

Tell that to the marines

Claudia Wright reports on the temporary gains in popularity military adventures bring to presidents

Washington
THE LARGE NUMBER of Americans who appear to be supporting President Reagan's invasion of Grenada should not lead the White House to conclude that the 'big lie' technique, and the media blackout that accompanied it, have been effective. On the contrary, for as long as it lasted, the censorship left the US media with no alternative but to play honest – thus bringing about the fastest ever collapse of a White House cover story.

Less than 40 minutes after the President's first public statement on the invasion, television reports had demonstrated that Americans in Grenada were in no danger until the invasion itself; that Grenada had been returning to normal and the airport open to flights the day before the troop landings; that the Caribbean states' request for US military help, even if it hadn't been manufactured by Washington, was illegal. The replacement lies – that the Soviets and Cubans were building a vast military establishment to take over the island and its neighbours; that there had been a secret request for intervention from the Grenadian governor-general; that there had been threats to take American hostages – took longer for the media to expose. But, within hours of Mr Reagan's second speech, on 27 October, there was no truth left in the claims he had made to justify the military operation.

For more than half the country, however, the polls suggest that this didn't matter – and, at the White House, this domestic poll result was all that counted. But if this spasm convinces the Administration that it now enjoys a popular mandate for military retaliation in Lebanon, or open warfare against Nicaragua, then it will be misreading the lessons of every major American military adventure in the last 25 years.

Comparing the Grenada invasion to other US interventions since 1958, the Reagan action turns out to be one of the least popular (see table). Only President Nixon's invasion of Eastern Cambodia in April 1970

attracted less approval; while President Johnson's invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965 was not only far more popular, but, militarily speaking, better executed. The Grenadian invasion has cost at least 20 American soldiers' lives in the first week, several more than were lost in the much longer Dominican operation.

Mr Reagan has had, however, an extraordinary stroke of short-run luck. The disaster at Beirut has made the misjudgement in Grenada look like a success. For at least two of his advisors, there will be a strong temptation to overestimate their freedom of action in the coming weeks. They are Colonel Robert McFarlane, the National Security Advisor, and Donald Rumsfeld, a former Defence Secretary who is likely to become the President's new Middle East negotiator.

A major figure in the Grenada operation, McFarlane played a more modest role in the military intervention of the Ford presidency – the Marine assault to rescue the crewmen of the American merchant vessel *SS Mayaguez* in May 1975. About his experience in that affair, McFarlane wrote that it had resulted in a lift of 12 percentage points in President Ford's popularity. He omitted to mention that the gain was brief – within six months of the incident, the President had lost most of it, and, within 18 months, the presidency itself.

The opinion polls show that the improvement in public approval of Mr Reagan's conduct of foreign policy is unlikely to be more stable than his predecessors' in similar crises. The 11-point jump in Reagan's popularity is less than Ford's gain after *Mayaguez* and equal to President Kennedy's support after the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion in Cuba. They are notably smaller than the 13 to 17-point leaps for Kennedy after he resolved the 1962 Cuban missile crisis without military action; for President Johnson when he stopped the bombing of North Vietnam in 1968; and for President Nixon after he concluded the Vietnam peace agreement in 1973. Nevertheless, it is likely that McFarlane has persuaded Reagan that his

instinct for confrontation and revenge are electoral assets. He certainly favours military retaliation for the bombing in Beirut.

Donald Rumsfeld can be just as persuasive. Although he too played only a minor part in the *Mayaguez* affair – he was the White House Chief of Staff – Rumsfeld cleverly manipulated public approval of Ford's action to make the President look independent of the influence of his Secretary of State, Henry Kissinger. He also used the *Mayaguez* incident to promote his own ambitions at Kissinger's expense. Now he wants the Middle East job as a stepping stone to succeed George Shultz as Secretary of State in 1985, and to position himself for the Republican presidential race in 1988.

