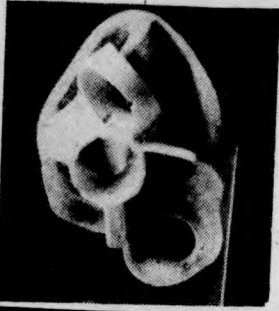


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Torture and beatings in U.S. Grenada

By John Harras

"That the United States invasion (of Grenada) violated all international law is uncontested among rational people," former US Attorney General Ramsey Clarke said during his speech last Friday at Osgoode Hall's Moot Court.

"If there is one thought I would like you to carry away from here," Clarke said, "it is that the knowledge of this history will be awfully important. All of us need to know and understand what happened in Grenada, what its implications are."

Clarke has become a constant observer of events in Grenada since the invasion. He is currently on a

Ronald Reagan wants to teach the American people during his administration."

Clarke sees the events in Grenada as Reagan's attempt to illustrate that "lesson." "People of the United States basically believed it was a glorious military victory," he said. "Uncle showing his muscle again. He can do it."

"That is a dangerous mentality. It's a foolish lesson."

Following the invasion hundreds of people—suspected participants of the alleged plot to kill Bishop—were held in what Clarke describes as "impossible human conditions." And now, says Clarke, a final 19

right to choice of council and the possibility of finding effective council is extremely limited."

Clarke points to the strong political affiliations of Caribbean lawyers, a persistent obstacle to finding council who will defend the accused in Grenada. "If you come from Tom Adams' Barbados and you're a lawyer, you're not too likely to readily defend some of these people causing trouble in Grenada." Nor, as Clarke suggested, would any of the lawyers in Grenada (the few they have) choose to represent these prisoners, since it would be extremely difficult to live on the island afterwards.

The evidence against the final 19 prisoners is, at best, weak, Clarke says. At a preliminary inquiry, 27 witnesses could not provide any information which suggested orders were issued by the Central Committee of the New Jewel Movement (the precursor to Maurice Bishop's People's Revolutionary Government) to assassinate Bishop and his supporters "If the law were to be followed," says Clarke, "no other evidence would be permitted. Why are they holding these people? Why do we silently permit the daily violation of their human rights?"

Clarke would like to see the establishment of an International Court of Criminal Justice, a project which

"People of the U.S. believed it was a glorious victory. Uncle showing his muscle again."

speaking tour of Canada and the United States, bringing to light some of the realities of the present political situation in Grenada.

Clarke claims that "truth had no place" following the October 1983 assassination of Grenadian Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, and the subsequent invasion of Grenada by US military forces.

"The most important thing to observe about the invasion and use of force is the absolute control of information, from the beginning and until this moment," said Clarke. He suggests that the American government learned a valuable lesson from the Vietnam war. The combination of "weakness, peace demonstrations, and finally a meddling media," prevented a victory in Vietnam.

"Had we controlled the facts," Clarke says, "we could have won. That's what the Westmoreland trial is about. It's the major lesson

people have been singled out by the United States government as being responsible for the assassination.

"You have had, since late-October, 1983, people held in violation of fundamental human rights recognized by virtually all countries on earth," Clarke said. Those violations, he said, include physical torture and beatings, forced confession, and the absolute denial of any access to the press.

"There has been no right to coun-

"If you come from Tom Adam's Barbados and you're a lawyer, you're not too likely to readily defend some of these people causing problems."

cil that has had any meaning," Clarke said. "There has been no capacity to investigate the facts, to pry out the truth. No right to council together, to confer to see what everyone knows. There has been no

Canadian lawyers should actively pursue. "If there were any basis for charges here at least they could be heard through the legal process," says Clarke. "There is no hope at this time for a fair trial in Grenada."

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