

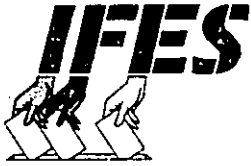
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**International Foundation for Electoral Systems**

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**The 1990 General  
Election in Grenada  
A Preliminary Analysis**

**July, 1989**

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by Dr. W. Marvin Will

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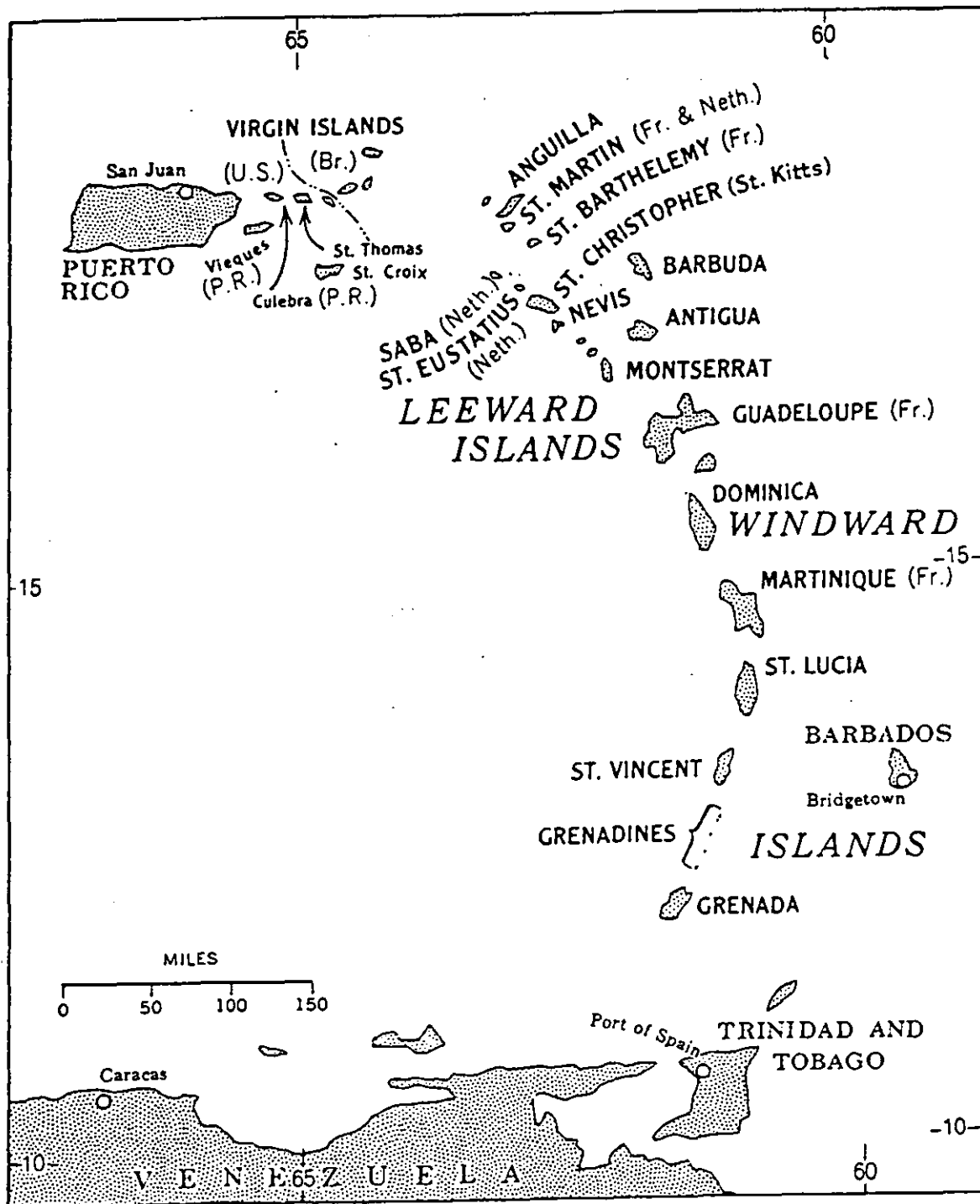
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FIGURE I



The Eastern Caribbean

**THE 1990 GENERAL ELECTION IN GRENADA:  
A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS**

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## THE 1990 GENERAL ELECTION IN GRENADA:

### A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

W. Marvin Will  
The University of Tulsa

#### A. INTRODUCTION

Grenada, the southernmost and the most densely populated state in the Windward Islands chain,<sup>1</sup> first garnered major popular attention in the United States--and in the world--on 25 October 1983 when forces from the U.S. joined with units from Jamaica, Barbados, and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to topple Grenada's three-year-old revolutionary government. This action, although popular among OECS states and in Grenada itself, was initially opposed by the Thatcher Government in the United Kingdom, by much of Hispanic America, and by the governments of four of the six largest states in the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) because of its circumvention of CARICOM and OAS procedures. This military action had the effect of perceptively establishing the U.S. as the important international actor in Grenada, an actor that played a significant role in structuring the island's post-revolutionary government. Thus, the Grenadian general election in 1990, the first national electoral test of the Island's post-revolutionary regime, is extremely important within the context of U.S. policy in the region not only in terms of electoral outcome, but even more so in regard to the U.S. role in the process of the actual electoral contest.

It is in the U.S. national interest to clearly comprehend the deeply rooted complexities of this upcoming election and to clearly and consistently support a fair and open contest. The initial task is understanding. This is not an easy mission.

#### B. GRENADA: AN OVERVIEW OF AN "UNSORTED" POLITY

Grenadians may have been ready to see their remaining blood-stained revolutionaries removed from office in 1983, observes the London-based Economist, but the country still "has not sorted out its odd politics" (18 February 1989, 46). Grenada's contemporary political system indeed appears unsorted. Until his death on 20 December 1989, 71-year-old Herbert Blaize tenaciously clung to the Prime Ministership of the New National Party (NNP) Government despite having been replaced as party leader by Keith Mitchell, a U.S.-trained economist, at the NNP convention in January of that year. In July 1989 Blaize further fragmented Grenadian politics by withdrawing his supporters from the NNP to form a new party, the National Party (NP), while retaining control of the government. In an effort to force Blaize's hand, Mitchell spent much of his first year at the helm of the NNP threatening to bring down the Blaize administration with a no confidence vote. Upon Blaize's death, Deputy Prime Minister Ben Jones assumed leadership of the newly formed party, the NP, and the Grenadian government.

Nor are these the only splinters in Grenadian party politics. In 1987 a 14-1 NNP parliamentary majority had been reduced to 9-6 as a result of cabinet and party resignations, resulting in formation of the National Democratic Congress (NDC) currently led by Nicholas Brathwaite, the Interim Prime Minister of Grenada during 1983-84. Some polls in mid-1989 suggest the NDC is the party to defeat in the 1990 general election--if, that is, any group can outpoll a highly personalist Grenada United Labour Party (GULP). GULP is made up of a mesmerized and deeply loyal, but increasingly senior, rural "crowd" still under the charismatic influence of the island's unchallenged labor leader, Eric Gairy. This leader's claim to international fame emanates from having been thrown out of office by both the British and the 1979 revolutionaries as a result of brutalities by his police force, fiscal and moral irregularities, and his alleged consortions with extraterrestrial phenomena.

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<sup>1</sup>Grenada is a volcanic island at the tip of the Windward chain, some 90 miles from Venezuela (see Figure I). It is 21 miles long x 10 miles wide (345 square km) and had an estimated population of 103,400 in 1987.

And if four major parties are not sufficient fragmentaion in Grenada, let us not overlook two remaining parties that view revolutionary social transformation via the ballot as the option for Grenadian development: 1) the Grenada People's Movement (GPM), a group that perceives national leadership needs as a cross between a New England Town Meeting and Moammar Gaddafi's Jamahiriyat; and 2) the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) that opts for closer ties with Cuba and the USSR but is largely underground and potentially subject to political blackmail. Although very minor parties, the votes of these groups may be crucial considering a predictable narrow plurality in this first-past-the-post system.

Although unusual and divergent from the norm among CARICOM states, these circumstances and events represent a pattern only slightly more "unsorted" than the last three centuries of Grenadian history itself! This status offers a major challenge to observers of electoral politics in Grenada, the Spice Island.

