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**October 1989**



THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

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For Immediate Release

October 3, 1989

STATEMENT BY THE PRESS SECRETARY

The President met with Soviet Minister of Defense Dmitri Yazov for about 30 minutes and exchanged views with him on issues of U.S.-Soviet security and arms control. General Yazov is here to meet with Defense Secretary Cheney as a part of a continuing program of contacts between military officials of the two countries.

The President expressed his desire to conclude agreements on conventional forces in Europe and on chemical weapons as soon as possible and his hopes for progress in START. General Yazov discussed Soviet views of the problems facing the two sides in arms control. The President reiterated his support for perestroika and asked that the General relay his best wishes for success to President Gorbachev.

Also present at the meeting were Secretary of State James Baker, Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell and Soviet Ambassador Yuriy Dubinin.

# # #

# PANAMA CRISIS

Noriega and later prompted criticism from lawmakers in both parties.

The military would prepare to block the routes mentioned by Major Giroldi, but only in a way that complied with the Panama Canal treaties. In other words, if those routes could be blocked by closing off roads that went through United States bases, that could be called "securing United States installations." The question of more overt action was deferred and Mr. Bush did not change standing orders not to engage the Panamanian military.

This decision was not relayed to the plotters and it is not clear whether this lack of response hindered the coup plotters or changed their tactics. An Administration official said the rebels had made it clear at the outset that they would go ahead without American help.

## Panama City, 7 A.M.

A company from the American First Battalion, 508 Infantry was moved to Fort Amador in case the troops were needed to seal off the road to Panama City. The troops ostensibly were moved for "physical training" to avoid a treaty violation. But the training ended at 8:40 A.M. and the unit stayed on site, all day, in battle gear.

As the morning passed, there was no sign of a coup attempt. Major Giroldi sent word that the uprising would start in the afternoon, but American misgivings deepened when nothing happened then either.

## Evening, Panama City

Major Giroldi's wife contacted the American military and said the coup would be Tuesday morning, assuming General Noriega was not in his headquarters. The officers dealing with her were not told of President Bush's prerequisites for greater American support, and did not pass them on.

The Southern Command notified the Panamanian Government, as required by the canal treaties, that the United States military would hold two exercises on Tuesday morning. In one, Marines were to be deployed west of Howard Force Base. In the other, a mechanized unit would be operating in the vicinity of Fort Amador. That, military officials reasoned, would put the troops in position to block the Panamanian Fifth Company from leaving Fort Amador and to stop the Seventh Company from moving down the Bridge of the Americas road.

## Tuesday, Oct. 3

### Panama City, 5 A.M.

(All times Eastern Daylight. Panama City's local time is an hour earlier.)

After reveille, the exercise for the Marines at Howard Air Base was changed at the last minute. Again, the Administration played it safe. The Marines were to be deployed at the approach to Howard, not farther west, which would have put them closer to the Seventh Company but away from any American base, a posting that some Americans thought went beyond what the treaties permitted. By deploying the Marines at the base gates, they could simply shut off Howard for "security reasons."

### Panama City, 8 A.M.

General Noriega arrived at headquarters, but the attack began anyway. Major Giroldi and his forces seized the compound.

### Gettysburg, Pa., 9 A.M.

Mr. Cheney was touring the Gettysburg battlefield with General Dmitri T. Yazov, Defense Minister of the Soviet Union. As the two sat next to each other on a bus, General Powell called with the news: the coup had started.

Mr. Baker, Mr. Cheney, Mr. Powell, Mr. Scowcroft, John H. Sununu, the White House chief of staff, and Robert M. Gates, deputy national security adviser, met with Mr. Bush briefly to assess the early developments in the coup attempt. "There was a lot of confusion at the time because there

was a lot of confusion in Panama," Mr. Cheney said. "That's what was coming up through the system."

### Panama City, 10 A.M.

American intelligence detected that Panamanian forces stationed at Río Hato near the military headquarters were preparing to move out. Within minutes, a plane was spotted at Tocumen airport, about 18 miles from Panama City. American officials suspected this plane would fly to Río Hato and return with reinforcements. Minutes later, a convoy of trucks rumbled by the American embassy, about a mile from the fighting, and the officials realized they were wrong. The plane had already ferried the troops.

Some Congressional critics have complained that Mr. Bush or the rebels should have been notified that the reinforcements were moving down an open route. But the Administration said that by the time they were certain the reinforcements were moving, it was too late.

## Washington, 11 A.M.

Mr. Cheney returned to the Pentagon, where General Powell and the other Joint Chiefs were meeting. The military was uncertain about General Noriega's whereabouts and the rebels' chances of success. Mr. Bush still thought it was prudent not to order military action.

"Are you going to intervene on the side of the coup plotters, get U.S. troops in a shooting scrape with Panamanian forces with a possibility that Noriega's outside in charge of the Panamanian forces?" Mr. Cheney said later.

## Washington, just before noon

Mr. Bush, Mr. Cheney, Mr. Powell, Mr. Scowcroft, Mr. Gates and Mr. Sununu met in the Oval Office. News from Panama was generally optimistic and the officials discussed a full range of military options. But they were still not sure General Noriega was in rebel custody.

American officials had been out of contact with Major Giroldi since his wife called late the night before to say the coup was on for Tuesday. The major had refused to provide telephone numbers to the Americans.

### Panama City, 12:01 A.M.

The mechanized American unit at Fort Amador sealed the base. That bottled up the Panamanian Fifth Company, which Mr. Cheney said never made any move to leave.

### Panama City, 12:10 A.M.

The rebels broadcast a communiqué saying General Noriega was cap-



## PANAMA CRISIS . . .

tured and would be forced to retire. But they recognized President Francisco Rodriguez, whom General Noriega had installed in office. "These were not clear-eyed democrats," said Pete Williams, the Pentagon spokesman.

### Panama City, 12:18 A.M.

According to the Pentagon, two Panamanian lieutenants associated with the coup arrived at the front gate of Fort Clayton, which is near the Panamanian headquarters. The officers were brought in to see Maj. Gen. Marc Cisneros, second in command to Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman. According to the Administration, the Panamanians said they "controlled" General Noriega, repeated concerns about the Fifth and Seventh companies and asked for roadblocks. Administration officials said no commitments were made.

"U.S. notified coup liaison that we are prepared to take Noriega under custody if brought to Fort Clayton," the Pentagon said in a written summary of events. "Answer — No intent to turn anyone over to U.S."

News of the meeting was relayed by the Southern Command to the Joint Chiefs in Washington. Administration officials said the American Embassy in Panama relayed a garbled version to the State Department, saying the rebels did want to turn over General Noriega. That deepened

the confusion, since the garbled version was recounted to members of Congressional intelligence committees after the coup failed.

General Noriega said Friday in an interview with CBS News that he was "not detained at any time. I was under fire, but I wasn't detained."

### Washington, 1:45 P.M.

Mr. Cheney and General Yazov went to the White House. But General Yazov was left in an outer office while Mr. Cheney told Mr. Bush, Mr. Scowcroft, Mr. Baker and Mr. Sununu about the meeting in Panama. As in the Oval Office meeting on Monday with President Bush, the Central Intelligence Agency was not represented. The President decided to go ahead with the planned roadblock at Howard Air Base, but to take no other action. Mr. Cheney, in response to Congressional criticism, said it would have been "crazy" to attack the military headquarters at that point to seize General Noriega. "That would have put us on the side, basically, of the Noriega forces against the coup forces," who were unwilling to turn over General Noriega, he said.

The officials' decided to instruct General Cisneros to ask for General Noriega and for a declaration of democratic principles. But it was too late.

### Panama City, 1:59 P.M.

American troops sealed Howard Air Base, cutting the Seventh Company's land route to downtown. The coup was starting to go sour. Some pro-Noriega forces were at the scene, fighting back.

The Pentagon action made no difference because the pro-Noriega troops had already been flown to the Tocumen airport from which they had driven the headquarters.

Mr. Cheney said the Americans would not have been authorized to fire on the Panamanians or resist their advance. "That's the kind of decision that would have come up the chain of command rapidly to the President, and he would have been given the opportunity to make the broad policy decision, 'Yes, we want to intervene militarily,'" Mr. Cheney said. "That decision was never made."

### Washington, 2:30 P.M.

The President was informed that the coup was collapsing.

Mr. Cheney was in his car, once again with General Yazov, driving back to the Pentagon from the White House. General Powell called with the news: the coup had failed.

# vs. Baker

By **WOLF BLITZER**  
IJN Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — In the aftermath of the latest US hostage crisis in Lebanon, a growing split has developed between the White House and the State Department over US policy toward Israel.

Well-informed US officials said that President George Bush and his senior White House aides are becoming increasingly more inclined to distance the US from Israel than Secretary of State James Baker and his advisers.

In part, the officials said, this stems from what is seen as Bush's chilly relationship with Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir as opposed to Baker's recently improved relationship with Foreign Minister Moshe Arens.

The prevailing thinking in the White House is that Israel, by capturing Hezbollah Sheik Obeid without any advance consultation with Washington, is not behaving as a reliable strategic partner.

Israel, according to White House officials, is not taking into consideration how these kinds of unilateral military operations can have a negative impact on the US.

Joining Bush in this critical view of Israel is White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and others. Vice-President Dan Quayle is described as a dissenting voice, usually expressing a greater understanding of Israel.

The White House's anger toward Israel was reflected in the angry, anti-Israeli remarks made shortly after Obeid's capture by Republican Senate Leader Bob Dole of Kansas.

Dole's initial, highly publicized blaming of Israel for the death of US Marine Corps Lt. Col. William Higgins was privately shared — if not inspired — by senior White House officials.

What has deeply angered Israeli officials and their supporters in Washington has been the continued refusal by Bush and other White House officials to acknowledge that Higgins was almost certainly killed



Secretary Baker



Security Advisor Scowcroft





# White House Dinner

DINNER, From B1

Great Britain Anne L. Armstrong, Laredo bank president Gary Jacobs and several members of the Texas congressional delegation.

The president got all the glamorous women at his table, including Cecilia Salinas de Gortari, soap star Constance Tower Gavin, media maven Barbara Walters and "Entertainment Tonight" hostess Mary Hart.

"I thought, 'What a wonderful opportunity to have dinner with my husband [pause] and a few other friends,'" Hart told reporters, some of whom were more interested in her legs, described by one TV critic as America's most beautiful. She kept them covered, however.

The Bushes tried something different for this dinner, taking a page out of Jimmy Carter's state-dinner how-to guide by scheduling toasts before the first course rather than after the last one. "He said, 'Now it means you can relax,'" said Barbara Walters.

After seeing the Salinases off at the front door, the Bushes started the dancing. Cheek to cheek. She wore a silver and white brocade gown and her multi-stranded pearl necklace. The next thing Barbara Bush knew, her husband traded her off for a dance with Tamara Haddad, producer of "The Larry King Show" and his date for the evening. King's bride-to-be, Julie Alexander, was in Philadelphia but due here tomorrow for the nuptial vows to be said Saturday at Duke Zeibert's. "Where else?" asked King.

After Haddad, Bush cut in on Chief of Protocol Joseph V. Reed Jr., who was dancing with Marilyn Quayle. Bush, in fact, was all over the place pairing people, then cutting in. Once he stopped right in the middle of the dance floor, motioning Chicago Tribune reporter Michael Kilian over to meet Mrs. Quayle.

While all of this was happening, no one seemed to notice that elsewhere was actor Anthony Quinn, making like Zorba the Greek, with his wife, Iolanda.

During the dinner of roast saddle of veal Farci and Mexican Fantasy dessert with cookies, Barbara Walters said Panama was discussed at the president's table "a little bit." She described Bush as "very relaxed," as did Hart, who observed, "The Bushes make this kind of formal evening very informal."

Presidential advisers couldn't escape the inevitable questions about what was going on in Panama. Brent

er. "We can't be responsible if we didn't have anything to do with it," said the national security adviser as he tried to move past a lineup of reporters.

Vice President Quayle took a few questions, admitting he was disappointed "to some extent, yes. I am disappointed Noriega is still in power." He said he was hopeful, however, that the attempted coup indicated "the cement around Noriega is cracking. The sooner Noriega leaves, the better off we will all be."

And walking into the East Room, Secretary of State James Baker looked over his shoulder and said, "Tune in tomorrow."

Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Tex.) was one of those who throughout the day had kept track of the insurrection in Panama, where U.S. troops were on full alert but reportedly had not been involved in any of the shooting.

"I'm disappointed that the people who are trying to overthrow Noriega were not successful," Gramm said. Another Texan, Rep. E. "Kika" de la Garza, was still rooting for the "junior officers to take care of Mr. Noriega for us," when he was informed that the coup had failed. Did he think the United States should have provided support?

"I think we've already offered all the help, besides interference in internal affairs, but if the coup failed, well..." de la Garza said.

Taking in all the arriving guests from the vantage point of the marble floor was the First Cockroach, quickly dubbed "La Cucaracha" by reporters. That wasn't the only housekeeping oversight that caught the attention of the media. Up in the grand foyer, dangling from a doorway was the swinging strand of a cobweb keeping time to "Ruffles and Flourishes."

"Well," said an unconcerned White House staffer, laughing, "we can't clean *everything* every day."

Judy Kaye showed why she was the toast of Broadway last year in "Phantom of the Opera" when she sang in the East Room after dinner. She said afterward she hadn't been sure what to expect when she heard the news about the attempted coup.

"I thought it might be difficult tonight after a rough day like that," she said. "But everyone was just wonderful."

## The guest list for Tuesday night's White House dinner:

Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari and Cecilia Occe-li de Salinas  
Gustavo Petricoli, ambassador of Mexico  
Emilio M. Gonzalez, president of the Senate



Clockwise from top left: Gen. Colin Powell and wife Alma; Barbara Walters; Barry and Margaret Zorthian; and Elizabeth and William Reilly at White House.

PHOTOS BY HARRY NALTCHAYAN—THE WASHINGTON POST

Pedro Aspe, secretary of finance and public credit  
Jaime Serra, secretary of commerce and industrial development  
Patricio Chirinos, secretary of urban development and ecology  
Jose Cordoba, chief of presidential staff  
Enrique Alvarez, attorney general  
Otto Granados, presidential spokesman  
Gen. Arturo Cardona, chief of presidential general staff  
Sergio Gonzalez, undersecretary for foreign relations  
Pedro Gonzalez Rubio, chief of protocol  
Ana Maria Ocelli de Rebollo  
Miguel Aleman, ambassador, and Christian Martell de Aleman  
Ernesto Ancira Jr. and Robin Ancira  
Nathan Appleman and Ann Appleman  
Alex Armendaris, president, Market Growth Inc.  
Anne L. Armstrong, former ambassador to the United Kingdom, and Tobin Armstrong  
Bernard Aronson, assistant secretary of state, and Carol Corillon  
James Baker, secretary of state, and Susan Baker  
Roy R. Barrera Jr. and Sally Barrera  
Sen. Lloyd M. Bentsen (D-Tex.) and B.A. Bentsen  
Stuart A. Bernstein, the Bernstein Companies, and Wilma Bernstein  
Nicholas Brady, secretary of the treasury, and Katherine Bryan Tennant Bryan  
John E. Bush and Columba Bush  
William H.T. Bush and Patty Bush  
Janet Craig  
Rep. E. "Kika" de la Garza (D-Tex.) and Lucille de la Garza  
Miguel Alvarez del Toro, professor, and Federico Alvarez Douglas Fairbanks Jr., actor/producer

Antonio O. Garza, Cameron County judge  
John Gavin, former ambassador to Mexico, and Connie Gavin  
Roberto C. Goizueta, chairman and CEO, the Coca-Cola Co., and Olga Goizueta  
Bruce C. Gottwald, president, Ethyl Corp., and Nancy Gottwald  
Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Tex.) and Wendy Gramm, chairman, CFTC  
Mary Hart, "Entertainment Tonight" host, and Burt Sugarman  
Edward Hidalgo and Belinda Hidalgo  
Carla A. Hills, U.S. trade representative, and Roderick M. Hills  
Ricardo H. Hinajosa, U.S. district judge, Texas  
Andrew G.P. Hobbs and Patricia Hobbs  
Gary Jacobs and Jessie Jacobs  
Judy Kaye, entertainer, and David Green  
Larry King, talk show host, and Tamara Haddad  
Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Ariz.)  
George W. Landau, president, Americas Society, and former ambassador to Mexico, and Mary Landau  
Bernard Cardinal Law, archbishop of Boston  
Burton Lee, physician to the president, and Ann Lee  
Rep. Jerry Lewis (R-Calif.) and Arlene Lewis  
Lawrence Lewis Jr. and Janet Lewis

Manuel Lujan, secretary of the interior  
Richard McCoy and Janet McCoy  
Justin Moore and Jeanette Moore  
Robert A. Mosbacher, secretary of commerce  
John D. Negroponte, U.S. ambassador to Mexico, and Diana Negroponte  
Sandra Day O'Connor, Supreme Court justice, and John J. O'Connor III  
Reynaldo Ortiz, president, U.S. West Inc., and Katie Ortiz  
Oscar Padilla and Margaret Padilla  
Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Alma Powell  
Vice President Dan Quayle and Marilyn Quayle  
Anthony Quinn, actor, and Iolanda Quinn  
Joseph V. Reed, chief of protocol, and Marie Reed  
William K. Reilly, administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, and Elizabeth Reilly  
John Schmitz and Lucia Schmitz  
Gen. Brent Scowcroft, assistant to the president for national security affairs  
Samuel K. Skinner, secretary of transportation, and "Honey" Skinner  
Rep. Charles W. Stenholm (D-Tex.) and Cindy Stenholm

Stephen M. Studdert, assistant to the president for special activities and initiatives, and Bonnie Studdert  
John H. Sununu, chief of staff to the president, and Nancy Sununu  
Richard Thornburgh, attorney general, and Ginny Thornburgh  
Russell E. Train, chairman, World Wildlife Fund—U.S./the Conservation Foundation, and Aileen Train  
Sally Tucker  
Joseph Unanue, president, Goya Foods, and Carmen Unanue  
Barbara Walters, television journalist, and Merv Adelson, chairman, East-West Capital Associates  
James D. Watkins, secretary of energy, and Sheila Watkins  
Rep. Vin Weber (R-Minn.) and Cheryl Weber  
James C. Wheat Jr., chairman, WFS Financial, and Willey Wheat  
James R. Whelan, editor-in-chief, Conservative Digest, and Helen Leonard  
Whitney M. Young and Margaret Young  
Frank D. Yturria, chairman, Texas Bank & Trust, and Mary Yturria  
Barry Zorthian and Margaret Zorthian



WASHINGTON TIMES

OCTOBER 6, 1989

Pg. 9

# Rebel hands Bush new peace plan for Angolan war

By James Morrison  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Bush reassured Angolan rebel leader Jonas Savimbi of "strong" U.S. support yesterday, and Mr. Savimbi presented him with a new cease-fire proposal aimed at re-opening the peace process with the Soviet-backed government of Angola.

Mr. Savimbi, speaking to reporters after the 30-minute meeting, said Mr. Bush endorsed the cease-fire plan, which the rebel leader said he will disclose today in a speech at the National Press Club.

In the past the Angolan rebels have proposed a cease-fire followed by an interim coalition government and winner-take-all free elections.

Later, in an address to the Heritage Foundation, Mr. Savimbi criticized the Bush administration for refusing to believe the Angolan army has used Soviet-supplied chemical weapons against his rebels.

A White House statement describing the meeting said Mr. Bush also urged Mr. Savimbi to resolve his differences with President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, who has been trying to promote a settlement between Mr. Savimbi's National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) and the Marxist government run by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA).

"The president urged Dr. Savimbi to work with President Mobutu and others in the region to foster the peace process," the short statement said. "He noted our long-standing support for a cease-fire and face-to-face negotiations, and, ultimately free and fair elections."

Mr. Bush delivered a similar message Wednesday when he met Mr. Mobutu. He also urged the Zairian leader to resume the delivery of covert U.S. military aid to UNITA

through his country. Mr. Mobutu is believed to have cut off aid because of his dispute with Mr. Savimbi.

Mr. Savimbi told reporters yesterday: "We have accepted the right of President Mobutu to be the mediator. We don't have any disagree-

ment between us and President Bush on President Mobutu."

Mr. Savimbi, who has been meeting with U.S. officials since Monday, said, "I consider my visit here a success."

Secretary of State James A. Baker III, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Herman Cohen and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft joined Mr. Bush in meeting with Mr. Savimbi.

At his speech to supporters at the Heritage Foundation, Mr. Savimbi said he has had no success convincing Bush administration officials that evidence collected by UNITA and analyzed by expert scientists in Europe prove that the MPLA has used Soviet-supplied chemical weapons.

"I don't know if to disclose that the MPLA is using chemical weapons will complicate relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. I think some political constraint is avoiding people from talking about that," he said.

Administration officials have said Mr. Savimbi's evidence is inconclusive.

The rebel leader came to Washington to get a reassurance of U.S. aid, estimated at between \$40 million and \$50 million a year, and to get Mr. Bush's endorsement of his views on a disputed cease-fire accord reached in June. The cease-fire has since broken down, with the MPLA claiming that Mr. Savimbi promised to go into exile and Mr. Savimbi calling that statement a lie. Mr. Mobutu, who mediated the cease-fire, has appeared to have contradicted himself on the issue.

The cease-fire between UNITA and the MPLA was signed June 22 at a summit meeting of 18 African heads of state in Gbadolite, Zaire. President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia told reporters that the closed-door negotiations that led to the cease-fire included a commitment by Mr. Savimbi to go into exile and to allow his UNITA forces to be incorporated into the Angolan army.

But Mr. Mobutu, who hosted the summit, rebutted Mr. Kaunda's statement, saying the cease-fire included only a halt to hostilities, a commitment to national reconciliation and an agreement to set up a commission to implement further negotiations.

But two months later, at a meeting of eight southern African nations in Zimbabwe, Mr. Mobutu signed another document that redefined the Gbadolite accord along the lines of an earlier MPLA peace proposal that includes the call for Mr. Savimbi's exile.

Mr. Mobutu has since not commented publicly on the two accords.

This week while Mr. Savimbi was consulting supporters in the White House and Capitol Hill, Angolan Foreign Minister Pedro Van Dunem was lobbying for a meeting with Mr. Baker, which is expected next week.

Also, the lobbying group TransAfrica has accused Mr. Savimbi of atrocities and is pressing for U.S. diplomatic recognition of the Angolan government.

Yesterday, TransAfrica director Randall Robinson criticized Sen. Orrin Hatch, Utah Republican, for calling for a Justice Department investigation into Mr. Randall's activities on behalf of the Marxist government.

"The spirit of McCarthyism is alive and well in Utah," Mr. Robinson said at a news conference.

• Peter LaBarbera contributed to this report.



# Relations getting closer on Soviet-Turkish border

By Hugh Pope  
*Reuters*

SARP, Turkey — The rumble of tour buses, cars and an occasional truck is becoming a familiar sound in the Black Sea village of Sarp as Turkish-Soviet border links multiply with new-found good-will and trade.

Guards in watchtowers on both sides peer through binoculars at the growing activity at the Sarp crossing, which was closed in the 1930s by Soviet leader Joseph Stalin and reopened in a chaotic, emotional ceremony a year ago.

Caution and red tape have done little to dampen local enthusiasm as families rediscover long-lost relatives who share the same Georgian or Laz ancestry of the Caucasus.

"Turkey? It was love at first sight," said a Soviet Georgian tourist in the regional center of Trabzon, where Soviet groups are becoming well known for weekly shopping sprees.

An average 100 people, two or three tour buses, 20 cars and one or two trucks now cross the border daily and the number is steadily rising, Turkish border officials say. About 60 percent of travelers are visiting relatives.

Poles, Greeks and Soviet Georgians and Azerbaijanis filled the new Turkish customs house on one recent day, and barely a week goes by without a sports team, official delegation or folk-dancing group crossing one way or the other.

The Soviet Union and Turkey, a member of NATO, are encouraging the contacts as part of rapidly improving relations in recent years.

Major talks on bilateral trade in Moscow this month also will clarify a local trade accord and detail how and what Turkish and Soviet border provinces may trade through Sarp.

Turkish sources expect a Soviet consulate to open in Trabzon before the end of the year, and a ferry link from Trabzon to the Soviet Georgian

port of Batum is under study.

Soviet Georgians are even more enthusiastic than Turks for better links — not just because Turkey has cheap consumer goods, but also because of Georgian aspirations for greater independence from Moscow, Turkish sources said.

"They even asked me if they could open a Georgian consulate," said Kadir Helvasi, mayor of Artvin, the capital of Turkey's Black Sea province of Artvin on the Soviet border.

Top Georgian officials raised their glasses at joint dinners to toast Georgian independence and to remember the "April 9 martyrs," 20 people killed in nationalist protests in Tbilisi, the Georgian capital, earlier this year, Helvasi said.

Helvasi, of Georgian origin like at least 10 percent of the people of Artvin province, has taken a lead in forging ties and arranging visits. He calls himself Georgia's "honorary consul."

The Moscow talks are expected to ease visa regulations, but a major trade problem remains: Georgia wants to buy a lot from Turkey, but Turkey needs little from Georgia.

"There is nothing here the Turks don't have," admitted a Soviet official at the Izmir International Trade Fair, where the Soviet pavilion featured a Georgian stand.

"We have people who speak Georgian and Laz [a Caucasian dialect]. But for us, business would be better done in hard currency, not barter," said Bahaettin Bayraktar, head of the chamber of commerce in Hopa, a small port town near Sarp.

Such problems have been overcome in bilateral trade because the Soviet Union uses income for transactions from a natural gas pipeline to western Turkey, opened in 1987, whose annual capacity will double to 210 billion cubic feet in the 1990s.

Turkish-Soviet trade is expected to reach \$1 billion this year, nearly

triple the 1986 figure, Albert Chernishev, the Soviet ambassador to Turkey, said.

"The chemistry is good," he said, adding that the opening of another crossing point between Turkey and the Soviet Union at Nakhchivan, part of Azerbaijan, was being discussed.

Turkey granted its first trade credits to Moscow this year. Moscow has used the \$300 million to buy Turkish pharmaceuticals, soaps, detergents and textiles.

"We have found good prices and proper quality," Chernishev said. "The Turkish side has observed with surprise that we might become their main trading partner."

In the past year, 1,500 Turks have started work in the Soviet Union on nearly \$392 million worth of projects, ranging from upscale developments in Moscow to Black Sea hotels.

A further \$350 million of construction credits are expected to be signed during the talks in Moscow, Soviet and Turkish officials say.

However, neither side has let its guard down far. Turkish officials said the Soviet military would not let Soviet customs officials visit their Turkish counterparts — even to drink tea made from the green bushes cloaking the lush coastal mountains.

On the Turkish side, NATO military exercises this month put battle-ready troops on beaches near Sarp.

But Turks have been flattered by recent favorable articles in Soviet publications such as the government newspaper *Izvestia*.

"We feel [Western Europeans] don't want us to join the European Community," said one Turkish official in the northeast, in reference to Turkey's unsuccessful effort to join the economic union that includes most of the nations of Western Europe.

"But you will see we can make other friends," the Turkish official said, in a reference to the Soviets.



# White House Puts Stock in What Robert Gates Says About Soviets—and Maybe They Do, Too

By GERALD F. SEIB

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL  
WASHINGTON — When Robert Gates talks, Mikhail Gorbachev listens. He doesn't always like what he hears, but he listens.

Mr. Gates is a longtime U.S. Sovietologist who now is President Bush's deputy national security adviser. A relatively low-profile official at home, Mr. Gates was amazed to discover on a May visit to the Kremlin that Mr. Gorbachev was thoroughly familiar with his speeches analyzing the enormous obstacles imperiling Gorbachev-era reforms.

And while critics at home chide Mr. Gates for being overly skeptical in gauging the chances that Mr. Gorbachev's reforms will succeed, he insists Kremlin leaders themselves actually share much of his analysis. "Without getting specific, when I was in Moscow I was told by senior Soviets that my appraisal of the problems they face was a pretty accurate one," says the silver-haired former deputy director of Central Intelligence.

The fact that the Soviets are tuned in to Mr. Gates underscores the important behind-the-scenes role he is assuming in the Bush administration—a role that is likely to grow as the administration heads toward a strategic-arms treaty and a superpower summit. Mr. Gates has spent much of his career dissecting twists and turns in the Soviet system, and now he is perhaps the administration's main Soviet analyst.

Within the White House, he is regarded as National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft's "alter ego" and recently was promoted to the highest internal staff rank. He often is one of a handful of top aides invited into the Oval Office for the informal sessions at which President Bush likes to make sensitive foreign-policy decisions.

"When we're in there, there are five or six of us, and Gates tends to be part of that group," says White House Chief of Staff John Sununu. Indeed, when five officials

stepped into the president's office Tuesday afternoon to brief him on a coup attempt in Panama, Mr. Gates was among them.

When Secretary of State James Baker met Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze in Wyoming two weeks ago, Mr. Gates sat at Mr. Baker's side. Progress there propelled U.S.-Soviet relations to center stage: The superpowers agreed on a summit meeting, likely to be held around May, between Mr. Bush and Mr. Gorbachev. Both sides say there's a good chance by then they will finish an historic treaty to cut strategic arsenals in half.

As a result, there will be a new focus in coming months on the administration's system for making East-West policy decisions, a system in which the dapper, good-natured Mr. Gates is an important cog. Thus, a look at Mr. Gates helps illustrate the approach the Bush team will be taking—an approach that some Democrats recently have branded as either too timid or too hard-line.

"I prefer to think of myself as a realist in terms of what's going on inside the Soviet Union," Mr. Gates says. "But I think there are also some very important opportunities for the United States that we should be moving on, and I think we're doing that."

Mr. Gates, 46 years old, is a native Kansan who developed a deep interest in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union in college. He joined the Central Intelligence Agency as an analyst in 1966, later spent five years on assignment to the National Security Council staff and eventually became deputy director of the CIA.

When CIA director William Casey became fatally ill in 1987, President Reagan nominated Mr. Gates to replace him. But the nomination was later withdrawn when it was imperiled by lingering congressional anger over the CIA's role in the Iran-Contra affair.

## Soviet-Watcher From a Distance

Despite his long interest in the Soviet Union, Mr. Gates couldn't actually visit the country until this year, when he left the intelligence business and moved into his new role as Mr. Scowcroft's deputy. In this job, Mr. Gates filters all paper work churned out by the foreign-policy bureaucracy before it reaches Mr. Scowcroft. And he heads an obscure but important group in the administration called the Deputies

Committee, a panel of top aides at the State Department, Pentagon, CIA and the Joint Chiefs of Staff that debates important national-security decisions.

Mr. Gates, a dedicated jogger who often rises before dawn to do his running, has adopted an open and genial style with other staffers that contrasts with the stealthy image normally associated with a former intelligence officer. And on Soviet affairs, Mr. Gates and Mr. Scowcroft seem to complement each other: While Mr. Scowcroft likes to discuss the complexities of arms-control issues, Mr. Gates prefers talking about the sweep of Soviet and Russian history and politics.

In essence, Mr. Gates says that while all top administration aides are in "harmony" in hoping Mr. Gorbachev's reforms succeed, history raises doubts about how deep or lasting changes in Moscow actually will be. In an April speech, for instance, Mr. Gates asserted that "for 70 years we repeatedly have seen a system in crisis proclaim reform and turn to the West for help, while the essential features of their system at the end of the day remain unchanged."

In particular, Mr. Gates says Mr. Gorbachev faces breathtaking problems in overcoming centuries of Russian reliance on the state as the source of all economic life. "I see the contrast between what has happened in the political arena in the Soviet Union and the economic problems, which seem to get only worse," Mr. Gates says in an interview. Because of the obstacles, he adds, "there already have been significant tactical retreats on the economic side. Significant elements of economic reform have essentially been put off indefinitely."

## Minimal U.S. Influence

Yet through it all, Mr. Gates maintains, Soviet strategic modernization continues.

"If I have a difference, it's not really with people inside the administration but some people outside the administration who believe that, somehow, the United States can make a significant difference in terms of Gorbachev's success in carrying out these reforms," he says. "Whether reform succeeds or not depends almost entirely on internal decisions and structural changes in the Soviet Union." Mr. Gates says the U.S. is offering what limited help it can by fostering good superpower relations, which enhance Mr. Gorbachev's stature, and by proposing deep conventional-arms cuts, which offer tangible economic relief.

Privately, Mr. Gates is known to calculate that Mr. Gorbachev is shrewd enough to survive even if all his reforms don't, and to believe that cautious analysis is necessary to offset unrealistic euphoria about changes in Moscow. Still, critics wonder whether Mr. Gates, like others in the Bush administration, is so skeptical that openings for improvement will be missed.

"He seems rather extremely cautious," says Jeremy Hough, a prominent Sovietologist at Duke University.

Yet even analysts who don't share all his views generally respect Mr. Gates's arguments. "I'm quite impressed with Bob Gates," says Dimitri Simes, a Soviet analyst at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "There is enough justification, looking at Russian history, for Bob Gates's caution."



Robert Gates



# Key Queries Never Put To Bush

## In Panama Crisis, Issue of U.S. Force Was Not Resolved

By David Hoffman  
and William Branigin  
Washington Post Staff Writers

As the coup attempt against Panamanian Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega unfolded Tuesday, critical questions about how much help U.S. forces should give the rebels were never put directly to President Bush, congressional and administration officials said yesterday.

On Monday, the day before the coup attempt, U.S. troops were authorized to take positions on roads and bridges, as requested by the leaders of the failed coup, and they did so on Tuesday when the coup was attempted. But Bush never gave orders that would have allowed these soldiers to use force to support the rebellion, officials said.

When U.S. officials in Panama discovered that troops loyal to Noriega had traveled to Panama City by an unexpected route, they did nothing to stop them or to try to alert the rebels, according to a well-informed Senate source.

The Bush administration's caution in the face of a possible coup was evident as early as Sunday at the first meeting between participants in the coup and U.S. officials, the Senate source said. U.S. participants were under instructions to "just listen" and not to ask questions or give encouragement. These initial contacts were with Panamanian Maj. Moises Giroldi and his wife. The Senate source said these instructions precluded any practical preparations such as setting up a channel of communication that could be used during the coup.

Under mounting criticism on Capitol Hill for the restrained U.S. response to the coup effort, Bush defended his actions yesterday, saying he reviewed all the information and "I don't see anything now that would have had me make a different decision then."

Bush said "there was never a chance" to grab Noriega, who is under U.S. indictment on drug charges. "What people, some people seem to have wanted me to do is to unleash the full military to go in and . . . 'get Noriega,'" Bush said. "I suppose you could have gone to general quarters, but that's not prudent and that's not the way I plan to conduct the military or foreign affairs of this country."

Asked whether the administration suffered because of communications breakdowns, Bush replied, "I don't think so. We had kind of almost a running meeting there and I think that's a good question, and I don't think I can factually answer that yet."

However, there continued to be criticism yesterday of how the crisis was handled. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) said, "What we had here was ad hoc decision-making that was not based on previous policy guidance, contingency planning or coordinated intelligence."

Nunn, who was briefed by Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney

and Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, added, "Policy guidance has to start with the president. Occasionally we have to foresee our policy of encouraging a coup might succeed, and we ought to be prepared." The United States has been encouraging Panamanian officers to oust Noriega since the summer of 1988.

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.) questioned whether Bush was given sufficient information.

"I just don't believe the information was distilled and presented to [Bush] in a way that gave him an understanding of the yes-or-no decision he had to make" on whether to authorize U.S. troops to use force against the Noriega loyalists,

Boren said. He also questioned why there were no representatives of the Central Intelligence Agency in the high-level White House discussions about the unfolding coup.

Concerning the rebels' request for U.S. forces to block incoming routes, Cheney said yesterday the troops were deployed under existing rules of engagement permitting them to defend themselves. Had they been threatened by the forces loyal to Noriega, he said, "that's the kind of decision that would have come up the chain rapidly to the president, and he would have been given the opportunity to make the broad policy decision, yes, we want to intervene militarily. That decision was never made."

The Senate source said that when the Noriega loyalists unexpectedly took a different route, bypassing the deployed U.S. forces but moving up a highway along the coast right in front of the American Embassy where they were readily visible to U.S. officials, Bush was not informed.

In describing the confused events surrounding the failed coup attempt, U.S. officials in Panama yesterday provided an account of bad timing and poor planning by the rebels, continuing suspicion and wariness by U.S. commanders about falling into a trap, lack of communication between the two sides and a highly cautious U.S. approach once the rebellion was underway.

According to one U.S. official close to the American military's Panama-based Southern Command, U.S. forces "never had any intention of going in to get Noriega" at the headquarters of the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) once the revolt was in progress. "It was not our coup. For us to go in would have been a mission beyond the scope of U.S. policy. That was not part of our planning process."

Another U.S. official knowledgeable about the military said that the rebels conveyed a request to Maj. Gen. Marc Cisneros, commander of U.S. Army troops at Fort Clayton in the former Panama Canal Zone, to send a helicopter to pick up Noriega at the PDF headquarters, but that this was not done because Cisneros



# Breakdown Seen in U.S. Response ...

had no authorization to do so and "it would have been a risky thing to do" because of the confined area.

The official added, however, that a platoon of armored personnel carriers could have run in and out of PDF headquarters to snatch Noriega "without too much risk," but that Cisneros was not authorized to make such a move by the new commander of the Southern Command, Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, who took over the post three days before the coup attempt.

White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater, asked yesterday about the request for a helicopter, said, "No. We never had any request to take him [Noriega] out."

Facing a delicate and confusing situation, relatively unfamiliar with his unit commanders and highly wary of the crafty Noriega, Thurman, whose expertise has been in military systems analysis, apparently acted "very conservatively throughout this whole exercise" and "did not take advantage of an unfolding opportunity," the official said.

The caution was evident in the U.S. response to Giroldi's Sunday request for the American forces to block two routes from the south and the west that Noriega's forces could use to send reinforcements to the PDF headquarters.

One practical effect of the U.S. deployment was to block the PDF

5th Infantry Company based at Fort Amador from going to Noriega's rescue, but beyond that the U.S. moves had no impact on the outcome of the coup attempt, the source acknowledged.

"They [the rebel leaders] had not asked us to do anything else," and the United States did not offer to go beyond the request, the source said.

According to another source, the result of the limited American deployment was that "U.S. forces were not committed to stop the movement of loyal elements." No attempt was made to block the vital road from Panama City's international airport, where Noriega's elite Battalion 2000 is based, or to cut off the highway spanning the Bridge

of the Americas over the Panama Canal, which divides the country in half just west of Panama City. Elements of the Battalion 2000 and another rifle company thus were able to counter-attack and crush the revolt.

At the White House yesterday, Secretary of State James A. Baker III, Cheney and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft held a morning breakfast meeting that one official said concentrated in part on ending the "spectacle of disloyalty" they saw in news reports of administration officials conceding that handling of the coup attempt was flawed.



# Bush and Panama: Chance Lost, Perhaps to Hesitancy

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7 — A senior European diplomat, preparing to leave Washington for another capital, had this to say last week about President Bush's performance in the realm of foreign policy during his first eight months in office: "He's been reasonably deft, and he's been extremely lucky."

News Analysis After the failed coup in Panama this week, the verdict might have been: Not so deft this time, but his luck held and saved him from major damage.

Because the two senior Democrats in Congress — Senator George J. Mitchell of Maine, the majority leader, and House Speaker Thomas S. Foley of Washington — both have strongly bipartisan instincts in such matters, they made no all-out assault on the President's conduct, accepting his assurances that no real chance to bring Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega to the United States had ever existed.

Because the reports from Panama and from Washington during the first 72 hours after the coup were so confusing and contradictory, the impression left was not a sharp picture of American bumbling or bungling but rather a blurry image of chances perhaps lost.

For the longer run, however, Washington's performance raised several disturbing questions that many in the Administration freely acknowledge.

## Hesitancy Is Perceived

Perhaps the largest one was posed by a hesitancy or passivity that seemed to characterize the response. For example, a senior Administration aide said that when supporters of General Noriega, the Panamanian leader, took an unexpected route to Panama City, United States officials did nothing to stop them "because the rebels never asked us to do it." Another ranking aide insisted that there was no point trying to bring General Noriega to the United States to stand trial because the rebels wanted him kept in Panama.

"It's hard to imagine Lyndon Johnson or Ronald Reagan hesitating, especially in the case of a man we'd been trying to get rid of for the better part of 10 years," said a Democrat with long foreign-policy experience. "You would have seen action first, then, after the fact, an explanation that great powers had to act to protect their interests. But Bush is more cautious."

The President has moved more slowly that some critics would have liked in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East. But on Panama, he had taken a hard line, repeatedly issuing only slightly oblique invitations to the Pana-

manian military to rise up and overthrow General Noriega, whom the United States considers a drug profiteer and a tyrant ranking with the world's worst.

In that context, the Administration's decision not to intervene revived memories of the 1950's, when President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, appeared to invite revolt in Eastern Europe with statements about "captive nations" casting off their chains, only to hang back when the Hungarian revolt came.

## Some Unsettling Questions

Beyond such strategic considerations, there were other unsettling questions about the way Washington acted and reacted this week, including these:

¶How sound was the Administration's intelligence-gathering? At one point, the White House's information was behind what was being broadcast on television, and at another, it appears, the White House's grasp of the events unfolding in Panama was so tenuous that it worried that Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, might actually know more than it did and asked his staff for a briefing.

¶How good was the coordination within the upper reaches of the Administration? Nothing to write home about, it would appear; not only did several vital questions about American policy fail to reach Mr. Bush in clear-cut form, but sloppy procedures marred the whole process of coordination, according to officials as senior as Robert M. Gates, the deputy director of the National Security Council.

¶What was the Secretary of State's role? In most of the post-mortems, little mention has been made of James A. Baker 3d, and much has been made of officials at the Pentagon and of such White House officials as Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, and John H. Sununu, the chief of staff.

¶Finally, how good was the contingency planning that underlay the President's repeated calls for the Panamanians to get rid of General Noriega? The evidence in this area is still incomplete, but it is clear that many of those involved in this week's events were unprepared for the ambiguity of motives, the speed of developments and the general atmosphere of chaos that prevailed in Panama this week.

## Unexpected Ways the Rule

But coups and rebellions seldom unfold in a tidy or predictable manner. Two or three generations of American officials have had trouble learning that lesson, which was manifest as long ago

The Washington Post

The New York Times **A 16**

The Washington Times

The Wall Street Journal

The Christian Science Monitor

New York Daily News

USA Today

The Chicago Tribune

Date **8 Oct 1989**

as the 1960's in the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba and the American-sponsored coup against Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam. Both developed in entirely unexpected ways and caused great embarrassment to American planners.

All in all, it may have been the bumpiest week so far for Mr. Bush, whose term has had astonishingly few setbacks so far and whose standing with the public has remained at levels unmatched at this stage of a Presidency in a quarter-century. The previously smooth-working machine put together by Mr. Sununu did not break down altogether, but it coughed and sputtered not only on Panama but also on health policy, with Richard G. Darman, the budget director, and Dr. Louis H. Sullivan, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, taking starkly contradictory public positions on the same day.

"This could be an important moment for us," a White House staff member suggested today. "That review John has ordered won't stop with Panama. He doesn't like confusion, and he'll find out what's causing it and fix it."



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**ABC NEWS**

**THIS WEEK WITH DAVID BRINKLEY**

**Sunday, October 8, 1989**

**GUESTS:**

**LT. GEN. BRENT SCOWCROFT**  
National Security Adviser

**SENATOR DAVID BOREN (D-Okla.)**  
Chairman, Select Committee on Intelligence

**SENATOR WILLIAM COHEN (R-Maine)**  
Co-Chair, Select Committee on Intelligence

**GUILLERMO "BILLY" FORD**  
Panamanian Opposition Leader

**INTERVIEWED BY:** Sam Donaldson - ABC News  
George F. Will - ABC News Analyst  
Cokie Roberts - ABC News

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SAM DONALDSON: Mr. Ford--Vice President-Elect Ford, as far as the United States is concerned--thanks for coming in today.

GUILLERMO 'BILLY' FORD: Thank you very much, Sam.

MR. DONALDSON: Here with me to join in the questioning are George Will and Cokie Roberts, both of ABC News.

Mr. Ford, looking at the coup attempt this past week, what's your assessment of the way the Bush administration acted? Was it is a reasonable action or not?

MR. FORD: I have said it over and over again since we were nominated back in January that the Defense Forces of the Republic of Panama are the responsible group for getting Noriega out. It is a Panamanian solution. A lot of people have been looking upon the United States for that kind of solution, and we've been trying to rally around the world for all democracies to rally along with the United States to get rid of Noriega.

But it seems to be sort of a mixed emotions in Latin America since they know that the U.S. troops are stationed there in the Canal area, that it would be a lot easier for the United States to do it. But I feel that the Latin American countries, specifically our neighbors down south of the border, north of the border of Panama, should really come up and put their act together and say, We want to do that, we want to do that, and Noriega must leave.

MR. DONALDSON: Fair enough. But I think last week, the question now is whether, when the coup plotters had Noriega in their grasp, they had captured him--and let's assume they did it without direct U.S. intervention, was the United States asked, can you tell us, to take Noriega?

MR. DONALDSON: I really don't know, Sam, because the truth of it is that there's a lot of confusion still about many of the stages of the coup. We were not noticed[sic] in advance; we had no way to find out because there's no contact whatsoever between the military and the opposition. That is one of Noriega's schemes to keep him away from us. So he really took us by surprise.

MR. DONALDSON: Well, there are a lot of reports, as you know, Mr. Ford, from many sources, including administration sources here--who will not go on the record, it's true--at least not yet, that, in fact, the coup plotters, as they held Noriega, asked U.S. forces to come in, in some way, and remove in.

Had that been the case, should the Bush administration have acted promptly?

MR. FORD: I've heard that over and over again, and it's very hard for us to tell the United States what to do. They have their own vested interests in Panama. They've been saying Noriega has got to leave--the same as Mrs. Thatcher, many other people, have said Noriega's got to leave. So again, there's a sovereign decision of the United States to go and do it.

But again, we cannot solely depend on the United States to get Noriega; we have to try to get him out.

GEORGE WILL: There is an artificial clarity, though, to what you're saying--that either the United States does it or the Panamanian Defense Forces. Did we not--the United States--by word and deed--encourage this, to get started, this coup?

MR. FORD: I think that the United States has encouraged in the past by sending them signals that Noriega must leave, they've been sending a message to the Defense Forces. So have we in the opposition. So, again, all these coups get encouragement from many angles; and I think the United States is not the exception.

MR. WILL: Now the encouragement seems to imply some minimum level of assistance; and, indeed, we did give some. We blocked off two or three important roads, which did not good. Suppose the third road had been blocked? Would Noriega be gone today?

MR. FORD: It would have increased the possibility of Noriega having left power. My biggest concern is, there's conflicting reports. At one time they say they have Noriega; and the other times they say they do not have Noriega. If they had him, when did they let him go?



MR. WILL: Who do you mean by "they had him?"

MR. FORD: I mean the people involved in the coup.

MR. DONALDSON: You mean, they should have shot him?

MR. FORD: I wouldn't say shoot him. But at least why did they give up? They gave themselves up.

MR. WILL: Is Noriega stronger today or weaker?

MR. FORD: By your standards, U.S. standards and the world standards, he looks to be stronger. Within our population, I'm sure that people are so terrified of what he's going to do in the future--I'm not talking about executions in Panama--unconfirmed reports of continued executions within the Panamanian Defense Forces; and he's going after the Panamanian population, the civilian population, after President-elect Endara and Vice President-elect Arias Calderon. So, again, for the world, he might look stronger. For Panamanians, he is not strong.

MR. WILL: Who is going to try a coup in the face of this fiasco?

MR. FORD: You want my personal opinion? This coup is not over. I'm sure that Noriega can't sleep well, and he's looking over his shoulder. That's my personal impression because too many colonels were involved, too many officers were involved. It was not the lower echelons; it was all the way from colonels down to sergeants.

COKIE ROBERTS: What do you mean it's not over? Does it mean--

MR. FORD: Well, there must have been other officers involved. I mean, by logic, this sized coup--which was much bigger than the one he had last year in March--it by logic would imply that many other officers could be involved. So, again, when you're talking about the people of the top echelon--two colonels--one lieutenant-colonel, majors, captains and everything--is not just a small little coup of somebody coming up and saying, Noriega, you've got to leave.

MS. ROBERTS: Mr. Ford, where are the people of Panama

in all this? When you--the rebels had taken over the radio station at some point, were announcing that they had gone in. When you had that same sort of situation in the Philippines, for instance, there were people blocking the troops coming in. Is the opposition so ineffectual that the people simply aren't out against Noriega?

MR. FORD: Absolutely.(sic) The opposition is closely knit. The only thing is, we're not going to get our people out to be massacred unless there is a master plan to get involved; and we had no contact, like I said before, with the people involved in the coup.

And it is very easy to say, Where as the people. In the Philippines, it was totally different. The people really rallied outside when many of the big blocks of military were turning against Marcos. At that time, Cardinal Sin rallied up the people; they went out, and then the whole thing started to unfold.

In Panama, we had no advance notice, and we didn't know who was doing the job.

MS. ROBERTS: So you're saying it has to come from somebody--a church leader or somebody has to rally the people? There's nobody there rallying the people against Noriega?

MR. FORD: No. I think the mistake of the people involved in the coup, they never called the opposition.

MR. DONALDSON: Now you say the coup is not over. You think it is rolling coup with many colonels perhaps still alive and still able to do something. How should the United States help? Should we help in some way? Or should we just sit back and await events?

MR. FORD: I think it would be up to the officers; that is my personal impression. If the coup has not come to an end, it would be entirely up to the Panamanian military to seek help--not only from the United States, but from wherever they--

MR. DONALDSON: But if they seek help, what should the Bush administratino do?



MR. FORD: If they seek help from the United States and other countries, it's up to the countries to decide. And I hope they get some help because the Panamanian people are screaming for help to get rid of Noriega.

MR. DONALDSON: Thank you very much. Mr. Ford, thanks for coming in today.

Coming next, the Democratic chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Senator David Boren of Oklahoma, and the Republican vice chairman, Maine Senator William Cohen. And shortly Lieutenant General Brent Scowcroft.

(Announcements)

MR. DONALDSON: Senator Boren, Senator Cohen, good to see you this morning. Good to see you both.

There's a story in the Washington Post this morning which says that the U.S. commander in Panama was finally given instructions by General Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, to go in with forces on a covert basis, preferably, and remove Noriega. But the coup collapsed before the commander in Panama could move.

Now your committee was briefed last week by senior administration officials. Did they tell you anything about this, Senator Boren?

SENATOR DAVID BOREN (D-Okla.): No. In fact, we never heard anything about, and I'm not sure whether or not that report was accurate as to whether or not the order ever came that we should go in and get Noriega.

In a way, I think it's a little bit of a red herring that takes our attention away from the major event. The major event is whether or not the coup would succeed. If the coup had succeeded, we wouldn't have to worry about getting Noriega. He would have been under house arrest. They made it clear they wanted him removed from power.

I think the central question is, why did the order never come to seal off the right road. We just saw in the earlier

segment, we seemed prepared to seal off the other roads. Was the president ever told--and we knew for about two hours--reinforcements were moving in from another direction? Was the president ever asked a yes-or-no decision, do you we have your authority to block those roads?

If we had, the whole question about where would Noriega be right now would be moot; he would be in custody of forces that wanted him removed from power.

MR. DONALDSON: Yes, but, Senator Cohen, this story in the Post this morning does suggest--assuming it's accurate--at the very least that there was confusion in Washington and a lapse of time before some sort of orders were given, does it not?

SENATOR WILLIAM COHEN (R-Maine): I think there was some confusion. There were conflicting reports coming in--exactly whether Noriega was inside. As a matter of fact, the coup planners did not plan to apprehend General Noriega. That was a mistake, as a matter of fact. He walked in on the coup plotters that morning in an unexpected fashion. So, there was a lot of confusion at the time.

I would say that, excluding my colleague here, my good friend from Oklahoma, that failure is the father of about a hundred hawks on Capitol Hill now. Suddenly everyone is fluttering around the Senate and the House saying, Let's use military force. And I find it ironic that many of the same people who have imposed some restrictions upon the administration by deed or word suddenly now want to use American force.

I think it's an opportunity for all of us to finally lay it out. Do the American people, by virtue of the Congress, really support the use of American force to take out Noriega, either overtly or covertly? We ought to know that.

