Senator David Durenberger
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

5/4/84

Dear Senator Durenberger,

It is a good thing for the country that you have taken time to learn first-hand the seriousness of the problems of Latin America and that you have tried to bring reason and purpose to our policy toward that area. I appreciate this and the time you took for your thoughtful response to my letter.

We are in substantial agreement, although I do disagree that we should support the cntras. We can't undo the past and most of them represent the hated regime we fixed on Nicaragua. Supporting them in any way alienates not the present government as much as most Nicaraguans and we can accomplish nothing that way.

While I do not believe that the coming elections in Honduras and El Salvador can or will have the results you anticipate, at this point in your remarks of the 26th you correctly and succinctly state what our hope should be, that "genuinely representative governments . . . can evolve(d) over time into full-fledged democracies..."

There is no way we can impose this growth on those countries and if they are to evolve full-fledged democracies we must suffer each to do this in its own way as it sees its way. We must not intervene politically or economically because if we do we will drive them into other hands. If we leave them alone they will grow into what we can accept as democratic governments. No people wants any kind of dictatorship, of either extreme. But if we require them to look elsewhere for assistance we leave them no real choice. We've made this mistake too often. If we keep repeating it we assure the opposite of the hope you expressed so clearly.

Their poverty and lack of capital may lead them to some economic policies that differ from ours but we find, for example, that some state ownership in countries like England and France are no barrier to friendship with us.

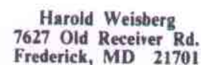
We revolted against England, but does it have a better friend today, or has it had a better friend since then?

As long as we arm them we prepare them for dictatorships. Nobody will invade them if we state we will prevent it. And they can't afford their military.

We damage our own interests by any kind of intervention, in those countries, in the rest of Latin America and throughout the world.

If we let each country take its own road and provide the help each desparately needs we will have earned and will hold their friendship and support. We will have their respect, that of the rest of the world, and our own.

Sincerely,



Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Rd.
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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

April 27, 1984

Mr. Harold Weisberg
7627 Old Receiver Road
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Harold:

Thank you for your interesting and detailed letter regarding your experiences in and observations on Central America.

I found your description of your participation in the postwar conferences on Latin America to be quite enlightening. Clearly, American policy in Latin America could be characterized by alternating cycles of panic and neglect. Unfortunately, we are now experiencing the results of these policies. As you point out, one of the key problems in Central America is that you cannot make policy unless the American people understand and support it. People don't put blind faith in Presidents on war and peace issues unless they are told all the facts. President Reagan has thus far failed in this respect.

Throughout the past several years, I have tried to bring reason and purpose to our foreign policy towards Central America. Because of my own travels to the region, I knew first-hand how serious the problems were and how urgently change was needed. I encouraged Presidents Carter and Reagan to support economic reforms and improvements in human rights. I continually prodded the Congress to play a positive role in shaping our foreign policy. I strongly believe that the United States has a responsibility to play a constructive role in this vital region. I believe that the bi-partisan Kissinger Commission has articulated a long-term strategy for resolving these problems. We must be prepared to assist Central American nations for a long time after the fighting ceases by providing economic assistance and moral support.

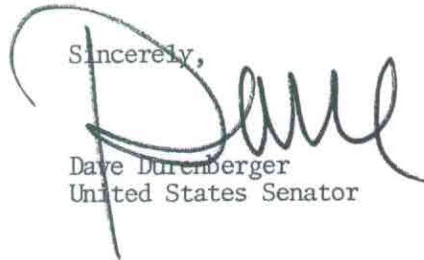
The recent revelations regarding the mining of Nicaraguan harbors left Congress faced with a new issue: whether that tactic was a sensible means of pressuring the Nicaraguan government. I concluded that it was unwise. It affected the ships of friendly countries; it harmed civilian cargoes, as well as military ones; and it led our government into the public relations fiasco of running away from a World Court that is usually a strong supporter of Western values. I therefore joined 83 of my colleagues in voting to recommend that the President stop all such mining, even though I remain convinced that we should not cut off the Nicaraguan contras.

Mr. Harold Weisberg
April 27, 1984
Page Two

To summarize, I feel that it would be wise for the Reagan Administration to carefully outline its goals and clarify its intentions with regard to its latest actions in Central America. I thought that you might be interested in a statement on Central America which I made on the Senate floor yesterday. I hope that you find it interesting and informative.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,



Dave Durenberger
United States Senator

Enclosure
DD:soc

and practical thinking that our society will need more and more as our population ages.

Today, Jamie is actively working with Maine's State Bureau of the Elderly to establish the home equity conversion project, a program whose purpose is to give older homeowners the opportunity to remain in their communities by using the equity from their homes as a source of income. It is hard to overstate how important it is in the small rural communities typical of Maine to give older people that opportunity.

The work of the Federal Council on Aging has helped us to recognize that the universal experience of growing old need not be a fearful one. Jamie Broder's contribution to that work, both in his service on the Council and in his civic activities in Maine, has been great in the past and I am confident it will be invaluable in the future.

This is a nomination which merits the unanimous support of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the nominations are considered and confirmed.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

The legislative clerk read the nomination of James H. Webb, Jr., of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The nomination is considered and confirmed.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Thomas H. Anderson, Jr., of Mississippi, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Barbados, and to serve concurrently and without additional compensation as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Commonwealth of Dominica, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to St. Lucia, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Antigua and Barbuda, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to St. Christopher; and the nomination of Harry E. Bergold, Jr., of Florida, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Republic of Nicaragua.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the nominations are considered and confirmed.

NOMINATIONS PLACED ON THE SECRETARY'S DESK IN THE AIR FORCE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The nominations will be stated.

The legislative clerk read various nominations placed on the Secretary's desk in the Air Force.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, the nominations are considered and confirmed.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote by which the nominations were considered and confirmed.

Mr. BYRD. I move to lay that motion on the table.

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the President be immediately notified of the confirmation of these nominations.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate return to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CENTRAL AMERICA AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

Mr. DURENBERGER. Mr. President, the last few weeks have seen an extraordinary amount of attention paid to events in Central America, and to the role which our country has played in those events. For instance, shortly before the March 6 elections in El Salvador, many of us heard from a high-ranking officer in the Salvadoran military concerning the links between death squad activities and the Salvadoran political system.

On March 8, we were treated to the spectacle of the administration seeking to load a significant appropriation onto the African famine relief bill, bypassing in the process both the Foreign Relations Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence.

Still later, and continuing into April, the Senate undertook 11 separate rollcall votes on the appropriations request which had emerged from a careful and bipartisan consideration of our policy in Central America. On all 11 votes, a majority—frequently an overwhelming bipartisan majority—voted to stay with the package which had been so carefully worked out by Senators INOUYE and KASTEN.

Yet only 1 day after this demonstration of bipartisanship within the Senate and cooperation between the Senate and the Executive, the President was at Georgetown University calling upon us to restore bipartisanship in our foreign policy, and to support "the practical details of policy, not just the general goals."

Finally, a scant 3 days after the President's speech, we in the Congress awoke to news stories which specified the role played by the American Government in the mining of Nicaraguan harbors. As Senator GOLDWATER made clear in his now-famous letter to the Director of Central Intelligence, the Congress had not been fully and appropriately briefed on this activity via the channels of the Senate Intelligence Committee. It was therefore not surprising that the Senate adopted, by an overwhelming vote, a resolution calling for the immediate termination of the mining.

