John Cole: More than Westminster street-wisdom at stake

Grenada replays the painful lesson of Suez

An American friend who visited London a year or so ago is an incurable parliament buff. It is not just that he believes intellectually in government of the people by the people for the people, organised through free and representative assemblies. Emotionally, also, he is turned on by the traditions, the language, the myths of his Congress and our Parliament.

Thus, he was delighted to have a seat in the public gallery when Lord (then Mr) Whitelaw deputised for Mrs Thatcher at Question Time. He emerged rolling appreciatively round his tongue the orotund phrases of Westminster—' my Rt Hon. and Gallant Friend ', ' that Clause Four stand part of the Bill ', ' I shall have to *name* the Hon. Gent.', and so on.

My friend's happiest years were as a lobbyist on Capitol Hill. From that period he had a similar Washingtonian glossary of eccentricity: ' I am about to read into the record, Mr Vice-President, the L to R section of the Los Angeles telephone directory '; ' Will the Hon. Senator yield the floor? '; and assorted, embarrassing references to ' this great Republic of ours '.

Politeness caused me to suppress an intolerance of this exotic parliamentary flim-flam that would have been unworthy of Dickens even in his *Martin Chuzzlewit* mood—' that Republic, but yesterday let loose upon her noble course, and but today so maimed and lame, so full of sores and ulcers, foul to the eye and almost hopeless to the sense, that her best friends turn from the loathsome creature with disgust '.

It must be recorded, in defence of Her Majesty's Ministers, that even in the wake of their Grenadian embarrassment, none of them feels *quite* as badly about the United States. It must be recorded, in defence of your correspondent, that even after hearing a good friend mouthing congressional gobbledegook, he still cherishes an affection for the American institution that is buried within it.

These thoughts are stimulated by difficulty in suspending disbelief in the first turbulent days of the new parliamentary term. Can it really be happening in such glorious Technicolor down there on the floor? And how much has *that* to do with what is happening on the equally dream-like beaches of the Caribbean? Only connect? Easier said than done.

Not that anyone at Westminster is inexperienced at suspending disbelief. Those who find no difficulty believing that a Danish prince contemplating suicide would do so in 33 lines of iambic pentameter should, with equal facility, accept it if some Bible-literate backbencher declares: ' Would that it were with all the Queen's enemies as it is with the Rt Hon. and Learned Member for Blankshire West.' Don't knock the traditions. What has been disconcerting, however, is a feeling that Westminster and the Caribbean are not just in different hemispheres, but on different planets.

Now, we ought not to look a gift horse entirely in the mouth. These have been marvellous parliamentary occasions. Denis Healey revealed once again what a formidable politician he is, lethal mixture of Balliol intellectual and bar-room brawler. You could almost see the bubbles coming out of Labour heads, with the misty words ' what might have been! '

David Owen had another good war, revealing that knowledge and experience help. Neil Kinnock shrewdly judged the mood of a House that willed even a new Leader of the Opposition to play in a minor key while the trumpets and bassoons were belting out the main theme. And the Prime Minister herself, cast in an unwontedly defensive role, showed a capacity for aggressive self-preservation—viz. her instinct to shout back about the Falklands when Neil Kinnock mentioned her humiliation over Grenada.

Mrs Thatcher must be a secret bridge-player, schooled to concentrate on her strong suits.

Sir Geoffrey Howe's difficulties have been chronicled enough. His parliamentary performances were embarrassingly bad, but so were the conditions he faced. The Foreign Secretary is too rational a man to enter fully into the delights of the House of Commons. To see him debate there, no one would guess that he has strong, even impassioned beliefs, and is rather stubborn. But his interview with Brian Walden on *Weekend World* did something to restore his reputation.

This was not just because by Sunday he and the Prime Minister had decided on a more aggressive attitude to Washington. It was also because Sir Geoffrey thrives more on the conventions of television, where even such a compulsive analyst as Mr Walden is less intimidating than—to adapt Evelyn Waugh—the English political classes braying for broken reputations.

