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Student name: Kyle Joseph
Student ID no.: 816021997
Degree Program: BA History
Supervisor: Dr. Danalee Jahgoo

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Regional Division: A Re-Examination of the Caribbean Response to Maurice Bishop's death and the 1983 United States Invasion of Grenada

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ABSTRACT

The death of Maurice Bishop and the US led invasion that followed were divisive events in the Caribbean. Within this context, this study examines the feelings of fear and shock that the killing of Bishop elicited in select English speaking Caribbean countries and the division that arose due to the roles and positions that these countries assumed in relation to the US invasion after. To achieve this, the study utilized a quantitative approach, incorporating a wide variety of material so as to fulfill the objectives of the study. The results that were derived from this shows that the feelings of shock and fear were pronounced at all levels of Caribbean society. The study also revealed that in some of the Caribbean countries, support for the government's position was strong and, in some cases, weak, a result that was seen in the Caribbean populace response to the roles and positions of other English Speaking Caribbean countries in this study. The study therefore shows that in the select Caribbean countries, there was a great degree of uniformity regarding the feelings of shock and fear but significant division as it relates to the roles and positions taken by countries in question.

Keywords: Grenada, shock, fear, division, grassroots, trade unions, socialism, radicalism, cold war.

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Introduction

Historical Background: Revolution and Invasion

The Grenada Revolution (1979-1983) can be considered one of the most defining events in the history of that country. In the years prior to the revolution, Grenada faced a myriad of problems under the leadership of the increasingly unpopular, Eric Gairy. Some of these problems included alleged corruption, a decline in the provision of social services and infrastructure and political persecution from Gairy's personal Mongoose Gang¹. These factors, coupled with a growing sense of disillusion among Grenadians, led to a bloodless coup by the New Jewel Movement (NJM) on 13th March, 1979². The newly formed government, the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG), led by Bishop, embarked on a range of projects to benefit the Grenadian people. These included improvements in health care, roads, and other major infrastructural projects such as the national airport³. The new Grenadian government also strengthened ties with non-democratic, Cuba. This revolution and developments which took place under the PRG, such as the construction of a new international airport at Point Saline's, raised "red flags" for the U.S., particularly because it represented a security threat⁴. It is important to understand that these events all happened during the Cold War, an ideological battle between the Soviet Union and the U.S. who emerged as the world's dominant political forces after World War Two. When internal factions in the PRG became apparent and culminated in the assassination of Maurice Bishop on 19th October 1983, U.S. led forces invaded Grenada six days

¹ Steele, Beverly A. *Grenada; A History of its People*. MacMillan Caribbean, Oxford, 2003 pp. 363-5

² Sanford, Gregory. *The New Jewel Movement; Grenada's Revolution, 1979-1983*. Centre for the Study of Foreign Affairs, 1985 p. 7

³ Steele, Beverly A. *Grenada; A History of its People*. pp. 386-88

⁴ Steele, Beverly A. *Grenada; A History of its People*. P. 385

after, effectively bringing to a succinct end, Grenada's Revolution (1979-83). This North American intervention was supported by several Caribbean countries.

1.1 Rationale and Objectives

The events of 1983 in Grenada gained tremendous attention regionally and internationally. This is evident in the wealth of scholarly material and media coverage on the death of Maurice Bishop and the subsequent invasion by the U.S. There has been a great deal of information on the responses of the governments of some Caribbean countries, such as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). However there has not been a large amount of material on how the Caribbean responded to this. Therefore, the main objectives of this study are:

- 1) To detail the different reactions of Caribbean countries to the killing of Maurice Bishop, from the political, organization/group and grassroots level.
- 2) To detail the roles that each Caribbean country took in relation to the U.S. invasion.
- 3) To compare and contrast these roles and the reactions they elicited after the invasion, at the political, group and individual level.

The rationale for this study is to build the historiography on the responses of the assassination of Maurice Bishop and the subsequent invasion of the United States. While the title of this research would suggest that the study focuses on the American invasion of Grenada, attention is also given to the death of Maurice Bishop as this event was the catalyst for intervention and so it is important to examine as well. Additionally, 2023 would mark the 40th anniversary of the death of Bishop and U.S. intervention, which followed. As a result, it is an appropriate time to reflect on

the events and re-examine the responses of the Caribbean and question just how divided the region was on the issue of intervention in Grenada.

1.2 Thesis Statement

With regards to the assassination of Maurice Bishop and US led invasion that followed, one may posit that the reaction and role of Caribbean states, despite there being some underlying similarities with regard to these two events between them, were nonetheless fragmented both regionally and locally.

1.3 Parameters

This research paper is centered on the English-Speaking Caribbean, namely countries such as: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. Belize and The Bahamas were excluded on the basis that there was a lack of a substantive amount of primary and secondary sources available.

This research paper's timeframe ranges from the inception of the Grenada Revolution on March 13, 1979, and five years following the assassination of Maurice Bishop and the US led invasion that followed. This timeframe would provide a sufficient amount of time to take into account academic writings that would have come after the events.

1.3 Methodology

To fulfil the main objectives of this study, qualitative research methods were utilized. This method was employed because of its applicability and suitability to the nature of the study. As the qualitative method “...collects open-ended, emerging data that is then used to develop themes...” it offers to the researcher the ability to tap into how persons felt, perceived an event and or knowledge pertaining to a said event⁵. This approach would therefore be best in gathering details on perspectives and emotions of leaders and people in other Caribbean countries to events in Grenada.

For the study, primary evidence, in the form of purposive sampling such as interviews, official documents, newspapers, speeches, and autobiographies were utilized. A total of nine interviews were conducted in select Caribbean countries such as Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Grenada, and Dominica. The interviews conducted were conversational, on the basis that such an approach would enable the researcher to tap into the emotions that the interviewees may have without the restrictions that structured questions may impose.

Several government documents were also collected. They include Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) declassified documents, regional government documents, and archives from various institutions such as the National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago. These documents provided both an introspective perspective into the Grenada Revolution from the governmental

⁵ Campbell, Suzanne. *What is Qualitative Research?* Clinical Laboratory Science, vol. 27, no. 1, 2014, p. 3.

level as well as new information that otherwise would have been limited to the public and other researchers at an earlier point in time.

Additionally, newspapers were utilized as primary sources on the basis that they provided first-hand information. The first-hand information that was gathered, provided a wide variety of reactions that many individuals, groups, and leaders had in various Caribbean countries. Newspapers collected were from: Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Grenada, and the United States.

Speeches and autobiographies from several political leaders were collected. These speeches were all instrumental in providing a greater understanding of the paradigms and justifications behind these leader's actions.

Most secondary sources collected were newspapers which were generally comprised of letters to the editors and opinions. Newspapers were used as secondary sources on the basis that they were not first-hand accounts and were only written after the event occurred. The use of these sources provided a wide collection of opinions and attitudes to the events in question that allowed for a greater capture of different opinions.

Several online databases were also utilized, thereby providing the research with a wide body of material so as to substantiate information for the two chapters of analysis. Moreover, a number of books were used, providing both an academic perspective as well as a significant amount of information.

1.4 Chapter outline

This study is broken up into three chapters. The first chapter is the literature review, which provides a brief description of the pre-existing literature. It outlines its strengths and weaknesses and the areas where research gaps exist. The following chapter titled ‘Shock and Fear’, presents, discusses, and analyzes these emotions found in the wake of the killing of Maurice Bishop. The last chapter, ‘A Region Divided’, provides an assessment of the division that was found throughout the region in relation to the US invasion.

