

5-1991

The U.S. Protectorate in Panama: An Analysis of Recent U.S.-Panamanian Relations With Specific Reference to Operation Just Cause (December, 1989)

Karen Cherese Nelson
Southern Illinois University Carbondale

Follow this and additional works at: http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/uhp_theses

Recommended Citation

Nelson, Karen Cherese, "The U.S. Protectorate in Panama: An Analysis of Recent U.S.-Panamanian Relations With Specific Reference to Operation Just Cause (December, 1989)" (1991). *Honors Theses*. Paper 300.

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the University Honors Program at OpenSIUC. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of OpenSIUC. For more information, please contact opensiuc@lib.siu.edu.

The U.S. Protectorate in Panama:
An Analysis of Recent U.S.-Panamanian Relations
with Specific Reference to Operation Just Cause (December, 1989)

by

Karen C. Nelson

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science with University Honors

Department of Political Science

Southern Illinois University

at Carbondale

May 1991

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter

1. INTRODUCTION	1
2. DEVELOPMENT OF PANAMANIAN PROTECTORATE.....	3
3. HISTORICAL BASES FOR PANAMANIAN SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL STRUCTURES.....	8
4. FACTORS IN U.S. DOMINANCE.....	12
5. OPERATION JUST CAUSE: ANTECEDENTS.....	20
Rediscovery of Noriega	
The Reagan Position	
The Bush Response	
6. ANALYSIS OF THE INVASION.....	31
Bush Administration Justifications	
U.S. Public Opinion	
Options: Legal and Other	
7. CONSEQUENCES FOR U.S.-PANAMANIAN RELATIONS.....	43
Sentiment Among the Panamanian People	
Economic Chaos	
The Likelihood of Democracy	
CONCLUSION	

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In December 1989 the United States intervened in Latin America once again adding one more instance to the list which included, among others, the 1954 overthrow of Arbenz in Guatemala, the 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic, and the 1973 assistance given the Chilean military in its successful overthrow of Allende in Chile. This latest case was the massive U.S. military invasion of Panama. From Washington's point of view, "Operation Just Cause," as it was called, was indeed just. The United States was responding to the request of a fairly large proportion of the Panamanian population that wished removal from power of General Manuel Antonio Noriega, the military ruler of Panama. Noriega's involvement in the world of drug trafficking and in questionable hemispheric radical political movements prevented him from projecting in Panama a positive image of the U.S.-installed civilian leadership. Washington's public explanation was that at the request of its southern neighbor the United States was simply ridding a friendly nation of an individual many Panamanians viewed as a tyrant.

Yet, behind this relatively simple explanation lies a more complex one, one which was not openly discussed as U.S. troops set foot on Panamanian soil. General Noriega was viewed by the Bush Administration as a threat to the stability of Latin America, a stability whose peculiar characteristics the United States had sought to maintain for more than a century. Although Panama is a small, relatively young Latin American country, it represents a major focal point in traditional definitions of the U.S. national interest. Although "Operation Just Cause" was ostensibly carried out in the name of Panamanian interests, in reality, it was on a set of questionable national security assumptions held by the Bush Administration that the massive assault on the small country was made. In his refusal to comply with U.S. orders to relinquish power, Noriega challenged Washington's control over Panama, one that had been exercised since 1903.

This paper will address the 1989 invasion in terms of the historical relationship existing between the two nation-states, that of U.S. as protector and Panama as protectorate. The writer's intent is to demonstrate that this relationship has resulted in a de facto loss of sovereign control by Panama and, as a result, continues to constitute a breach of international law.

CHAPTER 2

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PANAMANIAN PROTECTORATE

The protected state is dependent on the protection and control of a superior power. This relationship requires that the weaker nation-state allow the protector to involve itself in the domestic and foreign affairs of the country; the protectorate becomes the executor of decisions and demands or interests of the superior protecting power. It yields decision-making power to the protector by treaty or other agreement by which it "[releases] its right of non-intervention" (Thomas and Thomas, 92). According to one view of international law;

There is no international duty of self-preservation falling upon the state to maintain itself as sovereign or independent...It would seem strange if a state could not consent to a less drastic curtailment of its sovereignty by releasing its right of non-intervention, which is a right of each individual state flowing from sovereignty itself, although it may be admitted that by such a treaty the state is at least placed under the political tutelage of another, if not placed in the status of a protectorate.
(Thomas and Thomas, 92) ¹

Hence, a country may relinquish its right to be an independent actor with recognizable political, economic, and social policies of its own.

In the case of Panama, dependence on the United States was the result of the desires of three actors at the beginning of the present century: indigenous rebels, the Roosevelt Administration, and Philippe Bunau-Varilla. The rebels (led, in 1903, by four men: José Agustín Arango, Federico Boyd, Dr. Manuel Guerrero Amador, Tomas Arias, and C. C. Arosemena) had long sought freedom from Colombian rule but lacked the military capability to execute a successful "revolution" (LaFeber 1989, 19).² The Roosevelt Administration had secured an agreement with the Colombian government for the construction of an inter-oceanic canal across the Panamanian isthmus. The Hay-Herrán Treaty of 1903 gave

Colombia a \$10 million down-payment and \$250,000 annuity in exchange for "a 99-year lease on a six-mile-wide canal zone" but, unlike its North American counterpart, the Colombian Senate refused to ratify the Treaty (LaFeber, 1989, 18). Frenchman Philippe Bunau-Varilla was also experiencing difficulty in achieving his goal. His efforts to sell the New Panama Canal Company's canal construction rights--before their expiration in 1904--to the Russian czar and the British government were fruitless (LaFeber, 1989, 17; McCullough, 279). Therefore, three separate sets of frustrated goals led to plans for the liberation of the Isthmus from Colombian rule, the building of an inter-oceanic canal, and Bunau-Varilla's earning a \$40 million personal profit.³

With Bunau-Varilla acting as special envoy, the Panamanian delegation made an agreement with the Roosevelt Administration whereby the U.S. would provide military assistance to ensure a successful revolt and, in return, the newly independent Republic of Panama would sign a treaty granting the U.S. the right to construct an inter-oceanic canal across the narrow isthmus of the new nation-state. The delegation returned to Panama and witnessed the independence of their country on November 2, 1903.⁴ Washington had fulfilled its obligation. The time had arrived for Panama to commit to the treaty.

In 1903 U.S. Secretary of State John Hay and Panamanian "Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary" Philippe Bunau-Varilla signed the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Convention (McCullough, 387-388). Amador, Arango, Arosemena, Arias, and Boyd gave Bunau-Varilla the authority to act on Panama's behalf but within specific limits:

First, no deals could be made that affected 'the sovereignty of Panama which was free, States should pledge to uphold the new nation's 'sovereignty, territorial integrity, and public order'. . . . Third, a canal treaty would be drafted, but only after consultation with Amador and Boyd.
(LaFeber, 1989, 28-29)

Bunau-Varilla, who was motivated by the desire for fame, failed to adhere to any of the national's instructions (McCullough, 277). Instead, he

deliberately kept the rebel delegation waiting in New York while in Washington he proceeded to redraft Secretary Hay's treaty proposal, which was similar in language to the Hay-Herrán Treaty. However, Bunau-Varilla's version (which became the final treaty) gave a broader grant of power to the United States (McCullough 1977, 392).⁵ The treaty required the U.S. to pay Panama \$10 million for canal construction and a \$250,000 annuity, but Article 3 of the treaty also gave the United States "all the rights, power, and authority within the zone...which the United States would possess and exercise if it were the sovereign of the territory . . .to the entire exclusion of the exercise by the Republic of Panama of any sovereign rights, power or authority" (McCullough, 393). This provision permitted formation of a United States colony within Panama and was the first among several which transformed the newly independent country into a U.S. protectorate.

In addition to Article 3, Article 1 specified that "The United States guarantees and will maintain the independence of the Republic of Panama", thus giving the United States a basis for intervention (Mecham, 313). Through Article 3 the U.S. had been provided the right to maintain a permanent presence within the country and to govern the canal zone in accordance with U.S. laws and interests. Article 1 only served to extend the United States right to act as if it were sovereign to the whole of Panama. Then, with Article 136 of the 1904 Panamanian Constitution (which was modeled after the U.S. Constitution) the idea of sovereignty was solidified with the right of intervention (LaFeber, 1989, 33; Nyrop, 23). The article "gave the United States the right to intervene, in any part of Panama, to reestablish public peace and constitutional order" (LaFeber, 1989, 33). According to Nyrop, "[Panama] became a de facto protectorate of the [United States] through [Articles 1 and 136]" (23). Still, the mention of sovereignty in Article 3 was the crucial component, for it established the formal political presence of the United States in Panama.

Other provisions of the Treaty, specifically Articles II, IV, V, VII, and XII, further supported Bunau-Varilla's claim that the "The Republic of Panama is henceforth under the protection of the United States" (McCullough, 395). These provisions permitted the United States to pervade all facets of Panamanian life--political, economic, and social.

Articles II and IV granted perpetual occupation and use of Panamanian land and waters (LaFeber, 1989, 35-36). In addition, "Article VII provided the power to take by right of eminent domain needed lands, buildings, or water rights in Panama City and Colon, and to intervene in those cities, if necessary, to preserve public order" (36) (Mecham, 313). The provisions undoubtedly allowed the United States to determine in larger measure what regions of the country were populated, what regions were economically developed, and what political policies threatened public order. Furthermore, Article V gave the U.S. total control over Panamanian communications, and Article XII gave the Canal Company command of immigration (LaFeber, 1989, 36). As a consequence, the U.S. possessed the power to regulate both the dissemination of information and the racial composition of the new country. There was not time for an independent, sovereign Panamanian identity to be formed. Within a year of its independence the Republic had become no more than a Central American outpost of the United States.

