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THE WHITE HOUSE

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 FROM WHSR (NAME) (EXTENSION) (ROOM NUMBER)

MESSAGE DESCRIPTION GRENADA

<u>TO (AGENCY)</u>	<u>DELIVER TO:</u>	<u>DEPT/ROOM NO.</u>	<u>EXTENSION</u>
<u>A</u>	<u>DUANE Claridge</u>		
<u>A</u>	<u>BOB GATES</u>		

REMARKS:

NSC review completed.

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GRENADA

Background

Following a full review of U.S. policy toward Grenada conducted by the IG (Core Group) and NSPG last May and June, the President approved an action plan:

- Approach the Bishop government and offer better relations should it address certain concerns: stop its anti-U.S. rhetoric, improve its human rights record, and adopt a more truly non-aligned foreign policy.
- Should the approach produce no positive results, consult with key Congressional leaders about our concerns, especially regarding the threat to the security of the Eastern Caribbean and to U.S. supply routes posed by the Cuban-backed Grenadian government.
- Take steps to relocate the privately-owned American medical school from Grenada to another island, thus depriving the PRG of approximately \$5 to \$6 million in foreign exchange annually.



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The ninety-day testing period which followed a high level conversation in Washington in late June with Bishop failed to show any significant change in Grenadian policies. The remaining steps of the President's decision were in the process of being implemented when the current crisis developed in Grenada.

Current Situation

The outcome of the power struggle between Deputy Prime Minister Coard and Prime Minister Bishop is uncertain.

Coard, who lacks popular support but leads the radical faction of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) and is viewed as a hardline Marxist ideologue, apparently engineered a drastic reduction in Bishop's power through moves inside the NJM's Central Committee. Bishop was accused of employing dictatorial methods, of not moving fast enough to consolidate the revolution, and of failing to socialize economic and political

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structures. The officer corps of the People's Revolutionary Army (PRA) seems to be backing Coard; however, the PRA's rank and file may still be loyal to Bishop. The Cubans, who have a presence of about 500 personnel, consisting of some 12 military advisors, 25 medical personnel, 20 diplomatic/technical personnel, and 400 construction workers at the new airport, seem to be avoiding taking sides at this point. They are trying to mediate the dispute to insure that factional infighting does not break out into a divisive civil war -- a situation which would endanger their position in Grenada.

Some of Bishop's supporters have vowed to oppose Coard's ascendancy. Violence has broken out. At one point Bishop was reported to have been freed by a mob of his supporters who marched on the PRA's headquarters at Ft. Rupert. Troops fired into the crowd. Bishop was reportedly recaptured and possibly wounded and at least four people were killed. We have no information indicating that any of the violence has been aimed at the 800-1,000 U.S. citizens on the island. The American community, the majority of whom are students attending the St. George's Medical School, have not been targets of the government in the past and have experienced little or no hostility from the general population.

Should the disorders continue to spread, however, U.S. citizens could be endangered. We have information that the Venezuelans have ordered the evacuation of the dependents of their embassy. Amembassy Bridgetown has asked that we begin to make preparations for a possible emergency evacuation.

Barbadian Prime Minister Adams has offered to provide Barbadian Defence Force personnel in an effort to rescue Bishop, but indicated that he would be amenable to joining with others for more ambitious evacuation and stabilization plans.

Issues for Review

Whether a capability for better information concerning the situation in Grenada could be developed.

Whether contingency plans for emergency evacuation under hostile circumstances are adequate.

Whether the safe evacuation of U.S. citizens will require disarming the local forces.

How would the U.S. react to Cuban military intervention in Grenada?

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State is exploring the possibility of stationing a full-time, accredited officer in Grenada to monitor the situation continuously and provide consular services to the American community.

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Emergency Evacuation Plans

JCS has alerted CINCLANT to the possibility of an emergency evacuation of American citizens under hostile conditions and has undertaken to staff out various plans. Depending on the location of forces [] and the urgency of demands at the time of the evacuation become necessary, the use of amphibious forces would be the preferred method. Should time-urgency demands make it impossible to employ amphibious forces, airborne forces could be deployed to accomplish the mission. JCS is developing more complete information on the potential threat and the force level necessary to provide adequate security during an emergency evacuation.

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State would handle guidance to the media and the Hill in the event of an evacuation.

Disarming Local Forces

If the situation deteriorates further and American lives are threatened, triggering the emergency evacuation plans by the U.S. military, should we take the additional steps necessary to disarm local forces in order to complete the mission?

On the up side:

--The U.S. would bring home the point that where our security interests are threatened, we will not hesitate to employ the necessary force to protect them.

--This could have a salutary effect on events in Central America since U.S. willingness to use military power under critical circumstances would not be lost on the Nicaraguans and the Cubans.

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--The Caribbean would be freed of a pro-Cuban, pro-Marxist dictatorship and Grenada's small neighbors would be spared from the threats of subversion emanating from the island.

On the down side:

--There are no immediate alternatives to the current Grenadian political leadership. Former Prime Minister Eric Gairy is totally discredited and unpopular. There is a dearth of leadership in the disunified exile community.

--Though the Grenadian army (1,500) and the militia (2,000 - 3,000) would be not be an effective fighting force, some American casualties could be expected.

--Reaction from the Congress, public, and the media would probably be negative, unless a clear case of "protecting American lives" could be made.

--Cuban military and other personnel in Grenada might have to be disarmed and neutralized. Castro (and possibly the Soviets) might feel compelled to react by taking some sort of retaliatory action.

--A unilateral U.S. move would create a negative reaction in the Hemisphere, though many (especially Grenada's neighbors) would be secretly and perhaps openly relieved.

--In the long term the War Powers Resolution and other pieces of legislation could likely become the target for additional restrictive amendments.

Direct Cuban Military Intervention

Should the Cubans intervene militarily, it would indicate that the situation is certainly out of control. By definition then the situation would justify the emergency evacuation of American citizens, i.e., the implementation of the JCS contingency plan for evacuation under hostile conditions.

Advantages:

--We could persuasively justify our action to Congress and the public as necessary to protect American citizens.

--It might encourage the Grenadians to oppose the Cubans as an interventionist force.

--It might induce the Cubans to show more caution about their own role.

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Disadvantages:

--There would probably be casualties, both civilian and military.

--The U.S. would be accused of intervening in Grenadian political domestic affairs.

--It would detract attention from the Cuban military intervention.

Actions to Be Authorized

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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4. DOD should develop the contingency plan to disarm the local forces.

5. When and if a decision is made to evacuate U.S. citizens by use of U.S. military assets, State should inform immediately our Latin American and Caribbean friends as well as other allies.

6. The RIG should assess precisely what the U.S. should do in the event of direct Cuban military intervention in Grenada.

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8. State should plan a strategy to brief Congress and the media if an emergency evacuation is ordered.

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