



JUST CAUSE and the Principles of War

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In the many debates regarding future missions and doctrine for the post-Cold War Army, contingency missions such as Operation Just Cause must surely be examined in detail. The author uses the framework of the principles of war to analyze Just Cause and finds many interesting insights while describing many aspects of its planning and execution. He concludes that the principles, viewed from a broad perspective, still apply to current US doctrine.

HISTORICALLY, nations and their armies learn best from their defeats. Seldom do they learn from their successes. On 20 December 1989, the US Armed Forces conducted one of its most successful operations ever. In the aftermath of such a resounding success, there is a tendency not to critically examine our performance and, hence, not to learn from it. Future knowledge and competence rest on a foundation of a thorough understanding of the past. Additionally, as a future general officer once stated, "There are those in Washington who expect us to be able to do our job, and when the time comes, they will accept no excuses."¹ This article is an attempt to critically examine our performance during Operation *Just Cause* against a known doctrinal base with the hope that we may gain in professional competence.

The method used in this article will capitalize on the technique used in Retired Colonel Harry G. Summers Jr.'s landmark 1982 work, *On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context*.² A major part of that work analyzed applying the principles of war against our performance in that conflict. A telling point Summers made in that study concerned our inadequacy in doctrinally applying

the principles of war during the 1960s. Since that study, our principles of war have been resurrected and refined, and are well presented in US Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations*. But, now, in the aftermath of *Just Cause*, we must ask how well the principles of war were applied in our operations in Panama. This article addresses that question.

Objective. The military *objective* must flow from the nation's political purpose. In the case of Panama, the nation's political purpose had been clearly enunciated by two presidents: safeguarding American lives, protecting the Panama Canal and removing Manuel Noriega. Militarily, steps had been taken toward those goals. Military dependents were drawn down, and the profile of the US civilian community was reduced in Panama City. Additionally, US forces conducted exercises to improve military preparedness for defense of the canal as called for in the Carter-Torrijos Canal Treaty. As the events of the fall of 1989 unfolded, it became obvious that merely removing Noriega as head of the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) would not accomplish the other goals. As Noriega successively purged his officer corps of those with professional tenden-

cies, none remained who could reform the institution. Some of the potential successors to a deposed Noriega were at least as bad as Noriega, if not worse. And merely creating a "promotion opportunity for another thug," as General Fred FeWoerner, commander, US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), phrased it, would be insufficient to solve Panama's problems or to further the US strategy of encouraging democracy throughout the region.³

The strategic objectives of the operation were clearly and concisely expressed in the chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) execution order; namely, "To ensure: continuing freedom of transit through the Panama Canal, freedom from PDF abuse and harassment, freedom to exercise US treaty rights and responsibilities, the removal of Noriega from power in Panama, the removal of Noriega's cronies and accomplices from office, the creation of a PDF responsive to and supportive of an emergent democratic government in Panama, and a freely elected GOP [government of Panama] which is allowed to govern."^{4e}

These strategic military objectives were translated into the mission to "neutralize the PDF." The unified command translated the overall strategic objective into operational objectives. Viewing Panama as a target with the bull's-eye centered around the Panama City-Canal complex, SOUTHCOM selected operational objectives that were located within or could directly reinforce that battlefield. Three categories of objectives were identified. The first category directly and solely addressed the mission of neutralizing the PDF. Generally, these objectives were force-oriented instead of installation-oriented. The second category was composed of objectives that attacked the PDF and supported unilateral US goals. The third category solely supported US actions without neutralizing any PDF units.

For example, an objective of the first category was the primary command and control node of the PDF known as *La Comandancia*. Its isolation and seizure would critically disrupt PDF operations. An example of a second category objective was Tinajitos, home of the PDF 1st Infantry

Heavy Weapons Company. Also representative of the second category, the Tocumen-Torrijos Airport had to be seized not only to facilitate future US operations but also to neutralize the

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2d Infantry Company.^e A third category objective, the Bridge of the Americas was seized to secure the lines of communication between the east and west banks and to defend the canal.

From the earliest planning, the intent was to immediately neutralize forces within the bull's-eye with three H-hour operations.^e The PDF response to the 3 October 1989 coup attempt had been adroit and flexible. Infantry forces were airlifted from Rio Hato to the Tocumen-Torrijos Airport to link up with transport from the motorized battalion at Fort Cimarron.^e These forces then attacked the *Comandancia* from the east through Panama City.^e Nearly two battalions of the PDF were located on the two bases, and their quick response in October indicated a high degree of training and motivation.^e Ignoring these forces may have put the rest of the plan in peril. Both bases were included as D-day objectives.^e More important, attacking these units directly supported the mission of neutralizing the PDF.

