

Why the U.S. invaded Grenada

# Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Workers



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## U.S. Hands Off Grenada!

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OCTOBER 27 — In the first such airborne invasion since Vietnam, nearly 2,000 U.S. Marines and Army Rangers stormed the tiny island of Grenada October 25. This naked and unprovoked aggression reveals the hatred of the U.S. ruling class for the example Grenada set in 1979, when it became the first Black country in the world to carry out a socialist revolution.

As news of the criminal invasion spread, an outcry was heard around the world. Millions saw it as an ominous prelude to new U.S. military intervention against Nicaragua, the Salvadoran liberation fighters, and others struggling for freedom in the region.

The invasion of Grenada was preceded by the tragic developments that led to the assassination of Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and many other top government leaders. These events have been deeply felt by workers in the United States, especially Blacks. The Grenadian people, like their sisters and brothers in Cuba and Nicaragua, demonstrated that it is possible even for a tiny, oppressed nation to throw off the racist, imperialist boot of Washington, to take power from the hands of the capitalists and landlords, and to establish a government that fights for the interests of working people.

The U.S. rulers don't want us to know the truth about the gains they are destroying in Grenada. So they now claim Grenada was a "terror island" run by Cubans — not Grenadians — and that it was being built up as a "Cuban army base" and "terrorist training camp" for Havana.

But it is *Washington* that has turned Grenada into a *U.S. army base* to terrorize the Grenadian people and roll back what they won through their revolution. Six thousand U.S. troops now occupy the Black island — in an outrageous violation of that nation's right to self-determination and independence.

What are the gains the Grenadian revolution achieved?

In 1979, the Grenadians overthrew Eric Gairy, a U.S.-backed tyrant, and replaced him with a government of workers and farmers, led by the New Jewel Movement. That government, headed by Bishop, mobilized the toiling masses for four and a half years to overcome the legacy of poverty, hunger, and illiteracy left by centuries of colonial and capitalist rule.

In the short time since 1979, the Grenadian government slashed un-

employment from 49 percent to less than 14 percent. Thousands of acres of idle land were made available to small farmers for cooperatives.

Women were given equal rights, and a vast program of health care, nutrition, adult education, and literacy classes was organized to transform the lives of the Grenadian people. Democratic councils were established all over the island.

The Grenadian government asked for help from the world to accomplish these projects. Washington rejected the appeal, refused aid, and sabotaged Grenada's efforts to get loans from other nations. The Cuban government — in contrast — immediately responded by offering construction workers, doctors, technicians, and other assistance to the struggling, impoverished nation. Washington, meanwhile, stepped up its economic, diplomatic, and military threats against Grenada to try to force its people to back off from their revolution.

It was the refusal of the New Jewel leadership and Grenadian people to retreat from their course that earned them the fear and hatred of U.S. imperialism — and the profound admiration of workers all over the world.

Taking advantage of the devastating blow October 19, when Grenadian army officers overthrew the Bishop-led New Jewel government, Reagan ordered a U.S. fleet en route to Lebanon to change course and invade Grenada.

In the first hours of the invasion, Washington boasted that it was a "complete success." This quickly changed, as the Grenadian people, aided by Cuban construction workers on the island helping to build a new airport, fought back. By the second day, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger had to go on television and admit U.S. troops were meeting "a lot more resistance than we expected." Another 800 U.S. troops, from the 82nd Airborne Division, were rushed to Grenada.

In the front lines of the resistance to the invaders were the heroic Cuban workers. A CBS-TV report October 26 said the U.S. Marines were "stopped cold" when they attacked the Cubans at the airport site. *It took over 1,000 U.S. troops — backed up by aircraft and heavy weaponry — more than a day to overcome fewer than 700 Cubans.*

At the same time, the U.S. Defense Department said there were still "pockets of resistance" where fighters were holding out against the invasion force.

The Cuban government announced midday October 26 that the Cuban resistance had ended. Earlier, the government explained its decisions on how it would respond to the invasion. On October 25, President Fidel Castro announced that Grenadian authorities had asked Cuba to send fighters to help repel the impending invasion. According to Radio Havana the Cuban government responded "that it was impossible to accede to this request, for political and military reasons that were absolutely unfavorable to the organizing of a prolonged resistance."

At the same time, the radio station reported Castro said that those Cu-

bans in Grenada "should remain at their posts of work and should defend themselves if attacked by invading forces, despite the chilling of relations between Cuba and Grenada."

Radio Havana announced later that day, as the invasion was under way, that the U.S. invaders had taken Cubans hostages and demanded that all other Cubans surrender. The chief of the Cuban personnel indicated they would not surrender under any circumstances and that they awaited instructions from their commander-in-chief, Fidel Castro.

The Cuban government wired back immediately: "We congratulate your heroic resistance. The Cuban people are proud of you. Do not surrender under any circumstances."

The Cubans in Grenada responded: "Commander-in-chief, we will carry out your orders and we will not surrender. ¡Patria o muerte! [Homeland or death]"

The following morning, at a predawn news conference, Castro declared: "The valiant Cuban construction workers have written a beautiful page in history and waged a battle for the small countries of the world against imperialist military aggression. They have also fought for the Americas and for their own homeland, as if there in Grenada they were defending the first trenches of the liberty and sovereignty of Cuba."

Castro also reported that the Cuban government had taken emergency steps prior to the U.S. invasion to prevent it. It had appealed directly to U.S. diplomatic personnel and offered to cooperate in any way possible to safely evacuate North Americans and other non-Grenadians so as to avoid violence and intervention.

Washington spurned this proposal for peace, and never even reported it to the American people — because the U.S. rulers had already decided on their criminal aggression, regardless of the loss of life suffered by U.S. citizens, Grenadians, or Cubans.

The staggering military force sent against the 110,000 people of Grenada includes 6,000 U.S. Marines and Army Rangers backed up by AC-130 airplane gunships and a dozen warships, including the aircraft carrier *Independence*, with some 70 combat planes aboard. In addition, 300 troops have been sent in by the island nations of Barbados, Jamaica, Antigua, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Dominica, and St. Christopher-Nevis.

Grenada has an army of only 1,200, and a few thousand militia members.

The invasion was kept secret from the American people until it was four hours under way. President Reagan then held a news conference, defending the aggression by claiming that "American lives are at stake" (referring to U.S. students at St. George's University School of Medicine in Grenada), that several East Caribbean nations had called on Washington to act, and that the United States had to assist "in a joint effort to restore order and democracy on the island of Grenada."

The idea that this murderous assault had anything to do with protecting the U.S. students was immediately denounced by the chancellor of

the medical school himself, Dr. Charles Modica. He reported that prior arrangements had been made with the U.S. State Department and Canadian authorities to peacefully remove the students. The invasion plans were kept secret from him. If anyone were hurt in the assault, he declared, Reagan "should be held accountable." (Modica withdrew his statement a day later after the State Department called him in for a meeting.)

The "order and democracy" U.S. Marines are bringing the Grenadian people — "law and order" said Secretary of State George Shultz — reminds one of the "order" brought to Black communities in the United States in the rebellions against racist oppression during the 1960s and 1970s. "Law and order" at the point of a bayonet, or inflicted by club-swinging, trigger-happy cops.

The fact is, Reagan, in total violation of Grenada's sovereign right to self-determination, has invaded the island nation to wipe out the *working-class* law and order conquered over the past four and a half years by the Grenadian people, under the leadership of the New Jewel Movement. The kind of law and order where the needs and interests of the toiling masses come first, where their rights are enforced against the tiny minority that owns the banks, businesses, and landed estates.

When a sharp dispute split the New Jewel Movement leadership several weeks ago, culminating in the overthrow of the Bishop-led government and the assassination of central leaders of the revolution, Washington seized on this giant blow to maximize the damage it could do to the revolution in Grenada and worldwide.

An international disinformation campaign was swiftly organized to confuse, disarm, and disrupt the workers' movement on a world scale in the face of these tragic events. "News stories" flourished about Bishop being ousted by "hardliners" and "Marxists" because he was allegedly not moving "fast enough" in the construction of a socialist society. The Cuban and Soviet governments were charged — without a shred of proof — with organizing the anti-Bishop campaign, his murder, and the overthrow of his government.

When a new military council declared it was replacing the Bishop-led government, the imperialists tried to portray it as Marxist. The goal was to poison the minds of working people as to what genuine Marxism stands for.

The government and Communist Party of Cuba issued a major statement October 20 answering these lies, setting straight Cuba's role in the Grenada events, and clarifying for the world what genuine Marxism, communism, stands for.

Explaining that on principle they had not intervened at all in the Grenada events, the statement declared that "Bishop was among the political leaders who most enjoyed sympathy and respect among our people. . . . No doctrine, no principle, or position held up as revolutionary, and no internal division justifies atrocious proceedings like the physical elimi-

nation of Bishop and the outstanding group of honest and worthy leaders killed. . . ."

The imperialist invasion of Grenada and the danger of it spreading throughout Central America and the Caribbean poses a major challenge to the U.S. labor movement. How should it respond?

A criminal example of what not to do was given by the officialdom of the AFL-CIO. On October 20, in the wake of the assassination of Bishop, the AFL-CIO released a statement aimed at providing labor cover for Reagan's impending invasion.

Shedding crocodile tears for the slain Bishop, the statement then falsely charged his government with "denial of human and trade union rights." It called his overthrow by military figures a "communist purge." It continued, "The AFL-CIO calls upon the democratic governments and private institutions of the civilized world to take every possible action to castigate and condemn the lawless military regime."

Everyone in the labor movement opposed to U.S. intervention should repudiate this treacherous statement, made not in the interests of U.S. workers, but U.S. big business and its government. The best way to do so is to join immediately in the protests demanding that U.S. troops be withdrawn from Grenada.

There is a second task of unionists and all opponents of the invasion: drawing the lessons of the Grenadian revolution in order to strengthen the working-class struggle to take power in the United States and around the world.

Reagan's marines and bombers cannot drown in blood the gigantic impact that revolution has had within the United States, especially among Blacks, and on a world scale. Nor can the imperialists erase the enormous contribution the fallen Grenadian leaders made to the process of forging an international Marxist leadership capable of leading the proletariat to power.

Getting out the truth about what the workers' and farmers' government in Grenada has meant, its gains, the challenges it faced and the defeats it suffered, is vital to deepening the struggle of U.S. workers along the path charted by our sisters and brothers in Grenada.

Advancing that fight, for the socialist revolution in the United States, the fight already begun by the comrades of Grenada, Nicaragua, and Cuba, is the highest tribute that can be paid to the martyred New Jewel leaders, Grenadian workers and farmers, and the Cuban construction workers who have fallen in combat for that goal.

Long live the Grenadian revolution!

U.S. out of Grenada — bring the troops home now!

## Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Workers

*The following speech by Maurice Bishop, prime minister of Grenada, was given June 5, 1983, to an audience of over 2,500 people at Hunter College in New York City. It was originally printed in the July 15, 22, and 29, 1983, issues of the Militant. The speech has been slightly abridged; transcription and editorial preparation were done by the Militant.*

Thank you very much for that very warm welcome sisters and brothers, comrades all.

May I start out by bringing to you warm fraternal greetings from the free people of revolutionary Grenada. May I also right in the very beginning say how very, very pleasant it is to be back in New York among you, to be in this great hall, where there are so many hundreds of our sisters and brothers. That is going to bring a great deal of pleasure to our free people, and I will certainly report your warmth, your enthusiasm, and your revolutionary support for our process when I return.

I would also like to place on the record our deep appreciation for the people responsible in Hunter College for lending us this facility this evening.

We are here among friends. But looking around, there are two people here who are right now representing their countries at the United Nations — people who are involved in liberation struggles, who are struggling for freedom for their peoples.

It's very important right at the beginning, sisters and brothers, that we acknowledge the presence of Dr. Zehdi Terzi, the representative to the United Nations of the Palestine Liberation Organization, the PLO. [Chants of PLO!, PLO!, PLO!]

