There are several well−run hunting ranches in Texas, and having taken our bison on one, we can recommend it highly. This one is the Indianhead Ranch, Del Rio, Texas. The proprietor is Laurent Delagrange, and his telephone is (210) 775−6481.

We are informed by a *family member* in Anchorage that the situation there is getting so bad that pretty soon there may be more neckties than handguns in the average residence. We hope that is an exaggeration.

Note that Blaser has now come up with what may be called a "Super Drilling," which is a three−barrel job with an ingenious locking system that circumvents the geometric problem of radial breech opposition. There are places in the world, though not many, wherein a drilling is the perfect answer. Hermann Göring thought that such a piece would be ideal as survival equipment for a downed aviator. This would seem to be a limited market at best.

Gun crime is up 10.9 percent since the ban in Britain. Well, what else would you expect?

Having just finished wishing "peace on earth" to all and sundry, we may note that there are now no less than 65 wars in progress throughout the world. This depends upon what you call a war, but however you define it, that is a lot of fighting.

During the Christmas holidays in Britain a sales girl was fired for wishing a customer "Merry Christmas." Thus we welcome the millennium.

Few people pay much attention to the meaning of the words they use, and this does lead to a certain amount of confusion. For example, what is a "blood sport"? I have always held that a blood sport is a voluntary competitive activity in which the penalty for ineptitude may well be death or serious injury. By that definition, blood sports must include mountaineering, motor racing, the hunting of dangerous game, and certain kinds of skiing. In Britain, however, the little old ladies of all ages and both sexes regard fox hunting as a blood sport. By my definition, the blood sports are a fair test of manliness or machismo. In the British sense, the blood sports are simply the ostentatious affectations of snobs and toffs. In Britain it is currently fashionable to hate toffs − for obscure reasons.

This Internet business tends to bring out the worst in some people. I suppose that obscene and anonymous objurgation has always been popular with the dregs of society, but the Internet makes it possible for the masses to engage in this sort of thing. I have no objection to argument, even high−spirited argument, but I cannot respond to accusations hurled by faceless adversaries who are ready to use epithets, but unready to pose arguments. It is clear that I hold strong opinions on various controversial issues relating to firearms and their use. I enjoy supporting those positions when I get the chance, but much as I enjoy a fight, I find it impossible to fight against an opponent who will not reveal himself. Only recently one Internet activist called me all sorts of evil things, apparently because of my advocacy of the Scout rifle. Hardly seems worth getting all that excited about − or does it?

There are people who do not mind the fact that O.J. Simpson walks free. There are people who do not mind the fact that Lon Horiuchi is not only not punished for his atrocity at Ruby Ridge, but he continues on the public payroll. There are those who know who killed Vince Foster, but are not bothered by the fact that the subject has been dropped officially. I mind those things. Do you?

I note that some of my commentary that appears in *Guns & Ammo* magazine is censored for political correcttude. This group sensitivity is both ridiculous and childish.

The town of El Cenizo down there on the Mexican border goes on its merry way in defiance of the laws of these United States. This is the business of Mr. Bush as governor of Texas, but he is most unlikely to do anything about it, since all candidates are terrified of block voting, and if he were to take any action that might offend the Mexican vote in this country, that might hurt him in the forthcoming elections.

It has been suggested that we have now established our public schools as safe zones for felons who can be relatively sure that no one on campus is going to shoot back.

Shooting sticks are apparently enjoying a comeback among riflemen in open country − especially in Africa. I have never cared for the idea, though as an adolescent I once fabricated an elaborate set in high school woodshop. I tried carrying them afield on several occasions, and found that they got in my way. In Africa, where you always have one or more henchmen available to carry stuff, this unhandiness is not too serious. But I do not think counting on the presence of an artificial aid which may not be there when you need it is good procedure. Besides which, while shooting sticks do limit vertical variation, they do nothing to diminish side sway, which may be more serious. A solid sitting position, using a shooting sling, offers more precision than shooting sticks for less bother, but only a few people today understand about the shooting sling.

Note that the 376 Steyr cartridge is derived from the 9.3x64, rather than by 9.3x62.

The scientific name for the American bison, as you probably know, is *Bison bison.* Perhaps you did not know that the name for his European cousin is *Bison bonatus.* I just found that out myself.

Michel Röthlisberger, who will be coaching in the *Masters Series* at Gunsite, has a nephew who recently climbed the north wall of the Eiger, in Switzerland − fully covered by camcorder. This is one of the meanest mountains on earth, with a score of 54 deaths to its credit ten years ago − probably more since.

It will be interesting to see the preponderance of the Steyr Scout in the *Masters Series Rifle Classes* scheduled for this year. We all know that it is the shooter and not his rifle that places the hits on target. Still, the almost unanimous appearance of the Scouts up front in both instruction and competition indicates that the little gun is easier to hit with. Only insiders seem to know that, and it is possible they are not spreading the word around for fear of giving away their advantage.

If you are having difficulty in getting hold of a Scout, note that Rich Wyatt, of "Gunsmoke" in Denver, can put one in your hands faster than most. Rich, who is not only a *family member* but a member of the *Gunsite African Rifles,* can tell you all about it.

We were much amused in Texas to run across what may be called computerized deer hunters. You can tell a computerized deer hunter because he carries a digital deer gun. A digital deer gun is one mounting a Harris bipod. Those two prongs hanging down below are the digits.

We note the appearance of the Ruger Super Red Hawk in 454 Casull. This is a mighty instrument, if hardly one I would select for house defense. The late, revered Uncle Elmer once built a peacemaker for the 45−70 cartridge, and I am told it worked very well, though what you would want one for is somewhat obscure.

I guess it had to happen, but we hardly expected it. It turns out that a pedestrian has now been killed "by his cell phone." He was talking and walking rapidly and ran right into a tree and broke his neck.

Shooting Master John Gannaway has now broken down and ordered his Italian gun. Apparently there comes a time in the life of every shotgunner when he simply must have that Italian gun. John's piece should be in his hands by next summer, and we look forward avidly to seeing it. John wants it with exposed hammers, which I

think is a good idea, since hammerless actions are necessarily less robust than those with exposed hammers.

We had a neat story down in Phoenix involving a creep with a long record who attempted to hold up a cab driver. The cab driver neatly killed him. The nice thing about this story was that no charges were filed and the cab driver was not inconvenienced. Would that we could hear more of that sort of thing from Great Britain!

We issued the dressed bison meat to the worthy on 7 January, so I have now tentatively designated 7 January as St. Hubert's day. (Of course I will have to clear this with the Pope.) This is the day on which the product of the hunt is distributed to the needy.

We dutifully thank Joe Sledge, Gunsite graduate and member of the *Gunsite African Rifles,* for providing us with our Christmas dinner of leg of pronghorn antelope. The bison meat did not come in till later.

We expect to feature the Leopard light on the Scout at SHOT Show. A lot of people do not even know it is there, probably because it is non−regulation in the States. For leopards, or for house−to−house inner city work, it should be a great advantage.

Note that the extension magazine version of the Steyr Scout is useful primarily in IPSC competition, and possibly in guerilla action. For normal work, a rifle does not need a lot of ammunition aboard.

One J. Noble of IDPA has announced on the Internet that Jeff Cooper is unfit to hold a firearm. That is an interesting idea, and I am not going to say it is absolutely wrong, but it is certainly worthy of debate.

We were somewhat startled recently in reading a British publication which supported the anti−toff position by pointing out that Diana disliked hunting. Diana? Disliked hunting? We always thought that Diana was the goddess of − ... Oh, that Diana. Sorry about that, but somehow or other I keep falling into the wrong century.

We were forced to expand the rolls for the first *Masters Series Rifle Class* to 24, rather than 16 students. I dislike doing this because I like to maintain very close personal contact with the students, and three relays of eight each will use up too much time. Thus we will try two relays of twelve, put on another *Masters* coach and hope for the best. I can but hope that the supply is equal to the demand.

As of now, I can report no progress on the production of an idealized scoutscope. You may be sure that I will let you know the minute I have something to say.

Those students coming onboard in the year 2000 will note that the range facilities are all dolled up due to diligent enthusiasm of the new owner. Electric power at the targets and running water in the johns! Fancy that! If we get snowed under in February, we will at least be snowed under in comfort.

Having been devoted to the concept of excellence all my life, I react with dismay to the understanding that a lot of people do not care at all about excellence. Among other things, unless a person has put his mind to it, he may have no real idea of just what constitutes excellence in his own surroundings and equipment. You have to know something about rifles to know why rifle A is better than rifle B. This is true of automobiles, airplanes, boats, and houses. There has always been a tendency to equate price with excellence, resulting in that proverbial man who knew the price of everything but the worth of nothing. These people are generally found in the marketing business, which may be regarded as a necessary evil, something like lawyers.

We have little use for "solids" in the US, so little ingenuity is devoted to their design. A recent report from Africa, however, suggests that the conventional round−nosed, full−jacketed configuration is somewhat less than ideal, as it tends to slide through rather than smack and chop. The suggestion is that a proper solid should

have a flat point or "meplate" and then a cutting shoulder at bore diameter somewhere forward. The man who came up with this idea has extensive experience on culling buffalo in Africa − much more than might be encountered in a normal hunting career. I think the idea is worth exploring, but since there is obviously scant market for this, I do not expect much industry interest.

I hope people will remember that the Scout is basic, whereas the "Dragoon" (Oops! The 376 Scout) is peripheral.

In a long hunting career, I have never before had an occasion to use the "nudge" in controlling the trigger, but that is what I had to use in Texas on that bison. Amazing! Learn something every day.

As we hold discussion about errors in millennia and such, I propose the following titles for recent centuries. The 18th century was *the Century of the Superior Man,* producing as it did the minds of the Founding Fathers of the United States. The 19th century was *the Age of the Industrious Man,* during which machinery and machinists took over the world. The 20th century was (God Help Us!) *the Age of the Common Man,* so designated by Teddy Kennedy. And now the 21st century may be regarded as *the Century of the Superfluous Man,* since now we have machines to do our thinking for us. Surely you have noticed the extent to which thinking is going out of style.

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Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 8, No. 2 February, 2000

Mid−Winter 2000

The SHOT Show was interesting, as usual. As a display of new products it is a fine effort, but just what we need new products for is not always clear. The 1906 cartridge and the 1911 pistol have been with us for a great long time, but trying to improve on them is a daunting exercise. New guns at the SHOT Show were present, but not in the main overwhelming. One display I seek out early is that of the Perazzi shotgun, and this display has been around for a good many years. How to make this year's Perazzi better than last year's Perazzi is a problem for the philosopher, rather than the engineer. It always pleases me to realize that there are people who have built things like that, and, moreover, there are people who will buy them. I only pray that the purchasers and owners of these wonderful instruments really and truly appreciate them.

A contact we made up in Vegas who lives in Wyoming informs us that in that state everybody owns and uses personal weapons, "except for a few crackpots from California."

Somebody told me that the factory has come up with a rifle very much like the Scout, but in caliber 223. I cannot verify this, but I hope that it is not true. There is no possible reason for a scout−type rifle in that caliber, but then a year ago at the show I saw a muzzle brake on a 22. You can become very unpopular by asking people "why?".

We must caution prospective pistol students not to bring anything called "double−action only" to class. The term itself is a misnomer, since "double" implies two methods, and "only" negates that.

One thing that struck me forcefully at this SHOT Show was the discovery that a great many shooters − possibly a majority − do not understand shooting at all. They buy guns not because they are good, but because they are fashionable. This sort of thing must motivate the arms trade, because otherwise it could not survive economically. When you have a good gun, you just do not need another, except possibly as a source of spare parts. A good personal firearm will last you a lifetime, and that of your son, and of his son. It is hard to work quick turnovers when one is faced with that situation. As I have said several times before, the only steps forward in rifles of recent times are Jim West's "Co−pilot", Gerhard Blenk's Blaser 93, and the Steyr Scout. These three developments are important. The rest seem to be just window dressing.

Not to our surprise, we discover that gun crime in Britain is up 10.9 percent since the disarmament of the private citizen.

This new era into which we launch may be termed *The Age of Hurt Feelings.* I cannot but wonder where all these tender types have been during the nineteen hundreds. The rule of the school, when I was a tad, was "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names can never hurt me." Now in the age of social censorship various kinds of pressure may be brought to bear upon anyone who calls a spade a spade. Possibly we have not had enough wars in which to temper our sensitivity.

The current rage up in Vegas is dihydrous oxide (H_2O). In the good restaurants it is pushed something like it is supposed to have been on the planet Dune. You are often offered three different brands in order to gratify any

sort of acquired taste. Since I do not drink water myself, I find this whole thing pretty mysterious. What comes out of the tap at the *Sconce* seems quite good enough for us common folk.

And now that we have the Scout, after all these years, it appears necessary for some people to proceed to trash it up. The piece as originally issued was not perfect, but it was quite close. The fact that it is unavailable for left−handers is its principal drawback, and that is not a drawback if you happen to be right−handed. Apart from that, the action could stand improvement by relieving it for inspection with the little finger. It does not need sling sockets on the wrong side. And, of course, there is the matter of the perfected sight system, of which there is no promise at this time. I understand that manufacturers are peddlers first and artists second. With that in mind, I am still delighted with the way the Steyr Scout turned out. It will continue to dominate our training sessions here at Gunsite, and in due course people will understand that it is not "just another rifle," but rather a conceptual leap forward. This will only be understood by serious practical shooters, and there are not enough of those at this time.

A firsthand account suggests that the state of Connecticut is now totally overrun with whitetail deer. They will not let you shoot them so you have to kill them with cars.

It appears that Russia has now discovered the Parabellum cartridge, which has been around since 1908 or thereabouts. Their new line of service pistols and machine pistols is now made to take the 9mm pistol cartridge, which the US law enforcement establishment discovered about ten years ago.

We mentioned using the "nudge" in managing the trigger on the bison. This is the only time I have ever done that, and there were peculiar circumstances that made it necessary. The range was short (72 yards by laser), but off−hand was the only possible position and the animals were milling around like a subway crowd, offering only brief and intermittent "windows" into which to plant a shot. I do not teach the nudge, and I do not think I will start now, because it can lead to disaster in unskilled hands, but there it is, and we must face facts.

Note that SAAB Cars of USA is on an anti−hunting kick. I cannot see this as a good piece of propaganda for a car salesman.

A correspondent recently asked my opinion as to the utility of the "combination gun." This is generally a single instrument utilizing both a shot shell and a rifle cartridge in the same weapon. These pieces, in two, three, and four barrel guise, have been around for a very long time, but besides being expensive to make, they are of very specialized utility. There are not many estates upon which one may take game birds and full−sized quadrupeds on the same afternoon walk, and those that exist are nearly always private reserves where the owner or his guests hunt the same way in extended succession. Hermann Göring at one time sought to equip his combat pilots in the western desert with "Drillings" to be used for survival purposes in the event of forced landings. This was a pretty good idea, I suppose, but it did not seem to sweep the Luftwaffe.

