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GUNG-HO

The Magazine for the International Military Man

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SWAT GERMAN
STYLE

RHODESIAN
MILITARY BLUNDERS

REBEL INTERVIEW
SALVADORAN REBEL
INTERVIEW

MEDAL of
HONOR
ITS PROUD HISTORY

MORE
ALL CAMMIE REVIEW

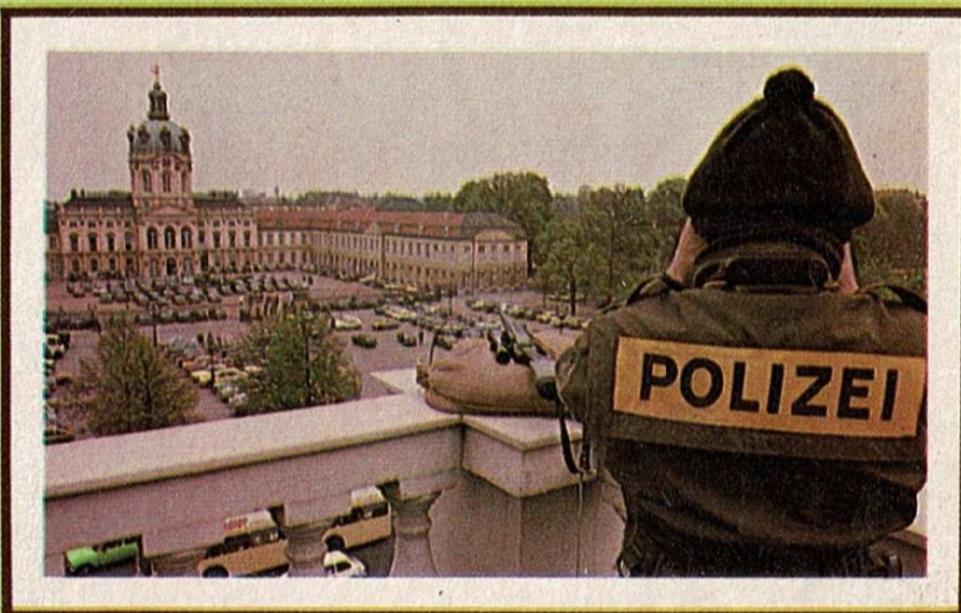
PLANNING FOR
MERC WORK



GUNG-HO

The Magazine for the International Military Man

Vol. 2, No. 17, August 1982



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A member of Frankfurt, (Germany) SWAT team at Bonnland training center.

Rhodesian Military Blunders

What Did The Terrorists Think Of The Rhodesian Security Forces? Captured Terrs Tell Of Blunders.

by Seamus O'Brien

INTRODUCTION

The author served with the British South African police. He saw extensive combat in Rhodesia, serving with official and unofficial (ranch security) units fighting terrorists.

Even though that "war" is over, the lessons are there for military men worldwide to read and learn. We are pleased to publish captured terrorist intelligence data gathered during various interrogations in this article. Even though this information was a result of a war in Africa, the basics are there to be learned and applied by soldiers operating anywhere in the world.

you are about to read is a precise rendition of a document issued by the Provincial Headquarters of the B.S.A.P. in early 1977. Classified *SECRET*, it was titled: *Terrorist Observations Of Security Forces Tactics*.

1. This office has taken the opportunity of the presence of captured terrorists in Gwelo to debrief them on the errors which they had observed being committed by the Security Forces, or had been told of by their comrades or instructors at the training camps. Whilst many of the points are basic, those interviewed were adamant that the mistakes are continually being made and if terminated would have a marked effect on the success rate of the Security Forces.

2. **FITNESS.** This was severely criticized, particularly that of the Army Territorials and Police Reserve. It was suggested to be the main reason why further terrorist groups were not contacted and destroyed. Security Forces required training runs with light kit and firearms building up to a minimum of 25 kilometers if contact with terrorist groups, who are withdrawing, is to be maintained. It was emphasized that at the best-operated camps, instructors insisted all movements were performed on the run and, as a result, the recruits' fitness improved rapidly.

