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By RICHARD HALLORAN Special to The New York Times

New York Times (1923-Current file); May 12, 1989; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The New York Times

pg. A8

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WASHINGTON, May 11 — The United States armed force ordered into Panama by President Bush today will be relatively small and will move slowly into Panama over the next three weeks, apparently as the result of a compromise between the Defense and State Departments.

Officials said the State Department had urged a show of military force intended to weaken the Panamanian leader, Gen. Manuel Antonio Noriega, and perhaps even to persuade him to give up power. But the Joint Chiefs of Staff have been reluctant to take military action when political objectives were not clear. Officials said the chiefs were supported by Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney.

The Joint Chiefs, officials said, were concerned that a show of military force not tempt General Noriega to take hostages from among the roughly 40,000 American civilians who live in Panama. These include dependents of the American forces there and employees of the Panama Canal Commission, diplomats and other United States Government employees, businessmen, retirees and tourists.

### Phased Deployment

The President said he had ordered a brigade-sized unit to deploy to Panama to reinforce 10,300 American troops already there and to protect American lives. About 1,700 soldiers and 165 marines are being sent, which is less than the 3,000 troops in a brigade.

They will be sent in phases, Pentagon officials said. The first elements of a light infantry battalion of 890 soldiers will be flown to Panama from Fort Ord, Calif., on Friday, while a battalion of mechanized infantry from Fort Polk, La., will take two to three weeks to get there by ship.

The phased deployment, officials said, was chosen because American bases in Panama are small and could handle the influx better if it came slowly. In addition, the battalion being



An American soldier stopping a car yesterday at the entrance to Fort Clayton, near Panama City, where security has been increased. President Bush has ordered 1,850 additional troops to Panama. Reuters

sent by ship could be turned around if the tension in Panama eased.

The deployment of two battalions, plus a command element and medical, signal and supply detachments instead of the three battalions and supporting units in a brigade, appeared to be a compromise made to accommodate the concerns of the Defense Department and specifically the Joint Chiefs.

In his announcement, President Bush was careful to avoid threatening Panama and justified the dispatch of troops as a measure to protect Americans. "I have a profound obligation as Commander in Chief of the armed forces and as President, and that is to protect American lives," the President said. "And I'm going to do what is prudent and necessary to do this."

### Troop Movements

At the Pentagon, the chief spokesman, J. Daniel Howard, said that 890 soldiers from the Seventh Infantry Division at Fort Ord, Calif., would be flown by Military Airlift Command C-141's in 55 flights from nearby Travis

Air Force Base to Howard Air Force Base in Panama. That includes an infantry battalion and an attached battery of artillery.

Where they would go from there was not disclosed, but the Army's Fort Kobbe is next door; an infantry battalion, a combat aviation battalion equipped with helicopters and an engineer battalion are stationed there now. It will take several days to a week to move all the soldiers to Panama.

In addition, 100 officers and soldiers from a brigade headquarters in the Seventh Infantry Division will be flown to Panama to assume control over this deployment. It will operate under the command of the United States Southern Command with headquarters in Quarry Heights.

From Camp Lejeune, N.C., a company of 165 marines from the Second Division will also be flown to Panama. They are equipped with 18 light armored vehicles. From the Fifth Infantry Division at Fort Polk, La., will go 726 soldiers in a reduced mechanized battalion.

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The New York Times/May 12, 1989

First U.S. reinforcements will  
land at Howard Air Base.