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## United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

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May 21, 1984

Harold Weisberg  
7627 Old Receiver Road  
Frederick, Maryland 21701

Dear Harry:

Just a brief note to thank you for your continuing correspondence on Central America.

I'm glad that we're in general agreement on our hopes for the future of Central America. As I've said previously, the United States must support efforts to encourage economic reforms and to democratize the Central American political process.

On one count, however, I think that your criticism of me is unjustified. You state that I look at Central America from a North American viewpoint, and not that of a Central American. I think that that is only natural, as I am proud to be both a Minnesotan and an American. As a result, my view of the world has been influenced by the values which my family instilled in me and by the experiences which I have had.

I understand your views on U.S. policies towards Nicaragua, but I differ in my assessment of American responsibility for the radicalization of that unfortunate country. I think that it's important to remember that the United States was the single largest donor of foreign aid to the Sandinista government during the 1979 to 1981 period, as our government contributed over \$125 million to Nicaragua. Despite this assistance, the Sandinistas tightened their control on most facets of life in Nicaragua, reduced individual freedoms, militarized Nicaraguan society, strengthened political and military ties with the Soviet Union and Cuba, and began to encourage destabilization activities in neighboring countries. I don't believe that a return to the assistance policies of 1979-81 would have the desired effect of moderating the Sandinistas' behavior.

Thanks again for your views, Harry. Please stay in touch.

Sincerely,



Dave Durenberger  
United States Senator

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