Early on, Panama's citizens questioned the right of the U.S. to act as if it were sovereign both inside and outside the Canal Zone. "The Panamanian government objected to the establishment of ports, customs houses, and tariffs by the United States, arguing that such concessions would ruin Panama's commerce and, moreover, would infringe Panama's sovereignty over the Canal Zone" (Mecham, 316). At first Washington dealt with the complaints in a patronizing manner. The Theodore Roosevelt Administration claimed that Panamanian sovereignty in the Canal Zone was merely "titular"; the United States, possessed "the equivalent of sovereignty over the canal strip". Nevertheless, Washington assured the Panamanians that this "equivalent" sovereignty did not mean the colonization of the Zone (LaFeber, 1989, 34).

The U.S. administration's demands for compliance in response to other Panamanian protests, however, indicated a different interpretation of U.S. and Panamanian sovereignty. From Washington's viewpoint, U.S. sovereignty in the zone was all-encompassing, and for a very good reason; Panama's was non-existent. The U.S., in accordance with the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904, was on a "civilizing" mission to prevent European influence in the Western Hemisphere and to tutor the "wicked and

inefficient type" (from Roosevelt's viewpoint, any non-caucasian). Therefore, Panama, with its highly mestizo, mulatto, and black population, was to be a primary target of Roosevelt's belief (LaFeber, 1989, 43-44).

Provisions of the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty of 1903 and the Constitution of 1904 sealed the fate of Panama and its citizens. Panamanians did not have any involvement in the drafting or signing of the first document, nor did they have direct involvement in deciding the content of the second. The United States utilized its power to tempt Panama to choose independence or continuance of Colombian rule (LaFeber, 1989, 30). By 1904 the foundation of the protectorate was firmly in place, and Panamanians could not eliminate what was to become a lasting U.S. presence.

CHAPTER 3

THE HISTORICAL BASES OF PANAMANIAN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, SOCIAL STRUCTURES

They have not the first elements of good or free government. Arbitrary power, military, and ecclesiastical, was stamped upon their habits, and upon all their institutions. ⁶

John Quincy Adams

Characteristic of most Latin American nation-states is the triarchy of the military, the Church and the hacendado class or landed elite (Mecham, 15). These institutions, in a historically symbiotic relationship, have wielded a great degree of influence, maintaining control of the political, social, and economic systems of the country. ⁷ The landed oligarchy, composed of a predominantly white upper-class and supported by the military, has occupied the primary power position, generally determining all other social, economic, and political structures. In addition to supporting the rural oligarchy, the military has taken as its most important responsibility maintenance of the established order, and the military's commitment to order is near absolute. Moreover, the armed forces of Latin American have been willing to defy the interests of the hacendados and depose oligarchically-controlled governments if it has resulted in the maintenance of order. The Church has performed its natural role of spiritual guidance and traditionally has not challenged either the oligarchic dominance or the qualities of militarily-imposed order. ⁸

A history of conformance to these roles, however, has not resulted in consistently favorable Latin American relations with the United States. The dominant oligarchy, the strong military, and the passive Church--in the case of Central American and Caribbean states--have contributed to the development of what LaFeber calls "neo-dependency" (1983, 16). This concept grows out of original dependency theory. So-called neo-dependent countries are not only subjugated to "the economic strength...of the leading powers", but are also subject to military interventions by "those leading

powers" (LaFeber 1983, 17-18). Central American countries in neo-dependent relationships with the United States tend to have the following characteristics: monocultural economies, oligarchies subservient to U.S. interests, and militaries backed by Washington (1983,17). These characteristics ensure that small nation-states are malleable and willing to ignore their domestic interests in order to comply with those of the United States.

Although Panama does not share all the characteristics of neo-dependence (it has a more diversified economy than other Central American nation-states, for example), its internal political, economic, and social structures suggest a long-term historic neo-dependence on the United States. The traditional landed oligarchy has fulfilled its characteristic role of making political, economic, and social decisions. Panamanian politics are characterized by a strong military presence. The military has given support to those civilian leaders who have worked within the established order; it has deposed those who threatened order and the military's power to impose it. The Church, however, has not taken an active role in political, economic, and social issues:

Weak organization, the small number of parish priests, and the even smaller number of Panamanian parish priests generally prevented the development of strong hierarchical positions on social and political issues. (Nyrop, 158)

In the late 1960s the military assumed a superior position in the traditional triarchy. With the appointment of General Omar Torrijos as "Supreme Leader of the Panamanian Revolution", military and political leadership were united. Since this merger, the Panamanian military (called at first the National Guard and later the Panamanian Defense Force) has controlled virtually all political life, linking itself with the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD)--or any other party that perceived the military as a required partner. In the decade of the 1980s, despite the presence of puppet President Eric Arturo Devalle, the trend continued under the rule of General Manuel Antonio Noriega, Torrijos' successor. Governments representing military and oligarchy interests have maintained

long-term leases of Panamanian territory for what has been perceived in Washington at least as a permanent military presence for the U.S. ⁹ Therefore, Panama fulfills the last two criteria of neo-dependency, a compliant military and an oligarchy receptive to U.S. interests.

In the same vein, Panamanian economic and social systems are highly dependent on U.S. interests. The primary source of governmental revenue is the Panama Canal. Since its inauguration in 1914, the Panamanians have been subject to U.S. interests as crystallized in a whole succession of Canal Treaties. In addition to the Canal, Panama also gains revenue from its export of bananas, sugar, and coffee. According to LaFeber, these particular crops are never profitable for any Central American nation-state given that they are priced according to "an international marketplace which the industrial powers [such as the United States]...can control" (1983, 17). Thus, Panama's economic system is virtually monocultural and not particularly profitable at that. The country's use of the U.S. dollar as its legal currency is a symbol of its non-sovereign status. This, together with its involvement in the world banking industry, increases the vulnerability of its economic system to the vagaries of the international market and U.S.-commanded Panamanian behavior within it.

Although not primary characteristics in LaFeber's development of neo-dependency, racial and class characteristics are also significant bases upon which the country has developed into an informal protectorate. LaFeber describes the racial and class consciousness of early Panama, after the construction of the Canal:

The racial composition was complex and potentially dangerous. At the top of the socio-political-economic ladder stood approximately 51,000 'whites' whose largely Spanish ancestry made them whiter than most other Panamanians. The leaders of this group came from several dozen, often interrelated families that comprised the oligarchy. (1989, 49) ¹⁰

Therefore, because a white bloodline and wealth were conducive and economic power, the standard of "white is right, and Blacks go to the back" was strictly applied (LaFeber 1989, 50). Consequently, mestizos and mulattos, the majority racial groups, were excluded from both the political and economic processes and comprised the lower socioeconomic stratum.

A racially and socially divisive social system was reinforced by the practice of segregation in the Canal Zone. During construction of the Canal, the zone administration adapted the U.S. segregation system to the Canal housing, schools, hospitals, and the pay scale (McCullough, 472). Panamanians and blacks, who had come from the West Indies or the United States, received their wages from the silver roll while white laborers received their pay from the gold roll (472).¹¹ The use of two payrolls emphasized the difference between the valuable gold currency and its lesser valued counterpart (472). LaFeber notes that Panamanians deeply resented this and other practices which according to Panamanian opinion, had grouped them together with the lowest classes of society (LaFeber 1989, 52).¹²

CHAPTER 4

FACTORS IN U.S. DOMINANCE OVER PANAMA

Despite the history of racial and social division in Panama, a distinct form of national unity known as Panaméñismo exists. Panamanian nationalism originated in pre-Canal times, when the country was a province of New Granada (present-day Colombia) and was the rallying force for opposition to Colombian rule until Panama's independence in 1903 (LaFeber 1989, 10, 20). This unity was based on the great "geographical myth--the belief that Panamanians were predestined to control the crossroads of the world" (20). In addition to this belief, it followed that an anti-imperialist sentiment developed toward both Colombia and the United States (20). This early nationalism was later formalized into modern Panaméñismo, "government by Panamanians for the happiness of the Panamanian people," as announced by President Arnulfo Arias in 1940 (LaFeber 1989, 74).

Panamanian wariness concerning what was perceived to be imperialism was, of course, not without cause. According to LaFeber, emergence of the geographical myth coincided with Washington's introduction of a deterministic policy based on Manifest Destiny and the White Man's Burden (1989, 20). Together, these two concepts resulted in the following perception of Latin America and Latin Americans:

The United States is superior to the Latin American nations and carries the right and the moral obligation to spread its benign influence among the backward peoples of the southern continent.
(Williams 1971, 18)

Panama's view of the U.S. as a potential colonizing power was to be increasingly justified by Washington's behavior. This foresight, however, did not prevent the United States from securing those clauses in the 1903 Treaty which gave it "power over Panama's economy, immigration, city

services, and foreign policy" (LaFeber 1989, 54). From the time of the signing of the 1903 treaty to the present, Washington has fulfilled its destiny, "asserting [its assumed] racial and cultural superiority over [what it has viewed as] a materially inferior native majority" while discounting the importance of Panamenista fervor (LaFeber 1989, 53).

The 1903 Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty also allowed opportunity for total economic domination of Panama by the United States. As a province of Colombia, Panama was a center for American investment--The United Fruit Company and Central and South American Telegraph, for example (LaFeber 1989, 60) (McCullough 1977, 399). The completion of the Canal in 1914, however, initiated a more complicated economic relationship between the two nation-states than had ever been imagined. The Canal encouraged an influx of new American investments:

By 1930, North Americans held nearly \$29 million in direct investments and \$18 million in Panamanian bonds. [Also] the United States provided more than two-thirds of the nation's \$19 million imports and took 94 percent of its \$ 4 million in exports. (LaFeber 1989, 62)

Prosperity in the United States was inextricably linked with Panamanian prosperity, or the reverse, as seen in the stock market crash of 1929. In the aftermath, Panama experienced a high level of unemployment and an increase in racial tension. In 1931 the emerging Panamanian middle class, composed of mestizo professionals who were motivated by the damaging effects of the Canal Zone monopoly, led a successful coup against the Arosemena government.¹³ They were reacting to years of U.S. monopoly in the Canal Zone. "In [the middle class's] view the United States-subsidized commissaries in the Zone robbed merchants of sales, discriminated against Panamanian workers, and humiliated their country's government" (LaFeber 1989, 64). Throughout the history of Canal Zone trade, Panamanians viewed the U.S. monopoly over Zone commissaries as

being directly correlated with the country's sluggish economy (Mecham, 316).

