

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 21, 1984

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In response to your letter of November 16, I want you to know that I, too, believe that an escalation of tension serves no one's interest and that such an escalation, if continued, would inevitably affect relations between our two countries.

Our policy toward Nicaragua is clear. We will not sit by idly while the Sandinista regime, aided by the Soviet Union, Cuba, and other states which maintain close relations with your country, provides materials and other support to insurgent and terrorist groups in the region. Neither can we and other countries whose interests are affected fail to be concerned by the massive and destabilizing amount of weaponry which Nicaragua itself has acquired or by the presence of large numbers of foreign military advisors. It is particularly clear that recent arms shipments to Nicaragua have exacerbated an already tense situation. The supply of advanced weaponry or large quantities of weapons gives Nicaragua a substantial offensive potential against its neighbors and constitutes a threat to peace in the area.

A subject of grave concern to us in recent weeks has, of course, been the question of combat aircraft for Nicaragua. As we have informed the Soviet Union on several occasions, the acquisition by Nicaragua of jet fighter aircraft would be unacceptable to the United States. I was therefore pleased to see from your letter that malicious designs involving shipment of Soviet combat aircraft to Nicaragua are not part of Soviet policy, and welcome this clarification as a useful step forward in our relations.

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NLS F99-051 #287

BY amf, NARA, DATE 10/16/00

I agree with you that the Nicaraguan people, as all people, must be given the opportunity to live in peace and exercise their inalienable rights. The Sandinista junta, therefore, owes it to its citizens and to the international community to fulfill the commitments which it undertook in its July 12, 1979, statement to the Organization of American States. It is unrealistic to expect other interested states to have full confidence in Nicaragua's intentions until those commitments are observed.

I wish to reaffirm to you my strong conviction that the Nicaragua problem should be resolved in the context of a negotiated settlement. The Contadora group of nations has defined the problems of the region and has made substantial progress in developing a treaty to meet these concerns. I applaud these efforts and give them my unqualified support. In the period ahead, we should know whether they will succeed. Much will depend on Nicaragua's willingness to moderate its behavior of the past five years. I am sure that you join me in the hope that the Contadora effort will bear fruit. It is clearly in both our interests to see reduction, rather than escalation of tensions in Central America.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald Reagan".

His Excellency
Konstantin Ustinovich Chernenko
Chairman of the Presidium of the
Supreme Soviet of the Union of
Soviet Socialist Republics
Moscow