

***The October 1983***

***Grenada Tragedy:***

***Whose Struggle***

***For Power?***

**Copyright © Committee To Free The Grenada 17, 1985 and 2002**

The names of NJM Party members quoted in this booklet from the minutes of various party meetings (which documents are on public display in Washington D.C.) have not been changed. In other words, all such names are authentic. However, interviews with rank and file NJM party members and with civil servants and other public workers who witnessed various of the events described herein were altered in the original booklet to protect these persons from job and other forms of victimisation and harassment. Because of the victimisation of some of these people whose involvement in the Process became known during the last two years (2000-2002), it has been decided to maintain, for the immediate future, the confidentiality of the remainder of these individuals.

## Preface

This booklet was written and published in the last quarter of 1985 by a group calling itself 'Grenadians for the Truth about October 83'. These are the reasons they gave, at that time, for researching the facts as to what really happened, and publishing this booklet with their findings:

**'Like all Grenadians, we have deliberately been kept in ignorance as to the true and full facts surrounding the October '83 crisis in our country which was immediately followed by its invasion by the United States. The investigation into the death of Prime Minister Maurice Bishop was carried out by an entirely foreign police force; no Grenadian police were allowed to take part. The Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder against former Government Ministers and soldiers of the Revolution was held in a tiny court within the Prison compound, surrounded by scores of heavily armed foreign soldiers.**

**'Over the past two years, however, many questions have confronted us as Grenadian citizens. Firstly, we continually asked ourselves: how could such an appalling tragedy have happened? How could a leadership so strongly untied, be split overnight? We recalled the many public rallies where members of the People's Revolutionary Government hugged each other publicly, the strong support which in practice they gave to each other in pursuing the programmes of the Revolution which brought such progress to our country and such benefits to our people; and we asked ourselves, how could it happen? Is there some explanation beyond what we have been told by the U.S., The New National Party (NNP) now in power, and the MBPM, none of whom we trust anyway?**

**'Then again, those of us who are not members of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) asked ourselves: why, if the imprisoned leaders of the Party are the ones responsible for the whole crisis and tragedy, why have the members of the NJM Party refused to support former NJM leaders Kenrick Radix and George Louison and their Party, the MBPM? For it is clear to us that, of a party of more than five hundred members, no more than fifteen (15) have left the NJM and joined the MBPM.**

**'Then, there are contradictions between the U.S. propaganda and certain facts which we know. Most obviously, if the crowd of civilians which stormed Fort Rupert Army Headquarters on 19<sup>th</sup> October 1983 was an entirely innocent, unarmed crowd, then how is it that two of the twenty four soldiers sent to restore order there were killed<sup>1</sup>, and several others wounded, including all those on the first armoured car, except for the driver? Did they shoot themselves? And if elements in the crowd supporting the Prime Minister were indeed armed, who armed them, and why is it so important to the U.S. that this fact should be concealed?**

**Again, why won't the Government of Grenada publish the names and true numbers of those killed on October 19<sup>th</sup>? The Revolutionary leaders at the time stated 17; the U.S. propaganda says scores or hundreds were killed. Grenada is a tiny island; it is certainly possible to discover the truth. Why does the U.S. and the Blaize NNP Government so badly wish to conceal the truth? Is it because they need these 'hundreds killed' to justify their invasion?'**

As can be appreciated, most Grenadians and Caribbean people generally, not to mention the rest of the world, are still ignorant of the answers to the above and other related questions, even 19 years after these tragic events occurred. This booklet posed and sought to answer three burning questions [outlined in the *Introduction*]; in the process it also attempted to answer several of the above questions. Unfortunately, the publication was not widely distributed at that time.

Much has happened over the seventeen years since this booklet was first published. There has been growing reflection on the Revolution and its meaning by Grenadians of all political backgrounds. Even many who were hostile have publicly acknowledged, in recent times, its many positive dimensions. Even the late Eric Matthew Gairy, at the first big rally of his supporters following his return to Grenada, praised the programmes of the Revolution even as he denounced its leaders for overthrowing him. And, in his last major speech before senility and then death set in, he boasted that he, not 'Bishop and the others', was 'the first Grenadian Revolutionary' and the first advocate of 'Black Power'. Meanwhile, the imprisoned (Grenada 17) revolutionaries have publicly conceded the Revolution's negative aspects, and their own mistakes in the Process. Moreover, the Grenada 17 members have gone on record as forgiving those who libelled and slandered them, beaten and tortured them, gave false testimony and framed them for crimes which they did not commit.

The re-publication of this booklet at this time is not intended to reopen old wounds or vilify any Grenadian. Despite its style and language being clearly that of the period in which it was written, we believe that it will be an important contribution to the debate on the Revolution, and in particular on the course and causes of the crisis and tragedy which befell the Process and the country in October 1983. This is because it examines and exposes many critical FACTS about the crisis which have been deliberately obscured from the public at large – Grenadians, West Indians in general, and the world as a whole. This booklet reveals *what* these facts are, *who* has hidden them from the public, *and why*.

There is, however, one matter which we need to draw to today's (2002's) readers' attention, regarding this booklet's explanation of the causes and unfolding of the party and national crisis and tragedy of October 1983: Cuba's role in those events is totally absent from this analysis. What is contained in this booklet is clearly truthful; backed as it is by well over two hundred (200) references to documentary evidence (e.g., Minutes of NJM meetings, US government documents, court records, etc) and detailed personal interviews with participants in the events. It misses, however, one further and decisive ingredient in getting *the full picture* of what really happened: Cuba's role in the October 1983 events.

Fortunately, there is a document which can fill that vital gap. It is in the form of a personal letter which John ‘Chalky’ Ventour, a member of NJM’s Political Bureau and Central Committee, wrote to a friend many years ago, in strict confidence. This confidentiality was maintained for several years, until a US scholar got hold of a copy and published it on the Internet. [The NJM leaders had taken a conscious decision not to reveal publicly Cuba’s role in the crisis and tragedy. These reasons are themselves outlined in Ventour’s letter.] Given that this originally private letter is now a widely published document, available on the Internet, it makes no sense to conceal its existence to readers of this highly revealing booklet. The study of this booklet, combined with reading Ventour’s letter on the Internet, will give Grenadians, Caribbean people and interested persons world-wide a more comprehensive picture of what really transpired in October 1983, and the reasons for same. We hope you find it useful in answering many, if not of course all, of the many questions you may have on your mind, and for quite some time now.

*‘Committee To Free The Grenada 17 (2002)’*

## **Table of Contents**

## Introduction

The October United States invasion of Grenada, besides bringing about the overthrow of the four and a half year old Grenada Revolution, also signalled the launching of a massive propaganda campaign against the New Jewel Movement – the Party which made and led the Revolution – against the Revolution’s achievements, and against individual leaders of the party, most of whom are still in prison awaiting trial on charges relating to the immensely tragic events of October 19<sup>th</sup>, 1983 which led to the death of the popular leader of the Revolution, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop.

A look back at the regional Caribbean Press will reveal that the psychological warfare battalion of the U.S. military force which invaded Grenada actually initiated its propaganda on October 14-15, several days before the death of P.M. Bishop. ‘U.S. Spokesmen’, operating from their Barbados Embassy nearly 100 miles away from Grenada and daily supported by certain local elements, began feeding into the already traditionally hostile media confident assertions concerning a ‘power struggle’ taking place between ‘hard-line leftists’ led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard and ‘Moderates’ led by Prime Minister Maurice Bishop. Following P.M. Bishop’s death, that media campaign was pursued with a conviction and intensity which left no room for doubt even in the minds of many honest journalists, academics and ordinary Caribbean citizens that this ‘power struggle’ and ‘conspiracy’ identified by the U.S. was the cause of the death of P.M. Bishop and other P.R.G. members.

It is noticeable that the propaganda campaign initiated by the U.S. invaders has maintained certain central themes, constantly repeated in hundreds of publications, often without the slightest shred of factual evidence to support their assertions; in other cases the so-called ‘facts’ quoted are actually lies, as will be demonstrated.

This paper examines the authentic minutes of NJM meetings over the 2½ year period, April 1981-October, 1983, and other NJM documents; as well as statements made in interviews with a number of NJM Party Members who lived through the crisis of 1983; and, whose relevant evidence presented (by the prosecution) at the 1984 preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder against 20 Government Ministers, Party Leaders and soldiers of the Grenada Revolution. It also examines a recent State Department publication, in which U.S. analysts commented on certain NJM and PRG documents seized by the invaders.

In so doing, the paper presents to the public new information which we believe confronts and exposes the falsity of three fundamental positions taken by the Government of the United States and repeated *ad nauseam* in most of the Caribbean media up to now.

The paper examines three statements of the U.S.:

- (1) That there was an ideological split within the leadership of the New Jewel Movement;
- (2) That there was no real crisis in the Party and Revolution; that the crisis was simply the result of a personal power struggle; and
- (3) That there was a conspiracy by a small clique in the leadership, aimed at removing Prime Minister Maurice Bishop and replacing him with Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard.

We believe that the actual documents of the NJM Party, which copiously record the real happenings within the Party as they occurred, reveal that these three statements by the U.S. Government, frequently repeated over the past two years, are deliberate falsifications, deliberate lies. That the American Government is fully conscious that these statements are lies, is, we believe, also clear from the statements of its own State Department analysts.

.....

## U.S. LIE NO. 1

There were serious ideological conflicts within the NJM leadership. There were two factions: one for building communism immediately; and one for a more gradual approach, or for not going so far. One for developing better relations with the U.S. and the other totally opposed to any such relations. One for restoring constitutional rule; and the other opposed to that. One 'moderate faction' led by Maurice Bishop; the 'hard-line' 'leftist' 'radical faction' led by Bernard Coard.

This was the cause, or part of the cause of the October '83 crisis, says the U.S. inspired propaganda campaign.

## THE TRUTH

1. All NJM documents indicate that there was *ideological unity* at the level of the leadership of the Party. That there were no conflicts on any fundamental issues or policies relating to the objectives of the Revolution, how these objective were to be achieved, or the rate at which they were to be pursued.
2. We could not find a single party document over the period 1979-1983 that shows any fundamental differences, whether on the issue of the economy, political organisation, foreign policy or national defence.
3. The NJM's major internal policy document, its analysis of the Revolution and the Way Forward for the Revolution, is contained in a document entitled, *Line of March for the Party* which was presented to the Party on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 1982 by the Party Leader, Brother Maurice Bishop. This document was discussed fully, and agreed to by the entire Party Leadership, at a Central Committee Meeting on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1982.

The *Line of March* document states clearly that the ultimate aim was to build socialism in Grenada, but it also points out that a long process of development along the 'Non-capitalist path', or more precisely 'the path of Socialist orientation' was first necessary.

Brother Maurice Bishop, in his presentation of the line of march for the Party and Revolution at a Party General Meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup> 1982 said that:

‘The Grenada Revolution is a National-democratic, anti-imperialist Revolution... under the leadership and with the dominant role being played by the working people... we cannot proceed straight to socialism but must first pass through a stage where we lay the basis, where we create the conditions.... for the building of socialism.... What we are speaking about now (the present state of the Revolution) is *Socialist orientation*.<sup>2</sup>

He went on to say that:

‘the national-democratic anti-imperialist Revolution is national because it arose from a national liberation struggle....Because it involves a vast majority of the people.... it is democratic because it aims to give or restore freedoms (lost during the Gairy period) to the majority of the people.... To readily expand democracy and the democratic participation of the poor and working people...(it) is also anti-imperialist because it is opposed to foreign domination and the exploitation of our country and its resources by the (foreign, especially U.S.) transnational corporations.’<sup>3</sup>

He went on to explain that Grenada does not have a socialist revolution because ‘only the working class can build socialism’,<sup>4</sup> and that because of the low level of development of Grenada after centuries of colonialism ‘our working class is too small and too politically underdeveloped’.<sup>5</sup> The basis for socialism, he stated, must be created, over time, through the building of the economy and the political and academic development of the working class, to enable it to play a stronger and stronger role in the Revolution.

On the question of the country’s economy, he states that:

‘Our objective as Marxist-Leninists must in the first instance be to construct socialism as rapidly but scientifically as possible...’<sup>6</sup>

however he stated:

‘we cannot opt for a total state sector model as the state does not have the necessary material or financial resources, management and skills resources, access to markets, international contacts, and so on...’<sup>7</sup>

the model that we have chosen in Grenada (is) the ‘mixed economy-state sector dominant’ type model.<sup>8</sup>

He openly posed the question of:

‘Whether a society such as ours....with so little infrastructure, with so little development of productive forces, with such a small working class, can build socialism ....’<sup>9</sup>

He answered:

‘Yes, it is possible for a country like ours to build socialism.’<sup>10</sup>

But the essence of what he said was that it would require a considerable development of the economy, as well as of Grenada’s working class, and would therefore take time.

It is worth noting here that although we possess no written records as to which CC members contributed to the policy guidelines for the various sections of the document, advocating a mixed economy, and putting forward reasons why this was the development model chosen for Grenada, must obviously have been contributed by Bro. Bernard Coard, the main spokesman on economic development within the leadership. That section on the development of the economy is entirely in line with the gradual road to socialism advocated by the document as a whole. Nowhere is there any suggestion of a ‘communism overnight’ model, as the U.S. has stated was Bro. Coard’s position. Indeed, in Bro. Coard’s model for the economic development of Grenada, socialism simply could not be built overnight; despite the tremendous economic progress made during the Revolution. The path of socialist orientation, as presented, would have entailed as its main policies: (a) The pursuit of a path of mixed economy, with the state sector dominant; (b) enhancing the role of the working people in the revolutionary process, through broadening and deepening the roles of the Organs of Popular People’s Democracy (the Village, Parish, Workers Councils, and the Mass Organisations of Youth, Women, Farmers, Trade Unions); (c) raising the political consciousness of the people, and broadening and deepening the Party’s organised links with the people; and (d) building up the capacity of the Revolution to defend itself against external military threat.

In the area of the Party, the objective was to build the NJM into a Vanguard party of the working class, capable of leading the Grenadian people to socialism.

This detailed document makes it very clear that these objectives could only be accomplished gradually, over time, possibly over several decades. Socialism, then, was not an immediate goal, but a long-term perspective.

