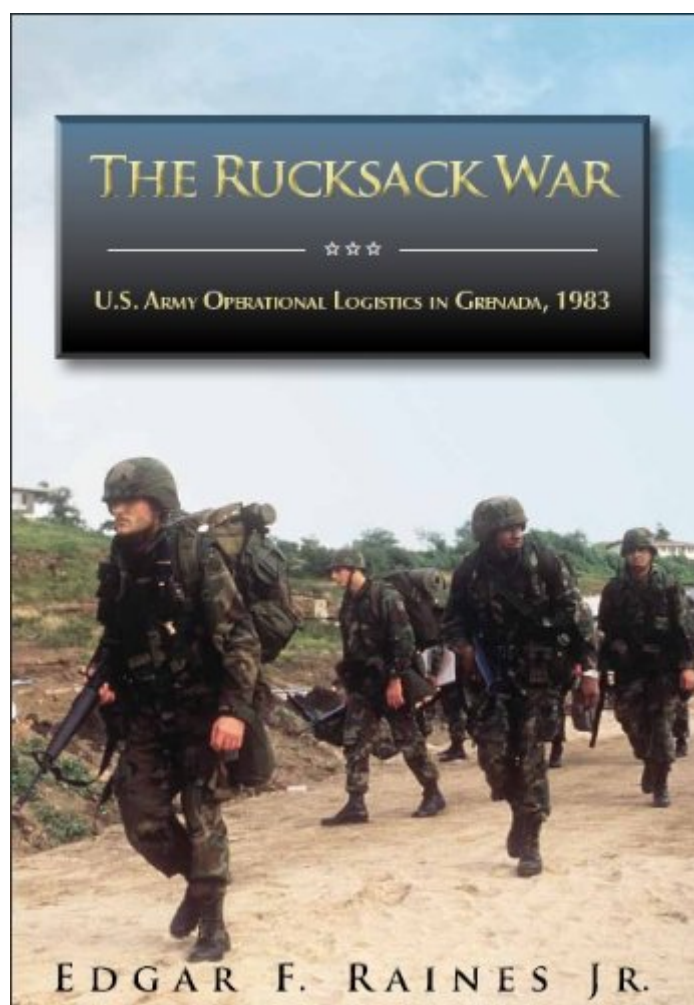


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THE RUCKSACK WAR: U.S. ARMY OPERATIONAL LOGISTICS IN GRENADA, 1983



Synopsis

Edgar F. Raines Jr.'s *The Rucksack War: U.S. Army Operational Logistics in Grenada, 1983*, the second volume in the U.S. Army Center of Military History's Contingency Operations Series, provides an account of how Army logistics affected ground operations during the Grenada intervention and, in turn, how combat influenced logistical performance. Noteworthy is the book's emphasis on the role of individuals and of the decisions they made based on the necessarily incomplete and sometimes misleading information available at the time. The narrative ranges through all levels of war—from the meetings of the National Security Council, where the president grappled with the question of whether to intervene in the wake of a bloody coup, to the jungles of Grenada, where a sergeant in combat coped successfully with a Cuban ambush despite a lack of hand grenades. Raines is careful to place Army logistical planning and operations in a joint context as well as grounding them in the Army's post-Vietnam reform of logistical organization and doctrine. In addition to furnishing a fascinating account of a complex operation, *The Rucksack War* identifies many issues that may well influence the conduct of U.S. forces in future short-notice contingency operations.

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Customer Reviews

Napoleon observed that an Army marches on its stomach which was his way of pointing out how important logistics are to any military campaign. This book is about what took place on the logistics front during Operation Urgent Fury which was the U.S. Army's invasion of the island of Grenada in 1983. While most books of wars and campaigns focus on the movements of the various units and their clashes, this book is remarkably absent of things like that. There are a few descriptions of the various operations, but they are intended to give you the background of the main storyline, rather than being the storyline. This book is very much an attempt made by the U.S. Army to examine what happened during this operation and learn from it for future events. As such it is a mixed bag of offerings, but overall an important read for those interested in Military affairs. The book is organized into 12 chapters that cover each of the basic elements of the operation from background material on Grenada and why the U.S. invaded it; to an explanation of the U.S. Military system and units that were involved; to events on the island and surrounding areas during the operation; to a recap and a section of recommendations and background on how this book came about to be written. The book was obviously written as a study and for professional study so the lay reader may have some trouble with the concepts and the jargon used - although it was obvious that attempts were made to minimize it. The overall message of the book was to show how some early mistakes in planning the operation created a difficult situation for the troops on the ground, but also how hard most of the troops involved worked to give all the necessary support to the fighting personnel.

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