

OPERATION URGENT FURY

Grenada

Ronald H. Cole



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The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Grenada

12 October - 2 November 1983

Ronald H. Cole

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FOREWORD

Written several years after the end of Operation URGENT FURY, this study focuses specifically on the involvement of the Chairman, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Joint Staff in planning and directing operations in Grenada in 1983. The monograph begins with a discussion of contingency planning for noncombatant evacuation which started after the 12 October 1983 coup that removed Grenada's Marxist leader, Maurice Bishop, and ends with the conclusion of the combat phase of URGENT FURY on 2 November 1983. The author, Dr. Ronald H. Cole, relied primarily on Joint Staff files and interviews as sources of information.

In writing this account, Dr. Cole was given valuable help by a number of the key participants and members of the Joint Staff; their contributions are cited in the endnotes. The final manuscript was reviewed by Mr. Willard J. Webb and Dr. Walter S. Poole, edited by Ms. Penny Norman and typed by Ms. Helga Echols. The end maps are taken from *US Marines in Grenada* by LtCol Ronald H. Spector, USMCR, and are used with the permission of the History and Museums Division, Headquarters, US Marine Corps.

This study was reviewed for declassification by the appropriate US Government agencies and cleared for release. While the text has been declassified, some of the sources remain classified. The volume is an official publication of the Office of the Chairman of

the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but the views expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Chairman or the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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Director for Joint History

Washington, DC
July 1997

CONTENTS

FOREWORD	iii
OVERVIEW	1
 Chapters	
1. The Crisis	9
Background 1979-1983.....	9
The Crisis Begins, 12 October 1983.....	10
The JCS Warning Order, 19 October 1983.....	13
USCINCLANT's Contingency Plan.....	14
Meeting of the Special Situation Group, 20 October 1983.....	16
 2. Planning and Preparation, 21-24 October 1983	19
Planning for a Military Operation, 21 October 1983...	19
Appeals from the OECS and the Governor-General, 21-22 October 1983.....	22
The Execute Order, 22 October 1983.....	26
Final Preparation, Washington and Norfolk, 23 October 1983.....	27
Final Political-Military Coordination, 23 October 1983.....	32
Final Preparation, CJTF 120, 24 October 1983.....	34

3. Combat Operations, 25 October - 2 November 1983.....	41
D-day URGENT FURY, 25 October 1983.....	41
Rescue of the Governor-General, the Drive to Grand Anse, and the Push for PSYOPS, 26 October 1983.....	47
Final Combat, Evacuation, and Public Affairs, 27 October 1983.....	51
Preparations to Neutralize the Threat of a Cuban-Led Insurgency, 28 October 1983.....	56
The End of Combat Operations, 29 October - 2 November 1983.....	58
 4. Assessment of URGENT FURY.....	 63
 NOTES.....	 69
 INDEX.....	 79
 MAPS	
Grenada.....	viii
Grenada Showing Tactical Phase Lines.....	85
St. George's City.....	85



OVERVIEW

Early in the morning of 25 October 1983, Operation URGENT FURY began with assaults on airstrips at Point Salines and Pearls on the tiny island nation of Grenada. Over the next nine days US troops would rescue American citizens, restore a popular native government, and eliminate a perceived threat to the stability of the Caribbean and American strategic interests there.

Memories of the Iranian hostage crisis and the aborted rescue attempt at Desert One were fresh. Anxious to avoid a similar experience, policymakers mounted URGENT FURY in haste in response to a threat to American medical students on Grenada. The operation succeeded, but flaws in its execution revealed weaknesses in joint operations. Together with the bombing of the Marine Corps barracks in Beirut that same month, the experience of Operation URGENT FURY added impetus to efforts to reform the joint system which were already under way.

Since 1979, when Maurice Bishop took power in Grenada, concern in the US State Department had grown as the country moved closer to Cuba and the Soviet Union. In late 1983 events in Grenada led to President Reagan's decision to conduct a military operation there. Cuba had built a runway on Grenada suitable for aircraft capable of interdicting US air and sea routes to Europe and the Middle East. Bishop's overthrow in October by militantly anti-US Marxists appeared to pose an immediate threat to the nearly six hundred American students and four hundred other foreigners living in Grenada.¹

State Department evacuation planning rapidly shifted to Department of Defense (DOD) planning for a much larger military operation.² Uncertain of the strength of the Grenadian troops and armed Cuban workers, US Atlantic Command (USLANTCOM) planners

developed a wide range of courses of action and recommended a large joint task force (JTF) to overwhelm the opposition.³

In a 20 October meeting, Secretary of State George P. Shultz and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John W. Vessey, Jr., USA, warned the Special Situation Group (SSG) comprised of Vice President George Bush and other top national security advisors that the Grenadian junta might resist an evacuation and that armed Cuban construction workers might intervene. The SSG approved a recommendation by the Chairman that the mission be expanded to include neutralization of Grenadian forces and the armed Cuban workers and reconstruction of the Grenadian government.⁴

Following presidential approval of an expanded mission, GEN Vessey made two far-reaching decisions. To ensure maximum operational security, he imposed special category (SPECAT) restrictions on all planning message traffic; this limited planning information to selected members of the Intelligence (J2) and Operations (J3) Directorates. Vessey then approved the course of action which specified a coup de main in which Rangers or Marines and airborne troops would conduct multiple simultaneous rescue and combat operations.⁵ After the diversion of US warships to Grenada became news on 21 October, US intelligence agencies reported that the Grenadians and Cubans were organizing to resist. The President then approved the Chairman's recommendation that the US ground forces include both Rangers and Marines.⁶

Three days before D-Day, the Secretary of Defense inserted the Chairman directly into the operational chain of command. He gave GEN Vessey authority to summon backup forces and to give

strategic direction to US Commander in Chief, Atlantic (USCINCLANT) and the supporting unified commands. The multiple missions of URGENT FURY--along with the rugged terrain of Grenada and reports of Grenadian plans to resist--caused Vessey to employ additional forces. Vessey responded positively to a request from Admiral Wesley L. McDonald, USN, USCINCLANT, for aerial surveillance operations between Cuba and Grenada to deter Cuban interference.⁷ To avoid civilian casualties and property damage, GEN Vessey also directed ADM McDonald to restrict use of tactical aircraft, naval gunfire, and helicopter gunships.

Support for URGENT FURY would be strengthened by international participation in the task force. When the governments of Jamaica, Barbados, and the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) offered modest forces, GEN Vessey directed Major General George B. Crist, USMC, to assist in setting up the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force (CPF). Vessey insisted that the CPF be given a visible but comparatively safe role. Crist arranged for the CPF to take custody of key Grenadian facilities after their capture by US forces.⁸ At the urging of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), ADM McDonald rearranged the joint task force, placing the Rangers and the 82d Airborne Division directly under Vice Admiral Joseph Metcalf, III, USN, Commander, Second Fleet.⁹ With guidance from Vessey and the other Chiefs, ADM McDonald designated a tactical boundary to separate Army and Marine areas of operation on the island. To help coordinate the ground forces, Vessey sent an experienced ground operations officer, Major General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, USA, to serve as advisor to Metcalf.¹⁰

Problems beset the operation from the start. The loss of the inertial navigation system in the lead C-130 aircraft meant that the flow of C-130s, had to be adjusted in the air and

delayed the parachute assault by the Rangers at Point Salines. Delay of the airdrop until daylight put it thirty-six minutes behind the Marine assault at Pearls and cost the Rangers and other Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) forces tactical surprise. Adjusting the airflow changed the order of the C-130 airdrop which mixed the Ranger units on the landing zone. The delay of the airdrop and confusion resulting from the unplanned sequence of the airdrop was a major operational slip-up. After overcoming stiff Cuban resistance at the airport and rescuing students at the True Blue campus, the Rangers learned of other American students at the Grand Anse campus south of St. George's and radioed for reinforcements. Meanwhile, having lost the cover of darkness as they entered St. George's, Navy SEALs found themselves trapped and outgunned as they tried to rescue the Governor-General.

At ADM McDonald's request, GEN Vessey sent two battalions from the 82d Airborne Division to reinforce the Rangers. At the same time, MG Schwarzkopf advised VADM Metcalf to redraw the tactical boundary between the Army and the Marines and move the Marines to rescue the SEALs. On 26 October, Schwarzkopf commandeered Marine helicopters on board the USS *Guam* to fly Rangers from Point Salines to rescue nearly two hundred American students at Grand Anse.¹¹

On 25 October, Navy A-7 Corsairs mistakenly bombed a mental hospital near the Grenadian command post at Fort Frederick. Two days later, an Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) lacking Army communications-electronics operating instructions (CEOI) failed to coordinate an attack on a sniper target near Frequente with the fire support element of the 82d Airborne Division. This time, the Corsairs attacked a brigade

headquarters of the 82d Airborne Division, wounding seventeen soldiers, three seriously.¹²

Major General Edward Trobaugh, USA, advanced his airborne troops northward slowly because he anticipated resistance and lacked fire support. Trobaugh's troops also had to guard and care for Cuban prisoners and Soviet refugees. The free movement of Marine units in the north contrasted starkly with Army movement in the south; Trobaugh's deliberate pace increasingly frustrated the desire of the JCS to complete the operation quickly.¹³

On 26 October, after the Marines had rescued the Governor-General and the SEALs, MajGen Crist escorted the Governor-General back to St. George's. While maintaining contact with GEN Vessey, he coordinated the evacuation of third country nationals, including Cuban and Soviet citizens, and continued his efforts to involve the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force in Operation URGENT FURY.¹⁴

During the first three days of Operation URGENT FURY, USCINCLANT banned reporters from Grenada for operational reasons. Faced with cries of censorship from the media and some members of Congress, GEN Vessey directed USCINCLANT to land reporters in Grenada starting on 28 October. Vessey would later comment that: "The huge mistake at the National level was failing to find a way to take some press along."¹⁵

The success of Operation URGENT FURY was marred by the consequences of inadequate time for planning, lack of tactical intelligence, and problems with joint command and control. The 21 October news report that US warships had been diverted to Grenada robbed the operation of strategic surprise. The Chairman and ADM McDonald compensated by striking with overwhelming force before the Grenadians or Cubans could react effectively. To

protect the force, GEN Vessey compartmentalized planning; however, the restriction excluded experts in logistics, civil affairs, and public affairs. Their absence was felt during the first days of the operation.¹⁶

An adequate JTF organization did not exist in the Caribbean so USCINCLANT chose Second Fleet to serve as the JTF headquarters. Second Fleet headquarters was a naval staff with little or no experience in planning and commanding large ground operations. Vessey sent Major General Schwarzkopf to advise the fleet commander and to insure coordination of ground operations. Because of incompatible radios, Navy ships within sight of Rangers and airborne troops could not initially receive or respond to their requests for fire support. On two occasions, when Navy jets did respond, they attacked the wrong targets.

Despite faults in execution, Operation URGENT FURY accomplished all of its objectives. The eight thousand soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines rescued nearly 600 Americans and 120 foreigners, restored popular government to Grenada, and eliminated the potential strategic threat to US lines of communication in the area. URGENT FURY cost US forces 19 killed and 116 wounded; Cuban forces lost 25 killed, 59 wounded and 638 captured. Grenadian forces suffered 45 killed and 358 wounded; at least 24 Grenadian civilians were killed. URGENT FURY reinforced awareness of weaknesses in the joint system and helped prod Congress to undertake the fundamental reforms embodied in the Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization Act of 1986.¹⁷

Commenting on the JCS role in URGENT FURY, GEN Vessey would later state that:

We, the JCS, followed our interpretation of the lessons of Desert One and of the broader allegations of weaknesses in the system during the Grenada operation. (1) We gave the task to the commander

responsible for the territory. (2) The JCS, personally reviewed the CINCLANT plan, agreed on its weaknesses and directed the commander to come up with a new plan. . . . (3) The SecDef personally reviewed the plan and approved it; he also had all of the JCS go with him and the Chairman to brief the President on the plan. The President personally queried each of the JCS about their support for the plan before approving it, himself. (4) The President and the SecDef personally reviewed the plan a second time before ordering its execution. The execution of the plan was then in the hands of the Unified Commander. The SecDef and the President did not interfere, but the SecDef was repeatedly briefed on progress. I had SecDef's authority to supervise execution of the plan, but only within the context of the plan he had approved.¹⁸

Chapter 1

The Crisis

Background 1979-1983

About 133 square miles in size, twice the size of Washington, DC, with a current population of about one hundred thousand, primarily English-speaking, descendants of African slaves, Grenada belonged to France for more than a century before it was ceded to Great Britain in 1763 by the Treaty of Paris. A British dependency, Grenada was under colonial administration after 1833 before attaining home rule in 1967 and full independence in 1974.

In March 1979, widespread dissatisfaction with economic conditions and the government of Prime Minister Sir Eric Gairy resulted in a bloodless coup in which the charismatic and Marxist Maurice Bishop, leader of the New Joint Endeavor for Welfare, Education, and Liberation (JEWEL), took complete power. During the next few years, Bishop's regime replaced democratic institutions with Marxist ones and deprived Her Majesty's Governor-General, Sir Paul Scoon, of any influence. Under Bishop, Grenada moved into the orbit of Cuba and the Soviet Union.

With Fidel Castro in Cuba and Bishop in Grenada, Soviet influence was established in the northernmost and southernmost of the Antilles, the chain of islands that bounds the Caribbean from the Florida Keys to the coast of Venezuela. Hostile control of a portion of the Antilles by Soviet Union proxies threatened US strategic interests, particularly vital air and shipping lanes through the Caribbean.¹⁹

Construction of a nine thousand-foot runway at Point Salines by a Cuban work force of about six hundred armed men worried US analysts. The Bishop regime claimed that the runway was essential to Grenada's tourism and economic development. Military experts observed that it would enable MiG 23s to operate from Grenada and extend the operating range of these Cuban fighter-bombers across the Caribbean. Nearly sixteen hundred miles closer than Havana to Angola, the runway at Point Salines could facilitate both eastbound flights supporting the nearly fifty thousand Cubans in Africa and flights from Libya and the Soviet bloc to Central America.²⁰

The prospect of Libyan and Soviet bloc citizens planting seeds of revolutionary warfare in Central America concerned President Reagan and the leaders of the island nations of the Antilles. In 1981, to counter Marxist subversion, Dominica, St. Lucia, Montserrat, St. Christopher-Nevis, Antigua, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Grenada had banded together as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States. Recognizing the limited capabilities of the OECS, President Reagan determined in early October 1983 to assist in defending their soil or in responding to emergencies on neighboring islands. He directed the Department of Defense to maintain military forces in the eastern Caribbean to deter aggression and to provide emergency air or sealoift of refugees or other groups. The President also directed frequent exercises in the Caribbean and periodic updating of contingency plans for the region.²¹

The Crisis Begins, 12 October 1983

A major emergency began in Grenada on 12 October. Disillusioned with Bishop's leadership, particularly after he

conferred with US officials in Washington in June 1983, a left wing faction of the government's Central Committee decided to remove Bishop. At midnight, with the assistance of General Hudson Austin, Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces, Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard placed Bishop under house arrest. One week later, followers of the popular Prime Minister freed him and accompanied him to army headquarters at Fort Rupert. After armored vehicles fired into the crowd, Hudson Austin's troops recaptured Bishop and executed him and several cabinet members and union leaders. Intelligence confirmed at least eighteen deaths, including Jacqueline Creft, the Minister of Education, who was viciously beaten.²²

In the wake of the murders and the resulting public furor, General Austin dissolved the civilian government and established a Revolutionary Military Council with himself as spokesman. Austin closed the airport, imposed a four-day, 24-hour curfew, and warned that violators would be shot on sight. These restrictions prevented the thousand or more US citizens on the island from leaving, and caused special hardship to the six hundred American students in the St. George's School of Medicine. The students had to violate the curfew to obtain adequate supplies of food and water.²³

In Washington, State Department and JCS officials feared that the new regime threatened the lives of the US medical students and other Americans and would provide the Cubans a base from which to operate against the Central American mainland. At a meeting of the Regional Interagency Group (RIG) of the National Security Council (NSC), on 12 October, Langhorne A. Motley, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, conferred with JCS representative Colonel James W. Connally, USAF, Chief of the Western Hemisphere Division, Plans and Policy

Directorate. Motley advised Connally that it might become necessary to plan on short notice a military operation in support of the evacuation of US citizens from Grenada. Noting that it would take several days to plan and execute such an operation, Connally promised to alert his superiors at the Pentagon.²⁴

On 14 October, Alphonso Sapia-Bosch, the Latin American desk officer on the National Security Council, contacted Commander Michael K. McQuiston, USN, in the Joint Operations Division, Operations Directorate (J-3/JOD). Sapia-Bosch wanted to know what military resources could be mustered on short notice to safeguard evacuation from Grenada. Told of this request, Lieutenant General Richard L. Prillaman, USA, the Director of Operations (J-3), activated a response cell in the National Military Command Center (NMCC) to assess the crisis and formulate possible courses of action. Organized under the Crisis Action System, the cell included action officers from the Western Hemisphere (WHEM) Branch of J-3/Joint Operations Division (JOD), an officer from the J-5/WHEM, and an officer from the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA).²⁵

The Unified Command Plan assigned primary responsibility for forces and "normal operations" in the Caribbean to the USLANTCOM.²⁶ The response cell contacted USCINCLANT's J-3 on 14 October and requested a list of options for both "show of force/presence" and noncombatant evacuation operations (NEOs). In the meantime, the intelligence community assessed the likely response of Grenadians to such US military operations.²⁷

From 14 to 17 October, Milan Bish, the US Ambassador to Barbados, who also had responsibility for Grenada, learned from informants in Grenada of growing danger to the US medical students. Ambassador Bish's reports prompted a meeting of the RIG on 17 October. During the meeting, Assistant Secretary

Motley asked Lieutenant General Jack N. Merritt, USA, Director of the Joint Staff, to begin contingency planning for military operations to rescue the students. The next day, LTG Merritt asked LTG Prillaman to consult with ADM McDonald at USLANTCOM on options for evacuating the medical students in various circumstances ranging from permissive or peaceful to armed resistance by Grenadians and Cubans.²⁸

The JCS Warning Order, 19 October 1983

The RIG met again on 19 October with Vice Admiral Arthur S. Moreau, Jr., Assistant to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, attending the meeting. Richard Brown, Deputy Director of State's Office of Caribbean Affairs, briefed the RIG on the current situation. Noting the presence in Grenada of nearly six hundred Cubans and two Cuban vessels moored in St. George's Harbor, Mr. Brown advised VADM Moreau that the JCS should plan for the worst scenario, one in which US military forces would have to evacuate civilians in the face of armed opposition from Grenadian and Cuban forces. Such an evacuation could begin, Brown warned, as early as the next day.²⁹

Admiral Moreau noted that a JCS response cell was monitoring the situation and that LTG Prillaman would alert USCINCLANT on the need to plan a noncombatant evacuation operation. Moreau pointed out, however, that the decision to plan combat operations would have to be made either by the Vice President in the Special Situation Group, or in the National Security Planning Group, by the President.³⁰

Late in the evening of 19 October, LTG Prillaman sent ADM McDonald a JCS warning order, signed by General Vessey. By dawn, McDonald was to submit alternative courses of action for a three-to five-day noncombatant evacuation operation to include one or more of the following options: seizure of evacuation points, show of force, combat operations to defend the evacuation, and post-evacuation peacekeeping. The warning order designated the Commanders of the Readiness Command (USCINCREC) and the Military Airlift Command (USCINCMAC) as supporting commanders and directed that all press queries about the operation be referred to the Public Affairs Office, Office of the Secretary of Defense.³¹ USCINCLANT, USCINCREC, and USCINCMAC immediately requested DIA imagery coverage and daily intelligence summaries on Grenada.³²

USCINCLANT's Contingency Plan

Upon receipt of the JCS warning order, ADM McDonald's staff reviewed contingency plans for noncombatant evacuations and show of force operations.³³ Major operations in either category required forces from the XVIII Airborne Corps and the Tactical Air Command. While deploying, Army and Air Force units would be under the command of a USLANTCOM component commander, but once ashore, they would be under the tactical control of the senior ground commander. Planning for such operations emphasized maximum restraint in the use of heavy firepower, particularly weapons such as aircraft, naval gunfire, and artillery.³⁴

In August 1981, USLANTCOM had conducted a large joint exercise in which Rangers and Marines landed on a small Caribbean island to practice a rescue of a group of US citizens.

