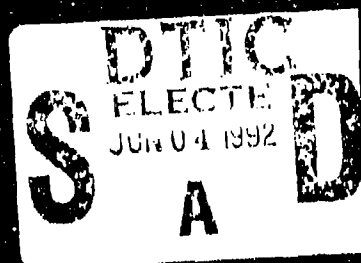


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# THE FOG OF PEACE: PLANNING AND EXECUTING THE RESTORATION OF PANAMA

John T. Fishel



Strategic Studies Institute  
U.S. Army War College

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\* \* \* \* \*

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# CONTENTS

FOREWORD .....	v
SUMMARY .....	vii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION: THE CLIMATE OF INTERVENTION .....	1
CHAPTER 2 : PLANNING FOR INTERVENTION: 1988 .....	7
CHAPTER 3: PLANNING FOR INTERVENTION: 1989 .....	17
CHAPTER 4: FROM BLUE SPOON TO JUST CAUSE .....	25
CHAPTER 5: OPERATION PROMOTE LIBERTY: COMCMOTF "IN CHARGE" .....	33
CHAPTER 6: OPERATION PROMOTE LIBERTY: THE MSG "ON THE COUNTRY TEAM" .....	43
CHAPTER 7: THE FOGGY RESULT OF PROMOTING LIBERTY .....	55
CHAPTER 8: FOG LIGHTS: STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	65
ENDNOTES .....	73
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	79
APPENDIX A: COMCMOTF ORGANIZATION .....	83
APPENDIX B: SCJ5, MEMORANDUM FOR SCCS, SUBJECT: HISTORY OF ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES PRECEDING JUST CAUSE .....	85
APPENDIX C: CMO ORGANIZATIONS .....	93
APPENDIX D: PROPOSED MSG (USSOCOM) INTERIM AND FINAL ORGANIZATIONS .....	95
APPENDIX E: MSG COMMAND STRUCTURE (31 MAR 90) .....	97
APPENDIX F: WALLET CARD .....	99

APPENDIX G: U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PANAMA .....	101
APPENDIX H: GLOSSARY .....	103
APPENDIX I: LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS .....	109
ABOUT THE AUTHOR .....	111

# FOREWORD

In a mere 14 months beginning in December 1989, the United States executed two significant military operations. Both Operations JUST CAUSE and DESERT STORM have had major political-military consequences. This study addresses the effects of the operation in Panama. In so doing it raises questions about where post-conflict activities belong in the planning and execution processes.

The author, who conducted more than 30 interviews with key participants in the Panama events, integrated this data with what he observed and recorded as a participant in the operation. He did not limit his sources to senior U.S. personnel but queried action officers and Panamanian authorities as well. In addition, he chose not to limit the study to the activities of the U.S. Military Support Group, but rather addressed the 2 years of planning for the aftermath of this contingency and its early execution by the Commander, Civil Military Operations Task Force.

By so doing, the author demonstrates the interaction of the Active Components and the Reserve, both day-to-day and in extraordinary circumstances. He explores the interagency arena and uncovers the weakness of the interaction between the military and other government agencies. While he shows that the Unified Command system is eminently well adapted to achieving operational success, he points out that, in the complex post-cold war world, it is not adequate to the task of independently effecting strategic success. The study challenges the military reader to look beyond the purely military in seeking ways to apply military resources effectively to the termination of conflict. It challenges the civilian reader to see military resources as among the tools available to the U.S. Government during the transition from war to peace as well as in the twilight world of low intensity conflict. Finally, the study demonstrates that post-conflict activities are perhaps the critical phase of the military campaign. In that case, achieving the strategic political-military objectives will depend on the extent of integrated, effective interagency planning for the conduct of the war and the associated civil-military operations.



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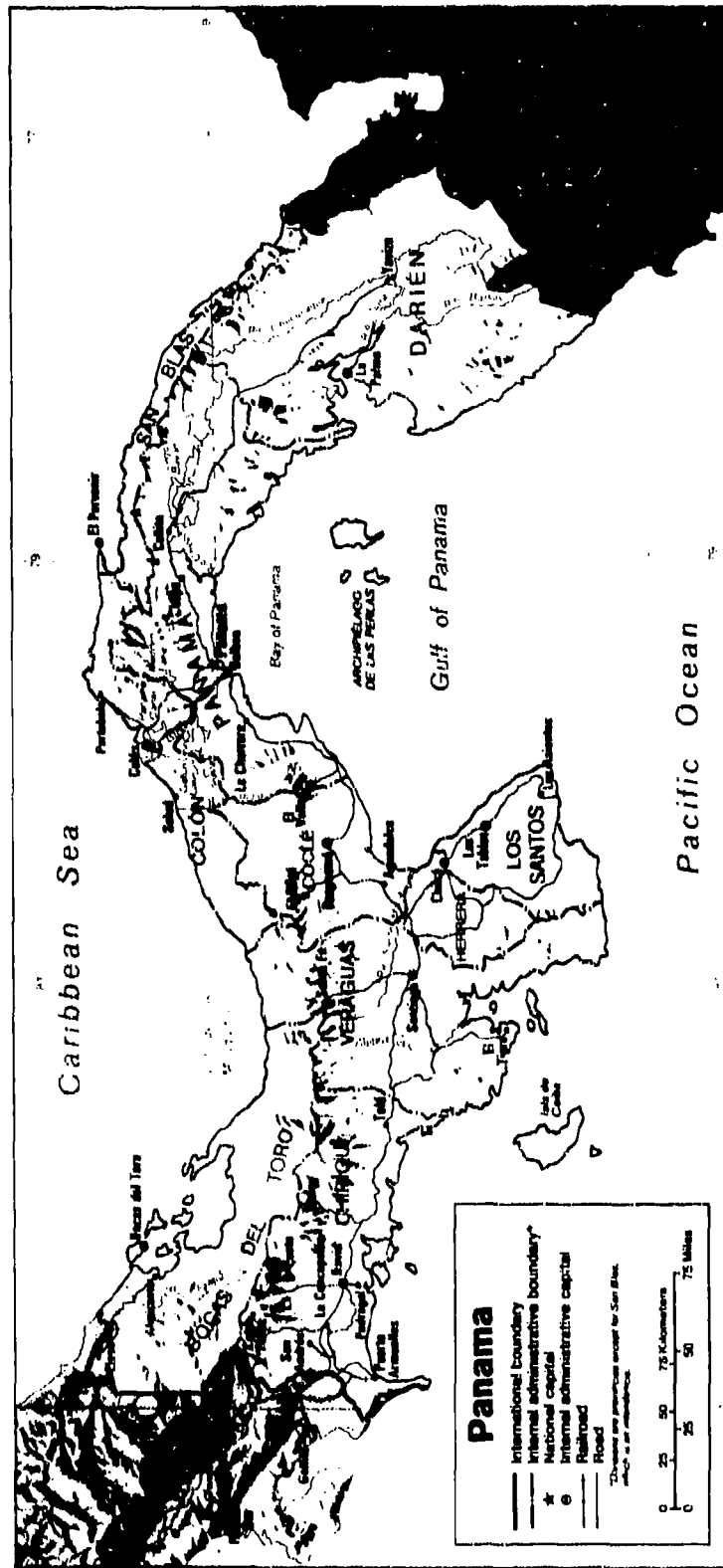


Figure 1.

## SUMMARY

In the postwar era, the United States has ended conflicts in Korea, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon (on two occasions), Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, and most recently in the Persian Gulf. In none of these cases has the termination process gone easily nor has it gone as much according to plan as the warfighting itself. As a result, it seems as if there is as much "fog" in establishing peace at the end of a conflict as there is on the battlefield.

This study addresses the termination of Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama in 1990. It focuses on the planning process that began in February 1988 and carries the story through the activities of the U.S. Military Support Group (MSG) until its deactivation in January 1991.

Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, the civil-military restoration operation conducted concurrently with Operation JUST CAUSE, was an operational success but strategically ambiguous. One reason for this result was that during the development of the combat plan, BLUE SPOON, and the civil-military operations (CMO) restoration plan, BLIND LOGIC, there was no clear political objective. With the decision to execute, President Bush provided one clearly political objective among the four he listed—reestablish democracy in Panama. The fact that democracy never was defined as an end-state objective and was understood implicitly and intuitively made it easy for diplomatic and military leaders to articulate the position that responsibility for making Panama's democracy work rested only with the Panamanians and not with the U.S. Government.

Despite the lack of a clear political/strategic objective, Panamanian democracy got off to a relatively good start as a result of its perceived electoral legitimacy. That legitimacy eroded beginning with the decision, supported by the United States, to create the National Police from the remnants of the PDF. When the new force after 8 months had no non-PDF recruits, had not been able to provide a perceived satisfactory level of security, and showed evidence of old style petty corruption, the government was blamed. When the lack of security was coupled with poor economic performance, the people withdrew their support—something well reflected in public opinion polls.

BLIND LOGIC's major strategic weakness was that it failed to address the strategic issue of democracy. President Guillermo Endara's observation that the United States "didn't have a specific plan to help us in establishing democracy. . ." is a telling confirmation of that weakness. The Panama strategy which was submitted to the U.S. Embassy by the Military Support Group took some major steps toward a remedy but still fell short of clearly describing the desired democratic end-state.

In planning BLIND LOGIC and executing PROMOTE LIBERTY, the principle of unity of command was violated more often than adhered to. This lack of unity of command resulted from the discontinuities between SOUTHCOM staff and the XVIII Airborne Corps during the planning as well as from the multiple organizations with overlapping responsibilities and differing chains of command established during execution. That the violation of the principle did not result in greater lack of unity of effort can be attributed to the relative clarity of the operational objectives, sense

of mission on the part of those who had to execute, and the maturation of staff coordination procedures in the joint arena of the unified command.

Although relative unity of effort was achieved among the military forces, the same cannot be said of the interagency arena. Rather, unity of effort among the several U.S. Government agencies was ragged at best. Foremost among the reasons was that throughout the planning process, none of the agencies that would have to participate in the restoration of Panama were permitted to know of the existence of BLIND LOGIC. It was classified, compartmented, and held exclusively within DOD channels.

As Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY proceeded, the most senior U.S. military and civilian leaders became very comfortable with each other as well as with the way relations with the Panamanian government were organized. This, however, was hardly the view of the people in the organizations that had to execute the policies. Rather, there were as many conflicting interpretations of U.S. policy objectives as there were agencies. In addition, a lack of congruence between the U.S. and Panamanian governments appeared early and grew as the year went on, although it never threatened the essence of the relationship.

The principles of mass and economy of force applied to Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY focus on the adequacy and consistency of U.S. support to restoration operations and the new government. A variety of legal constraints and policy directives inhibited the ability of the Commander, Civil-Military Operations Task Force (COMCMOTF), and the MSG to mass forces effectively to carry out the operation. These constraints ranged from the refusal to exercise the Reserve call-up authority, through the DOD cut-off of the use of operational funds for restoration purposes on January 20, to the delays in appropriating and dispersing economic assistance funds, and to the fact that less money was appropriated than the Panamanians perceived had been promised. By contrast, effective use of formerly embargoed security assistance funding and medical and engineering exercises provided a good example of economy of force measures that offset some of the negative Panamanian perception of the U.S. effort.

What was accomplished in Panama by Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY? A Panamanian businessman summed it up when he said, "You got the police working; not too well, but working. Second, you got the government ministries working."

A number of specific lessons come from planning BLIND LOGIC and executing PROMOTE LIBERTY. These include:

- There is an absolute requirement to articulate political-military strategic objectives in terms of clearly defined end-states.
- U.S. Government civilian agencies must develop the capability to conceive of strategy in terms of ends, ways, and means. Until such a capability is developed the military will have to take the lead in organizing the strategy development process.
- Unity of effort in the interagency environment can only be achieved if all critical government agencies are included in the contingency planning process. Even the

combat phase of the contingency plan will require input from State and other agencies but the CMO phase certainly will demand very heavy participation, particularly of State, Agency for International Development (AID), Justice, etc.

- A campaign plan to link the strategic and operational levels is absolutely necessary. The military must take the lead in developing a full-fledged campaign plan that includes CMO through the termination of the campaign. A major part of the CMO planning will involve the hand-off from the military to civilian agency lead. The follow-on campaign plan may well be State Department or AID lead with the military in a support role for both planning and execution.
- Both COMCMOTF and the MSG failed to be fully effective in orchestrating CMO in Panama because they were wholly military. An interagency organization to conduct restoration operations is required. Such an organization must work directly for the U.S. Ambassador. It must be in addition to the normal country team and much of its membership needs to be military.
- There are serious costs to operational capability if the total force concept is not exercised as intended. The bottom line is that the use of Reserve call-up authority must be made routine.
- Critical to the effective massing of forces in restoration operations is adequate funding and a sense of urgency. In the immediate aftermath of combat, operational funds must be used for restoration purposes. This source of funding should not be terminated solely for budgetary reasons. Long-term funding from appropriations requires that the Executive have a well-developed plan to induce the Congress to pass the required legislation with a real sense of urgency.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION: THE CLIMATE OF INTERVENTION

This report addresses an issue that has not been studied to any great extent: termination of small wars has often been messier than the actual fighting. "Given that war is the use of force to achieve political objectives, then those objectives should dictate the preparation, conduct, and termination phases of conflict."<sup>1</sup>

In the postwar era the United States has disengaged from conflicts in Korea, the Dominican Republic, Lebanon (on two occasions), Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, and most recently in the Persian Gulf. In none of these cases has the termination process gone easily nor has it gone as much according to plan as the warfighting itself. As a result, there seems to be as much "fog" in establishing the peace at the end of a conflict as there is on the battlefield.

This study concentrates on a single case—Panama. It addresses the planning process from the time it began in February 1988 through the execution of restoration operations which lasted more than a year after the fighting had ended. It is not a study of the conflict known as Operation JUST CAUSE, rather it is a study of the concurrent Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY. How these two operations were planned in parallel and executed on intersecting courses makes for a fascinating inquiry. However, before telling that story it is necessary to briefly consider the elaboration of the 21-month period of crisis in Panama.

### Events Of The Crisis.

Although there were a number of antecedents, the Panama crisis usually is considered to have begun with the public revelations of Colonel Roberto Diaz Herrera on June 7, 1987. On that date Diaz Herrera, who had been forcibly retired from the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) and from his position as Chief of Staff on June 1 by General Manuel Antonio Noriega, held a press conference in which he accused Noriega of masterminding many nefarious activities. These included the rigging of the 1984 national elections; the murder of Noriega's nemesis, Hugo Spadafora in 1985; money laundering; and dope dealing. In addition, Diaz Herrera accused Noriega of conspiring with the CIA to plant a bomb on the plane of his predecessor, General Omar Torrijos, who died in an airplane accident in the interior of the Republic in 1981.

While some of the charges could be corroborated by other evidence, others not only had no such support but were in fact contradicted by the available evidence. What made Diaz Herrera's accusations so inflammatory was that this was the very first time that significant conflict within the PDF institution had spilled over into the public domain. As a result, this event galvanized the civilian opposition to Noriega to mount a concerted campaign for his ouster. That campaign, led by the National Civic Crusade which drew much of its leadership from the Chamber of Commerce, consisted of massive peaceful demonstrations on the streets of Panama City. Noriega repressed

them ruthlessly with troops, tear gas, water cannon, birdshot, and fairly selective arrests, coupled with beatings and the threat of (and in a very few cases, the use of) torture.

While supporting the activities of the Civic Crusade, the United States did not commit itself to engineering the fall of Noriega during 1987. Indeed, American policy as reflected in the activities of the major U.S. Government entities in Panama—the Embassy, the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM), and the Panama Canal Commission (PCC)—appeared disjointed and inconsistent on the subject. By the end of 1987 it seemed that Noriega had weathered yet another storm.

In February 1988, two American grand juries, one in Miami and the other in Tampa, indicted Noriega on drug trafficking charges. This action had two significant impacts. First, it prompted new rounds in the internal Panamanian political crisis and, second and more importantly, it changed the fundamental nature of the conflict from one internal to Panama to one between Noriega and the United States.

In Panama, on February 25, President Delvalle, after secret conversations in Miami with Assistant Secretary of State for Interamerican Affairs Elliott Abrams, attempted to remove Noriega from his position as commander of the PDF. This was followed in the early hours of the next morning by the Noriega-controlled Legislative Assembly removing Delvalle and his Vice Presidents from office. The Assembly then declared the Minister of Education, Manuel Solis Palma, Minister in Charge of the Presidency. Delvalle went into hiding but continued to be recognized by the United States.

Sanctions against the Noriega regime, which had been instituted during the fall of 1987, were strengthened beginning a process of tightening the economic noose which lasted until the execution of Operation JUST CAUSE. On February 28, 1988, the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) ordered SOUTHCOM, under the command of General Fred F. Woerner, to begin planning for the use of U.S. forces against the PDF.<sup>2</sup> On March 16, 1988, PDF officers led by Panama City police chief, Colonel Leonidas Macias, attempted a coup to overthrow Noriega. The effort was inept; the rebellious officers were arrested, beaten, tortured, and jailed.

In March 1988, the PDF began armed infiltration exercises at the fuel tank farm near the town of Arraijan on the west bank of the Panama Canal. During the first of these incidents a U.S. Marine was accidentally killed by friendly fire. Tank farm incidents continued for the duration of the crisis.<sup>3</sup> There were also many low-key PDF incursions on other U.S. installations and numerous confrontations between U.S. MPs and the PDF.<sup>4</sup>

In the wake of the failed coup the U.S. Government made a major attempt to negotiate Noriega's departure. Although it appeared promising for a time, the effort finally failed in May. From then until the U.S. elections in November, Panama went on the back burner of American foreign policy. Neither side appeared to wish to turn up the heat. However, following George Bush's election, pressures and counter-pressures rose again. Incidents of PDF harassment of U.S. military personnel increased. On March 3, 1989, the PDF detained several school buses carrying American dependent children to DOD schools. The buses were held for operating without valid licenses (which was, in fact, the case) but the action put U.S. dependents at risk.<sup>5</sup> It also

brought pressure from the American dependent and civilian communities on the U.S. Congress to act on the situation in Panama.

On the domestic Panamanian political scene a new approach to resolving the crisis was taking place. Noriega had decided to go ahead with the scheduled national elections on May 7. As a result, the parties organized the appropriate electoral coalitions and began campaigning. For the opposition this meant a return to the traditional political leadership as opposed to the business leaders of the Civic Crusade. The election pitted Guillermo Endara, Ricardo Arias Calderon, and Billy Ford as the ticket of the opposition Civil Democratic Opposition Alliance (ADOC) against Noriega's crony, Carlos Duque; Noriega's brother-in-law, Ramon Sieiro; and Aquilino Boyd. The campaign was spirited and relatively open and the ADOC partners hoped that if they won a convincing victory Noriega would step down. Noriega, however, plotted to steal the election and on election day used every trick he could think of to achieve victory. Typically, he voted the PDF early and often. Unfortunately for Noriega, the PDF voted against him! When the early returns were running 3 to 1 in favor of ADOC, Noriega sought to confiscate ballots and stop the counting. The opposition had anticipated this tactic and had given most of the ballots to the Catholic Church for safekeeping. In the end, Noriega annulled the election over the strenuous protest of former U.S. President Jimmy Carter and other international election observers.

During an opposition demonstration on May 10, Noriega turned loose his paramilitary thugs, the Dignity Battalions, to assault the victorious opposition candidates. As a result, Billy Ford was seen on worldwide television staggering to safety, his shirt covered with the blood of his dead bodyguard. International revulsion led to strong Organization of American States (OAS) condemnation of the Noriega regime and renewed efforts to find a formula for him to exit. These efforts failed and, on September 1, Noriega had the former controller, Francisco Rodriguez, inaugurated as provisional President.

In June 1989, then Brigadier General Marc A. Cisneros took command of U.S. Army South (USARSO). Cisneros had been the Director of Operations (J3) of USSOUTHCOM and was General Woerner's personal choice to command USARSO and Joint Task Force-Panama (JTFPM). With Woerner's concurrence, Cisneros immediately began a series of operations, called SAND FLEAS and PURPLE STORMS,<sup>6</sup> to exercise U.S. treaty rights to their maximum extent. Not coincidentally, these exercises greatly stressed the PDF's command and control system. Between May 11 and July 1, by order of President Bush, all U.S. military, their dependents, and most DOD civilians were relocated to U.S. military bases. Many military dependents were forced to leave Panama along with all U.S. Embassy dependents. In addition, the Embassy was reduced from a strength of about 120 to 45 as regional offices were closed and nonessential personnel returned to the United States.

On July 20, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney announced that General Woerner would retire on October 1, 1989. He further announced that Woerner's replacement as CINC would be General Maxwell R. Thurman, who was being extended on active duty past his normal retirement to take the position. On September 30, General Thurman took command of USSOUTHCOM.

On October 3, a number of PDF majors led by Major Moises Giroldi, Commander of the Urraca Company which had saved Noriega during the March 16, 1988 coup, attempted to overthrow the

dictator. Unlike the earlier attempt, this time they almost succeeded. Girolodi captured Noriega and had achieved control of the PDF Headquarters. With limited U.S. cooperation he had neutralized the 5th Infantry Company (MP) based at Fort Amador and prevented the 7th Company based at Rio Hato from coming to the rescue directly down the Pan American Highway. Girolodi also believed that the commander of Battalion 2000 based at Fort Cimarron just east of Tocumen Airport would support the coup. Unfortunately, when the effort began to unravel, after Noriega was able to place a phone call to his mistress, Battalion 2000 changed sides and along with the 7th Company which was airlifted to Tocumen came to Noriega's rescue. Following the failure of the coup, Noriega ordered the brutal execution of its leaders, including Major Girolodi.

In the wake of the failed coup, SOUTHCOM and the XVIII Airborne Corps updated contingency plans that had been rewritten repeatedly since the spring of 1988 to use force against Noriega and the PDF. Additional military augmentation of U.S. forces took place. Equipment, including M-551 Sheridan Reconnaissance Vehicles ("light tanks") and Apache helicopters, was secretly prepositioned. Exercises, both in Panama and the United States, took on rehearsal aspects. Still, U.S. policymakers and their legal advisers believed that Noriega's provocations were not yet sufficient to justify a U.S. intervention.

January 1, 1990 was the date which a Panamanian national was to become the Administrator of the Panama Canal. The United States let it be known that it would not even consider Noriega's nominee. Instead, President Bush announced that he would appoint the current Panamanian Deputy Administrator, Fernando Manfredo, as Acting Administrator until there was a legitimate government in Panama.

At about this same time the U.S. Government increased economic sanctions. It announced that as of January 1, 1990, Panamanian-flagged vessels would no longer be permitted to enter U.S. ports, which would close off one of the few remaining sources of legitimate foreign exchange to the Panamanian government. It would also inflict severe hardship on the economy, striking for the first time at the wealth of Panama's economic elite.

On December 15, Noriega had the Chamber of Peoples Deputies proclaim him maximum leader and head of government. The Chamber also passed a resolution declaring that, "a state of war existed in Panama because of the North American aggression."<sup>7</sup>

On the evening of December 16, Marine Lieutenant Robert Paz was killed by the PDF at a checkpoint near Noriega's headquarters, the Comandancia, and a U.S. Navy Lieutenant was accosted and his wife was harassed sexually and psychologically. On December 17, President Bush gave the order to execute Operation JUST CAUSE.

Although the President set four strategic objectives for Operation JUST CAUSE—protect American lives, ensure the implementation of the Panama Canal Treaties, restore Panamanian democracy, and bring Manuel Noriega to justice—this study contends that the planning for Operations JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY was conducted in a context of a partial vacuum of strategic purpose. To a lesser extent this was true as well of the execution.



## **Crisis Context.**

The strategic context in which the planning for these operations took place was a period in which American military strategy was experiencing a major resurgence. For the first time since the end of World War II, military strategists had taken the lead from civilian defense intellectuals. Military strategists led by Professor (Colonel, USA-Ret.) Arthur Lykke of the U.S. Army War College had defined strategy in terms of ends (objectives), ways (courses of action), and means (resources). Lykke's lesson was not lost on USSOUTHCOM, which in 1987 produced its first written strategy in the 25 years of the command's existence. Called the Regional Security Strategy (RSS), it was long on ends but short on ways and means. It did reflect President Ronald Reagan's Latin American policy summarized as the Four D's—Democracy, Development, Defense, and Diplomacy.

When General Thurman became CINC, he undertook a major new strategy effort to which he devoted significant additional personnel from outside SOUTHCOM. Yet, when it was completed, Thurman's SOUTHCOM strategy (S<sup>2</sup>) was evolutionary, not revolutionary. In its objectives it resembled Woerner's RSS very closely. Its focus on ways and means fleshed out what had been only skeletal. Perhaps, most importantly, it developed subregional (Central America, etc.) and functional campaign plans as well as individual country action plans fully coordinated with the U.S. Embassy in each host nation. On December 15, 1989, the SOUTHCOM strategy, and the subregional and functional campaign plans were approved by the CINC.

While Panama had received some special attention during the development of the Central America campaign plan, the focus was not on the removal of Noriega. That focus was well addressed in the operations plan (OPLAN) called BLUE SPOON. But BLUE SPOON had been developed independently and mostly prior to the drafting of the S<sup>2</sup>. BLIND LOGIC, the OPLAN for the restoration of Panama, had received only minimal attention during the development of the S<sup>2</sup>. In short, both reflected having been developed in the strategic context of the RSS but without direct reference to that document. What this meant was that democracy, a major U.S. goal and objective of the RSS, provided a vague goal for the OPLANs. Nowhere, however, had anyone defined how the end state of democracy in Panama was to look.

One could argue that clearly delineating the end-state of democracy is not within the purview of the military strategist. However, there are no U.S. civilian strategists clearly articulating strategies to achieve democracy. If the military planners were not ordered to develop their plans directly to achieve the strategic objective of democracy and the civilian government planners did not formulate full blown strategies (ends, ways, and means), then no one developed a strategy to achieve democracy in Panama. The military planners were guided by the stated but undefined goal of a democratic Panama. But their planning was focused on achieving operational objectives, not strategic ones. Thus they operated in a partial vacuum of incompletely connected strategic documents and operational plans.

In a crisis, even an episodic and lingering one like Panama, a clear policy supported by a well-articulated strategy is required to develop effective campaign and operational plans. In Panama, from 1987 through December 16, 1989, U.S. national policy was not clearly articulated. Whether it was sufficiently thought out is beyond the scope of this study. Without a clearly

articulated policy there could be no effective strategy. And the theater strategic and operational planners found it necessary to make assumptions about the priorities of strategic and policy objectives. Some of those assumptions about objective priorities were wrong. That fact contributed to the change of command in USSOUTHCOM at the end of September 1989. That same fact put a senior general with little regional and Panama experience in the position of CINC just when the second coup took place. In addition, none of the flag rank staff directors (Chief of Staff, the J2, J3, and J5) had been on the job longer than 4 months. Of those four, only the Chief of Staff had any expertise in Latin American affairs, having just come from the position of Director of the Inter-American Defense College. None of them knew any of the personalities involved in the coup or the Noriega regime. In addition, the State Department Political Advisor (POLAD) had retired on September 30 and had not yet been replaced.

In short, the circumstances in USSOUTHCOM in the fall of 1989—the abrupt change of command and the normal rotation of the senior staff—contributed to the already tenuous ability of SOUTHCOM to develop or execute a Panama strategy. This, in turn, directed the attention of SOUTHCOM and its subordinate headquarters, Joint Task Force South (JTFSO) to what they knew how to do best—operational planning. The situation further focused that planning on direct military action rather than on the political-military environment in which military action would take place. Neither did it call attention to the post-conflict situation.

## **Approach.**

The following chapters of this study will address the planning which did take place during the varied circumstances of 1988 and 1989. It will then address the interaction between the planning for JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY and the execution of JUST CAUSE with emphasis on the civil-military situation. Here the impact of the one major change from the last Woerner plan to the Thurman plan will be the focal point. Next the study will look at the initial execution of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY concurrent with the execution of JUST CAUSE. It will follow with an examination of the establishment, organization, and functioning of the U.S. Military Support Group Panama (USMSGPM). This examination will include both its activities and its efforts to develop a country strategy in coordination with the Embassy. The final chapters will focus on the results of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, draw conclusions from the entire exercise, suggest lessons learned, and advance implications for strategy in the termination of small wars.

## CHAPTER 2

### PLANNING FOR INTERVENTION: 1988

"Planning for the possibility of U.S. forces being committed against the PDF in Panama began with the JCS Planning Order of 28 February 1988."<sup>8</sup> The resulting draft plan, known generally as ELABORATE MAZE, was developed as phases which were to be executable independently, concurrently, or in sequence.<sup>9</sup> This first cut concentrated on planning for building up combat forces, noncombatant evacuation operations (NEO), and combat operations. Following JCS approval of these initial plans the CINC, General Fred F. Woerner, directed that an additional phase be developed which addressed the restoration of Panamanian government and government services in the wake of combat operations against the PDF.<sup>10</sup>

During the course of the crisis briefly recounted in Chapter 1, SOUTHCOM sought to establish parameters for a strategy to accomplish U.S. Government goals in Panama as well as for the military actions in support of those goals. What was clear to everyone in SOUTHCOM was that, at least by the end of February 1988, the United States wanted General Noriega out of Panama. What was not clear was what was desired in his place. The possibilities ranged from an unreformed PDF-dominated government to newly elected democratic leadership. In either case Noriega had to go, but how to get him out was a problem. The contingency plan, later called BLUE SPOON, represented the extreme of using military force to bring him down. At the other extreme were Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Michael Kozak's efforts to cut a deal.<sup>11</sup> In between, under General Woerner's leadership, were coordinated interagency efforts to split Noriega from the rest of the PDF leadership (and the civilian leadership of the regime as well) which would result in an internal Panamanian resolution of the problem of Noriega, nudged along by a coordinated series of U.S. actions. When General Woerner sent this plan forward through his channels he called it FISSURES. He received no answer.<sup>12</sup> Later he tried again with FISSURES II, an updated version. Woerner's caveat on forwarding it was that the plan was integrated and holistic and could not be executed piecemeal. The only answer he received to FISSURES II was to execute individual pieces!<sup>13</sup>

While the FISSURES plans were coordinated, political-military efforts, ELABORATE MAZE contingency planning was closely held within DOD. In Panama no coordination with the Embassy was done except for those parts of the NEO plan which affected the Embassy.<sup>14</sup>

#### Planning Begins.

As noted above, planning for restoration operations in Panama as part of the ELABORATE MAZE plan began after initial approval of the combat plan had been received from JCS. In fact, it began one Sunday morning in March when two members of the Civil Affairs Branch of the Strategy, Policy, and Plans Directorate (SCJ5) were called to work to meet with the Deputy

Director, who asked them if they had ever heard of ELABORATE MAZE; when they told him they had not, he asked them to accompany him to the "tunnel."<sup>15</sup> (See Figure 2.)