CHAPTER ONE

Literature Review

The end of the Grenada Revolution brought with it a significant amount of published material. Whilst this literature review does not examine each work, it does highlight works done near and around this research paper's topic. As such, it highlights the strengths and weaknesses of these works and the relevance that it poses to this study.

The Grenada Revolution has its roots in the Gairy regime which preceded it. There exists a great degree of uniformity amongst sources regarding the role that Gairy's government played in eliciting the events of 13th March 1979. For Williams, Gairy's corrupt and repressive government provided the platform for the NJM to gain power⁶. Shalini provides a similar interpretation, attributing Gairy's corruption and repressive politics as decisive factors that "...made an electoral path toward socialism impossible"⁷. It is for this reason that Williams and Shalini both conclude that, the NJM's coup, was a move that was widely popular with Grenadians⁸⁹.

Payne et al note that the Grenada revolution brought much surprise to the Commonwealth Caribbean, with its action welcomed by only two Caribbean states, these being Jamaica and Guyana with its left-wing governments¹⁰. On the long terms effects of the NJM coup on its relations with the Commonwealth Caribbean, Fraser makes mention of the long-standing

⁶ Williams, Gary. "The Tail that wagged the dog; The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Role in the 1983 Intervention in Grenada", p.96.

⁷ Shalini, Puri. "The Grenada Revolution in the Caribbean Present-Operation Urgent Fury." Palgrave MacMillan, New York, 2014, pp. 31,35.

⁸ Williams, Gary. "The Tail that wagged the dog; The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Role in the 1983 Intervention in Grenada", p.96.

⁹ Steele, Beverly A. "Grenada; A History of its People." MacMillan Caribbean, 2003, p.378.

¹⁰ Payne et al. "Grenada; Revolution and Invasion." Routledge, New York, 2022, p.90.

ideological arguments that the Commonwealth Caribbean had with the Revolution ¹¹ . Notwithstanding these arguments, Sanford notes that in the years of the Grenada revolution, Caribbean governments though alarmed, “...all learned to live with the People’s Revolutionary Government as it came to be called”¹².

There is much debate regarding the PRG’s years in power and the policies and projects implemented during its rule, with some, such as Steele referring to some of these projects as worthy¹³ such as the PRG’s Housing Program¹⁴. Others, however, offer a more critical view. Sanford argues that the result of such projects and policies, though an ambitious concept, were “...an almost absolute failure”¹⁵. On other aspects of its rule such as its policies, Puri argued that because of the combination of military authority and party authority, there were significant consequences for egalitarianism and free speech¹⁶.

The internal discord that led to Bishop’s death and US invasion is well analyzed. Fraser’s analysis for example, touches on the fact that the internal in-fighting that occurred, was really the result of the breakdown of consensus amongst the leaders of the party and the lack of mechanisms that could have helped to mediate such disputes¹⁷. Williams provides a similar interpretative view, arguing that it was the differences in the ideology of the party between persons in the party led by Bishop who were ‘moderate’ and those led by Deputy Prime Minister

¹¹ Fraser, Peter D. “Revolutionary Suicide and Commonwealth Disarray; Grenada, October 1983.” *The Round Table*, 1984, p.25.

¹²Sanford, Gregory. “The New Jewel Movement; Grenada’s Revolution, 1979-1983”, p.42.

¹³Steele, Beverly A. *Grenada; A History of its People*, p.386.

¹⁴ Steele, Beverly A. *Grenada; A History of its People*. p. 388.

¹⁵ Sanford, Gregory. *The New Jewel Movement; Grenada’s Revolution, 1979-1983*, p.66

¹⁶ Shalini, Puri. *The Grenada Revolution in the Caribbean Present-Operation Urgent Fury*, p.67.

¹⁷ Fraser, Peter D. “Revolutionary Suicide and Commonwealth Disarray; Grenada, October 1983”, p.26.

Bernard Coard, who were 'hardliners'¹⁸. It was these internal circumstances that resulted in the death of Maurice Bishop, colleagues, and several other citizens.

Research into the reactions that Caribbean states had to the death of Maurice Bishop is lacking in analysis. Williams for instance, is moderate in his analysis of the reaction that Caribbean countries had to the killing of Maurice Bishop. He notes in a general way that "...the consensual Eastern Caribbean response was horror and condemnation [because] no one had envisaged such a bloody resolution of the power struggle"¹⁹. Similarly, Lewis' analysis of the reactions to the killing of Maurice Bishop, was surmised as materializing their worst fear²⁰. Most however do not provide an analysis that accounts for the fear felt by leaders, groups and even citizens in the Caribbean. This lack of research is indeed bemoaning and prevents one from arriving at a deeper understanding of the reactions felt at various levels in society.

When on October 25th, 1983, the US led invasion occurred, several Caribbean countries had different roles. Williams contends that the OECS's role was centered on persuading the United States to participate²¹. Fraser takes a bolder approach with regards to the 'persuasion,' Williams speaks of. He argues that the US was pressed into intervening militarily due to the agency of the OECS. Such an approach is contrary to belief that small, weak states can pressure large powerful ones²². It is for this reason that Lewis argues that "it was clear, therefore, that despite the other

¹⁸ Williams, Gary. "The Tail that wagged the dog; The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Role in the 1983 Intervention in Grenada", p.96.

¹⁹ Williams, Gary. "The Tail that wagged the dog; The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Role in the 1983 Intervention in Grenada", p.99.

²⁰ Lewis, Patsy. "Revisiting the Grenada Invasion; The OECS' Role and its Impact on Regional and International Politics." The Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, Vol 48, No 3, September 1999, p.104.

²¹ Williams, Gary. "The Tail that wagged the dog; The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Role in the 1983 Intervention in Grenada", p.99.

²² Fraser, Peter D. "Revolutionary Suicide and Commonwealth Disarray; Grenada, October 1983." The Round Table, 1984, p.28.

grounds presented to justify the invasion, OECS involvement played a key role”²³. Such writings, whilst highlighting the importance of the Eastern Caribbean in inciting the US led invasion, generalizes the role and influence by each state in the OECS. Outside of the OECS, Caricom’s role has significance. Caricom’s position was that of non-intervention. Lewis notes that it was determined that external forces should not have a hand in remedying the crisis and any response should be in the confines of the UN charter and by Caricom countries²⁴. Fraser’s assessment that Caricom leaders favored the use of sanctions²⁵ however, masks anomalies. Whilst Caricom leaders agreed to the principal of sanctions, some did favor other courses of actions. Lewis details this through an interview with Abraham²⁶, who viewed the meeting²⁷ as lacking discussion, and every representee already having a fixed position²⁸. Individually, for Lewis, Barbados’s role was acting as the leader in eliciting the invasion²⁹. This view is shared by Williams who notes the primacy of Tom Adam’s role³⁰. For Fraser, Jamaica’s role of intervention differentiated from that of others, in which it was predicated to some degree on ideological terms, as evinced in the Jamaican administration’s long held disdain for Cuba and communism overall³¹. This is corroborated by Burrowes, who noted that from the time that Prime Minister Seage took office, he attacked the presence of Grenada as an undemocratic

²³ Lewis, Patsy. “Revisiting the Grenada Invasion; The OECS’ Role and its Impact on Regional and International Politics”, p.88.

²⁴ Lewis, Patsy. “Revisiting the Grenada Invasion; The OECS’ Role and its Impact on Regional and International Politics”, p.96.

