

*The Grenada  
Revolution:  
Setting the record straight*



Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister of Grenada 1979 - 1983

**RICHARD HART**

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SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT**

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## Contents

Introduction	3
The Role of the Governor General	3
The Decision to Restore Constitutional Government	4
The Democratic Institutions for Popular Consultation and Participation	6
Misrepresentation of the Organisations for Popular Consultation and Participation	8
What Kind of Economy?	9
Was there Economic Decline during the Revolution?	11
Was there a Downturn in Agricultural Production?	12
Were there Currency Restrictions?	15
The Decline of Tourism	15
Alleged Confiscation of Property	16
The Judicial System	18
The PRG's Policy on Detentions	19
Detentions Listed on: <a href="http://www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com">www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com</a>	23
Did the PRG Restrict Religious Freedom?	24
The Workers' Education Classes	26
Many Creditable Social Improvements	27
Recruitment of Personnel from Abroad	28
Decline in the Popular Revolutionary Elan	31
Bishop's Leadership Qualities Assessed - Joint Leadership Proposed	33
Bernard Coard's Reaction to the Joint Party Leadership Proposal	36
The Crisis in the New Jewel Movement	38
The Killing of Bishop and Others	41
The Revolutionary Military Council	42
Scoon Promises "Fullest Support" if Invasion Occurs	43
United States Government Plans to Invade Grenada	45
The Invasion and Occupation	47
Looting Starts after US Troops Take Control	48
International Condemnation of the Invasion	50
Post Invasion Propaganda Lines	50
Scoon Installed as new <i>de facto</i> Government	51
Items taken from our St. Georges Flat	53
Scoon Restores the Pre-Revolutionary Name of Fort Rupert	54
PRG, Leading NJM and Members of the PRA Detained and Tortured	54
A Sadistic Prisons Commissioner	57
Economic Relations with Several Countries Terminated	58

Arrangements for an Election	59
Post-Invasion Departures from Grenada	60
Charges Laid against PRG, PRA and NJM Members	61
Partial Restoration of the Grenada Constitution	63
The Trial in the Grenada High Court	64
Prosecution Witnesses Cletus St. Paul and George Louison	67
Constitutional Motion in Suit 191 of 1986	68
Conviction, Sentences and Commuting of the Death Sentences	69
Conditions on "Death Row"	70
The Hearing of the Appeals	72
Judges Demand More Money before Delivering Judgement	72
Death Sentences Commuted	73
Grenada's Tortuous Return to the OECS Judicial System	75
Motion Filed on Behalf of the Three Soldiers	75
Motion Filed on Behalf of Prisoners Sentenced to Death	76
How Will Sir Paul Scoon Be Remembered?	77
Postscript	79
Notes	82

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# The Grenada Revolution: setting the record straight

## Introduction

Grenada and its Grenadines, Carriacou and Petit Martinique, are just 133 square miles in area with a population of about 100,000. It is one of the smallest sovereign states in the world. Nonetheless, the Grenada Revolution is one of the most remarkable and inspiring events ever to have occurred in the turbulent history of the Caribbean. Described in the report of an American research group as a “peaceful revolution”,<sup>1</sup> it started with the almost bloodless overthrow of a dictatorial and oppressive regime on 13 March 1979. It was brought to a violent and bloody end by the armed forces of the mighty USA in the last week of October 1983, having already been damaged by recent internal dissensions.

During the time that I worked for the People’s Revolutionary Government (PRG), I collected material about the revolution and subsequently did some research in the files of the Colonial Office on the island’s history as a former British Colony, thinking that I might one day write a book about Grenada. What has now inspired or, more accurately, provoked me to write this booklet is a recently published book by Sir Paul Scoon.<sup>2</sup> Scoon was appointed Governor General of Grenada in 1973 on the recommendation of Sir Eric Gairy, the Grenada Prime Minister. Scoon retired in 1992. His book contains so many inaccuracies and misrepresentations that I felt impelled to set the record straight. In addition to my own knowledge and recollections of the Grenada Revolution, I keep a diary which has proved to be a very useful record of day to day events during the revolutionary period.

## The Role of the Governor General

Traditionally a Governor General is the titular head of state. Like the Queen of England whom he represents, his office does not entitle him to exercise any political initiatives of his own. His functions normally are to assent to legislation enacted by the legislature by appending his signature thereto, to give the so-called “throne speech” (unless the Queen happens to be present), to entertain visiting heads of state and government and to perform certain other ceremonial roles. The “throne speech” is delivered at the opening of each term of the legislature and contains a statement of what the government proposes to do in the proximate future. It is prepared by the government of the day, and all the Governor General has to do is read it aloud. He cannot alter it in any way.

The constitution under which Grenada became an independent state was set out in an Order in Council made in England. It came into force on 7 February 1974.<sup>3</sup> This constitution made provision for a Governor General with strictly limited functions and powers. Section 62 provided that:

In the exercise of his functions the Governor General shall act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet or a Minister acting under the general authority of the Cabinet except in cases where he is required by this Constitution or any other law to act in accordance with the advice of any person or authority other than the Cabinet or in his own deliberate judgment.

The cases where he might act in his own judgment are clearly stated in Section 58:

Whenever the Governor General has occasion to appoint a Prime Minister he shall appoint a member of the House of Representatives who appears to him likely to command the support of the majority of the members of the House.

And in Section 61:

- (1) Whenever the Prime Minister is absent from Grenada or is by reason of illness unable to perform the functions conferred upon him by this Constitution, the Governor General may authorise some other Minister to perform those functions ...
- (2) The powers of the Governor General, acting under this section shall be exercised by him in accordance with the advice of the Prime Minister: Provided that if the Governor General acting in his own deliberate judgment, considers it impracticable to obtain the advice of the Prime Minister owing to his absence or illness he may exercise those powers in his own deliberate judgment.

And in Section 66:

Whenever there shall be occasion for the appointment of a Leader of the Opposition, the Governor General, acting in his own deliberate judgment, shall appoint the member of the House of Representatives who appears to him to command the support of the largest number of members of the House in opposition to the Government.

Following the overthrow of the Gairy regime in March 1979, the PRG suspended the constitution and dissolved the existing legislature. Subsequently however 21 of the 111 sections of the constitution were restored. The PRG decided to keep Sir Paul Scoon in office as Governor General so as not to sever the link with the Queen. But because, during the revolutionary period, laws were passed by proclamation of the PRG, he no longer had to append his signature to enacted legislation or read a "throne speech". People's Law No. 3 provided that he should perform such functions as the People's Revolutionary Government might from time to time advise.

### **The Decision to Restore Constitutional Government**

The overthrow of the oppressive and dictatorial Gairy regime, as Sir Paul acknowledges (p. 40), was immensely popular and the occasion for great rejoicing. *Caribbean Contact*, the monthly newspaper of the Caribbean Conference of Churches, recorded reactions to the event:

Grenada's triumph over its "long night of terror" with the creation of the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) was last month the cause for jollification and people's solidarity rallies throughout this region and in West Indian communities in Britain and North America. Now there's a new feeling in the air, a sense of liberation.<sup>4</sup>

At the massively attended rally where revolutionary leader Maurice Bishop announced the formation of the PRG, he promised to:

return to constitutional rule at an early opportunity and to appoint a Consultative Assembly to consult with all the people for the purpose of the establishment of a new Constitution which will reflect the wishes and aspirations of all the people of Grenada. The new Constitution will be submitted for popular approval in a referendum. All classes and strata will be involved.<sup>5</sup>

A period of consolidation of the revolution was of course necessary before this could be accomplished. In late May 1983 the decision was taken by the PRG to set up the necessary machinery for re-establishment of constitutional government. The appointment of a Constitution Commission was announced on 4 June both in Grenada and in the USA, which Prime Minister Maurice Bishop was visiting at the invitation of members of Congress.

The task of the commissioners was to study possible constitutional models, hold public consultations, receive memoranda on what should be provided for in the constitution, and then draft a constitution to be submitted for approval in a referendum. In its terms of reference the commission was required to provide for regular elections and to observe certain guiding principles:

The widest possible participation by the people in the country's decision-making process and the day to day administration of affairs of the State and of matters affecting their work and their residential communities. The concept of popular democracy should be reflected in the provisions of the Constitution whereby the structures therein contained shall be designed to facilitate continuous popular involvement. Something more meaningful is required than the illusion of popular control by the right merely to enter a polling booth once or twice every four or five years.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, the commissioners were required to provide in the draft constitution that any elected representative whose performance was deemed unsatisfactory by a majority of the voters concerned could be recalled. In such an event a fresh election would then be held to fill the vacancy.

The commission consisted of three lawyers and two representatives of popular mass organisations. The lawyers were: Alan Alexander, a leading Senior Counsel practising in Trinidad & Tobago, Chairman; the Civil Service Attorney General (I held that office at the time); and Ashley Taylor, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of External Affairs. The representatives of the mass organisations were to be appointed jointly by the Trade Union Council, the women's organisation and the youth organisation. My estimate that our work would have been



completed in about two years may have been optimistic. Maurice Bishop thought, probably more realistically, that the whole process might take five years.

Four years after the Grenada Revolution had begun, the PRG set in motion the machinery to re-establish constitutional government and hold elections. It is worth noting that this was considerably shorter than the time it took the revolutionaries in the British North American colonies, after their victory in their War of Independence, to establish constitutional government in the USA. The revolutionary struggle in the North American colonies started on 19 April 1775, and the Declaration of Independence was issued on 4 July 1776. They held their constitutional convention in 1787 and finally established constitutional government only in 1790.<sup>7</sup>

Up to the US invasion in October 1983, the commission had held only three or four meetings. It had only had time to study a number of precedents and fix a date for the first public consultation. Interestingly enough, the best precedent we had obtained for recall of an unsatisfactory elected representative was in the Constitution of the State of California.

Some people felt that the PRG would have been well advised to hold an early election under the previously existing system. The leaders of the revolutionary party, the New Jewel Movement (NJM), were so popular that, had elections been held, the NJM would have won an overwhelming majority. Rightly or wrongly, the PRG decided not to do this. The re-introduction of constitutional government was postponed until the revolution had been consolidated. They however established immediately a government in which non-party elements from the business community were well represented. Two businessmen, Lyden Ramdhanny and Norris Bain, were in the Cabinet. Bain was a full Minister. In June 1983 Ramdhanny, who had been Deputy Minister of Finance, was appointed Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation.

### **The Democratic Institutions for Popular Consultation and Participation**

The PRG developed a remarkably democratic structure for public debate and consultation. This system and how it originated has been described in a pamphlet by Bernard Coard, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance:

With the drawing up of the NJM's Manifesto during the summer of '73 ... and its approval by the people at the "People's Congress" at Seamoan, St. Andrews (attended by over 10,000 adult Grenadians) the ... programme of Village and Workers Assemblies became the official ... plan of the NJM to introduce some day, in the body politic of Grenada. ... And yet ... it must be honestly stated that the actual timing and nature ... of the "Assemblies" which emerged during the four years and seven months of the Revolution, starting in its earliest months and blossoming at an amazing speed throughout these years ... happened virtually "accidentally" - in its initial stages with the masses of the Working people "inviting themselves" to our NJM Party

delegates council meetings, and doing so in such numbers as to cause this structure to be transformed ...

And so, by the second or third month of the organisation of the Parish Council meetings of the NJM, invitations were going out to about 500 people per Parish and in most cases more than 500 were showing up ... It took very little time before the word "Delegates" was dropped and ... the door was open to all who wished to come. No longer restricted to supporters ... of the Party, the word NJM was dropped from these meetings. They became in name, form and content, simply Parish Council Meetings of the people of the Parish! And we had to find the largest school and church halls and community centres in each Parish to hold the people, lay on all the National Transport Buses ... and "truck in" hundreds of conference chairs from night to night around the island.

It took only a matter of months before the number of people attending and each wanting to speak or ask questions became impossible to accommodate, unless we moved from the Parish to the Zonal level, ie. splitting each Parish into two, three and (in the case of St. Georges) five Zones, so that the many thousands of extra people who wanted to take part could, so that many more would be able to speak during these meetings. So Parish Council meetings ... got phased out to be replaced by what was called Zonal Parish Council meetings. By 1980/81 there were ... 28 separate Zonal Parish Council Meetings ... We had estimated that in another 12 to 18 months Zonal Parish Council Meetings would have to be ...replaced at the village level. The level of mass involvement was making this distinctly possible in some areas sooner than in others.

Simultaneously with the move towards the Zonal Council meetings sprung up Workers, Youth, Women and Farmers Parish Councils or Assemblies geared towards discussing both National issues in general and issues of special importance to the particular grouping. ...<sup>8</sup>

At these parish and zonal meetings and meetings of mass organisations all major new government initiatives, including the budget and important new legislation, were submitted for public discussion. These matters went to the Cabinet for implementation only after such discussions had taken place. As Coard explained further:

Many new programmes of the Revolution were conceived or "born" in the Parish Council Meetings - the National Transport Service (NTS) being the first such example, in the very early days of the Assemblies starting up. Many specific economic (including taxation) measures were first suggested by the people in these Assemblies. And many roads, drains, main water pipes, sewage disposals, feeder roads for farmers, health and maternity clinics, etc. got repaired or installed or constructed ... as a direct consequence of the interaction of the masses in the Assemblies with the politicians, civil servants and state managers.

So, long before constitutional government and periodic elections were reintroduced, the PRG was involving the people in public affairs far more than ever before in Grenada or any of the other former colonies in the region.

### **Misrepresentation of the Organisations for Popular Consultation and Participation**

Sir Paul Scoon dismisses this democratic consultation. He sees it as a merely a means of indoctrinating the population. He writes (p. 60):

Bishop's much vaunted idea of democracy was based, as he claimed, on the "people's participation". Zonal Councils were established to give effect to the efficiently propagandized doctrine of people's participation. ... What was significant about them was that they were mere extensions of the party apparatus. While in theory anyone was free to attend and ... could express his views freely, in practice the Councils were so well manipulated and ... orchestrated that the opinions expressed ... had to be in keeping with socialist thinking.

He goes on to make the preposterous allegation that:

Any expression to the contrary was looked upon with suspicion ... the whole country was under surveillance with spies in the hotels, at social functions, in the banks, in the offices and even in homes with children spying on their parents ...

Sir Paul never condescended to attend a Parish or Zonal Council meeting or meetings held by any of the mass organisations to discuss government policies. I was at many of these meetings and can testify that expression of views was totally uninhibited. I saw for myself how legislation that the government was planning to adopt was influenced by such public discussions and how important these meetings were.

For example, during the revolution there had been a boom in exports of fruits and vegetables to Trinidad. The traffic was so large that schooners carrying this produce were sometimes double-parked on the Carenage in St. Georges. The down-side of this was that there was in some rural areas an increase in praedial larceny (the stealing of growing crops) as the thieves found a ready market on the Carenage. Farmers were demanding that the government should improve the operation of the existing Praedial Larceny Law. When someone was caught and prosecuted, the aggrieved farmer had to give up at least one day's work on his or her farm to attend court.

I was instructed to draft an amendment to the law, to be discussed at meetings of the Parish Zonal Councils and the Productive Farmers' Association. This amendment provided firstly that where a person was found with produce worth more than EC\$25 (about US\$10), that person had to satisfy the police that the produce had been come by lawfully. This could be done by showing that he or she occupied land on which the goods could have been produced or by

showing a receipt for their purchase. Secondly, in areas where praedial larceny was prevalent, persons charged for the offence would be tried and, if found guilty, sentenced by a locally appointed committee, meeting at a time and place convenient for the farmers.

Whilst the farmers at the meetings I attended were pleased that the government was doing something in response to their complaints, they balked at the idea of being appointed to local committees to sentence offenders. They were accustomed to the idea that justice should be administered by someone else from outside and above, by the official magistrate.

Reluctance to accept this responsibility was expressed at several of the meetings. Consequently, a new proposal was circulated for discussion, providing that local committees in these areas should decide the guilt or innocence of a person arrested for the offence, but if the person was found guilty, he or she should then be taken into custody and sent to the magistrate to be sentenced. At the second round of meetings the farmers were happy with this revised proposal and agreed that it should be submitted to the government for enactment in that form.

As well as misrepresenting the purpose and functioning of the Parish Zonal Councils, Sir Paul fails to mention the step taken towards restoring constitutional government by appointing the Constitution Commission. Had he mentioned this development this would of course have contradicted the impression he tries to create. And although he does not state specifically that constitutional government would not be restored, he certainly implies it (p. 97):

In response to the numerous calls for elections Bishop emphasised that participatory democracy was of much more benefit to the people than parliamentary democracy. He relegated parliamentary democracy to a five minute visit to a polling station every five years. ... What Bishop never grasped was that the Grenadian people were happier with their parliamentary democracy than with his new fangled brand of participatory democracy which was never clearly defined or institutionalized, and which restricted freedom of speech to mutterings in support of the revolution.

Of course, what Bishop meant was that a five minute visit to a polling station every five years was *not enough* democracy. He was not saying that there were to be no more elections of a legislature. Sir Paul's suggestion that the PRG had created the Parish and Zonal Councils to replace elections to a legislature is clearly disingenuous.

### **What Kind of Economy?**

Sir Paul several times describes the PRG and the measures it introduced as "socialist" and "communist", as for example in the following passages (pp. 49, 84 and 87):

The new regime quickly imposed the kind of State controls and constraints redolent of the totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe ... in the Far East, and of course Cuba. And so the people of Grenada became the unwitting recipients of the first revolutionary socialist regime in the English-speaking Caribbean.

And:

...a deteriorating economy which was squeezed by the anti-capitalist policies of the Bishop regime, relating to the ownership of land, transfer of money, entrepreneurship, taxation and state control of the commanding heights of the economy.

And:

Grenadians take pride in their own property, however small ... In such circumstances the imposition of radical socialism in Grenada would always be risky...

The revolutionary leaders never described the Grenada revolution as socialist. Nor did the PRG attempt to establish a socialist economy along Soviet or Eastern European lines, where private capitalist ownership of the means of production was prohibited. The PRG advocated and developed a mixed economy. The publicly owned sector was expanded but the existing private ownership of the means of production was not abolished or altered. There were two businessmen in the Cabinet who were not members of the NJM, and every effort was made to encourage and attract private investment. In an interview in July 1981 Maurice Bishop explained the PRG's economic policy:

The state sector alone cannot develop the economy, given the very low level of technology available, the limited human resources, the lack of capital, the lack of marketing expertise, the lack of promotional capacity. So we must stimulate the private sector generally, but also of course in agriculture, and in particular among the small and medium farmers.<sup>9</sup>

Sir Paul's reference to "*the anti-capitalist policies of the Bishop regime*" (p. 84) conveniently ignores the fact that the PRG did much to encourage private investments, including from abroad. This was the purpose of the 1983 Investment Code which offered a considerably wider range of investment incentives than before. I noted at the time how this was dealt with and, yet again, this account shows the inaccuracy of Sir Paul's allegations. My diary entry for 28 February reads:

Was summoned to a meeting of the Cabinet along with Boatswain (P. S. Min. of Ind. Dev. & Fish. who is also a member of the Committee which drafted the Investment Code) to discuss the code. Maurice wondered whether it could be made into a Law but I advised against this as it is really a promotional document. I suggested that Govt's approval of it along with the text be published in the Gazette. This was agreed but Maurice said that some of the hard-nosed businessmen will want to see the text of the Law under which incentives are offered. He therefore wants me to go through the various

incentive laws & amend them where necessary to reflect concessions and incentives mentioned in the Code.

I was asked to have the amendments ready for consideration by the Cabinet at 8 a.m. on the following morning! In my diary on 1 March I recorded that:

Last night I worked until 11 pm & was still at the stage of identifying what incentives there were under existing Laws, when I gave up in absolute frustration at the realisation that I simply had no hope of completing the task given to me in the time available. This morning I woke up with a solution already clear to me before I had had time to give any conscious thought to the problem & wondering why I had not thought of it. I went straight to Butler House at 8 a.m. where I explained my idea to the Cabinet.

I proposed that we leave existing Laws as they are and pass a Law (The Investment Code Incentives Law 1983) whereunder the Minister of Finance would have power to issue a Certificate to an applicant for approval of an investment, where he considered that the proposed investment would meet the criteria in the code for acceptance, which would grant the concessions or incentives referred to in the Code, or any of them & wholly or in part as specified in the Certificate, anything to the contrary in any existing Law notwithstanding.

This the Cabinet accepted subject to the amendment that the Minister should obtain Cabinet approval. They then spent the rest of the morning in finally settling the incentives to be mentioned in the Code, and released me at mid-day to draft the proposed Law. This I settled down to do after lunch with Boatswain's help and I was ready to present the Law to Cabinet by 4.30 pm. There it was debated & subject to some amendments, which I had completed by 6 pm., accepted. But while my hand-written draft was being typed, the power was cut off & I had to take it home to finish it.

### **Was there Economic Decline during the Revolution?**

Sir Paul repeatedly alleges that, during the period of the revolution, the economy of Grenada declined precipitously. He refers (p. 79) to "*the worsening economy*" and says (p. 81) that "*By 1982 the people in rural Grenada could see no change for the better*". He declares (p. 84) that "*Government revenues dwindled helplessly in the face of a deteriorating economy which was squeezed by the anti-capitalist policies of the Bishop regime...*" and that (p. 85) "*By January 1983 ... the economic failure of the revolution was clearly evident*". He also alleges (p. 99) "*rising unemployment*".

How does this compare with what was actually happening in the economy? How was its management viewed by expert world opinion? The World Bank, an institution most unlikely to be well disposed towards socialist policies, made a very favourable report on Grenada and how the PRG was managing the island's financial affairs. On 28 January 1983 I noted:

The favourable World Bank report on Grenada probably explains an approach we have recently had from agents for West European funds. They are offering a loan of \$20 million at 9% but at a discount of 5%.

The World Bank had every reason to be favourably impressed. On 24 February 1983 I noted:

Economic growth in 1982 was 5.5%, which compares very favourably with the rest of the world - the U.S.A. minus 1.7%, Canada minus 5%, Britain plus 0.5%, Italy 0.8%, France 1.5% and even Japan only 2.5%. As for sister Caribbean nations - Jamaica is said to be between minus 1% and plus 1%..., Barbados minus 5%. Grenada must be one of the few countries that bothers to balance its recurrent revenue and expenditure budget. And although borrowing to finance the capital expenditure budget is relatively high, the Govt. is very conscious of the need not to over-burden the economy, to "fall into the debt trap". The servicing of Grenada's debts in 1982 took only 3% of G.D.P. and 3.7% of foreign exchange earned which, according to World Bank figures is the lowest in the world!