At the tunnel the Civil Affairs (CA) officers briefly reviewed the approved phases of ELABORATE MAZE.<sup>16</sup> They were surprised to note that there was no CA activity anywhere in the plan. The Deputy Director told them to prepare a briefing for General Woerner by 1700 delineating the outline of a civil-military operations (CMO) plan for the restoration of Panama in the wake of U.S. combat operations against the PDF.

The CA officers, in seeking guidance, asked if the plan should follow the post-World War II formula for military government or whether it should be merely an expanded version of the civic action planning which was continually being effected in SOUTHCOM. After some brief discussion they decided to follow the military government model.

When the draft had been prepared the CA officers briefed General Woerner late that afternoon. The CINC generally approved of the outline but gave some additional guidance. First, he directed them to assume that the CINC would be in charge of the government of Panama for a period not in excess of 30 days. Military government would be transitional and would last only as long as necessary. If it were not necessary to institute military government, then some other alternative would be exercised. General Woerner assumed that he would be in charge after a military operation based on doctrine, historical precedent and the recommendation that he had made to JCS. He never received a response to that recommendation (the alternative to which was that the U.S. Ambassador to Panama would direct the interim government).<sup>17</sup>

General Woerner also directed that the plan would be short term and that the U.S. Embassy would be expected to take the leading role as soon as it became practical.<sup>18</sup> This guidance suggests that Woerner was considering the notion that a Panamanian civil government would be established early—certainly within the first month following U.S. military action. Finally, the CINC directed that while military government would control the whole of Panama, the plan should focus on Panama City and Colon with only minimum control exercised in David and essentially only a monitoring function throughout the rest of the country.<sup>19</sup> This guidance was based on the assumption that civil government would not break down significantly outside the Panama City-Colon axis and that the need for military government would be of short duration.

## **Reserve Support.**

With preliminary approval of the outline plan obtained from the CINC, it was necessary to put some flesh on the skeleton. The CA Branch of SCJ5 consisted of only four full time Army Reserve officers (USAR AGR) who had numerous other responsibilities. As a result, SCJ5 requested a team of CA officers principally from the SOUTHCOM CAPSTONE reserve unit, the 361st CA Brigade, to draft the full plan.

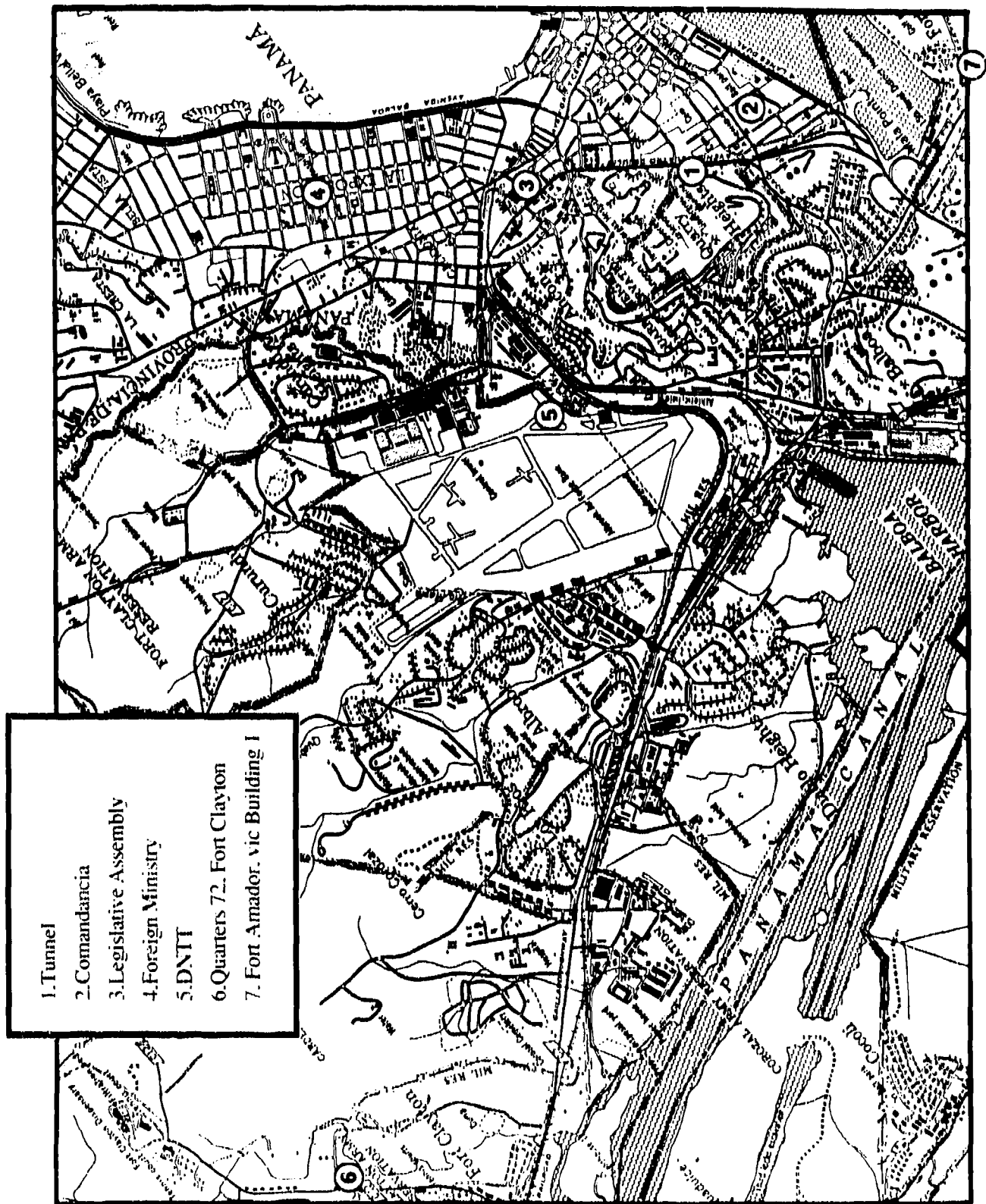


Figure 2.

It should be noted that the 361st had, in fact, established a Civil Affairs staff section in SOUTHCOM and had been working in Panama under the auspices of the J-5 since 1983.<sup>20</sup> As a result the brigade personnel had developed a significant degree of expertise on Panama through participation in joint and combined exercises, staffing the CA Branch, and the conduct of civic action seminars. Thus, members of the brigade had travelled through most of the Republic and were very familiar with Panama City and the surrounding area through repeated 17-day tours over a 5-year period.

Because the ELABORATE MAZE contingency plans were "close hold" within DOD, the request for support could not specify precisely what was desired. Therefore, the request was for volunteers to come on Temporary Tours of Active Duty (TTAD) for a period of 31 days to support contingency planning in the SOUTHCOM area.<sup>21</sup> The initial team arrived near the end of March 1988 and worked in one of the buildings of the Gorgas Army Community Hospital complex near SOUTHCOM Headquarters. While the CA planners were being "recruited" and gathered, an intriguing thing was happening to ELABORATE MAZE. At the direction of JCS,<sup>22</sup> the original phased plan was changed to a family of plans, later renamed PRAYERBOOK, which were designed to be executed independently, concurrently, or in sequence. Note the similarity of the language to that used to describe the phases in ELABORATE MAZE. Clearly, the major thrust of this change was to be cosmetic. Its apparent purpose was to permit greater emphasis to be placed on each plan than might be true if they were seen as phases. Moreover, separating the plans called attention to the fact that each was designed to be executed independently, if needed. Still, the change was primarily cosmetic when seen in the spring of 1988. It represented a refinement in the planning process, not any major shift in direction. Little did anyone involved realize what the impact of this "cosmetic" change would be 21 months later.

The team at the Gorgas hospital complex began its effort at developing a full blown plan. To begin, the team had the "butcher paper" briefing charts that the SCJ5 CA officers had used to brief General Woerner that Sunday afternoon in March. They also had been briefed on the guidance that Woerner had given. Finally, they had been "read on" to a TOP SECRET close hold distribution system for ELABORATE MAZE/PRAYERBOOK that was so compartmentalized that the CA planners had no access to the combat plan.

## **Assumptions.**

The first assumption under which the planning team operated included the guidance that their plan, now called KRYSTAL BALL, was to be capable of being executed independently of any other plan, concurrently with any other plan, or following the execution of the combat plan (now known as BLUE SPOON). The second assumption was that the CINC would be in charge of Civil-Military Operations (CMO) to restore government and governmental services in Panama after the execution of combat operations against the PDF, for a period not to exceed 30 days; that transfer of U.S. responsibility to the Embassy and the Ambassador would take place as soon as practicable after a Panamanian government was in place; that, should KRYSTAL BALL be implemented in a situation in which combat operations had not been conducted, e.g. an internal Panamanian solution, the U.S. Ambassador would be in charge of CMO which would support his

efforts to assist the Panamanian government. While these assumptions were given in the guidance, others had to be derived from the circumstances. First was the set of conditions in which CMO would be executed. These conditions were assumed to range from minimum damage through moderate to severe damage. It was further assumed that different sections of the country would suffer different levels of damage. This concept was implicit in General Woerner's guidance to concentrate on the Panama City-Colon axis to the partial exclusion of the rest of the country.

The second critical assumption was that the executors of KRYSTAL BALL, the CMO plan, would be the USAR CA units CAPSTONE<sup>23</sup> to SOUTHCOM with such augmentation as required either in the form of units or individual volunteers. The assumption that units would be used was predicated on the further assumption that in the event of execution the Presidential authority to call up individual members and units of the Selected Reserve involuntarily for up to 90 days would be exercised.<sup>24</sup> Assuming that a Reserve call-up would be exercised made the planning for CMO significantly easier since units which trained as units and had 5 years' experience working in Panama would lead the effort. Moreover, these units could be augmented by individual volunteers under Temporary Tour of Active Duty (TTAD) authority to provide specific skills such as language, area, or functional expertise without impacting negatively on unit integrity.

As the planning team launched into its effort, it became apparent that a plan so complex and sensitive could not be finalized in a 31-day period. As a result, SCJ5 soon initiated the message traffic required to bring follow-on teams to finish the job. The follow-on teams also generally came for 31-day tours and there were several sets of partial replacements over the period until August 1988. Although a handful of planners remained in place for much of the period, the series of 31-day tours brought in a majority of new people each time, most importantly several different colonels as team leaders. Each colonel wanted to put his own particular stamp on the plan which caused some delay as inconsistencies were resolved.

Irritants between the permanent SOUTHCOM Staff and the Reserve planners generally were minor. One that kept surfacing with each new team, however, was the effort by the Reservists to write into the plan the language of their CAPSTONE document that would make the Commander of the 361st CA Brigade a Brigadier General upon activation for the execution of KRYSTAL BALL. Each time SCJ5 would have to explain to the team that while this issue might be important to the Reserve community, it had no bearing on the plan they had been directed to produce because the general officer who would be in charge of CMO would be the J-5 himself, by direction of the CINC.<sup>25</sup>

## **The Planning Process.**

After the first planning team finished its tour with a draft plan in place, the follow-on teams moved their operations to the tunnel which put them in closer proximity to the J-5. They began seriously to refine the effort. What had appeared at first to be a fairly simple requirement for a CMO plan to restore civilian government and services to Panama became, with analysis, a more complicated effort. There actually was a need to develop two plans, one at the CINC level, the other at the level of the executing headquarters. This approach would bring KRYSTAL BALL in

line with BLUE SPOON and the other PRAYERBOOK plans. Unlike BLUE SPOON, where the implementing plan was initially developed by JTF-Panama, both KRYSTAL BALLS would be developed by the same planners working for SCJ5. This was because General Woerner had designated his J-5 as both the responsible planner for CMO and as Commander, Civil Military Operations Task Force (COMCMOTF). Thus the CINC's KRYSTAL BALL was to lay out a general concept of operation and task COMCMOTF to execute it. It further apportioned forces to COMCMOTF. COMCMOTF's KRYSTAL BALL would have to detail the concept of operation, task organize the forces required, establish subordinate headquarters, and address specifically what was to be done in each anticipated circumstance.<sup>26</sup>

The planning team attacked its problem from the ground up rather than from the top down. It focused its efforts first on developing the COMCMOTF plan and derived the CINC's plan from that. The process, however, was not quite as simple as this discussion makes it appear, nor was it quite so much a reversal of the normal approach to planning. Rather, the CINC's plan did exist in briefing form when the initial team arrived. From that they built the COMCMOTF plan and from that came the revised CINC plan. In short, the process was an interactive one that, while nonstandard, did not totally violate the normal sequence.<sup>27</sup>

## **The Plan(s).**

KRYSTAL BALL divided the Panama theater for CMO into three separate areas of operation (AO): Panama City and vicinity; Colon and the eastern part of the country; and David, which included the entire western part of the nation. Each AO was to be under the control of a different Reserve CA unit (brigade or group). Supervising the entire CMO effort would be the National Team which would be the nucleus of the 361st CA Brigade command and control elements. The National Team would work directly for COMCMOTF who was the SOUTHCOM J-5 and the Commander of the 361st would be his deputy.<sup>28</sup>

The plan identified specific locations for headquarters in each AO. Of historical interest was that COMCMOTF would operate out of SCJ5 at SOUTHCOM Headquarters on Quarry Heights while the National Team would work in Building 1 on Fort Amador<sup>29</sup> if execution took place following combat operations.

While these issues were discussed in both plans, the principal thrust of the COMCMOTF plan was on the identification of critical functional areas which would have to be addressed in the execution of CMO under any of the situations contemplated in KRYSTAL BALL. Among the most important of these functional areas were public safety (law and order), public health, education, public administration, and economic restoration.<sup>30</sup>

As an example, when the planners addressed public safety they considered whether the plan would be executed in a post-combat environment or after some internal Panamanian solution had been effected. If the latter case obtained, the effort would involve working within the current structure of the PDF to upgrade and professionalize its capabilities. By contrast, if the plan were to be implemented in the wake of combat operations, the planners deduced that there would be



a complete breakdown in law and order as the PDF police abandoned their posts. This would clearly have resulted in serious disorders, including significant looting, which would make it incumbent on U.S. forces to establish and restore law and order until such time as a new police force could be established. The nature of that police force also came under serious consideration with the planners concluding that former PDF would have to be used, to some degree, to staff the organization. The new police, however, would not be the initial providers of law and order; rather there would be a transition period during which U.S. military police would be on the streets.<sup>31</sup>

Developing the other functional areas involved similar analysis. In many cases the planners felt there would be a need to conduct assessments on the ground to determine precisely the kind of actions and assistance that would be required. Hence, assessments were built into the plan as the first stage of execution.

Another aspect of the planning involved the collection and analysis of CA-peculiar intelligence. While much of this data had been gathered over the previous 5 years and was included in the 361st's Panama Area Assessment, the work needed to be updated. Among the kinds of information needed were the locations of all the fire fighting equipment in the country. In addition, the planners identified locations for potential refugee camps.<sup>32</sup>

As the COMCMOTF version of KRYSTAL BALL was completed in August 1988, the planners structured it into a series of functional annexes. Each annex was designed to provide sufficient instruction to whomever would execute it to start them in the right direction. Thus, the education annex told the implementer the locations of all educational institutions and schools in Panama. It provided information about teachers, curriculum, classrooms, equipment, and told the implementers what to look for if they were tasked with the initial assessment.<sup>33</sup>

What the functional annexes provided was first, a recognition that a Reserve call-up might not be as timely as the overall plan called for or it might not happen at all. In other words, they recognized the possibility that non-CA-trained personnel might well have to execute the plan, at least in its early stages. Second, the annexes provided packets for whomever was to execute, directing a method for the implementation of CMO. Third, the annexes provided the required degree of flexibility needed to make the plan useful in a wide variety of circumstances and under differing conditions of execution.

The crafting of both KRYSTAL BALLS was completed by August 1988. By this time the Panama crisis had diminished in importance in U.S. foreign policy. As the Reserve planners turned over the documents they had produced to the permanent party they must have had the thought that they had just participated in an interesting training exercise. As General Woerner put it,

We never anticipated having to do that plan . . . since I really did believe what Washington was telling me, that it was contrary to our interests to intervene militarily in Panama, we would not intervene—from the President himself. So I thought at that stage that the greatest value of all this planning was as a training vehicle . . .<sup>34</sup>

The result was that like the other plans in the PRAYERBOOK, KRYSTAL BALL went on the shelf. At about this time there was a name change and KRYSTAL BALL was rechristened BLIND LOGIC. The 1988 American Presidential election campaign was in full swing, and Panama did not become a major issue. SOUTHCOM, breathing a collective sign of relief turned its attention to the rest of the hemisphere. USCINCSO could, for a time, cease being CINC Panama.

## Assessing the Process.

What is to be made of the planning process for CMO contingencies in Panama as it was carried out in 1988? Planning for the contingency of the use of military force against Noriega was an initiative of General Woerner,<sup>36</sup> although it probably would have begun at more or less the same time at the direction of JCS. The circumstances in Panama in late February 1988 dictated the need that this type of contingency planning take place. However, while General Woerner saw it clearly as prudent military contingency planning, others, both within and outside SOUTHCOM, saw it in a much more imminent light. The fact that the plans technically were drafted as Operations Orders (OPORDS) as opposed to Operations Plans (OPLANS) contributed to this perception.

While some have suggested that the CMO plan was an afterthought<sup>36</sup> and there is no question that CMO planning was begun after the completion of plans for the other phases of the operation, General Woerner asserts that not only was it not an afterthought but, "In fact, it was an idea that it always was the most significant and most difficult phase of the operation."<sup>37</sup> At the same time, given Woerner's perception and his guidance from Washington, no sense of urgency to complete the CMO phase was communicated early to the staff. Further complicating the matter was that the four CA officers on the staff of SCJ5 did not have TOP SECRET clearance at the time. This precluded them initially from forming a part of the planning cell.

Another complicating factor was that Plans, in 1988, was a Division of the J-3 while CA was a Branch of the J-5 Policy and Strategy Division. This separation coupled with the complete lack of CA expertise anywhere on the J-Staff except among the four USAR AGR officers kept CMO from being raised to the surface immediately. Only when the lack of CMO planning was noted were the CA officers brought in to develop a notional plan on a crash basis—in one day.

Of the four CA officers in SCJ5, only one had ever served previously in a CA assignment. As a result of this shortage of expertise and other very heavy demands on these officers, the decision was made to request support from the CAPSTONE CA unit. This support not only was forthcoming in a rapid and timely fashion, but also brought with it regional, functional, and country expertise that was not to be found in all of USSOUTHCOM. This expertise included individuals who had conducted civic action seminars with the PDF over the previous 5 years, knew many of the players, knew members of the U.S. Embassy staff, and knew how government and nongovernmental institutions worked in Panama. Moreover, the 361st was prepared to answer this kind of short term call for assistance having put together lists of its members who were ready and able to volunteer on short notice for tours of up to 31 days. These individuals had their employers fully prepared to support tours of duty of this nature.<sup>38</sup>

The 31-day tour for which the members of the 361st were generally prepared, however, had a negative ramification for the planning which would carry over into the execution but not be clearly seen until that time. The unit was not prepared to support, on a regular basis with large numbers of its members, voluntary TTAD for more than 31 days at a time. This resulted in the increments of 31-day planners described above. Although the negative results of the use of incremental planning teams were not viewed as serious at the time, had a greater urgency pervaded the command, the relatively minor delays this caused would have loomed larger than they did.

Another factor that would become more important later on was the high level of classification and the compartmentalization of the planning process. The inability of the CMO planners to consider the other plans in detail reduced the congruence of, particularly, BLUE SPOON and KRYSTAL BALL/BLIND LOGIC. The other impact of classification and compartmentalization was that as each planner left Panama to return to home station he was "read off" access. While he really could not forget what he knew he had to go through the motions. This, in turn, meant that when the team returned to the unit there could be no discussion of modifications among members of the same unit who would likely be called upon to go back to Panama for update work as well as to execute the plan in the unlikely event that would ever take place.

Like the Panama crisis itself, the planning process was episodic. It had a series of ebbs and flows within the course of an episode. This could be seen in the call for CMO planning and was issued with less than a day to prepare a briefing for the CINC, followed by a significant delay in getting assistance from the 361st and key individuals from other units, which, in turn, was followed by the retirement of BLIND LOGIC to the shelf to await further developments.

What about the plans? Were they adequate to the task at the time? It was not clear at first to the planners that planning was required on two levels. As the process evolved it became apparent that one plan delineating the USCINCSO's intent and concept was needed. This plan would also serve to direct COMCMOTF (SCJ5) in developing his implementing plan. Since the individuals charged with developing both plans were the same, the process was more interactive than normal, often appearing as if it were being conducted backwards.

The result, however, was two CMO plans that clearly addressed the issues as they were understood in the spring and summer of 1988. The plans in fact were developed at the operational level. The CINC plan clearly was operational while COMCMOTF's plan pushed down toward the tactical. Neither plan directly focused on or addressed the strategic. While the underlying strategic context suggested that the principal strategic objective of CMO should be to support the establishment of democratic government in Panama after U.S. military operations, this objective was not defined as an end-state. The strategic clarity was further befuddled by the need to plan for execution in circumstances other than post-combat. This meant that the plan had to be executable with an essentially unreformed PDF in place and dominant, hardly an auspicious democratic beginning. Finally, was the perception that the plans constituted a training exercise for the SOUTHCOM staff and its Reserve augmentees, which lent something of an air of unreality to the entire process.

## CHAPTER 3

### PLANNING FOR INTERVENTION: 1989

The Panama crisis was relatively quiescent during the second half of 1988 and the first two months of 1989—as if awaiting the results of the American Presidential elections. When those results changed nothing in Noriega's perception, he went on the offensive again. The critical incident took place on March 3, when the PDF seized 21 U.S. school buses, some with children on board, for an alleged licensing violation.<sup>39</sup> The U.S. MPs reacted strongly and the incident was defused. However, as noted in Chapter 1, the seizure had a profound effect on the U.S. civilian and dependent community in Panama. It also renewed the planning cycle. The PRAYERBOOK came off the shelf.

#### Review of the CMO Plan.

Among the PRAYERBOOK plans that were subject to reconsideration at this time was BLIND LOGIC, the CMO plan. The CA officers, who in January 1989 had been transferred to the Directorate of Operations (SCJ3), undertook the task. They reviewed BLIND LOGIC and sent it forward to JCS with no recommendations for changes. They were concerned, however, that several of the assumptions might have changed in the 8 months that the plan had been on the shelf. Of particular concern was the assumption concerning the exercise of the Reserve call-up authority and the impact on execution if that authority were not used.<sup>40</sup>

These concerns did not galvanize anybody into action at this time. As was usual in SOUTHCOM, their plates were full of so many other items that as the Panama crisis quieted down while awaiting the Panamanian elections in May, so did crisis planning. There was, in addition, an awareness on the part of the SOUTHCOM staff of how easy it was to be captured by events in Panama and to forget the broader regional responsibilities of the command. Hence there was a conscious effort on the part of many action officers to remind themselves that the CINC was CINCSO not CINC Panama.<sup>41</sup>

Panama held its national elections on May 7, and Noriega soon nullified them. On May 10 worldwide television broadcasts publicized the spectacle of the bloody shirts of the victorious candidates—the event which brought the Panama crisis back to the fore of U.S. policy concerns.

BLUE SPOON and BLIND LOGIC came back off the shelf. Staff changes in the CA Branch of SCJ3 had raised some important questions about who should be in charge of BLIND LOGIC. One such change was the fact that CA had come under the Deployable Joint Task Force (DJTF), an operational headquarters under the J-3 that was responsible for conducting exercises throughout Latin America, small scale contingency operations, and planning. It was not oriented toward handling major contingencies like those envisioned by the PRAYERBOOK series of plans. Second, the CA branch had undergone a reduction of personnel which halved its capability. Of

the four AGR officers who had been on board, only one remained in May 1989 while one replacement was to arrive soon. As a result, the CA action officer initiated discussions with SCJ5 to transfer BLIND LOGIC.<sup>42</sup>

The two staff sections rapidly agreed, as did the respective staff principals. A decision briefing, to be presented to General Woerner on May 18, was prepared. After reviewing the status of BLIND LOGIC the briefer asked General Woerner for decisions on four issues. First, he sought the CINC's approval for turning planning responsibility over to the J-5. CA responsibilities including planning had only moved to the J-3 in January 1989, and execution responsibilities still remained with the J-5 as COMCMOTF. The second issue was that of COMCMOTF. Since an external JTF under the XVIII Airborne Corps was being activated did the CINC still desire that SCJ5 continue as COMCMOTF? If not, then what general officer and what staff did he wish in its place? The third issue was the assumption that a Reserve call-up would indeed be effected in the event of execution of the plan. There was a need for planning guidance to focus on alternatives to a reserve call-up. The final issue was the need to bring in a new planning team from the 361st CA Brigade and other Reserve assets to do a complete update of BLIND LOGIC.

On the issue of transferring the plan to SCJ5, both Brigadier General Marc Cisneros, USA, the J-3, and Brigadier General James LeCleir, USAF, the J-5, indicated that they had discussed the issue and agreed with the recommendation. General Woerner readily gave his assent. With respect to retaining the J-5 as COMCMOTF with responsibility for execution, General Woerner reiterated his position that the very sensitivity of the relationships and their political-military nature demanded that COMCMOTF be a general officer on his staff and that the J-5 was most appropriate. General Woerner also agreed to the modified planning guidance to pursue alternatives to a Reserve call-up. With regard to the last issue, bringing in a new planning team from the Reserve CA community, General Woerner gave a very qualified approval. He stated that he did not want a large team but that a few Reservists could augment the staff and provide the needed expertise.

Following the briefing SCJ5 initiated the contacts required to assemble the team of Reservists and active component personnel required to give BLIND LOGIC a "good scrub," as it is called in the bureaucratic vernacular. The briefing generally had confirmed General Woerner's previous guidance for BLIND LOGIC. Most of the basic assumptions remained. The plan was still designed to be executed independently, concurrently, or in sequence with any other plan. It still assumed that any of three levels of damage could exist in the various areas of Panama. And it still focused attention on the Panama-Colon axis with less emphasis on David in the west and the Darien in the east. The one assumption that obviously demanded reconsideration was that which addressed the Reserve CA units to be employed by COMCMOTF in his execution of the plan. This would require assessing alternative command and control mechanisms and alternative force structures if a Reserve call-up were no longer going to be assumed. Since these issues tended to cluster around the organization and functioning of the COMCMOTF it was clear that they would be best addressed in the CINC level plan. Interestingly, they would have little impact and cause only marginal changes to the COMCMOTF plan.

While SCJ5 was activating the CA planners through the Reserve system and arranging support from the Active Component 96th CA Battalion, the leaders of the planning cell developed an

approach for staff review and involvement in updating BLIND LOGIC. One of the weaknesses that had been discovered in the plans as they had been developed was that there had been little, or no, staff and component input. Therefore, for those pieces of the plans that had to be executed by Panama-based forces there was no assurance that it was within their capabilities. The same was true for non-CA augmentation forces. As a result, a staff and component review was essential.

SCJ5 sent out a memorandum calling for a meeting of the staff elements and Army, Navy, Air Force, and Special Operations Command component representatives to establish a procedure for the review of BLIND LOGIC. At this first meeting it was necessary to "read on" to the planning system any representative who previously had not been on the access roster. Since representatives changed from time to time this became a continuing problem.

By the time of the second meeting of the staff and component representatives the Reserve CA planners had arrived and were well into their own review of the plan. While the staff and components provided a largely technical review of the capability to execute, the Active and Reserve CA planning cell began to consider just how the plan could be executed in the event that there was no Reserve call-up.

Their approach to the problem was to examine the capabilities required by the plan, especially in command and control and functional expertise. The optimal solution to the problem was the one already in the plan. By calling up the requisite Reserve units, they would have the headquarters elements needed to provide command and control and they would have the necessary civilian skills to provide the required functional expertise.

### **Alternatives to Reserve Call-up.**

Without a call-up, however, and using only forces on hand plus the 96th CA Battalion there would be a shortage of both command and control and functional expertise. Command and control would have to be exercised by headquarters elements available from the forces in-country or deployed. Functional expertise would be sorely lacking and would only be provided in the form of the CA generalists of the 96th and in instructions found in the functional annexes of the COMCMOTF plan. This analysis determined that while initial restoration of services could be accomplished with forces on the ground using the BLIND LOGIC annexes, sustainment and development of government and government services would be problematic at best.

Some use of Reserve CA assets would be required if full restoration of Panama's government and government services were to be accomplished. The only way the planning cell could see to achieve this result was through the use of the temporary tour of active duty (TTAD) mechanism which had been used to bring the planning cell on board in both 1988 and 1989. The problem with TTAD was that activating it was cumbersome and not very timely. It had taken nearly a month to respond to an urgent request for the three planners who were now supporting SCJ5.

An approach developed by one Reserve PSYOP battalion in the wake of the Grenada operation (URGENT FURY), suggested that a system of "hip pocket" orders for preselected

volunteers might work. The planning cell developed a concept for ARCVs (standing for Augmentation Reserve Component Volunteers). The concept called for 25 ARCVs to be preselected from among the officers of the 361st CA Brigade with some leavening from other Reserve CA units. Included among them would be the Brigade commander or his deputy. The remaining officers would be selected for their functional, area, and language skills and expertises, as well as for their roles in the command and control system of the 361st. Their mission upon arrival would be to fill out the COMCMOTF staff which, in this version of the plan, would do multiple duty as the National and Panama City Zone Teams.

One problem in activating the ARCVs would be getting them in country sufficiently early to be effective, assuming they were alerted too late to come in before hostilities commenced. Arranging for their movement under these circumstances entailed coordination with the new JTF that had just been activated, the XVIII Airborne Corps. Fortunately, several Corps planners were in Panama during this period and the cell was able to conduct the necessary coordination with them on this and other issues.

