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Geostrat'egie de l'Atlantique Sud

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activities and traditional American ideals.

Two basic factors serve to reduce the value of this book. First, in spite of its title, this volume is not really about *military* intelligence. In fact, chapter 2, which describes the Defense Intelligence Community, is the only section of this book which deals specifically with military intelligence. Every other essay would be equally at home in a more generic volume on the U.S. intelligence community. This is not to detract from the quality or value of the individual essays. The point is simply that if the reader, guided by the title, is expecting to encounter three hundred pages devoted to the military intelligence community, he will not find it in this book.

Second, a common criticism of many recent books which purport to deal with intelligence is that they are little more than collections of "spy stories," descriptions of individual exploits and operations without much grounding in the structure and organization of the intelligence discipline. *The Military Intelligence Community* is essentially the opposite: it tends to be academic and abstract without sufficient links to the real world. In short, it appears to be written for the professional student of intelligence rather than for the intelligence professional.

G.W. HARTMAN
Captain, U.S. Navy
Naval War College

Couteau-Bégarie, Hervé. *Géostratégie de l'Atlantique Sud*. Paris, France: Presses Universitaires de France, 1985. 214pp.

Mainly because the Suez Canal and the Panama Canal rendered the area almost obsolete in terms of heavy shipping, many people consider the South Atlantic peripheral to the East-West struggle. But the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967 revealed a serious vulnerability, as the old routes of the Cape of Good Hope and the Horn regained value.

Be that as it may, Hervé Couteau-Bégarie, a young French scholar, holds that the South Atlantic is, geopolitically speaking, of subordinate importance. This is not to say that it lacks a significant relevance. It has such relevance for three reasons: it includes vital sea lines of communications, the riparian countries are important to the Western Alliance, and the potential operation of missile submarines in its waters would add a new dimension to deterrence.

This book examines the development of the bordering countries' naval power, and those powers' potential influence on the superpowers' policies. Couteau-Bégarie sees the South Atlantic not as a closed system, but as another element in the global struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union. He also points out the effect of the struggle for regional hegemony by the southern Latin American countries, the role of the Antarctic region, the Soviet Union's presence in Angola and its effort to influence vital oil

lines, and the African expectancy of more influence upon world events.

Finally, the author emphasizes that although the South Atlantic is a low-risk area, its defense must be considered in a protracted war and, as such, some sort of agreement or alliance must be devised so as to involve the bordering countries in such a task. If one thinks that an attack on the South Atlantic sea lines of communications is highly improbable, then one must accept the same for an attack in Central Europe. But it is on this improbable hypothesis that the very existence of NATO is based.

This is a very interesting book on a not so well-known issue. Unfortunately, so far, it is available only in French.

ARIEL M. ROSAS
Captain, Chilean Navy

Dickey, Christopher. *With the Contras: A Reporter in the Wilds of Nicaragua*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985. 327pp. \$18.95

Given the title of the book, and add to it the author's pedigree—*Washington Post* Bureau Chief for Central America for three years, followed by a fellowship during which he produced this book—one expects a serious journalistic effort, well-documented and accurate in its facts. Finally, one might also expect to leave the book with a broader understanding of the Contras as an organization (if, indeed, they have

one) and a balanced assessment of their capabilities and potential.

If one has such expectations, one will be disappointed. What has emerged is an action/suspense novel written in the great tradition of Zane Grey, falling far short of the scholarship a topic of this importance demands. When one is able to sift out the substance of this book (which is substantial and which therefore makes the less-than-scholarly style all the more regrettable), one cannot help but be impressed at the degree to which the author took pains to document his sources. Drawing heavily from regional and U.S. press sources and a great number of interviews, such fastidiousness is vital for a book in which the facts as presented are often impossible to verify. In a few of the verifiable facts, Mr. Dickey's glaring errors throw into question those ascribable to privileged sources. For instance, General Edwin Meyer, Army Chief of Staff during a certain period of the book, is introduced as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (p. 123). Later, he describes Edgar Chamorro—an early member of the Nicaraguan Democratic Forces (FDN) Directorate—by saying that "for twenty years, Edgar was on his way to becoming a priest without ever quite making a wholehearted commitment." (p. 157). For whatever reason, the clear implication is that Chamorro was never a priest when he was indeed a Jesuit priest until 1969, when he left the order. Certainly neither of these transgressions of fact are vital to the issue, but they undoubtedly