### **Imposed Division, Violence, and Rebellllon**

Grenada<sup>2</sup> was first sighted by Columbus and claimed for Spain in 1498 but quickly became the colonial pawn of Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century wars. Despite abortive settlements as early as 1608 (English) and 1638 (French), the indigenous Carib Indians were not forced to cede the Island until the mid-seventeenth century, at which time they were largely annihilated by French forces at la Morne des Sauteurs on the Island's north coast. During the next quarter century, African slaves were introduced to Grenada--with their numbers swelling from 525 in 1701 to 12,000 by 1753. Today the descendants of these slaves make up more than 99 percent of the estimated 103,400 population of the Island. Grenada was ceded to Britain in 1763 but in 1779, while the British were involved in events elsewhere in the Americas, the Island was recaptured by France. Four years later it was returned to the U.K. and remained under British control until independence in 1974 (Thorndike 1985a, 24-26; Thorndike 1985b, 791; EPICA, 7-20).

Discriminatory laws were often levied not only against natives and Afro-Americans in Grenada but also successively against "losing" English or French nationals. Early attempts at government were inordinately caught up in alternating cross-national demands for revenge or for justice (Richardson, 406). Slave rebellions were also more frequent than in most Caribbean countries, as exemplified by Julien Fedon's Rebellion near Grenville in 1783. Participants of these rebellions who were captured but not executed were frequently transported to the jungles of Central America where they were put ashore to fend for themselves with but a few days provisions.<sup>3</sup>

At the time of emancipation in 1834, many of the 24,000 Grenadian slaves moved from the plantations into the most rugged parts of the island's interior. As a result, Grenada has enjoyed a healthy level of peasant agriculture and a relatively small urban population, in contrast to islands such as Barbados, 100 miles to the east, where there was no rugged interior in which to seek shelter and where plantation work resumed after a day or two spent in celebration of the event. These early acts of defiance by oppressed indigenous and slave peoples strongly imprinted Grenada's popular culture.

### **Politics: An Authoritarian and Very Personalist Legacy**

Grenada--and many other smaller Caribbean islands--suffered inordinately from "the ravages of colonialism." While larger Caribbean territories such as Jamaica, Trinidad, or Barbados might be sent governor-generals who were sympathetic to popular causes, "the smaller islands would not get that cream of the crop, and more likely would have, as colonial administrators, the failed Oxford 'passman' [with his] own special brand of English racial superiority" (Lewis 1987, 9). Grenada appears to have received an especially bad lot of personalist governors who frequently projected authoritarian qualities of leadership (Singham; EPICA). Following installation of Crown colonial government in Grenada in 1877, an early Twentieth Century Grenadian journalist/labor leader, Theophilus Albert Marryshow, observed

---

<sup>2</sup>Columbus actually named the island "Concepción."

<sup>3</sup>The survivors of this harsh treatment often mixed with the indigenous indians of the coastal countries and the dark Miskito, Rama, and Suma English-speaking peoples of Nicaragua and Honduras are their descendants. Many of the Garifuna peoples of Guatemala and Belize may also be descendants of these ex-slaves.

that even in those uncommon circumstances when decent colonial representatives were present, they were to be pitied since it was the system of Crown Colony Government that should be damned (Shepard, 17; also Hintzen and Will, 287-88; Ashdown, 45)!

The Crown system in the CARICOM states also led to each state being governed by London as a separate microscopic unit. Most importantly, as a 1932 conference in neighboring Dominica concluded, local Crown Colony Governments provided environments in which local leaders were

powerless to mould policy, still more powerless to act independently, paralysed by the subconscious fear of impending repression and therefore bereft of constructive thought, the West Indies politician has hitherto been inclined to dissipate his energies in acute and penetrating but embittered and essentially destructive criticism of the government on which, nevertheless, he has waited for the initiation of all policies [for]...which he has expected to assume the full responsibility . . . . His political life has been overshadowed by a government too omnipotent and omnipresent, and has had little opportunity for independent growth (quoted by Lewis 1987, 10; also see Lewis, 1968, 153).

This was after Marryshow had pressured the British colonial office to increase the number of elected legislators in Grenada--to four of fourteen! The legacy of slavery, compounded by the limited population and geographic size of the islands, impeded the development of legitimate political institutions in Grenada. The imposition of arbitrarily led, often undemocratic, and potentially incongruent Crown governmental structures developed for much larger societies certainly did little to promote legitimate institutionalized authority patterns.

Following the loss of the colonial crown jewels in the aftermath of World War II, the U.K. made an all-out effort to induce no longer profitable Caribbean colonies to seek independence. By the 1950s Britain was forced to promote major democratizing changes in Grenada and other Windward and Leeward Island Crown systems in response to strong pressures mounting in the region and also to effect greater compatibility between these systems and the more advanced political systems in Jamaica and Barbados with which these micro-states were soon to federate.

These changes required opening the formerly closed suffrage gates, which signaled the beginning of the end for colonialism in the region. But they did little to stabilize governance in Grenada. Grenada became even more unsettled, despite the advent of expanded suffrage in 1951. Grenada had less political order and legitimacy than any of the other nine West Indian territories that participated in the West Indies Federation (1958-62), or even the twelve states that gained singular independence following the failure of federation. The possible exception would be Guyana. What passed for government in Grenada could be summarized as "sham, conflict-ridden and irrelevant 'pantomime'. . . politics in the terminal phase of colonial rule . . . with irrational, corrupt, and 'cuckoo' qualities" (Singham; quote from R.T. Smith, 280).

Grenada's first precursor for political change from the popular culture, as early as the World War I period, was T. A. Marryshow, although his message reached few beyond his own St. George's electoral district and the literate, largely brown-skinned middle sectors who read his newspaper. He was accused of being too middle-class oriented to aggressively confront the colonial power. Marryshow was fond of saying that it is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness. In the words of a leading scholar of colonialism, the "stage arrives in every colonial freedom movement when the darkness must be cursed, [and] the entire system engaged" (Lewis 1968, 158, emphasis added). The individual destined both to curse that system and to engage Grenada's black rural workers would be Eric Matthew Gairy.

### C. PARTY POLITICS IN GRENADA: AN INTERPLAY OF CHARISMA, STRUCTURE, AND FRAGMENTATION

The rise of the popular forces in the Caribbean--both in the British West Indies and in territories such as Puerto Rico--"officially" began in the late 1930s with labor riots, gradual suffrage changes, formation of unions, and party building. The labor riots actually were initiated in Grenada in the 1920s but this is a little known fact due to minimal coverage by the international press. Violence broke out across the region, forcing an investigation by the British. The resultant probe by the West India Royal Commission during 1938-39, known as the Moyne Report, produced a report so unsettling that it was not published until after World War II. The Moyne investigatory hearings themselves had the effect of raising expectations for improved political and economic conditions in the region (see Will 1972).

## The Hero and the Crowd: Gairy, Gairyism, and Populist Revolt

There were no mass political parties, no national unions, nor any labor/party leaders representing the vast rural majority in Grenada during the 1930s. Too many of Grenada's potential leaders of the barefoot men had left the Spice Island for work in the Trinidadian oil fields and the refinery in Aruba in the Netherlands Antilles--leaders such as Uriah Butler, a Grenadian who became a labor organizer and precursor of the 1930s dislocations in Trinidad-Tobago. Another potential leader was Eric Gairy, a black man from Grenville, Grenada who, despite minimal formal education, learned powerful lessons in mass leadership during his sojourn as an organizer of West Indians workers engaged in oil refinery employment in Aruba. Deported in December 1949 on charges of agitating the refinery workers, Gairy's return to Grenada was the stimulus that at last engaged the Grenadian masses.

Charismatic or at least personal leadership has always played a considerable role in regional politics. The potential for such leadership may be produced by one part divine gift, but often at least two parts of such potential accrue from being there at the right time (Will 1972). In early 1950 the timing was right for Gairy to blend heavy doses of God, Marx, and class/racial-frustration with his own genuine charisma to initiate a movement to stimulate pride and increase economic rights among Grenadian workers.

Soon after Gairy's return to Grenada, the new English landlord of a large plantation in St. Andrew's Parish initiated eviction activity against numerous peasant workers. (See Figure II.) Gairy rushed to defend the evicted workers, claiming full cash compensation for them under the Tenant's Compensation Ordinance. As a result of this action, Gairy "became the Galahad of workers and peasants in this part of the island" (M. G. Smith, 283; also see EPICA, 36). By July 1950 Gairy had formed and registered his 27,000-member (1951) Grenada Manual and Metal Workers Union (GMMWU), naming himself president-general. Gairy immediately demanded a 50 percent wage increase for all sugar workers at the Grenada Sugar Factory, Ltd. When this demand was rejected outright, as expected, Gairy called a strike that involved nearly 500 workers, a number that soon doubled as workers from eleven estates joined the protest. Gairy now presented a demand to the Grenada Agricultural Employers' Society for a 20 percent raise for all workers on cocoa and nutmeg estates, two of the island's principal export crops. This was war.

