

THE UNITED STATES NAVAL WAR COLLEGE

National Security Decision Making Department



THE GRENADA INTERVENTION

by

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CAPT Roger Anderson, USN, cinched up his seat belt as US Air Flight 109 lifted off from T.F. Green Airport at 0715. It was a late-August morning, and CAPT Anderson was on his way to Washington, D.C. for a day's research on the Grenada intervention.

When the plane leveled off for the hour flight to D.C.'s National Airport, Roger Anderson took a look at his Washington schedule. His first meeting this morning was set for 0930 at the Old Executive Office Building adjacent to the White House, where he was going to interview Colonel Robert Iverson, USA, of the National Security Council (NSC) staff. As CAPT Anderson had learned, COL Iverson himself had been a member of the CNW class in Newport seven years before and remained willing to assist students from Newport despite his demanding assignment in the Latin America division of the National Security Council staff.

The NSC staffer had agreed to set aside an hour in his schedule this morning. "But before you get down here, Captain, let me make one suggestion," Bob Iverson had said. "If you do nothing else, read the article on Grenada decision making which appeared in the February 1984 Reader's Digest. It's the most complete public description of what went on at the White House in preparation for our intervention down there. Ollie North and some other members of the White House staff helped the writer pull together that account." CAPT Anderson had been a bit surprised to hear that the most authoritative account of Grenada decision making was to be found in Reader's Digest--he'd always considered that magazine to be a source of unimportant articles. But after he had finally run down a copy of the February 1984 issue at the library yesterday, he had noted with interest some statements on the cover. It was, apparently, the "World's Most-Read Magazine." Melvin Laird, President Nixon's former Secretary of Defense, was listed as the Digest's "Senior Counsellor." The author of the article in question--"Grenada: Anatomy of a 'Go' Decision"--was also listed as one of the Digest's Senior Editors in its Washington Bureau. "This research project could teach me a lot about the way Washington really works," CAPT Anderson thought to himself.

CAPT Anderson had been too busy yesterday to do anything more than duplicate a copy of the Digest's article on Grenada. But now he had an uninterrupted hour to read the article carefully and prepare some questions for his meeting with Colonel Iverson. Therefore, Anderson reached into his briefcase to find Ralph Kinney Bennett's analysis and settled back in his seat to read it... [At this point, find and read the reprint "Grenada: Anatomy of a 'Go' Decision."]

When he finished the Reader's Digest article, CAPT Roger Anderson tilted back his seat and pondered what he might ask COL

Iverson. Perhaps he should probe some into the background of the intervention--why was Grenada seen as a threat? He could ask about differences among the President's top advisers--surely there had been some. What surprises had there been during execution--did everything proceed as smoothly as the article implied? And why didn't the U.S. have better plans and intelligence before the operation?

By the time Roger Anderson had deplaned at National Airport, ridden the subway into the city, been checked through the elaborate security procedures at the Old Executive Office Building, and taken the elevator to the NSC staff offices on the third floor, it was 0930. At Iverson's office, the Colonel's secretary asked Anderson to take a seat; she was sure her boss would be off the telephone shortly. In fact, it proved to be another 30 minutes before COL Bob Iverson actually made his appearance.

"Sorry to keep you waiting," said Iverson as he shook Roger Anderson's hand. "We were just responding to the latest coup rumors in Haiti. Let's go back to my office."

"I read Ralph Bennett's article on the plane this morning," Roger Anderson began. "It's a very useful history, but it didn't give me much feel for the broader context of our decision. Is there anything I should know about that?"

"Good point," Iverson replied. "Interventions don't just arise out of thin air. The Reagan Administration did not look at Grenada as an isolated issue but rather as part of the larger problem of Central America and the Caribbean. The perceived threat was not just longstanding poverty and social injustice--although those clearly exist down there--but also Cuban and Soviet exploitation of these social conditions for their own international purposes. Events didn't seem to be going well in the region in 1983. UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick returned from a tour of Central America saying that the military situation in El Salvador was deteriorating and that the country needed more U.S. military assistance. CIA and DIA were reporting that the El Salvador military was largely failing to respond to the tactical advice of American military advisers. And while El Salvador and Nicaragua were the most visible battlegrounds for this international competition, events in other countries in the region--countries like Grenada, Suriname, Guatemala and Honduras--had also been on the Administration's mind. You may recall that when President Reagan went on national television in March 1983 to defend his new defense budget, one of his illustrations of the spread of Soviet and Cuban influence was the 10,000-foot runway under construction by Cuban workers at Point Salines, Grenada. While Maurice Bishop told us that this airfield would only be used for civilian purposes, it would be an ideal way station for ferrying Cuban soldiers to Africa and for shipping Soviet arms to Latin America. President Reagan mentioned Grenada once again in his April 1983 special address before Congress on Cuban and

Soviet subversion in Central America and the Caribbean. And in countless other speeches by the President and other senior Administration officials, we stressed that events in this part of the world are of critical importance to United States' security. Let me quote you some of the words in the National Security Council document, 'U.S. Policy in Central America and Cuba Through F.Y. '84,' written in April 1982 for the National Security Planning Group:

We have an interest in creating and supporting democratic states in Central America capable of conducting their political and economic affairs free from outside interference. Strategically, we have a vital interest in not allowing the proliferation of Cuba-model states which would provide platforms for subversion, compromise vital sea lanes and pose a direct military threat at or near our borders. This would undercut us globally and create economic dislocation and a resultant influx to the U.S. of illegal immigrants. In the short run we must work to eliminate Cuban/Soviet influence in the region, and in the long run we must build politically stable governments able to withstand such influences.

This whole classified document, by the way, was printed in The New York Times in April 1983.

"As you can imagine, with the President making televised speeches about the Soviet-Cuban threat in Central America and with Congress being asked for more assistance for El Salvador, Honduras and the Contras, the whole subject became caught up in American politics. A large number of groups were suddenly active for and against the Administration's foreign and military assistance requests. Some of the organizations supporting the President included the Association of American Chambers of Commerce, the Heritage Foundation, and the Council for Inter-American Security; among those opposing him were Amnesty International, the Institute for Policy Studies, the Inter-Religious Task Force, and the Council on Hemispheric Affairs. These and similar groups provided many of the witnesses for Senate and House subcommittee hearings. There were lots of leaks and counterleaks. Government officials from El Salvador and Nicaragua arrived in Washington to lobby for and against assistance. In an effort to persuade Congress to appropriate more money, the Administration promised that it would limit U.S. military advisers in El Salvador to 55 and would not send combat troops to Central America. The general public was evenly divided on the subject of U.S. assistance and advisers for El Salvador.

