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PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS: BI-PARTISAN ACCORD
WASHINGTON, D.C.
APRIL 18, 1989

Three weeks ago, for the first time in many years, the President and Congress, the Democratic and Republican leadership in the House and Senate, spoke with one voice about Central America.

By signing a Bi-Partisan Accord on Central America, we joined hands for the good of that troubled region. And by placing principle above party, we reaffirmed the cornerstone of America's foreign policy.

Last week, the Congress passed legislation to implement this Bi-Partisan Accord. And, today, flanked by Americans of decency and good will, I am proud to sign this legislation.

Thomas Jefferson said, "We are all Republicans -- we are all Federalists." Well, last week the Congress said that we are all Republicans -- we are all Democrats. My friends, you have shown that bi-partisanship works. And I want to thank you for acting quickly, honorably, and in the national interest.

Our Bi-Partisan Accord outlines U.S. policy toward Central America. And it supports the same goals as the people of Central America: Democracy, security, and peace. These goals are embodied in the Esquipulas Accord. And to reach them, we must work together with Latin American democratic leaders, with the support of our European friends.

The Esquipulas Accord, and our Bi-Partisan Accord, insist that insurgent forces have the right to reintegrate into their homeland under safe, democratic conditions with full civil and political rights. That is the desire of the Nicaraguan resistance. And we will support it through concerted diplomatic effort to reinforce this regional agreement.

Here, in particular, let me thank the Congress. For by supporting my request for continued assistance at current levels through the elections in Nicaragua scheduled for February 28, 1990, you have said "Yes" to democracy.

The Esquipulas Accord requires open and honest elections. We will be watching the Sandinista government to make sure that it complies. If it does, Nicaraguans will decide their own future -- freely, democratically. If not -- if its government mocks the promises it first made in 1979 -- its hypocrisy will outrage the world.

Forty-five years ago, Franklin Roosevelt observed that, "Peace, like war, can succeed only where there is a will to enforce it, and where there is available power to enforce it."

My friends, to Cuba, to the Soviet Union, and to all the nations of the world, the Bi-Partisan Accord on Central America proclaims: You already know of America's power. But let no one doubt our will.

Our accord envisions a democratic central America, and a more just and tranquil hemisphere. It says: Let us build homes and hospitals, not tools of terror. Above all, it points us toward the future -- for America, and for the people of Central America.

The legacy of peacemaker is a noble calling. So, let us seize the moment. Thank you, and God bless you. And now, it is my pleasure to sign legislation implementing the Bi-Partisan Accord on Central America.

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REMARKS: BIPARTISAN ACCORD

ROSE GARDEN

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1989

2:15 P.M.

FOUR WEEKS AGO, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MANY YEARS, THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS, THE DEMOCRATIC AND REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE, SPOKE WITH ONE VOICE ABOUT CENTRAL AMERICA.

- 2 -

BY SIGNING A BIPARTISAN ACCORD ON CENTRAL AMERICA, WE JOINED HANDS FOR THE GOOD OF THAT TROUBLED REGION. AND BY PLACING PRINCIPLE ABOVE PARTY, WE REAFFIRMED THE CORNERSTONE OF AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY.

LAST WEEK, THE CONGRESS PASSED LEGISLATION TO IMPLEMENT THIS BIPARTISAN ACCORD. AND, TODAY, I AM PROUD TO SIGN THIS LEGISLATION.

- 3 -

MY FRIENDS, YOU HAVE SHOWN THAT BIPARTISANSHIP WORKS. AND I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR ACTING QUICKLY, HONORABLY, AND IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST.

OUR OBJECTIVE IN CENTRAL AMERICA IS A DEMOCRATIC NICARAGUA WHICH DOES NOT SUBVERT OR THREATEN ITS NEIGHBORS AND WHOSE PEOPLE ENJOY THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FRUITS OF A FREE SOCIETY.

- 4 -

OUR CONTINUED ASSISTANCE TO THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE REPRESENTS THE COMMITMENT OF THE UNITED STATES BOTH TO SUPPORT THE ESQUIPULAS ((EH-SKI-P00-LAS)) PEACE PROCESS AND TO SUSTAIN THOSE WHO STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY.

- 5 -

UNDER THE ESQUIPULAS ACCORD, INSURGENT FORCES HAVE THE RIGHT TO REINTEGRATE INTO THEIR HOMELAND UNDER SAFE, DEMOCRATIC CONDITIONS WITH FULL CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS. THAT IS THE DESIRE OF THE NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE. AND WE WILL SUPPORT IT THROUGH CONCERTED DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS TO REINFORCE THIS REGIONAL AGREEMENT.

- 6 -

HERE, IN PARTICULAR, LET ME THANK THE CONGRESS. FOR BY SUPPORTING MY REQUEST FOR CONTINUED ASSISTANCE AT CURRENT LEVELS THROUGH THE ELECTIONS IN NICARAGUA, SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 28, 1990, YOU HAVE REAFFIRMED THE WILL OF THIS GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE PEACE AND FREEDOM IN CENTRAL AMERICA.

- 7 -

THE SUCCESS OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN PEACE PROCESS AND THE PROSPECTS OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION IN NICARAGUA DEPEND ON FULL AND HONEST SANDINISTA COMPLIANCE WITH THEIR REPEATED PLEDGES OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM. WE HAVE YET TO SEE GENUINE SANDINISTA COMPLIANCE; THUS FAR, THEY HAVE REFUSED TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE OPPOSITION REGARDING THE NECESSARY CONDITIONS FOR FAIR ELECTIONS.

- 8 -

IT IS CLEAR THAT CLOSE INTERNATIONAL SCRUTINY AND SUSTAINED PRESSURE WILL BE CRITICAL TO INDUCE SANDINISTA COMPLIANCE. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT THE SOVIET UNION MUST MATCH ITS RHETORICAL SUPPORT FOR THE PEACE PROCESS WITH CONCRETE ACTION TO HALT MILITARY AID, TO END SUBVERSION IN THE REGION, AND TO PROMOTE GENUINE DEMOCRACY IN NICARAGUA.

- 9 -

IT IS FITTING TO RECALL WHAT FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT SAID WHEN HE ADDRESSED THE NATION IN 1940: "TODAY WE SEEK A MORAL BASIS FOR PEACE.... IT CANNOT BE A LASTING PEACE IF THE FRUIT OF IT IS OPPRESSION, OR STARVATION, OR CRUELTY, OR HUMAN LIFE DOMINATED BY ARMED CAMPS."

OUR ACCORD ENVISIONS A DEMOCRATIC CENTRAL AMERICA, AND A MORE JUST AND TRANQUIL HEMISPHERE.

- 10 -

ABOVE ALL, IT POINTS US TOWARD THE FUTURE -- FOR AMERICA, AND FOR THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL AMERICA.

SO, LET US SEIZE THE MOMENT. THANK YOU, AND GOD BLESS YOU. AND NOW, IT IS MY PLEASURE TO SIGN LEGISLATION IMPLEMENTING THE BIPARTISAN ACCORD ON CENTRAL AMERICA.

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