

## **The United States' Opportunistic Foreign Policy: Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada as a Case Study**

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**Abstract:** *The US meddling abroad can take the shape of a direct military invasion such as in Grenada in October 1983. The Reagan Administration and its supporters regarded operation Urgent Fury with much satisfaction. For them, the invasion was an ideal example of a successful use of US military power. Reagan went, then, to Grenada to rescue US students, to end the Soviet-Cuban involvement, and to restore order and democracy. Accordingly, the invasion was valuable for the US strategic interests as well as for the Grenadians themselves. For the critics, in contrast, the Marines landed in Grenada essentially to break an ambitious socialist program, to install a pro-US government, and to send a warning to the other countries of the region. Sorting out the pros and cons of the Grenadian invasion is an important part of reaching conclusions about the appropriateness of Washington's action. So, was the 'Rescue Mission' in Grenada intended to rescue democracy and US credibility or US global economic interests? I will try to provide an answer through my analysis of the invasion's surroundings, and especially through an examination of the declared as well as the undeclared objectives behind it.*

**Keywords:** *American Foreign Policy / Latin America / Grenada / Operation Urgent Fury*

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The path leading to the October 1983 invasion of Grenada commenced in 1979, when Maurice Bishop and the New Jewel Movement (NJM) ousted the despotic Prime Minister Eric Gairy and established the Peoples' Revolutionary Government of Grenada. The Carter Administration reacted coolly to the Grenadian revolution and withheld recognition of the new government until free elections were held. The Carter Administration was concerned about Grenada's drift towards the Eastern bloc, but took no noteworthy action against the new government.

When the Reagan team came into power, US-Grenadian relations turned outright hostile. The administration's ideologues saw the Grenadian revolution as a worrying advance of what they perceived as a Soviet-Cuban conspiracy to spread communism through Latin America. In April 1982, President Reagan accused Grenada of having joined the Soviet Union and Cuba "to spread the virus of Marxism-Leninism in the region".<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, the Reagan White House took a very antagonistic approach toward the NJM. It refused to recognize the Grenadian government or its new ambassador in Washington. Furthermore, the Reagan Administration increased its diplomatic, economic, and military pressure upon Grenada. To back up a diplomatic campaign to isolate Grenada, Washington suspended all bilateral aid, excluded Grenada from its Caribbean Basin Initiative, and tried to block multilateral aid to the Bishop government. On the other hand, *the Washington Post* reported in 1983 that the CIA had proposed an anti-Grenadian covert action plan that was described as "economic destabilization affecting the political viability of the government".<sup>3</sup> Though it was not proven that the CIA had actually put its plan into practice, there is no doubt that the US economic pressure represented an obstacle to Bishop's revolutionary socio-economic programs.

In addition to such programs of economic pressure and diplomatic isolation, the Reagan Administration launched a campaign of military intimidation. In effect, the US military staged a series of provocative military exercises in the Caribbean in the early 1980s. In October 1981, for example, US military forces carried out an exercise code-named "Amber and the Amberdines" -obviously a reference to Grenada and the nearby Grenadines-, which simulated the invasion and occupation of a small Caribbean island.<sup>4</sup> As a result, Grenada, which was more and more worried about its national security, built stronger ties with the Eastern bloc,

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), p. 110.

<sup>3</sup> Cited in Lars Schoultz, *National Security and U.S. Policy toward Latin America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 244.

<sup>4</sup> Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy, op. cit.*, p. 110.

## The United States' Opportunistic Foreign Policy: Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada as a Case Study

especially Cuba. As Colgate University Professor Max Hilaire put it, "President Reagan's continuing hostility against Grenada, and the possibility of a direct US intervention pushed Grenada to align even closer to the Soviet-Cuban camp".<sup>5</sup> In effect, after its several attempts at negotiation were rejected by Washington, Grenada had little choice but to turn for assistance to US rivals. Then, the Reagan Administration used the existence of Eastern bloc assistance as an argument to give reason for a military action.

