

GRENADA PUBLIC DIPLOMACY THEMESBasic Situation

- The U.S. is cooperating with six Caribbean nations -- Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia and St. Vincent (the last four members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States - OECS) to protect lives and restore order in Grenada.
- This collective effort has military and political dimensions. U.S. is necessarily key to the military aspects; just as importantly, the Caribbean nations are key to the political aspects -- setting up a provisional government under law.
- Inaction would have aggravated the situation and increased the dangers to foreign nationals and regional peace.
- U.S. troops will leave as soon as possible. We cannot yet predict how soon that will be.

Political Aspects

- The murder of Prime Minister Bishop and his colleagues led to the disintegration of effective government in Grenada.
- Caribbean leaders believed that Bishop was eliminated because he might have held elections and led a democratic opening that could have reduced the island's growing militarization under Cuban control.
- Judging that this situation constituted an immediate threat to their peace and security, they determined on October 21 to act and sought our assistance.
- They made clear to us that they were convinced a further, violent internal power struggle was likely, and that whatever regime emerged would be dictatorial.

Humanitarian Concerns

- The brutal behavior and record of members of the RMC, and the absence of any indication that they were prepared to function as a government, led to grave concern about the safety of the nearly 1000 Americans and other foreigners in Grenada.
- Our concerns for safety of U.S. citizens were heightened by a shoot-on-sight 24-hour curfew, looting that occurred when that curfew was temporarily lifted on Friday October 21st, and efforts by some residents to charter boats and flee.

Strategic Aspects

-- Grenada was the only country in the Eastern Caribbean with a defense (as opposed to a constabulary) force. Grenada's military forces were 5 times larger than Barbados's and 50% larger than Jamaica's. In addition, Cuban armed forces had secretly established fortifications, arms caches, and military communications facilities.

-- Our ability to cooperate with governments in preserving peace and stability in a area of strategic importance to the United States.

Legal Authority

-- U.S. also acted to ensure safety of U.S. and foreign nationals -- such humanitarian actions long recognized as consistent with international law.

-- Treaty establishing OECS is regional agreement concerned inter alia with collective security. OECS members are not parties to Rio Treaty; OECS Treaty is in effect their collective security agreement.

-- The Governor General of Grenada made a confidential direct appeal to the OECS to take action to restore order on the island. As the sole remaining authoritative representative of government on Grenada, his appeal for action carried exceptional moral and legal weight.

-- Article 8 of OECS Treaty authorizes coordination for collective defense, and was basis for unanimous Oct. 23 request for outside aid.

-- OAS Charter Articles 22 (maintenance of peace and security) and 28 (situation endangering peace of America) allow collective measures pursuant to collective security agreements. (UN Article 52 expressly authorizes such arrangements).

-- Under OAS Article 22, such measures are not violations of Article 18 and 20 prohibitions against intervention and use of force.

-- Action was taken to restore order, not dictate political system (not analogous to Brezhnev Doctrine of perpetuating "socialist" governments).

Current Military and Political Situation

-- The Governor-General of Grenada is unharmed, and using his authority as the last remaining Constitutional official to work with the OECS to restore order and develop functioning institutions.

-- Organized Cuban resistance is the major factor in delaying termination of military phase and beginning of the political phase.

-- Evacuation of foreign nationals continues. The accounts of conditions in Grenada and praise for their rescuers by those who have reached the U.S. speak for themselves.