MR. WILL: Well, let's get to the question of what we've learned out of all this, both about our own mind and our own abilities. I'm curious about what your colleague Senator Nunn said. He said sometimes you have to be prepared for your



policy to succeed. Now the implication that a coup--getting a coup to occur was our policy. Is that our policy?

SENATOR BOREN: Well, it absolutely was our policy, and that's stated both publicly and privately. The president of the United States had called upon the PDF, in essence, to revolt and throw out Noriega.

MR. WILL: But when you encourage people rhetorically and repeatedly to have a coup when you have 12,000 soldiers standing a few hundred yards away, aren't you in some way promising aid?

SENATOR BOREN: Absolutely, George. And I guess, you know, some people have questioned me. They said you usually support the administration; you're known as not a partisan critic of the administration--and certainly I'm not. Why are you so angry about what has happened? Why do you feel so let down?

And that's exactly the point. I don't think it's right for this country, for a great country, to go out and encourage people to take action, put their lives on the line, to imply by encouraging them to take that action that we're going to help them and not be there when we need them.

It's time for us to regroup now and see what lessons we've learned, where do we go from here. I think the first thing we need to know is, if we're going to talk about and encourage people to take this action in the future, are we prepared. That fundamental decision should be made in advance. Are we prepared to use force to help them? What government of Panama, by the way, are we going to recognize, so that we have some legal authority to turn to?

We haven't even recognized the government. When Delvalle's term ended, we haven't even yet recognized the Endara government which might have called on us to come in and help in the situation.

MR. WILL: Are you angry, also, Senator Cohen--particularly it's that some people are saying it's the same old thing after Vietnam when people said the lesson is it can be dangerous to be America's enemy; it's fatal to be its friend.

SENATOR COHEN: Well, I think there's a question as to whether there was adequate planning for this kind of a contingency. But certainly the president of the United States, in my judgment, to make an informed judgment as to put American troops there. I think he's got several questions to ask.

If we're going to support a coup, what is the reliability of the individuals involved? There was a doubt about that. Number two, what was the adequacy of the planning involved? There were great doubts about that. Number three, what was the likelihood of the risk of casualties, should the Americans go in?

I think all of those questions had substantial doubt attached to them. We needed more planning, more intelligence, better organization and a greater assessment of the likelihood of American casualties under the circumstances. We didn't have that. And under those circumstances, I think he acted properly.

MS. ROBERTS: But, Senator, this is hardly news. The United States government has been trying to get Noriega out of there for quite some time now.

SENATOR COHEN: We could do it tomorrow; we could take Noriega out tomorrow.

MS. ROBERTS: So then why don't we?

SENATOR COHEN: Well, do the American really want to use force to take Noriega out? If they do, we can do that. My judgment is, the American people do not want that; nor do the Latin American people.

MS. ROBERTS: But the question of planning for--you're correct that the administration has said all along--and probably with the support of the American people, certainly with the support of the Congress that we're not going to go in there to get Noriega out. But there has also been the goal of having the Panamanians get them out.

Now given that goal and given the fact that that goal has been there for the last year or more, when it finally happens, why aren't those plans in place?



SENATOR COHEN: There are a lot of conflicting signals coming from the United States Congress, I might add. The question is, why didn't we have better intelligence. We've got to reassess exactly, for example, what happens if potential coup plotters come and say, We're going to get Noriega and we want your help. Does that then run into the executive prohibition against assassinations?

Those questions have yet to be resolved, and I think it's because there's been some split within the United States Congress, as well as the American people; and we've got to resolve that.

SENATOR BOREN: Well, with all due respect to my good and colleague--and we usually agree, I think we have to get back to basics, as they say. The fundamental question is this. If the president of the United States was going to make these statements, and if all the people in our government now for months--more than a year--were going to take the position, We're going to encourage these people to act, surely the fundamental question should have been asked before those words were ever spoken, Are we prepared to go all the way with these people?

I think the American people assumed that our government was ready, as well as the Panamanians assumed.

MR. DONALDSON: But were you ready, Senators?

SENATOR BOREN: Absolutely.

MR. DONALDSON: Well, your good friend and colleague, Senator Cohen, said he would exclude you--

SENATOR COHEN: Formerly good friend and colleague.

MR. DONALDSON: On Capitol Hill--he would exclude you as one of those who wants to put restraints on it, then calls for action.

SENATOR BOREN: Yes.

MR. DONALDSON: But I am told that in July of last year and again in October of last year, you personally signed a letter to the Reagan administration forbidding the administration from

using covert as well as overt--any aid to any plotters against Noriega.

SENATOR BOREN: Sam, I don't know where you got such information.

MR. DONALDSON: Is it not true?

SENATOR BOREN: No, it is not true. Obviously, we are constrained from being able to discuss classified information on this program. But let me tell you--and my good friend will back me up on this.

MR. DONALDSON: I got it from someone clearly who wishes you no well.

SENATOR BOREN: I'm sure that's true. He knows that time and time again--in fact, both of us--every time there's been a witness before our committee, we have asked again and again and again, if we start to take action, are we prepared to see it through? That's the question we've asked in every single meeting. This isn't armchair quarterbacking. This is in advance--in advance of all this talk.

The other thing I can say to you categorically is this. Since George Bush became president, every single word of authority that he has requested from the intelligence committee and every single penny that he has requested from the intelligence committee relating to Panama, he has gotten and he has gotten with my support.

MR. DONALDSON: Senator Boren, Senator Cohen, thanks very much for coming in today. Glad to have you on our program.

Coming next, the head of the National Security Council and chief national security advisor, Lieutenant-General Brent Scowcroft--when we return.

(Commercial announcements)

MR. DONALDSON: General Scowcroft, thank you for being with us this morning.

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Thank you, Sam.

MR. DONALDSON: We appreciate it. Always good to see you.



GEN. SCOWCROFT: Good to be here, Sam.

MR. DONALDSON: Let's begin where we just left off with Senator Boren and Senator Cohen. Senator Boren says that he never signed a letter in the Reagan administration's waning days which would absolutely forbid the Reagan administration from using covert action or from giving covert material. And he also said that he had never denied the Bush administration's request in any respect when it came to Panama. Is that correct?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Well, some of these things are very difficult to discuss, because they involve intelligence matters. But I think the important point is that the Congress in its micro-management of the Executive Branch going clear back as far as the executive order prohibiting assassinations, which was forced by the Congress, has, by its actions and its demeanor certainly leaned us against the kinds of things now they're saying we should have done. And Senator Boren over the last year, by his contribution to such things leaves me kind of astonished that he would say that.

MR. DONALDSON: Well, you're suggesting that it's not true that they never have denied the Bush administration what it wanted, what it asked for in Panama.

GEN. SCOWCROFT: That's true.

MR. DONALDSON: It's true it's not true?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: We did not get everything we had wanted. His statement literally is not in accord with all the facts.

MR. DONALDSON: What did you want?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Well, that's the problem, you know. This is the Intelligence Committee. These are all classified matters. But the literal statement, we have been denied absolutely nothing is simply not the case.

MR. DONALDSON: General, there's a great witch hunt on in Washington this weekend. I don't need to tell you someone is going to be it for what appears to be bungling in Panama.

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Well, I'm not just going--

MR. DONALDSON: Did you?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: I'm just not going to go into that kind of detail on that issue.

MR. WILL: Let's take a detail that's quite public. I think the American people would like to know how a great nation gets itself in a position whereby at a crucial moment its military is deployed, that is, we're half pregnant, as someone said. We're halfway into involvement. We block two roads, and not a third road. How does that, the worst of both worlds, doing something but doing it just enough to fail, how does that happen?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: I think there's a very, very big difference between the actions we took, and the actions we did not take. The two roads that we blocked, the causeway and the bridge over the Canal, are clearly areas, they're bottlenecks. They're easy to isolate. They're areas within our exercise area. They're areas where we have troops all the time. Clearly they are things that can be done within our general treaty authorities.

MR. WILL: But we were participating in a coup when we blocked them, no matter where--

GEN. SCOWCROFT: The third--well, we were in fact responding to the request of the plotters. The third group is very different. It's not a route. It's down through the heart of old Panama City. A number, multiple routes, crowded city. To do that, and outside the area where U.S. troops moved and exercised, that would have been the overt exercise of military force perhaps into a firefight to block them in the heart of a heavily populated area. That, then, was the overt intervention of American armed force in the main city of another power.

Now, under the circumstances, and remember the circumstances, the plotters came in. They said we don't want American help. We don't want our action tainted by being involved with the United States. All we want you to do is just sort of keep the reinforcements from these two roads. We don't want your help, and as a matter of fact, they said we hope that Noriega is not there.

MR. WILL: I understand. They only--they asked specifically

the two, but only two roads be blocked?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Yes, sir.

MR. WILL: To what purpose?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: To what purpose? Because they were worried about reinforcements from two specific units where they had indications that they would be--

MR. WILL: From that micro-question, let me ask a macro-question. Is it perhaps possible that Noriega is becoming like the hostage problem in Lebanon, something we can't do anything about, something--a tail wagging the dog? What is the American national interest in the removal of Noriega that justifies this embarrassment and this investment of your and other time?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: I think he's become a symbol; I don't think there's any question about that. He has become a symbol. And because of him being in Panama with the historic U.S. involvement in Panama, he has become a symbol that is hard to ignore,

MR. WILL: A dangerous, is he not, by now, a dangerous symbol of American paralysis?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Yes. He is a dangerous symbol.

MR. DONALDSON: And is he, if I may, a symbol of paralysis of the Bush administration? President Bush, as you know, before his winning campaign, was often accused of being a wimp. That was the word used. He overcame that image, certainly, and was elected. But if General Noriega can remain in power, isn't there a danger that that image will come back in full force on the President of the United States' shoulders?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: We certainly hope Noriega will not remain in power. I think we get back to the central point, though, and that is, under the circumstances of what we knew about the coup plotters and what their own goals were, and the fact that they did not want American overt help, added to the fact that we did not know at that point when we could have blocked the other road, whether or not Noriega was, in fact, in the compound--we had reports that he was; we had reports that he was wounded, maybe



even killed. We had reports he was at Fort Amador. The circumstances for the overt use of American armed forces into a, perhaps, combat situation did not appear to be the prudent step. That's the difference between the blocking of the two roads and further action.

MS. ROBERTS: General, why was the intelligence so bad, though? I mean, again, given the fact that this was something that we had wanted to occur, and clearly there should have been some sort of planning for it to occur--during that day when I was talking to members of the congressional intelligence committees they told me the CIA was watching CNN to find out what was happening in Panama. Now, why is that the case?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: This is a--you know, any time you have an action, a military action like this, you're going to have a lot of confusion, you're going to have a lot of conflicting reports. This is the fog of war. The last one, I remember, the Mayaguez. We had very incomplete information. All of the actions I'd been in, you're operating without a full deck of intelligence information.

MS. ROBERTS: Well, is that fog still there? For instance, did the rebels ask us to take Noriega or not?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: They did not.

MS. ROBERTS: They never asked--

GEN. SCOWCROFT: They did not.

MS. ROBERTS: --the United States to come in and fight for Noriega?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: No. As a matter of fact, they explicitly said we don't want American help. We don't want what we're doing, which is an internal cleansing of the PDF. We don't want American help to taint what we're doing.

MS. ROBERTS: Never? They never said after they already had him held they didn't say come and take him and hold him there?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Never.

MR. DONALDSON: Well, General Scowcroft, I take it, then, you are flatly denying the story in The Washington Post this morning. May I remind you what I read the story to be, and

that was that finally General Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs, talked by secure telephone with General Thurmond, who is the new commander of our Southern Command, and authorized him to use American forces, in--covert forces, ones that were not seen in uniform, to go in and get Noriega. Is that not true?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: No, I'm not flatly denying that at all. That's not what Cokie asked.

MR. DONALDSON: That's true?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: She asked did they ever offer Noriega to us. And the answer is a flat no.

MR. DONALDSON: Then what about the story I just asked you about?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Well, I'm not going to talk about the details of military operational plans and so on. But, yes, we did have plans for that. They were never ordered to be executed.

MR. DONALDSON: They were never ordered to be executed by General Thurmond, but they were authorized by Washington?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: The planning, absolutely. The execution was not authorized by--the planning, absolutely.

MR. DONALDSON: Why, because the coup collapsed before you could do it?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Yes, yes.

MR. DONALDSON: Well, then, what you're saying is, if I read you correctly, that the rebels never asked us to come in and get Noriega but we were about to do it anyway.

GEN. SCOWCROFT: The rebels never asked us, indeed, when we had that one meeting with General Cisneros. We asked them to give him. They said no. At that point, we became fairly certain, although we did not know for sure, and still have no positive proof Noriega was there. We had pretty good assurance that Noriega was there. We had pretty good assurance that Noriega was, in fact, there. That changes the calculus of what we were prepared to do.

MR. WILL: If we were prepared to go--

MS. ROBERTS: Hasn't Noriega said he was there?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: I beg your pardon?

MS. ROBERTS: Hasn't Noriega said he was there?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: The last thing he said was that, no, he was never there.

MR. WILL: If we were prepared to go and get Noriega, if the coup had not collapsed too soon, then we were prepared to, to use your term, to taint this all Panamanian action?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: Perhaps. But I don't want to pursue that too far.

MR. DONALDSON: But, we do, general.

GEN. SCOWCROFT: You see, what I'm saying is that the reason we didn't block that third crowded populated route was because, in major part, because of doubt about what the situation was inside the compound. That was relieved in considerable part by--

MR. WILL: Let's stipulate that all that you say is true about the fog of war and confusion is normal in these situations and all that. Still, no one can be real happy the way things went last Tuesday.

GEN. SCOWCROFT: We're not happy.

MR. WILL: I understand, and I'd like you to tell us what we'd learned, and if there's any penalty for failure in American government, that is, has someone done something wrong, and will there be a penalty?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: I guess what I would say, George, first of all, that looking back over it, given the circumstances at the time, I think our actions were proper and prudent, and there was a consensus, all the stories notwithstanding, a consensus among all advisers to the president that our action was correct. Now, can we improve on it? Can we improve on the kinds of intelligence, can we eliminate what gave rise to the story that they had offered us Noriega, which was simply a translation in a cable from "want"--from "won't" to "want"? Sure.



GEN. SCOWCROFT: General, you seem to be saying you're happy about what happened from Tuesday on, but there were inadequacies before Tuesday. Is that what really your position is?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: I guess what I'm saying is that given--there's nothing like 20/20 hindsight. Given what we know now about what actually was happening on the ground, then, I think I would not change what we did. Our procedures, and in some case some organizational things ought to be improved as a result of it. And we will be doing that.

MR. DONALDSON: General, you have acknowledged in the final stages before the coup collapsed, General Powell did talk to General Thurmond, and you were putting in train something which because the coup collapsed, you said could not then be ordered into action. My question to you now is did President Bush personally order this?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: President Bush personally was responsible for--

MR. DONALDSON: Was responsible, General?

GEN. SCOWCROFT: --whatever guidance was sent down--yes, personally ordered whatever guidance was sent to General Thurmond.

MR. DONALDSON: So these stories--

GEN. SCOWCROFT: While I'm not confirming the Woodward story in all its details, because some of it is not exactly--

MR. DONALDSON: But I'm asking now about another facet. It is said in print in the last 48 hours repeatedly that President Bush was not, in the final analysis, asked to give orders along the lines that we are discussing. And I'm just wondering whether he was, in fact, the man who ordered it, not just the man responsible. Obviously we know that.

GEN. SCOWCROFT: The man--ordered what was sent to General Thurmond, yes. That was a presidential order.

MR. DONALDSON: Thank you very much, General Scowcroft. Thanks for coming under fire this morning. We appreciate that.

# Panama Crisis: Disarray Hindered White House

The following article is based on reporting by Andrew Rosenthal, Stephen Engelberg and Michael R. Gordon and was written by Mr. Rosenthal.

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7 — At 9 A.M. Monday, President Bush gathered his senior advisers in the Oval Office to decide whether to throw the might of 12,000 American soldiers behind a little-known Panamanian major who hoped to overthrow Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega.

No formal decision was made, but Mr. Bush set the course: take only the minimal steps requested by the rebels but no American forces should go into combat without a specific Presidential decision.

Beyond that, the coup was to be left to the Panamanians, who had requested only minor American involvement. Mr. Bush's decision was never reversed.

## Breakdowns in Communications

What happened among the Panamanian forces is still largely unknown. But an examination of the events from late Sunday to Tuesday afternoon reveals these two breakdowns in communications, which Congressional critics believe illustrate inadequate planning by the rebels and the White House:

¶The rebel leader refused to provide telephone numbers to contact him, and the Americans could not reach him during the coup attempt.

¶Despite months of calling for a military uprising against General Noriega, the Administration did not decide until the Monday session that the rebels would have to meet two conditions — a declaration of democratic principles and an appeal for international backing — for broader American support.

These conditions were not relayed to American officers in Panama until Tuesday, even though they had contact with the rebel leader's wife on Monday. This information was never communicated to the plotters.

An Administration official asserted that the failure to convey the American requirements did not affect the outcome because the plotters never sought more extensive American assistance.

## Sunday, Oct. 1

### Panama City

The United States Southern Command is contacted by Adela Bonilla de Giroldi, wife of Maj. Moisés Giroldi Vega, the commander of the battalion stationed in the Panamanian Defense Forces headquarters in the old downtown section of Panama. American officials said Mrs. Giroldi said her husband and other officers were planning to overthrow General Noriega on Monday. She arranged a meeting for Major Giroldi with two officers from the Central Intelligence Agency.

According to Administration officials, Major Giroldi wanted two things: Sanctuary for his wife and family on an American military base, and roadblocks by American troops in two places, one along the route from Fort Amador north to downtown and one on the road leading east from Howard Air Base across the Bridge of the Americas.

The Panamanian Fifth Company is stationed at Fort Amador, along with American troops, and Major Giroldi feared the Panamanian troops there would defend General Noriega. The Seventh Company is to the southwest of Howard Air Base, and Major Giroldi was also concerned about that unit.

### Worrisome Statements

Administration officials said Major Giroldi did not want more American involvement. He said the coup would take place on Monday, but would begin only if General Noriega was not at his headquarters. He indicated that the rebels simply wanted the general to retire honorably.

Major Giroldi's statements worried the Americans and made them suspect that they would not be able to get General Noriega out of the country to face drug and racketeering charges filed by two Federal grand juries in Florida in 1988. "That had an impact later on," Mr. Cheney said.

Mr. Cheney and others said that to avoid the possibility of a trap Major Giroldi was not given any commitments of American help.

The Washington Post

The New York Times

A1

The Washington Times

The Wall Street Journal

The Christian Science Monitor

New York Daily News

USA Today

The Chicago Tribune

Date 8 Oct 1989

## Monday, Oct. 2

### Morning, Washington

At 2:30 A.M., Mr. Cheney was awakened by Gen. Colin L. Powell, newly appointed as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff but not yet sworn in to his post, and was told about the contact Sunday night in Panama City. Mr. Cheney telephoned Brent Scowcroft, Mr. Bush's national security adviser, and around this time Mr. Cheney approved sanctuary for Major Giroldi's family. "All of us agreed at that point that we simply had very little to go on," Mr. Cheney later said.

Throughout the day, Administration officials appear to have acted in a cloud of confused and vague information about the events in Panama and an atmosphere of mistrust that may have predisposed them not to throw much support behind Major Giroldi.

Coup reports from Panama were not uncommon, and Major Giroldi was not on the Pentagon's list of Panamanian officers who were considered capable of seizing control and holding it; he was a confidant of General Noriega and had been responsible for putting down the last coup attempt, in March 1988, just after the Federal indictments against General Noriega. Mr. Cheney and others feared they were being "set up."

"The point would have been to embarrass the United States," Mr. Cheney said, "to try to get us sucked into making some kind of a deal with coup plotters."

Administration officials have repeatedly cited this uncertainty to explain their hesitation in acting to support Major Giroldi. But some lawmakers have asked why the United States did not know more about him and apparently did not more closely question the rebels about their political objectives, specifically whether they would agree to set up a democracy.

### Avoiding Direct Conflict

From the start, military planners wanted to keep American soldiers out of direct conflict with the Panamanian armed forces. Officers at the Southern Command were reluctant to



get involved in an operation that they thought had little chance of success and might serve only to provoke criticism of the United States.

At 9 A.M., Mr. Bush became actively involved for the first time in the discussions on what was happening in Panama. Meeting in the Oval Office with senior aides, he chose a plan of action that contrasted dramatically with his angry oratory about General Noriega and later prompted criticism from lawmakers in both parties.

The military would prepare to block the routes mentioned by Major Giroldi, but only in a way that complied with the Panama Canal treaties. In other words, if those routes could be blocked by closing off roads that went through United States bases, that could be called "securing United States installations." The question of more overt action was deferred and Mr. Bush did not change standing orders not to engage the Panamanian military.

This decision was not relayed to the plotters and it is not clear whether this lack of response hindered the coup plotters or changed their tactics. An Administration official said the rebels had made it clear at the outset that they would go ahead without American help.

#### **Panama City, 7 A.M.**

A company from the American First Battalion, 508 Infantry was moved to Fort Amador in case the troops were needed to seal off the road to Panama City. The troops ostensibly were moved for "physical training" to avoid a treaty violation. But the training ended at 8:40 A.M. and the unit stayed on site, all day, in battle gear.

As the morning passed, there was no sign of a coup attempt. Major Giroldi sent word that the uprising would start in the afternoon, but American misgivings deepened when nothing happened then either.

#### **Evening, Panama City**

Major Giroldi's wife contacted the American military and said the coup would be Tuesday morning, assuming General Noriega was not in his headquarters. The officers dealing with her were not told of President Bush's prerequisites for greater American support, and did not pass them on.

The Southern Command notified the Panamanian Government, as required by the canal treaties, that the United States military would hold two exercises on Tuesday morning. In one, Marines were to be deployed west of Howard Force Base. In the

other, a mechanized unit would be operating in the vicinity of Fort Amador. That, military officials reasoned, would put the troops in position to block the Panamanian Fifth Company from leaving Fort Amador and to stop the Seventh Company from moving down the Bridge of the Americas road.

### **Tuesday, Oct. 3**

#### **Panama City, 5 A.M.**

(All times Eastern Daylight. Panama City's local time is an hour earlier.)

After reveille, the exercise for the Marines at Howard Air Base was changed at the last minute. Again, the Administration played it safe. The Marines were to be deployed at the approach to Howard, not farther west, which would have put them closer to the Seventh Company but away from any American base, a posting that some Americans thought went beyond what the treaties permitted. By deploying the Marines at the base gates, they could simply shut off Howard for "security reasons."

#### **Panama City, 8 A.M.**

General Noriega arrived at headquarters, but the attack began anyway. Major Giroldi and his forces seized the compound.

#### **Gettysburg, Pa., 9 A.M.**

Mr. Cheney was touring the Gettysburg battlefield with General Dmitri T. Yazov, Defense Minister of the Soviet Union. As the two sat next to each other on a bus, General Powell called with the news: the coup had started.

Mr. Baker, Mr. Cheney, Mr. Powell, Mr. Scowcroft, John H. Sununu, the White House chief of staff, and Robert M. Gates, deputy national security adviser, met with Mr. Bush briefly to assess the early developments in the coup attempt. "There was a lot of confusion at the time because there was a lot of confusion in Panama," Mr. Cheney said. "That's what was coming up through the system."

#### **Panama City, 10 A.M.**

American intelligence detected that Panamanian forces stationed at Rio Hato near the military headquarters were preparing to move out. Within minutes, a plane was spotted at Tocumen airport, about 18 miles from Panama City. American officials suspected this plane would fly to Rio Hato and return with reinforcements. Minutes later, a convoy of trucks rumbled by the American em-

bassy, about a mile from the fighting, and the officials realized they were wrong. The plane had already ferried the troops.

Some Congressional critics have complained that Mr. Bush or the rebels should have been notified that the reinforcements were moving down an open route. But the Administration said that by the time they were certain the reinforcements were moving, it was too late.

#### **Washington, 11 A.M.**

Mr. Cheney returned to the Pentagon, where General Powell and the other Joint Chiefs were meeting. The military was uncertain about General Noriega's whereabouts and the rebels' chances of success. Mr. Bush still thought it was prudent not to order military action.

"Are you going to intervene on the side of the coup plotters, get U.S. troops in a shooting scrape with Panamanian forces with a possibility that Noriega's outside in charge of the Panamanian forces?" Mr. Cheney said later.

#### **Washington, just before noon**

Mr. Bush, Mr. Cheney, Mr. Powell, Mr. Scowcroft, Mr. Gates and Mr. Sununu met in the Oval Office. News from Panama was generally optimistic and the officials discussed a full range of military options. But they were still not sure General Noriega was in rebel custody.

American officials had been out of contact with Major Giroldi since his wife called late the night before to say the coup was on for Tuesday. The major had refused to provide telephone numbers to the Americans.

#### **Panama City, 12:01 A.M.**

The mechanized American unit at Fort Amador sealed the base. That bottled up the Panamanian Fifth Company, which Mr. Cheney said never made any move to leave.

#### **Panama City, 12:10 A.M.**

The rebels broadcast a communiqué saying General Noriega was captured and would be forced to retire. But they recognized President Francisco Rodriguez, whom General Noriega had installed in office. "These were not clear-eyed democrats," said Pete Williams, the Pentagon spokesman.

#### **Panama City, 12:18 A.M.**

According to the Pentagon, two Panamanian lieutenants associated with the coup arrived at the front gate of Fort Clayton, which is near



the Panamanian headquarters. The officers were brought in to see Maj. Gen. Marc Cisneros, second in command to Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman. According to the Administration, the Panamanians said they "controlled" General Noriega, repeated concerns about the Fifth and Seventh companies and asked for roadblocks. Administration officials said no commitments were made.

"U.S. notified coup liaison that we are prepared to take Noriega under custody if brought to Fort Clayton," the Pentagon said in a written summary of events. "Answer — No intent to turn anyone over to U.S."

News of the meeting was relayed by the Southern Command to the Joint Chiefs in Washington. Administration officials said the American Embassy in Panama relayed a garbled version to the State Department, saying the rebels did want to turn over General Noriega. That deepened the confusion, since the garbled version was recounted to members of Congressional intelligence committees after the coup failed.

General Noriega said Friday in an interview with CBS News that he was "not detained at any time. I was under fire, but I wasn't detained."

#### **Washington, 1:45 P.M.**

Mr. Cheney and General Yazov went to the White House. But General Yazov was left in an outer office while Mr. Cheney told Mr. Bush, Mr. Scowcroft, Mr. Baker and Mr. Sununu about the meeting in Panama. As in the Oval Office meeting on Monday with President Bush, the Central Intelligence Agency was not represented. The President decided to go ahead with the planned roadblock at Howard Air Base, but to take no other action. Mr. Cheney, in response to Congressional criticism, said it would have been "crazy" to attack the military headquarters at that point to seize General Noriega. "That would have put us on the side, basically, of the Noriega forces against the coup forces," who were unwilling to turn over General Noriega, he said.

The officials decided to instruct General Cisneros to ask for General Noriega and for a declaration of democratic principles. But it was too late.

#### **Panama City, 1:59 P.M.**

American troops sealed Howard Air Base, cutting the Seventh Company's land route to downtown. The coup was starting to go sour. Some pro-Noriega forces were at the scene, fighting back.

The Pentagon action made no difference because the pro-Noriega troops had already been flown to the Tocumen airport from which they had driven the headquarters.

Mr. Cheney said the Americans would not have been authorized to fire on the Panamanians or resist their advance. "That's the kind of decision that would have come up the chain of command rapidly to the President, and he would have been given the opportunity to make the broad policy decision, 'Yes, we want to intervene militarily,'" Mr. Cheney said. "That decision was never made."

#### **Washington, 2:30 P.M.**

The President was informed that the coup was collapsing.

Mr. Cheney was in his car, once again with General Yazov, driving back to the Pentagon from the White House. General Powell called with the news: the coup had failed.



# Bush and Panama: Chance Lost, Perhaps to Hesitancy

By R. W. APPLE Jr.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 7 — A senior European diplomat, preparing to leave Washington for another capital, had this to say last week about President Bush's performance in the realm of foreign policy during his first eight months in office: "He's been reasonably deft, and he's been extremely lucky."

News  
Analysis

After the failed coup in Panama this week, the verdict might have been: Not so deft this time, but his luck held and saved him from major damage.

Because the two senior Democrats in Congress — Senator George J. Mitchell of Maine, the majority leader, and House Speaker Thomas S. Foley of Washington — both have strongly bipartisan instincts in such matters, they made no all-out assault on the President's conduct, accepting his assurances that no real chance to bring Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega to the United States had ever existed.

Because the reports from Panama and from Washington during the first 72 hours after the coup were so confusing and contradictory, the impression left was not a sharp picture of American bumbling or bungling but rather a blurry image of chances perhaps lost.

For the longer run, however, Washington's performance raised several disturbing questions that many in the Administration freely acknowledge.

## Hesitancy Is Perceived

Perhaps the largest one was posed by a hesitancy or passivity that seemed to characterize the response. For example, a senior Administration aide said that when supporters of General Noriega, the Panamanian leader, took an unexpected route to Panama City, United States officials did nothing to stop them "because the rebels never asked us to do it." Another ranking aide insisted that there was no point trying to bring General Noriega to the United States to stand trial because the rebels wanted him kept in Panama.

"It's hard to imagine Lyndon Johnson or Ronald Reagan hesitating, especially in the case of a man we'd been trying to get rid of for the better part of 10 years," said a Democrat with long foreign-policy experience. "You would have seen action first, then, after the fact, an explanation that great powers had to act to protect their interests. But Bush is more cautious."

The President has moved more slowly than some critics would have liked in Eastern Europe and in the Middle East. But on Panama, he had taken a hard line, repeatedly issuing only slightly oblique invitations to the Panamanian military to rise up and overthrow General Noriega, whom the United States considers a drug profiteer and a tyrant ranking with the world's worst.

In that context, the Administration's decision not to intervene revived memories of the 1950's, when President Eisenhower and his Secretary of State, John Foster Dulles, appeared to invite revolt in Eastern Europe with statements about "captive nations" casting off their chains, only to hang back when the Hungarian revolt came.

## Some Unsettling Questions

Beyond such strategic considerations, there were other unsettling questions about the way Washington acted and reacted this week, including these:

¶How sound was the Administration's intelligence-gathering? At one point, the White House's information was behind what was being broadcast on television, and at another, it appears, the White House's grasp of the events unfolding in Panama was so tenuous that it worried that Senator Jesse Helms, Republican of North Carolina, might actually know more than it did and asked his staff for a briefing.

¶How good was the coordination within the upper reaches of the Administration? Nothing to write home about, it would appear; not only did several vital questions about American policy fail to reach Mr. Bush in clear-cut form, but sloppy procedures marred the whole process of coordination, according to officials as senior as Robert M. Gates, the deputy director of the National Security Council.

¶What was the Secretary of State's role? In most of the post-mortems, little mention has been made of James A. Baker 3d, and much has been made of officials at the Pentagon and of such White House officials as Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, and John H. Sununu, the chief of staff.

¶Finally, how good was the contingency planning that underlay the

President's repeated calls for the Panamanians to get rid of General Noriega? The evidence in this area is still incomplete, but it is clear that many of those involved in this week's events were unprepared for the ambiguity of motives, the speed of developments and the general atmosphere of chaos that prevailed in Panama this week.

## Unexpected Ways the Rule

But coups and rebellions seldom unfold in a tidy or predictable manner. Two or three generations of American officials have had trouble learning that lesson, which was manifest as long ago as the 1960's in the Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba and the American-sponsored coup against Ngo Dinh Diem in South Vietnam. Both developed in entirely unexpected ways and caused great embarrassment to American planners.

All in all, it may have been the bumpiest week so far for Mr. Bush, whose term has had astonishingly few setbacks so far and whose standing with the public has remained at levels unmatched at this stage of a Presidency in a quarter-century. The previously smooth-working machine put together by Mr. Sununu did not break down altogether, but it coughed and sputtered not only on Panama but also on health policy, with Richard G. Darman, the budget director, and Dr. Louis H. Sullivan, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, taking starkly contradictory public positions on the same day.

"This could be an important moment for us," a White House staff member suggested today. "That review John has ordered won't stop with Panama. He doesn't like confusion, and he'll find out what's causing it and fix it."



# Panama Jinx

By ELAINE SCIOLINO

WASHINGTON

**A**FTER Washington stops arguing about the extent to which President Bush fumbled last week's attempt by Panamanian troops to oust Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, the Administration will have to think about where American policy goes from here.

The failed coup leaves the Administration with even more limited options in Panama than before, and not one is appealing.

The most obvious way for Mr. Bush to get rid of General Noriega quickly and dispel criticism that he missed an opportunity last week would be to order an old-fashioned military operation. Conservatives like Elliott Abrams criticize him for an unwillingness to topple General Noriega with force. But that would risk American casualties and hostages, a domestic political backlash, Latin American censure and perhaps failure.

"Removing Noriega by force is a ridiculous idea," said Robert A. Pastor, a Carter Administration official who is an expert on the region. "If we failed, we'd be humiliated, and if we succeeded, even our closest friends in Latin America would condemn us. We could be faced with a hostile new regime or find ourselves compelled to support a regime through military occupation."

Mr. Bush could improve his management of crises and hope the Panamanian military organizes a new coup, one more to Washington's liking. But the American decision not to intervene and General Noriega's most recent repression make it questionable that the United States will be given another chance, at least any time soon.

Perhaps President Bush could take another tack altogether, distancing himself from the failed policy he inherited from the Reagan Administration. His predecessor turned to economic and diplomatic sanctions, assuming they would quickly force General Noriega from power. This did not work, and for a long time some analysts have recommended that Mr. Bush begin to regard General Noriega as someone the United States may have to live with.

But switching to such a policy would incense American conservatives and send a signal to Latin America that Mr. Bush has backed down on promises to do whatever is needed to fight the hemisphere's drug trade.

As part of a long-term approach, Mr. Bush could assert that any coup by Panama's military, which for decades has had a reputation for corruption and ruthlessness, would not necessarily usher in a democratic regime.

After the coup last week, the Administration said that it hung back partly because the rebels were less interested in democracy and bringing General Noriega to justice than in grabbing power for themselves.

Some experts say Mr. Bush should recognize that what is at stake in Panama is not a strategic prize, but the image of the United States as a great power. While American conservatives point to the Panama Canal and American listening posts and military bases in Panama as evidence of its importance, some analysts like Mr. Pastor argue that these things have largely lost their strategic value, particularly in an era of waning East-West tensions. The Pentagon, anticipating the transfer of the canal from American to Panamanian control a decade from now, is planning to relocate its ground-command operations for Latin America from Panama to somewhere in the United States.

Mr. Bush could put more emphasis on multilateral diplomacy. Many Latin American and European countries have already recalled their ambassadors in protest against General Noriega's voiding of Panama's presidential election last May. But the United States failed last month in its efforts to get a tough resolution against General Noriega from the Organization of American States, illustrating just how difficult it is to use an instrument of diplomacy that successive American Administrations have ignored for more than a decade. The failure also showed how politically difficult it is for the O.A.S. to use muscle against one of its own.

Mr. Bush, in addition, has been accused of being unwilling to close a gap between his words and deeds. By announcing last spring that he would "love" to see the Panama Defense Forces oust General Noriega, he raised expectations that the United States favored quick military action and would support just such an effort as took place last week.

The words-deeds gap was noted by foreign policy experts last week and was illustrated by a Panamanian opposition leader who supports American policy, Guillermo Ford. Mr. Ford met briefly with Mr. Bush a day after the coup attempt. "I looked Bush straight in the eye and he told me he'd do whatever it takes to get Noriega out, that nothing has been ruled out," Mr. Ford said. "He said he would not allow a dictator like Noriega to make a fool of the United States and the rest of the world." But Mr. Bush offered no concrete strategy or new ideas to achieve that goal, Mr. Ford said.

PANAMA JINX . . .

## Marching in Place

Indeed, the possibility remains that Mr. Bush will simply beat the Noriega drum loudly while marching in place. None of his top advisers seem to have a clear idea where to turn next. Despite reports of tension between John H. Sununu, the White House chief of staff, and Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, over flaws in the handling of last week's crisis, neither is advocating a shift in basic policy. And Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d, who has still not focused much attention on various regional issues, including Panama, told Mr. Ford in a meeting last week that the United States intends to follow its current course.

Some Administration officials have tried to characterize the failed coup as a vindication of their policy. "The pressures we've been bringing to bear on the Noriega regime are having a real effect," said Bernard W. Aronson, the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. "At the end of the day, Noriega is more isolated, more paranoid and less secure in his control than before."

What makes any prediction difficult is that Panama's military leader was both weakened and strengthened last week. He was weakened because the rebellion reached deep into the ranks of the military, narrowing his circle of loyalists and exposing him as vulnerable. He was strengthened because his crackdown that followed is likely to discourage any new plot for some time.

Even a successful coup and the installation of the civilian opposition might not guarantee an end to General Noriega's influence. In his conversation with Mr. Bush last week, Mr. Ford said, he made it clear that the Panamanian opposition would never turn the General over to the United States to stand trial on drug-trafficking charges.

"I told Mr. Bush that we will fully comply with the Constitution of Panama," Mr. Ford said. "If Noriega wants to stay as a decent human being in Panama, he can stay in Panama."



# U.S. Officials Defend Panama Strategy

## Scowcroft Says Bush Personally Authorized Taking Custody of Noriega

By Arthur S. Brisbane  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Bush administration officials yesterday defended their decision not to use force to support an attempted coup against Panamanian Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, but left open questions about who authorized a plan to take him into U.S. custody.

Brent Scowcroft, the White House national security adviser, said in an interview on ABC News's "This Week With David Brinkley" that the administration had acted prudently during a confused sequence of events he described as the "fog of war."

"There is nothing like 20-20 hindsight," he said. "Given what we know now about what actually was happening on the ground then, I think I would not change what we did. Our procedures, and in some cases some organizational things, ought to be improved as a result of it. And we will be doing that."

Secretary of State James A. Baker III, appearing on the NBC News program "Meet the Press," said, "I would argue that there's a very good possibility that Gen. Noriega is a lot weaker after this unfortunately unsuccessful attempt than he was before."

Scowcroft and Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney, however, gave slightly different accounts of who provided the authorization to seize Noriega.

Scowcroft said President Bush "personally ordered whatever guidance was sent to Gen. [Maxwell R.] Thurman," the commander of U.S. forces in Panama.

Cheney, appearing on CBS News's "Face the Nation," said it was he who "made it clear that our commander on the scene was authorized to get [Noriega] if he could without using military force, and that he should develop an option or a plan to use military force to get him."

The Washington Post reported yesterday that Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, relayed the authorization ear-

ly Tuesday afternoon in a secure telephone conversation with Thurman, but that the military coup against Noriega collapsed before any plan could be implemented.

Powell laid out three options for Thurman, according to well-placed administration and congressional sources. One called for the United States to take the Panamanian strongman into custody if the rebel leaders voluntarily turned him over to them. A second proposed that U.S. forces take Noriega covertly or without visible display of uniformed personnel, and a third called for overt military seizure.

Powell told Thurman he had authority to carry out the first two options without any further contact with Washington, but that the overt military proposal would require presidential approval.

A cable coded "Secret—Operational Immediate" and sent by Thurman to Powell on Wednesday, one day after the failed coup, provided details of the three-option plan as part of a larger outline of the events, according to informed sources.

Cheney confirmed that Thurman was told to plan for an overt military move, but said he, Cheney, had "never thought that was a very good idea" because military action would have involved "going in against the rebels and taking Noriega."

Cheney asserted the rebels were unwilling to turn over Noriega, who was held in custody for several hours after the rebels seized his command post in Panama City early Tuesday.

Baker echoed Cheney, saying, "There's been some suggestion that the people engaged in the insurrection offered to turn General Noriega over to us. That is simply not the case. That never happened."

Scowcroft said that in a meeting between rebel leaders and U.S. officials, "The plotters came in and said, 'We do not want American help. We do not want our action tainted by being involved with the United States . . .'"

However, two U.S. sources in Panama close to the Southern Com-

mand said the rebels on the morning of the coup twice asked Maj. Gen. Marc Cisneros, commander of Army forces attached to the Southern Command, to pick up Noriega, Washington Post reporter William Branigin reported Saturday.

Another issue that remained confused after yesterday's television appearances centered around whether Congress had imposed restrictions that hobbled the U.S. effort to aid the coup.

Scowcroft criticized Congress for "micro-management" of the Executive Branch, adding that Congress "has, by its actions and its demeanor, certainly leaned us against the kinds of things now they're saying we should have done."

The national security adviser disputed a statement made by Sen. David L. Boren (D-Okla.), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Boren said on the ABC program that since Bush took office, "every single word of authority that he has requested from the intelligence committee and every single penny that he has requested from the intelligence committee relating to Panama, he has gotten with my support."

Responded Scowcroft, "The literal statement—we have been denied absolutely nothing—is simply not the case."

Staff writers David Hoffman and Bob Woodward contributed to this report.



# Aides: Bush OK'd seizure of Noriega

## Coup's failure foiled effort

By Stephen Kurkjian  
Globe Staff

WASHINGTON — President Bush authorized a secret plan to allow US troops in Panama to seize Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega without force during last week's coup attempt, but the coup collapsed before the order could be carried out. Bush's security and military advisers said yesterday.

In a network television interview, Brent Scowcroft, Bush's national security adviser, said that Bush had approved an order that would have allowed Gen. Maxwell Thurman, commander of US forces in Panama, to capture Noriega through the use of US officers out of uniform if he could be seized without bloodshed or placing uniformed US troops at risk.

In a separate interview, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney said that he had made it clear to Thurman that he was authorized to abduct Noriega "if he could do it without using military force."

Cheney and Scowcroft reiterated that the rebels had refused a US request, made shortly after noon Tuesday, that they turn Noriega over to the United States, saying that they were going to allow Noriega to stay in retirement in Panama.

Cheney said on the CBS News program "Face The Nation" that if the rebels refused to turn Noriega over to US forces, he authorized Thurman to develop an "option or plan" with which to wrest Noriega from the rebels by military force. Only Bush could have issued the order allowing Thurman to execute

such a plan calling for military force in the situation.

But executing that option never presented itself because Noriega's troops regained the upper hand in the battle.

But Cheney said the United States never made a decision to use military force. "That would have involved going in against the rebels and taking Noriega from them. I never thought that was a very good idea, but we told him to be prepared in case he got the order to do so, and then shortly after that, the coup fell apart," he said.

The order to prepare US forces out of uniform for a covert action to grab Noriega was first reported in The Washington Post. The article did not say who had ultimately authorized the plan to seize Noriega, but Scowcroft said it was Bush in an interview with Sam Donaldson on the ABC News program "This Week with David Brinkley."

In addition to Cheney and Scowcroft, Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d and John H. Sununu, the White House chief of staff, appeared on network interview shows yesterday and Saturday to respond to the sharp criticism from Republicans and Democrats that the Bush administration had bungled the best opportunity to remove Noriega since he was indicted in February 1988 to remove him from power.

"There is nothing like 20/20 hindsight," Scowcroft said. "Given what we know now about what was actually happening on the ground, then, I think I would not change

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Date **9 OCT 1989**

what we did."

Cheney was even harsher toward the congressional critics: "I've never seen so many bloodthirsty people as I've experienced over the last week."

Bush also made an appearance yesterday, speaking to a Republican women's group in Baltimore, but he made no reference to his handling of the Panama crisis.

In recent days, the White House and two Senate committees have announced they are conducting separate reviews of the administration's handling of the crisis.

However, Sen. David Boren of Oklahoma, the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, told interviewers yesterday that he remains disturbed that lack of preparation, contingency planning and intelligence on the part of the White House may have diminished the US chances for helping the rebels.

While stressing that Bush made the right decisions during the coup attempt, Sen. William Cohen of Maine, cochairman of the Intelligence Committee, said that "we needed more planning, more intelligence, better organization."

While they were willing to acknowledge that White House procedures need improving to respond to the next crisis, Bush's advisers stressed that in the end, the president made the right decision in not ordering any of the 13,000 US troops to become involved in the coup.

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They rejected the notion that Bush has urged the Panamanian Defense Forces to overthrow Noriega by any means possible or that the United States is under a moral obligation to lend support to a coup attempt even if it risks American lives.

The extent of the rebels' request, the advisers said, was to block troops loyal to Noriega from reaching the military headquarters where the coup was taking place. The United States provided that support, but further US initiative could have been viewed as a breach of Panama's sovereignty.

"The plotters came in and said, 'We do not want American help. We do not want our action tainted by being involved with the United States. All we want you to do is just sort of keep the reinforcements from these two roads,'" Scowcroft said.

US forces were deployed to block the two roads designated by the plotters, but Bush decided that further use of uniformed American troops to aid the rebels was too dangerous, Scowcroft said. "The two roads that we blocked, the causeway and the bridge over the canal, are . . . bottlenecks. They are easy to isolate. They are areas within our exercise area . . . Clearly, they are things that can be done within our general treaty authorities." He was referring to the 1977 pact turning over the Panama Canal to the Panamanians.

"The third route is very different . . . It is down through the heart of old Panama City, multiple routes, crowded city, to do that, and outside the area where US troops move and exercise, that have been the overt exercise of military force, perhaps into a fire fight, to block them in the heart of a heavily populated area," Scowcroft said.



# Administration Seeks to Spread Panama Blame

**Bush Aides Say Congress  
Has Hamstrung President**

By SARA FRITZ,  
Times Staff Writer

WASHINGTON—A top Administration official said Sunday that President Bush's critics in Congress share responsibility for the United States' reluctance to use American military personnel to assist in a coup against Panamanian leader Manuel A. Noriega last week.

Brent Scowcroft, Bush's national security adviser, said that Congress, through "micromanagement of the Executive Branch," has historically discouraged Presidents from using military force to topple unpopular leaders of other countries. He referred specifically to an executive order prohibiting assassinations by agents of the United States.

"Congress has, by its actions and its demeanor, certainly leaned us against the kinds of things now they're saying we should have done," Scowcroft said on ABC's "This Week with David Brinkley."

## Host of Critics

Over the past week, members of both parties in Congress—virtually everyone except the most liberal members—have criticized Bush for failing to provide the mutineers with the military assistance that would have enabled their coup against Noriega to succeed.

Scowcroft was reacting to their criticism as well as a statement by Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.) that the Bush Administration has never been denied any request for congressional approval of covert activity in Panama designed to oust Noriega.

Boren, also appearing on ABC, said: "Since George Bush became President, every single word of authority that he had requested from the Intelligence Committee and every single penny that he has requested from the Intelligence Committee relating to Panama, he has gotten and gotten with my

support."

Scowcroft replied that he was "astonished" by Boren's statement, adding, "We did not get everything we had wanted." But after the television show ended, and after he discussed the matter privately with Boren, according to a White House spokesman, Scowcroft acknowledged that the senator's statement was not incorrect.

Last year, according to sources, the Senate Intelligence Committee discouraged then-President Ronald Reagan from carrying out a covert plan that he had authorized to foment dissent against Noriega among his own forces. Scowcroft appeared to be alluding to that dispute.

Nevertheless, Scowcroft's comments reflected a widespread view within the Administration that the President's critics would have been equally—if not more—upset had the White House authorized U.S. military support for the coup.

"I have never seen so many bloodthirsty people as I've experienced over the last week . . . who say we should have used force," said Defense Secretary Dick Cheney on CBS' "Face the Nation."

## 'Monday Morning Quarterbacks'

"I think there's a lot of Monday morning quarterbacking going on. There are more Monday morning quarterbacks per square mile in Washington than any other city in the nation. The fact of the matter is, given what we knew then, and what we know now, I still think we made the right decision."

White House officials have acknowledged that their decision-making during the crisis was not as efficient as it might have been, but Bush has declared that he still feels he made the right decisions.

Sen. William S. Cohen (R-Me.), ranking Republican on the Senate Intelligence Committee, told ABC that he doubts members of Congress are speaking for their constituents when they call for the use of U.S. military force to oust Noriega. "My judgment is the American people do not want that, nor do the Latin American people," he said.

Scowcroft, Cheney and Secretary of State James A. Baker III, all of whom appeared on television Sunday in an effort to counter congressional criticism, said the President last Tuesday authorized the commander of U.S. forces in Panama to capture Noriega with-

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Date **9 OCT 89**

out the use of military force, if possible. Bush also instructed him to devise a plan for using troops to seize Noriega in the event such an action was warranted.

Neither of these two options were ever pursued by American forces in Panama, however, because the rebels said they were unwilling to surrender Noriega to the United States and because, the coup collapsed shortly after Bush issued the orders.

"We never made the decision to use military force," said Cheney. "That would have involved going in against the rebels and taking Noriega from them. I never thought that was a very good idea, but we told him [the U.S. commander] to be prepared in case he got the order to do so. And then, shortly after that, the coup fell apart."

Cheney characterized the position of U.S. troops in Panama last Tuesday as follows: "We were leaning forward in case the President made the decision to intervene militarily."

Baker, appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," said it would have been a mistake for the President to commit troops to assist the Panamanian rebels under the circumstances. "You do not commit American lives on somebody else's plan and somebody else's schedule," Baker added.

Asked what order went from the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the American command in Panama regarding the seizure of Noriega, Baker said, "I think the

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message that was sent was that, if there were an opportunity to do this without risking bloodshed and significant loss of American life and to do so without open military involvement, then he was free to go ahead—the commander on the ground was free to go ahead.”

Although Noriega succeeded in putting down the coup attempt, Baker said that the Panamanian leader continues to be weakened by his loss of support among other Latin American nations and among the officers in his own Defense Forces.

“He is isolated,” said Baker. “We are seeing his sole base of support—the Panama Defense Forces—come unglued, engage in insurrections against him, and I think frankly that this is moving in the right direction. I would argue that there’s a very good possibility that Gen. Noriega is a lot weaker after this unfortunately unsuccessful attempt than he was before.”

Boren has criticized the President for failing to bring U.S. intelligence officials into the decision-making last Tuesday, and Cheney acknowledged that the CIA was not represented at two key meetings between the President and his advisers in the White House situation room. But he insisted the President did receive intelligence reports from CIA officials in Panama.

“The suggestion that somehow the President did not convene his advisers and seek their advice is garbage,” Cheney said. “It’s not true.”



# Who Lost Noriega?

The lost opportunity in Panama was a disaster across the board that reflected adversely on the Bush administration's crisis management, built-in attitudes at the Pentagon and the CIA and, worst of all, the president's instincts.

The immediate inquests on "Who lost Noriega" during the 72 hours following the Panamanian dictator's close call point to a conjunction of incompetency and inflexibility with President Bush strangely removed from the action. Given a chance to achieve a publicly declared priority of the U.S. government, he was curiously detached.

The prospect that this ensures continued power for Gen. Manuel Noriega is referred to as "a stain on our honor" by Sen. David Boren, the administration's best Democratic friend in the Senate and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Yet, postcoup activity by the president's men has centered on political damage control, railing against criticism at home and denigrating the failed rebels in Panama.

No inquest can exonerate Bush. His first public comment that his foremost consideration was the safety of the American citizens in the canal zone is of a piece with putting the lives of hostages first. It was a clear signal to the thugs running Panama that all that tough talk about ousting drug lord Noriega did not count for much. It also revealed how much help the Colombian government and Nicaragua's Democratic opposition can count on in an emergency.

Institutional instincts complemented the president's. The CIA has been sensitized by repeated congressional rejections of covert actions during the Reagan administration on grounds it might result in Noriega's assassination. So, when the CIA received advance word of the coup attempt, its first reaction was to implore the rebels not to physically harm the murderous dictator.

Congressional-induced pacifism at the CIA is matched at the Pentagon. Gen. Colin Powell, the new chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, has expressed to senators in private conversation his intense opposition to risking American lives in either Nicaragua or Panama. That echoes his predecessor, Adm. William Crowe, and the post-Vietnam disinclination of the U.S. officer corps to fight small wars.

Given this collective mind-set, a decision not to intervene might well have resulted even if the crisis had been efficiently managed. But the Pentagon-run management system was flawed. Never were all the actors brought together in coordinated activity. Incredibly, the CIA was invited to no meetings. There is evidence that the president was not fully appraised of the whereabouts of the Panamanian rescue force.

