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| REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE | | | | Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188 | |
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| 1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 05-04-2012 | | 2. REPORT TYPE FINAL | | 3. DATES COVERED (From - To) | |
| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE URGENT FURY: The Operational Leadership of Vice Admiral Joseph P. Metcalf, III | | | | 5a. CONTRACT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5b. GRANT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER | |
| 6. AUTHOR(S) Samuel D. Ward Paper Advisor (if Any): Dr. Milan N. Vego | | | | 5d. PROJECT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5e. TASK NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER | |
| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Military Operations Department Naval War College 686 Cushing Road Newport, RI 02841-1207 | | | | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER | |
| 9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) | | | | 10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) | |
| | | | | 11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) | |
| 12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; Distribution is unlimited. Reference: DOD Directive 5230.24 | | | | | |
| 13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES A paper submitted to the Naval War College faculty in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department. The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the NWC or the Department of the Navy. | | | | | |
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| 15. SUBJECT TERMS Operation URGENT FURY, Grenada, Operational Leadership, Joseph P. Metcalf, III | | | | | |
| 16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: | | | 17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT | 18. NUMBER OF PAGES 25 | 19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON Chairman, JMO Dept |
| a. REPORT UNCLASSIFIED | b. ABSTRACT UNCLASSIFIED | c. THIS PAGE UNCLASSIFIED | | | 19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 401-841-3556 |

**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, R.I.**

**URGENT FURY: THE OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF
VICE ADMIRAL JOSEPH P. METCALF, III**

by

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

Signature: _____

04 May 2012

ABSTRACT

Vice Admiral Joseph P. Metcalf, III commanded the largest American joint military operation since the Vietnam War on the small Caribbean island of Grenada in 1983. This paper focuses on Metcalf's operational leadership during Operation URGENT FURY. It begins by providing the readers an introduction to Metcalf's life, his education and career, and the circumstances that led to Metcalf being named as the operational commander of Combined Joint Task Force 120. Examples follow from the planning and execution stages of the Grenada invasion illustrating Metcalf's possession of the three theoretical requirements of successful operational leadership: certain personality traits (including wisdom, good judgment, and emotional balance), a present yet unobtrusive command style, and significant professional knowledge allowing for critical decision making. Discussion topics include Metcalf's thirty-nine hours to prepare for the invasion, the decisions to bomb Fort Frederick and conduct a Marine amphibious assault at Grand Mal, Metcalf's relationship with General Schwarzkopf, and the now-infamous media policy. The paper concludes with lessons learned drawn from Metcalf's operational leadership performance for current and future leaders including the Vice Admiral's favorite: "When you are in command, COMMAND!"

INTRODUCTION

Six months prior to being sworn in as the seventeenth Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Mike Mullen stood in the U.S. Naval Academy Chapel on March 8, 2007 and delivered a stirring eulogy praising the life of Vice Admiral Joseph P. Metcalf, III. Mullen said in conclusion, “To the Sailors of this great Navy, the ones out there on watch right now, I say this: Remember Joe Metcalf. Learn of his life and of his service, for he helped build the Navy you now put to sea. He made you ready for combat so that you might never know its [sic] ugly sting. He fought the good fight.”¹ Surprisingly, very little is written to date about Vice Admiral Joseph P. Metcalf, III, despite his having operational command of units from all four branches of the military during America’s largest armed conflict after the Vietnam War. This paper will “remember Joe Metcalf” by focusing on Metcalf’s operational leadership during the 1983 Grenada invasion. It begins by providing the readers an introduction to Metcalf’s life, his education and career, and the circumstances that led to Metcalf being named as the operational commander of the Grenada conflict. Examples will follow from the planning and execution stages of the Grenada invasion illustrating Metcalf’s possession of the three theoretical requirements of successful operational leadership: certain personality traits (including wisdom, good judgment, and emotional balance), a present yet unobtrusive command style, and significant professional knowledge allowing for critical decision making. The paper will conclude with lessons learned drawn from Metcalf’s performance for current and future operational leaders from all sectors of public service, be it Navy, the Department of Defense, or from other government agencies.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Joseph P. Metcalf, III was born in Holyoke, MA in 1927. After enlisting in the Navy in 1946, he was quickly admitted to the Naval Academy and graduated in 1951 as a Surface Warfare Officer. His career at sea began with service aboard the destroyer USS *Watts* and on the staff of the Cruiser Division Six Commander before taking command himself of the landing ship USS *King County*. Metcalf commanded the USS *Westchester County* during the “first amphibious landing of the Vietnam War” in 1966 and was “in charge of evacuating all surface ships” during the final withdrawal from Saigon in 1975.² Metcalf’s other command tours at sea included the destroyer USS *Bradley*, Destroyer Squadron 33, the Naval Surface Group in the Middle Pacific, and Cruiser-Destroyer Group Eight.³ He also completed a number of tours ashore and by the summer of 1983, Metcalf held the three-star rank of Vice Admiral, commanded U.S. Second Fleet in the western Atlantic Ocean, and was only three months away from commanding the largest American joint military operation since the Vietnam War on the small Caribbean island of Grenada.

