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FLAWS IN THE JEWEL? THE GRENAADA REVOLUTION 1979-1983

BY

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ABSTRACT

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by
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Through examining the political, economic, and social developments of the Grenada Revolution, it is possible to view the revolutionary period as part of a continuum of Grenada's history. In most areas the Peoples' Revolutionary Government was unable to break away from its inherited constraints. An examination of the political control of the revolution reveals the continuity of authoritarian tendencies in Grenadian political culture emanating from the colonial period, while the PRG was unable to break successfully the ties of its dependent economy. The revolution did initiate considerable improvements in social conditions in Grenada, and its attempts at popular democracy provide some useful lessons for future policy makers in the Caribbean. The rigid imposition of an imported ideology, however, not designed for Grenada's unique historical conditions, meant that the revolution failed to change the complex and constricting barriers of class, race, and gender.
Acknowledgements

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Preface

Grenada lies at the southern tip of the Windward Islands chain that stretches down the Caribbean sea. To the south lies Trinidad and Tobago; further south, 90 miles from Grenada, is Venezuela and the great South American continent. The island is approximately twenty one miles long and 10 miles wide. Grenada's 344 square kilometers, which include the islands of Petit Martinique and Carriacou making up the political entity of Grenada, support a population estimated at 110,700 in 1982, with a population density of 322 per square kilometer.

Grenada is a volcanic island. Its steep slopes are lushly covered in trees such as nutmeg, banana, and cocoa which support the islands economy. Its rugged terrain limits the introduction of agricultural mechanization. The diversity of its land had meant that Grenada, unlike islands such as Barbados, was able to move away from its centuries of dependence on sugar, while at the same time, the availability of land unsuitable for sugar cultivation had facilitated the development of an independent peasantry, which grew crops, such as cocoa and bananas, more adaptable than sugar cane to small holdings, as well as subsistence agriculture.

The small size of Grenada, and the independence of the peasantry must be borne in mind in the analysis of the Grenada revolution that follows.
Chapter One


On March 13, 1979, the New Jewel Movement (NJM) successfully took power in Grenada by means of a military coup executed by a small band of armed NJM members who overthrew the unpopular government of Sir Eric Gairy. The NJM set up the People's Revolutionary Government to undertake the task of fundamentally changing the nature of Grenadian society. The extent of their success or failure will be explored in this thesis. The coup initially appears to have received overwhelming popular support. In order to understand how this could happen in a traditionally conservative society and to evaluate the achievements and failures of the revolution, it is first necessary to examine the background that made such an undertaking possible. Thus, this chapter will discuss the social, economic, and political conditions preceding the coup to see how Gairy alienated practically every sector of Grenadian society.

The history of Grenada and the rise to power of Gairy must be seen within the context of the history of the Caribbean region as a whole. During the years following the Second World War a new group of leaders had begun to emerge in the British Caribbean. In the 1930s the leadership had tended to come from the middle classes. But with the emergence of trade unions during the 1930s the leadership increasingly came from the poorer classes and sought to improve the appalling conditions of the majority of British West Indians.\(^1\) These conditions had spawned the series of labor riots that had engulfed most

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of the British Caribbean between 1929-1935. As a result, the British government had set up the West India Commission to investigate the cause of the unrest. Although the extensive and well documented investigation of the Commission, completed before the Second World War, had exposed the gravity of social conditions in the British Caribbean territories and the need for government action to provide relief, by the 1950s little had been done to make any improvements and living standards continued to deteriorate.  

At the same time, beginning with Jamaica in 1944, constitutional changes made by the British government gradually introduced universal suffrage into the territories. Subsequently, trade union leaders, such as Alexander Bustamente in Jamaica and Vere Bird in Antigua, began to build political parties with their support firmly rooted in the poverty stricken masses and sought to implement meaningful changes in wages and working conditions. In addition, the implementation of self-rule was advocated, and the question of independence and the form it should take started to appear on the political agenda.

Against this background of change Eric Gairy returned to Grenada in 1949. Born in Grenada in 1922, Gairy, a black man, from a poor background, was a primary school teacher for a while and, like many Grenadians, had migrated to Aruba where he had been active as a trade union organizer while working in the oil refineries there. Because the two unions existing in Grenada

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3 Lewis, Grenada: The Jewel Despoiled 11.
4 Details of Gairy's early years seem scant. It appears that despite being a primary school teacher, he had received only a low level of education before leaving Grenada. This is supported by Singham who claims Gairy attended literacy classes in Aruba. A.W. Singham, The Hero and the Crowd in a Colonial Polity (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), 153; Anthony
on his return both represented urban workers, the rural masses lacked a channel through which to articulate their grievances. In 1950 Gairy established the Grenada Manual and Mental Workers' Union (GMMWU), which appealed primarily to the predominantly black estate laborers and government workers, such as road workers, who were paid on a daily basis. The union was able to harness members' discontent to demand that the government and employers improve working conditions and increase wages. Consequently, 1950 saw a series of labor disputes culminating in 1951 when Gairy organized a general strike that lasted one month and forced the government to negotiate with him. The colonial government declared a state of emergency and the GMMWU's leaders, Gairy and Gascoigne Blaise, were detained on board the British naval ship H.M.S. Devonshire. This led to outbreaks of violence, with 10,000 workers said to have been "up in arms" protesting their leaders' detention. Following Gairy's release and his subsequent speeches calling for an end to the violence, the unrest gradually subsided, demonstrating the command Gairy had achieved over the working class. The ruling class eventually capitulated to the demands of Gairy and the GMMWU, resulting in substantial wage increases. Thus Gairy had emerged as a hero and was revered by the rural workers.\textsuperscript{5} It is vital to understand the impact of Gairy's work in this period in order to explain why he still continued to receive loyal support in some areas despite his later widespread abuses of power and his betrayal of the very groups that brought him to power.

Grenada, colonized continuously by the British since 1783, had been a British crown colony since 1877. While crown colony administration could have curbed the powers of the planter class, instead, it essentially denied ordinary people political rights. The colonial office assumed responsibility for the colony's administration and granted full powers to the appointed governor. In 1951 Grenada was granted a new constitution that included universal suffrage. This enabled Gairy to focus his labor activism into a political party, and the Grenada United Labour Party was formed, winning the election that same year. Gairy was the first black man of humble origins to gain a seat on the legislative council. His importance as a symbol for the masses must be understood in the context of a society deeply divided by the interwoven cleavages of race and class, with the lighter skinned Grenadians at the top of the socio-economic hierarchy and the majority of black people at the bottom.

Gairy was to remain at the center of Grenadian politics until he was overthrown by the NJM in 1979. Other political parties emerged in Grenada and, although Gairy lost two elections, no party could challenge effectively his grip on a substantial percentage of the electorate. Gairy won the election of 1954, but was defeated in 1957 by a coalition of the Grenada National Party and the People's Democratic Movement. He won the 1961 election, but was defeated by the Grenada National Party in the election of 1962. Gairy was again returned in 1967 to power where, largely due to subsequent election

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7 76.9 percent of Grenada's population were black, 17.5 percent were of mixed race, 4.1 percent were East Indian and 1.4 percent were white. Whites, with some people of mixed race, made up the dominant class, Brizan, 227.
tampering, he remained until 1979. Before examining Grenadian political changes more closely, it is first necessary to look at the social and economic setting in the island.

By the 1950s conditions in the rural areas had changed relatively little since the nineteenth century. Most of the population lived in extreme poverty: housing conditions were poor, often there was no plumbing, childhood diseases such as tuberculosis and gastro-enteritis were prevalent, education was severely limited. Landholding was extremely unequal with 1 percent of the population controlling, through estates of over one hundred acres, 50 percent of the arable land, while 95 percent of all farms in Grenada were under five acres. Moreover, the large estates controlled the best agricultural land. Even though Gairy’s activism had initially brought about wage increases that were relatively substantial, in the following years agricultural wages remained low. In the agreement made between the Grenada Agricultural Employers Society and the GMMWU in 1951 wages had increased from the 1950 level of 82 cents per day and 68 cents per day to $1.20 per day and $1.00 per day for men and women respectively. In 1964 agricultural workers were paid $2.00 per day for men and $1.70 for women. Although an increase to $4.00 per day for men and $3 for women had taken place by 1975, in the same period food prices rose 200 percent, clothing 164 percent, and housing by 135 percent.

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10 Singham, 45-46. Survey conducted in 1957.
Furthermore, once Gairy turned his attention towards politics, his neglect of the people whom he had set out to represent increased.

Gairy manipulated the population and furthered his own interests in his "Land for the Landless" scheme initiated in the mid 1960s, under which his government took over a large number of estates in order to redistribute land to those who had none. It appears, however, that Gairy used the scheme as a weapon merely to confiscate opponents' lands which were either divided up into very small lots or run inefficiently as state farms. The overall impact of the scheme seems in effect to have reduced the amount of land used productively, as well as to lose the confidence of the remaining landowners. Consequently, agricultural production suffered.\(^{12}\)

Grenada's economy, as a result of its genesis in the plantation system, was locked into a dependence on export agriculture, making it extremely vulnerable to the fluctuations of the international market. Moreover, dependence on the export of a limited number of crops had led to the neglect of domestic food production and to an overreliance on imports. The three principal export crops were, and continue to be, cocoa, bananas, and nutmeg. Although sugar had dominated the economy in the mid eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, nutmeg and cocoa had gradually taken over by the early twentieth century. Banana growing began on a commercial scale around 1953 and was greatly increased after the hurricane in 1955, as banana trees produced a faster return than either nutmeg or cocoa. But despite favorable price increases for bananas from 1973 on, except in 1975-76, production failed

to respond to the changing market. Instead, banana production declined steadily between 1976 and 1982, from 34 million pounds to 22 million pounds annually.\textsuperscript{13}

Cocoa prices had generally risen from the late 1930s to around 1950, then for the next twenty years prices tended to fall. In 1962, cocoa was still cultivated predominantly on large estates,\textsuperscript{14} whereas smallholders tended to grow bananas and nutmeg. Nutmeg had been grown on a commercial basis from the end of the nineteenth century, and by 1975 it had become Grenada's most important industry, accounting for almost 50 percent of exports that year. Both nutmeg and cocoa production seem to have fallen in the period from 1977, even as their price per pound continued to rise,\textsuperscript{15} suggesting that agricultural development was not being efficiently pursued.

An examination of export figures, however, does not reveal to whom the profits were accumulating. Although the long-term contract that was signed in 1955 with Geest industries, a large British firm, had guaranteed a market for banana growers, earnings seem to have been kept below what would have been received on the world market. Between 1958 and 1972 the price paid by Geest to the Grenada Banana Co-operative Society was on average 5.6 cents per pound, while world banana prices exceeded the cost of the Geest contract by an average of 8.4 cents per pound. In addition, estimates show that Grenada received only about 11 percent of the final value of bananas, whereas around 85 percent was sucked into foreign companies in the shipping and retail.


\textsuperscript{14} Britan, 298.

\textsuperscript{15} ibid, 299; Tony Thorndike, Grenada (London: Francis Pinter, 1985), 103.
trades.\textsuperscript{16} Grenada thus conforms to the pattern of world trade between underdeveloped economies and developed market economies in which the wealth is transferred from the peripheral countries of the world trade system to the economies of North America and Europe. Although Gairy was clearly not responsible for the dependent nature of Grenada's economy, as we shall see his corrupt and inefficient government, lacking a dynamic economic policy, contributed eventually to economic decline by the late 1970s.\textsuperscript{17}

The manner in which wealth was transferred out of Grenada has been well described by George Brizan.\textsuperscript{18} He argues that Grenada, rather than being a poor country, has been made poor, and that it has made a considerable contribution to the wealth of the developed market economies, particularly in the period 1674-1979. This was made possible by a number of factors. Export agricultural economies, unless they are able to diversify considerably, are vulnerable to the fluctuating world prices. These prices have been deteriorating due to world trading practices that have been constructed and controlled by the developed countries. Foreign investment has also contributed to the drain of wealth, because incentives given to encourage investment have allowed profits to accumulate to the investor. Perhaps the most important reason, however, is the loss of the value of commodities from the exporter of the unprocessed product to the countries in which they are manufactured or processed. Brizan gives a useful example in the case of nutmegs, by concluding that "if Grenada could bypass the agents and millers, and grind, blend and package the

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{16} Brizan, 302 and 310
\textsuperscript{18} The following summary of Grenada's drain of wealth follows closely that of Brizan's, 307-308.
\end{flushleft}
nutmegs itself, its earnings on the 23 million pounds exported during the last four years [1975-79] would have been $130 million instead of $58 million." He gives similar examples for the drain of profits in the cocoa industry when he points out that "between 1976 and 1979, Grenada exported 21.3 million pounds of cocoa for [Eastern Caribbean] EC$62.5 million; the total value-added on this [through the various stages of trade and manufacture] was approximately EC$625 million. Thus in those three years Grenada contributed EC$562 million to the wealth of the developed market economy countries." These figures, however, do not take into account the costs that would be involved in marketing the produce. Nevertheless, it is clear that in order for Grenada to improve the returns on its agricultural exports to both the growers and the government some agro-industrialization had to be developed in order to export a more finished product, as well as dispensing with some of the intermediaries who were unnecessarily reaping excess profits.

The marketing of agricultural exports was carried out by three major cooperatives: the Grenada Co-operative Nutmeg Association, the Grenada Banana Co-operative Association, and the Grenada Cocoa Association. "These were statutory bodies that had exclusive powers to buy the entire crop they represented, market it and, after deducting an operating commission, pay producers according to their output." Peasants had very little representation on these bodies as they seem to have been controlled and dominated by the elites, serving the large planters rather than the peasantry. Agriculture was further impaired by the shift of the planter class towards tourism in the 1960s,

19 Ibid, 308-309.
20 Ambursley, 196-198
leading to a substantial area of agricultural land being assigned for use in private residential development.

Besides agricultural exports, Grenada's economy also supported a small industrial sector and tourism. In the 1960s and 1970s agriculture contributed around 34 percent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), manufacturing did not contribute more than 4 percent, and tourism under 5 percent. 21 Tourism expanded rapidly in the early 1960s and continued to increase slowly thereafter. There are several problems, however, inherent in the development of the tourist industry. First, tourism tends to be capital intensive, requiring relatively little unskilled, low paid labor. It is, like agriculture, dependent on the external market which tends to fluctuate widely. Its contribution to long-term economic development is also questionable, particularly as it is most often dominated by foreign capital, ownership, and management, and few linkages are developed with the rest of the economy. All these conditions were present in Grenada, and tourism did not seem to ease the rising unemployment. Moreover, the majority of Grenada's tourists tended to be from cruise ships and spent less money than those who stayed overnight. 22

In the later years of his rule, Gairy seems to have contributed to this drain of wealth by forging ties with the "new capitalists in tourism, commerce and manufacturing to combat the power of his old enemies—the older capital groups

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21 Other major contributions to the GDP included the wholesale and retail trade, 14.7 percent in 1977; government services, which rose from 13.9 percent in 1960 to around 22 percent in the late 70s; and general services which averaged around 15 percent in the 1970s. Construction fell from 15.5 percent in 1960 to 2.5 percent in 1978, this most likely reflects the boom in tourism in the early 60s which would have led to increased construction. Ambursley, 195.

in the major staples and commerce."23 The little industrialization that took place under Gairy seems to have been "limited to inviting foreign firms to invest in Grenada. In return those firms were offered special concessions. . . [including] non-payment of taxes, non-payment of import duties etc. . . . In return bribes were demanded by Gairy personally. Schemes like Operation Bootstrap in practice did not succeed because Gairy's corruption had become so well known that even the foreign firms ceased to respond to his offers."24 Although tourism did pick up somewhat in 1978, Gairy's overall effect on the economy, as a result of corrupt and inefficient management, led to its deterioration.

Most of the economic growth that Grenada experienced between 1950 and 1979 seems to have taken place in the early 60s when Gairy was out of power25 and can be attributed for the most part to the growth of the tourist industry. After independence in 1974, the GDP declined considerably. In 1974 the GDP had been EC$60 million, whereas in 1977 it was as low as EC$28 million.26 Gairy had pushed for independence by arguing that independence, rather than being an economic burden, would open "the doors of international financial institutions and encouraged potential aid donors who would deal directly with legally dependent countries." He had boasted that "independence will support Grenada."27 Although at the time of its independence Grenada received monetary contributions as a parting gift from Britain, the sources of

23 Henry, 14.
25 Pryor, 32.
26 Henry, 13.
27 Payne, Sutton, and Thorndike, 11.
financial aid were changed. Instead of receiving direct assistance from Britain, Gairy turned to lending agencies such as the EEC, UN, IMF, and the Caribbean community (CARICOM). His corruption, however, had become notorious not only in the business world, as already mentioned, but also in international bodies. Consequently, the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) refused to lend money to the government under the credit scheme for small industry "due to inadequate managing and accounting practices."  

Gairy was thus rapidly losing support in all major areas.

Foreign governments and international agencies did, nevertheless, promise to lend EC$21.8 million to Grenada in 1977, but apparently because of the inefficiency and malpractices of Gairy's government only EC$2.8 million was actually released by the grantors. Precisely because of the excessive level of consumption and taxation in the public sector and lack of domestic savings, international bodies were the source of a great deal of Grenada's capital. The termination of these funds therefore put a stop to the scanty economic development already begun. By 1979 the Grenadian economy was in serious trouble. Due to his inept handling of the economy, Gairy had not been able to show that independence could bring forth the financial gains to Grenada that had been promised; on the contrary, the economy was in severe decline.

The economic situation described above was closely tied to political developments on the island. After Gairy's victories in the 1950-51 labor disturbances, he formed the Grenada United Labour Party and in 1951 won the first election under the new constitution with universal adult suffrage, his party

28 Ambursley, 199.
29 Ibid, 199.
having won six of the eight seats when, for the first time, elected members held
the majority in the legislative council. Once in the legislature, Gairy acted as if
he was above the law. At the time, however, it might well have been viewed by
his followers as disregard for those in authority in the "upper brackets," who
seemed generally to have viewed the lower classes with a great deal of
contempt. Although Gairy's populist and paternalistic attitude to his constituents
is apparent in his earlier speeches--he referred to himself as 'Uncle Gairy'---the extent to which he craved power at the cost of the betrayal of his supporters
was perhaps not so obvious in the late 1950s and early 60s.

Gairy did little to increase his support in other areas, especially in towns.
He nevertheless won the election in 1954, but with a smaller majority. His
support declined further during the period 1954-57, partly due to an increase in
migration to Trinidad and Britain from among the working class from which he
gained most support. At the same time, other active trade unions emerged
which siphoned votes from his traditional areas of support, and an organized
opposition party was formed by the middle and upper classes--the Grenada
National Party (GNP). In 1957 Gairy was disenfranchised for disrupting an
opposition meeting by leading a steel band through it. He lost his franchise and
his right to sit as a member of the legislative council for five years. The incident
seems to have done him more good than harm as his party won the 1961
elections. Following the suspension of the constitution after an investigation
into allegations of corruption against him, his party was defeated in the 1962

30 See for example the widely quoted speech made on the national radio on March 15th, 1951,
quoted in full by Singham,165-166.
election. Contributing to his defeat was his failure to support associated statehood with Trinidad, which many Grenadians favored.\textsuperscript{31}

The GNP, having formed a post-election coalition with a member of the People's Democratic Movement (PDM) and an independent member, governed Grenada between 1957 and 1961, and then governed alone from 1962 to 1967.\textsuperscript{32} The initial victory of the GNP under Herbert Blaize has been seen by some as a "victory for the ruling class."\textsuperscript{33} The net income of planters rose in that period by 170 percent due to the GNP's legislative policies subsidizing the costs of production, while, as has been noted, wages rose only marginally. In the second period the GNP continued the same "elitist policies," and the ruling class became further entrenched. It did, however, carry out some reforms in education, agriculture, communications, and sanitation, which included the building of new primary schools, the establishment of the Agricultural bank, and the expansion of the water supply. But these reforms were only superficial and did not result in far reaching structural economic or social changes and hardly seem to have touched the rural poor.\textsuperscript{34} The overall picture points to a lack of dynamism on the part of the GNP and a rigid desire for economic and political stability to ensure ruling class security, while the dire poverty and related social problems of the majority of Grenadians were never seriously addressed.

Gairy used the period between 1962 and 1967 to rebuild his base in his traditional areas of support by working through the GMMWU and calling a

\textsuperscript{31} The above account is based on Singham, 173-177, and 279-289.
\textsuperscript{32} Singham, 26.
\textsuperscript{33} Manning, 204.
number of disruptive strikes. These strikes were quickly called to a halt once he was restored to power in the 1967 election, clearly demonstrating that he had used the union in this period merely as a stepping stone to achieving power. Gairy then concentrated on consolidating that power.

Grenada had been a member of the ill-fated West Indian Federation that had crumbled in 1962. Consequently, its status was still undecided. During 1967, Grenada received yet another constitution as Britain granted it associated statehood. This left defense and foreign policy in the hands of Britain, while the Grenada legislature achieved control of the rest of the island's affairs. Associated statehood, in effect, meant that Gairy now no longer had the restraint imposed by the colonial administration, so that "as far as domestic matters were concerned, Gairy was now able to seize complete control and maintain it for the next twelve years through vote rigging, gerrymandering, patronage, and corruption,"35 accompanied by repression and terror in the later years.

The status of associated statehood remained until Grenada achieved independence in 1974. George Brizan argues that the constitutions under associated statehood and independence were both flawed by the "undemocratic structure of the upper house or Senate," which allowed for the subversion of parliament if a dominant figure chose to exploit it36--precisely what Gairy did. It is also arguable that if the West Indian Federation had succeeded, its centralized authority could have acted to constrain Gairy's powers, especially his abuse of human rights.37 As it was, Gairy ruled Grenada

35 Schoenhals, 18.
36 Brizan, 342.
from 1967 until the 1979 revolution. The challenge presented to his power by the New Jewel Movement, the political and economic crisis of 1973-74, and the years leading up to the revolution warrant closer examination.

The emergence and rise of the New Jewel Movement must be understood within the context of the international movements and events of the last years of the 1950s and 1960s, which had a great impact on the Caribbean region. The struggle for and granting of independence in Africa, the Cuban revolution, the civil rights movement, and the rise of Black Power in the United States all found receptive ground in the English speaking Caribbean. In addition, the impact of Black Power in the region was partly aided by the Rastafarian movement. Founded in Jamaica as early as the 1930s, the movement had been prominent in expressing the theme of black consciousness and later spread to other islands in the region, including Grenada. Walter Rodney, the Guyanese historian and political activist, pointed out the relevance of Black Power to the West Indies in three main objectives. First, "the break with imperialism which is historically white racist," second, "the assumption of power by the black masses in the islands," and third, "the cultural reconstruction of the society in the image of blacks."38 These objectives would later emerge in the rhetoric of the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) in Grenada and in particular in the cultural developments of the revolution39.

By the 1970s the flourishing of these new ideas had produced a generation of young people who no longer venerated British traditions and, consequently, began to question the appropriateness of the inherited political

39 See chapter four
system. Despite the granting of independence to Trinidad and Jamaica in 1962, followed by Barbados and British Guiana in 1966, social and economic conditions in these countries remained little changed. Economic strategies of industrialization had failed to improve the lives of the vast majority of West Indians or halt the growing unemployment, so that expectations arising from independence had been crushed. On the other hand, the Cuban revolution seemed to promise an alternative path that spoke of equality and social justice, showing genuine improvements in education, health care, and social services.\textsuperscript{40}

These ideological changes in the region affected the thinking of a new generation of Grenadians. At the same time, changing demographic factors in Grenada witnessed the creation of a young population base\textsuperscript{41} that was becoming increasingly frustrated with the \textit{status quo} and the limits of the colonial education system.\textsuperscript{42} In addition, the overt racism encountered in both the United States, Canada, and Europe helped to politicize the young Grenadians who were being educated abroad and who, with their increased political consciousness, would return to challenge the stagnant and corrupt government of Eric Gairy.

Maurice Bishop was among this new generation in Grenada who had gone to study overseas. He had won a scholarship to attend Grenada's

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|}
\hline
Age Group & 1960 & 1970 \\
\hline
10-14 & 10,731 & 15,176 \\
15-19 & 7,734 & 10,418 \\
20-24 & 6,257 & 6,755 \\
25-30 & 5,030 & 4,202 \\
31-40 & 8,021 & 7,157 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Population figures for Grenada.}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{40} Schoenhals, 20-21; Knight, 195 and 203
\textsuperscript{41} The following figures are taken from Brizan, 221:
\textsuperscript{42} For details of the limited education system spawned by colonialism see Brizan, chapter 18, 283-296.
prestigious Catholic boys secondary school and then studied law in London. In London he had become active in West Indian affairs, becoming president of the West Indian Students' Union and the director of the Standing Conference of West Indian Organizations. Furthermore, he helped found a legal aid center in Notting Hill Gate, an area where many West Indians lived. During this time he also seems to have established contact with fellow Grenadian Bernard Coard. Coard had studied at Brandeis University in the United States and then attended the University of Sussex in England. Bishop and Coard, together with people such as Unison Whiteman and Kendrick Radix, were to "create a new vision for Grenada." This vision would be fused with the efforts of working-class activists such as George Louison, Selwyn Strachan, Hudson Austin, and Vincent Noel, to provide the framework for constructing a different society in Grenada.

On his way back to Grenada in 1970, Bishop passed through Trinidad during the upheaval of the February Revolution. Like the 'Rodney Riots' in Jamaica in 1968, the February Revolution in Trinidad manifested the influence of the Black Power movement in the United States and can be seen as the culmination of discontent with the post-independence government's failure to improve social conditions. In both Jamaica and Trinidad the political system was able to quash the uprisings and channel the discontent. In Grenada, however, Gairy's stranglehold on political power and his increasing use of terror would eventually force his opponents to overturn the political system.

43 Schoenhals, 22-23
In the meantime, on his arrival in Grenada, Bishop and others organized a Black Power demonstration in St. Georges in support of the Trinidadian uprising, at the same time demanding more jobs and denouncing Gairy's leadership. This was a major challenge to Gairy from a group other than the elitist GNP. More threatening still, they used the same tactics that Gairy himself had used, such as mass demonstrations and personal charisma, to appeal to Gairy's own constituency. Gairy responded by passing the Emergency Powers Act, which permitted the "right to search without warrant, limit public assemblies and confiscate literature." He also announced the escalation of the police force and the formation of a "special squad" made up of hardened criminals that became known as the notorious "Mongoose Gang." 

The next opportunity for this new opposition to gain publicity came when nurses went on strike later in 1970. The striking nurses, who were supported by elements of the GNP, youth groups, trade unions, and school children, protested the conditions of the hospitals, which lacked basic items such as sheets and aspirin and suffered from rat infestations. Bishop, Kendrick Radix, and other young lawyers defended the twenty-two charged nurses and won their acquittal, although it appears that the nurses were not reinstated.

While Bishop formed the Movement for the Assemblies of Peoples (MAP) in 1973, which worked in the urban areas, Unison Whiteman had already formed the Joint Endeavor for Welfare Education and Liberation (JEWEL) to organize the agricultural workers. The latter group won nationwide publicity in

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45 EPICA, 44-45.
46 Searle, 16.
47 EPICA, 45; Searle, 16. In the Peoples' Indictment read out at the Peoples' Congress at Seamoon in 1973, one of the charges against Gairy was the "arbitrary dismissal" of the nurses who had protested in 1970, indicating that they had not been reinstated. See Brizan, 339.
January 1973 when it instigated the People's Trial of Lord Brownlow. Brownlow was an Englishman who had recently purchased La Sagesse estate and had then tried to block public access to the beach. The "trial" found Brownlow guilty and participants proceeded to gain access to the beach by force. Although forty of the organizers, mostly members of MAP and JEWEL, were arrested, the charges were eventually dropped. In March 1973 the two organizations, MAP and JEWEL, merged to form the New Jewel Movement (NJM) with Maurice Bishop and Unison Whiteman as joint-coordinating secretaries.

The philosophy and goals of the NJM were clearly elucidated in its manifesto issued the same year. An interesting document that essentially called for a more just society, it made clear its leaders' disillusionment with Westminster style democracy. Instead, the NJM envisioned "an end to party politics and the institution of People's Assemblies as the political structure that would ensure participatory democracy and the permanent involvement of the the people in decision-making," implicitly pointing toward a one-party state. As Gairy steered Grenada towards independence, the 1973 manifesto called for 'genuine independence' instead of the 'flag and anthem' independence that had become the pattern in the West Indies, wherein economic relationships with the developed nations remained intact. Although the manifesto was meant only as a guide, a great many of its aims were carried out when the NJM government was in power between 1979-1983.