The Foreign Secretary must have the slowest fuse in politics. Only a slow smile greeted Denis Healey when they bumped into each other soon after their bruising encounter. Only the mildest dissent answered Brian Walden when he over-interpreted Sir Geoffrey's answers as re-

vealing a Howeite Gaullism. Sir Geoffrey smilingly acknowledged Mr Walden's need for crisp encapsulation, but he was not ready yet for the Elysée, much less for Colombey-les-Deux-Eglises.

His dilemma, however, illustrates a wider problem revealed by Grenada. A skilful parliamentarian might have carried it off with more swagger, but the issue goes deeper than mere Westminster street-wisdom. It is our old friend, the Britain-has-lost-an-Empire-and-hasn't-yet-found-a-role syndrome.

Nearly everyone at Westminster—Labour, the Alliance, Enoch Powell, Conservative back benches, and eventually, even in public, the Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary—was outraged at the inadequacy of American consultation over the invasion. Grenada is not British sovereign territory, but it is ex-British and a sovereign territory; the Governor-General was appointed by Britain's Queen, though as Queen of Grenada. It was small wonder that the insouciance with which President Reagan treated his closest ally caused deep offence.

That anger reflects a public mood which puts Britain's role in world affairs, and particularly in former parts of the Empire, much higher than contemporary economic and military power indicate. Mrs Thatcher's own mood in world affairs is interventionist, but she is reluctant for British troops to be involved in Grenada. This is not just pique because President Reagan got there first: she is more than content that the US marines should restore peace, now that they're there.

But she also knows that British troops are thinly stretched across the world, from the Falklands and Belize, through Ulster and the Rhineland, to Cyprus, the Sinai, Beirut and Hong Kong. Older citizens may cherish dreams of residual military responsibility in every land that was coloured red on the maps of their youth. But neither men nor money is available.

Grenada may have one interesting consequence. Mrs Thatcher was already feeling her way towards a new international posture. She remains strong for the Atlantic Alliance, but may be more aware of the need for East-West détente than before. Her undoubted disillusionment with President Reagan's handling of Grenada will confirm her view that he must be dissuaded from adventures in Central America. She fears the Monroe Doctrine almost as much as the Brezhnev Doctrine.

More than a quarter of a century ago, over Suez, Britain discovered the limitations of her power in the modern world. President Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles were the tutors. The extraordinary incident of the Falklands, from which Mrs Thatcher derived such political advantage, quite swamping domestic politics for a couple of years, had partially obliterated that lesson.

Grenada, though less painful than Suez, has, nevertheless, taught the lesson once again. Not all the excitements of the Westminster battle can conceal that for long.

John Cole is the BBC Political Editor.

Julian O'Halloran: Reagan and Central America

Is Nicaragua next?

After the American invasion of Grenada, the question facing the three million people in Nicaragua is: ' Does this make it more or less likely that we, too, will be invaded? ' Julian O'Halloran, who has been in Nicaragua and Honduras for *Newsnight* (BBC2), believes that the answer is probably ' less likely ', in the short term at least. He explains why.

A direct invasion of Nicaraguan territory by US troops, possibly backed by the Honduran army, has been a prospect referred to repeatedly by Sandinista leaders in recent weeks. The prediction, however much it is or is not believed, has proved an effective rallying call for a population which has developed a bitter hatred of the Reagan administration.

If the United States is prepared to go into combat in Grenada why not Nicaragua? The first answer must be that while it is preoccupied with Grenada and the Middle East, the administration is hardly likely to choose to enter a third battleground within the next few weeks or months.

Secondly, if it has taken 5,000 American troops, plus 10,000 more US forces offshore to secure a tiny spice island with a tinpot army of a thousand or so (with or without the hotly disputed assistance of some Cubans), how many tens of thousands would it take to impose any kind of military domination on Nicaragua? Though small in comparison with the United States, Nicaragua is vast compared with Grenada. And, as the Americans have been the first to point out in the past, the Nicaraguan armed forces are by far the strongest numerically in Central America. If their large militia is included, the Nicaraguans could have more than 100,000 people under arms.