Unemployment, at 14% of the labour force when the unemployment census was taken in April 1982, is the lowest in CARICOM countries, even though Grenada counts people who say they have no employment & have stopped looking for employment whereas other countries exclude such persons from the unemployment figure. If there was astonishment at the recent favourable report of the World Bank on Grenada, there will be howls of dismay at Grenada's achievements now.<sup>10</sup>

### **Was there a Downturn in Agricultural Production?**

Grenada was mainly an agricultural country. The proportion of farmers was higher in Grenada than anywhere else in the Caribbean, except, perhaps, Dominica. Sir Paul alleges that during the revolution there was a serious down-turn in agriculture, for which he holds Maurice Bishop and his revolutionary government partly to blame. He concedes (p. 79) that:

To give a boost to agriculture the People's Revolutionary Government did make a worthwhile effort in agro-industrial development by starting a modest enterprise for the production of guava and nutmeg preserves as well as fruit juices and banana chips.

But he then negates this by asserting (pp. 79 - 80) that:

Such efforts elicited only lukewarm support from farmers who amid growing fear that their lands might be taken over by the state at any time were unwilling to put their scarce resources into their farms.

He alleges further (pp. 80 - 81) that:

agricultural workers had lost the will to work. They could not see any brighter prospects for themselves or their families. As far as they were concerned, greater effort on their part was no guarantee for the enjoyment

of maximum benefit. It was common practice for Army personnel to enter people's property and generously help themselves to fruit and vegetables.

And he falsely asserts that:

The Government and their agents continued to seize people's land without any apparent intention to compensate the owners.

These allegations are entirely unfounded. In fact farmers benefited a great deal during the revolutionary period and production increased significantly. This was a result not only of measures introduced by the PRG but also of the entirely fortuitous boom in the export of fruits and vegetables to Trinidad. It was hoped that once the new airport had been built, with a runway long enough to accommodate jet-engined aeroplanes for the first time, more fresh fruits and vegetables and even flowers could be exported to more distant markets.

Farmers had always faced the problems of an uncertain market for their crops and the high price charged by merchants for imported fertiliser. The government remedied these disadvantages by setting up the Marketing and National Import Board (MNIB). As I wrote in 1984:

This institution not only purchased locally grown foodstuffs for export and for the local retail trade, but was also used as a means controlling and in some cases reducing the prices of essential imports. Fertiliser was imported for resale to farmers at reasonable prices, and likewise cement for the building trade and cheaper rice for wholesale and retail distribution. Expansion of the MNIB by erection of refrigerated storage space and other warehousing facilities was envisaged. The Government's agro-industrial plant for canning fruit juices and other agricultural produce was another impressive development.<sup>11</sup>

The MNIB offered contracts to farmers ensuring guaranteed sales. Farmers were however still free to sell their produce in the markets either directly or to higglers.

In a lecture at the University in Jamaica in March 1984 I mentioned that the MNIB:

was designed initially to purchase farmers' crops and an effort was made to get the individual farmer ... to go over to a system of contracting to supply.

That proved a little difficult because many of the farmers were not accustomed to the idea of contracting, so it was making slow progress but progress nevertheless.<sup>12</sup>

Another problem, which affected both large and small farmers, was the fall in the world price of nutmegs, the island's principal export crop. Bishop referred to this in a speech on the third anniversary of the revolution:

...10 years ago, one ton of nutmegs could bring us enough money to buy a car. Now, for a car of the same value, we would have to sell at least five tons of nutmegs. So our nutmegs today are worth only a fifth of what they were worth five years ago. You can imagine how serious this is for our foreign exchange and our imports situation.<sup>13</sup>



Fortunately, the PRG was able to help both the economy and the nutmeg farmers. In February 1983 Maurice Bishop negotiated a very favourable trade agreement with the USSR. On 21 February 1983 I noted:

Went to the Information Office at Butler House to look at the press release on Maurice's mission to Moscow, then spoke with Mr Renwick, the Manager of the Nutmeg Coop Assn. on the phone. The Agreement with the Soviet Union on nutmegs is that they will purchase 500 metric tons per year for 5 years at prices to be negotiated annually. This year's price ... is US\$1850 per ton, but this was told to me in confidence as prices of individual deals are not usually announced for fear of prejudicing other deals. An average price is announced when all sales have been concluded.

Mr Renwick said that it is possible that it might suit the P.M's purpose to disclose this deals price ... considerably better than last year's prices ... but I agreed not to announce it without the PM's permission.

In future, the USSR would buy approximately one quarter of Grenada's average annual nutmeg production. In addition, the USSR also agreed to purchase a large part of the unsold nutmegs accumulated in the warehouses. These sales were of course very beneficial to Grenada's nutmeg farmers and the economy generally, but Sir Paul does not admit this. In his only reference to this trade agreement Sir Paul describes it (p. 84) as being "*for political purposes*".

The PRG also encouraged the production of other export crops. Plantation owners engaged in the export trade were helped to maintain production. One problem was that, in times of difficulty, plantation owners engaged in the export trade might sell their land. As many Grenadians living abroad wanted on retirement to return home and build a house, there was always a ready market for land. If such purchasers did any farming it would usually be only for their own consumption. If the land purchased had previously been used to produce an export crop, exports would decrease.

In order to discourage such sub-divisions and sales, the Land Development and Utilization Law provided that a sale of land in excess of 100 acres could not be made without a certificate from the Ministry of Agriculture. When such a certificate was applied for, the Minister could try to come to some arrangement with the would-be vendor to prevent any decrease of agricultural exports. This was not always possible, but I was personally involved in one case which resulted in an export crop continuing to be cultivated on a large area of plantation land.

Grenada's production of bananas for export was much lower than that of St. Lucia and the other Windward Islands. The government however wanted to ensure that such cultivation of bananas for export as there was should not decrease. Towards the end of 1982 the owners of Dougleston Estate, the largest banana plantation on the island, wanted to raise some money by selling off part of the estate, and they applied for the necessary certificate under the law. With the approval of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Agriculture proposed instead

that the owners borrow the money they needed from a bank, and the government would act as their guarantor. This was acceptable to the owners. As I noted on 15 December 1982:

A tremendously busy day, starting with a meeting with George Louison at the Ministry of Agriculture at 7.30 a.m. ... the Govt. is worried about further fragmentation of large estates. So the Govt. is willing to rescue a large land-owner who cannot find the money for end of year commitments by guaranteeing a loan from the bank ... & taking an option to purchase shares on incorporation of the estate as a company. In pursuance of this proposal I met with Angus Smith of the Min. of Finance at midday & with the landowner Mr Branch at 3 p.m.

In the event the owners were able to repay the loan on time. The government did not have to exercise its option to purchase shares in the company, as this was only to be enforced if the owners defaulted and the government as guarantor had to repay the loan.

### **Were there Currency Restrictions?**

Jamaica had very strict currency controls. Persons travelling abroad had to apply for a permit to take money with them to cover their expenses and money could not be sent out of the island without permission. There were also restrictions on buying foreign currency with Jamaican dollars. In Grenada there were no restrictions on sending money out of the island or on purchasing foreign exchange. I asked Bernard Coard, the Minister of Finance, why he did not, to protect the Grenadian currency, impose controls similar to those in force in Jamaica. He replied that remittances to the island from the many Grenadians living abroad were very important to the economy as a source of foreign exchange, and money being sent out of the country had not become a problem. He said that if the PRG were to place restrictions on sending money abroad, this would probably cause apprehension among Grenadians overseas and mean a substantial reduction in remittances. I was therefore surprised to read Sir Paul's claim (p. 61) that the PRG was preventing money leaving the island by stationing "*at the point of embarkation ... zealous revolutionaries whose task it was to stem the flow of capital out of the country*". There are so many inaccuracies in this book that it is hard to tell which are due to ignorance of the facts and which are inventions designed to show the PRG in an unfavourable light.

### **The Decline of Tourism**

Sir Paul refers specifically to a decline in tourism, for which he blames the revolution and the revolutionary leaders. There may indeed have been fewer American tourists visiting Grenada, given President Reagan's hostility towards the PRG for its close relations with Cuba. When, between 1976 and 1980, the US government made every effort to destabilise the Jamaican economy because of its

dislike of Michael Manley's government, one of the things it did was to discourage American tourists from visiting that island. It was only to be expected that the same policy would be applied in US relations with Grenada. Indeed Sir Paul does (p. 81) refer to "*unfavourable international coverage which sought to black-list the island as a tourist resort*".

But when Sir Paul writes (pp. 81- 82) that: "*the anti-imperialist rhetoric ... effectively called a halt to the berthing of cruise liners at the St. George's harbour*" and that "*one after another the cruise ships stopped calling*", he exaggerates. On 30 October 1982 I observed:

St. Georges is certainly a busy little port. There are always schooners coming and going - this morning I watched three of them go out - a lovely sight. There are also usually either cargo ships or cruise liners or both in the Carenage and sometimes, if there are too many ships in the Carenage, they wait at anchor in the open road on the Caribbean side, which I look out on from my office window.

I was aware of only one interruption in cruise liner arrivals and that was a short one. On 8 August 1982, shortly after my arrival in Grenada, Zazeeda Fitzpatrick, the wife of my predecessor in the Attorney General's chambers, told me of an incident when some Cuban exiles came in on one of the Cunard cruise ships, heard some of the Cuban workers talking on the wharf, and started trouble. The workers drove them back on board where, of course, the Cunard people were given the wrong end of the stick. So for some time (she thought about a month) the weekly Cunard liner did not call at Grenada.

### **Alleged Confiscation of Property**

Eric Gairy had entered politics as a poor man but had acquired considerable property while in office. The revolutionary leaders regarded this as ill-gotten gains, and his hotels and night clubs were expropriated without compensation. I understand that his deputy Derrick Knight also had some of the property he had acquired while in office confiscated. But these were the only cases of expropriation that occurred during the revolutionary period.

Sir Paul, however, makes a sweeping allegation that the PRG expropriated privately owned land without compensation. He writes (pp. 80 - 81):

In flagrant disregard of the Acquisitions Law, which had long preceded the Revolution, the Government and their agents continued to seize people's lands without any apparent intention to compensate the owners.

And (p. 344):

Bishop's policy of "idle lands for idle hands" was even worse. While Gairy acquired property under the Acquisitions Law, Bishop simply confiscated people's land, one for political reasons, the other on ideological grounds.

In general this was quite untrue. My diaries contain several references to purchases of land from private owners. In November 1982 and March 1983 I was involved

in negotiations with the owners of the site of the former Holiday Inn, which had been largely destroyed by a fire, for the sale of the site to the government. I worked on the contract for the sale of the land and the assignments of leases. On 13 December 1982 I attended a meeting at the Prime Minister's house to discuss the draft Airport Authority Law, which provided for compulsory purchases of land for the new airport at Point Salines. This was to be paid for by interest-bearing Airport Land Bonds. On 27 April 1983 I recorded: "*This afternoon I negotiated with a delightful old gentleman, with infinite trust in God, for the purchase by Govt. of his property as a day nursery*"

Sir Paul may also have been referring to and misrepresenting the Land Development and Utilization Law, introduced during the time of my predecessor. This law, designed to bring idle lands into productive use, provided that where a large area of land was being kept unused, the Minister of Agriculture could order the owner to submit a plan for bringing that land into use, either by cultivating it himself or by selling it to a person or persons who would use it productively. If the land-owner failed to do this within a reasonable time or refused to do it, the law authorised the government to take a lease on the unused area at a fair rental, to be determined under the provisions of the law, and to sub-let it to individual farmers or farmers' co-operatives.

Sir Paul also claims that the PRG took over non-agricultural private property without compensation. He states that the Coca Cola factory was seized (p. 82) and "*the Government and its agents proceeded to operate the factory, though they did not have the franchise to produce Coca Cola*". This gives a totally false impression of what happened at the Coca Cola factory. To quote my account of this affair published in 1984:

...there was a dispute between the Commercial and Industrial Workers Union and the holder ... of the franchise to bottle Coca Cola. Negotiations over the dismissal of two employees was referred to the Labour Commissioner, whose adjudication required their reinstatement. The employer refused to reinstate the men, deciding instead to close the factory. ...

The workers responded by taking control of the factory and resuming production. The employer then requested the Police to eject the workers but this did not happen. Instead the Government opened an account for the business under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance. The workers continued to operate the factory, and did so so successfully that the business continued to make a profit. This continued until the employer agreed to reinstate the dismissed employees. ...

The PRG's attitude was that, unless the employer respected the workers' rights, his rights would not be protected by the state... Indeed, in this particular case, some of the workers were disappointed that they were required to surrender control of the factory, but, given its commitment to

the mixed economy, the PRG did not consider that the circumstances justified expropriation.<sup>14</sup>

Sir Paul's account of what occurred at the River Antoine Estate reveals an interesting inconsistency. Led by the Budhlal brothers, who had initially supported the revolution, some of the workers seized the land in February 1980. Sir Paul does not mention the seizure of this estate at all, but uses the case to try to show, quite wrongly, that the PRG was opposed to co-operatives. His failure to mention this unlawful seizure of land was probably because its principal organisers subsequently became counter-revolutionaries. Sir Paul's version is as follows (p. 80):

A modest attempt to start a people's co-operative at River Antoine Estate was thwarted by the Government, who apparently felt that the main participants in this initiative might, under the guise of farming, unfold their own hidden political agenda.

In fact, as I wrote in 1984, the position was rather different:

There were, however, limits on the extent to which state power was used in support of the workers. When a group of persons led by a former supporter of the revolution, who was allegedly planning to organise them to grow ganja (marijuana) for export, seized a plantation at River Antoine, the PRG insisted on the land being returned to its owner.

Far from discouraging cooperatives, the PRG did what it could to encourage them, although they did not prove very successful. In April 1980 it set up a National Cooperative Development Agency within the Ministry of Agriculture, with a government-guaranteed loan from the National Commercial Bank of EC\$ 1 million.

### **The Judicial System**

At the outbreak of the Grenada Revolution on 13 March 1979, Grenada shared a judicial system with the other Leeward and Windward Islands. The West Indies Associated States Supreme Court, originally established by the Privy Council in Britain in 1967, had been Grenada's Supreme Court. This had been prescribed in the Grenada Constitution, and confirmed in a Grenada statute, The West Indies Associated States Supreme Court Act, in 1971. The Chief Justice, Sir Maurice Davis, had had his office in Grenada.

Although the Leeward and Windward Islands were by that time no longer federated and attempts to establish a federation of the so-called "Little Seven" had failed, their heads of government had in 1966 established a West Indies Associated States Council of Ministers with its own secretariat, which provided a forum for their meetings. On 20 March 1979 this council held a meeting in Antigua, from which the new People's Revolutionary Government in Grenada was excluded. At this meeting it was "*decided to remove the judges of the West Indies Associated States Appeal Court, now resident in Grenada, and also relocate the Court's headquarters, now fixed in St. Georges*".<sup>15</sup>

Soon after the overthrow of the Gairy regime, Chief Justice Sir Maurice Davis, who appears to have disapproved of the revolution, transferred his office to St. Lucia. He announced that the services of the of the West Indies Associated States Supreme Court would no longer be available to Grenada. It is unclear whether he did this prior to or after the decision taken by the Council of Ministers in Antigua on 20 March.

Although the PRG had not intended to withdraw from the Eastern Caribbean judicial system, Grenada found itself without a Supreme Court. The PRG had no alternative but to create a Grenada Supreme Court. At a rally held on 25 March 1979 Maurice Bishop announced the immediate repeal of the 1971 Act and the promulgation of a law establishing a Grenada Supreme Court.

In connection with Peoples Law Number 4, the establishment of the Grenada Supreme Court, the Prime Minister said he had spoken with Mr Justice Archibald Nedd, the Associated States Supreme Court judge resident in Grenada, and Mr Nedd had agreed to preside over the newly established Grenada Supreme Court.<sup>16</sup>

These were circumstances of which Sir Paul Scoon must have been well aware. He nevertheless asserts (p. 40) that it was the PRG that decided to withdraw Grenada from the Eastern Caribbean system. However, as I recorded on 15 November 1982: "*The C. J. ... confirmed the fact that there has been no interference in Grenada with the independence of the Judiciary*".

### **The PRG's Policy on Detentions**

Any regime that has come to power by physically overthrowing the previous regime expects supporters of the old regime and other opponents to use unconstitutional means to restore the *status quo ante*. In order to survive, a revolutionary regime must take steps to prevent its opponents from engaging in counter-revolutionary activities, at least until it has had time to consolidate and legitimise itself. There would necessarily be a period when elements considered capable of threatening the stability of a new revolutionary regime would be detained without regard for such constitutional requirements as prosecution and trial before a court of law.

It is therefore not surprising that the PRG detained without trial a number of persons engaged, or likely to engage, in counter-revolutionary activities. Detainees should be treated humanely and not subjected to torture or humiliation. This was the case in Grenada, in marked contrast to the recent treatment of prisoners in Iraq by the American and British military authorities. But although detainees were humanely treated and many were released, there were cases in which detention was unnecessary and unjustified. This has been admitted by the surviving revolutionary leaders in their published apology to those who suffered unjustly and to the Grenadian people.

Detention Orders were made by Maurice Bishop who, in addition to being Prime Minister, was Minister for National Security. The following order made in connection with the detention of one Anthony Mitchell is typical of the form in which these orders were made:

**GRENADA, CARRIACOU AND PETIT MARTINIQUE**

DETENTION ORDER

MADE BY THE MINISTER RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND PUBLIC ORDER UNDER REGULATION 2(1) AND 3(1) OF PEOPLES LAW No. 21 of 1979 (AS AMENDED) AND ALL OTHER POWERS ENABLING HIM IN THAT BEHALF

WHEREAS I am satisfied with respect to Anthony Mitchell of Vincennes, St. David's that to prevent his acting in a manner prejudicial to public safety, public order or the defence of Grenada with a view to subverting or sabotaging the People's Revolutionary Government it is necessary to provide for his detention NOW THEREFORE I, Minister responsible for maintenance of public safety and public order, DO ORDER that the said Anthony Mitchell of Vincennes, St. David's BE DETAINED in such place and under conditions as I may from time to time direct.

GROUND FOR DETENTION

That the said Anthony Mitchell on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of October 1979 is reasonably suspected of counselling and conspiring with other persons to take action of such a nature that was likely to endanger public safety, public order or the defence of Grenada or to subvert or sabotage the People's Revolutionary Government.

Dated this seventeenth day of November, 1979

M. Bishop

Minister of National Security.<sup>17</sup>

Sir Paul makes many wild accusations against the revolutionary regime. Perhaps his wildest is the allegation (p. 59) that there were "three thousand Grenadians detained without trial", that many of those detained were "tortured", and that "many of the Rastas were jailed and tortured". (p. 92) Whilst I was in Grenada I heard no claims that persons detained by the PRG were being tortured, but apparently such allegations were being made abroad. The Washington based Ecumenical Program for Inter-American Communication and Action (EPICA), in its 1982 report *Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution*, examined claims that persons detained by the PRG were being inhumanely treated:

...allegations of brutal treatment of the detainees have come from the United States government, conservative Caribbean governments and the U.S. and Caribbean reactionary media. These allegations have not been substantiated,

and Grenadian church leaders who have visited the detainees in prison have made no complaints about their treatment. In an effort to clear the air on the brutality issue, CCC [Caribbean Conference of Churches] General Secretary Roy Neehall wrote to Maurice Bishop, receiving in response a firm assurance that "the Grenada revolution continues to live up to its humanitarian principles". The PRG has also invited the Organization of American States to send a delegation to inspect the conditions under which the detainees live (*Caribbean Contact*, January 1981).

*Caribbean Contact* has been quite clear in its analysis of the real motivations behind the United States' vocal allegations of human rights violations in Grenada. Like "free elections", political prisoners are of concern to the U.S. when a revolutionary regime is in question, but are never mentioned in the case of U.S.-leaning regimes such as Haiti, Chile, Argentina, South Africa, Guyana, the Philippines ... (*Caribbean Contact*, June 1980, editorial). The question of whether the PRG is justified in holding detainees without trial must be separated from the United States' very political use of the detainee issue.<sup>18</sup>

I was interested in the matter of these detentions because of the representations that I received as Attorney General from branches of Amnesty International. Amnesty International disapproves of detentions without trial. Its branches adopt individual detainees and write letters to the Prime Minister, the Commissioner of the Prison and the Attorney General asking that the detainee be either placed on trial or released. I received several such letters. I do not know whether Prime Minister Bishop conferred with his Cabinet or Ministers before deciding on detentions but, as he was responsible for ordering them, I took the matter up with him.

I told Maurice of the letters I was receiving from Amnesty branches about individual detainees. In some cases the letters received were about persons who had either been released or prosecuted - Amnesty's information was not always up to date. I proposed to Maurice that I be authorised to write to Amnesty International, offering periodic reports on the numbers of detainees, naming those still in detention, those released without trial, and those who had been prosecuted, with details of the charges. In return they would be asked to advise their branches to stop sending letters.

My diary has entries about this: on 31 January 1983 "*Sent Maurice a copy of my draft letter to Amnesty International*"; on 8 February "*Went to Maurice's house tonight to discuss various outstanding matters, including the draft praedial larceny law and my proposals re a letter to Amnesty International*". After considering my proposal Maurice decided against it and told me that the policy of no comment on detentions should be continued. On 9 February I recorded that one of his reasons was that Amnesty International

refuse to recognise the right of a revolutionary government, no matter how humane its treatment of detainees, to detain even known terrorists without



trial. Maurice has seen the correspondence with Nicaragua, where they tried cooperating with Amnesty, only to be faced with more unreasonable demands.

Although I was never told how many persons were in detention, the estimates I heard from informed persons ranged between 40 and 70. Sir Paul's allegation that 3000 were in detention is ridiculous. It would have been impossible for the PRG to accommodate anywhere near that number of detainees. Since then I have tried to determine the number of persons detained under the PRG, with the assistance of Grenadian journalist Alister Hughes. He informed me that his *Grenada Newsletter* had reported a statement of 31 December 1981 by my predecessor, Miles Fitzpatrick, that there were "less than 100 detainees".

