

Alister Hughes

Eye Witness to History



A Grenadian Journalist's Memoir

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Printed in Meggen (Switzerland)

Designed by Long Arnold

ISBN 978-0-9855714-0-5

www.grenada-history.org

Dedication

To the Un-Named Dead of the October Massacre, 1983

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PREFACE

by Margaret Hughes

Alister Hughes, was born in 1919 into a middle class coloured family in Grenada, West Indies, and was raised by his paternal grandparents in St. George's, Grenada. His grandmother was the daughter of a freed slave and a French planter and his grandfather was headmaster of a local secondary school.

While this separation from his parents, at an early age, caused personal trauma, the influence of his highly educated grandfather was inspirational. Those early years of loneliness (he described his grandparents home as loveless) and the experience of being an outsider, developed in him a great independence, humour and courage. He recognized that the coloured middle class was part of Grenada's problem, and he distanced himself from it. One way he did this, for instance, was by playing soccer (the sport of the people) instead of cricket (the sport of the elite). In other words he saw the wider picture.

This early period of his life was the foundation of his love of justice, human rights and conservation in the Caribbean. This quality of detachment contributed to his becoming a great journalist and editor of the 'Grenada Newsletter', the newspaper he founded with his wife, Cynthia Hughes. Between 1972 and 1994 it covered a crucial part of Grenada's history. He was a graduate of the Thomson School of Journalism, and became a correspondent for AP, Reuters, the BBC and other news media. His love of his country and all things Caribbean motivated his great passion for

self-determination. The dependency he saw in the culture, behaviour and politics of the region saddened him. He used to say “we don’t know that we don’t know.”

His great poem “Caribbean Man” expresses his belief in the need to take ownership of Caribbean identity. For this reason he turned down a British honour because he said colonial honours “scramble our brains”. On the other hand he welcomed any recognition or honour given to him by his own people, such as the Honorary Degree from the University of the West Indies, which was given to him for “telling the truth”.

He was a founding member of Conservation Caribbean and an active member of Island Resources Foundation.

His favourite description of himself was by his first wife, Cynthia. When, in 1983, she was told that he had been executed in prison, she had commented “and he was such a useful man!” He considered this to be the highest praise any man could receive.

He died 28th February 2005.



Alister Hughes



Cynthia Hughes

CHAPTER ONE

A brief history of Grenadian political reform

*“A naked freeman is better
than a gilded slave”*

William Galway Donovan

In the latter half of the 19th century, Grenada's Legislative Assembly once enjoyed a limited franchise on the basis of property and/or salary qualifications. However, these qualifications were so high that they excluded all but a handful of persons. In effect, they were a farce. At one election, when the population was about thirty-five thousand, twenty-six members of the House were chosen by a total of one-hundred and thirty-six voters, including the twenty-six elected. In the same elections, in the constituency of St. Marks and St. Patrick's, there were only eight names on the electoral list. Those eight voters went to the polls and selected six of their number to represent them in the House. Obviously, back then there was a great need for much reform but the self-interests and shortsightedness of the legislators condemned Grenadians to an era in which even their limited franchise was non-existent.

One of the rare heroes of the time was Dr. William Wells. On two occasions he was an elected member of the House of Assembly, the first in 1854 when he was only thirty years old. However, when a cholera epidemic swept the island he became a part of the medical team battling the disease because health services and sanitation were totally inadequate. As part of the effort to solve the problem, the Medical Aid Act was passed in 1858, which called for the appointment of District Medical Practitioners (DMPs). Dr. Wells resigned his seat in the House and accepted the appointment as DMP for St. David's Parish. It would be ten years before he got back into politics.

Wells left behind a House and Council that had operated the same way for over a century and was made up of members who were undedicated or incompetent or both. Meetings were characterized by the free use of personal invective and very little was accomplished for the good of the colony. The utter unfitness of the Assembly may be gauged from the title of an act passed to provide for a supply of ice to the town. Its title was: "An Act to deceive the inhabitants of this island by representing the urgent necessity for keeping up a supply of ice for the use and benefit of hospitals, whereas nothing else is intended but the pecuniary aggrandizement of some Government favorites."

In 1876, the House of Assembly and Legislative Council were replaced by a unicameral legislature comprised of both nominated and elected members and one of the goals was a streamlining of the constitution, which was urgently needed. Also, it had been hoped that a new Constitution would attract candidates of a higher caliber. Unfortunately, the majority of citizens took little interest in public affairs, so the election of members was in the hands of

the same irresponsible group that had dominated the old House of Assembly. Wells, a tower of passion and competence in a field of compliance and incompetence, accepted a nomination to the new legislature but his term of office was cut short. At the first meeting of the new Council, on a motion of Charles Simmonds, and by a vote of twelve to three, it was agreed to petition the Queen to introduce a system of government from London. It was a system under which, for the next fifty years, Grenadians would be deprived of a voice in their own affairs. The petition read: We, the President and Members of the Legislative Assembly ... desire to approach your Majesty with feelings of the most unbounded loyalty and respect knowing, as we do, that your Majesty has the welfare and well-being of all your subjects at heart, and, satisfied that it is expedient that the entire control and government of this island ... should be vested in your Majesty, we have caused an Act repealing the present constitution of the colony to be passed; and, therefore, should your Majesty be graciously pleased to assent thereto, we leave entirely to your Majesty's wisdom and discretion to erect such form of government as your Majesty shall deem most desirable for the welfare of the colony, and we remain, as in duty bound, your Majesty's most obedient, most dutiful, and most devoted, loving subjects and servants.

Three members voted against the motion. Although sources do not disclose the names of two of them, it is recorded that Wells was strong in his opposition. The minutes stated: "Dr. Wells protests against the bill because it sets aside the undoubted rights of the people to have a voice in the making of the laws by which they are ruled and, particularly, in the imposing of taxes." Despite Wells' dissent and impassioned eloquence, the Constitution was repealed and replaced with Crown Colony government under which absolute control was exercised in London. Wells' voice for the rights

of the Grenadian people fell on deaf ears as those people voted, through their silence, for dependency and subservience rather than independence and rights.

Near the end of the 19th century, another voice echoed William Wells' demand for elected representation. It was the voice of William Galway Donovan, who was nicknamed the "Lion" because of his shock of red hair. The son of an Irishman (his mother may have been part Carib), Donovan was editor and publisher of the newspaper, *The Federalist and Grenada People* and his personal slogan was, "A naked freeman is better than a gilded slave". This journalist had two important "dreams" which he pushed relentlessly through the columns of his newspaper. First, he was passionate in his advocacy of Wells' claim that Grenadians should "have a voice in the making of the laws by which they are ruled". Secondly, he dreamed that the scattered islands of the British West Indies would come together in a "federation". He was to bequeath these dreams to a live-wire member of the next generation but before that he had an experience that radically affected his life.

A letter, appearing in *The Federalist and Grenada People*, was considered by the authorities to be contemptuous of a judgment of the High Court and it was demanded of Donovan that he disclose the name of the author. The penalty for failure to comply was a fine or a prison term of three months. His friends offered to pay the fine but Donovan, in agreement with the content of the letter, declined the offer, preferring to emphasize the journalistic principle of protecting his sources. He went to jail, the consequences having all the elements of a love story. The Superintendent of Prisons was a Mr. Depradine and he had two daughters, one named Constance. The Depradines lived close to the jail and, on visiting days, it was the

practice of the daughters to visit, bringing cakes and sweets for the female inmates. On the way to the female section, Constance and her sister passed the grid door behind which Donovan was confined and it is said that it was love at first sight. What started with shy words between Constance and Donovan blossomed into furtive hand holding, stolen kisses between bars and, upon his release, full courtship and marriage. For Donovan, he was recompensed many times over for sticking to his principles.

In 1906 Donovan employed a young man to deliver newspapers and help generally in the printery. The sixteen-year-old's name was Theophilus Albert Marryshow (originally Maricheau), "Teddy" for short. Donovan liked the youngster and soon found Teddy had much more talent and drive than was required to deliver newspapers, so taking him under his wing, he taught Teddy the responsibilities and ethics of the journalist. He loaned Teddy books, encouraging him to read in pursuit of knowledge and suggested this young man develop his writing skills. Teddy learned fast and was soon contributing regularly to the columns of the *Federalist*. But it was not only journalistic skill that Donovan passed on to his protégé, he imbued him with the principle of representative government, people's rights and his dream of a federated West Indies. It all had a pronounced effect on the young man. It was to influence the course of Grenadian and Caribbean history and become the foundation on which, decades later, the independence of Britain's West Indian colonies would be laid.

Teddy Marryshow rose to be a sub-editor on the staff of the *Federalist* and in 1909, when he was twenty-two years old, he received and accepted an offer of a job as editor of another local newspaper, the *St. George's Chronicle & Grenada Gazette*. This was a stepping

stone. Six years later, in partnership with a Grenadian lawyer, C F P Renwick, Teddy branched out on his own, founding his own newspaper, *The West Indian*. Now, with his own media platform, the young Marryshow became even more relentless in his advocacy of representative government and a federation of the British West Indian Caribbean islands. His editorials were a “thorn” in the side of the Administration, prompting one Governor to describe him as one of a class of men whom the Governor considered would be “a danger as members of a House of Assembly”. Teddy Marryshow was a prime mover in the formation of the Representative Government Association (RGA) and, on behalf of the Association, visited London in quest of an interview with the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Winston Churchill. He did not see Churchill but had discussions with E. F. I. Wood, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. Wood, on behalf of Churchill, subsequently headed a Commission of Inquiry to the British West Indies. Because of Marryshow’s efforts and arising from Wood’s report, seeking authorisation of the award, Grenadians were given a constitution that allowed five members to be elected to the Legislative Council. However, they were outnumbered. Against them, on the other side of the table, were three members appointed by the Governor, plus seven ex-officio members (persons holding official jobs like the Treasurer, Auditor, Attorney-General, etc), all sitting under the Governor as President. It wasn’t much but the long story of history would show it was a start.

In 1936, elected representation was increased from five to seven although, in effect, the essentials of Crown Colony government remained. The seven elected members were numerically balanced out by three ex-officio members plus four nominated by the Governor. Moreover, the Governor had a casting vote and autocratic

powers to enact bills opposed by the Legislature. It was no more than token representation and it would have made no difference if the elected membership had been increased to seventy-seven or seven hundred and seventy-seven because through the Governor, London still had the last word. This was the situation prior to World War II and, in fact, the constitutional changes introduced in 1925 and since, had taken Grenadians no nearer to having control of their own affairs. In addition, the property and/or job qualifications, entitling a citizen to the franchise denied a large percentage of the population the right to vote and be elected to the Legislature. Any form of so-called independence was a myth, a gilding of the truth, as the dream expressed and pursued by these stalwart Grenadians remained unfulfilled; we were still dependents of another government. Our recent history highlights the propensity with which too many Grenadians continue to shirk their responsibility to take action, especially in national matters, preferring to stay “uninvolved” and leave matters to somebody else, to be dependent instead of independent. Over one hundred and twenty years have slipped past since that Petition was sent Queen Victoria in 1876. Despite continuing dissatisfaction with our political leaders, and demands for more independence, the average Grenadian is unwilling to get involved. History has shown that apathy and carping criticism achieve nothing.

In the 1930s, social and economic conditions in Britain’s West Indian colonies cried out for attention and following civil unrest in Trinidad, Barbados and Jamaica, a Royal Commission was appointed in 1938. The Commission, under the chairmanship of Lord Moyne, inquired into conditions related to, among other fields, Public Health, Housing and Education. They also considered constitutional reform but rejected proposals that the West Indian colonies should be given complete self-government. This, the

Commission said, "... would render impossible the financial control necessary, if ... substantial assistance is to be afforded by His Majesty's Government". The Commission, however, did make one recommendation that had far-reaching effect. The property and/or job qualifications for voters would no longer be valid. Universal adult suffrage would be introduced. Unfortunately, the 1939 outbreak of World War II delayed implementation of the Commission's recommendations and, as a result, Grenada's Constitution was not upgraded until 1951.

The new constitution provided for eight elected seats in the House of Representatives and elections were fixed for 10th October 1951. It was the beginning of a new era in Grenadian politics and there would be difficult lessons to learn. We had no experience with party politics because in the past each political candidate ran as an independent and it was every man for himself, so this, coupled with the innovation of adult suffrage, meant we now had to learn how to work together for political advantage. This was unfamiliar territory and would prove to put our basic freedoms and political future at serious risk.

Nowhere was this more applicable than with Eric Gairy, whose political skills, directed through the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), the political arm of GMMWU, were away ahead of the field.

CHAPTER TWO

The Rise of Eric Gairy 1949 -1951



Eric Gairy

Eric Matthew Gairy was born in Grenada at Dunfermline, in St. Andrew's parish, on 18th February 1922. He was of peasant-proprietor parents, and received his education at the La Fillette Roman Catholic primary school. After a short stint as a teacher at his school in Grenada, he migrated to Trinidad, working there for a short time before moving to the Dutch island of Aruba. There, he became involved in organizing a trade union, which aroused the displeasure of the Dutch authorities and resulted in his deportation. He returned to Grenada from Aruba in 1949.

Reginald Clyne, in his book *Against The Currents* (privately published in Trinidad in 1996), provides interesting glimpses into the beginnings of Gairy's career. Clyne's sister, Cynthia, was married to Gairy, and at one of their first meetings Clyne witnessed Gairy in action when he addressed a Roman Catholic congregation

after mass in St. David's Parish. He outlined his program to them which, in the main, was to improve conditions of the workingman. He was determined, he said, that labour should be placed on a respectable footing and the workingman be properly paid. This was reported in the local news ... and consternation immediately broke out in government quarters. But Gairy, encouraged and inspired by the interest he had generated, invaded the countryside,"speaking eloquently and fearlessly. According to Clyne, branches of Gairy's Grenada Mental & Manual Workers Union (GMMWU) were organized at the time and the union was established in 1951; however, according to official records the GMMWU was registered in July 1950. Although it had a large membership it did not gain instant recognition.

Gairy soon moved his activities from the country districts to the Market Square at St. George's where he held mass gatherings and soon his followers had affectionately given him the name, "Uncle Gairy" and a marching song had been composed. To the tune of the British Labour Movement marching song, We'll Never Let the Old Flag Fall, it declared:

*We'll never let our Leader fall,
 For we love him the best of all
 We don't want to fight just to show our might
 But when we start we will fight, fight, fight,
 In peace or war you'll hear us sing,
 God bless Gairy, God bless us all*

At the ending of the strike, the price unfurled

We'll never let our Leader fall.

The planters of sugar, nutmegs and cocoa already had agreements with the Trade Union Council, a labor organization, which represented the trade unions, and the planters rejected Gairy's demand that GMMWU be made the bargaining body for all agricultural workers. In the face of this denial of recognition, Gairy continued to organize his union and boasted that "time would tell" who represented the workers.

During this period, my father, Norris Hughes and I were auctioneers and commission agents and we had an office in Halifax Street. Gairy sometimes came in to talk with my father and that was when I first met him. My impression was of an imposing presence and outgoing personality, even though he was a rather slim, young man. My father was sympathetic to his cause and a friendship sprang up between them and it appeared that Gairy sought the advice of an older man. However, that relationship was to change after Gairy called an island-wide strike in 1951.

I found Gairy worth observing and did so from a distance, usually in the context of his many gatherings in the St. George's Market Square. These events were always carefully orchestrated with plenty of music, hymns and prayers and, in hindsight, foretold of Gairy's very capable political skills. My curiosity and interest in Gairy's activities once put my brother Frank and me into hot water.

Our mother had injured her leg and was not able to attend one of Gairy's meetings, at which, it was reported, Gairy would make certain announcements. Frank and I were amateur radio operators, so in order to bring the event to our mother we decided to install a small transmitter in a building near to the Market Square. A short antenna and adequate proximity was all that was needed to ensure that the sounds of the meeting was reported in the local news would reach the hidden microphone and then mother could sit at home and simply tune in. But we forgot something. In those days, there were not many stations in the Eastern Caribbean and radio listeners merely tuned across the band until they found a strong signal. Our little transmitter put out a strong signal in and around St George's and so mother was not the only person who heard our illegal broadcast. Many surprised residents of St. George's listened to Gairy's speeches that night. It was my one and only, and fully unintended, political propaganda broadcast.

The clandestine broadcast did not go unnoticed by the authorities and there was consternation in high quarters. Telephones buzzed incessantly and before government officials went to bed that night there were tentative plans for an immediate probe. The initial report was that Gairy had installed a secret radio station and it was taken as confirmation that there was "outside influence" in the Grenada situation. This spread to talk of "communism" and, early next morning, Government officials got huddled to discuss the implications and what should be done. For Frank and me, there was no way out. It had become much bigger than our small and well-intended family activity. We had to go to Clifford Palmer, the Wireless Officer and admit to our folly. We told him everything and suffice it to say that what Mr. Palmer told us need not be recorded here. We departed his office two very chastened young men and apparently the powers that be were, in fact, relieved that it was only a Hughes family matter.

In August 1950, Gairy picked his first target, four sugar estates at the south end of the island. The estate owners resisted the GMMWU demands for recognition and Gairy called a strike. In what was to become a feature of GMMWU strategy under Gairy, this industrial action sparked a flood of violence. Telephone lines were cut, road blocks erected and fires set to buildings and equipment. The police were quite unable to cope with this rebellious situation and the Governor, Sir Robert Arundell, intervened. A party of police was flown in from St. Lucia and order was restored as Gairy and Arundell met. Gairy won his first battle; the strike was called off, Arundell appointed an arbitration tribunal, a 15% wage increase was awarded and employees working conditions were greatly improved. The sugar-belt owners had been beaten. And it was just a beginning.

With bigger fields to be conquered Gairy turned his attention to the nutmeg and cocoa estates where most of the island's agricultural labor was employed. This opened an unusual era in the history of industrial relations in Grenada.

Updating and improving both wages and working conditions of agricultural workers was long overdue, especially where traditionally the agricultural workers shouldered the burden of the paternalistic system, which evolved after abolition of slavery. Under this system, the planters were expected to be "kind" to the workers; thus, the workers were allowed the use of a piece of land to grow vegetables and when the planter slaughtered an animal the workers were given some of the meat. Also, in times of sickness the planter would probably help the workers financially with medical costs. But the workers got none of these benefits as a right. They were given them out of the goodness of the planter's heart and, in return, were paid a mere pittance for their labour.

Oversight of the agricultural workers' interests had been taken care of by the Trade Union Council (TUC), and the two planters' organizations, the Agricultural Association (AA) and Agricultural Employers Society (AES), both of which had Industrial Agreements with the TUC. Following the arbitration award, Government increased road workers wages by 15%, the figure fixed by the tribunal for the sugar-belt workers, and an overall 15% increase in the wages of all agricultural workers seemed to have been accepted. The planters were willing to amend their agreements with the TUC accordingly. But Gairy had other ideas. His demand was far in excess of 15% and this generated strong opposition. The planters argued that the regular agricultural workers (those on the cocoa and nutmeg estates) enjoyed advantages that the sugar-belt workers did not; therefore, it was unreasonable to increase the wages of the regular agricultural worker beyond 15%. They were unanimously opposed to Gairy's proposal and negotiations failed to bring agreement.

On 19th February 1951, Gairy called an island wide strike and Grenada was thrown into chaos. His rabble-rousing, vitriolic public speeches were frightening and no one knew what harm the strikers would be incited to do. Law and order were non-existent. On the estates, each night, planters found their animals slaughtered, crops and valuable trees were destroyed, arson was a nightly affair and residences and business places went up in flames. Even schools were burned. Intimidation, looting and rioting were rampant.

Gairy never publicly called on his followers to be violent but he was skillful in inciting violence. He surrounded himself with a gang of thugs he called his "bad boys," and by innuendo and veiled suggestion, he craftily spurred his bad boys to act and they directed their violence and lawlessness against his opponents. Whatever

arguments Gairy may have advanced around the bargaining table, it was clear they were backed by the activities of his bad boys. In this instance, the planters were intimidated and this gave Gairy the advantage. The power of violence was a lesson he learned and a practice he applied to further his objectives and throughout his trade union and political careers he never hesitated to employ this repressive method.

In February 1951, the mob violence continued to escalate and the strike situation deteriorated and it became more than the Governor could handle with the resources at his disposal. At his request, the HMS Devonshire was called down from Jamaica with one-hundred and fifty Marines and E.W. Balthrop, Labour Advisor to the British Government, flew in and the Royal Police Force was strengthened with police contingents from St. Lucia and Trinidad. Gairy, met with Balthrop and the Governor to discuss the eroding situation, and that was when I became obliquely involved.

Late in 1950, I started to build my home on land just outside St. George's, and when island-wide arson developed—it was given the nickname of “sky red”—I feared I might become the focus of activities of Gairy's bad boys. The Hughes name was not popular with Gairy, even though I suspect it was long before my name got onto his infamous “enemies” list. I felt my half-finished house had to be protected and a friend of mine, Ezekiel Pilgrim, helped me guard the property on a dusk to dawn schedule. It was tough going. There were people in the area who would not have hesitated to harm us and we never knew when we might be attacked. Ezekiel and I were extra vigilant and worked on a shift basis, ensuring that one of us was awake at all times. But complications developed. Gairy's bad boys cut the telephone trunk lines between each of

the island's five major towns so that Police Headquarters was completely out of touch with the communities and the chaos and fear worsened. In this emergency, the Grenada Amateur Radio Club, was asked to setup a communications network covering the island and as a club member experienced in operating mobile equipment, I had to join the team, leaving Ezekial to guard the house as best he could. I was stationed in Gouyave, a small town twelve miles north of St. George's up the west coast. Unknown to me, my father had attended a meeting with Balthrop, Gairy, the Governor, several prominent citizens and the planters representatives. They were there to discuss the strike situation and, at that meeting, my father stated that in response to the national emergency, I had been called away from guarding my own house and he asked that some security be provided for my unfinished and unprotected house. It seemed like a reasonable and innocuous request.

At his next public meeting in the Market Square, Gairy reported on that meeting with Balthrop, the Governor and the others. And he brought loud cheers when he singled out my father for the anger of the crowd. He said. "Once, somebody spoke to me about the Hughes and I told the person that the only one of them that I liked a little bit was Mr. Norris Hughes. I have changed my mind completely because I find that a Hughes is a Hughes." Gairy went on to highlight my father's request for protection for my house. "Mr. Norris Hughes has been asking for protection of his son Alister's house which costs \$20,000. I do not envy Mr. Hughes' son for his house, but I must say this: Why do we have to pay taxes in order to get policemen and marines to protect a \$20,000 house belonging to Mr. Hughes' son? That is unfair. Why should not Mr. Hughes and his son live in good grace with the people so that they would have no fear at all? You must live in good graces with the people so that you need not have any fear. Those bad boys,

the hooligans, the gangsters and the worthless boys, do not worry with the people who live in harmony with them.” This was typical Gairy. Turning things to his advantage, pandering to his growing base, setting Grenadians against Grenadians in order to inflame discontent and unrest. Speeches like this, which were regular occurrences, often preceded arson and violence. All I could do was warn Ezekiel to be extra vigilant.

Conditions continued to worsen and a State of Emergency was declared. Even though Gairy and his lieutenant, Gascoine Blaize, were arrested and subsequently released, he maintained the advantage. His goal was to improve both wages and working conditions but before that could be achieved the GMMWU had to be recognized as the bargaining agent for agricultural workers. Of course, the employers strongly resisted this demand, but whether Gairy’s methods were ethical or not, he still had the whip hand. Writing to the Agricultural Employers Society he said, “We like to assure you that we haven’t the slightest intention of begging you to recognize us as the bargaining party for Agricultural Workers in Grenada today. That fact is determined by the workers.” And, no doubt, reminding the farmers how vulnerable they were at the hands of looters, he added, “And here’s an important piece of information. When you mishandle the GMMWU, you mishandle your workers and be prepared to stand the consequences.” The consequences were predictable and appalling.

In St. David’s, on the east coast ten miles from St. Georges, there was a serious incident. Gathering outside the police station, a mob demanded the release of persons arrested for looting. It was a volatile situation. Police reinforcements were rushed from St. George’s and on arrival, they were forced to open fire on an

angry mob which threatened their lives. Three persons were killed and several others were wounded. The police also went into action against threatening mobs at Springs, a suburb of St. George's and at Victoria, a fishing village fifteen miles up the west coast. There were no deaths at either of these locations but several persons were wounded.

For a month, Grenada was engulfed in civil unrest and a miasma of fear until the planters succumbed. They had no adequate defense against the arson and violence that Gairy provoked. Property loss in burnt businesses, homes and schools was enormous, the damage was escalating and people were dying; not to mention the losses in killed or stolen animals, destroyed trees and stolen crops. Through fear and violence Gairy had created untenable conditions and capitulation became the only choice. GMMWU had to be recognized. The planters were forced to the bargaining table and Gairy won a major victory. An "industrial agreement" was hammered out and, with this in his pocket, Gairy turned to political matters.

In the election of 1951, GULP fielded eight candidates. A loosely knit party, calling itself the Action Committee, which was never more than the planter's reaction to GULP, also fielded eight candidates, and there were five Independents. The Independents didn't have a chance; between them, they scraped up a mere six percent of the vote. Generally speaking, the Action Committee appealed to the middle and upper classes and won two seats with twenty-five percent of the vote. But the crushing victory went to the newly enfranchised masses with GULP capturing six seats with nearly sixty-nine percent of the vote.

The term of the Legislature was then fixed at three years and General Elections were not held again until 20th October 1954. By this time, the Action Committee had faded from the scene and there was not even the semblance of a political party to oppose Gairy. Furthermore, the Independents had not learned or changed and it had not dawned on them that the advent of party politics had created a whole new way to play the game. Their time had passed. Despite their lack of political understanding and skills, they did have an effect on the '54 elections. No less than twenty-three candidates put themselves into the race and between them they attracted fifty-one percent of the votes but won only two seats. This reduced GULP's percentage to forty-nine percent, a figure considerably lower than three years before, but GULP still retained the six seats previously won. Slightly less than half the popular vote went to GULP but they held eighty percent of the seats, attributed, in part, to the power of "party politics."

Gairy's fortunes plummeted after the 1954 election, both politically and on the trade union front. GMMWU already had lost membership in 1953 when the Seamen and Waterfront Workers Union separated and in 1956 registration of the Commercial & Industrial Workers Union made additional inroads into GMMWU's membership. On the political front, GULP now had to contend with two political parties. The new Grenada National Party (GNP), which was launched in 1955 and the Peoples' Democratic Movement (PDM), which got off the ground just before the October 1957 elections. The presence of those two parties worked strongly against GULP. Of the twenty-five thousand, six-hundred and eighty-two votes cast in the eight constituencies, GULP gained over forty-four percent but won only two seats. GNP and PDM gained twenty-four and twenty-three percent respectively, which entitled them to two seats each. Two independents attracted the

remainder of the votes entitling them to one seat each. The GNP with PDM and the Independents formed an uneasy Government while GULP filled the role of Opposition. Gairy was one of the GULP winners but he had to forfeit his seat because he was found guilty of an election offence. He had broken up a rival's public meeting by leading a steel band through the crowd. He was disenfranchised for five years but GULP still held on to the seat in a by-election in which the candidate romped home an easy winner.

My debut into politics, some months before the 1957 elections, began a decade of association with GNP. That association left me with unpleasant memories but new insight into some of the political intrigue and dishonesty prevailing in party politics.

John Watts (later Sir John), GNP political leader, invited me to join the party and contest a seat on the St. George's District Board. This body was responsible for, among other things, the sanitation of the town and maintenance of its streets, markets and playgrounds. I accepted and was elected unopposed and shortly thereafter was made GNP General Secretary, a position I held until I retired from active politics in 1967. In 1960, the District Board was elevated to the status of a municipality and I was elected unopposed twice. My service with the District Board/City Council lasted until 1963.

One of the systemic problems I faced was that the GNP was infested with secret caucuses. The Executive, which was comprised of the officers of the Party, members elected to the House, and designated candidates for elections, was plagued with conspiracy. So too was the General Council, made up of representatives of all party groups. These conditions primarily stemmed from the fact that

GNP personnel were mostly products of a post World War II social transformation or revolution. A revolution, fueled by a spread of secondary education after 1945, that helped create a “new middle class”, which was replacing the pre-war middle class to which I belonged. Influence was shifting in many facets of our social and political culture. Most of the prominent GNP people were of that new middle class, the dynamics of which demanded a jostling for position and power, and, consciously or unconsciously, I was seen as a rival and a threat. An incident, which occurred shortly after I was elected General Secretary, illustrates my exclusion from the inner circle, mainly because of the conflict between the “old” and “new” middle class influence, and the extent of internal party plotting and scheming.

The West Indies Federation, a loose grouping of ten British Caribbean colonies, was established in 1958 but due to internecine jealousies it had a short life and collapsed in 1962. This incident was not atypical. The Federal Parliament was comprised of a House of Representatives and a Senate, Grenada being represented in the Senate by T. A. Marryshow and John Renwick. Marryshow’s efforts to unify the Commonwealth Caribbean were largely responsible for formation of the Federation, and Renwick was a prominent solicitor. Sadly, Marryshow died (1958) shortly after the first meeting of the Senate and, according to the Federal Constitution, a replacement had to be appointed by Lord Hales, Federal Governor General. This he was to do, acting in his own discretion after consultation with Grenada’s Governor, James Lloyd.

At that time, the GNP held the reins of power in the government and there were consultative discussions with the Party as to who should replace Marryshow. That consultation was between

Governor Lloyd and the GNP Executive but, although I was General Secretary and a member of the new middle Executive, I was never included in the discussions. I was kept completely in the dark. I discovered later that the first name the Executive proposed to Lloyd was that of John Watts, GNP Political Leader. This was rejected by Lord Hales. The Executive then proposed Merrydale Bullen, GNP Chairman. This, too, was turned down by Hales.

In the interim, my father, Norris Hughes, a prominent businessman with a distinguished public service record, became the popular choice for Marryshow's replacement. He had served and continued to serve in several public service fields. He had been elected President of the Chamber of Industry & Commerce, of the Employers Federation and of the Grenada Cricket Club and had devoted many years of service as Chairman of the Tourist Board and as President of the Family Planning Association. For the benefit of clerical workers, he designed a superannuating scheme through the Commercial & Industrial Workers Association (CIWA), which he operated, unpaid, for many years. This was well before such schemes were introduced into Grenada. It covered one hundred and fifty people employed by ten or twelve firms whom he persuaded to join the plan. In the political field, my father had been a member of the Executive Council, Grenada's upper chamber of Parliament and had an unbroken twelve year term as the elected, unpaid, Chairman of the St. George's District Board. He was well qualified and the logical nominee and yet his name had not been submitted.

My father, through his own sources, became aware that the GNP Executive had first proposed Watts and then Bullen to be Marryshow's replacement and he felt slighted, rightly so, that he

had been overlooked at first. A principled man, he no longer wished to support the GNP, so sent me, as GNP General Secretary, his resignation as a party member. Eventually, the Executive did submit the name of Norris Hughes and when it was forwarded to Lord Hales, with the Governor General's approval, my father was appointed a Senator.

It was clear that the first nominations submitted by the Executive demonstrated its members' true wishes. They wanted "their man", not the best man. Neither Watts nor Bullen had the public service record or stature of my father (one need only review the CVs) and he had been the popular choice, but the Executive had wanted the new Senator to the West Indies Federation to be "one of their" GNP members and a member the new middle class. Norris Hughes was definitely not of the "new middle class".

At the next meeting of the GNP Executive, under the agenda heading, Correspondence, I read out my father's resignation. To say it created a bombshell would be a gross understatement. I was told angrily that the Executive had wanted a party member to be appointed Federal Senator and that this resignation negated that. I was severely admonished and asked why I had not immediately reported Hughes' resignation? I replied that Norris Hughes was merely an ordinary floor member and his resignation had not required immediate reporting and I had no reason to report it because I had not been included in the Executive's deliberations nor informed of their wishes. Still angry, the meeting then instructed me that, in future, on receipt of "important" correspondence, I was to inform the President, M. A. Bullen, immediately. "It is clear", I said, "that this issue rests on the definition of "importance" therefore, since nobody has troubled to tell me what is, and what is not,

“important” to the Executive, if I am to carry out these instructions, I will have to show Mr. Bullen all correspondence, or be included in all Executive deliberations.” Nothing was ever done about it, no procedures were changed, I was not included in future Executive discussions and certainly, there was no apology forthcoming. It was politics as usual.

Another incident concerns the Party’s dealings with me as a Councilor on the St. George’s City Council. There were eight elected Councilors and four Aldermen appointed by the Councilors. With a majority of seats, the GNP controlled the Council. We made Fisher Archibald the first mayor with Eric Pierre his deputy and, within party circles, it was the understanding that the deputy would succeed the Mayor. The mayor was elected annually and the next year Pierre was given the post of mayor with me as his Deputy. For most of that year Pierre was in Israel attending a Trade Union course while I ran the affairs of the City, but when the time came for electing a new mayor, I did not get the post. Later, I discovered that there had been a secret caucus at which it had been decided to give the honour to another Party member, Gloria St. Bernard. I suspect that my role in what was dubbed the “tenders affair” had considerable bearing on the matter, since it neither enhanced my popularity nor increased my chances of becoming mayor.