3. **FIRING ACCURACY.** It was stated that terrorists are trained in correct guerilla-style to avoid confrontation with Security Forces, except on their own ground and after suitable preparation. It was fact that the firing accuracy of all Security Forces was poor when under stress. Whilst the Rhodesian Light Infantry was regarded as the most tenacious, they lacked the ability to hit their target whilst firing on the run and thus were not inflicting as high casualties as were possible. The Rhodesian African Rifles, B.S.A.P. Support Unit, and Territorials were described as being particularly bad with a strong tendency to lay down and fire into the sky when making contact with a group. It was suggested that in con-



A rare photo of a captured terr assisting in a Security Forces training exercise as he demonstrates the importance of a camouflaged weapon. Note how the uncamouflaged heavy barrel FN stands out on the troopie in the middle in contrast to the terr's weapon and the FN in the hands of the man in front of the landrover.

The Rhodesian Security Forces were highly touted by many Western sources as the best bush fighters in the world. But a thought that might be lingering in the minds of some is: did their enemies, the ZANLA and ZIPRA terrorists, share the same respect for the Rhodesians?

As an instructor in the British South Africa Police I had the opportunity to find out — from captured terrs themselves. Many were nothing more than young slips, lying that they were 20 when they looked 16. When they talked, it was often in short excited bursts, with their eyes darting wildly, like snared animals, for their fate upon capture was un-

certain: would it be prison or the hangman's noose? Or would they be 'turned' and allowed to employ their knowledge to assist the Security Forces?

The fact is scores of captured terrs were put to good use by the Rhodesians. Some were assimilated into elite combat or tracker units while others were designated for training purposes. A few even assisted during field exercises. All were interrogated thoroughly, and any useful information was quickly disseminated throughout the commands. Some of it, as you will see, was not altogether flattering.

So, except for minor editing, what

lot of bruises on shoulders and backs.

Because SWAT units provide a ready pool of experienced officers, there has been a growing demand to use this force in all kinds of dangerous arrest situations which used to be handled by the patrol or investigative division of the department. As these tasks were welcomed as an opportunity to operate in small groups or even at team size and "to get the feel of the real thing" most SEKs, which originally specialized in counterterrorist operations only, jumped at the chance to conduct arrests. A number of techniques first developed for the use against terrorists were adapted to "everyday" criminals. To facilitate an undiscovered approach to the subject in question, most SEKs had to leave their uniforms behind, step out of the jumpsuits and set aside their berets, which had become a kind of trademark: Some SWAT teams have special "familiarization" sessions, to accustom their members to slip into the role of a waiter in a restaurant, a garbage man, or a postman. A multitude of disguises were found and more are thought about every day — it is here that the aforementioned "grey matter" comes in. Evil-doers on the lookout for the proverbial "gasman", which is now so common ala Starsky and Hutch, will be in for some surprises, the moment SWAT teams fall on them. The examples given above were more of the early style, dating back to the first years of the seventies. By now, the imaginations of some SEK members have produced some remarkable blossoms, some of which permit a whole team to approach a subject and isolate him from his surroundings for arrest without him even realizing he is encircled. When earlier reports of SWAT equipment had shown the fire-resistant jumpsuits or the paratroop helmets, a much wider, but hidden set of requisites exist today, especially styled to mislead the "opposite number".