The other issues included forces required to support civil military operations (CMO) such as Military Police (MP), engineers, medical personnel, and the 96th CA Battalion. From the vantage point of the SOUTHCOM planners, where these forces would be troop listed, when they would arrive, and their relationship with the combat units needed definition. There was also a requirement that the mission of these CMO support forces, under the JTF—to restore law and order in the wake of the destruction of the PDF as well as to restore essential government services—be recognized. It was equally essential to coordinate the point at which the CMO support forces would transfer from the control of the JTF to COMCMOTF, the headquarters tasked by the CINC to be responsible for the restoration of Panama. In fact, these issues were addressed by the planning cell and the Corps planners after which the SOUTHCOM planners reported they were satisfied that agreement had been reached.

### **Contingency Corps Planning vs. SOUTHCOM Planning.**

The agreements that the planning cell perceived were incorporated into BLIND LOGIC in the form of conditions for execution. When those conditions were met, then CMO support forces would come under the control of COMCMOTF. The SOUTHCOM planners expected that the Corps planners would operate in parallel and incorporate the perceived agreements into their OPLAN.

The Corps planners, however, were operating under entirely different circumstances than were their SOUTHCOM counterparts. First, they had no authority to make any agreements with SOUTHCOM.<sup>43</sup> Although they reported their discussions fully to their superiors, the latter did not consider that there were any taskings, implied or explicit, in BLIND LOGIC.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, the Corps planners did not perceive BLIND LOGIC as an approved plan, which indeed the current draft was not, and therefore did not require formal consideration.<sup>45</sup> In addition, this entire episode took place during the period in which General Woerner's retirement was announced and his successor, General Thurman, was receiving his initial briefings as CINC designate. In fact, Thurman began receiving briefings on August 5, one set of which took place at Fort Bragg where he was briefed

by both the XVIII Airborne Corps and elements of the SOUTHCOM staff.<sup>46</sup> From the date of those briefings until Thurman took command on September 30, the Corps planners generally treated the SOUTHCOM staff as irrelevant.<sup>47</sup> Under the circumstances, there was little reason to be surprised about the extensive disconnects between SOUTHCOM and the Corps with respect to BLIND LOGIC.

## **Interagency Coordination: State Department.**

Another issue of coordination surfaced at about this same time. In working BLIND LOGIC it soon became apparent to the officers of the planning cell that they were treading heavily on State Department turf. As a result, the cell chief requested permission to coordinate with the Political Counselor at the Embassy. He was told that he could not since the plan was controlled exclusively within Department of Defense channels. The issue was so critical that permission was finally obtained to determine the Embassy's thinking on the issues addressed by BLIND LOGIC. The constraint was to gather information while, at most, "talking around the plan."

The visit did give the planning cell the benefit of one rather crucial State Department perception: that in the event that the U.S. Government chose to intervene in Panama with force it was likely that the government position would be that the PDF would be destroyed and under no circumstances replaced by any military organization. In other words, the planners perception of U.S. policy became that they should use the Costa Rican model (of police forces and no army). This perception was incorporated into the plan. Unfortunately, the constraints on candid discussion with the Embassy precluded consideration of other important political-military issues, such as whether there would be military government in Panama.

## **The Plans.**

Toward the end of August 1989, the BLIND LOGIC plans had achieved the form that the planners felt would accomplish the mission of beginning the restoration of Panamanian government and government services should the order to execute ever be given. The CINC's plan now could be executed independently, concurrently, or in sequence with BLUE SPOON (augmentation of forces and NEO having been overtaken by events).<sup>48</sup> It could be executed in situations involving light, moderate, or heavy damage to the Panamanian infrastructure. It could also be executed, with varying degrees of predicted effectiveness, in circumstances involving a Reserve call-up, the use of ARCVs, or with only in-place forces. BLIND LOGIC took account of the involvement of the XVIII Airborne Corps as the JTF and, if implemented following BLUE SPOON, it set as the critical condition for execution that combat be at less than platoon strength. At that point, CMO support forces would come under the control of COMCMOTF. Prior to that point the law and order mission and emergency service restoration mission would belong to the JTF. Most importantly, the SOUTHCOM planners believed that the Corps fully understood the implication of these conditions.



The plan also modified command and control arrangements making some minor changes in zone boundaries between Panama, Colon, and David. In addition, there were major changes in designating headquarters to control the zones, especially in the event of no Reserve call-up. In that case, COMCMOTF would do multiple duties as National Task Force, Panama Zone Task Force, and would detach elements to serve as the Colon Task Force. In retrospect, the approach sounds more complicated than it really was, given that the Panama-Colon axis is only 50 miles long and 10 miles wide and contains over half the population of the country. David and the western part of the country were placed under the control of Special Operations Command South (SOCSO) in its Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) capacity.

The COMCMOTF plan underwent few major changes in the course of the renewed planning effort. Rather, its structure into annexes, which were designed to be issued to implementing teams as packets, had held up well. Essentially, what the planners did was to validate the earlier effort, bring the entire plan in line with the new features of the CINC's plan, and take account of the existence of the external JTF. Thus the COMCMOTF plan was seen as being capable of execution by whatever forces COMCMOTF had available. For both plans one critical assumption remained unchanged: there would be no Panamanian government if BLIND LOGIC were executed in conjunction with BLUE SPOON. Therefore the CINC would establish and run a military government for as brief a period as possible.

### **Changing Players--Change of Command.**

In August, BLIND LOGIC planning wound down, and meetings with the staff and components ceased. The 96th CA representatives had departed. The Reserve planners were debriefed and returned to the 361st while what remained of the planning cell prepared to brief the staff principals, then the CINC. These two briefings would complete the internal SOUTHCOM planning cycle.

In the course of the 1989 effort, the staff principals had changed. On May 18, Brigadier General Marc Cisneros was the J-3. By September 1, he had been the Commanding General of USARSO and JTF-Panama for more than two months. His replacement was Brigadier General William Hartzog. On May 18, the J-5 was Brigadier General James LeClerc. By September 1, his replacement, Brigadier General Benard Gann, USAF, had come on board. Both knew generally what had been done with BLIND LOGIC over the summer; neither had been briefed in detail. After several delays both generals were located in the same room, where they received the briefing of BLIND LOGIC, and approved the plan. There only remained the CINC.

The remaining Reserve members of the planning cell prepared to depart SOUTHCOM. However, before it had completely dispersed, the cell had begun an initiative to keep BLIND LOGIC planning alive and in the hands of those who knew it best: the 361st CA Brigade. As the Reserve CA unit CAPSTONE to SOUTHCOM it technically had the responsibility to maintain CA annexes and plans. The problem with this plan was its close-hold nature and high degree of compartmentalization. Newly installed secure communications systems could overcome the essence of these problems and an effort was begun to see if something could be worked out so the 361st could maintain and update BLIND LOGIC.

From the time of his announced retirement on July 20, 1989, until the change of command on September 30 General Fred Woerner became increasingly irrelevant to the Panama equation. According to people who served with Woerner and some who served in other commands that dealt with SOUTHCOM, Woerner had become a nonperson as far as Washington was concerned.<sup>49</sup> It was in this context that the planners sought to get on the CINC's calendar. Each time the briefing would be postponed. Meanwhile the planning cell was rapidly disintegrating. By September 16, it was no more, and a requirement for a counternarcotics campaign plan due on October 15 was given to the staff on September 18. BLIND LOGIC went back on the shelf as SCJ5 busied itself with other duties. No one pushed to brief a CINC, either Woerner or Thurman.

## **Assessing the Process.**

The planning process in 1989 followed logically from that which preceded it. It responded to political-military events in Panama and the United States and to structural and personnel changes within SOUTHCOM itself. Planning for BLIND LOGIC remained dependent on the Reserve community for both manpower in simple numbers and expertise.

The guidance given by General Woerner to limit the Reserve participation forced a greater reliance on the SOUTHCOM Staff and components such that planning personnel from all staff sections, components and SOCSO became aware of the existence and some of the content of BLIND LOGIC. The probability that it would have some success if it were executed increased due to both the realistic review and the involvement of those organizations which would have to support it.

The planning took into account and attempted to effect coordination with the XVIII Airborne Corps as the external JTF headquarters. This attempted coordination should have alerted the Corps that SOUTHCOM was considering the political-military aftermath of a campaign and that the JTF had a role to play in that aftermath. It did not, however, cause the JTF to accept its implied mission in the CMO arena.

The process also pointed out the critical need for interagency coordination on any political-military CMO plan as well as the difficulties of conducting such coordination when the plan is restricted to DOD channels only. The impact of this lack of an ability to effect such coordination will be discussed further in a later chapter. Suffice it to say for the present that the limited discussions that were permitted resulted in important insights being incorporated into the plan while the lack of any candid discussion probably precluded the consideration of things that may well have been critical to U.S. political-military success on the strategic level in Panama.

The planning process was severely hampered by the leadership vacuum produced by the announced retirement of the CINC and the naming of a new one in the midst of the process. As a result, the planners never were able to get the blessing of a CINC since General Woerner's would have made no difference and General Thurman had no authority to make changes before the cell was disbanded and BLIND LOGIC was returned to the shelf along with the other

PRAYERBOOK plans. This statement does not relieve the planners or their superiors in SCJ5 of their responsibility, since they did not press the issue with a sense of urgency.

The revised BLIND LOGICs were improved significantly over their predecessors of the year before but in a clearly evolutionary manner. COMCMOTF's BLIND LOGIC largely was validated by the staff and component review that it underwent. Changes in it were primarily cosmetic or designed to bring it in line with the CINC's plan. Thus anyone charged with executing the plan or of one of its annexes could have a fairly high degree of confidence of operating within the realm of the possible.

The CINC's version of BLIND LOGIC had been the central focus of the 1989 planning effort. The changes in it were far more critical than those in COMCMOTF's plan and made the entire package much more realistic. Addressing the assumption of the Reserve call-up forced the planners to consider in detail the requirement for staffing COMCMOTF and the tasks that headquarters would have to perform. The conclusion that the planners reached, that a Reserve call-up was the optimal solution to the problem but that a team of 25 ACRVs could give COMCMOTF most of its required capability was correct. However, this was only true if the full concept of ACRVs as preselected individuals, mostly from the CAPSTONE unit to fill specific positions on the COMCMOTF staff with specific functional expertise and country experience, were executed. To the extent that the concept was ignored it would be less than totally effective.

The third approach, executing with in-place and Active Component forces meant a significant degradation in the ability of COMCMOTF to carry out his mission. In effect, this mode of execution would create a *de facto* reduced mission of emergency restoration of absolutely essential government services which could be carried out only for a very limited period.

Rethinking command and control for the ARCV and Active Component options produced a more streamlined and probably more realistic command and control structure that might even have worked better if the Reserve call-up option were used. It also led to the probability of a reduced requirement in the event of a Reserve call-up.

The attempted coordination with the XVIII Airborne Corps resulted in a concept of conditions for execution that was both realistic and reasonable. But it did require that all the planners in SOUTHCOM and the Corps adjust the troop list and air movement plan to include the early arrival of the critical CA ARCV cell, active duty CA forces and the MP elements of the CMO support forces. It also required that BLUE SPOON recognize and address the CMO mission, especially the law and order portion, during the period before the conditions for execution of BLIND LOGIC were met. Circumstances, including the change of command in SOUTHCOM, precluded that from happening.

## CHAPTER 4

### FROM BLUE SPOON TO JUST CAUSE

On September 30, 1989, General Maxwell R. Thurman assumed command of USSOUTHCOM from General Fred F. Woerner. The next day the command learned of a planned coup against General Noriega by Major Moises Giroldi, scheduled for Monday, October 2. On Monday, Giroldi sent word that the coup had been postponed a day. On Tuesday, the coup was attempted and by Tuesday night Giroldi was dead.<sup>50</sup> Over the next few weeks recriminations flew. The Bush Administration and General Thurman decided they would not again depend on the actions of the PDF.<sup>51</sup> As a result, planning of a revised BLUE SPOON began again in earnest.

The revision of BLUE SPOON again took place on two levels. In the J-3 of USSOUTHCOM the CINC's revised plan took shape, while at the headquarters of the XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, NC, the finishing touches were made to the plan of JTF-South.

#### **A New Focus For BLUE SPOON.**

Prior to his arrival in Panama, General Thurman was well aware of the plan to remove Noriega, having been briefed on BLUE SPOON as early as August.<sup>52</sup> In fact, the version that he ordered revised in the wake of the failed coup attempt already bore his stamp. It was not until after he had become CINC that Thurman became aware of a restoration plan—BLIND LOGIC. On the subject of restoration he gave no guidance.<sup>53</sup> His entire attention was devoted to BLUE SPOON. The cosmetic change from a restoration phase of the combat plan to a separate plan had returned to haunt SOUTHCOM.

As Chapter 3 made clear, BLUE SPOON and BLIND LOGIC were inextricably intertwined. They had, however, been developed separately both at the CINC and execution levels. Indeed, JTF-South's OPLAN specifically ignored BLIND LOGIC's requirements and General Thurman did not alert the XVIII Airborne Corps planners to that fact.<sup>54</sup>

The BLUE SPOON that Thurman inherited from Woerner was an extremely deliberate plan and was based on the principle of mass.<sup>55</sup> It was also based on General Woerner's knowledge and assessment of the PDF. A deliberate build-up of forces after execution had been decided upon which, coupled with direct psychological pressure, sought to produce a last minute Panamanian solution. If that failed, then the PDF would be overwhelmed by the massed U.S. forces.<sup>56</sup>

The focus of that massed U.S. force was on the center of Panama City, from Noriega's headquarters, the Comandancia, to the elite residential district on the Bay of Panama known as Punta Paitilla. Included within this area were the main shopping, banking, and residential districts

housing non-U.S. Government American citizens. Here, too, one would find Noriega's Dignity Battalions and some of his best troops, but hardly all of the latter.

While Woerner believed his plan had a good chance to succeed without firing a shot, he was completely confident of his ability to overwhelm the PDF, if that were required. Moreover, he was convinced that the relatively small and scattered elements of the PDF outside the city would be too disorganized to pose much of a threat.<sup>57</sup> As a result, his decision to concentrate his forces on the center of Panama City would have the dual effect of decapitating the PDF while, at the same time, providing a sufficient force to prevent the complete breakdown of order.

General Thurman, his J-3 (Brigadier General Hartzog), and Lieutenant General Carl Stiner, Commander of the XVIII Airborne Corps/JTF-South, approached the problem differently. As a result of the defeat of the October 3 coup attempt, they perceived the PDF as capable of being able to concentrate and/or disperse forces rapidly and to cause a great deal of trouble for U.S. forces during a long build-up. This was especially true if all the nearby PDF units were not hit simultaneously. Tactical if not strategic surprise was to be coupled with mass in their version of BLUE SPOON. Thus Thurman's plan called for simultaneously striking some 27 targets along the Panama City-Colon axis at night to take advantage of U.S. night fighting superiority and achieve tactical surprise.<sup>58</sup> Interestingly, those same 27 targets had been identified in Woerner's plan.<sup>59</sup>

To achieve a simultaneous strike on those targets at night with approximately the same size force as Woerner planned to use required one critical shift in focus from the center of Panama City to its periphery.<sup>60</sup> Although the Comandancia remained an immediate target, forces were shifted to attack the international airport and PDF air base, the cavalry squadron at Panama Viejo on the route to the airport, and the PDF *cuartel* at Tinajitas located in a working class district called San Miguelito on the northern outskirts of the city. This shift of forces left the center largely uncovered except for the immediate area of the Comandancia.

With the anticipated destruction of the PDF this lack of forces in the city center would leave a law and order vacuum. Such a vacuum would clearly result in a high potential for looting, vigilantism, and common criminal activity unless there were plans to provide U.S. forces to replace the disintegrated PDF. As pointed out in Chapter 3, the discussions with the XVIII Airborne Corps planners were designed to establish that JTF-South had a civil-military operations (CMO) mission which focused on law and order until such time as that mission was transferred to COMCMOTF.

The Corps' planners, however, had not incorporated the results of their discussions concerning the CMO mission into their version of BLUE SPOON. Instead, they had, as per their guidance, shifted the focus of the operation from the center of Panama City to the periphery resulting in the opening of much of the city to the breakdown of law and order, without providing any forces to maintain or restore the rule of law. In the rush to build a plan for taking down the PDF which took advantage of the night and achieved tactical surprise, hardly anyone anticipated the impact that these changes would have on the civil-military situation in Panama City.<sup>61</sup>

One part of the reason for this was that the early decision to separate the phases of the original plan and create individual and unique plans for each situation focused the attention of the operators toward the optimum approach to achieving the military objectives and away from the

objectives identified in the CMO plan, BLIND LOGIC. Added to this was the propensity of the XVIII Airborne Corps to see its military role in terms that could be described as breaking things while leaving it to somebody else to put them back together.<sup>62</sup>

While the BLUE SPOON revisions proceeded throughout October, little was happening with respect to BLIND LOGIC. The responsible officer in SCJ5 was busy working other issues as were the responsible Deputy Director and Brigadier General Gann. As a result, the issues raised by the lack of an effective interface between BLUE SPOON and BLIND LOGIC simply were not called to the CINC's attention.

The one thing that was happening with BLIND LOGIC during this period was that the 361st CA Brigade was following up on the initiative to maintain the plan at its Pensacola Florida headquarters. Thus the 361st sent one of its officers to SOUTHCOM to work out the details involving communications and security arrangements so that the transfer would become possible. As a result of this visit it would only be a matter of time before the transfer of BLIND LOGIC would be effected. That time could be fairly long, however, and SCJ5 was reconsidering its role as planner and executor. The revision of BLUE SPOON, particularly the streamlining of command and control with all executing elements under JTF-South, raised the question of the continued rationale for the J-5 to remain as COMCMOTF.

### **CMO: Whose Responsibility?**

With a new version of BLUE SPOON published at the end of October, it became imperative that BLIND LOGIC be revised in light of the changes that had been made. SCJ5 perceived that the changes required were relatively minor except for the possibility that the role of COMCMOTF should be passed to an entity under the command and control of JTF-South. The most logical candidate to replace SCJ5 was USARSO.

The perception within J-5 was that, with the advent of JTF-South, USARSO was a headquarters without a mission in the event of action in Panama. Who better, then, to execute the CMO mission than the staff that had spent the better part of the last 2 years focused on Panama? One problem with this solution was that this perception was less than wholly accurate. The USARSO Staff, wearing its JTF-Panama hat, would be almost entirely absorbed by the JTF-South Staff. Adding the COMCMOTF mission just would give General Cisneros and his staff one more hat for planning and execution. Still, these did not appear to be problems that could not be worked out.

In November, preliminary discussions on transferring BLIND LOGIC were held between USARSO planners and SCJ5. Essentially, these discussions served as a warning order that this was the way SOUTHCOM was thinking. USARSO did not object, but did ask some questions to clarify some of the aspects of the plan.

While these preliminary discussions were taking place between the two staff sections, the J-5, Brigadier General Gann, formalized the proposal to the CINC, advocating strongly that

COMCMOTF should be a functional flag officer in a command position. Specifically, he recommended that Major General Marc Cisneros, as commander of USARSO, be given the mission.<sup>63</sup> General Thurman gave his consent. Within the SOUTHCOM Staff, however, the COMCMOTF issue apparently was not coordinated with the J-3, who was the owner of the entire PRAYERBOOK and likely understood that SCJ5's perception of USARSO's capability was mistaken.<sup>64</sup>

Following the CINC's approval of the transfer, SCJ5 held initial discussions with the Acting Chief of Staff of USARSO. These discussions resulted in a staff review of BLIND LOGIC at USARSO. On December 12, a second and longer meeting was held between the Deputy Director, SCJ5, and the Chief of Staff of USARSO to hand off BLIND LOGIC. The Chief asserted that if the Army were to take on the mission of COMCMOTF, a USARSO plan would have to be developed which would involve full coordination with the Embassy and other U.S. Government agencies. In USARSO's opinion it could not execute BLIND LOGIC as it stood. This caused some consternation in SCJ5, and while it was agreed in principle that the plan would be transferred to USARSO, further clarification was required, especially with respect to coordination external to DOD.<sup>65</sup> Again, it should be noted that there was no great sense of urgency about any of this—the assessment of the probability of execution remained low.

### **Execution: Operation JUST CAUSE.**

This late planning involving what to do with BLIND LOGIC soon was overtaken by events. On the night of December 16, Lieutenant Robert Paz was killed while the Navy Lieutenant and his wife, who witnessed the shooting, were assaulted and threatened, she sexually. The combination of PDF actions provided the United States a *casus belli*. On December 17, the order to execute BLUE SPOON as Operation JUST CAUSE was given. Late on the evening of December 19, Guillermo Endara and his two Vice Presidents were sworn in by a Panamanian Justice of the Peace at Quarters 72, Fort Clayton.<sup>66</sup> By 0100 hours, December 20, U.S. offensive operations against the PDF were in full swing.

Operation JUST CAUSE generally went like clockwork. Task Force Bayonet (the 193d Infantry Brigade augmented by elements of the 5th Mech Division) took the Comandancia. Rangers captured Tocumen/Torrijos airport and Rio Hato, home of the Macho de Monte company (the "wild pigs"), who had come to Noriega's rescue in October. Elements of the 3d Battalion of the 7th Special Forces blocked the route of Battalion 2000, the other PDF organization involved in saving Noriega on October 3, at the Pacora Bridge.

Following the seizure of Torrijos/Tocumen by the Rangers, the 82d Airborne jumped into the airfield from which they would attack the PDF units at Tinajitas, Panama Viejo, and Fort Cimarron. Other units seized Renacer prison at Gamboa, fought a brief firefight with the 100 men PDI Marine company at Coco Solo on the Atlantic side, secured the U.S. military housing at Fort Amador from the PDF 5th Company across the golf course, and generally executed their missions exactly as planned. For an incredibly complex mission there were very few glitches.

What is absolutely clear from this brief recounting of the activities of U.S. forces during the first hours of Operation JUST CAUSE becomes even more obvious when one glances at a map of Panama City and its surroundings. (See Figure 3.) Except for the Comandancia and Fort Amador all the activity took place on the outskirts of the city. Early on December 20, looting of the center had begun. Later it would crescendo to a massive scale before subsiding on the third day. The looters were a mixed group ranging from Noriega's Dignity Battalions through common criminals to wealthy citizens looting the stores they normally shopped. In some individual stores the looting was countered by vigilantism as owners and their friends defended property. In the few instances where this happened it was successful. To the looting was added general lawlessness, occasional firefights between vigilantes and criminals or Dignity Battalion members, remnants of the PDF, Dignity Battalions, and U.S. forces. In short, downtown Panama City was in a state of chaos for the first 3 or 4 days.<sup>67</sup>

### **CMO Consequences: The Fog of Peace Rolls In.**

That this chaos was predictable and, indeed, had been predicted as a result of any operation to remove the PDF, should be clear from the entire previous discussion of the planning process for BLIND LOGIC. Thus any one who would argue that the breakdown of law and order symbolized by the looting in Panama City came as a surprise is either being disingenuous or confessing to having made a gross error in judgment. What is more important is the fact that invading a country, with or without the request of the government, conveys a responsibility to restore and maintain public order. Having inaugurated the Panamanian government of President Endara and Vice Presidents Arias Calderon and Ford, the United States was committed to having them succeed in the near term. Near term success meant providing that most basic of government responsibilities, security. The massive looting was *prima facie* evidence that the Endara Government was merely a facade and that neither it nor the United States were prepared to provide that security. The critical question is how the intelligent and experienced senior U.S. military leadership failed to see the obvious and take action.

One explanation is that it was a calculated risk.<sup>68</sup> This approach suggests that taking down the entire PDF at once, while it would leave a vacuum, would not result in extensive law and order problems until the shock of the invasion wore off. At that time U.S. forces would be in a position to be deployed to provide the needed security, having also been augmented by sufficient MPs. This explanation does not consider the past history of civil disorder in Panama and elsewhere. Moreover, it appears to have been crafted after the fact.

The more likely explanation is far more complex. The failure to react quickly to the looting resulted from a combination of circumstances that have been discussed individually above. First, General Woerner's BLUE SPOON concentrated on the center of Panama City and would have put sufficient forces into that area to have intimidated most looters and other elements of disorder at the risk of more potential resistance from the PDF. General Thurman's plan shifted U.S. forces to the PDF units on the periphery of the city in such a way that U.S. forces could not provide security to the city, while reducing the risk of effective PDF resistance.



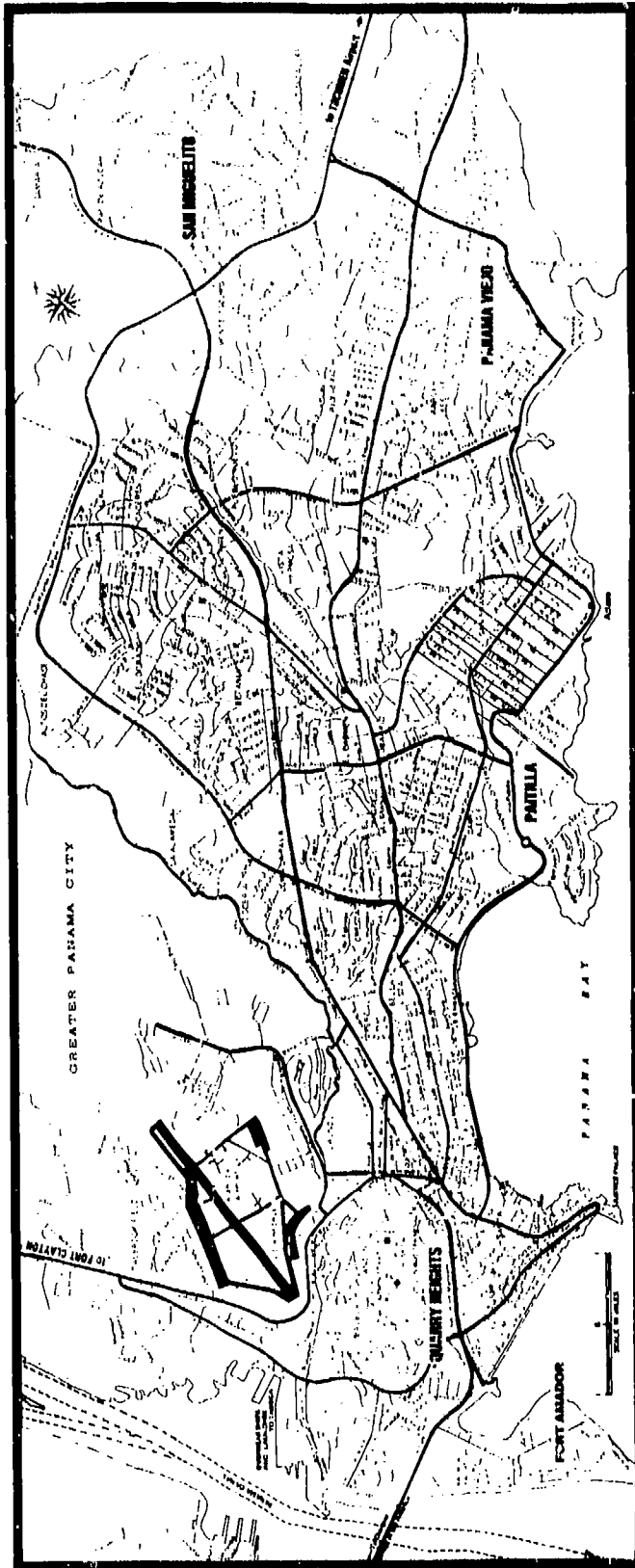


Figure 3.

This critique is not a criticism of Generals Thurman's and Stiner's concept of the operation against the PDF. It is a criticism of the planning process that permitted them to ignore the political-military consequences of military action. What led them into this trap is the second part of the explanation.

The early decision to go from a phased plan to a series of separate plans, while merely cosmetic under Woerner, diverted the attention of General Thurman.<sup>69</sup> Thus the latter focused his attention on the plan to remove the Noriega regime and not on the plan to restore government to Panama. This is not to say that Thurman ignored the problem, for he personally coordinated a great many related issues with the Charge d'Affaires at the U.S. Embassy, John Bushnell.<sup>70</sup> But he did not undertake his personal coordination of political-military issues in the light of "his" CMO plan. He did not concentrate his effort on BLIND LOGIC but on the tactical plan (BLUE SPOON).<sup>71</sup>

The third part of the explanation also revolves around the separate development of BLIND LOGIC from BLUE SPOON. Because it was a separate plan developed by a different SOUTHCOM directorate than the others in the PRAYERBOOK, and because the core of the planning cells were Reservists on special tours of duty, planning for BLIND LOGIC lagged significantly behind BLUE SPOON. The result was a completed plan that had never received formal approval from either General Woerner or General Thurman. Moreover, a completed plan also had not been approved by JCS. As a result, its demand for attention by the planners at XVIII Airborne Corps was nil. The Corps planners chose to ignore any implied CMO mission when they drew up their final version of BLUE SPOON for JTF-South.

The consequences of failing to incorporate the mission to restore or maintain law and order into BLUE SPOON were seen in the looting that took place in Panama City which was symbolic of the greater breakdown of law and order resulting from the successful destruction of the PDF as an institution. The perception the looting created was that there was no plan for the restoration of Panama and that everything involving restoration was being done ad hoc. In fact, while providing security was being handled largely on an ad hoc basis, BLIND LOGIC was providing a useful base on which to build a new Panamanian government.

## **The Beginning of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY.**

While preparations were being made to execute BLUE SPOON, similar preparations were being made with respect to BLIND LOGIC. On the morning of December 17, SCJ5 realized that it might have to execute the plan as COMCMOTF, the hand-off to USARSO not having been accomplished. That morning a review of the plan took place in J-5 Plans.

