

FIGHTING CHANCE

John 8: 31-32

Proverbs 22: 3

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RIFLE BAGS

So far the Middle East war has been a war of ships, airplanes, and missiles. Fortunately, American ground forces have not been involved in much individual combat, and, hopefully, they are now all coming home.

Nevertheless, hundreds of thousands of American infantry soldiers were sent to the Middle East armed with rifles and the other items of personal infantry equipment. Had they been required to fight with this equipment, many unnecessary deaths would have occurred.

Most of you know of Cresson Kearny as the author of Nuclear War Survival Skills. He is, in fact, the acknowledged world's expert on expedient civil defense. He is also a Rhodes Scholar who graduated summa cum laude from Princeton and earned two degrees at Oxford.

Less known, however, is that Cresson Kearny (now retired and living in Colorado) is America's foremost living designer of field-tested infantry equipment. Many of the items which American soldiers carried in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam were invented, adapted, and field-tested by Cresson Kearny and his colleagues.

This aspect of his career has involved the scientific aspects of invention and experimentation and the frustrating political aspects of dealing with the absurd Washington bureaucracy which seems to stand perpetually between Americans and innovation - especially in necessarily government programs such as defense. Even the high technology weapons used successfully in the Middle East were developed against continual opposition from the dead hand of Washington bureaucrats and politicians.

The military bureaucracy has been especially negligent when it comes to personal equipment for infantry. Not only have they been slow to provide needed equipment in wartime, but they often stop producing needed items which then must be reinvented