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48 Brizan, 333.
49 Ibid, 333
Interestingly, socialism was not mentioned in the manifesto, which is simply written and free of language that might have pointed towards a Marxist-Leninist approach. Marable Manning argues that at this stage the NJM was "essentially an eclectic social movement of national democratic, liberal and progressive forces," attracting "individuals who shared a common antipathy toward the Gairy regime, but disagreed over political issues."  

Although it was not mentioned by name, socialism in some form, such as the setting up of "People's Assemblies" to ensure radical democracy from the bottom up, was implicit in the aims of the manifesto, as will be discussed later.

The development of the NJM and its increasing local and regional support was met by escalating repression and terror tactics from Gairy, most notably the brutality that was perpetrated on 'Bloody Sunday.' In April 1973 the police had murdered a "young militant" NJM member, Jeremiah Richardson, while he was distributing copies of the party's newspaper, the *New Jewel*. Following a request for help from his family, the NJM organized at the site of the murder a demonstration that brought out about 5,000 protesters and succeeded in closing down Grenada's only airport for three days. The demonstration was followed on May 6 by a "Peoples Conference on Independence" called by the NJM. Gairy responded with indiscriminate violence and attacks on NJM supporters by his Mongoose Gang and the police. These attacks, however, failed to stem the growing tide of opposition. The NJM organized at Seamoon in Grenville a convention attended by 10,000 people where Gairy's crimes were read out in public. Threatened with a general strike if he refused to step down within two weeks, Gairy reacted with a further intensification of violence. On

51 Manning, 210 and 208-209
Sunday, November 18, 1973, six NJM members--Maurice Bishop, Unison Whiteman, Selwyn Strachan, Kendrick Radix, Hudson Austin and Simon Daniel--were intercepted by the secret police and brutally and ruthlessly beaten under the orders of the superintendent of police, Innocent Belmar. The brutal attacks backfired on Gairy and served to instigate the general strike that he had been trying to prevent. In addition, the violence made "living martyrs" of the NJM leaders and further eroded Gairy's support. This act, in particular, solidified opposition to Gairy from the younger generation, who now associated him only with violence, having no memory of the "uncle Gairy" of the 1950s.\(^{52}\)

The brutal beatings of "bloody Sunday" caused a national outcry. Subsequently, a Committee of 22 was formed from a coalition of groups, such as the Chamber of Commerce, the Civil Service Association, and the Rotary Club, that had little in common with the NJM's goals but felt that Gairy had overstepped his bounds with the indiscriminate use of terror. They called for a general strike, an investigation of the beatings, and the prosecution of all those involved. Gairy responded by setting up an independent commission of inquiry named the Duffus Commission. This commission carried out its investigations from December 17, 1973 to May 16, 1974. Its findings "constituted an indictment against the Gairy regime and called into question its legitimacy to govern."

Brizan sees the report as driving "another nail into his [Gairy's] coffin" as it revealed to the regional and international world the deep corruption of Gairy's regime. Gairy, however, appears to have paid scant attention to his own commission's report.\(^{53}\)

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\(^{52}\) Ibid, 209; Brizan, 341; Schoenhals, 26.

\(^{53}\) Manning, 211; Brizan, 344-345.
Although both Gairy and the NJM supported Grenada's independence from Britain, the NJM insisted that independence should be meaningful, while Gairy appears to have sought independence primarily to strengthen his political power. Moreover, opposition to the manner in which Gairy was leading Grenada toward independence was growing. He had failed to call a referendum, and his opponents were not satisfied that civil rights would be protected under the independence constitution. The controversy surrounding the process of gaining Grenada's independence reflects the growing disillusionment with decolonization in the Caribbean, as social conditions remained little changed in the independent countries and few benefits were perceived. With the independence issue at the forefront of the discontent, under the leadership of the Seamen and Waterfront Workers' Union and the NJM, the general strike was eventually called for January 1st, 1974. "For one month... the island was locked in a general strike and the streets were filled with thousands of Grenadians young and old demonstrating and chanting: "Gairy must go"." On Monday, 21 January 1974, the police shot and killed Rupert Bishop, Maurice Bishop's father, as they unleashed a wave of terror against demonstrators. Gairy's determination to crush the strike by whatever means necessary was inflamed by his desire that nothing should prevent him from leading the country into its forthcoming independence. The strike failed to lead to his resignation and was brought to an end because of the death threats and

54 The NJM laid out what they considered to be meaningful independence in their 1973 manifesto, in particular they argued that independence should be a "process of developing self-reliance and attaining self-sufficiency in all areas of our lives - economic, cultural, political and spiritual," "Manifesto of the New Jewel Movement," Martin, Vol. 1, 40-44.
55 Lewis, Grenada: The Jewel Despoiled, 17.
56 Britzan, 341
57 Ibid, 344.
violence against the union leadership as well as the violence used against
demonstrators.

Despite the preceding turmoil on the island, Grenada gained
independence from Britain in February 1974. Gairy's power increased and he
responded by introducing further repressive legislation in order to ensure that
he remained in power and to punish his opponents. Under the independence
constitution the Cabinet, appointed by the prime minister, assumed the
decision-making power of the civil service, so that every matter "from the hiring
of a janitor to the building of a school" was submitted to Cabinet, "with Gairy's
voice and vote supreme." Legislation designed to quieten the growing
opposition from the NJM included the Public Order Act of 1975, which made it
illegal to hold a demonstration or march without first getting the approval of the
Commissioner of Police. This was followed by the Newspaper Amendment Act
of 1975, which increased the deposit required to publish a newspaper from
EC$900 to EC$20,000. As was Gairy's intention, the Act effectively prevented
the publication of the New Jewel newspaper, which had already reached a
circulation of around 10,000. In 1976 a virtual ban was placed on the use of
public address systems; then in 1978 the Essential Services (Amendment) Act
was passed, making it illegal for specific groups of workers to strike, and the
Port Authority Act severely curtailed the strike power of dock workers.

The general strike of 1973-74 had shown that strike action was unable to
dislodge Gairy. The NJM, although it initially refused, reluctantly joined with the
GNP and other groups in an attempt to defeat Gairy at the polls. The 'People's

58 Ibid, 345
59 Lewis, "Roots of Revolution: Gairy and Gairyism in Grenada", 12; Brizan, 345; Manning, 213;
and Brizan, 347
Alliance' was formed to contest the 1976 elections. If the elections had been run fairly, it seems that the People's Alliance would certainly have won the election, but Gairy ensured that this would not happen. For example, the use of loudspeakers was severely restricted at the opposition's political rallies and Gairy ordered the Mongoose Gang to disrupt his opponents' meetings. Furthermore, the opposition claimed that the election rolls were fraudulently manipulated. Bishop later estimated that as many as 10,000 voters favorable to the People's Alliance were deleted from the electoral rolls, and around 13,000 nonexistent voters were added. In any event, the elections were clearly not free and fair.

In spite of Gairy's tactics, the opposition won 48.2 percent of the vote and six of the fifteen legislative seats. Bishop led the opposition, other NJM winners being Coard and Whiteman. With such a sizeable opposition evident in the percentage of votes won by the opposition, it would seem that Gairy would have had to pay attention to his opponents' voices. Moreover, "the population expected to see Parliament functioning vibrantly once more." Instead, Gairy continued his one-man rule. He used the system to ridicule the opposition, allowing little or no debate and denying the opposition the use of the radio. Clearly, Gairy was not going to be defeated or restrained by the electoral system.

Furthermore, although the People's Alliance had been able to unite in an attempt to defeat Gairyism, the differences in ideology between the groupings were far too diverse to allow that unity to last. Consequently, by mid-1977,

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60 Manning, 218
61 Brizan, 345
62 Manning, 218; Brizan, 345-346.
cooperation between the groups began to disintegrate. In addition, elements within the NJM began to grow dissatisfied with the NJM leaders' increasing move towards Marxism; George Brizan and Lloyd Noel were the first of the social democratic supporters of the NJM to leave.

An important element that had joined the NJM was a group called the Organization for Revolutionary Education and Liberation (OREL). OREL, which included Liam James and Leon Cornwell, was originally a Marxist study group, with Bernard Coard being its chief theoretician. OREL eventually merged with the NJM, and ultimately it was largely ex-OREL members who tried to steer the NJM towards a more conscious Marxist-Leninist path. This supports Marable Manning's argument that "two uneven and contradictory strains of socialism were present within the NJM, both of which were reinforced by the traditional culture and social structure of the population. One current of Grenadian socialism was egalitarian, democratic and Jamesian; the other was hierarchical, statist, command-oriented, placing power above the masses, and resembling in several administrative respects the rigid autocratic features of the Crown Colony and Gairy regimes."63 OREL members tended toward the latter. Subsequent developments during the revolution add further support to this analysis, and to the inevitable divisions that this hypothesis suggests. During the early years however, as Manning points out, OREL's members were welcome into the NJM and "NJM members themselves were largely unaware of any potentially antagonistic divisions that might one day divide the party . . . and a sense of comradeship was strong."64 At this stage, then, NJM members were

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63 Manning, 214-215, 199.
64 Ibid, 217
undoubtedly united in their desire to get rid of Gairy and to implement a just society as outlined in the 1973 Manifesto. How this would be implemented was still unclear. The main objective was to oust Gairy by whatever means possible.

Besides Gairy's misuse of the political system, the economic and social conditions in Grenada continued to worsen, accelerated in part by the 1973-74 crisis. In addition, the world oil crisis meant that Grenada, as an oil importer, suffered from the rising prices that would have affected such essential services as transportation and power supplies. Since then, mainly due to Gairy's corruption and mismanagement, the economy had failed to recover. Unemployment increased; by 1979 the official rate of unemployment was approximately 50 percent of Grenada's workforce. It has been estimated that this figure hides a 69 percent unemployment rate for women and nearly 80 percent for people under 25 years of age. Grenada's finances were in chaos. In 1979, because of "indiscriminate government borrowing," the national debt had risen to EC$60 million, and because of the continued heavy reliance on imports the trade deficit rose to EC$50 million. Furthermore, Grenada's population expanded, so that between 1974 and 1979 per capita incomes dropped in real terms by about 3 percent per annum.65

Grenada's basic infrastructure had been so severely neglected that essential areas such as water and electricity supply, roads, and health care, were in a state of collapse. The same problems that had led to the nurse's strike in 1970 remained unaddressed. Consequently, hospitals were without adequate supplies of essential items such as sheets, pillows, or medicines. Gairy had done little to improve the inadequate education system that Grenada

65 Payne, Sutton, and Thorndike, 14
had inherited from colonial rule. Functional illiteracy remained at around 40 percent, while the lack of repairs to school buildings meant that some had to be abandoned and school books were "virtually nonexistent."\(^{66}\)

Gairy had managed to alienate practically every sector of Grenadian society. His rise to power had been through his trade union activities, yet by 1979 he had made a complete about-turn from his position of the 1950s, which is reflected in the legislation passed. In 1977 Gairy--the union leader of the 1950s--was in dispute with the Public Services Association over his refusal to give wage increases recommended by the Salaries Revision Commission. Although the work of union leaders was greatly impeded by the ban on the use of loud speakers, a strike was eventually called. Gairy again responded with the threat of violence, leading to the strike being called off because of the very real danger involved to the union executives' lives. Rather, strike leaders were forced to settle for the government's offer; as Brizan notes: "it was a bitter pill for the Unions and a sad day for organized labour,"\(^{67}\) demonstrating how far their power had been curbed.

There is also a certain amount of irony in the parallel between the kind of provisions in the Essential Services Act and the Port Authority Act on the one hand, "and similar steps taken in 1951 to control and curtail industrial action by the GMMWU (Gairy's Union). These steps were taken by the establishment of the day--the Legislative Council, the Governor and the Colonial Office acting in unison." In 1978 they were taken by Gairy alone. In both cases the perpetrator's argument was to safeguard essential services. The Gairy of 1951

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\(^{66}\) Ibid, 14; see also Brizan, 283-296, for an examination of the education system in Grenada in the twentieth century.

\(^{67}\) Brizan, 347.
had declared that those laws were designed to "bring them [Grenadians] back into slavery." Twenty-seven years later, in an independent Grenada, he became the architect of the same kind of legislation he had so detested when initiated by colonial authorities.68

As Gairy proceeded to alienate the unions, the NJM had increasingly gained union support. In 1978 the Bank and General Workers Union had been formed, led by NJM member Vincent Noel. In March 1979 Barclay's bank workers went on strike after they had been refused union recognition as well as other grievances. Gairy backed the management. Perhaps in part because the grievances included complaints against racist treatment by the employers, a complaint with which black people of all levels of society could identify, the ensuing strike brought support to the NJM from the middle and business classes who were also opposed to Gairy.69

It is clear that Gairy's strategy for staying in power involved three basic tactics. First, he had created a "highly centralized bureaucracy where decision making depended on the cabinet which, in effect was Gairy himself." Second, he had crushed dissent and made it extremely difficult for the Parliamentary opposition to function, as "by 1979 Parliament had become his personal property." Third, he made "as many people as possible economically dependent upon the government and upon himself in order to control them politically."70 On top of this he 'legitimized' his government by holding elections which, although rigged, gave, for a while at least, to the casual observer some semblance of democracy. His support, however, continued to diminish.

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69 Searle, 31.
70 Brizan, 329-330.
While perhaps not affecting his support at home, it is important to note that Gairy's unpopularity was beginning to spread outside Grenada. Since 1975 Gairy had received the assistance of President Agosto Pinochet of Chile in building his military machinery and training his police force. The ties forged with the Chilean dictator, as well as with the South Korean regime of Pak Chung Hee, added to his unpopularity in international circles, especially with the more progressive regimes in Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, his insistence that the United Nations investigate UFO's attested to his increasing eccentricity. The negative image with which Gairy was perceived abroad would undoubtedly contribute to the reluctance of even conservative regimes in the Caribbean region to come to his support in the aftermath of the 1979 coup.

By 1979 what Gairy had initiated in the 1950s as a popular movement with the potential to implement lasting social change had mutated into his running the country, while evincing a strong Messianic streak, as a virtual police state. Nevertheless, it is true that Gairy's Grenada was never completely transformed "from being simply a corrupt and inefficient neocolonialist regime into an authoritarian police state." Unlike Pinochet's Chile, "all literature was not censored; opposition parties maintained the right to meet and mobilize their supporters; legitimate channels of dissent remained," but at the same time "random searches and arrests became more frequent" and the use of terror tactics, against the NJM specifically, increased. This is an important point; had

71 Brizan, 343.
72 Hutchinson, 14.
73 Lewis, "Roots of Revolution: Gairy and Gairyism in Grenada," 12.
74 Manning, 206.
Gairy's regime been organized along the lines of the Chilean dictatorship, the 1979 coup would have involved much more violence and the implementation of the NJM's program would have been almost impossible.

As it was, when Gairy left the country on March 12, 1979, giving orders that endangered the lives of NJM leaders, the NJM decided the time was ripe for them to take power by force, because clearly there was no other way to remove Gairy from office. Thus, when Bishop announced that Gairy had been deposed and that the 1974 constitution had been suspended by the new Peoples' Revolutionary Government, the majority of the population, including elements of every sector of Grenadian society, came out in full support of the NJM. Gairy's support had been eroded in all areas because of his mismanagement of the economy and outright corruption. Not only had he alienated most of the business sector, he had also failed to address the problems of the poor. Unemployment was severe. He had lost support from the unions and had not been able to show that independence had any benefits for Grenada. Clearly, the majority of Grenadians were sick and tired of Gairyism and willing to give their support to the People's Revolutionary Government. How long the NJM would be able to sustain that support, and to what extent the revolution implemented a fundamental break with the past are the subject of the following chapters.
Chapter Two
Political Considerations

Following the successful coup on March 13, 1979, the New Jewel Movement set about consolidating its power. The People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) was established, its cabinet initially consisting of fourteen members from different sectors of Grenadian society. Only nine of the cabinet members, including the two who were to emerge as the key players in the revolution, Maurice Bishop and Bernard Coard--Prime Minister and Minister of Finance respectively--were NJM members.\(^1\) The PRG then issued a series of People's Laws that included the suspension of the 1973 constitution, the retention of the Governor General as Head of State, and the creation of a Supreme Court. Existing laws remained extant unless subsequently amended or repealed.\(^2\)

As was made clear in their 1973 manifesto, the NJM did not consider the Westminster electoral model an appropriate system for Grenada. Instead they had envisaged a system of participatory democracy that would allow the majority to determine government policy. It was not, however, made clear that the NJM would follow a Marxist-Leninist path to socialism. It will be argued here that while the Westminster electoral system had been thoroughly abused by the Gairy government, and may indeed be seen as inappropriate, the NJM, in

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adhering rigidly to the orthodox Soviet model of government, was replacing one inappropriate European system with another equally ill-adapted for Grenadian society. The 1979 Grenadian revolution, nevertheless, did more to improve the socio-economic condition of the majority of its people than has any other regime in the Commonwealth Caribbean. Thus, the criticism here of the revolution is aimed more at its failure to produce a socialist alternative developing from within Grenada's own culture and conditions, rather than with the intention of reiterating the merits of the British parliamentary system.

The broad class alliance evident in the first Cabinet, which included GNP leader and businessman Norris Bain and Sydney Ambrose, a teacher, reflects the model that was to be followed by the PRG: the noncapitalist path of development or socialist orientation. Although this was not made clear until it was articulated by Maurice Bishop in his 'Line of March' speech presented to the NJM party's general meeting on March 13, 1982, in retrospect the actions of the PRG indicate its approach.³

Bishop stressed in his 'Line of March' address that Grenada was not then in a position to turn immediately to building socialism. As we have already seen, the New Jewel Movement had "inherited a backward, underdeveloped economy, with a very low level... a primitive level, of technical and economic development." The island's class formations were not compatible to a European style Marxist revolution in an industrialized or industrializing nation led by the working class. On the contrary, as Bishop himself admitted, in

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³ "Line of March for the Party. Presented by Comrade Maurice Bishop, Chairman, Central Committee, to General Meeting of Party on Monday 13th September, 1982." in Michael Ledeen and Herbert Romerstein, eds. Grenada Documents: An Overview and Selection, vol. I, (Washington, D.C.: Deps. of State and Defence, 1984), 1-1-49. Hereafter, this volume will be referred to as Grenada Documents. Titles are taken from the actual document when obvious, if not, they are taken from the Table of Contents.
Grenada there was a "very large petit bourgeoisie, particularly a large peasantry - the rural petit bourgeoisie - small farmers who own small means of production and who must therefore work as they cannot live off their own plot of land alone. Some of them employ labour; some do not. . . . Then there is the urban petit bourgeoisie in terms of shopkeepers, garage owners, craftsmen, small restaurant owners and such like." These groups were the largest class formation in Grenada. In contrast, the "working class" was "very small and made up of agricultural workers based mainly in the rural areas, transport and communication workers. . . manufacturing and industrial workers (the smallest section of all). . . and commercial workers." Bishop then emphasized the "low cultural level of the population" and "the lack of technical skills and technical expertise of the working people."4 What is questionable here is the relevance of an analysis of class formations, developed for nineteenth-century industrialized Europe,5 to a small agricultural island like Grenada where class lines were further complicated by skin color and centuries of colonization. As a consequence of Grenada's small working class, the noncapitalist path or socialist orientation originally developed by Soviet theorists for conditions in Africa was pursued.6 This model essentially allowed the capitalist stage of development in underdeveloped economies to be bypassed on the way to building socialism.7

6 Heine, 6.
Conforming to this model, the NJM sought to build "an alliance of many classes including sections of the small bourgeoisie but under the leadership and with the dominant role being played by the working people and particularly the working class, through their vanguard party the NJM." The Grenadian revolution was at the "national-democratic, anti-imperialist" stage of development, laying the basis for the ultimate goal of socialism and "the coming to power of the working class." It seems from the above that the "working class" did not include all working people. Bishop's terminology is somewhat confusing, his use of the term working class apparently refers to an industrial proletariat which was virtually nonexistent in Grenada. If the intention was to produce a majority industrial working class as in Europe, the task would be almost impossible given the rural nature of Grenada's economy and population with its propensity to small holding. At any rate, the NJM, through the PRG, sought to mobilize a "vast majority of the people" to participate in building the revolution.

Some of the first positive actions the PRG took to restore rights to ordinary people were to repeal the repressive legislation, such as the 1978 Essential Services Act and the 1975 Newspaper Act, that Gairy had imposed. It then undertook to broaden the political participation of "the poor and working people" by setting up "zonal councils, workers parish councils, farmers, women and youth councils"--"the organs of popular democracy." The 1973 manifesto had laid out how it would replace the party system by People's Assemblies. It is

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worth quoting from the 1973 Manifesto in order to see how the NJM matched up to its earlier plan:

Firstly, there will be the Village Assemblies. Each adult citizen, from eighteen years of age, will be a member of his Village Assembly. The Village Assembly will discuss the problems of the village and take decisions on them . . .

Secondly, we propose the creation of Parish Assemblies. These will be made up of representatives from throughout the parish . . .

Thirdly, we advocate the creation of Workers' Assemblies which will be organized along similar lines to the village assemblies . . .

Finally, there is the National Assembly. This will be the government of the land. It will be made up of representatives chosen from each village and the Workers Assembly, one each. The National Assembly will elect its Council to put the decisions into practice. Members of the Council will be on Committees which will head government departments . . .

At any time, the village can fire and replace its Council, its representative on the Parish Assembly, or its representative on the National Assembly. 11

The Manifesto made clear that the People's Assemblies would not be able to function immediately. Consequently, a provisional government (the PRG) would be set up, with the development of People's Assemblies as one of its tasks. As late as July 1983, Selwyn Strachan, the NJM's Minister of National

Mobilization and Labour, stated that "a national People's Assembly or Parliament," as described in the 1973 Manifesto, would "eventually be elected to replace the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) as the country's government." He also claimed that members from the communities, not only the New Jewel Movement, could be elected to this Assembly. There is little evidence, however, that this was government policy. For instance, there is no indication in the Central Committee meetings examined up to September 1983 that the institution of a National Assembly was contemplated.

In the meantime, the PRG began to construct the framework for people's power around three major structures: mass organizations, industrial democracy, and participatory democracy. The most important mass organizations were the National Youth Organization (NYO), the National Women's Organization (NWO), and the People's Militia. The National Youth Organization had, by mid 1981, reportedly reached a membership level of over 8,000, distributed among about 100 groups. Yet membership had fallen to around 4,000 in 1983, suggesting disillusionment with the organization. The National Women's Organization, which will be discussed in the next chapter, reportedly reached a membership level of 6,500, with 155 branches, by 1982, but as in the National Youth Organization, membership began to drop off. The People's Militia was largely successful in organizing popular participation in national defence. Training took place weekly, with annual maneuvers lasting three days. In its four year period the PRG was able to train about 3,500 volunteers.\footnote{\textit{Free West Indian}, July 9, 1983, in Martin, 69.} \footnote{Tony Thorndike, \textit{Grenada: Politics, Economics and Society} (London: Francis Pinter, 1985), 87-88. It was proposed in a Political Bureau Meeting in September 1982, that militia training should be changed "from every Wednesday to the 1st Wednesday in every month, with regular weekend/periodic training; and once a year training (sic) for 7 days of 15 days." This proposal required that "a law be passed in order for members of militia who are employed to get the}
Industrial democracy was pursued with pro-union legislation. Firstly, all Gairy's antiworkers' laws were repealed; then in May, 1979, the PRG passed the Trade Union Recognition Law. This gave "workers the opportunity to join the union of their choice, and the employer was compelled to recognize the trade union, once 51% of his workforce were financial members." Union membership had increased from 30 percent to 80 percent of the workforce by October 1979. There are a number of reasons for such a surge in membership. The anti-union stance of Gairy, when workers were sometimes victimized for being union members, had strongly discouraged workers from joining unions. After the revolution, therefore, they joined because they were able to do so freely, anticipating that their needs would now be met. The government certainly encouraged union membership, and possibly workers saw it in their best interests to join a union, while being further encouraged by the PRG's intent to democratize the unions and open up the books to members. It is, moreover, important to note the strong tradition of trade union participation in the British Caribbean.

necessary time off to attend the trainings. Each worker is to be allowed a maximum of 15 days." "Minutes of the Political Bureau Meeting, Wednesday 29th September, 1982," Grenada Documents, 82 - 1. It has not been possible to ascertain if the proposal and law were implemented.

14 In the Spirit of Butler: Trade Unionism in Free Grenada (St. George's, Grenada: Fedon Publishers, 1982), 22.


16 In the Spirit of Butler, interview with Frederick Grant, founding member and trustee of the Technical and Allied Workers' Union and a second Vice-president of the Grenada Trade Union Council, who claimed that membership had doubled in his union "due to the rights and privileges our members are getting at their workplaces." 85; he also states that "all the union's books are open." 83. This is further confirmed by Bernard Coard during the Public Workers' Union strike of 1981. Free West Indian, January 24, 1981, in Martin, 191.
Following criticism that some workers, while benefitting from the union’s gains, were refusing to join, the Trade Union Recognition (Amendment) Act was passed in 1982. The Act, instigated by complaints to the TUC from union members, stated that “non-unionized workers must pay a service contribution to that union which represents the workers at their workplace, equal to the regular union membership subscription. . . .” This ensured stronger trade union participation without going so far as to introduce a closed shop. Other legislation included the Equal Pay for Equal Work Decree in the state sector, aimed at bringing women’s wages on a par with men’s, announced in 1979; the Maternity Leave Law of 1980, which essentially gave women three months maternity leave, two of them on full pay; and the increased Workers’ Compensation Law of 1982.17

The principal goals of the unions under the NJM, besides the protection of workers’ rights, were worker participation and profit sharing. While many private companies had accepted profit sharing, worker participation was confined to a few state enterprises. The PRG prepared proposals for production committees with joint union and management representation, although few committees seemed to have been established by 1983.18 In addition, the PRG established workers’ education classes to enable workers to understand the

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revolution and learn about industrial relations and socialism. Interestingly, Vincent Noel, having talked with workers, reported in a Political Bureau meeting in June 1981 that workers claimed that "the classes [were] not related to our situation and [were] uninteresting." Noel felt that the reason for this and for the fall in attendance was that the wrong material was being used. Following a discussion of suitable material, the PB decided that the syllabus should be reviewed. It is not clear what the eventual outcome was, but the debate suggests that while workers were willing to attend classes that related to their own experiences as Grenadians, they perhaps found the party's emphasis on anti-imperialism and the use of too much unfamiliar terminology, both alienating and a little boring.  

NJM members headed five of the eight unions in Grenada including the Agricultural and General Workers Union (AGWU) led by Fitzroy Bain, a Central Committee member, and the Bank and General Workers' Union, led by Vice minister of National Mobilization, Vincent Noel, also a Political Bureau and Central Committee member. Interestingly, it was noted in a Central Committee meeting in May 1981 that "almost all Party Comrades are reluctant to join a trade union;" the CC therefore decided that all members should join the appropriate union, suggesting that the unions, despite the high level NJM members in the leadership, were less influenced by the NJM than the party

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20 "Line of March", 1 - 24; In the Spirit Of Butler, 56 and 46. Vincent Noel was dismissed from the Political Bureau and the Central Committee in July, 1981, for inefficient work as chairman of the Workers' Committee. "Central Committee Minutes, Held on 22nd July, 1981," Grenada Documents, 99 - 1-4. He was later appointed Secretary in the newly established Ministry of National Mobilization in a Cabinet reshuffle in 1981. Caribbean Contact, September 1981. It appears he continued as president of the BGWU.
leadership would have liked. Although the unions seemed generally favorable to the PRG, it appears that they primarily pursued the interests of their members, unwilling to sacrifice too much for the revolution. This was met with some hostility by the PRG, as displayed in the wages dispute with the Public Service Workers (joined by TAWU and GUT), which had led to strike action in 1981. The PRG referred to the call for a 'sick out' as "unprincipled and irresponsible," accusing the workers of being unable to comprehend fully the economic situation. Eventually a settlement was reached that set wage increases at 17.3 percent in 1981, with further increases in 1982 and 1983. The dispute highlighted the sometimes divergent interests of workers and government. Nevertheless, trade union rights were greatly increased under the PRG.

