

industry, by the inadequacy of the Pearls' Airport, which could not handle larger jet aircraft. The Point Salines project was designed to rectify this situation, but carried a substantial price tag (the initial estimate being around \$70 million). The Grenadians approached a wide array of states and multilateral institutions for assistance in financing the project.

The United States, however, fearful that the airport would be used as a base or landing facility for Soviet military aircraft, opposed the project, and was successful in seriously limiting Western participation in its finance. By contrast, Cuba in particular was willing to assist to whatever extent possible and necessary. Given Grenadian resolve to proceed, Western reluctance to provide assistance and Cuban willingness to participate, it was not surprising that the project increasingly took on the character of a Cuban affair.⁸⁵ This in turn strengthened American concern further.

Economic pressure was accompanied by limited use of military instruments. In August 1981, for example, the United States held substantial manoeuvres in the eastern Caribbean, involving air, naval and amphibious units. It is thus not only in terms of ideological affinity, but also in the context of considerable American hostility and mounting political, economic and military pressure that the evolving Soviet relationship with Grenada should be examined.

The Soviet response to the Grenadian Revolution was initially cautious and circumspect, for a number of reasons: unfamiliarity with the NJM coupled with a history of having "been burnt quite often . . . by giving support to governments which have either squandered that support, or turned around and become agents of imperialism, or lost power"⁸⁶, and perhaps a fear of provoking a hostile US response to the NJM regime in conditions where the fulfilment of security commitments would be difficult. Moreover, as Jacobs noted in his assessment of Soviet-Grenadian relations, "the core of the matter is that they regard Grenada as a small distant country".⁸⁷

⁸⁵ This is not to say that there was no significant Western participation. The British electronics firm Plessey, for example, contracted to provide the airport's radar and navigational aids systems, while much of the airport equipment was purchased from Japanese firms.

⁸⁶ R. Jacobs, "Letter of the Grenadian Ambassador" (11 July, 1983), in Seabury and McDougall, *op. cit.* (note 76), pp. 200-1.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 200.