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THE CENTRAL AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE LEADERS SEMINAR

STAGE I

A REPORT TO THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

submitted by

The Center For Democracy

Boston University

January 16, 1987

CENTRAL AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE LEADERS SEMINAR

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BELIZE

Basilio Ah, House of Representatives, United Democratic Party (UDP)

Florencio Marin, House of Representatives, Leader of the Opposition, Peoples United Party (PUP)

Fred Martinez, Vice President of the Senate, United Democratic Party (UDP)

Asterio Ortega, House of Representatives, United Democratic Party (UDP)

COSTA RICA

Alfonso Estevanovich, Deputy, National Liberation Party (PLN)

Rodolfo Mendez Mata, Deputy, United Social Christian Party (UNIDAD)

Oscar Saborio, Deputy, United Social Christian Party (UNIDAD)

Jose Luis Valenciano, Deputy, National Liberation Party (PLN)

EL SALVADOR

Hugo Carillo, First Vice President of the Assembly; Chairman, Foreign Relations Committee; Secretary General, National Conciliation Party (PCN)

Manuel Martir Noguera, Chairman, Legislative and Constitutional Affairs Committee; Christian Democratic Party (PDC)

Mauricio Zablah, Interlocutor, Interior and Public Works Committee; National Republican Alliance (ARENA)

Manuel de Jesus Zapeda Godinez, Interlocutor, "Gracias y Excusa" Committee; Christian Democratic Party (PDC)

GUATEMALA

Roberto Alejos Cambara, Secretary, Governing Council; Independent

Alfonso Alonso Barillas, First Vice President of the Congress; Christian Democratic Party (PDC)

Victor Hugo Godoy, Deputy, Revolutionary Party (PR)

Edmund Mulet, Deputy, Union of the National Center (UCN)

HONDURAS

Evenor Bonilla Medrano, Deputy, Liberal Party (PL)

Mauricio Calix Bardale, Deputy, National Party, (PN)

Javier Moncada, Chairman, Liberal Party Caucus; Liberal Party (PL)

Emilio Williams Agasse, Deputy, National Party (PN)

CENTRAL AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE LEADERS SEMINAR
CENTER FOR DEMOCRACY STAFF

Professor Allen Weinstein, President

Caleb McCarry, Director, International Programs

Alison Mayes, Executive Assistant to the President

Maria McFadden, Publications Director

Paul Nathanson, Assistant to the Director of International Programs

Joanne Cicala, Assistant to the President

Participating Members of the Board of Directors

Peter G. Kelly, Chairman

Frank J. Fahrenkopf, Jr., Vice Chairman

Dr. John R. Silber

Representative Dante B. Fascell

Representative Robert J. Lagomarsino

Thomas M. Gaubert

F. Clifton White

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

(Washington, D.C.)

Sunday, December 7, 1986

7:00 p.m. Reception, Madison Hotel

Greetings to the delegation from Professor Allen Weinstein, President, The Center for Democracy; Mr. Thomas Gaubert, on behalf of the Center Board of Directors; and, Mr. Philip Duncan, Administrative Assistant to House Speaker Jim Wright, on behalf of the Speaker

Monday, December 8, 1986

8:45 a.m. U.S. Capitol

Greetings from the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives, the Honorable Jack Russ. Group escorted onto House Floor by Sergeant at Arms Russ; observation of the Democratic Caucus voting for officers; tour of the Capitol

11:30 a.m. Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2200

Presentation by Congressional Budget Office Deputy Director Ned Gramlich; questions and answers

12:30 p.m. Luncheon, U.S. Senate Dining Room

Greetings from Republican Majority Leader Robert Dole; President Pro Tempore of the Senate Strom Thurmond; Senator Jay Rockefeller, and Senator Albert Gore; also by Center Board members Peter G. Kelly (Chairman) and F. Clifton White.