Employing divide and conquer tactics, the Employers' Society attempted to undercut this new labor movement by offering wage increases--but only if tied to world prices. A drop in world prices led to a rejection of this offer in January 1951, however, and within a month Gairy felt sufficiently strong to call a national strike. The strike produced a very confrontational and bitter period that included looting and arson--the latter often orchestrated by Gairy's use of the code-word "red sky" when he wished a specific estate to be torched. This activity resulted in the arrest and incarceration of Gairy and one of his assistants on Grenada's dependency island of Carriacou. Gairy had forced the Crown to engage in an action that would guarantee him mass support, an action that would be perceived as a form of martyrdom (EPICA, 36-37).

This support was parlayed into ballot strength for Gairy's GMMWU candidates in 1951 and 1954--and later also to the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), Gairy's personally directed union party. In the 1951 general election, for example, the aging Marryshow was the only non-Gairyite to win an elected seat. This electoral success, in general, continued for the subsequent three decades, with Gairy's candidates winning majorities in six of eight general elections: 1951, 1961, 1967, 1972, and 1976 (Emmanuel, 47-55; Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Barriteau, 1-13). (See Table I.)

**The Negative Legacy.** Eric Gairy transferred little of his personal magic and accepted few limits! By 1962 the British Government had suspended the Grenadian Constitution and removed Gairy from office, charging him with deliberate and systematic violations of financial regulations, alleged browbeating of public servants, destruction of civil service morale, and illegal use of public monies to purchase major items for his private residence. After Grenadian independence in 1974, Gairy accepted still fewer limits, as noted by the Duffus Report of 1975 which charged Gairy with very serious breaches including victimization of public servants; making selective concessions to favored business supporters; harassment of workers and the civil service; imprisonment of persons without bail or trial; brutality by the police force and by his personally recruited "Mongoose Gang," which was formed in 1967 but kept under wraps until 1970; and transforming police and magistrates into partisan agents of the Gairyite state. These activities produced a regime of terror that culminated in injury, torture, and murder, including the 1974 death of Maurice Bishop's father, Rupert Bishop (Lewis 1987, 13; Report of the Commission 1962; Report of the [Duffus] Commission 1975).

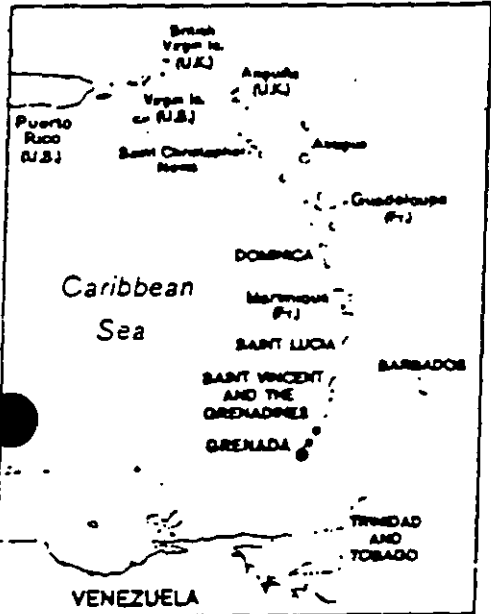
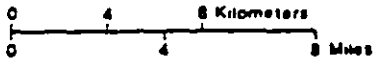


FIGURE II

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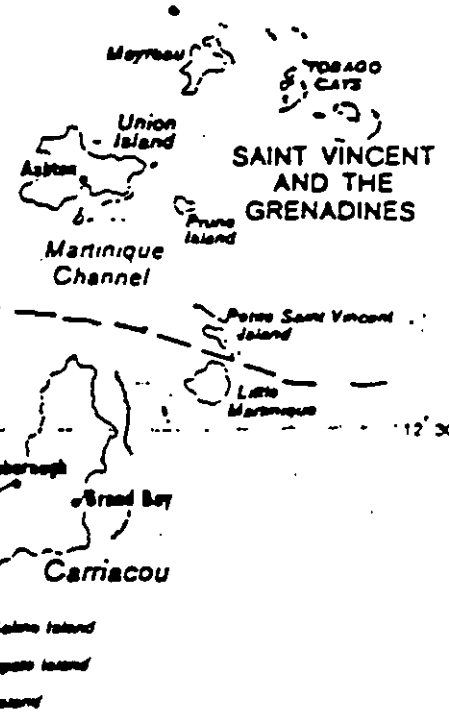
# Grenada

- ★ National capital
- Parish boundary
- Road

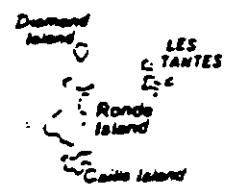


Caribbean Sea

GRENADINES

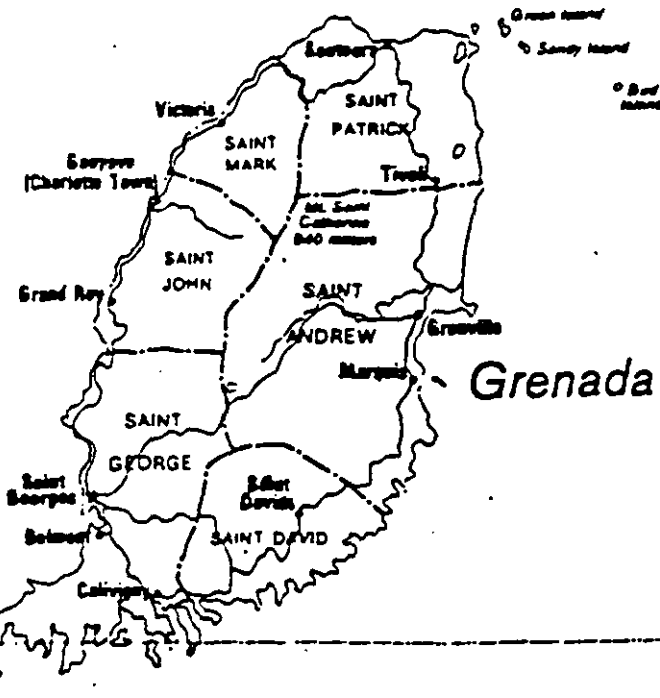


12° 30'



London Bridge

12° 15'



ATLANTIC OCEAN

12° 00'

12° 00'

Table I

## Grenada: Distribution of Votes and Seats in Elections, 1951-1976

| Election | GULP          | GNP           | PDM          | PA            | Other Parties             | Independents  |
|----------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Votes    |               |               |              |               |                           |               |
| 1951     | 13,238 (63.8) | X             | X            | X             | X                         | 7,509 (36.2)  |
| 1954     | 10,347 (46.0) | X             | X            | X             | X                         | 12,129 (54.0) |
| 1957     | 10,952 (44.4) | 6,012 (24.4)  | 5,327 (21.6) | X             | 246 <sup>a</sup> (1.0)    | 2,145 (8.6)   |
| 1961     | 11,606 (53.3) | 7,325 (33.7)  | X            | X             | 2,394 <sup>b</sup> (11.0) | 435 (2.0)     |
| 1962     | 9,705 (46.0)  | 11,341 (53.7) | X            | X             | X                         | 61 (0.3)      |
| 1967     | 15,827 (54.6) | 13,172 (45.4) | X            | X             | X                         | X             |
| 1972     | 20,164 (58.8) | 14,125 (41.2) | X            | X             | X                         | X             |
| 1976     | 21,132 (51.8) | (see PA)      | X            | 19,650 (48.2) | (see PA)                  | X             |
| Seats    |               |               |              |               |                           |               |
| 1951     | 6 (75.0)      | X             | X            | X             | X                         | 2 (25.0)      |
| 1954     | 6 (75.0)      | X             | X            | X             | X                         | 2 (25.0)      |
| 1957     | 2 (25.0)      | 2 (25.0)      | 2 (25.0)     | X             | 0                         | 2 (25.0)      |
| 1961     | 8 (80.0)      | 2 (20.0)      | X            | X             | 0                         | 0 (0.0)       |
| 1962     | 4 (40.0)      | 6 (60.0)      | X            | X             | X                         | 0 (0.0)       |
| 1967     | 7 (70.0)      | 3 (30.0)      | X            | X             | X                         | X             |
| 1972     | 13 (86.7)     | 2 (13.3)      | X            | X             | X                         | X             |
| 1976     | 9 (60.0)      | -             | X            | 6 (40.0)      | -                         | X             |

a. WIFLP  
b. PPM

SOURCE: Emmanuel, 47.