²⁵ Fraser, Peter D. “Revolutionary Suicide and Commonwealth Disarray; Grenada, October 1983”, p. 28.

²⁶ Abraham was a member of the Jamaican delegation at the Caricom meeting.

²⁷ This meeting occurred on_, in Trinidad and Tobago. Headed by George Chambers, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and chairman of Caricom, it was oriented around the death of Bishop and the action that should be taken by Caricom.

²⁸ Lewis, Patsy. “Revisiting the Grenada Invasion; The OECS’ Role and its Impact on Regional and International Politics”, p. 97.

²⁹ Lewis, Patsy. “Revisiting the Grenada Invasion; The OECS’ Role and its Impact on Regional and International Politics”, p. 93.

³⁰ Williams, Gary. “The Tail that Wagged the Dog; The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Role in the 1983 Intervention in Grenada”, p. 99.

³¹ Fraser, Peter D. “Revolutionary Suicide and Commonwealth Disarray; Grenada, October 1983”, p. 28.

member in the English-Speaking Caribbean³². Conversely, in this ideological context, Williams contends that Guyana's position of non-intervention was taken considering the precedent that would be set if, it, the only undemocratic country in Caricom, had chosen to intervene to restore democracy³³. It was a premise that Burnham would not have wanted³⁴. Burrowes appears to share this view, noting that any participatory role of Guyana in intervening, could constitute an action that could be made against it in the future³⁵. Conversely, Burrowes argues that Trinidad and Tobago's government's role was one arguing for some course of action regarding towards the new regime, but one that was completely against invasion "...before diplomacy had been tried"³⁶.

Research done on the reactions of Caribbean countries has been relatively deep in its analysis by some researchers, but bias in both its omission of some Caribbean countries' reaction and the reaction of various groups and individuals as well. Burrows offers perhaps the most exhaustive account of Caribbean states reaction. In his analysis, Burrows provides an in-depth account of Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad, and Tobago and to some extent Guyana, Dominica, and other Eastern Caribbean states. His methodology includes the utilization of polls that show the Jamaican and Trinbagonian public's reaction to the invasion, numerous statements from Seaga and Adams and numerous editorials. Comparatively, only William's offers similar insight into the reactions of some Caribbean countries. Williams both presents and analyses the reaction that the Barbadian, Jamaican, Dominican, Trinbagonian, and Guyanese public had towards the

³² Burrows, Reynold A. *Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the US-Caribbean Invasion*. Greenwood Press, 1988, p.110

³³ Williams, Gary. "The Tail that Wagged the Dog; The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States Role in the 1983 Intervention in Grenada", p.106.

³⁴ Burrows, Reynold A. "Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the US-Caribbean Invasion", p113.

³⁵ Burrows, Reynold A. "Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the US-Caribbean Invasion", p113.

³⁶ Burrows, Reynold A. "Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the US-Caribbean Invasion", p113.

invasion. Admittedly however, Williams does not offer as varied a collection of sources, but his decision to examine in detail some of these reactions and the meaning behind them, strengthens his research. Other researchers have tended to be more preliminary in their analysis, such as Payne et al, who have described the reactions of Caribbean countries like those of Burrows and Williams but only at the governmental level³⁷. Others such as Steele and Fraser have been less than analytical in their description of the reactions of Caribbean states. Once the analysis of the roles of Caribbean states moves beyond Barbados, Jamaica, and some OECS members therefore, there is a lack of analysis regarding the roles taken by other Caribbean states such as Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and to some degree other OECS states such as St. Lucia, St. Kitts, and Nevis. Reactions of groups and individuals from states such as St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua, and Barbuda, and to a lesser extent, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana are also lacking. This study therefore study will build on this gap in the historiography.

³⁷ Payne et al. "Grenada; Revolution and Invasion", pp.171, 172.

CHAPTER TWO-Shock and Fear

Feelings of shock

This chapter presents and analyses the feelings of shock and fear that was found in the Caribbean following Maurice Bishop's death. This chapter will show that these feelings of shock and fear were found at all levels, that is at the political, group and individual level in the Caribbean.

At the political level, shock seems to have been a common feeling. For Eugenia Charles, Edward Seaga, and Tom Adams for instance, the feelings of shock that they felt, led them to proclaim their complete disregard for meeting with Grenada's new rulers³⁸. St. Lucia's Prime Minister, Sir John Compton, expressed similarly strongly worded sentiments in relation to the shock and horror that he felt³⁹ as did Trinidad and Tobago's Prime Minister George Chambers⁴⁰. Guyana's Forbes Burnham, whose socialist leaning meant his bias towards the principles of the Grenada Revolution, similarly expressed his great shock at the news of Bishop's death⁴¹.

At the group level, feelings of shock were equally pronounced. Several trade unions for instance expressed their shock. Following news of Bishop's death, trade unions such as the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union, National Workers Union, and the Public Employees of Local Government offices expressed their shocked and horror at the events in Grenada⁴². The OWTU's declared the killing of Bishop as a tragedy, one in which it wished to see the end of the

³⁸“Military Council says it now rules Grenada.” *The New York Times*, 28, October 1983, p.A.8.

³⁹ Burrows, Reynold A. “Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the US-Caribbean Invasion”, p. 65.

⁴⁰ “Chambers Announces trade sanctions against Grenada.” *Jamaica Gleaner*, 21 October 1983. P5.

⁴¹ “Burnham.” *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 16 October 1983, p.16.

⁴² “Several Groups react with shock at Grenada Killings.” *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 21 October 1983, p.23.

butchers who committed the act⁴³. University students also expressed their shock. In Trinidad, University of the West Indies students and tertiary lecturers at St. Augustine, voiced their shock and regret to the irresponsible use of force by militant groups⁴⁴. The Department of Economics at UWI Mona Jamaica also voiced its shock, outrage, and anger at the events in Grenada⁴⁵. These feelings of shock from trade unions and university bodies are hardly surprising, given that for these organizations, the revolution's own ideological goals were intimately linked with the ideologies of these organizations. It is even more remarkable that other groups which did not share as intimate connections such as the Law Society of Trinidad and Tobago, was aghast upon hearing of the event⁴⁶.

It is interesting to note that on an individual/grassroots level, sentiments of shock also existed among persons considered Marxists or leftists. Gregory Fernandez for instance, a self-proclaimed supporter of Marxist thought, expressed his shock at the killing of Bishop. Additionally, George Joseph Junior equally expressed his own shock, despite his position on Bishop's regime at that point in time, which he held in disregard⁴⁷.

Hence, these feelings of shock appear to be universal. It is indeed remarkable that the shock felt seems to not have been informed by one's position on the Grenada revolution but rather the act itself. In fact, it seems that the feeling of shock ran against the current of the Cold War, where leftist/communist thought was pitted against democracy and capitalism. This then speaks to the rarity and barbarity in which this occurred as well as the

⁴³ "Oilfields Workers Trade Union; Our position on Grenada." *Trinidad Guardian*, 12 November 1983, p.6.

⁴⁴ "UWI Students Condemn 'murder' of Bishop." *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, 21 October 1983, p.9.

⁴⁵ "Burnham". *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 22 October 1983, p.16.

⁴⁶ "Law Society condemns new rulers." *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, 25 October 1983, p.8.