Does all this mean that the Nicaraguans can sleep more soundly in their beds after all? Probably not. The Reagan administration has long lumped Cuba, Grenada and Nicaragua into the same category. This is how the Under-Secretary of Defence for Policy, Fred Ikle, put it in a major speech on Central America in September: 'The Sandinista regime in Nicaragua is determined to create a second Cuba in Central America . . . Nicaragua is building new military airfields and is importing Soviet tanks, helicopters, armoured vehicles and other equipment. This " second Cuba " in Nicaragua would be more dangerous than Castro's Cuba, since it shares hard to defend borders with Honduras and Costa Rica.'

This statement is especially worrying for the Nicaraguans in the light of the most recent justification made by President Reagan for going into Grenada: namely, that a Cuban takeover was about to occur on the island, as evidenced, apparently, by sheds full of Soviet-made weapons.

The Americans have claimed that there are around 2,000 Cuban military advisers in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas and President Castro insist the figure is around 200. There is less dispute about 4,000 other Cubans, mainly doctors, teachers and technicians.

It is with Cuban help, US officials allege, that Nicaragua is exporting revolution, mainly through the supply of arms and ammunition to the left-wing rebels in El Salvador, but also, they say, by allowing the Salvadorean guerrillas to run a command-and-control centre from the Nicaraguan capital Managua. The problem for the Americans is that despite a growing number of troops, ships and surveillance posts in the region, neither they nor the Hondurans have managed to prove it.

'They have not managed to interdict a single bullet,' says Wayne Smith, an American career diplomat who was the US Chief of Mission in Cuba from 1979 to 1982. Mr Smith, who resigned from the service disillusioned with President Reagan's policies, argues that US policy should have been to secure verifiable accords which answer legitimate US security concerns, provide for negotiations and elections in El Salvador and impose institutional restraints on the Sandinista government in Nicaragua. Instead, says Mr Smith, the United States is pursuing a 'secret' war against that government 'which has no chance of getting rid of the Sandinistas'.

The CIA's backing for the 'Contras', or counter-revolutionaries, has been public knowledge in the United States since the spring of 1982. But, twice, the House of Representatives has voted against the continuation of an annual $19 million in funds for this war. This vote can be reversed by the Senate but it reflects the grave fears of Democrats in Congress over operations which have resulted in the deaths of around 1,000 Nicaraguans, including many civilians.

Recent air operations by the Contras show how some of the CIA money is probably being spent. Two of the rebels' planes which crashed in September, a DC-3 and a Cessna, were traced back to the United States. The Cessna crashed while bombing Managua's international airport. It turned out to have been exported from America in June this year by a firm called Investair Leasing Inc., which has offices in McLean, Virginia, just four miles from the CIA headquarters at Langley. Investair shares the fourth floor of its office block with a company called Air America. In the early Seventies Air America was the largest of

the CIA's private airlines.

A DC-3 here, a Cessna there, and from time to time an armed speedboat. It sounds more like early James Bond than a serious war, yet these air and sea attacks are now inflicting severe economic damage on Nicaragua.

There can be little doubt that American support for the Contra war is aimed at the overthrow of the Sandinistas. But the more limited objective is to persuade the regime to change politically and to give up ties with Cuba and support for the Salvadorean guerrillas. Travelling in Nicaragua I got the impression increasingly that trying to alter the political complexion of the Sandinista regime through military attacks is a bit like trying to change the shape of a balloon by hitting it with a hammer. The initial blows may bounce off. If the object is struck harder, there may be an explosion.

The US backing for the Contra war does not serve to make the Sandinista government any less popular. Earlier in the year it was suggested that disillusionment with the Sandinistas was growing. But the stepping up of the Contra attacks seems simply to have papered over the cracks, distracting attention from food shortages, increasing government control over the private sector, and the slow strangulation of the country's only independent newspaper.

So if the Contra war is failing in its objectives, the possibility is raised again of a direct and full-scale intervention by the United States. I raised this with Rafael Cordova Rivas, the eldest member of the three-man junta, before the attacks on the American and French bases in Beirut and, of course, before Grenada.

Mr Cordova Rivas is a jovial and rotund lawyer who comes complete with Panama hat and fat cigar and sees nothing out of place in offering you whisky at 9.30 in the morning. He could not look or sound less like a revolutionary leader if he tried.