Dr. Terzi can be assured as always that the people of Palestine and their sole authentic representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization, will always have the full support of the fraternal people of Grenada. [Applause]

And there is another liberation movement whose representative is present among us. And this one too has been in the news quite a lot recently. Contrary to what some people have been trying to pretend — that this particular liberation organization is not willing to take the struggle to the highest stage — right in the capital city of the racist apartheid country of South Africa, a bomb went off. [Applause]

The South African racists who have spent so much time inventing all sorts of ingenious ways of oppressing the people of South Africa, the

Black majority, are now discovering that in common with all of the national liberation movements around the world that are forced to move to the highest stage of the struggle, the African National Congress [ANC] is also willing to make that step.

In saluting the deputy permanent representative of the ANC to the United Nations, let us ask him to bring back to his people, to bring back to his organization, to bring back to Oliver Tambo, to Nelson Mandela whose spirit is here with us, to bring back the love, the respect, the concern, the admiration and the fraternal feelings of all of us: Brother David Ndaba. [Chants of ANC!, ANC!, ANC!]

The last time I had the opportunity, sisters and brothers, comrades, of being in New York, and addressing our Grenadian nationals, other people from the Caribbean and Latin America, and of course the people of the United States, was four years ago. Since those four years have passed, a lot has happened in our country. A lot has happened in the world. And one of the reasons that we have come to the United States is to share our experiences of the last four years with the people of the United States.

We were anxious to do this because there has been a major campaign [against Grenada] over the last several weeks and months — starting from last year in November with some remarks by the U.S. vice-president in Miami, continuing with more remarks from the secretary of state, the secretary of defense, the deputy secretary of defense, the admiral of the fleet.

[This included] the president himself, as you know, on the 10th of March addressing manufacturers; on the 23rd of March in the famous, or infamous, Star Wars speech; and more recently again to the joint session of Congress on the 27th of April. And in all these, different allegations were made against our country.

And therefore we were particularly happy, comrades, to have the opportunity of an invitation from TransAfrica, the organization based in Washington that has been doing lobbying for Africa and the Caribbean. We were invited to come to address their 6th annual dinner last night, and that was a very successful event. We want to publicly thank TransAfrica, once again, for making this visit possible.

The Congressional Black Caucus, too, was involved as cosponsor of this visit, and we also want to place our appreciation for this on the record. And if anyone has any doubts at all about the growing strength of the Black vote, and of the increasing influence of Afro-Americans in this country, I want to let you know that it was precisely because of the pressures that were brought by our friends in the Black Caucus that a visa was eventually granted for the visit. [Applause]

Of course, we set ourselves other objectives for the visit. These included the very important objective of trying to deepen and strengthen the people-to-people relations that have always existed between our two countries, Grenada and the United States. At the level of the people,

there has never been any problem. We have always had excellent relations with the people of the United States.

In fact, in some years more American tourists come to our country than the entire population of our country. And if we go around and take a careful count, we may well discover that there are more Grenadians living in the United States than the whole population of Grenada.

And on top of that, there are several Americans who reside permanently in our country. And there is a medical school in Grenada where over 700 young Americans are earning their right to become doctors.

So from our point of view, clearly, bad relations do not make sense. From our point of view, the need to ensure that even more American visitors come to our country every year is a critical and burning need. And the opportunity, therefore, to speak directly to the people of the United States is a very important opportunity.

We also set an objective of trying to make contact with as many sectors and sections of American society as we could during this visit. And to this end, there have been several meetings this past week with congressmen and with other influential people in the society. We have attempted over this period, also, to try to talk to as many people from the media as we could reach. That objective has gone quite well.

And another objective that we had was to use the period to deepen our relations with some of our closest friends in the United States, with our Black American sisters and brothers, with our Grenadian nationals, with those progressive forces right across the United States who have given us so much support unstintingly, to those who lead and are hard workers in the friendship societies and the solidarity committees. We were very anxious to speak to the sisters and brothers, to express our appreciation for the hard work that they have done, and to give them some idea as to what we are doing at this time in Grenada. That objective, also, has gone well.

Another objective was to try yet again to establish some form of official contact, an official dialogue with the government of the United States. We, of course, cannot decide which government is going to be in power in the United States at any given moment in time. That is a matter for the people of the United States. We believe it is extremely important for us to maintain normal relations so that we are able to conduct proper dialogue in a civilized fashion with whomever happens to be in power at a particular time. [Applause]

The question of ideological differences, the question of different paths of socio-economic and political development, the question of geopolitical perspectives and of strategic consensus and what not, is really neither here nor there in the final analysis. The fact of the matter is, if there is no established mechanism for holding dialogue, then there is no basis on which relations can be maintained in an effective way. We believe it is in the interests of both the peoples of the United States and of Grenada to have normal relations between our two governments.

We believe it is important because too much is at stake here. Too many of our nationals live in this country. And too many American citizens and students live in our country. There is a need for some kind of mechanism to be established. And that is why we have been struggling so hard to try to get some of the basic norms reestablished.

Let us exchange ambassadors, we have said. They have rejected that. So we have no ambassador accredited to Washington because they refuse to accept the credentials of the ambassador we have suggested. When they replaced their ambassador after the electoral victory of President Reagan in 1980 and a new ambassador came out in 1981, he was not accredited to Grenada. So we have to talk presumably using loud speakers.

In 1981 on two occasions I wrote letters to President Reagan — in March and again in August. The first letter, a short letter, made the simple, obvious point: look, you are a new president. We had hoped that as a new president you would take a new look at the situation, that you would be anxious to start off on as good relations as you can with all countries around the world. We had hoped, therefore, that you would want relations normalized. And we went on in that letter to make the point that what we are saying is the true bottom line is dialogue; it is talks. Therefore, let us get these talks going. We are proposing no agenda with any preconditions. Let us look at all questions. Let us put them all on the table. Let us see what you perceive as problems, and we will tell you what we perceive as problems. Let us see if in the course of those discussions we can narrow down differences so at least the new beginning that is made will be on the basis of mutual understanding with less distrust and less suspicion. No reply to that letter.

The second letter was August 1981. And this was a very long letter — about twelve typed pages. And the reason there were twelve typed pages was not because there were twelve typed pages talking about an agenda. There were twelve typed pages because by that time, the hostile, aggressive course of destabilization against our government by the Ronald Reagan administration had been well established.

So the letter went into the question of the propaganda destabilization against us. It went into the question of the economic destabilization against us. We were able to speak about a discrimination that is exercised against banana farmers in our country. We were able to speak about the attempt to offer money to the Caribbean Development Bank on the sole condition that Grenada be excluded. We were able to raise a number of these issues, including the fact that in April 1981, when we had organized a cofinancing conference to raise funds for our international airport project, the American administration sent their diplomats to European capitals trying to persuade member countries of the EEC [European Economic Community] not to attend that conference.

We raised in that letter the question of military destabilization, which was already beginning. We pointed out that one well-known mercenary in April of 1981 had gone publicly on television in this country admitting

that he was training mercenaries in Miami for an invasion of our country. We said, how can you allow this in your country? There are international conventions against this kind of thing. And sending marines directly to somebody's country is no less a sin than allowing mercenaries to be supplied, to be trained, and to have a logistical base on your own territory.

So we raised all these points. Once again, we said we are willing to talk at whatever level is deemed appropriate — let us make a start. Again, no reply.

The fact is, sisters and brothers, we have had this long, long history of trying to see in what ways relations could be normalized, and we have had very little success in this regard. But I really want to say tonight that we do believe it is important for us to continue that struggle, and therefore, notwithstanding the difficulties in the way, we deem it advisable to continue to press for a full normalization of relations.

But, of course, as we press for normalization, we are also going to continue to build our revolution. We are also going to continue to consolidate our process. In the face of all the difficulties, in the face of the economic destabilization, the political, diplomatic, and military threats and pressure, we are going to stand on our feet and keep going forward.

As you know, sisters and brothers, in these times it is becoming more and more difficult for developing Third World countries to go forward. Because, unfortunately, our economies remain by and large dependent on and tied to the capitalist world economies. And therefore, when the capitalist world goes through their cyclical crises one after the other, it has an immediate effect on us. As we say at home, when the capitalist world catches a cold, we catch pneumonia.

In the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] countries, for example, it is estimated that over 35 million people in the 12–13 countries are out of jobs — 35 million! It is estimated that in the United States there are, perhaps, 12 million people out of work; in Britain, perhaps 4 million people out of work; in all of the developed industrialized countries there is greater and greater unemployment. And as this unemployment goes deeper and deeper into the society, the people who feel it the most are the poor and working people.

There are massive cuts in social welfare. The cuts are not coming in the arms race. The cuts are not coming out of the arms budget. I understand the talk is to spend \$3 trillion over five years. The mind boggles. Three trillion dollars is not even three billion, which is three thousand million. But it is three thousand *billion*. And if you work out \$3 trillion over five years, you will discover it comes down to a spending of 1.6 billion United States dollars a day.

The arms are swallowing up the money; the people are not benefiting. This crisis in the capitalist world, moreover, has led to a situation where more and more of their countries, especially in 1982, experienced only negative growth.

The effect this has had on us, in turn, has been to create a crisis in the

developing world. It is now estimated that our debts exceed \$650 billion — that is how much money we owe collectively. And it is not just the amount of money that is owed by one or two well-known cases like Mexico or Argentina where you are talking about staggering debts of over \$80 billion. But perhaps over thirty-five countries in the developing world now owe about \$1 billion or more in debts in a context where they are still unable to create the necessary surpluses to repay the debts. Last year \$131 billion was spent by the countries of the Third World in just servicing their debts, in just paying the interest.

Last year, too, the purchasing power of the countries of the Third World fell again and fell very, very dramatically. It is estimated that over the last two years, Third World developing countries lost \$85 billion in purchasing power via the credits we lost, via the real prices for our commodities because the prices keep falling, and via high interest rates.

But on top of that, we are also discovering that it is becoming more and more difficult to engage in trade with the countries of the Western industrialized world. The developing world as a whole in 1955 had 40 percent of total world trade. But by 1969, that figure had dropped to 25 percent. In other words, we lost 15 percent of the world market.

Trade is also increasingly difficult for us because of the high tariff barriers.

The reality is that aid has also decreased quite dramatically for Third World countries. Long ago the United Nations set a target that all the developed industrialized countries should aim to provide as aid 0.7 percent of their gross national product. And so far as I know from the latest figures we have seen, not one single industrialized country has yet attained that target. Collectively they are now giving only 0.45 percent of the GNP as aid.

In the old days, it was possible to supplement some of this through direct investment. In Latin America, about forty years ago, 43 percent of all direct United States investment went to Latin America. But by the beginning of the 1970s, that 43 percent had dropped to 17 percent.

More and more, because of the influence of one or two countries, and in particular of one country, it is now becoming virtually impossible to get loans from the International Monetary Fund [IMF] or the World Bank. In fact, we know that there is a hit list which has been developed with countries like Grenada, Nicaragua, Angola, and Mozambique on it. Once any of these countries makes an application to the IMF, regardless of how good technically its program is, the instructions are to try to find all possible ways of blocking those sources of funding.

They are forcing more and more Third World countries to go directly to the international capital market, to the big commercial banks, to get loans. First of all, you have to have what they call a credit rating, and to get a credit rating you have to go to the same World Bank and IMF — not everybody can get a credit rating. But even after you get a credit rat-

ing, you have to then deal with the question of very short repayment terms and very high interest rates.

And while all of this is going on, sisters and brothers, there are so many people in the world who are unemployed, so many people in the world who are going to bed hungry every single night, so many millions in the Third World who are illiterate, and whose governments either do not care or feel they cannot do anything to solve that problem. Unemployment, hunger, malnutrition, disease, illiteracy — these are the crimes and the sins that are committed upon the poor developing countries of the Third World while the industrialized countries continue to exploit our resources and keep the profits. [Applause]

Consider what happens to the sweat of a banana farmer or a banana worker in Grenada. In Grenada, the particular transnational corporation we deal with is one called Geest Industries. Mr. Van Geest was a man who came from Holland originally, went to England and opened a flower shop. And then he discovered there was more money in ships than in flowers. He eventually developed a monopoly of transporting bananas from many, many Caribbean countries to the English market. It works out that for every dollar that is obtained from the sale of bananas, the banana workers and banana farmers share ten cents and the other ninety cents goes in one form or another to Mr. Van Geest and his type. Ten cents for all of that labor and sweat. That will give as good an indication as possible of the inequities and injustice in the system.