Similarly, modes of entry were perfected; whereas early German techniques of pre-SEK times would resort to such

time-consuming means as axing to open a barricaded door, modern SWAT techniques have a graded approach fitted to every occasion. In accordance to the legal situation and depending on the severity of the case, how much time is available and what kind of resistance is expected, the lower rungs of entry techniques would rely on the workmanship approach of a specially trained member, using pins and pricks or a battery-operated hand drill. Hydraulic pressure devices, operating on

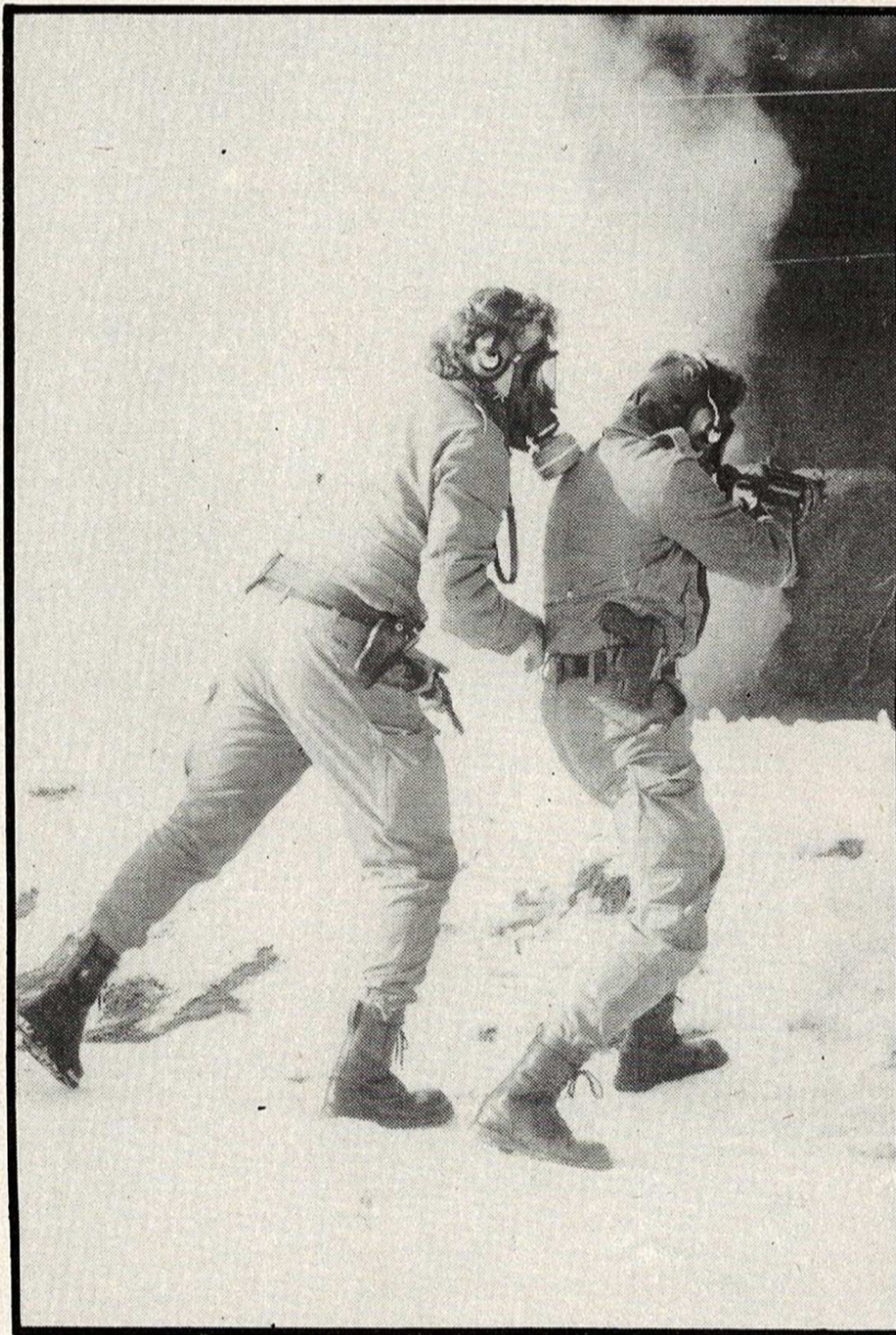
ern Germany, the evildoer was so surprised by the explosion-cum-entry of the SWAT team that he dropped his gun for sheer fright, making the arrest a totally unbloody and anticlimactic affair. Most experienced SEK members try to avoid doors at all when having to go into a building and much thought goes into various techniques to gain height and enter windows. While the GSG-9 already got as far as using mountaineering techniques to climb on facades, ascending hand-

held on to the front part of a five-yard pole, while three or four partners united their strength in lifting the pole, pushing the point man up to the first flight of windows. It is this ability to adapt to changing circumstances, to select the unconventional rather than the conventional approach, and the capability to always think two steps ahead, that the best of West Germany's SEKs have gained their edge over the increasingly complicated and violent crime they must deal with.

