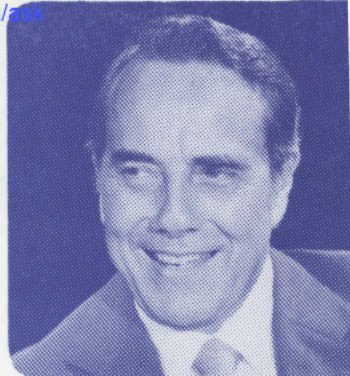


News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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STATEMENT OF SENATE MAJORITY LEADER BOB DOLE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH ON CONTRA AID

THIS AFTERNOON PRESIDENT REAGAN SPOKE TO THE NATION, URGING SUPPORT FOR EFFECTIVE AID TO THE FREEDOM FIGHTERS IN NICARAGUA, THE SO-CALLED CONTRAS.

AS WE ALL KNOW, THE PRESIDENT ORIGINALLY HAD ASKED TO SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE HOUSE, BECAUSE HE BELIEVES THIS ISSUE IS SO IMPORTANT TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY. REGRETTABLY, IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO MAKE THAT ARRANGEMENT. NONETHELESS, I HOPE THAT THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE, WHO WILL VOTE ON CONTRA AID WITHIN THE NEXT 24 HOURS, AND ALL OF US HERE IN THE SENATE, WHO WILL BE BACK ON THIS MATTER AFTER RECESS, WILL PONDER SERIOUSLY THE PRESIDENT'S WORDS.

THE PRESIDENT LAID IT ON THE LINE. NICARAGUA IS GOING STRAIGHT DOWN THE SAME PATH THAT CUBA DID. IT IS BEING TURNED INTO A SOVIET MILITARY BASE, THE FIRST ONE ON THE MAINLAND OF THE AMERICAS. IT IS BECOMING -- IT WILL BECOME -- A DIRECT AND SERIOUS THREAT TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY. MAYBE NOT TODAY, MAYBE NOT NEXT WEEK OR MONTH. BUT SOMEDAY.

UNLESS WE DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

WE'VE BEEN DEBATING THIS ISSUE FOR MONTHS, WHILE THE NOOSE TIGHTENED ON THE DEMOCRATIC FORCES INSIDE NICARAGUA; WHILE NEW RUSSIAN AND CUBAN ARMS AND ADVISERS ARRIVED; AND WHILE THE SANDINISTAS STEEPED UP THEIR ATTACKS ON HONDURAS AND THE OTHER DEMOCRATIC NATIONS OF CENTRAL AMERICA. AND I GUESS WE'LL KEEP ON DEBATING IT SOME MORE.

BUT WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO THE BOTTOM LINE. AND THAT BOTTOM LINE IS THE QUESTION THE PRESIDENT POSED TO THOSE WHO DOUBT THE THREAT FROM NICARAGUA IS REAL, THOSE WHO THINK THE PRESIDENT IS JUST CRYING "WOLF:" "WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR COUNTRY," THE PRESIDENT ASKED, "IF YOU ARE WRONG?"

I HOPE THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE WILL THINK ABOUT THAT AS THEY VOTE. I HOPE ALL OF US HERE WILL, TOO.

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