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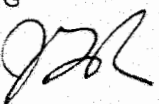
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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 21, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR FRED F. FIELDING

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS 

SUBJECT: Aid to Contras Meeting

Fred Ryan has asked if you have any objections to holding a White House briefing, at which the President will appear, for the American Conservative Trust (ACT) and the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty (NEPL). ACT and NEPL are the two private-sector organizations that have funded public awareness campaigns to increase support for the President's positions on Central America. The organizations will launch a \$3 million public opinion campaign to encourage Congress to provide aid to the Contras. According to Ryan, Mr. Regan has approved the briefing.

I see no legal bars to the contemplated briefing. It might be argued that the President is violating the spirit of the anti-lobbying provisions by assisting outside groups that encourage the public to "write their Congressman," but such an argument proves far too much. ACT and NEPL are outside groups, and White House briefings are often held for such outside groups without the result that the groups are thereafter considered arms of the White House.

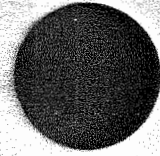
At the same time, however, Congress might resent the President assisting ACT and NEPL to pressure it, and the high-profile approach of ACT and NEPL might backfire. That, however, is an assessment for Legislative Affairs to make, not us.

Attachment

WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMINGDate Correspondence
Received (YY/MM/DD) 1 / 1

JR

Name of Correspondent: Fred Ryan☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Aid to Contras Meeting

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Office/Agency (Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CUTROLL</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>86/01/17</u>			<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>
	Referral Note:				
<u>Chat18</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>86/01/18</u>		<u>S</u>	<u>86/01/21</u>
	Referral Note:			<u>ASAP</u>	
		<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>			<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>
	Referral Note:				
		<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>			<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>
	Referral Note:				
		<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>			<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>
	Referral Note:				
		<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>			<u>1</u> / <u>1</u>

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Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.

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Always return completed correspondence record to Central Files.

Refer questions about the correspondence tracking system to Central Reference, ext. 2590.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

January 10, 1986

DONALD T. REGAN:

Attached is the material on Central America that Dave Fischer promised to get to you. I am discussing this with the NSC to be sure they are on board and supportive. Dave thought you would be interested in seeing the 4 minutes of their commercials so a video tape is attached. Dave is hopeful that a Roosevelt Room briefing can be arranged (with a Presidential drop by) so that this group can be helpful in the upcoming legislative effort.

Approve briefing subject
to full verification
(time to be determined) _____

Need more info before
discussing _____


David Chew

MEMORANDUM TO DONALD REGAN

FROM: David C. Fischer *DCF*
SUBJECT: Aid to Contras Meeting
DATE: 5 January 1986

Attached is the briefing paper for the proposed aid to the Contras meeting. No private group of Americans have better supported the President's Central America program as well as other issues critical to Ronald Reagan. Their efforts resulted in highly effective network television and newspaper messages. Transcripts of a few television spots are attached. A compilation of all 15 and 30 second television spots is available on video cassette tape.

My conversations with Bud McFarlane, Oliver North and Assistant Secretary Elliott Abrahms confirm my belief that this meeting is in the President's best interest and will greatly enhance his efforts in educating Americans and their elected representatives on Capital Hill. Time is critical. The meeting should be held in January thus enabling this group to mobilize their efforts as quickly and effectively as possible.

Once these men and women realize the President recognizes and appreciates their contribution towards his programs their continued enthusiastic support will be guaranteed.

A ten day notification period is needed to insure good attendance at this briefing. The names and accompanying required information have been given to the Secret Service for background checks.

MEETING WITH SUPPORTERS OF THE
CENTRAL AMERICAN FREEDOM PROGRAM

January __, 1986
Roosevelt Room
Approx: 4:30 pm

PURPOSE

The American Conservative Trust and The National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty have sponsored several programs in support of the President's policies including S.D.I., Central America and Arms Control. This briefing is for the principal financial contributors whose patriotism and generosity have made these public education programs so successful and influential.