The “tenders affair” happened when I was chairman of the Parks and Playgrounds Committee. The Esplanade, on the western side of the city, offered a challenge for beautification and I approached the then Director of Public Works, Clive Belizaire, for assistance. A plan, with estimates, was drawn up, beautification entailed construction of a stretch of iron railings, and my Committee discussed it and the general meeting gave its approval. Tenders were invited

for the supply of material and we advertised a closing date. The Committee selected the most favourable bid, although we did not have the power to make an award. So our report, seeking authorizing of the award to the successful bidder, was tabled at the next meeting of the Council. To my amazement, when my Committee's report came up for discussion and adoption, it was attached to a new tender for the required materials. This tender carried a date that was later than the advertised closing date for bids and it was submitted by a person who had had the opportunity to see all the bids received and it under-cut the rate quoted by the successful bidder. I strongly opposed any consideration being given to this tender but, despite my protests, this out-of-date bid was sent back to my Committee for consideration. I decided to take action. Having in mind its possible publication, I wrote a strong letter to the St. George's GNP constituency branch which represented GNP members resident in the constituency of the Town of St. George's. I set out all relative details and emphasized the closing date that had been given for receipt of tenders. Further, I pointed out that my Committee had selected the most attractive bid which had been submitted in compliance with that date. It was unthinkable, I said, that my Committee would give any consideration to an invalid tender which had been sent back for consideration. I was judicious in making sure that my letter made no threats but made clear the possibility of publicity. That had the desired effect. The invalid tender was withdrawn and nothing more was heard of it. Except, I was never considered for the assumed, "automatic" move up from deputy mayor to mayor. Again, for me it was more politics as usual.

Politics as usual was more often than not unacceptable politics. The 1957 General Elections were memorable in that they were characterized with frequent incidents of stone throwing. That's right, not disruptive steel bands or dancing, but stone throwing.

That year this happened mainly in the west coast towns of Gouyave and Victoria, where GNP's public campaign meetings were stoned, as a regular occurrence. The attacks usually took place at meetings held after dark when, suddenly, the crowd would be showered with stones. I never experienced any of these episodes in Gouyave or Victoria, but I was there when one of our meetings was attacked. It was in the village of Mary-Ann, a few miles east of St. George's, in the constituency of South St. George's. The meeting began with an attentive crowd of some forty people but after a while some heckling began. This grew until it seemed the meeting might have to be abandoned because, despite the use of a public address system, speakers could not be heard. Then it happened. I was not involved in the organization of the meeting but was sitting in my car at the back of the crowd with Cynthia and our children. The first warning of danger came when, out of the dark, a shower of stones was hurled into the crowd. With everyone running for cover, I knew it was time to beat a hasty retreat. But I was not fast enough. Shouting to Cynthia and the kids to keep down, I started the car and moved off just as a torrent of stones struck the back of the vehicle. Thinking that we had escaped with relatively minor damage, I then saw a man running out of the shadows. He had his arms outstretched above his head and carried a large boulder about the size of a football. There was no escape. The car could not move any faster. The menacing man, with all his strength, let fly that boulder, crashing it on to the bonnet of the car, creating a huge dent. Fortunately, he fled and so did we. Again, it was Grenadians accepting the unacceptable.

CHAPTER THREE

Eric Gairy in power 1961 - 1979.

In 1961, the constituencies were expanded to ten. The date for General Elections was fixed for 27th March and this event saw a GULP runaway come back with eight seats. GNP captured only two. Gairy's disenfranchisement was still in effect but that delayed him for only a short while. Five months later, (14th August) he was again eligible to be a candidate for elections and one of his members resigned his seat in the House, there was a by-election and Gairy won easily. As Chief Minister, he then embarked on a reign of misrule, which put Grenada back into the clutches of classic Crown Colony government.

Within a mere six months, Gairy's excesses were so flagrant that Grenada's Governor, James Lloyd, was forced to take action.

In January 1962, Lloyd appointed Howard Holland and Harold Watson under the Chairmanship of Mr. Justice Frank Field, “To inquire into the control of public expenditure in the territory...” The Commissioners did not go into all details but they did cite numerous examples of Gairy and his Government mismanaging and misappropriating public trust and funds.

In several cases, they found no grounds to justify the “public humiliation” meted out to civil servants by Gairy. They stated that George Stanford, the Financial Secretary, was the recipient of treatment intended to send a message and be a “lesson” for the Civil Service generally. So too was the “lesson” delivered when the Public Works Department Head, Clive Belizaire, was harshly admonished by Gairy in the presence of his subordinate officers. It was clear intimidation. They found that any officer who, in an honest attempt to perform his proper duties, came into conflict with Gairy, was subjected to pressure and intimidation that was too strong to resist and that put their positions at risk. The Commissioners went on to say that after browbeating the Civil Service into subservience, Gairy embarked on a series of what was euphemistically called, “financial adventures”.

One such adventure occurred with the Tenders Board, which he emasculated. According to official Financial Rules, contracts for public works, valued under EC\$1,500, were to be awarded by the Director of Public Works. Contracts involving larger sums were to be awarded by the Tenders Board. Gairy removed the Director from membership of the Tenders Board and limited his power to award contracts for public works up to only EC\$50. At the same time, Gairy replaced the Financial Secretary as Chairman of the Board with the Principal Secretary (PS) of the Ministry of Works.

And he gave the PS power to award contracts up to \$5,000. After consulting the Minister of Works, the PS, as Chairman, could award greater contracts without limit subject to “the urgency of the situation”. The Principal Secretary told the Commissioners he never awarded contracts except after discussion with his Minister and there was ample evidence before the Commissioners, they said, that the Minister (as all other Ministers) acted in accordance with directions given by the Chief Minister, Gairy. “In short”, the Commissioners said, “the award of contracts was now the prerogative of the Chief Minister...”

What personal financial advantages Gairy may have awarded himself, through exercise of such prerogatives, is best gleaned and judged from a review of his economic history. At the beginnings of his trade-union / political career, Gairy emphasized his humble origins and the poverty into which he had been born. To dramatize this, he frequently alluded to the fact that, in the Magistrates Court, he had fifty-two charges against him for petty debt. Some three decades on, a survey of his economic position reveals a very different and very attractive position. Far from having fifty-two charges against him for petty debt, he then owned two nightclubs and a small hotel. He also owned an attractive building on the Carenage in St. George’s, five acres of land with a “great house” in the hotel area, and over an acre of development land at Calivigny on the south coast. Also, there were two pieces of land totaling 10,800 square feet in Belmont, a suburb of St. George’s, thirty five acres of woodlands near the golf course, and he held shares in a development company. A conservative value of these assets was placed at over \$2.75 million (\$US).

Having undermined the Tenders Board to his advantage, Gairy then instructed Clive Belizaire to fill all the Government's cement requirements from B. N. Davis & Co. The price charged by this firm was EC\$1.96 per bag and it was pointed out to Gairy, by the Director, that cement was available in Grenada at EC\$1.76 per bag. This was 20 EC cents per bag cheaper than the B. N. Davis price but the directive remained in force, to the detriment of Grenadian taxpayers.

Another Gairy financial adventure involved the Minorca plantation that had been purchased by a staunch GULP supporter, W E Douglas. It began when the Minister for Industry instructed the Superintendent of Forestry & Lands, J. S. Ross, to survey some sixty acres of that plantation. Ross was to advise whether the area was suitable for forestation and for protection of the water catchments area. And he was to value the land. Ross' report, submitted to the Minister, said the land was not suitable for forestation due to poor soil. Nor was it useful for protection of the near-by Les Advocat water catchments area as it was below the level of the dam. But Ross had a suggestion. Government could purchase a reduced area of land, 20 acres, for the purpose of straightening the reserved forest boundaries. He valued the land at EC\$120 – EC\$140 per acre. Soon after filing his report, Ross went on vacation and one of his subordinate officers, by the name of Samuels, was instructed to repeat the survey and report directly to Gairy. Samuels thought the land was suitable for both forestation and for protection of the water catchments area and fixed the value at EC\$300 per acre. Further evidence before the Commission showed that the Permanent Secretary for Industry, St. Bernard, had been instructed to hurriedly prepare a memorandum for the Executive Council, which was to meet the next day. According to the Commission, the Minister of Industry knew that Douglas was asking EC\$300 per acre,

which, the Commission noted, coincided with Samuel's valuation. Nevertheless, through St. Bernard's memorandum, the Minister sought approval of the Executive Council, not for EC\$300 but for EC\$500 per acre. Compounding the corrupt distortion, the Executive Council decided to purchase the sixty odd acres at EC\$500 per acre. It was further directed that the sum of EC\$15,000 (about 50% of the total) be paid to Douglas immediately. However, when this transaction was concluded it was discovered that no check had been made of the title of the land and that Minorca had not been conveyed properly to Douglas from the previous owners. Also, there was an outstanding debt of EC\$12,000 on the plantation. The Minorca plantation, measuring one-hundred and forty-nine acres, was purchased by Douglas for EC\$74,400. With the outstanding debt of EC\$12,000, that puts the price at approximately EC\$570 per acre. Douglas told the Commission that he had asked Government for EC\$750 but accepted EC\$500, which was EC\$70 per acre less than the purchase price. The Commission said: "While it may appear remarkable that Government was able to pay less per acre for part of the plantation than the purchase price per acre for the whole plantation ... on consideration of the evidence of witnesses competent to place a valuation on these lands, it will be seen that the EC\$500 per acre that the Executive Council decided to pay is grossly in excess of the valuation of EC\$120 - \$140 placed on the lands by Ross, and even in excess of the valuation of EC\$300 by Samuels." The manager of the plantation told the Commission that the part of the plantation offered to Government was of no value for agricultural purposes and brought no income to the plantation. Viewed in this light, the Commission said: "One can understand the ready acceptance of Douglas of the price of EC \$500 per acre as fixed by the Executive Council when he was asking EC\$750 per acre." The Commission went on to say that the indecent haste with which the Government made its decision and paid down half the purchase price without the title being

investigated created an aura of suspicion. Also, there is suspicion in the fact that the officer responsible for the water supply, the Director of Public Works, was not consulted, and that the purchase was against the advice of the Superintendent of Forestry and Lands (it seems the Commission, from time to time, was given to understatement). “We are satisfied”, the Commissioners said, “that the proposed expenditure of EC \$30,000 on these lands is a waste of public funds.”

The Commission goes on to list several instances of work done for private individuals with Government funds. It also lists payments made from Government funds, “gratuitously and unnecessarily.” Although these may appear to be minor in amounts they are significant in illustrating the acceptance of gratuitous payments, which is corruption by another name. The items included: EC\$ 1,138 worth of repairs to a private road at Telescope, St. Andrews, done on instructions of the Minister for Communications and Works; repairs to the value of EC\$ 210, done to the private house of one Elias Henry, on instructions of the Minister of Communications & Works; and the use of a grader, leveling ground for a private concern, the Silver Sands Hotel. The Government unnecessarily paid one Lewis Charles a sum of money with respect of a contract for the sum of EC\$ 343.00 which Charles had to paint a house. Charles completed the contract and was paid, but on instructions of the Minister of Communications & Works was subsequently paid an additional EC\$ 186 that Charles said he had lost on the contract. Also, the Commission investigated the circumstances surrounding the purchase of an EC\$ 3,700 concrete mixer on instructions of the Minister of Communications & Works. It was found that, prior to purchase, there had been no consultation with the Director of Public Works or any other responsible officer of that department. The Commission stated that the mixer was of

a size suitable for larger building operations than those normally carried on by the Public Works Department and that it is not being used, has not been used, and is not likely to be used.

The refurnishing of Mount Royal, the Chief Minister's official residence, is a classic example of Gairy's total disregard for official financial instructions and of his propensity for show and self aggrandizement. Soon after his resumption of the post of Chief Minister, Gairy announced that the furnishings at Mount Royal had been good enough for Herbert Blaise, the previous Chief Minister, but were not good enough for him. Taking steps to remedy what he saw as this deficiency, he ordered an extensive sale of the existing furniture at Mount Royal. "The items were sold by auction without a prior Board of Survey," the Commission found, "and without any proper account to show that the proceeds were fully and promptly brought into revenue." The sale was followed by purchases of new furniture and furnishings to the amount of EC\$17,250, without the approval of the Tenders Board. This included a piano costing EC \$3,500, a radiogram costing EC\$1,450, and two radios.

The case of the Western International Life Motor Company would be amusing if it did not reveal such crass, criminal irresponsibility. The facts are clear. In 1961, two months after Gairy became Chief Minister, this company was formed by a man named Cecil Maitland and Gairy instructed the Director of Public Works to insure all Public Works Department (PWD) vehicles with this company. Maitland was the Managing Director and he was summoned before the Commissioners in order to ascertain the financial status of the company and the assets at its disposal. Maitland appeared but refused to disclose the company's financial position. The Commissioners then asked Maitland for documented proof that the

company had been officially approved as an insurer. He was unable to produce such proof. The Commission had in front of it a claim for EC\$10,000 relative to a damaged PWD truck and Maitland was asked whether the Company could meet this claim. The Managing Director refused to answer. The Commissioners asked Maitland whether, by his manner and attitude, he wished to convey the impression that his company was operating on a questionable basis. Maitland still had no answer. Sarcasm drips from the remark of the Commissioners as their report refers to Maitland's performance before them. "It is difficult to understand", they said, "the Managing Director's reluctance to seize the opportunity offered to enhance the reputation of the company and to gain free advertisement by declaring publicly its financial soundness." From the evidence relevant to this company and from Maitland's attitude, the Commission came to the conclusion that the operation of this company needs "careful consideration." It is to this company that Gairy committed Grenada's public funds without taking the simple precaution of ascertaining the company's financial status. The Commissioners called that "gross carelessness" on Gairy's part and said an inquiry into Maitland's company was all the more compulsory when it is remembered that private persons had also taken out insurance with this Company.

Obviously, the Commission was given to understatement and although it exposed the rotten underbelly of Grenada's "politics as usual", the significance of its work may best be seen in the paradoxical reaction of the public. There is no doubt that Gairy's criminal dishonesty, exposed by the Field Commission, was shocking. The media dubbed his behaviour, "Squandamania" and it seemed his political career was dead. In June 1962, Grenada's Constitution was suspended, direct control of the colony reverted to London and, when new elections were called, it was fully expected that the

GNP would sweep the polls. And additional circumstances created an even more favourable climate for a GNP landslide. The West Indies Federation (born February 23, 1958) collapsed and was dissolved on May 31, 1962. Its demise was the outcome of a referendum called in Jamaica on September 19th 1961 to ascertain whether or not that island should stay in the Federation. The result of the referendum was negative and signaled the disintegration of the islands' federation, which had come together so hopefully as a "nation" just four years before. In an effort to salvage what was left of the federation, Eric Williams, then Premier of Trinidad & Tobago, made an interesting announcement. Trinidad & Tobago (T&T) would seek independence, he said, and his country would offer, to the small islands of the Eastern Caribbean, the status of "Unitary Statehood" with Trinidad and Tobago. Not surprisingly, Grenada was the only country to take up that offer. Grenada is nearer to and has stronger personal, cultural and economic links with Trinidad than has any other East Caribbean country. Williams' offer of "Unitary Statehood" appealed to Grenadians and, coupled with the attraction of T&T's economic strength, it was a foregone conclusion that when the constitution was restored and elections called, the GNP would win easily. Elections were called on 13th September 1962 and the GNP won, but the results were surprising. It was expected that the revelations of the Field Commission and resultant ugly image smeared on Gairy and his party would translate into them having absolutely no chance of winning even a single seat. Surprise! Grenadians returned GULP with four seats. Gairy himself, the "Squandamania" chief, in a straight fight with the GNP candidate, walked away with a comfortable 56% of the votes. It revealed the paradox in Grenadian politics and begged the question: Why does the exposure of such blatant political corruption and the systemic disregard of public trust not translate into Grenadian's complete rejection of the incumbents?

If the 1962 results were surprising, then the following elections, on August 24th 1967, were astounding. By that time, the political scene had changed and the movement towards Unitary Statehood with T&T was dead. Williams had insisted that Grenada's inferior infrastructure be updated before he could welcome the new arrival to the State of Trinidad & Tobago. Of course, there was no way of accomplishing this. However, a new political factor, and a feather in the GNP's cap, boosted the party's political chances of holding on to the reins of Government. Britain proposed to Grenada and the small islands of the Eastern Caribbean that they should accept a new constitutional status: States in Association with Great Britain. Grenada would have complete internal self-government while Britain retained responsibility for Defense and Foreign Affairs. Grenada accepted this proposal and on 4th March 1967, the island became an "Associated State." The GNP appeared to be in a strong position. But the "dependency paradox" raised its ugly head. Grenadians forgot or chose to ignore their experience of "Squandamania" and reverted to politics as usual. The result of the 1967 elections devastated the GNP as we gave Gairy a clear majority of seven seats while the GNP had to be satisfied with only three. And Gairy's victory was underlined by the results of the poll in the constituency in which he won his seat. The percentage of votes cast for him increased from fifty-six percent in the previous election to sixty-three.

The case of R. A. Daniel is an instance of Grenadian failure to understand that our responsibility now is to take an active, involved part in the affairs of the nation. The Field Commission disclosed that Daniel, a civil servant, had collaborated with Gairy in illegal handling of government funds. Consequently, Daniel was fired and forfeited his pension rights. However—there always seems to be a "however" in Grenadian politics—when Gairy

gained control of the government in 1967 he thumbed his nose at the Commission. He rewarded Daniel and engineered a scandalous prostitution of the powers of Parliament. He had Parliament pass a special enabling bill authorizing payment of a pension and gratuity to Daniel. Again, based on past events, one would think that such obvious abuse of authority would be avoided or at least done more clandestinely in order not to provoke an outcry. No outcry was forthcoming. Some years later, after Grenada became officially independent, Gairy rewarded Daniel even further by appointing him Grenada's Consul-General in Canada. There was no protest that this prestigious office had been placed in the hands of a disgraced individual and once again we, the citizens, failed in our responsibility to our country. And we were unable to break the cycle of this irresponsible and unacceptable behavior. In the 1972 general elections there was another astonishing incident with the election of Maple Nedd, when, once again, we allowed Gairy to prostitute the authority of Parliament. Nedd, a known Gairy supporter, was employed as an enumerator preparing voters lists for the election. Running on the GULP ticket, she became a candidate in those elections and won a seat. However, the result of her win was challenged in the courts and she then lost the seat. It was ruled that persons connected with preparation of the electoral lists cannot become candidates for elections and this includes enumerators. This prohibition is a logical safeguard in the interest of fair elections as it is essential that every effort be made, and seen to be made, to protect the voters' lists. But, in order to gain his own ends, Gairy misused parliament. A law was passed exempting numerators from this ban and in a by-election we not only reelected Nedd, but in so doing acquiesced to Gairy's rape of our Constitution.

It was clear that Gairy would continue to abuse state power and it was his actions not his rhetoric that should have shamed

Grenadians into taking action. He took over the producers' co-operatives that control the island's three major export crops, nutmegs, cocoa and bananas. Their management boards were replaced with government-nominated boards and the Land Acquisition Act became a weapon to bolster his trade union activities. Landowners who opposed him had their lands taken away. All this despite the well-known fact that our constitution demands that acquisitions by Government must be accompanied by "payment of full compensation" and yet, scores of Grenadians lost lands valued at some US\$4 million for which they received no payment.

As a final step, our freedom of the press, the last vestige of democratic rule, was suppressed. Gairy's government acquired the West Indian newspaper and control was assumed over Radio Grenada, which was then the only radio station operating in Grenada. Both were limited to carrying only favourable news of the government and of Gairy's achievements.

Fear consolidates control

Early in 1970, a seemingly unrelated event occurred that would have serious, long-term consequences for Grenada. The "Black Power Movement," then overflowing from the United States, swept Trinidad and, on March 17th, thousands of followers of the movement staged a solidarity demonstration march in Trinidad. The Trinidad & Tobago Government was concerned and the Trinidad & Tobago Regiment was mobilized to deal with the situation. Unexpectedly, on April 21st, the Regiment mutinied and this precipitated a state of emergency. This unrest, in such close proximity on the neighboring island, caused considerable concern in Grenada. The uneasiness grew and when, less than a month later, there were

three large fires on the same night, in St. George's, the fear was that Black Power arsonists were responsible.

Gairy's reaction was typical of a man who, from the genesis of his political and trade union career, did not hesitate to use violence. And, no doubt, he saw it as an opportunity to consolidate his power through coercion, implied or actual. First, he called a meeting of the business community to explain his plan and, on May 3rd, made his infamous "Black Power" radio broadcast. To any astute observer, Gairy's strategy was a contradiction in itself. He proposed to employ a gang of criminals as a Reserve Police Force. He asked, "Does it not take steel to cut steel? I am proud of the ready response to my call to Grenadians, regardless of their record, to come and join in the defense of my Government and in the maintenance of law and order in their country. Indeed," he continued, "hundreds have come and some of the toughest and roughest of roughnecks have been recruited". Nicknamed the "Mongoose Gang" by the media, these hoodlums had the run of all police stations. Recruited and controlled by Gairy, the regular police had no authority over them and, as a Commission of Inquiry would find later, they inflicted "unspeakable atrocities" upon many Grenadians.

In November 1970, Gairy gave clear notice that he was prepared to use all means at his disposal to smother opposition. At that time, conditions at the General Hospital were bad and protests from the nursing body to the Ministry of Health had gone unheeded so, in the interest of their patients, the nurses decided to take action. Some thirty to forty nurses, in uniform and carrying placards, marched quietly from the hospital to the Ministry of Health, (now the National Insurance Scheme Building) about half a mile away. There they staged a sit-in. Gairy's reaction was swift. Both the army

and police were called out, tear gas was used and the nurses were evicted. Charges were laid against the nurses (later dismissed) and as a further act of intimidation, Gairy announced formation of two more bodies of criminals: the Night Ambush Squad and the Special Secret Police Force. Gairy had solidified the power of fear.

I covered the nurses' sit-in and, on two counts, this was a memorable day for me. On one count, it was the first time I had been tear-gassed. I knew, of course, the gas would affect my eyes but there were other effects that were just as uncomfortable. Although it does not last long, the gas creates a sharp sting wherever one perspires, in particular, in the armpits and groin. A small lesson learned. The other count was more important. This was the occasion that I first saw Bishop in action. He was not a part of the demonstration but he did give enthusiastic encouragement to the nurses. I recall seeing him running up the steps from the street to the second story. He had a wet handkerchief over his nose and mouth and, like me, was experiencing the uselessness of this protection. This piqued my interest in him and I learned that, soon after the event, he returned to the island from law school. Unbeknownst to me, my more-than-a-decade relationship with Maurice Bishop had begun.

Bishop became involved with a left wing group called Forum. The aim of Forum was to launch a weekly newspaper as part of the foundation for building a political movement. This did not materialize and Forum folded. In 1972, Bishop founded the Movement for the Advancement of Community Effort (MACE). This body, which later became the Movement for the Assembly of the Peoples (MAP), stated that it was dedicated to researching Grenada's socio-economic problems and applying these findings through political education among the masses.

In the same year, in a parallel development, Unison Whiteman, a young teacher from the east coast parish of St. David's, launched an organization he called Joint Effort for Welfare, Education and Liberation (JEWEL). Like MAP, this organization had political objectives. Its aim was to mobilize the peasantry, thereby undermining Gairy's power and, through a co-operative, provide an alternative to the program of patronage Gairy was using to gain support. Late in 1972, JEWEL gained popularity when the organization championed the cause of the residents of St. David's. A wealthy, ex-patriot landowner, Lord Brownlow, attempted to deny public passage on a well established right of way through his property to the Lasagesse beach. Whiteman organized a "Peoples Court," "tried" Brownlow, and then smashed an obstructing gate and led a crowd down to the beach. The tactic was successful. Brownlow capitulated, soon sold his property and left the island.

Bishop and Whiteman became aware of their common aims and, in 1973, agreed on a merger of their organizations; thus was born the New Jewel Movement (NJM) with Bishop and Whiteman becoming Joint Coordinating Secretaries.

The Grenadian performance at the polls can only be understood in the light of this political history and our innate dependency. Prior to 1967, when for the first time we had internal self-government, we had never been responsible, ultimately, for ourselves. The "Mother Country" was always there to look after us. Among other things, the Colonial Office supervised our finances and, in such instances as Gairy's "Squandamania", we assumed they were there to do whatever was necessary, in particular, to take care of us. We were their dependents and regardless of our outward expression and emotional desire for independence our inner roots were

deeply anchored in colonial dependency, whether by choice or passive legacy. Since we became a British possession in 1784, it has been comfortable (and usual) for us to let “Mother” take care of whatever eventuality presented itself. In fact, except for the very few, too few, strong-willed leaders like Wells, Donovan and Marryshow, who were steeped in principle and demanded a hand in shaping our destiny, we need not have bothered to vote. In too many instances we did not elect leaders, we elected self-centred, self-aggrandizing crooks and criminals. Not all can be painted with the same brush but many of our elected representatives are “guilty” by association. Of course, they debated matters and may have tried to do the right thing, but for the most part they either stood silently by, or worse, benefited from the “system” and all its ill-gotten bounty. Good governance was a futile exercise because at the highest levels we were cursed either by corrupt or apathetic leadership and it was the latter that perpetuated our crippling dependency. No despot can rule without the complicity of many around him. It was an innate belief that no matter what we decided or did, “Mother” always had the final word. This developed into deeply ingrained attitudes from which we regarded the execution of Grenadian affairs, not as our responsibility but that of Britain. We felt we did not have to worry, “Mother” was there. It was, and still is, in our cultural psyche and inbred into our thinking, so much so that we believe we do not have to take more than a passing interest because, eventually, someone else will solve our problems. It is, indeed, a damning legacy, a blight on our individual freedoms and an enormous impediment to true independence. All freedom begins with the individual and until Grenadians, one by one, shed their own, personal and deeply entrenched dependency, independence will remain a myth, shallowly rooted in words and symbols only. It leaves us with another question: Who, if anyone, will be the next Marryshow, Donovan or Williams?

It is less than 50 years since we have ostensibly had full charge of our internal affairs, and even less time since official independence, yet, as events have glaringly demonstrated, we are not ready for, nor are we capable of independence. How much more time and tragic experience is required before it sinks into our collective realization that we must face this new era with responsibility? The first step is to release ourselves from the shackles of dependency. To paraphrase astronaut Neil Armstrong's famous statement when he landed on the moon, I would say: It would be a small step for each Grenadian and a giant step for all Grenadians. Until then, the Gairys of Grenada will continue to inflict on us their version of "Squandamania" and worse, while we opt out of the real responsibility that comes with independence. We either accept responsibility or put up with the unacceptable, politics as usual.

"Grenadians neither voted nor fought for independence, it was conferred on them" Alister Hughes

The 1972 general elections were held on 28th February and are notorious in that the results enabled Britain to rid herself of a no-longer-profitable colony and in so doing, shamelessly betray Grenadians.

The GULP manifesto for these elections said: "We owe it to ourselves, and to those who come after us, to establish a full INDEPENDENT GRENADA, and we therefore commit our Party and our program to independence for Grenada".

Notwithstanding GULP's manifesto, no individual, nor party nor government of Grenada had the power to amend the section of the Constitution that would make Grenada independent. If such an amendment was required, the Constitution prescribed a mandatory democratic exercise. First, the Constitution demanded there be a two-thirds majority "Yes" vote in the House of Representatives in favour of the change. Then that vote had to be followed by a similar vote in the Senate. The Constitution then mandated a three-month interval following which a referendum must be held. And, if the Constitution was to be amended, the polls must result in a two-thirds "Yes" majority in favour of the change. It was quite clear.

GULP won the elections. GNP captured only two of the fifteen seats to which the slate had been expanded. Gairy then announced that his landslide victory was a mandate for independence and proceeded to London for discussions. There, he convinced the British Government that the terms of the Grenada Constitution should be swept aside and Britain should confer independence on Grenada without exercising the procedure set out in the Constitution. Again, this was a deliberate and transparent ignoring of basic rights ascribed by a country's constitution. What could be more politically abhorrent? What would Grenadians do this time? What would "Mother" do?

For any country, the move into independence is a vitally important step and provisions in Grenada's Constitution ensured that every chance would be given for full consideration by the electorate. This is, of course, essential under the most favourable of circumstances, but in view of conditions then existing in Grenada, and well known to the British Government, it was, to say the least, imperative that constitutional law be upheld, a fundamental of

democracy. Therefore, how shocking, how shameless, when the provisions of our Constitution were ignored.

The British Government was fully aware of Gairy's unspeakable and detestable track record and they knew there was considerable anti-Gairy feeling in Grenada because of his misrule. As recently as 1962, because of Gairy's patent misgovernment, London had been forced to assume control of the island's affairs. That could not have been forgotten. Nor could the British Government have been unaware of Gairy's excesses since 1967, after Grenada attained internal self-government. They knew of the victimization practiced on all who fell afoul of Gairy's displeasure, and they knew Gairy openly boasted that he employed criminals to "defend" his government. The Mongoose Gang and its operations were, in reality, far from being "secret" police. Against this background, it was a crass act of deliberate treachery by the British Government to disregard the provisions of Grenada's Constitution. It was a callous contempt for the rights of Grenadians. It denied us our constitutional prerogative to say whether or not we wished to take this important step. More particularly, it denied us the right to decide whether or not we wished to go independent under Gairy's intolerable leadership. This time our dependency on "Mother" (and her surrogate, Gairy) undermined our real independence. Britain abdicated centuries of responsibility to Grenada and we got empty, symbolic independence for the rest of the 20th century. However, from this undemocratic behaviour by the "Mother Country," coupled with Gairy's growing belligerence, came an inflamed sense of disquiet in Grenada. The unrest continued to grow and the aftermath of the general elections of 1972 marked a traumatic turning point in the island's history.

On the morning of March 10th 1979, my wife, Cynthia and I got a tip that police were searching the home of Maurice Bishop, the lawyer-politician. Bishop was the leader of the group of young left-wing intellectuals who had banded together in 1973. They called themselves the New Jewel Movement (NJM) and were loud in their condemnation of Prime Minister, Eric Gairy's violence and corruption. For his part, Gairy made no secret of his belief that NJM planned the armed overthrow of his government. Bishop and other NJM members were frequently harassed by police searches but our informant alerted us to an unusual feature of the present search. The numerical strength of the police and Grenada Defense Force (GDF) at Bishop's place was far greater than usual. Against the background of other information we had, this increased strength was significant.

Some weeks earlier, alarming news had been received in Grenada. Newspapers in the United States had reported that two Grenadians, prominent NJM members, James Wardally and Chester Humphrey, had been arrested in Washington and a quantity of arms and ammunition were discovered in their possession. The cache was hidden in two barrels labeled "grease," and Wardally and Humphrey had been charged with conspiring to export arms and ammunition.

In Grenada, the Government owned newspaper, *The West Indian*, commented on the "sinister silence" of NJM in the face of this news. It said, "For a Movement always ready to rush to the aid of victimized brothers in Dominica, Guyana and Timbuckkoo (sic), if needs be, it is unusual that no one has as yet flown off to the 'bastion of capitalist oppression' to ensure that Humphrey's and Wardally's human rights are not violated."

The NJM silence was uncharacteristic and remarkable. Was it a portend, a foreshadowing, that Bishop and his group were moving from verbal opposition to armed action? Their silence provoked much discussion and mild apprehension but there was no real alarm. If NJM had had a plan to oust Gairy by force, it was thought, that plan had failed with the arrest of Humphrey and Wardally. Besides, it was preposterous to think of armed revolution in Grenada. Such violent action was totally foreign to this ex-British West Indies fun-in-the sun island, nestled peacefully in the azure waters of the Eastern Caribbean.

But Gairy took no chances. When this disturbing information reached him, he immediately stepped up security. NJM members' homes and the homes of their families were put under 24-hour surveillance. Searches were conducted with increased frequency and at all hours of the day and night. Vehicles owned by NJM members were stopped and searched. The police and GDF were put on high alert and NJM members were shadowed around the clock. Nothing of consequence was found during any of the searches, but the hunt continued. There was no fear in the Grenadian mind that revolution was about to engulf their island and there was much public sympathy for the NJM members who were seen as the only voice raised against Gairy's excesses.

I was then a stringer for the Associated Press (AP) and the search of Bishop's home that morning had all the makings of a good story. Cynthia and I drove to the scene in the St. Paul's suburb where we found some thirty to fifty police and GDF personnel executing a thorough search. Every room was ransacked. Every cupboard, every drawer, locker, box and container was turned inside out. Nothing was overlooked, nothing untouched. Bishop was not present but

Angela, his wife, was. We knew her well and never before had we seen her so furious, so nervous and so fearful. Bishop's mother, Alimenta Bishop, lived next door and the police activity had extended to Mrs. Bishop's home. As Angela put it, a "swarm" of searchers had descended on Mrs. Bishop and they had submitted her home to the same reckless ransacking that was in progress at her son's place. Angela was concerned the traumatic experience might have an adverse effect on her elderly mother-in-law.

