
Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Volume Two, 1994

• Vol. 2, No. 1 Happy New Year	1
• Vol. 2, No. 2 Shot Show Issue	6
• Vol. 2, No. 3 Ides of March	11
• Vol. 2, No. 4 April Fool, 1994	16
• Vol. 2, No. 5 Maytime, 1994	21
• Vol. 2, No. 6 Maytime Supplement	26
• Vol. 2, No. 7 The Golden Joys, 1994	30
• Casualty Report, 27 June 1994	35
• Vol. 2, No. 8 July, 1994	36
• Vol. 2, No. 9 High Summer, 1994	41
• Vol. 2, No. 10 Dog Days, 1994	48
• Vol. 2, No. 11 National Condition Orange, 1994	53
• Vol. 2, No. 12 Summer's End, 1994	59
• Vol. 2, No. 13 Hunting Season, 1994	65
• Vol. 2, No. 14 Thanksgiving, 1994	70
• Vol. 2, No. 15 December, 1994	75
• Vol. 2, No. 16 Christmas, 1994	80

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 1

1 January 1994

Happy New Year

We were certainly happy to be able to put 1993 behind us, doubtless the worst year we can remember. From Belfast to Bosnia, from Somaliland to Ceylon, from Korea to Kabul, from Gotham to Gunsite, and from Waco to Washington, it was a year we do not wish to dwell better, since it could hardly be worse. Let us see to it.

The bright spot of `93 was our great Gunsite Reunion honoring Theodore Roosevelt's birthday at the Whittington Center in New Mexico. We already have plans for the next event in `94 and we hope that this will be the beginning of a great tradition.

Nineteen ninety-four is the centennial of the great Winchester lever-action 30-30, one of the outstanding artifacts of modern times. One correspondent has suggested that it should be replaced in its tactical niche by the Russian SKS in caliber 7.62x39, but somehow we tend to resist this notion. Among other things the SKS is clumsy, and its appearance aggravates the hoplophobes. I do not wish to sound chicken in this matter, but one of the nice things about the Model 94 is its innocent "Old West" appearance. If John Wayne loved it, it's got to be good.

The forthcoming SHOT show in Dallas may show us various new things. Steve Hornady has promised us a "quantum leap" in loaded rifle ammunition, and the IPSC booth will display a Belgian assembly of existing parts which is intended to serve as a prototype for practical rifle competition. Doubtless there will be many other things of note, and we will report upon them in the next issue of this paper.

Speaking of the Hornady operation, we regret to report that they are no longer manufacturing the excellent jacketed-truncated-cone (JTC) bullet for the 45 auto. This was the best projectile for this cartridge so far seen, and it has been our mainstay for duty operations for lo these many years.

It seems to be a principle of our modern industrial society to cease producing anything good as soon as it is discovered to be good. This may be the result of a general philosophy in sales to cause the consumer to grab whatever it is he likes at once before it is taken off the market. I can think of a dozen examples in the firearms field, and scores more throughout industry in general.

"If it is good, get it now. It won't be here tomorrow!"

This Russian patriot Zhirinovskiy now claims that Russia should reclaim Finland, Poland, the Baltic states, and Alaska. Much as our State Department enjoys giving in on all points suggested by European claimants, I do not think we should let Zhirinovskiy have Alaska, which is our national game preserve. On the other hand, in the true spirit of negotiation, maybe we should make him an offer. Chick Hastings suggests that we offer him the District of Columbia, New York City, and San Francisco.

Bambi's revenge continues. We read of a sportsman who got scooped up by a crocodile in Northern Australia, and of a gent who was done in by a nilgai down on a game farm in Texas. I do not think, however, that the beasties stand to win in the long run. There are too many of us and too few of them.

Family member and long-time Orange Gunsite staffer, Dr. Lloyd Pond of New Mexico, has sometimes pointed out that the advantages of the Weaver Stance over the isosceles are attributable to basic anatomical geometry. Now we get further corroboration from Dr. Edward P. Jastram, III of Montana:

"It turns out that the reflexive facilitation inhibition patterns of gait involve the muscles of the shoulder girdle and upper extremities as well as those of the lower, and that the precision with which one may use his muscles specific for stability, trigger and recoil control is position dependent."

I am not sure I fully understand that, but I have seen the Weaver Stance prevail and have taught it ever since its invention by Jack Weaver and its analysis by John Plahn so many years ago. Now it appears that the notion can be said to be "medically approved."

Let us not fail to celebrate Dan Dennehy's birthday on 15 January. This is a *National Gunsite Holiday* and all *family members* are authorized to take the day off.

From our enemies in the media we learn that the passage of the Brady Bill, while admittedly a totally ineffectual measure, was nonetheless a victory because it diminished the power of the National Rifle Association. From our standpoint, it is hard to believe that it did. It made Congress, not the NRA, look silly. But mostly it made these hoplophobic news commentators look even sillier. These people remind us of the spoiled child who threatens to hold his breath until he turns blue if he does not get his way, whether or not his way makes any sense – even to him.

From *family member* Bob Budz the following:

"*Big Brother* is now here – and look, he is retarded!"

Of course not all pundits are our enemies. Joe Sobran is a strong warrior on our side. Consider the following, extracted from his column appearing on 12 December in the *Washington Times*.

"Because the state can no longer protect us from crime, it wants to take away from us the means of protecting ourselves. This is the logic of gun control."

"In short, we – or our rulers, at any rate – now make law lawlessly. Bill Clinton wants to license all handguns in the United States. He affects not to know that the Second Amendment forbids the federal government to infringe our right to keep and bear arms. He doesn't ask, because he doesn't care, where the federal government gets the lawful power to require the licensing of guns. He thinks it has the actual political power to do it, and for him that is all that counts."

"So law-abiding citizens are left at a disadvantage – caught between a criminal class that disdains the law and a ruling class that disdains the Constitution."

That is beautifully put and, we hope, widely read.

From South Africa we hear of a most curious example of gun theft. In South Africa, as you know, a lost firearm is a serious matter before the law and the bereaved owner must be able to prove to the satisfaction of the authorities that he had manifested no contributory negligence. It turns out that a shooter from Durban many years ago had his P35 stolen. But just last month he was notified by the police that it had been recovered. When he went down to pick up his pistol he first maintained that it was not his, since it was quite a

bit different from the piece he had lost. The police insisted that it had to be his because the numbers matched. Upon further examination the man noted that most things about the weapon had been improved, including sights, speed safety, and stock. It was also cleaner and in better shape than when he had lost it. This is one of the most curious stories I have heard. One certainly does not think of a thief as being a pistolero, but then who knows what the odyssey of that pistol may have been? Somebody along the line had an appreciation of good equipment. One wonders if he will turn up to congratulate the original owner.

I continue to get good reports about the Para-Ordnance 45 Auto. I have not yet used it to the extent necessary to form an opinion, but I will talk to the people at SHOT and see what the latest developments are.

In this degenerate period in the life of the republic, I most strongly urge all responsible people to find a copy of the Constitution of the United States and to read the Tenth Amendment thereto with great care. I have not yet heard it proposed that legislators and executives who are ignorant of the supreme law of the land may be charged with "political malpractice," but it is high time that someone brought this up.

Back in *the Dark Ages* when I was but a lad, the following advice about the military services was often heard:

"If you want to learn a trade, join the Army.
If you want a clean bunk every night, join the Navy.
If you want to fly, join the Air Force.
If you want to fight, join the Marines."

That advice may no longer be applicable in the Billial administration, but those people now in the White House will not be around forever – much as it may seem so with every passing week.

It now appears that I will be chatting with Gordon Liddy again on the air on Monday, 7 February. I enjoyed our session last fall and I look forward to exchanging ideas again with a man of courage. He who is able to look the power of the state squarely in the eye without flinching is all too rare in *the Age of the Common Man*.

A couple of years ago we coined the appellation, "Preoccupation with Inconsequential Increments," or PII. This peculiarity lies in attributing importance to measurable deviations so small as to be meaningless. You see it in the people who shoot test groups in rifles, awarding a prize to a group which is only thousandths of an inch smaller than those unrewarded. One sees it in speed records awarded in one-thousandths of one mile-per-hour. One sees it in basketball scores which, nearing the century mark, are separated by less than three points. In all such cases Score *A* is "better" than Score *B*, but who cares?

An increment may be termed inconsequential when it has no significant relationship to the purpose of the exercise. Of course if the purpose of the exercise is in itself inconsequential some may not think this to be foolish. A very distinguished general at Quantico once caused the sign to be placed over the exit door of every office asking, in brilliant scarlet and gold, "What are you trying to do?" There was a man who knew more about human nature than most.

"Jeff Cooper's Commentaries," a sort of zamizdat Gunsite Gossip from behind the rice curtain here at Gunsite, is furnished regularly to both *Guns & Ammo* magazine and the current owner of the Gunsite Training Center. It is not available by subscription, due to the terms of the sale of the ranch, but appears to be much in demand. If you like it, show it to a friend. If he likes it, he may show it to a friend. This way I may still put out the word.

The next time you kill a buffalo bear in mind this recipe that I recently ran across in an old English cookbook: "Take the heavy thigh bones and roast them in the coals until they crack; then carefully spoon out the marrow, season it with salt and cayenne, and spread the mixture on toast." Funny I never ran across that before!

Rifleman and longtime Orange Gunsite stalwart, Larry Larsen, has joined the Babamkulu adventure for May of this year and he faces that delightful quandary about which rifle to take. He will not be hunting buffalo or elephant, so he does not need a heavy (with which Gunsite would provide him as holding the Gunsite Expert Badge.)

His choice is therefore between the 30–06 220 and the 350 250 ("Fireplug.") Either will do very well in the hands of a master marksman, so there is really very little to discuss. However, if Larry scores in Africa with his Fireplug he will then rate a Fireplug pin with a blood–red center. On the other hand, if he scores with the 30–06, he will be in a position to promote conspicuous international amity by leaving his ammunition behind. Fireplug ammunition is useless in Africa, since there are no weapons there to take it, but that is certainly not true of 30–06, which has been world–standard since before I was born.

In either case Larry will rate the brassard of the *Gunsite African Rifles*, which really dresses up one's uniform.

Joe Sobran, the columnist we mentioned previously, has come up with a nifty epithet for that zoological accretion with which Bill and Hillary have surrounded themselves in the White House, to wit: "The gaffe menagerie."

"That circus in DC would be funny if it didn't hurt so much."

Maggie Sullivan

The Nazis may have left us the Volkswagen and the freeway, but they have also handed us a nasty little terminological keepsake in the term "Assault Rifle." As you doubtless know, the Germans decided that they had to have something better for their tank–riders in Russia than either the G98 Mauser or the MP40 Schmeisser, the one being too clumsy and slow to fire, and the other, in 9mmP, under–powered. So they came up with a sort of hybrid piece splitting the difference. This was first called the MP (for Maschine Pistole) 44, but since it did not take a pistol cartridge but rather a shortened 8mm rifle cartridge, they changed its name to StG44 for "Sturmgewehr" which is literally translated as "assault rifle." When the Soviets picked over the wreckage of the Third Reich they really cottoned to the idea of the Sturmgewehr and came up with the Kalashnikov family of similar characteristics but using a different cartridge. This, of course, was the AK47. Weapons of this sort have a definite utility in armored warfare, though it is distinctly specialized. However, the Soviets and their satellites produced the AK47 and subsequent clones in such vast numbers that this piece is now world–standard from Beirut to the Bronx. Its tactical characteristics are not as important as its title. "Assault Rifle" is something the hoplophobes can really get hold of and wave around, whether or not they have any idea of what they are talking about – which usually they do not. So I guess we can attribute part of our problem here in the period of Clintomania to German ingenuity – not to the weapon itself, but to its title. Thanks a lot!

An Italian correspondent, viewing the current situation here at Gunsite, opined that the new owner had bought the box and thrown away the contents. This puts it very well. Italian is not only a beautiful language, but also a very expressive one.

One Jun Yamasaki, a Japanese bureaucrat, observes pungently that:

"When a rabbit raised in a zoo is suddenly kicked out into the wild, it is likely to be eaten."

There is a man of perceptivity!

Family member Mike Cox, who is now stationed in Saudi Arabia, recently took advantage of geography to split down to Africa for a bit of hunting. I understand his reasons for this, but he did make what I consider to be a couple of mistakes. He decided to hunt buffalo on his first venture, and to use a borrowed piece when he got there. He also had not come to rifle school, though presumably he knew how to shoot.

His outfitter handed him a 375. Now this cartridge may be world standard and certainly has killed innumerable buffalo, but it is not a proper buffalo gun.

Mike's first shot was perfectly placed in the shoulder, but as is not uncommon, the buff took no notice of it and disappeared into thick thorn. Mike then proceeded to short-stroke his rifle and jam it up tight. The PH immediately swapped the jammed 375 for his 458. With the second shot the buff went down and the hunter proceeded to short-stroke that one. The buff then got up and Mike shot him twice more with the 375, concluding the action. The range was about 12 paces and both hunters well and truly had blood on their shoes.

Now this was very exciting, and turned out well, but it makes two points. One, work that bolt, in front of your televisor, for at least a month before you take off. And two, use enough gun for buffalo.

To complete his adventure, Mike went up to Vic Falls where he had a run-in with a bunch of baboons. The ape chieftain, feeling his band threatened by a man without a gun, started throwing rocks. I have always been under the impression that while apes can throw things, they cannot throw them accurately since their brains are not arranged that way. In this case, however, Mike said that a couple of rocks about the size of softballs flew by close aboard. Mike happened to be wearing a sheath knife, and when he drew it, it seemed to get the attention of the ape. He threatened with his teeth, but chose not to close to hand-to-hand distance.

I do not recount this to embarrass good old Mike, but only to point out that there are things to be learned about the African bush even today in *the Age of the Wimp*

Prayer for 1994:

"Let each man get what he deserves."

Brad Ackman

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 2

31 January 1994

Shot Show Issue

As we go crowding into February, which is usually thought of as the worst month of the year, we may soften the blow by considering various aspects of the Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trades Show held this year in Dallas. This year's event was the best I can remember, but that may have something to do with the fact that last year's version in Houston was unsatisfactory. For whatever reason, I saw more things and got more things done this year than ever before, partly because of excellent contacts made.

I was able to discuss certain revisions in the presentation of "Cooper's Corner" in *Guns & Ammo* magazine with the new editor, Kevin Steele, and can look forward to broader coverage in the magazine, beginning with the May issue. I was able to talk at some length with Clint Smith of Thunder Ranch and to arrange for various rifle qualifications at his facility prior to the Babamkulu expedition to Africa in May. I talked with the people from Brno about new production. It is possible that we may be getting something interesting from them in due course. Naturally I talked with Steyr–Mannlicher, but without notable success, on the prospects of the production Scout Rifle. I was able to foster a few plans with Jean–Pierre Denis, President of IPSC, and with the range officials at Prague concerning the forthcoming practical rifle conference to be held there in June. As you doubtless know, there are serious complications about the conduct of practical rifle competition on an international scale. We profoundly hope that they may be resolved to everyone's satisfaction.

In addition to this sort of thing, we were able to look at a greater than usual number of new products of interest.

IPSC had a booth at Dallas this year, conducted by Nick Alexacos from Canada and Jean–Pierre Denis, the International President. Many tapes of the Tenth World Shoot at Bisley were displayed and seemed to attract much interest.

I talked at some length with the Voere people from Kufstein to see how they were progressing with their caseless cartridge project. At this time they are pretty satisfied with their 22 version and are hard at work upon a 6 millimeter. The concept of the caseless cartridge has always worried me because of the possibility of inadvertent ignition. The Voere people, however, insist you can hold that cartridge by its bullet and light the rear with a torch and hold it in your hand while it burns. Nobody volunteered to do this, but it is a cute idea. The caseless cartridge may be "the wave of the future," but it is sometime down the trail. Not in my lifetime, certainly, and probably not in yours.

Don Mitchell, of Mitchell Arms, showed me a couple of very nice 1911 clones available with both standard and oversized magazines. This may be the way to look for the immediate future.

Now that the media are doing their best to cover up the Waco atrocity, they have been able to downrate the news with the forensic pornography surrounding the Bobbitt case. In response to this, Dan Dennehy, the renowned knife maker who has long been one of the stalwarts of Orange Gunsite, will now offer a special instrument to be known as the "Dan Dennehy Dick Docker," featuring a serrated edge and a pink plastic hilt. He will have it on special order for uppity feminists as soon as it is available.

Steve Hornady was showing off his newly designed "linear" tracer ammunition for pistols, plus a new chronograph and a line of center-fire rifle ammunition termed "Light Magnum."

The tracer was very interesting, using as it does a thin axial cylinder of illumination material, rather than a chunk in the base as is now customary. This ammunition is now available in 38 Special and 9mm P and is intended primarily for police training. I am not sure that I understand its advantages in this activity, but I am willing to be convinced.

The new chronograph shows much promise, and I have ordered one for my own use since I no longer have access to the Gunsite materiel I acquired during my ownership.

The Light Magnum rifle ammunition purports to obtain significant velocity increases with no increase in pressure. Here again I remain to be convinced, and I will certainly run tests as soon as I receive both the ammunition and the chronograph. The claim is that this loading system will turn the 30-06 into a 300 Magnum, and the 308 into a 30-06. This sounds like something for nothing, but modern science is indeed wonderful.

Personally, I see no need to upgrade the power of the 30-06 by increasing its speed. I have long held that if you want more power than is available in the 30-06, you do not want more velocity, you want more bullet. Three cartridges that might really use additional velocity are the 308, the 350 RM, and the 458, since each of these is hampered by a case capacity too small for optimum ballistics. (John Gannaway can indeed achieve full velocity in the 350 RM, but only by loading up to the point where the cases are not re-usable.)

In case you are thinking about building up a rifle, Scout or otherwise, be sure you check with Pachmayr in Los Angeles to be sure you have a proper supply of hammerhead flush sling-sockets. I was told at SHOT that they are out of production, and yet they are the only sensible way to attach a sling to the rifle. Come to think of it, you better get on this even if you are not thinking about building a rifle. Trade goods are always useful.

Note that Gunsite Orange stalwart and *family member* Walt Mansell of California is running by petition for the Board of Directors of the National Rifle Association. This is a good man and we need all we can get.

Springfield Arms (now referred to as Springfield Inc.) is also making 1911 clones as fast as they may be produced, and Para-Ordnance is going ahead with their pioneer productions of the double column 45.

It has never been clear to me why increased magazine capacity in a defensive pistol is particularly choice. The bigger the magazine the bigger the gun, and the bigger the gun the harder it is to get hold of for people with small hands. And what, pray, does one need all those rounds for? How many lethal antagonists do you think you are going to be able to handle? Once when Bruce Nelson was asked by a suspect if the thirteen-round magazine in the P35 was not a big advantage, Bruce's answer was, "Well, yes, if you plan to miss a lot." The highest score I know of at this time achieved by one man against a group of armed adversaries was recorded in (of all places) the Ivory Coast! There, some years ago, a graduate student of mine laid out five goblins, with four dead and one totaled for the hospital. Of course there is the episode of Alvin York and his eight, but there is some dispute about that tale. (If you read it over very carefully you will see what I mean.) Be that as it may, I see no real need for a double column magazine. It is all the rage, of course, and like dual air bags, it is a popular current sales gimmick.

In shotguns we were again enchanted by the Perazzi display, including the top-grade works of art retailing for nearly seventy-thousand dollars. Even if I were very rich, I do not think I could bring myself to shoot a shotgun selling for the price of a middle-grade Mercedes Benz, but it is charming to know that such things exist. At the SHOT Show they will even let you touch one, if you are polite.

Note that while Steve Hornady has stopped making his excellent 230-grain JTC bullet for the 45 ACP cartridge, Nosler has taken up the torch and is now producing that bullet for sale.

The Republic is in very bad shape – probably the worst since 1776 – but it does us all well to remember that the principles of the Founding Fathers stand as sound and irrefutable today as yesterday. We must bear in mind that "they" cannot disarm us. They do not have the legal power, of course, but neither do they have the physical power. An army may be defeated by another army, but the people of a nation cannot be, as long as they are aware of their principles and maintain their determination to observe them. We hope, of course, that "they" never presume to try, because "they" simply cannot do it. What the American people need is the viscera to tell "them" No! God grant that we still have the courage!

"Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do children of humans as a whole experience it. Avoiding danger is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing."

Helen Keller, via Chuck Lyford

The item that got my attention most forcefully in the entire show was the new Blaser rifle called the R93. Gehardt Blenk, the proprietor of Blaser in Bavaria, is well-known for his innovative approach to design, and the 93 is radical enough for the most convinced high-tech enthusiast. It features the quick caliber interchange of previous models, but goes much farther than that. It is a straight-pull bolt-action, but it is not related to the old Schmidt-Rubin and Ross straight-pulls in that its bolt does not turn. When the bolt handle is tugged rearward the entire radial locking system is withdrawn into the bolt proper, allowing the action to be opened and closed in a split second. Both right and left hand bolts are available, and a whole slew of calibers up to and including the 416.

In all Blaser models the telescope is mounted on the barrel, which would lend itself well to Scoutscope system if the necessary ingredients were fabricated – which will not be for the present.

More dramatic than the straight-pull action, from the utilitarian standpoint, is a radical trigger release which I do not fully understand now, but which I will when my personal 93 arrives in April. This trigger employs the action of a vertical pedestal and is claimed to require no adjustment or tuning whatever. The release on the demonstration gun was superb, and that is something very rare in the industry today.

The R93 is handicapped slightly by a small magazine capacity of three rounds. Current rifle magazines resemble the fuel tanks of current automobiles. Downsize, they do not hold enough. It is true that I have never shot a bolt-action rifle dry in action, but then I have never had occasion to use a life jacket either. The difference in the utility of high capacity magazines in rifles and pistols is the result of the different concept of the purpose of the weapon.

The Blaser R93 is not a Scout rifle, but it is a fascinating technical forward step. Who knows what the future may bring?

I speak to the Czechs regularly about the revival of that excellent pop-up rear aperture sight that used to be standard equipment upon the ZKK actions. They keep right on looking blank, so the installation of a proper rear ghost-ring remains largely a do-it-yourself proposition.

People ask me what progress I am making on *"The Art of the Rifle"* and I can only respond that it is slow going. With the convulsion here at Gunsite my literary output is cut back by more than half, while my professional correspondence seems, if anything, to increase.

Now, however, I must get serious. Regarding the example of Sir Richard Burton, who promised *"The Book of the Sword"* and then died before he got to the last two volumes, I cannot let that happen.

We hear of an unfortunate woman who, during an nighttime asthma attack, confused the small handgun she kept under her pillow with an asthma inhaler and proceeded to relieve her symptoms. It was not a fatal mistake, partly because she used a 25 ACP, which everyone knows is not sufficient to clear sinuses.

From John B. Hubbard of Bangor, Maine

We were amused to hear recently from Alvin Hammer, a rifle graduate from Old Gunsite and a prospective member of the Babamkulu group, that people in his area (at least some people) regard his prospective adventure in Africa as too dangerous. What a curious idea is that! If these people would like to avoid dangers they should take the precaution of not being born. (Might that be a good reason for abortion?). As someone once pointed out, none of us is going to make it alive. True, we might get shot in Africa. We also might get shot in Washington DC, or struck by lightning, or headed by some drunk in a pickup truck. No one who has lived through a battle will ever let such things bother him.

"By my troth I care not. Man owes God a death, and come what way it will, he that dies this day is quit for the next."

In any case, the Babamkulu adventure is setting up nicely. I will have to fax Danie van Graan, who will be our host at Engonyameni, to the effect that if anybody gets shot on this venture he will have to apologize to Jesse Jackson.

Charlie Putman of Colorado, who holds both the Gunsite Scharfschützenabzeichen and the Gunsite Lion Badge, put in for one of the new R93 Blasers in caliber 416. I do not know what Charlie intends to do with that, but I will bet he is the first kid on his block to show it off.

"Consensus is the negation of leadership."

Margaret Thatcher, via Eric S.H. Ching

Mark Moritz recently introduced me to "the pistol that shoots everything." It is a Smith-frame revolver that accepts any known cartridge in the 9mm persuasion, from the 380 to the 357. It accomplishes this by means of a trick cylinder and ejector system that accommodates to any sort of rim. Mark tells me that this is the answer, in view of the dark times ahead when ammunition may be as hard to come by as good whiskey during Prohibition. Could be. In any case, it is a very interesting piece.

The run on arms and ammunition has caused shortages here and there throughout the country. In my opinion this phenomenon is a direct result of the passage of the Brady Bill. As everybody knows, that bill will do nothing about anything, but it does indicate that the hoplophobes now feel that they are free to go ahead with other and more ruinous action.

I have long preached that one should never be caught short in his personal armament, either in regard to the weapons or the ammunition. Keep up your supply, and do not neglect the 22 rimfire, which may well turn into the "ballistic wampum" I have spoken of the past.

If you have any loading equipment, stock primers, which may constitute the weakest link in the chain.

"The entire modern deification of survival, per se, survival returning to its self, survival naked and abstract with the denial of any subsequent excellence in what survives except the capacity for more survival still, is surely the strangest intellectual stopping place ever proposed by one man to another."

William James, via Roy Traband

That curious trial of the survivors of the Waco atrocity suggests trying the Christians for irritating the lions. ("Your honor, he just kept hitting me on the fist with his face!")

I have been annoyed enough to mention it before, but I wish people would stop using the word "professional" as a synonym for "expert." Anyone who does anything for money is a professional at whatever it is he is doing. That certainly does not mean that he is doing it well. You have only to look around you. An expert, on the other hand, is doing it well. Whether he gets paid for it or not is coincidental.