In fact, Bush was otherwise engaged on coup day, meeting with the visiting Mexican president and Soviet defense minister. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney spent the morning at Gettysburg with Dmitri Yazov. As was shown during Hurricane Hugo, this is an administration that does not lightly change its schedule when crises arise.

The administration official most expert about the crisis, National Security Council staffer Ted Briggs (a former ambassador to Panama), was cleaning out his desk that day—removed from the loop. He had been ordered fired by Secretary of State James A. Baker III (and promised to be made ambassador to Portugal), after months of wrangling over Latin American policy. Conduct that cost Briggs his job included demands for a firmer Panamanian policy.

In the wake of widespread criticism, there is talk inside the administration of shifting crisis management next time from the Pentagon to the White House, and the president ordered a formal study by Chief of Staff John Sununu.

But most postcoup activity has come under the heading of political damage control. More coordinated effort has been displayed in responding to criticism than was exerted in seizing the opportunity to topple Noriega. A critique delivered on the Senate floor by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) raised more hackles than the fiasco in

Panama. Two senior Helms aides were administered a tongue-lashing at the White House Thursday by Sununu and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft.

The highly regarded Cheney, the point man defending Bush's decision, disappointed Boren by referring to the slain coup leader, Maj. Moises Giroldi, as a Noriega "crony" not to be trusted. For months, Bush had pleaded for the Panamanian Defense Force's young officers to overthrow the dictator. Giroldi's failure (with the coup de grace allegedly administered by Noriega himself) is then treated with contempt in Washington.

It is hard to imagine any other Panamanian officer trusting the Bush administration enough to risk his life, but one hopes that the president will cease such calls to action. What must haunt him and many Americans is that 90 minutes to strike down the tyrant were offered and rejected, with little chance of the opportunity returning.

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# Bush Aide and Senator Clash On Coup Attempt in Panama

By STEPHEN ENGELBERG

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 8 — In an extraordinary public disagreement over intelligence policy, President Bush's national security adviser and the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee clashed sharply today over whether President Bush has been handcuffed by Senate restrictions on covert action in Panama.

Administration officials said Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, was voicing a frustration felt by many Administration officials over the committee's longstanding objections to any direct American association with coup plotters who might assassinate Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, the leader of Panama.

Mr. Scowcroft and other Administration officials asserted that the Senate committee's views, expressed in closed meetings, effectively ruled out the kind of planning or coordination with the rebels that lawmakers last week said was missing as they criticized the Administration's performance during last Tuesday's unsuccessful coup attempt.

In Panama today, diplomats said that moments after escaping the coup attempt General Noriega exploded in rage against his captured opponents and ordered the immediate execution of several rebel officers, including a close friend who led the attempted coup. [Page A7.]

A presidential executive order bars the Central Intelligence Agency from political assassinations. Administration officials disclosed for the first time that they have interpreted the Senate's view on assassinations to bar intelligence officers from providing guidance or help to any coup that might include the death of its target.

The issue arose as three of Mr. Bush's senior national security advisers appeared on network television programs this morning to answer blistering criticism from Capitol Hill on the coup attempt.

In separate appearances, Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d and Defense Secretary Dick Cheney were questioned about a Washington Post report that Gen. Colin Powell, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, had discussed plans for taking custody of General Noriega by telephone with Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, the United States commander in Panama. Mr. Cheney confirmed that this was true, but said the coup collapsed before any action could be taken.

Mr. Scowcroft, appearing on the ABC News program "This Week," did not directly discuss the Intelligence Committee's secret deliberations. But he said the executive order on assassinations, which dates to the Ford Administration, had been forced on the executive branch by lawmakers. He added, "The Congress, by its actions and demeanor, certainly leaned us against the kinds of things they're now saying we should have done."

The chairman of the Senate intelligence panel, David L. Boren, an Oklahoma Democrat, insisted in a separate appearance on the same program that the Bush Administration has been granted all the money and authority it has sought for activities "relating to Panama."

Mr. Scowcroft replied that "we did not get everything we have wanted" and Administration officials said he had in mind the committee's decision earlier this year to cut the financing for a covert program aimed at influencing the Panamanian elections.

Mr. Scowcroft said after the show that he had not meant to impugn the integrity of Mr. Boren, who said he had been referring only to operations aimed at influencing the Panamanian military.

"He told me he apologized," Senator Boren said in an interview. "He said that in the context I was speaking, I was correct. General Scowcroft was thinking about a different Panama program not leading to the stirring of dissent or coup possibilities."

## Noriega Ouster Still Expected

In interviews today and Saturday, Administration officials continued to insist that General Noriega would eventually be ousted. John H. Sununu, the White House chief of staff, said in an interview Saturday on the Cable News Network that he thought the odds were 8 to 5 that Mr. Noriega would be gone within six months.

"The President has said he wants him out, and I can't believe that between the will of the people of Panama and the will of the people of the United States, we can't achieve that," Mr. Sununu said. "If you want odds, I'd say 8 to 5 that he probably will be out."

Referring to the Panama Defense Forces, he added, "And I would not be surprised if the P.D.F. understands that when the President says our quarrel is not with the P.D.F. but with General Noriega that there will be continued unrest in that and an opportunity will come along in an effective way to get General Noriega out."

Secretary of State Baker, who appeared on the NBC News program "Meet the Press," said when asked about Mr. Sununu's oddsmaking: "Well, I don't want to put any specific odds on it. That's not the business that I'm in. But what I would say is that we should keep the pressure on and we intend to do that."

The United States has called for the overthrow of General Noriega so that he can be brought to the United States to face trial on charges of drug trafficking.

Administration officials continued to disclose new details of the coup attempt to deflect criticism of bungling.

Responding to the report today in The Washington Post, Mr. Cheney said in an appearance on the CBS News program "Face the Nation" that as the coup was faltering, he had given General Thurman authority to collect General Noriega from the rebels, if this could be done without using military force.

An Administration official called this possibility theoretical, because the Panamanian troops involved were armed and firing at each other.

Separately, officials said the Administration decided to invite the rebels to ask for United States intervention. The rebels were also to be told to declare their support for democracy.

The officials said General Thurman was asked to draw up contingency plans to encircle the compound where General Noriega was thought to be held so that he could be taken into American custody.

Administration officials said the message was never passed on because the coup ended.

Since Tuesday, the Administration has received sharp criticism from members of Congress, who faulted the White House for failing to plan adequately for a coup attempt like the one last week and for responding to the events in Panama on the fly.

The Administration began to respond to these statements Friday, when Mr. Cheney appeared at a closed meeting of the Senate Intelligence and Armed Services Committees and reminded the lawmakers of the Congressional objections to previously proposed covert operations in Panama.

A Senator said that William S. Cohen, Republican of Maine, the committee's vice chairman, was so angered by this remark that he inserted in the hearing record copies of the presidential intelligence orders on Panama that had been approved by the committee.

The disagreement between the Administration and Senate committee over Panama stems largely from July 1988, when the lawmakers sharply objected to the Reagan Administration's proposal for supporting a group of dissident Panamanian officers plotting a coup.

The committee does not have the authority to quash a covert action, but its objections have usually been sufficient to dissuade administrations from proceeding. The panel can also begin the lengthy process of voting to cut off money for an operation it does not support.



# White House trips on old statements

By Bill Gertz  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Bush administration officials spent the weekend defending the U.S. decision not to intervene in the coup attempt in Panama, but as they sought to put their own spin on the events they had to explain some conflicting statements made last week.

After first telling the American public that the administration was not involved, White House spokesmen admitted that U.S. military officials had agreed to block roads that might have been used by Panamanian Defense Forces units to put down the uprising.

It is still not clear why the administration answered that request but

failed to cut off a third highway that was used by forces loyal to Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega to put down the coup attempt.

Criticism mounted yesterday over the administration's handling of what is regarded as its first major foreign policy crisis.

In the latest controversy, senior officials said yesterday that the U.S. military commander in Panama was authorized to formulate covert and overt plans to capture Gen. Noriega after the rebels made it known he was in their hands.

But the plans were never implemented because the order came too late.

"I made it clear that our commander on the scene was authorized to get him if he could without using military force and that he should develop an option or a plan to use military force to get him," Defense Secretary Richard Cheney said on CBS' "Face the Nation."

"It seems to me that if there's a graphic example of the hangover from the Vietnam War, it's that kind of an order," Sen. John McCain, Arizona Republican, said on the same show.

"Why should you order someone who's in a military command to exercise military action but not use military force visibly to do so?" he said. "I think that was a very contradictory order, and my understanding is, because of the failure of communications and the failure of them to keep up with the situation as it evolved, that by that time it was too late."

Mr. Cheney also said U.S. forces did not block pro-Noriega forces from using a third route to Panamanian military headquarters because the rebels believed the forces that might use it were neutral and because the rebels wanted minimal U.S. involvement.

National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft said no U.S. military forces were in the area, so blocking the road, which passes in front of the U.S. Embassy, would have been an "overt exercise of military force."

Administration statements on the events in Panama continued to suffer from a lack of credibility because of last week's flip-flops.

White House spokesman Marlin

Fitzwater first told reporters that U.S. officials had not met directly with rebels before the shooting began Tuesday morning. He later acknowledged that the coup leader met a U.S. military leader the previous Sunday.

Mr. Fitzwater initially also denied that U.S. troops had been deployed to cut off roads used by pro-Noriega troops, saying "they would have been stopped."

Pentagon officials led reporters to believe that the U.S. troop deployments were a routine exercise planned last month and unrelated to the uprising. Officials later acknowledged that the troops blocked two roads leading to Gen. Noriega's headquarters during the rebel operation.

Congressional critics of White House handling of the crisis apparently have not been pacified by the administration's damage-control effort.

Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, New York Republican, joined the chorus of critics in calling the handling of the uprising "an incredible stain on us," and he said the White House statements were "a weak-kneed explanation for failure."

Sen. David Boren, Oklahoma Democrat and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, faulted the administration for not planning in advance to aid the rebels.

"Every time there has been a witness before our committee, we have asked again and again and again, if we start to take action, are we prepared to see it through?" Mr. Boren said on ABC's "This Week."

The Washington Post

The New York Times

The Washington Times **A-1**

The Wall Street Journal

The Christian Science Monitor

New York Daily News

USA Today

The Chicago Tribune

Date **9 Oct 89**

"Since George Bush became president, every single word of authority that he had requested from the intelligence committee and every single penny that he has requested from the intelligence committee relating to Panama, he has gotten and gotten

with my support," Mr. Boren said.

But Mr. Scowcroft said, "We did not get everything we have wanted."

Aides to Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican, said revelations about the authorization to use covert action to snatch Gen. Noriega support the senator's contention that the rebels had requested U.S. help in transferring Gen. Noriega to American custody.

But Mr. Cheney yesterday again denied that any requests were made by the rebels to turn the general over to the United States.

"Even as we go through the process now, we're still learning more and putting pieces together as we collect more and more information on what transpired and go back and reconstruct events," Mr. Cheney said. "But we have yet to be able to find any evidence that anybody ever contacted us and offered us Noriega. It just didn't happen."

Mr. Scowcroft said problems arose with the procedures used by the administration in dealing with the crisis.

"We're not happy," he said on ABC's "This Week."

President Bush said Saturday that he would not change any decisions made during the uprising.

Earlier this year, Mr. Bush had called on the Panamanian military to rise up and oust Gen. Noriega.

Clearly weary of several days of being battered by the press, Mr. Cheney said: "I have never seen so many bloodthirsty people as I've experienced over the last week, to watch all the people in Washington now who are experts in these kinds of decisions who say we should have used force."

"But the fact of the matter is, given what we knew then and what we know now, I still think we made the right decision," he said.



*Rowland Evans and Robert Novak*

# Who Lost Noriega?

The lost opportunity in Panama was a disaster across the board that reflected adversely on the Bush administration's crisis management, built-in attitudes at the Pentagon and the CIA and, worst of all, the president's instincts.

The immediate inquests on "Who lost Noriega" during the 72 hours following the Panamanian dictator's close call point to a conjunction of incompetency and inflexibility with President Bush strangely removed from the action. Given a chance to achieve a publicly declared priority of the U.S. government, he was curiously detached.

The prospect that this ensures continued power for Gen. Manuel Noriega is referred to as "a stain on our honor" by Sen. David Boren, the administration's best Democratic friend in the Senate and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. Yet, postcoup activity by the president's men has centered on political damage control, railing against criticism at home and denigrating the failed rebels in Panama.

No inquest can exonerate Bush. His first public comment that his foremost consideration was the safety of the American citizens in the canal zone is of a piece with putting the lives of hostages first. It was a clear signal to the thugs running Panama that all that tough talk about ousting drug lord Noriega did not count for much. It also revealed how much help the Colombian government and Nicaragua's Democratic opposition can count on in an emergency.

Institutional instincts complemented the president's. The CIA has been sensitized by repeated congressional rejections of covert actions during the Reagan administration on grounds it might result in Noriega's assassination. So, when the CIA received advance word of the coup attempt, its first reaction was to implore the rebels not to physically harm the murderous dictator.

Congressional-induced pacifism at the CIA is matched at the Pentagon. Gen. Colin Powell, the new chairman of the Joints Chiefs of Staff, has expressed to senators in private conversation his intense opposition to risking American lives in either Nicaragua or Panama. That echoes his predecessor, Adm. William Crowe, and the post-Vietnam disinclination of the U.S. officer corps to fight small wars.

Given this collective mind-set, a decision not to intervene might well have resulted even if the crisis had been efficiently managed. But the Pentagon-run management system was flawed. Never were all the actors brought together in coordinated activity. Incredibly, the CIA was invited to no meetings. There is evidence that the president was not fully apprised of the whereabouts of the Panamanian rescue force.

In fact, Bush was otherwise engaged on coup day, meeting with the visiting Mexican president and Soviet defense minister. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney spent the morning at Gettysburg with Dmitri Yazov. As was shown during Hurricane Hugo, this is an administration that does not lightly change its schedule when crises arise.

The administration official most expert about the crisis, National Security Council staffer Ted Briggs (a former ambassador to Panama), was cleaning out his desk that day—removed from the loop. He had been ordered fired by Secretary of State James A. Baker III (and promised to be made ambassador to Portugal), after months of wrangling over Latin American policy. Conduct that cost Briggs his job included demands for a firmer Panamanian policy.

In the wake of widespread criticism, there is talk inside the administration of shifting crisis management next time from the Pentagon to the White House, and the president ordered a formal study by Chief of Staff John Sununu.

But most postcoup activity has come under the heading of political damage control. More coordinated effort has been displayed in responding to criticism than was exerted in seizing the opportunity to topple Noriega. A critique delivered on the Senate floor by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) raised more hackles than the fiasco in Panama. Two senior Helms aides were administered a tongue-lashing at the White House Thursday by Sununu and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft.

The highly regarded Cheney, the point man defending Bush's decision, disappointed Boren by referring to

the slain coup leader, Maj. Moises Giroldi, as a Noriega "crony" not to be trusted. For months, Bush had pleaded for the Panamanian Defense Force's young officers to overthrow the dictator. Giroldi's failure (with the coup de grace allegedly administered by Noriega himself) is then treated with contempt in Washington.

It is hard to imagine any other Panamanian officer trusting the Bush administration enough to risk his life, but one hopes that the president will cease such calls to action. What must haunt him and many Americans is that 90 minutes to strike down the tyrant were offered and rejected, with little chance of the opportunity returning.



leader, Maj. Moises Giroldi, and nine other rebel officers were killed in combat, an assertion inconsistent with initial accounts—including one by Noriega himself—that the rebel leaders surrendered to him.

Roman Catholic Church sources, U.S. officials and other Western diplomats say all indications point to summary executions after the coup attempt failed, although this has been impossible to confirm with certainty.

What actually happened may be irrelevant, since the stories of executions are widely believed, even in PDF ranks, Panamanians say.

In the short term, the failure of the coup attempt may have helped Noriega reassert his power and solve some prickly problems.

The immediate effect was to add to the aura of omniscience and invincibility he has fostered within the PDF, damage the credibility and powerful image of U.S. military forces here and serve up a pretext to weed out his over-age officer corps.

A major grievance in the PDF has been that promotions have been blocked as senior officers—including Noriega himself—have clung to their posts beyond mandatory retirement age.

Just as the coup attempt last year provided the opportunity for a major military reshuffle, the arrest of 37 soldiers in connection with the latest revolt may also serve to relieve pressure from the middle and lower ranks, analysts say.

Among those arrested were two colonels, a lieutenant colonel, two majors, three captains and 19 lieutenants. Their alleged roles in the coup have not been explained.

The most senior of those detained—Col. Guillermo Wong, the military intelligence chief; Col. Julio Ow Young, the head of personnel, and Lt. Col. Armando Palacios Gondola, the chief PDF representative to a U.S.-Panamanian military joint committee formed under the terms of the Panama Canal treaties—already had fallen out of favor with Noriega, military sources said.

The offense of another detainee, Maj. Jose A. Pajaro, a traffic police officer, may have been his penchant

for playing golf with Americans, a friend said.

"I think they're running a little witch hunt right now," said one usually well-informed U.S. analyst.

The latest purge thus continues a two-year trend in which Noriega has swept out the most professional of the PDF's officers, leaving himself surrounded by elements known as the most slavishly loyal, thuggish and corrupt in the force.

While that may be some consolation for Noriega now, some analysts say, ultimately the fear with which he rules seems likely to give way to a new effort to remove him, since the country's basic problems will persist as long as he remains in power. But next time, no rival is likely to repeat the fatal mistake of Tuesday's coup leaders by trying to negotiate with Noriega.

Now that the unwritten rules of bloodless PDF power struggles have been dashed, a violent effort—perhaps an assassination—may become the sole recourse of PDF elements disgusted by the turn of events, Panamanians with military contacts say.

Shrinking in tandem with his military circle has been the limited base of the civilian government Noriega controls, now increasingly the domain of radical leftist elements.

Apparently angered by celebrations that erupted in government ministries when rebel officers prematurely announced his ouster, Noriega called last week for new "laws of war" and a purge of "traitors" within the government.

The prompt response was a package of 16 draft decrees that the government is expected to enact this week to further clamp down on news media, facilitate the dismissal of civil servants and rein in dissident teachers, among other moves.

One result is expected to be the firing of large numbers of employees in the bloated 150,000-member government bureaucracy, which has become a massive drain on the cash-strapped government.

The bureaucracy's ranks ballooned this decade as part of plans by the military-controlled regime to build an election constituency, a concern that has since become moot.

ports that some of the coup leaders were summarily executed after surrendering have come as a shock in a country unaccustomed to such slaughter. A previous coup attempt March 16, 1988, was bloodless and resulted only in the arrest of the leading conspirators. Even so, the harsh treatment of those officers in prison has been described as a source of discontent in the PDF.

Following the latest coup attempt, the deaths of at least 10 rebel officers, under circumstances that have yet to be officially explained, have terrified the PDF's officers, leaving them wondering where a purge of Noriega's internal enemies will lead next, according to Panamanians with military contacts.

PDF officials insist that the coup

## Panama Coup Attempt Aftermath

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DIANE SAWYER: Six days after rebels tried and failed to depose Panama's General Manuel Noriega, the Bush Administration is still trying to shake off charges that it bungled its first major foreign policy test. Today the Administration shot back at congressional critics, saying if something did go wrong, Congress should share the blame.

In Washington, David Ensor.

DAVID ENSOR: President Bush wasn't talking today, but his aides were, calling it hypocritical for some members of Congress to criticize his handling of the Panama coup attempt, given the limits Congress has imposed. A White House official points to last year, when the Senate Intelligence Committee was asked to allow the CIA to contact Panamanian army officers about a coup. The Intelligence Committee said no, a coup might lead to the assassination of General Noriega. That would have been a violation of President Ford's 1975 executive order barring the CIA from political assassinations. A State Department official says that overly restrictive congressional interpretation of the executive order meant the U.S. couldn't have much advance knowledge about the coup plotters or cooperation with them.

Disagreements on intelligence matters rarely become public, but this one did yesterday on This Week With David Brinkley.

BRENT SCOWCROFT: The important point is that the Congress, in its micromanagement of the Executive Branch, going clear back as far as the executive order prohibiting assassinations, certainly leaned us against the kinds of things now they're saying we should have done.

ENSOR: But members of Congress say that restriction was modified when President Bush was given approval to encourage a coup.

SENATOR DAVID BOREN: Every single word of authority that he's requested from the Intelligence Committee and every single penny that he's requested from the Intelligence Committee relating to Panama, he has gotten, and he's gotten with my support.

ENSOR: The Administration is making the case that congressional approval to encourage a coup is not worth much unless it's understood that rebellions are unpredictable. The deposed leader may not survive. It may be time, officials say, for Congress to loosen the limits on what the U.S. can do in places like Panama.

David Ensor, ABC News, Washington.

SAWYER: The question remains, however: Was the Administration ready to move when the coup started to unfold, and unfold quickly, in Panama?

As ABC's Bob Zelnick reports, even on the key question of how to deal with General Noriega, options were being posed at the last minute.

BOB ZELNICK: After the U.S. learned Noriega had been captured, President Bush authorized U.S. troops in Panama to covertly take Noriega



# DEFENSE DIALOG



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Tuesday, October 10, 1989 (Broadcasts of Monday, October 9, 1989)

## SUMMARY OF NETWORK NEWS IN THIS EDITION

**PANAMA COUP ATTEMPT AFTERMATH:** Bush Administration officials rejected congressional criticism of their handling of the attempt to overthrow General Noriega, saying that restrictions imposed by Congress inhibit their freedom of action in responding to such developments. But some Administration sources reportedly acknowledged that there was no contingency plan for seizing Noriega and that options were devised as events unfolded. In Panama, funeral services were held for the major who led the coup. A Noriega spokesman denied reports that the General had personally executed him. Reports by David Ensor, Bob Zelnick and Peter Collins, ABC; James Hattori, CBS.

**TURMOIL IN THE SOVIET BLOC:** The movement for freedom and democracy in East Germany appears to be gaining momentum, as large numbers of demonstrators are defying a harsh police crackdown. The decision of Hungarian Communists to replace their party with a Socialist one is part of a widespread repudiation of Communist practices and symbols in the country. Inside the Soviet Union, President Gorbachev is facing new acts of defiance from the Baltic states and the Caucasus. Reports by Tom Fenton, Anthony Mason and Dan Rather, CBS; Jim Bittermann and Tom Brokaw, NBC.

into U.S. custody, but only if it could be done without using violence. This was highly unlikely, given the ongoing fighting.

The President also proposed two other options. The second option: Take Noriega if the rebels would hand him over. Administration officials say the U.S. had already offered to do this at an earlier meeting, but the rebels turned it down.

The third option: Seize Noriega with whatever force was necessary. This plan could only take place with presidential approval. But before a military option could be considered, Noriega's forces overran the compound and crushed the attempted coup.

Administration sources acknowledge the options were devised on the spot, since contingency plans for seizing Noriega simply did not exist. They also acknowledge that the President and his key advisers failed to gather in the White House Situation Room, something that would have permitted them to stay in continuous touch with breaking Panama developments.

These details confirm what Administration officials privately acknowledge: that White House machinery did not work very well during this, the first foreign crisis of the Bush Administration.

Bob Zelnick, ABC News, Washington.

SAWYER: In Panama, the leader of the coup attempt was buried today. The controversy over how and when he died continues.

Here's Peter Collins.

PETER COLLINS: At a solemn high funeral mass in Panama City, family and friends of Major Moises Galdini gathered to pay their last respects.

His mother was present, but not his wife. It's believed she was flown to safety in the United States after seeking refuge at a U.S. base in Panama.

Referring to General Noriega, one of the major's nieces screamed out, "He will have to pay for this."

No Panamanian military men were at the funeral. It would have been too risky, with General Noriega now purging his armed forces of anyone suspected of disloyalty.

A spokesman for Noriega hotly denied published reports that the General himself killed Major Galdini.

EDGARDO LOPEZ GRIMALDI: That's a complete lie. It's pure fantasy. It didn't happen that way.

COLLINS: How did the major die?

LOPEZ: He died in a shootout with the loyal forces to General Noriega and to the nation.

COLLINS: The spokesman also denied that other officers arrested since the coup have been executed, and said they will be produced alive and well after an investigation is completed.

Meanwhile, a key opposition leader, Ricardo Arias Calderon, had sharp words for the American failure to help out during the coup.

RICARDO ARIAS CALDERON: A dog that barks better have a bite behind his bark, or otherwise it better shut up.

COLLINS: After celebrating his victory for several days last week, General Noriega is now meeting behind closed doors with top advisers to make sure there are no more revolts.

Peter Collins, ABC News, Panama City.



## Turmoil in the Soviet Bloc

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DAN RATHER: The communist world woke up with a painful hangover today after East Germany's unhappy 40th birthday over the weekend. And that was only one part of the turmoil in the Soviet Bloc. The whole face of communism is changing so much faster than Mikhail Gorbachev or any of the rest of us ever imagined, and in some places it may actually be crumbling.

The major datelines tonight are the Soviet Union itself, particularly Latvia and Azerbaijan; East Germany and Hungary.

In East Germany, a mass movement for freedom and democracy seems to be gaining momentum, even in the face of a vicious police crackdown. A huge crowd marched tonight in Leipzig, demanding reform of the hard-line, old-line communist system.

In Hungary today, the leaders of a suddenly transformed Communist Party adopted a platform calling for a multiparty democracy and a free enterprise economic system.

Inside the Soviet Union itself, Gorbachev is facing new acts of defiance from the Baltic states and the Caucasus.

Tom Fenton, in Berlin, begins our coverage of the changing face of communism.

TOM FENTON: More clashes between police and demonstrators are reported in East Germany tonight, as the battlelines are drawn between demonstrators seeking peaceful reform and a regime determined to crush dissent. An extra-

ordinary protest movement is sweeping across East Germany.

[Clip of people singing "We Shall Overcome"]

FENTON: "Freedom" is the cry of the new movement. The protest leaders are urging nonviolence. They have adopted the tactics used in the '60s by the American civil rights movement. Their aims are reforms and greater democracy within the socialist system. Illegal political groups have sprung up across the country to support those aims.

The government is responding with brute force. The People's Army, the infamous Stasi (?) secret police, and regular police are trying to crush the movement. Demonstrators have been beaten and hundreds arrested. It's the most serious challenge to the hard-line communist regime since hundreds of thousands of workers took to the streets in 1953. Soviet troops and tanks crushed that brief revolt.

In a reversal of the Soviet role, it was the visit of President Gorbachev that helped touch off this new explosion. After his weekend meeting with East German leader Erich Honecker, Gorbachev told Soviet TV many East Germans strongly support his reforms. But East German television tonight showed Honecker meeting a Chinese delegation and said China stands firmly with the East German Communist Party. Government propaganda described the protests as the work of hoodlums inspired by the Western media.

Information from East Germany is fragmentary tonight. Most of the reports come from the churches, where the protest movement was launched. But there are reports that up to

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By Bill Gertz  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

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It is still not clear why the administration answered that request but failed to cut off a third highway that was used by forces loyal to Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega to put down the coup attempt.

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In the latest controversy, senior officials said yesterday that the U.S. military commander in Panama was authorized to formulate covert and overt plans to capture Gen. Noriega after the rebels made it known he was in their hands.

But the plans were never implemented because the order came too late.

"I made it clear that our commander on the scene was authorized to get him if he could without using military force and that he should develop an option or a plan to use military force to get him," Defense Secretary Richard Cheney said on CBS' "Face the Nation."

"It seems to me that if there's a graphic example of the hangover from the Vietnam War, it's that kind of an order," Sen. John McCain, Arizona Republican, said on the same show.

"Why should you order someone who's in a military command to exercise military action but not use military force visibly to do so?" he said. "I think that was a very contradictory order, and my understanding is, because of the failure of communications and the failure of them to keep up with the situation as it evolved, that by that time it was too late."

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forces were in the area, so blocking the road, which passes in front of the U.S. Embassy, would have been an "overt exercise of military force."

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## MIXED SIGNALS

Various statements made by U.S. officials on the Oct. 3 uprising in Panama

### On reports the U.S. had been informed in advance:

**Oct. 3:** "If we were, the president doesn't know about it, the secretary of state doesn't know about it, and the secretary of defense doesn't know about it." — *White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater*

**Oct. 5:** "The kind of request we got was . . . would we be prepared to block access by road to keep two units that he [coup leader Maj. Moises Giroldi] was concerned about from getting to the compound where he planned to undertake the coup. We did not give him an answer to that."

— *Defense Secretary Richard Cheney*

### On U.S. aid:

**Oct. 4:** "There really wasn't any request."

— *Mr. Fitzwater*

**Oct. 5:** "They [the rebels] made a request that we block those access routes, and we said that we would be prepared to do that because we would want to do that to protect American lives and our treaty rights. And we were prepared to do that, and we did have forces in place for that purpose."

— *Mr. Fitzwater*

### On the U.S. decision not to intervene:

**Oct. 4:** "If you're going to risk American lives, it's the president's view that you do so on your own timetable. You do so based on your own plans, at a time of maximum opportunity and advantage. You don't do so on the basis of someone else's plans and in response to rapidly changing circumstances."

— *Secretary of State James A. Baker III*

**Oct. 8:** "Throughout this matter, the president was giving consideration to the question of whether he should commit American troops and if so, to what extent."

— *Mr. Baker*

### On removing Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega:

**Oct. 5:** [The rebels] told the U.S. officers that they were holding Noriega captive and requested U.S. assistance to take custody of Noriega and remove him to the United States."

— *Sen. Jesse Helms*

**Oct. 8:** "What happened after the Panamanians had contacted us — the rebels — and told us that they had Noriega but they would not give him to us, I made it clear that our commander on the scene was authorized to get him if he could without using military force and that he should develop an option or a plan to use military force to get him."

— *Mr. Cheney*

### On U.S. military movements in Panama:

**Oct. 5:** "This was done to ensure the safety of U.S. personnel and property."

— *a Defense Department spokesman*

**Oct. 8:** "It was also a responsible action for us to have forces deployed where, if a decision were made to intervene militarily, we could do so. . . . We were leaning forward in case the president made a decision to intervene militarily."

— *Mr. Cheney*

The Washington Times



## WHITE HOUSE...CONTINUED

cut off roads used by pro-Noriega troops, saying "they would have been stopped."

Pentagon officials led reporters to believe that the U.S. troop deployments were a routine exercise planned last month and unrelated to the uprising. Officials later acknowledged that the troops blocked two roads leading to Gen. Noriega's headquarters during the rebel operation.

Congressional critics of White House handling of the crisis apparently have not been pacified by the administration's damage-control effort.

Sen. Alfonse D'Amato, New York Republican, joined the chorus of critics in calling the handling of the uprising "an incredible stain on us," and he said the White House statements were "a weak-kneed explanation for failure."

Sen. David Boren, Oklahoma Democrat and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, faulted the administration for not planning in advance to aid the rebels.

"Every time there has been a witness before our committee, we have asked again and again and again, if we start to take action, are we prepared to see it through?" Mr. Boren said on ABC's "This Week."

"Since George Bush became president, every single word of authority that he had requested from the intelligence committee and every single penny that he has requested from the intelligence committee relating to Panama, he has gotten and gotten with my support," Mr. Boren said.

But Mr. Scowcroft said, "We did not get everything we have wanted."

Aides to Sen. Jesse Helms, North Carolina Republican, said revelations about the authorization to use covert action to snatch Gen. Noriega support the senator's contention that the rebels had requested U.S. help in transferring Gen. Noriega to American custody.

But Mr. Cheney yesterday again denied that any requests were made by the rebels to turn the general over to the United States.

"Even as we go through the process now, we're still learning more and putting pieces together as we collect more and more information on what transpired and go back and reconstruct events," Mr. Cheney said. "But we have yet to be able to find any evidence that anybody ever contacted us and offered us Noriega. It just didn't happen."

Mr. Scowcroft said problems arose with the procedures used by the administration in dealing with the crisis.

# The gang that wouldn't shoot

## A bungled coup in Panama embarrasses Bush

**W**hen it comes right down to it, the only real help George Bush was willing to give the Panamanian soldiers who tried to topple Manuel Noriega last week was a couple of roadblocks and a telephone number. Neither helped much. U.S. troops blocked two roads leading to the military headquarters where the dictator was temporarily penned in, but they left a third open, and pro-Noriega forces used it to come to his aid. The telephone number is another story. Call us after you have seized control, two Central Intelligence Agency officers told the coup leader, Maj. Moisés Giraldi Vega. Giraldi never called. And once the shooting began and it became clear that the coup attempt was fizzling, his co-conspirators outside Noriega's military headquarters began frantically dialing Washington on pay phones. What went wrong, they wanted to know.

The botched attempt to unseat Noriega was the toughest test yet of an administration that has shrugged off complaints that it is timid, obsessed with avoiding risks and slow to react. When it was over, the little dictator handed out flowers and kisses to admirers, and administration officials scrambled to explain what went awry. Noriega has trafficked with drug dealers and trampled his political opponents' few feeble efforts to restore democracy, and Bush has called publicly on Panamanians to rise up and topple their dictator. But when a handful of dissident military officers tried that last week, Bush and his aides were caught unprepared and were unwilling to give Noriega even a modest shove. The result is the administration's worst foreign-policy embarrass-

ment to date. "In principle," says a senior U.S. official with knowledge of the events, "it was a Bay of Pigs. We have been encouraging the Panamanians to actively do something, and then we withdrew our support at the critical time."

**Strange approach.** Such harsh assessments can be tempered only by the confusion that still shrouds the events preceding and during the attempted coup. A little more than two weeks before the action, Major Giraldi's wife Adella contacted U.S. officials in Panama, warning that her husband and other military officials would try to overthrow Noriega. Could they rely on U.S. assistance, Mrs. Giraldi asked. By any standard, it was a strange approach. CIA officials in Panama had dealt with Giraldi only sporadically before. He was an unlikely insurrectionist. In May, 1988, when other officers of the Panama Defense Forces had moved against Noriega, Giraldi, an old friend of the dictator's, had been instrumental in crushing the coup. But on Sunday, October 1, when Giraldi's family sought refuge at Fort Amador, a U.S. base operated jointly with the PDF, the possibility of a coup loomed larger. When the coup did not materialize on Monday, as expected, the administration remained passive. That day, Giraldi did ask the two CIA officers if Bush would authorize troops from the U.S. Southern Command in Panama to blockade two roads leading to the PDF headquarters. But Bush and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney were busy hosting visiting dignitaries, and senior officials did not even meet to discuss the coming coup attempt.

U.S. officials insist they were still leery of Giraldi. They worried that he did not

"We're not happy," he said on ABC's "This Week."

President Bush said Saturday that he would not change any decisions made during the uprising.

Earlier this year, Mr. Bush had called on the Panamanian military to rise up and oust Gen. Noriega.

Clearly weary of several days of being battered by the press, Mr.

Cheney said: "I have never seen so many bloodthirsty people as I've experienced over the last week, to watch all the people in Washington now who are experts in these kinds of decisions who say we should have used force."

"But the fact of the matter is, given what we knew then and what we know now, I still think we made the right decision," he said.



# Panama flap could strengthen Scowcroft's role

By Stephens Broening  
and Richard H. P. Sia

Washington Bureau of The Sun

WASHINGTON — Repairs to the Bush administration's crisis-management system, which wavered in last week's coup attempt in Panama, are likely to centralize control of future emergencies in the hands of the president's national security adviser, senior officials said yesterday.

They said the role of National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft probably will be strengthened because he is best placed to assure the orderly flow of information to the president during a crisis.

The administration also was concerned with seeing that coherent information is passed on during a crisis,

OCTOBER 10, 1989

sis, where appropriate, to Congress and the news media, officials said.

To many critics, the administration appeared indecisive and contradictory during and after the attempt by Panamanian officers to overthrow Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega.

In addition, agencies sometimes passed on incorrect information to Congress, officials said.

"We're not happy" with the confusion over the U.S. reaction, Mr. Scowcroft said Sunday.

Despite their dissatisfaction with some U.S. crisis-management procedures, which President Bush has ordered reviewed, top officials uniformly defended Mr. Bush not to intervene militarily on the side of the rebelling officers.

But the brief Panama crisis opened up what appeared to be a breach between the president's senior foreign policy advisers — Mr. Scowcroft, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and Secretary of State James A. Baker III — and White House chief of staff John H. Sununu.

Officials noted that Mr. Sununu

Pg. 1

criticized the handling of the crisis, by implication a reproach to one or more members of the national security triumvirate.

The result has been to increase the cohesion among the three, who are described as being unhappy with what they saw as Mr. Sununu's ill-informed revelations in the aftermath of the coup, said officials, who noted the chief of staff's lack of foreign policy experience.

In sharp contrast to Reagan administration practices, Mr. Bush's secretaries of state and defense and his national security adviser have demonstrated unusual collegiality that is based in large measure on friendship, according to officials who have seen them work together.

Meantime, officials said the absence of a clear plan for U.S. action in the event of General Noriega's ouster did not have a decisive effect on the president's reluctance to commit U.S. forces.

After some initial hesitation about

SCOWCROFT... Pg. 10

SCOWCROFT...

from Pg. 4

the character of the officers who led the coup, U.S. officials wished the plotters well.

But the administration withheld its vital support on the basis that the officers were not worth the commitment of U.S. prestige, officials said.

On Capitol Hill, an effort by the Senate Armed Services and Intelligence committees to compile a full accounting of the attempted coup was stymied by difficulty in obtaining information from the administration and disagreements over what could be declassified.

"I would not want to call it stonewalling, but I've been around a number of years, and I see the slow roll coming," a Senate source said.

The Senate report, which might not be released until later this week, could include a section devoted to "unanswered questions," the source said. "There are continuing discrepancies with various versions the administration's putting forward. That's not our problem; that's their problem," he said.

Key questions being pursued by the committees center on what U.S. officials told rebel officers before and during Tuesday's uprising.

Even after a three-hour closed-door briefing Friday by Mr. Cheney and Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., said the administration could not provide "with clarity" answers to those questions.

The source said one unresolved question deals with whether two rebel lieutenants who spoke with U.S. Brig. Gen. Marc A. Cisneros at Fort Clayton, Panama, late Tuesday morning asked for a U.S. helicopter to pick up General Noriega from the headquarters of the Panamanian Defense Forces, scene of the rebel assault. The Washington Post reported Saturday from Panama that such a request was made, administration statements to the contrary.



10, 1989 Pg. B5

ment spokesman Pete Williams said in an interview.

Mr. Williams said the Pentagon is also "looking into" the possible financial and editorial consolidation of the newspaper's two editions.

The General Accounting Office, assisted by the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, reported last year that it found evidence of censorship and improper management at the government-run daily newspaper.

The GAO, an investigative arm of Congress, also said the editor-in-chief should be a civilian — rather than a military officer — with solid journalism credentials.

The House Armed Services Committee, in the defense authorization bill report for the 1990 fiscal year, said the editor should have solid journalistic credentials, but it stopped short of calling for a civilian in the post.

The GAO investigation was launched last year at the request of

NEW YORK TIMES  
OCT. 10, 1989 Pg. B5

## Test Flights Begin Near Adirondacks

**ROME, N.Y.** The Air Force announced yesterday that it would begin low-level flights over northern New York and Adirondack Park today.

Flights of unarmed B-52 and FB-111 jet bombers will be on Mondays and Tuesdays, the Strategic Air Command said. The flights will originate at Griffiss Air Force Base here and other Northeastern bases. Planes will enter New York from Vermont near Ticonderoga, turn north to Malone and head west to Fort Drum, near Watertown, where they will drop practice bombs.

Nature groups have complained that the flights could harm the environment because the planes would be as low as 500 feet. The Air Force raised the minimum altitudes, to 2,000 feet, over most of the route and diverted the path around some sensi-

WASHINGTON TIMES  
OCT. 10, 89 Pg. 2

## New tanks allowed Soviets to cut forces

**LONDON** — New weapons and equipment have given the Soviet Union an edge in tank forces that has allowed it to withdraw thousands of older tanks from the front line facing NATO, a study said yesterday.

The Soviets no longer need as many tanks because their latest models are superior in some cases to those of the West in armor, mobility and firepower, said the latest edition of Jane's Armor and Artillery.

Improvements in armored vehicles and towed guns dominated the Soviet Union's decision to withdraw some of its conventional forces from Eastern Europe without waiting for similar concessions from NATO, Jane's said. New armor on Soviet tanks "has made the vehicles virtually immune" to penetration by shells from any NATO tank,

Pg. 22

impelled to make an exception for General Noriega, it was hard for them to overcome the cautious instincts that have taken hold.

In that context, several White House aides said, the absence from the Administration's top-level deliberations of Ted Briggs, the National Security Council's leading expert on General Noriega, may have been a decisive handicap. Mr. Briggs, a former Ambassador to Panama, who has advocated tougher action against General Noriega, has been relieved of his security council duties, reportedly at the behest of Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d. Mr. Briggs might have been able more accurately to evaluate the confused information that spurted into Washington in the crucial hours a week ago.

But even that is questioned by White House officials not involved in the political damage-limitation exercise and thus more likely to apportion some of the blame to Administration policy makers rather than placing it wholly on the shoulders of others.

"The intelligence wasn't good, and it wasn't made good use of," one aide said. "But that isn't really the point, is it? There wasn't a clear idea of exactly what we wanted to do in case of a coup, so we didn't ask the right questions, and without the right questions, intelligence doesn't help."

So what now? In addition to trying to remedy the structural problems that hampered coordination within the Administration, top officials see a number of perils against which they must guard in the coming weeks.

The list includes, but is certainly

1989

authorized in South Vietnam in 1963; Diem was assassinated anyway. When the C.I.A. tried to direct a military takeover to prevent the election of Salvador Allende Gossens in Chile during the Nixon Administration, the operation succeeded only in causing the murder of Gen. René Schneider, a constitutionalist partial to the U.S.

These and other "covert" operations quickly became public contri-

# Response to coup revives debate on covert policy

By Bill Gertz  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

The debate over the Bush administration's response to the coup attempt in Panama has revived charges that congressional restrictions on intelligence activities have hampered U.S. foreign policy.

National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft suggested in a television interview Sunday that reluctance on Capitol Hill to support covert paramilitary operations has made it difficult to oust Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Earlier, Sen. David Boren, Oklahoma Democrat and chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, denied that he had written a letter to the president opposing a planned covert operation because the operation might have violated a long-standing executive order banning U.S. involvement in assassinations.

Mr. Boren said he has supported "every single word of authority" and "every single penny" involving covert action programs related to Panama.

But Mr. Scowcroft said: "I think the important point is that the Congress and its micromanagement of the executive branch going clear back as far as the [1975] executive order prohibiting assassinations, which was forced by the Congress, has by its actions and its demeanor certainly leaned us against the kinds of things now they're saying we should have done."

"And Sen. Boren over the last year, by his contribution to such things, leaves me kind of astonished that he would say that," Mr. Scowcroft said on ABC's "This Week."

The national security adviser, citing the need to protect classified information, declined to discuss details of the administration's differences with the Senate Intelligence Committee.

But U.S. officials, who asked not to be named, said the intelligence panel clashed with the CIA earlier this year over a covert operation to back a former Panamanian colonel in a coup against Gen. Noriega.

According to the officials, the CIA worked covertly with Col. Eduardo Herrera Hassan, now in exile in Mi-

ami, for more than a year until the colonel indicated he could not guarantee that Gen. Noriega would not be killed.

"He [Col. Herrera] was speaking about the risks when he said 'A coup may result in Noriega's death. It may also result in my death, too,'" said one official familiar with the case.

CIA officials involved in the covert operation at that point informed the Senate Intelligence Committee that they had to break off contact with Col. Herrera because the planned operation may violate the ban on assassination, officials said.

However, officials disagreed over whether it was the CIA or the Senate panel that forced a cancellation of

the operation. Several Intelligence Committee members were opposed to it, officials said, but the panel has no formal veto over the administration's covert plans.

Contact with Col. Herrera was banned in April, officials said.

The CIA also has reduced its paramilitary covert operations under Director William Webster because of congressional criticism of the Iran-Contra affair, agency sources said.

CIA officers in Panama City warned coup leaders Oct. 1 that a plot involving the death of Gen. Noriega would lose U.S. support because of the assassination ban, The Washington Times reported last week.

CIA officials in Washington were not directly involved in crisis meetings on the Panama uprising on Tuesday, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney said Sunday.

Elliott Abrams, former assistant secretary of state for Latin affairs, said he questioned why the CIA was not brought into the coup planning.

"I think really the answer is probably restraints that are imposed here in Washington by the Congress," Mr. Abrams said Saturday in an interview with CNN television.

"It's interesting that it appears the main concern of the CIA people involved... was to keep Noriega alive," Mr. Elliott said. "Not to get Noriega out of power, but to meeting statutory standards in this country."

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times **A-3** \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date **10 Oct 89**

CIA covert operations in Panama have been limited to non-military programs such as financial support for opposition political parties and a clandestine radio operation, officials said.

Sen. William Cohen, Maine Republican and a supporter of the administration's handling of the crisis, said the failure of the United States to back the Panamanian rebels had spawned "about 100 hawks on Capitol Hill."

"Suddenly, everyone is fluttering around the Senate and the House, saying, 'Let's use military force,'" Mr. Cohen, vice chairman of the intelligence panel, said on ABC's "This Week."

"I find it ironic that many of the same people who have imposed some restrictions on the administration, by deed or word, suddenly now want to use American force," he said.

Meanwhile, the wife of coup leader Maj. Moises Giroldi Vega has been granted political asylum in the United States, officials said. Mrs. Adela Bonilla de Giroldi is in the United States at an undisclosed location.

Maj. Giroldi reportedly was killed by Gen. Noriega after the coup collapsed.

A captain in the Panamanian Defense Forces who took part in the uprising also was granted political asylum in the United States, officials said.



# In a Panamanian Maze, Search by the Cautious

By R. W. APPLE JR.

Special to The New York Times



WASHINGTON,  
Oct. 9 — **Brent  
Scowcroft**, the  
White House na-  
tional security ad-  
viser, spoke Sunday about "the fog of  
war" as one element that had sorely  
complicated the Bush Administra-  
tion's reaction to the attempted coup  
last week in Panama.

He meant the disorder that always  
attends fast-breaking events on the  
battlefield, but in this case the clouds  
of confusion stretched all the way to  
Washington and the decision-making  
process in the American Govern-  
ment.

**Mr. Scowcroft** and other officials,  
resentful of what the security adviser  
described as the "micromanage-  
ment" of foreign policy by Congress,  
argue that the Administration's re-  
sponse was severely limited by the  
precedent set in July 1988, when the  
Senate Intelligence Committee ob-  
jected to Reagan Administration pro-  
posals for supporting a coup plotted  
by a group of dissident Panamanian  
officers.

Congress, **Mr. Scowcroft** asserted,  
"has, by its actions and its demeanor,  
certainly leaned on us against the  
kinds of things they're now saying  
that we should have done."

Senator David L. Boren of Oklaho-  
ma, the intelligence committee's  
Democratic chairman, and Senator  
William S. Cohen of Maine, a Republi-  
can who is vice chairman, both say  
that is nonsense. A senior White  
House official sided with them today,  
asserting, "**Scowcroft** and the rest of  
them don't really have any business  
saying that, because that clearly was-  
n't the major issue around here last  
week."

What is undisputed, indeed obvious,  
is that few senior officials in the exe-  
cutive branch have much appetite any  
more for small-scale wars involving  
American troops. That is as true of  
Gen. Colin L. Powell as it was of his  
predecessor as Chairman of the Joint  
Chiefs of Staff, Adm. William J.  
Crowe Jr. The Vietnam War, a rank-  
ing officer said, "has made us wary of  
places like Panama and Colombia."

Likewise, the Central Intelligence  
Agency, which would once have been  
the obvious organization to get rid of  
Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, the  
Panamanian strongman, has been re-  
luctant to become involved, fearful  
that if anything went wrong, it would  
be accused of mounting an illegal as-  
sassination plan.

Conversations with a wide range of  
people this weekend suggest that the  
prevailing mood in Washington, from  
President Bush on down, has become  
profoundly anti-interventionist — so  
much so that however strongly many  
responsible officials may have felt  
impelled to make an exception for  
General Noriega, it was hard for  
them to overcome the cautious in-  
stincts that have taken hold.

In that context, several White  
House aides said, the absence from  
the Administration's top-level delib-  
erations of Ted Briggs, the National  
Security Council's leading expert on  
General Noriega, may have been a  
decisive handicap. Mr. Briggs, a for-  
mer Ambassador to Panama, who  
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a coup, so we didn't ask the right  
questions, and without the right ques-  
tions, intelligence doesn't help."

So what now? In addition to trying  
to remedy the structural problems  
that hampered coordination within  
the Administration, top officials see a  
number of perils against which they  
must guard in the coming weeks.

The list includes, but is certainly  
not limited to, somehow assuring the  
remaining Panamanian officers with  
rebellious tendencies that the United  
States is not a paper tiger; extending  
similar assurances to the Colombian  
Government, lest it let up on its war  
against the drug lords; and at the  
same time avoiding the temptation to  
make some flashy, but futile, show of  
force in Central America — all while  
repairing tattered relations with  
Capitol Hill.

They said Mr. Bush's honeymoon  
couldn't last forever, and it hasn't.

*Jim Hoagland*

# Cossiga Carries On

ROME—Francesco Cossiga is the guy chosen by Italy's politicians to come in and pick up the pieces when the government breaks up every year or two. As president of Italy, he figures out how Humptio Dumpio gets pasted back together and put up on the wall to await the next crash.

"In Italy, a leader has to conquer respect and authority day by day, every day," says the silver-haired law professor turned politician who has been Italy's head of state since 1985. "Italians do not look at authority and power with sacred respect as do countries that have strong traditions of government, like England, or countries that are the product of great revolutions, like the United States."

I was asking Cossiga if the frequent changes of prime ministers and cabinets (49 since World War II) created cynicism among Italians about their political system. The word pained him, and he corrected it to a more melodious, gentle one—while acknowledging that the musical chairs approach to politics has social and moral costs.

"I would not say that it causes cynicism, but rather disenchantment in front of the functioning of the political system. After all, we have been able to maintain a highly stable and consistent line in foreign policy for four decades, supporting NATO fully. After all, we are probably the only country in the West where a Communist Party implicitly accepts the country's membership in NATO."

This is one of the main points that Cossiga will be making to President Bush tomorrow, when they meet in Washington. The Italian leader will voice a strong endorsement for Bush's cautious approach toward change in Eastern

Europe. Cossiga will also offer support for the war against the "narco traffickers" of South America. He says this must not be an American war alone.

"These narco traffickers cannot be allowed to proclaim themselves as . . . heroes fighting a nationalistic struggle against the United States. European nations cannot leave the United States alone to confront the battle in states that produce and process drugs," says Cossiga, indicating that Italy is studying favorably appeals that Latin American nations have made for multinational or United Nations help to combat drug traffic.

If you were casting the part of Cossiga in a movie, you would need a combination of John Houseman and Walter Matthau. Cossiga answers most questions about local or world politics in a disciplined, professorial way. But he cannot prevent a gleam coming into his eye as he thinks of a wickedly funny response or idea, which he usually manages to stifle in the interest of the decorum of the presidency.

His is the only stable important job in Italian politics. The Houseman in him—the sense of rectitude and fairness that he inspires—brought Cossiga an unprecedented first-ballot election victory in Italy's fractious parliament, where Christian Democratic party leaders fight each other harder than they fight the Socialists or Communists.

The president, elected for seven years, has constitutional powers that are deliberately kept vague. He is a seemingly passive guardian of the system most of the time, suddenly becoming a wheeler-dealer when a government goes belly up and the president has to choose a new prime minister to form yet another coalition.

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## PANAMA: THE OFFICIAL WORD

### ON WHAT THE UNITED STATES KNEW

#### TUESDAY, OCT. 3, THE DAY OF THE COUP:

White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater:

“We do not know who’s involved here. We had some rumblings. We had rumors that this might occur, but there have been numerous rumors over the past few months . . . .”

#### WEDNESDAY, OCT. 4:

Fitzwater:

“Our sources were not directly in the insurgency, but rather were related to them . . . . We never did have direct discussions with the leaders of the insurgency at any point.”

#### FRIDAY, OCT. 6:

Fitzwater:

“There apparently was some direct contact with [coup leader] Maj. [Moises] Giroldi on Sunday . . . and the wife of Giroldi on Sunday, and apparently, there was a second meeting between Giroldi and somebody on the ground there Sunday.”

