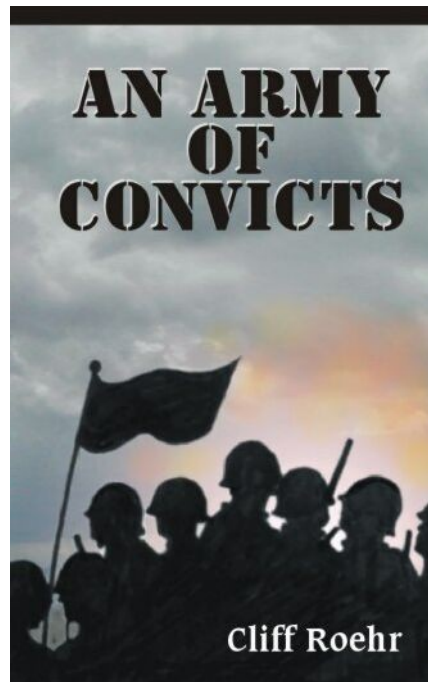


An Army of Convicts

By Cliff Roehr



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They combed America's prisons to find men suitable for military service,

then used them to form an Expendable Force to be placed on the front lines.

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Aside from putting forth my political agenda I tried to make it as interesting and entertaining as I possibly could. I think I succeeded, please let me know what you think after reading it. Send me mail to pahrumpsters@yahoo.com

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- CHAPTER 1 -
YOUNG ADAM

He was christened Adam Tallchief Harcrow. Adam was the name of his paternal grandfather and Tall Chief was the name of his maternal Cherokee grandfather. At nine Adam was a healthy normal kid. His mother, Carman, half Cherokee and half white, was a registered nurse at one of the UMA Quick Care Clinics in North Las Vegas, Nevada. His Father, Clarence, was a sergeant on the North Las Vegas Police Department. Adam was their only child.

Adam had skipped the fourth grade and was now attending Greenbrier Elementary School as a fifth grader although he was only nine. Carman, Clarence and Adam were a happy family. They were buying a brand new home in a new tract of three bedroom, two bath, stucco houses with red tile roofs, which most of the housing tracts in the Las Vegas Valley were in those days.

When Adam was nine, his father started suffering intermittent stomach pain. Clarence thought it was just indigestion. At Carman's insistence he made an appointment for a checkup. The Doctor had ordered the usual tests and then ordered more tests. Finally the diagnosis was made, it was not good news and the family was devastated. Although only in his early thirties, Clarence had been diagnosed with stomach cancer at a most advanced stage.

He was forced to resign from the police department and he underwent three surgeries over the next two years. It had spread to all his organs before it had ever been discovered. He underwent chemotherapy for several months and while on home hospice care Clarence passed away peacefully one morning when Adam was in school. The body had been removed before Adam came home. There was a large funeral, attended it seemed, by the whole North Las Vegas Police Department. It was a beautiful service and Clarence was laid to rest.

His father's passing had been difficult for Adam and it left a big void in his life. With his fathers life insurance and his mother's employment they were able to keep their home and maintain a decent standard of living. There was no abundance of money and Adam learned the value of a dollar early on.

During the two years of his father's convalescence Adam had spent a lot of time with him. They had taken turns reading the Classics to each other. They had discussed all kinds of things that were very enlightening and fascinating to the boy. Their discussions were about things that most boys his age had never been exposed to. Adam had enrolled in a local Kids Karate School when he was eleven and progressed rapidly. He obtained his black belt when he was thirteen. Along the way Adam had played soccer, basketball, little league baseball and Pop Warner football. He liked all sports and was better than average at all of them. He was the quarterback on his Pop Warner football team and the pitcher on the Wildcats Little League baseball team. The Wildcats won the league championship the last year that he played and Adam was

named the league's most valuable player. Adam had continued on at the Karate school after getting his black belt, instructing the younger children and in the process, earned his spending money.

Adam was blessed with the olive skin of his mother. He had the high cheek bones and black wavy hair of the Cherokee and deep inset steel blue eyes of his Caucasian father. At fourteen he possessed the startling good looks that had all the girls crazy about him and clamoring for his attention.

- CHAPTER 2 - WELCOME HOME HENRY

It was after midnight on the last leg of his flight that had brought him from his duty station near Seoul in South Korea to Japan, then Hawaii and then to his wife Lilly's Apartment in Portland, Oregon. Lilly had wanted to remain in Portland while he was overseas because Portland was where her parents lived. He was Master Sergeant John Henry Adams, United States Army. Henry had been relieved of duty two days early and was on his way to pick up his wife. Henry planned to buy a new car in Portland, maybe something small and gas efficient. While he was in Korea he had the opportunity to tour a couple of the Korean automobile factories to see how the Korean cars were made. He certainly wouldn't rule one of those out. After a few days off and a third, or was it a fourth, honeymoon with Lilly they would head for his new post of duty at Fort Lewis, Washington.

Henry, as he preferred to be called or Hank had just completed eighteen years of outstanding military service and was an E-8 Master Sergeant at age thirtysix. He was sure that he would retire as Master Sergeant-Major E-9 by the time he had his thirty years in. He would then be only 46 and would have plenty of time left to enjoy his retirement years. He had thought about opening a little fishing camp on the Seminole Reservation in Southern Florida where he was born and raised. But plenty of time to think about that later on, twelve more years to be exact.

Although Hank had no actual Indian blood, he was nevertheless an enrolled Seminole Indian. Back before the Civil War there were several hundred escaped slaves that made their way into the Seminole Nation and took asylum. Over the next one hundred seventy five years or so, many of them remained and were regarded as members of the tribe. When the Bureau of Indian Affairs started enrollment of certifiable Indians who were eligible for Indian benefits Hanks parents not only enrolled as Seminole Indians they had also enrolled Hank. He was therefore what was known in those parts as a Black Indian.

As daylight was breaking and the plane was on its final approach to Portland International Airport anxiety rose in Hank's throat. He hadn't seen his lovely wife, Lilly in almost two years, and he could hardly wait. He bought her flowers and a box of Candy at the Airport gift shops then caught a Taxi home. Lilly expected him home in two more days but he thought he would surprise her by walking in early so he had

not called to give her his change in plans.

Her apartment was on the second floor. He took the elevator up then found her door and tried it. It was unlocked so he let himself in without knocking. He laid the flowers and Candy down on the coffee table then noted that it was still only a little before 0600. She must still be in bed. The bedroom door was open a crack and Hank peered in. She was in bed all right but not alone. There was a white man in the bed with her. They were both sound asleep.

He was shocked beyond belief, she had never given any indication that she was being unfaithful to him. Without thinking the situation through properly Hank went into the kitchen and withdrew a boning knife from the knife rack. He then entered the bedroom and with no hesitation whatsoever he sank the knife deep into the sleeping mans temple and within less than one second withdrew it and stuck his lovely wife under the chin all the way to the hilt so that the blade penetrated her brain. Neither of them ever woke up, nor would they ever. Henry then went to the wall phone in the kitchen and dialed 911. He reported what he had done then sat down and waited for the police to arrive.

Within the hour he had signed a full confession and used his one phone call, not to call an attorney but to call his new duty station at Fort Lewis to tell them that he doubted he would be reporting in. He pleaded guilty at his arraignment and was promptly sentenced to twenty-five years in the Oregon State Penitentiary without the possibility of parole. By the next morning he was at the Oregon State Penitentiary at Pendleton to commence serving his sentence.

- CHAPTER 3 - ADAM'S FRESHMAN YEAR

Adam went out for the football team. Although he was large for his age he had no expectations of getting much playing time during his freshman year. He did make the team and was installed as the third string quarterback.

Two days before the start of the season the second string quarterback, a junior, blew his knee out in practice and was through for the season. Adam was moved up to the second string and had an active role from the first game on.

Just before half time of the third game of the season the starter took a vicious blow to the head and was out for three weeks with a concussion. His team trailed by a score of sixteen to seven when Adam came out and started the second half. He completed twenty two of twenty four passes in the second half and led his team to a thirty two to thirty win. He was on his way and never looked back.

The fourth game of the season found Central playing at home against an older and more mature team from Grant High. The night before the game Adam had accompanied his mother to do some shopping at the Meadows Mall. He had finished

looking at the things he was interested in and decided to have a coke in the food plaza. As luck would have it, he ran into Jeff Dawson, one of the wide receivers on his team, in the food court. They sat down at an empty table and were talking quietly between themselves about the upcoming game when three big burley guys, all well over two hundred pounds, came in and took a seat two tables over from them. The big guys were the macho blowhard types. As Adam gathered from their conversation, they were defensive linemen from Grant High. One of them, a big blond bruiser was saying to the others "Have you guys heard that Central has lost their first and second string quarterbacks and they are having to start some little freshman at quarterback. Man am I going to have a field day. I can hardly wait. The center of the Central offensive line are all Freshmen and sophomores, we can just blow them away. I am going to get a sack on that little kid every other down." Adam and Jeff just kind of smiled to themselves and Jeff said "Now we can't let them treat our little kid that way, can we?"

It turns out that the big blond guy's name was Carl Farmer. He was indeed their starting defensive tackle and a senior. He had been held back a year and was now nineteen years old. In one respect he was right; Adam at fourteen was just a kid, but not a little kid. At fourteen he was big for his age. He stood six feet tall and weighed almost two hundred lbs. Because of his athletic lifestyle, he had developed early. He didn't have an ounce of fat on him. He was already big enough to have been playing in the defensive line himself but because he had a cannon for a right arm he had been steered toward quarterback.

The band played the National Anthem while they all stood with their hands over their hearts. They had the flip of the coin and Central kicked off. Central held on downs

and Grant was forced to kick. After the kick rolled into the end zone Central took the ball on their own twenty. The first time Adam took the snap from center he faded back deep looking for either Jeff Dawson or Tommy Rich streaking down the sidelines.

Sure enough Carl Farmer had easily knocked the offensive tackle on his rear and was bearing down on Adam, arms waiving in the air. Adam saw him coming and whirled around as though to take off scrambling but made a full circle and brought his right leg up high, Karate style and nailed Carl hard right in the face mask. Carl's head snapped back, his feet went out from under him and he went down hard on his back. One of the officials had seen what Adam did but, thinking it just a fluke didn't call a penalty. After all, how often is a quarterback called for messing up an interior lineman. After disposing of Carl Farmer, Adam looked around quickly and determined that the rest of the offensive line had held. His guys were the only ones in the backfield. He spotted Tommy who had by this time ran out of pass range and was doubling back across the field. Adam hit him with a bullet twenty yards beyond the line of scrimmage, for a first down. When Carl Farmer hit the ground, it knocked the wind out of him and he had to be carried off the field to sit out a couple plays.

Central got one more first down but ended up punting the ball away.

Central finally stopped Grant and forced them to punt the ball but they had reached

midfield. The ball rolled into the end zone again and Adam's team took over, first and ten at the twenty. By now Carl Farmer had returned to the lineup and once again burst into the backfield in quest of the easy sack. Adam was definitely on the lookout for him this time; he once again did his karate pirouette, this time catching Carl square in the breadbasket with his instep. After completing his pass for a thirty-yard game he noticed that they were carrying Carl off the field with the wind knocked out of him again. "That guy's a slow learner," Adam remarked to no one in particular as he returned to his huddle to call the next play.

The third time that Carl returned to the lineup he was held at the line of scrimmage for the whole series of downs and Central drove down to the ten yard line before being forced to settle for the field goal.

On Central's next possession Carl once again broke through and came bearing down on Adam with hate in his eyes. It was obvious to Adam that Carl had lost it; he just wanted revenge. As Carl left his feet and hurled himself through the air at Adam's head Adam ducked down and then stood up quickly as Carl was going over the top. Carl flew up into the air, did a full gainer at about six feet off the ground. His helmet, which had not been snapped on, flew off and he once again came down hard on his back. This time when they carried him off the field, he did not return. Adam heard later that he had suffered a mild concussion as well as having the wind knocked out of him for the third time. "So much for the big guys from Grant beating up on our little kid quarterback." Jeff said.

Adam continued to improve with every game. Central lost three squeakers during the regular season, won seven games and made the playoffs. They lost their first playoff game but finished better than they were supposed to with so many Freshmen and Sophomores on the squad.

CHAPTER 4 THE PADRE

Father Jose Villa was the Parish Priest of a small out-of-the way church on the Oregon coast. He was happy in his work and enjoyed his relationship with his congregation and the community. He took great pride in the choir and in the beauty of the small church. He was active in all kinds of civic projects and even townspeople of other faith's sought him out for help in times of family crisis. He always rendered what help he could to anyone who required it whether they were Catholic or not. He always felt that deep down everyone was Catholic but a lot of them weren't aware of it.

Father Villa had been at his post for almost five years, since graduating from seminary and being ordained as a Priest. He particularly delighted in the children of the church and spent a lot of his time supervising their activities. He also spent a lot of time with the sick and the elderly, but the children were what fed his soul. He was about as thoroughly good through and through as a human being can get.

One day a Priest from a church in Portland was arrested for molesting a little boy

sexually. It was a terrible scandal and the news media made the most of it. They ran a film clip over and over of the Priest being led from the church in handcuffs. There was a long trial, resulting in a conviction. Then the media ran the clips of him being led from the courtroom in manacles to begin serving his twenty year sentence in the state penitentiary. The Bishop appeared on a Portland talk show to assure the people that priests like this were not typical of the Church and to assure everyone that the man had been excommunicated from the Church. A week went by and then word came that he had hanged himself in his prison cell. The whole ordeal had lasted almost six months and had done irreparable harm to every Catholic church and every Catholic clergyman in the state.

At this time there was a barber in town named Max Ruggles. Max had no religion, but his wife was Catholic, so his children were being raised Catholic. Max was one of those bigoted, narrow minded individuals that seem to be so plentiful in society. Watching the nightly news and closely following the story of the downfall of the Portland priest, he got the idea that maybe that priest was just the tip of the iceberg. He figured that maybe all priests were not of that ilk but that in all probability a lot of them were. His own two small children, one a boy and one a girl spent, it seemed to him, all of their free time at the Church, and they just adored that Father Villa. The more Max got to thinking about it the more worked up he became. He began to discuss his concerns openly in the barber shop and began to get a lot of the other men worked up also. Now we all know that a question posed by one man becomes a quotation when repeated by another.

Soon the whole town was up in arms and they sent for the psychologist from Portland who had done such a splendid job in nailing the Priest there. She interviewed all the children who participated in activities at the Catholic church. She was fond of using anatomically correct dolls in her interviews and in wording her questions so as to get a child to give her the answer she wanted to hear. Of course every child that left an interview was besieged by the other children with questions. Children will be children and so as to gain in peer group status many of them embellished their account of what had taken place in their interview.

It wasn't long before the police became involved. Father Villa, although completely innocent was arrested. The prosecutor visited him in jail and threatened him. Father Villa appealed to the bishop in Portland to furnish him with defense counsel but the bishop had a better idea. Upon his arrival in town the bishop went directly to the jail and talked to Father Villa himself. Father Villa tried to explain that he was innocent but that is what the bishop expected him to do. "Listen to me now Father," the bishop said "Do you love the Church?" "Of course I love the church." "Then this is what you must do, if you do not, it could put the church in a very embarrassing position and bring irreparable damage. "You must plead guilty and put a quick end to this mess. Quite frankly I don't know if the Church in Oregon could survive another fiasco like the one we have just gone through."

Father Villa was devastated but if that is what it took he would have to do as his bishop had instructed, to save the Church. He knew he was being martyred but there

was no other way out. At his arraignment two days later, he was represented by an attorney he had never before met. The man had been sent down from Portland by the bishop to make sure that he pleaded guilty and minimized the damage. When the judge asked "How does your client plead"? Father Villa's attorney responded "Guilty as Charged Your Honor." "This is quite unusual," responded the judge. "Mr. prosecutor, is this a plea bargain for a lighter sentence?" "No, Your Honor, it comes as a complete surprise to me, I was going to approach the defense after the arraignment to see what could be worked out, but now that hardly seems necessary." "In that case the law is clear, mandatory sentencing guidelines require me to sentence you to twenty years in the state penitentiary, without possibility of parole." With that the trial ended and Mr. Villa was led out of the courtroom in manacles.

- CHAPTER 5 - BASIC TRAINING

Adam came home from school one day about a week before the end of his freshman year and handed a printed form that he had filled out in his meticulous block letter printing and then signed with his full name and rank of private, and his serial number. "What's this" she asked? "Just a form you need to sign, Mom," he said. "What kind of form?" she asks. "It seems that I need your written permission," says Adam, " so I can attend Summer Camp with the ROTC." "Where is the camp being held, and how long will you be gone?" " The Camp is at Fort Ord; it is an old closed down army fort over on the coast, by Carmel. The Army Reserves, National Guard and ROTC have it now ," he responded. "Actually, attendance is mandatory, in order for me to stay in the ROTC program, so I don't even know why you should have to sign it." "Be that as it may, Adam, I want to know more about it." "Well it is army basic training, mom." "It's required, like I said. I will be gone most of the summer. It starts the week after school lets out, and I'll get back by late August." After much thought, Adam's mother relented, remarking "Seems like a nice cool place to spend the summer; I'll sign the form and you go and have a good time."

About two hundred boys gathered at the school parking lot, with their families and friends present to see them off, early on the morning of June twelfth. They were all dressed in their army fatigue uniforms and carried all of their army issue clothing in duffle bags. The duffle bags were tagged and loaded on a truck and then the boys were loaded onto brown U.S. Army busses and found their seats. They waived goodbye to their loved ones through the windows and the busses pulled out. The trip took the entire day, with "rest" stops and a lunch break, arriving at Fort Ord just before dark. Adam was seated beside another young private, Darrell Good, who lived in his neighborhood and was also on the football team. The boys had known each other most of their lives and were buddies. They had spent many hours playing together as little kids. The boys sang and laughed and horsed around on the bus trip and had a grand time.

Upon their arrival, the busses pulled in side by side in a large parking lot and the driver opened the door but hollered to the boys to remain seated. The driver left the bus, returning in a few minutes accompanied by four young men, in their late teens,

wearing yellow helmet liners with the word "CADRE" printed on the front and the back of each helmet. They were wearing army khaki uniforms with their collars open and combat boots polished to a high sheen. They looked really sharp, but not too friendly.

One of the cadre climbed up the steps and entered the bus; he wore the stripes of a Sergeant First Class, three stripes pointing up with two rockers below. "Good morning gentlemen" he said. "I am Sergeant Winslow and before you leave here, you will come to know me very well. When I tell you to leave the bus, I want you to debark quickly. You are to double-time to that area in front of the busses over there and form up. I suppose all of you know what squad and platoon you are in." He stepped off the bus then looked back and hollered "MOVE!"

The boys hastily assembled into their familiar formations and were marched to the huge mess hall in the reception area where they were fed a mediocre meal of fried chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy with green beans and a dinner roll. All of which would have been much better three hours earlier when it was still warm. They thought they would commence training immediately but instead spent their first week in something called pre-cycle. During that week they underwent a complete physical, had their heads shaved, received their shots and filled out about a hundred forms. Then one day the trucks showed up and they were trucked up to their company areas.

They formed up again after debarking the trucks and were addressed by the Company Commander, Captain Dubois. "This fort has a great history, men," he said, "It once served as the primary basic training fort West of the Mississippi." "Then the Army closed it down about twenty years ago. Now it has been reactivated for the convenience of training ROTC, National Guard and Army Reserve units. We, meaning your cadre and officers will attempt to recreate for you, army basic training as it was enjoyed by almost a million GI's in from the nineteen thirties to the nineteen eighties. Enjoy this little speech of mine gentlemen it is probably the last civil word you will hear from any of us for the next two months. Any questions? No, good, now Cadre, shape these men up."

Once again he and Darrell Good were thrown together in side to side bunks. Sergeant Winslow appeared at the front of the barracks and said "Now gather around men, I have a foot locker and a wall locker set up here. It contains all the clothing you have been issued and nothing else. Everything you see here is to be arranged exactly as you see it in your own foot locker and wall locker. Any man who has anything in a different place will regret it. I expect this barracks to be the best on the hill and have mercy on the man that lets me down.

Just before you boarded the trucks that brought you up here you were marched before the paymaster who gave each of you one of the army's famous "flying" twenties. We will later today be taking each platoon to the PX where you will purchase the things that you lack from the list that I have posted on the wall here. These are personal items of tooth paste, tooth brush, razor, shaving cream, shoe polish, liquid starch,

hand soap, cotton balls and laundry soap. Whatever is left of your twenty dollars after these purchases should be saved to replace items as needed. I caution you to buy nothing else. In the reception area you were given the opportunity to send anything else of value that you had home. From this point on anything else you are caught with will be confiscated. Basic trainees at this post have traditionally been allowed cigarettes and matches but since none of you girls are eighteen you are considered too young to smoke, so any man caught smoking will be severely punished. Beer is sold in the PX, but if any of you men are caught trying to buy beer you will likewise be severely punished. Another tradition of this facility is candy bars, they are worth their weight in gold, men will kill for a candy bar.

The army has always fed recruits double rations but with the amount of calories you will be burning you will feel like you are starving to death. This is a planned diet gentlemen. You fatso's will lose twenty to forty pounds in the next eight weeks and you skinny guys will gain that much but the candy will throw the whole system off so it is forbidden, do I make myself clear?" There was a mummer from the assembled Cadets then Sgt. Winslow repeated himself in a voice that could be heard for a quarter mile. "DO I MAKE MYSELF CLEAR?" "Yes sir", a few of the Cadets murmured. When Sgt. Winslow repeated himself again in an even louder voice he was answered in kind, "YES SIR!" Adam had no idea why they were to call sergeants SIR, but they were, that is just the way things were done here.

When they visited the PX Adam reluctantly purchased one bottle of liquid starch along with the other necessities that he was instructed to buy. A guy sidled up to him and nudged him on the shoulder. "If I were you," he said, "I would buy all of that stuff you could afford." Adam noticed that his hair was about an inch long, which meant that he had been this same route recently. "Why is that?" Adam asked? "You'll find out soon enough," the guy chuckled as he walked away. Luckily, Adam heeded his advice and bought six bottles.

Adam marched back to his company area with his platoon and figured he would wash and iron his fatigues. He wasn't sure why, he just had a premonition. For one thing he noticed that the army had generously furnished irons and ironing boards in all the barracks. He washed his clothes in a washtub with GI lye soap on a scrub board then saturated them with one whole bottle of the liquid starch he had just purchased. Since no one else was doing their laundry he hung them over one of the shower rods in the latrine then went to work on his boots.

One of the things that his father had taught him was how to give a spit shine. At first he had wondered why they were told to buy the cotton balls but now he figured it out. They were told to buy shoe polish, and the only kind they had at the PX was the old fashioned

Kiwi paste wax, which he had bought. They, however, were not told to buy a shoe brush or a polishing cloth. Well he knew what the cotton balls were for, to apply the shoe polish. You were to spit on the shoe or boot that you were working on then rub vigorously to attain a high shine. By 2:00 A.M. he had his fatigues washed,

starched so they would stand up by themselves and ironed so you could shave with the crease in his pants. He had spit-shined both pairs of his combat boots to the point that you could see your reflection in them. He looked over his accomplishments and then turned in.

Five A.M. Comes mighty early when you go to bed at 2:00 AM but Adam was soon glad that he had sacrificed a few hours sleep. The Company was ordered to attention and an inspection began. About a dozen men who had advance word or premonition were ordered to form a line in front of the mess hall door; everyone else was sent back to the barracks and told to come back out for an individual inspection. When they passed inspection they would be allowed to eat. The cooks were ready for this morning and had only prepared enough hot food for the few. After the cadre, the officers and the few who passed inspection had eaten, cold cereal, bread, peanut butter and jelly were set out for any of the others that could pass inspection before lunch. In the meantime those who passed were given time off. Adam went into the dayroom after breakfast, selected a two month old Automobile Magazine and promptly fell asleep.

After lunch they had their first GI party. That is a party where the barracks gets thoroughly cleaned, the floors buffed to a high gloss with Simonize Paste Car Wax, and each man finished setting up his foot locker and wall locker the way they had been taught. They also received instruction on bed making, with hospital corners and tight enough for a quarter to bounce off. When all was perfect, a full inspection was held with each man standing by his bunk. For the inspection they were told to don their khaki uniforms and low quarter shoes with black socks. Of course the barracks was not clean enough and no one, even Adam had their khaki uniforms pressed properly. After dinner they spent the time until 10:00 PM getting ready for another full inspection. By 11:00 P.M. most of them were in the sack, all wondering just what they had gotten themselves into. The cadre, it seems had not been lavish in their praise of the cadets, during that hell day.

The next morning, however, it looked like a entirely different group. After breakfast they were double- time marched about a mile to the armory where they were each issued an old army M1 rifle from the Korean War era. These rifles were obsolete for warfare but wonderful for training recruits how to handle and care for the army's equipment. They were then marched double-time to a training area that seemed to be about a mile from the armory. There they were taught how to disassemble, clean and reassemble their rifles.

For the first week of their training their destinations seemed to get a little further each day and they always moved at a double-time pace. No one, it seemed, ever walked in this place. Even when crossing their company from the barracks to the mess hall or day room, or office, they were required to run.

In the subsequent weeks they were taught all the basic skills that a soldier needed to know. One boy remarked, "When I get out of here I am going to make someone a good wife. So far the army has taught me to clean house, wash, iron, sew and make

beds. This would also be excellent training for motel maids." Several of the guys laughed because they had all had the same thought.

In their fifth week they started their qualifying on the rifle range with their old M1 rifles that had become their constant companions; they carried them everywhere. The rifles were stacked tepee fashion when they entered the mess hall for chow and were kept in a locked rack at the rear of each row of bunks in the barracks, but other than that they were carried everywhere they went. Each boy remembered the serial number of his rifle and there was always a mad scramble to retrieve the right one when they left a room where the rifles had been stacked out front.

Adam was among those who had little trouble qualifying on the range; as it turned out he was just a naturally good shot. Some of the boys, however, spent many extra hours before they were good enough to achieve the required scores.

Throughout the entire training period everyone had a ferocious appetite and although they were being fed double rations at every meal they were always hungry. Several of the young men had taken to buying candy bars at the PX. Even though this was strictly forbidden they found ways when they were out of sight of the cadre to gulp one down.

There were few fights, everyone was just too busy trying to survive and too damned tired to fight. One of the young men named Fletcher had a body odor problem. One morning Adam's whole platoon was sent back to the barracks because Sergeant Winslow said they stunk. They were told to come back out when they smelled better and if they got back soon enough they could still have breakfast; otherwise they would all go without. Everyone knew who among them it was that didn't smell very good and when the platoon returned to the barracks they wasted little time in stripping Private Fletcher buck naked while two of them filled the laundry tub with hot water. They took a harsh bristled floor scrub brush from the supply cabinet in the latrine and a bar of old army lye soap. When they finished scrubbing him down he was as red as a lobster, all over his body. He was allowed to rinse off quickly in the shower and get dressed. They made it in time to get fed. From that day on no one ever noticed Fletcher having any smell to him at all.

Military Academy at West Point, New York. He had wanted to attend Army since he had enrolled in high school. In their sixth week of training Adam woke up in the middle of the night and got out of bed intending to make a latrine call. He looked down at Darrell Good's bunk next to his. It had not been slept in. Adam knew what that meant; Darrell had been saying for over a week that he didn't think he could make it; he couldn't take it any more.

"Hey Jackson, wake up," he said to the boy that occupied the bunk next to Darrell's on the other side. "Have you seen Darrell? His bunk hasn't been slept in." "No man, I ain't seen him," Jackson murmured. "What do you think, that he went over the hill?" "If he did there ain't nothin' we can do about it, so you might as well go back to sleep." That wasn't good enough for Adam, he at least had to try. Hurriedly, Adam threw on

his fatigues and headed out the door. Adam made his way to the Main Gate which was almost two miles from the company area. There was a corporal on duty alone. Adam went up to him, "Evenin'," he said, "how long have you been on duty this shift?" "I just got here about an hour ago, why?" "We have a man missing and I wondered if he left through the main gate, that's all." "This isn't a prison and guys got a right to walk right on outta here, but we do log them out. Here's the log if you want to look for his name." Adam read the short list of names and Darrell's name was not there. "Is there another gate he could have left by?" "No, not at night there isn't, if his name is not on that list he is probably still on base somewhere." "Thanks, thanks very much". Adam then ran over to the PX and doughnut shop area. The PX was closed but the doughnut shop was open all night for the guys on guard duty and other night workers. There Darrell was, in the doughnut shop asleep with his head on a table. "Hey, Darrell, wake up." Adam shook him hard, "Lots a luck," the man behind the counter said, "whenever I get bored I give it a try but never get any more results than you just had." "He must be dead drunk." Adam felt Darrell's pulse, it was faint but he was still alive. "Call an ambulance, quick, he's not drunk; I'm no doctor, but it is my guess that he has fallen into a diabetic coma." The ambulance arrived in less than five minutes and they rushed Darrell to the base hospital. Adam rode along. In the emergency room they confirmed Adam's diagnosis immediately. The doctor told Adam to return to his unit before he was missed. "Your friend will be fine by morning but I am afraid his military career is behind him." Adam got back to the company area just as the other men were falling out for morning formation. He went up to Sergeant Winslow and told him about Darrell. "You fall in for now Harcrow, after breakfast you can go see your friend, then get some rest. The Company will be back here for lunch at noon, you can rejoin us then" Adam couldn't believe his ears, he expected a royal ass chewing but the sergeant had been really decent about it. Adam learned later that morning when he visited Darrell in the hospital that Darrell had called in before Adam got there and told them of his diabetes. The way that the report went in was that Darrell had felt the diabetic coma coming on but thought he could make it to the hospital in time. Adam had accompanied him, but they only got as far as the doughnut shop when Darrell passed out; that's when Adam asked the worker at the doughnut shop to call the ambulance. Darrell was sent back to Las Vegas by bus the next day. He would no longer be in the ROTC.

The boys mellowed out quickly on graduation day. All of the hard feelings they had built up over the past weeks toward Sergeant Winslow had vanished. They had accomplished something few men in this day and age would ever have the chance to experience. They had been given basic training the way their grandfathers had known it in the fifty's. The reason the army had chosen this old fashioned basic for the ROTC boys was because it built character differently than our modern training does. Also, the modern weapons and facilities were all in use preparing the soldiers who would be sent directly from basic training to the job of defending our country. The old facilities were all that was available to them at the time.

There was gang activity in Portland, Oregon as in any city. In this case the Turtles were in a bitter turf war with the Lords. Allen Jefferson enjoyed the title of Lord of the Lords. He was a very large fish in a small pond. He controlled all the rackets on his turf, a forty square block enclave of the northwest section of Portland. His only problem was the Turtles, and their leader Delbert Jefferson (no relation). Delbert and the Turtles ran the rackets in an area of about thirty square blocks adjoining the turf claimed by the Lords. There were nightly raids along the border and nasty fights where someone was frequently killed or seriously injured when members of both gangs showed up. It didn't matter to them whether it was a sporting event or a supermarket opening. If there was a crowd gathered anywhere in the area both gangs showed up and usually a fight would ensue.

Delbert got the idea that if Allen would just disappear from the scene he could take over the whole area. At twenty-six years of age Delbert had not attended school regularly since the ninth grade, but had graduated from a high school that seemed to require nothing more than your name in order to grant you a high school diploma. He had twenty-two prior arrests for progressively more serious offenses. He had risen to his position of leadership because he was ruthless. When anyone got in his way he simply killed them. He was a determined fighter that would use any means at hand to disable or kill his opponent. Delbert was content to oversee the pimps and the dealers in his area. He had never been involved with gambling because he wasn't smart enough and could not comprehend the strategies involved.

Delbert had done a little time in the county jail over the years for some of the more petty crimes that he had been arrested for but had never served a long stretch in a prison. Up until now he had lead a charmed life and avoided being arrested for a serious crime. This is not to say he never committed a violent crime, it was a case of witnesses who were interviewed invariably stated they had "seen nothing". The police were well aware of Delbert and his activities and knew that it would just be a matter of time before he slipped up.

One day Delbert got the idea to put an end to Allen Jefferson once and for all. He got on his cell phone and told Fat Boy, his driver, that he wanted his car to pick him up at his home on Kingsford Street in half an hour. He then reached under his bed and pulled out his large locked storage box. He unlocked it with the only key and selected a piece, his new full automatic assault rifle. It was a cheap Chinese imitation of the rifle used by the Russian army. After figuring out how it worked and loading it with the box of ammo he had bought, he was ready. He shoved it into an empty golf bag and was out the door. His new Buick Riviera was waiting at the curb. Fatso was driving and another of his goons, Big Louie was in the passenger seat. Seeing Delbert come out of the house, Louie got out of the car and flipped the lever on the front seat so it moved forward on its tracks and the back of the seat was folded forward so Delbert could get in. Delbert placed his golf bag in the car first and then got in himself.

He told Fatso to get going then told him where to turn, until ultimately they were at the end of the block where Allen Jefferson lived. Along the way they had passed an

unobtrusive green Ford station wagon and paid it no attention. What they didn't know was that Sergeant Javco of the Oregon Highway Patrol had just gotten off duty and was returning home in that green Ford. Sergeant Javco had cited Delbert twice on traffic violations and arrested him once for driving under the influence, so he recognized him immediately. Sergeant Javco decided to follow Delbert just to see what he was doing in this neighborhood where he didn't belong. Delbert told Fatso to pull over while he readied the rifle and rolled down the window. When Delbert's car pulled over so did Sergeant Javco's car, but about a block behind. As luck would have it Javco had parked directly in front of the home of a girl named Claudia that had recently babysat for him a time or two; he recognized her house.

Then they all waited. It didn't take long; Allen came out of the house and sat down on his porch to talk to two of his lieutenants that had dropped by to discuss some business. One of Delbert's stoolies had told him that this meeting took place nearly every night, on the front porch if the weather was nice or in the house if it was raining. It was a beautiful evening so there they were, as promised. "Let's go Fatso," Delbert said, "and take it slow and easy." As Fatso pulled in front of Allens house Delbert hollered "Stop Here!" and he cut loose with the assault rifle. He had never used the gun before and even though he showered the hedge in front of the house with bullets, he missed Allen and his cohorts on the front porch completely. When his ammunition had been exhausted he hollered "Go, Go, Go, Hit It Man!" and they were off. Seeing all of this, Sergeant Javco who was now immediately behind Delbert, gunned his Ford up beside Delbert's car and pulled him over. Sergeant Javco was armed with his service revolver, Delbert knew that he was out of ammunition and that he hadn't hit anyone so he didn't resist arrest. Sergeant Javco got on his cell phone and requested black and white backup immediately. Within two minutes there were three Portland police units on the scene. They cuffed the three suspects and put each of them in a separate police car, then they accompanied Sergeant Javco back to Allen Jefferson's house to get information for their report.

They couldn't have been more shocked when they saw a large crowd standing around in Allen's front yard and a Fire Department Paramedic van in front of the house as well as an ambulance. As the police walked up they saw what all the turmoil was about. There were two children, about three years of age, a boy and a girl, lying on the lawn. The paramedics were working furiously on the little girl but a woman came out of the house next door with a sheet and covered the little boy. Both had apparently been shot by Delbert when he shot low. He didn't know the kids were there because the hedge was taller than they were and the children had been sitting on the ground playing with toy cars in the dirt.

The police sent all the neighbors home and waited around until the children had been loaded into the ambulance and the paramedics and ambulance had left the scene. Allen stated that he had no idea who Delbert was or why he had wanted to shoot up their house. No one in the neighborhood seemed to know anything. This time though the police didn't need them. They had Delbert dead to rights.

The public defender assigned to Delbert's case, after reviewing the facts of the case,

came to the conclusion that the only possible way to keep his client off death row was to try and get a deal. Delbert got his deal, he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to twenty-five years without the possibility of parole and was sent to the Oregon State Penitentiary. In Oregon that is referred to as life in prison. The judge can give no more nor no less, in response to a guilty plea to Capital Murder.

- CHAPTER 7 -
ADAM'S SOPHOMORE YEAR

In his sophomore year as the starting quarterback he lead his team to another conference championship with an eight and two record and they made it all the way to the area finals. In their final game of the regular season Adam broke the little finger on his right hand, his passing hand. He was taken out and another sophomore quarterback finished the game. They lost that game by a big score being tallied on both sides but ended up in the playoffs anyway. In their first playoff game Adam had played the first half with his broken finger As a result, he fumbled the ball four times and only completed five passes for short yardage. He knew it was no use trying so he sat out the second half. His backup quarterback did a fair job but just couldn't seem to score. They blew several excellent opportunities but came away with a seven-three loss. Their defense had rallied but were not good enough to win without the offense. In spite of Adam's misfortune, he still set a school record for passes completed by a sophomore quarterback and had discovered a new aspect to his game. Because of his size, quickness and agility he had also run for over seven hundred yards and four touchdowns. He was the leading rusher on the team. On the academic side he once again managed to get all "A's." This accomplishment was more important to him than were his accomplishments on the football field.

That year had also seen Adam's first love affair blossom. June Torson had three classes with Adam during their second semester and they took real note of one another. She was, in many ways, typical of a High School sophomore and Adam was considered quite a catch. They began to walk home together with a stop along the way at a nearby 7-11 for a soda and a few minutes conversation while sitting on the curb in front of the store. Adam's two best friends, his wide receivers, Tom and Jeff were usually there also. Tom and Jeff were both juniors and loved to speculate on their future's in college and later professional football. They both thought they were exceptionally good and seemed to always fail to give Adam the credit for that. Adam himself had no interest in playing professional football but went along with their dreams anyway.

Adam got a good paying job that summer wiping down cars as they rolled out of the carwash. He only made minimum wage but the tips were great. Las Vegas had always been the best tipping town in the country; probably because so many of the people in Las Vegas worked for tips themselves in the local casinos. He saw June almost every evening. She was working at the McDonald's Restaurant just down the street from the carwash and they got off at about the same time. Actually, Adam had time to sit down and enjoy a coke before they left for their walk home.

Adam was still instructing at the Karate School in the evenings, receiving extra money. June, however, spent her evenings boning up on the classes that she intended taking in the fall semester. She wasn't all that interested in her school work but she was tired of seeing Adam getting all "A's" while she had to settle for "B's" and "C's." Adam and June were both off Tuesdays and Wednesdays and June's parents were both working those days so Adam and June had ample opportunity to get to know each other very well that summer. They both opened savings accounts. Adam put away more than three thousand dollars that summer and June put away over a thousand dollars before school resumed in September.

- CHAPTER 8 -
THE BAR ROOM BRAWL

Paul Banyon had drifted into central Oregon looking for work. After he had graduated from high school in Cartersville, Georgia two years earlier he had drifted from town to town, state to state. He didn't want any ties, had no interest in settling down. This was his chance to see the world. Some day he would find his place, but not yet.

Paul was a good natured giant. He stood six foot eight inches, and weighed in at a hefty 345 pounds. He had been an outstanding defensive tackle on his high school football team back in Georgia and had briefly been courted by a couple of colleges, but his test scores were so low that none of the colleges wanted him bad enough to take on the project of trying to keep his grades high enough to maintain his football eligibility. Despite his size he was just an easygoing big kid.

He had found temporary work on a ranch in Madras, Oregon, bucking hay bales onto trucks in the field then unloading the trucks and stacking the bales behind the barn where they would be used to feed the livestock during the winter. He was paired with a little man with a big mouth called Mousey. It was an understatement to say that Mousey didn't make many friends. Mousey tended to mean-mouth everybody he came into contact with. He was a wiry little guy that could hold his own in a fight because his mouth had gotten him into so many of them. When Paul hired on, Mousey thought better of trying to badger him and as they worked together that fall they became good friends.

One payday the pair of them went into town to pick up a few things and toss down a few cold ones. At the Roundup Saloon they bellied up to the bar, ordered their brew and were shootin' the bull when Mousey spotted a cheap looking old gal with a lot of makeup, sitting by herself in a rear booth. This gal was a typical barfly. Mousey, considering himself quite a ladies man left Paul at the bar and sauntered back to the booth and introduced himself. Gladys was her name. When Mousey ordered her a drink she asked him to sit down. They had been intermittently talking and dancing to the jukebox for quite a spell when three truck drivers that drove sixteen wheelers entered the bar. They were all looking for a "good time" and knew where they could find Gladys. They knew from past experience that Gladys would put out to any guy or group of guys that would buy her a drink and slip her a few bucks. About half an hour

before the truck drivers came in Paul had felt a little hungry so he had left the bar and walked across the street to a greasy spoon he had spotted. He didn't want to spoil his dinner so he settled for a bowl of chili, a shake and a couple burgers with fries. The drivers spotted Gladys in her usual booth, talking with some guy sitting across from her. They went up to the booth and in no uncertain terms told Mousey to beat it. Mousey was a little tough guy and wasn't about to be intimidated by these three clowns, especially since his buddy Paul was right over there at the bar. They exchanged a few uncomplimentary remarks before one of the drivers reached over and physically picked Mousey up by the lapel of his shirt. As he pulled Mousey out of the booth, one of the other drivers belted Mousey in the nose, not breaking it but blood spurted everywhere.

About this time Paul returned to the bar, having finished his snack across the street. He saw Mousey's problem and decided to enter the fracas; he loved a good barrroom brawl. With deceptive speed Paul crossed the deserted dance floor and grabbed two of the guys by their necks and slammed their heads together. This resulted in one fractured skull and one broken neck. Paul let them go in time to catch a vicious right from the third guy. He turned to the man and dropped the guy with one blow which he delivered sledge hammer style to the top of the man's head.

While all this was taking place, the bartender was dialing 911. There was a police cruiser on the main street not a block from the Roundup. They always expected a couple fights at the Roundup every evening and more on week ends. They were regulars, even though they wouldn't think of having a drink in the place. The police entered the bar just as Paul and Mousey were leaving. "Hold on there, Pilgrims," the one cop said, in his best John Wayne imitation, when he saw the blood covering Mousey's shirt. "Why don't you fellows come back in with us until we find out just what happened here." Paul and Mousey went back inside the bar right ahead of the police. As the police entered they saw two unconscious men on the floor and one who was sitting up groggily rubbing the top of his head. One of the cops went over and checked the pulse of the two lying on the floor. "Oh my God," the cop said, "one of these guys is dead and the other one has the whole side of his head caved in. He then turned to the bartender and said, "Jake, get an ambulance here quick, before this one dies too." As he spoke, the other cop who was now standing behind Paul and Mousey had pulled his gun. "Until we find out just what happened you fellas better put your hands behind your back". He used his cuffs on Paul, then borrowed his partner's cuffs and put them on Mousey.

By the time the police had gathered all the information that they would need for their report, the ambulance driver and attendant had arrived and carried the two men out, one bound for the hospital and the other for the morgue. The Police then escorted Paul and Mousey out to the squad car. Back at the station Paul was booked for murder and Mousey for disturbing the peace, since he hadn't hit anyone. Mousey got 60 days, but Paul pleaded guilty to murder two and drew twenty years. As soon as the judge had passed sentence Paul was loaded into a station wagon and driven up to Pendleton and incarcerated at the Oregon State Prison. He was assigned to the grounds maintenance work detail at the prison. He got along good with the guards

and the other inmates who preferred to call him Paul Bunion rather than Paul Banyon. Once Paul had settled in he did easy time.

- CHAPTER 9 -
ADAM'S JUNIOR YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL

In his junior year Central had an undefeated season. Adam's little finger had healed perfectly. By the end of his junior year Adam had already passed for more yards than any quarterback in the history of the school. They won the area finals that year. As a junior he made the high school All State Team and figured to have a good shot at high school All American in his upcoming senior year.

The major universities were already taking notice of Adam, Tom and Jeff and were sending out some invitations. In Jeff and Tom's case, it was already June and they desperately needed to find a place to play in the fall semester that would start in three months. The one invitation that Adam had received was from Washington State University at Pullman, where they ran a very pass- oriented offense. They had a great quarterback that was coming back for his senior year in September but the level of talent below him was lacking. They had scouted Central High School in North Las Vegas and were very impressed with Adam, placing him high on their list for their next great quarterback. They might suffer a little while Adam adjusted to college ball in his freshman year, but beyond that they figured their team would have a great shot at the national championship if they could just land this kid from Vegas.

Adam knew where he wanted to attend college, and only one school would do, the United States ol ROTC as a freshman. He was already looking back on his eight week misery of the summer before last with nostalgia. He had decided that he wanted to make the army his career and forego the possible riches that could result from a career as a professional athlete. Adam's grandfather and great-grandfather had been career army officers. His grandfather had attended West Point. Adam's father had gone to OCS and had served as an officer in the Gulf War.

- CHAPTER 10 -
THE DOCTOR

Dr. Winthrop Golstadt had a very lucrative practice. His office was on the top floor of one of the more prestigious buildings in the Portland City Center. His appointment calendar was booked solid. Patients were waiting almost a year to begin therapy sessions with Dr. Golstadt. He had a reputation as one of the best, if not the best psychiatrist in the state of Oregon. When it came to mental deficiencies he did not specialize. His patients suffered from all sorts of mental, emotional and imagined problems. The remarkable thing about Dr. Golstadt was that he got results; unlike most of his colleagues, he actually cured his patients, or at least some of them and many of the others showed marked improvement, or some improvement. The sessions, which cost his patients upwards of two hundred dollars for a forty-five minute hour, gave him a great deal of satisfaction and sometimes even pleasure, especially his pre-teen girl patients. Not that he actually had sex with any of them,

even if a couple of them claimed he did, but he was aroused while listening to their problems. But alas, all good things must come to an end. Dr. Golstadt was having problems at home. His marriage was on it's last leg. His father-in-law, a rough hewn self-made millionaire from the old school of hard work and hard knocks had little use for Dr. Winthrop Golstadt. He did not try to conceal that fact, even a little bit. Dr. Golstadt and his wife only got together with her parents a couple times a year although they all lived in the same city. Whenever the two men were in the same room there was trouble. Her father always picked the fight and Dr. Golstadt always used his superior education to cut the man to verbal ribbons. The Golstadt's had no children so the father-in-law was constantly trying to get his daughter to leave the guy and marry a real man.