Contemporary economic dependency on the United States is also centered on the Canal. In 1987 Panama received \$4 billion in U.S. investments and in 1988 \$1.1 million in U.S. aid (Sawyer). In addition, the United States paid Panama its treaty-mandated \$10,000,000 annuity for operation of the Canal. Compared to conditions in the 1920s, the Panama of the 1980s prospered well in economic terms from its relationship with the United States. In fact, "[n]early one-fifth of Panama's imports were from the U.S. while more than one-third of its exports went to the U.S. (Quigley). Then in 1988 the period of monocultural wealth was halted when U.S. President Reagan utilized the International Emergency Economic Powers Act to place sanctions on Panama. The sanctions, aimed at the person and government of strong-man Manuel Noriega, prohibited any payments by the United States government or by U.S. companies to Panama. Washington intended for the sanctions to act as a pressure tactic, forcing Panamanians to depose Noriega. Instead they merely led to heightened Panamanian nationalism and virtual economic demise of the country.

The almost immediate disintegration of the economy was a direct result of the restrictions caused by the sanctions. American businesses in Panama (approximately 450) could not pay taxes or telephone and electrical bills (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 39). In addition, the ban deprived the Panamanian government of U.S. aid, and a court order froze Panamanian government assets in U.S. banks. The government was thereby deprived of \$375 million dollars (Morganthau, 24-25). Sanctions added to the already weakening economic condition which had begun to surface in the latter half of the eighties. The once productive banking industry was experiencing capital flight (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 105). "The annual GDP growth rate fell from 4.7% in 1985 to 2.9% in 1986. . .and was probably zero in 1987 (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 42). The unemployment rate in 1986 was 10.2 % and about 14% at the time of the sanctions' implementation (De Córdoba, A11). In fact, the Panamanian Minister of Economic Planning foresaw the "[dismissal] of between 20,000 and 30,000 public sector employees out of a total of 150,000..." (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 37). The Panamanian government lacked a sufficient amount of

national currency, the U.S. dollar, to pay them (37).

The combined effect of the already weakening economy and U.S. sanctions prompted the Panamanian people to turn on the notoriously corrupt Noriega government. A large number of citizens temporarily put aside traditional racial and socioeconomic tensions in an attempt to oust General Noriega who, like his predecessor, the popular General Torrijos, capitalized on the divisiveness characterizing Panamanian society. Noriega assumed the role of Líder Maximo and gained vast support from lower class blacks and mestizos, offering them employment in the white-dominated political and economic systems (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 85). It was the closure of banks, unpaid pensions, a high unemployment rate, and the lack of food and medicines, however, that motivated these long-time supporters to side with the anti-Noriega National Civic Crusade or to abstain from political action altogether (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 104).¹⁴ The opposition, facing a determined Noriega, sought a "concerted and committed action from the U.S. Administration" to rid them of the General (105). They relied on the historic relationship between Panama and the United States to elicit an interventionary response from Washington.

The National Security State

An understanding of U.S.-Panamanian relations is only possible by understanding general U.S. policy toward Latin America. For over a century, Washington has viewed and continues to view Latin American nation-states as crucial for U.S. national security. The following discussion examines the concept of the national security state (with emphasis on its inception and its meaning during the Reagan Administration) with specific reference to Panama.¹⁵

United States-Latin American relations can be traced to the early eighteenth century. Later, in the aftermath of the Civil War, the United States, assuming the deterministic posture of Manifest Destiny, became the dominant force in the hemisphere. From the North American perspective, Latin American nation-states belonged geographically, politically, and culturally to the Western Hemisphere. The so-called

"Western Hemisphere Idea" described the concept of countries of both the North and South as having become "a community of neighbors sharing common interest and ideals" (Mecham, 85). However, the Southern neighbors' lack of democratic institutions obligated their powerful Northern neighbor, to give them guidance (Williams, 19).

This belief, while only partially explaining the pronouncement of the Monroe Doctrine, certainly brought forth (in 1903) the Roosevelt Corollary to that Doctrine, the latter being the pronouncement with which the United States claimed the right to exercise its military power to prevent European intervention in the Western Hemisphere (Mecham, 68). According to LaFeber, the U.S. formally announced its imperialistic character through the speech and actions of Theodore Roosevelt (1989, 41). As a result, Latin American nation-states, particularly those in the Central America and Caribbean, were partners in what Williams calls the U.S. policy of "defensive imperialism." The United States would deter any aggressive acts by European powers by means of deterring Latin America from committing any acts that would attract European intervention (Williams, 23). Hence, the fear of Europe as the alien "outsider" compelled the U.S. to control Latin America as one might control a child whose behavior threatened disorder on the part of others (LaFeber 1989, 41). Any country not under the direct tutelage of the United States was, in Washington's view, subject to instantaneous revolution (LaFeber 1989, 25).

The location of the Canal placed Panama among those nation-states viewed by the U.S. as being most important to its national security. Washington believed that "if unfriendly, powerful Europeans [like the Germans or the British] settled in one part of the Caribbean, their influence could spread until the Canal would be endangered" (LaFeber 1989, 42). So, like other countries in the region--e.g., Cuba and Nicaragua--Panama became the target of U.S. intervention when Washington perceived the slightest internal disorder. For instance, in 1918, four years after the completion of the Canal, U.S. troops intervened in response to rioting over a rigged election and occupied Chiriqui province for two years (LaFeber 1989, 58; Nyrop, 27). Military intervention was a long-term means of ensuring that the nation-states of the South did not risk the physical

security of the Hemisphere or impede United States policy (Mecham, 287).

More than seventy years later, U.S. assumptions about Latin American countries appeared not to have changed at all, and the international political system was still distinctly bipolar. The conflict between the U.S. and Europe as would be expansionist powers through the nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries continued in the Latin American arena; only the actors were different (Mecham, 462). From the Reagan Administration's viewpoint, the Monroe Doctrine had to be revived. The Soviet Union had replaced Great Britain and Germany as the Old World power which threatened U.S. national security (Mecham, 54). Therefore, tutelage of Latin American nation-states was still necessary, for somehow the countries of the South had not mastered democracy (as defined by U.S. State Department experts). North America was obligated to continue in its role as world policeman to keep "outsiders" from threatening the Hemisphere, and Central and Caribbean States were once again major forces in a posture of defensive imperialism (LaFeber 1989, 41; Williams, 23). President Reagan stated "Central America is America. It's at our doorstep" (Schoultz, 38). The United States was continuing its mission--now in terms of the Cold War--to keep the Soviet Union and its political doctrines from reaching the Hemisphere. U.S. Latin American foreign policy in became characterized by a paranoid fear of communist ideological and/or political presence. According to the Reagan administration, any instability within Latin America would leave a vacuum that the communists would be more than willing to fill.

Just as it viewed other other Central American and Caribbean states, the Administration valued Panama as an important actor in its hemispheric "fortress" policy. The nation-state has figured highly in the global balance of power, not only because of the Canal, but also for its being the site of U. S. military bases which would be of value in the keeping the region militarily free of a communist presence. Since 1913, the United States has maintained a military command center for Latin America in Panama, the United States Southern Command or SOUTHCOM (Schoultz, 166). The center defends the Canal and furthers U.S. military influence throughout the region through "supervision of military aid programs, the

support of military assistance groups...and the coordination of inter-American training exercises". The country has ten U.S. military installations occupied by a total of 10,300 U.S. military personnel (Sawyer). For over thirty years, Panama was the home of the School of the Americas, a U.S. military training center for Latin American forces, and it is the location of the Inter-American Air Force Academy (Schoultz, 167). Facilities like these have enabled the United States to have a direct presence in the region in order to look for signs of instability and communist threat.

The U.S. has further implanted itself in Panama through its influence over the national military. The Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty provided the foundation for U.S. development of the country's military. Nyrop cites the U.S. dissolution of the Panamanian army in 1904 as an example of the degree of North American control from the earliest times (Nyrop, 27). At the request of President Amador, who characterized his army as a "Frankenstein" . . . only the North Americans could control. . . .", U.S. officials ordered that the country's army be eliminated. "Panamanian arms and ammunition were placed in the Canal Zone under U.S. control. For the next quarter-century, the country depended on a 700-to 1000-member police force and the United States military for its internal security" (LaFeber 1989, 39).

This same control later manifested itself in the training of the Panamanian National Guard (later known as the Panamanian Defense Force), in the School of the Americas.¹⁶ According to LaFeber, "... [the School of Americas] produced 34,000 graduates by the mid-1970s. The Panamanian Guard provided 3500, or the fourth highest number of these graduates," (1989, 132; Nyrop 1980, 201). The school's "courses taught military officers to forget the old caudillismo and instead make their country immune to communism, not to enrich their bankrolls" (LaFeber 1989, 132). The Guard was the enforcing body of General Omar Torrijos who in 1968 assumed maximum leadership in Panama. Torrijos and the Panamanian National Guard were Washington's assurance that any instability which might threaten the national security state could be instantly suppressed.

The Torrijos government censored the country's media and outlawed free speech, political parties and the National Assembly (LaFeber 1989, 132) (Nyrop 1980, 151). After Torrijos's death in 1981, General Manuel Antonio Noriega, his successor, continued this tradition. Noriega, however, would cause the Reagan Administration--which in the 1980s was actively opposing Nicaragua's Sandinista's through clandestine aid to the Contras--to question its support of a strong Panamanian military under such a person as Manuel Noriega.