American foreign policy is thus being driven by schemers whose careers have been advanced by military adventurism. They aren't likely to be held back by the inevitable reversal in public approval, because it moves too slowly. Their game is the short-run one of collecting their winnings – getting the President re-elected and themselves promoted – before the odds catch up with them. □

WEST GERMANY

Safety in numbers

Tony Catterall on a new study of European national security

Cologne

THE WEST GERMAN peace movement, having brought unprecedented numbers on to the streets last month to oppose the planned stationing of cruise and Pershing II missiles, is at present riding high. With few exceptions, however, there is little thought for what is to come next; what tactics to adopt once the (almost) inevitable happens and the missiles begin to be deployed.

Such a move as that announced in Ottawa by the Nato Nuclear Planning Group – to remove 1,400 nuclear warheads from Europe – is dismissed by the radicals, who want a nuclear-free Europe now, as a public-relations exercise or an irrelevancy. But, for one group, which tries to work within the bounds of reality, it is a step in the right direction. At the same time as the Nato NPG decision was announced, the Peace Research Institute at Tübingen University in West Germany coincidentally published its latest study on security in Europe. Simply stated, it concludes that the continent would be a safer place without short- or medium-range nuclear weapons of any kind.

For Tübingen's Professor Volker Rittberger, the coincidence shows that his institute is working along the right lines. He told the *New Statesman*: "The Nato decision indicates that the utility function of such warheads is no longer recognised for war-

The popularity of presidential interventions (in per cent)

	Eisenhower <i>Beirut</i>	Kennedy <i>Bay of Pigs</i>	Johnson <i>Tonkin Gulf</i>	Johnson <i>Dominican Republic</i>	Nixon <i>Cambodia</i>	Carter <i>Iran</i>	Reagan <i>Grenada</i>
	1958	1961	1964	1965	1970	1980	1983
APPROVE	59	61	71	76	56	71	57
DISAPPROVE	27	15	16	17	32	18	35
UNDECIDED	12	24	13	7	12	11	8

Controlling the Caribbean

Fred Halliday describes why many Caribbean governments accept the policing role of the US

THE US INTERVENTION in Grenada bears many of the hallmarks of American counter-revolutionary intervention since 1945. In the first place, it has been sold to the US public and to the world by lies. The deployment of US combat troops in Vietnam in 1965 was, as we now know, preceded by several faked incidents, allegedly involving North Vietnamese naval forces in the Gulf of Tonkin and off the coast of South Vietnam. The invasion of Grenada was justified by Reagan in his initial statement by a set of excuses none of which has turned out to be true: that US citizens were in danger of being held hostage; that Cuban forces were about to take over the island; that the weapons on Grenada were to be shipped to 'terrorists' elsewhere.

Prime among Reagan's excuses, however, is the claim that the US forces were invited into Grenada. The host in place, Sir Paul Scoon, has emerged from days of detention aboard a US aircraft carrier to state that, yes, he did invite the troops in. His letter supposedly doing so was dated October 24 – the Monday before the Tuesday morning invasion. This is nonsense, for two reasons. First, the invasion decision had been taken by Reagan the day before and, secondly, Scoon saw British government representatives on that Monday and relayed no such information to them.

The other excuse is the invitation of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States – five of which, together with Jamaica, joined the US in occupying Grenada. Multilateral cosmetics are another stock-in-trade of US interventions. In Korea, the US forces were accompanied by contingents from 15 other states, including Turkey, Ethiopia, South Africa, Thailand and many western European countries. In Vietnam, Korean, Filipino and Thai forces were brought in to back up US forces.

The reasons for Washington wanting this contingent are evident enough: it provides an illusion of multilateral support and a supposed legitimisation. (The Russians used a similar argument when they concocted a Warsaw Pact coalition to invade Czechoslovakia in 1968.) In fact, the OECS constitution, to which these Uncle Tom régimes refer, provides no justification for such an invasion of a member state.

