

AVERTING DISASTER

Company D, 96th Civil Affairs Battalion at the
Balboa High School Displaced Civilians Facility

by Troy J. Sacquety



Abstract: The U.S. military was slow in exercising Civil Affairs during and after Operation JUST CAUSE. This became evident when 11,000 refugees turned the Balboa High School grounds into an impromptu Displaced Civilians facility. A pragmatic and common-sense approach by the untested 96th Civil Affairs Battalion snatched success from the mouth of disaster.

Prior to the U.S. invasion of Panama, little time was invested in post-conflict stability planning. Operation BLIND LOGIC (later changed to PROMOTE LIBERTY) contained only vague guidance for Panama's recovery after the removal of its dictator, Manuel Noriega. Even the U.S. Southern Command (US-SOUTHCOM) Commander, General (GEN) Maxwell R. Thurman, admitted that he "did not even spend five minutes on BLIND LOGIC."¹ No thought was given to displaced civilians (DCs). That oversight became apparent early on 20 December 1989 when combat operations made thousands homeless. Noriega-supported paramilitary Dignity Battalion (DIGBAT) thugs set fires to

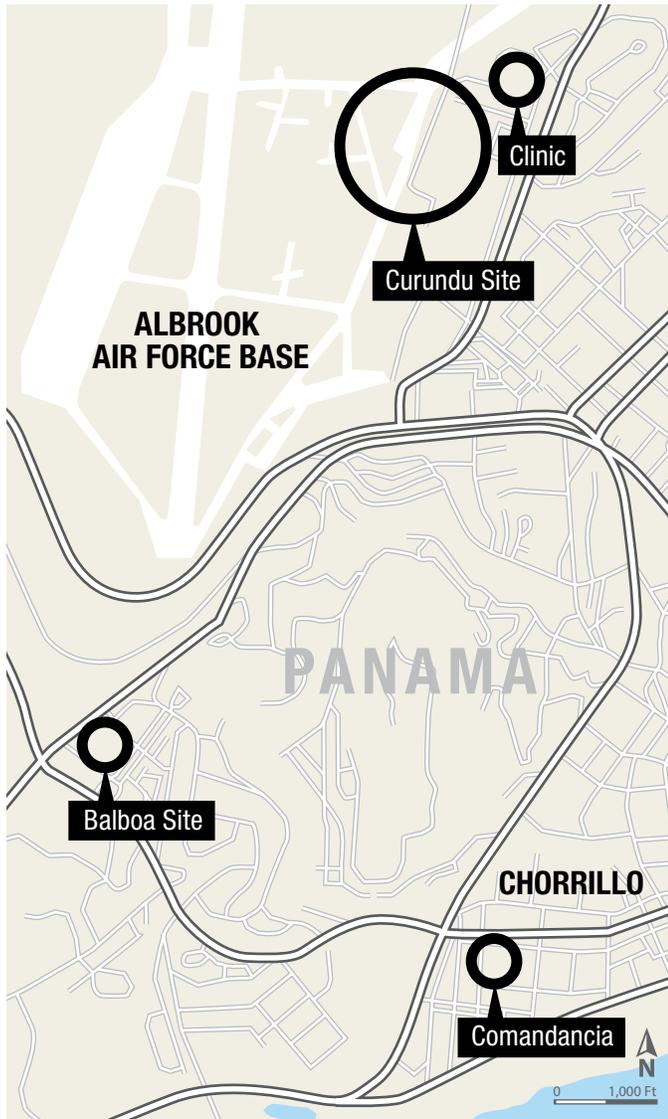
divert the U.S. assault on the *Comandancia*, the headquarters of the Panama Defense Forces (PDF).² Uncontrolled fires burned the surrounding 'wood-shanty' *barrio* of El Chorrillo, where 25,000 poverty-stricken dwellers lived in a few city blocks.³ With their homes in flames, the residents fled to the American-run Balboa High School a mile away. First Lieutenant (1LT) David W. Roberts, 4th Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 5th Infantry Division, had already set up a battalion aid station there to support the attack.⁴

Since planners had not designated an alternate location, the Balboa High School campus became a temporary, *de facto* DC facility.⁵ Likewise, poor planning, chaos, and the growing population left the facility on the cusp of a humanitarian crisis from 20 December to 22 December 1989. That situation changed when the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (CAB) was given the mission. Relatively untested CA soldiers pulled the Joint Task Force (JTF)-South effort 'out of the fire.' This case study examines Company D, 96th CAB management of the Balboa High School DC facility from



Left: The *Comandancia* was the headquarters of the PDF. During the assault to secure the building, Dignity Battalion (DIGBAT) personnel set fire to the surrounding neighborhood of El Chorrillo. **Bottom:** El Chorrillo was a poor, densely packed neighborhood. Thousands lost everything when fires swept through their tin, wood, cardboard, and plastic sheet homes.





