

Invasion by U.S. led to chaos, Canadians say

By JEFF SALLOT
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OTTAWA — The invasion of Grenada by heavily armed U.S. Marines was strongly denounced yesterday by six Canadian international aid workers who watched the political and military conflict unfold on the island.

The CUSO workers, who returned to Canada on Sunday night on a Canadian Forces flight, said yesterday that life was returning to normal on Grenada last week after a military coup and there was no need for a U.S. invasion.

"Our lives only became endangered at five o'clock (in the morning) on Tuesday, Oct. 25, when the marines began landing in Grenada and when it became impossible for us to leave the island," CUSO worker Barbara Thomas of Toronto told a news conference.

The six CUSO workers, along with 15 other Canadians, including families with young children, were able to get off the island only at the end of last week.

Miss Thomas, who had lived on the island for two months before the invasion, said she discounted U.S. claims that the marines were sent in to restore order. "We saw a total disintegration of law and order" as a result of the invasion, she said. The marines brought with them an end to any "civil or moral authority."

By last Thursday the situation in St. George's, the Grenadian capital, was so chaotic that marines stood by as hungry citizens, unable to find food elsewhere, looted stores, she said.

A Grenadian friend reported to the CUSO workers he had seen another Grenadian who was supposed to be in prison on a murder charge out roaming the streets. The way the CUSO workers got the story from Grenadians, the marines released criminals from the jail sometime on Wednesday or Thursday and the convicts were leading the looting of stores and private homes on Friday.

The CUSO workers said they are concerned for the personal

friends because the marines have started to ask questions about who on the island had supported the Marxist regime.

"The big blood-letting could very well start now," said Harvey Totten of British Columbia. He and the other CUSO workers said they doubted free elections could be held so long as U.S. troops were on the island.

They said the Canadian Government should take up the idea of participating with other Commonwealth countries in a peacekeeping or observer force.

Sue Mitchell, a food and nutrition worker who has served in Grenada for almost two years, said the CUSO group became concerned on Wednesday, Oct. 19, when a Grenadian military council executed Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and other senior Cabinet ministers and imposed a curfew throughout the island of 110,000. By the next morning, however, the initial fear began to abate as the CUSO workers observed that Grenadians were travelling the streets without being fired upon by the military.

That Friday the curfew was lifted long enough for people to go to the stores for food. Grenadian troops loyal to the new regime kept out of sight during this four-hour period.

The military council seemed to be softening its position and during a radio broadcast on Sunday night, Oct. 23, it was announced the curfew would be lifted again the following morning. People were to resume their normal business activities and some form of interim government would be established, said Marlene Green, a CUSO field staff officer who has worked in the region for four years.

Miss Thomas said that while Grenadians were shocked by the assassinations of the previous week, by Monday they felt there was a chance to peacefully resolve their own internal problems and went about their ordinary business.

The CUSO workers also maintained that resistance faced by the U.S. troops came

t Cubans.