Again, it should be emphasised that this *Line of March* document was collectively discussed by the leadership of the Party several times. Indeed, the Minutes of the August 27<sup>th</sup> 1982 Central Committee meeting indicate that the *Line of March* was originally to have been presented to the Party membership on the 26<sup>th</sup> August 1982, and that this meeting was postponed to September 13<sup>th</sup> 1982, partly because, Bro. Bishop said, there had not been:

‘full CC/PB (Central Committee/Political Bureau) input into the discussion, as the item re the way forward was not discussed by the CC/PB up to the morning of the meeting day.’<sup>11</sup>

There followed, at that meeting of August 27<sup>th</sup> a further discussion of the points which were to be contained in the document. Because of the widespread propaganda regarding ideological and policy differences within the CC of the NJM, it is worthwhile to note that those recorded as being present at the meeting, who

contributed and agreed on the content of the *Line of March for the Party*, included: Party leader, Bro. Maurice Bishop; Deputy Party leader, Bro. Bernard Coard, and several other CC members including Bros. Selwyn Strachan, Hudson Austin, George Louison, Liam James, Chalky Ventour, Phyllis Coard, Fitzroy Bain, Kamau Mc Barnette and Tan Bartholomew. (Unison Whiteman and other members are recorded as being out of the country.

*The Line of March* was unanimously accepted by the Party membership on September 13<sup>th</sup> 1982 and no dispute regarding the correctness of its stated policies is recorded in the minutes of any NJM meetings of the Political Bureau, Central Committee, or Party Membership during the remaining 13 months of the Revolution.

4. The U.S. invasion forces on their unsavoury mission in Grenada in October 1983, captured, they state:

‘roughly 35,000 lbs of material (documents) ranging from official Government treaties, orders, minutes, and correspondence to personal diaries, telexes,...’<sup>12</sup>

These documents formed ‘tens of thousands of pages’<sup>13</sup>. Of course, a thorough study has been done of these documents by U.S. political and military analysts. Recently, ‘representative samples’<sup>14</sup> of these documents were published in a blue book entitled: *Grenada Documents: An Overview and Selection, for public circulation by the U.S. State Department*. A comparison of the blue book’s documents with some of the authentic documents, reveals that the original documents have been, in several cases, carefully distorted before publication through the omission of certain sections, the subtle alteration of certain words and phrases, and so on.

What is of interest, however, is that after a thorough examination of virtually all the documents of the NJM, the authors of the book’s introduction<sup>15</sup> are forced to state that there is no evidence to show any ‘strong divergence’<sup>16</sup> of views within the leadership of the Party. Also they assert:

‘there is no reason to think that (Bishop’s) conversation with Judge Clark (then U.S. National Security Adviser) and other American officials earlier in the year led his colleagues to believe that he was 'soft on imperialism'’.<sup>17</sup>

The reference here is to Bro. Bishop's trip to the U.S.A. in June '83. Further, the introduction to the document stated that a study and examination of the documents shows:

‘a remarkable consistency, a single-minded dedication to the NJM objective...’<sup>18</sup>

**Translation: ‘singleminded’ unity of leadership and party in its outlook and pursuit of policies. These admissions are surely remarkable when compared with other statements emanating from the U.S. Government for many months**

**following its invasion of Grenada, and when compared with the widespread assertions of the press during the past two years, concerning an ideological split in the NJM leadership.**

**If ideological differences were not the root cause of the Grenada crisis, however, the U.S. has been ready at all times to provide a second explanation.**

## **U.S. LIE NO. 2**

There was no real crisis in the Party or country. The events of October 1983 were nothing but a personal power struggle, a grab for power by Bernard Coard supported by a small clique in the party.

## **THE TRUTH**

By September 1983, it is quite clear that there existed a deep crisis in the NJM Party as a whole, which threatened, ‘the disintegration of the party’.<sup>19</sup> The difficulties that matured into crisis, can be traced back to 1981. There was total agreement by the entire Party Leadership: Bishop, Whiteman, Strachan, Austin, Louison, Coard, bar none – that there was a crisis, which was extremely deep, which was caused by weak leadership and which required urgent solutions. Differences arose over the question of solutions.

### **Evidence From Minutes Of NJM Central Committee And Party Meetings, And Other NJM Documents 1981-1983**

On April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1981 the Central Committee (C.C.) of the NJM adopted a resolution prefaced by the following statement:

‘Whereas the Central Committee has noted a number of criticisms levelled in respect to the organisation of meetings of the Central Committee, the need for better functioning of higher organs of the party, and the need for greater administration and implementation generally within the party...<sup>20</sup>

Then followed a number of resolutions to improve the work of the Central Committee and the Party to meet the challenges ahead.

These resolutions were the result of two days of frank assessment, and self-criticism of the work of the Central Committee and Political Bureau, and of all the individual leaders of the party including Bro. Bishop.

At the December 1981 meeting of the C.C., Bro. Bishop, in summarizing the C.C.'s resolution of its work during 1981, made the following criticisms of the C.C.'s work and functioning:

- (1) There has not been sufficient serious follow-up on decisions taken: lack of implementation.
- (2) (the C.C.s work) have (has) not (been) conducted along the lines the Committee agreed to.
- (3) (the C.C.) has failed to give guidance to the party.
- (4) Circularization of decisions taken has not been sent down to the lower organs, effectively (have not been) properly communicated to the lower organs).<sup>21</sup>

At the April 1982 meeting of the C.C., the question of the Party's organisation and work again came up. Serious criticisms were made of the lack of planning and organisation of the party's work; of the guidance of the work by the CC.

Central Committee members spoke of the party's attempt to undertake too many tasks; and of this having an adverse effect on the quality of work and Organisation:

'our human and other resources do not permit us to do what we are setting ourselves.'<sup>22</sup>

We have an

'inability to refuse unrealistic tasks. We are guilty of last minute organisation.'<sup>23</sup>

'Our level of Organisation is poor.'<sup>24</sup>

'The present state of the party has to do firstly with the organisation of the work.... sufficient time is not given to organisational guidance.'<sup>25</sup>

were some of the comments made.

'Bro. Bishop in his remarks on the matter said he agreed: that we are doing too much and we are overworked.'<sup>26</sup>

and that there are

'weaknesses in our method of work.'<sup>27</sup>

At the June 1982 C.C. meeting, again the question of the state of the party and its work is seen to have been discussed. At this meeting it was observed that:

'The C.C. and P.B. devoted very little time to party work, and more to state work (economy, defence, etc) no time for internal party building, expanding party structures, building the party's link among the masses, etc.'<sup>28</sup>

In assessing the different areas of work amongst the masses, the following observations were made.

Regarding 'workers work': (which refers to the political and organisational work amongst the working class):

'work is about to collapse, need to take stock; (the C.C. is) dissatisfied with quality of work.'<sup>29</sup>

On work amongst farmers:

'very little work done in the last six months. The level of political (and) organisational work cannot be felt.... mood amongst farmers worse than six months ago.'<sup>30</sup>

Work amongst youth and students:

'worst area of mass work in the party .... quality of practical work quite unsatisfactory.'<sup>31</sup>

Work amongst women:

'The NWO has a significant number of groups not functioning or semi-functioning.'<sup>32</sup>

and has failed to

'consolidate (its) large membership.'<sup>33</sup>

Significantly, it was noted that:

'The party's internal state and links with the masses at its worst since the revolution,<sup>34</sup> (and that) party members' mood is lower than that of the masses.'<sup>35</sup>

The measures decided on 'Rationalization of party comrades work', 'training of party cadres', and 'introducing systems for control of work (for) guiding (the) work.'<sup>36</sup>

The Central Committee next met in July 1982. At that meeting discussion of the growing difficulties surrounding the party's work continued. By this time, C.C. members were obviously concerned about the evident downward trend in all aspects of the party's work, and the weakening of its links with the broad masses of the people, identified in June. The NJM had traditionally had very close links with the Grenadian people, arising out of the anti-Gairy struggle, and during the Revolution structures of Peoples' Democracy were set up to deepen further the links between party and people. Now for the first time, under sheer pressure of work compounded by the 'weaknesses in our method of work' earlier noted by Bro. Bishop<sup>37</sup>, those links were perceived to be weakening. The Central Committee evidently took this matter very seriously and in July it was decided

that rationalisation of party members' political work, in order to reduce each members workload, must be given priority; and that in addition, the party's work itself be rationalised, its areas of work be prioritised.

However, during the summer of 1982 problems arose within the Central Committee. The minutes of later meetings (in particular, the September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1983 party General Meeting) record the fact that the Central Committee tried to solve these problems in October 1982 without taking the matter involved to the party membership.

In October, 1982, an extraordinary meeting of the C.C. of the NJM was called by Bro. Bishop, C.C. Chairman:

‘to discuss a letter of resignation from Bro. Bernard Coard, Deputy Party Leader, and to examine issues raised in the letter related to the state of the party and the crisis in the work of the higher organs.’<sup>38</sup>

Although the Minutes of October 1982 do not give a very detailed picture of Bro. Coard's reasons for resigning from the Political Bureau, Central Committee and Organising Committee of the Party, they note that his decision to resign was

‘hastened by certain developments – linked to this was the undermining of his authority as Chairman of the O.C. (organising Committee)’<sup>39</sup>

and that

‘he had made reference to the slackness of the C.C., its unwillingness to speak up on issues, the lack of preparation for meetings by C.C. Comrades.’<sup>40</sup>

The 1983 Minutes of the NJM shed clearer light on the reasons for Bro. Coard's 1982 resignation. Let us therefore deal with this matter in greater detail later on; for while Bro. Coard's resignation was discussed and accepted, the main topic discussed at the C.C. meeting of October 1982 was again the state of the party and particularly of the Central Committee and Political Bureau.

The October 1982 meeting of the C.C. noted that the record of the C.C. deliberations on the organisational problems in the party was long, going back to 1981; that C.C. meetings of April 1981, December 1981, April 1982, June 1982 and July 1982; all discussed the problem and adopted decisions aimed at rectifying them; but that there were

‘certain glaring weaknesses’<sup>41</sup>

Amongst these were noted:

1. The improper functioning of the Central Committee and Political Bureau;
2. Lack of control at the level of Chairmanship;
3. Low level of discipline by members of leading organs.<sup>42</sup>

The meeting was severe in its criticism of a number of C.C. members. Kenrick Radix was removed from the Political Bureau (P.B.) and Central Committee (C.C.), and Caldwell Taylor from the C.C., for their poor work performance and discipline and two (2) other C.C. members were put on probation for a six (6) month period, after which their membership would be re-assessed.<sup>43</sup>

In respect of Kenrick Radix, the Minutes of several meetings of the C.C. and P.B. over the years record strong criticisms of his performance both as a member of the Political Bureau and as a Minister of Government. In April 1982, for instance, the Central Committee noted that:

‘the level of chaos in (the Ministry of Agro-Industries and Fisheries (was) really frightening and...what was really required in Agro-Industries and Fisheries is systems, which the relevant Minister (Kenrick Radix) needs to implement but has so far failed to do so even though he has been criticised time and time again.’<sup>44</sup>

During, the first half of 1982 other criticisms of Radix were raised by C.C. members and ordinary members of the party both formally and informally: his indisciplined spending on his ministry’s projects often contrary to Cabinet guidelines and decisions; his refusal to correct such pattern of behaviour when spoken to; his drunkenness and consequent uncontrolled behaviour at several Government functions; his verbal counter-attacks on those who dared criticise him, particularly Bro. Bernard Coard, who was the Minister of Finance and Planning and Chairman of the NJM Party Organising Committee, and who was forced to raise the issue of Radix’s irresponsible spending with him on several occasions.

‘ “Bernard Coard thinks he should be Prime Minister – he's trying to take all the authority from Maurice”, this was Radix’s line to a number of persons, including to Cde. Bishop himself, on many occasions, because he was furious that Cde. Coard told him to stop his wild spending on setting up Crucial Factor restaurant and other projects. This was because he ran up thousands of dollars of Government debts crediting materials for projects personally with businesses in town, which Cabinet had not decided must be done.’<sup>45</sup>

says a member of the NJM Party who became aware of this problem during the summer of 1982.

During the summer both Radix’s work and his behaviour, including his public behaviour, deteriorated sharply. Finally in October 1982 the C.C. took note of

‘his lack of political work,....deep seated individualism and his petit-bourgeois opportunist attitude to criticism’<sup>46</sup>

and

‘The consensus was that his performance was exceedingly below that befitting a C.C. member.’<sup>47</sup>

This removal of Radix from the C.C. should be noted; for as it turned out, the C.C.'s observation as to his attitude to criticism was to prove entirely accurate. His response to his being voted out of the C.C. was one of fury; he promptly dropped out of all the party's activities and his malicious verbal attacks on C.C. members who had criticised him intensified.<sup>48</sup>

As will later be seen, his actions during 1983, guided by his hostility, played a major role in the tragic events of October 1983.

In October 1982, however, it was clear that the C.C. made another major effort to rectify its weak functioning: seventeen major decisions were taken, aimed at strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the work of the C.C. members and the actual operation of the Central Committee and Political Bureau.

In November, at a General Meeting of the Party, Bro. Maurice Bishop delivered a report on the October C.C. plenary meeting; the C.C. frankly criticised itself for its weaknesses in its functioning, he said, and went on to outline some of the steps it would be taking aimed at correcting these.

The removal of Kenrick Radix and Caldwell Taylor were announced, and significantly, despite Radix's long standing membership of the Political Bureau, there was no questioning by party members of the correctness of the decision. The glaring weaknesses of his character and work performance were by this time well known within the party. Concern was expressed, however, at the resignation of Bro. Coard from the P.B. and C.C.

The C.C. had decided to state only that this was because of health problems brought on by pressure of work. Responding to deep concern raised by party member Sandra Ventour, however, Bro. Bishop said that

‘it was his hope that Cde. Coard would be back on the C.C. and P.B. in the not too distant future.’<sup>49</sup>

Following the October 1982 meeting, a full plenary meeting of the Central Committee was scheduled for the end of March 1983<sup>50</sup> and thereafter the C.C. was to meet

‘quarterly, for five days of intensive 'wholistic' assessing’<sup>51</sup>

The fact that the C.C. plenary did not take place until July 1983, nine months later, is perhaps the clearest indication of the further problems which erupted during 1983, this time on a national front, and their impact in terms of further weakening the functioning of the C.C. and the party. A brief comment on what these new problems were ought to be made here.