Grenada gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1974 and experienced two coup d’états in its first nine years of freedom. The first was bloodless in 1979, when a Marxist group headed by Maurice Bishop ousted the democratically-elected government. Bishop spent the next four years as Prime Minister strengthening Grenada’s ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union. Particularly worrisome to the Reagan Administration was the construction of a new nine thousand-foot runway at Point Salines on the eastern coast that could be used to “extend the operating range of these Cuban fighter-bombers [MiG 23s] across the Caribbean.”⁴ The second coup occurred on October 12, 1983 when the Commander-in-Chief of the Grenada Armed Forces placed Bishop under house arrest, dissolved the government,

installed a Revolutionary Military Council, and instituted a four day, twenty-four hour curfew for anyone on the island, including 600 American medical school students enrolled at St. George's University. Bishop and several other government leaders were executed within the week.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) issued an October 19 warning order instructing Admiral Wesley McDonald, Command-in-Chief of U.S. Atlantic Fleet (CINCLANT), to prepare for a noncombatant evacuation operation of the American medical students. Concern for the welfare of the students continued to rise as Vice President George H. W. Bush chaired a principals meeting in Washington, DC on October 20 and by the next day, CINCLANT was planning for a full-scale military operation on Grenada. However, not all necessary personnel were included in the initial planning stages because JCS required maximum operational security in order to maintain the element of surprise.⁵ President Ronald Reagan approved the use of military force on October 22 with orders to protect U.S. citizens on Grenada, disarm hostile forces, and restore a democratic government. JCS subsequently issued the execute order and later that evening, CINCLANT "proposed that Vice Admiral [VADM] Metcalf, as Commander of the Second Fleet, command the invasion force. On D-Day, VADM Metcalf would command four task forces [121: Army; 123: Special Operations; 124: Navy and Marines; 126: Air Force] known collectively as Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 120" and the "Army commander [would be placed] under VADM Metcalf's command."⁶ To advise on all ground operations, JCS later ordered the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division's Major General (MG) H. Norman Schwarzkopf to immediately report to Metcalf in Norfolk, Virginia. Metcalf was informed of his new

command of CJTF 120 on October 23 at 4:00 p.m., and for the rest of his life would refer to this lead up to the execution of Operation URGENT FURY as *the thirty-nine hours*.⁷

METCALF'S PERSONALITY TRAITS

One could argue that Metcalf, as a career Surface Warfare Officer and Commander of Second Fleet prior to legislated integration of the military services by the 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Act, was not the best choice to command the Grenada invasion. Metcalf's time spent at the Army War College certainly introduced him to the very basics of ground operations and strategy, but it was primarily Metcalf's strength of personality and apparent leadership skills that qualified him to command the ad-hoc operation. In describing the theoretical requirements of operational leadership, Dr. Milan Vego writes, "Successful commanders at any level of command possess certain character traits and professional knowledge and experience that distinguish them from less capable commanders. In general, they should have the wisdom, good judgment, and emotional balance to make critical decisions based on ambiguous information."⁸ Vego also lists specific personality traits such as "strength of character, high intellect, creativity, and boldness" as necessary for success as a military commander.⁹ VADM Joseph Metcalf had these personality traits.