In addition to its role in driving Grenada closer towards the Communist bloc, Washington's antagonist approach had a more or less significant influence on the Grenadian political events. Commenting on the domestic consequences of Washington's anti-Grenada policy, the left magazine *NACLA* wrote in 1984:

The groundwork for invasion was prepared in part by the years of US pressure on the Grenadian revolution. A small island...was squeezed until it broke. Economic pressure from Washington contributed to the administrative and financial tensions within the NJM leadership. The oscillation of US diplomacy, from menace to overture and back again, played shrewdly upon political divisions within the regime.<sup>6</sup>

In 1983, Maurice Bishop's hold on power began to weaken in the face of persistent dissension from hardliners in the NJM. This dissonance was hardened by the failure of Bishop's reconciling visit to Washington. In mid-1983, the head of the Grenadian government traveled to Washington in the hope of meeting President Reagan or Vice-president Bush. Key Administration officials refused to see him, however, and Bishop returned home empty-handed. A positive gesture from the White House might have permitted Bishop to return home with some evidence of success to assuage his critics. The failure of Bishop's rapprochement initiative, however, provoked even greater divisions within the central committee of the NJM, which led to his fall.<sup>7</sup>

In October 1983, the NJM's extremists placed Bishop under house arrest and then murdered him. And on October 20, the Revolutionary Military Council proclaimed itself in charge.<sup>8</sup> The Reagan Administration interpreted the ouster of Bishop as a dangerous turn to the extreme left. The Reagan officials speculated that Cuba had masterminded the coup and that Grenada would be opened fully to Cuban influence. The Reagan Administration was also concerned about the safety of the approximately 1000 US medical students on the island.<sup>9</sup>

On October 23, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) sent a written request for US assistance with an intervention against Grenada. President Reagan immediately signed the formal directive for operation 'Urgent Fury'. In the early hours of October 25, several thousand US troops landed on the island. It took three days for the Marines to secure the island and eliminate most of the armed resistance. Approximately 100 to 200 Grenadians, 50 to 100 Cubans, and 20 to 30 Americans were killed.<sup>10</sup> In the wake of the military invasion, the US government set up an active diplomatic and military presence in Grenada to direct a political transition to an elected, pro-US government. The US-supported and US-financed 1984 elections brought the pro-US Herbert Blaize to the Prime Ministership. With a friendly government in place, the US political and economic involvement was sharply reduced and the last of the US troops left the island in mid-1985.<sup>11</sup>

The official objectives of the October 1983 invasion were the following: (1) the protection of US citizens, (2) the end of Cuban and Soviet involvement in the island, and (3) the restoration of order and democratic rule. All these justifications, though vigorously supported by the Reagan Administration, apparently share similar shortcomings.

First, the White House addressed the need to evacuate the American students who were supposedly in danger. The situation in Grenada after Bishop's murder was naturally troubling to an Administration concerned about avoiding another Iran-style hostage situation. Nevertheless, the students themselves did not feel threatened and did not ask for help. Until the US invasion, charter planes were leaving the island and the students were free to leave.<sup>12</sup> US diplomats in the region reported over the weekend before the invasion that "US students in Grenada were, for the most part, unwilling to leave or be evacuated".<sup>13</sup> Moreover, when rumors began to circulate of a pending US military action, the Ruling Military Council sent a diplomatic note to the US

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<sup>5</sup>Max Hilaire, *International Law and the US Military Intervention* (The Hague: Kluwer International, 1997), p. 79.

<sup>6</sup>Editorial, "A Lovely Piece of Real Estate", *NACLA Report on the Americas*, November/December 1984, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup>Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy*, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

<sup>8</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 113.

<sup>12</sup>William Blum, *Killing Hope* (Monroe: Common Courage Press, 1995), p. 272.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*

## The United States' Opportunistic Foreign Policy: Operation Urgent Fury in Grenada as a Case Study

reassuring Washington that the lives and property of all Americans and other foreign citizens in Grenada would be fully protected.<sup>14</sup>

Despite the questionable nature of the threats facing American students, the possibility that Reagan and his advisers simply believed them and were unreceptive to contrary information cannot be dismissed. However, the manner in which the Reagan Administration acted to achieve this expressed goal -the security of US students- suggests that such a concern was at least secondary.<sup>15</sup> Even analysts that defend the security and national interest justification for the invasion are direct on this point:

The US could have airlifted the students to safety if that had been its sole intention. The fact that military commanders and soldiers did not know where the different sections of the campus were located even when they landed days later suggests not much real effort was made to ascertain their exact locations. Rather the US wanted to be part of the invading force under the right circumstances.<sup>16</sup>

Actually, it could even be argued that rejecting diplomatic overtures and then invading the island without knowing the location of the students or even the location of the campus put the students in even greater danger.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, the US invasion could not be considered as a genuine 'Rescue Mission', for the simple fact that its forces remained in Grenada long after US citizens had been evacuated. Accordingly, the fear of mischief to the US students could hardly be interpreted as the root motivation behind the military action. It was, at most, a secondary objective, "the straw that broke the camel's back".<sup>18</sup> Its main function was to obtain the US public's sympathy for the military action.

Second, the Reagan Administration focused on the anticommunist basis of the invasion. In an address to the nation on October 27, President Reagan maintained that before the US invasion, "Grenada was a Soviet-Cuban colony being readied as a major military bastion to export terror and undermine democracy. We got there just in time".<sup>19</sup> The Cuban presence in Grenada would threaten US security, Reagan claimed. Yet, the Cubans were unable even to save Maurice Bishop and his government, which Cuba had warmly supported. Moreover, the Cuban government had started to keep its distance vis-à-vis the Military Revolutionary Council which had overthrown Bishop. As for the Soviet Union, its non-reaction to the invasion proved that it considered Grenada, and Central America in general, of trivial politico-strategic interest. The US invasion of a real 'Soviet colony' or a Soviet 'major military bastion' would surely have deserved more than an official condemnation.

The cornerstone of the Reagan Administration's anti-communist basis for the invasion was the new airport built in Grenada, which, Washington charged, was intended as a military facility for the Russians and Cubans. Seven months before ordering the invasion, in a televised speech defending his defense budget, Reagan warned the American people:

On the small island of Grenada at the southern end of the Caribbean chain, the Cubans, with Soviet financing and backing, are in the process of building an airfield with a 10,000 foot runway. Grenada doesn't even have an air force. Who is it intended for? The Caribbean is a very important passageway for our international commerce and military lines of communication. More than half of all American oil imports now pass through the Caribbean. [...] The Soviet-Cuban militarization of Grenada, in short, can only be seen as power projection into the region, and it is in this important economic and strategic area that we are trying to help the governments of El Salvador, Costa Rica, Honduras, and others in their struggles for democracy against guerillas supported through Cuba and Nicaragua.<sup>20</sup>

The US government's pre-invasion public relations campaign relied on a key terminology [heavy Soviet and Cuban presence, possible threats to the US economic and strategic interests, possible threats to the 'democratic allies' in the area...] in order to make a tiny, remote island abruptly turn out to be of extreme vitality to the US

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<sup>14</sup>Max Hilaire, *International Law and the US Military Intervention*, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>15</sup> Douglass Van Belle, "Opportunistic Foreign Policy and the Political Management of the News Media Content: The Case of Grenada", *Southeastern Political Review*, June 1998, pp. 379-400.

<sup>16</sup>Reynold Burrows, *Revolution and Rescue in Grenada* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), p. 76.

<sup>17</sup> Douglass Van Belle, "Opportunistic Foreign Policy", *op. cit.*, p. 10.

<sup>18</sup>Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>19</sup>Cited in *Ibid*, p. 113.

<sup>20</sup> Cited in Christopher Dickey, "Central America: From Quagmire to Gaudron?", *Foreign Affairs*, 1983, p. 689.

national interests, and, thus, pave the way for the military action. Washington's ideologues portrayed the Cuban accord to help construct the Point Salines airport as a Communist challenge to US security. Once that perception had been established in Washington, US policy was designed to protect US security interests by invading the sovereign Grenada. Yet, while there were technical aides from the Eastern bloc working on the airport project, the idea that the airport being built was an extension of Soviet and Cuban military power is questionable, given that the primary economic justification of the construction project was to bring US tourists to the island. It is arguable that the only reason the Soviets were involved in the project at all was that the US had refused to participate.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the Soviets and Cubans were not the only foreign contributors to the airport. Financial support came from several other sources including Western Europe. The prime contractor was neither Cuban nor Russian but rather the Plessey Company, a British engineering firm.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, the British engineers who designed the airport insisted that they had done so to civilian specifications and that there were none of the special technical facilities needed for military exploitation.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, the perception of a Grenadian military threat seemed to be at least exaggerated. Indeed, US officials themselves later acknowledged that they had overestimated the Cuban-Soviet involvement in Grenada. In November 1983, *theNew York Times* reported that