Influenced by that experience and revisions in contingency planning, ADM McDonald replied to the warning order very early on the morning of 20 October with his commander's estimate. Later that day, he briefed GEN Vessey on the estimate. McDonald outlined an operation in which forces would be assigned "to protect and evacuate US citizens and designated foreign nationals."³⁵

After Grenada moved into the orbit of the Soviet Union and Cuba in 1979, US agencies had few opportunities to collect intelligence. Admiral McDonald's staff had inadequate tactical intelligence concerning Grenada. Aerial photography indicated numerous sites for landing zones and parachute drops. An old intelligence estimate calculated Grenadian forces at about twelve hundred regulars with more than twice that number of militia and four torpedo boats. Since the precise deployment of Grenadian forces was unknown, picking the sites to land troops would be a risky business.³⁶

From 20 to 25 October, planners in the JCS response cell and USLANTCOM J-3 relied mainly on information gleaned from the OECS and broadcasts of a Grenadian ham radio operator. DIA did pick up two significant pieces of information. First, on 6 October the Cuban vessel *Vietnam Heroica* had landed an undisclosed number of Cuban workers presumably to join others already at work on the runway at Point Salines. Second, on 13 October other Cuban vessels had delivered a cargo of arms for transit to an undisclosed location in the interior.³⁷ The presence of a well-armed force of Cubans complicated planning.

With incomplete intelligence, the USLANTCOM staff developed several courses of action to cover "permissive" and "hostile" environments. For evacuation operations in a permissive or uncontested environment, they recommended relying upon diplomatic

negotiations and movement of evacuees by commercial aircraft. In the event of resistance, the planners proposed to overawe the Grenadians with Marine Amphibious Ready Group (MARG) 1-84, en route from Morehead City, North Carolina, to Lebanon; the USS *Independence* battle group in transit from Hampton Roads, Virginia, to the Mediterranean; and by one or more airborne battalions from USREDCOM. To coordinate the evacuation the planners recommended a team from the US Forces, Caribbean (USFORCARIB) headquarters, Key West, Florida.³⁸

Meeting of the Special Situation Group, 20 October 1983

The JCS received the USCINCLANT plan on the morning of 20 October. General Vessey directed the J-3, J-5, and DIA to assess the impact of each of USCINCLANT's courses of action upon strategic readiness in the Atlantic area. Later that morning, he gave the assessment to the Crisis Pre-Planning Group (CPPG) of the National Security Council. Rear Admiral John M. Poindexter, USN, the Military Assistant to the NSC, chaired the meeting which included John McMahon, Deputy Director of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA); Lawrence S. Eagleburger, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; and Assistant Secretary of State Langhorne A. Motley, the State Department's senior action officer during the crisis. The conferees agreed that the Joint Chiefs of Staff should continue planning a military operation to protect the evacuation of civilians.³⁹

The CPPG also recommended a meeting of the Special Situation Group (SSG), the top crisis management committee of the NSC, that afternoon. With the Vice President as chairman, the SSG included the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of Central Intelligence, the Counselor to the President, the Chief

of Staff to the President, the Deputy Chief of Staff to the President, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁴⁰

The SSG met at 1645 on 20 October in the Executive Office Building. Since no decision had been made for military action, the crisis was still a diplomatic problem and Secretary Shultz explained plans for evacuation of US citizens from Grenada. As background, Shultz's staff had provided him a paper on US military operations to protect an evacuation which included a comparative analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of amphibious and airborne operations to support the evacuation. The paper also advocated disarmament of the Grenadian forces. Although disarmament could lead to charges of "gunboat diplomacy," it would demonstrate the willingness of the United States to fight for its interests in Central America and the Caribbean.⁴¹

General Vessey also briefed the SSG, focusing on the risks in using US military force and the possibility of third country military intervention on behalf of the Grenadian government. DIA advised that while the ineffectual Grenadian People's Revolutionary Army would resist attempts to evacuate the US students, neither Cuba nor the Soviet Union were likely to intervene militarily. The Cuban Navy had only a few submarines, guided missile patrol boats, hydrofoil craft, and minesweepers. While the Soviets might take measures elsewhere, they were not in a position to intervene militarily in the Caribbean. However, according to General Vessey, the JCS were determined that Castro and the Soviets get a clear and early message that "This is a US show; hands off!"

A third, albeit lesser consideration was the impact that a US military operation might have upon US forces in Europe and the

Middle East. Diversion of MARG 1-84 and the USS *Independence* battle group would extend the deployment of MARG 2-83 in Lebanon and carrier battle groups either in the Mediterranean Sea or the Indian Ocean. Diversion of naval forces would force curtailment or cancellation of US participation in the upcoming exercise with Spain, CRISEX '83, which could cause the Spanish government to question American regard for Spain's importance to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).⁴²

The SSG decided that, as the danger to the Americans on Grenada increased, the President would probably order intervention. Given the assessment of probable resistance by Grenadian forces, the SSG supported contingency planning by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and began drafting a National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) expanding the original mission to include neutralization of enemy forces and the political reconstruction of Grenada.⁴³ To make an expanded operation feasible, the JCS directed diversion of MARG 1-84 to a location to the east of Puerto Rico and the *Independence* battle group to the vicinity of Dominica--positions within striking range of Grenada. Late in the evening of 20 October, the ships of both forces altered course to move to these new positions.⁴⁴

Chapter 2

Planning and Preparation, 21-24 October 1983

Planning for a Military Operation, 21 October 1983

On 21 October, GEN Vessey called ADM McDonald to tell him of the decision to expand USCINCLANT's original mission to include planning for a possible military operation to deter or disarm Grenadian and Cuban forces. In addition to the naval and Marine forces from the *Independence* battle group and MARG 1-84 moving toward Grenada, Vessey told McDonald that military forces to be considered should include both battalions of US Army Rangers and, as a follow-on peacekeeping force, units from the 82d Airborne Division.⁴⁵

Late in the afternoon of 21 October, Admiral James D. Watkins, USN, Chief of Naval Operations (CNO), briefly replaced GEN Vessey as the Chairman since GEN Vessey was preparing to fly to Chicago for a speaking engagement. At 1700 hours, ADM Watkins attended another meeting of the CPPG which discussed intelligence reports indicating the possibility of armed resistance by Cubans. Intelligence sources estimated that the *Vietnam Heroica* might have carried some 240 Cuban combat troops to St. George's on 6 October. Other sources indicated that about fifty Soviet citizens resided in Grenada. The CPPG reviewed the draft NSDD giving particular attention to its discussion of an operation to neutralize hostile forces. The possible involvement of Cuban troops fueled the growing consensus that a military operation would be needed to protect the evacuation area or to disarm hostile forces elsewhere on the island.⁴⁶

Before leaving for Chicago, GEN Vessey sent new guidance to the commanders of USLANTCOM, MAC, USREDCOM, and the Joint Special Operations Command. The Joint Chiefs of Staff directed USCINCLANT to plan for the most demanding contingencies: rescue of the medical students in the face of hostile fire or a small invasion aimed at disarming Grenadian and Cuban forces. In preparation for either eventuality, USCINCLANT was to move MARG 1-84 and the *Independence* battle group to the vicinity of Grenada and CINCMAC was to seek to reduce the time needed to airlift Rangers, airborne troops, and JSOC forces to the island. To execute the more demanding mission of disarming all hostile forces, USCINCLANT and CINCMAC should plan for the airlift of one or more battalions of the 82d Airborne Division to Grenada.⁴⁷

Vessey stressed the importance of communications security. He directed that all coordination be limited to secure teleconferences and SPECAT messages. In the Pentagon, LTG Prillaman directed the JCS response cell to transfer all Grenadian message traffic from General Service (GENSER) channels to SPECAT channels. However, these precautions were too late, for CBS had already learned of the diversion of the warships to Grenada and would break the story on the news later that evening.⁴⁸ The stringent limits placed on message distribution to the commanders and key personnel at USLANTCOM, MAC, USREDCOM, and JSOC prevented further leaks. But they also excluded from preliminary planning and preparation the Strategic Air Command (SAC), the National Security Agency (NSA), and the Defense Mapping Agency, and four Joint Staff organizations: J-4, C3S, the Deputy Directorate for Political-Military Affairs in J-5, and the Public Affairs Office.⁴⁹

The JCS decision to plan for a large multi-service operation was based upon thorough Joint Staff analysis which envisioned the

rescue and evacuation of US citizens and foreign nationals from many points on an island about twice as large as the District of Columbia. The Joint Staff also considered the need to neutralize an enemy force of uncertain strength, intent, or disposition. Intelligence analysts offered planners estimates of 1,000 to 1,200 People's Revolutionary Army (PRA) regulars, 2,000 to 5,000 militiamen, and about 250 armed Cubans. These estimates would later be shown to be much lower than the actual numbers of such forces on the island.

Given the uncertainty, the JCS determined that a military operation should be a coup de main, that is, a surprise attack with overwhelming force. While catching the enemy off guard, such an operation could perform rescue missions and seize key military targets vital to the enemy's command and control of defensive operations. Forces substantially larger than the one available Marine battalion landing team of eighteen hundred men would be required. Earmarking the Marines for an amphibious assault to take one airfield, the Joint Chiefs decided to employ Rangers to seize the other airfield. Troops from the 82d Airborne Division would provide reinforcements.

The JCS knew that the highly trained forces assigned to the Joint Special Operations Command were especially adept at rescue operations and other actions anticipated in Grenada. Consequently, they permitted USCINCLANT to use them during URGENT FURY. However, the JCS directed ADM McDonald to return JSOC forces to JCS control as quickly as possible to allow them to resume their counter-terrorist mission.⁵⁰

On 21 October, following Vessey's message, planners from JSOC and the Rangers flew to USLANTCOM headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia; and liaison personnel from the 82d Airborne Division arrived the next day. The Army planners met with their USLANTCOM

counterparts and liaison officers from MAC to develop preliminary concepts of operations.⁵¹

Appeals from the OECS and the Governor-General, 21-22 October 1983

While Army planners flew to meet with their Navy and Marine counterparts in Norfolk, Donald Cruz, the US consular officer to Barbados, traveled to Grenada to meet with Major Leon Cornwall, the titular head of the Revolutionary Military Council. Cornwall was vague and evasive about the identities of Grenada's other leaders and their intentions toward US citizens. Talking with students from the medical school at St. George's, Mr. Cruz found them apprehensive about the future. A plane sent to retrieve Cruz was temporarily denied permission to land.⁵²

Nearby in Bridgetown, Barbados, the OECS convened in emergency session to discuss ways of ending the anarchy and violence on Grenada. Acting under Article 8 of the OECS collective security treaty of 1981, the members voted to ask Barbados, Jamaica, and the United States to join them in sending a multinational peacekeeping expedition to Grenada. Hours later, early in the morning of 22 October, Sir Paul Scoon, the Governor-General of Grenada, asked the OECS to free his country from the Revolutionary Military Council. The OECS sent its request and the Governor-General's to the ranking US diplomat in the Caribbean, Charles A. Gillespie, Executive Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs. From Barbados, Gillespie dispatched the requests to the State Department on 21 and 22 October.⁵³

After General Vessey returned to Washington from Chicago at 0130 on 22 October, he met with the SSG to discuss the requests. At 0430 hours, members of the SSG contacted Secretary Shultz and Robert C. McFarlane, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, both of whom were vacationing with President Reagan in Atlanta. Shultz and McFarlane informed the President of the two requests, and he called a teleconference with the members of the SSG for 0900 hours. With the addition of the President, the SSG became a National Security Planning Group (NSPG), the highest level in the NSC system.⁵⁴

With two separate requests for intervention in hand, the NSPG jettisoned the idea of a peaceful evacuation. The NSPG tasked the Joint Chiefs of Staff to plan a military expedition to seize Grenada from local military forces. Anticipating such an order, the Joint Staff had prepared alternative force packages: either two battalions of Rangers with JSOC elements or a Marine battalion landing team with SEALs totaling about eighteen hundred men. Either package would be reinforced with a follow-on force of at least two airborne battalions.⁵⁵

The concept for employing JSOC elements and the Rangers called for five specially equipped C-130s to drop JSOC teams under cover of darkness at Point Salines at the southwest tip of Grenada and at Pearls midway up the east coast. Protected by four helicopter gunships, the commandos would seize the airfields. From Point Salines some of them would then move up the west coast about four miles to St. George's, the island capital, and capture the radio station and police headquarters. These forces would then move about four miles southeast to capture the Grenadian military barracks at Calivigny. Later, sixteen C-130s would land the 1st and 2d Ranger Battalions at Point Salines and Pearls. They would consolidate control of all objectives and pursue any enemy forces fleeing into the

highlands. The Joint Staff estimated that up to four and one half hours would be required to seize control of all objectives. To begin the operation on the night of 25 October, the earliest possible date, a presidential decision would be required by 2000 hours on 22 October.

The second concept, an amphibious/heliborne assault by Marines with a Ranger follow-up force, used more manpower, but could be executed several hours earlier. Teams of SEALs would go ashore after midnight on 24 October to reconnoiter beach conditions at Point Salines and Pearls. By dawn of 25 October, a battalion landing team with air cover from the USS *Independence* would either land on the beaches or move by helicopter to objectives at Point Salines airfield, the St. George's medical school, and the Grand Anse beach about two miles below St. George's. Deploying to the east of Grand Anse, the Marines would then seize the Calivigny barracks. Once the Marines had secured their objectives, Rangers could land at Point Salines and move to St. George's to seize police headquarters, government buildings, and army headquarters.

Either option had risks. Landings by Rangers or Marines might prompt the Grenadians or Cubans to kill the students or hold them hostage. The Cuban construction workers might reinforce Grenadian troops and inflict significant casualties upon US forces; the Soviet Union might exert pressure on US forces or those of US allies in Europe or the Middle East. If any of those events occurred, the Reagan administration could expect criticism from Congress, the media, and foreign governments. Some critics would focus on the casualties or hostages; others might accuse the President of disregard for international law.

The Joint Staff concluded that the rewards of a successful operation offset the risks. A swift, precise strike probably

would rescue most of the students and avert a hostage situation. Removal of the pro-Cuban junta would eliminate a threat to US strategic interests in the Caribbean. A well-executed display of US military prowess would convey US determination to protect its vital interests. In Western Europe where US willingness to fight for European soil was questioned, such action might inspire confidence in the United States.

