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## Reloading 7.62 Nagant

Editor:

The 7.62 mm Russian revolver may be reloaded satisfactorily using standard .32-20 cases. The only extra trouble I incurred was thinning the rims of the .32-20 W-W cases on a lathe, as they were too thick for the cylinder to revolve. It is probably possible to use the cases as-is in the Nagant revolver by filing down the block which pushes the cylinder forward and through which the firing pin projects, but I do not like altering guns and preferred thinning the rims.

I had, and therefore used, .30 Carbine and .32 A.C.P. dies. Either will do. However, if you have to purchase dies I believe .32-20 might be better. The new W-W cases I used were a tight fit with .311" dia. 120-gr. bullets intended for the M1 Carbine and did not need to be crimped, but mouths had to be belled to start the bullets. The new cases were resized using either the .30 Carbine or .32 Auto dies as some were too large in diameter to chamber fully.

To reload after the first firing, the cases were decapped manually, then resized. After seating the bullets, they were crimped slightly as the necks were not sized small enough to hold the bullets by their tension alone.

Powder charges from 2.8 to 3.5 grs. of Bullseye may be used. The groove diameter of my bore measures .314". Accuracy is fair, and more than adequate for short range plinking.

It is satisfying to be able to fire an odd-ball revolver for which ammo was previously unavailable.

ROBERT PEARL  
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## M16 vs. M14

Editor:

I've just finished rereading Lt.Col. Wigger's article in the April 1, 1978 issue of the *American Rifleman*. It inspired me to write a letter which, perhaps, should have been written long before.

I served with the Army from May, 1966, to May, 1969, including a year in Vietnam. We received excellent instruction in the care and use of the M14 rifle during basic training at Ft. Ord, Calif. By the end of basic training, we were quite confident in our ability to use the M14 rifle effectively.

In September, 1967, I was sent to Vietnam. My only acquaintance with the M16 prior to that time was a two-day "familiarization course," during which each soldier fired a total of perhaps 35 rounds. Rifle malfunctions were fairly common, but were explained away by saying "these rifles are just worn-out trainers. You'll get new ones in Vietnam."

On arrival in Vietnam, I received what could loosely be called replacement training. We were given a casual familiari-

zation with booby traps, and were taught useful things like how to jump out of helicopters. No rifle training was received.

I was later issued an M16 but had no opportunity to zero it. Since I was supposed to be a garrison trooper, this may have made sense to the brass.

Vietnam being the kind of war it was, however, life was not peaceful for long. The first time I had to fire my rifle in combat it jammed, even though I had scrupulously maintained both weapon and ammunition.

Perhaps my one great accomplishment after this was to coerce the battalion operations officer to allow our headquarters troops to test-fire their M16s. About half of the weapons malfunctioned during the 15 minutes allowed for this operation.

This problem seemed to be fairly common, not only with the poorly-maintained rifles of the base-camp troops but with those of the line soldiers as well.

In the nearly 10 years since I left the Army, I've talked to a number of veterans about the merits of the M16. Without exception, every individual who carried an M16 in combat considered it an unreliable, untrustworthy device. Most of those who had some familiarity with the M14 stated that they would have preferred one over an M16. Reliability and accuracy were the reasons most commonly given for this choice.

A lack of confidence in a particular rifle will often lead to a lack of interest in using it well. And when one is told that a constantly-recurring problem was solved long ago, one tends to doubt the source that makes the claim. Lessons of this nature tend to be remembered for a long time. The distrust which is generated tends to spread. So though it may seem fanciful, it is possible that a contributing factor to the poor morale of American troops in Vietnam, especially in the latter part of the war, can be directly traced to a lack of confidence in the M16 rifle.

MARK J. ROSENBAUM  
PITTSBURGH, CALIF.

## Hunting Blind Canvas

Editor:

A hunting blind is usually built with only one objective in mind: concealment. It must appear to be part of the physical surroundings. Blinds are constructed at ground level, below ground, or elevated above ground (or water). Most portable blinds are bulky and difficult to move about in.

Permanent blinds place a considerable limitation on the mobile hunter who enjoys a variety of hunting locations. Cost of construction is another drawback.

An economical alternative that meets most hunters' needs is the simple gray-green canvas tarpaulin. I have set both duck and goose decoys in shallow waters, covered myself with a faded 6 ft. x 10 ft.

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