

# EDITORIAL/OPINION

## Does it make a difference?

The press is upset that it was not included in the invasion of Grenada. The press is correct in that the American people have the right to first-hand information on its military aggression. There are also serious constitutional questions about press censorship.

But the American people might ask: "Does it make a difference?" Theoretically, the answer is "Yes." But in reality, on-site media coverage has not been significantly different than the bulletins issued by the Pentagon.

The lies and half-truths are being repeated—first by Pentagon officials and now by reporters standing on the beaches of Grenada. The invasion is still being depicted as a battle against Cubans and the Cuban construction workers, doctors, teachers, etc., are referred to as "troops." The cache of small arms that was intended to arm Grenadian civilians against the impending invasion are still being described as a "Cuban, Soviet military build-up" and militia training sites as "guerilla training camps." The presence of technicians and diplomats from socialist nations are given as proof of a planned "Cuban, Soviet takeover."

The U.S. press has not discussed the government of Grenada; the economic and social gains made in the past 4½ years; the development of democratic processes; the reasons why help from the socialist nations has been essential.

It has said very little about the people of Grenada who, after having only 4½ years of self-government, are again an occupied nation. It has not told how their efforts at economic development have been left in the ruins of U.S. bombs and shells, or about those who have been injured or killed.

The U.S. press has helped build the atmosphere that allows such an invasion to occur and the majority of U.S. citizens to approve. The U.S. press bandies around such terms as "communist," "Marxist," "leftist," "regime," "strong man," etc., in an effort to confuse the issues and to hide the truth when discussing any government or group the U.S. does not support

—i.e., Nicaragua, Libya, the P.L.O. and the various liberation movements around the world. The struggles of the people to better their lives, the accomplishments of their governments, everyday life in the Third World nations are ignored. They report only on wars, disaster and crime. When the people attempt to improve their lives they are depicted as threatening "the American way of life."

The U.S. press has consistently provided one-sided, negative reports about Grenada, as it has about Cuba and Nicaragua. The American people know very little about these countries that are targets for our military power.

The press has come more and more to be controlled by a few corporations and is more concerned with profit than with truth. The television networks are in a continuous competition off ratings and, rather than search out the truth, rely on personalities and formats to grab their share of the listeners.

Yes, the press had a right to be there. But it probably didn't make that much difference that it wasn't.



Victor Manuel Cortin (Costa Rica)

## Letters to the Editor

### Grenada invasion likened to Vietnam

To the editor:

We are outraged at the brutal invasion of Grenada by 1,900 U.S. troops. The U.S. has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of this tiny, impoverished nation of 110,000. The "protection of American lives," is just a cynical pretext for the U.S. to attack a popular leftist revolution. Reagan's lie about "restoration of democracy" would be laughable except for the tragic loss of lives now and to come.

Despite U.S. claims to have "neutralized" Grenadian forces, the tens of thousands of popular militia continue to defend their revolution. As a Grenadian leader recently prophesized, the Marines will find it "easier to land than to leave."

Why do the vast majority of Grenadians support the revolutionary

process, initiated in 1979 with the overthrow of the U.S.-backed dictator Eric Gairy? Because unemployment has been reduced from 49 percent to 14.2 percent. Because health care is now free as is education. Because illiteracy has been reduced to 2 percent. All in four short years.

Last year Grenada's economy grew 5.5 percent while her Caribbean neighbors were in economic chaos. The rest of the Caribbean has tremendous unemployment and increasingly repressive governments, supported by the U.S.

The positive example of Grenada's revolution terrifies U.S. rulers and their Caribbean cohorts. But the social unrest in the Caribbean cannot be quashed by U.S. Marines, or by a Grenadian "caretaker" government (Reagan's euphemism for U.S.-controlled), or by the troops of

Barbados, Antigua, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent.

We, who remember the Vietnam war, call on Americans to join the growing movement to get the U.S. out!

Signers: Jamie Partridge, S. Rachel Moor, Paulette Wittwer, Leo A. Kirkpatrick, Katha Zerkan, Becky Ellis, Lois Poole, Anne Cook, Robert Shimabukuro, Janet M. Mihara, Cathie Shimabukuro, S. Lynn Parkinson, Carol Sholin, Terry Sorelle, Barry Barth, Douglas R. Seaton, James F. Miller, Nancy Sanders, Gary W. Bills.