The proverbial "man from Mars," visiting this city for the first time and knowing nothing of our customs, would be hard pressed to make sense of these events. So too would the American public. The question that is being asked, as we resume our legislative session, is "what next in Central America?"

Before we can answer that question, we have to ask ourselves "where have we been?"

POLICY AND PROCESS IN FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mr. President, the reason our actions here in Washington look so confusing is that we are dealing with two separate issues when we debate Central America. The first issue—a perennial in Washington—has to do with the procedures by which foreign policy is made. It touches on such questions as the proper role of Congress in foreign policy, the wisdom of our annual appropriations process, and the necessary tension between a policy that is always consistent enough to be understandable and flexible enough to be realistic.

The second issue, which is sometimes overlooked, is just where we hope to go in our overall Central America policy. When I say that this issue is often overlooked, I mean that we frequently get so bound up in the day-to-day details of ongoing events, or so enambured of the latest aphorisms to emerge from the critics and proponents of policy alike, that we ignore the forest for the trees.

Both issues are related, and it would be a very naive person who could suggest that policy and process are distinct entities, just as it would be a very naive person who would suggest that there is a large distinction between politics and policy. But even recognizing the necessary overlap between procedures and goals, it can be worthwhile periodically to recognize that they often pose separate questions and challenges to this country as it charts its course in international waters.

The issues with which we dealt throughout March and much of April nominally bore on our policy in Central America. But the actions we took were very distinct, because we were alternately dealing with procedural and policy questions.

I don't want to suggest that this is a desirable state of affairs. It isn't. We cannot hope to develop an integrated and comprehensive policy for Central America until we reintegrate our policy debate with some common understandings about procedures and process. But we will not achieve that state unless we first recognize that our current impasse derives from an inadequate set of procedural understand-

ings and a total failure to elaborate the long-term goals against which our daily actions in Central America can be measured.

So what I am proposing, Mr. President, is that we first get our house in order by artificially separating for the moment the question of policy from the question of process. When we recognize the limitations in each, we can correct them. When in turn they are corrected, we can reintegrate them and get on with the business of foreign relations. Perhaps the best way to do this is to carefully study just what happened in the dizzying couple of weeks I touched upon at the outset of my statement.

THE URGENT SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL

From March 29 through April 5, the Senate conducted an intense debate on the urgent supplemental appropriations bill for fiscal year 1984. In most respects, the intensity of this debate was no surprise, for the issue involved was Central America and the manner in which the bill first arose—a failed attempt by the President to make an end run around the authorizing committees and to tag his request onto a bill which we all knew could not be delayed—was guaranteed to arouse controversy.

In some respects, however, it is genuinely surprising that we should have devoted so much time to this matter, for the fact is that when we last appropriated funds for Central America we knew full well that the administration would be back this spring looking for more. We knew this because we guaranteed it by reducing the fiscal year 1984 authorization to levels well below what the administration had felt was prudent.

In other words, Mr. President, the real issue in the debate this spring was not over our policy in Central America. We had had that debate last fall. The issue instead was over the relatively trivial point of whether an additional short-term infusion of funds would be granted to carry out a program on which we had signed off last fall.

To draw a simplistic analogy, Mr. President, it was as if somebody had made the decision to purchase a car, and having arranged for consumer credit, to then debate whether or not to make his monthly payment on time and in the amount which his budget could stand. The debate was not over whether to sell the car, or to rely on public transportation, or to purchase a second and better car. The debate was simply over whether to meet an obligation which had been clearly understood from the outset, despite the fact that circumstances had not substantially changed.

Keep in mind, Mr. President, that the supplemental appropriation was carefully crafted by a bipartisan team, led by Senators INOUYE and KASTEN. It cut the President's initial request by one-third. It imposed limits. It was explicitly not an open-ended commitment. It was a short-term infusion of funds, designed to carry us through a period in which the glimmerings of a genuine policy are becoming vaguely apparent.

Two years ago, this country moved the Government of El Salvador in the general direction of elections. The first round of the Presidential elections was conducted in early March of this year. The second round will be conducted in May. To have cut off this process before it was even begun—for instance by killing funding for the paramilitary program which helps to preserve the lives of voters by making it harder for rebels armed by and directed from Nicaragua to fight—would simply have been folly. And to cast the vote on this question as a vote on "policy" is really begging the question, for the fact—as I intend to argue at length later—is that we do not yet have a genuine policy.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that on all separate rollcall votes, the Senate stayed with the appropriations bill by large majorities, frequently by margins greater than 3 to 1. There were few here who believed that it was appropriate to treat a short-term appropriations bill as the vehicle to alter or formulate policy. As my friend, the junior Senator from Connecticut stated in an exchange with me, the urgent supplemental appropriations bill was "hardly the kind of vehicle we ought to be using, this catchall we have every time we want to move something along." Senator DODD went on to say "my hope is that we might have an opportunity and a better forum for these kinds of policy discussions." I agree heartily.

That brings me to the next point—the remarkable and astonishing comments by the President in his Georgetown University speech, a speech which followed by 1 day the adoption—on a vote of 76 to 19—of the appropriations bill which underwrote his programs.

Perhaps it is a matter of proximity, Mr. President. I think I understand why people in the Senate might have viewed this bill as an occasion for a debate on policy, particularly given how poorly the administration had made its case when it tried to resort to the end run of March 8. But, for the life of me, I cannot understand how the President had this body in mind—if he did—when he gave his speech.

THE GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY SPEECH AND CONGRESSIONAL PROCEDURES

Mr. President, the tension between the Executive and the legislature in foreign policy is as old as the Republic. It was Thomas Jefferson who believed so strenuously in congressional primacy over the war powers, but it was President Jefferson who ignored Congress when he sent naval expeditions to the Barbary Coast.

Article I, section 8, of the Constitution is explicit on the question of congressional powers. So to argue that Congress is a nuisance or worse in the area of foreign policy is no argument at all. If Congress is a nuisance—and it frequently is—it is a necessary nuisance.

This is more than just civics book proprieties. The proper and necessary role of Congress is to act as a sort of board of directors, which mediates between the people and their President on matters of significant policy. We have learned too often that a foreign policy which is not supported by the people of this country is a foreign policy which will eventually fail. All the technology, or money, or keen analysis in the world cannot change this fact. So the best way to guarantee that a policy has support—and to pick up early warnings if it does not—is to rely on the Congress. A failure to do so is more than improper; it is stupid as well.

This does not mean that Congress is necessarily right. It does not mean that Congress is capable of running policy effectively. As the President properly noted in his Georgetown speech:

> Congress has not yet developed capacities for coherent, responsible action to carry out the new foreign policy powers it has taken for itself.

But, with all its failings—institutional, political, intellectual, and emotional—the Congress still remains at the center of our foreign policy process. If we are to correct the flaws which currently make sound policy so difficult to implement, we must begin by asking Congress to live up to its responsibilities, not to abrogate them.

It does not stretch the imagination too much to argue that this President, like all his predecessors, would probably sleep better if the only role we played in foreign policy was cheerleader. When the President spoke of the need for "restoring bipartisanship" and of his hopes that Congress would support "the practical details of policy, not just the general goals," he was to some extent using code words to ask us to be his cheerleader.