One little girl started mentioning the good doctor's avant-garde techniques to her aunt, then it made the papers, then more little girls started talking, then there was an investigation, followed in rapid order by civil law suits, divorce, being thrown out of the medical profession, criminal prosecution, and prison, more or less in that order, although some of the aforementioned disasters that befell the good doctor overlapped each other in frame of time.

Since he was a medical doctor as well as a psychiatrist his fellow inmates at Pendleton nicknamed him "Doc." He was assigned to assist the medical technician in the prison infirmary who was studying to become a P.A. (Physicians Assistant). Upon his arrival at Pendleton he was almost 40 years old but had four years of college ROTC and had served four years as a naval officer after he obtained his Medical Degree. Had they been authorized to utilize his skills he would have been a great catch for the prison system because they were going to have him around for the next twenty five years, without possibility of parole.

- CHAPTER 11 - THE NEW PRISON AT UMATILLA

There was a weekly meeting attended by Governor Terry, his staff members and key members of the state legislature. It was kind of an unofficial breakfast get-together held in the banquet room of a Salem restaurant where everyone could air their ideas and problems concerning the state. "Gentlemen I would like to thank you members of the Legislature that have approved my request for a new maximum security prison to be built at Umatilla. Hopefully, this will serve to reduce some of the overcrowding that has resulted from our new mandatory sentencing law that you passed. If things continue the way they have been going since this new mandatory sentencing law was passed it looks like we are going to be building a lot more of them. Actually, if this law stays on the books in it's present form for too many more years it could bankrupt the state of Oregon. Our inmate population is growing very rapidly. I am working on a plan that may help reduce the overcrowding a little." "What would that be, Governor?" "Gentlemen, I believe some of you already know General Kristociac of the Oregon National Guard. The General would like to enlighten you on some of the ideas we have been discussing. General -" "Good morning men, er I mean gentlemen, I am General Kristociac, but you can just call me Chris. Your Governor,

who is one of my oldest and dearest friends, and I have been pondering over an idea we have come up with that might help to alleviate the overcrowding of the prison system. We thought we would run it by you and see what you think."

"As you may or may not know, Guard enlistments in Oregon are down, way down. In fact, enlistments are down throughout the military. This state is having trouble getting enough of our men to volunteer for active duty to meet our quota. There just aren't enough men that want to be away from their family and their job for two years. We are short on guardsmen but we are long on prisoners. Now we just thought we would run this by you and see what you think, so don't get too excited, we would just like your thoughts on this. Governor Terry and I have had our staffs review many inmate files and we figure we would have no trouble selecting sixteen hundred or two thousand long term inmates who, if they weren't in prison would be well qualified to join the Oregon National Guard. I know that sounds far fetched -- and we haven't worked out all the details yet, but this is our line of thinking. We are here this morning to find out what you think after hearing our ideas."

"What would keep them from escaping if more freedom of motion was extended to them while they were serving in the Guard, General?" "That is a very good question Senator Johns and that is one of the problems we are contemplating. One thing that we have come up with and frankly we don't know whether it would work or not is to offer them an incentive program that would be so good that they would find it more beneficial not to escape." "What kind of incentive program were you thinking of General?" "We have had the Attorney General review the mandatory sentencing law that you fellas passed and the voters of this state approved. The Law says that convicts sentenced can not receive a reduction in the amount of time that they must serve for working (work time), giving blood (blood time), or good behavior (good time) like prisoners get in other states and like prisoners in this state received before mandatory sentencing came into effect.

The Attorney general is of the opinion that inmates sentenced under mandatory sentencing guidelines could receive time off their sentences for serving in the Guard. Additionally, we could offer them a chance to accumulate some minimum Social Security credits so they can look forward to some kind of retirement when they turn sixty-five. We have also asked the Department of the Army if these men would be allowed to reenlist if they were sent on active duty from the Guard. The army says that they would not be allowed to reenlist as long as we had a hold on them but if we kept them as Guardsmen on active duty until they had served their prison sentences they would allow them to enlist in grade and remain in the army if the army still needed men with their grade and MOS (Military Occupational Specialty).

Of course, all the time they spend on active duty would be counted toward Social Security and army retirement. The Attorney General has also told us that any Army or Guard pay they receive could be attached by the courts to pay victims compensation if they had been ordered to pay restitution in their sentencing." "What about the ones that were not so ordered, General?" "Any man that we and the Army approved for active duty would be obligated to volunteer to pay twenty-five percent of his pay into a general victims compensation fund to be distributed to any victim of crime if the

court has decreed that he should receive such compensation. One more little advantage to this scheme is that while they are in the Guard and housed in one of our prisons we would be able to charge them another twenty- five percent of their pay for board and room. If they are on active duty in the army and the army is housing them and feeding them we could not charge them that twenty-five percent."

Governor Terry got back up and added one more argument. "In every war that this nation has ever entered we have lost our brightest and best young men. It's time that we started feeding another kind of man into that meat grinder. Think of how any of you would feel if your son was killed in some senseless foreign conflict, some of you, I am sure have already lost sons or family members in one of these senseless wars." "Where and when would you gentlemen envision putting this plan into action, if we approved it? "Umatilla", the Governor responded, "it will be on line in eighteen months, and we could assign only men that, on the surface qualified for Guard Service. We know that all the approval's will take a while, so if there is anyone here that would like to put his name on the bill see me after the meeting and we can go over it. I even have the proposed legislation all prepared if you are satisfied with what we have written."

At least two members of each house agreed to sponsor and co-sponsor the legislation. They discussed some more State business and then adjourned.

Over the next year and a half Governor Terry, General Kristociac, and several State Legislators who believed in the project pushed the bill through both houses of the State Legislature. Governor Terry, of course did not hesitate to sign it. The new prison at Umatilla was completed on schedule and under budget.

- CHAPTER 12 - THE TRIP

It was June twelfth, graduation day and the last day of school. Adam was a junior and would be back for his final year of high school in September. This summer, however, he had accepted an invitation from Tommy Rich and Jeff Dawson to travel north for the summer and visit some of the colleges they had received invitations from to tour the campuses. Both Tom and Jeff were graduating and wanted to get their scholarships in place for the upcoming fall semester.

Jeff Dawson, had invitations to visit both the University of Oregon at Eugene and Portland State in Portland where an excellent football program was beginning to take shape. Tommy Rich wanted to visit both the University of Washington at Seattle and Washington State University at Pullman. They knew that Adam had been invited to tour the campus at Washington State and they did everything they could to persuade him to accompany them. They knew that he wanted to attend Army but argued that Washington State had a better football team and they were dedicated to the " passing game". "Come on, Adam, it will do no harm to tour the campus and hear what they have to say," Jeff said. "OK," Adam agreed, "I am not interested in the schools or their football programs but it does sound like a neat way to spend the summer and it will be a lot cooler in Washington and Oregon than it will be here in North Las Vegas."

They weren't short on funds. Jeff's uncle, a building contractor had an old Ford longvan that he wouldn't be using that summer and had loaned it to Jeff for his trip. All three boys had fairly hefty bank accounts that they had put aside working summers and after school. All three of them had steady girlfriends and wanted very much to take them along. The girls were as eager to take the trip as the boys were, so one by one the girls figured out a way to get away from home for about three weeks after school ended.

They were all good kids and mostly their parents figured they deserved a break. The parents, however, did not know that they would be going on a three week camping trip with their boyfriends. June had told her parents that she would be a counselor for a YWCA summer hike along the John Muir trail into the Yosemite Valley. That story worked so well that Dolores Palory, Tom's girlfriend, used the same story with her parents. Paula, Jeff's girl and the oldest of the lot had graduated the year before and was working full time at Burger King. . She was still living at home so she cooked up a story about accompanying the other two girls on a driving trip with one of the other families, to Acapulco. They thought this would be a good experience for her and after discussing it briefly, gave their daughter permission to go along with the group. None of the parents thought to verify stories with the appropriate adults so the girls joined the boys and on June thirteenth they were on their way to the great northwest.

They had all brought camping gear. They had plenty of money with them, but it would have been awkward registering at motels. They did go to motels about every fourth night to take showers and clean up, but other than that they cooked and slept under the stars. Mostly, they found state and federal campgrounds along their route and usually pulled in early. They bought what they needed in the way of groceries each day and it was great fun cooking out, relaxing, forgetting their hectic school schedules, which they would be returning to soon enough.

For the first time in his short and busy life Adam let his hair down. He had taken to downing a few beers every evening with Jeff and Tommy. Paula had a false ID that enabled her to purchase the beer for the group. Tommy had scored about three ounces of some really potent pot before they left and they found it not too difficult to replenish their supply as they went along. They were more or less on the bum right now, and loving it.

By June eighteenth, on the evening of the fifth day of their trip, they found themselves driving along the banks of the Willamette River about twenty miles South of Portland, Oregon. All of them had enjoyed their stop at The University of Oregon in Eugene where Tommy was treated royally by one of the assistant coaches. He was so favorably impressed that didn't see much point in touring Portland State but since they were all having such a good time and were in no hurry to finish their trip they decided to wait over the week-end and tour the school anyway.

It was a warm afternoon as they headed the van north on Interstate 5 from Salem. One of the boys noticed a service road off the freeway that wound it's way down the

embankment to the river. They slowed the van and cautiously exited. As they reached the bottom of the grade, at the river bank, they turned left to a route that would take them back under the freeway to an ideal camping spot they had seen from above. At a point underneath the freeway they noticed two men. One was pattering with their campsite about twenty yards back from the riverbank and the other, a lanky man of about 30 was seated on an old wooden Coca-Cola box on the river bank, but back from the river itself. The guy sitting on the box was smoking and there was no doubt about it he was puffing on a "roach". In order to get to their intended camping site, it was necessary to drive near the fellow. Jeff, who was driving, stopped the van beside him but did not shut the engine off. He rolled down the drivers side window and asked the man "Will anyone bother us or chase us off if we camp for the night in the clearing ahead?" At first they had thought him to be a hobo but now they could tell that he had the look of a small-time hoodlum. He had long, stringy black hair pulled back into a pony tail, with a rubber band around it, a gold earring in his right ear and a pallid complexion, like someone that spent a lot of his time indoors rather than on the open road. "Nah, go ahead, nobody's going to hassle you kids down here."

Jeff, figuring this guy for some kind of low life, and something other than a law abiding citizen asked him, "You don't happen to know anyone around here that might be selling, do you?" The guy gave out a chuckle and answered, "Just what the hell do you think I am doing down here, fishin.?" "I've got a regular clientele of guys that live in Portland and work in Salem that stop off here to stock up every night. I can fix you up with anything you want and the price is right too." After some negotiation, they purchased some marijuana, then they continued on down the river a couple hundred yards to their campsite. As they were starting to pull away the man said "You kids go easy on that stuff now, it might be a little better than what you are used to, but if you want any more just come and see ole Hermy." They continued on down the river to their campsite and began setting up for the night.

Adam couldn't get over how casual Jeff and Tommy and the girls had seemed during the transaction of buying the marijuana. He had only used weed a couple times in his life and had never bought any. He wouldn't even know how to go about it. He was more than a little apprehensive about this whole thing but figured, what the hell, it was time to loosen up a little and give it a try.

Their campsite was walking distance to a country store about a mile away, under the freeway, up the embankment and across a field and on a paved service road that they had seen when driving in. There were hundreds of wild blackberry bushes in the area, lots of tall pine trees behind the blackberries and the river in front of them.

Their campsite had been used many times before. Someone had left a nice fire pit made of rocks that someone before them had collected from along the riverbank. The boys wasted no time in gathering firewood and getting a fire going while the girls peeled some potatoes, carrots and onions and put them into a pot of water taken from the river. They opened a canned ham, diced that up and added it to the pot after the veggies had started to simmer. As the girls prepared the usual hobo stew that seemed to be a little different every night the guys set up the campsite and picked a few wild

blackberries growing nearby. There were an abundance of blackberries in the area and they intended to get their fill. The guys then each popped the lid on a cold beer. Tommy rolled a couple joints out of their newly acquired grass and began to pass them around.

June decided that they should have some shrimp dipped in cocktail sauce this evening as a special treat and asked Adam if he would accompany her to the store. "Ah, June, come on, I just got settled in to have a brew with the other guys. Besides, I doubt if that store sells shrimp anyway, and even if they did it would be frozen and we couldn't eat it tonight anyway." The last thing in the world that Adam wanted to do at this moment was to go on a two mile walk. June made some remark about pot heads and left by herself.

Several brews had been opened, several joints passed around and the stew was ready, but no June. She had been gone almost an hour and a half. Dinner was ready and she should have returned by now. They were all becoming concerned. "What in the world could be keeping her," Adam said. Tommy arose and said "We'd better go and find her; she has to be someplace between here and the store." The boys reluctantly got up and set out in search of June.

They found June, not a hundred yards from the camp, crawling on her hands and knees. She was all bloody and her face was puffy and lacerated; she was crying like a little kid. It was obvious that she had sustained a severe beating. She couldn't talk very clearly but said "I was returning from the store when I was attacked by that creep you guys bought the pot from, the one that called himself Hermy. The man had apparently seen her on the way to the store, then waited for her to return. He had brutalized her and raped her. The boys could see him clearly as they approached the bridge.

Adam was livid with rage but Hermy seemed cool and collected, or out on cloud nine, one or the other. Adam said "Man, we have some talking to do. My girl tells me that you waylaid her and beat her and raped her when she was on her way back to the campsite from the store up there." I guess Hermy had lost track of reality because he responded "Sure, so what, she is just a little whore and a tramp that you picked up along the way, what do you care." He wouldn't have sounded that flippant if he had his wits about him, but he was out of it, besides he had his ace in the hole in case this scene became nasty.

By this time Adam was saying little, but brandishing his all purpose knife that he had worn in a scabbard on his belt since the trip had begun. The other reason that Hermy was so cocky was that he knew that these boys had come to a gun fight and brought a knife. With Tommy and Jeff on either side of him and Adam directly in front Hermy decided that this had gone far enough and reached inside his jacket with deceptive speed to retrieve his snub nose 38 Smith and Wesson. Seeing him reach for what Adam knew had to be a gun, Adam lunged forward with his knife and sank it deep into Hermy. As luck would have it the knife had found the center of Hermy's heart. Hermy groaned once and was dead before he hit the ground. His last thought was

wonder at not finding his gun where he knew he always carried it; the holster was there but not the gun. As Adam's knife found home and Hermy began to fall Tommy and Jeff grabbed him from either side to hold him up. They only held onto him for a moment before releasing him and allowed him to fall to the ground.

Hermy's companion Simon was observing all of this from a vantage point high on the bank concealed by some wild blackberry bushes. He had Hermy's gun but was not about to use it. Hermy had left it on the table in their tent and Simon had picked it up an hour before. Hermy had been so excited about his plan to attack the girl that he had lain it on the table and forgotten about it. Simon had entered the tent in search of his extra pack of cigarettes when he spotted the gun on the table. Not wanting the police to see it if they should come by on one of their occasional patrols of the area, picked it up and stuffed into his pocket. He knew that Hermy, as a convicted felon, would not want to be caught with a weapon, if the authorities decided to patrol the area, as they occasionally did. He had intended to return it to Hermy later on.

The boys gathered up June and returned to camp. They packed hurriedly, dumped their dinner, threw everything in the van and drove away.. They were scared but tried not to show it, for the sake of the girls -- and each other for that matter.

It wasn't too difficult for the police to verify Simon's story and put out a description and all-points bulletin to apprehend the suspects.

In the meantime, the boys discussed their situation. Tommy said "This is bad but I don't think we will be in too much trouble if they catch us; after all when we tell them what that low-life did to June they are bound to let us go." Adam and Jeff were reluctant to dismiss the situation in such a casual manner, but nevertheless it raised their spirits a bit to hear Tommy put it in that perspective.

Two days later, camped near John Day, Oregon they were having dinner when they were approached by two men in business suits. One of the men asked "Do you kids mind if we sit down, we have some questions we want to ask you?" They found a seat on one of the benches the kids had brought up from a nearby vacant campsite without waiting for the answer to their question. The man lit a cigarette and inhaled deeply before continuing. "It seems that a couple days ago you boys did society a big favor and we are here to thank you." "Unfortunately, killing a man, even a man like Hermy Schwartz is a crime." "I'm afraid we are going to have to ask you to come with us."

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"Like I said there are some questions you are going to have to answer." "You're right, Adam said, "we'll follow you in to wherever you want us to go and we will see if we can get this taken care of."

"I'm afraid it doesn't work that way." the other man said. It was the first time he had spoken and he didn't sound nearly as friendly as his companion had. At that point half a dozen uniformed deputy sheriff's came out from the bushes and cuffed the boys.

They were hauled into the jail at John Day awaiting transfer to the Multnomah County Jail in Portland. Curiously, the officers who brought them in made no effort to interrogate them, but were very nice about providing them with food and blankets and seeing to it that Jeff's uncle was notified to come up and retrieve his van.

The girls were placed in a jail cell for the night, then each of their parents were called and told to come to John Day and get their daughters. Since the girls were not supposed to be anywhere near John Day, Oregon the parents were confused but most cooperative. Two days later, the parents arrived to retrieve their daughters and it was the last time any of the boys would ever see the girls.

The boys were loaded into the Sheriff's station wagon and driven to the Multnomah County Jail in Portland. They were booked and put into cells, separated from one another. One by one they were brought into an interrogation room where they each told two detectives their version of what had happened.

The boys all cooperated fully with the law enforcement officers and told substantially the same story. By the time they finished the detectives knew as much about the situation as the boys themselves did.

- CHAPTER 13 - SWEET REVENGE

Colonel Todd Dixon was a test pilot at Edwards AFB. Though only twenty-seven, he was already a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Air Force. He was not a military man; he was an engineer, a scientist, and a test pilot. He didn't really test airplanes, he tested a new type of aircraft. He had a bachelors degree in math from MIT, with a minor in chemistry; he had a masters in chemistry from Cal Tech. He was working on his doctorate in physics at Cal Tech when he could find time. He entered the air force three years earlier with a direct commission as major. The air force needed his skills badly; besides the air force was in a bidding war for Todd's services. Neither NASA, nor McDonald Douglas could offer Todd those gold oak leaves. Todd wasn't much influenced by the commission, but he figured that with any of the three organizations he would end up doing about the same job on the same project; however, in the air force he could live on base and avoid a two hour daily commute and maybe have more clout, since it would be the air force that would have the most early design input. NASA would be the client at the end of the tunnel and McDonald Douglas would build anything the air force told them to build.

Loss of the space shuttles Challenger and Columbia had prompted development of the new aircraft . Although the United States had developed a whole new breed of space shuttle and the remaining shuttles of the Challenger type had been retired, their replacements still blasted off with rockets and still depended on the atmosphere to slow their Mach 12 re-entry from space. The project Todd was working on was to create an aircraft that could take off from a runway, fly into space, acquire an orbit, then after it had accomplished it's mission in space, could abandon orbit and fly at speeds below Mach One back down to earth and land on the same runway it had taken off from. The aircraft would be the size of a large cargo plane and would be equipped with engines that could switch from one type of propulsion to another, depending on whether it was in atmosphere or space.

There was not yet a working prototype of the finished product but they were building

small aircraft with the new engine and Todd had test flown it in atmosphere, and at extremely high altitude, higher than any other craft had ever flown. They were approaching the time when the craft would be able to continue to accelerate on through the atmosphere and into space itself.

Colonel Dixon was a workaholic. He had been married back when he was at MIT but his wife Liz had been killed in an automobile accident. The couple was planning an evening out, he had arrived home late and was hurrying to get ready. Liz volunteered to drive their daughter Melanie, age eighteen months, to the sitter's so they could leave for their evening out as soon as she returned. After leaving the baby with the sitter, Liz was returning home. She was driving on a thoroughfare when a car traveling without headlights ran a stop sign, slammed into her car and killed her instantly. The driver of the car that hit Liz was also killed instantly. His autopsy showed that he had a blood alcohol level of greater than 4.0.

Todd had kept Melanie with him and was raising her himself, with the aid of a full time housekeeper. The housekeeper, Maria, was almost sixty and had no family of her own. She mothered Melanie, worked all day every day, never wanted a day off and was very happy keeping house for the young colonel and his precious daughter. One day while Todd was at work, Maria decided that she needed a few things from the commissary, which was within walking distance from Todd's quarters. She took Melanie along. By this time Melanie was a healthy, happy eight year old an adorable and exceptionally bright child. While crossing the street in front of the commissary, in the crosswalk, a car came speeding down the street and slammed into them. Both Maria and Melanie were DOA when they reached the base hospital.

The sergeant driving the car stopped when he saw what he had done. Two MP's coming out of the PX on the other side of the street witnessed the accident. They placed the sergeant under arrest and took him to the hospital for a blood alcohol test. He, like the drunk driver that had killed Liz, had a blood alcohol level of 4.0. Colonel Dixon was out on the flight line inspecting the aircraft he would be flying within the week when he was notified of the deaths of his daughter and housekeeper. He was numb with grief by this tragic news. He calmly walked off the runway and went to the MP station where he saw the culprit still going through the booking process. He etched that face indelibly on his mind and left without talking with anyone. Next Todd went to the Headquarters Office and filled out a brief form requesting thirty days annual leave, beginning immediately. The leave was granted, orders cut and he returned to his quarters.

He had a full bottle of prescription sleeping pills in the medicine cabinet. He took five of them and went to bed. Sleep was still slow in coming but eventually he dropped off. His rest was very fitful, his dreams were horrible, he tossed and turned and had nightmares. Ten hours later he awoke and took five more sleeping pills. He didn't want to talk to or see anyone.

On the second day after the accident he placed a call to the Judge Advocates Office and spoke with a Major Thompson. He knew the man casually as they had played golf

together a couple of times. The major discussed the case with Todd for a few minutes, then let it slip that the worst the sergeant was faced with was probably five years in the stockade. " In the civilian world he would be looking at twenty-five to life because his blood alcoholic level would make him guilty of two counts of capital murder two, but under the UCMJ on the base the most we can get him for is a manslaughter charge. He will have some officer assigned to defend him and will face a General Court Martial. Military courts tend to be particularly lenient in cases like this and Sergeant Coslow has an excellent military record." With that Todd thanked his friend and hung up the phone.

Three days went by. Todd tried to sleep as much as possible, with the aid of the sleeping pills. On the morning of the fourth day he arose, showered, shaved, donned his uniform concealed his nine millimeter service pistol in his belt at the small of his back. He then went to the officers' open mess and toyed with a plate of bacon and eggs for a few minutes. Then he got up and went to the post stockade. The sergeant at the desk asked "How can I help you Colonel?" Todd replied "I am Colonel Barnes, I have been assigned to represent Sergeant Coslow. Do you have a room where I could talk to my client?" "Certainly Colonel, please wait in that third room on the left down the hall and I will have him brought to you." A short time later two MP's entered the room with the manacled sergeant between them. "You can wait outside men, I will call you if I need you - and shut the door on your way out please." As soon as the MP's had stepped out Todd said, "Good morning sergeant, I am Colonel Barnes and I have been assigned as your defense counsel. You are the man who struck and killed the little girl and the old Mexican woman a couple days ago are you not?"

Todd knew very well that he was the man but his heart was pounding and he needed a moment to cool himself down and to regain his self- composure. "Yeah, that's me Colonel," Sergeant Coslow responded. With this confirmation that he had the right man, Todd promptly withdrew his service pistol and with no hesitation at all shot the sergeant between the eyes, killing him instantly. Hearing the shot, the two MP's rushed back into the room. Todd handed one of them his service pistol, butt first. Todd made no statement at that time nor did the MP's ask him any questions. They simply arrested him, booked him and escorted him to a cell. During the booking process they found out that he was Colonel Dixon, not Colonel Barnes as he had claimed.

"I can't say as I blame you sir; maybe in your place I would have done the same thing. You have, however, thought this thing through pretty thoroughly and you know what we have to do now."

Todd signed a full confession and went before the General Court Martial for sentencing. The minimum sentence for pre-meditated murder was twenty-five to life in a military prison. Todd was lead away in handcuffs to serve his time.

- CHAPTER 14 -
ADAM, JEFF AND TOM GO TO PRISON

None of the boys came from affluent families and none could afford to hire an attorney. The overworked and underpaid public defender had too many assigned cases to spend much time on their case. "Listen, Walter" The prosecutor began, "These kids are as guilty as sin. It would be a snap for me to prove premeditation, and you know it. I do not, however, in all good conscience want to see them on death row." "So what do you have in mind, Clyde?" the public defender asked. "I think you should advise them to cop to capital murder and I won't seek the death penalty," Clyde responded. "Oh, come on Clyde, you know I could walk them out of here if my agency had the manpower and the money for a trial." "I know that," Clyde countered "So just recommend they plead guilty to capital murder and they will walk in twentyfive years, and we can get on to more productive things where you might actually do some good."

Clyde and Walter ganged up on the boys in the anteroom off the hall leading to the courtroom. "We have the death penalty in Oregon," Clyde said to them, " and if you guys go to trial, you will be tried as adults and you could very well end up on death row, but if you plead guilty to capital murder you would each receive life in prison, without the possibility of parole." The prosecutor said "That guy you recognized as being with Hermy earlier in the day is Simon DeVoe. He witnessed the whole thing. He says that Jeff and Tommy each held one of Hermy's arms while Adam knifed him." Walter assured them that in Oregon, a life sentence amounted to twenty-five years, but they would be assured of escaping the gas chamber." After much consternation they all took the deal, pleaded guilty, were sentenced and, as promised, the judge sentenced them to twenty- five years without the possibility of parole. It was that quick; it was all over in fifteen minutes. As they were being escorted out of the court room the bailiff called the next case.

The three boys were initially sent to the state prison at Pendleton and as far as they knew would remain there for their entire sentence. Adam was crushed. Gone forever was his dream of playing his senior year at Central High School, gone was his dream of attending West Point and his subsequent career in the army. He would never marry, never have a family of his own. His life was essentially over.

The cells that Adam, Jeff and Tommy had been assigned to were in the Maximum Security block which was very similar to the traditional prisons you see depicted in so many movies. It had three tiers of cells at each side and one end with entrances on the ground floor at both ends and two tiers of cells above the entrances at each end. On the top two flights of cells there was a walkway that ran completely around so the guards could have quick access to any area on that level in the event of trouble. For the first time in his life someone addressed Adam by his middle name. The guards had an information card on each inmate and one of them, Martin Black Eagle, noticed Adam's middle name on the card. It was a Sunday afternoon, their second day of

incarceration; Adam, Tommy and Jeff were seated at one of the two dozen metal picnic type tables that were on the ground level in the center of the cell block. They were lamenting their situation when the loudspeaker came on and announced, "The following men will report to the desk for clean up detail. The second name called was Tall Chief Harcrow, They called six names in all. Adam told his companions "Well looks like they are putting me to work."

Adam was actually glad that they had called him because he didn't know whether he could take much more of that conversation with Jeff and Tommy or not. When he arrived at the desk, Martin Black Eagle made the work assignments. "Tall Chief, you and Washington take these brooms and sweep the main floor down; you other four take these mops and buckets and mop up after them. Nothing fancy and don't use much water but that floor out there looks pretty bad and the sarge wants it cleaned up." Washington stepped forward and took his broom, but Adam just stood there. It hadn't occurred to him that when Black Eagle said "Tall Chief" he meant Adam. "Hey, Harcrow, take your broom." "Oh you mean me, " he said. Adam had never used his middle name and certainly no one had ever addressed him by it. Washington, who was now holding his broom and starting to walk away was heard to mutter "dumb indian." Washington turned to Adam and said "You take that side Chief and I will get this one over here. This job will only take us a couple minutes." "What did you call me?" Adam asked? "Chief" repeated Washington as he started sweeping. Later that afternoon when Adam was standing in the chow line the man in front of him, who Adam had never met, turned to him and said "Hey, watch my place in line for me OK Chief?" Adam just muttered "sure," and let it go at that.

The next morning after breakfast they called out the names of all the new arrivals over the loudspeaker. Adam was assigned to the grounds maintenance crew. Tommy was assigned to the laundry and Jeff to the kitchen as a kitchen helper. After assignment one of the guards escorted each of them to their new work areas. Adam found himself standing in front of a low military type building connected in the rear to a large shed. There were about 60 men just sitting and standing around as if waiting for something. The guard ushered Adam into the building and up to a desk where an older, fat, balding guard was seated. "Here's a new man for you, George, think you can find something to keep him busy?" "Sure," there is always plenty to do around here." With that the guard who had escorted him over there turned and walked away. George said, "You just go out front with those other guys and someone will be along shortly to give you your work assignment for the day."

Another ten minutes went by, but eventually an older inmate with a clipboard came out of the office and announced, "OK, those of you who know where you are supposed to be working just form a line right here and give me your names, then proceed to your assigned work area." The process didn't take long and most of the men had reported to their respective areas. There were five men left. The man with the clipboard told four of the men to go to various work groups on the facility then turned to Adam. "OK, son, lets go, I'll show you where you will be working -- follow me." As they walked along, the old man asked, "What do they call you?" "Some of them have taken to calling me Chief," he said without giving it much thought. As it

turned out that was the last chance Adam would ever have to be called anything but Chief while at Pendleton.

The work detail he was assigned to was digging a trench for new sewer pipe that was being installed to service the needs of the prison. The old inmate, who was referred to by others as "Pops," turned Chief over to the guard supervising the detail and left. "Well, Chief, you kinda young to be here ain't ya?" "No matter, theres a lotta different folks finds themselves in this place. This is a good job, we got enough men so you can spell each other real often and nobody gonna get real tired out. The guys will tell you when you 'sposed to take your turn." "The big black dude down there diggin' now is called Hank and that giant he's working with is known as Paul Bunyan, they both pretty good old boys."

The detail worked for about two hours before breaking for a two hour lunch, then returned to their respective work sites, following the same procedure they had gone through that morning. This time, Adam was in the line to tell Pops where he was supposed to go.

The job took about a week to finish, then Adam was assigned to another inane work detail, this time painting the exterior of the large shed behind the work group office. Alfred, the guard in charge of Adam's work group was dumber than a stump but he wasn't mean, just an easy going old boy that no one ever seemed to take advantage of. He didn't have to tell anybody anything and that's the way he liked it. Even when George came out of the office to micro-manage the painting project he talked to Hank Adams, the defacto working foreman of the crew.

This was not an altogether unpleasant job, but Adam sure dreaded the thought of doing this for the next twenty-five years. He didn't know whether he could take that or not. Everyone on the crew had taken to calling him "Chief" and he didn't mind -- what difference did it make?

Adam was young, he had just turned sixteen was quite handsome, but by now he had also grown to six feet-two inches and weighed about 205 lbs. His cell mate was a small man and was no threat to him. Once, in the yard, he was approached by some of the older inmates who proceeded to taunt him. A big bruiser known as Bubba jeered "Hey Chief, you pretty, you wanna be my ole lady, kid." Then he reached out and grabbed Adam's arm. One second later Bubba was on the ground looking up, and didn't know how he got there. His buddies were laughing at him. No one bothered Chief much after that.

In the fish (new inmate) orientation they had mentioned that inmates were encouraged to take the GED test and get their high school diploma. Adam decided to look into this. He went to the prison library and ask the inmate at the desk "Is this where I sign up to take the GED test?" "No, there is an education coordinator over at the office that handles that." At the office he was told to come back after the evening meal and talk to a Mr. Grimes, the education coordinator.

Adam got into the chow line early and finished his meal quickly. Mr. Grimes seemed to Adam to be the type of man who was not interested in his job. He took Adam's name and other information and told him that he would be notified when they would be giving the next test. "It will be when enough men sign up to make it worthwhile giving the test, probably in a week or two, I'll let you know." "I do give evening classes, however, to prepare men to take the test if you would like to attend." "The only problem with that is that until you flunk the test you won't know what your weak areas are, so you won't know what to bone up on." "What kinds of classes are these?" asked Adam. "Well, lets see now, there is a class on how to take a test as well as classes in math, English and history. You may need help in all these areas or just a couple of them."

Adam opted to sit in on each class one time and maybe it would give him some idea of what he needed more help with. Mr. Grimes said he reckoned how that would be alright with him and handed Adam a class schedule. The first three classes were a joke and Adam decided that he was not going to benefit from attending any more of them. The last class, however, the one on how to take a test, interested him. Mr. Grimes, who when Adam had first met him had seemed disinterested in his work proved to be a very adept fellow when it came to knowing how to take a test. Adam picked up a world of information from him, things that he had never dreamed of. The test was administered in his fourth week at Pendleton. He knew that he had done well, but he had to wait another week to find out. His score was so high that Mr. Grimes couldn't believe it. "You have some great potential son. I know a little about your situation but you should avail yourself of the opportunity to further your education; even in here education can pay off with assignment to choice jobs and some benefits that the average inmate doesn't get. I'd like for you to take College English 50 and Oregon history and I will get the state to give you a regular high school diploma in addition to your GED test." Adam accepted and started the classes the next week. Three months later he finished the courses, and was given his high school diploma at age sixteen, six months earlier than he would have received it if he had graduated from high school.

- CHAPTER 15 - TRANSFER TO UMATILLA

About the time that Adam received his high school diploma, his name was called when he showed up for work and was told to go over to the infirmary and get a physical. In a place like Pendleton any break in the routine is welcomed, so Adam hastened over to the infirmary. He was told to get into line behind ten other men that were there ahead of him. A routine physical exam, including blood tests, that should have taken about an hour, took him all day. In a way he was kind of grateful to the prison system for taking that much interest in inmate health.

A week went by, then he, Jeff and Tommy and about five hundred other men were told to gather all their belongings and form up in the yard by the main gate. As they stood around they kept asking one another if they knew what was up. "I heard we are all being moved to another prison" someone said. Eventually they were all loaded

into big green busses and transferred out to the new maximum security prison at Umatilla.

As they got off the busses they were escorted to a cell block in the new prison and assigned a cell. Men kept arriving from prisons all over the state, until there were about sixteen hundred in the new prison. This proved to be a far cry from the overcrowding and chaos that he had known at Pendleton. Gone were the short-timers and the petty hoods and punks that made up the majority of the inmate population at Pendleton. This prison was brand new and though stark and cold was a first-class structure. The biggest difference was that the men here knew they would be here for the long haul and tended to be more subdued; they minded their own business and did their time. This was a real maximum security prison populated by long-term inmates, or "lifers", as they are referred to in other prisons.

They were all assigned to the same work groups they were in at Pendleton. Adam saw less and less of Jeff and Tommy. They had made new friends and so had he; besides there was something a little awkward about associating with them. It brought back too many bad memories.

Adam's new cell mate was the large black man that had been on the maintenance crew with him at Pendleton. The man said "Hi Chief, looks like we are going to be roomies." "Hank, I am sure glad to see you, I didn't know who they would throw me in with." They had a casual friendship developing at Pendleton, but here they became almost inseparable. They worked together on the same crew and it seemed like you never saw one without the other.

Hank, for his part, felt like a mother hen looking out for Chief all the time. Adam admired this big man and the habits he had developed during all those years in the army. Henry had no formal training in self-defense and certainly no training in the martial arts, so Adam commenced to teach Henry the art of Karate. They worked many hours in their cell and in the gymnasium. Yes, they did have a gymnasium at Umatilla, which was highly unusual for a state prison. Several of the other inmates saw what was going on and wanted to learn Karate also. Soon Adam found himself teaching a karate class. For some reason the guards never tried to stop them. This would never have been allowed in any other prison.

Adam and Hank were sitting at one of the picnic tables in the center of the cell block one afternoon, doing nothing in particular, when Adam looked up and saw four men standing around the table. All of them had their arms folded in front of them and they were all obviously Native Americans. Adam said "Hi fellas, something I can help you with?" "We need to talk, little brother," one of them said. "OK, lets talk." "First this black man must go; what I have to say is for indians only." "I think I will stick around," said Hank. "Suit yourself black man, I don't want to fight with you." "Young man, you are the one called "Chief," are you not?" Adam acknowledged that he was. "What is your American name?" "My Name is Adam Tall Chief Harcrow; you can call me by any one of those names." "We will call you Adam." The man said no more and just stood there with his arms folded. "So what do I owe this visit to?"

inquired Adam. "We don't like to talk about important matters with this black man sitting here" the man said. "Who are your people?" "My mother, is half Cherokee and half white, my father had no Indian blood at all." "I never met my Indian grandfather; he died before I was born I have never been on an Indian reservation, I don't speak any Cherokee and frankly I never knew much about Native American culture," Adam said. "Perhaps you should be talking to this black man here, as you call him, he is an enrolled member of the Seminole tribe in Florida." They all took another good look at Hank. "You Indians from Florida sure look funny" the man said. With that they all four turned and walked away. "I wonder what that was all about?" said Hank. "Oh, I kind of expected something like that sooner or later", said Adam, "they have a club of sorts, planning some kind of Indian uprising I think. They won't bother either one of us again, I hope."

Early one morning, about a month after their arrival, a guard who Adam had become friendly with, came down the walkway outside Adam's cell. "Hey Chief, he said, you better shake a leg, we just got word that Governor Terry is going to be here sometime today and he wants to address all the inmates and guards in the dining room. You maintenance guys are going to have a lot to do to get things set up for his visit. He will be speaking in the mess hall and they told me to get all the maintenance people up and fed first so they could start getting things in shape. I guess that goes for you too Hank -- you are on the maintenance crew aren't you?"

- CHAPTER 16 - THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSITION

The governor's party pulled up to the main gate at about eight thirty that morning. The crew had everything ready. The men were marched in and seated. The warden came out first and introduced the governor. The governor began by saying, "I know it is highly unusual for the governor of a state to visit a prison, much less to address the inmates, but I consider this to be a very special circumstance. Men, you have been sent to this facility because you have been convicted of violent crimes and you have long sentences to serve. There is not much to do here and with the new mandatory sentencing that they have now there is no way to shorten your sentences as they did in the past when you could compile work time, good time and blood time and cut each year down to about nine months; actually nine months and twenty days. I think that is unfair to you and to the taxpayers of this state who have to foot the bill to keep you here. I just may have devised a way to do something about cutting your sentences down a bit." Upon hearing this a murmur of approval ran through the crowd. "I first contacted the commander of the Oregon National Guard, General Kristociac. He and I ironed out the details then proposed a bill to the legislature which has now been voted into law. I am now able to offer you a way to shorten your sentences. We are forming a tough new National Guard unit from this prison inmate population. It has always seemed to me a shame to send our best and brightest young men to die in combat when there are people such as yourselves who would be happy for a chance to redeem themselves by serving in the military. I'll warn you though, in any future wars or conflicts I intend to volunteer you for front line duty and you will be a lot more likely to sustain casualties than the average member of the Oregon National Guard.

The Army has agreed to furnish us with training personnel and facilities right here on the prison grounds, and at the Umatilla Army Depot not far from here."

"Any time you are engaged in guard activities you will be earning time and a half off your sentences and any time you are in a combat theater you will earn double time. If you should reach the rank of E-6 (Sergeant First Class) or above you will receive double time off your sentence for time spent on active duty and triple time off your sentence for time spent in a combat zone. You will be paid for your guard activity at the rate of any other guard member; however, the state will take one-fourth of your pay for board and room and another fourth for the victim compensation program."

"If you were ordered by the court to pay restitution, then that part of your pay will go directly to the victim's family, otherwise it will go into a fund that will compensate the families of other victims. You will also earn Social Security credit so when you turn 65, if you are out by then, and most of you will be, you won't be a burden on the state, and just maybe you can retire with some dignity. I know that is a worry a lot of you have. This is the best part; upon your release from prison your parole obligations will be waived if you elect to muster into the regular army in the grade that you hold with the guard when you are released. You will also be eligible for regular army retirement after serving the required number of years. Time served in the guard, on active duty, counts toward retirement. You men will be allowed to put in for a two year hitch in the army but acceptance will be on a case by case basis and the army may not accept all who apply. (Or any for that matter, he thought).

We fully realize that this program will afford you a better opportunity to escape and the legislature has dealt with that issue also. Escapees or AWOL's will be shot on the spot, rather than being recaptured. If recaptured you will be returned to prison to resume serving remaining time that you had left when you signed up for the guard and that time will be doubled. So, don't sign up for this program unless you sincerely want to make the most of it. Any questions?" A hand shot up, "Sir, what about the guys that don't qualify; I mean what if they are too old, or can't pass the physical or don't meet the minimum educational standards?" "We have that all taken care of son." "If you look around you, you will see that the oldest man in this room is forty- two and he has twelve years prior military service in the navy. Most of the rest of you are under thirty one and do qualify age-wise. When you first arrived in the prison system you were given an aptitude and general intelligence test. If you recall, before being sent to this institution you were each given a physical examination. Actually, that was the army pre-induction physical. Every man in this institution qualifies for service, all sixteen hundred of you. Now, as you leave you will be handed an application for service in the Oregon National Guard. Any man that does not want to take us up on this offer should turn down the application and stand in a group at the rear of the hall. You will be transferred back to the prison from which you came, to serve out your time. Oregon National Guard personnel will remain at this facility until all of the applications are returned, which could amount to several days." It was interesting to note that no one refused the program.

Adam returned to his cell and completed the application. He went up to the guard and told him that his application was completed and he was ushered immediately to the office at the front of the facility where he was introduced to a Sergeant Woodrow who

invited him to have a seat across the table and he would go over the application. The sergeant noted "I see here that you have had three years of high school ROTC; you have completed your basic training and attained the rank of Staff Sergeant with the ROTC. You were a squad leader in your platoon." "That's right sergeant, I have had some military training and some leadership training in ROTC." "It looks like you are in luck here, because one of the biggest problems we anticipated with this program is finding qualified men to take the leadership rolls. You seem a little young, but I think you are going to get along just fine."

Several inmates went to see the National Guard Officer in charge of collecting the applications and asked for a word with him. "Sure, men, do you have some questions about service that I can help you with?" "Not exactly," one of the inmates, said "My name is John Henry Adams." Henry, who seemed to be the leader of the group, continued; "we have, all of us here and some others who didn't want to come along with us, gathered a list of names for you. These are the names of men who will not, in our opinion make good soldiers. We would like for you to decline their applications and return them to the prison they came from." "What, may I ask, makes you an expert on the subject Mr. Adams?" "Sir, I am a sixteen year Master Sergeant, in the United States Army. I know men and I know most of the men on this list, and believe me when I say they are not suitable for military service." There were a dozen names on the list. "alright, lets take this first name, Alf Turlock, what's wrong with him?" "That man is a booty bandit, sir." "What's a booty bandit Mr. Adams?" "He is a blatant homosexual, he's a rapist, a bully, and a murderer. I don't mean that he murdered on the streets, I mean he has murdered since being incarcerated." "What about this next man, Johnny Curtis?" "He is the leader of the White Brotherhood, a Neo- Nazi, who preaches race hatred and racial superiority of whites." "And the next man, Booker Jones, what's the problem with him?" "He is Johnny Curtis' black counterpart, a black man who preaches the same philosophy that Johnny Curtis preaches, only from the black perspective. If this idea is going to work and we are to have a military unit here we do not have room for trouble makers like these. Please take our word for it and get rid of these men now or they will destroy everything you are trying to accomplish here." "Okay, I will take this list to Major Dobbs and I would like all of your names, even the youngster there." "My name is Adam Harcrow, sir." In turn, all of the men present gave the officer their names and numbers.

Major Dobbs, upon receiving this information, was a little dubious but sent for the men who had presented the list. When the men arrived in Major Dobbs office he had a stenographer take down detailed information on every man they wanted eliminated. He thanked them for their concern and dismissed them. He then sent for every man who's name appeared on the list they had presented him with. He had a corporal escort them all into an interrogation room that had two way glass and some recording equipment. The corporal told them to please wait and they would be called in one at a time for an interview. Major Dobbs positioned himself and a prison psychologist on the other side of the glass and just watched and listened as the men were interviewed. From their conversations during the interview, every one of them confirmed what inmate Adams had said about them. In fact, a fight broke out and guards had to be sent in to break it up. The next morning, all twelve men were handcuffed, loaded into

a bus and returned to other prisons.

- CHAPTER 17 -
THE GUARD - TRAINING BEGINS

Basic training started two weeks later. It would be a warm day for the northwest, but at five in the morning it was still cold and damp. The National Guard cadre had assembled the new recruits into the quadrangle at the prison and formed them into a rough formation, five men deep, facing front. An overweight corporal was calling off names and directing those responding to one or another of six areas of the quadrangle. There they were met rather cordially by the cadre staff that would have responsibility for that company for the next eight weeks.

Adam found himself in Company C of the Eighth Oregon Infantry. He was greeted by Sergeant Kelso and told nicely to step to the rear of the area and wait until the entire unit had been assigned. Eventually, all of the names had been called and the assignments were complete. There were two hundred sixty-five men in Company C. At this point they were formed into five lines of 65 men each, facing forward and told to stand at ease. Lieutenant Dobson stepped forward and told the men to move out on his command. They were to follow Sergeant Kelso at the head of the formation. They were marched at a casual pace about 400 yards through the rear of the quadrangle. The first column was told to board the first of two army deuce-and-a-half trucks that had pulled into the area. Then two more trucks pulled up and the rest of the first line boarded. The routine was repeated until all of Company C was aboard the trucks. Half an hour later the trucks came to a stop in front of a dilapidated, long, low military building at what they were told was the Umatilla Army Depot. The depot was an army facility but it was mostly used for storage now. The facility was principally used for the storage of poison gas. Most of the people working at the facility were civilians. There were a few army personnel, mostly military police, who were responsible for security.