Do you enjoy recoil? A recent article in *Magnum* magazine from South Africa points out that the retroactive shock delivered by the shooting of a firearm is not necessarily punishment. The sock you feel when your racket centers a tennis ball, or when you floor the throttle on a highly-bred car in third gear, or when you hit the water from the boat deck of your fishing cruiser – these things are exhilarating. It seems possible that this tendency to mitigate the shock of recoil maybe overlooking something. Personally I enjoy shooting a full-sized weapon more than I do a 22, and if I can remember that far back, I used to anticipate with distinct pleasure an unavoidable tackle when running back a kickoff. Perhaps we should think further upon this.

We recently ran across an interesting new word, Schlimmbesserung. It describes the process of making something worse by "improving" it. That is a good word to have at the ready these days, since it covers the subject without the necessity of a long-winded explanation.

Those of you who are still looking for "*Another Country*," my best work to date, should know that the NRA Book Service still has a stock:

NRA Publications, 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030.

The current owner of Gunsite Press seems disinclined to reprint it, despite the demand, so it may be now or never.

Have we, the American people, truly forgotten the burning of the children?

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 3

1 March 1994

Idea of March

I am often criticized for not "sticking to my guns" and veering off into politics, sociology and history. That criticism may be valid, but the more I see of it the more I become convinced that history and conflict are synonymous. This seems to be inherent in the nature of man. According to Clausewitz, war is politics carried out by other means, and war, of course, is conducted with weapons, hence weaponry remains fascinating and completely a part of the human story. Whenever I read fiction I reflect that fiction writers are rarely properly grounded in weaponry, and this causes much of their fiction to fall flat. Certain notable exceptions were Rider Haggard, Stewart White and Ernest Hemingway. They may not have got their weaponry sorted out correctly every time, but at least they tried, and that is more than you can say about most current tellers of tales.

A couple of gun writers, who should know better, have taken it upon themselves to denigrate the Clifton bipod on the ground that it is fragile. It is true that one should not attempt to jack up a truck with the Clifton bipod, but properly trained rifleman will not do such a thing. Normally the Clifton bipod is retracted, and on those occasions when it is used, the shooter has time to treat it carefully. When you need a bipod you do not need it in a hurry, so treat it properly and all will be well.

We have received a couple of positive reports about the Chinese 1911 clone known as "Norinco." Quality control in a slave society can be anything the commissars decide, and, of course, slave labor is a lot cheaper. If you have a Norinco that works well, be satisfied.

As we proceed for our planning for the Babamkulu adventure in May, we note a small but troublesome tendency for wives to be negative about Africa. It is certainly true that Africa is an adventure, and adventures always involve risk. Who, however, can enjoy life without risk? As we have often written, danger, not variety, is a spice of life. Personally I do not see any more danger in an African hunting trip than I do in daily life in an American big city – probably a good deal less, but in any case we can only feel sorry for the timid soul who, as the saying goes, "dies a thousand times, while a brave man dies but once."

The problem is that only enthusiasts shoot well. Not many public employees are enthusiasts. This lowers both standards and potential, and gamesmanship is no help.

Indian Country, 1994

Goblin shows up late at hamburger dispensary behaving obnoxiously. Management calls the cops. Cop shows up and challenges goblin, who begins shooting at him. Cop sustains several hits before returning fire and goes down with a broken femur. Goblin runs dry and, bleeding from three wounds, commences to reload. Two Navajos are trying to get their car started on the parking lot. Analyzing the situation, they move in on the goblin and pound him into the pavement, leaving him for dead. They then go back to the car and continue fiddling with it. All manner of cop cars show up, complete with flashing lights. County deputy attorney, who arrives with the cops, approaches the two Navajos and asks if they can use any help. The answer is, "Well, yes. You got a flashlight?" Cops furnish flashlight.

Moral: Always carry a flashlight in Indian country.

Colonel Bob Young, USMC, Retired, is no longer employed by the new owner of the Gunsite Training Center. We understand that "He was too much of a Colonel."

According to a news item in the AIM Report, Major Robert Hines, of the DC Park Police, maintains that Vincent Foster, who was found dead in the park, was in possession of a "38-caliber 1911 Colt army revolver." Now there is a collector's item for you!

The newspaper accounts coming out of the Waco trials are quite unbelievable at this distance. It would appear that the attorneys for the FBI are talking about some other occurrence entirely. They are quoted as telling the jury that "These people (the Branch Davidians) wanted to destroy your country!" Somehow I never got that impression. What I would like to find out, however, is what sort of wounds caused the death of the three *BATmen* who entered the upper story first. Those men were buried before anyone got a good answer to that question, and evidently it was not raised at the trial. It matters, however, if the *BATmen* shot each other, as seems likely. That might well be verified by the nature of their wounds.

In a follow-up on the Waco atrocity, someone suggested to Bob Crovatto, our man in the murder capital, that the Branch Davidians could be characterized as "just a bunch of religious nuts with guns." Bob's response was, "Just like the people who founded this country. Right?"

Family member and Orange Gunsite stalwart Barrett Tillman attended Janet Reno's appearance in Phoenix last month and noted the following commentaries:

Reno: "I come from a community where I was born and raised."

Napolitano: "With both my hands I want to jump into this program with both feet."

A youth commenting upon the way to prevent gang violence: "Teach them education."

Well, we elected them!

In an article appearing in the "Oregonian," a cop spokesman claimed that law enforcement people should be worried about the Voere caseless cartridge since it throws no cases around, and thus makes tracing of the weapon in a homicide more difficult. Let us take up a collection to provide people who make statements like this with a thousand dollars for evidence of the first murder committed with a caseless cartridge.

Did you notice the attempt by the media to characterize Tonya Harding as low-brow because she hunts deer? I suppose there are plenty of people in the megalopolis who truly consider deer hunting to be a low-brow pastime. This is yet another testimony to the fact that many of our people – especially our city slickers – have completely lost whatever sense of historical continuity they may have had.

Anyone who takes the trouble to investigate the matter will find out that in a cultural sense big game hunting has always been considered a high-brow activity. Hunting, rather than horse racing, is in truth "The Sport of Kings." We cannot, of course, expect the media to understand that.

Having been called to task on the point, I must correct an impression I put out previously to the effect that the air bags in an automobile can be deployed by a swift kick to the front bumper. Apparently it takes more than that. I am told by people in the business that a blow sufficient to deploy the air bags in a Mercedes Benz will render the car undriveable. (This might not be true of all makes and models. We hear of a demonstration in

England where a car thief deployed the air bags from the outside, which invalidated the automatic locking system, thus permitting him access to the interior.)

To the best of my knowledge and belief, Lon Horiuchi, the man who shot Vickie Weaver in the face with a sniper rifle while she was holding her baby in her arms, is still walking around loose. If I am wrong in this assumption, please let me know.

There is a good side to everything, it appears. The recent series of cold snaps in Washington pretty well shut down the operation of the government for several days at a time.

A lady of our acquaintance, who lives alone, has asked us what sort of instrument is best for house defense in her case. To me the answer is easy: The "Lupara," a double-barreled 12-gauge shotgun with exposed hammers and short barrels. I understand the term Lupara is Sicilian and means approximately "wolf killer." Such a piece is enormously authoritative, it is easy to use, it requires minimal training in its management, and it may be left loaded and uncocked indefinitely on the closet shelf. The only precaution is to seal the muzzles with scotch tape or cotton wool to avoid the building of nests in the barrels by little varmints.

Such items are available from Rossi and Baikal, though you may have to hunt around for them at gun shows. Usually they are very reasonable in price.

I never suggest any sort of pistol for a householder who is not prepared to take up the study of the pistol. Pistolcraft is a somewhat advanced art, not to be acquired in one easy lesson. See what has happened when the US law enforcement establishment made the great shift from revolver to auto-pistol! I suppose that I was as instrumental as anyone in organizing and promoting that transference. I did so under the assumption – which I think is sound – that the self-loading pistol is simply a more efficient sidearm than a revolver. I have now discovered, as the years go by, that the self-loader seems to be just a touch too complex for our current generation of cops. Why a soldier can be taught the satisfactory use of an auto-pistol and a cop cannot is a mystery I do not pretend to understand, but I spent a long time in the military with the single-action auto-pistol without trouble. Suddenly, however, it appears to be dangerous to the user. This is a subject well worth looking into, but I have not yet seen it properly covered in the shooting press.

The renowned historian Christopher Dawson viewed the disintegration of Western culture as a far worse disaster than that of the fall of Rome; for the one was material; whereas the other is a spiritual disaster striking directly at the moral foundations of our society and destroying not just the outward form of civilization but the soul of man, which is the beginning and end of all human culture.

Via Christina Scott in *"A Historian and His World"*

Brent Clifton has a usable supply of the flush sling-mountings which constitute a minor but essential part of the Scout concept. It appears that the original maker of this device gave up in favor of the more conventional rectangular QD attachment, on the ground that the flush mounts were too expensive. One would not think that a minor additional expense would be a factor in the production of an artifact designed to last several lifetimes.

I keep getting queries in the mail about the nature of the Scout concept. I have prepared a fairly detailed presentation on this subject, which is scheduled for publication in the July issue of *Guns & Ammo* magazine. Please stand by.

The Tenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States reads as follows:

"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the

States are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Is that clear? It certainly would seem so. It is not a statement which requires any sort of "interpretation." It says that if the Constitution does not say the Feds can do it, the Feds cannot do it. This Amendment has never been repealed, and yet it has been disregarded since the reign of Franklin D. Roosevelt. It means that a great deal of federal legislation and regulation is flatly illegal – contrary to the supreme law of the land. The founding fathers made it quite clear that when the government promulgates an illegal law, that law is null and void. Some say that whether or not a law is legal is a matter for the courts to decide, but I do not see that there is anything to decide in the case of the Brady Bill, which is nowhere allowed in the Constitution. We have a sheriff in Arizona who says he is simply not going to observe the Brady Bill, and God bless him! A suit has now been filed declaring the Brady Bill to be void – as a violation of the Tenth Amendment of the Constitution. Let us see how the courts handle this. We simply cannot permit them to go on confusing the issue indefinitely.

Note the following exhilarating item from the news in Sao Paulo, which we extracted from *Vuurwapen Nuus*.

"An armed gunman who tried to hold up tourists at gunpoint was beaten to death by his intended victims. It was the third lynching of a mugger in one week in Brazil."

Now self-defense is not lynching, but the news is nevertheless very cheerful. Unfortunately the news item did not tell us the nationality of those three tourists. We can only guess.

In Cincinnati they have re-created one of the most disgusting elements of the Cromwellian dictatorship in England. This is a "squealer's circuit" by means of which citizens are encouraged to report the presence of firearms in the hands of their friends and neighbors – most particularly "semi-automatic firearms." I can see all of these little punks running around trying to get the exact mark and mod of a particular handgun which they see across the back fence, so they can run and tell the cops. There are so many sickening aspects of this picture that one hardly knows where to begin.

"An unarmed citizenry is a top priority on the liberal agenda. The Brady Bill is just the first step."

Walter Williams, in *Conservative Chronicle*

"The board reached a conclusion that the only safeguard at close encounters is a well-directed rapid fire from nothing less than a 45-caliber weapon."

Thompson LeGarde Study, Department of the Army Ordnance Board

Did you note how the railroad from Oslo to Lillehammer was being continually obstructed during the games by wildlife? The beast concerned is *Alces alces*, known in Norway as elg, in Germany as elch, and in America as moose. The species is circumpolar, but shows variations from place to place. These beasties are fond of standing on the railroad tracks in preference to plowing through deep snow, and this is true in Norway as well as in Alaska. A moose is a difficult beast to convince, and we hope the Norsemen did not waste much meat, since when we were there last the prime venison sold for about ten dollars a pound.

I recently was honored to be the guest speaker at the first dinner of the *Lazarus Long Discussion Society* (LLDS) based in Ogden, Utah. The group plans to meet at prearranged intervals to consider matters of political philosophy relating to the personal weaponry of the armed citizen. Graduates of Orange Gunsite constitute a core of the initial membership, but anyone interested in participation should contact:

Dennis Tueller, 1737 E Woodglen Rd, Sandy, UT 84092.

There is no need for gender classification in shooting competition. Consider Annie Oakiey, and the song "Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better!" Now that the Air Force has qualified a girl fighter pilot, it does seem silly to separate the ladies in a shooting match.

No, Janet, the Waco case is not closed. We have passed judgement upon the defenders, but it now remains to bring their attackers to justice.

"What Clinton and his kind want to develop is a population which sees itself as a victim of violent crime, economic injustice, racial and sexual prejudice, and helpless to correct these wrongs without government assistance. People who see themselves as victims look to rescuers, look to those who will help, for a victim is one who is demonstrably incapable of doing things for himself. He wouldn't be a victim otherwise. And under no circumstances must a victim take action on his own to remedy the evil he suffers from. Never. He should call the government to help."

via Howard McCord in *"The Coming Civil War in America"*

I have just been notified of what I consider to be a very high compliment. It seems that a group of medical men in San Francisco, who call themselves "Physicians for a Violence-Free Society," have picked me out personally as one of the chief contributors to the terrible state of the nation. I did not believe that I carried that much clout up in the Bay Region. Pretty soon I will be right up there with Rush Limbaugh.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 4

22 March 1994

April Fool, 1994

The first day of April, 1993, was the date of the great lynch party and auto da fe at Gunsite. Just one year ago the extent of my folly in selling the body of my life's work was made clear to me by the purchaser, in front of his henchmen assembled. Selling the ranch and the school was not in itself a disaster, but selling it to the wrong man was the greatest mistake of my life. It was entirely my fault, an error in character evaluation that I simply cannot explain nor excuse. It is bitter to be frustrated by enemies, but it is dreadfully moreso to be conned by one who posed as a friend.

Well, so be it. It was my blunder, and now I pay the price, along with my friends and followers. I have not entirely "plowed the sea," however. There are those who know, and they will continue to preach the word.

Mark Moritz informs us that he has given up all of his 9 millimeter pistols for Lent. Good thinking!

This is the centennial of the great Model 94 Winchester, one of the outstanding artifacts of modern times. It is unsound to make the claim that any one instrument "won the West," but the 94 was the mainstay of the wilderness during the early years of the twentieth century, and in the days of my youth it was a rare household that did not contain one. This excellent weapon is still with us today, and rendering good service wherever it is found. If you do not own one, you should get one, and not only for the sake of sentiment. If the public scene turns nasty, as some say it may, you will be far better off with an M94 in 30–30 than you will be with an SKS, AK47, or an M16.

I recently ran across a very thought–provoking piece from *Forbes Magazine*, which hypothesized that products are not necessarily designed to meet a perceived demand, but that sometimes the existence of a product may create the demand for it. A good example is the fax machine, which no one knew he wanted until it appeared, and which now we can hardly do without. The Scout rifle concept may be an example of this theory, since only a few people have ever handled a Scout, either on the range or in the field. They simply do not know what they are missing, and consequently they make no demand for it. This is the primary reason it has been fruitless up till now to try to persuade the industry to manufacture a production Scout. Oh well, as I have said before, "I got mine!"

Amid all the dismal news that we acquire daily about the state of the nation and the world, some dim but promising lights appear. For the first time since the reign of Roosevelt II, people are beginning to notice the Tenth Amendment to the US Constitution. Much as liberals may laugh, that Article is still on the books. It establishes beyond any question that powers not granted to the US government by the US Constitution are specifically unlawful and need not be obeyed.

Note this from the *Sixteenth American Jurisprudence*, Second Edition, Section 177:

"The general rule is that an unconstitutional statute, though having formed in nature of law, is in reality no law, but is wholly void and ineffective for any purpose, since unconstitutionality dates from the time of its enactment and not merely from the date of decision so branding it.

An unconstitutional law in legal contemplation is as inoperative as if it had never been passed. Such a statute leaves the question that it purports to settle just as it would be had the statute not been enacted."

"Since an unconstitutional law is void, the general principles follow that it imposes no duties, confers no rights, creates no office, bestows no power or authority on anyone, affords no protection and justifies no acts performed under it."

"No one is bound to obey an unconstitutional law and no courts are bound to enforce it."

A woman who cannot cook, like a man who cannot shoot, is in important ways incomplete.

The Guru

At this time the "Firestar," from Spain, in caliber 45 would seem to be the logical defense weapon of choice, assuming that it holds up to hard use. In the past I have known Star products to be somewhat less than fully durable. It will take a year's testing before I am ready to recommend the piece without reservations, but as of now it looks good.

The father of one of the more prominent American pistol shooters has seen fit to whimper in print about my conduct at the shoot-off at Bisley last September. As it happens, the organizers of that event seeded an asymmetrical ladder, and the result was that the two finalists had matching scores, and everything depended upon the outcome of that final bout. At its conclusion, each contestant had lost once, but the winner had beaten the loser in a fair fight. When the bout came up I explained this situation to both contestants, and to the match committee which was standing right behind me. I am quite satisfied with my decision, but I did run it past the committee before it was executed.

It is undignified to whimper. It is more undignified to whimper in print. And it is especially undignified to whimper in print when you are wrong. It is, of course, too much to expect dignified behavior in this *age of sleaze*.

Please note the date of the next *Keneyathlon* at NRA Whittington Center in Raton, New Mexico, which is 2-5 June. All Orange Gunsite graduates (who are in shape to run) should enjoy this one.

Incidentally, Dr. David Kahn, inventor of the *Keneyathlon*, informs us that the Greek word for scout is *proskopos* – the one who looks before. Perhaps we should nickname the Scout rifle a "periscope."

A young lady recently queried us about her choice of a deer rifle. She claims to be of small stature and somewhat recoil-shy, and had acquired a Model 99 Savage in caliber 250. It appears that her brothers had jeered at her about this, claiming that the 250 was a "mouse gun" and of insufficient authority to take deer. In our opinion they were quite wrong. The 250 Savage cartridge, using the heavier pattern of bullet (100-or 105-grains), is a completely reliable deer slayer when the bullet is placed correctly. (If the bullet is placed incorrectly no cartridge will make up for the mistake.)

The M99 Savage, like the M94 Winchester, is a tribute to American ingenuity and stands as a very superior, if unappreciated, sporting rifle. It was marketed over such a long period that variations in quality control and even design have made it inconsistent. The first thing to consider when acquiring a Model 99 is its trigger action, which is not always good, but the 99 with a good trigger is a gem. A friend of mine, who was left-handed, acquired one of these when we were at Stanford together. After I set it up for him with proper sights, loop sling, and a good trigger, I was most reluctant to give it back to him. On the range it shot up a storm, and I would like to think that it went on to a long and distinguished career as a venison fetcher.

I counseled the huntress to be happy with her M99 and to invite her two brothers over for dinner when she put her first venison on the table. I also pointed out that an excellent way to serve venison, if you are not familiar with cooking processes, is in fondue bourguinonne. (And I told her I would pay for the wine.)

And while we are speaking of scouts, let us consider the words of Major Frederick Russell Burnham, DSO, Chief of Scouts under Lord Roberts:

"Under the administration of [Cecil] Rhodes there were the fewest laws, the widest freedom, the least crime, and the truest justice I have ever seen in any part of the world."

Those of you who are old enough may remember the figure of Colonel Howland G. Taft, USMC, who pioneered practical pistol shooting with me at Quantico as early as 1948, and whose photograph appears various places in my early works.

Howie was a great man, who served his country with distinction throughout two wars. He was also a distinguished pistol shot and a theoretician of marksmanship.

We now learn with deep sorrow of his death in February of this year. He was a good comrade. May he rest in peace!

"Lesson from Rothbury" (From the *Daily Telegraph* (London,) Saturday August 28, 1993.)

"Country dwellers would not mind the withdrawal of policing from the countryside nearly so much if it were not also deliberate police policy to leave households unarmed and defenseless against criminals."

"The small town of Rothbury, in Northumberland, which was terrorized for the best part of three hours this week by five ruffians armed with crowbars, may feel annoyed that its police station is open only from nine to five on weekdays. This would not matter if law-breakers were like the rest of us, but criminals are so disrespectful of British habits that they are prepared to commit their burglaries out of office hours and without charging overtime."

"The villains spent two hours removing a post office safe while residents watched in terror. In America, of course, there would have been a short fusillade and all five thieves would be riddled with bullets, as every window in town bristled with sophisticated automatic weapons, not to mention the occasional bazooka."

"We do not wish to be too slavish in our imitation of this fine American culture, but it would be foolish to suppose we have nothing to learn from it. As we get poorer and less able to pay the huge demands of a police force which appears to have the country over a gun barrel, the least the Government can do is allow us to defend ourselves."

Auberon Waugh

Here is yet another assumption by the ignorant that somehow automatic weapons are more efficient in the suppression of violent crime than repeaters. It does not take a lot of shots to take out your man. One will do. We would like to remind Mr. Waugh of Alvin York. Of course we were better men in those days.

Have you noticed how some of these peculiar police departments have been opting for backup weapons that they refer to as rifles, even though the pieces shoot pistol cartridges? Evidently we have been too long without

a war, when we have senior public officials who cannot tell a rifle from a pistol.

Apparently the only thing that keeps the cops alive today is the fact that the crooks cannot shoot either. A horrible example of that sort of thing was revealed not long ago here in Arizona, where a particularly bad guy chose to get out of his car and shoot it out with the cops. The cops – and there were a lot of them – returned his fire with enthusiasm, if not precision. The whole episode was caught on someone's camcorder, and though it turned out all right in the end, the only one who was not embarrassed was the felon, because he was dead. He was hit seven times for thirty-three tries, as I hear it, at the range of a few paces.

We must note that these horrible examples are the ones that make it to the press. There must be plenty of cases where weapons are handled correctly, but they do not seem to make the news.

Rumor has it that Sarah Brady is being put forward by the *Shooting Industry Magazine* as "saleswoman of the decade." It is quite obvious that Sarah has done more to boost the sale of personal arms than any person in recent memory, and she should be appropriately honored.

After a lifetime of study, it has become apparent to me that the single most important element in the composition of a utility rifle is trigger action. A good trigger makes a rifle easier to hit with than its accuracy, or its sighting system, or its cartridge, or its action. A 2 minute rifle with a perfect trigger is more useful in the field than a 1 minute rifle without one. Today, unfortunately, most manufacturers do not realize this (or possibly they do not care) and since we live in *the Age of Litigation*, the idea of a delicate trigger out-of-the-box fills industrial directors with horror.

One reason why this matter of poor triggers is not as well appreciated as it might be is our preoccupation with the shooting bench, where a good trigger action is not nearly as important as it is in the field. The more stable the firing position is, the less the trigger matters, and most of our group-testing is done from the bench, which is the most stable position we can get. As the stability of the shooting position decreases, the delicacy of the trigger action becomes more important. It is less important, for example, from the prone position than it is on the snap shot. The "hitability" of a given rifle should always be tested in a field trial, to which few people have access. Thus we are stuck in most modern production with rifles that have many good features, but lack the most important one. (The exceptions to this general rule are Mauser, Mannlicher, and Blaser. Possibly these people are simply not as scared of law suits as the others.)

A good trigger should be light about 40oz. will do nicely – but more important than weight is an imperceptible let-off. The surprise break of the rifleman must indeed sunrise him, and thus he must not be able to detect any movement at all in the trigger when it releases the striker. Such a trigger should come with the gun over the counter, but with few exceptions it does not, though it did at one time. I have a Model 70 Winchester (dating from 1937!) and its trigger, though never touched by a gunsmith, is perfect. Do not look for any such thing, however, on any of its descendants being produced today.

Orange Gunsite stalwart Gabe Suarez contributes the following from California:

"As for myself, I have not achieved 'ace' yet in spite of taking every possible step in that quest (good things come to those who wait!). I did have the opportunity to study CQB and hostage rescue tactics with the Force Recon at Camp Pendleton. I was very impressed with their professionalism and skills. When we realized that most of us had been to Gunsite, the conversation stopped abruptly. Then one of the Marines carefully asked, 'Orange Gunsite or Grey Gunsite?' I've never been one to mince words. I proudly proclaimed, 'Orange Gunsite of course. Only a Democrat would want to learn shooting from a pill peddler!' This was met by cheers and laughter and the jovial conversation continued on course. I imagine that if I'd said 'grey', I'd have had to shoot my way out of there."

I recently had the pleasure of accompanying shooting master John Gannaway on a delightful morning's walk at the Arizona Hunt Club, which is handily located exactly between Gunsite and Phoenix. We were harassing pheasants and chukars, with the aid of a pair of perfectly splendid dogs whose work was a marvel to behold. They were German Shorthairs, and the only flaw I can find in their behavior was that they had not been trained to bite people who miss. Dog trainers should give that matter some thought.

As we have long taught, the rifle and the pistol serve two conceptually different purposes, and while each may be called upon to perform the function of the other, this is not a good practice and best results should not be expected.

The essential difference is that the pistol is designed to solve totally unexpected problems, whereas the rifle is taken in hand when the problem is foreseeable. Thus instant readiness is the primary quality of the pistol. As has been well said, "You cannot make an appointment for an emergency." When you know there is going to be an emergency, you pick up your rifle. Now there are all sorts of curious circumstances which may pose specific exceptions to the foregoing principles, but the fact remains that the two instruments fill different tactical niches, and training and practice should be based upon that concept.

The following from *family member* Paul Kirchner:

"Congratulations on your elevation to public enemy by the 'Physicians for a Violence-Free Society'! Despite my best efforts to annoy the liberals I fear I am not destined to achieve such prominence. Interesting how the name of this group instantly identified it as liberal, with its characteristically utopian aspirations. Why not stick with what they know, and form a 'Physicians for an Illness-Free Society'? They could have sub-chapters such as 'Psychiatrists for an Anxiety-Free Society'. If we wish to address violence, it makes more sense to have a 'Gun Owners for a Violence-Free Society' or we could associate ourselves with the 'Clear Thinkers for an Inanity-Free Society'."

With all due respect and full apology to Mr. Lincoln, the following:

"Now we are entering the opening engagements of a great civil war, testing whether this nation, or any nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that free men bear arms, can long endure."