Map of Balboa and the surrounding area.

22 December 1989 to 12 January 1990. It explains the level of Civil Affairs readiness for combat in Panama and the rationale for the refugee facility, as well as what the CA soldiers encountered and how they solved the immediate problems. The major events flow in sequence, but many problems were dealt with simultaneously. Before discussing this impromptu mission, it is necessary to explain the state of CA then.

In 1989, CA was not a Regular Army Branch; it was a functional area. Ninety-six percent of Army CA was in the Reserves. The 96th CAB was the only active-duty CA battalion.⁶ While the battalion was assigned to the U.S. Army 1st Special Operations Command (1st SOCOM), CA was an 'outsider' until designated a Special Operations function by the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) in 1993. Prior to JUST CAUSE, 96th CA teams assessed civilian institutions and infrastructure for Special Forces

Groups. The 96th CAB aligned its four companies regionally. Each company had five, four-man teams.⁷ Its strength of 125 soldiers limited missions to short term tactical missions.⁸

Army leadership was focused on combat units. Few knew how to employ CA or grasped its capabilities. The CA reputation in and employment by Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) likewise suffered from a lack of understanding.⁹ This negative perception of CA meant that assignment to the 96th CAB was not career-enhancing. The only active CA battalion had no 'champion.' It did not help that the vast majority of soldiers assigned were not graduates of the six-week CA course. This included the battalion commander.¹⁰ With the exception of Company A, which had some native Spanish speakers, few soldiers spoke a second language fluently.¹¹ However, the 96th soldiers came from different backgrounds. They had been to Basic Combat Training, Advanced Individual Training, and Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) schools, and the officers were basic-branch qualified. This background saved them in Panama.

JUST CAUSE operational planning (code-named BLUE SPOON) force-listed Company A, 96th CAB to assist the 75th Ranger Regiment with the capture of the Torrijos-Tocumen Airport Complex and the Rio Hato airfield. After the JUST CAUSE assaults, a small CA command element was to deploy to determine future requirements.¹² That 'floating' plan became obsolete early on 20 December when GEN Thurman complained to GEN Colin L. Powell that he had no CA units.¹³ The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff ordered the 96th CAB (-) to deploy to Panama. It arrived on the 22nd.

The 96th CAB commander, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Michael P. Peters, went to the J-5 (Civil Affairs) of JTF-South for guidance. LTC A. Dwayne Aaron directed Peters to provide CA teams to tactical units throughout Panama, conduct Humanitarian Assistance, help American citizens return to the U.S. if they wished, and assist at the Balboa High School DC facility.¹⁴ The latter proved to be the most complicated mission.¹⁵

Thousands of DCs had squatted on the high school grounds before U.S. forces could respond. The refugees broke into the gym, seeking cover and access to bathrooms. Others erected makeshift shelters on the baseball field. Surprisingly, they did not break into the school. The chaos accompanying a mass of poor, hungry people facing an absence of sanitation, shelter, and security, was a huge humanitarian crisis that required immediate attention. A poorly-run operation would increase the wartime hardships for Panamanians. This threatened to negate U.S. efforts to limit its war with Noriega, not the people. The presence of major news

correspondents at the high school meant that failure would be publicized and politically embarrassing.

