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The Invasion of Grenada

The invasion of Grenada took place on October 25, 1983. US Marines and Army soldiers were both deployed into Grenada to help stop Grenada from falling into Communist hands. The Reagan Administration explained that the goal of the invasion was to rescue American students who were in Grenada at the time. However, the true causes of the invasion may lie deeper than that. Administration officials have said “The Reagan Administration’s overriding reason for invading Grenada was to keep the United States from being perceived as a ‘paper tiger’ in the eyes of both friendly and hostile Latin American nations...”¹ The US did not want other countries to think they were too scared to use force to settle problems. The invasion was not accepted well by most Congressmen. At the same time, the US had Marines fighting in Lebanon, so sending even more troops into Grenada was troublesome for many people. The last thing people wanted to see was more troops being sent into combat. Representative Olympia J. Snowe (currently a Senator) shared such views when she said, “I’m dismayed we’re involved in Grenada, especially on the heels of Beirut.”² The reference Snowe makes to Beirut is about a terrorist who drove a truck filled with explosives into a Marine barracks in Beirut killing over 200 soldiers. This horrible event took place just two days earlier than the invasion. More troubling to others was the fact that the US was using military force to solve many of their problems as of late. Many people believed that the military should be used infrequently. Representative Paul Simon of Illinois (later a Senator) feared that military force was the “automatic reflex” of the Reagan Administration to solve the

recent problems the US faced.³ The reasons for the invasion are still disputed by many people, although there may be several different reasons.

¹ Bernard Gwertzman, "Steps to the Invasion: No More 'Paper Tiger'," *New York Times* (30 October 1983): 1. Available from: ProQuest, New York Times Historical Collection, Menlo School Lib. <<http://library.menloschool.org>> (accessed 27 March 2006).

² Steven V. Roberts, "Capitol Hill Is Sharply Split Over the Wisdom of Invading Grenada," *New York Times* (26 October 1983): A22. Available from: ProQuest, New York Times Historical Collection, Menlo School Lib. <<http://library.menloschool.org>> (accessed 27 March 2006).

³ Ibid