Admiral Mullen described Metcalf as "indefatigable, unassailable...the very best example of integrity and character and resolve...a legend" before calling him a "rock-hard, salt-stained, dyed-in-the-wool Surface Warrior...a bit of a scrapper...[who] loved nothing better than to mentor and to teach."¹⁰ General Schwarzkopf described Metcalf as "a wiry, feisty three-star with a sharp New England accent" in his autobiography.¹¹ John Carey was serving on the cruiser USS *Bunker Hill* when he first met the Vice Admiral and wrote a

tribute to Metcalf in 2007. “He was always remarkable...[and] had a marvelous flair for everything...Admiral Metcalf was not politically correct. He admitted that he was a ‘warrior’...[who] wanted integration and total information sharing...and he was always alacrity personified.” Carey continued, “He lived in an era dominated by the Cold War. He was flamboyant [sic] and proud. But when challenged to put forces into the fight, he rose to the occasion brilliantly and magnificently and quickly. He never waived [sic].”¹² Perhaps it was Metcalf’s alacrity, his brisk and cheerful readiness, which made him the appropriate choice to command the forces on Grenada.

Metcalf was certainly aware of Operation URGENT FURY prior to his official notification on October 23; yet, there are conflicting reports whether Metcalf could have engaged earlier in planning the operation. Metcalf wrote in 1986 that he “deliberately” chose to not be included in the preliminary planning process until he received formal command from CINCLANT so as not to be “emotionally identified with the development of a particular plan.”¹³ Choosing to remain isolated would severely degrade a commander’s ability to inject their operational vision into the planning process so it is unclear why Metcalf adopted this curious view.¹⁴ Perhaps he was merely attempting to conceal his disappointment at being excluded from the initial development of URGENT FURY plans. When Metcalf formally discussed the Grenada invasion with students at the Joint Forces Staff College from 2000-2002, he said on multiple occasions that Admiral McDonald should have involved him sooner in the planning process, especially since the two men knew each other very well (they were neighbors in Norfolk).¹⁵

Regardless of when or why Metcalf was given command and brought into the planning process, there was little time to think and barely enough time to react as the thirty-

nine hour clock started ticking. Metcalf's first step was to organize his CJTF 120 staff. He selected sixteen staff officers from Second Fleet and added representatives from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the Department of State (DOS), the Air Force, and the Army.¹⁶ Notably absent from the staff were a logistics officer and a public affairs officer, due in part to the "strict operational security" imposed by the JCS and Metcalf's belief that CJTF 120 would not be responsible for those two operational functions. Rather than creating a joint plan, each individual service was left responsible for its own logistics (in hindsight, this erroneous decision contributed to "unprecedented logistic demands" on the Army's 82nd Airborne Division later in the conflict).¹⁷ Press queries would be submitted to CINCLANT "for referral to the Office of the Secretary of Defense" as stated in the operations order.¹⁸

Once the staff was created and organized, Metcalf reviewed the CINCLANT invasion plans as edited by the JCS to confirm they were executable and could achieve the mission objectives. The objectives themselves were "clear and unambiguous" but Metcalf could foresee the restrictive rules of engagement requiring difficult operational level decision making during the execution phase.¹⁹ There was also a notable lack of human intelligence that would eventually require Metcalf to "make critical decisions based on ambiguous information." There were not enough people on the ground providing current information on the positions or defenses of Grenada and Cuban military forces, or identifying hospitals, neutral sites, and all of the housing locations for American university students.²⁰ Metcalf needed the plan—and everyone involved in it—to remain flexible.²¹

The plan included capabilities from each of the military's four branches but did not integrate the services; in fact, there was a line drawn horizontally across the island with the Marine Corps handling operations in the North and the Army Rangers landing in the South.

The Navy would blockade the island and provide fire support, the Air Force would interdict any Cuban airplanes arriving to reinforce the island, and Special Forces would locate and secure Grenada's Governor General. Deconfliction and coordination between the services would occur at Metcalf's headquarters aboard the USS *Guam*. Metcalf agreed that in the time allotted, the simplest and best way to execute this complex plan was to keep each service separated and allow the soldiers and sailors to fight as trained rather than instituting an ad hoc joint services organization.