We were interested to hear that Swaziland has misplaced its entire merchant navy. This consisted of one good−sized merchant vessel painted in bright colors to make it easy to find. Well, it has run off and has not been heard of since. A government spokesman has insisted loudly that this mishap has nothing whatever to do with the competence of the crew or any others involved. Okay, okay. I didn't say anything.

I am sure you noticed that Remington has now come up with a varmint rifle featuring electric ignition. I suppose the advantage of this system is its trigger action, but considering the trigger action you can get in conventional weapons (if you insist on it), it seems that carrying batteries around − even very long−lived batteries − is a bum trade.

In rifle work group size is of some interest, but it is by no means the critical consideration that some commentators seem to deem it. It is well to remember that a rifleman does not shoot *groups*, he shoots *shots*. A tight group is nice, but one must not fall into the error of PII (*Preoccupation with Inconsequential Increments*). I have shot a great deal in a long shooting life, and I have only once encountered a rifle that would not shoot better than I could shoot it. (That was a 32−20 lever gun which had been allowed to rust and then scraped out. In getting the rust out of the barrel, most of the rifling went along with it.)

Group size is unimportant, unless it is very bad. If you can hit a dinner plate, first shot, every time, under all conditions, at 100, that will do.

Somewhat to my astonishment, I was recently called obscenely to task (that's right, *obscenely* is the word) for the appearance of the 376 Steyr Scout. What this particular correspondent thinks is to be gained by committing his gutter language to print is not clear, but it does display a very curious state of mind. Well, he got my attention, if that is what he wanted, but I didn't think that is what he had in mind.

The leopard light feature on the Steyr Scout is not appreciated. Many owners do not even know it is there. This is largely because hunting by means of a light is forbidden in most sporting situations, but is certainly not a drawback in the paramilitary use of the arm.

Avoid "moonscopes." These are those huge, cumbersome tubes that make quick shooting almost impossible.

I recall an occasion in Okavango when Ronny, my PH, looked dubiously at my 350 Fireplug and asked, "How accurate is that little gun?" The shot coming up was a long one − nearer 300 than 200 − and I suppose he thought I should have had a great, long rifle in order to attempt a great, long shot. My response to his question was, "It's as accurate as I am." And so it was. It made a nice, clean, one−shot kill on a blue wildebeeste.

You know you have grown up when your children begin to retire. Our three sons−in−law are all doing that within the same twelve months. Wow!

We learn to our considerable sadness that Ollie and Susan Coltman have left Sable Ranch, which was one of the most delectable establishments in Southern Africa. Downsizing is given as the reason, but however it may be, we will no longer be able to show off Ollie's animals to our friends. Ollie, you may recall, is the man who was pounded by the buffalo and survived. I have always taken pride in my account of that occasion. Susan told me that of the various descriptions of that encounter mine was the only one that got it right.

We got a new and choice hunting anecdote from Hungary. It seems that a party of thirty Austrians went off pig hunting and harvested ten pigs, five of which were taken by the same man using (naturally) a Steyr Scout.

Since everything now appears to be "tactical," I am suggesting a new line of tactical paperclips for sale in the Gunsite Pro−Shop. For my part, I am going to try to stamp out the "t−word" until people start paying attention to what they are saying.

A major actuarial organization in South Africa has come up with the idea that within twenty years the white population of South Africa may exceed the black: this due to the explosive AIDS epidemic, which, at this time, affects only the black population. I suppose that that idea is one of those things "you can't say."

Doctor David Kahn, who is one of the faithful and who originated and promoted the *Keneyathlon* as a test of the practical rifleman's skill, has asked us for our opinion on a term to designate a truly dedicated rifleman. He feels that just "rifleman" is not elegant enough, and should give way to something in Latin or Greek. "Ekeibolon" is a Greek epithet for one who hits what he shoots at, and was upon occasion applied to Apollo.

There is the venerable English word "sharpshooter," but that has fallen upon ill usage. There are some true rifle wizards around, and I am honored to hold five or six of them in my own personal acquaintance, but the correct term for such people remains undecided. We solicit audience participation in this matter.

Our friend and colleague Bob Shimizu tells us that he is studying to become a curmudgeon in his old age. This is doubtless a worthy aim when one considers the difficulty of reaching the age of 65 and still retaining one's sanity in the face of the universal tsunami of ignorance. As Napoleon put it, rascality has its limits, but stupidity has none.

I recently ran across an account of a Yukon hunt conducted in 1919 by a wealthy politician. I was fascinated to discover that this gentleman hunted exactly the same country that I did in 1940. Not only did he use the same camps that I did, but he enjoyed the services of the same superb camp cook − Gene Jacquot. (Gene was cook in 1919, and outfitter in 1940.)

However, it was the client's riflery that gave me the most pause. He, like many sportsmen before and since, seemed to think that expensive equipment was the equivalent of good marksmanship. He used a brand new 280 Ross, which might be considered the "super magnum" of its day, and he proceeded to miss with it with great consistency. Then on one occasion he attempted (foolishly, I believe) a great long shot way out past Fort Mudge, and lucked out. This established for him the idea that the 280 was a solution to every problem.

I ran across a similar mind−set in Alberta about the same time. The two hunters I met down there were using brand new Sedgley Springfields of exquisite craftsmanship. The day before I met them, they had taken 55 shots at a white goat, which simply ambled over the ridge with no evidence of alarm or discomfort.

Hitting in the field calls for skill. Fine equipment is nice to have, but it is no substitute for skill. I thought everybody knew that.

I recently ran across the expression "To hunt elephant takes *legs*. To hunt buffalo takes *guts*. To hunt lion takes *heart*." I do not quite know how to interpret that, but it is pretty interesting.

Colonel Bob Young is the new operations manager at Gunsite, which is great, good news in my view. He not only knows the business thoroughly, but as a field−grade Marine officer, he knows how to get things done.

Please let us know if you would be interested in a Safari Prep course. I would like to teach it, but we will not put it on unless we discern a market.

Observing all those hundreds of people at the SHOT Show who were totally unaware of their surroundings leads me to wonder again how such people survive. Remember that sign "Be Alert! Lerts have more fun!" Obviously a lot of people do not believe that.

The bison hunt down in Texas was a howling success. Everything went so well that it seemed pre−written. The 376, using Steve Hornady's 270−grain pointed soft−point, turned a prime herd bull off like a light with one round. Moreover, we got the whole thing on video tape as Heidi Smith, Clint's wife, manned the camcorder throughout the enterprise. There have been several incidences in my hunting career wherein a video recorder would have been deeply appreciated, but this is the only one actually to be logged for posterity. Cheers for modern technology!

Note that previous class numbers (250, 270, etc.) do not apply to the *Masters Series.* The *Masters Series,* now getting underway, does not have numbers. We are starting with General Rifle and General Pistol, and while we may extend that later to other titles, they will not have numbers.

We cannot but wonder if any of Hillary's proposed new constituents up there in New York will ask her about Vince Foster. There are people who know how he got his body out to the park after death, but she is the one who is most authoritative on the subject.

Incidentally, if you have not yet got your Scout, note that Rich Wyatt has it available in stock. Additionally, Rich Wyatt ("Gunsmoke," Custom Gunsmithing, Inc., 3650 Wadsworth Blvd., #A, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033, phone: 303−456−4545), can also put a Jeff Cooper trigger in your new gun, which is something the factory will not do.

We talked to Jim West at some length at the show, and were further impressed by his pioneer efforts in weapon design up there in Anchorage. As you know, he pioneered the "Co−pilot" concept, which was subsequently pirated to lesser standards by the Marlin people, who make the action. Jim's original cartridge for the "Co−pilot" was the illustrious 45−70, but he has worked on some additional heavy calibers, intending to make even better stoppers out of compact lever−guns. One line he is pursuing is the fabrication of heavy−caliber solid bronze "chopper" bullets by simply turning them on a lathe. These bullets feature a conspicuous flat point in conjunction with a bore−diameter cutting shoulder, which might do particularly well in 45 caliber on buffalo. I must pursue the design of such a bullet in caliber 376 for those who may insist upon using the Dragoon rifle on targets heavier than intended. We do need a line of upgraded bullets for the 376. (Which could also be used in caliber 375.) I would much like to take a sample of this sort of thing to Africa with me in April, but as circumstances stand I am not holding my breath waiting.

We learn from a federal sniper school that domestic standard barrels will wash out after two thousand rounds of 300WM, whereas the same wear factor is five to eight thousand rounds in caliber 308. No private citizen is apt to shoot his own weapon that much, but it does point out a little−known aspect of the "big bottle 30s."

I sort of wish that people would quit trying to handcraft their Scout Rifles. They spend a lot of time and money, and they never quite make it up to factory spec. Tinkering, of course, is fun, and must not be begrudged, but you are not going to get something just as good for less money.

Downsizing our military will continue until we "throw the rascals out." God speed the day!

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Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 8, No. 3 March, 2000

Winterset 2000

We opened the new era at Gunsite with a general rifle class, which worked out very well, considering that the new facilities are not quite ready. It should be noted that the "Masters Series" of schools held here at Gunsite are so designated because of the quality of the instructors, rather than the qualifications of the students. Over the years we have become associated with men of truly outstanding caliber in the area of smallarms instruction. Here we have signed them up to provide our new students with the best available theory to accompany a week's intensive practice. Applicants for the *Masters Series* need not be experts in order to sign up. They do, however, need to be in reasonably good physical shape. I made this point before, but apparently it did not take, since there were a good half−dozen students in this initial rifle class who were not physically able to achieve a proper firing position. Rifle marksmanship is a moderately demanding physical exercise, calling for a certain amount of agility, as well as good muscle tone. We hate to turn students away, but for a man who cannot assume a quick sitting or prone position to enter a rifle class is only to embarrass him. I hope the word gets out.

In this first rifle class we broke one telescope sight and sheered the bipod axle pin on a Steyr Scout, otherwise, equipment stood up pretty well. We sometimes forget that a shooter will fire more out of his hunting rifle in a course of instruction here at school than he ordinarily will in several years of general duty. Breakages are not frequent, but they do occur.

Shooting Master and *family member* John Gannaway now has the dies as well as the components for the 376 Steyr cartridge, and will be building properly designed loads in time for our forthcoming African adventure. This does not include "solids," which will be necessary in due course. I do not believe that the 376 cartridge, or any medium, is properly used on elephant, rhino and hippo. It should be as good as the 375 Holland & Holland on buffalo, but I, for one, am not going to put that to a test. For buffalo you need 500 grains of bullet. You can do the job with less, but that does not make it a good idea.

Oddly enough we had one man show up with an AR10 battle rifle. It shot pretty well and did not break down, but it was much too cumbersome for the shooter, who simply could not fling it around with appropriate *elan.* The SS holds its ground as the preeminent general−purpose rifle of the day. It is the shooter, not the rifle, that gets the hits, but those hits are easier to get with the SS.

We do not seem to be having any winter this winter, but still there is the month of March with which to contend. March can be pretty nasty hereabouts, but we are always grateful for whatever water we receive. On the other hand we note the terrible floods ravaging the land in southeast Africa. The Zambezi and the Limpopo are busting out all over, and we pray they will not do too much damage to the game herds. Unfortunately, too much of this surplus water is running directly into the sea where it does not do the drought−stricken land much good. The human toll is already high, and we are told that more rain can be expected within the next weeks. We can but hope for the best.

We repeat that there are three interesting rifles which are new to this era: the "Co−pilot", the Blaser 93, and the Steyr Scout. Rich Wyatt, of "Gunsmoke" in Wheat Ridge, Colorado, has all three of those in stock at this

time.

We have a friend here in Arizona who has a positive phobia about wolves. He has now gone so far as to promote an anti−wolf rally over in the White Mountains. Obviously predators can overdo it, but I think that they are as much a part of the natural scene as the fish in the streams, and while they should be kept under control, they ought not to be set upon by human collective effort. In the West we now have a good and growing supply of coyotes, bobcats, cougars, and a good supply of bears. Though we have lost several pets over the years to the coyotes, I certainly do not feel that coyotes should be wiped out. Likewise, I cannot work up any particular frenzy about the wolves which have been recently imported into both Arizona and Montana. I understand that wolves do a certain amount of natural damage, and this understandably annoys cattle ranchers. Cougars can be rough on house pets, and they frequently target joggers. And seals eat salmon. And the coyotes now make it practically impossible for us to raise ducks and guineas around the *Sconce.* So I cannot get upset about wolves. I dare say they do some damage, but they do make a marvelous sound. Anyone who has heard the call of a wild wolf will treasure the experience. Predators do some harm, but not nearly as much as people do. The world would be a much less interesting place without them. Besides, wolves are better looking than most people.

When I see the sort of firearms people spend money on, I reflect that the boom in our economy seems to generate a sort of spending madness. "I've got it, let's spend it" is the cry. Whether we need it or not, gadgetry seems to be acquiring a certain merit of its own, and the accumulation of gadgetry becomes equivalent to virtue. People buy junk the way Buddhists turn prayer wheels. "The man who dies with the most toys wins."

After watching far too many television commercials − in spite of myself − I wish to offer the Chevrolet slogan to Ferrari. Do you think Ferrari would sell more cars if they claimed that they handled "like a rock"?

It appears that this baseball player Rocker has stated publically that he dislikes having to ride public transportation in company with scruffies. On this he has been sent to Coventry, where presumably they regularly wash his mouth out with soap. Does anybody really like to ride with scruffies? Social censorship − miscalled "political correctness" − is reaching new lows all the time.

If you wish to become a really good shot you will learn to live with your gun. It should always be within reach, and you should handle it freely. Not every household is the same, but if you maintain your rifle within reach at your breakfast table you will get in the amount of dry practice necessary to become totally one with your weapon. With the pistol you should try five dry snaps before you put it on in the morning and five more before you take it off in the evening. This way you will eventually blend with the piece, and your skill will be something unconscious and undirected. Note that you cannot shoot "instinctively." The shooting stroke is a programmed reflex, and you program it only by familiarity. You cannot go to the range enough to program those reflexes, but you can instill them at home, and the master marksman does just that.

They had a big raffle recently in Zimbabwe (Rhodesia). To everyone's intense surprise, Comrade Mugabe was the winner of the grand prize. For all our putative rejection of "racism," it is sometimes hard to take these popinjays seriously.

In the recent rifle class a question was posed as to at what age should you introduce your son to his rifle. The Countess came up with the perfect answer (as she usually does), which was, "when his voice changes." The next question was, what do you mean by *introduce?* As I see it, the young man should be given his weapon, thoroughly instructed in it, and then made responsible for it. By choice he should keep it in his room and maintain it spotlessly clean and ready for inspection at all times. It should become his "Linus blanket" to provide him with moral support when skies are dark. This program, of course, implies properly raised children, which seems to be confusingly rare today. Joe Foss, the authentic hero, tells a tale upon himself. When he was given his first rifle he was allowed to take it out and use it by himself, though not in company.