From the earliest days of the Grenada revolution the United States of America had demonstrated clearly its hostility towards the Revolution. *In April 1979*, the then U.S. Ambassador to the region, **Ortiz**, held a meeting with PM Bishop in which he threatened aggression against Grenada, if Grenada did not break diplomatic relations with Cuba. *In April 1980*, a plot was uncovered to overthrow the Revolution, kill the leadership, and install a government headed by Stanley Cyrus which would have received immediate U.S. recognition. *On June 19, 1980*, a bomb was set off at a mass rally

underneath the building where the leadership was sitting. President Reagan during his campaign for the **1980 U.S. elections** openly stated that Grenada had to be 'taught a lesson'. **In August 1981**, the U.S. carried out its 'dry run' for the invasion of Grenada, the notorious 'Amber and the Amberines' manoeuvres, invading the Vieques Islands, off Puerto Rico.

**In early 1983**, however, verbal threats against Grenada by high ranking U.S. Military and political spokesmen, including Vice-President Bush, stepped up, and on **March 10<sup>th</sup>**, President Reagan made the first of three speeches in which he referred to Grenada as a

'threat to the National Security of the United States of America.'<sup>52</sup>

**On March 19<sup>th</sup>** there was a large-scale military incursion into Nicaragua. U.S. battleships were also sighted off Grenada's shores: The country had to be mobilised in expectation of an invasion.

**On March 21<sup>st</sup>** the Central Committee issued a public statement

'to party members, supporters and the broad masses of the people of Grenada, on the present National Security situation facing our country and Revolution'<sup>53</sup>

That statement, thousands of copies of which were distributed islandwide in pamphlet form, warned that

'a military attack.... could come within a matter of days, or even hours.'<sup>54</sup>

This is the most serious threat our country has faced since March 13<sup>th</sup>, 1979,<sup>55</sup>

The statement declared, and further warned that:

'those who believe that .... we shall escape, either because we are an island or because we are small and not important to the United States, or just because 'we are always lucky' are like ostriches burying their heads in the sand.'<sup>56</sup>

What were the organisational implications of this threat from the U.S.?

Central Committee members will be in every parish of the country, starting tomorrow.... holding meetings with various groups of citizens.... organising medical and service (cooking) support groups,<sup>57</sup>

the statement went on. Also necessary was:

the guarding of beaches and vital targets.... the digging of trenches .... the donation of large bags.... sheets.... food and water to militia Comrades who must go into immediate training'<sup>58</sup>

and so on, and so on. The number of organisational tasks involved, not only for the Central Committee but also for all party members, was clearly enormous. 'Rationalization' efforts, to reduce the workload of party members was abandoned. Indeed, their workload increased.

Thus, the already excessive work-load of the C.C. and party members, created by the large number of new Projects and Programmes undertaken each year of the Revolution, in the context of a country traditionally desperately short of trained managers and other professionals, was grossly added to by the urgent need to mobilize the entire country's defence against the mightiest military force in the world. This led to a state of exhaustion in the C.C. and party members, and even in many non-party members which became more and more pronounced as the summer proceeded.

In addition, the economy of Grenada, despite its high growth rate of 5.5%, in 1982, in the face of the Western World's economic recession, came under unexpected financial pressure in 1983, when a loan from the IMF was delayed for several months due to U.S. pressure on the IMF to deny Grenada the loan which had been recommended by the IMF's own technical experts. Thus, while unemployment continued to fall there simply were not sufficient funds during the first seven months of 1983 to carry out certain important services, such as road repairs.

Thus, in May 1983, when the entire party met for the first of three weekend 'study retreats', a three hour session of house to house visiting in various communities by teams of party members produced workshop reports which spoke of

'the low mood of the masses .... fear of a military invasion ....lack of confidence that we could beat back the U.S. if they decided to invade....complaints about the state of the roads and electricity blackouts....and complaints by many persons that for the longest time now they can't see party members in the communities'<sup>59</sup>

The masses feel we are neglecting them<sup>60</sup>

One report stated,

'before times, they were used to seeing party members frequently, now they are saying 'it's months we don't see you at all'.<sup>61</sup>

In the discussions which followed party members expressed the view that

'the people need the physical presence and moral support of the party at this difficult time, and they also need to have their burning community problems, such as bad roads, attended to urgently.'<sup>62</sup>

The view was expressed that since the most burning issue was the state of the roads, special voluntary community projects involving both community and party members, should be started in communities where roads were particularly bad. This would also provide for increased contacts between party members and the communities.

Thus, in response to the real and urgent needs of the people, the party proposed to add yet again to its already enormous workload. During the final study-retreat weekend in July, a fierce debate took place in which approximately 60% maintained that a decision should be taken for all party members to take part in these voluntary community projects every Sunday while the other 40% of members maintained equally firmly that this was an impossibility in terms of workload.<sup>63</sup> It was clear that the entire party was torn between the objective needs of the situation in which the Revolution faced a grave threat to its very survival, and the capacity of the party to undertake increased tasks. The Central Committee, gravely concerned by the National situation, took the same position as the majority.<sup>64</sup> However, by July members were showing signs of severe exhaustion.

In July 1983 the C.C. met to make a complete analysis of the work of the party and Revolution. All areas of party and state work presented reports to the Central Committee on the state of their area of work, and suggestions for the way forward. The meeting was surrounded by great expectations from the general membership, for by that time the "serious and glaring problems" in the party's approach to the work were being personally and acutely experienced by the entire General Membership. Party members waited-anxiously for decisions and measures for effective rationalization of the work and its better organisation. There was a clear perception and strong feeling among party rank and file that somehow the party and revolution needed to 'shift gear' organisationally. The C.C. meeting therefore took place in this general atmosphere for seven days: July 13-19. Firm and decisive leadership was needed as never before.

The C.C. meeting's report to the General membership from that July plenary meeting recognised that there was a crisis in the work of the party and revolution. The document noted

the acute rise in the complexities and difficulties facing the Revolution on all fronts.<sup>65</sup>

The document is littered with phrases such as "stagnated" "deep crisis" "weak" "shaken confidence of the masses,"<sup>66</sup> describing the internal work of the party, work of the mass organisations, work in the economy, national defence and in the programmes of the Revolution.

However, while the C.C.'s minutes of its plenary reflects serious self-criticisms of its own work the C.C. in its report to the membership<sup>67</sup> basically largely absolved itself of all blame and instead blamed the party membership, non-party activists working in the mass organisations, and even the masses for the failures and problems.

The C.C. castigated the party membership for their "low rate of attendance at house to house and community work"<sup>68</sup> and "lack of consistency"<sup>69</sup> in the work. Largely ignoring the exhaustion which was the objective basis for the poor work of the party, the C.C. called for stepping up of the work in many areas, maintaining that this could be possible with a

systematic approach to our work,<sup>70</sup>

the professionatization of the party's work.<sup>71</sup>

and more “systematic guidance” of members work.<sup>72</sup>

The C.C.'s idealistic approach at its July meeting, its failure to face up to the real nature of the problems confronting party members and to take the difficult decisions necessary to truly attack those

complexities and difficulties facing the Revolution on all fronts.<sup>73</sup>

was to have serious repercussions within the party.

Between the time of the presentation of the C.C.'s report to the membership and August 26<sup>th</sup>, the membership of the party, extremely dissatisfied with the C.C.'s position on the problems of the membership, literally took the path of silent rebellion, refusing to carry out tasks viewed as involving excessive work; a number of members resigned from the party; and a high percentage of those who did not do so yet were seriously threatening to do just that.

It was in this atmosphere and these circumstances that the C.C. was reconvened on August 26, 1983 for an emergency session.

All the C.C. members present at the August 26<sup>th</sup> meeting spoke on the question of the crisis that was taking place in the party. Bro. Bishop, in summarising at the end of the meeting stated that he agreed

that (the party faces) the threat of disintegration, (he) agrees also with (the) analysis that comrades of the party are afraid to raise their criticisms.<sup>74</sup>

Further he stated that

we should reflect on the individual strengths and weaknesses of all C.C. members...we should also think about the specific responsibilities of C.C. Comrades both at the party and state level...<sup>75</sup>

In speaking on the crisis Bro. Selwyn Strachan, who was by that time Chairman of the Organising Committee of the party, and hence in day to day contact with the membership, said:

- i) Sections of the party have begun to rebel against the higher organs of the party. This is [a] serious and dangerous development.
- ii) This silent rebellion will turn into open rebellion, and if we don't address it now, it will be resolved in a Petit-bourgeois way.
- iii) At the heart of the matter is the C.C. The situation calls for a critical review of the C.C...<sup>76</sup>

Bro. Unison Whiteman said:

Things are pointing in the direction of a breakdown of confidence in the CC.<sup>77</sup>

Bro. Fitzroy Bain said that:

there is a division between party and masses [I am] concerned over the image of the party before the masses.<sup>78</sup>

Bro. Chris De Riggs (Kojo):

- (1) It is clear that the C.C. is facing a confidence crisis.
- (2) there is great danger of open rebellion and disintegration of our party;
- (3) the heart of the crisis is the Central Committee. At the level of its composition – (and) at the level of assignment of duties in party and state.<sup>79</sup>

Bro. Leon Cornwall:

- (1) We need to think more strategically than tactically;
- (2) We need to decide on measures for arresting the situation now, and for looking down the road.<sup>80</sup>

Bro. Liam James said:

We need to look at the situation in a special way... we are seeing the beginning of the disintegration of the party.<sup>81</sup>

Bro. Kamau McBarnette:

We need to ask ourselves: to what extent do we provide rank and file party members with the opportunity to speak out and do so frankly?<sup>82</sup>

Bro. Tan Bartholomew:

- (1) We cannot wait. We need to urgently address the question.
- (2) General Meetings can follow the C.C.'s deliberations where comrades can be given frank explanations.<sup>83</sup>

Bro. Hudson Austin.

Comrades are in a serious state of demoralization. Good comrades are asking to leave (the party).<sup>84</sup>

The meeting of the August 26<sup>th</sup> ended with the members present deciding that all members of the C.C. overseas should be recalled, and that the C.C. should meet again on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> to

examine the issues raised in the meeting (of August 26<sup>th</sup>) and to come up with appropriate steps.<sup>85</sup>

The C.C. reconvened on September 14<sup>th</sup> instead of September 13<sup>th</sup> as initially planned. The main items discussed were the state of party and revolution and the way forward. Again, for several hours, all comrades addressed the C.C. on the issues, first dealing with the state of the party and the revolution.

After listening to all the comments and discussions Bro. Bishop proposed the following broad conclusions:

1. There is a state of deep crisis in the party and revolution.
2. The main reason for these weaknesses is the functioning of the C.C.
3. The (party) crisis has become a major contributing factor to the crisis in the country and Revolution, and the low mood of the masses.
4. The crisis has also been compounded by the weaknesses in the material base; electricity blackouts, bad roads, retrenchment and jobs as an issue.

To correct the situation the following must be done:

1. Find methods of improving the work and improving individual and collective leadership of the C.C.
2. Develop a perspective based on Marxist-Leninist criterion to guide the work in the coming period.
3. Urgently find creative ways of deepening the links with, and our work among the masses.
4. Establish meaningful channels of communication between the leadership and the membership [of the party]...formally re-rationalize the work among party comrades, bearing in mind the ground-swell and complaints of overwork and lack of inner party democracy.
5. The C.C. needs to develop structures for accountability, bearing in mind that comrades are now demanding accounts from the party.<sup>86</sup>

Bro. Whiteman commented that:

he was shocked at the mood in the country ... There is not enough two-way communication in the party, too much directives are given, regardless of comrades' work plans and schedules, and unrealistic targets are set ... he has never seen such a bad condition before... Too much time is spent on small issues instead of addressing fundamental one.<sup>87</sup>

Bro. George Louison said that:

he was shocked on his arrival in the country to see the state of the roads, which is in the worst state it has ever been since the Revolution. This, he said, is because of the continued decline of the work of the party. He said that having listened to the number of comrades he agrees that there are a lot of problems in the leadership.<sup>88</sup>

Bro. Ewart Layne, a member of the Political Bureau, who had led off on that day's discussion said:

The Revolution now faces the greatest danger since 1979. There is great dispiritedness and dissatisfaction among the people... the state of the party at present is the lowest it had ever been...<sup>89</sup>

He also commented on the ever increasing complexities in all areas of work the party faced: in building the economy, building the links with the masses, preparing to carry the proposed constitution to the people in two years time; and strengthening the country's defence capacity in the face of a qualitatively stepped up aggression from imperialism.

In the face of all these tasks... the party is crumbling, all the mass organisations are (on) the ground ...<sup>90</sup> he said.

Bro. De Riggs,

pointed to the fact that the C.C. has failed to accept (responsibility for) the failure of the work which in his view is very dishonest. This attitude has discouraged comrades from criticising the higher organs.<sup>91</sup>

Bro. Ventour in outlining the precise nature of the crisis which was causing the threatened disintegration of the party said:

Comrades are complaining of the amount of tasks, some are showing signs of resignation.<sup>92</sup>

This has led to the collapse of many areas of work:

Community work is not going as expected,...the militia is non-existent.<sup>93</sup>

Bro. Leon Cornwall agreed. He said:

The C.C. has given too much unrealistic tasks and in pushing comrades to accomplish it (them) they became frustrated.<sup>94</sup>

He further said:

that there is confusion among the party masses, we do not know how we are going to come out of this situation because the party has not developed a (perspective)<sup>95</sup>

Further Cornwall said that the fall of all areas of mass organisation work....

is related to our lack of (perspective) on how to implement solutions<sup>96</sup>

Bro. Fitzroy Bain agreed with the positions of the comrades. He said that:

at that time the strongest supporters of the Revolution are demoralised.<sup>97</sup>

Further, he commented:

The mood of the party is also lower than that of the masses at this time. There exists a level of mistrust, resentment and frustration among party comrades....They also show a willingness to resign. Comrades of the Workers Committee are saying that their [union] positions are at stake, they attend too many meetings, they have no time to visit workplaces, and (are) given very little time to address the trade union work.<sup>98</sup>

Sis. Phyllis Coard said:

The C.C. has displayed idealism on the question of women in the party, they cannot cope with the demands of the party at this time. She said that she also notices that the older (party members) are getting tired and sick... [This] poor quality and low morale of the party is communicated to the masses because party comrades live and work among the masses.<sup>99</sup>

The problem is, she continued that

members are demoralised by having to carry out unrealistic tasks and decisions. The C.C. has failed to analyse the problems correctly and come up with a long term plan (of) development.<sup>100</sup>

Bro. Bishop then spoke, and praised comrades for their comments.