Angela told us searches had also been made at the homes of several prominent NJM members. She named Unison Whiteman, the close friend of Bishop, Bernard Coard, destined to play a major role in coming events and several other NJM members. As far as she knew, nothing had been found but it seemed to us that these widespread searches indicated the authorities had unusual security intelligence. They probably knew exactly what they were looking for and subsequent events proved they did.

Angela could not, or would not, tell us where we could find Bishop and that left us at a dead end. It seemed we could not round off our news story. But Cynthia had a hunch. She thought Bishop might be holed up at the NJM office, so we went to investigate.

The NJM office was on the third floor of a historic 18th century Georgian building in lower Lucas Street, St. George's. Other offices occupied that building, but this was Saturday afternoon and all doors were closed. The streets were deserted so the NJM office was a likely place for Bishop to take cover. Almost certain that Cynthia's hunch would pay off, we walked quietly towards the building with studied nonchalance. A narrow, inclined passage lead steeply

up from street level and at the top of that passage was a pocket-handkerchief yard space facing the entrance to the second floor. A short flight of stairs ran from the yard space to the closed door of the NJM office door. All was quiet as we took in the details of the area. A single, closed window overlooked the yard and we had an uncanny feeling that we were being watched. My heart raced as we mounted the stairs and rapped tentatively on the door. The sound of my knock rang out in the stillness for a brief moment and then it was a suffocating silence. It seemed like an eternity before the door opened, very cautiously. It was Maurice Bishop. He peered out just enough to see us but blocked our view of the room behind him. We sensed there were other people there, keeping out of sight.

We knew Maurice and he knew us. He was a tall, well built, brown-skinned man of thirty-five who radiated a natural charm, but that afternoon his looks, demeanor and attitude spoke of high tension and apprehension. Furrows of worry crossed his forehead and his face was etched with deep lines. He looked as though he had not slept for days and there was a disheveled look about him. He was uneasy. A slight smile of recognition crossed his good looks as he greeted us. "Some of us are hiding here to avoid arrest. We're trying to escape more of Gairy's harassment." He said and asked us to leave quickly and quietly.

With key members of the NJM in hiding and the widespread searches, we knew the situation had taken a dramatic turn. I knew that if these men were caught they would be subjected to brutal violence. Gairy's security forces were not known for restraint. But despite these instincts, it never crossed our minds that we were witnessing the onset of one of the more traumatic phases in Grenada's modern day history. We could not have imagined that we were

watching, first-hand, the launching of a plan, engineered by Bishop and his left wing companions, to snare unsuspecting Grenadians into a communist trap. We had no inkling that this was the genesis of events, which would culminate in the massacre of scores of Grenadians and result in the murder of Bishop himself by some of the companions who were hiding behind him that day.

Three days later, the pieces of the puzzle began to fit. About four-thirty on the morning of Tuesday, March 13th, I received a phone call from a professional colleague whose home is in the mountains north of St. George's. "Have you seen the flames in the south near Grand Anse beach?" he asked. He thought the radio station was on fire. I could not see the radio station from my home but, later, I found that what my colleague had seen was a fire at the Headquarters building of the Grenada Defense Force (GDF) in the True Blue area on the south tip of the island.

Since speaking with him through the half-open door, Bishop and his colleagues had stayed in hiding for three days and then reinforced by other comrades, they emerged at four-fifteen a.m. on March 13th. In an action, which lasted only thirty-five minutes, Bishop led an attack on the GDF Headquarters. There is some doubt about the number of men involved in that action with the number given, variously, as forty-seven or fifty-four. It also reflects on conflicting opinions as to whether or not the attackers were all Grenadians because some believed the attacking force was augmented by Cuban soldiers smuggled onto the island that weekend. The attack was successful. Despite a force of more than double the attackers, the hundred and twenty officers and men of the GDF did not fight. They fled. Their barracks were burned to the ground and their arms and ammunition captured. Neither the GDF nor

the rebels suffered casualties during this action but consolidating their position, the rebels registered their first killing. A GDF officer, Hyacinth Brizan, living some miles away, was alerted to the fire at Army headquarters and driving quickly to investigate, he was stopped by a party of rebels. An eyewitness account says Brizan reached for a rifle on the back seat of his car, but he didn't make it. He died instantly in a hail of bullets.

Corporal Godwin Pysadee of the Royal Grenada Police Force was the second fatality that morning. He was under the command of Assistant Superintendent Raymond "Bogo" DeSousa and a member of one of two Police contingents sent to the burnt-out barracks where he was killed when that contingent exchanged fire with the rebels. In this engagement, another policeman, Constable Barry Alexis, was wounded. DeSousa escaped with his men and later that day was involved in plans to counter attack the rebels. The other police contingent, commanded by Assistant Superintendent Adonis Francis, was engaged in a scuffle and was disarmed by the rebels. Francis' shoulder was slightly hurt. After the rout of the GDF and retreat by DeSousa, the rebels moved on and captured the nearby radio station. Alerted by my colleague's earlier phone call, I wanted to verify my suspicions so I telephoned the station. I was surprised to hear Bishop's voice answer my call. We had a short conversation and all I remember saying was, "Take care of yourself, Maurice." He thanked me and we hung up.

Gairy was off the island but his fears of an armed coup had been well founded and I was extremely apprehensive when I thought NJM would have to face the firepower of the Police and GDF. I anticipated much bloodshed. It was obvious that NJM had some weapons but I knew Bishop and his colleagues had no military

training. Whichever way it went, it was clear that violence would result. Setting aside my journalistic instincts, I knew that this was no time to be out and about and my thoughts ran anxiously to my daughter Joan, who with her husband Henry Lewis and their children, lived in a house on the outskirts of St. George's. Hurrying to caution Henry and Joan not to leave the safety of their home, I drove past the entrance to the Prime Minister's office and I got no further. To my amazement, there, armed with a carbine of ancient vintage, guarding the Prime Minister's office, was my son-in-law, Henry. Henry had never been a member of NJM but I learned later that, together with scores of other young men excited by the events, he had immediately joined the Peoples' Revolutionary Army. That morning he had been issued with a gun and had helped arrest people believed to be hostile to NJM. He became a bodyguard to a member of the Central Committee but shortly after that he left the island with his family to seek medical attention.

At about six-fifteen that morning, there was a radio broadcast by an unidentified voice. It announced: "The Government of the criminal dictator, Eric Gairy, has been overthrown. The entire army has surrendered and all their arms have been captured. The peoples' rights have been restored". There was a new Revolutionary Government and the Police were instructed to stay in their barracks. Foreign residents were assured their lives and property were safe, and the new Government looked forward to continuing friendly relationships.

At this time there was no sign of activity in St. George's, either by the rebels or police. Everything was quiet. But tension was high and it was compounded by frequent broadcasts calling for surrender by those policemen who had not yet given themselves up. These

repeated broadcasts gave no indication as to whether or not policemen were preparing to attack the rebels and this fueled growing apprehension there might be an armed confrontation.

The broadcasts were made by senior members of the of the Royal Grenada Police Force and by members of Gairy's government, each adding their urgent pleas for surrender. Among them was Herbert Preudhomme, Gairy's Deputy Prime Minister. Preudhomme said, "I understand that certain elements of the Police and Secret Police are in the Fort (Police Headquarters) in a vain attempt to hold out against the new Government. Police in the Fort, I am appealing to you to put down your arms and leave the Fort one by one. Further resistance is useless. If you try to resist you will be wiped out."

Subsequently interviewed, Lieutenant Colonel Winston Massanto, Commander of the Grenada Defence Force, told me that on the first day of the revolution, there had been near panic among Gairy supporters. He confirmed that even as Preudhomme broadcast his appeal, he (Massanto) had been at the Fort planning a counter attack against the rebels and with him were two members of Gairy's government, Senator Derek Knight, and Minister of State, Henry Bullen. Also present was Assistant Superintendent of Police DeSousa who had escaped after the skirmish with the rebels at the GDF Headquarters. Since 1972, Gairy had openly recruited and commanded a gang of criminals called variously the "Secret Police", the "Mongoose Gang" or "Police Aids." According to Massanto, some of these thugs also took part in his planning discussions. Massanto said the group discussed a plan to hoist a white flag as a sign of surrender then set an ambush for the rebels. "I believe I saved a great deal of bloodshed when I persuaded them to abandon this plan," Massanto said, "It was unethical and it had no chance of success."

All Grenadians were glued to the radio and the broadcasts calling for the police to surrender promoted a continuing sense of fear and uncertainty. The entire town of St. George's was quiet and the shops and stores were closed but, from the safety of my home, I saw two scenes that highlighted for me two of my country's conflicting realities: carefree pleasure and malicious politics. At a near-by street intersection I saw a group of small boys pretending to be traffic policemen and, quite unaffected by the reality of revolution and mounting tension, they waved the occasional vehicle past my house with flamboyant gestures. It was indeed a surreal scene; a juxtaposition of the reality that the real police were nowhere to be found while our carefree youth were still playing freely in the deserted streets. Even more contrasting was the scene across the harbour where tourists from the Russian cruise liner, Ivan Franco, unaware and unaffected by the tension of the unfolding drama, were disembarking. Also unruffled, sitting in their colourful little booths at the entrance to the docks near the Fire Station, were the vendors of spice baskets and trinkets. They were ignorant of, or preferring to ignore, the unfolding events of Grenada's history that might disrupt their business day.

Shortly before two-thirty that afternoon, the scene changed abruptly. A contingent of rebels arrived. From our home on Scott Street, we could see the fire station on the east rim of the harbor, about five hundred yards away, and we saw fifteen or twenty armed men rapidly alight from private cars and trucks. They carried rifles and surrounded the fire station. But there was no fighting. We heard only five shots and eyewitnesses say a number of firemen quickly ran out of the main entrance and surrendered.

This action was little noticed by most bystanders. The fire station is within two hundred yards of the docks and when the shots were fired there was a noticeable clearing away of the area. But the people who moved seemed more curious than alarmed. There was an aura of comic opera around the docks while the tourists from the Ivan Franco remained oblivious of the drama and danger. Unabated in their quest for souvenirs, they continued to make purchases, probably thinking the attack was no more than a scene from street theatricals staged for their entertainment.

By three p.m. rebel reinforcements had arrived. Some fifty revolutionaries left the fire station in a flotilla of cars, jeeps and military trucks and headed for Police Headquarters at Fort George, half a mile away. Eyewitnesses reported that on their arrival, fifteen policemen in the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), who were in the outlying area of the fort, surrendered. There was a brief delay when one policeman refused to come out of the building and locked himself in a room, refusing to surrender. He was unarmed and when he did not respond to the call to give himself up ten revolutionaries stormed the building and brought him out without injury. The detachment then moved on to the fort where Police Headquarters was taken without resistance.

Apart from the ambush proposed by Knight, Bullen and DeSousa, with elements of the "Secret Police" (Gairy's thugs), a plan that did not materialise, there was only one other "effort" made to resist the rebels. It was engineered by Albert Forsythe, a member of Gairy's Government but, this too, was not implemented. Forsythe's home was near the Victoria Police Station, fifteen miles north of St. George's on the west coast and he ordered that all arms and ammunition be transported from the Station to his residence. It had been his intention to make a stand there with whatever policemen

he found willing to join him, but before he could consolidate his position, he was apprehended by the rebels and added to the growing list of Gairy supporters who were held captive.

By nightfall on 13th March, Grenada was completely in the hands of the rebels. With victory, the victors became the Peoples Revolutionary Army (PRA) and within days the new government, the Peoples Revolutionary Government (PRG), was recognized by Jamaica, Guyana, Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago, Britain and the United States of America. More international recognition was to come and in Grenada the PRG received overwhelming popular support. It seemed that revolution was good.

Three days after the successful coup, Maurice Bishop invited Cynthia and me to visit Mount Royal, the Prime Minister's official residence. He wanted us to see what he called Gairy's "obeah (black magic) room". Not knowing what to expect, we accepted the invitation and would never forget that visit.

The room was small, not more than ten by twelve feet, and obviously, it had been set aside for performance of some ritual. Immediately upon entering the room we experienced a feeling of trepidation, as if suspended in some form of unreality. There was a discomfiting sensation of being in the presence of something unclean. There had always been reports that, for political advantage, Gairy exploited the belief in "obeah" and whenever questioned he never denied that he was partial towards the cult. He knew that certain segments of the electorate would have been attracted to such beliefs, therefore, he could influence support for himself. However, few gave it much concern. Now, here inside his official residence, at

his home, in this room, within this “sanctuary”, the evidence was morbidly clear that not only did Gairy exploit the belief in obeah for political purposes but he was a practitioner. The incongruity struck me: a prime minister deeply involved in a cult. Not only had the rumours been true, we had left them unquestioned, too ready and willing to accept what we wanted to see and not question what we didn't want to believe.

Behind the walls of Mount Royal - the home we provide for our prime ministers - was this ill-omened space of ritual practices. Two small altars carried balls of indigo said to be symbols of obeah. There were also pieces of saltpeter and several packets of an unidentified white powder. The practice of obeah is often merged with the symbols and rituals of Christianity and, interspersed with the indigo, white powder and saltpeter were crucifixes, statues of saints and rosaries. Cynthia and I were in disbelief. As we investigated further we found two black robes hanging in a wardrobe at the back of the room with a multi-coloured robe of blue, yellow and green. Obviously, Gairy dressed himself especially for these rituals. There was also a multi-coloured cape fastened by a brooch made of bone in the shape of a cow and a brilliant red stole, about four inches wide, decorated with sea shells, which would have been draped around the neck as a priest might wear it. Apparently, when conducting these rituals Gairy would wear a crown headdress, carry a wooden sword and a bishop's staff. The mental picture of him garbed in comic-opera style could, initially, almost be amusing, but such an image of a leader of a democratic country was no laughing matter. It was frightening. The person “on stage”, decked out in the trappings of black magic, was not an actor rather he was the Prime Minister of Grenada. Weighty matters of state were his responsibility and it was appalling to think that resolution of such matters were in the hands of an eccentric practicing voodoo.

The obeah room was further concrete evidence of Gairy's bizarre makeup and helps explain more about his character. It was a pointer to understanding part of his unscrupulous and ruthless nature. In the execution of his office, our prime minister did not seek guidance only from qualified experts but was lead also by divination generated by, and from, the symbols of obeah—chicken bones, balls of indigo, white powder, saltpeter and who knows what. Several Bibles in the obeah room shared a shelf with books about witchcraft. They included *The Truth About Witchcraft*, *Journeys Out Of The Body* and *Hostage To The Devil*. But two powerful telescopes and one very remarkable book in that room showed another aspect of Gairy's beliefs. The book, *The Twelve Blessings—the Concept as given by the Master Jesus*, was written by a George King. He is the founder of the Aetherius Society and claims to be the voice of the Interplanetary Parliament. King was appointed by the "Cosmic Masters" who "inhabit the higher planes of other planets", he says, and his ability to contact these higher beings was taught to him by a "world-renowned Yoga Master," who entered and left his apartment through a locked door. King is dead but was the leader of a group of believers in Unidentified Flying Objects (UFO). As a firm believer himself in UFOs, Gairy was a King disciple but he was no passive advocate. He delivered the featured address at the 1st International Congress on the UFO phenomenon held in Acapulco, Mexico in 1977. Gairy, addressing the General Assembly of the United Nations, tried repeatedly to motivate that body into assuming a leading role in UFO research. He said, "I have myself seen a UFO," Gairy told the General Assembly, "and have been overwhelmed by what I have seen". Echoing King's assertion that there are unseen beings somewhere in the sky, Gairy told the General Assembly that man has lost much of his natural endowments. "For while he is greater than any other creature on this planet," he said, "We observe that the cat can see through the dark, man today cannot. The dog, the horse and other creatures of

the animal species not only can see, but can also sense existences beyond man's capacity so to do". Why did we Grenadians not see, or worse, choose to ignore, the supernatural workings of the man we elected to lead our country?

During our visit to Mount Royal, Bishop showed us a document found among Gairy's papers. A list of thirty names (including my own) was headed, "God help me, Eric Matthew Gairy, to overcome these enemies". That list was probably drawn up prior to 1973 as it contains no names of members of the New Jewel Movement, which was launched that year. It does, however, list members of the Grenada National Party, the political party, which was Gairy's main opposition until he was deposed. I did wonder as to why the name of Derek Knight was on the list. Originally a member of GNP, Knight, a prominent Queens Council, left GNP and launched his own party, the Peoples Democratic Movement (PDM). PDM did not do well in the 1972 General Elections and, sometime after, Knight joined Gairy's GULP. Knight did not contest a seat in the 1976 General Elections but was appointed to the Senate by Gairy and was recognized as Gairy's "right hand" man. From time to time, there had been reports of serious friction between the two men but not enough to break up the alliance and Knight's inclusion on Gairy's list must have occurred earlier in the 1970s. Knight's inclusion is just another aggregation of facts demonstrating that Gairy, throughout his tenure as our prime minister, was given to abnormal and inexplicable behavior.

CHAPTER FOUR

Maurice Bishop in power, 1979- 1983



Maurice Bishop

After the coup, a euphoria swept the island and there was rejoicing that Grenada had been wrested from Gairy's hands. No longer would he be able to indulge in his shady financial dealings. No longer would he be able to employ criminals to do his bidding. No longer was our country's destiny in the hands of voodoo and black magic. Grenada had been handed back to Grenadians and maybe now we could become something other than a facsimile of a UFO. The rude awakening was to come later but for now, in the freedom from "Gairyism", the dawn of a new era was hailed and Bishop was the undisputed hero of the moment.

A feeling of national consciousness translated itself into watchful protectiveness. All prominent Gairy supporters were in jail or

had fled the island but such despotism left behind a prolonged fear and a not-so-far-fetched belief that Gairy might employ mercenaries to attack Grenada. The population was asked to report anything suspicious and, in the early days of the revolution, this resulted in acute public phobia. The revolutionaries ruled but they were, in part, ruled by the fear of counter-revolution. It was paradoxical; new freedom, new hope and yet, a lingering trepidation about the future.

I recall an incident that illustrated this heightened anxiety. One evening, as Cynthia and I sat with friends on our veranda, which overlooked the mouth of St. George's harbour, someone drew our attention to a small ship entering the harbour. The ship was unlit except for navigation lights and was travelling very slowly as it approached the docks. I, of course, had seen many similar, small ships entering the harbor in the evening hours, lit or unlit, and they had not raised suspicion in my mind. It's a normal occurrence and they look normal. But on that evening, in the aftermath of the revolution, I immediately took action and phoned the PRA. There had been no need for alarm but responding to the emotional sense permeating the current climate "to guard the fatherland", we had become victims of the phobia gripping the island. Again, it was the paradox of freedom with an attendant fear, a residual of violent revolution.

One of the clarions of the post-revolt was for Grenadians to support their new government and their country and many people, including Cynthia and me, responded to the PRG call to put one's skills at the service of Grenada. She was a qualified midwife, theatre nurse and Certified Royal Sanitary Institute Health Visitor and I was a journalist/broadcaster and experienced amateur

radio operator. Like many Grenadians, we were filled with hope and eager to assist in rebuilding our country from the ruinous state created by Gairy. We volunteered immediately. There was a PRA camp in the Morne Rouge hotel area where we handed in a list of our skills and then waited with anticipation of becoming involved in some way. We never heard another word about the initiative. In hindsight, it became clear as to why our offer, and those of others, was ignored. If we had been allowed to become involved we would soon have realized that the way forward, as chosen by the PRG, was not a way we could support. By accepting the volunteers' assistance the friction between the government and I would have surfaced much earlier and the PRG probably thought it better to avoid such likelihood. The request for support was for propaganda purposes, the actualization of it was never intended. For instance, Bishop had promised free speech and free and fair elections, promises the PRG never aimed to keep. Inevitably, the intentions versus the promises would have been exposed and generated problems with people like myself who, initially, were strong supporters of the revolution's outcome. And nothing was more fundamental to me than the issues of freedom and human rights that are grounded in a true democracy, the antithesis of what we had had under the oppression of Gairy. That is the underlying malaise that led us to accept anything and anyone, as long as they weren't Gairy.

Despite the propaganda and other PRG tactics, the enthusiastic nationalist feeling did not last long. Increasing numbers of Grenadians discovered that the elated feelings were built on false foundations and within months there was an incident, which confirmed my growing misgivings. In the early days of the revolution, Bishop stressed that all political parties were free to operate. The first political party to take advantage of this was Herbert Blaize's Grenada National Party (GNP) which called a public meeting in Sauteurs,

the town on the northern tip of the island. Covering this meeting, I was dismayed to see a gang of some twenty to thirty people dancing and gyrating, carnival style, through the crowd and disrupting the meeting. It was an obvious attempt to break up the gathering, and it worked. The next morning I phoned Prime Minister Bishop and told him what had happened and suggested he take steps to ensure that his promise of freedom for all political parties was not violated. His response amazed and disappointed me. He said Blaize was too “divisive” and what the GNP should do was to have a meeting in a hall where people could ask questions. Bishop was obviously avoiding the issue and in spite of my urgings he declined to make a public statement confirming freedom for all political parties. My reservations reflected a deeper foreboding. Two nights later, when GNP tried to hold a meeting in Grenville, the island’s second largest town, it too was broken up. Now the true nature of the revolution was beginning to show itself. We were discovering that in changing from Gairy to the PRG we had merely exchanged one type of dictatorship for another. It was just tyranny of a different political stripe. There were many unanswered questions, the foremost being: How could Grenadians have been so blind to this and so accepting of such deceit and manipulation?

The PRG leaders, Maurice Bishop and Bernard Coard, were ideologically similar and yet dramatically different, both in personality and methods and although they had strong “left” leanings their political views were of little concern in the minds of most Grenadians. I, as a journalist, might have been more heedful except I too allowed the cancerous years of Gairy to affect my mental acuity. Emotions ruled and I had allowed my journalistic skepticism to temporarily go silent. Collectively, we were so anxious to eradicate the rule of Gairy that we paid no attention to those offering the alternative. And certainly, before the revolution, there had been

no suggestion that the NJM might lead our country into anything as extreme as “communism”, nor was there any thought among us that Grenada would establish close links with Havana, Managua and Moscow.

However, within a month of the revolution Grenadians did sit up and take notice when the PRG received a large shipment of arms and ammunition from Cuba. Eyebrows were raised but in typical Grenadian style not much else was raised, no questions and little concern. At that time, there was the widespread fear that mercenaries, employed by Gairy, could attack the island; therefore, defense considerations were paramount and, no matter who provided it, getting our hands on a stockpile of arms seemed prudent. Unfolding history was to upbraid us for not being more cynical and guarded. Ironically, because the PRG had freed us from the fears engendered by the past we were more accepting and submissive to their promises, despite obvious signs of history repeating itself. The NJM/PRG was a Trojan horse that we welcomed into our midst.

Maurice Bishop was born in Aruba on 29th May 1944. When his Grenadian parents, Rupert and Alimenta Bishop returned home, he came to Grenada shortly before his seventh birthday. In Grenada, he attended the Roman Catholic Presentation College and afterwards, in 1967, qualified as a barrister at Lincolns Inn in London.

Returning to Grenada, the young barrister hung out his shingle and established a law practice. In 1972 he founded a political group, the Movement for Assemblies of the People (MAP) and in the following year, MAP merged with another political group.

That was the Joint Endeavor for Welfare Education & Liberation (JEWEL), founded by Bishop's close friend, Unison Whiteman. So was born the New Jewel Movement (NJM), which was to play such a critical role in the island's history. After the revolution and the formation of the PRG government the charismatic, good-looking and charming Bishop was the automatic choice to be made Prime Minister of the fledgling Government.

Bishop's Deputy in the PRG was Bernard Coard. Born in Grenada on 10th August 1944, (just three months after Bishop), he attended the Grenada Boys' Secondary School where he became active in the scout movement, earning the top bracket qualifications of a Queen's Scout. Later, he studied abroad, receiving a degree in political science & economics from Brandeis University in Waltham, Mass. He also gained a masters degree in comparative political economy from Sussex University in the U.K. In Britain, Coard worked as a Youth & Cooperative Development Officer and also taught at a school for educationally challenged children. During 1971 and 1972 he embarked on research on Latin America for a doctorate in political economy. The period 1974 to 1976 was spent at the University of the West Indies lecturing in the Departments of International Relations, Management and Government.

Returning to Grenada in 1976, Coard joined the NJM and was part of it when it teamed up under the banner of the "Peoples Alliance" to contest the 1976 General Elections. The Alliance won six of the fifteen House seats, NJM capturing three, of which Coard's was one.

The Bishop-Coard combination mirrored differences that harboured potential for dramatic conflict. On one hand was Bishop, a brilliant advocate with a good knowledge of the law and skilled in using his personality to advantage, especially in the art of persuasion. However, in the art of politics associates gave him less than full marks and said that within both the NJM and PRG he was not effective in delegating tasks and responsibilities and that he was poor at formalising and executing strategy. On the other hand Coard was a dedicated Marxist theorist and a good political strategist. However, he lacked an intimate knowledge of the Grenadian people and patience was not one of his virtues. He was in a hurry and wanted to waste no time converting the country into a classic communist state.

With Coard taking a strong but background position, it was Bishop, with his blend of charisma, legal brilliance and political incompetence that developed into a ruthless dictator. To further his political ends, he did not scruple to pass harsh laws, some of them being retroactive and, without the formality of a charge and trial, he filled the jail with hundreds of people he considered his enemies. He may not have had the same list as Gairy did (I don't know if I was on Bishop's list) but he certainly acted in the same manner. And yet he continued to flourish in the adulation of his supporters and capture them with his charm. As they seemed to put their faith either in him or some vague promise for the future, I think it was a regretful combination of both. Initially, for whatever reasons, we believed his promise that we would have free speech and early elections and that after conditions returned to normal they (PRG) would allow the country to revert to full democracy. It was indeed an empty promise, one that our small nation would long suffer the consequences of, because we accepted it unquestioningly, at a time when we desperately wanted to be led, regardless of the direction.

I first met Maurice Bishop at a press conference in 1973 when MAP and JEWEL were merging. I was impressed. We struck up a friendship and, up to the time of the revolution and for some time after, I enjoyed good relations with him. During Gairy's time, all Grenadian media had been under state control and NJM had no access to the regional and international media, but Bishop knew he was good news material and that I was valuable to him as a channel through which he could reach the outside world. And he knew I would not permit the Associated Press, and other news agencies I worked for, to be controlled or used for propaganda purposes. It allowed me access and to get to know the man who would become our next prime minister.

Bernard Coard was the other factor in the Bishop-Coard equation. In marked contrast to Bishop, Coard was a retiring figure. Inclined to be dour, he was totally devoid of charismatic endowments and not for him the public platform and cheering crowd. He was the hard-working theorist operating from the back room, dedicated to his ideology and ambition. Although not evident initially, he did have a burning desire for political power. I had much less contact with Coard than I had with Bishop and in the early days of the revolution, before such a hard line was taken against me by the PRG, he was never hostile in his dealings with me as a journalist. For me, his demeanor was not reassuring and at times he generated a sense of insincerity, as his answers to my questions were often evasive and less than satisfactory.

These, then, were the two men into whose hands the revolution had placed Grenada. A charismatic barrister with no sense of political strategy and an ambitious, power-hungry ideologue. Both were committed to the Marxist-Leninist path but Coard, with his dedication and political training, was far ahead of Bishop on the road and, from the beginning, this incongruous leadership mix was charged with explosive ingredients. It was not long before coming

events cast their sinister shadows.

Even before the shadows, some astute observers and doubting Thomases were aware of hidden dangers and saw how early actions by the PRG might be harbingers of things to come. But because there was no hint of a Bishop-Coard conflict it was thought that a gradual approach to change was best. There were those who cautioned against the unquestioning acceptance of the PRG/NJM and warned of having a far left ideology “imposed” on Grenadians, but the doubting Thomases were so completely outnumbered that their voice was not heard. The vast majority of Grenadians welcomed, with open arms, Bishop, Coard, their companions, their empty promises and their stringent ideology.

In the heady times following the coup, few realized or wanted to see the reality. NJM was a completely untried lot and Bishop and his group would never have gained such popular support if Gairy had not created the ugly background against which NJM could claim to rescue Grenada. People were so anxious to get out of the pot of oppression that they jumped right back into the fire of subjugation. This, and the failure to question, the failure to understand, the NJM's commitment to the goals and tactics of communism proved to be extremely costly. But Grenadians were so focused on the opportunity to escape the shambles created by Gairy that they were willing to become dependent on, and place their hopes for independence on, any leadership, with little or no objective questioning. In their hope for freedom they subjugated that freedom to the will of others.

At his first press conference after the capture of the island, Bishop set the mode of deception which was to be the fabric of the NJM regime. He refused to define his party's ideology in reply to media questions as to whether NJM was "communist". "We don't like labels", he said, "you look at our programme and decide". And Bishop was reassuring. He promised freedom of speech and of association. Under a new constitution approved by referendum, he said, elections would be held "as soon as possible".

That was an empty promise. Within three months, his tune had turned to something else. "Grenadians did not have a revolution to have elections", he said. The Peoples Revolutionary Government (PRG) does not want to state for how long elections must be postponed, he stated, but the PRG is clear that elections are not the key question. That attitude should have warned us. And the Coca-cola incident should have been further warning that Grenada may have fallen from the frying pan into the fire.

The revolution was just six months old when there was an industrial dispute between W E Julian & Co Ltd, bottlers of Coca-cola, and the Commercial & Industrial Workers Union (CIWU) headed by Vince Noel, a prominent PRG member. The dispute resulted in a strike and lock out which was resolved by the PRG by simply seizing the bottling plant. Said the PRG Minister for Labour, Selwyn Strachan, "the public has suffered a great deal because of the autocratic and arbitrary action of Management" and "the PRG has a commitment to citizens to guarantee them adequate services". The workers were re-employed and the plant was operated as a Government concern. In the interest of keeping the brand name before the public, the Coca-cola Company continued to supply the required essence until the PRG was ready to hand back the bottling

plant some two and a half years later, but the plant had made no money under PRG management.

There was a rude awakening, too, relative to press freedom. In October 1980, the PRG closed the independent “Torchlight” newspaper, owned by Grenada Publishers Ltd. . It was alleged that the paper published “vicious lies” and “misinformation”. An official publication said “Torchlight” had disclosed the location of a PRA camp. The newspaper had failed to “open its columns to a wide range of views, trying to stir up the maximum amount of confusion and unrest, and, generally, attempting to destabilize the PRG”.

The Caribbean Press Council investigated these charges and reported that “Torchlight” had not been guilty of destabilization. “While it is true that some of the criticism could be said to be unbalanced and lacking in investigated competence,” the Council said, “the same could be said of commentary in organs owned by the State or by the New Jewel Movement”.

The PRG disregarded this report and immediately passed a law banning newspaper shareholdings by aliens. This law also limited any Grenadian to 4% of the shareholdings in any Company which is the proprietor, printer or publisher of a newspaper. And this law automatically vested in Government all alien shareholdings and Grenadian shareholdings above 4%.

With the “Torchlight” banned, this left only the Government owned “Free West Indian” and the NJM party publication as the

newspapers originating in Grenada. Neither could be said to be independent. To fill this void, without violating the PRG law, was the inspiration of Leslie Pierre, a small businessman with no knowledge or experience of publication or journalism. The consequences of his inspiration were to have dramatic impact. He did not know the extent of the ruthlessness of the revolutionaries but he was destined to pay dearly with his freedom.

Pierre's idea was to have 26 Grenadians form a newspaper company, each subscriber having equivalent shares. That meant that each shareholder had less than 4% of the company, so complying with the provisions of the law. Pierre discussed the proposal with me and I thought it excellent. We brought Pierre's brother, Eric, into the picture along with Tillman Thomas, Dorothy Patterson, Lloyd Noel, Denise Campbell and Muriel Spencer. Then began the collection of subscribers which included shopkeepers, farmers, barristers, a journalist, businessmen and a trade-unionist. The shareholders were: Fitzroy Adams, Alex Bain, John St. Bernard, Denise Campbell, Rawle Charles, Terrence Cromwell, Dennis Forrester, Dudley Francis, Norris Franker, Alister Hughes, Leonard Hughes, Stephen John, Ben Jones, Benedict La Qua, Charles McIntyre, William Minors, Lloyd Noel, David Otway, Dorothy Paterson, Eric Pierre, Leslie Pierre, Hudson Scipio, John Smith, Joan Spencer, Tillman Thomas, Fred Toppin.

The newspaper was called "The Grenadian Voice". Produced on a duplicator, the first issue of 16 pages went on sale on June 12th 1981 and was completely sold out. The issue carried articles on "The law & you" (explaining the Taxes Management Law), "The Economy, a cause for concern", and "Agriculture as a priority". It also carried interviews with the President of the Hotel Association

and with the Government's Director of Tourism. This issue also had a page of local, regional and world news.

A week later, on the evening of the 19th of June, the next issue of the "Voice" was ready for distribution. The newspaper was produced in Leslie Pierre's office and the production team was Leslie and Eric Pierre, Tillman Thomas, Denise Campbell, Joan Spencer, Cynthia and me. About midnight, just as we closed the door and were standing on the pavement, a motorized squad of about thirty heavily armed PRA arrived under the command of Chief of Police Ian St. Bernard.

