



About Face: The Odyssey of an American Writer

David H. Hackworth, Julie Sherman

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Colonel Hackworth was the youngest 'Old Man' in the Korean War, and the youngest full colonel in Vietnam. To this day, he is America's most decorated living soldier. Yet he is also the reputed model for the infamous Colonel Kurtz in "Apocalypse Now". For the last eighteen years, he has lived in self-imposed exile in Australia, a man at odds with the nation he served so well. In "About Face" Hackworth tells the incredible story of his life. Orphaned before he was a year old, he found his home at the age of fifteen as a volunteer in the Army. During the first year of the Korean War, his extraordinary acts of heroism brought him, at age twenty, a battlefield commission. A highly decorated captain at the end of the war, Hackworth for the next twelve years was the consummate Cold Warrior, commanding troops in Germany and the United States and directly participating in such cold War flash points as the Berlin wall and the Cuban missile crises. By 1965 Hackworth was in Vietnam, where for most of the next six years his unmatched battlefield achievements made him a living legend. But the medals and accolades could not counter his growing disillusionment with what he had come to see as an unwinnable war, and in 1971 he left the Army after appearing on "Issues and Answers" to decry the tragically misguided and doomed American effort in Vietnam. It is an extraordinary account of a man of exemplary patriotism, played out against the backdrop of the changing fortunes of America and the American military since World War II. And finally, it is an indictment - not just of the Pentagon's fundamental misunderstanding of the conflict in Vietnam, but of the bureaucracy and self-interest that fueled that lost war.



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