An explicit goal of the operation was removing Noriega from power in Panama.^e Detailed plans had been developed to capture Noriega.^e In the months before, an attempt was made to develop an effective program of surveillance of Noriega.^e Confronted with the Department of Defense



PDF headquarters
after its bombardment
by US forces.

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(DOD) concerns on aspects of intelligence gathering, initially, and with the interagency coordination process, subsequently, the effort contributed little to Noriega's capture. Here the institutional peacetime national intelligence policies of the United States severely constrained the ability of the operational commanders and planners to obtain real-time and meaningful information on Noriega's whereabouts.

Several raid rehearsals were conducted before *Just Cause*. It was also hoped that the concentration of forces against the Panama City-Canal complex would essentially clamp down on the city. The effort was likened to casting a net over the city, prohibiting any movement. The net could then be drawn in. If any of the initial raids failed, planners thought the net would catch Noriega with the flotsam of the operation. Although the net itself did not ensnare Noriega, it

effectively denied him any method of egress from Panama. Although Noriega initially eluded capture, the totality of the PDF's neutralization effectively removed him from power.

Should additional objectives have been assigned in the hope of capturing Noriega? After all, there were those who felt his capture was the sole criteria by which to judge the success of the operation. In hindsight, it is difficult to see how additional objectives would have made much difference without the freedom to conduct the appropriate operations to develop adequate information on Noriega and the PDF.

Offensive. The *offensive* was seized in the opening moments of the conflict, and the initiative never once passed to the PDF. Isolated drive-by attacks and uncoordinated attacks by small elements did occur after the initial D-day operations, but they were so insignificant and random that they cannot be described as an at-

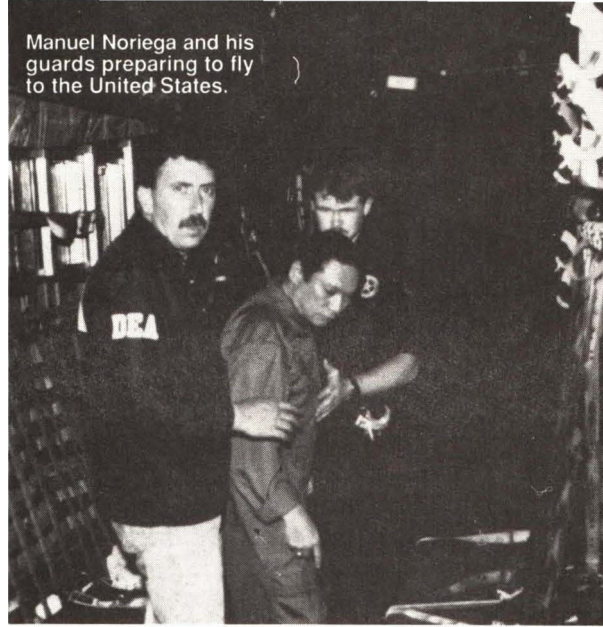
tempt at a counteroffensive. Additionally, most of the attacks were thwarted before they came to any sort of fruition. For example, nine vehicles, including a V300 armored vehicle, were destroyed by the 2d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, as Dignity Battalion or PDF members attempted drive-by attacks at Panama Viejo on D-day.^{5e}

It should be noted here that, even though the principles of war should be valid for any conflict, they are written in the context of a conventional war. As lethal as Panama was in isolated places, the conflict was essentially part of a low-intensity conflict (LIC). As such, many of the manifestations of the conflict were political in nature. Consequently, the current principles, especially the principle of the offensive, must be applied with a broader interpretation. The offensive must not only be applied militarily, which it was, but it must also be applied across the entire spectrum of conflict, to include police and political actions.

The massive looting that occurred in Panama City and Colón may be the greatest tragedy of the conflict. Months after the invasion, the economy has yet to fully recover from that depredation. It has been alleged that this looting was instigated by Dignity Battalion members to undermine the fledgling democratic government. If the looting was not actually instigated by the Dignity battalions, it was the mindless rampage of a citizenry with no restrictions of law and order. The bottom line is that US forces lost the initiative either to the Dignity battalions or to some set of sociopolitical factors. The result was the same; forces of law and order were stripped away, and for too long a time, nothing was substituted. In the final analysis, the looting made the task of the "freely elected GOP" infinitely more difficult.