St. Bernard was not hostile. He, however, ignored our protest against his lack of a search warrant. Demanding Leslie's keys, he proceeded with his men to take away our equipment with all copies of the newspaper they found in the office and in our cars parked nearby. Leslie, Eric and Joan were arrested and taken away "for questioning" (released later that day) and the PRA seized my car together with those of the Pierre brothers, Tillman and Joan.

It was then close to 1.00 am, the streets were deserted and Cynthia and I began walking home. That was about 15 minutes away and I became perturbed when I spotted one of St. Bernard's soldiers following about 50 feet behind us. This man was armed with a rifle carried at the ready position and I had fears that our bodies might be found riddled with bullets. I had nothing to defend us except a pair of scissors. But my mind was frantic with ideas as to how I could best use this "weapon" if the soldier started to close the gap between us. But the armed guard had been only a gesture of harassment and intimidation and, without incident, it was with relief that we closed our front door behind us. But harassment was

only just beginning. Next morning, we saw, on the surface of the street outside our home, a warning sign painted in big block letters. “If you play with fire, fire going to burn you”, it said.

That same day, at a public meeting, Bishop announced a new law banning all newspapers. This law was “deemed to come into effect on 16th June”, that is, three days BEFORE the PRA raid on our newspaper. In his speech, Bishop described me as “a man who has sunk lower and lower over the years”. He attacked my journalistic credibility and said my news reporting was biased.

“We think of the fact that here is a man who prides himself on being a professional journalist but you can’t see him in the rallies, you can’t see him when the Center for Popular Education has a national event..... you can’t see him when any important national events are taking place because he says then that he is too busy and what is taking place is not news worthy.” After the meeting, a crowd of some 60 young people spent more than an hour in the street outside our home, dancing in carnival fashion, jeering, calling out threats and insults and chanting the theme of “If you play with fire, fire going to burn you”.

Other shareholders in our newspaper were subject to similar harassment and some publicly disassociated themselves from the venture. The Government owned Radio Free Grenada referred to the “counter-revolutionary group of 26 responsible for publication of “The Grenadian Voice”, and announced that Dudley Fransis, in a signed statement, said he had learned that our newspaper had “CIA implication and I now make open declaration and disassociate myself completely from the company of 26”.

Advertisements of two other shareholders appeared in the Government owned "Free West Indian". One, signed by Norris Franker, declared that he had "no further association or connection, direct or indirect," with our newspaper. The other, signed by David Otway, declared that he had "agreed to become a shareholder in the honest belief that I was acting in the best interest of my country". Radio Free Grenada said that, in an interview, another shareholder, Dennis Forrester, declared that he knew only half a dozen of the shareholders and did not know the rest "from here to Adam". "I never got together in any plot or decide anything with anybody" Forrester said, "I am quite innocent. I don't know nothing about CIA business and what not".

For about two months after the close down of our newspaper, an armed PRA squad was stationed on 24 hour surveillance outside our home. The guard was comprised of about half dozen teenagers and every morning, when I took my usual brisk walk to the edge of town, the squad followed me in their car. But Cynthia and I discovered a ruse which may have brought the surveillance to a close earlier than the authorities planned. Every time we walked out of our gate on some errand, we hailed the squad and demanded an escort. Having got to our destination, we would instruct the escort to remain on duty and be there to accompany us on the way home. Initially, the youngsters clearly resented being instructed by us. When it became clear, however, that their surveillance was not having the intended intimidation, the situation became a game and, finally, most of them became quite friendly, chatting as they performed their "escort" duty.

On one occasion, however, I had a terrible fright. Cynthia had gone with her "escort" to get some photocopying done and, as she

returned, I happened to be looking out of a window overlooking our front door. The PRA squad must have been suspicious over the photocopying and they demanded to search her bag. She did not resist but I was horrified to hear her say loudly, "Let me tell you, make no mistake about it, I am CIA!" Well, you could have knocked me down with a feather !! What in the world was she talking about? And the soldiers would have been even more shocked. They would have to report that Cynthia confessed she was associated with the feared United States Criminal Investigation Agency, the CIA. But Cynthia did not leave us long in doubt. "Yes," she said, "I am CIA. I am a Christian In Action".

The harassment continued on July 2nd (1981). On that date, I was due to fly out to attend a meeting of The Caribbean Press Council and I had the required Income Tax Clearance to travel. At the airport, Immigration and Security officials cleared me and, in the departure lounge, I waited to board my flight. To my surprise, I was accosted by an Immigration official who told me I would not be allowed to leave the island. The official said the Security Division of the Prime Minister's office had ordered this action because my tax records were being investigated. I immediately phoned Ian Jacobs, personal assistant to the Prime Minister, seeking an explanation. Jacobs said he knew nothing of the matter but would investigate. Ten minutes later, however, he phoned me at the airport. He could find no one who could clear up the matter, he said. I then phoned Alfred De Bellotte, Comptroller of Income Tax. His department had given me a travel clearance and I wanted an explanation. But De Bellotte, said he was unaware of any investigation into my tax records. He suggested the ban on my travel was for some other reason. So, I contacted Jacobs again. I told him of De Bellotte's lack of knowledge of the matter and asked him to speak with the Comptroller. Within a short while, Jacobs called me

again. The investigation into my tax records “must have escaped De Bellotte’s, attention”, he said. Jacobs said the investigation was in progress but could not or would not, say who was the investigator. Nor could he say to whom I could apply for information. But he did confirm the ban on my travel.

On the day following, there was a conflict of wills at the Income Tax office. Representatives of the PRG demanded access to my tax records. Such records are strictly confidential and De Bellotte and his staff resisted the demand. But the PRG representatives were victors. Years later, De Bellotte told me that his protests had been in vain. ”The PRG got what they wanted”, he said, “and they sent me on un-requested leave, but I had the satisfaction of knowing that I had taken a principled stand”.

Having got what they wanted, that evening, Radio Free Grenada (RFG) devoted considerable time to publicising details of my tax records and alleging I had refused to pay my income tax. An assessment of EC\$1708.96 for 1979 tax was too small, “given Hughes’ life style”, RFG said. “This could only be right”, RFG said, “if Hughes’ entire income from all sources was somewhere in the vicinity of EC\$800.00 per month. But, Alister Hughes has himself and his wife to support, two maids to pay, a huge house with all modern electrical facilities, a car to maintain, electricity, telephone, water and gas bills to pay, land and house tax to pay, plus he has to finance his frequent trips abroad”. RFG said, I had made a news report, “in a dishonest, unethical manner” on the incident at the airport when a travel ban had been placed on me. The announcement said my report did not mention the fact that I was “living off the social services paid for by the working people of the country”.

“The people of Grenada are fully aware that Hughes has no intention of telling the Caribbean people the truth or of maintaining professional standards of journalism”, RFG said, “but his intention is to use cheap journalism in the interest of his minority class”

As a sequel to this incident, I was summoned to the Income Tax office two weeks later. There, I was told that my records were in order. But, I was never told when the ban had been lifted. Two months later, however, having to travel, I applied for the required documents and, without hindrance, was able to leave the island.

About a year later, in September 1982, Bishop delivered an interesting speech to a select group. It was a confidential address directed to members of the PRG Political Bureau and Central Committee. It outlined the “line of march” pursued by the Party and exposed its ruthless nature such as was evinced when the confidentiality of the income tax files was violated.

When first I saw a copy of this speech, I was skeptical. I could not believe Bishop could be so deceptive. The document looked unreal and I was willing to give consideration to the opinion of those who said the United States Psychological Unit had cleverly fabricated the document to smear Bishop. Subsequently, I discovered that the document was authentic. Two prominent NJM members confirmed to me that the speech, as published, was genuine. My informants are Chester Humphrey, President of the Technical & Industrial Workers Union and Peter David, Barrister. They were both present at the Boca Secondary School, on September 13th 1982, when Bishop spoke.

Bishop's address recounted the history of NJM. It analyzed Grenada's social structure and highlighted the Party's objective to build socialism in the island. NJM's role was as a "serious Marxist Leninist vanguard Party", leading, guiding and directing the whole process, he said.

NJM could not achieve its objective on its own, Bishop told the meeting, because NJM did not have enough managers, capital, international contacts or markets. So, from the outset, in order to hold on to power, it had been necessary to form an "alliance" with the "upper petit bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie". Within the first few hours of the revolution, he continued, we began to put that alliance in place, inviting the petit bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie to come down to Radio Free Grenada and, in some cases, feeling them out as to whether they would be willing to serve on the council of the PRG", Bishop said.

Outside the immediate leadership, there were 14 names announced mainly of the petit bourgeoisie, upper bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie including Simon Charles and Sidney Ambrose, peasantry; Bernard Gittens, professional middle strata; Lloyd Noel, professional middle strata; Parm Buxo and Norris Bain, middle capitalists; and Lyden Ramdhanny, big capitalist. "And this was done deliberately", Bishop said, "so that imperialism won't get so excited and would say, 'well, they have some nice fellas in that thing, everything alright', and, as a result, wouldn't think about sending in troops".

Bishop reminded the meeting of what had happened to the "comrades" in Ghana when they staged a coup d'état. The first

thing these comrades did was to say, 'we are Marxist-Leninists and we have just had a Marxist-Leninists Revolution and we are going to wipe out the bourgeoisie'. That was a mistake and they were overthrown on the same day. "Fortunately, NJM had a little more sense than that", Bishop said. "Part of the reason why it had been possible to build an alliance", he said, "is the low level of class consciousness of the bourgeoisie. They don't really fully understand what we're doing", he said, (and I can almost hear him chuckle as he thinks how easily Granadians had been hoodwinked.) "it comes over in a million things they say", he continued, "they are still hoping that what we are building is not socialism but, as one of them puts it, socialism/capitalism or capitalism/socialism... whatever that means."

In his speech, Bishop emphasized that, while the PRG had an alliance with sections of the bourgeoisie, the bourgeoisie was not part of the PRG "dictatorship." "They were not part of our rule and control", he said, "we bring them in for what we want to bring them in for". "They are not part of our dictatorship because when they try to hold public meetings and we don't want that, the masses shut down the meeting", he continued. "When we want to hold Zonal Councils and we don't want them there, we keep them out. When they want to put out a newspaper, and we don't want that, we close it down. When they want freedom of expression to attack the Government or link up with the CIA, and we don't want that, we crush them and jail them.

When the PRG holds Zonal Councils and Workers Councils", he said, "the bourgeoisie is not invited deliberately and consciously. In this way, they don't have the opportunity to come and try to confuse people inside the councils".

Bishop gave the meeting examples of how the PRG “dictatorship” would operate. “When the working people want to hold a public meeting”, he said, “we don’t stop them. When the working people want to go and hold a picket, we don’t stop them. When they want to picket Bata (shoe store), that is good, but if Bata want to picket workers, we jail Bata. The workers could picket Bata but Bata cannot picket the workers”.

When Torchlight (newspaper) workers want to take over the Company, “ he continued, “we support them, not publicly, through making noise, because that would not be in our best interest. We pretend we don’t know what is happening and let the trade unionists do it. But, if the Torchlight owners try to crush the workers, we jail the Torchlight owners.” In considering the scope and power of the PRG dictatorship, Bishop asked the meeting to consider how laws were made in revolutionary Grenada. “Laws are made in this country when Cabinet agrees and when I sign a document on behalf of Cabinet”, he said, “and that is what everybody in the country – like it or don’t like it – has to follow. Or, consider how people get detained in this country. We don’t go and call for no votes. You get detained when I sign an order after discussing it with the National Security Committee of the Party or with a higher Party body. Once I sign it, like it or don’t like it, its up the hill (jail) for them.”

Bishop summarized his dictatorial deception when he told his audience they were walking a “real tight rope”. “On the one hand you have to give encouragement and incentives and build the confidence of the bourgeoisie. But on the other hand, when they step out of line, we still have to crush them”

CHAPTER FIVE

The assassination of Maurice Bishop, 1983

*Eyewitness account as recorded
by Alister Hughes*

Meanwhile, within a year of the revolution, whispered reports told of growing friction and strained relations within the PRG. Coard was getting increasingly impatient. He was not satisfied with the slow development of Grenada into being a truly communist state. The pillars of the economy should be in the hands of the PRG, he thought, and he wanted to achieve this quickly. His impatience is highlighted in the minutes of the July 22nd 1981 meeting of the Central Committee (CC).

The Central Committee, comprising of some 15 or 20 members, was the final authority of the Party and, at that time, members were dissatisfied with the operation of one of its sub-committees, the Workers Committee (WC).

Members thought that that department had developed into a major scandal. The matter was discussed and the minutes record the debate contributions of only two members, Bishop, who was Chairman, and Coard. Those contributions afford a vivid picture of the contrast between the modes of operation of these two men and they indicate pointers to the gathering storm which was to engulf the PRG.

As Chairman, Bishop summarized what he thought had gone wrong. He was not satisfied with attention paid to the work of the WC. "If the NJM was to move forward", he said, members would have to take the revolutionary 'struggles' seriously. The WC had come up for discussion from time to time, he said, "but no serious thought had been given to it in a firm and disciplined way. Both the CC and Political Bureau {PB} (of which Coard was Chairman) should shoulder some blame", he thought.

Coard's approach was totally different. He pulled no punches. Not for him the tactic of expressing who should shoulder some blame. He pointed a finger exactly where he thought the blame should go- right on to the plates of members of the CC and PB. "These bodies must be constructively criticized", he said. He was angry and he berated members for their timidity and unprincipled softness in dealing with the situation.

The timidity and unprincipled softness of his CC colleagues appears to have been Coard's sore spot. And it continued to increase his frustration. The revolution was not going the way he knew it should. Basic Leninist measures were being ignored. It was becomingly impossible for him to continue to work in this situation and, early in 1982, he came to an important decision. He had had enough. He would resign. But Coard did not do anything hastily. Fully conscious that submission of his resignation would have tremendous implications, he thought carefully of the consequences.

Then, in October 1982, he acted. He sent Bishop his resignation from both the CC and PB.

CC Members were astounded. This was a bombshell. For some time, they had been aware that Coard had grievances. But, they had not realized how deep seated these grievances were. Coard's resignation indicated a serious rift in the leadership and could point to dangerous cracks in the administration. His resignation brought matters to a head and Bishop immediately called a meeting to discuss the matter. Coard did not attend, but a member was sent to get details from him.

Coard had several complaints. First, he made it clear that his resignation was not negotiable. He deplored the "slackness" of CC members and their unwillingness to speak up on issues. Members did not study and prepare for meetings, he complained. In his opinion, stringent Leninist measures were required but he feared that corrective measures would result in personality clashes.

The meeting lasted for four sessions, stretching over 32 hours. Among other subjects, the Party's work was analyzed together with the need for a Party School to tutor members in the science of Marxism-Leninism. Consideration was given also to the improper functioning of the CC and to the need for the self-critical approach by all committees.

Coard's resignation was accepted. Members were unanimous that the Party 'stood at the crossroads' and concluded the CC had a choice of two routes. One would be the "petty bourgeois" way of making Coard's resignation the issue. This would bring only temporary relief, members felt, and would surely lead to deterioration of the Party into a 'social-democratic party'. Such an action would bring about the degeneration of the revolution...

The other was the Communist route, -- 'the road of Leninist standards and functioning, and the road of democratic centralism, of selectivity, of criticism and self-criticism and of collective leadership'. And therefore, the meeting affirmed, the Party must be placed on a firm Leninist footing.

Nine months later, however, at the CC meeting convened on 13th July 1983, the crisis was still evident. Members claimed there were 'deep seated petty bourgeois manifestations' in the Party. They felt the Party had failed to transform itself ideologically and organizationally. It was said that the confidence of broad sections of the masses had been shaken, and that the leadership had failed to take the Party along a Leninist path. This meeting was in session for 6 days, lasting for more than 54 hours.

Members reviewed every aspect of the Party's position and it was apparent the root of the trouble had not been identified. Something more was required. More than analysis was needed, and on 26th August 1983, Bishop called an emergency CC meeting to discuss the general concern felt by party members.

In preparation, Bishop asked Leon Cornwall, a prominent CC member, to canvass the views of a number of senior party members. Cornwall summarized the feedback he had acquired, including the feeling that some CC members were not functioning properly. He had spoken with visiting comrades from the German Democratic Republic and from Cuba and they all had felt that the CC state of work was poor.

Other members expressed opinions. The CC performance had been weak. The militia was being neglected. The Party was in danger of disintegration. Sections of the Party were in rebellion. There was increasing disrespect among sections of the Party. There were no conclusions at this meeting, but it was arranged there would be a full meeting of the NJM in two weeks 'to come up with

appropriate steps’.

The scheduled meeting opened with an analysis of the state of the Party and revolution and it was generally agreed that the revolution faced its greatest danger since 1979. The Party was crumbling. There was great dissatisfaction among the people and sections of the party had begun to rebel against the higher organs of the party. All mass organizations were on the ground and the organs of ‘peoples’ democracy’ were about to collapse.

Over three days, members discussed the Party’s short-comings. Several solutions were put forward and for the first time, responsibility for the crisis shifted from the CC. It pin-pointed an individual..... Maurice Bishop. The focus came from CC member Liam James. James said, “The fundamental problem is the quality of CC leadership provided by comrade Maurice Bishop. He had great strength”, James said, “and had the ability to inspire and develop his comrades. Bishop had the ability to raise the regional and international respect for the Party and revolution, and had the charisma to build the confidence of the people both in and out of the country and to clearly put forward the positions of the Party. But, today,” he said, “these strengths alone cannot put the Party any further. The qualities Bishop lacked were a Leninist level of organization and discipline and he did not have great depth in ideological clarity. He was lacking in brilliance and strategy,” James thought, “qualities which were essential for Marxist/Leninist leadership.”

James’ statement unplugged floodgates of criticism of Bishop’s leadership. It is apparent that feelings against the Comrade Leader had been fermenting for some time. But there had been an understandable hesitancy to rock-the-boat. Now that Liam James had ‘braved the tiger’ however, everyone was willing to add their voice to the complaints. The situation was summed up by CC member, Tan Bartholomew. “I never rose any criticism of the CC and of the

leadership” he said, “though I was dissatisfied with the quality of leadership. Bishop’s weaknesses were known all the while but comrades were hesitant to raise them”

Bishop said he was dissatisfied that, for diplomatic reasons, CC members had not frankly discussed with him the issue of leadership. A couple of non-CC members had done so, he said, and he had picked up ‘an overwhelming sentiment’ that he did not have the required qualities. Bishop agreed that the criticisms leveled at him with reference to application of strategy and tactics were especially correct. However, he had found it difficult to find material to study the question of the functioning of the Political Bureau and Central Committee.

“On the question of the crisis and its problems”, Bishop said, “It is correct that, as Maximum Leader, I take full responsibility. I need time to think of my role and to give a more precise response to the problem.”

It is remarkable that, throughout this lengthy debate on Bishop’s failings, no one, not even Phyllis Coard, Bernard Coard’s wife, suggested that Bernard had the required qualities. The minutes of the meeting give the impression that members were still avoiding the basic issue. It was Liam James who, once more, unambiguously cut into to the root of the matter. He proposed that Coard be invited back into the Party and that the Party should have joint leadership, that is, a marrying of the strengths of Bishop and Coard.

Bishop’s work would be among the masses of the people with the focus on production and propaganda. He would also pay attention to the organs of popular democracy, militia mobilization and to regional and international work.

Coard would be chairman of the Organization Committee. He would be responsible for Party organizational development and for

strategy and tactics.

A lengthy debate followed. It involved the joint leadership proposal, the current state of the Party and appointment of individual responsibilities. And the meeting was divided, at times heatedly, especially on the subject of joint leadership. Some were in favour. Others were doubtful as to how it would work, while still others were concerned as to Coard's possible reaction to the proposal.

Bishop said he never had any problem with sharing power and he never had had an adverse attitude towards criticism. He had always worked well with Coard, but his concern is the 'operationalisation' of strategy and tactics. The matter should be discussed with Coard before a final decision was made, Bishop said, and he would like to know Coard's view of the proposal.

"The formulation of comrades criticisms has indicated a clear note of no confidence in me", Bishop said. "I will not be able to inspire the masses when I have to look back and feel that I do not have your confidence".

The meeting assured Bishop that his position was not being challenged. The criticisms of him were made "in the spirit of love for the Party, ideological clarity and wanting to build a genuine Marxist/Leninist party," they said, "But the meeting did not agree with Bishop that the proposal of joint leadership be discussed with Coard before a final decision was made." A vote was taken which resulted in nine being in favour of an immediate decision, one opposed and three abstaining.

It was proposed that the meeting have a recess during which Coard be invited to come in for discussions. Bishop opposed this. "I have to make a personal reflection on the issue," he said. "I propose that the CC meet with Coard in my absence. I leave for (a meeting in) St Kitts tomorrow and I think my proposal is in the

interest of the CC”.

Some members felt it would be difficult to have discussions with Coard in Bishop’s absence. It would seem that Bishop was avoiding the confrontation and it was important that both sides present the right attitude.

But Bishop’s view prevailed and it was decided the meeting would continue on the next day (17/9/83) with Coard present.

When the meeting reconvened, an explanation was given to Coard of the concept of joint leadership. He was told that the basic problem had been identified as Bishop’s weak leadership. Bishop was lacking in the fields of strategy and tactics and members felt Coard was the only person who had demonstrated these qualities. It was explained that Bishop had said he had no problem with the sharing of power and he, Coard, would have the chairmanship of the Political Bureau. Bishop would head the Central Committee.

In reply, Coard raised four points. First, he wanted to see the minutes of the meeting at which joint leadership had been discussed. He wanted to know which members had opposed the proposal or abstained when the vote was taken and he wanted to know the reasons they gave for their position. If other options were considered, he queried, why were they rejected and why was this meeting not scheduled so that Bishop could be present.

There is something unbelievable about Coard’s questions. He already had answers before he asked them. His wife, Phyllis, a member of the CC, was present throughout the debate. She had the answers. She knew who had voted for or against and who had abstained. She knew why Bishop was not present. She knew everything and it is stretching the limits of reason to believe that she had not briefed her husband, Bernard, on all details.

Why then, all the questions? Could it be that the Coards were

keeping up the fiction of Phyllis honouring the confidentiality of the meeting? It is difficult to accept this. Unless they were all completely unreasoning, members of the CC must have realized that Phyllis would certainly have recounted to her husband the details of the meeting.

It is easier to believe that Coard's questions were intended to intimidate. They may have been a subtle warning that he knew who was on his side and who was not. Maybe it was a promise of favoritism to those who approved. Or was it a further warning that, for him, the time for half measures was over and his return to the fold meant that members would have to toe the Marxist/Leninist line.

Coard raised two other questions to which, through his wife, he would have already had the answers. Had options other than joint leadership been considered, what were they, and why were they rejected? And he wanted to know why the meeting with him had not been scheduled so Bishop could be present?

Answering Coard took time. There was much repetition of Bishop's short comings and of the opinion that the Party and revolution were in crisis. Coard agreed. "Unless a fundamental package of measures is implemented", he warned, "the Party will disintegrate totally within 6 months, while imperialism has stepped up its range of attacks, laying the base for direct intervention in Central America."

Coard raised the issue of his resignation from the Organizational Committee and from the CC. His tone was threatening. He was sick and tired of being the only "hatchet-man" and critic, he said "The failure of CC comrades was to speak up freely and, as a result, I concluded that I was the main fetter to CC development because everyone was depending on me." He had been seriously affected by the accusation. The Comrade Leader had found himself vacillating between the Marxist/Leninist trend and the petit bourgeois trend,

Coard said. The CC was not aware of what was going on, and the situation worsened because comrades were not thinking. The severity of the drift and disintegration were not seen. It had reached the stage where he realized that his ability to influence the process was no longer possible.

“If I was an ordinary member’, Coard said,” I would have ‘mannered’ (reprimanded) the Comrade Leader years ago, but because I am Deputy Leader, comrades may have thought I am fighting for leadership. If I come back to the CC and the Comrade Leader falters, I will resign again if it is left to me to criticize him”.

There are two trends he said, the Petit Bourgeois Revolutionary Democratic trend and the Marxist/Leninist trend, as the struggle gets tougher, the taking of decisions becomes harder, the level of vacillation and indecisiveness grows and the crisis becomes deeper. Coard said he wanted it clear that he was prepared to accept any responsibility the CC may offer him but not as a member of the CC. He could not cope with emotional conflict which saps his energy.

Coard’s words generated general debate and the meeting decided that the only way forward would be with his membership of the CC. Riding on the obvious enthusiasm of the CC to have him back in the fold, Coard agreed that, while Bishop “reflected”, (he was given a week) he would meet with the CC to work out the way forward. It was also agreed that an early meeting with Bishop would be arranged and that a General Meeting would be called to let the rank and file know what was happening.

When Bishop’s week of grace had expired, arrangements were made for the meeting with him. He was notified but did not show up. He had not been given enough time, he said. Joint Leadership was a very important matter and he needed more time for reflection. CC members didn’t agree. Bishop had been given more than enough time. It had been decided to let the general membership

know exactly what was happening so, in spite of Bishop's uncooperative attitude, arrangements for an Extraordinary General Meeting were finalized. The date was fixed for Sunday 25th September (1983).

Fifty- two members attended that meeting, which was an overwhelming percentage of full NJM membership and it must have come as a surprise to them that the Party and revolution were in crisis. Most of them had not known anything of this turmoil. If they had been observant, however, they would have noted that, for some time, the situation in the Party had been mirrored by the public attitude. It was not open criticism. People were still cognizant of the fact that they could easily be behind a jail door without charge or trial. It was something more subtle. It was, perhaps, wordless, perhaps an attitude in body language. In these last days of the revolution, however, there was far less respect for those who ruled the island.

Neither Bishop nor Coard were present when the Extraordinary General Meeting opened and the chair was taken by Liam James, Minister of the Interior. He told members they were expected to contribute to the debate in a spirit of frankness. As Chairman, he warned, the meeting there had to be a high level of security consciousness as far as the documents they would be given. "This is an internal party matter," he said, and it must not be discussed outside "

The CC report to the membership was then distributed and discussed and it was revealed that the Party and revolution faced the worst crisis they had ever confronted. It was disturbing. The meeting learnt there was wide protest against the higher organs of the Party and prestige of Party members had fallen in the eyes of the masses. Key supporters were drifting away from the Party. Some were leaving the island. The revolution had lost its ability to "manner" (deal with) counter-revolutionaries, there was decreasing

attendance at Zonal Counsels and the Army was demoralized.

The situation called for quick attention. If early remedial measures were not taken, the result would be the overthrow of the revolution. The report identified the main problem. It was Bishop's weak leadership. The comrade Leader had tremendous strengths, the report said, but, by themselves, these could not rescue the Party. Coard had the qualities lacking in Bishop. The CC, therefore, had decided to create a joint leadership of the Party. This would marry the strengths of Bishop and Coard. James told the delegates that a CC meeting had been arranged for Bishop to put forward his position on the Joint Membership proposal. Bishop had failed to appear. "The Leader had said he needed more time to think and reflect. Bishop had been expected to be at the Extraordinary General Meeting that day" James said. "As delegates could see, he again had not turned up, giving the same reason for his absence."

James then read a note received from Coard. It said Coard understood Bishop would not be at the meeting. "Free and frank discussion will be inhibited if I attend," the note said, "but if the meeting wants me there, I will be willing to comply."

James explanation of Bishop's reason for his absence, and Coard's cooperative note, unleashed a torrent of anti-Bishop anger. He was called "unprincipled", "vacillating", "petit bourgeois" and "right opportunist". It was the general opinion that both he and Coard had to be at the meeting and it was suggested that a letter, signed by all members, be sent to Bishop demanding his presence. There were one or two members willing to give Bishop more time to reflect but they were overwhelmingly outnumbered and it was sarcastically asked whether there was one discipline binding on all or was it for everyone except the Leader?

Ewart Layne, a prominent CC member, warned the meeting that members faced a choice of two roads. One road led to "oppor-

tunism”, he said, and the other to Leninist principles.

“If the road to “opportunism” is chosen”, he said, “I cannot see any aspiring communist, any aspiring Marxist/Leninist, any comrade who stands for principle, remaining a member of the Central Committee”. All CC members had agreed that, if the road to “opportunism” is chosen, they would resign from the CC. The Party membership would then be free to choose a new CC. The resigning CC members would not stand for re-election, he said, but, to remove any suspicion that they are working to undermine the new CC, they would, as ordinary Party members, “be prepared to serve and defend the revolution overseas”.

A vote was taken. Forty-six were in favour of demanding Bishop’s presence, one was against and one abstained. (Elsewhere, in the NJM minutes, the attendance is given as 52) A delegation was then appointed to tell Bishop what had been decided and Coard was sent for. Coard was at the meeting within a short while. The meeting, however, had to wait for much longer before information was received about Bishop. The delegation had spent nearly two hours trying to persuade Bishop to attend the meeting. And the effort had been unsuccessful.

Bishop gave the delegation the same reason for not attending the CC meeting and the Extraordinary General Meeting. He had not yet formulated his position on the Joint Leadership proposal. He had always accepted the principle of power sharing, he said. As proof of this, he referred to the fact that he and Unison Whiteman had been Joint Coordinating Secretaries of JEWEL. Bishop told the delegation that, as Leader of the Party and of the revolution, he accepted the blame for the CC weakness. When it came to attend-

ing the Extraordinary General Meeting to explain his position, however, he was not ready for that. The delegation tried hard to persuade him to change his mind but, when they left him, had not succeeded. Bishop had been non-committal, the delegation said, but they expressed the hope and opinion that he would come.

Bishop arrived shortly after and, when he entered the room, he must have faced considerable hostility. Members would have been angry. Coard had responded immediately to the invitation that he attend the meeting. Now, they had been waiting nearly two hours for Bishop. This was frustrating. Their patience would have been wearing thin and it is not far fetched to presume that Coard was making good his time to weave opinion in his favour.

Going to the heart of the matter, Bishop was asked to explain his failure to respond immediately to the invitation to come to the meeting. The delegation had reported there were things in the CC report with which Bishop did not agree and he was asked to elaborate.

The minutes of this EAGM cannot convey the magic of Bishop's address to the meeting. I have listened to him on many occasions and have been moved by his oratory.

However, one would have been conscious of his charismatic charm, oozing through the printed record of what he said to the meeting. CC discussions had raised certain concerns, Bishop said, and he had assumed the CC would have explained his position to the EGM. "When stripped bare and, until I have completed my reflections", he said, "I can face the EGM with a clean conscience."

Bishop confessed to the meeting that he was "relatively confused

and emotional”. There were several things which concern him, he said. These things require a lot of mature reflection. He shared the CC conclusion that the source of the crisis lies in the CC, he said, and he believes firmly that the more authority and power one has, the greater responsibility to accept criticism. He felt the overall responsibility for failures belongs to that person.

“Our history shows that the masses build up a personality cult around a single individual”, he said, and he admitted that his style of leadership, in many cases, has led to vacillation and indecisiveness. “Because of the historic abuse of power” Bishop said, “I confess that my concept of leadership may be idealistic. I, and my contemporaries, have a distaste for one-man leadership but my style of leadership is in error since it calls for consensus – unity at all costs – and this causes vacillation”. Switching to the offensive, Bishop criticized the behaviour of CC members. He felt that some comrades had strong reservations and they should have raised them in an open, principled way. “These comrades have had these reservations for a long time”, he said, “and to have suddenly sprung them out, created a need for reflection.”

And Bishop gave a thinly concealed threat that he might resign. He was puzzled over the CC’s real position, he said. If it was what he was thinking, he could not see himself as being the CC Leader or being on the CC at all. The CC had listed his strengths and his weaknesses and the consensus had been that his strengths could not carry the revolution forward. So, it is proposed that the strengths of two comrades were to be married”, he said. He suspected that comrades had concluded that he is the wrong person to lead the Party into a Marxist/Leninist party.

“I cannot accept this unprincipled compromise”, Bishop said, “for me to put out my strengths, it must be as a result of a deep conviction, out of a love for the poor and working people and out of a feeling of CC confidence”. Joint Leadership was merely an interim compromise, he said, he only could solve the problem facing him, and any talk of this not being a case of “no confidence”, would be seen by him merely as a tactical move.

“I am considering the option of withdrawing from the Central Committee” he said, “but have not yet decided. However, the CC has a duty to meet in my absence and come up with some clear conclusions as to how to come out of this crisis. But the CC should not wait for me, because, if, after my reflection, I decide to withdraw, then many vital weeks would have been lost.”

“His only concern”, he said, “is about certain areas in the CC report which concern him and his role in the future, but the CC should go ahead and meet and, whatever line is taken, that can be communicated to him.”

Leon James was the first to react. He felt Bishop must remain and hear the views of members. “The meeting must distinguish between the emotional and psychological reactions of the CC”, he said. “CC is the highest body in the Party,” he continued, “and it is a fundamental Leninist principle that its decisions are binding on all. His opinion was that the meeting’s whole approach to the question must be totally cold blooded, honest and objective.”