It is too easy in the modern, post-Goldwater-Nichols era to judge Metcalf's decision separating the services as incorrect; however, Metcalf's choice gains credibility when the operational factors (time, force, space) are viewed from his perspective at that particular time. There were severe time constraints facing CJTF 120, the military services were untrained and unequipped to fight jointly, and Grenada's geography could accommodate multiple lines of operation. Metcalf later called the "assignment of tasks to the army and marines utiliz[ing] their specialized, individual [service] training...the tactical key to success of the operation." Despite having initial "reservations about certain high-risk aspects of the plan," Metcalf conferred with advisors and boldly "came to the conclusion that the plan as approved by the Joint Chiefs of Staff was executable with acceptable risk."²²

METCALF'S COMMAND STYLE

The second theoretical requirement of successful operational leadership is command style. Dr. Vego states, "the most effective leadership...is by example" and "the commander's presence on the scene has a powerful moral influence on the ultimate success of the operation." Vego continues, "The operational commander's duty should be to educate his subordinate commanders, with the aim of teaching them not what to think but how to

think” and “an honest relationship between a commander and his subordinates cannot help but improve the understanding of each other’s thoughts and actions.”²³ These examples perfectly describe VADM Joseph Metcalf’s command style during Operation URGENT FURY.

On October 24, 1983 at 7:00 a.m. in Norfolk—fifteen hours after taking command of CJTF 120 and less than twenty-four hours from the start of the invasion—Metcalf met with ADM McDonald, MG Schwarzkopf, commanders of the 82nd Airborne Rangers and Special Forces, and representatives from CIA and DOS to “establish who was in charge,” review the operation plan, and make “it understood that [Metcalf] would tell commanders ‘what’ to do rather than ‘how’ to do it.”²⁴ The Navy and Marine commanders were not invited to the meeting because Metcalf already “knew how they operated.”²⁵ Metcalf was confident in his ability to lead the overall operation, but honest about his limitations in directing land forces. In an attempt to unify ground command between the Marines and the Army, Metcalf proposed making Schwarzkopf the overall ground forces commander once the amphibious landing was complete. However, the proposal was rejected by CINCLANT because the commanding general of the 82nd Airborne outranked Schwarzkopf.²⁶ The message was clear: Metcalf was in charge.

Later that morning, Metcalf made one of the most crucial command decisions of the thirty-nine hours. Understanding that success in controlling URGENT FURY depended on how well the national military and political leadership were informed of the “progress of events” in Grenada, Metcalf assigned four members of his staff the sole task of sending at least two situation reports (SITREPs) every hour up the chain of command. Metcalf also assigned his operations officer to be the one and only “voice of Urgent Fury” on secure

communications lines to CINCLANT staff in order to reinforce the impression that the Grenada situation was under complete control. In hindsight, this critical decision is likely what persuaded JCS to allow Metcalf—a naval flag officer—to retain local command and control over URGENT FURY after land operations began in earnest.²⁷ After the initial invasion, rumors of the “real” situation on the ground began circling back to the Pentagon via the military services, but the JCS and CINCLANT would continue to rely on Metcalf’s thirty minute SITREPs as the “true state of affairs.”²⁸

At 11:00 a.m., Metcalf and Schwarzkopf departed Norfolk for Barbados and “used what little time they had to become acquainted.”²⁹ Metcalf was scheduled to meet with the commander of the international Caribbean Peacekeeping Force (CPF), which was a small force from Jamaica, Barbados, and some police officers from the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, on arrival in Bridgetown but the commander was late and the airport was filled with press.³⁰ Instead, Metcalf instructed Marine Corps Major General Crist to organize and prepare the CPF for an airlift to Grenada to conduct law enforcement actions as needed and assist with guarding prisoners.³¹ Metcalf and Schwarzkopf then boarded Navy helicopters and were on the deck of Metcalf’s makeshift command ship, the Iwo Jima-class “amphib” USS *Guam*, by 5:30 p.m. ready to command URGENT FURY from within the theater of operations. In order to boost morale and mentally prepare the forces that evening, “officers on the *Guam* preempted the scheduled feature for a showing of the ‘Sands of Iwo Jima’ starring John Wayne.”³²