But yet, sisters and brothers, in the face of all this the Grenada revolution has nonetheless continued to go forward and to make progress. At a time when even the big powerful industrialized nations were growing backwards last year, we grew forward by 5.5 percent. And coming out of the old history of negative development and retrogression under [former dictator Eric] Gairy, when year after year it was backward growth, over the last four years of the revolution cumulatively we have grown by over 15 percent.

The revolution in Grenada started from a base under Gairy of 49 percent unemployment — one in every two people who wanted to work couldn't get a job. And among women, 70 percent unemployment, seven out of every ten could not get a job. Therefore at the dawn of the revolution over 22,000 people who wanted to work could not find work. When we did a census last year, April 1982, the unemployment rate had dropped from 49 percent to 14.2 percent. [Applause]

In the days of Hurricane Gairy — those twenty-nine years of economic, political, social, and spiritual devastation of our country and of our people — there was no such thing as a plan. There was no such thing as a capital investment program, partly because Gairy was a mystic and therefore he didn't have to plan. But also partly because he was so corrupt that nobody was willing in any event to put even ten cents in his hand unless they send down ten police to check what's happening to their ten cents. So in those days we had nothing called a public invest-

ment program. And when it got going it was on the basis of very small feeble advances. The last year of Gairy, 1978, the capital investment program was \$8 million. The first year of the revolution that figure was doubled to \$16 million. The second year of the revolution it was more than doubled again to \$39.9 million.

The experts were saying that this is impossible — you don't have the resources, you don't have the management, you don't have enough tractors, you don't have any trucks, you don't have enough engineers, you cannot possibly do it. You are only lucky in 1979 when you doubled Gairy's. And you are only lucky in 1980 again when you doubled your own. And then when we went to 1981 and we doubled it again, they said, we know you has the luck, but something is wrong.

And last year in 1982 it went up to over \$100 million, and then we gave them the secret: we told them that in a revolution things operate differently than in the normal situation. [Applause] We have been able to make these accomplishments because in Grenada, consistent with our three pillars of the revolution — where the first pillar is our people who are always at the center and heart and focus of all our activities — we are able to mobilize and organize people to cut out waste, to cut corruption, to stamp out inefficiency, to move to planning, to look out for production, to check on productivity, to make sure that state enterprises are not set up to be subsidized but that state enterprises, too, must become viable, must make a profit, and therefore the state sector will have the surplus to bring the benefits.

Our people have gladly been pulled into the economic process because our people see the benefits which the revolution has brought them. They understand that when thirty-seven cents out of every dollar is spent on health and education that means something.

They look around and they understand that year after year inflation is being held reasonably in check. Last year it ran at 7 percent while wages ran at 10 percent, thus ensuring an overall increase of 3 percent in the standard of living of all our people.

They look around and recognize that year after year production increases. Last year in the state sector, production went up by over 34 percent. And in the private sector, production also rose. Last year, too, there was a tremendous rise in the export of nontraditional products. The increase in the export of fruits and vegetables last year went up by over 314 percent, which is a massive increase in a short period. There are also increases in production in areas like flour and clothing, and there was a slight decrease in the area of furniture.

At the same time there were some increases in the area of our traditional export crops — nutmegs, cocoa, and bananas. Though in the case of nutmegs, there has been a tremendous problem our country has had to face, a great difficulty in obtaining sales for the nutmegs. When you are producing something like nutmegs, which is really meant primarily as a spicing flavor for foods, and when there is a crisis or a recession or what-

ever the fancy name we use, then people stop putting the spices in the food and therefore your nutmegs accumulate.

But our people in Grenada are not only able to see these economic achievements in the broad terms in which I have described them, but they are able to feel what these benefits mean to them in a concrete and material way. Because today the money that the people of Grenada used to have to spend, for example, when they went to a doctor or a dentist, they no longer have to spend because they now have free health care.

They now understand that the number of doctors in the country has more than doubled, moving from a ratio of one doctor to every 4,000 before the revolution to the present ratio of one doctor for every 2,700 of our population. Moving from a situation before the revolution where there was just one dental clinic for the whole country, today there are seven dental clinics, including one for our off-shore islands of Carriacou and Petit Martinique.

Our people understand the value and the benefits of free secondary education. Because they know now that once their children are able to pass a common entrance exam, and get into secondary schools, they no longer have to worry about finding those fees, which for agricultural workers, for example, was very often impossible.

But not just free secondary education, but in effect free university education. Moving from a situation before the revolution where in the last year of Gairy, just three people went abroad on university scholarships and they happened to include Gairy's daughter and another minister's daughter. We moved from that situation to the first six months of the revolution, when 109 students went abroad on free university scholarships.

Our people are more and more getting to understand what we mean when we say that education to us is liberation, that education is a strategic concern of this government. That is why this year is the year we have named the "Year of Political and Academic Education." We understand the importance of bringing education to our people, of raising their consciousness, of promoting worker education classes in the workplace, at the same time giving them an academic education, providing them with skills training, ensuring that those who are not able to read and to write are now able to do so.

Following the establishment of the Center for Popular Education [CPE] program in early 1980, within one year the illiteracy figure in Grenada was reduced to 2 percent of the entire population. And UNESCO, the United Nations body dealing with education, says if you have less than 5 percent illiteracy, you do not have an illiteracy problem.

The fact is, that while illiteracy has now been removed, there is still a serious problem of functional literacy, and therefore the second phase of the CPE program has started. In this phase of adult education — which our people at home call the night schools — for two nights a week, three hours each, in other words, six hours a week, agricultural workers,

farmers in our country, clerical workers, factory workers, unemployed youth who have dropped out of school, more and more of them are now going to one of the seventy-two centers operating around the country, bringing this night school education to our people.

I really want the sisters and brothers to understand just how difficult this task is. If you can reflect back on the normal daily habits of the average agricultural worker throughout the fifties, sixties, and seventies, and to a great extent still today — if we are to be frank and honest — we understand how difficult it is to run an adult education program. The average agricultural worker goes to work early in the morning, goes home in the afternoon, does a little back gardening, then maybe heads to the rum shop to play some dominoes or sit down to talk with the partner. To ask such an agricultural worker now to come out twice a week to a night school and for three hours to sit down and go through a formal educational course is really asking a lot.

During the very first experience we had with the illiteracy phase in 1980, I remember holding several meetings from time to time with the CPE mobilizers and CPE educators, and over and over again those comrades would say that the problem is you cannot persuade the sisters and brothers to be consistent. Some nights when they're reaching a house and they knock on the door, and they say, "Where is your husband?" She says, "Not here." And when you look under the bed, you see the man hiding.

In other words, it is a very difficult task. But it is a task we are trying to accomplish.

What is the background and tradition we have had? It is a background and tradition that has, generally speaking, worshipped materialism. It is a background and tradition that has meant that because of the ravages of colonialism, our people have always seen themselves as transients. Our people have always had a visa mentality. And the whole point was to catch the next boat or plane to go abroad.

Coming out of the colonial experience and fed daily all of the rubbish that we are fed through the newspapers, the radios, and the televisions, where they are proclaiming the virtues of materialism. Where they are proclaiming the importance of every single person having a video, and having the latest kind of radio that only came out six months ago, not to mention the newest kind of shampoo. That kind of thing feeds consumerism, feeds economism, and helps to hold a society back. In our country, many people have as a sole aspiration the need to have a motor car. The fact that a motor car means foreign exchange earnings have to go out because we don't produce motor cars; that it means that more money has to be spent on gas — these things are not so easily explainable because of the political education that is daily taking place through the imperialist media.

The reason the people of Vietnam are quite content and happy that virtually every citizen can ride around Vietnam on a bicycle is in part be-

cause they have not been exposed to the corrupt and decadent values. But if we ask our people to take up a bicycle instead, of course, that is a problem. In Grenada, it's a double problem because Grenada is one big mountain and bicycles really can't work.

But the point I'm making, sisters and brothers, is the nature of the struggle that we have undergone, not only to raise production and productivity, but to instill new values in our people. As we struggle on the road towards creating a new man and a new woman, living a new life, in what we know will become a new civilization, the old culture, the old habits, the old prejudices are always there struggling against the shoots of the new. That is a struggle that we have to resolutely wage every single day of our lives.

But it is much easier for our people to make those sacrifices. It is much easier for them to accept the importance of doing these things which they have not been in the habit of doing, because now they know that for the first time material benefits are coming. Our people now understand that what they put out will come back, whether through free health care or free education or the number of jobs created.

With the free milk distribution program in our country last year, a small island like Grenada, 73,000 pounds of milk were distributed free every single month to over 50,000 people — nearly half of the population.

Last year, too, under the house repair program in our country, over 17,240 individuals benefited. Under this program, the poorest workers in our country are entitled to a loan to repair their houses, to fix the roofs, to fix the floors to make sure that rain does not fall on a child while he's trying to study. And after the materials are given to the worker, the worker then repays over six years at the rate of five dollars a month out of his wages.

If he had gone to a bank and knocked, let us say, on the door of Mr. Barclays, the first thing Mr. Barclays would ask him is, "Where is your collateral?" And maybe if he understand that big word, he put out his cutlass and say, "Look, no collateral." But even if he got past that word and he was able to find some collateral somehow or the other, there is still another hurdle that he'd have to go over. Because then he discovers that a loan could be only over one year. A \$1,000 loan at 12.5 percent interest over twelve months would mean a monthly repayment of over \$88 a month. That means that just about no agricultural worker would have been able to afford it.

And that is why today the agricultural workers understand what the revolution is about because they have felt the weight of the revolution.

The people understand that in all areas of their basic needs, attempts are being made to solve these problems. Two and a half million gallons more of water, pipe-borne water, are flowing into homes of our Grenadians at this time. Before the revolution, in many homes and in many parts of the country, pipes had actually rusted up because water had not

passed there for years. The pipes just stayed there and corroded. The people understand what it means when electrification is brought to their village. The people understand what it means when they know that by the middle of next year we will have doubled the electricity output and capacity in our country, and therefore more people will have the possibility of using electricity.

Thirty percent of the lowest-paid workers in our country no longer pay any income tax at all. These workers take home all their money. Old-age pensioners had their pension increased by 10 percent last year and this year it is going up again by 12.5 percent. Our people know that last year some \$43 million were spent on the international airport project alone, and another \$40 million will be spent on that project this year again.

They know that last year over forty-nine miles of feeder roads were built — feeder roads being the roads that connect the farmers to the main roads — so now the produce can be brought out safely. They know that apart from these forty-nine miles of feeder roads, that fifteen miles of farm roads were built, and fourteen new miles of main roads were also built, totaling, therefore, something like seventy-eight new miles of roads in our country last year alone.

Our people, therefore, have a greater and deeper understanding of what the revolution means and what it has brought to them. They certainly understand very, very clearly that when some people attack us on the grounds of human rights, when some people attack us on the grounds of constituting a threat to the national security of other countries, our people understand that is foolishness. They know the real reason has to do with the fact of the revolution and the benefits that the revolution is bringing to the people of our country. The real reason for all of this hostility is because some perceive that what is happening in Grenada can lay the basis for a new socio-economic and political path of development.

They give all kinds of reasons and excuses — some of them credible, some utter rubbish. We saw an interesting one recently in a secret report to the State Department. I want to tell you about that one, so you can reflect on it. That secret report made this point: that the Grenada revolution is in one sense even worse — I'm using their language — than the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions because the people of Grenada and the leadership of Grenada speak English, and therefore can communicate directly with the people of the United States. [Applause]

I can see from your applause, sisters and brothers, that you agree with the report. But I want to tell you what that same report said that also made us very dangerous. That is that the people of Grenada and the leadership of Grenada are predominantly Black. [Applause] They said that 95 percent of our population is Black — and they had the correct statistic — and if we have 95 percent of predominantly African origin in our country, then we can have a dangerous appeal to 30 million Black people in the United States. [Applause] Now that aspect of the report, clearly, is one of the most sensible.

