

Mr. McCURDY of Oklahoma

[Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks.]

Mr. Chairman, I offer this amendment on behalf of myself, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. COOPER, Mr. MacKAY, Mr. BUSTAMANTE, Mr. SPRATT, Mr. CHAPMAN, and Mr. RAY. It represents the efforts of a number of Members on both sides of the aisle who have worked hard over the past several months to develop a bipartisan policy with respect to Central America. The amendment is based on the following propositions:

First, that the Sandinista government is undemocratic and repressive. To the extent that they export revolution and provide bases for Soviet and Cuban military operations, they pose a security threat to their neighbors and to the United States.

Second, the contras have not become a unified and credible democratic alternative to the Sandinistas. They have no political identity in Nicaragua and no meaningful contact with the internal opposition. Nor are they an effective fighting force.

Third, support for the contras must be seen as an instru-

ment -- not a goal -- of United States policy.

Fourth, if we are to achieve a negotiated solution to the conflict, there must be clear incentives for both sides to negotiate.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the amendment is based on the proposition that poverty and social injustice are, in the long run, the most serious threat to hemispheric security. There is no sense in setting the stage for democracy in the region if we cannot produce an alternative to generations of oppression.

The amendment is framed as an amendment to the text of Senate Joint Resolution 283, and I will try to highlight the major differences.

It provides for serious bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Government of Nicaragua, provided only that a cease-fire is established before we begin such negotiations. As you know, Mr. Chairman, the President has already agreed that he would wait for at least 90 days before seeking military assistance, in order to pursue regional peace negotiations. We see no reason why the United States should not use this time to also pursue bilateral talks if a cease-fire is in place. Daniel Ortega has effectively used the lack of such talks as an excuse for dragging his feet on regional negotiations, and it seems to us that we should call his hand

once and for all on this point.

The amendment provides, in effect, that the \$30 million provided in the Senate resolution can be used at any time during the effective period -- until September 30, 1987 -- for purposes authorized by current law and for training. It deletes the Senate provision that would allow the use of such funds for "equipment and supplies necessary for defense against air attacks". This deletion is one of the two main objections to the amendment that have been expressed by Members on the other side of the aisle.

There are many reasons why we should not begin providing such weapons during the period when we hope to pursue serious negotiations. They have been well stated by the chairman of the Intelligence committee in the other body:

We do not know what weapons we are authorizing. We do not know whether they are missiles. We do not know whether they are aircraft guns. We do not know what the restrictions are on their use inside Honduras...We do not know whether there are any restrictions on their use inside Nicaragua. Are they portable infantry weapons? If so, are they going to be carried on offensive operations? If they are going to be carried on offensive operations, how can we call them defensive weaponry?



In addition, Mr. Chairman, in a recent telephone conversation with President Duarte, I expressed my particular concern that the introduction of such weapons at this time would undoubtedly result in the provision of SA-7's to the Salvadoran insurgents. I might also add that HIND helicopters were not used in the recent cross-border raid into Honduras.

The key section of the amendment deals with the additional funds provided in the Senate resolution -- \$70 million that could be used for lethal military equipment. Under the amendment, none of these funds could be used before July 28. On or after that date, the additional funds could be only if two events occur:

First, the President must report to the Congress that the Central American countries have not concluded a Contadora agreement; that Nicaragua is not engaged in a serious dialogue with representatives of the opposition; and that there is no reasonable prospect for reaching an agreement without additional assistance to the resistance.

Second, the Congress must enact a joint resolution approving the use of such funds. If such a resolution is enacted, \$25 million of the additional assistance provided in the Senate resolution would be available immediately, and

\$15 million after each subsequent 90-day report from the President.

Unless and until both of these events occur -- Presidential certification and a Congressional vote of approval -- the additional assistance provided in the Senate resolution remains completely "fenced".

This second vote of approval is the other principal objection that has been made against the amendment by the distinguished Assistant Minority Leader and some of his colleagues. The amendment, they say, would entail "yet another contra aid debate".

Let's look at the facts. The Senate resolution, which is being offered by the distinguished Minority Leader, contains the same expedited procedure for a vote of disapproval as the amendment provides for a vote of approval. So we will be debating this issue and voting "yet again" in any event. The difference is that under the amendment the vote is a meaningful one. If the President determines, at any time after the 90-day negotiating period he has already agreed to, that he must request lethal military aid, he will be asking for a commitment from this Congress that will extend far beyond \$70 million and the end of the next fiscal year.

The amendment says, in effect, that this kind of commitment

should be undertaken only with the support of a majority in both houses of the Congress. The decision should not be made by default. It should not be left up to 34 members of the other body. If, after 90 days and the report of the bipartisan monitoring commission, the President cannot muster a simple majority in the Congress to support his request for lethal military aid, then it seems to me that we should not undertake this kind of commitment. Conversely, if majorities in both houses vote to support his request, it seems to me that we will have a lot stronger and more sustainable policy than we have right now.

I should add that even if the Congress had approved the President's original request to provide immediate military aid, there is no question that we would be voting again. We would be voting on amendments in four committees and on the floor to every remotely germane bill and appropriations measure that came along. It is exactly this scenario that my colleagues and I have labored to prevent.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, none of the funds provided in the Senate resolution could be used for any purpose on or after July 28 unless the President reports to the Congress that certain conditions have been met by the groups receiving assistance. These include agreement on a plan for attaining democracy in Nicaragua, which must also take into account the special needs of the Indian population; training in human rights



and steps to prevent abuses; and restructuring of UNO -- the United Nicaraguan Opposition -- to ensure full subordination of military commanders to the political leadership.

This last item -- so-called "UNO reform" -- is a key issue, and one we have been pressing the Administration on in private for some time now. So far we have received reams of paper from State Department printing presses, but almost nothing in the way of real change, as evidenced on the front page of today's Washington Post. We believe the language of the amendment on this point is far preferable to the language in the Senate resolution, which requires only that groups receiving assistance "have agreed to and are beginning to implement" much milder reforms, and which does not mention UNO by name. I should add that the bipartisan monitoring commission must report to the Congress by July 21 on whether the mandated reforms have been carried out, and progress or lack thereof will clearly be a factor in the outcome of any second vote.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, the amendment adds two new sections. The first provides that the Secretary of State or his designee shall be responsible for coordinating and supervising all U.S. government activities under the resolution. The second provides that the Administration shall develop, by May 31, a plan for full funding of the Kissinger Commission proposals for aiding the Central American democracies.

Mr. Chairman, those of us who have worked on this amendment do not claim that it is perfect. We do believe it is better than any of the alternatives that have been presented. We ask only that each Member look at this as an honest effort to address key concerns in a bipartisan way. The issue is not what passes or fails to pass on this floor today. It's not who "wins" or "loses". The issue is whether we can put together a credible policy that the American people can understand and support. Perhaps that is impossible. But at least, I think, we should try.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I reserve the balance of my time.