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 5

May 1994

Maytime, 1994

Spring has definitely sprung, and the garden here at the Gunsite Sconce is bursting into bloom. Despite the miserable state of the world and the nation, it is impossible to be downhearted in this time of renewal, especially as we are looking forward to our departure shortly for Africa. This adventure may be the first of its kind in which all members are fully qualified in both marksmanship and gun handling. We will not be hunting buffalo this time, so all of our rifles will be of the 30-caliber persuasion, or thereabouts. After considerable experience and a great deal more study, I remain convinced that if you cannot do it with a 30-06, you probably cannot do it. (Naturally I exclude buffalo and elephant from this concept – not that untold numbers of both of these animals have not been taken neatly with military calibers.)

Now it happens that our elected government, after a fifteen year hiatus, has resumed the destruction of 1911 45s, M1 Garands, 03s, and Springfield 22 Trainers. Note that this has nothing whatever to do with crime. This is aimed directly at obviating the armed citizenry which is historically the only guarantee of human liberty.

Act on this at once. If you have not got a 1911, get one. If you have not got an 03, get one. If you have not got an M1, get one. (If you can possibly afford it, get two.)

Do you know about the Korth revolver? I have been approached with a prospect for promoting this piece in the United States. In essence the Korth is a luxury 357, built of the finest materials with the most meticulous craftsmanship and no manufacturing shortcuts. It is sometimes referred to as the Rolls Royce of handguns.

Much as we enjoy handling all sorts of firearms, we try to examine them with some sort of reference to their essential usefulness. I have not yet wrung out the Korth, and while I am willing to admit that it is probably a beautiful piece of ordnance, I am not sure of its "tactical niche." It doubtless shoots very well indeed, but then so does the Smith, Colt or Ruger. For those who enjoy "conspicuous consumption for prestige" it has a distinct appeal, but as far as I can tell, the shooters who go for this sort of thing are almost entirely shotgunners. Long observation suggests that shotgunners tend to be rich, whereas riflemen tend to be broke, and pistoleros tend to be more like riflemen than shotgunners.

There are plenty of people who will buy cars for no reason other than that they are expensive. This is true of shotguns as well. It may also be true of clothing in certain circles. Whether it is true of pistols is a matter to be explored. I have not yet held a Korth in my hand nor fired it. Possibly the chance will come in Europe this summer.

On that subject, the IPSC Rifle Conference, which is intended to find the proper way for international practical rifle competition to go, has been moved from Bohemia to Catalonia, mainly because of administrative difficulties in moving arms and ammunition across certain borders. I was looking forward to Bohemia more than I am able to do toward Catalonia but, of course, tourism is not part of the exercise. Both President Jean-Pierre Denis and I will do our best to insure that rifle competition worldwide will not be diminished by gamesmanship, as has happened with the pistol, but there are many obstacles in the way and all we can do is our best.

Note that the infamous traitor, Aldridge Ames, had donated five thousand dollars of his Russian payoff to the Democratic National Committee. No comment!

I am just back from Thunder Ranch in Texas, where I assisted Clint Smith in the conduct of the general purpose rifle class. This was a distinct pleasure for me for various reasons. First, it was nice to work on Clint's fancy new ranges, where he has installed some target systems which truly constitute a great leap forward. Second, it was pleasant to get back on the podium again, where I have not appeared since my excommunication by the Gunsite Training Center. Teaching is what I do, and when I do not do it I am frustrated. Third, our granddaughter Amy was a member of the class and it was necessary to get her checked out thoroughly before her participation in the African expedition in May. Naturally she will be using Sweetheart, this time loaded with 180-grain short-point Noslers.

I hope to be appearing with some regularity at Thunder Ranch, teaching both rifle and pistol classes. That Texas hill country is a nice part of the world, and there are interesting things down there in addition to the school. For example I would like to line up a nilgai for next winter.

Have you noted that the Heckler & Koch branch in Sterling, Virginia, has now received an order for 7,500 new service pistols for the United States armed forces? Our new "weapon of choice" will be in caliber 45 ACP, with a laser aiming module and a sound/flash suppressor. We do not know much about the design at this time, but at least it is of a good caliber.

At David Kahn's suggestion, I have undertaken to sponsor a special trophy to be awarded at the *Keneyathlon* at the NRA Whittington Shooting Center each year. This award will be in the form of a massive gold ring, a la Super Bowl, properly engraved and inscribed and known as "Guru's Gold." The idea is to award the contestant who does well in a way most nearly in accord with the practical use of the rifle. This year it will be presented to the shooter who, placing amongst the first five, uses the lightest rifle of the group. Next year we may reward the best man to use iron sights. Thereafter we may award to the highest placed grandfather, the highest placed junior, or the highest placed husband-and-wife combination. The list goes on.

"Battle is the sensation of life. A human being is never so alive as he is in combat. He may feel terror or he may not, but the prospect of losing his life makes it surge and flare within him. At no other time do his senses more acutely perceive the world. At no other time does his nerve fire with such spark. Never again will he weld as tight an emotional bond to others around him."

Philip Edwards, in *SOF Magazine*

The media insist that crime is the major concern of the American public today. In this connection they generally push the point that a disarmed society would be a crime-free society. They will not accept the truth that if you take all the guns off the street you still will have a crime problem, whereas if you take the criminals off the street you cannot have a gun problem.

In the larger sense, however, the personal ownership of firearms is only secondarily a matter of defense against the criminal. Note the following from Thomas Jefferson:

"The strongest reason for the people to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against the tyranny of government."

That is why our masters in Washington are so anxious to disarm us. They are not afraid of criminals. They are afraid of a populace which cannot be subdued by tyrants.

I noted with some astonishment in Texas that Sweetheart printed exactly to the same point of aim with both the 150-grain boat-tailed Federal premium ammunition used by the school, and with John Gannaway's 180 Noslers. This little rifle has really no right to do this sort of thing, but there is a definite magic about the piece which seems scientifically inexplicable.

Correction I erred in a previous issue by referring to a Scout Rifle as a "proscope," deriving from the word *proskopos*, which is Greek for "the one who looks out before." David Kahn, who is up on his Greek, informs me that the proper word is *proskoplopon* combining *proskopos* (scout) with *hopolon* (weapon). The Scout Rifle is, therefore, properly termed a *proskoplopon*, and long may it wave!

In teaching the rifle, we discover again that most sights are mounted too far to the rear, and most rifle stocks are too long. While it would be nice if each weapon were fitted personally to each shooter, the fact remains that a lanky rifleman can get along very well with a short stock, but a shorty will find it very difficult to do well with a long stock. Those of small stature should note that Savage currently offers its 110 CY rifle designed especially for ladies and young people. It is available in a variety of calibers, including both 270 and 308. This is an excellent item and should enjoy wider publicity than heretofore. (We had two southpaws in the first class at Thunder Ranch, and we reminded them that the excellent 99 Savage lever gun is available in 308.)

As an example of the state of modern journalism, one Mary Gotschall, writing in *National Review* for April, refers to "bullet piercing ammunition" in her essay on currently proposed disarmament legislation. Now what do you suppose bullet piercing ammunition might be? The depressing thing about this is not that Miss Mary was paying no attention to what she said, but that a whole series of editors and proofreaders did not catch this matter either. The problem is not so much that the writer was ignorant, but that she was paying no attention to what she wrote – and, what is worse, neither was anyone else.

One of the things we are looking forward to with great pleasure is the fact that we are not required to wear "hunter orange" in the African bush. Making oneself conspicuous is never a good idea, but trying to be conspicuous in the bush has always seemed to me to be defeating the whole purpose of the enterprise. That is just one reason why I love to hunt Africa.

In Texas we ran across one of the more curious pieces of ordnance to come to our attention. This was essentially an M1–A1 of Garand ancestry, which had been reworked into a sort of "bull-pup" with the action tucked back under the shooter's face and a telescope sight mounted way up there over the bore. I understand its selling price was about thirty-five hundred dollars. Here is a classic example of the German term *Schlimbesserung* which we noted in a previous edition. The unfortunate owner did his best to keep up with the class, but it was a hard fight.

When I make observations of this sort about new equipment, I am accused of Ludditeism, a generally fuddyduddy tendency to disdain the new and stick by the old. I admit being conservative in matters of weaponry, but I resent being packed into a package, in view of all the innovations which I have personally created. I might accuse the people who refuse to produce a production scout or a really good telescope sight of fuddyduddyism, but I won't. Ideas and innovations should be examined on their individual merit and not on their current fashion.

Did you catch that recent piece in the *Atlantic Monthly* on the subject of firearms ownership? It did not say anything we do not already know, but its appearance in a magazine with notably left-leaning tendencies was very refreshing.

Family member John Schaefer of New Jersey asserts that,

"We act as if comfort and luxury were the chief requirements of life, when all that we need to be happy is something to be enthusiastic about."

Does that explain the overwhelming passion of a large portion of the American public for the trivialities of professional sports? People who know almost nothing at all about the activity being demonstrated on the field can go practically hysterical in their enthusiasm for it – having nothing else to be enthusiastic about – it would seem.

We are straining at the administrative leash to get our hands on the Blaser M93 rifle, which is promised us for Africa. As I write, the chances of its arrival in time for checkout are about 50–50. If I do not have it ready I will fall back on the Lion Scout, which is a most comforting thing to fall back on.

"Among a people generally corrupt, liberty cannot long exist."

Edmund Burke

I have been recently asked by several correspondents about the difference between "Orange Gunsite" and "Grey Gunsite." When the Countess and I moved over here many long years ago, she selected as our official colors orange and chocolate brown. All of our signs, notices, and banners were thus rendered in those colors, establishing a tradition which we intended to follow, rather like those of "Navy blue and gold, or forever and forever Stanford red." When the current owner purchased the estate he decided to wipe out that tradition and change the colors to drab grey and black, and repainted all the signs. This was rather a favor to us, since it marked a clear-cut dividing line between the Gunsite tradition and the GTC operation. Now we can call Orange Gunsite that institution which the Countess and I created. Grey Gunsite is whatever the current owner desires to make of it. Hence in conversation Orange Gunsite means one thing and Grey Gunsite another. (And never the twain shall meet.)

We see that the Bahutu and the Watutsi have resumed their age-old hostilities. Truly they enjoy this sort of thing, and what they may lack in aptitude they make up in enthusiasm. This, of course, is one of the rewards of independence. The Belgian administration did not put up with it.

From Australia I received the following newsclipping from the *Brisbane Sunday Mail*:

"Customer at a one-person Brisbane suburban post office last week passed a note over the counter demanding the contents of the cash drawer. Quick thinking postie said she'd just banked the day's takings and the drawer was empty. Bloke grumbled a bit, but said that while he was there he might as well pay his telephone account, which he did, handing over his bill and the cash. Cops say their job is made so much easier when a crook leaves his name and address at the scene of the crime."

As *the New American Revolution* looms on the horizon, we hear its echoes. Here is Walter Williams, syndicated columnist, in *Conservative Chronicle*:

"I don't know about you, but if you hear that Williams' guns have been taken, you will know that Williams is dead."

Shades of Patrick Henry!

Recently we read some wet-behind-the-ears journalist referring to a self-loading pistol as "high tech" as opposed to a revolver, which was thought to be "low tech." Since successful self-loading pistols were in common use before World War I, this does not speak very highly for current technological innovation.

From *Business Week*, March 14, 1994, page 33, via Bruce Heath:

"Talk about talking out of both sides of your mouth at once. In late December '93, the Federal Gov't approved the massive (approaching \$100M) sale of US made "pump" shotguns and shells to Russia. Almost simultaneously, the Treasury Sec. announced domestic gun control restrictions on three types of semi-automatic shotguns. Could the good Sec. please explain why one is less dangerous than the other?"

"Commerce justifies the exports to Russia by saying they are for home defense and hunting. Whoops... Seems like the Russian gov't isn't doing too well lately in providing food and protection for its citizens. And now, of all things, the common Russian wants to be able to feed his *family* and personally protect them from criminals. Sounds like a standard anti-gun control defense to me! Alive & well in Russia of all places."

"Oh well... we should be used to this type of inconsistent behavior from Washington. All this from a gov't that attempts (among other things) to tax cigarette sales to pay for socialized health care and ban smoking in public places while simultaneously subsidizing the growers of tobacco."

There will now be a hiatus, while we scurry around Africa. With luck I may get a new edition out before I leave, but don't count on it.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 6

25 April 1994

Maytime Supplement

We are now off to the wars, to be gone some weeks. Thus I will not be able to put out a full issue of this paper prior to my return. However, since the build up of material keeps right on coming it seems a good idea to send you the following short issue. We expect to be back from Africa with a full report next month.

A couple of new bumper stickers have come to our attention, as follows:

"Don't bury your guns, shoot them!"

"If Vince Foster had had a gun he would be alive today."

In making preparations to take to the field I discover yet again that the manufacturers of telescope sights are paying attention to the wrong things. The makers insist upon giving us variable power – because it is assumed that is what the market demands. No one has explained what the use of a variable power telescope may be. The mechanism makes the eyepiece too long, it adds complexity and thus cost to the instrument, and all too often it changes the zero when the magnification is changed. And all this to no purpose.

Secondly, the manufacturers make a big issue of width of field, which, considering the various increments involved, is a trivial consideration. When the telescope is used properly, the left eye picks up the target while the right eye picks up the reticle. One does not need a wide field as long as the vision is clear at the center.

Furthermore, the manufacturers do not seem to realize that the big problems with telescope sights are fragility and dishonesty. A telescope sight is fragile if it breaks, and it does. It is dishonest when it does not make the adjustments indicated on the dials. It is infuriating to apply a left hand correction and wind up with a change in elevation. It is infuriating to apply a six-inch correction and wind up with 12 inches. The way to avoid this is to make a telescope with no moving parts whatsoever, but the makers insist that such an instrument would never sell – and sales, rather than excellence, are what the manufacturer must place foremost.

I am taking a Schmidt & Bender telescope to Africa – a very expensive instrument. I cannot properly evaluate its structural strength, but I can attest its honesty. We will see.

Let us all gather round to meet *the New Woman of The Nineties*. Her name is Tonya Rodham Bobbitt.

Must we really and truly defer to the thought police? Thomas Jefferson's "eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man" seems to have been forgotten in this degenerating age. Consider that Winchester's "Black Talon" ammunition has been withdrawn from the market, not because of anything that may be wrong with it, but because the title upsets the wimps. The Black Talon bullet is simply another form of expanding bullet, a device we have had at our disposal since the turn of the century. A new product, just different enough to escape censorship, will now be released under the name "Supreme Fail Safe." I do not know if this sort of thing is inherent in "democracy," but if it is, it may be time to try something else.

We must hasten to correct an error in the Maytime Commentary. In discussing rifle design we let slip the comment that "Most rifle stocks are too short." The truth is that most rifle stocks are too long. We caught that before the magazine went to press, but most of you got it the other way around. Sorry about that!

[Note: This error was corrected in the internet version – Barry.]

You may have noticed Janet Reno's notable pronouncement to the effect that she came from a place where she had been born and raised. Last week on the radio we heard her state that she had had various conferences with "survivors of homicides." This unpleasant woman, who holds one of the highest offices in the land, appears to be a borderline illiterate, besides which we all remember that she offered to take all responsibility for the massacre at Waco, and then did nothing of the sort. She is still on the payroll.

Note the new 45 auto now being manufactured in Hungary for export. Original reports from Africa indicate that it is a very serviceable item, and the price, of course, is right. You better hurry on down to your local friendly gun dealer before the *BATmen* discover it.

Let us never forget that Marxism is still the enemy – and still virulent. Marxist governments are in the saddle in Serbia, China, Cuba, North Korea, Vietnam, American academe, and perhaps a couple of other places we have missed. Additionally, the press insists that the African National Congress will dictate the future of South Africa. The African National Congress is not only a companion of the South African Communist Party, but its leader, Nelson Mandela, is an avowed and professed Marxist. The Cold War is far from over.

In making our travel plans we were shocked to discover that the favored anti-malarial prophylaxis at this time costs \$5.00 per pill! That is more per shot than Courvoisier VSOP, and besides it is no particular fun to take. At this extraordinary price I would like to think that Larium will work. Unfortunately, there is no way I will ever discover that.

We have an excellent field report on the results of the Brenneke 12-gauge slug on a buffalo at 9 yards. It achieved full penetration, destroyed the heart (rendering it inedible), and lodged under the skin at the far side. It did not drop the beast in its tracks, but it killed him in a few yards. We have always preached that the 12-gauge Brenneke slug is a very efficient defensive projectile for heavy animals – providing that you use it at short range. Its ballistic shape is poor, cutting its effectiveness down radically as range increases. If you get involved with a dangerous animal, remember he cannot hurt you if he cannot touch you. If you use your weaponry properly, at 20-yards and under, you should make out very well.

It has long been accepted that the 458 Winchester Magnum cartridge, while certainly a world-standard caliber, has turned out to be something of a swindle. While it is advertised in the books as roughly equivalent to the old rim-case express rifles, it simply does not measure up on the chronograph. Specifically, it will rarely achieve 2,000-feet per second with its 500-grain bullet. Here, it would seem, is an item in which to employ the new Hornady "enhanced performance" ammunition. Do not hold your breath, however. The 458 is not a big seller.

In a recent conversation with an active-duty Marine, we encountered a tale which astonishes almost as much as it discourages. This Marine is a gunnery sergeant of distinguished record, and quite young for his rank. (As is common knowledge, the rank of gunnery sergeant Marine Corps is probably the highest honor that can be bestowed upon a man – certainly better than Senator, Judge or President – and even higher than Commandant, US Marine Corps.)

It turns out that this gunny had married happily (he thought) and became the proud father of two children, whereupon his wife left him – on the grounds that as a sniper he had become "a killer." We have not heard the girl's story – perhaps something else was involved – but it is impossible to believe that any woman would not

understand that a Marine is essentially a killing machine, and he was a Marine when she married him. Apparently this girl was so completely ignorant that she had never heard of Joshua or David or Julius Caesar or Hannibal or King Arthur – to say nothing of George Washington, Mad Anthony Wayne, Sam Houston, Stonewall Jackson, Theodore Roosevelt, Douglas MacArthur or George Patton. She had no conception of what an honor it was to be the wife of a hero. If she is truly that ignorant, it is just as well that she left him. He is better off without her.

"We have tried to reward overall self-sensitive and self-controlled performance with a sportsman's trophy. To sophisticated folk's way of thinking, this prize, given to the entrant who best used his equipment and best exercised his judgment, is the most important categorical award of all. That riflist may not have a notably high score, but he will see everything, he will shoot at nothing he should not, and he will not miss. That riflist is truly a hunter in the greatest sense."

Dr. David N. Kahn, speaking of the *Keneyathlon*

I now have two first-hand accounts of sportsmen who seem to have been astonished and dismayed to discover that dangerous game may indeed be dangerous.

One of these events occurred to a bear hunter, who advanced upon a bear that he thought was dead, but which rolled over with its last breath and caught the hunter back-handed across the face, breaking his nose. This man was horrified. He swore he would never hunt again and sold his rifle at ten cents on the dollar to his partner.

In the other instance the hunter socked a lion pretty well in the center of the shoulder with his 375 whereupon it turned and ran right up the gun. In working the bolt he flipped that three-position safety to mid-point, failed to get a round off, and was saved by his PH at arm's length. He, too, was horrified to find that dangerous game is dangerous.

Now what do you suppose we have here? The whole point of hunting dangerous game is that the beast may jolly well kill you if you do not conduct yourself properly. That is the idea. The hunting of dangerous game is rarely as hard on the constitution of the hunter as the hunting of mountain sheep, but that is its charm for those of us who are no longer in Olympic condition. Only those in peak athletic condition may know of the joys of hunting the crags, but those of us who may be past our physical prime can still know the thrill of tangling with something deadly at short range. I find it difficult to believe that there are people who do not know that, but there are a lot of things I find it difficult to believe.

The American people have not yet demonstrated that they have sufficient gumption to stand up to the federal ninja, and these feds keep getting worse. One does not know whether to be more exasperated by their effrontery or their incompetence. Note that Janet Reno has been taking "training" in crisis management from the FBI. I have never know a more striking example of the blind leading the blind.

When one raises the issue of the free status of Lon Horiuchi, the murderer of Vickie Weaver, the surprisingly common answer is, "Nothing can be done to him because he is a federal agent!" So now, in their own eyes, federal agents are above the law. Several periodicals have pointed out recently that we are on our way to a police state. From this point it appears we have already arrived.

Here in Arizona recently, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (properly termed a rogue organization in various periodicals) called a meeting of senior state law enforcement officials for the purpose of instructing them in their duties and responsibilities toward *Big Brother*. They presented a twenty-two page letter informing the local police as to how they were to act as servants of the feds in the performance of their duties.

Having done that, they walked out of the meeting, not waiting around to listen to any questions about what right they had to give orders to local law enforcement. This, of course, did not sit well with the local people, and it does cast a shadow of what may be coming down the road. The schism between federal and local law enforcement may, if worse comes to worst, be the hope of the republic.

The Blaser R93 rifle came through in the nick of time. We plan to use it in Africa, and to report on it fully upon our return.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 7

3 June 1994

The Golden Joys, 1994

The Babamkulu Expedition was an occasion of unexampled magnificence – a broad mosaic of lapidary experiences which became so crowded together as almost to lose their individual characteristics. The exotic, the new, the wonderful, the exciting all happened so quickly and steadily that one's sensitivity circuits sometimes became overloaded. Pliny wrote, "Ex Africa semper aliquid novi," two thousand years ago. It must have been true then, for it is still true today. Babamkulu was an act impossible to follow.

This is not to say that one cannot do another African adventure, but only that one cannot step into the same river twice, and what one builds up in his memories may possibly never be approached again.

Most members of our gang kept a journal, and I will be enchanted to read as many of them as I can see, since what impresses "A" does not necessarily impress "B." Atop my own recollections, for example, stand the little klipspringer "Bokkie" who delighted in head-banging with the guests, the baby rhino who wanted to adopt us, the platoon of wild dogs enjoying the comfort of the day-warmed asphalt with no fear of man, the mamba heaving one-third of himself erect as he went to Condition Red, the stately beauty of the mighty kudu, the quite unbelievable giraffe, and the joy of watching our grandchild distinguish herself both by her superb marksmanship and her astonishing physical stamina. I must not forget to mention the evil serenade of the hyena at our bush braai. "Hear me! Out in the dark beyond the fire, I wait. Hear me! You will all come to me – in the end." Almost you get up and walk out to meet him. Almost.

And that just scratches the surface!

I packed along the curious new Blaser R93 rifle. This was the first example delivered in the States and it drew a good deal of attention in South Africa. It is indeed a very choice arm, and while by no means a Scout, it is a pleasure to use. I must caution the prospective user, however, to practice with it before he takes it to the field – and not just on the rifle bench. Its controls are enough different from a conventional bolt-action gun that under stress a shooter who is not used to the weapon may cross himself up. I am writing up the R93 for publication.

I intend to write up the entire Babamkulu episode in proper length when I get the chance, but this quick study will have to do for now. It is enough to say that *the Golden Joys of Africa* are still there. For how long we cannot say, but as of now, they are still there.

Of the seven rifles, five were 30-caliber. Larry Larsen brought his Fireplug and Alvin Hammer used a 7x57. The favored bullet was the 180 Nosler partition, and we have no complaints about bullet performance. Every rifleman in the group was a good shot, having been qualified personally by me, and a good shot will have no trouble with a light rifle or anything up to but not including buffalo. One shot stops on wildebeest and zebra are uncommon, as these are two of Africa's toughest beasts, pound-for-pound. On this occasion, however, we had our share, generally at moderate ranges. A zebra shot squarely through the heart with a 308 will run about 200 steps before bleeding out. He may not run quite that far if the same blow is delivered with a heavier rifle, but I am not sure about this. Up in Rhodesia, a good while back, I saw a zebra shot squarely through the boiler room twice with a 458 soft-point and he ran about the same distance. Larry Larsen iced his zebra on

the spot by breaking its neck with the borrowed Blaser 30–06 after his telescope came apart in the middle of the hunt. (Fortunately, Larry had taken official advice and had another telescope available at the ready.)

One of the nicest things about South Africa is the fact that one can wear his pistol at all times, with no trouble from the law. This makes for a very serene and comfortable atmosphere, which is missed immediately upon departure from the country. I did not wear my pistol when actually hunting, but at all other times during our tour. There was no cause for alarm, however, and I never sensed the electric tension that I recall from Central America or the Philippines. This is the way it should be, for "an armed society is a polite society," as we all know.

As it has been well put, "The first rule of gun-fighting is to have a gun." Most of the disasters we read about happen to people who did not understand this principle.

It was indeed sad to return to the States after a month's absence only to discover what silliness the silly Congress has been up to in our absence. That repeating rifle ban is not yet law and the fight continues. It is such a gross piece of silliness that it may well result to our advantage in the November elections. The silliness indicators for 1993 were up by 7.9 percent, and it looks like '94 is going to make things worse. Well, as 'tis said, "People get the government they deserve." It does seem to work out that way.

Through the good offices of General Denis Earp, we were shown an attempt by Musgrave to produce a competition rifle for IPSC. This was in the form of a straight Musgrave Mauser in 308 mounted with a Tasco red dot sight high and forward. When we had all shot this weapon, the consensus was that while that red dot was indeed handy for coarse shooting at short range, it obscured the entire target at distance. If that red dot were superimposed upon a conventional reticle, however, it might have some advantages. Naturally we all had doubts about a fighting machine that needed a battery to make it work. The rule about batteries is that they are usually dead when you need them.

After our hunt at Engonyameni, up on the Crocodile River, we drove south to the battlefields of Natal, where we studied on the ground various heroic acts performed by dead white males – and dead black males. We explored the battle at Blood River, fought with flint locks against spears, on up through Isandhlwana, Rorke's Drift, Laing's Nek, Majuba Hill, Colenso and Spioen Kop, the last fought with M96 Mausers. Thus we got a clear and vivid picture of war as fought by individual riflemen, and to us, who are rifleman, it was perfectly fascinating. Majuba Hill, for example, was fought by British soldiers using Martini–Henry rifles against Boer farmers using, for the most part, Snyders. These weapons were black–powder single–shots of large caliber and low velocity. While the British had some support artillery along on the expedition, it did not see action on top of Majuba Hill, which was, therefore, a rifle action, fought largely man–against–man with approximately equal numbers on both sides. The action was a total victory for the farmer and a total defeat for the soldier, and restates the proposition that there is no substitute for the one–shot, one–hit technique.