But, sisters and brothers, how do we evaluate other sides of the report? Like when they say that Grenada violates human rights. When they say to us, how come you have detainees, what about the press, what about elections? When they say to us, Where are your elections?, they don't turn around at the same time and say to their friends in South Africa, where are your elections? [Applause]

When they say to us that elections must be held, and if you don't have elections you can't expect support, and unless you have elections we can't give you the normal treatment, we say: Salvador Allende of Chile. [Applause] Salvador Allende of Chile was elected in September 1970 by the people of Chile. Allende did not take power through a revolution. Within twenty-four hours of his election, Richard Nixon, [Henry] Kissinger, and [Richard] Helms sat down and devised their plan, "Operation Make the Economy Scream." And even in the first three months after Allende was elected, before he was inaugurated as president, they already tried to kill Allende once. They couldn't even wait for him to be formally inaugurated.

Allende did not form a militia. Allende did not grab any land or property. Allende had no political detainees. Allende did not crush the press. He did not close down the parliament. He did not suspend the constitution. He played by every rule they wrote. But they killed him still.

These people understand very well that a revolution means a new situation. A revolution implies a fracture. It implies a break with the past. It implies disruption of a temporary character. Revolution means that the abuses and excesses of the violent, reactionary, and disruptive minority have to be crushed so that the majority's interests can prevail. [Applause]

No revolution that does not have a dislocation can be called revolution. That is an impossibility. When the British had their revolution in the 1650s, it took them 200 years to call their first election. When the Americans had their revolution in 1776, it took them thirteen years to call their election.

In the first week of the American revolution, 100,000 fled to Canada. Thousands were locked up without charge or trial. Hundreds were shot. And the counterrevolutionaries after the American revolution had no right to vote. They had no right to teach. They had no right to preach. They had no right to a job. Their land was confiscated without payment.

So when the falsifiers of history try to pretend that the American revolution was a Boston tea party — it was a very bloody tea party.

The fact of the matter is, sisters and brothers — if we are to be honest about this question — whenever revolution comes, the same questions face the leaders of the revolution. One question always is: what do you do with the bloody-minded murderers, the criminals, the ones who proped up the dictatorship. The ones who led to disappearances of our people. The ones who were beating the people, who were killing the people.

Revolutions answer that question in different ways. Some people take them out in the streets, line them up, and shoot them down. That is one answer. Some other people pretend that they went into the bush, and while they were in the bush as guerrillas, they shoot them down too. Some other people create special courts to deal with them. I am not passing judgment on any of these three models.

The Grenada revolution did not have the appetite for any of those three models. So we took what we say was the humanitarian course. We detained them and treated them well.

And you know it is highly significant that of the 400 to 500 people picked up by our masses on revolution day, on the 13th of March, not one of these Mongoose Gang elements arrived in the jail with even a scratch on them. And the only reason that happened is because our people at home understand the principled position that a revolution takes on no revenge, no victimization, no torture, no ill-treatment of anyone, regardless of what they have done. It is because our people understood this, something that very often happens in all revolutions — the spontaneous upheaval of the masses — did not really happen in Grenada.

A church-based organization in Washington called EPICA wrote a book last year on Grenada. They called it, *Grenada: the Peaceful Revolution*. We can understand why.

So when these elements come and make these statements we understand only too well where they are coming from. Because they understand that the processes and procedures for review are ongoing procedures. They understand that in Grenada no one is ever interfered with for what he says. No one is ever interfered with for what he writes. In fact, today criticism is deeper than ever in the society in a constructive way.

Our people also understand that the first law of the revolution is that a revolution must survive, must consolidate so more benefits can come to them.

And because of this fact, the revolution has laid down as a law, that nobody, regardless of who you are, will be allowed to be involved in any activity surrounding the overthrow of the government by the use of armed violence. And anyone who moves in that direction will be ruthlessly crushed. [Applause]

But we also feel, sisters and brothers, that the time has come for us to make another step along the way toward institutionalizing the process that we have been building for four years. And that is why only yesterday in Grenada the new chairman of the constitutional commission arrived in our capital city, St. George's, from Trinidad and Tobago, to announce the formation of the constitutional commission that has now undertaken the task of drafting a new constitution for our young revolution.

This constitution is not really going to look like the one that the queen gave us in 1974. That constitution as we remember was one of the main reasons for the struggles of '73 and '74, when so many of us were beaten and jailed. When our families and compatriots were being murdered,

one of the main reasons for that struggle was because our people were saying we wanted to be involved in the process of drafting the new constitution. And Gairy did not allow us that right. And the queen of England could have stayed in Buckingham Palace, put it in an envelope, put a stamp on it, and posted it to Gairy. That was the total involvement of Grenada in that constitution.

This time around, the constitution is going to come out of the bowels of our people and out of our earth. Our people will have their input and will decide what they want to see go into that constitution. This time around, the constitution will not just entrench empty rights, but will entrench rights and also provide remedies for enforcement of those rights.

Chapter 1 of our present constitution has twelve freedoms, fundamental freedoms. But anytime those rights are infringed and you go before the courts to see if you can do something about that: first of all you can only go by way of a constitutional motion. Secondly, that means you can only go in the high court, not the magistrate's court, which of course means money. And thirdly, once you reach the high court, even if the judge agrees with you and you win your case, the most the judge can give you is what they call a declaratory order, which declares your rights.

Now when you bring your declaratory order to the government, you then discover another maxim of the law. You cannot enforce against the Crown. In other words, you have a paper judgment in your hands that you can do nothing with.

We are going to want to put rights into the constitution, rights which can be enforced in a way that the people can themselves manage, and rights which, once the remedies are provided, will in fact be allowed by our government. A constitution with real teeth.

Our new constitution also is certainly going to institutionalize and entrench the systems of popular democracy which we have been building over these past four years in our country. Apart from the usual national elections, which will of course be there too, we are going to ensure that these embryonic organs of popular democracy continue to have a place.

Because to us, democracy is much, much more than just an election. To us, democracy is a great deal more than just the right to put an X next to Tweedledum or Tweedledee every five years.

The second principle of democracy for us is responsibilities. So the elected officials must at all times ensure that the mandate they are carrying out, if mandate it is, is the mandate the people want. And part of that responsibility means that the right to recall those we elect must be entrenched.

We don't believe in Grenada in presidents-for-life or elected-people-for-life. We believe in service for life. And when you stop serving, you must be recalled and get out of the way for somebody else to serve.

The third principle of democracy is participating mechanisms, popular participation. We accept the well-known definition of Abraham Lin-

coln. Lincoln said of democracy that it is government of, for, and by the people. I accept that, it's a good definition. But if it is government of, for, and by the people, then it cannot be just government of the people you elect. It also has to be *for* the people and it also has to be *by* them. They have to have a way of participating — that is what the word "by" means. And if that is absent, you don't really have a democracy.

So we are saying we need to have mechanisms that ensure that the people have a way of giving expression to their own feelings and concerns.

In some of the more developed, industrialized countries that have had hundreds of years to build a democracy, a number of things have developed that are perhaps helpful. Some of them have genuinely free and responsible press. Some of them genuinely allow all sections to express their views. Some of them have very effective lobbies where virtually every interest in the society can find a way to get their matter raised in congress or parliament. Some of them, of course, have a highly literate people and a highly developed public opinion, a people who can interpret for themselves, to some extent.

One form or the other of democracy may or may not be correct in those situations. Westminster parliamentary democracy, let us say, may well be acceptable to the people of England. I cannot speak to that.

But I know that for the people of Grenada, at this stage in our history, Westminster parliamentary democracy is really Westminster parliamentary hypocrisy. [Applause]

We believe that it is very important for the people to have a voice in running their affairs. One way is the creation of mass organizations of our people: the National Women's Organization, the National Youth Organization, the farmers union, and, of course, the labor unions.

Before the revolution, Gairy had passed a law in 1978, the Essential Services Act, which took away the right to strike from the workers of our country. We not only repealed that law, but instead we passed a new law, Recognition of Trade Unions Law, under which anytime in any work place 51 percent of the workers indicate that they want to form or to join a union of their choice, that union must be recognized by the employer.

Not only were the women of our country without work before the revolution, the women of our country were also the most harassed and victimized of any section of our population. Those few who were granted jobs from time to time, many of them were given those jobs only on the basis of a sexual favor. Our women were being sexually exploited in return for jobs.

The very first decree of the revolution was to outlaw sexual victimization and exploitation of our women in return for jobs. [Applause]

And going on from that, sisters and brothers, the revolution then passed a law, which applied to all workers in the public sector, of equal pay for equal work for all women. We also then passed another law more

recently, a maternity-leave law. And by this maternity-leave law every woman who is pregnant must be granted three months maternity leave — two months full pay and one could be without full pay — and a guarantee of return to employment after the pregnancy.

It is because of these laws and because of the new environment in the country that so many women have begun to step forward, have begun to assert themselves, have begun to go out and find new jobs, have begun to get fully involved in production. And that is why so many of them have joined their mass organization, so that today, at this point in time, one in every three adult women over the age of sixteen years is a member of the National Women's Organisation.

And in this organization, the women are able to experience training in democracy, training in self-rule, training in acquiring a new confidence. Once every two months they hold their parish meetings. They are also broken up into groups around the country where, among other things, they conduct political education and provide training opportunities.

Once in every two years at their congress, all the women have the opportunity of electing delegates. For six months before the congress, they have the opportunity to discuss the new program for the next two years. And then on the day of the congress, they elect their entire new leadership by a secret ballot.

So, within our mass organizations the principle of electorality is already entrenched. And for the people in general, there have been organs of popular democracy that have been built — zonal councils, parish councils, worker-parish councils, farmer councils — where the people come together from month to month. The usual agenda will be a report on programs taking place in the village.

Then there will be a report, usually by some senior member of the bureaucracy. It might be the manager of the Central Water Commission. Or it might be the manager of the telephone company or the electricity company. Or it might be the chief sanitary inspector, or the senior price-control inspector. And this senior bureaucrat has to go there and report to the people on his area of work, and then be submitted to a question-and-answer session. And after that, one of the top leaders in our country, one of us will also attend those meetings, and ourselves give a report, and usually there is question and answer time at the end of that also.

In this way, our people from day to day and week to week, are participating in helping to run the affairs of their country. And this is not just an abstract matter of principle. It has also brought practical, concrete benefits to our people.

I remember a worker-parish council in August 1981. The workers were in a real storm that night. They were complaining about the [private] bus drivers. And they were saying that the problem with the bus service is that all six or seven buses pass at the same time on the same route. Which, by the way, is true, because they are speeding and trying to catch all the passengers. And these bus drivers have been the most dif-

ficult people to organize. You could sit down and talk until you're blue in the face about the need for routes and the need for schedules. So the people were complaining that night and they said it had resulted very often in them reaching work late.

And there was a second complaint. They were saying that because of the half price for the schoolchildren, the bus drivers were refusing to pick up their children, so the children had to walk to school in the rain or the sun. So they insisted and demanded that we get some buses to start a public bus service.

Now that is August '81. The financial year is already eight months gone. The budget has been set. But because of the pressure and the demands, we were forced to go and find money wherever we could and buy twenty-six new buses to start a public transport service for the people. [Applause]

So this concept of democracy and our approach to human rights is one that has stressed solving these problems and the involvement of our people in a participatory way from day to day and week to week.

[Critics of Grenada's revolution] have also raised over and over again the question of our relations with Cuba as a second one of these red herrings. Every now and then when the red herring of detainees and elections and the press is finished, you will hear them say: Soviet and Cuban satellite.

You hear them say that the links with Cuba are such that it is dangerous to the security of the region.

What do we say on this question? We say first of all that yes, we have warm, fraternal relations with the government and people of Cuba. That is true. [Applause]

We say secondly that to us this is a matter of fundamental principle. And there are at least three very good reasons why we will always have good relations with the government and people of Cuba.

The first reason: we see Cuba as part of our Caribbean family of nations. One of the greatest curses of colonialism was that they divided the region according to different metropolitan centers. They taught us different languages. And then they made a great play of the fact that you are Dutch-speaking, you are Spanish-speaking, you are French-speaking, you are English-speaking, and, more recently, you are American-speaking.

And based on this linguistic nonsense, they taught us to hate each other. When we were growing up in school, they used to make us believe that the sun sets only in England. We used to be made to go down to Queen's Park on the queen's birthday and stand up in the hot sun all day. And at the end of the day, we're hot and sweaty and tired, and they give us a bun. And I remember the St. John's Ambulance Brigade stop on the corner in case you faint, they catch you quick.

