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A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

P-KANE, Joseph
P-HANNIFIN, Jerry
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This week's cover story is a sales report of sorts. The goods are TOWs, AK-47s, F-5s, MIG-23s, C-130s, Uzi submachine guns and French commando daggers—commodities in one of the world's busiest and potentially most lethal markets, the world arms trade. Associate Editor Burton Pines and Reporter-Researcher Genevieve Wilson began working on the intricate story several weeks ago, as the already staccato pace of major arms deals accelerated. "The most startling figure we found," Wilson says, "is that arms sales have increased 6000% since 1952, from $300 million to $18 *billion.*" Adds Pines: "We had to rewrite our lead paragraphs several times just to catch up with sales made while we were working."

DIRTY DINSMORE

HANNIFIN WITH JET

TERRY ARTHUR

KANE IN ARMY HELICOPTER

For the story, he used reports from correspondents in exporting nations like France and Britain as well as in customer countries in the Middle East and elsewhere. Something of a specialist in the field, Pines has recently written several analyses of strategic weapons for TIME, and last year attended Oxford University's conference on "Changes in the Balance of Power."

In the U.S., correspondents from Boston to Los Angeles spoke with academic experts, arms manufacturers and dealers, but the main files came from Washington. There, Joseph Kane, who covers the Pentagon, and Jerry Hannifin, our expert in military and aerospace technology, collaborated to analyze the policies and hardware of the world's largest arms purveyor: the U.S. No stranger to weapons or military politics, Kane commanded a howitzer battery in the peacetime Army in Germany in the early 1950s. As Atlanta bureau chief he directed coverage of the William Calley court martial, last year reported for our cover story on Defense Secretary James Schlesinger and the U.S.-Soviet arms balance.

Hannifin, a licensed pilot for more than 25 years, has flown several of the U.S.'s "hottest" fighters (among them the F-105 and the A-7 Corsair II) in the course of covering civil and military aerospace for TIME. Besides reporting for the arms trade story, both Hannifin and Kane contributed to an analysis of the new electronic weapons, which may radically alter the dynamics of future wars and which, we feel, warrant a separate story in this week's Science section.

When word of TIME's cover story circulated among Washington arms dealers, Hannifin found himself invited to West Virginia by a munitions merchant to try his hand at firing M-16s and Uzis. "I didn't shoot badly," he reports, "perhaps because I remembered what my old rifle-team instructor at Boise, Idaho, high school taught me. I put a speck of cigarette tobacco in my shooting eye to help with the windage."

Ralph P. Davidson

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