

23 October 1983

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SUBJECT: Possible Immediate Responses from the Soviets or the Cubans to the Grenadian Operation

1. This memorandum assesses the responses of either the Soviets or the Cubans, or the two of them together, to the Grenadian operation in the next month. We think that the Soviets will take the high road, as it were, in Europe, castigating us for our being quick on the trigger, rash, aggressive, irresponsible, and weaving our behavior over Grenada into the INF campaign which is going on now. The Cubans -- and Castro himself -- are more likely to think of revenge than would the Soviets, largely because the loss of Grenada is less damaging to them than to Castro. We note that almost inevitably there will be mutual suspicions over the course of events in Grenada, with the Cubans suspecting that the Soviets were promoting Coard over Bishop.

2. The invasion of Grenada has increased the pressure on the Soviets and the Cubans to accede to Nicaraguan requests for high performance aircraft, but most of us believe such a move still is unlikely. The US market is down, clearly: yet the Soviets and the Cubans might gamble that the United States would have to consider the international and domestic political costs of responding. If the Soviets and Cubans were willing to provide MIG's and we destroyed them, they would reap the dividend of making Washington appear trigger happy once again.

3. The reinfiltration of Cuban troops into Grenada, possibly to connect with Cuban remnants and start up irregular actions, seems unlikely. The island does not afford good sanctuary for such a force. More likely would be the introduction of a few agents to conduct acts of sabotage and propaganda and give the appearance of popular resistance to the new government.

4. The Soviets and Cubans may orchestrate terrorism -- or just the threat of it -- against Eastern Caribbean States, Jamaica, and Barbados, to discourage tourism and punish them for cooperating with the United States. Such action could further degrade economies of these countries with resultant political instability in some of them. (Here we note that the Grenada action shows that we cannot pretend that any one of these small island-states is unimportant to us, with the obvious implication of the need for an official US presence in each one.)

5. The Grenada operation also could be used as a justification for future aggressive actions by the Soviets in Pakistan or Poland, for example. If not a near threat, it is a way of looking at how the loss in Grenada might be made otherwise useful.

6. A cautionary note is also in order. There may be a tendency to see any happening in the near term that is contrary to US interests as a response to Grenada. If the Beirut bombing had taken place a week from now, would we have seen it as retaliation?

7. Attached is a list of possible Cuban and Soviet responses. After the immediate threat has expired, it will become increasingly difficult to distinguish the moves of the Soviets or the Cubans as a distinct response to Grenada.

Attachment:  
Possible Reactions

Possible Reactions (In rough order of likelihood)

USSR/Cubans orchestrate worldwide propaganda campaign, including demonstrations before US Embassies, atrocity stories, books, movies, etc.

Cuba requests additional military and economic assistance from USSR.

Nicaraguans request additional military/economic assistance from USSR/Cuba.

Cubans orchestrate campaign of sabotage/attacks against US bases or embassies overseas, in the continental United States, and Puerto Rico.

Cuba/USSR orchestrate violence aimed at tourists in Eastern Caribbean producing major drop in tourist revenue for OECs states, Barbados, Jamaica.

Low performance L-39 aircraft or MIG-15's are introduced into Nicaragua.

High performance jet aircraft are transhipped to Nicaragua from Cuba via a friendly third country port (Libya?) on a non-USSR/Cuban vessel.

Cuba infiltrates one-time saboteurs into Grenada to create impression of domestic resistance to "occupation force."

Cuba jams US commercial broadcasting.

Cuba dispatches explosives/sapper squads to Central America to target US equipment, installations, and facilities, or important Salvadoran/Honduran military equipment or facilities.

Kidnappings or assassinations of US officials or East Caribbean leaders.

USSR deploys a naval force to Caribbean.

USSR augments the Soviet brigade in Cuba.

Cuba seeks UN Security Council seat at next go-round.

Cuba instructs far left paramilitary organization in Dominican Republic to stir up trouble.

Cuba infiltrates guerrilla forces into Grenada.

Cuba dispatches OSA missile patrol boat or FOXTROT submarine to strike US naval vessel near Grenada.

Cuba orchestrates sabotage/protests among Jamaican contract workers at Guantanamo.

Soviets stir the pot in Lebanon, attempting to draw US forces into a "Vietnam quagmire."

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President Reagan and/or other officials are targetted for assassination attempt during Far East trip.

Cuban attack on Guantanamo Naval Base.

Soviet pressure on Berlin.

Terrorist attack (missile?) on U' naval forces off Lebanon.

Vietnamese attack on Spratley Islands.