The Observer welcomes Letters to the Editor. Letters should be short, and must contain the writer's name and address (addresses are not printed). The Observer reserves the right to edit for length.



## Struggle for equality just beginning

by Dr. Manning Marable

The debate around a Black presidential candidate for 1984 has split the Black community largely but not exclusively on class lines. Poor people, blue collar and low- to middle-income workers overwhelmingly endorse a Black revolt within the Democratic Party. Most Black middle class leaders of the NAACP and Urban League, on the other hand, have denounced the idea as a "hoax" and a "fraud." The majority of Black elected officials and particularly the mayors of major cities have already jumped aboard Mondale's bandwagon, along with the AFL-CIO bureaucracy. Even Atlanta mayor Andrew Young, one of Jesse's closest friends, states that "Blacks ought to be in any campaign where the candidate is likely to be elected president."

The immediate cause for debate revolves around Jesse Jackson's strengths and weaknesses as a candidate. But the more fundamental issue—which no one is discussing—is the fact that the Black community is nowhere nearly as culturally, economically, or socially cohesive as it was during the period of Jim Crow thirty years ago. A handful of Blacks view the Civil Rights Movement as having accomplished most if not all of its major goals; but for the Black majority, the struggle for equality has barely begun.

One viewpoint on our recent history is that Blacks have achieved a tremendous degree of success. Undeniably, massive changes in race relations have occurred. In Birmingham, Alabama, only twenty years ago, police chief "Bull" Connor unleashed dogs and levied clubs and firehoses against passive Black protesters. Today the mayor of Birmingham is a Black progressive, Richard Arrington. In September, 1968, Andrew Young was arrested during a strike of Black garbage workers. Four years later he was elected to Congress, and today he is the mayor of Atlanta. Less than a dec-

ade ago Howard Fuller was leader of the revolutionary Malcolm X College in North Carolina. Late last year Fuller became a cabinet member and top Black administrator to the governor of Wisconsin. During the Cold War Coleman Young was the radical executive secretary of the Communist-dominated National Negro Labor Council. For almost a decade, he has been the mayor of Detroit, and has pursued a close and cordial relationship with local corporate leaders and Henry Ford II. Marion Berry, currently mayor of Washington, D.C., first became involved in politics two decades ago as a militant leader of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee. The defiant youths of the "Black Power" generation have now reached middle age, and many are ensconced in higher education, government, and trade union leadership.

Superficially, the sheer numbers of Blacks moving into positions of political and economic power seem to validate the myth of American cultural pluralism and democracy. The number of Black elected officials nationwide jumped from 103 in 1964 to 5,003 in 1980. The number of Blacks in Congress increased from 5 in 1964 to 21 in 1983. A generation ago, the "Black bourgeoisie" consisted primarily of school teachers, postal workers, and skilled workmen. There were only 4,706 Black physicians and 2,180 Black lawyers in the U.S. in 1960. Most Black businesses consisted of "mom and pop" grocery stores, barber shops, and funeral parlors. With the passage of federal legislation promoting affirmative action and civil rights, opportunities for racial development were created in both the public and private sector. By 1977, 21 percent of all Black families had incomes between \$15,000 and \$24,999, and another 9 percent earned \$25,000 or more. Twenty-four Black-owned banks were started between 1970 and 1975. The

gross receipts of Black-owned and operated businesses exceeded \$145 billion in 1982.

The essential problem with this "Horatio Alger" saga of Black success is that these isolated examples do not comprise the general rule. Of the quarter-million Black-owned businesses in the U.S., for instance, only 1,060 have a workforce of 20 or more employees. Four-fifths of all Black businesses do not have a single paid employee. Affirmative action has supposedly created a new, dynamic Black middle class—but recent census data does not validate its existence. About 9.4 million white family heads earn at least \$35,000 annually, while only 375,000 Black families earn that figure out of a Black population of 28 million. Only three-fourths of one percent of all Black households earn over \$50,000 annually. As of three years ago, 548,000 white males reported personal incomes in excess of \$75,000. Only 4,000 Black men and fewer than 500 Black women earned this figure—mostly professional athletes, celebrities, physicians and a few token administrators.