An argument might be made that the looting was indeed unfortunate, but it would have no relevance to a discussion of the principles of war. Such a view is too narrow a perspective in LIC where political factors play a much larger role. A stated objective of the operation was "to ensure a freely elected GOP which is allowed to

Manuel Noriega and his guards preparing to fly to the United States.



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govern."⁶ Consequently, anything that hindered the accomplishment of that objective is relevant to an analysis of the operation. Viewed then, in this LIC perspective in which the offensive must be waged across the entire spectrum of conflict, the US forces failed to maintain the offensive. The looting ran counter to the effort of assisting the new government. Consequently, it must be viewed as an integral part of the military campaign. Since US forces failed to stop the looting in a timely manner, they abdicated the initiative to either the Noriega factions or to sociopolitical factors embodied in the mobs.

US forces did maintain the offensive in the move to the interior of Panama, however. The fact that the PDF garrisoned in the interior of Panama made no apparent effort to resist US forces does not change the fact that, militarily, the US forces maintained the offensive. The absence of fighting does not negate this successful

application of the offensive.

Mass. The philosophy of both General Maxwell R. Thurman, commander in chief (CINC), SOUTHCOM, and Lieutenant General Carl W. Stiner, commander, Joint Task

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Force (JTF) South, was to emphasize the principle of *mass*. Time and again during the planning process, the idea of applying overwhelming combat power was espoused. The purpose of applying overwhelming combat power was to shorten the conflict. An enemy faced with vastly superior combat power is less likely to resist, and the force with superior combat power obviously enhances its force protection capability. Applying overwhelming force is likely to decrease the number of casualties on both sides of the conflict.

In Operation *Just Cause*, more than 12 infantry battalions, supported by an impressive array of combat support (military police, aviation and engineer) and air fire support platforms, conducted the initial assaults on D-day. They were followed by an additional six infantry battalions in the days that followed. This force was pitted against a PDF force of four battalion equivalents. The majority of the PDF was organized into separate companies. Consequently, the disparate organizations and strengths of the PDF companies make direct comparison with US forces difficult. The disparate organization of the PDF force and the dispersed nature of its garrisons in

fact enhanced our mass advantage and allowed the US forces to attack and defeat each company in detail, maintaining a 3-1 superiority while doing so. The ability to mass combat power against each objective quickly and nearly simultaneously gave the PDF no chance to react or regroup. No one principle is decisive in war, but properly applying the principle of mass was the key factor in this victory.

Economy of Force. *Economy of force* is difficult to examine because, once again, *Just Cause* was not strictly "conventional" at the operational level. As with the offensive, it must be examined in a broader context, and the best example of its application at the operational level was the use of Special Forces. Before H-hour, three Special Forces teams were to provide reconnaissance and surveillance against two D-day objectives and a critical bridge. These teams had the additional task of interdicting any military forces leaving those sites. At the Pacora River Bridge, situated between Fort Cimarron and the Tocumen-Torrijos Airport, a 22-man Special Forces team executed the mission. In the course of the evening, the team prevented several mounted attempts at crossing the river toward the Rangers' airhead at the airport. Throughout the night, six vehicles were destroyed by the team and its AC-130 fire support platform.⁷

Force Ratios on D-Day

(exclusive of air support weapons)