The officer who had been in charge of BLIND LOGIC since May was on leave in the United States pending reassignment to USARSO and only the Plans Chief, the Deputies, and the J-5 personally had any familiarity with the plan. As a result, the SCJ3 CA officer, who had previous responsibility for BLIND LOGIC, was called in to assist. And since J-5 still had hope of passing the plan to USARSO, the USARSO senior planner was asked to comment on the task organization. He indicated the plan had some major problems from his point of view.<sup>72</sup>

On December 18 and 19, there was a crash effort to update and finalize BLIND LOGIC, as well as to get an approved version back from JCS. By December 19, it was clear that, initially at least, SCJ5 would have to execute as COMCMOTF. In the process, numerous secure conversations were held with JCS as the planners sought to pre-coordinate their message which would constitute the OPORD for BLIND LOGIC. Among the aspects of the process was Brigadier General Gann's statement that he was not going to conduct Operation BLIND LOGIC and that the name would have to be changed. He proposed PROMOTE LIBERTY, a name that JCS would approve.<sup>73</sup>

On December 20, the final version of the BLIND LOGIC plan was sent to JCS for approval. Among the changes included were the establishment of the long-term CMOTF under JTF-South. Not changed was the requirement to activate the 361st CA Brigade and its subordinate unit the 478th CA Company under the Presidential call-up authority.<sup>74</sup>

On the morning of December 20, while the plan was being finalized, General Thurman directed Brigadier General Gann to move his entire organization to the Legislative Assembly building and assist the new government. In other words, Gann was told to execute BLIND LOGIC.<sup>75</sup> At 1000 hours, on December 20, most of the J-5 staff headed for the Assembly building from Quarry Heights. They left behind a rear element in the tunnel.<sup>76</sup> On December 21, JCS ordered the execution of BLIND LOGIC in response to General Thurman's message of the day before which presented the plan.<sup>77</sup> JCS approved the entire plan, including Brigadier General Gann's name of PROMOTE LIBERTY, except for the involuntary call-up of the Reserve CA units. Instead, JCS was prepared to approve the use of Reserve CA volunteers as had been, more or less, contemplated in the planning as the ARCV option. Indeed, JCS was prepared to go further and approve, essentially, any number of volunteers requested—well above the contemplated 25 ARCVs. The one important caveat was that the 25 person core was to be approved for tours of 139 days; fewer days would not be acceptable. This played havoc with the planning of the 361st which had teams prepared to go for 31 days but could not, in general, volunteer for the longer 139 days. Of the preselected ARCVs, only three ended up in the initial package.

Between December 20 and 21, BLIND LOGIC began to be executed, under the name of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, by the J-5 as COMCMOTF. It had been executed concurrently with BLUE SPOON. Although numerous problems of execution would be faced, SOUTHCOM did, when the time came, have a plan to execute for the restoration of civil government in Panama.

## CHAPTER 5

### OPERATION PROMOTE LIBERTY: COMCMOTF "IN CHARGE"

On the morning of December 20, 1989, even before the final version of the CINC's BLIND LOGIC had been forwarded for JCS approval, Brigadier General Benard Gann, J-5 of USSOUTHCOM, moved two thirds of his staff to the Legislative Assembly building down the hill from Quarry Heights and began to function as COMCMOTF. General Thurman had told the American Charge d'Affaires, John Bushnell, that Gann and his civil-military operations task force (CMOTF) worked for Bushnell.<sup>78</sup> Thurman's instructions to Gann were to provide Bushnell what he needed to assist the newly inaugurated Panamanian government, as well as such additional support that might be required. This "additional support" would be considerable, given the extraordinarily limited resources available to Bushnell, whose entire mission strength on December 20 was about 15 with very few senior staff among them.<sup>79</sup> Implicit within Gann's instructions and his understanding of his mission was the execution of BLIND LOGIC, now called PROMOTE LIBERTY.

One problem for COMCMOTF was that an underlying assumption of BLIND LOGIC was wholly incorrect. Where BLIND LOGIC had assumed that there would be no civilian government in Panama and that, therefore, the CINC would be in charge of a temporary U.S. military government with assistance from State Department, a civilian government had been inaugurated prior to the commencement of Operation JUST CAUSE. There also was U.S. diplomatic representation to that government in the form of the Charge. This changed set of facts resulted in General Thurman's putting General Gann under the operational control of Mr. Bushnell.

Three people, one President and two Vice Presidents, do not constitute a government. Neither does an Embassy with a total reduced authorized strength of 45 and an effective strength of about 15 (due to leaves, rotations, and the lack of replacements) constitute effective diplomatic representation.<sup>80</sup> State recognized the dilemma this represented and with Thurman's support sent three POLADs (political advisers) to assist the Charge. They included Deputy Undersecretary of State for Interamerican Affairs, Michael Kozak, who had previous experience with Panama dating back to the negotiation of the Panama Canal Treaty. In addition to Kozak, the POLADs were a U.S. Information Agency officer, who had worked closely with the former Undersecretary of State for Interamerican Affairs, and the former junior political officer in the Embassy who had forged close links with Endara, Arias Calderon, and Ford when they constituted the opposition.<sup>81</sup> These three arrived in Panama on December 20, and immediately joined the country team. Two additional State Department officers shortly were sent to provide direct support to General Gann.

The erroneous assumption that there would be military government complicated the role of COMCMOTF. One member of the CMOTF staff suggested that General Gann and his team initially behaved as if they expected the new government to be functional, or nearly so, with cabinet ministers reporting in on a daily basis. In fact, what they found were the three elected officials, a

few members of the Embassy team, and no effective government. Indeed, the three leaders seemed to be essentially concerned about how the cabinet posts would be divided and with their own physical security.<sup>82</sup> The latter, of course, was a major concern through Friday, December 22, when there was an attack on the National Transit Authority (DNTT) building, where a police force was being assembled, by die-hard PDF and Dignity Battalion elements. As a result of the lack of other effective U.S. Government agencies and a Panamanian government of three disparate politicians with no resources, COMCMOTF found that it had no choice but lead the Government of Panama couching its actions in the form of suggestions and recommendations to the "government" and the Charge. This is not to suggest that there was much discord among the CMOTF, Embassy, and the Panamanian government. Rather, the situation among the three groups was relatively harmonious, but the effective lead was in the hands of the CMOTF personnel.<sup>83</sup>

## **Organization of COMCMOTF.**

To carry out its mission, which was nothing less than putting in place a new Panamanian government—making fact out of diplomatic fiction—COMCMOTF needed an organizational structure somewhat different from that envisioned in the BLIND LOGIC plan. The structure also needed to be adapted to SCJ5's normal way of doing business.

The organization of COMCMOTF (shown at Appendix A) followed the general organization of SCJ5 with three deputies under General Gann. Two of these were Forward and controlled the Day and Night teams of action officers. The third Deputy ran CMOTF Rear from the tunnel where he also had a Day and Night team. In addition to the three deputies, the fourth colonel in the J-5, Jack Pryor, served with the title of Special Staff Officer but was, in fact, assigned to the President and Vice Presidents as their liaison with the U.S. military. Pryor also had direct access to the CINC. Finally, there was a colonel as liaison from JTF-South.<sup>84</sup>

The key to the effective functioning of the CMOTF was found in the Day and Night teams of COMCMOTF Forward. There the action officers were responsible for the functional areas that had been identified in BLIND LOGIC. With some additions and other deletions the annexes of the COMCMOTF plan provided the action officers with a blueprint and guide as to how to accomplish tasks in their areas of responsibility.<sup>85</sup>

From December 20-25, COMCMOTF worked around the clock to restore services, establish a Government of Panama by assisting in the organization of government departments, and coordinating the activities of U.S. Government and private relief agencies.<sup>86</sup> Categories of activities were prioritized in ten groups beginning with health and safety through various levels of security to cleaning up the city, public affairs, and a variety of miscellaneous issues (see Appendix B).<sup>87</sup>

On December 22, CMOTF Forward relocated to the Foreign Ministry building from the Assembly, partly for security and partly because this was where the center of the new Panamanian government was being located. The President soon would attempt to occupy the Presidential

Palace and General Gann would go with him but the CMOTF would stay at the Foreign Ministry until relocated back to Quarry Heights. This would happen about January 1, with the arrival of the bulk of the Reserve CA volunteers.

As previously discussed, BLIND LOGIC had assumed the exercise of a Presidential call-up of selected Reserve units. While the planners had recognized the potential political problem involved with a call-up and attempted to provide an alternative with the ARCV concept, the final version of the plan had gone to JCS on December 20 with the call-up request intact. On December 21, JCS rejected the exercise of the call-up authority and determined to use volunteers under the temporary tour of active duty (TTAD) rules.<sup>88</sup> By deciding, however, to restrict the volunteers for the first increment of 25 to a minimum of 139 days, the decision makers had invalidated the ARCV concept. Of the 25 preselected individuals only three were in the original command and control group. One of these was the Deputy Commander of the 361st CA Brigade, who had been involved in the 1988 planning but had not seen or been formally briefed on the 1989 revisions.<sup>89</sup> A second was his operations officer, also a veteran of the 1988 planning, and the only exception to the 139 day rule (he came for 31 days, the maximum that he could effectively leave his job in volunteer status). The third was the only fully qualified Spanish linguist in the entire group, from another unit and a veteran of both the 1988 and 1989 planning cells. Of all the volunteers he was the only one intimately familiar with the entire plan.

Another result of the lack of effective coordination with the XVIII Airborne Corps during the planning process now became manifest. The Corps OPLAN 90-2, Joint Task Force South dated November 3, 1989, tasks the 361st CA Brigade to establish the Joint Civil Affairs Task Force (JCATF) at the same time as it was tasked in BLIND LOGIC to staff the CMOTF.<sup>90</sup> Although this dual tasking was partly resolved on paper by USCINCSO OPORD 2-90, BLIND LOGIC, dated December 20, 1989,<sup>91</sup> the execution order given General Gann—which reverted to the earlier concept of a separate headquarters responsible to the CINC—reinstated the problem. When the team arrived in Panama on December 26, the immediate question was whether they worked for Brigadier General Gann or Lieutenant General Stiner. Moreover, did they constitute the nucleus of the CMOTF or the JCATF?

The team spent the 6 days after their arrival preparing to receive an additional 114 or more volunteers due on January 1.<sup>92</sup> They also worked to secure "permanent" buildings in which to work. Finally, they sought to clarify the command and control situation. For that week they were under JTF-South which, however, appeared to want no part of the mission.<sup>93</sup> At the same time, COMCMOTF was executing the CMO mission, Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, for the CINC (and the Charge) and desperately needed support. By January 2, this situation was resolved with the organization under the command and control of General Gann. It did, however, call itself (and is called in the historical records) the CMOTF.<sup>94</sup> To avoid further confusion General Gann's headquarters will be called COMCMOTF while the senior Reserve CA headquarters will be called CMOTF.

On January 1, the second group of 114 CA Reservists arrived, expecting to be organized into the three zone task forces called for in BLIND LOGIC: Panama City, Colon, and David.<sup>95</sup> Conditions were not what had been anticipated during the planning and the need for three separate CA task forces did not exist. Rather, the decision was made to operate one CA task

force (CATF) which was analogous to the National Team in BLIND LOGIC. On January 2, there were three separate headquarters echelons in SOUTHCOM charged with the conduct of CMO-COMCMOTF, in overall control of CMOTF which commanded the CATF. This was not all, however, for under the command of JTF-South were two other organizations (to be discussed below) with CMO responsibilities as well as the combat units (augmented by elements of the 96th CA Battalion) which also were responsible for some CMO.

On the first full day of Operation JUST CAUSE, Major General Marc Cisneros, Commander of USARSO and Deputy Commander of JTF-South, felt uneasy about the way CMO was being handled.<sup>96</sup> He ordered his Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (DCSLOG) to take whatever he needed from the staff to set up an operation to help the Panamanians get back on their feet. Cisneros told him to be prepared to go where he told him when he told him.<sup>97</sup> The DCSLOG gathered a group that included a logistician, a CA person, and a communicator, plus several others, in USARSO headquarters to await developments.<sup>98</sup>

Several days later the problem had become clearer. While COMCMOTF was successfully setting up a Panamanian government and getting some services running, the massive looting accompanied by vigilantism, minor terrorism, and general lawlessness had created the expected chaos. The decision to inaugurate the Endara government had left the responsibility for reestablishing law and order squarely on the shoulders of the three men who made up the Government of Panama. Moreover, JTF-South in its OPLAN had made every effort to abdicate its responsibility for restoring law and order by stating, ". . . every effort will be made to minimize commitments of U.S. assets to support CA operations . . . by . . . avoiding maneuver, basing, and/or combat actions in built-up or densely populated areas, wherever possible."<sup>99</sup> Only in Phase II and III did JTF-South indicate that its CA responsibilities included, "Supporting functions of the Panamanian Government to enhance internal security and prevent the breakdown of law and order."<sup>100</sup>

## **The Cisneros Initiatives.**

COMCMOTF at this time did not have the assets to assist Endara, Arias Calderon, and Ford in establishing a Panamanian police force although it is clear that the decision to do so--and build it from the remnants of the PDF--was taken after consultations that included Thurman, Bushnell, Stiner, Cisneros, Gann, Pryor, and one or more of the POLADS as well as "the three." As a result, Cisneros took the initiative. With advice from Colonel Al Cornell, the former U.S. Defense Attache to Panama who knew most of the senior officers of the former PDF (and many of the junior ones as well), "the three" appointed Colonel Roberto Armijo commander of the Panama Public Force. Cisneros selected the former National Transportation Directorate building (DNTT) on the Panamanian side of Albrook Air Force Station as the headquarters of the Public Force and Cornell accompanied Armijo there. Cisneros also sent his Deputy Commander of the U.S. Army Security Assistance Agency for Latin America as Cisneros' own Deputy and then told his DCSLOG to set up a U.S. office to advise the Public Force. That office became known as the U.S. Forces Liaison Group (USFLG) with Cisneros as the commander. It was staffed largely with qualified Spanish speaking Army Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) and others with similar training and education from

both the Active and Reserve Components.<sup>101</sup> Its formal mission was to establish the Public Force, see to its initial equipping and training, and assist it in deploying in Panama City, Colon, and the cities and towns of the interior. The FLG soon began to coordinate all kinds of activities, most of which related to public security, among JTF-South, COMCMOTF, CMOTF, the Panamanian Ministry of Government and Justice (under Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon), the Embassy, and the last new organization, the Judicial Liaison Group (JLG).

The JLG was organized under General Cisneros' direction by the USARSO civilian international lawyer and filled a gap that had not really been contemplated by BLIND LOGIC. Its mission was to initiate action to get the court system functioning again. This entailed liaison with two separate Panamanian entities which are each independent of the Executive: the courts and the Attorney General's office.<sup>102</sup>

In the initial phases of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, COMCMOTF coordinated the establishment of the new Presidential security force, and in conjunction with the JTF-South, of the refugee camp at Balboa High School. It also coordinated the protection of significant facilities such as those which provided water and power, banks, and government buildings. COMCMOTF worked to get Tocumen International Airport reopened, and other services and activities restarted.<sup>103</sup>

CMOTF and CATF organized by teams and conducted assessments in numerous areas including health, education, finances, and public safety. CMOTF provided the personnel to staff a series of Ministry support teams operating under the authority of COMCMOTF and the U.S. Embassy. In addition, it provided personnel under the operational control of the USFLG to work on the reestablishment of the prisons and develop an initial training course for the National Police of the Public Force. Its personnel also augmented the JLG.<sup>104</sup>

USFLG established the Public Force, oversaw its division into components (Air Service, Maritime Service, and National Police), its disaggregation by the detachment of the investigative arm, the Immigration service, the Presidential Guard, the Port Police, and the planned detachment of the prison guards. It coordinated the equipping and standing up of the prison system, and the uniforming and arming of the police.<sup>105</sup>

The JLG coordinated the opening of the night court system to include the participation of prosecutors from the Attorney General's office. It assisted in the reconstitution of the rest of the judicial system and generally acted as liaison between the Panamanian government and U.S. forces on legal and judicial matters.<sup>106</sup>

An action which clearly demonstrates the complex nature of the situation in which these various organizations found themselves was that surrounding the provision of security to the city. The looting and chaos were finally stopped when sufficient U.S. forces were brought into the city to show enough force to discourage unlawful activity and enforce the curfew that had been declared. Most of these forces were infantry from USARSO's 193d Infantry Brigade augmented by MPs. Naturally the 193d commander wanted to relieve his troops of a mission for which they had not been trained, i.e. policing the city. To extricate the infantry three conditions had to be met: first, the National Police (PNP) had to put enough men on the streets to undertake joint patrols with



U.S. forces, especially the MPs. This was accomplished fairly rapidly. But before the infantry could leave there had to be a means to deal with the cases of petty criminals and curfew violators. This meant that the night court system had to be operating. Finally, there had to be somewhere to put those convicted by the night courts, which meant that the police jails and the major city prison had to be operating. But the looters had stripped the jails and the prison of anything that could be taken. To meet all of these requirements entailed the combined efforts of COMCMOTF, the USFLG, and the JLG assisted by CMOTF and CATF and punctuated by the personal "encouragement" of the commander of the 193d.<sup>107</sup> The result was that the PNP did go on joint patrols with U.S. forces; night courts did begin to function; and police jails and the prison were made operational with equipment liberated from captured stocks and with the assistance of USARSO's post engineers whose expenditures were authorized as an operational necessity under JUST CAUSE.<sup>108</sup> While the commander of the 193d was not satisfied with the pace at which the conditions were met, he was able to extricate his infantry within a relatively short time.

### **Interagency Coordination.**

The Embassy, meanwhile, was reconstituting its staff. A temporary duty senior political officer had arrived in late December and the Political Counselor was finally able to return on January 1. Soon, a new U.S. Ambassador, Deane Hinton, very senior with long experience in Latin America, was appointed and arrived by car from Costa Rica to take up his duties. As Embassy staff arrived the three temporary POLADS returned to normal duties in the United States.

The newly arriving diplomatic mission personnel "sort of smirked" at the efficiency of the U.S. military in having a plan to support each of the Panamanian government ministries that were just being established. While they looked on the situation as perhaps not totally proper, they realized that the military had put into place a civil assistance plan and that State had no such plan. "While we thought that some of this closeness to the Panamanian civil government, or at least the reawakening Panamanian civil government, was not appropriate, we also realized that an incredible number of things which needed to be done in the government weren't going to get done any other way. No one else was going to do them."<sup>109</sup>

As the Embassy expanded its role and the Panamanian government became established, coordination among the various U.S. and Panamanian organizations became more and more critical. The typical mechanisms to achieve effective coordination were used including daily meetings at the relocated COMCMOTF headquarters on Quarry Heights in the early morning (0630 hours), daily meetings at the Embassy in the late afternoon or evening, ad hoc meetings, memoranda, and the telephone. In addition, there were some unorthodox ways to solve coordination problems. In many cases COMCMOTF action officers acted as couriers between the ministries of the Panamanian government and the various U.S. organizations. Perhaps the most unusual coordination mechanism was COL Jack Pryor, operating from his new vantage point as liaison with Vice President and Minister of Government and Justice, Arias Calderon, as trouble shooter for the CINC and General Gann. One never knew when Pryor would show up, but he would always appear when there was a bottleneck with an approach to removing the stopper. Sometimes it worked; sometimes it did not.

## First Assessments.

The general impression that one received in Panama during the last 10 days of December 1989 and the first 2 weeks of January 1990 was of a kind of ordered chaos. If one were observing events from COMCMOTF it was clear that some sort of plan had been used to guide its endeavors. If, on the other hand, one were observing events from the vantage point of the USFLG then it seemed as if everything was being done ad hoc. Other vantage points produced perceptions between the two extremes or coincident with each. Both, of course, were correct. BLIND LOGIC had given COMCMOTF the guidebook to restore government services but had not provided a way to handle the breakdown of law and order without the participation of JTF-South. The USFLG was created as an ad hoc organization to provide the means to get a Panamanian police force on the streets in conjunction with U.S. forces and to coordinate anything arising in the public security arena. As with most military plans, where events overtake the plan the executors devise ad hoc solutions. The combination of parts of a plan that worked and ad hoc solutions to unanticipated problems gave some relatively positive results. By the middle of January, Panama did have a government and most public services were restored. The PDF had been broken into its component parts, elements had been detached and reorganized, and there were Panamanian policemen on the street working with U.S. MPs. The Public Force also had a new commander, newly promoted Colonel Eduardo Herrera Hassan, whose predecessor had been discovered to have been too tainted with Noriega's corruption to survive in the position. Given the accomplishments so far under Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY it was now time to regularize command and control and put together a structure for the long haul.

As can be seen from the forgoing description, the organization of U.S. military support for Panama was complex at best. (See Appendix C for an organizational schematic.) By Christmas Day, General James Lindsay, CINC, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), a major supporting CINC to General Thurman, was concerned that the restoration of Panama was not going as well as it should. Having expressed that concern to Thurman he secured permission to send one of his senior CA colonels to assess the situation and propose a long-term organizational solution. On December 26, the colonel arrived to begin work in the J-5 building on Quarry Heights.<sup>110</sup>

The colonel maintained direct contact with Lindsay by secure phone and fax. He took input from SCJ5 (COMCMOTF), the Commander, Special Operations Command South, the commanders of the 4th Psychological Operations Group and the 96th CA Battalion, the CMOTF, and the USARSO staff.<sup>111</sup> In addition to this input he looked to extant doctrine and his own experience in nation-building efforts in Vietnam. Initially, the colonel had considered that the proper organizational structure to oversee the restoration of Panama might be a derivative of the interagency (civilian and military) organization used in Vietnam, CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development System). General Lindsay, however, opposed that approach, looking for a more doctrinal structure that was entirely military rather than interagency.<sup>112</sup> As a result the colonel worked in that direction. What the colonel developed was a notion for a military support group that derived from the doctrinal Security Assistance Force (SAF) and put CA, PSYOP, Special Operations Forces (SOF), and Combat Service Support all in the same command, subordinate to the JTF and commanded by a general officer. (See Appendix D for a schematic

of the proposed organization.)<sup>113</sup> The colonel delivered his proposal for the organization to the SOUTHCOM J-3, BG William Hartzog on January 8, and returned to USSOCOM.

Meanwhile, General Hartzog had been receiving input on how a new and more permanent organization for the restoration of Panama should look from a variety of sources, many of them the same as those consulted by the colonel, and gradually modifications were made in the notional structure. One night Hartzog recalled having considered the functions the organization was to carry out and pondering whether they were creating a glorified MAAG or MILGROUP. He sent some officers to collect the regulations on MAAGs and MILGROUPS to clarify what it was that was being created. In the end, he concluded that the function to be provided was "support." With that Hartzog coined the name "United States Military Support Group" (USMSG).<sup>114</sup>

There were several differences between the SOCOM proposal and the initial organization of the MSG; they included the incorporation of the USFLG and the operational control of the MPs. (See Appendix E). With the decision made that there would be an MSG to replace the hodgepodge of military organizations then operating in support of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, the question of who would command it became pressing. Early in Operation JUST CAUSE, General Thurman had received a letter from Colonel Jim Steele, an officer who had worked with him on several occasions and who had been selected by the Army for promotion to Brigadier General. Steele, a Latin American FAO and former Commander of the USMILGROUP in El Salvador, had recently completed his command of an armored cavalry regiment in Europe and was languishing in a staff job. In his letter Steele offered to come to Panama to help. Thurman considered that the hard charging cavalryman would be the ideal choice to head the new MSG and arranged to have him sent to Panama on nearly the first available transportation. Steele's family would follow in several months.<sup>115</sup>

Although the broad outlines of the MSG had already been established by the time Steele was appointed its commander, he clearly would shape the organization in his own way. One aspect that he thought was important was, given his understanding of what it should do, the MSG ought to be a joint organization.<sup>116</sup> Its initial staffing, however, was totally Army and the Chief of Staff of USARSO had arranged with Department of the Army for Directed Military Overstrength (DMO) personnel to be assigned for a year. This was with the understanding that the positions would be converted to full 3-year accompanied tours.<sup>117</sup> Colonel Steele's insistence that the MSG be joint would nullify the DMO solution to staffing which would remain a thorn in his side.<sup>118</sup>

### **Locating the Headquarters.**

While these concepts were evolving, USARSO staff was organizing the MSG on an ad hoc basis. One important action was determining where its headquarters was to be located, which would have significant impact on the focus of the organization. Some wanted to locate it in the USFLG offices at PNP headquarters. This, of course, would have indicated that the primary purpose of the MSG was to equip and train the PNP and the rest of the Public Force. The alternative was to locate it elsewhere, preferably on Fort Amador where there were any number of former PDF (and former U.S. military) buildings available to centralize all the disparate

organizations and activities of the MSG. In this configuration the focus of the organization would be more balanced. Not only was the Amador solution the one finally chosen but the MSG site turned out to be Building 1—the site selected in BLIND LOGIC for the headquarters of the National Team.<sup>119</sup>

## **PROMOTE LIBERTY and BLIND LOGIC Compared.**

The first month of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY was clearly a state of making order out of confusion. In many respects it did follow the plan; in others solutions had to be improvised. Evolving changes in the contingency plan were abruptly made obsolete by the need to execute and the actual solution was most often to revert to BLIND LOGIC as a guide. The most conspicuous of these reversals was the decision to activate the J-5 as COMCMOTF when all the late planning had gone toward handing off the plan's execution to USARSO. As it turned out, there really was no way for the USARSO Staff to execute BLIND LOGIC since the vast majority of that staff, in its JTF-Panama capacity, was absorbed by JTF-South. Thus making SCJ5 the COMCMOTF achieved the original purposes that General Woerner had set. It retained the most sensitive political-military activities under the direct control of the CINC and in the hands of a general officer on his staff. It took the staff section whose duties most closely approximated CMO and gave it that responsibility, making use of most of the FAOs on the SOUTHCOM staff.

To expand on the point of the need for COMCMOTF to be linked directly to the CINC and external to the JTF chain of command there were circumstances where the political-military imperatives overrode the purely military. In those, COMCMOTF, wearing his J-5 hat could speak directly through the CINC who would give directions to the JTF.<sup>120</sup>

COMCMOTF made effective use of BLIND LOGIC as a basis for most of its action. This included the activation of the Reserve CMOTF and the CATF, organizing into ministerial support teams by functional area and generally executing the appropriate annexes of the plan. BLIND LOGIC, like any other plan, was not followed slavishly; rather it served as a guide where appropriate. Thus when it became clear by the time of the arrival of the bulk of the CA Reservists that there was no need for three zone task forces, they were consolidated into the CATF. Within 2 weeks it had become apparent that three CMO headquarters were too many and the CMOTF and CATF essentially consolidated their operations. It was, then, the consolidated entity that became a major subordinate element of the MSG as the CATF.

The creation of the MSG was the logical culmination of any effort to institutionalize CMO in Panama. It was clear that the SCJ5 had to return to its normal duties and that CMO was much more than civil affairs. As a result, the need to establish a headquarters that could control all the required forces and coordinate their disparate activities became manifest. Whether the purely military organization represented by the MSG or an interagency structure patterned on the CORDS model would have served better is something to be considered later. What is not subject to question was the need to institutionalize U.S. military support to Panama under a single chain of command. This, the MSG was designed to do. How well it accomplished its purpose will be explored in the next chapter.

## **Initial Accomplishments.**

The final issue for this chapter is to determine what was accomplished by Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY as executed by COMCMOTF. First and foremost, COMCMOTF established the government of Panama and restored essential government services. It moved from being the initiator of the actions of the Panamanian government (with government and Embassy approval) to being the advisor and facilitator of resources to the President, two Vice Presidents, and the Ministers as they were appointed. COMCMOTF received and utilized the Reserve CA personnel as they came on board in much the manner envisioned by BLIND LOGIC.

In the critical area of public security where the planning interface between BLIND LOGIC and BLUE SPOON had broken down, a vacuum was created that COMCMOTF was unable to fill. That vacuum was filled by the creation of the USFLG at the initiative of General Cisneros. Coordination between COMCMOTF and the USFLG was close, effective, and cooperative, and the Panama Public Force was established, equipped, uniformed, and put on the streets in joint patrols with U.S. forces.

The one area that BLIND LOGIC had not addressed was the judicial system. Again, General Cisneros' personnel stepped into the breach with the JLG which served to get the crucial night court system operating, including both judges and prosecutors from the office of the Attorney General. The JLG was successful only because it had the expertise of the USARSO international lawyer who had represented SOUTHCOM and USARSO before the Panamanian courts and knew the local legal system as did no other U.S. attorney in SOUTHCOM or any of its components.

In short, during the month that COMCMOTF was in charge of CMO in Panama, it executed, coordinated, or supervised all that BLIND LOGIC had contemplated. The period also pointed out several major gaps in the planning such as that in the legal and judicial system. It further demonstrated the consequences of inadequate coordination between SOUTHCOM and the JTF during the planning of the operations. Finally, it showed the negative consequence of having conducted no interagency coordination during the planning for CMO.

## CHAPTER 6

### OPERATION PROMOTE LIBERTY: THE MSG "ON THE COUNTRY TEAM"<sup>121</sup>

The United States Military Support Group-Panama (USMSGPM, or MSG) was activated on January 17, 1990. At that time the MSG was faced with three major tasks. First was defining its mission. Second, Colonel Jim Steele, the Commander, had to gain control over the several organizations that were being absorbed into the MSG or being placed under its operational control and define the new set of relationships. Third, there was a hand-off to be effected from COMCMOTF to the MSG of all ongoing civil-military operations and activities.

The mission of the MSG would be somewhat different from both the formal and informal mission of COMCMOTF. Where the mission of the latter was to reestablish law and order and to support the establishment of a Panamanian government (and, informally, to function as that government while the various ministries were being organized), the MSG was to support a partially structured government and a rapidly growing U.S. civilian governmental presence.<sup>122</sup> The U.S. Embassy had set as its watchword from the beginning that Operation JUST CAUSE was a "liberation," not an "occupation."<sup>123</sup> Liberation clearly put the onus for success or failure on the Panamanians and severely constrained the U.S. role, including the role of the military and its agent, the MSG. Hence, defining precisely the mission of the MSG was a tricky business, at best.

The approved mission statement of the MSG reflects the ambiguity of the idea that "liberation" is the policy but "occupation" more closely resembles the reality.<sup>124</sup> It reads:

Conduct nation building operations to ensure democracy, internationally recognized standards of justice, and professional public services are established and institutionalized in Panama.<sup>125</sup>

Two critical terms in the mission statement remained undefined—nation building and democracy. While the military clearly had a notion as to what kinds of actions constitute nation building, a degree of ambiguity was to the near-term advantage of the MSG. As a result, many kinds of military activities could be subsumed under the nation-building rubric.

By contrast, lack of definition of democracy worked to the advantage of no one.<sup>126</sup> All the players had an intuitive understanding of democracy which, in practice, equated to, "The Endara government was elected by the people of Panama. Therefore it is a democracy. Its actions are democratic. The Endara government must be made successful." This syllogism, of course, runs afoul of the "liberation" versus "occupation" formulation, but it also falls on logical grounds. An elected government is not always or necessarily democratic in its behavior. Nor is a government that has been elected necessarily democratic in its entire organization. In Panama, the Endara government had (and continues to have) difficulties in both areas. The fact that there was no clear definition of the conditions that constitute democracy meant that the MSG and the other U.S. Government agencies that were attempting to assist the Endara government had only the vaguest concept of what actions and programs would lead the country toward the democracy that was

one of the objectives listed by President Bush when he ordered the execution of Operation JUST CAUSE.