Officials of the Reagan Administration acknowledge that, in their effort to rally public support for the invasion of Grenada, they may have damaged the government's credibility by making sweeping charges about Soviet and Cuban influence on the island.<sup>24</sup>

The US government's third declared concern was 'the promotion of democracy'. Even though a noble cause, democracy promotion seemed to be more driven towards US domestic consumption. In fact, various foreign policy experts maintain that "the Administration's oft-proclaimed interest in promoting democracy was at most a very peripheral concern".<sup>25</sup> Moreover, for the Reagan Administration, democracy in Grenada consisted of little more than elections. The electoral process, which followed the invasion, was closely supervised and even covertly influenced to ensure it produced a moderate, pro-US government.<sup>26</sup>

For the Reagan Administration, operation 'Urgent Fury' was not only fair but also legal. Washington justified the intervention's legitimacy on the following grounds: (1) to protect the lives of American nationals, (2) to respond to an invitation issued by the Grenadian Governor-General, identified as the sole remaining authority on the island, and (3) to support the OECS' regional security arrangement.<sup>27</sup> Nevertheless, all these legal justifications share similar deficiencies.

First, the US government consistently argued that its action in Grenada was justified on humanitarian grounds. At a UN General Assembly session called to consider the situation in Grenada, US Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick contended that

The use of force by the task force was lawful under international law and the UN charter, because it was undertaken to protect American nationals from a clear and present danger.<sup>28</sup>

According to International Law experts, however, there are no legal bases for the use of force by one state to rescue its nationals in another state. Article 2(4) of the UN Charter prohibits the use of force in international relations and Article 51 provides for self-defense only if an armed attack occurs. There was no armed attack against the US, nor had any of its nationals been threatened.<sup>29</sup>

Washington also argued that its action was legal by virtue of an invitation issued by the Governor General of Grenada, Sir Paul Scoon. Yet, both the constitutional authority of the Governor General, who is appointed by the British Queen to his largely ceremonial position, as well as the scope of his invitation were the subject of serious criticism.<sup>30</sup> A few days after the invasion, the British press reported that the British Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, "was emphatic that there had been no request for intervention from Sir Paul Scoon".<sup>31</sup> Howe added that "Scoon had been seen by a British diplomat the day before the invasion and had not

<sup>21</sup> Douglass Van Belle, "Opportunistic Foreign Policy", *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>22</sup> Lars Schoultz, *National Security and U.S. Policy toward Latin America*, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

<sup>23</sup> Christopher Dickey, "Central America: From Quagmire to Gauldron?", *op. cit.*, p. 691.

<sup>24</sup> Cited in William Blum, *Killing Hope*, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

<sup>25</sup> Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy*, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Max Hilaire, *International Law and the US Military Intervention*, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 84.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>31</sup> Cited in William Blum, *Killing Hope*, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

mentioned any such desire".<sup>32</sup> Interviewed later by the **BBC**, Scoon himself said that an invasion was "the last thing" he wanted.<sup>33</sup>

A third legal justification provided by the Reagan Administration for intervening in Grenada was that the US was invited by several members of the OECS to intervene militarily. Ambassador Kirkpatrick informed the UN Security Council that the collective action so undertaken "fully comported with relevant provisions of the UN Charter, which accords regional organizations the authority to undertake collective action".<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, serious questions were raised regarding the legality of the US/OECS collective action in Grenada. While the OECS Treaty calls for 'collective defense' in the event of external aggression, it makes no provision for seeking external assistance against a member state.<sup>35</sup> The frequently cited paragraph eight of the OECS Charter allows for military action only if member states were unanimous. That was obviously not the case, since Grenada itself is an OECS member.