### ON WHAT ROLE THE UNITED STATES PLAYED

#### TUESDAY, OCT. 3:

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher:

“Let me note very clearly that the U.S. is not involved in these events in Panama . . . . This statement is very clear and it stands that the U.S. is not involved in the events that are taking place now in Panama.”

#### WEDNESDAY, OCT. 4:

White House spokesman Fitzwater:

“We were not involved in the planning of this, or discussion of this or execution of this . . . . We had no direct communication with coup leaders. We had no sense of their plans or intentions or possibilities at all.”

#### SUNDAY, OCT. 8:

Between them, Secretary of State James A. Baker III, Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft acknowledge discussions the previous Sunday, Monday and Tuesday between U.S. officials and the leader of the coup or his designated contacts.

Baker, Cheney and Scowcroft outline a meeting at the U.S. Southern Command headquarters in Panama between Maj. Gen. Marc Cisneros and two officers sent to him by coup leader Giroldi as the coup was faltering and acknowledge that at dawn the day of the coup they had given refuge to the Giroldi family.

Cheney says the United States blocked some access roads because the coup leaders had asked this action, and had put helicopters and other aircraft aloft as a way of “leaning forward” militarily in case direct combat was authorized.

Cheney acknowledges that the United States contemplated various forms of military action involving Noriega:

“ . . . Our commander on the scene was authorized to get him if he could without using military force and that he should develop . . . a plan to use military force to get him . . . . We never made the decision to use the military force. . . . Putting aircraft up over the city is not an unreasonable thing to have done . . . . It was responsible action for us to have force deployed where, if a decision were made to intervene militarily, we could do so.”

Secretary of State Baker:

“The president committed troops to block the roads that we were requested to block.”



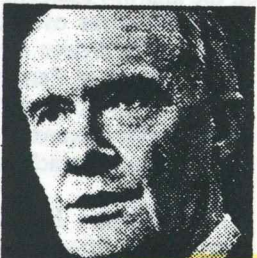
Fitzwater



Boucher



Cheney



Scowcroft



Baker

seem to have wanted me to do is to unleash the full military to go in and . . . 'get Noriega,' " Bush said. "I suppose you could have gone to general quarters, but that's not prudent and that's not the way I plan to conduct the military or foreign affairs of this country."

Asked whether the administration suffered because of communications breakdowns, Bush replied, "I don't think so. We had kind of almost a running meeting there and I think that's a good question, and I don't think I can factually answer that yet."

However, there continued to be criticism yesterday of how the crisis was handled. Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) said, "What we had here was ad hoc decision-making that was not based on previous policy guidance, contingency planning or coordinated intelligence."

Nunn, who was briefed by Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney and Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, added, "Policy guidance has to start with the president. Occasionally we have to foresee our policy of encouraging a coup might succeed, and we ought to be prepared." The United States has been encouraging Panamanian officers to oust Noriega since the summer of 1988.

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.) questioned whether Bush was given sufficient information.

"I just don't believe the information was distilled and presented to [Bush] in a way that gave him an understanding of the yes-or-no decision he had to make" on whether to authorize U.S. troops to use force against the Noriega loyalists, Boren said. He also questioned why there were no representatives of the Central Intelligence Agency in the high-level White House discussions about the unfolding coup.

Concerning the rebels' request for U.S. forces to block incoming routes, Cheney said yesterday the troops were deployed under existing rules of engagement permitting them to defend themselves. Had they been threatened by the forces loyal to Noriega, he said, "that's the kind of decision that would have been made rapidly to the

broad policy decision, yes, we want to intervene militarily. That decision was never made."

The Senate source said that when the Noriega loyalists unexpectedly took a different route, bypassing the deployed U.S. forces but moving up a highway along the coast right in front of the American Embassy where they were readily visible to U.S. officials, Bush was not informed.

In describing the confused events surrounding the failed coup attempt, U.S. officials in Panama yesterday provided an account of bad timing and poor planning by the rebels, continuing suspicion and wariness by U.S. commanders about falling into a trap, lack of communication between the two sides and a highly cautious U.S. approach once the rebellion was underway.

According to one U.S. official close to the American military's Panama-based Southern Command, U.S. forces "never had any intention of going in to get Noriega" at the headquarters of the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) once the revolt was in progress. "It was not our coup. For us to go in would have been a mission beyond the scope of U.S. policy. That was not part of our planning process."

Another U.S. official knowledgeable about the military said that the rebels conveyed a request to Maj. Gen. Marc Cisneros, commander of U.S. Army troops at Fort Clayton in the former Panama Canal Zone, to send a helicopter to pick up Noriega at the PDF headquarters, but that this was not done because Cisneros had no authorization to do so and "it would have been a risky thing to do" because of the confined area.

The official added, however, that a platoon of armored personnel carriers could have run in and out of PDF headquarters to snatch Noriega "without too much risk," but that Cisneros was not authorized to make such a move by the new commander of the Southern Command, Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, who took over the post three days before the coup attempt.

White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater, asked yesterday about the request for a helicopter, said, "No. We never had any request to take him [Noriega] out."

wary of the crafty Noriega, man, whose expertise has been in military systems analysis, apparently acted "very conservatively throughout this whole exercise" "did not take advantage of a folding opportunity," the source said.

The caution was evident in the U.S. response to Giroldi's request for the American forces to block two routes from the south to the west that Noriega's forces could use to send reinforcements to the PDF headquarters.

One practical effect of the deployment was to block the 5th Infantry Company based at Amador from going to Noriega's rescue, but beyond that the moves had no impact on the outcome of the coup attempt, a source acknowledged.

"They [the rebel leaders] had asked us to do anything else but the United States did not offer beyond the request, the source said.

According to another source, the result of the limited American deployment was that "U.S. forces were not committed to stopping movement of loyal elements." No attempt was made to block the road from Panama City's international airport, where Noriega's Battalion 2000 is based, or to cut off the highway spanning the Bay of the Americas over the Panama Canal, which divides the country in half just west of Panama City. Elements of the Battalion 2000 and another rifle company thus were able to counter-attack and crush the revolt.

At the White House yesterday, Secretary of State James A. Baker III, Cheney and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft held a morning breakfast meeting that one official said concentrated in part on ending the "spectacle of disloyalty" seen in news reports of admiration officials conceding that had the coup attempt was flawed

*Branigin of The Washington Post Foreign Service reported from Panama, Hoffman from Washington. Staff writers Ann Devroy, Joe Pichirallo, R. Jeffrey Smith, Helen Dewar and George Willson contributed to this report.*



# Administration Sought Funds Last Spring for Covert Action

By David Hoffman  
and John M. Goshko  
Washington Post Staff Writers

The Washington Post A-1  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date 11 OCT 89

Last spring the Bush administration informally asked the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence whether it would approve additional money for covert efforts to overthrow Panama's Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, but senators reacted coolly to a proposal they considered vague, according to informed sources in Congress and the administration.

Administration officials said that the negative response from Capitol Hill influenced their decision to react cautiously last week when they were informed of plans for a coup against Noriega by Panamanian military officers.

Officials also recalled that in August 1988, the Senate panel had reacted negatively to a more concrete Reagan administration proposal for covert action to try to oust Noriega, the sources said.

An informed Senate source said the Bush proposal last spring "didn't seem to be substantive," and said the senators' cool reaction to it was being used now as "a cover for failure" by the administration to make contingency plans for a possible coup. President Bush publicly advocated such a military coup last May 13.

Personalities involved hinted at their past disagreements in television interviews over the weekend. Sen. David L. Boren (D-Okla.), chairman of the Senate intelligence panel, asserted "categorically" that "since George Bush became president, every single word of authority that he has requested from the intelligence committee and every single penny that he has requested from the intelligence committee relating to Panama,

he has gotten and he has gotten with my support."

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The Bush administration did not press the issue last spring when Congress balked, in part because of internal disagreements about whether such a covert program would be a good idea, officials said.

The question of how to deal with Noriega has been a source of friction between the White House and Congress since early 1988, when Noriega was indicted on federal drug-trafficking charges. Yesterday, reflecting the continuing strain over the failed coup attempt and the torrent of congressional criticism that followed, Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney complained that members of Congress had hampered the crisis decision-making with their queries as the coup unfolded.

"We had situations here where members of Congress were literally calling [executive branch] agencies downtown, or even people in Panama, as these events unfolded, demanding information. That creates all kinds of problems," Cheney said in an interview with the Associated Press.

In March 1988, Panama's police chief, Col. Leonidas Macias, led an unsuccessful coup, and Noriega took the opportunity to purge sev-

eral senior officers, dimming prospects for another coup attempt. U.S. officials say the United States had nothing to do with the March 1988 coup attempt.

However, partly as a result of that abortive action, the United States turned to Lt. Col. Eduardo Herrera, who had been serving as Panamanian ambassador to Israel but who relocated to Miami because Noriega suspected Herrera of sympathy with his enemies.

U.S. sources said Herrera went on the CIA payroll and came to be regarded as military leader of the Panamanian exile groups in this country. While Herrera initially was looked on as a potentially important asset, one source said "he never was put to use" because the main thrust of U.S. policy throughout the spring of 1988 was to try to negotiate an agreement for Noriega voluntarily to give up command of the Panama Defense Forces.

Noriega refused to step aside, and by July 1988, the Reagan administration prepared a proposed intelligence finding that was submitted to the Senate intelligence

committee. According to reliable sources, it called for the Central Intelligence Agency to try to infiltrate various exiles, probably led by Herrera, into Panama to induce elements of the Defense Forces to stage a coup.

Administration officials warned that Noriega and others might be killed in a coup. The sources said



## 5:00 P.M. NEWS UPDATE

PANAMA COUP ATTEMPT/PRESIDENT (Deborah Zabarenko, Reuter) -- President Bush met with two senators Wednesday in an apparent move to smooth relations between the White House and Congress regarding U.S. policy toward Panama. Bush met for 35 minutes with Sens. Boren and Cohen, [the White House] said in a statement.... National Security Adviser Scowcroft attended the meeting, along with White House chief of staff Sununu and deputy national security adviser Gates.... In other developments Wednesday, the Miami Herald quoted one of the participants in the Oct. 3 anti-Noriega coup as saying that the coup leaders at no time planned to kill the general. Speaking from a Miami hideout after being flown out of Panama with 41 other dissidents, the rebel, who called himself Commander Thunder and spoke on condition that his real name be withheld, confirmed reports that troops held Noriega hostage for several hours and could have killed him at any time.

PANAMA CANAL DELEGATION (Panama City/Reuter) -- Panama named eight delegates Wednesday to a meeting of the Panama Canal Commission board of directors in Florida later this month. The choice could again put Panama in conflict with the U.S. since at least three of the delegates have previously been refused visas by Washington.... A U.S. Embassy spokesman was not immediately available to comment on the new delegates.

DRUG TRAFFICKER SEIZED (Bogota/Reuter) -- A reputed leading Colombian drug trafficker sought for extradition by the U.S. has been arrested in Bogota, authorities said Wednesday. Jose Rafael Abello Silva was captured in a restaurant on the north end of the capital Tuesday night by agents of the national intelligence agency, the Department of Administrative Security. Abello...headed the Medellin cartel's operation on the Caribbean coast, DAS spokeswoman Diva Rojas said.

ASYLUM BILL/REFUGEES (Reuter) -- Nicaraguan refugees expressed strong support Wednesday for a bill that would give 750,000 Nicaraguans, Chinese and Salvadorans three years of asylum in the U.S. along with work authorization papers. Adolfo Calero, a leader of Nicaragua's Contra rebels, said Nicaraguans could not now return to their homeland because it was not free and they faced the possibility of persecution.... Rep. Moakley, one of the sponsors of the legislation that had originally contemplated granting safe haven only for Salvadorans, said its chances for approval had improved considerably with the inclusion of Nicaraguans and Chinese.

U.S. ESPIONAGE/KGB OFFICIAL (Moscow/UPI) -- A KGB official Wednesday accused the U.S. of a high-tech espionage assault on the Soviet Union from space, from under the ground and from beneath the ocean despite warming relations between the two countries. "We are being listened to and watched -- secretly, constantly and rather actively," Maj. Gen. Igor Ustinov, a KGB department head, told Trud, the official newspaper of the country's state-run trade unions.... "Unfortunately, the facts show that in spite of the recent improvements in East-West relations, the special services of the capitalist countries, especially the United States, have not scaled down their activity in gathering intelligence....," he said. Ustinov claimed that CIA chief William Webster recently said "glasnost in the Soviet Union has opened up...unprecedented opportunities for gathering information both openly and secretly."

-more-



E. GERMANY/U.S. OFFICIALS (Reuter) -- U.S. officials said Wednesday they hoped talks between pro-reform demonstrators and city officials in Leipzig and Dresden reflect a split among East German leaders that will lead to democratic reforms. "I hope that continues and represents movement," Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Curits Kamman told a House foreign affairs subcommittee.... "There is the possibility that it will be repressed and that these leaders will be pushed aside," Kamman replied.... Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights Richard Schifter told the House subcommittee, "It could be...that there are some people who see the handwriting on the wall and decided to go with change rather than sticking with the old." Kamman had told the subcommittee in prepared testimony on democratic reforms in East Europe that "already splits are appearing in the formerly solid anti-reform regime front in the German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovakia, although both still have a long way to go."

SAUDI ARMS SALE/ADMINISTRATION (Reuter) -- The Bush administration Wednesday was to notify Congress of plans to sell Saudi Arabia 315 frontline tanks and support equipment totaling \$3.1 billion, U.S. officials said. State Department spokeswoman Tutwiler said the Pentagon was sending advance notice of the sale to Capitol Hill at some point in the day but refused to provide details.

S. AFRICAN RELEASES/STATE DEPARTMENT (Reuter) -- The U.S. Wednesday welcomed South Africa's decision to release jailed black anti-apartheid leader Walter Sisulu but said it was only one of many steps that must be taken by Pretoria's white minority-ruled government.... "We are encouraged by these positive moves, and hope that they are merely the first steps in a process which will see the release of all political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, and the return of political exiles, lifting of the state of emergency and associated restrictions on political activity, and negotiations on a peaceful transition to a non-racial and democratic South Africa," she said.

S. AFRICA RELEASES/U.N. (U.N./Reuter) -- U.N. Secretary General Perez de Cuellar welcomed the planned release of seven political prisoners in South Africa and renewed his call Wednesday to free black nationalist leader Nelson Mandela. At the same time Joseph Garba, president of the General Assembly, said South Africa's action, while welcome, "was too little and too late." ...The secretary general, in a statement, said indications that South Africa was seeking political change were encouraging. But he said many other leaders representing the majority of the people were still imprisoned, in detention or subject to other restrictions.

S. KOREA/HILLS (Seoul/UPI) -- U.S. Trade Rep. Hills said Wednesday South Koreans must let market forces, not the government, direct the economy if there is to be more economic growth. Hills...said at a press conference that some progress has been made in a series of meetings she had with Korea's political and economic leaders. "(South) Korea has achieved an economic miracle. Korea has been watched all around the world and particularly in this area. What we are asking of Korea is that it take steps that will continue this growth," Hills said.

IDA/CONABLE (Minneapolis/UPI) -- World Bank President Barber Conable said Wednesday the U.S. contribution to the International Development Agency is "very much in doubt" because of the budgetary constraints in Congress.... "American congressmen would rather vote money for something they can control," said Conable.... He [told a gathering of Minnesota business, banking and academic communities] the U.S. will have less influence in Africa and Asia if the nation fails to provide its contribution to the development agency.

MEDICAID ABORTIONS/HOUSE (UPI) -- The House narrowly voted Wednesday to add cases of rape and incest to the circumstances in which poor women can have government-funded abortions, approving language President Bush has vowed to veto.... The key abortion vote came on a motion by Rep. Boxer asking the House to reverse itself and go along with the Senate on the Labor-HHS bill by adding to the standard "life of the mother" cases incidents of rape and incest. She prevailed, 216 to 206. In a second vote, Boxer won 212 to 207.

S&L BAILOUT/FHLBS (UPI) -- The S&L bailout bill is placing a heavy financial burden on the Federal Home Loan Bank System, bankers told a House subcommittee Wednesday. "There can be no doubt that the financial obligations imposed upon the Federal Home Loan Banks by (the bailout bill) will place a significant burden on the Federal Home Loan Bank System," Thurman Connell, president of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Des Moines told a subcommittee of the House Committee on Banking, Finance and Urban Affairs.... David Sullivan, chairman of the National Council of Savings Institutions, said...the bailout will erode the capital of the Federal Home Loan Bank System, bringing the long-term viability of the system into question.



# Senate Panel Was Negative On Boosting Covert Aid

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By David Hoffman  
and John M. Goshko  
Washington Post Staff Writers

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Last spring the Bush administration informally asked the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence whether it would approve additional money for covert efforts to overthrow Panama's Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, but senators reacted coolly to a proposal they considered vague, according to informed sources in Congress and the administration.

Administration officials said that the negative response from Capitol Hill influenced their decision to react cautiously last week when they were informed of plans for a coup against Noriega by Panamanian military officers.

Officials also recalled that in August 1988, the Senate panel had reacted negatively to a more concrete Reagan administration proposal for covert action to try

to oust Noriega, the sources said.

An informed Senate source said the Bush proposal last spring "didn't seem to be substantive," and said the senators' cool reaction to it was being used now as "a cover for failure" by the administration to make contingency plans for a possible coup. President Bush publicly advocated such a military coup last May 13.

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# Senate Panel's Negative Aid Response Cited Behind U.S. Caution on Panama

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eral senior officers, dimming prospects for another coup attempt. U.S. officials say the United States had nothing to do with the March 1988 coup attempt.

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Noriega refused to step aside, and by July 1988, the Reagan administration prepared a proposed intelligence finding that was submitted to the Senate intelligence

committee. According to reliable sources, it called for the Central Intelligence Agency to try to infiltrate various exiles, probably led by Herrera, into Panama to induce elements of the Defense Forces to stage a coup.

Administration officials warned that Noriega and others might be killed in a coup. The sources said that caused furious opposition from Boren and Sen. William S. Cohen (R-Maine), the committee vice chairman, who pronounced it a potential violation of a presidential ban on U.S. participation in assassinations.

Boren could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Subsequently, the finding was narrowed to authorize temporary, limited support for a short-lived clandestine radio operation in Panama. After Bush took office, he issued another covert-action finding that reportedly included \$10 million to help opposition parties in Panama's May elections. Opposition leaders, however, vehemently maintain that they never received any such funds.



# Bush to Aides: Stop Second-Guessing

*President Angered by Recriminations Over U.S. Response to Rebellion*

By Ann Devroy  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Early last Friday morning an "enraged" President Bush ordered his top advisers to put a stop to internal criticism of the administration's handling of the coup attempt last week in Panama, according to knowledgeable officials.

Secretary of State James A. Baker III, Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney, national security adviser Brent Scowcroft and White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu, were gathered in the Oval Office when Bush expressed his anger, the officials said. Baker, Scowcroft and Sununu then passed the word to their own staffs that it was time to "shut down" internal second-guessing, the sources said.

From Tuesday through Thursday, officials in many departments had told reporters that the administration had been ill-prepared for its first unexpected international crisis, had no contingency plans for dealing with it, and reacted clumsily to unfolding events.

After the Oval Office session Friday morning, Baker lectured senior aides at the State Department on loyalty to the administration. His words were interpreted in the bureaucracy as a warning that criticism was a firing offense. Baker aides said he never threatened to fire anyone, but one source said the "theatrics" were meant "to send a message" to State Department employees.

That message was sent to U.S. Embassy personnel in Panama, who had on-the-scene information about events during the insurrection. The deputy chief of mission in charge of the embassy in Panama got a telephone call late Friday from Michael Kozak, assistant secretary of state for the region, informing him of Baker's insistence that no criticism come from State Department employees.

At the White House, spokesman Marlin Fitzwater publicly reflected the "no internal criticism" order, telling reporters that Bush was satisfied with how the revolt was handled and that a National Security Council review of the administration's response was routine and reflected no dissatisfaction. "It's the kind of review that goes on all the time," Fitzwater said.

The Friday session, officials said, was an effort to better control how the administration's actions were being portrayed in the media, initiating yet another phase in a four-day damage-control effort.

Beginning with the Tuesday morning coup attempt, administration officials acknowledged that their efforts to defend and explain themselves and to minimize congressional criticism were largely unsuccessful, in part because each day produced new information that conflicted with earlier administration statements and because so many officials were willing to concede that mistakes had been made.

Bush's anger Friday, aides to senior officials said, was based on reading the morning newspapers, many of which quoted senior officials lamenting how the crisis had been mishandled, and suggesting an efficient crisis management operation was lacking and that the president was either too cautious or too hampered in information he was receiving to make informed decisions.

According to officials, Baker, Cheney and Scowcroft had breakfast at the White House at 7: 30 a.m. at which they had expressed their own frustrations over the events in Panama and the drumbeat of criticism. Following that session, the three joined Bush, Vice President Quayle and Sununu in the Oval Office. Bush, at the start of a session devoted to a range of topics, expressed his anger over the morning papers and the spectacle of his aides freely acknowledging, although mostly anonymously, that the new administration had not met the test.

Reviewing the past week, officials said their problems began Tuesday, when spokesmen for the White House and State Department provided information about the coup attempt that turned out to be wrong or misleading. One official said Tuesday's effort, which was aimed at minimizing U.S. involvement in the insurrection, did not anticipate that a large amount of

the criticism would accuse the administration of being too passive in the face of an opportunity to join in toppling Panama strongman Manuel Antonio Noriega, indicted by the U.S. government on drug charges.

By Wednesday, the administration had designated Cheney as its official spokesman, canceling or declining congressional invitations for briefings by other officials. One official called this "an effort to make sure we were all singing from the same sheet of music." But Wednesday and Thursday produced more information that conflicted with the earlier administration version, prompting continuing questions by Democrats and Republicans about the handling of the coup attempt.

Officials said the administration decided Friday to "flood" the weekend airwaves with administration officials who "all got the same script," to answer the critics. One White House source said the administration toyed with but rejected an option of keeping all officials under wraps in the hope the "story would go away, would have no weekend legs."

On Saturday, Sununu appeared on a CNN interview program. On Sunday, Baker, Cheney and Scowcroft took their turns on the morning television interview programs, which often provide the grist for the evening news and Monday morning newspapers. Scowcroft, officials said, "dropped the script" by all but accusing Sen. David L. Boren (D-Okla.) of lying when he said the Senate had given the administration all the leeway it sought in dealing with Noriega.

By Monday, officials were engaged in a strenuous effort to avoid saying anything that would conceivably produce new television or newspaper stories. At the White House, Fitzwater was asked about the Scowcroft comments on Boren, and said, "Looking for a sound bite in new words? Brent said it fine. I'll just stick with his words."

At the State Department, spokesman Margaret Tutwiler was asked the kind of question the administration a week earlier had been bracing for:

How could it justify interfering in a coup in another country? Tutwiler quoted the president who said last week that he would do nothing differently and added, "Now, it's not my job to analyze or second-guess the president of the United States. And I'm not going to start doing that. He made his decisions and we stand by them, and it would be highly inappropriate for me to get out here and second-guess or analyze a presidential decision. I'm just not going to do it."

GUESSING...Pg. 15

carried them to Paitilla Airport, a domestic airport close to PDF headquarters.

Pro-Noriega members of the elite Battalion 2000 also were trucked in from outside Panama City, sources said. Their arrival was a blow to Giroldi, who had expected the unit to remain neutral, sources said.

Giroldi had originally planned the coup for Oct. 2, but held off, sources said, suspecting Noriega had learned his plan.

On Oct. 3, the day of the coup, Giroldi's fears of a leak grew when Noriega arrived unexpectedly early at PDF headquarters, sources said.

Giroldi then moved up the start of the coup, starting the attack on the headquarters before all rebel troops had arrived, sources said. One rebel contingent racing to get to the headquarters was slowed when it ran into a pro-Noriega unit and exchanged gunfire, sources said.

Noriega emerged from his office in the central PDF building and came face to face with Giroldi, sources said. Giroldi escorted Noriega and top aides to Giroldi's office in another building, sources said.

Noriega and his group were under Giroldi's control for several hours, the sources said.

After the move to deliver Noriega and the others to a U.S. military base was abandoned, Giroldi sent an aide to Fort Clayton, a nearby U.S. base, to see Cisneros, commander of U.S. Army forces of the Southern Command in Panama.

Giroldi is reported to have told his emissaries to ask Cisneros to implement the plan Giroldi said the United States had agreed to. The rebel representatives were said to be shocked by what one has described as Cisneros's aloof, non-committal responses. A rebel participant in the meeting has told others that Cisneros said the United States was concerned that work opinion might chastise it for intervening. Cisneros also reportedly said that the United States was concerned that Panamanian civilian would protest U.S. attempts to block the routes requested by the rebels, the sources said.

Cisneros further allegedly said he needed higher approval, perhaps from the Pentagon, to block the routes, but within five or 10 minutes, sources said, he told them that he had approval.

According to the Pentagon, the two routes were closed within 90 minutes of the meeting with the rebels, but the coup collapsed a short time later.

One source said that around 10

# Douglas New Engine

had been planning to use a new technology known as the unducted fan or ultra-high bypass engine, which is 35 percent more fuel-efficient than traditional engines, and quieter, but more expensive. Both the General Electric Company and Pratt & Whitney had been developing ultra-high bypass engines, which look much like propeller engines facing the back of the plane.

"This is a market-driven decision," said Keith Takahashi, a spokesman for McDonnell Douglas's Douglas Aircraft plant in Long Beach, Calif. "There didn't seem to be much interest among the airlines in the ultra-high bypass technology."

Analysts said the airlines were not interested because jet-fuel prices were relatively low.

"At some point the UDF engine will undoubtedly be introduced, but for now the V2500 gives more bang for the buck," said Lawrence M. Harris, an analyst at Bateman Eichler, Hill Richards Inc. in Los Angeles.

Howard Rubel, an analyst at C. J. Lawrence, Morgan Grenfell Inc. in New York, said airlines were also concerned about maintenance costs and safety with the new technology. Analysts said that the Boeing Company had also considered using the technology on a new plane in recent years, but decided against it, also primarily for price reasons.

# General Yazov Saw

will never be seen here. But it is certain to impress Mikhail Gorbachev.

Washington's unpreparedness and wishy-washy reaction could inspire Soviet militarists against arms control. They could

term weapons contracts would be increased from the \$78.8 billion requested by the administration to \$84.4 billion.

There are ways other than reducing personnel strength to save money from the \$78 billion personnel budget, but all are considered unlikely by military officials and congressional aides.

For example, reducing by 1 percentage point the 3.6 percent military pay raise proposed for Jan. 1 would cut the defense budget by about \$600 million, avoiding personnel cuts. But congressional negotiators rejected the idea, along with reductions in other allowances, saying it would hurt morale.

The Pentagon also could save money by freezing promotions, canceling permanent-change-of-station moves and reducing enlistment and reenlistment bonuses.

"These are disastrous actions that military officials tell us would be a last resort. A strength cut is far preferable," a congressional aide said.

No firm plan has been devised for allocating the reductions among the services, but aides working on the issue said the Army and Air Force probably would be expected to provide the bulk of the savings. The final decision on allocating the cuts could be left to Cheney.

"We are torn between giving... Cheney absolute authority to decide where to make the cuts, and trying to provide him political cover from making the tough decisions by telling him where to cut," a senior Senate aide said.

Congressional negotiators tentatively decided that Army strength should be reduced by about 10,000, Air Force personnel by about 6,000, Navy strength by about 2,000 and Marine Corps strength by about 1,000, congressional sources said, adding that the allocation is far from final. The formula would achieve the 20,000-person reduction that Cheney has told lawmakers would save \$461 million.

The cuts would be on top of strength reductions requested in the Pentagon's proposed budget. President Bush's budget requested personnel cuts of 7,400 in the Army, 3,100 in the Air Force and 1,200 in the Navy.

If deeper cuts are necessary, congressional aides, said the Navy and Marine Corps likely will be targeted, to spread the pain.

"We do not want any one service to take a disproportionate share of the cuts, nor to we want any service to be protected," said one aide involved in the negotiations.

Defense and service manpower officials said they would prefer to keep out of the defense bill the exact number of



# President tries to mend rift with Hill over Panama crisis

By Paul Bedard  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Bush, fearing a breakdown in relations with the Senate panel that must approve covert operations, yesterday sought to end the heated dispute between the administration and Congress over the U.S. response to last week's coup attempt in Panama.

Mr. Bush invited Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman David Boren, Oklahoma Democrat, and the panel's ranking Republican, William Cohen of Maine, to the White House "to clear the air," an administration official said.

Mr. Bush set up the 35-minute morning meeting "to avoid an outbreak of hostilities between the administration and Congress," said an administration official.

Since the White House and the committee normally work closely when secret operations are proposed, "they have to have a mutual trust," the official said.

After the meeting, the senators "seemed reasonably satisfied" with the president's actions during the coup and his restated pledge to work

closely with the panel, the official said.

But while the peace pipe was being smoked at the White House, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell joined the fray. "The efforts by some within the administration to shift responsibility for decisions... to the Senate Intelligence Committee are ill-founded, unfair and counterproductive," the Maine Democrat said.

He was referring to comments from some officials that the administration reacted cautiously to the Panama military rebellion because the Senate Intelligence Committee had been cool when approached informally last spring for additional funds for coup operations aimed at ousting Gen. Noriega.

Meanwhile, Secretary of State James A. Baker III has asked senior staff aides to end all criticism of the administration's response to the military uprising, State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said yesterday.

Noting that Mr. Baker "was concerned" that unidentified officials were making unflattering comments about other governmental de-

partments, she said the secretary said at a staff meeting Friday "he wanted to make perfectly clear he one hundred percent supported the president's decision."

Vice President Dan Quayle, White House Chief of Staff John Sununu and National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and his deputy Robert Gates joined the president at yesterday's meeting with Mr. Boren and Mr. Cohen.

Mr. Quayle said it concluded with everyone "on the same wave length. I believe it was a very good, productive meeting."

"The president expressed his particular appreciation for Sen. Boren's leadership on behalf of bipartisanship in foreign policy and his support for necessary presidential authorities in foreign policy matters," White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said in a statement.

That comment was apparently aimed at ending the verbal war waged over the weekend between Mr. Scowcroft and Mr. Boren.

Mr. Boren said on television Sunday that his panel has approved "every single penny" of funding requested by the administration, while

Mr. Scowcroft accused Congress of micromanaging intelligence and covert operations. Mr. Scowcroft said he was "kind of astonished" Mr. Boren would claim his panel has always backed Bush administration requests on Panama.

In Panama, meanwhile, Gen. Noriega has drawn up a package of "war laws" that strengthen his "direct control over the civil service, the media and the private sector. These war laws purportedly will strip Panamanians of their remaining civil liberties and human rights," the State Department announced.

Miss Tutwiler said the Noriega regime has killed 10, arrested 37 and wounded 26 "insurgents and loyalists. The dead were rebels, eight of them officers."

She said the general's actions have caused "turmoil" within the PDF.

Also yesterday, The Miami Herald quoted one of the participants in the Oct. 3 coup attempt as saying the coup leaders at no time planned to kill Gen. Noriega.

Speaking from a Miami hideout after being flown out of Panama with 41 other dissidents, the rebel confirmed reports that troops held Gen. Noriega hostage for several hours and could have killed him at any time.

The Herald cited a source close to the dissidents as saying the group would be moved out of Miami for security reasons.

State Department officials have been debriefing some of the coup members.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service was ready to review applications for political asylum from the group "if such requests are made," according to Miss Tutwiler.

• This story is based in part on wire service reports.

# Syrian pilot lands MiG in Israel

By Andrew Meisels  
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON TIMES

MEGIDDO, Israel — A Syrian pilot seeking asylum landed his Soviet-made MiG-23 fighter in northern Israel, providing the Israelis with an electronically advanced jet that is the backbone of the Syrian Air Force.

The unarmed, swing-wing jet, the first of its kind to fall into Israeli hands, evaded Israel's extensive air defense network before landing in Megiddo, 40 miles north of Tel Aviv.

"It's a tremendous coup for Israel to have this plane," said an Israeli Air Force officer, who asked for anonymity. "Although Syria has newer Russian planes, like the MiG-25 and the MiG-29, the MiG-23 remains the backbone of the Syrian air force. It makes up the bulk of Syria's first-line aircraft."

But the pilot's ability to penetrate Israeli airspace was an embarrassment to the government, which immediately launched an investigation.

"With the wisdom of hindsight, in this case it was good that we did not shoot it down because an advanced MiG-23 has fallen into our hands," Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin told Israel Television.

The pilot, Maj. Adel Bassem, was on a routine training flight with another MiG-23 over Syria when he suddenly veered west and crossed into Israeli airspace. Maj. Bassem, a 34-year-old bachelor, landed here four minutes later, on an airstrip normally used only by crop-dusting planes.

While civilian airport workers stood by stunned, the pilot emerged from the cockpit with his hands outstretched.

"I have no hostile intentions," he said in Arabic, according to witnesses. "I want political asylum."

The airport workers brought Maj. Bassem a bottle of water and made coffee for him. They then waited with him until Israeli security forces arrived. It took a full 20 minutes.

Among the first on the scene was Mr. Rabin, accompanied by Israel's chief of staff and deputy chief of staff. They chatted with Maj. Bassem over coffee for a while, then Mr. Rabin flew to Jerusalem to report to the weekly meeting of the government.

Israeli Air Force personnel arrived and debriefed the Syrian major for more than two hours in Megiddo before flying him by helicopter to an Air Force base.

"I decided to defect, and I chose to come to Israel," Maj. Bassem told

the Israelis. Israeli sources said his reasons apparently were personal.

Shortly after Maj. Bassem's arrival here, there were reports from Egypt of a second Syrian MiG-23 landing near Alexandria. But these reports were denied by both Egyptian and Syrian officials.

The Syrians said Maj. Bassem had made a forced landing in Israel because of engine trouble. They called on the International Red Cross to return both the pilot and his plane.

The MiG-23 — NATO code-named Flogger — is a twin-engine, swing-wing, single-seat fighter-interceptor introduced in 1967. There have been a dozen subsequent models of the aircraft incorporating various improvements.

The United States got its hands on

MiG...Pg. 7

WASHINGTON POST OCT. 12, 1989 Pg. 38

## Pakistan Has No A-Bomb, Bush Inform

By Don Oberdorfer  
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush has informed

WASHINGTON POST OCT. 12, 1989 Pg. 9

## Congress Told Of Plan to Sell

tration agreed not to equip the Saudi tanks with uranium armor, a much denser metal than steel.

The purchase of U.S. tanks to replace 15-year-old and largely inoperable French tanks is considered a



## Pitiful, Helpless Presidency?

President Bush yesterday called in Senators Boren and Cohen of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence to, as the AP put it, "mend fences" damaged in the Panama flap. The President was being too gentle. He should be demanding a return of the foreign-policy powers Congress has purloined. Otherwise, the next crisis will be handled no better than the one last week.

Usurpations by congressional committees of executive-branch authority have been detailed often in this space. We also have chided Presidents for too easily surrendering to what can best be called political blackmail.

Presidents now get "omnibus" appropriations bills—big, disorderly bales of paper that arrive at the last moment to effectively destroy the President's budgetary powers. Special prosecutors backed by Capitol Hill harass public servants, converting executive-branch policies into alleged felonies. A Speaker Jim Wright happily skips down to Managua to negotiate foreign policy, arrogating to himself powers that the Constitution clearly bestows on the presidency. He was chucked out of Congress only after violating the rules of *that* body.

The Panama affair shows why this cannot be allowed to continue. The reason has little to do with whether you like George Bush better than Senator Boren or Republicans better than Democrats. It has to do with whether a trillion-dollar enterprise called the United States government functions even half-well or descends finally into Balkanized anarchy. Panama was an embarrassment. Some future crisis, if addressed with similar confusion and ineptitude, could be far worse.

Defense Secretary Cheney and National Security Adviser Scowcroft both complain that congressional "micromanagement" of national-security policy was heavily to blame for the Panama failure. That has the ring of an alibi—neither Defense nor the White House performed well either—but it just happens to be true. Major Girolodi, who led the abortive coup against General Noriega, thought he was doing business with the CIA. What he didn't know was that the CIA is no longer a viable covert-operations organization. It is, in effect, run by Senator Boren's committee, not the

President, and has been effectively immobilized by that committee.

When Noriega's rescue forces were rushing to his aid and someone had to make a decision on whether to stop them or let the coup fail, the CIA was only a bit player. The President relied on Army advice and that advice, that Girolodi couldn't be trusted, was either beside the point or wrong. American generals don't care much for small actions in gritty little Third World countries, but it just happens that those are the military problems that most engage us in this era. The President, the American people and the Panamanian people want Noriega out, and the military helped muffle a chance to make that happen.

Would we have been better off if the CIA had not been neutered? The answer is yes. The purpose of covert operations is to deal with small problems before they become big ones that can be addressed only with military forces. Properly conducted, they save lives and avoid the kinds of embarrassment that Noriega has been generously handing out to Americans. Congress is entitled to review covert operations. It is not institutionally capable of running them.

What caught everyone in Washington by surprise was the outraged reaction of the American public to the Panama fiasco. Even some of the most liberal Senators, such as Kerry of Massachusetts, quickly sensed this sea change and joined the chorus of voices criticizing the President.

It would be a misreading of the Kerry flip-flop to assume that the congressional left, having worked so hard to grab the President's power, wants to give it back. But if even a Kerry has caught a whiff of grapeshot from the voters, it means that President Bush is in a strong position to start taking back the authority he and former Presidents have lost. If you want Noriega, you have to take him. If you want to protect the presidency, you have to chase the interlopers away.

As a result of the Panama fiasco, a lot of people, in the U.S. and elsewhere, now will be watching the American presidency with interest. That will be a good thing only if President Bush decides to exercise greater vigor in dealing with both the Noriegas of the world and the problems of his office.

WALL STREET JOURNAL

12 OCT 89

A-16



# President Tries to Make Peace With Sen. Boren

By Ann Devroy  
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush yesterday moved to make peace with Sen. David L. Boren (D-Okla.), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, three days after national security adviser Brent Scowcroft questioned Boren's credibility in a nationally televised dispute.

Bush called Sens. Boren and William S. Cohen (R-Maine), the panel's vice chairman, to the White House for a 35-minute private chat that included Scowcroft and White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu. Afterward, the White

House issued a statement expressing Bush's "particular appreciation" for Boren's "leadership on behalf of bipartisanship in foreign policy and his support for necessary presidential authorities in foreign policy matters."

A senior official said Scowcroft and Boren "now agree" that the Senate intelligence committee has not denied the president funds or approval for any specific action he wanted taken in Panama as the administration moved over the past months to isolate Panama's military leader, Manuel Antonio Noriega, and encourage his overthrow by the Panama Defense Forces.

Sources have said that Senate efforts to dissuade the Bush administration from various proposals, not specific rejections of money, have been the problem for the White House, which is sticking to its general complaint that Congress tries to "micromanage" foreign policy.

The White House session occurred after Boren, on a Sunday television interview program, stated "categorically" that Bush had gotten "every single penny" and "every single word of authority" he has sought in Panama. Scowcroft, who followed Boren on the program, said Boren's "statement is

literally not in accord with all the facts."

After the program, Scowcroft and Boren had what a White House official described as a "somewhat friendly discussion." And when Scowcroft emerged from the studios of ABC News here, he essentially withdrew his charge. An administration official said "he wished he hadn't said it," because "Boren is not the enemy. . . he has given us a great deal of cooperation."

The peacemaking at the White House, however, did not extend to Capitol Hill, where Senate Majority Leader George J. Mitchell (D-Maine) accused the administration

of trying to put the blame for its inaction in Panama on Congress. "The efforts by some within the administration to shift responsibility for decisions. . . to the Senate intelligence committee are ill-founded, unfair and counterproductive," he said. Mitchell said Congress has every right to question "how the administration could have been so unprepared when what it had long been urging took place."

Mitchell made his remarks in answer to a speech by Senate Minority Leader Robert J. Dole (R-Kan.) suggesting that the Senate put behind it the debate over how the Panamanian coup attempt was handled.

At the White House, press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said Bush called Boren and Cohen Tuesday to ask them to come to the White House session, which he said dealt with "the events of the last week in

Panama." He would provide no details.

The statement said the president "wanted to take this occasion to reaffirm the close working relationship with Senators Boren and Cohen." Officials acknowledge that Boren's support, or at least not outright opposition, is important to the White House on matters that range from capital gains taxes to foreign policy.

The meeting occurred as the State Department yesterday expressed concern about a new crackdown by Panamanian authorities on civil liberties there. Margaret Tutwiler said a new package of "war laws" is aimed at eliminating "the last vestiges of democracy and rule of law."

She cited laws that would allow the firing of civil servants for vaguely defined disloyalty and elimination of the right of habeas corpus.

The Washington Post A-14  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_  
Date 12 OCT 89



# Bush and Senators Meet On the Coup That Failed

By MICHAEL R. GORDON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 11 — President Bush met with the Democratic and Republican leaders of the Senate Intelligence Committee today to smooth relations with them over the Administration's handling of the failed coup in Panama.

The meeting came after Senator David L. Boren, the Oklahoma Democrat who is chairman of the intelligence panel, and Brent Scowcroft, the President's national security adviser, disagreed Sunday over whether Senate restrictions on covert action had hampered the Administration's handling of the attempted coup in Panama.

The White House issued a statement after Mr. Bush's 35-minute meeting with Senator Boren and Senator William S. Cohen, Republican of Maine, who serves as vice chairman of the panel.

## Placatory Words

"The President has the highest respect for the judgment and integrity of the chairman and vice chairman," said the White House statement, which also thanked Senator Boren for his support for "necessary Presidential authorities in foreign policy matters."

Vice President Dan Quayle; the President's chief of staff, John H. Sununu; Mr. Scowcroft, and Robert M. Gates, the deputy national security adviser, also attended the meeting at the White House.

Senator Boren has been among the most vocal critics of the Administration's handling of the coup. He has said Mr. Bush did not get timely intelligence that would have enabled American military forces to assist Panamanian rebels by blocking the movement of troops loyal to Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, whose forces crushed the coup on Tuesday.

## Televised Dispute

Senator Boren repeated his charges on the ABC News program "This Week," and asserted that the Senate committee had given the Administration all the money and authority it had sought for activities "relating to Panama."

Mr. Scowcroft disputed this statement and asserted that the committee's views, expressed in closed meetings, hindered the Administration from carrying out the sort of advance planning with the coup leaders that the critics said was needed.

Government officials who decline to be identified say that the disagreement between Senator Boren and Mr. Scowcroft stems in part from an episode in July 1988 when the lawmakers sharply objected to a plan by the Reagan Administration to support a group of Panamanian officers plotting a coup at

that time.

At the 1988 hearing, Reagan Administration officials told the senators that they could not fully control Col. Eduardo Herrera, the leader of that coup, and could not guarantee the life of General Noriega if the plan, by the Central Intelligence Agency, went forward. The plan ruled out the use of the American bases as a staging area and was said to have involved a small number of Panamanian officers, less than two dozen.

## Criticized for Different Reasons

Some committee members, including Senator Cohen, viewed the proposal as a thinly disguised attempt to circumvent the restrictions against assassination. Others on the committee, including Senator Boren, felt the plan was too modest and too risky to have any chance of success.

The deliberations, Government officials said, resulted in a letter from the

## Panama fiasco is made secondary to healing bruised feelings.

committee to the Administration warning against proceeding with the plan.

Government officials said the committee also expressed objections when the Reagan Administration returned with a similar plan in October 1988, saying a decision should be deferred until after the American Presidential elections.

## Colonel Deemed Unreliable

Earlier this year, the C.I.A. broke off relations with Colonel Herrera. One Administration official said this was because of pressure from Congress, but another said it happened after the C.I.A. concluded that he was not reliable.

In its statement today, the White House said that all participants in today's meeting "expressed disappointment over recent press stories" about the dispute between Senator Boren and the Administration.

Mr. Boren sought to portray the session as a vindication of his position.

"I especially appreciated the President's words in the meeting thanking me for always supporting necessary Presidential authority in foreign policy and expressing his dismay at some news stories which have implied otherwise," he said.

The Washington Post

The New York Times

The Washington Times

The Wall Street Journal

The Christian Science Monitor

New York Daily News

USA Today

The Chicago Tribune

Date 12 Oct 1989

A 12



# U.S. Planning Better Crisis Management

By JACK NELSON,  
TIMES STAFF WRITER

WASHINGTON—Bush Administration officials, embarrassed at the disarray that marred their response to the Panamanian coup attempt, are planning to reform the government's crisis management system and to take more "aggressive" action against Panamanian strongman Manuel A. Noriega in the future, sources said Thursday.

An internal White House investigation has concluded that the sluggish response to the armed rebellion was partly caused by operational and communications foul-ups, according to a source familiar with the inquiry.

Although this source said the problems can be fairly

easily corrected, other sources called the communications flaws much more serious. Officials responding to the crisis were "like the five blind guys trying to feel the elephant," one Bush adviser said. "They didn't know whether they had hold of the trunk or the tail."

Even more significant than any flaws and proposed reforms in White House crisis management, however, may be the new, more militant anti-Noriega attitude that has spread through the Administration in the wake of the failure of the Oct. 3 attempted coup. U.S. officials were described as "angry and frustrated" at the way Noriega outwitted his captors and emerged unscathed and more belligerent than ever.

The collapse of the coup amid evidence of Administration confusion and lack of decisiveness was especially galling because President Bush had advocated just such efforts by the Panamanian Defense Forces to oust Noriega.

"The planning now is for more aggressive action. The word is going out to be more aggressive," a senior government official said.

While declining to elaborate on what he meant by "aggressive action" or to discuss options available to the United States, the official

said: "Noriega's not out of the woods. He's into heavy paranoia, wondering who else was in on the plot. And we can make him a lot more paranoid."

In case another attempt is made to overthrow Noriega, one possible option for Bush would be to implement what some officials call "the President's snatch authority"—a secret ruling last June 21 by the Justice Department's office of legal counsel.

Sources told The Times that the legal opinion, which was issued in strictest secrecy and has never been released publicly, provides that the President can authorize the FBI to apprehend fugitives from U.S. law in foreign lands and return them to this country without the foreign government's consent, even if the action violates international law.

Dating back to Feb. 4, 1988, when federal grand juries in Miami and Tampa, Fla., indicted Noriega on drug trafficking and related charges, the United States has sought to drive him from power and, if possible, bring him to this country for trial.

Kidnaping a foreign leader would violate international law, but the Justice Department's "snatch" ruling apparently could be invoked as a legal weapon to seize and return to U.S. jurisdiction a foreign leader.

"The snatch option is a prerogative for the President to consider in trying to remove Noriega," an intelligence official said. He indicated that the Administration never seriously considered taking that action during the Oct. 3 coup attempt because it would have required direct military intervention and Bush wanted to keep "a

low military profile."

The Administration, which has been severely criticized by Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill for failing to assist the Panamanian coup leaders, might be tempted to invoke the Justice Department ruling in the event of another attempt by rebels to overthrow Noriega.

"We're probably not going to be the coolest of heads for a while," said one Administration official, who added that he hopes time will calm emotions because "some are angry and feeling that we've been had."

The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_  
**L.A. TIMES A-1**  
Date **13 OCT 89**

On Capitol Hill, too, there was concern that in the event of another coup attempt Administration officials—still smarting from criticism that they had let an opportunity to topple Noriega slip away—might feel under pressure to act quickly and end up doing something rash.

"I hope they don't overreact and do something dumb," said Rep. David McCurdy (D-Okla.), a leading member of the House Intelligence Committee.

McCurdy, who last week charged that the failed coup had reinforced "the wimp factor" that dogged Bush throughout last year's presidential campaign, said the Administration may never have as good a chance to oust Noriega as it had last week.

Despite concerns that the Administration may act precipitously if there is a next time, Bush has a well-earned reputation for being

cautious.

And the President's top national security advisers—Secretary of State James A. Baker III, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and CIA Director William H. Webster—also are well known as cautious leaders who are more apt to opt for inaction rather than run the risk of a serious setback in a crisis situation. (Webster was in Europe on a long-planned visit during the coup attempt.)

Also, "imperiling American troops is something that weighs heavily on the President's mind," said one of his top advisers.

During the coup, U.S. troops in Panama acted to support the rebels by blocking some roads near American facilities that Noriega loyalists might have used to attack the coup plotters. But other avenues of transportation, particularly airfields, were not blocked and the coup was crushed.

At first, the White House insisted that the U.S. troops had been deployed as part of a previously scheduled exercise and Bush publicly disclaimed significant U.S. involvement.



Later, however, after it was learned that the United States had advance knowledge of the plot against Noriega, the White House acknowledged that the deployments had been authorized to help the rebels.

Ever since the coup attempt, Bush's national security advisers have been conducting what one

official called "lessons learned" sessions where they have gone over details of the Administration's response and tried to pinpoint shortcomings in the crisis management system.

Although officials refused to comment on the record about their findings, a report on the internal White House investigation is expected to be presented to the President within a few days.

An official familiar with the findings thus far insisted that there was no failure of U.S. intelligence, that only "relatively minor" flaws were discovered in the response system and that any reforms can be easily implemented by the agencies involved. He indicated that those conclusions will be set forth in the report to Bush.

However, other officials said that intelligence was inadequate and that there were significant flaws in the response system.

For example, intelligence collected by the U.S. Southern Command in Panama frequently was fed to the White House through the Pentagon without being supplied to other agencies involved in the crisis.

Intelligence officials insisted that they sent enough information to Washington to permit a considered official response to the coup attempt.

He said that while the CIA is not under pressure from Capitol Hill for providing inadequate data, some people there are now "circling the wagons," looking for a scapegoat.

Intelligence sources confirmed that the White House was supplied with information about the coup attempt 29 hours before it oc-

curred, but one official said: "We don't know how the people there focused on what was being conveyed to them or how serious they thought it was."

The intelligence agencies themselves approached the planned coup with great skepticism, according to another official, who said: "The coup plan didn't sound like it was going anywhere from the beginning, and we conveyed that to the White House."

Neither Bush nor his top national security advisers in Washington at the time—Baker, Scowcroft and Cheney—considered the original information about the coup attempt serious enough to interrupt their personal schedules and go to the White House "situation room," where officials generally gather to assess intelligence and direct the Administration's response to an international crisis.

"It's obvious that two of the things they've learned from all this," said a close Bush adviser, "are that you've got to recognize a crisis when there is one, and you've got to be willing to interrupt your personal schedule and deal with it."

"Keeping personal schedules is not the beat-all, end-all of governing, and they are all big on that, on keeping their meetings on schedule. Somebody, somehow—Scowcroft or somebody—has got to say, 'Wait a minute, we've got to have a meeting.' You've got to say, 'Here's a crisis,' and get all the players involved. They can't work together if they're not together."

Times staff writers Robin Wright, Sara Fritz and Ronald J. Ostrow contributed to this story.

HAYNES JOHNSON

# Panama and Lessons Unlearned

To understand the implications of the Panama debacle, Americans should ponder revelations in a New York Times article out of Washington about workings of their government. Displayed prominently on Page One under the headline, "The Noriega Fiasco: What Went Wrong," it reads:

"The collapse of the United States effort to persuade Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega to step down as leader of Panama resulted from a series of miscalculations and a fundamental lack of coordination among the agencies responsible for policy toward Panama, according to American officials and diplomats.

"While administration officials said they have not abandoned the goal of forcing Gen. Noriega from power, they acknowledged in interviews that their actions have served to embolden the general and make it more difficult to achieve his departure.

"For nearly a year, the administration's policy was riddled with misjudgments, and neither the White House nor the National Security Council staff reconciled the conflicting objectives and priorities of different agencies . . . A White House official said today, 'The whole explanation for the miasma of Panama policy can be found in the workings and dynamics of interagency meetings, which failed to produce a sharp instrument to attain our objectives.'"

The article went on for a half page inside detailing specific examples of administration misjudgments, lack of coordination among agencies, internal conflicts between "get-tough diplomats" and a "cautious Pentagon," faulty intelligence and grave doubts about the strength and capacity of Noriega's opponents who would lead the coup.

Heard all of this before, you say? Right. That article was published on May 30, 1988, after another attempted coup against Noriega. In the context of the present fiasco, it makes eerie reading. It recounts the same kind of official writhing, rationalizing and finger-pointing that have wracked Washington since the latest coup attempt produced a complete failure and a humiliating embarrassment for the United States, especially for the Bush administration.

