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BOLD ACTION IN GRENADA : COUNTERING A SOVIET THREAT

INTRODUCTION

Soldiers from six Caribbean nations and the U.S. have rushed to Grenada to restore order and the rule of law. They have done so none too soon. The extremist lawlessness that engulfed Grenada in the past fortnight clearly posed threats to the nearly 1,000 Americans on the island--something that could not be ignored while the humiliating memory of the U.S. hostages in Iran is still so vivid. Grenada's unrest also posed threats to the region--something that prompted the Caribbean nations to request U.S. help in calming the situation. As important, the coup in Grenada, accompanied by murders of the country's leaders, offered an opportunity for the Soviet Union and Cuba to tighten their grips on the strategically located island nation.

The action by the U.S. and its Caribbean allies sends very strong signals:

- 1) That the U.S. no longer is going to tolerate its citizens being endangered abroad by extremist regimes;
- 2) That the U.S. is going to respond with help to restore order in its backyard when so requested by peaceful, democratic nations of the region;
- 3) That the U.S. has put Moscow and Havana on notice that those days are past when Washington watches idly as the Soviet Union and Cuba subvert nations of this hemisphere. The fact that many of Cuba's 600 "construction workers" on Grenada really have turned out to be well armed soldiers leaves no room to doubt that the island was being transformed into a forward garrison for Soviet and Cuban military activity and regional intimidation. And the fact that Suriname has ousted Cuba's ambassador, a high ranking officer in the Cuban intelligence services, indicates that the allied action on Grenada may already be shifting attitudes and perceptions in neighboring nations with respect to the Cuban threat.

While U.S. policymakers have been preoccupied with Central America, Soviet involvement has grown in the northern coast of South America, where Moscow, working through its Cuban surrogates, is quietly making advances that threaten the security of the region.

Attention focused briefly on Suriname last December when the Desi Bouterse government massacred 15 opposition leaders. This heavy-handed action triggered a wave of condemnation and the termination of U.S. and Dutch economic assistance. However, the area receded into the background.

The northern tier of South America is an area of intense concern for the U.S. Trade routes in the area carry half of America's imported oil. Over 45 percent of this oil comes from the Caribbean area itself, either directly from Venezuela or Mexico or from transshipment points such as Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, over 40 percent of Alaskan crude oil shipments go through the Panama Canal.¹ The area is also rich in bauxite, and has some manganese and gold. Suriname alone used to provide the U.S. with one quarter of its bauxite requirements.²

The U.S. also imports coffee from Colombia, sugar and shrimp from Guyana, and is the major trading partner of every northern tier country except Suriname. The area is an important market for U.S. manufactured and agricultural goods. Venezuela buys over 50 percent of its imports from the U.S.; Guyana buys 32 percent of its imports here and 18 percent of Brazil's non-oil imports come from the U.S.

The northern tier is also important for strategic reasons. In the event of an emergency in Europe, 75 percent of the men and materiel needed to reinforce the NATO allies would go through the Caribbean Sea.

For these reasons, the Soviets can be expected to take advantage of any opportunity to extend their influence into the area. Recently Moscow opened an embassy in Suriname for the first time and made plans to transmit broadcasts from TASS, the official Soviet news agency.³ As for Grenada, it had signed an economic and technical cooperation agreement with Cuba, which included aid for the completion of a new airstrip at Point Salines. From this airfield, Cuban and Soviet warplanes could threaten U.S. shipping, Venezuela, Trinidad and Tobago, and other nations in the region.

¹ Milton R. Copulos, "Central America: Growing Role in U.S. Energy Security," Heritage Foundation Background No. 295, October 6, 1983, p. 1.

² Diario Las Americas, February 16, 1982.

³ Bridgetown, Barbados. CANA in English 2110 GMT, August 24, 1983 (FBIS August 26, 1983, p. V2).

The growing Soviet presence in Suriname is particularly alarming because it would restore a mainland South American base to the USSR, something it has lacked since the Salvador Allende regime in Chile fell ten years ago. The potential for Soviet-sponsored subversion throughout South America is enormous--unless the U.S. moves to stop Soviet gains.

BACKGROUND

The northern coast of South America stretches from the isthmus of Panama far out into the Atlantic, terminating near the Brazilian port city of Fortaleza, only 2,000 miles from the West Coast of Africa. Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, French Guiana and Brazil make up the northern tier itself, with the island states of Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago close by.⁴

Cuban activity in the area has focused primarily on Grenada, including aid for its well-publicized attempts to complete a 9,800-foot runway which would be capable of accommodating every warplane in both the Cuban and Soviet inventories. Concern that the facility would be opened to the Soviets and Cubans mounted because of the substantial Cuban presence in Grenada and the reputation of Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard, who took "control" after the coup, as Cuba's pro-Moscow hardliner.