"Now, at the outset of the Reagan Administration, Secretary of State Al Haig had warned the White House that if the U.S. Government didn't develop and implement a long-range approach for dealing with Cuban and Soviet subversion in Central America, then we would end up making the same incremental and ineffective

escalations which had proved so disastrous in Southeast Asia. I think this was a point that came to be accepted by the President's other advisers. Of course that doesn't mean we ever fully implemented some grand strategy. There was considerable disagreement over just what to do. While Haig was here he not only advocated economic and military assistance to Central American allies and U.S. participation in interdiction and intelligence efforts but he also supported the direct application of U.S. military power against Cuba and other communist threats in the Western Hemisphere. Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were willing to support economic and military assistance and intelligence activities, but they were sufficiently worried about military threats in other parts of the world and about getting sucked into 'another Vietnam' that they generally opposed any U.S. military intervention in the region. The President's top White House advisers at the time--people like Vice President Bush, Counselor Ed Meese, Chief of Staff Jim Baker and Deputy Chief of Staff Mike Deaver--were willing to support a larger military presence in the region and frequent naval exercises, but they also were very reluctant to support any action which would further scare a public which already saw Ronald Reagan as too willing to resort to military solutions.

"There are a few other pieces of information that were an important part of the context leading up to the Grenada intervention. First, the United States Government wasn't alone in being concerned about the Marxist leadership on Grenada. Throughout 1981, 1982 and 1983, we heard from other Caribbean governments that the Cuban-backed regime of Maurice Bishop was aiding new-left parties in their countries. Both Dominica and St. Lucia formally protested Grenadian interference in their internal affairs. Nobody could figure out why Bishop needed a regular army of 1,500 men and a militia of 2,400 for a country of 110,000 people. The defense forces of the six other nations in the Organization of East Caribbean States (OECS) totalled fewer than 500 men. And of course Bishop's trips to Soviet-bloc countries, his aid agreements with Cuba and the Soviet Union, his reliance on the Cuban ambassador to Grenada, and his support for Soviet and Cuban positions in the United Nations all increased general concern that Grenada was gradually being turned into a Soviet satellite and a platform for subversion.

"Second, there had been a confidential meeting between Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, then-National Security Advisor Bill Clark, Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam and NSC staffer Ollie North here in Washington on June 7, 1983--about four months before the intervention. Bishop had come to the U.S. to speak at the organization of American States and attend United Nations' meetings, and he used these occasions to publicly express the desire for better relations with the U.S. Government. In his private meeting with Clark, Dam and North, Bishop repeated this desire. He had probably been frightened by all the evidence that

the Cubans and Soviets in Central America. Therefore, Bishop's arrest and execution by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Cord, who headed a faction of the New Jewel Movement with a real hard-line Marxist bent, would not have been viewed by those here in the White House as a favorable development, I think.

"Third, you should remember that in September 1983, we had two other crises. In Beirut the first serious shelling of the Marines at the International Airport had occurred, with several of our soldiers dying and our naval ships offshore retaliating against the Druse and Shiite Muslim artillery. And, equally important, the Soviet Union had shot down Korean Air Lines Flight 007 on September 1, killing 269 people, including 61 Americans. There was a lot of outrage over this Soviet action and a lot of frustration that our government seemed unable to do anything about it. This event certainly halted our slowly improving relations with the USSR, including speculation about a Reagan-Andropov summit meeting."

When COL Iverson had finished his overview of events prior to the Grenada intervention, CAPT Anderson steered the discussion in another direction. "What stands out," he asked, "about the President's thoughts and behavior during the actual crisis?"

"Well," said Bob Iverson, "that's a fair question. And fortunately I have some direct knowledge about that since I was serving over here at that time on the Situation Room staff prior to being sent to El Salvador as the Army attaché. An Air Force colonel assigned here and I staffed all of the NSC's documents for this crisis and attended most of the President's meetings with his top advisers. And one of the things which still stands out in my mind was the President's clear determination not to let the Soviets and the Cubans get a base of operations in the Eastern Caribbean. He clearly saw Grenada's potential for adding to the geopolitical threat to our sea lanes and our allies in the region.

"Now the President also understood the point made very strongly toward the end by his domestic advisers--Jim Baker, Mike Deaver and Ed Meese--that almost no American had ever heard of Grenada and that very few Americans would think that a few Cubans on a small Caribbean island were much of a threat. So the President was willing to accept the advice that, with respect to the public explanation of our actions, greater emphasis should be placed on the threat to American citizens on Grenada rather than on the strategic importance of stopping Communist subversion in the Caribbean.

"But I am convinced that even if a thousand Americans had not been living on Grenada, the President would still have made exactly the same decision if all the other factors had been the same. He viewed our intervention as part of a general responsibility to assist smaller countries who were struggling to resist

bility to assist smaller countries who were struggling to resist Soviet-Cuban subversion. We had to do some things to reverse this adverse trend.

"One other thing which struck me about the President during those two weeks of planning and execution was his greater involvement in the decision-making process than I had witnessed or heard about before. During the most intense period of the crisis--when we were also dealing with the bombing of the Marine compound in Beirut--the President was averaging only five hours sleep per night. President Reagan was more attentive and more involved at meetings than I or others around the White House had seen before. Not only did he make the big decision to go in; he made several lesser-order decisions as well. For instance, when we captured 750 Cuban soldiers on Grenada, several of the President's advisers wanted to release them only if Castro also agreed to take back the violent criminals whom he had released from his jails and sent to the United States in 1979. Several of us military officers ultimately persuaded the President that using captured soldiers as political bargaining chips in this way would violate the Geneva Convention on Prisoners of War. The President had to decide that one. It was the President, in consultation with Weinberger, who told the Joint Chiefs to double the number of troops they initially planned to send to Grenada. He also had to decide what kind of Grenadian government we would recognize and support as an alternative to the old Bishop regime. And he had to decide the relative priority to be given to rescuing our own citizens versus rescuing citizens from many other countries trapped in Grenada."

CAPT Anderson interrupted COL Iverson. "Are you saying that President Reagan micromanaged the intervention?"

"Not at all," shot back Iverson, with some irritation in his voice. "Until October 25 the President was intimately involved in sifting the intelligence reports and formulating a plan of action. But once the decision to move into Grenada was finally made, President Reagan delegated it to the military to pull it off. For him one of the lessons of Vietnam was that the military should be left alone to do its job. The President did not feel the need to be awakened when the actual predawn invasion was launched, and he did not ask to receive minute-by-minute field reports of the fighting. He even turned aside a suggestion that he call the field commanders in Grenada to congratulate them on the grounds that he wasn't 'going to bother the guys until they get the job done.'