I know the first time I realized just how deep this foolishness went and the extent to which they were miseducating us and trying to make us into

little Black Englishmen is when I arrived in England to study law in 1963. One of my first and greatest experiences — shocking experience, traumatic — was when I went somewhere one day. The national anthem started to play — poor little Black me, I jump up fast. When I look around, me only one standing up. Every Englishman sitting down.

You know like old [calypso singer Mighty] Sparrow. Sparrow is such a great Grenadian, so articulate. Sparrow points out in one of his best songs that the way they were educating us, they were really educating us to make us into fools.

They tell us if you're speaking Dutch, you're the best. If it's English, you're the best, French is the best, Spanish is the best, American is the best. And all of us hating each other.

When in fact we are one people from one Caribbean with one struggle and one destiny. [Applause]

We see it therefore as one of our historic duties and responsibilities to pull down these artificial barriers of colonialism and to develop that oneness and that unity that we nearly lost.

We believe it is critically necessary to have close relations with all of our neighbors. That is why I have done state visits to Mexico, to Venezuela, to Panama, to Cuba, to Nicaragua, to Ecuador. The reason has been a conscious attempt on the part of this new government to try to build those bridges and to make sure that all of this alienation of the past disappears.

The second reason is, we are a nonaligned country. We believe in nonalignments. And to us, nonalignment means that you have the right to choose your own friends. Nonalignment to us means that we have the right and the duty to diversify and expand our relationships and our friendships around the world. Nonalignment to us is not something that implies neutrality. Nonalignment is not meant to make you into a political eunuch that can't speak.

Nonalignment is meant to make you speak out loud and clear for what you believe in. And we have principles we believe in. [Applause]

There is also a third reason we will always have relations — warm, fraternal, close relations — with the people and government of Cuba. And that is our admiration and our respect for the internationalism and the achievements of the Cuban people. [Applause] Whether they like it or not, Cuba was the first revolution in this hemisphere to have succeeded. And if there was no Cuban revolution, there could have been no Grenada or Nicaraguan revolution. [Applause]

Whether they like it or not, Cuba was the first country in this hemisphere to give a sound licking to U.S. imperialism at the Bay of Pigs. [Applause]

Whether they like it or not, Cuban internationalist soldiers have been the first in the world to charge the racist South African monster and to face it with arms in their hands while defending Angola. [Chants of Viva Cuba! Viva Cuba! Viva Cuba!]

If there were no Cuban internationalist troops in Angola, how long ago would the South African apartheid monster have overrun Angola with the assistance of several Western powers? Cuba is a great stabilizing factor in that Angola equation. And that is why when they come up with this hypocrisy of linkage, and say that for Namibia to get independence, Cuban troops have to leave, we who are in the Third World understand that and have seen their bluff and will fully back the Cuban soldiers and the Angolan people in ensuring that they stay in Angola.

They can choose their South African and their Haitian and Chilean and South Korean and every dictator friend they wish. That is okay. But we can't choose our friends. Because we too small and poor to have the right to choose. They like to talk a lot about backyard and frontyard and lake. Grenada is nobody's backyard and part of nobody's lake. [Applause]

The more desperate that imperialism gets, the more it comes up with the most vulgar and hostile measures to try to keep the poor oppressed people of the world, who are trying to win their national liberation and to build their own future, down. Think of Nicaragua. Nicaragua, a country invaded over the years — two, three times in this century — by the United States. Nicaragua, a country that has been under the brutal heel of the Somozas for over forty-five years. Nicaragua, a country that just like the Americans 200 years ago, finally resorted to their supreme right to overthrow their repressors and murderers and to take their destiny into their own hands. And when the people of Nicaragua, when the sons and daughters of Sandino assumed their liberation, when they won in July of 1979, what was the crime they committed thereafter?

Their crime was to be bold and manly and fresh enough to say that their resources belong to them, to say that they want to build their country in their own way, to say that they want to choose their own friends, to say that they are going to build their country after their own image and likeness and not after the image and likeness of somebody else.

And because of that, you have this situation where today the most vulgar, shameless acts of the last year or so can pale only in comparison to what is happening in El Salvador, or what happened in the middle of last year in Lebanon when the Palestinian people were slaughtered. The most vulgar, shameless act of open CIA activity in their country.

The most open, vulgar, shameless act of even admitting that not only will they resort to covert actions, but if necessary, they will publicly back overt action against the Nicaraguans. The shamelessness of it can only be exceeded by the way in which sections of the media have chosen to respond. To pretend that the Nicaraguans are losing popular support. To pretend that these murderers, ex-Somocista elements, are some kind of freedom fighters. To pretend that these butchers who will just throw bombs on women and children as they are passing and run when they see the Sandinista soldiers. To pretend that these people deserve to have some opportunity to rule the people of Nicaragua — the shamelessness of it is really extraordinary.

And perhaps the only good thing that has come out of this recent episode, sisters and brothers, is the fact that for the first time in a long time, the people of Latin America themselves have tried to find a solution to the problems. That has been the historic meaning of the get-together of Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, and Panama on Contadora, to launch the Contadora initiative. Because what this Contadora initiative is all about is really extremely important for us.

It says first of all, that we the people of Latin America and the Caribbean will try to solve our problems ourselves. [Applause]

It says secondly that we do not accept the use of violence as a means of settling our disputes.

It says thirdly that we must always sit down and engage in negotiations and discussions before taking any other measures.

And it says fourthly that we are not prepared to accept that any country in our region, far less any country outside our region, has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another country.

And even though this Contadora initiative is fast becoming all things to all men — you hear everybody saying, yes, they're backing Contadora, which must mean that some people are trying to use Contadora in ways different than the original objectives were intended — nonetheless, it is an historic first step.

But these people have also thrown out another allegation against Grenada: I want to deal with it but I know people want to go home, it's getting late. [Shouts of No!, No!]

This other allegation concerns the question of our international airport project. This one is of course the most comical one of all.

According to the formulators of this famous theory, Grenada's international airport is now going to become a military base, and will now become a strategic jump-off point from where we can launch an attack on the great big, powerful, mighty United States. It looks as if we have become a superpower. [Laughter]

But the reality of the airport, of course, is well known to all those who make those statements. This airport is an ancient dream of the people of our country. [Applause] This international airport has undergone a quarter-century of studies. There are more than six voluminous reports and studies on this international airport. All previous governments from 1955 have spoken about the need for the airport.

And if you understand the situation in our country, that would be no surprise to anybody. The present airport is called Pearls. Pearls has a strip 5,500 feet long. That means only turboprop planes can come in. The turboprop planes that come in carry a maximum of 48 passengers. And better still, these planes can only land during the day between 6:00 and 6:00 because there are no night lights. And we cannot put night lights there because the airstrip happens to be conveniently located between the mountain and the sea. And unless we knock down the whole of the island, you cannot put an international airport in Pearls.

We had to make a strip of 9,000 feet because of all the manuals that

were done by European and American companies — I can think of McDonnell Douglas, people who do the DC-8, I can think of Boeing, and so on. They have produced manuals saying what length of strip is required if their planes are to land. So unless we born big and stupid, you cannot expect us to put down a strip that planes that can carry people, normal jet planes, won't be able to use.

This famous military base [Laughter] — let me tell you about it in a different way. I'll give you a little joke about it. After President Reagan's statements, one television crew — ABC in fact — came to the country. And they came and they wanted to do an interview, and they had a big fact file with all the questions. But the main question focused around the fact that we were building a sophisticated military base or at least a sophisticated military strip. So we said, okay, let's go down to the airport and take some photographs.

So these people went down there and they took photographs. They discovered that the airport had become the number one tourist attraction of the country. Every tourist on the island was taking a peek. They discovered at the end of this strip, which is also the end of the peninsula, at least two dozen Grenadians go every single evening to fish. They discovered that right at the beginning of the strip — at a distance of this podium to, let us say, the front row of that balcony, a few inches away — is where the medical school, with 700 American students, live and study. And they discovered that these medical school students, American students, were running up and down the strip, jogging, every day and every night. [Laughter]

ABC television also discovered that there was in fact a terminal building being constructed. Because in President Reagan's photograph, the one the spy plane took, there was a nice big cloud covering the terminal building. Quite by accident, of course. But when these people went down, that accident did not take place, so they caught the terminal building.

So they came back to put it on "Nightline" and the people of America were able to see that here genuinely was an international airport, with a full terminal building. But two days later, ABC comes back. Same crew. So I say, what's the problem now, fellows?

They say, all right. They say they agree it's not a sophisticated air base, they won't say that again. They're sorry about that. But, they now discover we have sophisticated communications facilities.

So we say, all right. We don't know anything about them. We don't know where they are. But feel free to go around the country. If you can find them, we also would like to see them. [Laughter]

So they spent another day or two going around. They didn't find them. They send the film back again, after asking questions and satisfying themselves that this was also nonsense.

Would you believe, the next day afterward they were back again. In other words, three times in six days. And this time they came back, they

said, we have another question for you. It is not sophisticated military base. It is not sophisticated communications facilities. But we understand you all have sophisticated *barracks*. [Laughter]

Of course, they discovered that this sophisticated barracks they were talking about was no more than temporary sheds which had been constructed on the airport site in which the Grenadian and the Cuban workers who are building the airport are living.

They also discovered that time that on the same airport site are workers from a British company called Plessey, and workers from a Finnish company called Metex, who are down there right now installing the communications equipment, the navigational aids, the electronics, etc. — all the things you need to get an airport functional. Working and living together.

They also then discovered that last year an American company called Layne Dredging from Miami spent nine months in Grenada helping to build this famous military base. [Laughter] That this company was dredging a section of the sea where the strip has to pass. A section called Hardy Bay. And therefore for these nine months they too were working and living with Grenadian and Cuban workers, building this airport.

So I said to these fellows, well look, as you know, Grenada relies in part on tourism. So we don't mind seeing you all again. I don't mind if they send you back down tomorrow. But if you're coming back down tomorrow, try to bring a few more ABC people. [Laughter, cheers] And secondly, if they will tell you it's sophisticated something else, at least make sure they come [up with something] better than saying sophisticated pants, or socks, or shoes. It had really become that ludicrous.

This international airport project as we see it is the gateway to our future. As we see it, it is what alone can give us the potential for economic takeoff. As we see it, it can help us to develop the tourist industry more. It can help us to develop our agro-industries more. It can help us to export our fresh fruits and vegetables better.

As every Grenadian who has gone back home and as anybody here in this audience who has ever traveled to Grenada will know, coming to Grenada right now is a literal nightmare. Coming to Grenada right now is like a labor of love. You have to be a martyr to want to come. The amount of trouble will make you sick. And what this airport will do is remove all of that trouble and inconvenience and allow our people to fly straight into our own airport. [Applause, cheers]

That is why we have made an exception this year. Usually every year at the end of December we announce what the next year will be called: the Year of Education, or Production, or whatever it is. But last month, six and a half months ahead of schedule, we announced to our people what the name of next year will be. So they can start from now to mobilize, including mobilizing overseas around the name, because 1984, next year, will be called the Year of the International Airport. [Applause, cheers]

And the fact of the matter is, next year is also significant for us because on the 13th of March, '84, it will be the fifth anniversary of the revolution. And as you know, people always make a fuss about the first anniversary, about the fifth anniversary, about the tenth anniversary, and so on. So we have reason to make an extra fuss next year. And therefore, what we want to do during the fifth festival on the 13th of March itself is to open our international airport on that date. [Cheers]

And I want to say to you sisters and brothers here and particularly to our Grenadian nationals, there is a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and excitement building all over the world because all of them want to be on the first flight that touch down.

When I was in London last month, addressing a rally much like this one, the Grenadians in the audience were all insisting that they will organize an inaugural flight, but the one condition is they must be the first plane to touch down. So what we have decided to do, because of course we can't have all of them first, is to settle for inaugural flights by zones, or by cities. London will have its own inaugural, Liverpool will have its own inaugural, New York, no doubt, will have its own inaugural [Applause], Washington is going to have its own inaugural. And what is going to be important, sisters and brothers, is to make sure you get on that inaugural because, as you realize, you'll be coming down to see the most widely publicized airport the world has ever known. [Applause]

I think we should give a special round of applause to those responsible for the free publicity. [Laughter] You know some people have even suggested that the best name we can give the airport is the Ronnie Reagan International Airport. [Laughter, shouts of No!] Of course, they are not serious. But as you know, one of the things that has been launched at home is a competition to find a name for the airport. And we would like our people overseas to also be involved in that competition.