'The problem that the US has with an attack on Nicaragua,' he said, 'is that it's not convenient for them to see any gringo, any Yankee, arriving in the United States in a pine box or, rather, dead. As soon as the pine boxes begin to arrive in the United States all North American opinion will move against the US government.'

I wonder what he would say now?

When Mrs Thatcher did her phone-in on the BBC World Service last Sunday she was asked if she thought the United States would invade Nicaragua. Her answer was quick and forthright. No, she did not think the US would invade Nicaragua. That answer, coming from the government which was kept in the dark until the eleventh hour about the invasion of Grenada, must have had for listeners in Nicaragua some of the flavour of a discourse on Hitler's intentions by Neville Chamberlain. Mrs Thatcher was quick to spot this too, admitting the government's record on predicting US invasions had not been 100 per cent in the previous week. 'I really have stuck my neck out a very long way,' the Prime Minister said. Nicaraguans will be hoping that whatever is left of that neck will remain intact.

The Listener. Dec. 8, 1985

Cuban friends

From Our Own Correspondent
Radio 4

'One or two among the army of American journalists covering Cuba during the current Grenada crisis were a little apprehensive when they were taken to a Havana hospital to interview Cubans wounded during the United States invasion of Grenada', reported John Rettie.

'Wouldn't there be some bitter recriminations, they thought? After all, the Cubans had been wounded by American troops and some of their comrades had been killed by them. Surely there would be some harsh words. There weren't — not from the wounded themselves, nor from the doctors and nurses, not even from the half a dozen majors and colonels in attendance who, after the pushing and shoving of television crews and reporters through the wards, beamingly invited the international press to a delicious spread of fresh tropical fruits and rich, black Cuban coffee.

'It really seems quite astonishing that after 25 years of United States pressure on Cuba and of sometimes virulent propaganda exchanges, Cubans as individuals are as friendly as ever towards American visitors. Not a single one of the American journalists here, whether on the streets or on their rounds of the bars and restaurants, has experienced anything but friendliness, interest and curiosity. This says something highly significant about Cuba. For all their prolonged isolation from their neighbours, especially the giant neighbour to the North, and their close alliance with the Soviet Union, the Cubans deeply feel themselves to be Caribbeans like other Caribbeans. As with other Spanish-speaking countries in the area, they play baseball like the Americans rather than cricket like the British. They drink rum and coffee, they lie on heavenly beaches and dance to exciting music which has its roots in Africa as well as Spain. They go fishing and skin-diving and they're not slaves to time.

'The people who are out of place here are the Russians. Over the years there have been too many reports of mutual irritation between Cubans and Russians for them to be dismissed as wishful American thinking, but in no sense does this mean that most Cubans want the Russians out. Every Cuban knows that their revolution has survived American pressure only because Soviet military and economic support has been added to their own resolve and they're proud of their revolution. It may be drab, it may be politically monolithic and it may have cut them off from their neighbours, but it's also lifted them out of the poverty and backwardness that's endemic elsewhere in the Caribbean and the Third World. The original revolutionary excitement, of course, has gone. In many ways, Cuba is now like Britain in the Second World War. Life for ordinary Britons then was boring and drab, and the war seemed likely to go on for ever, but everyone had enough to eat, uninteresting though the diet was, and people were more healthy then than at any time in the country's history, and the war justified everything. "Don't you know there's a war on?" people used to ask, in the face of grumbles. It's much like that in Cuba today. There's a war on with the United States, sometimes cold and sometimes — as in Grenada — hot. So everyone has to do military service. Three years for most people, two for university students. Service may be overseas, in Angola or Ethiopia for instance.

'Like Britain in the Second World War, this is a very militarised society, but you don't see much of it. Compared with, say, El Salvador or Guatemala, there are very few soldiers on the streets but, all the same, the burden of supporting revolutions round the world is there. As in Britain 40 years ago, wives, mothers and daughters hate the prolonged absence abroad of their husbands, sons and fathers, but they accept it with the same kind of resigned patriotism. According to some reports about 30 to 40 Cuban soldiers a month are being killed since the recent flare-up in fighting in Angola. That's perhaps roughly the same number as the number killed recently in Grenada, but nothing is said about the Angola casualties.