The Joint Staff also listed several steps that should be taken to establish a legal foundation for sending an expeditionary force into Grenada. If possible, the President should consult Congress in advance of the operation as required by Section 3 of the War Powers Resolution; if this was not possible, within 48 hours of the invasion he should explain the necessity and the legal grounds for the operation to the lawmakers. In accordance with Article 51 of the UN Charter and Article 5 of the Rio Treaty, the State Department should inform the Security Council of the United Nations and the signatories of the Rio Treaty of the operation and the reasons for it. Since Grenada technically remained a member of the British Commonwealth, the United States should also obtain the assistance or at least the approval of the United Kingdom. Finally, to legitimize continued military occupation after evacuating the US civilians, a request to form an interim Grenadian government would be needed.⁵⁶

State Department experts would later argue that Article 52 of the UN Charter and Article 22 of the Organization of American States (OAS) charter allowed regional bodies such as the OECS to act to preserve local peace and security. Indeed, the OECS charter stated that, in taking lawful collective action, the members could call upon the United States or other friendly nations for assistance. Eugenia Charles, spokesperson for the

OECS, had on 21 October made a formal request to the United States for such assistance.⁵⁷

The Execute Order, 22 October 1983

In the wake of new intelligence that the Grenadians were mobilizing about two thousand reservists to join an estimated fifteen hundred regulars and approximately six hundred armed Cubans (over four thousand troops altogether), the JCS concluded that neither the JSOC/Rangers nor the Marines alone would suffice. According to GEN Vessey, the Joint Chiefs of Staff wanted "to go in with enough force absolutely to get the job done ...to minimize casualties, both on our side and on theirs. We wanted to intimidate the Cubans." Accordingly, the NSPG directed the Joint Chiefs to send an execute order to ADM McDonald authorizing him to land a multi-service force of JSOC, Rangers, Marines and airborne troops, on Grenada on 25 October.⁵⁸

The presidential decision to use military action authorized ADM McDonald to organize a joint force with the missions of evacuating US citizens, disarming hostile forces, and restoring orderly government to Grenada. It also directed USCINCRD and CINCPAC to provide additional ground forces and transport planes. If, within twenty hours of receipt of the execute order, danger to the US citizens on the island had significantly increased, ADM McDonald was free to launch an immediate rescue using JSOC teams flown in by C-130.⁵⁹

Shortly after dispatch of the execute order, GEN Vessey alerted CINCSAC that his command would support the operation. CINCSAC immediately ordered the Director of Tanker Operations to assemble KC-135 and KC-10 tanker aircraft at Robbins Air Force

Base, Georgia, and Roosevelt Roads Naval Air Station (NAS), Puerto Rico, to refuel aircraft used during the operation. He also prepared to support USCINCLANT with airborne reconnaissance and monitoring missions in the eastern Caribbean.⁶⁰

Starting on 22 October, GEN Vessey communicated with ADM McDonald primarily by secure telephone. In the course of these conversations, the Chairman stressed the JCS belief that the size of the joint force planned by the LANTCOM staff did not appear adequate to intimidate and overwhelm the enemy. Vessey urged McDonald to revise his plan to increase the size of the force "to do the job quickly," and to request any additional forces needed.⁶¹

At this point, DIA provided the JCS with a revised estimate of Grenadian capacity and will to resist. Estimating Grenadian strength at no more than fifteen hundred regulars and three thousand reservists, DIA analysts expected the Grenadian forces to mount a determined resistance. The analysts also pointed out the presence of at least six Soviet-made armored personnel carriers (BTR 60s) and four Soviet-made 23-mm antiaircraft guns (ZU-23s), most of which were believed to be sited around the Cuban construction site at the Point Salines runway. Analysts, however, expected little resistance from the nearly six hundred Cuban construction workers and fifty Cuban military advisers believed to be on the island.⁶²

Final Preparation, Washington and Norfolk, 23 October 1983

The execute order did not end Joint Staff involvement in the final preparations for URGENT FURY. During the next several days, the Joint Staff would coordinate allied participation and

increase logistical and Command, and Control and Communications (C3) support for USLANTCOM. On 23 October, the State Department sent Ambassador Francis J. McNeill to meet with representatives of the OECS, Jamaica, and Barbados in Bridgetown, Barbados, and assess their countries' willingness to join peacekeeping operations. At the Secretary of State's request, Major General George B. Crist, USMC, Vice Director of the Joint Staff, accompanied the ambassador to advise him concerning US capabilities for military action in the Caribbean. During the next five days, MajGen Crist would help the Caribbean states organize a small peacekeeping force and coordinate its activities with the US forces, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the State Department.⁶³

On the morning General Crist departed for Grenada, LTG Merritt expanded the URGENT FURY response cell to include J-4, C3S, and the J-3 Special Operations Division personnel. General Vessey's emphasis on maximum operational security on 21 October had prevented Merritt from including these officers until he was certain that URGENT FURY would involve a conventional military assault.⁶⁴

While MajGen Crist and LTG Merritt assisted with the preparation for URGENT FURY, ADM McDonald's staff revised the concept of operations. Admiral McDonald flew to Washington late on 23 October to brief the JCS on the new concept. Titled "Evacuation of US Citizens from Grenada," it reflected the missions added to the NEO on 21 October: restoration of a democratic government in concert with the OECS, Jamaica, and Barbados; logistical support for US allies; and deterrence of Cuban intervention. The operational concept had four phases. In Phase 1, "Transit," the *Independence* battle group and MARG 1-84 would close to positions fifty-five nautical miles northwest and forty nautical miles north of Grenada. Six hours before the

invasion, JSOC teams and Rangers would fly out of Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, and Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia.

Phase 2, "Insertion," required heliborne and seaborne insertions of special operations forces several hours before dawn to conduct final reconnaissance, strike at critical Grenadian police and military installations in the St. George's area, and move to the Governor-General's residence to protect him. Meanwhile, battalions of Rangers and Marines would capture the airfields at Point Salines and Pearls. At this stage, URGENT FURY was seen as primarily an unconventional operation to evacuate civilians with a strong force of Rangers and Marines to deter outside interference. If Grenadians or Cubans attempted to block evacuation, the Rangers and Marines would respond as required by the situation. As backup, the 82d Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, would go on full alert three hours before H-hour.⁶⁵ Admiral McDonald's guidance to the task force reflected concern that the invasion be conducted with precision to minimize civilian casualties and damage to the local economy and infrastructure.⁶⁶

Phases 3 and 4 of the concept were known as "Stabilization/Evacuation" and "Peacekeeping," respectively. In Phase 3, after forces had secured airfields and key military and government installations, they would locate and protect US citizens, Governor-General Scoon, and foreigners, including those from communist countries. Evacuation of civilians set the stage for Phase 4, "Peacekeeping." Admiral McDonald's plan excluded the untrained OECS constabulary from assault landings. Instead, MAC would fly the three hundred-man force from Jamaica and Barbados to Grenada to work with the US force and the Governor-General to establish the interim government.⁶⁷

Admiral McDonald proposed that Vice Admiral Metcalf, as Commander of the Second Fleet, command the invasion force. On D-Day, VADM Metcalf would command four task forces known collectively as Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 120. Task Force 123, also known as "the JSOC/Rangers Task Force," included JSOC teams, pilots and crews of the 160th Aviation Battalion from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and two battalions of Army Rangers. Task Force 124 comprised an amphibious group made up of several ships including the flagship of VADM Metcalf, the USS *Guam*, and a battalion landing team of Marines from the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit.⁶⁸ Task Force 126 included a detachment of eight F-15s from the 33d Tactical Fighter Wing and four E-3As from the 552d Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) Detachment. Task Force 126's principal mission would be to prevent interference by Cuban vessels or aircraft. Task Force 121, made up of the 2d and 3d Brigades and support units of the 82d Airborne Division, would land on Grenada about nine hours after the initial assaults and then take charge of the Rangers and other Army units. To support CJTF 120, VADM Metcalf had the ships and planes of the *Independence* battle group⁶⁹ as well as elements from SAC, MAC, and USREDCOM. In the USLANTCOM concept, the SAC and MAC aircraft would operate independently of Task Force 126.⁷⁰

The JCS were not satisfied with provisions for command and control. The plan placed the Navy captain whose ships would bring the Marines ashore temporarily in command of the Army major general who would lead the ground forces once they were ashore. At JCS direction, ADM McDonald placed the Army commander under VADM Metcalf's command.⁷¹

McDonald's staff had earlier proposed blending Marines and Rangers in heterogeneous units for the initial landings at Point

Salines and Pearls. The JCS rejected carrying jointness to that extreme and advised McDonald to keep the plan simple and allow the units to operate under their customary organization. Initially, the plan lacked a boundary between Army and Marine areas of operation. In a session with ADM McDonald and the JCS, GEN Vessey drew a boundary dividing Grenada into northern (Marine) and southern (Army) sectors. In the afternoon of 23 October, the JCS approved the operational concept as revised.⁷²

Many of the difficulties in ADM McDonald's concept of operations stemmed from the makeup of his and VADM Metcalf's headquarters. Both organizations were "bluewater commands" overwhelmingly made up of naval officers. Atlantic Command lacked the Army and Air Force staff officers needed to plan the maneuver and tactical air support of several battalions of ground troops. To remedy that deficiency, on the night of 23 October, the JCS ordered MG Schwarzkopf, Commanding General of the 24th Mechanized Infantry Division, to report to VADM Metcalf at Norfolk to serve as Metcalf's adviser on ground operations. Two of General Schwarzkopf's superiors, Lieutenant General Jack V. Mackmull, USA, Commanding General, XVIII Airborne Corps, and General Richard E. Cavazos, USA, Commander in Chief, Forces Command, had recommended Schwarzkopf because of his extensive experience with airborne troops and Rangers and with Marines while assigned to a unified command.⁷³

General Prillaman later stated that the revised concept embodied a traditional rule of offensive warfare: it is better to overwhelm an enemy with preponderant force at the outset rather than to deploy a modest force that will encourage resistance or lead to a battle of attrition. Despite the lack of good tactical intelligence, the relatively small size of Grenada,

along with the US control of the air and sea surrounding it, made a powerful surprise strike most likely to succeed.⁷⁴

Despite their approval of the concept of overwhelming the enemy, the JCS stressed the need for strict rules of engagement to limit the use of firepower. Unnecessary casualties and property damage would negate the humanitarian aspects of the rescue operation and damage the economic infrastructure of the island, jeopardizing US efforts to restore popular, democratic government.⁷⁵

With JCS approval of the plan, ADM McDonald formally activated CJTF 120 with an operations order summarizing the revised concept of operations and adding significant guidance about enemy resistance. Aware of JCS concern that the Cubans might intervene, ADM McDonald decided to support VADM Metcalf with aerial surveillance operations northwest of Grenada and make them conspicuous enough to deter any Cuban vessels or aircraft heading toward the island. For the aerial support required, ADM McDonald arranged with USREDCOM to deploy E-3A and F-15 aircraft to Roosevelt Roads NAS. In the operations order, ADM McDonald directed VADM Metcalf to submit all press queries to USCINCLANT Public Affairs Office for referral to the Office of the Secretary of Defense.⁷⁶

Final Political-Military Coordination, 23 October 1983

In the wake of the bombing attack against US Marines at the Beirut Airport in Lebanon on 23 October, President Reagan, Secretary Shultz, and Mr. McFarlane returned to Washington for emergency sessions of the NSC and the NSPG. After discussing the Lebanon crisis, Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger briefed

President Reagan on USCINCLANT's plan for the proposed operation in Grenada. Having heard reports from Ambassador McNeill and MajGen Crist in Barbados that the violence and danger to US citizens had increased, President Reagan approved continued planning for an operation on the basis of an NSDD drafted on 20 October, but not formally issued.⁷⁷

The draft NSDD spelled out a three-fold mission: rescue of US citizens, restoration of democratic government, and preclusion of Cuban interference. For execution of military operations in support of the mission, the NSDD assigned primary responsibility to the Secretary of Defense, but directed him to coordinate political aspects of the mission with the Secretary of State and the Director of Central Intelligence. The Secretary of State was to arrange diplomatic cooperation with the OECS, Jamaica, and Barbados; to inform the Soviet Union and Cuba, at the proper time, of plans to protect and evacuate their nationals; and to prepare a campaign to convince Congress and the public that the operation was truly multilateral, that the current regime threatened US lives, and that the next Grenadian government would be more democratic.⁷⁸

Formally tasked with responsibility for the execution of URGENT FURY, Secretary Weinberger gave GEN Vessey full power to conduct the operation. The Chairman had the authority to call up backup forces, deploy them, and to issue guidance to unified and specified commanders--without going to the Secretary. Both Secretary Weinberger and GEN Vessey hoped to speed up responses to problems and requests from the tactical commander. During the next several days, the Chairman exercised his authority either by personally contacting ADM McDonald and supporting commanders, or through LTG Prillaman.⁷⁹

Secretary Shultz instructed Under Secretary for Political Affairs Lawrence S. Eagleburger and Assistant Secretary Langhorne A. Motley to work with MajGen Crist to arrange and to publicize the role of the Caribbean allies. The Secretary recommended that elements of the Eastern Caribbean force, known as the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force (CPF), be integrated in US command arrangements, be included in the initial landings on Grenada, and be given a conspicuous role in reconstruction of the government. Secretary Shultz envisioned a brief US presence followed by rapid drawdown of military forces and transfer of all peacekeeping duties to the CPF and the interim government.⁸⁰

Early in the evening of 23 October, intelligence indicated growing preparation by the Grenadian junta to mobilize popular resistance to a foreign invasion. Perhaps the news leaks about the diversion of the *Independence* battle group and MARG 1-84 had sounded the tocsin. From Barbados, the US defense attaché reported that Grenadian security guards and troops at the Richmond Hill Prison, St. George's, had received orders to kill all prisoners in the event of invasion. DIA also had unconfirmed information that British subjects and other foreign businessmen had already been executed. Meanwhile, the Barbadian National Radio spoke of growing dissatisfaction with the Grenadian armed forces over the brutal excesses of the regime and of the failure of militia members to report to their assigned units.⁸¹

Final Preparation, CJTF 120, 24 October 1983

Early on 24 October, the JCS ordered the JSOC Task Force (TF 123) to fill gaps in USCINCLANT's tactical intelligence about Grenada. Before dawn, two C-130s dropped teams of four Navy SEALs, equipped with Boston Whaler boats, off Point Salines and

Pearls to reconnoiter the beaches and airfields in preparation for the landings. After going ashore near Pearls, one team reported that beach conditions did not favor the amphibious assault planned for the Marine battalion landing team and recommended a heliborne assault.⁸² Before its rendezvous with the USS *Clifton Sprague* near Point Salines, the other SEAL team vanished in unexpectedly rough seas.⁸³

Shortly after dawn, ADM McDonald conducted a pre-invasion commander's conference at Norfolk. The meeting included VADM Metcalf; MG Richard A. Scholtes, USA, Commander of the JSOC/Rangers task force (TF 123); MG Trobaugh, Commanding General of the 82d Airborne Division (TF 121); and MG Schwarzkopf, the senior Army adviser to VADM Metcalf. Representatives from the Services, CIA, and the State Department also attended. General Scholtes reported the loss of the SEALs sent to reconnoiter the Point Salines area earlier that morning. Concerned about the lack of tactical intelligence on the enemy's defenses for the Point Salines airfield, the commanders considered postponing the operation for twenty-four hours. The State Department representative protested that such a delay might unnerve the governments participating in the Caribbean Peacekeeping Force. Admiral McDonald refused to alter the operational plan solely due to concerns about a "third rate, lightly armed and poorly trained adversary." He kept D-day on schedule, but postponed H-hour from 0400 hours to 0500 hours to give Scholtes' SEALs time for a second look at Point Salines. His decision required the special operations forces and Rangers to land at dawn instead of in the dark as had been planned.⁸⁴

The JCS execute order directed "close coordination with the Caribbean community forces (Caribbean Peacekeeping Force—CPF) at the appropriate time." In frequent contact with ADM McDonald,

GEN Vessey afterward insisted that the Admiral knew "from the beginning how important it was, politically and diplomatically, to involve the CPF 'early on' in the operation." Yet, the USCINCLANT concept of operations excluded the CPF from any active role. While in Barbados on 24 October, MajGen Crist tried to remedy the omission. He suggested to Vessey that ADM McDonald employ the CPF as a follow-on force to take custody of key Grenadian government facilities once they had been captured by the US forces. Early on 24 October, Crist met with the commanders of the Barbados and Jamaica Defense Forces and the OECS Regional Security Unit. The Jamaica Defense Force contributed a rifle company, an 81-mm mortar section, and a medical section--150 troops; the Barbados Defense Force, a rifle platoon of fifty troops; and the OECS Regional Security Unit, one hundred constabulary, apparently not organized in any particular fashion. Crist persuaded the Caribbean commanders that their entire force should enter Grenada on 25 October and relieve US troops holding Richmond Hill Prison, Radio Free Grenada, police headquarters, and the Government House.⁸⁵

Receiving word of the Crist-CPF agreement late in the morning of 24 October, Vessey directed McDonald to expand the URGENT FURY mission statement. The new version specified that Metcalf would act "in cooperation with other OECS/Friendly Government participants...." His task force would "...assist in restoration of democratic government in Grenada, provide the logistical support necessary to the peacekeeping force, and duly record by video tape and motion picture all military activities conducted by US and CPF military forces." Immediately after sending the modification, GEN Vessey directed MajGen Crist to improvise multinational command arrangements once all forces were on the ground in Grenada.⁸⁶

Reaching USCINCLANT the afternoon before D-day, the modification of the execute order gave ADM Metcalf little guidance on how to integrate CPF units into his force structure. In a later analysis of URGENT FURY, McDonald characterized the Chairman's order as too little, too late. In McDonald's view, details of such arrangements should have been worked out days earlier with the governments of the OECS, Barbados, and Jamaica. The failure to do so, the Admiral believed, thwarted effective CPF support of military operations during the first two days of URGENT FURY.⁸⁷

On the afternoon of 24 October, accompanied by MG Schwarzkopf, VADM Metcalf departed Norfolk for the USS *Guam* to assume command of the task force. En route, he stopped at Bridgetown, Barbados, to confer with the commander of the CPF, Brigadier Rudyard Lewis of the Barbados Defense Force. When MajGen Crist greeted VADM Metcalf and MG Schwarzkopf at the airport, he advised them that the brigadier could not be reached for at least forty-five minutes. Not wishing to wait that long, Metcalf asked Crist to help Brigadier Lewis organize the CPF for airlift either to Grenville or to Pearls airfield. From there, they would move to Point Salines and St. George's to relieve the US troops of duty guarding prisoners and conducting other police-type functions. The only obstacle appeared to be the transport of the Jamaican company and the OECS constabulary to staging areas in Barbados. To resolve the problem, Crist contacted CINCMAC who sent liaison officers that night to make the necessary arrangements.⁸⁸

Publicizing CPF participation in URGENT FURY required changes in the Joint Staff's crisis action organization. The Plans and Policy Directorate (J-5) coordinated efforts with J-3 to convince the US public and the world that URGENT FURY was truly a multinational operation with limited objectives and of

very short duration. On 24 October, LTG Prillaman and Lieutenant General Herman O. Thomson, USAF, Director, J-5, agreed to augment the JCS response cell, starting on D-day, with politico-military experts. Referred to as the Current Situation Room Crisis Action Team (CSR CAT), the augmented organization would meet in the National Military Command Center.⁸⁹

The CSR CAT included representatives from several other offices of the Joint Staff and their counterparts in the Service staffs, the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and the Department of State. Members shared interest and expertise in one or more functional or geographical aspect of US strategic interests in the eastern Caribbean. The CSR CAT would strive for the next week to master the political challenge posed by the crisis in Grenada--that of putting the best possible face on a military operation that combined a rescue mission with containment of Cuban adventurism in the Caribbean. From 25 October through 1 November, it would provide background and talking papers for the Chairman, public affairs statements for each Service, a radio script for USCINCLANT to use for psychological operations (PSYOPS), and an information booklet for the J-5 to use in presentations before Congress.⁹⁰

General Vessey was forced to divide his time between the crises in Lebanon and Grenada. During the afternoon of 24 October, VADM Moreau substituted for GEN Vessey at the meeting of the CPPG in Washington. For the next few days, Moreau represented the JCS in most NSC deliberations concerning URGENT FURY.⁹¹

Meanwhile in Tampa, Florida, General Wallace H. Nutting, USA, Commander in Chief, USREDCOM, directed the XVIII Airborne Corps to prepare battalions of the 82d Airborne Division for deployment to Grenada within the next four hours. According to

USCINCLANT's operations order of 23 October, the battalions would not be needed on Grenada until 1400 hours on 25 October. Shortly after his first message, GEN Nutting sent a second which placed the XVIII Airborne Corps under the operational command of ADM McDonald.⁹²

Back in Washington President Reagan conferred twice with the Joint Chiefs. Late that morning he asked for their individual views on the operation. All agreed that while it would be preferable to avoid the use of force, the situation on the island gave no alternative to its use to rescue the medical students. The JCS assured the President that the operation would succeed. That evening they met again with the President, this time in the upstairs residential area of the White House. On that occasion, the majority and minority leaders of the House and Senate attended. GEN Vessey explained the final plan of operations. Although the Democratic congressional leaders appeared uneasy about the use of force, they offered no alternative.⁹³

After the congressional leaders departed, President Reagan asked GEN Vessey two questions. What were the critical decision times for executing and for calling off the operation? How did the General plan to spend his final hours before the first landings on Grenada? To the first question Vessey responded that, if the landings were to begin on schedule, he must call the Pentagon immediately after their meeting and give the prearranged code word; the President, however, could call off the operation as late as a few hours before the landings. In response to the second question, Vessey said:

As soon as I send the message to the Pentagon to go ahead, I'm going home to go to bed. We've given this mission to an operational commander. He has the forces that he believes he needs. He knows that he has the full support of the Secretary of Defense and of you [the President] and the Joint

Chiefs of Staff. If he needs more help, then he'll call for it, but otherwise, there's nothing you or I can do until these troops have landed unless you decide to call it off between then and now. I'm going home to go to bed and in the morning [go to the Pentagon and] wait for the first reports to come in. The President replied, "I'm going to do the same thing."⁹⁴

With the transmittal of the President's "go" to the Pentagon, GEN Vessey shifted the primary role of the Joint Staff from strategic planning and direction to strategic and logistic support. While Vessey would largely refrain from giving operational guidance, his liaison officer in Barbados and Grenada, MajGen Crist, would advise ADM McDonald and VADM Metcalf on the employment of the CPF and on such politically sensitive areas as the internment and evacuation of citizens of Cuba, the Soviet Union, and other communist countries.

