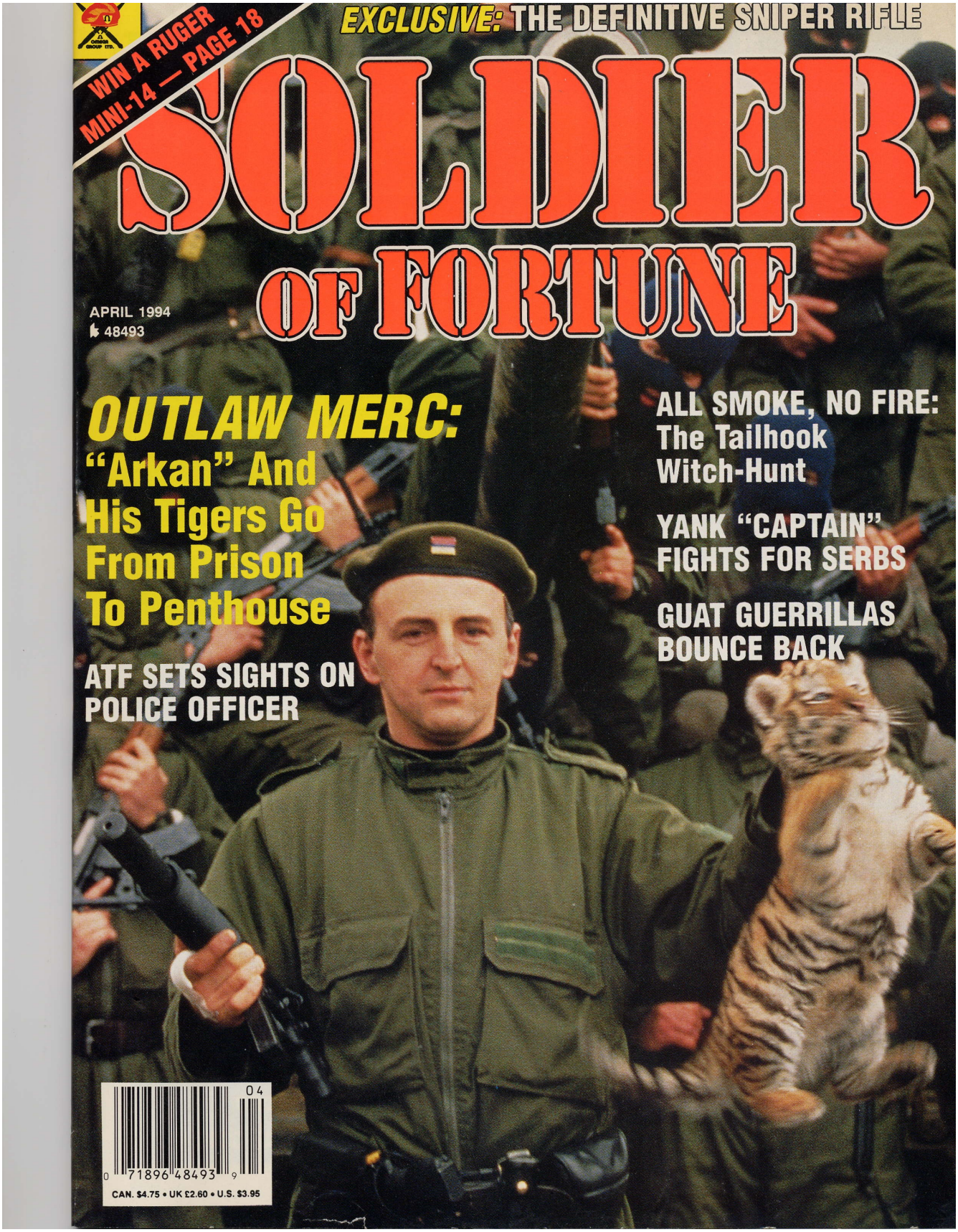
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James Bond's Fanny Pack