Alister said that "The number of detainees was rotated so that some were let go while others were picked up ...". He had escaped detention when most of the members of the so-called "Gang of 26", involved in an attempt to publish a newspaper, were detained. Another person who had then escaped detention was the brother of the newspaper editor Leslie Pierre. Alister believed they avoided detention because he was a journalist and Pierre was a trade unionist. He said that "It would have been too bad publicity for the PRG if we were picked up". He was sceptical about Scoon's allegation that there were 3,000 detainees. He had been Chairman of the Prison Visiting Committee and he said that "if my memory does not serve me wrong, we could accommodate less than 300". This figure includes convicted prisoners. He allowed for the fact that "detainees were held at Westerbarr (rasters) and at Fort Rupert" but added: "3,000? no way!"

Alister himself was in detention from the same day that Maurice Bishop was killed. He was detained by the Revolutionary Military Council established after the killing of Bishop. As I noted in my diary, he gave a radio broadcast on 29 October 1983 in which he: "gave a long account of events, saying that he went with the crowd that rescued Maurice Bishop from house arrest ... When he saw that the crowd had gone to Fort Rupert he turned back".

When the guards at the Richmond Hill prison deserted their posts during the US invasion, Alister and other detainees were released by a group of foreign journalists who had travelled independently to Grenada the day the US invasion commenced. He was my near neighbour and on 27 October 1983 I noted in my diary:

Had a word through the window with Alister Hughes, who spoke with me through the lattice-work of his house. We saw him come home yesterday evening ... Alister told me that he had been very well treated while in detention and not roughed up in any way, "not even verbally".

### **Detentions Listed on Web-site: [www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com](http://www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com)**

On this web-site, compiled by Ann Elizabeth Wilder, there is a list of names of persons said to have been "detained" between 13 March 1979 (the start of the Grenada Revolution) and 27 October 1983 (two days after the Americans invaded). As the compiler explains:

The names of the detainees listed are drawn from differing original lists and source materials ... the names of those detained were often recorded in lists laden with inaccuracy or incompleteness. Names may be listed in error or are missing. Sources included the lists compiled by the Peoples Revolutionary Government that are reproduced in the "Grenada Documents",<sup>20</sup> different issues of the "Grenada Newsletter" compiled by Alister Hughes, the "Recommendations of the Claims Commission 1988" plus books and periodicals.<sup>21</sup>

She asks readers to send her "contrary or additional information" and cautions that:

There is/was confusion of who was a lawful or unlawful detainee. The names of those detained were often recorded in lists laden with inaccuracy and incompleteness. Names may be listed in error or are missing.

The terms "detention" and "detainees" have been used elastically. The list appears to include not only political detainees but also persons in police and military custody pending investigation for reasons other than involvement, or suspicion of involvement, in counter-revolutionary activity. Despite this and any inaccuracies there may be, the compiler has made a serious and objective attempt to ascertain the names and number of persons incarcerated without trial, and the periods and places of incarceration.

Of the 418 names on the list, 315 (75.6%) are said to have been "released". No indication of release appears against 100 names. There is a note against two names that they died while in detention and a note against one that he is "missing" (escaped?). The place of detention is given for 138 detainees, but not for the remainder, and is as follows:

Richmond Hill Prison - 53, Hope Vale - 45, Fort Rupert - 19, Central Police Station - 3, Melville Police Station - 1, Levera Police Station 1, Fort Royale - 2, Sauteurs - 14.<sup>22</sup>

The data on the places of detention may in some cases be misleading. Those listed as released after a relatively short period were probably being held in custody pending investigation. The five persons listed as detained at the police stations may have been in police custody for alleged offences unconnected with counter-revolution. Some of those detained at Fort Rupert may have been in military custody pending investigations. Five of those detained at Fort Rupert were detained within five days of each other and six of them were released, most on the same day, 16 to 21 days later. The detentions listed at Richmond Hill were for much longer periods.

The 14 persons detained at Sauteurs seem to have been a special case. All but two of these were detained on 28 October, and all were released on 16 December 1980 – a period of 48 days. It seems likely that all were detained in respect of the same incident and released after a rather lengthy investigation.

The Hope Vale detention centre near Westerhall was mainly for Rastafarians. The Rastafarians had supported the revolution but some had subsequently become hostile, perhaps disappointed because the PRG was unwilling to sanction the growing of ganja (cannabis), which they smoke as part of their religion. It seems possible that some had been recruited by the Budhlall brothers, counter-revolutionaries found guilty of organising a bombing at Queens Park in an attempt to assassinate the revolutionary leadership. It was the Budhlalls who had organised the seizure of the River Antoine estate in order to grow ganja for sale, and the PRG had insisted that these lands be returned to the owners.

Periods of detention are stated for 282 persons, no period being given for 136 others:

<b>Period of Detention stated</b>	<b>Number Detained</b>
2 days to 1 week	11
over 1 week to 1 month	41
over 1 month to 2 months	8
over 2 months to 3 months	11
over 3 months to 6 months	34
over 6 months to 1 year	26
over 1 year to 1 year 6 months	21
over 1 year 6 months to 2 years	12
over 2 years to 2 years 6 months	22
over 2 years 6 months to 3 years	28
over 3 years to 3 years 6 months	36
over 3 years 6 months to 4 years	12
over 4 years	7

### **Did the PRG Restrict Religious Freedom?**

The great majority of supporters of the revolution and NJM members were religious. At no time during my residence in Grenada did I ever detect or hear of any expressions of hostility towards religion or observe any attempt to obstruct religious activities. The traditional religious holidays were recognised as before. I was not surprised to learn that one of the revolutionary leaders imprisoned by the Americans has obtained a degree in theology as an external student at London University.

Sir Paul is keen to convince his readers that the NJM and the PRG were trying to undermine and destroy religion and obstruct religious worship (pp. 71 - 72). Stressing his own piety, he portrays himself as the guardian of Christian family virtues against an atheistic onslaught. He writes (p. 72):

I came to the conclusion that the erosion of family values was accelerating and that certain activities of the revolution were rapidly gnawing away at the fabric of society. ...I was deeply concerned about the youth, our country's future, They had to be saved from the new wave of atheism that was threatening the very foundation of our state.

He also expresses disappointment (p. 43) that some clergy in all the major denominations supported the revolution:

The zeal of some of the younger clergymen was clearly propelled by the gale force winds of liberation theology which was sweeping across Latin American countries.

After giving various instances of friction that Gairy had had with Church leaders, Sir Paul continues:

It is no wonder, then, that the Church in Grenada did not speak out against the revolution on the morning of March 13, 1979 or indeed for months after ... The Church seemed to have either temporarily made a diversion from the path of building God's Kingdom or, confused by the pre-revolutionary activities in Grenada, seemed to have placed new interpretation on sacred scriptures.

It may also be that the Church leaders, ignorant of the true import of communism, were completely outsmarted by Bishop and his colleagues. Whatever their reasons, they did not remain neutral and some of the clergy were supportive of the New Jewel Movement and went so far as to use the pulpit in an effort to gain the congregation's acceptance of the revolution.

He then singles out certain individual priests for criticism, one of whom had committed the outrageous offence of keeping the exalted personage of the Governor General waiting "*for over half an hour*" at the opening of a Catholic community centre! (p. 44). He states that "*at least two lay preachers and the son of a prominent Methodist ... occupied leading positions in the revolution*", but adds that the Methodist Church was "*somewhat divided*" in its attitude. Most Methodists probably supported of the revolution, but Rev. Keith Ledson, the English head of that denomination in Grenada, appears to have strongly disapproved of it. When Godden "Cacademo" Grant, an early member of the NJM, strong supporter of the revolution and a long-standing Methodist, died on 16 December 1982,<sup>23</sup> the government decided to give him a state funeral on a Sunday after his death. Rev. Ledson refused to hold a funeral service for him, and the PRG saw this as an insult to the memory of a man seen as a national hero. Ledson was therefore asked to leave the island and promptly did so. Sir Paul however justifies (p. 45) Ledson's action and seems to regard his expulsion as an example of religious persecution!

Sir Paul says that although Bishop Sydney Charles, head of the Roman Catholic Church, had shown "*cautious optimism of the early days of the revolution*", this "*gave way to disillusionment and deep concern about the future of the Church*" and he "*knew that the Church was under attack*". We have only Sir Paul's word for this, and he has not proved himself to be a very reliable witness. Certainly, while I was in Grenada,

I saw no friction between church and state. The churches and church societies functioned freely throughout the revolutionary period. On 10 May 1983 I was invited to lecture at a seminar of the Anglican Teachers' Association at Gouyave. I recall that the chair was taken by an Anglican priest and that the lecture – on the revolutionary anti-slavery activities of slaves in the British Caribbean colonies – was well received and followed by a lively discussion.

### **The Workers' Education Classes**

One of Sir Paul's grossest misrepresentations concerns the workers' education classes. This was an excellent programme for government employees and others, designed to upgrade their knowledge and understanding not only of government programmes and policies but also of social and economic developments and Grenadian and Caribbean history. Sir Paul however alleges (p. 96) that "*the adult education programme ... was subtly used to inculcate the tenets of the communist doctrine*" and that (p. 162) "*During the Revolution it was mandatory for Civil Servants to attend lectures in Marxism*". Describing the education classes he writes (p. 62):

... internationalist workers, as was their aim, wreaked havoc on the minds of the Grenadian youth and subtly tried to introduce their communist ideology to innocent individuals under the guise of helping in the development process. In an effort to buttress the Revolution Prime Minister Maurice Bishop decreed that political education was to be compulsory for workers, not least for civil servants. Classes were held for policemen, civil servants, workers in statutory boards and other government inspired organisations. Little did Bishop and the upper echelons of the revolutionary movement realize how deep was the feeling of resentment among those who were forced to attend the classes in political education. ... The classes constituted a mere imparting of socialist ideology and failure to attend resulted in the withholding of annual increments in salary.

I have always been keen on promoting adult education and I conducted a weekly class for the staffs of the Attorney General's Department, the Supreme Court Registry and the National Secretariat (which organised national and international conferences). The heads of all the departments at York House cooperated fully, and Sir Archibald Nedd, the Chief Justice, expressed his enthusiastic support.

Although people got time off to attend the classes, they were not, as Sir Paul alleges, compulsory. Government employees could, if they preferred, stay at work. Jacqui McKenzie, now a lawyer in London, attended the classes conducted by Chris DeRiggs for the staff at the Ministry of Finance, and her recollections of the classes coincide with mine. As participants in the programme, we are better placed than Sir Paul to describe these classes and the subjects studied.

I made a note at the time of what was taught at these classes. It gives the lie to what Sir Paul has written about this programme.

On 9 February 1983 I noted that I had "*started sorting out statistics for the first session of the class I am to take for the staff in the York House complex*", and on 21 February I wrote: "*The class went very well today. The discussion was very lively and some of the women, who have not previously opened their mouths, participated in the discussion*".

However, on 15 March my diary entry was discouraging: "*Attendance was down to about 20, and the level of participation was very low. Even the West Indian cricketers going to South Africa issue didn't really bring the class to life*". On 21 March "*we considered imperialism, and I had to deliver a lecture. ... We have decided to use the class as a sort of minimal council to channel suggestions & grouches upwards. Today's session produced a good suggestion - that there should be some means whereby people not able to give service in the Militia can nevertheless be enrolled for less arduous aspects of defence work than would be called for in the Militia.*"

On 9 May: "*The class discussed improving the Government's revenues through making state enterprises profitable. A few more people are participating*", and on 30 May: "*The class went well today. The week after next we will go on an excursion to see some of the places mentioned in the Budget presentation - the Sandino plant [established with Cuban help for making blocks for prefabricated house construction], the Genetic Centre & the new airport site.*"

On 18 July 1983, "*we had a discussion on the status of women*". This "*turned out to be the liveliest session that we have had so far - a great success!*" I noted on 10 September that a seminar for workers' education tutors had decided "*to follow the EPICA book 'Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution' for the course which most classes have started. This starts with Grenada's slave trade/slavery origins*". My own course, however, aimed to "*cover man's social evolution through primitive food gathering/hunting societies and mixed hunting/agricultural societies to more developed agricultural societies with class divisions and the emergence of the coercive state, through slavery to feudalism and then to capitalism. Only then will I come to Caribbean history.*" On 12 September I noted: "*Finished feudalism in the class today. I must admit the subject left most participants cold. Hopefully I can finish an explanation of the rise of capitalism next week & then interest will pick up when we start on our own history the week after.*"

### **Many Creditable Social Improvements**

The revolution had many social improvements to its credit, particularly in education. One might have expected that, as a former teacher, Sir Paul would have been favourably impressed by the PRG's educational reforms, but so strong is his bias against the revolution and its leaders that, instead of recognition, we find only condemnation. Besides its worker education and adult literacy initiatives, the PRG replaced the previous fee-paying system by free secondary school education - a change no post-revolutionary government has seen fit to reverse.

In November 1980 the National In-Service Teacher Education Programme (NISTEP) was established. This very good programme enabled primary school teachers to up-grade their skills while they were still teaching. Courses at

the Grenada Teachers' College required full time attendance and on average only 45 teachers graduated, while approximately half that number left the profession, each year.<sup>24</sup> Very few Grenadians were training abroad as teachers with a view to returning to the island to teach, as this was expensive. NISTEP courses required attendance for one day per week, so teachers could benefit while retaining their existing jobs.

On 1 May 1983 I noted another important social reform, announced by Bishop at the May Day rally:

Maurice's announcement of the proposed legislation equalising the status of children born in and out of wedlock & establishing a family court to try certain matters of a delicate nature in camera, was received by the huge crowd with prolonged applause.

We do not know whether Sir Paul approved of this progressive measure. He may have regarded it as another way in which the revolution was undermining Christian family values.

### **Recruitment of Personnel from Abroad**

Grenada is a small island with no local university or skilled trades technical training school. It has always had to supplement the small number of Grenadians who had acquired skills abroad and returned home by recruiting workers from other countries. The problem became more acute during the revolution because of the accelerated pace of development. Sir Paul alleges (p. 95) that the workers from abroad "*came mainly from communist countries*". He also hopes to persuade his readers that the workers who came to Grenada from abroad were there not to provide necessary services but to indoctrinate Grenadians in communist ideology.

The best examples of the need for workers from abroad were in connection with the construction of the airport at Point Salines and the establishment of free medical and dental clinics in the rural areas. Before the revolution doctors and dentists in private practice had all practised in the two principal towns as they could not have earned a reasonable income anywhere else in the island. The six doctors and one dentist sent by the Cuban government enabled the PRG to extend free medical and dental care to the people in the rural areas who no longer had to travel to town for treatment. There were also two Indian doctors working in the government hospital in St. Georges.

The Grenada Revolution was an inspiration to progressive and fair-minded people throughout the English-speaking Caribbean area. Workers from other countries who came to Grenada provided various skills which were in short supply or non-existent. Some workers from abroad came of their own accord, out of a desire to help. Very few of those who came from abroad were merely in search of jobs offering more pay than they were earning in their home countries.

Dr. Mark Figueroa, an economist in the Department of Economics of the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, came to work in the Ministry of

Finance. Winston Davis, a Jamaican civil servant and member of the People's National Party, worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Carol Reckord, an agricultural expert who broadcast a radio programme on agriculture in Jamaica, was recruited as an agricultural consultant, with responsibility for assisting in the development of co-operative farming. Patrick Smikle, an experienced Jamaican journalist who helped with Radio Free Grenada in 1979, returned to work there in 1981. Lou Bone from Guyana worked as a senior civil servant in one of the ministries. Nelsa Wilks worked for the Centre for Popular Education's adult literacy programme. Margaret Regisford, a young woman from St. Vincent, worked in social welfare. Zazeeda Fitzpatrick from Guyana, the wife of my predecessor Miles Fitzpatrick, was a physiotherapist who gave voluntary service at the hospital. My wife Avis worked for several weeks without pay in the National Secretariat helping organise international conferences in Grenada.<sup>25</sup>

Teachers and teacher training personnel were also recruited, including Merle Hodge from Trinidad and Dr. Chris Searle from Goldsmith's College, London University. Dr. Brian Meeks of the Department of Government at the University in Jamaica, whose wife, also an academic, was a Grenadian, worked as an education consultant. A teacher from Dominica, who had been in Grenada before the revolution, continued to serve as headmistress of a girls' secondary school. Carol Davis, then a teacher but now a lawyer in Jamaica, came from Guyana. Leisbeth DeBloc was a teacher from England.

Sir Paul asserts (p. 72) that "*the Government brought into the school system a number of Russian teachers*", and (p. 164) that there were "*some fifteen Soviet teachers let loose on our schools*". Grenada is a very small island and if there had been any appreciable number of Russian or Soviet teachers in Grenada, I would have been aware of their presence.

Denzil Wilks was a member of the Workers' Party of Jamaica who worked for the Jamaican Government's Commercial Trading Organisation. He came to Grenada as a marketing consultant with the Marketing & National Import Board (MNIB), and was subsequently appointed manager. The MNIB proved so successful that after the US invasion Wilks was asked by Laurie Wilson, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, to remain at his post. About a week later however both Wilks and Dr. Figueroa were arrested by the Jamaican military occupation contingent. Wilks was interrogated by a white American member of the US invasion and occupation force, and he and Dr. Figueroa were both ordered to leave the island.

The PRG also recruited lawyers from abroad. Some time after the revolution had begun Lloyd Noel, the Attorney General under the old Gairy regime, was placed in detention and the only other lawyer then in government service was the Guyana-born retired magistrate Edwin Heyliger. For a time, when legal work was required, the PRG turned to Carol Bristol, senior partner in a prominent local law firm. Then Miles Fitzpatrick, a well-known human rights



lawyer from Guyana, was persuaded to come to Grenada as Legal Adviser to the government. Although Kenrick Radix was nominally the Attorney General, Miles was in fact running the Attorney General's chambers as Kenrick was also Minister of Industrial Production.

After two years Miles insisted that he had to return to his practice in Guyana, so I was recruited to replace him. Maurice Bishop had spoken of the difficulties his government was having in securing the services of full-time lawyers. In a conversation with Richard Jacobs, the Grenadian ambassador in Cuba, I remarked wryly that Grenada must be exceptional, as most Caribbean countries had too many lawyers. Jacobs however assured me that Maurice needed a lawyer whom he could trust to be in charge of legal affairs.

At that time I was employed as the solicitor of a local authority in England, but I told Jacobs that, if the PRG really needed my services, I would be willing to come to Grenada. Maurice Bishop knew me well and within a week I received a telephone call urging me to come immediately. I replied that I would be unable to leave my present job for three months. Maurice had then persuaded Miles to remain on the job until my arrival. The job paid less than I could have earned in England, but I was pleased to work for a progressive government led by persons working selflessly for the common good.

I arrived in Grenada in July 1982. I was appointed initially as Legal Adviser and then, from May 1983, as Attorney General. This was a civil service job - the post was a public office instead of, as formerly, a political office. In my chambers, in addition to Edwin Heyliger, there was Langston Sibblies from Jamaica, later replaced by Attiba Bostick from Trinidad, and then by Robert Grant, a Grenadian who had recently returned to the island. There was also, for a time, a career legal draftsman, originally from Sri Lanka, whose drink problem meant that he was not of much use to us.

We had an Association of International Workers which met from time to time. On 8 July 1983 I gave a talk at one of these meetings, on the struggle for independence in Jamaica. I do not recall seeing any of the Cubans at our meetings and there were no Russian or other East European members of the association - another reason for doubting Sir Paul's story that there were numerous Soviet citizens teaching in the schools.

Fennis Augustine had been the revolutionary government's High Commissioner in London. On 27 November 1983 I noted this conversation that I had with him after I had returned to England:

He says the situation [in Grenada] is one of confusion. Having put so many people out of the Govt. service, they have found themselves desperately short of capable people and have had to ask some of them to come back to work. Schools can only operate part time for lack of teachers.

U.S. helicopters are still flying all over the country and there are road blocks manned by American soldiers. Fennis was stopped on two

occasions when everyone in the car was made to get out and the car was searched. The West Indian occupation personnel are being used as Police but there is always an American in charge.

In the period after the invasion personnel from abroad were widely used. Soldiers from the US engaged in psychological warfare, and armed personnel from Barbados and Jamaica, brought in to police the island and run the prison, stayed for some considerable time. Lawyers were brought in from Trinidad and Jamaica to prosecute, and a judge stationed in Antigua was brought in to try those members and supporters of the PRG, the Revolutionary Military Council and the People's Revolutionary Army imprisoned by the invaders. Unlike the international workers of the revolutionary period, this new influx of non-Grenadians had Sir Paul's enthusiastic approval and support.

### **Decline in the Popular Revolutionary Elan**

Economic conditions had improved considerably under the revolutionary regime. However, the revolutionary leaders had created popular expectations which could not possibly be fulfilled over a short period of time. They had failed to explain that, given Grenada's low economic base of poverty and limited resources, many years would necessarily elapse before expectations of prosperity could be fulfilled.

By the second half of 1982 it had become apparent that the revolutionary elan had declined. Although the NJM and the PRG still enjoyed the support of the majority of the population, and no popular hostility to the regime was apparent, disillusionment was beginning to appear. This worried the Central Committee of the NJM, which held earnest discussions to try to determine the cause of this decline and how it might be remedied.

The mid-September 1982 Minutes of the NJM CC show that Bishop felt that much of the blame lay with the party leadership's failure to ensure that the party played its leadership role in society correctly. He argued:

The lack of proper application of strategy and tactics has led to our party paying no significant attention to the views of the party and the masses; there is clearly no channels for communication which has led to a break-down in collective leadership ... Decisions were taken outside of the CC, we have not yet set up systems for implementation and verification. ...The CC has made a number of mistakes over the past eighteen months because of weak links with the masses we became bureaucratic and too formalistic in our approach.

Visits to work places have disappeared, increasing non attendance at zonal councils and parish meetings, visits to the communities to meet the people at an informal level, decrease in the number of discussions and meetings with people in all areas of work, failure to participate in public activities, village meetings have disappeared. We have not paid sufficient regard to the material base in the country...

We have failed to point out to the masses that this period requires a number of sacrifices and that if we are not prepared to build the economy through hard work we will not make it. We have to take the blame for the over expectations of the people...

Bishop also referred to the mood of the farmers and agricultural workers, which he said was "*very low*". He summed up the situation:

1. There is a state of deep crisis in the party and the revolution.
2. The main reason for these weaknesses is the functioning of the CC.
3. The crisis has also become a major contributing factor to the crisis in the country and the revolution and the low mood of the masses
4. The crisis has also been compounded by the weakness in the material base, electrical block cuts, retrenchments and job as an issue.