During the Gairy regime, repressive public laws/edicts were implemented that harassed opposition parties and the media. There was also degradation--some would say caricaturing--of legislative, judicial, and executive institutions. The national economy and the nation's socio-educational needs were neglected--even though Gairy made public education mandatory in Grenada. Not the least were Gairy's alleged sexual exploits. As has occurred in the regimes of too many charismatic leaders, Eric Gairy began as an agent for positive change but became an authoritarian figure who laid the groundwork for the Commonwealth Caribbean's first coup (1979) and, subsequently, its first socio-political Revolution (1979-83).

**The Positive Legacy.** In this post-revolutionary period, it would be folly to dismiss Gairy as simply an authoritarian buffoon, as does Colin Henfrey (p. 15). Despite his shortcomings, a seldom told truth is that Gairy

played an important role in the raising of political consciousness of the Grenadian masses. . . . He represented himself as the popular champion against the white oligarchy and the brown middle class of the island society, clearly pursuing a politics of opéra bouffe against those elements. There is a strain of ribald irreverence in West Indian life, and Gairy brought it out into the open by his guying of prominent local personalities in his inventive market-square orations. He had a large following . . . the rural folk. He himself had been slighted when the local elite tennis club would not accept him for membership, so that his own private resentments became those of his followers. When he led a group of scared estate workers into the Santa Maria tourist hotel and demanded they be served a meal, or when he told domestic servant girls to go on strike against a system of minor slavery that required them to work from 6:00 a.m to 9:00 p.m., so that they had no time even for a bath, he was helping to destroy their ingrained deference to the 'betters.' He gave them new respect. He gained from them in return a fanatical hero worship, because they saw in him all of the tongue-sticking defiance to the master class that they could not afford to take on (Lewis 1987, 12, emphasis added).

Herbert Preudhomme, Gairy's Deputy and a GULP Executive Council member, admits indiscretions were committed, including the political use of felons and ruffians originally recruited to kill rabid mongeese (the "Mongoose Gang"). Those who were first "raised" remain loyal to Gairy, however, despite these serious errors.

**Gairy and GULP In the 1980s--and Beyond.** The Gairyites, who drew 36 percent of the electoral vote although winning but one seat in the 1984 general election, remain a major factor in the 1989 campaign and could play a key role in shaping the next Grenadian government. GULP, nevertheless, continues as a very personalist party--not only in the perception of the aging and now nearly blind "Uncle" Gairy, but as an unquestioned reality among many GULP followers. This was clearly exemplified by a rally organizer who, after relating how Gairy was responsible for giving him and his fellow workers their dignity in the early 1950s, then explained in all earnestness that GULP stands for Gairy's United Labour Party!

Gairy's dominance of his party was further demonstrated at a May 1989 rally incident in which a GULP political candidate voiced an indiscreet remark during a rally speech. Perceiving the comment to be incongruent with the several hymns and multi-denominational prayers that opened the rally, Gairy jumped to his feet, snatched the microphone from the candidate, and rephrased the remark, adding that "the speaker will be stopping very soon!" GULP indeed remains Gairy's very personal party. There appears to be little intra-party democracy either in formulating party manifestos or platforms, in selecting party candidates, or even in the retention of elected parliamentarians. Marcel Peters, the only GULP candidate to capture a seat in 1984, for example, soon left GULP over a policy disagreement with Gairy and formed the Grenada Democratic Labour Party (GDLP)--a projected nonentity in the 1990 general election.

It is the perception of both Keith Mitchell, Party Leader of the NNP, and Nicholas Brathwaite, head of the NDC, that Gairy will probably secure in the range of one-third of the national vote in the upcoming general election, a figure comparable to the electoral vote GULP garnered in 1984. Recent opinion polls, including a poll commissioned by Mitchell, support this prediction and indicate some 47 percent of older workers in Grenada are aligned with GULP. The poll anticipates the probable election of at least two GULP candidates in 1989. Electoral support for Gairy and his party is the most unwavering in comparison to anticipated levels of overall support for the NNP and NDC, not unlike the phenomenon of hyperplural, single-issue voting in the United States. These data produce an interesting contradiction with the fact that an estimated 95 percent (by the Grenadian Minister of Justice) of the Grenadian people supported the overthrow of the Gairy government in 1979 (Personal Interviews: Preudhomme, Cox, Brathwaite, Mitchell, and Joseph)!

### **Grenada's New National Party: A Crisis of Amalgamated Leadership**

The second contemporary party to consider is the New National Party, which is actually a confederation of three "centrist" parties effected just prior to the 1984 election. Since the Grenada National Party (GNP) dominated this alignment, and was the principal party alternative to Gairyism prior to the late 1970s, it deserves special attention.

**The GNP and Blaize: The Post-1956 Partisan Legacy.** Formed in 1956 by a dentist, Dr. John Watts, with assistance from Herbert Blaize, the GNP contested every election from that date through 1976, at which time it entered a People's Coalition (PC) with the New Jewel Movement (NJM) in an unsuccessful last-ditch effort to electorally counter the abuses of Gairyism. (Refer to Table 1.) Blaize, a planter/barrister from Carriacou, Grenada's largest Grenadine dependency 24 miles to the north, is currently Prime Minister of Grenada. He campaigned unsuccessfully for the Carriacou-Petit Martinique seat as an independent in 1954, but during the years of party competition from 1957 through 1976 consistently won the seat by landslide percentages as a member of the GNP.

The Island's first real coalition government was formed following the 1957 general election, the first election in which there was significant party competition in Grenada. GULP captured only two seats, although outpolling the GNP 44-24 percent, with two seats going to the GNP, two seats to a third party, the People's Democratic Movement (PDM), and two seats to victorious independent candidates, thus permitting the formation of an anti-Gairy government. By the time of the 1961 general election, parliamentary constituencies in Grenada had been increased from eight to ten. Fragmentation again occurred and the Gairyites returned to their 1951 pattern of strength, winning all of Grenada's rural seats, now numbering eight. Although the GNP garnered one-third of the total vote in 1961, it captured only two seats, St. George's and Carriacou.

The only time the GNP was able to defeat GULP in a straight party vote occurred in the general election of September 1962, but this victory required external assistance in the form of Britain's suspension of the Grenadian constitution and the removal of Gairy from office three months before the balloting. Even with this unusual circumstance, plus help from a second issue, whether Grenada should join Trinidad as a unitary state, the GNP captured but 54 percent at the polls and only a six-four majority in parliament. Blaize, who had served as First Minister of Grenada in 1960, again assumed this position. His title changed to Premier when Grenada became an Associated State in 1967.

**Policy Assessment.** In terms of domestic public policy, there was relatively little to differentiate the pre-revolutionary Blaize and Gairy governments. The Gairy government extended suffrage to 18-year-olds and claimed the introduction of Carifest/Carnival in Grenada. The Blaize administration was able to enact reforms in agriculture, education, and health, in addition to expanding the distribution of potable water and creating an agriculture bank, but these progressive measures were no match for Gairy's often race-/class-tinged rhetoric in which he presented himself as "a black messiah . . . against the brownskin professionals and their urban allies in the GNP" (Maingot, 25; also see Hintzen and Will, 61-2). As is requisite for effective propaganda, there was some truth in this charge, for just one of fifty-three candidates put forward by the GNP represented the working class--albeit only slightly more working-class candidates were recruited by GULP. Neither party offered a legislative threat to the island's dependent capitalistic structure nor was either party highly institutionalized, although, according to Maingot (28), Grenada had a "fairly stable two party system" prior to the 1979 coup-turned-revolution.