Chapter 3

Combat Operations, 25 October - 2 November 1983

D-Day URGENT FURY, 25 October 1983

In the predawn darkness, ships of the USS *Guam* amphibious ready group and C-130s from Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia, approached Grenada. Acting upon information from the SEALs' reconnaissance, nearly four hundred Marines made a helicopter assault upon Pearls at 0500 hours. Although scheduled at precisely the same time, the airdrop of several hundred Rangers at Point Salines was held up for thirty-six minutes because of the loss of the inertial navigation system in the lead C-130 which required that the sequence of C-130s be adjusted in the air. Adjusting the sequence of aircraft lost the JSOC forces the cover of darkness, cost them tactical surprise and mixed the Ranger units on the landing zone.⁹⁵

Combat results were uneven during the first hours. The Marines encountered very light resistance at Pearls and none at Grenville. They occupied the airfield and nearby objectives within two hours. Special operations forces and the Rangers began landing on the island at 0536 hours. Even as special operations helicopters tried to approach targets near St. George's, Grenadian troops opened fire with antiaircraft and automatic weapons. As the Rangers' C-130s approached the Point Salines airfield, the Cubans put up stiff resistance using antiaircraft guns and automatic weapons. Lieutenant Colonel Wesley B. Taylor, USA, commanding the 1st Ranger Battalion,

decided to reduce the time of descent and vulnerability to ground fire by having his men jump from five hundred feet.⁹⁶

Once on the ground a company of Rangers assembled at either end of the airfield. Hot-wiring a bulldozer and using it to clear obstacles strewn on the runway, the two companies attacked the Cuban defenders. The Cubans fought back with small arms and machine guns. At one point they sent BTR 60 armored personnel carriers towards the Rangers. Within the next two hours, gunships from the carrier USS *Independence* suppressed the armored personnel carriers, and the Rangers surrounded and captured about 250 Cubans. At 0900 hours, the Rangers rescued 138 American medical students at the True Blue Campus adjacent to the airfield only to learn that over two hundred more were still trapped at Grand Anse, a few miles to the north.⁹⁷

Learning almost immediately of the Cuban resistance at Point Salines, the JCS conferred at 0600 hours. The volume of Cuban firepower proved a tactical surprise, but GEN Vessey reassured his colleagues that gunships and superior ground forces would quickly suppress further resistance. To expedite a ceasefire, he recommended that the Secretary of State bluntly inform the regimes in Havana and St. George's that there was "no point in shooting muskets at us; we are going in with overwhelming force."⁹⁸

The resistance encountered by the Rangers convinced the JCS and the US commanders that the Cuban construction workers constituted a combat force. In fact, on 24 October, Cuba's Premier Castro had sent an experienced officer, Colonel Pedro Tortola Comas, to direct the defense of southern Grenada. Tortola Comas' men had just begun to break out the weapons and pile up sandbags when the first battalion of Rangers appeared on 25 October. Later, US forces would find a thousand rifles as

well as the equipment and barracks for a full strength Cuban battalion. Interrogation would reveal that many of the Cubans had fought for Castro in Ethiopia and Angola.⁹⁹

After the initial reports of Cuban resistance arrived at the Pentagon, GEN Vessey approved a request from ADM McDonald to send two battalions of the 82d Airborne Division at Fort Bragg to Grenada. Commanded by MG Trobaugh, the fifteen hundred paratroopers began the airlift to Point Salines at about 1000 hours. After their arrival, General Trobaugh consolidated the two airborne battalions with the Rangers and JSOC teams into Task Force 121. Meanwhile, after consulting with ADM McDonald about MG Trobaugh's need for Spanish-speaking interrogators to question the 250 Cuban prisoners held by the Rangers, LTG Prillaman arranged for the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters to send three interrogators at once and keep three more on standby.¹⁰⁰

With the Rangers heavily engaged near Point Salines, VADM Metcalf decided to send the CPF to the airfield there, instead of to Pearls as originally planned. Accompanied by General Crist, the CPF landed at 1045 hours. The CPF commander, Brigadier Lewis, met with MG Scholtes and MG Trobaugh. Lewis agreed to guard the Cuban prisoners while the Rangers and airborne troops devoted their efforts to securing the perimeter and moving north toward St. George's. Meanwhile, MajGen Crist set up a communication station near the airport. General Crist asked the governments of the OECS to inform the governments of the United Kingdom, France, Grenada, and West Germany that the CPF had landed on Grenada to link up with CJTF 120. He also assisted representatives of State and US Information Agency (USIA) in setting up an interim US Embassy.¹⁰¹

From the beaches at St. George's, a team of SEALs made its way east of the city to the residence of Governor-General Scoon.

After overwhelming the guards and rescuing the Governor-General, the SEALs came under heavy fire from armored personnel carriers. Lacking antitank weapons, the SEALs held off their attackers with grenades and automatic weapons and waited for the Rangers to rescue them. The lightly armed Rangers, however, were heavily engaged north of Salines against what appeared to be a fully-equipped Cuban battalion and could not move fast enough to save the SEALs. To support the SEALs until their relief could be mounted, VADM Metcalf ordered Navy and Marine aircraft to fly combat sorties over the Governor-General's residence and the vicinity.¹⁰²

Heavy antiaircraft fire from Fort Frederick and Fort Rupert downed two Marine Sea Cobra helicopters and deterred others from approaching the Governor-General's residence. Meanwhile, Grenadian military broadcasts indicated that Fort Frederick was probably an enemy command post. Admiral Metcalf's desire to protect the Governor-General and the SEALs while destroying a Grenadian headquarters and antiaircraft site overcame his concerns about serious "collateral damage." Squadrons of A-7 Corsairs from the USS *Independence* began attacking Fort Frederick and Fort Rupert in mid-afternoon.¹⁰³

One event marred naval air operations against Fort Frederick. Lacking military maps or other means of identifying a building next to the fort as a hospital, Corsair pilots bombed the building at 1535. During an investigation, the director of the hospital revealed that before the attack Grenadian troops had occupied the building, emplaced gun positions, and armed members of the hospital staff and several of the patients. Later, according to the director, the Grenadian troops evacuated all able-bodied staff and inmates to Fort Frederick, but locked up

the mental patients in one wing of the building where eighteen were killed during the air attack.¹⁰⁴

The resistance encountered between St. George's and Point Salines, combined with the realization that a second medical student campus existed at Grand Anse, prompted a reassessment of the ground tactical situation. Meeting about noon, VADM Metcalf and MG Schwarzkopf agreed that most, if not all, of the action was on the southern part of the island. Since the Marines in the amphibious craft off Pearls and Grenville had little to do, Schwarzkopf recommended to VADM Metcalf that they land at Grand Mal Bay north of St. George's, to open a "second front" to the rear of the Grenadian and Cuban forces. Metcalf agreed. After sailing around Grenada, a landing force of 250 Marines, five tanks, and thirteen amphibious vehicles landed at Grand Mal about 1900 hours, and moved south and east toward the Governor-General's residence.¹⁰⁵

In Washington, President Reagan told Congress and the press of the reasons for US operations in Grenada. Reporting to Congress in accordance with the War Powers Resolution,¹⁰⁶ the President informed Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, Speaker of the House, and Strom Thurmond, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, that US troops had joined the "OECS collective security forces in assisting the restoration of conditions of law and order...and to facilitate the protection and evacuation of United States citizens." Then, in reference to the resolution's sixty-day limitation upon such intervention without congressional approval, Reagan added, "Our forces will remain only so long as their presence is required."¹⁰⁷

In an 0900 briefing at the White House, the President gave three reasons for the intervention: to protect innocent lives, to forestall further chaos, and to assist in the restoration of law

and order and of governmental institutions on the island. He stressed the first, saying, "When I received reports that a large number of our citizens were seeking to escape the island thereby exposing themselves to great danger, and after receiving a formal request for help...I concluded the United States had no choice but to act strongly and decisively." When reporters asked for details about the military situation, the President replied: "...we are yielding to the influence of General Vessey in that we don't think in these early hours of that landing that we should be on the horn asking the commanders to stop and give us detailed reports."¹⁰⁸

Events on Grenada compelled VADM Metcalf to extend the ban on reporters. He had included in his concept of operations a press blackout until students had been rescued at the True Blue campus. By noon on 25 October, US troops had secured that campus, but had yet to reach the students at Grand Anse. Other factors influenced VADM Metcalf's decision to extend the press ban. During the remainder of that day and the next, JSOC teams and SEALs would employ techniques and systems that the JCS wished to protect from public disclosure. The unexpected extent of Cuban resistance and rumors that a Cuban colonel was organizing it also helped to explain the ban on reporters. Faced with unanticipated firefights, neither VADM Metcalf nor his subordinate wanted to jeopardize or slow down the tactical advance to provide escorts, shelter, and food for a group of reporters. The final consideration involved delays in the landing of military aircraft. Hampered by runways pockmarked by shell holes and littered with combat debris, airplanes bringing reinforcements and equipment were delayed while planes already on the runway offloaded. Admiral Metcalf was reluctant to delay the

arrival of men and material while planes carrying reporters shuttled back and forth blocking runways and airspace.¹⁰⁹

**Rescue of the Governor-General, the Drive to Grand Anse,
and the Push for PSYOPS, 26 October 1983**

The Marine task force that had landed at Grand Mal on 25 October fought its way to the Governor-General's residence by 0712 on 26 October. At about 1000, after rescuing Governor-General Scoon, his wife, twenty-two special operations personnel, and nine civilians, the Marines flew them by helicopter to the USS *Guam*. That afternoon, at Scoon's request, he was flown to Point Salines where he stayed until the Marines could secure St. George's. The Marine task force then moved a few miles east to the Grenadian stronghold at Fort Frederick in St. George's southern suburbs. Ten hours later, the Marines subdued the defenders and captured the fort.¹¹⁰

With St. George's in friendly hands, MajGen Crist accompanied the Governor-General from Point Salines to the capital and installed Scoon in a private residence. General Crist then arranged with the JCS and CIA to establish a secret communications link between the Governor-General and the Privy Council in London. Scoon soon received instructions establishing him as the nucleus of an interim regime. The next day the Soviet embassy recognized Scoon's authority.¹¹¹

At the southern end of the island on the morning of 26 October, MG Trobaugh's Task Force 121 deployed from the True Blue Campus to Grand Anse in search of more US medical students. On the way, troopers overcame stiff resistance at Frequente, a Cuban stronghold about one mile north of True Blue. Later, finding

Grand Anse also heavily defended by Cubans and Grenadians, Trobaugh asked VADM Metcalf for aid.

On board the USS *Guam* with Metcalf, MG Schwarzkopf studied the beach at Grand Anse and recommended that MG Trobaugh conduct

a heliborne assault to rescue the students at the nearby campus. Since no Army helicopters were available, MG Schwarzkopf convinced the Marine helicopter commander to fly Trobaugh's Rangers to Grand Anse later that afternoon. Major General Schwarzkopf's ambiguous status as an "adviser" had impeded his efforts to coordinate ground operations. At Schwarzkopf's recommendation, on 26 October, VADM Metcalf designated him the deputy commander of the JTF. Schwarzkopf redrew the tactical boundary to include Grand Anse in the Marine area; this was the second extension of the Marine area of operations in two days. At about 1600 on 26 October, six Marine Sea Knight helicopters flew the Rangers to Grand Anse. After a firefight lasting about thirty minutes, four Marine Sea Stallion helicopters landed and evacuated 224 medical students. As at the True Blue Campus on the previous day, the Rangers learned that there was yet another campus, this time at Lance aux Epines, a peninsula on Prickly Bay east of Point Salines.¹¹²

During the evening of 26 October, troopers and Marines evacuated refugees and interned prisoners. General Crist coordinated both operations with the State Department, the JCS, and ADM McDonald. After the rescue at Grand Anse on 25 October, the State Department requested DOD assistance in evacuating noncombatants to Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina; the JCS directed USCINCLANT and CINCMAC to provide airlift support. Bodies of US military personnel were to be flown to Dover, Delaware. Late that evening the JCS tasked the Logistics Directorate (J-4), headed by Vice Admiral W.J. Cowhill, USN, to arrange food for one thousand prisoners in custody of the CPF.¹¹³

During the combat and evacuation operations, ADM McDonald asked the JCS to validate a request for USCINCRED to send two more battalions of the 82d Airborne Division. They were needed

to relieve the exhausted Rangers and Marines and attack any new strongholds. The unexpected resistance by the Cubans at Point Salines, Grand Mal, Grand Anse, Frequente, and Fort Frederick justified the reinforcements. General Prillaman advised ADM McDonald that he did not need permission to ask USCINCRAD for reinforcements. By 2117, two more battalions and a brigade headquarters had landed at Point Salines airfield, increasing the number of airborne troops in Grenada from about two thousand to nearly five thousand.¹¹⁴

On the international scene, news of US military operations on Grenada embarrassed the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in Great Britain and aroused resentment in the Canadian government. In the British House of Commons, Labor Chief Denis Healey derided Prime Minister Thatcher as "Reagan's poodle." Healey concluded that Reagan's unilateral intervention in a nation of the Commonwealth offered new evidence of US disdain for British sensitivities and raised doubts over Thatcher's ability to control US cruise missiles stationed in the United Kingdom. In Ottawa, spokesmen questioned the need and legal justification for US intervention, especially after the Canadian government had already announced plans to conduct peaceful evacuation of its citizens from Grenada.¹¹⁵

Hoping to find a sympathetic forum in the Organization of American States, J. William Middendorff, US Permanent Representative, again explained the reasons for intervention: violence on Grenada endangered the inhabitants, US citizens living there, and the security of neighboring island republics. Article 52 of the UN Charter allowed regional bodies to deal with such disturbances; and Articles 22 and 28 of the OAS Charter allowed member states to enforce collective security if necessary by inviting joint participation in a peacekeeping force by the United States. Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, US Ambassador to the United

Nations, made a similar case to the Security Council on 27 October and to the General Assembly on 2 November.¹¹⁶

In a message to the JCS on 26 October, ADM McDonald requested guidance on themes for PSYOPS broadcasts to the Grenadian populace. He considered such operations essential to the speedy conclusion of military operations and the successful launching of a new government. Some of the proposed themes were: US involvement had been requested by Caribbean countries that feared the spread of Marxism by violent means; Caribbean and US forces were carefully avoiding civilian casualties or damage to private property; Cubans and Soviets were being offered safe conduct out of the country; and the presence of foreign troops would continue until the safety of the people of Grenada was assured. The JCS approved ADM McDonald's concept the following day; radio broadcasts began on 28 October.¹¹⁷

The JCS also approved expansion of the CSR CAT to include more experts on psychological operations and politico-military affairs. After midnight on 26 October, the CSR CAT moved to the Operations Planning Group (OPG) facility at the NMCC where it began coordinating all guidance relative to tactical operations, PSYOPS, and public affairs. Politico-military specialists from the Western Hemisphere Division of J-5 prepared to support MajGen Crist in planning the evacuation of noncombatants, the handling of detainees, cooperation with the CPF, and the exploitation and disposition of captured equipment and documents.¹¹⁸

On Grenada, MajGen Crist immersed himself in PSYOPS and politico-military affairs. After locating local radio announcers to broadcast on Radio Free Grenada, he worked with the Governor-General to establish an interim government. By late 26 October, the ground force commanders on Grenada had provided Crist with many captured Cuban and Soviet documents. At Crist's request the

CIA sent several linguists to translate them. The captured documents included five military assistance agreements between the Bishop government, the Soviet Union, and Cuba which provided for the training of Grenadian soldiers in both countries. The documents indicated a Soviet promise of \$30.5 million worth of uniforms, rifles, machine guns, antitank weapons, antiaircraft guns, and other military supplies to be delivered to Grenadian authorities over a five-year period. Meeting with VADM Metcalf, MajGen Crist recommended that ADM McDonald display the weapons and copies of the documents to counter the mounting criticism of URGENT FURY in Canada and Western Europe.¹¹⁹

Final Combat, Evacuation, and Public Affairs, 27 October 1983

Combat operations continued throughout the daylight hours of 27 October. Meeting scant resistance in the St. George's area, the Marines rapidly fanned out and occupied Fort Lucas, Richmond Hill Prison, and other points. Meanwhile, paratroopers advanced methodically eastward across southern Grenada. Since the paratroopers lacked adequate tactical intelligence and believed that, after fierce Cuban resistance at Salines, Frequente and Grand Anse, the enemy might be strong enough to resist or even counterattack; they employed the slow but thorough tactic of clearing all enemy in the zone, phase line by phase line, leaving no pockets of resistance. Several factors contributed to the deliberate pace of the airborne troops. Problems with the runway at Point Salines had delayed their deployment and the arrival of helicopter gunships. Without the helicopters, the paratroopers depended for fire support upon naval aircraft and naval gunfire. Since their radios could not communicate with the ships of the *Independence* battle group, Army radiomen were forced to send

their request for fire support to Fort Bragg which in turn relayed them by satellite to the ships. The requirement to guard new prisoners also slowed the advance of the airborne.¹²⁰