It is all there in the books, of course, but we, as rifleman, found many little details which caused us to reflect that chroniclers are rarely warriors, and often get the details of war fairly well mixed up. The matter of range, especially, is the weakest part of any battle account, and yet, in a rifleman's war, range is absolutely critical. We were fortunately able to walk the ground and measure the ranges for ourselves.

After studying the battlefields at suitable length, the expedition broke up, with various members leaving for home while the remainder moved on to the delights of the Cape. Here we spent a week in the wine country, where we did all the regulation things, such as riding up to the top of Table Mountain, and driving down to the end of the world, where the wind titan was confined by the Gods after the victory at Olympus. We lived luxuriously throughout and had only a little trouble with food and water. The trouble with the food was there was too much of it and it was too good. Several members remarked after they rose from the table that they simply could not bear the thought of another meal (and they did not have to, until the next one.)

As to the water, our problem was that many of our people drank too much of it. It is my view that overindulgence in water can cause water-on-the-knee, water-on-the-brain, floating kidneys, and rusty pipes. South Africa is wine country, and to drink water there is to go against the advice of Saint Paul. In addition I think that over-much water interferes with proper eye-to-hand coordination. I am glad to report that I had no trouble of this sort.

At the Army base where we shot the Ratel, we noted that the weapon of choice for officers and NCOs was the 45 auto, carried cocked-and-locked. It appears that my teachings are taken more seriously outside the US than in.

Granddaughter Amy distinguished herself, as had her brother and sister, using the renowned "Sweetheart," previously known as Scout II. After ten years, it still remains the best general-purpose firearm we have seen, since the Mannlicher Scout project seems to be on indefinite hold.

In reading Marion Carl's new book, co-authored with Barrett Tillman, we are impressed by the General's firm conviction that only enthusiasts do things well. Since one cannot draft nor train enthusiasts, that poses a problem for the armies of the world. I gather that the general opinion is that only one fighter pilot in ten turns out to be a real fighter pilot, thus we have to train ten to get one. Perhaps this is true of marksmen, too.

When you consider the obvious difficulty of putting twelve people of different backgrounds, temperament, and age together into one expedition for a full month, you can see how delighted we were that things went so well. This smoothness was due to the extraordinary administrative skills of Barry Miller, our old friend from Durban, who was there to arrange everything without a hitch, from time of arrival to time of departure. Barry even arranged the weather, which was perfect from start to finish.

In the actual hunting, Danie and Karin van Graan, who own and operate Engonyameni Safaris hunting concession, were complete marvels of efficiency and tact. We wanted for nothing, every need was met without asking, the game was plentiful, and our accommodations were lush. To my considerable delight, I discovered that Danie has built a bar adjoining our quarters under the trees out over the water, which he has officially labeled "Cooper's Corner." As I sat there on the terrace, lacing up my boots in the cold, grey light of dawn, listening to the "Christmas Tree birds," I reflected that life cannot get any better than this.

The crowning glory, from the standpoint of the Countess and myself, was granddaughter Amy's rifle performance. Elmon, her Swazi tracker, told Danie flatly that Amy was the best shot he had ever seen – and he is no chicken, being the progenitor of various grandchildren. This was rather as if the coach of a major professional football team were to watch his grandson, playing on his team, win the Most Valuable Player award in the Super Bowl.

The conventional wisdom maintains that the "Big Five" of Africa are the elephant, the rhino, the buffalo, the lion, and the leopard. Older generations referred only to the Big Four, not considering the leopard to be in the top category.

To the current *Big Five* might well be added the hippopotamus – when taken on dry land. I have known a couple professional outfitters who claim that this sort of thing is too dangerous and they will not attempt it. So if confrontation is your kick, you might give that a thought. It is difficult to find a place where hippo can be legally taken and then to find an outfitter who will lead you to a dry land shot, but I have it in mind and it may indeed be possible. Note that Mozambique is collapsing into old-fashioned disorganization and contains many hippos.

Now then, I have considered the matter at some length and I propose a further *Big Six* for the collector, based

upon the particularly choice nature of the trophy. This *Big Six* would include the Walia ibex, the mountain nyala, the bongo, the giant eland, the giant sable, and the situtunga. The man who can show prime examples of these six on his trophy wall is as yet unknown. For those who enjoy a really hard challenge, there is one.

Through the courtesy of our hosts I got a chance to fire the French 20mm gun which is the main armament of the Ratel, the extraordinarily efficient scout car used by the South Africans in the Angola War as a forward communication center for the famous G5 field gun. This is a very modern 20, with a surprisingly high cyclic rate of 800 rpm. This last feature is largely academic, since the only way to fire the piece effectively is in the semi-automatic mode. The Ratel is an armored personnel carrier somewhat reminiscent of the US Bradley, though it runs on wheels rather than treads, which makes it more suitable for African operation.

Only a little practice was necessary to demonstrate that once you have spotted on target with your coaxial machine-gun, the proper way to use the 20 is with a series of quick single shots delivered about half a second apart. In this mode it is easy to place all direct hits on the Sherman chassis we were using as target, whereas if bursts were used the result was some hits and some misses, with attendant wastage of ammunition. As with all vehicles of this sort, reloading ammunition is a tedious process and the gunner is well-advised to avoid wastage.

Curiously, this same principal applies to the use of hand-held automatic fire – an easy point to prove on the range, though not at all easy to get across to our legislators and commentators.

If I have anything to say about it – as I hope to – at the forthcoming Barcelona conference, it is going to be very difficult to build a special rifle for international competition, since that international competition will be so varied as to preclude specialization. Time will tell.

In that connection, we were interested to observe the results of the "Great Cultural Revolution," which took place in Africa in late April. The only result we could see to the election was the rescinding of the dress code for Parliament, which now allows a representative to represent his constituents in loin cloth and ostrich feathers, if that is his desire. One other change we did notice was the display of the new "gaboon banner" on every standard. The situation appears quite stable to an outsider at this time, but there is bound to be some sort of backlash when these poor deluded people find out that the instant wealth, leisure, and luxury promised them by ANC representatives are not immediately forthcoming.

It is true that the ANC platform calls for a number of steps which will be very difficult to enforce and would be better off left abandoned – such as one firearm per family. Mandela and Slovo must, to a certain extent, maintain their proper Marxist position in order to pacify the young activists on their team, and if lip service to Marxism is all that they really intend, the situation may show some promise. The people we talked to suggest that the new batch of legislators and officials are more easily bribable than the old, and thus may be kept in line by simply paying them off. Would that things were that simple in the US!

"Men who are looking for a safe thing should stay away from Africa."

Major Frederick Russell Burnham, in *Scouting on Two Continents*

"Three goblins gain entry to house and ask maid, at pistol point, where child is. Maid says that she doesn't know. Mother walks into room. Goblins ask mother. Mother tells them same. Second maid sees goblins and screams. Crowd gathers to see what's happening. Goblins fire to scare crowd away. Big mistake – most neighbors are military or security types. Goblins retreat into house and attempt escape across roof and out into street. First goblin is shot in leg and promptly beaten to death. Second goblin is shot in leg, beaten, and left for dead. (Made it alive to hospital; unknown if he lived.) Third goblin manages to make it to police where he

falls on knees and begs officers to arrest him. Neighbors unhappy about arrest since it ruined their scores on goblin catching."

"Big difference in reactions between Americans and Guatemalans."

Thomas K. Graziano,
April 18, 1994,
Guatemala City, Guatemala

Only interested people are interesting.

The Guru

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Special Edition

27 June 1994

Casualty Report

The reports of my death now circulating have been slightly exaggerated, as the man said. We are this date in dry-dock, having taken one minor-caliber hit, one major-caliber hit, and burst a boiler. Annoying, but not serious. (Double fracture left radius and ulna, compressed fracture second lumbar vertebra, concomitant lobar pneumonia and strep throat.)

All this does not lighten my literary load, and must delay my output at a time when I am already behind, but not to worry! We will be out for shakedown later this week and expect to meet all commitments – God Willing!

Sumer is icumen in
Down with whiskey,
Up with Gin!

(signed)

Jeff.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 8

11 July 1994

July, 1994

Back in the land of the living, I reflect that I discovered many very interesting things during my time in sick bay – most of which I did not need to know. As I write this I am not quite ready for full duty, but improvement proceeds at a gratifying pace. For those who never thought about it, I can assure you that hiccups are no help to a broken back. However, let's always remember: Was nicht unterbringt, mock' starker.

I find it strange and discouraging to note that the design and production of pistols, which once was the field of the United States industrial establishment, has been relinquished to the rest of the world. For most of my life a handgun was made in the United States or it was essentially inconsequential. Now, of course, we find that the American military service is armed with a weapon of Italian design. This is not to denigrate the Italians, who have indeed designed some wonderful weapons, but the art of the handgun has always been essentially an American concept, and to see us drop the subject in favor of the Europeans is not cheerful. We are by no means chauvinistic in this. We admire German and Italian cars excessively, and we are particularly fond of South African wines and Germanic rifles, but the art of the handgun has always been an almost exclusively American achievement, and it is indeed a pity to see that era vanish.

Colonel Bob Young is just back from Saudi Arabia, where he found that the elite Arabs are much fonder of small calibers and minor cartridges than they are of the battle-tested 308. It seems that the 308 bumps them when they shoot it. Poor babies!

A lot of heated conversation has been flying these days in connection with the word "hero." Research indicates that the word can mean almost anything one wants it to mean. It is really no longer possible to elevate anyone by referring to him as a hero. The most commonplace examples are entertainers. A hired entertainer is worth whatever the lord of the manor wishes to pay him, but the fact that he performs his entertainments well does in no way establish him as a hero. Thus no professional athlete can be correctly termed a hero for doing what he is paid to do excessively well. Expert, possibly. Hero, no. A true hero performs noble purposes of great difficulty at immediate risk of his life. Warriors and fire fighters may indeed be heroic, but hardly simple purveyors of amusement.

Freshly back from Africa and from our stay in the meat locker, we discover that Janet Reno is still on the payroll, and Lon Horiuchi is still wandering around loose. Someone should have taken care of that in our absence.

Hornblower buffs will recognize Rosas Bay in Catalonia as the site of the epic battle in which HMS Sutherland was sacrificed and Bush lost his leg. It is now the heart of the "Costa Brava," the renowned vacation center for North Europeans. This is in a part of Spain technically, but culturally otherwise. Among other things, Catalan is not a dialect but rather another language more akin to Provençal, and the Catalonians do not share nor admire the Castilian tradition. Catalonia is plagued in springtime by the tramontane which is a violent gale-force wind sweeping down from the Pyrenees to the sea. These gales – recorded up to 100 miles per hour – had a decisive hand in my personal mishap.

The conference at Rosas Bay was intended to set guidelines for policy control over international practical rifle competition. The conference was in no position to dictate policy to IPSC, but we had hoped to find a consensus which we could present to the assembly at the next general meeting in Buenos Aires. Unfortunately we did not have a quorum and several important members of the confederation did not send delegates, especially including the United States, the United Kingdom and South Africa. The result was that a rather strongly divergent view of the principles of practical rifle shooting was advanced at some length. At issue was the separation of objectives between the general purpose bolt-action rifle and the semi-automatic battle rifle. The question, of course, is whether these two types of weapons can be placed in competition with each other without giving a distinct advantage to one or the other. It was my hope to establish a single-class policy for the future, but it does not appear that this is going to work. There seems to be a sentiment that battle rifles and general purpose rifles should compete in separate categories, although on the same courses of fire. I do not think that this is a sound proposition, but it seems to be the opinion of the majority in attendance at the Rosas Bay Conference.

It seems clear that the appearance of battle rifles in international competition will cause certain doubts in the minds of those who would disarm the people. In view of the fact that courses of fire can be easily designed which give no advantage to a semi-automatic battle rifle, I would prefer that we put all of our weapons in one category, especially considering that battle rifles, as such, are forbidden in both the United Kingdom and South Africa – and may well be in the United States before long. Still we will get by with what we must, and the situation is not wholly disheartening.

One point that was established was the recommendation that general purpose rifles be limited to a weight ceiling of 3.5kgs. This, of course, is to obviate the appearance of special rifles designed for special competition under special circumstances, which has become the curse of pistol competition as now practiced.

We ask all concerned to consider these matters carefully and be prepared to have an opinion when the matter comes to a head in October.

Note that the new bolt-action Mauser is available in right- or left-handed form simply by changing the bolt. This is an idea whose time should have come a hundred years ago.

In the matter of cartridge design, things are no better. We really do not need new cartridges, since the 45 ACP has been around since the beginning and has not yet met its equal – for defensive utility purposes. Yet, we now have a selection of 9s, including 9x17, two varieties of 9x18, the 9x19, the 9x20, the 9x21, the 9x21.5, and the 9x22. This profusion of cartridge choices is obviously ridiculous. The purpose of a pistol cartridge is to turn your opponent off with one round. It is impossible to conceive how variations of 1mm of case length are going to effect this capability. If you want more stopping power than a 9mm affords you need a larger bore and more mass – you do not need more velocity. This conclusion was reached by the knowledgeable decades ago and it has not been successfully controverted. None of the various 9s is any more conclusive in a fight than any other. Why people just do not drop the subject is a mystery.

Note that the three-volume set of Deneys Reitz is now advertised for sale by Wolfe Publishing in Prescott. Anyone searching for a "role model" need look no farther than Deneys Reitz.

"Most of America's assault rifles are in the attics, basements, and closets of patriotic Americans who never fire them and to whom war against their own government would be an unthinkable nightmare."

"The problem is that millions of such weapons are now being stored in the homes of ordinary Americans, especially in the Western United States. Assault rifles have a military appearance and contribute in a subtle, psychological way to growing resistance to government

oppression. Most farmers, ranchers, and loggers who see their lives and families entirely destroyed by Babbitt and retainers will never fire a shot. The existence of these weapons, however, makes resistance, even legal resistance, more thinkable to these victims."

"The bureaucrats and politicians do not fear armed criminals or armed political zealots so much as they fear peaceful Americans who will probably never use their assault rifles – but whose mental toughness may be enhanced by possession of military weapons."

"The gun controllers are not deterred by the facts about guns and crime, because their primary fear is not of criminals. They fear ordinary Americans whose lives and freedom their policies are destroying. In this fear and in their world, they are on target."

Arthur B. Robinson, Ph.D. *Access to Energy*, July 1994, Vol. 21, no. 11

"Slavery in the modern world implies the absolute deprivation of the individual's liberty, while possession of weapons and mastery of their use are means to the individual's liberation. We do not perceive how a man may be armed and at the same time bereft of his freedom."

John Keegan, in *"The Face of Battle"*

We have dissected the new Hornady enhanced performance ammunition for the 308 and we find that it does indeed perform as advertised. That is to say it raises the 308 to 30–06 capacity and the 30–06 to 300. How it does this is not clear, except that *Lion Man* John Gannaway found it impossible to get the powder back into the case once the bullet had been removed. Some sort of compression is involved here, which is all right as long as it does not raise pressures to dangerous levels, and it does not seem to do this. The 308 could indeed use a little extra oomph, but that is not true of the 30–06. ("If you can't do it with a 180 at 2700, you probably can't do it.")

The 458 and the 350 Remington Short Magnum could indeed do with a bit of enhancement, but the prospect seems unlikely since there is no demand for the 458 and the 350 Short Magnum is essentially obsolete.

More important is the matter of bullet design. We have concluded over decades now that impact performance by the bullet is more significant than flight characteristics. We can hardly point to a case of power inadequacy, but we know of numerous examples of failure in bullet performance.

I recently cut a video tape with Bruce Beers, of Quad Productions, concerning the tradition of personal weaponry in America and its legal status. This tape is entitled "Liberty's Teeth" and is available for sale now. I think it turned out rather well.

The following curious report comes from the Australian publication *Nexus*:

"When Goldstein opened fire with the Galil he used a technique virtually unknown to soldiers in conventional armies, but taught by the Special Operations groups of the US and Russia. Instead of firing at random with bursts of three to five shots in full-automatic mode, Goldstein fired very fast single shots with the weapon set to semi-automatic, releasing one shot every time that the trigger was squeezed. Goldstein is reputed to have fired at 90 shots per minute. Kill rates are much higher using this special high speed, semi-automatic technique, but only if the assassin has received extensive training. As a medical doctor from the nearby Kiryat Arba settlement, it is reasonable to ask where Goldstein gained his high level of special operations expertise."

Imagine a private citizen using aimed fire today! This highly secret and specialized technique is only known to a few on the inside of the Special Operations units. What is the world coming to!

The British have reached some sort of new low in the event of having a prisoner give birth in shackles. This preoccupation with handcuffs on the part of the law enforcement establishment has long exasperated us, but we did not think it would go this far. The woman concerned was possibly a very nefarious person, but how she could pose a threat to the police when in the process of giving birth is beyond even the most bizarre imagination.

On the 50th anniversary of D-Day in Europe, a great deal of editorial comment was submitted honoring and extolling the heroic behavior of the Americans who gave their lives on the beaches of Normandy in order to free Europe. Just among ourselves, I doubt that they did. In truth, I do not know why men fight, except to defend their homelands, but I do know that in the course of two wars and a good many informal conflicts, I have never yet met anyone who died or risked his life for a political ideal. I can tell you why I and my comrades fought in the Pacific, but of course that does not apply to our comrades who fought in Europe. Men fight for all sorts of reasons, but the best reason we have heard so far is simply that men like to fight. (This is a terribly politically incorrect attitude and should not be aired about.)

This year we plan the *Second Annual Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial* at the Whittington Shooting Center near Raton, New Mexico. The dates are 21, 22, 23 October. We plan three days of shooting and two evenings of recitation/declamation. Mark it on your calendar and plan to be there.

We are very pleased to report that the special prize – "Guru's Gold" – at the *Keneyathlon* was taken by Sergeant Allan Swanson, USMC, utilizing the same rifle that he shot in his basic rifle course last year. The prize was awarded to the lightest rifle finishing in the first five places and Sergeant Swanson placed fourth overall. The three rifles ahead of him weighed 9.5, 11 and 13 pounds each.

The issue here is that we must find a way to reward portability in rifles, since when anyone enters competition it is quite possible for him to gain a slight advantage by carrying a heavier rifle, which is useful on the range but less useful in the field, and field performance is what we aim for. The proposed 3.5kgs weight ceiling for IPSC practical rifle, if adopted, may help in this direction.

We intend to keep the same rules for next year's *Keneyathlon*.

"In the Supreme Court and elsewhere, blithe talk about "a living Constitution" conceals the fact that the constitution is in fact dying as it is being reinterpreted out of existence, whenever it stands in the way of the prevailing zeitgeist."

Thomas Sowell

I was recently characterized by a Swedish weapons instructor as a "moss-backed amateur." This causes me no distress. Moss-backed I certainly am, having seen more of life, strife and conflict than this young man as apt to no matter how long he lives. And as to "amateur," I prize the adjective. The amateur does it for love, where a professional does it for money. As we have often asked, who does it better? I have been in love with personal weapons since I was a child. I have used them, trained with them, designed them, and employed them for nearly sixty years, and I did this because I love them. There is no question but what I could not have been paid to do whatever I have done as well.

In our recent survey of the African battlefields, we discovered more positively every time that it was not Boer marksmanship that made the difference in those wars so much as Boer gun handling. Contrary to widespread belief, the Boers did not do significant damage at great range, but when they got into a firing position at a

reasonable range, they shot carefully in order to hit rather than by volley in order to scare. It seems apparent that these men, while good shots, were not extraordinary shots. What matters is that when they came on to shoot they used their individual weapons purposefully rather than ostentatiously. Carefully aimed rifle fire at short range is overwhelmingly demoralizing. What happens, however, is as the range shortens improperly organized warriors tend to shoot carelessly. The difference is decisive.

An informal poll conducted in the area of Harare (ex-Salisbury, Rhodesia) indicates that the great majority want Ian Smith back in place of Robert Mugaby. If Mugaby finds out about this, Mr. Smith's head rests very lightly on his shoulders.

While the quiet revolution in South Africa seems to be proceeding without much trouble, at least trouble apparent from here, we note the following disquieting information. One Mr. Obed Bapela announced officially that under a government dominated by the ANC "whites" should be limited to owning only one firearm. Note that he did not say "people," he said "whites." That suggests an attitude that is overwhelmingly racist. Whether Mr. Bapela, who is listed as a Deputy Secretary General of the ANC, speaks for his government is not clear at this time, but while being a "racist" in most of the world today is considered to be reprehensible, this does not seem to be true in South Africa – at least in the leading circles of the African National Congress.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 9

26 July 1994

High Summer, 1994

Corn, only minutes off the stalk, and vine-ripened tomatoes from the garden! Summer may be unpleasantly warm, but it does have its compensations – especially now that the summer rains have come to freshen up the landscape. And now is the time to get out there with your rifle and put your annual 200 rounds through it so that you will not be caught by surprise during hunting season. Remember also to stay clear of the bench. Work on quick acquisition of position, instant bolt work, perfect surprise breaks, and do not forget the snap shot. You do not need it often, but when you do, it is awfully nice to have.

A *family member* recently sent in yet another multiple hit failure with a minor caliber pistol. The goblin took sixteen rounds of 9mm. before deciding to talk things over. The Countess asked if this was not some sort of record, but while close, it was not unique. We have had several up in the twenties over the years.

In that connection, we have been interested in going further into the action at Rorke's Drift to discover that several officers in that memorable engagement did excellent work with the heavy caliber British service revolver. The troops were using single loaders, but the officers had wheel guns, and when one is in danger of being mobbed by squadrons of passionate Zulus, one shot stops are quite satisfactory. From first hand accounts it appears that neither soldiers nor officers had any need to fire twice. That was over one hundred years ago, and see how we have progressed!

Those of you who wish your own copy of "*Liberty's Teeth*," the video tape I recently cut with Bruce Beers for Quad Productions, may secure same by calling: 916-275-4553.

It has come to my attention that there is a brochure floating around issued by (Grey) Gunsite which maintains that I inspect personally every piece sold by the Gunsmithy at this time. It is true that I used to do this, but I have not done so since the great lynch party of April Fool 1993. Any attempt to advertise that I do is barefaced prevarication.

Despite what you may read in the popular press, not all proper role models are deceased. Consider, for example, Admiral James B. Stockdale. This gentleman is widely known for his exposure to seven years of obscene abuse by slant-eyed little fiends in Hanoi during the Viet Nam war. This experience is worthy of note, but consider the fact that this man did much more than suffer torture. He is first of all a philosopher (by profession at the Hoover War Institute,) secondly a fighter pilot, and thirdly a naval officer. He did everything right throughout his life and now he continues to improve our thought processes as the continuation of his life's work. And note that while he may be politically incorrect as a white male, he is not a dead white male.

Family member and Babamtulu veteran Jack Buchmiller notes that if Nicole Simpson had studied at Gunsite she would now be a wealthy widow.

All of the enlightened are well aware of the *Pepper Popper* reactive steel target now in general use throughout the world. This is the brainchild of John Pepper of Maryland, who is now running for the Maryland House of Delegates. John is not only one of the few true rifle masters and a leading creator of practical rifle

competition, but he is also one of the dedicated defenders of American liberty as granted by God and protected by the Bill of Rights. He needs your support, and those of you who live in Maryland will do well to get in touch with him through the following address:

Pepper Campaign Committee, 5530 Wisconsin Ave., Suite 710, Chevy Chase, MD 20815.

For those of you who wish to acquire a proper view of the African scene, we can recommend "*The African Experience*" by Roland Olliver, available from Harper Collins. This is as clean and objective a piece of African history as we have run across.

As we have often preached, the only one of life's great pleasures of which there is never any satiety is learning. Anything else you do for your delight which you do long enough will eventually become tiresome, but learning never tires. Unfortunately, it has become fashionable to regard learning as a tool rather than an end in itself. It is customary to think that one learns "X" in order to do "Y." This may be true, but it is only a trivial aspect of the matter. Learning of any sort should be regarded as an end in itself, because it is the one attribute that lasts forever and can never be taken from you.

I now look forward to adventure after nilgai this winter with Finn Aagaard down in Texas. The nilgai is the "blue bull" of India, and while he does not sport a spectacular set of horns, he uses them skillfully and he is a big, strong animal. Also, he is reputed to be excellent eating. We will naturally give you a full report if everything works out.

In a recent article, Layne Simpson tells of the conclusions reached at a symposium of professional hunters which he recorded. These people were Africans, but their observations are pertinent everywhere. He lists the following shortcomings observed by the pros in the field, in the following order:

1. "Bringing more gun than one can shoot accurately." This is especially true of Africa, but it also applies to Alaska. It is a very common and pernicious error to assume that one will achieve better results in the field by the use of more powerful weapons. Power failures, when the bullet is well placed and penetrates fully, are almost unheard of. Bad shooting, on the other hand, is by no means uncommon. Many years ago we noted the inscription in a commercial advertisement which claimed that "Out where ranges are long you need Weatherby power." Mistake. Out where ranges are long (and even when they are not) what you need is to know how to shoot. The random shooter, who does not practice, is ill-advised to buy something bigger than what he is used to, since justifiably or not it may intimidate him. Recoil and blast are not problems with a well-seasoned marksman, but they may indeed upset the 20-round-a-year man. Use what you know you can hit with. Use the proper bullet and you will have no trouble.
2. "Poor physical condition." Hunting may not be the kind of activity that calls for entry into a triathlon, but it can be physically demanding, especially in mountainous terrain. We recently noted the conspicuous success of our shooters who were in top shape. Before you take the field find yourself a convenient hill and trot up it three times a week. You will be glad you did.
3. "Inability to spot game in heavy brush." This is a function of "the hunter's eye" and it cannot be learned by wishing. Generally speaking, the more hunting experience you have the better will be your target acquisition, but simple wilderness hiking, for those who can manage it, will sharpen up the skill conspicuously, especially if the individual makes a contest of it and logs his observations regularly on paper.
4. "Inability to shoot accurately from the offhand position." At least a third of your shots should be practiced from offhand, and against the clock. The one-and-a-half second interval I use when teaching rifle, from standard ready to hammer fall, is a good test. And you do not need a stop watch. Count to yourself, "one, two, three," at a convenient interval. On "one" you mount the piece to the shoulder. On "two" you acquire the reticle with the shooting eye. And on "three" you gently press the

trigger. Clearly you can practice this at home without going to the range, and you certainly should take time to do this before going to the field. Another system I often use is to sit in front of the tube, with my rifle in my lap, and wait for a commercial to come on which displays zeros or "O's." If I can simulate a clean surprise-break every time an "O" appears, I am getting there. If two "O's" appear (as in Coors,) the bolt must be snapped between the two shots. When you get good at this you are well on the way, even without going to the range.