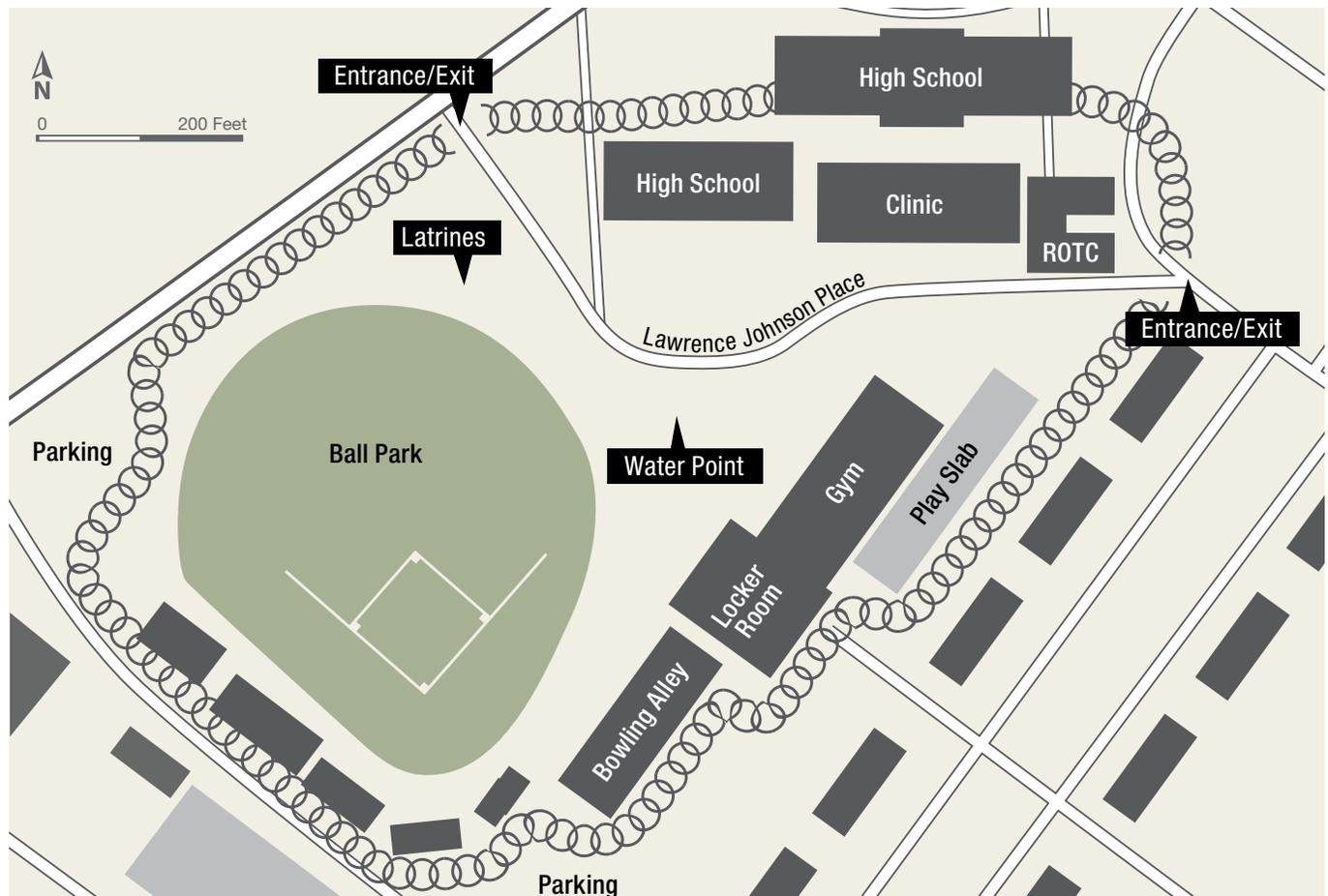
LTC Peters gave the Balboa High School mission to Company D, whose commander, Major (MAJ) Michael A. Lewis, was a Military Police (MP) officer. MAJ Lewis was to establish order. LTC Peters stated that that MAJ Lewis was “the most obvious choice. He had the right demeanor, was even tempered, and not easily flappable.”¹⁶ Together they went to the DC facility to meet the officer in charge, COL William J. Connolly, the United States Army South (USARSO) Deputy Chief of Staff, Resource Management (DCSRM). On 19 December 1989, the acting USARSO Chief of Staff had sent COL Connolly to USSOUTHCOM to “help fix” the neglected BLIND LOGIC operation order.¹⁷ With just a day to do this, COL Connolly focused “on the refugee issue, assuming that it would be one of the first problems with which the military would have to cope as the result of combat operations.”¹⁸ He was right. When the DCs squatted at the Balboa High School, COL Connolly was the most experienced available officer. COL Connolly and his four subordinates faced a tremendously difficult mission. The reality was evident during a quick walk around with LTC Peters and MAJ Lewis.

COL Connolly explained his dilemma. Combat units working in Balboa provided security. He could request engineer support from USARSO, but the priority of combat operations limited availability. As LTC Peters surmised, COL Connolly had to “count on the help of other units [over] which he had no control.”¹⁹ There was one exception. COL Connolly had gotten a Preventative Medical Section from the Gorgas Hospital to support an infantry battalion medical aid station that had been set up next to the school.²⁰

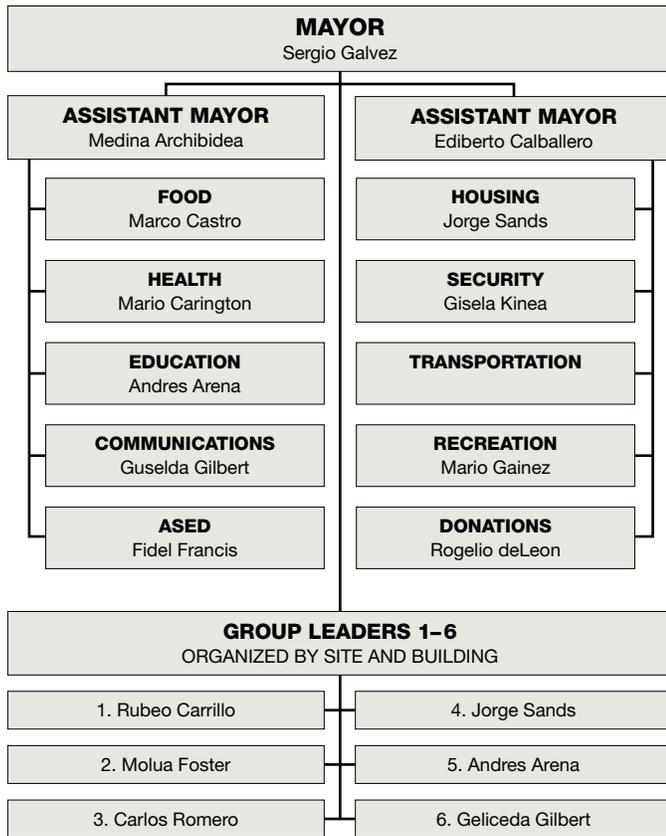
Because it was closed for Christmas break, the high school principal had been willing to open the building as needed. COL Connolly put the military administration in a classroom. LTC Peters and MAJ Lewis saw that hallways and a few other classrooms had been transformed into infirmaries, urgent care facilities, and medical supply rooms. The elderly and pregnant women were in separate classrooms. To prevent the spread of illness, COL Connolly had isolated sick children with their mothers.²¹ That was the upside. The rest of the DC facility was in chaos.