BACKGROUND

In 1985 ACT & NEPL spent in excess of \$3 million in supporting the President's programs through public awareness using television and newspaper messages. Their Central American Freedom Program was initiated in June. White House contacts with Oliver North, NSC, and Linda Chavez resulted in three White House sponsored briefings held in the EOB on June 21, October 17 and November 21. A representative of ACT & NEPL was invited to a Presidential S.D.I. Cabinet Room briefing where the President acknowledged viewing their S.D.I. program's network television message. A post Geneva tribute to the President was also aired on all network affiliates.

This group has budgeted \$3 million for educating public opinion on the issue of aid to the contras over the first few months of 1986. The purpose of this briefing is to: (1) provide current status report on the situation in Nicaragua; (2) recognize and express gratitude for their efforts in supporting the President; (3) encourage continuance of their generosity in funding these worthwhile projects.

PARTICIPANTS

Approximately 30 supporters and four staff members.

PRESS PLAN

White House photographer only.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Greeting by Chief of Staff Don Regan
- Briefing by Admiral Poindexter & Oliver North
- Briefing by Assistant Secretary Elliott Abrahms
- 5 minute drop-by of the President

SPONSOR: AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE TRUST
"MORNING OF PEACE"

30 SEC

"The President is working long into the night for a lasting world peace.

(Move in)

He will carry with him to the summit his program and our hopes for disarmament.

(Dissolve to child asleep)

And if we can, indeed, create a defensive shield to keep the weapons of nuclear destruction far from this earth...

(Dawn breaks)

...then she, we, all of us can awaken to a morning of peace and security we haven't had in thirty years.

Tell the President your prayers are with him. You can...by calling this number.

The American Conservative Trust."



THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

January 21, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR FREDERICK J. RYAN, JR.
DEPUTY ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
DIRECTOR, PRESIDENTIAL SCHEDULING

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING Original signed by RAH for FFF
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Aid to Contras Meeting

I have reviewed the proposal for a briefing for the American Conservative Trust and the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty on Central American issues. There is no legal prohibition that would preclude such a briefing. Objections may be raised that the President is violating the spirit of the anti-lobbying provisions by enlisting these private groups to lobby Congress. Care should accordingly be taken to avoid any suggestion of White House control of these groups, to minimize these objections.

FFF:JGR:aea 1/21/86

cc: FFFielding

✓JGRoberts

Subj

Chron

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR CHARLES DONOVAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CORRESPONDENCE

FROM: RICHARD A. HAUSER Original signed by RAH,
DEPUTY COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Contra Support Letters

Counsel's Office has reviewed the letters from the President to the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty and the Council for Inter-American Security. It is our view that the letters need to be edited slightly to avoid creating an impression of inappropriate linkage between the President and the public education and lobbying activities of these private sector organizations. The President cannot be made to appear to be using these independent organizations as lobbying arms of the Administration. The necessary edits appear on the attached copies of the drafts.

cc: Linas J. Kojelis

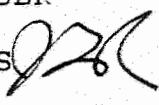
RAH/JGR:jmk
cc: RAHauser
JGRoberts
subject
chron.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

February 21, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR RICHARD A. HAUSER

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS 

SUBJECT: Contra Support Letters

Attached are the two commendation letters for Contra support groups that we have discussed. Our usual concerns with respect to such letters are: (1) the President cannot link himself so closely with the groups that their activities are viewed as being on behalf of, or at the direction of, the Administration; (2) since the groups often engage in lobbying activity we must be careful that our support does not amount to using the groups as a lobbying arm in contravention of anti-lobbying restrictions; and (3) since the groups are active in fundraising, some sensitivity to usual White House policy on endorsement of private fundraising must be shown.

Both letters, as submitted, raise serious appearance problems with respect to the first two points. In the drafts, the President urges continuation of specific public information campaigns for the explicit purpose of pressuring Congress. I have attempted to edit the letters to mitigate the appearance problems. The attached memorandum for your signature replies to Charles Donovan, who submitted the letters for our review, copy to Linas Kojelis, who sent the letters to Donovan.

WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMINGDate Correspondence Received (YY/MM/DD) 1 / 1Name of Correspondent: Charles Donovan☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) _____ (B) _____ (C) _____

Subject: Request for Presidential messenger
for letters in support of US aid
to Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance

ROUTE TO:**ACTION****DISPOSITION**

Office/Agency (Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CUTAW</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>86102112</u>			<u>1 / 1</u>
<u>Cut 18</u>	Referral Note: <u>R</u>	<u>8610213</u>		<u>5</u>	<u>8610213</u> <u>ASAP</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1 / 1</u>			<u>1 / 1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1 / 1</u>			<u>1 / 1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1 / 1</u>			<u>1 / 1</u>
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 2/11/86

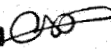
TO: White House Counsel

ACTION:

- ☒ Review/Approval
- ☐ Recommendation
- ☐ Information Copy
- ☐ Draft Reply
- ☐ As we discussed

DATE ACTION NEEDED: ASAP

COMMENT: Presidential messages requested
by Office of Public Liaison --
include references to Congressional
action -- is wording acceptable?

CHARLES A. DONOVAN 
Presidential Correspondence
Room 94, OEOB - x7610

February 11, 1986

Dear Spitz:

The National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty is serving a unique and vital role in its Central American Freedom Program.

Your efforts to educate the American public on the true nature of the Communist regime in Nicaragua are crucial to the success of our policy. I am confident that when Americans are asked to make a choice between Communism on the North American continent and support for the Nicaraguan freedom fighters they will choose to champion freedom.

The Central American Freedom Program is a vital link in the defense of freedom in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas have gone to New York not just to buy designer glasses, they have also gone to Madison Avenue to hire a public relations firm. The Sandinistas have retained teams of lawyers and public rela-

tions experts, who are registered with our Justice Department as foreign agents, to spread their propaganda across the United States. They hope to directly influence members of Congress by using disinformation in their home districts to confuse the issue. This cynical use of the free speech freedoms the Sandinistas systematically deny their own people must be countered.

In the next few weeks we will initiate an historic effort to achieve Congressional support for the cause of the freedom fighters in Nicaragua. If this effort is successful, it will herald the first light of a new dawn of freedom in Nicaragua. Your Central American Freedom Program puts you on "America's Frontline" in the battle for democracy. Courageous Americans have saved this nation countless times in the past by holding truth as our shield against the distortions of dictators. I am confident that you will help maintain this proud tradition. Please continue this critical program.

Best wishes and may God bless you.

Sincerely,

Mr. Carl Russell Channell
President
National Endowment for the
Preservation of Liberty
305 Fourth Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Co

Mr. Carl Russell Channell
President
National Endowment for the
Preservation of Liberty
305 Fourth Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Spitz:

The National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty is serving a unique and vital role in its Central American Freedom Program.

Your efforts to educate the American public on ^{the success of} the true nature of the communist regime in Nicaragua are crucial to our policy. I am confident that when Americans are asked to make a choice between communism on the North American continent and support for the Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters they will choose ~~freedom as their~~ champion. → Freedom.

The Central American Freedom Program is a vital link in the defense of freedom in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas have gone to New York not just to buy designer glasses, they have also gone to Madison Avenue to hire a public relations firm. The Sandinistas have retained teams of lawyers and public relations experts, who are registered with our Justice Department as foreign agents, to spread their propaganda across the United States. They hope to directly influence Congress by using disinformation in the home districts to confuse the issue. This cynical ~~abuse~~ ^{members of} of the First Amendment ^{Free speech} must be countered.

In the next few weeks we will initiate an historic effort to achieve Congressional support for the Freedom Fighters in Nicaragua. If this effort is successful, it will herald the ^{crisis of the} first light of a new dawn of freedom in Nicaragua.

42 Your Central American Freedom Program puts you on "America's Frontline" in our battle for democracy. I would remind you that courageous Americans have saved this nation countless times in the past by holding truth as our shield against the distortions of dictators. Please continue this critical program.

Best wishes and may God bless you.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

I am confident that you will help maintain this great tradition.

Freedom is the Sandinistas systematically deny their own people

February 11, 1986

Dear Lynn:

I would like to thank you and the Council for Inter-American Security for your help in generating support for the Nicaraguan freedom fighters.

