
up its monopoly on political power.

Between 1989 and '91, Berkowitz and Richelson write, the CIA not only said that the communist order was finished, but repeatedly mentioned a coup as a serious possibility. In addition, the agency said that nationalism, disillusion with the communist regime, and economic failure were so extensive that "even if hard-liners did manage to seize power temporarily, they would not be able to consolidate control." An April 1991 memorandum detailed steps that Soviet hard-liners had taken that suggested a coup was in the works. When the coup, from which Boris Yeltsin emerged the dominant figure, took place four months later, "the intelligence community quickly determined that . . . the plotters had little chance of success. This analysis enabled the United States to adjust its position quickly as the crisis evolved."

Operation Public Relations

"The Art of Naming Operations" by Gregory C. Sieminski, in *Parameters* (Autumn 1995), U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pa. 17013-5050.

Just before the 1989 invasion of Panama, an American general phoned another officer with a complaint: "Do you want your grandchildren to say you were in Blue Spoon?" The invasion quickly got a new name: Operation Just Cause. This righteous appellation struck some critics as, in the words of a *New York Times* editorial headline, "Operation High Hokum." Nevertheless, a trend was born, recounts Sieminski, an army lieutenant colonel. From the Persian Gulf War (Desert Shield and Desert Storm) to the humanitarian mission in Somalia (Operation Restore Hope) to the occupation of Haiti (Operation Uphold Democracy), major military operations since 1989 have been given nicknames intended to shape domestic and international perceptions.

It was not always so, Sieminski notes. The code names of World War II operations were classified until after the war and much care was taken to pick ones that did *not* suggest an operation's purpose or location. (Hitler was

not so careful. From Operation Sealion, the name for his planned invasion of Britain, British intelligence was able to divine the target.) The American-led invasion of Normandy in 1944 was originally named Roundhammer, but the British sneered at that "revolting neologism," and British prime minister Winston Churchill changed it to Overlord. It was to become the war's most famous code name.

During the Korean War, the American military continued to use code names to protect operational security, but let them be made public once the operation had begun. Taking command of the badly demoralized Eighth Army as it was being pushed southward by Chinese forces, Sieminski notes, Lieutenant General Matthew Ridgway gave "decidedly aggressive" names to his counteroffensives: Thunderbolt, Roundup, Killer, Ripper, Courageous, Audacious, and Dauntless. Thus inspired, presumably, the Eighth Army pushed the Chinese back to the 38th parallel. The names stirred some objections, however. The army chief of staff told Ridgway that "the word 'killer' . . . struck an unpleasant note as far as public relations was concerned." Ridgway was unrepentant, but operations after Killer and Ripper were given less violent names.

The PR lesson had to be learned again during the Vietnam War. In 1966, when a First Cavalry Division operation was dubbed Masher, Sieminski says, President Lyndon B. Johnson angrily objected. Masher swiftly gave way to the pacific White Wing. Thereafter, Vietnam operations were named after American cities (Junction City) or historic battles (Bastogne) or figures (Nathan Hale). Defense Department regulations adopted toward the end of the war (and still in force today) specify that nicknames must not "express a degree of bellicosity inconsistent with traditional American ideals or current foreign policy." Only with Operation Just Cause, however, did the military grasp the full PR potential of nicknames.

"But there is a point at which aggressive marketing turns public relations into propaganda [and] breeds cynicism rather than support," Sieminski cautions. "Precisely where this point is may be ill-defined, but the nickname Just Cause probably came close to it."