

James L. Holly, M.D.

Green Beret -- The Chosen -- The Making of a Special Forces Warrior

Green Berets

Since the Special Services Forces was formed in 1942 (dramatized in the movie, *The Devil's Brigade*, and particularly since the movie, *The Green Berets* (1968), America has known the name but seldom understood what our young men have endured to serve in this prestigious force.

This article is an introduction to the following book which details the training of the Green Berets, followed by the lyrics and link to the song, *The Ballad of the Green Beret*.

For all Americans, the Green Beret Story is a source of pride for some it is a very personal story.

Chosen Soldier: The Making of a Special Forces Warrior by Dick Couch (Crown Publishers, New York, 7007)

“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 force. 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 Force 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 language 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 leaders, 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.”

Ballad Of The Green Berets

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5WJVVSE_BE

As Written & Performed by SSgt Barry Sadler

*Fighting soldiers from the sky
Fearless men who jump and die
Men who mean just what they say
The brave men of the Green Beret*

*Silver wings upon their chest
These are men, America's best
One hundred men we'll test today
But only three win the Green Beret*

*Trained to live, off nature's land
Trained in combat, hand to hand
Men who fight by night and day
Courage deep, from the Green Beret*

*Silver wings upon their chest
These are men, America's best
One hundred men we'll test today
But only three win the Green Beret*

*Back at home a young wife waits
Her Green Beret has met his fate
He has died for those oppressed
Leaving her this last request*

*Put silver wings on my son's chest
Make him one of America's best*

*He'll be a man they'll test one day
Have him win the Green Beret*

The Green Beret



*The men of the Special Forces are masters of their profession,
the profession of arms.*

*Theirs is more than a job or an occupation.
It is a way of life that requires
a personal commitment found nowhere
else in society. Its obligation is
dedication...it's demands, duty and
loyalty...it's principle, integrity
...and its reward, personal satisfaction.*

*Their countrymen see them as the
epitome of the American fighting man.
Their badge of distinction is the
Green Beret known and respected worldwide.*

They wear it proudly!