Too often, Mr. President, we assume that the fundamental failing in our foreign policy derives exclusively from partisanship. As a result we look back to the few years in our era—shortly after World War II when Senator Vandenberg led his wing of the Republican Party out of isolationism and into strong support for Harry Truman's policies in Europe—as the golden age of American foreign policy. In extreme cases, we come to think of that era as the rule, not the exception.

There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that a foreign policy which enjoys bipartisan support is better than one that does not. But that goal cannot be cited as its own justification. It has to be worked for, hard, every day. If a policy is to be bipartisan, a broad spectrum of people must be convinced that the policy is worthwhile, at least in its general goals and prefer-

ably in its practical details. The act of convincing people has to be based on more than simply a presumptive claim to expertise, on more than simply an emotional appeal for deference to authority. It has to be based on a sound and well elaborated case. And frequently, it has to be based on give and take. Bipartisanship is a compromise, not a call to regimentation.

President Reagan himself understands the limits upon a bipartisan foreign policy when that policy is controversial. As he made clear in his opposition to the SALT II accord and the Panama Canal Treaty—agreements which were first negotiated by President Ford and later culminated by President Carter—bipartisanship is earned through hard work; it is not automatically conferred.

What is ironic in the Georgetown speech, therefore, is that it overlooks three crucial points.

First, it overlooks the fact that bipartisanship is a worthy goal which is observed more in the breach than not.

Second, it overlooks the fact that this Congress has largely supported the President's initiatives and has done so on a bipartisan basis. Despite all we read about the Republican-controlled Senate. The fact remains that congressional support for such things as construction of the MX missile; acceleration of defense spending; deployment of troops to Lebanon; the conduct of the arms talks; and the ongoing paramilitary program in Central America has occurred in both Houses, and has involved members of both parties. It was Senator INOUYE who steered the supplemental appropriations through Congress a few weeks ago. It was Speaker O'NEILL whose support was crucial to passage of the war powers resolution concerning Lebanon. It has been bipartisanship, in both Houses, which has underwritten this President's remarkable string of foreign policy victories.

Finally, the speech overlooks a third and crucial point. When the President expresses his understandable frustration with the limitations on the congressional ability to shape, oversee, and support policy, he is not speaking about bipartianship at all. Instead, he is talking about frictions and tensions which are built into the Congress as a body and into exective-congressional relations generically, regardless of party alinements.

As I noted earlier, there are some distinct limitations on the congressional ability to perform its proper role in foreign policy. But these limitations are as much institutional as they are political. And they must be overcome if we are to avoid policy paralysis.

For instance, as I argued when I introduced Senate Concurrent Resolution 97 along with Senators INOUYE and KASSEBAUM, Congress is far too reluctant to live up to its own responsibilities when those responsibilities entail making tough decisions and living with them. We are far too prone to dump everything in the President's lap, and then to act offended when he acts as we asked his to. We are far too prone to abrogate a policy-setting role—a role we must share with the President—and to adopt instead a micromanagement role. In that sense, the President's comments concerning the "practical details of policy" are somewhat understandable.

What is called for, if we are to act in a responsible way as a board of directors, is the ability to look at a large issue, recognize the tradeoffs and nuances, develop a sense of direction, and then entrust implementation to the proper authority. Too often, instead, we focus on the small issue or the current symbol; we avoid nuance; and we adopt a skeptical and critical attitude toward the details, not recognizing that when we fail to specify goals, then we will necessarily be upset about derivative details.

So I agree with the President that Congress needs to improve its mechanisms for dealing with policy. And I want to reiterate that when we do our job, it will be a shared task. That is why it is so critical that there be regular and complete consultation between the Executive and Congress. Without consultation—and the trust that comes from consultation—there can be no hope for bipartisanship, nor for a Congress willing to recognize its own limits as well as its responsibilities, and to behave accordingly. This brings us, of course, to the issue of the mining of Nicaraguan waters.

MINING AND THE PARAMILITARY PROGRAM

Mr. President, the Congress generally, and the House and Senate Intelligence Committees particularly, have made amply clear their willingness to sustain a program of paramilitary action in Central America if that program is sensible; if it is bounded rather than open-ended; if it is explained to the proper authorities rather than concealed; and if it is a clear and needed element of a larger policy.

Unfortunately, we have often lost sight of the reason why the United States looks to this option in its foreign policy. In generally, such programs are designed to provide us measures short of open hostilities to achieve aims which cannot be achieved diplomatically. In the case of Nicaragua, a country which has made abundantly clear its desire to feed the insurgency in El Salvador and export its own form of government by mob to Costa Rica, it has been a sensible idea to impose a cost on such actions. What this calls for, obviously, is limited and finite activities, not large-scale measures. Ideally, it would be beneficial if everybody who smuggled arms from Nicaragua into other countries, or who undertook terrorist bombings in Costa Rica, could be caught and detained.

Failing that, it is altogether sensible to impose a cost on those who get through, both to slow down the spread of subversion in what Nicaragua calls a "revolution without frontiers" and to deter future such actions.

Consistently, the Intelligence Committees have sought to provide guidance to the appropriate authorities in order to insure that what actions might be taken are within sensible and legal bounds. The reason that the Congress has thus far authorized the funding sought is that individual Members of Congress have been able to trust the judgment and the ability of their colleagues on the Senate and House Intelligence Committees. Rather than asking each Member of Congress to investigate what are necessarily highly sensitive matters, the Congress has entrusted that job to small committees.

If the administration—any administration—is to hope for continued congressional authority to conduct the kinds of programs which must occasionally be undertaken, it is vital that there be the greatest possible degree of consultation between the Executive and the appropriate congressional committees. As Senator GOLDWATER put it in his letter to Director Casey of the CIA, we cannot be expected to support a policy when we ourselves do not know what that policy is.

In short, if the Intelligence Committees are to do their job, they must have a reputation among their colleagues for reliability. They cannot have that reputation if vital information is kept from them. And if they should ultimately lose their effectiveness because their reputation has declined, the alternative will be a return to the days when up to eight separate committees oversaw the actions of the intelligence community. Under such circumstances, we will not ever have a policy; we will have a circus.

When the President stated in his Georgetown speech that the administration has tried to "seek new means to reach bipartisan, executive, legislative consensus," I was somewhat curious just what he meant. Keep in mind that these comments were delivered on Friday, April 6.

By Monday, April 9, I simply could not believe that assertion, for I had read—along with all of my colleagues—the details of our involvement in the mining of Nicaraguan waters. There had been no consensus on this issue because there had been no consultation. And, frankly, had there been consultation, there would not have been consensus for the action was foolish in the extreme. It posed a distinct risk of escalating our difficulties with Nicaragua; it involved other countries; and it self-evidently had no hope for secrecy. Worst of all, the subsequent treatment of the controversy demonstrated an incredible insensitivity to reality, and it succeeded in diverting attention from the behavior of the Sandinistas to our own behavior. That is why, of course, there was so lopsided a vote to prohibit future mining.