CHAPTER 5 OPERATION JUST CAUSE: ANTECEDENTS

Cocaine the cancer in the Panamanian Defense Force has metastasized. They have been at it for 20 years. 17

Jack H. Vaughn, Former U.S. Ambassador to Panama, in his testimony to the U.S. House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs

Rediscovery of Noriega

Washington's relationship with Noriega spanned almost four decades. As a young military cadet (and later as a member of the National Guard), Noriega served as a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) informant (Salholz, 15). Throughout his military training he spied on classmates suspected of leftist leanings. As a Guard officer he concentrated on collecting information on Cuba for the CIA. At the same time, General Torrijos recognized him as a loyal friend, and Noriega steadily climbed the ranks of the Guard command. His usefulness to the United States endured through both Republican and Democratic administrations. LaFeber states that "[Noriega] passed on such useful information to intelligence officials during the 1950s and 1960s that the CIA made him one of its 'assets'" (1989, 195). His privileged status remained intact, despite CIA Director George Bush's confirmation, in mid-1970, that Noriega was an intelligence agent for both the United States and Cuba (Parry, 16). In addition to his spying activities, the Panamanian was involved in the drug trade. However, Noriega's value--according to Washington--outweighed any offenses he committed against the United States or Panamanian society

That value doubled when Noriega became de facto leader of Panama in

1983. After the 1981 death of General Omar Torrijos, the Panamanian National Guard was to operate on a rotational command system:

In 1982 the four top officers of the National Guard agreed on a plan for rotational command of the guard among themselves, with each outgoing commander taking up a position of power within the PRD. [Each of the four officers was to have an opportunity to be the head of the National Guard]. (Robinson 1989, 189)¹⁸

In 1983, however, Noriega changed the rules when he assumed complete control of the Panamanian government. Following the tradition, he moved to fortify the National Guard and continued to take a percentage of the country's revenue as personal gain (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 8). He transformed the Guard into the 15,000-man Panamanian Defense Forces (PDF) which functioned as both military and police. Panamanians associated the PDF with its corrupt activities--i.e., drug trafficking, money laundering, arms smuggling, and illegal trade. The force was well-known for its Dignity Battalions and, particularly, its anti-riot squad called the Dobermans (Robinson 190). With the aid of the PDF, Noriega had complete control of Panama and for some Panamanians, this control lay in the hands of a "strange, twisted, scary" individual (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 11).

For the Reagan administration, Manuel Noriega's behavior was secondary. The General was a crucial actor in the Administration's Nicaraguan policy. Throughout the 1980s Washington was preoccupied with the Nicaraguan Sandinista government which it sought to counter with its proxies, the "Contras. U.S. officials, particularly President Reagan, perceived Contra victory as the key to instituting democratic government--that is, one receptive to U.S. interests--in the country. To ensure that Nicaragua would come under the control of the Contras, the United States executed clandestine missions under the direction of National Security Council aide Oliver North.

North's willing partner was General Noriega who carried out tasks for the Administration even after the U.S. Congress banned military assistance to the Contras. Kempe describes Noriega's involvement in the bombing of Nicaraguan military facilities; such was done to demonstrate the pervasiveness and power of the Contra organization (20). Noriega also offered "to murder Nicaraguan leaders on Washington's behalf", and for a salary of \$185,000 per year, the General leased his country as a shipment center for arms and money (Kempe, 22).

In addition to these activities, LaFeber has described Noriega's purposeful efforts to destroy the Contadora Peace Plan at the urging of the United States. The Plan, which called for a cessation of military activities, "threatened both to take initiative in the region out of Washington's hands and to leave the Sandinistas in power in Nicaragua" (LaFeber 1989, 200). By 1984--the year of the Boland Amendment which "cut off military aid to the Contras"--the Panamanian dictator was Washington's last hope for ousting Daniel Ortega's Sandinistas (Kempe, 24). Noriega was well aware of this factor and fatefully assumed that he was indispensable to the United States (Robinson, 191). Therefore, when he refused to continue to assist the Reagan Administration, he did not realize that he had pushed U.S. officials to the limits.

The Reagan Position

Noriega's lack of cooperation signalled Washington that an old friendship had gone sour, but before terminating the relationship, the Administration attempted to salvage it. In 1985 "both CIA Director William Casey and [National Security Council] Chief John Poindexter [began] to pressure Noriega to clean up his act..." (Morganthau, 36). To these two men the redemption of Noriega--who had been a friend to both the CIA, NSC, and the DEA--meant the chance to succeed in Nicaragua (36). The Panamanian ignored U.S. pressure, leaving Washington divided over the next course of action. Then the release of a New York Times article in 1986, describing Noriega's alleged involvement in cocaine trafficking, exposed the nature of the crisis but in simplistic terms. North Americans were faced with the image of the good U.S. battling the bad Central American

drug dealer.

Despite the publication of the article, some U.S. bureaucrats still favored the U.S.-Noriega relationship. LaFeber states that "Even after U.S. officials, no doubt led by Poindexter, publicly raised the pressure on Noriega to step down, they continued to praise him for cooperating with the DEA" (1989, 203). Until 1987 the Reagan Administration continued to debate about maintaining Noriega. Members of the CIA and Defense Department took sides against the State Department which from the beginning viewed the dictator as replaceable (Robinson 1989, 191). From 1987 until the end of President Reagan's term, the Administration used a series of measures to push Noriega out of Panama, none of which were successful.

Before Washington could make its first diplomatic overtures, unrest occurred in Panama. Members of the National Civic Crusade (NCC), a citizens' group led by white upper- and middle-class Panamanians, rallied to show their "discontent with PDF corruption and Noriega" (Robinson, 191). The leader retaliated with acts of violence aimed at both the United States and the NCC:

Noriega organized a street march of 5,000 followers, who smashed windows and stoned vehicles at the U.S. embassy, then overturned a statue of [Theodore Roosevelt] ...The General imprisoned up to 600 opponents in July alone, while street clashes with this forces led to at least one death and over 1,000 injuries. (LaFeber 1989, 205).

With the internal turmoil in Panama now exposed to the world, Washington apparently had justification for its subsequent actions. The Administration assumed that it would appear as a saviour to the Panamanian people. 19

The Reagan Administration initially approached Noriega in an unassuming manner, but as the dictator showed no sign of cooperating, the Administration gradually increased the pressure. First, "in December [1988] Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage flew to Panama to tell Noriega he had to go. Somehow, that message did not get through" (Morganthau, 36). Consequently, the U.S. sent a second message on

February 4, 1988, when a Florida grand jury charged Noriega for the following activities:

[giving] assistance in transshipment of drugs from Colombia to the [U.S.], laundering drug profits in Panama-based banks in return for a payoff, [granting] permission to set up cocaine processing plants. . . , and the sale of ether and acetone to the drug cartel. (Robinson , 191).

According to Bernal, the indictment was another poorly planned U.S. effort (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 151). Bernal's analysis has merit because the indictment only precipitated yet another U.S. action.

Following the indictment, the U.S. decided to act in closer proximity to Noriega. Assistant Secretary of State Elliot Abrams held secret meeting with Noriega's puppet president, Eric Arturo Delvalle and encouraged him to release Noriega as the PDF Commander (Pichirallo 16). When Delvalle attempted to fire Noriega on February 25, 1988, the General responded by firing Delvalle and replacing him with Manuel Solís Palma. In turn, the United States refused to recognize the Solís Palma government and conceded to the newly exiled Delvalle's request to freeze Panamanian revenues (Robinson, 193). The Administration appeared desperate, for as Bernal emphasizes, "President Eric Arturo Delvalle [had been] a Noriega puppet [only] a few weeks ago" (U.S. Congress, House, 188, 151).

Month after month Noriega and Washington continued the battle of wills. In March Deputy Assistant Secretary of State William Walker and legal adviser Michael Kozak traveled to Panama to offer Noriega a deal: the U.S. would not extradite Noriega to stand trial if he would go immediately into exile. The General refused the deal. On March 16, 1980, the leader faced and put down a coup attempt led by Colonel Leonidas Macias and his troops (Robinson, 193). The following month President Reagan utilized the International Emergency Economic Powers Act "to ban payments to Noriega's government"; this ban prohibited U.S. companies and U.S. citizens residing in Panama from making any payments to the Panamanian

government ("U.S. Ban") (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 89; See also Chapter IV, "Factors in U.S. Dominance"). Although this ban in combination with a suspension of Panama's favored trade status and economic aid only further weakened the country's economy, Noriega still rejected a second U.S. deal.

In May 1988 Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Michael Kozak returned to Panama with another proposal: the U.S. would drop the drug indictments if Noriega would resign on August 12, 1988 and go into exile. After Noriega's departure, U.S. aid to Panama would resume (Galloway 28). Once again the leader refused. Prior to Kozak's leaving, the U.S. Senate passed "an amendment prohibiting any negotiations with Noriega that would include quashing the Miami indictment" (Morganthau 1988, 39). The Administration had, indeed, reached a stalemate in resolving the crisis. Even in its last days the Reagan Administration attempted to remedy the situation.

In July the Administration considered sponsoring another coup which would have been sanctioned by President Reagan's Covert Action Finding ("Reagan"). Officials did not follow through with the plan because the Department of Defense voiced concerns about its effect on the future of U.S. military base placement in Central America ("Reagan"). Yet, the Administration acted paradoxically in August 1988 when it did not include Noriega on a list to countries with "heads of state senior government officials involved in drug trafficking"--as required by the 1986 Anti-Drug Act ("U.S. Drops"). According to Washington, Noriega was not listed because he was not the legitimate head of Panamanian government ("U.S. Drops"). Perhaps the U.S. officials considered the omission as a formal retraction of the drug indictment which would coax Noriega to cooperate. Regardless of the intent, the strong man remained firmly in place, a problem pending for the next U.S. president.