He said that he is struck by the level of thought and preparation of comrades as evident in their various contributions.<sup>101</sup>

However, he commented

points are coming out more sharply today.<sup>102</sup>

Further, he continued:

The C.C. has not been able to rise to the challenge of the increasing complexity [of the work of the Revolution], this has led it to take a number of unrealistic decisions...<sup>103</sup>

Other comrades expressed views, dwelling on the same themes, and adding evidence and examples to substantiate them.

So as we see all comrades agreed on (a) the existence of the crisis; (b) that the crisis was deep; and (c) that the fundamental problem lay with the Central Committee itself: its poor functioning, guidance and leadership.

When the question of the C.C. was discussed, (Agenda item 2) again all comrades spoke. Bro. Liam James led off this discussion. He said that:

within the C.C. there are many problems, all comrades must be criticised for their levels of disorganisation (and) low ideological level.<sup>104</sup>

However, he pointed out that in his view,

The most fundamental problem is the quality of leadership of the Central Committee and party provided by Cde. Maurice Bishop.<sup>105</sup>

He said that:

in his view the Cde. has great strengths, his ability to inspire and develop comrades, his ability to raise the regional and international respect for the party and revolution; he has the charisma to build the confidence of the people both in and out of the country, and to put forward clearly the positions of the party.<sup>106</sup>

However, he continued:

today these strengths *alone* cannot put [push] the party any further in this period. The qualities he lacks (are) what is needed to push the revolution forward at this time.

1. Leninist level of Organisation and discipline;
2. Great depth in ideological clarity;
3. Brilliance in strategy and tactics.<sup>107</sup>

It ought to be particularly noted that every member of the C.C. expressed agreement with the analysis made by Bro. James.

Bro. De Riggs began by saying that:

He agreed that the situation was favourable to counterrevolution at this time; state power can be easily overthrown. The low mood of the party and the masses is also clear to him.<sup>108</sup>

He continued:

The main problem is the question of leadership. There is immediate need for the reorganisation of the C.C. in order to rebuild the confidence of the membership and the masses in the party. In solving the problem the interest of

the party and revolution must be taken first; he pointed out that he agreed with all the points made by Cde. James.<sup>109</sup>

Bro. Dave 'Tan' Bartholomew, Central Committee member from St. Patrick's parish and President of the National Youth Organisation (NYO) said:

he had never (previously) raised any criticism of the CC and leadership. He agreed with the points made on the strengths of the Cde. Leader. Cde. Bishop's weaknesses were known all the while, but comrades were hesitant to raise them. Though he [Bishop] had accepted criticisms of this [in the past], he had never fulfilled them [in practice]. The quality of the C.C. has deteriorated very badly, there is too much vacillation by the Cde. Leader.<sup>110</sup>

Bro. George Louison said that:

The number one problem is the quality of leadership given the process by Cde. Bishop. He loses focus and spends too much time on details. The points made by Cdes James and Cornwall have really crystalized (sic) the problem which we have to find ways of solving.<sup>111</sup>

Bro. Unison Whiteman commented that

the weaknesses mentioned of the Cde. Leader [Cde. Bishop] are correct.<sup>112</sup>

He also said that

The Cde. Leader had not set enough time to deal with fundamental matters.<sup>113</sup>

Bro. Bain said:

he agreed with the points made by Cde. James, and added it is greater (even more) demanding of the leader to give more guidance to the process at this time.<sup>114</sup>

Bros. Strachan, Cornwall, Layne and all other Central Committee members expressed their agreement with the analysis and conclusions of Bro. James.

Bro. Bishop in replying:

thanked comrades for their frankness in their criticisms.<sup>115</sup>

He said that he was aware that in the past comrades have given serious thoughts to the question of his leadership,

and failed to raise it for diplomatic reasons which were not good.<sup>116</sup>

He further said that:

he agrees that the points are correct, especially [the one on] correct application of strategy and tactics.<sup>117</sup>

which he said,

cannot be achieved except the other qualities are fulfilled.<sup>118</sup>

On September 16<sup>th</sup> the meeting addressed the question of specific solutions. It was then that the proposal for Joint Leadership of the party was made. It was only on this question of specific solutions that differences arose. ***The U.S. insists, as do Radix and Louison since the invasion, that there was no genuine crisis within the NJM.*** But it is clear from the very detailed minutes of the CC meetings of September 14-16, 1983 that ***there was indeed a very real and deep crisis and further that there were absolutely no differences on this.*** It is clear from the very detailed minutes of the CC meetings of September 14-16, 1983, that there had been absolutely no differences of opinion on the existence of long-standing problems, of an immediate and genuine crisis, its depth, the causes of the crisis and the urgent need for a solution: Brothers Bishop, Strachan, Louison, Whiteman, De Riggs, Austin and all other CC members were in full agreement on these matters, as the CC minutes so conclusively show.

## U.S. LIE NO. 3

There was a conspiracy by a section or 'clique', of the C.C. aimed at removing Bro. Maurice Bishop as leader of the Revolution.

## THE TRUTH

There was no conspiracy to remove Bro. Bishop; there was no ***proposal*** to remove Bro. Bishop either as leader of the party, Government or Revolution. There was a proposal ***put openly to the Central Committee and then to the entire party***, to establish Joint Leadership of the ***Party***. This was openly and fully discussed and adopted by both the Central Committee and Party membership.

## EVIDENCE

One significant act to note in this regard is the total absence of any accusation of this kind in the U.S. State Department book, *Grenada Documents*, previously mentioned, the *introduction to which analyses the contents of the Grenada documents seized by the U.S. invaders*. This subject matter is totally avoided by its authors. The reason: because all the documents of the NJM point to exceedingly open and frank discussions of the Joint Leadership proposal within the party.

Such an accusation runs totally contrary to the minutes of the Central Committee and Party General Meetings which recorded the open and exhaustive discussion of the Joint Leadership proposal by the Central Committee, party members, and even candidate members of the party.

This truth, however, did not prevent the U.S. military psychological warfare battalion, which landed on Grenada on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 1983 from hysterically repeating, month after month following the invasion, that there was beyond doubt a conspiracy against P.M. Bishop. Such is the power of U.S. ‘sources’ over the Regional Caribbean media that this line has been carried unquestioningly, not only in Grenada but throughout the Caribbean, for the past two years. It is also a fact that the U.S. has received invaluable assistance in spreading this ‘conspiracy’, lie, from Radix and Louison, whose narrow political ambitions coincide with what has been the far more deadly political objective of the U.S. – to bring about the passive acceptance of foreign occupation followed by neo-colonial American rule, on the part of many shocked and bewildered Grenadians who, barred from receiving the truth of the crisis of October, came to believe that there were no local leaders they could trust.

Now that the initial hue and cry has died down, let us ask ourselves: what do the actual minutes of the NJM reveal about the manner in which the proposal was put forward for joint leadership within the party?

### **C.C. MEETING, SEPTEMBER 14-17, 1983**

The proposal on joint leadership was first put forward on September 16<sup>th</sup> at the 14-16 September Central Committee plenary meeting.

As has already been noted, the meeting was called specifically to discuss the grave crisis in the party, and to urgently work out the way forward. As Bro. Bishop said at the time in preparing for that meeting:

We should reflect on the individual strengths and weaknesses of all C.C. members. We should also think about the specific responsibilities of C.C. Comrades both at the party and state level.<sup>119</sup>

The proposal for joint leadership of the party was situated therefore in the context of a deep and profound crisis in the party and revolution; and in the context of the C.C.'s conclusion, that the fundamental problem was the leadership of the C.C. and party provided by Bro. Bishop, even though he had his areas of immense strength which the C.C. also acknowledged.

The proposal for joint leadership of the party was put forward by Cde. Liam James, a member of the Political Bureau. The minutes of the Central Committee of 14-16 September, record that Bro. James put forward five proposals all aimed at solving the crisis; the fifth proposal was:

a model of joint leadership, marrying the strengths of Cdes. Bishop and Coard,<sup>120</sup>

He further proposed a division of responsibilities reflecting the strengths of each, as follows:

Cde. Maurice Bishop:

1. Direct work among the masses (with focus on production and propaganda).
2. Particular attention to the organs of popular democracy, working-class, youth masses, visit to urban and rural workplaces.
3. Militia mobilisation.
4. Regional and International work.

Cde. Bernard Coard:

1. Party Organisation work, (including) Chairman of the O.C. (Organising Committee of the party).
2. Party organisational development and formation of comrades.
3. Strategy and tactics.<sup>121</sup>

He went on to propose that:

The C.C. must ratify all proposals and decisions sought by the comrades. C.C. meetings should be monthly. Chaired by Cde. Maurice Bishop, P.B. (continuing) weekly, Chaired by Cde. Bernard Coard. The both Cdes will write quarterly reports to the C.C. for review. The Membership must be told of these decisions.<sup>122</sup>

Further, in response to Bro. George Louison, he later made it explicitly clear that his proposal entailed that:

Cde. Bishop will (continue as) Prime Minister and Commander-in- Chief, he will sign all documents of the C.C.<sup>123</sup>

During this section of the meeting every member of the Central Committee gave his opinion on the proposal for joint leadership and there was a very full discussion before the vote was taken. The majority of C.C. members strongly supported the proposal. Bro. Bishop's reaction to the proposal was mixed:

He said his honest view is that the party must utilize all strengths and talents...he has never had any problems with sharing power...he has worked

very well with Cde. Coard over the years from school days, they share a lot of policy decisions, they both wrote the [Party's] manifesto, the People's Congress [1973] indictment of Gairy... Cde. James's breakdown of responsibilities is very useful ... his own idea of his role falls into what Cde. James had outlined ... however, his concerns (are) the operationalizing of strategy and tactics...Cde. Bernard's view of the situation and response... how we will articulate this to the party and masses... <sup>124</sup>

He also expressed his concern that the proposal really reflected a vote of no confidence by the C.C. in his leadership. <sup>125</sup>

Bro. George Louison opposed the joint leadership proposal, because, he said:

he feels that this model cannot solve the problem of Cde. Maurice Bishop...The qualities missing have two dimensions... the level of effort of personal discipline... and of collective mannersing from the C.C. to ensure that he builds these qualities; if he fails then it may be necessary to remove the comrade in the future. <sup>126</sup>

All other C.C. members disagreed with this view, expressing the opinion that a model of joint leadership would not only improve the immediate functioning of the party, but also assist Bro. Bishop in developing the particular qualities he lacked, thereby strengthening him as leader of the Revolutionary Process. Bro. Strachan, for example, said that:

he has been able to recognize the strengths of the two comrades due to years of experience of working with them. The Cde. Leader can unite all classes and strata which is vitally needed. Cde. Coard has the qualities that he is lacking. Therefore a creative way must be used to fuse these qualities to move the process forward. It is clear that Cde. Coard's absence is felt over the year... [a joint leadership] will also help to transform the Cde. leader. <sup>127</sup>

After further exhaustive discussion the proposal was voted on at the level of the C.C., with the following results: In favour: 9; opposed: 1; abstentions: 3. <sup>128</sup>

Louison voted against the proposal. Bros. Bishop and Whiteman abstained; and the minutes record that:

Cde. Austin abstained because he was not present for the full discussion for the greater part of the meeting. <sup>129</sup>

having in fact returned from an official visit overseas only two hours before the three day CC meeting ended.

At the same meeting there was also a long debate regarding informing the membership of the deliberations of the C.C., and the C.C. decisions. Traditionally, in the NJM, all important C.C. decisions are submitted to a General Meeting of the Party, which has the power to ratify or overrule C.C. decisions. One position of some C.C. members

was that both a report from the C.C. and the full minutes of the C.C. meeting should go to the party members. The position of others was that only a report should be given.

Bro. James, in speaking on the question held that the full minutes should go to the party members, because, he said:

The failure to give the members clear indications [a clear and detailed briefing] of the meeting will lead to further lack of confidence of the membership in the C.C. <sup>130</sup>

Bro. Bishop in opposing the membership having access to the minutes said:

The minutes of the C.C. cannot go to the membership because he has not seen that in any party. He feels that the party is not at the stage to provide (the membership with) all points and arguments raised in the meeting. <sup>131</sup>

A vote was finally taken on the issue: 10 members voted in favour of the proposal; 1 voted against (Louison) and two abstained (Bros. Bishop and Whiteman). <sup>132</sup>

**What is highly significant, is that the so-called ‘conspirators’, those charged and convicted of ‘Conspiracy’ by the U.S. controlled press, and most of whom are now facing trial with their lives at stake, are the very same C.C. members who were insisting on full disclosure to the party – that party members be given the actual C.C. minutes, so that they could know all the reasoning, views and arguments of the C.C. to better inform any position they might arrive at. Strange behaviour for ‘Conspirators’!**

Before the General Meeting of full members, the decision for joint leadership had to be put to Bro. Bernard Coard, since he was not present at the C.C. meeting of September 14-16, 1983, having resigned from the Central Committee and Political Bureau in October 1982. Most C.C. members were of the view that the entire C.C. should meet with Bro. Coard to put the C.C.’s decision to him and obtain his response.

But Bishop had a different view: He proposed that the C.C. meet with Cde. Coard in his absence... <sup>133</sup>

He suggested that:

the C.C. meet Cde. Bernard Coard tomorrow [September 17<sup>th</sup>] while he will be leaving for St. Kitts. He thinks that this will be in the interest of the C.C. <sup>134</sup>

Others disagreed with this view. Bro James:

felt that Cde. Bishop should stand up and face the situation because he is part of the Central Committee. He thinks that it can and it will affect Cde. Bernard's position on the issue. <sup>135</sup>

Others expressed similar views to that of Bro. James, and insisted that Cde. Bishop should be present at the meeting with Bro. Coard

for the sake of the future of the Revolution.<sup>136</sup>

However, Bro. Bishop held firm to his position, and in the light of that

it was finally agreed to meet at 1.00 p.m. on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> with Cde. Coard.<sup>137</sup>

in the absence of Bro. Bishop.