The main setup of the SEK may vary from district to district and city to city, but the basic tendencies are similar and have drawn their inspirations from American SWAT ideas: There is the single unit, the smallest nucleus of which is the three-to-five man group known as the 'SET.' Two or three of these will make up one team, which is trained to work together like a fine Swiss watch. The team is the operational backbone; within its membership, all the specialities are represented. There is always one or two "entry" and lock freaks", who have received relevant training at a locksmith firm and who are constantly trying to transfer their knowledge to the other members of their team. Though most police officers have a basic knowledge in first aid, some larger SEKs have trained medics in their teams and have given their members "freshen-up" lectures on the finer points of handling the wounded. Depending on the administrative arrangements, snipers may or may not be members of the team; within the GSG-9, whose arrangements have been copied by some of the larger SEKs, two of the five men SETs are trained snipers who can double as assault team members when there is no need for their specialized function. As all weapon and equipment procurement is standardized at state level, there is not a wide variety of armament to be seen with the various SEKs — again the GSG-9 is the exception to this rule.

The standard German police weapons center around the 9mm FMJ "Parabellum" cartridge.

(Continued on page 62)



Room assault practice carried out on an outdoor range. After smoke and gas are employed, an assault with machine guns and pistols takes place on targets with hostage targets blocking the bad guys — live ammo, of course.

a similar line as a carlift, were adapted to the fire brigade for more problematic cases and in certain circumstances, where surprise and speed is all-important, one might have to resort to a few feet of explosive cord and "go in with a bang." When this technique was used in a bank robbery which had turned into a hostage barricade situation in south-

over-hand in corners, using small crevices, decorations, and rainpipes as holds, the local SEKs experimented with all kinds of ladders, hooks and even rope ladders. In southern Germany, where houses in the countryside are usually only of the one or two story type, an unusual system was tested; using a method not unlike pole-vaulting; one officer

action with FITNESS, units should be trained to fire on the run at targets moving backwards and weaving. The targets should represent a man in a crouching position as this is the pose the terrorists are trained to adopt when rapidly deploying or retreating.

4. BUSHCRAFT. The lack of this ability by Security Forces was discussed at length. The fact that many members came from urban backgrounds was appreciated but it was pointed out that so do many terrorist recruits. Terrorists, after their initial three months of fitness and weapon training, concentrate on rapid movement through uninhabited countryside. This is done by taking a group of eight to ten to a prominent point and indicating a similar feature in the distance. At first, instructors accompany the group, continually encouraging them to greater effort. Later, groups are sent out and on each occasion a different person from the group is made commander. They are given an impossibly short time, usually about two hours, to accomplish the movement with the incentive that food and water will be waiting at the rendezvous point if they arrive

December 15, 1981

Jim Shults
P.O. Box 760
Broomfield, Colo. 80020

Dear Jim,

Enclosed are a few more photos which, in my view, help to illustrate the article. Hopefully, they will meet your criteria keeping in mind that the photograph of the captured terr assisting in the training of Security Forces is probably the only one to come out of Rhodesia.

Although I want to keep you happy please bear in mind that the importance of this article is to show the chinks in the Rhodesian armor. While many elite troops such as SAS, RLI and Selous Scouts ran around in shorts and cut off sleeves and T shirts looking real macho, the fact is that they were assholes for doing so. These guys were just not as good as many people thought and made many mistakes. The Rhodesian government encouraged this superman image with the foreign press to instill fear into the terrs.