Metcalf’s demand for an invasion plan with built-in flexibility proved critical three hours prior to H-Hour (5:00 a.m.) on D-Day (October 25). A Special Operations team conducted nighttime reconnaissance of the northeastern Grenada beaches where the Marines

planned to land, and discovered it unsuitable for an amphibious assault.³³ Metcalf revised the plans at the last minute and instructed the Marines to land in the same area using helicopters. The Special Operations teams were unable to “recon” the southwestern beaches due to rough seas, so the Army Rangers would need to land without the benefit of current intelligence.³⁴ Metcalf continued working tirelessly through the night as *the thirty-nine hours* came rapidly to a close.

There were mixed combat results during the first twelve hours of URGENT FURY’s execution phase. “The Marines encountered very light resistance” from enemy forces after conducting the airborne assault and successfully occupied “nearby objectives within two hours.”³⁵ However, the Army Rangers and Special Operations teams were not as lucky. The mission to secure Grenada’s Governor General had left twenty-two Special Operations soldiers trapped inside the executive mansion and surrounded by Grenadian forces, while the Rangers had encountered stiff resistance from Cuban forces after landing in the south.³⁶ Metcalf made two crucial command decisions that day to remedy the disproportionate “action” between the northern and southern parts of the island.³⁷ One of those decisions will be questioned and one applauded as long as URGENT FURY is studied.

Two helicopter gunships that Metcalf sent to assist the soldiers trapped at the Governor General’s mansion were shot down by antiaircraft fire originating from Fort Frederick, which “was an old British fort, set on high ground overlooking the town” and “surrounded by a residential area.” After Fort Frederick was identified by intelligence officers as also being the location of the enemy force’s headquarters, Metcalf ordered an airstrike that leveled the fort. Unfortunately, the strike also destroyed an unmarked hospital nearby, killing seventeen mental patients. A subsequent investigation “revealed that before

the attack Grenadian troops” had “evacuated all able-bodied staff and inmates” and “locked up the mental patients in one wing of the building.”³⁸ Many years after the conflict, Metcalf remained proud of his command decision to bomb Fort Frederick based on the operational intelligence available to him at the time.³⁹

Perhaps the most daring maneuver of Operation URGENT FURY was Metcalf ordering Marines to conduct an unplanned daylight amphibious landing on the western beach of Grand Mal. A “reserve” Marine rifle company was unused and “standing by” off the eastern coast of Grenada because the initial Marine landing in the North had occurred relatively easily. Schwarzkopf approached Metcalf with the idea of maneuvering the “reserve” Marines to the west coast to “take the pressure off the governor’s house.” Metcalf agreed with the need to flank the enemy pinning down his friendly forces, so after sending a Special Operations team to “recon” the proposed landing site and “weighing all the pros and cons,” Metcalf ordered the risky landing for later that evening.⁴⁰

METCALF’S PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

The third theoretical requirement of successful operational leadership is professional knowledge and experience. Dr. Vego states, “all great captains in history...were known for constantly working to improve their professional knowledge.” Also, “the operational commander should possess a thorough knowledge and understanding of the theory and practice of operational art” and “must be physically and mentally strong” to “withstand the hardships of extended field duty and set an example.” Vego continues by writing, “Success will come because of weighing, judging, and balancing ends, ways, and means.”⁴¹

Joseph Metcalf loved technology and was constantly teaching himself about the newest gadget and military capability. He “led...a naval renaissance, an enormous leap forward in technology and tactics that brought [the U.S. Navy] the Aegis weapons system, the ARLEIGH BURKE-class destroyer and a 600-ship Navy.”⁴² Metcalf also “fully embraced the computer driven U.S. Navy.” He was proud of the “very first email in the Pentagon” and he “wanted integration and total information sharing.” In addition to looking forward, Metcalf never forgot the past. He “honored American history” and “paid special attention to his predecessors in Naval history,” including World War II-era Admirals Burke, Wright, Ramage, and Vice Admiral Bulkeley. Metcalf saw it as his duty to educate others about these great leaders and was known to banish people to the Pentagon Library until a sufficient amount of naval history was memorized.⁴³ Metcalf appreciated the value of learning (he was a graduate of the Army War College and the Naval Postgraduate School) and was a strong proponent for joint professional military education. The New York Times reported “Admiral Metcalf rarely spoke about his Grenada experiences,” apparently unaware that Metcalf would regularly meet with military officers at the Joint Forces Staff College specifically to discuss and field direct questions about his leadership during Operation URGENT FURY.⁴⁴ According to the Dean of the College’s Joint and Combined Warfighting School, Metcalf always responded bluntly and honestly to questions and never gave the impression of pursuing a hidden agenda designed to shape a particular legacy. Metcalf would end every student discussion with his favorite saying: “When you are in command, COMMAND!”⁴⁵ What happened on Grenada happened, and he was proud of it.