Thousands of DCs were squatting on the high school grounds and hundreds more were arriving daily. Refugees were coming and going at will, making it

Map of the Balboa Displaced Civilians Facility.



Organization: Balboa Community



impossible to get an accurate headcount. Some were merely transients who lived with family members outside the facility. They returned for food, or to use the facilities. Others had nowhere to go and stayed. In the gym, women and children slept in cramped quarters on the floor. LTC Peters and MAJ Lewis saw that the toilets were backed up. The stench was awful. Makeshift ‘tents’ filled the baseball field. People were sleeping on the bleachers. The torrential afternoon rains of the tropics and the masses of people had turned the grass into “a sea of mud,” said LTC Peters.²²

The ‘walk-through’ showed LTC Peters the magnitude of the problem. With multiple commitments, LTC Peters could only give MAJ Lewis nine personnel. However, the 96th Tactical Operations Center (TOC) on nearby Fort Clayton would help. COL Connolly was redirected on 27 December to fund the ‘money for weapons’ program. This left MAJ Lewis and his second-in-command, CPT Gregory J. Rhine, to turn the DC mess into a sanitary humanitarian refuge.²³ MAJ Lewis divided his team to cover operations, sanitation, and logistics.

The 96th CAB soldiers got to work. With the *United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Handbook for Emergencies* as a guide, MAJ Lewis used “a blackboard and wrote down the missions that were necessary and decided which [to] accomplish” each day. “Once we started that,” MAJ Lewis noted, “it started looking a

Thousands of DCs lived in makeshift shelters on the baseball field. Others slept in the bleachers. Wet clothing was drying everywhere.



lot better.”²⁴ The priority tasks were discipline, sanitation, food, shelter, and security. Because solving these interrelated tasks was done concurrently, they are presented thematically.

The first priority was to impose some discipline to get organized. The Panamanians had to help and assume ownership for the facility. It was serendipitous that Serio Galvez, the elected but never seated mayor of El Chorrillo, was at the high school.²⁵ Galvez was encouraged to take charge because the DCs were his people and his responsibility. The mayor ‘deputized’ some as ‘assistant mayors’ to assign residents critical tasks, and to hold them accountable for their jobs, including the unpleasant tasks.

A Psychological Operations loudspeaker team helped to create order. Soldiers from the 1st Psychological Operations Battalion (commanded by LTC Dennis P. Walko) erected their speakers to relay information and make announcements.²⁶ The system helped the mayor explain why certain tasks had to be done. The residents were told what needed to be done, as well as why and when. The broadcasts provided a sense of community. When not broadcasting informational broadcasts, the PSYOP soldiers played Panamanian music.

The next task was to improve sanitation. 1LT Bruce A. Baker, attached Company C Supply Officer, 96th CAB, remembered, “When we got there and walked around . . . [we] saw what terrible shape it was in. The latrines were overflowing . . . there were chickens and dogs and cats and naked kids [relieving themselves] all over the place.” And, “they couldn’t take a shower. There was an extreme amount of garbage everywhere.”²⁷ MAJ Lewis arranged for the 96th CAB TOC to hire Panamanian contractors to unclog the ‘backed-up’ facilities and to provide portable toilets. The Preventative Medicine Team from Gorgas Army Hospital showed the DCs how to use toilets, and clean them afterwards, since many of the El Chorrillo residents did not have running water or flush toilets. Then, it became their responsibility. The 96th personnel also divided the gym showers for males and females. Water troughs and rope were purchased for communal clothes washing and clotheslines.

The TOC contracted for dumpsters for trash disposal. The CA soldiers explained how to use the marked receptacles while Mayor Galvez organized cleanup crews. CPT Rhine located a nearby dog kennel for pets before announcing that other animals were no longer permitted.²⁸ The removal of flea-ridden dogs, chickens, and pigs improved sanitation efforts when all the animal excrement was removed.

