



Chosen Soldier: The Making of a Special Forces Warrior

Dick Couch

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IN combating terror, America can no longer depend on its conventional military superiority and the use of sophisticated technology. We are fighting guerrilla wars, against insurgents hidden in remote regions, often deep among the local population. In battles such as these, squadrons of billion-dollar bombers and naval fleets mean much less than on-the-ground intelligence and the ability to organize local forces. That's why, more than ever before, we need men like those of the Army Special Forces—the legendary Green Berets. In *Chosen Soldier*, Dick Couch—a former Navy SEAL widely admired for his books about SEAL training and operations—offers an unprecedented view of the training of the Army Special Forces warrior. Each year, several thousand enlisted men and several hundred officers volunteer for Special Forces training; less than a quarter of those who apply will complete the course. *Chosen Soldier* spells out in fascinating detail the arduous regimen these men undergo—the demanding selection process and grueling field exercises, the high-level technical training and intensive language courses, and the simulated battle problems that test everything from how well they gather operational intelligence to their skills at negotiating with volatile, often hostile, local leaders.

Green Berets are expected to be deadly in combat, yes, but their responsibilities go far beyond those of other Special Operations fighters; they're taught to operate in foreign cultures, often behind enemy lines; to recruit, train, and lead local forces; to gather intelligence in hostile territory; to forge bonds across languages and cultures. They must not only be experts in such fields as explosives, communications, engineering, and field medicine, but also be able to teach those skills to others. Each and every Green Beret must function as tactical combat leader, negotiator, teacher, drill sergeant, and diplomat.

These tasks require more than just physical prowess; they require a unique mix of character, intelligence, language skills, and—most of all—adaptability. It's no wonder that the Green Berets' training regimen is known as the hardest in the world. Drawing on his unprecedented access to the closed world of Army Special Forces training, Dick Couch paints a vivid, intimate portrait of these extraordinary men and the process that forges America's smartest, most versatile, and most valuable fighting force.

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