**When Ballots Fall.** Differences between the GNP and GULP appeared to center on identity with working-class voters and charismatic leadership qualities. GULP continually scored high in both categories, even in the pre-independence election of 1972, which drew 83.5 percent of the electorate. This happened again in 1976 when GULP defeated a GNP/Popular Coalition (PC) effort in which the GNP joined forces with candidates from the three-year-old New Jewel Movement (NJM), including founder Maurice Bishop. Although three of four NJM candidates won parliamentary seats, the overall electoral failure of the GNP/PC in 1976, according to the EPICA Task Force, convinced the NJM of the impotence and ultimate institutional bankruptcy of party politics as a vehicle for defeating Gairy--and, by implication, of the incongruence of the Westminster model with local needs. "Clearly, the GNP image was political poison" the NJM reasoned: "all Gairy had to do was remind the electorate that the GNP consisted of 'Big Shots' [including] the estate owners who were their former masters, and the GULP would carry off every vote" (EPICA, 45). This became a rationale for displacement of Gairy by force and formation of the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) in 1979.<sup>4</sup>

Blaize maintained GNP presence during the regime of Bishop's PRG government by continuing to meet with party faithful; thus, following the overturn of the PRG, Blaize appeared the most viable option to lead or at least assist in forming a new party coalition to block a victory by either Gairy's GULP forces or the leftover revolutionaries of the Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) in the 1984 general election. Both Grenada's neighboring Caribbean states and the U.S., realizing that Gairy possessed the most solid bloc of voters in Grenada, deemed a merger of forces was necessary to block GULP.

**Confederating the New National Party.** An amalgamation or confederation of party groups would be a most difficult task in view of Grenada's experiences with highly personal party politics. A meeting of three Caribbean prime ministers (James "Son" Mitchell of St. Vincent, John Compton of St. Lucia, and the late Tom Adams of Barbados) on St. Vincent's Union Island on 26 August 1984, however, produced "a shotgun marriage of the Grenada National Party of Herbert Blaize, the National Democratic Party of George Brizan, and the Grenada Democratic Movement" (Council on Hemispheric Affairs, 4). The GDM was led by Francis Alexis. These Grenadian party leaders ultimately signed an accord creating

- a) a single political party in Grenada to be known as the New National Party, b) the appointment of Herbert Blaize to be Leader and Chairman of the New Party, [and] c) the establishment of a joint steering

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<sup>4</sup>According to Tony Thorndike (1985b, 795), a major reason for the March 1979 seizure of government was the receipt of leaked information from "police allies that their assassination had been ordered by Gairy, to take place while he was in New York discussing extraterrestrial phenomena . . . with the United Nations secretary-general."

committee to formulate a Constitution and Programme of the new Party (Grenadian Voice, 1 September 1984).

Prime Ministers Mitchell, Adams, and Compton signed as witnesses to this extraordinary document. A fourth party leader, Winston Whyte of the Christian Democratic Labour Party (CDLP), also signed the Union Island accord. However, as an omen of defections to come, he almost immediately took his party out of the alliance, withdrawing because of disagreements relating to the selection of candidates for the 1984 election--and because of alleged tampering with the accord to favor Blaize and the GNP. The CDLP with five candidates, a one-candidate Grenada Federated Labour "Party" (GFLP), plus GULP and the MBPM remained outside the coalition in the 1984 general election.

Furthering party institutionalization is, of course, of continuing vital concern, one which Blaize noted on the very eve of the Union Island talks (Grenadian Voice, 25 August 1984):

What I am concerned about is the effectiveness of the team. . . . Not merely to put a team together and say Hooray, but a team that [is capable of governing] the day after election . . . The leader must be assured of the support and loyalty of all the members. Pledges are one thing . . . , but th[ey are] not enough . . . . You need a sort of in-depth feeling of loyalty.

In-depth feelings of party identity grow slowly, however. Despite initial electoral assistance from Caribbean prime ministers/party leaders, there was not even a NNP joint steering committee, party structure, or candidates for the December 1984 general election in evidence until September of that year. When the list of fifteen candidates was presented on 22 September 1984, more than half (8) came from the GNP, four from the National Democratic Party (NDP), and three from the Grenada Democratic Movement (GDM).

The public announcement of the candidate slate produced early evidence of intra-NNP tension that became a factor in the later dissolution of the party: "There was some question surrounding the choice of two or more candidates and the possibility exists that substitutions will be made!" No substitutions were made, however. Still the confederation paid off as the NNP swept fourteen seats to one for GULP in the December balloting (Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Barriteau, 82-87, quote on 87). (See Table II.) Emmanuel feels Gairy's less-than-robust leadership from the sidelines, plus a relatively weak team of candidates, largely explains GULP's low totals. Nonetheless, 1984 was a victory for party integration and candidate cooperation, both hard-to-achieve products throughout Grenadian history. Had a political corner been turned toward the political middle ground? The quick answer is no.

**The NNP Divides: A Return to Fragmentation.** The harbingers of coming divisions were present in the initial NNP Steering Committee plurality and in the 1984 nominee allocation process, both dominated by the GNP. By 1987, principals of the smaller parties that confederated with the GNP to form the NNP in 1984 had left the coalition to join the New Democratic Congress, leaving the NNP essentially in its pre-Union Island status. Defectors included former Ministers Brizan and Alexis, who headed the National Democratic Party and the Grenada Democratic Movement, respectively, prior to the Union Island accord.

Even the remaining nine NNP representatives were less than united, as is underscored by leadership and policy differences between Mitchell and Blaize that resulted in the replacement of Blaize by Mitchell as NNP leader in January 1989 and the dismissal of Mitchell from the Blaize Cabinet in July 1989. One aspect of their policy differences centered on the use of government fiscal policy to reduce the 20-29 percent unemployment in Grenada. Another factor related to government censorship of black power and alleged left-wing publications and materials, plus visa denials to prospective Grenadian visitors the government categorized as radical, a policy harking back to restrictions imposed by Gairy during the 1950s and 1960s (See FBIS, 21 April 1989, 7-8). Yet another policy difference focused on the rate of integration of former revolutionaries into the party and the government. Mitchell particularly disagreed with the Blaize-Jones government's failure to alleviate extremely high unemployment among the Island's youth and also to its ban on selected books.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>The book ban includes works of the Pathfinder Press Inc., New York, known for its humorous and leftist caricatures, e.g. Rius' "documentary comic book," Cuba for Beginners (1979), and works such as Tomás Borge, et al., Sandinistas Speak (1982).

**TABLE II**  
**RESULTS OF THE GRENADIAN GENERAL ELECTIONS, 1984**

| Constituency                       | Registration | Total Vote (%) | Candidate/Party            | Vote (%)     | Shares of Vote (%) | Seats |                    |   |
|------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------|--------------------|---|
| 1. Town of St. George              | 3,338        | 2,677 (80.2)   | McGuire (NNP)              | 1,745 (65.2) | NNP 23,997 (58.5)  | 14    |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Anthony (GULP)             | 756 (28.2)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Bullen G. Robertson (MBPM) | 151 (5.6)    |                    |       | GULP 14,798 (36.1) | 1 |
|                                    |              |                | (CDLP)                     | 25 (1.0)     |                    |       | MBPM 2,024 (4.9)   | 0 |
| 2. St. George South                | 3,889        | 3,239 (83.3)   | St. Louis (NNP)            | 1,905 (58.8) | CDLP 107 (0.3)     | 0     |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Adams (GULP)               | 1,173 (36.2) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Emmanuel (MBPM)            | 153 (4.7)    |                    |       | GFLP 10 (0.02)     | 0 |
|                                    |              |                | McBurnie (Ind.)            | 8 (0.3)      |                    |       |                    |   |
| 3. St. George S.E.                 | 3,017        | 2,536 (84.1)   | Alexis (NNP)               | 1,674 (66.0) | Inds. 105 (0.3)    | 0     |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Hercules (GULP)            | 642 (25.3)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Radix K. (MBPM)            | 220 (8.7)    |                    |       |                    |   |
| 4. St. George N.E.                 | 4,031        | 3,386 (84.0)   | Brizan (NNP)               | 2,438 (72.0) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Forsyth (GULP)             | 818 (24.2)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Thompson (MBPM)            | 99 (2.9)     |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Joseph (CDLP)              | 31 (0.9)     |                    |       |                    |   |
| 5. St. George N.W.                 | 2,763        | 2,386 (86.4)   | Mitchell (NNP)             | 1,370 (57.4) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Lewis (GULP)               | 956 (40.1)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Byam (MBPM)                | 60 (0.9)     |                    |       |                    |   |
| 6. St. David                       | 5,357        | 4,723 (88.2)   | Williams D.C. (NNP)        | 2,856 (60.5) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Radix D. (GULP)            | 1,756 (37.2) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Williams A.T. (MBPM)       | 111 (2.3)    |                    |       |                    |   |
| 7. St. Andrew S.E.                 | 2,451        | 2,143 (87.4)   | Andrew (NNP)               | 1,094 (51.0) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Duncan I. (GULP)           | 997 (46.5)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Lewis (MBPM)               | 24 (1.1)     |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | LaTouche (CDLP)            | 18 (0.8)     |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Felix (GFLP)               | 10 (0.5)     |                    |       |                    |   |
| 8. St. Andrew S.W.                 | 3,907        | 3,400 (87.0)   | Jones (NNP)                | 1,964 (57.8) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Strachan (GULP)            | 1,206 (35.5) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Bernard (MBPM)             | 185 (5.4)    |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Hopkin (Ind.)              | 45 (1.3)     |                    |       |                    |   |
| 9. St. Andrew N.E.                 | 2,867        | 2,416 (84.5)   | Pope (NNP)                 | 1,140 (47.2) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Peters (GULP)              | 1,276 (52.8) |                    |       |                    |   |
| 10. St. Andrew N.W.                | 2,592        | 2,304 (88.9)   | Walker (NNP)               | 1,282 (55.6) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Fletcher (GULP)            | 1,004 (43.6) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Rennie (CDLP)              | 18 (0.8)     |                    |       |                    |   |
| 11. St. Patrick E.                 | 2,121        | 1,800 (84.9)   | Thomas T. (NNP)            | 935 (51.9)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Frederick (GULP)           | 787 (43.7)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Cato (MBPM)                | 66 (3.7)     |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Whyte (CDLP)               | 12 (0.7)     |                    |       |                    |   |
| 12. St. Patrick W.                 | 2,924        | 2,516 (86.0)   | Lalsingh (NNP)             | 1,438 (57.2) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Raeburn (GULP)             | 905 (36.0)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Thomas S. (MBPM)           | 173 (6.8)    |                    |       |                    |   |
| 13. St. Mark                       | 2,085        | 1,819 (87.2)   | Alexander (NNP)            | 930 (51.1)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | James (GULP)               | 750 (41.2)   |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Louison G. (MBPM)          | 139 (7.6)    |                    |       |                    |   |
| 14. St. John                       | 4,373        | 3,699 (84.6)   | Duncan G. (NNP)            | 1,611 (43.6) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Thomas E. (GULP)           | 1,576 (42.6) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Louison E. (MBPM)          | 512 (13.8)   |                    |       |                    |   |
| 15. Carriacou/<br>Petit Martinique | 2,443        | 1,979 (81.0)   | Blaize (NNP)               | 1,663 (84.0) |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Clyne (GULP)               | 119 (6.0)    |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Bullen L. (MBPM)           | 146 (7.4)    |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              |                | Fleary (Ind.)              | 51 (2.6)     |                    |       |                    |   |
|                                    |              | 49,158         | 41,041 (85.3)              |              |                    |       |                    |   |