If Washington's needs are evident, there still remains the question of why the OECS states themselves were so eager to offer themselves to Reagan's crusade. None of them could seriously argue that Grenada, whether under Bishop or Hudson Austin, was a direct threat. The real threat came

Taking over
Point Salines



from another quarter, and explains why these countries fell into line so quickly. That quarter was the US.

The Caribbean has been under effective US domination since the end of the last century. The seizure of Cuba and Puerto Rico in 1898, the invasions of Haiti and the Dominican Republic which followed, the

building of the Panama Canal all placed this region under US domination long before Britain began, in 1962, to grant independence to the island colonies.

During World War II, the military position of the US was confirmed by the granting of base rights on the British colonies of the Bahamas, Antigua and Trinidad, as well as in Bermuda, to supplement US forces already deployed in Puerto Rico and at the Guantanamo naval base in Cuba itself. The postwar boom, founded on tourism, oil refining and the narcotics trade, has integrated these islands into the US economy. Cricket and Anglicanism may prevail at the cultural level, but the Eastern Caribbean dollar is tied to its US homonym, and it is US tourists to whom the citizens of the Barbados suburbs of Hastings and Worthing look for their prosperity.

The sharper strategic perception occasioned by the new cold war has, however, been accompanied by recession. Tourism and export earnings have fallen. Social unrest has grown. Of the five states that formed the Caribbean contingent on Grenada, four have in recent years faced internal crisis. Dominica has seen several coup attempts against the government of Mrs Eugenia Charles, and the rounding up, in unpublicised campaigns, of large numbers of suspected opponents. St Vincent saw an attempted Black Power insurrection soon after it became independent in 1979. Jamaica's Edward Seaga was elected to office in October 1980 after an electoral campaign that left several hundred people killed; a recent poll has shown that, if an election were held now, Seaga would be swept out of office by Michael Manley's National Party. St Lucia's prime minister John Compton was elected last year on the platform 'Christians Ever, Communists Never' and ousted a government that had sought to improve ties with Cuba. Barbados, long considered the most tranquil of the Caribbean islands, and the jumping-off point for this US invasion corps, has in the past year seen a marked increase in unemployment.

The US has been intent on showing its concern for these islands in the current international confrontation, and in putting pressure upon them. CIA support for the electoral victories of the current governments in Jamaica, Dominica and St Lucia has been reported. In October 1981, Reagan announced a Caribbean Basin Initiative that would provide economic aid to pro-Washington régimes in the area. With such a string of Ngo Dinh Diems lined up across the Caribbean, it is not surprising that Rea-

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Caribbean States & population

State	Population (1981)
Greater Antilles	
Cuba (Spanish-speaking)	9.9 million
Haiti (French-speaking)	5.5 million
Dominican Republic (Spanish-speaking)	5.5 million
Puerto Rico (Spanish-speaking)	3.2 million
French-speaking	
Martinique	340,000
Guadeloupe	325,000
Guyane	63,000
Dutch-speaking	
Dutch Antilles (Aruba, Curaçao, Bonaire etc)	250,000
Surinam	350,000
More developed	
English-speaking	
Bahamas	213,000
Barbados	250,000
Guyana	795,000
Jamaica	2.2 million
Trinidad & Tobago	1.1 million
Less developed	
English-speaking	
Antigua and Barbuda	76,000
Belize	148,000
Dominica	80,000
Grenada	111,000
Montserrat	12,000
St Kitts/Nevis	49,000
St Lucia	120,000
St Vincent	116,000
British Colonies	
Anguilla	6,600
British Virgin Islands	12,200
Cayman Islands	16,800
Turks & Caicos	7,500

Sources: World of Information, Latin America and the Caribbean 1983; Caribbean Development Bank, Annual Report 1982.

gan was able to win an 'invitation' to invade Grenada.