What this episode demonstrates, Mr. President, is that Congress—with all its cumbersome procedures—can serve as a valuable check on stupidity. It shows, in other words, that procedure can bolster policy. The astonishing failure of the administration to understand the special burdens borne by the House and Senate Intelligence Committees is perhaps the least of the issues involved here, bad as they were. Here was a case where a failure to adhere to procedure led to a policy decision which was disastrous. And that brings us back to the beginning—the need to integrate policy with procedure.

Obviously, the vote against the behavior of the administration did not represent a repudiation of the policy which we had sustained and supported the previous week. In the first place, we adopted a nonbinding resolution. In the second place, few of us agreed that mining harbors was consonant with either the overall policy interests of the United States in Central America or with the paramilitary program in particular. So in voting as we did, we did not undercut our policy, we reaffirmed it. Finally, we were rightly disturbed that there had been such a flagrant abuse of procedure.

So in some senses, the 84 to 12 vote on the Kennedy resolution was a matter of politics inside the Washington Beltway, not policy at the water's edge. But as a clear signal of the need to conform our policy to proper procedure, the vote spoke legions about the overall failings of U.S. policy in Central America.

We can learn from this episode, Mr. President, and we can use the lessons gained to develop the kind of foreign policy which I know that President Reagan wants to see us adopt in Central America. The first lesson we must learn, of course, is that procedure is a vital element of sound policy, not an impediment to it. And I think we are learning that lesson now, both here in Congress and in the Executive.

Over the past few days, we have begun—at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue—to move toward recommitting ourselves to full and active consultation and participation in the shared duties of foreign policy. Pledges have been made, and misunderstandings have been cleared up. I am confident that we will not see a repetition of the mining fiasco.

But structural reforms are not enough. We cannot just ink in lines of communication on an organization chart and expect to establish the kind of working relationship needed to actually formulate and implement policy. As I mentioned earlier, bipartisanship—which is really a form of trust—has to be earned.

It is not earned when the Secretary of State reiterates the foolish statement that a lack of bipartisanship is what undermined our approach to Lebanon. If people in the administration really believe this point, then they have not read the conclusions of their own Commission of Inquiry, chaired by Admiral Long, and they have forgotten that even as orders were being prepared to load our marines on ships administration spokesmen were attacking anybody in Congress who suggested this alternative.

Bipartisanship is not earned when things like the Georgetown speech follows by 1 day a manifest demonstration of bipartisanship in the Senate of the United States.

Bipartisanship is not earned when the administration apparently views the Intelligence Committees as obstacles, rather than as partners in the tough job of making and implementing policy.

Unless we start seeing a genuine interest in sharing with Congress—both Houses and both parties—the responsibility for crafting our policy in Central America, we will lose any prospect of a policy at all. We already face the threat that the House may cut off the CIA supplemental funding which this body appropriated on April 5. Speaking as a member of the Intelligence Committee, as a person with years of experience in Central America, and as a Republican Senator, I know that this would be a tragic mistake—a point made with some clarity in a recent edition of the New Republic. But if it were to happen, the fault would lie as much with the administration as with the House. So here is one Republican Senator who will make the case that his own party's interest as much as the Nation's interest is served when the President makes better overtures for bipartisanship than he did at Georgetown.

THE CHALLENGE IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Mr. President, if we in Congress have the courage and the will to tackle so challenging and complex an issue—particularly in an election year—we have an impending opportunity to help elaborate a policy for Central America, to live up to our own responsibilities, to benefit this country we serve. That opportunity, of course, will be found in the debate—if we have one—over the Jackson plan.

It is often said that we function too often here by continuing resolution—the force feeding of money into programs which have not been well studied. That is nowhere more the case than in our policy toward Central America.

Every year since I have been here, we have gone through occasional debates over particular issues—human rights; land reform; trade relations. We have usually done so on a bilateral basis, and with little real scrutiny of our underlying assumptions about how countries evolve. A debate over the future of a region has too often become a trivia contest over a given country's past. We have seldom, if ever, enunciated what goals we want to accomplish, and we have never determined whether Central America is a distinct region. A cockpit for United States-Soviet relations, or a spot on the map where seven countries happen to be found.

We have not been alone in this failing, of course. Time after time, in listening to administration testimony, I get the sense that our policy is determined simply by whomever has a microphone on a given day, and by whatever minicrisis occured the day before. We are still coming to grips with this complex region, Mr. President. Because of that, it is simply not correct to say that we have a policy. Instead, it can be said at best that we have a series of programs, which seem to change with the winds.

In the next few weeks, Central America is about to undergo the starts of what could be a profound change. El Salvador and Honduras will both hold elections. These elections may well result in genuinely representative governments which can evolved over time into full-fledged democracies provided we and they are constant in our purpose. This will then leave Guatemala at one extreme and Nicaragua at another. And it will bolster the Contadora peace process, provided the U.S. is willing to follow the advice of such authorities as President Monge of Costa Rica.

In short, Mr. President, we may soon be able to benefit from the advice and expertise of committed democrats in as many as four countries in the region—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Panama. If we ourselves can overcome our own prejudices and learn from this unique configuration, I am confident that we can begin to put some flesh on the skeletonized policy outlined by the Kissinger Commission.

Mr. President, this is not the place to outline the details of the Jackson plan, with which all of us are familiar anyway. Suffice it to say that the report is remarkable in its subtlety, in its grasp of the complexity of the situation, in its avoidance of bumper-sticker nostrums, and in the degree to which it has been misrepresented, misunderstood, and ignored by so many Americans. As a recent article in the National Journal makes clear, the report of the Bipartisan Commission, like the works of Shakespeare or the Bible, is more quoted than read.

Mr. President, I am confident that the Jackson plan represents a significant outline which, with modification by the Congress, can begin to shape our long-term policy. It can account for the complex interrelationships among countries in the region. It can account for the urgency of the crisis which has been so long in the making and so long ignored. It can account for the fact that, like it or not, the United States will always be involved in the region even if by default. What will be needed, Mr. President, is a willingness by this body, and by our colleagues in the House, to sit down and actually think this through.

So to conclude, Mr. President, we need to begin now to ask some fundamental questions. Each of us will have different answers, of course, but we need a set of common questions. Let me pose a few of them:

First, will the administration be willing to replace its current hodgepodge of programs with a clear statement of what we are doing?

Second, will the President and his officers begin to demonstrate a genuine willingness to work with Congress, and not against it?

Third, will we in Congress begin, as the Nation's board of directors, to enunciate a vision of the future, recognizing that the United States must play major role in that future?

Fourth, will we in both branches of Government begin to work together to give some specifics to that vision, altering it where needed and deferring to each other's particular form of expertise where appropriate?

Fifth, will we take advantage of the great pool of talent which can be found among people like President Monge or former President Duarte?

Finally, will we come to recognize that just as our policy must be long term, so too the congressional sense of responsibility for actually shaping and sharing policy must be long term?

Unless these questions are answered in the affirmative, I fear that we will continue to see our current pattern of vacillation between procedural and policy questions.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the articles from the National Journal and the New Republic, to which I have referred, be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the articles were ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the National Journal, Apr. 21, 1984]

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE KISSINGER PANEL'S CENTRAL AMERICA CONSENSUS?

(By Christopher Madison)

Last summer, President Reagan appointed a bipartisan commission to help build public support for his Central America policies, which were causing increasing contoversy. The 12-member commission finished its work in January and, apparently overcoming many preconceptions about the issues, forged a consensus. But that consensus has not been extended to Congress or the American public.