5. "Shooting offhand when a natural rest is available." Whenever possible, use a rest, and this is surprisingly possible. On my last trip to Southwest Africa, all four shots I took were from a tree or post rest. The late, great Elmer Keith was fond of using his "ten gallon" hat for this purpose when shooting from prone. And Jack O'Connor was fond of using his binocular case. If a rest is available, use it. Do not try to prove that you are capable of hitting the target from offhand.
6. "Inability to shoot quickly." See paragraph "4" above. Note that this is fully as much a matter of mental conditioning as of marksmanship. I have know several good shots, who had proved they could shoot quickly, go into a sort of paralysis when the Baker Flag was hoisted. This may be a form of buck fever, so inoculate yourself before taking the field.
7. "Choosing a bullet that goes to pieces without penetrating." Proper placement and penetration are the two things that will secure your game most reliably. Placement is the function of anatomical knowledge and marksmanship. Penetration is a function of bullet performance. There are some stout bullets on the market. Use one that is tried and tested.
8. "Unsafe gunhandling." This is a terror, and simply establishes that far too many people take to the field without any education at all in the principles of marksmanship. It is not confined to duffers. Too many times we have seen professionals handling their weapons in ways that would bring a stern reprimand from any competent rangemaster. By choice, go to school if you can. With or without school engrave the four principles of safe gun handling in your mind and do not ever let them fade out.
 1. All guns are always loaded.
 2. Do not let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy.
 3. Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.
 4. Be sure of your target.
9. "Unfamiliarity with animal anatomy." Study your target's anatomy with great care whenever you see a picture of a four-footed beast in a book, a magazine or on the tube. Remember that your target is a three-dimensional object and pay careful attention to "target angle" (zero is coming straight in, 180 is running straight away, and so on in between).
10. "Admiring the first shot rather than continuing to shoot until the animal is down." This one brings pained recollection to me as I lost the best sable I ever saw by calling off the war immediately when the beast dropped to a hit on the spinal flange. Having been overgunned for most of my hunting life in North America, I assumed that when I got a clean surprise-break, my animal was secured. This is not necessarily true, and the bolt should be snapped instantly following a shot regardless of what you see through the glass. The ideal is to get your empty on the ground by the time you pick up your target after recoil.

I apologize to Mr. Simpson for borrowing his work, but it was excellent and I mean this in the sense of sincerest flattery.

"I think it would be very wrong indeed to do anything to fit a boy for the modern world."

John Mortimore, in the British publication, *Spectator*

And now we see advertised the "Black Knight" service pistol, designed to give you everything in a 1911 that you always wanted but were afraid to ask about. It is made entirely in the United States and it is presented as being "ready out of the box," just as was the Gunsite Service Pistol in earlier days. I have not yet seen one nor

fired it, but it is clearly a good idea and we wish it well.

(Nowlin Custom Mfg., Rt. 1, Box 308, Claremore, OK 74017.)

How long do you suppose it will take Jesse Jackson to discover that the horror in Rwanda was caused by the French abandonment of their colonial policies and leaving these people to their own devices?

[Editor's note: see also – exchange of letters in "Guns & Ammo" Magazine, April, May 1995.]

For further enlightenment on the situation in both South Africa and the US, I can strongly recommend the self-published typescript,

"Racism, Guilt and Self-Deceit" by M. Gedahlia Braun
Box 261330, Johannesburg 2023, RSA.

Dr. Braun has discovered that only the politically correct can find publishers in today's atmosphere. His work, which is very carefully researched and irreproachably objective, is not politically correct, which may be its strongest recommendation.

It certainly seems clear that we do not need this flood of new cartridges that we see advertised at every turn. The cartridges we have used for most of the twentieth century are quite good enough as they stand. What we do need is improved delivery systems. At this time, we do not have a proper rifle action, nor do we have a proper rifle sight. And nobody seems inclined to build one because the manufacturers can sell all they make as it is right now.

Among the many desirable features which we do not see on our current guns is a mechanism to obviate a "short stroking." I have never been guilty of this sin personally, since in my childhood I was forcefully instructed to work that bolt just as hard as I could – hard all the way, both ways, with no mercy. Still, in my recent hunting adventures, I have known three cases in which the shooter did not withdraw the bolt all the way and failed to pick up the next cartridge on closing the bolt. This can be serious – even deadly when confronting dangerous game. It seems to me that a simple gadget could be installed in the receiver which would prevent forward motion of the bolt until after it had been fully withdrawn. It seems evident that the complaints do not seem to get through to the designers, who are anxious to give us such things as variable power telescopes and three-position safeties, as well as trigger cocking self-loading pieces – all of which stand as answers in search of questions.

A *family member* and Babamkulu veteran Art Hammer has gone to considerable trouble to analyze and collate the shooting results of our recent expedition. His conclusions are for the most part not surprising, but they do corroborate various principles we have gathered over the years.

The toughest beasts in Africa, pound for pound, are the blue wildebeest and the zebra. It is here that the notion arose that some of our members could have used more power, but I take leave to doubt this. Ian McFarlane of Okavango once told me that he had seen a blue wildebeest take eight hits in the boiler room from a 300 Winchester Magnum before falling down. On the other hand, granddaughter Amy Heath dropped hers on the spot with one round from the 308/180 Nosler. There naturally is some luck involved here, but more than that it is the combination of proper placement and adequate penetration which seems to make the difference.

One conclusion I did find somewhat surprising was that animals who suffered complete penetration – in one side and out the other – were 50 percent more likely to go down quickly than animals which did not show exit wounds. Since 38 animals were recovered, by seven hunters over a period of ten days, this analysis is

somewhat more reliable than my own experience, which never indicated to me that full penetration was a critical desideratum.

- The median distance at which animals were shot was 125 yards.
- Shooters were severely winded in 25 percent of cases observed.
- The sling was used in 50 percent of cases.
- A field rest was used in 45 percent of cases.

Danie van Graan, our host at Engonyameni, feels very strongly that the prospective African hunter should submit himself to a proper course of rifle training, not more than six months before undertaking the adventure. He also corroborates the general command, "Get in shape!"

Those of you who are coming to the NRA Whittington Center for the *Second Annual Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial* are urged to make preparations now. First, you should make your reservation with Mike Ballew at the shooting center. Remember the occasion will last for three days – October 21, 22 and 23. Second, start thinking about which declamation you wish to declaim. Your presentation may be either prose or verse, it may be read from the manuscript or memorized. It need not be prepared either by or about Theodore Roosevelt, but it should reflect the spirit of the age which he typified. When you have decided, it would be helpful if you would let me know what your title is so that I can put the word out to avoid duplication. Never did we suspect that there were so many frustrated thespians among the faithful. If you came last time you will know what I mean, and if this one is your first adventure, I guarantee that you will be delighted. Make your plans now!

Neighbor and *family member* Colonel Bob Young has taken me out shooting following my recent stint in drydock. I am happy to report that while I cannot yet quite yet "do it all," I can do most of it, and I expect to be fully combat-worthy by the end of summer. A bit of advice I can extend to the inexperienced is, if you go about breaking bones take care to break them one at a time.

It may be a digression from the usual content of this publication, but for heaven's sake remember that we have a chance in November! The liberal strangle-hold on our federal legislature may be broken if we all take the trouble to vote for the right man. The war cry, "Throw the rascals out!"

Letters in "Guns & Ammo."

[Editor's Note: the following exchange of letters re Jeff's comment on the situation in Rwanda is from the letters page of "Guns & Ammo" Magazine, April and May 1995 issues.]

This from **Randall Baker**, Chicago, IL,

The Facts on Rwanda

Although I generally like and agree with your magazine, as an African-American I am concerned about Jeff Cooper's recent comment in "Cooper's Corner." He wrote, "How long do you suppose it will take Jesse Jackson to discover that the horror in Rwanda was caused by the French abandonment of their colonial policies and leaving these people to their own devices?" This is both inflammatory and wrong.

It wasn't the French that left Rwanda, it was the Belgians. Independence was achieved in 1962. Prior to that it was occupied by the Germans. Slavery was abolished during the Belgian mandate. In some small degree, education was available to the native-born Africans and

tribal systems flourished. The Hutu and Tutsi feuding was going on before the Belgians left.

And **Jeff's** reply,

Cooper's Response

Many thanks for your thoughtful letter to the magazine.

First, you are quite right in pointing out that it was the Belgian colonials, not the French, who were in charge of Rwanda, I was quite wrong in that and it embarrasses me. On the other hand, the tribal warfare between Bahutu and Watutsi was held to a minimum during the colonial administrations, and that was the main point of my statement.

[This continued in the May issue...]

from **Randall Baker,**

New-Found Friend

I am currently stationed on board the USS Constellation (CV-64) somewhere in the western Pacific Ocean in transit to the points further west. Mail is a godsend out here. I am even more appreciative that you took the time out of what must be a very hectic schedule to respond to my letter. I am truly impressed.

I am glad that you acknowledged my letter, in spite of my acerbic attack on your column, you responded with professionalism becoming of an elder statesmen of the sport that we both enjoy. Believe it or not, I share the same opinion that you do on the OJ situation. My father (who is the city marshal of my home of record) shares your sentiments as well. It was a very hard-hitting statement. However, with all the media attention that this tragedy has received, I was concerned that the statement would ring of tabloid, particularly in a magazine that reports so intelligently on a subject so sensitive on our current government's agenda. Being African-American, I am a bit more sensitive to things that concern rights – perhaps I am too sensitive. But the anti-gunners also think that the NRA is too sensitive concerning the Second Amendment, right?

May you enjoy the fact that you are the gunner's guru, because you are definitely that. In fact, some sage advice from you (surprise break) allowed me to qualify as a pistol expert with the .45. Although our politics may differ sometimes and I don't always agree with the things in your Cooper's Corner, you are the resident expert and I am a fan of yours.

signed as: Randall Baker, AE (AW), USN

From **Jeff,**

Cooper's Reply

Having been seagoing for a long period in the Western Pacific, I can understand your feelings about mail call.

We all have our personal sensitivities. You are sensitive about racial matters, I on matters of political liberty. I suppose the issues are not completely unrelated.

Be that as it may, I am pleased to learn that we are basically on the same side of the barricades.

Onward and upward.

[See also Vol. 2, No. 5.]

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 10

11 August 1994

Dog Days, 1994

Hot, isn't it? This may not be the hottest summer on record, but it is certainly a standout, even in places like Moscow, Tokyo and Fairbanks. Maybe somebody down there is trying to tell us something.

As we write this, the so-called Crime Bill of the Clinton Administration is still being pushed. The utter hypocrisy of this proposition emphasizes the near total collapse of our political system. This proposed bill can do nothing about crime, and its proponents know that. They insult the intelligence of their constituents by assuming that voting for a bill which is called a "Crime Bill" will gain the votes of innocents who are concerned about crime and admire the antics of those who would "do something about it," whether or not what they propose to do has any relation to reality.

Apart from the banning of "assault weapons" (which are almost never used in crime,) this bill promises to fund the employment of 100 thousand more police officers. We have enough police officers, who almost invariably catch the goblins. What is not done with the goblins after they are caught is the root of the crime.

Today's criminals know they have little to fear from the police or the law, and that situation is not going to be corrected by throwing money at it, but you good people who read these words know all that. Apparently there are a great many people who do not know all that, and certainly the publicity media are not interested in correcting the situation.

It may be that this ridiculous Crime Bill will be shot down, but that will not win the war. Those people will be back with something else, as bad or worse. The struggle will continue, and it is up to each of us to pull his weight. At this time in our history, complacency is a sin.

Note that the goblins choose as victims only those they deem to be patsies. Louis Awerbuck and Chris Pollack have recently gleaned the following statement from a restroom wall:

"There are no victims, only volunteers. You volunteer by looking uncertain and afraid. You volunteer by being, as grass-eaters invariably are, unprepared to confront the hazards of life."

As it used to be emphasized at Orange Gunsite, you are an easy mark in *White*, but you are a difficult problem in *Orange*.

Family member and Shooting Master Louis Awerbuck recently showed us a most interesting device, which amounts to a ghost-ring for a pistol. It is not as obtrusive as one might expect, and it is a great deal less so than any form of glass sight. The large diameter aperture sits low over the rear of the slide, and it does not interfere with a holster which permits the use of a "target sight." I think it deserves study, and I will do what I can to promote this.

We learn that the federal assassin Lon Horiuchi is now being afforded personal security by the state. Perhaps the need for this man to look over his shoulder for the rest of his life is in some measure adequate punishment

for his crimes.

Again we call your attention to the *Second Annual Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial* to be held at the Whittington Shooting Center in New Mexico on 21, 22 and 23 October.

It happens that the shooting center is not sending out applications, but requesting that all reservations be made by telephone (505-445-3615.) There will be shooting for rifle, pistol and shotgun, but no competition for prizes. We want to keep the event informal and pleasurable, without any pushing and shoving.

There will be recitations on Friday and Saturday nights, and we ask again that you tell us what you intend to declaim so that we can avoid a duplication of effort. The presentations do not need to be in verse and they need not be memorized, so there is no need to be bashful. (If anybody is up for "The Ballad of East and West," please let me know so I can change my target.)

Accommodations are amazingly reasonable – \$16.00 per night for one, and \$28.00 for a couple. Hot meals are available at the cafeteria and there is a kitchenette in each wing of the sleeping quarters.

Any posters or portraits of TR that you wish to furnish will be properly displayed.

(The weather will be warmer this year – since it could not be any colder than it was last year.)

The fifth of this month was *Lion Day*, the anniversary of our face-off with the king of beasts, down in the Lowveldt. We encouraged all hands connected with that operation to "splice the main brace" on the day.

"And all the time – such is the tragic comedy of our situation – we continue to clamor for those very qualities we are rendering impossible. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honor and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful."

C.S.Lewis, via Eric Ching

Family member and Rifle Master Larry Larsen informs us that as the years roll by he seems to need a smaller aperture in his ghost-ring. Naturally a smaller aperture is a little slower, but it may indeed help those of us of retirement age. I must look into this further. (I note that Danie van Graan of Engonyameni has never believed in a ghost-ring, but uses a disk, even on his lion-stopping 45-70. It may be that Danie is older than I thought.)

Note that while the illustrious 50-caliber Browning machinegun is increasingly overlooked by the designers of combat vehicles, it still stands in the hotspots of the world as the King Machinegun. The armorers, who usually live well to the rear, theorize that the 50 is too much for antipersonnel use and too little for use against armor. This is theoretically true, but the great advantage of the 50 is its ammunition supply. You can carry enough 50-caliber ammunition to stay in action for quite some time, but when you move up to a 20, 25 or 30mm automatic cannon you find that you run out pretty fast, especially on full auto. You also discover that replenishing the ammunition of these light machine cannon can be a frustrating task. With the Bradley, for example, you pretty much have to call off the war in order to re-load your vehicle with that 25mm fodder.

The 50 will not punch a hole in a modern tank, but it will raise amazing cane with a truck, or a parked airplane, or any sort of boat or improvised revetment. We have a friend who served two tours up on the north perimeter of I Corps in Viet Nam, and he claims that that quad-50 mounted on a half-track was essentially the modern equivalent of Thor's Lawnmower.

In the face of the increasing wave of oppression which is the mood in Washington, note that there are both municipalities and counties in the south and in the west which are turning to armament ordnances, which require citizens to be armed, to increase the security of their streets. The newest county we learn of in this regard is Catron County, New Mexico.

This from the *Wall Street Journal*:

"But even better equipment can't seem to solve the department's more basic shortcomings. In the late 1980s the police began to phase in new 9mm service pistols. Within a short time, it became evident that such weaponry was beyond the grasp of many cops. Between early 1989 and late 1992, more than one out of every seven shots fired by Washington police officers was fired accidentally."

More all the time it seems evident that the large caliber revolver should be the primary sidearm of the police.

Tanya Metaksa, the new head of the Institute of Legislative Action for the NRA, puts it very well when she says,

"Mr. Magaw (Director of US BATF) is typical of a Clinton administration that doesn't know the law, doesn't know how to deal with violent criminals, doesn't understand firearms and doesn't give straight answers to the American people."

It appears that the 1903 Springfield is becoming increasingly hard to find. Let us not let this situation get out of hand. There should be an 03 in every well-ordered household, either for field use or as a basis for "sporterizing."

Likewise, since our current masters in Washington seem intent on trashing the M1, every well-ordered household should be with one of those also.

In that connection I notice that the unfortunate Haitians seem intent upon repelling borders with M1s. The photo was in the press. If the United States deems it necessary to invade the island, our forces will naturally be equipped with all the most modern and sophisticated support weapons, against which the poor old Haitians will be practically helpless. But when it comes to the individual arm carried by the individual soldier, a man with an M1 is two and a half laps ahead of a man with an M16.

"Our politicians continue to promise more uniformed reinforcement. What we get in Tampa are the loveliest young women one would ever hope to see across the dinner table. They are not what one would hope to see when calling for help dealing with a 6' 3" 250-pound prison-physique on the rampage. These gendarmettes are gorgeous but mostly useless. Then again, many cops are useless, and not so pleasant to look at."

Ron Bales

Family member Randy Umbs has found the good life in up in northern Wisconsin. Among the many other amenities of his new situation, he has discovered the sport of logging competition. I was fascinated to hear of the machination of the gamesmen in this activity. Now it appears we have chain saws which are useful for nothing except competition. They sport snowmobile engines, 30-inch bars and can only be hefted by weight lifters. Randy tells me that these devices can cut through a 30-inch log 3 times in 5 seconds. (That's what he said - 30 inches, 3 times, 5 seconds.) So now we have the "competition chain saw." Heavens to Elizabeth!

Our continued African studies in depth turn up all sorts of interesting information. For example, the Zulus at Isandhlwana had very few rifles, but they wiped out the British force largely with spears. In the aftermath of that disaster, the Zulus acquired a great many rifles left on the field. They grabbed these up eagerly and used them in the subsequent fights at Kambula and Ulundi, in which they were totally overwhelmed by British musketry. Moral: It is not enough to snatch up an advanced piece of equipment. You must also know how to use it.

Going further into those actions we discovered, somewhat to our surprise, that the Zulus used a large number of rifles at Rorke's Drift, without much success, but that the British officers used large-bore 6-shot revolvers to greater effect than their troops achieved with the single-shot Martini-Henry. A large-capacity handgun really comes into its own when you are faced with the problem of repelling boarders at short range. That, however, is certainly a specialized task.

Ernie Pfaff recently told us that he was quite impressed with a group of law enforcement people with whom he formed contact and had joined in shooting. I expressed some surprise at this because law enforcement groups, in general, do not shoot well. Ernie got back to me later with the statement that he had found out in passing that practically all of the group he was talking about were Orange Gunsite graduates.

A *family member* recently reported a case in Texas in which two police officers expended 60 rounds on one felon to obtain two hits, one in the hand and one in the leg. Obviously Spray-and-Pray is the order of the day. It seems to me that these gross failures cannot be due to bad marksmanship. Certainly any miss is bad marksmanship, but failure to concentrate on the front sight, and failure to surprise yourself with the trigger-break, and failure to concentrate on the problem at hand to the exclusion of anything extraneous is a failure of mental conditioning. Now mental conditioning cannot be successfully achieved without the confidence imparted by a reasonable degree of basic marksmanship. Your mind-set cannot be right unless you know you can hit, but hitting your adversary in a vital spot across the room is simply not very hard, unless you count on rapid volume of fire rather than concentration on your shooting to achieve hits.

While we are satisfied that the intermediate-eye-relief (IER) telescope sight is a vast improvement on any general purpose rifle, we must admit that it is no appreciable help in slow fire. In shooting from a *hochsitz*, or hunting mountain sheep, or hunting antelope on the plains, the snapshot is simply not involved. To disregard the snapshot, however, is to neglect one's repertoire. I have seen the snapshot used with splendid effect five times in the field, and snapshotting with a short-eye-relief telescope is unnecessarily difficult. For this reason the Scout Rifle, which is emphatically a general purpose rifle, must normally carry an IER glass.

And while on that subject bear in mind that the Ching Sling is essential to the Scout concept, and it should be made of leather or very heavy-bodied plastic. Flimsy nylon webbing will not do.

In perusing the offerings in the new *Gun Digest* catalog, I was impressed by the extraordinary diversity afforded in weapon type, weight, class and price. At one end of the scale you may now acquire a Century Enfield Sporter No. 4 for \$156.00, and this ought to be a truly outstanding utility gun. At the other end, Heym will build you a magazine rifle in caliber 600 Nitro Express for a mere \$11,500.00. In the middle ranges, you can obtain a very nicely made conventional bolt-action rifle (without sights) for between \$2,000 and \$3,000. On the other hand, you cannot obtain a properly setup Scout Rifle at any price, though Parker Hale advertises one (which does not measure up) for about \$500.00.

I suppose there is no point in talking to the *family* or the readers of this Commentary about rifles available for sale, since you people already have your rifles – like the ladies of Boston who already have their hats.

"Your comments on the M99 in 250 Savage brought back memories. When I was a kid we frequently vacationed at a camp in upstate New York. The owner had an M99 in 250 and a

freezer full of venison. Each one was a one-shot kill. It was fitted with a two and a half power scope of ancient construction and was well worn and lovingly cared for. It had never failed him! Wish I had it! Still can't figure out what all the current fuss over high velocity is all about. If you can't do it at 2,700fps you just plain can't do it."

John Schaefer

It is a truism that one does well what he enjoys doing, and going back over some writings of the young Hemingway we discover his insistence that one kills well only if he enjoys killing. Hemingway was speaking of bull fighting, but the idea may be extended beyond that. David is said to be the greatest killer amongst the ancient Jews – shall we assume he enjoyed his work? Both Sulla and Julius Caesar seemed to have enjoyed it, and coming down to modern times we can discover from his writings that Wade Hampton evidently did, as well as Stonewall Jackson and Nathan Forrest. Grant, on the other hand, evidently did not, but to be an effective soldier one does not have to be a recreational killer.

I once spent a couple of weeks in a hospital bed adjoining that of a Marine officer of distinguished record who told me, in confidence, that what he enjoyed more than anything else was killing Japs. This attitude may be improper in today's diminished society, but the gentleman concerned is now dead and his reputation is safe.

Hemingway goes on to explain this by saying that the act of killing may or may not be difficult in itself (as it is for bird shooting or aerial combat,) but is somehow a howl of defiance – defiance of man's inevitable end. In this sense, to kill is to spit in the face of death, paradoxical as that may sound to some. I think the matter is worth study – though do not tell anybody I said so.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 11

1 September 1993

National Condition Orange, 1994

These are indeed the times that try men's souls! A majority of both houses of Congress has levied upon the citizens of the United States a ridiculous piece of legislation for the sole reason of appeasing an electorate which is deemed to be incapable of sound political judgment. The Clinton "Crime Bill" is not aimed at crime – the matter a majority of citizens hold to be of utmost importance – it does not even pretend to be aimed at crime. It is a grotesque piece of catastrophically expensive social legislation attempting to persuade the unthinking that Congress has "done something" about crime. Crime is a moral matter and cannot be fought by throwing money at it. The essential element of democracy is public virtue. If that is not present, democracy fails, as indeed it seems to have done.

Every member of Congress who voted for the Clinton "Crime Bill" has cause to be bitterly ashamed of his hypocrisy. It is up to the electorate to throw the rascals out, and we have the chance coming up in November. Let us make it an event to be known historically as The November Revolution, and take the power out of the hands of those who despise us by replacing them with candidates who are aware of the reality of public sentiment in this country. Arizona's Congressman Bob Stump was told by the "Washington Establishment" that if he dared to vote against the "Crime Bill," his constituents would reject him in November. He voted against it, and upon his return to his state, his office received just six phone calls condemning him for this and about 700 congratulating him upon it. Behold the mainstream!

"The principal function of computers is to make life impossible without them."

J. Dalrymple

George Mason, one of our distinguished Founding Fathers, put it very clearly when he said that the militia is constituted of all the people, except for a few public servants. Since the current weapon of personal choice for the armed forces of the United States is the M16, is it not the duty of all the people to own, operate and understand this piece? It would seem so. If this particular weapon is termed by various people as an "assault rifle" it is now forbidden to "all the people." This poses a critical philosophical confrontation in American public life at this time.

Our enemies are whooping like hyenas over what they claim to be the corpse of the American shooting public, as represented by the National Rifle Association. As might be expected from such people, they have whooped too soon. The NRA is embattled, as it has been since I first joined back in my adolescence. We win some and we lose some, but we never give up the fight to secure the blessings of liberty upon ourselves and our posterity – as it is put in the Preamble to the Constitution.

