenders on Capitol Hill want the Marines to bide their time until 2012, when the Navy says it will deploy seven new DDG-1000 class destroyers – at \$3.3 billion apiece. These slower, thin-skinned vessels are to be equipped with an unproven Advanced Gun System designed to fire rounds weighing only 63 pounds but costing nearly \$100,000 each. Even if the new ships eventually perform as advertised by their promoters, that's scant solace to the soldier or Marine who needs naval gunfire support at any point during the next six years.

People in Washington who ought to know better – like Sen. John Warner, R-Va., the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee – have turned a deaf ear to the plight of the Marines. Thankfully, a handful of stalwarts led by Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., have taken up the cause of preserving the Wisconsin and Iowa as mobilization assets. He believes that keeping the battlewagons ready to fight will save American lives. He's right. ✕

To find out more about Oliver North, and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate web page at www.creators.com.

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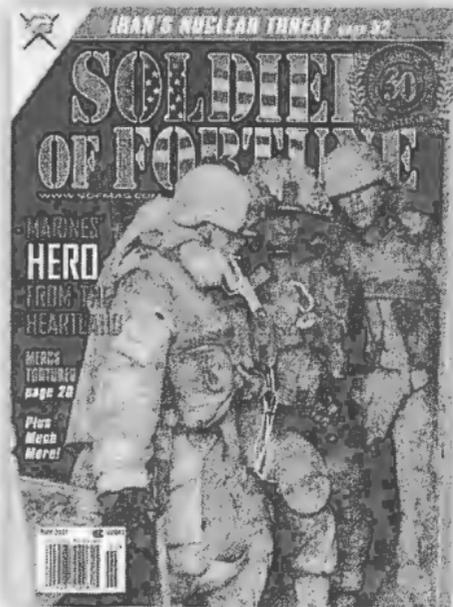
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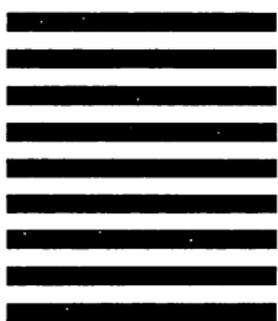
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