Tempted beyond resistance, he let go and fractured a ceramic insulator on a power line. For this sin he was *grounded for a year* − a truly awesome penalty. At age 14 a year is forever, and Joe had full time to ponder upon his precious rifle locked away in his father's closet. It is not necessary to use tranquilizers to "train up the child in the way he should go."

Family member and Gunsite coach Michel Röthlisberger did Mozambique last year, and it was the sort of experience that one is glad to have known, but would not do again. After hammering their way all day to a hunting camp way back in the boonies, Michel's wife, Annette, looked around the said, "You have two rifles, I want one."

I do not suppose that many of our readers are troubled by the presence of predators on their daily wanderings, but some are. Bob Young comes up with the correct solution to this. If you find a coyote or a cougar dogging your steps, just bounce a round off the ground six or eight feet in front of his nose. This will show him that his company is not wanted and get him out of your hair. (There are those who would ask how to do this, and our answer is derived from President Jefferson, to wit: "Let your gun be your companion on all your walks.")

In the last rifle class we had a couple of students show up with Model 700 Remingtons in caliber 308. This puzzles me. If you are going to buy a full−sized bolt−action sporting rifle, why would you choose 308 over 30−06? The 308 is now equivalent of yesterday's 30−06, but still it lacks the versatility of the larger round. Why pay the same price for something less?

We recently had a curious dust−up down in the Phoenix area in which this goblin kidnaped a girl on a parking lot, ran off with her, committed rape, then shot her several times and left her for dead. He then wandered into the house of a previous employer and announced he was going to kill everybody in sight. The householder, a woman as it happens, proceeded to shoot him very dead. To us this seems to be a great story, but not to the Phoenix press, which did its best to ignore the whole thing. Instead of pinning a medal on this woman, they dropped the subject. You see, it is not acceptable to fight back in this curious time. If you fight back and lose (which is unlikely), you may get some notice, but if you fight back and win, the media would rather not hear about it.

Family member Tom Russell reports discovering on the range a fellow shooter who was operating not one but two bull guns, one in 223 and one in 7 Magnum. Now hardly anyone really needs a bull gun, and, if he does, he hardly needs two. And if he does need two, what does he want with a 223? This all takes us back to this notion of the current imperative to get rid of your cash. Who asks why? Just buy something!

As it is now the fashion to make up lists of outstanding performers of the previous century, we note that *National Review,* a periodical for which we have the greatest respect, named Don Budge as "The Athlete of the 20th Century." By amazing coincidence, my father and I just happened to be at Wimbledon on the occasion when Budge defeated Baron Gottfried von Cramm of Germany in a spectacular cliffhanger resulting in the world championship. I remember being awed by the experience, and I was gratified to discover that the occasion has not been forgotten. Don Budge, American, tennis, Athlete of the Century. Yes, indeed!

It appears that many shooters do not understand about the evolution of the *Modern Technique of Pistolcraft* − nor, as to that, about the technique itself. Herewith a quick synopsis:

In the beginning the pistol was a cavalry weapon − an attempt to extend the reach of both saber and lance. Thus it was a tool to be used with one hand, the other being needed to control the horse. Quickly, however, it was discovered to be the equalizer, as effective afoot as ahorse. Despite this, its ancestry ruled for a couple of centuries, and armies continued to regard it as one−handed clear up into the late twentieth century.

Then came *practical shooting,* the revolution, and the one−hand gun evolved into the two−hand gun. The

revolution was born in Southern California, at Big Bear Lake, and I know about it because I was intimately involved in it.

When recovering from a shattered radius at the Marine Corps Base in Quantico in 1947, I "audited" the FBI Academy and ran right into what the Bureau called its "Practical Pistol Course," which, while hardly practical, was a great step forward from conventional target shooting. In company with Howie Tatt (then captain, later colonel) I dreamed up a military course of fire for the pistol which was especially suited for infantrymen of all grades whose duties precluded the packing of a rifle − drivers, mechanics, tankers, artillerymen, staff officers, etc. Target shooting did not do this. We sought improvement.

But the war ended, and as a civilian (sort of) I wound up at Big Bear Lake in California, where I continued to play around with the *practical* pistol. Contests were organized, beginning with a straightforward quick−draw match called "The Leatherslap," which everyone enjoyed and became an annual event. Contestants wanted more, so a monthly program began which emphasized variety and realism. No two matches could be held in the same year, and the challenges should replicate actual gunfights − so far as practical.

The creative genius was Jack Weaver, a deputy sheriff and pistol hobbyist, who observed, thought it over, and concluded that two hands are better than one. He placed seventh the first year, then came back the second year and wiped us out. Some were using the cowboy hip−shot, some the Applegate "instinctive" method, and I was shooting one−handed long−point from the target range. Jack walloped us all − and decisively − using a six−inch Smith K−38. He was *very* quick and *he did not miss.* And, of course, he shot from the Weaver Stance, which was, and is, the way to go.

So when I began to teach pistolcraft, first at Big Bear, then at Gunsite, I emphasized variety, realism, and the Weaver Stance. I thought that I covered the subject, but I ran into a theoretical obstacle. I discovered that there is a basic divergence in purpose between the amateur and the professional. The amateur seeks excellence. The professional seeks adequacy. The hobbyist shooter wants to be *better.* The cop wants to be good enough.

When we remember that real gunfights take place at very short range − across the room − and that there is usually plenty of time, we see that the brilliant pistolcraft evident in competition is perhaps irrelevant. Far more important is attitude, the state of mind necessary to do what is needful when the time arises. The best shot in the world is helpless if he doesn't want to shoot. And thereby hangs the tale. We can teach you how to shoot. We cannot teach you how to react to a lethal emergency. Recently a young woman was ordered to stand by while an assailant proceeded to bind her escort, presumably preliminary to rape. She then pulled a pistol out of the attacker's belt and killed him with it. We don't know if she was a good shot. It doesn't matter.

In reviewing the ample array of new service pistols, we note that very few seem concerned with the configuration of the handle. The 1911 is too big for many hands. At school I have discovered it is too big for 50 percent of women's hands and about 25 percent of men's. This means that the purpose in improving the configuration of the 1911 should be reduction in the size of the butt, not in increasing it. A double−column magazine serves little purpose in a street fight, but a slim−line version of the pistol is much easier for a good many people to manage. It took me a while to discover this because I have a reasonably large hand and can manage the 1911 as it stands without trouble: but then I am right−handed, so the absence of a left−handed Steyr Scout does not trouble me until I think in the big picture. We are at work on the problem of slim−lining the 1911, and we will keep you posted on this development.

In the recent rifle class we ran across something that was rather shocking. It seems the dealer in question simply ordered a Remington 700, bolted a telescope topside and sold it without any sort of tuning or check up. The weapon rattled like a Toonerville trolley when shaken and gave the class to understand that the Remington 700 is a dog. This, of course, is not true, but you really should tighten the screws before you take it out on the range. Apparently, nobody told the customer that, and Master John Gannaway, who was in charge

of that end of the line, coined the condemnation "AAR" (awful in all respects).

Family member Michel Röthlisberger of Switzerland suggests the following propaganda pronouncement: "*Shooters* do not commit crimes." That, of course, is obviously true, but think how it would shake up all those poor underprivileged types in Great Britain or New Jersey. The concept is beyond their comprehension, or so it would appear.

In the recent class we encountered a very peculiar item − a "municipal Scout." I noticed the piece on assembly and asked the presumed owner why he happened to get the item in black. His answer was, his department bought three of them and ordered them all in black for departmental purposes. A departmental Scout! Is that what we are doing with the city tax money? It is not easy to explain why a policeman needs a rifle of any kind, but it can be done. Why he needs an expensive rifle − a radical improvement − is somewhat harder. I did not ask, but I suspect that the squad cars in this friend's town are all Porsches.

"Better a dinosaur than a cockroach."

The Guru

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Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 8, No. 4 April, 2000

Springtime 2000

The blossoms are at their best and the buds show promise of an excellent fruit year. We had very little winter, but we look forward now to a furiously active spring and early summer, both here and abroad.

Construction proceeds apace here at the ranch, and though we are not quite ready yet for the new era, we will do our very best to bring things up to scratch as rapidly as the new construction will allow. We have conducted one *Master Series Rifle* class already, and are set to do a pistol session next week. There will be more of these as the year passes, and we hope each one will be better than the last. I plan to be imparting classic Gunsite doctrine, as perfected in the past, with the masterful help of our *Master Series* faculty. A number of critics have called in to explain to Colonel Bob Young that we have the message all wrong, and they, as former members of various sorts of special forces units, stand ready to step in here and straighten us out. On the matter of marksmanship doctrine we are not inflexible, but we wish to be convinced in person by those who claim to be able to show us the right path. The core issue in combat weaponcraft remains the combat mind−set, as always. We study this matter continuously from the field, preferably by means of first hand experience, though to a lesser extent from press reports. Newsmen as a group do not understand fighting, though they show no reticence in pretending to, but we at least can get things like time, date and number from their reports. (Isn't it fascinating that the news people are so concerned with the caliber of smallarms and the mechanical nature of repeating actions? This seems to be a new thing, as I do not remember this degree of technical preoccupation before.)

There will be a hiatus now as we head off for Africa again for a period of several weeks. Sorry about that, but we will be able to bring back various interesting anecdotes and observations upon our return.

Here at Gunsite we have always been more interested in the performance of the individual than of the group. When the individual shooter is shown that his individual performance can be brought to near perfection, we feel that we have done our job. Sad to say, there are those who remain convinced that fighting is correctly and exclusively a state function, and that the individual citizen has no business learning how to involve himself in it. This notion is widespread but fortunately not universal, and thus we stay in business.

We ask again if you have any interest in a "Safari Prep," course as we hear continuously from Africa that it is customary for the usual African sportsman to manifest truly shocking incompetence in many important areas. We will not put on a Safari Prep course in 2000, but we will set one up for 2001 if the world is still in one piece by that time.

It would seem obvious by now that if you want to get the most out of your Gunsite rifle instruction you should bring a Steyr Scout to work with. Hits are achieved by the shooter, not the rifle, but why not make it easy on yourself?

The rejection of basic American tradition by the (British−owned) firm of Smith & Wesson is irritating but not unexpected. It does appear that the company is in the process of phasing itself out of business, but then it has not been a true leader in the sidearms field for some time. I suppose those of us who pioneered the modern

technique of the pistol may be held responsible for the gradual abandonment of the revolver principle in American law enforcement circles. Years ago I might have thought better of this development than I do now. Certainly the self−loader is a more efficient sidearm than the wheel−gun, but it has brought about the flowering of the "spray−and−pray" principle, to the intense disgust of all serious shooters. Seen in this light, it may very well be that the police should have stuck with the revolver.

Getting information off the Internet is like getting a glass of water from Niagara Falls, according to Arthur C. Clarke. Maybe he has a point there.

"Thought control." We thought we were fighting against it, as exemplified by Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin, but now a strident cadre of busybodies is doing its best to inflict it upon us. No person of dignity will submit to being told how to think, but dignity has all but gone out of style in *The Age of the Common Man.* Freedom of speech may be guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution, but that does not mean that we exercise it. Just try calling a spade a spade and see what happens!

May it be suggested that a man who does not hunt is like a woman who does not cook? Okay, I said it and I am glad!

The Gunsite gunsmithy is now at work on the production of a custom clone of the 1911, built to my specifications on a Springfield frame. Eighty of these pistols will be produced and serialized 0 through 80 in gold out of respect for my venerable 80 years. (Note, this is not to be confused with the announced Gunsite Service Pistol 2000, which is similar but not the same.)

I intend to take a few of these new fangled "spray point" bronze bullets on a forthcoming pig hunt in South Carolina. According to photos that I saw at the SHOT Show, this bullet configuration combines radial tissue disruption with full penetration in a very unusual way. Of course, I first have to find the pig.

Note that there is no such thing as a "wall of separation" between church and state stipulated in this country. We do not have it and we do not need it. What we may need, however, is a wall of separation between school and state. The state has no business brain washing our children, despite the fact that that seems to be what it does at this time, or attempts to do. Education is not the state's business.

Recently a certain ineptizoid got stuck in the rocks up on Camelback Mountain near Phoenix. He was rapelling down when he discovered to his astonishment that he had run out of rope. Municipal rescue attempts were able to fetch him down off the rocks without damage, but now the question arises as to who is to blame for this mishap. (According to modern sociology no victim can be responsible for anything.) It occurs to us that some smart accident attorney might bring suit against the rope maker for making the rope too short. That idea is not sillier than many we have seen as *The Age of the Wimp* carries on.

> "Yes, we did produce a near perfect republic, but will they keep it, or will they, in the enjoyment of plenty, lose the memory of freedom? Material abundance without character is the surest way to destruction."
>
> Thomas Jefferson

I suppose you know that the British have recalled all of their SA 80 service rifles, which were discovered to be unreliable in operation under severe conditions of dust and precipitation. That piece was apparently British designed, but insufficiently tested before adoption. The SA 80 took the now standard 223 cartridge, which never should have been adopted by any serious military power.

Which brings us to the subject of poor old General Pinochet of Chile. This man saved his country almost single handedly from communism, but that in itself is largely a negative attribute in the eyes of the international left.

After some period of examination it appears that the European Union is a rather evil organization. The Swiss have been trying to avoid entanglement with it, but they are pretty well surrounded. It seems that the EU has now decided to ostracize Austria, presumably because the Austrians are not terrified of the ghost of Hitler. The members of the EU are evidently not terrified by the ghost of Stalin − but that is another matter.

We have given the matter a good deal of thought here at Gunsite, and our conclusion is that a prospective hunter of big game should put between one and two hundred rounds through the weapon he intends to take afield before taking off. This could prove somewhat burdensome if your weapon of choice is a 416 (at $6.00 a shot), but then we have never been very much impressed by the 416. If you choose to hunt with a really heavy rifle, you must be prepared to face up to the expense. Of course you can practice with a lesser round without losing too much in the way of preparation. One option might be to put in your 200 rounds with your 308 and about 40 rounds with your heavy. Not many of us shoot a lot of buffalo, so this does not seem to be a serious problem.

You all saw those pictures of Mozambique under water. We hear from our good friends in the eastern Transvaal that no serious damage has been done, away from the Zambezi Delta. We expect to be down that way next month and should wind up with some pretty good sea stories on this subject.

Family member Ted Ajax has put forth a nomination for the *Waffenpösselhaft* award for 2000. This is a gadget which sets up an additional barrel and action for your M16, but which takes the 50−caliber BMG cartridge. Just what one might do with a piece of this sort is by no means clear, but as we have often mentioned, if you ask what a weapon is for you may make a lot of enemies.