Now more than ever, Americans who support the cause of freedom and democracy in Central America must let their voices be heard. I understand that the Council for Inter-American Security is undertaking a massive education and action campaign to call for military aid to the Nicaraguan resistance. The Council's multi-faceted campaign of radio, television, and newspaper advertising, together with your proposed Central American Truth Squad tour and your mailing of more than 1.5 million letters urging American citizens to make their views known, are sure to have a dramatic impact on how Congress votes on this important issue.

We cannot abandon those brave Nicaraguan peasants, farmers, students, and workers who have given so much to free their

country from Communism. We must give them the material support they need to return their country to democracy. I am depending on the Council for Inter-American Security and its friends for their help in this effort. It will be a tough fight, but we can win this time if Congress realizes that the American people will not allow the cause of freedom in Nicaragua to perish.

Thank you for your loyal support.

Sincerely,

Mr. L. Francis Bouche
President
Council for Inter-American Security
122 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

RR/LK/CAD f/AVH/jz (2PMNC)

January 27, 1986

DRAFT

Dear Lynn:

I would like to thank you and the Council for Inter-American Security for your help in generating support for the Nicaraguan freedom fighters.

Now ^{let their voices be heard} more than ever, Americans who support the cause of freedom and democracy in Central America must (make their views known to their Representatives in Congress.) I understand that the Council for Inter-American Security is undertaking a massive education and action campaign to call for military aid to the Nicaraguan resistance. The Council's multi-faceted campaign of radio, television, and newspaper advertising, together with your proposed Central American Truth Squad tour and your mailing of more than 1.5 million letters ^{make their views known} urging American citizens to (write their elected officials), are sure to have a dramatic impact on how Congress votes on this important issue.

We cannot abandon those brave Nicaraguan peasants, farmers, students, and workers who have given so much to free their country from Communism. We must give them the materials ^{supplies} they need to return their country to democracy. I am depending on the Council for ^{friends} Inter-American Security and its supporters for their help in this effort. It will be a tough fight, but ^{we} we can win this time if Congress realizes that the American people will not allow the cause of freedom in Nicaragua to ^{die} perish.

Thank you for your loyal support.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

L. Francis Bouchey
President Council for Inter-American Security
122 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 9, 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR ANNE HIGGINS

FROM: LINAS KOJELIS *LK*

SUBJECT: Letters to Support Groups on U.S. Aid to Nicaraguan
Democratic Resistance

Anne, several of our key support groups are currently mobilizing their efforts to support the President's request for continued aid to the democratic resistance in Nicaragua. Theirs will be multi-million dollar efforts, including thousands of man hours. The support we get from these groups is vital to the success of the President's policies in Central America.

Attached are drafts to two key groups -- The Council for Inter-American Security and the National Endowment for the Preservation of Liberty. I would appreciate your preparing Presidential messages to these groups as quickly as possible.

I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of this memo to NSC (O. North) to expedite the clearance process.

cc: Oliver North, NSC

February 11, 1986

Dear Lynn:

I would like to thank you and the Council for Inter-American Security for your ~~help in generating~~ support for the Nicaraguan freedom fighters.

Now more than ever, Americans who support the cause of freedom and democracy in Central America must let their voices be heard. I understand that the Council for Inter-American Security is undertaking a massive education and action campaign to call for military aid to the Nicaraguan resistance. The Council's multi-faceted campaign ~~of radio, television, and newspaper advertising, together with your proposed Central American Truth Squad tour and your mailing of more than 1.5 million letters urging American citizens to make their views known,~~ ^{is} ~~are~~ sure to have a dramatic impact on ~~how Congress votes on~~ this important issue.

public
awareness
of

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all that you have done.

Thank you for ~~your loyal support.~~

Sincerely,

Mr. L. Francis Bouchev
President
Council for Inter-American Security
122 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001

RR/LK/CAD f/AVH/jz (2PMNC)

February 11, 1986

Dear Spitz:

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Your efforts to educate the American public on the true nature of the Communist regime in Nicaragua are critically important. ~~crucial~~ to the ~~success of our policy.~~ I am confident that when Americans are asked to make a choice between Communism on the North American continent and support for the Nicaraguan freedom fighters they will choose to champion freedom.