During a phone conversation on the 27th, GEN Vessey asked ADM McDonald about the seizure of the military barracks at Calivigny, a priority objective in the original plan. At noon, USCINCLANT sent a message to VADM Metcalf and MG Schwarzkopf at Point Salines stating that the JCS wanted Calivigny barracks taken before dark. The message's unusual reference to the JCS likely reflected the CINCLANT staff's desire to underscore GEN Vessey's concern. The order surprised Schwarzkopf inasmuch as there was little resistance expected at Calivigny and the airborne troops were planning to take the barracks early the next day during the normal course of their advance. In view of the success of the operation to date, Schwarzkopf questioned JCS intervention in the tactical command of ground operations. When VADM Metcalf directed his staff to confirm the order, USCINCLANT replied, "JCS has ordered you to take Calivigny barracks before dark." Metcalf relayed the order to General Trobaugh at 1200.¹²¹

Instead of using airborne troops to take Calivigny barracks, Trobaugh selected the Rangers who, after two days of heavy fighting, were relaxing at Point Salines airfield waiting to be redeployed to the United States. Although the airborne troops were within eight kilometers of Calivigny, their rate of advance would not permit them to reach the barracks before dark. The Rangers and their helicopters were available for immediate duty. Trobaugh knew that the Rangers were more experienced in heliborne assaults, and that they had originally planned to take Calivigny on D-day. Before the Rangers' assault at 1750, VADM Metcalf's ships delivered salvos of naval gunfire and launched sorties of Corsairs. Army UH-160 Black Hawk helicopters then landed the

Ranger battalions at the barracks compound area; three helicopters were damaged, but the Rangers took control of the barracks by 2100.¹²²

An incident involving the accidental strafing of friendly troops about a half mile east of Frequente occurred on 27 October. When snipers fired on an airborne battalion near a sugar mill east of the 2d Brigade command post, a nearby Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) team called in an air strike by Corsairs from the USS *Independence*. Although the ANGLICO team had carefully described the source of sniper fire, the team lacked the necessary Communications Electronic Operating Instructions (CEOI) to clear the target with the 2d Brigade fire support element. As a result, the Corsairs struck the command post injuring seventeen troops, three of them seriously.¹²³

By 27 October, the requirement to guard, feed, house, and provide medical care to Cuban prisoners and Soviet citizens concerned the Joint Chiefs. Properly carried out, such duties would continue to slow combat operations by the 82d Airborne. On the other hand, neglect of these matters could jeopardize the health and safety of prisoners and refugees and possibly provoke intervention or protests by their home countries.¹²⁴

Early on 27 October, the JCS directed ADM McDonald to evacuate Cuban and Soviet noncombatants as soon as possible. McDonald recommended flying Cuban prisoners and noncombatants to the US naval base at Guantanamo for release to Cuban custody. The State Department coordinated arrangements to screen persons seeking refuge in the Soviet consulate for airlift to Kingston, Jamaica.¹²⁵

In the afternoon, the JCS and their Operations Deputies met to discuss Cuban prisoners and possible fugitives hiding in the interior. They agreed that dead or seriously wounded Cubans

should be returned to Cuba as soon as possible, but that other prisoners should not be released until US intelligence officers had interrogated them. The Joint Chiefs agreed on the importance of apprehending Cubans hiding in the interior of Grenada before they could establish bases for guerrilla warfare; as a consequence, they directed a thorough reconnaissance of the nearby island of Carriacou.¹²⁶

On 27 October, CINCMAC proposed establishing an aeromedical evacuation control center on Barbados. Wounded US troops would be flown to the USS *Guam* for medical stabilization and then to Roosevelt Roads NAS, Puerto Rico, for more extensive treatment. After approving the CINCMAC proposal, the JCS directed ADM McDonald to lift the ban on foreign flights to Grenada to permit the Royal Canadian Air Force to evacuate Canadian citizens. Meanwhile, MAC had evacuated 379 US medical students to Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina.¹²⁷

While wounded US troops and medical students were leaving Grenada, US reporters were angrily demanding to be let in. Newspaper headlines on 25 and 26 October denounced the Reagan administration for condoning "an unparalleled act of censorship that forced the public to rely on the Government's self-serving accounts of the action."¹²⁸ In a session before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 27 October, Senator Paul Sarbanes (D, Maryland) noted that "the treatment by the Administration of the free press raises very serious questions about our function as a free society."¹²⁹ Senator Nancy Kassebaum (R, Kansas) dismissed earlier DOD statements that reporters had to be kept from the island for their own safety with the remark that "reporters have faced far worse conditions in Lebanon." Other

senators cited the presence of reporters with invasion forces on D-day in 1944.¹³⁰

In response to an order from Secretary Weinberger on 26 October, ADM McDonald submitted a public affairs plan the following day. The time had come to allow reporters on the island, but McDonald did not want them killed or interfering with operations. To establish control, he proposed setting up a Joint Information Board (JIB) in Bridgetown, Barbados, with branches on Grenada and on the USS *Guam*. During the day, either of the branches would transport a pool of no more than twenty reporters to the sites of previous fighting and other comparatively safe areas. On the return of the media pool, JIB representatives would review stories and photographs for immediate release. At about 0900, the Secretary of Defense approved McDonald's plan, and late that afternoon a pool of twelve reporters from Barbados landed in Grenada. General Vessey would later note that:

The huge mistake at the National level was failing to find a way to take some press along. We missed a great opportunity to have the American people get reports about how well the Rangers and Marines operated. We compounded the error by permitting Admiral Metcalf to keep the media out longer than we had intended.¹³¹

While reporters waited for their first opportunity to file stories from Grenada, translators and intelligence experts from the CIA continued to study the captured documents. These records confirmed the presence of more than six hundred Cuban workers and technical assistants on Grenada, including Cuban and Soviet advisers within every government ministry. They also revealed how dependent the Marxist regime had been upon Cuban support to remain in power. The analysts were able to substantiate earlier estimates that the Cubans were constructing the oversized runway

to fly large jets from Cuba and the Soviet Union to destinations in Latin America and west Africa.¹³²

Assistant Secretary of State Langhorne Motley arrived in Grenada on 27 October. General Crist briefed him on final preparations to move Governor-General Scoon and the CPF to St. George's where the CPF would assume control of all key political facilities. With Secretary Motley and the CPF now fully in charge of efforts to reconstruct a viable government on the island, MajGen Crist viewed his mission as complete; he returned to the Pentagon the following day.¹³³

Preparations to Neutralize the Threat of a Cuban-Led Insurgency, **28 October 1983**

By 28 October the tempo of combat operations had declined significantly; units were dealing with occasional snipers, mopping up, and continuing to search for Hudson Austin, Bernard Coard, and other members of the revolutionary junta. While sweeping the peninsula of Lance aux Epines near St. George's, airborne troopers located the last group of 202 US medical students, bringing the number rescued to 564. Subsequently, the troopers linked up with Marines at the Ross Point Hotel near St. George's. That same day, ADM McDonald redeployed both battalions of Rangers to Hunter Army Air Field. To aid Mr. Motley and the CPF in political reconstruction, USREDCOM sent an "augmentation support package" of engineers, PSYOPS teams, military police, civil affairs teams, signal troops, military intelligence personnel, medics, and part of an aviation battalion to Grenada.¹³⁴

Treatment and classification of Cuban prisoners had become a pressing issue. The Army Operations Deputy, Lieutenant General Fred K. Mahaffey, USA, advised the other services' Operations Deputies that captured Cubans should be reclassified as "prisoners of war" rather than "personnel under protective custody." Speaking as the DOD's executive agent for the prisoner of war program, LTG Mahaffey explained that the term "prisoner of war" would accord the Cubans certain rights under the Geneva Convention, for example, the right to communicate with relatives. However, as LTG Merritt later explained, the Operations Deputies decided to retain the original classification to avoid even the slightest hint that the United States might be at war with Cuba.¹³⁵

Within the CSR CAT, J-5 officers recommended to GEN Vessey that Cuban prisoners be segregated according to rank to lessen command influence and permit more fruitful interrogations. The J-5 officers hoped that the results of interrogation would bolster their contention that six hundred prisoners were members of combat units sent to make Grenada into a Cuban military base. To preclude future charges of torture, the staff also recommended that prisoners be screened by medical experts and that reporters be allowed to interview them.¹³⁶

Earlier resistance convinced the JCS that the six hundred prisoners accounted for a little more than half of the Cubans present on the island. The Acting Chairman of the JCS, General John A. Wickham, Jr., USA, estimated that up to five hundred Cubans might have fled to Grenada's mountainous interior to wage guerrilla warfare. He asked ADM McDonald to submit a concept of operations for isolating and eliminating them.¹³⁷

Within eight hours, ADM McDonald submitted a revised plan for Grenada and the nearby northern island of Carriacou.

McDonald planned to redeploy the approximately five hundred Marines on Grenada back to their ship and leave peacekeeping operations on Grenada in the hands of the 82d Airborne Division and the CPF. The CPF would assume responsibility for peace and order in the capital and its vicinity while the paratroopers conducted sweeps of the mountains to flush out any remaining pockets of resistance. On 1 November the Marine battalion landing team would make an amphibious assault upon Carriacou.¹³⁸ The JCS approved McDonald's concept.¹³⁹

The End of Combat Operations, 29 October - 2 November 1983

During the last five days of URGENT FURY, capture of Bernard Coard, Leon Cornwell, and Edward Layne and their incarceration on board the USS *Guam* virtually ended major organized resistance on Grenada. Reports of armed Cubans holding out on the nearby island of Carriacou turned planners' efforts in that direction. Meanwhile, movement of communist diplomats and Cuban prisoners continued to occupy VADM Metcalf, ADM McDonald, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

On 29 October, shortly after paratroopers surrounded the Cuban embassy, a Cuban diplomat handed the US commander a note signed the previous day by the Cuban ambassador to Grenada, Jullian Torrez Rizo. In the note, the ambassador explained that his government had ordered him to depart the island and to leave behind his staff for evacuation by the US military forces. General Trobaugh passed the note to a State Department representative. Washington policymakers decided that evacuation would wait until US troops had dealt with all Cuban fighters.

Moreover, arrangements with the Red Cross and third country intermediaries for repatriation had not been worked out.¹⁴⁰

Following consultation with the State Department, the JCS sent further guidance on third country nationals to VADM Metcalf and MG Trobaugh. Diplomats and their dependents from Cuba, the Soviet Union, North Korea, Eastern Europe, and Libya would be allowed to leave immediately once their passports had been validated. Persons with questionable passports, along with captured Cuban combatants, would be interrogated, photographed, and held until hostilities had ceased and arrangements for their repatriation had been concluded.¹⁴¹

By 29 October, URGENT FURY had attained its initial objectives of rescuing and evacuating 599 US citizens and 121 foreigners and defeating Cuban and Grenadian armed forces. However, installation of a non-Marxist government and protection of that government from Cuban-sponsored guerrilla warfare remained to be done. Paramount among the remaining tasks was the operation against Carriacou proposed on 28 October. Other tasks included redeployment of MARG 1-84 and the *Independence* battle group; promotion of Grenadian stability when the new government assumed control; detention and care of prisoners pending their release; and continued collection of captured supplies, weapons, and documents.¹⁴²

Conferring with ADM McDonald, VADM Metcalf and MG Trobaugh on board the USS *Guam*, General Vessey noted the concern that a sizable number of armed Cubans or Grenadians were regrouping for guerrilla operations. He asked Trobaugh what action had been taken against the reported Grenadian guerrilla training camp at Grand Etans in the hills of central Grenada. Trobaugh replied that one of his battalion commanders had conducted an aerial reconnaissance of the area, but that he had found nothing.

Operations to date and the information found in captured documents convinced Trobaugh that neither the Grenadians nor the Cubans had any plans to start an insurgency; they had buried weapons simply to conceal the extent of the communist arms buildup in Grenada. Leaving the *Guam*, Vessey, McDonald, and Trobaugh flew to Point Salines, the scene of the most intense fighting. Seeing Cuban prisoners held in the hot sun in a barbed wire enclosure on a macadam parking lot, Vessey told McDonald and Trobaugh to get the prisoners under shade immediately and to make certain they were treated humanely.¹⁴³

On 31 October, while Trobaugh's men scoured Grenada's highlands, VADM Metcalf directed Operation DUKE, an amphibious operation against Carriacou. That evening the Marines of Task Force 124 boarded the USS *Saipan* and departed Grenada for their new mission. At 0530 on 1 November, under cover of eight Air Force A-10s, the Marines landed unopposed and, in less than three hours, occupied all objectives. They captured seventeen members of the Grenadian Army and a quantity of military equipment including rifles, radios, explosives, ammunition, jeeps, a truck, and a generator, but they found no Cubans. On 2 November, paratroopers relieved the Marines who reboarded the USS *Saipan* and returned to the fleet.¹⁴⁴

Late in the afternoon of 2 November, after redeploying both MARG 1-84 and the *Independence* battle group to the Middle East, ADM McDonald designated MG Trobaugh, "Commander, Combined Forces, Grenada." The combat phase of URGENT FURY had ended. Secretary Weinberger ordered Trobaugh to continue reconstruction with the goal of withdrawing all US troops as soon as the new government could stand on its own. The 82d Airborne Division reached a peak strength of more than six thousand troops in Grenada on 3

November, but began redeploying almost immediately. The last battalion flew back to Fort Bragg on 12 December.¹⁴⁵

Nearly eight thousand soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines had participated in URGENT FURY along with 353 Caribbean allies of the CPF. US forces had sustained 19 killed and 116 wounded; Cuban forces lost 25 killed, 59 wounded and 638 personnel captured. Grenadian forces casualties were 45 killed and 358 wounded; at least 24 civilians were killed. On 10 November in recognition that US forces on Grenada had "encountered foreign armed opposition that included heavy small arms, machine guns, and antiaircraft artillery," the Joint Chiefs of Staff made all military participants in URGENT FURY eligible to receive the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.¹⁴⁶

Chapter 4

Assessment of URGENT FURY

Public questions and criticism of the need for URGENT FURY surfaced during the operation and continued well into 1984. During URGENT FURY, spokesmen for the Defense Department and the JCS responded immediately to such questions. General Vessey detailed the reasons for URGENT FURY in a backgrounder to the press on 29 October. On 2 November, Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth W. Dam and MajGen Crist explained the operation to the House Foreign Affairs Committee while ADM McDonald and General Paul Gorman, USA, the Commander in Chief of US Southern Command, provided a similar briefing to the Senate Armed Services Committee.¹⁴⁷

As criticism mounted, GEN Vessey recognized the need to conduct thorough inquiries into various aspects of the operation. He began with the press embargo. During the interview on 6 November with "Meet the Press," the Chairman stated that, due to the unexpected intensity of Cuban resistance and the needs of operational security, military leaders had denied reporters access to Grenada until the third day of the operation. To review the problem of balancing legitimate news coverage with troops safety General Vessey announced the formation of a commission of military and media experts. Under the chairmanship of a former Army public affairs chief, Major General Winant Sidle, USA (Ret), and consisting of eight media representatives and six military officers, the commission would recommend creation of a media pool of selected reporters who would, on short notice and in secrecy, be called to accompany joint task forces either for training exercises or on real joint military operations.¹⁴⁸

On 8 November, members of the House Appropriations Committee questioned Secretary Weinberger and General Paul X. Kelley, USMC, Commandant of the US Marine Corps, about the press embargo and joint tactical planning and execution. To find detailed answers to the issues raised, GEN Vessey ordered the Joint Staff and USCINCLANT to conduct separate investigations into URGENT FURY planning procedures, operations security, command and control, PSYOPS, public affairs, and politico-military affairs. The Joint Staff submitted a draft report in January 1984; ADM McDonald's report followed a month later.¹⁴⁹

Creation of the Joint Staff report was assigned to Colonel George W. Kirschenbauer, USA, Chief of the Planning System Branch, Operations Plans Division, J-3; Kirschenbauer's report was submitted to LTG Prillaman, the J-3, in January 1984. After revision, the J-3 submitted the report to the Operations Deputies on 22 February 1984. Finalized under the supervision of Colonel Kirschenbauer's successor, Captain Michael J. Harris, USN, "The Joint Overview of Operation URGENT FURY" was submitted to the Operations Deputies on 1 May 1985.¹⁵⁰

During an appearance on "Meet the Press" on 6 November 1983, General Vessey candidly summarized URGENT FURY in these words:

"We planned the operation in a very short period of time--in about 48 hours. We planned it with insufficient intelligence for the type of operation we wanted to conduct. As a result we probably used more force than we needed to do the job, but the operation went reasonably well. ...Things did go wrong, but generally the operation was a success. The troops did very well..."¹⁵¹

To improve the planning and execution of future joint contingency operations, the Joint Staff studied the operation to learn how a

"very short period of time" for planning and "insufficient intelligence" caused some "things [to] go wrong."

The 21 October news report that US warships had been diverted to Grenada drastically limited the time available for planning. Intelligence reports that Fidel Castro had sent an army colonel to organize the defense of Grenada raised the possibility that, if the United States did not act quickly, the Cubans and Grenadians would hold the US students hostage and fight attempts to evacuate them. President Reagan directed a military operation to avert either eventuality. Retaining the element of surprise required maximum secrecy in planning and preparation. To assure such secrecy, the JCS severely restricted access to operational planning, excluding planners from the Joint Deployment Agency and various intelligence and combat support agencies.

Faced with limited intelligence, GEN Vessey and the joint planners chose to use overwhelming force on Grenada. The objectives were diverse and the available Marine battalion landing team was not large enough to cover all targets. Rangers were available but too few in number. The 82d Airborne Division was also at hand and could provide the necessary reinforcement. Rangers, paratroopers, Marines--all had different equipment, transportation, and close air support. Combined for the first time, such an amalgam inevitably experienced problems with command and control, communications, and combat support.