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

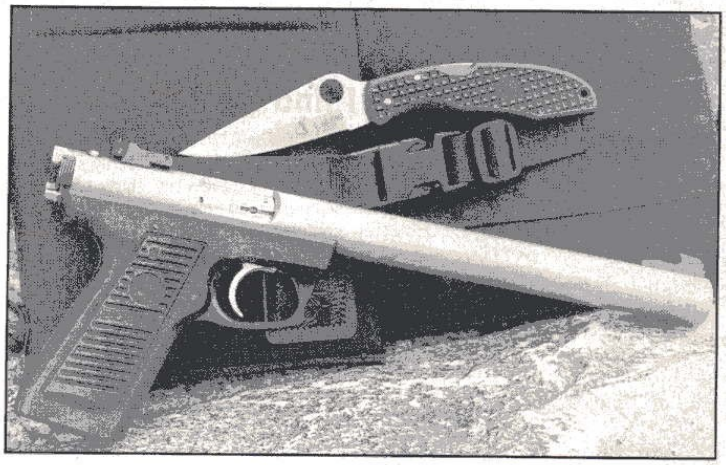
There are a number of valid reasons that justify the acquisition of sound-suppressed firearms. Some are quite innocuous, others more sinister, but still legitimate. Among the more mundane applications are pest control and informal target shooting without the need for hearing protection. There are presumably those who obtain sound suppressors solely because they are intrigued by the "James Bond" mystique associated with these devices. Law enforcement tactical teams sometimes deploy with sound-suppressed MP5s to permit voice contact between team members during dynamic building entries. Finally, government operatives, both military and civilian, involved in clandestine operations employ sound suppressors to remove sentries and, occasionally, more important personnel.

More firearms chambered for the .22 LR rimfire cartridge have been modified for sound suppression than any other. Why this cartridge instead of more impressive rounds like the .45 ACP?

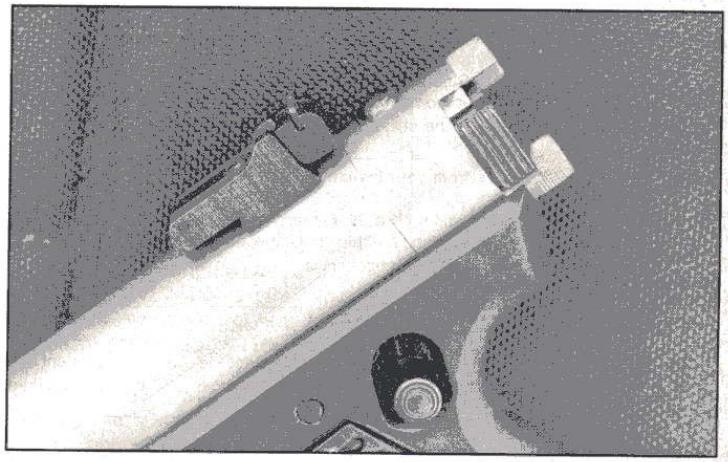
First of all, the .22 LR cartridge has relatively low muzzle blast. And, it's the muzzle blast to which all sound suppressors, successful or not, address themselves. They do so by use of a single formula from physics known as the ideal gas law. Applicable to all ideal gases (any gas behaves as an ideal gas if its density is very low), the equation states that pressure equals temperature multiplied by a constant divided by volume. As muzzle blast is a consequence of relatively high-pressure gases exiting the barrel, reduction of this pressure immediately before exit, by either increasing the volume or decreasing the temperature (cooling), or both, will reduce the sound pressure level.

There is also a large variety of .22 LR semiauto pistols available, a substantial portion of which have compact and concealable lightweight envelopes. Almost all of these operate by means of unlocked blowback with fixed barrels. This means we can hang a suppressor on the muzzle with no effect on the weapon's reliable operation. Attaching a sound suppressor to many locked-breech, short-recoil-operated pistols places an added mass on the rearward moving components that often requires the addition of a sophisticated recoil booster to insure positive functioning.