3:30 p.m. Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2200

Exchange with the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, the Honorable Dan Rostenkowski; presentation by Committee Chief Counsel Joseph K. Dowley; questions and answers

4:30 p.m. U.S. Capitol, Room 148

Meeting with the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, The Honorable Jim Wright

7:00 p.m. Sheraton Grand Hotel

Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee reception (Speaker Wright greeted the Central American delegation, speaking in Spanish and English to over 1,500 guests)

Tuesday, December 9, 1986

- 8:30 a.m. Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2250
Meeting with members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee the Honorable Benjamin Gilman and the Honorable Robert Lagomarsino, also with the Honorable Bob Livingston
- 10:30 a.m. Library of Congress, Thomas Jefferson Building
Tour of the Library
- 11:30 a.m. Congressional Research Service, James Madison Building
Greetings from CRS Director Joseph Ross; presentations on CRS services by staff
- 2:30 p.m. Old Executive Office Building, Indian Treaty Room
Briefings by Mr. Raymond Burkhardt and Mr. Walter Raymond, Special Assistants to the President for National Security Affairs; open exchange of views

(Boston, Massachusetts)

Wednesday, December 10, 1986

- 8:45 a.m. Embassy Suites Hotel
Presentation by Stephen Lakis (President, State Legislative Leaders Foundation) on operation and role of state legislatures
- 11:30 a.m. Luncheon, Bank of Boston
Greetings from William Brown, Chairman of the Board, Bank of Boston. Presentations by: Frank Aldrich, Senior Vice President and Latin America Division Head; John Devine, Deputy Group Executive, International Banking Group; James Thornblade, Senior International Economist
- 2:00 p.m. Massachusetts State House, Senate Chamber
Exchange with the Honorable William Bulger, President, Massachusetts State Senate. Presentations by Chief Clerk Edward O'Neil and Second Assistant Clerk Douglas Boyer; questions and answers
- 7:00 p.m. Reception and dinner, Anthony's Pier 4 Restaurant
Speaker: the Honorable William Bulger. Also present: Senator Bill Kirby; Professor Shane Hunt, Center for Latin American Development Studies (Boston University), and other guests

Thursday, December 11, 1986

- 10:00 a.m. Massachusetts State House, Governor's Office
Presentations by Deputy Directors Ben Concannon and John Judge of Governor Dukakis' Office of Economic Development; questions and answers
- 11:00 a.m. Massachusetts State House, Senator McGovern's Office
Briefing by Massachusetts Deputy Budget Director Bruce Bullen
- 12:00 p.m. Massachusetts State House, Senator McGovern's Office
Dialogue with Senate Ways and Means Committee Chairwoman Patricia McGovern
- 1:30 p.m. Massachusetts State House, Reference Library
Briefing by Legislative Reference Librarian Mary McLellan
- 2:45 p.m. Massachusetts State House, Computer Center
Briefing by Computer Center Director Henry Szymura

[The delegation's plane departing Boston was held on the ground, with passengers aboard, for 5 hours due to inclement weather and an FAA equipment failure. Actual check-in time at the Holiday Inn Town Square in Saint Paul was after 2:00 a.m. As a result, morning meetings scheduled for Saint Paul were moved to the afternoon of Friday, December 12.]

Friday, December 12, 1986

12:15 p.m. Luncheon, Saint Paul Hotel

Presentations by John Post, Director of Senate Research and Michael Finn, Director of House Majority Research; Greetings from Kathleen Foley, Chief of Staff to Senate President Jerome Hughes. Questions and answers

2:00 p.m. State Office Building, Reviser's Office

Presentation by Scott Cross, Director, Minnesota State Reviser's Office. Demonstration of state computer system. Questions and answers

3:00 p.m. Minnesota State House, Senate Hearing Room

Meeting with the President of the Minnesota State Senate, the Honorable Jerome Hughes and the Majority Leader of the Senate, the Honorable Roger Moe. (Briefing on state political procedures and discussion of Central American issues)

4:30 p.m. State Capitol

Informal tour

6:30 p.m. Holiday Inn Town Square

Final meeting and review of the week by the delegation and Center staff. Planning of Stage II of the Seminar for September 1987. Discussion of U.S.-Central American legislative forum planned for the spring of 1987. Moderated by Professor Allen Weinstein, President of the Center.

