

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

FM WASHINGTON 100045Z NOVEMBER 83

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELEGRAM NUMBER 3383 OF 9 NOV

INFO PRIORITY UKDEL NATO, PARIS, BONN, UKMIS NEW YORK, BRIDGETOWN
KINGSTON, GEORGETOWN, PORT OF SPAIN, BELMOPAN, OTTAWA

MY TELNO 3281 (NOT TO ALL): GRENADA: US OPINION

1. US OPINION HAS CONTINUED TO SOLIDIFY BEHIND THE PRESIDENT. THE DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP, WHICH WAS INITIALLY DISPOSED TO CRITICISE THE US INTERVENTION, HAS NOW SWUNG ROUND TO SUPPORT IT. IN PARTICULAR TIP O'NEILL HAS RECANTED AND IS NOW SAYING THAT THE INTERVENTION WAS JUSTIFIED. CONGRESSMAN BARNES, A LEADING DEMOCRATIC CRITIC OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S CENTRAL AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN POLICIES, PUBLISHED AN ARTICLE IN TODAY'S WASHINGTON POST SETTING OUT IN FULL HIS REASONS FOR REACHING THE SAME CONCLUSION. THIS APPEARS OPPOSITE A FIRST LEADER ON THE POST'S NORMALLY LIBERAL EDITORIAL PAGE HEADED QUOTE GRENADA: ALL THINGS CONSIDERED UNQUOTE WHICH CONCLUDES THAT THE PRESIDENT MADE THE RIGHT DECISION, REDEEMING A TRULY DISTURBING SITUATION WITH AN ECONOMICAL USE OF FORCE BUT WARNING HIM OFF ANY GENERALISATION OF THIS PRACTICE. THERE IS A MOOD OF NATIONAL SATISFACTION AND PRIDE IN THE U.S. MILITARY, WHO WERE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THE TASK WITH FEW CIVILIAN CASUALTIES.

2. THIS HAS THROWN INTO SHARPER RELIEF AN UNDERCURRENT OF CRITICISM, PARTICULARLY ON THE HILL AND IN PUBLIC SENTIMENT, ABOUT THE EUROPEAN AND PARTICULARLY THE BRITISH ATTITUDE. MANY AMERICANS HAVE FELT HURT AND ANGRY THAT AFTER THEIR SUPPORT FOR US OVER THE FALKLANDS, WE HAVE BEEN SO FORTHRIGHT IN EXPRESSING OUR DISAGREEMENT WITH THEM OVER GRENADA. THIS SENSE OF INJURY HAS STRENGTHENED AS EVIDENCE HAS BEEN PUBLISHED OF THE EXTENT OF CUBAN AND EAST EUROPEAN PENETRATION IN GRENADA. AMERICANS FEEL THAT THIS, TOGETHER WITH THE OVERWHELMING GRENADIAN WELCOME FOR THE MULTI-NATIONAL INTERVENTION AS A RESCUE OPERATION, MORE THAN JUSTIFIED THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION. THEY ARE PUZZLED THAT WE AND OTHER EUROPEANS ARE SLOW TO RECOGNISE THIS.

3. SENATOR JOHN TOWER, WHO VISITED GRENADA LAST WEEKEND, TOLD THE MINISTER TODAY THAT IN HIS VIEW THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ISSUES WERE NOT AS CLEAR-CUT AS WE SUGGESTED. IN THE GRENADAN CASE, IT WAS CLEAR THAT A MILITARY GROUP HAD ESTABLISHED ITSELF IN POWER WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE. HE THOUGHT THAT HISTORY WOULD JUDGE THAT THE US HAD BEEN RIGHT TO JOIN WITH THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES IN MEETING THE GRAVE THREAT THEY PERCEIVED TO THEIR OWN STABILITY. HE RECOGNISED THAT THIS PRINCIPLE COULD NOT BE APPLIED TO ALL SUCH SITUATIONS. THERE WAS NO QUESTION OF THE PRESIDENT GOING ON A CRUSADE TO OVERTURN MILITARY DICTATORSHIPS AROUND THE WORLD. SUCH AN IDEA WAS ABSURD. BUT HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THE AMERICAN ACTION IN GRENADA WOULD HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO STABILITY IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA AND WOULD HAVE GIVEN THE CUBANS AND THEIR ALLIES FURIOUSLY TO THINK.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

