

STATEMENT OF SENATOR BOB DOLE  
S. J. RES. 106 AND THE PRESIDENTIAL LETTER  
APRIL 23, 1985

MR. PRESIDENT:

S. J. RES. 106 AND THE COMPANION LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT ARE FULLY CONSISTENT WITH OUR OVERALL POLICY GOALS AND STRATEGY IN NICARAGUA. THEY REPRESENT A PACKAGE CONTAINING THE FOUR ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF A SOUND APPROACH TO THE CURRENT SITUATION.

FIRST, THIS PACKAGE WILL STRONGLY ENCOURAGE THE BEGINNING OF GOOD FAITH NEGOTIATIONS. BY CONTINUING TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR THE CONTRAS AT THE \$14 MILLION LEVEL AND WITHIN EXISTING CHANNELS, THE PACKAGE PRESERVES ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT POINTS OF LEVERAGE WHICH WE HAVE IN NICARAGUA. WE CANNOT GIVE UP THAT LEVERAGE IF WE ARE TO HAVE ANY REALISTIC PROSPECT OF GETTING THE SANDANISTAS TO MODERATE THEIR OPPRESSIVE AND AGGRESSIVE POLICIES AND TAKE PART IN SERIOUS TALKS.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE PRESIDENT PLEDGED TO USE NO MORE THAN THE \$14 MILLION AND TO USE ALL OF IT FOR NON-LETHAL PURPOSES, AS A SIGN OF OUR GOOD FAITH INTEREST IN NEGOTIATIONS. THE PRESIDENT HAS ALSO ASSERTED HIS INTENTION TO RESUME DIRECT CONTACTS WITH THE SANDANISTAS, TO PRESS FOR A CEASEFIRE AND THE BEGINNING OF TALKS BETWEEN THE CONTENDING FORCES WITHIN THE COUNTRY, WHO MUST ULTIMATELY DECIDE THE FATE OF THEIR OWN COUNTRY.

THE SANDANISTAS HAVE SAID REPEATEDLY THAT THEY ARE INTERESTED IN A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AND NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. THE PRESIDENT IS GOING THE EXTRA MILE TO GIVE THEM THE CHANCE TO DEMONSTRATE THEY ARE SINCERE.

SECOND, THE RESOLUTION AND LETTER WILL PRESERVE AND IN FACT ENHANCE THE POLICY FLEXIBILITY THE PRESIDENT NEEDS, WHILE ENSURING THAT CONGRESS CAN PLAY ITS APPROPRIATE OVERSIGHT ROLE. IN HIS LETTER, THE PRESIDENT SAYS HE WILL MAKE GREATER USE OF ECONOMIC PRESSURE, A TOOL WHICH WE HAVE NOT YET FULLY EXPLOITED, TO ENCOURAGE MORE REASONABLE POLICIES IN MANAGUA. WHILE THE ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO MANAGE THE EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS FOR THE CONTRAS, THE CONGRESS HAS BEEN ASSURED THAT IT WILL BE GIVEN A FULL ACCOUNTING OF HOW THOSE FUNDS ARE SPENT. THOUGH NO POLICY OPTION IS PRECLUDED FOR FY86, THE PRESIDENT HAS COMMITTED HIMSELF TO REPORT TO THE CONGRESS BY SEPTEMBER 1, 1986, ON THE SITUATION IN NICARAGUA, SO THAT OUR OWN DECISIONS CAN BE MADE ON THE BASIS OF ALL THE FACTS. AND THE PRESIDENT HAS PROMISED A CLOSE MONITORING OF ANY CEASEFIRE WHICH EMERGES, SO THAT WE MAY KNOW WHO IS ABIDING BY ITS PROVISIONS AND WHO ISN'T.

THIRD, THE PRESIDENT'S PACKAGE, BY CONTINUING THE FUNDING WHICH THE PRESIDENT SOUGHT, MAKES GOOD ON OUR NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO THE CONTRAS. WE CAN ARGUE ALL WE WANT ABOUT THE WISDOM OF THAT COMMITMENT, BUT WE CAN HARDLY QUESTION THAT IT EXISTS. WHATEVER ELSE WE DO TODAY, LET THIS NOT BE THE DAY THAT THE



CONGRESS PULLS THE PLUG ON YET ANOTHER GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE CHOSEN TO BELIEVE IN OUR WORD.

FINALLY, THE RESOLUTION AND LETTER ARE REAL WORLD SOLUTIONS TO THE REAL WORLD SITUATION. THE PRESIDENT HAS STOOD FIRM ON WHAT HE REGARDS -- CORRECTLY, IN MY VIEW -- AS MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE, BUT HE HAS SHOWN A REAL WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE THROUGHOUT THE HARD BARGAINING IN WHICH WE HAVE BEEN ENGAGED OVER THE PAST SEVERAL DAYS. OTHERS INVOLVED IN OUR DISCUSSIONS HAVE COMPROMISED, TOO, IN THE INTEREST OF GETTING SOMETHING WHICH MOST OF US CAN COMFORTABLY SUPPORT. ALL OF US HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT SOME OF THE THINGS WHICH HAVE GONE ON IN AND AROUND NICARAGUA. NONE OF US WANTS TO DENY THE PRESIDENT AND THE ADMINISTRATION THE WHEREWITHAL THEY NEED TO CONDUCT AN EFFECTIVE FOREIGN POLICY. THIS PACKAGE STRIKES A REALISTIC MIDDLE GROUND.

I URGE ALL OF MY COLLEAGUES TO THINK ABOUT THIS VOTE IN THIS REALISTIC FRAME OF MIND. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT VOTE, AND WE ARE GOING TO BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR DEVELOPMENTS WHICH OUR DECISION TODAY PRODUCES. THE BEST DECISION, FOR OUR COUNTRY AND FOR US, IS TO SUPPORT THIS PACKAGE.