Cuban influence appeared to have been spreading to Suriname as well. Perceiving the obvious leftward tilt of the Bouterse regime and the presence of a large staff at the Cuban embassy, Brazil has taken action to slow, if not halt, the movement of Suriname into the Cuban camp.

The northern tier represents a number of opportunities which Cuba could exploit to enhance Soviet influence. Several factors aid the Cubans: an extensive intelligence network throughout Latin America, including agents of the KGB-style Direccion General de Inteligencia (DGI) in every diplomatic mission in the hemisphere;⁵ a training apparatus; modern military forces; a well-developed propaganda network; and longstanding links with important terrorist groups in northern tier countries.

SOVIET OBJECTIVES

Drug Smuggling

A unique combination of politics, geography and economics makes the northern tier an attractive target of opportunity for

⁴ See also, Edward A. Lynch, "Moscow Eyes the Caribbean," Heritage Foundation Backgrounder No. 284, August 17, 1983.

⁵ "Cuba's Renewed Support for Violence in Latin America," Department of State Special Report, December 1981.

the Soviet Union and its proxy, Cuba. The existence of a thriving marijuana and cocaine industry in Colombia, for example, has led Cuba into a marriage of convenience with drug smugglers. Cuba provides safe passage and protection to those smuggling drugs into the U.S. In return, the Cubans gain hard currency to buy arms for such groups as the M-19 organization in Colombia. The Cubans also use the smugglers to deliver the guns to the terrorists.⁶ In this way, the Cubans support armed insurrection in Colombia and exacerbate an already severe law enforcement problem in the U.S.

African Activities

The northern tier is potentially useful as a base supporting Cuban and Soviet activities in Africa. The Suriname facilities, for example, would ease greatly Cuba's ability to reinforce and resupply its forces in Angola, since Suriname is 1,500 miles closer to Africa than is Cuba and 600 miles closer than is Grenada. Such proximity would permit the use of more varieties of aircraft and more frequent flights between Africa and the Western Hemisphere.

Suriname already has an airbase, near its capital of Paramaribo, capable of handling all types of aircraft, including Cuban MiGs and jumbo jets. Bouterse has recently announced a plan to modernize the airport.⁷

Increase the general level of tension.

The Soviets and Cubans can use their northern tier beachhead to challenge U.S. security arrangements in the Caribbean area. So doing, they can force the U.S. to divert attention and resources from other parts of the world. Moscow need only exacerbate existing problems. It does not have to establish Cuban-style communist regimes in places like Guyana or Suriname, although it would welcome this. An unstable or anti-American Guyana or Suriname would be sufficient to claim U.S. attention and resources.

The states of the north coast of South America face a number of political and economic problems which provide opportunities for Moscow and Havana. There are several border disputes between countries in the region, some of which date from the nineteenth century. Last year's South Atlantic war over the Malvinas/Falklands demonstrated that such disputes can erupt into the violence which could test seriously U.S. policy in Latin America.

⁶ Statement by James H. Michel, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs, before the Subcommittee on Security and Terrorism of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary and the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, April 30, 1983.

⁷ Rotterdam, The Netherlands Handelsblad, April 30, 1983, p. 5 (FBIS May 10, 1983, p. V3).

Colombia and Venezuela, for example, disagree over the maritime demarkation in the Gulf of Venezuela, with rights to offshore oilfields compounding the problem. Other ill-defined parts of the land bordering the two countries lead to occasional, brief disputes.

A more serious disagreement exists between Venezuela and Guyana, with the former laying claim to an area called Essequibo that amounts to about three-fifths of Guyana's territory. The U.N. has been asked to devise a method of negotiating a solution. Cuba may be tempted to prod either or both sides to press their claims forcefully, laying the groundwork for armed conflict. The presence of uranium, gold, bauxite, and oil and other mineral deposits raise the economic stakes of this dispute.

Guyana and Suriname, also have quarrelled over their common border. Armed conflict broke out in 1968, and the dispute has never completely been settled.

