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The Sandino Affair



Synopsis

This is a reprint of the 1985 Duke University Press edition of *The Sandino Affair*, the classic account of the struggle of native General Augusto C. Sandino against the United States Marine Corps in the mountains and jungles of Nicaragua from 1927 to 1933. A proud Hispanic and a master of guerrilla tactics, Sandino was the spiritual father of a generation of Latin American revolutionary warriors, including Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, and the Sandinistas of contemporary Nicaragua.

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Customer Reviews

Few have better credentials as an expert on Latin American guerrillas than author Macaulay who, after fighting as one under Castro, turned to studying them as a historian. He has put his expertise to good account in this volume. Sandino won the war against US intervention (1928-1933) although he lost many engagements and his casualty rate was several times that of the enemy.... The principal innovation of the war was the US Marines' use of airplanes for tactical support: the first recorded dive-bombing in history took place in Nicaragua in 1927.... The book is well balanced and well written. -- American Historical Review, May 1968
In a classic monograph, scrupulously researched and stylishly written, the author sketches the backdrop of Nicaragua, brings American troops to the foreground, and then places his nationalist guerrilla leader in this context. When originally written nearly two decades ago this work was hailed as a parable that could illuminate United States policy in Vietnam. Today the lessons to be learned fall much closer to home.... This work has been and will continue to be influential. -- Latin America in Books, January 1986
Macaulay describes in great detail Sandino's military tactics and battles, the role an underdeveloped

infrastructure and geography played in the warfare, and the American military, Nicaraguan and other Central American personalities involved in the action.... The book is fast-paced and well-written. It ought to be in all public and school libraries.... Whether one agrees or disagrees with the contemporary Sandinistas, this book helps one understand them. -- The Reprint Bulletin, January 1987

Macaulay's prose flows smoothly, guiding the reader through the intricacies of the various engagements and the complications of jungle movements of small bodies of troops. The limited scale of the operations is soon forgotten, for the author skillfully integrates the various campaigns and places them in the context of the overall confrontation between the guerrillas and the Marines. Descriptive passages convey the nature of the terrain, giving the reader a feeling of involvement. The study is well grounded in the primary sources, and is clearly military history at its best. -- Caribbean Studies, January 1969

Neill Macaulay's *The Sandino Affair* is woven around the subject of guerrilla warfare. Its focus is Nicaragua specifically; Central America in general. It embraces a somewhat glorified biography of Sandino and what in part appears to be a biased account of U.S. involvement in Nicaragua, 1927-1933. The author, Macaulay, speaks of the "imperialist aims" of the United States and fails to give due credit to the peacekeeping role of the Marines and their contribution to bringing a civil war to an end.... Macaulay recounts how Somoza arranged the steps by which a squad of Guardia, essentially a firing squad, ended Gen Sandino's colorful and "radical ambitious" career. Macaulay here displays his prejudice. He states that although the United States was not directly involved in the assassination of Sandino, it is generally believed that the crime was instigated by "Yankee Imperialists." -- Marine Corps Gazette, November 1986

Neill Macaulay's account of the bizarre war between U.S. marines and Nicaraguan rebel chief Augusto C. Sandino reads curiously like today's newspapers. From 1927 to 1933, Sandino's guerrillas practiced hit-and-run tactics against the superior American occupying force, dragging away their dead and wounded with them to mask the measure of their losses, dispersing during the day to avoid U.S. bombing and engaging the enemy only when surprise and tactical position favored them. In Cuba, for example, Che Guevara and Fidel Castro took Sandino as their model. -- Newsweek, 6 March 1967

No mere rehash of an unsavory experience, this is a solid military and political history of a now-forgotten insurgency in Nicaragua that for six years involved the Marine Corps in frustrating jungle and guerrilla warfare. It points up our failure to learn to understand native peoples in our efforts to win them to allegiance to the lawful government, and that our conduct of this affair still rankles among peoples of the American Republics. -- Army, May 1967

