

SOLARZ/
INTERVIEW

BRINKLEY: John, thank you. Coming next, Rep. Stephen Solarz from New York, from the House Foreign Affairs Committee, who has been a critic of the whole Grenada operation.

BRINKLEY: Mr. Solarz in New York, thanks very much for coming in and talking with us. Delighted to have you. SOLARZ: Good to be here, David.

BRINKLEY: Here with me are George Will of ABC News, and Sam Donaldson, ABC News White House correspondent. Mr. Solarz, you have been critical of the Grenada operation. What, if you were making the decisions, what would you have done? SOLARZ: Well, my position David, has been that, if in fact it can be demonstrated that the Americans on Grenada were in jeopardy, or if it becomes clear that Cuba was transforming Grenada into a base for aggression and subversion in the Caribbean, then what we did was justified. But at least, as of a few days ago, it was by no means clear that the lives of the students were in jeopardy. My understanding is, for example, that the authorities on Grenada had offered on several occasions to permit the Americans who were there to leave, and we apparently made no serious effort whatsoever, to contact the authorities in an effort to make an arrangement for the students on the island to leave. In so far as the extent to which Cuba was attempting to utilize Grenada as a base for aggression and subversion in the Caribbean is concerned, I want to hear what the Congressional delegation which has just visited Grenada has to say. If the arms we've discovered there were clearly far in excess of any legitimate requirements on the part of the Grenadian militia, then I think a good case can be made that we had a responsibility to protect the other Democratic countries of the Caribbean from Cuban aggression. But so far, it seems to me, that case has not yet been definitively established.

BRINKLEY: So if the Reagan administration's description of this operation turns out to your satisfaction, you will support it?

SOLZARZ: If the arguments which have been advanced by the administration turn out to be, once the press and the Congress has had an opportunity to examine them, to be accurate, then I think what they did made sense, but I think we have to keep a couple of things in mind. For one thing, the administration, as you know, in fact prohibited the press from going onto the island until after the invasion was already well underway, and then, the reporters who were there, were clearly restricted in terms of their access. Secondly, I think we do have to recognize that while we have clearly succeeded in making possible the restoration of democracy on Grenada, which is unquestionably a plus, that we've also paid a very heavy price for what we've done. We've generated very serious concerns on the part of our allies in Europe at a time when we're about to proceed with the deployment of the Euro-missiles. That has created great problems with friendly governments in that part of the world. We've clearly produced an intensification of anti-Americanism in Central America. We have acted in ways

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