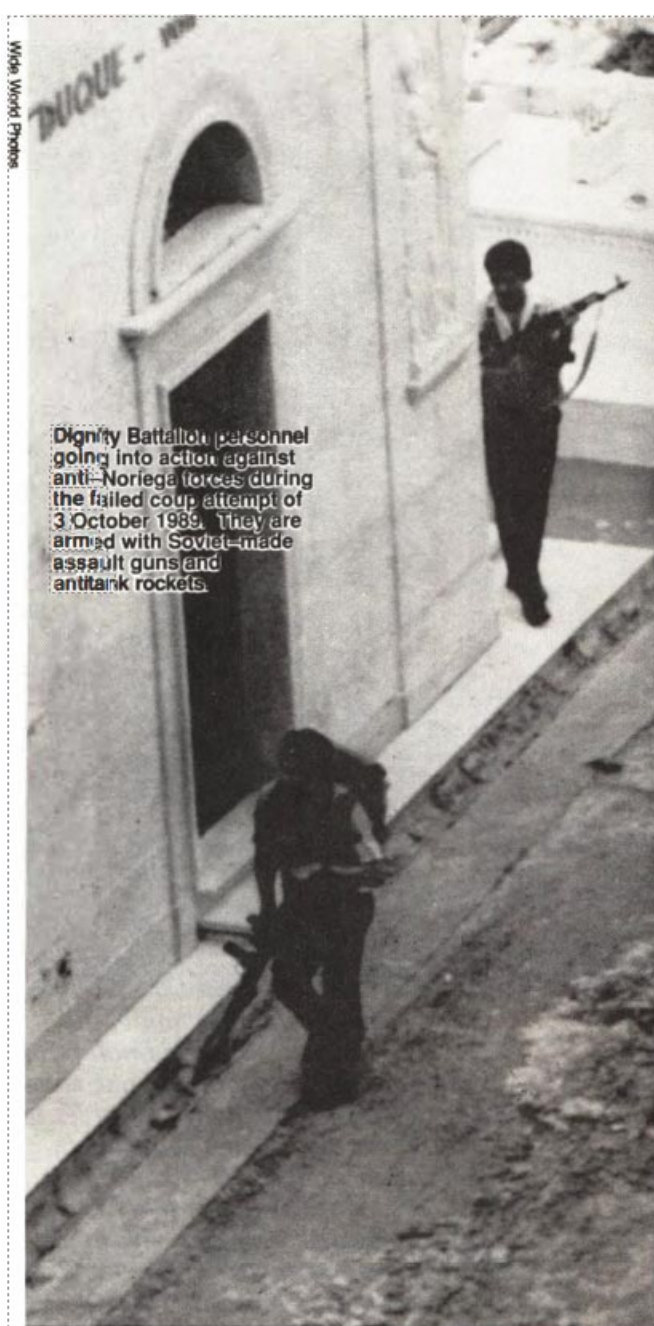
Location	US	PDF
La Comandancia	Mech Bn TF	2 PDF Cos
Tocumen-Torrijos	4 Rgr Cos	1 PDF Co
Rio Hato	5 Rgr Cos	2 PDF Cos
Fort Amador	1 Inf Bn	1 PDF Co
Curundu-Balboa	1 Inf Bn	Various Police Units
Fort Cimarron	1 Inf Bn	0 (Bn 2000 missing)
Tinajitos	1 Inf Bn	1 PDF Co
Panama Viejo	1 Inf Bn	1 Cav Sqdn (ceremonial) & Elements of Special Forces
Fort Espinar	1 Inf Co(+)	1 PDF Co
Coco Solo	1 Inf Co(+)	100-Man Naval Infantry Co

Psychological operations (PSYOP) and electronic warfare (EW) are also economy-of-force or force multiplier operations. The EW effort was particularly effective just before H-hour. A broad range of transmitters was effectively shut down by the effort. PSYOP also was to have played an effective role in the initial battle. A Special Forces team temporarily disabled a television station transmission site. In its frequency, an EC-130 airborne PSYOP transmission platform broadcast prepackaged tapes.

The effectiveness of that effort was questionable, however. After the battle, reports tell of the seal of the DOD being broadcast over the channel without any accompanying message.⁸ In Panama, PSYOP units scrambled to produce additional tapes. Although the television channel was denied to the Noriega forces, *Radio Nacional* continued to broadcast its pro-Noriega message for several days. On the airwaves, it was a case of too little, too late.

Special Forces also played an economy-of-force role in the maneuvers to disarm the remainder of the PDF in the interior of Panama. When a town was selected to be the next objective, a small Special Forces element was inserted into the airfield. Opposition was not expected, but by leading with a small team (supported by an AC-130), the larger force, which was close behind, was less likely to become decisively engaged.⁹ The level of confrontation was kept low by using a small team initially and the overt threat of the large follow-on force, Ranger or infantry battalion. The demonstrated effect of employing overwhelming combat power in the opening phases of the campaign at H-hour, D-day, made smaller, less threatening moves subsequently possible. This method resulted in the remainder of Panama capitulating to US forces.

Maneuver. According to FM 100-5, maneuver consists of "three interrelated dimensions: flexibility, mobility, and maneuverability." Maneuver implies movement but doctrinally includes other dimensions. Maneuver includes fire and movement, the "considered application of the principles of mass and economy of force," and flexibility in "thought, plans,



Dignity Battalion personnel going into action against anti-Noriega forces during the failed coup attempt of 3 October 1989. They are armed with Soviet-made assault guns and antitank rockets.

