

## Noriega-75; U.S.-20

Count one vote against a United Nations resolution to condemn the U.S. invasion of Panama. Calling Manuel Noriega a "narco-terrorist who placed his interests above those of the Panamanian people," the U.N. representative appointed by Noriega cast Panama's vote with the U.S.

Most other Latin American nations lined up with the Cubans and Nicaraguans. The only neighbors of Panama to vote with the U.S. and against the local dictator were El Salvador and little Dominica; Honduras and Costa Rica managed to abstain. With the OAS joining the totalitarian-non-aligned bloc, the tally ended up with 75 for Noriega, 20 for the U.S., 40 abstaining and 24 not present.

Not a bad U.S. showing, U.N. cog-noscenti said. Poland courageously abstained, but the rest of the Warsaw Pact voted for Noriega, while pleading for U.S. economic aid. The U.S. held NATO, except for three votes. Spain voted for Noriega, apparently still sore at President Monroe. Greece and Iceland abstained.

Middle East watchers will note that Israel voted against, Egypt abstained and Syria voted for. The Common Market application committee should file away the interesting fact that Turkey voted against while Sweden and Austria voted for. The Philippines and Grenada could only bring themselves to abstain, not fully approving the use of American arms to preserve democracy.

Here's the score sheet:

FOR NORIEGA: Afghanistan, Albania,

Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Austria, Barbados, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian SSR, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, East Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kuwait, Laos, Libya, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Romania, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Syria, Trinidad-Tobago, Uganda, Ukrainian SSR, Soviet Union, Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

FOR THE U.S.: Australia, Belgium, Britain, Canada, Denmark, Dominica, El Salvador, France, West Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Turkey and United States.

ABSTENTIONS: Antigua-Barbuda, Bahrain, Brunei Dar-Salam, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Costa Rica, Egypt, Fiji, Greece, Grenada, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malta, Morocco, Niger, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Rwanda, St. Lucia, St. Vincent-Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Somalia, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Zaire.

NOT PRESENT: Bahamas, Bangladesh, Benin, Cambodia, Cameroon, Comoros, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Gabon, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Lesotho, Maldives, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, St. Kitts-Nevis, Sao Tome-Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Swaziland and South Africa (expelled from General Assembly).

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## Letters to the Editor

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TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1990

Your editorial underscores an important point that has gone largely unnoticed in recent weeks.

When Americans are unified, as they were in the case of the Panama strike, it makes almost no difference what the rest of the world thinks. The Panama experience shows that so long as Congress, the media and lobby groups agree with the president, what the rest of the world thinks counts for very little. Disgruntled comments by allies, professed outrage in Latin America, lopsided votes at the United Nations—they all hardly matter. Conversely, they count for a great deal when Americans are divided (as was the case, most notably, in Vietnam and El Salvador).

There's an obvious lesson here. If we can settle our differences, no one can stop us.

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