We can report no progress on the matter of an idealized sight system for the Scout rifle. Conversation is friendly, but progress is not forthcoming. "These things take time," I was once told in Austria. I believe it.

An Australian correspondent has introduced us to a creature we had not run across in all our wanderings. This is nicknamed the "Borneo beetle" by the Australian Air Force people, and it is pretty alarming. It hangs out in trees at the edge of clearings and walkways. When it detects approaching movement on the part of a creature of any size, it launches to the attack. If a target is small, like say a song bird, it kills it in the air with its powerful mandibles and devours what nourishment it can find from the wreckage on the ground. If it hits something too big, like say a man, it rips out a piece of meat as large as it can handle, about the size of a small French fry, and flies off with it. This can be pretty annoying to the troops, who were forced to resort to a stratagem. On field exercises they would pack pockets full of steel hex nuts. When the troops heard one of these assault bugs approaching (which was not too difficult because his flight was noisy), they would throw a hex nut in the air in front of him. With luck he would grab the nut, and finding it too heavy to carry, he would be forced to land, prey in hand. This little beasty would seem to be an excellent target for a 22 shot round, but, of course, the troops did not have such things at hand while on duty in Borneo. I suppose a badminton racket would be a handy defensive instrument under these circumstances, but here again we do not usually pack badminton rackets in our jungle warfare kits.

The Borneo beetle seems to be a most interesting creature. Perhaps we should cruise down there and investigate.

In this era of the decay of good English usage, we point out that the terms woman and lady are not inter−changeable. "Woman" is a specific definition, similar to "cow," "mare," or "hen." "Lady," on the other hand, is an honorific, the feminine equivalent of "Lord." Consider, for example, the significance between the

adjectives "womanly," "girlish" and "ladylike." Not the same, are they?

Pop English may truly be a lost cause. I have gone back and scanned several volumes of my collection of Edgar Rice Burroughs (Tarzan, etc.) And then I compare the usage in these pieces to that in modern journalism. I need to make no corrections, either typographical or grammatical, in any of the Tarzan books or their companions. They may be considered juvenile by some standards, but reading them carefully is a good way to improve your English.

More or less by accident, we recently ran across a small snippet at the end of a movie in which we discovered the world's greatest marksman. The name is Whoopi Goldberg (!). This one can shoot any sort of firearm, under any sort of pressure, from any position, against the clock, without sights − and she never misses! We heard she also took third prize in the Ugly Woman contest. Show business is marvelous indeed!

> "Under the administration of 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."
>
> Frederick Russell Burnham

Burnham was writing at about the turn of the 20th century, but we have made much progress since then, haven't we?

We hear of another croc hit up in Chobe. It seems this lad was walking down to the river bank to do his laundry. He was a tourist, not a local, or he would have known better. The way these innocents wander around the world with no understanding of nature or life in general is what we used to call a scandal for the jay birds. Well, at least they will not reproduce, and I guess that is all to the good.

In keeping track of special agent Lon Horiuchi, we note that the television people are understandably reluctant to show his face. After killing Vicki Weaver with one round to the face up at Ruby Ridge, he was put in charge of a sniper team which went on down to Waco. Just what a sniper team might be good for in that action is not clear, but Horiuchi has maintained that his team never fired a shot at that time. Recently released television coverage of that action shows four empty cartridge cases on the ground at the sniper post occupied by Horiuchi and his team. Apparently, someone else came in after the battle and dropped the four empties at the spot where Horiuchi was located. If he says no shots were fired, I guess no shots were fired. After all, Agent Horiuchi is a West Point graduate, and we can trust him implicitly.

We suggest that you do not bring to school here any equipment which requires batteries to operate it. (That is apart from your ordinary flashlight.) These dry cells have a marvelous way of being dead when you need them. A friend of Colonel Bob Young had the job of replenishing dry cells in the Gulf War. He spent all of his time in his helicopter racing from one point to another dumping off sacks full of dry cells, some of which worked.

I am sure you all caught the story of that excellent performance by a teacher in a class beset by some loony student with a pistol. Where her male opposite number in the other room hysterically told all of his students to hit the deck, and did so himself, our heroine just walked up to the perpetrator and took the pistol away from him. This girl has earned the Gunsite silver medal for common sense. Way to go, teach!

For those planning to come to the new Gunsite this year, we have several suggestions. First, get in shape. Second, do not bring a nipping dog to the campground. Third, do not bring a pistol which cannot be cocked. Fourth, read the book.

A correspondent recently sent us a novel he had written on the subject of the breakdown of liberty in this country. This work was fiction and, as you might suppose, it included a good deal of high−toned violence, including gunfire. The trouble is, the author evidently has never been in a fight and knows nothing about the mechanics of fighting. He gets his cartridges and calibers right, but he probably got those simply out of reading gun magazines. He does not, however, know what happens when a man gets shot. I suppose there are fewer and fewer of those who do understand about this, as our wars recede into the past. Still the number of street fights which occur regularly in today's embattled society would seem to provide enough observation to clean up this matter. My suggestion is that if an author chooses to write about street violence, either with firearms or without, he send his typescript to somebody who has been there for a technical review.

As I write this, I look forward to bison short ribs for dinner tonight, prepared as the Countess can prepare them. I reflect that we should shoot bison more often. It may not provide the best venison in the world, but if our experience can be useful, it is certainly among the best. Moreover, you may collect about 400 pounds per shot fired.

Historian and *family member* Barrett Tillman discovers that there are more than 30 incidents involving the 1911 pistol in which the Medal of Honor was awarded. That instrument represents a triumph of design, and it was just one of John Browning's triumphs. Oddly enough, John Browning never heard a shot fired in anger. (But then, Beethoven was deaf.)

FINN AAGAARD
1932 − 2000

With deep sadness we must report the death of our dear friend Finn − hunter, rifleman, author, distinguished outdoorsman and Gunsite *family member*. Finn was a Norseman who became a PH in Kenya in its great days and then resettled in Texas after the demise of tropical Africa.

In the US he wrote freelance for various shooting periodicals and his work was remarkable for both modesty and absolute honesty − qualities somewhat rare in "specialty journalism."

We had the pleasure of taking the field with Finn on a several occasions in Texas, Arizona, and New Mexico. He was a splendid companion and we will miss him sorely.

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Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 8, No. 4 March 16, 2000

Special Edition

What follows is a special extra issue of the Commentaries. It has nothing to do with guns or shooting, so those of you who have only those interests may choose to set it aside. What it does discuss, however, is more important. This is the dire state of what is currently called "higher education" in the United States, but which may be more properly called "social censorship," or *Thought Control*. In today's academia there is apparently only one side of any important question. The result is sociological taboo, and it must be exposed as just that. So let's get with it!

http://www.reason.com/0003/fe.ak.thought.html

REASON *March 2000*
Thought Reform 101
The Orwellian implications of today's college orientation

By Alan Charles Kors

At Wake Forest University last fall, one of the few events designated as "mandatory" for freshman orientation was attendance at *Blue Eyed*, a filmed racism awareness workshop in which whites are abused, ridiculed, made to fail, and taught helpless passivity so that they can identify with "a person of color for a day." In Swarthmore College's dormitories, in the fall of 1998, first−year students were asked to line up by skin color, from lightest to darkest, and to step forward and talk about how they felt concerning their place in that line. Indeed, at almost all of our campuses, some form of moral and political re−education has been built into freshman orientation and residential programming. These exercises have become so commonplace that most students do not even think of the issues of privacy, rights, and dignity involved.

A central goal of these programs is to uproot "internalized oppression," a crucial concept in the diversity education planning documents of most universities. Like the Leninists' notion of "false consciousness," from which it ultimately is derived, it identifies as a major barrier to progressive change the fact that the victims of oppression have internalized the very values and ways of thinking by which society oppresses them. What could workers possibly know, compared to intellectuals, about what workers truly should want? What could students possibly know, compared to those creating programs for offices of student life and residence, about what students truly should feel? Any desire for assimilation or for individualism reflects the imprint of white America's strategy for racial hegemony.

In 1991 and 1992 both *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal* published surveys of freshman orientations. The *Times* observed that "orientation has evolved into an intense... initiation" that involves "delicate subjects like... date rape [and] race relations, and how freshmen, some from small towns and tiny high schools, are supposed to deal with them." In recent years, public ridicule of "political correctness" has made academic administrators more circumspect about speaking their true minds, so one should listen carefully to the claims made for these programs before colleges began to spin their politically correct agendas.

Tony Tillman, in charge of a mandatory "Social Issues" orientation at Dartmouth, explained in the *Journal* that students needed to address "the various forms of `isms': sexism, racism, classism," all of which were interrelated. Oberlin "educated" its freshmen about "differences in race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, and culture," with separate orientations for blacks, Hispanics, gays and lesbians, and Americans of Asian descent. Columbia University sought to give its incoming students the chance "to reevaluate [and] learn things," so that they could rid themselves of "their own social and personal beliefs that foster inequality." Katherine Balmer, assistant dean for freshmen at Columbia, explained to the *Times* that "you can't bring all these people together... without some sort of training."

Greg Ricks, multicultural educator at Stanford (after similar stints at Dartmouth and Harvard), was frank about his agenda: "White students need help to understand what it means to be white in a multicultural community... For the white heterosexual male who feels disconnected and marginalized by multiculturalism, we've got to do a lot of work here." Planning for New Student Week at Northwestern University, a member of the Cultural Diversity Project Committee explained to the *Weekly Northwestern Review* in 1989 that the committee's goal was "changing the world, or at least the way [undergraduates] perceive it." In 1993, Ana Maria Garcia, assistant dean of Haverford College, proudly told the *Philadelphia Inquirer* of official freshman dormitory programs there, which divided students into two groups: happy, unselfish Alphas and grim, acquisitive Betas. For Garcia, the exercise was wonderfully successful: "Students in both groups said the game made them feel excluded, confused, awkward, and foolish," which, for Garcia, accomplished the purpose of Haverford's program: "to raise student awareness of racial and ethnic diversity."

In the early 1990s, Bryn Mawr College shared its mandatory "Building Pluralism" program with any school that requested it. Bryn Mawr probed the most private experiences of every first−year student: difference and discomfort; racial, ethnic, and class experiences; sexual orientation; religious beliefs. By the end of this "orientation," students were devising "individual and collective action plans" for "breaking free" of "the cycle of oppression" and for achieving "new meaning" as "change agents." Although the public relations savvy of universities has changed since the early 1990s, these programs proliferate apace.

The darkest nightmare of the literature on power is George Orwell's *1984*, where there is not even an interior space of privacy and self. Winston Smith faces the ultimate and consistent logic of the argument that everything is political, and he can only dream of "a time when there were still privacy, love, and friendship, and when members of a family stood by one another without needing to know the reason."

Orwell did not know that as he wrote, Mao's China was subjecting university students to "thought reform," known also as "re−education," that was not complete until children had denounced the lives and political morals of their parents and emerged as "progressive" in a manner satisfactory to their trainers. In the diversity education film *Skin Deep*, a favorite in academic "sensitivity training," a white student in his third day of a "facilitated" retreat on race, with his name on the screen and his college and hometown identified, confesses his family's inertial Southern racism and, catching his breath, says to the group (and to the thousands of students who will see this film on their own campuses), "It's a tough choice, choosing what's right and choosing your family."

Political correctness is not the end of human liberty, because political correctness does not have power commensurate with its aspirations. It is essential, however, to understand those totalizing ambitions for what they are. O'Brien's re−education of Winston in *1984* went to the heart of such invasiveness. "We are not content with negative obedience... When finally you surrender to us, it must be of your own free will." The Party wanted not to destroy the heretic but to "capture his inner mind." Where others were content to command "Thou shalt not" or "Thou shalt," O'Brien explains, "Our command is *`Thou art.'*" To reach that end requires "learning... understanding [and] acceptance," and the realization that one has no control even over one's inner soul. In *Blue Eyed*, the facilitator, Jane Elliott, says of those under her authority for the day, "A new reality is going to be created for these people." She informs everyone of the rules of the event: "You have no power, absolutely no power." By the end, broken and in tears, they see their own racist evil, and they love

Big Sister.

The people devoted to remolding the inner lives of undergraduates are mostly kind and often charming individuals. At the Fourth Annual National Conference on People of Color in Predominantly White Institutions, held at and sponsored by the University of Nebraska last October, faculty and middle−level administrators of student life from around the country complained and joked about their low budgets, inadequate influence, and herculean tasks.

Their papers and interviews reveal an ideologically and humanly diverse crowd, but they share certain assumptions and beliefs, most of which are reasonable subjects for debate, but none of which should provide campuses with freshman agendas: America is an unjust society. Drop−out rates for students of color reflect a hostile environment and a lack of institutional understanding of identity and culture. What happens in the classroom is inadequate preparation for thinking correctly about justice and oppression.

They also share views that place us directly on the path of thought reform: White students desperately need formal "training" in racial and cultural awareness. The moral goal of such training should override white notions of privacy and individualism. The university must become a therapeutic and political agent of progressive change.

Handouts at the Nebraska conclave illustrated this agenda. Irma Amirall−Padamsee, the associate dean of student relations and the director of multicultural affairs at Syracuse University, distributed the Office of Multicultural Affairs' brochure. Its "philosophy" presupposes that students live "in a world impacted by various oppression issues," including "racism." "OMA's role," it announced, "is to provide the... leadership needed to encourage our students... to grow into individuals willing to take a proactive stance against oppression in all its shapes."

Molly Tovar, who has done this sort of work both at the University of Oklahoma and at Oklahoma State University, passed out a 22−page guide she co−authored, "How to Build and Implement a Comprehensive Diversity Plan." The guide explains the three "kinds of attitudes" that agents of cultural change will face: "The Believers," who are "cooperative; excited; participative; contributive"; "The Fence Straddlers," who are "suspicious; observers; cautious; potentially open−minded"; and "The Skeptics," who are "critical; passive aggressive; isolated; traditional."

Ronnie Wooten, of Northern Illinois University, distributed a handout, "Inclusive Classroom Matters." It adapts a variety of common academic sources on multiculturalism, including a set of "guidelines" on how to "facilitate learning about those who are different from you." The students in this "inclusive classroom" would have to abandon what might be their sincere inner beliefs, replacing them with such professions of faith as "We will assume that people (both the groups we study and the members of the class) always do the best that they can." The guidelines make it clear that one may not restrict one's changes to the intellectual: "We will address the emotional as well as the cognitive content of the course material. We will work to break down the fears that prohibit communication."