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Blackhawk and Huey helicopters operating out of a supply point during Operation Just Cause.



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and operations.”¹⁰ Each of these aspects of maneuver should be examined separately.

Operationally, fire and movement occurred only once on D-day. The air assaults of battalions from the Tocumen-Torrijos Airport to attack objectives at Fort Cimarron, Tinajitos and Panama Viejo are examples of fire and movement at the operational level.

Additional ground movement was hampered by the unfortunate results of the 82d Airborne Division's heavy drop. In a bid to keep the Tocumen-Torrijos runways clear for follow-on operations, the wheeled and tracked vehicles were dropped by parachute on a neighboring drop zone. The land, however, was low, and the majority of the unit's vehicles became stuck in the mud. The unit attempted to improvise with rental cars, but the lack of transportation had a detrimental impact on mobility.¹¹ The absence of those vehicles undoubtedly contributed to the inexplicable delay in moving into the city to stop the looting.

Flexibility is also an inherent component of maneuver. In many respects, the major battles of *Just Cause* resembled “set-piece affairs.” Although Stiner had verbally outlined his thoughts on subsequent moves to his commanders and staff, no written campaign plan had been prepared for actions past the initial assaults at either the unified command level or the JTF level. Operationally, little flexibility was required during these initial operations. There were glimpses of flexibility, however.

Within the ground forces and aircrews from Continental United States (CONUS), completing the outloading process and marshaling for the assault was a gigantic exercise in flexibility as they struggled to maintain some semblance of order in the face of a severe ice storm in the Carolinas. Tactically, the reconnaissance and surveillance teams at the Pacora River Bridge were forced to extemporize as the first of six PDF vehicles neared the bridge before the team was fully settled. The mechanized task force also practiced flexibility as it encountered obstacles across its routes to isolate the *Comandancia*. The technique employed to pacify the interior of Panama was developed nearly on the run by the units involved. Its acceptance by the chain of command of JTF South exhibited not only flexibility but also a willingness to accept calculated risks as well.

Despite the absence of large armored forces rolling across the plains to conduct deep penetrations or slashing envelopments, the compo-

nents of fire and movement, the principles of mass and economy of force, and flexibility were all applied to an appropriate degree. Consequently, when viewed in all of its components, the principle of maneuver was applied throughout *Just Cause*.

Unity of Command. When addressing unity of command, FM 100-5 states, "Coordination may be achieved by cooperation; it is, however, best achieved by vesting a single commander with the requisite authority to direct and to coordinate all forces employed in pursuit of a common goal."¹² One of the primary results of the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act has been to place "requisite authority" in a single commander—the unified command's CINC.

Throughout the planning process and execution, there was a clear chain of command from the president to the CINC. In fact, since Thurman gave Stiner operational control of the entire fighting force, that clearly delineated chain of command proceeded down to the tactical levels. Unlike other contingency operations, service rivalries and politics were not allowed to hamstring the planning and execution of the operation. There was never any doubt in Stiner's mind for whom he was working. As he said in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, "There were no problems with ambiguous relationships or units receiving guidance from multiple sources. These were direct results of the Reorganization Act and Special Operations legislation."¹³

Despite parochial comments, *Just Cause* was a joint operation. All four services, with a diverse array of tactical units, participated in *Just Cause*, as did a host of supporting CINCs and agencies. Thurman, as the supported CINC, was the war-fighting CINC, and he had a great deal of latitude in how he fought the war. Despite the preponderance of one service, it was the Joint Staff in Washington that monitored and supervised the unified command. The conflict was very much a joint effort.

Tactically, throughout the operation, care was taken to ensure that the chain of command did not become muddled. Subordinate units had

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their higher headquarters change on them in the course of the battle, but the passage of operational control was clearly delineated and stated in appropriate fragmentary orders.

Operationally, then, unity of command was applied. But it was applied, on one hand, by the US Congress. The Reorganization Act has effectively placed the operational employment of troops in the joint system. Therefore, the single responsible commander, the CINC, is no longer fettered by conflicting operational direction from the services. Unity of command was also facilitated by Thurman's decision to place all forces under the operational control of JTF South. Such had not always been the plan, and there was a conscious decision on Thurman's part to direct that change.

Security. Security can be achieved by three means; namely, applying operational security (OPSEC) measures, hiding a force or being deceiving as to its intent, and using combat power. The planning and execution of *Just Cause* saw the application of all three of those measures.