'It's difficult to penetrate far below the surface of life in Cuba, but there've been no hints of any serious discontent about this world role. What does seem to be true, though, is that Cubans deeply wish it were all over.'

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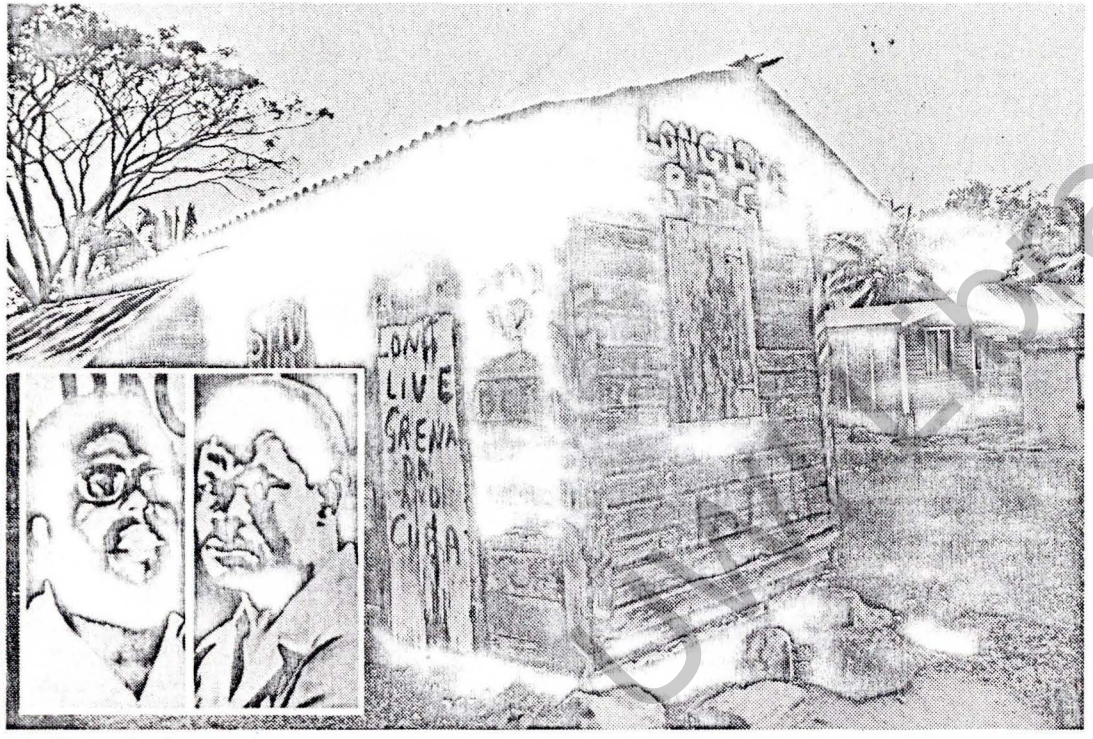
James Cox: The Grenada question

Will 'normality' ever return, and will it last?



Lennox Smillie/Camera Press

Graffiti reflecting the PRG's popularity with ordinary Grenadians. Inset: Austin and Coard

Will the Queen, when she visits Grenada next October, be able to strengthen the links with Britain which were weakened when Mrs Thatcher refused to back the American intervention in Grenada 20 months ago?

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People's Revolutionary Government who seized power in a nearly bloodless coup in 1979, who, for four years, ran the country without a Parliament and who used the selfsame Chamber for meetings of what was grandly called the Central Committee. The PRG, though it never sought an electoral mandate, does seem to have been widely popular among ordinary Grenadians, not least because of its charismatic leader, Maurice Bishop, who was a Grenadian first and a Marxist second; a combination which led to his downfall when he in turn was overthrown,

variety of charges, ranging from extortion and torture to murder. Those found guilty of murder could still suffer the death penalty, which Grenada still retains. 'The 19' include the principal leaders of the Revolutionary Army, Bernard Coard, his wife Phyllis and General Hudson Austin. The date of the start of the trial has already been put back twice because of a series of appeals by the accused on the somewhat whimsical ground that the present Grenada High Court is unconstitutional because it was set up by the PRG (of which the accused were members), which was itself an illegal government.