One American I know pitched up to onload a chopper with RLI's Fireforce dressed in full kit, long commie pants, long sleeved shirt and camouflaged face and hands. A lieutenant grabbed him, asking what did he think he was doing — everyone else was dressed in shorts and T shirts. The American looked the 19-year-old lieutenant square in the face and said, "I don't fight in my underwear ... SIR!"

Sincerely,
Seamus O'Brien

Letter from the author answering our request for more photos.

SECRET

SECRET

TERRORIST OBSERVATIONS OF SECURITY FORCES TACTICS

1. This office has taken the opportunity of the presence of captured terrorists in Gwelo to debrief them on the errors which they had observed being committed by the Security Forces, or had been told of by their comrades or instructors at the training camps.
2. Whilst many of the points raised are basic, those interviewed were adamant that the mistakes are continually being made and if terminated would have a marked effect on the success rate of the Security Forces.
3. You may wish to consider the possibility that the other services would be interested in the points raised. We perhaps could make more use of captured terrorists to act in a training capacity with Security Forces.
4. **FITNESS.** This was severely criticised, particularly that of the Territorials and Police Reserve. It was suggested to be the main reason why further terrorist groups were not contacted and destroyed. Security Forces required training runs with light kit and firearms building up to a minimum of 25 kilometres if contact with terrorist groups, who are withdrawing, is to be maintained. It was emphasised that at the best run camps, instructors insisted all movements were performed on the run and, as a result, the recruits fitness improved rapidly.
5. **FIRING ACCURACY.** It was stated that terrorists are trained in correct guerilla-style to avoid confrontation with Security Forces, except on their own ground and after suitable preparation. It was fact that the firing accuracy of all security forces was poor when under stress. Whilst the R.L.I. was regarded as the most tenacious, they lacked the ability to hit their target whilst firing on the run and thus were not inflicting as high casualties as were possible. The R.A.S., Support Unit and Territorials were described as being particularly bad with a strong tendency to lay down and fire into the sky when making contact with a group. It was suggested that in conjunction with FITNESS, details should be trained to fire on the run at targets moving backwards and weaving. The targets should represent a man in a crouching position as this is the pose the terrorists are trained to adopt when rapidly deploying or retreating.
6. **BUSHCRAFT.** The lack of this ability by Security Forces was discussed at length. The fact that many members came from Urban backgrounds was appreciated but it was pointed out that so do many terrorist recruits. Terrorists, after their initial three months of fitness and weapon training, concentrate on rapid movement through uninhabited countryside. This is done by taking a group of eight to ten to a prominent point and indicating a similar feature in the distance. At first instructors accompany the group, continually encouraging them to greater effort. Later, groups are sent out and on each occasion a different person from the group is made commander.

They/.....

The SECRET document this article was based on.