The idea of village-based democracy was much more innovative than mass organizations and industrial democracy. To implement participatory democracy, Parish Councils were established in mid 1979. These were initially open only to NJM members and supporters, but by the end of the year they were open to everyone. Each of the seven Parish Councils was chaired by a member or nominee of the Political Bureau, and meetings discussed "broad national issues as well as specific problems facing the people of the Parish."

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22 Free West Indian, March 7, 1981, in Martin, Vol. I, 196; Manning, 229; Thorndike, Grenada, 92-93. On another occasion, Fitzroy Bain, although a CC member, had encouraged his union, the AGWU, "to take industrial action when demands for public holiday and incentive pay were not met," Free West Indian, October 3, 1981, Martin, 189.
23 Frederick Grant, a union member since 1958, claimed that his union, the TAWU was "free from any government interference," In the Spirit of Butler, 83; and Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Barritteau, found the majority of those surveyed felt that union rights had improved under the PRG, 26.
The parish councils proved so popular, although doubtless there was pressure from the PRG on people to attend, that in 1980 they were further broken down into what eventually reached around thirty-six Zonal Councils at the village level. "The Parish Councils, Zonal Councils and all the mass organizations within the parish [were] serviced and co-ordinated by a committee called the Parish Co-ordinating Body (PCB)." Additionally, the mass organizations had their co-ordinating structures at the parish and national level. The lack of sufficient activists meant that the leadership roles at the zonal, parish, and party branch levels were frequently taken by the same individuals. In 1983 there was a further development with the establishment of Village Co-ordinating Bodies (VCBs), "responsible for dealing with all grievances of residents, as well as with community development." This network could have formed the basis for genuine mass participation that was to be embodied in a new Constitution.

The center of power, however, lay in the Central Committee (CC). The Central Committee of the NJM had been established in September 1979, with the Political Bureau as its most important subcommittee. It had been elected originally by NJM party members, but thereafter Central Committee members took decisions on its membership among themselves. For example, in July 1981 Vincent Noel was removed from both the Political Bureau and Central Committee, having failed to work effectively as chairman of the Worker's Committee. Whereas the CC generally met either fortnightly or monthly, the

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26 Thorndike, Grenada, 72.
27 "Central Committee Minutes Held on 22nd July, 1981," in Grenada Documents, 99 - 1-4. In October 1982 three new members were added to the Political Bureau, "Minutes of the Political Bureau Meeting, Wednesday 27th October, 1982," Grenada Documents, 83 - 1. The following year, during the extraordinary meeting of the CC, Tan Bartholomew complained that "Cdes were not consulted when the three Cdes of the C.C. was brought onto the P.B.," suggesting members
Political Bureau, chaired by Bishop, met weekly and saw to the implementation of CC decisions as well as provided theoretical and ideological guidance. Political Bureau membership consisted of senior CC members. Members of the CC and PB subjected themselves to criticism and stringent work ethics. They were expected to play leadership roles in major areas of party work, as well as attend Marxist Leninist study groups. By 1982 the NJM party had "over 90 percent direct control... of the ruling council of the PRG and Cabinet." If the selection of CC members had been entirely controlled through election by NJM party members, who in turn were truly representative of the masses, then decisions of the CC could be said to reflect, through representation, the wishes of the majority. As things stood the CC was not representative of the Grenadian people.

The PRG's effort to include the masses in government decisions was further impeded by the closely monitored and restricted membership of the NJM, which would produce inevitably a new class. This elite group claimed to represent the interests of the masses, but had no concrete grounds for doing so as it failed ultimately to give them a voice in decision making. Moreover, there is every indication in the documents that the NJM leadership was becoming increasingly weary through overwork, precisely because there were too few leaders to carry out the vast amount of work the PRG agenda required. Bernard Coard, for example, pointed out at a Central Committee meeting in August 1982 that "our [the CC's] main problem is that we are trying to do too much... our

were growing critical of the CC acting alone. "Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee NJM, 14-16 September, 1983," Grenada Documents, 112 - 7.
28 Thomdike, Grenada, 72.
human and other resources do not permit us to do what we are setting ourselves." He further stated that there were complaints "even from technocrats and bureaucrats that excessive demands [were] being made on them by the Ministers etc."30 Although it is understandable that the party leadership wished to ensure that only those entirely committed to party aims and willing to follow the stringent work and study requirements were permitted to join, the contradiction lay in the fact that by making membership so difficult to ensure Leninist standards were maintained, the NJM was actually thwarting participation by the very people it claimed to represent. While allowing easy access to the party might well have meant a lowering of the strict Leninist principles and discipline imposed, it would have ensured that the party, and hence the revolution, remain more closely representative of the Grenadian people.

Instead, the NJM seemed to become more and more elitist. In the 'Line of March' speech of September 1982 Bishop articulated the categories and requirements for membership. Membership was divided into full members, candidate members, and applicants, while a further category of potential applicant was proposed in 1982.31 At the time of the U.S. invasion in 1983, there were only 72 full members, 94 candidate members and 180 applicants.32

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30 "Meeting of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement, Held on the 21st April 1982," *Grenada Documents*, 102 - 8. Bishop also agreed that they "were doing too much" and were overworked. 102 - 9. In the same meeting Phyllis Coard criticized the leadership's "inability to refuse unrealistic tasks," 102 - 7. During the course of the "Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee NJM, 14 -16 September, 1983," Phyllis Coard noted that "older Cdes are getting tired and sick," that one of the main problems of the CC was "illness as a result of phycological (sic) pressure," and felt that George Louison's failure in the Organizing Committee's task was due to overwork. 112 - 9, 16, and 28. Another CC and PB member, Chalkie Ventour, who had been persistently sick since 1982, felt his illness was more psychological than physical. *ibid*, 112 - 19.
32 Thorndike, "Peoples Power in Theory and Practice," 44. The NJM, rather than broadening its membership, had made entry into the party more restricted. In 1982 Bishop announced that "we
This represented a very small percentage of Grenada's population of approximately 110,000.

The small number of party members reflects the stringent requirements that the party demanded for membership. There were four basic requirements for full party membership. First, "regular collective ideological study organized by the Party"; second, members had to "engage in consistent political work under the guidance of an organ of the Party"; third, "consistent payment of party dues fixed at 5% of gross salary." (Bishop stressed that it was gross and did not take into consideration money given to family members. Unemployed members and students had to pay $1 per month.); and fourth membership required "understanding, accepting and implementing the principles and programme of the Party." This included "a complete willingness to accept Party discipline in many, many areas of one's personal life. . . .", which could mean that even the timing of a vacation was to be approved by the Party. 33

Undoubtedly, the stringency of these requirements severely restricted membership from all groups of society, but particularly the poor. Although it is not possible to ascertain how stringently money was deducted, failing to take into account the number of people someone's salary supported seems ludicrous in a society like Grenada where extended families were prevalent. Furthermore, Tony Thorndike notes that "the number of women who passed the

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33 "Line of March for the Party," in *Grenada Documents*, 1 - 43-45. Furthermore, the NJM was constantly on the alert to curb the counter revolutionary 'petty bourgeoisie' tendencies among its members.
tests was disproportionately few.\textsuperscript{34} This was most likely a consequence of inadequate childcare facilities presenting an added burden for women with children who wished to attend all required meetings and participate actively in party work. The relation of women to the revolution will be discussed later. It is clear, however, that these requirements would have been particularly restricting to those with large families and the responsibility of caring for small children.

It is apparent that the party leadership wished to construct the NJM party along the lines of the Cuban and Soviet models. Although Grenada received substantial financial aid and assistance from both countries, especially from Cuba, there seems to be no evidence that they were under pressure to conform to these models. Indeed, one East German official is said to have remarked, privately, that it was quite inappropriate to apply a model suitable for the Bolsheviks in exile prior to 1917 to revolutionary Grenada.\textsuperscript{35} Furthermore, there is an inherent contradiction between the grassroots democracy outlined in the 1973 NJM Manifesto and the Leninist model of leadership by a small tightly controlled party. The party leadership most likely chose to follow the Soviet and Cuban models seeing them as the best method of controlling the direction of the revolution and maintaining their own political power.

Its Marxist-Leninist path notwithstanding, the question of holding elections remained a thorn in the side of the revolution throughout its four year's existence. Concern came from international circles as well as from within Grenada. Although "freedom of elections" had been promised in Bishop's first

\footnote{Thordike, \textit{Grenada}, 79. Unfortunately, Thordike does not cite his source for this information.}

\footnote{Thordike, \textit{Grenada}, 81, quoted from a private interview conducted in June 1982.}
broadcast to the nation on March 13, 1979, the NJM had already made it clear that it did not intend to continue the Westminster electoral system. In 1982 Bishop reiterated the inappropriateness of the British system for Grenada, stating that the system functioned in Britain because of "centuries of development, an informed public opinion, the presence of strong lobbies to represent views of particular interests, and that it was created at a time of relative peace." In the Caribbean, however, the system was a shadow of the British system, and lacked any substance. Despite the almost certain victory the NJM would have gained in the first year of the revolution if elections had been held, it would therefore have gone very much against their principles to go to the polls under the existing structure. What the NJM did not acknowledge was the historical importance of elections in Grenada, where black people had persistently been denied the vote and where universal suffrage had only been granted as recently as 1951. People wanted elections. It is, of course, true that one of the aims of the NJM revolution was to try and eradicate dependency on the West, including the reverence people had for the British electoral system. It could, nevertheless, have called some sort of referendum. Perhaps members of the Central Committee could have been elected, or at the very least elections could have been held for leaders of each zonal council and for the leadership of the mass organizations.

The popular democracy contemplated for Grenada through the local zonal and parish councils could have given people a much greater voice in the

37 *Caribbean Contact*, October 1982, 16.
38 In the survey conducted by Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Barritteau, 70.1 percent of their respondents disagreed with the PRG's failure to call general elections, 37.
government than parliamentary style elections, and, with time, won wider acceptance, if it had been shown to work. But in practice the councils had no power. Decisions came down from above; there was little accountability to those below, and absolutely no power to remove people 'at the top.' Moreover, evidence emerging from the extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee in September 1983 indicates that the leadership withheld its decisions even from party members. Tan Bartholomew complained that "the party has been dishonest with its members on a number of issues which has shaken the confidence of the party masses . . . internal party democracy has been destroyed and decisions are handed down without involving the full members." Kamau Mc Barnett stated that "the C.C. needs to explain the criterion for membership on the C.C. and by what mechanism are Cmdes work on the C.C. are judge(sic)." He further commented that "the party must be honest and frank with its members." These comments suggest there was growing criticism among members that the leadership was acting without their consultation as well as failing to pass down decisions.

If party members were not receiving information, the masses were certainly being kept in the dark. At the same meeting, Fitzroy Bain astutely pointed out that the party had set "much [too] high standards for the people." While the Central Committee was anxious to form closer links with the masses, it did not do so, probably because some of those in command essentially held the masses with a certain degree of contempt not far removed from that shown

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by the elites and colonial authorities under colonial rule.\textsuperscript{40} Despite the assertion that the party had "a working class leadership,"\textsuperscript{41} few members of the Central Committee were working class. Bishop and Coard's backgrounds were certainly privileged, while many of the CC members had been educated abroad. Furthermore, as late as 1983, a CC report stated that "the party has also failed to recruit into its ranks members of the working class, the most strategic class."\textsuperscript{42} Consequently, Bishop's claim that the revolution was from the start a "dictatorship of the entire working people"\textsuperscript{43} was unfounded.

Despite its failings, the PRG's version of popular participation had some outstanding successes. It did more than most other Commonwealth Caribbean countries to involve actively the 'masses' in government. People did have a chance to meet with PRG members, discuss policy, and air their grievances, while their suggestions were taken into account in many incidents of public policy making. For example, Lyden Ramdhanny, PRG deputy Minister of Finance and Minister of Tourism, claimed that the idea for a national transport system did not come from the PRG but from local council meetings. The PRG had received some money that was to be used to repair the roads. The strength of support shown for a good public transport system, however, changed their

\textsuperscript{40} Heine claims this was particularly true of Coard, see Jorge Heine, "The Hero and the Apparatchik," in Heine, 239, while Bishop and other Central Committee members frequently referred to the backwardness of the population. In his "Line of March speech," for example, Bishop claimed the NJM was "way ahead ideologically of the masses of our people." Further, as has been noted, the leadership did not feel obligated to allow the masses into the decision making process of the CC--most important decisions were made behind closed doors. See also Thorndike, "Peoples Power in Theory and Practice," 38.

\textsuperscript{41} "Minutes of the Central Committee Meeting held on Friday 27th August, 1982." in Grenada Documents, 104 - 3.


\textsuperscript{43} "Line of March for the Party," in Grenada Documents, 1 - 18.
decision instead into buying twenty-six Japanese buses. In addition, the mass organizations carried out surveys to ascertain what were generally seen as the most urgent problems. The National Women's Organization, for example, had initially perceived unemployment as the main problem for women. But, after discussion at the group, parish, and delegate levels, a preponderance of women felt that simply solving unemployment was inadequate, and that technical education and, most importantly, adequate childcare facilities also had to be implemented. Hence the NWO was able to incorporate the women's wishes into its three year program.

Perhaps the best example of the NJM's attempt at popular participation was in the making of the budget. Beginning in January 1982 draft budget proposals were put forward to the mass organizations at a Conference of Delegates of the Mass Organizations on the Economy, in order that they might be discussed at all levels of society. The conference was followed by a "series of 25 Zonal and Workers' Parish Councils throughout the country," as well as consultations with the private sector. Another conference was held on March 1 for those who had not yet been able to contribute suggestions, and this was followed by consultation with representatives and managers of the state sector. The budget was finally presented on March 9, 1982. Bernard Coard, in his budget address, claimed that the people's suggestions were studied by members of the Cabinet and PRG "in order to arrive at the final draft of the Budget and Plan for 1982."

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44 Heine, 16, interview conducted by Jorge Heine in 1987. The idea for a public transport system was, however, mentioned in the NJM Manifesto.
46 "To Construct from Morning, Making the People's Budget in Grenada," St. George's, Grenada: Fedon Publishers, 1982, 9 and 95.
It is difficult to ascertain how many of these suggestions were implemented. Certainly numerous suggestions were noted down,\(^{47}\) and, as Coard pointed out, there was "an amazing commonality of opinion being expressed in all the villages." He further commented that there were three main concerns that came up again and again in the suggestions: better price controls, buying more local food, and control of imports, all of which, he claimed, were addressed in 1982.\(^{48}\) These concerns were, however, already part of PRG policy, and it is hard to determine how much real impact the people's suggestions actually had on budget proposals. Certainly the process gave people the feeling that their concerns counted, and it would have provided the PRG with a good barometer to assess the needs of the masses. The NJM's experience with the budget and with the local councils should be seen, as Jorge Heine points out, as "one of the most important experiments in grass roots democracy to have taken place in the Caribbean."\(^{49}\) Its greatest failure was not to allow some form of general electoral process to have taken place.

Equally as controversial as the calling of elections has been the relationship between the PRG and the press. Under Gairy, the NJM's newspaper had been virtually banned; hence, after the coup, the repressive 1975 Newspaper Amendment Act had been withdrawn in 1979. The PRG then faced the dilemma of trying to consolidate the revolution with one small radio station and no daily newspaper of its own. It was, at the same time, surrounded by the hostile media of its more powerful opponents in the region, such as the

\(^{47}\) "To Construct from Morning," 36-44, list some of the suggestions.
\(^{49}\) Heine, 16.
Jamaican *Daily Gleaner* and the *Trinidad Express*, with whom it lacked the finance to compete. Consequently, the PRG, with the help of the German Democratic Republic, modernized the equipment of the national newspaper, the *Free West Indian*, eventually changing it into a twice weekly publication that acted as a mouthpiece for the PRG. In addition, the PRG with Soviet assistance augmented the power of Radio Free Grenada. It moved to diversify further its sources of international news to include the Cuban Prensa Latina and the Soviet Tass news agency.\(^50\) This was in accordance with growing criticism in the Third World on the manner in which the international news agencies collected and disseminated news. The agencies tended to concentrate on "coup, corruption, poverty and calamities," while producing "an unrelenting one-way traffic in ideas and values from the western countries to the third world,"\(^51\) with little chance of producing a fair exchange of information.

Bishop, as both Prime Minister and Minister of Information, had strongly supported the decisions made at the Sixth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Havana in 1979, towards forming a new international information order. The decisions aimed "to strengthen and develop the national mass communications media, to utilize more national information services, to cooperate with other nations' information services in disseminating and circulating information, to secure better avenues of training for national communications personnel, and to develop, as rapidly as possible, the technical and technological foundations for national communications policies."\(^52\) These

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objectives, by strengthening the national media, should have been able to accommodate the voices of government opponents. The PRG's tolerance of opposition voices was, however, severely limited.

It banned publication of two newspapers, the *Torchlight* and the *Grenadian Voice*, which were critical of the government. The *Torchlight* had been Grenada's main newspaper which, although initially supportive of the PRG, began to expound anti-government sentiment. It was eventually closed down by the PRG in October 1979, with the announcement that "no Grenadian may hold more the 4 percent of the paid up capital of a Company that is a proprietor, printer or publisher of a newspaper." In June 1981 an attempt to publish another opposition newspaper, the *Grenadian Voice*, was suppressed. Bishop accused the publishers of being in league with the CIA and determined to destabilize the revolution. Although there is little direct evidence that this was so, the CIA had reportedly used the Jamaican *Daily Gleaner* and the Chilean *El Mercurio* to undermine the governments of Michael Manley and Salvador Allende, providing fears that similar tactics would be used in Grenada. Bishop maintained that freedom of press did not extend to efforts to destabilize the revolution. He further announced on the same day that "no newspaper is to be printed for the period of the next year until a media policy is formulated."

Subsequently, the Newspaper (Publications) Law of June, 1981, made Bishop's words law. No definite media policy appears to have been

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53 Manning, 242-243.
54 Bishop clearly lays down his case in his speech 'Freedom of the Press and Imperialist Destabilization' on June 19, 1981, in Marcus and Taber, 150-173. See also the section on the media in Martin.Vol. I.
55 "Freedom of the Press and Imperialist Destabilization, June, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 165; *Grenada, The People's Laws 1981*, (St. George's, Grenada: Government Printing Office, 1982), 75-77. Section 3 of the law states that, with some exceptions, "no newspaper or other paper, pamphlet or publication containing any public news, intelligence or report of any occurrence or
announced by the end of the revolution. Furthermore, the PRG seemed determined to control the press in Grenada, and certainly in the early years of the revolution it was not prepared to tolerate opposition.

Rather than diversifying the news sources, as the Havana charter had suggested, the PRG's actions changed the news from a western bias to a government bias. While there is much truth in Bishop's criticism of the free press in the West as being controlled frequently by a single company or group of companies, on balance it seems that the NJM's position on the press did more harm than good. It would, perhaps, have been more effective to withdraw publication of offending articles rather than close down entire newspapers. The closures not only gave more fuel to NJM opponents but were unpopular among some of the revolution's supporters--a public opinion survey conducted in 1984 found that 60.3 percent of the sample surveyed, who thought that the revolution had improved conditions in general, felt that freedom of speech under the PRG had deteriorated.

The Torchlight issue brought to light the ambivalence of the PRG's relationship with the Rastafarians in Grenada. The offending issue of the Torchlight that had led to the ban carried a front page article claiming that there were major disagreements between the PRG and Rastafarians. The PRG found the article particularly disturbing because it felt that the Torchlight was attempting to stir unrest and incite anti-government violence among an important but fragile element of its supporters. Some Rastafarians seemed to

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any remarks or observations thereon or upon any political matter ... shall be published or distributed in Grenada for the period [one year] in which this law shall have effect." 76. The PRG thus overreacted by instituting this unnecessarily harsh legislation.
57 Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Bartheleau, 26-27.
58 "Out the Torchlight," Free West Indian, October 20, 1979, in Martin, Vol. I, 97-98.
have actively supported the revolution and were members of the Peoples' Revolutionary Army and the Militia, coming out to demonstrate against the newspaper in support of the the PRG.\textsuperscript{59} Whether these were just individuals wearing dreadlocks, the hairstyle associated with Rastafarianism, or followers of the religion, is difficult to say. Additionally, an interview with Rastafarian and calypsonian, Grantis 'The Lion' Joseph, stressed unity between the government and Rastas.\textsuperscript{60} On the other hand, PRG documents reveal a different story.

At a Central Committee meeting on June 24, 1981, Unison Whiteman claimed that there was "evidence that the rastas [were] planning to go on an offensive in the Northern part of the country within days" so that the government should consider preventative measures. Phyllis Coard estimated that they "should be prepared to pick up about 50 rastas." She felt that the Rastafarian movement had weakened the NJM's support base, possibly by displaying dissension among its grassroot followers, but that the government "should not play up the line that this is a move against the rasta movement generally; we don't have the capacity to hold all the rastas in the country: the quality of guards used to guard the rastas has to be the best - they must be politically educated."

Her concern demonstrates the sensitivity of the issue because of the significance of the Rastafarian movement to revolutionary movements in the Caribbean. There was suggestion of film censorship following the recent showing of "Reggae Sunsplash," which, they claimed, had served to augment the movement, while Vincent Noel stated that it was not the rank and file of Rastas who were preparing the offensive. Whiteman pointed out that the

\textsuperscript{59} See "Out the Torchlight," \textit{Free West Indian}, October 20, 1979, in Martin, Vol. I 97.
\textsuperscript{60} \textit{Carriacou and Petite Martinique in the Mainstream of the Revolution} (St. George's, Grenada: Fedon Publishers: 1982), 111-115.
Central Committee's "greatest weakness is the lack of precise information," suggesting that they may have been operating on the basis of rumors, perhaps exaggerating the threat. The matter was further discussed in a Political Bureau meeting the same day. Here it was stated by Major Einstein Louison that "a place is being constructed to house the 300 rastas that will be "picked up.""

Furthermore, Bishop, no doubt remembering the indignity of having his head shaved in prison on 'Bloody Sunday,' "stated that he was totally against taking up 300 of them and cutting their hair as was proposed." Unfortunately, the documents do not reveal who proposed such an act that showed total disregard for Rastafarian religious practices. Neither do they suggest exactly what the Rastafarians hoped to achieve. Most likely the Rastafarians were displaying their objection to what they felt to be the authoritarian nature of PRG directives, especially against the growing of marijuana, as marijuana was given religious sanction by many Rastafarians.

PRG documents further reveal that at a Political Bureau meeting earlier on June 3, 1981, a woman named Grace James was fired because of her "connection with the rastas." No other information has been found regarding this incident. In addition, a list of persons in detention on July 22, reveals that of 61 political prisoners detained in 1981, 33 had "declared themselves avowed Rastafarians while there are about six (6) others sporting "dreadlocks" but disclaim any connection with the Rastafarians." Moreover, "nine (9) persons

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61 "Minutes of Central Committee Meeting Held on Wednesday, 24th June, 1981," Grenada Documents, 97 -1-2.
62 "Minutes of Political Bureau Meeting on Wednesday, 24th June, 1981," Grenada Documents, 57 - 1. It is not clear whether the PB or CC meeting was held first.
wearing dreadlocks have elected to cut their hair and have done so." The document does not state on what grounds they were detained, and why, unless it was to ensure better treatment, they should 'elect' to cut their hair, or the relevance of such a decision. The growth of dreadlocks may be seen in itself as a statement against Western values and culture. Yet, the PRG never acknowledged this. Instead, documents quoted above suggest that the Rastafarians were perceived as a real threat to the revolution. It seems that relations were soured between the PRG and the Rastafarians over the growing of marijuana. But, the independence of the Rastafarian lifestyle was anathema to the disciplined approach of the NJM leadership, and leaders presumably felt the need to keep Rastafarians under strict control.

There is a certain degree of irony in the Central Committee's attitude. From their origin in Jamaica during the 1930s, Rastafarians had been at the forefront of anti-colonial protest and the promotion of black consciousness. A revolution claiming to throw off the ties of Western cultural dependency, which, as we shall see, the NJM did, should have been able to accommodate a group of people whose ideology had sprung from the legacy of slavery and colonialism in the region, whether or not it agreed with their religious beliefs. Moreover, because of the nature of their beliefs and strong anti-imperialist stance, it would have been very unlikely that Rastafarians, of all people, would become agents of imperialism. The attitude of the Central Committee to Rastafarians closely resembles the prejudice of their right wing opponents. It demonstrates the CC's deep-seated adherence to Western cultural norms, despite the rhetoric towards independence from Western values. More

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64 "List of Detainees Currently Charged Before the Courts," _Grenada Documents_, 11 - 3-4
importantly, it indicates that the NJM's intolerance of dissidents was not confined to those with links to imperialism.

Besides the Rastafarians, the PRG also held other political detainees, some for long periods, without trial. Following the coup, the People's Revolutionary Army had been established and was granted authority to arrest and interrogate members of the public.65 Undoubtedly, in the coup's aftermath, it was exigent to detain members of Gairy's infamous Mongoose gang and his inner circle of political supporters who might have posed a threat to the revolution. Yet, terrorist acts did take place. Most notably, a bomb apparently intended for the NJM leadership exploded at Queen's Park stadium on June 19, 1980, killing three young women and injuring others.66 Certainly the perpetrators of such deeds should have been detained and tried. Nevertheless, the PRG also held people such as Lloyd Noel, who posed no immediate threat, and simply disagreed with the revolution's direction. In the 'Line of March' speech, Bishop states, somewhat flippantly, that: "consider how people get detained in this country. We don't go and call for no votes. You get detained when I sign an order after discussing it with the National Security Committee of Party or with a higher Party body. Once I sign it - like or don't like it - its up the hill for them."67

65 Manning, 222. In addition, in April, 1979, People's Law No. 17 and No. 21 were passed which established preventive detention for anyone who was accused of subverting or sabotaging the government. "Persons detained under this law would be allowed no bail; the writ of habeas corpus would no lie in the case of any person denied bail by or under this law, and the Supreme Court . . . had no jurisdiction to grant such bail." 223, quoted by Manning from Brizan, 350.
67 "Line of March for the Party," in Grenada Documents, 1 - 25. "The hill" refers to the prison where detainees were held.
A perusal of the charges advanced against the detainees listed indicate that some of the latter were perceived to be quite dangerous. These charges included "possession of Explosive Substance," "Failure to disclose information about terrorists," "conspiracy to commit acts of terrorism," and "causing death by explosive substance." Whether or not these charges were justified is uncertain. Documents listing the names of detainees indicate that the PRG continued to show concern, review, and keep an account of their position.

There are some indications of this in the Political Bureau meetings. In June, 1981, the Political Bureau stated that there was "a need to review the detainees and come up with a package for the release of some," then, in December that year, it stated that 22 of 25 suggested names were to be released. Again, in November 1982, the PB stated that some of the detainees were to be released. These comments suggest that it was the PB rather than the courts that decided the detainees fate. There is, moreover, no indication that the detainees were to be tried and were thus denied the proper avenues of justice. It is not clear how long detainees could be held without trial, but a few were held as long as the revolution itself. Allegations of brutality made by reactionary governments in

68 "List of Detainees Currently Charged Before the Courts," in Grenada Documents, 11 - 1.
69 "List of Person in Detention as from 1st January 1982," 6 - 1-11; "List of Detainees Currently Charged Before the Courts," 11 - 1-5; and "Report on Detainees sent to the Prime Minister 19 September 1981," 12 - 1-3. The government appointed a taskforce in 1981 to deal with detainee's affairs. A report from the taskforce indicated that the prisons were overcrowded, and that there were currently 333 detainees being held. This figure consisted of political and criminal detainees. In 1982 the number of political detainees was reportedly 95. Caribbean Contact, March 1982.
70 "Minutes of Political Bureau Meeting, on Wednesday 10th June 1981," 55 - 3; "Minutes of Political Bureau Meeting, on Monday 28th December 1981," 76 -2; and "Wednesday 3rd November, 1982" [PB Meeting] 84 - 2, Grenada Documents. Bishop claimed in an interview in the Gramma Weekly Review in July 1981, that the PRG's position was that whenever possible detainees "must be brought to trial on specific charges." "The Present Stage of the Grenadian Revolution," Marcus and Taber, 186.
the region most likely contain some verifiable incidents; police forces seldom exhibit exemplary behavior. While their record is far from clean and excesses did occur in the PRG's use of political detention--state violence was understandable given the revolutionary situation. 72

The PRG's treatment of political detainees became an issue of contention in the region. It seems that the issue tended to be used more as a political weapon than for reasons of genuine concern. Initial response to the revolution in the Caribbean was mixed. While the left leaning governments welcomed the NJM, conservative regimes such as Barbados's Tom Adams, were openly hostile. They insisted that Grenada should hold elections and stressed unduly allegations of brutal treatment, while John Compton, Prime Minister of St. Lucia, wanted Britain to send in the troops. The reaction of the English-speaking Caribbean shows how deeply the "belief in constitutionality is still a firmly held tenet of West Indian political life. The Grenada revolution symbolized an alternative model of change, and created deep fears that such takeovers could happen elsewhere in the region." 73 The situation, however, did not remain static. Although Michael Manley's defeat in the Jamaican election of 1980 isolated the PRG further, the situation thereafter gradually began to improve, perhaps because, with time, other governments began to feel that the revolution posed less of a threat to their own political system than was at first feared. In

71 Thorndike, Grenada, 112. It has not been possible to determine on what grounds these detainees were being held, how dangerous they were thought to be, or reasons why they had not been tried.