In a word, although the Reagan Administration's moral arguments for the invasion could be subjected to debate, the same could not be said about its legal justifications. Both the UN Charter and the OAS Charter prohibit external intervention in the affairs of other sovereign states. Concerning the invasion's legality under international law, political science professor Max Hilaire gathers a large amount of evidence and then concludes his chapter devoted to "International Law and the US-led international law in Grenada" with the following terms:

The Grenada intervention was a flagrant violation of international law by the US and its allies. All three justifications provided by the US failed to hold up under the scrutiny of international law. [...] The US claim of collective self-defense was another attempt by the US to gain regional legitimacy and to mute international condemnation for an operation that had no legal basis in international law. Whereas the US intervention in Grenada could be justified under the Monroe Doctrine and other unilateral promulgations rooted in past precedents, it cannot be justified under the UN Charter or international law. The Grenada intervention is consistent with the actions of the US in Guatemala, Cuba and the Dominican Republic but that does not make it legal. [...] The Grenada intervention showed a total disregard for universal norms and the skillful manipulation of regionalism to legitimize the unilateral actions of the US.<sup>36</sup>

Consequently, the invasion was severely condemned internationally. France described the invasion as "a surprising action in relation to international law".<sup>37</sup> The OAS Council of Ministers voted to condemn the operation as a violation of international law and the non-intervention clause of the OAS charter. And a Security Council resolution condemning the US intervention in Grenada was vetoed by the United States.<sup>38</sup> To this overwhelming international condemnation, President Reagan responded: "One hundred nations in the UN have not agreed with us on just about everything that's come before them where we're involved, and it didn't upset my breakfast at all".<sup>39</sup>

US analysts offered different assessments of the US invasion and occupation of Grenada, depending on their different beliefs and on their perceptions of the US role in the world. For almost all US conservatives and the majority of moderates, the invasion of Grenada was "inordinately praiseworthy", in fact, one of the greatest US foreign policy successes of the 1980s. The leading view held that the US had done right; with minimal casualties, the armed forces 'liberated' US students, restored democratic rule, and eliminated the Soviet-sponsored threat.<sup>40</sup>

The invasion's critics were outnumbered and divided. For some liberal observers, who believe that the US should primarily abide by the principal of non-intervention, the invasion was 'sound in policy but illegal in

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<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Cited in Max Hilaire, *International Law and the US Military Intervention*, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 81.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Cited in William Blum, *Killing Hope*, *op. cit.*, p. 277.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy*, *op. cit.*, p. 114 ; -Christopher Dickey, "Central America: From Quagmire to Gauldron?", *op. cit.*, p. 692.

form'. This view is defended by Professor Thomas Carothers, who evaluates the US intervention in Grenada in this way:

It is true the invasion of Grenada was a sympathetic case for intervention, but at least two points should be noted: First, the US invasion was not a humanitarian intervention. The invasion was a geostrategic move to reduce the Soviet-Cuban sphere of influence in the Western Hemisphere. The invasion had positive effects on the Grenadan political system but the US government was not driven to invade Grenada out of concern for Grenadans. [...] The invasion must be defended for what it was, a use of force to advance US geostrategic interests.

Second, even if a strong case can be made in a particular instance that a principle should be bent or ignored, concern for the long-term health of the principle should override short-term considerations. If the US wants other countries, particularly its adversaries, to obey the principle of non-intervention, its best course is to strengthen that principle by obeying it, not weaken it by violating it and explaining away that violation as a special case. Special cases ... are the downfall of valuable principles, such as nonintervention.<sup>41</sup>

A different critical view challenges the Administration's official objectives and maintains that Reagan's decision to send the Marines to Grenada was an example of an opportunistic foreign policy decision, a rally event. Douglass Van Belle, a professor of political science at the University of New Orleans, put it thus:

The invasion of Grenada was prompted by the need to direct domestic attention away from an issue that had proven itself to be both unresolvable and detrimental to President Reagan's domestic standing. That issue was the Lebanese civil war and the US role in it.<sup>42</sup>

Accordingly, the US invasion of Grenada provided an example of a president seizing an opportunity to use a foreign policy conflict to alter the balance of favorable versus critical coverage in the domestic news media, presumably to influence the leader's overall levels of domestic support.<sup>43</sup>