Sharon Ulmar, assistant to the chancellor for diversity and equal opportunity at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, handed out a flyer titled "Can [A] Diversity Program Create Behavior Changes?" Her program's mode of self−evaluation was to measure "the number of participants that took action based upon the awareness they learned from [the] program." Among the units of "awareness" successfully acquired were the following (some of which surely might strike one as more problematic than others): "gays and lesbians no different than [sic] others"; "handicap accessibility is for those who are handicaped [sic]"; "difficult to make a decision about own beliefs when others are watching"; "module allowed participant to witness subtle behaviors instead of hearing about it"; and the ineffably tautological "understanding commonalities of each individual may be similar to yours."

Denise Bynes, program coordinator for Adelphi University's Center for African−American Studies Programs, distributed a "Conflict Resolution Styles Questionnaire" for students, all of whom are to be categorized at the end as one of the following: "competing, avoiding, accommodating, compromising, and collaborating." The handout also presents the "basic values" of each American ethnic group. For white Americans, these are "Freedom/liberty/privacy; equality/fairness; achievement/success; individualism/self−interest; economical use of time; comfort." For African−Americans, "Ethnic pride, heritage, history; kinship bonds/family/motherhood; equality/fairness; achievement; respect; religion/spirituality." For Asian−Americans, "Reciprocal social duties; self−control/courtesy/dignity; devotion to parents; tradition (family, culture, the past); duty/hard work/diligence." Each group also has its own particular "overview" of nature, logic, time, society, and interpersonal relationships. Whites wish to "control" nature, for example; Hispanics, to live in "harmony" with it; blacks, to "overcome" it; and Asians, to "be adjusted to" and "accept" it. Whites are "rational, logical, analytical"; Hispanics, "rational, ethical"; blacks, "allegorical and synthetical"; and Asians, "intuitive, holistic, tolerate inconsistencies."

According to a formal presentation by Bynes and her colleague at Adelphi, Hinda Adele Barlaz, all of these materials were acquired during "training" by the US Department of Justice Community Relations Service, a program so effective that "it was very hard to get any of the other white members of the committee [Barlaz was white] to go for the training that the Department of Justice provided free of charge. The white members of the [Adelphi Prejudice Reduction] Committee had been so alienated by the training that they didn't want to go back."

What do these presenters in Nebraska, typical of those now governing offices of student life and residence, believe about the re−education of our college students? The keynote speaker at the conference was Carlos Muñoz, professor of ethnic studies at the University of California at Berkeley. He explains in an interview that to create an appropriate environment on campus, one has "to do as much outreach as possible away from the classroom, into the dorms, into the places where students live." Such work should begin during freshman orientation, continue throughout a college experience, and be mandatory.

Amirall−Padamsee from Syracuse argues that "students of color need to be nurtured as insightful leaders of our community" and that "they must be formally trained in anti−oppression theory and related skill building." "White students," in turn, "have to be trained as allies in change." (*Ally* is a code word in sensitivity training circles. As the "diversity facilitator" Hugh Vasquez of the Todos Institute explains in a widely used manual, an "ally" is someone from "the dominant group" who is aware of and articulates his unmerited privilege and who intervenes on behalf of mistreated groups.)

The goal of such training, according to Amirall−Padamsee, is "to produce graduates who are individuals committed to educational and social justice, and not just a tolerance of, but a validating of difference." To accomplish that she says, "we need to define and implement ways to translate education to behavioral change." In addition, she boasts, she has access to federal work−study funds, and she uses that position − and her capacity to dismiss people − "to try to make a positive change in the way that the student is thinking."

Tovar, formerly of Oklahoma State University and now at the University of Oklahoma, declares in an interview at the conference that "at OSU we have all kinds of sensitivity training." She describes an incident involving fraternity brothers who had been disrespectful of Native American culture: They ended up "incredibly emotional... These fraternity kids broke down." OSU also has mandatory multicultural freshman orientation sessions.

Bynes, also the co−chairman of the Prejudice Reduction Committee at Adelphi University, says the committee's emphasis is on training individuals how to interact "with a diverse student body," with "separate training for students... [and] special sessions on student leadership training." This "cultural and racial awareness training would benefit all members of the Adelphi community, both in their university and personal lives." The committee would get people to talk about "`what I like about being so−and−so,' `what I dislike

about being so−and−so,' and `the first time I encountered prejudice,'" all exercises that the facilitators had been shown and had experienced in their own "training" by the Justice Department.

Bynes is a kind, accomplished, candid, and well−meaning woman. As she explains, "White people must have... sensitivity training... so that they can become aware of white privilege." Mandatory sensitivity training ideally should include both students and faculty, but "there are things that we can't dictate to the faculty because of the fact that they have a union."

There are painful ironies in these attempts at thought reform. Individual identity lies at the heart of both dignity and the flourishing of an ethnically heterogeneous society. Black students on American campuses rightly decry any tendency of university police to stop students based on race. Their objections are not statistical but moral: One is an individual, not an instance of blood or appearance. The assault on individual identity was essential to the horror and inhumanity of Jim Crow laws, of apartheid, and of the Nuremberg Race Laws. It is no less inhuman when undertaken by "diversity educators."

From the Inquisition to the political use of Soviet psychiatry, history has taught us to recoil morally from the violation of the ultimate refuges of self−consciousness, conscience, and private beliefs. The song of the "peat bog soldiers," sent by the Nazis to work until they died, was "*Die Gedanken sind frei*," "Thoughts Are Free," for that truly is the final atom of human liberty. No decent society or person should pursue another human being there. Our colleges and universities do so routinely.

The desire to "train" individuals on issues of race and diversity has spawned a new industry of moral re−education. Colleges and universities have been hiring diversity "trainers" or "facilitators" for 15 years, and the most famous of them can command $35,000 for "cultural audits," $5,000 for sensitivity workshop training, and a sliding scale of honoraria, some for not less than $3,000 per hour, for lectures.

This growing industry has its mountebanks, its careerists, its well−meaning zealots, and its sadists. The categories often blur. Three of the most celebrated facilitators at the moment are Edwin J. Nichols, of Nichols and Associates in Washington, DC; Hugh Vasquez, of the Todos Institute in Oakland, California; and Jane Elliott, the Torquemada of thought reform. To examine their work is to see into the heart of American re−education.

Nichols first came to the attention of critics of intrusive political correctness in 1990, when he led an infamous "racial sensitivity" session at the University College of the University of Cincinnati. According to witnesses, his exercise culminated in the humiliation of a blond, blue−eyed, young female professor, whom he ridiculed as a "perfect" member of "the privileged white elite" who not only would win "a beauty contest" but even "wore her string of pearls." The woman, according to these accounts, sat and sobbed. These contemporaneous revelations did not harm Nichols' career.

According to the curriculum vitae sent by his firm, Nichols studied at Eberhardt−Karls Universität in Tubingen, Germany, and at Leopold−Franzens Universität in Innsbruck, Austria, "where he received his Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology and Psychiatry, cum laude" (a rare degree). In some publicity material, he states that he founded a school of child psychology in Africa; at other times, he modestly withholds that accomplishment.

Nichols' schedule of fees is almost as impressive as his schedule of thought reform. He charges $3,500 for a three−hour "Basic Cultural Awareness Seminar," plus travel and per diem. For a plain old "Workshop," he gets $4,000−$5,000 plus expenses. This makes his staple offering − a "Full Day Session (Awareness Seminar and Workshop)" − a bargain at $5,000 plus expenses. For a "Cultural Audit," he gets $20,000−$35,000 (he recently did one of these for the University of Michigan School of Medicine). The Bureau of Labor Statistics at the Department of Labor paid him $15,000 for diversity training; the Environmental Protection Agency got him cheaply at $12,000.

Business is booming. Nichols has brought awareness to the employees of six cabinet departments, three branches of the armed services, the Federal Reserve Bank, the Federal Aviation Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, and the FBI; the Goddard Space Center, the Naval Air Warfare Center, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and NASA; the Office of Personnel Management, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Social Security Administration. He has enlightened city and county governments, whole school systems, various state government departments, labor unions, several prestigious law firms, and the Archdiocese of Baltimore. His clients include "Fortune 500 Corporations, foreign governments, parastatals, associations, health and mental health systems," and he has been a consultant to offices of "The British Commonwealth of Nations" and "organizations in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Japan, Latin America... Singapore, Malaysia, and China." He has a very long list of academic clients, and he was a centerpiece of Johns Hopkins' 1999 freshman orientation.

What does Nichols believe? He believes that culture is genetically determined, and that blacks, Hispanics, and descendants of non−Jewish Middle−Eastern tribes place their "highest value" on "interpersonal relationships." In Africa, women are the equal of men. Whites were altered permanently by the Ice Age. They value objects highly, not people. That is why white men commit suicide so frequently when they are downsized.

Nichols calls his science of value systems "axiology," and he believes that if managers and administrators understand these cultural differences, they can manage more effectively, understanding why, according to him, blacks attach no importance to being on time, while whites are compulsive about it. Whites are logical; blacks are intuitive and empathetic. Whites are frigid; blacks are warm and spontaneous. Whites are relentlessly acquisitive; nonwhites are in harmony with nature. White engineers, for example, care about their part of something; Asian engineers, managers should know, care about the whole. Whites are linear; nonwhites have a spiral conception of time. Nichols has a handout that he frequently uses. Whites, it explains, "know through counting and measuring"; Native Americans learn through "oneness"; Hispanics and Arabs "know through symbolic and imagery [sic]"; Asians "know through striving toward the transcendence [sic]." Asking nonwhites to act white in the workplace is fatal to organizational harmony. Understanding cultural axiology is essential to management for the 21st century. Now, reread his list of clients.

Two diversity training films widely used at major universities reveal the techniques and the characters of two other leading thought reformers. *Skin Deep*, the 1996 film funded by the Ford Foundation, records an encounter at a retreat between college students from around the country. The facilitators are not active in the film, but the published guide tells you what they do and identifies their leader as Hugh Vasquez.

Skin Deep begins with ominous news clips from the major networks about "racial violence," "racism," "slurs," and "racist jokes" on campus. It announces that "at these training grounds for our future leaders, intolerance has once again become a way of life." We meet white, Hispanic, black, and Asian−American students from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, the University of California at Berkeley, and Texas A&M. The whites have terrible stories to tell: They have grown up in white neighborhoods; their families have prejudices; and they feel rejected by people of color. The people of color have terrible stories to tell: They suffer frequent abuse in white America, and they are sick of it.

Neither group is typical of a college population. The whites, we gradually learn, have been members of organizations working for racial understanding. The students of color all use terms like "allies," suggesting that they've been through sessions like this before. There is a Jewish woman who objects to being thrown into the nightly "white caucus," where she doesn't really belong. She also anguishes over whether all of the things she has been told at the encounter about the Jewish role in the suffering of people of color are true. (Vasquez responds candidly to an inquiry on this, revealing that some of those allegations were outright anti−Semitic, and that the Jewish girl was looking for "allies" who would not "scapegoat" Jews.) In short, the white students talk about the stereotypes they have learned, and the students of color reflect deeply on the cruelty of race in America.

When white students initially suggest that they personally did not do terrible things, the students of color fire back with both barrels. A first reply goes immediately to the heart of the matter: "One thing that you must definitely understand is that we're discussing how this country was founded, and because you are a white male, people are going to hate you." A black student explains, more patiently: "Things are going on *presently*: the IMF, presently; the World Bank, presently; NAFTA, presently; Time Warner, presently; the diamond factories, presently; reservations, presently; ghettos, presently; barrios, presently. Slavery still exists." (Diamond factories?) The Chicana, Judy, lets them know that "I will not stop being angry, and I will not be less angry or frustrated to accommodate anybody. You whites have to understand because we have been oppressed for 2,000 years. And if you take offense, so?" (Two thousand years?) And from Khanh, a bitter Vietnamese student: "White people need to hear that white people are very affected by internalized racism... As a person of color growing up in this society, I was taught to hate myself and I did hate myself. If you're a white person, you were taught to love yourself... If you don't know that you have shit in your head, you'll never deal with racism."

By the end, the students of color have had the grace to state that if the white students become real "allies," their victims can let go of their anger a bit. White students have come to realize that the pieties their parents taught them, such as an honest day's pay for an honest day's work, apply only to whites in America.

In short, what moves the film (and American thought reform) is a denial of individual identity and responsibility, an insistence on group victimization and rights, and the belief that America is an almost uniquely iniquitous place in the world, without opportunity, legal equality, or justice. "I want you to know," an Hispanic male explains, "that because of the system, my cousin was shot... and then another cousin was shot." The tribalism of the exploited Third World expresses a core truth: You are your blood and history. Let the children of the guilty denounce their parents. Let the victims stake their claims. Let the cultural revolution begin.

Vasquez is a frank and warm man by e−mail. He explains that the filmmaker never showed the facilitators because she wanted to focus solely on the students, but that "it took a great deal of planning and structure and facilitation to make what happened happen." In his own mind, he was devoted to eliminating "blame, ridicule, judgements, guilt, and shame" among all of the students in the group, and he sounds sincere when he writes that his goal is to eliminate "individual and institutional mistreatment of any group or culture." But his effect, whatever his intention, is frightening, atavistic, and irrational, and his means are deeply intrusive.

Americans surely need to study, discuss, and debate, frankly, matters of race and ethnicity. Reasonable people disagree on profound questions. Some of the issues are empirical: Is aversion to difference acquired above all from culture or evolution? Should we be more startled by America's success in creating a nation of diverse backgrounds or by the difficulties it has in doing so?

Some of the issues are moral and political: Should we favor legal equality with differential outcomes or equality of outcomes even at the price of legal inequality? Are today's whites responsible for the crimes of 19th−century Southern slave owners? What are the benefits and costs of a society based on individual responsibility? These are not issues for indoctrination. Indeed, they do not even reflect everyone's chosen intellectual or moral agenda, and free individuals choose such agendas for themselves.

Vasquez's "Study Guide" for *Skin Deep* explains that the final goal of using the film in "colleges, high schools, corporations, and the workplace" is to produce "action strategies and... networks for working against racism," for which there is a page of strategy. The guide further explains the necessity of affirmative action, the "myths" of reverse discrimination and balkanization, and the reality of white privilege. It teaches the need for the privileged to become "allies" of the oppressed, and it focuses on the nightmare of "internalized oppression." The internalization of oppression manifests itself in "self−doubt... fear of one's own power; an urgent pull to assimilate; isolation from one's own group; self−blame for lack of success; [and] fighting over the smallest slice of the economic pie."

The guide also has a rare explicit endorsement of "political correctness," reminding facilitators that "language was a prime factor" in the murder of 6 million Jews, that language perpetuates racism, and that it is wrong to believe that "anything people say should be left alone simply because we all have the right to free speech... The challenges to political correctness tend to come from those who want to be able to say anything without repercussions." (He did not have Khanh in mind.)

Skin Deep is a kid's cartoon, however, compared to Jane Elliott's *Blue Eyed*. Elliott has been lionized by the American media, including Oprah Winfrey, and she is widely employed by a growing number of universities. Disney plans to make a movie of her life.