Sisters and brothers, I think it really is time to close, it is. [Shouts of No!]

Long live the people of free Grenada! Long live the workers, farmers, youth, and women of free Grenada! [Cheers]  
Long live the people of the United States! [Cheers]  
Long live Grenada-U.S. relations and friendship! [Cheers]  
Long live the people of Cuba and Nicaragua! [Cheers]  
Long live the people of Angola and Mozambique! [Cheers]  
Long live the people of Palestine! [Cheers]  
Long live the people of South Africa! [Cheers]  
Long live the people of El Salvador! [Cheers]  
Forward ever! [Backward never!]  
Forward ever! [Backward never!]  
Forward ever! [Backward never!]  
One love, one heart! [Prolonged cheers and standing ovation]

## Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada Together We Shall Win

*The following speech by Maurice Bishop was given to a 1980 rally of 1.5 million people in Havana.*

Esteemed Comrade Fidel Castro

Esteemed Comrade Daniel Ortega

Beloved revolutionary comrades of free and revolutionary Cuba

I bring you today warm revolutionary greetings from the people of free Grenada. [Applause] This morning, comrades, I was addressing a rally in my own country to honor International Workers Day, and I left my country some time after 11 o'clock this morning to travel more than 1,000 miles to come to your country. But even if the distance was 10,000 miles, no force on earth could have stopped me from being here today. [Applause]

The unity, the militant solidarity which unifies our countries, our peoples' struggles — it is this unity and this solidarity which is today making imperialism tremble, because we recognize in Grenada just as imperialists recognize, that without the Cuban revolution of 1959 there could have been no Grenadian revolution, nor Nicaraguan revolution in 1979. [Applause]

It is the Cuban revolution that has taught the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean how to face blockades, how to defeat criminal invasions of their territories. The people of this region have looked at Girón, they have looked at *La Coubre*, they have looked at Escambray, they have looked at assassination attempts on their leadership; they remember the October 1976 destruction of their Cubana airliner, they have seen your struggles; they have been inspired by your victories; and they have observed that even in the face of these difficulties revolutionary Cuba was able to wipe out illiteracy, prostitution, drug-taking, and unemployment. They were able to see you build socialism in your small country. They have seen your strides and achievements in health and education. They have seen that today, 21 years after your revolution, your country is able to assist more than 30 countries around the world. And countries like Grenada and Nicaragua will always feel grateful to the people of Cuba and to the Cuban revolution for their assistance with their doctors, with their teachers, and with their selfless workers.

Certainly we in Grenada will never forget that it was the military assistance of Cuba in the first weeks of our revolution that provided us with the basis to defend our own revolution. [Applause] And when im-

perialism and reaction keep saying to us in Grenada, why do we need arms, where are the arms coming from, why should such a small country need so much arms, we always give them the answer our people have given. Whenever mercenaries or foreign aggressors land in our country, they will discover how much arms we have, whether we can use the arms, and where the arms came from as we shed their blood on our soil. [Applause]

Your revolution, comrades, has also provided the region and the world with a living legend with your great and indomitable leader, Fidel Castro. [Applause] Fidel has taught us not only how to fight, but also how to work, how to build socialism, and how to lead our country in a spirit of humility, sincerity, commitment, and firm revolutionary leadership. [Applause]

It is important to be in revolutionary Cuba at this period in world history. Today we can see another crisis in international capitalism. Today we can see them complaining that their superprofits are falling. We can see their interest rate running towards 20 percent. The school lunches they have been providing for their children, even that, they have had to reduce by over \$500 million. Their workers are daily finding that jobs are disappearing. But their more than \$33 billion profit on investments around the world demand that they create new tension in the world, so that their economy, which is based on war and armament, would once again flourish.

They are also terrified by the victories of the national liberation movements in Africa, in Asia, in the Middle East, and right here in Latin America. They have looked around and they see that today the struggles of the people of the region are continuing to reach new heights. They look at El Salvador and they recognize that while yesterday it was Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada, tomorrow it will undoubtedly be El Salvador. [Applause]

So they have decided to step up on their arms supply and their arms race. They have decided to scuttle SALT II and détente. They have decided to spend this year more than \$142 billion on arms. At the same time, the invasions which have characterized their relations with our region over the years starting with the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, they are shaping now to create new doctrines, to plan new maneuvers, to obtain new bases to strengthen and deepen their military presence in the hope that this will crush the rising wave of national liberation consciousness that is sweeping our region and the world.

Their interventions in Mexico, in Nicaragua, in Colombia, in Panama, in the Dominican Republic, in Haiti, in Honduras, all of these invasions which they have had over the years — they are now preparing once again to embark on a new campaign of terror and intimidation of the people of our region.

But sometimes it is no longer by direct intervention, sometimes they rely more on control and manipulation, on the use of threat of force, on the techniques of destabilization, on the use of diplomatic pressure, on

the use of propaganda destabilization, on the policy of economic isolation. But in each case all of this is meant to lay the basis for a United States-organized or -backed coup d'etat.

In 1954, they succeeded in overthrowing Arbenz in Guatemala. In 1973, they succeeded in overthrowing Allende in Chile. But the one lesson that they have never forgotten and will never forget is that in 1961 they failed when they tried at Girón right here in revolutionary Cuba! [Applause]

Today we can hear them setting up their cries against the revolutionary processes in Nicaragua and Cuba. You can hear them talking about human rights, you can hear them calling for elections even though they won't understand that our revolutions are popular revolutions. You can see them encouraging the ultraleftists in our countries to take violent action against our peoples. Their propaganda has reached the point where our countries have become electoral issues in the presidential campaign in that country. And at the same time, as usual, the threats against revolutionary Cuba, the continuation of the criminal economic blockade against revolutionary Cuba, the creation of artificial crisis after artificial crisis. First the question of the Soviet troops in October last year, and now the question of so-called refugees at this point in time. All of this is part and parcel of the imperialist campaign to try to defame the Cuban revolution, to try to isolate the Cuban people, to try to lay the basis for an armed invasion or other form of intervention of your beloved country. But in Grenada we have been using a slogan and that slogan has been saying that "If they touch Cuba or if they touch Nicaragua, then they touch Grenada too." [Applause]

Comrades, as the people who own this region, as the people who belong to these countries, it is for us to decide what we want to do with our lives in our countries. It is for us, the people of the region, to demand whether or not we want to have military bases on our territory. It is for us to decide whether or not we want other peoples' planes to fly over our countries. And one of the most contemptuous and arrogant acts of imperialism is today to presume that in 1980 not only do they have the right to have a base in Guantánamo but that they also have a right to operate military maneuvers on the very soil of free and revolutionary Cuba.

We, the people of this region, demand that our region is recognized and respected as a zone of peace. We demand an end to all military task forces and air and sea patrols of our region. We demand that the people of the region must be free from aggressive military harassment of any military power. We demand an end to the Monroe Doctrine and to the Carter Doctrine and all other doctrines which are aimed at perpetuating interventionism or backyardism in the region. There must be an end to all attempts to use the so-called peacekeeping apparatus of the Organization of American States to militarily intervene in the region, to hold back progressive and patriotic movements.

We also call today that the right to self-determination for all peoples in the region must be recognized and accepted.

We today renew our call for the independence of the sister people of Puerto Rico. [Applause]

We today insist that all of the people of the region in the 25 colonial countries which still exist — English, Dutch, French, or American territories — we demand the right to independence for the peoples of those countries. We demand that a principle of ideological pluralism must be respected and practiced by imperialist powers.

We must have the right to build our processes in our own way, free from outside interference, free from all forms of threats or attempts to force us to accept other peoples' processes.

Today we insist that there must be an end to the invasions, an end to the landing by marines, an end to the gunboats, an end to the Playa Girón, an end to the slaughters and massacres of our Sandinos, our Ches, and our Allendes. [Applause]

We call also for an end to the arming and financing of counter-revolutionary and antipopular, antidemocratic or antiprogressive regimes. There must be an end to the manipulation of regional and world tension for electoral purposes. The future of the region and the future of the world, the question of world peace cannot be compromised because of any election, no matter whose election.

There must therefore be respect for the sovereignty, legal equality, and territorial integrity of the countries of our region.

It is clear today, comrades, that the desperate plans of imperialism can be defeated once again, once we remain organized, vigilant, united, and demonstrate firm and militant anti-imperialist solidarity.

We look to the people of Cuba, we look to your revolution and your leadership to ensure that the revolutionary process in the Caribbean and Central American region continues to go forward with strength.

We salute you, the freedom-loving people of revolutionary Cuba. We salute your great and revolutionary leader, Comrade Fidel Castro. [Applause]

Long live the freedom-loving people of revolutionary Cuba! [Applause and shouts of "Long live!"]

Long live the Communist Party of Cuba! [Applause and shouts of "Long live!"]

Long live Comrade Fidel Castro!  
Long live the Nicaraguan revolution!  
Long live the Sandinista Liberation Front!  
Long live the national liberation movements!  
Long live the socialist world!  
Long live the Grenadian revolution!  
Long live the militant unity and solidarity of workers internationally!  
Cuba, Nicaragua, Grenada, together we shall win! [Applause]  
Adelante siempre, atrás nunca! [Forward ever, backward never]  
[Ovation]

## Statement by the Cuban Government and the Cuban Communist Party

*The following is the text of an October 20, 1983, declaration issued in the name of the Cuban Communist Party and the revolutionary government of Cuba, followed by a brief decree by the Council of State. The statements were transcribed and translated by Intercontinental Press from a broadcast over Radio Havana on October 21.*

As has now become totally clear, for some weeks and perhaps months a deepgoing conflict has been unfolding in the ruling party in Grenada and its leadership.

When Maurice Bishop, the principal leader of the party and the prime minister of Grenada, made a brief stop of just thirty-six hours in Cuba between the evening of Thursday the 6th [of October] and the morning of Saturday the 8th, after official visits to Hungary and Czechoslovakia, he made not the slightest mention in his conversations with Comrade Fidel and other Cuban leaders of the serious discussions and differences that were taking place inside the New Jewel [Movement], the name by which the leading party of his country is known. Thus he provided a great proof of dignity and respect for his own party and for Cuba.

All the topics of conversation revolved around Cuba's collaboration with Grenada, the efforts at cooperation carried out by the Grenadian delegation in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, with the results of which Bishop felt broadly satisfied, and other international themes.

On Friday, October 7, Fidel accompanied Bishop on a tour of important installations that are under construction in Cienfuegos, showing him the progress of our development plans and the excellent quality of our workers, with whom both leaders had lengthy dialogues.

A few days later, on Wednesday, October 12, our embassy in Grenada reported the surprising and disagreeable news that deep divisions had surfaced in the Central Committee of the party in Grenada.

During the morning of that day, Bishop himself communicated [to the embassy] regarding the differences that had arisen some time before. He said that they were being discussed and that efforts were being made to resolve them, but that he had never imagined the seriousness they were going to take on during his absence. He simply stated the differences and did not request any opinion or cooperation on our part in trying to overcome them, once again showing his great respect for Cuba's international policy and for the internal affairs of his own party.

During the afternoon, it was learned that Bishop's adversaries had gained a majority in the Central Committee of the party as well as in the political apparatus of the army and the security force, and that Bishop had been removed from his post in the party and put under house arrest.

As it was a purely internal problem, despite our friendship for Bishop and our confidence in his integrity and his leadership abilities, the Cuban government and party instructed our representatives in Grenada that, complying fully with the principles and norms of Cuba's international policy, they should absolutely refrain from involving themselves in the internal affairs of the party and of Grenada.

News went on arriving continually from our embassy during the following days about the positions and arguments of the two sides involved in the conflict. In our opinion, what was really involved was not principled differences, but rather conflicts of personality and conceptions of leadership method, from which other subjective factors were not absent.

On Saturday, October 15, Comrade Fidel sent a message to the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement expressing with full clarity Cuba's position, which is guided by the principle of absolutely abstaining from involvement in the internal affairs of a party or country. He expressed at the same time his deep concern that the division that had arisen could do considerable damage to the image of the revolutionary process in Grenada, both inside the country and abroad. In Cuba itself, where Bishop was highly esteemed, it would not be easy to explain the facts. Hope was held out that the difficulties could be overcome with the greatest of wisdom, serenity, loyalty to principles, and generosity.