72 Manning claims that a few officers of the PRA, notably Leon Cornwall, "were guilty of unjustified Acts of cruelty." He further claims that "Bishop and other PRG leader did not tolerate such violence," but their concern was sometimes tempered by their concern for state security. Cornwall was apparently appointed ambassador to Cuba to get him out of the country. Manning, 245. It has not been possible to ascertain the reaction of the population to the detentions.

73 Payne, 143, EPICA, 57.
1981 Grenada was party to the treaty implemented on July 4, 1981, establishing the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), which aimed to bring the signatories closer coordination in areas such as economic and foreign policy.74

Despite hostility, the PRG had continued to attend Caribbean Community (CARICOM) meetings and had from the start supported Caribbean integration. In November 1982 the PRG triumphed at the CARICOM regional conference in Jamaica with the adoption of the Declaration of Ocho Rios. Tom Adams, in collaboration with Edward Seaga, had hoped to pass a clause at the conference making parliamentary democracy compulsory for CARICOM members. The PRG thus sent top level representatives to the meeting in order to counter the move.75 Bishop was able to convince CARICOM members not only to reject the Barbadian proposal, but his counter proposals influenced the final Declaration. The 13-point Declaration acknowledged the emergence of ideological pluralism in the Caribbean and was committed to "ensuring it will not inhibit the processes of integration." It reiterated the call for all states to respect "the principles of non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries." Most importantly for the PRG, the Declaration reiterated "the right of self-determination of all peoples including the right to choose their own path of social, political and economic development and insist there can be no justification for any external interference with the exercise of that right."76 This was a major victory for Grenada. Consequently, Grenada's relations with other CARICOM members continued to improve. In July 1983 the

75 'Central Committee Report on First Plenary Session, 13 - 19 July, 1983," Grenada Documents, 110 - 4 and 12; 'Wednesday 3rd November, 1982' [PB Meeting], Grenada Documents 84 - 2; Anthony Payne, "The Foreign Policy of the PRG" in Heine, 143-144.
76 The Ocho Rios Declaration reprinted in Caribbean Contact, December 1982.
Central Committee noted, among other things, that there were indications of a "gradual shift in the balance of forces in CARICOM in our favour," and that there had been "growth of formal and informal relations between Grenada and Caricom countries, . . . [and] developing relations with Trinidad." In addition, there was "growing positive sentiment toward Grenada in the OECS."77 The PRG's foreign relations, however, continued to cause conservative regimes in the region some concern.

Besides establishing close relations with Cuba, the PRG sought to change the direction of Grenada's foreign policy from traditional sources in the West to the Soviet Bloc and non-aligned nations. From the beginning of the revolution relations with Washington were cold. Certainly, the Grenadian revolution was perceived as a threat to United States security, and given the United States dubious record of intervention in the region it sees as its 'backyard', the NJM had reason to be concerned. Bishop, however, made it clear in a radio broadcast on April 13, 1979, that "we are not in anybody's backyard, and we are definitely not for sale." In this speech he stated that "it is well established internationally that all independent countries have a full, free and unhampered right to conduct their own internal affairs. We do not, therefore, recognize any right of the United States of America to instruct us on who we may develop relations with and who we may not." This followed an announcement from Washington that it viewed "with displeasure any tendency on the part of Grenada to develop closer ties with Cuba."78 Bishop stressed that

Grenada wished to have friendly relations with the United States, Britain, and Canada, and its Caribbean neighbors. But following the revolution, the PRG's request for "massive assistance, technical and financial" was not met with concrete offers from Washington. On the other hand, Grenada received immediate assistance from both Guyana and Jamaica.\(^7^9\)

Central to Grenada's foreign policy, as outlined in a foreign relations report in 1982, were the "principles of non-alignment - anti-imperialism, anti-racism, anti-colonialism, anti-neo-colonialism, anti-fascism as well as irreconcilable opposition to the hosting of military bases." The report stated, in line with the proposals outlined above to be put forward at CARICOM in 1982, that the government recognized "the principles of national sovereignty, respect for the territorial integrity of states, the legal equality of states, the right to develop one's own politics-socio-economic process free from outside interference, non-intervention in the domestic affairs of states and ideological pluralism . . . ." Furthermore, Grenada advocated world peace and had had a resolution adopted at the Organization of American States meeting in La Paz, Bolivia in 1979, in accordance with its desire to make the Caribbean a zone of peace.\(^8^0\) Clearly, Grenada's foreign policy was designed to align it closer with other socialist countries and the non-aligned movement, not only to find new sources of financial aid, but also to seek protection from the very real threat of United States intervention. But of course Grenada's relations with Cuba and

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\(^7^9\) *Ibid*, 28-29. Grenada's relationship with Guyana would soon turn sour, however, following the assassination of Walter Rodney in 1980 and the Burnham Government's obvious involvement, see Anthony Payne "The Foreign Policy of the People's Revolutionary Government," in Heine, 143.

\(^8^0\) "Foreign Relations Report" (Although attached to a CC meeting in October 1982, the report seems to have been written around April/May 1981 as the OECS treaty had not yet been signed.) *Grenada Documents*, 106 - 3.
the Soviet Union, as well as its overt support for the Nicaraguan revolution and the Salvadorian rebels, only served to increase Washington's hostility.

The fear of U.S. destabilization\textsuperscript{81} pervaded Bishop's speeches and even the Central Committee meetings. Consequently, the PRG had set up a program of "national preparedness" in case of "external aggression and internal subversion." In August 1981 U.S. military maneuvers in the region had seemed extremely suspicious. Under the code name 'Amber and the Amberines,' the U.S. had undertaken military activity on Vieques Island off the coast of Puerto Rico. The PRG had "concluded that these fictitious islands were 'Grenada and the Grenadines' and that the military exercise was "a practice run for the direct invasion of Grenada by US troops." The United States denied such a claim, maintaining that the exercises were part of a world-wide \textit{Ocean Venture '81} operation in collaboration with its NATO allies. The PRG claims, however, seem to hold more weight considering the similarities between the Vieques terrain and Grenada.\textsuperscript{82} Moreover, U.S. naval activities in the region certainly presented a menace. Whether or not the U.S. actually planned to invade Grenada is

\textsuperscript{81} For a fuller discussion of the United States destabilization in Grenada see Chris Searle, \textit{Grenada: the Struggle against Destabilization} (London: Zed Press, 1983). Bishop maintained in a letter to the President of the United States on August 11, 1981, reprinted in \textit{Caribbean Contact}, that the US had embarked on a "conscious campaign of propaganda destabilization and economic warfare against" Grenada. The economic warfare most likely refers to the attempts by the US government to block loans from the Economic Community to Grenada for the international airport project. \textit{Caribbean Contact}, March 1982. Furthermore, Bishop maintained that the US was successful in "bringing about [Grenada's] isolation by the CARICOM countries." (although Grenada was eventually able to end this isolation as evident in the CARICOM meeting in November 1982) "Minutes of Central Committee Meeting Held on Wednesday, 19th August, 1981," \textit{Grenada Documents}, 100 - 2.

\textsuperscript{82} \textit{Caribbean Contact}, September 1981. The PRG gives 8 reasons which support its belief that "Amber and the Amberines" was a code name for "Grenada and the Grenadines." The threat from the US was also discussed in a Central Committee meeting on 19th August, 1981, \textit{Grenada Documents}, 100 - 1. The CC members agreed that "the main feature of the present period is the threat to the Revolution being posed by imperialism - US imperialism in particular," 100 - 1.
harder to verify.\textsuperscript{83} The Central Committee members apparently believed it would.\textsuperscript{84} Furthermore, it is partly in response to fear of U.S. destabilization that the PRG was so intolerant of any political criticism.\textsuperscript{85}

Despite anti-imperialist rhetoric, Bishop did make several attempts to heal the relationship with Washington but was rebuffed. Bishop first sent a letter to President Ronald Reagan on March 26, 1981 in an attempt to normalize relations with the U.S.. The letter objected "to pressure from Washington to discourage European support for international financial assistance for Grenada's new international airport," and requested a meeting "at the highest possible level." The letter was ignored by Washington. This was followed by another letter from Bishop to the U.S. President, on August 11, 1981--perhaps in view of the military exercises in the region--expressing concern over the worsening relations between the U.S. and Grenada, and claiming that the PRG wanted to establish good relations between the two countries. The letter was answered on October 6, 1981, by the Chargé d'Affaires in the U.S. embassy in Barbados, Ludlow Flower. The reply inferred that the U.S. would negotiate with the PRG "should the Government of Grenada sincerely demonstrate its intention

\textsuperscript{83} During his Presidency, Carter had announced the formation of a quick strike Caribbean task force to deal with "threats" to US national security, EPICA, 60.

\textsuperscript{84} See the Central Committee meeting of August 19, 1981 and the resolution of March 21, 1983. In both documents the CC members seemed genuinely to believe a US invasion was imminent, how much hard evidence they had to back up this belief is more difficult to determine. The document of March 1983 refers to "intelligence information." In both cases the PRG called for the mobilization of the people through the militia in order to defend Grenada. Grenada Documents, 100 - 1-3; 109 - 1-4.

\textsuperscript{85} Manning, 242.
to maintain a policy of genuine non-alignment and progress toward a truly democratic society." The result seems to have been a stalemate.86

Most likely resulting from behind the scene negotiations, Bishop was invited to the United States by TransAfrica, a powerful black organization, to address their sixth annual dinner on June 4, 1983. A meeting of the Political Bureau in May 1983 outlined "three broad strategic objectives" to the visit: "conveying to the U.S. press and people the image of our P.M. as a sober and responsible statement who is committed to normalising relations with the U.S.A.;" "to develop firm unshakeable links and bonds of identity with the black community in the U.S.A.;" and "to promote Tourism primarily among the Black Community." Additionally, it was agreed that Selwyn Strachan would request the media to tone down the attacks on the U.S. during this period so as not to "jeopardize the visit," thus demonstrating the importance now being given by the PRG to improving relations with Washington.87

The Political Bureau also stated that Bishop would request a meeting with Reagan during his visit.88 The request was not granted. Instead Bishop was eventually granted a 30 minute meeting with National Security Council chief William Clark and Assistant Secretary of State Kenneth Dam. Rough handwritten minutes of the meeting, which have been attributed to Bishop, were found in the Grenada documents. They are difficult to decipher, but it appears that the main concern of the U.S. was Soviet influence among its neighbors which it found "unacceptable." Clark appears to have been willing to accept

86 Caribbean Contact, March 1982. Unison Whiteman, PRG Foreign Minister, was unable to get a meeting with the State Department when he passed through Washington around December 1982. Furthermore the new Ambassador to Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, unlike his predecessor, had not been credited to Grenada. Caribbean Contact, January 1982.
87 "Minutes of the Political Bureau, 4th May, 1983," Grenada Documents, 93 - 4-5.
talks on the normalization of relations, but the key issue was Soviet and Cuban influence and the need to see a change in Grenada's conduct in this regard. Although Bishop stated that "we can explore any range of subjects and give fullest assurance that we constitute no threat to the U.S.," neither side seems to have given any concessions. Nevertheless, the meeting opened up the way for further dialogue. The PRG, however, was determined to continue its relationship with Cuba and the Soviet Union, which, of course, was unacceptable to the U.S.. On the other hand, Reagan inflated Washington's concern for alleged human rights violations in Grenada, and his persistent charge that the new international airport, since construction began in 1980, was being constructed for military purposes was unfounded.

To some extent, it is arguable that despite the very real threat that the U.S. posed to the revolution, the NJM overused destabilization and anti-imperialist rhetoric to hide its own inadequacies and even as an excuse for confining power in the hands of a small elite. Mobilizing the population against attack would certainly have provided a distraction from pressing economic and social problems while serving to unify people behind the revolution. Nevertheless, the possibility of U.S. military intervention was ever present. It is ironic that the implosion of the revolution and the massacre of Bishop and his supporters would itself be the factor that triggered the U.S. invasion.

Of all the areas of society where the NJM attempted to implement change, it was perhaps the least successful in bringing about a grassroots

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89 "Notes on Bishop's Meeting in Washington with Judge Clark, et al," *Grenada Documents*, 32 - 1-3. The notes also state that Clark "agreed to of the record meeting, a secret meeting." It is not clear if this meant another meeting was arranged or refers to this meeting. A perusal of more of the Grenada documents in Washington might uncover further information. Payne, 141-142.

popular democracy. The creation of a National Assembly as laid out in the 1973 Manifesto was never developed fully. Although the framework initiated by the establishment of village councils could have given the masses a vigorous voice in decision making, the NJM chose instead to impose rigidly a Marxist-Leninist model of government that had not been designed for the conditions in Grenada and which encouraged rather than diluted the authoritarian tendencies inherited in Grenadian society. At the very least the masses should have been kept informed of the decisions taken in Central Committee meetings. As it was, the Central Committee grew more deeply estranged from the people whose interests it had claimed to represent.
Chapter Three
The Economy

The People’s Revolutionary Government’s management of the Grenadian economy has received more praise than its attempt at participatory democracy.\(^1\) After years of Gairy’s mismanagement and inefficiency, the PRG inherited an economy in a serious state of decline. As we have seen, unemployment stood at around 50 percent, the infrastructure was in a state of collapse, and indiscriminate borrowing by the government had placed Grenada in financial chaos.\(^2\) The early goals of the new revolutionary government, therefore, were to develop and repair the economic infrastructure, address unemployment, and get the economy growing again.

Like most countries in the Caribbean, Grenada’s overdependence on a limited variety of export crops had led to the neglect of local food production.\(^3\) Consequently, the PRG’s major aim, as had been laid out in the NJM manifesto of 1973, was to encourage food production in the hope of cutting down its import bill. To address the problem of dependency, the manifesto had stated the need not only to diversify Grenada’s export crops and markets but also to attract new trading partners from Africa, Asia, and Latin America; again the PRG

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\(^2\) The 50 percent unemployment rate is the figure provided by the PRG. It will be discussed further on in this chapter.

\(^3\) Most territories in the region have remained entrenched in monocrop export agriculture. As a result, still in 1970 over 50 percent of food consumed in the English speaking Caribbean was imported. In Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados and Antigua, it has been estimated that over 80 percent of food was imported, Clive Y. Thomas, The Poor and the Powerless: Economic Policy and Change in the Caribbean (London: Latin America Bureau, 1988), 127.
attempted to follow this goal. Finally, economic strategy was to be concentrated around four major areas: agriculture, agro-industries, fishing, and tourism, and the strategy included the development of the previously neglected islands of Carriacou and Petit Martinique, which were part of the political entity of Grenada.⁴

In accordance with the non-capitalist path of development that the PRG chose to pursue, its approach to restructure the economy was fairly moderate. Although the ultimate goal was a socialist economy, Grenada could not at an early stage employ a model totally dominated by the state, because, as Bishop later admitted, the state lacked "the necessary material of financial resources, management and skills resources, access to markets, international contacts and so on." Thus leaders opted for a mixed economy but with the state sector dominant.⁵ Bishop subsequently outlined the essence of this model in his 'Line of March' speech in September 1982 by pointing out that the state sector had to be built into the dominant sector with the aim of ultimately assuming control of all major areas, including financial institutions, foreign trade, and public utilities. The approach, however, emphasized gradualism. In 1982 the state had succeeded in controlling about one quarter of the total economy,⁶ which appears extremely moderate for a revolutionary government and suggests that

⁴ "Manifesto of the New Jewel Movement," in Martin, Vol. I, 7, 9, 22. See also Carriacou and Petite Martinique, In the Mainstream of the Revolution (St. George's, Grenada: Fedon Publishers, 1982). Projects to improve conditions in these islands included building roads, extending the electricity system, and providing a public bus service, 19.
⁵ "Line of March," Michael Ledeen and Herbert Romerstein, eds. Grenada Documents: An Overview and Selection, Vol. I, (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of State and Defence, 1984), 1 - 7-8. The 1973 manifesto had advocated a more radical approach; nationalizing the banks. The more moderate approach that the PRG took seems to have been a result of rationalization. Its policy was formed by a more careful evaluation of Grenada's circumstances.
the stress on a dominant state sector was more difficult to implement than the NJM acknowledged.

Agriculture was the "main pillar" of Grenada's economy and, consequently, its development was crucial. Emphasis on export agriculture contradicted the PRG's goal of reducing its dependence on export crops. Breaking that pattern, however, would take time. First the PRG needed to get foreign exchange to buy imports; and second, the long gestation period of many crops meant that change to new crops could take place only slowly. The four and a half years of the revolution was not long enough to change a centuries-old pattern of agriculture. Nevertheless, an examination of the PRG's policies can provide some indications of the direction it was taking.

Increased agricultural productivity was the PRG's first priority. An improved agricultural sector, it was hoped, would reduce Grenada's dependence on imported food, provide crops for the expansion of agro-industries, increase foreign exchange earnings, raise the incomes of agricultural workers, and provide employment. Putting these aims into effect was more complicated. Grenada's agriculture was hampered by inefficient patterns of landholding as well as backward technology—the cutlass and fork were still the most widely used agricultural tools. The productivity of the agricultural worker was thus extremely low, on average lower than the wage received. This in turn locked the agricultural workers into earning low wages, and the poverty this engendered meant that workers had little access to

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8 Coard stated that a worker earning $8.50 per day was producing less than $3.00 or $4.00 per day in agricultural produce. "Report on the National Economy," 46.
education. Additionally, because of its low prestige, agricultural work had been shunned by the young and was left mostly to older people.

For these reasons, the PRG emphasized the importance of education as one of the means of improving agriculture. Bernard Coard, Minister of Finance, stated that "modern methods of agriculture demand educated workers." He further explained that "the low educational level of those involved in agriculture prevents them, for example, from understanding and adopting new methods regarding use of fertilizers, pesticides, and so on."9 Perhaps Coard underestimated the capabilities of Grenada's agricultural workers. Nevertheless, the kind of education the PRG had in mind stressed agricultural training, but first the workers had to be given access to the basic skills of reading and writing in order to proceed. The PRG's Adult Education program, which will be examined in the next chapter, aimed to provide these skills.

There is always a danger that educated workers might not want to stay on the land. Consequently, government educational programs underscored the importance of agriculture, aiming to enhance its status not only to encourage workers to stay on the land but also to encourage the youth back to agriculture.

As well as improve the educational levels of agricultural workers the government needed to improve other aspects of the agricultural economy. In 1982, in order to facilitate agricultural development, the government had begun construction of approximately 67 miles of feeder roads.10 The government saw increased mechanization and modernization of agriculture as critical to raise productivity and to attract back to agriculture young people who were

10 "To Construct from Morning, Making the People's Budget in Grenada" (St. George's, Grenada: Fedon Publishers, 1982), 105, 118.
discouraged by low wages, low prestige, and agriculture's historical links with servitude. The production of different crops was also encouraged both to enhance export and for use in local agro-industries. Additionally, the PRG saw that greater cooperation between small farmers was essential in order to make small scale agriculture profitable. For example, farmers would need to cooperate more often in the renting of tractors and other large pieces of equipment, irrigation, and pest control. It is interesting to note here that the PRG stressed cooperation, respecting the right of private ownership, as opposed to Soviet style collectivization. This made more sense in the Grenadian context because of the importance attached by agricultural workers to land ownership. Finally, the PRG hoped to find new markets abroad. Prices were falling for Grenada's cash crops, and customers in its traditional markets were buying less. It was hoped that new markets would find buyers who would offer guaranteed sales and stable prices.\textsuperscript{11}

The state run farms illustrate the basic problems inherent in Grenada's agriculture. In 1980 the government had set up the Grenada Farms Corporation to administer the twenty-five government owned farms. Most of these estates had been acquired by Gairy through his "Land for the Landless" scheme\textsuperscript{12} and subsequently had been poorly managed. The World Bank reported that "in many instances cocoa, and banana lands [had] turned to bush and pasture." After the revolution, new management teams had been brought in to try to make the estates at least self-sufficient within the following five years. It was thought that the current deficit, which had been reduced from EC$0.6 million in 1981 to

\textsuperscript{11} "Report on the National Economy," 46-50.
\textsuperscript{12} See chapter one, 5.
EC$0.2 million in 1982, would be eliminated altogether in 1985. Whether the PRG would have achieved this will never be known, but Coard's report in 1983 found the GFC still plagued with the problems affecting most of the agricultural sector. The corporation's main purposes were to increase Grenada's output of cocoa, bananas, and nutmeg, its traditional exports crops; to grow and export new, non-traditional export crops; and to develop the production of livestock for Grenada to become self-sufficient in meat. In appraising its work in 1983, Coard stated that it had only reached 37 percent of its target for 1982. He argued that the main problems hindering the GFC's productivity included poor management and organization as well as backward methods of agriculture and the "advanced age, poor nutrition and lack of education" of the workers. Thus, the GFC had failed to stimulate the agricultural sector as had been hoped, illustrating the main problems that the PRG faced in attempting to advance agriculture.

A major hindrance to agricultural development was land distribution which had changed relatively little since the colonial period. As Coard pointed out in his budget address in 1983, Grenada could not hope to develop fully its agricultural potential without a resolution of the issue of land distribution. When the PRG took power, one third of the arable land lay idle. Coard claimed that while small and medium farmers were fully utilizing their land, there were "thousands of acres of idle lands" on the large private estates; and "at the same time, many of our rural youth and women need work." The difficulty would be in

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making agricultural work attractive to young people. How much of this land was cultivatable is hard to say, but as large estates tended to have the best land, it must be assumed that most of it was. There were several reasons that the lands lay idle. The fall in world prices had made cultivation increasingly unprofitable; despite the high unemployment rate in Grenada, many young people were reluctant to work the land for low wages, causing a labor shortage on the estates. Moreover, some of the large estate owners were absentee landlords with other interests abroad--low levels of land tax did not encourage them to cultivate land for relatively small returns.\textsuperscript{15} Employing the slogan "Idle lands and Idle hands--An End to Unemployment," the PRG, by helping youth set up co-operatives, sought to entice them to work the land which, it was hoped, would go some way in solving the problem of arable land laying idle, and, at the same time, lessen unemployment.\textsuperscript{16}

For these reasons the PRG had passed the Land Utilization Act in 1981, which allowed the government "to take out a compulsory lease for 10 years on any estate over 100 acres, if the land is idle or grossly under-utilized, unless the owners can submit a plan for the agricultural development of their lands." It was hoped that the Act would free idle land that could then be used for the establishment of agricultural co-operatives. The terms of the bill seem moderate; it did not allow lands to be confiscated indiscriminately or forbid large


landholdings. On the contrary, the bill could be criticized for its failure to address seriously the land problem or alter fundamentally the structure of landholding in Grenada.

The 1973 manifesto had advocated "radically redistributing the land in Grenada into co-operative farms of not less than 40-50 acres in size." Faced with the practicality of accomplishing such a move, however, the PRG did not attempt to distribute land in this way. Instead, the government encouraged and assisted the setting up of private co-operatives of small farmers and other groups. In 1981 fifteen co-operatives had been established while people were being trained to establish seventeen more. In 1982 the Free West Indian stated there were twenty-four co-operatives established, which included fourteen agricultural ones. The newspaper also claimed that "the majority of the agricultural co-ops formed [in 1981] are realising earnings from their crops and are able to pay their wages, [maintain] bank balances and purchase farm inputs." Moreover, the government made it easier for small farmers to obtain financial assistance if they formed co-operatives. Even though the number of cooperatives and of persons involved in them had "expanded rapidly since the revolution," Coard claimed in 1983 that they were now growing only slowly because young people preferred to work for the government rather than join co-operatives. It seems that the PRG's "Idle Lands and Idle Hands" scheme was not very successful, but it might have grown more so in time if agricultural

returns had improved making agricultural work more profitable and thus more attractive.

Partly to assist with marketing new varieties of fruits and vegetables and to assist Grenada's farmers by providing guaranteed markets for their output, a Marketing and National Importing Board (MNIB) had been established. Bishop explained that it "not only ensures proper handling of exports and the marketing of our products but also reduces the cost of living through the importation of certain basic essential items," thus breaking the monopolies on items such as sugar, rice, and cement, which were distributed at "much cheaper prices than obtained previously." Besides the MNIB, imports and exports were handled by a group of private traders, and, in addition to these sets of agents, the main export crops were exported by the marketing boards. A major aim in establishing the MNIB was to cut out the 'middlemen.' Coard made this clear in an address to a group of businessmen in March 1983 when he declared that he wanted to see the private sector out of "merchandising, wholesaling and importing."19 In evaluating the MNIB's success in 1982, Coard claimed that it had "done well in its import trade, and its distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables to the public, but has fallen down in its export activity. A dynamic thrust to tie up new markets needs to be found."20 An increase in fruit and vegetable exports to Caricom seems to have been the result largely of efforts by the private sector. Clearly, the PRG would have liked the MNIB to oust eventually the private traders, but this could only have been achieved through firm government intervention.

20 "Report on the National Economy," 63. See also "To construct from morning," 100-101.
Furthermore, the MNIB would have needed more time to develop more effective organization. One of the conditions of an IMF loan in August 1983 prohibited further extension of the MNIB monopoly privileges, so that, for the short term at any rate, the private sector would continue to play an important role in all aspects of trade. Furthermore, despite price controls on around one hundred imported items, the PRG generally did not interfere with market incentives so that most prices on the island followed world prices.21

The PRG had come to power at a time of falling world prices, which contributed to the decline of exports. Between 1981 and 1982 both cocoa and banana exports fell, with cocoa exports down as much as 30.9 percent from 1981 to 1982, while the price per pound decreased. On the other hand both nutmeg and mace exports increased in quantity; although the price of mace increased, that of nutmeg fell. Production of nutmeg was able to make a small gain in 1982, but Grenada was left with a surplus of over 1,000,000 pounds for which markets could not be found.22 The main reason for these poor results in export agriculture was the world-wide recession, which meant that Grenada's

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21 According to Pryor even the controlled items were subject to fluctuation according to world prices as they were priced by the imported price plus a mark up. Still, by bypassing the middleman, the PRG was able to keep prices down of certain essential items including drugs and hospital supplies, cement, and powdered milk. Pryor, 117, 86, 188-189; Anthony Payne, Paul Sutton, and Tony Thorndike, *Grenada: Revolution and Invasion* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984), 22.


103. *The Grenada Newsletter*, 28th May, 1983. The figures given by Coard in his “Report on the National Economy” differ from those quoted in Thorndike. The reason for this is unclear. One can only speculate that Coard's were a preliminary estimate and the Department of Agriculture's were issued later. While the figures agree--although the actual amounts differ--that banana and cocoa exports fell, Coard's figures show the price per pound as higher in 1982 than 1981. The Department of Agriculture shows the reverse. Coard's text, moreover contradicts the table, as he stated that the price of cocoa fell in 1982. 26. The Department of Agriculture statistics thus seem more reliable. The *Grenada Newsletter* agrees with Coard's export figures, probably gained from the same source. It can be deduced that exports of bananas and cocoa definitely fell, although the percentage quoted above may not be exact.
traditional trading partners were buying less.\textsuperscript{23} Other reasons were climatic—between 1979 and 1980 Grenada had suffered from two hurricanes and two floods—\textsuperscript{24} and due to an increase in the production of fruits and vegetables.

On the other hand there was quite a sizeable increase in the export of non-traditional exports, such as eggplants and other vegetables and fruits. In 1979, traditional exports had made up 93 percent of exports, while in 1982 this had fallen to 63.4 percent. Fruit and vegetable exports had increased by more than three times in this period, most of them going to Caricom countries such as Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Jamaica, and to St. Vincent.\textsuperscript{25} For transhipment. At the same time, fruit and vegetable sales had doubled locally.\textsuperscript{25} Increased production of fruits and vegetables indicates that the government was achieving some success in its efforts to diversify agricultural crops.