Instead, in the months since the report's release, as during the previous year, Reagan has been engaged in constant battle with Congress over his Central America policies. Sometimes he wins; Congress has never succeeded in cutting off aid to El Salvador. But the Administration's policy toward Nicaragua has always generated controversy, and may make consensus impossible.

Early this month, for example, the Senate seemed to be leaning in Reagan's direction when it overwhelmingly approved his $62 million aid request for El Salvador and a $21 million authorization to support the antigovernment rebels in Nicaragua.

The very next week, outraged by disclosures that the Central Intelligence Agency had a direct role in supervising the mining of Nicaraguan harbors, the Senate approved a "sense-of-the-Senate" resolution condemning the CIA's role. The House quickly approved a similar resolution by a 281-111 vote, and seemed certain to vote down further funds for the Nicaraguan effort and to scale back the Salvadoran aid request.

Far in the background in these debates, and having almost no obvious influence, it seems, is the report of the National Bipartisan Commission on Central America, chaired by former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger. The lack of impact has left some members frustrated and depressed. Others believe it was unrealistic to expect a commission report to end the Central American debate, particularly in an election year when Democrats need issues on which to challenge Reagan at the polls.

The 12-member commission, appoointed by Reagan last year at the first stirrings of controversy over his policies, was asked to make policy recommendations and to suggest how a consensus might be achieved. It undertook an exhaustive review of political, social and economic conditions in the region and took clear stands on most of the issues—but not all—now being debated by Congress.

In its report presented to Reagan last January, the commission concluded there was an acute crisis in the region and proposed a series of complex, long-range solutions emphasizing economic, social and humanitarian programs. The Administration quickly translated the findings into legislation and submitted it to Congress. But debate there has focused instead on highly controversial military questions involving Nicaragua's efforts to launch a communist revolution in the region. Meanwhile, the bulk of the commission's recommendations have become buried in House and Senate committees.

Jim Wright, D-Texas, the House Majority Leader, who served as a senior counselor to the commission, said of its report: "Unfortunately, it has not had the impact that it deserved to have. Maybe it isn't too late, once we get past the harshly divisive subtopics and focus instead on the long-range issues."

Wright counts among the divisive subtopics aid to the Nicaraguan guerrillas, the U.S. military presence in Honduras and continued aid to El Salvador. These are not unimportant questions, but, he said in an interview, they detract from any discussions of the central point of the Kissinger commission's report, the need for the United States "to begin to commit ourselves to a long-term program of economic and social development" for the region.

LONG-TERM PROGRAM

The commission did not ignore the problems of aid to El Salvador and the rebels in Nicaragua, but it took a broader perspective. It said: "Central America is our near neighbor and a strategic crossroads of global significance." After identifying the long festering social, political and economic problems in the region, the commission concluded they were being exacerbated by revolutionary forces in Nicaragua that were backed by Cuba and the Soviet Union. Nicaragua's revolutionary activities in neighboring El Salvador and elsewhere in the region must be neutralized, the commission said, by negotiation if possible, by force if necessary.

On a broader level, the commission said "the advance of Soviet and Cuban power on the American mainland affects the global balance" and required the United States "to defend against security threats near our borders. . . ."

The commission's solutions included $8 billion in economic aid over five years, as well as significantly increased military assistance to U.S. allies such as El Salvador and Honduras. And while it did not explicitly endorse U.S. support for the secret war against the government in Nicaragua, it said the Marxist-Leninist government there was a threat to the region and that the pressure applied by the antigovernment insurgents may force the Nicaraguan government to consider a negotiated settlement to the region's tensions.

In addition to the establishment of an innovative agency to distribute economic aid to all countries in the region, including Nicaragua, if it made a commitment to social, political and economic reforms, the commission recommended establishing a literacy and teachers corps, scholarships for Central Americans to attend U.S. universities and increased housing and health programs.

It was a surprise to many, including the commission members themselves, that they managed to reach a consensus on U.S. goals and interests in Central America. Just as surprising, considering the group's bipartisan makeup, that consensus was a close approximation of Reagan's policies.

On the other hand, the Administration's critics were not surprised that the commission endorsed Reagan's policies; they assumed the President would not decide to appoint a commission that would disagree with him. But interviews with some members of the commission and its small staff suggest that something unusual happened among the commission's Democrats and Republicans, politicians and labor leaders, educators and others.

In addition to Kissinger, its chairman, the commission's members were former Republican Sen. Nicholas F. Brady of New Jersey; San Antonio Democratic Mayor Henry G. Cisneros; former Texas Gov. William P. Clements Jr., a Republican; Yale University professor Carlos F. Diaz-Alejandro; Wilson S. Johnson, chairman of the National Federation of Independent Business Inc.; Lane Kirkland, president of the AFL-CIO; Washington political analyst Richard M. Scammon; Boston University president John Silber; former Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart; former Democratic National Committee chairman Robert S. Strauss; and William B. Walsh, founder of Project Hope.

"I was astounded at what happened to that group," said William D. Rogers, a former career diplomat and Kissinger aide who served as a senior counselor to the 12 members. Many commission members, he said, began with only a "primitive understanding of Central America" and were biased in their solutions. "Liberals thought you just needed a New Deal for the region, and conservatives thought you just needed to bomb Cuba."

But the group "learned and came together" and produced, in Roger's view, a complex strategic report that went beyond bland generalities and took into account the interrelationships of politics, economics and human rights in the region. Some members changed their views on the issues in the process of hearing testimony in Washington, visiting Central America and debating and drafting their report. "They came up with a policy that took us beyond infectious bilateralism" Rogers said.

HARD-LINE CONSENSUS

This process may have contributed to the commission's surprisingly hard-line consensus on the problems in the region. Certainly not every member of the commission was prepared at the outset to endorse the Administration's thesis that the United States had to confront the threat posed to Central America and the Western Hemisphere by left-wing revolutions.

But the commission reached that conclusion at the end. It wrote: "The Soviet-Cuban

challenge to make Central America part of their geostrategic challenge is what has turned the struggle . . . into a security and political problem for the United States and for the hemisphere." It also said that "the triumph of hostile forces" in the region would be "read as a sign of U.S. impotence."

This cold war reading of the Central American situation has always been the most controversial part of the Administration's policies there; skeptics have questioned whether there was a genuine, widespread communist threat to the region, and Congress has hesitated to approve aid based on these conclusions.

But this view was endorsed by all 12 commission members, including three who were perceived as anything but conservative on Central American politics: Cisneros, Diaz-Alejandro and Strauss. The conclusion served as the basis for the recommendation that the United States increase its military and economic aid to El Salvador, provided it was conditioned on improvements in human rights.

Commission members and staff agree that such a consensus may have surprised outsiders. Rogers said that these views emerged from several key events. Most crucial was a briefing the commission received from leaders of the Sandinista regime, including Daniel Ortega, the head of the government, in Managua last winter.

According to Walsh, a commission member who supported Administration policy before he was appointed, the Nicaraguans had an opportunity to begin a "dialogue" with Americans through the commission. Instead, they delivered what he called a "tirade" against U.S. policy.