While sanitation improved rapidly, the CA team feared an outbreak of measles and flu among the largely unvaccinated children. CPT Rhine learned

Reserve CA

and the Balboa High School Displaced Civilian Facility



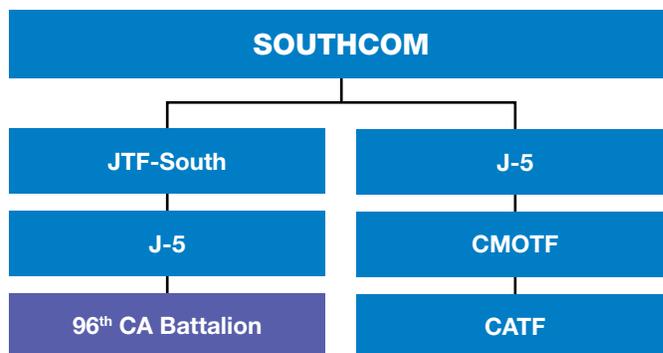
361st BDE SSI

Despite the BLIND LOGIC premise that Army reserve CA units would be activated for PROMOTE LIBERTY, individual reserve CA soldiers were asked to volunteer (from 31 and 139 days).¹ Because it took time for processing, the 96th CA was already at work in the Balboa High School DC facility when the reserve soldiers began trickling into Panama. The first group of twenty-five reserve CA soldiers (361st CA Brigade) arrived on 26 December 1989.

Led by COL William H. Stone (Deputy Commander), they formed the Civil Military Operations Task Force (CMOTF) under JTF-South. COL Stone assigned Captain Margaret V. Cain and Sergeant First Class John W. Wawroski to the Humanitarian Assistance Team and sent them to the Balboa High School DC facility. They worked for MAJ Lewis, acted as liaison to the CMOTF, and helped plan for the move to Albrook Air Force Station on 13 January 1990.² A civilian nurse, CPT Cain helped care for the geriatric DCs.

Another 126 reservists arrived on 1 January 1990. They formed the Civil Affairs Task Force (CATF), the “operational element for the CMOTF.”³ COL Stone sent a 14-soldier CATF contingent (led by COL William W. Graham, 361st CA Brigade), to the Balboa High School DC facility. When they arrived on 2 January 1990, COL Graham saw how well MAJ Lewis was doing and subordinated his team to support the effort at the Balboa High School DC facility until it closed on 13 January 1990. COL Graham then took command of the Albrook DC facility.⁴

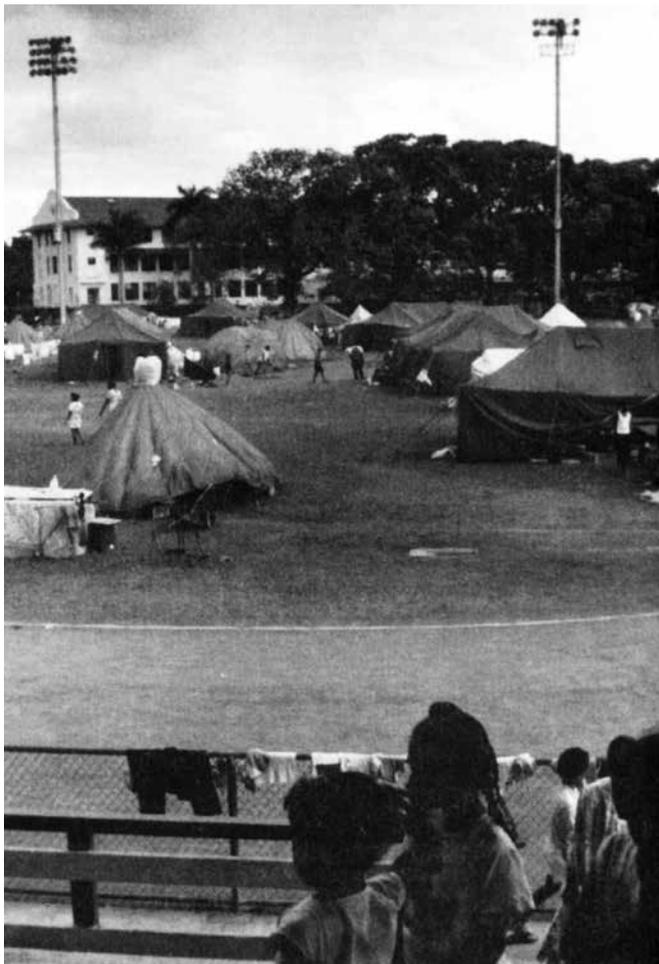
Command Structure: Civil Affairs Panama, January 1990



that there were U.S. Air Force medical teams at Howard Air Force Station that could provide immunizations. He arranged for the five teams (4-5 personnel each) to come and inoculate all of the kids against those childhood diseases.²⁹ Solving the food issue was another hurdle.

