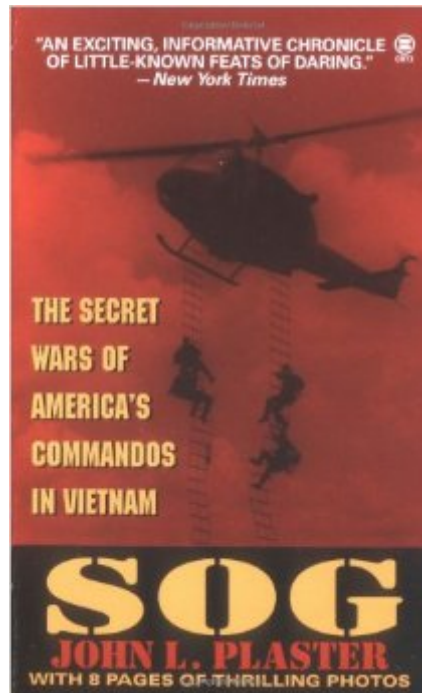


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Sog: The Secret Wars Of America's Commandos In Vietnam



Synopsis

Major John L. Plaster, a three-tour veteran of Vietnam tells the story of the most highly classified United States covert operatives to serve in the war: The Studies and Observations Group, code-named SOG. Comprised of volunteers from such elite military units as the Army's Green Berets, the USAF Air Commandos, and Navy SEALs, SOG agents answered directly to the Pentagon's Joint Chiefs, with some missions requiring approval from the White House. Now for the first time, the dangerous assignments of this top-secret unit can at last be revealed!

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Customer Reviews

Today I read the outrageous criticisms posted by Donald Zlotnik and Sherman Batman. Instead of attacking them personally, which would be easy to do, I offer these facts in repudiation: First, Sherman Batman claimed much of what I wrote didn't happen, was wrong, etc. He called my writing on the suppressed Swedish K a "stupid statement" and insisted that SOG did not such weapons (as if that were important). Look at the April 2015 American Rifleman magazine, page 91, a photograph of SOG recon man Hurley Gilpin with a suppressed Swedish K. I carried one myself in combat -- Batman was wrong. Another "stupid statement" he cited (which I never wrote) concerned a potential rusting problem with the M16/CAR-15, and insists it was impossible because these are aluminum weapons. What I cited concerned the trigger mechanism which is steel, and was cited in Congressional testimony in 1968 as one of the Colt weapon's problems in Vietnam. Again, he was totally wrong and even misrepresented what I wrote. As for whether we sang in the club to memorialize each lost man, Batman can phone Joe Parnar, whom he knows, and learn that this is absolutely true. The song often was led by the Recon Company commander, Ed Lesesne. My

writing of this book was supported by 3 years of research, which included TAPED interviews with all four living Chief's SOG (the SOG commanders) in their homes, such as Major General Jack Singlaub and General Donald Blackburn. Did they lie? It included TAPED interviews with all seven surviving SOG Medal of Honor recipients. In the 3 other cases, I interviewed the men who were with them when they died earning that Medal. In all, I interviewed more than 100 SOG veterans of all ranks, which generated 10,000 transcript pages, single-spaced.

I am a veteran of SOG having served with CCC, FOB-2, Kontum RVN. After being assigned to ST Illinois I pulled several missions and suddenly found myself One-Zero (Team Leader) after the One-Zero quit Recon and moved on to the Hatchet Force. I have conversed with John Plaster on several occasions and have purchased all his books. In this particular book I am mentioned on pages 89-90 where he (Plaster) tells what he says is the story of the "Bright Lights" mission that recovered the body of SP5 John Kedenburg MOH. I and my assistant Team Leader, One-One, Mike Tramel have read this tale and were absolutely astounded to learn from Plaster's book what a couple of bumbling heroes we were. In short, the only truthful details is our names. The date, and details of the mission are 100% BS. In addition to our mission Plaster makes several stupid statements in his book that defy the imagination. For example: He states that Thunderstorms in VN (SE Asia) do not produce lightning only thunder. He was issued a Silenced Swedish K SMG. To the best of my knowledge and belief we had a plethora of Silenced Sten Guns/.22 cal colt woodsman pistols, a conex container of Swedish K's but none had silencers. He always checked his safety just prior of getting out of the Helicopter to insure, due to humid weather in VN, that it had not rusted solid. Now this would be a real trick since the receiver of the CAR-15 was aluminium alloy and did not rust. Going to the Club and singing "Old Blue" everytime a US SF soldier was lost. This never happened while I was at the FOB, again to the best of my knowledge and belief. However, SFC James McGlon was known as "Old Blue" because he was always singing "Old Blue" at the Club.

I write this review with a 1-star rating with the chief purpose of debunking the only other 1-star rating on this book and a companion 2-star rating. Actually, I rate Plaster's books as 5-star. I was one of the SOG recon men of whom Plaster writes in his books. His account of one of my missions was spot on factual with no exaggerations, no literary license, no embellishment. Were there a few errors in the accounts? Possibly due to the erosion of memories over time. But Plaster interviewed dozens of SOG personnel, and in most cases sought to confirm their mission exploits both from other team members on those particular missions, and from official documents to include after action and

command summary reports. In particular, Major Zlotnik (Retired), the only reviewer who rated Plaster's book with one star, claims knowledge that he does not possess. Unlike John Plaster, who was a top-notch recon team leader and possessed first hand knowledge and experience, Zlotnik served as a supply/staff officer who claims to have sat in on debriefings (which in my experience would be unlikely for a supply officer) and had access to after action reports (also unlikely) and possessed vicarious insights only. I will also point out that most of SOG's Medal of Honor recipients came from CCC, so his claims that CCN was the most hazardous SOG operation is uninformed and clearly ridiculous; note also that CCC's casualty rate also exceeded 100%. And Zlotnik's access to mission information from the other SOB forward operating bases was virtually non-existent in a compartmented intelligence environment, so he couldn't possibly pass authoritative judgement on the relative hazards. In respect to the 2-star review by Sherman Batman, please note that his SOG assignment appears to have been "circa 1968".

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