A full debate followed during which were ventilated the subjects of joint leadership, criticism of Bishop and his leadership, Le-

nin's dogma on criticism, the CC's failures, and whether or not Bishop should leave the meeting. A vote was taken indicating that 51 members wanted Bishop to stay and there was one abstention. (Elsewhere, in the NJM minutes, the attendance is given as 48)

After more discussions, the meeting called on Bishop and Coard to speak. Coard said it was an historic day in the life of the Party. He was very pleased with progress being made by members, the CC meetings he had attended recently had surprised him. Unlike the past, he said, every CC member was putting forward well thought out clear and reasoned positions on the way forward for building the Party and transforming it into a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party. In the past, most members were silent at CC meetings. They had no ideas as to how to build the Party and revolution, he said, but now, he witnesses a qualitative difference. He said also that the General Meeting showed quality and thought. A qualitative lift has taken place in the CC as well as among the membership, Coard said, and this makes him deeply confident in the future of building socialism and communism. "I pledge to the Party that I will put every ounce of effort into building the process", Coard said, "and I know that comrade Bishop will do the same". The minutes of the meeting record that the speech was punctuated with applause. It did more than that, it moved Bishop to action.

When Coard concluded, Bishop stood up and embraced Coard.

Bishop's address was in sharp contrast with what he had said earlier in the meeting when he hinted he might resign.

His opening statement was that it had been correct for him to come to the EGM and to stay to hear member's views. Reflecting in isolation would not have been correct, he said, because he would

have seen things in a lopsided manner. He no longer disagreed with items in the CC report. He noted that the entire EGM had accepted the CC analysis and decision, and this satisfied his concern. He admitted that his response to CC criticism and decision had been petit bourgeois, but the meeting had rammed home the fact that both the criticism and decision were correct. "I sincerely accept the criticism and, in practice, will fulfil the decision" Bishop said.

Bishop said that his whole life is for the Party and revolution, and the difficulty he had was because so many things were going through his mind. His desire, he said, is to use criticism positively and to march along with the entire Party to build a Marxist-Leninist Party. "I pledge to the Party that I will do everything to erode my petit bourgeois traits", Bishop said, "I never had difficulty working with comrade Coard" he said, "and joint leadership will help to push the Party and revolution forward." The minutes report that, at this point, all members broke into singing the "Internationale" and members filed past to embrace Bishop and Coard.

The crisis was over.....or so it seemed. Bishop and Coard had been reconciled. Coard was pleased with the new Marxist-Leninist attitudes of CC members, Bishop had promised to mend his petit bourgeois ways and everybody was happy with the Coard/Bishop joint leadership proposal.

But the crisis was not over. In fact, the worst was still to come. Very shortly, Grenadians would be murdering each other. Many lives would be lost, the fate of loved ones would be unknown and the genesis of this horrible tragedy would be visited on Grenada within a few short weeks.

Three days after the dramatic Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of 25th September 1983, Bishop left for a visit to Hungary and Czechoslovakia. He was accompanied by Unison Whiteman, Foreign Minister and George Louison, Minister for Agriculture. The delegation negotiated collaboration agreements with both Czechoslovakia and Hungary, and Bishop could chalk up several successes to his trip. That is beyond question. What is open to speculation, however, is what was discussed by Bishop, Whiteman and Louison in the privacy of their hotel rooms.

The three Grenadians were close friends and it is felt that the opportunity would have been taken to discuss the "Joint Leadership proposal". In spite of Bishop's declaration of acceptance of the proposal, he still had reservations as to how joint leadership would work, and it would not have been difficult for Whiteman and Louison to persuade him to reject it.

What also is open to speculation is the unscheduled stop at Cuba on the way home. Was it to discuss the Grenada crisis with Fidel Castro? Coming events were to force Fidel to deny vehemently that Bishop had briefed him on the Grenada situation. He (Castro) told the CC that he was indignant that "some of you" would have considered Cuba capable of meddling in the internal affairs of NJM.

Bishop returned to Grenada on Saturday 8th October and, for the next 12 days, there occurred a series of events which were disastrous for him. These events carved ugly, dramatic scars across the island's historic face. They were an omen of the human slaughter which was soon to come.

Bishop was coming home after an official visit abroad and, normally, as Prime Minister, there would have been a high level party to meet him. There was not. One CC member only was at the airport when he arrived. It was Selwyn Strachan, Minister for Mobilisation, and it is said that he was very casually dressed in shorts and slippers. This seeming slight may have been an indication that the CC already knew of Bishop's change of heart and were planning action against him. Perhaps personnel in the Grenada embassy in Havana had tipped off the CC. Bishop was to tell Vince Noel, one of his supporters, that Strachan had been very cold and that CC members were avoiding him.

A day or two after Bishop's return, there was a rapidly spreading rumour in St. George's that Coard and his Jamaican wife, Phyllis, planned to assassinate Bishop. I was unable to trace its source but it was clear there was something going very wrong in the PRG. At that time, I, and the general public, did not know anything about the "Joint Leadership" controversy. For some time there had been reports of friction, but there had been nothing specific. In a country where guns were commonplace, however, the rumour created a sense of confused fear.

This increased when it was announced that Bishop had been deposed. The decision to remove him from office was taken at a CC meeting on Wednesday 12th but it was not until the afternoon of Friday 14th that it was known that Bishop had been put under house arrest together with Unison Whiteman and George Louison, his close companions on the recently concluded trip.

The announcement of Bishop's fate was made on the premises of the Government owned newspaper the "Free West Indian" by Selwyn Strachan, Minister for Mobilization. Strachan told a crowd of about 300 persons that Coard had become Prime Minister. Bishop had refused to implement a Party decision that there was to be a Bishop/Coard joint leadership of the Party, Strachan said. Bishop had flouted a Party decision so he had been removed and Coard was the new Comrade Leader and Prime Minister.

When I got to the scene, Strachan had delivered his message and gone. I found an infuriated pro-Bishop crowd demanding to know Bishop's fate. There were loud shouts of "No Bishop, no revolution!" Later that evening, an announcement by Radio Free Grenada (RFG) made the situation puzzling. In direct opposition to Strachan's announcement, the radio station said Coard had resigned from the PRG. This resignation, RFG said, had been made because of a "vicious rumour" that Coard and his wife, Phyllis, planned to kill Bishop. Coard told RFG that his resignation would make it clear to the public that the rumour was a vicious lie.

That evening (14th) I was made aware of another resignation. A young girl, who refused to identify herself, brought me a sealed envelope saying, "Somebody sent that to you, it's very important". In the envelope was a letter dated 13.10.83 addressed to Comrade. Maurice Bishop, Prime Minister of Grenada

It read;

Dear Prime Minister,

I hereby submit my resignation from the Government of Grenada with immediate effect. It has been an honour to have

served the country during the long, hard years of struggle under your leadership.

Every wish for your future health and best of luck

(sgd) Kendrick Radix

It was difficult to figure out what Coard hoped to achieve by publicizing his so-called resignation. He had won his tussle with Bishop and no one was likely to believe he would now quietly fade away. Radix's resignation also seemed to have no relevance unless it had something to do with the scene with which I became involved on the following day, Saturday 15th.

That morning, Cynthia and I were apprehensive. St. George's was quiet. There were reports, however, of pro-Bishop demonstrations massing in Gouyave and Grenville. There was no verification of this but it was frightening to picture what might happen. The question of violence certainly did cross our minds. But it was not the violence of guns. Our thinking was that Bishop was very popular and if Coard and his associates had the temerity to put him under arrest, they risked the wrath of the crowd.

At that time, we lived on Scott Street which is close to the Carnegie which rings St. George's inner harbour. About mid morning, there were crowd sounds coming from that direction. I quickly got into the car and headed into over there, picking up a colleague, Dwight Whyllie, of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Dwight was then in Grenada on a UNESCO assignment training the Radio Free Grenada staff.

Dwight told me that Kendrick Radix, PRG Minister for Industrialization & Fisheries and Bishop's close friend, was leading a pro-Bishop demonstration which had started at the Market Square on the other side of town. We found Radix, with about 200 followers, at the parking lot at the back of the pier and he was waxing warm.

"I warned Maurice (Bishop) months ago that Coard was trying to seize power," Radix bellowed into the microphone, "in spite of Coard's resignation, he is obsessed with power. If Maurice is not released by Monday (17th)," he continued, "there must be no work, no school and no play in Grenada. All Grenadians must show their rejection of Coard and their support for Bishop", and he told the demonstrators not to be surprised if many of them were in prison that night. But not to be afraid because Coard would not dare to use the army against them. "I don't have my health," Radix said, "but I have to pick up my guns again".

Dwight and I were standing at the back of the crowd, both of us recording, when Dwight was approached by three Security and Immigration officials and asked to accompany them to the near-by Immigration Department. In reply to his inquiry, they said, "We want to talk to you". When the demonstrators realized what was taking place, everything happened very fast. The crowd moved in. I found myself jammed against Dwight, and realized that my hand was against the handle of his recorder which he was carrying at his side. He must have sensed it was my hand. A gentle tug released the handle to me and I faded away into the crowd. Meanwhile, the crowd "rescued" Dwight. "Come us, you are not going with them", they shouted as they pulled Dwight away from the officials and into a car driven away by Radix.

On the same day, (October 15th), the PRG expelled five jour-

nalists covering Radix's demonstration. They were: Nat Carnes Associated Press (AP) Caribbean Editor; Willie Alleyne; Barbadian born and based AP press photographer; Charles Hackett, photographer attached to the Barbados Nation newspaper; Albert Branford of the Caribbean News Agency (CANA), and a United Press Photographer, Rosa Sabalones. And on October 16th, another journalist, Andy Johnson, of the Trinidad Express Newspaper, was also expelled. These media representatives were all told by Immigration Department officials that the Radix demonstration was "a purely internal matter. When things have been settled", they said, "we will invite you back to Grenada".

On the evening of Saturday 15th, over RFG, the Peoples Revolutionary Army (PRA) warned that it should be understood that the PRA will not tolerate any manifestation of counter revolution. The warning was issued by Major Liam "Bogo" Cornwall and he said that any action which aims at disturbing the peace and normal life of the nation or threatens the revolution will be firmly and swiftly dealt with.

Cornwall said the PRA recognizes that the New Jewel Movement has led the struggles of Grenadians for the past ten and a half years and that Maurice Bishop has been the acknowledged leader of the revolution 'and has led us thus far'. Cornwall then recounted Bishop's political fate.

"Recently" he said, "the NJM Central Committee leadership, and the entire NJM membership, took certain firm decisions on internal party changes which were aimed at strengthening the work of the party and revolution. Comrade Maurice Bishop refused to

accept and implement these decisions even though he had been present at the party meeting and voted for the decisions". Cornwall said that the entire army had passed a resolution demanding that Bishop accept and implement the decisions of the army. The NJM has never tolerated "one-manship" and, much as "we of the PRA love and respect Comrade Maurice Bishop, we definitely will not tolerate this development in our country"

In an interview on October 18th, PRG Foreign Minister, Unison Whiteman, told the Montserrat based Radio Antilles that he and three other Ministers of Bishop's Cabinet had resigned. These were, he said, George Louison, Minister of Agriculture, Lyden Ramdhanny, Minister of Tourism & Civil Aviation, and Norris Bain, Minister of Housing.

Whiteman said resignations had been made because Deputy Prime Minister Coard had been running the Government single-handedly with his wife and had refused to consider proposals to resolve the political crisis. Coard had been dragging his feet about having discussions to solve the political crisis, Whiteman told the radio station, and he was saying that he had to wait on a decision of the NJM Central Committee. According to Whiteman, Coard was saying publicly that the Central Committee had been meeting regularly but Coard had told him, together with Louison, Ramdhanny and Bain, that he could not give a response to their proposals because the Central Committee had not been able to meet. "Either he is lying to us or is lying to the people," Whiteman told Radio Antilles.

October 19th dawned bright, and sunny. From an early hour, I watched growing crowds gathering in St. George's Market Square. They were thousands of men, women and school children. They came from the suburbs on foot. They came by the bus load, by cars

and by trucks from all over the island. They numbered some four to five thousand persons and they were militant.

The atmosphere was electric. Many persons were waving pro-Bishop placards. These placards appeared to have been hurriedly painted, and two especially caught my attention... One said, "C for Coard, C for Communism". This clearly condemned both Bernard Coard and the PRG Communist ideology. Perhaps this was a surfacing of a growing rejection of the PRG philosophy plus an anti-Coard statement in favour of Bishop.

The other placard which caught my attention is not so easily rationalized. It said, "God Bless America". This sentiment was entirely out of context with the occasion. Until that moment, the United States had been labelled as imperialist enemy number one. Vitriolic rhetoric had been constantly and vehemently directed against Washington. The last government to be wished a blessing would have been the USA and that placard was completely out of place there.

Elevated above the crowd, standing on the tray of a truck in the market place, and speaking with great passion, Unison Whiteman called on the crowd to free Bishop. Bishop was being held under house arrest at his official residence at Mount Weldale, he said. That residence, overlooking St. George's, was on a hilltop about a mile away and Whiteman, telling the crowd not to be afraid, urged them to follow him there.

An obvious confrontation was in the making. There could be violence. And, it was with butterflies churning in the pit of my stomach that I followed the surging crowd from the Market Square. We were well up Lucas Street when my fears were confirmed. I heard rapid rifle fire. The leading section of the crowd was not within my view and I learned later that soldiers guarding Bishop put up only token resistance.

But, I didn't know that then. Undeterred by the shots, the grim-faced chanting crowd continued to press determinedly towards Mount Weldale. I had, perhaps, walked with the crowd about half way up Lucas Street when my discretion got to be stronger than my valor. There was shooting up ahead. I did not wish to be a dead journalist and I turned back. From the veranda of my home, there is a restricted view of Mount Weldale and from there, with binoculars, I tried to follow what was happening. But it was frustrating. I could see movement but no detail. After some minutes I gave it up and plucking what little courage I could muster, I again approached Lucas Street and joined the crowd.

The junction of Lucas Street and the Mount Weldale roadway is about two or three yards from the Weldale House itself. When I arrived at this junction, the crowd was no longer pressing forward and there was an almost tangible tense feeling of expectancy. This persisted for about five minutes and then, suddenly, the situation and the mood changed. A human wave swept back from Mount Weldale towards Lucas Street. There was wild shouting and jubilation. I was swept towards the side of the roadway and that was when I saw Bishop. He was pale. There were lines on his drawn face and he looked tired and dishevelled. He carried an aura of bewilderment. And he had difficulty finding his feet as he was propelled forward by the jostling, hilarious, crowd excitedly chanting "We get us Prime Minister!!"

The crowd pushed Bishop towards a small truck standing in the middle of Lucas Street. The noise was terrific. It was difficult getting to him. Fighting my way, with arm outstretched clutching my microphone, I got near enough to shout at him to say something. The tumult and shouting was so great, however, that his voice was almost completely lost and I could record only the words "...the masses".... The time was then 10.30 am.

Surrounded by the jubilant throng, the truck disappeared down Lucas Street with Bishop aboard. One section of the crowd went to Fort Rupert with him while I returned to the Market Square with the other section. The time was then 10.35am.

At the Market Square, I found at least 7 or 8 thousand people, but it was difficult to estimate. The Square itself was crowded and there were many more people out of sight filling the adjoining side streets. Excitement filled the air. A raised platform had been erected and a public address system advised that the Prime Minister would arrive shortly to address his liberators. There was a vibrant air of anticipation and a feeling that, somehow, things would be better now.

There was no sense of impending disaster. Waiting in the blazing sun for over two hours certainly had cooled some of the initial excitement. But the crowd's eagerness to hear "we Prime Minister" had not waned. There was a lot of chatter and, listening to the groups near me, I was aware of one particular question being debated. Now that the crowd had shown such strong support for Bishop, what would Bernard Coard do next? Opinion was almost unanimous. Whatever the power struggle between Bishop and Coard, Coard had lost and it was felt that he and his supporters would fear the crowd's wrath. They would try to leave the island speedily.

At 1.05 pm, there was an abrupt change in the circumstances. At that time, there were two loud explosions and I saw a column of black smoke rising from Fort Rupert. It was not rifle fire. It was heavy pieces of artillery. The explosions brought out an incredulous rising gasp from the crowd and there was a wild rush to vacate the Market Square. Through my recorder, I commenced a diary of events, noting that, through a microphone, a voice from the platform tried to calm the crowd. "Don't worry", the voice said, "keep

cool, don't be alarmed, don't run, stay right here". But nobody listened. Everybody wanted to get away. No one knew what was happening but no one wanted to be in the open. There were no more heavy artillery bursts, but the Square was being emptied speedily.

Indistinct, excited, confused announcements came from the microphone. Shouts from the crowd made them disjointed. 'Don't worry, keep cool,... don't be alarmed,.. Don't run,... stay right here.I want to bring you...keep calm" .

At 01.08 pm there was an announcement from the platform by a man I knew as Sydney Ambrose. I understood he was in charge of arrangements for Bishop's address. But Ambrose obviously did not know what was happening at Fort Rupert. Most of his words were lost in the crowd noise. But he tried to be reassuring. "... keep you up to date... . There is nothing that will happen to anybody here today... because we are not here today... not to move from here ... you want to know what has happened... tell you ... don't be afraid, don't run... . We want to bring you up to date with what has taken place... this is the most ... experience in the history of Grenada and want you to stand... . We are not here to hurt anybody, we just want to keep you up to date with exactly what is taking place".

There were two or three bursts of rifle fire at 01.14pm and the crowd became increasingly apprehensive. But the hubbub was subsiding and you could hear more of Ambrose's voice. "Don't be alarmed", he told the crowd, "This is just to put you in fear. There is no reason why you have to be afraid. It is impossible, impracticable, and it will never happen that anybody could do you anything. Nobody will trouble you today because we are not here toanybody so, you stand firm with us until we present to you your honourable, respectable and dignified Prime Minister".

Nobody was listening. Everyone was seeking cover. An air of fear and apprehension permeated the Market Square as people ran aimlessly this way and that. A water-truck came into view picking its careful way through the thinning crowd, a group of men precariously clinging on its sides like flies.

At 01.17 pm thick, black smoke was still rising out of Fort Rupert. There were not many people now in the Square. Ambrose had disappeared and there was no sign of Bishop. In my original position, I did not have a clear view of Fort Rupert and moving into Granby Street, which abuts the south side of the Market Square, I had hoped to get a better view of the Fort. I was to regret that move. Caught in the midst of a panic stricken crowd of men, women and children rushing in all directions, I was thrown against a wall and only by good fortune did I not suffer injury.

At 01.24 pm, I walked to the end of Granby Street, where it connects with Halifax Street, joining a group surrounding a man who, I was told, had been at Fort Rupert. "Everyone was trying to question him and the noise was terrific. It was with difficulty that I forced my way to his side and made a disjointed recording of his replies.

"...people shot up there....I saw them carrying about five people to the hospital""I have no idea where Maurice (Bishop) is now, but one guy told me (that) they shoot down the building that he was in" ...

What follows is Alister Hughes' eye-witness account as recorded by him following the sight of smoke rising from the Fort.

I don't know what is causing that. From here, we can't see the

actual Fort buildings but it seems to me from somewhere near the Administration buildings. The Square has thinned out a fair amount, there are not nearly as many people here now. I am seeing that thick smoke in the Fort area. Thick black smoke. There is no flame but it is billowing up very densely. I am standing in the middle of the Market Square looking up in that direction. I can't see any people up there from where I am standing but there obviously is something on fire in that area.

I am moving in the direction of Granby Street. The crowd is racing away. I nearly turned over, I don't know what for. There was a great racing away from the corner there. I still don't know what could have caused it but I nearly got overturned. I see some men standing at that corner who seem to be the same people I saw guarding the entrance to the platform where Sydney Ambrose and the others were standing near to the microphone. There is a group of men standing near the policeman by Barclays Bank, another group at the bottom by Royal Bank and, there is another group close to the Bank of Nova Scotia. But I don't know what caused that rushing just now. Fifty or sixty people rushed down towards the Buy Rite Area, but I see no reason for it. The Market Square is almost empty now.

Another announcement from the platform by Sydney Ambrose saying come back and stand in the Market Square. But nobody seems to know quite what is happening.

I am now in Granby Street opposite to Amado's. I'm going to see whether I can identify what is burning up at the Fort. I couldn't see from the Market Square area. The trucks from the airport are now parked at the bottom of Granby Street, obviously in an ef-

fort to prevent anything from driving in. They are parked blocking the street. I'm now close to the children's Shopping Plaza. There is black smoke but I don't know what is on fire. It is heavy black smoke. I can see no flame and it is possible it could be coming from the parking lot in front of the Fort, from what is known as the parade ground

I'm in the area down towards DeLima and here on the Esplanade people seem to

Voice people shot up there

Hughes Really, do you know for sure that they have been shot ?

Voice Yes

Hughes You saw anybody ?

Voice I saw them carrying people into the hospital, man!!

Hughes Now, after that shooting ?

Voice Ah-hah

Hughes About how many ?

Voice About five people

Hughes So you have any idea where Maurice is now ?

Voice I haven't got the idea

Voice 2 I haven't got an idea but one guy told me they shoot down the building in which he was in.

Some armoured cars went up there and they just blast down the building

Hughes What building was he in ?

Voice 2 He was up in a building behind the Fort up there

Hughes You mean, at the Citadel ? at Fort Rupert ?

Voice 2 Yes

Hughes And they say that they just shot down the building that he was in ?

Voice 2 Yes, they destroy it.

Hughes Somebody told you that ?

Voice 2 Yes, somebody told me that, I'm not sure.

Hughes Ah, yes, you will have to get that confirmed.

Hughes In case I did not get it on the tape, a man just told me he understands that Bishop was in a building up at the Fort, at Fort Rupert and armoured cars just blasted it down. That needs to be confirmed. Time is 1.24.

Hughes It has been said by one other person that the building that Maurice was in up there has been blasted by gun fire. I have not had that confirmed.

Hughes I see a man running down the steps. I see two men running down the steps. That is three people running down the steps

Hughes Heavy explosion from the Fort, another heavy explosion. It is now 1.26

There is still smoke rising from the Fort. Just one single rifle. Just on the western side of the Fort, I see a gun just on the western side of the Fort, it is pointing very high, there're soldiers around it, it is pointing in this direction but it is a high elevation, pointing roughly in this direction. The black smoke is still billowing up from what looks like the north-eastern area of Fort George.

Hughes ...bottom of Granby Street, moving out in this direction, nobody but just the driver. The other one, there is one past. One truck is backing into Granby Street, he appears to be turning in preparation to coming this way. Yes he is, he's coming back this way. There seem to be trucks which came from the airport, 5058 number.

Hughes Told wounded people have been taken to the hospital. I have not had that confirmed. I have also been told that Maurice was in a building at Fort George and that it was fired on and it has been suggested to me that that smoke is from that building. I do not have confirmation of this, repeat, I do not have confirmation of this.

Hughes Where were you ?.

Female Voice At the Fort

Hughes And what happened ?

Voice They just start firing off bullets

Hughes Where you at the Fort, right at the top ?

Voice Yes, underneath the building

Hughes Underneath the building, and you got shot in your back ?

Voice Yes.

Hughes Anywhere else ?

Voice No, only there

Hughes Have you been to the hospital ?

Voice No, not as yet

Hughes What is your name ?

Voice Sherrill Alexander

Hughes Have you seen anything of the Prime Minister ?

Voice I don't know

Hughes You haven't seen anything ? You better go and get some attention

Hughes The wound in her left shoulder is not bleeding very much. She does not seem weak in any way but, definitely, a wound in her left shoulder. The crowd here has decided that they are going to take her to hospital but it is a risky thing because, if she got shot in that area she is likely to be shot again. The bullet wound is at the back of her left shoulder. Quite an ugly looking wound

Hughes I am now standing close to the Police Station on the Esplanade and the time is 1.32 pm

Confused, Hysterical Voices It have somebody what dead ? Oh God ! Oh God !

Hughes What happened ?

*Confused Voices Oh God..... if you see people in the hospital !
Oh God ! Oh God ! It have people what dead ?
God, yes ! Girl, come stand up ! I want to go
home ! Oh God ! I go bring you up home... what
happen ? You see a lot of people up there .You got
a bullet ? No. Oh God !*

Hughes Did you see the dead people ?

Voice Oh God ! Oh God !

Male Voice (hostile) Alister, I think you should move from there

Hughes All right

Male Voice (hostile) I think you should move from there.

Hughes OK

*Male Voice (hostile) Definitely, because it is propaganda, propa-
ganda you want to throw out there*

Hughes Really ?

*Male Voice (hostile) You really throw out..... (loud confused
voices)*

*Voices (confused) Give people a chance..... You stay right there !
I'm not sayingYou don't care about the
life of the girl. You have to care about person's
life!*

Hughes Time is now 1.36

Hughes Just received another report that Maurice Bishop
was at Fort Rupert (or Fort George as the case may

be). I have no confirmation of this that he has seen a man shot in the knee, a soldier shot in the knee and a woman shot in the hand and other people with blood stains. These people were taken to the hospital

Hughes Report that Maurice and Jackie Creft and some other persons are being held by the Army at Fort Rupert and they have them lined up against a wall. But the situation at the moment is very uncertain and there is nothing confirmed.

Hughes Market Square now, very few people here, still a great sense of apprehension. Time is now 01.40 pm and the fate of the Prime Minister is not known. I'm still seeing smoke coming from Fort George, or Fort Rupert as it is now called

Leaving the Market Square about 3.00 pm, I walked to the top of Market Hill at its junction with Church Street. There I had an experience which could have had serious consequences. Coming up the hill, with six rifle-carrying soldiers aboard, I saw an approaching Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) I felt no apprehension and, unconscious of possible danger, I stopped to up-date my note book. Suddenly, as the APC roared past, I felt myself pulled violently across the street and into the safety of the Methodist Manse. My rescuer was the Reverend Phillip Ponce. Don't be a fool, Alister, he said, if they see you, they'll certainly shoot you!

That evening (October 19th), my wife, Cynthia, and I, had much to talk about. I had been able to phone her once or twice giving her the latest developments which she passed on to Radio 610 in Trinidad and to the Associated Press in Puerto Rico. But there was

so much which was pure speculation. For instance, what were the explosions heard from the Fort ? And the rifle fire ? Had anybody been killed? And what had been Maurice Bishop's fate ?

We got some answers at 10.30 that night, in a broadcast over Radio Free Grenada by PRA General Hudson Austin. A formal offer had been made to Bishop, he said. He had been invited to continue as a member of the Party and work closely with the NJM Central Committee in running the country. According to the General, a crowd led by Unison Whiteman, Vincent Noel and two businessmen had stormed Bishops home where the soldiers had been instructed not to fire on the people. Bishop led the crowd of innocent people to seize Fort Rupert, the Headquarters of the Armed Forces, Austin continued.

The Armed Forces tried to talk with Bishop and Whiteman seeking a peaceful solution, the PRA General said, but Bishop and Whiteman declared there would be no compromise. And, he continued, they declared their intention to wipe out the entire NJM Central Committee and to smash the PRA.

At that point, the Revolutionary Armed Forces sent a Company of soldiers to re-establish control of Fort Rupert, Austin said. Maurice Bishop and his group fired on the soldiers, killing members of the PRA, Sergeant Dorset Peters and Warrant Officer Raphael Mason and wounding several others. The Revolutionary Armed Forces were forced to storm the Fort and, in the process, the following persons were killed - Maurice Bishop, Unison Whiteman, Vincent Noel, Jacqueline Creft, Norris Bain and Fitzroy Bain, among others.

As of 3.00 pm of that day October 19th the General said, the Peoples Revolutionary Military Council would form the Government and govern strictly. Anyone who sought to demonstrate or disturb the peace would be shot, he warned. A 24 hour curfew was in effect and anyone violating this would be shot.

Cynthia and I were still discussing the implications of Austin's broadcast when, shortly before midnight, three PRA soldiers, armed with rifles, banged on my front door. They identified themselves as security personnel and demanded that the door be opened. It was a frightening experience. I had no idea what these soldiers had in mind. But the door had to be opened. Against the background of Austin's broadcast, resisting might have fatal consequences

Not knowing my fate, I asked for a moment to change my clothes, stripped off my watch, emptied my pockets and, realising this might be a final parting, said goodbye to Cynthia.

Put into the back seat of a car, I was driven to Richmond Hill Prison. Seated on my right was one of the soldiers and, for the entire drive, he held a pistol just inches away from my head. It was an uncomfortable sensation. Later, I was to find out this man's name is Calistus Barnard, alias Abdulla.

Arriving at the prison I was locked into a barn-like room of some 12 by 14 feet square which had inherited a nickname from a period when the Prison tended small stock. It was the Goat Pen. Only one other person was there when I arrived. It was my brother Leonard. He had had no conflict with the PRG, he said. However, he suspected he had been detained because, some weeks before, he

had had to reprimand a member of his staff for absenting himself from work, without permission, so that he could attend PRA military manoeuvres.

Throughout that night, more and more men were added to the number of detainees. The Pen had two stacked bunk-beds on two sides, two of which had thin foam mattresses. These sleeping arrangements were soon exhausted and new comers lay on the floor. Over 20 of us were crowded into that space. The door of the Pen opened inwards and the room became so crowded that, before morning, those on the floor had to stand so the door could be opened to let more inmates in.

Sanitary arrangements were primitive. It comprised just one bucket. It was an unpleasant, ill-smelling embarrassment when, because of necessity, this facility had to be used. For those of us who had minor use for the bucket, dawn brought welcome relief. When the door was opened and daylight and fresh air streamed in, distended bladders delivered a deluge into a conveniently nearby drain

About mid morning, I was moved from the Pen and locked into one of a row of white-tiled cells on the upper floor of the prison. The cell had a door of iron bars, measured some 10 x 12 feet and had a small window high on the wall. A paper thin mattress was rolled in one corner. Other cells in the row were occupied and I was told that I should call when I needed to use the toilet.

I did not occupy that cell for long. After an hour or two, I was moved to the infirmary. That building is a lean-to construction, some 15 x 25 feet, occupying a corner of the prison yard. The Pris-

on's southern and eastern walls formed two sides of the infirmary, open-spaced concrete blocks served as the northern side and on the west side was a door of iron bars.

Sleeping accommodation was provided by two rows of double bunk beds. These were covered with inch-thick foam mattresses which gave no protection against the beds' iron slats. A narrow passage between the beds ran from west to east and, at the top of this passage, sitting against the wall like a throne, was the toilet facility.... a rusty bucket tucked under a rough wooden seat.

Richmond Hill Prison is located on the narrow spine of a 600 foot elevation overlooking St. George's. In the walls, which form part of the infirmary, were several narrow slits through which can be seen a wide panorama sweeping downward to the southernmost tip of the island.

I shared the infirmary with 17 other detainees, and, on the first day after our incarceration, we each were taken for an interview with the prison doctor. The doctor did not examine me and my interview was limited to his question whether I had any ailments. I confessed to an in-growing toe nail. The doctor said he could do nothing about that, but ordered that I be issued two valium tablets daily. That prescription did nothing for my toe but it did enable me to minister to anxieties of some of my fellow detainees.

Breakfast consisted of watery milk and bread. The milk was served in a bucket. However, as we had only 12 plastic cups be-

tween us, some had to wait a turn before having a dip. The evening meal was a duplication of the breakfast menu. At noon, lunch was comprised, invariably, of rice mixed with salted fish, a piece of 'ground provision' [root vegetables] and split peas. Served without knives forks or spoons, the midday meal was eaten with the fingers. It had been cooked many hours before and was most unappetizing. So I was very interested when, one day, the warder asked whether anyone would like pork instead of salted fish. Jumping at this chance of having an upgraded menu, visions of meaty gravy filled my imagination. But it was not to be. At the next lunch time, my portion of salted fish had been disappointedly replaced by a small piece of salted pork snout.

It is said that sailing the sea brings out the best and worst in the human being. Something like this is true also of being confined to prison. Some of the group were not overly concerned with the fate of their companions. Their freedom had been taken away. They ranted and raved. They were sure there had been a mistake and, if they could only get a message to this or that person in the PRG, they would be freed immediately.

Others of the group were depressed. They saw only a dark outcome to the situation. Perhaps even death. But there were others who never let the light of hope be extinguished. In this connection, "Turkey" made an indelible carving on my memory.

I never found out his name. He was just Turkey. Always smiling, always cheerful, his home was somewhere in the country. He was a natural story-teller and it was never clear whether or not he was spinning yarns. Like his story of the little old lady in his village who kept poultry. According to "Turkey", he and his friend, Bob,

had had their eyes on the old lady's hens for some time. But the hen house was too close to the residence to operate their scheme. So, donning uniform-like tunics and helmets, and posing as government health inspectors, they visited the poor, unsophisticated old lady.

“We told her the hen house was too close to the residence for health reasons”, Turkey said, “and we helped her to move it some distance away”. That evening, the fake health inspectors had an easy time raiding the hen house and according to Turkey they took away only two chickens.

A routine developed in the infirmary. At 6.00 am, we were allowed into the prison yard. One hour only was given daily for exercising and for bathing together. Five or six men at a time were under the communal shower and that was a unique experience for someone used to the privacy of a bath room. But, in a day or two, the scales of civilised living were washed away as our solitary cake of soap passed in turn from hand to hand.