Planning for the possibility of US forces being

From Noriega's perspective, the United States did not have the will to take any truly decisive action. The previous troop deployments and exercises lulled Noriega into believing that the United States did not have the will to act in Panama.

Combat preparations were effectively hidden from PDF cognizance. For example, while the PURPLE STORM and SAND FLEA exercises, which JTF Panama conducted during the latter half of 1989, were to exercise US treaty rights, they also served an ancillary purpose of conditioning the PDF to US force movements in Panama. Additionally, tactical commanders could rehearse their missions on their actual objectives.

committed against the PDF in Panama began with the JCS Planning Order of 28 February 1988.¹⁴ Although the resulting *Blue Spoon* operation order was updated in October 1989, many of the objectives remained virtually unchanged. The fact that the US forces did not encounter more difficult obstacles and resistance on their respective objectives indicates that the OPSEC of the plan was maintained throughout the nearly two years of its existence. Proper OPSEC appears to have been maintained.

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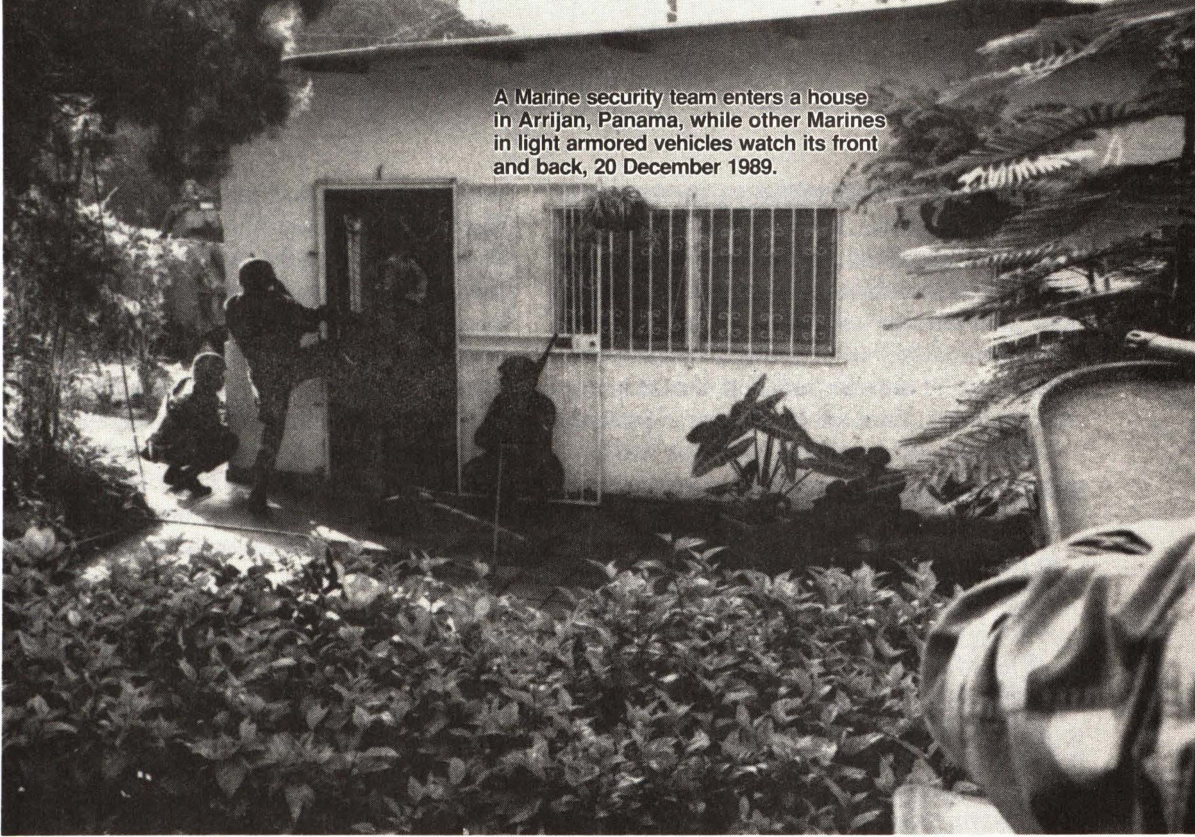
important, Noriega—to the United States dispatching troops without decisive result during periods of increased tension.¹⁵ Other preparations, such as infiltrating and hiding M551 tanks and AH-64 helicopters, were conducted more conventionally. These weapon systems arrived during the hours of darkness and were kept from public view until they were operationally required. As the foregoing relates, security was enhanced by each of these actions.

