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## **Panama: U.S. Southern Command Releases New Lower Casualty Figures For December 1989 Invasion**

*by Deborah Tyroler*

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In a Dec. 14 communique released in Panama City, the US Southern Command announced revised casualty figures for the December 1989 invasion. The new death toll is as follows: 65 soldiers, 155 civilians, 50 others who have not been categorized, and 75 bodies described as "missing." The figures, said the communique, include persons who perished as a result of fires, murder, traffic accidents, looting and natural causes during the invasion. The estimates were based on figures compiled by the Panamanian Institute of Legal Medicine. The Southern Command had formerly calculated 314 military and 202 civilian deaths. The communique asserted that allegations of thousands dead made by opposition groups "have turned out to be without foundation." Next, the communique said that the US army has investigated 14 of 24 complaints concerning serious misconduct of soldiers. Nine of the complaints were thrown out, described as not meriting investigation, and one case is pending. Eleven of the complaints investigated were forwarded through legal channels, and three were found to be without basis. (Basic data from AP, 12/14/90)

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