Proper command and control of a joint task force with land, sea, and air components requires a truly joint headquarters. Within USLANTCOM, the Headquarters, US Forces Caribbean, provided a staff of officers from all services. However, USFORCARIB was located at Key West, Florida, a considerable distance from USLANTCOM headquarters, Norfolk, Virginia. To save time in coordinating and to maintain tight operational security, ADM McDonald chose instead Second Fleet headquarters as the

headquarters for the CJTF 120. Collocated with ADM McDonald's headquarters in Norfolk, Second Fleet had operational forces at its disposal; USFORCARIB was only a headquarters. USCINCLANT did add Army officers to Second Fleet headquarters during the last two days of the planning, but in the opinion of the Joint Staff, the new headquarters still lacked needed ground and air expertise. Hence, the first few days of URGENT FURY saw uncoordinated ground operations by Rangers and Marines and the absence of unified air support.¹⁵²

Lack of interoperable communications exacerbated systemic lack of command and control. Here again short planning time and excessive security were contributory factors. Faced with the sudden transformation of a noncombatant evacuation operation into a joint combat operation, communications planners hurriedly made adjustments in their systems, but ran out of time before they could supply the same Communications Electronics Operating Instructions (CEOI), codes, and communications security procedures to all the combatants. Critically, communications planners were unable to provide tactical forces with compatible communications equipment. Navy radios could not communicate with the Vinson secure radio equipment used by the Army units, delaying and complicating requests for naval air and naval gunfire support. Soldiers in sight of warships delayed operations until distant Air Force gunships and Army helicopters could be summoned.

The pre-D-Day exclusion of several types of planners impeded the operation's logistical flow, civil-military relations, and public affairs. Inadequate logistics planning delayed arrival of troops, supplies, and fuel on Grenada after D-Day. To compensate, troops took needed items from local businesses or homes. Shortage of medical personnel and confusion over Medevac procedures sometimes held up treatment of the injured. Army

helicopter pilots carrying wounded men had to learn the techniques for landing on naval vessels. Lack of civil affairs and public health personnel meant that combat troops had to be diverted to perform these tasks. During the early stages of URGENT FURY, PSYOPS units were not on hand to urge Grenadian cooperation with US forces. Public affairs planners in the Pentagon did not have time to organize a pool of reporters to cover the Rangers and Marines on D-day. Lack of such coverage created ill will among the US media who complained about suppression of the public right to know.

Despite deficiencies in planning and intelligence that complicated tactical execution, the Joint Staff termed the operation a success:

Guidance and policy were concise and clear as were the orders given by the NCA, the JCS, the CINC, and the JTF Commander to the forces involved. The clearly defined Rules of Engagement permitted mission effectiveness with minimal civilian casualties. ... Although time available for planning the operation was constrained, the plan which evolved made the best use of the forces allocated, and their capabilities, training, and readiness. The procedures established for crisis situations generally proved adequate for ... highly sensitive and time critical requirements. The military personnel assigned ... especially those who had joint tour experience, were very effective. ... Lastly, ... the NCA and JCS (and their staffs) permitted the chain of intervention ... to use their experience, expertise, and familiarity with the situation to accomplish the mission.¹⁵³

NOTES

While the text of this study has been declassified, some of its sources remain classified.

Overview

¹ National Security Decision Directive (NSDD) 105, 4 Oct 83, TS, JMF 001 (CY 1983); US Department of State and Department of Defense, "Grenada: A Preliminary Report," 16 Dec 83, U, pp. 5-6; Baltimore Sun, 26 Oct 83, p. 8; Msg, State 307725, 280507Z Oct 83, S, J-5/Western Hemisphere (WHEM) Files.

² LTG Richard L. Prillaman, USA, Director of Joint Operations (J-3), interviewed by Dr. Ronald H. Cole, 9 Feb 83, S, Joint History Office (JHO) Files; Philadelphia Enquirer, 26 Oct 83, p. 14; NY Times, 26 Oct 83; Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 200616Z Oct 83, S, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, CJCS Files; Msg, State to JCS 200632Z Oct 83, S, UF Master Scenario Events List (MSEL), J-3/JOD Files.

³ Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 200616Z Oct 83, S, UF Opns Files, J-3/JOD Files; URGENT FURY Log Book, 201400Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1; DIA Assessment, Tab A to J-5 Point Paper for CJCS for SSG Mtg on 20 Oct 83, "Grenada," TS, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; GEN John W. Vessey, USA, CJCS, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 25 Mar 87, S, JHO Files; J-3 Background Paper for CJCS, 2 Nov 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; VADM Arthur S. Moreau, Jr., Asst to CJCS, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 12 Jul 84, TS, JHO Files; Col James W. Connally, USAF, J-5/WHEM, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 25 Jun 84, S, JHO Files.

⁴ Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; Connally Interview; Moreau Interview; Msg, JCS/CJCS to USCINCLANT, CINCMAC, USCINCRD, CDRJSOC, 211755Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Prillaman Interview; LTG Jack N. Merritt, USA, DJS, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 21 Jun 84, S; JHO Files; Msg, JCS/CJCS to CINCSAC, 230242Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT, CJCS Files.

⁵ DOS and DOD Preliminary Report, 16 Dec 83, U, p. 2; Newsweek, 7 Nov 83, p. 75; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1; MajGen George Crist, USMC, VDJS, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 16 Feb 84, S, JHO Files; Msg, State 307725 to All Dip. And Consular Posts, 280507Z Oct 83, U, J-5/WHEM Files; Draft NSDD, 23 Oct 83, TS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files; NY Times, 26 Oct 83, p. 18; CJCS Backgrounder, 1730, 29 Oct 83, U, CJCS Files; Talking Paper (TP) for CJCS for Mtg of National Security Policy Group (NSPG) on 22 Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; J-3 Backgrounder for CJCS, 2 Nov 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, CJCS to JCS et al, 222054Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Vessey Interview.

⁶ Draft NSDD, 23 Oct 83, TS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview; Vessey Interview; DIA Assessment by Col Peter Cummings, USAF, Asst to DepDir for CI, 22 Oct 83, S-NF, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 232242Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD, Opnl Msg File (URGENT FURY) as cited in UF MSEL; URGENT FURY Log Book, 24 Oct 83, TS-SENS, J-3/JOD Files.

⁷ Briefing on USLANTCOM Plan URGENT FURY, n.d., TS, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, USCINCLANT to CINCMAC et al, 240007Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT, URGENT FURY Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; Vessey Interview.

⁸ Crist Interview; Merritt Interview; Briefing on USLANTCOM Plan for URGENT FURY, n.d., TS, J-3/JOD Files; Moreau Interview; LTG H. Norman Schwarzkopf, USA, DCSOPS, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 15 Dec 87, S, JHO Files; Memo, MajGen Crist to GEN Vessey and ADM McDonald, 23 Oct 83, TS-SENS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files.

⁹ Prillaman Interview; Moreau Interview; Vessey Interview.

¹⁰ Grenada Update Briefing for OpsDepts, 24 Oct 83, TS-SENS, Sec 1, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview; Merritt Interview; Vessey Interview; Schwarzkopf Interview; MAJ Bruce Pirnie, USA, Operation URGENT FURY: The United States Army in Joint Operations (Washington: USA Center of Military History, 1986), S, pp. 73-74.

¹¹ Operations Planning Group (OPG) Outline of Operations on Grenada, Final Update, 1500, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files; Schwarzkopf Interview; LtCol Ronald H. Spector, USMCR, US Marines in Grenada, 1983 (Washington, USMC History and Museums Div, 1987), pp. 8-9; CJCS Backgrounder to the Press, 29 Oct 83, U; GEN Vessey, Interview with "Meet the Press," 6 Nov 83, U, CJCS Files; Army Times, 5 Nov 84, p. 34; Minutes of JCS Mtg, by Col David H. Roe, USAF, Spec Asst on Jt Matters to DJS, 25 Oct 83, TS, JHO Files; Crist Interview; DOS and OD, "Preliminary Report," 16 Dec 83, U, p. 27; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; URGENT FURY Log Book, 240030Z and 250045Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 250701Z Oct 83, S; Msg, JCS to Army, 250717Z Oct 83, S; UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, State to JCS, 251722Z Oct 83, S, UF, Opnl Msg File, GF-3, J-3/OPD Files; Pirnie, Operation URGENT FURY, S, pp. 119-120; Telecon, JCS-USMC, 251900Z Oct 83, TS, UF MSEL, J-3/OPD Files; Vessey Interview.

¹² Schwarzkopf Interview; Pirnie, Operation URGENT FURY, S, pp. 119-120; Spector, US Marines in Grenada, 1983, pp. 10-11; CAPT Michael F. O'Brien, USN, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 19 Nov 87, S, JHO Files; During URGENT FURY O'Brien led Attack Squadron (VA) 87 on sorties from the USS *Independence*; OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files; Telecon, JCS-USMC, 251900Z Oct 83, TS, UF MSEL, J-3/OPD Files.

¹³ Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; Analysis of the Lind Report, 1 May 1984, S, CJCS Files; Army Times, 5 Nov 84, p. 34; Schwarzkopf Interview; Baltimore Sun, 5 Jun 84, p. 7; Vessey Interview; OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U; Msg, USCINCLANT to COMJTF 120, 271622Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; James Kitfield, Prodigal Soldier (NY, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1995), p. 266.

¹⁴ URGENT FURY Log Book, 260209Z Oct 83, TS; Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 260611Z Oct 83, S; Msg, USCINCLANT to XVIII Abn Corps, 261210Z Oct 83, S, UF Opnl Msg File, GF-4, J-3/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, Memo, JCS to J-3, 262500Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-3/OPD Files; Merritt Interview; Msg, MajGen Crist to JCS, 262100Z Oct 83, S, Sec II, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY); OPSUM, URGENT FURY, for Congressional Delegation, prepared for COL Cullom, 2 Nov 83, S, UF File, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, CJTF 120 to USCINCLANT, 270030Z Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; Crist Interview; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 270313Z Oct 83, Sec 1, J-3 Chronology, S, URGENT FURY, J-3/OPD Files; Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 270946Z Oct 83, and reply 272245Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, Opnl Msg File, GF-5, J-3/JOD Files; Mins of JCS Mtg, by Col David H. Roe, USAF, Spec Asst on Joint Matters to DJS, 27 Oct 83, TS, JHO Files; Msg, SecDef to USCINCLANT, 261815Z Oct 83, and reply, 270517Z Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; Msg, SecDef to JCS, 271354 Oct 83, S, UF Opnl Msg File, GF-5, J-3/JOD Files.

¹⁵ President Ronald Reagan's interview by reporters at the White House of 25 Oct 83, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 31 Oct 83, p. 1487; Prillaman Interview; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S; GEN Vessey, interviewed on "Meet the Press," 6 Nov 83, U, CJCS Files; Vessey Interview; Ltr, GEN John W. Vessey, Jr., USA (Ret) to BG David A. Armstrong, USA (Ret), Director for Joint History, OJCS, 1 Sep 96, U, JHO; hereafter Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.

¹⁶ Vessey Interview with "Meet the Press"; Vessey Interview; J-3/OPD Joint Overview, 1 May 85, S, JHO Files.

¹⁷ Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files (See updated J-3 casualty chart in historian's files); Major Mark Adkin, URGENT FURY: The Battle for Grenada (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1989), p. 309; Michael Clodfelter, Warfare and Conflicts: A Statistical Reference to Casualty and Other Figures, 1618-1991, Vol II (London: McFarland, 1991), p. 1180.

¹⁸ Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.

Chapter 1

The Crisis

¹⁹ NSDD 105, 4 Oct 83, TS, JMF 001 (CY 1983).

²⁰ US Department of State and Department of Defense, "Grenada: A Preliminary Report," 16 Dec 83, U, p. 5. (Hereafter DOS and DOD, Preliminary Report, 16 Dec 83, (U); Baltimore Sun, 26 Oct 83, p.8.

²¹ DOS and DOD Preliminary Report, 16 Dec 83, U, pp. 5-6; NSDD 105, 4 Oct 83, TS, JMF 001 (CY 1983).

²² Msg, State to JCS, 172144Z Oct 83, S, URGENT FURY (hereafter UF), Opnl Msg File, GF-1, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, State 307725 to All Dip. and Consular Posts, 280507Z Oct 83, U, URGENT FURY File (hereafter UF File), J-5 WHEM Files (hereafter Msg State 307725, 280507Z Oct 83, J-5/WHEM Files); DOS and DOD, Preliminary Report, 16 Dec 83, U, pp. 31-36; Transcript, DepSecState and VDJS before House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International, Security, Scientific, and Western Hemisphere Affairs, "Situation in Grenada," 2 Nov 83, U, CJCS Files.

²³ Msg, State 307725, 280507Z Oct 83, J-5/WHEM Files; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1.

²⁴ Connally Interview.

²⁵ URGENT FURY Log Book, J-3/JOD, 14 Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, "Opn URGENT FURY (U)," Jan 83, S, J-3/OPD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, "Opn URGENT FURY (U)," 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; (hereafter Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files.)

²⁶ SM-356-75 to CINCs, 27 Jun 75, C, JMF 040 (11 Jan 74) Sec 11; Briefing Paper for SecDef for DEF/JCS Mtg on 9 Jun 81, "Unified Command Plan of 1975," n.d. [before 8 Jun 81], JCS 1259/905, S, JMF 040 (1 Dec 80).

²⁷ URGENT FURY Log Book, 14 Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files.

²⁸ Merritt Interview; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1.

²⁹ Connally Interview; Moreau Interview.

³⁰ Moreau Interview.

³¹ J-3 Background Paper for CJCS for CINC's Mini-Conference on 2-3 Nov 83, atch to DJSM 1839-83, TS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files (hereafter J-3 Background Paper for CJCS, 2 Nov 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files).

³² Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-5/OPD Files.

³³ This contingency plan, like those of other unified commands, fulfilled a JCS requirement spelled out in the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan [JSCP (FY 83), Vol I] in SM-125-82 to CINCs, 12 Feb 83, JCS 1844/718, TS, JMF 510 (12 Feb 83) Sec 2.

³⁴ Prillaman Interview.

³⁵ Historical Report of the Commander in Chief, Atlantic, 1981, S-NOFORN, pp. V-2 to V-3; Philadelphia Enquirer, 26 Oct 83, p. 14; NY Times, 26 Oct 83, p. 22; Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 200616Z Oct 83, S, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files.

³⁶ Msg, State to JCS 200632Z Oct 83, S, UF Master Scenario Events List (hereafter MSEL), J-3/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview.

³⁷ Msg, State to JCS, 200632Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview.

³⁸ Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 200616Z Oct 83, S, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files.

³⁹ URGENT FURY Log Book, 201400Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1.

⁴⁰ J-5 Point Paper for CJCS for SSG Mtg on 20 Oct 83, "Grenada," 20 Oct 83, TS, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files.

⁴¹ Background Paper for SSG Mtg on 20 Oct 83 (prepared by State Department), "Grenada," 20 Oct 83, TS, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files. Four years later, when asked about Secretary Shultz's briefing to the SSG on 20 October 1983, General Vessey expressed serious doubt that the Secretary had specifically discussed

military operations at that time: "Secretary Shultz would have been embarrassed to discuss the specifics of military operations with us [the military] as it was really not his place to do so." Vessey Interview.

⁴² J-3 Background Paper for CJCS, 2 Nov 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; DIA Assessment, Tab A to J-5 Point Paper for CJCS for SSG mtg on 20 Oct 83, "Grenada," 20 Oct 83, TS, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; Vessey Interview; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.

⁴³ Moreau Interview; Connally Interview.

⁴⁴ Moreau Interview; Connally Interview; Draft of SecDef Remarks on Grenada, 28 Oct 83, TS-SENS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY); Msg, CINCLANTFLT to COMSECONDFLEET, 210040Z Oct 83, S, UF Opns File; J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1; NY Times, 26 Oct 83, p. 18.

Chapter 2

Planning and Preparation, 21-24 October 1983

⁴⁵ Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files.

⁴⁶ Connally Interview; Moreau Interview.

⁴⁷ Msg, JCS/CJCS to USCINCLANT, CINCMAC, USCINCRED, CDRSOC, 211755Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files.

⁴⁸ Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Prillaman Interview.

⁴⁹ Merritt Interview; Msg, JCS/CJCS to CINCSAC, 230242Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT, CJCS Files.

⁵⁰ Response of GEN Vessey to Congress, "Analysis of the Lind Report (U)," 1 May 84, S, pp. 1-5. (This response was subsequently declassified, with minor changes and published as an article by Benjamin F. Schemmer, entitled "JCS Reply to Congressional Reform Caucus' Critique ["Lind Report"] of the Grenada Operation," Armed Forces Journal, Jul 84, p. 14.); CJCS Backgrounder to the Press, 1730, 29 Oct 83, U, CJCS Files; Merritt Interview; Crist Interview; Moreau Interview; Connally Interview; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.

⁵¹ Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, and Response of GEN Vessey to Congress, "Analysis of the Lind Report," 1 May 84, S, pp. 1-5, CJCS Files.

⁵² DOS and DOD, Preliminary Report, 16 Dec 83, U, p. 2; Newsweek, 7 Nov 83, p. 75; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1.

⁵³ Crist Interview; Msg, State 307725 to All Dip. and Consular Posts, 280507Z Oct 83, U, J-5/WHEM Files; Draft NSDD, 23 Oct 83, TS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1; NY Times, 26 Oct 83, p. 18; Newsweek, 7 Nov 83, p. 75.

⁵⁴ Msg, State 307725 to All Dip. and Consular Posts, 280507Z Oct 83, U, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; CJCS Backgrounder, 1730, 29 Oct 83, U, CJCS Files; NY Times, 26 Oct 83, p. 18; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1.

⁵⁵ TP for CJCS for Mtg of NSPG on 22 Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; Crist Interview.

⁵⁶ J-5 TP for CJCS for Mtg to NSPG on 22 Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files.

⁵⁷ Msg, State 307725 to All Dip. and Consular Posts, 280507Z Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files.

⁵⁸ J-3 Background Paper for CJCS, 2 Nov 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, CJCS to JCS et al., 222054Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Washington Post, 6 Nov 83, p. A1; NY Times, 26 Oct 83, p. 18; Vessey Interview.

⁵⁹ Msg, CJCS to JCS USCINCLANT, CINCMAC, USCINCRED, COMJSOC, 222054Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT PIERCER, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, USCINCRED to USCINCLANT, 192100Z Nov 83, S, J-3/OPD Files.

⁶⁰ Msg, JCS/CJCS to CINCSAC, 230242Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT, CJCS Files; History of the Strategic Air Command, 1983, TS, p. 183.

⁶¹ Vessey Interview.

⁶² DIA Assessment by Col Peter Cummings, USAF, Asst to DepDir for CI, 22 Oct 83, S-NF, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files.