At first, each DC received two 'Meal, Ready-to-Eat' (MRE) packs per day. The DCs "would stand in line all morning" and "all afternoon" for the meals, recalled MAJ Lewis. The waiting routine "was not necessarily bad because it gave them something to do and kept them out of trouble" while the CA team got things organized.³⁰ While MREs sufficed for the immediate need, they were expensive, and their wrappers produced a lot of trash. And, most DCs were used to a 1500 calorie/day diet of beans and rice. The calorie-rich MREs caused severe gastric upset, putting further strains on the toilets.³¹ To solve both problems, the JTF-South J-5 got mobile kitchens from the USARSO 41st Area Support Group (ASG). The Panamanian civilians were trained on the equipment. For local foods, 1LT Baker raided a former PDF warehouse to collect bags of dry beans, rice, sugar, flour, and cooking oil. Meanwhile, the DCs built tables and benches to eat their meals. The Panamanian-cooked meals raised morale "overnight," said Rhine.³²

To help bring some semblance of order to the school grounds, the CA team arranged for the delivery of tents to the baseball field for those men sleeping 'under the stars.' The 41st ASG provided twenty-five general purpose (GP) medium tents and fifteen GP small tents.³³

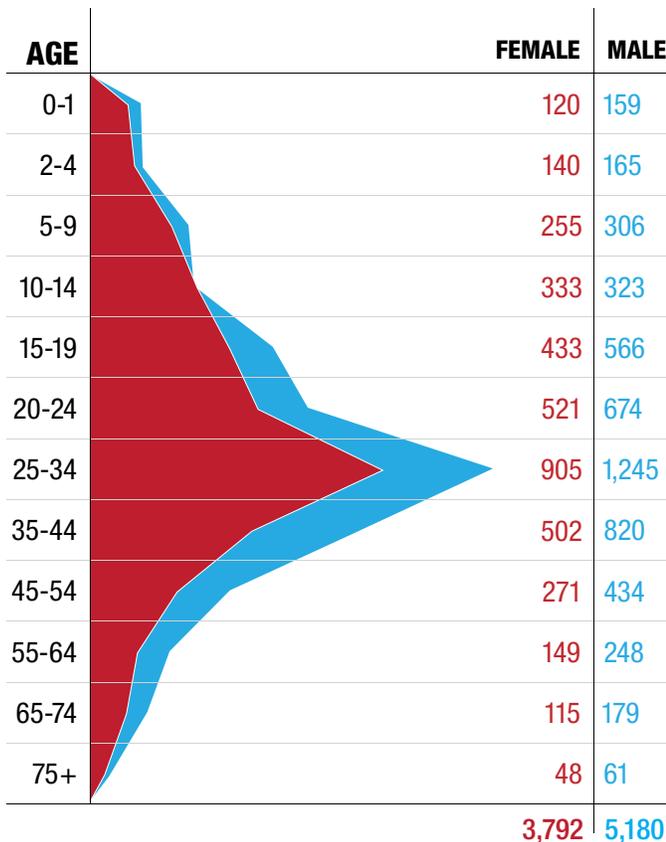


Top: The CA team scrounged unserviceable parachutes for sun shelters. **Bottom:** The 96th CA soldiers got tents from the 41st Area Support Group, JTF-South. Once shown how to erect them, the Panamanians built their tent city.





Top: Two entrances to the Balboa DC camp allowed 96th CA personnel to control access and check bags for contraband, weapons, and drugs. (Photo credit: Gregory J. Rhine) **Bottom:** Demographic Age Break Down of Balboa Displaced Civilians Camp Populations.



Despite an absence of Spanish speakers, two CA NCOs demonstrated how to erect the tents, a step at a time. The attentive DCs then set them up “one after another,” where the NCOs had marked their placement.³⁴ Meanwhile, 1LT Baker contacted USARSO to get thirty-five non-serviceable parachutes for sun shelters.³⁵

The last major concern was security. Because the facility evolved from an *ad hoc* assembly area, the DCs became transients. Looters, drug users, sex offenders, and PDF in civilian clothes lived among the DCs. The CA soldiers relied on the mayor and the semi-permanent residents to identify troublemakers. Most DCs disliked Noriega and were happy to identify former PDF infiltrators. Families had little tolerance for drug and sex offenders, but looters were acceptable; the stolen goods trade was popular. CPT Rhine, however, felt that loud-speaker warnings deterred those engaged in the practice when threatened with expulsion.³⁶

Perimeter security was a U.S. military responsibility. To improve safety, USSOUTHCOM had engineers place concertina wire rolls around the school facility. USARSO arranged for rotating infantry to control access at two entrances. Army CPT Steven Sanchez, the senior Junior Reserve Officers Training Course (JROTC) advisor at the Balboa High School detachment, mustered cadets to perform perimeter security.³⁷ They often served as the sole roving patrol during the evening hours.