The Bush Response

By the time of his election, George Bush, Vice President during the Reagan Administration, understood the nature of the Panamanian crisis. He knew of the dissension among key administrative agencies concerning a resolution of the issue. In fact, during the last days of his vice presidency,

he contributed to the discord by openly opposing President Reagan's final offer to negotiate with Manuel Noriega (Morganthau 1988, 36). However, Bush's decision to approach the situation differently did not give him any added advantage. Like Reagan he faced a determined Noriega, who continued to draw support from Panamanians through generation of anti-Yankee sentiment (Branigin 18). Moreover, the new president also found that the past discord of the Reagan Administration carried over into his own.

President Bush faced four pressing issues: (1) the continuance of economic sanctions; (2) the upcoming Panamanian election; (3) the need to appoint a Panamanian Canal administrator; and (4) the expiration of recognized Panamanian President Eric Arturo Delvalle's term (August 1989) (Branigin 18). The President attempted to respond to these with policies in accordance with the U.S. "objective of removing General Noriega, reforming the Panamanian Defense Forces, and removing them from politics" through U.S. assistance of the Panamanian people (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 119). The failure of Bush's initial response to the crisis led the Administration to opt for the historical military solution to Latin American problems.

The Administration's first action was to extend economic sanctions for one year.²⁰ This included the cancelling of Panama's sugar quota which cost the country approximately \$15 million in revenue ("U.S. Expands"). Although the original intent of the sanctions was "to squeeze Panama's economy" enough to spark public opposition to Noriega, the sanctions did not have the desired effect (Tonelson). While opposition to Noriega grew, the economic sanctions worsened the living conditions of the very people who were a part of the opposition (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 119). As a result, the sanctions discredited the U.S. aim of giving support to the Panamanian opposition and instead gave Noriega the advantage. The General managed to survive what he termed "Yankee sanctions" (Quigley). According to Bernal, "Noriega painted the [economic] situation in such a way that Panamanians blame the United States for the lack of cash" (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 151). Despite this fact and complaints from American businesses, about the negative impact of the sanctions' restrictions, President Bush defended his decision by stating that "actions and policies of the regime in Panama continue to pose

an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States" (Branigin 1989b, 18; "U.S. Sanctions").

Given the adverse effect of the sanctions vis-a-vis U.S. policy, the 1989 Panamanian presidential election became the United States foremost opportunity to reclaim its influence in Panama. The election results would determine whether the next government would be receptive to U.S. interests and if the Panama canal administrator--to be a Panamanian national chosen according to treaty mandate, by December 31, 1989--would be a part of that same government (Robinson, 199). The U.S. refused to accept a Noriega appointee for Canal Administrator; the Senate passed "a non-binding resolution (63-31) [deciding that it would not vote for a Noriega appointee even if the [Bush] administration approved one" (199). Therefore, the Bush Administration acted to defeat Noriega's Coalition of National Liberation (COLINA) in the May 7 election (Branigin 1989a, 19). President Bush authorized the CIA's assistance of the Democratic Alliance of Civic Opposition Party, led by presidential candidate Guillermo Endara ("CIA") (Branigin 1989a, 19). The directive permitted the CIA to offer \$10 million to the opposition party for financing its campaign costs, specifically, secret radio and television broadcasts ("Bush Seeks") ("CIA"). Noriega responded by ordering a halt to broadcast and publication of opposition views. He also claimed that Washington's action was an attempt to breach the Canal Treaties ("Bush Seeks" 1989). (The U.S. would, indeed violate the Treaties if President Bush refused to acknowledge a Noriega appointee for Canal Administrator) (Seib and Greenberg).

Noriega's response demonstrated the degree of his power over the election process. The dictator controlled the Electoral Tribunal, the body in charge of "[issuing] identity cards, [registering] voters, [settling] electoral challenges. . . and officially [declaring] the winning candidates" (Branigin 1989a, 19). Moreover, through the Electoral Tribunal the PDF issued voter identification cards, cedulas, for the elections and thereby rigged the registration list with multiple names and registered dead voters (Cochez, A15). PDF members were also able to vote anywhere at anytime; an electoral code required that the Forces' members vote at the end of the line at the end of the day (A15). This regulation gave the military ample opportunity to stuff ballot boxes or destroy ballots cast for the opposition.

Consequently, the May 7 election was expected to result in victory for Noriega's candidate, Carlos Duque. Candidates of the government-sponsored COLINA were accompanied by political organizers (military zone chiefs). The presence of the military reinforced Noriega's earlier warning to Panamanian citizens that during the election "[they] must choose between the triumph of COLINA or the disappearance of the republic--and [the latter Panamanians] could not permit. . . [those] who are against us must be liquidated. . . There is no possibility of losing" (Cochez, A15). Thus, when both the opposition and COLINA claimed victory, Noriega nullified the election, and subsequently, Noriega supporters beat the presidential and vice presidential candidates of the Democratic Alliance for Civic Opposition Party with iron bars ("Panama Nullifies", 1).²¹ Apparently both the U.S. and the Panamanian opposition had lost the final chance to oust Noriega.

However, the nullification of the election prompted the U.S. to give its first overt response. The Bush Administration at first moved cautiously, calling for condemnation of the Noriega regime by other Latin American nation-states. Adams characterizes this approach as "smart"; it indicated that the U.S. supported multilateral rather than unilateral action (1989b, 1C). He also observes that the Administration "cast the situation as a 'conflict between Noriega and the people of Panama'" rather than one between Noriega and the U.S. (Adams 1989b, 1C). At this time experts suggested a semi-"hands-off" policy in order to keep Latin Americans on the U.S. side and to maintain the view of Noriega as a corrupt dictator (1989b, 1C).

Latin American nation-states responded through the Organization of American States (OAS). In May 1989, the OAS requested that Noriega make "conciliation formulas [leading to] a transfer of power democratically" (Adams 1989a, 1B). The OAS issued a vague statement for specific reasons (1989a, 1B). First, the OAS did not look favorably upon the U.S. because of its delinquency in payment of membership dues. Second, other experts credit the OAS position to Washington's conditional interest in the organization. Latin Americanist Mark Rosenberg states:

We've [the United States] always had great expectations of the OAS when we wanted it to do our bidding. But after eight years of neglect, we don't have very many allies there. . .(Adams 1989a, 1B)

Third, the Organization faced the dilemma of upholding one of its guiding principles over the other: the doctrine of non-intervention versus the belief in representative democracy. Fearful that the U.S. might intervene in Panama the OAS decided to take a more or less neutral stance (Adams 1989a, 1B). Adams emphasizes that the long history of U.S. intervention in Latin America has made the doctrine of non-intervention a high priority in the region. In addition, all OAS members could identify with Panama's difficulty in establishing and maintaining a democracy (Adams 1989a, 1B). Therefore, in June 1989 the group of countries took its final action when it sent a delegation to Panama to encourage Noriega to leave (De Córdoba 1989, A14). The OAS found that the dictator was no more willing to cooperate with his neighbors than he was with the United States.

Anticipating a weak response from the OAS, the Bush Administration began to consider three options: (1) the use of military force, (2) a total trade embargo, and (3) the sending of additional troops to Panama-- increasing the current number of 10,500 (Seib and Greenberg). Of the three the Administration chose the latter. On May 11, 1989, President Bush ordered 1,800 soldiers to Panama (O'Rourke, 1). The President's order was a "show of force" which was given to maintain support within the U.S. In light of the PDF's harassment of American citizens residing in Panama, the grounds for the action appeared solid and unquestionable. Still President Bush formally justified his decision with the following statement:

I'm worried about the lives of American citizens, and will do what is necessary to protect the lives of American citizens. And we will not be intimidated by the bullying tactics, brutal though they may be, of the dictator Noriega (O'Rourke, 1).

The Failed Coup

By late 1989 a Panamanian ousting of Noriega seemed likely to occur. On October 3, 1989, a group of PDF members led by Major Moises Giroldi attempted to overthrow the Noriega regime ("Loyalists"; "Noriega's Phone", 13A). The rebel officers took control of the PDF headquarters in Panama City and captured General Noriega ("Loyalist" 1989). "After a six-hour gun battle," however, loyal members of the PDF wrested control from the renegade officers and rescued Noriega (1989).²² The rebels' intent was to force Noriega to retire. Under no condition did Major Giroldi and his men plan to kill or extradite the General ("Noriega's Phone", 13A). Still Major Giroldi was killed for orchestrating the coup, and according to the Public Broadcasting System Program "War and Peace in Panama"--which was aired on April 12, 1991--the dissident officers who returned to PDF headquarters were never seen again. Noriega told Panamanians that "This incident [corresponded] to the permanent aggression of U.S. forces against the tranquility of [the] country" ("Loyalists").

In the aftermath of the event, argument in Washington centered on the Bush Administration's failure to act. Despite the CIA's claim that the rebels only sought minimal assistance--which the U.S. provided by constructing street blockades--top U.S. legislators openly criticized the President for his failure to act ("Noriega's", 13A) (Sawyer). Contradicting the CIA, President Bush denied any U.S. involvement in the coup attempt. He stated that rumors of U.S. assistance were unfounded ("Loyalists"). Yet, sources show that Washington was notified of the plan 24 hours in advance. Intelligence Director Webster explained away the charges of inefficiency in terms of the Administration's cautious approach to the Noriega regime ("Noriega's Phone", 13A). For some congressmen this explanation was inadequate. Senator Dennis DeConcini avidly advocated U.S. military intervention as "a warranted and absolute right under the canal treaties" ("Bush"). Hence, the Bush Administration now confronted real domestic pressure for more-direct action.

CHAPTER 6 ANALYSIS OF THE INVASION

Every human life is precious and yet, I
have to answer, yes, it was worth it. 23

President George Bush, commenting on his
decision to invade Panama

Bush Administration Justifications

For two years the U.S. pressured Noriega to relinquish power and to leave Panama. On December 20, 1989, the lengthy effort culminated with the occurrence of Operation Just Cause. In the early morning hours U.S. forces closed in on Panama's capital city, spraying gun fire from the air while stealthy Special Operations troops moved below on the ground. During the invasion, the Special Operations troops were to capture General Noriega, but the dictator evaded the ground forces. Implementing General Colin Powell's strategy of "overwhelming force", U.S. air power--including the Air Force's Stealth F-117--simultaneously hit several targets throughout Panama. The chief target, however, was the Commandancia, the Panamanian Defense Forces Headquarters, which was completely destroyed. The U.S. successfully invaded the small Central American Country and managed to do so with minimal loss; 23 U.S. soldiers were killed and 312 were wounded ("War and Peace" 1991). Assessing all U.S. costs, the invasion did, indeed, appear to be worthwhile.