To understand the problems that arose in the NJM leadership in the last quarter of 1982, it is necessary to know something about the characters of the principal revolutionary leaders. In most respects Maurice Bishop was an admirable leader. He had great charisma, was an inspiring speaker and could articulate the aims of the revolution and NJM and government policies with great clarity. But organisational efficiency was not one of his strong points. Sometimes Bishop found it difficult to make decisions. I experienced this on occasion when I needed instructions in the performance of my responsibilities.

In September 1982, Bishop described his style of leadership of the party as being "*by consensus*". He used to hold informal consultations with his comrades before making up his mind. Unfortunately however, as Maurice himself observed, it too often happened that "*decisions were taken outside of the CC.*"

Bernard Coard on the other hand was extremely efficient and well organised. He was also outspoken in his criticisms of inefficiency, even of the leader's inefficiency. Coard would speak up while others remained silent. Consequently, some members of the CC suspected him of undermining the leader and seeking to become leader himself.

These suspicions upset Coard, and to demonstrate that he had no aspirations to become the party leader, he resigned from the party offices he held and stated that he would in future serve as an ordinary party member. However, lest the news of his resignation might be the cause of disquiet, it was decided to keep it secret. This secret was so well kept that, apart from members of the Central Committee few, if any, people in Grenada and no one abroad knew about it. As he was no longer on the CC, Coard was not present at the discussions referred to above and below.



Maurice Bishop

### **Bishop's Leadership Qualities Assessed - Joint Leadership Proposed**

Bishop's remarks at the NJM CC on the deterioration of the situation in the country were followed by a lengthy discussion. Everyone agreed that there was a crisis and the minutes disclose that Bishop himself came in for criticism. Liam James was recorded as saying:

The most fundamental problem is the quality of leadership of the Central Committee and the party provided by Cde. Maurice Bishop ...the Cde. has great strength, his ability to inspire and develop cdes., his ability to raise the regional and international respect for the party and the revolution, he has the charisma to build the confidence of the people both in and out of the

country and to put forward clearly the positions of the party. Today these strengths alone cannot put the party any further in this period. The qualities he lacks is what is needed to push the revolution forward at this time.

James then listed the qualities that he thought the leader lacked:

1. A Leninist level of organisation and discipline;
2. Great depth in ideological clarity;
3. Brilliance in strategy and tactics.

Prior to this, only Bernard Coard had criticised Bishop personally but, following James, a further 9 of the 13 members present (total CC membership was 17) expressed similar sentiments. The minutes record Unison Whiteman's contribution:

The weaknesses mention [sic] of the Cde. Leader are correct. ... there have been some improvements in scheduling and study but these improvements are not fundamental enough. He said that the Cde. leader had not [given] enough time to the fundamental but we have to be careful that we don't shift too much blame from the CC collectively. We need to have a commitment on the CC to new norms, prioritisation, greater reflection, better style of work. We have to build up Comrades, e.g. Cde Leader, we have to assist [insist ?] on higher standards from him which he is capable of.

Bishop is recorded in the Minutes as having "*thanked the Cdes. for their frankness in their criticisms*" which in the past they had "*failed to raise ... for diplomatic reasons which was not good ... he agreed that the points are correct...*". After lunch, he put forward some ideas on how to improve the situation:

To develop and maintain links with the masses the leadership must personally get on the ground among the people, step up participation in zonal and parish councils, visit schools, monitor and push production...

He then went on to suggest how the CC and its Organising Committee could work better. James then proposed a more radical way of solving their difficulties. Suggesting that Bernard Coard be required to rejoin the CC,

Cde. James ... proposed a modle [sic - model] of joint leadership, marrying the strengths of Cdes. Bishop and Coard. He went on to define the responsibilities of the two cdes

#### **Cde Maurice Bishop**

- (i) Direct work among the masses, focus on production and propaganda;
- (ii) Particular attention to the organs of popular democracy, working class youth masses, visits to urban and rural work places;
- (iii) Militia mobilisation;
- (iv) Regional and international work.

#### **Cde. Bernard Coard**

- (i) Party organisation work, Chairman of the OC
- (ii) Party organisational development and formation of cdes;
- (iii) Strategy and tactics

James insisted that they should not initiate changes of policy without the CC's approval:

The CC must discuss and ratify all proposals and decisions sought by the Cdes. CC meetings must be monthly, chaired by Cde. Bishop. PB [Political Bureau] weekly chaired by Cde. Bernard Coard. The both Cdes will write quarterly reports to the CC for review. The membership must be told of this decision.

Not all CC members favoured these proposals. George Louison heatedly opposed them. Unison Whiteman had reservations. He said that he had never heard of joint leaders of a party and thought that Bishop and Coard should be designated leader and deputy leader but that their respective responsibilities should be defined as proposed by James. Bishop's response was more cautious:

The party must utilise all strengths and talents of Cdes. in the party ... He had never had any problems with sharing power, or even a bad attitude to criticisms. He had worked very well with Cde. Bernard over the years from school days, they share a lot of policy decisions, they both wrote the manifesto, the peoples congress enditement [sic - indictment] of Gairy. He referred to 1977 when Cde. Coard was accused of aggressiveness and wanting to grab power, he had defended him.

His position is that he or anybody [sic - neither he nor anybody else?] has the right to be leader for life, he favours cooperation over competition. He feels that Bernard can come back to the PB [Political Bureau] because of his skills and intelligence. Cde James' breakdown of responsibility is very useful, however his concerns is the operationalisation of strategy and tactics. His own idea of his role falls into what Cde James had outlined. He feels that school visits should have been included under his responsibilities...

He would like to know what is Cde. Bernard's view of the situation and response. If he do not agree what will be the views of the CC... [he would like] to get some answers on the operationalisation [of joint leadership], how will we articulate this to the party and the masses. His personal concerns are: image of leadership, power struggle, imminent collapse of the revolution.

The formulation of Cdes. criticisms have indicated a clear note of no confidence and that he cannot inspire the masses when he have to look over his back or feel he does not have the full confidence of his comrades.

It seems clear that Bishop was not happy with the proposal, interpreting it to mean that CC members had lost confidence in him. This caused considerable concern and several members who had supported the proposal denied that this was the case. One member put it this way: "*the meeting was one of unprecedented frankness and boldness by all Cdes., it was done through the spirit of great love for the revolution and the Leader*". When the joint leadership proposal was put to the vote on 16 September, 9 members voted in favour, George Louison voted against and three members - Bishop, Whiteman and General Hudson Austin - abstained.

Following the vote one member proposed that they take a break and “ask Cde. Coard to come to the meeting for the decision to be put to him”. Bishop opposed this “because of the fact that he has to make a personal reflection on the issue”. He proposed that the CC meet with Coard the next day in his absence, when he would be leaving the island to attend the St. Kitts independence celebrations. In answer to the argument that it was important that both of them should be present, his reply was that “based on his personal position to sit down with Coard for productive discussion, it will have no usefulness, it will be counter-productive”. He said that it was critical for him to know “Bernard’s position ... this will even help him in his own personal reflection”



Bernard Coard

### **Bernard Coard's Reaction to the Joint Party Leadership Proposal**

Bernard Coard attended the NJM CC the next day. His reaction when he was told of the CC decision is revealing as it rebuts the allegation, made by Sir Paul and others, that he was engaged in a power struggle to replace Bishop as party leader. Coard raised four questions:

1. He would like to see the minutes of the meeting.
2. The position of those opposed or abstain and what are the reasons.
3. Were other options examine [sic], what were these options and why were they rejected.
4. Why was not the meeting schedule [sic] so that Cde. Bishop could be present.

After being told about the proceedings of the Committee during the past three days, Coard then:

Reminded Cdes. of his reasons for resigning last year ... He said that he was tired and sick of being the only hatchet man and critique [sic - critic]. The failure of the CC comrades was to speak up freely, as a result he concluded

he was the main fetter to development of the CC because everyone was depending on him for everything, especially in the area of the economy ...

He said he detected a feeling of wanting him to undermine the Comrade Leader's position. He would not like to return to the CC and PB, any tasks given to him he will do it. He even used the struggle of the formation of the OC [Organising Committee] . Cdes. Louison, Strachan and himself was accused for organising another seat of power in the party ... He was seriously affected by the accusation of wanting to undermine the leadership so he resigned from the OC.

Coard's reluctance to return to the leadership is evident from what he said next: Because of his position as deputy leader and the extent that comrades will think that he is fighting for leadership, if he comes back and Cde. Bishop falter he would be afraid to criticise him and will resign again. For it to be left for him to manners the leader, he is not prepared to deal with this. He admit that on his part is a Pb [petty-bourgeois] conduct. However, he had tried to give the party his best support in strategy and tactics, he would prefer to operate as in the past year. He also is prepared to take on all responsibilities the CC offers him, but off the CC. He cannot take emotional conflict situation that saps his energies. He wanted this to be clearly put to the party

Not until he was assured that the joint leadership proposal was acceptable to Maurice Bishop did Bernard Coard consent to it. This occurred at a general meeting of the full members of the party on 25 September 1983, convened to consider the joint leadership proposal. Bishop had not attended the opening of the meeting and because of this Coard too had stayed away, but when the conference sent deputations to both men to urge their attendance and Bishop agreed to come, Coard also agreed to attend.

During the 15-hour debate, the proposal and the reasons therefor were fully explained and many members who spoke expressed their approval. The minutes recorded that:

Cde. Bishop stands and embraces Cde. Coard. Cde Bishop said that it was correct for him to come to the GM and stay and hear the views of the party membership. He said that reflecting in isolation would not have been correct for him since he would have seen things in a lopsided manner. He said that the entire GM had accepted the CC analysis and decision and this has satisfied his concern. He admitted to the GM that his response to the CC criticism was petit bourgeois. He said that the GM has rammed home that the criticism was correct and so too was the decision. He said, "I sincerely accept the criticism and will fulfil the decision in practice".

Cde. Bishop went on to say that his whole life is for the party and revolution and the difficulty he had was because so many things were going through his mind. He said he agreed with Cde. Moses Jeffrey that he had not shown confidence in the party. But all these things are now behind his back. He said that the party comrades are maturing and are capable of taking



strong positions. ...He said that he never had difficulties in working with Cde. Coard and joint leadership would help push the party and revolution forward (applause). At the end of Cde. Bishop's speech the entire GM broke into singing the Internationale and members filed past to embrace Cdes. Bishop and Coard.

It appeared that the issue had been amicably resolved on 25 September. However, the joint leadership issue soon blew up again with fatal consequences. On 26 September 1983 Bishop left on an economic mission to eastern European countries, returning to the island via Cuba, where he spent a week, on 8 October. On his return he informed his comrades that he had changed his mind and wanted the issue re-opened.

### **The Crisis in the New Jewel Movement**

The decision on 25 September 1983 to adopt a system of joint leadership within the NJM had been unanimous. George Louison, the CC member who had vehemently opposed this proposal at the CC, was not present at the general meeting. He was however a member of the economic mission to Hungary and Czechoslovakia. It is on record that Louison addressed a meeting of NJM members working and studying in Hungary, at which he assured those present that no final decision had been reached on the proposal. Bishop had not attended this meeting but, during their time together in Eastern Europe, George Louison is believed to have worked assiduously to persuade Bishop to repudiate the decision.

Bishop returned to Grenada via Cuba where he spent a week. Although he spent a day with Fidel Castro, during which they reportedly went fishing, there is no record of their informal discussions. Whether or not Castro expressed disapproval of the joint leadership idea, as was suspected by other NJM leaders in Grenada, may never be known. Joint leadership of a party would however have been very different to the way things were done in Cuba. But while they were in Cuba Cletus St. Paul, Bishop's chief security guard, telephoned his superior in security in Grenada. I referred to this telephone call and the consternation it caused in my lecture at the University in Jamaica in March 1984:

He said on the phone that "them trying to get rid of the Chief and it look like blood will have to flow". Now you may think it extraordinary that grown men could get so upset and panicky over a thing like this, but that they were in a panic is indicated by what happened. The plane via Cuba was expected back on October 7<sup>th</sup>. I know this because I had a friend who was staying with us who was a sister of the Head of Protocol who was on the flight and that sister from Guyana was expecting to go back and so we were going to pick up her sister when the plane came in ... and when we went the plane hadn't come.<sup>26</sup>

So we went back ... to the airport on the Sunday for her to catch her plane - the 8<sup>th</sup> - to Guyana and while we were there the plane came in, the plane from Cuba. Now Grenadians have a way that when the Prime Minister is leaving or coming back, the whole of the ministers flock to the airport to see him off and there was only one minister there - Selwyn Strachan. I went into the VIP lounge to pick up this young lady's suitcase and there they were, sitting side by side, looking very glum. None of the animated conversation you would expect. Something was wrong. I shook hands with the Prime Minister, greeted him and went away with the suitcase.

When I got to London after I got out of Grenada, I met a gentleman, Mr Roopnarine, who is the father of Rupert Roopnarine, the leader of the WPA,<sup>27</sup> and he said - "A very strange thing happened on the night of the 7<sup>th</sup>. I got a telephone call to say that somebody had to have somewhere to sleep. Could I help? And I said yes, I have a spare bed-room, and who should come to find a place to sleep away from his own home but Bernard Coard". It's a crazy thing, all right, but that was the atmosphere that prevailed...

Other NJM leaders are also known to have gone into hiding on the night of 7 October. They had learned what George Louison had said to the party members at the meeting in Hungary, that Maurice had spent a week in Cuba and what Cletus St. Paul had said in his telephone call. This had led to fears that Maurice might be returning with Cuban commandos to seize personal control and liquidate the other NJM leaders. The panic subsided when it became known that the only passengers on the plane which arrived on 8 October were Maurice and his delegation and the Cuban Ambassador. Nevertheless the atmosphere remained tense and Maurice subsequently complained that over the next three days only Hudson Austin had come to see him at his residence.

On 12 October, at an NJM CC meeting, Maurice informed his comrades that he had decided to reject the joint leadership decision. This was strongly resented by the CC members, who felt that he should be bound by the decision of the party general meeting. They insisted that the decision be respected. This may have been formally correct, but their attitude was unrealistic. They should have realised that, given Maurice's popularity and the fact that he was virtually the personification of the revolution, the party decision could not possibly be implemented if he was opposed to it.

When his wish that the matter be re-opened and the decision be reversed was not acceded to, Maurice embarked on a drastic course of action which he seems to have expected would allow him to regain personal control. He gave instructions to Cletus St. Paul and Errol George, his two security guards, to inform certain persons, whose names were on a list that he approved, that Bernard Coard and his wife Phyllis were planning to kill him. The persons to be so informed were expected when so informed to, and of course did, quickly spread

the rumour, which immediately created a situation of unrest. Errol George was however unhappy about the task given to him. He therefore informed his superiors of what Bishop had told him to do and gave them the list.



George Louison

To quote my introduction to the collection of Maurice Bishop's speeches:

My own analysis of these events suggests that, having ascertained the unwillingness of the Central Committee to reopen the matter, Bishop had decided to employ a strategy somewhat similar to what the late Chinese leader Mao Tse-tung decided to do when he lost control of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist party - go directly to the masses over their heads and rally them to his support.<sup>28</sup> But what appears to have enraged the membership of the party was the disclosure of the bizarre tactics that Bishop had decided to employ.

This plan, which had begun to be put into effect on October 12, was disclosed by one of Bishop's two personal security guards ... This security guard had given a statement to his superiors to the effect that Bishop had informed him that Bernard and Phyllis Coard were plotting to kill him (Bishop). Bishop, he said, had given instructions for a list to be drawn up of persons to be informed of this plot and had personally approved the list.

This, the security guard now repeated orally on October 13, in Bishop's presence, to all the members of the party.

On October 12 word was in circulation concerning the alleged plot. One immediate effect had been that a group of persons, led by an insurance agent from St. Paul's district where Bishop's mother lived, collected firearms at the local Militia headquarters and set off to defend the Prime Minister. Having been alerted by the security guard, the security forces intercepted them. The other security guard was also taken into custody and interrogated.

Whatever the merits or demerits of a decision to seek a reopening of the decision of September 25, the spreading of such a rumour was a particularly desperate and dangerous course which could have endangered the life of the man chosen by the party members to be their joint leader. At the meeting of party members on the night of October 13 Bishop denied responsibility for the rumour, speaking at length in his own defence. But having heard the evidence given to the meeting by the security guard, the overwhelming majority of the members believed that Bishop was guilty. On that same night (not on October 12 as has been suggested by some persons) Bishop was placed under house arrest. ...

Over the next few days the Central Committee, no doubt conscious of an upsurge of mass support for Bishop, endeavoured to work out a compromise with him whereby he would have resumed the exercise of his state functions and remained a member of the party. Four members of the committee met with him directly and at their request a trade union leader from Trinidad came to Grenada to act as a conciliator.

Michael Als, the Trinidad trade union leader who had come to Grenada as requested to help resolve the impasse, relayed a proposal from the NJM CC to Bishop: "*Let us go back to the joint leadership proposal that was agreed, but you must go on the air and defuse these rumours and say they are not true and accept responsibility for the friction ...*". The person who drove Als to Bishop's residence and back told me that Als had said "*Maurice said he didn't think he could accept it but he'd sleep on it and give the answer next morning.*"

At 10 a.m. on 19 October several CC members had assembled at the entrance to Bishop's house to hear his decision when a large crowd arrived, led by Unison Whiteman. Maurice then came out and marched at the head of the crowd into the town. Microphones had been set up in the Market Square by Bishop's supporters, who expected that he would go directly there to address the crowd. Instead he led the marchers to the Army headquarters at Fort Rupert where they took over the fort.

### **The Killing of Bishop and Others**

The tragic events that followed are on record and fairly well known. The armoury was opened and guns were distributed to members of the crowd. Some CC members had gone to Fort Frederick. As Lt. Colonel Ewart Layne stated, he

spoke on the telephone with Unison Whiteman and had “asked him to leave the Fort and let us continue with negotiations” Whiteman however had replied “no negotiations is manners for all you”.

Rebuffed by Whiteman, Layne wanted to discuss developments with other CC members but, as he subsequently explained:

By this time the situation with the Central Committee members was one of total paralysis. I could see that comrades felt that the situation was totally out of hand. It was at this point that I called General Austin outside and put it to him that the only way to save the revolution and the party was to move to recapture Fort Rupert and for the Military to take control for a short period. I raise it with General Austin as a military man because by that time I realise that it was now a military matter and the Central Committee was totally ineffective.

Layne went on to state:

General Austin ... allowed me to have my way recognising the tremendous respect I have amongst the men and that even he was paralysed in this situation. It was from there on I could say that I took over the situation completely. I did so conscious of the responsibility of upholding the revolution and saving the lives of soldiers and party members who were at Fort Rupert.<sup>29</sup>

Layne despatched two armoured cars with soldiers, with instructions to remove the civilians from the fort. Not expecting to encounter any resistance, the soldiers on the leading armoured car were sitting out in the open. They were ambushed as their vehicle entered the fort. Two of them were killed outright and Cadet Officer Conrad Mayers, the officer in charge of the party, was fatally wounded and died two hours later. His deputy, Lance Corporal Simon, was seriously wounded but survived. The civilians were then expelled from the fort and Bishop, Whiteman and five others were shot and killed by soldiers in what was virtually an execution.

### **The Revolutionary Military Council**

On 19 October 1983 General Austin established the Revolutionary Military Council (RMC) with himself as Chairman. According to Sir Paul (p. 132), “*One of the first acts of the Revolutionary Military Council was to dissolve the People’s Revolutionary Government and dismiss all members of the Cabinet*”. Some Ministers had however already resigned. The RMC had become the *de facto* government. Austin however announced that it would be short-lived and that he would start negotiations immediately to establish a government, which he hoped would be able to take over within ten to fourteen days. Sir Paul states (p. 123) that on 21 October Austin came to see him and informed him that:

the intention of the RMC was to form a Government consisting of civilian as well as military personnel with a minimum of delay. Both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs would be civilians. The RMC,

he declared, was already in touch with possible candidates for these posts including Earle (Mario) Bullen and Richard Jacobs, our Ambassadors in Brussels and Moscow respectively”.

The RMC announced a curfew, requiring persons to remain in their homes except during a three hour prescribed period for shopping and other essential tasks. A warning was issued that persons breaching the curfew would be shot. However, the military did nothing to enforce it and no one was shot. Although the curfew announcement ensured there were no public protests over the killing of Bishop, in other respects it was a bit of a farce. From my window I could see people milling about on the roads alongside the Carenage during the curfew hours, and I learned that students at the American St. Georges University Medical School were seen out jogging on the roads near the school.

While the RMC was the *de facto* government, Sir Paul “*summoned Hart to Governor General’s House*” as he put it. (p. 166). For the Governor General to exercise a political initiative and summon a senior civil servant to Government House, without the authorisation of the government of the day, was of course beyond his authority. I thought at the time that it might be a good idea to see him and find out what he was up to, but it would have been improper for me to respond to his summons without authority. I therefore called the office of Liam James, a member of the RMC, asking him to call me back and tell me what I should do. I received no reply, but this was not surprising as the RMC were presumably busy preparing for the American invasion. As Sir Paul confirms, I did not obey his summons.

### **Scoon Promises “Fullest Support” if Invasion Occurs**

According to Sir Paul, (pp. 129 - 130) after a meeting with Barbadian Prime Minister Tom Adams, the British High Commissioner in Barbados Giles Bullard recommended to the British Government that if the United States decided to invade Grenada “*Britain should give its support or, at the very least, should refrain from doing anything that might weaken or jeopardize*” the operation. He says that “*Bullard’s advice was not accepted in London*”.

In my diary, on the day the invasion started, I noted that “*This afternoon the BBC was reported by Radio B’dos as stating that the British Govt. did not support the move and that Margaret Thatcher advised Reagan against it*”. Sir Paul complains (p. 196) that “*Sir Geoffrey Howe, the British Foreign Secretary, in an interview tried to explain how wrong the Americans were to intervene militarily in Grenada and how in that regard the principles of international law had been violated*”. Thus Sir Paul admits he knew that the British Government had not approved and did not approve of the invasion.<sup>30</sup>

Sir Paul had no authority from the Queen to support the invasion and he made no attempt to obtain it. He no doubt knew it would not have been forthcoming. The British Government would certainly have known if he had applied for the Queen’s authority. On 26 October I noted in my diary: “*It appears*

that Margaret Thatcher not only advised Reagan against the invasion but that the British Government refused to participate in the invasion". On 27 October I made this further note: "Trinidad Radio reports that the British Govt. has denied any knowledge of a request from Sir Paul Scoon for British military intervention".

