

ABSTRACT

This is a study of the Grenadian Revolution which lasted from March, 1979 until October, 1983. It tries to achieve three objectives. The first is to examine the origins of the process and to understand the forces which led to social revolution on this small, Caribbean island. The second is to analyse the main political and economic measures of the revolutionary government and to understand the extent to which it was successful in forging alternative developmental approaches for the region. The third is to examine the final crisis and fall of the revolution and to understand whether its failure was due to peculiar circumstances or to general weaknesses in the path of development pursued.

To achieve these, two frames of reference are utilized. The stated path of development was one of Socialist Orientation and an attempt is made to understand the main tenets of this theory and the problems associated with it, as a point of departure to examine the specific policies of the Government. In the second instance, an attempt is made to understand the Grenadian Social Formation and its peculiar articulation as a strategic platform from which to observe the unfolding of the process.

Two working hypotheses are suggested. The first is that while the rise and fall of the process is influenced by many elements, it did achieve a significant measure of success and its ultimate demise was not an inevitability, determined

by geo-political considerations. The second, is that while the failure of the Revolution to survive is largely to be located in the subjective political errors of the leaders, these errors are in turn, largely conditioned by the relative autonomy of that leadership. The concept "relative autonomy" speaks to the independence which the leadership possessed in relation to its mass base and it is suggested that while this is an objective feature of the social formation, attempts could have been made to bridge the gap between the two elements. The failure to do this however, led to the alienation of the leaders from their supporters, thus setting the stage for crisis and defeat.

In the conclusion, an attempt is made to draw the main lessons from the Grenadian experience and to suggest the chief tasks which any future revolutionary project might have to address. The main conclusion is that in the immediate future, the left movement will have to solve the issue of its own democratization as a prelude to its serious involvement in further rounds of political struggle in the region.