"Now that doesn't mean that there weren't some NSC aides monitoring the events on Grenada with the highly sophisticated command-and-control apparatus here. A couple of us listened in on all the satellite communications going back and forth, and if we had heard something we didn't like we would have called it to McFarlane's or the President's attention. Nor does this mean that

the President wasn't called on to resolve some highly sensitive questions like what to do with the Cuban prisoners. But I don't think you could accuse us of micromanaging the military from the White House on this one."

CAPT Anderson raised another topic. "You mentioned the bombing in Lebanon. How much did the tragedy in Beirut impact on the Grenada decision?"

"It's hard to gauge that precisely," Iverson responded. "After the truck-bomb attack, I think Secretary Weinberger and General Vessey were reluctant to get into another situation where we would take more casualties. They were also worried that an intervention coming at this time would add fuel to the charge that the Administration was too willing to use military power. I also think that from the first discussions of Grenada, General Vessey wanted to be certain that the Joint Chiefs weren't getting trapped into another symbolic display of military power lacking in precise military objectives.

"The bombing in Beirut also affected the thinking of the President's political advisers, who felt that the tragedy would be further magnified by a botched intervention in Grenada and that therefore the risks might not be worth the rewards. Also some aides argued that the Grenada operation might be seen as a political ploy to divert attention from the losses in Beirut. The President listened to these views but in the end rejected them."

"Were there any major differences of opinion among the President's top advisers?" Anderson asked. "The Reader's Digest article paints the picture of a pretty unified Administration."

Iverson pondered the question for a moment. "I'd rather not go into that beyond what I've already said," he finally replied. "I will say, in summary, that by the date of the operation-- October 25--there appeared to be general support for going in, but it is also true that some advisers came around to this position much sooner and stronger than others."

"Can you offer an assessment of Bud McFarlane's performance during this event? After all, he had only been on the job as National Security Advisor for about a week before this occurred."

"Well, Roger, I'm not sure that I'm the most objective commentator on McFarlane's behavior, since I worked for the guy. He already had a lot of on-the-job training as Deputy National Security Advisor from January 1982 until October 1983. But it seems to me that this episode stands out as one of the positive examples of NSC coordination of the decision-making process during the first Reagan Administration. McFarlane saw to it that the President and Vice President were exposed to a range of views and the best intelligence the government had to offer, and he made sure that the President's advisers were well aware of their

boss's goals and priorities. This was all done under some pretty tough circumstances.

"Which is not to say that McFarlane didn't eventually make clear his own point of view. At the last important National Security Council session prior to our intervention, when the President was going around the Cabinet table canvassing each major adviser's opinion, McFarlane spoke very strongly in favor of the proposed military operation."

Glancing down at his watch, CAPT Anderson realized that he only had time for one or two more questions. "Why didn't we have better intelligence or better-developed contingency plans for Grenada?" he asked. "We had been talking about the Marxist problem on that island for years."

A somewhat pained expression crossed Iverson's face. "Yes," he replied, "you're probably right. We should have been better prepared. On the other hand you've got to recognize how the system works. On the intelligence side we have limited assets which have to cover the entire globe, and quite naturally we target them on the largest threats, not on the Grenada's of this world. So when we cut back our human intelligence collection in the late 1970s--after the great national debate over the ethics of U.S. intelligence--agents in obscure places like Grenada were eliminated. Then, too, the intelligence community was given almost no advanced notice of this intervention during which to reallocate what assets it does have. This was because of the speed of events in Grenada, our lack of any intelligence agents on the island, and because the Defense Department wasn't very interested in this affair until just a few days before we went in. Then there is always the unpredictable human factor. The Grenadian operative who the CIA was going to help onto the island refused to go--despite a cash offer of \$100,000! You'd be amazed at the number of policy makers who think you can create good collection and assessment with the snap of a finger.

"The lack of a fully developed contingency plan for occupation of Grenada was a somewhat similar problem. Our war plans tend to be drawn up for the big scenarios like war contingencies in Europe and the Middle East. In such an event we would allocate minimal resources to Grenada--the plan might call for landing a company of U.S. soldiers at the Point Salines airfield to secure that strategic asset. Certainly no one had drawn up a full-scale plan which foresaw our occupying the entire island and assisting in the reconstruction of a democratic government there. Perhaps there is something wrong with our process since these unconventional events seem to be what we face most often. But it would be awfully hard to prepare for every one of these contingencies."

Roger Anderson once again glanced at his watch. It now read 1130. His next appointment across town at the State Department

was scheduled for 1300, and he needed to catch a bite to eat before he met that one.

"I know you have a lot of work to do," said Anderson, rising to his feet. "Perhaps I'll have a few more questions to ask after I've done some more research."

"That would be fine," said Bob Iverson. "You might want to call me from Newport on the secure phone some day."

CAPT Anderson retraced his path out of the Old Executive Office Building and proceeded up 17th Street to the local McDonald's restaurant. After a sandwich and a look through the day's Washington Post, he caught the Metro train to the State Department headquarters. Following a thorough security check in the lobby, he headed for the office of CAPT Bruce Ford, USN, on the 7th floor of the building. Ford had been an acquaintance of Anderson's ever since their years together as Naval Academy midshipmen and was now serving in State's Inter-American Affairs Bureau.

CAPT Anderson arrived at Ford's office promptly at 1255 hours. "Good to see you again, Roger," said Bruce Ford, as he shook his friend's hand. "How can I help you on this Grenada research project? I should have some information that's relevant since I was here in State's Politico-Military Bureau at the time and right in the middle of the Grenada operation for a month."

"That's just what I wanted to hear," commented Anderson, as he pulled a note pad from his briefcase. "I know very little about the way things are done over here at State."

"Oh, it's certainly different than being in the Pentagon," said Ford, as he leaned back in his chair. "There is a lot less structure here. Tasking is often done by proximity, not by who is formally responsible. Practically every day is just a series of mini-crises, as we attempt to respond sensibly to events in the international environment. Of course it's when the heat goes up an extra notch--as in Grenada--that you really find out who is in charge. In a national crisis it's the guys with the most guts, stamina and ink who are in control. Some people who ought to be important players drop out along the way. For example, the Caribbean desk officer announced a week into Grenada that he wasn't going to continue to work nights and weekends anymore--and he didn't. While that was rather shocking, you've got to have some sympathy for him. After having served tours in the Pentagon and over here I can tell you that the Pentagon has a lot more slack time, people and money to throw into the decision-making process when that becomes necessary. Over here you just work until you drop; there is no such thing as 'shifts.'"

"That sounds pretty grim," replied CAPT Anderson. "But let me shift the focus a bit. When I was over at the White House this

morning I didn't find out much about any differences of opinion which might have occurred between State and Defense during the course of the crisis. Perhaps you were close enough to the scene to have some information about this."