SOURCE: Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Barriteau

The party institutionalization and integration Blaize sought had not transpired. Nonetheless, the Blaize government contributed needed legitimacy and, in the opinion of the Grenada Informer (31 March 1989, 32), provided an atmosphere more conducive to democratic openness than that experienced in Grenada for nearly two decades, in spite of his censorship policies and divisiveness. This "new freedom" is best illustrated by a March 1989 roundtable of party leaders, organized by the Grenada Information Service, that included Marrayshow, Brathwaite, and Mitchell. In January 1989, NNP leadership was given by party ballot to Dr. Keith "Stone" Mitchell but Blaize continued to hold the office of Prime Minister until his death in December of that year.<sup>6</sup> During this period, his imposed GNP majority in the 1984 coalition, the majority he hoped would secure his position within the coalition, had slipped almost in tandem with his failing health and energy.

Mitchell, a former mathematics professor at Howard University is considered a liberal-moderate in socio-economic areas. He is ambitious and is the most charismatic of all current party leaders in Grenada, with the possible exception of Gairy. He maintains solid links with the black working class and, as a result, has received praise from Gairy—who has referred to him publicly as "my son." Mitchell, in fact, wins support from and seems "at home" with several GULP supporters who are strong in his St. George N.W. constituency. At the same time he is on good terms with some members of the NDC team—but apparently not with Alexis, his ex-colleague in the GDM. Their campaign speeches and ads have been extremely personal and vitriolic. These two facts suggest interesting possibilities regarding the direction of a possible coalition government resulting from the probability that no group will win a clear majority.

During 1989, Mitchell encouraged rumors that he was considering drastic steps to induce Blaize to relinquish the office of prime minister. He had hoped to advance the election date since polls in early 1989 suggested his candidacy would gain from an early balloting. But the massive support envisioned for Mitchell did not materialize. This dampened intemperate moves by Mitchell. In July 1989, Blaize dismissed Mitchell from the Cabinet and at the same time took his supporters in the NNP into a new party called the National Party (NP) (E[astern] C[aribbean] News, 28-29 July 1989, 1). Upon the death of Blaize on 20 December 1989, former Deputy Prime Minister Ben Jones assumed leadership of both the Grenadian government and Blaize's newly formed NP.

Neither Mitchell nor Jones is expected to secure a plurality in the general election of 1990 as a result of the splintering of the NNP into two factions in 1989. In fact, it appears that Jones, who is not recognized as an electoral workaholic by his cohorts, and the NP will probably garner even fewer votes than Mitchell's NNP. This presents the very real probability that either the NDC or GULP will secure a plurality in the upcoming balloting, with the NDC seemingly in the forefront.

### **The New Democratic Congress: A Coalition for Victory?**

While the NNP was formed in part by external forces, the New Democratic Congress is Grenada-made. As noted, formation of the NDC in reality represented the dissolution of the NNP confederation of 1984. Three resignations from Blaize's cabinet in 1987, resulting from dissatisfaction with NNP leadership and policies, buttressed this new opposition party which is considered by many to be the strongest partisan group contesting the upcoming general election.

NDC Leader Nicholas Brathwaite, an educator from Carriacou who was Grenada's relatively popular Interim Prime Minister during 1983-84, anchors the NDC appeal to business interests and older voters but is no counterpart to either Gairy or Mitchell in charismatic leadership. Brathwaite offers qualities of integrity and stability, both positive contributions to the NDC need for accelerated legitimization. This was probably a key factor when acting leader Dr. George Brizan recruited Brathwaite to head the new party. In Brathwaite's words, "Brizan came to me, I did not go to him, and I was impressed by what he was attempting to do. I feel we have a very good chance for victory."

Brizan, currently Deputy Leader of the NDC, is a well-published former UWI history professor who has written the seminal history of Grenada (Grenada, Island of Conflict). He is the former head of the National Democratic Party and was a co-founder of the NNP. A representative from St. George N.E. who polled 84 percent of the votes in that

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<sup>6</sup>Mitchell, lacking a majority in parliament, did not possess sufficient strength for a "no confidence" vote. Other parliamentarians did not rally to bring down the Blaize government since they did not perceive it to be in their interest.

constituency in 1984, Brizan expected to receive the economic development portfolio, a major cabinet position, in the Blaize government. Instead he was assigned the agriculture and tourism portfolio. Brizan complements the NDC leader by projecting a good deal of leadership wisdom and charisma.

The remaining member of the NDC triumverate, Dr. Francis Alexis, is the popular representative from the St. George S.E. constituency. A leading barrister who has been a senior lecturer in law at the University of the West Indies in Barbados, Alexis was the former head of the Grenada Democratic Movement and a co-founder of the NNP. He maintains national "leadership" exposure as a weekly newspaper columnist on consumer economics.

These three NDC leaders form the nucleus of what they anticipate will be the next government of Grenada. In the event the NDC receives a plurality, Brathwaite feels the natural ties of the NDC in formation of a coalition will extend to moderates within the government, including Prime Minister Ben Jones. In terms of policy, however, Brathwaite concurs with Mitchell that government policies on economic, censorship, and integration issues have not been sufficiently progressive. He also feels Grenada should renew its membership in the Nonaligned Movement but should certainly maintain close ties with the West (FBIS, 31 March 1989).

The most glaring problem facing this new party is that Brathwaite, Brizan, and Alexis are all big men in their constituencies and in their professions--and all have government experience. Each expects to win a parliamentary seat in the upcoming election and each should offer attractive, pragmatic, and progressive leadership to Grenada. But will they be able to share power? A further concern is the lack of charismatic appeal at the top of the NDC leadership, a major liability in small island politics. In general, political rallies in 1989 reflected widespread electoral support for the NDC.