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tions experts, who are registered with our Justice Department as foreign agents, to spread their propaganda across the United States. They hope to directly influence members of Congress ~~by using disinformation~~ in their home districts to confuse the issue. This cynical use of the free speech freedoms the Sandinistas systematically deny their own people ~~must be countered.~~

cannot go unanswered.

In the next few weeks we will initiate an historic effort to achieve Congressional support for the cause of the freedom fighters in Nicaragua. If this effort is successful, it will herald the first light of a new dawn of freedom in Nicaragua. Your Central American Freedom Program puts you on "America's Frontline" in the battle for democracy. Courageous Americans have saved this nation countless times in the past by holding truth as our shield against the distortions of dictators. ~~I am confident that you will help maintain this proud tradition. Please continue this critical program.~~

Best wishes and may God bless you.

Sincerely,

Mr. Carl Russell Channell
President
National Endowment for the
Preservation of Liberty
305 Fourth Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002

Larry Garrett

raise at noon

[Signature]

Request for Additional Authority and

Assistance for the Nicaraguan Democratic Resistance

Pursuant to the provisions of section 722(p) of the International Security and Development Cooperation Act of 1985 (P.L. 99-83) and section 106(a) of chapter V of the Supplemental Appropriations Act, 1985 (P.L. 99-88), I hereby request that the Congress approve additional authority and assistance for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance, as follows:

eliminates reprogramming problem and addresses issue of order problem caused by State.

(1) That the sum of \$100,000,000 appropriated by the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 1986, as contained in P.L. 99-190, shall ^{for transfer by} ~~also~~ be available ^{to appropriations available} ~~to~~ the President ^{and shall be available for that purpose,} for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance, subject to the terms and conditions of this request.

(2) That the funds made available under paragraph (1) will include funds that have been made available for obligation ^{beyond} ~~until~~ September 30, 1987, as provided by law: Provided, That not more than 25 percent shall be available for obligation upon the enactment of a joint resolution approving this request, and an additional 15 percent shall become available upon submission of each report to the Congress required by paragraph (6) (E) of this request.

2/25/11:50 PM
Don USC
Don
Don
Don

TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES:

When the Congress approved humanitarian assistance for the Nicaraguan democratic resistance last year, it assured the survival of those fighting for democracy in Nicaragua. However, this assistance has not been sufficient to bring about changes in the policies of the communist Government of Nicaragua that would make possible a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Central America and end Nicaragua's aggression against our allies there.

Determinations

Negotiations based on the Contadora Document of Objectives of September 9, 1983, have failed to produce an agreement, and other trade and economic measures have failed to resolve the conflict. At the same time, the legislation for humanitarian assistance is about to expire. If no further action is taken, it is clear that the Nicaraguan communists will steadily intensify their efforts to crush all opposition to their tyranny, consolidating their ability to use Nicaragua, in concert with their Soviet-block patrons, as a base for further intimidating the democratic nations of Central America and spreading subversion and terrorism in our hemisphere.

In these circumstances, the laws providing for humanitarian assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance permit me to request authority to provide additional assistance, and specify expedited procedures for action by the Congress on my request. I am transmitting herewith a formal request for such additional assistance. As required by law, I have consulted with the Congress in formulating this request.

Why Negotiations and Other Measures Have Failed

In reports that I transmitted to the Congress in November 1985 and February 1986, I described the continued efforts by the United States to promote a negotiated settlement in Central America and in Nicaragua based on the

Contadora Document of Objectives. Our persistent efforts to achieve a peaceful solution have failed to resolve the conflict because Nicaragua has continued to reject meaningful negotiations. Communist attempts to circumvent and subvert Contadora, apparent from the beginning of the negotiating process, have left a clear trail of lost opportunities for peaceful reconciliation. In most recent months, Nicaragua has repeatedly frustrated negotiations aimed at producing a final, comprehensive Contadora treaty.