The logic of the US action has to be seen elsewhere, in the strategic situation facing Reagan at the end of three years in office. The US has not had a clear counter-revolutionary victory since the invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965. That action was rapid and successful; indeed, the emphasis on rapidity has recently been enshrined in the name of the US's new intervention corps: the 'Rapid Deployment Force'. The long list of defeats, among which Vietnam

still ranks as the greatest, has kindled, in the US military and political establishments, a bitter desire for revenge that Grenada has served to express. Reagan's first years in office had not given him such an opportunity. Despite attempts to taunt Gaddafi, the Libyan colonel has avoided direct confrontation. Harassment of such Soviet allies as Cambodia, Afghanistan, South Yemen and Ethiopia has produced little tangible honour. The greater interventionist actions of recent years — of South African into Angola and of Israel into Lebanon — have been carried out with US approval, but without its overt participation. Grenada's internal troubles gave Reagan his chance, and he took it.

The great question-mark is the one that now hangs over US intentions towards Central America. So far, the covert wars being

fought there have not defeated the guerrillas of El Salvador and Guatemala, or cowed Cuba and Nicaragua. Reagan has to double or quit. The most ominous result of the intervention in Grenada is, perhaps, the remark by one US administration official that 'After Grenada, anything goes'. But if the stiff and enduring resistance put up by the small Grenadian and Cuban forces last week is anything to go by, then it will require a force of many tens of thousands of US troops to subdue the Central American revolutions. If Reagan and his associates wish to unlearn the lessons of Vietnam, they may have to be taught them all over again. □

Fred Halliday's overview of recent Caribbean developments, Cold War in the Caribbean, is published in New Left Review 141, September-October 1983.

GRENADA: 2

The Reagan Doctrine

Michael Klare charts the steps — political and military — leading to the US invasion

Washington

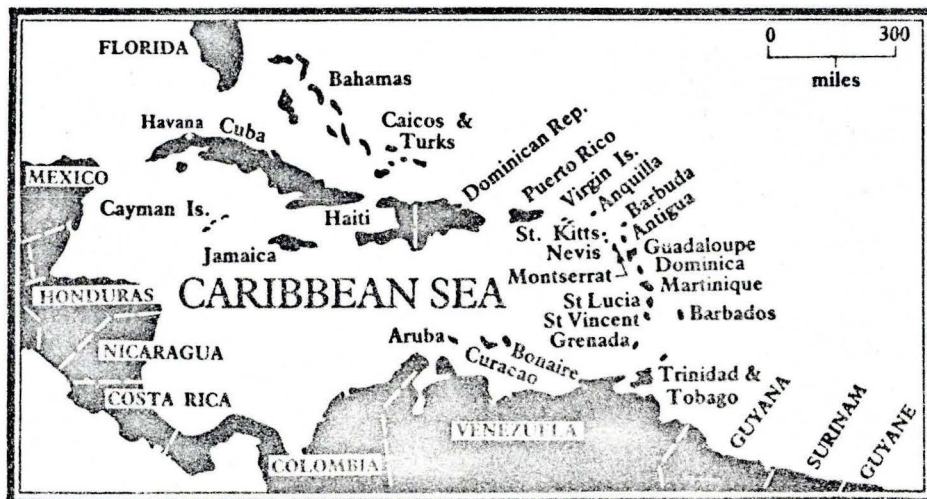
THE INVASION OF Grenada by the US was not a capricious move, but a calculated, logical extension of the Reagan Administration's defence policies. For years, Administration officials have suggested that the Cuba-Grenada alliance represented a severe threat to US security, and that extraordinary measures were justified to overcome that threat. Indeed, it is surprising that the Administration did not move *sooner* to carry out its strategic design.