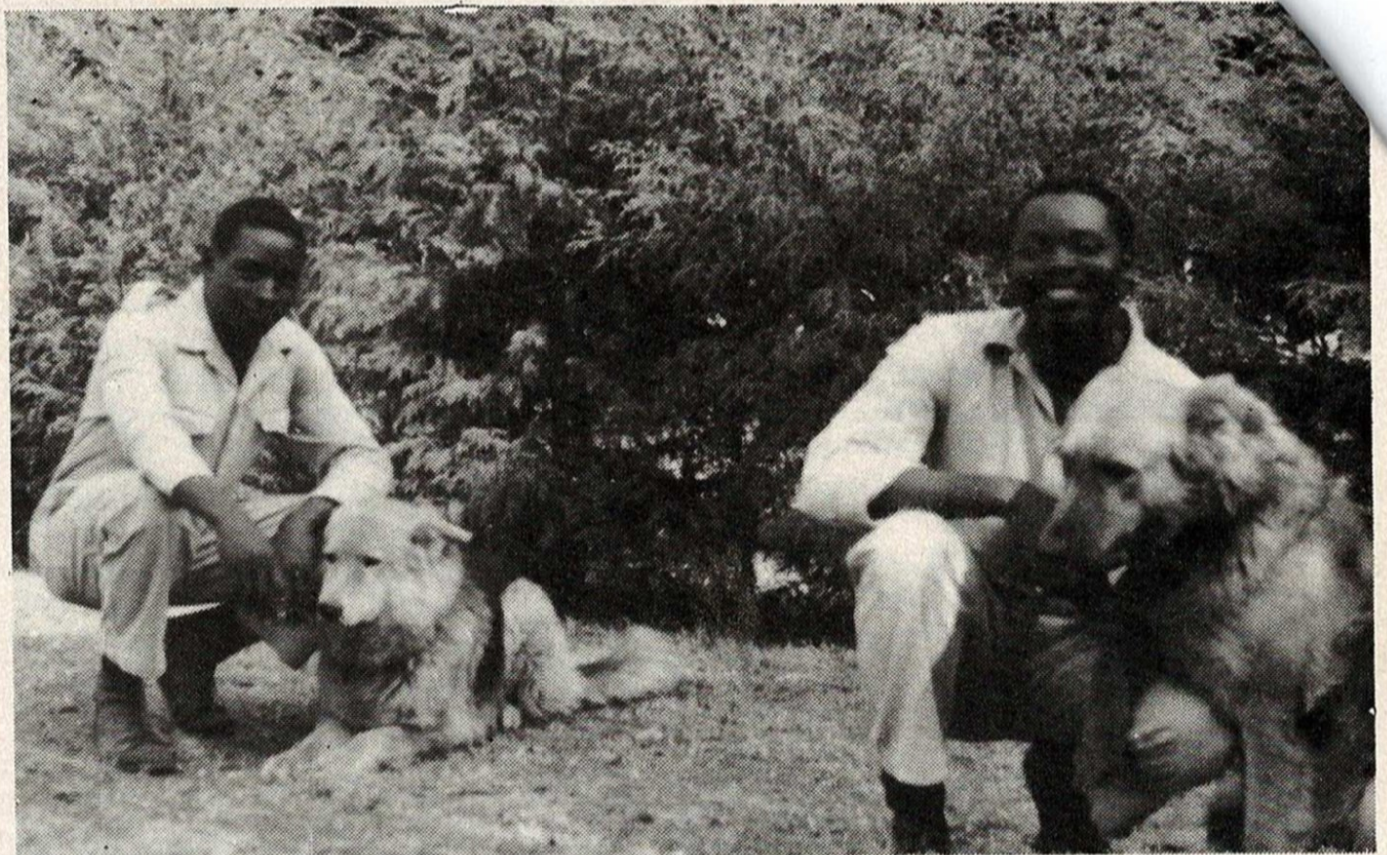
on time. Failure to achieve punctuality results in no food and water and instructions to carry on to another specified feature. A later development is that when travelling between the two points, instructors, firing live ammunition, set up ambushes in order that recruits can practice rapid retreats, rendezvous, and anti-tracking procedure.

5. OBSERVATION POINTS. Strong criticism was made of present procedure. Personnel made unnecessary movement during daylight, wore short sleeved or rolled-up sleeves on camouflage shirts. Some took off their shirts and sunbathed, presumably not realizing that the white arms and bodies are distinctive, even at a considerable distance. Details smoked, not apparently having been told that it can be smelled by a person, especially those who have been in the bush for a long time, at a considerable distance; two hundred meters was quoted. It was stated that small transistor radios had been heard playing from observation posts. The need for terrorists to have a sniper rifle to kill the complement of observation posts had been mentioned. It was suggested that rarely were basic camouflage procedures adopted by observation posts personnel who appeared to believe that their camouflage kit never needed any addition to suit the surroundings. Observation posts were frequently established on the top of a feature, thus 'sky-lining' all movement. The terrorists, on the other hand, were instructed to locate observation points on the sides of features.