Recent Contadora meetings to discuss a comprehensive, verifiable regional agreement have been inconclusive largely due to Nicaraguan intransigence on key issues. Following two rounds of talks in October, on November 11, 1985, Nicaragua made public a letter from President Ortega to the Contadora Group and Support Group governments setting forth objections to the September 12, 1985, draft agreement tabled by the Contadora Group governments. Nicaragua argued that it could not assume the obligations of a Contadora agreement unless it reached a prior accommodation with the United States.

On December 3, President Ortega formally requested a suspension in Contadora negotiations until May 1986, that is until after the governments to be elected in Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala will have been installed. Costa Rica, Honduras, and Guatemala, however, joined 25 other OAS member states in voting for a resolution at the OAS General Assembly in Cartagena that urged continuation of the Contadora negotiations. Of all OAS members, only one member -- Nicaragua -- voted against that resolution. Subsequently, only Nicaragua refused to resume Contadora talks -- a major reason why the United Nations General Assembly failed to achieve consensus on a resolution of support for the Contadora process.

On January 12, the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group and Support Group, meeting at Caraballeda, Venezuela, issued a joint statement intended to revitalize the process. The Foreign Ministers of the five Central American states,

including Nicaragua, signed the "Declaration of Guatemala" on January 15, endorsing the Caraballeda message. Afterwards, the Government of Nicaragua issued a press communique which, although claiming "total adherence" to the Caraballeda message, characterized the various actions suggested in the Caraballeda message as prerequisites to resumption of Contadora negotiations. This communique also reaffirmed the Nicaraguan position of November 11 objecting to the Contadora draft agreement.

On February 5, President Ortega repeated this position in his speech to the Third Cuban Communist Party Congress in Havana noting that "the peace document that the Contadora Group submitted in September 1985 is unacceptable to Nicaragua."

On February 10, Secretary of State Shultz met with the Foreign Ministers of the Contadora Group and Support Group. The Secretary welcomed the good offices of the two Contadora groups to promote national reconciliation as expressed in the Caraballeda message, and offered to resume bilateral talks with Nicaragua simultaneously with the beginning of Sandinista dialogue with the democratic resistance. Secretary Shultz also informed the Foreign Ministers that the United States was prepared to take further steps in response to changes in Nicaraguan behavior on the four key issues of concern -- support of subversion, the Cuban/Soviet presence, the military buildup, and internal repression. He pointed out that a dialogue and ceasefire would mean that cessation of the application of force and the process of national reconciliation would go forward at the same time. My Special Envoy, Ambassador Harry Shlaudeman, began consultation with the Contadora and Support Group governments the week of February 16 on this initiative.

Meanwhile, the Sandinistas have rejected a February 6 proposal from opposition political parties in Nicaragua for suspension of hostilities, an effective general amnesty law for reconciliation of all Nicaraguans, a repeal of the state of emergency, an agreement for the establishment and observance of a new electoral process, effective fulfillment of Nicaragua's commitments for democratization and international assistance in the implementation of these demands. Also, another Contadora negotiating session held February 14-15 was inconclusive because of continued Nicaraguan refusal to address the remaining issues to be resolved in the current Contadora draft agreement.

Description of Request

The request transmitted herewith asks your approval for the transfer of \$100,000,000 from funds already appropriated for the Department of Defense so that those funds would also be available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. I am requesting this transfer authority, in lieu of a supplemental appropriation, because I regard this request as a matter of high priority for the national security of the United States. Including a proposal for additional funds in this request would have diverted attention from the basic national security issues here involved. However, the resulting reduction in the funds available for the Department of Defense, if not remedied, will inevitably impair ongoing efforts to restore and maintain the readiness of the armed forces. This impairment in defense readiness will be addressed separately.

The \$100,000,000 to be made available for assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance would include funds that have been appropriated to remain available for obligation until September 30, 1987. obligations will be made on an incremental basis, with 25 percent available when the request

is approved and an additional 15 percent to become available at 90-day intervals as reports are provided to the Congress on actions to achieve a resolution of the conflict in Central America.