A fairly gruesome tale about the activities and intentions of 'the 19' is likely to unfold, but the effect of it on Grenadians is unpredictable. There is scant sympathy for the defendants—when they were taken by bus from Richmond Hill prison to the High Court for an earlier hearing an angry crowd gathered and threw stones at them; for the trial itself special arrangements have been made to construct a custom-built courtroom inside the jail.

More sophisticated Grenadians believe the trial will trace the ineluctable process by which the Bishop regime led to the short-lived Coard takeover, and say it will be a warning against the dangers of one-party rule without the checks and balances of constitutional democracy. But foreign diplomats on the island suspect so complex a message will be lost on the ordinary Grenadians, and that popular anger is more directed against the alleged murderers of the beloved Bishop than against political extremists.

Indeed, for a people who have seen at first-hand and in small compass the actions and reactions of history—from colonialism to independence, from the abuse of that independence by the eccentric government of the first Prime Minister, Sir Eric Gairy, to the 'reformist' takeover by Bishop and the left wing, and from that to bloody revolution and military invasion—the Grenadians seem to have little sense of either consequence or continuum. A currently popular calypso entitled 'Where do we go from here?' seems to sum up the islanders' bafflement over their present situation.

The new government, elected last December, under the leadership of a wily but elderly Prime

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The Clerk to the Grenadian Houses of Parliament was good enough to show me round the Parliament Buildings during a brief visit I made to the island recently. The guided tour didn't take very long—it's not a big Parliament. The single Chamber, which is used alternately by both the elected Lower and the appointed Upper House, occupies an airy and well-appointed room on a hill overlooking the twin bays of the island capital, St George's.

The Clerk, who is justifiably proud and possessive of the Parliament Buildings, led me to a recess next to the Chamber and said: 'This is where we are trying to build up the Parliamentary Library. Though,' he added dryly, pointing to rows of empty shelves, 'we are rather starting from scratch.'

Round another corner, some of the shelves were occupied, many with books bearing the bookplate of the British House of Commons and announcing that they had been presented to Grenada when the island achieved independence. There were also a few rather dog-eared copies of the Grenadian Hansard, of which the Clerk observed sadly: 'It's not a complete record, but it's all we were able to salvage. They didn't leave us much.'

They, in this case, were the members of the People's Revolutionary Government who seized power in a nearly bloodless coup in 1979, who, for four years, ran the country without a Parliament and who used the selfsame Chamber for meetings of what was grandly called the Central Committee. The PRG, though it never sought an electoral mandate, does seem to have been widely popular among ordinary Grenadians, not least because of its charismatic leader, Maurice Bishop, who was a Grenadian first and a Marxist second; a combination which led to his downfall when he in turn was overthrown, and murdered, in October 1983, by more hard-line members of his own faction. That violent and chaotic week led directly to the American military intervention which effectively ended only last month when the last contingent of US troops finally flew home, arousing considerably mixed feelings among the islanders.

Mixed feelings because the Grenadians are not yet confident enough of their newly restored democracy, nor of the strength of their newly trained police force, nor, perhaps, of their own ability to restrain their political volatility, to ensure that the 'events of 1983', as they are always called, do not recur. Brian Pitt, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, expressed their feelings when he told me: 'Of course we are concerned that it could happen again. We have learnt how to overthrow a government, and that is something that cannot just be swept under the carpet of history.'

The burdens incurred by Grenada's relatively brief history as an independent nation will be evident next month when 'the 19', members of the PRG who were arrested after the coup and the Bishop killing, are brought to trial on a

Hill prison to the High Court for an earlier hearing an angry crowd gathered and threw stones at them; for the trial itself special arrangements have been made to construct a custom-built courtroom inside the jail.

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The new government, elected last December, under the leadership of a wily but elderly Prime Minister, Herbert Blaize, is already under fire for going either too quickly or too slowly or, at any rate, not in the right direction. It is an inexperienced and uneasy coalition and one can only sympathise with it as it wrestles simultaneously with the normal problems of a poor Caribbean island and the task of restoring normality to a shattered political process.