### The Other Parties

**The Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement.** The MBPM, representing the Bishop wing of the fallen PRG, is most puzzling in its apparent contradictions. As the Minister of Justice observes, and as UWI survey data corroborate, the Grenadian revolution is positively supported by the bulk of the Grenadian populace (77 percent indicate continuous support prior to the overthrow of Bishop's revolution). Most Grenadians polled also felt positive changes did occur under the PRG, especially in improved electrical service (86.7%), elevated women's rights (85%), expanded housing (82.9%), and increased employment (69.4%). Only freedom of speech and openness of the electoral process were perceived to have worsened during the PRG tenure. Further, more than 80 percent of the electorate indicated they admired Bishop (Emmanuel, Brathwaite, and Barribeau, ch. 4). Given these facts, it is curious that the MBPM received only 5 percent as its actual share of the vote in the December 1984 election. It is also anticipated the MBPM party will not do significantly better under its new leader, Dr. Terrence Marryshow, the grandson of the late T. A. Marryshow, in the 1990 election.

There are three factors that explain the difference between support level and actual voting strength for the MBPM: 1) although supportive of Bishop, three-fourths of the Grenadian electorate actually express a negative feeling toward the MBPM; 2) there is no doubt some of the strongest opposition to the PRG came from the business community and, thus, according to one government minister, the possibility of subtle blackmail exists; and 3) a real effort is being made by both the NNP and the NDC to reach out to include the former revolutionaries. Keith Mitchell indicates the NNP has decided to permit inclusion of a former "major player" from the PRG in its leadership team, a controversial decision but one he is pleased the NNP has made. Policy inclusiveness is also evident in Brathwaite's comments.

In short, there appears to be a growing tide in favor of including members of the former revolutionary government in the major party system of Grenada--which detracts from the voting strength of the MBPM. As the Grenada Informer (7 April 1989, 8) notes, such integration of "repentant" revolutionaries would be beneficial to the overall development of the Island. The MBPM, however, endorses several policies espoused by the PRG, including economic policies, expanded ties with Cuba and the USSR, and promotion of a nuclear free zone for the Caribbean (FBIS, 15 March 1989, 13). Thus, revolutionary options exist at the ballot, but the MBPM will not garner significant support.

**The Grenada People's Movement: The Case for Town Hall Democracy.** Dr. Raphael Fletcher, a UWI physicist recently returned from a lectureship in Libya, heads the Grenada People's Movement (GPM), the final party currently visible in the 1989-90 Grenadian political landscape. Dr. Fletcher's shoestring operation pledges to field a



slate of office seekers but one gets the impression he is campaigning primarily to educate Grenadians rather than to elect his team. In this respect the GPM is similar to the MBPM.

Political education at the hustings is an old West Indian tradition made famous in Trinidad during the 1950s by Dr. Eric Williams and in the years since by Dr. Lloyd Best. Fletcher, a former colleague of Best, argues eloquently in the local press for increased democracy and decreased corruption.

#### **D. THE CONTEMPORARY ELECTION PROCESS: STRUCTURE, FUNCTION, AND ATTITUDES**

##### **Support for the Process**

As has been argued, there remains a high level of acceptance of personality politics in Grenada and a relatively low level of institutionalization of political parties and other structures of government. The past two decades in Grenada have also been heavily laced with authoritarian systems, both right and left. It should be noted, however, that all that has been said about Grenada's past decades of authoritarianism, personality politics, and a continuing lack of institutionalization of political parties is found within the context of the Commonwealth Caribbean, a region that overall has a much higher level of institutional legitimization and democracy--and personal income--than is typical of either Hispanic America or, especially, the Third World.

Thus, Grenada has remained supportive of elections. Grenadians registered an 86.2 percent support for Bishop and the revolution in a 1984 University of the West Indies survey. The same poll indicated a strong majority of Grenadians in all age and socio-economic categories, including 78-80 percent of the age 35-and-over group, were unfavorable toward Bishop and the PRG for not holding elections (Emmanuel, Brathwaite, Barriteau, esp. 21-49)! Grenadians, it seems, support individuals over institutions but do demand elections. Grenadians also vote at a much higher level (85 percent in 1984) than the U.S. electorate, and even at a slightly higher level than most CARICOM states, with little variation from urban to rural constituencies (Emmanuel). And the voting privilege in Grenada is voluntary.

As a state, Grenada is far more law abiding and democratically open than countries such as Haiti or El Salvador. Voters in the Grenadian elections, as well as observers of the Grenadian electoral process, will not be physically molested or gunned-down nor intimidated by the government. In Grenada, by contrast, the election process is revered and the rule of law persists.

##### **The Rules**

Formal electoral rules in Grenada, as in the United States, are based both on constitutional and statutory sources supported by informal cultural norms. Electoral systems in Grenada, and in the OECS in general, are fashioned along the lines of the British Westminster model which assumes a) parliamentary government, with its partially merged executive and legislative systems; b) competitive party politics; including c) a loyal opposition; and, finally, d) a process that is totally supported by law, that now includes universal adult franchise and, generally, the key Anglo-Saxon civil liberties of speech, press, assembly, and religion--the foundation on which Western democracy rests.

These parliamentary electoral systems are characterized by regular general elections in which candidates securing the largest number of votes represent single-member constituencies. Constitutionally, elections are scheduled within a five-year interval, with provisions for interim by-elections to fill vacant seats. In accordance with tradition, the Governor-General, who holds a largely honorific position representing the Crown (upon nomination by the Prime Minister), "invites" the leader of the party securing a parliamentary majority in the electoral contest to form a government. If a majority is lacking, the Governor-General invites the parliamentary leader he feels is in the best position to form a government. This procedure could be very relevant in Grenada in 1990.

Governor-General Sir Paul Scoon also appoints the Senate upon the recommendation of the leaders of the majority and opposition parties, with the lion's share of the seats awarded to the majority. While largely pro forma in terms of power, the position of Governor-General has a major hold on tradition in the West Indies and in Grenada. As

an example, the PRG retained Sir Paul as Governor-General in Grenada following the Revolution, thus presenting a major anomaly--but a fortuitous one for reestablishing civilian government in the post-revolutionary era.

**Some Specific Rules.** A body of constitutional provisions and electoral statutes sets forth the basic election rules in Grenada, including voter eligibility, registration regulations, balloting procedures, the numbers of and boundaries for constituency districts, and establishes the electoral offices. Some specifics for Grenada are as follows:

- \* Eligible voting age, 18;
- \* Registration is required in the constituency in which you vote, registration is open 15 January-30 April of each year, and the preliminary registration list is posted in each of the Island's fifteen constituencies for fifteen days prior to preparation of the final voting list;
- \* Paper ballots, which must be initialed by the polling officer, are employed for the secret balloting process and the initials must be visible before the ballot can be deposited in a sealed metal ballot box;
- \* No campaigning is permitted within 100 yards of each polling station;
- \* Each party is entitled to station poll-watchers in each polling station and the watchers are permitted, by law, to check the ballot boxes before sealing;
- \* Polls are open from 6:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.;
- \* Ballots are to be counted by 9:00 a.m. on the morning following the election; and
- \* Ballot boxes are housed under guard at a police station.

**And the Law.** These rules and related regulations are under the supervision of the Supervisor of Elections, currently Alphonus Redhead. Mr. Redhead also prepares a report on the balloting and enters in the official Gazette the names of candidates elected to parliament. Supervisors and enumerators for each constituency, each of whom must take an oath of office, are appointed by the Governor-General upon recommendation by the Supervisor of Elections. The Supervisor also handles disputes. Alleged breaches of law become the responsibility of the Attorney General and criminal and civil law, with the right of appeal, is operative. Although temporarily on hold, the OECS Court of Appeals is in St. Vincent. In short, the Grenada general election of 1990 will be held in an environment that is open and democratic.

#### E. POTENTIAL IFES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

When contemplating appropriate electoral assistance from the United States to Grenada, it is imperative to constantly keep in mind Grenada's size and to remain cognizant that it is an insular state with only slightly more than 100,000 population. Half of Grenada's total population is registered to vote. The country is also relatively poor, with a per capita income just over US\$1,000, the third lowest among the sixteen Commonwealth Caribbean entities.

The six parties currently planning to contest the upcoming general election in Grenada are very tiny by any standard. Since parties are defined as membership institutions, the Grenadian parties are definitely very poor economically, based on the Island's relatively low per capita income. Assistance with procurement of equipment for communication appears to be a need of all the parties and also the Grenadian Election Commission itself. The Commission is forced to send all registration lists to Barbados for computer processing, a system involving both cost and delay. The gift of an office-scale IBM or IBM-clone personal computer with appropriate software would be beneficial in alleviating such problems. Electoral commodities such as audio equipment, PCs, printers, and pagemaker-type word processing software would contribute tremendously to efficient and effective oral and written communication, including preparation of campaign literature, for these small linkage structures.