Sir Paul's account (pp. 134 - 135) of his meeting with British Deputy High Commissioner in Barbados David Montgomery on 23 October is revealing. This is not only because it sounds very conspiratorial but also because it shows that he was taking a political initiative without authorisation from the *de facto* government of Grenada:

As a precaution I arranged that he should not sign the Visitors Book ... We conducted most of our conversation sitting on a bench in the garden. After passing on a number of messages Montgomery gave me a detailed briefing on the high-powered diplomatic activity taking place in Barbados and elsewhere and also brought me up to date on the already substantial and rapidly growing United States military build up in Barbados.

In reply to a question Montgomery said that he was unaware of any imminent military action to restore the situation in Grenada, but it could not be ruled out that the outcome of the high level discussions currently taking place between Prime Minister Adams, Prime Minister Seaga and the OECS Heads of Government on the one hand and the United States Government on the other might be agreement to take joint military action. ...

In a calm, reassuring voice Montgomery suggested that, in these circumstances I should perhaps give urgent consideration to the role I would be expected to assume if a military operation were to be mounted against the Revolutionary Military Council ... The awesome significance of these disturbing words caused me to ponder for some time before commenting that while military intervention into one's territory was not the sort of thing I would normally advocate, the current explosive situation in Grenada was such that it was difficult to avoid the conclusion that only the presence of friendly foreign troops could rescue Grenadians from the abyss ... Therefore, if a military operation to achieve that were to be undertaken by our sister states - if necessary with assistance from the United States, I would give such an initiative my fullest support. [my emphasis - RH].

Sir Paul records that Montgomery arrived in Grenada on 22 October, "accompanied by two diplomatic colleagues from the United States Embassy in Barbados, Ken Furze and Linda Flohr". Sir Paul also met with these diplomats, although it seems they were not present at his conspiratorial meeting with Montgomery. There is no record of what he said to these American envoys or whether he gave them a similar undertaking of support - except perhaps in the files of the US Embassy in Barbados.

Sir Paul says that when he told Montgomery that he would give any invasion his "fullest support", and Montgomery asked him if he would put this in writing, he "temporized". This is not surprising. If the subsequent invasion had been repelled and the Revolutionary Government had survived, and his dealings had

come to light, he may very well have faced criminal proceedings. But Sir Paul admits (p. 145) that, after he had been taken aboard a US warship and from there to a house at Point Salines under US control, he signed "*letters ... addressed to Tom Adams, Edward Seaga, Eugenia Charles and Ronald Reagan*".

Sir Paul does not say what these letters contained, but he admits that they were handed to him by a Brigadier with the invading forces, who apologised for their late delivery. He says that he "*made one alteration before signing them*". On 19 January 1992 I met Tony Abrahams, who in 1984 had been a Minister in Seaga's Government in Jamaica but had subsequently broken with him. Tony volunteered some very interesting information, which I noted in my diary:

The gathering at Lillyfield was about 50 or 60 persons, across the political spectrum, though there may not have been any JLP person who is still a member of that party. ... Tony Abrahams, the former JLP member, told me that it was he who brought the letter to Grenada for Sir Paul Scoon to sign inviting the Americans to invade. The letter was back-dated because he (Abrahams) only arrived in Grenada on the day of the invasion. He said Scoon was reluctant to sign it. Similar letters were sent to the other OECS heads of governments.<sup>31</sup>

Clearly these letters, dated before the invasion but signed by Scoon after its commencement, were designed to provide a "fig leaf" cover for violating international law in invading a sovereign state. The letters would have allowed the invaders to claim they had acted at the request of the Governor General.

### **United States Government Plans to Invade Grenada**

The US Government had clearly signalled its hostile intentions when, in speeches on 10 March and again on 23 March 1983, President Reagan had claimed that Grenada posed a threat to US national security. He bolstered this ridiculous suggestion by claiming that the PRG was an agent of the USSR for whom the Cubans were building an air base and a naval base on the island. This was not just empty rhetoric. Any US President who alleged such a threat to US national security and then did nothing about it would have had problems in the next presidential election campaign. Reagan clearly intended to take action.

US forces had already carried out two invasion rehearsals. During the NATO exercises in 1981 they had carried out a landing on Vieques Island off the coast of Puerto Rico. The scenario for this operation was to replace the government of a hostile state, with one favourable to the USA. The mythical state in this exercise was named "Amber and the Amberines", a thinly disguised reference to Grenada and the Grenadines.

On 23 September 1983 US troops rehearsed an airborne invasion at Ephrata municipal airport in Washington State, USA. A month later these same troops were used in the invasion of Grenada. It seems probable that, if Grenadians had not themselves provided a pretext by killing the Prime Minister, the US



Government would have staged something else, like the notorious Tonkin Gulf incident in the Vietnam war, as an excuse for carrying out their plans.

The PRG had done what it could to prepare the army to resist the anticipated invasion. The only Caribbean area Commonwealth Government that had done anything to help Grenada build up its armed forces was that of Guyana. There was not very much that Guyana could do, but it had helped to train Grenadian soldiers. The army acquired what armaments it could, including anti-aircraft guns, but it could do little to prepare for an invasion by the mighty USA.

These weapons had obviously been acquired for defence, but this did not stop Sir Paul from implying otherwise. In a radio broadcast (quoted pp. 150 - 151), after his installation by the invaders as the *de facto* government, he said: "*Sad to say, it is now known that the Peoples Revolutionary Army (PRA) had in its possession an incredible amount of foreign sophisticated weapons*". Sir Paul made no acknowledgement that the weapons had been acquired for defence against an anticipated invasion. He clearly intended to create the impression that the PRG had acquired these weapons for use against other Caribbean states.

On 24 October, the day before the invasion, I noted:

Happily the night has passed without the planned invasion materialising. Harold Murray called from Jamaica. He says that a news item on JBC [Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation] this morning says that in view of the killing of over 70 US soldiers & wounding of over 100 in a bomb blast in the Lebanon yesterday, the US task force has been redirected to the Lebanon, but no source was given for the story.

Everything seems normal here this morning. Shops & offices are open and at the St. G. University Medical School classes have resumed. My staff turned out to work - late as usual! Gayle [sic - Gail], however, was not well - she is in an advanced state of pregnancy. I drove her home.

Have started Christine working on transcribing my tapes of the last few days radio broadcasts. This morning a very statesmanlike diplomatic note from the Min. of Foreign Affairs to the U.S. Embassy in Barbados was read on R.F.G. [Radio Free Grenada]. R.F.G. has a story that Jamaica has failed all three IMF [International Monetary Fund] tests & is in for a rough time economically & that Seaga is concealing the failure from the Ja. public & hoping the proposed invasion will divert public attention & qualify him for further U.S. aid...

It has been reported that 500 parents of the U.S. medical students in Grenada met in New York yesterday and decided to send a telegram to Reagan urging him not to take any precipitate and provocative action. But it looks as if Reagan has decided to invade, with the complicity of Seaga & Tom Adams. R.F.G. reports that a decision to invade was taken yesterday by the Govts of Ja., B'dos, St. Vincent, St. Lucia, Antigua, Dominica, St. Kitts & Montserrat - but this is all window dressing for the U.S. A Jamaican contingent had actually left for B'dos before the decision of the OECS states!

## The Invasion and Occupation

The invasion started at 5.40 a.m. on Tuesday, 25 October. Some 6,000 US troops, with naval vessels and aircraft, were involved in the military assault.<sup>32</sup> The fighting lasted for about a week. The ensuing occupation, in which US forces were supplemented by soldiers and police from Jamaica and Barbados, and personnel from other eastern Caribbean islands, lasted for over a year. All the Caribbean forces were brought in by US aircraft.

A post-invasion propaganda offensive was conducted by the US Army's Psychological Warfare Battalion. They based themselves at Marryshow House in St. Georges, which they arbitrarily took over from the Extra-Mural Department of the University of the W.I. In May 1984 I was told by Tony Thorndike, an English academic and a fellow member of the Society for Caribbean Studies, that "*When the University protested Seaga threatened to cut off funds*". The Unit did not leave Marryshow House until January 1984.

Soon after the offensive commenced a party of American soldiers, "The Seals", landed by helicopter at the Governor General's House and assured Sir Paul that they were there to protect him. Two days later a party of Marines arrived. Then, as Sir Paul records (pp. 143-145) "*The Seals with a reinforcement of about sixty Marines*" took him and his wife "*to Queens Park where a helicopter was awaiting us*". From there, he says, "*My wife and I embarked ... for the journey to the USS Guam*" where, "*dressed in borrowed navy overalls, I sat down to a very hearty breakfast*". From there he was flown to Point Salines airstrip, controlled by US forces, and installed in a vacant house belonging to a retired Englishman. This was where he signed those back-dated letters to President Reagan, Tom Adams, Edward Seaga and Eugenia Charles. On Friday 28 October he was flown back to the Governor General's House.

The PRA and some units of the Militia fought bravely against overwhelming odds. Two days after the invasion started I noted: "*According to C.B.S. news at 11.25 am. the American death toll is 8 and six are missing and thirty-three wounded*". Subsequently, on 10 November, I recorded:

Some journalists have suggested that the American casualties in Grenada were much higher than admitted - 40 not 18 dead and many more wounded than the number of 37. They say the number of helicopters shot down was nearer 12 than the 4 admitted. US public opinion polls show that Reagan's support has risen as a result of his "victory".

Dennis Bartholemew, then at the Grenada High Commission in London, visited Grenada shortly after the end of hostilities. He later told me he had seen what appeared to be the wrecks of 17 aircraft. At a meeting of the NJM's UK organisation in London on 29 January 1984, I noted:

Dennis spoke of the damage to property during the invasion. He had counted approx 90 buildings bombed, burned or riddled by bullets. He said

the Americans had destroyed the vehicles, equipment and machinery which the Cuban Govt. had given to Grenada & other vehicles & equipment they were using at the airport site and had stolen the electronic & other equipment at the airport, some of which belonged to the British contractors Plessey. The loss of equipment was serious as this was to be used, after completion of the airport, for road construction. He said that both the Sandino plant for prefab. house construction & the Ramon Quintana plant for asphalt manufacture and stone crushing had been badly damaged.

Dennis said that resistance by the armed forces to the invasion had been considerable, despite the demoralising effect of the killing of Maurice Bishop. He thought U.S. casualties could have been as high as 400. He mentioned the loss of 40 in fighting for the radio station at Beau Sejour. Two militia companies which were at half strength had inflicted these losses.

The U.S. forces had later succeeded in retaking the station but had been driven out by a PRA force of 50 men and had fled to the beach where they were picked up by helicopters. The U.S. had been unable to retake the station until they had carried out extensive bombing from the air of the buildings, which were completely destroyed...

The official US figure for the number of American soldiers killed was 19.

The Cubans in Grenada were under instruction from their Government to remain neutral in the event of an American invasion. Cuban workers at the airport had only a few rifles the Grenadian Government had issued to them for defensive purposes when they had established their camp at the work site. Despite this they were attacked by US troops, 12 were killed and hundreds arrested and detained. When sending the bodies of dead Cubans back to Cuba the Americans included the bodies of several Grenadians killed in action. This was probably a deliberate provocation as they were clearly distinguishable from the Cubans. The Cuban Government returned their bodies to Grenada.

When Reagan visited Grenada in February 1986, to receive the plaudits of a large crowd as Grenada's "liberator", he unveiled a plaque at the airport in memory of the American soldiers who had died in action. No mention was made of the Grenadians who had died defending their country and no plaque honouring their memory has been unveiled, nor has any official record of their names, or even their numbers, ever been made. Nor is there a plaque recording the names of the Cubans who were killed.

### **Looting Starts after US Troops Take Control**

While the Revolutionary Military Council was the *de facto* government perfect order had prevailed, but as soon as US troops entered St. Georges, widespread looting began. These troops did nothing to prevent it. Sir Paul reports (pp. 151 - 152) that when he returned to his residence he found that some of his personal

belongings and the food and drink left behind had gone. Apparently the looters had used his private car to

transport the booty from the house to the Western Gate as the car was found at that gate ... it would appear that our residence was occupied by the household staff of the late Prime Minister from the evidence the men left behind such as the official diary of the Prime Minister's residence, personal bank books and other personal belongings.

This shows that Bishop's house had been looted, but hardly, as Sir Paul suggests, that the culprits were members of the former Prime Minister's domestic staff. Sir Paul writes (pp. 160 - 161) that:

Four businessmen, led by Fred Toppin, Managing Director of ... Jonas Browne & Hubbard Ltd, were the first to call on me after I had returned to my official residence... they reported that the business community had suffered tremendously at the hands of looters. Shops were broken into and people unabashedly walked in and helped themselves to items large and small. In some cases vehicles were parked outside business places to collect the cumbersome merchandise.

On 26 October I noted:

Today we have seen many people coming along Simmons St & going down the steps by the house, loaded with new suitcases, radios and other goods, obviously looted from shops on the Market Square side of the town...

On 28 October I recorded further looting:

This morning the Food Fair supermarket, which backs onto Scott Street just below us, was looted. We could see people coming up the steps from Scott St. beside our house carrying bags of flour etc & baskets of loot from Food Fair. There was a regular procession of people coming along Simmons St. & going down the steps empty handed and returning with loot. ...

Shahiba [who for safety was staying with us] learned from a Belmont neighbour on the telephone this morning that her house at Belmont has been totally looted. The neighbour saw beds and furniture & even the old fridge being carried away down the drive, though the fridge got too heavy for them & they jettisoned it. This neighbour knows all but one of the looters, & could even see them storing the things looted in an empty house, but she was afraid to go out. The looters had to pass close to the camp the American soldiers have established at Butler gap, but they took no interest in the looters.

On 29 October I noted:

The occupation forces do not appear to be doing any policing functions, at least not on this side of the town and I suspect on the other side either. Looting is continuing with impunity - all this within a quarter of a mile of the large US military encampment at Queens Park.

## International Condemnation of the Invasion

Contrasting his politics with those of Maurice Bishop, Sir Paul writes (p. 56): "*When it came to ideology, we were poles apart. He looked to the left while I felt more comfortable setting my sight in the opposite direction*". Scoon must have been very disappointed that Margaret Thatcher was so strongly opposed to the planned American invasion. The readiness of Tom Adams, Edward Seaga, Eugenia Charles and other Organisation of East Caribbean States (OECS) leaders to cooperate with Reagan's planned invasion pleased him immensely. He refers to Adams in particularly glowing terms.

Sir Paul deploras (pp. 153 - 154) the fact that "*the Bahamas, Belize, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago ... did not take part in the rescue mission [sic.]... spouting out a great deal of intellectual nonsense about the correctness of the military intervention*".

On 7 November 1983 I noted:

George Chambers, Prime Minister of Trinidad & Tobago, has warned that the US is expected to exert "economic and other pressures" because his Government condemned the invasion of Grenada. The Trinidad Govt. has withdrawn its Ambassador to Barbados and told the Barbadian Govt. that "it would not be appropriate for them to send an envoy to Trinidad at the moment".

With few exceptions governments around the world condemned the invasion and called for the withdrawal of troops. At the UN General Assembly, despite a request from the US for a 24-hour postponement, a debate on the issue began on the evening of 25 October. The representative of Mexico described the invasion as a "*clear violation of the rules of international law ... totally lacking in justification*".<sup>33</sup> Of the 63 countries whose representatives spoke over the next two days, only those of the US and the OECS countries defended the action.<sup>34</sup>

The matter was also quickly taken up in the Security Council on the joint initiative of the governments of Guyana, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe. Their resolution of 28 October, which "*deeply deplored the armed intervention in Grenada*" as "*a flagrant violation of international law and of the independence sovereignty and territorial integrity of that state*" was passed by 11 to 1 with 3 abstentions (Britain, Togo and Zaire). It was vetoed by the USA.

On 11 November I noted:

The Guardian ... has a statement by Michael Manley condemning the invasion. He makes the point that many Grenadians were so irate over the killing of Maurice that they welcomed the invasion as some sort of revenge on the Army which had killed him.

## Post Invasion Propaganda Lines

Initially the US propaganda campaign within Grenada was designed to discredit the entire revolution and its leaders. On 8 December 1983 I recorded a conversation I had with Tony Thorndike, who had recently returned from a visit to Grenada:

He says that the American propagandists in Grenada have now directed their psychological warfare against the PRG including Maurice. Having already effectively smeared Bernard & Phyllis Coard, Hudson Austin, Liam James, etc by a poster campaign of hate, they are now going for a larger target area.

He says he was present at a reception given by Leslie Pierre for people who had helped him to establish his newspaper Grenada Voice which was held at the Seascape Inn where he was staying & an American psychological warfare man,<sup>35</sup> assuming that he (Tony) was "one of us", told him that "Bishop was as much a Goddamn communist as those Goddamn communists up on the hill" and stressed the importance of making the Grenadian people understand this. Tony says the propaganda is being concentrated on allegations of torture of detainees by the P.R.G. with Bishop's knowledge and he feels they are succeeding in turning the people against the P.R.G.

The US approach soon changed when the propagandists realised how immensely popular Bishop had been. The new line was to suggest that Maurice had been all right as he was a moderate social democrat but that Bernard Coard and others were doctrinaire hard line communists. Sir Paul does not take this line, but he does claim that there was a power struggle within the NJM and that Coard was intent on replacing Bishop as party leader. As we have seen, the minutes of the NJM CC and the general members' meeting of 25 September 1983 do not bear this out.

### **Soon Installed as new *de facto* Government**

Soon after the invasion commenced, Sir Paul Scoon was installed as the *de facto* government, but he was answerable to Tony Gillespie and other US officials. He records (p. 149) that when he was introduced to Gillespie by David Montgomery he "*thought Gillespie was the right man at the right time to be America's Special Envoy in Grenada*". He also proudly records that he "*learned later that Gillespie thought also that I was the right man at the right time*"!

Sir Paul exercised this function for just over one year. He personally selected an "Advisory Council", which held its first meeting on 15 November 1983. On occasion he refers to it as an "Interim Administration" and twice (pp. 197 and 212) he even calls it "the Interim Government", although its function never ceased to be advisory. With this arrangement in place he ruled Grenada. But although he was under American supervision, it seems he was allowed to do things very much in his own way, just as the British Government had trusted its colonial governors - its "man on the spot".

Sir Paul claims (p. 159) he was acting constitutionally:

With the cessation of hostilities, I assumed control of the affairs of Grenada. Without a government I exercised executive authority up to November 15 when I appointed an Advisory Council to perform the functions of an Interim Government... There could be no denying that I was the sole constitutional authority left in the country.

But although he continued to refer to himself as Governor General, Sir Paul had, by his own admission, ceased to perform that function as defined by the constitution. Having been installed as ruler, he was not acting as a Governor General. Instead, his position was akin to that of a colonial-era Governor, except that those Governors were answerable to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, while Sir Paul was answerable to the US Government's special envoy. Nor was his Advisory Council an interim government as he suggests. It was more akin to the advisory local Privy Councils provided for under the pre-independence constitutions of Jamaica and other British colonies. This continued until the restoration of constitutional government after the election held on 3 December 1984. Only then did he resume his constitutional functions as Governor General.

Sir Paul removed several senior Grenadian civil servants from office. For example, Merle Collins, who had worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told me of her experience:

She was told by a Barbadian soldier that he had instructions from Sir Paul Scoon that she & Ashley Taylor were not to be allowed to enter the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. She stayed home for a month after which Pat Emmanuel, who was in charge of Foreign Affairs for the Interim Government [Advisory Council], told her that what she had been told was foolishness & she should return to work, which she did.

Several attempts were made to persuade her to apply for a transfer. Braithwaite, Chairman of the Advisory Council,

suggested that it would embarrass her if he asked her to write his speech for a meeting he was going to in Dominica but ... she said that she would be quite happy to write it. She wrote the speech which he did not use, substituting a speech in which he thanked Eugenia Charles for invading Grenada! Braithwaite told her that her Section (International Research) is no longer needed...

During the invasion and its aftermath, I was receiving medical treatment for a severe attack of shingles. To avoid the possibility of being sued for breach of contract for leaving my post in Grenada, I sent in an application for leave supported by a certificate from my doctor in Barbados. When I got to London, having received no response to my application, I telephoned Grenada on 22 November 1983, and noted:

Got through on the phone to the Governor General's House in Grenada this evening. Sir Paul's secretary's assistant was the only person available & she told me my application for leave had been approved & and a letter was on its way to me. But I still don't know whether my contract will be terminated.

I never did get the letter approving my leave, nor any salary for October and November. On 28 November I noted: "*Tony Thorndike phoned from Grenada. He says the Government is taking the position that by leaving Grenada I abandoned my job and that my employment was terminated as from that date*". Fortunately, we were able to employ a

shipping agent to go to the flat in St. Georges, crate up all our belongings and ship them to us.

### **Items taken from our St. Georges Flat**

I learned recently that between our hurried departure from Grenada and the time when the shipping agent crated up our belongings, two items had been removed from my papers and given to the Americans. This was discovered when a researcher working in the US National Archives found the following two memoranda, dated 12 December 1983. The first read:

#### **SECRET**

EMBASSY OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
Panama, R.P

**MEMORANDUM** December 12, 1983

TO: Amembassy [sic] Georgetown FROM: POL - James C. Cason  
SUBJECT: Cheddi and Janet Jagan Correspondence with Richard Hart, Jamaican  
Communist  
REF: Grenada 365

Attached is correspondence during the last twenty years between the Jagans and Richard Hart, Jamaican born communist who served as editor of the Mirror under Jagan and who went on to become leader of the London-based communist front group Caribbean Labour Solidarity, and most recently, Attorney General of Revolutionary Grenada. This correspondence was seized from Hart's house in St. Georges by the Deputy Public Prosecutor,<sup>36</sup> and was passed to us quietly with the understanding that the method of acquisition would be kept confidential.

Much of the correspondence is mundane, dealing with the progress of Hart's writings, but some gives useful insights into the PPP's early years, and Cheddi Jagan's observations on the current Guyanese political scene are revealing. Jagan makes clear throughout his dedication to Marxism-Leninism, and his interest in close relations with Cuba and the Soviets.

Rather than making copies of the whole bundle, we have decided to leave it to your judgement what if any of this material is useful, and who else should receive copies.