Finally, don't sell the .22 LR



The Operator Pak, designed for government operatives, consists of a highly sophisticated sound-suppressed Ruger 22/45 pistol with a unique bolt lock, a proprietary-size Safepacker holster and a Spyderco Clipit Endura locking folder knife.



Government-issue Arms Tech sound-suppressed Ruger 22/45 pistols are equipped with a bolt lock in the form of a sleeve at the end of the receiver tube. When rotated 10 degrees clockwise it will block the bolt to further reduce the sound pressure level and will also prevent the ejection of empty cases.

cartridge short (no pun intended). Outside of military and law enforcement circles, it has done and continues to do great execution, albeit not always swiftly. When fired from pistol-length barrels, .22 LR 36-grain lead hollow-points will expand anywhere from .30 up to .35 caliber and will penetrate more than nine inches of soft tissue. Caliber .22 LR 40-grain, round-nose lead projectiles will penetrate approximately 13.5 inches of soft tissue. Furthermore, these latter bullets almost always yaw 180 degrees during their passage through tissue, ending their path traveling base forward. Where the bullet yaw is at its maximum, 60 to 120 degrees, the height of the wound track will increase to half an inch (the length of the bullet) maximum and crush a wider area of tissue.

Nevertheless, the bullet that makes the biggest hole will do the most damage, providing we have the penetration required (a minimum of 12 inches in soft tissue). In this regard the .22 LR round remains marginal at best. However, for sentry removal and other clandestine operations, these weapons will be used up close with careful shot placement — preferably in the head.

Arms Tech Inc. (Dept. SOF, 5121 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85012) has been in operation for more than six years, but remains relatively unknown outside of the government circles in which it deals exclusively. Arcane International Ltd. (Dept. SOF, 5133 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85012) distributes Arms Tech sound suppressors that are similar to their government models but designed specifically for the civilian marketplace. *Soldier Of Fortune* was recently provided with a specimen of the Arms Tech government model, a sound-suppressed Ruger 22/45 pistol for test and evaluation.

Ruger's 22/45 pistol provides shooters with both the Colt M1911A1's 17-degree grip angle and its left-side controls, as well as a frame fabricated from a space-age synthetic material. It also provides an excellent platform for installation of a sound-suppressor.

The Ruger 22/45 pistol's grip frame is made of matte black, glass-filled, injection-molded Zytel nylon. Zytel is unaffected by salt water, sweat, oils or bore cleaning solvents. It also tends to slightly dampen sound pressure levels. It will not crack, chip or peel and never needs refinishing.

The magazine catch/release has been moved from the heel of the frame, where it is found on the standard Ruger .22 pistols in the European manner, to the left side of the frame directly in back of the trigger, where it is located on the M1911A1 series.

The manual thumb safety is also located on the left side of the frame in the same location as on the M1911A1 and on the Ruger Mark II series. Push down to fire. In the safe position, the mechanism blocks the sear and prevents it from pivoting forward to release the hammer when the trigger is pulled.

The bolt's hold-open release button will be found on the left side in approximately the same place as the M1911A1's slide stop lever. The hold-open is activated — after the last shot has been fired — when a steel button protruding from the left side of the magazine (and also used for manually lowering the magazine follower when loading the magazine) pivots a sheet-metal lever in the frame upward to hold the bolt to the rear.

Ruger 22/45 receivers are made from heavy-walled, seamless, 400 series stainless steel tubing that has been machine-finished. The stress-relieved barrel forgings are also made of heat-treated, 400 series stainless steel. All Ruger .22 LR semiauto pistol barrels have six-groove rifling with a right-hand twist of one turn in 16 inches.