- ⁶³ Crist Interview.
- ⁶⁴ Merritt Interview.
- ⁶⁵ Bfg on USLANTCOM Plan URGENT FURY, n.d., TS, J-3/JOD Files; Moreau Interview; Schwarzkopf Interview.
- ⁶⁶ Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 232242Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD, Opnl Msg File (URGENT FURY) as cited in UF MSEL; URGENT FURY Log Book, 24 Oct 83, TS-SENS, J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁶⁷ Bfg on USLANTCOM Plan URGENT FURY, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Moreau Interview.
- ⁶⁸ Other ships in CJTF 124 included the *Trenton*, *Fort Snelling*, *Manitowoc*, and *Barnstable County*.
- ⁶⁹ The group included the *Independence*, *Richmond K. Turner*, *Caron*, *Clifton Sprague*, *Coontz*, and *Moosbrugger*.
- ⁷⁰ URGENT FURY Task Force and Command Structure, Sec 1, TS, J-3 Chron File, J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁷¹ Grenada Update Briefing for OpsDeps, 24 Oct 84, TS-SENS, Sec 1, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.
- ⁷² (S) Prillaman Interview; Moreau Interview; Vessey Interview; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.
- ⁷³ Prillaman Interview; Merritt Interview; Vessey Interview; Schwarzkopf Interview; MAJ Bruce Pirnie, USA, Operation URGENT FURY: The United States Army in Joint Operations (Washington: USA Center of Military History, 1986), S, pp. 73-74.
- ⁷⁴ Prillaman Interview; U.S. News and World Report, 14 Nov 83, p. 25.
- ⁷⁵ Vessey Interview.
- ⁷⁶ Msg, USCINCLANT to CINCMAC et al., 240007Z Oct 83, TS-SPECAT, URGENT FURY Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; Vessey Interview.
- ⁷⁷ Draft NSDD, 23 Oct 83, TS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview.
- ⁷⁸ Draft NSDD, 23 Oct 83, TS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁷⁹ Vessey Interview.
- ⁸⁰ Memo, MajGen Crist to GEN Vessey and ADM McDonald, 23 Oct 83, TS-SENS, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁸¹ DIA Intsum #8, 240040Z Oct 83, S, UF Opns File; Point Paper for J-3, "Grenada Situation Update," 24 Oct 83, S, Sec 1, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY); J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁸² Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 240040Z Oct 83, TS, UF Opnl Msg File, GF 2; Grenada Update Briefing for OpsDeps, 24 Oct 83, TS, Sec 1, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY); URGENT FURY Log Book, 241205Z Oct 83; J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁸³ Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 260036Z Oct 83, S, UF, MSEL, J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁸⁴ Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS File; Schwarzkopf Interview; MAC Study, URGENT FURY: The United States Air Force and the Grenada Operation, Jan 88, S, p. 29.
- ⁸⁵ Msg, MajGen Crist to JCS, 240815Z Oct 83, TS, Sec 1, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files. Crist Interview; Vessey Interview.
- ⁸⁶ Msg, CJCS to JCS, USCINCLANT, et al., 241643Z Oct 83; TS-SPECAT, UF Opns File, J-3/JOD Files; Crist Interview; Vessey Interview.
- ⁸⁷ Rpt, USCINCLANT To CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files.
- ⁸⁸ Crist Interview; Schwarzkopf Interview.
- ⁸⁹ CSR CAT Point Paper for J-5, "Current Situation Room Action Team (U)" n.d. [ca. 24 Oct 83], S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; Oral Order, J-3 to J-3/JOD, 241600Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-5/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview.
- ⁹⁰ CSR CAT Point Paper for J-5, "CSR CAT," n.d. [ca. 24 Oct 83], S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files.
- ⁹¹ J-3 Chronology of Events, 14 Oct-2 Nov 83, S, prepared by Maj Mike Moore, USAF, URGENT FURY Working Group/J-3/JOD Files (hereafter J-3 Chronology), S, URGENT FURY J-3/OPD Files).
- ⁹² Msg, USCINCLANT to XVIII Airborne Corps, 242030Z Oct 83, TS, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files.
- ⁹³ Vessey Interview.
- ⁹⁴ Ibid.

Chapter 3

Combat Operations, 25 October - 2 November 1983

⁹⁵ Operations Planning Group (OPG) Outline of Operations on Grenada, Final Update, 1500, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files (hereafter OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files); Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.

⁹⁶ Ibid; Schwarzkopf Interview; LtCol Ronald H. Spector, USMC, US Marines in Grenada, 1983 (Washington, USMC History and Museums Div., 1987), pp. 8-9.

⁹⁷ CJCS Backgrounder to the Press, 29 Oct 83, U; Interview, "Meet the Press" with GEN Vessey, 6 Nov 83, U, CJCS Files; Army Times, 5 Nov 84, p. 34.

⁹⁸ Minutes of JCS Mtg, by Col David H. Roe, USAF, Spec Asst on Jt Matters to DJS, 25 Oct 83, TS, JHO Files.

⁹⁹ Crist Interview; DOS and DOD, "Preliminary Report," 16 Dec 83, U, p. 27.

¹⁰⁰ Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files.

¹⁰¹ Crist Interview; Schwarzkopf Interview; URGENT FURY Log Book, 240030Z and 250045Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 250701Z Oct 83, S; Msg, JCS to Army, 250717Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Msg, State to JCS, 251722Z Oct 83, S, UF, Opnl Msg File, GF-3, J-3/OPD Files.

¹⁰² Schwarzkopf Interview; Pirnie, Operation URGENT FURY, S, pp. 114-115; Spector, US Marines in Grenada, 1983, p. 10.

¹⁰³ Schwarzkopf Interview; Pirnie, Operation URGENT FURY, S, pp. 119-120; Spector, US Marines in Grenada, 1983, pp. 10-11; CDR Michael F. O'Brien, USN, interviewed by Dr. Cole, 19 November 1987. During URGENT FURY, then CDR O'Brien led Attack Squadron (VA) 87 on sorties from the USS *Independence*. A published account of his combat experiences may be found in Timothy J. Christmann's "A Look Back: TacAir in Grenada," Naval Aviation News, Nov-Dec 85, pp. 6-9. OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files; Telecon, JCS-USMC, 251900Z Oct 83, TS, UF MSEL J-3/OPD Files.

¹⁰⁴ Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS 311824Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Transcript, testimony of SecDef and CMC before House Approp. Cmte, "Situation in Lebanon and Grenada," 8 Nov 83, S, JHO Files; NY Times, 1 Nov 83, p. L; Schwarzkopf Interview; O'Brien Interview. Clodfelter, Warfare and Armed Conflicts, p. 1180.

¹⁰⁵ OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files; Telecon, JCS-USMC, 251900Z Oct 83, TS, UF MSEL, J-3/OPD Files; Schwarzkopf Interview; Spector, US Marines in Grenada, 1983, pp. 12-16.

¹⁰⁶ Public Law 93-148, 7 Nov 73. This law required the President to withdraw troops within 60 days or less from any foreign military operation not previously authorized by Congress.

¹⁰⁷ Ltrs, Pres. Reagan to the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate, 25 Oct 83, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 31 Oct 83, pp. 1493-1494.

¹⁰⁸ Interview, President Reagan with reporters, White House, 25 Oct 83, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, 31 Oct 83, p. 1487.

¹⁰⁹ Prillaman Interview. Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S; "Meet the Press," with GEN Vessey, 6 Nov 83, U, CJCS Files; Vessey Interview; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.

¹¹⁰ OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Schwarzkopf Interview; Spector, US Marines in Grenada, 1983, p. 16.

¹¹¹ Crist Interview.

¹¹² (S) OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U, J-3/JOD Files; Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files. General Vessey found the lack of HUMINT about the medical campuses at Grand Anse and Lance aux Epines inexcusable. Before D-day, the president of the medical college was visiting in the United States. When interrogated about the layout of True Blue Campus near Point Salines, he provided much useful information. Neither the interrogators asked nor did he volunteer, however, intelligence about the campuses at Grand Anse or Lance aux

Epines. Hence, tactical commanders had to plan impromptu rescues for the two other campuses. Vessey Interview; Schwarzkopf Interview.

¹¹³ Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT et al., 261748Z Oct 83, S; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, CINCMAC, 436 MAW, 262105Z Oct 83, S; UF Opnl Msg File GF-4, J-3, URGENT FURY Log Book, 262223Z Oct 83, TS, J-3/OPD Files.

¹¹⁴ URGENT FURY Log Book, 260209Z Oct 83, TS, Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 260611Z Oct 83, S; Msg, CINCLANT to REDCOM, 260846 Oct 83, S; Msg, USCINCLANT to XVIII Abn Corps, 261210Z Oct 83, S; UF Opnl Msg File, GF-4, J-3/JOD Files; Prillaman Interview.

¹¹⁵ (S) Msgs: London 22996 to State, 261344Z Oct 83, C-SPECAT; London 23064 to State, 261806Z Oct 83, C; Ottawa 08009 to SecState, 261920Z Oct 83, C; J-5/WHEM Files. In fact, during the meeting with Ambassador McNeill and General Crist on Sunday night, 23 October, the leaders of the OECS, Jamaica, and Barbados had strongly opposed involving either the United Kingdom or the Commonwealth. For years, the Caribbean leaders had importuned both countries for intervention in Marxist Grenada only to be ignored. The leaders therefore preferred to go into Grenada either with the more sympathetic United States or on their own. Nonetheless, on 24 October President Reagan had belatedly informed Prime Minister Thatcher of the impending operation in an effort to enlist her support if not participation. Before Thatcher could respond, D-day arrived and the operation went off as scheduled. Crist Interview.

¹¹⁶ Dept of State Bulletin, Dec 83, pp. 72-77.

¹¹⁷ Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 261302Z Oct 83, S, UF File; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 270317Z Oct 83, S, Sec I, J-3 Chronology; J-3/JOD Files; Msg, USCINCLANT to CJTF 120 info JCS 270722Z Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files.

¹¹⁸ Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S; Memo, JCS to J-3, 262500Z [sic] Oct 83, S, UF MSEL; J-3/OPD Files JCS; Merritt Interview.

¹¹⁹ Msg, MajGen Crist to JCS, 262100Z Oct 83, S, Sec II, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY); OPSUM, URGENT FURY, for Congressional Delegation, prepared for COL Cullom, 2 Nov 83, S, UF File; J-3/JOD Files; Msg, CJTF 120 to USCINCLANT, 270030Z Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; Crist Interview.

¹²⁰ Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, JHO Files; Analysis of the Lind Report, 1 May 1984, S; CJCS Files; An almost verbatim unclassified version of this analysis may be found in Armed Forces Journal, July 1984, pp. 12-14, 18, and 99. Also see Army Times, 5 Nov 84, p. 34; Schwarzkopf Interview.

¹²¹ An article in the Baltimore Sun (5 Jun 84, p. 7) alleged that GEN Vessey complained bitterly to MG Trobaugh on 27 October that: "We have two companies of Marines running all over the island and thousands of Army troops doing nothing. What the hell is going on?" Nearly four years later, Vessey neither recalled that remark nor asking MG Trobaugh to employ Rangers in a daytime assault role. In a letter to the JHO in 1996, GEN Vessey stated that "My memory of the events, a check of my phone log for that day, and my generally fairly scrupulous insistence that the existing chain of command be used, lead me to say that the assertion that I called Trobaugh is just, flat wrong, despite the Baltimore Sun article." Vessey Interview; OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U; Msg, USCINCLANT to COMJTF 120, 271622Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96. Concerning the "JCS order" to take Calivigny barracks before dark, no such order has been found in JCS records. Shortly after the operation, MG Schwarzkopf met with the Joint Staff and Service representatives. When he asked who had sent the order, LTG Prillaman, the J-3, replied that no one in the Joint Staff had sent such an order. Four years later, Schwarzkopf speculated that some staff officer at USCINCLANT headquarters used the phrase to emphasize Vessey's concern. Schwarzkopf Interview.

¹²² OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U; Msg, USCINCLANT to COMJTF 120, 271622Z Oct 83, S, UFMSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Rpt USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files; Major Mark Adkins, Urgent Fury (Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 1989), pp. 279-280.

- ¹²³ Pirnie, Operation URGENT FURY, S, pp. 148-151; Schwarzkopf Interview; O'Brien Interview.
- ¹²⁴ Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files.
- ¹²⁵ Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 270313Z Oct 83, Sec 1, J-3 Chronology, S, URGENT FURY, J-3/OPD Files; Msg USCINCLANT to JCS, 270946Z Oct 83, and reply 272245Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, Opnl Msg File, GF-5, J-3/JOD Files.
- ¹²⁶ Mins of JCS Mtg, by Col David H. Roe, USAF, Spec Asst on Joint Matters to DJ S, 27 Oct 83, TS, JHO Files.
- ¹²⁷ Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Msg, CINCMAC to JCS, 271012Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL; OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, U; Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 270314Z Oct 83, and reply, 270516Z Oct 83, S, UF Opnl Msg File, GF-5; J-3/JOD Files.
- ¹²⁸ NY Times, 5 Feb 84, p. 8.
- ¹²⁹ Philadelphia Inquirer, 28 Oct 83, p. 14.
- ¹³⁰ Baltimore Sun, 28 Oct 83, p. 10.
- ¹³¹ Msg, SecDef to USCINCLANT, 261815Z Oct 83, and reply, 270517Z Oct 83, S, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files; Msg, SecDef to JCS, 271354Z Oct 83, S, UF Opnl Msg File, GF-5, J-3/JOD Files; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.
- ¹³² (C) Msg, SecState to SecDef, 271858Z Oct 83, C, J-3 Chronology (Moore), S, URGENT FURY; J-3/OPD Files; Crist Interview. During the week after the combat phase of URGENT FURY ended on 2 November, and for the next four months, thousands of captured documents were sent to the DIA for exploitation and analysis. Within the National Military Intelligence Center of the Pentagon, DIA analysts screened the documents for those of immediate interest to the President, State, and CIA. During the next several weeks, thousands of other documents were catalogued and microfilmed for permanent retention. The original documents were sent back to the new government of Grenada. The documents are considered an invaluable source for studies of how the Soviet and the Cuban governments methodically established a "third world proxy." Interview, Dr. Cole with Mr. Roger Denk, DIA Management Office, 20 Apr 84, S, JHO Files.
- ¹³³ Crist Interview.
- ¹³⁴ Msg, JCS to AMEMB Kingston, JM, et al., 281214Z Oct 83, S; Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 281820Z Oct 83, S; Msg, USCINCLANT to CJTF 120, 281904Z Oct 83, S; WINMSG 130, USARMY to JCS, 282500 [sic] Oct 83, S, UF opnl Msg File, G-F's 4, 5, and 6; J-3/JOD Files; Army Times, 5 Nov 84, p. 34.
- ¹³⁵ Memo, LTG Mahaffey, DCS/OPS Army to DJS, 30 Oct 83, S, J-5/WHEM Files; Memo, JCS for CSA, 31 Oct 83, S, UF MSEL; J-3/OPD Files; Merritt Interview.
- ¹³⁶ J-5 Background Paper for CJCS, 28 Oct 83, TS, UF File, J-5/WHEM Files.
- ¹³⁷ Msg, Actg CJCS to USCINCLANT, 280140Z Oct 83, TS, Sec II, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files.
- ¹³⁸ Conf Memo, USCINCLANT, 280900Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files.
- ¹³⁹ Msg JCS 281811Z Oct 83 to USCINCLANT, S, Sec II, J-3 Chron File (URGENT FURY), J-3/JOD Files.
- ¹⁴⁰ URGENT FURY Log Book, 29 Oct 83, TS; Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS, 291916Z Oct 83, S, UF Opnl Msg File GF-7; J-4/JOD Files.
- ¹⁴¹ Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 300153Z Oct 83, S, UF Opnl Msg File, GF-8, J-3/JOD Files.
- ¹⁴² Msg, JCS to USCINCLANT, 291952Z Oct 83, Sec 1, J-3; Chronology, S, URGENT FURY, J-3/OPD Files.
- ¹⁴³ Rpt, USCINCLANT to JCS, 20 Oct 83, TS, UF MSEL, J-3/JOD Files; Vessey Interview; Ltr, GEN Vessey to BG Armstrong, 1 Sep 96.
- ¹⁴⁴ OPG Log, 291842Z Oct 83, S, UF MSEL; Msg, USCINCLANT to JCS 312346Z Oct 83, TS, UF Opnl File, GF-9; OPG Final Update, 2 Nov 83, J-3/JOD Files.
- ¹⁴⁵ JCSM-285-83 for SecDef, 10 Nov 83, JCS 2532/23, U, JMF 161 (2 Nov 83). Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPD Files; Interview, Dr. Cole with Mr. George MacGarrigle, Center of Military History, 20 Apr 84, U, JHO Files.

¹⁴⁶ JCSM-285-83 for SecDef, 10 Nov 83, JCS 2532/23, U, JMF 161 (2 Nov 83). Rpt, USCINCLANT to CJCS, 6 Feb 84, S, CJCS Files. Clodfelter, Warfare and Armed Conflict, p. 1180.

Chapter 4

Assessment of URGENT FURY

¹⁴⁷ CJCS Backgrounder, 29 Oct 83, U; Interv, "Meet the Press" with GEN Vessey, 6 Nov 83, U; Transcript, testimony of DepSecState Dam and MajGen Crist before House Foreign Affairs Committee, "Situation in Grenada," 2 Nov 83, U; CJCS Files; NY Times, 3 Nov 83, pp. 17 and 21.

¹⁴⁸ Interview, "Meet the Press," with GEN Vessey, 6 Nov 83, U, CJCS Files; Rpt, MG Winant Sidle (USA, Ret), to CJCS, 23 Aug 84, U, JHO Files.

¹⁴⁹ Draft Rpt for J-3, Jan 84, S, J-3/OPF Files; Merritt Interview.

¹⁵⁰ J-3/OPD Joint Overview, 1 May 1985, S, JHO Files.

¹⁵¹ Interview, "Meet the Press," with GEN Vessey, 6 Nov 83, CJCS Files. By "48 hours," General Vessey referred to "serious military planning," that is, joint tactical planning by the staffs of Admiral McDonald and Vice Admiral Metcalf after their receipt of the JCS execute order of 22 October 1983 (Msg 222054Z Oct 83, Q.V., p. 30.) Vessey Interview.

¹⁵² Four years later, General Vessey still agreed with the choice of Admiral Metcalf's Second Fleet to execute URGENT FURY. The general had visited USFORCARIB before the operation and found it too isolated and lacking in organic forces. He said, "It would have been as useful as an extra tit on a warthog. . . . It would have been the worst choice for an operational headquarters." Vessey Interview.

¹⁵³ J-3/OPD Joint Overview, 1 May 85, S, JHO Files.