As well as diversifying agricultural products the government wanted to secure new markets. While it wished to continue trade with its traditional trading partners, the PRG, "in order to increase exports, find better prices and increase [its] earnings of foreign exchange," as well as to lessen its dependency, wanted to diversify its markets for both new products as well as its traditional ones. It had some success in this goal. In 1983 Coard stated that the government had

\textsuperscript{23} "Report on the National Economy," 25 and 27. Journalist Alister Hughes reported that total banana exports from the Windward Islands, which include Grenada, had fallen in 1982 by 2.7 percent in volume and 6.5 percent in value as compared to 1981, The Grenada Newsletter, 28th May, 1983. It seems that the long term contract with Geest to buy all of the Windward's bananas was subject to variation.

\textsuperscript{24} Bishop claimed that 40 percent of the banana crop, 27 percent of the nutmeg crop, and 19 percent of the cocoa crop had been lost in 1980, "Grenada is Not Alone, November 23, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 242. EPICA Task Force, Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution (Washington DC, 1982), 74. Starting in 1982, with the assistance of Canada, the government had launched a cocoa rehabilitation scheme costing around 20 million dollars over a period of 8 years, "To construct from morning," 119. Money was to be spent on replacing old and dying trees, and those affected by disease and cocoa plants would be sold to farmers at prices less than their actual cost, "Report on the National Economy," 161.

\textsuperscript{25} "Report on the National Economy," 27-29.
made long term contracts with socialist countries for the sale of cocoa and nutmeg and in return was able to purchase capital goods from these countries "on credit at very reasonable prices." 26 Coard asserted that the PRG's commitment to Caribbean integration was demonstrated by Grenada's increase in exports of non-traditional products to Caricom members, and, in particular, to its long term trading partner Trinidad and Tobago (It also served the interests of Grenada to export local products). Trinidad and Tobago represented 31 percent of Grenada's imports. On the other hand, in 1983 Britain was still Grenada's largest trading partner,27 verifying the difficulties of loosening colonial ties. The quest to find new markets was more difficult than the PRG had envisioned.

In addition to exporting basic agricultural produce the government wished to develop industries that would utilize Grenada's crops and produce a finished product. The PRG was very proud of its achievements in the establishment of agro-industries. Its policy had been "to place emphasis on utilising the natural/human resources of the country to produce processed goods for local consumption as well as for export." This policy appears to have been well suited for a small agricultural island like Grenada, because, as Coard explained in 1983, "the production of nectars, jams and jellies provides an industry which uses agricultural raw materials (mangoes, soursop and other

26 "The Present Stage of the Grenada Revolution, July 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 181; "Report on the National Economy," 61. The Grenada Newsletter, May 1983, reported that a Russian ship was loading a second shipment of 500 tons of nutmegs for the Soviet Union. The first shipment, carrying 300 tons, had left in May, 1982. The newsletter claimed the second shipment was negotiated at a lower price reflecting the downward trend in nutmeg prices.
27 "Report on the National Economy," 24, 29. Pre-revolutionary imports from Trinidad and Tobago stood at 24 percent in 1979, thus they had increased by seven percent under the PRG, Fitzroy Ambursley, and Robin Cohen, eds., Crisis in the Caribbean (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), 199.
fruits) and therefore creates jobs for agricultural workers." He continued that it was part of the government's economic strategy to create linkages among the various areas of the economy to stimulate economic growth more quickly.28 Indeed, such an approach seems likely to lay the basis for sustained economic development. Demonstrating its commitment to agricultural related industry, the PRG had named 1981 the 'Year of Agriculture and Agro-Industries,' and in that year a coffee processing plant and an agro-industrial plant had been established.

Why the PRG should choose to establish a coffee processing plant is unclear. Although there seems to have been a good potential market in the Caribbean for processed coffee, it does not seem to have been sound policy when Grenada could not supply the coffee itself, which contradicts the PRG's call to increase linkages between different areas of the economy and for self-sufficiency. Furthermore, even if coffee growing appeared to be viable, coffee trees would not have provided reasonable returns for some time. Without further information, the plant's establishment seems to have been ill-contrived.29 According to Coard, the coffee processing plant had more than doubled its output between 1981 and 1982. Worker productivity had increased, and the plant had obtained a large order from Trinidad. Its activities were hampered, however, by the limited supply of coffee beans--most had to be imported from abroad--and marketing problems. The plant's capacity was being underutilized; the government's solution was to increase coffee growing in Grenada and

29 Brizan had suggested manufacturing cocoa products which would seem more in line with the PRG's stated policy of creating industry with linkages. Brizan, 309.
secure markets for coffee exports. Grenada Agro-Industries, the
government's agro-industrial plant, appears to have fared well in its first two
years of operation. It was producing an increasing range of products using
local fruits and vegetables, including juices, chutney, and jams under the Spice
Island label—its nutmeg jelly had apparently won an international competition
abroad. Coard's figure for the increased productivity of the workers seems a
little startling. He stated that in 1981 a worker produced an average value of
$22. 10. per day. This had shot up in 1982, to $104. 12. per day. The reason
for this tremendous leap is unclear; it might simply have been miscalculated, but
possibly the lower figure represents a slow start, while the latter shows a more
realistic working figure.

The above notwithstanding, the industry had some problems. These
included lack of space and cold storage facilities for storage of fruits that were
needed in production; the factory was not always able to get all the produce it
required; and packaging was expensive. In addition, an inexperienced
management had been slow to find solutions to these problems, and the MNIB
needed to find more markets for the products. In 1982 the factory had managed
to achieve an increased output two and a half times higher than 1981, which
perhaps is to be expected as it only started operating in 1981, but provides
some indication of the plants potential. Products were popular in the local
market and were being sold abroad.

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30 "Report on the National Economy," 57. Where the coffee beans were being imported from is
not stated.
31 "Imperialism. A Blood Sucking System, Third Anniversary Speech by PM Maurice Bishop,"
32 "Report on the National Economy," 57. Interestingly, suggestions that people had made for
the budget had included the need for a cheap packaging, such as plastic bags, to lower the price
of the products for the local market. See, for example, "To construct from morning," 42 and 43.
By 1982 the government had also established a spice grinding project, which reportedly had already made a profit before reaching its full production potential, and the Forestry Development Corporation to cultivate trees and produce wood. Additionally, the PRG improved the livestock industry. The Livestock Production and Genetic Centre (LPGC) was set up to breed high quality pigs, sheep, and goats with the aim of making Grenada self sufficient in meat. Although it had only managed to reach half of its target for 1982, Coard asserted that the enterprise had grown considerably. The LPGC, like all the other PRG established industries, was only just beginning and was mainly laying down the framework for its expansion. Its expenditure in 1982 had mostly involved the construction of buildings for livestock and other necessities. Its main problems involved finance and delays in both decision making and, consequently, the late the arrival of livestock. Furthermore, consideration does not appear to have been given to the potential problem of possible environmental damage that an increased supply of sheep and goats, both grazing animals, might pose.33

In line with its aim to lessen imports and produce more local food, and with Cuban assistance, the PRG was committed to expanding the fishing industry. Fishing was seen as an inexpensive and abundant source of protein, and its development was of major importance. Unlike the industries outlined above, the National Fisheries Industry, which had operated both fishing and fish processing, had run at a loss in 1982. A major setback seems to have been problems with fishing boats and equipment. In September 1982 a meeting between Bishop, Kendrick Radix, Minister of Agro-Industries and Fisheries, and

the Minister of Fisheries from Cuba had concluded that of the ten boats that had been donated to Grenada from Cuba, only two were still functioning. Even they were on the verge of collapse. Apparently the ferroconcrete boats were unsuitable for Grenadian conditions, and the engines were too weak to power the boats. An earlier visit by the Cuban Commission of Fisheries to Grenada had found that another problem with the fisheries industry was organizational. For example, of the spare parts requested from Cuba, 60 percent had been sent but had not been used; some had been lost. The Commission also noted that the boats, which should have been dry docked twice a year, had not received such servicing for over a year. Why this was so is not clear, but possibly the industry suffered from inadequate financing. Frederic Pryor contends that the government tried to preserve the fish, but the cold-storage facilities kept breaking down. Moreover, Grenadian consumers were accustomed to buying fresh fish at the wharf and did not like the new procedure.34 Eventually, claiming it suffered from inefficient management and inexperienced workers, the government had to close down the National Fisheries Industry, while plans were made to implement a more efficient operation.35 Certainly the PRG was correct in stressing the potential of fishing, for which there seems to have been a demand both in Grenada and in the region. For example, in December 1981 Grenada had secured export orders for salted fish from Antigua and Dominica and people's suggestions for the 1982 budget had indicated a demand for

34 Pryor, 121-122.
35 "Report on the National Economy," 53-54; "Minutes of the Political Bureau Meeting on Wednesday, 15th Sept. 1982," Grenada Documents, 80 - 1; "Meeting of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement, Held on the 21st April 1982," Grenada Documents, 102 - 2-3. The CC placed most of the blame on Kennrick Radix. Unfortunately Radix was not present at this meeting to answer to the criticism, with the hindsight of the events of 1983, criticism of Radix appears to have been politically motivated as he was a strong supporter of Bishop--the two had been in law practice together before the revolution.
salted fish locally. Disorganization seems to have been the industry's main setback. It also appears that the PRG did not provide the necessary infrastructure such as efficient storage facilities.

In the meantime, in December 1982, a $7.1 million fisheries project was announced. Perhaps with the benefit of experience, it seems to have been more adequately thought out than the National Fisheries Industry. With aid from the United Nations International Agricultural Development Fund and the Venezuelan Investment Fund, the project included the renovation and building of six fishing markets with ice-making equipment. Two fishing sheds and collection points were to be set up, and fishermen would be able to expand their capacity and be "guaranteed a good price on the market." Fishing co-operatives would be established around the markets, which would assist fishermen "to buy in bulk and get duty-free concessions." Refrigerated vans were to be bought to distribute fish to inland markets. Furthermore, the project would provide loans for boats and fishing equipment.

Overall, it seems that Grenada's infant industries were hampered mostly by inadequate marketing—a problem that the PRG did seem to be addressing slowly—and lack of efficient management. The four and a half years of the revolution is too short a period to judge the success of these various projects or evaluate their full potential. Suffice it to say that their establishment shows that the PRG tried to create some industries that would provide linkages with other areas of the economy.

36 Caribbean Contact, December 1981; "To construct from morning," 136.
37 "$7.1 Million for Fisheries Project," Free West Indian, December 4, 1982, in Martin, Vol. I, 250-251. It has not been possible to determine the results of this project.
While the PRG faced serious problems in its development of agriculture and fishing, on balance it was reasonably successful in agricultural development—particularly in the area of crop diversification. An opinion poll conducted in 1984 found that 77.6 percent of the respondents felt that agriculture and fishing had improved during the revolution. The government succeeded in the gradual reduction in imports and in the percentage of food imported. In 1979 food made up 30.6 percent of Grenada's imports, and in 1982 this had fallen to 27.5 percent. However, this was probably in part due to a 2 percent duty imposed on imports in 1982, as well as higher consumption duties imposed on such items as imported tinned and bottled fruits and vegetables.

The PRG, nevertheless, did not radically transform agriculture, and was only partially successful in lessening the ties of dependency. It is not possible to say whether it would have had ongoing success if the revolution had continued, as much depended on the direction the revolution would have taken. An undated Central Committee document resolved to move forward with the "collectivisation and transformation of the countrysides," but how this was to take place is not clear. The Soviet model of collectivisation seems inherently

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39 "Report on the National Economy," 25; "To construct from morning," 118, 126. In the 1982 budget a two percent duty levy was put on all imports to help towards financing the construction of the international airport. In addition consumption duty was increased on "items that [Grenada] can produce here and should not be importing," or the item could be imported from Caricom, as well as some luxury and semi-luxury items. See "To construct from morning," 118, 126-127.
40 "Central Committee Resolution on Agriculture," Document 111-10 in Paul Seabury, and Walter A. McDougall eds., The Grenada Papers (San Francisco, California: ICS Press, 1984), 119-120. The document states that from early October the CC and PB had been engaged in a long and exhaustive analysis of agriculture. It has not been possible to ascertain what other documents related to this debate have so far surfaced, but certainly more research needs to be undertaken on PRG agricultural policy.
inappropriate for Grenada, given both its failure in the Soviet Union and the
difference in scale of the two countries. A preliminary evaluation indicates that
the PRG did not seem to have looked into creating a more appropriate local
model of development for Grenada's agriculture. Furthermore, it failed to
address adequately the question of land use and redistribution.

Besides agriculture the PRG's second most important sector was tourism.
The prospect of encouraging traditional tourism contradicts the NJM's aims of
developing socialism and breaking away from the ties of Western culture and
values. The 1973 NJM manifesto, however, had advocated a new kind of
tourism. It had criticized the kind that Grenada had been developing wherein
most of the hotels and restaurants were owned by foreigners and most of the
foods were imported, thus forging few backward linkages with the local
economy. In addition, tourists as well as foreign investors often showed little
respect for the local people or culture and "treat [Grenadians] who work for them
as dirt."41 The manifesto stressed the need to nationalize all foreign-owned
hotels and tourist housing settlements. It further described how the new
industry would differ from traditional tourism in the Caribbean:

In this new industry, all the meats, vegetables, provisions,
fish, drinks, fruits, spices, handicrafts,(chairs, tables,
ornaments, etc.) will be locally produced. This will create
a large market for our farmers, fishermen, and handicraft
men and women. Our agro-industry factories would also be
able to supply the hotels and restaurants with canned, bottled
and packaged foodstuffs of all kinds. . . . It would provide

jobs at higher wages . . . and it will provide a large and new market for the goods made by thousands of Grenadians throughout the country. . . . We want to attract to Grenada as tourists not just a few rich, white people who can afford the ridiculous prices these hotels charge . . . Rather, we want the massive numbers of potential tourists from Venezuela, Colombia, Brazil, Mexico and other parts of Latin America, the millions of black Americans . . . thousands of Trinidadians, Jamaicans, Arubians . . . together with tourists coming from Africa and other parts of the world who would love to come here but cannot afford the present nonsensical prices.  

Although the "new tourism" described above sounds very appealing and presents an alternative model that would solve some of the problems of conventional tourism, its feasibility remains unclear. While the PRG tried to change the direction of tourism, the evidence shows that they were not successful. Interviewed in 1981, Bishop characterized the approach that the PRG was taking to tourism as "work tourism," by which he meant that the tourist sector would be "integrated, through vertical and horizontal linkages, with the rest of the economy." To this end, in keeping with the 1973 Manifesto, the PRG planned to supply the industry from its own agricultural, fishing and agro-industrial sectors, which would be improved to meet the new demand. In addition, the government hoped to arrange "package tours aimed at people who are interested in experiencing different aspects of our development process." This would, for example, include those working in education and who

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wished to look at the PRG's various experiments in educational programs.\textsuperscript{43}

The government also hoped to arrange conferences to attract more visitors. In November 1981 it had held successfully the Third Caribbean Trade Union Conference and the International Solidarity Conference; the two conferences attracted a combination of 147 delegates to Grenada. Bishop later commented that in order to diversify their market, the government had increased promotion of tourism in Western Europe, Latin America, and the Caribbean region, while still maintaining its traditional U.S. market. The PRG, however, failed to upgrade Grenada's tourist facilities to provide for the expected increase in tourism.\textsuperscript{44}

In line with the above policy, Bishop's trip to the United States in May 1983 had as one of its goals the promotion of tourism among black Americans, although given the recession in the United States at that time, it was not likely to have resulted in much of an increase in tourists and was largely a political move. Bishop's visit, however, was also an attempt to counter the bad publicity that Grenada had received in the United States discouraging American tourists from coming to the island since the 1979 coup because of the PRG's links with Cuba and the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{45}

\textsuperscript{43} "The Present Stage of the Grenada Revolution, July 1981", in Marcus and Taber, 179-180.

\textsuperscript{44} "To construct from morning," 92; "Grenada Is Not Alone, November 23, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 243.

\textsuperscript{45} "Minutes of the Political Bureau, 4th May, 1983," Grenada Documents, 93 - 4. Bishop frequently accused the United States of economic destabilization of its tourist industry by warning Americans, through the travel agencies, that Grenada was unsafe. Bishop claimed that rumors were being spread in the United States that, for instance, Grenada was an "armed camp" with the people armed with carbines, and that the island was to be used as a Soviet base. He also claimed that travel agencies in New York warned tourists against travelling to Grenada. See for example, "The Class Struggle in Grenada, the Caribbean, and the USA, July 15, 1980," in Marcus and Taber, 103-104 and "The U.S. Has Embarked on a Massive Offensive, July 23, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 211-2. Tony Martin also contends that "articles appeared in the mass media and travel trade publications advising against travel to Grenada," see Tony Martin, ed., In Nobody's Backyard, The Grenada Revolution in its Own Words, Volume II: "Facing the World" (The Majority
Bishop explained the PRG's position on tourism in the 'Line of March' address in 1982. He stated that the major emphasis of Grenada's economic development in the next five years "will undoubtedly be tourism." This he argued, was not because the NJM liked tourism, but that it had little choice. "Tourism is the sector that has the greatest potential for giving us the profits to invest in the areas we really want to invest in - agriculture, agro-industries, fisheries and non-agro industrialisation." He then discussed the problem of controlling tourist development and spoke of a plan for a "Tourist Code" that would lay down guidelines "to ensure that the negative social effects of tourism are at all times curbed. For example, take prostitution, if you catch local prostitutes - lock them up and rehabilitate them. If you catch foreign prostitutes coming in - deport them." It has not been possible to determine whether the proposed code was actually formulated.\(^4\) The reality, though, is that the PRG appears to have taken an increasingly conventional approach to tourism, most likely because the need for ready cash would be more easily met by doing so, while the long term hope of changing the nature of the industry was much more difficult to implement.

Despite the NJM's earlier rhetoric, the government did not announce a plan to nationalize the hotels. It did take over the night clubs and hotels acquired by Gairy and some of his close associates, incorporating them into the Grenada Resorts Corporation (GRC), the state-run tourist sector. This move, however, seems to have been politically rather than economically motivated, as


Press, Dover, Massachusetts, 1985), 100. The construction of an international airport also contributed to this adverse publicity as Washington insisted that the airport was to be used by the Soviet Union and Cuba for military purposes. Thus there seems to have been much truth in Bishop's claims. *Caribbean Contact*, May 1981; "International Airport-Constant Target of U.S. Attacks," *Free West Indian*, March 28, 1983, in Martin, Vol. I, 261-263.
no other hotels were expropriated. By 1983 the corporation owned four hotels, some holiday cottages, and Camp Carriacou (on the island of Carriacou). In 1982 the GRC had achieved a little over two-thirds of the aimed for occupancy rate. Coard outlined its main problems as being overstaffed compared to the private sector, having bad management and inexperienced staff--most of the workers had done no former hotel work. Additionally, the government ministries "were extremely slack in paying their bills to the PRG." Suggested improvements for 1983, therefore, included arranging a better system for the collection of monies from the ministries, training programs for management and workers, and "extensive marketing and promotion overseas." The state sector thus seems to have been run inefficiently.

Inefficiency on the part of the PRG was not the only reason for low returns from the tourism. For the Caribbean region as a whole, 1978 had been a peak year for the number of international tourist arrivals. This was followed by small a annual increase. The world-wide recession led to negative growth, so that tourist arrivals in 1981 decreased in the region, thereafter numbers slowly crept up. In Grenada during 1980-82 tourism declined not only due to the international recession, but also as a result of the adverse publicity Grenada had received in the United States. Furthermore, the loss of the Holiday Inn in

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47 "The Present Stage of the Grenada Revolution, July 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 179-180. It has not been possible to find out how many hotels and nightclubs were owned by Gafr, possibly it included the four hotels that the state owned in 1983. Pryor states that "the Gafr regime had ostensibly bought--but in reality, confiscated--several hotels." Pryor, 103, 145.
48 "Report on the National Economy," 64-54, 106. In 1977 room occupancies had averaged 45 percent with a high season figure of 75-80 percent and a low season figure of 20-25 percent. Ambursley, 197. Coard only states the occupancy rate for the state sector, it has not been possible to find the occupancy rate for the industry as a whole, but as tourist arrivals were lower in 1982 than 1977 it must be assumed that occupancy rates were lower overall in 1982. For details of tourist arrivals see Pryor, 301.
49 Thomas, 148.
1981 by fire contributed to the fall in overnight tourist numbers. Apparently, the decline was halted in 1983 as figures issued early that year indicated an increase in arrivals. Whether this was met with an increase in tourist expenditure is not clear.\textsuperscript{50} These events demonstrate tourism's vulnerability to outside forces and the fragility of an economy heavily reliant on the tourist sector.

In 1982 the Ministry of Tourism had been separated from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, indicating apparently the growing importance the PRG was placing on developing the tourist sector. Additionally in the same year the PRG had begun looking for funds to put up "one or two state-owned hotels, as well as hotels owned jointly by government and private business." Furthermore, the PRG had held discussions with "several private companies and businessmen regarding the building of hotels."\textsuperscript{51} The new Minister of Tourism, Lyden Rhamdhanny, visited the United States in May 1983, as part of Bishop's party, and hosted a reception in New York for tour operators and travel agents. Six weeks previously he had made a trip to Canada and the eastern United States in an effort to increase tourism from North America.\textsuperscript{52} It is evident at this stage, then, that the PRG remained committed to working with the private sector in tourism and to pursuing its traditional tourist markets rather than making a radical departure into new areas as the 'new tourism' had advocated. The investment code published by the PRG in 1983 encouraged foreign investment in tourism. Offering tax holidays, it favored joint ventures between the government and foreign capital. This was illustrated in the same year when the

\textsuperscript{50} "Grenada is Not Alone, November 23, 1981." Marcus and Taber, 242; Ambursley, 206. Increased tourist expenditure would most likely depend in part on whether the tourists stayed on the islands overnight or were visitors from cruise ships, as overnight visitors spend more money on food and accommodation. It has not been possible to uncover reliable data.
\textsuperscript{51} "Report on the National Economy," 64-54.
\textsuperscript{52} The \textit{Grenada Newsletter}, May 28, 1983.
PRG bought the premises of the Grenada Holiday Inn that had been burnt down in 1981 and initiated discussions with British Caledonia Hotel Management Services, Holiday Inns of Canada and other hotel management companies to discuss the handling of the new hotel. Inasmuch as these companies would have been disinclined to promote a 'new tourism,' the PRG was becoming more tied up with traditional tourism, with plans for a 'new tourism' being gradually pushed to one side. There was in fact nothing much 'new' about the PRG's policy toward tourism. Despite much talk the record clearly shows that the thrust of the PRG's economic policy was to continue development of traditional tourism.

The main project undertaken to enhance tourism, also aid exporting, and indeed the revolution's most ambitious and costly project, was the building of a new international airport at Point Salines. The airport was to be complete with a new terminal building and a runway of 9,000 feet. The idea of building an international airport was not new, although the NJM, in its 1973 manifesto, had not supported such a project. After the revolution in 1979, however, "a full-sized airport was seen as a priority for external communications, trade, and tourism, and decreasing Grenada's dependence on her sometimes hostile neighbours." A new airport would bring the convenience of direct flights from Europe and North America and would encourage the export of agricultural perishables. Bishop had pointed to the example of St. Lucia where, he claimed,

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54 In its 1973 Manifesto the NJM stated that it was not in favor of building a new airport "at this time," presumably, further consideration made it apparent that a new airport was needed. "Manifesto of the New Jewel Movement," in Martin, Vol. I, 25; "The Shifting Sands of Point Salines," Free West Indian, January 1, 1981, 255-256; "Together We Shall Build Our Airport, March, 29, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 143
"the construction of an international airport was the major turning point in speeding that country's economic development in recent years."55

The main problem with building the airport was to find financing; the total cost of the project was estimated at over $100 million.56 The bulk of assistance came from Cuba, who provided technical expertise; supplied the skilled labor that Grenada could not provide; supplied vital equipment, such as bulldozers, graders, and other heavy equipment; and provided cement and steel. Further assistance came in the form of grants from Syria, Libya, Iraq, and Algeria, including over $19 million in cash assistance, as well as 10,000 barrels of diesel oil from Venezuela.57 The European Economic Community (ECC) provided the PRG with a grant of EC$6 million; subsequently, individual Western countries became involved in the project. The British company, Plessey Limited, provided the electronics for the airport, and Metex of Finland also supplied equipment. The airport was scheduled to be finished in 1984, and that year was to be named the "Year of the International Airport."58

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55 "Together We Shall Build Our Airport, March 29, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 146. The 1982 World Bank report on Grenada stated that "the main economic purpose of the international airport . . . is to attract an increased flow of tourists to Grenada" it further stated that Grenada would only be able to keep up its annual growth rate by keeping up its determined effort to increase exports and "if the flow of tourists responds to the existence of a new international airport," demonstrating that the World Bank did not share Washington's views regarding the purpose of the airport. "World Bank 1982 Report-Excerpts," in Martin, Vol. I, 234 and 238.

56 Estimates for the total cost of the airport vary. In December, 1981, the Caribbean Contact referred to "the $71 million dollar international airport development," Caribbean Contact, December 1981. Journalist Allister Hughes in the Grenada Newsletter in 1983, said the cost of the undertaking had been estimated at $60 million, but the most recent estimate was $71 million. Thus $71 million seems a more likely estimate. The Grenada Newsletter, May 28, 1983. The Shifting Sands of Point Salines," Free West Indian, January 1, 1981, in Martin, Vol. I, 255.


58 Caribbean Contact, May 1981. The United States had tried to block the loan from the EEC. Washington had been hostile to the international airport from the start of its construction in 1980. Because of the substantial funding that Cuba was contributing and due to the length of the runway, Washington continued to insist that the new airport was to be used as a "refueling point by Cuba and the Soviet Union for political adventurism against other nations, especially in Africa."
The construction of a large-scale project such as the airport provided a boost for Grenada's economy, as well as creating jobs, because it spawned the need for connected industries. For example, a quarry, stone crusher, and asphalt plant, was established by the Cubans to facilitate the airport's construction. Additionally, the plant provided much needed jobs. As has been noted, Grenada's unemployment rate had been estimated at around 50 percent when the NJM took power. Reportedly hidden in this figure was an estimated 69 percent among women and 80 percent among young people. Bishop claimed in 1981 that through the expansion of the cooperative and state sectors, unemployment had been reduced to around 30 percent. This downward trend continued, and a census taken in April 1982 found that unemployment stood at a remarkable 14.2 percent. In his budget address for

There was, however, nothing unusual about the size of Grenada's runway—9000 feet long and 150 feet wide. St. Lucia and Antigua both then had runways of the same length as did the small island of Aruba. Ledeon and Romerstein in the Grenada Documents, label document no. 23 in the table of contents as "Page from notebook of Liam James referring to military use of airport," which seems to reflect more the authors' bias than the contents of the page of the notebook. For the most part the page of the notebook is illegible, it does mention military use of the airport among other things, but it is not possible to draw a conclusion. As the United State proved in its invasion of Grenada, the airport, like most airports of a certain size, could be used to land military planes. There are no indications, however, that the airport was being constructed for military purposes.