The bolt is made of polished, black oxide-finished, chrome-moly steel, and Ruger 22/45 bolts have the Ruger logo stamped onto the rear face. The fixed ejector, a stainless steel stamping, is permanently attached to the receiver. The two-piece extractor is spring-loaded. Also spring-loaded, the firing pin's protrusion is restricted by a cross-pin that passes through the bolt body. The recoil spring,

Continued on page 74

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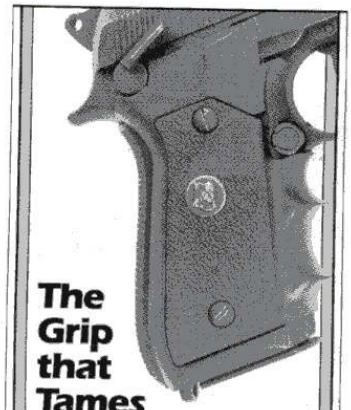

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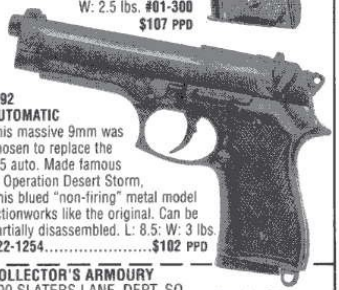

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Not even the bloodless mass demonstrations forcing Serrano's resignation were enough to convince guerrilla leaders that change can be made without guns. Meanwhile, acts of sabotage, eco-terrorism, motorist strafings and executions of "enemies of the people" spread the suffering. Yet the greatest obstacles to peace are perhaps the vested interests of both the military and the URNG.

The military fears a human rights witch-hunt, especially one manipulated by the guerrillas and by human rights groups that overlook guerrilla atrocities. Also, if the URNG disarmed to join the pack of legitimate political parties, the rebels would lose not only the attention they now enjoy, but also the money raised by overseas solidarity groups and the "war taxes" collected at home.

From 1978 to 1984 alone, the guerrillas reportedly acquired some $42 million from war taxes, extortions, robberies and kidnappings. Guerrillas are also suspected of profiting from narcotics trafficking, another plausible incentive against demobilization [see sidebar].

Unlike in El Salvador, where the United States and other nations have helped bankroll insertion of former combatants into civilian life, no such aid appears forthcoming for Guatemala. With national joblessness and underemployment estimated at around 40%, many demobilized soldiers and guerrillas would face grim futures in peacetime.

And until the combatants are taken care of, combat will continue.

For more than a decade, SOF *Senior Foreign Correspondent Steve Salisbury has lived and worked in Central America, filing dozens of stories on armed conflicts in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala.*

FULL AUTO

Continued from page 21

held captive on its guide rod, rides on top of the bolt body.

All triggers for Ruger .22 LR semiauto pistols are serrated and made of aluminum. Trigger pull weight on my personal Ruger 22/45 is a crisp 3.25 pounds with no perceptible overtravel.

It was to this pistol that Arms Tech Inc. installed their sound suppressor. The length of the sound suppressor is 7.5 inches, which increases the overall length of the package to 13 inches. The height remains approximately 5.5 inches. The weight of the system, empty, is 2 pounds, 3.5 ounces.

The suppressor housing is manufactured from 304 stainless steel tubing. The baffle system is constructed from aluminum alloy. The exterior of the sound suppressor housing and the Ruger 22/45 receiver tube have been glass-bead-blasted to achieve a handsome semi-glossy, satin-chrome finish.

A black-oxide blade-type front sight, 0.125-inches thick, has been installed on the sound suppressor housing to mate with the Ruger rear sight, which is a black-oxide, open square-notch-type, adjustable for both windage and elevation zero.

A simple but quite effective bolt lock, in the form of a sleeve fabricated from 17-4 stainless steel tubing and knurled on the end, was also installed. When rotated approximately 10 degrees clockwise, it will block the bolt to further enhance the reduction in sound pressure level and prevent empty cases from being ejected onto the ground, where they might not be easily retrieved, if this is required. The bolt lock is available only on units supplied to government agencies.

Sound suppressors are usually evaluated and compared by a logarithmic ratio called the decibel (dB). The logarithmic nature of the dB is important to keep in mind, as a 3-dB drop in sound is one-half of the original, a 20-dB decrease is 1/100 the original and a 30-dB decrease is only 1/1000 of the original sound pressure level. However, because the sensitivity curve of the ear is also logarithmic, decreasing the sound energy to a hundredth of its value only halves the apparent sound to an ear. For comparison purposes, quiet conversation is about 55 dB, a handclap 65 dB, a jackhammer about 120 dB, and an M16 rifle 165 dB.