⁴⁷ Readers may refer to the appendix for greater insight into this interview

Fear for the spread of radicalism

The fear of the spread of radicalism after Bishop's death was a popular reaction experienced by most of the Caribbean. This fear however existed beforehand. In Trinidad and Tobago, interviewee, Gregory Fernandez⁴⁸ provides an understanding of what partly influenced this fear. He contends that coming out of the Black Power Revolution⁴⁹ there existed several "tribes" or organizations such as the National Union of Freedom Fighters (NUFF), which had underground connections to the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine⁵⁰. The existence of these groups, which Fernandez contends embraced Marxist thought and had connections with the Grenada Revolution, heightened the fear of growing leftist thought and the consequences of what that meant for Trinidad and Tobago⁵¹.

This was not specific to just Trinidad and Tobago but also several other islands as well. Seaga opines that blame could not be registered towards Eastern Caribbean states for perceiving the events in Grenada as a prelude to action that could be taken beyond those in power in Grenada⁵². Notwithstanding the obvious bias that Seaga had towards democracy, his assertion was symptomatic of how several other Caribbean leaders felt. Sir John Compton, Prime Minister of St. Lucia expressed his view after Bishop's death that, Bernard Coard's regime would attempt to push the Caribbean community towards the communist camp⁵³. In fact, both Prime Ministers, Seaga and Compton, professed their belief that Grenada and its allies, could by training and

⁴⁸ For greater insight into Mr. Fernandez' remarks please see appendix C for a transcript of part of the interview.

⁴⁹ Readers can turn to Teelucksingh's work on the Black Power Revolution for a greater understanding of what occurred.

⁵⁰ Readers can turn to the appendix C for an in-depth understanding of the Mr. Fernandez comments regarding these underground groups.

⁵¹ See appendix C for transcript of interview with Gregory Fernandez

⁵² Burrows, Reynold A. "Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the US-Caribbean Invasion.", p.113.

⁵³ "Support for Radical Movements." *CIA*, 1982, December, p. 6.

arming insurgents, strengthen the threat of illegal takeovers among weak and fragmented mini states of the Eastern Caribbean⁵⁴. It has also been argued that it was the security fear that moved Milton Cato, Prime Minister of St. Vincent, and the Grenadines, to send out feelers to the Hudson Austin⁵⁵ regime for the normalization of ties⁵⁶. Antigua and Barbuda's Foreign Minister contended that the killing of Bishop threatened the region's peaceful diplomacy⁵⁷. The fear felt by Eastern Caribbean leaders can be best surmised by the Director General of the OECS, Vaughan Lewis. Similar to Seaga and Adams, he contends that it was the military build-up in Grenada and the threat it posed that catalyzed their military intervention⁵⁸.

The fear felt was arguably substantiated by the political environment. In St. Lucia, the leftist leaning Progressive Labour Party won the 1981 elections. In Dominica, the Défense Force was disbanded on the grounds that it had been thoroughly penetrated by radicals and was a means through which some attempted to initiate a coup⁵⁹. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the Youlou United Liberation Movement (Yulimo), headed by its Marxist leader, Dr. Ralph Gonsalves, was believed to have posed the greatest challenge to the ruling SLUP⁶⁰. Albert Xavier⁶¹ thereby contends that there was a plan to subvert the elected governments of Eastern Caribbean with communist leading revolutionary governments⁶². The plausibility of Xavier's claim is uncertain, but it is evident that in the Eastern Caribbean, non-democratic ideas were influential. Thus, for

⁵⁴“Support for Radical Movements.” *CIA*, 1982, December, p. 6.

⁵⁵ Hudson Austin was the commander of the People's Revolutionary Army at that point in time. Following Bishop's death, the PRA upheld itself as the temporary ruler of Grenada and hence Hudson Austin assumed relevance due his position as leader of the PRA.

⁵⁶ “Eastern Caribbean was in the mood for war.” *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 26 October 1983, p.1.

⁵⁷ “Grenada.” *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 22 October 1983, p.16.

⁵⁸ Phillips, Dion E. “The Defunct Dominica Défense Force and Two Attempted Coups on the Nature Island.” *Caribbean Studies*, Vol. 30, no. 1, 2002, pp. 52–81.

⁵⁹ Kaufman Michael T. 1900 US troops, with Caribbean Allies, invade Grenada and fight leftist units; Moscow protests; British are critical.” *The New York Times*, 26 October, p.A.1.

⁶⁰ Prospects for stability in smaller islands of the Eastern Caribbean. *CIA*, March 22, 1979, p.3.

⁶¹ Albert Xavier was a journalist for the Wall Street Journal.

⁶² Xavier, Albert. “Plotting had the Eastern Caribbean on edge.” *The Wall Street Journal*, 1 November 1983.

several leaders, there would have had some degree of fear as it pertains to what seemed to be growing leftism in the Eastern Caribbean.

Several individuals also appear to be well informed of this and thus had their own fears. When asked about the events in Grenada, a student from Queen's Royal College postulated that leftist governments such as Grenada's should not be left in power because of the role they would have in encouraging other aspiring leftist groups⁶³. Another student provides an interesting perspective. He argues that during the revolutionary years, he noticed changes in the average Grenadian, citing as an example a young individual who spoke of the ability of Grenada to defeat Trinidad in a war⁶⁴. Such circumstances led him to believe the fears expressed by others, that if something could happen in Grenada, it could equally occur in Trinidad⁶⁵. Another interviewee noted in acknowledgement that persons had good reason to fear the spread of radicalism⁶⁶. Such comments therefore were indicative of the fear of militarization that some young students and other persons felt in Trinidad and the wider Caribbean.

These reactions therefore show that there was commonality found in several Caribbean islands. They show that regardless of the political ideology that different leaders held, and groups and individuals, there was some deep concern at all levels for the Grenadian people. It was this concern, however, as would be discussed, alongside a wide assortment of other factors, that would lead various Caribbean states to align themselves in a position that was contrary to one another.

⁶³ Martin, Angela. "Some were sad, some glad and others alarmed, the talk in the town yesterday." *The Trinidad and Tobago Express*, 21 October 1983, p.9.

⁶⁵ See appendix E for interview with George Joseph Jnr.

⁶⁶ See appendix D for interview with George Joseph Snr.

CHAPTER THREE- A Region Divided

This chapter examines the division that was found in the region. It firstly outlines the positions taken by each Caribbean state, followed by an analysis of the opposition and support that politicians, groups and individuals had towards the position of their respective government. It will also analyze the support and opposition that politicians, groups and individuals had towards the position and role undertaken by other Caribbean countries in relation to the US invasion.

Positions taken by Caribbean countries following the death of Maurice Bishop

In the wake of Bishop's death, it posed the question to Caribbean leaders of how best to deal with the new regime in Grenada. Some such as Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana strongly stuck to their position of non-intervention. In contrast, each Caribbean country in the OECS, in addition to Barbados and Jamaica were proponents for intervention. Thus, from the days following Bishop's death, the Caribbean was politically divided. When the invasion did occur on October 25th, the days that followed would show that other politicians, groups, and individuals were either in support of these leaders' positions or were against it.

Opposition expressed by politicians, groups, and individuals to the position of their respective government

At the political level, opposition to the government's position was relatively moderate. In Trinidad and Tobago, senator George Bovell was perhaps the most vocal, expressing his support and praise to Jamaica, Barbados, the OECS and the U.S. for what they described as "rescuing democracy"⁶⁷. Senator Myers, was more indirect in his criticism, viewing the lack of a full

⁶⁷ Trinidad and Tobago, Parliament, Senate. *Grenada Political Crisis*, Senate, 25 October 1983, pp. 77, 78.

contingent of West Indian troops as robbing the region of any sense of heroism⁶⁸. In other islands, opposition was found in the opposition. Michael Manley for example, accused the country's Prime Minister of setting the stage for 'fascist style' repression...⁶⁹. Notably, Manley's criticism could be understood in the context of his own intimate connections that he had with Bishop and his parties' own socialist tendencies. Criticism also appeared in St. Kitts and Nevis where the opposition Labour Party condemned the government for its decision to send troops without consultation with them⁷⁰.

