

In this instance too, it is clear, therefore, that increasing American pressure on a radical regime in the region was accompanied by a deepening relationship between the regional actor and the Soviet Union. The picture is again one of radical responses to local problems combining with American policy to create opportunities for Soviet penetration.

The latter in turn was the cause of a dramatic heightening of American hostility towards Grenada. In February and March of 1983, the Reagan Administration claimed that Grenada was being turned into a Soviet base, that the Point Salines airport was intended for use by Soviet aircraft, and that Grenada was being transformed by massive arms transfers into a catalyst for instability and revolution throughout the region.

It was in the context of this escalating rhetoric and in a climate of growing challenge to his leadership by hardliners such as Bernard Coard that Bishop made his final overture to the United States. In June 1983, he visited Washington and offered to resolve differences between the two countries through diplomatic channels. The Reagan Administration rebuffed his initiative. Indeed, no official higher than Judge Clark, then National Security Advisor, would agree to meet with him. It is reasonable to suppose that this refusal of the United States to deal with Bishop weakened the moderate faction within the Grenadian leadership, thereby contributing to the radicalization of the regime. This process culminated in the October coup d'état which removed Bishop from power, and ultimately in the civil disturbances which provided the justification for United States intervention.

In assessing the threat to United States security posed by the Soviet-Grenadian relationship, it is useful to examine three issues: the quantity of Soviet military assistance to Grenada; the nature of the Soviet-Grenadian military relationship; and the degree of Soviet commitment to Grenada. With regard to the first, it has been argued that the quantity of Soviet assistance to Grenada was well beyond that necessary for Grenadian security and thus suggested Soviet support for Grenadian "export of revolution" to other states in the Eastern Caribbean. Total Soviet military assistance to Grenada amounted to some twenty million roubles worth of equipment. An examination of the various arms transfer agreements indicates that Soviet assistance was made up in the main of small arms (7.62 mm rifles and ammunition, 76 mm guns, 57 mm anti-