They debarked from the trucks and were once again formed into five columns. One by one they entered the building where there was a long counter with National Guard personnel standing about four feet apart. At each station they were handed something. When they left the building each man carried one duffle bag containing two pair of combat boots, one pair of low quarters, one jacket, three fatigue shirts, three fatigue pants, five suits of underwear, five pair of socks, one fatigue hat, one helmet liner, one helmet and one set of dog tags with their names and a long number preceded by the letters NG. The dog tags came with a two-foot chain. There were various other items of military apparel in each issue, including a dress uniform, with khaki shirts and ties. Two web belts with brass buckles completed the ensemble.

After receiving their clothing issue they were directed to the building next door where they encountered five barber chairs and barbers. Each recruit was given a custom haircut. One barber was overheard to ask a recruit with particularly long beautiful locks if he would like to keep his hair and when he responded in the affirmative he was handed a sandwich bag and told to retrieve it from the floor of the barber shop before he left. They all walked out, completely bald. The entire company had

received their haircuts in less than an hour. After their haircuts they were once again formed up and marched to an army mess hall where they were fed the best meal they had enjoyed since they had been sentenced; thick, juicy hamburger patties with mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans and salad. There was even a slice of chocolate cake for dessert.

Upon their arrival back at the prison they found their cells stripped of everything except the bunks and mattresses. Nothing else remained. The major's voice came over the loudspeaker and informed them that all of their personal possessions had been boxed and stored in their names pending completion of their first eight weeks in the army, at which point they would reappear as mysteriously as they had disappeared. Their cells had never been locked down and they were free to leave for the evening meal as soon as released by the cadre which would be coming around to instruct them on how to arrange their newly issued clothing into the footlocker that each had been provided in their absence. All in all it had been a very busy, confusing and welcome day for men doing long stretches left to serve in prison. At chow that evening they were delighted to find fried chicken and all the trimmings. There was so much food that most of them could not eat it all.

At breakfast the next morning, more of the same, scrambled eggs, ham, hash brown potatoes, toast, coffee and huge portions; they couldn't believe their good fortune. As they formed up once again in the quadrangle, they found there were six areas delineated by signs now indicating companies A through F. Adam found the Company C area and awaited further instruction. The men had assembled in a column of bunches, not being told to do otherwise and waited. When their cadre appeared with his clipboard he said "Listen up now you scum, if I call your name you are to move to a position behind me." The first name that he read was "Johnston, Robert," the second was "Harcrow, Adam." He read twenty-five more names then dismissed the rest of the men for one hour. He instructed these twenty-five men to accompany him to a room in the office where he said "I don't know whether you birds are worth a damn or not but we have to start somewhere and you are the only ones with prior military service. Each of you will start out as an acting sergeant, except for you, Adams -- Major Dobbs wants to see you in his office right away". One of the other cadre led Hank away to talk to the major.

The cadre sergeant continued, "You will receive private's pay but you will be responsible for the nine or so other men in your squad. If I have a problem with any one of them it is your ass I am going to climb on. This is not a good job to have; you would all be better off if I had not called your names. You will be hated by the men and by the cadre as well, so if you want out say so now. No one spoke. About all that you will get in return is to be first in the chow line and most importantly, first in the seconds line. You will be the one I look to if anybody screws up and you will have to fix whatever is wrong. Only three of you, Harcrow, Frankworther and Johns have prior military experience at sergeant or above so you three will be my platoon sergeants and God rest your soles -- you three for the next 8 weeks are going to have the most difficult job in the army."

Major Dobbs looked up from behind his desk cluttered with papers as Adams was lead in. "Sergeant, er a, prisoner Adams reporting as ordered, sir" he said as he saluted smartly. "You were quite right when you said Sergeant, soldier, only you should have said Sergeant-Major Adams. That's right, I have looked over your record and I want you for my Battalion Sergeant-Major, if you are interested." "Sir, does that mean that I am now an E-9 Sergeant-Major in the Oregon National Guard?" "Not exactly, Dobbs said, you are an E-8, Acting E-9, but you will have no break in service. When you were arrested you were given a General Discharge for the Good of the Service. I have had that removed and you have been transferred to the Oregon National Guard on active duty. You are the best qualified man in this outfit and I am going to rely on you heavily. You are going to have to live up to your reputation." "I can arrange for you to have a private cell if you like, and I want you to dine at the officers table beside me. Sometimes that will be the only chance I will have to talk with you about what is happening in the battalion." "If you don't mind sir, I had just as soon keep my cell mate. His name is Adam Harcrow and I think that boy has real potential. We get along just fine and I would like to keep him around." "Harcrow, huh?," said Dobbs. "Isn't he the sixteen year old sergeant from high school ROTC who has already been through basic training once?" "That's the one sir, and if I am any judge of character he will one day command this battalion if they give him a chance."

Basic training for the prisoner army got underway with only one hitch. The harassment traditionally inflicted on basic training recruits just didn't work on these guys; it flowed off of them like water off a ducks back. After three days of getting nowhere with their petty intimidation, the brass conferred with the cadre and decided to try another method of training. It was decided to just conduct the classes, continue the physical fitness training and hold the inspections, with some kind of punishment for those that are too sloppy. Many of these guys are seasoned convicts and they do whatever they are told to do. They regard our cadre as just more "bulls". They still have their own clandestine society that we are not a part of and never will be. I think the answer for this is to heap more responsibility on their own squad and platoon leaders. We will just be there more as instructors. This proved to be a very different basic training camp. The guys shaped up nicely because they wanted to, not because someone was badgering them into it. If a man started screwing up it was more often than not the other men that came down on him. "Hey, man, I have twenty years to do and If I can do it in eleven or twelve that is gonna suit me just fine. "I sure don't want any little raggedy ass punk like you messing that up for me, so shape up." That was the gist of what came down on the men that weren't giving one hundred percent. It was obvious the prisoners desperately wanted this program to work.

One day a committee of eight privates approached Sergeant-Major Adams with a proposition, "Sir would you mind if we sent out a patrol every night when we are not here in the compound? It's not exactly that we expect anybody to make a break for it, but if anyone should attempt to do so, it would probably be at night when we are camped out somewhere." Sergeant Adams discussed this with Major Dobbs and they agreed with this plan.

They fell out at 5 AM every morning, took roll and had breakfast before boarding busses and trucks that took them to the improvised training facilities at the Depot. They double-timed everywhere they went and seemed particularly fond of the bawdy army songs used to chant cadence.

When they had finished learning all about their weapons and it came time to introduce them to the rifle range and live ammunition everyone in management, both the guard and the prison, were very apprehensive. It was kind of a disappointment that it came off without a hitch. They noted that on the whole these guys were better marksmen, much better marksmen, than the average recruit. They took great pride in these worn out old M-16 rifles they had been issued. They really enjoyed learning how to use them properly.

Whenever a company is on the rifle range it is an age old custom in the army to place guards at all the roads leading to the range. Adam had been asked to furnish guards while B company was using the range. He told each of his squad sergeants to place one of their men and showed them on a map where the men should be. That evening at roll call before boarding the busses for the trip back to the prison, one private Escobar was missing. A cold chill ran through everyone. It wouldn't take many screw-ups to abort this whole deal and ruin it for everybody. The men were told to stand in place, at rest, and guards were summoned from the prison to initiate the search for the AWOL soldier.

As the guards and the warden entered the facility and proceeded down the road leading to the troop assembly area they were stopped by a soldier on guard duty brandishing a rifle. He approached their car and ask who they were and made them produce ID. He then politely inquired as to the nature of their business before allowing them to pass. Upon arriving at the troop formation they related this encounter to the captain in charge. "Wait a minute," he said, "was the soldier who stopped you a young Mexican man of about twenty?" The warden answered "Yes, yes he was, why?" "Was he wearing a name tag?" the captain inquired. "I don't recall" replied the warden. "I do" said one of the guards from the prison, "the name sewn on his fatigue jacket was Escobar."

The captain laughed, sighed with relief and said "Sorry to have brought you gentlemen out here like this; Escobar is our missing man. Someone had assigned him to guard duty and no one was sent to relieve him so he remained on duty, guarding his post as he was told to do." The battalion gathered up Private Escobar on their way home and one squad sergeant got a royal ass chewing from Adam and others. So much for the great escape.

The officers in the National Guard Unit were meeting to discuss how well things were going. Major Dobbs, the Commanding Officer of the guard unit addressed the group. "We have only three men sent back to regular prison so far and it appears that the others will have no problem keeping with the program. These men are picking up soldiering skills much faster than regular recruits and so far, no one could say that this program is not a raving success; however, to make this a functioning unit they must

have officers and trained NCO's. It is not going to work having our men staff this unit with the high-skill positions. During World War II they encountered a similar problem and solved it by setting up a special 90- day program to turn out second lieutenants. There was a lot of griping in the army about the '90-day wonders,' but they did play a big part in winning that war. I propose that we take all of the men who are now serving as temporary NCO's and an additional one hundred men from the ranks who you feel can identify as having the most potential and send them to a special Officer Candidate School upon completion of their second eight weeks of basic infantry training.

The junior officer slots will then be filled with their own men, those that finish highest in the class standings and the others will be their NCO's. They finish their first eight weeks this Friday and are entitled to a week off so that gives us a little less than three months to get things set up." One of the captains had a question. "Sir, when you say junior officers, do you mean that some of these men will attain the rank of first lieutenant or captain on completion of the 90-day program?" "Yes I do," Major Dobbs replied. "They will graduate as second lieutenants, but will wear the insignia of whatever rank they are required to be, in an acting capacity. They will automatically be promoted as soon as they have time in grade, until they reach the rank in which they are acting. Look at it this way, captain, this unit is expendable, the whole unit is cannon fodder. When, not if, a combat situation arises they will spearhead any military action this country undertakes. If we assigned regular officers to this duty they would have a very short life expectancy. Of course, if any of you men want to volunteer to remain as officers in the prison army, then please raise your hands now." None were raised.

Delbert Jefferson was continually shooting his mouth off. During the first eight weeks of basic training he would tell any of the other convict soldiers who would listen that when the opportunity arose he was going to make his break. He belittled the bulls that had furnished him with this plush opportunity, and he belittled the other inmates for their appreciation of the program. "Just you wait, he would say, one of these days Delbert will be long gone." A couple of the inmates who were to serve on the night patrol, overheard his boast's and were keeping a particularly close watch on him.

The second eight weeks basic infantry training went by smoothly, with one exception. The battalion was on their first bivouac, sleeping out in one of the more remote areas of the Depot. The next morning at roll call there was a Private Delbert Jefferson missing. He was found about four hundred yards away from the camp on a path leading to the highway. He was unconscious. The letters AWOL carved in his forehead in letters an inch high, the letters had been filled with blue indelible ink. He was sent by ambulance to the prison infirmary where the inmate medic on duty sterilized and bandaged the wound on his forehead. He was told by the medic not to remove the bandage until the wound had a chance to heal.

Delbert was shipped back to Pendleton that same day. Upon his arrival he was escorted directly to an isolation cell. These are maximum facility lockups. In most

prisons they are known as "The Hole." In these cells inmates are equipped with one pair of trousers, one shirt, one pair of slippers, and nothing else. The room is equipped with one toilet and nothing else. They are fed a piece of high nutrition tasteless mush about the size of a man's fist, three times a day. The inmates call this dog food. If they eat the dog food they will feel intense hunger after the first day. If they eat nothing their physical condition deteriorates faster, but after the third day they no longer suffer the pangs of hunger.

The old pro's who have been to the hole many times will put their dog food aside and eat it all in the last three days, before they are let out. Most of them know how long they will be in there. Even if they do not hear anyone say it, they know how long a man usually gets for any particular infraction of the rules. In this case however, Delbert had no idea how long he would be there. He lacked the self discipline necessary to deny himself anything so he ate the mush as they gave it to him and suffered the hunger. Lacking a mirror, or any reflective surface that would let him see himself, he was not aware of the indelible ink in his wounds until he got out two weeks later. By that time the ink had set and could never be removed. A medical aid went by and cleaned and dressed his wound daily but never mentioned the ink. The aid would just mutter something like "Oh, that's healing nicely," or "Good, there is no sign of infection."

When he was released from the hole he removed the bandage and saw the bright blue lettering. He was mortified. Delbert would carry those scars and his tattoo the rest of his life. What story Delbert dreamed up to explain the scars to anyone who asked is unknown. Upon his release from the hole there was a letter waiting for him from the Oregon National Guard notifying him that he now had one more accolade to add to his life-long list of negative achievement, a dishonorable discharge.

There were no more dropouts and no more AWOL's. The men who were to attend OCS had been selected. The list of names included Adam Harcrow, Jeff Dawson, and Tommy Rich. Prison type security had become very lax because any man who wanted to escape could have done so at any time, if he wanted to brave the possibility of running into the night patrol. It was kind of amazing that each morning after the unit had spent the night in the field the same dozen men went on sick call and were ordered to spend the first half of the day in bed. No more of the trainees had wanted to try desertion as a way out of the army. At the end of the second eight weeks training, and after another week of rest, the training resumed. Those selected attended OCS. The rest of the men were given advanced training in survival and other skills that ordinary army recruits never received.

It became obvious that one of the officer candidates was head and shoulders above the others; Adam Harcrow. He could have taught the course. Despite the way he shined, the other men didn't seem to resent him. He got along well with everyone and the other men seemed to look to him for leadership, although he was still only seventeen. They kidded him a lot and always called him Chief, though Chief was beginning to take on a different meaning. At the conclusion of the training Adam was assigned as Company Commander of Company C, a second lieutenant in the Oregon National

Guard, acting Captain. He was authorized to wear the railroad track double silver bars of a captain. For the time being a Guard captain was also attached to each company as an advisor. Lt Lopez, of the National Guard was assigned as Adam's advisor, but his real advisor was Sergeant-Major Adams. One day Lopez remarked, "You know, son, at seventeen you are probably the youngest acting Captain in the United States Army." Adam just smiled.

Not surprisingly they had found clergymen of all the major faiths within the prison system and were able to obtain for these men commissions as Chaplain, First Lieutenant, but they still had to endure basic training for eight weeks so they could better understand these men. One particular problem they had in assembling their Chaplain Section was with the Catholics. It seemed, that even though a number of priests were available, they had all been excommunicated. They no longer had the authority of the church to say Mass, administer last rights, perform marriages or any other official function. One man in particular wanted very much to serve as a Catholic chaplain. His name was Jose Villa, formerly Father Villa. He had been a parish priest, who had been found guilty of sexual misconduct with a minor and sentenced to twenty years in the penitentiary. Major Dobbs contacted a Bishop in Portland and requested that a priest in good standing be assigned to minister to the Catholic inmates of the unit.

"That would be quite impossible Major, we are desperately short of qualified priests as it is." "In that case" said Major Dobbs, "is there any way that Father Villa could be reinstated, for the purpose of ministering to these convicts?" The Bishop was very familiar with Father Villa, and actually liked the man very much. He had felt badly that the Church had strongly advised Father Villa to admit to guilt rather than to embarrass the Church with the negative publicity that a trial would bring. Father Villa, for his part, wanted a trial because he maintained his innocence. "I will see what I can do about Father Villa," said the Bishop, "It would be an unprecedented action but it may be possible, I'll get back to you."

Over a month passed, then one day a letter finally arrived from the Bishop to Major Dobbs. "I have been authorized by the Cardinal to visit Father Villa at the prison and hear his confession. I will speak with him at length at that time. If he repents his sins but steadfastly denies the charges against him I will be able to authorize full reinstatement to the priesthood. We were able to do this because all there was against the man was an accusation and by pleading guilty to the charge he was merely following the instructions of his superiors." Two weeks later the Battalion had their Catholic chaplain. Fortunately, the other chaplain posts were not that hard to fill. The question of arms was bothering Major Dobbs. "I don't like it a bit" he told General Kristociac, when the General visited. These men have been equipped with the army's old hand me down M-16's. Most of the rifles are so old that they are no longer accurate. We are having constant trouble with them because they are worn out from all the use they have had over the years. In spite of the condition of the rifles, these men have achieved outstanding performance on the rifle range. It wouldn't be right to order them to the front line in a war situation equipped with these outdated M-16's. The army has offered to equip us with AR-15's but I went to the armory at Fort

Lewis and checked out the rifles they offered us. They are in even worse condition than the M-16's that we have now. The rest of the army now uses the new AR- 21's but there are not enough of them to equip these guys." "Don't worry Major, I am well aware of the problem and I am working on it" the General replied.

An Assistant Producer from a weekly network prime time news magazine called Major Dobbs and identified himself as Cal Porter. "That's right Major, the whole crew from Nations Week will be at the prison next Tuesday. I am not calling you seeking your permission, we already have that from Governor Terry. I am calling to let you know that we will be there along with Governor Terry and General Kristociac. We will be filming a twenty minute segment to run in about three weeks on your, shall we say, unusual military organization. We think it is something the American people would be interested in.

The crew from Nations Week showed up as scheduled, accompanied by Governor Terry and General Kristociac. They filmed the prison, some of the men going through a mock training exercise, the mess hall at meal time and whatever else interested them. They did not narrate their film, just filmed. They then called the governor into an office and interviewed him for no more than ten minutes. When they were through with the governor they gave the general the same ten minute interview. Then they turned the cameras on Major Dobbs and ask him five or six unrelated questions of no significance. Three inmate soldiers were brought in and interviewed. One of the inmates was the young Captain Adam Harcrow, another was Sergeant-Major Adams and a third was a young private. They asked them what crime they had committed that got them there and what they thought about serving in the military. At that point they thanked one and all and invited them to tune in to the show when it aired. After the governor thanked one and all and told them they had done a splendid job, the governor and General Kristociac left. The inmates and Major Dobbs just looked at each other, shrugged, gave the appropriate salutes and went back to business as usual. Two weeks after Major Dobbs complained to General Kristociac about the rifles, he received a call "Hello Major Dobbs, my name is Carlo Swinson, I am a marketing representative for Springfield Arms. We have developed a new Military version of the Springfield 308. It carries a new twenty-five round clip, is a gas operated, semiautomatic.

The barrel is longer than most military rifles, and it is a little heavier, more like the traditional hunting rifle. The good news is that it is the most accurate rifle in the world. With the new night/day laser scope that we have developed a skilled marksman can put six slugs in a coffee can lid at nine hundred yards, and the effective range exceeds one thousand yards. The laser feature only works at night, it puts out a laser dot that shows up precisely where the bullet will strike. We have been trying to get the army to give it a real field test but were getting nowhere until General Kristociac came along. He has persuaded the army to approve the weapon for your battalion. When could I come out for a demonstration?" "You tell me Carlo, any time that is convenient for you, sounds like an answer to our prayers." "How's this Saturday morning sound?" "Great, can you bring ten rifles for the test?" "Sure, I'll be there about ten AM, if that is good for you." "See you then." Dobbs was elated. He sent for Adam and told him to have his twenty best shooters ready to test a new rifle at

the appointed time. "Adam, have them bring along those junk M-16's that are assigned to them now."

Saturday morning Adam loaded their twenty best shooters and forty other men to work the range and the targets, onto one of the big green busses and headed for the range. They arrived around 0800. "OK men, I want you to shoot a qualifying round at five hundred yards using your M-16's. Fire six shots each from prone, kneeling and standing position. "Sergeant, have some of these other men measure back one, two, three and four hundred yards from this line and lay down a fifty foot chalk line parallel to this firing line at each interval". The range wasn't set up for anything over five hundred yards.

Carlo Swinson arrived on time and was escorted out to the range by Major Dobbs. Guards were posted to warn anyone who might accidentally wander onto the range and the test began. "Mr. Swinson, this is Captain Harcrow. These twenty men here are the ones that have proven themselves to be the best rifle sharpshooters in their company." "Pleased to meet you Mr. Swinson, I have here the targets my men just finished shooting at five hundred yards, six rounds each, in the standing, kneeling, and prone positions; as you can see a lot of the holes are in the black but a lot of them aren't."

"Follow me gentlemen," Carlo said as he walked over and opened the back of his Jeep wagon. In the back of his wagon were ten new plastic cases and a large metal ammo box. "You first ten men each take a rifle out of one of those plastic cases. As the men opened the cases they saw ten brand new, Springfield 308 rifles in velvet lined cases. "Wow, this is the most beautiful rifle I have ever seen" one young corporal exclaimed as he withdrew the rifle from the case. "Now if four of you would please grab onto ammo box by the handles at the corners and we will carry this stuff over to the firing line." "I would like the ten men who just showed the best score with those M-16's to take one of these rifles and shoot the same course. These rifles have already been zeroed in at the factory so they should be ready to go." "I don't want you to even take practice rounds first, just aim and shoot the best you can with a strange rifle." The results were amazing. Of the one hundred eighty rounds fired they were all in the black, most in the ten circle in the center of the black. "I see you have marked off additional distances behind the firing line as I asked you to do, so lets now move back to six hundred yards and please hand the rifles over to the ten men that have not already fired." The results were almost as good with only a couple shots out of the black and only a few less in the ten circle. They repeated the same procedure at seven hundred, eight hundred and nine hundred yards. All of the men did better at nine hundred yards with the Springfields than they had done at five hundred yards with the M-16's.

"I'm sold said Dobbs, where do I sign?" "Not so fast Carlo said. I am authorized by the factory to leave these ten rifles that I brought with me for, shall we say, more extensive testing, but my guess is that it will take two months at least to get all the paper work done, now that we have found a unit willing to switch to these rifles." "Just put as much of a rush on it as you can; you never can tell when we might be called out for combat and I sure as hell don't want to send these kids into combat with

those old M-16's, they weren't all that good when they were new but now they are just plain worn out."

Exactly one week later four trucks from Springfield Arms pulled up at the main gate with new rifles and ammo to equip the entire battalion. Apparently General Kristociac had some friends in high places.

After the filming at the prison everyone watched the next three weeks of Nations Week on TV but there was no mention of their segment. After seven weeks the anchor man announced that they had intended to run an interview with an Arab leader that was making a lot of waves but the film didn't arrive in time so we thought you might enjoy this bit that we recently filmed at a state penitentiary in the State of Oregon. Throughout the whole segment the narrator poked fun at the Governor, General Kristociac, the prison and the men. They were made to look ridiculous. They especially panned the idea of having a sixteen year old captain. The news anchor ended the film with a chuckle and a smile. Anyone watching that particular segment of the show would have thought the unit to be a latter day reincarnation of the Keystone Cops, a bunch of buffoons. Neither Governor Terry nor General Kristociac ever mentioned the TV show to Major Dobbs or anyone else at the prison.

Instructors were brought in from the 101st Airborne at Fort Bragg and the men were all given the instruction necessary to qualify them for their paratrooper insignia. A man cannot enter Special Forces until his second enlistment, but a Special Forces team had been sent to Umatilla and presented them with an abbreviated eight week course in Special Forces techniques. These guys at Umatilla were strictly infantry, dog-faced soldiers, but very well trained. They had spent four weeks with Delta Force instructors that had been sent to Umatilla to deliver a crash course. They learned how to be there without being seen. Some of the men took to this type of warfare so well they were referred to as "the invisibles." Adam took the training right along with the

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men; he was a field man not an office man. By this time the guys were anxious for some kind of war to start just so they could try out their new skills. They didn't have long to wait.

- CHAPTER 18 -

COMBAT

The army brass and the administration had long felt that a sweep through the high mountains of Colombia to ferret out the drug establishment would prove very fruitful and was long overdue, so when the President of Colombia said that he would embark on just such a mission with the Colombian army, but wanted arms and technical assistance from the United States, they agreed wholeheartedly and agreed to also assign a battalion of their best trained men to spearhead the drive. For the most part the Regular Army resented all the hoopla that was going around about this prison battalion and how good they were. They figured that a big percent of these men were doing time on drug related charges and, after all, wasn't Colombia a Disneyland for junkies?

They had been designated the First Special Battalion of the Oregon National Guard but the army designated them the First Battalion of The First Regiment of the First Infantry Division, which had been deactivated for years. Before that, The First had been a training division at Fort Ord, California before that facility was closed when the army downsized. What most people had forgotten was that it was also the First

Division that spent that terrible winter at Valley Forge, under a General named George Washington.

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The men were elated at being activated and sent to a combat theater where they would earn double time off their sentences. They were flown out of McCord Air Force Base near Tacoma, Washington on a cold, rainy November morning in old Air Force C-124's. These planes were considered obsolete, but still served the purpose. Twentytwo hours later they were on the ground in Bogota. They were loaded on trucks and moved to an unused portion of a nearby army base where advance personnel had erected seven huge tents. Each Company was billeted in a tent; there was one for the field kitchen and mess hall and one for the officers.

Major Dobbs called them to an assembly in the large area in the center formed by the tents. "Men, this assignment could well be the end of this program or if it goes well could enable the program to be adopted by more states or by the army itself. You are in Colombia which is known for growing, processing and selling narcotics. We are here to clean out the drug lords and the narcotics industry once and for all. There are people in the Army high command and in the political arena that want you to fall on your faces".

"They arranged to have this action approved because they want nothing more than to have it fail. They figure that since some or most of you are in prison on drug related charges that you won't be able to resist the temptation. As soon as you get your hands on drugs that's all she wrote. They think that many of you will desert, that many of you will get high and be sitting ducks for the enemy to slaughter at their leisure. I don't think that is going to happen. Each and every one of you have been off drugs for at least eighteen months and none of you are chemically dependent. If we prove a point here by not having any AWOL's, deserters or anyone caught in possession of or using drugs during the time we are here it will mean a great future for the program. Now I am going to ask each of you to hold up your hand right now if you think you might be tempted. Don't be ashamed; if you think there is any possibility that you would be tempted we can assign you to duty where you will not come into contact with the drugs. There will be a lot to do here that will not expose you to temptation."

First one, then three and finally almost fifty men held up their hands. "Platoon sergeants, take the names of those who held up their hands and make sure that they are so assigned." Captain Harcrow's Company had eleven men and Adam started thinking of how he intended to handle their assignments.

The plan he came up with worked perfectly. He told the platoon sergeants to pick out two of the straightest men they had for each guy that held up his hand and to make sure that at least one of these two men were with the tempted one every waking hour. They were to steer them away from tempting situations and otherwise watch them closely when they were in the field. During the entire time that C Company was in Colombia not one incident occurred. The Army and the Administration were impressed and the Governor of Oregon was very relieved.

On the first morning after their arrival they commenced orientation. Most of the speakers were army personnel who had been in Colombia for years. They were taught about poisonous snakes and insects and plants and told the situation as it existed in the countryside. They were told how the drug lords intimidated the peasants, how they murdered, robbed, raped them. The peasants did help the army a little but were very

cautious and terrified of the drug organizations. In most of the countryside the
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government did not rule, the drug lords ruled.

Over the years the Colombian army had some success. They would raid an area in force and destroy crops and facilities, but as soon as the army pulled out things went right back to the way they were before the raid. Army patrols did not fair so well.

The drug organizations were well staffed, equipped and trained. Any company size army unit could just about depend on being ambushed somewhere along their route and usually lost half or more of their men before they got back. What was being planned for this operation was to take one district at a time and hold it until it was pacified and functioning smoothly under government control.

The prison battalion was to spearhead the advance with government guides and advisors to recommend routes and objectives along the way. They weren't on the trucks more than two hours before they reached the first objective area and disembarked. They advanced on foot for about an hour then reached a clearing that would be their camp for the time being. They radioed base and soon a dozen cargo helicopters arrived with supplies and equipment that they would need. They spent the rest of the day setting up their base camp and getting a rest.

The next morning platoon sized units began to advance into the countryside. They stayed no more than a quarter of a mile apart and stayed in close radio contact. By evening they had covered almost ten miles and met with no resistance. While most of the men pitched pup tents. Choppers soon arrived with hot chow. Just before dark, patrols were sent out a mile or so from camp and guards were placed at strategic points to prevent a night time sneak attack. The next morning all was quiet, the guards were all relieved and the choppers appeared with a hot breakfast.

Their second day out was a repeat of the first day. They passed through a small village about noon and called in the pacification team of Colombians that would make this village their home for as long as it took for the Colombian people to win back their country. The pacification team consisted of soldiers, nurses, teachers and others needed to reach out to the villagers.

On the third day the advance party radioed back that they had reached the crest of a hill and could see what appeared to be a poppy field in the valley below. When the rest of the battalion arrived they spread out and moved slowly and cautiously into the valley. Sure enough, they had found a narcotics crop but there was no one there to protect it. The farmers had abandoned their crop and their farmhouse and fled into the mountains when they heard the soldiers coming. The house was poor and there were no processing facilities. Apparently this was just a local farmer that grew his crop to sell to the mob. They destroyed the crop with poison that had been specifically developed for that purpose. It would kill the growing crop but it would not harm the soil for future crops of other types, although the present crop would not fair well in this soil for many years.

They fell into this routine and in less than a month had covered a good sized portion of the country. They had yet to find their first drug lord headquarters, but then this was no surprise. The area that they had been marching through was chosen for this very reason. The Colombians knew where the drug establishments were and wanted to take away as much of their territory as they could before they had to confront them.

They had been in the field about two weeks when one of the Colombian guides told them that the first drug lord stronghold was just over the hills ahead. This time the Colombian army directed the prison battalion to encircle the drug facility and take the high ground. A number of skirmishes broke out as the soldiers encountered members of the drug lord outer guards or patrols.

The soldiers were certain that by now the drug lord soldiers at the encampment knew of their presence; they had possibly known for several days. When the soldiers entered the camp there was no one there to greet them. Apparently this camp was not up to taking on a full battalion of U.S. Army troops. The camp had not been deserted for long because there were still cups of hot coffee sitting around as well as other signs that the inhabitants of this place had very recently vacated. Apparently some of the druggies had gotten away just before they had been completely encircled, but all in all the operation was a huge success.

The men set about torching the facility. The smoke from the burning warehouses produced an unusual but not unpleasant aroma. Once the place had been laid to ruin the soldiers once again fanned out and moved on. Early that afternoon the soldiers reached another clearing, one that would make an ideal place for the choppers to land. Major Dobbs asked Sergeant-Major Adams to have the men hold up here for the night, set up camp and get a little rest.

The choppers again brought in hot food and supplies. Adam and Major Dobbs requested that one of the choppers that had already been unloaded fly them over the fifteen miles or so that lay immediately in front of them. They noticed a small village only a couple miles ahead of their camp. It appeared on the map as San Angelo. The size of the dot on the map indicated that it was a village of fewer than one hundred inhabitants. No other places of habitation were noted.

Upon their return to camp Adam was informed that Lieutenant Woods had already positioned the sentry's at one mile and at half mile posts from their camp along a well worn footpath through the mountains. Adam told Lieutenant Woods of the village of San Angelo, that he had seen from the air and suggested that a sentry also be posted on the hill overlooking the village. The lieutenant dispatched the additional sentry immediately.

Later that afternoon Adam decided to make an inspection tour of his sentry posts. He took the Sergeant of the Guard, Colin Freeman, with him to show him the locations. They came upon one man who didn't seem to be paying much attention and were able to get close enough to touch him before he noticed them. After the appropriate dressing down they continued on down the trail to where the second sentry was posted. This time they were properly challenged at a respectable distance. Sergeant Freeman said "Looks like you have seen them all captain, we might as well return to camp. Adam answered "not quite, there is a small village down this path about another mile. I spotted it from the air earlier this afternoon. I asked Lieutenant Woods to send a man down there to take a perch overlooking the village. I know the lieutenant dispatched a man out there but you must not have been around so he didn't

tell you."

"It's not so much of a sentry post as it is a lookout post. With those drug dealers from that fort we destroyed earlier out wandering in these hills, I just wanted a man out there to watch for them". "What's the name of the village, captain?" "The map shows it as San Angelo, a village with fewer than one hundred population and no roads going in or out." As they approached their lookout he gave them hand motions to get down and placed his finger to his lips to indicate they should be quiet. "What is it?" Adam whispered. The sentry replied, "there is something going on down there sir, and it doesn't look good. About an hour ago several men with guns arrived and they are rounding up the villagers and lining them up against the church wall over there. I think there is about to be a mass execution." "Yeah, I can see what's happening," said Freeman. "You are Private Gonzales, aren't you, soldier?" said Adam. "Yes sir." "Well, Gonzalez, go back up the path about one hundred yards or so, to a point where you can get out with your radio and where you won't be overheard by the people down there. Then radio for C Company to get out here now. Then you go back down the path and meet them and direct them to this position. The sergeant and I will take over here and keep an eye on the situation." With that, Private Gonzales took off up the hill at a trot.

"These must be the guys that got away when we hit that drug gang this afternoon, sir." "Yeah, they probably think the villagers ratted them out and now they are about to take reprisals." "Lets move in and see if we can disrupt them until the posse arrives." They moved rapidly down the hill and in doing so, drew the attention of some of the bandits. They drew some fire but were able to reach a position of cover only 75 yards from the church. There seemed to be about twenty bad guys and they were in various parts of the village still rounding up the villagers. Adam was able to bring down two of them. Sergeant Freeman got one for sure and may have hit a second; it was hard to tell as the man withdrew behind the corner of the church. The others scurried for cover, leaving the hapless villagers just standing there by the church. It was almost dark now and Adam knew that they had to get closer if they were to be able to fire effectively. They were not carrying the Springfield 308's with the night vision scopes but rather the somewhat lighter M-16's. As they moved to a hay mound, maybe fifty yards from the bandits main position, Adam felt a bullet slam into his left side. It hurt like hell, but the bullet had passed through cleanly and he knew it had not hit bone, or any vital organs. It did bleed a lot though and soon Adam's whole left side was drenched in blood. He hoped the others would arrive before he bled to death.

The gun battle continued to rage for another ten minutes. By this time most of the villagers had run off or were lying down so as to present as low a profile as possible. Two of the bandits managed to circle around behind Adam and Sergeant Freeman. One of the bandits shot the sergeant cleanly in the back of the head and blew the whole top of his head off. In the meantime, in the dim light of near darkness, the other missed Adam all together. Adam whirled to his left and saw what had happened to Sergeant Colin Freeman. About that time he took a vicious rifle butt to the face and the lights went out.

When the two bandits saw all the blood on Adam's uniform they took him for dead and returned to join their group by the church. About this time shots began to ring out from the ridge where the sentry had been posted and the enemy, knowing that the cavalry had arrived, made for the other side of the village and disappeared into the brush. The cavalry in this case consisted of one very large Sergeant-Major who was screaming at the top of his lungs and firing like a mad man as he came charging down the hill. He had arrived on the scene a good five minutes ahead of anyone else because he hadn't double-timed to get there; he had covered the whole distance from the camp at a dead run. When he heard that Chief might be in trouble he grabbed an M-16 and a belt of ammo and lit out. The M-16's were still preferred by the higher ranking NCO's and the officers, as they didn't expect to use them anyway.

He found Harcrow and Freeman right away. It was obvious that Freeman was dead but his interest was in Chief and he was still alive, though Hank saw that he had lost a lot of blood. Hank ripped his own shirt off and tore it in half. He placed half on each side of the wound and cinched it down with his belt in an effort to stop the bleeding. By this time Lieutenant Woods, and some of the other men had arrived on the scene. Hank called out to them, "Over here lieutenant, its Chief, he's been hurt bad but he is still alive." Get on the radio and get a chopper in here. We may be able to save him if we can get him to a hospital as soon as possible." It would take the chopper almost an hour to get there and Chief would be dead by then. The medic on the scene was Dr. Winthrop Golstadt the former psychiatrist from Portland. Now he was looking at a lifetime ban from the medical profession and twenty-five years in the penitentiary . The prisoners called him "Doc." He had joined the unit as a medic right after he finished basic training. He carried a well equipped medical bag on his back. He quickly checked Chief's dog tags and saw that his blood type was O-Positive. He called out for anyone who was O-Positive to get over there on the double. Four men were there in less than a minute. Doc grabbed the arm of the first volunteer, swabbed the inside of his right arm and inserted one end of a four-foot length of plastic tubing equipped with a blood donor needle affixed to each end and a tube clamp in the middle. The man never flinched. He taped it so it wouldn't come out and told the donor to stand up. As he stood the life giving fluid began to flow into the tube. Doc clamped the tube once it was full, then swabbed the inside of Chief's arm with alcohol, located the artery, then inserted the needle. He couldn't carry a blood supply in his pack but he had made up this tube for just such an occasion. Doc then told several of the men standing around to make a stretcher out of their shirts stretched over two poles with sticks tied at each end to keep them separated. After about five minutes he removed the tube from the donor, swabbed his arm with alcohol again and placed a piece of sterile cotton over the wound. Doc didn't have a separate needle for each donor, but he did rinse the used needle quickly in alcohol. Doc then called out "next" and another volunteer stepped forward. He kept this up until the chopper was approaching.

Doc pulled the plug on the donor and told the men to put Chief on the improvised stretcher they had made. As soon as the chopper set down the men were loading Chief aboard. Doc climbed in also. The medical attendant in the chopper objected to this briefly until Doc said "I am a physician, this man is my patient, I intend to stay

with him until we reach the hospital". Doc then ordered three more men with type O blood to board the chopper. They were airborne immediately, bound for the hospital in Bogota. Doc utilized the three additional donors in route. Once in the hospital Doc sent the three blood donors back to the unit via a supply truck that was headed for the First Battalion camp. Doc stayed with Chief all night and all the next day until he was completely out of danger, then hitched a ride on a chopper back to the unit. While Doc was at the hospital no one challenged his right to be there or to care for his patient and no one expressed any doubt that he was an accredited physician.

On the flight back, Doc wondered if he hadn't found a home. He would never be allowed to practice medicine again on the outside but here he was treated with respect. He held sick call every morning and doled out the medications as he saw fit. Mostly it was minor stuff but he knew there was such a thing as a field operating room and he was going to see if he couldn't get assigned to one.

Two days later Adam awoke in a hospital in Bogota. He was draped with the usual bottles and tubes and his side hurt like hell, but a quick inventory told him that he was still all there. His face was bandaged and was told that he had a broken nose but otherwise should make a full recovery. "In a couple days, as soon as you can be moved you will be flown back to Madigan Army Hospital in Tacoma, Washington, captain. Your fighting days in Colombia are over." "Incidentally, they tell me that you owe your life to two men." First your battalion Sergeant-Major, a man named Adams sprinted for over a mile to arrive on the scene before anyone else. He chased away the enemy and found that you were still alive before anyone else got there. Second, you owe your life to Dr. Winthrop Golstadt, I don't know how you guys rate a full fledged M.D. as a medic but very few medics in the army could have done what he did.

"How long will this take to heal, doctor?" Adam ask. Oh, about six weeks; your side is really messed up. "Is there anything they can do for me at Madigan that they can't do here?" He ask. No, not really, but by the time you are ready to return to duty your unit will be back at Umatilla. Your guys will have taken all the ground that the Colombians can hold on to by then. Your unit may be sent in again when the Colombians have enough trained people to keep the territory that you guys are taking for them.

- CHAPTER 19 - AFTER THE COMBAT

Lt. Frederick Woods, with the help of a Spanish speaking interpreter questioned the villagers about what had taken place before they got there. An old man, apparently the mayor or at any rate a man of authority in the village, could not lavish enough praise on the two brave young Americans who had saved the lives of all seventy-two residents of the village. "They gave their lives for us, senior; these men are true heros." "They are true heros, as you put it," Lieutenant Woods said, "but one of them is still alive and it looks like he is going to make it." "Oh, gracias a Dios, gracias a Dios" repeated the venerable one. "We want to send a letter to him and to the

President of The United States and thank them for the acts of these brave men. We would give them something but there is nothing in this whole village that they would want." "You write the letter, sir, and I will be happy to see that both Captain Harcrow and the President receive it."

Upon getting the translated version of the letter and a copy of Lieutenant Woods' report, the President said, "I want this captain promoted to major, and I want you to see to it that he receives the Purple Heart and the Silver Star and I want you to draft a bill to Congress, both houses, nominating this young man and this Sergeant Colin Freeman for the Congressional Medal of Honor. I also want this Sergeant-Major Adams to receive the Silver Star. They willingly gave their lives for those villagers and it is not Captain Harcrow's fault that he survived. As soon as he is released from the hospital I would like to meet him; better yet, I will be on the Coast in two weeks and I am sure that Seattle and Tacoma are two of the cities that I will be visiting. Please arrange for me to stop in at the hospital and pay him a surprise visit; I love to do things like this; it is one of the few good things about this job, aside from placing personal phone calls to people I don't know but need to win over to my point of view. While you are at it look into this Dr. Golstadt's case and see if we want him, or can use him as a practicing M.D. in the army."

Major Dobbs, with Sergeant-Major Adams, got into Major Dobbs station wagon one morning and drove off. Five hours later they pulled up in front of Madigan Army Hospital in Tacoma, Washington. They went directly to Adam's room. Among other things they filled him in on the success of the mission in Colombia. "During this entire operation we lost only one man, Sergeant Colin Freeman. You, Adam, were the only man seriously wounded. The Colombian government had reclaimed about twenty percent of their country from the drug lords. Most of the rest of the country is relatively flat land that the government already controls. The land that we took back will be cleared and planted in coffee this time. In a couple years the Colombians will have enough trained people to go after the remaining drug barons. The Colombians themselves should not only be able to take the rest of their country back, they should also have the ability to pacify it and hold on to it. Their biggest need now is for education, not soldiers. Once the standard of living is raised and the people are no longer living in fear, they may be able to turn things around and in so doing, become a peaceful and democratic country".

Adam thought that was great news and was anxious to return to duty. Hank spent the night on a rollaway folding bed that the hospital had brought into Adam's room. Major Dobbs took a motel room in South Tacoma. When they left the next morning Adam begged the doctor to release him so he could return with them to Umatilla but the doctor refused. "You are just not ready to travel yet Adam. Like it or not you are going to be with us for a while longer.

- CHAPTER 20 - THE MAJOR

It was raining cats and dogs when Hank and Dobbs left the hospital. Adam had

insisted on being taken downstairs in a wheelchair to see them off. After they had pulled away Adam had been returned to his room, but remained in the wheel chair. His room overlooked the rear of the hospital. Adam was sitting by the window watching the rain pour down. The President's motorcade pulled up in front of Madigan Army Hospital. Two Secret Servicemen got out of the lead car and entered the hospital while President Lomas waited in his limousine. They asked the receptionist Adam's room number and took the elevator up to his floor. Adam was still sitting in his wheelchair by the window when they entered. "Yes, gentlemen, what can I do for you?" Adam asked. "You have a visitor, son," one of them replied. "I have no idea who it could be," Adam responded "most of my friends are not allowed to travel, you know." "I think you will enjoy meeting this man captain, he is your biggest admirer." The two men looked around the room and into the closet and bathroom then left, returning about five minutes later, followed by a tall lanky man in an immaculate suit and tie, but he sported a ruffled, unruly head of hair. Adam just stared at the chiseled features of his sculptured face and knew instantly that this was General Theodore Lomas himself, the President of the United States. Adam bounded to his feet and nearly fainted from the pain in his side. "Oh, sit down, son, I don't bite," the President said. "I happened to be in Tacoma to make a campaign speech and to endorse our party's candidate for the Senate. I figured that since I was going to be in the area anyway I should take the time to meet the hero of the Colombian campaign." "Besides, I wanted to be the one to deliver this news to you myself." "Yes, sir, er, I mean what news is that sir?" Adam stammered. "Well," the President began, "largely because of you and your men and your stellar performance in Colombia you have made us all proud and because of that I have decided to make this 'prisoner soldier' concept a limited national program. A lot remains to be done but the wheels are already in motion and I believe that we should have something concrete to present to Congress in a very short time. Of course you know that the biggest shortcoming that this program has is a lack of qualified officer personnel, that is why I have been authorized to offer you a direct commission as Major, in the United States Army and command of your battalion. You already know that you have been awarded the Purple Heart and Silver Star medals, but what you don't know is that I have submitted your name to Congress along with a request that they consider you for the Congressional Medal of Honor." "But, sir," Adam interrupted, there are lots of American service men who have done as much as I did and more without receiving these accolades." "I know," said President Lomas, "but you just happened to be in the right place at the right time, this time. I am going to be selling this program to a lot of people who don't want it and over-playing the Major Harcrow card a little can't do anything but help my cause. By the way, there will be photographers here in the next few days from Time and Newsweek and I have taken the liberty of having a new black dress uniform delivered to your room here before they arrive. It will be the first chance the American people have to see what the new officers' uniform looks like. Sorry I can't stay longer and visit, I would like to hear your account of what it was like down there but I am due in Tacoma shortly and I just sort of fit this visit into my schedule. Lots of luck, major and don't let me down now, you hear." With that, President Lomas reached over and shook Adam's hand and was out the door, the two Secret Service men trailing behind.

I can't believe it, Adam mused, according to my plan I would have graduated West Point and been a major by the time I was thirty and now, because of these strange circumstances I am a major at seventeen. I just don't know how I will be able to keep this job or be promoted any further up the ladder unless I can figure out a way to get some kind of college education. Nearly all field grade officers in today's army are college graduates.

When he got out of the hospital, with no permanent damage other than the nasty scar on his left side, he learned how inmates with long sentences were being enlisted and were being sent to a desolate location in the California desert near where Patton had trained his 3rd Army in World War II.

The men from Umatilla had been relocated. The inmates being recruited were from the federal prisons and from the six states that had chosen to go into the program. This time they were being more selective, keeping the groups relatively small and taking only the cream of the crop. It was becoming tough to get into the Elite Forces, or Expandable Forces, depending on your point of view. Major Dobbs of the Oregon National Guard had been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and was now running the whole show. He was now the only officer that was not a prisoner. The Expandable Forces were now considered the First Infantry Division of the United States Army.

- CHAPTER 21 - CAMP HOPE

Their headquarters were set up between Indio, California and Blythe, California about twenty miles north of Interstate 40, at a desolate point in the Mojave Desert. This area had been officially designated as Camp Hope in honor of Bob Hope who had entertained American servicemen at Christmas for so many years. The name also seemed appropriate because this place brought hope to so many men that were otherwise without hope.

