

GENERAL ORDERS }

No. 20

HEADQUARTERS  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
WASHINGTON, DC, 29 December 1995**GENERAL MAXWELL REID THURMAN**

The death of General Maxwell R. Thurman, on December 1, 1995, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center is announced with deep regret. His last duty assignment was as Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Army Southern Command, Quarry Heights, Panama.

Born in High Point, North Carolina, General Thurman attended North Carolina State University, graduating with a degree in Chemical Engineering in 1953. While at North Carolina State he enrolled in the ROTC and was commissioned an officer through that program. His training included preparations in ordnance and artillery. He continued his training at the Army Command and General Staff College and at the Army War College.

General Thurman has held a variety of staff and command positions, both in Europe and the United States. In Europe he commanded light artillery and rocket units with the 11th Airborne Division, and he saw service during the 1958 Lebanon Crisis. He served in Vietnam, first as a corps intelligence advisor and later as the Commander, 2nd Battalion, 35th Field Artillery, during the Tet Offensive. Returning to the United States, he commanded the 82nd Airborne Division Artillery and from 1979 until 1981, the United States Army Recruiting Command. Other assignments included duty as an instructor at the United States Military Academy and with the Army Field Artillery School, and Army Training and Doctrine Command.

Promoted to the rank of lieutenant general in 1981, General Thurman became Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel for the United States Army. In 1983 he was promoted to full general and appointed Vice Chief of Staff of the Army. He assumed command of the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command at Fort Monroe, Virginia, in 1987. During these years it was largely through General Thurman's inspiration and leadership that the Army's new recruiting and training programs were implemented and the modern volunteer professional Army we now possess came into existence.

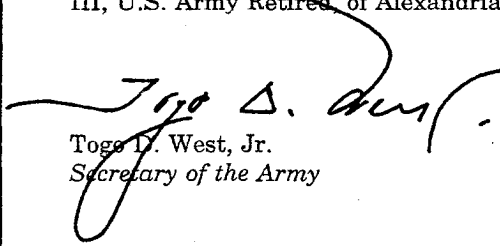
In September 1989, General Thurman was named Commander-in-Chief of the United States Southern Command, responsible for all American military national security policy and strategy in the region. It was under his leadership that the United States prepared and launched Operation "Just Cause" in Panama, which successfully removed dictator, Manuel Noriega, and helped restore democracy to that strategic nation.

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General Thurman held numerous awards and honors. He was decorated by the governments of France, Germany, and Venezuela. A Senior Fellow of the Institute of Land Warfare, he was also Executive-in-Residence at North Carolina State University and served on the President's Commission on Women in the Armed Forces, and the President's Commission on Panama. In 1992, he received the North Carolina Award in Public Service, for a native North Carolinian living outside the state. In 1995, he was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters Degree from North Carolina State University.

In 1991, Maxwell Thurman, one of the true "fathers of the modern American Army," retired after more than thirty-seven years of service to his country.

General Thurman is survived by his brother Lieutenant General John R. Thurman III, U.S. Army Retired, of Alexandria, Virginia.



Togo D. West, Jr.  
*Secretary of the Army*

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