On the other hand, the Bush Administration did appear at any time to be concerned whether or not the invasion was justified in terms of international law (both general and Inter-American). Prior to the military strike, President Bush asserted that his decision to intervene was based on the following grounds: (1) protection of U.S. citizens; (2) "[defense of] democracy in Panama"; (3) capture of Noriega "for violation of U.S. antinarcotics statutes" and (4) protection of the Panama Canal (Maechling,

122; Watson, 21).²⁴ General Noriega's declaration of Panama's state of war with the U.S. and the killing of an American serviceman by the PDF--both incidents occurring only a few days prior to the invasion--gave some credibility to these proposed justifications ("U.S. Soldier"). However, Maechling states that "the legality [of the invasion] is dubious" ("War and Peace" 1991). "Of the four reasons cited by Bush to justify the invasion, two find no support in international law" (Maechling, 121). An examination of the four justifications in terms of general and Inter-American international law indicates that Maechling's assessment is correct.

Protection of U.S. Citizens Abroad

A nation's right to intervene on behalf of protecting its citizens abroad is granted under both general international law and Inter-American law. This right rests upon the condition that the country is not treating "alien citizens" in a humanitarian manner--according to an understood "international standard" (Thomas and Thomas, 304-305). Intervention, however, is a last resort. Both general international law and Inter-American law require the citizens' home country to complete a two-step process: (1) to "[exhaust] all local [legal] remedies" and (2) to "[sustain] a denial of justice" (Thomas and Thomas, 304, 326). After these conditions are met intervention becomes a viable option.

Nevertheless, the two divisions of law address this course of action differently. General international law offers the alien's country more freedom in dealing with the situation because reprisals--whether armed or unarmed--are not categorized as a breach of the law (Thomas and Thomas, 86, 327).²⁵ On the contrary, Inter-American law, meaning the OAS Charter, is more restrictive; it prohibits reprisal by an individual nation-state on behalf of its citizens (Thomas and Thomas, 327). Instead the Inter-American system mandates resolution of alleged aliens' rights violation by means of diplomatic negotiations, and if negotiations are unsuccessful, then the two nation-states must address the problem to the entire OAS body (Thomas and Thomas, 138-139). This regulation was initiated by Article II of the Inter-American Treaty of Reciprocal Assistance of 1947 (Rio Treaty). With specific regard to the U.S.-

Panamanian crisis, Maechling notes that the U.S., a member of the OAS, did not attempt to resolve the alleged citizens' rights violations by Panama in this manner (124). Although the U.S. sought and received an OAS condemnation of the Noriega regime, it did not use the organization to resolve the ongoing dispute.

Defending Democracy

Second, the Bush Administration claimed that armed intervention was its means of preserving democracy. Yet, before this contention can be given serious consideration, the question of whether or not democracy existed in Panama prior to the Noriega regime must be answered. Reviewing the history of the nation-state, the answer is decidedly in the negative. Maechling states "The notion that Panama, a country governed since its inception by a corrupt oligarchy and a succession of dictatorial leaders, had democracy to begin with is itself ludicrous" (123).

Furthermore, the preservation of democracy as justification for military intervention finds no support in general international law or inter-American law. General international law adheres to the principle that a country's freedom "to choose any form of government or political institution" supersedes any other nation-state's desire for democracy (Thomas and Thomas, 359). Generally, "as long as a [country's] regime does not breach international law, any intervention to bring about the overthrow of its government, no matter how undemocratic it is internally, [is] illegal" (Thomas and Thomas, 361). Thus, an intervening country would act without legitimacy, that is, outside of its realm of authority by exercising power not granted to it (Brilmayer, 16).

Likewise, the OAS, the regional body which defines the inter-American system, does not permit intervention by one member nation-state into another for the purpose of establishing democracy (Thomas and Thomas, 36). Inter-American law operates on the assumption that all member nation-states will pursue a democratic course. Even if they do not, the doctrine of non-intervention, established for the Inter-American system in 1947 with the Rio Treaty, prohibits the "threat or the use of force in any

manner inconsistent with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations or of this Treaty" (Thomas and Thomas, 436).

The Third

A third justification of the Bush Administration was that General Noriega who allegedly violated U.S. drug laws had to be captured and made to face the consequences of his actions. The U.S. based its claim to Noriega on the "effects doctrine, which extends the reach of U.S. criminal jurisdiction beyond U.S. borders if the crime or conspiracy has an impact inside the United States or against its citizens" (Maechling, 128). In this particular case, Washington asserted that Noriega's actions benefitted the U.S. drug trade, thereby affecting United States citizens. Application of the effects doctrine in international law, however, has been limited to terrorist activities committed in international air space, "piracy, [and] war crimes" (Maechling, 128-129). Noriega's assistance to the Medellin drug cartel does not fit into any of these categories. Moreover, no prior ground exists within the history of the doctrine for trying heads of state (129).²⁶

Safeguarding the Canal

Finally, Washington proposed that the invasion of Panama was necessary in order to defend the Canal and to maintain the Canal Treaties of 1979. Admittedly, the United States is entrusted with the power to defend the Canal by Article IV of the Canal Treaties. Thus far, all literature on the 1989 invasion has emphasized the fact that General Noriega made no direct reference to, nor did he commit any overt act of violence which threatened the security of the Canal or the Treaties. In the absence of such action, the argument of the United States remains weak and without basis. Maechling best summarizes the true nature of the U.S. contention with these words:

What brought the crisis to a head was that under the Commission, the administrator, was scheduled to pass from an American to a nominee of the Panamanian

government on January 1, 1990. . [This fact] presented the Bush administration, and Congress, with the embarrassing dilemma of how to deal with a government that Washington refused to recognize. (Maechling 1990, 120-121) 27

In light of the history of U.S.-Panamanian relations, Maechling's characterization is accurate. Panamanian administration of the Canal would have contradicted the traditional U.S. role as the superior protecting the interests of Panama.

U.S. Public Opinion

A survey of the U.S. citizen opinion indicates that Washington was politically correct in its decision to act militarily. Grier reports that President Bush received an 80% public approval rating for the December invasion. However, prior to the intervention only 26% of U.S. citizens surveyed favored the use of military force (Manegold, 30). Yet, the strong assent by the U.S. mass-base after the invasion more than likely stems from a sense of nationalism. In a Newsweek poll of U.S. citizens prior to the invasion, 60% of the people stated that it was "very important that General Noriega give up power in Panama" (Manegold, 30). Also 50% favored a "[U.S.] halt [in] the process for giving Panama control of the Panama Canal as long as Noriega [was] in power" (30). These figures indicate that perhaps U.S. citizens do view the Panama Canal as only another region of the United States, and therefore, to a majority of the U.S. populace the Bush action was justified.

Even the opposing Democratic Party was relatively silent with its criticism of the administration's choice of force. Some negative comment was voiced by Senate majority leader George Mitchell and Senate Armed Services Committee chairman Sam Nunn (Grier, 2). Still Watson states that "expressions of support for Operation Just Cause were faxed to news organizations by many vacationing congressmen, who have learned not to criticize invasions by popular presidents"; the political costs are too expensive (21). Therefore, the first foreign policy decision of the Bush

Administration apparently awakened a stagnant nationalism and set the tone for future U.S. policy in the international community.

Options: Legal and other

Despite the high measure of domestic support for the December invasion, the alternatives to military action should be considered. During the congressional hearings prior to the invasion--held in April and June of 1988, expert witness testimony revealed several options, some legal and others not.

Of the suggested legal alternatives, a joint regional action with other Latin American countries was the primary one. Experts advised the legislature to pursue a multilateral diplomatic overture because this course of action was more functional--feasible and low in costs. Former U.S. Ambassador to Costa Rica Francis J. McNeil stated that "the least painful way to get Noriega out quickly is for Latin America to mediate between Noriega and the opposition" (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 13). In addition to this principal option were suggestions for the U.S. to "[extract itself] from the crisis environment and to "[reconcile] with the [Noriega] regime" (U.S. Congress, House 1988, 63-64). However, these options were classified as unsuitable for resolution of the situation.

Continuation of economic sanctions--based on the assumption that these sanctions were legal--was also dismissed as an unsuitable action. Proponents of the sanctions represented a minority in the group of witnesses. They based their support for this option on the grounds that it demonstrated a strong U.S. position (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 64). Opponents of sanctions, however, successfully argued that they were not producing the desired result, and moreover, that they only further eroded support for the U.S. within Panama as well as the country's economy (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 53). From the opposition's viewpoint, the sanctions were part of a U.S. action centered solely on ousting Noriega and obstructed other goals like "the eventual restoration of democracy" (1988, 53).

The single illegal option under consideration was the use of conventional military force or simply a military strike team (special

forces in covert action). The vast majority of testimony declared this alternative too costly and risky. If the operation failed, the U.S. would then have to contend with condemnation from the world community, especially the countries of Latin America (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 27). Furthermore, the absence of a direct threat to the Panama Canal by the Noriega regime provided no legal grounds for U.S. military action ("U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 31). Still proponents of the measure suggested that the action be reserved for later use, in the event that U.S. interests were directly threatened by Panama (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 64). If military force were used too soon, the U.S. could lose the opportunity to spread and create democracy in Central America (1988, 64).