Adam knew nothing of construction but he didn't need to, the army had been quite generous in furnishing competent engineers and foremen in every trade. They supervised the work and surprisingly, many of the inmates had worked in construction before their troubles began.

At first they were housed in tents, then the men were put to work building barracks, mess halls, chapels, laundries and other buildings essential to an army fort. During the construction of the base the prisoners were encouraged to come forward and disclose the fact that they were competent in some phase of construction that was being accomplished by outsiders. After interviews and in some cases testing for competency, they took over the jobs the men from the outside were doing. By the time the construction of the facility was about halfway completed, the only outsiders remaining were the professional engineers and a couple of them had been selected from the inmate population. These men regarded all outsiders as Bulls and resented them being there. This was especially true of their own officers; however, by now Colonel Dobbs was the only officer from the outside that remained. Even the MP's on

the base were convicts.

The army was screening the inmates in the military penitentiaries like Leavenworth and selecting a few experienced soldiers that had once accumulated outstanding military records and rank before committing a one-time serious crime. They didn't take any of the hustlers, the guys convicted of scamming the military by selling equipment and such. Most of those selected were enlisted men rather than officers. Many had been NCO's including three E-9 Master Sergeants Major and one Master Chief Petty Officer from the Navy. One officer that they did accept was a former Lieutenant Colonel from the Air Force by the name of Todd Dixon, who was given the rank of major in the National Guard and placed in command of the newly formed 2nd Battalion to which the new men entering the program were assigned. Major Dixon had never been a field commander, but he seemed to be adapting nicely. Hank Adams had been promoted to permanent E-9 after the battalion returned from Colombia. He was firmly in place as Battalion Sergeant-Major of the 1st Battalion. He had become Major Harcrow's right hand man. The captains, serving as Company Commanders, knew that when Hank told them of something that had to be done he was speaking for Major Harcrow and they tended to treat him with all of the respect they would have shown the major.

As time passed, it was apparent that the candidates best suited for this program were those first time offenders whose crime had been a major felony. Men who had always been law abiding citizens before their one big slip-up; men who had not been exposed to the general inmate population of prison for an extended period of time before being recruited into the Extended Forces. Some candidates were now being sent directly to the EF after sentencing. The EF would administer the tests and physical examinations, then offer those that qualified the chance to enlist or be sent to a prison. It is interesting to note that all those who could qualify enlisted and some of those who didn't qualify for one reason or another were devastated at being rejected. A reception area had been set up as well as two permanent basic training companies, so the longest anyone waited before starting basic training was eight weeks. One of the basic training companies was always giving the first eight weeks of training and the other was always giving the second eight weeks. There was also an NCO Academy on post as well as a Cook School, an Administrative School, a Jump School, a Special Forces training unit and an Officer Candidate School. The program was beginning to take shape and functioning much like the "real" army.

The need for their own construction battalion soon became apparent. Most of the men selected to populate that battalion were drawn from the men who had proved themselves most qualified while the whole outfit was working on the construction phase of Camp Hope. These men were then replaced in the ranks by the new arrivals as they finished basic training.

They retained their classic Table of Organization as Squads made up Platoons, Platoons made up Battalions, Battalions made up Regiments and Regiments made up Divisions. There was no point in going to the new standard setup of battle groups, etc., because these men were infantry and nothing but infantry. They lacked the

armored, artillery and missile components that made up the battle groups of the Regular Army.

They were beginning to acquire a few support helicopters that were handed down from the Regular Army. These were the old Chinooks and Black Hawks. None of these were Apache battle choppers. The choppers moved men and supplies around and did medical evacuations. The helicopter pilots were given the rank of Warrant Officer, Junior Grade and later promoted to Chief Warrant Officer. These were the most sought- after jobs in the EF.

Adam commanded the 1st Battalion which was intact as the unit that came in from the Oregon Guard. The 1st Battalion had been federalized, which meant they were permanently called to active duty. The men were still paying twenty- five percent of their earnings to the State of Oregon Victim Compensation Fund, but more importantly some newly elected governor could not recall them to serve out their time in prison.

The two battalions had now become known as the 1st Regiment of the 1st Division. The food was not great, but better than any prison food and as good in quality as any military unit in the armed forces and the best part was, there was plenty of it. The Officers Mess tent, though not elegant, served great food and a great variety of food. Adam was eating better than he ever had in his life.

A new governor could stop any further recruitment from that state but the state was receiving over one hundred thousand dollars monthly for the victims compensation fund and saved over fifty thousand dollars a month for the cost of housing sixteen hundred inmates. So cutting off the supply of new inmates from Oregon was not likely. In fact more states wanted to get more of their men into the program because they all needed the money.

Adam knew that attitude and esprit de corps was essential in a unit like this so he was constantly talking with the men to see what they wanted and needed and what suggestions they had. One thing they all requested was for the PX to start serving beer. They reasoned that at least one PX on any military installation served beer and that beer would prove no more dangerous in their hands than in the hands of other servicemen that didn't work half as hard. Adam and Colonel Dobbs agreed, and soon they had tap beer, served in paper cups.

Adam had started a small Drum and Bugle Corps in the 1st Battalion because every army needed music from time to time. Then one day a new inmate arrived in the 2nd Battalion who had excellent musical credentials. He had been the band leader at a major university before he had gone astray. His name was Alfred Wagon and he held a position of national prominence in the band music world.

Major Todd Dixon, Commander of the 2nd Battalion, not to be outdone by Adam Harcrow and the 1st Battalion put Private Wagon to work. As soon as Wagon had finished his basic training he was told to assemble a small marching band of some

thirty musicians. This worked out so well that Colonel Dobbs designated the band as the Regimental Band and ordered Dixon to start a simple drum and bugle corps for the 2nd Battalion as Adam had done in the 1st Battalion.

The Regimental Band soon grew to over one hundred members and became a very good band indeed. Under Alfred Wagnon's direction they rapidly became as good as any university band in the country. They had the advantage of being able to hang on to their musicians for a long period of time and these guys didn't have any distractions such as leave time, girl friends and the like. Soon they were every bit as polished as the United States Marine Corps Marching Band. It was difficult to provide the necessary security incumbent with their playing off post but those security measures were taken anyway because it was excellent publicity for the EF to perform in such events as the Tournament of Roses and other nationally televised events. Always accompanied, of course, by an almost equal number of armed MP's in their khaki uniforms with MP bands on their upper sleeves.

Another newly arrived inmate, one Stephen Leathers, had been the choir director for one of the largest Evangelical churches in the country, an organization that owns their own radio station and sponsors their own hour on network television every Sunday morning. Then alas Stephen had wandered from the straight and narrow and found himself at Camp Hope. After he finished basic training he was referred to Colonel Dobbs who had mentioned the possibility of forming a choir at the Camp. Two years later their only rival was found in the Mormon Tabernacle, in Salt Lake City. This presented yet another challenge to security as they were in demand all over the world. Little did the people, who came to hear them perform, realize that all those MP's who were there to keep an eye on the choir members were also convicts.

There was a small ghost town, known as Frenchman's Gulch Mining camp, situated on the base, about ten miles east of the main post. They had thought of using it as a training facility for house-to-house combat training but Adam and Todd Dixon had other ideas. They had the whole town fenced with a twelve foot high chain link fence with concertina wire at the top. They then put a crew to work refurbishing the hotel, bar and other buildings. They did a little calculation and decided they could have as many as five hundred men here at a time so they contacted several of the large hotel chains and put it up for bid. Get Away Inns of California was the high bidder and began construction of a new, state of the art, deluxe resort hotel. Before the facility was ever opened the fenced area was tripled, then tripled again. Two of Nevada's best-run brothels were invited to build establishments on the facility. International Hotels was invited to put up a fifteen thousand square foot casino which they named the "Gold Dust." International also built a two hundred room hotel. Each of the hotels had a coffee shop and a high end dining room. The Gold Dust Casino also had a two hundred seat Nevada style buffet that served breakfast, lunch and dinner. Because there was no competition the house take at the casino was limited to no more than two percent on any game. The brothels came under very rigid health and price controls. There was even a nine-hole golf course, and a ten acre lake stocked with rainbow trout, blue gill and crappie. Row boats were available free of charge as was the fishing gear.

The only men that could register at the hotels had to show leave papers but any of the men were free to patronize the casino, the eating establishments and the brothels any time they wanted. The place was policed by the MP's but all the men knew that once they were arrested for disturbing the peace in the Gulch they would be banned for a full year. No one misbehaved, they just didn't want to lose this privilege.

This was all done to solve a problem that had been building. These men like other GI's were building up leave time and there was no way for them to use it. Most of the men had accumulated a good sum of money and they were entitled to take their leave and spend their money. Everything ran on a debit card system. Real cash was forbidden and the debit cards were not good off the base. As soon as Frenchman's Gulch was completed the men were offered the chance to take leave and spend it in the Gulch. They were entitled to have their wives and girl friends accompany them there but everyone coming in had to submit to a thorough search and had to sign a waiver saying that they understood that the nature of the activities that took place in "The Gulch" could offend some people.

At first only five hundred men at a time were admitted and then for only a maximum stay of five days. Eventually when most of the surplus leave had been used up a man could stay for as long as he could get leave time approved for. The population of Frenchman's Gulch always seemed to stay at the five hundred maximum, however. The civilians who worked at the various business establishments in The Gulch lived in Blythe and were offered free bus transportation to and from work. The buses made several trips a day.

Private Albert Harlow, one of the prisoner/soldiers, approached an MP at the fort and asked, "What would happen if narcotics were found in the Gulch sergeant?" "I suspect they would close it down in a heartbeat, was the answer." "Well in that case you better take me to your Commanding Officer." "Captain, my name is Private Harlow, I am damn glad to be in this program and damn glad to have the Gulch as a place to spend my leave." "I don't want anyone screwing it up for me, so that is why I am here. I just got back to my unit from the Gulch this afternoon and I think you ought to know that there is a 21 and craps dealer in the casino offering to sell drugs to the men there. I watched him after I heard that from another GI, but did not see him doing anything suspicious. When I finished my leave at the Gulch I left and came directly here. I don't know who the GI was that told me about it and it was really just a chance remark that I overheard. I don't know if he had any takers but I think you should watch him." "What did he look like?" the Captain asked. "Tall, slender, dark hair, maybe hispanic, about 30 or so; he works in the pit at the casino." "Thanks, private, we'll take it from here."

The next day two MP's in plain clothes were playing for small stakes in the casino pit. One sat at a blackjack table and the other stood at the roulette table. These were guys who had lots of experience on the wrong side of the fence before being caught themselves and sent to prison. They just watched and waited. They spotted three men who possibly fit Private Harlow's description during their first shift. They did not identify any suspicious activity by any of these men. Two more MP's relieved them

and continued to watch the second shift with no result. The third shift came and went, still nothing. The stake out continued on the second day with still no suspicious activity. The MP's were beginning to think Private Harlow was mistaken in his relating of the alleged incident.

Then on the third day a man they had not seen before showed up on the swing shift . He must have been on his days off the first two days. They used a lapel camera and got a picture of him. Private Harlow looked at the picture and said, "yes, that is the man I thought the GI's were referring to when I overheard the conversation, but there was no way I could be sure. He is the one that I watched for two days. One thing for sure he was not selling retail to the public". Men were assigned to continue surveillance for two more days and nothing unusual occurred. It was decided that an MP should ride the bus in from Blythe. A man boarded the bus, carrying a black lunch pail. He passed through the gate where he was required to open the pail. The MP at the gate observed the legitimate contents and passed him on through. At the casino he went to his locker and deposited the lunch pail and a book he was carrying. He then went out and started his shift. A short time later when the suspect left for his first break, he passed one of the inmates in the hall and passed him a package of cigarettes in a cardboard flip-top box. The inmate passed back to the man an identical pack of cigarettes. The two men never spoke, they simply walked away in different directions.

One of the MP's followed the GI, who went directly to the tram that ran every ten minutes and followed him back to the base. The man then made the rounds of several men on his work detail handing out the drugs to various men in exchange for casino chips. All of these actions were photographed. By now six inmates had been involved.

The next afternoon two MP's were on the bus from Blythe, keeping an eye on the suspect. Two more greeted the civilian employee busses as they arrived from Blythe. The suspect got off the second bus, with the two MP's right behind him. They asked him to step aside, they had some questions they wanted to ask him. "Where do you work?" one of the MP's asked? "At the Gold Dust," the man answered, "Why?" "What job do you do there?" the MP continued. "I'm a dealer," the man answered. "Do you object to us searching you?" the MP asked "Hey, what is this? Am I under arrest, or what?" "That all depends on what we find when we search you" the MP answered. "Now answer my question." "No, I guess not." "May I look at your lunch pail, sir?" the other MP asked as he took the lunch pail from the man's hand and opened it. As soon as the MP's saw the contents of the lunch pail they reached in and withdrew the flip-top cigarette pack. They opened the box and there were the drugs. They cuffed the suspect and read the man his rights. When they had finished reading him his rights they loaded him into their jeep. "Well," the man said "It looks like now I will be in this army instead of dealing cards to it." "Sir," the MP responded "we wouldn't want you in this army."

The six inmates that had bought the drugs and the inmate who had sold them were arrested within the hour. All six were tried by General Court Martial. The five buyers

were each given ten years, stripped of all bonus time earned and returned to prison. The man selling the drugs was given twenty years, stripped of his bonus time earned and returned to prison. The trial was well publicized on the base. The MP's were sure there had been other inmates involved but figured by making an example of the ones that were caught they had put an end to the narcotics trafficking on the post. The civilian was selling the narcotics for casino chips which he was able to convert to cash at the end of his shift. No one had ever questioned why he received so much more money in tips than the other dealers. The MP's set up a program whereby the casino was to report all employee tips to them. It was only the dealers and cocktail waitresses who received cash tips. Tips received in the restaurants were entered on the check by the diner and charged to his debit card.

If an inmate visited the Gulch and imbibed too heavily he had a problem. Any man observed to have had too much to drink was denied access to the tram that ran between the Gulch and the base. He was then faced with a fifteen mile walk. The trams quit running at midnight. Any man who missed the last one would also have to walk. In order to enter the Gulch once the tram arrived a man had to have his debit card scanned. If he had less than one thousand dollars in his account he was not allowed to enter. Any man found in the fenced road to the Gulch at 0500 received three days in the stockade. The men quickly learned these rules and few violators were caught.

Adam started a karate school on the base and found a dozen Black Belts that were willing to instruct. Surprisingly, all the classes were full to overflowing, even with the long hours that the men were putting in on the various construction projects. Each platoon formed a baseball team with each battalion comprising a league. Red hot competition soon developed. A crowd turned out every evening as soon as makeshift lights had been set up on the all dirt baseball field, to cheer on their teams. Beer, however, was not served or allowed at the games.

One day Captain's Jeff, Dawson, and Tommy Rich, Adam's old buddies from high school, paid him a visit. "Sir," Jeff said, "do you ever long for those good days when you were the kid quarterback and you were throwing passes to those two very promising wide receivers of yours?" "Yeah, maybe I do at that, but I haven't thought about those days lately," Adam responded, "we have been given this opportunity to redeem ourselves and hopefully accomplish a great deal to the benefit of others and ourselves, but it looks like our football playing days are over." "Well, maybe not," Tommy put in. "There is a semi-pro football league operating in Southern California and that is exactly where we seem to be." I have checked around and it seems that there are a few experienced players in the 1st Battalion but the 2nd Battalion has a virtual bonanza of good college players, from major universities, too and starters, even a couple of guys that made it to the NFL." "Our biggest problem in putting together a representative team seems to be the lack of a better than average quarterback." Said Jeff. "You don't happen to know where we could find one do you, sir?" Tommy put in. That did it, it rekindled old yearnings in Adam that he thought he had put behind him. "Semi-pro, you say," said Adam. "I don't know, we would have to run it past Dobbs and you know what a hard-ass he is," said Adam. Then they all had a good

laugh. The Desert Rats were born.

Their first season they were able to arrange pre-season games with a couple of college teams and some of the semi-pro teams from Southern California and a couple other service teams. They did OK but didn't set the world on fire. The men ate it up. There were enough volunteers and surplus lumber to build a modest five thousand seat stadium and enough grass seed to plant a field. The men all chipped in to buy their uniforms. All of their games had to be home games but they did manage to play a seven game schedule that first season. They won four and lost three, but all three losses were close games against some fairly good college teams.

On Adam's eighteenth Birthday he was sitting at his desk, going through his in-basket when he noticed a memo from National Army Command announcing the fact that a service-wide competitive exam for in-service appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York was being offered. He initialed it and passed it along for distribution then had second thoughts. It would do no good to announce something like this if the men that read it would not be eligible because of the nature of their enlistments. He made further inquiry of headquarters at nearby Camp Irwin, and learned that there didn't seem to be any restriction on who could apply to take the test, as long as they qualified in every other respect. He gave it some more thought and decided that he just might qualify.

Adam applied to take the exam. Colonel Dobbs went through the roof when he saw the application. He summoned Adam and bellowed out, "What the hell is this all about Major Harcrow?, why the hell do you want to go to West Point?, so you can go back to 2nd Lieutenant in four years when you graduate?" "No sir, replied Adam, but it has always been my dream to attend the Academy and just maybe this might be an opportunity to do just that. I may be a major now, by some fluke, but I don't always want to be a major and I will certainly need a college education to go any higher and what better school for a professional soldier than West Point." "That's a good point, but you know how badly we need officers, that is the main reason you have come so far so fast." "It will really leave us in a bind if you take off for four years but we'll manage somehow." "Do you have anyone in mind to take over your command?" "Yes sir, Captain Frederick Woods, who now has my old Company C, would be an excellent choice; besides there is no guarantee the Academy will accept me. I am still serving twenty-five years without the possibility of parole, you know." "Oh, if I know you, they will jump at the chance to get you major."

Adam finished the exam and came away with a really good feeling. It seemed to be a test that was designed for him. He figured that he could get General Lomas, the President, who was an academy graduate himself, to sponsor him but he had rather earn his berth by passing the competitive exam.

Six weeks went by and he heard nothing, then one day he received a letter from the Department of the Army informing him that not only had he passed the test, he had the highest score in the entire army and was ranked number one.

Colonel Dobbs called the Governor of Oregon. Adam received special consent from the Oregon Department of Corrections that if he was selected to attend the Academy

he could do so. Governor Terry was very pleased that one of the men from the unit he had started had scored so high on the entrance exam.

- CHAPTER 22 -
THE ACADEMY

The reviewing committee at the academy, which went over the test results, was also responsible for making the selections. Their first thoughts were to reject Adam, as they didn't want a convicted felon attending West Point; that would be unheard of. The Committee chairman opened the meeting by saying "Serving on this committee has it's rewards, the first candidate that we are to review has got to be a joke. A convict from the Oregon State Department of Corrections, serving a sentence of twenty-five years without the possibility of parole has applied to attend this institution. To top that off the Department of Corrections has given him their permission to do so, if we were to accept him, which is hardly likely, wouldn't you say?" They all kind of chuckled and nodded in agreement, all except one member, the head football coach, Colonel Bethany. The colonel had taken the trouble to review Adam's file, as he did with all the applicants who had played football in high school. The colonel said "Please don't be so hasty, my friends. What the chairman says is true, but this young man also has some very redeeming qualities you may have overlooked. True, I am most interested in him because of his accomplishments on the football field. At Central High School in North Las Vegas, Nevada he made All State at quarterback in his junior year and was touted for High School All American in his senior year. There is maybe only once every decade that Army gets a shot at recruiting a football player of this quality. He was unable to complete his senior year because of the circumstances of his incarceration. Instead, he took the GED test in prison and then took two additional classes in English and Oregon History and was awarded his High School Diploma from the State. From the time he started middle school, through his junior year in high school, he received straight A's. At age thirteen he earned a black belt in karate. He has the highest score ever recorded by an in service applicant to attend this university. Unlike any other state in the Nation, the Oregon Department of Corrections has formed a National Guard unit at their maximum security prison at Umatilla. As you might have guessed they turned out to be long on enlisted men but short on officer material. Because of Adam's participation in high school ROTC he attended OCS and was made a 2nd Lieutenant, Acting Captain, upon graduation.

"His unit was called to active duty to help clean out the drug lords in Colombia. Because they were considered to be expendable forces, they spearheaded the joint Colombian and U.S. forces action in that country. While in that action Major Harcrow was decorated with the Purple Heart and the Silver Star. He has been nominated by the President of the United States to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor and I understand that yesterday Congress gave their approval for him to receive that award. He is a major in the United States Army and is doing the work of a colonel as Battalion Commander of 1st Battalion of the 1st Infantry Regiment, 1st Division of the United States Army.

"Since joining the Guard he has completed his sixteen weeks of basic infantry

training, jump school, an abbreviated version of Special Forces training and Officer Candidate School. In short, gentlemen, this young man appears to be the best qualified candidate that we have had since George Patton. Incidentally, Adam's grandfather also graduated from this academy and served as a Brigadier General in Patton's 3rd Army from Normandy until he was killed, crossing the Rhine." The committee was flabbergasted at all of this and moved immediately to accept Major Adam Harcrow as a student at the Academy.

Adam got word of his acceptance to the Academy two weeks before the beginning of the summer session which was mandatory for all freshmen. He turned over his command to Acting Major Frederick Woods. Dobbs drove him to Portland International Airport. Adam was dressed in civilian clothes but had his black dress uniform in a garment bag that he intended to carry on the plane. Hank went along to see Adam off. It was highly illegal for a prisoner to travel on commercial air but Dobbs thought he would have little trouble justifying it in this case if anyone wanted to make an issue of it. Dobbs and Hank both gave Adam a big hug and shook his hand before he boarded his flight.

When Adam boarded, the stewardess who greeted the passengers said "sir, I can take that garment bag and hang it up for you if that's a suit you don't want to get wrinkled". "Oh, thanks Adam said and handed her the bag". He found his seat and settled in for the long flight to Kennedy Airport. Adam had elected to fly coach. The passenger next to him was a captain in the Air Force, who was traveling in uniform. The captain asked him what he did and Adam replied "I am in the army." The captain, noting Adam's age, chuckled and said "Don't you mean I am in the army, Sir?" " No I meant it the way I said it." "Wait a minute, are you saying that you are equal to or outrank me?" "Yes, I am saying that I outrank you." "You sure must be a lot older than you look, then" "Actually, I turned eighteen last month, captain." "Oh! I know who you are, you're Major Adam Harcrow, aren't you?" "That's me, and I sure have enjoyed this little conversation." "What the heck are you doing on a commercial flight?" "From what I heard you are serving a twenty-five year prison sentence." "Shhh, I'm not really supposed to be flying commercial but since I have just been accepted as an underclassman at West Point I guess they figured I wasn't much of an escape risk." "I guess that would be about right, sir." The captain, Dave Sternway turned out to be a real nice guy. He was a jet jockey on his way home from his duty station to attend his father's funeral in New York. He could have caught a hop but there was nothing going that way that would have gotten him there in time. They chatted all the way to Kennedy. Just before they arrived, Adam went back to the men's room and changed into his dress uniform, the one the President had tailored for him. "Damn, you guys have the sharpest looking dress uniforms I have ever seen," Sternway said. Adam covered his uniform with a raincoat so as not to ruffle anyone's feathers. "Someone from the Academy is supposed to be meeting me captain, can we drop you anywhere?" "No thanks son, I mean sir, and chuckled again." That was one of Adam's biggest problems; it was hard to get anybody to take him seriously. Oh well, he thought, by the time I leave the Academy I will be four years older. By then I might look more like a real major.

An upperclassman in a station wagon had picked Adam up at the airport and driven him to the Academy. Adam recognized him by his uniform. The cadet had been instructed to pick up a plebe that was coming in on that flight and Adam, in his raincoat seemed to fit the part. "Pardon me, but I think I am the guy you are supposed to pick up." "You the plebe?" "Yep, that I am, let me get my luggage and we can hit the road." "I'll bring the car around to the American Airlines arriving passengers exit and pick you up in about ten minutes." With that he was off. The rain had let up by the time Adam reached the car so he took his raincoat off before getting in. All the Cadet could think to say was "Adam Harcrow!" "Sir, are you sure that you are going to be a plebe?" "That's right, I went to OCS and my rank is a battlefield commission, sort of, but I haven't been to college yet and this opportunity presented itself so here I am." "Well sir, plebes are supposed to address all upperclassmen as Sir, sir. Oh Hell, this is awkward, sir. Are you EF guys allowed to fly commercial without any kind of a guard or anything?" "Not really, no. EF has ever done it before, but I guess in this case I am considered a kind of low escape risk." "They aren't going to allow you to wear your uniform, or your ribbons and certainly not your oak leaves at the Academy you know." "Actually that's all been worked out. I am permitted to wear my own uniform at formal occasions, otherwise I am to dress like any other cadet, and when I am so attired I won't rate Sir; but if I am dressed like this I am entitled to all the courtesy that these oak leaves bestow, OK?" "Yes sir, I think I can handle that." "What's your name soldier?" "Dana Westfield, sir, and I can hardly wait for you to have your new uniform issued." They either rode in silence or made small talk for the rest of the trip. When they got to the Academy, Adam went directly to the administration office and reported in. "Cadet Adam Harcrow reporting for duty." The cadet sergeant who received him stood and saluted. "We have got to get you out of those clothes first thing major," he said with a big grin on his face. He knew exactly who Adam Harcrow was and knew most of his story.

Not only did he enter plebe summer at West Point as the only convicted felon to ever be admitted to the university he was also the only holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the only serving major to ever be admitted. Most importantly he was the only All State High School Quarterback that the Academy had the good fortune to attract in many years.

They didn't bother Adam much during Plebe Summer. Most had read newspaper accounts about him and had seen his picture on the cover of Time and Newsweek. They knew he was a major in the army, and knew of his decorations. They kidded him a little, like calling ATTENTION when he walked into the room. Besides, he was bigger and older than most of them; although he was only eighteen he carried himself more like he was thirty.

The previous year The Black Knights of the Hudson had a miserable record on the football field; they had finished the season two and six, the worst record in thirty years. This was due largely because Army did not have a real quarterback and the guy who attempted to fill that position had graduated. Because of his superb physical condition and his natural athletic abilities, not to mention his recent experience as quarterback of the Camp Hope, Desert Rats football team, Adam started every game

for the next four years for the cadets. In his second day on campus he was shown to Coach Bethany's office and told to have a seat until the coach returned. Adam waited about fifteen minutes before the coach entered the outer office where Adam was waiting. Coach recognized him immediately from his pictures. "Oh my God, pennies from heaven; how's your arm son, that wound didn't mess it up did it?" "No sir, I am ready to play right now." Then Coach addressed his other big worry. "How long has it been since you played?" "Oh I played in seven games this last season, we had a pretty good service team at Camp Hope." "Great, training starts Monday morning at 0700 hours." "My freshmen players can forget about all that Plebe Summer bull." "There are only a few orientation classes you will have to attend; you'll be excused from everything else. In short, son, your ass is mine this summer."

In his freshman year the team improved to 5 and 4 thanks largely to a banner year for freshmen at the Academy. It was still considered a successful season because they beat Navy at Annapolis. There were ten freshmen on the starting offense and eight on the starting defense.

When Adam finished his first year at the Academy and the rest of the boys were headed home for the summer, the entire football team spent the summer at the school. The rest of the team got a month off to go home and see their families but not Adam. He could have returned to his unit for a month but travel for him was still difficult, and there was always the danger that he would be recognized and some solid citizen would take exception to a lifer, traveling around the country on his own. So Adam obtained a reading list of the books that he would have to read and study from during the next semester and spent his month off getting that out of the way so that in the fall semester he could spend all of his time on football. All of the other sophomore class of which Adam was now a part, were retained to help with greeting the arriving freshmen and to complete their military indoctrination.

That year there had been only a half dozen seniors graduating and there were only a half dozen incoming freshmen who made the team. Because Adam was so good at getting them the ball, his receivers always tended to receive almost as much attention as he did. Summer practice that year was very productive. The team looked good and they proved in September that they were good. In their first game they stomped Rutgers, 62 to 7. It was a rout. The whole second half Adam's freshman understudy played at quarterback and Adam assisted with the coaching. In his sophomore year the team had seven wins and two losses. They beat Navy at home and almost won a bowl bid. The two games that they lost were to contenders for the National Championship, and they lost those by the slimmest of margins. The cadets were turning into a powerhouse in college football. By the end of the season they were rated at the bottom of the top ten colleges in the country.

- CHAPTER 23 -
THE SMOKE JUMPERS

Adam received letters regularly from now Captain Tommy Rich, now Colonel Dobbs and his old buddy Sergeant-Major Hank Adams. The outfit was growing by leaps and bounds. There were now two full regiments of three battalions each, almost ten thousand men in all. You wouldn't know the place, he was told. An old Brigadier General nearing retirement named Matthew Clay had been installed as the Division Commander. "Thank goodness he is a pussycat", wrote Dobbs. "He lets me have my own way on almost everything. We have tripled the size of Frenchman's Gulch and the busses are running back and forth to Blythe every fifteen minutes around the clock, except between midnight and five AM when they run every half hour. We really need you back here", Dobbs wrote; "with all this growth I feel like the old guys are beginning to lose control. It no longer seems like our outfit. We have our own two hundred bed stockade and it is usually full. It seems like nowadays we are sending ten or twelve men a week back to prison to do their time. We have had several AWOL/deserters but so far all of them have been caught. The army brass just says with this many more men in the program this is to be expected. Esprit de corps is still good, but could be a lot better".

"Our 1st Battalion from Oregon are still the cream of the crop and the backbone of this outfit. We now have a new training assignment. The Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service have sent us a whole new batch of cadre. The men are being taken, one company at a time to a heavily forested area of the San Bernardino National Forest and given two weeks classroom training in fighting forest fires. These guys were given airborne training early on so now when they have finished their classroom training they are given smoke jumper training. They seem to be taking to it quite well and even enjoying themselves. They kind of like jumping out of airplanes. After eight weeks they are returned to Camp Hope and the next company taken". Colonel Dobbs closed his letter and mailed it to Adam at the Academy.

Two days after Colonel Dobbs posted that letter to Adam, a phone call came in from the Forest Service notifying Colonel Dobbs to have the A Company who had graduated from fire fighting training, to prepare to put that training to use. Forest Service aircraft will pick up the A Company men. "Have them at the air strip at 0700 with all their equipment, Colonel." " B Company is in their seventh week of fire fighting training, we are going to accelerate their last week of training into this week end and utilize them also. Perhaps you have been reading the papers and realize that a serious fire broken out in the Yellowstone. We have already sent the Navajo's into the mountains surrounding Yosemite and they have their hands full with the fires raging there. We will have them ready to go at 0700," Colonel Dobbs responded.

The men of A Company were flown to the Forest Service Camp in Idaho, told what gear to leave there and what gear to take with them. They were fed a heavy lunch and told to board another plane, where they found their parachutes waiting for them. As

the guys were boarding the plane they felt a rush of excitement about being called on to really do something with the training they had received. Once they were airborne a Forest Service man came out of the cockpit. "My name is Running Bird men, I will be jumping with you today and I will supervise your activities while you are working this fire." He produced a map with a red circle drawn on it. "Our target area is marked on this map in Red. I am passing it around so all of you can note the surrounding area, most of which is now on fire. You will have little trouble in identifying the target area -- when you jump it is the part that is not burning. You have all been trained for this job so once on the ground you are expected to go right to work. Each of the other planes also have their supervisors on board and are receiving the same type of instruction you are. I doubt if they will be working the in same area. You, however, will take your orders from me."

As they flew in at two thousand feet they could see the fire below. They strapped on their chutes, snapped their strap onto the wire and prepared to jump. The door slid open and out they went. No one was injured in the jump, or the landing and as soon as they were all together on the ground Running Bird started assigning the men to their tasks. The work was grueling and they couldn't really tell if they were making any headway or not. "The jump was fun, but this sure isn't," one private remarked. The men talked little and worked a lot for the rest of that day. That evening a chopper arrived with hot food and bedrolls. The men withdrew to a safe area to eat and try to get some sleep. Sleep was not to come however, for another four hours. Around midnight they were relieved by a boys reformatory crew that had marched in. The men then got five hours sleep. The next morning at daybreak choppers came and picked them up. After a huge breakfast of steak and eggs they were ferried down the hill to a small landing strip and loaded into planes equipped with chutes. Ten minutes later, after being briefed by Running Bird, they were dropped again; this time into another sector of the fire. The routine of the first day was repeated for five more days. They heard that the fire was declared under control and were returned to Camp Hope to resume their regular daily routine. No words of appreciation, or even a simple 'thank you' were expressed by Running Bird.

A Mr. Crawford from the Forest Service called Colonel Dobbs and thanked him. Crawford said the men had all performed well and their help was much appreciated. By the end of the following week they were dropping down on a fire in the Canadian Banff National Forest in western Alberta and eastern British Columbia. This time their supervisor was Com Lee Chou of the Canadian Forest Service. The men were all amazed at how similar things were here in Canada to what they had just experienced in the Yellowstone. The only difference was that the terrain was rougher and the walk-in crews took longer to relieve them. They were in Canada that summer for a total of three weeks, fighting two different fires.

Companies A and B were the only ones that had received fire fighter training before the fire season struck. In all they were called out five times that summer. They received no additional pay for this duty as they were already being paid by the government for their time. The Forest Service however transferred \$350,000 to the army as compensation for having to pay the men additional "jump pay". That worked

out to about \$538 per man. The Canadian Government had, however, sent a nice plaque to the unit recognizing their bravery and assistance they had rendered. This was accompanied by a check in the amount of six hundred fifty thousand dollars to be paid in U.S. funds and was intended as a \$1,000 bonus for each man that worked in Canada during the fire season.

Colonel Dobbs called a meeting of all the men who had worked fires that summer. "Here is the deal men, you six hundred and fifty men were the only ones who had an opportunity to receive your fire fighter training before the fire season arrived and you were the only ones here to work on the fire lines. We have now received a total of one million dollars in additional pay from the Canadian and U.S. Forest Services as additional compensation for the work that you have done. This works out to \$1,538 per man. We can pay it directly to you or we can use it to construct some recreational facility here on the base that the government refuses to fund. I have prepared ballots for each of you to complete and the majority rules. It is your decision to make -- would you rather have the additional pay or contribute the funds toward a recreational facility such as a swimming pool, sauna, gym equipment, tennis courts, etc. I have made one decision for you already; that is that the majority rules. If the majority wants the money put into your private accounts then that decision will bind everyone and that is the way the money will be distributed. If the majority wants the money for a recreational facility fund then the whole million will be used towards funding for that project. Does anyone here want to speak for one side or the other?"

A young soldier stood "Men," he said "I am Corporal Shaw from A company. I want to say a few words in support of the recreational fund. Since the only place we have to spend our money is the PX and the Gulch I have been able to save quite a nest egg. On the other hand, I miss having access to recreational facilities I enjoyed when I was on the outside, like a swimming pool, tennis court, volleyball court. The army is not about to fund a project such as this, but together, by contributing to this fund, we could start buying some of them this year. By next year more of us will be trained to fight fires so there will probably be even more money for the fund. Also, we should remember that our money will go a long way because we won't have to buy the land they sit on and we won't have to pay for labor, just materials. I for one encourage the rest of you to vote to contribute your bonus to the fund." "Thank you Corporal Shaw, does anyone want to say a few words in favor of distribution of the funds?" "Men my name is Private Curtis of A Company, I worked hard for that money and risked my life; besides my parents are old and could use that money. If I get my share of it I intend to send most of it home to them." "Thank you, Private Curtis, anyone else?" "Yes sir, my name isn't important but I just wanted to say that I know Private Curtis pretty well, he doesn't have poor parents. His father is a retired railroad foreman and draws a nice pension. Private Curtis spends all his money down at the thousand dollar limit at the Gulch. Every payday he is over there at the brothels, bars and in the casino until the money runs out. Then he sits around and bitches about the army until the next payday. I believe that if he got his distribution he would be at the Gulch every night until the money was all used up. I am therefore going to vote for the Recreation Fund." The murmur from the group indicated agreement with the sentiment for putting the money into the fund.

"Now men, file by and Sergeant Maynard will hand you each a ballot; mark it but don't sign it and drop it in the ballot box on the table over here." When the ballots were counted the recreational facilities carried the day by a 512 to 138 margin. When the final tally was announced Colonel Dobbs continued.

"Since the majority of you have voted for the recreation fund you can write out just how you think the money should be spent. Remember we don't have to pay for land or labor, just materials. You can hand these written suggestions to Sergeant Maynard over the next week, we will then meet again and vote on the specific projects you want most after a price tag has been placed on each of them. By this means Camp Hope ended up with a large indoor heated swimming pool with a high dive and a low dive, four steam rooms and four saunas. They had enough left over for necessary supplies to last for two years, and enough for a bar-b-cue to dedicate the new pool to all the men of Camp Hope. Beer was served in paper cups. No fights broke out and they all had a great time..

- CHAPTER 24 -
ONE YEAR LATER

In Adam's junior year Army only lost one game. They went to the Holiday Bowl where they beat a hapless West Virginia team handily. In the final AP football poll of the season they were rated number three in the nation behind two undefeated teams that never played each other and neither of them played Army. That year Adam led the nation in passing and won runnerup for the Heisman Trophy; he also rushed for more yards than any other major college quarterback. On the academic front, Adam was still getting straight "A's" and was ranked number one in his class going into his senior year.

A formal party was held at the end of the season to honor the members of the football team. All of the cadets were told they could invite their girlfriends or fiances but that dress would be strictly formal. A large dance band was hired. A formal dinner preceded the dance. Adam, of course had no girl to invite so he went alone. Before the festivities got started the announcer on stage called on the football team, one man at a time, to join him on stage. Each man called received a round of applause ranging from polite to enthusiastic as they ran down the aisle and bounded up on the stage. "And last but not least ladies and gentlemen, the All American Quarterback of the Black Knights of the Hudson, the nations leading college passer, and runnerup for the Heisman trophy, Major Adam Harcrow."

Some eyes of people who didn't know that Adam was a major opened wide. Then they opened wider as Adam entered from the rear of the auditorium with his oak leaf clusters sideways on his tailored black dress uniform. They all gawked, even the other cadets, as he walked smartly down the aisle and up the stairs to the stage. "Major Harcrow come over here a minute, I'm not through with you yet," the MC continued. "Ladies and gentlemen, I want you also to know that Major Harcrow's grade point average since the fifth grade is a perfect 4.0 and he is also rated number one in his class at the Point. Do you have anything you would like to say, major?" "Not really" he said as he approached the podium."

"You may not have anything to say Major, but there is an old soldier waiting in the wings off to my left who has something he wants to say to you. General Lomas, would you come out please and tell us what we owe this honor to?" The band immediately struck up "Hail to the Chief" and President Lomas walked out on to the stage. The applause from the audience lasted until the President motioned for them to quiet." "Major Harcrow, I told you in that hospital room over three years ago that I had nominated you for a very special commendation. You since have learned that Congress approved that request, but I have been waiting for a moment just like this when I could make the official presentation". With that he opened a velvet box that was being held by a Secret Service man at his side, and withdrew a long circular red white and blue ribbon with a medal at the bottom. Major Harcrow it is with tremendous pride that a grateful nation awards you The Congressional Medal of Honor." President Lomas said as he placed the medal around Adams neck. "Thank

you sir, I don't know what to say," was all Adam could manage to stammer. The President, like all politicians, could not stop there. He launched into a five minute account of what Adam had done to earn the medal. "In conclusion," he finished "lets eat." At the dinner that followed, the President sat at the head of the first table with Adam on his right and the Commandant of the Academy on his left.

On the home front, Camp Hope had been renamed Fort Hope but the news from what was now known as Fort Hope, was not that good. Hank had turned down a direct commission as a major. He had said "No sir, I am the first soldier in the best unit in the army and that is all I ever wanted to be." The 1st Division was now three full regiments of three battalions each and that is all that the army had envisioned for this unit. The rapid growth was taking it's toll.

Things were getting a little out of hand. The outfit was losing it's continuity. General Clay had retired and been replaced by Major General Donald Huntsford, who was also just putting in his last year before retirement. The good news was that Dobbs had been promoted to Brigadier General and now was running the whole show because General Huntsford felt as though he was being punished and disgraced at the end of his career and took little interest in the outfit. He didn't like the idea of Frenchman's Gulch, but admitted that these men had to have somewhere to spend their leave time and they couldn't be allowed to leave the base.

All of the jobs that were traditionally done by civilian personnel on other army bases were done by convicts at Fort Hope. Many of them were women serving long sentences of their own. They were not in the army but they received twenty-five percent reduction in their sentence for the time spent at the Fort. They were people that had some expertise at the jobs they were doing. They were kept in barracks away from the troops and had their own theaters, barber and beauty shops and other amenities separate from the soldiers; however, their vacation time was also spent at the "Gulch."

Desertions were now a minor, but bothersome problem and threatened the existence of the unit. The Oregon guys had their night patrol working again and every once in awhile a missing man's body was found somewhere in the desert with the now infamous AWOL carved on his forehead. The night patrol had become much more effective since all of the men now had been issued night vision goggles and the 308 Springfields with the night/day scopes on them. No one in the army was ever moved to put a stop to this barbaric practice and everyone was sure that it had a significant deterrent effect on AWOL's and desertions.

All of the men at Fort Hope who had finished their army training were now sent to the Forest Service fire fighter training camp. By the beginning of fire season some three thousand men were qualified firefighters. It was a light fire season because they had a good snow pack in the mountains and a better than average rainfall. What fires they did have came late in the season. Because there were so many more men involved there was still almost two million dollars in bonus pay which the men once again voted to use for recreational purposes. This time they constructed a beautiful park

with grass, trees and covered picnic areas and the money set aside to maintain it for two years. The men voted among themselves to name the park Firefighters Park, because it was their firefighting effort that financed the building of it. It did not cost them much to bring the track and field up to Olympic standards. They also voted enough funds to keep the Fort swimming pool going for another year.

Adam had followed his practice of previous years in getting his fall semester work done during the first month of the summer vacation. This time he had the assistance of the instructors that he would have in the coming semester. He was so far ahead in his class work by the time that football practice started that all he would need to do is take the tests to maintain his "A" average.

In his senior year Army went undefeated and won the Cotton Bowl to be crowned the mythical National Champion by all the major polls. It was the first time since World War II that an Army team had finished a year like this one. He led the nation in passing again and won the Heisman Award as the college football player of the year. General Lomas, the President, was there to congratulate him after the Cotton Bowl. The President was elated at Adam's success. He told Adam that right after graduation he should go directly to the White House, there was something very important that they had to discuss. "By the way Adam, they tell me that if you keep your grade point average where it is now for your final semester you will graduate first in your class, so make sure that you do. It is very important to my future plans for you.

The Chicago Bears, drafting fourth in the NFL draft took him as their third round pick, even though they were aware of his story and background and doubted that he would seldom be available to play for them.

- CHAPTER 25 -
THE GENERAL

Adam graduated first in his class he and was sent before a board to determine what rank he should receive. Since he had been a major four years earlier when he entered the Academy, it seemed hardly fair to award him 2nd Lieutenant along with his classmates. After careful consideration and the despite the urging of the President the Board of Equity awarded Adam the permanent rank of Lt. Colonel. "Beyond that," the chairman said later, "the President can do anything he likes."

President Lomas had urged the board to consider a much higher rank for Adam. The President was nearing the end of his second term and would be leaving office soon. The Convict Army was his legacy to the nation, the program he had started and would be remembered for in the history books. Lately there had been signs that the wheels, if not coming off, were coming loose. He wanted Adam to take command of the entire prison army that was now stabilized at one full division, plus the prison population of over one thousand civilian workers, two permanent training companies and staff. They needed the training companies just to keep up with replacements for those inmates who had finished their time and were, for the most part, being mustered into the Regular Army. The success of the division in firefighting alone caused the army to rethink their position on keeping the Convict Army at only one division. This division was envisioned as only the cadre core of the force this was to become. Despite the President's urging, the board saw fit to award Adam no more than Lt. Colonel. President Lomas decided that he had to do something before his term in office was up. Adam for his part was not disappointed because he felt that attaining a rank of Lt. Colonel at the age of twenty-two was pretty amazing.

Before Adam had entered the Academy things had been going splendidly. Sure there had been lots of growth going on, but Dobbs, Adam and Nelson had been steering things in the right direction. Then Adam had left for the Academy and because Dobbs and Nelson were lacking in rank they could not be chosen to command a full division. The army had appointed a succession of retiring generals from the Regular Army to the command. These men regarded the Convict Army Command as punishment. They were men who failed to grasp the importance of the special needs and abilities of the men in this unit. That special feeling of pride and enthusiasm was waning. The old generals had not understood and in truth could not have cared less.

The President had his way in one respect; Adam might only be a Lt. Colonel but he could be appointed by the President to the rank of Acting Brigadier General. What President Lomas wanted was the same three men who had created this outfit to be back in command. Dobbs had now been a Brigadier for over a year; he could be promoted to Major General and placed in full command of the division. There was Major Frederick Woods who could be appointed Acting Colonel and placed in command of the 1st Regiment. Colonel Nelson was now a full Colonel and could command the 2nd Regiment. A convict Lt. Colonel by the name of Alan Spear had come to the front lately as a real mover and a shaker. Spear had been placed in

command of the 3rd Regiment that was formed just two years ago. Dobbs had told the President that Spear, though not a visionary could be relied upon to work with the program if he had the proper leadership. There was only one man who could adequately fill the post of Deputy Commander of the division. The Board of Equity had seen fit to award him the rank of Lt. Colonel.