"Yes I was," CAPT Ford said. "I think people tended to forget--after our victory--that there were some differences between State and Defense during the policy-formulation phase of the crisis. On October 14, the day after Maurice Bishop was overthrown and put in jail, the White House requested the JCS begin routine planning for a noncombatant evacuation operation (NEO) for Americans on Grenada. Then on October 17, Tony Motley, the Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, started advocating a military mission to forcibly rescue the 1,000 Americans still on Grenada. He was backed in this by Larry Eagleburger, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs and the number three man in this Department at that time. At the inter-agency meeting here that day, however, the three-star representative from the Joint Chiefs, VADM Art Moreau, resisted the idea of beginning the formal contingency planning needed for such a military operation. The Chiefs were by no means sure that all of the non-military options for insuring the safety of the Americans down there had been fully exhausted. Nor were they sure that there was a real threat to the Americans in light of the ambiguous nature of our intelligence.

"With the execution of Maurice Bishop on October 19 and the growing lawlessness on the island, the Chiefs agreed to start planning an opposed military evacuation of the Americans on Grenada. They certainly didn't want to be put in the position of having to attempt another hostage rescue mission. But by now Motley and Eagleburger were arguing that an evacuation would not be enough and that to serve the broader interests of the United States we should take over the entire island. The Chiefs were reluctant to buy this line. Not only did they not have operational forces in place for such an intervention, but the military intelligence available on the Grenadian military and the Cuban advisers was very sketchy.

"Our human intelligence regarding the military situation was nil. Estimates of the Cubans on the island ranged from 500 to 900, and we had little knowledge of their weaponry and combat proficiency. It even turned out later that our intelligence set up didn't get to the troop commanders the important information that there was more than one campus where American students should be located or that Grenada consisted of more than one island. This latter piece of information was pointed out to Washington by an officer in the amphibious task force who had previously been on all three of Grenada's principal islands.

"It was at this point that the weight of Secretary of State George Shultz began to be felt. On the recommendation of Shultz and McFarlane, the President ordered the Special Situation Group

to start meeting on the issue under the direction of Vice President Bush. Those in attendance on October 20th included the Cabinet-level principals--Bush, Shultz, Weinberger, Vessey, Director of Central Intelligence Casey, McFarlane, Meese, Baker, Deaver--and one senior staffer supporting each principal. Secretary Shultz argued that 'we should strike while the iron is hot.' Shultz said there would be a strong message for Cuba, Nicaragua and our allies if we took some bold action. McFarlane seemed to be a discreet supporter of Shultz's position. Weinberger and Vessey, on the other hand, wanted to wait for more intelligence before agreeing to any occupation. They conceded that U.S. casualties would probably be light but still wondered if the operation were necessary. After all, U.S. servicemen were already under fire in Beirut on what had started as a noncombatant evacuation. Remember that the initial CINCLANT options for Grenada envisioned using almost no military force and relying on charter airplanes to bring out the students under benign conditions. That might have worked, too, if the game plan had not been expanded to include removal of the government.

"By October 21 Shultz and his supporters had prevailed to the point where the President instructed the Joint Chiefs to expand their planning to include neutralization of Grenadian forces and restoration of democracy to that nation. Then the die was cast when the Eastern Caribbean Island nations officially asked for our military help in restoring democracy on Grenada. That cable arrived here at the State Department late October 21 and was relayed to Shultz and McFarlane in Augusta, where they took it directly to the President early the next morning. This request not only crystalized the President's thoughts; it also did the same for the Vice President, who was still chairing the SSG back in Washington. At one of these last SSG meetings, Bush asked, 'If the United States isn't willing to help some small democratic countries, who will?' Even when Weinberger, Vessey and several of the President's political advisers had some second thoughts following the truck bombing in Beirut, it was too late for them to halt the momentum. President Reagan isn't the kind of guy who is inclined to change his mind or be seized by agonizing doubts once he has decided to do something. Weinberger and Vessey were finally brought on board by the understanding that the military would be left to run this operation its way and that it would be a case of getting in and out quickly, using plenty of troops, and not bogging down in some static deployment."

"Gosh, Bruce, I didn't realize that George Shultz had been such an influential force in the Grenada operation."

"Look, Roger, attention doesn't necessarily equate with influence. Former Secretary of State Al Haig got plenty of headlines and look where those got him. Shultz's unpretentiousness fit right in with Ronald Reagan's congenial and collegial approach to things."

"Influence over Central American policy was a case in point. In May 1983 Shultz had to battle National Security Advisor Bill Clark and UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick to regain direction of the Administration's policies in that area. Throughout the first half of 1983, Clark and Kirkpatrick had a series of disagreements with State's then-Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, Thomas Enders, over tactics for building domestic support for the Administration's policies and over whether to keep negotiation channels open to the leftists in Central America. Because of these differences, Clark and his NSC staff increasingly took personal charge of day-to-day decisions on Central America and they ginned up the idea of a Special Ambassador to Central America in the person of former-Senator Richard Stone, a friend of Clark's. Finally Shultz had a meeting with the President and the National Security Advisor, at which he complained that he was being frozen out of the process. It was agreed that Shultz would be given back leadership of Central American policy if Enders were replaced with Langhorne Motley, then our ambassador to Brazil.

"That wasn't the end of the story, however. In late July 1983 Reagan approved orders for large-scale naval maneuvers near Nicaragua without Shultz's personal knowledge. Shultz had participated in earlier discussions of the exercises, but it was his clear understanding that the National Security Council had sent the question back to a lower-level interagency group for further review. Unfortunately, these new military instructions were reported in the July 23rd New York Times--right in the middle of the heated House of Representatives' debate over U.S. covert operations in Nicaragua. Not only did the new maneuvers infuriate Congressional leaders who had not been informed of them, but it also embarrassed the Secretary of State, who had to concede that he didn't know they had been approved.

"Both Shultz and Clark tried to mollify Congress in a series of closed-door briefings, but the Administration suffered a serious policy defeat in the House of Representatives, which voted 228 to 195 to cut off all CIA money to U.S.-backed rebels fighting the leftist government in Nicaragua. In the meantime the major news outlets in town--The Washington Post, CBS News, Time, etc.--started reporting that Clark had once again emerged as the dominant figure in Reagan's Central American policy.

"All of this was just too much for Shultz. On August 4, he held a private meeting with the President in the oval Office at which he unveiled a laundry list of complaints, including disputes about diplomatic appointees, a 'back-channel' White House message to West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and the Central American maneuvers. This made a powerful impact on the President, I'm told, coming from a figure who had been remarkably relaxed about bureaucratic turf. While Shultz apparently didn't threaten to resign, the implications of his complaints and the possibility that he might quit generated a lot of alarm over in the White

House. You can't lose your second Secretary of State within a year without the public wondering why.