### **C.C. MEETS WITH BRO. BERNARD COARD, SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup>**

At the C.C. meeting on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, after listening to the analysis, conclusions and proposals of the Central Committee Bro. Coard initially raised four points, these being:

1. He would like to see the minutes of the meeting (of September 14-16).
2. He would like to know the positions of those who opposed or abstained (on the joint leadership proposal) and what are their reasons.
3. Were other options examined (by the C.C.) (if, so) what are these options and why were they rejected?
4. Why was not this meeting scheduled so that Cde. Bishop could be present.<sup>138</sup>

After receiving detailed explanations on all these issues, he stated his agreement with the C.C.'s overall analysis of the poor state of the work, and danger of disintegration of the party

unless a fundamental package of measures<sup>139</sup>

were instituted

However, on the specific question of joint leadership, he said; he would not like to return to the C.C. and P.B. Any task given to him he will do it.<sup>140</sup>

He stated that during the past year, though not on the C.C. he had tried to give the party

his best support in the area of strategy and tactics<sup>141</sup>

and said he

is prepared to take all responsibilities that the C.C. offers him *but off the C.C.*<sup>142</sup>

He reminded C.C. members that he had resigned from the C.C. in 1982, because when he struggled to get serious action and decisions taken to advance the work, to solve the organisational problems, some comrades interpreted it as his trying

to undermine the Comrade Leader's position.<sup>143</sup>

and were accusing him of that behind his back. He said that:

he was seriously affected by the accusations of [his] wanting to undermine the leadership, and so he resigned.<sup>144</sup>

In an oblique reference to Radix's attacks on him during the summer of 1982, he said:

when this reached critical persons in the P.B. it was very bad<sup>145</sup>

particularly when

the Comrade leader found himself vacillating<sup>146</sup>

between those [like Radix] who were engaging in accusations, and yet doing very little work; and those who were serious about moving the Process forward. He felt that his resignation was in the best interest of the party. He said that given that background,

it will be an emotional strain on him to come back to the C.C. under any model.<sup>147</sup>

and he will not do so

unless he is forced to.<sup>148</sup>

This emotional conflict will only serve to:

sap his energies. He wants this [position] to be clearly put to the party.<sup>149</sup>

He added that:

the (real) issue is to start collective leadership (by) the C.C.<sup>150</sup>

In between Bro. Coard's comments, other comrades of the C.C. reiterated their positions, and impressed upon Bro. Coard, that he ought to abide by the decision of the C.C., that he returned to the Central Committee as joint leader of the party.

So, far from a conspiracy led by Bernard Coard, and ‘all pre-planned and pre-arranged’ against Bro. Bishop’, what the NJM minutes indicate clearly is that, firstly, Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard was most reluctant to accept *any* position on the Party’s C.C., much less the position of joint leader of the party. Secondly, that Bro. Hudson Austin, widely billed by the media as the ‘second man’ in the conspiracy, would not even vote on the joint leadership proposal, having missed most of the discussions on the matter. Thirdly, that far from trying to impose this decision on the party by means of subterfuge these C.C. members, since vilified by the press as ‘conspirators’, were most anxious to inform and involve the party membership fully, to the extent of ‘opening the books’ to them – presenting members with the C.C. minutes themselves – in order that the general membership could take an informed decision on the issue.

Again we say, strange behaviour for ‘conspirators’!

### **SEPTEMBER 25: THE PARTY RESOLVES THE ISSUE**

On September 25<sup>th</sup>, a General Meeting of the party was held which lasted from 9.00 a.m. until midnight (15 hours). The minutes of the C.C. meeting of September 14-16, among other documents, were studied and discussed by the membership, organised in workshops. Shortly after 1.00 p.m. Bro. Bishop spoke. This was followed by a general discussion, then workshops.

After the workshop discussions, an eight-hour plenary session (4.00 p.m. to midnight) was held at which members were asked to give their opinions on the Central Committee’s analysis, conclusions, proposals, and decisions.

Member after member spoke at the plenary session, endorsing the C.C.’s conclusion; supporting the decision on joint leadership; criticising the C.C. as a whole for its previous failure to confront and address the longstanding, recurring, glaring weaknesses, which had started since early 1981, and criticising the C.C. also for its hiding of problems from the membership in the past.

Party member, Francis Gill, for instance, commented that the problems dealt with within the minutes were

already known by most of the party’s members, and that the bringing of the minutes to the membership was forced on the C.C. because the members would not have accepted anything without seeing the minutes.<sup>151</sup>

Einstein Louison, brother of George Louison, said that:

some comrades are trying to justify a serious kind of complacency that frightens him. This matter is one of life or death of the Revolution. It was the members who forced this unto the C.C. On Comrade Bishop’s concerns he

said it is clear that Cde. Bishop lost touch with the reality around him. He also said that this is true of Cde. Bain. He pointed out that Cde. Bishop had failed to supervise the work and thus he criticised him for slackness.<sup>152</sup>

Further, he said that:

The C.C. comrades who did not vote for the (joint leadership) decision, but instead previously agreed to all the analysis of the crisis and problems remind him of what Marx said about some philosophers. He quoted: ‘The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however, is to change it’.<sup>153</sup>

Valdon Boldeau, a member of the party from St. John’s parish said:

he was happy with the C.C.’s discussions and conclusions. For some time now he has been unhappy with how the party was operating. He is now happy to see the C.C. openly and frankly discussing its problems and ... prepared to solve them.<sup>154</sup>

Boldeau was recording secretary to the Central Committee, and as such had been present throughout the C.C. meeting of September 14-16. He went on to state that in his view:

the criticism of Cde. Bishop at the C.C. plenary was honest and made from the standpoint of genuine respect and to pull the party out of the crisis. He said he supported the model of joint leadership. He reminded Cde. Bishop that C.C. decisions are binding on every party member and as leader he must be more willing to stand firm with the C.C. decision. Cde. Boldeau stated that if Cde. Bishop does not fulfill the decision this would lead to disrespect for the C.C. and for himself.<sup>155</sup>

Chester Humphrey, a party member of many years’ standing and Vice-President of the Technical and Allied Workers’ Union (TAWU) asked “what is the main issue?” He answered:

We are trying to rescue a dangerous situation. He asked, what is necessary to rescue the situation? He answered that one necessary ingredient is that of strengthening the C.C. and the party leadership and this is why he firmly supports joint leadership of the party between Cdes. Bishop and Coard, the two most outstanding comrades of the party, with different necessary strengths.<sup>156</sup>

Lex McBain said that:

since April 1981 the resolutions of the C.C. have been pointing to weak leadership within the C.C. but nothing was done. Therefore, if we (meet) and

(take) another such resolution and do nothing, then soon the party would disintegrate and the Revolution be overthrown.<sup>157</sup>

Claudette Pitt, member of the party since 1974, reminded Bro. Bishop that:

In the years before the Revolution he always singled out the excellent hard work of Cde. Coard and that he said in those days, had it not been for the tremendous hard work energy and foresight of Cde. Coard all of them, including himself would have given up the struggle. She said that she strongly supports the C.C. decisions.<sup>158</sup>

Earlier, after many members had spoken, but before any other women member had contributed, Edlyn Lambert, another rank and file member of the party and also a stalwart of the years of anti-Gairy struggle spoke. Laughingly, she said

That if the women of the party did not speak the [long] meeting could not have ended.<sup>159</sup>

She then said that:

The matters raised in the minutes are of no threat to the Revolution since the majority of the party members know of the problems and difficulties of the C.C. The threat to the Revolution, she said, is the continuous failure of the C.C. to tell the members the truth and to act to overcome weaknesses and shortcomings.<sup>160</sup>

In an appeal to Bro. Bishop on behalf of all members present, she said,

In May Cde. Bishop called on every party member 'to walk the extra mile'...how can we walk the extra mile if you do not set the pace for us?<sup>161</sup>

She then begged Bro. Bishop to.

To think of the many lives that would be lost if the party does not come out of the crisis so the Revolution could move forward.<sup>162</sup>

In all, during the meeting, there were speeches by more than thirty party members. The overwhelming sentiment was in favour of the joint leadership proposal.

Close to midnight, Peter David, an ordinary member of the party proposed a resolution ratifying the C.C. decision on joint leadership. A vote was taken on the Resolution. Everyone at the meeting including Bro. Bishop himself, all other members of the C.C. present, and all party members voted in favour of the C.C.'s decision on joint leadership<sup>163</sup> and it was thereby adopted as an official decision of the party's General Meeting.

Both Bros. Coard and Bishop then addressed the meeting:

Bro. Bernard Coard:

pledged to the party that he would put every ounce of effort to building the process and he knows that Cde. Bishop would do the same ... for they both owed it to the party and the revolution and Grenadian working class to do all that is possible to build the revolution. <sup>164</sup> (applause)

and the minutes read on

Comrade Bishop stands and embraces Comrade Coard. <sup>165</sup>

symbolising his acceptance of the party's decision, and his willingness to work jointly with Bro. Coard for the good of the party, revolution and working people.

Bro. Bishop then addressed the meeting, and stated his acceptance of the party's decision and willingness to carry it out. He said:

I sincerely accept the criticism and will fulfil the decision. <sup>166</sup>

The next day, September 26<sup>th</sup>, Candidate Members of the party met, discussed the C.C. minutes for a period of eight hours, and voted unanimously to support the joint leadership decision adopted by the full General Meeting the previous day. <sup>167</sup>

**The decision for Joint Leadership of the NJM party, then, far from being approached in a conspiratorial manner, was submitted to open and exceedingly frank and full discussion at all levels of the party, and adopted by an overwhelming vote.**

### **SEPTEMBER 25-OCTOBER 12: THE REAL CONSPIRATORS AT WORK**

So by the end of September 26<sup>th</sup>, the party, Central Committee, full members and candidate members of the NJM – all adopted the decision for a joint leadership within the party. Bro. Bishop and Bro. Unison Whiteman, who had previously abstained on the question, when it came before the C.C., now accepted it by voting in support of the proposal on September 25<sup>th</sup>.

The resolution of this issue, and the high quality and unity of the September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting was the cause of

great joy, and everybody went to Maurice Bishop's house. <sup>168</sup>

afterwards to have drinks, and continue the expression of happiness, as a witness at the 1984 Preliminary Inquiry testified.

But one party leader was not present on September 25<sup>th</sup>: George Louison. He was away in Hungary; leading the advance delegation for the Prime Minister's official visit to that country. It will be remembered that he alone of the C.C. had voted against the joint leadership decision when it was first proposed at the C.C. meeting of 14-16 September.

**On September 26<sup>th</sup> Bro. Bishop left on his state visit to Hungary and Czechoslovakia. It is on this trip that the unity of the party and its leadership was finally undermined. For it appears certain from the evidence available that George Louison adopted a systematic policy aimed at getting Bro. Bishop to renege on his acceptance of the party's decision.**

Additionally, he deliberately spread disinformation among the party members who were also part of the delegation. He worked overtime, conjuring up images of some 'evil conspiracy' aimed at removing Bro. Bishop as leader of the party and revolution.

While in Hungary, he called a meeting of all party members who were also part of the delegation, to discuss the issue of Joint leadership. Bro. Bishop did not attend this meeting. Louison's explanation for his [Bishop's] absence, according to party members present on the trip, one of whom gave evidence at the time of the 1984 Preliminary Inquiry, was that

Maurice needed more time to consider the joint leadership issue,<sup>169</sup>

since no final decision was yet made on the matter, he assured them. In the course of the meeting, he attacked a number of C.C. members who supported the joint leadership issue, and castigated the 'joint leadership proposal'.<sup>170</sup>

Outside of the meeting, he told some leading party members on the trip that it was indeed a conspiracy to remove the Prime Minister from the leadership, led by Bro. Coard. He told them that

Maurice told him that Liam James, [the Political Bureau member who first proposed joint leadership], said to him that Cde. Coard was the first to raise the joint leadership idea.<sup>171</sup>

As further 'proof' of this conspiracy, he told party members that

Maurice had a discussion with Liam on September 13<sup>th</sup>, on the upcoming C.C. meeting, and not once did Liam James give any hint of dissatisfaction with his [Maurice's] leadership, or of the joint leadership proposal to come.<sup>172</sup>

***Subsequently, Bro. Bishop (on October 12<sup>th</sup>) pointed out that none of these events ever took place, and that George Louison was lying.***<sup>173</sup>

As Errol George, a prosecution witness at the Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder of Maurice Bishop and others, said:

George Louison attempted to come between Coard and Bishop during the trip in Hungary because when we left Grenada there was agreement for joint

leadership, but in Hungary George Louison was saying that Maurice did not agree to the joint leadership.<sup>174</sup>

Indeed, Louison was successful. Throughout the duration of the trip, Bro. Bishop, contrary to all custom and practice, did not communicate with Grenada, or with Bros. Coard and Strachan, not even to inform them of the day and time of his return. Before then, as a rule, whenever any of those three ministers of Government travelled, regular communication, through telephone was maintained, in order to exchange information on the progress of the official visits, and on the situation back home. Now this rule was not observed for the first time in 4½ years.<sup>175</sup>

It is the opinion of the vast majority of party members that Brother Bishop's final acceptance of joint leadership at the end of the September 25<sup>th</sup> General Meeting was sincere; that at that moment Bro. Bishop genuinely intended to carry out the decision. It is also the opinion of many members that, as one member put it:

if George Louison had not worked day and night on Cde. Maurice, he would have come home and implemented the decision. The combination of his skills in inspiring the people and Cde. Bernard's skills in party organisation would definitely have strengthened the revolution, who knows, maybe the Yankees wouldn't have found it so easy to invade? ... at least Grenada would not have suffered the shame we have gone through. And all because George Louison was looking to be Cde. Bishop's right-hand man – that's the *real* reason he fought against joint leadership. That's why he did everything he could to change Cde. Maurice's mind, by every underhand means, including all manner of lies against the rest of the leadership.<sup>176</sup>

Meanwhile, the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was not idle. It is now known that the CIA was successful in penetrating both the NJM and the PRG at the highest levels. They established a nest of hostile agents who had access to documents of the Central Committee and PRG.