Finally, security can also be achieved through strength. There is little doubt that one reason the enemy never “acquired an unexpected advantage” is because he generally chose not to fight. After the initial actions, he realized his military position was hopeless. The PDF, despite its organization as a military force, did not have the means to counter the armed strength of the United States. The PDF was essentially destroyed as a conventional fighting force and was not able to make the transition to a guerrilla army throughout the operation, if such was its intention. Strength ensured security.

Surprise. There has been a good deal of discussion on whether the PDF was alerted to *Just Cause* and whether surprise was maintained. With the cable news networks' coverage of events at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, over the two days before H-hour, only a megalomaniac would have discounted the possibility of an invasion. That a leak occurred in the hours before the invasion has been neither denied nor confirmed. Regardless of a leak, no army can strike without giving indications of impending operations. As a snake must coil to strike, so also must an army reposition and marshal its assets and move to its jump-off point, either by air, ground or sea. Since firing actually began before H-hour, surprise was lost at least at one location.^{16e}

Surprise is not a homogenous factor on a battlefield and must be viewed at several levels. As I have discussed, *Just Cause* may have been compromised at the operational level. Whether through prior notification, the reporting of the news networks, or proper analysis of a variety of indicators, certain leaders within the PDF expected the invasion. From the tactical perspec-

A Marine security team enters a house in Arrijan, Panama, while other Marines in light armored vehicles watch its front and back, 20 December 1989.



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tive, however, the secrecy concerning the nature and timing of the attack appears to have been maintained

Strategically, surprise was maintained, despite its loss at the operational level. The critical command node in the PDF was Noriega. Noriega's actions on the night of the invasion and in the ensuing days demonstrate that he was surprised. Over the previous two years, the United States had deployed security enhancement forces to Panama on six separate occasions. Troop strength on the ground had increased more than 30 percent. US forces had traded shots with PDF intruders at a petroleum tank farm off and on for 20 months. For six months, the United States had conducted a series of exercises designed to reassert treaty rights.¹⁷

Despite all of these actions, nothing changed. Noriega and his government remained firmly in control. From Noriega's perspective, the United States did not have the will to take any truly decisive action. The previous troop deployments and exercises lulled Noriega into believing that the United States did not have the will to act in Panama.

Simplicity. *Just Cause* was a complex, finely timed military operation made executable only through clear, concise orders and realistically conducted rehearsals. So, from the outside looking in, *simplicity* appears to have been lacking. If subordinates had not understood their tasks and had the operation not been rehearsed, military disaster might well have been the result.

Panama was not a neat, linear battlefield. Although, at the operational level, linear unit

boundaries were assigned during the initial operations, they were of little value. The battlefield more resembled a lethal mosaic of separate attacks conducted by land, sea and air from the four points of the compass. For example, the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 508th Infantry, conducted an air assault into Fort Amador from the south and then attacked west. Across the

When a town was selected to be the next objective, a small Special Forces element was inserted into the airfield. . . . The level of confrontation was kept low by using a small team initially and the overt threat of the large follow-on force, Ranger or infantry battalion. The demonstrated effect of employing overwhelming combat power in the opening phases of the campaign at H-hour, D-day, made smaller, less threatening moves subsequently possible.

bay, less than a mile distant, a mechanized battalion attacked to the southeast to isolate the Comandancia. Supporting this mosaic was a variety of fixed- and rotary-wing lift and gunships, all of which required refueling either from Strategic Air Command tankers or forward arming and refueling points deployed to field sites. Air traffic control was a colossal effort at the local level.

Air traffic control was a monumental effort not only in Panama. More than 200 sorties deployed in an air train 67 miles long.¹⁸ Planes marshaled from bases all over CONUS, converged, rendezvoused with tankers to refuel en route, evaded detection and delivered their loads at the appropriate place. *Just Cause* was complicated, indeed, but, as with many of the principles, the perspective changes between the operational and tactical levels.