Dobbs himself was nearing sixty and retirement was not considered to be that far into his future. When the President was told that a Colonel Harcrow was waiting in his anteroom to see him he was overjoyed. "Send him in right away," he told his Secretary". When Adam entered the Oval Office the President greeted him warmly. The President then launched into a description of the problem. Almost one hour later, Adam walked out of President Lomas office as an Acting Brigadier General, whether the Board of Equity liked it or not. Adam had been appointed by the President as Deputy Commander of the 1st Division. Of course the President had obtained prior approval for this move from the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He had a hard time convincing the Joint Chiefs, but he was, after all, their Commander-in-Chief and they were just his advisors.

Now, thought President Lomas, alone in his office, my division is in good hands. Orders were cut and published. By the time Adam reached Fort Hope he was greeted by a huge banner that proclaimed "Welcome Home, General Harcrow." The old General who had been in command of the division had been discretely reassigned to an intelligence post in the Pentagon and had already left Fort Hope.

Sure, General Harcrow was only twenty-two years old, but rather than being a hindrance, President Lomas viewed it as an asset. Adam Harcrow would now be postured to replace General Dobbs, when Dobbs retired. Adam was the spirit, the heart and soul of the elite forces and if they were to succeed in becoming an integral and necessary part of the army it would be left to General Harcrow to bring this about. The President had a bill drafted and attached to the Federal Highway Assistance Appropriations Act to make Acting General Harcrow's rank permanent. The bill, of course passed, as no Senator or Congressman wanted to be on record as having opposed it. Adam was now a full-fledged General and no one could dispute it, even after the President left office in a couple months. CNN equated that action to President Clinton's last days in office when he pardoned all his big contributors. President Lomas did not concern himself with the opinion expressed by CNN. General Dobbs was not in good health but he was determined to remain on the job until Adam had the credentials necessary to take over the command when he retired. Adam was Dobbs right-hand man and over the next year, Adam began to function more and more as the Commanding General, rather than the Deputy Commander, as General Dobbs was in and out of the hospital for one operation after another. Adam was constantly seen by the men at various training exercises and other activities. He was seen at The Gulch, playing golf and visiting with the men at one of the casino bars. He was seen in the PX drinking beer with the junior officers and even the senior enlisted men. His constant companion was Division Sergeant-Major Adams. You never saw one without the other. Division Headquarters had three offices opening off the reception room; one was Dobbs office, one was Adam's office

and the third office was that of the Division Sergeant-Major, Henry Adams. It kind of crept up on him, so even he didn't realize that although he was not an officer, he had been functioning as the Deputy Commander of the Division, while Adam had been functioning as the Commander.

The grass in Firefighters Park was fully established now and the trees had grown noticeably. A new small building was erected in the center of the park. Adam had asked the manager of the PX to start making arrangements for a cookout at the building. With more and more men finishing their prison sentences and transferring to the Regular Army, this would be a great way to send them off to their new assignments. When a man's time was up, a birthday, or any other excuse they could think of, buddies would get together, buy what they need for a cookout at the PX and throw a bash in the park. Adam even extended the places where they could legally drink beer to include Firefighters Park.. The beer was only available at the PX building and only in paper cups and it had to be consumed on the premises.

There was one other interesting addition to Firefighters Park. One of the caretakers was out one morning picking up some trash so he could run the lawnmower when he spotted a big black Labrador retriever under one of the picnic tables. How she got there no one knew. But what she was doing there became quite apparent as the day progressed. Instead of one dog there were suddenly five dogs and four of them were very small. A medic, who had been a veterinarian, was summoned and saw that she was placed in one of the cells in the base jail. He fed her, gave her water and examined her to see if there were going to be any problems. She was pronounced in good health and so were her four puppies.

When the pups were about a week old, the Lab and her pups were moved to a fancy new dog house that had suddenly appeared at the park. The PX manager just happened to come by with a fifty pound sack of dog food and some puppy chow. Somehow the inmates started calling the mother dog "Mommy". She was very friendly and playful but didn't want anyone messing with the puppies. As the pups grew they also received names but each of them was known by several names, depending on who was in the park at the moment. It is doubtful if any of the pups ever actually learned their names, they just came running to anyone who called them. As they grew they were all over the park. They wanted to play with anyone who showed them any attention or fed them. They weren't exactly Black Labs like their mother, they had longer hair and looked more like they might be half Golden Retriever, or Irish Setter.

The one pup that everyone knew by the same name was "Frisbee". He loved the things, and never tired of catching them and bringing them back to whoever threw them so they would throw them again. If a couple guys were playing catch with a frisbee he would suddenly show up out of nowhere, leap high in the air and intercept it in mid-flight. He would always return it to whoever had thrown it. When there was no one present to play with you would see him trotting around the park with his own frisbee in his mouth or taking a nap with his frisbee laying beside him.

Many of the men had dogs before they got into trouble and these dogs rapidly grew

near and dear to their hearts. All the pups grew into big fat dogs because everyone was always feeding them, all except Frisbee, that is. He stayed lean and trim; probably because he got more exercise than the others. Mommy turned out to be everybody's favorite old dog. She was gentle and affectionate, once her pups got older and she realized that no one intended to harm them. These dogs carved a very special niche for themselves at Fort Hope and were enjoyed by all the men.

There was a USAFI (United States Armed Forces Institute) building on the base that offered anyone interested in furthering their education the opportunity to enroll in a wide variety of correspondence courses. The building was equipped with a limited number of classrooms. Several of the convict soldiers had their teaching credentials and began conducting classes on various subjects. Soon there was a building with twenty classrooms constructed from scrounged and surplus materials and a handsome donation from the Firefighters fund. Tuition was charged those wishing to attend and that money was used to pay instructors from the outside. Over the years the school sought and received academic accreditation. Now an inmate with no more than a high school diploma could obtain a two year Associates Degree in a variety of majors. The Institution was officially named Theodore Lomas College. It came under the umbrella of the University of California extension service. Many years in the future it would eventually become known as "The University of California at Fort Hope." The fire fighting season continued to be a busy one for the men at Fort Hope. Every year the recreation fund grew by more than a million dollars. A committee was elected by the men to determine what projects should be funded and for how much. The projects they funded eventually made Fort Hope the best equipped Fort in the army for recreational activities.

In their fourth year on the fire lines it was particularly dry on the California Coast, which is almost never dry but this year it was parched. All of Fort Hope's Firefighters had been called out for an enormous fire that was threatening the Giant Redwoods. Plane load after plane load of men were dropped in the rugged Coastal Range. Charlie Company of the third was clearing a brush path about half a mile in from the advancing flames and failed to see that the fire had broken through just a mile below their position and was now burning in behind them. When they finally noticed that the fire had them surrounded on three sides they made a break for the one side that was not burning. Before they could reach their escape hatch the dry grass had kindled and the tree top fire balls had began to jump to the trees along that route and they were completely surrounded. They only had about one square mile of unkindled area to maneuver in and their was no place to maneuver to. They were certainly doomed. At just about the same time three old Huey choppers from Fort Hope were ferrying in food and supplies to the base camp fifteen miles down the hill. When Charlie Company radioed in their situation the Fire Marshall in charge ordered air drops of chemicals and water to be dropped so as to open a path for them to escape by but everyone knew this would be too little and too late. The chopper jockeys from Fort Hope had also picked up the distress call. They landed their choppers and began to jettison their cargo by shoving everything indiscriminately out the side doors. Several of the men standing around joined them and the choppers were empty in less than two minutes, a job that usually took half an hour.

One, two, three, the old choppers rose from the base camp and headed up the hill. With flames lapping at the choppers on all sides, the first one went in and set down. It was filled to capacity with frightened men in ten seconds flat. As the last man grabbed hold the chopper rose and headed for a clearing just on the other side of the burning area. As the first chopper rose, the second was coming in. As the second filled up and took off the third landed and took off almost immediately. As soon as that one had made room the first one was back for a second load. The third chopper's second load accounted for the last of the men but it almost didn't make it out. The men were all suffering from smoke inhalation, especially the pilot. The load was heavier than the maximum capacity. The chopper tilted to one side almost driving the blades into a tree that was burning; it leaned to one side then righted and rose straight up.

With Charlie Company all out and safe, the choppers now had to go back to the kitchen forty miles away and load up with more food supplies. When they had unloaded at the base camp, most of the food they were carrying was lost. Nobody seemed to mind waiting an extra hour to be fed; most of them were too tired to eat anyway.

Adam and Dr. Golstadt were in the Officers Club one morning, having coffee and discussing the morale of the troops. "One thing I might suggest is that we be given final approval authority before a man is sent here." "Of course, it wouldn't be practical to send the men for us to interview them but they could send their prison records, rap sheets and their case histories of what got them into trouble in the first place." "I have done a little research profiling what we know about the men who have failed in this program and I think I am beginning to be able to identify the failures before they ever arrive here." "OK, what are we looking for then doctor?" "It's not so simple as to be reduced to a few words, Adam. What it would amount to would be comparing the profile of the applicant with what we know about the failures on twenty major points." "We could then give the applicant a score; the higher the score the less likely he would be to adapt to our program." "Sounds reasonable to me doc, I'll look into it." "We already have a profiling number on a sampling of men that have succeeded. You Adam, for example, are a two, I am a four; Henry is a three and so on. Some of the guys who have made it are way up in the fifteen range so the system is not foolproof. I have yet to come across a man that stayed who was above a fifteen, but many of those who failed were above fifteen. Unfortunately, several of those who washed out were sixes and sevens but I still think the system is worth implementing. If they try to send us a seventeen we simply won't accept him".

That same day Adam put the question to Dobbs, who thought it was a great idea. "From now on, Adam we will just not accept any man into the program who doc Golstadt says is not likely to succeed." "That one step will probably go a long way towards improving the desertion rate."

They had a dental office with four chairs but no dentists. Contract dentists from Blythe and Indio were being brought in and the army would only pay for emergency

work. Adam had been searching the entire prison network of all state and federal prisons looking for dentists. He told the people at Headquarters, Sixth Army who were responsible for recruitment that Fort Hope was in desperate need of their own dentists.

The same thing was true for RN's. Not many men had become RN's in the first place and it seemed as though no RN had ever been sent to prison. They found one madman sent to prison for practicing euthanasia, which might be all right except for his poor choices in selecting those he disposed of. They found a famous physician who was serving a life sentence for assisting his terminally ill patients with suicide, but he was too old to take on a practice.

Finally one morning, Adam came in to find six new files in his in basket. There were three dentists and three RN's who were serving time in various prisons around the country. Adam's elation was short-lived however, when he learned that all six were women. Adam took the files and went to see General Dobbs. "What do you think general; we desperately need these job skills, but could we handle six women at this Fort?" "Why not, there are dozens of women over in the civilian inmate section and other than the fact that they tend to get married right away there haven't been any problems." "We are building cottages for the married inmates in that section and some of the men here have been asking why we can't do the same on this side." "Go ahead and accept these women; they won't be in the army but they will be treated as civilian inmates". "We could give them commissions in the army and still billet them with the civilians, sir." "Yeah, I don't see why that wouldn't work, bring them on in, if they otherwise qualify, of course." So Fort Hope had six brand new 1st Lieutenants and the first women soldiers at Fort Hope.

Within six months some of the NCO'S and officers who had been married before going to prison were being allowed to move their wives on post and were assigned one of the new housing units constructed for that purpose. The wives were free to come and go but the men were confined to the base. Along with the housing units came the commissary. Since the convict soldiers were not allowed to own motor vehicles, golf carts became very popular. Dependents automobiles were parked in a secure lighted parking area off post. A tram ran from the main gate to the parking lot at regular intervals. The men who had wives and children were just out of luck. There was no way society would tolerate moving children onto the fort. Firefighters Park was now used on Sundays for visitors with families. If the weather was nice they could bring their children in for a picnic but the place was heavily watched by MP's to make sure that no child ever left the park.

They ultimately came up with the idea that the wives and children could live just off post in a new fenced area half a mile from the enclosed fort. Married inmates who had children could commute by busses that ran between the fort to the family housing area. Word went out that the first time contraband (narcotics), which was about the only thing that was still contraband for these men, was found either in the family housing area or found coming into the fort itself through the housing area, the whole program would be shut down. If any of the kids living in the family housing area ever

did bring any narcotics home, their fathers never found out about it. Two MP's lived there as well and kept a close watch on the teenage residents in particular. Couples were not allowed to raise their voices to one another in the family housing area or on the base. If they engaged in an argument, they had to do so in a civil tone or they would lose the privilege of having wives and families with them. The MP's were seldom summoned to a family disturbance and when they were the families were ordered to leave the post and the men were moved back to the barracks, or in some cases, washed out of the program and returned to prison. They were all aware of this and acted accordingly. The men with this privilege simply learned to keep their anger under control.

Captain Jeff Dawson had a wisdom tooth that just had to come out; it was aching constantly. He also needed other dental work, he knew, as he hadn't seen a dentist in several years. When he showed up at the dental office with the mother of all toothaches, he was ushered into the dentist's office right away and seated in the chair to wait for the dentist to see him. About ten minutes later Cynthia Porter entered the room.

She had completed Dental College at Oregon Health Science University in Portland and went to work for a local dentist who had graduated two years ahead of her. They were married two months later. He turned out to be the worst kind of a husband. He came home drunk and beat her up pretty badly on several occasions. Finally she had enough and was waiting for him the next time that he failed to show up when he was expected. When he did come in at around two in the morning she was waiting just inside the door. She knew he was drunk because she could hear him cursing loudly as he fumbled for his keys. Eventually he found the right key and let himself in. Cynthia had intended to just teach him a lesson and hopefully avoid another beating, but as he stepped across the threshold, Cynthia lost control, struck him with the baseball bat she was holding and he hit the floor with a crushed forehead. He was pronounced DOA at the County Hospital.

Cynthia was guilty of capital murder and was a candidate for death row. Instead, she opted for one of the plea bargains that Oregon was so famous for and was serving twenty-five years without the possibility of parole when she heard about the Convict Army and how they were looking for qualified dentists. So here she was, pulling Jeff Dawson's wisdom tooth. She also got a pretty good look at Jeff's other teeth while she was at it. "Just how long has it been since you last saw a dentist, captain?" she inquired. "Too long, I hate to admit," said Jeff.

Before you leave make an appointment for a full dental evaluation and a thorough deep root cleaning she told him. I just fit you in today because you had a toothache but I can see you are going to need quite a lot of work." Jeff made the appointment as he was told and went back to the company office to take it easy the rest of the day. Jeff did need a lot of dental work and was scheduled for six more appointments. Sometime after his third appointment he had come to know Cynthia pretty well. The two kidded and joked with each other a lot now while she was drilling and filling. He couldn't get her off his mind. Was it just because she was a woman, or was there

really something special about her? He couldn't honestly say but he sure thought about her an awful lot. One evening he and Tom Rich were dining at the Officers Club when who should walk in but Cynthia and another equally stunning woman of African American descent. Jeff spotted Cynthia immediately and was up from the table like a shot. "Cynthia, fancy meeting you here with all the clubs in this town to choose from." Cynthia laughed and said "Jeff I would like for you to meet my best friend, Lieutenant Della Marshall. She is an RN at the base hospital". By the time the introductions had begun, Tom was at Jeff's elbow. Jeff turned to Tom and said "this is my best friend Captain Tommy Rich; we have been friends since high school." "High school -- and you both ended up here?" "It's a long story, and if you will join us for dinner I will explain."

The girls joined them for dinner that night, and almost every night from then on. They shared their tales of woe and all grudgingly admitted they were better off now than if they had never committed their crime in the first place. Della had a story that paralleled Cynthia's in so many ways that it was almost spooky. They were both medical professionals and both had killed their abusive husbands, both were from Portland and both had copped to capital murder to avoid the risk of the gas chamber. Both Jeff and Tommy had given up hope of ever being able to enjoy the pleasures of a wife and family, but now the wheels were beginning to spin in their heads. Tommy and Della were black, Jeff and Cynthia were white, all four were officers in the United States Army and just maybe there was a chance to form lasting relationships. There was one problem and the girls broached it one evening. "You know, don't you Tommy, that we can never have a family?" Della blurted out one evening. "No I didn't know," Tommy volunteered. He was a little shocked at this since all four of them had marriage on their minds, although no one had actually discussed that aspect of their friendship. "Yes", said Della, we could probably obtain permission to marry, but to get permission, we would have to agree to an operation that would prevent us from ever having children." "Actually, we had to agree to that operation in order to get accepted into this program and it has already been performed," said Cynthia. "No use making this any harder than it is Della." "The good news is that the operation is sometimes reversible," Della added. "With the bonus time we are getting, your biological clocks will still be ticking when we finish our prison time" Jeff added. So right there and right then the four of them agreed to wed, this being the strangest marriage proposal anyone ever heard.

The six new female officers had all met men and six weddings had recently been performed. Captains Jeff Dawson and Tom Rich were two of the lucky grooms. The others were officers as well. Not that any of the women had anything against enlisted men, but they were all officers themselves and came into contact with other officers more often than they came in contact with the enlisted men. Six new officer's quarters were constructed on the base and the newlyweds settled in.

More female companionship was on the way. A thorough search of all the women's prisons turned up several hundred women with skills that could be utilized at Fort Hope. The old adage is that an army moves on its stomach, but the truth is that the army runs on paper work and at Fort Hope the paper work was a mess. Everything

seemed to be screwed up. Pay records, shot records, everything. New barracks were constructed between Fort Hope and the Gulch, fences put up so it would look like a prison and a gate, manned at all times by MP's, was erected. This was off the main road between the Fort and the Gulch. This was to be known as the Female Facility. All of the women from the civilian prisoners section were moved over there first. There had been a number of incidents recently between the civilian male prisoner population and the women even though they had separate facilities in which to conduct all of their activities.

The new women were then brought in a few at a time. There were pharmacists, LPN's, a few more RN's and a lot of women with office backgrounds and skills. All of the offices on the post were now fenced off and the women transported by bus from the female facility to work. It seemed like everything they did created a need to do something else. More mess halls were built, more entertainment areas, PX's, necessary shops, etc., not only at the female facility but at the office compound. As soon as the women saw Firefighters Park they wanted to know if they could also use it. Dobbs, Harcrow, Spear, and Dixon were at a loss. Should we set aside certain times for the women or should we deny the women the use of the park or just let it be coed? They finally decided to let it be coed, but the MP patrols were increased, all secluded spots were removed from the landscaping and the women were forbidden from leaving the park, except in a bus. Busses were now running around the Fort pretty much like city busses. They were driven and maintained by the civilian male convicts. Fort Hope now had almost three thousand civilian convict workers. So far there had been no rapes or attempted rapes, probably because of the presence of the brothels in the Gulch. Budding romances were everywhere and there was little the Administration could do to prevent that.

The base chaplains performed more marriages every week. Couples all wanted individual housing and that was not a problem. Apartment houses with seven hundred square feet apartments sprang up in the dependent housing area. Anyone, civilian or military that was married could rent one. The rent was quite reasonable and the money was used to build more housing. This actually saved the army some money as the army no longer had to feed and house these people. They did give them a small allotment in addition to their pay so they could shop at the commissary. The thing that was always in the back of everyone's mind was that if they screwed up they would be stripped of their earned bonus time and returned to prison. This became just about the straightest community in the country. Fort Hope, like other military installations, adopted the same policy toward gays. Don't ask and don't tell. An open display of homosexuality was forbidden and grounds to be sent back to prison. There must have been gay men as well as gay women at Fort Hope, but if there were they kept it to themselves. There were no special facilities constructed to accommodate their privacy.

Once Adam had time to get his feet on the ground after returning from the Academy it wasn't so much a case of making changes or instituting new programs at Fort Hope as it was a case of making the ones that were there work better. Adam knew what it was; with all these new men and now women arriving and so many of the old ones

going out to the Regular Army the Unit had lost its identity. Instilling pride in the Elite Forces was Adam, Dr. Golstadt and Hank's number one priority.

Once, while having dinner at the Carrington with Dr. Golstadt, Adam was moved to ask a question that had been bugging him for a long time. "Tell me something Doc, (nobody ever called him Winthrop) how did you ever come to commit the crime that you committed? Molestation of little girls just doesn't fit you somehow?" "Adam, the answer to that is that I didn't commit any crime, I just admitted to several." "What do you mean, Doc?" "Oh it's a long story, Adam, but the way my personal life was going I was just following the course of least resistance. That accusation the first little girl made about me was completely false; then when the do-gooders got hold of the story things got worse. My marriage was on the rocks, I was faced with defending myself against millions of dollars in civil suits. My father-in-law hated my guts. Prison began to sound like a pretty viable alternative to what I was facing in Portland. My career had already been ruined and I didn't relish life as a homeless man. I chose this course, Adam and as God is my witness I have no interest in little girls whatsoever. Actually, my marriage was on the rocks because my wife found out I was a closet gay. Now I have been able to develop a meaningful relationship here at Fort Hope and am happier than I have ever been in my life. I am all wrapped up in this work Adam and never want anything else; I am a truly happy man, or at least I could be if my friend and I were allowed to come out of the closet and live together openly but I know that will never be." "I feel a lot better about you now than I did before I asked and you are quite right, until you have been discharged from your prison obligation you must remain in the closet and let whoever wants to think whatever they want about you and little girls."

Adam called a general meeting of all of the officers in the division. "Gentlemen," he started out, "We are at a crossroads. This outfit has grown rapidly and I have been away for almost four years." In many ways, this is not the outfit it was when I left. Sure, the outfit is much larger; however, that is -- or could be, a good thing. In many ways things have improved and in many ways they have either gotten out of hand or they are on the brink of getting out of hand. This is a problem, but the main problem that I am concerned about is the attitude of the officers and the men now compared to what it was four years ago. We were a cohesive unit then, but now we are a bunch of individuals with too many of us marching to his own drummer and putting self above the group. The way I see it is there are two ways correcting this: One is the traditional army way, to come down hard on the men, instill harsh military discipline, to punish those who do not conform. With these men that would, in my opinion, be counter productive. For the most part, our men are just like the men in the Regular Army, but in some ways they are quite different. They say that these men have drug problems, but I am of the opinion that this Division is largely made up of men who lack the ability to cope in a rational way with their personal problems. The other way to deal with our common problem is to convince the men that we are all in this together and we are all damn lucky to be here. I myself am a twenty-two year old Brigadier General that still owes the State of Oregon approximately twelve years hard time.

"This is an unconventional unit in a conventional army. I for one would be very upset if I had to give up this shiny silver star and go back to being locked up. I assume that none of you would relish the idea of giving up your army careers either, so here is what I think, and I expect to hear from you as to your opinions.

"I think that to salvage this program we need to de-emphasize rank and the pretense of being in the army and to rediscover who and what we really are, a bunch of convicts that have been given the chance of a lifetime. We should all be constantly aware that our very existence is in the hands of a bunch of old men and women in government and the military who for the most part don't appreciate us very much and would love to see us fail. The only man remaining in this unit that is not a convict is General Dobbs, who is terminally ill with prostate cancer and is trying to just hang on long enough for me to be eligible to replace him. This is important to President Lomas, our chief benefactor. Don't think for a moment that is because I am some sort of superman. It is because men like General Dobbs and General Lomas are acutely aware of the nature of the men in this Division. General Lomas regards this as his legacy to the nation, the thing he will be remembered for.

"As you know, the President's eight years in office is coming to a close. He leaves office in a couple months and his replacement could be a disaster for this program. Think for a moment what it could mean if a Regular Army general were assigned to this command and decided to shape this bunch of misfits up the old army way. If General Lomas could justify my selection as General Dobbs replacement at this time, General Dobbs would retire tomorrow and go home to die in peace. So what is happening, is that I am posturing myself to be presented as the only logical choice to replace Dobbs and if, when the time comes, I am not that replacement then we could all be in big trouble.

"My feeling is that we need to go out and reach every man in the unit on a personal level. We need to convince each and every one of them that in order to survive we need to be the best unit in the army, and by a large margin. I guess you could look at it as patriotism to our own selfish cause.

"Bugging out of details must become a thing of the past; dogging it on training exercises must become a thing of the past; laziness is not acceptable. The army has a couple terms for this and society has had a term for it for years. Society refers to it as esprit de corps. The army terms are "R.A. attitude," which stands for Regular Army and the other army term is "Gung Ho" attitude. In order to continue this very good deal, we have to turn this into the most "Gung Ho" outfit in the United States Military. "I have given this a lot of thought recently and these are some of the ideas that I have been kicking around. Every man in the Division will be responsible for getting to know, on a personal basis, the man serving one step below him, as well as the man serving one step above him. I mean really get to know that man, know his family situation, know if he has a significant other, know his interests, his dreams, his desires, his successes, his failures, his gang affiliations, if any, how he ended up here, who his best friends on the outside are. Every officer and noncom in the Division should receive training in how to identify personality clashes that may be occurring

among the men and among the officers. These personalities should be separated, they can't clash if they don't come together. This is most important; we must get to know each other well enough to know what, if anything, is troubling one of us, and we should all be aware of what help is available and to get that help immediately.

"If a man has a sudden change in attitude someone here should know him well enough to be able sense what is bothering him and then take the time to find out what we can do to help him through his problem. This should not be approached in a business-like official manner, rather it should be approached as a personal friend and confidant manner. I want a list of the names of all the men who have experience and training in counseling other. Colonel Winthrop Golstadt, who was a very highly regarded psychiatrist in civilian life, will screen and train these counselors; I want each counselor to be well versed on what his role should be in group counseling, because I plan to form each squad into a support group. One of the counselors will meet with each group at least twice a week if there are no problem people involved. If a man in that group has a problem that could affect the group, then that group would meet as often as necessary to work through the problem.

"During these meetings, each of the men will have a chance to talk and be encouraged to vent their feelings. They should be encouraged to openly discuss their gripes and complaints about the division or any problems they have from back home or problems that they may have with each other. The counselor assigned to the group should be able to direct the flow of discussion toward openness in order to bring these men out of any shell they may have created around themselves. The men should feel they are among friends who actually care about them and their well-being. Every man in this division, all of us, should develop a genuine friendship and brotherly love for everyone else in the group. We are all in this together. I want the information from these meetings and relationships to filter up the chain of command until they reach someone who has the capacity to handle them. After the problem has been handled I want it to continue to be passed up the chain of command until it reaches my office.

"There is a clerk in my office who will enter this information into the computer for later correlation and analysis. If whatever is bothering a man is something that someone else here can do something about, then the appropriate superior should be made aware of the problem and do everything in his power to help. If a number of men have the same problem and it relates to the attitude of someone above them then I want someone to take some action to rectify the situation. God pity the officer or noncom in this unit that buries a problem because it stems from something he has done. That is why it absolutely must continue to filter up the ladder. If the food is bad in one of the mess halls or there is a man in position of authority who is seem as conducting himself in an aloof, uncaring or authoritarian manner and it is affecting the cohesion of the group then that NCO or officer should receive the counseling that he needs in order to make the necessary changes. That goes for every man in the division that exercises a position of authority, including myself, but excluding General Dobbs. "Suggestion boxes are being installed at strategic locations around the post. Any man that writes a suggestion or complaint will receive a written response. If it is a complaint, the written response will come from the man that is in the position immediately above that of the person responsible for making the necessary change. These changes are not intended to short circuit the chain of command. I do not want

privates in this division coming up to me and saying 'Hey chief, I have a gripe'. I want what I am saying here and the spirit of what I have said here to filter down and I want anything the men have to say to filter up. If any of you have any comments or ideas concerning the things I have just talked about I want to hear them, especially ideas about how to help bring about the changes as soon as possible."

Dr. Golstadt dined with Adam often. They discussed individual problems that had filtered up to either Adam through his chain of command or up to Winthrop through his counselor cadre. Adam was eternally grateful to have Dr. Golstadt; not only had he saved Adam's life in Colombia, he had a greater insight and appreciation of Adams goals in directing the attitude of the division than any of the other officers. They had become close friends. Many an evening you could find Adam dining at the same table with Father Villa, Dr. Golstadt and Henry Adams, at either the officers' open mess or at one of the restaurants in the Gulch. So far as anyone knew Henry Adams was the only enlisted man in the army to have full officers club privileges. He would just walk into the club, always in civilian clothes and the head steward would say something like, "Good evening Master Sergeant-Major, your usual table?" There was nothing official about this of course it just happened that way. There was not an officer in the division that wanted to question Henry about anything he did or said. The general may not have done a masterful job of getting through to the officers at his meeting, but he did get through to them. In the following weeks and months it was like a breath of fresh air had blown through their valley. A few minor changes were made and a few adjustments in routine, but generally everything was being done with a fresh attitude. It was becoming obvious to all that a new day had dawned. There were far fewer court-martials, fewer fights, fewer rule infractions and fewer attempts at desertion.

The incident of the helicopter pilots rescue of Charlie Company had gone a long way in establishing that feeling of comradery that Adam felt he so desperately needed to impart to the men.

One of the suggestions that was submitted from a squad sergeant was concerning the men's attitude toward their training exercises. "Now the men perform in the field because someone in authority is all over them if they don't perform, when what should be happening is that men willingly give 110 percent, not because of fear of reprisal but because his life depends on it. If either you or the guy next to you is not giving 110 percent, it could cost you your life on some foreign battlefield, or it could cost you a one way trip back to the prison you came from. I suggest that this thought be instilled into the men over and over until they each have a deep-down understanding of it." This suggestion was implemented by being stressed in memos and talks that they all received in every meeting they attended. Finally it became obvious that this thought had taken hold.

The men were hard as nails and they resented being commanded by the fat old generals who had been stuck with this command when they had failed at everything else. The few convicts who had finished their prison sentences and mustered into the Regular Army had proven to be top quality soldiers. They were career men that made

no bones about it and they knew how to soldier. After all, the Regular Army was a breeze for them. A few of the men who finished their prison sentences had tried to remain with the Expendable Forces to serve out their time in the army but were convinced to move on into the Regular Army to make room for the new prisoners. Now anyone who listened to the choir, or listened to the division band play, or attended one of their many sporting events, could see the pride, not in the participants but in the men that were watching the performance.

A problem of another kind had arisen. Several months earlier the lounge at the Gold Dust started a karaoke night, where they would play music to popular or oldies songs and different members of the audience would get up on stage and sing the words which were presented on a television monitor. Corporal Bobby McAllister was in the audience on the second or third time that the club had karaoke. Bobby was just a plain old country boy that took a lot of kidding from the other guys because of his distinct rural Oklahoma accent. He talked like Jim Nabors did on the old Gomer Pyle Show. He wasn't putting on though, that was just Bobby's natural way of talking. Some of the other guys in the audience were ribbing him, trying to get him to get up and sing. Finally he consented to give it a try. He looked at the play list for a song he knew and finally settled for Hank Williams' old standby Your Cheatin Heart. When Bobby started singing you could close your eyes and swear that a young Hank Williams was on that stage. Bobby won the \$200 first prize that night and after all the other contestants had finished singing, they asked him to do another song. He did three more songs and in each case sounded exactly like the original recording of the country and western performer. Bobby enjoyed entertaining on stage and enjoyed the first prize money so much that he began to make it a point to be at the Gold Dust every Friday evening. He always took first prize and they never let him get away with singing just one song.

One Friday night there was a country western group from one of the other clubs who came to hear him sing before their gig started. They liked him so much that they asked him to come over to the StarLight Lounge and sing a few songs with them. Bobby was all for that and sang at the StarLight until late in the evening, so late in fact that he missed the last bus back to the Fort and had to walk the fifteen miles home. The next Friday evening after picking up his prize money at the Gold Dust he went over to the StarLight and sang with the Country Folk, as the group called themselves. After about three standard country songs the band leader came up to Bobby while the band was taking a break and asked "By any chance, Bobby, do you read music?" "Well sort of," Bobby answered, "When I was a kid I took piano lessons. I never was very good on the piano but I did learn to read music some." "Great," said Junior, the band leader, "Take a look at this song that one of the other guys in the band and I wrote and see if you want to give it a try." As Bobby looked at the music he started to hum the song. Junior was impressed. When the band went back on stage after their break Junior took the mike and told the audience what they were about to hear, then the band started the music and Bobby started singing right on cue. Now Junior and the band were not convicts; they were just a country group that was playing in a local club when the manager from the StarLight Lounge heard them and hired them to play at the Gulch. This night, in the audience was a convict soldier by the name of Tony

Alvarez, a lieutenant from the 2nd regiment. Before his arrest he had run a recording studio in, of all places, Nashville, Tennessee. Tony was completely overwhelmed by that song and by Bobby singing it. Tony just had to record that song.

Monday morning he went to his company commander and received permission to talk to the battalion commander who gave him permission, etc. and on up the ladder until he ended up talking to Colonel Dixon himself. What were the chances he wanted to know of getting a sound studio set up for him to record Bobby's song? Colonel Dixon did not refer him to any higher authority because he knew there was no money in the budget to set up a recording studio. "Sorry, lieutenant there just aren't funds; we are already in a budget crunch as it is. Have you tried the inmate recreation fund?" So off Tony went to try the recreation fund president. "Sorry Tony, not many men would benefit from a recording studio and we already have a list of things as long as your arm that we are just waiting to fund when we get the money." Not one to be easily discouraged Tony decided to raise the money from investors. He bent the ear of every man he ran into until he found ten guys willing to put up \$1,000 each to own a piece of the recording studio and also own a piece of Bobby's record. More bad news; Tony was told that he certainly could build the studio on government property, at the school, but then everything would belong to the school. Tony called a meeting of his investors and they all agreed so long as Tony would have a key to the locked room and no one who was not expert in using the equipment would be allowed in unless Tony or someone familiar with the equipment was also there.

Tony started his venture by getting Bobby McAllister to sign a lifetime personal services contract for twenty-five percent of his earnings. Tony then ordered the equipment through channels, and paid for it up front. This was approved because the equipment was to be donated to the school. Tony even agreed to teach a course in sound recording in exchange for the room. After the equipment arrived and was installed at the school he obtained permission for the four male band members to come on the base to make the recording. Before the recording session began Tony got the band members to all sign personal service contracts as well. Bobby was there of course and after about five hours work they had themselves a master. Tony then made up five hundred audio cassette copies of the song. The next morning Tony sent away for a copyright on the song. He had to go through channels once again to get permission to obtain a \$35 cashier's check made payable to the copyright office. Once his copyright had been applied for he wrote a master letter to accompany the tape and went to the library to get the addresses of four hundred country radio stations and record producers. The radio stations picked up on the song and began playing it before he even had time to hear from a producer. Who needed them anyway. Tony had renamed the group Bobby and the Jailbirds. As orders for the record began to roll in he got ahold of an old friend of his in Nashville that owned his own small record label "Tent Records" and arranged for him to fill the orders on the Tent Records label. Most recording is done now on albums, people are buying a hit record only if it comes on a CD or audio tape with several songs. Tony got his group together and found that they had six more original songs in the can. He had them record those six songs, all with Bobby McAllister doing the vocal, then they filled up the album with several standards that were out of copyright.

In two weeks the album broke into the top ten and in six weeks it was the top selling country and western album on the C&W charts.

Adam had followed all of these goings on from a distance, he heard a remark from time to time about Corporal Bobby McAllister or Lieutenant Tony Alvarez and the record they were making but didn't pay much attention to it; he thought it was harmless. This morning however, the phone had been ringing off the hook, every news hound in the music business wanted to talk to Bobby McAllister, not just to interview him but they wanted him as a guest on the morning and the late night variety shows. That meant they wanted him in New York, Los Angeles and Nashville. They wanted him to appear on the Grand Ole Opry as well as many other places around the country.

Adam looked up Bobby's record. He had been a fair soldier since joining the unit two years earlier. He was a contribution to the unit from the state prison system of Oklahoma. He still had fifteen years to serve for murder. He had killed the clerk of a convenience store during an armed robbery. He would not be eligible for parole for another five years. Adam finally decided that any accredited members of the press or the media that wanted to interview Bobby could do so at the Gulch. The manager at the StarLight Lounge was more than happy to welcome the press and the media in and to accommodate them with lighting or anything else they wanted, for a fee of course. In the meantime, two more of Bobby and the Jail Birds' original songs had taken off. The music world was clamoring for a second album. The band had semi-permanent permission to be on base and were staying in hotel rooms in the Gulch, which was the only place on base they were permitted to go except to the recording studio. As they sat in their rooms all day they wrote songs. The second album was released two months behind the first album and it was an even bigger hit. Adam finally relented and allowed Bobby to go, under guard, to the Country Music Awards in Nashville where he received the award for Country Music Entertainer of the Year. In his acceptance speech he gave credit to his band and to Tony, but lavished praise on General Harcrow and Fort Hope for making this all possible. The outcome of all of this was that Bobby McAllister made Sergeant.

The post branch of California Desert Bank also noted and brought to Adam's attention that one Lieutenant Alvarez had over two million dollars in his account and one Sergeant Bobby McAllister had over five million in his account. Adam told the manager that he was aware that the amounts would be significant but he had never guessed it would be that much. He suggested that the manager call the men in and discuss their alternatives for putting the money into something safe and secure that would draw interest, possibly money market or CD's. He also requested that the bank manager also assist the two men in preparing a will so the bank would know what to do with the money if something happened to either of them.

Bobby McAllister was not the only member of the Fort hope family to be a successful recording artist. Tony Alvarez also cut masters of several albums by the choir. These never shot to the top of the charts but they were all consistent sellers and endured for

years. The only time that one of the choir CD's went to the top of the charts was at Christmas. They had three Christmas albums in three years that all went Gold. Tony also recorded the band and released six different CD's of marching band music that sold very well. The money from all of these recordings went directly to the Fort Hope Recreation Fund, even Tony Alvarez' share.

The idea of Alvarez and McAllister investing in something safe didn't exactly pan out. The two young millionaires went through channels and found themselves in Adams office a few days after Adam had talked to the bank manager. Adam looked up from behind his desk, "What can I do for the two richest men at Fort Hope this morning, gentlemen?" "We want your permission to go into business here on the Fort, sir," Tony responded. "Just what kind of business did you have in mind?" "Sir, we want to start a taxi service." "I can't say that we don't need one so I will listen to your proposal." "What we intend to do sir, is to purchase one hundred of these eightpassenger golf carts -- like the ones in this brochure here," Bobby answered as he handed Adam the brochure. Adam noted that the golf carts were electric, the one in the picture was bright yellow, with a canopy and looked quite attractive. Adam noted that each one sold for almost ten thousand dollars. "You would need a building to store the machines and service them; what did you have in mind to do about that?" "We would like to lease a building in the construction equipment storage area that is not now being used for anything else, sir, we would be willing to pay the army one thousand dollars a month, the first year paid in advance, on a five year lease." "Where would you get drivers?" "That's easy sir. Off duty soldiers, and civilian convicts, sir; we have many people on this Fort working shift work now and we could provide service around the clock." "And how would you get paid?" "We would put in meters that would accept debit cards, just like they have in all the major cities now, sir." "You men seem to have this all figured out. Congratulations, I think Fort Hope just got themselves a taxi company. By the way, how did you come up with this idea?" "The three times that I had to walk from the Gulch back to the Fort," Bobby said, "I thought about it all the way back, why don't somebody open a doggon cab company on this Fort." Within ninety days the cabs were rolling and a radio dispatch system set up.

- CHAPTER 26 -
THE WAR GAMES

A memo came down announcing upcoming war games were to be held in the vast empty area around Fort Hope. Four full battle groups armed with all the high tech toys that the army had were to simulate a war with a low tech army. This was planned, Adam guessed, to demonstrate the superiority of an army that been fitted with all of this high tech equipment. The army just wanted to see how many hours a division of conventional soldiers could survive against the U.S. Army in modern warfare. This didn't set very well with Adam. There was a place in modern warfare for all of the different types of units and the day when infantry would be totally obsolete was a long way off. Meetings were held and plans drawn up at Fort Hope. They had time to hear everyone out and they planned accordingly. Two thousand holes were dug in the desert. Tunnels were dug and reinforced with sewer pipe connecting the holes.

Their own construction battalion had taken care of that. There were several entrances carved into the mountainsides and concealed. Mines which only gave off orange chalk dust and a big bang when detonated were laid strategically all over the area that was to be used for the games. After all, this was supposed to be a demonstration of how a modern army could easily annihilate an indigenous army fighting on their own turf.

A railroad spur had been routed into the Fort. Recently, approximately twenty-five miles of large concrete sewer pipe had been delivered, unloaded and was waiting for the construction battalion to lay the pipe and run it out to a new sewage treatment facility that would also be built to accommodate the needs of the Fort and Frenchman's Gulch. Adam had noted that the pipe was large enough for a man to crawl through.

There were some natural caverns about two miles from where the attacking army would gather to commence their attack.. The construction battalion had trenched out and buried sewer pipe connecting the pipe to more than thirty concealed openings at various places in the battlefield. Blowers were installed in the caverns to blow fresh air into this network of sewer pipe.

On the appointed day, the two armies formed up some twenty-five miles apart. What the attackers didn't know was that Adam had six thousand of his best soldiers concealed in the caverns. With every non-combat qualified person on the Fort and even some of the civilians from the Gulch, some six thousand people had been dressed in the black fatigue uniforms and were taught where to stand as the inspectors flew over in helicopters to note that both the attacking forces and the defense forces were in place.

There were about the same number of men on each side but the attackers had some seven billion dollars worth of hardware that the defenders lacked. The attackers also

had combat choppers and air support that the defenders lacked. Everyone except the men of the 1st Division thought this would be a 'turkey shoot'. Some didn't even see the point of it.

The order was given and the battle began. On the one side the tanks and armored personnel carriers began to roll. Soon the heavy equipment began to detonate mines that had been planted by the defending force. Losses were larger than anticipated and the commanders of the attacking force placed foot soldiers out in front of their heavy equipment to find and clear the mines. They had little difficulty in doing this but the process had reduced the speed of the attacking army to a snail's pace. On the first day of the battle the attackers had only advanced about twelve miles.

On the other side the army began to disappear. As the attacking force began to pass over the first of the camouflaged holes dug by the defenders, the defenders from the caverns began to appear behind the attackers. As privates Washington and Sutter climbed out of their hole in the ground they noticed one private with a slight limp about fifty yards behind everyone else. Washington and Sutter, from Fort Hope, walked fast enough to catch up with him. The straggler was watching the ground just in front of his feet, his field jacket tied around his waist by the arms of the jacket. The Fort Hope men came up on either side of the soldier. "Man, this sure is a bunch of crap," Washington said. "You can say that again" the young soldier answered. "You don't have to do this any longer though," Sutter put in. "Oh, why's that?" the soldier commented. "Because you are dead," Washington said as Sutter drew an Orange chalked stick across his throat. "Now, dead man, lets have those fatigues." "You're kidding aren't you?" the kid asked. "Nope we want your uniform, man," said Washington.

More of the stragglers from the attacking force were quickly overtaken and forced to give up their Regular Army fatigue uniforms. They were then shot with the powder bullets that chalk marked them as dead. The Fort Hope men donned the uniforms taken from the attacking army. Dressed in their new uniforms the 1st Division guys quickly caught up with the attacking units. One by one the units at the rear were decommissioned. No prisoners were taken, they were just chalk marked while standing, wearing only their underwear, with their hands tied behind. The convict soldiers packed their own uniforms into the nylon bags that they carried, tagged them and left them to be picked up by one of the trucks that they had commandeered. The attacking army made camp for the night, still between twelve and thirteen miles from Fort Hope. That night the infiltrators killed off the sentries and the sleeping men so that by morning there were almost six thousand Fort Hope men posing as members of the attacking force. Many of the infiltrators were discovered, but when this happened there were enough defenders present to eliminate the ones who had discovered them.

As the day progressed there were fewer and fewer of the attacking army remaining. Adam's men were careful not to eliminate anyone above the rank of captain, that would be the attacking army's majors, colonels, and generals.

As darkness fell on the second day of the battle the attackers had reached the outer fence surrounding Fort Hope. They could see no signs of life inside but were ordered to retreat a half mile and hole up for the night so that they could spring forth at first light to claim their easy victory. Adam's men were all armed with sticks and orange chalk. They had been the ones to volunteer for guard duty. As their entire division braced for the battle, the attackers slept.

At two A.M. they began the systematic slaughter of the attacking force. The six thousand men of the 1st Division crept into the attackers' camp and began to cut the throats of the sleeping men with the orange chalk covered sticks. The men whose throats had been cut were led away by judges who had watched them simulate death. They continued to take particular care not to slit the throat of any field grade officers. At dawn the officers awoke and summoned their men to join them for the day's activities. Their biggest problem was that they didn't have any men left to summon. At that point they realized that all the men they did have were pointing rifles at them and were once again clad in the black fatigues of the defenders.

The main gate was within sight of their camp. A Humvee appeared inside the compound and exited through the main gate. It was followed by three large green busses. The vehicles ambled along painfully slow toward the position where the field grade officers of the attacking force had been assembled. When it had come to a stop in front of them, a large man in a black dress uniform opened the door and got out. He wore the stripes of master sergeant-major. "Good Morning, gentlemen," he said cheerfully. "I am division Sergeant-Major Henry Adams. Since you all appear to be our prisoners, I have been sent by General Adam Harcrow to invite you all to a hearty breakfast served with plenty of hot coffee, at the Officers Mess." The 1st Division had not lost a man. The attackers had lost all of their men and all of their high tech equipment. General Harcrow tried to make a case for being allowed to keep the equipment but the army wouldn't hear of it. "Besides," said General Davis, "you don't appear to need it. In fact, because of this fiasco the army may have to re-evaluate the introduction of our high tech equipment for the benefit of our infantry as well ."

That afternoon the phone rang in Adam's office and the clerk directed the call to Adam. "It's a man from Nations Week. A television show producer wants to talk to you General." "I'll take that call, thank you, sergeant." "No we would not be interested in you filming a twenty minute segment at Fort Hope." "I don't care who you have permission from; the President will countermand that permission, or you can drop the whole matter right here. Goodbye."