One member of this nest was a Caribbean born woman who came to Grenada in the earliest days following the Revolution. She moved to Grenada from the United States of America, where she had been living for several years. She proceeded to ingratiate herself with Bro. Bishop. She became a close friend, developed some influence on him, and most importantly because of his trust of her, was able to gain access to Party documents containing all the inner workings and secrets of the Party.

From April 1983 we warned Bro. Bishop that we were fairly certain this woman was working for the CIA.<sup>177</sup>

Says an NJM Party member known as Andy, who was a senior official in the PRG's Ministry of National Security,

she had been living in the USA for several years where she worked as a secretary. She came to visit Grenada only one week after the March 13 Revolution, and she made a pass at Cde. Maurice. When she saw that he was

attracted to her, she moved to Grenada and took a job in the civil service which brought her into frequent contact with Cde. Maurice. Then she bought a large and expensive house – cash down! How could she afford that on a secretary's or middle level civil servant's salary? So we investigated, and we laid out the information we gathered to the Cde. Leader. He was upset and disturbed, there was no doubt about that. He cooled the relationship for a few months. But she kept at him, and after a while he just couldn't resist her. She was able to go in and out of his house as she liked, including into all the rooms where he kept confidential party and state files. Within six months of his death she married a leading member of another political party in Grenada.<sup>178</sup>

This penetration put the CIA in a position to know of the differences in the party from the time they surfaced and to stimulate them. They did exactly that. Once it became known that differences had arisen inside the leadership, the CIA activated all their agents in Grenada with the task of fanning these differences and sewing the seeds of destruction.

From all the evidence now available it would appear that there were at least three agents in the delegation which accompanied Bro. Bishop to Hungary. The woman previously mentioned, as on other occasions in the past, was a member of his official delegation on this visit, in her capacity as a civil servant. Also included in the Prime Minister's delegation was a prominent Caribbean Journalist working for the Grenada Government. He also had come to Grenada from the USA, where he had lived previously for many years. He also had become personally close to Bro. Bishop, who regarded him not just as a civil servant but as a friend of Grenada and a personal friend. Of him Andy says

we were watching him – we had certain information on him which caused us to put a question mark beside his name. But it was his actions on October 19<sup>th</sup> which conclusively demonstrated his CIA connections. Because at the very moment when the crowd was taking Bro. Bishop from his home, this same man was sticking up workers at the telephone company with a gun, demanding that they cut certain people's telephone lines, and that they get him through to RFG [Radio Free Grenada]. He had a statement in his hand already prepared, which said that the people took Bro. Bishop from his home and up to Fort Rupert. This was even before Cde. Bishop even left his home. So this shows that the storming of Fort Rupert was planned in advance by other elements outside, and that this same man was working as part of this same group whose purpose was to cause bloodshed that day.<sup>179</sup>

And then there was the agent who had apparently penetrated the Party most deeply: the personal security officer who Bro. Bishop trusted most deeply. Of him Andy says

we never suspected him until it was too late – he was always beside Cde. Bishop, he would often be on duty working 18 hours a day, his devotion to Cde. Bishop had always seemed so outstanding. And Cde. Bishop himself had complete confidence in him. He even recommended him for membership in

the party and for promotion to the rank of Lieutenant in the Armed Forces. There was no one who Cde. Bishop trusted more among his personal security officers. As it turned out, he had been acting as an agent provocateur for some time, attempting to stir up trouble within the party leadership. However, his activities were so cleverly carried out that the Ministry of National Security was unaware of what was going on until things got out of hand – his actions in stimulating the crisis came as a real shock to us.<sup>180</sup>

On the night before Bro. Bishop returned home, Cletus St. Paul, Chief Personal Security Officer to Bro. Bishop, telephoned home to the overall Chief of the Personal Security Department enquiring about the situation in the country, and saying, to him that

those men and them in the Central Committee f..king up the chief, but blood will flow.<sup>181</sup>

In the same conversation he mentioned the name of Bro. Coard several times in threatening language.

This was viewed as an extremely serious matter by the Security Services; more so because the previous month, information had reached the highest levels of the security services, that in October 1982, nearly a year previously, the said Cletus St. Paul had raised with at least two persons, the question of killing Bro. Coard.<sup>182</sup>

**The work of George Louison on the trip to Hungary was therefore strongly complemented and reinforced by the hostile activity of the CIA, for though there is no evidence to show that Louison had any links with the CIA, in practice he was working in unison with them, although in pursuit of his own narrow ends.**

**So what clearly developed on P.M. Bishop's 2-week trip to Hungary and Czechoslovakia was objectively a coming together of the forces of Louison and the CIA; both, for their own respective reasons, aimed at getting Bro. Bishop to defy the Party's decision, and hence objectively to split the Party.**

In short, Bro. Maurice Bishop at that crucial moment was literally surrounded by forces who were drumming into his head, night and day that he should not accept the sharing of the Party's Leadership. This constant pressure on Bro. Bishop was combined with his own personal weaknesses, especially his well known tendency to allow close personal friends to have unusual sway over him, and his tendency as seen in the NJM documents, to resent criticism.

**It was this confluence of forces and tendencies, the chemistry of the joint operation of Louison and the CIA, that in the final analysis led to Bro. Bishop's slide off the path of principle, and into a road of defiance of the Party's decision which was bound to effectively split the party and its leadership. It was in these circumstances that Bro. Bishop a few days later (October 12) took the incredible step of initiating the rumour against Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard, which was bound to split the unity of the party and people.**

On their return home on October 8<sup>th</sup> several NJM party members who had been on the visit to Hungary, expressed great concern to C.C. and other party members about the developments on the trip, for they had received conflicting reports: on the one hand, other party members who came along with Bro. Bishop after the September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting,

were telling them about the September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, the decision for joint leadership, and the joy and happiness afterwards; and on the other hand, there was George Louison, telling them about ‘conspiracy’ and ‘proof’ Maurice had of conspiracy, that no decision was yet arrived at, and that:

Maurice was still considering the issue of joint leadership.<sup>183</sup>

Further, comrades expressed concern about the emotional and psychological state of Bro. Bishop, which they described as getting progressively worse as the trip went on.<sup>184</sup>

George Louison, on his return home, continued his activities, attempting to canvass other NJM party members with his ‘conspiracy’ and ‘no final decision’ position. From all accounts he was firmly rebuffed by party members at home, for they knew the facts, all of them having been present at the September 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> meetings.<sup>185</sup>

He therefore mobilised Kenrick Radix to assist him in his campaign, passing the minutes of the Central Committee meetings of September 14-16 to him. Both he and Radix proceeded to mobilise key non-party persons, who were influential in their communities, and in the larger society, and even leaked to them sections of the minutes critical of Bro. Bishop, interpreting it to them as evidence of a plot to remove Bro. Bishop.<sup>186</sup> Inevitably, between October 8-14, these deliberate leaks also reached several local agents of the U.S. CIA, supplementing the information already passed to them by their agents around Bro. Bishop, updating it, adding to it and indicating to the CIA how Radix and Louison could be ‘assisted’ by the CIA in trouble making activities aimed at provoking more trouble, and if possible, some degree of violence which could be used to justify the already planned U.S. invasion of Grenada.

Thus the general situation: The activities of George Louison, both in Eastern Europe and on his return home, the activities of the CIA nest around Bro. Bishop; Bro. Bishop’s failure to communicate with the other members of the party and Revolution while he was on his trip and the threats of Cletus St. Paul – set off a vicious spiral of distrust which apparently led to the virtual breakdown of effective communication for a few critical days, at a time when it was most needed, namely from October 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, immediately after Bro. Bishop’s return home.

Once the rumour was spread, once Bro. Bishop was confined to his home on October 13<sup>th</sup>, the CIA stepped up its work to ensure that no healing would take place. CIA agents actively began sowing more rumours and confusion in villages and communities throughout the country. Overnight, they became the firmest supporters of Bishop. Their activities were backed up by the hostile media in the region, especially the radio stations beaming into Grenada, which, fed by the U.S. Embassy in Barbados and its agents in Grenada, also became overnight converts to what they proclaimed to be the cause of Bishop. Together they worked overtime to ensure that the problems of the NJM and Grenada Revolution came to a head. They did not intend to allow this long awaited opportunity to pass.<sup>187</sup>

Thus between October 14-19, the propaganda campaign of the U.S. mounted in the regional media, was escalated rapidly; as were the locally organised, ‘CIA assisted’ demonstrations.

Thus it would appear that between September 25<sup>th</sup> and October 12<sup>th</sup> there certainly was a conspiracy: but amazingly not the conspiracy of ‘Coard and his clique’ so well publicised against those imprisoned and therefore powerless to reply.

**Instead, what emerges is two separate conspiracies: one by Louison and Radix, determined to impose their will on the NJM by any and all means, cost it what it might; and the other by the CIA under Ronald Reagan.**

The CIA rapidly activated its ‘sleeping agents’ in Grenada, professionally intervening with a skill, an experience and ruthlessness born of thousands of intelligence operations to bring down Governments all over the world which the mighty U.S.A. decides must be removed. These were the only conspiracies for which we could find any factual evidence.

### **OCTOBER 13-19: THE STRUGGLES FOR PEACE, AND FOR CIVIL WAR**

The chief prosecuting lawyers in the murder case against the NJM 20 (now 19) have stated categorically (though without supporting evidence) that at some point between October 13-19, a decision was taken by the rest of the leadership to murder Bro. Bishop, in order to achieve the objective of taking power from him.<sup>188</sup>

This is really a new version of the original conspiracy accusation levelled by the U.S. But what do the facts, including the *written facts*, reveal?

A number of facts indicate that although – or perhaps because – the national situation was very tense and deteriorating rapidly, the NJM-CC’s efforts for a peaceful solution to the crisis, far from being abandoned, were actually *stepped up*. For one thing, action was taken by the army leadership (several of whom were C.C. members), to prevent any further deterioration of the situation through a possible confrontation between demonstrators and members of the Armed Forces, by deliberately *not* deploying any members of the army or police service at the demonstrations. As one officer of the People’s Revolutionary Army says:

During that period it was made clear to the Army that there was an internal dispute which the party itself must solve; furthermore, that any confrontations between soldiers of the PRA and the masses would only worsen the situation... orders were again given for all soldiers to remain in barracks, no soldiers were to be permitted anywhere near the demonstrations.<sup>189</sup>

At the same time, an investigative team was set up within the Ministry of National Security, to

1. Inquire into circumstances surrounding the initiation and spreading of the rumour on October 12, and any other related facts bearing on the present crisis, and
2. to indicate whether and which of the persons involved are either known or thought to be working for foreign intelligence services.<sup>190</sup>

We were instructed to submit a report within 2 weeks <sup>191</sup>

says a member of the team.

Meanwhile, efforts were being made by the Central Committee majority to resolve the crisis through negotiations.

Although George Louison had been expelled from the NJM Central Committee and Political Bureau on October 12<sup>th</sup>, following reports by NJM party members concerning his activities on the visit to Hungary, he was invited, nonetheless, to meet with Bros. Coard, Strachan and Whiteman, in an effort to work out a solution to the crisis – a fact which he admitted in July 1984 at the Preliminary Inquiry into the murder charges surrounding Bishop's death, saying:

On the following day which was Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> (October) I spoke to Bernard Coard and Selwyn Strachan in the company of Unison Whiteman. The discussion was about resolving the crisis that had developed in the party, and the country. We had gone to the discussions on the invitation of Bernard Coard. The discussions took part on the Saturday, part of Sunday and part of Monday. <sup>192</sup>

Between October 14-17, in fact, three such meetings took place between Bros. Coard, Strachan, Whiteman and Louison. However, as one party member comments:

After a few days a lot of people got to know that George [Louison] was talking to the C.C. comrades during the day and organizing demonstrations in the evenings. Visiting people all over the country to mobilize them. He had no interest in solving the crisis, only in creating more trouble. <sup>193</sup>

On the early evening of October 18<sup>th</sup>, George Louison, was detained for inciting the use of violence at demonstrations in conversations with several persons.

At about 10 p.m. on the night of October 18<sup>th</sup>, an emergency General Meeting of the party was held. The purpose of the meeting was not to announce the collapse of negotiations or the arrest of Louison, rather, the meeting was called to discuss an entirely new initiative by the Central Committee.

The minutes of the emergency G.M. of NJM Party members of October 18, 1983, record that the meeting was chaired by Political Bureau member Bro. John (Chalky) Ventour who was also the elected General Secretary of the Grenada Trade Union Council (TUC) and President of the Commercial and Industrial Workers Union (CIWU), and that two other members of the Central Committee were present: Bro. Leon Cornwall, Grenada's Ambassador to Cuba and formerly a popular officer in the PRA, holding the rank of Major, and Bro. Kamau Mc Barnette, Secretary for Information in the PRG.

And where were the other members of the Party Leadership? The Party members were soon to find out.

At this very moment said Bro. Ventour,

a delegation of four C.C. comrades – General Austin, Cde. Owusu James [Liam James], Cde. Headache [Ewart Layne] and Cde. Tan Bartholomew are meeting with Maurice.<sup>194</sup>

Bro. Ventour, who spoke first, told the meeting that the C.C. had met for several hours that day, had reviewed the events of the past five and had decided on

a compromise to end the present political crisis.<sup>195</sup>

Bro. Ventour continued, saying that

The C.C. was very shocked over the rate of events and by how rapidly the situation in the country had deteriorated during the last five days.<sup>196</sup>

He stated that the:

C.C. has taken into account the serious political discontent and anger of the masses towards the Party.<sup>197</sup>

He further revealed that:

as of this evening, 7 (seven), of the 11 (eleven) cabinet members have resigned, (and) this, qualitatively worsens the political crisis in the country.<sup>198</sup>

He then stated that:

Taking into account our working people's interest... (and the) pride and hope for the future with which working people the world over view Revolutionary Grenada, (the) C.C. has decided to put a compromise proposal to Cde. Maurice aimed at immediately ending the political crisis.<sup>199</sup>

Bro. Ventour then outlined the 5 point proposal which he said was at that moment being put to Bro. Bishop by the 4-man C.C. delegation. The C.C. proposal was as follows:

1. Cde. Bishop publicly accepts responsibility for the present political crisis in the country, as he had done at (the special general) meeting of M's, CM's and A's (Full members, Candidate members and Applicants of the party) last Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October. Maurice should publicly also accept responsibility for the rumour since both P.S. men (personal security officers) state Maurice gave them the rumour to spread. However, if Maurice refuses to do so, then, in (the) interest of quickly resolving (the) crisis, (the) party will put the Issue to rest. This will be put to him.
2. Revo (revolution) to continue along same path – C.C. doesn't anticipate there will be any difficulties in both sides agreeing to this.