Blue Eyed arose from Elliott's elementary school class in Riceville, Iowa, where, starting in 1968, she inflicted upon her dyslexic students an experience in which they were loathed or praised based upon their eye color. According to Elliott, she was ostracized for this experiment, her own children were beaten and abused, and her parents (who were racists, she informed a Dutch interviewer) were driven into isolation, bankruptcy, and despair because they had raised "a nigger lover" (one of her favorite terms).

In her modest explanation, once news of her exercise with the children made it onto national television, the people of Riceville feared that blacks across America would assume that everyone there was like Elliott and would move to their town. To punish her for that, they stopped buying from her father. Elliott also revealed to her Dutch interviewer that she abandoned teaching school in 1984 to devote herself full time to diversity education, for which she receives $6,000 per day from "companies and governmental institutions."

In *Blue Eyed*, masochistic adults accept Elliott's two−and−a−half−hour exercise in sadism (reduced to 90 minutes of film), designed to make white people understand what it is to be "a person of color" in America. To achieve this, she divides her group into stupid, lazy, shiftless, incompetent, and psychologically brutalized "blue eyes," on the one hand, and clever and empowered "brown eyes," on the other. Some of the sadism is central to the "game," but much is gratuitous, and it continues after the exercise has ended.

Elliott is unbearably tendentious and ignorant. To teach what an IQ test truly is, she gives the brown eyes half of the answers to an impossible test before the blue eyes enter the room, explaining that, for people of color, the IQ exam is "a test about which you know absolutely nothing." IQ tests only measure "white culture." They are a means of "reinforcing our position of power," and "we do this all the time in public, private, and parochial schools," using "culturally biased tests, textbooks, and pictures on the wall... for white people." (Fortunately for Elliott, it appears there were no Asian−Americans or psychometricians in her group.)

Elliott often describes the 1990s as if they were the 1920s; indeed, in her view, nothing has changed in America since the collapse of Reconstruction. Every day in the United States, she explains, white power keeps black males in their place by calling them "boy" (two syllables, hissed), "and we do it to accomplished black males over 70, and we get away with it." We tell blacks to assimilate, which means merely to "act white," but when they try that, we put them in their place and change the rules. For example (this in 1995), whites now are building up Colin Powell, but as soon as they build "this boy" up, they will kick him down. For Elliott, the Powell boom was a conscious conspiracy to humiliate and disorient blacks.

She teaches her "blueys" with relish that protest accomplishes nothing, because if blacks protest, "we kill them." It is not smart to speak up or act clever, which is why blacks appear passive and stupid. The lesson: "You have no power, absolutely no power. ...Quit trying." Blacks might try to "win" on the inside, but it is almost impossible to validate oneself when white society puts you down "all day, every day."

Even if a "bluey" understands the implications of the workshop, or even if a white woman understands male prejudice, it bears no real relationship to the daily suffering of every black: "You do not live in the same country as that [black] woman. You live in the USA, but you do not live in the same country as she does." Blacks such as Shelby Steele (singled out by name), who speak of transcending race, delude themselves,

because one might transcend one's skin color but never society's behavior: "All you can do is sit there and take it." People call the exercise cruel, Elliott explains, but "I'm only doing this for one day to little white children. Society does this to children of color every day." She stands over briefly assertive "blueys" and humiliates them, explaining that if this makes you sick to your stomach for a few hours, now you understand why blacks die younger.

In short, this is America, and there truly is no hope. Nothing ever changes. No one can succeed by effort. Culture, society, and politics all are static. "White privilege" controls all agencies of power, influence, and image, and uses all the means that arise from these to render "people of color" psychologically impotent, confused, passive, and helpless. So either vent your hatred or assume your guilt.

There is no redemption except guilt, but there is a political moral. After "teaching" a "bluey" to submit totally to her authority, she asks if that was a good lesson. The workshop thinks it was. No, she says with venom, submission to tyranny is a terrible lesson, but "what I just did to him today Newt Gingrich is doing to you every day... and you are submitting to that, submitting to oppression."

The facilitators' guide and publicity for *Blue Eyed* states things honestly: Elliott "does not intellectualize highly emotionally charged or challenging topics... she uses participants' own emotions to make them feel discomfort, guilt, shame, embarrassment, and humiliation." Facilitators are urged to use the raw emotions of *Blue Eyed* (blueys do cry a lot) to tap the reactions of the viewers. They should not expect black participants to "bleed on the floor for whites," but they should get whites to "stretch" and "take risks." The facilitators should be prepared for very strong and painful emotions and memories from the participants. The ultimate goal of the film: "It is not enough for white people to stop abusing people of color. All US people need a personal vision for ending racism and other oppressive ideologies within themselves."

Elliott does mean everyone. In 1996, she told her audience at Kansas State University that all whites are racists, whatever they believe about themselves: "If you want to see another racist, turn to the person on your right. Now look at the person on your left." She also believes that blacks were in America 600 years before whites. She told the students at Kansas State that if they were angry at her, they should write letters, but that they must do so without paper, alphabet, or numbers, all of which were invented by people of color. Whites, in Elliott's view, did have a certain creativity. Betraying a breathtaking ignorance of world history, she told the Australian Internet magazine *Webfronds* in 1998 that "white people invented racism." Other than that, however, whites were quite parasitic.

"You're all sitting here writing in a language [English] that white people didn't come up with," she told the magazine. "You're all sitting here writing on paper that white people didn't invent. Most of you are wearing clothes made out of cloth that white people didn't come up with. We stole those ideas from other people. If you're a Christian, you're believing in a philosophy that came to us from people of color."

Jane Elliott has lived through revolutionary cultural changes without taking note of any. She teaches only helplessness and despair to blacks and only blood−guilt and self−contempt to whites. She addresses no issue with intellectual seriousness or purpose. She also is the reigning star in thought reform these days. On May 7, 1999, CBS News ran a feature on her that declared: "For over 30 years, Jane Elliott has waged a one−woman campaign against racism in America." CBS might want to rethink the notion of "racism."

Even traditionalist campuses now permit the ideologues in their offices of student life to pursue individuals into the last inner refuge of free men and women and to turn students over to trainers who want them to change "within themselves." This is a return of *in loco parentis*, with a power unimagined in prior ages by the poor souls who only tried to keep men and women from sleeping with each other overnight. It is the university standing not simply in the place of parents but in the place of private conscience, identity, and belief.

From the evidence, most students tune it out, just as most students at most times generally have tuned out abuses of power and diminutions of liberty. One should not take heart from that. Where students react, it is generally with an anger that, ironically and sadly, exacerbates the balkanization of our universities. The more social work we bring to our colleges and universities, the more segregated they become, and in the classifieds of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* during the last few years, colleges and universities by the hundreds have advertised for individuals to oversee "diversity education," "diversity training," and "sensitivity training."

Orwell may have been profoundly wrong about the totalitarian effects of high technology, but he understood full well how the authoritarians of this century had moved from the desire for outer control to the desire for inner control. He understood that the new age sought to overcome what, in Julia's terms, was the ultimate source of freedom for human beings: "They can't get inside you." Our colleges and universities hire trainers to "get inside" American students.

Thought reform is making its way inexorably to an office near you. If we let it occur at our universities and accept it passively in our own domains, then a people who defeated totalitarians abroad will surrender their dignity, privacy, and conscience to the totalitarians within.

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Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

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Hooray For May!

So, by the grace of God and a great deal of luck, I made it to my 80th birthday. Certainly I never thought I'd live to see the day. Whether being 80 years old is a good thing or not remains to be seen. Certainly the world is full of marvelous things, and if human civilization is not one of them, there is truly a great deal left over to enjoy. Our African trip was, as always, a wonderful adventure from which we learned many things. We had no less than seven hunters in camp, which is too many, but everybody scored and the novices especially were treated to the full blast of the bushveldt. Everybody scored and everybody shot well. It is a great satisfaction for me as a teacher to see my students deliver under pressure, and I must reflect that the life of a professional hunter is a hard one − almost impossibly hard if his client cannot cope. I have never brought along clients who could not cope, and that is my good deed for the era.

We had two southpaws along who were thus somewhat inhibited from the use of the Scout rifle. And they were impressed further by the short−sightedness of a manufacturer who does not understand that about one shooter in six is left−handed. To abandon 17 percent of the market does not seem a good business practice to me.

The "Dragoon" in caliber 376 Steyr was much admired, but not put to much of a test in my hands, since I encountered nothing heavy enough to show it off. The 376 is not a deer gun, and it shows off best against targets in the thousand pound range. It will certainly kill a deer, or an impala, or a man, but it is unnecessarily muscular for that task, and I suppose it is going to be hard to feed for some time to come. The only available factory ammunition at this time is Steve Hornady's, and while it will certainly do the job, I can think of several ways in which its bullet performance might be improved. Among other things, there is no "solid" available for it now, and the solid bullet does have its usefulness. We can, of course, use RNFJ 300s now available for the 375 Holland Magnum, but a properly designed 270−grain JTC bullet would be an improvement if the cartridge is to be used on buffalo.

We have learned by diffuse channels that the people at Leupold are investigating the possible recoil problem inherent in the Dragoon, which they discover recoils half as much again as the 308, in weapons of similar weight. This is a worthy enterprise and we wish it all success.

We ran across a charming salutation amongst the NGuni on our last adventure. "May all your wives grow fat." Try that the next time you are introduced to the CEO.

At Columbia, South Carolina, we had the pleasure of shooting the "mini−gun," the 308 power−driven Gatling used by the "Magic Dragon" in Vietnam. It cyclic rate is quite unbelievable, something like six thousand rounds per minute, and when it is fired you cannot tell the reports apart with your ear. There is just this bright orange spindle out in front of the barrels and a great ripping noise like tearing a sheet. This is great fun, as long as someone else is providing the ammunition.

Our current vice president and contender for the presidency this year has observed for the record that "a zebra cannot change its spots." In Africa, we checked this out and found the statement to be quite true. It takes a far left politician, however, to make a public statement like that and not be ashamed of it at all.

Now having been elected for yet another term as a director of the National Rifle Association, I would like to thank those members of the Association who voted for me for their support. As just one member of a very large board of directors, I have very little personal influence on the policies of the Association, but I do promise to keep up the effort, successful or not. We on the Board are continually beset by complaints from the membership, saying that, a) we are too hard−nosed, and b) we are not hard−nosed enough. The NRA may not be perfect, but it is certainly the best game in town in terms of clout, and if I have anything to say about it, we will increase the clout to whatever extent we may. At around 3−plus million members our influence is great, but not great enough. The NRA should have 10 million members, since there are 50 million gun owners in this country and they would all be disarmed but for the efforts of the Association. These people, sad to say, are content to let others do their work for them. Since it is political liberty, over and above gun ownership, that we are fighting for, I disdain pleas to "compromise." The remarkable people who gave us this country were quite ready to sacrifice their lives for the principle of political liberty. God grant that we may be worthy of them!

The birthday occasion in South Africa was orchestrated by Danie and Karen van Graan with great ceremony, including an enormous cake with eighty candles. Engonyameni shirts, supplied by Rich Wyatt, were worn by the hunters, and there was singing, bugle−blowing, declamations, and nyama for the troops. Now that I have heard "Amazing Grace" sung at my own funeral, I may not have to die.

We tend to think highly of the Swiss, especially as to their policies toward firearms, but we were much annoyed last month when the Swiss customs officers at the Zurich airport snutch our pistol. It was rather a special pistol, having been presented to me by the Mid−Carolina Rifle Club with suitable engraving. I was to take it to Africa, shoot a warthog or an impala, and return it to the donor that it might be auctioned off. We have passed through Switzerland many times in the past with no difficulty with customs, but somebody seems to have come up with a new rule in the meantime and had not told us about it. I have about a 40−60 chance of seeing that pistol again, but meanwhile I must caution all of the faithful to check out the Swiss regs very carefully immediately before any attempt to cross Swiss boundaries. Our temporary pit stops in Zurich in the past have always been very pleasant, but we must henceforth forego them unless we find, as has been suggested, that the whole thing was a bureaucratic glitch.

I make a determined effort to keep my mind open, especially in matters of weaponcraft. If there is a better way to do something with a firearm, or a better firearm, I wish to know about it, but I must be convinced that the asserted improvement is actually real, and not merely a passing fad. Thus to some people the doctrine developed in past years by practical pistol competition is not quick to change. The move to adopt the isosceles position in place of the Weaver stance is the result of mechanical attempts to reduce recoil at the expense of stopping power. The object of practical pistol skill is not to win trophies, but rather to stop fights. Muzzle brakes and reduced loads are backward steps and not to be regarded as progress. When we see the terms "race gun" and "carry gun" as representing two different instruments, we learn that some people at least have lost sight of the object of the exercise. It is important not to become dogmatic about this. If there is a better way or a better weapon, let's have it. But I have not seen this developing in pistolcraft, at least not recently. Those of us who have studied the matter deeply understood this a good many years ago. We will change when we are shown why we should, but not until then. In riflecraft, on the other hand, we have discovered a couple of new things which seem to be truly worthwhile, one of which is the "fist rest," sometimes referred as the "Hawkins" rest. A good number of my students have taken this technique afield with uniformly excellent results. I suppose there is nothing new under the sun, but illustrations indicate that the fist rest has not been widely used until quite recently. So now we teach it, where we did not as recently as five years ago.

Two of the really lousy ideas we have seen recently are the "tactical" Blaser R93 and the Steyr Scout in 223. We have seen pictures of the former, but only rumors of the later. May it not come to pass!

With all the flying we have been doing recently, we have been treated to perhaps a dozen new movies. The Countess and I used to like movies very much and regarded them as our principle entertainment during our early married years. But those were, in some measure, good movies, which are evidently not being made anymore. It is possible that I am just another old curmudgeon, but it seems to me that a good movie is a very scarce item these days. When we lived in California I knew of a very rich friend who, after he had given up driving Ferraris in competition, took his principle pleasure in sitting up late in his palace in Palm Springs, drinking vodka and watching old movies. I do not know whether the vodka helped, but the old movies were certainly better. Now living as we do in the sticks, it is more difficult for us to "take in a movie" on impulse. So we attempt to read the reviews in the hopes of finding an exceptionally satisfactory entertainment. Our luck has not been good, and now that we see what is being done in this line on these long airplane rides, the situation seems to be degenerating.

One of Danie's Swazi trackers wandered into town sometime ago and observed a party of health faddists working out in a gymnasium. Watching them sweat and strain, he asked Danie just how much they were paid to do that. When Danie told him that rather than being paid, they were paying for the privilege, our friend was appropriately amazed. "With that much effort you could build a house very quickly," was his comment.