The number of Blacks who are being currently trained in the professions is still pitifully small. A profile of the 1981-82 recipients of doctorates in the U.S. illustrates the problem. Only 1,133 of the 31,048 Americans receiving doctorates were Black, about 3.6 percent of the total. The vast majority of them, 850 or 75 percent, were concentrated in two fields, education and social sciences. Only 29 of the 3,348 doctorates in the physical sciences were Afro-Americans. In advanced mathematics, 6 out of 720; engineering, 20 of 2,644; and in the growing field of computer sciences, only one out of 220 doctorates. Thus, despite Blacks' advances, there is still no viable Black middle class—only an elite of individuals with illusions about their wealth and the nature of the larger society.



## The lure of military might

by Congressman Ron Wyden

In a balmier time in the world of international relations, the use of the military by superpowers was the accepted way to assert power. Revolutions, revolutions and threats to the power of a major state were met with the blunt tool of military force.

In our much more complex world, where all military confrontations present the specter of possible escalation to nuclear war, we can ill-afford to establish a policy of diplomacy by arms. Yet, that is the direction we have been steadily heading.

Now we find ourselves on the shores of Grenada; an island nation not-so-long ago known only as a major spice producer. The next thing anybody knew, Grenada had become the home of hundreds of Cubans and the site of a new airport which President Reagan claimed was being built for military purposes.

Then, after a bloody coup led to the assassination of the Prime Minister, President Reagan ordered in the Marines with the expressed purpose of evacuating some 1,000 American medical students and "to assist in the restoration of conditions of law and order of governmental institutions on the island of Grenada where a brutal group of leftist thugs violently seized power."

In the aftermath, I find it incomprehensible that the problem merited a strictly military response. As I write, some 6,000 American fighting men are encamped on Grenada. Sixteen have been killed.

What troubles me is that there seemed to be little evidence that the American students were in imminent danger, as the President contends, and that there seemed to be little exploration of alternative means of evacuating the students. I am not convinced that the use of our

military, with resulting deaths of American soldiers and diplomatic isolation from our closest allies, was the last resort.

The invasion of Grenada seems to be proof that our foreign policy has traded the tools of negotiation for the tools of force and confrontation.

In the short run, this will cost the lives of young Americans asked to die for unclear goals in distant lands. In the long term, it will cost our treasury billions and billions of dollars as Congressional hawks seek to fund a military that can play the role of a "global policeman."

We must learn to resist the lure of military tools. This nation cannot remake the world in its image with the force of guns and planes. Rather, we must seek peaceful solutions and exhaust them before we hit the beach.

## District 18 Viewpoint

by Ross Danielson  
District 18 Democratic Leader

Caution and patience is recommended to those who see the present plans for a District 18 Leadership Forum as the means to settle on a single Black candidate for District 18.

If the Forum seeks, in one public meeting, to endorse one candidate and to exclude all others, the Forum is trying to do too much too fast. For the planned forum is neither a sufficient opportunity for new candidates to present themselves nor a sufficient opportunity for the community to evaluate the present candidates.

The limitations of the proposed event make it unattractive for any candidate except a single front-runner who may have every advantage and risk very little. Presently it appears that only two Democratic candidates are choosing to participate, and both candidates deserve credit for being willing to formulate campaign positions and present them-

selves before the public at this early date.

But it would be a grave mistake to take any "balloting" too seriously at this point. And if an endorsement is given to one candidate, it should not be used punitively against others.

The shaping of District 18 as a "Black district" was largely accomplished by reapportionment in the 1981 legislature, and many no doubt see "one Black candidate" as possibly providing a finishing touch for the new district. But trying to enforce an endorsement of the Leadership Forum at this early stage of next year's campaign is like trying to drive in the finishing nail with a sledge hammer.

If the sledge hammer is discarded, the Leadership Forum may turn out to be a constructive contribution to the larger political process.

This is intended as a column entitled "Democratic 18 Viewpoint." When signed the opinions are those of the author. When unsigned, this

column represents the viewpoint of the officers of District 18 Democrats. Address comments to Ross Danielson, District 18 Democratic Leader, c/o the Portland Observer.

## Cuba

(Continued from page 1 column 6)

country. They can be traced to the 19th century wars of independence and to themes of resistance and honor that have fed the fires and emotions as well as ideals of generations.

Cuban "internationalists" in Grenada or elsewhere remain repositories of that political culture. And as evidenced in the last few days, they are willing to die for it.

And relatives in Cuba, just like relatives of U.S. soldiers recently killed in Lebanon, feel sorrow as well as pride because their children have stood firm and died for what they believed in.

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