Sound levels also diminish as

an observer moves farther from the sound source. The sound level drops according to the "inverse square law" (i.e., the sound decreases with the square of the distance from the source). A unit that sounds fairly loud within the confines of a small room may not even be heard by an observer when fired from a distance of 25 meters outdoors and from behind cover and concealment.

The Arms Tech sound suppressor has been optimized for use with high velocity .22 LR ammunition. The sound signatures of the ammunition fired through the Arms Tech system (Remington .22 Target, Winchester Super-X .22 LR High Velocity and Eley Subsonic Hollow Point) were measured by means of a Bruel & Kjaer-type 2209 Impulse Precision Sound Level Meter with a quarter-inch No. 4135 microphone and A-scale weighting placed one meter away from the front, and to left, of the muzzle at an angle normal (90 degrees) to the barrel's axis.

The meter was calibrated both before and after the tests. No instrument drift was noted. All of this is as per U.S. milspec. The humidity at the time of the tests was 83% with a temperature of 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

When fired through an unsuppressed Ruger 22/45 pistol, the sound signature of the ammunition used in our tests varied from 148.13 to 149.26 dB. When fired through the Arms Tech system, the results were as follows:

Ammunition	Sound Pressure Level Semiautomatic	Bolt Locked	Unsuppressed Ruger 22/45	Net Max dB Reduction
REM .22 TAR.	110.80	110.15	148.63	38.48
WIN Super-X	113.11	114.53	149.26	36.15
Eley Subsonic	110.04	109.00	148.13	39.13

This is excellent performance. The Arms Tech system also totally eliminates the firearm's flash signature — an important consideration for clandestine operatives. (Note: This does not mean that suppressors with this characteristic can be used in an explosive gas environment, i.e., an illicit drug lab. However, Arms Tech can provide law enforcement agencies with a sound suppressor that is safe under these conditions.)

While the Arms Tech unit has been designed for use as a dry suppression system, it can be used as a wet environment sound suppressor as well. The manufacturer claims that this will drop the sound pressure level by another 10 dB.

When fired at 25 yards from a sandbag rest, the best accuracy potential was provided by the

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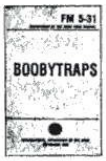

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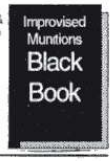

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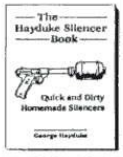

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Winchester Super-X .22 LR High Velocity ammunition, which consistently produced groups under 1 inch.

A maintenance schedule for this sound suppressor will depend upon the ammunition employed, as all .22 rimfire ammunition generates a lot of fouling — but some brands are worse than others. The unit is not designed to be disassembled by the user.

Do not use solvents such as Hoppe's No. 9 as they will attack the aluminum baffles. *Fighting Firearms* Contributing Editor Al Paulson recommends Kroil, which is available from Kano Laboratories (Dept. SOF, 1000 S. Thompson Lane, Nashville, TN 37211-2627; phone: 615-833-4101, fax: 615-833-5790). Their "Get Smart Deal" includes a one-gallon can, an aerosol can and shipping for $20. Soaking the baffles overnight in Kroil will remove most of the fouling.

The Arms Tech sound-suppressed Ruger 22/45 pistol comes with a special, proprietary-size Safepacker holster. Originally designed by Ralph Holzhaus II of The Wilderness Center (Dept. SOF, 5130 N. 19th Ave., Suite 7, Phoenix, AZ 85015; phone: 602-242-4945; catalog $1) to protect a handgun during mountain rescues, the Safepacker holster is fabricated from 1000-denier Cordura nylon, with one-quarter-inch closed-cell, neoprene foam in between, and a Fastex quick-release buckle. The holster's flap contains a Velcro closure pocket. Inside is a Spyderco Clipit Endura locking folder knife with a plain-edged, stainless steel blade that is provided by Arms Tech. The entire package consisting of the suppressed Ruger 22/45, special Safepacker holster and Clipit knife is referred to as "The Operator Pak." I also carry a spare magazine in the closure pouch.