The practical problem initially facing the MSG, of gaining control over the organizations to be absorbed without doing violence to their ongoing activities, was something that would condition the degree of success the MSG would have. Effective absorption and control depended on the ability of the MSG Staff to supervise and the degree to which the subordinate organizations supported or resisted their incorporation. This varied significantly among the organizations.

## **Absorbing the USFLG.**

The USFLG was quickly and easily absorbed by the MSG. Only two things changed—its name which became the Public Force Liaison Division (PFLD) and its commander. General Cisneros simply dropped his hat as USFLG commander and went back to being only Deputy Commander of JTF-Panama in addition to CG USARSO. Shortly, with the departure of augmentation forces, Cisneros became Commander, JTF-Panama. Since the MSG worked for the JTF, all was in order. The Deputy Commander of the USFLG became the division chief and the PFLD concentrated on the police mission. That mission was threefold: get the force in uniform and on the street; equip the force; and train the force.

As discussed above, it was essential in the earliest days of JUST CAUSE to get a Panamanian police force visibly on the streets. Due to the massive looting the impression that JUST CAUSE was a "liberation" and not an "occupation" rapidly was wearing thin. Thus, the USFLG's initial major task was to assist Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon in his role as Minister of Government and Justice in recruiting a police force from the ranks of the old PDF, vetting the officers and getting some of them on the streets in joint patrols with U.S. forces as rapidly as possible. Equally important was to have these new police in some uniform other than the old PDF uniform. Fortunately, the U.S. forces recently had undergone a change in combat uniform and the Fort Clayton warehouse had some 50,000 available jungle fatigues. There were enough to equip the entire Public Force with several sets immediately.

Jungle fatigues, however, are a military uniform and the United States and the new government were agreed that Panama would have no military, only a police force (and an air transport service and coast guard). A new police uniform was required and it fell upon the USFLG and later the PFLD to assist the Public Force in making the purchase, using security assistance funds that had been released from U.S. sanctions. Although the quest for uniforms began during the tenure of COMCMOTF and, at one point, involved General Gann personally, it was finished by the PFLD coordinating the efforts of the Public Force, COL Jack Pryor who as liaison with Vice President Arias was brokering the deal, SOUTHCOM, JTF-Panama, the Defense Security Assistance Agency, and the Embassy. One reason that the uniform purchase took so long was that the Public Force leadership rejected the blue uniforms originally chosen. This action pointed to one of the critical reasons for the PFLD: its ability to, through its FAOs, gain and maintain the confidence of the former PDF officers who made up the staff of the Public Force, and advise and assist their transformation from soldiers to policemen.

The second major task of the PFLD was to coordinate the equipping of the Public Force, and especially its National Police branch (PNP) with weapons, vehicles, radios and other equipment. This, too, was accomplished by using existing security assistance money as well as recovering former PDF equipment. The PFLD, working with SCJ5, was able to stop the wholesale transfer of captured PDF weapons to the United States and retain some in country for use by the Public Force and other public security organizations. When too many of the retained weapons turned out to be "damaged goods," a buy with security assistance funds was initiated. PDF vehicles were restored by U.S. forces with operational funds under the authority of Operation JUST CAUSE until January 20, when DOD directed that this cease.<sup>127</sup> This exercise resulted in only some 40 patrol cars becoming available to the PNP so that, again, security assistance money had to be used for surplus U.S. military trucks and new Chevrolet patrol cars. While awaiting the arrival of the vehicles the only way that mounted patrols could be conducted under peacetime rules was as joint patrols with U.S. MPs in the latter's vehicles. Expressions of concern for a high U.S. military profile of joint patrols in military vehicles (HMMWVs) ("occupation") caused the MSG to respond by leasing civilian style patrol cars for the joint patrols but which, under the law, only the U.S. personnel could drive.<sup>128</sup>

Training was the third area in which the PFLD was deeply involved. The police force initially was hardly a model institution. First, the PDF, while largely being made up of policemen and carrying out police functions, had developed a military ethos. Real policemen were definitely "second class citizens."<sup>129</sup> Secondly, the PDF police had been wholly reactive, mainly repressive, mostly brutal, corrupt, and generally undisciplined. In short, the new police were not safe to walk the streets much less police them. As a result, the USFLG/PFLD, working with the operations and training section of the Public Force, called upon the Civil Affairs Task Force (CATF) to provide a team of Reservists who were policemen in civilian life, to develop a short, transition training course. This course, called the "20 Hour Course," was administered by the PFLD to PNP trainers who, in turn, trained the police in both the urban precincts and the rural police zones. The entire PNP finally completed the course on April 1, 1990, and this was the only training that was common to the entire force in its first year of operation.<sup>130</sup> In short, the PFLD slid smoothly into the MSG organization and continued to do what it had been doing merely reporting to a different commander.

### **Integrating the CMOTF.**

Integrating the Reserve CA was somewhat more difficult. In the first instance, the two headquarters, CMOTF and CATF, which already had been partly consolidated, required the completion of that consolidation. This would not happen until the initial 31 day tours were completed which gave an excuse to close one of the headquarters. The one which was terminated was the CATF; however, the CMOTF then changed its name to CATF and undertook the job of coordinating civil affairs (CA) activities for the MSG. Among other aspects of the consolidation of CA activities, the Ministry Support Teams generally closed operations and returned to the United States with the completion of their tours. In a few cases, personnel and functions were placed under the control of staff sections of the Embassy. The CATF also had to relocate from the "permanent" buildings it had occupied on January 1, to the MSG headquarters on Fort Amador.



The relocation, however, was significantly delayed, retaining some physical distance from the MSG which translated into a certain degree of autonomy. One other factor was that the CATF, like the CMOTF before it, responded to reporting requirements from Army Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg. Occasionally, these reporting requirements appeared to get in the way of the operational requirements levied by the MSG.<sup>131</sup>

CMOTF and CATF had much to do with assisting in the restoration of government services and the preparation of additional MSG support to Panama. With varying degrees of involvement, CATF supported efforts to get businesses reopened including the banks, lotteries, the racetrack, and the casinos—all significant sources of government revenue—and also the schools reopened, and transportation and health services functioning. CATF also provided major support to the PFLD in police training and joint patrols. Finally CATF supported efforts to see that print and broadcast media resumed normal operations. CATF had a major role in planning for JCS directed Exercise FUERTES CAMINOS and associated civic assistance activities as well as follow-on SOUTHCOM directed exercises. These exercises brought to bear funds for rural engineering and medical support to Panama that were not part of the various aid appropriations and went far toward offsetting the negative perceptions of U.S. assistance which did not meet promises nor arrive in a timely manner.<sup>132</sup>

## **The JLG and PSYOP.**

The JLG never really came under the control of the MSG although one of its attorneys did serve as staff judge advocate (SJA) for the organization. Part of this was due to the fact that JLG personnel never were fully independent of the USARSO SJA, partly because the MSG never really comprehended how important its role could be, and partly because it so clearly was treading on the turf of the USAID administration of justice program. Suffice that the JLG became significantly less conspicuous as the MSG began to operate in its full range with a need for its own lawyer and the USARSO SJA reasserted control over its wayward civilian and military attorneys.

The Joint Psychological Operations Task Force, essentially the First PSYOP Battalion (Airborne), had been operating in Panama since the beginning of Operation JUST CAUSE. Now it was brought under the command of the MSG as the PSYOP Support Element.<sup>133</sup> It continued to carry out the psychological operations mission of enhancing the image of the new Panamanian government, building support for the Public Force in general and the PNP in particular. Psychological operations were used to foster a positive police self-image through various media including posters, pamphlets, and individual cards bearing the police oath of office on one side and the Policeman's Ten Commandments on the other.<sup>134</sup> (See Appendix F.) In addition, the PSYOP Support Element produced messages in support of law and order and which promoted a positive image of U.S. forces. The media used included loudspeaker and leaflet operations, radio and TV broadcasts, and a Spanish language newspaper in addition to the posters, cards and other hand-out items.<sup>135</sup>

## **The Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF).**

Full control of the JSOTF never was achieved by the MSG. Command of the JSOTF was the second hat worn by the commander of the Special Operations Command-South which was, and is, a subunified command directly subordinate to the CINC. Thus, while JSOTF was placed under the operational control of the MSG, the Special Operations Command maintained its normal status within SOUTHCOM. As a result JSOTF was able to maintain a greater degree of autonomy under the MSG than anyone had envisioned. Again, this did not signify constant conflict but rather a certain looseness of control well beyond that implied by the formal command relationship resulting in more need to build consensus between the MSG and JSOTF.

In practice, JSOTF provided Special Forces personnel in two-man teams to each police precinct in Panama City to work with the Reserve policemen (RC Cops) provided by the CATF, about whom more will be discussed later. In the interior, JSOTF provided the U.S. military presence long after the combat force departed and when combat support and service support forces made only sporadic interventions. JSOTF's role in the interior changed significantly over time. Its initial focus was the sole U.S. presence with responsibility for almost anything that was done in the name of the new government, except when more senior combat commanders were in the area and arrogated to themselves the same authority. Then JSOTF sought to control and remove corrupt former PDF from the ranks of the PNP while continuing ongoing intelligence missions. Its ultimate mission was to collaborate with the new PNP Zone leadership and assist in developing positive relationships between the police and the local political authorities. Occasionally, this shifting role created some conflict between JSOTF forces and the PNP as previous roles continued to be played by the Special Forces soldiers.<sup>136</sup> Generally, however, the required adaptation to new roles went smoothly.

### **And the Military Police.**

The JTF-South MP Brigade also was under the operational control of the MSG. Control of MP forces by the MSG always was loose but became more cooperative when the MP Brigade headquarters returned to the United States and the MP units came under the command of the USARSO Provost Marshal. The MP role was confined to the Panama City-Colon axis and the U.S. bases. On the latter they exercised their traditional role. In the city, MP efforts were coordinated by the Provost Marshal's deputy who worked closely with the PFLD and the Special Forces/RC Cop teams. The principal function of the MPs was the conduct of joint patrols with the PNP to maintain law and order in the city. Initially, the MPs assisted the PNP in developing a number of policing techniques and procedures including reporting. As time passed the MP presence was reduced; setting behavioral examples on joint patrol became the residual MP "training" role.

As the MSG became more involved in coordinating engineer and medical exercises in support of Panamanian ministry activities in the interior, these U.S. forces were placed under the operational control of the MSG for the duration of the exercise or deployment. The MSG J-5 (which took over the mission of the CATF on the latter's redeployment in May 1990) coordinated the

actions of medical and engineer units with the relevant Panamanian ministries, local governments, and other U.S. agencies operating from the Embassy.

## **Staff Capabilities.**

Effective control of these disparate organizations depended on the capabilities of the MSG Staff. When the hand-off from COMCMOTF was effected in the 10 days between January 17 and 28 (when General Gann finally returned to his Quarry Heights office and his SCJ5 duties), an ad hoc MSG Staff was established from available USARSO assets. To replace that staff with one that was permanent the USARSO Chief of Staff had negotiated with Department of the Army for Directed Military Overstrength positions and the necessary personnel to fill them for a year. Colonel Steele's requirement for a joint organization killed this solution and, since it never was successfully concluded, left the MSG throughout most of its life with a largely ad hoc and changing staff that always was understrength and always came out of USARSO's hide. Were it not for the relatively dynamic quality of its leadership in several critical areas and the good working relationships among most of the players, the MSG would have had great difficulty in accomplishing its mission. Fortunately, Colonel Steele's first Chief of Staff had the full confidence of General Cisneros and had been responsible for establishing the USFLG. In early March, he was replaced by Colonel Jack Pryor, who had become the political target of members of the Panamanian Legislative Assembly for being too close an advisor to Vice President and Minister of Government and Justice, Arias Calderon. So Pryor left his desk in Arias' office and became Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff of the MSG. He brought with him a hand-held radio that kept him in direct contact with Arias. Importantly, Pryor and Steele complemented each other well.

Another critical position in the MSG was that of J-3. This had been occupied from the beginning by the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) liaison officer who stayed almost until his permanent replacement arrived in the early summer. The new J-3 was a FAO who had served as Steele's Operations Officer in El Salvador.

The third key staff position permanently filled by early summer was that of J-5. This officer and his deputy were both FAOs with excellent command of the language and previous experience in Panama—indeed the J-5 was a graduate of Balboa High School and had many relatives who were close to the new government.<sup>137</sup> In short, the MSG was fortunate that it was able to fill its key positions with people who could get things done and who understood the situation they were dealing with better than the normal luck of the draw. This success, dependent on Steele's and Pryor's access to the CINC, offset some of the negative implications of the lack of permanent Army or joint fill of MSG positions.

## **Illustrative Cases.**

As the MSG was established and matured over the several months from January 17 until June 1990, so too did the U.S. Embassy become fully functional and other government agencies arrived to help in the restoration of Panama. The maturing of the MSG and the Embassy and the

introduction of other agencies combined with the increasing effectiveness of the Panamanian government to create problems of joint, combined, and interagency coordination. Three cases will be examined briefly to illustrate the range of the problem and its solution or lack thereof.

**PSYOP.** The first case is that of psychological operations (PSYOP). The PSYOP Support Element conducted a large number of operations to further the objectives of the U.S. forces, the U.S. Government, and the Panamanian government. While there can be questions as to the appropriateness of U.S. military psychological operations as the instrument of persuasive communication with selected Panamanian target audiences, the Embassy simply rejected its use without serious discussion. As a result, the PSYOP Support Element was the first subordinate organization of the MSG to depart Panama. The Embassy asserted its authority and the military complied.

**The Panama National Police.** The second case is more complex and involves military support to the police. As discussed above, the MSG inherited the USFLG mission to establish and train the PNP. In late January, at one of the coordination meetings held at the Embassy, the DCM, John Bushnell, asked if it would be possible to put Reservists who were policemen in civilian life with the PNP as trainers. PFLD and CATF representatives responded that such a program could be started immediately with personnel on hand and it could be augmented with 30-man 31-day increments. Thus was born what came to be called the "RC Cop" program. At this same meeting Bushnell requested that the PFLD personnel cease to operate in uniforms and start wearing civilian clothes—a request that was perceived and carried out as an order.<sup>138</sup>

Colonel Steele expanded on the RC Cop concept by directing that in each city precinct, teams would consist of two Special Forces (SF) soldiers and two RC Cops. The SF would provide an assured language capability and continuity in each precinct while the RC Cops would provide police expertise. A variant on this same concept was used in the rural police zones with one RC Cop assigned to each SF Detachment. The mission in both cases was to plan, supervise and coordinate the training of the PNP beginning with the 20-hour course discussed above and continuing with on-the-job training, monitoring performance, and advising the precinct and zone commanders.<sup>139</sup>

Almost before the RC Cop program began, it hit an interagency snag. Again in late January, Mr. David J. "Kris" Kriskovich, Director of the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) of the U.S. Department of Justice<sup>140</sup> along with some USAID Administration of Justice Program personnel, visited Panama in anticipation of being given a major role in the police training effort. On his return to Washington Kriskovich made his recommendations.

On February 7, 1990, Congress passed the Urgent Assistance to Democracy in Panama Act which appropriated \$42 million in emergency assistance for Panama. It also specifically exempted the military from the provisions of Section 660 of the Foreign Assistance Act prohibiting military support of police. At the same time, the new act specifically renewed the prohibition on military training of police especially for Panama.<sup>141</sup> While the exact limitations on military involvement with the police would not be clear for some time, the Act put a major constraint on the RC Cop Program.

Soon thereafter ICITAP returned with the mission to establish and train the PNP and the Judicial Technical Police (PTJ—successor to the former investigative arm of the PDF). This mission was agreed to by both State and the Justice Departments with Ambassador Deane Hinton giving clear direction as to what he wanted ICITAP to accomplish in Panama. This was nothing less than the replacement of the military as the principal U.S. interface with the PNP in the shortest possible time.<sup>142</sup>

Understanding this guidance, the Chief of the PFLD immediately made office space available to Kriskovich and ICITAP in police headquarters. In addition, Colonel Al Cornell had just returned to his Defense Attache duties in Guatemala, leaving an opportunity for ICITAP to fill a hole in the advising scheme by providing an advisor to the Director General (DG) of the PNP, Colonel Eduardo Herrera Hassan. And it just so happened that Kris Kriskovich, as a young SF officer in the U.S. Army, had gone through a course at the School of the Americas in Panama with a young officer of the *Guardia* (the predecessor of the PDF) named Eduardo Herrera Hassan. For whatever reason ICITAP chose not to use the office space provided and neither Kriskovich nor anyone else moved into the advising vacancy created by Cornell's departure. As a result, a golden opportunity to influence the development of the PNP as a civilian institution through access built on the reestablishment of an old relationship was lost.

Instead of taking on the required advising role, ICITAP did what it had been doing in other Latin American countries for the previous several years, teaching a series of short seminars and courses with instructors drawn mainly from the ranks of retired FBI agents. Those instructors were contracted by ICITAP's "permanent" consulting firm which handled all of the organization's logistics. The problem was compounded by the fact that, for its first 6 months, ICITAP had no permanent staff in country, with leadership alternating between Kriskovich and his training officer every 2 weeks with little or no overlap.<sup>143</sup>

With ICITAP making so little headway with the PNP, the Embassy made no effort to move the military out of its relationship with the PNP. Over the 2 months between February and April the role of the PFLD and the RC Cops became clearer. Although they could not train the PNP they could conduct joint patrols (MP, SF, and RC Cops), support precinct house administration and other law enforcement functions to maintain order, and monitor adherence to training standards.<sup>144</sup> In other words, while the military was prohibited from training, it still could advise. Unfortunately, no one was advising the Director General (DG) of the PNP or his Deputy. This lack resulted in the very messy firing of the DG for being out of touch with government policy. His successor lasted for only 2 weeks when he engaged in a nasty exchange of accusations with the publisher of the major newspaper that was detailed on the editorial pages of all the major dailies.<sup>145</sup>

In May, as personnel began to rotate, the MSG reorganized and the PFLD was reduced in size and redesignated the Police Liaison Element (PLE). Its focus shifted to coordinating the RC Cop program and coordinating with ICITAP as opposed to the PNP staff. In June the MSG received the services of the former Deputy Chief of the Dallas, Texas, Police Department on contract, who in September took over the running of the PLE. This was fortuitous since this individual established a very effective rapport with the new civilian DG of the PNP, a lawyer named Ebrahim Asvat. Asvat had the confidence of Vice President Arias and had been one of his liaisons to the Public Force from the time it was established. Indeed, his assumption of the position as DG was in

addition of his role as Director of Public Security for the Ministry of Government and Justice responsible for all three components to the Public Force.<sup>146</sup>

The former Dallas Deputy Chief, at least, had credibility with ICITAP and with the DG, who retained significant MSG influence with the police until his departure in November. In the meantime, ICITAP had established its permanent presence in Panama with several professionals, not all of whom were FBI. Its most successful program has been its work with the Police Academy, due in large part to the relationship established between the Justice Department lawyer advisor and the PNP Major who directs the Academy.<sup>147</sup> With the exception of this program, Dr. Asvat, the former civilian police DG, claims that ICITAP has wasted the U.S. taxpayer's money. He argues that its short courses, which remain ICITAP's primary methodology, are useless.<sup>148</sup> Regardless of who may be at fault it is clear that interagency coordination between the MSG and ICITAP failed to achieve a coherent and effective U.S. Government approach to establishing and training a civilian police force from the remnants of the PDF. The proof of that failure lies in the police mutiny (coup attempt and/or protest) of December 4-5, 1990, led by ex-DG, Colonel Eduardo Herrera Hassan, who had been broken out of jail by former PDF officers. Equally telling is that Colonels Steele and Pryor were at police headquarters awaiting the return of Asvat and Arias Calderon when Herrera's men took control. Nowhere on the premises was anyone from ICITAP.<sup>149</sup>

**The Panama Campaign Plan.** The third case which illustrates the development of the interagency arena in Panama during 1990 is the construction of a Panama strategy, also called a campaign plan (CAMPLAN) or a country action plan. In any event, the development of the Panama strategy was part of a SOUTHCOM regional initiative that had been interrupted by Operation JUST CAUSE—the SOUTHCOM Strategy (S<sup>2</sup>).<sup>150</sup>

As discussed briefly in Chapter 1, the S<sup>2</sup> consisted of a strategy for the theater, three subregional campaign plans, one functional campaign plan, and was to add country action plans for each of the nations in the SOUTHCOM area of responsibility. In each country the MILGROUP was assigned to write the strategy in full coordination with the rest of the country team. In Panama in February, General Thurman assigned the task of producing a Panama strategy to the MSG. This resulted in some fumbling to get an order that respected the chain of command from USCINCSO to Commander, JTF-Panama, to Commander, USMSGPM. That accomplished, the MSG began to devise a Panama strategy under the guidance of SCJ5. The guidance called for the clear statement of objectives and supporting objectives, how they were to be achieved, by what organizations, and how much it would cost to achieve each objective. Moreover, the MSG specifically was not limited to developing only the military portion of the plan but also the role other government agencies were to play. Finally, the MSG was to derive the strategic objectives for Panama from the Ambassador's message stating his goals and objectives.

In February, however, the goals and objectives message was only in its earliest draft and it kept changing. Most of the changes were stylistic rather than substantive but still caused the MSG some concern and redrafting. Still, what was perhaps the most important factor in the development of the objectives portion of the Panama strategy was that it met an immediate need to go beyond the objectives of BLIND LOGIC. These, largely, had been met: those that had not, could be

retained in the new strategy if they remained valid. But circumstances had changed and with them the need for strategic objectives.

Guiding the Panama strategy drafting were the regional strategic objectives in the S<sup>2</sup>, the tentative goals and objectives being drawn up by the Embassy, and the objective stated by President Bush of restoring democracy. Yet, no one had bothered to define the conditions that would make for a functioning democracy in Panama. To a degree, even the Panama strategy would fail to fully define these conditions although it did identify supporting objectives that would enhance democracy nationwide.

By April, the drafters had completed their first attempt bringing together the efforts of all the units that made up the MSG. Now they began the long effort to coordinate the product. At the Embassy, the draft was coordinated with the Political Counselor, the Economic Counselor, and the Narcotics Attache. It was coordinated with USAID, with ICITAP, and with all the relevant U.S. agencies. In no case was any objection raised at this stage.

The second draft addressed the specific programs that would be carried out by each agency with the major emphasis on the military programs. In the drafting, care was taken to spell out how an engineer unit, for example, using Title 10 Humanitarian and Civic Assistance funds to construct a school would engage the local community to gain its support and participation. The directed process was designed to specifically strengthen democratic institutions at the local level. Additional coordination was accomplished after this second draft was completed.

To get some different thinking applied to the strategic problem the MSG engaged the services of a consulting firm with ongoing SOUTHCOM contracts to develop its own version of the strategy. The contractor developed some innovative objectives and approaches which were incorporated into the third draft of the strategy. The fourth and final draft was approved by SOUTHCOM and delivered to the Embassy as a proposal. By this time, however, General Thurman had been diagnosed as having leukemia and was undergoing treatment, and so was not in country to press the issue of the strategy with the Ambassador. No one else did either. The result was that while some specifics were incorporated into the U.S. Government's program for Panama, the holistic approach of a fully coordinated strategy of mutually reinforcing programs to achieve specific and related objectives was lost.<sup>151</sup>

By late fall 1990, it was clear that the MSG had served its purpose. As originally conceived, it would go out of business at the end of a year if conditions warranted. In November it appeared as if conditions so warranted. On December 4-5, however, there was a hiccup—the police coup/mutiny/protest. As a result, Ambassador Hinton asked the MSG to put off its deactivation until sometime after the December 20 anniversary of Operation JUST CAUSE.<sup>152</sup> Deactivation finally took place on January 17, 1991, the anniversary date of the activation of the MSG.<sup>153</sup>

Although the military role played by the MSG has diminished, its functions continue (since Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY has not been terminated) and are being performed by the J-5 of JTF-Panama which in May 1991 was subordinate to Colonel Jim Steele, USARSO Deputy Commander for Support. At that time there still remained a small liaison office in the PNP headquarters. Steele still joined President Endara and Ambassador Hinton for breakfast on a

weekly basis, and his radio was still tied in with the President of Panama's net. However strange this may appear, President Endara, Ambassador Hinton, the CINC, the Commander of JTF-Panama, and Steele himself all seemed to be comfortable with the arrangement.<sup>154</sup> The implication that the relationship of the U.S. military with the Panamanian government remains closer and more autonomous than may be desirable is inescapable. The Panama dynamic is still evolving.



## CHAPTER 7

### THE FOGGY RESULT OF PROMOTING LIBERTY

The story of planning for and executing the restoration of Panama having now been told, one must ask what really was accomplished and how well. Merely to answer these questions is not sufficient; rather for the answers to be useful they should be structured by some central organizing concepts. Three such concepts from the doctrinal literature of the U.S. Army will be used here: the Principles of War,<sup>155</sup> the Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) Imperatives,<sup>156</sup> and the Tenets of Campaign Planning.<sup>157</sup> Not each and every component of these concepts is useful and therefore not all will be used. Still, together the three concepts provide a general framework for analyzing the results of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY.

#### **Objective.**

The first principle of war, the objective, orients this analysis. If the objective is clear and attainable then the first strategic battle has been won. In contingency operations, of which JUST CAUSE/PROMOTE LIBERTY is one, Clausewitz' dictum, that war is an extension of diplomacy by other means, returns as the LIC imperative of political dominance. Restated for JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY, the question is whether the political objective was stated clearly and was attainable by the forces used.

During the contingency planning of BLUE SPOON and BLIND LOGIC there was no clear political objective. Operational objectives were to remove Noriega from power and establish a government to provide services until a new Panamanian government could be established. With the decision to execute, President Bush listed his four objectives for the operation,<sup>158</sup> only one of which was clearly political and applied directly to Promote Liberty--reestablish democracy in Panama. It mattered little that in its 86 years of independence Panama never had known democracy in anything remotely resembling the full sense of the concept.<sup>159</sup> It also did not seem to matter to anyone in the U.S. Government that democracy was not defined as a set of conditions which needed to exist. Rather, democracy was understood intuitively by the U.S. military and civilian personnel very much in terms of the syllogism articulated in Chapter 6.

And, as suggested, both BLUE SPOON and BLIND LOGIC were developed in the atmosphere of the Four Ds policy that was reiterated and captured in the SOUTHCOM Regional Security Strategy (RSS). The fact that the understanding of democracy as the objective was implicit and intuitive rather than explicit made it very easy for a number of senior military leaders and State Department personnel to see the entire JUST CAUSE scenario as a 26,000 man posse sent out to capture one drug running crook.<sup>160</sup> It made it equally easy for diplomatic personnel to articulate the position that responsibility for making Panama's democracy work rested only with the Panamanians and not with the U.S. Government.<sup>161</sup> This view was reinforced by, and in turn reinforced, the concept embodied in the slogan, "liberation, not occupation." The Panamanians,

however, were totally unprepared to govern, let alone make democracy work. In words written over 30 years ago, Kalman Silvert, the dean of U.S. Latin American scholars, made the general case, ". . . It is not a rare phenomenon in Latin America to find a political group taking power after long and continued opposition only to find itself powerless to put a program into effect because of its own administrative inadequacies and inability to transfer protest politics to positive policy."<sup>162</sup> This general case clearly describes that of the Endara Government. As noted above, three "guys" and an inauguration do not make a government. Neither do those same three "guys" and an abortive election make a democracy. Nor can that election alone confer long-term legitimacy to that government. Here lay one of the major foci of the problem of the lack of clarity around the objective.

What Panama required was U.S. support for an objective best described as democratic legitimacy. Indeed, this is how the United States should have stated the objective. Democratic legitimacy consists of: The degree of popular support for the government. The perception that corruption within the government has been limited to an acceptable level. The perception of the government's ability to govern. The existence of alternatives to political violence.<sup>163</sup>

The new Endara administration began its governmental life with a kind of "face legitimacy" based on its electoral victory in the May 7, 1989, elections. Polling data confirmed that the electoral results were perceived by the Panamanian people as legitimate and that the circumstances of the government's inauguration on a U.S. military base had no significant negative impact. Where the government had problems with the perception of its legitimate right to govern was in the Latin American international arena. Not that the other Latin American states held any brief for Noriega but they held that U.S. intervention in the internal affairs of any hemispheric republic was illegitimate. Still, given the character of the Noriega regime, such views were somewhat muted and most responded to the personal diplomacy of Vice President Ricardo Arias Calderon and the obvious joy of the people of Panama at, once again, being free of a tyrant.

The government also made a good start with respect to the issue of corruption. Its leaders were relatively clean (and relatively wealthy with no need to line their pockets) and compared to Noriega even a petty thief like Torrijos would look honest. By Panamanian standards this government not only was honest, it was "as pure as ivory soap." During its first year in office the standards obviously relaxed, however the government maintained its essential lack of corruption. Still, one began to hear, as the year went on, some significant criticism of the embryonic corruption.

With respect to its ability to govern, the administration was given a grace period. Citizens knew full well that the government would need some time to get organized and begin to deliver services, including security, on its own. Its problems, however, began immediately upon the decision, in conjunction with the United States, to create the Public Force and PNP from the remnants of the old PDF.

When the new force after 8 months still had no new (non-PDF) recruits, had not been able to provide a perceived satisfactory level of security, and evidence of old style petty corruption appeared, the government was blamed. When this was followed by the abortive December 4-5 police coup attempt/cum mutiny/cum protest demonstration that had to be put down by U.S. forces at the request of the government, public confidence fell. When the lack of the premier service,

security, was coupled with poor economic performance in areas where it counted with the public (such as in the continuing high rate of unemployment), the people withdrew their support.