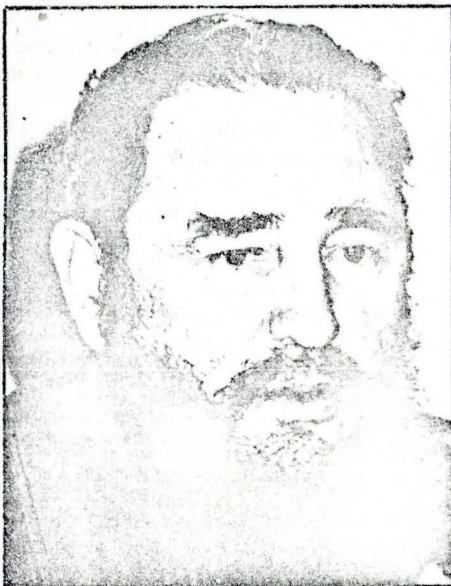
From the start, the Reagan Administration has enunciated a clear and consistent military doctrine. It holds that: (1) America's overseas economic interests are severely threatened by growing rebellion and subversion in the Third World — most of which the Administration attributes to Soviet-Cuban adventurism; (2) such

disorder had been encouraged by US disinclination to use military force in resisting such threats (i.e. the 'Vietnam Syndrome'); (3) it is now imperative that the US actively combat Soviet-inspired insurgency in order to restore the 'credibility' of American power and thereby discourage further threats to US interests. Taken together, these points can now be identified as the 'Grenada Syndrome'.

This doctrine was fully articulated in this Administration's first major statements on defense policy. In a May 1981 address to the American Newspaper Publishers' Association, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger noted: 'We and our allies have come to be critically dependent on places in the world which are subject to great instability.' These instabilities are a significant threat in their own right and, furthermore, 'present a temptation for various forms of Soviet intervention'. Because these threats will multiply without firm American resistance, protecting US security 'means developing urgently a better ability to respond to crises far from our shores, and to stay there as long as necessary'. Ultimately, it means that 'we must be able to defend ourselves in wars of any size and shape and in any region where we have vital interests'.

Weinberger carried this theme even further in an April 1982 speech before the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City, where he contended that the Soviets had been 'emboldened by America's post-Vietnam paralysis' to push 'its traditional policy of global expansionism to new dimensions'. Weinberger affirmed that we must not only resist Soviet incursions in the Third





Castro: denies he wants to take over the world

World but begin to roll them back. 'We must be prepared to halt and seek to reverse the geographic expansion of Soviet control and presence, particularly when it threatens a vital interest or further erodes the geostrategic position of the United States and its allies.'

This reference to the 'geostrategic position' of the United States reflects a presumption that the Soviets seek to cripple the West by gaining control over the world's sea lanes and associated maritime 'choke points'. Because the US and its allies are so dependent on imported raw materials, the argument goes, the USSR can gain a 'stranglehold' over the Western economies by 'interdicting' these key trade routes.

Hence, finally, the significance of Grenada. Not only did the Grenadian Revolution of 1979 represent (in Washington's view) a major expansion of Soviet-Cuban influence in the Third World and thus justify military counteraction, but it also represented a *strategic* threat to US interests, because of its pivotal location astride the sea lanes into the Caribbean.

MY FIRST EXPOSURE to the Administration's thinking on Grenada occurred in May 1982, when I interviewed the Commander-in-Chief of the US Caribbean Command, Admiral Robert P. McKenzie. Contending that past US administrations had severely neglected the Caribbean, McKenzie insisted that 'this is an area that is just absolutely vital to the United States of America'. Not only is it the conduit through which much of our imported petroleum and other materials pass on their way to US ports, but it also houses many of the key sea lanes (or SLOCs, for 'sea lines of communication' connecting the United States to its overseas allies. Furthermore, 'the Soviets know this', and have attempted to imperil Western security by developing a capability to interdict the SLOCs in this area. At the heart of the Soviet plan, in his view, was the establishment of military bases at the two ends of the Caribbean - at Cuba in the West and Grenada in the East. Grenada was especially important, he affirmed, because it 'is extremely strategically located in a region

where the sea lanes converge'.

