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[REDACTED]

Grenada: Edging Left [REDACTED]

Since the coup in Grenada last March, Prime Minister Maurice Bishop's foreign policy has moved closer to Cuba and the Soviet Union, and at home, his efforts to develop a one-party state have accelerated. Strong criticism from influential local groups and from neighboring islands, however, may slow Bishop's leftward turn.

Foreign Policy



Prime Minister
Maurice Bishop

Bishop admires Fidel Castro and apparently believes that the Cuban President should be the dominant political figure in the region. Bishop's speech last month at the nonaligned summit in Havana denounced the West and solidly backed Cuban and Soviet positions; the USSR later established diplomatic links and [REDACTED] offered to train six Grenadian military personnel. Bishop returned from Havana with 13 Cuban economic advisers, raising the number of Cubans in Grenada to between 50 and 60, most of whom are technical personnel. Havana, which now has about six military advisers on the island, has been Bishop's principal source of arms.

Bishop has been generally cool and occasionally hostile toward the United States, although he told Canadian Prime Minister Clark in Ottawa in October that he still wants friendly relations with Washington and would seek a rapprochement.

[REDACTED] Bishop stated that US-Caribbean policy is militaristic, is opposed to progressive governments in the region, and is still trying to isolate Cuba. Since the

2 November 1979

11

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coup, Bishop has openly accused the United States of trying to destabilize his government, has publicly distorted friendly communications from Washington, and has reportedly helped two alleged Grenadian gunrunners flee US justice. [REDACTED]

Domestic Policies

Bishop has generally been credited with responsible management of Grenada's economy. He has stopped the customary waste and corruption of the previous government and has begun to pay off Grenada's foreign debts. In addition, he has inaugurated sound, small-scale social programs, launched needed infrastructure projects, and reorganized government-owned estates to increase their efficiency. The island's crime rate has apparently dropped dramatically. [REDACTED]



*Opposition Leader
Winston Whyte*

In the past month, however, Bishop's stock has been reduced significantly. The private sector was alarmed by his takeover of a bottling company during a labor dispute. Moderate groups protested his shutdown of the independent press and his arrest of a prominent opposition leader, Winston Whyte--who has joined over 70 political prisoners jailed since the coup. Bishop also has openly admitted that, despite his earlier pledge, he has no firm plans to hold an election. [REDACTED]

As a result, influential Grenadians who had supported the government--including the Catholic bishop--have publicly denounced recent administration

* The above photo appeared in the 1974 Grenada Souvenir Book.

2 November 1979

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actions. Late last month, Bishop was confronted by high school students calling for freedom to dissent "within the revolution," the first successful demonstration against the government's policies. [REDACTED]

Prospects

Bishop apparently underestimated local reaction to his recent moves and may ease up to consolidate his gains. He was particularly unprepared for criticism from younger Grenadians, his principal base of support. We do not believe, however, that any adjustments to prevailing winds will alter his basic leftist course. [REDACTED]

That course, however, may be hindered by growing criticism from neighboring islands. Last month, government leaders from Barbados, Antigua, and Trinidad and Tobago broke a long silence to denounce the Prime Minister's latest actions. Antigua's leading pro-Cuban leftist, Tim Hector, also publicly criticized Bishop's crack-down. In addition, the Caribbean Council of Churches and regional human rights and press groups--strong early supporters of Bishop--have issued protests to Grenada. [REDACTED]

Although the Prime Minister has ignored past US efforts to temper his policies, he is sensitive to his neighbors. While Bishop will undoubtedly hold his ground, he likely will try to avoid further confrontation with influential governments in the region. [REDACTED]

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2 November 1979

13

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