The region also faces serious economic problems. Every country in the area has been suffering from the current global recession. Venezuela, for example, had zero economic growth in 1982 and saw a drop in real per capita income. Guyana experienced a drop in the prices of its major exports--sugar, rice and bauxite.⁸ Though Suriname boasts one of the highest per capita incomes in the developing world, unemployment now runs between 10 and 20 percent while its foreign reserves of \$120 million are dwindling rapidly.⁹ Brazil is saddled with the largest external debt in the developing world and is facing political unrest as the result of austerity measures demanded by its creditors. Northern Brazil has been the scene of food riots and occasional land seizures, actions which so far seem to be merely a response to chronic poverty. Outside forces can add a political component by using Marxist rhetoric.

Inroads into South America.

By gaining access to either Suriname or Guyana, the Soviets could increase their activities, and those of their Cuban operatives, in South America, with opportunities to smuggle arms into Brazil or Venezuela through the trackless jungles of the southern Guiana highlands. The U.S. and Honduras are currently having great difficulty stopping arms shipments between Nicaragua and the rebels of El Salvador. Trying to stop a similar flow between a pro-Soviet Suriname and Brazil would be much more difficult.

⁸ Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1982 Report submitted to the Committee on Foreign Relations, U.S. Senate and Committee on Foreign Affairs, U.S. House of Representatives, by the Department of State, February 1983, p. 541.

⁹ Pico Iyer, "A Country of Mutes," Time, May 30, 1983, p. 33.

Recognizing the danger of Cubans on its border, Brazil has stationed four jungle-trained battalions in the northern state of Para, near the Surinamese border.¹⁰ Such a force may be a symbolic deterrence but would be unlikely to stop the spread of subversion should the Soviets make this a high priority effort given the dense jungle along the border and the traditional ineffectiveness of regular troops against guerrilla bands. Brazil's action demonstrates that the mere threat of Cuban or Soviet sponsored activities can force a military commitment to the area and the allocation of resources. This is a lesson for Washington.

Interdiction of trade routes.

The Caribbean Basin is of vital commercial importance to the U.S. Over half of the oil imported by the U.S. transits routes within easy reach of Grenada.¹¹ In addition, over 90 percent of U.S. supplies of cobalt, manganese, titanium, and chromium come from either basin countries or from Africa.¹² Military airfields in Guyana or Suriname would give the Soviets the ability to interdict trade routes from the South Atlantic to the U.S. These routes are used by virtually all supertankers coming from the Persian Gulf as well as ships from mineral exporting countries in southern Africa.

The Soviets do not need to control these sealanes; all that is needed to disrupt trade is the ability to threaten them. The ability to reach far out into the Atlantic would increase the Soviet threat and encourage states dependent on South Atlantic trade to seek some sort of modus vivendi with Moscow. This trend will be broadened and accelerated if the U.S. fails to react to Soviet advances.

The recently concluded five-year cooperation agreement between Cuba and the West African island nation of Sao Tome and Principe also affects the security of Atlantic trade. It seems, for example, the one small outer island of the African nation is already being prepared as a military outpost.¹³ An airstrip there, coupled with access to Suriname, Grenada or Guyana, would give the Cubans a base bracketing both sides of the Atlantic.

Cuban or Soviet access to Guyanese or Surinamese facilities also would threaten Trinidad and Tobago, an important oil transshipment point.

¹⁰ "Se Rumora que Brasil Acumula Tropas en sus Fronteras," Diario Las Americas, April 20, 1983.

¹¹ David C. Jordan, "U.S. Options--and Illusions, In Central America," Strategic Review, Spring 1982, p. 56.

¹² Statement of Alfred Scheier, Jr., Chairman of the Board of Advance Pressure Castings Corporation before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, June 20, 1983.

¹³ "Cuba's South Atlantic Outpost," Foreign Report April 21, 1983, pp. 3-4.

The Panama Canal is, of course, a crucial Western trade route. With the addition of Soviet MiGs to the Nicaraguan air force, which is scheduled for 1985, the Soviets will be able to threaten the Canal from a base only 400 air miles away. A future Soviet base in Nicaragua, however, would be vulnerable to an attack from the U.S. Castro, however, has links with guerrilla groups such as the M-19 in Colombia, whose territory commands both the Atlantic and Pacific approaches to the waterway. Should a Cuban-supported group take power in Colombia, the U.S. would have to move against two countries, not just one, to make the Canal secure.

