

and consider alternate force laydowns or followup actions.

Besides many tactical problems of ground and mission, the volume provides enough material to address other questions. Consider weapons. As the authors point out, the Kalashnikov was the most recognizable trademark of the guerrilla, but the RPG-7 (rocket propelled grenade) was actually the most important Mujahideen weapon. The vignettes are filled with examples of the RPG used as an equalizer against tanks, armored personnel carriers, and even helicopters. This is a weapon we will continue to encounter—simple, reliable, more technically accessible than the mortar, and probably the best “anti-anything” weapon in wide circulation.

Working back through how the RPG figured in the individual vignettes provides food for thought on how to neutralize RPG gunners.

Besides the RPGs, the vignettes show the Mujahideen gradually acquiring a large number of heavy weapons relative to their manpower. Some of this hardware was acquired from outside, but most was abandoned by a disintegrating Afghan army. It is not clear that the Mujahideen ever really became skilled at coordinating their odd jumble of supporting weapons, or even individually proficient with some of the more complicated pieces, but it is clear that there was a strong desire to use all the weapons, all at once. This is a phenomenon we have seen and should ex-

pect in interventions in failed states. The volume provides plenty of material to motivate serious thinking.

This book is worth your time. The individual reader can stimulate his thinking with the variety of situations. The instructor can draw on this volume to illustrate his points, pose tactical decision problems, and motivate an appreciation for minor tactics.

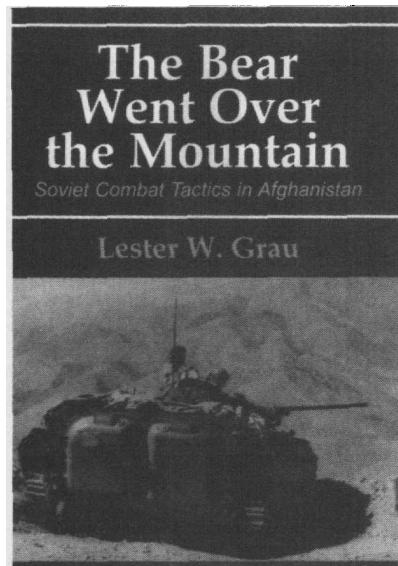


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## Lessons from Afghanistan

reviewed by Capt Robert C. Fulford

**THE BEAR WENT OVER THE MOUNTAIN: Soviet Combat Tactics in Afghanistan. Edited by Lester W. Grau. Frank Cass Publishers, Portland, OR, 1998, 220 pp., \$24.50. (Member \$22.00)**



In the not so distant future, the preponderance of our Corps' junior leaders will be products of the post-Cold War era. Most of the current lieutenants and captains were com-

missioned after the fall of the “Evil Empire.” The 18- and 19-year-old recruits entering today’s Corps were only 10 or 11 years old when the Soviet Union finally collapsed. While there are many tangible benefits associated with residing in a country serving as the world’s only remaining “superpower,” complacency and arrogance reign as our newfound foes. It is easy to ignore the lessons of the past; especially those learned by our former adversaries. As Bill Lind notes in *The Maneuver Warfare Handbook* and repeatedly warns us, “Too often, Americans do not pay much attention to what others are doing and learning.” If we are to remain successful and dominant as a society and as a military, we must overcome this arrogant habit.

The reduction in tensions between East and West resulted in a period of relative openness, providing opportunities for the exchange of

ideas and lessons learned over nearly 50 years of bitter worldwide competition. *The Bear Went Over the Mountain* is a product of this period. The History of Military Art Department at the Frunze Combined Arms Academy in Moscow produced a collection of lessons learned titled, *Combat Action of Soviet Forces in the Republic of Afghanistan*. This book is a product of countless interviews with small unit leaders, battalion commanders, and staff officers in the aftermath of the war in Afghanistan. The Frunze Academy staff compiled these interviews into a series of 47 vignettes, complete with first person narrative and academy staff commentary. Created prior to the fall of the Soviet Union, *Combat Action* was intended for use within the Soviet military and not for external publication. The result is a very honest appraisal of the successes and failures of Soviet leadership and tactics during the decade long conflict.

It is obvious that the Soviets intended this book for the use of small unit leaders, for it focuses solely on the tactical level of operations. *Combat Action* is very similar to our *Infantry In Battle*, and provides examples of tactical actions in ambushes, cordon and searches, convoy operations, defensive operations, and attacking a strongpoint. The commentary brings out as common trends the failures in tactical reconnaissance, the results of poor tactical dis-

cipline, and the importance and challenge of attaining tactical surprise.