This perception of the strategic situation in the Caribbean underlay the series of military exercises that McKenzie commanded over a two-year period. In the largest of these, 'Operation Ocean Venture 1982', some 45,000 US servicemen participated in manoeuvres in the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. The purpose of this exercise, he declared, was 'to send a signal to those people who are friends and those who would oppose us in this part of the world that we can project military force'.

At the climax of 'Ocean Venture', 2,000 Marines, aided by Army paratroopers, stormed ashore at 'Blue Beach' on Vieques, an island off the coast of Puerto Rico that is roughly the same size and shape as Grenada. Although no overt correlation was made to 'real world' conditions, it is hard to view the Vieques operation as anything but a practice run for the invasion of Grenada. According to US officials on the scene, the scenario for Ocean Venture called for US forces to seize an airstrip and garrison just inland from Blue Beach - an operation that closely resembled the US landing at Point Salines in Grenada. When asked the purpose of the exercise, my escort, a Colonel Gray of the 82nd Airborne Division, replied: 'So that if we ever have to do it - fight the real thing - we'll be prepared.' (The 82nd Airborne has played a key role in the Grenada operation.)

In the months that followed, it became increasingly apparent that McKenzie's perception of the strategic importance of Grenada was shared by key members of the Administration and, ultimately, by the President himself. In a major address to the National Association of Manufacturers last March, Reagan decried those US lawmakers who denigrated the importance of Grenada because its sole value is as a source of nutmeg. 'People who make these arguments haven't taken a good look at a map lately . . . it is not nutmeg that is at stake in the Caribbean . . . it is the United States national security.'

FOR THOSE familiar with foreign policy formulations, the reference to 'national security' should have produced a shudder of fear - for, by elevating the Grenada situation from a purely local irritation into a matter of US national security, the White House was establishing the political foundation for American intervention.

In case there was any doubt about his intentions, Reagan reiterated this point in his 'Star Wars' speech of 23 March this year. Although most media coverage of this speech focused on his call for the deployment of new weapons in space, Reagan actually devoted as much time to a discussion of the threat posed by Grenada. 'More than half of all American oil imports now pass through the Caribbean,' he said, and this leads us to wonder why the Cubans are building a 10,000-foot runway on the island. This facility 'is unrelated to any potential threat to this island country'.

Finally, in his speech to a Joint Session of Congress on 27 April, Reagan completed his

case against Grenada. Referring again to the Cuban-built airfield at Point Salines, he suggested that the Soviets would use this facility to block US reinforcements to Europe and the Middle East in the event of a major war. Grenada was thus a threat not only to the Caribbean, but to NATO and all other US commitments abroad. 'If we cannot defend ourselves [in this area],' he declared, 'we cannot expect to prevail elsewhere. Our credibility would collapse, our alliances would crumble, and the safety of our homeland would be put at jeopardy.'

Viewed from this perspective, the US invasion of Grenada is not an isolated event, but a possible harbinger of similar US moves elsewhere. Indeed, at this very moment, US forces are poised for possible intervention in the Strait of Hormuz, should Iran carry out its threat to block the Strait in retaliation for Iraqi missile attacks on its surviving oil installations. A very large US force is also to be deployed in Honduras as part of Operation 'Big Pine II', and it is not unlikely that CIA-supported commandos will use this occasion to precipitate a direct US clash with Sandinista forces in Nicaragua - thereby providing the pretext for full-scale US intervention. US military action is also possible in the event of a further deterioration of the political situation inside the Philippines - site of the most important US naval base in the Pacific - and in response to any further Libyan moves in North Africa.