This was well reflected in the polls which showed support for the government a year after the invasion to have fallen to less than 20 percent.<sup>164</sup> A poor woman who lives near the airport and is active in volunteer work described the situation this way:

The government has done nothing. It seems that we were mistaken about Endara. Now we are worse off than before. The streets are full of thugs; you can't sleep in peace. There is more unemployment than before; more problems in general than before; and this situation affects everyone and everything.<sup>165</sup>

In spite of its loss of popular support, the government has shown that alternatives to political violence do exist through the electoral process by holding elections to fill the seats in the Legislative Assembly which remained undecided after the final count from the May 1989 elections. Even on this issue, however, the picture is unclear. President Endara has so far taken no steps to return municipal government—mayors and councils—to the people through the electoral process.<sup>166</sup> In addition, there has been no effort to develop responsible elective government at the province level; governors were and remain appointed positions. Thus electoral democracy in Panama remains very much a partial process with the potential for long-term public alienation at the local level. In addition, President Endara has used the libel law of the Noriega era to jail a critical journalist, which is seen as an attack on press freedom. Thus, Panamanian democratic legitimacy is now very much in question.<sup>167</sup>

Planning for BLIND LOGIC did not address these issues. It was near-term operational planning to provide government and government services while a democratic civilian government was being established. That it was applicable in so many ways to the situation on December 20, is to its credit. That it did not address the strategic objective of democracy adequately was a major weakness. President Endara's observation that the United States "didn't have a specific plan to help us in establishing a democracy . . ." is a telling confirmation of that weakness.<sup>168</sup>

The Panama strategy that the MSG submitted to the Embassy took some major steps toward a remedy. It identified democracy clearly as the strategic objective and attempted to address it in terms of the process and not in terms of the current Panamanian administration. While it identified specific supporting objectives and the ways and means to achieve them, it still fell short of clearly describing the desired democratic end state.

### **Unity of Command/Unity of Effort.**

The second principle, unity of command, was violated more often than adhered to in planning BLIND LOGIC and executing PROMOTE LIBERTY. That the violation of the principle did not result in greater lack of unity of effort can be attributed to the relative clarity of the operational (as opposed to the strategic) objectives, the sense of mission on the part of those who had to execute, and the positive influence of personality in that key players in several military organizations had

worked together before and sought to use informal communication channels to resolve potential conflict.

While future planners cannot count on the "right" personality factors being present, perhaps what has here been called personality was, rather, more a function of the maturation of staff coordination procedures in the joint arena of a unified command than it really was of personality. One staff officer described the initial atmosphere in COMCMOTF as being "us versus them" where "us" were the SOUTHCOM and USARSO people while "them" were the XVIII Airborne Corps outsiders. Yet, as the outsiders came to realize what the conditions in Panama were, they rapidly began to discover that the "locals" knew how to get things done and respect developed.<sup>169</sup>

The initial lack of congruence between the locals and outsiders was the natural outgrowth of the planning process where the attempted coordination between the SOUTHCOM and Corps planners had come apart as a result of the mismatch of perceptions with respect to an agreement over the proper roles of JTF-South and COMCMOTF, including assigned forces, and place of CMO and CMO support forces in the air flow. The disconnect was nearly complete and resulted from the preconceived attitudes of both parties combined with the status of BLIND LOGIC in the approval process and the change of command at SOUTHCOM. When the fact that BLIND LOGIC was a separate and distinct contingency plan is added, then much of the failure to achieve planned unity of effort is explained.

The inability to achieve General Thurman's intended unity of command with respect to CMO was due as much to the reality of the situation as it was to the fact that transferring responsibility for BLIND LOGIC to USARSO simply was overcome by events. Thurman's intent was to centralize command in General Stiner at JTF-South, hence the latter's deputy, General Cisneros was the logical candidate to execute BLIND LOGIC as discussed in Chapter 6. More than the pace of events, the need for COMCMOTF to be a general officer responsible directly to the CINC, the requirement for a staff not mired in the muck of the combat operations, and the need for political-military and regional expertise, as well as the necessity to support the Charge by leading him in the right direction, all confirmed the wisdom of achieving unity of military command between civil-military and combat operations in the person of the CINC. Civil-military operations are most clearly the CINC's responsibility.

If unity of military command was achieved at a level higher than that which General Thurman intended and without the loss of unity of effort among the military forces, then the same cannot be said of the interagency arena. Rather, unity of effort among the several U.S. Government agencies involved was ragged at best.

Foremost among the reasons for the lack of interagency unity of effort is the fact that throughout the process of planning BLIND LOGIC none of the other U.S. Government agencies which would have to participate in its execution were ever permitted to even know of the plan's existence. Such input as was received from other agencies was roundabout and unwitting. The reason, of course, was that the Department of State, AID, and Justice, etc., were all, deliberately, excluded by DOD. The PRAYERBOOK was classified, compartmented, and held exclusively within DOD channels. This precluded any meaningful interagency planning. A principal consequence of this exclusion of State, in particular, was the failure of the SCJ5 planners to challenge the assumption that, in

the event of an invasion, the CINC would govern Panama. Continued reliance on that assumption resulted in the failure of the planners to anticipate the existence of the government of the "three." That failure made the execution of the plan subject to significant adaptation and ad hoc solutions to problems that might well have been anticipated if the assumption had been subjected to Embassy scrutiny.

In the early days of the execution of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, General Thurman achieved unity of command by the simple expedient of putting COMCMOTF under the operational control of the Charge. Unity of effort was then achieved because COMCMOTF, having the personnel and other assets that the Embassy did not, was able to "lead in support." COMCMOTF had a plan; it had personnel; it had vehicles, communications, and funds; the Embassy had none of these. COMCMOTF responded to the suggestions of Mr. Bushnell as if they were orders, but those were relatively few, although usually reflective of broad Latin American experience. But General Gann also responded directly to the guidance of General Thurman, who, after all, wrote his efficiency report. Finally, he responded to the requests from the government of the "three." In the first few days these were relatively few, for as President Endara said, "What happened at the very beginning was that we didn't understand exactly what they were doing. As things rolled along we realized that they were really looking for us to take the initiative and that they would help us in our initiatives."<sup>170</sup>

When Ambassador Hinton arrived, General Thurman sent him a memorandum in which he discussed the role of COMCMOTF. He told Hinton that General Gann worked for Hinton until that arrangement no longer was useful. At that time the Ambassador should release Gann and his people to return to their normal duties.<sup>171</sup>

The activation of the MSG coincided with the beginning of normal staffing at the Embassy and in other government agencies. The reinvigoration of the Embassy and the functioning of other agencies produced the not unexpected turf questions. What becomes especially clear in talking to the most senior military and civilian leadership is that they all felt quite comfortable with each other as well as with the way that relations with the Panamanian government were organized.<sup>172</sup>

If the senior U.S. civilian and military leaders in Panama perceived that unity of effort had been achieved at the top, then that was hardly the view of the people in the organizations that had to execute the policies. Rather there were conflicting interpretations of U.S. policy objectives that continued past the cut-off date for this study.<sup>173</sup> Issues involving the proper U.S. role in establishing, influencing, advising, and training Panama's security forces never were resolved. For example, at no time did the U.S. Government insist that Panama must directly address the degree of security it wishes to provide itself along with the degree of risk it is willing to accept. Because Panama has not even raised these questions, the answers become the result of "non-decisions," not even decisions postponed. The reason that the question was never raised is that neither the military nor ICITAP nor the Embassy developed a coordinated position to influence the Panamanian government on this issue.

A lack of congruence between the U.S. and Panamanian governments appeared early and grew as the year went on. While that was normal and to be expected, it rapidly became an

impediment to achieving effective combined unity of effort on issues where both governments were in agreement on the objectives. President Endara put it well when he said,

With regard to U.S. help, I had some frustrations this past year. I think the United States had a very clear intention to help Panama right away. I think President Bush's intention was that, and in his speech made some days after the invasion, he made it very clear to the U.S. people, to the Panamanian people, and to the world at large, he wanted to help us right away . . . . We had the idea first when we heard President Bush that we were going to get a massive dose, a jump start. Actually, we never received a jump start.<sup>174</sup>

Endara's remarks on the subject are kind. But they are also telling in what they say about how the efforts of the two governments lacked congruence. They are also valid in substance, something which will be discussed in more detail below. As suggested, lack of congruence between the two governments should have been expected to increase over time. Simply put, their interests are different.

Among other places where these differences were played out was in the negotiations on the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT) which is designed to provide information sharing between the United States and Panama on financial transactions involving drug running and the laundering of narcotics money. The MLAT, as originally proposed by the United States, struck at the very core of Panama's offshore banking industry, based as it is on confidentiality. More importantly, U.S. assistance was held hostage for the signing of the MLAT. In the end a workable agreement was negotiated but not without leaving many Panamanians believing that the United States was prepared to impose on Panama, in its hour of need, conditions it did not even ask of the U.S. banking system.<sup>175</sup>

BLIND LOGIC, conceived of as a campaign plan, falls short in achieving and/or enhancing unity of effort on several counts. While it attempted to meet the tenet of composing subordinate forces and designating command relationships, it could not direct JTF-South's civil-military operations mission until such time as it was an approved plan. Action officer level coordination proved to be no substitute for CINC and JCS approval. Moreover, there was no circumstance in which General Thurman and/or General Gann were going to be able to compose the forces of other government agencies. General Thurman could and did place his civil-military operations forces under the operational control of the Charge thereby designating the only command relationship that could increase unity of effort under the circumstances. When the MSG was established, however, not even this command relationship held up. Rather, a coordination relationship was established which worked about as well as could be expected among the executing agencies, and better than should have been expected among those at the top. Obviously, given the nonsubordinate nature of the interagency environment, it was difficult, at best, to provide operational direction to any organization not directly in the military chain of command. The effort to write a holistic, coordinated Panama strategy was an attempt to create interagency synergism through coordination. It failed because the only person who might have pushed it to success, the CINC, had, due to his illness, ceased to be in the position to do so. As a result, interagency bureaucratic inertia took over and the several agencies followed their own individual paths.

## **Mass and Economy of Force.**

The principles of mass and economy of force applied to Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY focus on adequacy and consistency of U.S. support, or the LIC imperative of perseverance. Complicating the ability of U.S. forces to mass resources to assist in the restoration of Panama were the legal constraints on options dictated by legislation. Even during the planning phase, BLIND LOGIC had to confront the issue posed by Section 673b of Title 10 of the U.S. Code—the Selected Reserve Presidential call-up.<sup>176</sup> The call-up of specific Reserve CA units was part of the BLIND LOGIC plan. Only the political sensing of the planners kept SOUTHCOM from relying exclusively on the exercise of the call-up authority. As it was, the fact that they had made alternate plans, the ARCVs, permitted the Reserve community to provide the required number of CA forces.

The failure to exercise the call-up resulted in two major negatives that affected principles and imperatives being discussed here. First, unit integrity was lost; Reserve forces were brought in piecemeal and had to create a composite unit of people who knew little or nothing of the country in which they were to operate. Second, tours of 31 days for most of the Reserve volunteers did not permit the composite unit to build any kind of integrity nor establish sufficient continuity of support. This resulted in a violation of the principle of mass. The reason that the call-up authority was not invoked can only be speculated but it seems clear that JCS, OSD, and/or the National Command Authority (NCA) were concerned about the possible political consequences. Moreover, few enough of the generals in the Pentagon (or in SOUTHCOM) had any concept of how the authority was supposed to work.<sup>177</sup>

In addition to the problems caused by the failure to effect the Reserve call-up, the problem was compounded by the inadequate coordination between SOUTHCOM and the XVIII Airborne Corps during planning for BLIND LOGIC. As a result of CA and CMO support forces not being included in the air flow plans, there was a significant shortage of both when they were most needed. This was particularly apparent in the requirements for MPs and the 25 members of the initial increment of the CMOTF. Indeed, the problem was made worse when the loadmasters bumped CMOTF personnel from aircraft to make room for additional but unnecessary combat forces.<sup>178</sup> A 4-day delay in the arrival of Reserve CA assets was engendered by requiring the force to muster at Fort Bragg, NC, before deploying to Panama rather than proceeding from home station to the nearest point of embarkation.<sup>179</sup> The whole process of activating Reserve CA forces and prioritizing CA and CMO support forces violated both the principles of mass and economy of force.

Funding resources well illustrate these principles. As President Endara expressed, Panama believed President Bush's promise of assistance. Indeed, President Bush had articulated again President Reagan's promise of sufficient U.S. aid to restore Panama's economy from the effects of sanctions, even before the invasion, if Noriega was removed. In January, on his visit to Panama, Vice President Dan Quayle brought a promise of a one billion dollar assistance package to restore the country. The first U.S. aid package submitted to Congress was the \$42 million Urgent Assistance to Democracy in Panama Act, which was passed on February 7. At about that time the administration submitted to the Congress a bill calling for an additional \$500 million in assistance monies.<sup>180</sup> The title of the bill gives an indication that its intent was still to restore the Panamanian economy from the effects of sanctions and invasion. It was called the Dire

Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.<sup>181</sup> In both cases the stated intent was to "jump start" Panama's economy.<sup>182</sup> Had the funds been distributed with the sense of urgency implied by the names of the acts then the principle of mass would have been adhered to well.

Unfortunately, as President Endara indicated, distribution was exceedingly slow. Funding from the original \$42 million only began to be distributed in quantity in May, 4 months after it had been appropriated. The Dire Emergency Act was only passed on May 25, over 4 months after it had been submitted, and instead of \$500 million it contained only \$420 million.<sup>183</sup> The GAO reported to Congress on April 8, 1991 that:

Of the \$420 million Congress appropriated to "jump start" the Panamanian economy, \$377.5 million had been obligated by AID as of February 28, 1991 . . . . Although agreements have been signed with the government of Panama . . . to obligate 90 percent of the Dire Emergency Act funds, AID has disbursed only about \$77.9 million (about 19 percent of the amount appropriated). Even less, about \$41.8 million, has actually been spent by the Panamanian government or AID.<sup>184</sup>

The effect of this delay was not lost on the Panamanian business community, one of whose members harshly criticized the United States for the slowness of delivery on the promises it did keep.<sup>185</sup>

Offsetting some of the slowness of both appropriations and delivery of aid was the expenditure of military and military administered funds. During Operation JUST CAUSE, DOD operational funds could be used legally for any purpose that would further the operation and a number of restoration and assistance projects were carried out, at least, until January 20, when DOD directed that peacetime rules applied.<sup>186</sup>

After that date, joint exercise funds, SOUTHCOM training funds, and Title 10 Humanitarian/Civic Assistance monies could be spent on engineering and medical programs while some operational funds still could be used for joint patrols with the PNP. AID estimated that the total of these expenditures amounted to \$15 million as of April 15, 1991.<sup>187</sup> In addition, some \$9.9 million in 1987 security assistance funding that had been embargoed during the sanctions were released and used to equip the Public Force.<sup>188</sup> Collectively, these military expenditures, coming early as most of them did and generally being highly visible, represented an effective application of the principle of economy of force.

The question arises as to whatever happened to the one billion dollars pledged during Vice President Quayle's visit. This discussion has accounted for only \$486.9 million, less than half. Appendix G shows how AID breaks down the economic assistance, trade, loan guarantee, and other programs to reach a grand total of \$994.9 million.<sup>189</sup> Most Panamanians, however, do not count the same way AID does and view the U.S. assistance as less than half what was promised. Equally important is the way in which the recipients perceive the reasons for the delays and shortfalls. Panamanians of all political stripes believe that the conditions imposed by the United States for release of aid dollars are onerous and unacceptable. Most often they cite the early versions of the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty as their example and they draw the conclusion that the United States has forgotten that it was responsible for the destruction of Panama's economy through both sanctions and invasion.<sup>190</sup>



## Assessment.

At a minimum this critique draws attention to a valid point. The U.S. political attention span is limited, and on Panama was much shorter than the Panamanians expected it to be. The result was that instead of emergency restoration funding, U.S. assistance came to be looked upon in the Congress and in the bureaucracy as just another aid program to be used to further a wide variety of foreign policy goals. Thus, aid to the new democratic government of Nicaragua was included in the same legislation. The lack of clarity with respect to the objective of democracy, inadequate unity of effort, and the inability to appropriately mass resources, resulted in the perception that the United States lacked the perseverance to see its responsibility through to the end--an end which became significantly less clear as time went on.

What was accomplished in Panama by Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY? A Panamanian businessman educated at Yale and the University of Pennsylvania said, "You got the police working; not too well, but working. Second, you got the government ministries working." He was not, however, sure how much credit for the latter goes to Panamanian leaders and how much to the United States.<sup>191</sup> That lack of assurance as to who deserves the credit is all to the good, for credit redounds to increase the democratic legitimacy of the government of Panama, the well-hidden but primary U.S. strategic objective. What did the United States achieve? Clearly, operational success was a result of PROMOTE LIBERTY. The questions are found at the strategic level. And their implications will be discussed in the next and final chapter.

## CHAPTER 8

# FOG LIGHTS: STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the previous chapters have demonstrated, the planning of BLIND LOGIC muddled through to achieve success at the operational level with its execution as PROMOTE LIBERTY. Its degree of strategic success remains in doubt and will remain so for some time. The reason is that strategic success of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY depends on achieving an objective that, while it underlay BLIND LOGIC, never was explicitly stated and defined in the plan. While that objective, democracy, was stated explicitly by President Bush and restated in the mission of the MSG, it never was defined in strategic terms as an end-state.

### **The Political-Military Relationship.**

In addressing war termination, which is what BLIND LOGIC/PROMOTE LIBERTY do, it is imperative to recognize that the objective will always be a political-military one. In the Clausewitzian sense, the continuum of diplomacy to war is being extended back to diplomacy again. The transition is not from the distinctly military to the distinctly political but rather from the more political through the more military to the more political—to go through the entire continuum. In the case of Panama, this relationship between the political and the military, while relatively clear at the start of the planning process, became obscured toward the end. In part, this was the result of the decision to separate the original phased plan into the PRAYERBOOK family of plans. The effect of this decision was compounded by the change of command. Because of his systemic approach, General Thurman's attention was directed toward the single combat plan—BLUE SPOON. His staff did not demand that equal attention be paid to the other plan—BLIND LOGIC—which addressed the political-military aftermath of the combat operation. As a result, the combat plan changed focus from the center of Panama City to the periphery without taking into account the political-military consequences of that action.

A partial solution to the problem raised here is to make certain that a campaign plan is developed which follows the central tenets of that process. It is useful to recall, at this point, that the PRAYERBOOK series of plans, technically, were developed as operations orders (OPORDS) and never were converted to plans (OPLANS). A result was to direct the attention of those responsible for both planning and execution downward toward the interface between the operational and tactical levels. Lest these comments be taken too critically, it must be remembered that campaign planning was in its infancy with the U.S. Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute's seminal publication on the subject surfacing only a little more than a month before the JCS planning order was issued.<sup>192</sup> Nevertheless, the development of a campaign plan by the CINC would have directed the focus of the effort upward toward the strategic/operational interface rather than downward. It would also have called attention during the planning phase to the lack of a clear strategic objective.

This lack in the planning stages is explainable largely because the U.S. Government had not achieved consensus as to what it wanted for Panama. The history of American foreign policy is replete with examples of conflict between idealism and realpolitik. These carried through the entire Panama crisis. While understandable, this does not excuse the planners from their obligation to articulate a strategic objective that was compatible with American foreign policy goals. If BLUE SPOON were to be executed, then the strategic objective for Panama had to be what President Bush later expressed, democracy in Panama. This was the only strategic objective compatible with President Reagan's policy of the four Ds, which oriented SOUTHCOM's Regional Security Strategy (RSS). Indeed, democracy in the hemisphere was a strategic goal of the RSS and its successor, the S<sup>2</sup>.

Although the goal of democracy in Panama undergirded BLUE SPOON and BLIND LOGIC, it was not stated explicitly in a military document until the mission statement of the MSG was approved. More importantly, democracy in Panama never was stated in terms which defined it as an end-state. In other words, the conditions which make for a functioning and self-sustaining democracy were not articulated. Moreover, the supporting objectives required to achieve that democracy in the MSG's draft Panama Strategy did not provide an adequate substitute. The result of this omission has been the ambiguity of the Panama operations in terms of strategic success. One important lesson, therefore, is the absolute requirement to articulate the strategic objective in terms of end-states which are clearly defined. In the case of Panama this required an analysis of those conditions for democracy which already existed and those which would have to be created.

It can be argued that it is not the proper role of the military to develop political strategies. The first response is that what is being called for is not only a political strategy but one that has both the political and the military dimensions. Therefore, it is emphatically the duty of the military to produce such a strategy, although not necessarily alone.

## **Strategy in the Interagency Environment.**

The problem is, as suggested in Chapter 1, that the community of civilian agencies of the U.S. Government (State, AID, Justice, etc.) is not in the strategy business. Indeed, it is not too harsh a judgment that these agencies have no concept of the interrelated documents that constitute modern military strategy bringing together the ends, ways, and means to support and defend the national interest. Despite their lack of capability at present, the other government agencies must play their legitimate role in developing the end-game for wars, and near wars, like Panama. Until such a capability is developed the military will have to take the lead in organizing the strategy development process.

Planning in isolation, however, whether by accident or design, will surely result in strategies, campaign, and operations plans that are much less than optimal. The problem is how to achieve the unity of effort from the beginning of planning through the execution. This was not achieved in Panama. One of the first considerations in achieving unity of effort is who will be in charge. As one officer who was intimately involved in PROMOTE LIBERTY put it, "We didn't have MacArthur

there. We had MacArthur, periodically."<sup>193</sup> Yet, General Thurman was adamant that he would not be the pro-consul.<sup>194</sup> In the future, it can be expected that there never again will be a "MacArthur," a military pro-consul. If in future operations the need arises for a pro-consul, that role will be filled by the civilian American ambassador. Unlike MacArthur, there is no readily identifiable role model.

If that is the case, then the entire process must be conducted in an interagency environment. The process must begin with planning. Even the combat phase of the plan will require input from State and other government agencies. But the restoration or CMO phase certainly will demand the very heavy participation of State, AID, Justice, and many of the other agencies present on the Embassy's Country Team. Without that participation each player is likely to go his own way. In present circumstances, that means that the only plan likely to be developed will be military, which will leave precisely the kind of problem that existed in Panama.

While it is essential to have interagency involvement in the planning process, it is not clear what agency has the lead. Obviously, the military has the lead during the combat phase but is that equally true for the CMO phase? If a campaign plan is to be an integrated whole then the answer is that, yes, the military must have the lead in planning through the termination of the campaign. A major part of the planning will involve the hand-off from the military to civilian agency lead. The follow-on campaign plan may well be State Department or AID lead with the military in a support role for both planning and execution.

### **Unity of Effort in Execution.**

Unity of effort was an equally serious issue during the execution of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY. Neither COMCMOTF nor the MSG, as actually organized or as planned, were structured adequately to achieve full unity of effort. Although the senior leadership honestly believes that it worked well in concert to achieve U.S. goals, the facts suggest that the organizations which had to carry out the program never did overcome their own parochial interests.

Thus Justice's International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) failed to make use of the expertise that was found in the USFLG/PFLD with respect to the organization and people with which it needed to work. It also chose to ignore the fact that the military had assets available which, had ICITAP made effective use of them, would have greatly enhanced its ability to accomplish the mission the Ambassador gave it. Instead ICITAP chose to defend its bureaucratic turf. Similar experiences occurred within the military and among other agencies. Another example is what happened to the holistic Panama strategy after it was submitted to the Embassy; it was used in such bits and pieces that it lost its synergistic effect.

### **Effective Interagency Organization.**

Clearly, future efforts to terminate small wars will involve extensive civil military operations (CMO). The experience of Panama shows that neither of the organizations created by the military

to conduct CMO was fully capable of achieving interagency unity of effort. Both COMCMOTF and the MSG failed because they were wholly military. Interagency organization is required to conduct restoration operations in the aftermath of a small war. Such an organizing concept might be as useful in other settings such as counterinsurgency.

An interagency organization will serve the Ambassador. This assumes that the Ambassador will be the American official in charge of the conduct of U.S. policy in a foreign country even in circumstances where one would expect that the military commander might take that position. This is the lesson of Vietnam, Panama, and other interventions.

Since an Embassy normally is not staffed to undertake the restoration and reconstruction of a country, the Ambassador must have a separate organization with that capability. Much of it will be military. Its commander--and a commander it must have--may be either civilian or military. The deputy must be the other. It probably should have a military type staff structure which argues strongly that the chief of staff be a military officer. Staff sections, however, would, of necessity, be integrated with civilian members from several agencies and military members.

Execution of restoration operations would fall to a variety of organizations, most of which would be either military or civilian with a formal and standard structure. Thus, the MPs would work according to their normal structure and procedures. There would, however, be some cases where agencies would be created as amalgams of military and civilian entities. Taking Panama as an example, the USFLG easily could have been restructured to make its chief the in-country ICITAP director with its members taken from its military staff, Justice Department professionals, and some of ICITAP's senior consultants. This interagency organization then would have taken operational control of the MPs, SF/RC Cop teams, and any other entity having a responsibility for organizing, equipping, and training the police.

Other organizational variants might include: the attachment of Reserve CA personnel to the USAID mission; operational control of PSYOP by the U.S. Information Service; and placing DEA under the operational control of the Special Forces or vice versa, depending on the circumstances and mission. The point of this discussion is not to suggest that any of these particular modes of organization is correct, or better than any other, but to direct attention to the concept that various means exist to achieve unity of effort through command and control mechanisms and imaginative organization. How unity of effort is achieved is less important than that it be achieved.

### **The Total Force Concept.**

Panama, once again, reminded the Department of Defense that there are serious costs if the total force concept is not exercised as intended. The failure to utilize the Selected Reserve Call-up Authority cost SOUTHCOM needed CA expertise and its timely arrival. It further had the price of reducing the effectiveness of the Reserve personnel who did arrive because of the requirement to build a composite unit ad hoc. Moreover, the whole incident demonstrated that the Active Army leadership did not have a full understanding of what was available under the authority, what the Reserves were capable of, and what they were not. Perhaps the leadership learned this lesson

since the call-up authority was used for DESERT SHIELD/STORM. The anecdotal evidence, however, suggests that the lesson has only been partially absorbed.

What Panama should demonstrate is that where the required skills are found in the Reserve community, the only effective way to make use of those skills in a contingency is through the exercise of a call-up. Had that been done for Panama, not only could the needed CA units have been called, but also such CMO support forces as additional MP units from the National Guard. The bottom line is that the use of the call-up must become routine.

## **Massing Resources and Paying the Price.**

In terms of the massing of resources Panama provides additional lessons in the use of forces and funding. The decision to exclude the military from training the PNP was taken under a particular interpretation of historical reality. That interpretation was analogous to the accusation that the military is always prepared to fight the last war. In the Panama case, the primary reason for including the training prohibition in the Urgent Assistance to Democracy in Panama Act was that the military had been responsible for training the PDF—who were, after all, the villains of the piece.

Yet, as discussed above, the military had some distinct advantages when it came to training the PNP that ICITAP did not have. These included knowledge of the players, cultural sensitivity, language capability, country and regional expertise, and large numbers of personnel with civilian police expertise (the RC Cops). Under ICITAP's direction these advantages should have been exploited. Instead, the military was written out of the training equation very prematurely. Once again, the lesson is that all capabilities, properly orchestrated, must be used to adequately mass the required resources.

The second part of that lesson is the need for adequate oversight. This is the link between mass and unity of effort. If the establishment of a government and its security forces is to be done well, the Ambassador must be in charge. He and his staff need to be involved in the planning. And he must give his staff, perhaps his Political Counselor, oversight authority—what the military calls "staff supervision."

Critical to the adequate massing of resources is adequate funding and a sense of urgency. Two lessons from the Panama experience can be drawn here. First, in the immediate aftermath of combat, operational funds must be used for restoration purposes. While this was done, it was terminated prematurely in such a way that the newly established MSG was deprived of essential resources almost before it became operational. The only apparent reason for the decision to terminate the use of operational funds was budgetary. In future operations, the budget must not be permitted to drive the strategy thereby risking failure by premature disengagement.

Long-term funding for restoration operations will come from appropriations. The Panama experience points to the need for the Executive to have a well-developed plan for inducing Congress to pass the required legislation with a real sense of urgency. Four months in the context

of what was happening in Panama was interminable. Equally important are the requirements not to muddy the implementing rules with extraneous conditions and to have a plan to make rapid delivery of the funding to the recipient. An example of the former weakness was the drawn out negotiation process over the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty which, in its original formulation, would have imposed intrusive oversight conditions on the Panamanian banking system—requirements to which the U.S. banking industry is not subject. Examples of the second abound, as the GAO report cited in Chapter 7 demonstrates.

## **Education and Training.**

Certain inadequacies in the education and training of military officers and civilian decision-level personnel become very clear as a result of the Panama experience. The political side of the political-military equation does not seem to be addressed adequately in the curricula of the command and staff colleges and the senior service schools. This is not to say that it is ignored but rather that it does not appear to have been included in the curricula in a context that demands the attention of the student. Thus, the need for a CA annex to an OPLAN is addressed, but not the fact that a campaign plan requires a fully integrated CMO phase to effect the transition from military dominant "other means" to diplomacy.

Secondly, the personnel of other U.S. Government agencies generally have no concept of and have not been educated or trained in developing strategy as the military understands it. Likewise, they have received no training in, and can hardly conceive of, campaign planning. To respond to this deficiency there is a need to convince those agencies of the requirement for such education and training and provide the opportunity to partake of it. One approach would be to encourage the attendance at the U.S. Army War College of the very best people from the other agencies with special emphasis on State, AID, and Justice. This approach will have long-term positive results. A second way focuses on the near-term need. Here, the Army War College would develop a traveling road show to present a short course on strategy and campaign planning to military commands and civilian agencies which would most likely benefit from it. For best results, participation should be directed from the National Command Authority.

## **Doctrine.**

There is also a need to modify doctrine as a result of the Panama experience. If the COMCMOTF and MSG do not provide adequate models for the future, then such models must be devised and included in doctrinal publications. The MSG follows from the Security Assistance Force (SAF) model found in FM 100-20. That model should be modified to reflect the kind of flexible and adaptable interagency structure discussed above. It must be stressed, however, that the proper organization for restoration operations (or as they are now becoming called, nation assistance operations)<sup>195</sup> cannot follow some cookie cutter approach. Rather the revised doctrine should emphasize the venerable military notion of tailoring to the situation.

In sum, Panama demonstrates that the fog of peace can be as murky as the fog of war. It shows as well that the military has learned a great many lessons. The unified command system is capable of conducting a contingency operation and terminating the combat while establishing a civilian government. It did this rather well, although not without some difficulties. What had not been learned by the time of Panama was the critical link between operational planning and military strategy. Similarly, the learning curve is only beginning to come to grips with the link between military and political strategy. Hopefully, this study has contributed to our knowledge of these important linkages. Hopefully, we have begun to pierce the fog.



