

EXCURSUS 1

Richard J. Payne on THE LESSONS OF GRENADA

When the U.S. decided to intervene in Grenada, it was acting, at least in part, upon a long-standing and close relationship with the nations of the Caribbean—a relationship based on cultural affinity, geographic proximity, and common adherence to democratic processes. Indeed, when Britain, devastated by World War II, granted the islands their independence despite their precarious economic and political condition, it was the United States that assumed the role of protector. Commonwealth Caribbean leaders generally realize that their future is irrevocably linked to that of the United States and, similarly, Americans regard a Caribbean free of hostile incursions as essential to their security.

Some three years before the U.S. responded to the request of the Eastern Caribbean states for military intervention in Grenada, Prime Minister Eugenia Charles of Dominica had advocated stronger U.S. involvement in Caribbean affairs, stressing that the Caribbean was America's "front door" rather than its "back yard." The argument is a good one. Approximately 45 per cent of U.S. shipping passes through Caribbean waters, and a significant proportion of the petroleum consumed in the U.S. is refined in Trinidad, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, and Aruba. Furthermore, both tourism and immigration contribute to the large-scale exchange of peoples.

The Commonwealth Caribbean has a democratic tradition as old as that of the U.S. That tradition was severely disrupted when, in 1979, Maurice Bishop came to power through a bloodless coup, and again in 1983, when Bishop and several Cabinet members were assassinated by political rivals. One must note, however, that even before 1979 constitutional government was under attack by then Prime Minister Eric Gairy.

In 1970 the New Jewel Movement was formed by a group of middle-class intellectuals and professionals intent upon the removal of Gairy. Sir Gairy ruled Grenada through a mixture of authoritarianism, brutality, and corruption, denying legitimate political opposition and utilizing the police

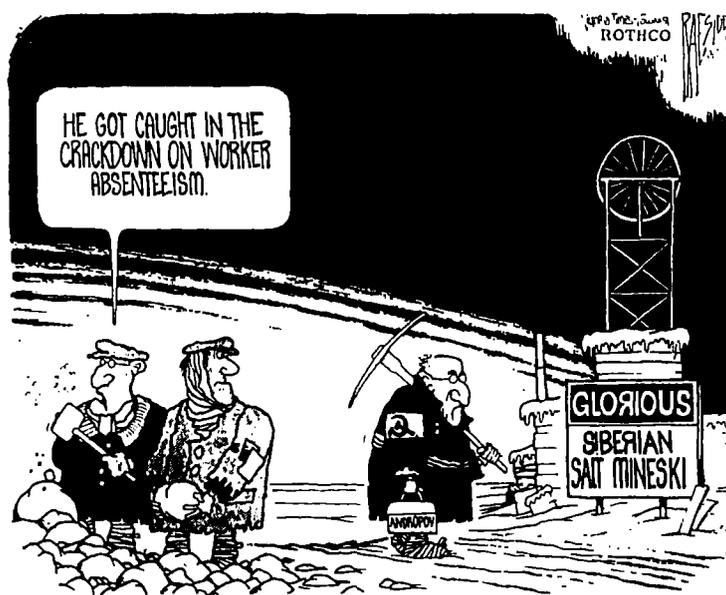
and his infamous "Mongoose Gang" to harass and injure members of the New Jewel Movement. Supported by business, labor, and other interest groups, Bishop and the New Jewel Movement seized power, demonstrating the deterioration of democratic processes.

The leftward movement under Bishop must be evaluated against the background of economic stagnation as well as of violations of social and political freedoms. At the time of the coup approximately sixteen thousand people, or roughly 50 per cent of Grenada's workforce, were unemployed; the trade deficit was roughly \$18 million; and the standard of living was continuing to decline. Hospitals had too few sheets, hardly enough medicines, and few qualified nurses; schools were substandard and textbook shortages were widespread. These serious economic problems provided an opportunity for Cuban and Soviet involvement in Grenada.