At bottom, Cuba's concern centered on preventing the events from taking on the character of a violent and bloody confrontation. In his message, Fidel also stated that Cuba's collaboration would be maintained as a commitment to the people of Grenada, independently of changes that might occur in the leadership of the party and the country, since it was a purely internal question.

For several more days, the situation remained at an impasse. At certain moments it seemed that an honorable, intelligent, and peaceful solution could come about. It was clear that the people were in favor of Bishop and were calling for his presence.

The Western press launched all kinds of speculations about the events. We did not say a single word in order to avoid having our public statements appear as interference in the internal affairs of Grenada, in view of our close, broad, and fraternal relations with that sister country. In that way we had complied rigorously with our principles of respect for the internal affairs of fraternal parties and countries.

Yesterday, October 19, during the morning, news began to arrive that the workers had gone on strike and that the people had taken to the streets in support of Bishop. In a massive demonstration they arrived at his residence where they freed him from house arrest.

It seems — since the reports are still imprecise — that a military in-

stallation was occupied by the people. The army sent personnel to the area. It is said that the army fired against the demonstrators, causing deaths and injuries, retook the installation, and arrested numerous persons. Of Bishop's fate, and that of other leaders who were with him, there was no news.

In the afternoon the dramatic outcome became known. An official communiqué announced the death of Maurice Bishop, prime minister; Unison Whiteman, minister of foreign relations; Jacqueline Creft, minister of education; Vincent Noel, first vice-president of the trade union federation of Grenada; Norris Bain, minister of housing; and Fitzroy Bain, general secretary of the agricultural workers union.

It has still not been possible to determine exactly the actual way in which Bishop and the other leaders died. Bishop was among the political leaders who most enjoyed sympathy and respect among our people, for his talent, his simplicity, his revolutionary sincerity and honesty, and his proven friendship for our country. Besides that, he enjoyed great international prestige. The news of his death stirred the leadership of our party, and we render the deepest tribute to his memory.

It is most unfortunate that the differences among the Grenadian revolutionaries climaxed in this bloody drama. No doctrine, no principle or position held up as revolutionary, and no internal division justifies atrocious proceedings like the physical elimination of Bishop and the outstanding group of honest and worthy leaders killed yesterday. The death of Bishop and his comrades must be clarified, and if they were executed in cold blood the guilty ones deserve to be punished in an exemplary way.

Imperialism will now try to make use of this tragedy and the grave errors committed by the Grenadian revolutionaries in order to sweep away the revolutionary process in Grenada and subject it once again to neocolonial and imperial domination. The situation is most difficult and complex. Only a miracle of common sense, equanimity, and wisdom on the part of the Grenadian revolutionaries, and of serenity in the reaction and response of the international progressive movement, can still salvage the process.

No step must be taken that would aid imperialism in its plans. In Grenada many Cuban doctors, teachers, technicians of various kinds, and hundreds of construction workers are collaborating in providing essential services to the people and in the development of projects that are vital to the economy. Though profoundly embittered by the events, we will take no precipitate step with regard to technical and economic collaboration that could affect essential services or economic interests vital to the people of Grenada, for whom we have sincere and deep feelings of admiration and affection.

After the tragic outcome yesterday, we will continue following the development of events closely. We will maintain the strict principle of not involving ourselves in the internal affairs of Grenada, and we will take

into account, above all, the interests of the Grenadian people in matters of economic and technical collaboration if that is possible in the new situation. But our political relations with the new figures in the Grenadian leadership will have to be subjected to serious and profound analysis. Nonetheless, if the Grenadian revolutionary process manages to be preserved, we will do whatever is possible to help it.

Let it be hoped that the painful events that have taken place cause all the revolutionaries of Grenada and the world to reflect deeply, and that the concept prevail that no crime must be committed in the name of the revolution and freedom.

\* \* \*

The Council of State, making use of the powers conferred upon it, has decided to issue the following decree:

First, to declare three days of official mourning, beginning at 6 a. m. tomorrow [October 21], for the death of the prime minister of Grenada, Comrade Maurice Bishop, which occurred yesterday afternoon

Second, that the national flag remain at half-staff at public buildings and military installations during the period of official mourning

Third, that the ministers of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and of foreign relations take responsibility for carrying out the provisions of this decree.

Fidel Castro Ruz  
President of the Council of State

## Grenada: Why U.S. Wants to Destroy Its Example for Workers and Farmers

by Steve Clark

*Reprinted from the November 4, 1983, issue of the Militant.*

Washington's invasion of Grenada is aimed at finishing off once and for all the workers' and farmers' government that came to power there in March 1979 through a popular, anticapitalist revolution. It is part of the escalating efforts by the U.S. ruling class to halt and roll back the advance of the American socialist revolution, opened by the victory of the Cuban workers and farmers in 1959 and given a powerful new impulse by victories in Nicaragua and Grenada twenty years later.

In launching this bloody onslaught, U.S. imperialism has taken advantage of the devastating blow dealt to the Grenada revolution October 19 by the execution of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and five other outstanding revolutionary leaders of the New Jewel Movement (NJM): Foreign Minister Unison Whiteman; Housing Minister Norris Bain; Education Minister Jacqueline Creft; and union leaders Vincent Noel and Fitzroy Bain.

This crime against the Grenada revolution by the new military council has been denounced by revolutionary leaders of the working-class movement and anti-imperialist struggles around the world.

If the current invasion succeeds in imposing a foreign occupation of Grenada, the imperialist forces will install a capitalist regime subservient to Washington — a regime like the dictatorship of Eric Gairy overthrown by the Grenadian people in 1979, or like the seven Caribbean governments participating in Washington's counterrevolutionary assault.

Washington wants to forestall the reemergence of revolutionary leadership to replace Bishop and the other fallen NJM leaders and to prevent further mass mobilizations such as those that occurred in support of Bishop and the revolution.

The depth of the popular support for the anti-imperialist, anticapitalist course of such leaders as Bishop was dramatically demonstrated during the week leading up to the executions. As the October 20 statement of the Cuban government and Communist Party noted, "It was clear that the people were in favor of Bishop" and "had taken to the streets in support of" him.

Further testimony to this support was the very fact that the military officers who toppled the People's Revolutionary Government felt that they could only hope to stabilize their power by beheading the revolutionary

leadership in a bloodbath.

The widow of one of the slain leaders has reported that Bishop and five other NJM leaders surrendered peacefully to the military authorities following a mass demonstration of supporters October 19. According to her account and those of others on the scene, the six leaders were then taken inside a building and shot.

These eyewitness reports belie the claim by Gen. Hudson Austin over radio that evening that the NJM leaders were killed during a gun battle initiated by Bishop supporters, as well as the slander that Bishop "had linked up — openly — with counterrevolutionaries" in order "to wipe out the entire leadership of the party and the army."

Bishop had "linked up" with the workers and farmers who made the revolution; it is Austin and his military council that have wiped out virtually the entire top leadership of the New Jewel Movement.

Austin's demagogic attempt to wrap his murderous actions in the mantle of defending the revolution was clearly given no credence by the working people of Grenada. The new regime could not mobilize any popular support during the week leading up to the executions. Armored military vehicles fired into the crowd of Bishop's supporters, killing and wounding many participants. And the first decree of the council was a four-day, round-the-clock curfew, with warnings that violators would be "shot on sight."

The message to the Grenadian people could not have been clearer. Maurice Bishop was placed under house arrest and then killed in cold blood; now the Grenadian people were under house arrest with the same fate awaiting them should they defy the council.

What happened on March 13, 1979, on this tiny island that put such a scare into the U.S. government and the capitalist rulers it represents?

On that day the workers and farmers of Grenada toppled the corrupt, neocolonial dictatorship of Eric Gairy. Gairy had used the thugs of his feared and hated "Mongoose Gang" to brutalize and murder opponents of his anti-working-class policies. His government served only his own extensive capitalist interests and those of a handful of other wealthy Grenadians, keeping the country subordinate to British and U.S. imperialism.

During the 1970s, the New Jewel Movement was formed and gained growing mass support through several broad-based struggles for democratic rights, improved conditions for workers and farmers, and freedom from imperialist domination. In the weeks leading up to March 13, 1979, NJM leaders learned of a plot by Gairy to assassinate them while he was out of the country. The revolutionists prevented this massacre by organizing a successful armed takeover of the True Blue army barracks and of the island's sole radio transmitter.

An appeal for mass support over the occupied radio station brought the Grenadian people into the streets by the tens of thousands, occupying the police station and other strategic points and ensuring victory. The NJM took the lead in establishing a People's Revolutionary Govern-

ment, with one of its founding leaders, Maurice Bishop, as prime minister.

The new government was politically independent of both the imperialist and local Grenadian capitalist classes, basing itself instead on the workers and farmers. It completely dismantled Gairy's army and officer corps, building a new army and militia.

From its first days in power, the revolutionary government began to implement popular measures to upgrade health and education, guarantee labor rights, improve the conditions of small farmers, ensure equal treatment of women and upgrade their position in society, and spur economic development.

The Grenada revolution — like the Cuban revolution twenty years earlier, and the Nicaraguan revolution a few months later — was a radical, anticapitalist revolution. Starting from the organization of the toilers to combat imperialist domination and establish democratic liberties, the new government laid the foundation for working people to begin the transition from capitalist property relations to the establishment of a workers' state based on nationalized property and economic planning.

"With the working people we made our popular, anti-imperialist, and democratic revolution," Prime Minister Bishop explained. "With them we will build and advance to socialism and final victory."

The establishment of the workers' and farmers' government was the first fruit of that anticapitalist revolution, an indispensable instrument of the toilers to carry out the expropriation of the exploiters. It overthrew the political dictatorship of the capitalist minority in Grenada, replacing it with the opening stage of what Marxists call the dictatorship of the proletariat — that is, political rule by, and in the interests of, the workers and poor farmers, the toiling majority.

The Grenadian capitalists, and also some U.S. and other imperialist economic interests, retained substantial property holdings in agriculture, industry, and commerce, but they no longer held *political* power. They could no longer dictate that the government and state would act to defend profits over the needs of the workers and farmers.

Still ahead of the revolution was the task of breaking the economic power of the capitalist class and consolidating a workers' state. Bishop and the NJM leadership sought to lead this transition in a way that would be least disruptive for the Grenadian people.

They understood that it would take time, organization, education, and discipline for the working class to prepare itself and its allies, the small farmers, to administer an entire society and all the industrial, agricultural, and commercial enterprises that make it up.

It would also take time for the new government to build up the infrastructure of roads, new plant and equipment, and administrative and scientific know-how to begin solid economic growth on which any lasting betterment of living conditions had to be based.

The gains of the first years of the revolution already showed big strides along this road. The state-owned sector was increasingly taking

the lead in the island's economic expansion and development.

Prior to this month's events, the capitalist press in the United States and elsewhere almost universally labelled Bishop and the entire NJM leadership as "dangerous" Marxists and "proxies" for Cuba and the Soviet Union. When news of the divisions inside the government came out, however, the media began peddling speculation that the course followed by Bishop had become more "moderate," and not to the liking of "more Marxist" figures in the NJM, allegedly backed by Cuba.

An October 20 *New York Times* article reporting Bishop's death, for example, chalked up the events in part to disputes over "the Prime Minister's policy of encouraging private industry to help improve the island's economy...."

These labels bandied about by the capitalist press — "hardline" vs. "softline," "moderate" vs. "radical," "less Marxist" vs. "rigid Marxist" — are intended to confuse and disorient readers; they are a fake and a fraud.

How quickly and by what means to carry out a transformation of property relations cannot be measured against some gauge oscillating from "less Marxist" to "more Marxist."

Following the October 1917 revolution in Russia, the Bolshevik leadership, wrote V.I. Lenin in 1921, "made an attempt to pass, as gradually as possible, breaking up as little of the old as possible, to the new social relations...."

There were those in the party who erroneously opposed this course, but they were not "more Marxist" than Lenin.