At the group level, criticisms from groups were seemingly based on intimacy shared with the tenets of the Grenada Revolution as opposed to it being objective. For example, when in 1983 the US and the UWI Mona, Jamaica for instance, a protest by student groups⁷¹ of the intervention⁷². Perhaps the greatest example of disagreement with the Trinidad and Tobago government's position was seen in an organized protest, in what declassified Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) documents revealed was the first pro-US demonstration in Trinidad⁷³. Other groups such as the *Trinidad and Tobago Express*, though not explicit in its criticisms, in an interview with Tom Adams confirmed its support for the invasion as well⁷⁴.

Criticism was more profound at the grassroots and individual level. In Trinidad and Tobago, one editorial for instance, spoke of the government's lack of action⁷⁵ whilst another spoke of

⁶⁸ Trinidad and Tobago, Parliament, Senate. *Grenada Political Crisis*, Senate, 25 October 1983, p. 86.

⁶⁹ "A gov't with no decisions" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 4 November 1983, p.11.

⁷⁰ "Opposition to invasion in St Kitts." *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 27 October 1983, p.17.

⁷¹ These three student groups were: The Union of Democratic Students, The Grenada Students' Association, and the Guild Undergraduates of UWI.

⁷² "Student Groups protest against Grenada Invasion." *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 27 October 1983, p.13.

⁷³ "National Intelligence Daily." CIA archives, 1983, November 2, p.1.

⁷⁴ "We have our own rules in the Caribbean-Adams." *The Trinidad and Tobago Express*, October 30, 1983. p.2.

⁷⁵ "A Gov't with no decisions." *The Trinidad Guardian*, 3 November 1983, p.8.

how this inaction perceivably placed Trinidad and Tobago alongside other totalitarian regimes⁷⁶. In Barbados, the most public of all its criticisms was that of Mighty Gabby's calypso, 'Boots'. It decried Adams' action, rhetorically asking Adams of the logic behind sending troops against the backdrop of various economic challenges⁷⁷. In the media, Adams faced criticisms from the editor of *The Caribbean Contact* who spoke of the dangerous precedent it set and the consequences it would have for the region in the future⁷⁸. Vere Bird of Antigua and Barbuda was not exempt from criticism either. Numerous individuals in their letters to the editor expressed their disagreement with the role of Antigua in the intervention. One such editorial targeted Bird's lack of consultation and decision to send troops⁷⁹. Another editorial targeted Bird's act as one that was dictatorial on the basis that cabinet only approved after Antiguan soldiers had already been sent⁸⁰. *The Jamaica Gleaner* also reported on some persons who held the view that Jamaica had too many problems of its own to be sending troops⁸¹. Thus, whilst admittedly small in number, these voices still provide a greater understanding that within the Caribbean, despite the mass of support that some governments had, there were several voices that stressed opposition to the intervention.

Thus, in assessing the opposition voiced to individuals' government's position, two points stand out. The first one is the discontent that some groups and persons felt at their government for making a decision that was not held in consultation with the people. This is certainly warranted as all these governments, with the exception of Guyana, were democratically elected and thus accountable to the people. The second speaks to the role of the Cold War in fashioning

⁷⁶ Herbert, Harold. "Now T'dad aligns itself with Guyana." *The Trinidad Guardian*, 3 November 1983, p.8.

⁷⁷ *The Mighty Gabby-Boots*. YouTube, Bajanbloom bloom, 10 July 2012.

⁷⁸ Burrows, Reynold A. "Revolution and Rescue in Grenada: An Account of the US-Caribbean Invasion." p 109.

⁷⁹ "US invasion-a shameful plot." *The Outlet*, 28 October 1983, p.1.

⁸⁰ Hall, H. "Grenada's Prime Minister Maurice Bishop-historic visit to the US." *The Outlet*, 28 October 1983, p.3.

⁸¹ "Public support for the invasion." *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 27 October 1983, p.13.

persons' position on how they expect their government to act in relation to events such as these; a telling example of the depth to which the Cold War impacted regional politics and public opinion of it.

Support by politicians, groups, and individuals to their respective government's position

At the political level support appears to have varied throughout the Caribbean. In Trinidad and Tobago for instance political support could have been considered moderate to strong. In the Parliamentary House of Senate's, debate on the Grenada situation, Senator Ashford Sinanan expressed his support of Chambers; albeit one of the few to do so⁸². Notwithstanding this, it seems that the opposition and government both saw eye to eye on this topic of discussion⁸³. Conversely, in Dominica and Guyana, support by the opposition was incredibly strong. In Dominica, there was unanimity with respect to parliamentary approval for their position taken by Eugenia Charles' government. In Guyana, several minority leftist parties in addition to the opposition, supported the Government's lack of participation⁸⁴. Thus, whilst Trinidad and Tobago's opposition appears to have been moderate in its support, in Dominica and Guyana it was strong. Guyana's case is perhaps all the more remarkable given that it speaks to the extent which socialist ideology played in unifying the two against what was a threat to its own ideology.

At the group level, support for each group's respective government was mixed. On one hand, as in Trinidad and Tobago where the government took a non-interventionist position,

⁸² Trinidad and Tobago, Parliament, Senate. *Grenada Political Crisis*, Senate, 25 October 1983, pp. 77, 78.

⁸³ Trinidad and Tobago, Parliament, Senate. *Grenada Political Crisis*, Senate, 25 October 1983, pp. 77, 78.

⁸⁴ "Guyana condemns the invasion." *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 26 October 1983, p. 18.

support was mainly from trade unions and politically affiliated groups to the government. For example, the People's National Movement (PNM) Youth League⁸⁵, OWTU⁸⁶ and the Island Wide Cane Farmer's Trade Union (ICFTU) all supported the government⁸⁷.

At the individual level, support also varied. In Trinidad and Tobago, despite there being arguably widespread support for the intervention, there were few voices that supported the stance taken by the Trinidad and Tobago government. One letter to the editor, wrote of the pride that he felt of the Prime Minister and his decision to object to invasion⁸⁸. Gregory Fernandez, an interviewee, stressed his disapproval of the U.S. led intervention and support for the stand that the government took⁸⁹. In Jamaica, a poll conducted showed that there was widespread support for the intervention in Grenada⁹⁰. *The Jamaica Gleaner* reported that Seaga received support from several individuals when addressing the house of parliament⁹¹. In Antigua and Barbuda, support for the government was seen in *The Worker's Voice*., whereby the church expressed its gratitude to those who intervened⁹².

Reaction of Caribbean populace to OECS, Barbados and Jamaica's decision to invade

Grenada

⁸⁵ "PNM Youth League wants TT Caricom role reviewed." *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 7 November 1983, p.1.

⁸⁶ "OWTU; our position on Grenada" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 12 November 1983, pp.6,7.

⁸⁷ "ICFTU supports Chambers" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 7 November 1983, p.6

⁸⁸ "Today I'm really proud to be a Trini" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 7 November 1983,

⁸⁹ See appendix C for interview with Gregory Fernandez

⁹⁰ "Most Jamaican backed invasion." *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 3 November 1983, p.5.

