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War Dogs: How Three Stoners From Miami Beach Became The Most Unlikely Gunrunners In History



Synopsis

The pause-resister inside account of how two kids from Florida became big-time weapons traders - and how the US government turned on them. In January 2007 two young stoners from Miami Beach - one a ninth-grade dropout, the other a licensed masseur - won a \$300 million Department of Defense contract to supply ammunition to the Afghanistan military. Incredibly, instead of fulfilling the order with high-quality arms, Efraim Diveroli and David Packouz - the dudes - bought cheap Communist-style surplus ammunition from Balkan gunrunners. The pair then secretly repackaged millions of rounds of shoddy Chinese ammunition and shipped it to Kabul - until they were caught by Pentagon investigators and the scandal turned up on the front page of The New York Times. That's the "official" story. The truth is far more explosive. For the first time, journalist Guy Lawson tells the thrilling true tale. It's a trip that goes from a dive apartment in Miami Beach to mountain caves in Albania, the corridors of power in Washington, and the frontlines of Iraq and Afghanistan. Lawson's account includes a shady Swiss gunrunner, Russian arms dealers, corrupt Albanian gangsters, and a Pentagon investigation that impeded America's war efforts in Afghanistan. Lawson exposes the mysterious and murky world of global arms dealing, showing how the American military came to use private contractors like Diveroli and Packouz as middlemen to secure weapons from illegal arms dealers - the same men who sell guns to dictators, warlords, and drug traffickers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Good read, different then movie. It is interesting how the movie can largely twist the facts. Many differences from movie, and hard to tell at times which is the right story. A very detailed and thoughtful book.

It reads like a long article but gives very interesting insight into the politics and corruption behind the business of war. It's all seen through the eyes of a couple of amateur kids so it makes for a pretty good story. The movie was entertaining but definitely puts many changes on the real story from the book. If you liked the movie but want to know more and the true story, then it is a must read.

I really enjoyed this book, finding it both a wildly entertaining story and a story from which I learned a lot about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Lawson provides a fascinating look into the shady world of arms dealing, and the bizarre, almost farcical, nature of military bureaucracy. In doing so he exposes many of the absurdities of war and foreign policy - such as how the US govt. ban on Chinese armaments caused millions of AK-47 rounds manufactured by the Chinese decades ago to sit, unused in US military warehouses while the Afghan National Army faced such a severe ammunition shortage that Afghan soldiers were quite literally faced with fighting the Taliban without any bullets to fire back.

Enjoyed this as much as the previous Lawson books. Fast read and once again found myself amazed about the truths. Better than fiction.

Intriguing book, but not exciting. I would have liked more about their religious background and family life. It was unclear how the characters were able to actually get into the arms dealing business, and how they managed to avoid being "bumped off". Overall, it was entertaining, but not a piece of literature with staying power.

It is unbelievable what these two were able to accomplish being so young. The book has double the drama than the movie, as good as the movie was too.

Shortest review possible. Lawson always does a great job of taking something intricate and unravels it slowly, highlights all the necessary points that are integral to understanding the story. Not so easy to do in the world of arms dealing. I've had extensive experience tracking down stolen munitions through third-world nations and telling the story. Unfortunately, most of the story is usually

impossible to fully vet. Lawson didn't have it any easier even in dealing with a situation involving a U.S. company and the U.S. Govt. It's the polar opposite. Info and docs everywhere. The same problem of piecing together the story exists as it does in my area of work. But with one unique exception: the documentation can easily hinder the progress of telling the story. So had a off to Lawson, once again.

The author is a former writer for Rolling Stone. As such the story, while compelling is salted with Mr. Lawson's personal opinions of the war in Iraq. This takes away from the story and I could not help but wonder sometimes if I was reading the tale of two young men who made a fortune in the arms trade or if I was reading the musings of Guy Lawson.

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