- CHAPTER 27 -
FAREWELL GENERAL DOBBS

At 1000 hours, two days after the war games ended, Adam received word that General Dobbs wanted to see him in his quarters right away. This was an unusual request because Adam had just dined with Dobbs the evening before. Then Adam thought, maybe there is something he forgot to tell me. At any rate Adam finished cleaning up the paper work that just had to be done yesterday and walked down the hall of the administration building to Dobbs makeshift apartment. He knocked and Dobbs' nurse on duty let him in. General Dobbs had a nurse on duty twenty-four hours a day. They were all male, but only one of them was a member of the convict army. The rest were from a home care service in Blythe. It was actually a hospice service. They were escorted from the main gate to the apartment and back to the main gate by MP's. Dobbs was sitting up in his bed. He didn't look very good. His skin had taken on kind of a grayish tint. His eyes were moist. When he said "good morning Adam," his voice was very weak, and his speech was slurred. "Good morning, General. I came as soon as I could." "Adam, I hate to let you down, but I think my time is near." "Don't think you are letting me down sir. I sincerely appreciate you staying with this command as long as you have. You have done all you can do, but maybe the time has come that you should be checked in to a hospital." "Nonsense, there is nothing they can do for me in a hospital that they can't do right here. The only medications that I receive now are for pain relief in order to keep me as comfortable as possible. There is nothing left to tell you about running the division that we have not already discussed. I called you down here just now so I could say goodbye, and to say that over these last years you have become like a son to me, a son I never had. I had hoped to remain in command until you had the qualifications to replace me, but I didn't make it, I am sorry. It looks like you are going to get a new commanding general from the outside after all. I only hope he is someone that understands these men and knows how to motivate them the way you have, or that he is a man that wants to do nothing and stays out of your way. "Thank you sir, I really appreciate that as I appreciate everything you have done for me and for the men along the way." With that said, Adam leaned over his bed and the two generals embraced warmly. Adam stepped back and saluted, did a snappy about face and marched out of the room. In the hall outside the door Adam broke down and sobbed for a few seconds before he regained control of himself and returned to his office. For the rest of the day Adam would pick up a memo and read the same paragraph five or six times and then not have any idea of what he had just read. His mind was retracing his relationship with General Dobbs and how much the general meant to him. Oh, how he would miss that old man. Sometime around noon word came that General Dobbs had died. Dobbs' nurse on duty, who happened to be the one who was a member of the division, delivered the message personally to General Harcrow. "Sir his last words were, 'Tell Adam I will be watching over him'. He said those words then gripped my hand, closed his eyes and went limp as he passed away." Adam said nothing, but once again Adam sobbed briefly then arose from behind his desk and walked out of the office. He just wanted to walk for a bit and to be alone with his thoughts. He never had realized until today how much that old man had meant to him.

The day of reckoning had come and Adam knew that it had come too soon. He knew that he had not yet been able to position himself to be selected as Dobbs' replacement. He was overcome with an awesome feeling of misgiving about who might be sent in to command the division. The wrong man could wreck the division and everything they had all worked so hard for.

General Lomas was prohibited by the Constitution from a third term but luckily the man from his own party had replaced him as President. The man's name was Alfred Conrado. He had moved up from Vice President and won the presidency largely due to the efforts of the outgoing President. Because of this fortuitous circumstance, General Lomas still had a lot of clout with the administration. Maybe he could persuade President Conrado to appoint an appropriate general. Then Adam began to run names through his mind of the men who might be appointed and could think of none who would be appropriate.

In his will, General Dobbs had expressed the desire to be buried in the new cemetery at Fort Hope. He was given a full military funeral. Having no family of his own he had left his life savings of a little over \$500,000 to the Fort Hope Recreation Fund, except for the sum of \$100,000, which he left to Adam. There were a few dignitaries in attendance at General Dobbs' funeral; among them was the former President of the United States, General Lomas, in uniform with his four stars on his shoulder. After Dobbs had been laid to rest General Lomas said to Adam, "What I would really like to do is to spend a few days at your famous Frenchman's Gulch. My wife is off on a cruise with her sister and my daughter is married and has her own family to care for. I understand you have a pretty good nine hole golf course and a lake full of fish at the Gulch."

Maybe while I am there you could find a way from time to time to tear yourself from your duties and join me for a little golf and a little fishing." "Sir," Adam answered, "I will make the time to spend with you, but I'm afraid that I know nothing of golf or fishing.." "Perhaps we could dine together, every evening of your stay, in your suite. This would afford us the privacy to talk freely. Sergeant-Major, would you please escort the general to the Gulch and see that he is put up in the best suite at the Carrington Inn." I should be able to join you about seven if that is alright with you General."

As General Lomas was escorted to the black Cadillac sedan waiting at the curb, General Harcrow turned to Henry, "Sergeant-Major, please see to it that President Lomas has a trained orderly at his disposal twenty-four hours a day to take care of his needs and also make sure that his two secret service men are taken care of as well. Services rendered will be complimentary and if the service providers want to be paid later I will take care of it. Somehow I don't think I will be presented with many bills. You might also find out just how good General Lomas is at golf and furnish him with a couple good natured officers that he can beat, but not too easily. You might also find out very discretely if he is interested in any female companionship and arrange for that." "Don't worry Chief I'll take care of everything; I'll make a quick phone call

right now to the Carrington Inn, before he gets there." Ironically, the best room at the Carrington had been dubbed The Presidential Suite, although no one ever expected a President would ever actually occupy it.

Adam called the Carrington about six thirty to see how things were going. He spoke directly with the manager. I assume President Lomas has been properly accommodated," he said. "Oh yes sir," the manager answered, and don't worry about a thing. All the President's needs will be taken care of, compliments of the Carrington Inn for the length of his stay. You have no idea of the publicity value this has to the company and we won't even have to say which Carrington Inn he patronized. It would be worth a fortune to us if we could get him to stay here the rest of his days." Adam expressed his appreciation, then added "the other reason that I am calling is that I will be joining him for dinner this evening. We would like hors d'oeuvres and drinks at seven, followed by a leisurely meal which we will order when the drinks arrive." "Very good General, prepare yourself for elegant service and a wonderful meal."

As the two generals enjoyed their appetizers and drinks they talked of Fort Hope, where it was now and where it was going in the near future. Adam brought General Lomas up to date on the counseling and support groups that were now so effectively in operation and filled him in on the support and training units that had been added. General Lomas then broke his news to Adam. "It seems, Adam, that our biggest problem has been getting you promoted fast enough to keep up with the growth on this Fort. First you should know that President Conrado is my man. I chose him when he was the unemployed ex-governor of New Mexico, to be my vice-presidential running mate. When I had been President for seven years I devoted a great deal of time, for the rest of my term, getting him the Party's nomination, which ultimately resulted in his being elected President. He is well aware that Fort Hope and the men here are my pet project, so we are very lucky there. We knew of General Dobbs' medical problems but it was entirely General Dobbs idea to stay on until you had enough time in to qualify for his job. At this point it is a little early for you to move up to that job.

We find ourselves right back in the soup though because the army now wants to expand this Fort to two full divisions of infantry as soon as possible. I suppose that you have heard that so far every man that has finished his prison sentence in the First Division has stayed out of trouble. Adam, we have a recidivism rate of absolutely zero. That is the main reason the army wants to expand, that and the fact that these men are damned good infantry. General LaCross, the Army Commander wanted to send in Regular Army replacements to form the Second Division, but President Conrado and I have talked him out of that. We pointed out that having convicts and regulars in the same Fort would create so many problems that both divisions would suffer. So here is the compromise we came up with.

Things are relatively stable in the world right now. The North Koreans are still a problem and sooner or later we are going to have to take them on. Since the death of Fidel Castro, there is much turmoil in Cuba. There has been a succession of

Communist dictators and sooner or later the Florida Cubans are going to take over that island on their own, to bring about a democracy in Cuba. India and Pakistan are still at each others throats but we can handle that without having to call on the men at Fort Hope. Any one of these trouble spots could break out into full war at any time but we think we have a couple years. What we have decided to do is recruit the men for the Second Division at Fort Hope from the prison populations of the United States. You know what kinds of men you will be getting and how to handle them. You will need all but one regiment to train these new men. You will retain one regiment at ready alert and be able to supply a full division on thirty days notice."

General Lomas stayed on for almost a month, left for six weeks and on his second trip stayed for two months. Throughout all this time Adam had been acting Commander. General Lomas was everywhere on the Fort, sticking his nose into everything. He attended choir practices, band rehearsals, baseball games and any other event that he could find to amuse himself. Although strictly speaking he was a civilian with no status on the Fort he was always treated with the utmost respect.

One day General Lomas bounded into Adam's office all excited about an idea he had. "You know what Adam, most ex-presidents have a library, right?" "Right, sir," Adam answered. "Well, I have decided to build mine right here at Fort Hope." "That would be excellent, sir, except for one thing." "What's that Adam?" General Lomas asked. "Well sir, all presidential libraries are open to the public, while Fort Hope is closed to everyone except the men stationed here and VIP's with official business here." "That's the way I want it, son, I was lying in bed last night and thought, you know of all the things you have done in your life your sponsorship of Fort Hope has been the most significant, this is what you will be remembered for a hundred years from now. Besides being a hall of memorabilia for an ex- president, a presidential library is also a first-class lending library and this Post does not have one. I intend to have the army dedicate the existing football field to me and then to take most of the money that I raise for my library and construct a new thirty-thousand seat sports arena right outside the main gate, but still on this facility. That way the general public could attend events there and they could even take escorted tours of my library in small groups, like they do in the White House. That's off limits to the general public also." "So be it," said Adam, "it could certainly do us no harm."

Contributions to The President Lomas Library Fund were pushed by all three networks and all the major city daily papers, No one heard the count and everyone was asking everyone else to contribute. Bobby McAllister was even let out, with MP's guarding him of course, to put on a benefit performance live at the Hollywood Bowl, and another at the Grand Ole Opry. The money poured in, tons of it. Along with his library, General Lomas also had a four thousand square foot cottage constructed at the rear of the library adequate to accommodate himself, his Secret Service entourage, a butler, a driver, a maid and a cook. "It is none of my business, sir, but what about your family; you know this is no place for women." "The first thing is, quit calling me sir, my name is Theodore but Ted will do just fine. The second thing is that my wife, as you refer to her was only willing to stay with me while I was the President and she was the First Lady. Our relationship has essentially

been over for ten years. We have mutually agreed to go our separate ways. I suppose we will be seen together for a week or so two or three times a year but for the most part I want to be right here at Fort Hope. I feel at home here; my only regret is that I never had this idea in the first place and I never had the opportunity to command this outfit myself."

"That, however, may change." Adam was dumbfounded at this and stammered, "fill me in sir, er, I mean, Ted." "Well, I know it is unprecedented, but hell, it is the unprecedented things in life that make life interesting. I have come up with the solution to your rank problem. Since this is where I want to be anyway and since I am only sixty-two years old and since I never formally resigned from the army when I became President, I have requested reinstatement. Son, you are looking at the new Commanding General of Fort Hope. I may keep this post for a long time because I can't think of anything I had rather do or anywhere else I had rather be. You are going to have to bring me up to speed on all that you are doing here."

"If you don't mind, what role will I be playing in this new structure, Ted?" "You will be a Major General, commanding the First Division. In that capacity we can promote you to Lieutenant General at our earliest opportunity. Since arriving here I have come to know Colonel Todd Dixon quite well and I feel that he is ready for his star. I am submitting his name and recommending him for promotion to Brigadier General in command of the Second Division, which for the next year or so will be the training division. I think Spear is also ready for Brigadier and if you concur, I would also like to promote Colonel Frederick Woods to Brigadier General to serve as your second in command of the First Division. Remember, I spoke to you one other time about this eventually becoming a branch of the army. As soon as we assimilate the Second Division we will start putting together the Third Division. The Convict Army will then be postured to assume most or all of the infantry in the Regular Army. When I finally do decide to hang it up I see you as my replacement. For now though, we need a four star general on board as soon as possible and that would be me. In this way we can be assured that the program will never fall into the wrong hands again."

"Fantastic, you sure don't think small, do you Ted, I mean sir? There is no way I am going to call my Commanding General 'Ted'."

When Adam assumed his new command, at twenty-three years of age, he was the youngest man to ever become a Major General in the history of the United States Army. Generals Lomas, Harcrow, Dixon, Spear and Woods began to bring up the qualified men from within the ranks. The field was wide open to those who qualified. They obtained state of the art equipment for First Division instead of the hand me downs from the Regular Army that they had until now. They issued every man one of the new snappy black dress uniforms that General Lomas had created for Adam when he visited him in the hospital years ago. The noncoms wore their stripes upside down and the officers wore their insignia sideways to denote their supposed lower standing, but to them this was an emblem of pride. Adam was entitled to wear two stars and he wore them sideways at the ends of his epaulets. Adam made the cover of Time Magazine again. This time the cover picture portrayed General Lomas, Adam and Master Sergeant-Major Adams on their cover, with the generals wearing their stars

across and Sergeant-Major wearing his stripes upside down. All of them, of course were clad in their new black uniforms.

- CHAPTER 28 -
THE SECOND KOREAN CONFLICT

The two Korea's had been a thorn in the side of the U.S. Military since the early fifties. Now things were looking particularly grim. It was the same old place with the same old issues. Adam had received word to put his First Division on alert for possible deployment to Korea. Two days later they were told to prepare the men for battle. The entire First Division, with all supporting units, was to be at the Fort Hope air strip the next morning at 0500. "What do you make of this General?" Adam asked. "Looks to me like The First is going to be visiting Korea for a while Adam, maybe quite a while." "How long before the Second Division will be ready?" Adam asked Dixon. "They wouldn't be anywhere near as well trained as the First," Dixon answered, but we could have them combat ready in sixty days."

As they spoke the sound of engines could be heard in the distance. Soon the roar was deafening, as the sky filled with old four engine transport planes. One after the other they landed and taxied off onto the oiled tarmac at the end of the runway. Adam summoned a jeep and the three generals were driven around the end of the runway to where the pilot of the first aircraft to land was waiting. "Tell me we are not going all the way to Korea in these relics, Major," Adam said after the exchange of salutes. The major laughed, "No General, we will be flying you to Nellis AFB near Las Vegas, where more modern transportation awaits; they just couldn't bring the big stuff in here.

We have twenty of these relics and looks like we will be running back and forth from here to Nellis all day to move a whole division. As soon as the planes land, start loading your men and equipment." First the men of the First Division started boarding the planes, which taxied onto the runway and took off as soon as they were loaded. Two hours passed and the first of the planes returned. More men climbed aboard and the old planes took off again. One after another the planes came in from Nellis, landed and took off immediately after being loaded. They had no flight control system at Fort Hope only a man in the tower with a radio. He was busy all day giving landing instructions, clearances, weather, wind speed, etc..

By that evening the entire First Division had been shuttled to Nellis AFB and half of them were already on their way to Korea. Adam had taken the first flight out, Todd Dixon and men from the Second Division had handled the loading of the remainder of the men and equipment as the planes returned. The entourage landed at Hickam AFB in Honolulu, one after the other to refuel and were off again. They flew most of the day eventually arriving at a Korean air base near the DMZ. When they debarked, Adam was relieved to see that the big circus tents had once again been set up and were waiting for them.

Within two days the equipment had been stored on trucks and the men were making themselves at home. Adam was standing in front of the headquarters tent when a Humvee appeared and a four star general got out. The two generals exchanged salutes

and the four-star said, "Good morning, I assume you are General Harcrow -- my name is Hubberland, I command this damn place. Lets go inside, we need to talk I don't want anyone else hearing what we have to say, ask your field 1st Sgt. here to leave and stand just outside the flap to make sure no one else comes in." Adam didn't have to ask; Henry abruptly did an about face and marched out of the tent. "Some time tomorrow afternoon General Ho Pak Kim and as many North Koreans as he can muster are going to cross the DMZ and attack our position. I have purposely stationed you and your men up here near the end of the zone so that when you get the word you and your men will cross into the North, penetrate some twenty clicks then turn left. As you move, drop one platoon at a time, about every click then have them space themselves out in a thin line that should be one hundred twenty- five miles long and one man deep. That will be your sector. You are then to start your men moving back toward the DMZ. It should take you about a week to get back across the DMZ with whatever men you have left." All the time General Hubberland was talking he was pointing at a map he had laid out in front of him. "A ROK Division will be spread out all along the DMZ for that one hundred twenty-five miles on this side of the DMZ. We figure that the North has maybe the equivalent of one division in this area, all situated along their side of the DMZ. They may or may not try to cross, but one thing is for sure; they will not turn back and head North toward you and your men Your men are to march all that first night and all the next day. You will dig in and hold your positions that second night. We don't figure you will meet much resistance until the morning of the third day. Remember, you will be coming up from behind them. You probably won't take them by surprise but they will be busy fighting the ROK's on this side of the line. There will be lots of casualties on both sides and we will do what we can to get your wounded out but don't count on too much. Remember, you and your men are the 'Expendable Forces'; you are to expect casualties."

"What weapons do your men carry? I noticed your guards out in front of the tent had what looked like deer rifles." "That was a Springfield 308, General, all of my men are equipped with them. There were not enough of the new AR-21's to equip our two divisions. The army offered us our choice of the old AR-15's, or M-16's, but then we had a visit from the Springfield Arms Manufacturers representative who offered us a great deal on the new Military 308's. We tried them out and everyone agreed that this was the rifle we wanted." "General Lomas, our commanding general, had no trouble in obtaining them for us; we are very happy with them."

"One question," Adam asked, "how do you know the North Korean's are going to launch an attack tomorrow afternoon?" "Well--er--um," stammered General Hubberland, "We intercepted their codes. We know what they are planning." With that they exchanged salutes and General Hubberland departed.

Adam certainly didn't like the sound of that and knew there was something going on that didn't quite ring true. Henry had reentered the tent and went directly to his field jacket hanging over the back of the chair near where the two generals had been talking. "Lets listen to it all again Chief and see if we can figure out what it is," Henry suggested, as he pulled a tiny tape recorder out of his field jacket pocket. "You devil, Henry, you smelled a rat before I did, didn't you?" "Not exactly Chief, I just don't like

taking unnecessary chances." "Just a second; before you start that thing lets get that radio genius of ours, you know, that kid Kramer in here and see what he has come up with. While you're at it, get all the Field Grade officers in here."

"What do you think guys?" Adam asked after they listened to the tape. "Kinda stinks, doesn't it" they all agreed, "but what is wrong with this picture?" "If Hubberland's people had gotten hold of the codes like he said and overheard information that an attack was planned and when, it wouldn't be handled in this way. We would be put on the defensive not the offensive." "The other thing is, there would be more ROK units mobilizing and moving in this direction," Kramer added. "I have been on the radio ever since we got here, listening to both sides, with the help of a Korean interpreter. There is nothing happening on either side that would indicate an imminent attack."

"This is a longshot gang but what if General Hubberland has, like he said, obtained their codes and he intends to have one of his South Koreans give the North Koreans the order to cross the DMZ, and launch the attack?" "That may be a long-shot, General," Woods agreed, "but if that is the case then it explains a lot, doesn't it?" "May I speak, sir," Henry put in. "Certainly, Sergeant- Major, after all, getting this tape was your idea." Henry continued --"when we got word that we were coming here I wanted to find out a little about the man we would be working for so I got on the phone and did some checking." "and?" said Adam. "and he hates the idea of a convict army; he would like nothing better than to send this whole division into a situation where we would all be annihilated without serving any worthwhile purpose." "Are you sure of this Henry?" "No, sir but that is the 'gut feeling' I have on this man; you can take it for what it is worth. On several occasions, he has made public statements that clearly express his negative opinions about our program."

"That puts us in a real pickle gentlemen; it seems we will have to choose between being destroyed or disobeying a order. Any ideas?" Kramer suggested he record all transmissions between the North Korean High Command and their field commander, Ho Pak Kim. "This may not help us out of the situation we are in now but it could later be used as evidence against general Hubberland. It seems to me that if we were to also record all transmissions in and out of Hubberland's office, we would be able to establish that Hubberland ordered the North to attack." "Excellent," said Adam. "If Hubberland does give the order then I would feel justified in disobeying his order and using our Division in whatever way would do the most good. One thing we can be sure of is that there is an ambush of some sort waiting for us just across the DMZ." "Kramer, do you have the ability to key in on any of our satellites to determine just what is waiting for us on the other side of the line?" "It's possible sir, but I am making no guarantees; I really don't have the right equipment" "Just give it a try, that is all I ask." "Sir, we could send a model airplane over tonight after dark; we have several of them. Technically that is a violation of the treaty, but the value of the intelligence that we could gather might be worth it." "Good, I will stand the heat, even if I have to rely on General Lomas to bail me out."

One other thing, before you go Kramer, since you can listen in on Hubberland and Ho

Pak Kim so easily I am sure they can tap into our conversations as well. Do you know of a way to get me a secure line to General Lomas back at Fort Hope?" "Sure General, there is a village about six miles back down that road. Use the pay phone there; I suppose it's possible they could be monitoring it, but I doubt it -- they can't be everywhere at once." "Adam and Henry, accompanied by two MP's, set out to find the pay phone but Adam decided to be very discrete in what he said."

Adam dialed Lomas' private number in his quarters. His houseboy answered the phone by just saying "hello", as he was instructed to do. "Hi Hadgee," Adam said, is my dad there, I want to talk to him." "Sure Chief, just a sec, I'll get him for you." It took a couple minutes to get General Lomas on the line. "Hi dad, just thought I would call to let you know we made it alright. The sergeant I work for though is a real prick; I think he is trying to get me into trouble. How's mom and the others getting along? You know dad, it would be great if you could get in touch with that guy that took over your job when you retired and tell him to start finding out what is going on. His agent in the factory here could get him into a real mess tomorrow afternoon if everything happens the way I think it will. When you call him, tell him that I may have to go it alone and I would like to know that he is behind me. "Take care of yourself son, and do whatever you have to do and rest assured that I will watch out for you here. It seems to me everything should be alright no matter which way you go. Goodnight son, I have to get to bed now."

With that Adam hung up and returned to the division. He guessed that even if they monitored that call they wouldn't use their top brass and it would be dismissed as a GI calling home to talk to his dad. Adam was right, it was monitored, listened to and dismissed by a corporal who didn't have the vaguest notion of what he had just heard. Major Kramer sent his spy plane out that evening right after dark. It only took a few minutes to confirm that they were directly across the DMZ from several North Korean divisions just out of view behind some low hills. Kramer turned his plane around and brought it back immediately. It had probably not been noticed on the other side. Kramer was unsuccessful however, with linking to the satellite, but that didn't matter because he had found out what he needed to know from the model "spy" plane. Adam issued a verbal memo down through the chain of command. "Men, prepare for the kind of battle you have been trained for. There are possibly as many as six, but at least four North Korean divisions just on the other side of those low hills on the other side of the DMZ. When the word comes down I want the entire division to move back about two miles and abandon our present camp. We are to take a position behind that next row of hills on the south side of the DMZ and dig in. We believe that the main Korean attack will come directly through this camp and we don't intend to get caught with our pants down."

They had done all that they could. Adam ordered heavy sentry postings that night and turned in. The next morning Kramer reported all radio messages at a normal level and still no mass mobilizing of the ROK forces further to the south. After lunch the First Division began to move their trucks and personnel back behind the ridge Adam had noticed. The men dug in and the first two regiments made sure their night vision goggles were working properly and attached the night vision scopes to their 308

Springfield rifles. The 1st Regiment positioned themselves along the ridge to meet the attack when it came. There had been no further communication from General Hubberland's headquarters; he just didn't seem very concerned about the First Division. Kramer's radio apparatus was truck mounted so he was only out of commission for about fifteen minutes while he withdrew to a position about four miles behind the DMZ.

At 1615 hours a message originated from Hubberland's headquarters, directed to General Ho Pak Kim. The speaker was Korean and was impersonating an officer in the North Korean High Command. He gave some code words and then disconnected. Major Kramer opened the door to the radio truck and called out at the top of his lungs: "General Harcrow! if anybody knows where the General is get him over here -- I have something he should hear!" "Adam heard Kramer's call and rushed out of his tent and into the radio truck. "What's up Kramer, what have you got?" Kramer quickly replayed the radio transmission that he had picked up. "That originated from Hubberland's headquarters one minute and twelve seconds ago, sir." "So what does it mean?" Kramer's Korean assistant answered for him. "It is someone in Hubberland's headquarters speaking to General Ho, he speaks only five words, which don't make any sense, then he repeats those five words slowly and distinctly and breaks the connection." "It looks like you were right sir," Kramer added. "I think Hubberland just had one of his Korean's order General Ho to cross the DMZ in force and attack." Five minutes passed and all radios were silent. Then there was a loud rumble and a mushroom shaped cloud appeared on the horizon. It could be seen all the way to where the First Division had dug into the hillside. "What the Hell," said Henry, that was a nuke." "The order to attack did come from Hubberland's headquarters, only they didn't know as much about the North Korean codes as they thought. I believe they ordered a nuclear strike on their own position."

Adam stepped back inside the truck just as the fax machine came on: "TO: MAJOR GENERAL ADAM HARCROW, FIRST DIVISION ... YOU ARE NOW THE RANKING AMERICAN OFFICER IN THE THEATER ... TAKE NO ACTION UNTIL FURTHER ORDERS. END ... GENERAL FARNSWORTH, CHIEF OF STAFF"...The machine then went quiet. "I take it from that General Hubberland, in fact, nuked himself" Kramer said. "...and probably about fifty thousand other guys who were with him," Adam added. The phone rang....

"This is General Farnsworth, did you get my Fax?" "Yes sir," the clerk responded, "Good," said General Farnsworth. How soon can you get it to General Harcrow?" "Just a second sir, General Harcrow is standing right here." "This is General Harcrow," Adam said as he took the phone from the corporal. "Oh thank God! Do you know what's going on in the DMZ Harcrow?" "Yes sir, we know a great deal about it, but unfortunately not enough I'm afraid." "Brief me and make it quick." Adam only had to think for a second before he decided to tell General Farnsworth everything he knew about it, ending with.... "and that's about it. General Hubberland is the one that ordered the nuclear strike and we have the tapes to prove it." "Good work, Harcrow." Adam continued, "There are some ten divisions of the ROK Army headed for the DMZ. They are 'general' heavy and their ranking man is a four- star but

you are the ranking American and you command the only substantial American force still in the theater. I will have Colonel Briggs from my staff at your headquarters within twelve hours to get that tape. That is the most important thing right now. Here is how it stands; we may have lost up to fifty thousand Americans in that blast, at least two full divisions and part of a third. There was an entire army corps right there across from P'anmunjom at the main DMZ crossing. We don't have any idea yet how many are dead, and how many are wounded. We also don't know if any can still function. If there are any they will be sent to join up with the First Division and await further orders." "What you have just told me has put a whole new spin on this." Farnsworth replied. "The President is here with me in the War Room and insisted that I talk to you before ordering a nuclear attack on P'yongyang. You said that your intelligence has disclosed a large cluster of North Koreans just across the DMZ from your position and that you are about twenty five miles south and east of Kuum-ni, is that correct?" "Yes sir. Our division was right on the DMZ but we have pulled back about two miles and we are dug in behind a row of low hills. I have a full TO&E division, the First from Fort Hope. We just arrived the day before yesterday, so we have no sick or wounded. With our excellent equipment and training, we feel capable of defending ourselves against six divisions of North Koreans. We believe that we could even take the battle to them and go on offensive if that is what is needed. As you know, my men have been trained as an offensive force and we are much better on the offensive than we are on the defensive, sir." "You just hold that offense in check until you hear further from me General, but I do appreciate your assessment of your situation. You are likely to see some U.S. Air Force Operations in your sector in the very near future. So for now General, just hold your position."

As soon as Adam hung up the phone he turned to Major Kramer. "Make three backups of that tape immediately; you keep one, give one to Sergeant- Major Adams and give me one. If anyone asks if there any backups tell them no, just the original; this Colonel Briggs will ask for that and you should give it to him." Adam then picked up the phone and was connected to his headquarters. "Henry, move the headquarters back here beside the radio truck, it's going to be a long night." He had no more than hung up the phone this time and he heard the sound of jets flying overhead. There must have been sixty or more U.S. jets coming in low over his position. They shot across the DMZ and began a barrage, raining hell-fire and brimstone at targets just on the other side. Major Kramer, in the meantime, was picking up their pilot-to-pilot radio transmissions. It made no sense to Adam but as the jets departed, Kramer looked up and said, "so much for that threat." Within the hour the same planes were pounding General Ho Pak Kim's position between Kaesong and P'anmunjom and the two cities as well. Kramer had picked up that bit of news over the radio. Within four hours the heavy bombers had appeared and taken up where the fighters had left off. They carried plenty of heavy explosives, but no nuclear devices. They hit the North Korean Navy bases at Hungnam, Haeju, Hungnam, Chongjin and Sonbong. Missiles and smart bombs were raining all over vital military sites in all parts of North Korea. The North Korean Infrastructure was never much to start with, but now it was also in a shambles. The ROK Army units had arrived and were positioning themselves all along the DMZ, but not crossing; neither were the North Koreans. Adam had his driver take him up to the DMZ. He spoke with the ROK

general in charge, "I notice your men are not crossing," Adam said. "What you think...we nuts?" the ROK General answered. "Everything on that side gonna die real quick, big bombs blow them all to hell."

A chopper came in and landed near Adams headquarters, A bird colonel got out and trotted over to General Harcrow's headquarters tent. After he saluted he said "I am Colonel Briggs, I believe you have a package for General Farnsworth." "Sergeant-Major would you please get the package for Colonel Briggs, it is locked in my bottom desk drawer. I believe you have the key do you not?" "Yes sir," Henry replied as he ducked into the tent, returning a minute later with a small wrapped package. "General Harcrow, General Farnsworth wants your assurance that this is the only copy of the contents of this package." "Sergeant-Major would you be so kind as to ask Major Kramer to step out here." "Colonel, this is Major Kramer, our division Chief of Communications, who made the item." "Major Kramer, now answer truthfully, are there any other copies of this item?" Colonel Briggs was facing Major Kramer and Adam was behind the colonel. Adam nodded yes and held up one finger. Major Kramer said "no sir, only our master in the radio truck." "Would you please bring that to me Major. General Farnsworth and the President want no evidence laying around that could prove that an American general started this war. I hope you can appreciate that gentlemen. If this ever got out it would set the credibility of the United States back immeasurably."

As soon as Colonel had possession of Major Kramer's original tape, he boarded his chopper and was gone. "What was that all about, sir," Kramer asked. "The man would have never believed that we had only the one copy, Major and now, although he can't be absolutely sure, he can HOPE we didn't keep one. Can you imagine what kind of propaganda tool that tape would make in the wrong hands? I'm not sure now that it was a good idea for us to keep any copies, but knowing the American justice system as I do, I just couldn't bring myself to giving them all up. When General Lomas arrives I will give him my copy and Hank will put his copy in a safe deposit box when we return to Fort Hope. In the meantime Major Kramer, I would appreciate it if you would burn Hank's copy onto a CD and label it as classical music. Hank likes that type of music and I know he has many classical music CD's. Hank, you should mail all of your CD's back to General Todd Dixon at Fort Hope, along with a written message asking him to put them in your filing cabinet and lock them up until you return. That way it couldn't possibly fall into enemy hands and no one back home would know what it meant even if they should happen to listen to it."

Within two days the theater was stabilized. North Korea had lost so much that they would not be a threat to anyone for a long time. Adam was a little disappointed that his men had not seen any action but he was very pleased that they had no casualties. He had just finished breakfast when he received another phone call from General Farnsworth. "General Harcrow, the President has opted to eliminate North Korea as a separate nation. They have been an outlaw and rogue nation for the last seventy years or so and a festering sore spot on the face of the earth. The president of South Korea agrees. There are twelve more divisions en route to Korea. What we have decided to do is to send in your division to spearhead an action that will pacify the entire country.

Remember Iraq in 1990, the president feels that if he leaves this job half finished he will always regret it. Your men of the First Division will take the ground, then the South Koreans will secure the land, pacify the people, at which time other American divisions, as they become available, will broaden the front. Because of the biggest screw-up of all time we have been presented with a golden opportunity to make the world a better place for all of us. You are in command there General Harcrow and it is not for me to sit here in Washington and tell you how to proceed. I have arranged for you and your men to operate independently of the Regular Army and National Guard units which are headed to Korea as we speak. I have been in communication with General Lomas; we would both would love to put you in command of the whole show but we can't. Even if the highest ranking man that we sent over there was a major general, he would still out-rank you by time in grade. You are still the youngest general in the army and the one most recently promoted to major general. We are doing the next best thing; General Lomas has agreed to become Theater Commander. He will be flying out to Korea tomorrow. Whatever plans you make, General Harcrow, you should wait until you have discussed them with General Lomas before you move."

Adam allowed the men of the First Division to return to their tents in the makeshift camp just below the DMZ. Guards were posted every few feet and rotated often. Every man wore night vision goggles after dark and had the scopes on their rifles set for nighttime vision. Nothing could have gotten through the zone without being spotted. All remained quiet to the north except for the U.S. Air Force bombing raids, which were relentless.

Two days later another helicopter arrived unannounced. The pilot got out and ran over to the headquarters tent. Adam returned his salute then the man said, "General Lomas has sent me to get General Harcrow and fly him to Seoul...would that be you sir?" "That's me," said Adam, "lets go....Sergeant-Major, call General Woods and tell him he is acting Division Commander until I return and tell him that under no circumstances should he start a shooting war until I get back." "Yes sir, right away." "Henry, as soon as you are finished come and board the chopper; I want you with me for this meeting." "Yes sir! I surely will do that."

Adam and Henry were flown to Seoul where they were driven to the Hilton in a limousine that was waiting for them at the airport. They stopped at the desk and were surprised to find that rooms had been reserved for both of them. They were then escorted up to General Lomas' room. "How in the hell did you know Hank would be coming along, sir?" "Simple" said Ted, "you never go anywhere without him; you guys are like twins. Dobbs once told me that Hank spent the whole four years that you were at the academy in a bad mood. By the way, Hank, this is another chance for me to give you a battlefield commission, if you will accept it. You could still be Adam's aid. I think Adam is the only general in the army that has an enlisted man as an aid. I suppose you know that colonels and brigadier generals shake in their boots when they see you coming." "Never mind that sir, I don't wanna be no officer...I don't trust em."

They all had a good laugh, then got down to business over drinks. "Adam, how do you think you will fare against a much larger force of North Koreans?" "No problem at all sir, our guys are so much better trained and equipped than they are; they don't stand a chance." "You know the battle plan that we have trained for all these years...the first and second regiments fight all night and sleep all day while the third regiment protects them. It is simplicity in itself, but without those Springfield rifles and our night vision gear it wouldn't be possible. Our guys have practiced so much that they can make a quarter look like a washer at nine hundred yards. The Koreans couldn't hit the broad side of a barn at three hundred yards; like I said...no contest." "How soon will you be ready to move out?" "I'd say right after dark this evening would be a good time. We can cross about five miles west of our camp. The 3rd Regiment can help the ancillary services cross after the first and second have already crossed. "Better make that right after dark tomorrow night Adam, I want you to spend the night here; that is why I made arrangements for your rooms and that was no small feat, even for me I might add. Lets eat an early dinner, say about 1630 -- how does that sound?" "Sounds good to me General, I could eat right now." "I'll call for you then and we will meet in the hotel dining room."

Adam knew when he walked into the dining room why General Lomas had wanted him to stay over. Half the damned Congress was there. "Gentlemen, General Lomas. May I present my protegee and closest friend, General Adam Harcrow and his trusted companion Tonto... no, seriously, the gentleman with him is division Master Sergeant-Major John Henry Adams, General Harcrow's aid. "General Harcrow, Sergeant Adams, I'd like you to meet the United States Congress. Those disreputable looking ladies and gentlemen at the next table seem to be the United States Press Corps. They just appear all on their own I might add, no one usually really invites them." Adam could have strangled General Lomas for setting him up like this; he could at least have given him some forewarning.

Adam figured out right away that Lomas intended to keep things as light as possible, but there was no way these congressmen, senators and the press were going to leave Korea until they had a shot at him. This was kind of a test to see how Adam would stand up to a different kind of pressure than Lomas had ever seen him exposed to before. "Gee, I'm so delighted you could all come; this is just the kind of thing a battle commander needs in the middle of a war. Actually, Sergeant Adams and I welcome this diversion as things have been a little grim up on the DMZ the last few days." Unlike events such as these in the states, they weren't served cold rubber chicken but rather inch thick New York cut steaks, with all the trimmings. Everything was cooked to perfection.

After dinner drinks were served and Adam was forced to endure a sort of press conference. He answered all the questions truthfully except the ones relating to national security, which he did not comment on. He didn't know how the Desert Rats football team was going to do this year with all the guys in Korea, or if they would even have a season. No, he didn't have a girl friend and most of them already knew why. Yes, he ate broccoli, and his favorite color was blue. No, he didn't think that being a major general at his age posed any problem. Aside from that he had to decline

answering all other questions for reasons of national security.

After dinner they all retired to their respective rooms. Adam had no more than entered his room and began to relax when he heard a knock on the door. It was Senator Thurston who wanted to ask all the same questions Adam had just refused to answer for the group. As politely as he could he evaded giving any hard data but assured the good senator that the war was in good hands and that yes the loss of all those American lives was the worst tragedy in the history of our great nation but he intended to do something about it and soon.

After the senator left there was a veritable parade of news people and legislators parading in and out of his room until after midnight. He once again gave no real information and kept repeating the reason for his evasiveness. He tried to steer the conversation away from the war and eventually became pretty good at appeasing them without getting them perturbed with him.

At breakfast the next morning in General Lomas' room he recounted his problems of the night before, only to find out that Hank and General Lomas had the same people call on them with the same questions. "I just wanted you to know Adam that I don't have any bed of roses here in Seoul. Would you like to trade places with me, I would like nothing better than to lead the First into battle with the North Koreans and let you deal with the South Koreans, the World Press and the American Congress." Incidentally you both handled yourselves very well last night and I am sorry I dragged you into that without warning you ahead of time. I seriously wanted to see how you would handle yourselves in this type of situation, but I also had a good laugh." "Before we leave, General, there is something I must give you," with that he handed the general the tape and explained its significance in some detail." "God, I'm glad you told me this Adam, I'm no longer in the loop for information like this and it is information that I really must have to conduct this war from the right perspective. "Do the Koreans, north or south know what really happened?" "No, not at this point. The South Koreans may never guess, but the North Koreans might figure it out; they knew they did not give that order, so of course someone else had to have given it." As it turned out General Ho Pak Kim had been killed in one of the first U.S. retaliatory air raids and dozens of the top brass in P'yongyang had also been killed by U.S. bombing, including the strong-man dictator, Hum Don Wi, himself. These facts would not be known for some time yet. The North Koreans always assumed that their own General, Ho Pak Kim, had taken it on himself to launch that nuke.

The First Infantry Division moved out according to Adam's plan, just after dark the following evening. They crossed the DMZ without a shot being fired. As they crossed the first row of low hills, the smell hit them, the stench almost unbearable; it was the smell of decaying human flesh. As the men of the First Division moved cautiously through the area so recently populated by up to six North Korean divisions they saw bodies, seemingly thousands of them, scattered everywhere. No apparent effort had been made to bury them; they just lay where they fell. Their equipment was un-molested beside them. No effort had been made to gather their arms or ammunition or even their meager food supplies

The site was one of total devastation. On that first night the troops moved rapidly through the encampment area to the outskirts of Kuum-ni. As they entered the city at near daybreak they found the same devastation. The city was deserted, the stench of rotting human flesh was even worse than it had been in the camps area. The bustling waterfront area had been completely destroyed, hardly a building remained standing. Kuum-ni had been a city of over one-million people that now lay in total ruin with not one soul to be found anywhere. Word was passed and the men withdrew back across the DMZ. It took most of the day for everyone to regroup at little Fort Hope where they had started from.

Adam now had a secure line to General Lomas and he reported what they had seen on the other side. "I haven't seen anything like that since the pictures of Germany after the Allied saturation bombing at the end of World II," Adam reported. "They may have killed fifty thousand of our men at the DMZ, with one strike, but I estimate that the area we scouted last night and this morning in the city of Kuum-ni the dead must have totaled between five hundred thousand and a million people." "War is a terrible thing, Adam, and I hope you remember last night for the rest of your life," General Lomas answered. "What I want you to do is to give your men the rest of today and tomorrow to rest up and then cross again, five miles further to the west, then head inland until daybreak or until you encounter resistance. Incidentally, there weren't anywhere near fifty thousand men killed by the nuclear strike." "There weren't?" Adam responded. "No, that was a big bang all right but it was a tactical nuke, maybe the only one that North Korea had. It totally destroyed about half a square mile. It was carried by a short-range missile launched from only about fifteen miles away. The North Koreans' aim was pretty good or they just got lucky, because ground zero was right over Hubberland's head. We have maybe twenty thousand dead and another twenty thousand wounded. Surprisingly, the device was fairly clean, so with modern decontamination procedures it will be safe to reenter the area withing a year or so without wearing protective clothing. The South Korean's and our people are already hauling out the rubble and burying it. The area will be posted and avoided for a while but in a couple years you could walk through without any hint of what took place there. Our planes are continuing their saturation bombing of the North Korean infrastructure

but are now avoiding destruction of the inland cities, although those cities are probably no longer habitable because they lack basic services and food supply. "Your men will be followed in by two divisions of ROK Army with trucks to keep you and themselves supplied and to bring out any civilians and POW's that you find. I know your men are deadly at nine hundred yards with those 308's but I want them to refrain from shooting until they can get close enough to determine that their target is actually a belligerent. These people are not the Viet Cong; most of them, even most of the soldiers will just be looking for a way to save their own lives. There are already special internment camps being set up where the people you pick up can be housed and fed until the South Korean's clear each one as being no threat. The South Koreans will then move them to better camps awaiting repatriation to the north. This may just turn into a humanitarian rescue effort more than a war," General Lomas concluded.

Two nights later the First Division crossed the DMZ again. This time with a South Korean division close behind. The Koreans didn't like the idea of fighting at night but then, as Adam pointed out to General Woo, we are doing the fighting and night gives us a huge advantage with our night vision equipment. Adam, General Woo, a Korean brigadier and Hank rode in a Humvee between the two divisions. They began to see North Korean trucks and heavy equipment abandoned along the road. Most of them were not damaged. A quick check showed that they had simply run out of fuel. Adam was in constant touch with his point unit by radio. After they had penetrated about five miles the point unit commander radioed that they had spotted a campfire ahead. Scouts were sent ahead to investigate. The report came back that there were maybe a hundred or so North Koreans camped in a small valley. Some were civilians and some were military. They were all hunkered down and not talking much, some of them were trying to arrange sleeping gear of various kinds. There were several ox carts near their camp but no motor vehicles were spotted.

Adam radioed "Send a Korean with a bullhorn to advise them that they are our prisoners, that we have two divisions bearing down on them and to resist would be futile; then send in two more Koreans with a light truck and ask them to deposit their arms in the truck. Let them know that we mean them no harm and they will be transported south, properly fed and housed. This goes for their men in uniform as well as the civilians. Let me know as soon as they give any indication that they would like to surrender."

Things went as planned. The North Koreans were a little apprehensive but more than cooperative. The soldiers among them acted no differently from the civilians. Trucks were moved up and the North Koreans hauled off to the relocation center. This same scenario replayed itself five times the first night. No one they encountered wanted to put up any resistance. At dawn the two divisions spread out along a thirty mile wide front and made camp for the day. Adam was on the secure phone line again talking with General Lomas, telling him what they were finding as they moved north. "What we are finding out so far from the first group you sent back is that this will be the pattern all over the north. Apparently there is no one left in charge over there. You are to continue for a couple more days, take today off and have your men get a good night's rest. By then we should have some twenty divisions of Korean and American troops walking north taking prisoners. As soon as President Lee feels that the South Koreans can take control of the situation themselves, we can all go home. From now on you won't have to spearhead the operation and your guys can back up the Koreans as they lead the march through North Korea."

American and ROK forces had also been transported by sea to all the seaports in North Korea and began the same type of operation that the men moving north were following.

Over the next week there were a few pockets of North Korean Army encountered that were still ready to fight, but with almost a half million South Korean and American soldiers steadily moving forward those rare encounters with belligerents amounted to little more than brief skirmishes. After another week President Pak Lee announced

that he was president of all of Korea. He thanked his American benefactors, let them know that Korea would need massive amounts of aid for a couple more years while the northern half of their country was being rebuilt and pretty much told the Americans they could go home now...except for the corps of engineers, that is; we will need all the heavy equipment and operators we can get.

It wasn't long before other Asian nations, even Australia and New Zealand, began to arrive with reconstruction assistance. The First Division was flown back to Fort Hope without losing a man.

- CHAPTER 29 -
AFTER THE WAR

The nation was overjoyed, the President was overjoyed and the Congress was happy to be rid of the North Korean threat to world peace, but everyone was still in shock and saddened at the loss of so many young Americans who lost their lives when the North Koreans fired off that nuclear device.

By a complicated formula that had been worked out the men were to receive seven days off their sentences for every day spent in a combat zone, but his division had brought such an abrupt end to the war that Congress acted to reduce each mans sentence by one year. Adam had now been in prison, if you could call it that, for a little over seven years. He still had twelve to go as six years had been knocked off his sentence by his military bonus time.

Many of the men in the division had now completed their sentences by virtue of their bonus time and were being mustered into the Regular Army. Another curious thing was happening; some members of the Regular Army were asking to be transferred to the expendable forces unit. After all, wasn't that where the real men wanted to be? Some young men right off the street were wanting to enlist but only on the condition that they could be assigned to Expendable Forces.

Of course none of these requests were honored. Adam felt that it would compromise the integrity of the unit. The men were receiving full pay and allowances but still twenty-five percent of what they paid went to their states of origin to support the victims compensation fund. In addition to that, many of them were having a portion of their pay withheld voluntarily to pay restitution to their own victims; this had become their cause. The courts of the country were deluged with filings seeking restitution and additional restitution, but these requests generally were not met with much sympathy, but more with justice.