## ENDNOTES

1. Robert M. Herrick (COL, U.S. Army, Ret.), personal communication, nd.
2. LTC William C. Bennett, "Just Cause and the Principles of War," *Military Review*, March 1991, pp. 9-10.
3. *Tropic Times*, HQ USSOUTHCOM, Panama, various.
4. CPT(P) Anthony M. Schilling, "Force Protection: Military Police Experience in Panama," *Military Review*, March 1991, p. 22.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
6. PURPLE STORM Exercises had been initiated by JTF-Panama under Cisneros's predecessor, MG Bernard Loeffke, but took an expanded focus after Cisneros assumed command.
7. Author's translation of Panamanian radio announcement on *Red Nacional*, December 15, 1989.
8. Bennett, "Just Cause and the Principles of War," pp. 9-10.
9. Interviews with planners from SOUTHCOM and RC in April/May 1991. Beginning April 1991 through May 1991, the author conducted a series of interviews with the persons listed as contributors. Generally, these individuals will be identified in the notes only by general position, i.e. planner, staff officer, businessman, State Department official, etc. This guidance was reiterated by GEN Fred F. Woerner on May 18, 1989.
10. Interview with GEN Woerner, May 6, 1991. Interviews with planners, April/May 1991.
11. Frederick Kempe, *Divorcing the Dictator*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1990, pp. 275, 289, 336-342.
12. Interviews, April/May 1991.
13. Interview with GEN Woerner, May 6, 1991.
14. Interviews with military planners and State Department personnel, April/May 1991.
15. Interviews with military planners, April/May 1991. The tunnel is a series of rooms at HQ USSOUTHCOM on Quarry Heights that are dug into Ancon Hill which looms over Panama City. It is, indeed, a tunnel. See map.
16. Interviews, *op. cit.*
17. Interview with GEN Woerner, May 6, 1991.
18. Interviews, *op. cit.*
19. *Ibid.*
20. LTC John T. Fisher and MAJ Edmund S. Cowan, "Civil Military Operations and the War for Moral Legitimacy in Latin America," SWORD Paper #VII, HQ USSOUTHCOM, 1987. The 361st CA Brigade had sent key personnel to SOUTHCOM in 1983 where the J-5 invited the brigade to develop and man a Civil Affairs Branch.
21. Interviews with RC planners, April/May 1991. In addition to TTAD, 17-day annual training under overseas deployment training (ODT) funding was used.
22. Interviews with SOUTHCOM AC and RC planners.
23. CAPSTONE refers to the association between an Army Reserve unit and its active component headquarters.
24. CMOTF BLIND LOGIC/OPORD 1-88, declassified December 22, 1989.
25. Interviews with SOUTHCOM AC and RC planners.
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. BLIND LOGIC, declassified December 22, 1989.
29. *Ibid.*
30. *Ibid.*; and interviews with SOUTHCOM AC and RC planners.
31. BLIND LOGIC, declassified December 22, 1989; and interviews with SOUTHCOM AC and RC planners.
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*

34. Interview with GEN Woerner, May 6, 1991.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Interviews with planners and staff officers, April/May 1991.
37. Interview with GEN Woerner, May 6, 1991.
38. Interviews with Reserve officers involved in the planning and execution of BLIND LOGIC, April/May 1991.
39. Gabriel Marcella and GEN Fred F. Woerner (USA-Ret.), "The Road to War: The U.S.-Panamanian Crisis, 1987-89," unpublished paper, May 6, 1991.
40. Interview with planner, May 1991.
41. Interviews with SOUTHCOM staff officers, April-May 1991. The author, who at the time was a SOUTHCOM Staff Officer, personally observed this reaction. Such observations will be cited hereafter as participant observation.
42. Participant observation; interview with planner, May 1991.
43. Interviews with staff planners from the XVIII Airborne Corps, April-May 1991.
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*
46. Interview with GEN Thurman, April 3, 1991.
47. Interviews with XVIII Airborne Corps planners.
48. CMOTF, BLIND LOGIC, OPOD 1-88, declassified December 22, 1989.
49. Interviews with various staff officers, April/May 1991.
50. See Kevin Buckley, *Panama: The Whole Story*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991, chapters 12 and 13; Bob Woodward, *The Commanders*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991, pp 120-130; Frederick Kempe, *Divorcing the Dictator*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1990, chapter 21.
51. See Woodward, pp. 128-130.
52. Interview with GEN Maxwell R. Thurman, April 3, 1991.
53. Interviews with planners April-May 1991.
54. *Ibid.*
55. Interview with GEN Woerner, May 6, 1991.
56. *Ibid.* See also Buckley.
57. Interview with GEN Woerner, May 6, 1991.
58. Interviews with SOUTHCOM and XVIII Airborne Corps planners, April/May 1991.
59. *Ibid.*
60. There is some controversy over the details of this point but five separate knowledgeable senior officers, from different headquarters, when interviewed concurred on the fact that the emphasis did, indeed, shift from the center of Panama City to the periphery.
61. Interviews with SOUTHCOM and XVIII Airborne Corps planners, April-May 1991.
62. *Ibid.*
63. Interview with BG Bonaro Gann, SCJ5, April 25, 1991.
64. Interview with MG William Hartzog, CG USARSO and former SCJ3, May 1, 1991.
65. Interviews with USARSO and SOUTHCOM Staff, April-May 1991.
66. Interview with COL Jack Pryor, Deputy Commander USMSGPM, April 23 and 27, 1991.
67. Interviews with staff officers, April/May 1991.
68. *Ibid.*
69. Interviews with Generals Thurman and Woerner. General Woerner stated that the change was merely cosmetic while General Thurman said that had BLIND LOGIC been a phase of the plan, rather than separate, it would very likely have gained his attention.

70. Interview with GEN Thurman.
71. *Ibid.*
72. Interview with USARSO planner, May 1991.
73. Interview with BG Gann.
74. Interviews with SOUTHCOM planners, May 1991.
75. Interviews with GEN Thurman and BG Gann.
76. Interviews with staff officers, April/May 1991.
77. *Ibid.*
78. Interview with GEN Thurman, April 3, 1991.
79. Interview with BG Gann, April 25, 1991.
80. Interviews with State and military personnel assigned to the U.S. Embassy, Panama, April/May 1991.
81. Interview with senior State Department officer, April/May 1991.
82. Interviews with COMCMOTF staff officers, April/May 1991.
83. *Ibid.*
84. *Ibid.*
85. *Ibid.*
86. *Ibid.*
87. SCJ5 Memorandum, June 20, 1990.
88. Interviews with planners and staff officers, April-May 1991.
89. *Ibid.*
90. HQ XVIII Airborne Corps, Fort Bragg, NC, JTF-South OPLAN 2-90. November 3, 1989, declassified by msg dtd 020700Z Jan 90 subrevised class guide, declassified August 14, 1990. Hereafter referred to as OPLAN 2-90 decl. August 14, 1990).
91. U.S. Army Special Operations Command briefing (ARSOC Briefing), "Just Cause Promote Liberty," April 1990, UNCLAS, and interviews with USSOCOM and USSOUTHCOM staff officers, April-May 1991.
92. *Ibid.*
93. Interviews with COMCMOTF staff officers, April-May 1991.
94. ARSOC Briefing.
95. *Ibid.*
96. Interviews with USARSO staff officers, April/May 1991.
97. Interview with COL Norman Higginbotham, DCSLOG USARSO, April 5, 1991.
98. *Ibid.*
99. OFLAN 2-90, decl. August 14, 1990. It should be noted that an interview with General Stiner was requested. General Stiner, communicating through his office, declined the interview.
100. *Ibid.* Of course, the breakdown of law and order was inherent and immediate in an operation designed to decapitate and destroy the PDF.
101. John T. Fishel and Richard D. Downie, "Taking Responsibility for Our Actions: Establishing the Panama National Police," *Military Review*, forthcoming.
102. Interview with U.S./Panamanian lawyer, April/May 1991.
103. SCJ5 Memorandum.
104. *Ibid.* See also Fishel and Downie.
105. Fishel and Downie.
106. ARSOC Briefing.

107. Participant observation. The author recalls the Commander of the 193d Infantry Brigade lounging in the offices of USFLG gently encouraging the effort to get the prisons running. This occurred several times and each time the encouragement was a little greater.

108. Participant observation and interviews with senior members of the USARSO Staff, April-May 1991.

109. Interview with a senior State Department officer, April 1991. This note relates to the entire paragraph.

110. Interview with USSOCOM senior staff officer, April 1991.

111. *Ibid.*

112. *Ibid.*

113. *Ibid.*

114. Interview with MG Hartzog, CG USARSO, May 1, 1991.

115. Interviews with GEN Thurman, and COL(P) James Steele, April 23, 1991.

116. Interview with COL Steele.

117. Interviews with senior staff officers, April/May 1991.

118. *Ibid.*

119. CMOTF BLIND LOGIC OPORD 1-88, declassified December 22, 1989.

120. Fishel and Downie. Also SCJ5 Memorandum to JTF-South, January 4, 1990.

121. The "Country Team" concept refers to all the principal staff sections in a U.S. Embassy and the other government agencies assigned. In Panama, the MSG was a "de facto" member of the Country Team and its commander attended Country Team meetings.

122. Interviews with senior MSG officers, April/May 1991.

123. Interviews with senior State Department officials and military officers, April/May 1991.

124. *Ibid.*

125. MSG Briefing, UNCLAS, ca. July 1990. Although the term "nation assistance" is replacing "nation building," the older term was in use during the period covered by this study and will be retained here.

126. Interviews with officials in State Department, NSC, and SOUTHCOM, April/May 1991.

127. Interview with senior officers at USSOCOM, April 1991.

128. Interviews with senior MSG officers. It should be noted that the correct term for U.S./Host Nation operations is "combined." However, "joint patrols" was the terminology used on the ground in Panama.

129. Interview with PNP traffic policeman, January 1990.

130. See John T. Fishel and Richard D. Downie, "Taking Responsibility for Our Actions: Establishing Panama's National Police," *Military Review*, forthcoming.

131. Interviews with MSG officers.

132. *Ibid.* Also, interviews with Panamanian business persons, legislator, other officials. See, too, GAO report, "Aid to Panama," Washington DC, April 1991, p. 1.

133. Participant observation.

134. Wallet Card, "Policeman's Ten Commandments."

135. USSOCOM briefing, "JUST CAUSE PROMOTE LIBERTY," UNCLAS, nd.

136. Participant observation. In April 1990, the author, at the direction of the Commander of the MSG, conducted an investigation of several of these incidents.

137. Interviews with MSG officers.

138. Participant observation.

139. See Fishel and Downie.

140. *Ibid.* Also participant observation.

141. *Facts on File*, Vol 50, No. 2569, February 16, 1990, p. 101.

142. Interviews with senior MSG officers.
143. Interviews with ICITAP personnel and consultants, April-May 1990, and interviews with MSG officers.
144. MSG Briefing, and interviews with MSG officers.
145. Interviews with MSG officials; *La Prensa*, (various) September 1990.
146. Interview with Ebrahim Asvat, former DG PNP, April 24, 1991.
147. Interview with MAJ Francisco Alvarez, Director of the Police Academy, April 22, 1991, and interviews with ICITAP personnel, April/May 1991.
148. Interview with Ebrahim Asvat.
149. Interviews with COL(P) Steele, April 23, COL Jack Pryor, April 27, 1991, and Francisco Alvarez. Herrera had been jailed after his return to Panama for plotting against the government.
150. Participant observation. Interviews with SOUTHCOM and MSG staff officers, April-May 1991.
151. Interviews with senior MSG and State Department officials, April/May 1991.
152. Interview with COL Steele.
153. *Ibid.*, and interview with COL Pryor.
154. Interviews with these individuals did not suggest any discomfort with this arrangement. In fact, Ambassador Hinton expressed satisfaction with the close links that existed. In early July 1991, MG William Hartzog gave up command of USARSO. On July 19, 1991, COL Jim Steele retired from the U.S. Army.
155. *FM 100-5, Operations*, HQDA, Washington, D.C., May 1986.
156. *FM 100-20/AF Pam 3-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict*, HQ Depts of the Army and the Air Force, December 1990.
157. Strategic Studies Institute, *Campaign Planning*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, January 4, 1988.
158. Kevin Buckley, *Panama: The Whole Story*, New York: Simon and Schuster, New York, 1991, p. 230; also, CNN December 20, 1989 (Bush Speech).
159. Over the last decade the author has had numerous discussions with academic colleagues who specialize on Latin America, in which there is a strong consensus that, in the past, democracy in Panama simply did not exist.
160. Interviews with military and diplomatic participants, April/May 1991.
161. Interviews with senior State Department officials, April/May 1991.
162. K. H. Silvert, *The Conflict Society*, New Orleans: The Houser Press, New Orleans, 1961, p. 61.
163. John T. Fishel and Edmund S. Cowan, "Civil Military Operations and the War for Moral Legitimacy in Latin America," *Military Review*, January 1988, p. 37.
164. See *La Prensa*, *La Estrella de Panama*, etc., in numerous poll reports from December 1990 thru July 13, 1991.
165. Viodelda Picada Lara, personal letter to the author, April 1991.
166. Interviews with journalists and consultants working in Panama; also State Department and SOUTHCOM officials, April-May 1991.
167. See *El Siglo*, *La Prensa*, etc., various issues, April 18 - May 4, 1991.
168. Interview with President Guillermo Endara Gallmany, May 3, 1991.
169. Interviews with COMCMOTF staff officers, April/May 1991.
170. Interview with President Endara.
171. Interview with GEN Thurman, April 3, 1991.
172. Interviews with senior leadership in Panama including GEN Thurman and Ambassador Hinton, April-May 1991.
173. Interviews with staff officers and officials, April-May 1991.
174. Interview with President Endara.

175. Interviews with Panamanian business persons and State Department officials, April/May 1991.
176. *Title 10, United States Code*, February 1989, Section 673b.
177. Interviews with senior officers, April-May 1991.
178. Interview with SOUTHCOM staff officer, April/May 1991.
179. SCJ5 Memorandum, June 20, 1990, declassified April 25, 1991.
180. *Facts on File*, Vol 50, No 2569, February 16, 1990.
181. GAO report, "Aid to Panama," Washington, D.C., April 1991.
182. *Ibid.*
183. *Ibid.*
184. *Ibid.*
185. Interviews with Panamanian business persons.
186. Interviews with USSOCOM, SOUTHCOM, and USARSO staff officers, April-May 1991.
187. Statement of Thomas Stukel, AID Mission Director for Panama, April 17, 1991.
188. *Ibid.*
189. *Ibid.*
190. Interviews with Panamanian business persons.
191. Interview with Panamanian businessman, April 1991.
192. Strategic Studies Institute, *Campaign Planning*, Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, January 4, 1988.
193. Interview with senior MSG officer, April 1991.
194. Interview with GEN Thurman, April 3, 1991.
195. Nation assistance is both more and less than restoration. The term is literally replacing "nation building" which was used in the mission statement of the MSG. It refers to those U.S. military operations which assist a host government in building its infrastructure, hopefully to include the democratic political infrastructure as well as the economic.

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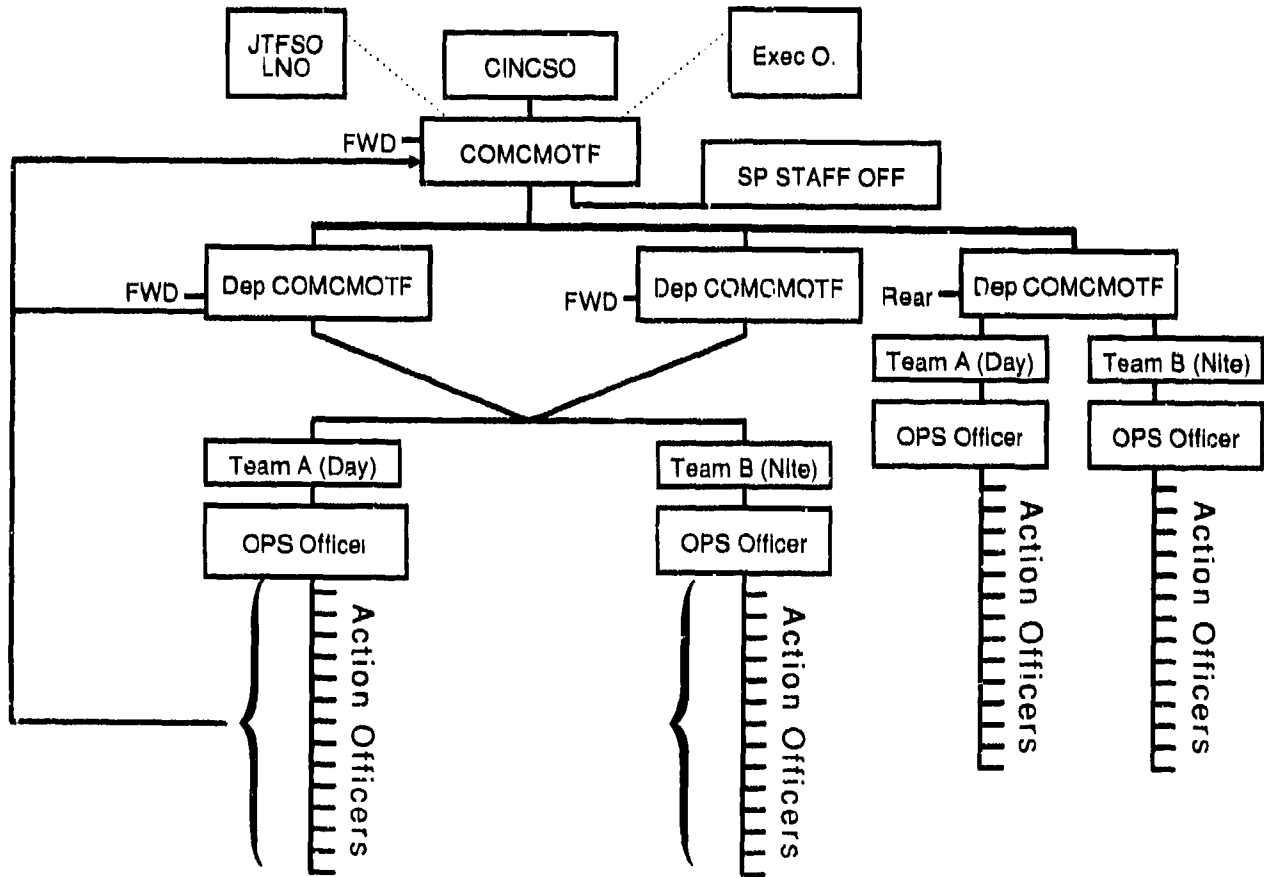
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# APPENDIX A

## COMCMOTF Organization





## APPENDIX B

### DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

UNITED STATES SOUTHERN COMMAND  
QUARRY HEIGHTS, PANAMA

SCJ5

20 June 1990

#### MEMORANDUM FOR SCCS

**Subject: History of Actions and Activities Preceding JUST CAUSE**

1. Reference: Chief of Staff Memorandum, Control Number 291531May 90, subject as above.
2. Operation JUST Cause served as a catalyst putting into motion many of the actions for which J5 serves as the responsible staff element. These include, but are not limited to: developing regional U.S. national security policy and strategy; monitoring and developing contingency forces and plans; maintaining a working relationship with the Joint Staff; developing and monitoring terms of reference and command relationships for regional U.S. military forces; and developing, managing, and coordinating the humanitarian civil military affairs programs for Latin America in accordance with U.S. national security objectives. J5 Plans conducted some actions prior to the actual operation, and those actions are included as Classified Enclosure 1, SAB. One member of J5 Policy and Strategy Division served on the BLIND LOGIC Working Group. The remainder of J5 Divisions performed normal day-to-day functions until 19 December 1989.
3. On 19 December 1989, J5 became the skeleton around which the new government of Panama would be formed. The following is a brief account of actions, by day, as they unfolded for the J5 staff. Some general comments follow.
  - a. 19 December 1989: At approximately 0830, COL Mills, VDIR-P, notified all personnel to attend a meeting in the J5 Conference Room at 0900. COL Mills informed the group that they would be working late on a project at the "Tunnel." It was determined, at this time, that a TS/SCI clearance would be needed to work this project. Personnel not possessing the appropriate clearance were returned to normal duties. Personnel were advised that they were not to discuss the meeting or that they would be working late. Another meeting was scheduled for 1500, which directed the personnel to report to the Tunnel at 1800. At 1800, personnel in the Tunnel were locked in and outgoing calls were prohibited. All other personnel returned home as usual. They became "locked in" at their respective domiciles when the operation kicked off. This "pool" of personnel should have been held at Quarry Heights for later disposition. The mission was to organize to provide Civil Military/Civil Affairs support to

SUBJECT: History of Actions and Activities Preceding JUST CAUSE

Panama following the pending military operation. Very few in the room were familiar with the plan BLIND LOGIC, and no one had any SCJ5 training in Civil Affairs matters. Administrative requirements were significant as administrative support was minimal. Dependents and others residing on Quarry Heights were evacuated from their homes to the Tunnel, which was already overcrowded. Together they awaited the military operation.

b. 20 December 1989: Mortar and small arms fire could be heard in the Tunnel. The J5 Civil Affairs cell was working from the Mezzanine. The air conditioning ceased to function causing the communications equipment to overheat and fail. The personnel, who had been evacuated to the Tunnel, were allowed to return to their homes. Some military personnel were allowed to leave for short periods to get a shower or a nap, if they could find a place on Quarry Heights. J5 personnel assumed the responsibility for the care of key individuals in the newly installed Panamanian government (President Endara, Vice President Ford, and Vice President Arias Calderon and their families). This included initial arming and training of the President's and Vice President's security staffs. PML Echo prevented any personnel replacement from other areas, so the initial crew continued operations. The focus of the J5 cell was to get the new government operational. A decision was made to forward deploy an element of the J5 cell to the Legislative Palace for the purpose of getting basic public services back into operation. It was hoped that the restoration of these services would prevent further chaos such as, looting, assorted crime, and sanitation concerns. The area around the Palace was not yet secure, and it was without utilities and running water.

c. 21 December 1990: J5 Task Force Forward began operations out of the Legislative Palace providing direct interface with the Panamanian government. J5 personnel were heavily involved in drug and security operations between the newly forming Panamanian government and the U.S. military forces. All coordination for the new Public Force went through the J5 Forward cell to the new Public Force Headquarters. Protection for all significant facilities such as water, power, banks, and government buildings was coordinated, checked, and realized, by J5 Forward, as security dictated. As situations arose, J5 Forward, in coordination with the Rear, handled specific target seizures of arms, personnel and drug-related material. J5 Task Force Rear provided liaison among Task Force Forward, Task Force Panama, PCC, SOUTHCOM offices and various others. TF-Rear also worked international humanitarian assistance flights (bringing in relief supplies and taking away nationals), coordinated the

SCJ5

20 June 1990

SUBJECT: History of Actions and Activities Preceding JUST CAUSE

reopening of Tocumen Airport, assisted in the evacuation of U.S. citizens and dependents on MAC flights, tracked numbers and locations of detainees, coordinated the developments of new uniforms for the new Public Force, and provided for/coordinated administrative and logistical support for TF-Forward. TF-Rear also worked a plan for the handling of KIAs, as the situation was overwhelming the hospital morgues. TF-Rear was the coordination point for all incoming communications from the civilian sector, whether U.S., Panamanian, or 3d country. They attempted to provide required assistance and quell anxious callers. In the early evening, just after dark, three members of TF-Forward were involved in an incident outside the main entrance to Albrook. They mistakenly ran a U.S. roadblock and were engaged. One individual was wounded by gunfire, one suffered a concussion, and the third suffered cuts and bruises. The wounded individual was medevaced and recovered. The other two returned to duty.

d. 22 December 1989: Relief personnel reported for duty and the original crew was relieved. Efforts to initiate trash collection, to get the Palace operational, to establish a new government structure, to open Tocumen Airport, to coordinate humanitarian assistance flights, and to get Panamanian stores stocked and open were primary tasks. Two temporary POLADS reported for duty.

e. 23-25 December 1989: J5 continued to conduct Civil Affairs functions. Trained reserve Civil Affairs/Civil Military Operations personnel did not arrive until after the 1st of the year to assume the mission.

4. The mission of the J5 during Operation Just Cause and for some time after was to function alongside the newly installed Panamanian government and assist them in any and every way possible in the transition from the Noriega regime to the new administration of President Endara. They were to help get the new government operational. This resulted in a great deal of initiative and improvisation on the part of many individuals. It was a unique opportunity for the individuals involved, and there were few guidelines for the many and varied tasks they performed. They responded in exemplary fashion. Problems of significance were addressed in the after action report.

1 Enclosure  
as

BENARD W. GANN  
Brigadier General  
Director, Strategy,  
Programs, and Policy

## JUSTIFICATION

Personnel of the United States Southern Command distinguished themselves during Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY by extraordinary humanitarian service in support of and after combat operations in the Republic of Panama from 19 December 1989 to 31 January 1990. The humanitarian support provided to Panama from the United States Southern Command was at the request of and coordinated through the State Department. Southern Command personnel provided invaluable hands-on humanitarian assistance to the citizens of the Republic of Panama during their recovery from the aftermath of Operation JUST CAUSE. Joint Civil Military Operations were conducted to ensure law and order and to provide essential services to the Panamanian people in the wake of JUST CAUSE in support of the new democratic government of Panama.

At 1000 on 20 December 1989, U.S. Commander-in-Chief General Maxwell R. Thurman appointed Brigadier General Benard W. Gann as the Commander, Civil-Military Operations Task Force (COMCMOTF). Brigadier General Gann relocated his Task Force from Quarry Heights, Panama to the Legislative Assembly building in downtown Panama City to support the new government in providing essential services to two million people throughout the Republic of Panama. Exposed to hostile fire in combat, CMOTF personnel assessed the status of the economic, service and government institutions of the Republic of Panama, and commenced a ministerial rebuilding program that enhanced public well-being and encompassed the principles of a representative democracy as its basis.

CMOTF personnel coordinated with the new President and Vice Presidents and other designated Panamanian to assist in locating and transporting key Panamanian officials selected to serve as the ministers of government. CMOTF personnel personally coordinated with the following ministers of government to restore essential services to Panama: Minister of Justice, Minister of Planning and Finance, Minister of Industry and Commerce, Minister of Foreign Relations, Minister of Treasury, Ministry of the Presidency, Minister of Labor, Minister of Agriculture, Minister of Health, Minister of Education, Minister of Housing, and Minister of Public Works.

From 20-22 December 1989, operating from the Legislative Assembly building, CMOTF personnel coordinated and participated in the safe movement of Panamanian business men from outlying areas to meet with Panamanian government officials to discuss the restoration of specific services prioritized by USCINCSO into ten categories.

Priority one: Medical, fire fighting, water, power, communications, postal service, sanitation, and the return to work program. Priority two: Build a national police force,

weapons turn-in, and provide security for GOP officials. Priority three: Food distribution, and warehouse security. Priority four: Neighborhood night watch program. Priority five: Protection of property, and security of GOP facilities. Priority six: City clean-up, GOP funding, GOP rebuilds PANAMA, removal of graffiti, and graves registration. Priority seven: Print a Spanish newspaper. Priority eight: Grass roots. Priority nine: Counternarcotics, military flight requests, civil aviation, human rights, and the detainee program. Priority ten: Fuel.

At 0800 on 22 December 1989, CMOTF personnel relocated to the Foreign Ministry building in downtown Panama City at the request of the President of the Republic of Panama. The relocation of the task force allowed Panamanians and CMOTF personnel to work together under enhanced security conditions. CMOTF personnel drove through the city to the outskirts of town to pick up the Texaco distributor in order for Presidential and CMOTF coordination to commence. This humanitarian action enabled cutoff fuel supplies to be replenished throughout the country of Panama. The significance of this action allowed sanitation trucks, police force, food distribution, medical resupply, and government and business activities to resume as quickly as possible.

While providing humanitarian assistance to the people of the REPUBLIC OF PANAMA, CMOTF personnel encountered hostile sniper fire from three enemy personnel across the street of the Foreign Ministry building during Christmas Eve and the evening of Christmas Day, 24-25 December 1989, respectively. During an encounter with hostile personnel of the Dignity Battalion on 25 December 1989, CMOTF personnel personally risked their own lives to provide security to Panamanian fire fighters as they spent three hours putting out a three story blaze that threatened the old historic downtown PANAMA CITY neighborhood to include the Foreign Ministry building. This humanitarian act was directly responsible for saving lives and the personal homes of Panamanians threatened by a raging fire that was contained in three floors of a multi-story building.

During another hostile encounter, U.S. Forces prevented a Panamanian vehicle from penetrating a tactical barricade. CMOTF personnel were requested to personally evacuate four wounded Panamanian personnel (two children and two adults) to Gorgas Army Hospital. This humanitarian act was performed by CMOTF personnel at the request of 7th ID (Light) security personnel after several hours of fruitless attempts by hospital ambulance drivers attempting to enter the live fire zone, two blocks in depth around the Foreign Ministry building. Although the fifth victim (mother of the two children) died from gunshot wounds, the immediate evacuation of the remaining four Panamanians by CMOTF personnel at the scene of the shooting to the hospital directly

prevented additional casualties who may have expired due to the lack of any on site U.S. or Panamanian medical assistance.

Throughout the evening of the 25th of December 1989, CMOTF personnel assisted disoriented Panamanians who attempted to transit the area around the Foreign Ministry building which was under sniper fire. By personally detouring them away from tactical road blocks, this humanitarian action prevented numerous innocent casualties prior to the COMCMOTF recommending a more stringent Joint Task Force South rules of engagement.

CMOTF personnel provided shelter, subsistence, and transportation to stranded Panamanian businessmen and their families on 22-25 December 1990 during previously mentioned sniper attacks on U.S. Forces and Panamanian officials around the legislative Assembly and Foreign Ministry buildings. The genuine concern and personal actions of CMOTF officers and men to assist these stranded Panamanians was instrumental in achieving the required bond between U.S. FORCES and Panamanians to rebuild the country of PANAMA. The significance of these humanitarian acts allowed restoration of government and business to provide essential services to the Panamanian populace.