Bishop's relationship with Castro perhaps influenced him to adopt policies even more dangerous than those of the Gairy government. He intimidated and imprisoned the opposition without charges or trials, and he abolished the opposition newspaper, the Constitution, and elections. A number of laws were enacted that, among other things, concentrated all legislative and executive powers in the People's Revolutionary Government and mandated that the head of state, Governor General Paul Scoon, act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet. This power was buttressed by the People's Revolutionary Army, trained by the Cubans.

Cuba's emphasis on military support for Bishop led to increasing militarization of Grenada, a development uncharacteristic of the Commonwealth Caribbean. Grenada's army grew to about a thousand soldiers, equivalent in size to that of Trinidad and Tobago with a population ten times larger than Grenada's 110,000. Furthermore, Grenada had been arming a civilian militia and, given the large number of weapons found by Caribbean and U.S. soldiers, intended to continue militarization of Grenada and perhaps other Eastern Caribbean states. Despite the New Jewel Movement's respect for private property, including that owned by Bishop and members of his cabinet, Grenada's ideological orientation was becoming increasingly similar to that of Cuba and the Soviet Union.

The New Jewel Movement adopted a Soviet-style system of government with a politburo, a central committee, and a



one-party state. At the time of Bishop's assassination, an ambassador as well as approximately thirty other Soviet citizens resided in Grenada. Under Bishop's leadership, Grenada voted in the United Nations against resolutions condemning Soviet aggression in Afghanistan. This unusual alliance may have been influenced by Grenada's heavy reliance on Cuban military, technical, and security assistance as well as on a significant amount of economic aid from the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries.

The most controversial project involving the Cubans and a primary motive for American military involvement in Grenada was the construction of a major airfield at Point Salenes on the southern tip of the island. Reagan regarded this as an obvious demonstration of Soviet/Cuban expansionism and military interest in the Caribbean, arguing that the 9,800-foot runway had clear military potential for Cuba and the USSR. Cuba financed half the expense of the airport and provided approximately five hundred construction workers to build it. Other contributors were Libya, Iraq, Mexico, and the Soviet Union, which gave a million rubles to purchase steel and other goods as well as a ten-year credit of 5.5 million rubles. The European Economic Community agreed to Grenada's request for \$17 million for training and technical assistance for the new airport.

There were other signs of Communist-bloc interest in Grenada, including North Korean aid in constructing a sports stadium and in supporting fisheries and agriculture; East Germany's provision of a \$6 million line of credit for financing the modernization of the telephone system and purchases of agricultural equipment; the Soviet purchase of Grenadian nutmeg and cocoa at stable prices under a five-year contract; and Cuban and Bulgarian assistance with fisheries. These developments led Reagan to conclude that Grenada "bears the Soviet and Cuban trademark, which means that it will attempt to spread the virus among its neighbors."

Reagan attempted to punish Grenada by encouraging European countries to withhold financial support for the Grenada airport, by terminating the U.S. aid program to Grenada, and by trying to prevent Grenadian participation in the Caribbean Development Bank. Furthermore, Reagan sought to persuade several Caribbean leaders, including Adams of Barbados and Seaga of Jamaica, to change the treaty governing the Caribbean Community (Caricom) in order to commit its members to the principles of parliamentary democracy and human rights. The Caribbean leaders decided not to amend the treaty significantly and called only for a commitment to the international covenant on economic, social, and cultural rights. This, however, should not be seen as an endorsement of Bishop's rule but, rather, as an indication that most Caribbean leaders regarded events in Grenada as less of a threat than did the U.S. president.

In March, 1983, Reagan declared the situation in Grenada a threat to American security. This statement, made on the opening day of a month-long Caribbean exercise by seventy-seven U.S. and allied warships, influenced Bishop to return to Grenada from a summit meeting of nonaligned nations held in India. Subsequently, Bishop accused the CIA of plotting to overthrow his regime. By June 7, 1983, a step was taken toward improved relations between Grenada and the U.S. Due partly to congressional pressure, Bishop was granted a meeting with former National Security Advisor William Clark and Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam. Reagan refused to meet with Bishop, and perhaps missed an opportunity to provide him with the option of reducing his reliance on the Soviet bloc and Cuba.