Clearly, the Reagan Administration views the Grenada operation as a test both of military doctrine and of domestic political sentiment. If the US reaction to the invasion is circumscribed or muted, the Administration will be persuaded that the Vietnam Syndrome has finally been extinguished and that public opinion is primed for an interventionist policy - the Grenada Doctrine - on a global basis. If, however, the reaction is strongly negative, the Administration may be deterred from pursuing this policy. In the final analysis, the Grenada action is a sort of plebiscite on future US military policy. Its outcome will have profound significance for the entire world. □

Michael T. Klare is a Fellow of the Institute of Policy Studies in Washington DC and the author of several books including *Beyond the Vietnam Syndrome - US Interventionism in the 1980s*.

THIS ENGLAND

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□ Islington decided earlier this year to twin with Grenada. It is to send redundant dustcarts to help the island's struggling economy. - *Daily Telegraph* (R.A. England)

□ An application to open a West Indian restaurant in Lambeth received unexpected support from Tory councillor David Moore at a planning sub-committee on the grounds that it would be 'a major contribution to race relations'. How so? 'It will prove,' said Mr Moore, 'that West Indians do not eat fried dogs.' - *Guardian* (D. Herman)

GRENADA

Deserted Island

Peter Pringle on the hypocrisy of British policy

Grenada

IT BOGGLES the mind to learn, in this age of satellites and microwave communications, that the Foreign Office's outpost in Grenada does not even own a telex machine. But so it was, when Whitehall wanted to send word of the US invasion to our man in Grenada, John Kelly, that the coded message — a jumble of letters, figures, question and exclamation marks — came clattering over the telex of the office *above* him: an office run by the Organization of American States.

I mention this not to suggest any security breach — Mr Kelly was the only one with access to the relevant codebook — but as a symbol of the pathetic nature of the Foreign Office's (and therefore Mrs Thatcher's) concern about events in Grenada prior to the invasion. The really depressing aspect of this lack of concern is that it is as widespread in the Caribbean and Central America as revolutions and *coups d'état*.

In its desperation about Grenada, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) was forced to turn to the US. For the moment, the US is, as one diplomat put it, 'the big good wolf'. This definition might be a bit ambivalent for the Americans, who are so obsessed with being liked — especially in countries they have just invaded — that the CBS television company conducted a popularity poll in Grenada ten days after the Marines attacked. Not surprisingly, in the atmosphere of fear and confusion following the invasion, 91 per cent said that they were glad to see the Americans.

Grenadians also readily complained about the Cubans (they didn't speak our language and they fucked our goats) and communism (we didn't like having to attend all those classes on Marx and Lenin) and the thugs who murdered Bishop. For Bishop himself, however, there are few bad words. In part, this is the 'one-manism' of West Indian politics — 'Look man,' said Peter James, a 22-year-old unemployed clerk, 'if you are nice to a Grenadian, he will love you quick, quick, quick. If you yourself would like to be Prime Minister here, you could be if you are nice to us. Ronald Reagan has been nice to us, he could also be Prime Minister.'

But also, after Bishop's death, many Grenadians feared that General Austin, the ring-leader of the violent coup, would kill again. As Peter James put it, 'I believe we were going into a gutter without any way out. To many, Ronald Reagan offered the prospect of jobs and prosperity — even perhaps a visa

to America. But we also know that if the Americans invest \$20 million here, they will want \$100 million back. The money won't stay in Grenada.'

THERE IS SOME confusion here. How does one tally the support and mourning for Bishop with the fulsome welcome for Reagan? Invading armies, we know, are often met by flag-waving crowds, but the Grenadians weren't waving flags when the Marines came in. Rather, they were obviously stunned by the sheer force of the invasion: 5,000 men (one for every 20 Grenadians); the sky dotted permanently with noisy helicopters and even noisier fighter bombers; the tiny roads clogged with soldiers, jeeps and trucks; the infamous British and Cuban-built 9,000-foot runway at Point Salines cluttered with C-130 transports.

