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Prime Minister.

MR. COLES ✓

A-46. 27/6

GRENADA

A glance at the history of the last thirty years is necessary in order to keep the American invasion of Grenada in perspective. Successive American Administrations have consistently refused to tolerate the existence of Left Wing regimes in Central America and the Caribbean. They have not hesitated to use military force in pursuit of this policy.

In 1954, the Americans intervened militarily in Guatemala to throw out the elected Left Wing President, Arbenz. The legacy of this incident has been a succession of brutal and unstable military dictatorships in Guatemala. No Americans that I know are particularly proud of this episode.

Two years after Castro came to power in Cuba, the Kennedy Administration launched the Bay of Pigs invasion. It was a military failure and the Americans have wisely not tried again. The cost would be too high. The Bay of Pigs is of course still the rallying cry of the anti-interventionist lobby in the United States.

In 1965, the Americans invaded the Dominican Republic and threw out a Left Wing Government. This was a success. They were able to instal a respectable, democratic government and to withdraw their troops quickly. The Dominican Republic has remained, by Latin American standards, a peaceful democracy ever since.

The Americans are currently doing everything short of direct military intervention to topple the Sandinista regime in Nicaragua. They would not hesitate to go the whole hog if they thought that they could get away with it militarily, without unacceptable casualties, and internationally.

The only thing that is unique about Grenada is that it is the first time that the Americans have invaded a former British Colony, a member of the Commonwealth and a Monarchy.

I believe that this incident will have a decisive effect on attitudes in the Caribbean. Hitherto, my impression has been that the small islands of the Eastern Caribbean, plus of course Belize,

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have been disposed to look to us rather than the Americans to provide the minimal force which might be required to extricate them from local difficulties. Now, they will all realise that they have joined the Hispanic Central American states in the United States "sphere of influence".

In the short term, the next two or three weeks should demonstrate whether Grenada will be an American political success (the Dominican Republic) or a failure (Guatemala and the Bay of Pigs). In this country, indignation will continue to be expressed because of the Commonwealth and Crown connections and the rejection of our advice. This indignation is likely to spill over into the CHGM. With these considerations in mind, we should <sup>not</sup> feel obliged to show solidarity with the Americans in the Security Council, particularly if anything like the draft resolution at present circulating is brought to a vote: the Americans will of course vote against. I am not suggesting that we should make a parade of our differences, as the French would, by making anti-American statements and by voting in favour. But we should make quietly clear that there have been differences and we should, in principle, be prepared to vote one way from the Americans, ie to abstain.

When the dust has settled, we should think about the longer term implications of this incident for the high level dialogue with the Americans which we were planning to launch in the specific context of Belize. Grenada strengthens my view that we should get out of Belize at the earliest practicable opportunity before we find ourselves in another false position. While accepting American primacy throughout the area, we should do some plain speaking about the need for full consultation before the Americans decide to take military action against another Commonwealth country. It is becoming increasingly obvious that they had been planning the Grenada move for some time.



A.D. PARSONS  
26 October 1983

PS Schedule of American interventions in this century (taken from The Guardian) attached.



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is that, if a deal is ever struck, the "contras" will be dropped.

The same scholar also described the debate within the administration over a "small minority" bent on the military overthrow of the Sandinistas, and the rest, who want to use military pressure only to achieve a settlement. That debate may, in the end, prove more apparent than real, when it is considered that the United States is asking Nicaragua not only to end aid and training for El Salvador and other Central American insurgents, not only to send its Cuban and other communist advisers packing, not only to reduce its armed forces, but also to establish real "pluralism." Defined, that appears to mean at least general elections supervised by outsiders. Thus majority and minority may be arguing essentially the same policy.

Among those who make Central American policy for the Reagan government there is an "either-or" attitude likely to be reinforced by the Grenada intervention. There is no notion of a gradual pushing and nudging towards adequate relations between a great power and obstreperous small neighbours, or of the way in which Soviet purposes are entangled with, rather than the cause of, local ambitions. That strategic back door upon which the Russians are hammering must be slammed shut—and the louder the slam the better.