Both episodes expose a disturbing truth about American policy toward Panama.

There was no policy then, at least not a clearly defined one. Other than official U.S. bombast about removing the "drug lord and dictator," there has been no clear policy since. Worse, U.S. officials obviously did not learn from earlier mistakes. As recent problems show, they have resurfaced with a vengeance. So once more, Washington is enveloped in a political climate of recrimination.

Present circumstances would be bad enough if the problems were the result of a new team of amateurs taking over the national-security apparatus. That is not the case. The current administration team has worked together well in foreign-policy crises dating to the military rescue of the U.S. merchant ship Mayaguez in May 1975. Over many years, they have been tested and toughened by their varied high government experience. Together, Richard B. Cheney, Brent Scowcroft, James A. Baker III and George Bush form an unusually experienced and solid group of national leaders. None needs on-the-job training. The country has every reason to believe them to be as eminently capable of exercising power and making correct decisions as any similar group of officials in years.

That things went wrong again in Panama is as evident as the lessons are important.

The first lesson involves covert operations. From the Bay of Pigs to Iran-contra, Americans have learned repeatedly that involvement in large-scale covert operations is, at best, highly risky and, at worse, potentially disastrous. They never work out as advertised; something always goes wrong. Invariably, the consequences of failure and public exposure of any U.S. role make matters more difficult. Worst is to be halfway involved. That's what happened in the latest Panama situation. The United States was neither fully in nor out but tainted nonetheless.

Lesson No. 2 involves U.S. force. Bush & Co. are to be commended for stressing prudence in committing troops. So is the Pentagon. In this, discretion is the better part of valor. A great nation employs its power only when its vital interests are endangered and then commits them fully and with all the force at its command to carry out carefully stated objectives.

Noriega does not pose such a threat. He is, as Sen. J. William Fulbright told John F. Kennedy of Fidel Castro before the Bay of Pigs invasion, a "thorn in the flesh, not a dagger in the heart."

Final lesson: Next time, get the act together.



# Nicaraguan Opposition Operating on a Shoestring

By Lee Hockstader  
Washington Post Foreign Service

MANAGUA, Nicaragua—Dilsia Saenz, a Managua housewife not much involved in politics, happens to live next door to the headquarters of the National Opposition Union, the political coalition that is challenging the Sandinistas in next February's general elections.

For the past few months, Saenz has allowed her neighbors to attach an extension to her phone line. Until the government-run phone company finally came by this week to install three new lines, it was the only phone the opposition had.

In Washington, where the Bush administration sees the Nicaraguan elections as a historic opportunity to topple the anti-American Sandinista regime, the debate concerns how many millions of dollars to send to finance the opposition presidential campaign of newspaper publisher Violeta Chamorro. In Managua, the Sandinista government of President Daniel Ortega trumpets reports that under-the-table funds from the CIA are already filtering into opposition coffers.

But the reality at the Nicaraguan opposition's headquarters is that with voter registration already underway, it is struggling to keep a shoestring operation afloat at a critical juncture in the electoral process. Judging from appearances, UNO, as it is known in its Spanish initials, is practically broke.

"Here we have no paper, no folders, no staples, barely any furniture," said Roberto Guzman, the director of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party, one of 14 parties in the UNO coalition. "We had an ad in the paper the other day asking for second-

hand furniture, typewriters, anything."

Guzman estimates the opposition needs \$6 million to run its campaign.

Throughout the country they have ruled as a virtual one-party monopoly for a decade, the Sandinistas have offices in almost every city and town. In Managua, Sandinista banners and flags adorn public buildings and lamp posts. Teen-agers wear Sandinista T-shirts, and drawings of the distinctive broad-brimmed hat of Augusto Cesar Sandino, the 19th-century guerrilla who inspired the ruling party's name and revolution, can be seen nearly everywhere.

By contrast, UNO is practically invisible. It has opened offices in just half of the country's 16 departments, or provinces, and is still struggling to come up with a slogan to compete with the Sandinistas' "Everything will be better." At this point, UNO campaign organizers say, hiring a political consultant—let alone a media specialist—is out of the question.

"We lack funds, we lack materials, and we lack experience," acknowledged Guzman. "The only thing we have is the people's support."

Whether or not UNO has widespread popular support is a matter of debate. Polls taken during the summer, before Chamorro was nominated, suggest that the Sandinistas start the campaign with a substantial advantage.

What is more certain is that the UNO coalition, which includes 14 parties ranging from conservative to Communist, is getting a slow start in what is expected to be a hard-fought campaign.

For years, the opposition blamed most of its problems on persecutions and manipulation by the Sandinistas. But in recent months, UNO acknowledged that the Sandinistas under close scrutiny by election observers from the United Nations, the Organization of American States and other groups, backed off and are mostly leaving the opposition alone.

On several occasions when the opposition has cried foul, the Supreme Elections Council has quickly stepped in. When UNO complained that a portion of one of their television spots had been censored on state-run television, the council

which oversees electoral matters immediately ordered that the spot be re-broadcast in its entirety. The government complied.

At the same time, however, UNO has been plagued by internal bickering and organizational confusion. A fund-raising trip to Miami by Chamorro last month netted a disappointing \$10,000, according to campaign officials.

Sources in Miami also said that on the first day of her trip, Chamorro angered a group of well-connected exiled Nicaraguan businessmen when she canceled a fundraising dinner with them at the last minute. The group had planned dinner to present the candidate with a plan to set up a non-profit corporation that would raise funds and channel them to Chamorro's campaign.

Most analysts agree that the ineffectiveness of UNO's organizational trail could not be worse.

Registration for the Feb. 25 elections is scheduled only for the four Sundays in October. Nicaraguans who do not register during those four days cannot vote.

The Washington Post A-24  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date 13 OCT 89

# Rein on Anti-Noriega Acts Loosened

## *Bush, Senators Agree to Clarify Rules on Intelligence-Gathering*

By David Hoffman  
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush has won tentative agreement from leaders of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence for more leeway in covert intelligence-gathering activities against Panamanian Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, administration and congressional sources said yesterday.

The sources said Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.) and Vice Chairman William S. Cohen (R-Maine) agreed in an Oval Office meeting with Bush Wednesday that last week's failed coup plot against Noriega exposed "ambiguities" in the rules Central Intelligence Agency operatives were following in Panama. Administration officials have said this stemmed in part from the committee's strong protests last year to several Reagan administration initiatives for secretly aiding those who would overthrow Noriega.

Bush and the senators agreed to clarify the rules for intelligence-gathering, and one source said it was "inevitable" that the administration will start to develop a new plan against Noriega that would be more aggressive and supportive of coup plotters but which would avoid direct participation in assassination attempts.

The Senate panel sent several letters outlining objections to the Reagan proposals in July and October 1988. Sources have also said they reacted negatively to a Bush administration suggestion about resuming covert action against Noriega earlier this year.

Bush had publicly urged the Panama Defense Force to overthrow Noriega last spring. But when the coup led by Maj. Moises Giroldi began to unfold last week, the United States responded cautiously, providing only limited assistance. Many in Congress later criticized Bush for failing to follow through on his rhetoric and for lacking contingency plans for military action to aid the insurrection.

In response to questioning from the Senate panel Friday, Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney referred to one of the letters as setting a tone of caution and restrictions on all CIA activities in Panama. Cheney complained that the Senate letter had inhibited the administration when it came to the decision last week about whether to set up communications with the plotters against Noriega.

Some senators reacted with irritation to what they viewed as an effort by Cheney to shift the blame for the failed coup to Congress. On Sunday, Boren clashed in back-to-back televised interviews with national security adviser Brent Scowcroft

over the issue. Bush subsequently summoned Boren and Cohen to the White House to mend fences.

Sources said that last year, Boren objected that the Reagan measures were "half-way" and not fully thought out. Cohen expressed concern that the plans would entangle the CIA with assassins and lead the agency into activities prohibited by the presidential executive order banning any direct or indirect agency involvement in assassination plots.

The sources said Wednesday's meeting with Bush concluded that intelligence operatives in Panama should be given clear instructions on what is prohibited and what is permissible. Any changes would have to be approved by the full committee.

White House spokesman Roman Popadiuk said he would have "no comment" on "a private conversation" Bush had with the senators. Boren was unavailable for comment, but a spokesman noted his statement after the meeting this week that the discussion "focused on intelligence matters," which "will be of great help to our country if we ever confront a crisis like the Panama situation in the future." Cohen said last night, "To the extent that our intelligence personnel feel there are ambiguities under which they operate, the administration and Congress should work to clarify them."



# Crisis-Management Committee Slated By White House After Panama Review

By GERALD F. SEIB

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON—The White House has decided, as a result of an internal review of its activities during the failed coup in Panama, that it automatically will convene a designated crisis-management committee to coordinate its handling of future emergencies.

But despite the collapse of the coup, the White House has concluded that the national-security decision-making system otherwise needs only "fine-tuning," a senior administration official said.

Some other minor changes will be made to improve communications among second-level officials, which administration aides acknowledge were dangerously faulty at some points during the Panama crisis. "Underneath the principal [officials], the lateral communication wasn't too great," said the senior administration official.

For instance, the White House has decided that in future emergencies, officials from such agencies as the State Department, the Pentagon and the Central Intelligence Agency automatically will be summoned to the White House Situation Room to coordinate the flow of information from overseas cables and telephone calls to top Bush aides. White House aides are concerned that different agencies had different versions of information at some points in the Panama crisis.

And the White House has decided that its sophisticated capabilities to conduct teleconferences bringing together numerous officials weren't used enough in the crisis.

The changes called for in the review, conducted by National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, amount to minor tinkering with the Bush administration's decision-making system. Senior aides consider them "procedural and organizational changes," one said. Critics of the administration are bound to argue that the changes don't go far enough to correct flaws in government coordination or to ensure better contingency planning.

Still, they represent a move toward a more structured decision-making system than President Bush has preferred so far. Mr. Bush is more comfortable making decisions in informal gatherings with a handful of his top advisers, rather than in structured meetings with officials from many agencies.

The senior official said the changes indicate that the president needs a "slightly" more structured decision-making system. More importantly, he said, "what we need to do is ensure a little more formalized backup just under him."

Mr. Bush will designate the so-called Deputies Committee, an already existing panel consisting of the second-highest officials at the State Department, Pentagon, Central Intelligence Agency and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to serve as his crisis-management team. The committee's chairman is Robert Gates, who is Mr. Scowcroft's deputy on the National Security Council staff.

The Deputies Committee already meets regularly to handle routine national-security business, and officials previously had considered it the group that would coordinate the administration's handling of emergencies. But the panel never was convened during the Panama crisis.

As a result of the review of that affair, officials said, Mr. Bush is likely to amend the secret, formal directive with which he set up his decision-making system to provide that the Deputies Committee automatically will be called to the White House whenever he declares that a crisis exists. The president also is likely to specify precisely which officials will sit on the committee to handle a crisis.

The White House has concluded that Mr. Bush and other top administration officials made decisions based on correct information during the Panama crisis, largely because of direct phone links between the Oval Office and U.S. military commanders and diplomats in Panama.

But officials say the review found that at lower levels, the bureaucracy had dangerously skewed or incomplete information. At one point, for instance, officials in the State Department and the CIA thought the Panamanian officers leading the coup were offering to turn Panamanian strongman Manuel Noriega over to the U.S. But President Bush and White House aides thought—correctly, the administration now insists—that the rebels refused to turn the leader over.

Administration aides also implied the White House has begun considering new plans for destabilizing Mr. Noriega. "One of the things we'll be looking at are ways to increase his anxiety," a senior official said. The U.S., he added, may "do things to indicate that he is vulnerable and that he needs to keep looking over his shoulder."

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal **A-16**  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date **13 OCT 89**



# Panama: How America Lost Its Will to Act

By Elliott Abrams

**B**EHIND THE latest Panama debacle lies a much deeper problem, one that afflicts nearly every agency and institution of the United States government: We have evolved over the last 15 years a system in which it is much easier to resist action than to act, and in which the penalties for action far exceed those for inaction.

Panama shows how this paralysis has intimidated our national-security agencies. It's the latest chapter in a story that began for the military with Vietnam and for the CIA with the Church committee investigation in 1975-76.

Under Ronald Reagan, and apparently under George Bush, the Joint Chiefs of Staff have opposed the use of force in Panama. They were willing to step aside and let the CIA act, let Treasury undertake an economic blockade or let State run off to the Organization of American States for help.

In the Reagan administration, the JCS fought for this position with every weapon in the Washington arsenal: delay, obfuscation, gross exaggeration of the military threat from the Panama Defense Force, leaks of sensitive White House meetings and plain contempt for the civilians who disagreed. While I, from my post at the State Department, deeply disagreed, I also sympathized: The chiefs knew that plans can easily go astray and did not care to be left holding the bag if the civilians ducked for cover. They rightly assumed that the political aftermath a U.S. intervention might be bloodier than the battle itself.

The CIA's wounds are even fresher and arguably deeper. I was fascinated to read in the press that the first reaction of the CIA agents told of the Panama coup plan by its plotters was "Don't kill Noriega!" Not "Where's your support?" or "How's your operational security?" or "How can we help?" but "Don't kill Noriega." And it is said that that advice may well explain why the plotters did not do so, only to be killed instead by Noriega hours later.



TIM CLARK FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

Now why would skilled CIA field agents respond that way? Perhaps because they were thinking not about Manuel Antonio Noriega, but instead about Joseph Fernandez, the former CIA station chief in Costa Rica. Fernandez is now under indictment by the Iran-contra special prosecutor for allegedly giving illegal aid to the contras—an object lesson in the dangers of sticking your neck out.

Without violating rules of secrecy, it is possible to say that any coup against Noriega ran the risk of resulting in his death; and killing a head of government is a violation of a U.S. executive order, respect for which the Senate Intelligence Committee has repeatedly stressed. So for CIA agents, the gain from a possible successful coup may have seemed microscopic compared with the risk of hearings, investigations ("What did the chief of station know and when did he know it?"), and even criminal indictments were Noriega to lose his life in such a coup. Moreover, the success would be institutional, or national; the indictment would be awfully personal. Result: caution and inaction.

Indeed, this sort of caution—political caution, not professional caution—has hampered CIA activity in Panama over the last year. If intelligence was short on the day of the coup, I for one would blame the guys in the Intelligence Committee rather than those in the

CIA. But the point here is not Panama; instead, it is that once again inaction is made safe and attractive because the potential costs of action are raised so high.

It is in this context that bashing President Bush over Panama is unfair. Whatever the administration's failure of policy or will, and I believe both were ingredients in the fiasco, there is blame to share for literally everyone over Panama, not least the Reagan administration in which I served, and there is a far more serious problem in getting action out of our institutions.

**T**wo examples will help explain what has caused this gridlock. First, the organization of the Congress. Long gone are the days in which Sam Rayburn, Lyndon Johnson and a handful of committee chairmen could make deals that settled business quickly and efficiently. When I arrived on the Hill in the 1970s as a Senate staffer, chairmen such as Richard Russell of the Armed Services Committee and Scoop Jackson (my boss) of the Interior Committee did not simply throw their weight around and intimidate the bureaucrats: They actually wrote legislation and made sure the public's business was completed. The Foreign Relations Committee regularly passed foreign-aid budgets and State Department authorization bills on time.



Bush...

cision-making process," the study said.

As a member of the Tower board, Scowcroft was offended by the discoveries about Marine Lt. Col. Oliver L. North running clandestine operations from the National Security Council staff, several friends said. As a result, Scowcroft has recruited a staff of veteran government officials and academics, including some analysts from the Central Intelligence Agency. The staff has been turned into a kind of government think tank with a greatly diminished role in policy-making, officials said.

For example, Bush's recent U.N. initiative to limit chemical weapons stockpiles was hammered out by State and Defense Department policy-makers, officials said. Although it went through the National Security Council staff, a policy committee chaired by the NSC staff member never met because of concern about leaks. Instead, details were worked out on paper. Then the issue went to the Deputies' Committee, chaired by Gates, then to the full security council chaired by Bush. The president made his final decisions after talking privately with Baker.

"You have two styles of national security officer—one who wants to lead his president, and the other, which I consider the ideal type, who is not attempting to impose his will on policy across the board," said former defense secretary James R. Schlesinger. The latter type, he said, is Scowcroft.

Others said Scowcroft can be enormously influential with Bush, but always in private. Scowcroft persuaded Bush to preserve the Midgetman missile as an option, but they have yet to break the congressional impasse over modernizing the land-

based missile force. Under Bush, Scowcroft has devoted himself largely to East-West issues and arms control, where his interest is deepest, but has not delved into other areas, except as necessary, officials said.

Instead of the ideological zeal that motivated many of Reagan's policy-makers, the Scowcroft team came to the White House to manage things as they are. "This administration is not ideological," said one

of Scowcroft's top assistants. "It is conservative with a small 'c.' It is trying to preserve what is working, not embracing departure for departure's sake. We prefer what is, as opposed to the alternative. We don't want to reinvent the world. This is not an administration that is hell-bent on change."

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*Staff researcher Bruce Brown contributed to this report.*



WASHINGTON POST

OCTOBER 15, 1989

Pg. 1

# On Panama, Bush Characteristically Cautious

## *Scowcroft, Shunning Role of Crisis Manager, Maintained Informality*

By David Hoffman

Washington Post Staff Writer

On the morning of the failed coup attempt against Panamanian Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, President Bush greeted Mexican President Carlos Salinas de Gortari with full pomp and circumstance on the White House South Lawn. Bush and his top advisers "were all out there for 20 minutes at coup time," a White House official recalled.

Though they had received contradictory reports about events in Panama, no one suggested that the president change his schedule. Bush handled the Panama situation in a characteristic manner—informally, with only a small circle of trusted senior advisers, sometimes just talking with them on the telephone.

"For 10 months, they've had this collegial, informal atmosphere," according to an administration source who has worked at close hand with Bush, national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, Secretary of State James A. Baker III and Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney. "They just continued as they had. They took in the facts as they needed them. They shut out the bureaucracy. The flow of information into them should have been more organized. There should have been a central collection point. There was never a point where someone said, 'Let's call a meeting.'"

"That's not the kind of thing you do if it's just the boys," this official added. "You just say, 'Let's go in and talk.'"

The Panama coup attempt turned out to be the first major challenge in 10 months to this informal approach to decision-making. The episode opens a window on how Bush has been making key national se-

curity decisions—a method, based on long-standing personal relationships and a penchant for utmost secrecy, that ran into trouble during and after the risk-filled Panama crisis.

The Panama revolt led to a torrent of criticism from Congress that Bush had failed the plotters against Noriega and had failed to live up to his rhetoric calling for such an insurrection. But according to insiders, Bush and his advisers were interested first in avoiding a serious blunder. Their deeply ingrained caution was stronger than any fear of being criticized for missing an opportunity.

In the critical hours of the failed coup, every one of his senior advisers gave Bush reasons not to intervene. In the last stage of the coup, as the new chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin L. Powell, considered options for using military force, Bush insisted that it would have to be contingent on some kind of request from the plotters, which never came, a participant said.

This caution has become a trademark of Bush's reaction to events around the globe in the opening phase of his presidency, from the lengthy "strategic review" he undertook after the inauguration, to the tumult in China last spring, to the pell-mell reforms in the Soviet Union and the end of communist rule in Poland.

Among Bush's inner circle, Scowcroft has adopted a unique role in setting this course. According to a wide range of sources interviewed for this article, including senior Bush advisers, administration policy-makers and outsiders, Scowcroft spends more time with Bush than any other

senior official, often hours each day in the Oval Office, serving as a sort of personal counselor. When he returns to his own desk, often at the end of the day, paperwork can be piled high, according to other officials. Staff members often complain that Scowcroft has too little time for them, and often fails to stay on top of unfolding events.

Scowcroft has eschewed the function of crisis manager. Nor does he see himself as the whip hand over the Cabinet secretaries or the messenger of every urgent development, according to those who have dealt with him. Rather, said House Armed Services Committee Chairman Les Aspin (D-Wis.), Scowcroft "has established a very close relationship with the president, spends a lot of time with him, and it's very hard to tell where his views begin and Bush's leave off in a lot of issues."

A diminutive, soft-spoken retired Air Force lieutenant general who was a business partner and protege of Henry A. Kissinger and served as President Gerald R. Ford's national security adviser, Scowcroft has sought to create a system that would adapt to Bush's whirlwind operating style, close aides said. This was a goal he took from his service on the Tower special review board, which investigated the Iran-contra affair and concluded that President Ronald Reagan had been too passive in managing national security decisions.

In effect, Scowcroft decided not to do what he expected Bush would do—drive the policy, broker the deals, knock heads together when necessary and call the crisis meetings, officials said. Scowcroft has instead tried to be the wise man in



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**ARMS CONTROL ISSUES**

|                                               |                 |      |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|------|
| GOING BACK TO THE STARTING POINT<br>(Insight) | Jonas Bernstein | B-23 |
|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------|------|

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|                                                                      |                                    |      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| PROLIFERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST<br>(Issues in Science & Technology) | Vice President Dan<br>Quayle et al | B-26 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------|

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|                                                                 |               |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------|
| VERIFICATION AND VISIONS OF A<br>COSTLY UTOPIA (German Tribune) | Thomas Kroter | B-28 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------|

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|                                                                                   |            |      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------|
| U.S., SOVIET CHEMICAL ARMS TALKS<br>IN HIGH GEAR (Chemical & Engineering<br>News) | Lois Ember | B-29 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------|

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**HOTSPOTS**

|                                                                                       |               |      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------|
| CAMBODIA'S WARRING FORCES JOCKEY<br>FOR US RECOGNITION (Christian<br>Science Monitor) | Clayton Jones | B-30 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------|

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|                                                                           |                    |      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------|
| KEY INSTALLATION CAPTURED, CAMBODIAN<br>REBEL REPORTS (Los Angeles Times) | Charles P. Wallace | B-31 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------|

the mix. He decided to leave the day-to-day management of policy to his deputy, Robert M. Gates, and a special high-level group known as the Deputies' Committee, which Scowcroft designed for this purpose and which Gates chairs.

Scowcroft also adapted to Bush's fear of news leaks and his desire to avoid large meetings on sensitive national security issues. "I don't want to see this on the front page tomorrow!" Bush has instructed. These concerns led naturally to the informal network of the closest advisers—"the boys"—that often constitutes the full circle Bush consults before making important decisions.

Asked to sit down for an interview for this article, Scowcroft refused.

The Panama crisis, with its garbled and contradictory messages from Panama City, murky intelligence about the plotters and their intentions, and its proximity to U.S. forces there, posed difficult challenges to Bush's informal, closed system.

From the outset, Bush's advisers urged caution. Defense Secretary Cheney told Bush he was suspicious of the leader of the coup, Maj. Moises Giroldi. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, expressed the chiefs' traditional reluctance to engage U.S. forces with an undefined goal and amid many risks of bloodshed. Secretary of State Baker, officials said, was concerned about the possible legal entanglements with Congress over prohibitions on the United States engaging in assassinations. According to one source, Baker's first reaction on hearing of a possible coup was, "Get the lawyers."

The administration first learned a coup was possible Sunday night, but Bush's advisers decided not to wake him with that news. The president first considered how to respond on Monday; he decided to stay within the options he had been presented, offering limited aid to the plotters by allowing U.S. forces to block two roads, which could be legally justified as protecting U.S. interests under the Panama Canal Treaties, but not a third road. It is not clear whether Bush ever received other information about the coup plotters, such as their request for air cover, or whether the plotters ever received Bush's suggestion that they ask for international assistance.

No member of the inner circle recognized Panama as a potential foreign policy or domestic political crisis for the president, officials said. Cheney went ahead with a visit to Gettysburg with Soviet Defense Minister Dimitri Yazov on the day of the coup. Bush went ahead with the Salinas ceremonies. "Nobody ever said, 'Cancel Salinas, we have a crisis here,'" recalled a participant. "There wasn't a feeling at the time we were being hemmed in by a crisis. There wasn't a crisis atmosphere. The aftermath is when the crisis set in."

W. Clark McFadden II, who served as general counsel to the Tower board, said the Panama coup was a "particularly difficult test" for the national security system. "We didn't find ourselves in a situation that was the result of a lot of staff work or the result of the NSC [National Security Council] system or even a covert operation," he said. "It was not bringing the system to bear. It was an event that leaped out. I get the sense that events dictated this more than policy or individuals."

Kenneth L. Adelman, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in the Reagan administration, noted that Bush and the principal advisers seemed to lack support from subordinates. "What this means is you have a group below the Cabinet level that is monitoring the latest information, going up to the principals for them to feed into the president. They are so spooked by leaks that it's not working," he said.

Scowcroft, too, apparently recognized this problem after the fact. Officials said on Friday that he has instructed the Deputies' Committee to convene and serve as a crisis management team next time.

Within the administration, there is still sharp debate on whether Bush should have had at his disposal better contingency plans in the event of a coup, since he had publicly advocated a revolt last May, urging the Panamanian military "to do everything they can to get Mr. Noriega out of there."

A State Department official defended the lack of an affirmative response to this coup attempt. "How could you plan for a coup when it's not your coup?" the official asked. But others said Bush and Scowcroft should have demanded more so that Bush's rhetoric would be matched by actions.

Those who have known Scowcroft for a long time said his reaction to the Panama episode seemed out of character. In the past, although not known for administrative skills, he has stressed the importance of crisis management, as he did in the Tower board report.

As Ford's national security adviser, Scowcroft played a much different role during the 1975 Mayaguez crisis, when a merchant marine vessel was seized by Cambodia and Ford ordered a military rescue operation. Ford conducted four full-fledged National Security Council meetings, with 12 to 16 participants, during that episode, which lasted three days.

A subsequent study of the Mayaguez crisis concluded that when a president keeps his meetings small in such situations, there is "an added danger of insulating the group—usually composed of high-level generalists—from the very specialists in the Executive Branch and elsewhere who may have specific knowledge of the cultural and political factors operative on the scene."

"A concerted attempt needs to be made to seek this information from area specialists and others and to insure that it is injected into the decision-making process," the study said.

As a member of the Tower board, Scowcroft was offended by the discoveries about Marine Lt. Col. Oliver L. North running clandestine operations from the National Security Council staff, several friends said. As a result, Scowcroft has recruited a staff of veteran government officials and academics, including some analysts from the Central Intelligence Agency. The staff has been turned into a kind of government think tank with a greatly diminished role in policy-making, officials said.

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*Staff researcher Bruce Brown contributed to this report.*

the government blames it on the [U.S.] aggression," complained a University of Panama professor. "When Panama couldn't go to a basketball championship in Venezuela, they blamed it on the aggression. This is the most inept, incompetent crowd. They're just a bunch of uniformed delinquents."

At Centro Medico Paitilla, the private hospital where Noriega and opposition figures have come for treatment, there are shortages of syringes, antibiotics, intravenous fluids, and even plastic gloves. When there are not enough gloves, nurses wash and recycle them.

Fund-raising events have been organized to pay for chemotherapy for cancer patients. Drugs are in such short supply that hospitals rely on the families of patients to track down required drugs at other medical institutions.

"For almost a year, if you go to the public hospital you have to bring your own toilet paper, your own bed-sheets," said a nurse who, like many Panamanians these days, asked not to be named.

Though dentists report a sharp increase in stress-related teeth-grinding, dental clinics in Panama City have been closing early because patient loads have dropped by almost half. Some have simply closed the shutters for good.

"We are surviving on patients that have insurance," said Marcin de Arias, a Panama City physician. "I don't know what everybody else is doing."

More patients are demanding tranquilizers, she said, adding that Panamanians seem to be venting their aggression and frustration on the road with wild driving and a firm hand on the horn.

Taxi drivers with rosaries dangling from rearview mirrors complain bitterly about the loss of tourists from the United States and Europe. Hotel rooms go empty and offices along the thoroughfares are plastered with "for rent" signs. Hotel occupancy has dropped almost 6 percent this year.

"It's very bad," complained Samuel Mora, a taxi driver who picked up just two fares after waiting eight hours at his regular post outside the Hotel Europa.

For Fred Denton, the president of the American Chamber of Commerce, the crisis has followed him home.

"Two years ago I could have sold my house for \$275,000 to \$300,000," said Denton. "Now I'd be lucky if I could sell it for \$175,000. There are no sales now at the low and middle end — unless you want to give it away. Some of the expensive ones are still selling, but they're going to peo-

PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER

OCTOBER 15, 1989

Pg. 1

# Panama in grip of sanctions

## Jobs, money go; Noriega stays

By Doreen Carvajal  
*Regular Staff Writer*

PANAMA CITY, Panama — It is dusk along Avenida Balboa and the weak light glows yellow, shining on the faces of rough-hewn men and the crudely lettered graffiti.

Dozens of men hunch on a curb beneath the upbeat words of a government slogan — "Panama Is Dignity." Most ignore the sentiment; their minds are on free ham sandwiches and heaping plates of macaroni and tuna spooned by Catholic volunteers. A cup of Kool-Aid washes it down.

The line of jobless men, women, and children who come for the charity group's gift of potluck keeps growing, another dismal statistic to add to all the others that add up to La Crisis.

La Crisis is the Panamanian term for the economic struggles that began in 1988, when the United States imposed a series of financial sanctions to dislodge Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega from power. Almost \$56

million in Panamanian funds were frozen; Panama Canal fees of almost \$80 million a year are being withheld.

Hard times have not dislodged the general, but depression has gripped the Panamanian pocketbook and spirit.

By almost every indicator, the country is mired in depression. An economic report prepared by the American Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Panama predicts more of the same: "An economic recovery is not perceived as possible, unless a solution is first achieved in the political arena."

Fernando Watson, a former cook, camps in the narrow streets of Panama City. Carver Williams, a jobless former bank employee, survives on charity meals.

"I can't get a visa out of Panama. There's no jobs here because of the crisis," said Williams. "I haven't had a job for three months."

In a country of palms, beaches and balmy weather, tourism has plunged. Construction has virtually halted. The government lists national unemployment at 16 percent, but analysts believe it is much higher.

Most banks refuse to cash the payroll checks issued by the Panamanian government, which has watched its revenues shrink by 51 percent since 1987.

The crisis has stung high and low — from the biologist who lacks the government funding to conduct research to the vegetable vendor who survives on charity meals and the money from peddling eggplants and coriander.

"When anything goes wrong now,



# Lack of Information Hampered U.S. Response to Panama Coup Attempt

By George C. Wilson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The situation was so murky at the height of the Panama crisis that U.S. observers not only were not sure if the rebels held Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, but had no idea where he might be held in the four-story Panama Defense Force (PDF) headquarters, according to Pentagon officials.

This meant, they said, that any kind of ground assault by U.S. forces on Oct. 3, would have required enough troops to surround the block-long building so no one could escape. Other riflemen would have had to be sent inside to search for Noriega room by room. Defense Department officials said the searchers could have been shot by Noriega loyalists.

Though they learned Sunday night, Oct. 1, that a coup was planned, it was not until 9:15 a.m. on the following Tuesday, when the sound of gunfire issued from the headquarters, that such U.S. military leaders as Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, commander of the Southern Command in Panama, and Gen. Colin L. Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, knew that "something is happening," as one official put it.

Even then, the official added, U.S. military officials could only report to President Bush that "there's a firefight taking place at the [PDF] headquarters building.

Who's fighting whom? We don't know. There's just a firefight."

From the start of the gunfire until about 11 a.m., the official said, Bush advisers could not answer such vital questions as: "Who really was in charge of the PDF headquarters? Was Noriega in PDF headquarters or not? If he was in PDF headquarters, was he out of command and control of PDF? Was he alive? Was he injured? Was he dead? What was Noriega's situation?"

Shortly after 11 a.m., the evidence hardened that Noriega was inside the headquarters. At about the same time, the high-technology U.S. intelligence network in Panama came to life, sending messages about forces loyal to Noriega moving toward the headquarters or going on alert.

The messages, most carrying the urgent "critic" designation, indicated to U.S. military leaders, officials said, that either Noriega or his lieutenants were in communication with forces outside the headquarters and that the rebels were not completely in control of the fluid events.

However, it was also possible that the Panamanian troops on the move were going in to help the rebels, not Noriega.

The 9:15 a.m. to 11 a.m. window on Oct. 3, it appears in retrospect, was a crucial interlude for all sides, officials said.

The United States waited for the situation to clarify; the uncommi-

ted Panamanian soldiers inside the building waited to see if U.S. forces were going to come in to assure a rebel victory; Noriega and his lieutenants waited for help to arrive from the outside.

Bush, Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney, Powell, national security adviser Brent Scowcroft and Thurman had the same hard information about the coup by noon on Tuesday, defense officials said. And all agreed the situation was still too murky to commit U.S. forces to capturing Noriega.

"It was not a question of blocking this road or that road, shooting down an airplane," said one official familiar with the deliberations. Those actions were incidental, he said, to the fundamental question that would confront Bush if he obtained a clear picture of what was happening in Panama: Should U.S. forces be committed?

"The president never thought that there was sufficient information to warrant the introduction of the armed forces of the United States" to capture Noriega, one official said. "It was not that complicated." No amount of policy meetings in Washington on the crisis would have changed that bottom line, the official contended.

The fatal flaw in the coup attempt, defense officials said, was the unwillingness of Maj. Moises Giroldi, leader of the coup, to kill Noriega or hand him over to the United States. "Noriega stared him down," one official asserted.



George C. Wilson

# A Policy Bound to Crash

*Anything that could have gone wrong in Panama would have.*

I can understand why George Bush, a former Navy pilot, concluded that there was more drag than lift in the idea of sending U.S. troops to try to snatch Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega from the rebels. He knows, I trust, that if there is anything that can go wrong in a military operation, it will. And there was too much that could have gone wrong.

For example, the M16 rifle, which our troops would have been carrying, is far from a precision instrument. It is more like a machine gun than a single-shot .22. Just one nervous, teenaged trooper putting his M16 on automatic, called "rock and roll," and pulling the trigger in the crowded room where Noriega was held could have killed Americans, friendly rebels and Noriega—all in a single burst.

The high-risk nature of rescues and abductions is such that the United States, Israel and other nations rehearse them day after day, night after night, before attempting them. Long before U.S. troopers helicoptered into the North Vietnamese prison camp of Son Tay in 1970 in hopes of rescuing Americans, they went into the Florida outback, built a replica of the camp and practiced their every move for every second of the raid. The actual rescue operation failed not from bad execution but from bad intelligence. The American POWs were no longer inside Son Tay.

If U.S. officials are telling it straight, the intelligence was also bad on Panama when military leaders needed precise information the most. This was the

few hours when Noriega was in control, apparently, of at least some but not all of his own soldiers. Bush had to contemplate the possibility of American troopers, who had no Son Tay-type rehearsal, rushing into an unfamiliar room and getting shot in the face by Noriega's supporters.

I have seen from close range dozens of seemingly straightforward military operations get fouled up tragically, so I understand why Bush did not give the go signal for an ad hoc rescue attempt. What I cannot understand is why he believes kidnapping Noriega, no matter how it is done, and putting him on trial in Miami on drug charges would provide more lift than drag for him and for the United States.

To much of the developing world, Noriega is the leader of Panama, elected or not. The giant United States kidnapping this pygmy leader in his own country just would not go down in Latin America or in much of the rest of the world. And once Noriega was in jail in Miami, the public relations problem for Bush and the United States would almost certainly get worse day by day, month by month.

Can't you see Noriega's lawyers dominating the news shows night after night by charging the United States with violating Noriega's rights? For openers, the Justice Department would have had to ask the federal judge to deny Noriega bail so he would not skip back to Panama. This would generate the first of many howls from Noriega. Every day his lawyers

would file new motions and hold new press conferences.

And how much lift could there be for Bush and the country in bringing a parade of drug traffickers with little credibility to Miami to testify against Noriega? Each one, or his lawyer, would no doubt hold a sidewalk press conference to deepen the ugliness of the whole spectacle of a superpower trying to convict in a Miami courtroom a Latin leader it used to employ.

The president of the United States has already convicted Noriega rhetorically, making it easy for Noriega's lawyers to argue that there is no place in the United States where their client could get a fair trial. And when you think of it, they would be right on this, if nothing else.

Also, if well-paid lawyers can do anything, they can delay trials. Thus, the prosecution against Noriega could take years, keeping him on the covers of national magazines, making him even more of a folk hero than Cuba's Castro in the developing world and diverting our government from more important work.

If Noriega is half as bad as George Bush says he is, the Panamanians will find a way to get rid of him sooner or later. Leaving the deed to them is a policy that will fly. Trying to do it for them is a policy that is bound to crash.

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*The writer covers the military for The Washington Post.*

# The gang that wouldn't shoot

A bungled coup in Panama embarrasses Bush

Newsweek

Time

U.S. News & World Report 26

Date 16 Oct 89

**W**hen it comes right down to it, the only real help George Bush was willing to give the Panamanian soldiers who tried to topple Manuel Noriega last week was a couple of roadblocks and a telephone number. Neither helped much. U.S. troops blocked two roads leading to the military headquarters where the dictator was temporarily penned in, but they left a third open, and pro-Noriega forces used it to come to his aid. The telephone number is another story. Call us after you have seized control, two Central Intelligence Agency officers told the coup leader, Maj. Moisés Giraldi Vega. Giraldi never called. And once the shooting began and it became clear that the coup attempt was fizzling, his co-conspirators outside Noriega's military headquarters began frantically dialing Washington on pay phones. What went wrong, they wanted to know.

The botched attempt to unseat Noriega was the toughest test yet of an administration that has shrugged off complaints that it is timid, obsessed with avoiding risks and slow to react. When it was over, the little dictator handed out flowers and kisses to admirers, and administration officials scrambled to explain what went awry. Noriega has trafficked with drug dealers and trampled his political opponents' few feeble efforts to restore democracy, and Bush has called publicly on Panamanians to rise up and topple their dictator. But when a handful of dissident military officers tried that last week, Bush

and his aides were caught unprepared and were unwilling to give Noriega even a modest shove. The result is the administration's worst foreign-policy embarrassment to date. "In principle," says a senior U.S. official with knowledge of the events, "it was a Bay of Pigs. We have been encouraging the Panamanians to actively do something, and then we withdrew our support at the critical time."

**Strange approach.** Such harsh assessments can be tempered only by the confusion that still shrouds the events preceding and during the attempted coup. A little more than two weeks before the action, Major Giraldi's wife Adella contacted U.S. officials in Panama, warning that her husband and other military officials would try to overthrow Noriega. Could they rely on U.S. assistance, Mrs. Giraldi asked. By any standard, it was a strange approach. CIA officials in Panama had dealt with Giraldi only sporadically before. He was an unlikely insurrectionist. In May, 1988, when other officers of the Panama Defense Forces had moved against Noriega, Giraldi, an old friend of the dictator's, had been instrumental in crushing the coup. But on Sunday, October 1, when Giraldi's family sought refuge at Fort Amador, a U.S. base operated jointly with the PDF, the possibility of a coup loomed larger. When the coup did not materialize on Monday, as expected, the administration remained passive. That day, Giraldi did ask the two CIA officers if Bush would authorize troops from the U.S. Southern Command in

Panama to blockade two roads leading to the PDF headquarters. But Bush and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney were busy hosting visiting dignitaries, and senior officials did not even meet to discuss the coming coup attempt.

U.S. officials insist they were still leery of Giraldi. They worried that he did not have enough support in the PDF to pull off the coup, or that it could be a ruse concocted by Noriega to draw American forces into a confrontation. Another reason for caution, military and intelligence officials say, is that Giraldi and his men had no intention, at least initially, of turning Noriega over to the United States. Giraldi told U.S. officials he would attempt a coup only while Noriega was absent. "Maybe they don't have their act together," Cheney remembers thinking. "It would lead a prudent man to say, 'Maybe it's a setup.'" Given Giraldi's

## The White House under fire

**B**ush and his aides said last week's botched coup attempt was the wrong opportunity for the U.S., but they admitted they had made mistakes. Critics from the left and right said the mistakes stemmed from an administration that favored inaction over all other policy options.



**Bush.** Encouragement, then almost no action



**Cheney.** Go slow; it could be a setup



**Baker.** The time wasn't ripe for U.S. action



**Scowcroft.** Did he move too cautiously?

SUSAN STEINKAMP FOR US&W

CHICK HARRITY FOR US&W

TIMOTHY A. MURPHY

DARRYL HEIKES—US&W



pute. Two senior Bush advisers say the rebels warned Gen. Marc Cisneros, the chief of U.S. Army forces in Panama, against using U.S. troops. But according to one knowledgeable senior official, one of the U.S. officers who met with the two rebels at Fort Clayton asked John Maisto, the ranking American diplomat in Panama, whether the CIA or U.S. troops could get Noriega out and help end the coup. Maisto forwarded the request, and the National Security Council decided that the U.S. would take custody of Noriega if the rebels delivered him, or if the CIA could find a way to spirit him out of his own headquarters. Bush and his advisers, however, refused to send U.S. troops less than a mile from their base to get Noriega. The rebels never got an answer.

But the CIA station in Panama is not a paramilitary force. And the Pentagon worried that troops might have to fight their way into PDF headquarters, perhaps suffering casualties, and that ground fire could have brought down a helicopter. A senior military official says the administration was haunted by images of Desert One, the aborted 1980 Iran rescue mission.

The military was reluctant to risk even a single American life without better intelligence. According to a senior U.S. official with knowledge of the events, Giraldi's men told Cisneros that they had Noriega in custody. But a senior U.S. intelligence official believes the rebels were simply enlisting U.S. aid in a sneaky bid to rescue their floundering coup. Administration officials say they would not have committed soldiers in any event because they had no faith in the coup leaders. "You don't

commit U.S. forces into that bloody, murky environment," Cheney said, "when you don't have a clear objective."

"We got him." But the overriding U.S. objective was simply to avoid trouble, and U.S. officials had very little information with which to formulate a bolder plan. At 12:45 p.m., the Pentagon received a cable from Panama that said, in part: "Noriega wounded. Bodyguards killed." Cheney was elated. "We got him," he told Bush. Fifteen minutes later, another cable arrived at the White House. Noriega was fine, it said.

The most controversial question in the whole affair is what the rebels intended to do with Noriega, and it has been framed, absurdly, in a dispute over two simple words. A cable sent to the Pentagon from the Southern Command, headed by Gen. Maxwell Thurman, said the rebels "won't" turn over the dictator. But a message from Maisto to Secretary of State James Baker reported that the rebels "want" to deliver Noriega. Senior administration officials blamed the confusion on Maisto, who, they charge, miscopied notes from a conversation, evidently between Cisneros and the two rebel soldiers. However, one senior U.S. official familiar with the events charged that Maisto was being made a scapegoat and that the entire story about "want" and "won't" was deliberately cobbled together to cover up the administration's bumbling.

The questions fail to address the larger issue, however. Facing its first real trial, one that demanded quick decisions in a dangerous area, the Bush administration was caught unprepared, and its reactions were slowed by poor intelligence. Throughout his political life, George Bush has emphasized the merits of caution, and that approach often serves him well. On some issues, such as dealing with change in the Soviet Union, prudence is well-advised. But to lead, a President has to know when to shift gears and act.

by Brian Duffy with Kenneth T. Walsh  
and Peter Cary in Washington

JOHN VAN BEEKUM FOR USNEWS



**Sununu.** Will review the mistakes made

TIMOTHY A. MURPHY



**Webster.** The spy chief was missing in action

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE



**Thurman.** No fighting allowed by U.S. troops

CHARLIE ARCHAMBAULT FOR USNEWS



**Boren.** An obligation to support the rebels

TIMOTHY A. MURPHY



**Helms.** A pitiful showing by Keystone Kops

## 10:30 A.M. NEWS UPDATE

STOCK MARKET (Headline News Ticker) -- The Dow Jones Industrial Average rebounded from a loss of 64 points at 10:10 to gain 9.63 points at 10:27 a.m. The volume was very heavy at 132,000,000 shares traded.

(New York/Reuter) -- Wall Street stocks shed more than 60 points in early trading Monday, as selling gathered steam after the plunge of 190 points on Friday. Shortly after 10 a.m. EDT, the Dow was down 61 points at 2,508.40. Falling issues outpaced [gainers] by a more than 10-1 ratio on heavy volume of 96 million shares.

TOKYO STOCK MARKET (Tokyo/Reuter) -- The Tokyo stock market fell to a steep loss Monday but managed to avoid the massive losses that hit Wall Street Friday. Other Asian markets fell, with stocks down sharply in Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong. In Tokyo...the key 225-share Nikkei index ended down 647.33 points, or 1.84 percent, to 34,501.76.... "It wasn't fun, but there was more calm than panic," one broker said.

EUROPEAN STOCK MARKET (London/Reuter) -- European stocks fell Monday in hectic trading to match a 7 percent drop in New York Friday but dealers were waiting to see if Wall Street's opening brought a fresh selling wave.... The key London Financial Times/London Stock Exchange index of 100 leading stocks opened 157.1 points down, an even bigger drop than the 132-point fall in the October 1987 stock market crash.... "It all rests on Wall Street now and I'm taking no bets on that," said one dealer.

U.S. STOCK EXCHANGE PRESIDENT (New York/Reuter) -- American Stock Exchange President Kenneth Liebler said Monday that trading in Tokyo and London showed that markets were not headed toward a repeat of the crash two years ago. "It's not nearly as bad as what we saw during the Black Monday experience two years ago," Liebler said in an interview on CBS "This Morning", referring to stock market activity Monday in Tokyo and London. "The modest drop in Tokyo is a very positive sign," he said.... He said a decision by the Federal Reserve and other institutions to intervene with cash if necessary would help stave off another Black Monday by preventing a repeat liquidity crisis.

WEBSTER/SCOWCROFT (AP) -- President Bush is "fully satisfied" with CIA Director Webster and the intelligence agency's performance during the attempted coup in Panama, White House national security adviser Scowcroft said Monday. "Rumors of White House displeasure are totally false," Scowcroft said in a written statement responding to a published report.... "The President is fully satisfied with the performance of the intelligence community, including during the Panama episode," Scowcroft's statement said. "The President strongly supports Director Webster."



Donaldson: How much [of a role] does psychology play?...

Kudlow: ...If you want to talk about psychology, one thing that continues to worry me is this monetary warfare between the Treasury Department and the Federal Reserve Board, where the Treasury, for whatever its poorly thought-out motivations, keeps bashing the dollar in exchange markets, and the Fed, with greater wisdom, keeps stabilizing the dollar. If we could square that loop, and then move ahead to a capital gains reduction, I think the stock market is going to resume its long-term rise.

Brinkley: ...What would you like [the Senate] to do to carry on a healthy economy in this country?...

Rogers: That's a very simple answer: Cut capital gains tax; do everything you can to encourage long-term investment in America. Stop taxing savings, stop taxing dividends, and cut the budget deficit.

Kudlow: I would cut the capital gains tax and I would also enforce Gramm-Rudman. I think a Gramm-Rudman sequester would be far better than this current budget deal. And then I think Gramm-Rudman, which has served some useful purpose, should be patched up with respect to its imperfections, and we should move ahead to gradual, but steady, deficit reduction in the 1990s.

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Guests: Sens. Bentsen and Rudman.

Brinkley: You have heard the two Wall Street experts before you.... What do you say?

Bentsen: I listened to Mr. Kudlow talk about blaming -- not moving forward on the capital gains for the 190-point drop. I can't help but remember when he was also the principle advisor for David Stockman at OMB when they missed by tens of billions of dollars on their estimates....

Rudman: I really think that your other guest had it more on the mark.... The leveraged buy-outs have concerned all of us in Congress, outside of Congress -- so much debt in American corporation today. The fact that we have not done as much on the deficit as a general environment, the background music the economy is playing against, has not helped either. But, contrary to what people think, we have been making progress in that area, including this year.

Will: ... Good old Rudman is in favor of taking the Social Security off budget.

Rudman: That's right.

Will: You favor it. What are the chances of doing this?

Rudman: I think the chances are very good.... We would like to phase out the Social Security contribution over the next three years.... Gramm-Rudman-Hollings has not worked perfectly, in fact, it's worked imperfectly. But the fact is that no one who follows the budget process can disagree with the basic fact that federal spending has been cut roughly one-third in terms of growth since 1985. We have done that....

-more-

Will: A rising economy certainly deserves a lot of credit for having done that -- not your law.

Rudman: ...If that law were not in place, federal spending would be higher today and deficits would be higher today than they were yesterday.

Donaldson: You're right.

Bentsen: ...I must say, in defense of my friend here, that I think the Gramm-Rudman has helped. It's obviously imperfect; you had a lot of creative accounting. But the biggest problem is that you see this Administration not really cutting that deficit enough, and then you see the Congress not willing to reach beyond those cuts.

Donaldson: Sixteen billion dollars on paper of cuts, but it will take about a month for it to really bite. Before that month is over, will you (a) have a budget deal which will obviate the cuts, or (b) change your law?

Rudman: ...If the Senate clean reconciliation bill is adopted by the House and we agree to it, we will truly have deficit reduction. If we now tinker, as we were up until Friday night, then we won't. And I will tell you this much -- that if a sequester falls, in my view, it might be the best thing in the world for this country to understand that there's no such thing as a free lunch. I hope we can fix it; I hope the House goes along with it. But if we don't, I'd rather save a real \$16 billion than save nothing at all -- that's my view.

Donaldson: For eight years, we've taught there was a free lunch....

Brinkley: Who's buying lunch -- the Japanese?

Rudman: No, our grandchildren are buying lunch.

Bentsen: I think you're going to see sequester take effect, but I think it will be softened, and then it will be turned around within three or four weeks....

Donaldson: Tell me what you think is going to happen on Monday....

Bentsen: ...Remember that there are certainly basic differences between 1987 and now. And the melt-down procedures to protect against melt-down is much more sophisticated than it was.... The underlying economic factors are relatively stable....

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Guest: Richard Darman.

Donaldson: Let's talk about this grand deal you're going to have to cut in the next two or three weeks if we're not going to actually have this sequestering and cutting of money.

Darman: ...I think that it may be that sequester is the best available alternative. At least it's real.... This time, if it goes into effect, I think it would be good if people would live with it and say, don't restore the cuts.

Donaldson: ...The President would not sign the bill if it contained any new taxes or new tax increases?



Darman: No. He's been extremely clear on that if we mean new taxes.

Will: Is there any thought that the best thing you could do is to veto it?

Darman: Yes, absolutely.... If a bad bill comes to the President, I feel certain it will be vetoed.... There are certain provisions in the House bill that relate to pensions which are extremely objectionable to the Administration. There are some environmental provisions that are problematic. There are some child care provisions that are troublesome. There is a long list.... We've provided it to Congress.

Donaldson: ...Look what you did to the savings-and-loan bailout. That was sort of a fraud, wasn't it -- setting up a corporation to put it off the budget so that, in fact, higher interest will be paid by the taxpayers.

Darman: No, I don't think so.... The fact is...it's on-budget -- \$20 billion of it in fiscal year 1989....

Donaldson: Isn't it a fact that taxpayers will pay more in interest than if they just paid it out of general revenues?

Darman: No, not necessarily. But it's a technical argument.... What would have happened had you done it otherwise? What would have happened to interest rates? If they would have been higher than it would have been the wrong way to go.

Will: Would that be a reason for vetoing the bill -- the fact that it is fraudulent? I mean, if you did that stuff in the private sector, you'd go to prison for that kind of stuff, wouldn't you?

Darman: Fraud would be a good reason, but --

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DISCUSSION -- Ellen Goodman joins.

Brinkley: Abortion.... It does seem now that changes are taking place.... What do you make of it?

Donaldson: ...What we've seen in the last several years is the anti-abortion forces having the field all to themselves.... Martinez getting his ears pinned back, and what's happening in Florida has been very salutary. I think now legislators can stand up if they believe in pro-choice and vote that way without fearing that somehow they're going to have their head cut off.

Goodman: Prior to the Webster decision, a lot of legislators who didn't feel strongly about this issue either way felt, well, if I have to throw a vote, I'm safer off throwing this vote in the direction of pro-life, and now that's shifted.

Will: Now, that is exactly the box that President Bush finds himself in. He gave the not altogether lucid explanation of his views on abortion, his latest version of his views on abortion, in his press conference this week, where he said, I'm not going to change my position any, I hope there is flexibility to deal with the House and the language coming out of Congress, and, as he says about most things, I don't want any conflict. He can't have it all three ways.

