

## BOOK REVIEW

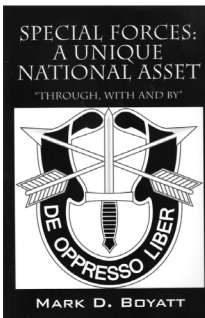
### Special Forces

#### *A Unique National Asset Through, With, and By*

Boyatt, Mark D. *Special Forces: A Unique National Asset. Through, With, and By*. Denver, CO: Outskirts Press; 2016. ISBN-10: 1478766395 and ISBN-13: 978-1478766391. 578 pages.

Review by COL (Ret) Warner "Rocky" D. Farr, MD, MPH

**O**K, a disclaimer right up front: I know this guy. He is a great Special Forces Soldier and a deep thinker. We served together and knew each other at US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School in the late 1990s. Mark has had a varied career, from Green Light Team to Blue Light member in the 1970s (ask around if you do not know what those are) to a successful Special Forces Battalion command in the 1980s, and as 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne) commander in the 1990s in Haiti. Gee, have I mentioned that while at Army War College he wrote a thesis in which he originated the term "*through, with, and by*"?<sup>1</sup>



This is an very interesting book. It covers Special Forces from selection, to assessment, to training, to mission set, to regional focus, and to ideology. Much of this broad brush of what is Special Forces is accomplished through excerpts from various manuals back to and including several from the Office of Strategic Services. The book is necessary to have simply for all the references. Personally, I found many needed references in this book for a monograph that I am writing (thanks, Mark). In particular, Mark discusses the groundbreaking concept of Special Action Forces, a 1960–1970 effort to have

a total Special Operations Force array (Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, Logistics, Medical, Aviation, Special Forces, Intelligence, Engineer, Military Police) regionally focused, language qualified, and all under a designated regional Special Forces Group. It was a harbinger of what the Theater Special Operations Commands have become today.

This book could stand alone as a textbook for Special Forces training. Mark covers everything from the ethos to the doctrine to the real stories on how it happened. It should be required reading for all US ambassadors, congressmen, and anyone else who has to deal with Special Forces. However, it is more. It should be read by all Special Forces Soldiers to see our origins and how we got to where we are today. In the interest of accuracy and truth, every US Senator and Congressman, staffer, military reporter, and senior military officer should use this book for a desk reference. I cannot recommend it too highly as a one-source reference for all of Special Forces.

#### Reference

1. Boyatt MD. Unconventional Operations Forces of Special Operations. 1993. [www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a264031.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a264031.pdf). Accessed 18 July 2016.



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