Martin Woollacott

FOR exactly half of this century so far, a total of 42 years, American troops have been occupying one or another of the countries and islands of central America and the Caribbean. The process began in 1898, when the war between America and Spain over the remnants of the Spanish Empire saw the beginning of America's expansion into the global role. At the time, the US occupation of the Philippines seemed the most important consequence, but as the years went on, America's hegemony over its central American back yard has been the more enduring.

The war ended with the island of Puerto Rico virtually annexed to the US, and Cuba and Panama as protectorates. The treaties of

1903 with those two countries not only established permanent US bases, but also legally guaranteed America's formal right to military intervention in circumstances where Washington saw fit. And in Panama, Washington saw fit in 1908, 1912 and 1918, largely because 1914 saw the opening of America's vital strategic interest in the area, the Panama Canal.

But the United Fruit Company, whose commercial operations in central America gave birth and point to the phrase "banana republic," was swiftly establishing the plantations and opening the ports and railroads that tied US commerce to official policy. In 1954, when the CIA ran its successful coup against the liberal reform government of Jacobo Arbenz, those ties were blatant. The Secretary of State John Foster Dulles had been United Fruit's lawyer, and had also worked for the company's bankers Schroders. His brother Allen, who had been a director of Schroders, was running the CIA, which duly organised the coup to make Guatemala safe for United Fruit.

The mixture of financial and strategic motives has shaped US policy in the area throughout the century, but there has been one major policy change. Until the Roosevelt government took office in 1933, US policy had been shaped by the Monroe Doctrine, which traditionally denied other foreign powers the right to intervene in the Western hemisphere—and the Doctrine was widely ignored while the US was too weak to enforce it. But in 1904, the Roosevelt corollary to the Doctrine was promulgated, which said that the US assumed a general right to intervene to protect its own interests. Under this rubric, the US embarked on its long occupation of Haiti, Dominican Republic and Nicaragua which provoked a major diplomatic row at the 1928 International Conference of American States.

At the next conference, in 1933, the FDR government effectively renounced in principle its "right" to unilateral military intervention. Thenceforth, it became a prime object of US diplomacy to secure enough Latin support to make those interventions "multilateral." This was the justification of the

1965 invasion of the Dominican Republic, and failure to achieve such multi-national backing meant that the strikes against Guatemala in 1954 and against Cuba in 1961 had to be clandestine.

Yesterday's strike on Grenada, with the backing of other Caribbean troops, seems to follow the pattern established in 1933. But it now raises the question of further US actions against the Sandinista government of Nicaragua, according to Gordon Connell Smith of Hull University, the historian of the Organisation of American States, whose research helped establish the following chronology:

The interventions:

Mexico: 1914, the US Navy bombards Veracruz and lands troops to overthrow President Huerta. 1915: US Army "hot pursuits" of Pancho Villa.

Panama: 1903. US Marines land to block Columbian troops from aborting Panama's declaration of independence. 1908, 1912, 1918. Marines land to "restore order."

Honduras: 1912, the Marines land to protect US banana estates.

Nicaragua: 1909, 1912, Marines land to protect US commercial interests. 1927-33, US military occupation. 1981 to present, US-backed war of destabilisation against Sandinista regime.

Cuba: 1899-1900, and 1906-09, US occupation. Permanent US naval base at Guantanamo since 1903. Intermittent US "shows of force" until 1933, when US pressure led to the pro-American dictatorship of Batista. 1961, Bay of Pigs assault on Castro's Cuba.

Guatemala: 1954, US-backed guerrilla invasion to overthrow Arbenz

Costa Rica: threat of US invasion used in 1919 to change government.

Haiti: 1905, US takes over Customs offices to guarantee debt payments. 1915-34, US military occupation, including forced labour of local population.

Dominican Republic. 1905, US takes over Customs. 1916-24, US military occupation, and setting up of local military constabulary which guarantees pro-US government is "strong man." 1965, US Marines invade to topple "progressive" government.

Martin Walker



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