59 "To construct from morning," 115.
60 "The Fighting Example of Sandino Lives! February, 23, 1980," in Marcus and Taber, 73; "Grenada is Not Alone, November 23, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 244; "Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Working People, June 5, 1983," in Marcus and Taber, 294, Rita Joseph, "The Significance of the Grenada Revolution to Women in Grenada, Bulletin of Eastern Caribbean Affairs 7.1 (1981), 16. In March 1982, the PRG started a program to create more jobs and end unemployment. The program started with a four day census of the unemployed and was followed by a national conference on unemployment in May 1982. Free West Indian, March 27, 1982, in Martin, Vol. I, 242-243. The figures given by the PRG for unemployment have been accepted by most scholars, see for example: Ambursley, 208; Thordike, Grenada, 107; Manning, 231; and Kai P. Schoenhals, and Richard A. Melanson, Revolution and Intervention in Grenada: The New Jewel Movement, The United States and The Caribbean (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 46. Pryor, however, has challenged the estimates claiming them to be exaggerated. He estimates that unemployment was around 19 and 20 percent of the labor force and that the PRG succeeded in reducing it by five percent. That is, he claims that unemployment went from 24 percent in 1978, to 30 percent in 1981 to 19 percent in 1983, Pryor, 23-34, 204-205. It is not clear if the PRG and Pryor used the same definitions of unemployment. Bishop said that the survey undertaken in
1983, Coard claimed this was due to an expanded public sector that provided 9,350 full time jobs. As a result of improved infrastructure, such as in roads, electricity, and telephone services, jobs had also opened up in the new private businesses that had developed. The private sector had become increasingly active in manufacturing, including beverage production, flour milling, furniture making, garment production, and agro-processing. Furthermore, it must be noted that around 1,500 youths had been recruited into the People's Revolutionary Army.61

The PRG made significant improvements in infrastructure. As part of the feeder road development project to facilitate agricultural development, it implemented the Eastern Main Road Project, which included 2.2 million dollars' worth of road construction, financed jointly by the government and the EEC. Telephone services were greatly improved with the help of equipment supplied by the German Democratic Republic on credit. The number of telephone lines available was expanded from 3,000 to 6,800. The new telephone lines meant that Grenada could now dial Carriacou direct and vice versa--previously only one line had been available between the two islands--and individuals in both

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April 1982 included part-time rural workers and seasonal workers. Pryor did not include part-time workers, but included those unemployed for less than six months of the year. Pryor himself admits that the data is insufficient, and there does not seem enough evidence to suggest that Pryor's estimates are any more reliable than the PRG's, "Fighting Unemployment Through Production!" in Chris Searle, ed., *In Nobody's Backyard: Maurice Bishop's Speeches 1979-1983: A Memorial Volume London*; Zed Books, 1984), 156. Furthermore, the figures of 27.9 unemployment in 1980 and 14.2 in 1982 have been accepted by the United Nations Economic Commission on Latin America(ECLA). It is worthwhile noting that the ECLA lists an unemployment rate of 39.5 percent in 1984, this had dropped to 21 percent in 1985, the last year listed, see table reproduced in Carmen Diana Deere, (coordinator), Peggy Antrobus, Lynn Bolles, Edwin Melendez, Peter Phillips, Marcia Rivera, and Helen Safa, *In the Shadows of the Sun: Caribbean Development Alternatives and U.S. Policy* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1990), 20. Therefore, until more research is undertaken on unemployment, the PRG's estimates remain the best guide.

61 "Report on the National Economy," 5-6. It has not been possible to determine the number of people previously employed in the public sector; Ambursley, 207; Thorndike, *Grenada*, 107. The PRA was estimated to have reached 2000 by 1983, *Ibid*, 121.
islands could make and receive international calls without going through the operator.62

Improvements were also made in the provision of electricity and water. Grenada Electricity Services (Grenlec) was able to make a profit in 1982, with an increase over 1981 sales of 11.8 percent. The government had obtained a loan from the European Investment Bank (EIB) of $6.2 million to buy two new generators. This would give Grenada the capacity to supply the new international airport with electricity, as well as to supply areas which still did not have electricity. Carriacou and Petite Martinique received extended services, some areas receiving electricity for the first time. The Central Water Commission's two main purposes were "construction work, such as building dams and the laying of pipes," and "the community service of supplying water to people." In 1982 it had increased water supply by 39 percent and construction by 12.5 percent from 1981.63

In a survey conducted in 1984, a high 86.7 percent of respondents felt that electricity services had improved under the PRG, while only 39.6 percent felt that water had improved, the majority, 50.3 percent, felt that water services had remained the same.64 This might be because the construction was unable to keep up with the new demand made by increasing the supply, not only to more individuals but also for manufacturing and the international airport site. In addition, progress may have been hampered by delays in the arrival of overseas funds to finance the main construction project and other water services. Although it appears that the finance had arrived in 1983, it is possible

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62 "To construct from morning," 116 -118.
64 Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Barritteau, 26.
that the revolution ended before the PRG had been able to complete its work on the water services.\textsuperscript{65}

As part of its infrastructural development the PRG launched a National Transport Service (NTS) in 1982. Before the revolution, transport had been monopolized by private minibus owners who had provided services only where and when it was profitable. The launching of the NTS was partly in response to popular demand and seems to have been a successful project. The NTS had twenty six buses and operated services from 6.30 a.m. to 10.30 pm. A resident of Carriacou who worked on the buses summed up the need that there had been for public transport:

transport is something which the people just must have.
Without buses the people had to walk everywhere or sometimes use donkeys, because often there was no alternative.
The people always wanted a bus service, and you can see this now in the number of people who are moving around with it.
You could hear them talking about, 'this service should have been long install!' And people more moving together now, more cooperating.\textsuperscript{66}

In a small country where cars are a luxury, a public transport system was indeed an essential service that the PRG provided successfully for the community. In 1983 the NTS hoped to buy twelve new buses and expand and improve the service,\textsuperscript{67} thus verifying its popularity.

\textsuperscript{65} "Report on the National Economy," 68-69.
\textsuperscript{66} "Buses of Unity" interview with Grantis "the Lion" Joseph, 1982 in Carriacou and Petite Martinique In the Mainstream of the Revolution (St. George's, Grenada: Fedon Publishers, 1982), 112.
\textsuperscript{67} "Report on the National Economy," 171.
The NTS had some problems. It appears that although sales had been high, expenses were higher, and the company had made a loss of about $175,000 in its first nine and half months. Coard noted that "it need not make a big profit, for it provides an important service, but it should not lose." He felt that there was need for greater efficiency in the running of the service. The provision of a public bus service was designed to provide a service rather than make a profit and it is possible that in order to make the service accessible to those who needed it, the fares charged were too low, routes chosen may have been unprofitable, and, like many of the PRG's new projects, it suffered from bad organization.

In order to fund its various projects the PRG wanted to gain control of the financial sector. As in other major sectors of the economy, the governments approach to financial institutions was moderate. Bishop, in his 'Line of March' speech to the party in 1982, had stated that "we must assume total control of all financial institutions over a period of time." If this was the policy, the PRG was advancing gradually. At the time of the revolution in 1979, there were six banks in Grenada. One was state-owned, another was a small cooperative bank, and the remaining four were foreign owned private banks. In 1979 the Imperial Bank sold its Grenada branch to the PRG. Subsequently, the PRG changed it into the National Commercial Bank (NCB). Two years later the bank had become the largest lender to the agricultural sector and was also lending money to the private sector in tourism and manufacturing. It became the second largest bank in Grenada. In 1982 the government bought the Royal Bank of

Canada, which was changed to the Grenada Bank of Commerce. The other state owned bank, the Grenada Development Bank (GDB), had been set up upon Grenada’s independence principally to aid the agricultural sector and was financed mainly by external aid funds. The PRG converted it into an investment bank lending to all sectors. In 1983 Coard reported that the GDB had made a record number of loans in 1982, resulting from an "increasing interest by private local investors in developing different types of businesses, especially manufacturing." It also provided loans to farmers involved in domestic food production. Thus there remained two foreign owned banks; the Bank of Nova Scotia and Barclay’s Bank, with which the government apparently did not interfere. Nor did it interfere with other financial institutions such as several small insurance companies.69

Although the NJM insisted that the public sector must dominate the economy, and despite the great expansion of that sector, the private sector seems to have remained very much dominant, and despite some restraints, was encouraged by the government because in reality it had little choice if it wanted to boost the economy. The World Bank report of 1982 claimed that the private sector dominated agriculture, manufacturing, and the distributive trades, commercial banking, and tourism. The latter, it claimed, was owned mostly by local and foreign businessmen.70 The NCB as well as the GDB both provide loans for local businesses, and the PRG gave an incentive of a ten percent

69 “Report on the National Economy,” 71-72; Pryor, 146-147. It has not been possible to find details of different lending policies between the commercial banks and state owned banks. One can only presume that the latter supported the government’s policies, while the commercial banks were more cautious as to which projects were viable. Moreover, the government must have channelled its various foreign grants and loans through the banks it controlled to provide the capital to lend. Most likely the international lending agencies, such as the Caribbean Development Bank, were specific as to what the money provided was to be used for.

rebate on company tax to companies investing in manufacturing. In early 1983 an investment code was published by the PRG in order to act as a moderator to the private sector. The code made clear the PRG's intention to limit foreign investment in commerce, insurance, banking, agriculture, and transport but encourage foreign investment in tourism and manufacturing. This was because of the much higher capital investment required in these two areas. The government gave its support to private business with the provision that: "the ideology and goals of the revolution must be respected and the rights of the working class given due consideration." Fitzroy Ambursley claimed that few businessmen publicly disputed this condition and that "the majority of businessmen express[ed] general support for the revolution." He found some evidence that some businessmen were disguising the amount of profits made and taking money out of Grenada.71 But this behavior is not uncommon among businessmen who tend to take their money where it can accumulate the most profit, regardless of ideology.

Despite the moderate economic strategy that the NJM was following, aid coming from Cuba and the Soviet Union continued to irk Washington, which applied economic pressure to the Grenada government. After the hurricane in 1980, which destroyed 40 percent of Grenada's banana crop, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) excluded Grenada from its assistance to the Windward Island Banana Grower's Association (Winban), of which Grenada was a member--an action strongly criticized by other Winban member states.

71 "World Bank 1982 Report-Excerpts," in Martin, Vol. I, 236. Details of the Investment Code have been taken from Fitzroy Ambursley, "Grenada: the New Jewel Revolution," 207. According to Jorge Heine, Ambursley, while doing doctoral research in Grenada, was deported for publishing work that "heavily criticized the course of the revolution for being petty bourgeois." Apparently, he since "engaged in some heavy self-criticism in print" and the chapter quoted here is a revised edition of his previous work, Heine, 345; Ambursley, 207.
Washington further demanded that Grenada be excluded from U.S. funds channelled through the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB). The CDB refused to accept the grant of $EC10.8 million stating that the exclusion of Grenada would be against the bank's charter. Finally, in 1982 Grenada was excluded from the $10 million supplemental aid for the Eastern Caribbean under the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). Its exclusion implies that the United States intended to use the CBI as a means of gaining political hegemony in the region. Grenada, however, was able to receive EC$8.1 million in economic aid from Algeria, mostly towards the cost of construction of the airport, and EC$ 5 million from the OPEC fund to finance three projects: "road reconstruction; to expand the Grenada Sugar Factory and to improve electricity services in the sister island, Carriacou."\(^{72}\) It seems that U.S. belligerence towards Grenada and Grenada's vocal defiance of U.S. pressure, in effect, encouraged other countries, particularly in the socialist bloc and non-aligned movement, to come to Grenada's aid. This may have been not so much to secure political hegemony in the area but rather to give support to the Grenada revolution and perhaps to attempt to weaken U.S. dominance in the region.

Although the PRG was successful in securing loans and grants from non-traditional sources, it was unable to lessen its dependence on external sources. It also failed to restructure fundamentally Grenada's economy, but on balance the PRG seems to have achieved a great deal in its four and a half years of government. The World Bank reported that "Grenada had been one of the very few countries in the Western Hemisphere that continued to experience per

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capita growth during 1981." The Gross Domestic Product both nominal and real had also continued to grow between 1979 and 1982. The growth rate had been 2.1 percent in 1979, 3.0 percent in 1980 and 1981, and an impressive 5.5 percent in 1982. Coard attributed the growth to the large amounts of funds put into development projects every year since the revolution. Undoubtedly the construction of the international airport gave a major boost to the economy's growth. The World Bank had predicted that Grenada's economy would continue to grow "if a determined effort is made to increase the volume of exports (and the recent sharp increase in garment exports is highly encouraging in this respect) and if the flow of tourists responds to the existence of a new international airport."73 The government had also been able to curb inflation. In 1981 the rise in real wages was 7 percent, in 1982 it was 3 percent and the expected rate for 1983 was 4 percent. Furthermore the PRG had been successful in keeping down the level of debt servicing. In 1982 it was below four percent of exports. Moreover, the PRG had been paying off loans inherited from the Gairy years and had paid of nearly one million dollars in contributions owed to regional and international organizations that Gairy had failed to pay.74 However, the large amounts of money that the PRG was borrowing from diverse sources in order to balance its budget would have to be paid back eventually. Presumably the government thought that sound investments, such as the airport project, would pay off so that debts could be repaid. The Grenada Revolution

73 "World Bank 1982 Report-Excerpts," in Martin, Vol. I, 238; "Report on the National Economy.," 4. Garment exports were in the hands of private companies attesting to the continued importance of the private sector. 74 In 1981 salaries had increased by seventeen and a half percent, while prices had increased by ten and a half percent, in 1982 prices went up seven percent and money wages went up ten percent. Coard argued that under Gairy wage rises had been eaten up by "huge increases in prices" so that the standard of living had been deteriorating. "Report on the National Economy," 9-11 and 15; "World Bank 1982 Report-Excerpts," in Martin, Vol. I, 237.
was cut short before it was able to reap the benefits of its development projects and experience the full effects of its economic strategies. Whether it would have been able to pay back its debts comfortably remains unclear.

It is also uncertain what would have happened in the long term to the ideological split between the PRG's economic strategies and its political goals of achieving socialism. Indications of these complexities are apparent in the report of the Central Committee's first plenary session in July, 1983. Regarding the economy the report stated that:

While our economy has continued to grow we are experiencing extreme difficulties in mobilizing external finance and receiving already promised amounts. This has led to a serious cash flow problem which has slowed down and is even threatening to halt key capital investment projects, caused limited lay-offs and shrunken the confidence of broad sections of the masses.

The alliance with the local bourgeoisie aimed at developing a national economy, has become much more complex. Recent IMF negotiations and imperialism's growing attempts to provide ideological guidelines and possible finance through CBI to the local bourgeoisie has made the need for a much clearer appreciation by the entire party of the strategy and tactics on how to maintain that economic alliance, and use it in the interest of the working people, even more urgent.

We need to bear in mind therefore, that the coming two years
will be particularly difficult and complex on the economic front.\textsuperscript{75} How the NJM would have resolved these difficulties and what tactics and strategy they would have used is not possible to say, but a confrontation between the expanding private and state sectors seems to have been inevitable at some point.

In evaluating the economic record of the Grenada revolution, it must be borne in mind what the NJM had inherited. The ties of dependency that had arisen from years of colonization could not be overturned overnight. The NJM certainly made an attempt to implement self-sustained growth and weaken the island's dependence on the industrialized countries. This was no easy task. Consequently, measured against the tremendous difficulties encumbering the economy of a non-industrialized country, the NJM achieved a great deal. However, it is arguable that the PRG merely transferred its dependence on Western countries to other sources that were more palatable politically. Clive Thomas noted Grenada's overall dependence on three major sources: the Caribbean Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the European Development Bank. The PRG applied skillful diplomacy to acquire a range of grants, gifts and soft loans from these agencies, the Soviet bloc, and non-aligned nations. Indeed, the PRG's period has been referred to as 'foreign aid socialism.'\textsuperscript{76} Bishop himself, however, had argued that, in contrast to aid received from the United States, of the many nations who had aided the PRG not one of them had "ever tried to compromise our freedom or put conditions on

\textsuperscript{76} Thomas, 247; Frederic Pryor defines "foreign aid socialism" as "the attempt to introduce socialism by a government completely dependent on foreign grants and concessionary loans of like-minded nations to achieve its economic aims," Pryor, 2.
their assistance, none of these countries has ever tried to undermine our
economic process or pervert our development for their own ends." Bishop went
on to clarify the difference in the relationship between the former client patron
kind of former times to the one the PRG had formed. He claimed that receipt of
economic aid now took place "in a true relationship of friendship, partnership
and respect for mutual dignity and sovereignty." While this might be true to a
certain extent, and Cuba in particular espoused a policy of noninterference, it
was Grenada's professed path of socialist orientation that encouraged many of
these countries to support it in the first place. Had Grenada decided to move
away from socialism, perhaps some of its donors would have tried to interfere in
Grenada's internal affairs. Moreover, Grenada's dependence on foreign aid
seemed to have forced some compromises on its economic policy. For
example, it could in general only get aid for projects agreed by the donor
country, was not always in a position to articulate its specific needs, and the
equipment donated was sometimes not suitable for Grenada, as was noted with
the Cuban fishing boats.

Grenada did achieve its goal of lessening dependence on the West, but it
still had a long way to go before it arrived at its own internal source of
development. Four and a half years was too short a time to achieve this. The

77 "Three Years of the Grenada Revolution, March 13, 1982," in Marcus and Taber, 260,
"Statement by the Cuban Government and the Cuban Communist Party," Marcus and Taber, 313-
316.
78 "The Truth About Cuba's Role" in Marcus and Taber, 317. Thorndike found no evidence that
either Cuba or the Soviet Union had pressurized the NJM to become an orthodox Marxist-Leninist
party, and claims that the opposite is true. Thorndike, Grenada, 81. A newspaper article written by
the former Prime Minister of Jamaica, Michael Manley, also confirms the view that Cuba was
reluctant to meddle in the internal affairs of other countries, Caribbean Contact, November 1981.
79 Pryor, 63. Furthermore, as Pryor points out, when expected aid was not forthcoming, the PRG
found itself in financial trouble as was discussed in the Central Committee Plenary Session in July
1983, cited above, footnote 73.
PRG did make a gallant attempt to transform the economy—even if the deeds at times could not match the words—but was held back by the reality of Grenada's entrenched position in the international economy as well as an insufficient number of professionally trained people to carry out the PRG's projects efficiently. One can only speculate that, given time, and when and if its various projects began to pay off, and as more Grenadians finished their training abroad, the PRG might have become less dependent on foreign aid and gone some way to becoming independent economically. As it was, continuity rather than change characterized Grenada's economy, which remained dependent on the export of cocoa, bananas and nutmeg, followed by traditional tourism—"new tourism" had not been a viable possibility. Moreover, although some attempt had been made to implement land reform, little change of ownership had taken place.

Possibly some of the more successful and innovative accomplishments of the PRG, where change did occur, can be seen in the revolution's healthcare and education programs, as well as its attempt to break the cultural ties of colonialism—to decolonize the mind—which will be examined in the next chapter.
Chapter Four

Social and Cultural Developments

The most notable achievements of the Grenada revolution were in its social policies. The People's Revolutionary Government greatly expanded education and health care services, improved the status of women in Grenadian society, and significantly attempted to develop national culture.

In order to aid its economic and political strategies the government placed great emphasis on education. The education system inherited from Grenada's colonial past had been designed to educate a small elite. Although secondary school education had expanded since the 1960s, and a few scholarships were awarded, it was still inadequate to meet the demand of Grenadian society with fees of $37.50 per term being prohibitive to most poor families. University education remained only for those lucky enough to win one of the few scholarships available abroad or who could afford the high costs involved. Gairy had failed to pay levies due to the University of the West Indies which had further curtailed Grenadians' access to university education. Moreover, as we have seen, schools had been neglected by the Gairy government so that "virtually every single pre-primary school in our country" as well as most other schools were in need of repair.¹

Under colonial rule the curriculum of the Grenadian education system, modelled on the British public school system, first taught Grenadian children English nursery rhymes and then European history but little of their own history or that of the Caribbean. At the secondary level students read the work of British poets and novelists such as William Wordsworth and Jane Austen, while Caribbean writers such as George Lamming or Dennis Walcott were ignored. The education given was geared toward preparing students for professions such as law, medicine, and business. Furthermore, as Bishop pointed out in an address in July 1979, the colonial education system had imbibed people with an "attitude of self hate" that aimed "to get us to abandon our history, our culture, our values. To get us to accept the principles of white superiority, to destroy our confidence, to stifle our creativity, to perpetuate in our society class privilege." Although in more recent years there had been a shift toward a more relevant curriculum in the Commonwealth Caribbean, Gairy had neglected education so that little had been done to change the education system since independence. Evidently the colonial education system had not been completely successful or the New Jewel Movement would not have been able to emerge. Nevertheless, it was precisely these attitudes that the NJM's education policies hoped to overturn. Most important, the government wished to expand the education system to make education accessible to all Grenadians.

In the first nineteen months of the revolution significant improvements had been made from preschool to university. Through mobilizing local communities to undertake voluntary work, sixty-six primary schools had been

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2 Schoenhals, 49.
repaired. Primary schools were provided with free milk and a "subsidized meal system for all." The PRG had proudly opened Grenada's second public secondary school, and had reduced secondary school fees to $12.50 per term; after September 1981 secondary schooling was free. In addition, the number of government scholarships available for study at universities abroad had increased from only 3 in the last years of Gairy's government, to 109 in the first six months of the revolution, and had reached 220 by July 1981. Bishop commented that there were "more university places available than qualified nationals to fill them," a situation the government hoped to remedy gradually through the provision of free secondary education.⁴

Possibly one of its most ambitious education projects was the PRG's attempt to eradicate illiteracy. In a survey conducted in April 1980, 12,000 Grenadians were found to be illiterate or functionally illiterate. Phase one of the Centre for Popular Education (CPE) literacy program began in August 1980 and lasted until February 1981. It reportedly started with a total of 3,500 learners and a volunteer teaching force of 2,000. The campaign, built by examining the JAMAL literacy program in Jamaica, the Cuban model, and the work of the Brazilian, Paulo Freire, relied on volunteer teachers to go to people's homes to teach them the basic skills of reading and writing.⁵ Slogans such as "each one

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⁵ The Government defined illiterate as someone who cannot read or write, and functionally illiterate as referring to "someone whose ability to read and write is severely limited." It has not been possible to find details of the survey, but if Bishop's later claim that the rate was reduced to 2 percent of the population in a year is correct, it must be assumed that the former figure included a high percentage of functional illiterates while the latter did not. "Adult Education is a Must," Free West Indian, October 16, 1982, in Tony Martin, ed., In Nobody's Backyard: The Grenada Revolution in its Own Words, Vol. 1, "The Revolution at Home" (Dover, Massachusetts: The
must teach one," "if you know, teach, if you don't, learn," and "no liberation without education," were adopted to popularize the campaign. The plan seems to have been largely successful; Bishop later claimed that in one year illiteracy levels dropped to 2 percent of the entire population. This figure presumably does not include functional illiteracy, because this still remained a problem.6

In order to tackle functional illiteracy, stage two of the CPE program was launched in 1982 to teach students more than just the basic skills of reading and writing. The two-year program aimed to reach a broader cross section of people and develop the intellectual capacity of the adult learners, teaching them a much wider range of subjects including "language arts and mathematics." The program also aimed at developing the political awareness of the adults—that is, enabling them to understand the government's ideology—in the hope that they would contribute positively to the community. Students were required to attend classes two nights a week for two hours. As Bishop pointed out, running an adult education program was not an easy task; "the average agricultural worker goes to work early in the morning, goes home in the afternoon, does a little back gardening, then maybe heads to the rum shop to play some dominoes or sit down to talk with the partner" (he omitted to add the

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burden of those responsible for childcare), and was thus reluctant to give up
his/her valuable free time in order to attend classes. He added that CPE
mobilizers and educators complained constantly of the difficulty of getting
people to attend classes with regularity—even in their own homes.7

An interview with Dwight Coy, parish coordinator and organizer of the
literacy program for Carriacou, confirmed the initial reluctance of students to join
the program. He spoke of the "evasion and brambling" of the students in the
early days; they were unclear what the program was about and were shy and
unwilling to show their illiteracy. However, the program eventually achieved
good results as its value became understood, and Carriacou's was held up as
the "most dynamic and outstanding parish program."8

By February 1983 the total number of learners enrolled in the CPE
program reportedly stood at 5,010. Trade unions and mass organizations were
expected to play an important role in recruiting learners. The Banker and
General Workers' Union, for instance, had recruited 638 learners, while the
National Organisation for Women had recruited 352. The latter figure seems
rather low and possibly reflects the problems that the NWO was experiencing,
which will be examined later.9

There is some evidence that the Central Committee was not altogether
happy with the results of the CPE. In July 1983 the CC analysis of the work of

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7 "The Present Stage of the Grenada Revolution, July 1981" in Marcus and Taber, 180; Maurice
8 Brambling is a Grenadian term for "Fooling, deceiving, purposely delaying." Chris Searle, Words
9 Carriacou and Petite Martinique, In the Mainstream of the Revolution, 49.
9 "Center for Popular Education Passes 5,000 Target," Free West Indian, February 23, 1983, in
Martin, Vol. I, 74-75. There may have been some coercion involved in recruiting students to the
CPE programs, nevertheless, it would seem that most people had much to gain and little to lose
from receiving free education.
the CPE found it to be "weak" for several reasons: the "subjective weakness of the leadership at the national and parish levels," the "low involvement and inconsistent attendance of workers in the classes," and "inadequate and inefficient mobilization by the mass organizations." Consequently, the CC decided that, among other things, "material incentives" were to be offered to students, and the curriculum was to be expanded to include history, science and social studies. It is possible that the CC overstressed the problems with the CPE, because by that time the NJM leadership was becoming highly critical of the progress of the revolution in terms of its Marxist Leninism, and perhaps expected too much from the program. Paget Henry claims that the literacy campaign "was an extremely popular program, strongly identified with the working class." Unfortunately, he does not state his source. Notwithstanding the above, those who participated in the program undoubtedly must have reaped the benefits of acquiring literacy.

When the PRG took power in 1979, fewer than one third of primary teachers and only 7 percent of secondary teachers had received any professional training. Subsequently, the National In-Service Teacher Education Programme (NISTEP) was launched in 1980. The program evolved out of discussions with all primary and secondary teachers which concluded that there was a "burning need" for "increased training opportunities." NISTEP

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10 "Central Committee Report on First Plenary Session, 13-19 July, 1983," Michael Ledeen and Herbert Romerstein, eds. Grenada Documents: An Overview and Selection, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: Dept. of State and Defence, 1984), 110 - 8. In the same session criticism of the party, and thus the revolution, emerges. For example, the CC felt that "main feature" of the political and economic situation at that time was "the continued failure of the party to transform itself ideologically and organisationally and to exercise firm leadership along a Leninist path in the face of the acute rise in the complexities and difficulties facing the revolution on all fronts-economic, political, social, military and international," 110 -1.

was "based on the principle of continuous education -- the need to constantly upgrade one's level of competence in order to keep abreast of innovations and developments in a rapidly changing environment." The aim was to train as many teachers as possible without having to take them out of the classroom for long periods. Although the project arose out of discussion with the teachers, there appears to have been some problems in encouraging their participation. The program involved extra work and loss of some vacation time. Bishop stated that teachers felt initially that they would not be able to cope with the added workload. After the government and the teachers had faced the problems and discussed them, Bishop asserted that "the vast majority of our teachers are expressing their fullest support for the programmes and are willing to go forward to make it into a massive success." Instead of 50 teachers being trained every two years, many of whom subsequently migrated overseas, the new program planned to train over 500 teachers in the following three years. It was hoped that the dynamism and ideology of the NJM's education policies, together with new job opportunities, would encourage them to stay in Grenada.

The Political Bureau discussed some of NISTEP's problems during a meeting in June 1981. George Louison stated that the NISTEP program was "going very bad, (sic) basically because of the weak leadership in the person of Judith Bullen," who headed the program. In addition, "some 79 persons have missed classes 5 or more times already." Louison claimed that the students were objecting to the "quality of the lectures, the syllabus [being] not up-to-date,

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[and] the lack of co-ordination and planning." The meeting resolved to discuss the matter with Bullen.14 Despite the short period of its existence, the program appears to have been reasonably successful because, by the end of 1983, the government expected the majority of primary school teachers to have received training or to be in training. Furthermore, a meeting of the CC in July 1983 mentioned that a NISTEP program for secondary school teachers was to commence in September 1983.15 Most of the problems discussed by the PB could possibly have been smoothed out as the program developed, and with experience the quality of training could have improved.

Besides expanding education opportunities in general, the PRG stressed the importance of technical education. It proposed to link education with production aiming to provide people with skills that would be of major importance in boosting Grenada's development. As Bishop explained, Grenada "must produce the agriculturalists, the mechanics, the engineers, the hoteliers, the boat captains, etc.," that were needed to develop agriculture, agro-industries, fisheries, and tourism.16 With these goals in mind, by 1981 the PRG had established a fisheries training school to teach modern techniques of fishing and a cooperative training school to teach young people cooperative "principles and practices," intended to encourage the development of agricultural cooperatives. A hotel training school, a police training school, and

16 "Education is Production Too! October 15, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 221.
a public servants' in-service program had also been started. The government had reopened the Mirabeau Farm School and had set up training programs for the workers in agro-industries. Undoubtedly, the establishment of these schools provided the basis for developing programs to train people with skills which they would later use to the ultimate benefit of themselves and the country.17

The PRG saw education as "the most critical factor to change our situation" and aid social and political development. Accordingly, 1980 had been named the 'Year of Education and Production' and 1983 was designated the 'Year of Political and Academic Education.' In 1983 the PRG's two main goals were "to improve the quality of primary education" and "to greatly expand the adult education program." Money would be spent on repairing schools, and a grant had been obtained from UNESCO to purchase school furniture. The government was also planning to build four new community centers with assistance from the European Development Fund.18 Furthermore, Bishop stated that in 1983 the government hoped to achieve "worker education in all work places," "more work-study programs for our students," "more seminars and more training programs by the mass organizations," and "more technical seminars for different categories of workers in order to improve their skills." An essential part of the education programs was to convey an understanding of the NJM's ideology, so that people might, in Bishop's words, see the link "between

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17 "The Present Stage of the Grenada Revolution, July 1980," in Marcus and Taber, 180; "Education is a Must!" in Searle, In Nobody's Backyard, 57. The agricultural school reportedly had 50 graduates in 1979 according to Bishop, 57.
18 "Report on the National Economy," 73, 120-121.
imperialist exploitation and persistent poverty," a connection the NJM steadfastly emphasized.  