In Arizona the new concealed carry law is now in effect, providing for the issuance of permits to those citizens who are considered qualified. While there are various things wrong with this law, in my opinion, it is certainly a step forward except for those who feel that any sort of firearms license is an illegal infringement upon personal liberty. A curious characteristic of the law is the requirement of the exposure of the applicant to 16 hours of qualified instruction. (Why 16? Nobody seems to have asked that question. It is quite evident that

mere exposure to a training program has no bearing upon subsequent competence. We know of people who have sat through many years of instruction in college English and who cannot write a coherent sentence.) The issue, of course, is that there are not enough people to conduct proper instruction, and the state has had to improvise all sorts of ways of judging an instructor as "qualified." The upshot is that the qualification program is no more than window dressing, but that is not a serious matter. The object is that every man be armed, as Jefferson put it, and this is a step in that direction. By the time all these permits are issued, violent criminals will have no way of knowing whether their prospective victims are armed or not, and this may indeed have some effect in the deterrence of violent crime.

In the Middle Ages it was customary to rule that only the good guys could be armed and the bad guys could not. This did not work, for obvious reasons, but today we have reached a stage where, in general, the good guys are unarmed, while only the criminals are armed. This situation is equally intolerable. So now the answer may be to insure that everybody is armed, since it may be assumed that there are a great deal many more good guys than bad guys, the criminals will be heavily outnumbered, and that just may be the answer we are looking for. We thus proceed toward a "polite society."

It has been reported to us that stainless steel, now so popular in the manufacture of personal arms, will not pick up a magnet. It seems to us that this depends upon how much of the stainless is ferrous and how much is not. The only stainless piece we have in our possession is the Smith & Wesson M60, and it does pick up a magnet. You might check this matter out for yourself.

According to the Consolidated Crime Report of the FBI for the year of 1992 (the most recent complete compilation) only one-fourth of the murders committed in this country were committed with firearms of any type, and less than 1 percent were committed with rifles, yet Clinton's triumph specifies the "assault rifle" as the root of all evil. Of course Bill has allies. Here is Senator Metzenbaum of Ohio in the Constitution Subcommittee of February 10, 1989,

"No, we are not looking at how to control criminals, we are talking about banning the AK47 and semi-automatic guns!"

They cannot make it much clearer than that. Crime is not the issue at all. Your personal weapon is.

It should be noted by those seeking to acquire a proper street rifle that the Marlin offerings afford a better base for the installation of a ghost-ring than the Winchesters. A good ghost-ring rear sight for this job is that found on the M1 US Carbine. For those who prefer Winchesters, I see that Marble has now re-introduced its Number Two tang sight, which is a very good step. This new Marble sight has no provision for deflection adjustment. However, adjustment may be achieved either by lateral displacement of the front sight or by shimming the base of the tang sight.

I am informed by Mark Harris of Wolfe Publications that the three-volume boxed set of the works of Deneys Reitz is being packaged and on the way. I say again that people in search of a role model, and especially parents in search of a role model for their sons, can do no better than to explore the distinguished career of this distinguished man as an example of how life should be lived.

We note that the new Winchester "Supreme" ammunition, previously known as "Black Talon" (and still so labeled on the box), is fitted with a very complex projectile intended for controlled expansion on heavy game. This manifests admirable concern for terminal ballistic performance, which has not always been characteristic of the manufacturers of commercial ammunition. How it works in the field is not yet clear, and at first glance it could seem to be rather reluctant to expand at all, since its forward aperture is very small, and the entire front end of the bullet is made of a bronze alloy. So we must give it a chance in the field, and hope to get good reports from this year's hunting season, especially from elk and moose hunters. We note that the projectile is

very deeply seated in the case, and that consequently there will be a certain amount of jump into the forcing cone at takeoff. What effect this has on the ammunition's performance remains to be seen. We will keep you posted.

"Young people, in my limited view, should not spend their time acting furtive. They are not good at it, and it ruins their posture."

Wolfgang S. Hammersmith

Note that there is no gender separation in shooting. The popular tendency to have "ladies' classes" in competition is unsound. I am strongly against placing the female of the species in harm's way, but that certainly does not mean that if she picks up a firearm she is under any handicap in competition with the male of the species. It is widely held in training circles that women have a slight advantage over men in learning marksmanship, since they demonstrate a somewhat better attitude about taking instruction. Physical strength is not significant. Osa Johnson backed up her husband with a double 470, and she was a tiny little woman. There is no reason for recoil or blast to affect matters. My middle daughter, Parry, told me when she was seventeen and shooting very well indeed, that she did not flinch because whether she flinched or not she would still get bumped on the shoulder, and she would prefer to get a bump on the shoulder and a hit than to get a bump on the shoulder and a miss. (Parry, of course, was the girl who told me at one time, "Daddy, if I can see it, I can hit it," which should be the motto of every rifleman. I am simply not going to use the term "rifle person." As Churchill, master of the English language, once said, "Man" embraces "Woman," which is exactly as it should be.)

As a Director of the National Rifle Association I am honored to discover that the President of the United States considers our organization to be a wrench in the gears of progress. I can but wish that he would make that matter official by presenting the Board of Directors at the next meeting with a plaque to that effect. Personally I stand ready to receive the Medal of Freedom whenever he chooses to send it.

"A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy, always followed by a dictatorship."

"The average age of the world's greatest civilizations has been 200 years. These nations have progressed through this sequence:

- ◆ From bondage to spiritual faith
- ◆ From spiritual faith to great courage
- ◆ From courage to liberty
- ◆ From liberty to abundance
- ◆ From abundance to complacency
- ◆ From complacency to apathy
- ◆ From apathy to dependence
- ◆ From dependence back again into bondage."

Professor Alexander Tyler,
200 years ago while we were still a British Colony,
via Cas Gadomski

Hurry and phone in your reservations for the *Second Annual Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial* at Whittington Center in Raton, New Mexico (telephone: 505-445-3615). We are hoping to fill two buildings, and that will take sixty applicants. There is a trap shooting event being held at the same time (22,

23 October) and those people want space too. Be sure to identify yourself as a Gunsite *family member*.

Continually I hear reporters speak of persons or units as being "outgunned." I have said it before and I will say it again: *You are outgunned only if you miss!*

The federal ninjas seem to be building up their strength, and the black unmarked helicopters sneaked by Gunsite just today! Aircraft controllers tell us that these people regard themselves as above the law, and do not need clearance or authorization for any of their activities. This matter has to be explored, and I suggest that you actuate your legislators as soon as possible. We hear from a man who is in a position to know that one of the best uses for laser sights is the attack to the ground from a helicopter with a fully automatic rifle. Now who needs to know how to do this?

The oath of office reads,

"To support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies foreign and domestic."

The Branch Davidians at Waco may have been kooks, but they cannot be defined as enemies of the US Constitution, foreign or domestic – nor can Randy Weaver and his wife and child. On the other hand, federal agencies which act illegally and without justification to employ overwhelming lethal force against US citizens must indeed come up for consideration. As we all know, no action has been taken against the assault troops at Waco, though their surviving victims have been sent to prison. Janet Reno volunteered to accept all responsibility, but note that nothing has been done about that. As noted,

"These are the times that try men's souls."

I suppose there is a reason for these 40 caliber pistols. When promoting the Bren Ten, the purpose was increased power and effective range, but I have since discovered that excess power seems difficult to control for many people, and excess range is irrelevant to the pistol situation. Besides, the hot ten cartridge is no longer with us. We have the 45, which is generally a better round, so I see no need for the 40, except as a sales item.

I am interested to learn from a correspondent now on some sort of duty in Mugabestan that current rules in that country forbid the use of any cartridge smaller than 375 on kudu. I have no idea who came up with this ruling, but it does not seem sound to me. The kudu, while large, is not a "hard" animal. The 308 or 30-06 or 7x57 or 270 will all put the largest kudu down in his tracks, if the shot is well-placed. If the shot is not well-placed the 375 will do no better. Besides which, there are some sportsmen who are intimidated by the recoil and blast of a 375, and consequently are less likely to place their shot well than if they are using a 30-caliber. I am certainly not against the use of increased power in big game hunting, but long experience convinces me that proper placement combined with proper bullet design are decisively more important than cartridge power.

You don't need higher velocity. You don't need a bigger gun. What you need is full mastery of field marksmanship.

I note when looking at the gun magazines that my forthcoming work *"The Art of the Rifle"* is sorely overdue. I certainly do not presume to know all about rifle shooting, but I know a good deal, and since there is almost no place today where one can learn how to use a rifle properly a textbook is sorely needed, so I am getting on it. Henceforth two-days-a-week, except when I am traveling, will be devoted to this work.

A cougar was recently sighted at Gunsite, and we have issued a cougar alert to all joggers. A number of people do not seem to realize that it is in the nature of a predatory carnivore to pursue anything that runs. The fact that it is running away suggests that it may be good to eat. Some of the joggers we have seen on city streets do not look too appetizing, but they still should be aware of the problem.

And on the subject of sightings, son-in-law Bruce Heath recently ran onto a party of nine white goats (*Oreamnos americanus*) up on Torrey and Gray's Peak, some 70 miles west of Denver. We learn upon inquiry that these goats are resettled, but that does not detract from their attractiveness. A great deal of the four-footed game in Africa is resettled, and all of the four-footed game in New Zealand, as well as the elk of Arizona, and the whitetails of Montana. Bruce's current project is the surmounting of all of the 14,000-foot peaks in Colorado. If he keeps this up he may meet a good many more of those people.

Sales records suggest that the SKS seems to be obtaining the status of "weapon of choice" amongst the oppressed lower classes, who are strapped for cash. I would like to suggest that the newly available Enfield Mark 4, in 303 British, is a much better choice. Both of these pieces seem to be available for less than \$200, but the Enfield is a real gun, where the SKS is a sort of hybrid. Of course the Enfield is a bolt-action weapon, where the SKS is semi-automatic. Some people feel that a self-loader is just better in all respects. They are wrong, but they are entitled to their opinion.

You will note that Sara Brady now lists herself as "Chair" on publications coming from Handgun Control. Does that not suggest that she ought to be sat upon more often?

We note with some interest that a recent rape attempt in New York was foiled by a couple of youngsters who were playing "splatball." When the perpetrator knocked a girl jogger down it was noted by the participants, who proceeded to clobber him with yellow paint. This confused him sufficiently so that he abandoned his purpose. When apprehended by the police later, the perpetrator claimed that he knocked the girl down in order to find out if he knew her. The judge claimed that this was a viable reason and dismissed the prisoner with a slap on the wrist. Obviously the newly passed "Crime Bill" will take care of such matters for us.

"Anyone who claims that popular struggles are doomed to defeat by modern military technology must find it literally incredible that France and the United States suffered defeat in Vietnam; that the Shah no longer rules Iran; Somosa in Nicaragua; that Portugal was expelled from Angola and Mozambique; England from Palestine and Ireland; and France from Algeria."

Allan Goetlieb

I recently called to your attention the excellent book, "*Racism, Guilt and Self-Deceit*" by Gedahlia Braun. This work is so politically incorrect that the author has not yet found a publisher for it, so he has printed it up himself. When we showed it to a distinguished *family member* recently, he exclaimed, "Why this is what everybody already knows, but everybody is afraid to say!" It is available in binder form for \$20.00 from,

Jim Moriarity, 4030 Birchwood Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33478.

"Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women. When it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it."

Justice Learned Hand

Many years ago the esteemed Colonel Townsend Whelen declaimed that,

"Only accurate rifles are interesting"

and gave birth to the accuracy mystique which yet today bemuses a great many shooters, whether or not they can shoot well. I am frequently addressed by correspondents who ask me whether such-and-such a rifle, or such-and-such a pistol, is "accurate." My standard answer is,

"It is certainly more accurate than you can appreciate."

The rifle will invariably do its job, if you do yours.

Those of you who read Tolkien will recognize the current American scenario. The Nazgul are abroad – the ringwraiths – the Black Riders. It is time to prepare.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 12

27 September 1994

Summer's End, 1994

If we can put aside for a moment the disgusting state of the nation and modern social developments in general, we may dwell with pleasure upon the approach of Autumn – the finest season of the year. This summer just past shorted us on the corn season, which was both late and brief, and while our fresh garden tomatoes are delicious, they have not been with us for long, and we cannot expect them much longer. However, the turning of the temperature is a delight, and here at Gunsite it is now a wonderful time to step outside. restricted though we are by present legal circumstances.

The next few months promise to be extremely busy, and we hope for many good things – especially, of course, the November Revolution. It is up to us to throw the rascals out, and we must work on this with all the energy we can spare.

Though we have never been attracted to the 9mm Parabellum cartridge, we are much impressed at the new CP1 pistol from Littleton in South Africa. This is a true pocket pistol, 7 inches long, 5 inches high and weighing just over 24oz. It has a delayed blow-back action, carries a 12-round magazine, and is of a particularly sleek modern design. I will have to use it more before I draw any firm conclusions, but right now it appears to be a great step forward.

Family member and full-time California cop Gabriel Suarez, who is gradually working up to his Ace Rating in police actions, contributes the following:

"Gun control is a band-aid, feeling good approach to the nation's crime problem. It is easier for politicians to ban something than it is to condemn a murderer to death or a robber to life in prison. In essence, 'gun control' is the coward's way out."

"Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is always a vice."

Thomas Paine

I hope it is not necessary for me to remind the faithful once again of the forthcoming *Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, to be held at the NRA Whittington Center in New Mexico on 21, 22, 23 October. We are now promised that Paul Kirchner will contribute a new original verse, that Finn Aagaard will give us "The Ballad of Bo Da Thone" by Kipling, and that Marti Tueller may be prevailed upon to give us once again "The Female of the Species." (I am thinking of "The Ballad of East and West," but there is so much excellent stuff around that I may not even get a chance to get the floor.) When you call for your reservation, remember to identify yourself as part of the Gunsite Group.

We tested a batch of the new Winchester "Black Talon" rifle ammunition in caliber 30-06 (our test sample was pretty small, at \$1.50 a shot). Its accuracy (two different shooters using two different guns) was acceptable, but not outstanding. The black finish on the bullet leaves a startlingly clean bore at first glance, but shows a good deal of residue upon soaking. Bullet performance in target is impossible to determine

without extensive field testing, but even if it is particularly good, I do not see how it can justify its price. You can build superbly accurate ammunition, with proven bullet performance, for half the tariff.

We were asked by *family member* Dr. Lloyd Pond if the new 3-volume set of Deneys Reitz (pronounced to rhyme with "nice rates") would be suitable inspiration for a 12-year-old. We had to respond that this is entirely a matter of which 12-year-old. Some people at that age are quite mature, but others go around in long baggy shorts with their shirt tails out and their hats on backwards. Incidentally, the books are now in stock at:

Wolfe Publishing Co. 6471 Air Park Dr., Prescott, AZ 86301, 602-445-7810.

We note that in the proposed oath for the United Nations Supernational Armed Forces, the oath-taker is required to refer to himself as a "fighting person." This term is unacceptable, along with "person hole," "post person," and "hunts person." The emasculation of man appears to be the aim of "political rectitude" and no one with any intellectual self-respect will have anything to do with it.

Did you note that the Brady Bill was declared unconstitutional in May in Montana, and in June in Texas – both by US district courts? (We may now add Arizona and Vermont.) Did you further note how the media did not notice this?

I am amused at some of the criticism of the Scout Rifle concept appearing in the gun magazines, especially since true Scout Rifles are so rare as to be very difficult to obtain for testing. You really have to use a Scout in the field to appreciate it, but we probably should not encourage this sort of thing until such time as a true production Scout may be offered for sale. As of now what I read seems to be criticism for its own sake, which is not at all necessary since nobody has to buy one.

New motto for *the Biliary Administration*.

"I can lick any kid in the block, as long as he is under six years old."

From what I have been able to observe at IPSC matches, the rooney guns are conspicuously slow off the mark, though they pick up speed after the shooting gets under way. This, of course, is a failure of concept in which the courses of fire reward a great number of shots instead of speed to the first hit. Limiting shooters to one shot per whistle would seem unrealistic, but one well-placed hit should be enough, if it lands first. Obviously course design remains the primary challenge of the international organization, and it is unlikely to be improved by people who do not understand the purpose of the exercise. Accordingly, the President of IPSC has appointed a committee to meet at Las Vegas in connection with the Safari Club convention to see if we cannot get a satisfactory agreement on the direction practical rifle competition should take. There are serious differences of opinion about this, and as always the gamesmen have a strong say. The best example of a practical rifle contest now in effect, in my opinion, is the *Keneyathlon* of David Kahn, held annually at the Whittington Center in New Mexico. We plan to run a sort of capsule preview of this event again at the reunion, but I doubt if any international delegates will be present to get the message. As in all things political, we tighten our belts, keep our powder dry, and hope for the best.

A recent fracas on the freeway near Holbrook, Arizona, brings one to wonder about the whole evolutionary process. It seems that a motorhome was observed by the police driving erratically on the highway. When the cops came up along side, the female passenger was seen to produce a pistol and shoot at the driver, mostly missing him. Whereupon the vehicle veered off the road and crashed. The cops collared both parties and hauled them off for medical attention and interrogation. As you might suppose, both narcotics and alcohol were involved.

The "greens" continue on their loopy course with increased velocity. As usual they object to any sort of outdoor sport which may give anybody any pleasure, but they have zeroed in on the "catch-and-release" program on the belief that to catch a fish and then turn him loose disturbs him psychologically. (Honest to God!) These people have now gone so far as to harass and attack fishing contests in both England and on the continent of Europe. Clearly the welfare state has succeeded beyond wildest expectations, now that people simply have nothing productive to do.

"I never wonder to see men wicked, but I often wonder to see them not ashamed."

Jonathan Swift, via Eric Ching

I recently ran into an Israeli citizen at our local post office, and in conversation he revealed that, while his sister had an intense desire to visit the United States, he strongly advised her against it. He pointed out that the street scene in America is simply too hazardous for an innocent female brought up in the civilized Near East.

Randy Garrett, the custom ammunition maker of Chehalis, Washington, has really been hard at work on the 45–70 cartridge, as well as upon the various super hot loads for the heavy pistols. He is now featuring a 415 grain hard cast lead bullet for this cartridge that shows greater penetration than almost anything you can name, including the 375. When you remember that dangerous game is shot at short range, it begins to appear that we have been overlooking the best brown–bear cartridge for over a hundred years. If you have not obtained your Marlin 45–70 yet (or your new Winchester Replica 86 from Browning) you better get on that before the BATF discovers that the 45–70 is a "destructive device."

Have you noticed that in all these miserable murders the victim is almost invariably unarmed? It would seem yet again that you cannot be victimized unless you choose to be a victim.

On the sideboard in our living room at Gunsite rests a presentation version of the mighty M1, deemed by George Patton, among others, to be the finest individual fighting tool ever created. It is fully operational, and now according to the precepts of the Clinton Crime Bill, it is outlawed because its magazine contains more than five rounds and (horror of horrors) it mounts a bayonet lug under the muzzle! Any politician who voted for that ridiculous bill voted to trash the M1. That is not only idiocy, but sacrilege, and any man who acted to support that foolishness should be removed from office and sent to a re–education camp.

Clearly Americans come in various species today, and there do not seem to be any grounds for intellectual agreement among them.

"Give me some men who are stout–hearted men who will fight for the rights they adore."

"Start me with ten who are stout–hearted men and I'll soon give you ten thousand more."

That is Victor Herbert in "*Naughty Marrieta*." Pretty subversive, hey?

When I used to teach American history, my standard texts, in addition to the Constitution and the Declaration, were the *Federalist Papers* of Madison, Hamilton and Jay, and "*Democracy in America*" by Alexis de Tocqueville. This Frenchman, who had close acquaintance with the horrors of the French Revolution, studied the American form of government at great length and wrote possibly the best analysis of it seen so far. As an outsider, and in no sense a politician, he could be objective, but that is not easy in such matters. He is well worth reading in entirety, but note here the following paragraph:

"It must not be forgotten that it is especially dangerous to enslave me in the minor details of life. I should be inclined to think freedom less necessary in great things than in little ones, if it were possible to secure one without possessing the other. Subjection in minor affairs breaks out everyday and is felt by the whole community indiscriminately. It does not drive men to resistance, but it crosses them at every turn until they are led to surrender the exercise of their own will and soon become incapable of exercising the great and only privilege which remains to them. The rights of private persons among democratic nations are commonly of small importance. The consequences are that they are often sacrificed without regret and almost always violated without remorse."

The subjection to which the American citizen is now exposed every day of his life is so great that the whole idea of liberty ("That which does not injure one's neighbor") is almost totally lost. The greatest of despots, Louis XIV, never told his subjects what they could or could not eat and drink, and he never told them how to conduct their private lives. He drafted no armies, and his guardsmen did not go about brandishing handcuffs.

(This handcuffery has got completely out of control. Only recently a female attorney in Florida was forcefully shackled by bailiffs because she wore shorts into a court room. Let us not argue that this is "policy." If it is, that policy must be changed.)

Better an ounce of wisdom than a pound of knowledge.

The Guru

I have located a Balvar Fixed Four telescope with no internal adjustments, together with the discontinued B&L mounting system for which it was designed. I am not going to let it get away, but if you have a sincere need of such equipment and full understanding thereof, let me know.

Note that the distinguished General Denis Earp, Regional Director for IPSC South Africa, is a one-rifle man. His one rifle is a 458, and he uses it for everything from guinea fowl to rhinoceros. Remember the old adage, "Beware of the man with one gun. He probably can use it."

I am sure you all have noticed the way the media kept on talking about how inferior the Haitian defense force must be, and insisting in every single announcement that the rifles issued to the Haitians are decrepit leftovers from World War II. It is certainly true that the Haitians do not have much of an army, but when it comes to individual armament they have better rifles than we do. Ask anyone who has used both of them.

We are informed by Mike Ballew from the Whittington Shooting Center that there is still room for people to reserve accommodations for the *Second Annual Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial* on 21, 22, 23 October. Barry Miller, our man in South Africa, plans to attend and can thus bring everybody up to the situation there straight from the horse's mouth. There will be rifle, pistol and shotgun events, but remember, nothing is obligatory. We would like you to recite, but we certainly do not insist. This is for fun and we would all like to enjoy the occasion free from pressure.

We have two new bear incidents to report in the last couple weeks, one from Alaska and one from Montana. In view of this, we would like to reiterate the five *Gunsite Bear Rules* for anyone who may not know them.

- Be alert.
- Do not regard bears as cuddly. They are large, strong, dangerous animals, and upon occasion they can be very fierce.
- Never enter bear country without a powerful weapon and the skill to use it well.
- Do not pitch your camp on a bear run.

- Be alert.

New bumper sticker from Curt Rich in Texas:

"The reason I am smiling is because I haven't any idea of what's going on."

Up in Colorado recently we acquired a pungent suggestion from a *family member* who must remain nameless because he is a federal agent. It goes thus: Relatively few people have any idea of what their rights are when it comes to discussing official matters with officials. You are not required to say anything when questioned by a government official in the line of duty. This is particularly true of federal agents. The local law enforcement establishment is frequently composed of good citizens, but the feds are another matter. They are not on your side and most of the time they are acting unconstitutionally – without accountability to anyone. These feds who have been shooting up citizens and trashing up private property have no fear of being held responsible for their transgressions. Note that none of the ninja involved at Waco or Idaho have been charged, fired, or even reprimanded!

It remains the case, however, that law enforcement establishment can get nowhere without the cooperation of the citizens, and this is true whether the agents are federal or local. If the citizenry just clams up, the system breaks down. I never thought I would live to see the day when I would take a position such as this, but the increasing arrogance and impertinence of *Big Brother* has made life entirely different from what it was in the recent past. George Orwell wrote his terrifying prediction about the future of society and called it "1984." It had not come true in 1984, but in 1994 it is almost upon us.

I was recently shown the new shotgun sight from MMC, formerly of Deming, New Mexico, but now located in Fort Worth. This one seems to do the job. It is optically sound, reliably adjustable and very strong. (Don't leave home without it!)

Family member Dan Dennehy informs us when Clinton heard that there were one hundred thousand cattle guards in Colorado he ordered half of them fired because he has been annoyed by the attitude of the ranchers in that state toward his policies. Before the order could be implemented, however, Pat Schroeder stepped in and insisted that those to be fired be given six months retraining – at the public expense, naturally.

The Countess and I were somewhat flabbergasted to receive our new Arizona Concealed Carry Permits. Considering the procedures involved and the caseload, I had not expected any action before 1995. So now we are legal, though in fact the limitations of the license are such as to render it difficult to obey. Specifically, whether or not one has a license, he cannot wear his piece into a restaurant where wine may be had with dinner, or any other place where the proprietor puts up a negative sign (this includes the Mayo Clinic in Scottsdale.)

I guess the situation is better than before, but its effect upon our previous lifestyle here in Arizona will be almost nil. The speed of administration, however, remains remarkable.

In DC this coming week I hope to examine the Vince Foster situation in more depth than the media will allow. Whatever happened to this man, the official version of his death is absolutely untenable.

Question:

Why do Estonians keep irrigating their flower gardens with oil?

Answer:

To keep their guns from rusting.

This from the *American Rifleman*.

Regarding Haiti, today's headline in the *Arizona Republic* reads as follows:

"Emboldened civilians raid, ransack and loot."

Egad, Sir, these civilians have always been a problem, and when they become emboldened, what hope to save the crown? Governments essentially fear people they cannot intimidate, and when "civilians" become "emboldened" the government shakes in its boots. May it always be so!

At the conclusion of a pistol session we conducted up in Denver recently, the victor in the shootoff was using a Smith and Wesson "double-cruncher" (this is an oxymoronic double-action-only pistol) – a very difficult piece to use well. This proves again the axiom that it is the man rather than the weapon which wins the day. As we often said, a first rate man with a third rate weapon is decisively better than if conditions are reversed.

I was recently asked by Rick Jameson of Shooting Times, what was my favorite shooting sport, what was my favorite cartridge, and what was my favorite load? He wanted one-shot answers, which were, of course, impossible to produce. The grandest shooting sports I can call to mind are the hunting of the great mountain sheep, and the hunting of the black African buffalo. They are not at all alike, and it is impossible to place one ahead of the other. The question may be settled for me, of course, since at my age there is no question of climbing the crags after the great rams, but I can still hunt the buffalo, since he lives essentially in flat country. That does not mean, however, that I favor the bull over the ram.