Intimidation

The most important by-product of unchecked Cuban expansion is the impression of U.S. weakness and vacillation that it creates. Example: Colombia last year favored invoking the Rio Treaty against Cuba for spreading revolution in Central America; now it is seeking Castro's aid in joining the "non-aligned" movement.¹⁴

If Colombia, a large nation with fairly sophisticated armed forces, feels the need to gravitate toward Cuban strength, how can smaller and weaker nations be expected to resist? Eventually even Brazil may succumb to Soviet and Cuban pressure and seek accommodation. It is political conquest of this sort that the U.S. needs to fear from Cuban expansion into mainland South America. A "Finlandization"--not the conquest of states like Brazil and Venezuela--is probably the immediate Soviet goal. It is this that made it so important for the U.S. to demonstrate its commitment to the area's security by supporting the freedom fighters in Nicaragua, taking the action it has in Grenada, and remaining ready to take other action when appropriate.

CUBAN AND SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN THE NORTHERN TIER

Suriname

A country-by-country examination reveals the depth and breadth of Soviet inroads along northern South America. In Suriname, chief of state Bouterse claimed in 1980 that the coup that brought him to power triumphed thanks to the technical help and arms sent by Cuba.¹⁵ Since then, Cuban assistance has increased. Heading the Cuban mission in Suriname has been Oscar Osvaldo Cardenas, a senior intelligence officer and a former chief of the Caribbean section of the Americas department of the Cuban

¹⁴ "Why Cuba's clout continues to grow in the Caribbean," Business Week, February 14, 1983, p. 61.

¹⁵ Ariel Ramos, "Mientras el Mundo Mira a El Salvador, Cuba se Ha Sumado a Surinam," Diario Las Americas, February 16, 1983.

Central Committee. He played a key role in the establishment of the Bishop dictatorship in Grenada.¹⁶

The Venezuelan Christian Democratic Party has charged that Soviet and Cuban soldiers were organizing a personal guard for Bouterse. The party communiqué added that students were being flown from Paramaribo to Havana to be trained and that the number of Cuban visitors to Suriname was increasing.¹⁷ There are also indications that Cuban "advisers" were taking control of the country's communication and airport facilities.¹⁸

Bouterse makes no secret of his admiration for "what the leaders of (Cuba and Grenada) are trying to do and have succeeded in doing for their people." He has visited Cuba at least once and in early 1982 signed a friendship and mutual assistance treaty with Castro providing for regular consultations. This was supplemented in May 1983 by the formation of a joint commission to prepare a program of cooperation in several areas.¹⁹

Concern over the leftward drift of Suriname was heightened by the massacre last December of at least 15 and perhaps as many as 40 opposition leaders. The killings, out of character for once stable Suriname, shocked the world. The U.S. and the Netherlands, Suriname's former colonial ruler, reacted swiftly. Both countries immediately cut off economic assistance and the Dutch suspended a 15-year, \$1.5 billion aid program arranged when Suriname was given its independence. It had accounted for one quarter of Suriname's annual budget.²⁰

The men killed in the massacre were responsible for embarrassing Bouterse by calling a protest rally that attracted ten times the number of people as did an official rally to welcome Maurice Bishop. Aware of his host's embarrassment, Bishop told Bouterse that he was "too friendly" to his enemies. "You must eliminate them or they will eliminate you,"²¹ advised the late Grenadan Prime Minister. Havana Radio praised the crackdown. Official Soviet sources portrayed the slaughter as a reasonable response to a CIA plot to overthrow the regime.²²

¹⁶ Warren Hoge, "In Suriname, 'They Make You Full of Holes, Man'," New York Times, January 28, 1983, p. 2.

¹⁷ Paris, AFP in Spanish, 1503 GMT, February 9, 1983 (FBIS February 10, 1983, p. L1).

¹⁸ "The C.I.A. and Suriname," Wall Street Journal, June 3, 1983.

¹⁹ Bridgetown, Barbados, CANA in English 1752 GMT, May 17, 1983 (FBIS May 18, 1983, p. V1).

²⁰ Warren Hoge, "Brazil Negotiating Trade and Aid Deal with Suriname," New York Times, June 12, 1983, p. A3.

²¹ "A Country of Mutes," op. cit.

²² Moscow, TASS in English 0527 GMT, December 11, 1982 (FBIS December 13, 1982, p. K2).