DCs could come and go at will. Since there was no ‘headcount’ of residents, or a way to identify who belonged, the CA soldiers instituted access control measures. Each incoming civilian had his/her bags searched for contraband or weapons. Then, the 96th CA personnel began ‘registering’ personnel by name and occupation. Each Panamanian that filled out the form was given a MAJ Lewis-signed paper pass. Panamanian social worker volunteers used six computers to input data from 11,000 forms to create a searchable database.³⁸

Once the facility was running smoothly, attention was given to preparing for its closure to eliminate ‘dependency.’ In late December 1989, the Department of State mandated that Balboa High School resume classes on 16 January 1990. By 31 December 1989, JTF-South had selected another location for the DCs on Albrook Air Force Station.³⁹ The Company C, 96th CAB Commander, MAJ Richard M. Cheek, was given that mission. That ‘fixed’ facility was ready on 13 January 1990, and 2,500 refugees were bussed to Albrook as the Balboa High School DC facility was shut down. Since many USARSO staff personnel had dependent high school children, Panamanian workers were contracted to clean up the high school facility so it would be ready for the return of students on 16 January.⁴⁰

Despite the absence of refugee planning before the U.S. military intervention on 20 December 1989, the 96th CAB effort at the Balboa High School was highly

successful. CA soldiers prevented a humanitarian crisis. Although they had little experience in DC operations, the CA soldiers quickly identified the problems and organized them by priority into manageable tasks. Then, common sense, hard work, and Panamanian ‘ownership’ led to success. They identified Panamanian leaders and partnered with them to stabilize a chaotic situation. In their efforts at the Balboa High School DC facility, Company D, 96th CAB, aided by other members of the battalion, truly brought ‘order from chaos.’ 🇺🇸

Takeaways:

- 1 The U.S. military did not plan for refugees during Operation JUST CAUSE.
- 2 Despite having no experience in DC operations, the 96th CA contingent provided order, sanitation, food, and shelter for thousands of displaced Panamanians.
- 3 The CA soldiers worked by, with, and through Panamanian partners who accepted ownership. Together, they established stability and improved the lives of thousands facing chaos.
- 4 The Balboa High School DC facility was politically highly visible. A poor effort would have invited international criticism. Problem-solving and hard work by 96th CAB soldiers resulted in a well-run Panamanian ‘owned’ facility.

The 96th CAB soldiers were proud of their efforts in Panama. Despite limited Spanish skills, they used basic soldier discipline and problem solving skills to provide stability after JUST CAUSE.

(Photo credit: Gregory J. Rhine)



Acknowledgements:

The author would like to thank 96th CAB veterans Michael P. Peters, Richard M. Cheek, and Gregory J. Rhine for their assistance with this article.