-more-

Donaldson: That was an extraordinary press conference. I didn't see it, unfortunately. I read the transcript; having read the transcript I don't think I want to see it. But here seems to be a key quote. Question: Are you unalterably opposed, or is there some room for compromise? George Bush, the President of the United States is pleased to answer. Answer: Yes, I'm opposed. And I hope we'll see what we can do in terms of the conference committee to see if there is room for flexibility.

Goodman: That's been the problem with his position all along. It's never rung true.... The larger symbolic notion behind that is that George Bush doesn't know where to go on this. He doesn't want to come out looking as if he's attacking the most vulnerable women, and he's going with the polls again, which is the other thing --

Donaldson: In 1980, George Bush ran for the presidency and he favored abortion in some limited circumstances. Then he became Mr. Reagan's vice presidential nominee and he discovered that he was opposed to abortion completely. Now there's a little pressure and he may decide that, after all, he may not be opposed completely. And this is leadership?

Will: It's just one of the accidents of politics that this comes in the aftermath of the Panama episode. It raises the general feeling that the Administration doesn't mean what it says....

Donaldson: As the leader of the Bush-bashers in Washington, you wrote another column saying this was an unserious presidency.

Will: I think there are grounds for wondering what it is he and his Administration care deeply about. Where do they want to dig their heels in? ...The question is, does this President want to go down to honorable defeat every now and then, or does he want to split every difference.

Goodman: ...What we have is maybe the end of the honeymoon, but I think of it more as the end of the campaign.

Donaldson: I haven't been the chief Bush-basher in town, but I have often thought that George Bush's problem was to overcome that view that he was a wimp. I thought he had done it to some extent, although probably by means that were not completely honorable during the campaign. But something happened this past week.... Sen. Boren came from Capitol Hill to say publicly that he and his committee members had given the Administration everything they'd asked for in the way of authority to deal with Noriega. He was followed immediately by Gen. Scowcroft...who said that just wasn't true.... Did Mr. Bush back up Gen. Scowcroft? Ehh, in a way through his spokesman. And then he invited Senators Boren and Cohen down to the White House to be stroked and to be told, oh, that's all right. Now I think that humiliates Gen. Scowcroft. I think the President ought to have said, Scowcroft's my man, he told the truth, you haven't given me everything I wanted, and I want it....

Will: There is a pattern here. That is, this President suffered a really quite stunning, unprecedented rebuff, when his nominee to be secretary of defense was rejected.... When it was over, the President of the United States sat down with pen and ink...and he wrote Weyrich [phonetic] a note saying, hey, no hard feelings. Well, maybe there ought to be some hard feelings there. That is leadership.... What are these people serious about? ....They just cave too often.



The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date API 16 OCT 89

## Scowcroft Says Bush Fully Satisfied with CIA Chief's Performance

By TOM RAUM

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) - President Bush is ``fully satisfied'' with CIA Director William H. Webster and the intelligence agency's performance during the attempted coup in Panama, White House national security adviser Brent Scowcroft said today.

Rumors of White House displeasure are totally false," Scowcroft said in a written statement responding to a published report.

The Washington Post, in today's editions, reported that unidentified "senior officials" in the Bush administration were frustrated with Webster's low-profile performance and had begun talk of replacing him with a more active player.

The Post quoted White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu as saying during a recent staff meeting that he had learned more about the attempted coup from watching Cable News Network than from Webster's Central Intelligence Agency.

Webster was out of the country during the unsuccessful Panamanian coup attempt earlier this month and no CIA representative was present as Bush met throughout the day of the coup with other advisers. Administration officials have said they kept in touch with the CIA on developments.

Deputy White House press secretary Roman Popadiuk said Scowcroft issued the statement in an effort to quell speculation that Webster might be on his way out.

"The president is fully satisfied with the performance of the intelligence community, including during the Panama episode," Scowcroft's statement said. "The president strongly supports Director Webster."

Popadiuk said a complete administration review of the failed coup and the U.S. response to it "is just about over."

The White House has been criticized by members of Congress for not having a more organized flow of information during the Oct. 3 coup. Some members have criticized Bush for not doing more to assist those seeking to overthrow Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega.

Bush last Friday defended U.S. caution, telling a news conference that "I have not seen any fact in all the reports that have come out that would make me have done something different."

Webster was the head of the FBI from 1978 to 1987, when then-President Reagan moved him to the CIA post after the Iran-contra affair. Bush, a former CIA chief himself, decided to retain him in that job.

Popadiuk declined to say whether Bush's support for Webster carried any commitment on how long Webster would remain in that job.

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_  
UPI  
Date 16 OCT 89

Spokesman says Bush confident in CIA director

WASHINGTON (UPI) A White House spokesman, rejecting reports that CIA Director William Webster is headed out of office, said Monday that President Bush has "full confidence" in the CIA leader.

The Washington Post reported Monday that senior Bush administration officials are frustrated by Webster's performance and have begun to talk about possibly replacing him with someone who can advise the president more actively.

The newspaper quoted White House chief of staff John Sununu as saying "he learned more about the attempted coup in Panama from watching Cable News Network than from Webster's Central Intelligence Agency."

Webster was out of the United States at the time of the attempted Panamanian coup earlier this month. His deputy was not invited to the Oval Office meetings on Oct. 3, when the attempted overthrow was under way. The meetings, however, were attended by national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, Secretary of State James Baker, Defense Secretary Dick Cheney and Gen. Colin Power, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"We were getting reports from the CIA," said White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater, who told reporters "the president has full confidence in Webster."

"Absolutely not," said another aide when asked whether Webster would be replaced as the CIA chief.

There have been recurring reports that Webster is not a part of Bush's inner circle and that he has not provided the intelligence needed by the White House.

Webster, a former FBI director, is a holdover from the Reagan administration.

The Post quoted a senior adviser as saying that "there is a sense that the institution (CIA) is not being energetically or effectively led." Webster was faulted by Bush aides for an alleged "lax" day-to-day CIA operation and failure to provide a broad strategic overview.

The newspaper said Webster "enjoys the strong support" of Sen. David Boren, D-Okla., chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

The Post quoted officials as saying Webster had worked diligently to re-establish confidence in the CIA in Congress in the aftermath of the Iran-Contra scandal.



# CIA Director Under Fire

## Bush Aides See Webster as Ineffective

By Ann Devroy  
and David B. Ottaway  
Washington Post Staff Writers

Senior officials in the Bush administration are expressing increasing frustration with the performance of CIA Director William H. Webster and have begun to talk about possibly replacing him with someone who can play a more active role as an intelligence adviser to the president.

White House Chief of Staff John H. Sununu quipped at a recent staff meeting that he had learned more about the attempted coup in Panama from watching Cable News Network than from Webster's Central Intelligence Agency. Webster was out of the country during the coup attempt, and no CIA official attended White House meetings where it was discussed, according to a Senate intelligence committee source.

The White House "is playing without a full deck of advisers," according to another official critical of Webster.

When Webster moved from the Federal Bureau of Investigation to the CIA in the wake of embarrassing Iran-contra affair disclosures, he sought to play down the director's role, especially in policy discussions, and emphasize good relations with Congress, according to numerous officials. This approach appears not to suit many in the new

administration, which decided to keep Webster on at the CIA as a symbol of continuity.

One knowledgeable source said Webster is considered "too captive of Congress," too lax in day-to-day management of intelligence and lacking a broad strategic overview of foreign policy and the intelligence community's role.

"There is a sense that the institution [the CIA] is not being very energetically or effectively led. . . . There is unhappiness with the intelligence being provided overall and with the conclusions based on that intelligence," said one senior

official. The same source added that Webster "is not close to Bush. He's not close to [Secretary of State James A.] Baker. He's not close to [national security adviser Brent] Scowcroft. There's no reason for him to be treated with any great weight."

Asked if Webster's job were in jeopardy, a senior official said, "He was always considered a temporary. I gave him a year to 18 months [after Bush was inaugurated]. But if you guys start writing Bush is unhappy with him, the president will kiss both his cheeks in the Rose Garden and keep him for seven more years." Neither this official nor any of the others interviewed for this article indicated that Webster's departure from the CIA is imminent.

A CIA spokesman said Friday that Webster had seen President Bush three or four times last week and that Bush had shown no sign of displeasure with his performance. Webster had no comment on the criticisms made by these administration officials. The critics all declined to be identified by name or position. They include high-ranking officials.

Webster enjoys the strong support of Sen. David L. Boren (D-Okla.), chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Boren told The Washington Post Sept. 26 that he gives the CIA director "the highest possible marks in the personal integrity, character and rule-of-law category . . . perhaps the highest of any the agency has ever had." Through an aide, Boren said last week that his feelings about Webster had not changed.

Webster has worked diligently, according to Boren and others, to reestablish congressional confidence in the agency and its working relations with Congress, which were badly damaged by the Iran-contra affair. That was his principal mandate when President Ronald Reagan moved him to the CIA in 1987.

Boren said he believed Bush "did absolutely the right thing" in keeping Webster on as CIA director. "It was the right signal to send that we're not going to politicize the agency," he said.

The Washington Post **A-1**  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date **16 OCT 89**

But other members of the congressional intelligence committees have noted Webster's lack of knowledge about many issues the agency has to deal with and questioned his commitment to the job. Boren, too, noted that Webster "has his critics as well as his supporters."

Webster's good relations with Boren are a source of unease among some administration colleagues. "There is some feeling here that Webster does not remember who he works for. He works for the president," said one official. Another said there were fears in the administration that Webster "is too quick to tell the committees everything he knows even before he's asked."

The most vocal critics of Webster's performance have been supporters of the Afghan resistance in the Senate and House. They hold him responsible for a failure to get U.S. arms to the guerrilla rebels last spring when they were planning a major offensive against the Soviet-backed Kabul government.

Congressmen who met with Webster in August to discuss the shortcomings of the Afghan operation found that he was not well-informed on its details and unaware

of many of the problems they brought up with him. They blamed him for placing a CIA analyst, rather than someone from the opera-

tions division of the agency, in charge of the whole operation.

One official said that until he decided to keep Webster for the sake of continuity, Bush's initial candidate for the post was James Lilley, current ambassador to China. Lilley, a career CIA officer, served as Bush's chief intelligence official when Bush was the chief U.S. diplomatic repre-

**CONTINUED**

sentative in Beijing in the mid-1970s. Officials now mention Lilley as a possible successor to Webster.

The lack of any representative of the CIA during last week's deliberations on Panama, officials said, was not surprising since Webster is not one of the key foreign-policy advisers on whom Bush relies.

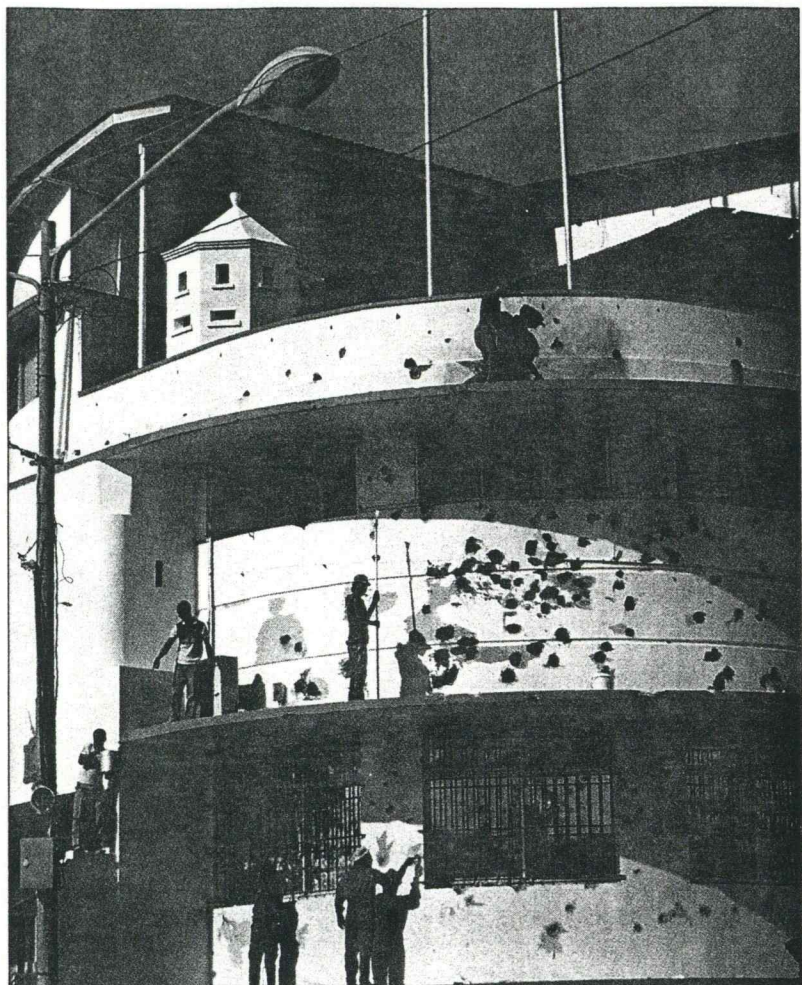
"He's just not in that group, never has been and never will be," said one Bush aide, referring to the fact that unlike Webster, Baker, Scowcroft and Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney have known and worked with Bush for decades.

Some Bush presidential aides have suggested that Bush is relying on Robert M. Gates, Scowcroft's deputy, as his chief intelligence adviser and is, in effect, "working around" Webster. Gates was the number two at the CIA during the final years of William J. Casey's directorship and was nominated to replace Casey but withdrew after the Senate made clear to Reagan that Gates would not be confirmed because of questions about his role in the Iran-contra affair.



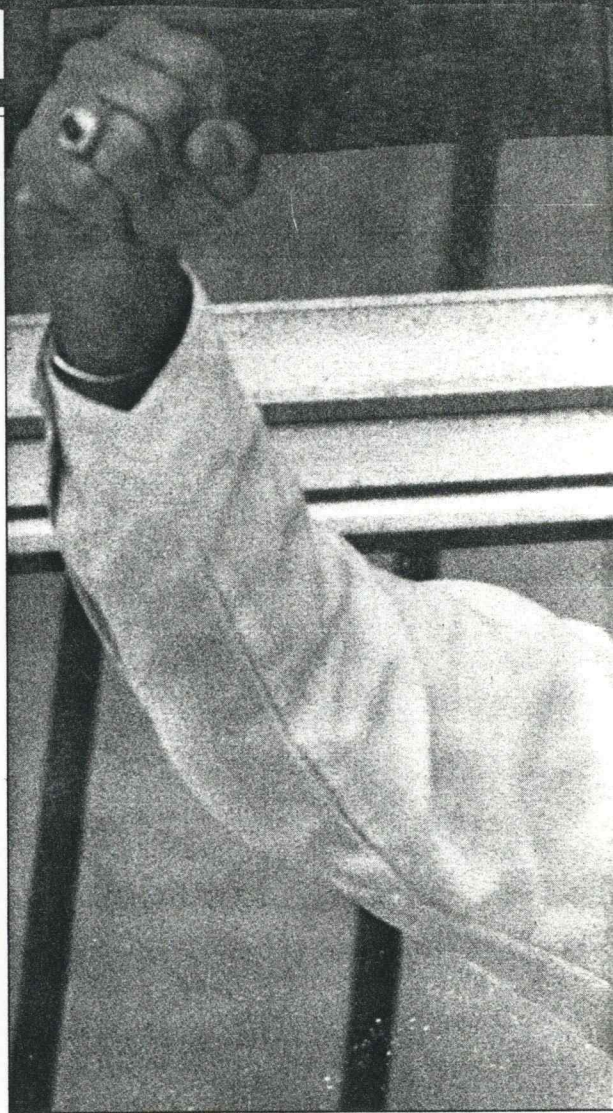
**WILLIAM H. WEBSTER**  
... called "too captive of Congress"





JASON BLEIBTREU—SIGMA

Close calls and quick repairs: Noriega gestures in triumph after surviving a four-hour siege, workers erase the damage



# Amateur Hour

A coup attempt in Panama fails to topple Noriega, and the administration stands accused of reluctance to help the rebels out when they needed it

**C**onfident, unscathed and maddeningly still in power, Panama's Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega last week shook off a bloody coup attempt by junior officers and came out swinging. "The gringo piranhas want to do away with me," the dictator crowed to reporters after it was over. The attempted overthrow—launched in a hail of gunfire at about 8 a.m. Tuesday by a Panamanian major and more than 100 rebel soldiers—was over in just five hours, a failure of planning, coordination and ultimately of nerve. At the height of the drama, coup leader Maj. Moisés Giroldi Vega

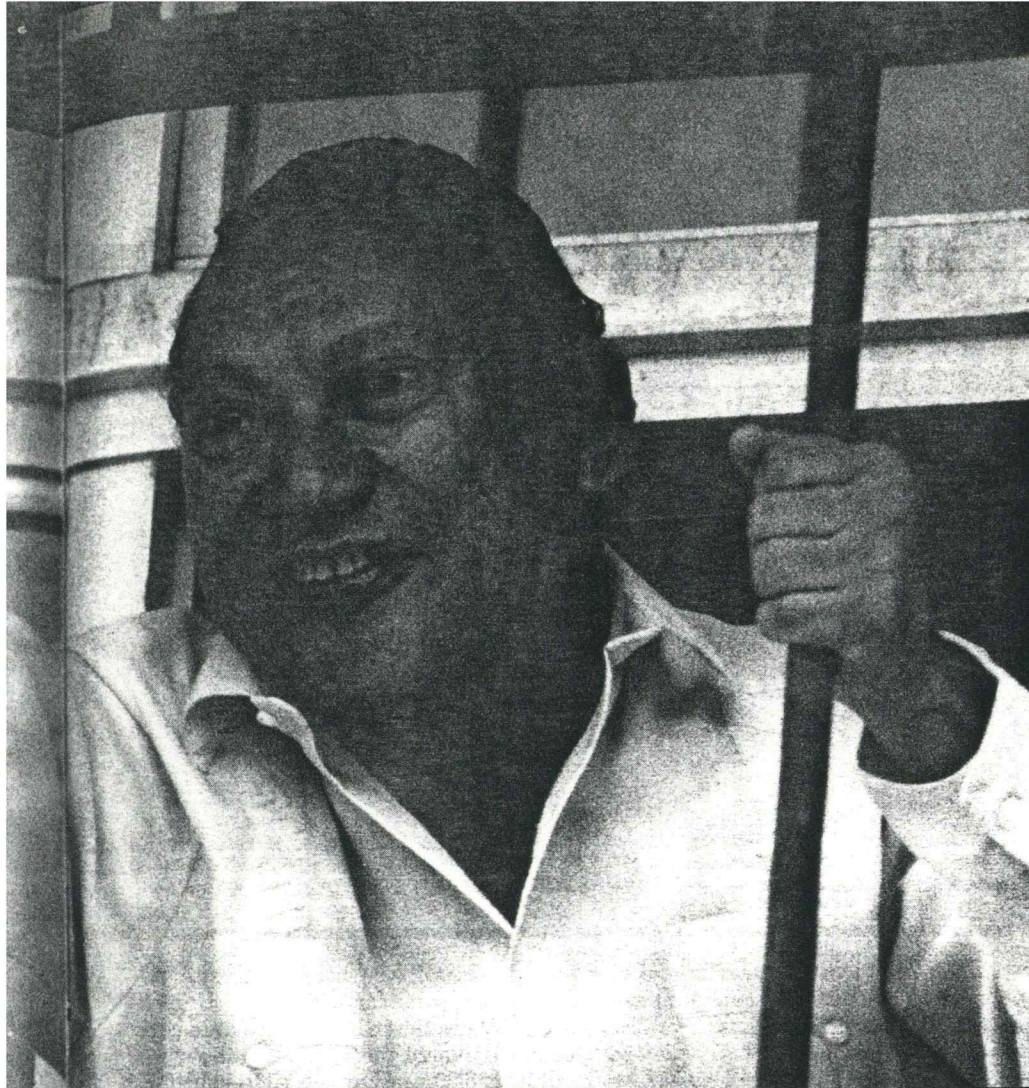
had Noriega cornered but ultimately could not spring the trap. By midafternoon Tuesday everything was over but the backlash. But the backlash reached all the way to Washington, as evidence of U.S. involvement grew. George Bush, it seemed, was halfway in and halfway out. As a result, he got the worst of both sides: a loss of face in a world where that matters, and Noriega still in power.

Noriega was not Bush's problem to begin with: the dictator has been a constant rebuke to Washington ever since his 1988 indictment in the United States on charges of drug trafficking, money laundering and

racketeering. These made him a target of intense political pressure from Washington. He has survived economic sanctions, diplomatic isolation, American funding of opposition leaders and even a previous coup attempt, in March of last year. From each episode he has emerged gloating. Now it is the Bush administration's turn to be tested by fire, and the first results are not comforting.

From the White House to the Pentagon, the management of last week's crisis smacked of inexperience and unpreparedness. The administration argued that the circumstances weren't right for a more ag-





BETH CRUZ—REUTER

gressive U.S. military role—indeed, direct intervention would have risked American lives. But it was also clear that Washington had neither the information nor the plans to make that critical decision. Some problem areas:

■ **Intelligence:** Despite Bush's declaration after last May's stolen election that the Panama Defense Forces should "do everything they can to get Mr. Noriega out of there," U.S. intelligence had not cultivated PDF sources. This created delays in evaluating overtures from coup leader Girolodi. And for several crucial hours last week, Washington was unaware of Noriega's actual whereabouts.

■ **Communications:** Information flowed to Washington in ragtag fashion. A message to the Pentagon that the rebels "won't" turn Noriega over became, in the version to the State Department and the Central Intelligence Agency, that they "want" the United States to

take him. Officials lamely called this a product of poor penmanship.

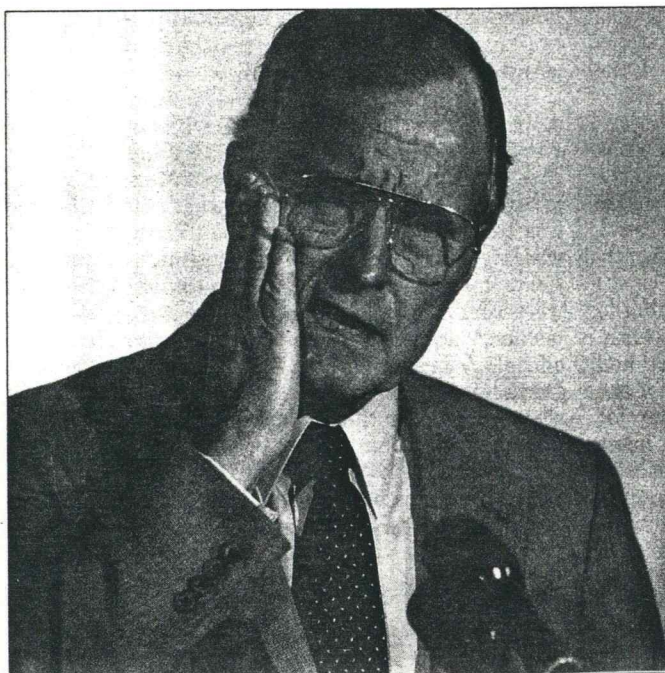
■ **Planning:** The absence of serious contingency thinking was evident in the uncertain way the administration responded to its own growing awareness that a coup attempt was imminent. For about a month, congressional and Pentagon sources told NEWSWEEK, U.S. officials have been hear-

ing reports of renewed discontent among junior officers of the PDF. The Girolodi group's intentions were communicated to CIA officers no later than Sunday, Oct. 1. Not until 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday—by which time the rebellion was already sputtering—was there a full top-level meeting, including the president, Secretary of State James Baker, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, national-security adviser **Brent Scowcroft** and his deputy Robert Gates, White House chief of staff John Sununu and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Colin Powell. Even then, the session did not include CIA Director William Webster. "Occasionally we have to foresee [that] our policy of encouraging a coup might succeed," said Sen. Sam Nunn, chairman of the Armed Services Committee. "We ought to be prepared."

■ **Credibility:** The week gave the administration its first real experience with damage control, and it did not go well. Tuesday, State Department spokesman Richard Boucher told the press: "The U.S. is not involved in these events." The Bush administration, said White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, was never directly informed of a coup plot. "If we were," he told reporters, "the president doesn't know about it, the secretary of State doesn't know about it and the secretary of Defense doesn't know about it." In fact, they all knew. Bush, Baker and Cheney learned of the planned overthrow 29 hours before the first shot was fired. Girolodi told CIA officials in Panama City Sunday night, and Cheney himself confirmed Friday that the administration had been immediately informed.

When Girolodi met with the CIA operatives in Panama City he told them the coup would be launched Monday. He added two requests: sanctuary for his family in the U.S. Embassy and deployment of U.S. troops to block two roads. Monday came and went without any unusual troop move-

ments, and in Washington, the delay gave administration officials time to think and fret. Since Girolodi had played a critical role in the quashing of a coup attempt against Noriega in 1988 (winning himself a promotion from captain to major in the process), American officials worried that he was an unlikely rebel. They considered the possibility that Noriega, desperate to win points at home by proving American intervention in Panama's internal affairs, was laying a clever trap using Girolodi as his bait. Still, according to a senior Bush administration official, the major was told that the United States would lend tactical sup-



**Damage control: George Bush**  
WIN McNAMEE—SIPA



# The Desperate Hours: How the Coup Failed



*Distractions: Bush meeting with President Salinas of Mexico*

WALLY McNAMEE—NEWSWEEK

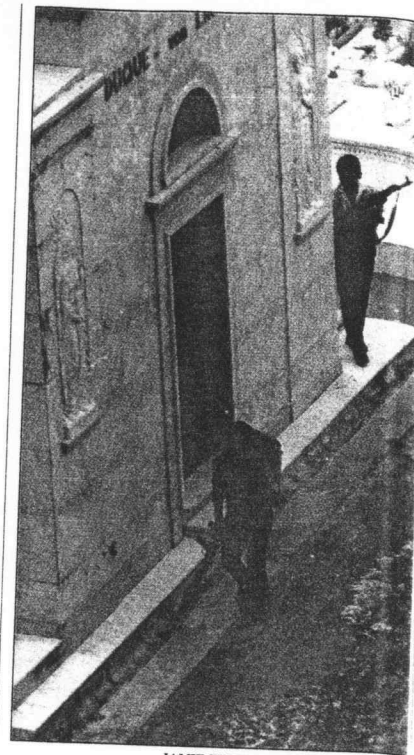
**R**ebel officers of the Panama Defense Forces began last week's attempt to overthrow Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega in confidence of American support. The chronology below (in local time, corresponding to U.S. Central Daylight Time) suggests that the American commitment was both halting and ambivalent.

## 7:50 AM

Noriega enters the Panamanian military headquarters, the *comandancia*, for a regular meeting with his general staff. On this cue, rebel troops under the command of Maj. Moisés Giroldi Vega move in from buildings occupied across the street, shooting their way toward Noriega's inner offices.

## 8:20 AM

Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, the newly installed commander in chief of the U.S. Southern Command, orders American bases sealed. Troops in full battle dress move out, prepared to block



JAMIE FERNANDEZ—AP

*Nerves: Patrol near the PDF*

port if the rebels met two conditions. They would have to make their request public. And they would have to commit themselves to establishing a democratic regime. When Giroldi kept his silence on both counts, seeds of doubt began sprouting in Washington.

Tuesday morning the coup began auspiciously, and on schedule. Shortly before 8 a.m., General Noriega's blue, armor-plated Mercedes Benz rolled into the Panama Defense Forces' headquarters, the *comandancia*, delivering the general to a regular meeting with his top staff. Unbeknownst to him, across the street, occupying the compound's G-2 military intelligence headquarters and the G-1 military personnel buildings, rebel troops from the Urraca guard battalion and some members of the "Doberman" riot police lay in wait, following orders issued by Giroldi. Once Noriega was in place, they attacked. Under the cover of mortars and machine-gun fire, the rebels entered the *comandancia*. Outside the headquarters, in a neighborhood heavily populated with Noriega supporters, other armed rebels stood guard.

**Permission to fire:** Within minutes after the start of the rebel attack, Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, who just 72 hours before had taken over as commander in chief of the Southern Command, gave the order for U.S. troops to seal off all U.S. military bases and prepare to block two main roads leading from Panamanian bases to the *comandancia* (map, page 29). American soldiers,

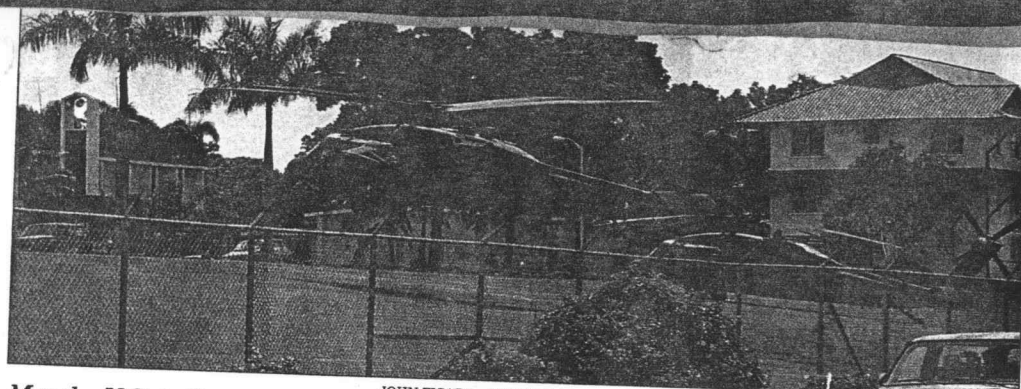
dressed for combat and armed with live ammunition and permission to fire if threatened, took up positions near the gates of Fort Amador, a facility divided between U.S. forces and Noriega's Fifth Company. This effectively blocked the road into the city. A couple of miles away, more troops parked near the Bridge of the Americas on the Pan-American Highway, the access route for the Seventh Company, a well-trained detachment of Noriega loyalists known as the *Machos del Monte*, based at Río Hato, about an hour's drive west of the capital. With these choke points secured and the rebels confident of the backing of key figures in the Panama Defense Forces' infantry units, the riot police, palace guard and some special forces, the coup seemed to be going well enough.

In Washington, where the president was distracted by scheduled meetings with Soviet Defense Minister Dmitry T. Yazov and President Carlos Salinas de Gortari of Mexico, it was a different story altogether. All was confusion and missed signals. There was lingering doubt of Giroldi's true intentions. It was "a situation where messages were coming in a fast and fragmentary fashion," according to one White House official. A critical breakdown in intelligence left U.S. officials doubting that Noriega was even in the *comandancia*. Their information put him at Fort Amador. But their information was wrong. Only later, when U.S. officials in Panama intercepted Noriega's frantic calls from his besieged

block in the military headquarters to his supporters around Panama, did the United States realize that Giroldi had indeed cornered his quarry.

Still, at 8:20 a.m. Panama time—about a half hour after the initial assault—all systems appeared to be "go" as far as the rebels were concerned. Soon General Thurmond had all American troops in Panama on Delta Alert, their highest state of readiness. "We had a plan based on our requirements and their requirements," said a U.S. military official in Panama, "and that was executed flawlessly." While Giroldi and his men kept Noriega pinned down at the military headquarters, U.S. helicopters roared over the capital. "They came in at a very low level, very fast," an American witness said later. "It was not like an exercise." It was in fact an attempt at intimidation. Gunning their engines and racing across the horizon, American pilots could flex U.S. muscle without actually taking hostile action.

**No bluff:** Meanwhile, inside the *comandancia*, Noriega was pinned down but far from surrender. Reportedly shouting at the rebels from a bunkerlike position inside his office, he warned the rebels that loyal troops were on their way. It was no bluff. Loyalists were descending on the headquarters from the east. Though American detachments had blocked roads to the south and west of the military compound, the roads from Panama City airports were left unguarded—allowing soldiers from



**Muscle:** U.S. helicopters, Powell (top), Thurman

Noriega loyalists' access routes to the capital city.

## 9:00 AM

Rebel troops gain control of the headquarters building, effectively trapping Noriega inside his offices. The battle is monitored from U.S. helicopters.

## 11:00 AM

A rebel communiqué on Panamanian radio announces that Noriega and other top officials will be 'retired.' The broadcast is cut off abruptly. U.S. troops block the

JOHN FICARA—NEWSWEEK



U.S. ARMY

LARRY REIDER—SIPA



**'Gringo piranhas':** A pro-Noriega rally after the coup attempt

road out of Fort Amador, but troops loyal to Noriega advance from the airport areas to the east.

## 11:30 AM

Rebel emissaries appear at Fort Clayton. They meet with Brig. Gen. Marc Cisneros. Sources say they ask for a helicopter to remove Noriega, but refuse to release him to American custody. The Bush administration says there was no helicopter request.

## 1:00 PM

With the Bush administration apparently unwilling to commit further military support to the coup, the rebels place a desperate phone call to U.S. officers, finally offering the strongman up if only U.S. troops will join battle. But it is too late. Noriega loyalists are shooting their way into the headquarters. A few minutes later, Giroldi and his fellow coup leaders bow to the inevitable. They surrender their weapons, perhaps in hopes of mercy. Sources say Giroldi is shot dead on the spot—by Noriega himself.

the Seventh Company to evade the road-blocks via airlift into the civilian Paitilla airport. At the same time, members of Noriega's loyal U.S.-trained and -equipped Battalion 200th approached from the equally unattended area around the international airport.

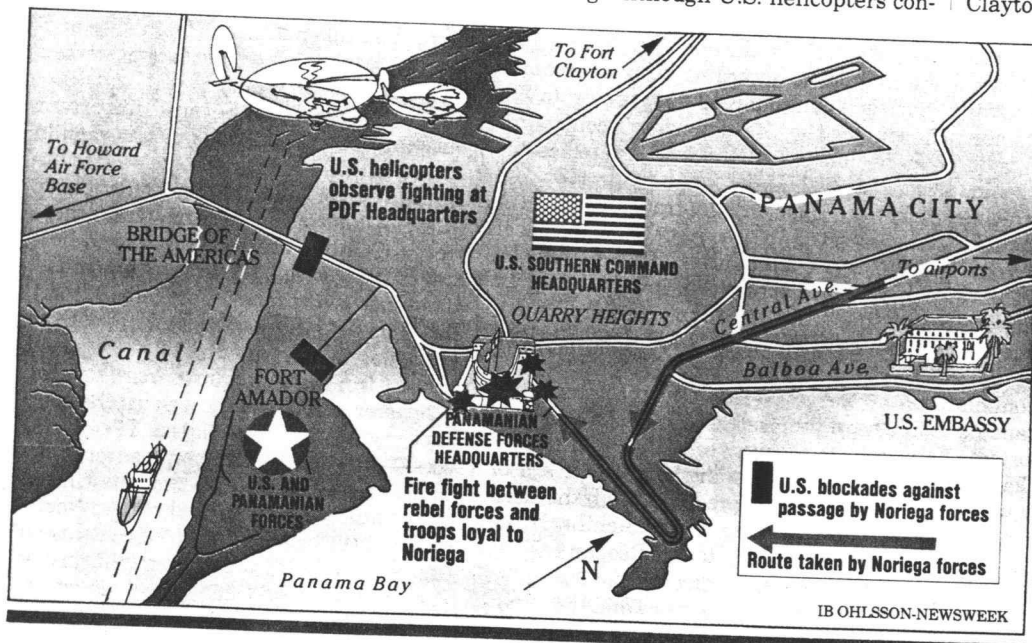
Inside the military headquarters, the momentum was already shifting. Perhaps in an attempt to encourage further defections from Noriega, at 11 a.m. the rebels announced their takeover on government

radio and said that Noriega and several other top officials would be retired. They did not say where the dictator was, however, nor did they announce who would take over in his stead. At about the same time, U.S. soldiers totally sealed off Fort Amador—still believing that Noriega was showing; their broadcast was cut off in midsentence.

Inside the comandancia, panic was mounting. Although U.S. helicopters con-

tinued to stage flyovers near the compound, none landed to offer help. It looked like another failure of communications. Giroldi and his men seem to have expected more than symbolic support. Shortly after 11, Giroldi dispatched several men to talk face to face with U.S. officials. At about 11:30, two officers and three enlisted men who introduced themselves as "coup liaison negotiators" were ushered into the U.S. Army South headquarters at Fort Clayton. There, the two officers met with Brig. Gen. Marc Cisneros, the commander of U.S. Army South. According to censored Southern Command notes of that conversation obtained by NEWSWEEK in Washington, the rebels claimed to have Noriega "under control" (though not necessarily actually in custody) in the comandancia.

Other sources say the rebels wanted America's help in getting the dictator out, but with conditions: the strongman could not be whisked out of the country to face trial in the United States on the drug charges. Instead, he was to be allowed to begin a new life in the countryside. The U.S. government denies having received any such request; the Southern Command notes say only that Giroldi's officers reported that they



IB OHLSSON-NEWSWEEK



## Against Noriega: A Poll

In the wake of last week's failed coup attempt in Panama, about a third of Americans felt the Bush administration did not do enough to secure General Noriega's removal. More favor covert action than military invasion, however.

**From what you've seen or heard of the reported coup attempt against General Noriega in Panama this week, do you think the United States:**

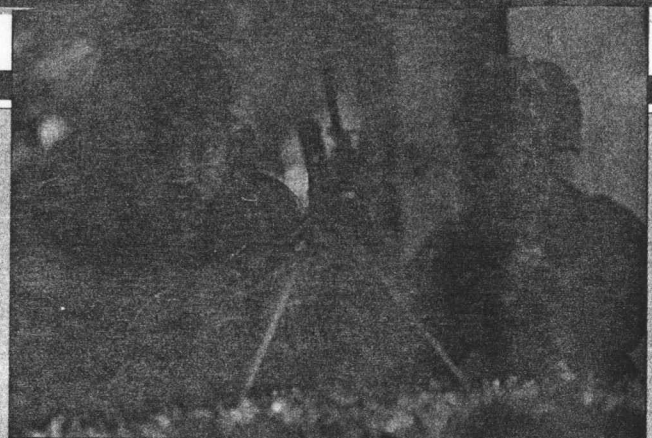
- 9% Played too much of a role
- 30% Played not enough of a role
- 45% U.S. policy just about right

**In your opinion, how important is it to the United States that General Noriega give up power in Panama?**

|                      | Current | 5/89 |
|----------------------|---------|------|
| Very important       | 60%     | 71%  |
| Somewhat important   | 23%     | 16%  |
| Not too important    | 6%      | 5%   |
| Not at all important | 3%      | 3%   |

**Do you favor or oppose the following options for U.S. policy toward Panama at this time? (Percent saying favor.)**

- 76% Persuade other nations in the region to pressure Noriega to surrender power
- 54% Impose a total U.S. economic boycott on Panama
- 26% Use U.S. military forces to invade Panama and overthrow Noriega
- 46% Set up a secret operation to unseat Noriega



PATRICK CHAUVEL—SYGMA

**Preparedness:** U.S. troops at Howard Air Force Base in Panama

**Would you favor or oppose a deal in which the United States would drop drug charges against Noriega in exchange for his giving up power in Panama?**

- 31% Favor
- 59% Oppose

**Should the United States halt the process for giving Panama control of the Panama Canal as long as Noriega is in power? Or should we not halt the process because it would only make Noriega look like a hero and make enemies for the U.S. throughout Latin America?**

- 50% Should halt
- 38% Should not halt

**In general, should the United States seek the removal of all heads of state found to be engaged in drug trafficking?**

- 81% Yes
- 13% No

For this NEWSWEEK Poll, The Gallup Organization interviewed a national sample of 750 adults by telephone Oct. 5-6, 1989. The margin of error is plus or minus 4 percentage points. Some "Don't know" and other answers omitted. The NEWSWEEK Poll © 1989 by NEWSWEEK, Inc.

had "no intention to turn over their people to the U.S." Instead, the memo said, they "wanted [an] honorable exit for Noriega to retire—not leave the country."

**Use of force:** A high-level source told NEWSWEEK, however, that the rebel request was relayed to the White House within the hour—along with their refusal to surrender Noriega to U.S. custody. At this point, Bush—meeting with his top advisers while Soviet Defense Minister Yazov cooled his heels outside the Oval Office—offered the rebels a second choice. The United States would take Noriega off their hands covertly; the military could, for example, spirit him away in an unmarked car guarded by plainclothes officers. This, too, the envoys at Fort Clayton refused. Finally, Bush authorized Thurman to develop a plan for capturing the dictator himself—even if this meant the use of force.

With the United States slow to commit itself and Noriega's loyal forces advancing on the headquarters, the rebels reportedly placed a last desperate call to Fort Clayton for help just before noon. Now they wanted American troops to storm the place, save them and get Noriega—even if it meant that the strongman would end up in Miami. By then it was too late. Just after noon in Panama City, intelligence

sources in Panama said, the confrontation at the headquarters ended with Giroldi and Noriega face to face for the first time since the takeover attempt. Realizing that he couldn't win and perhaps hoping for mercy, Giroldi surrendered his weapons and gave up, bringing the coup to a close. A moment later, by some accounts, Noriega shot and killed the coup leader. For the other rebels, the end came that night. At midnight, according to one account, Noriega's men forced the rebels to lie down in the headquarters' courtyard. There, one by one, the rebels were executed in the darkness.

For the Bush administration, the end of the coup attempt was just the beginning of a crisis of credibility. While Noriega whipped his supporters into a frenzy by shouting "hit the *Yanquis* hard!" Sen. Jesse Helms (who likened the American role to that of the Keystone Kops) and other conservatives were hitting the administration hard themselves.

In the end, critics said, Bush was in for a dime but not a dollar. It made for a poor contrast with his predecessor. In the crisis over the hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in 1985, Ronald Reagan ordered a daring in-flight interception of the terrorists' plane despite the risks and the potential repercussions throughout the Middle

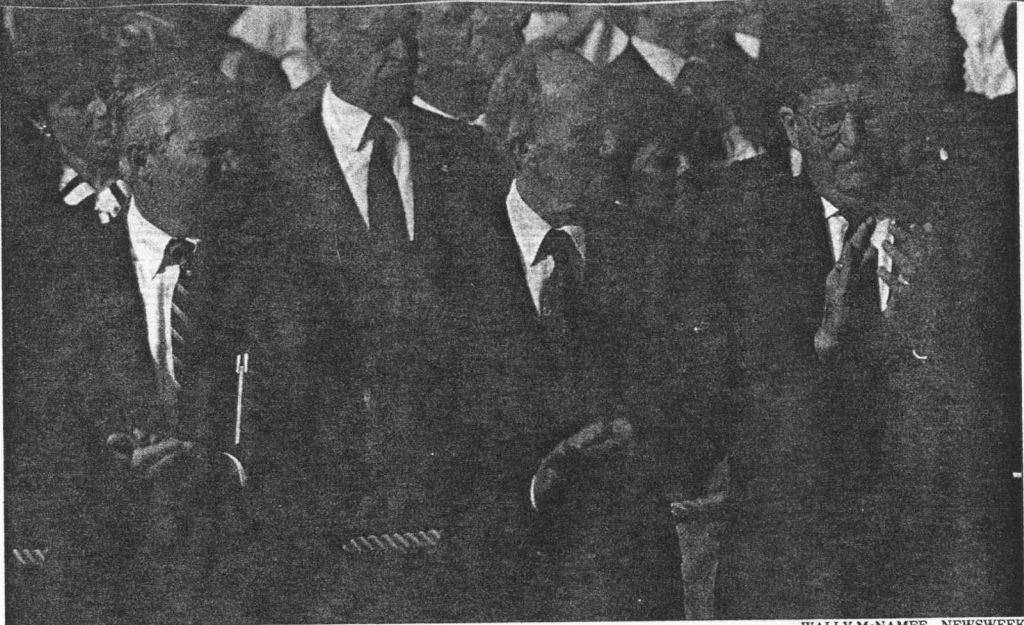
East. But Bush, in hesitating to do more than block the roads, showed an innate caution once again. "This is laissez-faire diplomacy and it's outrageous," said Democrat Dave McCurdy, the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. Tuesday's debacle, he said, "makes Jimmy Carter look like a man of resolve." Bush himself was unmoved. "I'm not just being stubborn," he said on Friday. "I don't see anything now that would have had me make a different decision then."

**Important questions:** Several important questions about Tuesday's events remain unanswered. Most troublesome was the uncertainty about the rebels' calls for help on Tuesday. Sources in Panama claim there were several separate requests for a helicopter for Noriega, the first by telephone, the second on the rebels' Fort Clayton visit. Based on all information available at the weekend, this seems unlikely. A second version, from Washington sources, says the helicopter was called for only as the coup appeared to be near collapse. The official version presented by Cheney was more circumspect still. He denied that the United States was ever approached to take Noriega out of the comandancia. "There was no suggestion of 'Will you move him from one spot to another?'" Cheney told reporters. Cheney did, however, concede that the

rules of engagement for the troops assigned roadblock duty would under some circumstances allow them to shoot first: a hair-trigger situation.

Noriega himself had ahead of him some nerve-racking moments. Not only was the revolt by officers close to him a close call, but also he had to wonder why he did not win more spontaneous support from his political allies. Neither President Francisco Rodríguez, Noriega's handpicked puppet, nor any other senior government official rushed to support the general when the rebels seemed about to take control. In fact, when the insurrectionists aired their communiqué on Noriega's "retirement," parties broke out spontaneously in several government ministries. Jubilant civil servants ripped down oversize portraits of the dictator and dashed them to the floor.

To win back the political balance, Noriega quickly turned to the methods he knows best: violence and intimidation. For months, U.S. intelligence officials have known that the rebels who staged a failed coup in March of last year have been tortured until they were virtually "turned into vegetables," in the words of an American officer who observed last week's coup attempt from a hilltop on Quarry Heights,



WALLY McNAMEE—NEWSWEEK

**What did they know? When did they know it? Gates, Scowcroft and Sununu in Washington**

the headquarters of U.S. forces in Panama. The same fate almost surely awaits those captured Tuesday, and perhaps many others: on Thursday, Noriega announced "a new package of war laws" that gives him more power than ever.

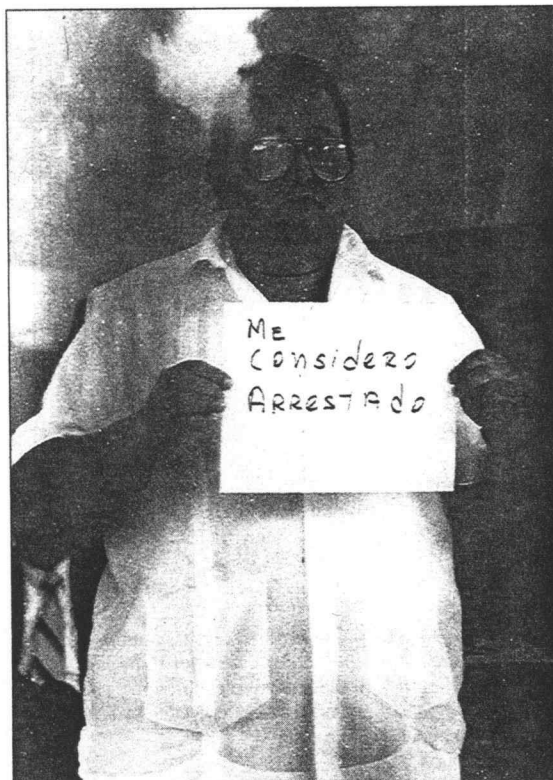
The reprisals began almost immediately. "We are going to make a list. We are going to make a list," Noriega shouted at supporters in the provincial town of Santiago on Thursday. "Here, every dignified and militant public employee has to become a judge of traitors who are deep rooted." By then, his goon squads were out in full force. Soldiers in civilian clothes patrolled the streets of Panama City; a dozen members of the opposition Liberal Party were arrested following a violent attack backed up with tear gas; and men in civilian clothes wielding shotguns, clubs and rubber hoses surrounded the offices of the civilian opposition coalition and hauled away former presidential candidate Guillermo Endara, who had begun a hunger strike Sept. 20. Only intervention by the Spanish ambassador, Tomás Lozano, procured Endara's release; he has now taken sanctuary in the Vatican's embassy compound.

Whatever happens next in Panama, the questions for the United States are sure to linger. At first glance, the Bush team's damage control seems to have worked. Beyond the inevitable sniping from the Congress, a NEWSWEEK Poll suggests no widespread criticism (page 30). But eventually the policymakers will have to confront the most difficult ques-

tion of all: what business did the United States have interfering with an essentially internal conflict outside its own borders? Many Americans would argue that once the United States made an issue of Noriega, as the Reagan administration did, there was no alternative to intervention. The alternative was a loss of credibility. Others disagree: "The striking thing about this debate over the last couple of days," said Walter LaFeber, professor of U.S. foreign policy at Cornell University, "has been that we've been talking about Panama as if it were the 51st state... You wouldn't have gotten the sense in the last 48 hours of debate... that Panama is actually a sovereign country with whom we've made treaties."

**Full impact:** By late Saturday, just as Panama began to slip back into the patterns of normal life, officials at the White House and Pentagon were staring at the full impact of the coup at home. At the Pentagon, mounds of paper piled up as officials tried to sort out a moment-by-moment account of the rebels' assault and the American response. Bickering and conflicts were rumored on Capitol Hill as officials with the Pentagon and the White House scrambled to lay the blame anywhere but on their own front doors. Diplomats worried about the fallout in Latin America: would the Panamanian opposition ever trust the United States again? Would Colombian President Virgilio Barco Vargas take seriously the American war on drugs after Noriega's escape? At the White House, Sununu was so disturbed that he ordered a full investigation into the handling of the affair. For a moment, it almost seemed as though Noriega had pulled off a coup of his own—leaving his American adversaries scrambling for cover.

C. S. MANEGOLD with CHARLES LANE in Panama City and JOHN BARRY, DOUGLAS WALLER and THOMAS M. DEFRAK in Washington



DENNIS COOK—AP

**'I consider myself arrested': Opposition head Endara**



# White House Supports C.I.A. Call For Greater Leeway During Coups

By STEPHEN ENGELBERG

Special to The New York Times

NYT 10-12-88 A1

WASHINGTON, Oct. 17 — The White House today endorsed calls for more latitude for the Central Intelligence Agency in supporting potentially violent efforts to overthrow foreign dictators, joining what is likely to become a heated debate on the issue between Congress and the Executive Branch.

For several senior officials in the Bush Administration, including the National Security Adviser, Brent Scowcroft, and President Bush himself, the discussion is a return to an issue that they were involved in as senior members of the Ford Administration, when restrictions on covert operations were established.

## Statements by Webster

President Ford, in the wake of Congressional investigations detailing the C.I.A.'s role in plots to kill foreign leaders, issued an executive order in January 1976 barring American involvement in assassinations. General Scowcroft, who was Mr. Ford's national security adviser, said in an interview earlier this month that the rules on assassination had been forced on the Ex-

ecutive Branch by a Congress bent on "micro-management."

Congressional officials said that unusually candid statements on the subject made on Monday by the Director of Central Intelligence, William H. Webster, had defined in terms favorable to the Administration a dispute that would typically have taken place behind the closed doors of the House and Senate Intelligence Committees.

Mr. Webster said in an interview that the Central Intelligence Agency needed greater flexibility to support potentially violent coups. He said the existing restrictions had kept the agency from giving advice or guidance to the rebels who sought to overthrow Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, the Panama-

nian military leader, on Oct. 3.

"When despots take over, there has to be a means to deal with that sort of making us to be hired killers," Mr. Webster said.

Marlin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman, said today, "We certainly are in agreement with everything Judge Webster said yesterday."

## Damage Control Is Seen

Representative Anthony C. Beilinson, the California Democrat who is chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said today that the Bush Administration officials were overstating the restrictions imposed by the executive order to counter criticism of the White House's handling of the events in Panama.

Representative Beilinson, who said he supported the President's approach to the coup, said: "I think it's an unfair burden to put on the executive order. It's also unfair to use Panama as a lever to change something that has made good sense and should be on the books in the first place."

Mr. Beilinson, who has been chairman of the House Intelligence panel since January, said he was personally uncomfortable with the idea of American covert aid to coup plotters whose plans called for violence but did not include the death of their country's leader. "I myself do not believe that we should be involved, except in extreme circumstances, in overthrowing governments or deposing leaders, however bad they may be," he said.

## Pattern Since Coup Attempt

Mr. Fitzwater's statement of support for Mr. Webster fits into a pattern that has emerged since the coup attempt in Panama. Last week, a White House official said the rules governing the agency's dealing with coup plotters in Panama would have to be re-examined. Mr. Webster's remarks carried the issue a step further by singling out the interpretation of the executive order on assassinations as the central issue, and raising the question of

whether a less restrictive reading would be in the national interest.