On October 25, 1983 at 5:00 p.m. Metcalf held a running estimate of the overall situation with Schwarzkopf. At the end of the invasion’s initial twelve hours, the airfields

and the students at the True Blue campus were secure, but resistance was heavier than expected and continuing, the Governor General was protected but not yet safe, and there were still more American students to secure at other locations. Metcalf decided to extend the press ban another day “until the initial objectives had been secured.”⁴⁶ Then, in a display of self-awareness and raw honesty, Metcalf confessed his lack of knowledge about ground operations and asked Schwarzkopf to create the following day’s plans.⁴⁷ Schwarzkopf agreed and Metcalf, who had worked for thirty-six hours straight, left the command center to get a few hours of sleep.

The first day of URGENT FURY did not go as well as hoped, but October 26 was a completely different story. The risky Marine landing at Grand Mal, which Metcalf ordered after weighing the ends, ways, means, and risk, “went off without a hitch.”⁴⁸ The Marine rifle company pushed towards the executive mansion overnight, reinforced the besieged Special Operations forces just after 7:00 a.m., and the Governor General was sipping tea with Metcalf on the *Guam* by 10:00 a.m.⁴⁹ There was not an abundance of time available for diplomacy because Metcalf needed to work through many issues caused primarily by a lack of “jointness” between the services. Thankfully, “Metcalf possessed both the leadership and ‘joint’ experience gained during his participation in the evacuation of Saigon” to effectively deal with communications, logistics, and command and control issues as they arose.⁵⁰

When “Metcalf received an urgent message from the office of the Navy’s comptroller in Washington warning that he should not refuel the Army helicopters because the funds-transfer arrangements with the Army had not yet been worked out,” Metcalf spit out an expletive and instructed his Chief of Staff to “give them fuel.”⁵¹ When the Army was facing a tough ground fight over hilly terrain covered with Cuban fighters in order to reach 200

American medical students living on the eastern coast of Grenada, Metcalf unhesitatingly approved the use of Marine helicopters to pick up Army Rangers and conduct a beach landing and subsequent evacuation at Grand Anse.⁵² When Schwarzkopf's "status as an advisor" began "imped[ing] his efforts to coordinate ground operations," Metcalf unilaterally "designated him the deputy commander of the JTF," which eliminated any further questions about CJTF 120's command and control.⁵³ Schwarzkopf would later write, "I was gratified to see [Metcalf] act swiftly and decisively on my behalf."⁵⁴ In fact, the U.S. Army's Center of Military History would later write, "the good working relationship that developed between Admiral Metcalf and his Army adviser, General Schwarzkopf, demonstrated that such [joint] cooperation was possible."⁵⁵

By the third day of the operation, Metcalf's controversial decision to extend the media blackout became one of his biggest headaches. Metcalf's ambivalence towards the press stemmed from his experiences in Vietnam. He "had little confidence in the press to report accurately events or make balanced interpretations of what had occurred" and he "shared a common belief [within the military] that the media was not inclined to play it straight."⁵⁶ Metcalf felt there were greater priorities to deal with than shuttling and escorting members of the media, like dealing with Cuban and Soviet prisoners of war and getting the water and electricity turned back on in St Georges.⁵⁷

A bipartisan congressional coalition felt differently and put tremendous political pressure on the Reagan Administration to end the blackout. JCS eventually ordered Metcalf to accommodate reporters, to which Metcalf obliged and began allowing press access to Grenada in limited numbers. Mop-up operations in Grenada began the following day (October 28), which allowed Metcalf to fly to Barbados to meet with the Organization of