(I have never been on a deep south back country quail hunt, and I am assured by various people of discrimination that this is the finest of all shooting sports. Since I have never been there, I have no opinion.)

As to my favorite cartridge, this is like asking about a favorite wine, a favorite painting, a favorite song, or a favorite dish. Under torture I would have to say the 30-06, but that would leave all pistol cartridges out, and I would not choose the 06 for buffalo if I had any choice. Also the 308 must get in there somewhere as a more compact, slightly junior version of the "30 US" As to favorite load, this spreads matters still more thinly. I can recommend many good loads for both rifles and pistols, but I certainly cannot pick out a favorite.

I hope Rick can expand his questionnaire into a larger sphere of operations, as these one-shot answers simply do not cover the subject.

It will come as no surprise to any of you who follow the current scene that the silliness indicators, as of this date, are up a whopping 40 points, and we still have three months to go in 1994.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 13

27 October 1994

Hunting Season, 1994

The *Second Annual Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*, held at the NRA Whittington Center in northeast New Mexico last week, was a splendid occasion. It was attended by an imposing selection of the faithful, and while those who missed it missed a good deal, we could not have handled many more than those who came. We had three days of shooting and two nights of recitation, and everyone was able to enjoy every activity he chose. We had forty-four participants, and sixty would have overstressed the facilities in the time allotted.

Dennis Tueller supervised the pistol shooting until he was called away by an emergency, whereupon he was spelled by Rich Wyatt, who saw to it that everybody had a marvelous time. John Gannaway and I supervised the rifle preliminaries, and David Kahn ran an abbreviated version of the *Keneyathlon*. By moving our timing around it was possible for John to give everyone as much sporting clay shotgunning as possible, and he and I set up and ran the aerial rifle shooting event, which is always a delight.

It is interesting to compare trap shooting with aerial rifle shooting. A good trap shot expects to hit over ninety-five out of a hundred birds, which means that any miss is a great agony. On the other hand, when one attempts ten clays with a rifle, the hits are positively exhilarating and misses are not depressing. It is possible to opine that hitting a flying clay with a rifle is an unrealistic exercise, but learning to mount instantaneously so that the sights are on when the bird is horizontal is a most useful skill. Snap shots are not common in the field, but knowing one can handle them is immensely satisfying.

The evening recitations were absolutely inspiring. I do not know how long we can keep this up, but we have tried it now three times (including the first session at the Sconce Armory), and every time all hands came away floating six inches off the ground. It is most appropriate that we dedicate this event to Theodore Roosevelt. I feel sure he would have enjoyed attendance just as much as we all did.

All the recitations were appreciated, and special note should be taken of the original works prepared for the occasion by Paul Kirchner, Mike Taylor, and Lindy Wisdom.

We have already scheduled for next year, and if we can maintain our forward motion at the polls next month our third reunion will be the most joyful of the three. Whittington is hard to get to, which may be a great asset. If it were easy of access, the crowds would be unmanageable.

We hope to see you all again next year.

Dan Dennehy informed us at Raton that he finally had to "put down" his long-time friend and companion Martin Luther King. We all sympathize with Dan in his sorrow.

Family member Cas Gadomski from Alaska reports the use of Black Talon pistol ammunition on a large and belligerent dog. One round worked just fine. Doctor Martin Fackler is a great believer in the Black Talon pistol round. One dog does not prove much, but it may serve to bolster Doctor Fackler's opinion.

Recently in Washington I was impressed by the length to which people have gone to work up the M16 into a target rifle. The fact that the M16 (and its brother, the AR15) is now illegal does not seem to discourage the gadgeteers. Replacement barrels and replacement sights have come a long way, and that miserable trigger that comes with the gun is now replaceable with something very good indeed. I was treated to much discussion about the accuracy potential of the "poodle-shooter" when it was properly modified and specially loaded. I found this most interesting in comparison to the current state of the art with go-carts. The motor racing fraternity has now developed the go-cart into a pretty ferocious machine that handles like a feather, goes like a shot, and also serves to kill a number of aspiring boy racers. It is an impressive machine, but it is still a go-cart. These new glorified M16s are both impressive and expensive, but they are still "poodle-shooters."

"One of these days the talking will be over and the citizenry of the United States will decide whether or not to remain free."

Dan W. Shoemaker

I was mistaken in a previous issue when I mentioned that the M1 rifle had been banned by the new "crime" legislation. It is the M14 which is banned, rather than the M1, because the M14 has a detachable magazine and the M1 does not. None of this makes any sense, of course, because criminals do not use either M14s or M1s, but there never has been any point in trying to make sense with a hoplophobe. His mind is made up and he does not wish to be confused with the facts.

I also erred in my introduction to the Deneys Reitz trilogy, now available for sale from Wolfe Publishing. I said the young man was issued a G98 Mauser by the Commandant General. That was, of course, a G96 Mauser.

Shucks!

I note a recent tendency on the part of the unenlightened to hold forth about how difficult it was to shoot the Thompson "sub-machine-gun." After all it was of major caliber and it was fully automatic. We hear people reporting that it took a man of great weight and muscle to hold that muzzle down when firing a hot burst.

As the Thompson fades into the past I would like to point out briefly that firing that piece on full automatic was difficult only if you did not know how to do it. It is a heavy gun, and when one applies some 11lbs of vertical pressure with his supporting arm the piece suddenly unweights itself partially on firing, and the shooter tends to raise the muzzle and continue to raise it with each successive shot. This results in alarming muzzle climb and suggests to the shooter that the recoil is insupportable. In actuality, all one needed to do was to reduce the upward pressure in the left arm upon firing, allowing the piece to "ride on its recoil." This is easy, once you know the trick, and, in fact, it is so easy that one can learn to fire the piece one-handed without the supporting stock in one easy lesson. I guess this information should be filed away amongst the arcana of the middle nineteen-hundreds.

This from an FBI agent who must obviously remain anonymous:

"I wasn't surprised when I heard that Horiuchi had killed Mrs. Weaver. We were in the same class at Quantico. The man was a robot. He would do anything to please his superiors."

Well, Horiuchi is still at large. One wonders how much he pleased his superiors.

One reader wrote in to scold me for printing Jack Buchmiller's opinion that if Nicole Simpson had been to Gunsite she would be now a wealthy widow. This correspondent maintains that the implication is that Simpson is guilty. Well, yes, that is the implication, but neither Jack nor I constitute a court, nor will we sit

upon the jury. According to English Common Law, the accused is innocent until proven guilty, but law is not necessarily justice, nor is justice necessarily legal.

We hear from people who should know that that thick piece of glass that was placed in front of Aristide upon his inauguration cost the taxpayers 25 thousand dollars. Almost one could not see through it, but it was claimed to be able to stop a 30-06. It takes a lot to stop a 30-06, and the disaffected Haitian remnants specialize in the 30-06 – you saw them on camera packing those M1s. A good friend and correspondent in Central America holds that, while no angel, Cedras was a considerable improvement over Aristide. One wonders how long the little fellow will last.

"Corruptissima republica plurimae leges."

Tacitus, *Annals III 27*, via Mark Moritz

(The more corrupt the state, the more numerous the laws.)

Family member Ty Miller, who lives on Kenai, reports that he has plenty of white goats for the hunting up there. The Rocky Mountain Goat (*Oreamnos americanus*) may not be much of a trophy for your wall, but hunting him is one of the great thrills, as ordinarily you have to follow him up into his cliffs and crags, hanging on with your fingernails. Those of you who wish to turn up the wick in your hunting experiences should consider these Kenai goats.

Whenever we can stop cursing, we may come to realize that the ridiculous "crime bill" of the Clinton Administration may actually turn out to help our side, in that it reveals the total foolishness of our elected representatives, and has provoked a surprising amount of annoyance amongst the people at large. Any public representative who voted for that bill has been established as unworthy of the people's trust, and he has additionally encroached upon the rights and privileges of the American citizen. This gravels a great many people more than is understood within the beltway. Let us hope we are seeing the first squeezings of the grapes of wrath

It appears I have involved myself in an awkward conflict of dates due to the shifting of the winter meeting of the NRA to the first weekend in February. This is the date of the SCI meeting in Las Vegas. I do not ordinarily attend Safari Club meetings, but this time I am committed by previous promises to our great good friends the van Graans from South Africa, who are operating a booth which we are to man. It is, of course, dereliction of duty to miss a meeting of a board of which one is a member, but some of us have schedules that are laid on as much as a year in advance, and when one gives one a promise, that is binding. Be that as it may, mea culpa.

I am informed that the police force of the District of Columbia has now traded in 6,000 old Glocks for 6,000 new Glocks. Charming! The reason given was that they saw a chance to turn in "old guns" for "new guns." Is not the new always better than the old? Personally I cannot see what the DC police need with firearms. They cannot do anything about the homicidal streets with them or without them, and their accident rate indicates that a good many of them cannot master any mechanism more complicated than a night stick.

Since we are informed that these black ninja helicopters do not in fact exist, we may infer that if you shoot one down it does not count.

Though I tried, I could unearth nothing about the Vince Foster death that I did not already know. Since this case was immediately covered up by the White House, it is now unlikely that anyone will ever know for sure just how this man met his death. The official account is quite unbelievable, for perhaps a dozen reasons, but

that is the account that will go down in the record and will probably turn up in the history books.

The result of this is that anyone is at liberty to make up his own story about this case, and even faint possibility will be more impressive than what we have been permitted to know.

As seems more apparent with every passing month, justice in this country is indeed "a respecter of persons."

We understand that Charlton Heston, speaking as the voice of God, says that he sent the Clintons to the people of the United States as punishment for their sins. It is, therefore, up to us to repent at the polls.

It seems time to bring this one around again:

"A clip is not a magazine,
A mag is not a clip,
And neither is a grip a stock,
And "stock" does not mean grip.
I do not mean to nitpick,
But improvement would be seen,
If we could bring ourselves to say
Exactly what we mean."

Also – to "decimate" means to reduce by exactly 10% (decimals and all that). It does not mean to "devastate."

It appears that I will be teaching the rifle at Whittington sometime in the early Spring of '95. Anyone interested should contact:

Rich Wyatt 3430 Wright St., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033. Telephone 303-232-0542.

While I was back in Washington I got into a big session concerning air guns, which are instruments in which I have rarely had any particular interest. But as it turns out there is a place for air guns. This is mainly a function of nosy neighbors, because in many parts of the East, shooting any sort of varmint is illegal. Air guns are not completely quiet, but they are pretty quiet, especially if they are fired from inside a dwelling through an open window. Air guns are not very efficient ballistically, but they will do for shots taken inside one's yard on small beasties such as rats or gophers.

New issue air guns come in various calibers – 17, 20, 22 and 25. They can be had with very good triggers, and quite considerable accuracy. The ones I saw were overlarge, but that seems to be inherent in their mechanism, since pumping air calls for a hand-operated air compressor which involves a lot of steel. Nine-and-a-half or 10lbs seem a bit much, but a 6lb air rifle does not seem to be in the cards. This is not vital because the air gun will normally be used "on base," so to speak.

It does appear that certain sorts of people feel it their responsibility to correct the sins of strangers. This seems to be particularly true of the over civilized who tend to congregate in the suburbs.

We recently heard of a man who got into an extensive legal hassle somewhere in the East because he bashed a rat on the head with a stick. If he had had access to a well-constructed air gun he might have avoided the whole problem.

One of the features of Barrett Tillman's annual *Buffalo Wallow Assault Weapon Match and Croquet Tournament* is the 300-yard "flop and drop" test. The object of the exercise is very simple. One must start standing and on signal assume whatever position he chooses and sock the head of a silhouette target at 300

meters. This year *family member* George Olmsted won the event in the extraordinary time of 8 seconds! We will not ask George if he could do it again. We will just congratulate him on doing it once.

A friend of ours stationed in Korea recently tried to get through the exit station at the airport in possession of his legally-owned personal weapons. Long ago we used to report an occasion of total administrative confusion as a "Chinese Fire Drill." The term was then replaced by "Father's Day in Harlem," which, in turn, was supplanted by "An Iranian Funeral." Now we have the latest in this series, which is "A Korean Security Check."

All this talk about "restoring democracy" to Haiti brings up an interesting point in political philosophy. Democracy, simply stated, is majority rule. No more, no less. Majority rule may be a good thing, but to make a god of it is to be politically simple-minded. Majority rule justifies three people in a lifeboat in killing and eating the other two. Some of the things done in ancient Athens in the name of democracy were frightfully oppressive, and we must remember that the Nazi Party was elected by a wide majority. To me it seems that the aim of government is the optimum balance of liberty and order. Democracy is one way of achieving that, but for democracy to succeed it requires the virtue of the people, as Montesquieu observed. Thus when we cheer for democracy we must remember that it may not be the best, but rather the least of several evils. Saying that we invaded Haiti to "restore democracy" is pretty silly, since the Haitians have never had democracy and would not know what to do with it if they got it.

Note that democracy is nowhere mentioned in either the Declaration of Independence or the US Constitution. Let us by all means favor it, let us not make a god of it.

Family member Jack Buchmiller is now hunting around for a good choice for a heavy rifle for use in Africa. I have long personally favored the elegant 460 G&A Special, but at this time it is not the only choice available. The 470 Capstick and the 500 A-Square should be looked into, but I would not push for the 416. Certainly a 400-grain bullet will do. For that matter, so will a 220-grain 30, but I see no reason going for a light-heavy in place of a real heavy. In any case the search is on, and it is great fun. I am sure Jack will welcome all constructive suggestions.

Sign reported by Clifford F. Thies in Rocky Mountain National Park:

"Please do not feed the squirrels. If you feed the squirrels, they'll become overweight, and prone to disease. Their population will grow, and they'll lose their ability to forage for food on their own. They will expect you to feed them and will attack you if you don't. They'll become like little welfare recipients, and you wouldn't want to do this to them."

May all your adversaries be on full-auto!

The Guru

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 14

10 November 1994

Thanksgiving, 1994

From Ken Pantling, our man in Norwich:

"Republicans are cummin' in,
Ludly sing whoopee!
Slick Willy's looking very glum
And so is Hillary.

The Senate's gone, they've lost the House,
Cuomo's on the rocks.
Little Teddy's hangin' in
But only by his socks.

Poor Ollie didn't make it
But he would have done I fancy
If he hadn't fallen at the post,
Tripped up by darling Nancy.

The White House, it was shot up,
It was only tit for tat.
Shame on the fellow with the SKS
He shot like a Democrat.

But the White House now stands empty,
Nobody there, one hears,
But getting rid of jerks like that
Will take two more whole years."

It has been sagely observed that while every hunting trip is a qualified success, every election is a qualified disaster. We may render pious thanks for the reversal of forty years of leftist domination of Congress, but we note that the people returned egregious miscreants to office in Massachusetts, California and Florida, and thus have got the government they deserve.

On the whole, the election turned out well, so let us enjoy our traditional Festival of Gratitude with due appreciation.

This from Bill Buckley's *National Review*:

"Binkymania is taking over in Alaska. Binky, a 30-year old polar bear in Anchorage Zoo, recently munched on an intrusive tourist and two drunken teenagers who went for a midnight swim in her pool. Citizens are touting her for office ("Binky for Governor – Take a Bite Out of Crime") and urging zookeepers to set aside a day for people to play with Binky as a means

of reducing her food bill and upping average test scores in Alaskan schools."

Let us consider the "*L-shaped Pepper Popper*." The standard *Pepper Popper* goes down when it is well hit, and stays down. This makes it necessary for somebody, usually the shooter, to step forward and set it up again. This is fine for pistol activity where the ranges are short, but when one uses the Popper as a rifle target the problem of getting it to come back up again becomes "labor intensive." At the recent *Gunsite Reunion* at Whittington Center, John Gannaway showed us some heavy-duty Poppers which were designed to bounce but not fall when struck solidly by a rifle of adequate power. They worked quite well, but they were somewhat difficult to judge at 300 meters – or even 200. Now then, let us consider the provision of a forward-extended counter-weight affixed to the base of the popper. This could be a smooth metal rod on which a sliding weight could be adjusted for calibration. When properly set up this popper would flinch to a hit by starting over rearward and then it would come back to vertical due to the adjusted weight on the rod. Such a device would be more complicated to manufacture and hence more expensive than a standard popper, but it would be more useful for training and practice purposes, and if made of proper armored steel it could be made reactive for almost any caliber, even including the 223. Why didn't we think of this before?

Justice Robert Bork, who in spite of his reputation as a distinguished legal mind has never quite understood about the Second Amendment, has now opined that if we were to observe the Tenth Amendment, as it was written, we would practically wreck our federal system, as it now functions. Exactly! Let us get on with it!

On the subject of power, I have been recently amused by an exchange between riflemaster Ross Seyfried and a correspondent who decries Ross's scorn for the 350 Fireplug cartridge. So do I, for that matter. I and John Gannaway and Mervyn Ullman have enjoyed vast success with the Fireplug in Africa, as have Bob Crovatto and I on moose, and a whole sock-full of sportsmen on elk. Les Bowman, the Godfather of all elk guides, hailed the 350 Fireplug when it came out as the ideal piece for the American elk, combining as it did decisive power with truly extraordinary handiness. The Fireplug did in my lion exactly in the act of charging with a paralyzing end-for-end blow. For Ross to scorn this rifle and cartridge combination as a "dinky little woods carbine" is not to my mind giving us his most considered opinion. Ross, like his mentor Elmer Keith, is very fond of great big guns, and these gentlemen should not be castigated for that. Differences of opinion, of course, are what make for horse racing, and we all enjoy discussions, but to say that I like "A," therefore "B" is bad, is foolishness, unless backed up by irrefutable documentation.

Speaking of differences of opinion, we have seen the Waco atrocity characterized in the press as a "mass suicide." We thought it was properly referred to as a "ninja massacre." Clearly there is a broad difference of opinion here. As I understand it, we still have the survivors of the Waco atrocity in jail, though it has never been made very clear just what they are in jail for. I certainly do not maintain that the Branch Davidians were not pretty kooky, but I have read most of the accounts and I still do not know what they did that was evil. I guess I should bear in mind the legal axiom that "being right does not assure victory."

We note that old buddy Cameron Hopkins, Editor of *Guns* magazine, has finally been able to convince a manufacturer to produce his "425 Express" rifle. The cartridge is "lightheavy" short enough to work through standard length actions, and should do very well for buffalo, being very similar to the 416 but with slightly greater impact area. (Personally, I will continue to hold out for 500-grain bullets in a full-sized heavy for this sort of thing.)

And here we have yet another "*Big Seven*." As I understand it, the seven millimeter Remington Magnum was designed by Warren Page as a means of beefing up the proven 270 Winchester. It did this, but why this needed to be done was an open question. Now we have a series of new 7 RM cartridges with even bigger powder bottles than the 7 RM, but nobody has bothered to tell us why we need anything like that. To most of us, the 270 is pretty much the ideal deer cartridge, and in good hands it will do up African antelope in fine style, as proved by Jack O'Connor, Ian McFarlane, Steve Lunceford, and many others. In inept hands, a jazzed

up 270 is not only no advantage over the original, but may indeed be a disadvantage in that the unenlightened shooter may feel that power may make up for placement – which, of course, it won't.

If you need more power than you can get from proven light bores such as the 270, 7x57, and the 30–06, you need more bullet – not more velocity. All of the good lights will shoot flat enough to do a proper job out to ranges beyond which the shooter cannot be trusted to hit his target, and all retain enough power at reasonable ranges to penetrate the vitals and bring down even a tough target. So what is the purpose of the brand new "7mm Star Wars Magnum" to be introduced at the SHOT show? Well, the purpose, of course, is to sell. The sucker will always fall for anything that is new, and he is the proper prey of the marketeer.

The consensus seems to be that we really should have music at the next *Gunsite Reunion and Theodore Roosevelt Memorial*. I do not think we can arrange a piano, but we should be able to come up with a guitar or two. Let us put our minds to that.

How often do you remember hearing various pernicious politicians opine that only the police and military should have access to firearms. As has been clearly stated,

"When only the police are armed, what you have is a police state."

I am sure that you have heard more about the Simpson case than you need, but I simply cannot resist relaying to you the following comment from Bill O'Connor, of Kensington, Maryland:

"The authorities had nine shots at O.J. for wife beating. They either held fire or missed every time. Second, the 911 call took 13 minutes. When Nicole hung up, the police had still not arrived. Conclusion: Ordinary citizens don't need guns for protection. We have the police. They should be here any minute."

I am continually amused at the standard journalistic practice of claiming that "studies have shown" something or other to be the case, when the journalist has no rational reason for making his point. Personally, I prefer reason to statistics every time. With this in mind, I present the following list of things that my own "studies have shown" to be true.

- 78.2% of deer always know about opening day the day before it happens.
 - If you obey the speed limit in Southern California on the freeways you will be rear ended 57.3% of the time.
 - Large-bore pistols are 59% more reliable fight stoppers than small-bore pistols.
 - 83% of Democrats fear liberty.
 - 83% of Republicans fear Democrats.
 - 68% of street punks do not fear 92% of respectable citizens.
 - 71% of feminist agitators tend to be ugly.
 - You can get drunk on beer, but you have to work at it.
 - Politicians can get drunk on power, and it takes no effort at all.
 - 96% of violent criminals just hate being shot.
 - Statistics can be used to establish any preconceived conclusions.
-

The date for the rifle class at Whittington has been penciled in for the fourth week in April. I would like to get at it sooner, since I like the job, but Rich Wyatt is concerned about weather in the spring – and with good cause. If there appears to be a demand we may run two rifle sessions back-to-back. Rich has promoted some excellent disappearing rifle targets for the field course, and barring accidents I will have two of the nation's most distinguished riflemasters to support me.

I was recently scolded by a correspondent who said that I was violating my own principles when I said that it is a good practice before the hunt to sit before the television and snap in on all zeros or ohs which appear in the commercials. He said that this violated Rule 2, which states that you are never to allow the muzzle to cover anything that you are not willing to destroy. I take his point, but after my recent stint in the meat locker, during which I was exposed continuously to daytime television, I have lost any affection I might have ever have had for televisions. I have not blown any away as yet, but there may come a day!

As we proceed with our work on *"The Art of the Rifle"* we ponder upon such definitions and standards as may be established. We think much more about successful field marksmanship than about target marksmanship. Not that we decry the skills of the target range, which are of a very high order, but which are often different from those skills necessary in the field – either in hunting or in combat. Our African expedition last May gave us much food for thought, both in the hunting examples we witnessed at Engonyameni and in the military examples we were able to recreate at Sandlwana, Rorke's Drift, Majuba Hill, and Spionkop.

Self control is obviously the essence of good marksmanship of any sort, but self control under conditions of extreme hazard may more properly be referred to as "stress control." We learn of people who fail to shoot well in the field because they were excited. We hear of people forgetting their basic principles in conflict because they were frozen with fear. These are not acceptable reasons. When you are holding a firearm, you have the power to surmount stress. The killing expression, as those who have seen it know, is one of complete calm. Regardless of what you may see on the screen, one does not grimace when he is shooting for blood – with pistol, rifle, tank gun or fighter plane. Thus it is that a great field shot may or may not be a great target shot. He must be a good target shot, but not necessarily a master. What makes him a master field shot is his ability to control stress so that he can put his targeting abilities to proper use, regardless of his personal hazard or excitement. A good hunter is nearly always a good soldier. Let the bunny-huggers bear that in mind whenever they feel threatened.

It is a pleasure to learn that Lt. General Victor Krulak's son has now received his third star. We all share the Brute's pride in this distinguished family record.

Reading in a copy of the Journal of the National Rifle Association of the United Kingdom, sent to us by a British correspondent, we discover that for quite a long time aimed fire on the part of soldiers was held to be "illegal, immoral, and probably fattening." In the day of the Brown Bess the infantryman's weapon was employed in mass with an effect rather like that of a giant shotgun. The weapons themselves were so inaccurate that it was almost pointless to fit them with sights at all, but they were not supposed to be fired individually, but rather on command by the entire infantry unit. Blasts of musketry of this sort were quite effective as long as there was a suitable target available, preferably a similar unit of massed infantry standing within range at close order. Victory, of course, would go to that side which got the blast off first.

When rifles appeared the capacity of the rifleman to pick out an individual enemy and deck him became apparent. This was considered to be a VBT (Very Bad Thing) in many military circles. Among other things, it placed the lives of officers in particular danger, which was considered to be an antisocial development. During the Peninsular War, for example, the matter came to a head:

"During the Peninsular War the British employed sharpshooters where they were used to great effect. During one seven-day period these marksman killed 500 officers and eight generals. This resulted in the order that rifleman were to be given no quarter if captured on the grounds that their fire was aimed, a practice that was considered unfair."

Thus it was that for a particular set of circumstances if you set about killing your enemy on purpose you were held to be a war criminal, at least by the French Revolutionary Army.

We learn from the armed forces publications that the future of military marksmanship is placed increasingly at hazard by the official assumption that troops cannot be taught to shoot well, and that, therefore, the infantry weapon of the future will probably be some sort of short range, high-explosive grenade-launcher. No one worries about the problem of ammunition supply anymore since the assumption is that we will always have complete command of the air. This has been happily true in our recent military adventures, but as we look to post cold-war speculation, in which the enemy is no longer the Evil Empire but more probably the liberty loving citizen, two aspects of this debate become apparent. It may come to pass that the weapon of the oppressor will not need the same characteristics as the weapon of the resistor, and vice versa. This may be the reason why rifle marksmanship training, as well as the military rifles themselves, continue on their downward path. As the day of the master marksman follows the day of the master sailor, we are forced to the alarming conclusion that the good shot may eventually become politically unacceptable. Fancy that!