"Ten weeks later Bill Clark chose to resign as National Security Assistant and accept an appointment as Secretary of Interior. Nobody seems to know exactly why this happened. Stories at the time suggested that Clark simply was tired of the hard work and tedious hours in the national security job and was looking for a rest. Surely, however, part of the cause was Clark's bruising battle over Nicaragua and his tug-of-war with Shultz. Perhaps because of this history, Shultz played an important role in picking Clark's successor. He had a private luncheon with the President and several long telephone conversations with him in the four days prior to the announcement that Bud McFarlane was being elevated one notch to National Security Advisor. The only other serious candidate for the job that I heard of was UN Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, a person considered to be more like Clark in her views. You can be sure that Shultz favored McFarlane's low key personality to Ambassador Kirkpatrick's more aggressive style."

"It sounds to me like Shultz and McFarlane were an interesting team," observed CAPT Anderson.

"You're absolutely right, Roger. During August and September of 1983, Shultz and Larry Eagleburger were virtually alone at the top of the Administration in supporting McFarlane's requests for relaxing restrictions on Marine operations in Beirut and for using U.S. naval gunfire against the Druse and Shiite artillery. That was while McFarlane was still Special Envoy to the Middle East and Deputy National Security Advisor."

"Bruce, you're providing me some excellent data on what went into the President's decision to intervene in Grenada, but I don't have much feel for what happened after that decision was made. Can you tell me something about that?"

"Well, Roger, a lot of what we did in Washington was intended to keep other people off the soldiers' backs so that they could get the mission accomplished. By 'other people' I mean the news media and Congress. For General Vessey, operational security was everything and you didn't want a leak before the operation began. Therefore, planning for Grenada was done by the smallest of cells within the Joint Staff, supported of course by LANTCOM. When the 82nd Airborne was alerted, the troops were told that this was just another exercise against the mythical nation of Macaba.

"Another way leaks were prevented was to keep the White House's own Press Office completely in the dark until the invasion began. Because of this Press Secretary Larry Speakes and his deputies quite innocently called all rumors of an impending military operation preposterous and absurd--right up to

the hour when it actually began. In fact the deception of the press corps was so complete that the Deputy Press Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Les Janka, resigned on October 31, saying that his credibility with the press had been irreparably damaged.

"Once the occupation actually began on October 25, the battle was on for control of public opinion. Bush, Shultz, Weinberger, Vessey, and McFarlane all spent many hours with the news media, both publicly and privately, explaining why the decision was made. This was extremely important given the furor we caused by barring all reporters from the island during the first days of the battle. We ran witness after witness up to Capitol Hill to meet with Congressional committees, including some heavyweights like Secretary Weinberger, General Vessey, General Kelley and Deputy Secretary of State Dam. And of course, President Reagan went on national television the evening of October 27 to say that Grenada was 'a Soviet-Cuban colony being readied as a major military bastion' and that 'we got there just in time.' Lots of people in town--including Reagan's critics--consider that to be one of the most effective speeches he has ever made."

Captain Anderson interrupted. "What you just told me ties in with something I heard from the Chief of Staff officer of the amphibious task force that assaulted Grenada. He made quite a point that both Army and Marine Corps intelligence officers on the ground in Grenada did a superb job in instantly recognizing the importance of the piles of documents which both forces were capturing on the island. It took a tremendous effort to get documents which were captured as late as the morning of the 27th sorted and then put on dedicated courier flights from Grenada to Washington via Barbados in time for the President's speech that same night. The President never could have put the extent of Cuban and Soviet military intentions so strongly to the American people without having that vital proof in his hands."

"Yes," replied CAPT Ford, "that certainly was a case of those on the scene keeping in mind the needs of the National Command Authority--even in the heat of combat. And the public responded to the President's appeal for support. Following his speech, Americans' approval of the Grenada occupation rose to 55%, compared to 31% disapproval. The percentage of Americans approving of the President's handling of his job immediately jumped 7% to an overall level of 56% after URGENT FURY--the highest level in two years."

"How did Congress play in all this, Bruce? They're often the President's most severe critic."

"Well, Roger, those were the days when the Republicans controlled the Senate and the Democrats controlled the House of Representatives. The President had the leaders of the House and Senate--Tip O'Neill, Jim Wright, Bob Michel, Howard Baker, and

Robert Byrd--over to the White House the evening before the intervention, to hear General Vessey, George Shultz and Bud McFarlane explain the plan. Of the five Congressional leaders, only Howard Baker felt the operation should be approved, but even he advised the President--along with the other four Congressmen--that the White House would take a great deal of political flak on Capitol Hill for this intervention. As far as they could see, there was insufficient threat from the tiny island of Grenada to warrant the loss of American lives sure to occur, and they were convinced most of Congress would feel the same way.

"I heard later from a person at that meeting that President Reagan was very upset by what he was told. He was now convinced that the Grenada operation was the correct thing to do, and he simply couldn't understand why these Congressional leaders didn't see the world the same way. Apparently this meeting left such an impression on Reagan that he chose not to consult Congress very seriously again in any crisis situation.

"Three days after the intervention began, the Senate voted 64 to 20 that the War Powers Resolution applied to the fighting in Grenada, meaning that U.S. troops would have to withdraw from Grenada in sixty days unless the Senate voted an extension. 'The implication of this resolution,' said Senator Charles Percy, the Republican chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, 'is that we take the War Powers Act seriously. It is the law of the land and we ought to abide by it.' On November 1, the House adopted a similar bill by an overwhelming 403 to 23 vote. Ironically, neither of these bills passed the other branch of Congress before it adjourned on November 18, so technically the War Powers Resolution was never invoked. But it was clear that both Republican and Democratic members of Congress were saying something about the role of Congress in foreign policy.

"Now, as one might expect, things got more partisan on the House side than in the Senate. House Speaker Tip O'Neill broke his silence two days after the intervention began and told a press conference that Reagan's policy in Grenada was 'wrong' and 'frightening' and that 'we can't go the way of gunboat diplomacy.' A 14-member House of Representatives delegation took off on a four-day inspection mission to Grenada and Barbados on November 3, to establish for themselves whether Americans on the island had been in danger and whether the Grenadians welcomed our intervention. Rather surprisingly, 11 of the 14 members of the commission returned to Washington with the final conclusion that 'under the circumstances the President acted correctly to protect American lives.' In the face of this House report and rising public support for the President, House Speaker O'Neill called another press conference on November 8 to state that he was now convinced that 'sending American forces into combat was justified.'"