CHAPTER 7 CONSEQUENCES FOR U.S.-PANAMANIAN RELATIONS

They [the United States] don't want an independent Panama. They want a sub-subservient Panama because that is how they've always prospered. 28

Former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador
Robert White

In the aftermath of the invasion the United States found that simple victory would not resolve the Panamanian crisis. Instead the very target of the Operation, General Manuel Antonio Noriega, remained free, taking refuge in the Vatican Embassy in Panama (Lane, 18). Noriega arrived at the embassy on December 24, 1989--four days after the U.S. invasion--and stayed there until January 3, 1990, when he surrendered to U.S. troops ("War and Peace" 1991). Meanwhile within the capital city Panamanians looted local businesses, and U.S. troops faced a resistant PDF. Those members of the PDF who had not been killed, injured, or captured during the invasion changed into civilian clothes and infiltrated the streets of Panama City in order to fight with U.S. troops. To eliminate the number of renegade Panamanian soldiers the U.S. military offered cash for guns and confiscated them from citizens' homes through raids.

Sentiment Among the Panamanian People

Surprisingly enough, the great majority of Panamanians viewed the invasion and its subsequent consequences as completely beneficial, a liberation from the repression of the Noriega regime ("War and Peace"). Larmer quotes one Panamanian as saying "There was no civilian government before. The Defense Forces were running the country. Things had to change" (3). Still the Panamanian support for a U.S. invasion is, according to Larmer, a rarity given the history of U.S. Latin American relations. He states:

In any other Latin American country, including such dependent U.S. allies as El Salvador or Honduras, the idea of U.S. intervention is anathema to the basic principle of Latin nationalism. (Larmer 3)

Larmer explains Panama's acceptance of the U.S. invasion on the bases of its historic relationship with the superior power--proximity and construction of the canal. "Panama was born of the United States" and it has both benefitted and suffered as a result (3).

More than a year after the invasion, the same Panamanians who favored the invasion now see a new and unfavorable reality. A primary reason for this change in attitude is the death toll controversy. In the aftermath of the invasion there remained "more suffering and harm than benefits" (Horton 11). Horton reports that the official claim of 556 Panamanians dead, as a result of the invasion, may now be more accurately stated as 2,000.

According to human rights and church groups, the official count is incorrect, and the unearthing of numerous bodies from mass graves in the months following the invasion lend an element of truth to their claim (11). One such mass grave was uncovered at the Garden Of Peace Cemetery in late December of 1989, and it revealed the remains of 275 Panamanians (Gannon, 3). This exhumation was not the only case. Other articles describing the invasion aftermath cite the discovery of more mass graves, containing 100 or more bodies ("War and Peace").

The occurrence of incidents like these make the statement of Roberto Eisemann, owner of a major Panamanian newspaper, seem prophetic: "people will tend to forget the Noriega regime and focus on consequences of the invasion" ("War and Peace"). Already the discovery of the mass graves has prompted some families of the deceased to seek recompensation from the United States government. They have filed law suits against the United States but, as of April 9, 1991, the U.S. had not made any attempt at restitution to the deceased Panamanians' families. Former U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Robert White predicted that the U.S. inaction in the matter will be an "irritant in U.S.-Panamanian relations [in the future], a running sore" ("War and Peace").

Economic Chaos

In addition to the death count controversy, Panamanians are also experiencing severe economic difficulties. The weakened (almost non-existent) Panamanian economy was worsened by the destruction of business buildings during the invasion and the looting of those same businesses after the invasion. In January of 1990 more than 75% of Panamanian businesses were inoperable, and the total estimate of the material damages caused by the invasion was \$2 billion (Grimes) (Horton, 11). In response the United States promised an aid package of \$420 million for 1990, but as of December 1990, the U.S. had distributed only \$120 million (11). Former U.S. Ambassador to Panama Ambler Ross cites different figures for U.S. aid, stating that the proposed aid package was \$400 million with only \$100 million in "real money" delivered to Panama. He suggests that the United States "clean up [its] mess" ("War and Peace").

Furthermore, the displacement of Panamanian citizens, from work and their homes, has also helped to create a stagnant economy. In post-invasion Panama one-third of Panamanian adults are jobless, and 40% live below the poverty line (Horton 1991, 11). A pertinent example are the residents of the barrio, Chorillo--one of the areas hardest hit during the invasion--who represent the lower middle-class and the poor of Panamanian society. According to the program "War and Peace in Panama" (April, 1991), the lower middle-class and the poor make up two-thirds of the country's population, and these same individuals face an unemployment rate which is 25% greater than the one under Noriega. Despite the new Panamanian government's claim that it has built new apartments and opened savings accounts for all the displaced families, the people of Chorillo remain homeless ("War and Peace" 1991). The people have found that the reparations of \$7, 300 per family are insufficient (Horton 1991, 11).

The Likelihood of Democracy

In the aftermath of the invasion, Panamanians also question the efficacy of their new democratic government. Since the country lacks a history of functional procedural democracy, the U.S.-installed Endara government is under close scrutiny. President Guillermo Endara--who was sworn in "on a U.S. base right before the invasion," must face a society shaped within the last 20 years by a nationalistic military government (Maechlin, 122). His greatest challenge is uniting the rabi blancos (white butts)--"middle-class businessmen and professionals--and the rabi prietos (dark butts)--the poor of Panamanian society, the latter which represents the strong support group of both Torrijos and Noriega (Morganthau, 25). The current condition of Panamanian affairs, however, indicate that President Endara is not making progress. For example, drug trafficking and money laundering are occurring at a rate higher than that under Noriega ("War and Peace"). The country's weak judicial system does not punish those individuals charged with drug trafficking, and corruption within government agencies persists. Consequently, Endara and his administration have gained the reputation of being weak. Most Panamanians--at least those like newspaperman Roberto Eisemann who are familiar with the concept of a functional democracy--consider them "amateurs" in the game of democracy ("War and Peace")

Therefore, more than one year after the invasion, U.S. troops still occupy and maintain stability in the country. A total of 7,000 U.S. troops were added to the 12,700 already based in Panama in response to looting post-invasion Panama City. After one day, 2,500 more troops were sent to the country (Watson, 16). A new civilian Panamanian police force known as the Public Force assists the U.S. troops in their duties ("War and Peace"). Ironically, the 11,000-member police force is composed of 98% former PDF members. Hence, the Panamanian people wonder if they will have eventually exchanged one military regime for yet another. For instance, in December 1990, Herrera Hassan, a former PDF member, staged a coup attempt. Panamanians watched while the new Public Force took no action to stop the unrest. Finally, U.S. troops arrived to end the attempted

overthrow. This incident is more than likely indicative of the future for Panama. Apparently, the country's path to democracy will be a shaky and arduous one. If the United States seeks to maintain its historical relationship with Panama, then it will have to be continuously present in Panama as the country makes its transition. Otherwise "militarization will once again [take root in Panama]" (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 151). 29

CONCLUSION

Three questions are pertinent when addressing the future of U.S.-Panamanian relations: (1) Will the de facto protectorate status continue and, if so, what will be the long-term consequences?; (2) What options realistically exist for changing the present state of U.S.-Panamanian relations?; and (3) Will Panama and other Central American and Caribbean states be the object of a different set of long-term U.S. policies, ones that are more functional than the simplistic and overly expensive use of military force? The answer to these questions lies in the very heart of United States-Latin American policy toward in the 1990s. The new decade ushers in a different world order and indeed, it is one completely different from that of the Cold War period.

With the development of the new political arena, the United States has abandoned the belief of an international political system divided into the two spheres of East and West--consider the current state of the Soviet Union--however, Washington still assumes a division of "Good" and "Evil". In regard to Latin America the U.S. perceives this division in terms of Latin "sloppiness" (bad) versus Gringo "efficiency" (bad). The very occurrence of Operation Just Cause confirms this general conclusion. Therefore, in the case of Panama, the de facto protectorate will continue. The imposition of the U.S.-backed Endara government upon the Panamanian people indicates a continuation of U.S. tutelage and U.S. support for the traditional oligarchy. Guillermo Endara and the majority of his coalition represent the elite of Panama. Likewise the continued U.S. military presence in post-invasion Panama indicates that Washington still seeks a Panamanian military which is receptive to U.S. interests but strong enough to replace any sloppy civilian government.

After 20 years of militarization, the continuation of the de facto protectorate will prove to be disastrous for Panama. The special relationship with Washington produced the rule of both Torrijos and Noriega, and in the future it will produce similar regimes. In fact, President Guillermo Endara, a member of the Arnulfista Party, recently expelled cabinet members belonging to the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) for allegedly carrying out a spy operation in conjunction with

members of the police force (Brooks, 4). The PDC monitored the activity of "political opponents" (the PDC and the Arnulfista Party are the "two major political parties" in Panama). In response to Endara's action, Ricardo Arias Calderon, the current vice president of Panama and leader of the PDC, has vowed to "form an opposition to the government." The formation of an opposition will dissolve the coalition which in 1987 protested the Noriega regime. As a result, President Endara now faces the possibility of the PDC joining with the new civilian police in order to overthrow of his government (4). Thus, the future for Panama could entail a perpetual cycle of economic, social and more importantly, political instability--of the kind it is experiencing in the aftermath of the invasion.

The only realistic avenue for changing the future of Panama and the nature of U.S.-Panamanian relations is for Washington to make a change in its policy toward the isthmian nation-state. Such a change will occur if the U.S. views North-South relations in terms of the new world order. Kurth suggests that the United States replace its traditional assumptions about its place in the international community with ones more suitable for this new order. Specifically, the United States must abandon its assumptions of a strategic bipolarity (in balance of power terms) and economic, ideological, and political superiority (Newfarmer, 3). Instead the U.S. must first, identify itself as the head of a multinational coalition of nations (strategic multipolarity) (Newfarmer, 9). Second, Washington must assume a position of "first among equals" in the international economic community (economic multipolarity). Third, it must begin to incorporate religion and other societal factors in its understanding of other nation-states' ideologies (ideological multipolarity). Finally, the U.S. must organize its foreign policy based on the assumption of political allies rather than political enemies (9).

