

to those responsible for shooting down the Prime Minister and four of his Cabinet along with dozens of innocent people. In my judgment, that is not the view that will be taken by most Canadians. This view of the NDP and the Liberals totally discounts the right of the people of Grenada to freedom of choice.

Of concern to Canadians is whether a Caribbean country, member of the Commonwealth, should be turned over to the Cubans and Soviets against the wishes of its people. Premier Castro has admitted to the presence of 600 or 700 armed Cubans in Grenada. They virtually controlled the country. By no stretch of the imagination can this be made to appear as any shining example of democracy.

The Prime Minister's (Mr. Trudeau) position would have resulted in this state of affairs continuing. It would have allowed the Soviets and Cubans to strengthen their grip on the Island. It would have perpetuated a situation where Grenadians had no rights in their own country. It would have sanctioned and approved instability and fear in the region. It appears that the Canadian Government was so anxious to maintain a hands-off attitude that no attention was paid.

We believe the Grenadians, with their tradition of Commonwealth membership, have the same right to free elections as any other country in the Commonwealth. The Government turned its back on the Caribbean situation and it was perfectly obvious that this was its attitude. This is one reason why it was neither advised nor consulted about the multinational force until the very last minute. We are now informed reluctantly by the Prime Minister that Canadian officials did in fact meet with the Caribbean leaders, including Premier Adams of Barbados, as early as last Friday at which time the possibility of intervention was mentioned.

The Government has made much of the fact that Britain has taken the same position as Canada. Even if this were so—and there are essential differences—it must be noted that Britain's situation is not in any way similar to Canada's. The Caribbean Commonwealth countries are former British colonies. Britain does not relish the liberation of a former colony by the United States.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Nielsen: That was made clear. We do not consider this to be a laughing matter, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Waddell: You are making it such. You are absurd.

Mr. Nielsen: If they had read the debates in the British House of Commons, that was made clear. Britain did not have troops available in the immediate area.

The Prime Minister and the Government have rejected the intervention to restore calm and public order in Grenada.

President Reagan and Secretary Shultz have promised the removal of American marines and the holding of elections within a reasonable period after order has been restored. The Governor General of Grenada will be asked to form a provisional government to act in the interim.

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The United States moved in only after a request was received from the chairperson of the Organization of States in the Eastern Caribbean. These States are bound by mutual defence agreements. It should also be noted that the Eastern Caribbean States were asked for help by the Governor General of Grenada, Paul Scoon.

Tom Adams, the Prime Minister of Barbados; Edward Seaga, Prime Minister of Jamaica; Eugenia Charles, Prime Minister of Dominica, who is also chairman of the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States, were among those who requested intervention.

Great Britain was approached and expressed doubts about armed intervention. Canada was not formally approached or consulted until a few hours before the intervention took place.

Canada has strong interests in the Caribbean. Only last February in St. Lucia, the Prime Minister committed this country to investing some \$350 million in Caribbean aid. Private Canadian investment runs into hundreds of millions of dollars and of course, thousands of Canadians use the Caribbean for recreational purposes. There are many thousands of Canadians of Caribbean origin who are now making a substantial contribution in this country.

In a situation of murder and wholesale killing, the Prime Minister and three on his Cabinet shot down in Grenada, a strong Cuban military presence involving a threat to stability of the Caribbean community, the Canadian Government appeared totally unconcerned. It was caught flatfooted by events and now it is saying that it is all President Reagan's fault. Day after day, we asked questions about the Government's intentions and got no answers. Because the present Government does not have the confidence of its allies and partners, Canada was not consulted and advised about what was going to be taking place. The Government adopted its usual non-aligned posture, even to the point of not inviting consultation. Under the existing circumstances, this amounted to giving a green light to those who murdered the chief officers of the government as well as many others.

A Canadian Government with a realistic concern for Canadian interests would have taken steps to inform itself about what was going on. It would have consulted our allies and would have been in a position to offer advice and assistance. The simple fact is that we failed to live up to our responsibilities in that area. We emerged as an untrustworthy partner, one that could not be trusted to keep a secret. The Government was not informed. It was not even interested.

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Canadians, Sir, were placed in jeopardy by the Government's lethargy and by the Government's failure to act. As a result Canada's standing in the Caribbean has diminished considerably. All of the wriggling and squirming that has been going on by the Prime Minister and his singularly ill-informed "minister of fate" cannot change those facts. Once again, this Government has let down Canada most deplorably.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!