Using the lavatory was another experience. This facility, which occupied a dirty, rehabilitated hut in one corner of the prison yard, had a half-door which gave some measure of privacy. The user's knees were hidden but one could identify the occupant if one knew the pattern and colour of the trousers curled around his ankles. And the tank for flushing was not attached to the water main. Before entering the hut, therefore, the user was required to arm himself with a bucket of water for flushing purposes.

Life in the infirmary was indescribably boring. Somebody had

a bible and, with the help of an assistant, I organised a short daily prayer session in which everyone joined. We took it in turn to present short readings from the bible. And those who wished to pray aloud did so. Someone else had a pack of playing cards and the games went on and on and on as men tried to fill the leaden hours which went so slowly round the clock.

We received kindness from unexpected sources. At that time, several of the Mongoose Gang were in Richmond Hill. These were violent convicted criminals recruited by Prime Minister Eric Gairy to brutalise and intimidate his opponents. They were fierce men who sparked terror in the mind, and, when the NJM ousted Gairy in 1979, many of the Mongoose Gang were jailed.

They were still being held at Richmond Hill during the events of October 19th 1983 and they proved valuable friends. One of them had a hidden radio receiver. We didn't know how he got it into the prison or where or how he hid it, but, two or three times a day, a member of the Gang would come to the outside of the open-block infirmary wall and whisper the latest news to me. In turn, I would pass this information on to my detainee companions.

Through this link, we knew of the meeting called by Barbados Prime Minister, Tom Adams, to discuss the Grenada situation. We knew that meeting would be attended by heads of the Organisation of East Caribbean States (OECS). We were up-to-date on reservations of Jamaica, Guyana and Belize concerning military intervention and we knew Dominica's Prime Minister, Eugenia Charles, might ask the United States for help.

During the news transfer, we always had the help of a particular friendly prison warder. He was fully aware of what was going on and would position himself where he could see anyone approaching. On the approach of another warder our friend, using a very threatening tone would call out, Hughes, what is happening there ? !! This was, of course, a signal we should break up the news transfer.

On Sunday (23rd), five days after we had been locked in, all of my fellow detainees were released. I was apprehensive as to the reason I was singled out to remain behind bars and puzzled when three new detainees were brought in. I still don't know what it was all about but, where there had been 18 of us before, just four of us had the infirmary to ourselves.

My new companions were Radix, McMillan and Tower. Radix was a quiet man. It was obvious he was unwell and spent most of the time in bed. McMillan and Tower (I never got his name) could be described as the long-and-short of it. Mac was well under six feet while Tower, hence the nick-name, stretched up to 6 feet six or seven inches.

It was on that day we saw a battleship patrolling the western horizon. Things were about to happen but, on that day too, we began to believe we might not get out of Richmond Hill Prison alive. Looking down outside the prison walls, we could see PRA soldiers digging what appeared to be rows of graves. They eventually turned out to be trenches dug for defence of the prison but, in our imaginations, we anticipated the early arrival of the firing squads.

We saw no warders next day (Monday 24th). One of the Mon-

goose Gang told us they had left. There was no food that day and night-fall brought new anxieties. The prison is located near a PRA camp and, from early in the evening, we could hear the soldiers singing. They were military songs and the thought was born that the soldiers were hyping themselves up to come to do their dirty work at the prison. With the memory of the graves we had seen outside the walls, sleep did not come easily.

In the early hours of the following morning (Tuesday 25th), we became conscious of a dull, persistent droning sound above us. We did not know it then but this was the drone of the United States Airborne Warning and Control Systems (AWAC) plane which was to play so vital a part in the mission to rescue Grenada

As the dawn brightened, we saw PRA soldiers crouched in the trenches. They had green camouflaging branches tied to their helmets. They looked prepared for action and they did not have long to wait. Two fighter jets roared low overhead and were mistaken by the men in the trenches for Soviet fighters. This mistaken identity of friendly Russian reinforcements raised a triumphant cheer from the PRA soldiers. "We get two MIGs!!", they shouted. Rifles were waved joyfully but this belief was soon dispelled. Three United States Black Hawk helicopter gun-ships swooped down the valley spraying the trenches with bullets and we never saw the PRA again.

Suddenly, the exploding, thundering sound of continuous gun fire echoed and re-echoed through the prison walls. It was frightening. We did not know it but we were in the very centre of a fierce battle for Richmond Hill Prison. And we were quite unprotected. We did not know who was doing the firing. Nor could we tell if we were the target. What we did know is that we were in a literal

war zone and there was every chance the explosions would find the infirmary.

The reactions of my detainee companions were interesting. Like me, Radix was very concerned and took refuge under a bed. Tower strode around the room like a caged animal while McMillan lay down, closed his eyes and seemed to be asleep. For my part, I performed a ridiculously futile gesture born of fear. I lay down as close as I could get to a wall and covered myself with one of the one-inch-thick foam rubber mattresses.

What was happening was that, at first light, five Black Hawks had been sent to secure the Prison, then thought to be an easy target. But the crews had not been properly briefed as to the terrain. PRA defences were much stronger than anticipated, and the helicopters ran into a withering wall of fire.

The encounter may have lasted an hour before the Black Hawks withdrew. They had lost one downed helicopter and several dead and wounded. Through our slit windows, we could watch the evidence of fighting in the Point Salines area but the battle for Richmond Hill Prison was over.

We still had not seen anything of the prison guards. For two days, there had been nothing to eat and hunger pains were strong. But our Mongoose friends didn't fail us. They fed us. They found no food in the kitchen but, scouting at the back of the bakery, found mounds of rock-hard, stale bread thrown out to be used as

fuel to feed the oven furnace. They brought us some of this bread and it is difficult to describe the flavor. Since then, nothing has tasted as good!!!

We never knew how the Mongoose Gang got their cell doors open. With no guards around, members of the Gang were all over the prison but they advised us not to try to get out. Some prisoners had tried to escape that morning, they said, and had been fired on. They thought it better for us to stay in our cells until somebody in authority came to release us.

But the idea of sitting quietly in the infirmary waiting for some trigger-happy PRA to find us was not appealing. We decided it was impossible to break down the door. Perhaps, we thought, we could break through the open-spaced concrete block wall into the prison yard, but we had nothing to use as a battering ram. We considered forcing a hole through the roof but, even if we could stack the beds high enough, we had no tools for this job.

Our prospects for getting out alive seemed dim until the matter was decided for us. How it was done I do not know but some detainees had managed to break open their cell door padlocks. Armed with rocks and short lengths of iron pipe, some of them got to work on our padlock and, after much pounding and battering, succeeded in demolishing it. Joining the gangs of padlock-demolishers, we added to the joyful sound of opening cell doors.

Sometime later, as I was hammering at a particularly strong padlock, I heard my name called. Hughes, someone said, two white men looking for you. Investigating, I saw two non-Grenadian journalists I knew. They had come to the island in the wake of the American intervention, they had a car and, together with some detainee friends, took me home.

As I approached my home and before coming to the front door, I made the special whistle Cynthia and I used to call each other. Until then, all the news she had had of me was given her by a young man we knew. Obviously sent by those who wished to create fear, he claimed he had seen me. He had been present, he said, when I had been put against a wall and shot. My whistle then, to Cynthia, was like a sound from the grave. We met with arms outstretched and there was then a bewildering confusion as floods of photo flashes blinded us.

The house was overflowing with newsmen. Our reunion was fast becoming a media event as it seemed the press would never stop taking pictures and asking questions. There was no privacy until Cynthia took a hand. No more pictures, she decreed. Then, putting the front door between us and the media, we found the only available private spot, the street outside.



Teddy Victor, Alister Hughes and Lloyd Noel, leaving prison.

CHAPTER SIX

Lead up to the Maurice Bishop Murder Trial

The military mopping up exercise was completed within a week. Fighting had stopped. No Combat Forces were on the island. And the authorities assured the public their security was guaranteed by the 150 Military Police left behind. But there was a sense of uncertainty. The hunt was still on for PRA hiding in the mountains and most Grenadians felt they were standing on the brink of an uncertain future.

An island search for members of the PRG and PRA resulted in 48 detainees being held at Richmond Hill Prison. Some were released. On 22nd February, four months after the massacre at Fort Rupert, the Court sat under Senior Magistrate Lyle St.Paul. This was for the purpose of holding a Preliminary Inquiry (PI), that

is, consideration by the Magistrate as to whether, on the face of it, there was sufficient evidence to put before a jury in the High Court.

Charges of murder were laid against Fabian Gabriel, Andy Mitchell, Callistus Bernard, Vincent Joseph, Cosmos Richardson, Lester Goat Redhead and Christopher Stroude.

Eleven other persons were charged with conspiring to commit an act of terrorism. Those under this charge were Bernard and Phyllis Coard, Hudson Austin, Leon Cornwall, Liam James, Ewart Layne, Dave Bartholomew, John Ventour, Colville McBarnette, Ian St. Bernard and Selwyn Strachan

Jamaican barrister Jacqueline Samuels-Brown appeared for all the accused. Representing the Crown, Anselm Clouden, then Crown Council, told the Court the Prosecution was not ready to proceed and a hearing was fixed for April 4th.

The regular Court in the heart of St. George's cannot accommodate a large number of accused. In preparation for the April sitting, therefore, a special court was prepared. With accommodation not only for the Magistrate but for three High Court Judges, this was a commodious room in a building adjacent to the Richmond Hill Prison.

On the western side of the room was a raised dais. The Judges' Chambers were at their backs and on their right was the press box. The jury sat to their left. The Prosecution and Defence barristers occupied the space immediately in front of the Judges' dais while, facing the Judges, the accused sat on two rows of benches. At the back of the room, there was limited seating for the public on benches.

The PI opened under a heavy blanket of security never before seen in Grenada. No vehicular traffic was permitted in the vicinity. A no flying area of some 3 square miles of air space was created above the Court and, starting half a mile away, there were six check-points to be negotiated.

The general public was not allowed entry. At check-point number one, soldiers carefully scrutinized passes issued to the press and to relatives of the accused. Cars were meticulously searched, tape recorders and cameras were taken away and, via walkie-talkie, clearance for each individual had to be obtained.

A few hundred yards away, at check point 2, more soldiers checked passes and everyone was required to leave his car. It was all very politely done. Just park it on the side of the road, sir, it will be quite safe.

Now check point number 3 had to be faced on foot. This was a couple of hundred yards away and was a repetition of 2. More soldiers, more checking of passes, more waiting and then clearance by walkie-talkie.

Apart from a routine checking of passes, not too much time was spent at check-point number 4, but, as far as the flow of human beings was concerned, check-point 5 was a veritable road-block.

At this point, a pretty young lady wrote names and other information into a large book. Please have a seat, sir she said. Right there on the bench under the tent, sir just wait your turn. Sorry about the inconvenience, sir, but you will soon be through.

She, having satisfied herself as to your nationality, your residence, how long you had been in the island, when did you arrive, where you were staying, which section of the media you

represented and other pertinent information, you were allowed to move on. And the last check-point the search was electronic. One was frisked by one of those little hand-held things they use at airports and which squeal pig-like when they pass over your belt buckle.

The whole procedure took over half an hour and one had the feeling that, through those elaborate defences, any subversive would have had a bit of trouble trying to be subversive.

That morning, two more accused were brought before Lyle St. Paul, together with the 18 persons originally charged. They were Cecil Prime and Raeburn Nelson. They, with the original 18, were then charged jointly with murder. The charge read, "For that the defendants...did commit murder by intentionally causing the death of Maurice Bishop, Jaqueline Creft, Unison Whiteman, Norris Bain, Fitzroy Bain, Keith Hailing, Evelyn Brat Bullen, by unlawful harm". The conspiracy charge laid against Bernard Coard and others was not dropped but, at the request of the Prosecution, was allowed to remain on file.

Jamaican-born Vilma Hylton, Grenada's Acting Director of Prosecutions (DPP), appeared for the Prosecution and with her was Odel Adam, seconded from his post of Attorney General of Montserrat. Also with her was Grenadian Crown Council, Tillman Thomas.

Guyanese Lloyd Lockoo, assisted by his son, Edward, represented Bernard and Phyllis Coard while Jacqueline Samuels-Brown represented all the other accused. The Lockoos did not continue to appear at the PI after April 4th.

Samuels-Brown advised the Court that the Defence Team of Jamaican barristers would comprise Howard Hamilton (Leader), Norma Linton, Earl Witter, DeLano Harriman, Maurice

Frankson, Arnold J Nickolson and herself.

Hylton was ready to proceed, but both Samuels-Brown and Luckoo told the Magistrate they would need at least two months to be briefed by their clients. St.Paul allowed the adjournment and fixed the next sitting for April 25th.

All did not go smoothly. The Defence requested and were granted further adjournments to 6th June, 27th June and 28th June, and it was at this stage St.Paul lost patience.

I dont know what is going to happen, he said angrily, but I do know that, if this continues, I am not going to take part in the game. I am fed up and you may be looking for another magistrate.

But the Defence Team was undeterred. They threatened to walk out. "We have been given written instructions from our clients to apply for a 5-day adjournment", they told the Magistrate, "with the understanding that, if that adjournment is not granted, we are not to participate further in these proceedings".

After consultations in the Magistrate's Chambers, a compromise was reached, St.Paul warning that he was running out of patience. Remember, he said, the name of the Magistrate in this case is St.Paul and not Job. I will say no to any further applications for adjournments.

There was friction also in the ranks of the Prosecution. DPP Vilma Hylton told the Magistrate she was being replaced as Leader of the Prosecution Team. There was no assurance she would continue as part of the Team, she said. She told St.Paul the new Leader was Trinidadian barrister Karl Hudson Phillips QC, who was then in the Court. "My integrity is of the utmost importance", she said. Hilton did not say what she considered a challenge to her integrity

but gave some indication, by her comments with reference to the Defence Team of Jamaican barristers, “I cannot deny that I know them all”, she said, “but I dare any man to say that I have discussed this case with any Defence Council”.

Considerable time was taken up by Defence lawyers complaining their clients human rights were being denied. The lawyers were not being permitted to consult the accused in private, they said. Rodents, flies, roaches and even a centipede had been found in the food. The accused had not been permitted to have any reading material, they said, and the request was made that they be allowed notebooks to make notes of instructions they wished to give their council.

But St.Paul said he had no jurisdiction to command changes in prison conditions. I will not make any pronouncements from where I sit, he said, the Commissioner of Prisons has a book of rules and he should read them.

Early in the PI, Guyanese Barrister Clarence Hughes argued, before St.Paul, that there were certain questions concerning the Grenadian Constitution which St.Paul should refer to the High Court for a ruling. St.Paul did not agree and Clarence Hughes filed a Motion in the High Court asking that St.Paul be ordered to refer these matters. He asked also that the PI be stopped until the High Court had ruled.

This matter was heard on July 9th before the Chief Justice, Mr Justice Nedd. Hudson Phillips appeared for St.Paul. Nedd reserved his judgment until July 13th when he dismissed Clarence Hughes’ motion as an abuse of process. “Not one of the questions posed requires an interpretation which is necessary for the disposal of the PI by the Magistrate”, he said. “This has been an attempt to stop

the wheels of justice from turning, even temporarily”.

Proceedings of the PI brought lighter moments such as when a special Motion was put before St.Paul by Defence barrister Earl Witter. Requesting permission to make a statement, Witter drew the Magistrates’ attention to the unusual dress worn by Hudson Phillips.

“The attire of the learned Leader of the Prosecution is, strictly speaking, outside the normal dress of these Courts”, he said, “but it is deserving of the highest commendation”.

Hudson Phillips was then very elegantly dressed in an olive-brown suit of unusual design. Colorless, it was worn over a brown, black and grey pin-striped shirt. The jacket of the suit had metal buttons running almost to the neckline and was open to reveal a maroon tie. At the back, the jacket had a single deep pleat running from the neckline down to the hem. “One area in which the Prosecution had excelled at the Inquiry is in the area of sartorial elegance”, Witter said.

Replying, Hudson Phillips said Witter was under a handicap. He was limited only to a rear view of the attire, he said.

The Learned Magistrate has a front view, Hudson Phillips continued and I want to assure my learned friend, Mr. Witter, that view also reflects the competence of my tailor.

Witter had the last word. Thanking Hudson Phillips, he said that the view to which he had been exposed was not only r-e-a-r but r-a-r-e.

The English spoken on West Indian islands is characterized by strong, distinctive accents of which the most extreme are, perhaps

Barbados and Jamaica. This was highlighted when a Barbadian gave evidence in the most extreme of Barbadian accents. First, he was asked to speak louder as the Jamaican lawyers were not hearing him. When this did not help, Howard Hamilton, in a joking tone, suggested to the Magistrate that an interpreter might be helpful..

In the same mood, Hudson Phillips interposed he had had a lot of difficulty understanding Hamilton's Jamaican accent. Nevertheless he said, I did not ask for an interpreter.

Which prompted St.Paul to tell a story.

Some years ago, he said, he had had a St.Lucian before him for trial, but the proceedings were delayed because the accused spoke nothing but French patois.

I asked if there was anyone Court who spoke patois and could interpret he said, and a Barbadian man volunteered to help.

St.Paul said the accused man kept repeating, in patois, *Culpa-ble. compassion* (I am guilty, have mercy) and St.Paul asked the Barbadian interpreter what that meant.

The man says he guilty, the Barbadian replied, but he says he want compensation.

Twenty-seven witnesses were called at the PI and the hearings continued until August 3rd when the Prosecution and Defence completed addresses to the Court. St.Paul reserved his judgement and gave his decision on August 8. He found there was sufficient evidence against 19 of the 20 persons charged. He therefore ordered they stand trial in the High Court. He found insufficient evidence against one of the 20, Ian St.Bernard.

On the charge of murder brought against you, he told St. Bernard, you are hereby discharged. The October Assizes opened on October 9th and Chief Justice Nedd announced the Bishop Trial would come to the High Court on October 16th. But, there was some doubt as to whether the Defence Team would be ready by this date.

Legal expenses for the PI were paid by the accused but, in a telephone interview from Jamaica, Howard Hamilton, Team Leader, said the Team had not been properly instructed.

I cannot assume responsibility in a trial of this magnitude, he said, without being in a position to assure the Council associated with me that their fees are assured.

Using the same court-room as that at which the PI was heard, the case was called on October 16th. And the Security Police took no chances. The security was thick and sometimes surprising.

First, one went through a check point half a mile from the courtroom. I showed my little green identification card and was allowed to drive on. Two hundred yards beyond was another check point and there I was told to leave my car and walk. Before moving on, however, I had dealings with a large policeman in a little booth by the roadside. He had a big book in his lap. He looked at my identification card, entered my name and address in his book and waved me on.

That was just the beginning. A bit further on was another check point where a large sign was displayed. The following items are prohibited, it said, (A) cameras, (B) tape recorders (C) watches and (D) all electronic equipment I was to have reason to remember that sign.

Except for my watch, I was not carrying any of the prohibited material. Nobody asked me for it so, still wearing it, I joined a queue filing past another policeman at the side of the road in another booth and with another big book in his lap. He, too, looked at my identification, entered my name and address and waved me on. That was the curtain raiser on the final check.

In a little room a few yards from the Court, a queue of persons was lined up and I could see those ahead of me being de-watched. So, when my turn came, I did not wait to be asked. I whipped off my 10-dollar Casio and presented it to the policeman who gave me a receipt and put my name and address down in his book.

Then, after I had been given the usual electronic frisking, I started to leave. I carried only my notebook and pen and I had also an illustrated mail order catalogue I wanted to look through as I waited for the Court to start its sitting.

But I was stopped, May I have that catalogue please sir, a policeman said. The catalogue? I asked unbelievably, as I hesitantly handed it over to him. Yes, please sir, the catalogue, he said, putting it away in a plastic bag with my watch. Puzzled, I walked away. What possible connection, I thought, could a mail order catalogue have with security? Was there something here that I was missing? Then, suddenly, understanding dawned. I remembered the sign I had seen at the check point. No electronic equipment was allowed, it said. My mail order catalogue was from an American company, Radio Shack. And, cover to cover, that catalogue was chock full of electronic equipment!!!

That morning, DeLano Harrison, one of the Defence Team, told the Chief Justice the accused had not yet found the money to retain the team to appear at the trial. The Court would have to assign and pay for Council to defend the accused, the Chief Justice said, and he hoped to assign the barristers who had appeared for the accused at the PI. They are the Council of their choice he said, so I would be meeting their wishes.

At this sitting, the names of three victims were added and the charges were broken down into 11 counts. The first count to be read to the accused was the one naming Maurice Bishop as the murder victim, and the first to be asked to plead guilty or not guilty was Andy Mitchell.

'I do not recognise the legality of this Court', Mitchell said, as the Registrar of the Supreme Court, Denis Lambert, asked for his plea.

'You are not pleading'? Nedd asked.

Mitchell remained silent and, as Lambert asked each of the accused in turn for their plea on the first count, they all gave similar replies. Some said, too, they were not prepared to be tried under foreign occupation and others that the legality of this Court had been challenged by a Motion.

Registrar Lambert then read each of the other 10 counts, asking each accused in turn for his or her plea. Through it all, they all remained silent. The reference to a challenge to the Court refers to a Motion filed in the High Court by Clarence Hughes on October 2nd challenging the validity and legality of the Grenada Supreme Court.

The position was that, since 1967, and until the revolution of 1979, Grenada shared the West Indies Associated States Supreme Court with 5 other Windward and Leeward Islands. When the

PRG took over the Government, they abolished the Constitution and with it the West Indies Associated States Supreme Court. Instead, they created their own Grenada Supreme Court and Court of Appeal.

Clarence Hughes' Motion was for a High Court ruling that the Grenada Supreme Court and Court of Appeal no longer existed. His Motion also called for a reinstatement of the right of appeal to the Privy Council. The hearing was on October 24th before Chief Justice Archibald Nedd. Arguing his Motion, Hughes contended that when laws are passed under the basic norm established by a Constitution, these laws remain even though there is a change of Government. However, he said, the strength of the PRG was the basic norm under which that Government passed laws. With the overthrow of the PRG, that basic norm was also overthrown, Hughes said. This applied to all laws passed by the PRG, he said, including the law creating the Grenada Supreme Court.

The Defence barrister pointed out that, with the overthrow of the PRG and the succeeding Revolutionary Military Council, the Governor General, Sir Paul Scoon, had, under a section of the Grenada Constitution, assumed full executive power on behalf of the Queen. That act of assumption of power based on a provision of the Constitution proved, he said, that the Constitution was still in existence and that the Constitution, or parts of it, were in force.

With the Governor General assuming Executive Authority, Hughes said, and there being no Legislature in Grenada, Sir Paul Scoon could take certain actions only in an emergency. But, the Defence lawyer argued, Sir Paul could take no action or give

recognition to any action that the Legislature itself, if it was in existence, could take or recognise.

Any legislative powers the Governor General exercises, Hughes said, he does as a delegate of Parliament and he can have no greater power than Parliament which cannot set up or recognise, in contravention of the provisions of the Constitution, a court such as the Grenada Supreme Court.

Hudson-Phillips, opposing the Motion, told the Court that all the provisions of the suspended Constitution had not yet been brought back into force. Example of this, he said, is Section 58 which reads, There shall be a Prime Minister of Grenada who shall be appointed by the Governor General. If the Governor General made the mistake of bringing that provision of the Constitution into effect before there were General Elections, he said, there would be total and absolute chaos.

As far as the West Indies Associated States Supreme Court is concerned, Hudson-Phillips said, before that can be given jurisdiction in Grenada again, the Governor General needs a Prime Minister to talk to the Prime Ministers in the other States sharing that Court. What the Governor General is doing, he said, is to bring a step by step logic to reintroduction of the Constitution, and he has not yet taken the final step in that chain of logic.

The Chief Justice reserved his judgment and, on November 9th, dismissed the Motion and declared the Grenada Supreme Court valid and legal.

It was during the taking of the pleas on October 16th that attention focused on one of the accused, Phyllis Coard. That morning,

as she was escorted into the Court by the police, it was noted that she walked very slowly and that she looked pale and drooped.

Some time later, as she sat with her head resting on the back of the seat in front her, there was a commotion in the dock. Falling forward on to the floor in front of her, she was surrounded by the other accused, including her husband, Bernard Coard. She could not be seen but could be heard moaning loudly.

As Nedd ordered Ms Coard to be taken out, by 4 policewomen, and given medical attention, she called out, I have been on a hunger strike for the past 6 weeks, and I have not been allowed to see a doctor of my choice or my lawyer.

If Mrs. Coard does not keep quiet, the Chief Justice said, she will be dealt with, sick or not, but I must say her voice does not sound like that of an ill person. After 46 years at the Bar on both sides of it, I have learned to expect the possibility of any kind of delaying tactic and I am prepared for it.

Nedd appointed Dr Stan Friday to a team charged with examining Mrs Coard with particular reference to whether her condition is in consonance with abstention from food for 6 weeks. The Prosecution appointed Dr Alister Budhlall to that team and, paid for and appointed by Mrs. Coard, was Jamaican Dr. Peter Figueroa. The examination took place at the General Hospital on October 21st and eyewitnesses say a hostile crowd jeered and booed her. On November 1st, she was brought into the Court on a stretcher and Nedd said he had had a report from the doctors.

It is evident from the report that you are not fit and will require a certain amount of care. he told Mrs Coard. They have made recommendations as regards to you and, should you have complaints, direct them to the Registrar for transmission to me.

Speaking with a hardly audible voice, Mrs Coard, told Nedd she had not been able to communicate with her lawyer, Howard Hamilton. Nedd reminded her, however, she and the other accused were still unrepresented in the trial.

Mr Hamilton has been able to communicate with this Court, Nedd replied, and, as far as this Court is concerned, he is not your lawyer. At this point you have no lawyer. Until such time as I can persuade Mr Hamilton and his Team to accept the assignment, or you can tell me that you have retained lawyers, you are not legally represented. he said.

Mrs Coard said her family had been trying to retain lawyers but she had not been permitted to contact them or friends, and she wanted to have visitors so she can find out what is happening.

I must remind you that you are on remand on a serious charge, the Chief Justice replied. You are not there as a member of a social club.

She must understand that the Grenada prison system is not like that in the United States where radios and newspapers are provided, Nedd told Mrs Coard. But he would look into the matter of her ability to communicate with her family, he said.

The Chief Justice went on to inform the accused that he had tried unsuccessfully to assign to the Defence the Jamaican barristers who had appeared for the accused at the PI.

Attempting to address the Court, one of the accused, Selwyn Strachan, said he wished to make a statement on the question of the accused being assigned lawyers of their choice. Nedd ordered him to be seated. Strachan persisted and, firmly repeating the order to sit down, Nedd informed him that whatever pronouncements

he made from the Bench were not made with a view to having a discussion.

I don't want any speech, the Chief Justice said, what I have said is that I am trying to get Counsel to represent you. If I don't get and you are unable to get for yourself, then you remain locked up.

Another accused, Leon Cornwall, getting to his feet, shouted, "I have a right to address the Court".

If you don't sit down Nedd said, I will hold you in contempt and you will go back to the jail, not on remand but serving a term. With my 47 years of experience, on both sides of the Bar, what is going on is clear to me. The Court is not fooled.

After the sitting of November 1st, negotiations with the Jamaican Defence barristers continued into the new year. There had been adjournment after adjournment and it was not until April that the Chief Justice disclosed there had been some success.

"Negotiations have reached a stage where I am now certain I can assign 6 or 7 barristers to the Defence", he said.

Fixing the next sitting for August 8th, he warned, that that was the last adjournment he would allow. If anyone was ill or without Council on that date, he said, the trial would proceed without them.

But Bernard and Phylis Coard had said they had not yet completed arrangements to be defended by Jamaican barrister, Ian Ramsey And, Howard Hamilton, Leader of the Defence Team, told the Court certain administrative arrangements had not yet been completed relative to eight Jamaican barristers.

A source close to the Registrar's office explained that these arrangements relate to payment of the Defence Team's brief-fee of EC\$300,000. The source said this sum had not yet been paid by the Grenada Treasury. This must be done before the Team could be properly briefed to undertake the defence.

That source confirmed on July 12th that the brief-fee had been paid. The source said individual arrangements had been made with each barrister. There would no longer be a Defence Team. Instead, Howard Hamilton would become Senior Council. With him would be Norma Linton, Arnold J Nicholson, Earl Witter, Glen Cruickshank, DeLano Harrison, Maurice Frankson, and Jacqueline Samuels-Brown.

That group of barristers would be responsible for the defence of Hudson Austin, Dave Bartholomew, Liam James, Selwyn Strachan, John Ventour, Raeburn Nelson, Cecil Prime, Calustus Bernard, Lester Redhead, Fabian Gabriel, Leon Cornwall, Vincent Joseph, Cosmos Richardson, Christopher Stroude, Ewart Layne, Colville McBarnett and Andy Mitchell. When arrangements had been made, the Coards would have Ian Ramsay to defend them.

In the mean time, sitting on May 10th, the Appeal Court dismissed the Motion filed by Clarence Hughes asking for a declaration that Grenada Supreme Court no longer existed and had been replaced by the Supreme Court of the West Indies Associated States. Sitting on this matter were the President, Mr Justice J.O.F. Haynes, Mr Justice Liverpool and Mr Justice Neville Peterkin.

In its judgement, the Appeal Court found that the legal doctrine of state necessity applied if there was not to be chaos. The safety of the people is the highest law, the judgement said. Reading the judgement, Haynes said the validity of the Grenada Supreme Court will remain as long as the necessity remains, but that does not mean forever. It would take some time but it is assumed the

Grenada Government will move quickly to regularize the matter constitutionally.

In spite of the warning of the Chief Justice, there was a further adjournment to September 2nd. This was necessary to accommodate two Motions that the Defence filed on August 7th. The first was a complaint that the fundamental rights of the accused persons were being eroded and the other was a challenge to the validity of the Grenada Supreme Court.

Arguments with reference to these Motions took seven days. With reference to the first Motion, the Defence argued that the accused were tortured and continued to be subjected to degrading and inhuman treatment.

The Commissioner of Prisons (Lionel Maloney) subjected the accused to a course of treatment characterized by inhumanity, arbitrariness, caprice and discrimination and was provocative in nature.

Other charges included complaints that the prison food was contaminated by centipedes, cockroaches and other vermin, that Maloney restricted the accused to their cells in solitary confinement for between 23 and 24 hours per day, that Maloney frequently suspended visits to the accused from wives, relatives and friends for prolonged periods without prior notification and without any or reasonable cause and that the Defence team was not allowed adequate opportunity to visit their clients.

There was a clash between Defence barrister Nicholson and the Chief Justice when Nicholson told the Court he and others of the Defence Team had gone to the Prison with the Deputy Registrar to get certain affidavits signed but had failed to get entrance to the Prison. This clash sparked sharp tempers and threatened a walk out by the Jamaican team of barristers.

The seeds for this were sown when DPP Hylton said she had had a call from the Defence Leader, Hamilton. Hamilton told her he could not locate the Justice of the Peace (JP) that he wanted to use to have the affidavits sworn and requested she suggest a JP who could be used. He asked also that she assist in helping the Defence gain entrance to the prison.

“I told him I could not help him as far as entrance to the prison was concerned”, she said, “but, in the matter of finding a JP, I was sure either the Registrar or Deputy Registrar would be willing to go to the prison with him”.

Defence Leader Hamilton was not in Court and Nedd asked Defence Council Nicholson why it had been necessary to look for a special JP when the Registrar, Deputy Registrar and even the Chief Clerk in the Registry are all JPs and available at all times.

Nicholson: “The position as related by the DPP is not exactly as happened”.

Hylton: (jumping to her feet) “I take strong objection to that”!!!

Nedd (to Nicholson): “Are you suggesting that the DPP is misleading the Court” ?

Nicholson: “No, but what she had related is not what exactly as happened”.

Nedd: “Perhaps you should not say anything more or you may find yourself in trouble and returning to Jamaica sooner than you had thought”.

Nicholson: (incredulously) “Returning to Jamaica?”

Nedd: (sternly) “Resume your seat, I no longer wish to ask you any questions”.

Nicholson: “As your Lordship pleases”.

On the next day, this matter was referred to by Hamilton as a regrettable misunderstanding between council and he vowed before Nedd that he would protect the rights of the Jamaican barristers in the Defence Team.

“I vow”, Hamilton said, “to guard jealously, with every fibre of my being, the rights of Defence Council to advance their arguments using every ethical and legal recourse”. Hamilton told the Chief Justice the concern of the Defence had deepened into consternation because Nedd had not given any assurances, that what he had told Nicholson did not constitute a threat. Our security comes from the Court, Hamilton said, we have been employed by the Court to undertake the Defence and it is vital that we know we are not being threatened.

The Chief Justice said that, as far as the Court was concerned, the matter was closed. Hamilton, however, continued to press for assurances.

“Our view is that the Defense must know they are not being threatened” he told the Chief Justice. “You have said the matter is closed but it is of concern to us that, in a case which will be plagued with difficulties, in the first instance of this, we are faced with what appears to be a threat. I invite the Court now to withdraw our assignment and allow the accused to retain us privately”.

Nedd replied that, by whomever he was retained, the Court will not allow Council on either side to attribute a lack of truthfulness to their opponents.