⁹¹ "Support for the PM." *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 27 October 1983, p.14.

⁹² "What the Church had to say: time to rebuild our national institutions." *The Worker's Voice*, 10 December 1983.

Among the responses and other documentary evidence that exists, the decision to invade Grenada by the OECS, Barbados, and Jamaica in concert with the United States, elicited mixed responses from politicians, groups and individuals.

In the Trinidad and Tobago Parliament, much debate went on in the senate. Senator George Bovell was noted for his decision to support the intervening parties for restoring democracy⁹³. Opposition Senator Ashford Sinanan however posited an opposing view, one that argued that the OECS should not contributed to the invasion ⁹⁴ . Because of what appears to be miscommunication, both Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago voiced their verbal disapproval of one another's motives. An example of this can be seen in the stalemate in trade talks and tension with regards to Trinidad and Tobago's ambassador in Barbados, who the Barbadian Prime Minister accused of lying ⁹⁵. Beyond these countries, Guyana threatened secession from Caricom⁹⁶. It is clear that for Guyana's threat was influenced by the fact that it saw the invasion as a long-term threat to itself and an infringement on what was meant to be the Grenadian people asserting for themselves their own independence.

In support of the action taken by the OECS, Barbados and Jamaica, several organizations, both regional and local, expressed their appreciation for resolving such an issue. In Trinidad and Tobago, the Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago (HATT), voiced its view that Eugenia Charles was a lady who showed the strength of character amid the perceived inaction of the Trinidad and Tobago government⁹⁷⁹⁸. The Farmers and National Workers Group (FNWG)

⁹³ Trinidad and Tobago, Parliament, Senate. *Grenada Political Crisis*, Senate, 25 October 1983, p. 90.

⁹⁴ Trinidad and Tobago, Parliament, Senate. *Grenada Political Crisis*, Senate, 25 October 1983, p. 80.

⁹⁵ "Grenada invasion creates rifts in the Caribbean" *The New York Times*, 13 November 1983, p.21.

⁹⁶ "Burnham warns of breakup" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 1 November 1983, p.7.

⁹⁷ "Keep on trucking Eugenia!" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 2 November 1983 p.21.

⁹⁸ See appendix G

of St. Vincent and the Grenadines expressed thanks to Reagan and condemned those who condemned the invasion.⁹⁹ Other businesses strayed away from offering a position on the matter, possibly to avert potential criticisms, and instead offered to provide aid to those afflicted by the crisis. Companies such as Bermudez, provided food and prominent businessmen such as Michael J. Williams and Mr. Taran Seegobin set up funds to aid in the recovery of Grenada¹⁰⁰. It is important, however, to take note of the religious bodies, such as the Roman Catholic Church's, Archbishop of Trinidad, and Tobago Anthony Pantin, were also involved in these funds¹⁰¹.

In contrast there were several organizations who expressed in varying terms, their vehement disapproval to the invasion, likening it to an 'imperialistic' or an unjust act. One such example, is the Caribbean Council of Churches (CCC). Initially, the CCC expressed its opinion that the invasion was wrong, only to reverse it in the days following, thanking countries for the peace they brought to Grenada¹⁰². Other religious bodies such as the Antigua Christian Council (ACC) shared a similarly ironic tale. In a statement, it spoke of its reversal of its decision and view that the "...US-led intervention was a justifiable one"¹⁰³. It is obvious that as regional bodies they received widespread criticism that caused them to reverse their previous stand¹⁰⁴. In stark contrast however was the OWTU. Its position was strongly worded, postulating that it took a principled stand in condemning the perpetrators and those implicit in the invasion as it infringed on the Grenadian people's "...struggle to chart their own destiny"¹⁰⁵. In a similar context, the Caribbean Union of Teachers (CUT) condemned the U.S. led invasion citing it as a short-sighted

⁹⁹ "Farmers tell Reagan thanks." *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 4 November 1983, p.17.

¹⁰⁰ "Fund launched to help G'da." *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 4 November 1983, p.13.

¹⁰¹ Fund launched to help G'da." *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 4 November 1983, p.13.

¹⁰² "CCC thank God." *The Grenada Newsletter*, 26 November 1983, p.6.

¹⁰³ "ACC agrees after review of issues." *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 19 November 1983 p.5.

¹⁰⁴ "CCC'S Grenada stand leaves it unpopular." *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 14 November 1983, p.6.

¹⁰⁵ "OWTU position on Grenada" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 12 November, 1983, pp.6,7.

approach in inviting the US¹⁰⁶. Similarly, the Communist Worker's Party of Jamaica similarly critiqued and condemned the government for its role in intervening into the affairs of the Grenadian people¹⁰⁷. The Barbados Worker's Union, the largest in the island, was reported to 'moderately' condemn the invasion¹⁰⁸.

Individually, several persons touched on their support and lack thereof for the action taken by the Barbados, Jamaica, and the OECS. On one page, several opinions held intervention and the lack of Trinidad and Tobago support to be embarrassing¹⁰⁹. One interviewee from Trinidad, spoke of his support whereby he stressed that "everybody was saying the same thing that Trinidad should have invaded"¹¹⁰. In Barbados, Burgess¹¹¹ best sums of the Barbadian populace support for the invasion by an assertion made by Jack, a Barbadian, that if someone is threatening you in your own house, it was the responsibility of others to get the police to help you"¹¹². In Jamaica, a poll done showed that 58% of the population was in support of intervention whilst 34% expressed disagreement and 8% having no opinion¹¹³.

It can be best surmised that the region was divided based on the evidence shown. It appears that the morality to which some have cited as a justification for intervening was clouded by the centrality of competing ideologies. This was made clear by the fact of each country, whether at the political, group and or individual level spoke of the significance of democracy or as in other

¹⁰⁶ "CUT-short sighted approach" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 3 November, 1983, p.5.

¹⁰⁷ "Communists attack PM, Manley." *The Jamaica Gleaner*, 28 November 1983, p.14.

¹⁰⁸ Burgess, J. "Most residents of nearby Barbados appear to support Grenada Invasion." *The Washington Post*, 29 October 1983.

¹⁰⁹ "Voices of the people" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 3 November 1983, p.8.

¹¹⁰ See appendix D and E for transcript of this part of the interview with George Joseph and George Joseph Jr.

¹¹¹ Burgess was a journalist for the *Washington Post* at the point in time it was published.

¹¹² Burgess "Most Residents of Nearby Barbados Appear to Support Grenada Invasion." *The Washington Post*, 29 October 1983.

¹¹³ "Most Jamaicans backed invasion" *The Trinidad and Tobago Guardian*, 3 November 1983, p.5.

cases, the ability for a people to select for themselves the political system that they desire. It is abundantly clear that the region's division was predicated not on a lack of concern for Grenadians or the immoral manner in which the PRA assumed power after Bishop's death but rather on the grounds in which Caribbean countries could legitimately help a brother in need without infringing on

CONCLUSION

The study examined the feelings of shock and fear felt by the Caribbean after Maurice Bishop's death. It also examined the division that the region had in the wake of the US led invasion from two standpoints: the local populace's support or opposition to the position taken by the government and the support or opposition that they had to other government's position. The results show that in the region, there was strong sense of shock and fear at all three levels. The feeling of shock was shown to have been not only felt by politicians, groups, and individuals but to have traversed preexisting ideological divides in the region. The fear of radicalism was shown to have been most acute in several countries with the exception being Guyana owing to its socialist background at the time. The positions taken by countries was proven to have had a determinant impact on the position taken by some to support or oppose their own government's position and other Caribbean governments as well. This support or opposition was revealed to be attributable to several factors such as: similarities in ideological beliefs with the Grenada Revolution, the legality of the invasion and the importance of democracy in being reasserted. Thus, this study reveals that in the Caribbean countries examined, there was strong sense of shock and fear of the spread of radicalism. It was also poignantly revealed that the region was divided and multitude of factors, both internal and external that influenced this division.