Endnotes

- 1 Lawrence A. Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama: Operation JUST CAUSE December 1989-January 1990* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2014), 449.
- 2 For an account of the attack on the Comandancia, see Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama*, 121-138.
- 3 Families averaged 3.5 persons and lived in wood hovels of 200 square feet or less. MAJ Lasher, Team Chief, Chorrillo Project, "Subject: Req. Info. Gen Thurman's 1600 10 Jan. Briefing," 10 January 1990, located in Folder, After Action Report-Operation JUST CAUSE (Panama), includes daily situation reports (1-30 Jan 1990), 134, Civil Affairs Latin America, USASOC History Classified files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 Richard Van Ness Ginn, *The History of the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps* (Washington DC: United States Army Center of Military History, 1997), 426, on Internet at <https://history.amedd.army.mil/booksdocs/HistoryofUSArmyMSC/chapter13.html>, accessed 6 December 2019.
- 5 This article uses the term 'facility' to describe the refugee area at the Balboa High School. During the operation, the term 'camp' was widely used. However, that term does not properly describe an area where DCs were free to come and go at will. Camp implies that they were corralled into an area with restricted access and limited freedom to leave.
- 6 Civil Affairs was a branch in the U.S. Army Reserves. The political challenges of activation meant they were rarely deployed as units.
- 7 Company A was oriented to Latin America, Company B to the Pacific, Company C to the Middle East, and Company D to Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa.
- 8 Michael P. Peters interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 12 September 2019, USASOC History Office Classified Files, hereafter name and date.
- 9 Peters interview, 12 September 2019.
- 10 Peters interview, 20 September 2019.
- 11 Peters interview, 29 October 2019; Gregory J. Rhine, interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 30 October 2019, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 12 LTC Michael P. Peters, MAJ Kassem R. Saleh, CPT Michael D. Clay, CPT Joe N. Hadden, and 1LT Vernon G. Schoonover, interview by MAJ Robert P. Cook, 326th Military History Detachment, 11 April 1990, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter individual name and date.
- 13 Ronald H. Cole, *Operation JUST CAUSE Panama* (Washington DC: Joint History Office, 1995), 46.
- 14 Peters interview, 11 April 1990. LTC Aaron was one of the XVIII Airborne Corps officers deployed to Panama as part of JTF-South, the warfighting command for JUST CAUSE.
- 15 Peters interview, 29 October 2019.
- 16 Peters interview, 29 October 2019.
- 17 Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama*, 131. At lower levels, the 96th CA had been involved in planning for DCs. Gregory J. Rhine, then a Captain in the 96th, was involved in pre-JUST CAUSE planning regarding DCs and protecting cultural sites and artifacts. Gregory J. Rhine, "Running a Dislocated Civilians Camp During Operation Just Cause December 1989, Reflections by former Major Gregory J. Rhine, D Co., 96th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne)," copy provided to author.
- 18 Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama*, 131.
- 19 Peters interview, 29 October 2019.
- 20 Larry P. Vervack, "SUBJECT: Operation JUST CAUSE Observations," 1 May 1990, 47. Copy provided in email from Lewis L. Barger, AMEDD Center of History & Heritage, to Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, "SUBJECT: 1748-Operation JUST CAUSE," 6 December 2019. The clinic later had the added support of more than a dozen medical residents from the University of Panama.
- 21 The policy of isolating sick children was continued by the 96th CA soldiers.
- 22 Peters interview, 29 October 2019.
- 23 Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama*, 424. COL Connolly had to find funds for a weapons turn-in program.
- 24 Lewis interview, 11 April 1990.
- 25 Yates, *The U.S. Military Intervention in Panama*, 442. Noriega had not allowed Galvez to serve.
- 26 Gregory J. Rhine, interview by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 30 October 2019, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Dennis P. Walko, "Psychological Operations in Panama During Operations Just Cause and Promote Liberty," in Frank L. Goldstein, ed. *Psychological Operations: Principles and Case Studies* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1996), 261.
- 27 MAJ Michael A. Lewis, CPT Ronald Hagen, CPT Gregory J. Rhine, and 1LT Bruce Baker, interview by MAJ Robert P. Cook, 326th Military History Detachment, 11 April 1990, copy in USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter name and date.
- 28 Rhine interview, 30 October 2019. Rhine said that after the announcement to remove the animals, the DCs "had a lot of barbecues."
- 29 Email from Gregory J. Rhine to Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, "SUBJECT: Balboa: JUST CAUSE," 9 December 2019, USASOC History Office Classified Files; Rhine interview, 30 October 2019. Rhine was an MP who had provided security at a DC camp at Fort Indiantown Gap, PA, for Cuban refugees that were part of the Mariel Boat Lift in 1980-81. He was familiar with some of the critical needs of DC operations.
- 30 Lewis interview, 11 April 1990.
- 31 Rhine interview, 30 October 2019.
- 32 Rhine interview, 30 October 2019.
- 33 Lewis interview, 11 April 1990.
- 34 Clay interview, 11 April 1990.
- 35 Lewis interview, 11 April 1990.
- 36 Rhine interview, 30 October 2019.
- 37 Rhine interview, 30 October 2019.
- 38 Clay interview, 11 April 1990. The number of residents in the facility on a daily basis was less than 5,000.
- 39 Civil Affairs Task Force, "Chronological Events Displaced Civilian Community Balboa/Curundu DC Facility," February 1990, Folder, Civil Affairs Task Force, Ancon, Panama, Civil Affairs Latin America, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 40 Soldiers from the 96th CAB helped oversee the cleanup efforts.

Reserve CA and the Balboa High School DC Facility Endnotes

- 1 United States Army Special Operations Command, "JUST CAUSE/PROMOTE LIBERTY Civil Affairs," May 1990, located in Folder, USASOC Briefing-JUST CAUSE/PROMOTE LIBERTY, Civil Affairs Latin America, USASOC History Office Classified files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 Margaret V. Cain, "History of Displaced Civilian Facility," February 1990, located in Folder, Humanitarian Assistance Team (HAT), Civil Affairs Latin America, USASOC History Office Classified files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 3 Kenneth D. Strong, "Civil Affairs After Action Report, JUST CAUSE [361st CA Brigade], March 1990, located in Folder, Civil Affairs After Action Report-Operation JUST CAUSE-Panama-361st CA BDE-1 Jan-28 Feb 1990, Civil Affairs Latin America, USASOC History Office Classified files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 LTC Greenhut, "Civil Affairs in Panama," April 1990, located in Folder, Civil Affairs in Panama, LTC Greenhut, USASOC Historian, Civil Affairs Latin America, USASOC History Office Classified files, Fort Bragg, NC. COL Graham was a civil engineer and industrial hygienist. He had helped to run a DC camp at Fort Indiantown Gap, PA, during the Mariel Boatlift of Cuban refugees in 1980.