The second memorandum, from the same official but addressed to "ARA/CAR - Grenada Desk", with copies to the US Embassies in London, Kingston and Georgetown, had a different subject heading describing the contents of its enclosure:

Attached is a Xerox of the address book of Richard Hart, former Attorney General of the Peoples Republic of Grenada [sic], and a communist with many contacts throughout the Caribbean, and in the UK.

This sentence was followed by the extraordinarily ill-informed comment:



Most of the names in Hart's address book are probably those of Marxists, as it appears Hart had few friends who were not also committed Marxists.

### **Scoon Restores the Pre-Revolutionary Name of Fort Rupert**

One of Sir Paul's early accomplishments, of which he was no doubt proud, was to restore the pre-revolutionary name of Fort George, named after a King of England. The PRG had re-named the fort in honour of the Grenadian martyr Rupert Bishop, Maurice Bishop's father. Rupert Bishop's death was remembered annually on 21 January. As I noted on that date in 1983:

Offices closed half-day today, the anniversary of "Bloody Monday" - the day on which in 1974 Gairy's "Green Beasts" (soldiers) & Mongoose Gang brutally broke up an anti Gairy demonstration and shot Rupert Bishop dead when he attempted to stop the soldiers from entering a building in pursuit of school children. Avis and I took part in the march from the Carenage to the cemetery.

### **PRG, Leading NJM and Members of the PRA Detained and Tortured**

Most surviving members of the PRG, members of the RMC, several members of the PRA, many members of the NJM and trade unionists were arrested and detained by the invaders. Bernard and Phyllis Coard, Hudson Austin and others were taken to an American warship. A report by Amnesty International records:

Members of the Grenada 17 were ... subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, in violation of international laws and standards.<sup>37</sup> For instance, some of the Grenada 17 were held in wooden crates, fully exposed to the sun and without facilities for water or personal hygiene. Bernard Coard was allegedly held for a total of nine days in steel cages in the holds of two US military ships. The cages were placed very near the engine rooms of the ships where the noise was deafening.<sup>38</sup>

The Amnesty report states further:

In late October 1983 the Grenada 17 were arrested and detained by US forces ... held incommunicado on US naval vessels ... and subjected to lengthy interrogation. During their detention, the whereabouts of the Grenada 17 were kept secret and requests from lawyers, family members and others to meet with them were rejected. They were held by the US for periods of nine to twelve days ... The incommunicado detention of the Grenada 17 violated both the constitutional law of Grenada and international human rights law.<sup>39</sup>

On 7 November 1983 I noted:

The Guardian reports the removal yesterday "from a US warship to a gaol in Grenada" of Bernard & Phyllis Coard, Hudson Austin and three others, The report states: "Blindfolded and handcuffed, with the men stripped to the waist, they were put in individual cells".

After their ordeal on the warships and on the wharf the Grenada 17 were incarcerated in the Richmond Hill Prison in St. Georges, where several of them were tortured to force them to sign "confessions", which some did. In a statement to the Court which tried the Grenada 17, Colville (Kamau) McBarnette recorded how he had been tortured and why he had signed the "confession", which had been written out for his signature by his Barbadian police interrogator. He said that: "*For over five hours I was subjected to beatings in the stomach and on the head*" and that his torturers had made:

threats to terrorise my mother and father, my wife and children ... and said to me if I don't sign a statement ... that the Central Committee on October 19, met at Fort Frederick and took a decision to execute Maurice Bishop and others ... I would be shot and afterwards they would claim that I tried to escape.

Informing the judge that medical confirmation of his injuries was available and that he was not examined by a doctor until 24 days after he had been tortured, he said:

In his written report ... Dr. Gopaul records the fact that I made certain complaints to him, including pains in my stomach and passing unusual red urine. Dr. Gopaul ... in his report ... records as part of his findings "tenderness in certain regions of the body".

Addressing the judge, McBarnette said further:

Your Lordship, it is not possible for me physically to resist any beating for any length of time ... I am frail, would you expect me to resist beatings, how long? And when some people would ask, why did you sign that statement? I did so ... simply because I was physically unable to resist the beatings and the tortures any longer. I did so because I wished to protect my family from the threats and what was said to me. And I am saying something now, that if the same thing were to happen tomorrow I would do it all over again...<sup>40</sup>

Another of the Grenada 17 who was tortured was Lieutenant Lester Redhead. His statement was recorded in the Amnesty Report:

I say that the statement was taken under torture. I admit that the signature at the bottom is mine. I only signed the statement after being tortured for several hours by Barbadian police officer Sgt. Ashford Jones and Courcey Holder. ... On or about 29 October 1983 I was captured by US invasion forces and taken to a prison [sic] of war camp at Point Saline. There I was subject to physiological torture. I was placed in a box 8 x 8 [feet] with a little door I had to lie down to crawl into. On first night that box was beaten the entire night ... A forklift actually lifted that box off the ground with me inside. I was only given one meal a day...

On 11<sup>th</sup> November 1983 I was taken ... by Sgt. Ashford Jones and Courcey Holder among others ... I was immediately handcuffed to a chair and left there for about 30 minutes with a Bajan police officer pointing a .38 pistol at my head ... I told him [Sgt. Jones who had entered the room] I would

only do so [make a statement] in the presence of my lawyers. Having said that Courcey Holder immediately started to beat me in the head ...

After they completed writing that so called statement Sgt. Jones asked me to read the statement. I told him that as far as I was concerned I did not give any statement. I refused to do so. Again they started beating me. When I could not take the blows anymore I had to give in and sign the statement. I was then taken back to Point Saline and put back in the box...

At the trial the prosecution produced "confessions" admitting involvement in the killing of Bishop and others, signed by PRA members Major Christopher Stroude, Lieut. Callistus Bernard and Privates Andy Mitchell, Cosmos Richardson and Vincent Joseph. None of these statements were in the handwriting of the persons who had signed them and they all repudiated them as having been extracted under torture. But although medical evidence was available confirming the physical injuries these persons had received, the judge treated their claims of torture cavalierly. In several cases he refused to admit available evidence of their injuries, and accepted their statements in evidence, stating that he believed they had been voluntarily given.

Christopher Stroude told the court of his treatment by his interrogators over 23 hours on 15 to 16 November 1983, which eventually caused him to give in and sign the statement presented to him. He testified to:

Being punched on stomach and chest. Being punched on the neck, hit on ears, strangled with cloth to around neck to point of unconsciousness. Being beaten with iron pipe on chest, right hip, bottom and right thigh. Being threatened that he would be given electric shocks to his genitals. Numbness in hand continued for months afterwards; inability to turn head without pain and persistent intermittent swelling of ears...

He said that:

Dr prescribed pain killers, anti-inflammatory pills and X-rays; and continues to prescribe medication for ears sporadically up to time of trial.

In this case the doctor who had treated Stroude was called as a witness and the report of his evidence stated that he examined Stroude on 17 November 1983, and found:

Numbness of Medial three fingers and corresponding area of left hand, extending up the arm. Tenderness on both sides of the abdomen, tenderness of spine, tenderness of left forearm. Recent 3" abrasion on left side of neck; tenderness on swallowing. Recent 5" abrasion side of chest, over 5th - 6th - 7th ribs; and other abrasions on lower part of chest.

The doctor added that it was his impression that there was:

Pain from muscles - involving several parts of the body and possible injury to the nerves supplying the skin of the medial three fingers of the left hand.

The judge did not question the doctor but, having heard the evidence, he said:

I was impressed by both Sgt. Jones and Inspector Watson [Stroude's interrogators]. I found them to be credible and I believed them when they said they

did not lay a hand on the accused Stroude nor torture nor beat him in any way ... I could find nothing in the doctor's evidence to shake the impression I had formed that the police officers were speaking the truth.<sup>41</sup>

Mr Justice Byron's treatment of Stroude's claim that his "confession" had been extracted by torture was fairly typical. Statements made under torture are not admissible in evidence, but he treated all the statements made by the accused as if they had been voluntarily given. Nor did he draw any conclusions from the fact that the statements signed by literate accused were in the hand-writing of their interrogators.

### **A Sadistic Prisons Commissioner**

Sir Paul does not mention the inhumane and illegal treatment the prisoners received on arrest and during their detention by US forces. He makes the amazing assertion (p. 158) that they were "*brought together ... in lawful custody*". When Ramsey Clarke, the former US Attorney General and a firm upholder of civil rights, visited Grenada, Sir Paul directed that he be refused permission to interview any of the prisoners.

Soon was particularly well disposed towards Lionel Maloney, a sadistic Barbadian from that island's prison service, whom he installed as Commissioner of Richmond Hill Prison. He describes Maloney (p. 202) as "*a no-nonsense man, a strict disciplinarian*" and adds:

Maloney had a keen sense of the importance of the security of the country as a whole. He so often assured me that as long as he was in Grenada I should have nothing to worry about in terms of my own safety and in terms of the security of the country. He felt that his responsibility in the area of security extended beyond the Prisons compound, and so it was his duty to be vigilant at all times and in all places ... he would telephone me day or night to apprise me of any unusual activity in the country. (p. 203)

Maloney seems to have seen it as part of his functions to punish the Grenada 17 for their previous revolutionary activities. In addition to the torture some of them endured, he would place them for days at a time on a bread and water diet. There were several other detainees, against whom lesser charges or no charges at all had been brought, whom Maloney also treated severely. On 26 July 1984 I noted a report by Sandra Ventour, a Grenadian student who had recently returned to Britain from a visit home. She told of a victory won by the detainees as a result of a hunger strike:

Maloney ... had cancelled the permission of the relatives to take in meals and was allowing them to bring only two fruits per day. They were being allowed visits by only one relative per week for 15 minutes and access by lawyers was restricted to 2 hours. They were getting only 2 hours out of their cells for exercise in every 24 hours except in the case of Phyllis [Coard] who was allowed only 1 hour. They were not allowed to have paper & pens.

As a result of the hunger strike a conference was held [with Maloney] ... & the lawyers for the defence & prosecution, at which it was agreed:

1. that the detainees can have three meals per day sent in;
2. that they will have 4 hours per day out of their cells for exercise;
3. that their lawyers can have access of up to 6 hours each detainee per week;
4. that they can have & keep their note books in their possession at all times.

When these terms were agreed the hunger strike was called off... Sandra says ... the morale of the detainees & the relatives is high.

Seven of these detainees had been prosecuted for "*occasioning bodily harm to the Budhlalls*" who had been found guilty of a bombing at Queens Park intended to eliminate the members of the PRG. The Budhlalls had been released from prison and pardoned by Sir Paul soon after the invasion. Bail was granted to one of these detainees, named Ogilvie, who had not been in Grenada at the time of the alleged offence but, as I noted:

The Barbadian sergeant who was in charge of the prisoners refused to release him & ordered him to get into the vehicle to return to the prison. This he refused to do. He was then taken before the Magistrate who then withdrew the bail, but Robert Grant [formerly in my Attorney General's chambers] made another application two or three days later and protested very strongly and got him bail.

On 11 May 1984 I was interviewed for BBC's "Radio Black London", along with Dudley Thompson. Dudley was a well known Jamaican criminal lawyer who was in Grenada to represent some of the detainees. *Habeas Corpus* applications had been made for the release of several of the detainees and he said that when the *Habeas Corpus* papers were served on Maloney, "*he tore them up and threw them out of the window*". Dudley expected the application would be successful, but that the "*fifteen persons held without trial will be released & then rearrested on some charge*". Other lawyers, he said, had been denied access to their clients but "*are getting access now*".

The next day Dudley reported "*that 5 of the persons detained without trial have now been released and are walking the streets of St. Georges without being molested. They include Chris DeRiggs, Mikey Prime, Ashley Folkes and Keith Roberts*". DeRiggs was a member of the NJM Central Committee who had been out of the country at the time Bishop was killed. Prime was the brother of one of the Grenada 17. Folkes and Roberts had been officers in the PRG's Security Unit.

### **Economic Relations with Several Countries Terminated**

There were advantages for under-developed countries in establishing economic links with the developed socialist countries. One was that new enterprises set up with capital goods and expertise from those states would be locally, usually publicly, owned, rather than being wholly or partly owned by foreign investors. This had been the case with Indian steel mills, the Aswan Dam in Egypt and the

Cuban nickel industry. In Grenada, a prefabricated house plant and an asphalt and stone crushing plant were built with equipment and expertise supplied by Cuba.

Under the PRG, Grenada was beginning to develop economic relations with the USSR. I noticed several Soviet cruise ships docking in the Carenage, and on 26 February 1983 I noted:

Last night a Soviet cargo ship arrived with a cargo of agricultural machinery & other technical equipment, including a spray-plane, as a gift to Grenada. There was meeting on the wharf this morning to receive it. I do hope they care the machinery - they don't do very well with motor cars.

Some agricultural machinery was obtained from the German Democratic Republic, and the idea was to establish a Government Agricultural Machinery Station, from which farmers could rent tractors, ploughs, etc. that they could not themselves afford to purchase. I do not think this plan had been put into operation by the time of the invasion, and it was not pursued under Sir Paul's government. I do not know what happened to the equipment.

The PRG had arranged with the Soviet Government to test the feasibility of creating a deep-water harbour at Grenville, with berthing facilities for large ships. This would have given an enormous boost to the Grenadian economy, perhaps as important as the new airport at Point Salines, on which Cubans had been working.

Alas, one of Sir Paul's first acts upon taking over was to sever Grenada's relations with the socialist and certain other countries. Sir Paul boasts (pp. 158 - 159) that, as soon as the fighting stopped, he: "*took the bold and unprecedented step to sever diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union, Libya, East Germany, North Korea and other communist countries*" and "*politely asked the Soviet and Libyan diplomats to leave the country*". To please his American patrons and satisfy his own prejudices, Sir Paul deprived his country of the obvious advantages of diversified political and economic relations.

Sir Paul claims that he did not break diplomatic relations with Cuba but merely "*declared their Ambassador persona non grata*" although "*the two countries could name Ambassadors on a non-resident basis*".

### **Arrangements for an Election**

Sir Paul states that preparations for general elections were "*high on the agenda of the Advisory Council*" and that he took personal charge "*to accelerate the process*". (p. 184) He appointed an Elections Commission, but he fell out with its head and replaced him, dismissing all the staff that had been employed. The list of voters was eventually finalised and the general election was held on 3 December 1984. Once an elected government was in place, Sir Paul dissolved the Advisory Council and resumed his constitutional functions as Governor General.

Six days after the end of hostilities, Anthony Rushford, a British constitutional law expert and retired civil servant arrived in the island. As Sir Paul

recognised (pp. 175 - 176), Rushford had been "*the principal author of the constitutions of most of the islands*" and "*a member of the British delegation at the independence conference on Grenada held at Marlborough House, London in May 1973*". He came under the auspices of the Commonwealth Secretariat and Sir Paul appointed him to succeed me as Attorney General.

It did not take Rushford long to fall out with Sir Paul. On 4 December I was told on the telephone from Barbados that Rushford had resigned. On 6 December I noted:

The Guardian has the story of Rushford's resignation, attributed to disagreements he has had with Scoon, whom he accuses of being a Gov. General who "appoints himself saviour of his people, calls in foreign armies and then does very little to bring about a restoration of constitutional civil government".

And on 8 December:

My successor Rushford rates news in the Times yesterday and today. He really lays into Sir Paul. One interesting comment is that he couldn't get an answer as to how Scoon came to invite foreign troops to enter Grenada and that Scoon's letter must be considered "dubious".

Not surprisingly Sir Paul (pp. 175 - 178) tries his best to discredit Rushford, claiming he had appointed Rushford as Attorney General against his "*better judgement*".

### **Post-Invasion Departures from Grenada**

Commercial flights in and out of Grenada were suspended because of the invasion. However, holders of British and British Commonwealth passports were initially freely permitted to leave for Barbados on the empty cargo planes that had brought in military equipment for use by the occupying troops. When we heard of this possibility, my wife and I hurriedly packed a suitcase with essentials and left for the assembly point at Queens Park. At Queens Park would-be departees were separated from their luggage, which we were told would be sent on by helicopter to Point Salines airfield to await us. A few of them were also sent to Point Salines that day but most of us had to wait at Queens Park until the following day.

When we got to the airfield and enquired after our luggage, no one would admit to any knowledge of it. We never did recover it, but our losses were minimal. A young Grenadian couple were less fortunate. Their shop had been bombed during the invasion, and they had lost most of their stock. Their suitcases had contained all the jewellery and other saleable items that they and their relatives could spare, which they hoped to sell in Barbados to re-stock their shop. American soldiers were in charge of everything at Queens Park and Point Salines, so our luggage could not have got into the hands of Grenadian looters. I can only conclude that the American GIs were allowed to acquire some "spoils of war".

By the next day departure procedures had been tightened up and would-be departing passengers were being vetted both by Barbadian immigration officials and an American "intelligence" officer. He was being advised by a Grenadian named Langdon who had been in prison for escaping from custody. Fortunately for me, I had not been in court when Langdon was prosecuted by one of my assistants, so he did not know me. When this officer asked to see my luggage and was told that it had disappeared, he showed no surprise.

In a way, the theft of our suitcase helped us, because it contained a folder with my instrument of appointment by Maurice Bishop as Attorney General. Had this American officer been aware of my post, he would probably have assumed that I had been a member of the PRG and arrested me. He would not have understood that an Attorney General could be an ordinary civil servant. In the event, all he had to go on was my British passport, which described me as a solicitor. He concluded that I was an innocuous British career lawyer and he allowed us to board the plane.

Why Langdon should have "fingered" Margaret Regisford is not clear because, so far as I know, she was not engaged in anything other than her social welfare work, but she was not allowed to board the plane. She later told me what had happened:

At Point Salines she and her baby were put in a barbed wire enclosure adjoining that in which many Cubans were being detained. A day or two later she was transferred to another area where she saw some people preparing to board a plane to Barbados. No one said anything to her as to whether or not she should go, but she joined the group of people and got aboard the plane. She has a relative in Barbados with whom they are staying.

Most, if not all, of the international workers were subsequently expelled from or allowed to leave Grenada.

### **Charges Laid against PRG, PRA and NJM Members**

After the invasion Sir Paul Scoon retained the Grenada Supreme Court, with its High Court and Court of Appeal, established by the PRG. In February 1984 a charge of murder at common law was laid against eight male members of the People's Revolutionary Army. At the same time eleven leading members of the New Jewel Movement were charged that they had "*conspired together with others to commit an act of terrorism which caused the death of members of the People's Revolutionary Government namely Maurice Bishop*" and three others "*contrary to sections 10 and 19 of the Terrorism (Prevention) Law 1980*".

These original charges were not proceeded with but, on 3 April 1984, a new charge was laid against 20 members of the NJM and the PRA which alleged that they: "*did commit murder by intentionally causing the death of Maurice Bishop*" and five others "*by unlawful harm contrary to section 234 of the Criminal Code, Chapter 76, of*



*Volume 1 of the Laws of Grenada ...*". Subsequently, on 28 September 1984, the 20 charged were indicted for the murder of a total of eleven persons.

The usual preliminary examination followed, in which the prosecution presents its evidence to a magistrate, who decides whether it is sufficient for the accused to stand trial. On 8 August the magistrate committed all the accused except one to stand trial as charged. The exception was Ian St. Bernard, the PRG's Commissioner of Police, who could not be committed because the prosecution's key witness had forgotten to name him as having been present at Fort Frederick. The charge against the soldier Gabriel was later dropped on condition that he give evidence against the other three soldiers. The remainder came to be known as the Grenada 17.

The prosecution case that the NJM CC had resolved to kill Bishop depended entirely on the evidence of Cletus St. Paul, Bishop's chief security guard. St. Paul alleged that on 19 October, while he was being held at Fort Frederick after his arrest for spreading rumours about threats to kill Bishop, he had seen the CC members in a group talking and gesticulating, although he could not hear what they were saying. The official transcript of what he said at the preliminary examination read:

I heard Leon Cornwall [one of the accused] then speaking to some soldiers. This was in the presence and hearing of the Central Committee members. He told them that the masses freed Maurice Bishop from his home and because of the vicious rumour big businessman seize the opportunity to create trouble under the leadership of Brat Bullen and they must be liquidated. He then shouted "Long live the Central Committee". When he shouted that, the members of the Central Committee raised hands and said "Long live the Central Committee, long live the revolution".

St. Paul's evidence was clearly insufficient to conclude that CC members had met and decided that Bishop and others should be killed. Moreover, it was contradicted at the preliminary examination by Errol George, Bishop's other security guard who had been with St. Paul at Fort Frederick. George denied that the gathering of CC members had taken place.

As I subsequently observed:

Mr Dudley Thompson, a distinguished Jamaican criminal lawyer now Jamaican Ambassador to Nigeria, who was present in court during the Preliminary Examination, expressed the opinion that, on the evidence presented by the prosecution, no magistrate in Jamaica would have committed the members of the NJM Central Committee to stand trial.<sup>42</sup>

The fact that the magistrate in St. Georges committed the CC members to stand trial, instead of dismissing them at the end of his examination, shows the atmosphere prevailing in Grenada at the time. Even the committal of the soldiers accused of the fatal shooting was not conclusive, as the two witnesses identified

different soldiers as the persons who had fired the shots that killed Bishop and others.

The government employed Mr Justice Dennis Byron, a judge of the OECS Supreme Court then stationed in Antigua, to conduct the trial, and made him Chief Justice of Grenada. In October 1984 a motion was filed in the Grenada High Court on behalf of the accused, arguing that the Court was unconstitutional and had no jurisdiction to try them. Byron dismissed this motion, holding that the PRG, which had created the court, had achieved *de jure* status and the laws by which the court had been established were therefore valid. At the end of 1984 the lawyers representing the accused lodged an appeal and applied for a stay of execution of the trial pending the decision of the Grenada Court of Appeal, which Byron refused to grant.

### **Partial Restoration of the Grenada Constitution**

In November 1984 Sir Paul Scoon issued a proclamation purporting to restore the pre-revolutionary constitution of Grenada, apart from those sections which had provided that the OECS Supreme Court was Grenada's Supreme Court, with a right of appeal from its Court of Appeal to the Privy Council in Britain. This omission was to ensure that the trial of the prisoners, and any appeal that might ensue, would continue in the Grenada courts by judges appointed by the Grenada government, with no right of appeal to the Privy Council.

In February 1985, while the appeal was still pending before the Grenada Court of Appeal, the newly elected legislature enacted the "Confirmation of Validity Act". This provided that, "*for the avoidance of doubt*", all laws and rules made by the PRG, all proclamations made by the Governor General before he appointed his Advisory Council and all proclamations made by him thereafter with or without the advice of the Advisory Council, were valid. However, no "Speaker's Certificate", required under Grenada's constitution to validate an enacted law, was issued in respect of this law.