“It is clear you have had little experience in appearing in my Court”, Nedd told Hamilton, “As far as straight dealings is

concerned, you have nothing to fear and I am proud of the record I hold for fairness and impartiality”.

The Chief Justice said that, as far as the incident with Nicholson and Hylton was concerned, if the shoe had been on the other foot, the position he had taken would have applied equally.

Another charge against the prison authorities was made by Defence Council Witter who told Nedd he had been present when the accused, Calistus Bernard, had been badly beaten by prison guards. “This is a new height of outrage and depths of depravity that this should happen in the presence of Council”, he said.

Witter said the Commissioner of Prisons, Maloney, had been present when this incident occurred and he (Witter) was not surprised when Bernard was unable to come to Court that day.

DPP Hylton told the Court Maloney had been in touch with her and there was another side to the story. “Witter had used offensive language to the prison guards”, she said. “They may not be legal council as he is”, she said, “but they certainly are not skunks”.

The DDP said Maloney told her Witter had been given leave for a one-hour visit with his clients. After an hour and a half, however, Witter paid no heed when told his time had expired. At the end of 2 hours, Maloney told Witter he would have to leave as the guards had not yet had their lunch. Before they left, Maloney told Witter, they would have to put the 8 accused, then in conference with Witter, back into their cells.

It was at this stage, Hylton told Nedd, that Witter abused the guards. It was at this stage too that the accused offered resistance to being taken away and force had to be used.

Witter denied the allegations. “Insofar as these imputations are cast on me by instructions of the Commissioner of Prisons and his

underlings” he said, “I will not dignify those instructions by refuting them. They are untrue”.

The other Defence Motion sought to reopen the question of the validity of the Grenada Supreme Court. The Appeal Court said that validity of the Grenada Supreme Court will remain as long as the necessity remains, but that does not mean for ever. It would take some time the Court said, but it assumed the Grenada Government would move quickly to regularize the matter constitutionally.

The Defence Motion argued that the validity of the Grenada Supreme Court, given by the Appeal Court, was provisional.

Defence Leader Hamilton argued that the effect of the ruling, of the Appeal Court, was that the Grenada Supreme Court was unconstitutional and was operating merely by grace, under the law of state of necessity.

The Motion argues that the Grenada Government is fully competent to restore the High Court of Justice (established under the Independence Constitution) or to establish a High Court of Justice of its own, or to legitimise the existing Grenada Court established by the PRG.

The Motion calls on the Chief Justice to take a bold step and declare when the validity of the Grenada Supreme Court would expire.

Leader of the Prosecution, Karl Hudson-Phillips, told the Court that the question, of the validity of the Grenada Supreme Court and how long it can run had already been answered by the Court of Appeal. The validity of the Grenada Supreme Court will continue until the Grenada Parliament has either, taken Grenada back

into the Supreme Court of the Organisation of East Caribbean States,(the Court appointed by the Grenada Constitution), or had taken steps to set up a constitutional Supreme Court.

On August 19th, delivering his judgement on the Motion as to the status of the Grenada Supreme Court, Nedd ruled that the Court was legal and valid. And, he said, the Court of Appeal had declared that it could not bind Parliament to a timetable, within which legislation must be enacted, to give Grenada a constitutional Court.

“I have been invited (by the Defence) to be bold enough to do what the Court of Appeal said it could not do”, the Chief Justice said, “I decline the invitation”.

Nedd ordered the Defence to pay the costs of the Prosecution in this matter in spite of the Defence plea that the accused did not have money to pay Council and must rely on the Court to retain Council for them. The Chief Justice pointed out, however, that the Defence Motion asked costs to be paid to the Defence if their Motion had succeeded.

Said Nedd: “What is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander”.

The matter of the second Motion, that referring to the basic rights of the accused, was resolved when agreement was reached between the Prosecution and the Defence and, on August 23rd, the relevant Consent Order was made by the Chief Justice.

That Order included specifications that:

- On a daily basis, the Commissioner of Prison, Lionel Maloney, must give reasonable and uninterrupted access to Defence Council to their clients between 9.00am and 4.30pm.

- The accused were to be allowed a reasonable amount of food and drink to be sent to them daily and the accused were not to have meals in their cells but in the area or areas of Richmond Hill Prison designated or reserved for the consumption of food by untried prisoners.
- Maloney was to allow the accused to have a reasonable amount of reading material and notebooks and pens, for the purpose of preparing instructions for their legal advisors. And, as far as those notebooks were concerned, Maloney was not to try to find out what was written in them.
- The accused were to have exercise time out of their cells from 6.00am to 4.30pm and, for at least half of that time, they must be allowed to associate with each other and discuss their defence outside the hearing of prison officers.
- Medical visits be provided and Maloney must ensure that whatever treatment or medication was prescribed was supplied promptly.
- Three of the accused were to be medically examined immediately. They were Andy Mitchell, Fabian Gabriel and Calistus Bernard. Medical reports in this connection were to be delivered to the Defence attorneys.
- A copy for the Grenada Constitution, taken from Ewart Layne, and a copy of the Prison Rules, taken from Selwyn Strachan, must be returned together with other documents seized.
- All of the accused were to be allowed two 15-minute visits per week from relatives, friends and children, and they were to be allowed materials for letter-writing.
- Maloney must ensure that all persons employed at the

Prison knew the terms of the Agreement, and the Defence was given liberty to apply, that is, they could come back to Court for redress if the Order was being violated.

Addressing the Court, Defence Leader Hamilton remarked that a lot had been said about delays, particularly against the Defence, and the Defence was pleased it had been able to save the Court time by assisting in preparation of the agreement.

“The Order made by the Court, based on the agreement, is a vindication of all the Defence has been saying for the last 20 months, he said. I hope the Defence will be able to proceed to assist the Court further by bringing this matter to a speedy conclusion”.

DPP Hylton did not accept Hamilton’s statement.

“We wish it to be understood”, she said, “that we do not concede any of the charges made in Motion. The Agreement was drawn up in accordance with the Prison Rules and we have not gone outside that”.

In a side issue, it was announced by Defence Leader Hamilton, on August 21st, that the accused, Bernard and Phyllis Coard, had, at last, been able to finalise arrangements for their defence by Jamaican barrister Ian Ramsay.

Coard had told Nedd, two weeks before, that negotiations with Ramsay had not been completed. He blamed the prison authorities for this delay. “Arrangements have been 99% completed”, he said, and with the cooperation of the prison authorities, they can be finalised within a few days”. Coard said that, on August 7th, he had had a two-hour interview with a representative of the family, Weldon Brewer, a United States lawyer. There was to have been a further meeting, he said, but he understood this had not been

permitted. Brewer, he said, was making arrangements for representation by Ramsay, and Coard asked the Chief Justice, in the interest of Justice, to facilitate the discussions with Brewer.

Coard also complained that, over the last 18 months, he had only been allowed to confer with his wife twice. The last time was some seven months ago and they had only 10 minutes together. The second time was recently.

“We were permitted 45 minutes” he said, “and there were six prison officers present. My wife and I were made to sit eight feet apart with wire netting between us, all the prison officers were within earshot, and two of them took notes of everything we said”.

Hamilton told Nedd that two of Ramsay’s associates, Maurice Tenn and Enos Grant would arrive in Grenada that evening (21st)

With the arrival of Ramsay and his team, and with the disposal of the two Defence Motions, all seemed set for continuance of the trial on September 2nd, the date fixed by Nedd. But that was not to be, as, plagued by delays of every kind, yet another had surfaced.

The problem centred on the Commissioner of Prisons, Lionel Maloney. He seemed dedicated to making life difficult for the Jamaican barristers. He was deliberately ignoring the Consent Order and, in an interview on August 27th, DPP Hylton told me she had received a letter from Defence barrister Hamilton in this connection.

That letter complained that, despite the Consent Order, Defence Council continue to be denied reasonable access to their clients. Hamilton pointed to the inevitable consequences this would have for the preparation of the defence, and for the commencement and conduct of the trial. The Defence lawyer implored the DPP to use her best endeavours to secure Maloney’s compliance with the Order.

“I have replied to Mr Hamilton”, Hylton told me, “suggesting that he go to the prison compound at 2.00pm and inform the Commissioner that he had come to interview his clients. I have sent copies of that letter to the Minister for Legal Affairs, Ben Jones, and to Mr Maloney”.

There was no improvement in the situation and a source close to the Defence told me that, on two occasions, the Defence barristers had not been permitted to drive into the prison compound. According to this source, also, another violation of the Order was when, on two occasions, a letter from the Defence Team to the defendants was refused to be taken by the prison guards.

Maloney’s disregard of the Court Order was not understandable. One source, close to the Defence Team, referring to Maloney’s dedication to physical culture, expressed the opinion this might have been at the root of the problem. “Maloney”, he quipped, “was all muscles from the neck up”.

Be that as it may, the Jamaicans’ patience had run out. On August 28th, they filed a Motion citing Maloney for Contempt of Court. That Motion asked the Court to order that the Commissioner be forthwith committed to Richmond Hill Prison.

Two days later, Defence barrister Hamilton told me that he had declined the help of the DPP Hylton in her offer to persuade Maloney to comply with the Consent Order.

“I have deliberately decided not to attempt to visit the prison in these circumstances where it would have been the efforts of the Prosecution which enabled us to see the clients”. Hamilton said.

The Defence had a Court Order on which they were entitled to rely, he continued, and, as far as honouring of the Order by the Prison Authorities was concerned, they had decided to observe the situation as to what was happening with the accused...

“If, after filing of the Contempt Motion, there had been positive indication by Prison Authorities in observing the terms of the Order”, Hamilton told me, “it was my intention to ask the Court to adjourn the hearing of that Motion without fixing a date so we could move with dispatch”.

The hearing of the Contempt Motion was fixed for September 16th. There was then no chance of asking for an adjournment without fixing a date, the Defence lawyer said, because these new complaints against Maloney opened up a whole new can of worms.

Another side to the story was highlighted by a news item appearing in a local newspaper. That item read: “Sources close to the Prison claim that one of the reasons, for the difficulties the Defence lawyers experience with the Prison Commissioner, is the fact that some of them have been very rude and insulting to him personally and have also given a lot of trouble to prison officers”.

I asked Hamilton to comment on the news story, and he was vehement in his denial of the charge that anyone of his Team had been rude to the Commissioner or had given trouble to Prison officers. But, he said, he thought he understood what was behind the charge.

“If these sources have any connection with the Prison Administration”, he said, “then it comes as no surprise to me that an effort is being made to discredit Defence Council personally”.

According to Hamilton, this attack on the Defence results from the fact that the Court Order secured by the Defence, ensuring certain facilities for themselves and their clients, is seen, in some quarters as a victory which must be diluted.

“Securing the Court Order was not a victory”, Hamilton told me, “but was merely the obtaining of rights which the accused, and all other untried prisoners, are entitled”.

On September 2nd, the Jamaican barrister, Ian Ramsay, addressed the Court for the first time. He told Nedd he had been officially retained by the Coards, on 20th August, and had been asked to be the overall Leader of all the Defence barristers retained in the trial.

“I have been asked to coordinate the activities of Council who appear with me with other Council”, he said.

Ramsay referred to difficulties Defence lawyers were having in preparing their case and asked Nedd to allow adequate time for preparation of their defence, particularly in respect of the Coards.

Addressing the Court, Defence barrister Hamilton said this was not just a murder trial but a previous Administration which is on trial.

But, Leader of the Prosecution, Karl Hudson-Phillips, challenged Hamilton’s statement.

“We are not treating this as the trial of any previous Administration”, he said, “but on the principle, in common law, that the law is for all, for the strong, the weak, the powerful and the previously powerful”.

The Chief Justice adjourned the trial for mention until September 4th, that is, for arranging when the actual taking of evidence would begin. When the Court sat on that day, both the Prosecution and the Defence asked for an adjournment until late November. Nedd, however, refused this, fixing the new date at October 1st.

“But it may well be that the time I am allowing the Defence may prove insufficient”, he said, “but I will cross that fence when I come to it”.

In the mean time, another delay to the overall proceedings surfaced when the Contempt of Court charges against James Maloney came up for hearing on September 16th. The Chief Justice announced he would not be hearing the arguments.

“I disqualify myself in this matter”, he said, “since February, I know too much about the allegations and rebuttals made”.

Nedd said a date would be fixed for a hearing of the Motion by Mr Justice James Patterson. But, the Chief Justice gave no indication that the murder trial hearings themselves would also be affected. He said nothing about it in Court. On September 23rd, however, he told me he would leave the Bench on December 31st.

I suspect Nedd had had enough of adjournments, delays and controversy. But his retirement would mean appointment of his replacement. With hearings before him the trial had been given special status. Now it was likely the case would take its chances of delay with those scheduled for hearing at the October 8th Assizes.

The Contempt Motion came before Patterson on September 18th. Witter was the only Defence barrister in the Court that day, and he seemed more concerned with getting an adjournment than with addressing the Motion.

“Since the Motion was filed, I am pleased to say there has been an improvement in the conditions of the accused”, he said, “and it appears that Commissioner Maloney is now disposed to comply with the terms of the Order”.

“If the hearing is adjourned without fixing a date”, he said, “and if, at any time, there is deterioration in the situation at the prison, the Defence can come back to the Court for redress”.

Patterson declined to treat the matter as Witter requested. “This would result in holding a sword of Damocles over the Commissioners head”, he said. Patterson told Witter that he could not expect to whistle and drink soup at the same time.

DPP Hylton, appearing for Maloney, asked that the Contempt Motion be struck off. The Motion had been filed during the Court vacation, she said, and no permission to file had been sought from a Judge in Chambers as the Courts rules demand.

Witter argued that no permission had been required to file the Motion. Further, he said, Maloney had not put in an appearance in Court. The Rules require his appearance, he said, and this meant that neither the Commissioner nor his Council could be heard.

Hylton’s reply was that it was required that the Order be served on Maloney in person. This had not been done, she said, so Maloney was not required to appear in Court.

Witter contended that Maloney should have made a conditional appearance. The Defence barrister, however, seemed unwilling to push this point if he could get the adjournment he wanted.

“I am minded to take my seat and let my learned friend, the DPP, agree now to an adjournment until after 29th September”, he said, “her attitude will guide my course of action”.

The DPP was not willing, however, and Witter told the Court he had tried his best.

“I sought to render charity but it was not appreciated”. he said. “The attitude of Commissioner Maloney, through his Council, is one of arrogance and defiance of the rules of Court”.

One reason behind the pressure for adjournment seemed to emerge when Witter told Patterson there was urgent business he must attend to in the Jamaica Courts. He wished to fly there the next day. He asked for an adjournment until a date after September 29th. Patterson, however, was unwilling to leave the matter hanging over Maloney’s head.

“The easy way out of this is for you to withdraw the Motion now and, if necessary at a later date, come to the Court with another Motion”. he told Witter.

But the Defence barrister would not agree. “Once before”, “he said, such an action had been brought by the Defence against Maloney and, when it was withdrawn, conditions at the Prison deteriorated”.

The arguments continued for two days after which, on September 24th, Patterson gave his judgement. He dealt first with Witter’s argument that neither Maloney nor his Counsel could be heard because Maloney did not make an appearance.

Even though Maloney had not made an appearance in Court he said, he could have been heard through his Counsel as an *amicus curiae* (friend of the Court).

The outcome of this matter appeared to rest, principally, on the question of whether Maloney had been served, personally, with the Court Order, as is demanded by the Rules of the Court.

The Defence put forward the argument that a copy of the Order had been left at Maloney's office. Witter pointed out also that the Contempt Motion contained an appeal to the Court to waive the requirement of personal service, a discretion which the Court may exercise.

In his judgment, Patterson said personal service means exactly that. The Court Order should have been served on Maloney, personally. Leaving a copy of the Order at his office was not personal service, he said.

With reference to the request that the Court waive the requirement for personal service, he said, such a request can come when there is evidence that the person on whom the document is to be served is evading service, but no evidence has been put forward in this connection.

Patterson found in favour of Maloney and the DPP, ordering the Defence to pay costs. Witter gave notice of appeal.

The Defence had another Motion similar to the one dismissed by Patterson and, two days after Patterson delivered his judgement, yet another Motion was filed. This one bore similarity to two previously filed Motions challenging the constitutionality of the Grenada Supreme Court established by the PRG. It said no basis in fact or law exists for the continued application of the doctrine of necessity.

But this Motion goes further. It challenges the competence of the Grenada Supreme Court to hear any matter relative to infringement of constitutional rights.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Maurice Bishop Murder Trial. Chronology and Verdict.

An entire, day-to-day account of the Trial appeared in the GRENADA NEWSLETTER, and can be read on-line . The coverage of the Trial begins in the February 25th 1984 edition, pages 2 to 3 <http://dloc.com/AA00000053/00287/2j> and it ends in the Newsletter edition for 6th December 1986 <http://dloc.com/AA00000053/00335/3j>, which has the announcement of the verdict of 4 December, the matrix of verdicts, and Alister's own timeline or chronology of the progress of the event, from the murders on 19 December 1983 to the verdict on December 4th, 1986.

Chronology

1983

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 19th October | Killings at Fort Rupert. 10 murder-victims die. |
| 4th November | Eleventh murder-victim, Jemma Belmar, dies. |

1984

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 27th June | Preliminary Inquiry begins. |
| 8th August | Preliminary Inquiry ends. |
| 16th October | Nineteen accused arraigned in High Court. |
| 24th October | Defence files Motion challenging legality of the Grenada Supreme Court. |
| 19th November | High Court declares Grenada Supreme Court legal under the “Doctrine of State Necessity”. |

1985

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| 22nd February | Parliament passes Act 1/1985 validating all laws passed by the Peoples Revolutionary Government and all Proclamations issued by the Governor General. |
| 10th May | Appeal Court declares Grenada Supreme Court “unconstitutional” but legal under |

- the “Doctrine of State Necessity”
- 1st July Court retains Legal Counsel for 17 accused.
- 10th July Question of validity of Act 1/1985 raised in Privy Council.
- 7th August Defence files Motion challenging legality of the Grenada Supreme Court. Defence files Motion charging Commissioner of Prisons with violating fundamental rights of the accused.
- 8th August Trial hearings begin in High Court.
- 9th August High Court begins hearings of Defence Motion challenging legality of the Grenada Supreme Court. High Court begins hearings of Defence Motion charging the Commissioner of Prisons with violating fundamental rights of the accused.
- 19th August High Court declares Grenada Supreme Court legal under the “Doctrine of State Necessity” and says Appeal Court has already ruled in this connection.
- August 20th Bernard and Phyllis Coard retain legal counsel.
- 23rd August High Court makes “Consent Order” arising from Defence Motion charging Commissioner of Prisons with violating fundamental rights of the accused.
- 28th August Defence files Motion charging Commissioner of Prisons with Contempt, violating the ‘Consent Order’.
- 2nd September Legal Counsel for Bernard and Phyllis Coard

- appear in High Court for the first time.
- 4th September Trial fixed for October 1st.
- 16th September Chief Justice Nedd disqualifies himself.
- 24th September High Court dismisses Defence Motion charging Commissioner of Prisons with Contempt.
- 1st October Murder trial set down for February 4th Assizes.
- 3rd October Further defence Motion charging Commissioner of Prisons with Contempt withdrawn. Defence Appeal against High Court Judgment of 24th September withdrawn.
- Defence Motion before the High Court claiming that “massive, deliberate, pre-trial publicity and all-pervasive prejudice” denied the accused the constitutional right to a “fair trial” and challenging the jurisdiction of the Court to hear the matter. The Motion also challenged the validity of Act 1/1985. Motion set down for October 10th.
- 10th October Defence “Fair Trial” Motion set down for November 21st.
- 21st November Defence “Fair Trial” Motion set down for February 4th Assizes.

1986

- 24th January Acting Chief Justice Dennis Byron appointed.
- 4th February Assizes open. Defence “Fair Trial” Motion

- and the Murder Trial set down for March 3rd.
- 3rd March Chief Justice Byron adjourns Trial to March 4th.
- 4th March Jury panel, summoned by Registrar Mr Christian St Louis, dismissed.
- 5th March Registrar, Mr Christian St Louis, dismissed and replaced by Miss Denise Campbell.
- 11th March Defence raise matter of Miss Denise Campbell, formerly of the Prosecution Team, now Acting Registrar.
- 17th March New jury panel in attendance at Court.
- 25th March High Court strikes out Defence “Fair Trial” Motion and declares it an abuse of the process of the Court.
- 3rd April Defence lodges appeal against judgement of 25th March striking out “Fair Trial”. Motion.
- 7th April Defence applies for stay of trial proceedings until the “Fair Trial” Motion appeal is heard.
- 9th April Defence objects to jury panel summoned by Acting Registrar, Miss Denise Campbell.
- High Court rules no breach of law in summoning of jury panel by Registrar, Miss Denise Campbell.
- Chief Justice Byron refuses application for stay of trial proceedings.
- 10th April High Court rules Miss Denise Campbell did not at any time, have a dual role of Registrar and member of the Prosecuting team. Acting Chief

- Justice Byron rejects Defence suggestion that he disqualify himself on the grounds of bias.
- 11th April Defence Team announces withdrawal from representing accused in trial, while continuing representation in Appeal Court.
- 14th April Chief Justice refused permission to Defence Team to withdraw partially from representation of accused.
- 15th April Defence Team withdraws completely from representation of the accused.
- Accused fail to plead to charges when called upon to do so.
- 16th April Accused initiate process of chanting,
- 18th April The jury and alternates empanelled.
- 21st April One male Alternate juror discharged, after prosecution finds he lost a relative in the shooting at Fort Rupert on 19th October 1983.
- 22nd April Accused, Fabian Gabriel, granted a conditional pardon.
- 23rd April One male alternate juror fell ill and was discharged.
- Prosecution Leader, Mr. Karl Hudson-Phillips, QC, addresses the jury.
- 24th April First witness sworn
- 29th April Jury with four Alternates sequestered.

- 14th May Appeal Court hears Defence “Fair Trial” Motion.
- 17th May Appeal Court dismisses Defence “Fair Trial” Motion and calls it an abuse of the process of the Court.
- Appeal Court expresses concern over lack of progress towards returning the legal system to constitutionality.
- 2nd June Defence files Motion, charging violation of the accused’s constitutional rights, in that the trial is proceeding in their absence.
- 6th June Defence Constitutional Rights Motion comes before Mr. Justice James Patterson and is fixed “for mention” on June 10th.
- 10th June Defence Constitutional Rights Motion comes before Mr. Justice James Patterson.
- Defence charge M.r Justice Patterson with a bias.
- 11th June Mr. Justice James Patterson rejects charge of bias.
- 19th June Mr. Justice James Patterson rules that he has no jurisdiction to hear the Defence Constitutional Rights Motion.
- 23rd June Defence files appeal, against judgement of Mr. Justice James Patterson made on 19th June 1986.
- 30th June President of the Appeal Court, Mr. Justice J O F Haynes, sitting alone as an “assignee” of the Court, hears arguments for stay of Trial proceedings until Defence Constitutional Rights Motion appeal is heard.

- 2nd July Mr. Justice J O F Haynes refuses Order, for stay of Trial proceedings, and expresses opinion that neither he nor Mr. Justice James Patterson has jurisdiction to hear the Defence Constitutional Motion, and that it must be heard in the Court of Chief Justice Byron, where the matter arose.
- 8th July Last witness testifies.
- 9th July Prosecution closes case.
- 16th July Accused called on to make their defence. The first accused makes unsworn statement from the Dock.
- 21st July Defence Constitutional Rights Motion comes before Appeal Court.
- Leader of the Prosecution advised the Appeal Court that the Grenada Government applied, on the 17th July 1986, to rejoin the East Caribbean Supreme Court with effect from 1st January 1987.
- 22nd July Jury Foreman collapses in Court and is discharged.
- 23rd July Full Appeal Court hears Defence Constitutional Rights Motion.
- 25th July Appeal Court rules that the High Court has jurisdiction to hear the Defence Constitutional Rights Motion. The Court refuses Defence application for a stay of proceedings in the trial.
- The Appeal Court says it will endeavour to give instructions, within four weeks, as to the hearing of the Motion.

- 7th August One male alternate falls ill and is discharged.
- 8th August Defence files Motion asking for Order that Act 1/1985 is invalid.
- 24th September Defence Act 1/1985 Motion comes before Mr. Justice James Patterson.
- Prosecution Leader discloses that Defence has approached the Privy Council, on 16th September 1986, to consider validity of Act 1/1985. Judge rules that this is the same matter before the Court and adjourns matter to a day to be fixed.
- 2nd October The last accused completes unsworn statement from the Dock.
- 9th October Appeal Court rules that Mr. Justice James Patterson has jurisdiction to hear the Constitutional Rights Motion and orders that it be sent back to him for hearing.
- 14th October Chief Justice Brown rules that Prosecution has the right to “reply”, whether accused choose to address jury or not.
- 20th October Accused decline to address jury.
- 22nd October Prosecution Leader begins address to jury.
- 13th November Prosecution Leader ends address to jury
- 19th November Chief Justice Byron begins summing up for jury.
- 4th December Chief Justice Byron completes summing up.

The jury retires to consider verdicts.

The jury returns verdicts.

The Maurice Bishop Murder Trial Verdicts

After deliberating for exactly three hours on Thursday the 4th of December 1986, the jury in the Maurice Bishop Murder Trial returned its verdicts.

Fourteen of the eighteen accused were found guilty of murder, three were guilty of manslaughter and one was acquitted on all the charges.

The accused faced eleven charges of murder arising out of incidents on the 19th of October 1983 at Fort Rupert, Headquarters of the Peoples' Revolutionary Army (PRA) in the heart of St Georges. Evidence before the court was that, on that day, a large crowd freed Prime Minister Bishop from house arrest and over-ran Fort Rupert.

The Prosecution's case was that 10 of the accused, members of the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement (NJM) who were at Fort Frederick about two miles outside of St Georges, sent three armoured cars with soldiers to recapture Fort Rupert and execute Bishop and others.

Those members of the Central Committee are Bernard Coard, Phyllis Coard, Hudson Austin, Selwyn Strachan, Ewart Layne, Liam James, Leon Cornwall, Dave Bartholomew, John Ventour and Colville McBarnette

They were all found guilty of murder on the eleven counts.

When the armoured cars arrived at Fort Rupert, they, first of all, bombarded the operations room where Bishop and others were and that bombardment resulted in the death of three persons, Avis Ferguson, Jemma Belmar and Vincent Noel.

The evidence indicated that eight of the accused were at Fort Rupert on that day and the Jury found three of them, Callistus Bernard, Christopher Stroude and Lester Redhead, all commissioned officers of the PRA, guilty of the murder of Ferguson, Belmar and Noel

Chief Justice Byron instructed the jury to return a verdict of not guilty with reference to Belmar and Ferguson against Cecil Prime, another PRA commissioned officer who also was at Fort Rupert, but he was found guilty of the murder of Noel.

Three of the other four accused at Fort Rupert, Andy Mitchell, Vincent Joseph, and Cosmos Richardson were regular PRA soldiers. In his summing up, the judge told the jury that, if they formed the opinion that these accused, in taking part in the murders, were responding to what they thought were legal orders then the charge against them should be reduced to manslaughter of Ferguson, Belmar and Noel: the evidence did not link Mitchell with these deaths and he was acquitted on all three counts.

When the bombardment of the operations room stopped, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, Minister of Education Jacqueline Creft, Foreign Affairs Minister Unison Whiteman, Minister of Housing Maurice Bain, trade-unionist Fitzroy Bain, Evelyn Bullen, Cecil Maitland and Keith Hayling were all lined up against a wall and gunned down.

The execution squad was commanded by Bernard who held the rank of Lieutenant and the “trigger men” who took his orders were regular soldiers Mitchell, Joseph and Richardson.

It appears the jury formed the opinion that Mitchell, Joseph and Richardson acted under the belief that they were obeying a legitimate order, and they were found guilty of manslaughter on these eight counts.

Bernard together with Stroude, Redhead and Prime, was found guilty of murder on these eight counts.

The eighth accused at Fort Rupert on that day was Raeburn Nelson. He commanded the third armoured car sent to recapture Fort Rupert, and he had orders to deploy his men around the fort.

In his summing up, the Chief Justice instructed the jury that, if they formed the opinion that Nelson did not know there had been orders to execute Bishop and others, he should be acquitted.

The jury found him guilty on all counts.

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MAURICE BISHOP MURDER TRIAL - THE VERDICTS																
THE DECEASED																
Executed on Upper Parade Square																
Killed In Bombard- ment of Op- erations Room																
Executed on Upper Parade Square																
THE ACCUSED																
1 Maurice Bishop 2 Jaqueline Creft 3 Johnson Whiteman 4 Norris Bain 5 Fitzroy Bain 6 Evelyn Bullen 7 Keith Hayling 8 Cecil Maitland 9 Avis Paganon 10 Vincent Noel 11 Jemma Belmar																
The Sentence																
Group at Port Rupert including Execution Squad	Andy Mitchell	1	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	NG	NG	NG	30 Years In Prison
	Vincent Joseph	2	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	45 Years In Prison
	Cosmos Richardson	3	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	45 Years In Prison
	Callistus Bernard	4	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Lester Redhead	5	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Christopher Stroude	6	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
Group At Port Frederick including Members Of The Armoured Car Unit	Hudson Austin	1	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Bernard Coard	2	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Leon Cornwall	3	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Liam James	4	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	John Ventour	5	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Dave Bartholomew	6	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Ewart Layne	7	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Colville McBarnette	8	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Selwyn Strachen	9	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Phyllis Coard	10	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
	Cecil Prime	11	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	G	To Hang
Raeburn Nelson		NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	NG	Freed

M = Guilty Of Manslaughter G = Guilty Of Murder NG = Not Guilty

APPENDIX 1

Citation from University of the West Indies, November 1990, (Conferment of honorary degree, Doctor of Laws, on Alister Hughes).

Alister Earl Hewitson Hughes

Chancellor, there are times, in this our Caribbean, when to write or to speak the truth in public is a dangerous thing; but there are men among us whose business is the truth and who, rather than flee the danger, pursue and proclaim their truth, not disguised in learned jargon, but uttered in the common coinage of ordinary language so that all can understand. It is such a man we honour tonight.

Alister Hughes, born in St. Georges, Grenada, in 1919, became, in the 1980s, one of the best known of Caribbean journalists, both within the region and beyond. He was at times the sole authoritative voice to which the world turned for news of events in Grenada. The road to this achievement, however, was anything but conventional. Upon leaving the Grenada Boys Secondary School, to which he had won a scholarship in 1931, Alister Hughes did

not have in mind the journalistic career for which he is now justly celebrated; rather he wanted to get on with the exciting business of life and making a living. His first job, in 1937, as office clerk in a commercial house in St. Georges, was the beginning of a career in commerce that lasted until the early seventies. During the war, hoping to be even more extravagantly rewarded than the five shillings a week he was receiving in Grenada, he sought his fortune in Trinidad, where he worked on the wharves as a Dock Labour Expeditor.

Returning to Grenada after the war, he managed a bakery briefly before becoming a partner in the family firm, A. Norris Hughes and Sons, the business of which included a commission agency, dry goods store, auctioneering, real estate, travel agency, the sale of insurance and the sales and servicing of sewing machines. It is clear that this variety of interests and responsibilities was appropriate to a man with considerable resources of mental energy, curiosity and creativity. He became manager of the family business in 1969, after brief managerial stints in two local manufacturing concerns.

Alister Hughes' skills in the arts of communication were being honed by his numerous activities in so many different spheres of life in Grenada. Apart from his experiences in business, which came to include serving as Secretary, and then President, of the Grenada Chamber of Commerce and Director of the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce, he served as an elected member of the St. Georges District Board (1957-60) before being elected to the St. Georges City Council, where he served from 1960-63, including a term as Deputy Mayor in 1962. During the ten years from 1957 to 1967 he was general secretary of the Grenada National Party. There can be few journalists who have had as thorough a knowledge, through personal experience, of the spheres of life on which they are called to report. Even the technical side of journalism is represented in his vast experience: as Amateur Radio Operator VP2-

GE., Hughes was instrumental in providing communications out of St. Lucia after Castries was destroyed by fire in 1948. Again in 1951 he helped provide radio communications within Grenada during a period of civil unrest and rioting. He has the newsman's instinct to be in the right place when things are happening, but this is perhaps because he has lived, not the fugitive and cloistered life on the margins that others chose, but rather a life amidst the heat and dust of social upheaval.

Such a life has, as we have said, its dangers, especially when fuelled by Grenada's peculiarly volatile politics of recent times. Alister Hughes was beaten up by the political thugs of one regime in the seventies and persecuted, arrested and imprisoned by the army of another in the eighties. The pursuit of truth and the vocation to inform the world about it has always attracted the sinister attentions of those in power who would prefer that the world was not informed of their activities – regardless of the specific political ideology that has spawned their particular lust for power.