- CHAPTER 30 -
THE DESERT RATS

The Desert Rats had returned from Korea in time to start their hodgepodge football season. Games had quickly been arranged with whatever college or service teams that had an open date and were interested in earning some big money for their organizations. Major's Dawson and Rich had become stellar performers at wide receiver positions. Adam decided to play this season and then maybe hang his cleats up. The five thousand seat stadium at Fort Hope had become a thirty thousand seat stadium, thanks to General Lomas Library Fund and a generous donation from Bobby McAllister. The Desert Rats were now the cream of the military teams. It was a warm August night and the world champion Chicago Bears were playing a final tune-up game at Fort Hope before the NFL pre-season games began. It was officially referred to as a scrimmage, but you would never have known that by the size and exuberance of the crowd. The stadium, though outside the main gate, was surrounded by a twelve foot fence topped with concertina wire. The visitors parking lot was outside the fence. The visitors' seating was also separated from the convict seating area by a movable high fence which was adjusted for each event depending on the number of guest tickets sold. All seats were pre-sold with no tickets sold at the gate. To amuse the locals (the convicts) the starting offensive teams were introduced individually by name and background. First the world champion Chicago Bears were called out by starting position and college team that they had played for. Then the home team was called out by name and team they had played for, announcing: Wide receiver, from Central High School in North Las Vegas, Nevada is Major Jeff Dawson; also from Central High in North Las Vegas is Major Tommy Rich; next, at tight end from Notre Dame University and the Cleveland Browns is Don Pfirman; at center position is Johnny Johnson from the University of Southern California and from the New York Jets is Al Lackland, etc., through the convict line-up. Finally, at quarterback from Central High School in North Las Vegas, Nevada and the United States Military Academy is the Heisman award winning quarterback of the Desert Rats, Major General Adam Harcrow.

Every man on the Desert Rats football team was also either a student or an instructor at the karate school. Adam was a firm believer in karate as a form of physical conditioning. A suggestion from Adam was all it took to send the entire football team scurrying down to enroll in the school.

The team was good but not up to NFL quality except at two positions. At quarterback Adam still had no peer, even in the NFL and the Desert Rats starting defensive end Paul Banyon would have been a starter in the pro-bowl had he ever attended college and gone into the NFL. Every team in the NFL had done the math to calculate how old he would be when he finished his prison term. They were very disappointed when they calculated that he would be thirty-two even with his military time, and probably too old to start an NFL career. Paul was already a Sgt. 1st Class and wanted to stick around and retire from the army.

One of the Bears commented, "How did that kid Harcrow ever become a general so quick; he was just a cadet a couple of years ago or so." "For one thing, when he played at West Point he was already a major but I'm with you... how did he get to be a two star general in such a short time....go figure." Coach Mike Curry commented, "we thought so highly of him that we wasted a third round draft choice on him even though we knew that he could never play for us. I think he is one of the best quarterbacks to come out of college in the last twenty years. So watch yourselves guys, even though this is a semi-pro team and you are the worlds champions they can burn you and burn you quick. I would really rather be playing the Seattle Seahawks like we did in the Super Bowl."

As the game progressed, overall talent began to show and the Chicago Bears escaped with a 51- 50 win. Adam threw for five touchdowns and ran for another, but the Bears scored a last second field goal to gain the win. In the game Paul Banyon had four sacks and caused two turn-overs. Mike Curry left the field feeling all the more like he would give anything to have Adam Harcrow as his quarterback. No team in the NFL had scored that many points against the Bears in the last five years. The kid was amazing, but what the hell you gonna offer a twenty-four year old major-general to make him change professions; even if he could, he wouldn't.

As for Adam and Jeff and Tommy, this wasn't a defeat, this was a vindication. "See what we can do if given the chance, guys? These were the NFL Champions and we almost took them."

- CHAPTER 31 -
BACK TO FORT HOPE

If a man went AWOL and was found and brought back to the Fort, he was stripped of all pay and allowances as well as any military bonus time he had earned, and was returned to prison to serve out his sentence. After the Korean war, this only happened twice at Fort Hope. In fact Fort Hope had the lowest per capita AWOL rate of any post of duty in the army. Both the men who went over the hill were young privates, both had long arrest records beginning before they reached their teens. No man who had ever been promoted wanted to leave. Sure, they wanted out, but Fort Hope was certainly the lessor of the two evils.

Dr. Golstadt and his staff had worked up a novel presentation which he or one of his staff gave new arrivals as they arrived at Fort Hope, if they were men with known street gang affiliation. There were never more than a dozen men at a time in the group. "Come on in guys and have a seat." The school desks were arranged in a circle with the presenter already seated in one of them as the group was ushered into the classroom. An orderly took their beverage order as soon as they were seated. "Now then gentlemen," the moderator began, "We are here today to talk about your former lives and your present life, how much those lives are alike and also how much they differ. You men were selected to attend this briefing because all of you come to us from gangs of one kind or another. Lets talk for a minute about gangs. What was it about life in the gang that appealed to you--- anyone?" Typically, the rest of the meeting would go something like this. "The feeling of belonging, and the sense that you were somebody," a recruit in the group might respond; another might respond, "it was the money," another would say "our gang was the toughest guys in the city." "Let's look at those things objectively. "You are now presented with the opportunity to belong to the biggest, and most feared gang on earth, the United States Army. For the most part, this gang is beyond the reach of the law when we are engaged in official 'gang' activities. There is no gang anywhere that would even think of going up against our 'gang'. You have the opportunity here to develop that sense of identity, to make friends, lifelong friends; guys that you can rely on and trust with your life. As for the money, you are all receiving a small amount as your pay. Of course twenty-five percent of that goes to the victims compensation fund, and a little of it goes to taxes, but the rest goes into your account. You have each been issued a debit card that can be used at the PX and at The Gulch, once you have the \$1,000 minimum in your account. You can have funds sent to your family back home if you want, by setting up an allotment. If you need to send money at any time to anyone else you can obtain permission to do so by going through channels; if you have a legitimate reason, it will be allowed. The bulk of what you will be paid, will not go to your account here, but will be paid to you over your lifetime as Veterans Health Benefits, Army retirement, Social Security, the GI Bill for education, and the GI Bill for buying a home when you get out or retire. No one knows what inflation will do to the dollar over the years but by a conservative estimate each of you will receive over one million dollars for your lifetime of service if, after your prison release, you elect to muster into the Regular Army and stay until retirement. So look around you gentlemen; you are in a room full

of millionaires. No gang on the streets can or wants to match that kind of package." This type of dialogue would continue for an hour or so with the men increasingly being drawn into the conversation; some would suddenly come forward with an idea of how the army beat the street gang life all to hell. "I have to worked harder here than I did on the street but there is one big difference....my whole life until now has been controlled by fear and I just now realized that I am not afraid any more." The young men from the street gangs tended to be smart-mouthed and alienated the other men when they first arrived, but as they figured out that didn't work here, they gradually came around. A few of those types had become noncoms themselves and had taken on very G.I. attitudes. Once they had realized that gang life was behind them and this was their life now, they tended to accept that and then began to pride themselves on how well they could do their jobs. They all remembered how they felt when they were handed a long prison sentence and they remembered how elated they were when they learned they had been selected for military duty.

Surprisingly, several men had been selected who were known members of organized crime. Most of these men were "made" guys, "wise" guys, officers in the Mafia. Several of the men were members of the Mexican Mafia. None were members of the Russian Mafia, because none were U.S. citizens. A few were members of other Mafia type organizations. Many were gang members from the big cities. Without exception, they all shaped up and made good soldiers.

They were identified and the officers and noncoms all knew what a man's background was and what he was in for whenever he was placed in a unit or moved to another unit. No two men from any one crime organization or gang were ever placed in the same unit. They were forbidden from meeting with, associating with, or even being seen with any other member of their organization from the outside. Adam soon learned that the Mafia types adapted to army life very well and made excellent officers and noncoms themselves. Actually, most of the real "wise guys" qualified for OCS. By the time they made captain they all had compiled superior performance records. All had renounced their old ways and most were happy to never have anything to do with organized crime again. Most of them would have gotten out a long time ago, but under the circumstances they lived and worked under, that was just not possible. On the whole they were good commanders, but seemed to lack compassion. Dr. Golstadt had worked up a special program designed to debrief various types of thugs and career criminals. The doctor and his assistants monitored their progress constantly.

It was a commonly observed phenomenon, that all of the organized criminals, once they had turned the corner and earned some rank and responsibility were harder on their own kind than the other officers and noncoms were.

Upon completion of their prison sentences a few of the older men wanted to be released rather than to stay in the army but this was very rare. Most of the men from the 1st Battalion had been career criminals and had no retirement or Social Security to fall back on if they chose to get out. By remaining in the Regular Army they would

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also become eligible for veterans benefits and military retirement with their Expendable Forces time counting toward retirement.

Petty crimes on the base were treated with company punishment while more serious

infractions brought a special or general courts martial. The usual sentence handed out to those found guilty of a serious crime was return to prison with additional time for their crime. If their new sentence was a year or less they did the time in the post stockade and were then returned to duty.

More and more the off-post army schools were accepting members of Expendable Forces in their classes. They had learned by experience that these men were not escape risks. The classes ranged from foreign language to helicopter pilot training as the Expendable Forces now had their own limited number of combat choppers, as well as the service chopper they had since their expedition to Colombia.

Several members of the United States Congress visited the base on a fact-finding tour. They wanted to see just how much bang the government was getting for their buck. They wanted to know if this was really the crackerjack military organization it was supposed to be, or just another social welfare program. One U.S. Senator asked Adam, who was acting as their host and guide, "General, tell me if you are spending your budget in the most practical way possible." "In most ways, yes we are, senator," Adam responded "but there is one expense item that is a joke; we spend a large portion of our annual budget on security fences that, in my opinion, are entirely unnecessary. We only do that because it is expected of us. Any man on this post could leave if he wanted to and all the fences and concertina wire in the world couldn't prevent it."

"Could you explain that please?" the senator asked. "Fort Hope has the best record of any military establishment in the United States for AWOL and desertion. This is because the men have so much more to lose than others in the military. Once a man is selected for this program he is elated; he knows that he can cut his prison sentence roughly in half. Once he has been here for one year, he has knocked two years off his sentence, but only if he remains here. In five years he has knocked ten years off his sentence. If he were sent back to prison that bonus time he is compiling is erased. He is tried here at Fort Hope before being returned to prison. Depending on the circumstances, he can receive an additional sentence equal to his original sentence for attempting desertion. So, say a man was sentenced originally to serve twenty years, he is able to cut that to ten years here, but if he walks away and is retaken he is looking at serving the full amount of time remaining on his original sentence, say fifteen years, if he has already been here five years, plus an additional twenty years, so instead of having only five years to serve here he now has thirty-five years to serve in prison. These guys may not be math geniuses, but they can figure that one out with little difficulty."

One congressman interjected..."Just a minute general, I have seen men from Fort Hope perform several times away from the base, such as your marching band playing in the Rose Parade, and they are always heavily guarded by MP's with sub-machine guns; how do you explain the necessity for all that security?" "Congressman, did you ever wonder where all those heavily armed MP's came from?" "You mean they also

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were from Fort Hope, and were themselves convicts?" "Right you are Congressman. It was kind of a reward to give some of the other men a chance to get away from the Fort for a bit and it looked impressive to the public." "But what if those men had turned on the crowd along Colorado Boulevard?" "With what?" Adam responded, "they don't carry live ammunition, they were just part of the show."

"Now wait a minute General, I have seen enough prison pictures to know the kinds of men that we have locked away in prison. They are violent, irrational and cliquish. They seem only motivated to destroy each other and to defy authority; they are full of hate and revenge, they would be useless for any purpose whatsoever. These prison pictures that I am speaking of are not all fiction either, many of them were documentaries. How do you explain the difference in the men here at Fort Hope from those in regular prisons.?" "It is really simple in a way Congressman, the regular prisons in this country and around the world are dehumanizing institutions. Human beings are remarkable things. They learn to adapt to their environment. A human being will become whatever the course of least resistance forces him to become to survive. He will also strive to gain peer group recognition. A man does that when he is elected to Congress for the first time. He arrives in Washington for the first time after winning an election and he only has a vague idea of how the system really works. He listens to things that are being said and if he is smart he listens to advice on how to survive in that environment; he learns to work within the established system and attempts to gain peer group recognition from working within the system. He will do whatever he thinks he must do in order to survive and succeed in that setting. If that same man sent to Congress was instead sent to prison, he would become quite a different person. After two years in prison, if he were successful, he would become scarcely more than an animal, a violent, uncaring cruel creature. He would be applying the same human motivation that the freshman Congressman applies during his first two years.

"We like to get most of our men before they have spent much time in prison and before they have had time to degenerate into one of those animals. The men that work best for us are ones who have never before done time. Yes, they may have committed a heinous crime and yes, society should take steps to make sure that they never do anything like that again, so they sentence them to very long prison terms. If we get that man right away after sentencing or after he has been in a regular prison for a very brief period, just long enough to experience the horror of being there and has just had time enough to wonder how he is going to survive the next twenty or thirty years in that place and we offer him an alternative, then our likelihood of succeeding in redirecting that man's motivation is enormous. We are very likely to succeed and in most cases we do succeed.

"Fort Hope, like the prison is a very tough place. We actually treat men much harsher than they are treated in prison. Prison does not ask much or expect much of the man; we, on the other hand, expect a lot and demand a lot of him, but he is aware that all of the men who are forcing him to perform and achieve at a high level are themselves convicts. As you may or may not know, I was convicted of murder when I was sixteen years old and sentenced to twenty-five years in prison, without the possibility of parole. If I were still just serving that time I would be quite a different person than I am today. By this time, eight years into my sentence, I would have degenerated into

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one of those animals filled with hate and revenge. As it is, I am the youngest Lt. General in the United States Army. I have never committed another crime nor am I likely to. The same is true of the men here at Fort Hope that are only corporals, sergeants, or privates for that matter. We have learned first of all to have self-respect; to have ambition to achieve a better life; to gain peer group status by playing by the

rules that are imposed on us here. Some of us seem to have been endowed by our creator to be more successful than others; that is the same on the outside as it is in here. I think that being in the right place at the right time is very important, but each of us, after a little soul searching, knows what his potential is. Mostly, we have a tendency to overestimate our own worth, and aspire to greater goals than we can actually achieve, but the fact that we have those goals and are working in a positive way to achieve them is the secret of the success of Fort Hope." This gave the Congressmen plenty to think about as the gathering dispersed.

Dr. Golstadt knocked on Adams door one evening. "Come in, Doc, care for a martini, I'm having one." "Sure, Adam, why not....very dry please with two olives." "To what do I owe this visit Doc. My guess is that you want something that only I can approve, because your not known as a social butterfly." "Yes and no, Adam; I've been thinking a lot lately about our medical deficit. We have bled the prison system dry of all the medical professionals that even have a year to go on their sentences and we are still behind. We still spend a substantial part of our annual budget on outside medical staffing. I have come up with a great solution that would take several years to kick in, but eventually we would have a surplus of medical professionals in every field." "My guess is, Doc, that you are leading up to asking for a full-blown Medical Center, right?" "You got it Adam, we have the room here at Fort Hope, there certainly is the need, not just for our men but the VA Hospitals in Southern California are overflowing; there is not and never has been adequate long term care for veterans anywhere in the VA system. Our nation is critically short of doctors and nurses.

Right here we need almost five hundred full time physicians, another five hundred PA's, a thousand RN's, five hundred dentists, a thousand dental technicians, and the list goes on and on. What the government should do is to build a full-fledged training medical center here with half for our use and half for indigent care and VA care with a large dental college attached. Sure it would be expensive, but the cost of construction wouldn't be as great building it here as it would be anywhere else."

"Lets go over to General Lomas cottage and see what he thinks of the idea Doc." "My God, Doc, do you know what you are asking? The cost of a facility like that could run into several billion dollars." "General we are talking here about a nation with a trillion dollar annual budget, and a critical shortage of medical professionals. You and I both know that a facility like that will be built somewhere eventually and there are some very compelling reasons to build it here. I have done a little survey and we could probably come up with five hundred to a thousand qualified people a year to enter training for a career in the medical professions. We could accept some students from the outside that could get their training here by obligating themselves to work for the Veterans Administration for a number of years after graduation. They would be students that could not afford the quarter of a million dollars that it now costs to attend a private medical university." "This means that I will have to call in a lot of markers that I have in Congress and in the Administration but what the hell, if I don't use them I lose them. My influence gets weaker every year as the men that owed me something leave office and/or retire. Of course we could count on the entire California delegation and Nevada, but aside from that it may be a little tough sledding. Certainly Congress sees the need for such a facility but they all want it in their home state, not somewhere else." "That means we have to dazzle them with bull-shit, sir. We can demonstrate where this would be the most economical site in the United

States to construct it. We have the greatest need and we are blessed with one of the healthiest environments in the country." "OK Doc, you get your numbers together and I will give it a try."

Two days later General Lomas left for Washington. He started with President Alfred Conrado. After hearing Ted's pitch, Alfred was reluctant because of budgetary concerns, but mentally he began to place this project into some kind of perspective along with other projects he wanted and realized that it actually placed pretty high, although it was something he had never given any thought to. "I hadn't even considered the kind of facility you have described Ted, but there is a real need for a disease research foundation hospital, in conjunction with a training hospital and this is something I was going to bring before the next session. How would you feel about housing disease research along with the rest of your plan?" "That would suit me just fine Al, if the rest of the package came with it." "Alright Ted leave these stats that you have worked up with me and give me a little time to twist some arms." "In the meantime Al, do you think it would do any harm if I did some arm twisting of my own?" "No, the more we bring this issue to the forefront of their thinking the more likely we are to get approval."

It took General Lomas almost a month to call in all his markers, to wine and dine the important legislators and to put together a coalition in Congress that would assure approval. He lined up two of the most important senators on the hill and two of the most important congressmen to introduce the identical bill in both houses more or less simultaneously. He then went to work on the committee chairmen who would report their findings to the Senate and the House and got them to commit to expediting the bill through the committee. Then surprise of all surprises, the damned bill floated through both houses and the president signed it in record time. Aside from the "pork barrel" legislators who would have liked to have a plum like this to take home to their voters, the bill was well received. The Fort Hope Medical Research and Training Center would become a reality, including a full-fledged dental college. However, they did not get the full undergraduate pre-med university that they had also asked for, but General Lomas really didn't expect to. That would have been too much to ask and it was just a bargaining chip anyway, at least for this year. The ten billion dollars that was approved gave them everything else. The unknown quantities that they would now have to deal with were the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta and the Department of Veterans Affairs as well as the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Department of Interior that would now want to have some say in everything that went on. Their input, however, was limited to what went on outside the main gate. What went on inside was still strictly up to the Department of the Army and the Bureau of Prisons.

Not far from Fort Hope was the tiny town of Desert Center, California, population three hundred. A family named Ragsdale was moving west back in the 1920's when their car broke down in the middle of the desert, half way between Blythe and Indio. They decided to settle right there and over the years they opened a restaurant, filling station, garage, a small grocery store and a small motel. The place never thrived, except briefly during WW II, when Patton's men were training nearby. Along in the

early 1970's a starry-eyed developer came to town and built a man-made lake and a nine hole golf course with an RV Park and a small housing development about a mile and a half out of town. It never took off and never amounted to much either but this was actually the closest "town" to Fort Hope.

As the ten billion dollars started to flow, folks flocked in. By the time the medical center opened two years later the population of Desert Center had mushroomed to over thirty thousand people. The area began to look more like Palm Springs than it did Desert Center. The medical center itself was situated ten miles from Fort Hope. Like Frenchman's Gulch, it too was connected to the Fort by a fenced highway. Neither the Department of Veterans Affairs nor the Center for Disease Control proved to be a problem. They were both very happy to get any new facility at all and cooperated very nicely with the Fort Hope Administration in developing the hospital and convalescent home for veterans.

One other player entered the game, but that was no problem either, it was a real blessing because they possessed the teaching expertise and they even threw in another billion dollars of their own money. That player was the University of California. Their money mostly went for dormitories and classrooms for what they dubbed The University of California at Desert Center. A full undergraduate university specializing in pre- med. Five big green busses arrived at the college every morning from Fort Hope with the convict students that had earned the right to attend. The men from Fort Hope just blended in with all the others and there was never an attempt to escape, desert, or go AWOL from the college campus. The thirty-thousand seat stadium constructed by the Fort Hope men was subsequently leased to the University for their home games.

While this was all taking place, MSgt. Paul Banyon received permission to fight off post and one warm summer night at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas he won the world heavyweight championship. His first defense of his title, however, was held at Desert Rat Stadium. Fort Hope now had three men who had earned well over one million dollars while being incarcerated. Paul made millions of dollars just on endorsements. Paul and Bobby McAllister were the poster boys of Fort Hope.

The Director of the Oregon Department of Corrections once called Adam and objected to the lenient treatment given to convict Banyon. Adam just asked the man if it wasn't the purpose of the Department of Corrections to eradicate anti-social behavior. Then he said "Sir, I am a Lieutenant General in the United States Army; Bobby McAllister has been named Country Music Entertainer of the Year for the last three years, Major General Winthrop Golstadt is the director of the largest and most prestigious medical center in the United States. Wouldn't you say that at the propensity for anti-social behavior has been successfully eradicated, at least in the three of us? Furthermore, Fort Hope is now the largest military installation in the Armed Forces of the United States, every man on this post, except for General Lomas, is a convict and not one man who finished his prison sentence at Fort has ever been arrested on a felony charge. If you think about it, we are doing a lot better job of eradicating anti-social behavior than you are."

Adam kept replaying that phone conversation with the Director of the Oregon Department of Corrections over and over in his head for several days. There was something here that he was missing. What was it? Finally it came to him; Fort Hope was cast in a military setting. With civilian convicts there were six divisions and over 120,000 convicts serving their time at Fort Hope. Almost every one of them would someday be released from prison as solid citizens. They wouldn't have the right to vote, but they would be good tax payers. On the whole, they would leave here as honest hard working American citizens with good job skills and good paying jobs. Every one of them would leave Fort Hope as an asset to society. Now, not all of them were soldiers by any means; they represented the whole cross- section of American society: bakers, butchers, etc., but as far as Adam knew they had no candlestick makers; he would have to ask about that, maybe somewhere on Fort Hope there was a candlestick maker.

- CHAPTER 32 - THE ATHLETES

The activities of the men at Fort Hope expanded in many directions. Many became superb athletes; every major sport was available except for winter sports, hockey and bowling. Bowling was contemplated and the top brass was seeking a franchisee willing to build the facilities. The PX had begun selling bicycles. At first they offered about the same variety of bikes found in a large department store, but soon found that the racing bikes were about the only ones that were selling. The fifteen mile stretch of road from the post to the Gulch was paved and fenced. Soon there was so much bike traffic on the road that an additional paved bike path was added. Competition grew quite keen and many of the men were badgering the PX manager to start selling the kinds of bikes used in world class competition. A few rose to the challenge, bought stop watches, found out what the international rules were for bike racing, and began to turn in world-class times for the various distances.

Olympic style swimming and diving facilities were not available but the men themselves had started a fund to raise the money to acquire such facilities. There was the pool that had been built with the fire fighters' money but it was always too busy and it was not suitable for serious Olympic training.

As you can imagine, the world of amateur boxing flourished. Among those who were most successful at this was Paul Banyon in the super heavyweight division. After learning the finer points of boxing, Paul had twelve amateur bouts on the base and won all of them by knockouts or TKO's when he injured his opponent to the extent that the fight had to be stopped. After that none of the other men would fight him. His buddy, Sam Marshall, who had been a fight trainer on the outside, started writing letters to fight promoters and managers all over the country trying to get some prominent heavyweights to come to the Fort to fight or at least spar with Paul. There were no takers. No one, it seemed wanted to risk looking bad against an unknown and unranked heavyweight. The training facilities at Fort Hope were just a collection of makeshift junk in an old warehouse, but the serious boxing aspirants used them faithfully.

In track and field many men began to excel. Men who had never even watched the Olympics were now participating in Olympic events and were steadily improving. The Summer Olympics were still two years off when several of the men felt they could make the U.S. Olympic Team if allowed to try out and were allowed to participate even if they could qualify. The library had obtained books pertaining to Olympic records, times, distances, etc., as well as Olympic rules for the various events.

Men interested in Olympic sports learned to do things by the book and then compare their performances against those of the world record holders. A sign was erected giving the world record time in each of the events that men from Fort Hope participated in. Underneath the worlds record was the Fort Hope record. By the time

the Olympic tryouts started, the men from Fort Hope had bested the world record in seven events.

The upcoming Olympics, were to be held in Kansas City, Kansas. The men of the Fort persuaded the brass and the friendly politicians to intercede for them with the U.S. Olympic committee to hold some of the tryouts at Desert Rat Stadium at Fort Hope. As a result there were eleven convict soldiers from Fort Hope on the United States Olympic Team when the team marched into Arrowhead Stadium.

By the end of the meet, the men from Fort Hope had won seven medals, two gold, two silver and three bronze. MSgt. Paul Banyon once again won all his boxing matches by first-round knockouts and brought home a gold. A young staff sergeant by the name of Carter Blank took the gold in the one hundred meter dash to win the title of the Fastest Man on Earth. The two man volleyball team took a silver, as did one of the cyclists. One of Fort Hope's men got the bronze in the twenty- six mile marathon, largely aided by the weather. This had turned out to be the hottest late summer in the history of Kansas City. The Fort Hope man had been training in one hundred degreeplus temperature all summer. The men also won a bronze in the 400 relay and in the mile. All in all, there were only about a dozen countries on earth that won more medals than the Fort Hope team won. They all returned to the Fort saying "just wait four more years, we'll kill um."

Each regiment had a basketball team. Every one of those teams had at least one man with All American status or NBA experience. They weren't a bunch of slouches. From time to time one of these teams would get a chance to play a game against a major college, and eventually it came to pass that they were able to attract an NBA team, the Los Angeles Lakers to visit Fort Hope. Fort Hope put together an all-star team, members of which were voted in by the players themselves. They had a month to practice playing together against the second string all star team. Usually basketball was played indoors, but the weather was so nice and the evenings so warm and comfortable this time of year that they decided to hold the game in Desert Rat Stadium. For basketball they were able to pack thirty-five thousand spectators into the stadium. Half the tickets went to convicts, the other half to other members of the community. The place was packed.

The stadium was full to capacity, there was more excitement in the air than is normal for a basketball game, especially one that doesn't count. The Fort Hope Desert Rats came out ready to play and held their own with the Lakers during the first half, even taking a one point lead into the dressing room with them at half time. The Lakers were up by two points at the end of the third quarter then jumped out to a big twelve point lead early in the fourth quarter. The Desert Rats made a run with five minutes remaining but came up four points short at the final whistle. The Lakers all complimented the Desert Rats, "Wow, we didn't think you guys would be this good," one of them said. "You might not win the NBA Championship with your team, but you sure wouldn't finish dead last." "I would say that right now you guys are better than any college team in the country," the coach of the Lakers added. After they had showered and changed, the Desert Rats asked and received permission

to invite all the Laker players over to the Gulch for a good dinner and an evening out as the Desert Rats guests. They had a wonderful time and of course the Fort Hope Recreation Committee picked up all the tabs. After all, the Recreation Committee had just received a three hundred thousand dollar profit from the game.

The money earned from this game went to build a first class indoor gymnasium, including the very best in training facilities for boxers and an NBA quality basketball court with seating for two thousand.

After Paul took the gold in the Olympic games, three different ranking heavyweights were persuaded to take Sam up on the deal and came to the Fort to compete on three different occasions. The Desert Rats sports stadium was used to host these three events. The men of the Fort paid a handsome price for tickets to these events and packed the stadium. For the first of these events there was a reporter from the local paper in Blythe covering the event, but for the second and third of Paul's fights there were major sports reporters present. The third of these fights was televised on ESPN. These three fights resulted in three more knockouts.

By this time, Paul had earned his Black Belt at the Fort karate school. He was considered by many to be the best defensive end in football. He now stood six foot eight and weighed in at a trimmed down three hundred fifteen pounds. Unlike most big men he was not awkward, but rather lithe and graceful on his feet. He had at least a six-inch reach advantage over any opponent he ever faced. Whatever part of another mans body that he hit with a solid blow broke. If Paul hit him in the ribs the ribs cracked; if he hit a man in the face his nose or chin would fracture. Very few of his opponents had ever hit him a solid blow so no one knew whether he could take a punch or not. The gate receipts for these fights and the TV money for Paul's third professional fight were all donated to the Fort's recreation fund and were ultimately used to construct the Olympic swimming and diving facility and to draw up plans for a world class indoor sports complex with seating for twenty-five thousand. It was named the Colin Freeman Memorial Arena for the only man who had ever been killed in action while serving in the Expendable Forces.

After Paul's impressive win on ESPN the big voices in the sports world started pushing Andy Waxman, the current WBA champion, to fight Paul at Fort Hope. The public wants this fight and the time has come. Paul Banyon won the gold in the Olympic games for the United States. Then he pulled the old George Foreman trick of waving the American flag around the ring. He has knocked out the three leading contenders in the first round. What are you waiting for Andy, you will receive a five million dollar guarantee; Paul will settle for a one million dollar guarantee if you will agree to defend your title at Fort Hope. There was no way Andy Waxman could avoid the fight, so he signed. ESPN put up the six million dollars for the purses and the Fort Hope Recreation Committee agreed to host the fight for the gate receipts.

Andy Waxman, when interviewed before the fight had said something to the effect that the bigger they are the harder they fall. He added some remark about big guys weren't fast. "Did you ever see any films of Primo Carnera's fights"? he asked the

newsman that was interviewing him. "I am a lot faster than this guy." "Andy", the newscaster said, "this guy is no Primo Carnera, he has a black belt in karate and he is good enough at defensive end that he could play in the Pro-Bowl." "What is he doing time for, anyway?" Andy asked the newsman. "Oh that...he killed a man in a barroom brawl; I think he hit him on top of the head with that sledge hammer fist of his and the man died, is the way I heard it." Actually, the man that Paul hit didn't die but the newscaster didn't know that. Andy finished by saying "differences of opinion -- that's what makes horse racing. We'll see, come tonight."

On the night of the fight every seat in Desert Rat Stadium was taken and at higher prices than had ever been charged for any previous event. Ringside seats were going for five hundred dollars and the minimum price charged was one hundred dollars. ESPN had agreed to allow Fort Hope to access the fight for free so that the men that could not afford a seat in the stadium could still watch it.

The two combatants entered the ring and were introduced, they touched gloves and returned to their corners. Andy Waxman was almost one hundred pounds lighter than Paul Banyon, he was five inches shorter and Paul had the reach on him by almost three inches. Waxman had more experience and everyone expected a good fight, except the Fort Hope guys, who expected Paul to win by a knockout. The bell rang and they came out fighting.

Andy Waxman was fast, the fighters had no more than reached the center of the ring than Andy waded in and tagged Paul with several viscous blows to the body and face. Paul finally pushed him away. As Andy started in again, Paul hit him hard in the chest. You could hear ribs breaking at ringside and over ESPN. Andy staggered back, folding his arms over his chest. At that point Paul hit him square in the face, breaking his nose. Blood squirted everywhere. Paul followed up with a blow to the right side of his face, breaking his jaw, and another blow to the rib cage. Andy went down and didn't move. After the ten-count medics rushed into the ring. They worked on Andy briefly then brought in a stretcher and carted him away. He was loaded into an ambulance and rushed to the hospital where he was pronounced dead on arrival. Paul was now the world heavyweight champion but he felt terrible. He told his handler, "I will never fight anywhere again as long as I live."

Paul returned to his room, alone, he didn't want anyone around. He had been brooding for about an hour when he heard a knock on the door. He opened it to find a priest standing there. "Come on in Father" he said. "I should tell you right up front that I am not catholic, so I doubt if there's anything you can say to make me feel better." "At least I brought a bottle of wine" Father Villa said. "Hey, you could get in real trouble with that; you know it's against the rules." Paul said. "Not to worry," answered Father Villa, "I am a general, and besides General Harcrow sent me over with the wine." The two men sipped the wine and talked for almost two hours. When Father Villa left, Paul somehow felt a lot better. It was strange, the first time he had killed a man in a fight, he was given twenty-five years in prison, this time they wanted to congratulate him. Father Villa had talked him out of his depression, to some degree. He knew now what he would do. He would offer to fight any heavyweight

that wanted a shot at the title. He would first let them know of the risk involved, then he would just try to put on a good show, but hold back somewhat on his punches. He may win one or two more fights, but his purse for the next fight would be at least five million, probably much more. It would go into his account and he could do a lot of good with that money.

When his sentence was up he would buy a ranch somewhere and retire in peace. He thought that Father Villa was quite a guy. While he had made all these decisions himself, he made them while he was talking to the priest.

Paul never did become a catholic, but he did start attending Mass whenever and wherever Father Villa delivered the mass. He made Father Villa an offer. "Father, your time will be up soon, how would you feel if I built you a nice church of your own somewhere?" "The catholic faith does not work that way," Father Villa said. No, my time is almost up and I have received permission from the Church and the Army to continue my ministry right here at Fort Hope for as long as I am able to function and then retire right here at the Fort.

When they first started the recreation fund with the million dollars that the firefighters had donated, they had to look for ways to stretch the money as far as they could. Now with the football games, basketball games, championship fights and baseball games, as well as the firefighters bonus that they continued to receive each year, they were looking for ways to spend all that money. The Recreation Committee now had over ten million dollars a year to spend. With that kind of money available they went ahead with construction of the indoor sports multiplex, adjacent to Desert Rat Stadium.

Adam decided that the time had come. The Fort Hope example was now strong enough and had successfully proven itself enough to start trying to bring about prison reform elsewhere, wherever they could get their foot in the door. Two ex- presidents, Theodore Lomas and now Alfred Conrado as well as Adam Harcrow, Bobby McAllister, and Paul Banyon all agreed that they should join together to get the message out. They all made themselves available for speaking engagements, TV appearances, newspaper interviews, anything they could think of to get their face before the public urging prison reform and describing the formula that worked so well at Fort Hope.

- CHAPTER 33 -
THE ALASKA ADVENTURE

Their first big break came from an unexpected quarter. The Alaska Department of Corrections. Dr. Golstadt assembled all the materials that he had used piecemeal over the years at Fort Hope into a comprehensive program, which he had Adam and the entire committee present to the Alaska officials.

The Alaskans asked that Fort Hope send as many men as they thought necessary to take over a prison system with five thousand inmates and turn it around so that the men and women that left that system would leave with self-respect and take a responsible place in society. They wanted that zero recidivism rate that Fort Hope enjoyed. " We don't just want your people as advisors, we want your people to run our prison system. The prison system in Alaska is in total disarray. Men are released after serving their time and more often than not re-arrested on another felony charge within thirty days."

Once your people are in place and have learned all they can from the people that we have now those people will be reassigned to other state jobs and your people will be running our entire prison system. "You know that the people we will be sending are themselves convicts serving time, don't you?" "Yes, we are fully aware of that and we have decided this is what we want to do. Alaska is still the last frontier, our state is the largest in the nation, but we are a young state, our people are different from those in the little states. Therefore, our leaders have to be men of vision, not intimidated by the dogma that rules the thinking of other states. We are not afraid to make mistakes, if that is what it takes to have a system of criminal correction that actually works." "Sir, I think we have just the man for the job. Colonel Elmo Ugalak, from Kotzebue, Alaska, is one of Fort Hope's up and comers; he is an Eskimo, with a masters degree in English Literature. Moreover, he understands our system and is an outstanding member of the Fort Hope team. You should also know that he is serving a sentence of life in prison, with the possibility of parole. He has been eligible for parole for seven years and has never applied for it." "He sounds ideal to me," the Governor of Alaska responded.

When the Fort Hope crew arrived in Alaska they were met with a cold shoulder and not just from the weather. The state employees that ran the prison system were not all that anxious to change jobs. Most of the Alaska employees of the prison system had moved to Alaska from the "lower forty-eight" with great credentials in prison operation. The idea of criminals, who are serving time themselves, running a prison system was ridiculous. "Half the inmates in this prison are Alaska natives; they don't think like you or I, the only thing they understand is getting the shit kicked out of them if they don't do as they are told. You have to either keep them locked up or watch them every minute. Given any chance at all they will make a run for it. These are the only people I have ever seen that don't stop when someone says "stop or I'll shoot;" they are a different breed." the director said to the leader of the Fort Hope

crew when they arrived.

"Actually they are five breeds", stated the colonel from Fort Hope; they are Aleut, Athabaskan, Hyda, Tlingit and Eskimo, with a few Canadian Simsiones(sp) thrown in for good measure". "Let me introduce myself -- I am Colonel Elmo Ugalak. I am an Eskimo from a little village outside Kotzebu. I got in trouble many years ago in Seattle and ended up at Fort Hope. Once I have had a chance to evaluate our resources here I will be taking over as warden of this prison and I will also head the Alaska Department of Corrections, so please don't insult my intelligence with any more racial garbage like I just heard."

That conversation kind of set the mood for all their future dialogue, which didn't go on for too long. Colonel Ugalak had his people check out their facilities and review their books. The crew that they were replacing introduced them to the inmates, gave him the key to the men's room and left.

The first thing Elmo did was call the inmates together and conducted a light-hearted dialogue with them. He was one of them and he was in charge now. He described the types of men that he would not tolerate, then said "if any of you guys are one of those types you're gonna be in big trouble".

His staff interviewed every inmate in the institution one at a time and asked them a series of questions prepared by Dr. Golstadt. The answers were all recorded and compared on computer. At the end of the first month Colonel Ugalak had a good idea of the inmate internal structure; who did what to who, why and when. He knew each man's attitude toward race, religion, crime, punishment and hopes for some kind of a future.

He then called another meeting, "OK you guys, I am gonna make you a deal; I am gonna give you a chance to cut your time in half. First though, I am gonna read a list of names and I want you to go to that bull in the back there if your name is called. He actually didn't read any names himself he handed the clipboard to an assistant who read the names.

The men whose names were on the list were the ones that he had determined he couldn't do anything with. The standard white supremists, booty bandits, dope dealers, bullies and other worthless specimens of humanity that were beyond any help. They were loaded on two busses and carted off. Colonel Ugalak never said where they had been taken. They were actually transferred to a maximum security Federal prison in Colorado. Everyone was dismissed. Elmo waited over the weekend, then called another meeting of all inmates.

"Last time we talked I told you that I had an offer for you whereby you could cut your prison time in half -- you wanna hear it now?" Of course they were all ears. "Things have been going pretty good around here since those troublemakers left, huh?" One would never guess that Colonel Ugalak had a masters degree in English Literature from a Seattle university to hear him talk, but that was the beauty of a masters degree,

it gave him exceptional communication skills. "Now then you guys, this is the deal. You can't get to our state capital in Juneau unless you take a boat or fly in; we're gonna change that. They have had a road for years that runs north out of Juneau for about forty miles, as far as the road could go. What we're gonna do, those of you who want to that is, is to build a bridge over some water to where the road can start up again, then run that road all the way to Skagway where you can take existing road to White Horse in the Yukon, join up with the Alaska Highway at White Horse and drive right down to the lower forty-eight states. That way all them people in the state capital can drive in. Don't you be fooled this will be hard work.

"I'm gonna have my men interview all of you again to find out what your areas of expertise are. We will need medics, dentists, equipment operators, engineers, cooks, etc. We will bring in outsiders only for those jobs that we can't fill from here and those outsiders that we do bring in will be from Fort Hope; they will be cons, just like us. For any time you spend working on this project you will receive two days off your sentence for every day you work. If you don't want to work, we will send you off to join the troublemakers we carted off last week." No one knew where they had been sent but they all knew they didn't want to join them. "Anybody here that don't wanna work?" Not one hand was raised..

Colonel Ugalak already had a Table of Organization and Equipment and a list of materials he would need and when he would need them. The job would take about four years to complete. The area they would be working in gets about one hundred thirty inches of rain a year.

There is some snow in mid-winter but not much. The only dry season is the month of August and sometimes it rains quite a bit in August. In the summer the sun goes down around midnight then rises about two in the morning. In the winter there are days when it never gets full daylight before night sets in again.

The daytime temperatures in the summer can get into the nineties, but seldom does. The coldest it ever gets in winter is thirteen below which is very rare. More likely the winter lows are around ten degrees.

The biggest problem in summer is the mosquitos and tiny gnats; there are billions of them. One man working outside one summer day was wearing yellow protective gear and you could watch him working and not see any yellow at all he was completely covered with mosquitos.

The supervisors and foremen on the job were all men from Fort Hope; many of them civilian convicts and others were military. The civilian convicts from Fort Hope supervised the work and the military convicts from Fort Hope supervised the inmates. For the first two months of the project they were very tough on the Alaska inmates just as if they were going through basic training, but gradually, as the work progressed, they loosened up and became more friendly. More actual work got done after they became friendly. Colonel Ugalak set up his base camp on the mainland across the water from the end of the Juneau road. He didn't want any of his inmates

getting the idea to go into Juneau. If they had gone into Juneau they would have been easy to find. There was no way out if you didn't have plane fare or boat fare for an Alaska State Ferry. At any rate, Ugalak didn't want them going there, so he put his base camp where they couldn't go much of anywhere and supplied them by running boats in from a staging area he had set up at the end of the road that ran to a clearing forty miles north of Juneau. They first built a pontoon floating bridge across the channel, then went to work on a permanent structure..

They were all told that if anyone was insubordinate or tried to escape they would be sent to join the other troublemakers and none of these guys wanted to go there so they just more or less behaved themselves and worked. Colonel Ugalak had never mentioned pay to them, but one day he called them all together and gave them all a debit card from California Desert Bank. "You men each have earned \$500 in the last two weeks," he told them; however, we have taken twenty-five percent of that for board and room. Another twenty-five percent has been put into a crime victim's compensation fund, so you will find that you have only \$250 in your account. Of course we have taken \$25 for federal withholding and Social Security and a couple dollars for FICA, but the rest of it is yours. You each have a little over \$200 and think of it this way, you never expected anything so this is just pennies from heaven." "How we s'posed to spend it colonel?" Someone hollered out. I have arranged for a PX to be built right where I now stand and guess who is gonna build it. The sooner it gets built the sooner you will have somewhere to spend that \$200 of yours, so lets get busy."

It was late spring and in spite of the rain the work progressed rapidly. By midsummer the pontoon bridge was opened and trees had been felled and a dirt road pushed through all the way to Skagway. Soon the dirt road had been graveled and rolled. It was possible for the first time to have an automobile in Juneau that didn't come in by boat. Once the road was opened two inmates took their chances and made their break. They were apprehended at the Alaska Airlines terminal of the Juneau airport while trying to buy tickets to Seattle with their debit cards. That was so funny that Ugalak didn't have the heart to send them out to a federal maximum security prison so he sent them back to the Alaska State Prison and had them locked up in solitary for thirty days. At the end of that time he had them returned to the work detail. The second summer on the job the road from Juneau was re-paved and the gravel road from the bridge to Skagway was paved. At the end of four years, right on schedule, the bridge was completed.

Several men had finished serving their time and been released but Colonel Ugalak had some misgivings about seeing them go. New men had taken their places. Even during periods of inclement weather the men were kept working outdoors.

The governor of the state of Alaska was very pleased with his new road and bridge to the state capital. It was still easier to bring a car into Juneau by boat but somehow it gave you more of a good feeling about the place to know that you could get in your car and drive to any place you wanted, as long as you were in no hurry to get there. The easiest and, of course, the quickest way out was to fly to Seattle and rent a car,

but now you had an option.

While Colonel Ugalak was building the road he referred two hundred men to Fort Hope for military enlistment. These were the fortunate ones, because the next project for those who remained in Alaska was to build a highway from Anchorage to Dillingham. This project was scheduled for completion in ten years. On this project temperatures of thirty five below zero were not uncommon. The work was harsh but these men were cutting their sentences in half, gaining valuable work skills, were treated decently, were building Social Security credits, the food was great and they had money to spend. It still beat being locked up in prison all to hell.

Colonel Ugalak had set up an office in Anchorage to find suitable employment for all the men who were released. Four years after Fort Hope had taken over administration of the Alaska prison system, only two men who were a product of that system had been re-convicted on felony charges. These men were not taken back into the Alaska system but were sent to Montana to serve their new sentences. Alaska accepted more than twenty men from Montana who wanted the transfer.

- CHAPTER 34 -
THE FORT HOPE PROGRAM

Several other states had followed closely the progress that had been made in Oregon and Alaska in dealing with convicts. Delegations were visiting Fort Hope. Letters were received from some official or another in virtually every state in the nation, as well as from many countries.

No other jurisdiction wanted the Fort Hope crew to completely take over their prison system, but many wanted advisors sent from Fort Hope to look at what they were now doing and recommend ways in which they could improve the system.

The recommendations were all the same in the general sense. Give the men something difficult and challenging to do. Be harsh in your discipline. Only take volunteers into the program. Offer substantial rewards for their participation. Gradually let up on the harshness of the discipline once you see the men headed in the right direction. Quickly identify the troublemakers and get them out of the program. Try to get those with long sentences ahead of them into the Fort Hope program. Give the men responsibility as they are able to absorb it. Don't be afraid to put convicts in positions of authority just because they are convicts. See that they receive a fair wage for their work. Issue debit cards and give them a worthwhile selection of merchandise that they can purchase. Make them pay a substantial portion of those wages into a victims compensation fund. Make them pay for their board and room. Put them into a position whereby the longer they participated in the program the more they stood to lose if they failed. Allow men with exceptional ability and talent to have the opportunity to pursue that field of endeavor and to have an opportunity to succeed, whatever that field of endeavor was. Make sure that every man has the opportunity to further his education and to learn marketable job skills while he is incarcerated. Then make sure that he has a good paying job to go to upon his release. In this environment employers will feel fortunate to be able to hire a man from your program because they will know that he is a good worker that will cause them no trouble.

