

## Third World: a view from India

# Maurice Bishop—a fiery, fearless fighter

Commonwealth Heads of Government will be missing Maurice Bishop. His assailants have made the world poorer by removing him from the scene. He had come as the leader of delegation from Grenada at the Seventh Non-Aligned summit in March and contributed much more than could be expected from the Head of a tiny island state like Grenada.

At the NAM summit he made it very clear that his people stood for Non-Alignment and the principles of anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, anti-neocolonialism, anti-racism and anti-zionism. Bishop told that imperialism was trying desperately to divide and derail, our movement.

In his leadership of the New Delhi summit, Grenada, proposed measures for fundamental institutional reform of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. He also vigorously supported the necessity for 'immediate and unconditional global economic negotiations' and pleaded for strengthening concrete South-South cooperation."

Bishop put before the Summit a proposal for a Watchdog committee of the Non-aligned movement to view the operational processes and methods of the international financial institutions. 'Our own experience in both World-Bank and IMF is very revealing. In the case of World Bank for example, they have said that our economy is too small, and therefore, they are not able to send us money... In the case of the IMF, they have applied a number of new sets of conditional, unjust conditionality, in relation to Grenada. For example in a recent application for extended fund facility, they insisted that the World Bank must first endorse our public investment programme. And the World Bank refused to do so. And that is the very first time in the history of these institutions that the IMF insisted on getting World Bank endorsement before considering an IMF loan.'

Bishop circulated a document for the establishment of Watchdog Committee for the movement that will oversee the operations of the World Bank and the IMF relations with countries of this movement. He also suggested that a review Commission be set up to review the reports of World Bank on different countries of the movement.

Bishop also supported the idea of debtors cartel which would use the threat to default of non-payment of foreign loans as a means of pressure for global negotiations. "What is quite clear is that the Bretton Woods sys-

tem has collapsed right from the beginning it was designed for the developed world, at the time when it was set up. There were not very many independent countries around in any event... And we certainly believe that a time has come for fundamental and radical revamping of that system and that the development of a new approach to international financial problems, new international financial institutions and a new internal monetary system in general.

At his press conference during the New Delhi summit references were made about IJS threats. Replying to a question Bishop referred to a Washington Post article that essentially said that sometime in the middle of 1981, the US Senate Intelligence

Committee considered a plan from the CIA to destabilise Grenada. That plan spoke of propaganda, economic, political and military destabilisation and what they described as 'other unexercised methods'. Washington Post article also said that when this plan was put before President Carter, he rejected most parts of the plan except propaganda destabilisation, and it seemed to imply that President Reagan added to some of President Carter's original positions.

Bishop said, "We knew from the very first week that a nor-



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mal blockade of Grenada was contemplated; this was disclosed in Newsweek in March 1979. Thereafter we had information about the CIA terrorist plan. So the entire history of our young revolution has been one of dealing with different forms of destabilisation. And over the years, we can honestly say that we have seen all forms of destabilisation."

He wanted that the Caribbean region be declared zone of peace. But he said, "The continuing activities of the US in particular in creating tension in the region through aggressive and hostile manoeuvres, through the attempts to perpetuate their own ideology and belief on the different Latin American and Caribbean nations, through attempts

to try to force all countries in the region into accepting the philosophy of "backyardisation—that is to say that Caribbean Sea is their backyard, though attempting to tell countries who they must be friendly with, through attempting to tell countries how they must built until that policy is ended. I think we are going to continue to have problems in the region."

Why was the US hostile towards Grenada? Grenada's was the first revolution in the English speaking Caribbean region and the US feared that a preced-

dent was set by Grenada for others to follow. "They are concerned that a particular path of development that we have been following might be one that could become attractive to other countries in the region. The fact is that the people of the region have naturally been excited by events in Grenada. A number of fundamental changes have been taken place, free education, free health care, housing repair programmes, free meal distribution and the like. We have been able to achieve over 14 per cent economic growth over the past growth last year. Unemployment in our country has moved from four years, a 5.6 per cent real 49 per cent in 1979 to 14 per cent at this time — a drop of about 75 per cent in 4 years. There is an attempt in Grenada, a conscious one of building a new socio-economic and political system and the people of the region are watching this.

When asked about the evidence, Maurice Bishop pointed out that Amba and Amerique

manoeuvre of the US Navy in August 1981 was a full dress rehearsal for a possible invasion

to make a number of communists ministers in his government, Reagan objects, and when the French government decides to send humanitarian assistance through Red Cross to the war victims of El Salvador, Reagan objects. And then other European countries decide that they are going to sign up the contract with the Soviet Government on the gasoline deal, Reagan also objects when we try to obtain funds for international airport projects from the European economic community. Bishop told us that day (March 9 1983), "We have had as all young revolutions have had a number of counter-revolutionary plots in the country. On two of the occasions, the people who were involved in the plot admitted of CIA involvement. In one case in October 1979, the CIA was supposed to have sent in two boats with arms according to the actual conspirators of the plot. Likewise on June 19, 1980 there was a bomb blast in St George's when all of us were gathered on Heroes Day rally, and a bomb

Vigorous anti-imperialist policies pursued by Maurice Bishop, the very prime minister of the tiny Caribbean island country of Grenada, antagonised the U.S. his powerful enemies engineered his downfall in a coup that subsequently led to his assassination — a fate not uncommon to those who defy the big and the mighty.

During his presence in New Delhi at the Seventh Non-Aligned Summit, Bishop left a deep impression on the media men. K. M. Surivastava narrates his impressions of the man and the words he spoke.

of Grenada. He pointed out that "Amba actually appeared on the map of Grenada near the location of a new international airport site. The man who led that particular military manoeuvre, Rear Admiral Mackenzie, in a press conference on Bejouca admitted that the manoeuvre was against what he called one of the three islands — Cuba, Nicaragua and Grenada. He said that the island has an army of about 2,000 troops, which Bishop had feared was a full dress rehearsal for an invasion of Grenada.

Maurice Bishop had said about Reagan. "We believe that Reagan himself is a kind of crusader that he believes that he can whip everybody into line; that he has absolutely no respect for the views of any country — big and small. It is highly significant that even in dealing with countries like France or just little countries like Grenada that you can barely see on the map. Reagan's attitude is one that I have just spoken of. So, when President Mitterand

was set up which sent over 100 of our people to hospital and killed three young people in our country. That bomb was, of course, armed at the entire leadership which was on the platform. Fortunately, the charge was not strong enough to bring the platform down. But again, the people involved in that particular plot named the CIA as having been involved in supplying them with a particular technology which has certainly been alien to Grenada."

Thus Maurice Bishop had warned us what may happen to him and his country. However, the world community could not prevent the association of Maurice Bishop and later the U.S. forces put into actual practice the Amba and Ambaine manoeuvre diplomacy to European capitals lobbying not to attend the co-financing conference. My point is that, really, Reagan is trying to whip the whole world into line and into shape. And that must have many aspects — economic, political, military and diplomatic."