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Take That Hill! Royal Marines in the Falklands War

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this book; copious research notes are included as an appendix.

However, I failed to discern any military lessons to be learned from *Howlin' Mad vs the Army*; the book's greatest utility perhaps may be as a ready reference for any point-counterpoint argument one may have as to whether Holland Smith was justified in relieving Ralph Smith. If you face the spectre of that issue raising its ugly head anytime in your career, you might find *Howlin' Mad vs the Army* useful; otherwise, however, your professional library will be complete without it.

ARLEN B. COYLE
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Vaux, Nick. *Take That Hill! Royal Marines in the Falklands War*. Elmsford, N.Y.: Pergamon, 1987. 256pp. \$21.95 paper \$13.75

Major General Nick Vaux, Royal Marines, has written a marvelous story about his experiences as commanding officer of 42 Commando during the recent Falkland Islands campaign. The book begins in April 1982 when then Lieutenant Colonel Vaux and his commando were alerted to a crisis in the Falklands and ends with their triumphant return to England in July.

It covers the severe hardships they endured as a result of the extreme weather and terrain conditions in those South Atlantic islands, their valiant fight under adverse conditions, the administrative and logistics problems inherent in any distant

operation, especially one organized on an *ad hoc* basis, and the successful completion of their mission.

Although the emphasis is on 42 Commando, the author gives appropriate credit to the other units involved: the entire Commando Brigade, various British Army formations (especially the two parachute battalions), the Royal Navy, and the commercial ships and their crews.

As noted by other commentators, this is not a book on strategy. Rather, it addresses fighting from the company level down to the individual level; how well the Marines performed.

There are many examples of tactical brilliance, individual heroism and endurance, and battle-field humor; Argentine POWs thought that the arrival of a British chaplain meant that they would receive the last rites before being executed. Decisions made in the comfort of Northwoods in England were not always appreciated in the wind and rain of the islands. Once again, the complexities of amphibious operations and the detailed planning required for them are well-illustrated. In this case the illustrations include the importance of civilian shipping, the scarcity of air and logistics support, and the terrible weather. Tactically, 42 Commando landed as the reserve, moved forward to become a front-line unit and, finally, seized their assigned objective, Mt. Harriet. These maneuvers required the commando to overcome a variety of tactical problems, not the least of

which were C³; the need to march at night; the scarcity of helicopter support; and the need for individuals to keep in mind their own survival.

Their commanding officer has written a well-deserved tribute to his men and to those who fought alongside them or supported them.

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Turner, Robert F. *Nicaragua v. United States: A Look at the Facts*. McLean, Va.: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1987. 159pp. \$9.95

"... if the US Congress decides once again to deny support to groups in Central America who wish to resist the Sandinistas, Nicaragua—with the continued support of Cuba and the Soviet Union—can be expected to succeed in its efforts to overthrow neighboring democratic governments." On 3 February 1988, four weeks after the book containing this warning became available, the U.S. House of Representatives defeated a modest funding request that was 90 percent humanitarian and 10 percent military assistance.

If persuading the U.S. Congress to identify Nicaragua as the military aggressor in Central America is the norm by which Robert F. Turner's book must be judged, the verdict is in and he has failed. Yet, the case is rationally argued, assembled with balance, and meticulously documented.

Turner's "Background to Conflict" chapter describes the legacy of the two U.S. military occupations of

Nicaragua, the broad-based Sandinista revolution of 1977-1979, and two years of U.S. economic support for the new regime. Next, the "Marxism-Leninism" chapter details the long-term process, 1961-1979, by which a dedicated minority manipulated the revolution and seized control in the hour of victory. That margin of control, Turner demonstrates, was Cuban support carried out within Managua by expert conflict managers.

The strongest chapter is "Nicaraguan Aggression Against El Salvador," which outlines the steps by which Cuba's government used Nicaragua as a staging base for arming and assembling a revolutionary coalition in El Salvador. Some attention is devoted to the brilliant steps by which disinformation and active measures were employed to deceive members of the U.S. Congress, the press, and the celebrity world. Succeeding chapters reveal a surprisingly well-documented pattern of Sandinista aggression against Honduras and Costa Rica.

The final chapter is a moral and legal argument for U.S. aid to the democratic resistance (Contras). Turner, once a U.S. Army officer and later a State Department official in South Vietnam, offers no melancholy domino theory, just a warning that the United States will be forced to pay a higher military price to neutralize Soviet surrogate military power in Central America later.

Turner clears up many common misbeliefs about recent turmoil in Nicaragua and El Salvador. The Sandinistas militarized to a level ten