CAPT Anderson checked his watch and concluded that he should bring his interview to a close. "Bruce, I remember your telling me that you only had thirty minutes to spare this afternoon. You have been very informative. I'll try to get back to you in person or by phone before I write up my research paper."

The session with Bruce Ford had taken forty minutes, leaving CAPT Anderson ample time to get over to the Pentagon for his 1430 appointment. As he waited for the shuttle bus which runs between State and the Pentagon, he mulled over some of the insights which he had picked up during the day. It was clear, of course, that most of what he had learned related to decision making at the Presidential level and that he didn't really have much data yet about the military planning and execution of the intervention. But, then, that was precisely why he was headed to the Pentagon to see his friend and former skipper, CAPT Steve Cozza. Given Steve's current position as chief of the Joint Operations Division on the Chairman's Joint Staff, he should be able to provide an insider's view on the military action.

Following the ride to the Pentagon, the security check at the River Entrance, and a call to his friend from the guard station at the entry way to the JCS compound, CAPT Cozza appeared to escort Roger Anderson down to the 2nd floor. After a few minutes of banter about their families and current assignments, the two friends' conversation drifted toward Grenada. "Well, Rog, there is a lot of information available now on military planning and execution in Grenada because of the debates leading up to the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. Those members of Congress who wanted to change the military advisory and command structure latched onto Grenada as one of the events which supported their case, and they dragged out for public consideration details that normally would have been locked up in classified after-action reports.

"To begin, I understand the Secretary of Defense and the Chiefs were reluctant participants in the operation. There was concern not only over the adequacy of military intelligence but also over the short time available for planning.

"Once it was decided to go ahead with the invasion, the President and Secretary Weinberger tended to delegate the affair to the military. Weinberger thought that Vietnam and the Iranian hostage raid demonstrated the importance of leaving military operations to field commanders; he also believed that the British experience in the Falklands confirmed this view.

"General Vessey and the other Joint Chiefs were deeply involved in planning the operation. During the 48-hour period before the intervention, the Chiefs brought CINCLANT, Admiral Wesley McDonald, up from Norfolk to review his draft plan, and they also met with the Commander of the Joint Special Operations Command, Major General Richard Schultes.

"When the CINCLANT plan was briefed, it had already been overtaken by the expanding mission to secure the whole island. Since that mission would clearly require more than the 800 Marine infantrymen readily available on board the five amphibious ships then enroute, the Chiefs brought in the Army and the Special Operations Forces. The Special Operations Forces were supposed to accomplish several missions aimed at preparing for the political overthrow of the revolutionary government and insuring the safety of the British Governor General, Sir Paul Scoon. Scoon was a figurehead, but at this stage of the planning it was already being envisioned that he could be used to head a provisional government after the invasion. The Army's mission was not only to secure the Pt. Salines runway but also occupy and secure half the island south of a boundary line which was established by the JCS. The Marines were to occupy the area north of the boundary line.

"There has been some interesting speculation as to why the Marines so easily settled for a ground plan that had them landing at Pearls on the northeast side of the island. Pearls was known to have a questionable airfield and inadequate beaches, whereas the best landing site for a classical amphibious assault was in the vicinity of Grande Anse Beach just northeast of Pt. Salines. Some suggest that the Assistant Commandant's acceptance of this ground plan at a meeting in the JCS 'tank' was due to the death of 241 Marines early October 23rd at Beirut International Airport. Perhaps the Corps opted for the north end of Grenada, away from the Cubans concentrated at Pt. Salines airport and in the capital of St. George's, because of the smaller risk of more death and injury.

"When it came to actual execution, General Vessey delegated very extensively to Admiral McDonald and the on-the-scene Joint Task Force Commander (CJTf), Vice Admiral Joe Metcalf. The night before the invasion was to begin, the General packed his briefcase and headed home after the orders were passed down to the field commanders, and he recommended that the members of his Joint Staff do the same. During the actual fighting he was reluctant to ask for additional information from field commanders even when pressed for this by senior civilians. A friend of mine heard him yell at his staff, 'Don't force information up from the commander! He's busy fighting and doesn't have time for your questions.' General Vessey allocated several JCS satellite channels for Admirals McDonald and Metcalf. These channels provided secure voice communication down to individual commanders at the numbered task force level within Joint Task Force 120, and one of these channels was restricted to only the CINCLANTFLT command center and Admiral Metcalf on the GUAM. The others were open nets which could be monitored on a party line basis.

"Of course this approach doesn't mean that General Vessey didn't know what was going on. He received scores of situation reports from the operators in the field. In fact, Admiral

Metcalf flooded this place with SITREPs--2 messages per hour--as a device to keep the Pentagon staffs off his back. And in this age of instant communications, reports also arrived in the building from the Rangers' parent command, from the Army Corps headquarters, from Military Airlift Command, and from others. There was a lot of conflicting information for a while because no joint commander can hope to funnel all reports up the line through his headquarters, and Admiral Metcalf wisely didn't try. He assumed correctly that after a while his own frequent, numbered SITREPs would be viewed as the single authoritative source by the Chiefs."

Roger Anderson interrupted his friend. "Steve, that's terrific information. But what about this flap over barring news reporters from going onto the island?"

"Rog, I think that was consistent with what I've already said. General Vessey was very concerned about operational security, and he told the National Security Council that the operation had to be secret if we were to minimize casualties to soldiers and civilians. We knew that Castro had already sent a Colonel to Grenada to buck up the Cubans' defenses there, so we didn't want any more leaks. Equally important, the Chiefs had decided to rely extensively on Special Operations Forces, and they didn't want their identity, tactics and equipment splashed all over the front pages. So it was decided in the Pentagon to keep all the press out the first day and start taking them in on the second day. Well, Vice Admiral Metcalf was still fighting on the second day, and he decided that he didn't have room on his ships for the media assembled on Barbados. Finally, the press complaints back in Washington became so intense that the Joint Chiefs ordered Metcalf on the third day to start flying groups of reporters in and out of Grenada for daytime observation.

"Now, there is no question but that the military paid a price for this media exclusion--much bigger than anticipated. Vice Admiral Metcalf says that he didn't even know that the press establishment back home was in an uproar until his Saturday press conference--the fifth day into the operation. All the major news organizations protested the restrictions in letters to the President and the Defense Secretary. This highly publicized debate over press freedom was in every newspaper and on every news broadcast, and it diverted some attention away from the accomplishments of our troops. A lot of respected journalists were on television telling the American people that this was politically motivated censorship, not a military requirement. Henry Catto, the Pentagon's own Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs from March 1981 until September 1983, said that the costs of denying access had exceeded the benefits and that the average member of the Joint Chiefs has all the public relations sense of Attila the Hun! When we uncovered enough new Soviet-made weapons on Grenada to equip a division of troops and a number of secret agreements between Grenada and other Communist countries, the press seemed

to downplay this because they hadn't been on the scene when these guns and documents were found.