When I was a whippersnapper...New York City had many more newspapers than it does today. Among them were tabloids that...tried to build up circulation with sensational stories. One story I can remember the

newsboys shouting was, "Extra! Extra! United States declares war on Nicaragua." In fact, the United States never declared war on Nicaragua, but we did have a sizeable force of marines there...trying to put down a guerrilla leader named Augusto Sandino.... His name stuck in my mind,...and so, when a book about him became available, I decided to read it. The book is by Neill Macaulay, a former American Army officer who also served with Castro in the early days and now teaches history at the University of Florida.. Macaulay's style is clear, unadorned and direct, and that contributes to the unusual interest of his book. -- Edwin Newman, NBC News, 14 June 1971 While an accomplished innovator in military technique, Sandino was a tragic political figure. After waging a valiant struggle from 1927 to 1933, he surrendered upon the election of a liberal government and the departure of the Marines without receiving any government position or guarantees. Within a year, he was gunned down by the eldest Somoza's henchmen in the National Guard and a dictatorship was imposed.... Sandino obviously tapped into a deep strain of anti-Yankee sentiment.... In providing insight into the character of the figure who served as an inspiration for hemispheric revolution in Cuba and Nicaragua, Macaulay performs a valuable service. -- Best Sellers, February 1986

Neill Macaulay is a native of South Carolina who has spent a lot of time in Latin America and East Asia.. He served in the U.S. Army in Korea in 1957-58 and in Fidel Castro's army in Cuba in 1958-59. Returning to the U.S. in 1960, he wound up in graduate school at the University of Texas, where he received a Ph.D. in History in 1965. He spent most of the next two years in Brazil on a postdoctoral fellowship researching the 1924-26 revolutionary movement led by Luis Carlos Prestes. For twenty years, beginning in 1966, Macaulay taught Latin American history at the University of Florida. He has published five books in that field. He has not held a regular job since 1986. He writes fiction under the pseudonym "Kevin O'Kelly."

The book is a masterpiece. Well written, well documented and objective all the way. It does not glorify anyone. It paints an excellent picture of something that must people has either forgotten, been led to believe lies, or never heard about it.

Very Good

Augusto Cesar Sandino, Mestizo Military Genius, Ultimate CMDT-En-Jefe, Messiah, Legend, Icon, Supernatural Powers, Leader, Writer, Deity, Jesus II, Teleportation powers, Poet, Electromagnetism

Theory Expert/Practitioner, Theosophist, ESP powers, Philosopher, Psychoanalyst, World's 1st Superhuman, Invisibility powers, Greatest of All & All times.

Outstanding book. Excellent historical account of General Sandino and the genesis of the nationalist struggle in Nicaragua. A little vague on the extent of American commercial interest the US Marines were sent to protect. This book should be read by anyone looking to understand guerrilla warfare. Especially useful in paralleling combat tactics used by the viet-cong or any nationalist insurgency. Should be required reading for all troopers headed to advise against the FARC and ELN.

Sandino's insurgency in Nicaragua during the 1930's had debate teams in American high schools asking the question why the US Marine Corps was indeed involved in Central America. Decades later, debate teams would be asking why US Marines and other elements of the Armed Forces were about to intervene in a war in Iraq... MacAulay has obviously done his homework in this superb book. He details Sandino's rise and history, from his travels to Mexico and meetings with various Bolsheviks, to his ultimate betrayal by Somoza. MacAulay also shows how Sandino and his men persevered in a jungle environment, cut off without roads or running water, and how the first aerial attack was executed in the Americas. MacAulay does not demonize the Marines, as lesser writers and ideologues would love to. Indeed, he even pays tribute to that greatest of all Marines, Lewis "Chesty" Puller, and his company of Marines and Nicaraguans who fought the Sandinistas on their own terms...and won. It is a pity that this book is out of print. Generations of historians and military history buffs will not be disappointed in this breathtaking history of the Nicaraguas.

I understand this book was Maculay's doctoral thesis, and I think exceeds the purpose. Written with such a fine style the reader is situated in the jungles of Nicaragua experiencing guerilla warfare at its best. It is a well documented work. In addition to reviewing previous titles on the subject, Macaulay did extensive research on Marine Corps archives to produce an unbiased and scientific study of the struggle. Also, the portrait of the character is highly accurate of this little man (only 5'-4") born as illegitimate son in a nicaraguan village, yet his nationalism and valor had monumental influence throughout generations of latin-americans. As of today his presence is still vivid and controversial.

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