6. AMBUSHES. Comment was highly critical with mention being made of snoring, smoking, use of cosmetics (after-shave lotions) and highly scented soaps. The terrorists conceded that they smell after living for extended periods in the bush without soap; however, unlike the Security Forces they acquire, like animals, the smell of the bush. It was suggested that Security Forces should not return to base camps every few days but should remain in situ in the bush, in order to become acclimated.

7. RENDEZVOUS POINTS. Whilst moving, and especially en route to a target, a terrorist commander is instructed to indicate rendezvous points. When a contact was effected, or the members of the formation became separated for any reason, they would wait at the nearest rendezvous point for approximately ten minutes and then move to the next, waiting for some fifteen minutes, and so on; the further from the scene of the contact the longer the wait. This indicates again the poor opinion terrorists have of the ability of Security Forces to quickly mount a sustained follow-up. Those interviewed stated firmly that if rapid follow-up was done, a high rate of kills/captures would be attained, as immediately after a contact the morale of the poorly trained recruit is often very low.

8. ACTION AFTER CONTACT. In addition to the lack of rapid and prolonged follow-up, the ineffective and slow 360 degree clearing of a contact area was mentioned. Terrorists said many wounded terrorists had been allowed to get away to fight another day. Using soldiers with dogs



A BSAP tracker — dog team. As suggested by captured terrs, they were used at contact sites during the follow ups. Dogs were good for finding dropped weapons and wounded terrorists, but the oppressive African heat hampered their effectiveness in long distance tracking. A terr could cover 25 kilometers at a dead run after a contact if he chose to do so.

to search the area as soon as possible after a contact was mentioned as an improvement to present procedure.

9. PATROL PROCEDURES. Basic procedure was stated to be faulty. Rarely was a kraal kept under observation from observation points prior to and after a security patrol visited it. It is common practice for a juvenile to be dispatched to warn terrorists in the immediate vicinity of the presence of Security Forces. A rapid follow-up in the direction taken by the terrorists could often result in a contact. Routine day patrolling was stated to be of little value, due to the observation kept on them by the terrorists and local inhabitants. If the Security Forces wished to engage the

terrorists they would have to play them at their own game, by operating clandestine observation points. The point was made that observation posts and patrols comprised solely of European soldiers were ineffective as they did not understand the language or habits of the locals and often missed unusual occurrences which would be obvious to an African soldier.

10. SECURITY OF CAMP. It was not uncommon for the terrorists to visit camps in the bush vacated by the Security Forces. Ration packs were often found discarded with some of their contents intact, thus providing a welcome change from the normal terrorist repast. Tins were found unpunctured with some of their contents intact. Letters from wives/girlfriends provided light reading, and discarded message forms made interesting reading.

11. FIREARMS CAMOUFLAGE. Mention was made that firearms could often be seen at a distance, particularly against the camouflage uniform worn by the Security Forces. Instances of ambushes being compromised by shiny weapons were quoted. Those interviewed suggested the external surfaces of firearms should be painted or taped to match the Security Force camouflage.

12. LAND MINES. Terrorists frequently observe the road where they have planted a mine to ascertain its effectiveness. The poor discipline of details involved in a land mine explosion was mentioned, with the crowding of men around the damaged vehicle or injured details, making them excellent targets for a follow-up



According to the terrs, that's more like it: blackened face and hands, camouflaged weapon, long sleeves and pants. Though the Rhodesian may be remembered for his bare armed and short panted fighting dress, he missed many an opportunity for a kill by being seen hundreds of meters away.

(Continued on page 54)

inally, on July 25, 1963, the
sional awards were stopped
the Medal of Honor was returned
combat-only award, Townsend's
iginal intent 102 years earlier!

America's Pyramid of Honor
evolved over a long and difficult time.
It began with the medal which is
commonly called the Congressional
Medal of Honor because it was first
created by Congress in a Congres-
sional act and issued by the presi-
dent in the name of Congress. Now
the Medal of Honor heads the list of
American military awards and the
requirements for the medal have
been standardized. "The Medal of
Honor is awarded to any person while
on active duty in the Armed Forces of
the United States who performs an
act of heroism at the risk of life, above
and beyond the call of duty...