One trend, however, stands out above the rest in its importance—the lack of rapid and sound decision-making by small unit leaders. Time and again, the Frunze staff points to this as a prominent factor in the failure of its units. Over the course of this war, the Soviets began to realize that their methodical and centralized philosophy of warfare was not conducive to the current battlefield. Out of necessity, they attempted to develop their small unit leaders' initiative and decisionmaking skills. With this change came tactical success. Unfortunately, for the Soviets it came too late, as their nation lost the will to sustain the conflict.

LtCol Lester Grau is a retired U.S. Army infantry officer with combat ex-

perience in Vietnam. Currently, he is on the staff at the Foreign Military Studies Office at Fort Leavenworth, specializing in Russian studies. Several years ago, he received a copy of the Frunze Academy's work and deemed it valuable enough for translation into English. To this translation LtCol Grau added his own commentary, as well as two additional vignettes. The result is titled, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*. This is not a study in maneuver warfare, nor is it a template for doctrinal change within a military. Additionally, it was not designed as a literary work, but rather as a documentation of lessons learned. These lessons, though, do lend credence to the Marine Corps' warfighting doctrine, and bear out the importance of the education and development of the small unit leader. It is here that

you will find this book the most useful. It is an outstanding source of tactical decision game material, and it will prove extremely useful for small unit level PME.

LtCol Grau provides us with a unique opportunity to look inside the successes and failures of another military; coincidentally, one that our nation's military organized, trained, and prepared to fight for almost 50 years. When taken in the proper context, the lessons gleaned out of this work will prove to be valuable tools in preparation for future conflicts.

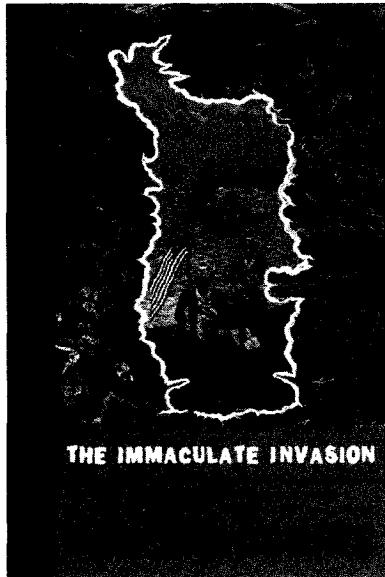


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## Uphold Democracy

reviewed by Col Charles T. Williamson, USMC(Ret)

**THE IMMACULATE INVASION.** By Bob Shacochis, Viking Press, New York, 1999, 404 pp., \$27.95. (Member \$19.60)



On 19 September 1994, U.S. military forces made unopposed landings in the Republic of Haiti. Marines landed in the north at Cap

Haitien, the second largest city in Haiti, and the U.S. Army 10th Mountain Division landed in the capital city of Port-au-Prince. At the same time Special Forces teams landed and deployed to small towns around the country. Thus began Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY.

This was not the first time that the United States had intervened in Haiti. In 1915, the Marines landed to restore order and remained for 19 years. In the early days of World War II and later during the Cold War, U.S. military, naval, and air missions were dispatched to assist the Haitian military, but these met with little success. In 1994, the United States was involved once more, this time to "uphold democracy" by removing an illegal military dictatorship and restoring the democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power.

Award-winning author Bob Shacochis covered the story for *Harper's Magazine*. Unlike so many reporters who departed when the landing was no longer front-page news, Shacochis stayed for 18 months to get the larger story. He spent most of that time with a Special Forces "A" Team in the northern town of Limb  , not far from Cap Ha  tien. During his stay he also visited the 10th Mountain Division in Port-au-Prince, the Marines in Cap Ha  tien, and Special Forces teams scattered around the country.

After setting the scene historically, Shacochis describes Aristide's 3-year exile in the United States and the political debate that surrounded him. During that time, a weak President Clinton was unable to command support for his pro-Aristide policy within his own executive branch, let alone muster any support from a hostile Congress. In Washington, the CIA, Defense Department, State Department, and the Congress openly opposed the White House regarding Aristide. In Port-au-Prince, the American Embassy acquiesced when the CIA Station and Defense Attach   Office conspired with FRAPH, the "Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti," and worked together to oppose Aristide's return.