Many old Grenadians look back to British rule as some kind of Golden Age. For them, London remains the centre of the universe; British customs and traditions as a norm can be continually strived after; and the Queen's presence as symbolic head of state as a fixed point in a confused world. (It was significant that even the Bishop regime upheld the Queen's role and issued their 'People's Laws' with the imprimatur of the Governor-General, Sir Paul Scoon.) For these Grenadians the Royal Visit, during this autumn's Caribbean tour, will be an important and sentimental symbol of a remembered past.

For younger Grenadians, the British connection is fading fast, and became more tenuous when Mrs Thatcher refused to back the Amer-

ican intervention. Although in the St George's Post Office one can observe that most of the foreign mail appears to be sent to addresses in Kilburn and Notting Hill, there are now flourishing communities of expatriates in Toronto and New York. For their cousins still at home, the American intervention, with its helicopters, jeeps and free-wheeling GIs, was exciting and revealing. One has to add that the Americans behaved impeccably during their stay and much impressed the islanders with their courtesy, drive and efficiency.

But for yet other Grenadians, even sometimes the same ones as favour the Americans, there is a hankering for the drama and drive of the Bishop years. A number of ordinary young people told me that they thought people 'worked harder' then, and that Bishop was a 'good leader'—an implicitly pejorative comparison with the staid Mr Blaize.

Brian Pitt of the Chamber of Commerce, while not hiding his concern about the Blaize government, seemed to see more clearly than most when he said that he wanted to see Grenada 'neither Sovietised, nor Americanised nor re-Britiicised, but finding its own way in the world'.

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Peter Evans: Adjusting to sexual equality

Make way for the 'new man'

Vive la différence maybe, but what exactly are the differences between the sexes? Has the much vaunted sexual revolution really started to affect traditional roles? Writer and broadcaster Peter Evans has been in search of the counterpart to the liberated female.

Why can't a woman be more like a man? asks that implacable misogynist Professor Henry Higgins—a male stereotype if ever there was one. He it is, in *My Fair Lady,* who goes on immodestly to describe all members of his sex in terms of exaggerated praise:

Men are so honest
So thoroughly square
Eternally noble
Historically fair.

The trouble is, as the Women's Movement has been telling us for a long time, this image of men as tough, fair-minded and in command of the situation is not confined to the never-never land of the theatrical stage. It is not hard to find people—well, men anyway—who subscribe to the view that the Higgins-style stereotype is pretty close to the way things are. Indeed, one can easily forget that the whole drive towards sexual equality, with its contempt for pat generalisations about the 'true' qualities and characteristics of the sexes, has ever taken place at all in the last decade or so. So often do we run up against those entrenched male sexist attitudes that Women's Lib might never have existed outside the enlightened, liberal confines of what used to be called the 'quality' mass media.

youngster have enormous impact on the toddler's gender identity. Dr Barbara Lloyd showed this beautifully, in what she calls her 'infant transvestite experiment'. She took four babies, two boys and two girls, and dressed them all either in frilly pink dresses or in sporty blue tracksuits. She then presented the children to two women who were not their mothers, to play with. The mothers, and hence the children, behaved differently according to how the latter were dressed. If they were 'girls', then the women tended to calm them down if the infants showed signs of hyperactivity. If they were 'boys', the children were encouraged to rush about as little boys are generally supposed to do. Thus from parental attitudes, argues Dr Lloyd, can come that demure, little-girl behaviour and the 'natural' noisiness of little boys—a short step, perhaps, from the 'Me, Tarzan: you, Jane' dichotomy of adult life?

So, although there are biological differences between the sexes, these do not dictate or determine male behaviour like a puppeteer's strings. Parents influence—consciously and otherwise—their son's gender orientation and sex role, by passing on what they themselves feel is right and appropriate. This works well to a point, but not when it leads to extreme stereotypical behaviour, or when it produces in youngsters inner conflicts and pressures.

