

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
OCTOBER 17, 1989

CONTACT: WALT RIKER
(202) 224-5358

HARKIN AMENDMENT IS PREMEDITATED MURDER

MR. PRESIDENT:

FROM TIME TO TIME, WE TALK ABOUT "KILLER" AMENDMENTS. THIS AMENDMENT IS A CASE OF PREMEDITATED MURDER.

THE REAL PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT IS AS CLEAR AS IT IS SIMPLE: IT IS TO KILL THIS PROGRAM; TO KILL OFF WHAT LITTLE POSSIBILITY REMAINS THAT THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION WILL HAVE A FIGHTING CHANCE IN AN ELECTION THAT ORTEGA HAS ALREADY SEMI-RIGGED.

THE SENATOR KNOWS WHAT SANDINISTA LAW SAYS. HE KNOWS THAT THE OPPOSITION WILL BE TAXED ON ANY MONEY IT RECEIVES FROM FOREIGN SOURCES. THE SENATOR KNOWS THAT, IF WE TELL THE OPPOSITION IT CAN'T USE A DIME OF OUR MONEY TO COMPLY WITH SANDINISTA LAW -- THE OPPOSITION CAN'T ACCEPT A DIME OF OUR MONEY.

I COMMEND THE SENATOR ON HIS CLEVER DRAFTING. IT'S A SET UP, PURE AND SIMPLE. HOW DO YOU VOTE AGAINST A PROHIBITION ON GIVING MONEY TO THE COMMUNIST SANDINISTAS?

WELL, LET ME TELL YOU HOW. YOU DO IT BY RIPPING THE SHEEP'S CLOTHING OFF THIS WOLF, AND EXPOSING IT FOR WHAT IT IS.

THE FACT IS, WE'VE GOT TWO CHOICES. THE ONE I SUPPORT, WHICH IS TO PROVIDE AS MUCH ASSISTANCE AS WE CAN TO THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION -- EVEN IF IT MEANS THAT SOME OF OUR DOLLARS WILL END UP WITH AN ELECTION BOARD DOMINATED BY THE SANDINISTAS.

THE OTHER CHOICE IS TURNING OUR BACKS ON THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION, AND GIVING COMMANDANTE ORTEGA AND HIS GOONS A FREE FIELD TO CONTINUE THEIR TYRANNY IN NICARAGUA. THAT'S THE REAL CHOICE THE SENATOR FROM IOWA IS PRESENTING.

MRS. CHAMORRO WANTS THIS BILL TO PASS -- IN A FORM THAT WILL ALLOW US TO PROVIDE THE DEMOCRATIC OPPOSITION ASSISTANCE, WITHOUT FORCING THEM TO VIOLATE SANDINISTA LAW.

ALTHOUGH WE DON'T HAVE IT OFFICIALLY, I THINK WE CAN FAIRLY GUESS THAT DANIEL ORTEGA WANTS THE AMENDMENT FROM THE SENATOR FROM IOWA TO PASS. LIKE ANYONE WHO KNOWS SANDINISTA LAW AND CAN READ THE LANGUAGE OF THIS AMENDMENT, HE KNOWS THAT PASSING THAT AMENDMENT WILL KILL ANY AID.

THE ISSUE IS WHAT'S BEST FOR DEMOCRACY IN NICARAGUA.

MRS. CHAMORRO IS ON ONE SIDE; DANIEL ORTEGA IS ON THE OTHER. YOU FIGURE IT OUT.

MR. PRESIDENT: WE ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE A BIPARTISAN ACCORD. THE ADMINISTRATION HAS WORKED HARD TO DEAL WITH DEMOCRATIC MEMBERS OF BOTH THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE -- TO ADDRESS THEIR LEGITIMATE CONCERNS.

BUT THE POINT IS, THE ADMINISTRATION WENT NOT ONLY THE FIRST MILE -- BUT MORE THAN A FEW EXTRA MILES TO PUT THIS LEGISLATION INTO BIPARTISAN FORM. THE HOUSE VOTED FOR IT ON A BIPARTISAN BASIS.

THE SENATE SHOULD RESPOND TO THE GOOD FAITH EFFORT OF THE ADMINISTRATION. THE SENATE IN THIS INSTANCE SHOULD FOLLOW THE BIPARTISAN EXAMPLE OF THE HOUSE.

THE SENATE SHOULD TABLE THE HARKIN AMENDMENT -- SO WE CAN PASS THIS BILL "CLEAN," AND WE CAN BEGIN TO MATCH OUR RHETORIC ABOUT SUPPORTING DEMOCRACY IN NICARAGUA, WITH SOME CONCRETE ACTION TO GIVE THE DEMOCRATIC