In June 1987, in order to remedy this oversight, the legislature enacted the People's Laws, Interim Government Proclamations and Ordinances Confirmation and Validity Act 1987. This act repealed the earlier act and retrospectively validated the said laws, rules and proclamations. This time round a Speaker's Certificate was issued, but the matter may still be in doubt.

The point at issue is an interesting one. When Sir Paul proclaimed the restoration of the constitution apart from the sections on the Supreme Court, he was in effect amending the constitution. The 1985 and 1987 legislation was intended to ratify everything that Sir Paul had done while he was acting as the government, including the action he had taken to preserve the Grenada Supreme Court. But section 39(5)(c) of the constitution provides that any alteration of the constitution requires approval of two-thirds of the registered voters in a referen-

dum. As no referendum was held, the legislature may not have achieved the desired objective.

In May 1985 the Grenada Court of Appeal issued an interesting judgement. Mr Justice J. O. F. Haynes said that the Court had found that the PRG had not achieved *de jure* status and that the pre-revolutionary constitution, although suspended by the PRG, had remained in force. The court therefore agreed with the submission of counsel for the prisoners that the Grenada Supreme Court (and therefore the Appeal Court itself) was unconstitutional. Nevertheless the judges held that because there was no functioning constitutional court in existence, the Grenada Court could continue to function as a "court of necessity" until a constitutional court was established and that the trial of the accused could continue.

### **The Trial in the Grenada High Court**

Meanwhile, the proceedings before the Grenada High Court were continuing. Mr Justice Byron ordered the suspension of the Registrar of the Supreme Court and dismissed the assembly of jurors. He then appointed as temporary Registrar Ms. Denise Campbell, who had been a member of the prosecution team until the day before she assumed her duties. Ms. Campbell selected a new assembly of jurors, ignoring the strict procedure prescribed in the Grenada Jury Law.

On 3 March 1986 the hearing of the evidence in the trial of the Grenada 17 commenced before Mr Justice Byron. He refused the application by their lawyers that the proceedings be stayed pending the hearing of their appeal, and the defendants instructed their lawyers to withdraw from the case and refused to participate in the proceedings. As I recorded in my account of the trial:

Having decided to take no part in the trial, the accused noisily disrupted the proceedings. The Judge retaliated by imprisoning them for contempt of court and proceeded with the trial in their absence. This, incidentally, was in violation of the Grenada Constitution, which provides that a person charged with a capital offence cannot be tried in his absence. Nor can it be argued that the Judge had no alternative. There are other means which a court can employ, and has from time to time in the past employed, for dealing with such an emergency without violating the constitution.<sup>43</sup>

St. Paul's evidence at the trial was similar to his statements to the preliminary examination. He did however strengthen it by substituting the words "*Central Committee Orders*" for the words "*long live the Central Committee*" he had used previously. Naming the NJM CC members, he said:

They conversed among themselves for a while. I was not able to hear what they were saying. They were in a group, grouped together, they were shaking heads and making signs with their hands. After that Leon Cornwall left the group speaking to the soldiers who were gathered there. When he left the group he moved a distance of about 5 to 6 yards. He spoke to the soldiers in a commanding voice. The other members of the Central Committee could

have heard. I was about 5 to 6 yards away from him but in another direction from the Central Committee.

He told the soldiers that because of ... a vicious rumour, spread by Maurice Bishop, counter revolutionaries, big business seized the opportunity to create trouble, free Maurice Bishop from house arrest. As a result these elements must be liquidated. This was said in the presence and hearing of the Central Committee members. He then start shouting Central Committee Orders. The other members of the Central Committee start shouting with him Central Committee Orders, the soldiers replied we obey, we obey.

The prosecution also presented "confessions", written out by the Barbadian police interrogators and signed by some of the defendants. They subsequently repudiated these statements on the grounds that they had been forced to sign under torture. The statement signed by Colville (Kamau) McBarnette contained the passage "*it was agreed by all the Central Committee members ... that Comrade Bishop and his clique must be executed*". The judge admitted these statements in evidence.

Not only did the judge allow statements given under torture to be tendered in evidence, he also failed to caution the jury that a statement made by an individual is only evidence against that individual. It cannot be used as evidence against anyone who did not hear or see it and have an opportunity to deny its truth. No evidence was given to suggest that any of the other accused had seen or heard these statements. Amnesty International commented adversely on the cursory manner in which the trial judge treated claims by the accused that their statements had been signed under torture:

Of the 16 persons named by the defendants as being able to give evidence in support of their having been tortured, the judge decided to call only three of them as witnesses; of the three witnesses, the judge examined only one fully; having called the police inspector who had conducted an official investigation into the allegations of torture, he failed to ask him a single question to determine what the results of his investigation had been...

Although 12 defendants alleged that they were tortured, the judge called and questioned the prison doctor only in respect to four of them. In a fifth case, he called the doctor but sent him away again without asking him a single question; a comparison of the doctor's testimony with his written records in the prison file reveals certain inconsistencies. For example, in one case he stated that he did not order x-rays for possible internal injuries, whereas the medical files show that he did. The judge declined to examine the medical files himself.

The Amnesty International Report then stated:

It was incumbent upon the Court - and vital to the interests of justice - for a thorough investigation to be carried out into the allegations of torture before confessions were introduced in evidence, as specified under international laws and standards. For example, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture has stated:

“Where allegations of torture and other forms of ill-treatment are raised by a defendant during trial, the burden of proof should shift to the prosecution to prove beyond reasonable doubt that the confession was not obtained by unlawful means, including torture or similar ill-treatment.”<sup>44</sup>

Amnesty International’s conclusion on this point was that:

From its examination of the trial transcript and other documents, Amnesty International views the investigation into the allegations of torture as woefully inadequate. ... The Court appeared to rely primarily on the testimony of the police officers against whom the allegations were made, who, not surprisingly, stated that no torture took place and that the statements were given of the defendants’ free will. The Court ignored numerous avenues of inquiry into the allegations of torture.

A confession admitting guilt is one of the most powerful pieces of evidence against any individual accused of a serious crime. It is highly likely that any juror hearing evidence of a confession will be minded to move towards a guilty verdict immediately and less likely to be influenced by other evidence of guilt or innocence. For this reason, courts should employ extreme caution before admitting into evidence confessions that are alleged to have been coerced or obtained under torture.<sup>45</sup>

Amnesty International condemned the trial in very strong terms:

...the Grenada 17 were tried before a tribunal created specifically for their case and before a judge who lacked both independence and impartiality. Prior to the trial on 10 May 1985, a three judge panel of the Court of Appeal found that the proposed tribunal was indeed unconstitutional. The trial was allowed to continue, however, as the Court of Appeal deemed it a “court of necessity”, even though no such procedure is recognised within either international or Grenadian law and even though a tribunal deemed unconstitutional cannot be considered a lawful court of law...

The tribunal was established solely to try the Grenada 17 and was financed in part by a grant from the Government of the United States. The circumstances surrounding establishment of the Court were in contravention of internationally recognised human rights ...The selection of the jury also was fraught with irregularities which contravened accepted legal protections under the common law system, including the laws of Grenada...

These protections and procedures include the right of defendants to be involved in the jury selection on equal footing with the prosecution. In the case of the Grenada 17, however, these rights were not respected. Under Grenadian law, jury pools are selected by the Registrar of the court. In this case, the court removed the long-standing Registrar (who later returned as registrar in other cases) and dismissed the jury pool he had established. The registrar was replaced with Denise Campbell, who had been a long-term member of the prosecution team...

The Court appeared to be unwilling to tolerate any public debate on the lawfulness of the proceedings. A newspaper, *The Informer*, published

an article questioning whether the original 33 potential jurors had been selected unlawfully. Its editor was charged with contempt of court, tried and sentenced to two weeks' imprisonment... The jury was picked without any probe for prejudice and no defendant or defence counsel were present during the selection process. Some members of the jury were also alleged to have cheered when the judge informed the defence lawyers that they were liable to be cited for contempt of court during preliminary hearings on 11 April 1986.<sup>46</sup>

The report summarised its conclusions on the trial as follows:

Amnesty International believes the trial of the Grenada 17 was fatally flawed and did not meet international standards. In line with international human rights standards, Amnesty International believes that the Grenada 17 cannot continue to be incarcerated on the grounds of a conviction that was obtained via a process that was in gross violation of international standards governing the fairness of trials.<sup>47</sup>

Among the many improprieties in the trial was the judge's failure to call Errol George to give evidence. In my account of the trial I wrote:

The prosecution did not put up Errol George as a witness because his testimony would have refuted Cletus St. Paul's evidence that there had been a meeting at Fort Frederick on the morning of 19 October and their whole case ... rested on that evidence. But the Judge had before him the depositions of the evidence given at the Preliminary Examination and knew that George, who had been with St. Paul at Fort Frederick during the whole of the time covered by the latter's evidence, did not support St. Paul on this point.

A trial judge can himself call a witness if he thinks that his evidence will assist the course of justice. In the circumstances of this case the Judge certainly had such an obligation. His failure to discharge that obligation had the effect of leaving St. Paul's evidence unchallenged. Nor did he, in his summing up to the jury, place the necessary weight on the statements taken from Ewart Layne and Selwyn Strachan, which also discounted St. Paul's allegation concerning the alleged meeting.<sup>48</sup>

### **Prosecution Witnesses Cletus St. Paul and George Louison**

Cletus St. Paul was apparently well rewarded for his services to the prosecution. In March 1984 Donald McPhail, a former official in the Grenadian Embassy in Cuba, told me that St. Paul had come to see him in Grenada and that he (St. Paul) "*is now driving a big new Datsun taxi ...*"

George Louison, the former PRG Minister of Agriculture, also gave evidence for the prosecution at the preliminary examination. In September 1984 I made notes on a taped interview between the lawyer Robert Grant and Alva James of the Ministry of Finance:

He [Alva James] went to see Bernard Coard at about 7 am on the morning of Oct. 14 [1983] about the Suriname housing project agreement that we

were working on & it was then that Bernard told him about the developments leading to Maurice's house arrest. Bernard blamed George Louison as the person who was responsible for getting Maurice to change his mind about accepting joint leadership. He drew a distinction between Unison Whiteman's approach to the question of joint leadership and George's.

Alva says: "He suggested that the villain was George Louison and that although Unison was not in support of joint leadership his arguments in opposition to joint leadership were substantive and well taken arguments." Bernard regarded George's attitude in an entirely different light. Alva records that Bernard told him that "Maurice is the kind of person who would do what the last person he spoke to advised him to do and the last person he received advice from was George. So this refusal to accept the ... position in respect of joint leadership was basically what had been said to him by George Louison whilst they were on this trip to the eastern European countries".

This analysis would certainly explain George's apparent determination to do whatever he can to help the Americans to eliminate the remaining NJM leadership. If indeed his was the principal responsibility in influencing Maurice to go back on his agreement to accept joint leadership, then he may be suffering pangs of conscience and be tormented by the thought that he was indirectly responsible for Maurice's death. If this is so, then that would explain his behaviour today - a conscious or sub-conscious reaction to his own feelings of guilt.

But if George's attitude to joint leadership was unprincipled, in distinction to Uni's, what were his motives in opposing it. Could it be that George had personal ambitions to emerge as the No. 2 leader of the Revolution next to Maurice, and that he therefore saw the decision to make Bernard joint leader of the party with Maurice as confirmation of the fact that Bernard was above him in the hierarchy, thereby putting paid to his chances of becoming No. 2...

Whatever George Louison said at the preliminary examination seems to have been of little use to the prosecution, as he was not called as a witness at the trial. Nonetheless, a conversation I had in August 1984 with Tony Thorndike suggests Louison may have been rewarded:

He says that he had to buy some motor car parts for George Louison costing about EC\$600.00 & when George came to pay him he produced a large roll of US \$100 bills, so large that he had to secure it with a rubber band. He peeled off three & when Tony said that he would have to give him change, George dismissed this breezily.

### **Constitutional Motion in Suit 191 of 1986**

On 3 June 1986 a motion was filed in the Grenada High Court re-opening the issue of the capacity of the Grenada Court to try the accused. It was set down for

hearing before Mr Justice Patterson. The prisoners then asked him to recuse (disqualify) himself in view of prejudicial statements he had made about them. As reported in the Jamaican *Daily Gleaner*, Patterson, a deeply religious man, had publicly referred to them as “*Satans*”. He however refused to do so. On 20 June 1986 Patterson dismissed the motion on the grounds that he had no jurisdiction to hear it.

In June 1988, the Appeal Court eventually ruled that Patterson should hear the motion. In the meantime the main trial had proceeded apace and on 4 December 1986 the prisoners had been convicted and sentenced. The prisoners had however pursued the motion because, had it succeeded, it would have nullified the judgement in the main trial. Patterson dismissed it again in July 1988, giving no reasons for his decision.

Subsequently, in June 2000, documents surfaced in the USA under the Freedom of Information Act which revealed that when Mr Justice Patterson was supposed to be considering this motion, he was in contact with the Political Office of the US Embassy in Grenada.

One document referred to a meeting held in March 1987 at which Patterson had advised the Americans that the appeal hearing would be delayed because of the time it would take to prepare the trial record, and that:

Grenada is not a member of OECS courts system, and will not pursue its Application [to rejoin that system] until the appeals process is exhausted.

He did not consider that the prisoners would succeed in appealing to the Privy Council.<sup>49</sup>

The US Government had been observing the case of the Grenada 17 closely. Other documents released disclosed that Vilma Hylton, the Director of Public Prosecutions in Grenada, had apparently been making regular reports to the Political Office in the US Embassy in St. Georges.

### **Conviction, Sentences and Commuting of the Death Sentences**

Although they took no other part in their trial, the Grenada 17 made statements to the court in which they declared their innocence, reiterated that the court, being unconstitutional, had no jurisdiction to try them and stated their willingness to be tried before a lawfully constituted court. On 4 December 1986, not unexpectedly, all the Grenada 17 were found guilty.

The three soldiers alleged to have fired the shots that killed Bishop and his companions were found guilty of manslaughter. Two were sentenced to three consecutive terms of imprisonment for 15 years aggregating 45 years and the third was sentenced to two such consecutive terms aggregating 30 years. The remaining 14, nine of whom had been members of the PRG, four of whom had been army officers, and one of whom was a prominent trade union leader, were found guilty as charged and sentenced to death. The 17 then lodged appeals against their convictions and sentences.



### Conditions on "Death Row"

In an affidavit sworn by thirteen of the prisoners on 23 September 2002, they gave a detailed description of how they had been treated after their conviction and sentence:

- (a) Upon being convicted and sentenced we were immediately put under death row conditions. We remained under these conditions ... until August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1991. During these 1715 days, we were confined to cells of 9ft x 6ft x 9ft approximately. There were no running water or toilet facilities in the cells. We were allowed to keep two buckets in our cells, one to be used as a slop pail and one as a water bucket. We were also allowed to keep a cup and three books, including a bible. Each cell contained a bed but we were denied the use of sheets or blankets. Throughout ... a 100-watt light bulb burned in each of our cells, approximately 7ft above the ground, 24 hours each day. We were not allowed to have any soap, toothbrush or toothpaste in our cells. Our toothbrushes were kept locked up in a separate location ... and were given only limited use of them. We were prohibited on pain of punishment from wearing underwear, indeed all our underwear were forcible removed ... We had no access to radio or TV or any form of recreation;
- (b) For the first six weeks or thereabout ... we were kept locked up in the cells all day except for a period of approximately 15 minutes each day when we were let out one by one to do ablutions. We were allowed to slop our pails once a day. Therefore, for a 24 hour period, we had to suffer the ... unhygienic circumstance of having pails full of body waste in our cells. In those circumstances meals were served to us in our cells ...;
- (c) From February 1987 or thereabout, we were allowed out of cells in groups of three for sunlight. Such periods ... were supposed to be on a daily basis. In practice, however, those periods out of cells were intermittent, with the guards using any excuse ... not to allow us sunlight ... Whenever we were actually let out we remained out on average for periods of about 20 minutes;
- (d) ... a system of 'inspections' was instituted. The then commissioner of prisons, a member of the invasion forces, would arrive with an entourage ... On his arrival at the entrance ... an announcement 'Stand for Inspection!' would be made by the guard on duty ... we had to stand fully dressed including headgear, a cap, which was part of the uniform. As the commissioner ... passed by the cell, the guard would call out the name of the occupant ... the occupant had to respond 'Yes Sir'. The guard would then shout out ... 'Remove headdress!' To this order the occupant had to remove his cap... We were forced to comply on pain of punishment and violence. The inspection spectacle was humiliating and degrading when the commissioner would arrive on a weekend together with his family or other social visitors ... Frequently, such 'inspections' occurred twice, often three times and on a few occasions four times in one day;

- (e) ...we were constantly exposed to violence and threats of violence. Several of us were beaten and otherwise punished for no reason at all, or on the flimsiest of excuses. We were regularly insulted and taunted by the guards and told that we would be hanged;
- (f) ...the prison authorities adopted a policy of placing the most mentally ill prisoners including some ... found 'guilty but insane' of multiple murders in the very section of the prison where we were held. These prisoners would make noise day and night shouting at the top of their voices, banging the gates and bars... This was clearly calculated to add to the torment of our situation ... whenever we protested against the situation such as in court, the prison guards would ... inform the mentally insane inmates of our complaints with the clear intent of provoking them into further tormenting us;
- (g) ...we were handcuffed whenever we had to move out of the security wing ... For example, we were handcuffed when taken to receive 15 minute social or family visits. We had to receive these visits in handcuffs and behind two mesh wires ... also ... whenever we were taken to visit our lawyers ... we had to provide instructions to, and receive advice from ... while in handcuffs;
- (h) On November 4<sup>th</sup> 1988 Applicant Leon Cornwall was savagely beaten by a group of prison guards. Several of us joined in protest action against this brutality. The protest took the form of refusing to recognize the inspection spectacle ... As a result ... several of us were beaten and taken before the commissioner and in violation of the prison rules he 'tried us' ... and sentenced us to 14 days bread and water ... which was the maximum that could be given under the rules ... under Prison Rules any such trial was to be carried out by the superintendent of prison or one of his delegates. The commissioner should come into the picture only if there is an appeal;
- (i) The bread and water punishment involved:
1. being locked up all day without even the... sunlight period aforementioned;
  2. receiving a piece of dry bread twice per day... the only food allowed during the period of the punishment;
  3. the bed and mattress removed from the cell... each morning. As a result, we had to either remain standing or sit or lie on the cold floor. The bed was returned between 4.00 and 6.00 p.m.
  4. denial of monthly 15 minute visit from family and friends during the days of punishment;
- (j) ...each and every one of us experienced being put on bread and water punishment. Some of us were ... targeted and experienced over 100 days bread and water punishment in total ...the bread and water punishment was ... employed as a form of terror and torture ... prior to the death sentences being handed down on us, prisoners who were sentenced to death and who had appealed were treated as appellants. Since the commuting of the death sentences against us, the special regime that we were subjected to has been abolished...

## **The Hearing of the Appeals**

The hearing of the prisoners' appeals against conviction began in 1988 but was aborted following the death in December that year of Mr Justice J. O. F. Haynes, President of the Court of Appeal. A new bench of judges was appointed, and in March 1989 they re-started the process under Sir Frederick Smith.

The prisoners, represented by counsel, again argued that the Grenada Supreme Court with its High Court and its Court of Appeal were unconstitutional, and that the proper court before which the trial should have taken place and their appeals should be heard was the OECS Supreme Court. However, the judges stuck to the view that the Grenada Supreme Court, although unconstitutional, was a "court of necessity", and proceeded with the hearing of the appeals.

## **Judges Demand More Money before Delivering Judgement**

The hearing was concluded in September 1990, when the judges reserved judgement. In an affidavit sworn on 23 September 2002, seven of the prisoners stated:

We have been informed and verily believe that before the judgements of the Court of Appeal were delivered the government of Grenada, in answer to a parliamentary question, revealed that the justices of appeal were to receive \$650,000 US for issuing judgements... This \$650,000 US was in addition to sums they were entitled to under their original contracts.

This was confirmed in a report to the US State Department from the American Embassy in Grenada in May 1991:

(a) ...The Government has confirmed that the three appellate justices will be paid an additional US dollars 650,000 for delivering the appellate judgement. ...In response to a request from Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) opposition senator Derek Knight, on March 28 the Government provided a written reply which stated that the Government of Grenada has agreed to pay the justices an additional US dollars 650,000 above their original contracts for delivering judgement at the appellate level. (The US dollars 650,000 will [be] divided among the three justices).

1. At the final sitting of the appellate court on September 19, 1990, the President of the court, Sir Frederick Smith, promised an oral judgement in six to eight weeks and the full written judgement later. Subsequently, it was decided that the oral and written judgements should be delivered at the same time to preclude a possible procedural challenge. The continuing postponement of the decision led to public speculation that the justices were holding their decision until the Government came up with more money.

2. In response to newspaper comments on the delay ... the justices argued that the sheer magnitude of the appeal, not the amount of compensation, has delayed the delivery of the judgement. There are 44 grounds of appeal, 520 cases cited by the defence attorneys that had to be studied, as well as a trial transcript of 9000 pages.<sup>50</sup>

However, in May 1998 Sir Frederick confirmed to the *Grenadian Voice* that the judges had indeed been holding out for more money than had originally been agreed to for their services. He said that the government had agreed to pay the additional amount "but not all at one time". The newspaper reported:

Sir Frederick Smith said that there were 30 grounds of appeal and the three Judges agreed to divide them up and write the findings on ten each ... They each completed their allotted task and then circulated the respective scripts among themselves for vetting and final agreement. However, they were not prepared to turn them over until the final commitment had been fulfilled.<sup>51</sup>

On 12 July 1991, not having received all this extra money, Sir Frederick gave an oral judgement dismissing the appeals, which took him about twenty minutes to deliver. To this day the Grenada 17's lawyers have been unable to obtain a copy of the written judgement. By the time Sir Fredrick was interviewed in 1998 there had been another general election in Grenada, resulting in a change of government. After that interview the editor of the *Grenadian Voice* contacted the new government and reported further:

The current Attorney-General could tell the Voice nothing about plans to secure the Judgment and Minister for Legal Affairs Dr Raphael Fletcher said that his government had not given any consideration to the matter.<sup>52</sup>

The paper commented:

...it is difficult not to come to the conclusion that the whole thing ... constituted a flagrant abuse of the system of justice... It is a terrible travesty of justice when appellants are deprived of the results of one such review – even after eight years...