Similarly, the revolutionary leaders of the Nicaraguan workers' and farmers' government have so far left much industry and substantial land-holdings in private hands, while declaring socialism to be their goal and taking important steps toward the consolidation of a workers' state.

The question for a revolutionary leadership of the working class — whether in Russia, Nicaragua, or Grenada — is not how fast to move in the abstract, but how to prepare, educate, and organize the working population to run society in their own class interests. That will be determined by many factors — material conditions, the relationship of class forces at home and internationally, and the capacities and experience of the leadership.

It is wrong to think that "a revolution is like instant coffee; you just throw it in a cup and it comes out presto," Bishop explained in an interview with *Intercontinental Press* in July 1980.

Bishop's supposedly "less Marxist" position on the pace of nationalizations is just one example of a broadside "disinformation" campaign in the capitalist press. It is reminiscent of the campaign earlier this year around the assassination of Mélida Anaya Montes and suicide of Salvador Cayetano Carpio, two top leaders of the Salvadoran revolutionary movement.

There too, false charges were made of Cuban involvement in foul crimes, and meaningless labels were slapped on individuals and political

currents. In both cases, the fundamental aims of the bourgeois propaganda machine have been the same.

First, the rulers hope to discredit revolutionary struggles and their leaders in the eyes of working people throughout the world, thereby making it easier to justify direct or indirect U.S. military invasions such as that now under way against Grenada.

Second, the rulers hope that their rumors and false information will foment confusion, demoralization, and divisions among revolutionary fighters and their domestic and international backers. The conscious aim is to disrupt collaboration and solidarity, and to raise doubts about whether it is possible to stand up and win in the fight for a better world.

From their own class standpoint, the U.S. capitalists agreed with Fidel Castro's 1980 statement that Grenada, Cuba, and Nicaragua are "three giants of the Caribbean, standing up on the very threshold of imperialism."

Bishop pointed to one reason why the U.S. rulers have been particularly worried about Grenada when he spoke to an audience of 2,500 people in New York City in June 1983. He cited a State Department report that, according to Bishop, "made this point: that the Grenada revolution is in one sense even worse . . . than the Cuban and Nicaraguan revolutions because the people of Grenada and the leadership of Grenada speak English and therefore can communicate directly with the people of the United States."

As the crowd rose to its feet for a prolonged ovation, Bishop continued that "95 percent of our population is Black" and can thus "have a dangerous appeal to 30 million Black people in the United States."

It was that powerful example set by the Grenada revolution, its leaders, and its accomplishments that the U.S. rulers fear.

A central aspect of the bourgeois disinformation campaign is the charge that Cuba and the Soviet Union were behind the killing of Bishop and other NJM leaders. The imperialists hope to justify their false claim that the peoples and governments of Central America and the Caribbean have something to fear from Cuba and the USSR, and therefore need U.S. military protection from such "subversion."

The imperialists have kept up this campaign of lies and slanders against Cuba despite an October 20 statement by the Cuban government and party firmly condemning the executions. Three days of national mourning for these revolutionists were declared in Cuba, and by the revolutionary government of Nicaragua as well.

The ultimate goal of the capitalist disinformation campaign is to convince working people that it is useless to struggle. The cause of freedom, justice, and socialism is not worth living, fighting, and — if need be — dying for, because things always go awry. The hope and promise are always betrayed.

This was the pitch of an October 21 *New York Times* editorial headlined, "Harvest of Failure in Grenada." The editorial concluded that, "In an all-too-familiar pattern, the populists who led the way to power have

now been devoured by hard army and party men." The military regime established over the corpses of the New Jewel Movement leaders, the editorial claimed, represents "a hard lurch to the dogmatic and pro-Soviet left."

Do the recent events in Grenada represent a "harvest of failure" and a "lurch to the left"?

Just the opposite. It was the achievements of the Grenadian workers and farmers that made imperialism so desperate to reverse the revolution and eliminate its leaders. Whatever the motives of General Austin and company, their actions gave a mighty boost to this reactionary cause.

Bishop reviewed the major social accomplishments of the revolution in his New York City speech earlier this year. He also pointed to big strides in economic development to promote the island's income from tourism, agricultural production for the home and export markets, and industrial development.

In addition, the revolution has made progress in involving working people in determining and administering the affairs of their country. The workers' and farmers' government immediately granted and enforced labor rights, leading to organizing drives that brought 80 percent of the work force into unions. Mass women's organizations, youth organizations, and farmers' organizations were launched.

Democratic bodies called parish and worker-parish councils were set up in workplaces, villages, and neighborhoods. These councils discussed and debated proposed government policies, including its yearly budget and plan, and provided a forum for criticisms and discussion of problems of the revolution.

And Bishop announced at the New York meeting "that the time has come for us to make another step along the way toward institutionalizing the process that we have been building for four years." He said that preparation of a draft constitution had begun, laying the groundwork for future elections.

These elections, he said, would not replace but instead "institutionalize and entrench the systems of popular democracy" established during the first years of the revolution. The goal was the "involvement of our people in a participatory way from day to day and week to week," not "just the right to put an X next to Tweedledum or Tweedledee every five years."

This announcement, too, has been picked up by the capitalist press for use in its disinformation campaign. According to press accounts, Bishop had been at odds with other NJM leaders over these plans for the constitution and elections.

There were undoubtedly differences inside the NJM leadership, including serious divisions that intensified in recent weeks. There is no reason, however, to question the judgment of the October 20 Cuban statement that these differences did not involve "principled differences, but rather conflicts of personality and conceptions of leadership method, from which other subjective factors were not absent."

The day prior to the execution of Bishop, the capitalist media reported an October 17 radio address by Gen. Austin given, according to him, on behalf of the party's Central Committee. According to Austin, while "there has been no dispute" over the "political and economic policies of the party," the Central Committee had voted to expel Bishop from the party "to stop the steady growth of one-man rule in our party and country."

Austin sought to create the impression that the army was merely acting to ensure implementation of party decisions adopted by a majority led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard.

Several facts should be noted about Austin's October 17 statement and about the persistent reports in the capitalist media that the new military government is being run by Coard.

First, when the late Foreign Minister Unison Whiteman returned to Grenada from New York where he had addressed the United Nations General Assembly, he phoned the Caribbean News Agency October 18 to report that, contrary to Austin's claim, the NJM Central Committee had *not* been meeting in recent days.

Moreover, Coard has not been heard from since October 14, when news of Bishop's house arrest first began to be reported. Coard was not mentioned in Austin's subsequent, October 19, radio address announcing the military council, and he was not named as one of the council's sixteen members.

Whatever further facts turn up about Coard's role and the internal strife in the New Jewel Movement, it is nevertheless clear that the Cuban statement was correct to stress the disruptive character and tragic results of internal factional maneuvering against the NJM's central leadership around Bishop. This ended up paralyzing the party. Whatever the exact sequence of events, this paralysis in turn paved the way for a military takeover, the executions, and the devastated condition of the revolution that made the country so vulnerable to invasion.

Cuban Marxists have direct experience with such disruptive leadership methods. At the end of 1961, the July 26 Movement — which had led the workers and peasants to victory and to the consolidation of the first workers' state in the Americas — fused with two other parties to form the Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI).

The new organization secretary of the ORI was Anibal Escalante, a longtime leader of the Popular Socialist Party (PSP), the traditional Moscow-line Communist Party. Escalante abused his position to build up a party and state apparatus increasingly composed of PSP cadres, winking at special privileges and bureaucratic practices. He also started a rumor-mill belittling the July 26 leaders.

The concrete situation in Cuba was quite different from what developed in Grenada, of course. It should be noted, however, that the Escalante grouping circulated the charge that Castro was refusing to function as part of the collective party leadership. It dismissed the popular support for Castro and other July 26 leaders as signs of a "personality

cult."

In March 1962 Castro gave a televised speech pointing to the dangerous growth of bureaucracy, privilege, and favoritism fostered by Escalante. The party leadership removed Escalante from his post. On Castro's proposal, the procedure for becoming a party member was changed so that nominations would come from assemblies of the candidate's coworkers; this has remained the procedure ever since.

A common bourgeois press speculation at the time, echoed by many in the radical movement internationally, was that "more hardline Marxists" from the PSP had been taking over, pushing aside the "more moderate" July 26 team. Some groups claiming to be Marxist even lined up with Escalante in the dispute on this basis.

A workers' and farmers' government such as that established in Grenada in March 1979 marks a necessary stage in a socialist revolution, consolidating the toilers' power over a reconstructed government and state apparatus. While there are no set timetables or recipes for the transition to a workers' state, the revolution will ultimately either move forward to the expropriation of the capitalists and landlords, or it will be driven back, allowing the reestablishment of capitalist class rule.

In Russia in 1917-18 and Cuba in 1959-60, workers' and farmers' governments went forward to the consolidation of workers' states under revolutionary Marxist leaderships. Following World War II, workers' states were consolidated in China, Yugoslavia, and other Eastern European countries despite Stalinist leaderships that lacked the revolutionary capacities of the Bolshevik and Cuban parties.

A year or two following the victorious struggle in Algeria against French colonial rule, a workers' and farmers' government came into existence there as well. Between late 1963 and mid-1965, that government took increasingly radical, anticapitalist measures against both foreign imperialist and local Algerian holdings. It mobilized the workers and poor peasants to exercise greater control over their society and economy. The left wing of the Algerian leadership, led by head of state Ben Bella, publicly declared its intention to follow the course charted by the Cuban revolution.

The Ben Bella group, however, was not a Marxist leadership like that of the Cuban, Nicaraguan, and Grenada revolutions. In response to resistance by procapitalist forces to the radical course of the revolution, Ben Bella vacillated and retreated. He did not rely on mobilization of the workers and poor peasants to defend and extend their gains.

As a result, a clique of officers in the revolutionary army, which had been built in the course of the anticolonial struggle, overthrew Ben Bella in June 1965. Gen. Houari Boumedienne, who had himself initially been associated with the left wing, replaced Ben Bella.

The workers' and farmers' government in Algeria had become quite rotted out by the time of the 1965 coup, and the takeover did not necessitate the bloody liquidation of the former leadership; Ben Bella was jailed but not executed. The new regime was not a rightist government à

la Chile, but sought to dampen popular opposition by claiming to defend certain previous gains and retaining an anti-imperialist posture in foreign policy.

Nonetheless, the Algerian workers' and farmers' government had been overthrown. It was replaced by a radical, bourgeois nationalist regime such as those that have come to power in a number of Middle Eastern, African, Asian, and Latin American countries as a result of the upsurge of the colonial revolution since World War II.

The course of the Grenada revolution since 1979 has been strikingly different from the trajectory of the Algerian workers' and farmers' government, above all because of the capacities of the Marxist leadership team of Bishop and other NJM leaders. They were deeply influenced by the experiences and lessons learned from the Cuban revolution and its proletarian internationalist leadership.

The Grenada revolution had not rotted out, nor were the workers and farmers demobilized when the events of this month erupted. That is why the new regime had to slaughter the central core of the leadership and subject the masses to hails of bullets and a "shoot-to-kill," four-day curfew.

That is also why imperialism decided to directly intervene with its own forces. While Washington recognized the serious blow that the revolution had taken, it also recognized that the revolution had not yet been crushed. It is seeking by its own might to hold down the workers and farmers, prevent the reemergence of a revolutionary leadership, and deal the workers' and farmers' government a final deathblow.

Whatever the outcome of the battle between the imperialist forces and the Grenadian people, one thing can be said with certainty. While it may be possible for Washington to roll back the Grenada revolution for a time, it cannot erase from history the example and rich lessons of the past four years. The workers' and farmers' government brought to power by the Grenadian people remains one of the three giants of the Caribbean for revolutionary-minded working people throughout the Americas and the world.

Nor can the imperialists sweep away the contribution made by Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement to the process of constructing a new, international revolutionary leadership of the working class and its allies.

Bishop, the other slain NJM leaders, and those Grenadians who fell October 19 and are falling today in defense of their country's sovereignty — they join the ranks of martyrs of the international working-class movement.

Right now, the best tribute we can pay them is to turn our efforts to mobilizing the broadest possible opposition to the U.S. occupation of their homeland and to Washington's efforts to use this criminal invasion to bring closer the direct use of U.S. military power to halt the advance of the socialist revolution in Nicaragua, El Salvador, and throughout the Caribbean and Central America.