Representative Lee H. Hamilton, the Indiana Republican who was chairman of the House Intelligence Committee from 1984 to 1986, said today that he was puzzled by Mr. Webster's statements. "No person from the intelligence community ever came to me in those years and said, 'Look, this executive order has us hamstrung,'" he said.

But Administration officials asserted that the Congress, and particularly the Senate Intelligence Committee, had taken a more restrictive view of the assassination prohibition in the last two years. Bush Administration officials said they would like to refine the interpretation of the executive order to allow for links to coup plotters who plan violence, but not the killing of their nation's leader or leaders.

## Reagan's 'Panama 3' Plan

In July 1988, a Reagan Administration proposal called "Panama 3" was sharply criticized by Senate Intelligence Committee members. It called for a violent coup led by about two dozen Panamanian military officers. The C.I.A.'s assessment of the risk acknowledged that General Noriega and others might die if the plan went forward.

Some committee members, including Senator Bill Bradley, Democrat of New Jersey, and Senator William S. Cohen, Republican of Maine, were said to be concerned that this skirted the executive order, which says no one "employed by or acting on behalf of the United States Government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassination."

Senator David L. Boren, the Oklahoma Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, said today in a statement that Mr. Bush has already been invited by the panel to "propose a clarification of any intelligence policy where he thinks an ambiguity may now exist."

"I have long supported giving the President any authority that is truly needed to meet his responsibilities as Commander in Chief," Senator Boren said.



# Quayle: Let Soviets reform themselves

By Paul Bedard *WT 10-10-84*  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES *21*

LOS ANGELES — A simmering rift within the Bush administration became public yesterday as Vice President Dan Quayle attacked State Department offers to help Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev make political and economic reforms.

"Let them reform themselves," Mr. Quayle told reporters at a press conference in San Francisco before traveling to Los Angeles.

In the first evidence of a major split inside the top ranks of President's Bush's administration, Mr. Quayle called the Soviet Union a danger to the Free World and cautioned Americans not to count on Mr. Gorbachev, whom he referred to as "general secretary," not president.

"The United States does not pin our hopes on one man, or one group of men," the vice president said in a

speech here. "The Soviet Union remains our potential adversary."

In talking to reporters and in his address, Mr. Quayle played what one aide described as the "bad cop" vs. the administration's "good cop," Secretary of State James A. Baker III.

Mr. Baker, an acknowledged moderate, said in a New York speech Monday that the United States no longer has to fear the Soviet Union and offered U.S. help for Mr. Gorbachev's problem-plagued reform program. Officials said the Baker speech was crafted to counter conservatives who have urged that brakes be applied to warming U.S.-Soviet relations.

Mr. Baker said the United States has a "historic opportunity" to "leave behind the postwar period with the ups and downs of the Cold War."

He also praised Mr. Gorbachev's

reforms, which he said were worthy of assistance from a brain trust of U.S. economic experts.

But Mr. Quayle said the Soviet Union must look to itself for help. "The best thing for them to do is reform themselves. . . . They've got to get out of this idea that a centralized, controlled economy is going to produce wealth and opportunity," he said.

Mr. Baker, in his speech to the Foreign Policy Association in New York, suggested that the administration no longer feels the Soviet Union is playing a deceptive game aimed at getting the United States to drop its guard.

"Perestroika," he said, is "different from earlier, failed attempts at reforming the state Lenin founded and Stalin built."

Mr. Quayle, however, cautioned that the United States must keep its guard high, despite reports that the Soviet Union is demilitarizing.

"The world is probably more threatened [now] than in the past," Mr. Quayle said.

The dispute over U.S.-Soviet relations pits administration moderates, such as National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, against conservatives, including Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, in vying for Mr. Bush's ear.

Mr. Bush has wished Mr. Gorbachev well in his reform efforts but hasn't taken a clear stand on how the United States will deal with Soviet requests for technical assistance. Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze asked for such assistance during his recent summit with Mr. Baker in Wyoming.

The latest Quayle-Baker clash reflects a longtime difference between the two over U.S. policy toward the Soviet Union, aides said.

While Mr. Baker said the reforms under way in the Soviet Union give hope for new and historic relations between the superpowers, Mr. Quayle highlighted the "dark side of the Soviet Union."

In comments added to his speech

before the Town Hall of California, Mr. Quayle said: "Change is under way in the Soviet bloc. We wish success to the proponents of freedom. We must remember, however, that freedom's success is never assured."

Mr. Quayle repeatedly called the Soviet Union "dangerous" for its role in arming the Marxist regimes of Nicaragua, Afghanistan and Cambodia.

"This effort contradicts 'new thinking.' It is just the darker side of Soviet foreign policy. . . . That is why, although this is a time of hope, it is no time for complacency."

Mr. Quayle also claimed that, despite arms control proposals pre-

sented by Mr. Gorbachev, the Soviet Union continues to build and modernize its military arsenal.

"While arms control agreements hopefully will decrease this threat, the strategic military arsenal of the Soviet Union today is at a record high and this continues to concern us," he said.

Mr. Quayle's comments were the sharpest attack on administration moderates' views of U.S.-Soviet relations since Mr. Cheney said in a broadcast that he didn't believe Mr. Gorbachev would succeed in keeping his office.

Mr. Quayle's address was followed by a personal audience with former President Reagan.



# N.Y. right-to-life reps hang tough

As pro-choice forces show mounting political muscle, the few remaining right-to-life votes among congressmen from the New York metropolitan area insist they won't be swayed, even if their anti-abortion votes cost them their seats.

"If I'm defeated on this issue, I will go quietly without changing my views," said Rep. Tom Manton (D-Queens), who took over the seat once held by the pro-choice Geraldine Ferraro.

"As long as they don't take away my law license, I can still make a living," added Manton, who says his mail is running 50-50 on abortion in his district,

which is 70 percent Catholic.

But Manton says the heat isn't being felt as much in New York because even if the Supreme Court were to overturn the Roe-v.-Wade decision that legalized abortion, New York state "would not change" its pro-choice abortion laws.

Among the 20 congressmen from the metropolitan area, there were just four votes against federal funding for abortions in cases of rape and incest last week: Manton (the only Democrat) and Reps. Ray McGrath (R-L.I.), Norman Lent (R-L.I.) and Guy Molinari (R-S.I.)



Two congressmen had flip-flopped to vote pro-choice: Rep. Floyd Flake (D-Queens) said he voted for federal funding because of the Central Park rape case, while Rep. George Hochbrueckner (D-L.I.) said he was tired of right-to-lifers picketing his congressional office on Long Island.

But the four remaining right-

to-lifers say they won't switch.

As for New York's senators, Republican Al D'Amato votes right-to-life while Democratic Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan votes pro-choice.

Molinari, now running for Staten Island borough president, says his right-to-life stance "probably costs me votes. Historically, in my district, a majority favors abortions, even Catholics."

Molinari says he won't budge on the issue — but if he becomes borough president and his daughter, Susan, seeks his congressional seat, that will be one less right-to-life vote because

she's pro-choice.

**WAY OF ALL FLESH:** It's not just the federal government that wants to do some belt-tightening. Portly White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater is trying to slim down Oprah Winfrey-style, by sipping the same Optifast dietary supplement she used.

Fitzwater's goal is to lose 30 pounds. But then what will happen to all those self-deprecating quips he uses to defuse tension?

**CUOMO '92 WATCH:** Noted with interest that the New York governor is the focus of a big interview in the first edition of the California Democratic party's new magazine, particularly since California is angling for a big role in picking the 1992 presidential nominee.

Among the Gov's comments: "A big development with Bush that has not been properly described, in my opinion, is that he has rejected Reagan! At least rhetorically."

"He says it's not trees that pollute, it is acid rain. He says there are poor people who need to be welcomed into the circle of opportunity . . . Reagan never admitted that. I think frankly that that made Reagan stronger politically."

**SLIPPERY:** Even some Bushites are amazed (and jealous) of how Secretary of State Jim Baker managed (once again) to escape unscathed from a Bushite mess, this time the Panama flap.

There was flak for National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, for chief-of-staff John Sununu, for Defense Secretary Cheney, for the CIA, but few brickbats aimed at Baker, the foreign-policy chief.

Baker, while chairing Bush's campaign, also managed to escape all criticism over the Willie Horton issue or the choice of Dan Quayle as vice president (though insiders insist he okayed it).

How come? Complains one Bush adviser who doesn't always get such gentle press: "The press treats him with kid gloves because he's such a good leaker. They owe him."



## So many so wise after the event

**M**y plan to write a thoughtful column about something else has been derailed by the controversy over the Bush administration's reaction to the Panama coup attempt.

I simply can't stand the ineffable gall of people who have spent nearly two decades trying to cripple the ability of the U.S. government to respond effectively in a foreign crisis, now suavely complaining that President George Bush and his aides didn't do enough, or do it fast enough, during the unsuccessful attempt to overthrow Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega.

Talk about Monday morning quarterbacks! Seldom in the field of human conflict have so many been so wise after the event. There are, to be sure, good men — Republican Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina, for one — who have always favored forthright U.S. action in support of its friends and its interests abroad, and who feel that the Bush team fell woefully short in Panama. But the great majority of the critics are time-serving liberals, in Congress and the media, who have forfeited, by their own prior conduct, any moral right to complain that not enough was done.

These are the people who systematically dismantled the covert capabilities of the CIA during the 1970s — an act for which, as our former deputy ambassador to the United Nations Charles Lichenstein remarked, a special ring is reserved for them in hell. They have been joined by a number of better men, like Democratic Sen. David L. Boren of Oklahoma and Republican Sen. William S. Cohen of Maine, chairman and vice chairman of the Intelligence Committee, who are unwilling to admit that even they have chronically urged caution on the executive branch whenever bold action abroad has been contemplated.

Now that the crisis is over and the

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coup has failed, all these wise men crowd forward to tell us precisely what Mr. Bush ought to have done, and where National Security Council Director Brent Scowcroft went wrong, and why Defense Secretary Richard Cheney fell short. It is a contemptible performance.

No doubt the Bush team, which is still new and relatively untried, was somewhat slow and unsure in reacting to the news from Panama. But you can bet your bottom dollar that one of the chief restraints on the White House team was the knowledge of the pounding it would get from these retrospective masterminds if it involved U.S. forces actively in the coup and then the coup failed anyway. Mr. Bush and his advisers would have been accused of "overreacting," of being "trigger-happy," of seeking shorthand solutions to intractable problems, and (above all) of wasting, or at least risking, the lives of American soldiers to provide a gaudy feather for the cap of their commander in chief. There is simply no end — and no bottom — to what these Afterthought Experts would have been saying.

**T**ake R.W. Apple Jr., chief Washington correspondent of The New York Times, who manages to combine felicitously the characteristics of a working journalist and a stuffed shirt. Mr. Apple has been reading the Prayers for the Dead over the highly favorable ratings of the president for several months, and he tried yet again in the wake of the Panama coup. "They said Mr. Bush's honeymoon couldn't last forever," he gloated, "and it hasn't."

But Mr. Apple, who is hardly famous for urging the Republican White House to be more venturesome, manages to come up with only one specific complaint. He cites the usual anonymous sources as blaming the absence of a particular pet bureaucrat, apparently sidelined by Secretary of State James A. Baker III, for the lack of perceptive and aggressive advice at the crucial moment.

Typically, his New York Times colleague Tom Wicker swings his snickersnee closer to the bone: "In fact," Mr. Wicker asserts, without offering the slightest evidence, "the coup attempt was inspired by George Bush's repeated invitations to the Panamanian military to seize power." Just imagine how he would be howling if Mr. Bush had really intervened!

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times **F 3**  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date **20 OCT 1989**



Instead of acting, the Bush team was apparently reacting—to a glut of conflicting messages. Between 40 to 50 phone calls were made between the rebels and American officials. For a long time, key administration officials did not even know where Noriega was. Later, when a rebel officer called Fort Clayton, "nobody knew who he was," said a friend of the Girolodi family.

**'Micromanagement':** Even with the clearest of signals, administration officials may not have known what to do. No one had ever determined how to respond to a group of rebels not following a U.S. game plan. When precisely that happened, the administration had no set response. The White House pinned the blame for that on Congress. It was congressional "micromanagement," Scowcroft said, that hamstrung the administration. The Senate Intelligence Committee nixed an administration plan to foment a coup in Panama in the summer of 1988, Bush officials charged. From then on, they said, the CIA was pinned down and ineffectual. A second overture to the committee this year ran into similar problems. "Congress has ... leaned us against the kinds of things now they're saying we should have done," said Scowcroft.

Congressional sources spat the blame right back. They claimed that an initial CIA plan to destabilize the Noriega regime was vague. The summer 1988 overture was turned down because the CIA had not analyzed the prospects for a coup's success; and a later plan was questioned because of the very problem that hampered the administration on Oct. 3: poor contingency planning. The committee probably didn't know

just how right it was about the last problem. "Until the shooting began Tuesday, there were no serious discussions of exactly what to do," said one administration source. "By that time, the information was coming in fast and furious and there was little time for thoughtful planning."

Wednesday Bush met with Intelligence Committee chairman Sen. David Boren to smooth things over. Then the real work began. "Panama is not the big issue here," said one intelligence official. "The big issue here is how this country functions in a crisis." By Saturday there were signs the country soon might be functioning better. A senior White House official said that internal reviews had already addressed one problem—the flow of information to the president. A

crisis-management committee will coordinate all future emergencies, with representatives from pertinent agencies gathered in the White House Situation Room. Sources also said the State Department will be meeting with Panamanian opposition leaders this week, and that the administration has already issued new guidelines for American military, intelligence and diplomatic officials to give them more leeway to support coup plotters in the future.

Next time coup plotters may need something more than U.S. help. According to sources in Panama, Noriega's campaign of fear and revenge is purging the ranks of military opposition. Among its victims was Col. Guillermo Wong, the intelligence chief who kept his forces out of the battle

even though they were stationed across the street from the PDF headquarters. Noriega summoned Wong after the coup attempt to "thank" him for his help. When he showed up, the general stared him in the face and shouted, "Arrest this son of a whore." Also rumored to be in detention was Maj. Federico Olechea, commander of the 2000 Battalion, the force that ultimately recaptured the PDF *comandancia* from the rebels. Olechea was accused by Mrs. Girolodi of having been in league with the rebels at first, before switching sides.

Death was the grim fate of other rebels. Though Noriega denies reports of executions, American cables obtained by NewsWEEK (box) cite a source as reporting that

more than 70 slain rebels were brought to one hospital. Many had been shot several times, perhaps in the fighting. Others appeared to have been executed. A second morgue reportedly held the bodies of 35 slain rebels. Morgue workers were kept from the storage areas by plainclothes police. Ironically, it was Girolodi's failure to match Noriega's brutality that proved his undoing; on principle, he refused to kill the general when he had the chance. The question the Bush administration must face now is whether the United States should be more ruthless the next time around.

C. S. MANEGOLD with DOUGLAS WALLER, MARGARET GARREARD WARNER, ANN MCDANIEL, THOMAS M. DEFRAK and JOHN BARRY in Washington, CHARLES LANE in Panama City and ERIK CALONIUS in Miami



## Strategic Defense Initiative

ARMS CONTROL  
TODAY

OCTOBER 1989

Pg. 33

## The Future of SDI

Matthew Bunn

*On the Defensive? The Future of SDI.* Joseph S. Nye, Jr., and James A. Schear, eds. The Aspen Strategy Group. University Press of America, Inc: Lanham, MD, 1988, 206pp., cloth, \$28.50, paper, \$13.50.

The latest work from the Aspen Strategy Group, a high-level gathering of former officials and other defense analysts, is their most satisfying yet. Indeed, *On the Defensive? The Future of SDI* may well be the most balanced and sober review of the issues raised by the SDI program to appear since its inception.

The book is a collection of articles by a variety of analysts, which was published in 1988 following a 1987 "joint statement" on the subject from the same group. To most readers, the introductory chapter will be the most interesting because of the current office held by one of its authors: National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft. The account of the status and prospects of SDI given by Scowcroft and coauthors William Perry, Joseph Nye, and James Schear is pessimistic because it is realistic: as they remark, insisting on the minimum criteria that defenses be survivable and cheaper than the offenses needed to defeat them "would effectively rule out deployment of space-based defenses during the next decade, including those proposed under various schemes for early deployment."

Scowcroft and his colleagues report that SDI's technical progress "has been incremental to date," with "no major breakthroughs," and point out that "many innovations that aid the defense can also help the offense." In addition, they question whether boost-phase defenses—the focus of the SDI program—will ever be feasible, explaining that space-based defenses "may be too exposed to survive technically feasible countermeasures."

The introduction emphasizes the importance of the ABM Treaty, rejecting both the broad interpretation (still insisted on by

the administration in which Scowcroft serves) and the Defense Department's permissive reading of the traditional interpretation, proposing "a better criterion" for SDI tests: "Would we raise objections if we saw the Soviets conducting the same test?" The authors argue strongly that the ABM Treaty is "in our interest" because it restrains Soviet ABM programs and "serves as the conceptual basis for offensive arms control."

The introduction ends with an eminently sensible five-point plan for SDI's future. The first three concentrate on the technical program, recommending a focus on research, not development, in pursuit of "a more plausible near-term agenda," and devoid of showy demonstrations designed to garner public support. The last two focus on arms control, recommending reaffirmation of the traditional interpretation while negotiating deep cuts in offensive strategic forces—the "grand compromise." Scowcroft and his coauthors point out that "a sensible research program can be conducted within the traditional interpretation of the ABM Treaty for the next ten years."

The following chapters provide more detail in many of the areas addressed in the introduction. Strobe Talbott provides a perceptive description of policy-making on SDI under President Reagan. Tom Johnson, a physicist at West Point, gives an account of SDI's technical status that is both clear and clear-headed, pointing out that substantial obstacles remain to be overcome. Jeffrey Boutwell ably covers the important security concerns SDI has raised within NATO. Harvard's Ashton Carter manages to condense his sizable studies of the complex subject of adapting the ABM Treaty to new technologies into a dense but readable 30 pages, providing the best short introduction to the subject yet available.

MIT's Stephen Meyer provides a detailed discussion of potential Soviet

responses to SDI, with interesting new material on the Soviet strategic defense program. "Despite U.S. rhetoric to the contrary," Meyer argues, "there is no evidence that the Soviets have an 'SDI-skiy'—an organized undertaking to devise an integrated strategic defense 'architecture' at the earliest possible deployment date." Meyer predicts that the Soviet Union will not take dramatic near-term responses to SDI, since whether any system will be deployed and what form it will take remain uncertain. But if deployment begins to take definite shape, Meyer describes a number of possible Soviet counters, concluding that "a near-term SDI deployment would probably require—in Soviet estimation—at least a doubling of their offensive forces."

Perhaps the most disappointing chapters of the book are the contributions from Edward Warner of RAND and Michael May of the Lawrence Livermore Laboratory. Warner's chapter, "SDI and the Existing Arms Control Regime," is largely a discussion of the charges of ABM noncompliance the United States and the Soviet Union have swapped in recent years. But the Reagan administration's charges are only reported, with little analysis of their validity, and the discussion of SDI is based on dated information. May's chapter is primarily concerned with the impact of SDI research and development: will it provide spinoffs for other military programs or drain resources away, which military areas might be most affected, and so on.

The fundamental problem with both chapters is that they focus almost exclusively on SDI's past and present, rather than examining the impact of various options for the future (as promised by the book's title). Thus, there is little examination in Warner's chapter of how thoroughly abrogation of the ABM Treaty would torpedo the chances for the breakthrough arms control agreements now being negotiated, and May devotes only brief attention to the myriad



FUTURE...CONTINUED

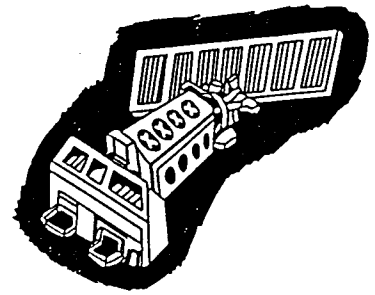
security problems posed by near-term SDI deployment. A far better review of the security and arms control implications of various options for SDI can be found in Warner's own *Next Moves: An Arms Control Agenda for the 1990s*, written with David Ochmanek for the Council on Foreign Relations.

Nevertheless, *On the Defensive* is an

excellent study of the status of SDI and the issues facing it. It should be high on the reading list of everyone concerned with missile defenses and the future of the ABM Treaty.

ACT

*Matthew Bunn is a senior research analyst at the Arms Control Association. He is completing a book for the Association on the ABM Treaty.*



FPI (Free Press International)  
INTERNATIONAL  
REPORT

OCTOBER 20, 1989

Pg. 1

## Security Specialists Flail START Without SDI

Only deployment of a missile intercept system will enable the United States to prudently accept the risks of the draft Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), according to a group of leading national security specialists who met privately in Washington early this month.

The group of 20 included prominent officials in both the executive and legislative branches of government, who attended on condition they not be named or quoted, as well as academics, representatives of the defense industry, consulting companies and think tanks.

In a statement issued post-conference, the experts concluded: "In our view, START is an important additional reason to proceed with deployment of a ballistic missile defense," at the core of the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

"A defense against ballistic missiles would lessen the vulnerability of a [START] reduced U.S. force to continuing modernization of Soviet strategic forces, to unexpected rapid changes in the threat, and to Soviet cheating, circumvention of the agreement, and preparations for rapid breakout from START.

The group noted that Soviet investments in strategic nuclear forces have actually increased faster under Mikhail Gorbachev than under his predecessors and that these forces are "far more formidable" than a decade ago.

Of particular concern is a new Soviet missile called SS-18 Mod[ification number] 5 by the Pentagon in public releases, but known as SS-X-26 within the intelligence community.

Defense analyst Frank Gaffney recently said it is indeed a "new missile," because it has a throwweight 20-25 percent greater than that of the SS-18. Gaffney directs the Center for Security Policy and was a deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security policy under President Reagan.

The SALT II treaty prohibits any new

ICBM that has a length, diameter, weight or throwweight 5 percent or more greater than that of an existing ICBM. "Throwweight" is the term coined to describe the weight of all devices — warheads, guidance systems, decoys — that a missile can "throw" into an intercontinental trajectory.

The Soviet threat is increasingly being defined in terms of assumed benign Soviet intentions, rather than actual Soviet military capabilities, the conferees agreed. With 5 years of decreasing U.S. expenditures and increasing Soviet buildup, the experts consider the military balance to have shifted heavily in favor of the Soviets, thus making "U.S. deterrent forces seriously vulnerable to new Soviet capabilities."

Believing that Congress — a number of whose members appear willing to take the Gorbachev-era detente initiative at face value — is determined to cut spending on new defensive systems and research and development, the Air Force reportedly is already planning tactically on a reduced U.S. missile force.

In a recent letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee from Air Force Secretary Vernon Rice, the Air Force proposed cutting its purchase of Midgetman missiles from 500 to 300 — and may even agree to 150. The corps is also resigned to receiving no more than 50 MX missiles.

The letter, the contents of which were read to *Free Press International*, also has the Air Force expressing hope that the Soviets will consider "downloading" the capabilities of U.S. strategic missiles as the equivalent of destroying missiles. Downloading means reducing the number of warheads that a missile can carry.

If this is acceptable to Moscow, the current fleet of 500 30-year-old Minutemen III ICBMs would be modified to contain a mix of Minuteman IV (one warhead) and Minuteman V (two) missiles.

The Navy may also ask to shift from 24-Trident-missile capable Ohio-class submar-

ines to a new boat mounting 12 Tridents.

The group agreed that U.S. security will best be served by disavowing the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty and deployment of defenses. They say that the 1972 ABM treaty was "ill-conceived," since it has failed to limit the growth of Soviet offensive forces or of Soviet defenses as predicted by its advocates.

"The ABM treaty now stands in the way of U.S. development and deployment of the kind of defense that would stabilize the strategic balance and reduce missile threats to the United States. Continued adherence to the treaty is not in our national interest, and President Bush should declare this," the group concluded.

They urge the administration to proceed with missile defenses while it attempts to negotiate a missile defense deployment agreement to accompany the START treaty. They say that if such a pro-SDI agreement is not reached within 2 years, or by the time START reductions begin formally, the United States should begin its deployment of defenses free of ABM treaty restrictions.

The meeting was chaired by William Van Cleave, director of the Center for Defense and Strategic Studies at S.W. Missouri University and a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. Among the private sector attendees who can also be named were: Gaffney, Roger W. Barnett, senior associate at the National Institute for Public Policy and an adjunct professor at Georgetown University; Charles Kupperman, director of special studies at McDonnell Douglas; Keith Payne, executive vice president at the National Institute for Public Policy; James Hackett, manager of policy operations at Titan Corporation and a former acting director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency; William R. Graham, vice president of Jaycor and formerly science adviser to Reagan; and John Blaylock, manager of preliminary designs at Boeing Corp.

# 'Spymaster' Bush's policy proposals carry risks

By Timothy J. McNulty

**W**ASHINGTON—White House officials are giving a hearty endorsement to two new proposed policy changes that have ominous echoes of the past: One could lead to U.S. involvement in assassination, the other to kidnapping.

Both policies, born of the frustration of dealing with Panama's Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, with the international drug trade and with political terrorists, are risky and could create enormous controversy for the Bush administration if they are ever acted on.

On another level, both suggest that despite the administration's seeming openhandedness and well-intentioned motives, there is another intensely political and secretive aspect to this presidency.

In short, George Bush loves the spy business.

Back in the mid-1970s, when he was director of the Central Intelligence Agency for 356 days, Bush discovered a new dimension of information that seemed to dovetail beautifully with his own view of political intrigue. The current eagerness to add to the CIA's legal arsenal may simply be a reflection of Bush's personal interest in the covert.

Bush's man at the CIA. Director William Webster, said last week that he would welcome a congressional move to loosen a 13-year-old executive order that restricts his agency from assassination plots.

Webster complained that White House and congressional interpretation of that order had unnecessarily

restrained his agents from supporting attempts to overthrow unsavory foreign governments because those plots might result in the death of the foreign leader. He wanted to see that interpretation relaxed.

Webster explained that he wanted rules devised so that CIA agents' authority was so clearly defined that "they can go right up to the edge of that authority and not worry if they or their agency is going to get into trouble."

The original order was signed by

President Gerald Ford in 1976 after congressional investigations disclosed CIA plots in the early 1960s to assassinate Cuban President Fidel Castro and agency involvement in the murder of Rafael Trujillo, leader of the Dominican Republic. A decade later, the CIA also supported a coup that ended in the death of Chile's President Salvador Allende and brought a country with long democratic traditions under dictatorial rule.

Ford moved to define what the

CIA was allowed and not allowed to do in part to avoid Congress' placing new legal restrictions on intelligence activities. Each president since Ford has concurred in the restraining order.

What is puzzling, however, is why the administration feels the need for reinforcing CIA tactics that once were discredited. The only explanation, it seemed, was that it was so deeply embarrassed over the failure to oust Noriega from Panama after Bush and others had for months explicitly promoted just such a coup.

Sen. William Cohen of Maine, senior Republican on the Senate Intelligence Committee, said it may be time to review the interpretation but the order itself should not be changed.

"I don't want to see us getting into the assassination business by another name," Cohen said.

Even Webster's two top assistants at the CIA, the deputy director of intelligence, Richard Kerr, and the deputy director for operations, Richard Stolz, said that restriction wasn't the problem in Panama. But the entire episode was a public setback for the administration, which takes great pride in its intelligence savvy and mature foreign policy analysis.

Webster's call to "reinterpret" the regulations had the effect of deflecting critics from saying Bush or his advisers were too timid and passive—perhaps even wimpish—by suggesting that it was CIA field agents who were too timid and passive, and perhaps even wimpish.

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The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune p 9

Date 22 OCT 89

The second controversial order had been approved by the Justice Department several months ago but wasn't revealed until last week. It allows U.S. agents, if given presidential authorization, to seize fugitives abroad without the permission of the host country, a reversal of the department's 1980 ruling forbidding such activity.

Critics of the order say that seizing fugitives abroad violates international law and is tantamount to kidnapping. But the administration appears to be quietly embracing the new ruling, partly to show its zeal against drug traffickers in Latin America as well as giving itself legal justification in the future to capture political terrorists.

These problems are nothing new. What's different is the President's interest in intelligence, which may provide him with more insight into how the problems might be dealt with.

As soon as Bush was elected vice president in late 1980, he was authorized to receive his own CIA briefing, and for eight years he welcomed that as a bracing way to start the day. Some of his staffers during those years irreverently referred to Bush as "Spymaster" because he kept using many channels of information that bypassed his own staff.

His penchant for writing short personal notes is well known; less publicized is Bush's eagerness to receive private messages in return. Those messages often give him tidbits of information that

**CONTINUED**



can be stored away or used in various political arenas.

Bush also uses the telephone as an informal channel of information, and senior White House officials said they still are surprised by what Bush has learned and stumped about who has told him. Chief of Staff John Sununu and Secretary of State James A. Baker III are two men in the administration with immediate access to the President, but it is his executive secretary, Patty Presock, who knows which personal telephone calls to screen and which immediately go through to the Oval Office.

Nearly a year ago, after winning the presidency, Bush decided he would keep up his habit of beginning each day with a CIA officer—not a political appointee, but a line intelligence analyst—telling him the secrets of other nations.

It was an unusual decision because the President's daily security briefing normally is handled by the national security adviser, who is supposed to combine the intelligence learned from the military, the CIA and the State Department and present it with some geopolitical coherence. It is gingerly suggested one reason for the poor handling of the Panama debacle was that Bush was getting "three different streams of information" and trying to coordinate the material himself.

On a daily basis, Bush's insistence on a separate CIA briefing also created an internal political problem in the White House.

Brent Scowcroft, the security adviser, wanted to know what the CIA was telling the President directly, so he lobbied to sit in on that 15-minute briefing at 8 a.m. At the same time, Sununu wanted to know what Scowcroft was telling the President at his usual 8:15 a.m. briefing as well as what the CIA told him at the 8 o'clock session—so Sununu, too, sits in on both.

Unlike President Ronald Reagan, who often relied on written summaries of routine intelligence matters, Bush insists even on vacation on face-to-face briefings either by Scowcroft or his deputy, Robert Gates, who used to be deputy director of the CIA and is widely believed to still yearn for that job.

Though White House officials have been protective of each other in the wake of the Panama blunder, they said there is a new organizational process underway to get intelligence information to the President in one coherent form. They are convinced it will help in the next fast-breaking crisis.

It is not so clear, however, how much will be accomplished by giving more authority to field agents to engage in overthrow plots or to pull off the capture of a drug fugitive in a foreign land.

# White House Wonders if Downsizing Has Hurt National Security Council

## WASHINGTON INSIGHT

By GERALD F. SEIB

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON—With the dust settling from the failed coup attempt in Panama, one of the many lingering questions the Bush administration will ponder is this: Is the National Security Council staff big enough, and does it have enough clout, to do its job of coordinating foreign policy?

President Bush's national security adviser, Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, came into office in January intent on making the NSC staff leaner and more disciplined than it had been during the Reagan administration. Gen. Scowcroft was a member of the Tower Commission, which investigated the Iran-Contra affair. He was all too aware of how a large, inadequately supervised NSC staff had spun out of control and nearly wrecked President Reagan's second term.

So, following both the style he pursued as President Ford's national security adviser and the recommendations of the Tower Commission, Gen. Scowcroft has pruned the NSC staff and tried to ensure that it sticks to its assigned tasks—namely, gathering the views of the State Department, Pentagon and intelligence community; serving as an honest broker in distilling that information for the president and then making sure presidential decisions are carried out.

The Tower Commission specifically said that the NSC staff should be "small" and warned against letting "energetic self-starters" like Lt. Col. Oliver North strike out on their own rather than leaving the day-to-day execution of policies to the State Department, Pentagon or Central Intelligence Agency.

However, the Panama episode has raised questions about whether the NSC staff is sufficiently big, diverse and powerful to coordinate U.S. policy on tough issues. During the coup attempt and its aftermath, NSC staffers were "stretched very thin," says one senior administration official. "It's a very small shop."

Gen. Scowcroft doesn't plan to increase the staff right now, but is weighing that possibility, the official adds.

The NSC staff "doesn't have the horsepower that I believe is required to have an effective interagency process," says Frank Gaffney, a former Pentagon aide who now runs the Center for Security Policy, a conservative Washington think-tank. "The problem with this administration, I think, is that by design it has greatly diminished, both in a physical sense and in a procedural sense, the role of the NSC."

The National Security Council itself was established in 1947 because policymakers sensed a need, in an increasingly complex world, for a formal system within the White House to make sure that communications flowed smoothly between the president and the State Department, Pentagon and intelligence agencies. By law, the council includes the president, vice president and secretaries of state and defense.

In practice, the director of central intelligence and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff also serve as unofficial members.

But the size, shape and role of the NSC staff have been left for each president and his national security adviser to decide. That task is one of Washington's perennial problems. In the Bush White House, the size of the NSC's staff of professional officers is down to about 50 from about 70 in

1987, administration officials say.

Administration officials insist that the size of the staff wasn't a problem during the Panama crisis. But one clear problem during the coup attempt was that the NSC staffer most experienced in Latin America, Everett Briggs, was gone. He had just resigned, at least in part because of a feud with Assistant Secretary of State Bernard Aronson over the administration's policy on Panama and support for Nicaragua's Contra rebels.

The absence of Mr. Briggs underscored the possible inadequacy of the current NSC staff. Both Gen. Scowcroft and his deputy, Robert Gates, are experts in U.S.-Soviet affairs. Gen. Scowcroft is particularly well-versed in arms control, and Mr. Gates has spent years studying Soviet politics and society. Both have become confidants of President Bush.

But neither has an extensive background in Latin America, the Middle East or Asia. In those areas, the role of NSC staffers under them therefore have become more important.

Gen. Scowcroft knows as well as anyone that one of the biggest dangers he faces is that NSC staffers working in relative anonymity will take over policy-making and operational tasks that are best left to bigger and more experienced State Department and Pentagon bureaus. But just as every previous NSC adviser has, Gen. Scowcroft now will have to mull at what point the NSC staff becomes too lean and too restrained.

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The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal A-11  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date 23 Oct '89



# What Next, Noriega?

Postmortem depression settles in as Washington tries to reconstruct what went wrong in Panama

**A**lmost no one escaped the blame last week. In Panama, strongman Manuel Noriega responded to the failed Oct. 3 military uprising by staging a purge that included executions as well as arrests. Morgues were full and an entire cellblock in a prison near the Panama Defense Forces (PDF) headquarters was reportedly cleared to make room for suspected rebels. Maj. Moisés Giroldi's widow accused Noriega of executing the coup leader when the takeover failed. Another rebel, Capt. Nicasio Lorenzo, was pronounced dead of asphyxiation. The government said he killed himself; his family suspected murder. History may judge the attempted overthrow as the bloodiest single episode in Panamanian history.

In Washington, the damage was strictly political. But it, too, was extensive. State Department and White House officials were quick to dismiss reports of an administrative witch hunt and instead described reconstructions of U.S. involvement as part of a standard review. But behind the scenes, administration officials were furiously trying to establish what went wrong and why. "The issue is being as vigorously reviewed as any foreign-policy issue I can think of in the last five years," said one State Department veteran. At the Pentagon, just establishing a chronology was still a problem days after the revolt was stifled.

President George Bush quickly wearied of the backbiting. The Friday after the coup attempt, the president met with his chief of staff John Sununu, Secretary of State James Baker, national-security adviser Brent Scowcroft and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney to issue an order that they close ranks and keep quiet. The orders were followed with a zeal unusual for Washington. But it didn't keep at least one senior administration official from a damning private assessment: "This was a collective screw-up," he conceded.

ed. "And we all know that."

Initially, critics singled out **Scowcroft** for poor crisis management. As one U.S. intelligence official claimed, the problem was not a lack of intelligence from Panama City. Rather, there was a flood of information coming from the U.S. Southern Command in Panama, the U.S. Embassy and the CIA. But no one in the National Security Council was sorting through it. There also was a disturbing lack of specialists. Everett Ellis Briggs, the NSC's top Latin America expert and a hard-liner on both Panama and Nicaragua, was cleaning out his desk the day of the coup after having lost to the more moderate Baker in a political duel over Nicaragua.

**On the spot:** Others placed the blame on Cheney. Why, his critics wondered, did he rely on the rebels' projections of success when in Panama the U.S. military knew in late morning that troops had moved in to support Noriega? The Defense secretary did himself further injury by acting as spokesman in the first days after the coup attempt. As more information about U.S. involvement leaked out, he had to keep modifying his positions.

U.S. officers in Panama fared better. "In essence what happened was that the men on the spot who were witnessing this coup never felt they had a clear enough picture ... to risk recommending intervention," said a State Department official. Gen. Maxwell R. Thurman, who took up the Panama City command the previous Saturday, will likely be spared altogether. "To go after Thurman when he'd only been on the job

Newsweek **26**

Time

U.S. News & World Report

Date **23 Oct '89**

two days," said one Pentagon official, "would be criminal."

Also spared was Baker. His careful statements in public during the crisis left his critics without ammunition. In one television appearance, he ducked a question about an authorization to capture Noriega by claiming to be "not totally familiar" with the decision. His involvement "was sporadic," said a State Department aide. In fact, the harshest query about Baker was one that applied to many others in the Bush team, too: is this administration overcautious in foreign policy?

Over the years, a military chastened by its experience in Vietnam has become increasingly reluctant to recommend the use of force. Former Defense secretary Caspar

Weinberger made this explicit in a speech in 1984 when he said armed intervention was appropriate only when it "is deemed vital to our national interest" and we have the "clear intention of winning." Throughout the Reagan administration, this view was opposed by Secretary of State George Shultz, whose hawkish instincts were usually shared by Ronald Reagan. But under Bush, the cautious approach prevails. Bush, Baker and Cheney are careful by temperament: a Cheney friend says, "He'll never test the depth of a river with both feet at once." In addition, all three come to their jobs from the field of electoral politics. As a result, they seldom make key policy decisions without thinking first of how to avoid a conflict with Congress.

On Oct. 3 that meant avoiding U.S. casualties. "I'd hate to think what we'd be facing now if we'd had 26 American GIs come home in body bags," said

a senior Baker aide. "You know what [reporters] would be saying to me now: ... 'You knew there was a congressional prohibition. You knew it was against the law' ... The fact is, nobody's dead and there are no investigations." The search for a fail-safe operation kept Bush from acting more deci-

sively. "We wanted too much information," said a senior Bush aide. "We wanted to know precisely what was happening. ... [But] you have to make a political decision and just go for it. That was not done."



Instead of acting, the Bush team was apparently reacting—to a glut of conflicting messages. Between 40 to 50 phone calls were made between the rebels and American officials. For a long time, key administration officials did not even know where Noriega was. Later, when a rebel officer called Fort Clayton, “nobody knew who he was,” said a friend of the Giroldi family.

**‘Micromanagement’:** Even with the clearest of signals, administration officials may not have known what to do. No one had ever determined how to respond to a group of rebels not following a U.S. game plan. When precisely that happened, the administration had no set response. The White House pinned the blame for that on Congress. It was congressional “micromanagement,” **Scowcroft** said, that hamstrung the administration. The Senate Intelligence Committee nixed an administration plan to foment a coup in Panama in the summer of 1988, Bush officials charged. From then on, they said, the CIA was pinned down and ineffectual. A second overture to the committee this year ran into similar problems. “Congress has ... leaned us against the kinds of things now they’re saying we should have done,” said Scowcroft.

Congressional sources spat the blame right back. They claimed that an initial CIA plan to destabilize the Noriega regime was vague. The summer 1988 overture was turned down because the CIA had not analyzed the prospects for a coup’s success; and a later plan was questioned because of the very problem that hampered the administration on Oct. 3: poor contingency planning. The committee probably didn’t know just how right it was about the last problem. “Until the shooting began Tuesday, there were no serious discussions of exactly what to do,” said one administration

source. “By that time, the information was coming in fast and furious and there was little time for thoughtful planning.”

Wednesday Bush met with Intelligence Committee chairman Sen. David Boren to smooth things over. Then the real work began. “Panama is not the big issue here,” said one intelligence official. “The big issue here is how this country functions in a crisis.” By Saturday there were signs the country soon might be functioning better. A senior White House official said that internal reviews had already addressed one problem—the flow of information to the president. A

crisis-management committee will coordinate all future emergencies, with representatives from pertinent agencies gathered in the White House Situation Room. Sources also said the State Department will be meeting with Panamanian opposition leaders this week, and that the administration has already issued new guidelines for American military, intelligence and diplomatic officials to give them more leeway to support coup plotters in the future.

Next time coup plotters may need something more than U.S. help. According to sources in Panama, Noriega’s campaign of fear and revenge is purging the ranks of military opposition. Among its victims was Col. Guillermo Wong, the intelligence chief who kept his forces out of the battle

even though they were stationed across the street from the PDF headquarters. Noriega summoned Wong after the coup attempt to “thank” him for his help. When he showed up, the general stared him in the face and shouted, “Arrest this son of a whore.” Also rumored to be in detention was Maj. Federico Olechea, commander of the 2000 Battalion, the force that ultimately recaptured the PDF *comandancia* from the rebels. Olechea was accused by Mrs. Giroldi of having been in league with the rebels at first, before switching sides.

Death was the grim fate of other rebels. Though Noriega denies reports of executions, American cables obtained by **NewsWEEK** (box) cite a source as reporting that

more than 70 slain rebels were brought to one hospital. Many had been shot several times, perhaps in the fighting. Others appeared to have been executed. A second morgue reportedly held the bodies of 35 slain rebels. Morgue workers were kept from the storage areas by plainclothes police. Ironically, it was Giroldi’s failure to match Noriega’s brutality that proved his undoing; on principle, he refused to kill the general when he had the chance. The question the Bush administration must face now is whether the United States should be more ruthless the next time around.

C. S. MANEGOLD with DOUGLAS WALLER, MARGARET GARRARD WARNER, ANN MCDANIEL, THOMAS M. DEFRAK and JOHN BARRY in Washington, CHARLES LANE in Panama City and ERIK CALONIUS in Miami



# Guidelines On Noriega Set Last Fall

## Covert Action Stalled To Prevent Impact on U.S. Presidential Race

By David Hoffman  
and David B. Ottaway  
Washington Post Staff Writers

Congress and the Reagan administration agreed to guidelines that sharply restricted covert activities against Panamanian Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega last fall to minimize any impact on the U.S. presidential election, according to sources close to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

The sources, who are familiar with secret correspondence between the panel and the White House, said that the record does not fully support President Bush's complaint last week that congressional "micromanagement" had stymied covert operations against Noriega.

The sources said that Gen. Colin L. Powell, then national security adviser to President Ronald Reagan, and CIA Director William H. Webster wrote separate letters to the committee in October 1988 outlining what they understood to be the guidelines for any covert action in Panama. The sources said that the highly classified correspondence suggests that Congress and the White House were essentially in accord over the guidelines at the time.

The result of this understanding on sharply restrictive guidelines was to put on hold any covert action against Noriega until after the U.S. presidential election and a new administration took office, the sources said.

Webster and Powell were responding to an Oct. 6, 1988, letter to them from Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.) and Vice Chairman William S. Cohen (R-Maine), who had urged caution in Panama during the period of the U.S. election cam-

paign. Sources said Boren and Cohen were concerned that the Central Intelligence Agency not become enmeshed in a risky covert venture that could backfire during the election season.

Last week, in a meeting with a group of Senate Republicans, Bush cited one of the Senate panel's letters to make his point about congressional "micromanagement" in foreign policy. Bush singled out from a Senate letter a restriction that might be interpreted as requiring the United States to notify Noriega that he was the target of a possible coup that could endanger his life. At the time, the administration and the Senate panel were discussing what activities would be permitted under the 13-year-old executive order banning U.S. involvement in assassination plots.

It was not clear whether Bush was referring to the Oct. 6 letter.

Sources said that the restriction Bush cited and others in the letter were not imposed solely by the Senate panel, but that the administration had collaborated in framing them. A high-ranking Reagan administration source said yesterday: "I don't recall any animosity or anger from either side. If we didn't have the support, we weren't going to do it."

Bush's use of the 1988 Senate letter was interpreted by some senators as an attempt to make Congress share the blame for the failed coup attempt against Noriega earlier this month. Boren said in a statement Sunday, "The fact is that there was no limitation suggested by the committee on CIA activities in Panama . . . that was not already the policy which the CIA had previously announced as its own." He said "senior administration officials" at the time had agreed to the restrictions orally and in writing.

However, a Bush administration official insisted again yesterday that the Reagan White House had "capitulated" to the Senate demands, and that Bush was correct to describe it as congressional interference.

Bush's comments in the meeting last week angered some senators who thought they were in the process of settling the issue of covert operations in Panama with the White House. Recently, Boren and Cohen met with Bush to discuss it, and sources said the Justice Department has been asked by the White House to provide a legal interpre-

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The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
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USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

Date **24 Oct '89**

tation of the executive order banning assassinations, which will be presented to the intelligence panel.

Boren charged on Sunday that "the American people are being deliberately misled" by selective leaks from the correspondence.

Yesterday, Boren and Cohen met with national security adviser Brent Scowcroft at the senators' request and reportedly discussed this and other related intelligence issues. Seeking to smooth over the flap, Bush insisted yesterday that he has "no differences at all with Mr. Boren on all of this, and he knows it, and we know it, and that's a good thing for the whole situation."

Boren was not available for comment but issued a statement on his meeting with Scowcroft, saying it was "focused on the future and not for the purpose of arguing about past policies. It was a good positive meeting in every respect."

Staff writer Helen Dewar contributed to this report.



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New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

BOSTON GLOBE, 10.16  
Date 24 OCT 1989

# White House, Congress ease rift on Panama

By Stephen Kurkjian  
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON - The White House and the leaders of the Senate Intelligence Committee sought yesterday to tone down the dispute over whether US officials were overly restricted in dealing with the coup attempt in Panama.

Sen. David L. Boren of Oklahoma, chairman of the panel, and Sen. William S. Cohen of Maine, its ranking Republican, met for nearly 90 minutes at the White House with John H. Sununu, the chief of staff, and Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, to discuss Bush's complaints of excessive Capitol Hill intervention in intelligence issues.

At a meeting with seven Republican senators last week, Bush complained that a strict interpretation of the policy on US involvement in foreign coups would require him to notify the Panamanian military leader, Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, of any coup plot that could endanger his life.

The sources said Bush read the senators part of a classified letter from the Senate Intelligence Committee outlining the restrictions. The notification requirement is one of several restrictions on the White House in the 14-year-old US ban on assassinations of foreign leaders, Bush told the senators.

But Cohen and Boren both pointed out that the policy was based on CIA guidelines that

had been agreed upon by the executive branch, according to accounts of the meeting.

The reports on the meeting Sunday night by NBC News, threatened to reopen the wrangling between the White House and Congress over the US role in the failed coup in Panama, as well as to damage communications between the two branches over intelligence issues.

"We were worried that the White House might be working on its own agenda and that's what was behind these leaks," Cohen said yesterday. "The president's people assured us that they view these leaks with as much consternation as we do. There is no good to be gained from finger pointing."

Cohen said he also urged Bush's advisers to reconsider the White House's opposition to the requirement that the administration inform congressional leaders of all covert actions within 48 hours.

Cohen said he also urged Bush's advisers to reconsider the White House's opposition to his proposal that the administration inform congressional leaders of all covert actions within 48 hours. At present the White House is required to provide the information only on a "timely basis," but the Reagan White House's failure to disclose to congressional leaders its secret arms dealings with Iran has illustrated the need for more precise legislative language, according to supporters of the proposal.



# White House, Noriega And Battle in Congress

By STEPHEN ENGELBERG  
with SUSAN F. RASKY  
Special to The New York Times

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The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
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Date 25 Oct 1989

WASHINGTON, Oct. 24 — Behind the debate that has erupted over the failed coup in Panama lies a history of secret Bush and Reagan Administration plans that went awry or were resisted by Congress.

Early this month Brent Scowcroft, the President's national security adviser, and Senator David L. Boren, the Oklahoma Democrat who is chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, sharply disagreed on national television over whether Congress had impeded operations for Panama.

And William H. Webster, the Director of Central Intelligence, in an interview last week called for a re-examination of the way Congress and the executive branch have applied the Presidential executive order barring American involvement in assassinations.

## Details Are Disclosed

Government officials said these public comments gave only a bare outline of a conflict over how to speed the removal of Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, the Panamanian leader, and how to interpret the Presidential order on assassinations. They disclosed these details about Panama and the continuing struggle between the White House and Senate intelligence panel over the conduct of covert operations:

¶ In mid-1988 Senator Boren and Senator William S. Cohen, the Maine Republican who is vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, exchanged letters with the Reagan Administration in which it was agreed to rule out dealing with coup plotters whose plans could lead to the death of General Noriega. President Bush has made it clear to lawmakers that he wants greater latitude, and Congress is divided over the issue.

¶ In early 1989, senior Bush Administration officials decided to present Congress with a plan for covert aid to Panamanian dissidents that called only for "nonlethal" assistance. The officials ruled out directly fomenting a coup against General Noriega because, they said, informal soundings of the Senate committee's leaders suggested that the lawmakers remained opposed to supporting a plot that could include violence against General Noriega.

¶ About the same time, the Senate declined to release half of \$20 million

sought by the Bush Administration for a covert operation to support the Panamanian opposition in the May election, which was subsequently annulled by General Noriega. Several Senate committees declined to approve the \$10 million, which was to be shifted from the Pentagon budget, after being told that a Panamanian who was helping the Central Intelligence Agency had become involved in corrupt activities.

¶ Senator Cohen has been pressing the White House this year to accept the principle that it should notify Congress of all covert operations within a reasonable time limit. After talks between the Senator and the White House broke down, the Senate intelligence panel approved an amendment that would bar the C.I.A. from spending its contingency fund for covert operations on anything about which Congress had not been notified. The move prompted a White House threat of a veto, and the issue remains under discussion between the committee and the Administration.

## Greater Latitude Urged

The executive order barring American involvement in assassinations was issued in 1976 by President Ford and reaffirmed by his successors. Mr. Webster said in the interview last week that it had been interpreted so strictly as to bar the C.I.A. from helping any coup attempt that might end in the unforeseen death of a country's leader.

Mr. Webster said the prohibition did not come into play in the coup attempt in Panama this month since the military plotters were not asking for extensive American help. But he said the agency needed greater latitude to work with rebels whose plans might call for violence but not assassination.

Some on Capitol Hill saw Mr. Webster's comments, and the remarks by Mr. Scowcroft, as a politically motivated effort to shift the blame for "Who lost Panama?" to the Congress. Others said Mr. Webster was simply expressing Mr. Bush's view when he said the C.I.A. needed greater leeway.

Mr. Bush was the Director of Central Intelligence when the original executive order was adopted.

In contrast with the view expressed by Mr. Webster, Administration officials said operations officers at the C.I.A. were largely satisfied with the existing interpretation. The C.I.A. officers, these officials said, are wary about any change in applying the exec-

utive order that could involve the agency in ambiguous situations that could be seen after the fact as being assassination plots.

## Senators Are Told of Plot

Present and former officials agree that the issue came to the fore when the Reagan Administration went to the Senate Intelligence Committee in July 1988 with its plans for a coup in Panama.

Former Reagan Administration officials said the Administration had debated for months the wording of the Presidential intelligence order, or "finding," that would accompany the plan.

An attached C.I.A. assessment said the agency viewed it as likely that General Noriega would be killed, a former official said. The agency noted that the United States would have scant operational control over the force of about two dozen Panamanians.

When Reagan Administration officials showed up to brief the committee, some Senators believed they were being "set up" just four months before the United States Presidential election to take blame if the plans failed.

An unusually large number of officials from the State Department, the Pentagon and the C.I.A. attended the committee meeting, raising fears among the senators that the plan was drawn up precisely so it could be disclosed to the press. Indeed, the committee received reporters' inquiries about the plan while the deliberations were going on.

## 'A Flat No Go'

In the meeting, Senators Cohen and Bill Bradley, Democrat of New Jersey, expressed concern about whether the proposal constituted American involvement in assassination. Senator Boren did not raise that question, but said he was concerned that the plan involved too few people and stood little chance of success.

Within a day, the committee had dispatched a letter under the signatures of Senators Boren and Cohen that made it clear to the White House that the plan was what a former Administration official termed "a flat no go."