Others who attended noted from the briefing that the Sandinistas clearly were using Soviet and Cuban intelligence information and that this erased any doubts commission members may have had about the links between the Soviets and Cubans and the Nicaraguans.

Commission members also received intelligence briefings from U.S. sources about Soviet and Cuban activity in the region. A fact that impressed them was the Soviet arms flow into Nicaragua and to the Salvadoran guerrillas. Several members of the commission concluded, in the words of a member, "Eventually, unless there was a change in the behavior of the Nicaraguans, the United States would find itself with a security problem in the region."

Commission members also heard from other governments in the region. According to Rogers, this was the "bombshell" that produced the commission's hard-line consensus. "They heard repeatedly from respected democratic leaders in the region the sense that the continuation of the Sandinista regime in its current form was incompatible with the long-term peace and security of the region," Rogers said.

According to Walsh, officials in Honduras who met with commission members feared they were about to be invaded. Administration officials familiar with the commission's briefings in the region said that officials in Costa Rica also expressed alarm about the Nicaraguans and that this "surprised" the commission.

"They didn't expect that, even though we'd been telling people that for years," said an Administration specialist on Central America.

MISUNDERSTOOD?

The commission completed its work in early January and released its report on Jan. 11. At that point, Rogers said, it's "fell off the table."

The report presented a complex economic, political and military strategy for the region that was not easily digested or presented to the public. Instead, Rogers said, two perceptions dominated. First, in part because of Kissinger's connection with the effort, it was widely perceived that the report viewed the region entirely in terms of the East-West conflict and that it proposed a military solution to problems in the region.

Second, the surprising degree of consensus was partially hidden as public attention focused on two dissenting footnotes. One, supported by Cisneros and Diaz-Alejandro, stated clear opposition to continued U.S. support for guerrillas fighting the Nicaraguan government—a point on which the report had been vague. The other, signed by Kissinger and others, took issue with the report's conclusion that the United States should require improvements in human rights conditions before granting aid to El Salvador. Rogers said that these dissents were secondary to the broad agreement and should have been perceived that way.

"The extraordinary educational experience of the commission was not transferred to the American people at large in any respect," Rogers said.

He also blamed premature leaks about the commission's findings in major newspapers. Most stories appearing before the report was made public were "misinformed" in some aspect, Rogers said, and it was difficult to alter the impression they left. He cited a front-page Sunday New York Times story, written by Seymour M. Hersh, that concentrated almost exclusively on military aspects of the commission's work. Rogers said the story was based on a consultant's draft that already had been rejected.

Rogers also faulted himself and the commission for not working hard enough beforehand to obtain Latin American support for the findings. When the Latin Americans did react, they were luke-warm at best and appeared to be reacting to press accounts rather than the report itself.

Rogers described himself as "depressed and very disappointed" that the commission's consensus was not adopted by Congress or the public. "There was very little realization of the complex and comprehensive nature of what the commission proposed," he said. Rather than debate long-range strategy for the region, he said, Congress became entangled in the details of whether to send aid to El Salvador before or after the election there and whether it should be $90 million or $60 million. Discussion about the economic program presented in the report has been sparse.

But the commission's report has had some impact, even if it has not created a national consensus. "Some people felt a commission on Central America could end the debate. I never believed that. But it has changed the debate in some positive ways," said Rep. Michael D. Barnes, D-Md., a vocal critic of Administration policy in the region who served as a counselor to the commission but who has since distanced himself from some of its findings.

Barnes, who chairs the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs, said the report educated Americans about the region, emphasized economic difficulties at a time when most attention was being focused on military and political problems and made it clear that in El Salvador, there was significant right-wing violence. On this last point, he said, it was, in effect, a repudiation of the Administration's policies, which he said "downplayed" right-wing violence.

Over all, Barnes said, "The commission raised the level of the debate. We now have a more knowledgeable debate."

Administration officials put it somewhat differently. "If nothing else, it showed we were on the right track," said Otto J. Reich, the State Department's coordinator for public diplomacy for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Another official, deeply involved in shepherding the Administration's aid program through Congress, said, "It has provided an element of political cover for those that are going to vote in favor of the Administration."

Nevertheless, there has been some grumbling about both the report and the Administration's handling of legislation implementing its recommendations.

Sen. Christopher J. Dodd, D-Conn., a leading critic of Administration policy, for example, criticized the report because it gave little emphasis to the "Contadora" peace process, an effort by Mexico, Colombia, Venezuela and Panama to mediate the conflicts in Central America and arrange a regional peace agreement.

"Here we have 132 pages of how to bring peace and stability and hope to the Latin Americans in the 1980s," Dodd said during Senate debate in early April on the El Salvador emergency aid package. "We have the four most significant Latin American countries trying to work out an answer to that. We study the problem, and when we get through studying the problem, they find themselves in one paragraph of a 132-page report. We wonder why there is some degree of skepticism about our intention."

Richard E. Feinberg, who served in the State Department and on the National Security Council staff during the Carter Administration and now is a fellow at the Overseas Development Council, said the commission concentrated on "worst-case scenarios that are unlikely and that can be prevented with a reasonably sensible diplomacy. The report raises the specter of offensive Soviet military bases on the isthmus. Yet no evidence is presented that either the Soviet Union or Central American governments are considering such a move, or why it would be in their advantage to do so." Feinberg made the comments in a critique of the commission's report that was presented to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last February.

More often, criticism has concerned the Administration's implementation of the report. "They picked out what they wanted and ignored what they didn't want," said a Latin American specialist who worked with the commission in drafting the recommendations.

The notion of conditioning aid to El Salvador on human rights improvements and other reforms was strongly endorsed by the Kissinger commission, for example, but a prominent commission member has accused the Administration of ignoring the recommendation.

"One of the ways we were able to achieve a bipartisan consensus was through strong conditionality language, but they walked away from it," said former Democratic National Committee Chairman Strauss in an interview. As a result, he has refused to speak out in favor of the Administration's legislative proposal.

Strauss, Rogers and others have also criticized the Administration's handling of a proposal for a Central American Development Organization, which is a key, if largely unnoticed, element in the report. The organization, with members from all Central American nations and a U.S. chairman, was designed as a multilateral alternative to traditional government-to-government assistance programs, which many believed have not worked and lack credibility.

A fourth of U.S. aid recommended in the report was to be distributed through the or-

ganization, which would distribute it to countries in the region that had made commitments to improve social, political and economic conditions and to refrain from military attacks on neighbors.

But critics said the Administration weakened the proposal when it was submitted to Congress. According to Rogers, the designation of the administrator of the Agency for International Development as the chairman of the development organization was exactly what the commission did not want. "This transfers a multilateral effort into an aid mechanism. It can't carry out the goals set by the commission."

DIVIDED CONGRESS

The primary reason Reagan appointed the Kissinger commission, of course, was to try to create more support for his policies in Congress. Even though the commission strongly endorsed most of Reagan's policies, Congress is still divided on the issues, mostly along party lines.

There was a consensus of sorts in April when the Senate approved its emergency aid package to El Salvador, but those who voted against the Administration said the majority were merely afraid of being tagged with "losing" El Salvador. And whatever consensus existed was quickly overshadowed by the controversy over the mining of Nicaraguan harbors. Meanwhile, as Congress concentrates on national security questions, the commission's broader recommendations are much further back in the legislative pipeline.