—while engaged in action against
an enemy of the United States.

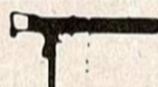
—while engaged in military opera-
tions involving conflict with an op-
posing force.

—while serving with friendly for-
eign forces engaged in armed conflict
against an opposing force in which
the United States is not a belligerent
party."

Although these rules standardized
the awarding of the medal, there is
still a lot of confusion about the
privileges holders of the medal re-
ceive. Public Law 39-53, which was
passed on April 27, 1916, provided a
payment of \$10 per month to holders
of the medal upon reaching age 65
providing the award was "In action
involving actual conflict with the
enemy at the risk of life above and
beyond the call of duty." This law was
changed in 1961 with an increase to
\$100. Again in 1964 the law was
changed and the age requirement for
the payment was reduced to \$40 and
the benefit payment extended to the
17 then living recipients of the medal
who had received it in non-combat
actions. Finally in 1965 the age
requirement for the pension was
eliminated completely.

One of the myths surrounding the
medal is that a person who holds it
may obtain special privileges or avoid
hazardous duty. Neither is true. A
holder of the Medal of Honor may
travel on military aircraft on a space
available basis after leaving the ser-
vice and the son of a Medal of Honor
holder may attend a military acad-
emy providing he is qualified for the
academy. No one holding the medal
may use it to avoid routine or combat
duties in the military. Also there is no
requirement that a person holding
the medal be saluted regardless of
rank. Saluting holders of the medal is
a tradition carried out by those who
wish to recognize the heroic deed
behind the awarding of the medal.

The Medal of Honor evolved in
America out of a need to recognize
the heroic deeds of the men who
fought to save the Union. Books are
full of those actions, many of them
among the most inspiring heroics in
the history of war.



RHODESIA

(Continued from page 40)

attack. It was suggested that if fire
was initiated at possible observation
post positions in the close vicinity, it
could well result in the terrorist
group moving and providing targets
for follow-up and also give the terror-
ist the impression that their efforts
were in vain — that the Security
Forces were very much alive and on
the offensive.

To my knowledge, every suggestion
made in this document was empha-
sized in training programs nation-
wide. Ranges, if necessary, were re-
designed to provide for moving tar-
gets, fitness programs were insti-
tuted, lectures were amended, and
live-fire drills, including ambush and
counter-ambush drills, hammered in

the basics. In one instance, a direc-
tive came down from Combined Op-
erations stating that all weapons
would henceforth be camouflaged;
you should have seen the scramble
for green and sand paint.

It wasn't that the Rhodesians were
not well trained; it was that no matter
how well trained or disciplined men
are, the human elements of laziness
and lack of attention to detail will
always surface in the eye of the
enemy. That is why prisoners can be
invaluable training aids if used
properly.

In the Rhodesian case, much effort
went into correcting their mistakes.
In my view, however, there is not a
military in the free world that can
boast of spending an inordinate
amount of time on basic details. For
the combat soldier, there is no such
thing as too much practice on the
basics.



REWARDS

You are reminded that large rewards continue to be paid to those persons who give information leading directly to the death or capture of terrorists and their weapons.

Do not be afraid to report all you know about the whereabouts of terrorists and their weapons because your identity will be kept secret and the reward you earn will be paid to you privately. You can choose to be paid in cash or the money can be put into a Post Office or Building Society savings account in your name.

Look at the amounts shown against the terrorists and their weapons in the photograph below.



Other terrorist weapons not shown in the photograph above also qualify for the payment of a reward. The amounts vary according to the type of weapon and the quantity thereof.

REPORT QUICKLY!

30th January, 1975.

Printed by the Government Printer

A reward poster inciting civilians and African locals to report the presence of terrorists. Information leading to the death or capture of a terrorist resulted in the payment of up to \$5000.00 for a senior terrorist leader to \$300.00 for an AK-47 or light weapon.