It is perhaps also helpful to see the Grenadians' enthusiasm in the light of what has been called their 'cultural ambidextrousness'. In days gone by, young Grenadians who aspired to enter the European-colonial kingdom often did so by discarding any loyalty to colour, creed or class. As Patrick Emmanuel, a sociologist of the University of the West Indies, observes, 'They could portray the culture of the elite or of the mass as the circumstances warranted.'

When Grenadians from the emergent middle classes succeeded, as the West Indian political scientist C. L. R. James put it, in 'crawling or worming their way into recognition by government or big business', they quickly found how impotent they were. But that was before Independence and Grenada's attempt at a socialist revolution — something of which has remained. Peter James learned to be cynical about the American profit motive and the aims of the invasion during the Bishop years.

Outside the capital St George's other, less thoughtful, opinions are heard. The Charles family, for example, work the fish-filled waters off the south-western tip of the island. 'God bless America', they cried in unison. 'All of them (members of the Bishop and Austin government) was wicked'. Never mind that, for the last four years, Washington has done its damndest to make sure that a socialist Grenada got no foreign aid at all; or that, when elections are held next year, it may not approve of the new government. It might not be the 'suitable' administration that Major Douglas Frey, of the

82nd Airborne, told journalists was what the American troops had come to install.

Actually, the first civilian official to arrive on Grenada to help put the new government together was not American, but British. As I left Grenada a strange figure appeared on the tarmac. He was wearing a pale suit over a blue pinstriped shirt and sporting, in his breast pocket, an overflowing grey silk handkerchief the same colour as his shoes. He introduced himself as Antony Redfern Rushford, recently arrived from London and now appointed legal adviser to the Governor-General of Grenada, Sir Paul Scoon.

'The situation is this', he began, by way of explaining his presence. 'At the top is the Queen — that is, the Queen in her capacity as Queen of Grenada. Below her is Sir Paul Scoon and then,' and he drew a big open box in mid air and punched his fist through it, 'there is a big gaping hole. That is where I come in and, if you want any help after hours, I'm not averse to a tippie.' God help Grenada, I thought, as I walked off the tarmac into the boiling hot belly of the C-130. The British are back. □

FAR EAST

Travels with Ronnie

Jon Halliday reviews the aims of Reagan's tour

AS RONALD REAGAN embarks on his East Asia tour this week, he may count himself lucky to have anyone at all to visit. Originally designed as a grand swing round the local allies, the trip had to be cut in half after Philippines opposition leader Aquino was rather too blatantly murdered on the Manila tarmac where Reagan himself would have trod. As it is, both of Reagan's hosts, Chon Doo Hwan in South Korea and Yasuhiro Nakasone in Japan, are in precarious positions. Chon is only alive at all because of an apparent fluke in missing last month's bomb in Rangoon. And Nakasone has a premature election in the offing because of his inability to break his links to his mentor, convicted criminal ex-premier Tanaka.

The Reagan Administration, with its strong California component, has pushed a 'Pacific first' approach much more powerfully than is often recognised in Europe. Not only has trans-Pacific trade overtaken trans-Atlantic trade, but the North-West Pacific area has become a key zone for the US-led military build-up against the USSR. Unlike in Europe, however, there is as yet no NATO-like organisation. Rather, the US has *exclusive* and strong bilateral military ties to the individual countries.

In Japan, Reagan has three main goals. First, to pressure Tokyo into upping its military expenditure and taking a much

THIS ENGLAND

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□ A 51-year-old man who has spent 35 years in mental hospitals, 30 of them in Moss Side, Liverpool's top security hospital, can return to the outside world, a Mental Health Tribunal has ruled. Peter Wilson's crime was that as a teenager he stole a bicycle and broke into a beach hut. — *Daily Telegraph* (Brenda Rowe).

□ The council is to move to stop a Bolton Road restaurant using their garden area as part of their food and bar facilities following complaints about noise — from a neighbouring centre for the hard of hearing. — *Eastbourne Post* (Paul Morris).