The Administration packaged them in legislation entitled the Central American Democracy, Peace and Development Initiative Act of 1984, and the bill was referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee. There, stripped of the fancy title, the recommendations became part of those committee's annual efforts to produce foreign aid legislation.

Unfortunately for the commissions and the Administration, procedural difficulties and disputes within the House and Senate committees have made it impossible to pass foreign aid bills in the past two years, and this year may prove no different. Without the omnibus aid bills, portions of the commission's recommendations must be tacked on to appropriations bills and continuing resolutions.

Meanwhile, as debate in Congress focuses on U.S. military involvement in Central América, the commission's report has had little influence. Administration critics contend that this is because the commission did not say anything that was new.

Said a congressional staff member who specializes in Latin America and is critical of the Administration's policy: "If the purpose of the commission was to create a consensus behind the idea that we have interests in the region, we already knew that. It was just reaffirming a preexisting consensus."

The real debate, said the staffer, is not over goals but strategy: how the United States should respond to the continued presence of Marxist-Leninist governments in the region.

That view was echoed by Rep. Ed Zschau, R-Calif., a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee who recently visited El Salvador and who supports many of Reagan's policies. "I felt the Kissinger commission described the problems pretty accurately," Zschau said. "Where the debate focuses on is what to do to address them."

While it is true that the commission steered clear of policy details in an effort to avoid being seen as a shadow policy arm of the Administration, it did address several key strategy questions in broad terms. On El Salvador, for example, it came down strongly in favor of continued economic and military aid, contingent on human rights improvements there. And it concluded that it is in the interest of the United States to help El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica protect themselves from possible Nicaraguan aggression. The best way to do that, it said, is through a regional peace strategy, which it outlined in detail. Central to the commission's plan was the application of pressure on Nicaragua to end its support of the Salvadoran guerrillas and other leftist movements in the region.

NICARAGUA DEBATE

On the highly controversial question of U.S. military involvement in the region, and especially in support of the Nicaraguan rebels, known as "contras," the commission gave qualified support to the Administration's position.

Like the Administration, it viewed the political struggle in Nicaragua and El Salvador as a crisis that threatens U.S. national security. Moreover, it did not rule out the possibility of U.S. military activity in the region.

"Central America's crisis is our crisis," the report concluded on a note of unmistakable urgency. Like the Administration, a majority of commission members concluded that the existence of the Nicaraguan contras is having the positive effect of exerting pressure on the communist government there to negotiate an end to tensions in the region. On the question of using military force against Nicaragua, the report said: "Nicaragua must be aware that force remains an ultimate recourse."

But that urgency is not yet shared by Congress. Said Rep. Zschau, "The debate is hampered by what is reality" in Central America. "Some people in my district think the Salvadoran guerrillas represent the people," he said, adding that it isn't a view he shares.

Wright said that some members of Congress, unlike the Kissinger commission and the Administration, also sympathize with the Salvadoran rebels. "I don't think they consciously want to promote Marxism, but they romantically identify with the idea of a popular rebellion," he said.

But Wright said the Administration's support of the contras had hampered a consensus and noted that the commission did not conclude the United States had a right to disrupt the Sandinista regime.

Perhaps the most obvious reason for a lack of consensus is congressional distrust and suspicion about the ultimate aims and means of Administration policy. The Kissinger commission said use of U.S. troops should be regarded as a "last resort and only where there are clear dangers to U.S. security."

Judging from recent debate in Congress, Administration critics fear a major U.S. involvement is just around the corner. "We can see where this fellow is taking us," Sen. Joseph R. Biden Jr., D-Del., said recently. "I believe the day after he is reelected you will see American troops fighting in Latin America."

Both Administration officials and some members of the Kissinger commission argue that election-year politics and the closed minds of their critics are making matters worse in Congress.

Some Members of Congress worry that a position of strong support for Reagan's policies could be used against them politically. A way for them to put "political space" between themselves and the Administration, an Administration official said, is to put strong conditions on aid requests.

"The biggest problem is that individuals in Congress have very closed minds and fixed ideas" about Central America, said Walsh. He said some liberals are reluctant to accept the commission's conclusion that the United States must act to prevent the spread of leftist governments in the region.

A State Department official who specializes in Latin America, when asked why the Kissinger report had only minimal impact, said many of the views in Congress are based on a perception of the region that is several years old.

Referring to Robert White, a former U.S. ambassador to El Salvador who is critical of continued U.S. support for the country, the official said, "Bob White is describing a Central America that no longer exists."

He cited as evidence land reform, the elections this spring and in 1982 and a steady reduction in the number of political murders in the past few years.

Ironically, before the disclosures about the mining of Nicaraguan harbors caused a storm of protest, Congress appeared to be moving toward a consensus in support of emergency aid to El Salvador. Administration officials were predicting success in the House as well as the Senate. "When you get people aside," said an Administration lobbyist, "there is not a great deal of disagreement about the threat posed to the countries in the region by the spread of leftist governments."

But even before the mining was disclosed, this official conceded that support for the contras was highly controversial.

Also working in the Administration's favor, it seemed, were the Salvadoran elections in late March. Jose Napoleon Duarte, a moderate, led all other candidates. Duarte is now favored to win the presidency in a runoff later this spring against Roberto D'Aubuisson, a right-wing candidate who has been linked to the country's death squads.

Barnes believes Duarte will win and get broader support for his government. Duarte is well regarded by Congress and has pledged to open a dialogue with anti-government rebels, Barnes noted.

It is not clear whether the furor over Nicaragua will permanently negate that progress, or whether the Administration will be able to turn the debate back in the direction of El Salvador. But it unquestionably has lost ground.

[From The New Republic, May 7, 1984]

REMEMBER THE MINE

After the humiliation in Lebanon, the United States might at least have allowed a decent interval to pass before again making itself foolish in the eyes of the world. Yet we were back at it again with the Nicaraguan mining fiasco, a misadventure from its clumsy conception through its abrupt demise. And again, the display of incompetence was bipartisan, initiated by the Republican Administration and compounded by members of both parties in Congress. The C.I.A. apparently could not resist going beyond its role of providing assistance to anti-Sandinista rebel groups fighting in Nicaragua. It had to get its very own piece of the action, so it concocted schemes to involve itself directly in raiding a Nicaraguan port and then in laying mines in Nicaraguan harbors. The operations risked discovery, risked accusations that the United States was violating international law, risked arousing the indignation of countries whose shipping might be damaged. Yet the C.I.A. persuaded the President's national security adviser to walk its ideas into the Oval Office for approval, and he walked right out again with Mr. Reagan's O.K.

Congress's two intelligence oversight committees should have warned the Administration to drop its plans, but they didn't. Both were informed—in the case of the mining, the House's committee was told in January, the Senate's in March—but if the Members were listening to what they were being told, they did not focus on the implications of a direct C.I.A. operation. Senators Barry Goldwater and Daniel Patrick Moynihan protest that out of more than 130 pages of hearing transcript only two sentences referred to the mining, and did not mention the C.I.A.'s role. The Administration counters that its written submissions—as opposed to oral summaries—described and justified the operation in detail. If the C.I.A. was hiding, the Senate was not seeking. After Murphy's Law was fulfilled with its customary reliability in matters covert and American, Congress panicked—much as it did when the going got rough in Lebanon—and not only condemned the mining operation by lopsided margins in both Houses but also threatened to cut off funding for aid to the contras entirely. That move, if actually carried through when Congress returns from recess, would be at least as mindless as the mining itself.