On one of the "fish wrappers" at the check-out stand, we note that our people in Haiti are being increasingly menaced by zombies. Now zombies pose a special problem for the troops because since they are already dead you cannot kill them. It is possible, of course, that they may be inactivated by means of silver bullets, though whether or not there is enough silver in the projectile of a "poodle-shooter" to do the job is a question yet to be answered. We would prefer to try our luck with any one of the new 45-caliber hollow-point bullets, with the cavity filled with silver.

The more sinister of the new rulers of South Africa are suggesting that no white man has any need for more than one gun. This does open the interesting discussion about how many guns a citizen of any color actually needs. Well, of course, if a man is not a shooter he does not need any guns, and that takes care of that. But it is interesting to speculate about how many guns a shooter needs.

I would like to open the seminar with the proposition that a shooter needs a rifle, a pistol, a shotgun and a 22. Now then, will one center-fire rifle do or must every man have a spare in each category? Does the shooter need a 22 rifle and a 22 pistol? Does the shooter need a fowling piece, an upland bird gun, and a combat shotgun? The subject broadens. Contributions are welcome.

(Of course, the citizen's need is none of the government's business. This is a purely theoretical discussion.)

"I do believe that where there is a choice only between cowardice and violence I would advise violence."

Mohandas Gandhi

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 15

30 November 1994

December, 1994

Troubled times indeed!

Here at the *Gunsite Sconce* we are involved in a very large correspondence. This means that I communicate with a great many different people, though possibly their political diversification may not be great. As it happens, however, the people I talk to, both in person and by mail, seem to be divided into three categories. In the first are those who feel that the United States and Western civilization in general are in trouble. The second is composed of people who feel that we are all involved in very deep trouble. And the third group feels that we are tottering on the brink of disaster. No one, of course, can predict the future, but when we, as a nation, have placed our faith in democracy – a form of government which depends essentially upon the virtue of the people – what hope is there when such virtue no longer exists? We should not be pessimistic, especially at this time of year, but the republic, as well as our culture at large, is in for rough times – and rougher ahead. Let us hope that we are worthy of the sacrifices of our forefathers!

Recently in the waiting room of an office in Prescott we heard a customer, looking at us, remark, "The man has a pistol." My response was, "Yea, we just won the election!" I do not know if the customer got the point, but I did enjoy the exchange.

The Revolution of `94 went quite well, as everyone is pleased to see. It is now up to the new team in Washington to take advantage of the mood of the times. The *Billary Administration* must remain in the saddle for another two years, of course, but having lost both stirrups and one rein, it may be that the horse has more to say about the direction of travel than the rider.

It is vital that we must not go limp simply because we won a battle. That was not the whole war, and much fighting remains ahead. In the pursuit of liberty we can never relax.

You all noticed that the part played by the NRA in the Revolution of `94 was significant. Some of the losers claim that it was decisive. May it be so! Most of the press, and even some of our own membership, have recently taken the view that the NRA is a paper tiger, unable to make any difference where it counts. This is just not so, and the shooters of this country remain a political force to contend with despite the complaints of the limp left. Sign up a new member every month! Only by doing so can you discharge your duty to the republic.

A correspondent recently attempted to convince us that the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms should now be referred to as "ATF" rather than BATF. We disagree strongly. As long as this nefarious branch of the federal ninja may be referred to as the "*BATmen*," we have a certain semantic advantage.

We note the announcement of the new "450 Rigby" cartridge. This is a proprietary round suitable (for the present) only in the 450 Rigby rifle. Its ballistics are just a tad short of those of Baby, throwing a 45-caliber bullet at a starting velocity of 2,350. I do not know why this cartridge is needed when we now have a good assortment of practical heavy cartridges for bolt-action rifles, but need has never been an important factor in

cartridge design. The combination of rifle and cartridge should do very well indeed for those fortunate enough to be able to hunt heavy animals. We wish the combination all success.

After much juggling around it now appears that our rifle class at Whittington Center is set for 3–8 April, and that is just one session. If the demand appears, we will schedule another.

(Future pistol sessions are not yet firm.)

The following material is from "*National Review*" for November 21, 1994.

"We simply do not understand. Assault rifles were banned by the crime bill. The crime bill passed. Even Republicans voted for it. It was signed into law. Assault weapons are illegal. You cannot have one. Nobody has one. They are all gone. They will never bother the decent citizens of this country again. Crime has ended. We outlawed crime. Nobody could have shot at the White House with an assault weapon. Clinton flacks must have made up the whole incident.

"Of course it wasn't an `assault rifle,' but a Chinese automatic. That's okay: half the people who supported the crime bill didn't know the difference either."

Those of you who wondered what "PPC" signified in the design of some new cartridges may stop wondering. Those three letters stand for Pindell Palmsano Canucce. Now you can relax.

While assisting in zeroing operations for the current elk season, we discovered again, as if we had ever forgotten, that almost the first thing one should check when taking out a rifle which has been out of use for some time is the solidity of the telescope mounting system. All telescope mounting screws should be locked tight and checked for that before any attempt is made to zero the piece. Three of us forgot that last month and were much embarrassed at the result.

Those of you who feel the need should note that Don Mitchell is now offering a 10–round magazine for the 1911 pistol. You can inquire about this from,

Mitchell Arms, 3400 West MacArthur Blvd, Santa Ana, CA 92704

You may have missed it, but a memorial was recently set up to honor the memory of the four ninja who died in the Waco massacre (by whose hand is not clear). It did not last long. It has been removed by persons unknown and not yet rediscovered.

As to that, it seems to me that a monument to the eighty–odd innocents who perished at the hands of the feds at Waco might be in order. It seems likely that money for such an operation could be easily amassed, and think what a blow that would be for the cause of liberty at this time!

Our man in the megalopolis informs us that the word is now out that Aristide has offered to send troops to Washington in order to maintain the Clintons in power.

"The Boers knocked us silly at a mile." I am a great admirer of Mr. Rudyard Kipling, but the notion that the Boers were spectacular "long shooters" is without accurate foundation. The Boers were hunters who lived by their rifles. Any hunter knows that the rule is to get closer if you can. The difference between a deadly shot and a lesser man is concentration. When an experienced hunter presses the trigger he knows that he has a clean kill. Too often a soldier shoots only to make noise or to provide "suppressive fire," which, as the saying

goes, "doesn't." A spectacular example of this occurred on the summit of Majuba Hill in 1881. The two sides enjoyed no particular difference in efficiency of armament, but where the British fired by volley, the Boers shot to kill. The range varied from 75 to 25 meters (we walked it!), and the effect of carefully delivered fire at short range was simply appalling. The panic that ensued has been minimized in the journalistic accounts written in English, but anyone can go to the site and relive the experience on the ground, if he so wishes.

We were once told personally by General Robert Cushman, Commandant of the Marine Corps, that the only thing that really scared him was the one occasion in the South Pacific when he encountered carefully aimed rifle fire from the Nips. He told me that he thanked God that this was the only occasion on which the Nips seemed to be able to deliver it.

Only hits count. Perhaps we forgot to preach that in the past.

In our concentration on Lon Horiuchi, the man who shot Vicky Weaver in the face while she was holding her baby, we must not forget that he was not the only one involved. One Richard Rogers, of the FBI hostage rescue organization, is the man who set the rules of engagement both at the Randy Weaver ranch and at Waco. As far as I can determine, he is the man who gave the orders that Horiuchi carried out. Richard Rogers – this is a name to bear in mind.

As procedures for implementing the new concealed–carry law in Arizona proceed, we are amused by the provision that the applicant must be exposed to sixteen hours of qualified instruction before being certified. So how do you suppose the good people in the state house came up with sixteen hours? Our guess is that they took the number of days in the shortest month in the year and subtracted from that the number of months in the year. Alternatively they could have taken the number of hoofs on a cow and multiplied it by the number of paws on a dog. It should be obvious even to a legislator that the number of hours one is exposed to instruction has nothing whatever to do with the amount of information imparted. A man can sleep through sixteen hours of instruction just as well as he can sleep through thirty minutes thereof. However this is not important. The important thing is, in the words of Patrick Henry, "That every man be armed." As long as we screen out the loonies, the rest will take care of themselves.

In that connection I should point out that at least one certifying officer in Arizona uses our film "*Liberty's Teeth*" as part of the sixteen–hour session necessary for certification. Applicants can sleep through that too, but we would like to think that we hold their attention for at least some of the period.

We are informed by our man in Guatemala that the *BATmen* are now active there. Just what excuse there is for funding these unpleasant people in their activities overseas is not clear. The sooner the BATF is abolished, the better. Why on earth it now seems necessary to send these people overseas to look after the record–keeping for American citizens seems ludicrous. It is clear that once an organization is founded and funded at the federal level, it loses sight of its purpose in life and simply seeks to perpetuate itself – at whatever costs the taxpayers. Let us pray that the new boys in Washington understand that!

"Judging from Waco and the Weavers, the feds are almost one hundred times more likely to kill an innocent person than a guilty one."

Jack Buchmiller

We have recently been reading up on the life and times of Nathan Bedford Forrest, CSA, properly termed the "Tiger of Tennessee." This was an amazing man, declared by no less authority than U.S. Grant to be the finest general of the Confederacy. When our Civil War broke out there was a lot of enthusiasm but little organization, and one of the things most notably missing on the Southern side was simply the firearm. This did not bother Forrest very much since he simply stipulated that anyone who wished to join him must furnish

his own horse and "gun." The result was that the majority of Forrest's troopers in the early part of the war were armed with double-barreled shotguns. This traditional fowling piece may certainly not be the ideal personal weapon for the infantry, but in the hands of a bunch of howling horsemen attacking suddenly out of the dark it was decisively effective. Always outnumbered, Forrest attacked mainly at night, and at night a shotgun has a great deal to be said for it.

We have scheduled an IPSC meeting at Las Vegas in connection with the SHOT show to be held there in mid-January. The purpose of this meeting, which I am to chair, is to settle upon a proper format in which to conduct practical rifle competition in coming years. This procedure is complicated by the fact that the governments of the world are in general opposed to the practical use of the rifle by private citizens. There are other obstacles that will occur to you. In any case, we intend to kick these matters around on 18 January and see if we can come up with a workable consensus. May God defend the right!

We seldom go to the movies anymore, but I have always had a persistent taste for Westerns, and it does not seem to be so very uncommon. During the Thanksgiving festivities, it happens I caught two modern, big budget Westerns largely to see how they had improved over the more traditional examples, if at all.

I discovered some interesting things. The first, the weaponcraft has shown no significant improvement. While the directors may be careful to use firearms which are correctly assigned to the period under discussion, they do not understand that Hollywood holsters are a development of the post war world. It is interesting to see a gunfighter of the 1880s portrayed as drawing from a 1955 model holster.

The second point which intrudes is language. The conventional obscenity of the 1960s and since was never used in the 19th century, as far as anyone can determine from informal writings and conversation. On the other hand, there are forbidden words today which were commonplace in the 19th century. The result is the portrayal of people whose speech is totally unconvincing.

A third point, and probably the most critical, is that Hollywood has now discovered "Post Operational Trauma" (POT). The notion that a man will get all shook up after he has killed another is a post-Korean War development. Nobody from Little David to George Patton was ever upset after he had killed a man for a good reason. Furthermore, this POT business is not common today, as we can tell by talking to participants in current violence. To have some legendary "gunfighter" of the old West go all to pieces because he has just shot the bad guy is ridiculous, but, like arugula, it is fashionable, so we must not criticize it.

One good thing we noted about the Westerns was their demonstration of the principle that Personal Unilateral Disarmament (sometimes referred to as "gun control") is absolutely useless in the suppression of crime. "No guns in town" has always been the first step of the oppressor.

I am sometimes asked why I do not do more literary work on the subject of defensive pistolcraft. I hate to say it, but the answer is that I believe that I have discovered what I need to know about defensive pistolcraft. I know what works, and I have proved it. No subject of this sort may ever be considered completely and finally closed, but I have not seen anything written nor heard anything spoken within the last decade which has caused any fundamental change in doctrine or equipment already discovered.

The subject of personal defense is far more psychological than technical. As soon as you decide and insist that you will not be victimized, you have done more than any weapon can to provide for your safety.

Bear in mind that a legal verdict of "innocent" does not mean that the accused did not commit the felonious act. For example, Hinckley was found "innocent" of shooting Reagan, but there is absolutely no question that he did. All a verdict of "innocent" means is that the legal procedures in force at the moment could not establish a fact "beyond a reasonable doubt." It now appears that our football player may be found legally

innocent of murdering his wife, but he knows what he did – and so do his attorneys.

I say again, as forcefully as may be, that one should not go for buff on his first time out. On your first African excursion you should go for antelope, zebra and pigs, if you choose, but do not stake your whole enterprise on one critical objective.

If you go to the right place you may indeed connect, but the buffalo experience may or may not be the Wagnerian climax that you expect. It is quite possible to deck a buffalo with no drama at all, and if you have saved and saved, and planned and planned, and sacrificed and sacrificed to get to a place where you get your buffalo, see him, fire one shot, and watch him drop in his tracks, you may well get the notion that you have spent your life hunting the wrong thing. Buffalo indeed can provide excitement, but a really dramatic buffalo kill is about as probable as a really good bullfight. If you do not work up to it, you may not even appreciate it if it happens. The African experience should be enjoyed for its own sake and not for the sake of any specific objective. The joy is in the hunt itself and not in the trophy. The buffalo is grand, but he is by no means the only reason to go to Africa.

The Scout rifle project has aroused a good deal of interest, but there is still a bit of misunderstanding about the concept. Fundamentally, no one can appreciate the merits of a Scout rifle until he has used it under field conditions. One cannot make assumptions about it based upon theoretical speculation, because a Scout rifle when properly set up constitutes an accretion of increments which together constitute an object which is greater than the sum of its parts – a synergism.

Thus one cannot build an approximation of a Scout and expect results. The job should be done right or not at all.

"If I can't get within three football fields, it is not my rifle that needs the work."

Kevin Wilmeth

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.

Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 2, No. 16

20 December 1994

Christmas, 1994

Merry Christmas

Indeed 'tis the season to be jolly, and while the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune are no less outrageous than in any other season, the greatest of all gifts is the capacity to be joyful. We feel dreadfully sorry for those who cannot see the joke, but that is what life is – a huge, Olympian, ongoing joke. Stricken as we may often be by misfortune, illness, accident, and grief, it is still necessary for us to laugh in the face of life, and deck and halls.

God rest ye Merry, Gentlemen!

We have received some negative reports from England about the Firestar, which seems to us to be a good design – possibly hampered by problematical metallurgy. On the other hand, I have a good recommendation from *family member* Eric Ching on the Astra A70. Time will tell.

I was even more exasperated than usual with the Billary Team when they declared Pearl Harbor Day to be an official day of mourning – with flags at half-staff. Certainly many good men died on 7 December, 1941, through the treachery of the Japanese, but the mood of Pearl Harbor was never one of sadness – rather one of fury. I was into that war up to my ears from the very beginning, and I never heard a comrade express sorrow about that Pearl Harbor perfidy. To the contrary, that act by the Japanese inspired and unified the American people as nothing else has done since, and possibly as nothing else before. For a while we were all on the same team, and that team was dedicated to the obliteration of the *Rising Sun*, at whatever cost was necessary. We were not sad, we were mad, and that is what should be remembered on Pearl Harbor Day.

I would like to revive the annual *Waffenpösselhaft Award* for 1994 on behalf of Senator Bob Kerrey, who has been mentioned as a Democratic presidential candidate for 1996. This fellow waved an AK47 over his head on television and declaimed, "You don't need one of these to hunt birds." If the Senator feels that the Bill of Rights is concerned with bird hunting, I suggest he trade in his Medal of Honor for a short but durable correspondence course in American Government.

The hunting season just past brought us many interesting adventures; mainly secondhand, I regret to say. One of the most entertaining was George Olmsted's borrowing of the Lion Scout to take after elk.

George had the stock split on his 375 only days before the opening of the season, and so it seemed only reasonable for him to take the Lion Scout out and harvest his venison. The Lion Scout, as all Firepluggers know, is the seniormost member of the Fireplug family, being a "Super Scout" built on the BRNO 601 action and taking the 350/360 cartridge. At 8lbs all up it is a tad overweight, but it belts that nifty Swift 250 out of its 19-inch muzzle at a measured 2500 feet per second, and handy as it is, it will do nicely for anything on earth short of buffalo.

The original 350 Remington Short Magnum was extolled when it came out by Les Bowman, Dean of Elk

Outfitters, and in its slightly tuned-up version it is the ideal medium cartridge.

I used it last year to lay out my lion at eleven steps, and since that time it has scored on no less than four elk, taken at ranges from 160 to 276 paces – with one round apiece. You do not recover the Swift bullet on elk, but the wound channel is just right – broad, but without excess destruction of venison.

George's report:

"Gary made a most interesting comment near the end of the hunt. He had ridden with me a lot of the time, while I drove he had the task of holding the Lion Scout. On Monday, out of the blue, he said, `You know at first I didn't understand your thing for this rifle. I thought it was ugly. Now I realize that it is the most mechanically perfect thing I have ever seen. It has been absolutely perfect for everything we have done.'"

Already a couple of the faithful have sent in checks for a foundation memorial to the innocents who perished at the hands of the ninja at Waco. I would like to note that we do not have a foundation for this fund just yet, but if the money continues to come in we will establish one in the city of Waco for the purpose of designing and building the monument.

I find it odd that the great majority of "gun writers" insist upon doing accuracy testing of rifles at 100 yards range. You cannot find out much of anything at 100. You can begin to get the picture at 200, but only at 300 can you derive a true accuracy assessment of rifle, ammunition and sight. Of course in the field you will do very little shooting at 300 (despite what the ads say), but if you are looking for an accuracy index nothing you will find at 100 will show you very much.

I have been criticized by referring to our federal masked men as "ninja," when in the view of the critic the traditional role of the ninja in Japan was to fight against oppression and tyranny. Let us note that almost no one ever resorts to force and violence unless he is convinced that his cause is right, but without going into that let us reflect upon the fact that a man who covers his face shows reason to be ashamed of what he is doing. A man who takes it upon himself to shed blood while concealing his identity is a revolting perversion of the warrior ethic.

It has long been my conviction that a masked man with a gun is a target. I see no reason to change that view.

Reports provided through Barry Miller, our man in South Africa, suggest that the new government is encountering just the sort of difficulties it might have expected. It is awkward to maintain the image of a revolutionary anti-establishment movement when you are the establishment. Street crime is flourishing, and the new minister of defense has had to cope with some four thousand desertions from the SADF by members who apparently feel that since they have won the war they might as well take their rifles and go home.

"Where, oh where, is my Mercedes Benz,
So loudly promised to me?
I have seen no car since that Xhosa got hence,
Oh where, oh where, can it be?"

On a bumper sticker:

The US Constitution
Void Where Prohibited By Law

It has been a bad year for Bambi – or rather for bambiists. The whitetail deer are developing into a locust-like pest in much of rural and suburban America. It appears that we are not eating them as fast as they are eating us out of house and garden. There are bear incidents reported regularly from bear country. The cougar, once considered a completely harmless beast, has taken to running down joggers. And finally, of all things, we have discovered a creature in the South Atlantic which may be referred to as the "Brazilian Hard-nosed Dolphin," having killed a couple of people with fearful butts. A shark scarfed up a diver off the coast of California, but if he was, as reported, a Great White Shark, also known as the "man eating" shark, it should be noted that the White Shark is protected in South Africa. You remember the jingle:

"The most chivalrous fish in the ocean,
With the ladies forebearing and mild.
Though his record be dark,
The man eating shark,
Will touch neither woman nor child."

In that last connection some dimwitted journalist from California reported that swimmers have taken to carrying "plastic pistols" as protection against sharks. This is also a candidate for the *Waffenpösselhaft Award*. I have shot a lot of sharks, and I can tell you from first-hand, direct experience that sharks are not impressed by gunfire of any sort. Besides, they don't tell you they are coming.

For the FBI to investigate Horiuchi is somewhat like Hitler's investigating Himmler.

But no matter what Reno and Freeh and Rogers and Horiuchi may say, that case is not closed. Whether Horiuchi committed a procedural error at Ruby Ridge is not important. What he committed was a mortal sin, and that sin will find him out. The only appropriate demise for this man now would seem to be the traditional route of sepekku, with which he should be familiar. If he needs a proper knife I have one, which I will provide to him upon request.

It is long been considered doctrine to play dead if you are caught by a grizzly bear. Now it turns out that while this may indeed work for grizzlies, which do not ordinarily kill people for food, it does not work for black bears, who, when they attack people, usually try to eat them.

We have almost a dozen good reports now of the effect of Black Talon pistol ammunition on coyotes.

Please note that contrary to recently published and distributed information from the Gunsite Training Center, I do not test the output of the gunsmithy any longer, and I have not done so since the lynch party of 1993. To announce that I do so is blatant and probably actionable falsification.

Have you noticed that some political appointee has ruled that the expressed will of the people of California (Prop 187) is unconstitutional? Well, so is the Brady Bill, and, for that matter, Social Security, but the arrogance of the judiciary seems to know no bounds.

That rumbling sound you hear is caused by the Founding Fathers whirling in their graves.

Family member and Master Rifleman, Colonel Swerker Ulving of the Swedish Army sends the following report from the Balkans, where he is on duty with the UN:

"It might sound strange, but I like Sarajevo. If one wants one could only see ugly shot-up buildings, but the city is still beautiful in a peculiar way. It is robust and tough. It survives. It has a certain, "Go ahead and shoot, I will still be here" attitude, and now facing a third winter as a besieged city the people are still proud, hard working for survival, and polite and gentle.

Of course many of the inhabitants are armed, and we all know that an armed society is a polite one."

"As in bygone wars, two types of weapons surface: sniper rifles and pistols. And also as in the past, no one really knows how to use them. Pistols are carried in Condition 3 or 4. Sniper rifles are also carried, but seldom used. The anti-sniping teams seem to like the burst from a heavy machine-gun instead. Being a trained sniper myself, I really abhor that the murderers down here are called snipers. Military snipers do not shoot at trams or six-year-old girls!"

Well, how about United States federal snipers? They seem to shoot at women with babies in their arms. Oh, but that was "inadvertent," says the *New York Times*. Inadvertent the way the bombing of Hiroshima was inadvertent. Perhaps we were really aiming for Vladivostok.

This from *family member* Doc Berger:

"Have you heard that O.J. is planning to marry again as soon as he is acquitted? Yeah, he plans to take another stab at it."

"For justice to be done, it must be seen to be done."

Ronnie Sipes

It has been reported to us, by a man whom we have no reason to doubt, that a certain prominent gunsmith has told prospective customers that the Remington bolt-action simply cannot fire when the safety is taken off – and that this has never happened since the introduction of the weapon. This man knows what he says is not the case, because he knows me, and like most of my friends, he has heard my tale of the time that I killed an impala simply by easing the safety off when I had a good sight picture. I do not wish to disparage products, but uncontrolled safety action is a matter of life and death.

I have been deluged with comments reflecting the indignation of the American people at the recent behavior of the ninja. I thank all of you who have sought to enlighten me, though I might point out that I read the papers, too.

I notice from International Defense Review dispatches that the Canadians have decided to issue something resembling a Scout rifle to their search-and-rescue people operating in the northern wilderness. The piece is a Ruger 77 in 30-06, somewhat modified (short barrel, folding stock). Curiously enough, it has neither a glass sight nor a ghost-ring.

The reason given for the change is the discovery that the 9mm Parabellum pistol cartridge simply will not do for serious work. Fancy that!

This from *family member* Paul Kirchner:

"Los Angeles and Ho Chi Min City have declared themselves sister cities. It makes sense – they are both Third World metropolises formerly occupied by Americans."

From Europe we now note the appearance of the 9x25 pistol cartridge. Here is truly a classic case of an answer in search of a question.

Also from Europe we see pictures of a new Mauser police rifle, strictly out of Star Wars. It never seems to

occur to people in procurement offices that if you cannot shoot, gadgetry will not help, and that if you can shoot, gadgetry is unnecessary. (We must not let the salesmen find that out.)

"I noted without dismay the violent passing of Jeffrey Dahmer, but there was a lesson in the story that went unremarked in the media. We have essentially turned over our prisons to the inmates, and they do pretty much as they please. For the decent among us, the dread prison inspires is not so much the loss of freedom, but the sort of people we would be surrounded by. It is inappropriate for America to criticize Singapore, where the corporal punishment is administered officially and in measured doses, when in our prisons it is left to the discretion of fiends and perverts."

Paul Kirchner

Did you note that when it was discovered that the murderer on the New York commuter train had waited a dutiful 15 days for permission to buy his weapon, the *CLAMS* suggested that the proper course of action was to extend the waiting period to 21 days?

Among the new developments we note the 5.7x28 Squirt Gun from FN. This would appear to be the veritable apotheosis of the spray-and-pray concept. May it rest in peace!

In checking the outlets we discover the weapon of choice for the peasantry is definitely the SKS. It seems to us that the Enfield 4 would be a far better choice, but the SKS is available all over the place, together with its ammunition, where the Enfield is not. The Enfield, when you can get it, costs about half as much as the SKS, for those on a budget.

"Don't forget that it was Republican 'moderates' who sold out Freedom and the 2nd Amendment and handed us the defeat on the Schumer 'assault weapons' ban and the Crime Bill by voting with Bill Clinton instead of you. Those 'moderate' Republicans are still there!"

Marion P. Hammer, First VP, NRA

Indeed so! Note that our new crop of heroes in Washington seems nobly concerned with taxation and spending, but curiously lax about liberty. Prosperity without liberty is Dead Sea fruit. We await curbs on the federal law enforcement establishment. Get on with it!

If you have not tried it, we suggest that you "fondue" your venison. You spear the bite-sized chunks on a long-handled fork, and dip them quickly into the hot pot. Do not leave them in too long, and be careful not to let the shaft touch your lip on the way out.

Please Note. These "Commentaries" are for personal use only. Not for publication.
