

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

TAB E

INTERAGENCY INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENT
26 October 1983

GRENADA: THE CUBAN FACTOR

Prior to yesterday's invasion, the Cuban contingent in Grenada was believed to comprise at least 400 personnel consisting of the following elements:

- a construction brigade housed at the Point Salines Airfield (350 personnel)
- a military advisory mission headquartered about a mile north of Point Salines (10 to 12 advisors)
- the Cuban Embassy staff and guard force located in southeastern St. Georges (at least 15)
- civilian technicians and advisors (including 25 medical personnel and 15 technicians at Radio Free Grenada)

This does not include any forces that may have been aboard a Cuban Naval Academy training ship, the Vietnam Heroico, which has been used to transport cargo and as a troop carrier that was anchored at Port St. Georges.

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[redacted] that 350 Cuban workers at the airfield were safe and in their barracks. These men include many military reservists, some of whom may have had combat experience in Angola or Ethiopia. [redacted] indicated they were armed and may have been formed into squads or companies. Cuban Colonel Pedro Tortola Comes, who arrived on the island only Monday, was said by Radio Havana yesterday to be in charge of the workers holding out at the airport.

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This Interagency Intelligence Assessment was requested by the National Security Council Staff. It was prepared under the auspices of the National Intelligence Officer for Latin America by [redacted] of the Office of African and Latin American Analysis, CIA. The Assessment was coordinated at the working level with the Central Intelligence Agency, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and the Department of State. Information available as of 0900 hours on 26 October 1983 was used in the preparation of this Assessment.

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The Cuban military advisory contingent is evidently larger than we had previously estimated and could number as many as 100. Reporting [redacted] indicated personnel from the mission were active in fighting at the Point Salines Airfield, firing on US helicopters with small arms and a machine-gun, and making a stand against a ground assault near the fuel tanks north of the airfield. The Cubans who reportedly were encountered at Pearls Airfield and at the Radio Free Grenada site north of St. Georges may have included advisors from the military mission as well. [redacted]

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The Cubans could have landed some additional forces from the Vietnam Heroico without our knowledge, but we know that it loaded sugar, 500 tons of cement and other cargo in Mariel harbor before departing Cuba for Grenada on 1 October. There are accommodations on the ship for 240 personnel when carrying cargo. The cargo manifest and destination were declared on 29 August and it took one month to complete the loading. We believe that the cargo was delivered, suggesting that no more than 240 additional Cuban personnel could have been transferred to Grenada. The ship has been in port or just outside St. Georges' harbor since the week before the coup. [redacted]

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We have received at least two reports of landings, but none have been confirmed. [redacted]

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On the other hand, a US field commander estimated that US forces in Grenada were facing the equivalent of two well-armed and well-trained Cuban light infantry battalions, which could indicate that some additional forces were inserted. A report yesterday that tanks and armored personnel carriers were located near Pearls Airfield was not corroborated [redacted] and CINCLANT Intelligence has disavowed the report. [redacted]

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The stiffness of the resistance thus far can be attributed to the following factors:

- Colonel Tortola's effective command of Cuban personnel on the island.
- The Cubans had warning of the likelihood of landings and had time to arm and disperse themselves for defensive action. They probably had a plan for deployment in case of attack and had the advantage of knowing the terrain.
- Heavy, accurate anti-aircraft fire from known Grenadian Army positions downed or disabled the majority of the Black Hawk transport helicopters early in the action, severely reducing the mobility of US forces in the St. Georges-Point Salines area.
- The only road leading from the airfield north toward St. Georges goes right past both the Cuban workers housing area and their military mission headquarters, where 300-400 armed Cubans were concentrated.

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[redacted] indicated the Army had brought other reinforcements to this general area by truck.

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-- The strongest units of the Grenadian Army -- at Fort Frederick and in the Frequente-Grand Anse area north of the airfield -- have probably been stiffened by Cuban advisors.

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We believe that the arrival last night of additional helicopters and troops of the 82nd Airborne at Point Salines, the reported Marine armored force landing north of St. Georges, and continued heavy suppression of anti-aircraft and artillery positions in the Fort Frederick area will lead to a collapse of organized resistance today.

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POSSIBLE CUBAN DIVERSIONS

As President Fidel Castro has publicly admitted, the Cubans are incapable of reinforcing their forces in Grenada. Nor are they likely to risk a direct attack on US Naval forces off Grenada. Cuba's two FOXTROT submarines were observed in port on Monday. Castro, however, may be angry enough to order sabotage against US forces, bases, or embassies elsewhere in the Caribbean Basin or in the continental United States, using surrogate forces or Cuban operatives employed in such a manner to provide plausible denial. While some isolated Cuban retaliatory acts may occur, we do not believe Havana can create any diversion sufficient to alter the outcome in Grenada.

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ANNEXPEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY ARMY (PRA)Commander: General Hudson Austin

<u>Size</u>	<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Comment</u>
1,000 - 1,200	AK-47s, RPGs, heavy machine guns, mortars, recoilless rifles, BTR-60 and BRDM armored personnel carriers, ZU-23, ZPU 4 AA batteries, and field artillery.	Headquarters at Ft. Rupert with camps near St. Georges and at Calivigny. Groups of junior officers NCOs trained in Cuba. Some Cuban advisors on island provide basic training. Officer Corps probably loyal to Austin.

People's Revolutionary Militia (PRM)Commander: Winston Bullen (deceased)

2,000-4,000	AK-47s, small arms, possible heavy machine guns and light artillery	Created by Bishop as his personal security force. Several hundred members reportedly trained in Cuba. The Militia reportedly was disarmed last week by PRA with Bullen subsequently executed. Loyalties unknown.
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Grenada Police Service (GPS)Commander: Major Ian St. Bernard

300-500	Small arms. Coast Guard has four small British patrol boats provided by Libya.	Consists of Prison Service, Immigration Service, and Coast Guard. Some police received training, including political indoctrination, in Cuba.
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**INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY STATEMENT
26 October 1983**

ATTACHMENT TO GRENADA: THE CUBAN FACTOR

At approximately 0130 hours on 26 October, Cuban President Castro made a public statement and answered questions from the press in Havana. When asked how many Cubans are in Grenada, Castro responded that there were more than 700, including some 550 construction workers. At 0945 on 26 October, we received a report

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stating that the Cuban Foreign Ministry was informing its Missions overseas that there are approximately 1,000 Cubans in Grenada. The

Previous reporting has indicated a basic complement of 350 to 400 construction workers, although approximately 200 additional workers were introduced late last year -- presumably to replace construction workers already there -- but we were never able to confirm their return to Cuba. If they did not return to Cuba, this would account for much of the discrepancy with our previous estimate of 350 construction workers. Vietnam Heroico could have brought in some 200 - 300 more personnel, accounting for the remainder of the discrepancy.

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In view of the conflicting reports and the lack of good independent information, we estimate that as many as 1,000 Cuban personnel could be in Grenada, although an estimate of 400 to 700 still appears to be a more credible range.

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