



THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
WASHINGTON THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

November 1, 1983

Mr. Edward M. Joyce
President, CBS News
2020 M Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Mr. Joyce:

I am responding to your letter of October 25, 1983 regarding public affairs policies during the operations in Grenada.

As regards your first concern, the requirement for absolute secrecy precluded the presence of news media on the first day of the operation. Since one of our primary objectives, that of safely evacuating our American medical students, had not been achieved on the first day of the operation, the ground commander believed that he could not devote resources to assist the media or provide for their reasonable safety on the second day.

As I am sure you are aware, a media pool, which included CBS as well as the other networks, went into Grenada on October 27 and one each succeeding day. To date, 494 reporters, some of whom (like CBS) have been repeaters, representing 152 news agencies, have been transported to Grenada via U.S. military aircraft. In addition, we have transported to Grenada edit packages for three of the four networks. I believe the above shows our desire to cooperate with the media as fully as possible.

As regards your second concern, I am informed that the incident you refer to occurred somewhat differently than you report.

As I understand it, your reporter, a Pentagon "regular" who is well known and liked by our public affairs officers, walked up to a group of our officers including the two you name in your letter, and asked if a CBS crew could fly in their own chartered aircraft to Grenada. He was told that this was not possible due to operational considerations and at that time he said, "You people are sure taking a page out of the British book in the Falklands." His statement was made in a bantering manner and taken that way by my officers. An atmosphere of informal banter ensued between the officers and your reporter about his statement. The officers state firmly that the issue of the Falklands was introduced by your reporter and not by them.

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GRENADA

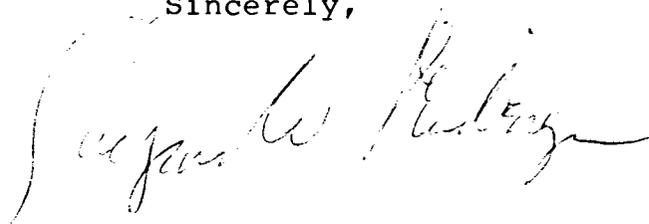
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I regret that this misunderstanding has occurred. Obviously our officers thought they were engaging in friendly and joking conversation with your reporter and were not officially supporting or endorsing his statement.

Any knowledgeable person who compares the Falklands and Grenada operations can see the glaring differences between the two cases. If, indeed, we had "learned our lessons from the British," we would have taken press with us as the British did. In order to perform, as the British did, we would also have had to impose censorship, which we did not do. I am sure you agree that there was no attempt to censor any media material from Grenada. No one in the office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) has consulted with British officials concerning tailoring our press policies to theirs. Obviously such activity would run counter to our open society and we would not consider it.

I hope this rather lengthy reply adequately answers your letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Joseph W. Bastien". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed word "Sincerely,".