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APPENDIX A

Interview questions

- Can you briefly recall what the prevailing atmosphere in your country was like following the assassination of Maurice Bishop?
- Did the US invasion of Grenada surprise you?
- Did you have any suspicion that other Caribbean countries were involved in the invasion/
- What was the reaction of the Trinbagonian public to the events in Grenada?
- In relation to the decision taken by (name of the country of the interviewee) to intervene militarily or not (subject to the decision taken), do you agree with it? – Why
- As a small island developing state, do you think that your position and contribution regarding the invasion has in any way been marginalized?
- Following the ending of the emergency CARICOM meeting, it was agreed that as a regional political body, there should be a non-interventionist role, particularly that of a military invasion, in Grenada. Following the US led invasion, was there any thought about the effect this would have for those countries that partook and those that did not?
- Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Belize, and The Bahamas, all opposed the invasion. Do you think that these countries should have had a different position?
- Did relations between your country and the OECS become stronger or weaker?
- Did relations between your country and CARICOM become stronger or weaker?
- In retrospect, following the assassination of Maurice Bishop, is there anything that you wish your country would have done differently?

- Do you think that there is anything that CARICOM and the OECS can learn from the US invasion?

APPENDIX B

The following extract relates to an interview done with Andy Johnson. It consists of his responses as well as the interviewer's own questions as well. It must be noted however that the extract is not chronological and only consists of some parts of the interview.

Interviewer asks Mr. Johnson of his knowledge of internal disunity before the death of Bishop

Interviewee: "...And Don Rojas who was then Bishop's press secretary we were waiting in Antigua to change planes to come to Trinidad and I was telling them about some of what we were hearing about what was happening in n Grenada, you know. repression and so on, people being arrested for all kinds of reasons and so on and the prisons were filled of young people. it was because they didn't want to demonstrably going on along with what was happening, and they were both saying that all those things were part of the counter-revolutionary plot against the regime and so on. So that was in September of 83, within weeks began hearing about the cracks in the firmament of the PRG because by my estimation Bishop had made this commitment to hold elections and regularize the status, the pressure was on by others, by which time it was clear that the PRG was split down the center some of the fellas who went through with Coard, who was more hardline, he and his wife, and they had by that time they were known to have formed an Organization for Revolutionary, Liberation and Education (OREL), and they came up with this plan for joint leadership. Sensibly so one would be prime minister for six months and the next one would prime minister for six months you know, one thing led to another and then we got reports that something was coming down and I was covering parliament on Friday, that was the middle of October and I got several notes from my editors to come back to the office because we want to get you into Grenada tonight and I came back"

Interviewer: Could you recall what was the Trinbagonians reaction to when they heard that Maurice bishop was assassinated?

Interviewee: Well of course people were horrified by about it because it was alien to our understanding of government and leadership. People were horrified and people expressed that... when it happened prime minister George chambers made an announcement about wanting to impose visa restrictions on Grenadian people coming here and sort of isolate Trinidad from Grenada when half of us have grandparents and relatives from Grenada and it was not a popular decision at all. As much as people were concerned about what was going in Grenada, this idea about locking them out people who wanted to come here so that was not a popular decision at all.

APPENDIX C

The following extract relates to an interview done with Gregory Fernandez. It consists of parts of his responses as well as the interviewer's own questions as well. It must be noted however that the extract is not chronological and only consists of some parts of the interview.

Interviewer: The year is 1979, at this point in time what were you doing?

Interviewee: In 1979, I had just gone into UWI...so, I was not radicalized at that point in time. ...While I was on campus, I was introduced to literature to Marxists stuff, Mae Tse-Tung and that kinda [kind of] things and leftist stuff. I also met other guys on the campus who, during that they had different left groups in Trinidad, and they used to be functioning on the campus too and I ended up joining one.

Interviewer: What was that like, joining the group?

Interviewee: Well, they used to have study circles so that you could study and revolutionary thought and thing like that and eventually they introduced me into the organization and that organizations as an underground organization, I was accepted and brought in as a member and they used to have these circles. from there I learnt about Marxism, Leninism, Mae Tse-Tung though, I learned about CLR James, George Padmore, it opened up my mind to viewing the world, during that time I learned about the Russian revolution, the communist manifesto, about Toussaint and his real role in the world, French imperialism, British imperialism, us imperialism, so all those things, it basically opened up my mind to seeing the world from this perspective.

Interviewer: Do you think the government at the time was afraid of radicals?

Interviewee: Very much so.

Interviewer: Why?

Interviewee: I would tell you why. There was an organization coming out of 1970... coming out of 1970 there had more than one tribe. For instance, the National Union of Freedom Fighters or NUFF and... it had NJAC, which was on cultural nationalism, which was African stuff, then it had another organization that broke away from NJAC that most people don't know about, that was called for national movement for true independence the shortening was and that was an underground organization and that was where all the serious radicals was and over the years they penetrated a number of organizations...

APPENDIX D

The following extract relates to an interview done with George ‘Umbala’ Joseph. It consists of parts of his responses as well as the interviewer’s own questions as well. It must be noted however that the extract is not chronological and only consists of some parts of the interview.

Interviewer: Bearing in mind that Williams, the prime minister in 1979 following in the context of what you just said, that is that he sent back the letter, do you think that you were surprised when the US invaded Grenada in 83 that Trinidad’s position was one of non-interference?

Interviewee: Well Trinidad may I tell you, never interfered in the affairs of Grenada during that period, so it was a question of ‘I was not there when the courting had been taking place so now that there is a marriage and divorce, I am still not party to...that marriage and sorts. Now you’d have to untangle that but very seriously you’d have to look into the fact that in common parlance that means I wasn’t there, I didn’t see, I didn’t know, I don’t want to know!

Interviewer: Were you disappointed with that course of actions [Trinidad and Tobago’s government position of non-interference]?

Interviewee: Well, I was not appointed or disappointed. I don’t believe that Trinidad had an input because even the British government, Thatcher was the prime minister at the time and Mr. Reagan was the president of the US, and they had jurisdiction [that is Britain] over Grenada. It was sovereign state, ruled by the crown and they were not informed. They simply invaded and the excuse was as is international was to save American lives. One must remember at the time there was the St. George’s School of Medicine and there were more Americans in that compound than there were Grenadians personnel so the excuse was legitimate.

Interviewer: When Maurice Bishop was killed, George chambers at that point in time, he implemented a visa policy where Grenadians coming to Trinidad you had to have a visa, I am not sure if u know of that policy that he implemented.?

Interviewee: That was an easy thing because there were Grenadians whose parents and children were there, and it was rather, I wud not call it humanitarian ground as much as an inevitable feature that they would want to come back to their families and I don't know nor would I pretend because George chambers by that time had disbanded the national advisory councils...that we were no longer advisors, be that as it may, these people would have families and they would like to bring them in as the case may be and the personnel that was so appointed would determine if they were entitled to visas and passage or granted visas to come to Trinidad rather than as they say in Grenada wash your foot and come.

