

# Arts & Entertainment

## News from Grenada: 'It don't come easy'

By Christopher Burbach  
and Mike Frost

The media is the message, as Marshall McLuhan asserted so often. Since much of what we know about the world is told to us by television, it is interesting to note the coverage the recent invasion of Grenada received.

From the moment the pre-dawn attack was announced, TV was there in its traditional role as world commentator.

First mention of the event came around 8 a.m., when President Ronald Reagan and Dominican Prime Minister Eugenia Charles addressed the



### Television Review

nation. Ironically, Lincoln's channel 10 had to interrupt its tape-delayed showing of "The CBS Morning News," in order to air the new news.

The network's first big chance to tell the nation of the day's events came during the evening newscast at 5:30 p.m.

The day's events were still sketchy, although the White House had already begun its campaign to rationalize the incident. One of the more amusing attempts at this was aired on ABC's "World News Tonight." The White House released pictures of a dedicated President Reagan, hard at work on the Grenada situation Sunday morning. The idea here was to prove the decision to invade wasn't a hasty one. To prove that it was indeed 4 a.m., the president was shown in his jammies and slippers conferring with a fully dressed George Schultz.

In direct contrast to the network's commercial filled synopses was the ever-professional and insightful "MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour." They had simultaneous interviews with a number of people from both the critics' and supporters' camps, they delivered an objective and informative report on Grenada's history and the invasion and they gave equal air time to leaders of nations that approved and others who condemned the U.S. action. They



Photo courtesy NETV  
Robert MacNeil (left) and Jim Lehrer:  
"Neither sensationalistic nor even slightly yellow."

also spoke with editors of small-town newspapers to get "grass roots America's" (my cliché, not their's), reaction.

And, there were *no commercials*. MacNeil and Lehrer were neither sensationalistic nor even slightly yellow. Their thought-provoking interviews provided the flash needed to gain and regain listener attention. Perhaps commercial television should take some lessons from class acts like "NewsHour."

The only prime-time coverage of the events was on the Cable News Network. "Primenews," as they called it, was a Voice of America broadcast with pictures. OK, that's a bit of an exaggeration, but the show did fail to even attempt approaching both sides of the issue on several key points.

Although they told the story of the invasion itself as well as possible without actually having someone on the island, CNN's anchorpersons and reporters leaned quite noticeably toward a favorable portrayal of the event in their background and follow-up work.

A reporter gave a short history of Grenada from colonial times to the present. Innocuous enough so

far. However, the reporter discussed efforts to lengthen the airstrip at a Grenadan airport only in terms of its potential use as a Soviet or Cuban military base. Fears about such use are not at all unfounded. However, Grenadan government contentions that the longer airstrip would be used as a runway for large passenger planes bearing tourists should not be totally disregarded. The reporter neglected to mention that argument.

Interviews at the United Nations hit both sides of the debate, as did coverage of Capitol Hill orations. "Primenews" did relay Soviet reaction, properly prefacing that statement with a camera shot of the Soviet news agency building lurking behind its ominous and doubt-inspiring stone TACC. (Them darn Russkies, can't even write an S).

The most flagrant foul by "Primenews" was a spot they did that looked like a Marine recruiting commercial. Their reporter interviewed a Marine recruiter in Los Angeles about an increase in enlistments since the Beirut explosion. A new enlistee was quoted as saying he was "inspired about going to protect American people." The reporter ended the spot with the Marine Corps ditty, "the few, the proud, the Marines." Gee.

The three commercial networks all presented late-night summaries of the day's event. CBS' melodramatic "Attack at Dawn" was a disappointment. Throughout the day, CBS' coverage had been quite good. But now, late at night, everything fell apart. The reporting was unimaginative (many of the reports seemed to be holdovers from the evening broadcasts), the props were ineffective (the map of Grenada showed little detail besides the airports) and the commentary was absurd. Anchor Dan Rather wound up this sentimental fluff with a glum monologue about how our fighting boys were miles and miles away from "the green, green grass of home."

Another surprising element of the CBS broadcast was the insertion of commercials. One must wonder if a sharp CBS advertising executive actually went around to companies trying to sell the special news bulletin. Perhaps because of the frequent commercial breaks, Rather was constantly cutting short his guests to go to a commercial. A disturbing practice for a "news special," to say the least.

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## HOTSPOTS



Photos courtesy the Zoo and Elektra/Asylum records

Jackson Browne (right) will appear in the Devaney Sports Center Sunday night, while Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets play the Zoo.

### Television

• A classic weekend for classic movies. At 10:30 p.m. Friday on KUON, Channel 12, Claudette Colbert and Ben Lyon star in "I Cover the Waterfront." This is a classic 1933 melodrama dealing with a hard-nosed reported (Lyon) struggling to break smuggling ring. In the meantime, he falls in love with the smuggler's daughter and you know the rest. Great stuff to eat popcorn by.