There were also specific recommendations given to each state and jurisdiction visited. Fort Hope had sent advisors to twenty-six states and thirty- four foreign countries. Many of the suggestions they made were beginning to take effect. The recidivism rate was beginning to drop in all the places where their system was implemented. Perhaps someday rehabilitation would be the most important factor considered in prison administration, world wide. At least that was the goal of the Fort Hope crew.

- CHAPTER 35 -
FORT HUACHUCA

The prisoner population at Fort Hope continued to grow, finally reaching six full divisions. Fort Hope was now the largest military facility in the United States. General Lomas had moved Adam up from command of the First Division to second in command of Fort Hope. In the process, Adam was awarded the rank Lieutenant General and given his third star.

There was concern growing in Washington that too much of the nation's infantry asset was in one place. The second, fourth and sixth divisions were moved to newly acquired Fort Huachuca, in the Arizona Desert about 70 miles Southeast of Tucson . The fort was now closed but had formerly been home to the Army Intelligence Center and School, Army Information Systems Command, Army Electronic Proving Ground, Army Information Systems Engineering Command and Army Signal Command. All of these functions had been relocated so the facilities at the fort were available. Fort Huachuca was very well appointed and suited their needs to a tee. There were several flights daily between Fort Hope and Fort Huachuca. The Sixth Division was now the training division.

Adam was promoted to the rank of full General and received his fourth star. His headquarters remained at Fort Hope but he spent about half his time at Fort Huachuca, where now Lieutenant General Todd Dixon was the Fort Commander. Lieutenant General Alan Spear became the commander of Fort Hope which retained three full battle-ready divisions. Major General Frederick Woods now commanded the original First Division at Fort Hope.

One day Adam commented to Dixon, "Do you realize, that now, for the first time there is no one assigned to the Convict Army that is not himself a convict?" That would soon change.

General Lomas, at sixty-seven years of age, served as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as he was the ranking military man in the Armed Forces. General Lomas still made his home at his cottage at Fort Hope, but like many U.S. Senators, and Congressmen, General Lomas commuted to Washington DC frequently.

-CHAPTER 36 - THE NEW HITLER

There was one thing in the Middle East that had not changed in over two thousand years -- the old hatreds. Israel had survived as a thorn in the side of the Moslem part of the world. There were a hundred times as many Arabs as there were Jews but somehow the Arabs had never been able to agree in unison about how to rid themselves, once and for all, of this annoyance. Even when they formed the United Arab Republic years ago, there was no continuity of leadership and no concensus of opinion as to what should be done and how to go about it. This has always been the case.

Perhaps there had been a fundamental change. A new leader that had come to power in one of the Arab states, who possessed the guile and the golden tongued charisma of Adolph Hitler and a lot of the same ideas. He had a long complicated name that started with Mohamad and ended with Hussein. He was known to the world as Mohammed Hussein, or the Grand Ayatollah.

He had succeeded, where hundreds of others had failed, in bringing together all the various sects of the Moslem religion. Mohammed Hussein claimed to be a distant relative of the infamous Saddam Hussein who ended his reign in the Iraq war of 2003. Mohammed Hussein, however, was born in Germany where he fell in early with the Neo-Nazi movement. He was schooled in his early formative years in both Nazism and the Moslem religion. His mind performed a marriage of Islam and Nazism which were actually quite similar.

As a young man he had served five years in prison where he wrote his own book, which was little more than an editing of the Koran that brought together the two concepts of the Moslem faith and Nazism. Upon his release from prison he left Germany and made his way to Saudi Arabia where he entered the service of a rich oil tycoon and rose in the ranks rapidly. He succeeded in convincing his employer of the wisdom of his political religious beliefs. When election time next rolled around in the fledgling democracy of Iraq, Mohammed took the country by storm.

With his ample financial backing he took the election by a landslide and became the President of Iraq. That was the last election ever held in Iraq. Over the years he had acquired quite a following. He had surrounded himself with an inner circle very reminiscent of Hess, Himmler and the rest of the Fuhrer's old gang. Shortly after his election his appearance began to change. He grew a small mustache and began to comb his hair down over his forehead as Adolf had done. The Fourth Reich was well on its way. He even called his secret police the Gestapo.

Some of the other leaders of the Arab world listened to him and agreed with what he said. Those leaders who did not agree with his new political twist to the Moslem religion, Mohammed promptly disposed of and replaced with his own men. He had successfully put together an effective coalition that might finally be able to rid the area of all who were not true believers. He had quietly unified all the war machinery of all

the Moslem states into one cohesive force.

All foreign embassies in Moslem nations had been closed, the Ambassadors and their staffs sent home. That is, all were sent home except the Americans and the British. He threw them into prison without a trial. The President of the United States and the Prime Minister of Great Britain filed protests at the UN, where the French prevented a resolution being filed against Mohammed Hussein and his coalition of states. Mohammed then had a bright idea. He sponsored a nightly TV show on all Arab TV stations where a prisoner was brought before an Ayatollah sitting on a bench. The prisoner had charges read against him then the Ayatollah would pronounce sentence. It usually amounted to life in prison. During the show there were two huge Arab men dressed in black leather with black hoods and masks, that stood behind the accused and whenever the accused hesitated to agree with the charges against him or with anything else the Grand Ayatollah said they would snap the accused in the back with a bull whip leaving an ugly bleeding welt that the TV camera's made the most of. The pronouncement of sentence was televised throughout the Middle East and the Moslems loved it.

The prisoners were always Jews that had fallen into Arab hands one way or another. After the embassies had been closed, Hussein had a good supply of British and American diplomats on hand so he began to try one of these every night, then after they were accused of being infidels they were sentenced to life in prison. After pronouncing sentence Mohammed would launch into a tirade that would go on for two or three hours. He would extol the virtues of Allah and advocate genocide of all non-believers, particularly the hated Jews. The show was carried on all TV stations in the Moslem world and the Moslems loved it. Hatred of non-believers grew stronger each day, particularly hatred for Jews. He would urge believers in all Moslem nations to kill the non-believers among them. This led to mass slaughters in countries such as Turkey, Pakistan and the Moslem sections of the former Yugoslavia. Thousands were slaughtered.

It was no longer safe for any non-believer or foreigners anywhere in the Moslem countries. There were zealots everywhere who would attack them and the Moslem police would always refuse to intervene. Many foreigners were killed on the street. They were usually knocked to the ground and then kicked to death by the crowd. Every night on the list of who had been killed on the streets and those in his prisons. The conditions

in those prisons were calculated to sustain human life for not more than two months. There were no sanitation facilities whatsoever. No running water, no toilets, no electricity. There was a hole in the wall of each dungeon. There was a slop trough below each hole where a bucket of slop was poured once each day. This concoction was made from garbage collected from homes and restaurants, mixed with water and fed to the prisoners. At many of the collection sites Arabs would throw human excrement in with the garbage that was to be fed to the prisoners. There was a hole in the roof where the Arabs periodically dumped straw and weeds. The inmates had no bedding but slept on the straw and weeds.

The doors to each dungeon were opened briefly once every two weeks so the prisoners could throw out the corpses that had accumulated. The Moslem viewers never tired of seeing the misery that fell to the non-believers in the prisons.

On numerous occasions entire families were brought to trial. These were families of American or British diplomats who were arrested when their embassies were seized. They would be sentenced to life in prison then ridiculed for an hour or so by the raving maniac, Mohammed Hussein. When these families were taken away the men and children were thrown into the dungeons, but the women and girls over seven were taken to a building adjacent to the court where they were stripped of all clothing and repeatedly raped by long lines of Arab men, many of whom had journeyed to Baghdad so they could take part in this particular pleasure. Eventually the women or girls became unconscious. At such time several of the Arab men would pick up their nude, unconscious bodies and toss them into a urinal where the men would then line up and take turns urinating on them until they heard their call to prayer being sounded. When they were finished with the women and girls they were tossed back into the "dungeon" with the rest of their families. The men who had participated in these atrocities would then pray to Allah during the evening prayer ritual. This was all filmed on videotape and shown on the next TV show. The Moslems loved it. The President of the United States protested to the United Nations, but the French once again prevented him from obtaining a sanction against Mohammed. The French it seems, had loaned billions of Francs to the scoundrel and they were receiving the payments on their loans as agreed, so they were just protecting their investment. So far Mohammed had not imprisoned any French. At this time gas was selling for the equivalent of forty American cents per gallon in Paris and twelve dollars a gallon in Los Angeles.

The TV program had become so successful that Mohammed moved on to bigger and better shows by sending whole families of Jewish settlers up before the Ayatollah and then beheading all of them, even the little children, on television. The Moslems loved it. The crowd in the studio always screamed their fanatical approval when this happened.

The President of the United States and Israeli Ambassador to the United Nations called a special session of the Security Council and urged all civilized nations to take action to put an end to Hussein. All but one member of the Security Council approved taking action. The French exercised their veto. The Russians and the Chinese almost always sided with the French to some extent. None of the other timid nations on the Security Council would agree to any action unless it had unanimous Security Council approval, so they refused to take any action.

The Israeli Ambassador to Washington had called on the President of the United States and pressed the point that Israel did not need any assistance in defending itself against any of its neighbors; they had been doing that for years. This new coalition however, was a different matter. What they were now facing was the Third Reich in Moslem clothing. Assistance, and a lot of it, would be required, or Israel would be

wiped off the map.

The President of the United States agreed with this assessment wholeheartedly and agreed that the U.S. would provide as much assistance as was required to squelch this threat.

The United States appealed to NATO for cooperation but NATO refused outright. Only one other nation on earth, Great Britain, could see where it was in their best interest to preserve Israel. Australia and Canada provided lip support but were not willing to send material assistance. It was obvious that once again Uncle Sam had to go it alone, except for the British of course; they sent a brigade of troops and a carrier. The United States and Israel appealed to the United Nations but they knew in advance they were just going through a formality. The Secretary of State himself appeared before the General Assembly and made an impassioned appeal, but it fell on deaf ears, even when he showed excerpts of Mohammed's latest TV shows.

CNN occasionally mentioned the show but they put the spin on it that it was evidence of how the world community hated the United States for their imperialistic attitude.

- CHAPTER 37 -
WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

During the subsequent weeks massive amounts of weaponry, men and materials from all branches of the U.S. military establishment were channeled to Israel. This did not deter the Arab intentions and they continued to mobilize their forces still anticipating victory. Though they strongly resented U.S. involvement, they did not fully realize the magnitude of the United States commitment.

Among the U.S. forces that were sent to this cause were the three divisions from Fort Hope and two from Fort Huachuca. There were seventy-five thousand soldiers and another twenty thousand support workers. The 101st Airborne, the 82nd Airborne, the Third United States Mechanized Infantry and more than a dozen support units were sent to Israel during the next three months. These units remained under command of their own generals but were told that if and when a shooting war began they would be under the command of the Israeli army commander.

Israel was one of the few countries that had no use for the Fort Hope system of criminal rehabilitation. They did not like the idea of these men being in Israel. The men were resented by everyone there and treated very shabbily by the people they encountered. Whenever they came in contact with an Israeli military unit they were treated as second-class citizens. The Fort Hope troops, however, were part of the U.S. assistance package and the Israelis could not very easily refuse their participation without refusing all aid from the U.S.

The Fort Hope and Fort Huachuca units were assigned to defend the most exposed sectors where major Arab thrusts would come. They were at the front with the Israeli army backing them up. The Israelis figured that these jailbirds might kill off a few Arabs, slow their attack and even perhaps, soften them up a little before the real Israeli army and the regular American army divisions had to confront the Arabs head-on. It might cost an awful lot of American lives, but what the hell, this was just a bunch of convicts that the Americans wanted to get rid of anyway; that's why they referred to them as the Expendable Forces. The Israelis figured this hoard of American convicts would be poorly equipped, poorly trained and led by incompetents. Apparently the Israeli assessment was that the United States had just yanked these convicts out of their cells, given them a black fatigue uniform, issued them a deer rifle and sent them to Israel.

Adam called on the Israeli commander and requested access to rifle ranges so his men could get the practice they required. The Israeli general snickered and suggested a competition between his marksmen and the best that General Harcrow had to offer. Adam jumped at this chance to gain a little respect. He had a crew arrive at the range a little early. They observed that the maximum range for firing was six hundred yards. They got out their chalk marking equipment then laid down marks at seven hundred, eight hundred, nine hundred and one thousand yards. When the Israelis showed up they looked puzzled at the new marks on the ground.

The Israeli commander showed up personally to observe this fiasco, as did Adam Harcrow. "Would your men like to start this competition at three hundred yards?" asked the Israeli. "No," Adam responded, "that would be a waste of ammunition, lets start at six hundred." Of course the Fort Hope rifle team, firing their 308 Springfields, cleaned the Israeli's plow. Adam then suggested that they move back to seven hundred yards. "Our men are not accustomed to target shooting at that distance General Harcrow, but we will give it a try." The results at seven hundred were a joke. The Israelis seldom got a round in the black while the Americans never got one out of the black. When Adam suggested eight hundred yards the Israeli general was the one to say that would be a waste of ammunition. So the Fort Hope rifle team put on an exhibition at eight hundred yards, then nine hundred yards and finally at one thousand yards where most of their shots were still in the black.

The Israeli commander, General Charbone, couldn't believe his eyes, "You have put together a team of splendid riflemen here General Harcrow, too bad the rest of your men aren't that skilled." "Oh, but they are, any of them can obtain results very similar to what these men did, but you are right -- these are the cream of the crop." With that they all went back to their units. The Israeli commander wondered for days about that shooting match; it just didn't add up.

General Charbone told his orderly to see if he could get General Harcrow on the phone. "Yes, General Harcrow, one moment sir, General Charbone wishes a word with you," he said as he handed the phone to the general. "Ah, General Harcrow, just a couple things; we have about 2,000 pair of night vision goggles that we could loan you for your nighttime sentries, if you like." "Thank you very much General Charbone but all our men are already equipped with the latest in night vision equipment, including night/day vision scopes on all our rifles. If the enemy makes a move at night we can drop him while he is still too far away to hear the sound of the rifle firing." "Splendid, General Harcrow, the other thing is medical care. I can make available a limited number of beds in the hospitals where your men are stationed so they can receive care from real physicians when the need arises." "Thanks, again General but we have our own field medical hospitals all set up. Our convict doctors are capable of performing everything from brain surgery to organ transplants right in our own facilities." "But, I was given to understand that the men you brought were all convicts, General Harcrow." "We are convicts, General Charbone," Adam responded. "What do you mean WE, General Harcrow; surely you are not a convict, you are a four star general." "I am a four star general, and I graduated first in my class at West Point, but I am also a convict serving twenty-five years without possibility of parole." "I am sorry, General Harcrow but that is just not possible," with that, General Charbone hung up the phone.

The two generals met again a few days later at a General officers conference between the Israeli and American General officers. "What we expect of you and your men, General Harcrow, is for you to hold your ground as best you can for as long as you can" "We can hold our ground, as you put it General, for as long as you want. What you don't seem to realize who we are and the extent of our training. The United States

Army did not just conscript a bunch of convicts out of the prisons and send them over here pretending to be an army. My men are the best trained, best equipped fighting men on the face of the earth, bar none. Sure, we can defend a position if that is what is required but we are not a defensive army, we are an offensive army. We are equipped and trained for fighting at night on the offense and then digging in and holding the previous nights gains while we rest during the day. We are all foot soldiers, we don't need and don't want support from mechanized units. We have our own choppers for supply, some troop movement, and medical evacuations. We as a unit are the best rifle shots in the world, so in your planning please take what I have told you into consideration and you will find that we will perform a lot better. In fact, I have ordered my men to take to the offensive upon the first provocation, no matter how small. We came over here to clean out this bunch of sand chiggers and that is just what we intend to do if you can see your way clear to stay out of our way."

"Thank you, General Harcrow, no one had ever explained that to me before. I guess that kind of explains your performance on the rifle range the other day. I assure you that I have been properly chastised and I want you to know that what you just said changes my strategy considerably. So we let them fire the first shot and we attack."

"Not quite, General Charbone, let them even throw the first rock."

The men did not accept the idea of not being allowed to take prisoners. The grumbling found it's way all the way up the chain of command. Adam reluctantly agreed and ordered that anyone clad in tight fitting under garments or holding a naked baby or small child out in front of them so that the soldiers could tell from a distance that they concealed no explosive devices would be taken prisoner if they approached in broad daylight. Camps were set up to far to the rear of the fighting for these refugees. They were provided with the necessities of life.

What actually set things off was an old obsolete Arab missile possibly fired by accident, around 1600 hours the next evening. The warhead was a simple high explosive; it hit nothing, but dug an impressive hole in the sand. Adam immediately picked up the phone and within twenty minutes twelve U.S. carriers were launching one plane after another. They had already been assigned their targets by satellite surveillance; they knew where the enemy concentrations of troops and equipment were located. At the same time missiles began to break water headed for Damascus, Bagdad, Tehran, Cairo, and every other national capital city in the Arab world. These were not nuclear missiles but they had state of the art guidance systems and each one was aimed at a strategic target, missile bases, military bases and yes, national palaces. Within half an hour the jets were once again streaking in over Adams head. These were followed within seconds by very large explosions occurring in Arab positions all around Israel. "It is beginning to remind me of Korea," Adam said. "Yeah," responded, General Spear. "Those fly- boys sure do soften them up for us don't they." "General Charbone on the phone for you General Harcrow" "General Harcrow, Charbone, here, listen you said you prefer fighting at night, correct?" "That's right general." "It will be dark soon, so prepare your men to move out. Stop your men wherever they are at first light. Our units will then move on through your position and continue to press the attack. In this way they will never have time to rest." "Great idea, General Charbone; we always trained assuming that we had to provide our own

cover during the day; this way my men can have two meals, five or six hours sleep and be moving up to pass through your new position at sunset." "I'll see you at first light, General Charbone." "As soon as the explosions die down a little over there move the men out, advance as far as you can tonight, then stop. Put out heavy guard until the Israelis catch up with us in the morning then we can all rest for the day," Adam instructed his generals.

They moved out cautiously. There was more resistance than they had encountered in Korea. Here, however, they showed no mercy; after all, the people they were up against here were fanatics bent on genocide; not just genocide of Jews, but of all nonbelievers.

In their fanaticism they reveled in the glory of death for their cause. Because of the enemies penchant for sending in suicide bombers disguised as innocent civilians, the men of the six American divisions shot everyone they encountered, whether he looked like a soldier or not. They spared the children until one of them they had allowed to surrender suddenly exploded, killing more than a dozen American soldiers. Then they said we will just kill em all and let Allah sort em out. The Americans advanced almost thirty kilometers that first night. Just as in Korea they came across whole divisions of Arabs destroyed by the air force. Adam remembered the stench only too well.

Over five hundred airplanes from the various Arab countries had become airborne shortly after the attacks had began, but not one of them had made it so far as to even penetrate Israeli air space. The Israeli air force had knocked them out of the sky before their old instruments had even told them that they were under attack. Neither Israel nor the United States had lost a plane.

Just before dawn the Americans heard a thunderous clatter from behind their lines. They looked around to see hundreds of Israeli and American tanks moving up and past their lines. The tanks were accompanied by Israeli infantry. The units pounded forward at a steady three miles an hour. It was all the infantry could do just to keep up. As they approached an Arab village just ahead they called in an air strike, the friendly airplanes leveled the village in minutes and the tanks just continued on, rolling right over the rubble. One Israeli tank commander was heard to shout, "Allah may be great but I'll take the U.S. Air Force over him any time."

Late that afternoon hundreds of two and a half ton trucks came up from behind the lines. They loaded up with convict infantrymen and continued forward. The Americans rode for about forty kilometers before catching up with the infantry, which had now been left at the rear of the Israeli advance. On the way they passed one flattened village after another. The air was always thick with the smell of death. They began to pass wrecked Arab armor, trucks and artillery pieces.

Intelligence reports had began to filter in. The first hours of the war had been very productive. No fewer than seven prominent Arab heads of state were dead, including their young Fuhrer, whose idea this had been in the first place. Many of the Arab

generals and field commanders had been caught by the air force, along with their units. What this army faced now were small bands of fanatics lead by majors, captains and even sergeants. They were just as dedicated as they had ever been and just as anxious to die for the glory of Allah and their cause. The Israeli and American forces promptly obliged them.

Now the air forces were pounding major Arab cities, paying particular attention to destroying their holy places and their places of worship. Some of the more distant Arab nations were blowing up their own oil producing and storage facilities. The air forces were doing what they could to stop this wanton destruction of the worlds most valuable resource, but there was little they could do.

Within the week five major capital cities had fallen to relentless air force bombing and land invasion at night by the American night fighters; they made house to house combat look easy. Once a capital city had been taken, it was leveled.

Adam was in his tent catching up on some paper work. He was seated in a folding chair at his field desk. There was a rustling sound at the rear of the tent causing Adam to glance in that direction. To his amazement he saw the blade of a large knife pierce the tent material. Before he could react the knife had cut a three foot gaping slit in the back of the tent, the blade barely missing his right arm. A large hand quickly emerged through the slit grabbing Adam by the arm. This was followed by a powerful jerk, pulling Adam off his feet and through the hole in the tent. As he emerged he was encased in two large powerful arms. Both Adam and his assailant dove over a three foot drop-off behind the tent and into the soft desert sand. As they hit the sand a deafening explosion was heard from Adams tent. Parts of his field desk, writing tools and paper work rained down on their heads. "That was too close for comfort, Chief," Henry exclaimed as he released his hold on Adam.

Several officers in an adjacent tent some twenty feet away ran out of their tents screaming in pain. Adam never allowed other tents to be placed too close to his so that he could hold conversations in privacy. When the grenade went off, fragments wounded three other men in the next tent but none seriously.

Flood lights came on and the roving MP patrol came careening down the improvised street in a jeep. There were dozens of soldiers running toward the command tent but there was one running the other way. The MP's had little trouble in overtaking him. As they pulled alongside the fleeing man the jeep slowed and the man in the passenger seat leaped from the jeep tackling the man and bringing him down hard. He was cuffed with his hands behind his back and loaded into the back of the jeep.

Henry said "Looks like they caught the guy that tossed the grenade. I just happened to be walking behind the officers' tents taking a look around when I saw this guy take the grenade out of his field jacket pocket and reach for the pin. I didn't have time to do anything other than open the back of your tent and get you out.

The MP's turned the jeep around and drove back to where Adam and Henry were standing. AWe saw him throw that grenade sir, but we were too far away to stop

him." "Looks like you must not have been in the tent when that thing exploded; lucky for you sir." "Yeah, lucky," said Adam. "I was in the tent, but the Sergeant Major here got me out just in time. That makes twice you have saved my life Henry. I just don't know what to say to express my gratitude. Take this man into the MP tent and find out what this is all about sergeant. He is wearing one of our uniforms so he may be one of us."

There were already men gathering up Adams papers that had been strewn around and a sergeant told Adam that he would have a whole new tent set up within the hour. The injured men had been taken to the camp field hospital for treatment. Adam and Henry decided to walk over to the MP tent just to kill some time and see what the perpetrator was all about.

It turns out that the man was named Saed Hussein Agabra. He was indeed a member of the Expendable Forces, a private first class in one of the engineer battalions. According to his dog tags, he was of the Moslem faith. Little more was learned during questioning. Adam was eventually assured that there was no big conspiracy. Just to be on the safe side, Adam had all the other Moslem soldiers in the unit returned to Fort Hope the next day. The man who threw the grenade was courtmartialled and shot the next day. His last words were "Allah is great".

The Arab leaders who were left all contacted the American and Israeli commanders wanting to end the war. "So you can do what, regroup, rearm and come knocking at our door again in another twenty years -- go to hell." The five American divisions commanded by Adam Harcrow had now lost a little over one hundred men. There had been an additional five hundred injured. Arabs it seemed, liked to sacrifice their own lives by hiding in the rubble then standing up and shooting as many men as they could before they themselves were shot. So far this had been the most effective weapon they had come up with. At least it caused the most casualties.

When all the Arab lands had been taken and most of the people had chosen to go to claim the reward that Allah had in store for them, a call went out to the overpopulated lands of the world seeking settlers. Immigrants came from all continents, all nations, all religions, all walks of life. Most people in the area were still Arabs. The Arabs that remained were relocated so that they were intermixed. Many of the remaining Arabs were Arab Christians.

The new nations would be ruled under a joint U.S./Israeli mandate for one hundred years. The populations were as much a hodgepodge as the United States itself. The majority, when they were in their native lands, had no particular affection for Israel or the United States, but no real hatred either. Mostly they were just the poor and humble masses of humanity looking for a better life. The way the resettlement was arranged it broke up the homogeneous groups. There was a mixture everywhere. While they were ruled under the one hundred year mandate, they were not allowed to have military forces.

When Israel and the United States took over administration of all Middle Eastern oil

facilities, it set off a squeal that could be heard around the world. Everyone objected, but most were quietly pleased that the world oil supply was now in competent hands. The profits from the sale of the oil went to support the fledgling new governments. Israel saw to it that the Moslem religion was outlawed in the former Arab states as a dangerous cult. The remaining Moslem religious leaders were tried on charges of inciting genocide and given long prison sentences that were to be served in prisons located all over the globe. No two were sent to the same prison and none were sent to prisons situated in Moslem countries. The entire region enjoyed freedom of religion and all faiths were welcome. The old national boundaries were erased and replaced by five new nations, all of them democracies. Each of these new nations were ruled by a constitution that drew from the best of all the existing constitutions in the world. Each individual was guaranteed rights even more extensive than the U.S. Bill of Rights.

The people living in the new nations were free to speak any language they liked but the official language in all five nations was English. Time would tell how successful this had been, but for now Israel's borders were safe and Israel was a little larger than it had been before the war. It was the same size as the other five new nations.

The Fort Hope men gradually returned to Fort Hope and the Fort Huachuca men returned to Fort Huachuca. A war memorial was erected at each fort honoring the valiant men who had given their lives in the Middle East.

Discontent and verbal condemnation of the Israeli/United States coalition continued in the United Nations for several years, but no nation ever objected strongly enough to want to go to war over it. Time is a great healer and the world had other problems to address.

- CHAPTER 35 -
RELEASED FROM PRISON

At age thirty-two, with his military time bonus, Adam had completed his twenty-five year sentence and was granted his outright release from prison. Chaplain/Brigadier General/Father Jose Villa had also finished his prison sentence and been released from prison, but received special permission to remain as Chief of Chaplains of Fort Hope. Adam's headquarters were transferred to Washington D.C. Master Sergeant-Major Henry Adams, who had also been released from prison, accompanied his boss to Washington.

Adam now attended the meetings of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a newly created advisory capacity. General Lomas retired from active duty at almost 76 years of age. General Lomas' request that he be allowed to spend his remaining years at his cottage at Fort Hope was approved. General Lomas contended that the small golf course at Fort Hope was about all he could handle any more. A new man was appointed as Chief of Staff of the Army. Adam was appointed Commander of the Infantry Branch of the Army. Brigadier General's Thomas Rich and Jeffery Dawson were also released from their prison obligations. Both requested to remain at Fort Hope. Unlike others who had wanted to stay with the Expendable Forces, Adam thought that it was important to allow Generals Dawson and Rich to remain with their command; they were two of the original group and it was important to have them remain. Adam found it delightful that he was now able to attend the non-official functions in the nation's capital. He even hosted several cocktail parties attended by the in-crowd. While attending a party given by Senator Claxton, the senior senator from Nevada, he met the senator's daughter, Janet. The sparks flew as they hit it off immediately. Adam had put off becoming involved with a woman because it would not have been appropriate while he was still serving his prison sentence. Now that he had been released from prison he was free to choose his own friends and come and go as he pleased.

Janet and Adam began to see each other on a regular basis. He dined with her and her family at least once a week. Janet was constantly amazed at Adam's limited exposure to so many aspects of life that most people took for granted. He had never been to a zoo, or an amusement park, or a nightclub outside of the Gulch for that matter. She enjoyed cooking meals for him at his house although he had a housekeeper. Adam knew nothing of wine. He had, over the years, learned to play golf at Fort Hope, but he was not very good at it. He became close friends with and developed close ties to the senator.

One night after dinner at Janet's house Senator Claxton ask Adam to join him in the library for an after dinner drink. When they were seated in leather chairs near the fireplace, a servant took their order for two brandies. Senator Claxton offered Adam a cigar. Adam declined, then the senator said, "you wouldn't mind if I had one would you?" "Certainly not, sir, go right ahead." "Adam, the reason I asked you in here is there is something I need to discuss with you. You have been seeing quite a lot of my

daughter and I can only assume that at some point your relationship may become serious." "It already has, Arthur, I plan to ask her to marry me in the near future." Arthur said, "That is none of my business, of course, except for one thing. I have been asked by a very influential group to consider a run for the presidency in the next election. Unfortunately, the president's family becomes the First Family and open to all the scrutiny of the press. Not to brag, but early polls indicate that I could beat any other candidate who has expressed interest in seeking the office. I have run your name by my campaign manager and he feels that you would be more of an asset than a liability. You are well aware of what those assets and liabilities are, I am sure. There are two questions that I need to pose to you; do you have anything in your background that is not already public knowledge that could prove an embarrassment to me if it came out and how would it impact your career plans if your father-in-law were the President of the United States?"

"Well sir, my entire life has been pretty much an open book. Every school kid in America knows about my conviction for murder when I was sixteen years old, but aside from that I have nothing whatsoever to hide. As for my own career plans being affected, the only thing that comes to mind is that I may be next in line to command the entire United States Army. If I were to be appointed to that post while my father-in-law was president it could raise some eyebrows, but I don't see that as a serious problem. Of course, you know that generals do not and cannot make political endorsements. It was found out long ago that if a general bets on the wrong horse or party his career is over; in fact that is pretty much true even if he bets on the right horse; so Generals stay out of politics entirely, no matter what their personal political views are. It would also be necessary for you to never mention my name in any speech that you make, and if asked by a reporter to comment on me in any way, that you say 'General Harcrow is my daughter's husband', nothing more. The general has nothing whatsoever to do with my candidacy for president. You can never expect me to attend any event that has any political overtones. That would, of course, go for your daughter also. I know full well that in most cases a candidate's entire family helps with the campaign, but that would not be possible in this case.

"That said, and although she is twenty-eight years old and does not require your permission to marry, I think this is as good a time as any to ask for your daughter's hand in marriage. We are very much in love, and she has already consented to become my wife. We could put the announcement off for two years but considering our ages, we prefer not to; we would like to start our own family as soon as possible." "Of course you have my permission, Adam, and my blessing, but it's a damn shame that you have to keep me at arms length while I seek the presidency."

At age thirty-two, Adam Tall Chief Harcrow was married to Janet Elisabeth Claxton. The services were held in a small chapel run by a Justice of the Peace in Arlington, Virginia. Sergeant-Major Henry Adams was best man. In their first three years of marriage, the couple produced two daughters and a son. His wife's father, Senator Claxton, made his run for the presidency when Adam was thirty-five, shortly after his son was born.

At thirty-three Adam had become Commander of the Army on his own. The fact that his father-in-law had thrown his hat into the ring for the presidency had nothing to do with the appointment and did not complicate Adam's life at all. Henry Adams was assigned to head up the general's personal staff. Hank managed the enlisted personnel in the office and maintained quarters and a small office at the General's personal residence.

The senator won a squeaker election and was sworn into office the following January. Adam was now a member of the First Family.

Since he was stationed in Washington D.C. and lived near the White House, he and his wife and children visited often. President Claxton served only the one term and for health reasons did not stand for reelection. Adam was very relieved to see him leave office. No matter what anybody said, being the son-in-law of the president did throw a shadow on his own career.

When Adam was thirty-nine, he was in his office one morning going through some paper work when his phone rang. The call was from Father Villa at Fort Hope. General Lomas had died; no they didn't even know the cause of death. The general was found in his favorite chair with his newspaper in his lap and a half cup of coffee on his end table. Five minutes earlier his cook had taken his breakfast order and was in the kitchen when she thought of another question that she had forgotten to ask about the preparation of his breakfast. When she went back to ask she found him reclined in his chair with a look of contentment on his face.

At age forty Adam became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He had now been a general officer for eighteen years and was the ranking officer in the United States Military. Henry had turned sixty and was finally thinking of retirement. Adam told him "Don't put in for retirement yet old buddy, I'm working on a nice surprise for you." "Oh, you know Chief, Hank will stick around as long as you need him." There is a rank in each of the military branches that is largely honorary and denotes the top enlisted man in that branch. In the Navy it is called Command Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. In the army it is called Command Sergeant-Major of the Army. It is generally held by a man for his last year of service before retirement. There are some official duties involved but those generally consist of ribbon cuttings and dedications to new facilities and the like. Nevertheless, this rank can only be held by one man at a time. It is the highest honor that an enlisted man can aspire to. The army may have a dozen or more four star generals, but they have only one Command Sergeant-Major of the Army.

Adam thought to himself, I know I am going to take some heat over this, but I don't care. Hank is going to spend his last year in the army as Command Sergeant-Major. When General Harcrow's selection was announced a couple months later it caused very little grumbling among the brass. Most of the top brass in the army knew Hank quite well and agreed that the honor was well deserved.

Henry, for his part, was flabbergasted. Henry was replaced at the office by another

Sergeant-Major from Fort Hope and moved to his new office with a small staff. Henry continued to reside in General Harcrow's personal residence and run his private office until his retirement. At the end of this magical year Henry retired from the army at age sixty-two with forty-two years of honorable service. After retirement he returned to the Seminole reservation and opened the fishing camp he had always dreamed of . Business was lousy, the water stunk, the fish didn't bite, and his Seminole brothers didn't cotton much to his "white man's ways." Hank's dream retirement lasted about a year and he was back in Washington.

Adam was home with his family on a cold blustery Sunday evening when he heard his doorbell ring. Adam called out, "I'll get that." "Hank! Come in out of the cold old buddy. I thought you'd be down in Florida fishing." "Chief, that retirement is not all it's cracked up to be...I felt unwelcome and out of place the whole time I was there." Can you think of anything here in Washington that I could do?" "I think I could use someone to run this household and my personal office like you used to do, but the job doesn't pay much, since the army won't be footing the bill." "Oh, that's all right Chief, I don't need no money, I got plenty of that, I just wanna be someplace where I feel at home, a place where I feel like I belong. It didn't take me long to figure out that I had nothing in common with my 'brothers' back on the reservation." WELCOME HOME HENRY.

Henry was home and he stayed right there for the rest of his days. The children and Janet were delighted to have their "uncle Henry" back. Henry had his own quarters, but took his meals with the family. He drove Adam around in his limousine and was at Adams side all the time. Once again, when Henry spoke everyone listened, because they were never sure whether he was just passing on what Adam had told him to pass on, or whether it was something Henry had decided. Much of the time Henry himself wasn't sure. Henry was given the title of Administrative Assistant and was put back on the government payroll in the civilian service as a GS-14.

Adam's son wanted nothing to do with the army but wanted to pursue a career in medicine. One of the girls, however, wanted to attend West Point and make the army her career.

Adam was promoted one more time during his ten year stint as Army Commander and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. He finally retired from the army at age fifty as a five star General of the Army, joining the ranks of MacArthur, Eisenhower, Nimitz, and Marshall. He retired from the army to become Secretary of Defense. His father-inlaw, of course, was no longer president; however; the current president, a man named Rupert Oswald, held Adam in the highest regard.

During his term as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Adam had supervised this country's participation in several skirmishes and police actions but no major wars had developed.

-CHAPTER 39 - EXONERATION

There was still one thing that galled Adam about his life; it was that damned murder conviction he was sentenced for without ever going to trial. He wondered if there wasn't some way to have it expunged from his record. At the next cabinet meeting he buttonholed the Attorney General and posed the question...could anything be done? "I think so," the Attorney General responded, with a twinkle in his eye.

That very afternoon the Attorney General of the United States Called the Attorney General of the State of Oregon and explained the situation. There were actually three phone calls made within the following week on Adam's behalf. The Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court called the Chief Justice of the Oregon Supreme Court and President Oswald called the Governor of the State of Oregon. They all agreed that something should be done to right this wrong. These three Oregon officials each called the appropriate judges and prosecutors in Multnomah County and had them schedule a new trial for Adam.

On the appointed date the Attorney General flew out to Portland with Adam and Henry. The Attorney General himself, Ralph Biggs, wanted to represent Adam. Before arraignments were held for the day, presided over by Judge Higgins, the bailiff called the courtroom to order and gave the order to "all rise." The judge entered the courtroom from his chambers and took his seat on the bench. The bailiff called Adam's case. After The Attorney General and Adam had taken their places at the defense table, the Judge announced "I have read the brief submitted by the counsel for the defense and heartily concur the defendants in this case were not afforded a fair trial and were badgered by the system into pleading guilty to a crime that they could probably have beaten had they had adequate defense. Therefore, I am hereby granting the defendant's motion to set aside that conviction. Now counselor, how does your client plead to the charges?" "Not guilty, your honor" the Attorney General chimed in. The Judge then turned to the prosecutor and inquired "Do you have any argument against that plea, counselor?" "None at all, Your Honor, I have reviewed this case and concluded that there is no way the State wishes to proceed against this defendant." "So be it," said the judge, "Case dismissed in the interest of justice; the same goes for the co-defendants, Jeff Dawson and Thomas Rich. The court also orders that the record of this conviction be expunged from the records of all three of these men ." After leaving the court room, Adam and Henry flew to Los Angeles, rented a car and drove to Fort Hope. They arrived that evening. They presented their credentials at the main gate and were given a Military Police escort to Tom Rich's office. As luck would have it, Jeff Dawson was there also; he had stopped by to pick Tom up. The pair were planning on having dinner together at the Carrington Inn, at the Gulch. They couldn't believe their ears when the clerk in the outer office came on the intercom and announced that Chief and Hank were in the outer office. Tom and Jeff invited Adam and Hank to join them for dinner. Adam said "before we go, please have your clerk make two copies of this document for me." He handed the court order to the clerk who obligingly made the copies and handed them back to

Adam who tucked them away in his inner coat pocket.

They all enjoyed a wonderful leisurely dinner and then ordered after dinner drinks. Jeff and Tom still hadn't a clue as to what had brought the pair to Fort Hope. Adam withdrew the two folded copies of the court order from his jacket and handed one to Tom and one to Jeff. After reading the documents, Jeff looked around the table and stammered, "does this mean what I think it means?" "That's right," said Adam, "our convictions have been set aside, we have been completely exonerated of all wrongdoing and our records have been expunged. It is as though we had never been arrested or charged with a crime."

Jeff sighed. 'At the time of our conviction, I thought my life had ended, but knowing what I do now it was a blessing in disguise. Who was our attorney?....I want that same guy to represent Father Villa.' "I kind of doubt that he will be available," said Adam, "we were represented by the Attorney General of the United States." They all had a chuckle at that, then Tom said, "well, perhaps we will seek other council, but now that we know something like this is possible, Father Villa deserves the same treatment. That man was completely innocent, he was just railroaded into a confession of guilt by his bishop. That order the Church issued years ago, restoring him to the priesthood, says as much."

After they said their goodbyes the next morning and left Fort Hope, Jeff placed a call to Judge Higgins. Two weeks later another letter arrived in the mail from the judge including the name of Jose Villa on the court order exonerating the others. Father Villa was not as excited about it as the others were. "I just hope this does not cost me my position," he said. "It was already difficult for me to consider myself a martyr, but now it will be impossible, I will just have to be content to be a brigadier general," he said and gave a hearty laugh.

Adam no longer had a prison record and could now attempt to achieve his last remaining goal. The president did not intend to run again two years hence and had already been feeling Adam out as a possible candidate for the presidency. Adam was free at last to make his own run for the White House.

- CHAPTER 40 -

THE NEXT MORNING

At 5:00 A.M. the lights came on in Adam's cell block and he awoke to the blare of loud music played by the guards to get everyone up. He sat up on his cot, dazed, then frantically lifted his shirt and stared at his left side; there was no scar.

That morning, about a month after their arrival at Umatilla, a guard who Adam had become friendly with, came down the walkway outside Adam's cell at five A.M.

"Hey Chief," he said, "you better shake a leg, we just got word that Governor Terry's going to be here sometime today and he wants to address all the inmates.

-AUTHORS VIEW -
NEED FOR PRISON REFORM

Our prison system in its present form has failed almost completely to fulfill any of the reasons for its existence. Is there a better way to punish people for wrongdoing and at the same time protect society? This fiction novel hypothesizes that there may be other ways and explores one of those alternatives in detail. A work of fiction cannot change a society but it could plant a seed that could get more of us thinking about the problem and perhaps someday, someone will take steps towards solving that problem.

The key to making any correctional system work is to give the convict some meaningful work to do. Give him a goal with the promise of fulfilling his basic human needs. He must have his activities closely monitored while he is working toward that goal. He or she must be afforded the opportunity to express their own sexuality with another person of his or her preferred gender and not be forced into a sexual pattern that could harm their efforts to join the mainstream of society.

As I write this story, I am in my sixty-seventh year and am quite certain that I will not be around to witness any significant change or improvement in the system. Perhaps no one alive today will live to see it. A successful system would correct antisocial behavior and would produce solid, useful citizens and we could all pursue life, liberty and happiness as we saw fit within a framework of social justice.

There are only six principal reasons for sending anyone to prison. They are:

1. For punishment.
2. As punishment.
3. For rehabilitation.
4. To protect society.
5. For revenge.
6. As a deterrent to crime.

We the taxpayers shell out billions of dollars a year to send people to prison, yet most don't know why we do that. Let's look at the five reasons one by one and analyze them:

FOR PUNISHMENT: This assumes they will be punished after incarceration.

Corporal punishment is forbidden by the Constitution. You can't beat them or torture them or physically abuse them in any way, as many an over-zealous warden or guard has found. In the past, some prisons were run by men who did administer punishment and perhaps some still are. Most of those that did so are no longer in existence and the few that are left will be changed sooner rather than later.

AS PUNISHMENT: This is somewhat valid. To take away a person's right to liberty, freedom and the pursuit of happiness is a sobering move. It is probably the main reason that no one wants to go to prison. The question that arises is...does the loss of rights and freedom make a better citizen out of the individual. Why should the rest of us care? We should care because in less than five years a full one-half of the prison population will be released and once again living among the rest of us, whether we like it or not. Will we get back a better person than we sent away? As punishment has some validity, but not much, since in the end it is counter-productive.

FOR REHABILITATION: This should be the goal for all prisons, but the few employees of America's prisons involved in this endeavor are overwhelmed with the enormity of the task and the limited resources at their disposal to accomplish this task. The result is that few, if any, prisons have rehabilitation as their stated primary goal. For most prisons, their unwritten stated goal is to function as efficiently as they can within the budget they are allotted, as a human warehouse. We'll keep them safe until they have finished their time and then we will let them out and wait for them to return. We know they will return, because we have not prepared them in any way to cope with the world outside. Halfway houses are a joke and the convicts all know it. We will give a medical doctor who was sent to prison a job washing dishes so he can afford to live in a flophouse. We have done our job; he is "rehabilitated" and if he ends up back in prison it is his fault, not ours. That is the prevailing philosophy on rehabilitation. We, the taxpayers, wonder why there is such a high recidivism rate.

TO PROTECT SOCIETY: What a joke that is. The average man who goes to prison will spend an average of fewer than five years in prison, yet actuary tables tell us that he will live another forty years or so after he is released. Yes, society is protected for the five or ten percent of his remaining life that he will be incarcerated, for his most recent crime; then we will turn him loose with absolutely no options other than to commit another crime just to survive. When he commits that next crime, one of you, dear taxpayer, will be his victim.

FOR REVENGE: Criminologists don't use this reason, but nevertheless it is a valid reason for sending someone to prison. He wronged me and I did not deserve to be wronged so I will fix him; I will send him to prison and then do everything in my power to make sure he does not get out. I do this because I am afraid that he will come looking for me and take his revenge out on me for sending him to prison. That sums up the collective reasoning. Look at the horrible thing that he did; we'll teach him, we'll send him to prison. Another form of revenge reasoning.

AS A DETERRENT TO CRIME: He won't do that because he knows what will happen to him. He will go to prison, therefore he won't do the crime. We all know that the threat of going to prison is no more a deterrent to crime than the threat of the death penalty is a deterrent to murder. England, which does not have the death penalty has a much lower per capita murder rate than those states in the U.S. that do have the death penalty and states that have the death penalty do not enjoy a per capita murder rate any lower than the states that do not have the death penalty. Fear of going to prison does not keep people from committing crimes.

To sum it up, the reasons for maintaining this antiquated prison system that we now have are weak. The United States has a higher percentage of citizens behind bars than does any other developed nation on earth. Not only is our prison population growing in numbers at a runaway pace, it is also growing as a percent of the total population. As a nation, just what percent of the total population can we afford to keep incarcerated and still survive as a nation? As the land of the free and the home of the brave, could we become the land of the free eighty percent, or possibly the land of the

free sixty percent?

IF YOU ARE A SENTENCED INMATE SERVING TIME OR IF YOU HAVE A LOVED ONE THAT IS THEN PLEASE HELP ME PUBLISIZE THIS BOOK BY WORD OF MOUTH. I am Cliff Roehr, the Author, and I sincerely believe that the concepts of this book should be considered by the powers that be. If you believe that then please make it your responsibility to get this book into their hands and into every prison library in the United States and Canada. This concept could come to pass if enough of us want it badly enough and try hard enough to get someone somewhere to give it a try.

IF YOU TOOK THE TIME TO READ THIS BOOK THEN PLEASE TAKE THE TIME TO LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU THOUGHT OF IT. Send me an email at pahrumpsters@yahoo.com.

If you liked the book then please consider ordering a copy or copies and have them sent directly from <http://Amazon.com> ISBN 1-59109-846-7 to the prison library of your choice/and or to the public official of your choice. I think this book could make a difference in our penal system if enough people read it.