Of the \$100,000,000, \$30,000,000 will be for a program of humanitarian assistance administered by the present Nicaraguan Humanitarian Assistance Office, including \$3,000,000 exclusively for strengthening the observance and advancement of human rights. This emphasis on human rights reflects a determination that human rights must be respected. As in our support for democracy elsewhere, human rights training and assistance can be expected to achieve significant positive results.

Should a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Central America be achieved during the period these funds remain available, the remaining funds could then be used for assistance to Central American countries, including Nicaragua, for relief, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

Approval of this request will permit me to use any department or agency in the Executive Branch, including agencies involved in intelligence activities, in carrying out programs and activities to assist the Nicaraguan democratic resistance. The statutory requirements for congressional approval of the use of such agencies, as well as statutes requiring prior authorization for the use of appropriated funds will be satisfied by the approval of my request.

Finally, the request contains a series of undertakings by me, which I am asking the Congress to accept. These undertakings, which were developed in consultations with the Congress, are intended to assure that a clear and explicit understanding exists between the Executive and Legislative Branches as to the purposes of the requested assistance to the Nicaraguan democratic resistance and United States objectives in Central America.

In particular, I am undertaking in this request:

-- That United States policy toward Nicaragua will be based on Nicaragua's responsiveness to our well-known concerns about the Government of Nicaragua's close military and security ties to Cuba and the Soviet Union, its military buildup, its unlawful support for subversion and terrorism, its internal repression, and its refusal to negotiate in good faith with its neighbors or its own people;

-- That, in addition to support for the democratic resistance, the United States will rely on economic, political and diplomatic measures to address these concerns. In this regard, I am publicly affirming two offers that I have previously made through diplomatic channels in an effort to obtain a peaceful resolution of the conflict. First, we will engage in formal bilateral discussions with the Nicaraguan Government, to commence simultaneously with a church-mediated national dialogue in Nicaragua, as has been proposed by the United Nicaraguan Opposition. Second, we will take other positive actions in response to Nicaraguan steps toward meeting our concerns.

In determining how to implement these offers, I will consult with the Congress and will be guided by the observable behavior of the Government of Nicaragua. We will not be satisfied with expressions of intent. But we will respond to changes of behavior in areas such as freedom of the press and religion, reductions of foreign arms and military personnel, respect for a cease-fire, and cessation of support for insurgents and terrorists.

My request affirms that our actions are consistent with our right to defend ourselves and assist our allies, and are directed toward achieving peace based on the Contadora Document of Objectives and a democratic reconciliation in Nicaragua, all without the use of force by the United States. I do not intend to introduce the armed forces of the United

States into combat against the Government of Nicaragua, and I affirm that I will not regard approval of my request for assistance as authorizing any such action.

The final undertaking in this request responds to the desire of the Congress to be kept informed about efforts to achieve resolution of the conflict in Central America. I am undertaking to report every ninety days on progress toward a negotiated settlement, as well as on the disbursement of assistance funds and on human rights issues. The continued availability of assistance funds will be contingent upon the receipt by the Congress of these periodic reports.

The Need For This Assistance

Since the beginning of my first Administration, there has been no foreign policy issue more directly affecting United States national interests than the conflict in Central America, for this conflict challenges not only our strategic position but the very principles upon which this Nation is founded. We can be justifiably proud of progress in the region to alleviate and ultimately eliminate the causes of that conflict. With strong support from the United States, freedom and democracy, the fundamental pillars of peace, have made dramatic gains. Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador have held free and open elections. Costa Rica continues its tradition as a vigorous democratic example. United States economic, political, and military support have strengthened the moderate center in Central America and reversed the tragic polarization on the left and right that threatened to engulf the region in endless violence. As a result, the only president in Central America who wears a military uniform today is Daniel Ortega of Nicaragua. He presides over a repressive regime, armed to the teeth by the Soviets and Cubans, which is the most immediate threat to the progress of its neighbors.