The NJM’s political ideology was included in its education policies. Bernard Coard, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Planning, Finance, and Trade, announced in his 1983 budget address that the Ministry of Education, besides equipping the schools with furniture and putting additional funds into the school feeding program, hoped to improve teaching methods and textbooks. In 1982 the government had launched new school books called Marryshow Readers named after the Grenadian statesman and journalist, T.A. Marryshow. The books were produced in Grenada following collaboration between Grenadian teachers and a Trinidadian and British teacher working in Grenada. The idea behind the books was to produce texts more relevant to Grenada than previous books available. The three Marryshow Readers published, their texts using illustrations of rural life in Grenada, were only for the first grade; plans were apparently underway to produce new texts for higher grades. The project, as well as the low cost of the books, was made possible by a cooperation agreement with Cuba. The production of such a book was clearly a very important development towards instilling the value of Grenadian culture and placing less stress on European culture.

As part of its attack on the cultural heritage of the colonial power the PRG acknowledged the validity of Grenadian grammatical forms of English. Poet and Minister of Health Chris De Riggs asserted astutely that “Every Grenadian

needs to be bilingual. We need Standard English as an international instrument and for study, newspapers and radio, but we would be culturally incomplete, we wouldn't even be standing on one leg, if we couldn't understand and use our dialect." Rather than teaching, as had previously been the case, that Creole English was incorrect English, schools were encouraged to teach it as a language in its own right alongside standard English.21

The PRG displayed its commitment to education by increasing its allocation in the annual budget. The recurrent expenditure on education was increased by three million dollars, from $15.2 million in 1982 to $18.1 million in 1983. Whereas in 1981 21.3 percent of the recurrent budget was spent on education, in 1982 the percentage had increased to 22.5 percent, and in 1983 it was 22.3 percent. Under Gairy the annual expenditure had been around $8.8 million, so that the PRG had more than doubled the money being spent on education. However, the overall budget had also grown, and, as can be seen from the above figures, the percentage spent on education decreased slightly in 1983.22 Perhaps more important than the actual amount of money spent was the PRG's approach toward education. It had mobilized the population to participate in its adult education programs and school repair programs, broadened the curriculum to included technical education and indigenous culture, and promoted the idea of education as the right for all rather than the privilege of a small elite.

21 Chris Searle, Words Unchained, 24, 72-73
22 "Report on the National Economy," 14 and 131; Education is Production Too! October 15, 1981," in Marcus and Taber, 221. I have not been able to determine the actual percentage spent on education during the Gairy years.
Besides its accomplishments in expanding education, the PRG, viewing health care as "a basic human right," achieved a great deal in providing health care facilities in Grenada. Bishop explained that "health development both contributes to, and results from social and economic development." The health goals of the revolution stressed provision of health care according to need, particularly expanding medical services into the poor rural areas, and, most important, the development of primary health care.\textsuperscript{23} It increased its recurrent expenditure on health by $1.9 million from $9.8 million in 1982 to $11.7 million in 1983.\textsuperscript{24}

As part of its program to improve health care the PRG increased the number of doctors practicing in Grenada. According to Bishop, under Gairy the ratio of doctors had been one to every 4,000 of the population; by 1983 the ratio was reportedly one to every 2,700 patients. Within the first six months of the PRG, twelve Cuban doctors and dentists had come to Grenada on loan, enabling more people to receive medical attention which was provided free of charge in all public health institutions.\textsuperscript{25} The government had also established dental clinics in each parish--there had been only one on the island in 1979. In his 1981 address marking the second anniversary of the revolution, Bishop pointed out that the government had provided a new eye clinic, the first one in Grenada; a new maternity clinic; an intensive care unit; while both X-ray

\textsuperscript{23} "The Class Struggle in Grenada, the Caribbean, and the USA, July 15, 1980," in Marcus and Taber, 108 "Health For All - A Right of the Caribbean Masses," in Searle, \textit{In Nobody's Backyard}, 47.

\textsuperscript{24} "Report on the National Economy," 131. It has not been possible to obtain a breakdown of this figure to see in which areas the money was being spent.

\textsuperscript{25} "Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Working People, June 5, 1983," in Marcus and Taber, 295; "Beat Back Destablisers," in Searle, \textit{In Nobody's Backyard}, 24. It has not been possible to verify the figures quoted here by Bishop. Nevertheless, it seems likely that, with the aid of the Cubans, the ratio of doctors to patients increased.
facilities and the casualty department had been expanded and a new operating theater had been built. These achievements palpably demonstrate the government's commitment to providing improved health care facilities.

The main emphasis of the PRG's health policy was on preventative medicine through the provision of basic health facilities in every community. For example, it was hoped that by September 1983 all children under three years old would have been immunized. Village health committees were set up to involve the masses in health care. Their work included involving the community in public health education, monitoring the quality of the health care they received, and working on community projects such as unblocking drains to stave off mosquitoes in order to avoid mosquito-borne diseases. One piece of evidence attesting to the success of Grenada's health care program is shown in the establishment in 1981 of a research project aimed at reducing child deaths from diarrhea and related problems. The researchers, a group of Canadian doctors, had chosen Grenada because of the quality of its primary health care system. Furthermore, comments arising during discussion of the 1982 budget revealed the popularity of primary health care and the community projects.

As well as the improvements in education and health care, and infrastructural improvements, such as the expansion of water facilities, the government considered housing improvements an important part of raising the living conditions of Grenadians. It implemented a housing repair program for

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29 "To construct from morning." *Making the People's Budget in Grenada*, (St. George's, Grenada: Fedon Publishers, 1982), 111.
the poorest workers, and made interest-free loans available. The workers were required to pay back only two thirds of the loan over a ten year period. In 1982, with assistance from Cuba, it opened a plant for construction of pre-fabricated housing units, reportedly able to construct 500 houses every year. Furthermore, a Ministry of Housing was created with responsibility for a national housing program. The amount of activity in this area suggests that considerable improvements were made. Furthermore, an opinion poll conducted in Grenada in 1984 found that 82.9 percent of respondents felt that housing had improved under the PRG.30

In the same poll an overwhelming majority of the respondents (85.2 percent) considered that women's rights had improved during the revolution.31 Women had actively supported and joined the NJM through its struggles against the Gairy regime. The 1973 manifesto had promised to remove the "various disabilities and disadvantages which women presently suffer under the law."32 The PRG's policy regarding women was explained in an article written in 1981 by Rita Joseph, head of the Women's Desk in the Ministry of Education and Social Affairs.33 Joseph maintained that the PRG had made "consistent efforts to integrate women into its development strategies and was "firmly committed, not only to the principle of equal rights for women, but also to

31 Emmanuel, Brathwaite, Baratteau, 26.
the active promotion of full and equal participation by women in all areas of the economy and society." 34

Accordingly, the government had taken several measures to demonstrate this policy. In March 1979 the PRG proclaimed the principles of equal pay for equal work, maternity leave, and an end to the sexual exploitation of women for work, whereby jobs were offered in return for sex—under Gairy this was said to have been a common practice. 35 Bishop later maintained that the PRG had implemented equal pay for equal work in the state sector. 36 A more careful look at the evidence suggests that this was not the case. In 1981, for example, an article in the Free West Indian stated that agricultural and road worker's wages had been increased from $6.80 to $8.50 for men and from $5.80 to $7.50 for women. Joseph claimed that the policy had been implemented in "some sectors," but that the situation was more complex in areas where, traditionally, different types of work had been done by men and women such as in the agricultural sector. In 1981 the Women's Desk was apparently carrying out a survey to determine which jobs were of equal value. Too much concern, however, for what work was of equal value, rather than a broader interpretation of the principle, might have led to undue procrastination in its execution. 37

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34 Ibid., 17.
35 "Women Step Forward, June 15, 1979," in Marcus and Taber, 38. Further references to sexual exploitation of women are in Joseph, 17. She also claimed that the PRG had accomplished "the complete abolition of sexual exploitation." Although they may have abolished certain practices, it is extremely doubtful whether they could have achieved this much. 18.
36 See for example, "Maurice Bishop Speaks to U.S. Working People, June 5, 1983," in Marcus and Taber, 303; "Long Live the Women of Free Grenada," in Searle, In Nobody's Backyard, 214; "The Present Stage of the Grenada Revolution, July 1981" in Marcus and Taber, 184. In the latter interview Bishop stated that there had been "substantive implementation" in the state sector of equal pay for equal work.
37 Joseph, 19.
There appears to have been no provision made for maternity leave before the revolution. Thus the PRG passed the Maternity Leave Law in 1980. Essentially, pregnant women were entitled to three months maternity leave with the right to return to work at the end of that leave. If the woman had worked for the same employer for eighteen months or longer, she was entitled to two months paid leave, although daily paid workers were entitled "to a sum equal to one-fifth the pay earned in the twelve months immediately prior to the commencement of the maternity leave." If she had worked in the job for less than eighteen months, she was entitled to the leave but to no pay. Although the Act could be criticized for not allowing more time, and its failure to provide for paternity leave, it was certainly a tremendous improvement for women as there had been no paid maternity leave previously.  

The PRG went some way in challenging sexual roles in schools and other areas of Grenadian society. Its primary school text, the Marryshow Readers, showed both men and women cooking and sharing childcare, and boys as well as girls helping in the kitchen and with the housework. On the other hand women were shown in roles other than homemaker. While it was acknowledged that the scenes were not part of most children's experience, it was felt that depicting people in different roles would help to break down traditional prejudices of sex roles and form new values. The PRG also erected billboards bearing the slogans 'Women Step Forward!' and 'Women, Equal in Production and Defence,' which would have prompted the population at least to

39 Interview with Marla Hodge, a Trinidadian teacher who came to live in Grenada during the revolution and helped to develop the Marryshow readers, conducted by Chris Searle in Chris Searle, Words Unchained: Language and Revolution in Grenada, '79-82.
reconsider the position of women in Grenada. Evidence that the NJM's stress on the integration of women was having some effect can be noted in the changing lyrics of Grenada's popular song and musical style, the calypso. As the revolution progressed, fewer calypsoes focused on women as sexual objects; instead, songs in 1982 such as "Women Be Free" and "Tribute to Women" promoted women's fuller participation in all areas of society.40

The National Women's Organization (NWO) was the primary institution for encouraging the participation of women in the revolution. It was modelled on the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) which had played an important role in Cuba in mobilizing women and placing women's issues on the political agenda.41 The NWO had been formed in 1977 with about 60 women, and in December 1980 membership was still small with only 129 members. Following a mass mobilization drive, the NWO reportedly reached a membership of 6,500 members in December 1982. Membership was open to all women over the age of 14, and members were able to elect the organization's national executive every three years. Encouraged through the NWO, women began to enter areas of work which had formerly been reserved for men, such as furniture making, carpentry, plumbing, and fisheries.42

40 Is Freedom We Making, The New Democracy in Grenada (St. George's, Grenada: Government Information Services, 1981), 19; Searle, Words Unchained, 194 and 201-203.
In June 1982 the NWO came under attack from the Central Committee which claimed that it had failed to consolidate its large membership, many of its groups were not functioning, and insufficient members of the groups were active. Moreover, it was claimed that NWO's socialism classes were poor and the political and ideological work among the masses had not "got off the ground;" not enough mobilization was being carried out. Publicly, however, Bishop praised the NWO, most probably because the NJM leadership wanted the population to believe in the success of its mass organizations and boost its morale. His opening address that same year at the NWO's first congress in December highly praised its leadership. Proposals put forward at the congress sought to share the workload, provide training for new political leadership, and create interesting activities to encourage greater participation. Despite the criticism, it appears that the NWO provided inspiration for Grenadian women to become more involved in political activities.

It has already been mentioned that the NWO's three-year work plan was first circulated among all its members at group, parish, and delegate levels. As a result of the dialogue which took place at such meetings the final draft put much emphasis on technical training for women. This process also resulted in childcare being brought firmly onto the agenda. It was noted that it was no good providing employment opportunities and job training facilities if women could

43 "Minutes of the Central Committee Meeting, on Saturday, 26th June, 1982," Grenada Documents, 103 - 2. It is interesting to note that while Vincent Noel had been held responsible when the work of the Worker's Committee was criticized, and Kenrick Radix had been blamed for problems in the fisheries, Phyllis Coard was not held responsible for the NWO although she was its president. This reflects the divisions that were to emerge in the party in 1983--Radix and Noel were both Bishop supporters. See "Meeting of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement, Held on the 21st April 1982," Grenada Documents, 102-3; Central Committee Minutes Held on 22nd July, 1981," Grenada Documents, 99 - 2-4.
not find adequate childcare. However, despite the NWO's progressive outlook on women in employment, childcare was still seen as women's work, and there is no mention of men being asked to share the responsibility of looking after children even though this issue had been raised in the images described in the new Marryshow Readers. Instead, the NWO plan stated that "women must give of their time voluntarily in order to look after children in the day care centres."45 The issue of childcare and housework is a complex one. While Marxists have generally argued that women's full involvement in production alone would lead to their equality, this has not proven the case in the communist countries. A glance at the leadership of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and China, for instance, reveals few women in top leadership roles, and recent investigation of the position of women in these countries reveal their continued inequality. It now seems clear that women's 'double shift' both inside and outside the home is one of the major factors contributing to the persistence of gender inequalities in socialist as well as capitalist systems. While not wishing to devalue the very real contribution of the NWO in improving conditions for women in Grenada, its failure to challenge gender roles on the issue of childcare and housework was a serious omission that would curtail both Grenadian women's career advancement and their participation in the party leadership.46

46 For a full discussion of these problems see Sonia Kruks, Rayna Rapp, and Marilyn B. Young, eds., Promissory Notes: Women in the Transition to Socialism (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1989), particularly Lourdes Benería, "Capitalism and Socialism: Some Feminist Questions," 329, and Delia Dawn "Of Dogma, Dicta, and Washing Machines: Women in the People's Republic of China," 355. In 1975 Cuba addressed this issue and enacted the Family Code in which both men and women were to share responsibility for housework and childcare. Implementing the code has been more difficult and results have been poor, see Muriel Nazzari, "The "Woman Question" in Cuba: An Analysis of Material Constraints on its Resolution," in Kruks, Rapp, and Young, 109; and Leahy, 108.
These issues were raised by women party members with the leadership of the NJM as shown in the minutes of the Political Bureau and Central Committee meetings, and indicate that the NJM was paying inadequate attention to their needs. A particularly interesting and revealing document is the letter from Phyllis Coard, chairperson of the Women's Committee of the NJM, regarding "problems affecting women Party members" and circulated to the Political Bureau in May 1982.\textsuperscript{47} The letter complained that women party members were "under considerable strain," for reasons outlined in six points. First, the needs of women with children were not being taken into account when timetables were set for study classes and committee meetings. Male party members had not been sympathetic to the difficulties involved in finding baby sitters. The letter suggested that these needs be considered. Second, the letter pointed out that "most women in our Party have to wash, cook, clean and sometimes also have to care for children and elderly parents, in addition to taking on just as much political work as the men who in most cases accept little responsibility in the housekeeping area." It asked that this be taken into account when tasks were allotted because women were becoming extremely tired. Third, the Maternity Leave Law was not being respected by the party. Consequently, pregnant women and women with babies were still expected to carry on party work. Fourth, some single women with children were finding it difficult to pay full party dues because of the burden of providing for the family when fathers paid monies which were woefully inadequate for the maintenance of their children.

\textsuperscript{47} "Report from Women's Committee, May 11, 1982," \textit{Grenada Documents}, 79 - 1-3.
The fifth point stated that "the Party should seek actively to change the attitude of Party men to the question of baby-sitting, child care, housework and should ensure that all fathers support their children equally both financially and psychologically." The letter outlined how this should be done, and stressed that party members living together should share equally housework and childcare. The women's complaints challenged traditional gender roles wherein men have virtually no responsibility for physical childcare or housework and demonstrate some of the obstacles that women in general as well as party members experience in the struggle to attain equality. It is interesting that these radical suggestions are not mentioned as a goal in Bishop's speeches, thus casting a doubt on the extent of the NJM's commitment to women's equality. The sixth point acknowledged some of the generally unstated problems that women faced. It argued that party members had the responsibility of showing the masses what a socialist relationship was. Accordingly, the Women's Committee felt that "it is time married Party men stopped running around with several other women; it is time they stopped having "outside" children;" and that party men should stop pressuring women to have their children in return for marriage, while "women Party members [should] learn to stop gossiping about other peoples personal relationships." In order to soften the criticism, the letter ends by acknowledging that although these problems existed, the NJM far outweighed other Caribbean parties in the "high degree of equality which it offers to women, both within and outside the Party."48

Even more interesting is the response of the NJM leadership to this document. It appears that it did not respond until a Political Bureau meeting in

48 Ibid, emphasis in original.
September 1982—four months after the letter was written. This meeting was attended by a delegation from the NWO consisting of Phyllis Coard, Rita Joseph, and Claudette Pitt. The Political Bureau stated that it shared the women’s concerns, suggesting, among other things, that family education for both men and women be examined, and noted that "the Party had not fully addressed the women’s question, although it has been an issue of concern." However, the minutes end with the following comments: "For all of us (men) we have shon (sic) a lack of concern and support for the women we have a relationship with. (This is not to excuse women for wat (sic) they do to earn disrespect)." It further stated that, "The level of human commitment. There is an attitude among women members to laziness, mask for excuses, ill discipline."\(^{49}\) Despite its acknowledgment of the women’s complaints, this latter remark suggests that the Political Bureau had not taken them very seriously, exhibiting a tendency to try to blame the women for their own problems. Although it is also unclear why the PB took so long to respond, one suspects that the delay points to a lack of total commitment to women’s issues on the part of the NJM leadership, perhaps especially when the the leadership itself was under personal attack.\(^{50}\)

This conclusion is further confirmed by the Central Committee Report on the First Plenary Session in July 1983 when women’s work in the party was

\(^{49}\) In attacking the women by calling them lazy and ill disciplined the NJM leadership was in fact projecting its own laziness and unwillingness to relinquish its benefits from the unrecognized extra labor of women. When women refused to give excessive labor freely they were accused of being lazy when it is the men who are lazy in this case. For further discussion of the projection of laziness by the dominant group onto those who labor for them, and a study that has contributed greatly to the body of work on post-colonial discourse, see Syed Hussein Alatas, *The Myth of the Lazy Native* (London: F. Cass, 1977).

\(^{50}\) "Minutes of the Political Bureau Meeting, On Wednesday, 22nd September, 1982," *Grenada Documents*, 81 - 2-3.
again discussed. The work of the Women's Committee was described as weak and some of the women on the committee were accused of having "deep petty bourgeois trends," a criticism often used against those with whom the CC did not agree. Regarding the complaint that the party had paid insufficient attention to the special needs of women party members with young children (made fourteen months prior to this session) "the Central Committee concluded that this allegation [was] without substance (sic)." It continued that there had been "steady and discerning improvement in the arrangements which have been made by the Party to facilitate Party comrades with young children in carrying out their Party duties. This attitude therefore reflected "a disguised petty bourgeois attitude and reaction." The CC concluded that "the inequality of the women was one of the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system and had to be resolved by the Party in a systematic way in accordance with the material development of the society."51 It pointed out that attempts were being made to solve the problems women faced by the provision of day care centers, kindergartens, and pre-primary facilities, and the development of educational opportunities and jobs for women. Subjective difficulties such as "old culture, old views, old prejudices, old habits, old values," were to be resolved by both men and women in the party through group study on "the Woman Question."52

51 "Central Committee Report on First Plenary Session, 13 - 19 July, 1983," *Grenada Documents*, 110 - 18-19. By blaming the inequality of women on capitalism the NJM was failing to analyze fully the root of female oppression. While capitalism contributes to the exploitation of women, and while exploitation is inherent in capitalism, the exploitation of women is not inherent in capitalism. Socialism has made many promises of equality to women and placed "the Women Question" firmly on the agenda. So far, however, it has failed to provide the solution. For a full discussion on capitalism versus socialism in the advancement of women see Kruks, Rapp, and Young, particularly the essay by Beñát, 325-332; for a comparison of women and development strategies in Cuba, the United States, Mexico, and the Soviet Union, see Leahy.

52 The use of the term the "Woman Question" is very significant. As Kruks, Rapp, and Young point out in their introduction: "The very language of the problematic, the "Woman Question," recalls the nineteenth-century discourse in which it was first framed. The analysis of woman as
a "principled and systematic way" that required "a conscious attempt at change in attitude and practice."53 However, the CC then resolved that:

the Party cannot encourage weakness, breed cynicism, encourage [a] wrong subjective attitude, put the party in a position of a privileged clique, or encourage disunity between men and women in the Party's rank and file, bearing in mind the paramount importance of the need to ensure that both the men and women unite in the struggle to defeat our principle enemies of capitalism and imperialism and achieve our strategic objective of building Socialism.54

This conclusion clearly demonstrates how the apparently genuine concerns of women party members were conveniently subordinated to the 'higher' goal of socialism. The NJM leadership did not attempt to solve the women's problems, and it is unlikely that they would have been addressed at a later stage of the revolution if they were not dealt with satisfactorily at that point because the attitudes demonstrated toward women by male party leaders do not appear open to change. Furthermore, there is sufficient evidence from the examples of the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba to suggest that if women's rights are not separate from the rest of the society socialists wished to transform inevitably had consequences for the total vision socialists embraced. The Woman Question would be answered by socialism along with all other social problems. Women as a category had nothing to contribute to the theory of socialism." Thus women were seen as just another of society's problems rather than as an integral part of that society. Knuks, Rapp and Young, 8. Interestingly, this attitude is reflected in Bishop's speeches when he often referred to "workers, farmers, youth, and women," as if women were not also workers, farmers, and youth. See for example "Maurice Bishop-Speech to the First Congress, National Women's Organization," Free West Indian, December 11, 1982, in Martin, Vol. 1, 163.

accompanied by a fundamental assault on gender stereotyping as an integral and irreversible part of the revolutionary process from the beginning, then, although conditions for women may improve considerably, their status is likely to remain unequal.

It is of no small coincidence that all the members of the Political Bureau were male, and that Phyllis Coard was the only woman on the Central Committee. With the attitudes expressed above, it would have been difficult for more women to have reached the leadership level. In other areas of government, however, the NJM did make considerable progress. Joseph claimed that there were four women deputy ministers and two women ambassadors, including Dessima Williams, ambassador to the Organization of American States. The number of women working as directors of commissions, public agencies, and statutory bodies, as advisers, senior civil servants, and technical officers had risen from two to twenty, and women technical officers headed the Economic Planning Ministry, the Co-operatives Development Agency, the Mass Literacy Campaign, and the Planning Department in the Ministry of Health. Thus while women did make considerable employment gains under the PRG, in spite of the obstacles we have discussed, they were not represented adequately in the top leadership.

Jacqueline Creft was reported as being the first women appointed to the cabinet when she became Minister of Education, Youth, and Culture in July

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55 Joseph, 19. Phyllis Coard was also president of the National Women's Organization, Manning, 238.

56 It must also be acknowledged that having women in leadership roles is not the only indicator of women's equality, it might only indicate progress for the middle class. I have not been able to analyze how many of the positions filled by women were filled by working class women. While time and space prohibit a full discussion of this topic, suffice to say that employment alone does not necessarily mean the end of gender discrimination.
1981. Creft, however, sent in a letter of resignation from that post and the party in November 1982. The PB stated that she was to be persuaded to stay on as Minister until a replacement could be found. She appears to have continued because she was present at a PB meeting in January 1983 to discuss her education report. In August 1982 a Ministry of Women's Affairs was established with Creft as Minister and Phyllis Coard as Secretary. Possibly Creft was suffering from overwork from the two appointments she held on top of the demands of being an NJM party member, and, as a mother of a young child, she no doubt shared some of the concerns outlined in the letter from the Women's Committee.

The main criticism that can be leveled at the NJM is the weakness of the leadership's commitment to ending all the inequities that women suffered. By pointing a finger at imperialism and capitalism, the NJM leaders avoided confronting their own responsibility and complicity in the subordination of women. Nevertheless, on balance, despite the shortcomings of the leadership, the NJM revolution did much to improve the status of women in Grenada. Improvements in education provided women with more opportunities to learn and the National Women's Organization and Ministry of Women's Affairs provided the machinery to address women's issues and needs, giving women the means to articulate their grievances. The NWO stimulated women to begin the slow process of ending discrimination. My argument remains, however, that


58 Manning, 238.
women's attainment of full equality would be stifled unless an effort was made to change fundamental conceptions of gender relations among the leadership itself.

Incorporated into the polices improving educational opportunities, health care, and opportunities for women, the NJM placed much importance on cultural transformation. It stressed the value of Grenadian culture, encouraging the development of national unity; at the same time, it sought to impart the ideals of socialism. The NJM attacked cultural imperialism, by which it meant that the culture of the imperial powers, in Grenada's case of Britain and the United States, dominated the country even after the colonial power had officially 'pulled out.' Consequently, the PRG fostered the growth of various local art forms in Grenada including theater, poetry, and music. New theater groups were formed such as the Theatre Group of the National Youth Organization (TGNYO), Worker's Enlightenment, We Foute, and the GBSS Drama Group. Because these new groups were government sponsored, the content of their productions was supportive of the NJM. For example, two of the TGNYO's productions were named "De Bomb" and "De Cocoa." The first was built around the bomb attack in Grenada in June 1980. The second depicted injustices suffered by local cocoa producers at the hands of European and North American companies.

In addition to these overtly political forms of artistic expression, the government encouraged more traditional forms of culture. For instance, it
encouraged the Big Drum dance from Carriacou. According to Christine David, a school teacher, the Big Drum dance, with its roots in Africa, had developed on Carriacou as a result of the very high level of absenteeism among European landlords during slavery which, combined with the small size of the island, had enabled a close-knit Afro-Caribbean community to develop with strong African retentions which had been incorporated into this Grenadian dance. Although David had actively promoted the dance before the revolution, under the PRG the Big Drum dance was performed in schools and more opportunities were provided for it and other local dance forms to be practiced and studied. The Big Drum dancers, presumably with government funding, were able to attend the Caribbean arts festival, Carifesta, in Cuba and in Barbados. Grenada's National Performing Company, which consisted of dancers, singers, poets, drummers, and calypsonians, completed a one-month tour of the United States and Canada in December 1982. The PRG saw such cultural groups as ambassadors for Grenada, promoting the revolution abroad and encouraging tourism.61

Like other countries in the English speaking Caribbean, Grenada's annual carnival was an important event. As a result of the mass political mobilization initiated by the PRG, during the revolution the carnival took on much more overtly political overtones than in the years prior to the revolution. Although calypsoes had traditionally been a form of social and political commentary, under the revolution political themes prospered. In the 1983 carnival the more serious calypsoes focused on three main themes: "patriotism,

the struggle between rich and poor and solidarity with the struggling African people," with titles such as "Voice of the Oppressed," "Bourgeoisie Policy" and "Condemn South Africa." It is not clear whether or not there were calypsoes critical of the government, but given the PRG's actions toward the press, strong criticism most likely would not have been tolerated. Calypsonians were therefore discouraged from attacking the government. In any case, the PRG's encouragement of this form of expression probably meant that calypsonians were inclined to support the government. Additionally, an article in the Free West Indian in 1981 noted that since the 1980 carnival the costume bands had gone back to original themes that were more political and satirical. In the years leading up to the revolution, according to the article, the bands' themes had become orientied increasingly towards more frivolous sexual themes depicting "vice and immorality."  