In my opinion, the greatest single advantage of the Safepacker is surprise and, as a consequence, the draw stroke sequence should always appear almost casual.

The draw stroke sequence — developed by myself and a Sam Spade-type who totes a Safepacker everyday — is as follows: Insert the Ruger 22/45 into the holster muzzle-first with the rear sight next to the weapon compartment's Velcro breakaway closure. The Safepacker is carried in the left hand (for a right-handed shooter) with the top of the pistol facing down and the muzzle forward. Swing the holster up and index it and the butt end of the pistol against your stomach, just above the belt line. Slide the left hand under the flap while positioning the thumb and index finger of the right hand on the Fastex quick-release buckle. Open the buckle and let the holster swing downward while continuing to hold the holster flap with the left hand. Reach into the gun compartment, brushing the Velcro closure open while grabbing the weapon. Withdraw the handgun, let the Safepacker fall to the ground and assume the Weaver position.

The Operator Pak is an attractive package. No other sound-suppressed .22 LR pistol is provided with a carrying

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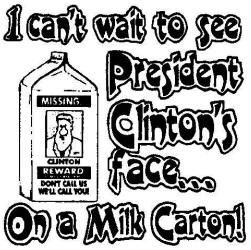

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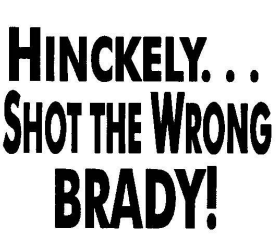

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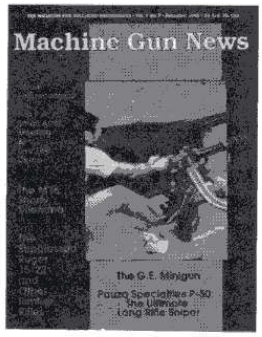

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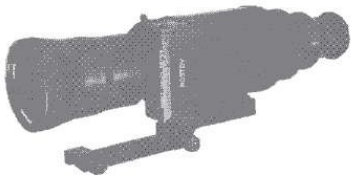

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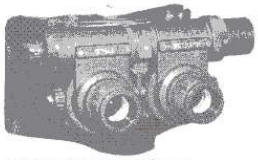

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rig designed to specifically accommodate its envelope. The Spyderco locking folder is a clever touch. More important, the Arms Tech "can" provides lightweight, effective sound suppression with Ruger's most impressive .22 LR pistol. ✠

AMERIKANAC COMMANDO

Continued from page 51

of volunteers, as "everyone wanted to stay at the front on Mount Igman because they were feeding us three boxes of C-ration-type Yugoslav national army rations a day. *Three a day.* No one was worried about dying; we were finally getting enough to eat."

The attack on Mount Igman was Zack's last major combat action. He returned to routine duties in positions around the Jewish cemetery until leaving in October 1993. The appreciative Serb Chetniks of *Novo Sarajevo* commissioned Zack a captain, and the Serb government awarded him a Serbian passport and honorable discharge. Five Chetniks were awarded the Serbian Medal of Bravery for heroism during the Mount Igman offensive. Kapetan Zlatko "Zack" Novkovic was one of them.

Rob Krott is an SOF *Senior Foreign Correspondent.* ✠

OUTLAW MERC

Continued from page 53

mans and Ustashe, the nationalist Chetniks, and Tito's communists, some 1.7 *million* Yugoslavs were killed — *more than half of them by other Yugoslavs.*

Only in such a convoluted and chaotic political arena could a criminal figure akin to Arkan become a war hero, rising political star, and one of the richest men in his country. Once prominent, however, the politically ambitious can find former alliances to be fragile, and former sponsors hazardous. Arkan, or course, isn't the only former Serbian militia commander to enter politics.

Another irregular militia com-