3. Maurice of course to remain as P.M. and leader of Revo (Revolution).
4. In spite of strong feelings of party members expressed [on] October 13, Maurice should continue (as a) member of the P.B. and C.C. C.C. believes this (is) necessary for (the) smooth functioning of (the) party and Revolution.
5. (The) specific issue of (the) leadership of (the) party to be thrashed out in negotiations. C.C. will put to M (Maurice Bishop) that for (the) unity of the party he should accept party G.M. decision (for joint leadership); however, (it) will also be put to him that the Revo is seriously endangered – that whatever decision is necessary to save the Revo, it must be made – that if he still refuses the joint-leadership, (the) party is prepared to abandon (the) September 25 decision (on joint leadership).<sup>200</sup>

Bro. Ventour closed by regretting the absence of some Party members because of the impossibility of contacting everyone in time, given the fact the day's C.C. meeting had only ended around 8:30 p.m., after which the emergency G.M. was arranged for 10 p.m. that night. But given the rapidly deteriorating situation, he said, the delegation had to meet with Bro. Bishop that night, therefore the C.C. felt it should inform as many members as possible that night also. He hoped members would support the C.C.'s decision for compromise, he ended.

Bro. Leon Cornwall, popularly known to party members as 'Bogo' spoke next. He said that:

It is clear the situation is rapidly deteriorating...(the) masses don't understand the issue, they love Maurice, (and they) have been agitated by men like Dix and George (Kenrick Radix and George Louison). In the interest of the Revo we have to make a big compromise (and) this is a retreat.<sup>201</sup>

As a CC member with experience in both the military and the International Relations spheres he went on to warn that

this compromise is necessary because if things continue where there is so much tension and confusion in the country...then Imperialism would take advantage of this to overthrow the Revo and bring the country under Chilean-type fascist rule.<sup>202</sup>

Bro. Cornwall concluded that:

It is better to have the Revo with all its problems than to have no Revo, but instead a Chile.<sup>203</sup>

And finally, Kamau Mc. Barnette also presented the C.C.'s position. He said:

It is clear that Cde. Maurice is aware that the masses are with him (and) this strengthens his determination to hold to his position. (The) only sensible thing

to do is compromise... some people are saying we and Cde. Bishop must get together and settle up everything because this is looking bad.<sup>204</sup>

He also said he is sure that

U.S. Imperialism does not want us to settle this situation (and) is just waiting for the chance to pounce on the country and overthrow the Revo.<sup>205</sup>

He strongly urged on members that:

The C.C.'s decision to compromise or retreat is in the party and Revolution's best interest.<sup>206</sup>

**Thus on the 18<sup>th</sup> October the Central Committee, far from conspiring to remove Bro. Bishop from office, much less to kill him, was openly informing members of the party that its present collective position, arrived at that very afternoon, was that a compromise solution must be adopted in order to end the crisis, and that it was prepared to retreat on major issues, including the Party's decision on internal joint leadership, in the interest of bringing about an immediate end to the crisis.** The reasons for this decision are clearly stated. The overwhelming sentiment of the people of the country, and the clear perception that imperialism would take advantage of any drawn-out crisis to move militarily to overthrow the Revolution.

And what were the responses of party members? Initially, feelings on the proposed compromise were mixed. A number of party members expressed reservations about

Throwing the party's principles out the window, as they expressed it.<sup>207</sup>

How could the party enforce majority decisions on all members in future, they argued, if the leader of the party was allowed to defy an important and unanimous party decision, and then receive the agreement of the C.C. and party to his doing so? Some members predicted that there would be acute demoralization and even resignations if this type of compromise were arrived at. Others asked how could it be possible to simply forget that Maurice had been responsible for the spreading of a dreadful rumour against two fellow C.C. members? Would such an agreement lay a genuine basis for re-establishing the unity of the party? Or would it possibly lay the basis for 'one man rule' in the country in the future?<sup>208</sup>

Some members initially proposed that rather than seek an immediate and unsatisfactory compromise, the C.C. should meet with Bro. Bishop each day for a week, should reason with him and try to persuade him to stick to the path of principle. Other members felt strongly, however, that time was running out.<sup>209</sup>

One member warned that:

U.S. Imperialism would always try to exploit for their own purposes rifts, splits (or even tensions) in Revolutionary movements. Grenada (is) no

exception. Furthermore imperialism deliberately stimulates divisions between the Revolutionary movement and the people.<sup>210</sup>

He said he believes that:

Events of the few days have shown that Imperialism has agents on the ground (in the country) for that very purpose. (The) quicker we can resolve this situation so there is unity in (the) party and unity between party and masses, the better it would be for the Revo...he supports the decision to seek a compromise.<sup>211</sup>

Christopher Stroude, an Army Major, also spoke; and given the fact that he is one of the persons charged with murder, it is worth noting that he said that:

When he voted at (the) G.M. for joint leadership he did so in (the) interest of the party. But if things continue so (the) party would mash up and imperialism won't hesitate to land (its) troops...therefore... a compromise is correct.<sup>212</sup>

Another party member commented on the

U.S. propaganda offensive being carried throughout the region about 'power struggle' in the party and government between Cde. Maurice and Cde. Bernard.<sup>213</sup>

This he stated, has greatly worsened the situation. However, he also commented,

We (party members) are not able to reach the masses on this issue. People (are) not listening. They only want to hear what Maurice himself has to say... Maurice has used the masses' love for him to defy the party... It is a hard decision for party comrades...one man overturning the decision of the whole party. However, (the) situation is serious. U.S. imperialism (is) on the warpath these days – we can't forget Reagan and Weinberger's threats against Grenada. (I) agree we must compromise in order to save the Revolution.<sup>214</sup>

This was another meeting which ended near midnight. After much discussion, the membership, including those who at first expressed reservations, agreed to accept the position of the central committee. And so, the party was poised for a solution.

Meanwhile, the 4-man delegation from the C.C. met with Bro. Bishop. After midnight a senior official of the Ministry of National Security, Joseph Gilbert was contacted on a matter of urgency.

A member of the C.C. (he says) informed me that a delegation from the C.C. met with Cde. Maurice Bishop that evening. He told me they presented a compromise proposal to Cde. Bishop as a basis for negotiations to end the crisis, and his (Bishop's) position was that before he responds to it he will

want to discuss it with George Louison and Unison Whiteman. Cde. Bishop and the C.C. delegation agreed to meet again at around 10 a.m. the following day, 19<sup>th</sup> October, he said, and the C.C. would like Cde. Bishop to be in a position to be able to give them a reply on the proposal at that time, so that negotiations can go forward and the matter be settled quickly. I was therefore instructed to locate Cde. Whiteman and inform him of Cde. Bishop's wish to see him urgently; and also to organise immediately for George Louison, who was then detained at a Government protocol house in St. Paul's, to be brought to see Cde. Bishop early in the morning. I did organise for Louison to see Cde. Bishop early that morning. I was not successful in locating Unison Whiteman.  
215

George Louison, prosecution witness against the leadership of the NJM, and virulent in his public attacks on the NJM leadership since the invasion of Grenada, nevertheless confirms in his evidence at the Preliminary Inquiry of 1984 that

on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> [October] at around 7 a.m. I was taken and brought to Maurice Bishop's home... by 2 PRA soldiers I was told something and I was taken to see Maurice Bishop ...I spoke to Bishop. After speaking to him I was taken back to Park Estate. I returned there about 9 a.m.<sup>216</sup>

**It would appear, therefore, that Bro. Bishop was snatched from his home on the morning of the 19<sup>th</sup> at just around the hour when members of the C.C. delegation would have been preparing to meet with him, thus effectively cancelling a meeting which could have led to a solution to the crisis, and substituting instead the tragedy which was to be used as the basis for the U.S. invasion of Grenada. While the party leadership was preparing, was struggling, for a peaceful solution, others were struggling for civil war.**

There is no doubt that the majority of the crowd which took Bro. Bishop from his home acted out of a deep love and loyalty to him. Moreover, the majority of the crowd wanted to hear from him as to the reasons for the crisis. And fully expected him to address them from the market square, where microphones had been set up earlier that morning of the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**There is also no doubt, however, that there were other elements in the crowd with other ideas, other intentions. For, mysteriously, there appeared in the October 19 demonstration placards with pro-American slogans such as 'We love America' and 'God bless America'. On October 19, just how did the United States of America fit into an internal national crisis? Indeed, that question must be asked, along with others, such as, who was it who actively incited the seizure of the Army Headquarters by the crowd? Why did Bro. Bishop decide not to speak in the market square but to lead a civilian crowd to storm Fort Rupert, the Headquarters of the Army and Ministry of Defence? And which 'trusted friend' advised him to have weapons distributed to the most uncontrollable elements in the crowd, thus ensuring a bloody clash between Army and Armed civilians?**

**For, as witnesses at the Preliminary Inquiry testified,**

**Guns were taken from the armoury and distributed to civilians...I saw a very large number of civilians and ex-soldiers with guns before the armoured cars arrived... the weapons were AK 47's and about 2 sub-machine guns, and pistols. Most of them were AK 47's.**<sup>217</sup>

And

**(After the battle at Fort Rupert) I saw soldiers as well as others lying on the ground...as if wounded or dead. I saw quite a few lying in military uniform.**<sup>218</sup>

Who were the real conspirators on October 19? The guilt of Louison and Radix is already clear. But who are those other unpatriotic Grenadians willing to work with the CIA, willing to go to any lengths, eager to deliberately provoke bloodshed, willing to gamble Maurice Bishop's life, together with those of civilians and soldiers, in order to bring down the Revolution?

*Their names may yet be revealed.*

## Conclusion

On June 19, 1980, a bomb was set off at a mass rally in Queen's Park, St. George's, underneath the building where the leadership of the Revolution was sitting. Three persons were killed, 96 injured.

The bomb was apparently carded to go off at 3 p.m. but went off at 3.12 p.m.

At 3.04 p.m., eight minutes *before* the bomb went off, the U.S. Embassy in Barbados put out a release which was broadcast over Radio Barbados, stating a bomb went off at Queen's Park, St. George's, killing Maurice Bishop and other leaders of the Revolution.

In August 1983, the Government of Barbados began stockpiling medicines and other medical means for military uses. These facilities were used as medical support for the October invasion of Grenada. This action was actually commented on at the time by the Barbadian leader of the Opposition and former Prime Minister, Mr. Errol Barrow, who saw it as sinister, as the quantities involved would satisfy the needs of an army several times the size of Barbados' Army.

The U.S. Ambassador to France, in an interview broadcast over many radio stations in the first few days following the U.S. invasion of Grenada, revealed that the decision to invade Grenada was actually taken before October 12<sup>th</sup>. In other words, long before the death of Maurice Bishop, and even before the spreading of the rumour on October 12<sup>th</sup>, which made the crisis public, the Government of Ronald Reagan had taken a firm decision to invade Grenada. Tiny Grenada, with its economy growing every year of the Revolution, with unemployment falling rapidly, with its many new projects and

programmes to benefit the poor and working people, was becoming too clear an example of what can be achieved when a Revolutionary Government exercises its power in the interest of the working class and working people. Too many citizens of Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and other Caribbean territories were visiting Grenada, 'to see for themselves' what was going on. Too many were impressed with what they saw.

And so, the Government of the U.S.A. by early 1983 took a decision to invade Grenada. By August they had the Government of Barbados stock-piling medical supplies to back their invasion of Grenada.

For the U.S.A., for Ronald Reagan, the genuine internal difficulties within the NJM, intensified by the opportunism of George Louison and Kenrick Radix must have come as an unexpected birthday present. For indeed, Chilean-type Fascist rule has all too often followed a U.S. invasion, and this exposes the U.S. as the international bully, which it is. **But in the case of Grenada the U.S. found a people deeply shocked by an entirely unexpected crisis in a party and Government traditionally extraordinarily united; a people in mourning for a beloved leader, a people terrified and traumatised by their first ever military invasion, the first real war in our country with six days of fighting between PRA and U.S. forces, which left more than one hundred Grenadians killed in the US bombing and shelling and gunfire. A people, moreover, who could not grasp how and why this had all come about. A people shocked and bewildered. A people desperately seeking answers.**

And so, the United States provided answers. It's simple, they said: **The Revolution is gone, not because the U.S. Government overthrew it, but because your 'corrupt leaders' betrayed you. Your beloved Prime Minister is dead as a result of a greedy 'power struggle' by his Deputy, and a group of 'radical leftist' in the leadership, as a result of a 'conspiracy' to remove Bishop from power, as a result of deliberate executions ordered by those 'corrupt leaders'.**

Forthwith, every leader of the Revolution left alive was rapidly locked up (including even Christopher De Riggs, Minister of Health, who was out of the country from October 13<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>) while notably Radix and Louison were left free); meanwhile the U.S.-organized trial and conviction by the media continued day after day, month after month. Five months later, all except De Riggs were officially charged with murder.

***However, as this paper has shown, there was no group of 'radical leftists' struggling for power; there were genuine problems within the NJM and those problems were fully and openly discussed and democratic decisions taken to resolve them.*** But by the time the Americans issued their charges for murder, their version of the Grenada crisis, as asserted constantly through the media, had gained wide credibility.

And so, many of the Grenadian people – though by no means all – came to believe, in the months after the invasion, that there were no national leaders left whom they could trust; and thus the Americans were able to achieve their most coveted aim. The passive acceptance by Grenadians of foreign occupation, followed by continuing neo-colonial rule over Grenada by the United States.