Our fully restored constitution, which was held in abeyance for nearly seven years because of the case, still provides for appeals to the Privy Council ... the appellants should not reasonably be deprived of the opportunity of allowing the Law Lords to deny them leave. But obviously, they could not even make the first step in this direction without having the written judgement in their hands. ...in the name of all that is right and fair they are entitled to have and examine the judgement.<sup>53</sup>

### **Death Sentences Commuted**

The imposition of the death sentences caused an international outcry and protests poured in from all over the world. As Sir Paul himself acknowledges (pp. 324 - 325):

Letters, telegrams and telephone messages from far and near seeking clemency for those sentenced to death began to reach me, and these increased with every passing day. Most of these petitions were from overseas, and three notable ones were from world renowned Mother Theresa of Calcutta who had previously visited Grenada, and from two illustrious sons of Grenada, namely Sir Sydney Gun-Munro, former Governor General of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the Rt. Rev. Cuthbert Woodroffe, former

Archbishop of the West Indies. ...my staff was very good in screening telephone callers who wanted to speak to me about the upshot of the trial or who wanted to put in a plea for clemency...

On Thursday July 25, Hon. Joan Purcell, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy, advised me that the death sentences should be carried out... The following day I signed the death warrants... The plan was to hang the fourteen in three or four batches the following week...

Then there was a dramatic turn of events ... I was relaxing at my private home in St. Pauls on Saturday, July 27, when I observed a car coming through the gate ... A gentleman got out and ... I soon recognized him to be Dr. Francis Alexis, the Attorney General.

According to Alexis, the Prime Minister could not see himself facing up to the execution of so many people ... and ... he would like to see a stay of execution... Joan Purcell was sitting in the car... No sooner had Dr. Alexis and Mrs Purcell left..., I received a call from the Prime Minister who advised me to effect a stay of execution...

I ... had the Commissioner of Prisons report to me with the signed warrants... He returned the warrants to me, and I told him that he should not take any further action on the matter of hanging until he received fresh directions.

When Sir Paul attended a church service at Grand Anse on the following day, he was annoyed (p. 326) that the priest took the opportunity to express his disapproval of capital punishment. He says he complained about this to Bishop Charles. Four days later Sir Paul "*received Joan Purcell in her capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Prerogative of Mercy*", who advised him "*to commute the death sentence to life imprisonment*". He adds that: "*On this occasion I did not act as promptly as I did when she first advised me to pursue the sentence of death ... I allowed five days to elapse before I signed the new warrants*" because "*I wanted to make sure that I would not have to recall the new warrants*". He does not express his own opinion concerning the reprieve.

Sir Paul says (pp. 327 - 328) that the "*Cabinet had discussed the question of a pardon for the fourteen convicted on three occasions*" and that "*the third time the Prime Minister took the matter to Cabinet there was an almost complete turn around*". He adds, with more than a hint of annoyance:

I was very embarrassed to have to recall documents on which I had painfully affixed my signature ... But when the Prime Minister went on national radio and gave the impression that he was granting a pardon I thought it was time to start packing my bags as there was nothing more I could usefully do to protect the integrity of my office. Given the number of enquiries my office received after the ... broadcast it was clear to me that the perception among listeners was that the Prime Minister was the one responsible for granting pardon to prisoners.

The Constitution of Grenada provides (section 72) that the Governor General may, on the Queen's behalf, exercise the Prerogative of Mercy (commute death

judge stationed in Antigua. The soldiers then counter appealed against that part of Mr Justice Alleyne's decision that they were not entitled to damages for false imprisonment.

By this time Justice Byron, now Sir Dennis Byron, who had presided over the Grenada High Court when it convicted the Grenada 17 in 1986, had become Chief Justice of the OECS Supreme Court. He was now in a position to choose the judges who would hear the appeals. The Appeal Court upheld the government's appeal and dismissed the soldiers' counter appeal. Two of the three judges then refused the soldiers leave to appeal to the Privy Council. However, the Privy Council has power to allow an appeal and an application to do so is pending.

### **Motion Filed on Behalf of Prisoners Sentenced to Death**

A separate motion was filed on 23 September 2002 in the OECS High Court on behalf of 13 of the 14 prisoners<sup>54</sup> whose death sentences had been commuted to imprisonment for life. It sought a declaration that their convictions and sentences and their continued imprisonment are illegal.

In March 2004 Mr Justice Kenneth Benjamin, ruled that:

- (1) the sentences of death imposed upon the applicants at their trial before Mr. Justice Byron in the Grenada High Court were unconstitutional and illegal;
- (a) the substitution by the Governor General of terms of imprisonment for the remainder of the applicants' natural lives was unconstitutional and illegal, as the Governor General had, by imposing sentences, usurped the sentencing function of the Court;
- (b) the failure to provide the applicants with the written judgement of the judges of the Grenada Court of Appeal in upholding the decision of the Grenada High Court and the sentences imposed by Mr. Justice Byron was illegal.

Mr Justice Benjamin then ordered that:

- (a) The sentences of death imposed by Mr Justice Byron in December 1986 and the sentences of imprisonment for the remainder of the applicants' natural lives substituted by the Governor General be quashed;
- (b) The Applicants be remanded in custody and brought before a judge of the Eastern Caribbean High Court within 42 days to be sentenced under the convictions dated December 4, 1986 and pending sentence the applicants be transferred from the part of the Richmond Hill Prison reserved for persons sentenced to imprisonment to the area reserved for prisoners in custody;
- (c) The applicants be paid monetary compensation, to be assessed by a judge in chambers and paid to the applicants by the respondent, in respect of the failure to provide them with a copy of the written judgement of the judges of the Grenada Court of Appeal, giving their reasons for dismissing the appeals.

- (d) The respondents to pay the costs of the applicants on the motion in the sum of \$15,000.

The Grenada government appealed against this judgement and the prisoners counter-appealed. The argument on the counter-appeal was that, having found the original and substituted sentences to be illegal, the judge should have ordered their immediate release.

Normally, these appeals would have been heard at the next regular session of the Court of Appeal in July 2004 before three of the regular judges of the Court of Appeal. However Sir Dennis Byron, just before leaving his post as Chief Justice of the OECS, decided to start the hearing earlier, on 28 June. This enabled him to appoint special Judges to hear the appeals.

One of Byron's special appointees was Mr Justice Redhead, who was brought out of retirement to act as President of the Court. The prisoners argued that Judge Redhead should "recuse" (disqualify) himself because, as Bernard Coard stated on 11 August 2004:

He has been (and still is) engaged in a bitter family feud with one of my colleagues and co-applicants in the case before the said Appeal Court (having once been married to and divorced from the first cousin of this colleague of mine!). Sir Dennis knew all this as Byron and Redhead have been close friends and colleagues on the same bench over many years.

Another special judge appointed by Byron was Mr Justice Archibald, one of the three judges who had dismissed the soldiers' appeal. In a published paper entitled *The Eastern Caribbean Judiciary and the Case of the Grenada 17*, Bernard Coard pointed out that these judges had asserted that the soldiers Mitchell, Richardson and Joseph had been "*part of a regime which passed laws suspending the [OECS] Courts and abolishing the Privy Council*". In fact, at the time that the temporary Grenada courts system was set up, Mitchell was a 15 year old schoolboy, Richardson was a political detainee of the PRG and Joseph was working as an upholsterer in Beaulieu.

Counsel for the prisoners demanded that Mr Justice Redhead recuse himself and suggested that Mr. Justice Archibald might do likewise. No doubt to save himself embarrassment, Redhead did recuse himself, but Archibald did not. Mr. Justice Adrian Saunders, Sir Dennis Byron's successor, also recused himself on the grounds that in the late 1970s and early 1980s both Maurice Bishop and Bernard Coard had been his friends.

The effect of these recusals was that the hearing of the appeals could not proceed on 28 June and the matter had to be put back. The appeals will be heard by regular judges of the Court of Appeal.

### **How Will Sir Paul Scoon Be Remembered?**

Sir Paul is a handsome man and his readers are not allowed to forget this. His book contains 26 photographs of him performing various functions and 7 of

himself or of him and his wife. His complaints about his treatment by the Revolutionary Government are revealing. To uphold the dignity of his office, he considered it his due to be maintained in a state of splendour with special privileges. He writes (pp. 68 - 69):

While on a personal level the revolutionary Government extended the usual courtesies to me, ... for them the maintenance of Governor General's House was not a priority. The Governor General's residence must be seen to be the symbol of respectability, stability, ...of the highest order... The interior of the residence as well as the grounds should be a national show-piece. The Revolutionary Government evidently thought otherwise, since any request for improvement or refurbishment was met with polite rejection "due to lack of funds".

Personal appeals to the Prime Minister fared no better. The gardeners had their working days reduced from ten to five per fortnight ... about half their number resigned and looked for employment elsewhere... Further economic measures imposed upon my Household included reduction in the number of security guards, the withdrawal of the maintenance man and a reduction in the number of domestic staff with no temporary replacement for staff on vacation.

When the private bath house at Grand Anse beach, provided for him by the previous regime, was "severely damaged", he was annoyed that his "requests for its restoration ... proved futile", and adds: "To my astonishment I learnt that when the matter went before Cabinet, a senior member questioned why the Governor General should have a bathhouse". (p. 338)

Surprised that his request for the "upgrading" of the interior of his residence was not complied with, he records (p. 337) his displeasure:

When we put a request to the Ministry of Finance for funds to purchase two chandeliers, the request was turned down promptly. This was during the first year of the Peoples Revolutionary Government. The thinking was that the chandelier was a piece of bourgeois apparatus.

Initially appointed Governor General in 1973 under Sir Eric Gairy, Sir Paul continued to serve in that capacity under the People's Revolutionary Government from 1979 to 1983 and the short-lived Revolutionary Military Council. He then served as a virtual colonial governor, while retaining his title as Governor General, during the US occupation from October 1983 to December 1984. Thereafter, from December 1984 until his retirement in 1992, he continued to serve as Governor General.

In view of the fact that Sir Paul was able to remain in office while persons so different from one another were in control of Grenada, the title of his book, *Survival For Service*, is appropriate. But while, superficially, there might appear to be some similarity between Sir Paul and that famous character in English literature the Vicar of Bray, who retained his appointment under successive reigning



monarchs Charles II, James II, William and Mary, Anne and George I, there was this important distinction. Whilst the Vicar's decision to remain at his post was entirely voluntary, the constitution required Sir Paul to continue to perform his functions whatever the political complexion of successive heads of government might be.



### **Postscript**

On 14 February 2005 the OECS Court of Appeal (which, together with the High Court, forms the Supreme Court of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States), ruled on the appeals from the judgement of Mr Justice Benjamin in the High Court. It upheld the Grenada Government's appeal and dismissed the Grenada prisoners' counter appeal. The judges view was that the Grenada 17 had been convicted by the Grenada High Court in 1986, and had lost their appeal against conviction at the Grenada Court of Appeal in 1991. As these courts that together comprised the now defunct Grenada Supreme Court, the matter cannot now be reviewed.

This curious and controversial decision means that the 16 members of the Grenada 17 who are still in prison will remain there and Phyllis Coard will continue to be subject to recall to prison. This will continue to be the case unless their release is ordered as a result of an appeal to the Privy Council. It is however possible that the Grenada Government, anticipating potential defeat in the Privy Council, could simply decide to release them in the meantime.

As mentioned above, the capacity of the Grenada Court to try the Grenada 17 had been successfully challenged before Mr Justice Benjamin in the OECS High Court on the ground that the former Grenada Supreme Court was unconstitutional, and indeed at the time of their original trial the GSC had been declared to be an unconstitutional court by its own Court of Appeal. The Grenada Court of Appeal had however then ruled that the unconstitutional Grenada High Court could proceed with the trial as a "court of necessity", as it then proceeded to do.

Subsequently this unconstitutional Grenada Court was abolished and at the same time the OECS Supreme Court was restored as Grenada's Supreme Court. This was achieved by the Constitutional Judicature (Restoration) Act (Act No. 19 of 1991 – the so-called "Restoration Act"). However, this Act contained a section designed to prevent the Grenada 17 from subsequently challenging in the OECS Supreme Court the validity of their convictions and, if necessary, appealing therefrom to the Privy Council. The section read as follows:

7 (1) All matters and proceedings commenced and pending in the Former High Court, including matters ordered by the Former Court of Appeal [the abolished Grenada Courts] to be reheard, retried or determined howsoever by the Former High Court, shall be deemed to have been commenced and may be continued in the High Court and for such purpose only, nothing contained in this Act shall invalidate any proceedings done in the Former High Court prior to the appointed day [the day on which the Act came into force].

(2) All matters and proceedings pending in and not determined by the Former Court of Appeal shall be determined and concluded as if pending in the Court of Appeal...

(4) Notwithstanding anything contained in this Act or any other law, no appeal whatsoever at all shall lie to Her Majesty in Council from any decision whether final, interlocutory or otherwise or from anything or matter arising out of any such decision of the Former Court of Appeal.

One of the questions that may now arise is whether this clause in the Restoration Act is in violation of the Grenada Constitution.

In his judgement on the motion which the government had appealed against, Mr Justice Benjamin found that, when commuting the death sentences imposed on 14 of the Grenada 17, the Governor General had usurped the sentencing function of the High Court, and ordered that they be sent to the High

Court to be re-sentenced. When commuting the death sentences the Governor General had ordered that the 14 prisoners concerned be imprisoned “*for the remainder of their natural lives*”. Another question that the judges had to decide was whether the effect of the use of these words was to impose a different sentence to the sentence of “*life imprisonment*” that he had been advised by the Mercy Committee to impose. On the first point the judges decided that the Governor General had not exceeded his permitted functions in imposing an alternative sentence of imprisonment. On the second point Mr Justice Gordon said:

I am of the view that the two sentences, though differently expressed, perhaps for emotional reasons, amount to the same in law.

Mr. Justice Alleyne appears to have shared this view as he said, in the course of his judgement:

That the sentence of imprisonment for life, which clearly in principle cannot be distinguished from imprisonment for the remainder of natural life, is not an unlawful sentence in principle, is affirmed by a number of decisions...

It would seem to follow, from this finding that there is no difference between “*life imprisonment*” and “*imprisonment for the remainder of natural life*”, that whichever formulation was used, under Rule 3(b) of the rules made under the Prisons Act (Cap. 254 of the Revised Laws of Grenada 1991), to use Mr. Justice Alleyne’s words:

The Board [of Review] is under a duty to review the sentences of all prisoners serving a life sentence after 12 months of the sentence, again after four years from the date of the sentence, and thereafter after at four year intervals.

Rule 4 of the Prison Rules provides:

The Superintendent shall bring to the notice of the Board all long term convicts ... at the end of the fourth year of imprisonment and every fourth year thereafter, describing the prisoner’s mental and bodily conditions with particular reference to the effect of imprisonment upon his health, his demeanour and his attitude towards the offence and towards crime generally and upon his conduct and industry and on any other points which might be of assistance to the Board in considering his case.

As is well known, the conduct of the prisoners has been morally and otherwise exemplary and the effect that they have had on other prisoners, educationally and in other respects, has been very beneficial. This clearly warrants a recommendation that they should be released. Two of the prisoners, John Anthony (“Chalky”) Ventour and Colville (“Kamau”) McBarnette are seriously ill and in need of medical treatment unavailable in the Richmond Hill Prison. So far as I am aware, the requirements of these regulations have not been complied with. The Grenada 17 now intend to take their case to the Privy Council. This will involve considerable expense. A fund has therefore been opened to which all persons wishing to see justice done are requested to subscribe.

## Note from the author

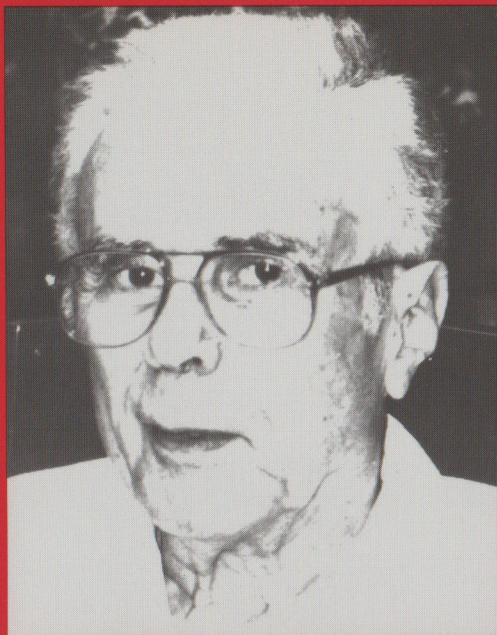
Contributions for the Grenada 17 Legal Expenses Fund should be made payable to “Committee for Human Rights in Grenada”, and sent to Phillip Kennedy, Treasurer, 4 Provost Road, New Southgate, London N11 1EN. Please indicate that they are specifically intended for the Grenada 17 Legal Expenses Fund.

## Notes

1. Ecumenical Program for Interamerican Communication and Action (EPICA), Washington DC
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4. *Caribbean Contact*, April, 1979
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15. Communication from Alister Hughes to Richard Hart, 18 April 2004, quoting *Grenada Newsletter* (ed. Alister Hughes) 24 March 1979.
16. *Grenada Newsletter*, 31 March 1979.
17. Specimen Detention Order on web-site: [www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com](http://www.thegrenadarevolutiononline.com). The explanation of the difference between the date on which this detainee was “reasonably suspected” and the date of the Detention Order may be that he was under investigation, possibly in custody, for a month. Mitchell was released on 16 November 1982.
18. *Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution*, EPICA, Washington, 1982 (hereafter referred to as *EPICA Report*), p. 110
19. Alister Hughes to Richard Hart, e-mail dated 6 April 2004. His “rasters” refers to detained Rastafarians.

20. The "Grenada Documents" referred to are documents taken from Grenada by the American invaders, copies of a selection of which were released through American Embassies.
21. The Claims Commission was set up by the Grenada Government to consider claims by persons who claimed to have been deprived of property during the revolution.
22. The French had a "Fort Royale". This was probably the fort the British called "Fort George" which the PRG re-named "Fort Rupert" in honour of Maurice Bishop's assassinated father.
23. Shirley R. Braithwaite, *Cacademo Grant: Hero of the People's Revolution*, St. Georges, CPE, 1983.
24. *EPICA Report*, p. 84
25. Conferences of Intellectual Workers were held in November 1982 and June 1983. The American Association of Jurists Conference was held in August 1983.
26. These sisters were Mrs Zazeeda Fitzpatrick (mentioned above) and Shahiba Strong, Head of Protocol in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who, incidentally, was then Maurice Bishop's girlfriend.
27. Working Peoples Alliance of Guyana. Mr Roopnarine Senior was living in Grenada.
28. This is a reference to the so-called "cultural revolution" in which Mao Tse-tung, in 1966, encouraged the youth to form "red guards" and, with army support in some areas, humiliate and remove from their positions persons in authority, enabling him to regain personal control.
29. Richard Hart, *The Grenada Trial: A Travesty Of Justice*, Kingston, Foundation for Phyllis Coard, 1996, p. 15
30. As Sir Paul records (p. 130), Margaret Thatcher "in a personal telephone call to President Reagan ... made a last minute ... effort to persuade him to cancel the operation". Other Commonwealth governments, including Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana, also opposed the invasion.
31. Lillyfield was the residence of Arnold and Claire Bertram in St. Ann, Jamaica. The meeting was in connection with the formation of the New Beginning Movement. According to my diary entry: "*The consensus of the meeting was that the New Beginning Movement should be a sort of think-tank, not a new political party. But several people thought that eventually the formation of a new political party must take place*". Nothing came of the last mentioned idea.
32. James Ferguson, *Grenada: Revolution In Reverse*, London, Latin American Bureau, 1990, p. ix
33. *New York Times*, 28 October 1983
34. K. P. Schoenhals and R. A. Melanson, *Revolution And Intervention in Grenada*, p. 162
35. This man was Mark Krischik, a propagandist with the US Army Psychological Warfare Battalion.
36. The person referred to was probably the late Edwin Heyliger, my assistant in the Attorney General's chambers, in charge of prosecutions. That he was originally from Guyana probably explains his interest in my correspondence with the Jagans. Whether he was acting on instructions from Sir Paul Scoon or on his own initiative, intent on ingratiating himself with the Americans, may never be known.
37. *Inter alia*, Article 5 of the American Convention on Human Rights; Articles I, XXV, and XXVI of the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man; Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

38. *Grenada 17: The Last of the Cold War Prisoners?*, Amnesty International, London, 23 October 2003 (hereafter referred to as *Amnesty Report*), p. 7.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
40. R. Hart, *op. cit.*, pp. 16 - 17.
41. This information is contained in *The Grenada 17 Appeal: Latest Documents*, published by Phyllis Coard Support Group, Committee for Human Rights in Grenada, London, n.d., citing Vol. 1 Part 3, pp. 778 - 782, 661 - 665 and 681 of the transcript of the Trial of the Grenada 17.
42. R. Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 20
44. *Amnesty Report*, pp. 11-12
45. *Ibid.*, pp. 13 - 14
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 14 - 18.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
48. R. Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 21.
49. Publication of collection of documents released to Dr. Richard Gibson published by the Committee to Free the Grenada 17, n.d. quoting Item No. 00304754 - Confidential Grenada 00541 Subject: Maurice Bishop Murder Trial; Appeal Hearings - AMEMBASSY GRENADA to RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7965 131406Z Mar 87
50. Item No. 00352445 - from Amembassy Grenada to RUEHC/SECSTATE, 021637Z May 91
51. *Grenadian Voice*, 16 May 1998
52. *Cutlass* (organ of Caribbean Labour Solidarity,), 3rd Quarter, 1998.
53. *Ibid.*
54. Phyllis Coard, the fourteenth person sentenced, was no longer in prison. She is suffering from cancer and is in Jamaica for treatment not available in Grenada, having been temporarily released on humanitarian grounds.



### **The Author**

Richard Hart practised as a solicitor in his native Jamaica from 1941 to 1963. He served on the Executive of the Peoples National Party of which he was a foundation member in 1938 and was active in the trade union movement. After editing a newspaper in Guyana in 1964 he came to England in 1965 and worked as a solicitor to a Local Authority. In 1982 he went to Grenada as Legal Adviser to the Revolutionary Government, becoming its civil service Attorney General in 1983. Following the American invasion he returned to England. He is the author of several books on Caribbean history.

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