Guyana

There is mounting evidence of Cuban and Soviet involvement in Guyana. According to one report, based on intelligence sources, ten military-type airstrips are being built in the backlands. Indeed, opposition leaders and Catholic missionaries have been denied access to designated backland areas.²³

Besides the airstrips, there are definite links between Guyana and Cuba. The Cubans have a large mission in Georgetown, and Guyana has been receiving large amounts of aid from Cuba since 1974, especially in the areas of technology, agriculture and education.²⁴ The government of President Linden Forbes-Burnham gives diplomatic support to Nicaragua and Grenada, and reacted to Suriname's December massacre only by looking forward to Suriname "speedily resolving its current difficulties."²⁵ Guyana also abstained when the resolution condemning the Korean Air Lines massacre came up for a vote in the U.N. Security Council.

Successful Soviet penetration of Guyana could be costly to the U.S. Forbes-Burnham has stated that the mineral-rich Essequibo is important to the control of the Eastern Caribbean. The prospect of Soviet surrogates gaining this control by taking over the Essequibo is unattractive. The Soviet ability to interdict vital sealanes would be greatly enhanced and the threat to the Eastern Caribbean trade routes would double. Moreover, Guyana would provide a base for operations into Venezuela and Brazil, perhaps leading to a revival of guerrilla activity in these currently stable and friendly states.

Colombia.

Cuba maintains close contact with the M-19 movement, the best known of Colombia's terrorist forces. Several M-19 members have been trained in Cuba and the Soviet Union. The group also deployed brigades in Central America earlier this year.²⁶ The new head of the M-19, Ivan Marino Ospina, has received special training in Cuba and Eastern Europe.²⁷

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- ²³ Virginia Prewett, "The Soviet-Cuban Military Threat to the South," Washington Times, May 6, 1983, p. C1. There has, so far, been no confirmation of this report and it may be an elaborate ruse by Venezuelan intelligence to discredit the Guyana regime in preparation for another diplomatic offensive to recover the Essequibo.
- ²⁴ Rio de Janeiro. Jornal do Brasil in Portuguese April 18, 1983, p. 8 (FBIS, April 20, 1983, p. D3).
- ²⁵ Cedric Lynch, "Caribbean Ired over Killings in Suriname," Times of the Americas, February 2, 1983, p. 12.
- ²⁶ Bogota El Tiempo in Spanish May 5, 1983, p. 7A (FBIS, May 11, 1983, p. F4).
- ²⁷ Bogota El Siglo in Spanish July 22, 1983, p. 3 (FBIS, July 26, 1983, p. F2).

There are also connections between the M-19 and radical Arab groups. An M-19 communiqué that mentioned Cuban and Russian training also stated that the Libyan arms shipment intercepted by Brazil was intended for the M-19 and that that particular seizure "will not prevent others from being brought in." Connections with the Palestinian Liberation Organization have also been charged.²⁸

Venezuela.

In the early 1960s, Cuba tried to destabilize Venezuela by landing guerrillas, who, it was hoped, would spark a general insurrection. The operation failed miserably, but the scattered remnants of Cuba's force make up the Bandera Roja, or Red Flag organization. A concentrated effort by Venezuelan security forces last year seemed to have eliminated the danger, but in June, 25 people, apparently linked to Bandera Roja, were arrested.

The worsening economic picture in Venezuela may produce conditions conducive to a revival of the movement. Leftist forces and Cuban controlled airstrips in Guyana could serve as a base for supplying Venezuelan terrorists; already two Guyanese citizens have been arrested for spying in Venezuela.²⁹

Brazil.

Brazil could move forcibly against Cuba. It is the only Latin American nation with a larger army than Castro's, and its leadership has shown a willingness to use force against subversion in the Guianas. Besides its jungle battalions, Brazil can field a 20,000-man Rapid Deployment Force to respond to any threat to its sovereignty. The Brazilians strengthened their forces because of the threat of Cuban subversion, because of increased border tensions among its northern neighbors, and possibly to intimidate the Surinamese government.³⁰

Brazilian National Security Adviser Danilo Venturini recently offered Bouterse unlimited credit, military training in Brazil for his troops, the purchase of half of Suriname's rice exports, and a ban on Surinamese exile activity in Brazil, in return for a pledge to stop more Cubans from entering Suriname and perhaps throwing out those already present.³¹ Brazil is apparently not satisfied with Surinamese assurances that Cuban influence is declining and may be reconsidering its "carrot" approach to the problem of Suriname's leftward tilt.

²⁸ Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, International Report--Latin America, May 1982, p. 17. See also Eileen Scully, "The P.L.O.'s Growing Latin American Base," Heritage Foundation Backgrounders No. 281, August 2, 1983.

²⁹ Paris AFP in Spanish 2339 GMT, May 18, 1983 (FBIS, May 19, 1983, p. L1).

