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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

I have no particular interest in arms trading, but I love a good read, and this jaw dropping true story

kept me up reading until 3am! It is an incredibly well researched piece of journalism, but it reads like page-turning fiction - except this story is way too crazy to have been made up. Guy Lawson is at the top of his game here, letting us in on how two stoner teenagers (working at a kitchen table with two cellphones) were awarded millions of dollars of US government military contracts and how they deal with everyone from sleazy but world renowned international arms dealers to average Joe's taking advantage of the loosely regulated world of internet gun trade. I will never again be able to hear about troops being deployed anywhere for any reason without wondering where their weapons came from, and who procured them.

A fun and educational read tailor-made for people (like me) whose eyes glaze over at the minutiae of government policy and international relations. Lawson explains the complex legal and historical matters that contribute to the plot in a clear, concise way--just the facts to help illustrate the ridiculousness of this true story, paired with amazing interviews from the dudes themselves. I flew through it in 48 hours, totally hooked by the great storytelling. I learned a ton and highly recommend this book!

I saw the movie, "War Dogs," twice, and I wanted to know more about the actual story. Now I'm reading the book, "Arms and the Dudes," and I'm really enjoying it. I'm especially appreciating the exhaustive research Guy Lawson does for his books -- and the background information he provides on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The author is a true, old-fashioned journalist who obviously enjoys interviewing people and writing about them. This book is a real "page turner" for me, and I recommend it highly.

A history book with so much humor and suspense that it reads like a good novel. Lawson writes a story of young ambition and living the dream with vengeance. On a more serious note, the book illuminates the little known world of government financing and shows what kind of deals the US government has to sign with the devil to keep up empire.

This is an amazing story. I still find it hard to believe that it actually happened even though I know that it did. I guess it's just a matter of time before it becomes a movie. The author did a very good job writing I was never bored.

Was intrigued by the commercials for the movie so I decided to read the book. A fast read and

incredibly interesting, quite surprised at how easy it was for these very young men to get arms contracts. Everyone should read this book.

I read this book as a firearms enthusiast. It's clear to me that these guys, although two of them come off as extremely selfish and greedy, were basically entrapped. (Especially in the coda at the end) When the law is unclear (as it was about the Chinese ammunition issue - five+ years storage should effectively "repatriate" it) it seems like the leeway is given to the prosecution, not the defendant. Entrapment, entrapment, entrapment. We needed this ammunition for our Afghan allies, and all this book does is show how venal some law enforcement can be, and how screwed up the procurement process was, and still is. The book itself is breezy, well written and entertaining.

Good read, different than 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.

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