The most severe appraisal of the Grenadian episode was issued by the New Left. The latter affirm that the real threat that alarmed Washington was neither military nor ideological. It was rather 'the threat of the good example', an ambitious progressive socio-economic program, which could offer an alternative to the Developing World populations. Actually, Grenada's natural resources were not crucial. Nor would the revolutionary collectivization of a nation of 102,000 people represent serious investment loss to US corporations. But, if other countries would follow that course, the Leftist critics claim, it eventually would put the American 'economic supremacy' at risk.<sup>44</sup> The 'rescue mission' did, then, not aim at rescuing US citizens but US Business, as Professor Cynthia Hamilton, from the University of Rhode Island, explained in 1984:

The greatest challenge to capitalism will continue to come from national liberation movements in the Third World. All have the expressed objective of moving out of the orbit of dependency, away from the repression and poverty of capitalist development. [...]

For the US, the option is clear: any further threat to capitalism abroad must be met with covert and overt force as the search for cheap labor and more markets continues. Historically, capitalism has always turned to international solutions for its falling rate of profit domestically. As the US economy continues its staggering march to transformation domestically, a new international division of labor will be worked out and attacks by the US against progressive economic alternatives will continue. The Grenada invasion merely masked these intentions and

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<sup>41</sup>Thomas Carothers, *In the Name of Democracy*, *op. cit.*, p. 115-116.

<sup>42</sup> Douglass Van Belle, "Opportunistic Foreign Policy", *op. cit.*, p. 11.

<sup>43</sup>*Ibid*, p. 19.

<sup>44</sup> Michael Parenti, *Against Empire* (San Francisco: City Lights Press, 1995), p. 42.

demonstrated the 'new colonialism' which now threatens the Third World.<sup>45</sup>

According to the Leftist critics, and with regard to the theory which states that 'one rotten apple can spoil the barrel', the American power elite was concerned that if a tiny country like Grenada adopted a different approach and did well in guaranteeing a better living for its people<sup>46</sup>, all other Latin American countries would like to follow its example. For Professor Michael Parenti, for example,

Reagan's invasion of Grenada served as a notice to all other Caribbean countries that this was the fate that awaited any nation that sought to get out from under its client-state status.<sup>47</sup>

In my opinion, the different views stated above, while sound, are one-sided. Portraying Reagan's decision to invade Grenada as 'a rally event', or solely in economic terms, represents only one side of the story. The US illegal invasion of the sovereign Grenada had various functions, which were not necessarily those offered by the Reagan Administration and its supporters. Actually, the invasion was an expression of the Reagan ideologues' and their right wing allies' desire to mount a policy of rollback against the Soviet Union -the tiny Grenada was obviously the easiest target for such a policy. To defend American credibility within a bipolar international arena, the US ousted what it regarded as a revolutionary pro-Cuban regime and replaced it by an elected pro-US government. The Reagan government sought also to get rid of the Vietnam Syndrome and to prove its eagerness to use force to combat hostile governments in the region.

Washington did not only get rid of a hostile government but also of a 'hostile' socio-economic system. In effect, one of the effects of the intervention was to dismantle the NJM's socio-economic transformation. On the eve of the invasion, the following social and economic programs were canceled: adult literacy, free milk distribution, housing repair, free schoolbooks and uniforms, free basic medical care ...<sup>48</sup> and Grenada was brought back into the client-state status. But, in my opinion, the most important lesson of the Grenadian episode was that a superpower could violate international law without paying serious political costs.

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<sup>45</sup> Cynthia Hamilton, "U.S. Foreign Policy and Grenada", [www.uri.edu/personal/cha/6734u/grenada.htm](http://www.uri.edu/personal/cha/6734u/grenada.htm), 1984, p. 11.

<sup>46</sup> The period of NJM rule had seen substantial improvements in island conditions. Unemployment had been greatly reduced and GNP had risen at an average rate of 3 percent from 1979 to 1982 (Editorial, "A Lovely Piece of Real Estate", *NACLA Report on the Americas*, November/December 1984, p. 27).

<sup>47</sup> Michael Parenti, *Against Empire*, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>48</sup> Cynthia Hamilton, "U.S. Foreign Policy and Grenada", *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.