Few now question that the rulers of Nicaragua are deeply committed communists, determined to consolidate their totalitarian communist state. Their long, documented record of brutal repression leaves no room for doubt. Nor can there be any dispute that they seek to export their ideology through terrorism and subversion to neighboring countries. Their neighbors' success in offering democracy as a viable alternative for the people of Central America is a major threat to the system they advocate. The Sandinistas have been constrained principally because they have not yet crushed opposition to their regime at home. The struggle of the Nicaraguan democratic resistance for democracy in their own homeland has provided a shield for democratic progress in other Central American countries. But the Sandinistas, with massive Soviet and Cuban military assistance, have clearly made the elimination of these freedom fighters their number one priority. If they achieve that goal, there will be no remaining obstacle to their efforts to destabilize neighboring states.

Despite this threat to peace, we do not accept that conflagration is inevitable in Central America. The path to peace is clear. The origin of the conflict in Nicaragua is the revolt of the Nicaraguan people themselves against tyranny. A church-mediated dialogue, serious negotiations between the Sandinistas and the external and internal opposition, including the democratic resistance, is the place to begin. The United States strongly supports such negotiations, and we welcome the efforts of the Latin American nations of the Contadora Group and Support Group to promote national reconciliation talks to resolve the Nicaraguan conflict. We will steadfastly support the Contadora process in its efforts to find a solution in Central America that will be the basis for lasting peace. We will also continue to look for flexibility in the Nicaraguan position and are prepared to respond with appropriate measures to encourage them to come to terms with their own people in a democratic framework.

At the same time, we can entertain no illusions that the Sandinistas will enter negotiations on steps to allow legitimate democratic dissent unless democratic forces in Nicaragua can credibly and forcefully assert their right to a voice in Nicaragua's future. The Sandinistas' record of repression of democratic opposition groups leaves little hope that they will willingly follow such a course. They will never embrace open, democratic norms unless confronted with undeniable demands from steadily growing numbers of Nicaraguans prepared to fight for liberty and for their right to participate in their country's political life.

Our experience with the Sandinistas over six and a half years points unmistakably to the need to accompany diplomatic policy with substantial pressure focused on the same objectives. Without power, diplomacy lacks leverage. The Sandinistas will not take meaningful steps toward national reconciliation until they realize that opposition to the consolidation of a Marxist-Leninist regime is too strong to be repressed. Approval of this request will enable the United States to be in a position to provide assistance that permits the resistance to conduct sustained operations in Nicaragua and expand their area of operations. The resistance will be able to incorporate more of the thousands of volunteers waiting to join their forces but who cannot be accepted for lack of supplies. They will be able to establish a stronger presence among a larger segment of the Nicaraguan population, thus increasing the pressure on the Sandinistas to enter into dialogue with all opposition elements, and to negotiate seriously in the Contadora process.

The cause of the United States in Nicaragua, as in the rest of Central America, is the cause of freedom and ultimately, our own national security.

The Soviet Union and its satellites understand the great stakes in Nicaragua. The Soviets have already made their decision to support the Sandinistas. Cuba's Castro has already made his decision to support the Sandinistas, saying we support them, "...because they are fighting America at its doorstep. Nicaragua means a great thing; it means fighting America near its borders."

Congress must act decisively to prevent an outcome deeply injurious to the security of our Nation.

If the enemies of democracy thousands of miles away understand the strategic importance of Nicaragua, understand that Nicaragua offers the possibility of destabilizing all Central America, of sending a tidal wave of refugees streaming toward our southern border, and of tying down the United States and weakening our ability to meet our commitments overseas, then we Americans must understand that Nicaragua is a foreign policy question of supreme importance which goes to the heart of our country's freedom and future. With its vote, Congress will make its decision.

Those fighting for freedom in Nicaragua deserve and desperately need our help. The humanitarian assistance approved by the Congress in 1985 has proven insufficient. Cuban and Soviet military aid in the form of training and sophisticated hardware have taken their toll. If the Nicaraguan democratic resistance is to continue its struggle, and if peace, democracy, and security in this hemisphere are to be preserved, the United States must provide what is necessary to carry on the fight. If we fail to help friends in need now, then the price we will pay later will be much higher.

Your approval of the request I am transmitting to you will provide the necessary help. I urge the prompt enactment of a joint resolution expressing that approval.

THE WHITE HOUSE,

February 25, 1986.