Eastern Caribbean States and hold his first press conference of the conflict. For two hours, confrontational reporters peppered Metcalf with questions and demanded an accounting as to why there was a press ban instituted at all and why, on the second day of the operation, had the Vice Admiral “personally ordered shots fired across the bow of [a] media’s vessel [attempting to reach Grenada], forcing them to return to Barbados.”⁵⁸ Metcalf, who quarantined the island to prevent Cuban reinforcements from arriving and to prevent the leader of the Grenadian coup from escaping, claimed to not know it was a boat carrying the media. A reporter on that particular boat asked, “Admiral, what would have happened if we hadn’t turned around?” To which Metcalf replied without hesitation, “We would have blown your ass right out of the water.”⁵⁹

CINCLANT’s Public Affairs Office supported Metcalf’s command decision to exclude the media. In the official post-action report to JCS, CINCLANT reaffirmed the press ban was lifted as soon as the military objectives were accomplished and was only necessary to ensure surprise, protect the lives of U.S. service members, and ensure the medical students were not taken hostage.⁶⁰ However, the Chairman of the JCS later claimed the media relations failure was a “huge mistake at the National level” and “we [JCS] compounded the error by permitting Admiral Metcalf to keep the media out longer than we had intended.”⁶¹ Metcalf’s decision would have repercussions in media-military relations for years to come. In fact, Schwarzkopf would later use the lessons he learned from the Grenada media blackout to directly influence his own choices in 1991’s Operation Desert Storm.⁶²

There was one final Grenada operation for Metcalf to oversee. On October 31, he ordered a Marine amphibious assault on the island of Carriacou (codenamed Operation DUKE) because enemy Grenadian forces were reportedly garrisoning the island. There were

no reported issues during the November 1 landing, in fact, the seventeen enemy soldiers on the island “turned out in civilian clothes to surrender.”⁶³ On November 2 at 3:00 p.m., Metcalf reported the official cessation of hostilities and subsequently handed over command of all forces to the commanding general of the 82nd Airborne Rangers. Operation URGENT FURY was over.⁶⁴

CONCLUSION AND LESSONS LEARNED

Vice Admiral Joseph P. Metcalf, III was the operational commander of the largest U.S. military operation after the Vietnam War. Inherent personality traits, combined with a command style refined by and professional knowledge gained from serving over thirty years in the Navy, gave Metcalf the operational leadership skills necessary to successfully command Operation URGENT FURY. He had little advanced notice to prepare, only thirty-nine hours to plan, and a week to command a multinational, joint military operation before the military knew how to be joint. Lessons learned in Grenada led directly to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and a new media relations policy for the military.

Drawing from Metcalf’s performance before and during the invasion, there are also several beneficial operational leadership lessons for current and future leaders. First, a strong leader must be mentally prepared to be called upon at any moment to command a team. It may be a team unfamiliar to the leader and it may occur in an unfamiliar setting. Commanders should study historical examples of superb leadership performance in advance to be mentally prepared for any assignment. Second, a leader must always see the whole board. As in chess, an operational leader must not focus too much on the details of a single action; rather, the leader must view every situation from the entire, “big picture” perspective.

Third, a commander should instruct direct reports on what to do, but not how to do it.

Operational leaders should communicate the end state, and then stand aside to allow direct reports autonomy to complete the mission. In other words, expect positive results, but do not micro-manage. Fourth, the operational leader must keep all stakeholders properly informed. It is critical to overly communicate up the chain of command and regularly communicate down the chain of command, especially in a crisis situation. The final, and perhaps most important, lesson in operational leadership comes directly from the Vice Admiral himself. A leader must be capable of making tough decisions. Remember, “When you are in command, **COMMAND!**”