The assassination of Bishop and other Cabinet members as well as a number of civilians served as a catalyst for the close-knit Caribbean states to act. Bishop had been placed under house arrest by Hudson Austin's so-called hard-line

Marxists, who were displeased with his departure from the Party line. An estimated three thousand Grenadians rescued Bishop, forty of whom later died with him.

Although it has been argued that Reagan took advantage of developments on Grenada to implement his plan to invade, there is significant evidence to show that the initiative was taken by the English-speaking Caribbean states. Shortly after Bishop's death the thirteen members of the Caribbean Community and Common Market met in Trinidad to discuss possible action in Grenada. They agreed to make an attempt to reverse a situation they considered threatening, deciding to sever diplomatic ties, impose economic sanctions, and even take military actions to restore "normalcy" to Grenada. These states have very close ties, are loosely federated, act in many areas as a single state, and correctly regard Grenada as an integral part of their group. Grenada is, for example, a member of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, formed in 1981 to promote common banking, joint tourism promotion and import of goods—all designed to bring them eventually into a single nation. Sovereignty has always been modified by the small size of these islands. Because of their shared experiences and sense of unity, Caribbean states not only felt they were threatened by Austin's actions but that something had to be done to stop the spread of instability and chaos.

Many both in and outside government argue that U.S. military action in Grenada was necessitated by the brutality that accompanied the 1983 coup and reflected the genuine concern of small Caribbean island-states. The fact remains that the use of force was an outgrowth of the failure of U.S. Caribbean policy. Grenada demonstrated that it is essential for the U.S. to reexamine its policy toward annoying but basically nonthreatening leftist regimes. President Reagan's policy of alienating Grenada only helped to push it closer to Cuba and contributed to the political chaos that brought on U.S. military involvement.

The key challenge for Caribbean leaders is to provide a decent livelihood for their citizens. This reality has not been altered by sending in the Marines. Indeed, the invasion and its aftermath show that economic assistance is by far the more effective and less costly solution to Caribbean problems. To the cost in lives of the invasion itself must be added the \$30 million the Reagan administration eventually allocated to assist in the rebuilding and development of Grenada—far more than the \$10 million requested for all the Eastern Caribbean islands under the Caribbean Basin Initiative. The lesson for foreign policy-makers is that the success of U.S. Caribbean policy depends primarily on America's ability to address poverty in a region where people are daily made aware of the disparity between their lives and those of the tourists with whom they interact. Now that the Marines have left Grenada, there must be serious consideration of the economic difficulties facing the islands that provide opportunities for the intervention of nonindigenous and undemocratic forces. Emphasis on free trade and attracting foreign investment to the area is a step in the right direction.

As American policy-makers assess the invasion, it is to be hoped that they will come to several conclusions: One, that shunning left-wing regimes and emphasizing military solutions cannot solve the deeply rooted causes of instability. Two, that greater emphasis must be placed on demilitarizing the Caribbean region, including a reduction of arms transfers to friendly governments. Three, that the Peace Corps ought to be sent to assist in developing basic technical skills, medical care, solar energy, agriculture, and education. Four, that Caribbean problems are not part of the East-West confrontation and that serious efforts must be made to isolate regional issues from the U.S.-Soviet rivalry. And finally, that the U.S. cannot continue to refuse to negotiate with

Cuba. Developments in Grenada provide an excellent opportunity for policy-makers in Washington to begin a much-needed dialogue with Havana.

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EXCURSUS 2

Stephen Brockmann on A GERMAN HISTORY LESSON

For three years now, as antinuclear demonstrations, petitions, and civil disobedience have increased in number and mass in West Germany, Germany and the Germans have been more and more in the news. The American press, including such liberal magazines as the *New Republic* and the *Progressive*, has shown a general tendency to treat this movement as a new phase of German nationalism. Further, it is portrayed as naive, anti-American, and forgetful of history. Why?