At the same time the United States hopes that in the climate of public hostility which it has created those whom it has identified as 'murderers', will unquestioningly be convicted and hanged, thus wiping out the entire remaining leadership of the Revolution, and ensuring uncontested rule over Grenada by the U.S. for many decades to come. **We**

**believe that there is a very real possibility of a miscarriage of justice occurring in the trial of the 19 leaders and soldiers of the Revolution.**

This paper has sought to demonstrate that the NJM documents in which were faithfully recorded the facts about the crisis *while it was actually developing, while the events were actually taking place* – those documents indicated clearly that the Government of the United States has blatantly lied to the Grenadians and the world about the nature and true events of the Grenada crisis of October, 1983.

We believe that these lies are intended to mask from public view and examination, the truth about who was *really* struggling for power in Grenada, namely, *the United States itself*. To accomplish this aim, the Reagan Administration has undertaken a truly massive propaganda campaign world wide, and especially within the Caribbean region, and most particularly within Grenada itself. The extent to which the lies of the United States have been believed and accepted, even by honest people in Grenada, the region and the world, is one measure of the success of the Reagan operation which *we* code name ‘Pacification through propaganda’.

We believe that the facts revealed by the NJM documents as well as by party members who lived through the crisis, command attention. Yes, there undoubtedly was a struggle for power; yes there *was* a conspiracy, but, it would appear, not by those targeted as conspirators by the U.S.! Who then led the conspiracy in Grenada? **The essential truth which we believe confronts all Grenadian patriots, all honest citizens of our region, all people world wide who care about justice, is as follows:**

The United States Government, determined to overthrow the Grenada Revolution, took action to deliberately intensify genuine problems within the NJM party, (problems already stimulated by the work of local opportunists), and when it saw, on October 18, that the prospect of a solution was real and immediate, the U.S. took further action to ensure bloodshed which could be used as the excuse for a military invasion.

The United States of America did indeed struggle for power in Grenada, and – for the moment – Ronald Reagan has won.

We say ‘for the moment’ because we know that in the history of mankind, no people have been permanently subjected to foreign rule.

Today South Africa, tomorrow Chile, and in the future, there will also once again be a free and Revolutionary Grenada!

*If you are interested in reading more about the "Grenada 17", you can visit their web site: [www.grenada17.cwc.net](http://www.grenada17.cwc.net)*

## Footnotes

- 
- <sup>1</sup> The two soldiers from the Armoured cars killed at Fort Rupert on October 19<sup>th</sup> 1983 were Officer Cadet Conrad Mayers and Warrant Officer Raphael Mason. They were shot by civilians who had been armed.
- <sup>2</sup> Line of March of the Party, (emphasis ours)
- <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>11</sup> Minutes of the meeting of the (NJM) Central Committee held on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1982: Item 4, Line of March/Way Forward.
- <sup>12</sup> *Grenada Documents: An Overview and Selection*, released by the U.S. Department of State and the Department of Defense, September, 1984, Washington D.C. Introduction, Page 1
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, Introduction, page 2
- <sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, Introduction, page 1 and 14
- <sup>15</sup> Michael Ledeen and Herbert Romerstein.
- <sup>16</sup> *Grenada Documents*, op.cit, Introduction, page 14
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, Introduction, page 15
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, Introduction, page 14
- <sup>19</sup> Minutes of Emergency Meeting of NJM Central Committee dated 26<sup>th</sup> August 1983, indicate a one item agenda: "Concerns of party membership". On this item Liam James: "We are seeing the beginning of the disintegration of the party", Christopher De Riggs (Kojo) "the report tells us that there is a grave danger of open rebellion and disintegration of our party". Maurice Bishop: "(I am) in agreement with Owusu (Liam James) that we are faced with the threat of disintegration".
- <sup>20</sup> Central Committee resolutions of April 5<sup>th</sup> 1981; Resolution 1, preamble.
- <sup>21</sup> Minutes of Central Committee meeting held Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> December, 1981: (Agenda item 1: "Review of 5<sup>th</sup> April, 1981 Resolutions)
- <sup>22</sup> Minutes of the meeting of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement held on the 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1983, Agenda item 2: "State of the Party".
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, Phyllis Coard
- <sup>24</sup> *Ibid*, Dave (Tan) Bartholomew
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, Leon (Bogo) Cornwall
- <sup>26</sup> *Ibid*, Maurice Bishop
- <sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, Maurice Bishop
- <sup>28</sup> Minutes of the Central Committee Meeting on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June 1982, (Party Leadership)
- <sup>29</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>33</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>34</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>36</sup> *Ibid* (Tasks)
- <sup>37</sup> At the April 1982 C.C. meeting.
- <sup>38</sup> Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee of NJM from Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 1982
- <sup>39</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>40</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>42</sup> *Ibid*

- 
- <sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, decision 13, membership of C.C. and P.B.
- <sup>44</sup> Minutes of meeting of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement, held on the 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1982
- <sup>45</sup> Interview with Reginald Taylor, member of the NJM, conducted in July and August 1985. ***Except for those identified by name in the minutes of meetings, all names of NJM members and civil servants in the PRG have been changed, to protect them from victimization and other forms of official harassment.***
- <sup>46</sup> Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee of NJM from Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October, 1982, op.cit
- <sup>47</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>48</sup> Interview with Reginald Taylor, July and August 1985.
- <sup>49</sup> Interview with Reginald Taylor and Judy Charles, members of the NJM who were present at the Party General meeting of November 1982. Interview conducted in August 1985.
- <sup>50</sup> Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee of NJM from Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 1982, op.cit, sequence of C.C. meetings, decision 4, (ii).
- <sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, decision 4 (i)
- <sup>52</sup> Speech by U.S. President Ronald Reagan, March 10, 1983, reported on *Radio Free Grenada* and several radio stations in the Caribbean Region.
- <sup>53</sup> Our country is in danger: National pamphlets issued by the NJM on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1983, subtitle.
- <sup>54</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>55</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>56</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>57</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>58</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>59</sup> Reports of workshop 1, (personal copy of Peter Bain, Workshop leader) from weekend study retreat, May 1983.
- <sup>60</sup> Report of workshop 3 (personal copy of Ann Simon, Workshop recording secretary), for weekend study retreat, May 1983.
- <sup>61</sup> Report of workshop 3, quoted above.
- <sup>62</sup> Statement attributed to Peter Bain by Ann Simon, in interview with her conducted in September 1985.
- <sup>63</sup> Interview with Ian Bain, Jenny Fleming and Ann Simon, conducted September, 1985.
- <sup>64</sup> Interview with Ian Bain, Jenny Fleming and Ann Simon, conducted September, 1985.
- <sup>65</sup> Central Committee Report on First Plenary Session, 13-19 July, 1983, Section 1.
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, dated July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1983
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid*, Section 1 (d)
- <sup>71</sup> *Ibid*, Section 1 (c)
- <sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, Section 1 (b)
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>74</sup> Minutes of emergency meeting of NJM Central Committee dated 26<sup>th</sup> August 1983.
- <sup>75</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>85</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>86</sup> Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee of the NJM, 14-16 September 1983.
- <sup>87</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>88</sup> *Ibid*

---

89 *Ibid*

90 *Ibid*

91 *Ibid*

92 *Ibid*

93 *Ibid*

94 *Ibid*

95 *Ibid*

96 *Ibid*

97 *Ibid*

98 *Ibid*

99 *Ibid*

100 *Ibid*

101 *Ibid*

102 *Ibid*

103 *Ibid*

104 *Ibid*

105 *Ibid*

106 *Ibid*

107 *Ibid*

108 *Ibid*

109 *Ibid*

110 *Ibid*

111 *Ibid*

112 *Ibid*

113 *Ibid*

114 *Ibid*

115 *Ibid*

116 *Ibid*

117 *Ibid*

118 *Ibid*

119 Minutes of Emergency Meeting of NJM Central Committee dated 26<sup>th</sup> August, 1983, op.cit.

120 Extraordinary Meeting of the Central Committee NJM 14-16 September, 1983.

121 *Ibid*

122 *Ibid*

123 *Ibid*

124 *Ibid*

125 *Ibid*

126 *Ibid*

127 *Ibid*

128 Decision 2: Formalization of Joint Leadership

129 *Ibid*

130 *Ibid*

131 *Ibid*

132 *Ibid*

133 *Ibid*

134 *Ibid*

135 *Ibid*

136 *Ibid*

137 *Ibid*

138 *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983

139 *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983

140 *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983

141 *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983

142 *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983

143 *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983

- 
- <sup>144</sup> *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983
- <sup>145</sup> *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983
- <sup>146</sup> *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983
- <sup>147</sup> *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983
- <sup>148</sup> *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983
- <sup>149</sup> *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983
- <sup>150</sup> *Ibid*, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 1983
- <sup>151</sup> General Meeting of full members (of the NJM) Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> September, 1983. Minutes, p27, and see also p16.
- <sup>152</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>153</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>154</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>155</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>156</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>157</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>158</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>159</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>160</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>161</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>162</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>163</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>164</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>165</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>166</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>167</sup> Minutes of Extraordinary meeting of Candidate Members of NJM Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September, 1983.
- <sup>168</sup> Deposition of Errol Seaton George, given at the Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder of Maurice Bishop and others against Andy Mitchell and others, 11<sup>th</sup> July, 1984, see p5 of the evidence.
- <sup>169</sup> *Ibid*. Confirmed interview with Cecil Alexander, Joseph Phillip, and Sharon Mitchell, NJM members present on Bro. Bishop's official visit to Hungary and Czechoslovakia in late September-early October 1983.
- <sup>170</sup> Interviews with Cecil Alexander, Joseph Phillip, and Sharon Mitchell, NJM members present on Bro. Bishop's official visit to Hungary and Czechoslovakia in late September-early October 1983. Interviews conducted in July and August, 1985.
- <sup>171</sup> Interview with Cecil Alexander, Joseph Phillip, and Sharon Mitchell.
- <sup>172</sup> Interview with Cecil Alexander, Joseph Phillip, and Sharon Mitchell.
- <sup>173</sup> Minutes of Political Bureau meeting, 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1983.
- <sup>174</sup> Deposition of Errol Seaton George, op.cit, p12.
- <sup>175</sup> Interview with George Robinson, administrative officer attached to the Personal Security Unit at Mt. Wheldale, August 1985, quote: "The Comrade Leader always called to Cde. Coard and Cde. Strachan when he was abroad. But while he was away in Hungary he didn't do so. We at home were not even sure of the date of his return, whether he would get back on the 8<sup>th</sup> October or spend a week in Cuba and return on the 15<sup>th</sup>. No one from his delegation called at all until the night before his return. And then, what a call! (The reference in the last phrase is to the phone call from Cletus St. Paul, later referred to).
- <sup>176</sup> Statement of Cecil Alexander. This sentiment was echoed by almost all the NJM members interviewed.
- <sup>177</sup> Three interviews with Andy Church, official in the Ministry of National Security, conducted in July and August 1985.
- <sup>178</sup> Interviews with Andy Church.
- <sup>179</sup> Interviews with Andy Church.
- <sup>180</sup> Interviews with Andy Church.
- <sup>181</sup> Interview with Adrian Thomas, officer of the Mt. Wheldale Personal Security Unit, conducted in September 1985.
- <sup>182</sup> Interviews with Andy Church, July and August 1985.
- <sup>183</sup> Interviews with Cecil Alexander, Sharon Mitchell and Joseph Phillip, op.cit.
- <sup>184</sup> Interviews with Cecil Alexander, Sharon Mitchell and Joseph Phillip, op.cit.
- <sup>185</sup> Interviews with Alexander Hayes and Richard Donovan.

- 
- <sup>186</sup> Interview with Andy Church, op.cit.
- <sup>187</sup> Numerous reports on *Radio Antilles*, *Radio Trinidad*, *610 Radio*, *Barbados Rediffusion*, as well as newspaper reports in *Trinidad Express* and *Guardian*, *Barbados Advocate* and *Nation*, and others during 14-19 October 1983.
- <sup>188</sup> Closing submissions of Mr. Karl Hudson Phillip, Q.C., leader of the Prosecution, at the Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder of Maurice Bishop and others, August 8, 1984.
- <sup>189</sup> Interview with Arthur Hayes, officer of the People's Revolutionary Army (PRA).
- <sup>190</sup> Quoted from personal notes of Joseph Gilbert, senior official of the PRG's Ministry of National Security.
- <sup>191</sup> Interview with Joseph Gilbert and Andy Church, conducted in August 1985.
- <sup>192</sup> Deposition of George Louison, given as evidence for the Prosecution in the Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder of Maurice Bishop and others, 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1984, pp 184-185. On page 183, Louison also admits that he was expelled from the P.B. and C.C. on October 12<sup>th</sup>.
- <sup>193</sup> Interview with David Jones, conducted September 1985.
- <sup>194</sup> Emergency G.M. (General Meeting) of NJM Party Members, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1983.
- <sup>195</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>196</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>197</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>198</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>199</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>200</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>201</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>202</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>203</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>204</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>205</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>206</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>207</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>208</sup> *Ibid*, and interview with NJM members Reginald Taylor, Cecil Alexander, Rupert Pitt and Margaret Holder.
- <sup>209</sup> *Ibid*, and interview with NJM members Reginald Taylor, Cecil Alexander, Rupert Pitt and Margaret Holder.
- <sup>210</sup> Emergency G.M. of NJM Party Members, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1983, op.cit.
- <sup>211</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>212</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>213</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>214</sup> *Ibid*
- <sup>215</sup> Interview with Joseph Gilbert, conducted September 1985.
- <sup>216</sup> Deposition of George Louison, given as evidence (for the Prosecution) in the Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder of Maurice Bishop and others, 26<sup>th</sup> July, 1984, pp 186-187.
- <sup>217</sup> Deposition of Chris Stanislaus, given as evidence (for the Prosecution) in the Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder of Maurice Bishop and others, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1984, p147
- <sup>218</sup> Deposition of Agnes Angela Grant, Matron of the General Hospital, St. George's, given in evidence (for the Prosecution) in the Preliminary Inquiry into the charge of murder of Maurice Bishop and others, 12<sup>th</sup> July, 1984, p45.