We thought that the US federal government had reached a new low at Ruby Ridge. Then came Waco, and now we have the disgusting story of Elián Gonzales. This boy's mother risked her life and, as it turned out, lost it in order to spring herself and her child from the enemy prison. She died, he lived, and now, contrary to the elementary principles of humanity and the will of the majority of those concerned, we threw the kid back over the wall in order to make propaganda for a communist dictator. There is no way that we, as a nation, can ever make amends for that act.

I am pleased to report that *"Another Country,"* which I regard as my best book, is now back in print, and is available at the Gunsite Pro Shop.

When people ask us how are things in South Africa, we are inclined to quote our great, good friend Barry Miller of Durban. "People get the government they deserve, and we got it." When I first went to Africa over 20 years go, the unit of currency was the Rand, which was worth at that time $1.50. Today it is worth 14 cents. Before the revolution South African Airways was an outstanding airline in terms of cabin service. Today it would appear that the new management is taking its pointers from Aeroflot. When you effectively "give the country back to the Indians" you may find that the Indians do not know how to run the store.

The current situation in South Africa is oppressive in some ways, but by no means all. Country touring on the highway offers the best accommodations to be found anywhere in the world. I have not been everywhere in the world, of course, but my experience is not narrow. I can say that the good luxury hotels of rural South Africa are unequaled anywhere else. A really good hotel offers a fireplace in every bedroom. It offers a sitting room adjoining the dining room wherein guests may gather for a complimentary sherry while they place their orders. A really good hotel offers practically instant laundry service, including pressing. (In Spain, by contrast, it is easier and cheaper to buy new underwear.) Needless to say, a really good hotel offers a varied and imaginative cuisine. In South Africa this includes a broad selection of really excellent wines. As a final touch a really good hotel offers a complimentary car wash every morning. Apart from the scenery, the hunting, the history, and the wine, motor touring in South Africa is alone worth the trip.

The anti−hunting mood is unpleasantly manifest by the *polypragmatoi* throughout the world. We who hunt have no desire to reverse the emotional attitudes of those who do not, but we do wish they would quit telling us how to change our ways. The hunters of the world are the conservationists, without whom there would be no game animals anywhere for the bunny−huggers to hug. We prize the game, and we treat it with more respect than the bambiists do. Man is a carnivorous predator, and hunting, not horse racing, is "the sport of kings." We hunters rarely preach, but we are justified in resenting being preached at by people who do not

understand. As our great, good friend Danie Van Graan of Engonyameni puts it, "You can make a wild one tame, but you can't make a tame one wild."

Many years ago we made the mistake of introducing the wrong client to our hunting friends down there. He has returned three times. The PH who told us the story said that the first time this client appeared to be strange. The second time he was unpleasant. The third time he was obnoxious. And the fourth time he was intolerable. Now we hear he intends to come back again, but our PH friend told us that he will under no circumstances hunt with him.

The only "close encounter" on this last expedition involved a ringhals, which is frequently referred to as a "spitting cobra," though it is not actually related to the cobras. Regardless of its relations, it spat upon one of the trackers and got him right in the eye as intended (by the snake, not the tracker). The pain is agonizing, but the venom is not life−threatening unless it enters an open lesion. He showed no residual ill−effects the next day.

To me the high point of the last adventure was the performance of Joshua Robinson, son of Dr. Art Robinson the scientist/philosopher. Joshua has been to school with both pistol and rifle, and when he had a fleeting chance at a handsome bushbuck he decked him with one shot from offhand at 50 yards so quickly that Alf, his professional hunter, said it was the quickest shot he had ever seen. Joshua has done the bit on the flying clays at Whittington and he was using his own personal scout rifle with its angelic trigger.

As a crowning touch, Joshua borrowed Rich Wyatt's Dragoon and killed a running zebra with another snapshot at fifty meters. A zebra is a very tough beast, so this was a nifty case study of the 376 cartridge. Target angle was 090, and penetration was complete − in one side and out the other. This is a very satisfactory new round.

Incidentally, the bushveldt at Engonyameni this year was so lush that most shots were taken from offhand. I preach that when one can get steadier, he should always do so, but when only a brief second is afforded through the underbrush, the snapshot from offhand is often your only choice.

In Africa this time we heard of what was reported to be an unprovoked buffalo attack, though, under the circumstances, that might not be the right word. This buff had wandered into the wrong reservation and an attempt was made to herd him back where he belonged without gunfire. The man who was hit survived by grabbing the bull by the horns, which system has been known to work several times. There is a group in South Africa known as the "Survivors Club." It includes nine people who have been hit by buffalo and survived. Pretty exclusive!

On our way to Africa we were invited by Ed Kelleher, president of the Mid−Carolina Rifle Club, to participate in some local activities which included a pig hunt down in Hampton County, South Carolina. Pig hunting in those parts is generally conducted from tree stands, and cannot be really called hunting when it consists mainly of sitting and waiting − sometimes successfully, sometimes not. In my case, my usual good luck obtained and right there into the clearing below trotted this black pig (or Russian boar, as is the local term). I was packing the Dragoon − unnecessarily, but that is what I had in hand. That pig was killed as suddenly and decisively as anything I have ever shot − dead in its tracks with nary a muscle twitch.

Nobody called on Lindy's tree stand in the morning, but that changed on the afternoon watch and she put her animal away neatly at about a hundred yards with the 308/180 from her Steyr Scout.

On the morning watch from my tree stand I heard a certain amount of shooting hither and yon. In one instance, I heard three evenly spaced shots some 15 seconds apart. Later in the day I asked about that from the gentleman who had done the shooting. "Too far," he said, which called up an interesting picture. I could see

him shooting vainly at his beast as the first shot fell short in the dirt. He raised his sights, dropped another one short. And then tried still a third with the weapon elevated at some 30 degrees, only to find it strike at the feet of his pig, which had been standing there all this time. He was shooting a 30−30, which is the weapon of choice in those parts. The most popular version is a lever−action carbine fitted with what might be called a "moonscope," which is fully as long and three times as expensive as the rifle itself. This is popular because much of the shooting is done in very reduced light, either before dawn or after dark. It didn't help, of course, since his target beast was standing out there beyond the range of his weapon.

Some of the good old boys, hunting from the same base, did the job with dogs, which would run the beast to bay, whereupon they charged up and slew him with pistols. This is somewhat more exciting than a tree stand, provided you are in good running condition. Still better would be the use of a spear, though nobody I met there seemed to want to try it. Theodore Roosevelt, among others, insisted that the proper way to hunt a pig is with a spear. I think there is much to be said for that.

Since the revolution six years ago, things have steadily got worse in South Africa, but despite the political and civil degeneration, the *Golden Joys* are still there, glimmering through the murk of the "post modern" age. Go while there is still time!

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Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

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June

As the man said, "These are the times that try men's souls." He spoke when the American nation was in grave peril, and the liberties for which that nation was founded are today in grave peril. We have the summer to prepare for an election in which American political liberty will be up for grabs. If the American people choose to install another set of Beltway weirdos for the next four years the damage may be irreparable. Increasingly the Supreme Court makes the laws (in violation of the principle of separation of powers), and if the White House gang gets in it will pack the court, sounding the death knell of the constitutional principles for which we have fought down the ages.

So do not let it happen! Certainly your personal weapons are at stake, but above that, your political liberty is at stake. This has always been true, since the two must exist together. The first thing you can do is to join the National Rifle Association, or upgrade the membership you now hold. The second thing is to sign somebody else up, even if you have to pay his tariff. The third thing is to make yourself heard in person to your legislators and to those voices in the media who represent the enemy. We do not march in the streets, except in uniform, but that does not mean that we cannot make our power felt. That power is growing rapidly, quickly up to 3.6 million members and anticipating 4 million by election time. We have got to throw the rascals out in November, and by all that is holy we can do it!

Move out!

We have said it before, but we think it deserves repeating. Do not bring a pistol that cannot be cocked to school. We do not put the Glock in this category, since the Glock can be learned pretty well at short range where most actions take place, but "DA only" is a pointless handicap.

To those of you who like playing with words we have offered "ineptizoid" from Curt Rich. *Family member* Ed Head now suggests "nefarian."

So now we have the 450 Marlin cartridge, which is in effect a "Plus P" 45−70, purposely non−interchangeable to avoid its use in trap−door Springfields. This is probably a good idea, evidently stolen by Marlin from Jim West of Anchorage. The light, handy, powerful, quick−firing, take−down "Co−pilot" is a step forward, affording decisive stopping power in a convenient package at the short to medium ranges most useful in the hunting field. The 450 Marlin and the hand−loaded 45−70 will both stay neatly in the kill zone up to about 175 meters. Over the last decade our hunting averages have gone to 120 meters. Of course there is always a chance for that unusual long shot, so I am not personally graduating to the 450 just yet. If I need more power than the 308, I can happily fall back on the 376. Both of those rounds will hit as far as I can hold.

Fat, shrill and stupid. I need not mention any name, but I do wonder why people will pay to see an entertainer of that caliber.

One of the things we learned from the war in Chechnya is the utility of the cell phone. The Chechens have no formally organized units, but their small, irregular groups communicate freely by just the sort of handheld

phones you see on the mall.

The Countess and our daughters recently spent a delightful week in Bermuda. While there they were treated to an opinion by the Chief of Police that while violent crime is rapidly increasing, there is nothing for the citizen to worry about because there are no guns on the island. Fancy that! We might point out that there were no guns in ancient Rome either, but when I was there (I was much younger then), I always went abroad at night with an armed guard. It is all a matter of what you consider to be important.

> "A man may conduct himself well in both adversity and good fortune, but if you want to test his character, give him power."
>
> Abraham Lincoln

The following comes from Curt Rich's Newsletter, May 2000.

> "During ABC's unbelievably slanted 'Town Hall Meeting,' (that translates to '2 hour Clinton Propaganda Display') in the White House Friday, May 12, 2000 on Good Morning America, a display of courage rarely seen on TV occurred. Diane Sawyer and President Clinton hosted a propaganda display in the Roosevelt Room. The audience was mostly members of the 'Million' (Misinformed) Mothers' March, a propaganda demonstration organized by the Clinton White House. The token opposition was the lady from Kileen who, because of Texas' prohibition of concealed carry at the time, was unarmed when the lunatic started shooting in Luby's a few years ago. She stood up to the President, called him to task, and would not be silenced by the partisan mob. I've seen acts of courage under fire. I've studied the subject much of my life. I think she deserves a medal. If no one gives her any, I propose to give her one of mine. Because of her, in the two hours of emotion−filled gun confiscation frenzy, a few minutes of truth stood out like a shining beacon. As they say on The X Files, the truth is out there."

The trouble with history is that it is not politically correct, thus we see the modern counter−culture historians adjusting it to fit their ideology. This is particularly noticeable in the movie industry, but in *the Age of Illusion* there are very few people who are concerned about the truth.

Occasionally the only shot offered a hunter is one from dead astern − target angle 180. This is referred to in Africa as the "Portugese head shot," and it is a bad deal. Gut−shooting an animal from behind is a disgusting practice, but if you are good enough you may have the option of shooting over the top of the back and breaking the neck just at the base of the skull. That is a bit tricky, but I have seen it successfully brought off on four different occasions. The option is to wait, in the hope that the animal will turn at least his head. I have seen that shot executed perfectly twice in Africa. In all these cases, the shooters were excellent marksmen, and I am happy to say that they were all trained by me personally.

> "The only thing that saves us from bureaucracy is inefficiency. An efficient bureaucracy is the greatest threat to liberty."
>
> Eugene McCarthy, via Joyce Anderson

It strikes me that the Internet, useful as it is, constitutes a great source of what the military used to call "bum dope," there being no screening or editing involved in the release of material. It also is in large measure redundant. Many kind folks have written in to respond to questions I have put in these Commentaries with information that they got off the Internet. That information they derived from encyclopedias which I already have. Not to complain, but information, per se, is of no use without the wisdom to use it well. We have plenty

of information − what we need is wisdom.

It is interesting to speculate on the place that "career" seems to have taken in the mind of the professional soldier. Back when I was such a one, we certainly gave no thought to careers. The object was to do the best possible job in our own eyes − a matter of pure self−respect. What somebody else thought about us was of only passing interest. I, for example, did not even glance at my "jacket" until after the Korean War. That, of course, was characteristic of another age.

The range facilities here at Gunsite have been radically expanded and improved by the new boss, and we are operating now from a shiny new plant capable of handling more people, and − if the teaching staff does its business properly − handling them better. Onward and upward!

The new Czech 95 pistol is a very handsome item, and it is probably very well made in the tradition of its engineers. It is available in 40 S&W, but not in 45 ACP, which limits it to the second rank of serious defensive pistols.

Herewith a candidate for the "silliest headline of the year" award, which appeared on the front page of the *Citizen Tribune* of Morristown, Tennessee:

> "BLACK BEARS CONSIDERED VICTIM PREY"

Well, doggone! Are we to assume that heretofore black bears had considered their victims great good friends? There have been a series of black bear incidents so far in 2000, and in every case it would appear that the bruins had the idea that people are good to eat. Surprise, surprise!

Having spent the best part of my life in the pursuit of excellence, it comes as a shock to me to realize that many people are not interested in excellence. An amazing number of people neither want to do things better nor make things better. As far as I can see, their only aim in life is to make others notice them, one way or another. One can make himself noticeable in all sorts of ways, but certainly not all of them are good ways. This brings me around, of course, to the Steyr Scout rifle. This piece is really better − about 88 percent of what it should be, as compared to perhaps 50 percent or lower in other artifacts. We need a new and radically improved sight system, and the piece should be available in a left−hand version. With those two improvements it would be up there in the high 90s. As it is, it is a true joy to use in the field.

Various people now are planning to take the Dragoon to Alaska to show off its virtues on moose and the big bears. With currently available ammunition by Steve Hornady it should do very well, but we look forward to the appearance of somewhat more imaginative bullet design. If it has a defect, it is in recoil, and if we remember that recoil effect on the shooter is about 85 percent psychological, we should address this problem psychologically rather than mechanically.

The following from Cousin Bongo (Tom Graziano, *family member* from Arizona):

> "If people are going to imitate your Scout concept, the least they could do is put a bit of effort into getting it at least partially correct. The various imitations I have seen are so poorly done that they are going to prevent people from realizing the superiority of the concept."

Orange *family member* and police ace Gabe Suarez opines that a major obstacle in the promulgation of political freedom is that political freedom is simply too scary for most people. Certainly it is too scary for the Brits, who at this point feel that violent transgressions against society, while unfortunate, are acceptable, but that fighting back is an unforgivable sin. The man who breaks your jaw and steals your wallet may get 6 months in the slammer, but if you resist him with lethal force you are in deep trouble. A farmer in Britain

recently acquired a life sentence in prison for shooting an armed bandit. It certainly appears the prospect of human dignity has been lost somewhere in the depths of the 20th century. Perhaps our sociological goal now is "freedom from freedom."

