

DISCLAIMER

In 1967, DoD sent a psychiatrist [Dr Peter Bourne] to interview the troops in Vietnam to study stress in the combat zone. *The New York Times* published an article describing some of his interim conclusions while I was assigned to the C Detachment (Company B) in Pleiku. Bourne determined that there was a challenge going on at the A detachments, forcing the camp commanders to attempt ever greater risks in order to maintain his authority over the NCO's on his team. Bourne concluded that the life expectancy for an A-detachment commander was three months.

While this may have been an interesting theory, the statistics that I had in IICTZ did not bear out Bourne's conclusions. It was easy to imagine the long nights in the team house where Bourne's chain was being mightily yanked by member of the team.

The reason this comes to mind is Vincent Coppola's book, *Uneasy Warriors*. Mr Coppola is a much better writer than he is a reporter. I don't believe that he seriously misquoted Tony Coehlo, Joe Cincotti, Ben Dennis, Ed MacDougall, Sid Lumpkin, Steve Sosa, Joe Argentieri, Joe Lupyak and other denizens of "Fayette-Nam," but they may have shaded their war stories in ways that he bought hook line and sinker.

Coppola, like Bourne, was predisposed to accept the worst. Both the careless historical errors and the anti-Vietnam soldier attitude are apparent throughout the book. The writing, however, is good enough to maintain the reader's interest and none of the subjects will complain too much that his individual story was seriously misrepresented.

Coppola understands that there is a difference between an Special Forces and the rest of the Army. But I don't think he has been successful in capturing the spirit of *De Oppresso Liber* with his concept of a Faustian bargain for the Special Forces trooper's soul. The Special Forces motto works both ways.