Since 1983 marked not only the three hundredth anniversary of the first German migration of America but also the fiftieth anniversary of Adolf Hitler's electoral victory, comparisons with Germany's past have been particularly strong of late. Yet in making comparisons between Germany of the world wars and the Germany of today, journalists overlook the most obvious "lesson" of all: Ironically, they accuse the *Germans* of being disorderly, of resisting authority! When groups of German citizens call the very idea of nuclear weapons evil, why are Americans so upset? Isn't this the sort of thing we would like to have heard from Germans fifty years ago? The answer, of course, is that resistance to Hitler is one thing, resistance to the U.S. another.

There is further irony in the fact that both the U.S. administration and the government of Helmut Kohl are attempting to use the celebration of the 1683 German migration to America as a means of fostering amity between the two countries and, thus, as a way of boosting support for deployment of Pershing II and cruise missiles in Europe. West German President Karl Carstens, during a recent tour of the United States, urged acceptance of the weapons in the name of German-American friendship, and Vice-President Bush in Germany last June did the same. But those immigrants whose tricentennial is being used in this manner were Mennonites—pacifists—and some were escaping the draft in their own country. As Theo Summer has remarked in *Die Zeit*, there can be no doubt about whose side they would be on today.

Most of the Germans who demonstrate, petition, and commit acts of civil disobedience and have voted the Green party to prominence feel that what is at stake is more than a weapon here and there; it is Europe itself. Motivated by fear of what Herman Göring called "total war"—a situation into which Germans marched numbly and passively fifty years ago—they have overcome the inclination to avoid what can be seen as disorderly and "un-German." They are attempting to fulfill the vow of the post-World War II years, "*Nie Wieder Krieg*"—never again war.

Who, then, is being historically naive?

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EXCURSUS 3

Thomas Land on CURING AN ANCIENT ILL

The first human trials of a new vaccine against leprosy are now being conducted in Norway and India, and further trials are scheduled to begin soon in Britain and North America. Another vaccine recently tested in Venezuela produced spectacular improvement in the condition of three hundred patients suffering from the most acute form of the disease.

The human trials, expected to be widened considerably, are supervised by the United Nations World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva. Excitement is high as scientists explore the realistic new prospect of the complete eradication of the disease, but they also caution that it might well take several years to establish properly the efficiency of the vaccine.

The progress comes none too soon. A recent report released in Geneva warns that "leprosy-control methods developed over the past thirty years may be rendered completely ineffectual" because the bacteria are becoming resistant to dapsone, an inexpensive and widely used drug. Thus far some twenty-five countries have reported dapsone resistance. A resurgence of the disease could still be prevented by multidrug treatment, but such treatment is too expensive for the countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where most of the fifteen million leprosy victims live.

The present trials in Norway and those about to begin in Britain and North America involve the exposure of healthy males to leprosy. The Northern Hemisphere has been chosen for the trials because it is virtually free of the disease, the presence of which might confuse the research results. Amazingly, there is no shortage of volunteers. These trials follow a series of brilliant research breakthroughs in India, Canada, and the United Kingdom, ending the inability of scientists to produce laboratory cultures of the disease organisms or to encourage them in animals used for vaccine development. The new vaccine contains whole leprosy bacilli, a medical first.

In India, the vaccine is based on disease organisms killed by gamma radiation obtained from the wounds of heavily infected patients. Developed at the Indian Cancer Research Institute in Bombay, the vaccine has already been submitted for clinical trials there. A group of seventy-five heavily infected patients have responded well to the Bombay vaccine, with reversal of symptoms in 90 per cent of them.

The British breakthrough resulted from the discovery that the leprosy organism flourishes in the body of the tiny, rare, nine-banded armadillo, a bizarre creature native to the Americas. It has taken several years to obtain sufficient quantities of the leprosy germ extracted from infected tissues and to purify the material for human experiments. The new vaccine has been developed at the National Institute of Medical Research in London in cooperation with the Microbiological Research Establishment at Porton Down, England.

Leprosy is most prevalent in economically depressed areas, where large populations have no access to any form of medical care and live in conditions of malnutrition and squalor. The new vaccine may well play an important part in widespread future public health plans to eradicate the disease—but, to be effective, its application will have to be backed by radical economic measures to improve the basic living conditions of millions of people.

Thomas Land writes from Europe on global affairs.