4. TOWER HIMSELF MUCH REGRETTED THE CONTRACTION OF BRITAIN'S INFLUENCE ROUND THE WORLD. HE RECOGNISED THE NEED FOR US TO MATCH OUR MILITARY EFFORT WITH OUR RESOURCES. BUT THE US DID NOT WANT TO BE QUOTE OUT THERE UNQUOTE ON THEIR OWN. THEY NEEDED THE BRITISH ALONGSIDE THEM. IN THE CARIBBEAN IT WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT THAT WE SHOULD MAINTAIN OUR GARRISON IN BELIZE. HE HAD SEEN FOR HIMSELF HOW MUCH DAMAGE OUR RESPONSE ON GRENADA HAD DONE TO CONFIDENCE IN BRITAIN AMONG THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES. HE HOPED WE WOULD MEND OUR FENCES WITH THEM.

5. TOWER AND OTHER WELL-DISPOSED SENATORS HAVE BEEN DISMAYED AT THE MOOD OF ANTI-AMERICANISM IN BRITAIN AND ELSEWHERE IN EUROPE WHICH HAS BEEN FED BY THIS EPISODE. LIKE SENIOR MEMBERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION, THEY REGRET THE PERFUNCTORY NATURE OF CONSULTATION OVER THE US ACTION IN GRENADA. BUT THEY ARGUE THAT IF ACTION WAS TO BE TAKEN, IT HAD TO BE SWIFT AND DETERMINED. GIVEN THE PRESSURES UNDER WHICH THE PRESIDENT AND HIS PRINCIPAL ADVISERS WERE WORKING, THEY TEND TO FEEL THAT FULLER CONSULTATION MAY NOT HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE. THEY RECOGNISE THAT THIS MAY HAVE RESULTED IN SOME EROSION OF CONFIDENCE. V

6. THERE IS A GENERAL DESIRE NOW TO PUT THE DIFFERENCE OVER GRENADA BEHIND US. IT IS NOT GENERALLY SEEN AS SIGNIFICANT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP. THERE IS ADMIRATION FOR THE FIRM LINE THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN TAKING ON INF DEPLOYMENT. BUT THERE IS SOME CONCERN THAT MUTUAL IRRITATION OVER GRENADA MIGHT SPILL OVER INTO OTHER PROBLEMS, IN PARTICULAR ARGENTINA AND EVENTUAL ARMS SUPPLIES. ON THIS THE AMERICANS FACE A DIFFICULT DILEMMA. THEY HAVE A CLEAR VIEW OF THEIR OWN INTEREST IN NURTURING A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP WITH THE NEW DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT IN BUENOS AIRES. BUT AT THE SAME TIME THEY ARE FULLY ALIVE TO OUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE SUPPLY OF SENSITIVE ITEMS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ARGENTINA. CERTIFICATION, HOWEVER, IS LINKED EXPLICITLY IN U.S. LEGISLATION TO THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS: AND IT IS REGARDED HERE AS INEVITABLE THAT CERTIFICATION WILL BE GRANTED ONCE ARGENTINA RETURNS TO CIVILIAN RULE.

WRIGHT

[COPIES SENT TO NO 10 DOWNING ST]

GRENADA LIMITED

WIAD
NAD
S AM D
MCAD
UND
PUSD
DEFENCE D
NEWS D
INFO D
PROTOCOL D
ECD'S
PARLIAMENTARY UNIT

CCD
CONS D
SOV D
EED
MAED
WED
RES D
LEGAL ADVS
PLANNING STAFF
PS

PS/LADY YOUNG
PS/MR WHITNEY
PS/PUS
SIR J BULLARD
MR GIFFARD
MR WRIGHT
MR URE
MR CARTLEDGE
MR HANNAY
MR ADAMS
CABINET OFFICE

COPIES TO:
MR ANNING LACPD/ODA
MOD (DI 4)

-2-

CONFIDENTIAL