One government official suggested any complimentary equipment to assist the Grenadian electoral process should be given to the Grenadian government for use by all parties. When former Prime Minister Nicholas Braithwaite was queried about the feasibility of such a proposal, his response was "whoever made that suggestion must not have known much about Grenadian politics--or was in the government." Another opposition party noted that any gift of equipment should go to a nonpartisan organization, an organization with great integrity that is open to all groups. The Caribbean Conference of Churches, which has an office in St. George's, was suggested as a potential choice. Another choice might be the Grenadian Information Service, which has a high level of independence from Grenadian political pressures, as demonstrated in mid-1989 when it coordinated a roundtable for party leaders of all political

persuasions. It would be naive, however, to assume that time-sharing during the very few weeks of a parliamentary election would not be an invitation to major conflicts and abuse.

**The U.S. government and IFES policies and observers should avoid all appearances of favoritism. This is doubly important in view of the uncertainty of the Grenadian electoral outcome.**

## F. CONCLUSIONS

Grenada, a very small, relatively poor Commonwealth Caribbean state, faces a constitutionally mandated general election which must be held prior to April 1990. Six small, poorly institutionalized, often personalist political parties will be competing for leadership of the country. These include the governing National Party which has but a fraction of the electoral strength of the 1984 confederated party as the result of the internal dissolution of the confederation in 1987 and a serious division among the remaining members into two factions in 1989: the New National Party (NNP), led by Keith Mitchell; and the National Party (NP), coalesced by the late Prime Minister Herbert Blaize in July 1989.<sup>7</sup>

Both the progressive, youth-oriented New Democratic Congress (NDC), led by former Interim Prime Minister Nicholas Brathwaite, and the traditional, senior-oriented Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), dominated by the legendary Eric Gairy, appear to have the potential to secure a plurality in the 1990 balloting, with the NDC in the better position for such an eventuality. The NNP, whose 14-member government had eroded to a poorly integrated eight-member body by July 1989, appears to have a greatly diminished potential of securing a plurality as the result of the formal division of the party, however it will probably outpoll the newly formed NP, led by Prime Minister Ben Jones since the death of the 71-year-old Blaize on 20 December 1989. The minor parties participating in the election, Raphael Fletcher's Grenada Progressive Movement (GPM) and Terrence Maryshow's Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM), are not likely to seriously affect the election outcome except in closely contested constituency races. The fostering of ideas and challenges is their principal goal.

As a result of this extreme fragmentation of parties, there is the high probability of coalition government in 1990 in this first-past-the-post system. The issue of coalition government, therefore, must be seriously addressed. Should the NDC secure adequate votes to attempt formation of a government, a coalition with any victorious member of the NP is a strong possibility. If a Mitchell-led NNP should lead a coalition effort, options would include selected members of the NDC and/or moderate Gairyites, with the Gairyites holding the edge. Conversely, should GULP secure an electoral plurality, initial coalition offers would probably be extended to Mitchell's NNP.

Grenada's new government will most likely include fewer "old school" leaders and more university-trained pragmatists, a trend that has already made major inprints on the CARICOM landscape. If led by the NDC or NNP, the new Grenadian government should be more interested in expanding employment opportunities, reducing censorship, and promoting integration than was the 1984-89 Blaize administration. Relations with business interests should remain positive although many Grenadian political leaders have become wary of insensitive and poorly planned investment proposals from abroad. Substantial economic growth has occurred since 1985 but high levels of unemployment continue. Assuming the rate of inflation can be slowed and that the serious issue of unemployment can be substantially improved, especially among the youth of the country, the future should bring continued democratization to Grenada. Should the opposite occur, growing public disillusionment could evolve, fracturing even further a fragile coalition government.

The U.S. role in Grenada in 1983--and again in the party confederation effort in 1984--places the U.S. in a highly visible position. The U.S. is now faced with a most difficult task in its attempt to fulfill the Reagan pledge of restoring democracy and democratic institutions to a country that has had little previous experience with either. It is important, therefore, that IFES exercise caution in providing election assistance. Requests for technical help must come from Grenada. Partisan favoritism should be avoided at all costs and all IFES activity should promote the continuation of a free and open election process in Grenada.

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<sup>7</sup>Due to disagreement regarding who controls the real national party, the newly formed NP (National Party) is sometimes referred to as TNP (The National Party).

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The Honorable Francis Alexis\*  
Church Street  
St. George's, Grenada

Barrister/law professor; officer in New Democratic Congress (NDC); co-founder of NNP; member of NNP Government 1984-1987; formerly head of the Grenada Democratic Movement (GDM)

The Honorable Denis G. Antoine\*  
Embassy of Grenada  
1701 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20009

Counselor; Alternate Representative to O.A.S.

The Honorable Herbert Blaize\* (1918-1989)  
Prime Minister, NNP Government, 1984-1989; former First Minister and Premier as member of Grenada National Party (GNP); founder of the National Party (NP), 1989

The Honorable Nicholas Brathwaite\*  
Villa A  
St. George's, Grenada

Leader of NDC; Interim Prime Minister following 1983 intervention

Dr. Jacqueline Braveboy-Wagner\*  
Associate Professor of Political Science, City University of NY;  
has published widely on Caribbean; family members live in Grenada

Dr. George I. Brizan\*  
Deputy Leader of NDC; co-founder of the New National Party (NNP); Minister of Agriculture and Tourism, 1984-1987; former head of the National Democratic Party (NDP); a well-published historian

Jeff Cambrone\*

Kingstown, St. Vincent  
Chair, St. Vincent Merchants Commission; delegate to CBI conferences in Miami

Dr. Edward Cox\*  
Department of History  
Rice University  
Houston, TX 77251

A native Grenadian who writes extensively on his country

Dr. Neville Duncan\*  
Senior Lecturer of Government, University of the West Indies (UWI)-Cave Hill (Barbados); a top pollster in the Eastern Caribbean

Dr. Rapheal Fletcher\*  
Leader, Grenada People's Movement (GPM); a physicist who has been a member of the faculty at the University of the West Indies (UWI), and at universities in Britain and in Africa

Sir Eric Matthew Gairy\*  
Founding Leader, Grenada United Labour Party (GULP); Premier/Prime Minister, 1961-1962, 1967-1979

Alistair Hughes\*  
International journalist, St. George's, who was persecuted by People's Revolutionary Government (PRG)

The Honorable Benjamin Jones  
Prime Minister of the National Party (NP) Government following the death of Herbert Blaize in December 1989;  
Deputy Prime Minister in the Blaize Government

The Honorable Lawrence Joseph\*  
NNP Minister of State for Legal Affairs and National Security; Senator; Chair of NNP (Joseph was removed from the Cabinet and Senate by Blaize in July 1989)

Dr. Terrence Marryshow  
Head, Maurice Bishop Patriotic Movement (MBPM) (Marryshow, the grandson of popular leader/journalist T. A. Marryshow, studied medicine in Cuba during the PRG regime in Grenada)

Dr. Keith "Stone" Mitchell\*  
Leader, NNP, January 1989- ; NNP Minister of Works, Communications, Public Utilities, Community Development, Women's Affairs, Civil Aviation, and Co-operatives, 1984-1989 (Mitchell was removed from the Cabinet by Blaize in July 1989)

Herbert Preudhomme\*  
Archibald Avenue  
St. George's, Grenada  
Member of GULP Executive Council; Acting Prime Minister when government was toppled in 1979; GULP MP intermittently from 1958-1979

The Honorable Kendrick Radix  
Former Head, MBPM; a founder of New Jewel Movement (NJM); Minister of Justice during the PRG regime (where he was an opponent of the Bernard Coard faction)

The Honorable Alphonus C. Redhead, J.P.\*  
#1 Woolwich Road  
Tempe, St. George's, Grenada  
Supervisor of Elections

**Dr. Selwyn Ryan\***

Department of Government, UWI-St. Augustine (Trinidad); journalist and one of the top pollsters in Grenada and the Eastern Caribbean

**The Honorable Bernard St. John\***

Bridgetown, Barbados

Former Prime Minister of Barbados and former Leader of the Barbados Labour Party; a top barrister specializing in Eastern Caribbean law

**Lew Smith\***

Journalist, St. George's

**Curtis Strachan**

Clerk of Parliament

**The Honorable Daniel Williams**

Attorney General of Grenada

**The Honorable Albert O. Xavier\***

Embassy of Grenada

1701 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W.

Washington, DC 20009

Ambassador for Grenada to United States

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\*Individuals interviewed.