• Bette David and Leslie Howard star in the classic "Of Human Bondage" 8 p.m. Saturday on Channel 12. This adaptation of the W. Somerset Maugham novel won Davis an academy award nomination in 1934.

• And for bad movie fans, "The Mask," will be shown in glorious 3-D tonight on KMTV channel 3 in Omaha. This 1961 dud stars Ann Collins and the great Paul Stevens in pursuit of a possessed ancient Aztec mask. Both realistic and frightening! Unfortunately, 3-D glasses for the flick are only available at Convenient stores in Omaha. Still, it's fun to watch even in 2-D.

### At the Sheldon

• More Halloween festivities. The Sheldon Film Theatre presents a horror film double feature. "The Haunt-

ing," starring Julie Harris, Claire Bloom and Russ Tamblyn will be shown Saturday at 3 and 9 p.m. and Sunday at 7 p.m. Nicholas Roeg's "Don't Look Now," starring Julie Christie and Donald Sutherland will be screened Saturday at 9 p.m. and Sunday at 3 and 9 p.m. The evening shows can be seen two for the price of one.

### Around Town

• Anson Funderburgh and the Rockets will be at the Zoo Bar, 136 N. 14th St. tonight and Saturday. This is one of the hottest rockabilly bands in Texas, and with the release of an album earlier this year, the band is quickly gaining a national reputation. Cover charge is \$3.

• Jackson Browne will appear at the Bob Devaney Sports Center Sunday night at 8 p.m. Plenty of tickets still are available.

• It's like Homecoming all over again. UNL graduate Sara Ganz will appear with The Nebraska Chamber Orchestra Sunday at 3 p.m., at the First Plymouth Congregational Church, 20th and D streets. Ganz will perform Randall Snyder's "Sabbatical Suite," among other pieces. Snyder is a music theory teacher at UNL. He will give a lecture on his work an hour before the concert starts.

## Albee pair double treat

Review by Eric Peterson

Two short Edward Albee plays are being featured at the Nebraska Directors' Theatre, 421 S. Ninth St., tonight and Saturday night at 8 p.m. Albee's first play, "The Zoo Story," forms the first of "A Pair of Albees," directed by graduate student Timothy Mooney; the second is "Counting the Ways," an elegant and fairly recent piece on love directed by Theater department Chairman Rex McGraw.

"The Zoo Story" production is especially effective. Charlie Bachmann plays a fussy and restricted small executive in publishing who is confronted with the threat and fascination of a younger and alienated man, played by Jeff Talbott, in a chance encounter.

Even before anyone else is on the stage we can tell what Bachmann's character, Peter, is like by how his whole body is kept in — the arms close to his sides, the book straight in front, the legs folded with painful neatness. A bold and preemptory Talbott steps in, circles around Bachmann, and commands conversation. Peter retreats further every time Jerry (the Talbott character) thrusts his finger. Jerry pictures Peter's home life, envisioning "A dog" and looking in its direction. It shows Jerry's hold over Peter, and is a very nice touch in the production — when Peter comes to look when and where Jerry does to catch sight of the visions in his mind.

Only by directly insulting Peter can Jerry get any other response from his than nervous assent. It's completely Jerry's game. Jerry repeats an odd statement that is really what the play is like, and what he is up to: "Sometimes you have to go a very long way out of your way in order to come back a short distance correctly."

They discover each other's circum-

stances in life. Peter's is conventional and comfortable, with wife, two daughters, a cat and parakeets. Jerry's self-description, in which Talbott alternates loud sarcasm with low directness, is very well done.

Jerry describes his family's fairly grim finish, his hellish apartment complete with Cerberus and his inability to sleep with anybody more than once — except for a Greek boy for a couple of weeks when he was fifteen. "That was jazz at a very special hotel, wasn't it?"

Jerry tells of his encounter with the Cerberus dog in a fashion which Peter obviously finds gripping. "If a person can't deal with other people, he has to find a way of dealing with something — with animals!" In the same sense of experimentation with which he acted toward the dog, and with the same desperate desire to confront another being, Jerry escalates the encounter with Peter to violence — and jumps on a knife he holds out in defense.

It will be difficult for Peter to avoid a sense of responsibility and dread in the way he has in the past, which is part of Jerry get any other response from him story. Although Talbott dropped his tone at one point near the end, the final situation in "The Zoo Story" was arrived at in a convincing way, and carried through.

Nancy Marcy's performance in "Counting the Ways" is elegant and lively, reflecting the precise, detached and ultimately frivolous character (known only as She) that she plays. Foster Collins, who plays He, quotes W.H. Auden's lot. "Counting the Ways" is distinguished by numerous small scenes which Albee zestfully constructs; a short and usually inconclusive action ends quickly when the light clicks off — there are 17 scenes in a play lasting a little more than 40 minutes.

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