This has been recognised in two quite different schools. In one, a London comprehensive, Frances Magee runs a 'life skills course', which gets boys to examine carefully their relationships with one another. They will, for example, discuss bullying—macho male aggression in the making—and come to appreciate that it is neither logical nor useful as a means of getting what they want. In the more rarefied atmosphere of Westminster School, the headmaster Dr John Rae is

ican intervention. Although in the St George's Post Office one can observe that most of the foreign mail appears to be sent to addresses in Kilburn and Notting Hill, there are now flourishing communities of expatriates in Toronto and New York. For their cousins still at home, the American intervention, with its helicopters, jeeps and free-wheeling GIs, was exciting and revealing. One has to add that the Americans behaved impeccably during their stay and much impressed the islanders with their courtesy, drive and efficiency.

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That's not so easy for a small nation whose principal exports of cocoa, bananas and nutmeg are sorely afflicted by the elemental forces of world markets. Foreign aid can only do so much, and although the Americans in particular, along with the Canadians and the EEC, have poured millions into the island economy, that will, ironically, taper off as Grenada is seen to be returning to political stability. A young woman, the wife of a prominent businessman but who happened herself to come from nearby St Vincent, told me only half-jokingly that other Caribbean nations were really quite jealous of all the attention being paid to Grenada, and wondered whether it would be a good idea for them to have a Marxist revolution, too.

The best guess is that, traumatised by the events of the past few years, Grenadians, whatever their doubts, will at least give Mr Blaize a chance. The newly trained Grenadian police force seems to be in control and political normality is returning, though economic stability may be harder to achieve. And the Americans have made it clear that, if the worst comes to the worst, they're always ready to come back.

James Cox is BBC Radio New York Correspondent.

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Eternally noble
Historically fair.

The trouble is, as the Women's Movement has been telling us for a long time, this image of men as tough, fair-minded and in command of the situation is not confined to the never-never land of the theatrical stage. It is not hard to find people—well, men anyway—who subscribe to the view that the Higgins-style stereotype is pretty close to the way things are. Indeed, one can easily forget that the whole drive towards sexual equality, with its contempt for pat generalisations about the 'true' qualities and characteristics of the sexes, has ever taken place at all in the last decade or so. So often do we run up against those entrenched male sexist attitudes that Women's Lib might never have existed outside the enlightened, liberal confines of what used to be called the 'quality' mass media.

There are signs, however, that changing attitudes *are* beginning to trickle into the hitherto watertight male psyche: that the sorts of social and psychological adjustments that women have been making are indeed having some repercussions on their male counterparts. Perhaps, in the search for the liberated female, we have failed to look closely enough at a series of interesting readjustments taking place concurrently among men.

Of course, you could argue that the roles and behaviour of the two sexes cannot be modified too much because they are firmly rooted in our biology. Take, for example, the propensity of males for aggression. In his studies of two- and three-year-old infants, the psychologist Dr John Archer demonstrates quite clearly that little boys do engage in a lot more aggressive behaviour than girls, either fighting in all seriousness or as a game of rough-and-tumble. So it would seem that somehow violent and pseudo-violent behaviour are built in through the insidious action of some aggro-gene.

On the other hand, parents, relatives, teachers and everyone else who comes into contact with a ing to how the latter were dressed. If they were 'girls', then the women tended to calm them down if the infants showed signs of hyperactivity. If they were 'boys', the children were encouraged to rush about as little boys are generally supposed to do. Thus from parental attitudes, argues Dr Lloyd, can come that demure, little-girl behaviour and the 'natural' noisiness of little boys—a short step, perhaps, from the 'Me, Tarzan: you, Jane' dichotomy of adult life?

So, although there are biological differences between the sexes, these do not dictate or determine male behaviour like a puppeteer's strings. Parents influence—consciously and otherwise—their son's gender orientation and sex role, by passing on what they themselves feel is right and appropriate. This works well to a point, but not when it leads to extreme stereotypical behaviour, or when it produces in youngsters inner conflicts and pressures.

This has been recognised in two quite different schools. In one, a London comprehensive, Frances Magee runs a 'life skills course', which gets boys to examine carefully their relationships with one another. They will, for example, discuss bullying—macho male aggression in the making—and come to appreciate that it is neither logical nor useful as a means of getting what they want. In the more rarefied atmosphere of Westminster School, the headmaster Dr John Rae is