At a later point in the interview, the interviewee in response to one of the interviewers' question slightly deviates and touches on a prominent topic

Interviewee: There were those who were fearful that communism would have taken whole of the Caribbean through Grenada and there were reasons for that and fortunately it was not as inevitable as people thought. If you are asking me if it was a good thing or bad thing, I would say that look at what has happened subsequently.

APPENDIX E

The following extract relates to an interview done with George Joseph Junior. It consists of parts of his responses as well as the interviewer's own questions as well. It must be noted however that the extract is not chronological and only consists of some parts of the interview.

Interviewer: Can you tell me how you came to know about the Grenada revolution?

Interviewee: Through the media...television, papers... 7 o'clock news...

Interviewer: Did it come as a surprise?

Interviewee: Yes, it was. Those kinds of things don't happen in the British Caribbean. Countries once ruled by Britain. Oh, let me rechange that, it was radio Trinidad news, audio, therefore.

Interviewer: ... from 1979 to 1983 you were a student in CIC?

Interviewee: I was in Maria Regina in 79 and in 1980 I went to CIC.

Interviewer: From that time from 1979 to 1983, did you follow up on the events in Grenada?

Interviewee: I had to because every Christmas we used to spend it in Isle of Caille [an island positioned north of Grenada].

Interviewer: ...with the fact that Grenadians were stigmatized and the butt of jokes [this was his opinion before and hence formed the foundation of this question], essentially did you have an intimate relationship or connection with what was going on?

Interviewee: Not in 1979, not in 1989, 1981, 1982, but from 1983, I became connected to Grenada more intimately because I noticed changes with the average Grenadian when I went

there for Christmas. For example, [interviewee names person to which the interviewee is not allowed to reveal] was an up and coming young socialist and saying things like Grenada go beat this country and that country and defeat Trinidad in a war and I could not say anything because you would see the military presence every time you looked out of the window and saw the main street in Gouvyae. There was also a situation where there were posters everywhere saying to support the People's Revolutionary Government and one of the things that Bishop wanted to do was to change the narrative of Grenadians being illiterate. He put [placed] more and more Grenadians in school and taught them to read and write...

Interviewer: So in your own personal opinion, how would you say the events taking place in Grenada at least what Maurice Bishop was attempting to do had positives?

Interviewee: At least I was mature enough to realize that Grenada was not the backward place that we Trinidadians would like it to be, and Grenadians were not as stupid and naive as we thought that they were. However, we saw that, when I say we, I mean those with eyes, saw that Grenada was improving, agriculture, tourism, light manufacturing. but most of the products in Grenadian's parlors and shops came from Trinidad every Wednesday they would bring down agricultural products to Trinidad and every Thursday they would leave with their boats overfilled with products sailing back to Grenada to offload...

Interviewer: The time is now coming down to October 1983, and you did say that in this year you were becoming more and more and concerned or at least it was more intimate, in October of that year, how did you keep abreast with what was going on?

Interviewee: Well, the 7 O'clock news showed that on the Wednesday night news that people were being killed and there were rumors that Coard and a group of hardliners had taken over and

that Bishop was under arrest and I came from Diego Martin in a car, so when I wud dropping off in Abercromby street, I would walk across oxford street down Pembroke street into St Mary's into my form four class. ... I would reach in school quarter to seven and we were discussing this, and one guy came with the Express showing bishop arrested and he held up the newspaper and about an half an hour later another guy came in the classroom with another coy of the express that bishop was murdered. So, there were two Express front pages that day and had I been able to have the foresight I would have gone out and bought newspapers back then and make sure and get two copies of the express and keep that. but the bottom line was that we were interested because whether we wanted to amidst it or not, we had connections to Grenada, if not family wise at least connections because we were all British colonies, once British colonies and some were saying that what could happen in Grenada could happen in Trinidad.

APPENDIX F

The following extract relates to an interview done with Anderson Johnson, an author of several books on politics in St. Lucia. It consists of parts of his responses as well as the interviewer's own questions as well. It must be noted however that the extract is not chronological and only consists of some parts of the interview.

Interviewer: In the years following independence, I believe that there were two major parties in St. Lucia, correct?

Interviewee: Yes

Interviewer: Right. These two major parties can you tell me what were their political ideologies?

Interviewee: Well, ah, there is the United Workers Party (UWP) [where] one of its founders was Sir John Compton who was the first and only premier of St. Lucia and he was the first prime minister, and he led the country to independence. So, the UWP party in the minds of a lot of St. Lucians were a conservative party and more geared more geared... towards the middle class and upper class whereas the labour party was considered the party of the labour class; the party of the masses so to speak. For example, one of its founders and its leaders George Charles, one St. Lucia's airport is named after him, arose from the labour union and in the 40s and 50s you know the political process in the region... so George Charles, who was a major figure in the St. Lucia labour party came out of the labour union in the 40s and from the labor union he transitioned into the St, Lucia labor party. So, the labour party is very much grounded in the labour movement...

Interviewer asks at this point if youth were involved in the labour party in the late 20

Interviewee: Yes, it had massive support because they were speaking the language of the youth. They were revolutionary radicals. They raised a lot of consciousness so when they came to power in 1979, it was like youth movement because also at the time they were the most educated political party and government that we had up until then...well George Oldum was in his 40s whereas Compton was at least a generation, maybe ten years older than Odum so they appealed much more to the young people

Interviewer: With that being said and the popularity that they had among the young people um i believe that they didn't stay in power too long?

Interviewee: Yes, because they had a power struggle...but back to your question you see when these fellas [persons] was [were] campaigning for the 1979 elections because of their own rhetoric because for example Peter Josie who was a part of the St. Lucia labour...he would go on the platform saying that if we cannot get into power by law we will get into power by violence. He and George Odum were basically seen as the in actuality the leaders of the St. Lucia party... but they were making people scared because they were talking about revolution their whole stance was what seems to suggest violence and so forth, getting into power by any means necessary...

APPENDIX G

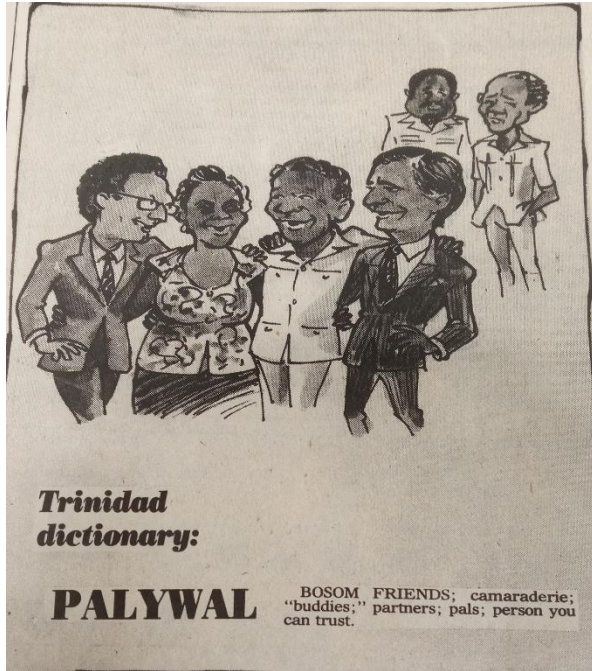


Image of Tom Adams, Eugenia Charles, Edward Seaga and Ronald Reagan, with a despondent looking Forbes Burnham and George Chambers in the Trinidad and Tobago Guardian, 4 November 1983.

Source: National Library and Information System Authority