With these modifications in place, Panama and other Central American Caribbean states might become the object of a different set of long-term U.S. policies. Panama, in particular, would then have the opportunity to transform itself into a functional independent democracy. Assuming a new world outlook, the U.S. would no longer seek to control the Panamanian government but rather to assist it. For example, if in post-invasion Panama a government took power--other than the U.S.-installed Endara

government--Washington would approach it in the spirit of cooperation, based on the perception of the government as a potential ally. This difference in approach would serve to further U.S. national interests in the region. Changes in the U.S. perspective on Latin America, such as this, might in time dissolve the U.S. protectorate in Panama, putting an end to centuries of violation of international law and reestablishing a sovereign Central American neighbor.

NOTES

¹ While this release of the right of non-intervention is not violative of international law--according to the prevailing school of legal thought--the protectorate, by the doctrine of rebus sic stantibus, (meaning, at this point of affairs, in these circumstances) can extract itself from the protectorate agreement (See Thomas 92-93).

² The quotations indicate that the rebels may not have sought a complete change of Panamanian political, economic, social, and psychological structures (total social revolution) but merely independence from Colombia.

³ Bunau-Varilla was instrumental in forming the New Panama Canal Company after the first French construction effort failed. Ferdinand de Lesseps' plan to build a sea-level canal instead of one using locks--led to his failure (See McCullough, "Book One", for a more detailed account).

⁴ The Roosevelt Administration desired a canal in Panama, but Senator John Tyler Morgan favored a Nicaraguan site (McCullough 263).

⁵ See McCullough's Path Between the Seas, Chapters 12 and 13, for a chronology of the events surrounding the drafting of the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty of 1903.

⁶ (LaFeber 1989, 24)

⁷ Tannenbaum's Ten Keys to Latin America is a valuable resource for gaining an understanding of Latin America's history in terms of politics, society, and religion.

⁸ This statement is not to discount the later political activeness of the Church but gives a general description of its traditional role.

⁹ The meaning and effect of U.S. military presence in Panama will be covered in the discussion of the national security state.

¹⁰ LaFeber states that mestizos represented over 200,000 of the early Panamanian population. In present-day Panama mestizos and mulattos represent 70% of a population of 1,830,175.

¹¹ See McCullough for a detailed history of U.S. Canal Zone Administration evolution.

¹² Blacks from the U.S. and the West Indies were given jobs in the Zone before Panamanian workers. This practice resulted in Panamanian

resentment of the alien workers and Canal Zone administration.

13 The summary of events in Panama's early economic relationship with the United States was taken from LaFeber, pages 60-65.

14 The National Civic Crusade for Democracy was formed in 1987 to voice opposition to the Noriega government. Its membership is largely composed of white upper- and middle-class Panamanians.

15 This description of the national security state as perceived by the Reagan Administration is not meant to imply that only that Administration had strong anti-communist concerns.

16 The National Guard was created from the Panamanian National Police by Commander José Antonio Remón in the early 1950s (Nyrop, 33).

17 (U.S. Congress, House, 1988, 8)

18 Robinson notes that the Democratic Revolutionary Party, which was created by Torrijos, "is an alliance of business interests and the military" (1989, 188).

19 This statement is not meant to convey the idea that Noriega and the PDF were not repressive but rather that the true nature of the U.S.-Noriega struggle was not openly discussed.

20 The expiration date for the sanctions imposed by the Bush Administration was April 8, 1990.

21 Noriega supporters, who were primarily from the lower class, perhaps feared losing their patron. To these people Endara and his followers more than likely represented the traditional elite who would end their new-found prosperity.

22 According to CIA Director William Webster, Noriega was able to telephone "his mistress and other supporters [to tell them] to rescue him" ("Noriega's Phone", 13A).

23 ("War and Peace", April 9, 1991)

24 The rumor of "a 250-man urban commando unit specifically trained for terrorist assault on American neighborhoods" more than likely prompted the first justification (Watson, 21).

25 See page 86 of Thomas and Thomas for further explanation of the term reprisal in relation to international law.

26 Even more questionable is President Bush's offer of a \$1 million

bounty for Noriega when special operations troops failed to capture him during the invasion.

27 See Maechling for an excellent discussion of the illegality of Washington's refusal to recognize the Solis Palma government.

28 ("War and Peace ", April 9, 1991)

29 This statement is based on the assumption that the U.S. wants Panama to be a functional procedural democracy.

WORKS CITED

- Adams, Bob. "Target: Noriega." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 12 May 1989: 1(C)
_____. "Noriega and OAS: Panamanian on Panamanian Recalls Somoza
Ouster." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 19 May 1989: 1(B).
- Branigin, William. "Giving Noriega His Fair Advantage." The Washington
Post, 24 April 1989.
_____. "What to Do About Panama?" The Washington Post, 27 March
1989: 18.
- Brilmayer, Lea. Justifying International Acts. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1989.
- Brooks, Laura. "Panama's Fragile Coalition Splits Over Spying Charges."
The Christian Science Monitor, 10 April 1991: 4.
- "Bush Faulted in Foiled Coup." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, October 1989.
- "Bush Seeks to Break Treaties with Panama, Noriega Charges." St. Louis
Post-Dispatch, 20 April 1989.
- "CIA Aiding Panamanian Foes of Noriega." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 23
April 1989.
- Cochez, Guillermo A. "Can Panama's Opposition Get Noriega Out If the Fix
Is In?" The Wall Street Journal, 5 May 1989: A15.
- De Córdoba, Jose. "What OAS Wants, Is Not Noriega's Style." The Wall
Street Journal, 12 June 1989: A14.
- De Córdoba, Jose. "Panama Starts Down Long Road to Economic Recovery."
The Wall Street Journal, 4 January 1990: A11.
- Galloway, Joseph L., et al. "Post-mortem on the Rout in Panama." U.S.
News and World Report, 6 June 1988: 28.
- Gannon, J.D. "Invasion Took Its Toll In Deaths, Human Suffering." The
Christian Science Monitor, 23 December 1989: 3.
- Grier, Peter. "Panama Is a Watershed for Bush Foreign Policy." The
Christian Science Monitor, 8 January 1990.
- Grimes, Charlotte. "Panamanians Feel Post-Invasion Ills." St. Louis
Post-Dispatch, 3 January 1990.

- Horton, Lynn. "Panama a Year After the Invasion: Grim Reality Replaces Initial Jubilation." Witness For Peace (Winter) 1991: 11.
- Kempe, Frederick. "The Noriega Files." Newsweek 15 January 1990: 19-24.
- LaFeber, Walter. The Panama Canal: The Crisis in Historical Perspective. New York: Oxford UP, 1989.
- _____ Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America. New York: W. W. Norton, 1983.
- "Lane, Charles. "The Dictator and the Diplomat." Newsweek 15 January 1990.
- Larmer, Brook. "Panamanians Applaud Invasion." The Christian Science Monitor, 29 December 1989: 3.
- McCullough, David. The Path Between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal 1870-1914. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1977.
- Maechling, Charles, Jr. "Washington's Illegal Invasion." Foreign Policy (Summer) 1990: 113-131.
- Manegold, C.S., et al. "Amateur Hour." Newsweek 16 October 1989: 26-31.
- Mecham, J. Lloyd. A Survey of United States-Latin American Relations. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1965.
- Morganthau, Tom, et al. "The Invasion May Be the Easy Part." Newsweek 1 January 1990: 24-25.
- _____ "Anatomy of a Fiasco." Newsweek 6 June 1988: 36-39.
- Newfarmer, Richard. From Gunboats to Diplomacy: New U.S. Policies for Latin America. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1984.
- "Noriega Loyalists Crush Coup Effort." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 4 October 1989.
- "Noriega's Phone Calls Foiled coup, CIA Director Says" St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 5 November 1989: 13 (A).
- Nyrop, Richard F., ed. Panama: A Country Study. 3 ed. Washington, D.C.: Foreign Area Studies, The American University, 1980.
- O'Rourke, Lawrence M. "U.S. Adds Troops in Panama." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 12 May 1989: 1.
- "Panama Nullifies Presidential." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 11 May 1989: 1.
- Parry, Robert and Douglas Waller. "The Bush-Noriega Relationship." Newsweek 15 January 1990: 16-17.

- Dichirallo, Joe and Molly Moore. "Putting Together the Pieces of Panama's Fractured Coup." The Washington Post, 16 October 1989: 14.
- Quigley, Kevin. "Why Sanctions Failed in Panama." The Wall Street Journal, 7 April 1989.
- "Reagan Might Back Coup in Panama, Sources Say." St. Louis Post-Dispatch 28 July 1988.
- Robinson, Linda. "Dwindling Options in Panama." Foreign Affairs 68 (Winter) 1989/90: 187-205.
- Salholz, et al. "Noriega's Surrender." Newsweek 15 January 1990: 14-18.
- Sawyer, Jon. "Steadfast: Noriega Wards Off Foes." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 4 October 1989.
- Schultz, Lars. National Security and United States Policy Toward Latin America. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1987.
- Seib, Gerald F. and Robert S. Greenberg. "Bush Considers Military, Other Options In Response to Election Fraud in Panama." The Wall Street Journal, 11 May 1989.
- Thomas, Ann Van Wynen, and A. J. Thomas, Jr. Non-Intervention: The Law and Its Import in the Americas. Dallas: Southern Methodist, UP, 1956.
- Tonelson, Alan. "Sanctions Work, but Only If Hard and Fast." The Wall Street Journal, 13 September 1988.
- "U.S. Ban On Payments To Panama Being Eased." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 25 August 1988.
- U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Foreign Affairs. Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs. The Political Situation in Panama and Options for U.S. Policy. 100th Cong., 2nd Sess., 20 April-1 June 1988.
- "U.S. Drops Noriega From 'Drug Ties' List." St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 31 August 1989.
- "U.S. Expands Sanctions On Panama." St. Louis Post-Dispatch 13 September 1989.
- War and Peace in Panama 1hr. Public Broadcasting System, 9 April 1991, Video cassette.
- Williams, Edward J. The Political Themes of Inter-American Relations. California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1971.