The fact that the operation was not a failure testifies to the simplicity of the plan at the tacti-

cal and lower end of the operational level. At the battalion level, the tasks were relatively straightforward, in that units were tasked to conduct doctrinally appropriate missions. Combat operations are never "easy," but in *Just Cause*, they were straightforward: conduct a parachute assault to seize an airhead, attack to isolate . . . and so forth. The most complicated battalion missions fell to the battalions of the 82d Airborne Division. These three battalions conducted a parachute assault and assembled and subsequently conducted an air assault to seize an objective.¹⁹

At the lower end of the operational level, simplicity was enhanced by using clear, concise orders and using standard control measures to the brigade task forces. The brigade task forces from the 82d Airborne Division had the eastern half of Panama City. The Panama-based 193d Infantry Brigade was allotted the western portion of the city and the canal operating area. The Marine task force was responsible for the Bridge of the Americas and the west bank, while the brigade from the 7th Infantry Division was responsible for Colón.²⁰ Using standard orders and overlays simplified understanding the tasks and enhanced communications between headquarters.

It was primarily at the upper ends of the operational level of war that the operation became complicated. Delivering the force to the battlefield was a challenging, complicated task, possibly the most critical of the entire operation. A force must be delivered to the battlefield in a combat formation—ready to fight—to be able to fight. Despite tremendous obstacles, the Military Airlift Command delivered the combat formations.

Was the principle of *simplicity* applied? The answer is mixed. At the tactical and lower end of the operational level, the operation was kept simple. At the upper end of the operational level, *Just Cause* was a complicated, yet finely tuned, military operation.

Was *Just Cause* as successful, doctrinally, as it appears to have been portrayed? Were the principles of war applied? Should the principles be

reviewed for applicability to short-duration contingency operations? There can be no doubt that the operation was extremely successful. But certain events indicate that, when the principles of war are applied to short-duration contingency operations in a LIC environment, the interpretation of the principles must be viewed within a broader context than normal. The forms that some of the principles may take are likely to be less traditional or "military" and more "police" or "political" in nature. As the analysis of the principle of maneuver showed, the principles are not always what they appear to be at first glance. Maneuver is more than just movement; only by understanding the components can the whole be understood. It is by examining the components of each of the principles against the political backdrop of LIC that we identify the forms they may take in contingency operations.

This discussion has been an attempt to generate thought on the applicability of the principles of war on *Just Cause* in particular and on contingency operations in general. If we are not to stagnate as a profession, we must critically

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examine our performance in the crucible of combat. Future knowledge and competence are founded on a thorough understanding of past conflict. The many after-action reviews (hot-washes) of the participating units provided them with specific items toward which to guide future training. Hopefully, this discussion will spark a corresponding study of our doctrine. Remember, when our forces are committed to combat, not only will those in Washington not accept excuses but neither will the American people. **MR**

NOTES

1. Major General Wayne A. Downing, as battalion commander of 2d Battalion, 75th Rangers, in a talk to his officers in 1978.

2. Harry G. Summers Jr., *On Strategy: The Vietnam War in Context* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, The Army War College, 23 March 1982).

3. General Fred F. Woerner, as commander in chief, US Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), during a staff briefing on the *Blue Spoon* operation order, June 1989.

4. Message from Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), DTG 182325Z December 1989, Subject: Execute Order.

5. *Soldiers in Panama: Stories of Operation Just Cause* (Fort Leavenworth, KS, US Army Command and General Staff College, January 1990).

6. CJCS, Execute Order.

7. Ibid.

8. Author's notes.

9. CJCS, Execute Order.

10. US Department of the Army Field Manual (FM) 100-5, *Operations* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, May 1986), 175.

11. Author's notes.

12. FM 100-5, *Operations*, 176.

13. Lieutenant General Stiner's response to the chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee, prehearing defense policy questions, dated 11 May 1989.

14. Message from JCS, DTG 281944Z February 1988, Subject: Planning Order.

15. Security forces deployment orders for Panama were: JCS 171727Z March 1988, security enhancement; JCS 122008Z March 1988, security enhancement; JCS 010315Z April 1988, security enhancement; JCS 091635Z June 1988, security enhancement; CJCS 111953Z May 1989, *Nimrod Dancer*; CJCS 181740Z November 1989, bomb security forces. Between March 1988 and November 1989, troop strength increased from approximately 10,000 to more than 13,000.

16. Author's note.

17. Firefights with unknown intruders started in March 1988 and occurred with varying degrees of frequency through 1988. Some incidents occurred as late as November 1989. Joint Task Force (JTF) *Panama* conducted the *PURPLE STORM* and *SAND FLEA* series of exercises commencing in July 1989.

18. SOUTHCOM Command Brief, "*Just Cause—The Rebirth of a Nation.*"

19. JTF *South* OPORD 90-1 (*Blue Spoon*), dated 3 November 1990.

20. Ibid.

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