NOTES

1. Mike Mullen, "Joe Metcalf III Memorial Service Eulogy," U.S. Navy, March 8, 2007, 3.
2. Matt Schudel, "Joseph Metcalf; Led Grenada Invasion," *The Washington Post*, March 11, 2007, 2.
3. Metcalf's career awards included multiple Distinguished Service Medals, three Legions of Merit, and two Bronze Stars with Combat V. Surface Navy Association Hall of Fame, *Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf, III*.
4. Ronald H. Cole, *OPERATION URGENT FURY The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Grenada 12 October - 2 November 1983*, (Washington: Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1997), 10.
5. Ibid., 28.
6. Ibid., 30.
7. Joseph Metcalf III, "Decision Making and the Grenada Rescue Operation," in James G. March and Roger Weissinger-Baylon, *Ambiguity and Command: Organizational Perspectives on Military Decision Making* (Marshfield: Pitman Publishing, 1986), 282.
8. Milan N. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare: Theory and Practice*, (2007; repr., Newport: Naval War College, 2009), X-5.
9. Ibid., X-6.
10. Mullen, "Eulogy," 2-3.
11. H. Norman Schwarzkopf with Peter Petre, *It Doesn't Take a Hero: The Autobiography of General H. Norman Schwarzkopf*, (New York: Bantam, 1992), 246.
12. John E. Carey, "Tribute to Admiral Joe Metcalf, 'Warrior' and Alacrity Personified," *Peace and Freedom*, March 13, 2007, 3.
13. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 282.
14. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare*, X-7.
15. James Butler, interview by the author, April 6, 2012.
16. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 280.

17. Gilbert S. Harper, "Logistics in Grenada: Supporting No-Plan Wars" *Parameters*, June 1990: 53-54.
18. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 32.
19. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 282.
20. J. Mike Simmons, *Operation Urgent Fury: Operational Art or a Strategy of Overwhelming Combat Power?* (Fort Leavenworth: United States Army Command and General Staff College, 1994), 31-36.
21. Daniel P. Bolger, *Americans At War, 1975-1986: An Era of Violent Peace*, (Novato: Presidio, 1988), 296.
22. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 283.
23. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare*, X-12-13.
24. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 284.
25. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 296.
26. Richard W. Stewart, *Operation Urgent Fury: The Invasion of Grenada, October 1983*, (U.S. Department of Defense: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2008), 12.
27. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 284-5.
28. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 291.
29. Jack Anderson and Dale Van Atta, *Stormin' Norman: An American Hero*, (New York: Kensington Publishing Corp., 1991), 58.
30. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 248.
31. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 37.
32. Anderson, *Stormin' Norman*, 59.
33. Office of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Military Operations Historical Collection," (*Doctrine Networked Education and Training*, July 15, 1997), III-7.
34. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 249.
35. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 41.

36. Mark Adkin, *Urgent Fury: The Battle for Grenada*, (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1989), 223.
37. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 45.
38. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 44.
39. Butler, interview.
40. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 288.
41. Vego, *Joint Operational Warfare*, X-11-12.
42. Mullen, "Eulogy," 2.
43. Carey, "Tribute," 3.
44. Dennis Hevesi, "Joseph Metcalf III Dies at 79; Led Invasion of Grenada," *The New York Times*, March 13, 2007, 3.
45. Butler, interview.
46. U.S. Atlantic Command, *Operation Urgent Fury Report (U)*, (Norfolk: USAC, 1984), 7. (Secret) Information extracted is unclassified.
47. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 252.
48. Office of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "Joint Military Operations," III-9.
49. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 253.
50. S. J. Labadie, *Jointness for the Sake of Jointness in Operation "URGENT FURY"*, (Newport: Naval War College, 1993), 13.
51. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 250.
52. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 290.
53. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 49.
54. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 255.
55. Stewart, *Operation Urgent Fury*, 36.

56. J. Metcalf III, "The Press and Grenada 1983," *The Grenada Revolution Online*, 1991.
57. Metcalf, "Decision Making," 290.
58. Margaret H. Belknap, "The CNN Effect: Strategic Enabler or Operational Risk?" *Parameters*, Autumn 2002: 104.
59. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 257-8.
60. U.S. Atlantic Command, *Operation Urgent Fury Report*, 7.
61. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 56.
62. Schwarzkopf, *Autobiography*, 343.
63. Adkin, *Urgent Fury*, 303.
64. The 82nd Airborne Division remained on Grenada for an additional six weeks to assist with reconstruction. The last American troops left the island on December 12. Cole, *URGENT FURY*, 62.

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