INDEX

- Aerial surveillance: 3, 15, 27, 32, 59
- Aeromedical evacuation control center: 54
- Airborne Corps, XVIII: 14, 38-39, 43
- Airborne Division, 82d: 3, 4-5, 19, 20, 21-22, 29, 30, 35, 38-39, 43, 48-49, 51-52, 53, 56, 57-58, 60-61, 64
- Airborne troops: 2, 5, 16, 20, 23, 26
- Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) Detachment, 552d: 30
- Aircraft
 - A-7s: 4-5, 44, 52-53
 - A-10s: 60
 - C-130s: 3-4, 23, 26, 34-35, 41
 - E-3As: 30, 32
 - F-15s: 30, 32
 - KC-10s: 26
 - KC-135s: 26
 - UH-160s: 52-53
 - helicopters: 4, 23, 41, 44, 47-48, 51-53
 - loss of navigation system: 3-4, 41
 - Marine: 44
 - Navy: 44
 - transport: 26
- Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO): 4-5, 53
- American medical students in Grenada
 - evacuation of: 48, 54, 56, 59
 - planning for evacuation of: 1-2, 11-18, 20-21, 24-25, 28-29, 39
 - rescue of: 4, 42, 45, 46, 47-48, 75n112
 - threat to: 1, 11-13, 22, 24, 26, 33, 64
- Amphibious assaults: 21, 24, 35, 41, 45, 58, 60
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal: 61
- Atlantic Command (USLANTCOM): 1-2, 12-13, 14-16, 20, 21-22, 27, 28, 30, 31, 64
- Austin, GEN Hudson, Grenadian Armed Forces: 11, 56
- Aviation Battalion, 160th: 30
- Baltimore Sun*: 75-76n121
- Barbados Defense Force: 36, 37
- Barbados: 3, 10, 12-13, 22, 28, 29, 33, 34, 36, 37, 40, 54, 55, 75n115
- Bish, Milan: 12-13
- Bishop, Maurice: 1, 9, 10-11, 51, 55-56
- British Commonwealth: 25, 49, 75n115
- Brown, Richard: 13
- Bush, George: 2, 13, 16-17
- Calivigny Barracks, Grenada: 23, 24, 52-53, 75-76n121
- Canada: 49, 51, 54
- Captured documents: 50-51, 55-56, 59, 60, 76n132
- Captured equipment: 50, 59
- Caribbean Peacekeeping Force (CPF): 3, 5, 34, 35-38, 40, 43, 48, 50, 56, 57-58, 61
- Carriacou: 54, 57-58, 59, 60
- Castro, Fidel: 9, 17, 42-43, 64
- Casualties
 - American: 4-5, 6, 48, 53, 54, 61
 - civilian: 4, 6, 44, 50, 61
 - Cuban: 6, 53-54, 61
 - due to friendly fire: 53
 - Grenadian forces: 6, 61
 - minimization of: 26, 29, 32, 50
- Cavazos, GEN Richard E., USA: 31
- CBS: 20
- Censorship. *See* Press, relations with the.
- Central America: 10, 11-12, 17
- Central Intelligence Agency: 28, 35, 47, 50-51, 55-56, 76n132
- Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff: 2-3. *See also* Vessey, GEN John W., Jr., USA.
- Charles, Eugenia: 25-26
- Charleston AFB, SC: 48, 54
- Chief of Naval Operations (CNO): 19. *See also* Watkins, ADM James D., USN.
- Clifton Sprague*, USS: 35, 73n69
- Coard, Bernard: 11, 56, 58
- Comas, COL Pedro Tortola, Cuba: 42
- Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 120: 30, 32, 34-40, 43, 48, 65-66
- Commander in Chief, Military Airlift Command (USCINMAC): 14, 20, 26, 37, 48, 54
- Commander in Chief, Readiness Command (USCINCRD): 14, 26, 48-49
- Commander, Second Fleet: 3. *See also* Metcalf, VADM Joseph, III, USN.

Commander in Chief, Atlantic
 (USCINCLANT): 2-3, 5, 6, 7,
 12, 13-16, 19, 20, 21, 27, 32-
 33, 34-35, 36-37, 38-39, 48,
 52, 63, 65, 75-76*n*121. See
 also McDonald, ADM Wesley L.,
 USN.
 Commander in Chief, Strategic Air
 Command (USCINCSAC): 26-27
 Communications
 problems with: 4-5, 6, 51-52,
 53, 65, 66
 secret: 47
 security of: 2, 20, 27
 Connally, Col James W., USAF: 11-12
 Cornwall, MAJ Leon, Grenada: 22, 58
 Cowhill, VADM W. J., USN: 48
 Creft, Jacqueline: 11
 CRISEX '83: 18
 Crisis Action System: 12
 Crist, MajGen George B., USMC: 3,
 5, 28, 32-33, 34, 36, 37, 40,
 43, 47, 48, 50-51, 56, 63,
 75*n*115
 Cruz, Donald: 22
 Cuba
 captured documents: 50-51,
 76*n*132
 combat troops in Grenada: 19, 41
 construction in Grenada: 1, 10,
 13, 55-56
 deterrence of interference by:
 3, 17, 28-29, 30, 32, 33, 42
 threat to Central America: 10-12
 vessels: 13, 15, 17, 19
 Cuban nationals in Grenada
 armed: 15, 19, 21, 26, 41-43,
 57, 58-59, 65
 construction workers: 2, 10, 15,
 24, 27, 42, 55-56
 evacuation of: 5, 40, 50, 53, 59
 proposed disarmament of: 19, 20
 resistance from: 4, 19, 41-43,
 44, 46, 47-49, 51, 58, 70
 Current Situation Room Crisis Action
 Team (CSR CAT): 38, 50, 57

 Dam, Kenneth W.: 63
 Defense, Office of the Secretary of:
 38
 Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA):
 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 27, 34,
 76*n*132
 Defense Mapping Agency: 20
 Director of Central Intelligence:
 33
 Dominica: 10, 18
 Dover, DE: 48

Eagleburger, Lawrence S.: 16, 34

 Foreign nationals in Grenada: 1, 6,
 34, 58-59
 American. See American medical
 students in Grenada.
 British: 34
 Canadian: 49, 54
 Cuban. See Cuban nationals in
 Grenada.
 evacuation of: 5, 15, 40, 50,
 53-54, 59
 planning for the evacuation of:
 20-21, 29
 Soviet: 5, 19, 40, 50, 53, 58-59
 Fort Bragg, NC: 29, 43, 51-52, 61
 Fort Campbell, KY: 30
 Fort Frederick, Grenada: 4, 44, 47,
 49
 Fort Lucas, Grenada: 51
 Fort Rupert, Grenada: 11, 44
 Frequente, Grenada: 47, 49, 53

 Gairy, Eric: 9
 Geneva Convention: 57
 Gillespie, Charles A.: 22
 Goldwater-Nichols DOD Reorganization
 Act of 1986: 6
 Gorman, GEN Paul, USA: 63
 Grand Anse, Grenada
 beach: 24, 47-48, 49
 campus: 4, 42, 45, 46, 47,
 75*n*112
 Grand Etans, Grenada: 59
 Grand Mal Bay, Grenada: 45, 47, 49
 Grenada
 government of: 9-11, 36, 43
 Governor General of. See Scoon,
 Paul.
 political reconstruction of: 18,
 25, 33-34, 36, 50-51, 56, 59,
 60
 PSYOPS broadcasts to: 50-51
 Revolutionary Military Council:
 22
 terrain: 3, 9
 Grenadian People's Revolution- ary
 Army: 17, 60
 casualties: 6
 estimates of: 15, 21, 26, 27
 proposed disarmament of: 17, 19,
 20
 resistance by: 41, 47
 training for: 51
 Grenville, Grenada: 41, 45
 Guam, USS: 4, 30, 37, 41, 47-48,
 54, 55, 58, 59, 60
 Guantanamo Naval Base, Cuba: 53

Harris, CAPT Michael J., USN: 64
 Healey, Denis: 49
 Helicopters
 gunships: 51-52
 heliborne assaults: 41, 47-48, 52-53
 Marine: 44, 48
 Hunter Army Airfield, GA: 28-29, 41, 56

Independence, USS, battle group:
 16, 17-18, 19, 20, 24, 28-29, 30, 34, 42, 44, 51-52, 53, 59, 60, 73n69, 74n103

 Jamaica: 3, 22, 28, 29, 33, 37, 53, 75n115
 Jamaica Defense Force: 36, 37
 Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS): 5, 11-12, 47, 48-49
 and Calivigny Barracks: 52
 and Carriacou: 58
 Deputy Director for Political-Military Affairs: 20
 execute order: 35-37
 Logistics Directorate: 48
 and prisoners: 58
 Public Affairs Office: 20, 67
 response cell: 12, 15, 20, 28, 38
 role in planning: 3, 6-7, 13-14, 16, 19-20, 23-24, 26, 27-28, 30-31, 64-65, 67
 Special Operations Division: 28
 warning order: 13-14
 Joint Deployment Agency: 65
 Joint Information Board (JIB): 55
 "Joint Overview of Operation URGENT FURY, The": 64
 Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC): 4, 20
 forces: 20, 21, 23, 26, 28-29, 30, 35, 41, 43, 44
 and planning: 21-22
 Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan: 71n33
 Joint Task Force (JTF): 3, 6

 Kassebaum, Nancy: 54-55
 Kelley, GEN Paul X., USMC: 64
 Kirkpatrick, Jeane J.: 49-50
 Kirschenbauer, COL George W., USA: 64

 Lance aux Epines, Grenada: 48, 56, 75n112

Layne, Edward: 58
 Lebanon: 15-16, 17-18, 32, 38
 Lewis, Brig Rudyard, Barbadian Defense Force: 37, 43
 Libya: 59
 Logistical support for US allies: 28-29

 McDonald, ADM Wesley L., USN: 3, 4, 5-6, 13-16, 19, 21, 26, 27, 28-32, 33, 35-36, 37, 39, 40, 43, 48-49, 50-51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57-58, 59, 60, 63, 64, 65-66, 77n151
 McFarlane, Robert C.: 23, 32-33
 Mackmull, LTG Jack V., USA: 31
 McMahon, John: 16
 McNeill, Francis J.: 28, 32-33, 75n115
 McQuiston, CDR Michael K., USN: 12
 Mahaffey, LTG Fred K., USA: 57
 Marine Amphibious Ready Group (MARG)
 1-84: 15-16, 17-18, 19, 20, 28-29, 34, 59, 60
 2-83: 17-18
 Marine Amphibious Unit, 22d: 30
 "Meet the Press": 63, 64
 Merritt, LTG Jack N., USA: 12-13, 28, 57
 Metcalf, VADM Joseph, III, USN: 3, 4, 30, 32, 35, 36-37, 40, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47-48, 51, 52, 55, 58-59, 60, 77n151, 77n152
 Middendorff, J. William: 49
 Military Airlift Command (MAC): 21-22, 29, 30, 54
 Military intelligence
 and Carriacou: 54
 lack of: 35, 51
 for planning: 12, 14, 19, 21, 26, 64
 problems with: 15, 31-32, 63-64
 tactical: 15, 27, 29, 31-32, 34-35, 41, 51
 Mission statements: 1-2, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28-29, 33, 36
 Moreau, VADM Arthur S., Jr., USN: 13, 38
 Motley, Langhorne A.: 11-13, 16, 34, 56
 Multinational command arrangements: 36-37

 National Military Command Center: 12, 38, 50
 National Security Agency (NSA): 20
 National Security Council (NSC): 32-33, 38

Crisis Pre-Planning Group (CPPG): 16, 19, 38
 Regional Interagency Group: 11-13
 National Security Decision Directive (NSDD): 18, 19, 33
 National Security Planning Group (NSPG): 13, 23, 26, 32-33
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): 18
 North Korea: 59
 Nutting, GEN Wallace H., USA: 38-39

 O'Brien, CDR Michael F., USN: 74N103
 O'Neill, Thomas P. "Tip": 45
 Operation DUKE: 60
 Organization of American States (OAS): 25, 49-50
 Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States (OECS): 3, 10, 15, 22-26, 28, 29, 33, 36, 37, 43, 45, 75n115

 Parachute assaults: 3-4
 Peacekeeping forces: 19, 22, 28, 29, 34, 57-58. *See also* Caribbean Peacekeeping Force.
 Pearls, Grenada: 4, 23, 24, 29, 30-31, 34-35, 41, 43, 45
 Poindexter, RADM John M., USN: 16
 Point Salines, Grenada: 3-4, 37, 47, 49, 60
 airfield at: 10, 11, 15, 22, 24, 27, 29, 35, 51
 landings at: 30-31, 34-35, 41-43
 Pope Air Force Base, NC: 28-29
 Press, relations with the arrangements for: 14, 32, 55-56, 63
 banning of reporters: 5, 46, 54-55, 63-64, 657
 news leaks: 20, 34, 65
 Reagan and: 45-46, 54
 Prickly Bay, Grenada: 48
 Prillaman, LTG Richard L., USA: 12-14, 20, 31-32, 33, 38, 43, 49, 64, 75-76n121
 Prisoners
 capturing of: 42, 58
 Cuban: 5, 6, 42, 43, 53-54, 57, 58-59, 60, 61
 responsibility for: 37, 43, 48, 50, 52, 53, 57, 58, 59, 60
 treatment of: 60
 Property damage
 bombing of hospital: 44
 efforts to minimize: 29, 32, 50
 Psychological operations (PSYOPS): 38, 50-51, 67

Public relations. *See also* Press, relations with the.
 and CPF participation: 37-38
 CSR CAT and: 38, 50
 videotaping of operations: 36

 Radio Free Grenada: 50-51
 Ranger units: 2, 3-4, 14-15, 19, 20, 21-22, 23, 24, 26, 28-29, 30-31, 35, 41-43, 44, 48-49, 52-53, 56, 65, 66, 75-76n121
 1st Battalion: 23, 41
 2d Battalion: 23
 Readiness Command (USREDCOM): 16, 20, 30, 32, 38, 56
 Reagan, Ronald: 1, 7, 10, 13, 18, 23, 24, 32-33, 39-40, 45-46, 49, 54-55, 65, 75n115
 Red Cross: 58-59
 Refugees
 evacuation of: 48, 53
 Soviet: 5
 Richmond Hill Prison, Grenada: 34, 36, 51
 Rio Treaty: 25
 Robbins Air Force Base, GA: 26-27
 Roosevelt Roads Naval Air Station, PR: 26-27, 32, 54
 Royal Canadian Air Force: 54

 St. George's, Grenada: 4, 5, 13, 19, 23, 24, 29, 37, 41, 43-44, 47, 51, 56
 St. George's School of Medicine: 11
 Saipan, USS: 60
 Sapia-Bosch, Alphonso: 12

 Sarbanes, Paul: 54
 Scholtes, MG Richard A., USA: 35, 43
 Schwarzkopf, MG H. Norman, USA: 3, 4, 6, 31, 35, 37, 45, 47-48, 52, 75-76n121
 Scoon, Paul: 4, 5, 8, 22-26, 29, 43-44, 45, 47, 50-51, 56
 SEALs units: 4, 5, 23, 24, 34-35, 41, 43-44, 46
 Second Fleet: 3, 6, 30, 65-66, 77n152
 Secretary of Defense: 2-3, 7, 32-33, 55, 60, 64
 Secretary of State: 2, 33, 42. *See also* Shultz, George P.
 Security
 of communications: 2, 20, 27, 66
 operational: 63
 and planning: 2, 5-6, 28, 65, 66

Shultz, George P.: 2, 17, 23, 32-33, 34, 72n41
Sidle, MG Winant, USA (Ret): 63
Spain: 18
Special Situation Group (SSG): 2, 13, 16-18, 23, 72n41
State, US Department of: 1, 11, 22, 25-26, 28, 35, 38, 43, 48, 53, 58-59, 76n132
Strategic Air Command (SAC): 20, 30

Tactical Air Command: 14
Tactical boundaries (by Service): 3, 4, 30-31, 48
Tactical Fighter Wing, 33d: 30
Task Forces
 121: 30, 35, 43, 47
 123: 30, 34-35
 124: 30, 60, 73n68
 126: 30
Taylor, LTC Wesley B., USA: 41
Thatcher, Margaret: 49, 75n115
Thomson, Lt Gen Herman O., USAF: 38
Thurmond, Strom: 45
Torrez Rizo, Jullian: 58-59
Trobough, MG Edward, USA: 5, 35, 43, 47-48, 52, 58-59, 60, 75-76n121
True Blue campus: 4, 42, 46, 47, 75n112

Unified Command Plan: 12
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR): 9, 17, 24, 33, 47
 captured documents: 50-51, 55-56, 76n132
 equipment in Grenada: 27
 nationals in Grenada: 5, 19, 40, 50, 53, 55-56, 58-59
United Kingdom: 25, 43, 47, 49, 75n115
United Nations General Assembly: 49-50
United Nations Security Council: 25, 49-50
US Air Force: 14, 31, 60
US Army: 3, 14, 21-22, 31
US Congress: 33, 74n106
 banning of reporters: 5, 63-64
 consultation with: 25, 39, 45
 presentations to: 38
US Forces Caribbean (USFORCARIB): 16, 65-66, 77n152
US House of Representatives
 Appropriations Committee: 64
 Foreign Relations Committee: 63
US Information Agency: 43

US Marine Corps: 2, 3, 14-15, 19, 26, 48-49, 56, 57-58, 66, 75n121
 assaults by: 4, 5, 29, 41, 60
 battalion landing teams: 21, 23, 24, 30-31, 35, 45, 47, 51, 58, 65
US Navy: 19, 31
 air operations: 44, 51-52
 SEALS. See SEALS units.
 support for Rangers: 51-53, 66
US Senate
 Armed Services Committee: 63
 Foreign Relations Committee: 54-55

Vessey, GEN John W., Jr., USA: 2-3, 4, 6-7, 13-14, 23, 64, 71n41
 and banning of reporters: 5, 55, 64
 and Congress: 63, 64
 and operations: 33, 35-36, 38, 39-40, 42, 43, 46, 52, 59, 75-76n121
 and planning: 5-6, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21-22, 26-27, 28, 31, 65, 75n112, 77n151, 77n152
 and prisoners: 57, 60
Vietnam Heroica (Cuban vessel): 15, 19

War Powers Resolution: 25, 45, 74n106
Watkins, ADM James D., USN: 19
Weinberger, Caspar W.: 32-33, 55, 60, 64
Wickham, GEN John A., Jr., USA: 57

GRENADA
Showing Tactical
Phase Lines

Kilometers 0 1 2 3 4 5

Caribbean Sea