Poetry seems to have flourished under the NJM with many people expressing themselves through Creole words. Poetry was printed regularly in the Free West Indian and was integrated into mass activities, becoming a regular feature of rallies, radio, and zonal and parish worker's councils. For example, at a worker's parish council meeting in August 1981, Chris de Riggs recited two of his poems "Jookootoo I" and "Mercenaries," the latter inspired by United States military maneuvers in the region.  

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63 Chris Searle, Grenada: The Struggle Against Destabilization, 93; Is freedom we making, The New Democracy in Grenada (St. George's, Grenada: Government Information Services, 1981), 4-8. Jookootoo I is "a simpleton, poor, unschooled and unsophisticated e.g. A slave or agricultural labourer," 92.
As part of its program to foster cultural development, facilitate the spread of socialist values among the population, and strengthen its support among young Grenadians, the NJM sought to build the National Youth Organization. Besides cultural activities, the NYO was involved in sports and community projects, such as repairing school buildings. But it is evident that as late as 1981 that the NYO lacked sufficiently qualified leaders, reportedly because most of its former leaders had moved on into other political activities, and 200 NYO members had been sent to study abroad.\(^6\) In the extraordinary meeting of the Central Committee in September 1983, Tan Bartholomew accused the party of "bleeding the youth movement" because its best members were "pulled out at a time when the youth movement is in problems." He presumably meant that they were sent overseas to fill the scholarships that the NJM was offered or were moved on to perform other political tasks. He complained that leading party members had discredited the youth movement by calling the NYO "Not yet organize (sic)."\(^6\) In June 1982 the CC had described the NYO as "the worse area of mass work in the Party" and claimed that "bourgeois forces [were] reorganising their youth arm - religious, scouts, cubs, etc." The NJM feared that the weakness of the National Youth Organization would facilitate the organization of youth by the churches, particularly the Anglican and Catholic churches, and thus the churches might gain more influence over the youth than the PRG.\(^6\)

\(^6\) "Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee NJM, 14-16 September, 1983," Grenada Documents, 12 - 7.
\(^6\) "Minutes of the Central Committee Meeting, on Saturday, 26th June, 1982; "Analysis of the Church in Grenada," Grenada Documents, 5 - 4-5.
Although most church groups in Grenada approved initially of the NJM's seizure of power, the relationship between the NJM and the churches soon became strained, as the government viewed the church as a possible threat to the revolution. The main religious groups in Grenada were the Roman Catholic church, the Anglican church, the Methodists, Presbyterians, and the Seventh Day Adventists. The Roman Catholic church was the most powerful religious organization in Grenada, claiming 70,000 baptized members—over 70 percent of Grenadians. In 1974, under Gairy, Patrick Webster, the Bishop of Grenada, was transferred from the island allegedly because he had demanded an inquiry into the events of 'Bloody Sunday.' Webster was replaced by a more conservative Bishop, Sydney Charles.67 Although the Anglican church, traditionally the church of the elite, was less influential than the Catholic church it was still perceived by the PRG as a "major threat to the revolution." Indeed, available evidence supports the PRG's belief that there was no clear "left" religion in Grenada, and contended that all church leaders were "to different degrees hostile to the revolution."68

In 1981 Bishop addressed the Christian Peace Conference held in Grenada. He tried to show that the goals of Christianity and the revolution were linked in their fight for social justice, arguing that the role of the church was to "complement the work of the revolutionary government." The NJM documents,

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however, reveal that the government was deeply suspicious of the churches, whose activities it closely monitored.69

A report written in July 1983 reveals how the NJM perceived the church as a threat at different stages of the revolution.70 During the years 1980 and 1981 the churches aggravated the PRG by persisting in calling for elections71 to be held and questioning the PRG's policy toward political detainees. The NJM saw this as an attempt to destabilize the revolution rather than as the genuine moral concern of the church. As the Marxist Leninist direction of the revolution became clearer, the Catholic church seems to have grown increasingly hostile. In fact in late 1979 the PRG closed down the church's newspaper the *Catholic Standard*, apparently because of its call for elections and its criticism of the government actions, which the PRG felt to be "tantamount to destabilizing."72 The Catholic church had begun to print pamphlets about Marxism, reportedly "aimed at showing that Communism is atheistic and should be feared." Essentially, the PRG saw the pamphlets as trying to undermine its authority by attacking Marxist Leninist ideology.73 In 1982 Bishop Charles was

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69 For instance, in 1982 a Cuban delegation came to Grenada to analyze the religious situation and offer the NJM advice on dealing with the churches. See "Report of the Delegation sent to Grenada by the America Department with the Aim of Starting the Gathering of Sources for the Characterization of the Religious Situation in the Country, and the Contacts for Further Cooperation Between the PCC and the NJM Regarding the Question," *Grenada Documents*, 2 - 1-35.

70 "Analysis of the Church in Grenada, 12th July, 1983" *Grenada Documents*, 5 -1-5.

71 The PRG's approach to elections and to political detainees has been discussed in chapter two.

72 *The Grenada Democratic Movement: Fact Sheet*, issued June, 8, 1983. The Grenada Democratic Movement had been formed in New York in May 1983. A later attempt by the Catholic Church to circulate its newspaper, The *Catholic Focus*, which it had printed in Trinidad and Tobago, was also prohibited by the PRG. *Caribbean Contact*, July 1981.

alleged to have begun "to push the line that the Church will face its biggest "Challenge" in 1983," inferring that the Church felt itself to be threatened by the revolution. Consequently, the Catholic church adopted a new strategy to reorganize the Catholic Youth "under the the direct control of the Bishop." It imported 4,365 copies of the Jerusalem Bible, which made the message of the bible more easily accessible, apparently because it was written more in the form of a novel. That same year the Archdeacon of the Anglican church, according to the NJM document, "spoke of the need to safeguard the right to worship and acted in a way that would make anyone feel that this right was about to be taken away." At this point there seems insufficient evidence to suggest that the government had plans to curtail the churches. For its part the PRG offended all the churches by deporting Methodist Minister Ledson for refusing to officiate at the burial of a NJM "comrade," Demo Grant.

In 1983 the PRG claimed there had been "a frenzied drive" by the non traditional churches, such as the Jehovah's Witnesses, to increase their membership. At the same time it believed that the "organization of the youths [by the Catholic church] continue[d] at an accelerated rate, with all ages included in this drive." Furthermore, the Anglican church was beginning to reorganize its youth groups after a three year lapse. Because of the weakness of its mass organizations, and what it felt to be the increasing hostility of the Catholic church, the PRG deemed the situation "very serious." As a result, it recommended a series of measures to counter the church's influence. These

74 "Analysis of the Church in Grenada, 12th July, 1983" Grenada Documents, 5-2-3. The "anti-PRG and anti-Revolution" sermons of Archdeacon Huggins were discussed at a Political Bureau meeting in January 1983. Someone close to the Archdeacon was to be told about the matter who would then speak to the Archdeacon, which seems a reasonable approach to the problem. "Minutes of the Political Bureau Meeting, Wednesday 5th January, 1983," Grenada Documents, 88-3.
included the removal of "deeply religious" head teachers from the primary schools," providing more political education for both students and teachers, and the building up of the mass organizations. The measures called for further dialogue with "West Indian Priests, Nuns and Brothers," (the majority of Catholic priests, sixteen out of twenty two, were not West Indian, coming from England, Ireland, and the United States.) and the promotion of contacts with churches from Nicaragua and Latin America who espoused the "theology of liberation and . . . the idea of a church committed to Revolutionary positions." In an attempt to counter the more reactionary elements of the Catholic church, the PRG wished to strengthen cooperation with church members sympathetic to the revolution.

Interestingly, the Papal Nuncio met with Maurice Bishop on his visit to Grenada in September 1982. Bishop, who had been raised as a Catholic, reported that the meeting was "very warm;" they discussed a number of things with respect to the church and the government. Bishop complained that "the attitude [of Bishop Charles] is generally one of being another Prime Minister."

The Papal Nuncio proposed that a meeting should be arranged with all the priests and Bishop Charles "in which the laws are all laid down;" he reportedly said that "there are some priests/nuns that the PRG can check sometimes." Furthermore, he reportedly stated that "what the church wanted was spiritual freedom," and that the church and state could most likely cooperate in the area of education.

The PRG was to appoint an ambassador to the Vatican. It

75 "Analysis of the Church in Grenada, 12th July, 1983" Grenada Documents, 5 -3-5
76 "Minutes of the Political Bureau Meeting, On Wednesday, 22nd September, 1982," Grenada Documents, 81 - 1-2. In this regard, in January 1983 the PRG was to approach church leaders regarding the use of the churches as CPE centers. "Minutes of the Political Bureau Meeting, Wednesday 12th January, 1983," Grenada Documents, 89 - 2 and 4.
seems a remarkably amicable meeting to have taken place between a Marxist Leninist leader and a member of the Vatican. Either Bishop overstated the receptiveness of the Papal Nuncio or more likely, both men were capable diplomats. However, the document discussed above, written in 1983, shows that the Papal Nuncio's visit did not ease the tension between the PRG and the Catholic church.

Despite the close monitoring of the churches and the obvious antagonism between orthodox Marxist Leninism, which the NJM leadership espoused, and Christianity, the PRG seems on the whole to have taken a conciliatory approach to the church. A major obstacle seems to have been the hostility of Bishop Charles. By offering an alternative ideology, the church in Grenada did present a challenge to the revolution. Furthermore, because appointment of the religious hierarchy was out of the PRG's control, priests and other religious ministers were not really answerable to the government, although the PRG could make life difficult for them. Doubtless the NJM would have liked to weaken religious belief among the population but, given the strength of Christian belief in Grenada, from a practical viewpoint it had little choice but to look for ways to incorporate religion into the revolution, where it might be controlled more safely.\textsuperscript{77}

In the other areas discussed in this chapter the PRG did implement some genuine improvements. Access to education and health care was made possible for people for whom the costs had previously been prohibitive, and local cultural activities seem to have flourished-- albeit with political overtones.

\textsuperscript{77} The NJM received advice from Cuba concerning the relationship between the church and state. The Catholic church in Cuba, having passed through various stages including out right confrontation with the Cuban government, had in 1979 reached a new stage of dialogue. See, Raul Gomez Treto, \textit{The Church and Socialism in Cuba}, New York: Orbis Books, 1988.
The PRG does seem to have been very successful in developing national unity and mobilizing the population behind the revolution, which is demonstrated in its volunteer programs to repair schools, undertake community work in villages, and participate in the literacy program.\textsuperscript{78} The position of women, although not changing as much as the PRG promised, did improve considerably.

\textsuperscript{78} See, for example, article by Grenadian journalist Alister Hughes in \textit{The Vincentian}, March 28, 1980.
Conclusion

The Grenada revolution has a mixed record which cannot be seen as separated from the rest of Grenada’s history but must instead be viewed as part of a continuum. Having examined the political, economic, and social policies initiated during the four and a half years of the People’s Revolutionary Government, some interesting parallels can be drawn between the Gairy years discussed in the first chapter and the revolution. Indeed, these parallels in some cases extend back to the years of colonialism and to the complexities of the society that arose out of a background of slavery.

As was noted in chapter one, in the colonial period Grenada had been ruled predominantly by whites, joined gradually by people of mixed race. Gairy seemed to represent a break with this tradition and had risen to power as the hero of the black masses. Under his regime more black people were able to gain access to the privileged elite, and the leadership darkened over time. Once in power, however, Gairy’s policies served more to entrench the new hierarchy in Grenada than to undertake a fundamental challenge to the class/color hierarchy that remained very much in existence. Although Black Power was a major influence in elevating the status of black people, class relations—complicated by race—remained intact, and light skin either signified middle class origins or gave easier access to upward mobility. The New Jewel Movement believed that Marxism Leninism provided the means to rectify these inequities, but this ideology did not take into consideration the complexities of Grenada’s social structure, precisely because it was not designed for a twentieth-century multi-cultural society.
Because of the entrenched race/class hierarchy, attempts to create a more just society as described in the 1973 NJM Manifesto fell short. Although Gairy had claimed that his purpose was to give voice to the impoverished rural workers, he had failed to do so and the maintenance and extension of his own power became his sole aim. Likewise, a major aim of the revolution was for it to be a 'people's revolution' where, following the centuries of exploitation, the 'masses' would at last take power and the country would be run to serve their interests rather than a small privileged elite. The NJM asserted that power should come from the majority and should filter up to the leadership who would carry out the people's wishes. But it is questionable just how far the leadership was ready to listen to the needs of the majority--in practice Central Committee members aimed to instill their ideology from the top down.

The inability of leaders to allow a democratic system to arise reflects the authoritarianism inherent in the colonial system and its aftermath. In a 1979 address Bishop criticized the education system in Grenada because it had "taught us to accept attitudes of authoritarian rule, a hierarchical structure that says that the people do not have any right to participate, do not have any right to have their voices heard." If colonial rule and Gairyism are obvious examples of authoritarianism, it seems that rather than fundamentally altering these attitudes, the NJM, in effect, had imbued them. During the revolution, power became increasingly coveted by a small group who claimed to speak for the masses but in reality had lost touch with them and instead were handing down their own decisions made behind closed doors.

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There is, nevertheless, a clear and important difference between the policies of the colonial government, Gairy and the NJM. The latter at least expressed the desire to implement a more just society, to take power away from the capitalist class, and to provide a better standard of living for the majority of Grenadians. Their greatest failure, however, was that they did not believe in the value of what the masses had to say. The way the concerns of women party members were handled, for instance, demonstrates the narrowing of the decision-making process to a small elite, the Central Committee, rather than the holding of open forums to allow these problems to be discussed by the full party membership, and ultimately the population in general. Indeed, had the 'masses' been involved in decision making processes the inside debacle over joint leadership that resulted in the death of Maurice Bishop and his close supporters might not have happened. Had the matter been put to the people, without question they would have chosen Bishop as their leader.

That is not to say that the NJM leadership did not consult the people it claimed to speak for on many issues; clearly it did. The implementation of a system of village based institutions designed to filter the people's needs upwards, the innovative budget-making process, and the mass organizations

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2 The events leading to the death of Bishop have been well documented elsewhere. Many questions remain unanswered concerning the nature of the split between the Coard and Bishop factions. It is possible that with time further evidence will be uncovered to throw more light on these tragic events. See Tony Thorndike, Grenada: Politics, Economics and Society (London: Francis Pinter, 1985); Hugh O'Shaughnessy, Grenada: Revolution, Invasion, and Aftermath (London: Sphere Books, 1984); Marable Manning, African and Caribbean Politics: From Kwame Nkrumah to the Grenada Revolution (London: Verso, 1987). Regarding the split between Bishop and Coard, see Jorge Heine "The Hero and the Apparatchik: Charismatic Leadership, Political Management, and Crisis in Revolutionary Grenada," in Jorge Heine ed., A Revolution Aborted: The Lessons of Grenada (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1990). Heine's main argument is that "although ideology played a part in the final crisis of the revolution, the crisis itself cannot be understood without a grasp of the personalities and the particular leadership styles developed by Bishop and Coard and how they interacted in the final confrontation," 217.
undoubtedly gave people the chance to air their opinions, and to feel that their views actually mattered. However, although the NJM did seem to take into account people's views in the budget making process, for example, most of the suggestions adopted were already part of government policy. In another instance, the people had been the initiators of the public transport system. However, this was not against NJM policy; on the contrary, it had been mentioned in the NJM manifesto. Thus its implementation merely changed a government priority rather than represented a fundamental policy change.

Failure to accomplish the democracy outlined in the 1973 People's Manifesto also encompassed the retention of old prejudices. Contempt for the predominantly black rural agriculture workers from other groups in Grenadian society was an inheritance from slavery. Gairy strove to challenge this contempt by ensconcing himself in government, but once his presence was accepted he cared little for those who had been left behind.3 The meetings of the Political Bureau and Central Committee revealed that to a certain extent the NJM leadership also held the masses in the same contempt. This contempt was accompanied by a degree of authoritarian paternalism that had been inherent in the slave holding class, as well as in the colonial system whereby the British government saw itself as the trustee of its colonial territories. Gairy's speeches were imbued with paternalism exemplified in his name of "Uncle Gairy." This paternalism led to the emergence of hero figures, first the British Government with all its pomp and arrogance set itself up as a charismatic institution. Gairy

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3 A series of interviews conducted with elites in Grenada by A.W. Singham in 1962 revealed that of the 39 economic elites interviewed, 32 felt that "the introduction of adult suffrage had been a mistake," furthermore, 25 of these 32 "still advocated the return to a limited franchise based on literacy and educational qualifications. Not only were the masses castigated for illiteracy, they were said to be lacking in intelligence, gullible, [and] easily led." A.W. Singham, The Hero and the Crowd in a Colonial Polity (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1968), 195-196.
then stole much of this pomp, but, instead of professing loyalty to the Crown, declared himself to be the representative of God. Both Gairy and Bishop also evinced a degree of populism and had a great capacity to draw the crowd, using street demonstrations and mass rallies to demonstrate their support. Instead of being sent by royalty or the divine, Bishop based his legitimacy as the representative of the 'people.' Being young, attractive, and popular, his attraction was such that it undoubtedly aided the consolidation of the revolution.

The chronic mixture of paternalism and contempt in Grenadian politics is evident in the NJM leadership. Members believed that the working people were not yet sufficiently politically aware to make valid judgements on Grenada's needs. Although there were Central Committee members such as Fitzroy Bain who had emerged from the working class as leaders of the working class, most of the leadership of the NJM came from the middle class. Moreover, the majority of the leadership had been educated abroad and had themselves imbued a certain amount of arrogance concerning the superiority of their knowledge. While challenging the concept of cultural imperialism, they themselves were not free from an overreliance on outside knowledge and models. The tenacity with which members of the Central Committee insisted on applying orthodox Marxist-Leninist doctrines to the Grenada situation—even though implemented gradually through following the path of socialist orientation—displays their inflexibility in developing and adapting their ideology to suit Grenadian conditions.

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4 But even of those Central Committee members of working class origins, most had received secondary school education, which, in the Grenadian context, was a move toward the middle class. See, for example, EPICA Task Force, Grenada: The Peaceful Revolution (Washington DC, 1982), 52.
At the same time that the ideology of Marxism Leninism was upheld rigidly, the leadership proved to be more adaptable when faced with the reality of Grenada's economic situation. Consequently, the NJM's approach to the economy was moderate and despite talk of, for instance, a "new tourism," the NJM's overall economic policies differed little from those of Gairy, or for that matter from the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean. The sources of financial aid changed, shifting Grenada's dependence to Cuba and, to a lesser extent, the Soviet Bloc, but government continued to depend on international bodies, including the European Economic Community. In 1983 the NJM had turned to the IMF for a loan. Bernard Coard was a capable economist, and, as Minister of Finance, his efficient management of the economy differed markedly from the inefficiency of the Gairy government's, earning the respect of such conservative bodies as the World Bank. But it did not need a revolution to achieve this. Grenada both before and after the revolution remained dependent on the export of cocoa, nutmegs, and bananas, and on traditional tourism.

As part of the tendency toward authoritarianism/paternalism, striking parallels can be seen in the handling of the freedom of the press by the colonial government, Gairy, and the NJM. While none of these three groups sought to ban all dissident publications, each one chose to ban the publications that were felt most closely to threaten government authority. The colonial government had at various stages raised the possibility of banning subversive literature. In the 1920s it had passed the Seditious Publications Bill to stop the dissemination of Marcus Garvey's literature; after the disturbances in the 1950s the legislature tabled, but did not pass, the Importation of Publications
Ordinance, aimed at the control of communist literature. Gairy had passed the
Newspaper Amendment Act of 1975 in order to stop the circulation of the NJM
newspaper, and the NJM, although heavily critical of Gairy's actions, did the
same to its opponents by the closure of the Torchlight, the Catholic Standard,
and the Grenada Voice. Publishing of new newspapers was prevented
by the Newspaper (Publications) Law of June 1981, demonstrating that the PRG
was determined to control the press.

In another similarity, Grenadian governments or dominant elites tended
to look for scapegoats rather than address problems. In the 1950s the planter
class had called the strikes for improved working conditions led by Gairy a "well
guided Communist plot," failing to recognize the appalling conditions which
gave rise to the disturbances. Gairy in turn justified the repression he
unleashed in terms of anti-communism. The NJM for its part was consumed
with the fear of destabilization by imperialist forces. In all cases the leadership	
tended to blame outside forces for its troubles rather than looking inward to find	
the real source of discontent.

The NJM's social programs were the one area where the revolution
seemed to effect genuine changes and broke free of Grenadian history.
Access to education expanded greatly and, despite its shortcomings, the adult
literacy programs benefitted those who participated. The expansion of primary
health care, and the establishment of free medical services undeniably helped
those who could not previously afford medical attention. Although criticism has

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5 Kai P. Schoenhals and Richard A. Melanson, Revolution and Intervention in Grenada: The New
Jewel Movement, the United States, and the Caribbean (Boulder and London: Westview Press,
1985), 9; George Brizan, Grenada, Island of Conflict: From Amerindians to People's Revolution
6 Brizan, 248, Thorndike, 39.
been made of the NJM's attempts to improve the quality of women's lives, changes were made, and the attention focused on the need to integrate women into development programs most certainly laid the foundation for women themselves to push for change.\textsuperscript{7} While many of the gains of the revolution might have been lost since the revolution's end, an awareness of the merits of Grenada's own culture must surely survive, and in this area alone it is possible to argue that the PRG accelerated a break with the past. However, arguably these achievements could have taken place under a social democracy. It did not necessarily need a revolution aimed at the eventual implementation of a Marxist Leninist state to introduce these improvements and changes.

The four and a half years of the Grenadian revolution provide lessons that are extremely important in the formulation of development strategies for the future, not only for Grenada but for the Caribbean area as a whole. This thesis has only begun to address some of the many issues that the revolution raised. More discussion is needed, for instance, regarding democratic alternatives to Westminster style elections. How far is it possible to implement genuine 'people's democracy' as the NJM outlined in its 1973 manifesto, but failed to practice fully once in power? The implosion of the NJM revolution does not in itself represent the failure of 'people's power' because by 1983 the NJM had strayed far from the path of democracy. It is hoped that as more researchers delve into the wealth of documents seized during the American invasion, as well as those that will come to light in Grenada itself, some of the themes touched upon here will be expanded upon and discussed more fully. Future

\textsuperscript{7} A full analysis of the participation of women in the Grenada revolution, improvements in their living conditions, their economic achievements, and changing perceptions of gender roles has not yet been undertaken.
policy makers should abide by the lessons learnt from the Grenada revolution. The recurring problems of class, race, and gender need to be faced. Only then might a more just and equal society emerge which will be able to tolerate internal criticism, a genuine free press, as well as equal opportunities to education and access to medical care, and the end of discrimination on grounds of race or gender.
Postscript

Following divisions within the Central Committee, ostensibly over Bishop's refusal to agree to a Central Committee proposal that he and Bernard Coard should share joint leadership, Bishop was placed under house arrest on October 12, 1983. On Wednesday, October 19, 1983, while a crowd estimated at around 25,000 Grenadians waited in the market place for Bishop to speak, 5000 demonstrators led by Unison Whiteman and Fitzroy Bain marched to the Prime Minister's residence to release their popular leader. The angry crowd chanting "we want we leader" received little resistance from the soldiers guarding Bishop's house. Carrying Bishop shoulder high, the crowd then marched to Fort Rupert, the People’s Revolutionary Army headquarters, supposedly for Bishop to address the nation and restore his leadership. The PRA soldiers in the garrison purportedly joined the side of the demonstrators. Shortly thereafter, three armored personnel carriers said to have been despatched under the orders of Coard, arrived at the fort. The soldiers, no longer loyal to the people but to those on the Central Committee who opposed Bishop's leadership, opened fire on the crowd killing and wounding an unknown number of people. The events that followed are somewhat unclear, but the most plausible account is that Bishop and his close supporters surrendered to the soldiers who then, under orders from the leadership opposing Bishop, shot and killed in cold blood Maurice Bishop, Unison Whiteman, Fitzroy Bain, Norris Bain, Jacqueline Creft, and Vincent Noel.¹

Following the brutal murders, the Revolutionary Military Council (RMC) was set up and took power in Grenada. The death of Bishop and his close associates had shocked deeply the Grenadian people. Moreover, the RMC's first action was to announce a 72 hour curfew stating that "anyone violating this curfew will be shot on sight." The ramifications of such a curfew must be firmly understood. in the context of Grenada's predominantly agricultural society which meant that people were unable to tend their crops and livestock. Grenada was in a state of siege.

It must be remembered that the PRG had maintained the Governor General. Following the death of the popular Prime Minister, the Governor General, who had taken a backseat during the revolution, came to the fore. Apparently, it was he who requested, after much deliberation, that the United States and Caribbean Community should send in a rescue mission.

On October 25, 1983 Washington launched operation "Urgent Fury." The operation involved actively 6,000 US marines and paratroopers, with many more in reserve. Although not involved in the fighting, 400 paramilitary personnel from six Caribbean States were part of the invasion force. The United States invasion was resisted by Cuban construction workers and members of the Peoples' Revolutionary Army and Militia. The fierce fighting resulted in the death of forty-five Grenadians (including twenty-four civilians), twenty-four Cubans, and eighteen US personnel, while reportedly 280 Grenadians were wounded along with 57 Cubans and 113 Americans.²

Undoubtedly the average Grenadian welcomed the invading forces, but it is arguable that given the desperation of their situation, they would have welcomed anyone who could overthrow the unpopular RMC.

The motives of the United States, however, must also be seen in perspective. The Reagan administration did not act out of compassion for the plight of Grenadians but rather took the opportunity to quash the Marxist Leninist regime that had been a thorn in its side from its onset. Even though this was the first invasion of a Commonwealth country in the region, the size of the operation and the eagerness of the United States to intervene must be considered in view of the zeal with which Washington has used its military strength to intervene in countries that it considers in its backyard.

Bishop’s wife, Angela Bishop, felt Bishop himself “would not have welcomed the invasion under any circumstances”, even given the desperate events that had made the Governor General endorse it. The use of military force in the region by the United States to relieve a deadlocked situation should be carefully balanced against the repercussions of that action in the region as a whole, ever fearful and resentful of US military power. In the wider context of US policy towards the Caribbean and Central America, the US invasion cannot be condoned. It is doubtful that the RMC could have survived with Bishop gone and the loss of support and outright enragement of the population. It is quite possible that if the US had not invaded the people would have taken justice into their own hands and themselves dealt with Bishop’s murderers.

The protracted trial of Bernard Coard, Phyllis Coard and fourteen others responsible for the murders was not resolved until December 1986, when the

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4 Sunday Sun, November 13, 1983.
Coards and twelve others were found guilty and sentenced to hang. There followed a series of appeals that were all dismissed by the Appeal Court Judges. The decision was made public in July 1991. In August 1991 those condemned to death had their death sentences commuted to life imprisonment by Sir Paul Scoon, Governor General of Grenada.5

After the defeat of the Revolutionary Military Council, the Governor General appointed an advisory council, to help him govern the country and prepare for elections. Elections were finally held in December 1984. The main parties that participated in the elections were Gairy's Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM), led by George Louison and Kendrick Radix, and the New National Party (NNP). The New National Party, had come into existence in August 1984 and was a coalition backed by the United States.6 It was a three party alliance of the Grenada National Party (GNP), the Grenada Democratic Movement (GDM) and the National Democratic Party (NDP). The NNP won the election receiving 58 percent of the vote. The Gulp won 36 percent and the MPBM only 5 percent. The leader of the NNP, and therefore the new Prime Minister, was Herbert Blaize, an old rival of Gairy's, who had been out of office for seventeen years and was by this time old and infirm. Grenadian history had come full circle. The election indicated the reestablishment of the Westminster model of

5 Caribbean Contact, July/August 1991.
6 Reagan admitted that the Republican party and the United States' private sector had allocated $250,000 to the New National Party, and the NNP also received financial and technical assistance from the National Endowment for Democracy. Furthermore, many of the youths who had been previously Bishop's greatest supporters, had refused to register to vote, partly due, according to Thorndike, to "a deep disillusionment with all politicians," after the events leading to the fall of the revolution and subsequent intervention, and also because they objected to a new ruling that a compulsory photo had to be taken at the poll. The above factors may in part have contributed to the low vote received by the MBPM. Thorndike, Grenada: Politics, Economics and Society, (London: Francis Pinter, 1985), 172, 175.
parliamentary democracy in the island. With this, the NJM's aim to implement an alternative model of democracy, as outlined in the NJM Manifesto, never reached fruition.
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