JTFSO, USSOUTHCOM, and CMOTF personnel directly contributed to the establishment of a displaced person camp at Balboa High School from 20 December 1989 to 19 January 1990. Initially the refugee camp sheltered, fed, and provided medical assistance to 1800 displaced Panamanian personnel in the Balboa High School. As word spread and additional supplies were available, more Panamanians sought shelter and the camp was moved to the Balboa High School athletic field to accommodate over 500 displaced personnel. On 13 January 1990, 2700 displaced persons moved from the Balboa High School Athletic Field to the Albrook/Curundu camp site. USSOUTHCOM provided support to the displaced persons camp until 26 January 1990. The majority of the displaced Panamanians came from the Chorrillo area, which contained the Panamanian Defense Force Headquarters at the Commandancia, all of which was destroyed by fire during the invasion on 19-20 December 1989. The Chorrillo housing area was inhabited by 10,000 low income families, many who did not have funds to relocate. USSOUTHCOM personnel assisted the government of Panama in the concept for development of the Chorrillo housing project in order to provide needy housing for its former inhabitants. These singularly distinctive humanitarian acts of establishing a displaced persons camp and low income housing for displaced Panamanians was significant in winning the hearts and minds of the people of this new Central American democracy.

From 2-26 January 1990, USSOUTHCOM formed Ministerial Liaison Teams from CMOTF assets, and Civil Affairs Reservists from CONUS. At the peak of Operation Promote Liberty, the CMOTF was augmented



with 152 reservists charged with providing humanitarian assistance, government support, and civil action programs.

The liaison teams identified an urgent medical threat of a potential Dengue epidemic in PANAMA CITY to a lack of resources for mosquito control since 1985. An emergency plan would start spraying operations if a case of Dengue was identified in Panama.

In conjunction with the Ministry of Health, CMOTF were able to obtain or coordinate the following initial humanitarian medical assistance: DOD Phase IV special medication in short supply or absent from PANAMA costing four million dollars; two million dollars in clinical supplies from Project Hope; initial medical supply assistance of many volunteer organizations in PANAMA through the Chamber of Commerce who provided labor and transportation; five hundred thousand dollars grant for medicines and equipment from USAID; four renal dialysis machines for Ministry of Health hospitals from DOD donations; the donation of DOD medical equipment from USOMA.

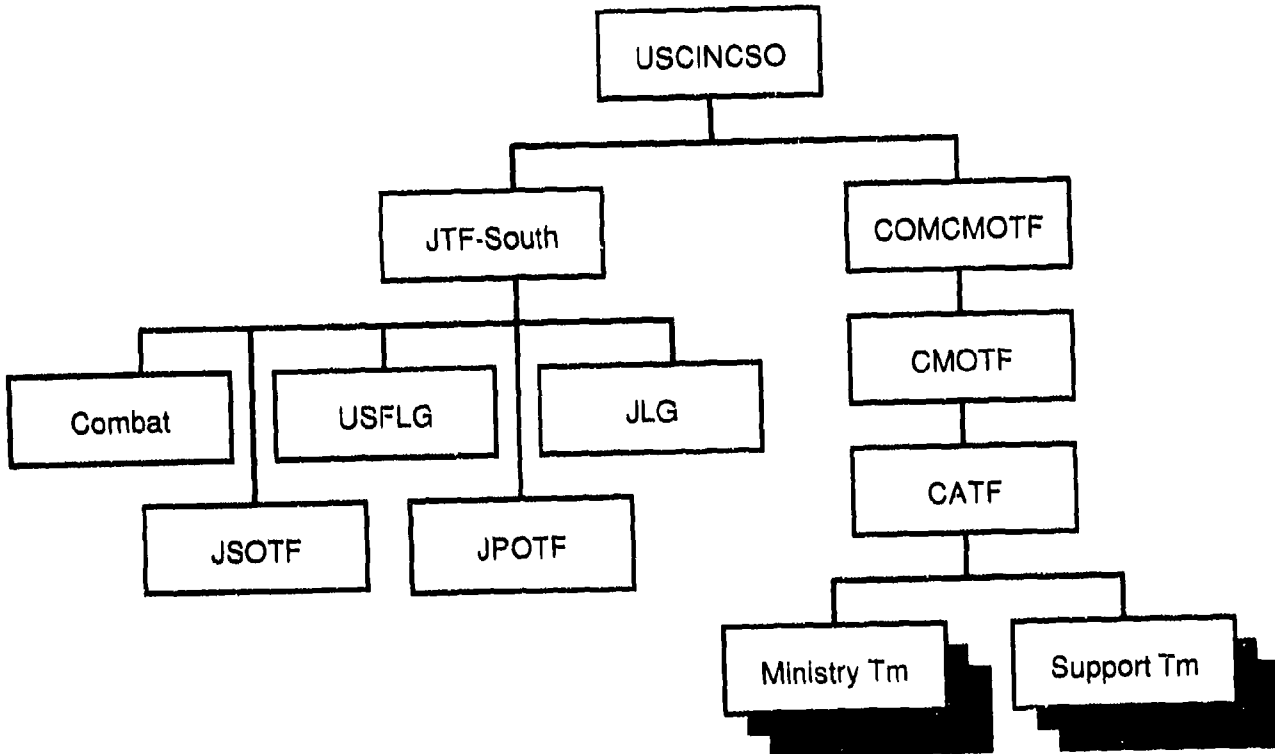
CMOTF personnel assisted the Minister of Agriculture in monitoring receipt, warehousing, and distribution of humanitarian relief supplies. The total humanitarian aid as of 29 December 1989 consisted of 22 flights containing 540 tons of food and medicine. Liaison officers initially assisted the Panamanian Government in obtaining U.S. airlift assistance and security. CMOTF personnel also coordinated the security for the movement of humanitarian supplies to ensure the trucks were not looted and reached their final destinations. Liaison teams aided the Minister of Agriculture in requesting DOS financial assistance for the sugar cane harvest which resulted in preferred trade status and an increased sugar quota to the UNITED STATES. This humanitarian action resulted in increased employment in the countryside of rural PANAMA.

A CMOTF education survey team visited 54 schools throughout the country. This represented twenty-five percent of the country's schools and an excellent sociological sample as well. An assessment of the repairs needed for five schools and one school bus was due to direct combat damage by U.S. troops living in the school, or damage caused by U.S. troops instructing civilians to take refuge in schools during combat. The survey team determined that schools could open on schedule in April 1990 with some fundamental aid programs and simple repairs. School rehabilitation teams were established from the communities for each school and basic supplies were provided to return the schools to serviceable condition. After combat operations in Panama, the CMOTF also coordinated with the DODDS school system to provide school supplies to Panamanian schools that were looted. This humanitarian action assisted the Panamanian government reestablishing the viability of their primary and secondary school systems.

As a direct result of efforts by these Southern Command personnel, the impact of combat operations on the civilian population of PANAMA was significantly reduced, lives were saved and stronger bonds between PANAMA and the United States were engendered. By their continuous display of professionalism, determination, empathy, and total devotion to duty, these members of the United States Southern Command reflect great credit upon themselves, their Services, and uphold the highest humanitarian traditions of the Department of Defense.

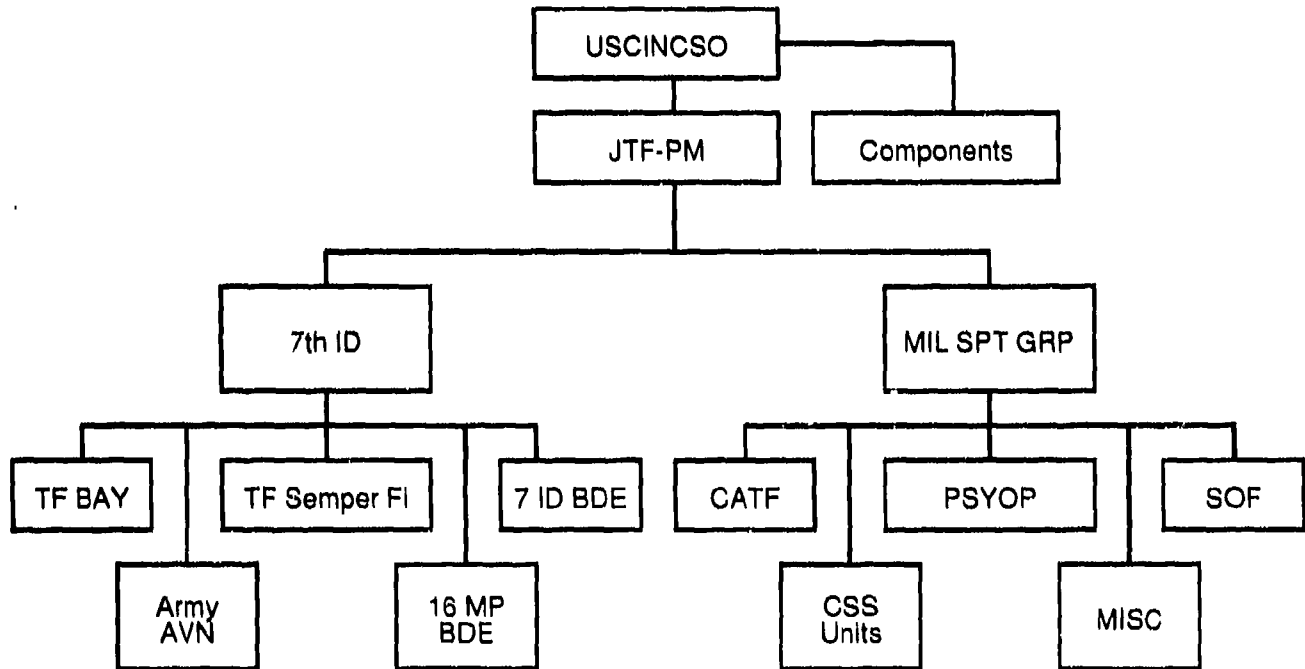
# APPENDIX C

## CMO Organizations



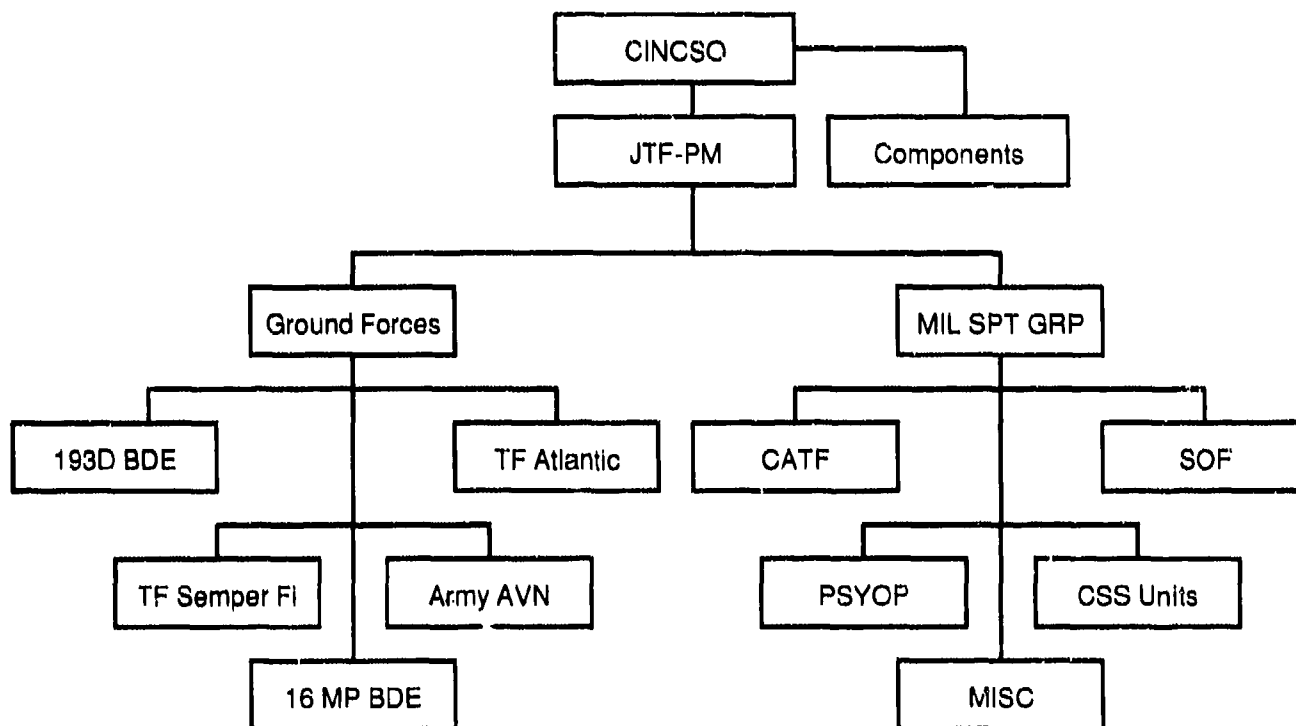
# APPENDIX D

## Proposed MSG (USSOCOM) Interim Organization



# APPENDIX D (cont'd)

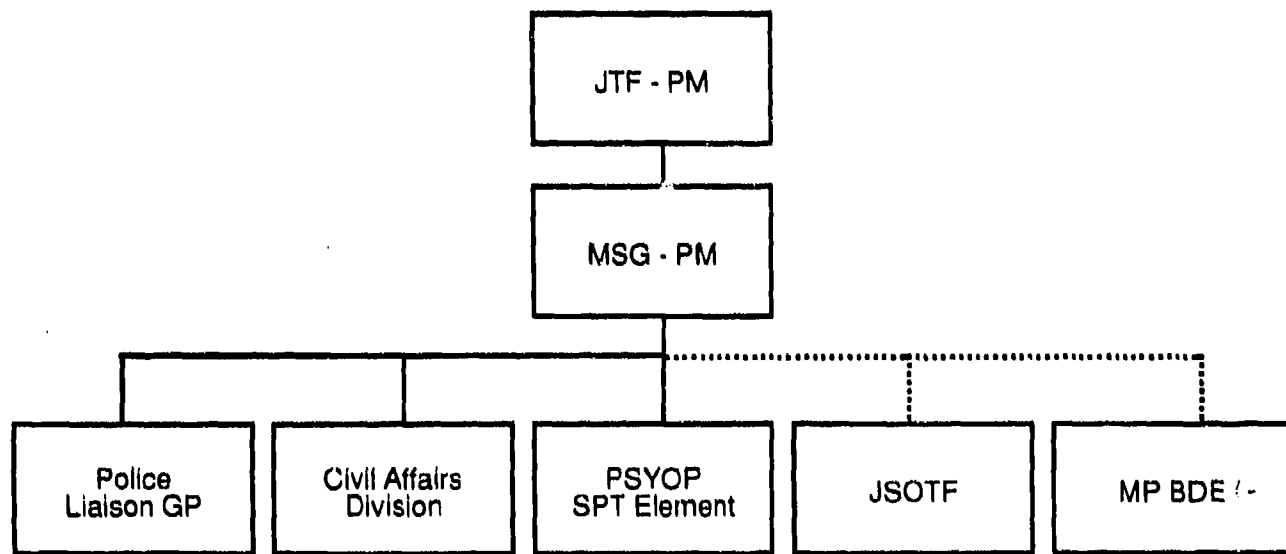
## Proposed MSG (USSOCOM) Final Organization



# APPENDIX E

## MSG

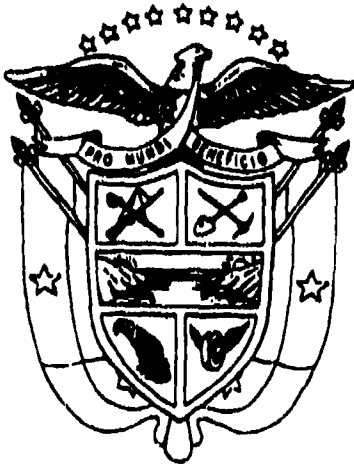
### Command Structure (31 Mar 90)



..... OPCON

# APPENDIX F

## Wallet Card



**JURO A DIOS Y A LA PATRIA  
CUMPLIR CON LEALTAD, BAJO  
LA AUTORIDAD DEL PRESIDENTE  
DE LA REPUBLICA, LA  
CONSTITUCION Y LAS LEYES DE  
PANAMA, EN DEFENSA DE LA  
DEMOCRACIA**

Oath

### LOS DIEZ MANDAMIENTOS DEL POLICIA

1. Protegeré y serviré a la comunidad con cortesía, dignidad y respeto por los derechos humanos, tratando a cada persona como espero que se me trate a mí.
2. Garantizaré la seguridad y protección del público dondequiera que me encuentra.
3. Me abstendré siempre de cometer y tolerar actos de corrupción e informaré las supuestas violaciones.
4. Me opondré a sobornos, exigir comida, bebida o servicios sin pagarlos.
5. Cumpliré mi trabajo sin amenazar, intimidar u hostigar al público.
6. Mi integridad moral me exigirá privarme de ejecutar o tolerar actos de tortura, o castigos inhumanos y degradantes aunque los ordene un superior.
7. Mi cargo y mi acceso a armas jamás serán utilizados para intimidar a otros.
8. Mi autoridad no será motivo de abuso en ningún momento para obtener favores personales de otros, lo que incluye transportación y préstamos.
9. Seré intolerante y enérgico con los fugitivos de la justicia o personas que posean armas ilegales.
10. Emplearé la fuerza sólo cuando sea necesario y el mínimo de fuerza requerido; haciendo uso de la fuerza mortal únicamente como último recurso.

Commandments

# APPENDIX G

## U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PANAMA

### STATUS OF FUNDS APPROPRIATED IN FY 1990

SOURCE: STATEMENT OF THOMAS STUKEL, AID MISSION DIRECTOR FOR PANAMA,  
APRIL 17, 1991

	PROGRAMMED FY 1990 \$ Millions	AGREEMENTS SIGNED AS OF 04/15/91 \$ Millions	DISBURSED TO GOP AS OF 04/15/91 \$ Millions
Emergency Needs Assistance:	\$51.9	\$40.0	\$37.5
Food, shelter and replacement housing for displaced (Grant & Guaranty)	\$34.7	\$22.8	\$20.8
Emergency Employment Program	\$7.0	\$7.0	\$6.7
Small Business Credit Fund	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$5.0
Emergency Public Sector Support	\$5.2	\$5.2	\$5.0
Immediate Economic Recovery Assistance:	\$351.8	\$351.8	\$101.9
Normalization			
Relations with IFIs	\$130.0	\$130.0	\$0.0*
Public Investment	\$113.9	\$113.9	\$29.9
Private Sector Reactivation Credit	\$107.9	\$107.9	\$72.0**
Development Assistance:	\$51.4	\$23.7	\$5.7
Administration & Policy Improvement	\$16.0	\$8.5	
Support for Democratic Institutions	\$3.1	\$2.4	\$1.1
Human Resources Development	\$7.0	\$6.0	
Improved Police Services (ICITAP)	\$13.2	\$6.7	\$4.6
Protection of Canal Watershed	\$10.1	\$0.1	
Export & Investment Promotion	\$2.0		
Program Design, Administration, Evaluation and Audit:	\$6.0	\$3.3	\$2.4
Grand Total FY 90	\$461.1	\$418.8	\$147.5
Percent of Total Including OE & HIG	100%	91%	32%
Percent of Appropriated Program Funds	100%	93%	33%

\*\$130.0 available upon GOP request.

\*\*Balance of \$36.0 available upon GOP request.



# U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PANAMA

## STATUS OF TRADE, LOAN GUARANTEE AND OTHER PROGRAMS

	BENEFITS MADE AVAILABLE	BENEFITS UTILIZED AS OF 4/15/91
	\$ Millions	\$ Millions
Sugar Quota	\$13.4	\$13.4
CBI and Generalized System of Preferences	\$10.0	\$10.0
U.S. Military Civic Action	\$15.0	\$15.0
U.S. Military Training and Sales Program	\$9.9	\$9.0
Export-Import Bank Credit Guarantees	\$400.0	\$71.0
Commodity Credit Corporation Guarantees	\$18.0	\$1.2
Overseas Private Investment Corporation Guarantees	\$50.0	\$0.0
P.L. 480 Food Assistance	\$15.0	\$0.0
Trade and Development Program	\$0.6	\$0.0
Inter-American Development Foundation	\$1.9	\$1.9
TOTAL	\$533.8	\$121.5

# APPENDIX H

## GLOSSARY

- AC:** Active Component of the U.S. military, as opposed to the Reserve Component.
- ADOC:** Civil Democratic Opposition Alliance. Spanish acronym for Panama opposition party coalition, 1989 elections.
- AGR:** Active Guard and Reserve. Full time Reservists and Guardsmen on active duty to support the National Guard and Reserve as part of the total force.
- AID:** Agency for International Development. An autonomous agency of the U.S. State Department; administers foreign aid. Called USAID overseas.
- AO:** Area of Operations.
- ARCV:** Augmentation Reserve Component Volunteer. Acronym coined by 1989 BLIND LOGIC planning group to refer to 25 pre-selected Reserve Civil Affairs officers required to implement the plan.
- CA:** Civil Affairs. Used to refer to Civil Affairs qualified personnel and to units which have the Civil Affairs mission.
- CAMPLAN:** Campaign Plan.
- CAPSTONE:** The alignment between Reserve and active units for both training and warfighting.
- CATF:** Civil Affairs Task Force. CATF referred to two specific organizations during Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY. Initially, it was the subordinate Civil Affairs headquarters in the COMCMOTF, CMOTF, CATF trace. Then it became the Civil Affairs element of the MSG. See CMOTF, COMCMOTF, JCATF, and MSG.
- CG:** Commanding General.
- CINC:** Commander-in-Chief.
- CINCSO:** See USCINCSO.
- CMO:** Civil-military operations.

CMOTF: Civil-Military Operations Task Force. Initially, the organization planned in BLIND LOGIC to carry out CMO. During the execution of Operation PROMOTE LIBERTY, CMOTF referred to the CA headquarters subordinate to COMCMOTF. See COMCMOTF.

COMCMOTF: Commander, Civil-Military Operations Task Force. Term is used to refer to General Gann personally as well as to the highest CMO headquarters during Operations JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY.

CORDS: Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development System. The interagency civilian and military organization during the Vietnam War under Ambassador Robert Komer that was responsible for CMO.

DCM: Deputy Chief of Mission. The number two person in a U.S. Embassy. The DCM becomes Charge d'Affaires in the absence of the Ambassador.

DCSLOG: Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics.

DG: Director General. (Of the Panama National Police.)

DJTF: Deployable Joint Task Force.

DMO: Directed Military Overstrength. An Army concept for providing personnel to an Army agency before it has a formal staffing document.

DNTT: Spanish initials for the National Transportation Directorate, the building that became the headquarters of the Panama National Police.

DOD: Department of Defense.

FAO: Foreign Area Officer. The product of an Army training program in the grade of Captain or higher who has had specialized training on a particular world region to include language, a Master's degree, and in-country experience.

FLG: See USFLG.

HMMWV: High Mobility Multi-mission Wheeled Vehicle. Pronounced HumrnVee, also called Hummer, it is the successor to the Jeep.

ICITAP: International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program. Department of Justice agency charged with training Panamanian police.

J-3: Director of Operations on a Joint Staff.

J-5: Director of Policy, Plans, and Strategy on a Joint Staff. On some joint staffs is responsible for civil-military operations.

JCATF: See CATF.

JCS: Joint Chiefs of Staff.

JLG: Judicial Liaison Group. An entity created initially under JTF-South and later under the MSG to advise and assist the Panamanians on legal and judicial matters.

JSOTF: Joint Special Operations Task Force.

J-Staff: Joint Staff. Staff of any joint headquarters made up of personnel from several services.

JTF: Joint Task Force.

JTFPM: Joint Task Force-Panama.

JTFSO: Joint Task Force-South.

MAAG: Military Assistance Advisory Group. One name for a Security Assistance Organization on an Embassy country team.

MILGROUP: Another common name for a Security Assistance Organization.

MLAT: Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. A type treaty that attempts to deal with drug money laundering.

MP: Military Police.

MSG: See USMSGPM.

NEO: Non-combatant Evacuation Operations.

ODT: Overseas Deployment Training. A means of funding Reserve and National Guard annual training outside continental United States.

OPLAN: Operations Plan.

OPORD: Operations Order. An OPLAN becomes an OPORD when the decision to execute is made.

OSD: Office of the Secretary of Defense.

PCC: Panama Canal Commission.

PDF: Panama Defense Forces. Panama's armed forces and police under Noriega.

PFLD: Public Force Liaison Division. Division of the USMSG-PM charged with liaison, training, and equipping of the Panama Public Force (National Police, Air Service, Maritime Service). Successor to USFLG.

PNP: Panama National Police.

POLAD: Political Advisor. State Department officer attached to the staff of a CINC.

PSYOP: Psychological Operations.

PTJ: Spanish initials for the Technical Judicial Police, Panama's investigative police.

RC: Reserve Component (of the U.S.Army).

RC Cops: Reserve Component Cops. Reserve Component soldiers and officers who are civilian police and were assigned to Panama to advise the PNP.

RSS: Regional Security Strategy. Theater strategy developed during General Woerner's tenure as USCINCSO.

S<sup>2</sup>: SOUTHCOM Strategy. Theater Strategy developed during General Thurman's tenure as USCINCSO. Replaced RSS

SAF: Security Assistance Force. Army doctrinal organization built around an augmented Special Forces Group which is capable of conducting a variety of broadly interpreted security assistance missions.

SCJ3: USSOUTHCOM Directorate of Operations.

SCJ5: USSOUTHCOM Directorate of Policy, Plans, and Strategy.

SF: U.S. Army Special Forces.

SJA: Staff Judge Advocate. A command's lawyer(s).

SOCOM: See USSOCOM.

SOCOSO: (Also SOCSOUTH): Special Operations Command-South. A sub-unified command of USSOUTHCOM.

SOF: Special Operations Forces (of all services).

SOUTHCOM: See USSOUTHCOM.

TTAD: Temporary Tour of Active Duty. Reserve Component mechanism for funding tours of duty up to 179 days using Active Component funds.

USAID: See AID.

USAR: United States Army Reserve.

USARSO: United States Army South. The Army component of USSOUTHCOM.

USCINCSO: United States Commander-in-Chief, United States Southern Command.

USFLG: United States Forces Liaison Group. Organization created under JTFSO to establish, equip, and train the Panama Public Force. It was succeeded by the PFLD when the USMSGPM was established. Also called FLG.

USMSGPM: United States Military Support Group - Panama. Created as the successor to COMCMOTF, this subordinate element of JTFPM coordinated all U.S. military activity in support of the Panamanian Government. Its commander was a *de facto* member of the Embassy Country Team.

USSOCOM: United States Special Operations Command. Supporting unified command (to USSOUTHCOM) located at MacDill AFB, Florida.

USSOUTHCOM: United States Southern Command. Located at Quarry Heights, Panama, it is responsible for all U.S. military activity in Central and South America.

# APPENDIX I

## LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Name/Rank	Position During Promote Liberty	Location	Date
COL John A. Cope	State Dept Pol Mll	Wash DC	27 Mar 91
Mr. Michael Polt	Political Counselor, Embassy	Wash DC	3 Apr 91
GEN M. R. Thurman	USCINCSO	Wash DC	3 Apr 91
LTC(P) John Schornick	Chief, Current Opns, XVIII ABC	Carlisle PA	4 Apr 91
COL N. Higginbotham	DCSLOG USARSO	New Cumb PA	4 Apr 91
MG Marc Cisneros	CG USARSO/JTFPM	Ft Hood	15 Apr 91
COL (Ret) Bill Stone	Planner/Cdr CATF	Eglin AFB	16 Apr 91
COL Duncan Bushart	Planner/G3 CATF	Pensacola FL	16 Apr 91
COL David Holdsworth	DDIR SCJ5	MacDill AFB	17 Apr 91
LTC Edmund Rowan	Planner/AO SCJ5	MacDill AFB	17 Apr 91
COL Harold Youmans	OJCS-J33/SOCOM AO	MacDill AFB	18 Apr 91
Dr. Larry Yates	USACGSC CSI	Miami, FL	21 Apr 91
COL Larry Raab	USARSO PMO	Ft Clayton	22 Apr 91
Nelson Borrero	ICITAP	Panama	22 Apr 91
COL Jack Pryor	Dep Cdr MSG	Ft Clayton	23 Apr 91
Mr. David Beal	DCM	AmEmb PM	23 Apr 91
Dr. Ebrahim Asvat	DG PNP	Panama	24 Apr 91
H. L. German Gnaegi	Legislator	Panama	24 Apr 91
MAJ Francisco Alvarez	Dir Police Academy	Panama	25 Apr 91
BG Benard Gann	COMCMOTF	SOUTHCOM	25 Apr 91
COL Frank Carson	DEPCOMCMOTF	SOUTHCOM	25 Apr 91
COL(P) James Steele	Cdr MSG	Ft Clayton	26 Apr 91
Mr. Arturo Muller A.	Banker	Panama	26 Apr 91

Ms. Sigrid Muller	Businesswoman	Panama	26 Apr 91
Mr. Arturo Muller N.	Businessman	Panama	27 Apr 91
CPT Amadis Jimenez	PNP LNO to MG Cisneros	Panama	28 Apr 91
LTC Bryan Batullis	Chief, Plans SCJ5	SOUTHCOM	29 Apr 91
LTC Tim McMahon	Chief Planner XVIII Abn Corps	SOUTHCOM	29 Apr 91
GEN George Joulwan	USCINCSO	SOUTHCOM	29 Apr 91
Amb Deane Hinton	US Amb	AmEmb PM	30 Apr 91
MG Wm. Hartzog	CG USARSO/JTFPM	Ft Clayton	1 May 91
Mr. Henry Ford	Businessman	Panama	1 May 91
LTC(Ret) Fernando Quesada	DG PNP	Panama	1 May 91
Mr. Patrick Lang	Chief ICITAP	Panama	2 May 91
Mr. Ray Rivera	ICITAP	Panama	2 May 91
Viodelda Picada Lara	Domestic	Panama	2 May 91
Gullermo Endara G.	President of Panama	Panama	3 May 91
Winston Robles	Editor, La Prensa	Panama	3 May 91
Ms Blsa Williams	POLAD	AmEmb PM	3 May 91
Berta Thayer	Consultant/Journalist	Panama	4 May 91
David Adams	Journalist	Panama	4 May 91
Mr. Bud Jacobs	POLAD	SOUTHCOM	4 May 91
COL Dennis Caffrey	SICOFAA	Miami	5 May 91
GEN(Ret) Fred Woerner	USCINCSO	Boston	6 May 91
LTG Robert S. Rodrigues	CA Officer, SCJ3	Hawaii (telephone)	8 May 91
COL Leonard Hardy	Chief of Staff, USARSO	Carlisle PA	16 May 91
LTC Bob Pantler	Chief of Plans, JTF-PM	Leavenworth (telephone)	20 May 91
COL Chris Needles	NSC Staff	Wash DC	22 May 91



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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