At a time when individuals were not permitted to own more than four percent of a publication, Hughes got together with twenty-five other shareholders to create the newspaper *The Grenada Voice*, of which only one issue was allowed to see the light of day; the second issue, along with modest production equipment, was seized; Hughes lost his car for ten months, his telephone for eleven months, and his house was under constant surveillance. Later he was arrested and detained in prison; he has never been told the reason for this. But all of this is part of the reason he is here tonight. By persecuting the reporter, those responsible ensured that he became part of the news; the messenger, as so often happens, became the message. Alister Hughes was the news that reporters from the *Miami Herald* and the *London Times* went looking for

during the American Intervention. Although they were too late to release him from prison – for once the guards had fled it was clear that the prisoner would not scruple to release himself – Hughes' freedom was trumpeted in the media of the world. This is because his unflagging dedication to the objective reporting of the truth; truth is always the greatest news.

Alister Hughes, who started his journalistic career in earnest in 1969 as author of a syndicated column with subscribers in the Caribbean, North America and London, is today Correspondent for Associated Press and the Caribbean News agency, a stringer for ABC News Radio and Time Incorporated, and Founder, Editor and Publisher of The Grenada Newsletter. Over the years since 1970 he has reported for many wire services, for 610 Radio Trinidad, Radio Antilles Monserrat, Radio St. Lucia and CBC Radio Barbados. His work continues – he happened to be on the spot to cover the coup in Trinidad this year – while that of those who tried to stop him has ceased. We salute the integrity and courage of the man; he has not allowed himself to be intimidated or deterred from what he has perceived to be his duty. In fact, it is reliably reported that the only situation from which he ever retreated without making a stand was when a racoon he had inadvertently cornered made a run at him in a suburban backyard in Toronto, where he was visiting his son.

Alister Hughes has continued to serve his community in many spheres other than journalism: he has been foundation member and then secretary of the Grenada National Trust; he has served in identical capacities, the Caribbean Conservation Association; he has served on the executive of the Grenada Press Association and as Executive Secretary of the Caribbean Press Council. He is currently president of the Caribbean Institute of Human Rights. Among his hobbies is the collecting of Grenadian antiquities, including an antique car which was the first taxi on the island.

Of all the many things Alister Hughes has done over the years, he will tell you that the best was his marriage in 1943 to Cynthia Copeland, who has been at his side in all of his endeavours until her death last year. She was his partner in the Grenada Newsletter and in 1984 they jointly received the Maria Moors Cabot Prize from Colombia University for distinguished journalistic service. I know his only disappointment about tonight's proceedings is that Cynthia is not here to join in the celebration of a life and a career to which she made an immeasurable and unselfish contribution

Chancellor, in Alister Hughes we see a man who stuck to his job and did it well, in times of danger and persecution, not for reasons of wealth and power nor honour, but out of a simple love for his homeland and people and a perception of the dignity of man that did not permit him to bend and submit to the questionable requirements of political expediency. I present Alister Earl Hewitson Hughes for the conferment of the degree of Doctor of Laws, *honoris causa*.

November 17, 1990

APPENDIX 2

Citation by General Jack K. Farris, US AirForce on his days in Grenada

It was about 14:50, 2 November 1983. I looked out the cockpit window of the USAF C 141 as it banked left to land at Point Salinas airfield, Grenada. The airfield, built by the Cubans, was impressive, accommodating the world's largest aircraft. I thought why would Cuba build such a sizeable airfield on Grenada?

Army Rangers had led the U. S. invasion of Grenada, seizing it on 25 October. I looked north as we were landing. St George's, the Grenadian capital, was only a few miles away. It would be my headquarters for U. S. Forces Grenada, and I mused for how long I would be here? That was up to me. As we touched down, I made my decision and later told my staff that "we must stabilize Grenada and create an environment of lasting peace and harmony by Christmas and go home".

I knew I had little knowledge of Grenada and its people and that "mission accomplished" would have more to do with

Grenadians than Americans. Thus, I devoted the next day to learning about those I was there to serve. I first visited Governor General Sir Paul Scoon, seeking his guidance. He agreed with our plans, especially immediate retraining of the police force, job creation, infrastructure repairs, and immediate creation of a Governing Council, which Sir Paul would chair. I told him Ambassador Gillespie was due any hour now, and I would serve on his Country Team.

Next I visited one Leslie Pierre, editor of the *The Grenadian Voice*. As I recall he had an office in downtown St. George's and lived above his place of business. He encouraged me to just be with the people of Grenada, win their hearts and minds. I thought, I had tried to do that in Vietnam for two years and failed.

The lessons I learned in Vietnam were unambiguous. My first tour was in 1965 as an advisor to the Vietnamese Airborne Brigade. As I moved throughout Vietnam with the 3d Airborne Battalion, it was evident that the battalion and what it represented were unwelcome by most Vietnamese. The battalion's troops stole from the Vietnamese and mistreated them. They were unwelcome and hated as representatives of a corrupt Saigon government intent on protecting the status quo. Search and destroy operations were futile. When we abandoned an area, the Viet Cong simply returned, offering more than the government in Saigon. By the time of my second tour in 1969, not much had changed.

Grenada paled in comparison to the complexities of Vietnam. But in Grenada, I now knew we could win hearts and minds through a people who saw hope in a trusted government that would quickly emerge and that valued freedom and equality over order. This time I must succeed.

Next, I visited Alister Hughes, who had recently been rescued from the dreaded Richmond Hill Prison by U. S. Special Forces in a helicopter assault on the prison. Alister had stood against the communist dictatorship and for freedom (just as he had against the Gairy regime) and was thus arrested as an enemy of the state. I had already visited the prison and saw where he and other freedom fighters were so horribly tormented. Freedom was anathema in communist Grenada.

I finally found Alister's home. I knocked on the door and introduced myself to Cynthia, his wife. She made me feel like an old friend and called for Alister, "You won't believe who is here," she screamed, like some kid, I thought. Alister likewise was friendly; and I soon learned wise, caring, and courageous. He was very thin, reflecting his painful incarceration. The three of us spoke for about two hours on that first visit. There would be many more. I was fascinated. They had captured my heart and soul. I now had the wise counselor I needed to do my job and leave Grenada by Christmas.

What did I learn from Alister and Cynthia Hughes? I learned that Cynthia was a courageous, intense woman who stood by her man, often not knowing whether she would ever see him again or what he was enduring in Richmond Hill Prison. They so intellectually complimented one another. The two of them even won the admiration of President Reagan and the U.S. Congress on a trip to Washington in November, 1983. I thank you, Cynthia, for everything your friendship and wise counsel allowed me to do for Grenada.

Well, how about Alister? We became close friends, united in our goal to secure freedom and stability for Grenada. I see more clearly each passing year that we, the U.S. forces, would not have so easily succeeded in Grenada without the sage advice and comfort of my

friend. He gave me self-confidence. I believe it was our second visit when Alister told me to get rid of my MP guards and sidearm. "The people of Grenada know why you are here, what you did; and they love you for it. Spend more time with them," he pleaded. The next day, accompanied by my unarmed aide-de-camp and jeep driver, I spent the whole day, against the advice of my entire staff, driving around Grenada unarmed and visiting dozens of Grenadians. We were offered food, drinks, and gratitude by every Grenadian we met. That day Grenadians captured my mind and spirit. We might be out before Christmas.

I know that Alister was a journalist, but to me he was a great deal more. After retiring from the Army and as a college professor, I taught political science, critical thinking, and leadership courses. I used my friend Alister as an example of a leader who developed leadership skills through trial and error. He knew leaders were not born. That they are made by getting up to bat every chance they get. He knew that words whisper, examples thunder. Alister knew that leaders stood tall when the going got tough. So many times I have pondered to myself, could I have continued to lead as Alister did during those long, dreadful days at Richmond Hill Prison? Courage was his *raison d'être*.

Life is about relationships. The only thing we do in life without them is fail. I was so blessed as Commander U. S. Forces Grenada to have Alister Hughes as my friend and wise counselor. I thank you Alister. I am saddened by your death, and I want the world to understand what you meant to me and what you gave to your country. *Eyewitness To Revolution* is an accounting of a remarkable life and a historic event both for Grenada and America. President Reagan briefly abandoned America's cold war policy

of containment and rolled back communism. Citizens of Grenada made it a reality.

On 15 December, 1983, I departed Grenada. Alister was there to see me off. I said, as quoted in the media, "I think the Grenadian people ought to lead the kind of life they have always led and enjoy themselves, have their Christmas at midnight, have their parties and gatherings, and go back to the way Grenada was." And I say to my friend Alister. "You made it possible. Farewell my friend. I will be with you always, as you were with me."

Lieutenant General Jack K. Farris, Jr.

U. S. Army (retired)

September 2006

This citation was sourced by Dr. H C Hughes of California, a cousin of Alister Hughes.

APPENDIX 3

Grenadianese

An article on the use of
'non-standard English

by

Alister Hughes

English is Grenada's official language. That's what you'll hear spoken in Parliament. That's what you'll hear used by the receptionist at any of our hotels. And that's what you'll hear when you chat with the taxi man or vendor.

But English is not the national language of this island. That's something different. To hear the national language you must associate with Grenadians when they are relaxing. Be with them when they've let their hair down. When they're not careful about speaking "good" English. That is, when they are not on their best linguistic behaviour.

In the national language the people of this island have developed a special vocabulary. It falls short of being a dialect but is a picturesque collection of expressive words and phrases. Echoes of this vocabulary

will be heard in other Caribbean islands and its origins are intriguing.

These words and phrases mirror Grenada's history. They trace the island's story through the centuries and have become so entwined with standard English that the users are hardly aware of them. And so, unnoticed, something unique, something we may call "Grenadianese" has evolved.

It is unfortunate, however, that this cultural gem is not considered "respectable". Words from this vocabulary are banned from class rooms where "proper" English is taught. And, little boys and girls get their knuckles rapped for using them. Nevertheless, the vocabulary continues to be used by all sectors of the society and Grenadianese flourishes.

The French were the first to colonize Grenada and they contributed generously to the vocabulary. The first settlement was in 1650 and, for over two centuries, the island experienced a historical see-saw existence. Grenada was owned, at one time or the another, by either France or Britain and this had its influence on Grenadianese.

The languages of the African slaves also had their impact. So did the language of the Spaniards who came from the South American mainland to trade with the colonists. A few Amerindian words have been preserved and always, there is the Grenadian's faculty to coin his own words.

Grenada's folk lore offers a fertile field for encountering Grenadianese. For instance, in the mythology of the island the la-jab-ess is a terrifying, supernatural female. Deriving her name from the French, la diablesse, a female devil, the la-jab-ess has a beautiful figure. Roaming after dark, she wears a wide-brimmed, floppy hat which masks her face. And her long skirt hides the fact that, while one of her feet is normal, the other is a cloven hoof.

Undoubtedly, lonely wives created this myth. The story goes that

some half-drunk husband, staggering home late at night, is propositioned by this seductive lady. Hand in hand, they stroll to a secluded spot at the brink of a precipice where the la-jab-ess lifts the brim of her hat. This discloses a fearful skull face. Frightened out of his mind, the terrified husband falls over the precipice and dies.

Another dreaded, mythological, Grenadian figure is the lou-ga-rou. This name is derived from the French loup-garou, a werewolf, but the Grenadian version has special powers.

The lou-ga-rou is a human being who can assume the power to fly. At night, the lou-ga-rou sheds his skin. Hiding it under an inverted bowl, he sets off on his quest for human blood. And, closed doors are no barrier to this creature. To get to his victim, the lou-ga-rou can enter a room through a key-hole.

But there is a sure way of protecting one's self. The trick is to spread a cupful of sand on your doorstep. No lou-ga-rou can get past that without counting every grain. The counting certainly will take until daylight and, at that time, all lou-ga-rous must re-enter their skins.

By the way, should you ever find a skin under an inverted bowl, rub it well with salt. And, in the morning, keep a sharp look out. Should you notice anyone unusually scratching, you've identified a lou-ga-rou.

Another Grenadianese word derived from the French is jamet. This is an euphemism for a prostitute. Jamet is a word adopted from Trinidad where, about a hundred years ago, the French aristocracy in that island propounded the theory of the diamèter or diameter of society.

The theory was that the aristocracy occupied the upper section of the diamèter. Then, there were descending grades of society, the lower orders being confined to the lower section of the diamèter.

With time, the word *diamètre* became used as a label for what was regarded as the lowest class, the prostitutes, and it was easy phonetic step from this to the Grenadianese *jamet*.

Travo, a contraction of *travaux*, the French creole word for work, is the name Grenadians give to persons who do grueling work on the roads. And *bun-jay*, said with emphasis, is derived from the French *Bon Dieu!!*, that is, in English, *Good God!!*

If, goodness forbid, a Grenadian should accuse you of being “*quel bay*”, he has insulted you. This Grenadianese word comes from the French *quel bête* which, loosely translated, is “How stupid you are!” Meaning much the same thing is *too-tool-bay*, from the French, *totement bête*, that is, completely foolish.

An accident which sometimes befalls Grenadians is a fallen *boo-chet*. The *boo-chet* is located somewhere in the chest and is likely to “fall” when one attempts to lift too heavy a weight. The derivation comes from the French, *brechet*, the breast-bone and there is a recommended cure if you should happen to suffer a “fall”.

Carefully tie two pegs of garlic in a knot of hair at the top of your head and wait. This is one hundred percent guaranteed to lift the *boo-chet* back into place.

The bark of a tree, *bor-ban-day*, is reputed to be a powerful aphrodisiac. The word is derived from two French words, *bois*, a tree, and *bander*, to be stretched.

A Grenadianese word in wide use is *maco*. Its derivation is uncertain but this noun describes a person who delights in ferreting out people’s business. And, an adjective has been derived from *maco*. A nose-y person is said to be *macotious*.

Two other widely used words whose derivations are uncertain are *dan-dan* and *lime*. *Dan-dan* refers to the clothes someone is

wearing and usually is said of a child. One would say, “I like your dan-dan.”

Lime first appeared in the early 1940s. At that time, it was the practice of young people to congregate outside some fête, heckling the guests as they arrived. These young people were called limers and they were said to be liming the fête. The word has evolved considerably since then. The original meaning remains but, additionally today, to lime is just to enjoy leisure time.

Many Grenadianese words came in slave ships from Africa. One is ko-ko-bay, an African word for the disease of leprosy. Coupled with the word “yaws”, a skin disease which is standard English, ko-ko-bay is preserved in an old Grenadian saying. Used to indicate that things couldn’t be any worse with the speaker, the saying is, “If you have ko-ko-bay, you can’t get yaws”. That is, my problems are already so great (leprosy), that any additional problems (yaws) won’t make a difference.

Grenadianese is indebted to Africa for another word, kata, to cover and protect. When they carry loads on their heads, Grenadian women protect their scalps with a pad of straw or cloth. In Grenadianese, that pad has the same African name, kata.

A word with wide currency in Grenadianese is jook, to prick or pierce. Probably derived from the West African jukka, to poke, jook is found in many combinations. To step on a nail is to get a nail-jook. Figuratively, to jook ants-nest is to stir up trouble, and spoiling fish which generates a pricking sensation in the mouth is said to be jooking-tongue.

Adoptions from English are found in the unusual use of the words hand and foot. A local newspaper once reported that a man had been charged in the Magistrate’s court with wounding someone in the foot, “six inches above the knee”. But, that charge sounds

totally impossible. As everyone knows, the foot is not above the knee - it is that part of the leg below the ankle. But this seemingly ridiculous charge didn't surprise the Magistrate or anybody else. In Grenadianese, you see, the foot is the whole limb from the hip to the toes. Hand, too, is the whole limb from the shoulder to the fingers.

These are Old English meanings. Three hundred years ago, when Britain was carving out her empire, English colonists in Grenada used the words hand and foot with exactly the same meanings as these words have in Grenadianese today.

Should you visit our Post Office today, if you wish to collect registered mail, you will be struck by a sign which instructs you to walk with your identification. This instruction merely means to "bring" your identification. But the use of the word walk in Grenadianese can puzzle a non-Grenadian. He would be quite confused if he is advised that in case of rain, he should walk with a change of clothes.

The Spaniards have left us the expression we use when two horses (or politicians) are running neck and neck. We say they are running *mano-mano*. This comes from the Spanish, *mano a mano*, meaning together. And the Amerindians have left us *canerie* and *mab-boo-yah*. The first is an earthenware cooking pot. The second is a dangerous looking, but quite harmless, house lizard which the Amerindians believed embodied an evil spirit.

Grenadianese is a national gem. It should be recognized and preserved. And efforts should be made to eradicate from the minds of Grenadians the undeserved label of poor respectability with which they have been taught to regard their national language.

Further, just as an English speaking visitor to France would be facilitated by a pamphlet setting out, in French, common words and

phrases he may find useful, so too, in Grenada, visitors would be facilitated by a pamphlet on Grenadianese.

Recently, the need for this was brought home to me

Walking one day in St.George's town

A tourist I happened to see,

Kind sir, he said, will you please help me,

I'm puzzled as puzzled can be.

I paused and asked how could I assist,

His problem he then did unfold,

His mind, it seemed, was turned upside down

By some things that he had been told.

I've met, he said, some really nice folks,

But their words are so very queer,

They talk, they chat, they all understand,

But nothing makes sense that I hear

I heard a woman called a jamet

And she, in surprise, said, bun-jay

It's hard to know just what they do mean,

Please tell me what is bour-ban-day?

And then, he said, a man told his friend.

Of something that never can be,

He said he had a pain in his foot,
 Located high over the knee
 If that was bad, then worse was to come
 With something he heard loud and clear,
 My tyres are good, a taximan said.
 But I always walk with a spare.
 He then heard them speak. of ma boo-yah
 Of dan-dan and travo and all,
 Clutching his chest, a man said to him,
 You must know, me boochet just fall
 Two men a heated argument had
 Said one, you're quelle bay for so.
 The other said, You're real too-tool-bay
 Besides, you're a blasted maco
 My friend, confused, in desperation
 Just wanted to have a good time
 Got more confused when somebody asked
 If he was enjoying the lime
 I tried my best to explain these things
 And thought I had made a good try,
 But when I asked if he would return,

He gave me a funny reply.
I will be back for certain, he said,
But my legs cannot take the strain
My wife and I refuse to walk back
We're taking the bloody airplane.

APPENDIX 4

A Short Glossary Of Grenadianese

Al-pa-gat: Slipper with leather sole & coarse woven top. (Spanish: alpagata, a sandal made of hemp)

Tai-che: Large iron container for boiling sugar (Spanish : tacho, a sugar-boiler)

Ash-urn: Pounded parched corn mixed with sugar (African: orsi-am, pounded parched corn mixed with sugar)

Doe-gla: Person of mixed East Indian and Negro blood.

Ko-pa-set-ic: First class/excellent (US Negro slang: kopasetee, first class/excellent)

Doctor Shop: Pharmacy

Acid: Liquor

Peg: Segment of a citrus fruit

Soul Case: The human body “I work out me soul case today”

Bub-bul: Dishonesty

Frup-se: To drink noisily (especially of soup)

Zutt: Cigarette butt

Sankey: Religious song (After Rev. Ira David Sankey)

Straw cork: Illicitly distilled rum

Sa-ven: Child's game (French se venter to plume oneself)

Set: Large number/quantity. "A whole set of kids"

Next: Another. "Give me a next hat"

Am-way: Help! French A moi help!

Day clean: Dawn

© Alister Hughes, 2004.

This paper was presented at the Grenada Country Conference, January 2002, and was offered in this form as a public service by the University of the West Indies.

Alister Hughes's collection of 1000 examples of Grenadianese is currently under consideration for publication with the University of Toronto.

APPENDIX 5

Caribbean Man

An aspirational poem

by

Alister Hughes

We are now independent, yes, massa day done,
We're free. It's a new day which now has begun.
So please, let's get working as hard as we can
To foster the growth of Caribbean Man.

Let's take a look backward, remember with pride
Those brave ones who stood up and battled the tide,
Who braced up and faced it when all others ran,
Who fought for the birth of Caribbean Man.

Pat Bogle, as brave as you ever will find,
 And Gordon , like true steel in fire refined,
 They died in Jamaica, pursuing a plan
 To fight for the rights of Caribbean Man

And Critchlow, for gains to the workers he fought
 And when he was fired that counted for naught,
 Guyana his country, far sighted his scan
 He called for the vote for Caribbean Man.

More noble nude freeman than full gilded slave
 He lived by that precept and Donovan gave
 Example that we too with dignity can
 Though trampled, be proud of Caribbean Man.

In Donovan's tracks then came Ted Marryshow
 His dream was that we had just one way to go
 One country Westindies, division he'd ban
 One nation, one people, Caribbean Man.

These are but few of the great ones of yore

Who faced the rough storm in the time gone before
When it was easy to drift with all in the van
With never a thought of Caribbean Man.

When all were so willing to swim with the tide
Be accepted, and join in the social ride
Kowtow to the massa, and pray that he can
Forget that you are a Caribbean Man.

Be called in to dinner or government tea
Get an honour or knighthood or CBE
Think Limies superior and much better than
Black, brown or whatever Caribbean Man.

Not so these great ones, much more noble their game
Unselfish, far-sighted the stars were their aim
Society's glitter was not in their plan
They knew the true worth of Caribbean Man

They knew that the masters didn't dare educate

The objects they ruled in colonial state
 The learning they gave us was 'Dan in the Van'
 The basics, no more for Caribbean Man.

And history for us never touched on our shores
 And focused on Europe, kings, treaties and wars
 What mattered, developed, continued , began
 In no way included Caribbean Man

They taught us of Raleigh and Hawkings and Drake
 Their exploits and how brave a fight they did make
 We saw this with pride, as true British eyes can
 But not with the eyes of Caribbean Man

We knew naught of Fedon, Toussaint or Quacko
 Nor Christophe, Quamina or loose-mouthed Cudjoe
 We knew not of Cuffie away down in Guyan
 And what he had done for Caribbean Man

But now we are free, and its slavery no more

Our fate is our own. We've the key to the door
That leads to our future, let's find if we can
What stuff that he's made of, Caribbean Man

When we were colonials in long days gone by,
To make like massa was what we did try
To be like the British our aim and our plan
A synthetic Limie, Caribbean Man

Tha's over but sadly, we've not yet begun
To see our own place, recognize our own sun
In place of the Limey, weare now African
Not yet do we know we're Caribbean Man

How ae weforget and consign to the breeze
Our brother the Indian, our sister Chinese
And others who cover the whole ethnic span
For they too, my frend, are Caribbean Man

We're all of this region, no matter the skin

Black, white, pink or yellow, we'd better begin
 To know we're a nation and one common plan
 Is what must develop, Caribbean Man

Lets turn eyes inwards and scales from them shed,
 See us as a people and not that we're wed
 And fixed to some mother, whom never can
 We grow and develop, Caribbean Man

Not England nor China nor India nor Spain
 Not Africa, Scotland nor France nor Bahrain
 Can now be our Mother, that can't be our plan
 We're nobody's child, we're Caribbean Man

We have our own custom, traditions, folklore,
 Like carnival, John Canoe, Big Drum and more
 Anansi and Tigue, Lajabless and steel pan
 A heritage rich of Caribbean Man

And pepper-pot, oil-down, ackra and bush tea

With foo-foo and jug-jug, bhul-jol and bodi
 And ginger beer, sorrel, all foods that we can
 Be proud are produced by Caribbean Man

Walcott, Louise Bennet, Rhone, Peters and Hill,
 McBernie, Keens-Douglas and many more still'
 In drama and poetry, dance, none better than
 These greats, they're the soul of Caribbean Man

Our foods and our culture are not second place
 They're unique and reflect our multiple race
 We're a nation, a wonderful blended clan
 We're special, we're vibrant Caribbean Man

And why in this climate, continue to try
 To ape the ex-masters with jacket and tie.
 That garb is for cold clime, can't we find a plan
 Of suitable dress for Caribbean Man?

That may seem a small thing but symbols must be

The pointers which prove to our children that we
Are not orphan people who catch as they can
At standards to govern Caribbean Man

We must know and teach, we're a people by right
We're not bastard offspring in desperate plight
Pretending we're British or African clan
Ignoring the fact we're Caribbean Man

Lets shake off inertia, lets find a new birth,
Lets lift our heads high, recognize our own worth
Our future awaits with unlimited span
Awake and move forward, Caribbean Man !!!

And this is Alister's "Explanatory Note".. the page numbers refer to Alister's original typescript of the poem.

Caribbean Man

Explanation sheet

Cover Logo and word "CARICOM" refer to the Caribbean Community and Common Market, the grouping of Britain's ex-West Indian colonies.

Page 1, verse 3 Paul Bogle a former slave in Jamaica, led an armed protest uprising (riot) in 1865 against injustices to ex-slaves in that country. He was tried and hanged. George William Gordon, also born a slave, a mulatto, educated himself and became a wealthy influential landowner. He was a member of the Jamaica House of Assembly and used his position to try to get better conditions for the ex-slaves. He took no part in the riot but, because he was known to be a friend of Bogle, he was tried, with no opportunity to defend himself, and was hanged.

Page 1, verse 4 Hubert Critchlow formed the British Guiana Labour Union in 1919, the first registered trade union in the dependent British Empire. This came in the midst of serious labour unrest in British Guiana and, championing the workers cause, Critchlow was dismissed from his job.

Page 1, verse 5 William Galway Donovan, Grenadian, newspaper-editor, patriot, lived late in the last century, and is well known for his principle that "A naked freeman is better than a gilded slave". He had the vision of a united Westindies. He went to jail rather than withdraw his public criticism of what he considered to

be an unjust decision of a corrupt Judge.

Page 2 verse 1 Theophilous Albert Marrayshow (1887-1958) was a protégé of Donovan and inherited the drive for a united Westindies. He is known as the “Father” of the West Indies Federation which, born in 1958, died in 1961.

Page 2, verse 4 C.B.E., (Commander Of the British Empire), an honour conferred by the Queen of England.

Page 3 verse 1 Natives of Britain’s colonies had no vote in Britain and were, therefore, more “objects” belonging to the Queen than her “subjects”. A calypsonian, ridiculing a totally unsuitable and inadequate booklet specially produced for the education of children in the colonies, used, in his song, a line from that booklet, “Dan Is The Man In The Van”.

Page 3 verse 4 Julien Fédon led an unsuccessful revolution in Grenada in 1795. Toussaint Louverture and Henri Christophe were leaders of the Haitian revolution in 1791. Quamina was the leader of a slave up-rising in British Guiana in 1823. Cuffie was the leader of a slave up-rising in British Guiana in 1763. Cudjoe was one of the leaders of a slave conspiracy in the Virgin Islands in 1759. However, he violated security and the slave owners were able to avert an up-rising.

Page 4 verse 5 and page 5 verse 1 With the breaking of colonial ties to the “Mother Country”, Britain, there has been an unfortunate tendency of some Westindians to seek Africa as a “Mother Country”.

Page 5 verse 2 John Canoe, a Christmas traditional street dancing in Jamaica. Big Drum, a traditional dance routine in Carriacou, Grenada’s sister island. Anansi and Tigue, traditional folk tales. Lajabless, a supernatural figure in folklore. Page 5, verses 3 and 4, Self explanatory.

APPENDIX 6

ALISTER HUGHES

A Memory by Diana Yohannan

It was Friday 4 March 2005. The warm breeze fanned the mid-day heat as I sat on the crematorium verandah in St. George's. It was Alister Hughes' funeral. A last goodbye to a good friend. As I listened to the music and poetry chosen by his widow, Margaret, my mind drifted back to the interview he gave me in 1997. I had asked many questions about his life and times. No one-liner answers; but considered opinions on many subjects. Some of them curiously linked to the present. I smiled when I remembered my last question. As a man whose great love was words, I had asked him whether he had thought about an inscription for his headstone. He laughed and answered without hesitation, "Oh yes, on October 19 1983, the day Maurice Bishop was murdered, I was taken by the Peoples Revolutionary Army from my home. Somebody gave my wife, Cynthia an 'eyewitness account' of my execution. They said they had seen me put up against a wall and shot. Cynthia spoke to a neighbour and told her something she related to me very

diffidently afterwards. But I thought it was the greatest compliment I've ever been paid. She said, "and he was such a useful man! I'd like those words on my headstone."

Alister was a good journalist and also a brave one. At the age of fifty he started to write. When representing The Grenada Chamber of Commerce on the Incorporated Chambers of Commerce of the Caribbean, (ICCC), he met Ken Gordon, then Executive Director. Gordon left to become the Managing Director of the Trinidad Express and asked Alister to contribute. "It was the best decision I made in my life because nothing else I have done has given me as much satisfaction." The wealth of experience he gained from his commercial career in the previous thirty six years gave him, he said "a better understanding of what I was writing about."

As I listened to the tribute from the Caribbean Media Writers Association, I remembered how he had reflected at length about journalism in the early seventies - and his first scoop. "You know, those were exciting days. Everything was new. There was no reporting between the islands before, and those of us who were doing it were pioneers." A friend of his designed a unique piece of equipment to screen out background noise on taped interviews. This involved two tape recorders and a flashback that reacted only to voice current when the first tape was copied on to the second. "Experimenting with equipment was the excitement then," he said, "It was much more fun - and economical too."

This experimentation, and Alister's experience as a ham radio operator, gave him his first scoop when George Bush, then Vice President of the United States, visited Grenada in February 1986. Alister recalled, "He held a press conference at Government House. I had a mobile Citizens Band radio (CB), with a base at my home. I hooked the base into the home telephone, left my wife Cynthia there, and went to Government House with the portable

CB. When Bush started to speak I called Cynthia and said, ‘Phone Puerto Rico,’ where Associated Press had their headquarters and where I had to report to them. I held up my portable in front of the loudspeaker and it went from there to the base in my home, into the phone and on to Puerto Rico. We beat the competition by seven hours!”

Looking for the truth almost cost him his life on his fifty fifth birthday. On January 21 1974, one of the numerous public protests under the Gairy regime took place outside Otway House, headquarters of the Seamen and Waterfront Workers Union. About 6,000 people were under attack from the Mongoose Gang.

“We had to retreat into Otway House,” Alister remembered. “We were there under rifle fire for about an hour. Finally, they tear-gassed us and I had to run outside. On the way out I had to step over the body of Rupert Bishop, Maurice’s father, who’d been shot. As I came out there were six men with cutlasses and sticks. They were about to attack me when a policeman rescued me. He said something at the time I thought was complimentary. He said “You’re a good man, I can’t let them do that to you.” Then he said with a chuckle, “When I thought about it subsequently, I wondered if he hadn’t thought I was a good man, would he have left me to the wolves?”

During the reading of his poem ‘Caribbean Man’ by members of his family, I remembered his views on his own identity. Although born in Grenada he regarded himself as a Caribbean man. He passionately believed in Caribbean unity and a Caribbean, rather than an insular identity. It was not surprising to discover that he refused the British colonial honour, Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE), “because it undermined all that I stand for. If I had accepted the CBE, I am not centering myself in the Caribbean, I am centering myself in Britain which is now

a foreign country. If they had local honours I would be thrilled to take the lowest of the low of local honours rather than a Knighthood from the Queen.”

He believed that due to a long colonial history, Caribbean people have not yet found their identity. In the case of Grenada, he said that they were focused on Britain as the mother country and London as the centre of the universe. “In fact, until recently,” he continued, “we were much closer to London than we were to Caracas. Colonial honours, going to see the changing of the guard, the Queen’s Christmas message. All that shows how tightly we were attached to London. Well, we’ve lost that mother now and we’re looking for another mother because we don’t feel that we’re grown-up children yet. The majority of the people in the Caribbean are black-skinned and many of them are looking for Mother Africa. But what about the Chinese, the Portuguese and the Indians who live on these islands? They also are Caribbean people and they cannot identify with Mother Africa. We have our own very strong culture, but we need to recognize it.”

As the funeral service drew to a close I recalled I had asked him how he would like to be remembered. “I think,” he said quietly, “As somebody who was a Caribbean person; somebody who wished passionately for a unity in the Caribbean; and somebody who had a love for people.”

I’m sorry that Alister didn’t live long enough to see the publication of this book. It is a testament to his fearless pursuit of the truth under two dictatorships and nearly cost him his life on two occasions.

Alister has gone but I can see him now, sitting on the verandah, his crumpled shorts held up with a piece of string, sipping his beloved brandy. ... the bottle a handy distance from the glass.

Contributors

Alister Hughes, Journalist of Grenada, (1919 — 2005)

Margaret Hughes, Widow and Archivist of Alister's Writings;

Peter Lamb, Editor

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the following for their help in editing the text and arranging for its publication:

Long Arnold, Paraic Corbett, Peter Lamb, Patrick Murphy,
Bruce Potter and Judith Towle



Alister Hughes, (1919 – 2005) was born in St. Georges, Grenada and lived there for the rest of his life. Following a successful career in business and local politics, he turned to writing and, from 1969 onwards he became one of the best known of Caribbean journalists, his columns and broadcasts reaching all over the region, as well as to North America and to London. He was the founder, editor and publisher of *The Grenada Newsletter* and was admired for his integrity and courage in pursuit of the truth in dangerous times. For this he was beaten up by the political thugs of one regime in the seventies, and persecuted and imprisoned by the army of another in the eighties. In 1990 he received an honorary doctorate for his work from the University of the West Indies.

Hughes' very personal account and analysis of these events makes compulsive reading. His own vision for Grenada was of a prosperous, happy country; whose multi-racial population was united by a common 'Caribbean' identity. His unfulfilled ideal was to see the whole Caribbean world connected in some form of beneficial federation.