"I think General Vessey's immediate creation of a joint military-civilian panel to look at the news media's complaints suggested a realization that this issue can't be handled in this way the next time. That panel ultimately endorsed 'the historic principle that American journalists, print and broadcast, with their professional equipment, should be present at military operations.' However, if the news media are going to be there in these limited combat operations, you have to factor them into your leadership as a C.O. There is no room for traditional battlefield behavior where if you need something, you just appropriate it with little thought about how it might look later on TV. There is no 'nice way' to conduct house-to-house searches for a TV camera. We haven't trained for this. When was the last time you were subjected to constant media presence as a part of an exercise or had to give interviews as a part of your training?"

Roger Anderson interrupted his friend. "That's interesting, Steve, but let's get down to the actual execution of the military mission. It all sounded pretty smooth from what I recall. There were glowing reports about the heroism of the troops. Various politicians and officials were claiming to be personal friends of General Vessey. There were reports about the skill with which units from the four services were quickly forged into an effective fighting team."

CAPT Cozza leaned forward in his chair. "Rog, it's quite true that the objectives of URGENT FURY were accomplished completely. But none of this should blind us to the fact that both our planning and execution fell far short of perfection."

"Just what problems do you have in mind?" asked Roger Anderson.

"Rog, let me summarize. First, the idea of the Joint Caribbean Task Force doesn't work in practice. URGENT FURY proved that contingency operations break too quickly, and have too high a risk factor to have the planning delegated much below the JCS level. Fast breaking and high stakes military operations are going to be centrally planned in Washington between the JCS and some variant of the National Security Council. Regional contingency planning by remote headquarters--and anything not in Washington is remote for this purpose--is unrealistic.

"Admiral Wesley McDonald and his staff at USLANTCOM headquarters were given only forty-eight hours to come up with options for the Grenada intervention. During the period of October 14 through October 20, USCINCLANT and his staff were engaged in rather straightforward planning for a peaceful evacuation of the 1,000 Americans--most of them medical

students--on the island. This plan anticipated the use of only Navy and Marine Corps units. Then suddenly, late on the 21st, USCINCLANT was ordered to start developing options for occupation of the island. Even Admiral McDonald's best plans were overtaken by events before he could brief them to the Chiefs here in Washington.

"Of course, this meant lashing together operational forces at the last moment. It's interesting that although low-intensity conflicts such as Grenada are our most frequent military requirement, there is no permanent, standing joint task force to handle these. Consequently, an operational task force of about 10,000 personnel from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force was created on the spot, and not too surprisingly this apparatus had some flaws. The ground force was made up of both Marine and Army elements, but it had no overall ground commander. A Marine Corps Colonel commanded the ground forces attacking the northern end of the island--designated Task Force 124--while Army soldiers on the southern end--Task Force 122 and 123--were commanded by a Major General.

"As it turned out, another separate chain of command was in existence for the Special Operations Forces during the early going, and some of the people on the flagship GUAM have said there were several surprises early on involving these small units whose locations and missions were held in such secrecy that VADM Metcalf was sometimes surprised they were even in the area. This became a problem when several of these small units ran into trouble and had to be assisted or rescued by conventional Navy and Marine forces.

"As you might expect with a task force pulled together so quickly, this wasn't the only example of a breakdown in communication. Another one appears to have occurred between the Joint Chiefs, Admiral McDonald and VADM Metcalf on the one hand and the Army commanders at Pt. Salines airfield on the other. MG Trobaugh, the Commanding General of the 82d Airborne Division, believed his primary missions were to secure the airhead at Pt. Salines and to rescue the American students. These two objectives were to be accomplished within JCS Rules of Engagement designed to minimize damage to the island and limit U.S. casualties. MG Trobaugh was apparently unaware of the equally high priority assigned by the JCS to occupying the entire island as quickly as possible and then getting U.S. troops off the island. As a consequence, the 82d Airborne Division was slow in expanding its area of operations beyond the Pt. Salines vicinity.

"Another factor contributed to the 82d Airborne's slow progress north into the island. The Rangers who seized the Pt. Salines runway were surprised at the military resistance they received--U.S. intelligence had very badly underestimated the will power and the skill of the Cuban advisers and the Grenadian People's Revolutionary Army. Twenty-four Cubans and 45

Grenadians died and some 400 of them were wounded fighting our occupying forces. When MG Trobaugh and the lead elements of the 82d Airborne Division arrived late the first day, their familiarization briefing from the Rangers emphasized that the 82d faced a resolute enemy. It's obvious that this brief had an effect on MG Trobaugh since he immediately called back to the 18th Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg to request more ground troops. C-141s carrying supplies were turned around in mid-air and sent back for more soldiers. For several days thereafter, Trobaugh very slowly expanded the 82d's perimeter beyond the Pt. Salines runway and focused his attention on organizing the six battalions and support equipment that were pouring in for four days.

"Meanwhile, the Marines in the north quickly seized control of the lightly defended Pearls airport, steamed around to the southern end of the island to help our special forces pinned down in St. George's, and then proceeded south of St. George's to link up with the slowly moving 82d Airborne. That MG Trobaugh's superiors--notably the Joint Chiefs--were agitated by his troops' lack of progress in comparison to the Marines became clear on Sunday, October 30, when General Vessey and Admiral McDonald actually flew aboard the GUAM, had General Trobaugh out to the GUAM to look at the battle map, and told him to get his troops moving north.

"In retrospect it's clear that not enough was done to insure coordination between Admiral Metcalf and his staff on USS GUAM and MG Trobaugh and his staff at Pt. Salines. There was no joint operations order drafted for the operation, and existing contingency plans were not used as a framework for coordinating the planning effort. There was no senior Navy liaison officer assigned to the 82d, and most coordination between the amphibious task force and the 82d was accomplished by messenger. The role of MG Norm Schwarzkopf as Army liaison to VADM Metcalf was always murky. Schwarzkopf didn't get very involved in planning discussions, I'm told. And other than Schwarzkopf there were no Army or Air Force representatives on Admiral Metcalf's staff in such critical areas as operations and intelligence. Understand, however, the constraint that Admiral Metcalf himself was working within. His planned CJTF 120 staff consisted of 88 personnel gathered from all the services, but he was told he could only bring 30 staff with him to the GUAM because of space limitations. That didn't leave much room for Army and Air Force reps.