While the panel has authority only to review covert operations, not kill them, Presidents typically heed the committee's united opposition, as Mr. Reagan did in this case. Through its budgetary powers, Congress can cut off financing for operations it opposes.

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Now, 15 months later, Senator Boren said in a statement Friday that "there are ambiguities in the record from both the Congressional end and from executive branch policy statements about the meaning of the executive order."

"The President and I agree this is the case," he said of a recent meeting with Mr. Bush.

"I have invited the President to send his suggestions to the committee and have pledged that we will give expeditious and fair consideration to his ideas," he continued.

On Monday, President Bush said he had "no differences at all" with Senator Boren on the ground rules for covert actions, but declined to elaborate.

#### Letter's Effect Debated

The panel's 1988 letter said the C.I.A. had an obligation to prevent an assassination if foreigners recruited as agents by the United States tried to carry one out. Administration officials said this was interpreted by some in the Government as requiring the C.I.A. to warn General Noriega about assassination plots by people working with American intelligence.

A former Reagan Administration official insisted that the committee's letter was taken as a new statement of policy and that efforts to covertly oust General Noriega largely ceased because of it. Another former Reagan Administration official termed the committee's view of the executive order an "annoyance" but said it did not block operations that were otherwise worthwhile.

After President Bush took office, the C.I.A. took to the committee a program of "nonlethal" aid to insurgents in Panama. The program was approved, although some on the House Intelligence Committee later met with President Bush to question whether it went far enough.

The Administration separately presented plans for a \$20 million covert action program aimed at influencing the Panamanian election in May. The plans included financing for various opposition activities, including a clandestine radio station, printing and other electioneering, to which the committee readily agreed.

It was decided that the money would be released in two \$10 million installments, with a chance to assess progress after the first installment was spent.

When the C.I.A. came back for the second installment, it was clear that the program had some administrative problems. Money was going to opposition officials, but it was also being taken by at least one Panamanian suspected of involvement in corrupt activities, Government officials said. The second \$10 million was not approved.



# BUSH AIDE, SENATORS SEEK COMPROMISE ON COVERT NOTICE

By Jim Adams

WASHINGTON, Reuter - President Bush's national security adviser and two senators are working on a compromise that would require Bush to notify Congress of any covert intelligence operation within 48 hours, the senators said.

Congress has been pressing for faster notification since 1987 after former President Ronald Reagan failed to notify Congress of secret U.S. arms sales to Iran for 10 months and said that complied with a vague requirement then of "timely notification" to Congress.

"We're making progress," Sen. David Boren, D-Okla., chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, told reporters.

It was not clear whether the compromise would require the notification 48 hours after the president approved the operation or 48 hours after the operation actually started.

Boren and the committee's vice chairman, Sen. William Cohen, R-Maine, said they had met earlier with Bush's national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, and would meet with him again on the notice.

Boren said the committee, in an intelligence funding bill, had already approved a requirement that the administration give Congress 48 hours' notice.

But he conceded it would be difficult to win approval from the full Congress of the 48-hour provision and said he was seeking a compromise under which Bush would agree less formally to give Congress that notification.

On another subject, Boren said a recent dispute over U.S. support of any coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega was with an unidentified Bush aide and not with the president himself.

"I don't think the president himself is engaged in it," Boren said. "He and I don't have any disagreement."

Boren had said earlier that he agreed with Bush that a U.S. ban against assassinating foreign leaders should be clarified on such questions as whether U.S. support of any coup that could kill a foreign leader was also prohibited.

Boren said Scowcroft and Central Intelligence Agency director William Webster were consulting with the committee on clarifying the assassination ban.

But he said someone else in the administration had leaked suggestions that the committee was the first to interpret the regulation as saying U.S. support of potentially deadly coups was prohibited. Boren said that, on the contrary, former administration officials had previously held that interpretation.

"I think somebody somewhere has a separate agenda," Boren

said of whoever was leaking the information against the committee.

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Date **25 Oct '89**



# Baker Bars Expert's Speech About Gorbachev's Chances

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 26 — Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d barred a speech that the White House's top Soviet expert was scheduled to deliver this evening because he regarded the address as excessively pessimistic about President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's prospects for success, Administration officials said today.

It is unusual for a Secretary of State to intervene to block the speech of another senior Administration official. The move reflects the caution with which the Administration discusses Mr. Gorbachev at this time of rapid change, when there are conflicting perceptions about what is happening in the Soviet Union and how the United States should respond.

## 2 Drafts of Speech Rejected

The Administration does not want to appear to be hastening the Soviet leader's demise with self-fulfilling prophecies or being overly naïve about the opportunities Mr. Gorbachev may be presenting. In order to maintain a consistent voice and policy, Secretary Baker has recently taken a more active role as the Administration's foreign-policy spokesman.

The officials said earlier this week that the White House asked Mr. Baker to review a draft of a speech that Robert M. Gates, the deputy national security adviser, was scheduled to give to the National Collegiate Security Conference in Bethesda, Md., a student colloquium.

Mr. Baker's Policy Planning staff and European Affairs division were adamantly opposed to the address, officials said, arguing that it could send the wrong signal at a time when the United States and Soviet Union are moving toward broader dialogue on a variety of fronts. Mr. Baker agreed with their assessment, officials said.

After the State Department sent back his first draft, Mr. Gates revised it in a way he hoped would be acceptable to the Secretary of State and sent it back. The second draft was also found want-

ing, officials said.

On Wednesday, Mr. Baker spoke to the national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, Mr. Gates's immediate superior, and said he thought that it would best that the speech not be delivered. Mr. Scowcroft acceded to the request, the officials said. Mr. Baker did not speak directly to Mr. Gates.

"There are no and never have been any personal problems between Bob Gates and Jim Baker," said an Administration official. "Baker just felt that there were some lines in that speech that could be misinterpreted and seized upon by the press that could make it appear that we are all not singing from the same hymn book, or create the perception of differences where they do not exist. Considering that Baker has just given these two speeches about Administration's position on U.S.-Soviet relations, he suggested that this would not be the best time for Mr. Gates to deliver his remarks."

According to officials who have seen a draft of the speech by Mr. Gates, he began it by quoting passages from Mr. Baker's two recent addresses on East-West relations. But Mr. Baker apparently had problems with the next part, which was a detailed discussion about the economic and ethnic problems Mr. Gorbachev's perestroika program was unleashing and encountering. The overall assessment left the impression that Mr. Gorbachev's prospects for succeeding were very dim.

## Baker Seeks Consistent Voice

That view is widely held among top officials in the Bush Administration. Nevertheless, the position Mr. Baker has taken in his recent speeches in the name of the Administration is that whether Mr. Gorbachev is likely to succeed or not "perestroika promises Soviet actions more advantageous to our interests" and the United States should do whatever it can now to "lock in" arms control and other agreements with Moscow that are mutually advantageous.

Even if perestroika does not succeed, Mr. Baker said in his speech in San Francisco Monday, "If the Soviets have already destroyed weapons, it will be difficult, costly and time consuming for any future Kremlin leadership to reverse the process and to assert military superiority."

Administration officials said that after all the attention given to Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence S. Eagleburger's recent speech about the

potential for European instability that could result from Mr. Gorbachev's programs — an assessment that was attacked by Democrats as nostalgia for the stability of the Cold War — Mr. Baker has been insistent that the Administration speak in a more consistent voice. Otherwise, he has insisted, it will be impossible to shape a domestic or Congressional consensus on East-West relations.

That was felt even more when, one day after Mr. Baker said in an address in New York on Oct. 16 that the Administration wants perestroika to succeed and is prepared to give Mr. Gorbachev technical advice to help change his economy, Vice President Dan Quayle gave an address in which he said, "Let them reform themselves."

## Hard-Line Stance on Gorbachev

Administration officials said they were very wary of having yet another speech that might easily be interpreted as contradicting Mr. Baker in tone, if not in substance.

Mr. Gates, the former deputy director of Central Intelligence and an expert on the Soviet Union, has long been seen as the most hard-line member of the Bush policymaking team when it comes to whether Mr. Gorbachev was really intent on fundamentally reshaping the Soviet Union and whether he will succeed. This is not the first time his speeches have created some controversy.

On Oct. 14, 1988, while he was still Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, Mr. Gates delivered an address about perestroika to the American Association for the Advancement of Science in which he said: "While Gorbachev's bold political moves and radical rhetoric have shaken the Soviet system, he has not yet really changed it. We can hope for such change but all of Russian and Soviet history cautions us to be skeptical and cautious."

"Whether Gorbachev succeeds or fails, or just survives, a still long competition and struggle with the Soviet Union lie before us," he said.

After the remarks were published, Secretary of State George P. Shultz "read out" Mr. Gates on the telephone, according to State Department officials, for making such a negative pronouncement without getting advance clearance. Mr. Shultz was concerned that Mr. Gates's speech might be interpreted as a sign that the Administration was "writing off" Mr. Gorbachev.

In May, Mr. Gates accompanied Mr. Baker to his first meeting with Mr. Gorbachev in Moscow. During that meeting, Mr. Gorbachev suddenly shifted his attention from Mr. Baker to Mr. Gates, smiled and announced that he had information that there was a cell within the security council staff that had been created for the sole purpose of discrediting perestroika and that Mr. Gates was the head of it.

Mr. Gorbachev suggested to Mr. Baker that their two countries work to improve relations so as "to put Mr. Gates out of a job." Mr. Baker at the time defended Mr. Gates, telling the Soviet leader that everyone in the Bush Administration wanted perestroika to succeed.



# Gorbachev Plans to Destroy His A-Armed Subs in Baltic

BY BILL KELLER  
Special to The New York Times

HELSINKI, Finland, Oct. 26 — President Mikhail S. Gorbachev announced plans today to destroy four Soviet nuclear-missile submarines based in the Baltic Sea, as a step toward ridding the region of nuclear weapons.

The Soviet leader also said Moscow had withdrawn all of its short-range nuclear missiles to sites beyond range of northern Europe.

Mr. Gorbachev's announcements, in a speech to Finnish leaders tonight, was the latest in a series of concessions aimed at building good will in the region and increasing pressure for wider disarmament in Europe.

Western military specialists said the moves were significant political gestures but would not have a major effect on the military balance in the region.

## European Summit Urged

Mr. Gorbachev also called for a summit meeting of the leaders of Europe, the United States and Canada here in 1992, to take a fresh look at the future of Europe.

The Soviet leader has been using his three-day visit here to expand a northern disarmament campaign that he began two years ago with a speech in Murmansk, and to focus attention on neutral Finland as a model neighbor at a time when tumultuous change is shaking Communist Eastern Europe.

Underscoring his pledge that Moscow will not intervene in Eastern Europe, Mr. Gorbachev signed a joint declaration of principles today with President Mauno Koivisto of Finland, advocating "absolute respect" for the inter-

nal affairs of other countries.

The document endorses "absolute respect for the principle of the freedom of social and political choice, de-ideologization and humanization of the relations between states, adherence to international law in foreign policy activities, and giving priority to human interests and values."

"The use of force of any kind cannot be justified: neither by a military alliance against another alliance, nor within these alliances, nor against neutral countries from any quarter," the Soviet and Finnish leaders agreed.

Mr. Gorbachev told the audience tonight at the sleek Finlandia Concert Hall here that Moscow would retire its last four Golf-class nuclear missile submarines in the Baltic Sea by the end of 1990, destroying them along with their payloads and not replacing them with newer models.

They are the last of six submarines deployed in the region in 1976, and are the only vessels in the Baltic armed with nuclear ballistic missiles. The Soviet Union announced last spring that the two others were being withdrawn from operation.

Norman Polmar, a leading American naval analyst, said the submarines were nearly 30 years old and thus approaching the end of their useful life. The removal of their nuclear missiles — three per ship, with an estimated range of 900 nautical miles — still leaves many other submarines in the Baltic Sea able to carry nuclear cruise missiles and nuclear torpedos, he said.

"I look at this as a political gesture to the Baltic states — to West Germany, Denmark, Norway and Sweden, and certainly it would also be a gesture to Poland and East Germany," Mr. Polmar said.

Mr. Gorbachev said Moscow "is prepared to come to agreement with all the nuclear powers and the Baltic States on effective guarantees for the nuclear-free status of the Baltic Sea."

The Soviet leader said Moscow had made "unilateral steps" to pull back its land-based nuclear missiles from Northern Europe. The Soviet Union is eliminating medium-range nuclear missiles as part of an agreement with the United States, but his report tonight indicated that Moscow had also moved back short-range tactical weapons not covered by that treaty.

"As of now, we have no medium or shorter-range missiles on operational

status in areas adjacent to the north of Europe," he said. "Soviet tactical nuclear systems are now deployed in areas from which they cannot reach northern Europe from any given site in Soviet territory."

Officials in the Finnish Foreign Ministry praised this as a sign of Moscow's commitment to reduce tensions in the region, although tactical nuclear weapons, being quite portable, could be quickly returned in a time of crisis.

## Finland's Neutrality Backed

In his speech tonight, Mr. Gorbachev said Moscow "unreservedly recognizes Finland's neutral status and shall continue to do so in the future."

Soviet leaders have previously equivocated on Finland's neutrality, suggesting that Finland owes special deference to its giant eastern neighbor, so Mr. Gorbachev's statement was an important point of pride for Finns.

The two nations also signed an array of agreements promising cooperation on environmental protection, in economic development of the Kola Peninsula and in resolving trade difficulties.

While Mr. Gorbachev was pressing his case for nuclear disarmament, United States officials said today that new intelligence reports showed that the Soviet military had begun a long-expected upgrading of its anti-missile defense system around Moscow.

The ring of anti-missile defenses is permitted under the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, and the Pentagon had recently predicted that improvements in the system might begin this year.

American officials said the more advanced system included two layers of nuclear-tipped missiles to stop attacking missiles either inside or outside the earth's atmosphere.

# Panel Drops Covert-Acts Notification

## In Compromise, Bush Pledges to Inform Hill In All but Rare Cases

By David Hoffman  
and David B. Ottaway  
Washington Post Staff Writers

The leaders of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence have dropped their demand for a new legal requirement that President Bush notify them within 48 hours of all covert operations in exchange for Bush's pledge to notify them in advance or within "a few days" about most such activities.

Bush, however, will reserve the option in rare cases not to tell Congress and claim it is his constitutional prerogative to withhold such information.

In a major compromise after months of negotiation, Bush has agreed to send a letter to the panel outlining his intentions, and the 48-hour proposal has not been included in the authorization bill for the intelligence agencies.

The letter is designed to resolve a long-running procedural dispute between Congress and the White House that stemmed from the Iran-contra affair, but it does not settle underlying constitutional issues of whether the president has the right to withhold information from Congress about clandestine activities.

Officials acknowledged the compromise with Bush provides no iron-clad guarantee against another situation, such as occurred in the Iran-contra affair, when President Ronald Reagan failed to tell Congress for nearly a year about the controversial arms sales to Iran. But officials predicted it is less likely that a president would take the huge political risk of bypassing Congress again.

At the time of Reagan's actions, the law required only "timely" notification to Congress. In the wake of the scandal, which came to light in late 1986, Senate intelligence panel Vice Chairman William S. Cohen (R-Maine) led a battle to define the law to require that Congress be informed within 48 hours. In August 1987, Reagan submitted a letter promising notification within 48 hours "in all but the most exceptional circumstances."

The issue was reopened when Bush took office and the Senate panel pressed for a legislative requirement, which the Senate had passed last year but the House had not.

Cohen said yesterday the new understanding is a "good compromise" in which Bush has pledged to be "sensitive to congressional concerns" while at the same time reserving the option to authorize a covert operation and not tell Congress.

As a result of the compromise, the Senate panel has dropped from its 1990 authorization bill language requiring 48-hour notification. The legislation now remains as it was before, requiring only notification to Congress "in a timely fashion."

Cohen said "we have more than enough votes" in Congress to impose the 48-hour requirement, but it would certainly be vetoed by Bush, and lacks enough support to be overridden.

The compromise was hammered out in recent negotiations involving Cohen, panel Chairman David L. Boren (D-Okla.), Bush and national security adviser Brent Scowcroft. "There were some concessions on our part and some on his," Cohen said of the president, who has strongly resisted any congressional restrictions on his authority.

According to Cohen and administration officials, Bush's letter will pledge:

- He will give Congress prior notification in all but rare cases that he is authorizing a covert action through a directive known as an intelligence "finding."

- In "rare cases," the president may delay notification for a "few days."

- He reserves the option not to tell Congress at all. Cohen said this in effect would be an assertion that the Constitution does not require him to share the information with Congress. Cohen said the record of congressional debates will show that "Congress does not recognize he has that power."

"We could in fact have another situation out there where there is an intelligence finding and we don't know about it," a Senate official said.

However, another source familiar with the shaping of the compromise said, "Iran-contra could happen again, but it happens at the peril of the president."

The authorization bill, which was made public yesterday and next goes to the Senate floor, also provides for a controversial establishment of a presidentially appointed inspector general for the Central Intelligence Agency. Both CIA Director William H. Webster and the White House have in the past expressed opposition to this idea.

Four senators issued a joint dissenting statement saying they saw "no compelling need for or great value" in establishing such an office.



# Salvadoran Cites Killings By Army Unit . . .

drop of 300 feet to large rocks jutting from the ocean.

Sources in El Salvador with access to intelligence said a U.S. adviser specializing in intelligence and another U.S. adviser work in liaison with the First Brigade, and that the CIA routinely pays expenses for intelligence operations in the brigades, including money for informers and office supplies. The United States, which gives El Salvador about \$1.5 million a day in economic and military aid, has about 55 military advisers in El Salvador. A CIA spokesman said that as a matter of policy the agency neither denies nor confirms reports about intelligence matters.

The sources said an intelligence adviser sometimes takes cash to the brigades, although they said it was seldom more than \$1,000. Joya Martinez said he saw the U.S. advisers write checks for as much as \$3,000 for expenses such as office equipment and gasoline.

The sources said that, unless an adviser asked about a special case, he was not informed of arrests, and that the advisers never participated in interrogations.

The U.S. military in El Salvador said through an embassy spokesman that the embassy "exchanges information with the Salvadoran armed forces on a regular basis, but does not regularly or systematically receive photocopies of military reports on captured guerrillas."

"In cases where the embassy has been made aware of captures, there is no routine follow-up, since Salvadoran law requires that a military detainee be passed to police custody and remanded for proceedings in the civil legal system within 72 hours or released with no charges," the spokesman said. "The embassy does of course follow up any specific reports of human rights abuses by either civilian or military authorities."

The Salvadoran military has confirmed that a unit of the First Brigade beat and killed suspected reb-

els in early July. According to accounts by family members, Joya Martinez led a patrol of soldiers that rounded up eight civilians near the hamlet of Tres Ceibas and savagely beat them.

Lucio Parada, 20, was killed by shots in the head after being beaten by a group of soldiers after they tied his thumbs behind his back and his ankles together, according to family members who witnessed the arrest. The relatives said the troops told them they were under orders to carry out the arrests and torture.

"They accused him of being a guerrilla and told him to turn over his guns," said Sebastian Parada, his father, at his mud house near Nejapa, 20 miles north of the capital. "He said he had nothing, but they took him to the cane field and started beating him."

Parada and his wife said that they recognized Joya Martinez when local television aired a video of his accusations last week.

"We were terrified," said Parada. "We feel a great resentment, because there he is alive, and our son is dead. He is the one who held a gun to Lucio's head, and beat him the most."

Joaquin Miranda Marroquin, 20, was badly beaten and died in a hospital in the capital after being turned over to the First Brigade. The other six were freed after 14 days, although under Salvadoran law they should have been released after 72 hours.

Col. Rene Emilio Ponce, military chief of staff, said in an interview that abuses such as the Tres Ceibas killings persisted, but that they were isolated acts, not institutionally sanctioned or part of routine killings.

But there are flaws in the army version of the Tres Ceibas killing, according to diplomats and human rights monitors familiar with the case, that demonstrate the continuing inability of the military to investigate itself.

Col. Elena Fuentes' original version, when asked about the two deaths, was that the men had fallen off a truck and died. A later National Guard investigation into the killing said Joya Martinez acted almost alone, and the investigation did not seek to trace the chain of responsibility or why the other six remained illegally detained, according to one person who studied the report.

"They defined everything as narrowly as possible," the source said. "Joya Martinez is to be the scapegoat. The question is, after 10 years, why can't the military do better on things like this?"

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*Special correspondent Farah reported from San Salvador.*

# Bush gets Gorbachev note

THE WASHINGTON TIMES

President Bush received a new letter from Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev yesterday, hand-delivered in the Oval Office by a top-rank Soviet legislator.

Contents of the message were not disclosed, although the Soviet official said they contain a "very positive" evaluation of U.S.-Soviet relations and show "a new way forward for improvement of relations."

"That letter can cause the spirit of optimism," Yevgeniy M. Primakov, chairman of the Council of Union, the upper house of the Supreme Soviet, told reporters after his meeting with Mr. Bush.

The Russian-language original of the three-page letter was given to Mr. Bush as he welcomed Mr. Primakov, a professor of political science who heads an 18-member delegation of Soviet lawmakers touring the United

States as guests of the Senate leadership.

"I have transmitted the English version to the secretary of state," Mr. Primakov said as he opened the Oval Office meeting by giving Mr. Bush the letter.

Mr. Primakov said the letter was "very positive" but declined to discuss its specifics. "It's the property of the president," he responded through his interpreter.

Attending yesterday's meeting in the Oval Office were Vice President Dan Quayle, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and his deputy, Robert Gates, and White House Chief of Staff John Sununu. Accompanying Mr. Primakov were Ambassador Yuri Dubinin; the delegation's co-chairman Ilmar Sisher, who is co-chairman of the lower house, the Council of Nationalities; and Anatoly Sobchak, another member of the Supreme Soviet delegation.



# New focus revitalizes the Marines

*First of three parts*

By Otto Kreisher  
Copley News Service

WASHINGTON — Repeatedly since World War II, they have been declared as obsolete as the horse cavalry.

But as the prospects of war with the Soviet Union in Europe recede, and U.S. national security concerns focus more on threats from terrorists and smaller unstable countries, even former critics believe the relatively lightly armed but mobile Ma-

veteran Marines can recall.

And the entire Corps is responding, with varying levels of enthusiasm, to new initiatives in organization, training and war-fighting concepts.

The new equipment is a legacy of the military buildup of the Reagan presidency.

The high-quality personnel are the product of pay and benefit improvements from the All Volunteer Force policies and, judging from interviews with new recruits, of the Marines' enduring image as an elite force.

The new initiatives are attributable to Gen. Alfred M. Gray. The Marine Commandant resembles a pit bull and talks like a combat-hardened sergeant, but is credited with possessing a more intellectual vision than any commandant has had in decades.

"Gray is the first commandant since (John A.) Lejeune who is seriously trying to change the Marine Corps," said William S. Lind, presi-

# Baker Blocked Speech by NSC Deputy on Gorbachev Reforms

By Don Oberdorfer  
Washington Post Staff Writer

Secretary of State James A. Baker III used his influence earlier this week to block a speech by deputy national security adviser Robert M. Gates that was pessimistic about Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's *perestroika* reforms, the White House said yesterday.

Press secretary Marlin Fitzwater, confirming a report in the New York Times, said Baker felt it was "inappropriate . . . at this time" for a senior administration official to be so publicly pessimistic about Gorbachev's chances for success.

"It's not really a question of policy," Fitzwater told reporters en route to a meeting with Central American leaders in Costa Rica. "It's a question of analysis and in-

terpretation of events that the State Department felt was better left unsaid at this point."

Gates, a career Sovietologist and former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has been outspokenly skeptical that Gorbachev can succeed in his ambitious reform program. Last October a public assertion by Gates, then at CIA, that Gorbachev had "not really changed" the Soviet behavior pattern brought an objection from then-Secretary of State George P. Shultz on grounds that Gates was making foreign policy outside the established policymaking channels.

An administration official said national security adviser Brent Scowcroft told Baker early this week by telephone that Gates was planning to give a speech on U.S.-Soviet relations and that it would be sent to

Baker for review. After it was received, the official said, several Baker aides including Sovietologist Dennis Ross, State Department policy planning chief, "flagged items that might be seized upon to create a perception of differences in the administration on U.S.-Soviet policy."

Baker then called Scowcroft, according to this account, and said he was concerned about the timing of the Gates speech in light of the two Soviet policy addresses Baker had given last Monday and the Monday before, which Baker felt had been well-received.

"There's no division whatsoever as regards policy," Baker said of the matter, but he said he suggested that Gates cancel the speech, which was to be made to a student group in Silver Spring, because "the timing was not the best."

"People like to draw differences," said Baker.

One source said President Bush telephoned Baker to inquire about the situation after learning of Baker's objections.

Vice President Quayle, interviewed yesterday for the John McLaughlin television program "One on One," to be broadcast this weekend, said, "I think the decision was correct" to cancel the Gates speech.

Quayle, whose views on *perestroika* seemed to be at odds with those of Baker two weeks ago, said Baker "has made very important speeches on U.S.-Soviet policy" which should be digested and analyzed by the public and press. The implication was that the Gates address would have detracted from that process.

An administration official said the

dispute over the Gates speech was a symptom of the growing tension in the administration over how to respond to Gorbachev. This official said there is a group of senior advisers to Bush—including Gates, Quayle and Defense Secretary Richard B. Cheney—that believes there is certain to be more unrest in the Soviet Union and a subsequent crackdown by Gorbachev. As a result, this official said, many in the administration, including those three, wish to take a cautious approach and avoid getting too far out in front. They are said to feel that Baker will "look silly" if the United States goes too far and Gorbachev has to crack down and retreat from *perestroika*.

However, this official said, the public should not discount efforts by Baker to accelerate superpower

negotiations in areas that will help Gorbachev. This official said even though there is some resentment among the others about Baker's thrust, it must be taken seriously, especially since Bush has not made his own position clear.

Bush and Baker have said publicly for months that they hope *perestroika* will succeed and they have expressed the same view to Soviet representatives on many occasions. Going beyond this, Baker said last Monday in San Francisco that the administration should "seize the opportunity" to make maximum efforts to complete arms control agreements.

Staff writers David Hoffman in Washington and Ann Devroy in Costa Rica contributed to this report.



# Warsaw Pact Warns Against Border Shifts

By Blaine Harden  
Washington Post Foreign Service

WARSAW, Oct. 27—The seven nations of the Warsaw Pact, in a joint expression of concern over the possibility of a reunited Germany, today denounced any changes in "postwar borders" as a threat to the stability of Europe.

In a communique released after a two-day meeting here, Warsaw Pact foreign ministers declared that the safety of "a common European home . . . rests with unconditional respect for the inviolability of existing frontiers, territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of states."

In a blunt criticism of West Germany's policy of granting automatic citizenship to East German refugees, the statement said "it is imperative to fully respect the prerogatives of sovereign states, including the issue of citizenship."

The communique, which specifically warned of "the danger of stepped-up neo-Naziism and revanchism," appeared to reflect growing anxiety among Warsaw Pact nations about the ramifications of mass protests and demands for urgent change in East Germany, a country that until this fall had appeared to be one of the most stable and conservative members of the Eastern Bloc. Many European

commentators have said recently that, without a socialist government in East Berlin, there is no justification for the existence of a separate East Germany.

But the unanimity among the ministers to thwart a reunited Germany, which under Adolf Hitler brutalized much of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union during World War II, could not conceal deep and spreading fractures within the once solidly Communist alliance.

Apart from the call to maintain two separate German states, the meeting of the pact's foreign ministers was more an exercise in ignoring irreconcilable differences than a gathering of like-minded allies.

In recent months, hard-line Czechoslovakia has denounced the reformist governments of Poland and Hungary, which are rapidly dismantling Communist systems, for interference in its internal affairs. Meanwhile, Romania has tried, and failed, to organize an economic boycott of Poland's Solidarity-led government.

Hungary and Romania are locked in a bitter squabble over the treatment of ethnic Hungarians who live inside Romanian borders. The dispute has grown to such a fever pitch that the Hungarian defense minister, Ferenc Karpati, in remarks published today in the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro*, said he was "very worried" and "cannot exclude the idea of a confrontation."

Political reforms in Poland, Hungary and, most recently, in East Germany have backed Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria and Romania into a corner. While finding little solace from President Mikhail Gorbachev's fast-changing Soviet Union, the hard-liners of Eastern Europe appear to be struggling to defend Marxist orthodoxy. In fact, dissidents whose views resemble those of Poland's and Hungary's new leadership, are being jailed in Prague, Sofia and Budapest.

In Warsaw this week, it was the Soviet foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, who appeared most comfortable talking about change in Eastern Europe. In a long interview with Adam Michnik, a Polish editor and longtime Solidarity firebrand, Shevardnadze said:

"We might not fully like the fact that it is non-Communists who are in the leadership of Poland, but we respect the will of the Polish nation . . . We want our Polish friends to develop their ties with the West. Your experience regarding cooperation with the West might also be of use to us."

The Soviet foreign minister's statement contradicted a warning sounded by Romanian leader Ni-

colae Ceausescu this meeting of the Com Central Committee. According to the official news agency, Ceausescu led his country for 24

"Steps are taken in Bloc countries that w sitions of socialism a way to the reinstatement of socialism in various forms openly declare that take various capitalist a model. It is hard to though, that socialism oped and improved b model the capitalist sy into classes of oppressed."

At a banquet dinner Thursday night, Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki, told the bloc foreign ministers that undergoing essential changes. The Warsaw Pact outside these changes.

The first non-Communist in this part of more than 40 years w mand that his dinner respond creatively to t by seeking to turn the more into a political th alliance.

In economics, as in rift in the Warsaw Pact deepening. Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and E continue to adhere to a of central economic pl Hungary and Poland, a extent, the Soviet Uni to junk it.

Mazowiecki called night for "radical reform Comecon," the Com bloc plagued by unrealistic rates and heavy subsidies quality manufactured g

The prime minister Comecon reform follow tation in Washington la highly specific Polish that aims to end all ce and create a stable co rrency. The reforms, if pear to amount to an ish withdrawal from soft-currency and bar which Comecon operat

# US shifting to support Gorbachev

By Adam Pertman  
GLOBE STAFF

The Washington Post \_\_\_\_\_  
The New York Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Washington Times \_\_\_\_\_  
The Wall Street Journal \_\_\_\_\_  
The Christian Science Monitor \_\_\_\_\_  
New York Daily News \_\_\_\_\_  
USA Today \_\_\_\_\_  
The Chicago Tribune \_\_\_\_\_

**Boston Globe, A-1**  
Date **28 Oct 1989**

WASHINGTON - A longstanding debate among US officials about Soviet President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's prospects for success appears to have shifted in the last couple of weeks, as President Bush and Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d have edged away from the ranks of naysayers to offer public encouragement.

The latest evidence of this change in attitude, administration officials said yesterday, was a decision by Baker to forbid a ranking White House official from giving a speech that the secretary regarded as too pessimistic about Gorbachev.

The address was to have been delivered this week to a student forum in Maryland by Robert Gates, who is Bush's deputy national security adviser, his top Soviet authority and probably the most conservative senior administration aide in his thinking about the changes being implemented by Gorbachev.

Marlin Fitzwater, the White House spokesman, confirmed a report in yesterday's New York Times that Baker ordered the address scrapped. He told reporters on a flight to Costa Rica that various administration officials were "all over the lot" in their thinking about Gorbachev's program of reform, but he added that "the president's policy ... is we want it to endure."

Gates, a former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, has consistently counseled caution in US dealings with Moscow. Vice President Dan Quayle, Defense Secretary Richard Cheney and Lawrence Eagleburger, deputy secretary of state, at times have counseled likewise.

In Bonn yesterday, for example, Cheney echoed Washington's official support for Gorbachev's programs of glasnost and perestroika in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But he added, "I have to remind people the Soviet Union still has, and is the only nation to have, the military capability to destroy the United States and its allies."

The influence of such advisers as Cheney and Gates was partly responsible, officials acknowledged, for the administration's cautious and deliberate responses to the relaxation of hard-line policies in Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union. But Baker's rhetoric, which sometimes sounded much like Cheney's in the past, has taken a clear turn in the last couple of weeks.

Two speeches he made, one on arms control and the other on providing assistance to Moscow, were markedly more upbeat about the opportunities presented by the evolving US-Soviet relationship. His decision to kill Gates' speech, along with Fitzwater's assertion that this was in keeping with the president's policy, indicated a desire to make this new, more forthcoming thinking a permanent fixture in the administration.

Bush and Baker had come under sharp attack, particularly from Democrats in Congress but also from some Republicans, for not responding more aggressively to promote Gorbachev's changes. It is unclear whether, or to what extent, the new US tack comes in response to that political pressure.

Officials would not discuss specifics of what Baker found objectionable in Gates' address except to say that passages dealing with Soviet ethnic unrest and economic prob-

lems sounded what one aide called "a pessimistic tone, as if Gorbachev was going to have one hell of a time succeeding."

The aide, confirming the Times account, said State Department policy advisers objected, and Baker then told the national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft, that he thought the speech should not be delivered.

"It's a question of analysis and interpretation of events that the State Department felt was better left unsaid at this point," Fitzwater said aboard Air Force One, which was carrying Bush to a meeting with Latin American leaders in Costa Rica. The department, he added, "just felt it's inappropriate to talk about it at this time."



# Policy Dispute on Gorbachev's Reforms Goes Public

■ **Diplomacy:** The Administration is struggling to conceal doubts that perestroika will succeed.

By ROBERT C. TOTH  
and DAVID LAUTER  
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

WASHINGTON—A long-simmering dispute within the Bush Administration over how to deal with the Soviet reform effort erupted Friday as the White House confirmed that Secretary of State James A. Baker III had killed a pessimistic speech about *perestroika* that a senior White House official had planned.

At the center of the dispute, White House Press Secretary Marlin Fitzwater said, are differing views over whether Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev can succeed with *perestroika*, or restructuring of Soviet society.

"There are opinions all over the lot" on that issue, Fitzwater said. "The policy is clear about our wanting to support *glasnost* [openness] and *perestroika*," he added, but officials have "widely varying differences" over the "durability" of Gorbachev's reform plan.

Taken at face value, Fitzwater's remarks suggest that Baker is more optimistic about Gorbachev's chances for success than is the official whose speech he quashed—Robert M. Gates, the President's

deputy national security adviser.

The reality, however, may be more complex. According to some sources, Baker's objection to the proposed Gates speech was that it represented a public expression of no confidence in Gorbachev at a time when U.S. policy is to support his reform efforts.

"The concern was that a downbeat analysis about the prospects would have looked like we're assuming Gorbachev is doomed and we're planning accordingly," said one official. "No one assumes he faces favorable odds, but we're out to advance U.S. interests, whoever is in charge there, not discuss Gorbachev's survivability prospects."

The Administration's public view of *perestroika*'s chances has important political implications at this time, several officials said.

Recently, the Administration has been under fire from Democrats for being too timid and unimaginative in responding to the Gorbachev revolution. Baker helped sidetrack those allegations with two speeches on U.S.-Soviet relations that were clearly upbeat in their outlook, emphasizing opportunities for potential progress. But a new, negative evaluation

could have fueled more charges that the Administration speaks with two voices on Soviet policy.

"The White House was sensitive to this matter, too," said one senior official. "That's why they sent it [Gates' speech text] around" for State Department comments.

Fitzwater, responding to a New York Times report Friday on Baker's blocking of the speech, said that the question of *perestroika*'s chances is one of "analysis, of interpretation of events that the State Department felt better left unsaid at this point."

In his public comments on *perestroika*, Baker has not addressed directly whether he believes the reforms will succeed or fail. He deflects such questions by saying that only the Soviets can make the reforms work and that their success is in the U.S. interest.

Gates, a former deputy director of the CIA, has long taken a skeptical view. The speech he planned to deliver to the National Collegiate Security Conference in Bethesda, Md., was understood to focus more on the obstacles to reform, such as the labor strikes and nationality conflicts in the Soviet Union, than on its limited successes.

The conflict over the speech was the most open airing to date of foreign policy disagreements within the Administration. It was a

major departure from the Administration's usual approach, which strongly discourages public discussion of such disputes.

Officials confirmed that National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft, in particular, was upset by the public squabble, in which he was forced to mediate between his chief deputy and Baker.

Meanwhile, the State Department issued a 64-page report accusing the Soviet Union of maintaining its propaganda and "disinformation" programs aimed at the United States despite the relaxation of tensions between the superpowers. The report displayed a Cold War tone that has been notably absent from Baker's recent speeches.

The report said Moscow last year ended a three-year-old effort to convince the world that the AIDS epidemic was the product of a bungled U.S. germ-warfare program. But the State Department said the Soviets were behind a rumor campaign this year claiming that U.S. hospitals were bringing Latin American orphans to the United States for use as organ donors for transplants.

The report also asserts that Moscow has used forged letters and bogus books to spread stories intended to damage U.S. policies. It said Moscow relies on Soviet employees of the United Nations to

perform propaganda and intelligence work. "Approximately one-fourth of the Soviets in the U.N. secretariat are intelligence officers," the report said.

Toth reported from Washington and Lauter from San Jose, Costa Rica. Times staff writers Norman Kempster and Doyle McManus, in Washington, contributed to the story.

The Washington Post         
The New York Times         
The Washington Times         
The Wall Street Journal         
The Christian Science Monitor         
New York Daily News         
USA Today         
The Chicago Tribune         
**L.A. Times A-7**  
Date **28 OCT 89**



## ROBERT GATES: WASHINGTON SCEPTIC Man who looks at perestroika through a gloomy prism

By Peter Riddell, US Editor, in Washington

LAST May in Moscow, Mr Mikhail Gorbachev suddenly turned from Mr James Baker, the US Secretary of State, to a short, silver-haired official sitting alongside him.

The Soviet leader said he had heard there was a cell within the (US) Security Council staff that had been created for the sole purpose of discrediting perestroika and that the official was the head of it.

His target was Mr Robert Gates, Deputy National Security Adviser and former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr Gorbachev is reported to have suggested to Mr Baker that their two countries work to improve relations so as "to put Mr Gates out of a job".

Mr Baker promptly defended Mr Gates, though last week he may have had some sympathy with Mr Gorbachev's intervention.

Long-simmering doubts within the Administration about perestroika surfaced when Mr Baker insisted that a speech by Mr Gates not be delivered.

The Moscow incident - various versions of which have been leaked by Mr Gates' fans and foes - is revealing, but not surprising, since over the past two years Mr Gates has emerged as Washington's leading sceptic about perestroika.

It is easy to see why Mr Gorbachev and his advisers are suspicious of Mr Gates.

While open and approachable in person, his discussion of the Soviet Union has a clinical, almost monochrome, character, familiar from the Cold War era.

He talks like the intelligence analyst he has been for most of his 23 years in the CIA and the National Security Council.

For all his PhD in Russian and Soviet studies and prominence as a Sovietologist, he had never visited the Soviet Union until last May.



Robert Gates: Rapid rise

Mr Gates is the type of detached US intelligence officer so chillingly portrayed by John Le Carré in his recent novels, notably this year's "The Russia House".

Described by one associate as a "bureaucratic climber", Mr Gates, now aged 46, rose rapidly both because of his assiduity as an analyst and because he developed the right mentors.

These have included, in the mid-1970s, Mr Brent Scowcroft, then, as now, the President's National Security Adviser, and, in the 1980s, Mr William Casey, the CIA director.

Mr Gates stood in for Mr Casey during his final illness and was nominated to become CIA director by President Reagan.

However, his appointment became caught up in the Iran-contra controversy in early 1987 when he was accused of a combination of looking the other way and covering up.

During two bruising confirmation hearings he was described by Republican Senator William Cohen of being "an ambitious young man, type-A personality, climbing the ladder of success. You basically didn't want to rock the boat".

Under pressure, Mr Gates withdrew his name.

Mr Gates, who was deputy director of the CIA until the beginning of this year, has remained a controversial figure.

A speech in mid-October 1988 infuriated the then Secretary of State Mr George Shultz because he thought it might be seen as the US "writing off" Mr Gorbachev - the same criticism made now by Mr Baker.

Mr Gates' view of the Soviet Union has been consistent - and unusually public. He has stressed the internal opposition to Mr Gorbachev and his reforms.

In his October 1988 address, he said: "While Gorbachev's bold political moves and radical rhetoric have shaken the Soviet system, he has not yet really changed it. We can hope for such change but all of Russian and Soviet history cautions us to be sceptical - and cautious".

He concluded: "Whether Gorbachev succeeds, fails or just survives, a still long competition and struggle with the Soviet Union lie before us".

The passage in his latest, suppressed, speech which caused such concern in the State Department was a very pessimistic discussion of the Soviet Union's ethnic and economic problems.

The problem for Mr Baker is not just that Mr Gates might potentially create problems with Moscow by saying aloud what many in Washington are saying privately, but that his views reflect deeper differences within the Administration.

Mr Gates - together with Mr Dick Cheney, the Defence Secretary, and Vice President Dan Quayle - believe that current Soviet problems are so serious that the US should not become too committed to the success of perestroika, particularly over arms control.

Mr Baker has gone much further in talking about seizing an opportunity with the Soviets.

The Gates affair is likely to rumble on. In part, it reflects his own perspective and experience.

"Intelligence looks at the world through a unique and gloomy prism. It has been said that when an intelligence officer smells flowers, he looks around for a coffin."



# U.S. Illusions Shattered in Snows of Krasnoyarsk

■ **Arms Control:** The Soviet confession of willful violations says much to give us pause about their behavior—and that of many prominent Americans.

By FRANK J. GAFFNEY JR.

It is perhaps appropriate that the week that saw the Soviet Union announce the "Frank Sinatra Doctrine" as the guiding force in its foreign policy began with the admission that Moscow had been lying for six years about a violation of the 1972 anti-ballistic missile treaty. It is instructive that the Soviets themselves would see fit to draw a parallel between the entertainer with such a colorful, not to say checkered, past and their own behavior.

Even more instructive has been the truly astonishing reaction to the disclosure by Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze that Moscow had known for some time that its construction of a large, phased array radar near the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk was illegal. By and large this admission has simply been accepted as one more indication of the wondrous benefits of *glasnost*.

What seems to be totally absent is an appreciation that the confession speaks volumes about Soviet behavior—and that of many prominent Americans. We ignore these insights at our peril.

Most importantly, it is now an unsailable fact that the Soviet Union is capable of consciously and willfully violating arms-control agreements. For years, the Ronald Reagan Administration was berated for asserting this; indeed, some suggested that the very act of accusing the Soviets was proof that President Reagan was not truly interested in nuclear arms control.

This observation is particularly sig-

nificant insofar as there are a number of other examples of suspected Soviet violations of formal arms-control agreements. While the evidence to support these charges has not always been as clear-cut as Krasnoyarsk, it is only prudent now to assume Soviet culpability in these areas as well—at least until an opportunity is afforded for a complete and independent accounting.

The emphasis placed by the last Administration on the verification of U.S.-Soviet arms-control agreements is, obviously, fully warranted. Here again, his critics claimed that President Reagan's obsession with exacting verification arrangements was nothing more than an effort to sabotage the prospects for agreements.

Unfortunately, toward the end of his Administration, notably in the treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces, President Reagan became considerably less insistent on effective verification—even as Moscow became more adept at accepting inspection regimes that appeared intrusive but were, in fact, of little value should the Soviets be determined to cheat. The resulting procedures, especially if applied as precedents in other agreements, may well invite future Soviet arms-control violations.

Shevardnadze's confession on Krasnoyarsk provides an embarrassing indictment of those self-styled American authorities on arms control who for years contended that the Soviets were right in averring that this radar was not a violation of the ABM treaty or who, at the very least, trivialized the significance of this treaty breach. A list of those who made such representations is a virtual Who's Who of the U.S. arms-control community. To name but a few of these discredited apologists: McGeorge Bundy, George Kennan, Robert McNamara, Gerard Smith, Paul Warnke, Rep. Tom Downey (D-N.Y.) plus the Arms Control Assn., the

Federation of American Scientists and the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Incredible as it may seem, few—if any—of these individuals or organizations have had the grace to admit their errors. To the contrary, we are now being told that the Soviet admission on Krasnoyarsk, and Moscow's stated determination to tear down this illegal radar, in no way vindicates the firm and outspoken position taken by the United States government about Soviet non-compliance.

This is simply absurd. Even if one takes at face value Shevardnadze's preposterous statement that it took Moscow four years to "sort out" the facts with respect to the illegal character of the Krasnoyarsk facility, there is simply no reason to believe that such a sorting out would have taken place—let alone produced the results it did—absent concerted U.S. pressure. At the very least, the demonstrated inability of such "experts" to assess correctly past Soviet behavior and to advocate effective American responses should call into question their future analyses and recommendations.

Finally, it should be borne in mind that the Krasnoyarsk radar is but one facet of a comprehensive and ongoing Soviet program designed to reduce Soviet vulnerability to nuclear attack—a program fundamentally at odds with the object and purpose of the ABM treaty. Even if the Krasnoyarsk facility is destroyed, we should be under no illusion that Moscow has abandoned its commitment to strategic defense. Instead, the United States must press forward with its own Strategic Defense Initiative, both as a means of providing for a more effective deterrent to nuclear war and as a hedge against as-yet-unacknowledged and future Soviet arms-control violations.

*Frank J. Gaffney Jr., director of the Center for Security Policy in Washington, held senior positions in the Reagan Defense Department.*

# East bloc moves lead White House to stop encouraging division

By Paul Bedard  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Reflecting its approval of the Kremlin's political and economic reforms, the Bush administration has dropped past White House attempts to divide the Soviet bloc and is encouraging East European regimes to follow Moscow's lead.

White House officials said yesterday that President Bush has scrapped previous policies of rewarding East bloc nations for stepping away from the Soviet Union. They said the policy change is due in large part to Kremlin reforms.

The new policy, seen in the administration's economic support of Hungary and Poland, now focuses on encouraging reforms in individual East bloc nations with no demands that ties to the Soviet Union be cut — although that may be the result — the officials said.

Explaining the emerging Bush doctrine, National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft said, "Our policy has been to encourage differentiation in Eastern Europe, not ... on the basis of their distance from the Soviet Union ... but on the basis of their interest in political pluralism and in opening up their economic systems."

One official said "it would be silly" for the Bush administration to reward an Eastern European nation for walking away from the Soviet Union when the Kremlin is implementing policies Washington considers desirable — namely, greater economic and political freedom.

The official said the White House wants East bloc nations to follow Moscow's changes — not avoid them. "The Soviets are reform-minded. ... Things have changed, circumstances have changed," the official said, noting the historic democratic reforms taking place in Poland, Hungary and East Germany.

Asked the administration's reaction to the changes sponsored by the Soviet Union, White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater said, "I can

certainly understand why the Soviets are changing their tune on this with the Warsaw Pact countries all singing, 'Please release me, let me go.'"

The latest example: Bulgaria, which the State Department yesterday said is on the brink of announcing major reforms.

"We welcome indications that the Bulgarian government will move faster on needed reforms. Bulgaria still lags behind the leaders of reform in Eastern Europe," said State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler.

"What I'd like to suggest is that we may be at one of those historic periods of transition when we're really moving from one age to another," Mr. Scowcroft told a convention of American Stock Exchange international investors at the Mayflower Hotel.

"Our enemies, those who have the alternative vision of the world, are now more and more openly abandoning it and moving to adopt the things from our world. In that sense, we have won," he said.

"In almost every sense you look at it, American foreign policy since the war has been a tremendous success. We are now talking from our agenda — our agenda — political pluralism, market economics," Mr. Scowcroft said.

Mr. Scowcroft's views are shared by Secretary of State James A. Baker III, who has heaped praise on Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev and his reform programs. They have steered the administration away from the view held by administration conservatives, notably Vice President Dan Quayle and Defense Secretary Richard Cheney, that the Soviets should not be trusted.

Mr. Scowcroft said the U.S. policy of containing the growth of commu-

nism has succeeded, encouraging demands for major changes.

"Whether we talked about detente in the '70s, peaceful coexistence and so on, it was all different ways of managing this struggle, this mortal struggle between two different systems," he said.

But today, he said, "We can look beyond it, beyond a Soviet Union determined one way or another to overthrow the world as it is, into a Soviet Union prepared — not necessarily to be friendly — but prepared to take its place as a member of the international community, not as a mortal threat to the international community."

In a direct compliment to Mr. Gorbachev and his reforms, Mr. Scowcroft said, "We have a long way to go, and there are signs — there are both good signs and bad signs. But if you look back over, even in the last five years since Gorbachev came into office, some of the things that we're now hearing and seeing now would have been absolutely unimaginable just five years ago."

White House Chief of Staff John Sununu, meanwhile, said changes taking place in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union and "even in China, although it was aborted a little bit," represent a "victory for Western values."

Joining the Baker-Scowcroft camp, Mr. Sununu gave the American Stock Exchange gathering a cheery description of American-style changes taking place in the communist world.

Change pushed "from the bottom up in many cases" by reformers in communist countries "has created a sense of inevitability in many cases for the kind of political change that has been the hope and dream of free countries around the world to see extended to those countries that have lived in less free environments," Mr. Sununu said.

Mr. Scowcroft had a word of warning, however. While there is "a lot of promise here [there is] still a lot of danger," he said. "A lot of things can happen both in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe."



# Loyalty conflict stirs nightmare for Soviet army

by Peter Millar

THE Soviet army is suffering a crisis of both morals and morale. While Eduard Shevardnadze, Russia's foreign minister, last week officially pronounced the Afghan war to have been illegal, Moscow's military debated: who gives the orders, the general or the politician?

An old Russian soldier's nightmare is recurring: the internal battle on two fronts.

In the face of unprecedented criticism of their actions, the men who command Moscow's vast fighting machine have begun to show jitters. Last week General Vladimir Lobov, chief of staff of the Warsaw Pact armed forces, admitted to *Sovietskaya Rossya*, a conservative newspaper, that growing numbers of young people were evading conscription. "We, soldiers and generals alike, are worried, we are very worried indeed," he said.

The concern is heightened by the past week's meeting of the pact, which for the first time in its history disclosed an alliance held together by goodwill alone. Mikhail Gorbachev has made clear that those who refuse to reform cannot expect Russian tanks in support. Shevardnadze told the closing session of the pact's foreign ministers on Friday that Moscow aimed to have brought all its boys home by the year 2000.

The dilemma for the Rus-

sian fighting man, from conscript to colonel, comes from not knowing whether his duty is to protect the state or the system.

The seeds of this confusion were sown in 1918, when the Bolsheviks enlisted militarily competent ex-Tsarist officers and imposed political commissars to ensure they carried out the new regime's orders. Loyalty was judged according to politics rather than patriotism. The result was a dual command structure inside the armed forces, the ascendancy oscillating according to the political climate.

Over the past four years Gorbachev has sought to play down ideology while still insisting on the leading role of the party — a policy that has kept him in power during a period of reform, but which has caused a conflict of loyalty for simple soldiers.

Tested warriors like General Boris Gromov, the last soldier out of Afghanistan and now commander of the sensitive Kiev military district, have reacted by maintaining a political silence. With questions about alleged atrocities now being asked in parliament, discretion is the better part of valour.

Lobov spoke up for this faction by warning against the easy criticism of those who follow orders. He also pointed at another fear: "The military press has recently and justifiably raised the alarm about

the Soviet army's possible transformation into a worker and peasant red army."

What he meant was the spectre of a "people's army" — an echo of the 1930s, when purges so reduced the officer corps of the old, egalitarian Red Army that it was unprepared to counter the German attack in 1941.

Facing military defeat, Stalin rallied his troops by reinstating old values and traditions, including Cossack fur hats, sabres and epaulettes, and regiments named after Tsarist generals. Later, the "Red Army" became the "Soviet Army".

Lobov believes that those traditions, and by implication the military's ability to do its job, are now threatened. He said that it was up to society to protect the army from "outrages against its history and desecration of its relics", and called for restoration of the "centuries-old principle of honour in service".

Since June, the Supreme Soviet has had a standing committee for defence and state security, under a civilian head, to which both the army and KGB are supposed to be responsible. Its intended role is as an American-style congressional watchdog; in fact, its members are vetted by the KGB and several are generals, so that the separation of interests is at best blurred.

A clear indicator of the balance of power between the overt and covert services, however, is the fact that Vladimir Kryuchkov, the KGB chairman, sprang straight to full membership of the politburo, while Dmitri Yazov, minister of defence, remains a candidate member.

The interim result is that strong elements of the military now seem in favour of keeping a low profile and doing their job, if only someone would tell them what the job is.