³⁰ O Estado de Sao Paulo in Portuguese, April 17, 1983, p. 1 (FBIS, April 18, 1983, p. VI).

³¹ Latin American Regional Reports, Caribbean, May 13, 1983, p. 5.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cuban threat to South America's northern tier is not imminent. This has given the U.S. time to act and choose from a greater selection of responses than it has had in dealing with Central America. The U.S. also has the advantage of sharing concerns and responsibilities with Brazil, which feels threatened by Cuban expansion, and the island nations of the Caribbean.

The U.S. must adopt as its primary objective the promotion of democratic alternatives to the Cuban model in South America. One method of promoting democracy is by supporting the free flow of ideas, especially in states where this is threatened. Suriname's December massacre was accompanied by the destruction of opposition newspapers' offices. In Guyana, opposition press has difficulties getting import licenses for newsprint. In fact, the Georgetown Catholic Standard was not even allowed to receive donated newsprint.³² A small amount of aid from the U.S., in the form of newsprint, printing facilities, or money for such things, even if given covertly, could have an important effect in presenting the people of Suriname and Guyana with a more balanced view of the world.

If the presentation of a democratic alternative leads to the formation of exile movements, by providing more internal support, the U.S. should, if the movements have credibility, support them. The current Surinamese democratic resistance movement is large but badly split.³³ Unity must be a prerequisite for U.S. aid or recognition. If this is achieved, the U.S. should be prepared to give aid.

In democratic states, the U.S. should provide sufficient security and technical assistance to help them combat Cuban-inspired terrorism. This will require the ability to distinguish between terrorism for political change and acts of violence ignited by poor economic conditions. An oppressive political regime should not expect automatic U.S. aid merely because it is the object of purely internal or non-Communist resistance.

The U.S. also should continue improving relations with Brazil. Both nations want to keep Soviet and Cuban influence out of South America. Brazil may be able to do this using the carrot rather than the stick. If this does not work, the U.S. must be able to work with Brazil on other measures.

U.S. aid to Suriname should be resumed only when democracy is restored. This is the Dutch policy and it reflects a desire beyond the mere exclusion of Cuba from the area.

³² Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, *op. cit.*, p. 536.

³³ Warren Hoge, "Full of Holes," *op. cit.*

The same policy should be followed toward Cuba and its satellites. The U.S. should continue excluding Cuba from foreign aid and loans from international agencies. Nicaragua, Grenada, Suriname and Guyana similarly should be excluded until they show commitment to personal freedom and free enterprise. Recently the U.S. blocked an Inter-American Development Bank loan to Guyana because excessive government regulation of the project threatened its economic viability. The use of U.S. leverage to encourage more productive economies, not only in the northern tier but throughout Latin America, will help resolve the economic problems that make socialism look more attractive.

Improvement of relations with the U.S. should also be made contingent on the reduction of arms levels throughout the region. The U.S. should strongly urge that the size of regional armed forces be determined solely by defensive needs. High levels of arms offer a greater potential for human rights abuses, especially in the hands of a brutal government like Suriname's, as well as a greater temptation to use force to settle border disputes. The U.S. should show the states of northern South America that offensively oriented armies lead to poorer relations with the U.S.

The U.S. should reduce its dependence on Caribbean trade routes. Attaining oil and minerals from geographically diverse sources will reduce the chances of political turmoil in any one supplier causing a shortage. Varying the points of entry will also reduce U.S. dependence on Caribbean trade and gradually reduce the ability of the Soviets to use the threat of interdiction as a weapon. The U.S. has already reduced bauxite imports from Suriname and replaced them with African sources. Other diversification should be explored.

CONCLUSION

The nature of the Cuban and Soviet threat to the northern tier of South America and the lessons of Central America and the Caribbean should work to the advantage of the U.S. The Cuban road, having been travelled now by both Cuba and Nicaragua, should be familiar enough. If another state starts down this road, the U.S. should recognize this and act appropriately. The Cuban and Nicaraguan experiences show the futility of trying to co-opt a Cuban style revolution. Rather, it must be met with strength. Fulfillment of the basic aspirations of the people of Latin America for freedom must be a high priority goal of U.S. policy. Moscow and Havana cannot be allowed to encircle the Caribbean Sea and begin subversive activities in mainland South America. This Washington and the American public must regard as intolerable. The allied action on Grenada, indeed, puts Moscow and Havana on notice that such activities will not be tolerated.

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