We do not support aid to the contras with any relish. And in many respects we do not support the Reagan Administration's goals and methods in suplying aid. For example, the bulk of U.S. assistance goes to the rightist, Honduras-based Nicaraguan Democratic Force (F.D.N.), many of the field commanders of which were officers in Anastasio Somoza's brutal and justifiably detested National Guard. A far better prospect for winning the support of Nicaragua's people is the Democratic Revolutionary Alliance (ARDE) headed by the former anti-Somoza guerrilla leader Edén Pastora ("Comandante Cero"). Mr. Pastora's force has just captured a coastal town in southern Nicaragua, has been bolstered (according to news reports) by the defection of an entire battalion of Sandinista soldiers, and is planning to set up a government in exile. ARDE apparently does now receive C.I.A. help, but much less than the F.D.N.

The Administration's purposes in aiding the guerrilla groups are also suspect. ARDE has proposed a plan whereby antigovernment military activity would cease if the Sandinistas agree to hold fair elections this November—that is, if opposition candidates are guaranteed security from Sandinista toughs and the right to have their views heard free from censorship, and if the election is internationally supervised. The Reagan Administration has failed to endorse the ARDE proposal, leading to the suspicion that democracy in Nicaragua is not one of its primary goals. Indeed, there seems to be a split within the Administration over Nicaragua mush as there was in Lebanon. One group, said to include Secretary of State Shultz, believes (sensibly, in our view) that aid to the contras should be designed to pressure Nicaragua into halting subversive activity against El Salvador and into entering serious peace negotiations with its neighbors. Another school of thought within the Administration—reportedly led by Secretary of Defense Weinberger and the C.I.A. director, William Casey—regards the very existence of a leftist Nicaragua as an intolerable menace to vital interests of the United States, and wants it expunged. In other words, there is agreement on means but not on ends. The result is a confusion of policy, as the covert war goes forward without any clear idea of what it is meant to accomplish. The immediate danger is that the Administration will fail to press convincingly for negotiations and peace, will arouse fears at home and abroad that the United States intends to send American troops into the region, and will encourage Congress to force an end to American activities in Central America. That could lead to an unpalatable choice between a regional Communist victory and the introduction of American troops.

Aiding the contras is not, by itself, a policy. But helping rebels, especially democratic rebels, with a view toward negotiations leading to some sort of regional settlement, is a policy, and a far better one than either letting the Sandinistas spread revolution or sending in U.S. troops. Could the Sandinista regime be won over with kindness, as all three Democratic Presidential candidates seem to propose? Something like that was tried by the Carter Administration after the new regime took power, and it didn't work. According to Alfonso Robelo Callejas, once a Somoza political prisoner, later a member of the Sandinistas' revolutionary junta, and now political director of ARDE, "It's possible that the United States pushed Castro into the arms of the Soviet Union, but that's not the case with the Sandinistas. The Carter Administration did everything possible to be friendly. It gave us $120 million in aid. It wanted to send a Peace Corps delegation until it was refused. On the other side, the Sandinistas had a secret defense agreement with Cuba from the beginning. That was the original foreign intervention. No government office when I was there was without a Cuban officer. The Cuban Ambassador sat at the table with the junta when it made its decisions."

Not much change in that department. According to both Administration and Congressional sources, there are now about eight thousand Cubans in Nicaragua, including three thousand military advisers installed in the Sandinista army of seventy-five thousand men, which is the largest army in Central America. From the outset the Sandinista regime has been dedicated to a "revolution without frontiers" in Central America, and has tried to destabilize not only El Salvador but also democratic Costa Rica. The Reagan Administration has failed to convince the American people and Congress with its evidence of Nicaragua's subversive activities, but a respected New York Times correspondent, Stephen Kinzer, reported on April 10 that European and Latin American diplomats based in Managua—including some whose governments have been critical of U.S. policy—now share the view that Nicaragua does indeed send military supplies to left-wing insurgents in El Salvador and provides training bases for them.

We believe that American policy toward Nicaragua must be one of both pressure and persuasion. To the extent that U.S.-aided forces tie down Nicaraguan forces and win popular support, the Sandinista regime will have to concern itself with its own security and cannot concentrate on making mischief across its borders. At the same time, the United States should make it clear that its goal is negotiation and political compromise both within Nicaragua and among the nations of Central America.

The trouble with the C.I.A.'s mining harbors aiding ex-Somocistas, and ignoring opportunities for negotiation is that they undermine America's credibility as a respecter of international law, a promoter of democracy, and a partner in peacemaking. However, for Congress to cut off aid to the contras in reaction to the mining fiasco also would damage America's credibility. It would mean—once again—that the United States had embarked on a policy that it would not follow through on, in the process encouraging people to fight for the freedom of their country and then abandoning them. The collapse of American policy in Lebanon was a nasty blow to American credibility. Either a Marxist-Leninist takeover of Central America or an American invasion would be far worse.

TRIBUTE TO ANSEL ADAMS

Mr. CRANSTON. Mr. President, I pay tribute today to Ansel Adams—my friend, my colleague in addressing the great environmental issues of our times, and the greatest photographer of the American West that ever lived. Ansel Adams died this week. But as it can be said of all great lives, Ansel Adams has left America and the world, with a legacy of camera art that has enriched us beyond words. Ansel Adams saw the West not only with his eyes, but with his soul. In the mountains, rivers, and valleys of the West he saw poetry, he saw truth, he saw wisdom, he saw grace. To Ansel, the terrain so gorgeously caught by his lens was not just Earth and sky, but spirit and vision. He saw wilderness as mataphor for the very fabric of our lives—mirroring, in our regard for it.

For over 50 years Ansel Adams traveled to every part of America and photographed the extraordinary beauty of our land, from Alaska to the Appalachians, from the Maine coast to California's Yosemite. I admired the work of Ansel Adams for many years. But I only got to know him personally in 1980 when we worked together on legislation to protect the Big Sur coast of California. At that time, Ansel was nearly 78 years old. He had been an ardent conservationist for more than 60 years. But in spite of his age, he was still one of the most forceful spokesmen for preservation of the natural environment I have every met. He was still meeting new challenges, fighting for Big Sur, working to rid the Interior Department of James Watt.

Ansel Adams will be remembered for his life, and his art, and there was little difference in how he approached each. In his concern for preservation of America's wilderness, he mirrored his deep belief that we treat our physical setting not much different from how we treat our human family as a whole.

Ansel Adams cared deeply about the environment. He cared deeply about people. I and millions of Americans like me cared deeply about him and will deeply miss him.

IDA NUDEL'S BIRTHDAY

Mr. PERCY. Mr. President, tomorrow is the 53d birthday of Ida Nudel, a woman well known to most of my Senate colleagues for her courage and devotion in assisting Soviet Jewish prisoners of conscience and their families.

In 1978 Ida herself was convicted of alleged hooliganism for having placed on her balcony a sign reading "KGB, Let Me Go." She was sentenced to 4 years of internal exile in Siberia. Upon