The South Africans have now produced a brand new "poodle shooter" which fills exactly the same tactical niche as the M16 − not a particularly distinguished niche. This piece is made by Vector and it looks very trim. We have not put in for a test model though, because I am basically not interested in poodle shooters.

In a previous issue we noted that my work *"Another Country"* is now back in print and available at the Trading Post at Gunsite. The thing is, this version is paperback. If you have a hardcover, hang onto it.

It is sad to note that the political unrest in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) has practically ruined tourism/hunting in that country. I find this odd. On several occasions I have gone hunting in a war zone, and found the experience exhilarating. It suggests what deer hunting must have been like back in the American West in the mid−19th century. Obviously a hunter should always be on the alert, but when the woods are full of bad guys this is brought personally home. I had the impression that only people with a full supply of viscera enjoyed hunting in Africa anyway, but obviously outlooks differ.

Orange *family member* and distinguished naval historian Barrett Tillman notes that while there were several important German soldiers and flyers who stood up to and faced down both Göring and Hitler, we do not seem to have anybody in our own military establishment today who will stand up to Pat Schroeder.

Barrett Tillman further reports that the percentage of pretty girls at the Johannesburg airport is the highest he has seen in any place in the world − yet another reason for you unattached young males to make the trip.

While we are forced to regard the media as hostile to our liberties, there are some people in the news business who are still on our side. Note this from the *Wall Street Journal*:

> "Indeed, the tendency among sophisticates to blame inanimate objects such as knives or guns is a kind of defense mechanism against the principle of personal responsibility."

After all these years of waiting we finally acquired a very authentic Saufeder, or pig−spear, from Walter Luger of Salzburg. It is a handsome thing, and any self−respecting pig should be proud to be stuck with it.

The proliferation of small calibers and large magazines in the public sector is clearly connected to the growth of the "spray−and−pray" concept. The official word seems to be "If you can't shoot well, shoot a lot." Thus we see these news reports of double and even triple digit ammunition expenditure in civil gunfights, wherein one round well−placed would do.

In the private sector, on the other hand, the shooting seems to be better. Orange *family member* and rangemaster Ed Head reports of a case in Imperial Beach, California in which the scum element ran into a proper response. This affair seems to have been gang related, but however that was these two goblins showed up at a party muttering threats − an attitude not uncommon in those parts with those people. According to the host, he asked these characters to leave the premises, which they did, still muttering threats. They came back and were told again to leave. This time they announced they were going to arm themselves, come back and flatten the place, together with all involved. (I have never understood why anyone will telegraph his punch by announcing to his proposed victim what he is going to do.) Meantime the two characters did come back, fully armed. The householder fired two shots, achieved two head shots and two one−stop shots.

In due course the householder host was charged with something or other, tried and acquitted. He may thank

providence that this did not happen in England.

> "The unarmed man is not just defenseless − he is also contemptible."
>
> Machiavelli

Having now arrived at great age, I have my answer prepared for those who would ask me to what I attribute my durability. My answer is that never throughout my long life have I been willingly unarmed. The American Medical Association should take note.

You hunter/riflemen must remember that you do not cease practicing just because it is summer.

In response to all those helpful letters that were sent to me explaining the difference between iron and steel, I must report that the difference is semantic rather than chemical. I do thank those who participated in this exercise, and I now have the equivalent of a 3−unit upper division course in Ferous Metallurgy.

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Jeff Cooper's Commentaries

Previously Gunsite Gossip

Vol. 8, No. 7 July, 2000

The Big Bang

We were unable to get this issue to you in time for the Uproarious Fourth, but we trust you all celebrated the occasion appropriately with martial music, gunfire and patriotic exclamations. Here at Gunsite we featured barbecued buffalo, beans and beer, and toasted our friends from far and near. The republic has fallen upon evil days, but this must not discourage us. To the contrary, we must fire up our political awareness and set to work to re−institute the virtues of self−control, personal responsibility, chastity, decency, and good manners. The task is difficult, but not impossible.

Several people have remarked that the only place that one can find instruction in how to use a shooting sling is in *"The Art of the Rifle."* This is probably true, but the art of the rifle is becoming a lost art, and that is the reason I wrote the book.

Here at Gunsite we are making every effort to spruce up the place for the new era. Our Masters' program has started out well, and in the last class we achieved a triumph in the person of a young man of 18 who had never touched a firearm before coming to school, but who aced the class for an E ticket. This makes the trouble worth the trouble.

Family member Tom Flowers of Waco relays the report that somebody managed to drive a Bradley fighting vehicle off a cliff at Fort Hood. This is very difficult, there being no cliffs in the vicinity, but journalists keep writing about things they do not understand, which annoys us gunmen more than somewhat. It would be nice if writers of both commentary and fiction would lay off topics in which they have no competence, but that appears to be a futile hope.

For the man who has everything, we now report the offering in Germany of a museum piece version of the double 700 Nitro. This gorgeous item sells for 120,000 DM (plus or minus $80,000) and weighs eighteen and a half pounds. Important components are gold plated "to avoid corrosion." I guess this is evidence that in truth "the economy is on a roll."

Just last Sunday, the second of June, a new guided missile destroyer was commissioned and christened the USS McCampbell. This is a piece of good news, for at a time when we often name our ships after politicians rather than heros, Captain David McCampbell was a true example of the heroic breed.

Naturally we shooters prefer to extol heros who are conspicuously good marksmen − York, Woodfill, Hanneken for example. Captain David McCampbell is thus particularly gratifying to us, being probably the best shot in the naval air arm. He won his 34 victories by a lethal combination of outstanding flying skill and superb marksmanship. He won all sorts of prizes for aerial gunnery prior to World War II, and then put his skill to use as he rose in rank. It was as a four−stripe naval captain (the equivalent of a full colonel in the ground services) that he earned the Medal of Honor by shooting down nine Japanese aircraft on one mission. This was not a fluke, since on another occasion he splashed seven between takeoff and landing. Historian and *family member* Barrett Tillman computes that Captain McCampbell averaged out to one four−second burst per kill. Despite a fairly riotous personal life, he lived to the ripe old age of 86 and died just four years ago. I have

frequently posed the question about how to define a really good shot. David McCampbell was a really good shot.

The psychological castration of little boys proceeds apace in the education establishment. We hope and believe that school cannot replace the home as a source of values, but this is true only of the better homes. Perhaps that is just as well.

We now learn that a series of courts has fully absolved Lon Horiuchi of the murder of Vicki Weaver, on the grounds that he was "only doing his job." A number of German war criminals offered that argument at the Nürnberg trials, but they were hanged anyway.

So now Horiuchi walks free under no legal cloud. One wonders how carefully he watches his back.

Gunsite is now featuring the Number 80 Party Pistol, which is a short−coupled 1911 mildly embellished and − get this − slim−lined. As far as I know, this is the only 1911 clone which is slim−lined out of the box. About time! Only 80 of these instruments will be produced, in cognizance of my 80th birthday just past. The piece is expensive, but so is a Porsche. You get what you pay for.

There seems to be a certain amount of debate about the velocities obtained with the 376 Steyr cartridge in factory form. Steve Hornady claims 2600 feet for the 270−grain bullet, but he does not specify barrel length. The barrel of the Dragoon is short, at nineteen inches, and we suspect that Steve ran his tests with something longer than that. Hearing rumors about under−loading, John Gannaway just re−tested the factory load with his carefully calibrated chronograph and came up with an average of 2581.

The people at Steyr continue to push the cartridge in the conventional SBS rifle, which puzzles me. The virtue of the 376 Steyr cartridge is that it can be had in Scout configuration. Anyone who wants a conventional rifle of this category may go to the 375 Holland & Holland, which is not only slightly more powerful than the 376 Steyr, but also widely available. Ammunition for that 376 is going to continue to be hard to get for some time.

For reasons unknown to me Steve has issued a 225−grain load for the 376 cartridge which is loaded back down to a tested 2430f/s. This is 30−06 performance (220 at 2400). I vastly admire the 30−06, but I can see no reason to construct an entirely new and potentially more powerful round and then load it back down again. Clearly there are things about marketing that I do not understand.

It has been suggested that a significant difference between Americans and other people is that Americans admire success, whereas others envy it. That, of course, is an outrageously broad generalization, but it does give one to think.

Over the portals of our service academies there are inscribed the three words: Duty, Honor, Country. Those words used to be more easily defined than today when we tend to elect conspicuously dishonorable people to the highest offices in the land.

I thought that we had reached the low point in our history of dishonor at Ruby Ridge, but then came Waco, and now we have decided to throw the Gonzales boy back over the wall which his mother died trying to climb. There are still plenty of honorable Americans, but the federal government is making it difficult for them to pay it proper respect.

We are now planning the Safari Prep course for next year, scheduled for late March in order to give prospects a chance to catch a rifle class before coming to Safari Prep. As now planned, people in this course should know how to shoot a rifle before they come, and the best way to do this is to catch a rifle class here at Gunsite. (Just saying that you already know how to shoot a rifle is not convincing.)

There will be shooting in this class, and it will be conducted with the rifle the student intends to take to Africa. We plan three days, split about evenly between class work and field work. I have long looked forward to this effort, the more so because of the tales I get from my African friends about the astonishing naïveté and incompetence of American hunters who wander afield with the notion that money is enough and competence is insignificant. You can do an African hunt at about any level you choose, varying from sleep−on−the−ground−and−wash−your−own−socks to Indian Maharaja−style, but the important thing is to get a proper amount of pleasure for your money. You will not get this if you enter the scene blind. We can help. Please let us know here at Gunsite as soon as possible so that we can plan for the size of the class.

> "When death comes, as it must, the worthy man should be able to say that he left no drop in the bowl."
>
> Alcibiades (pp)

I continue to read my share of history, both fictional and presumably factual, and I discover a sad decline in literary skill amongst current writers. Too often they not only get their facts wrong, but they raddle the language. For example, whoever invented the term "gunned down" should flunk the course, as should those who maintain that shell fragments constitute "shrapnel." Additionally, a man who has never been in a fight should not write about it, since he has no firsthand knowledge of how a man reacts to violence. Unfortunately this decline is equally true, or even more so, in film than in print.

Do we know for a fact that the Smith & Wesson sell−out was British−inspired? I have no spies on station in this league.

As the Brits continue their downward trend towards full realization of Orwell's *"1984"*, they are now recommending that people overhearing "racist" remarks in pubs or restaurants make haste to report this transgression to the cops. Britain was once the "Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the Free," but that was in the 19th century.

As you doubtless know it is now assumed that the "Ancients" (Neanderthals) were displaced and/or exterminated by the "Moderns" (Cro−Magnons). Since the Ancients were stronger than the Moderns and had an equivalent or slightly larger brain capacity, the Moderns must have had an asset which gave them victory. In my opinion, this asset was missilery. As far as we can tell the Moderns had bows and javelins, where the Ancients did not, and that may have done it.

Incidentally, the two races lived side−by−side in Europe for quite some time, and this probably gave rise to the warning that "the goblins will get you if you don't watch out." Ancient middens have been found containing the bones of immature Moderns. Better stay out of the deep woods, kids.

Had you noticed that the new headman in Russia is pushing for a twelve percent flat tax? We have always been rather plus on the idea of a flat tax, and look where it turned up!

The pig (*Sus scrofa*) seems to be taking over as the world's prime game animal, at least the most popular and accessible. Wild pigs are all over the place, and they can turn into a very considerable nuisance if their numbers are not controlled. So pig hunting may well be the wave of the future, which is okay because pigs are plentiful, active, intelligent, tasty − and can be dangerous.

Prerequisite reading for the Safari Prep course stands as follows: *"Meditations on Hunting"* by José Ortega y Gasset, *"The Perfect Shot"* by Kevin Robertson, *"The Art of the Rifle"* by Jeff Cooper. These books are now

available from the Gunsite Trading Post.

In enlarging the facility here we have named three new ranges after Alvin York, Sam Woodfill, and Herman Hanneken. We did not use Hathcock because his name has already appeared on half−a−dozen other installations.

In recent testing John Gannaway and a partner discovered that their 376 Dragoon printed to exactly the same place on paper regardless of how it was held, and it shot to the same point for both shooters. This is pretty unusual. It may be the result of mounting the sight on that extended receiver, which does not touch the barrel. However, whatever causes it, it works.

Feinstein, Lautenberg and Waxman − there is a choice crew − have now decided that "the 50 BMG cartridge presents a serious and substantial threat to national security." Er, howzat? Sometimes our adversaries are so silly that we forget how dangerous they are.

Leopards. Shortly before his death I was very pleased to learn that the late, great Finn Aagaard and I had the same view on the subject of leopard hunting. That is, the leopard is just too beautiful to shoot. Finn told me, "I have never pressed trigger on a leopard, and I never intend to." That does not mean that either of us sought to restrict or eliminate leopard hunting. Leopards are pretty fierce people and are quite partial to eating domestic pets and children. In some places they lean towards the dismal practice of snatching infants out of the mother's arms, and when they get into a goat pen they usually kill all the goats, over and above what they can eat. No, they are not nice people, but neither are they endangered. They blend well into civilization, both in India and Africa, under conditions where lions and tigers perish, but I do not want to shoot one. Let George do it!

A recent paper we saw discussed some training information from Alcatraz, and we discovered that the guards on that island were carrying their 1911s in Condition One long before that system was accepted by law enforcement in general. Of course, it is not now absolutely accepted, but we are getting there at last.

In a previous issue we reported how that girl from Kileen, Texas, laid into Bill Clinton in a television confrontation. What we did not realize was that Susan Howard, the charming chairman of the NRA Public Affairs Committee, was swinging the hatchet with her usual efficiency on that same occasion. It is easy to make Bill Clinton look silly in debate, but Susan does it with such style that it hardly hurts. (Of course, it is impossible to embarrass Clinton anyway, since he is without shame.)

Frankie Lou Nicholson, "our man in Nebraska," tells of a turkey hunter who used his turkey call so expertly that he called up a bobcat. The beasty was practically in spitting distance before he discovered the error in his target identification system. He was dreadfully surprised, but no harm was done. Cat, hunter and turkey all survived to wait for next season.

Possibly a really good product does not need to advertise. I do not recall ever seeing an ad for a Ferrari. However, as a great admirer of this Steyr Scout, I do not think it has been drawn adequately to the attention of the shooters. Part of the problem is that you have to shoot it on a series of extensive field courses to realize just how much better it is than anything else available. Most critics base their criticism on initial impression and possibly on the size of bench groups. Consider that the very superior Remington 600s and 660s were largely rejected because their bolt handle swept forward rather than rearward. This was an advanced idea and based upon the notion that the bolt handle should be quickly available to the trigger finger. The idea was right, but the result was funny looking in many people's eyes. It does not seem to us that looks have anything to do with riflery.

This proliferation of gutter language is not only bad taste, but also the confession of an inadequate vocabulary.