"Since communications among the services were bad because of incompatible equipment and lack of joint training, the Army and the Marines had little understanding of each other's responsibilities or location. There was, for example, a confrontation between an Army commander and Marine Corps commander near the Ross Beach Hotel south of St. George's. Neither the Army nor the Marines had any idea the other was operating near that landmark. When an Army company commander walked into the Marine perimeter at the Ross Point Hotel, he informed the Marines they were in a

'free fire zone.' In fact, the boundary line establishing responsibility for the Ross Point Hotel had been shifted to the Marines late the day before, but the Army battalion commander was not informed of this change. One of the 82d's brigade commanders finally settled the issue by passing the word that the Army was in the Marines' area of responsibility."

CAPT Anderson furrowed his brow a bit. "I guess I did hear about some operational problems in Grenada. I recall there was some criticism that the Rangers, who are specially trained to fight at night, were tasked to seize Pt. Salines runway at dawn."

"Yes, that decision has been criticized as a violation of doctrine. You know, if the ZU-23 anti-aircraft guns guarding Pt. Salines airfield had been placed so that they could fire below 500 feet, some of our C-130s dropping the Rangers would surely have been hit and we would have lost a lot of men. It's my understanding that the Rangers wanted to jump at 0230 the morning of October 25, but the Joint Chiefs decided to delay the jump until 0500 because a number of special warfare operations in St. George's were not scheduled to begin until 0400. These would have been compromised by any prior Ranger action. Then the Rangers did not actually jump at Pt. Salines until 0536--by which time it was dawn. That occurred because the inertial navigation system went out on the lead C-130, the aircraft squadron temporarily lost its way to Grenada, and it didn't reach the drop zone until 0536. The final irony is that the special operations mission at St. George's that delayed the Rangers' jump did not actually get underway until 0700 because someone misconverted the Greenwich Mean Time in the operation plan to the local time in the Caribbean.

"But what you find most criticized, Roger, are not these human and mechanical errors but the service rigidities and rivalries that cropped up, getting in the way of 'jointness.' One case occurred when it was belatedly discovered that there was a second group of U.S. medical students located at Grand Anse Beach two miles north of Pt. Salines. After the initial idea of opening a ground corridor from Pt. Salines to Grand Anse was rejected, someone on Metcalf's staff came up with the idea of a quick heliborne assault directly into Grand Anse Beach. The trouble was that by this time all three Marine companies were fully committed at Pearls and in St. George's. The answer seemed to be to employ one of the Ranger units still left at Pt. Salines and lift it in with available Marine CH-46 and CH-53 helicopters.

"This joint air assault idea precipitated a major argument with the Marine MAU Commander and his staff, and most of their objections centered on the argument that Marine Corps doctrine is unequivocal: Marine air assets of amphibious task forces belong solely to the Marine commander and are to be used only by him to support Marine landing forces. There was a lot of talk about the integrity of Marine Air Ground Task Forces because the MAU staff

thought the idea of an air assault with Rangers untrained in Marine tactics would be too risky, especially without any rehearsal. And it was risky--that beach was barely wide enough for one CH-46, and we lost one helicopter to hostile fire.

"But there simply was no better way to get those students rescued, and rescuing them was one of the primary objectives. Fortunately, the Marine helicopter squadron C.O. grasped the importance of the mission and was willing to take the Rangers on board and try the assault without rehearsal. Admiral Metcalf overrode the MAU Commander's objections and ordered the joint air assault for 1600 on Day Two, only five hours after it was first proposed. And you know, that successful rescue led directly to the scenes later that same evening and the next morning of U.S. medical students getting off their C-141s and kissing American soil. Those TV and newspaper images of grateful students ensured to a large extent the public's support of URGENT FURY.

"Yes, we have a ways to go in the area of inter-service cooperation, I think. I'll tell you one more story, this one relating to logistics. Late on Day One an Army Major asked whether the Navy could provide water and rations for the 600 Cubans already taken prisoner at Pt. Salines. This would require breaking into Marine supplies located on amphibious ships located 3 miles off shore. The problem was that the Marines had no doctrine for supplying POWs of Army forces with rations, and the MAU was worried about cost accounting later if they gave away their supplies. To solve that problem the Army Major was requested to provide a one-line message from the 82d Airborne Division asking for some water and rations. The Marines were already loading pallets of rations and water trailers into landing craft, to send in for the POWs, when the Army Major withdrew the request for supplies. Instead the Army laid on a C-141 flight the next day to bring in Army rations and North Carolina water for the Cuban POWs. Later discussions among those involved in this event suggested that senior commanders in the 18th Airborne Corps and 82d Airborne Division had become concerned that any Navy or Marine Corps logistic assistance might later become grounds for questioning the overall adequacy of Army logistic support capabilities."

"Sounds as if we are more interested in service budgets than getting the job done," said CAPT Anderson. "I hope that was an isolated case."

"I'm not sure it was," responded CAPT Cozza. "I'm told that the first Army helicopters which landed on the GUAM were denied fuel because their pilots weren't carrying the proper credit card. That's pretty picky in the middle of a real battle, I think. Finally some Navy officers had to disregard the regulations so they could refuel Army helicopters evacuating wounded to the GUAM."

Roger Anderson reflected a moment, then replied, "I assume all these problems have been corrected by officials here in the Pentagon. I mean, you wouldn't want things like that to happen in some future war."

"Well, its difficult to know where we stand," said CAPT Steve Cozza. "All of these problems and more were documented in after-action reports filed by field commanders involved in URGENT FURY, but it's hard to get effective action on them for several reasons. First, we achieved all our original objectives in Grenada. It seems like nitpicking to come along and say that we could have done things even better--'more efficiently.' Second, there is the related problem that the quality of performance is sometimes embellished to make senior officers look good. There is a clear feeling within elements of the USMC that the officer who headed up the Marine study group on Grenada, and who was considered by many a solid choice for brigadier general, was not selected because the Commandant was intensely irritated by the study group's conclusions. Third, Grenada was yesterday's problem. Defending the defense budget and interdicting drugs are today's problems. Fourth, to make significant improvements on some of these problems requires us to take on the gut issues of doctrinal interfaces among the services and service-specific procurement. These are very tough nuts to crack. And finally, people in this building are understandably worried about openly discussing inter-service problems since this information will be exaggerated and exploited by those wishing to cut the defense budget and further reorganize the services. It's tough to change yourself when you're afraid to have an open discussion."

"Yes, I can understand how these factors would slow the wheels of progress," said CAPT Roger Anderson, "but the lessons of Grenada are still important. The next war we have is not likely to be as simple as taking on the Grenadian armed forces and their Cuban advisers."