Saturday, December 13, 1986

Honduran and Salvadoran delegations depart Saint Paul for home countries. Belizean, Costa Rican, and Guatemalan delegations hold informal meetings with Center staff. Free time.

Sunday, December 14, 1986

Belizean, Costa Rican, and Guatemalan delegations depart Saint Paul for home countries.

THE CENTRAL AMERICAN LEGISLATIVE LEADERS SEMINARSTAGE I

Introduction

Stage I of the Central American Legislative Leaders Seminar was sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development and Boston University, and was organized by The Center for Democracy.

Stage I of the Seminar was designed to bring a total of twenty democratically-elected legislators, representing majority and principal minority parties, from the republics of Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to the United States to observe legislative government at the national level in Washington, D.C. and at the state level in Boston, Massachusetts and Saint Paul, Minnesota*.

The Seminar was intended to coincide with ongoing efforts by Central American legislators to strengthen their parliaments technically and administratively. Therefore, as indicated in the schedule of meetings, presentations on computer technology, library systems, staff and legislative structures--both federal and state--were programmed. The Seminar also aimed at facilitating mutual exchange and dialogue between the Central American legislators and American legislators at the national and state levels, thereby

encouraging greater interest in and bipartisan support for Central America's parliaments by the Congress and state legislatures. Finally, the Seminar was designed to maximize opportunities for informal dialogue among the Central American legislators themselves, who only infrequently meet with their counterparts elsewhere in the region.

Stage I of the Seminar will be followed by Stage II, to be held in the Western European countries of Spain and France. The goals of Stage II will parallel those described for Stage I.

Assessment of Logistics

(Air Transportation)

The provision of airline tickets to the participating legislators (hereinafter participants) was handled as follows: tickets were issued in Boston by Garber Executive Travel, then sent via DHL international air service to the USAID missions in each participating country. Delivery was scheduled for Friday, December 5, 1986. The DHL packages arrived as scheduled in San Jose, Costa Rica and Belize City, Belize. The package to Guatemala City, Guatemala arrived on December 6, and the packages to Tegucigalpa, Honduras and San Salvador, El Salvador did not arrive as scheduled. The delay in delivery to Guatemala City and non delivery to Tegucigalpa and San Salvador were caused by a mechanical failure experienced by DHL in Central America (Please see attached letter from DHL). As a result

of the delays and non deliveries, the Center prepaid tickets for the Salvadoran and Honduran participants. These tickets were collected by the participants and used to travel to Miami Florida, where two Center representatives were present to meet them. AID personnel were kept fully informed on the necessary adjustments of each stage of the process. Participants reached Washington in a comfortable and friendly mood generally despite the adjustments required for some by DHL mishap. They expressed their appreciation for the Center's and AID's cooperation and successful effort to deal with the emergency.

Along with the briefing materials distributed to participants upon their arrival were letters of welcome from President Ronald Reagan and Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts. The letters had been requested, after describing the participants and their Seminar schedule, by The Center for Democracy. (See Appendix for the Reagan and Dukakis letters.)

During the U.S. portion of the program, air transportation proceeded as scheduled, with the exception of weather induced delays in Washington and Boston. The Center experienced difficulty with reservations for those participants traveling on Taca International Airlines. Apparently, the holiday season demand for reservations lead to Taca cancelling reservations, including those of some

(Lodging/per diem)

Lodging was prearranged, within per diem guidelines, for the participants in Washington, D.C., Boston, Massachusetts, and Saint Paul Minnesota. Each participant was provided a single occupancy room in each city. The basic cost of the room was paid for in advance from funds budgeted for per diem. The balance of budgeted per diem was given to the participants in cash at the beginning of the seminar. Participants paid for incidental expenses, above and beyond

basic room costs, and provided for meals not covered by Center sponsored functions out of these funds. No problems were observed with this arrangement, and the money provided to the participants for incidental expenses proved adequate.

(Interpreting)

The Center provided a total of four interpreters (two simultaneous and two escort) and one technician during the entire seminar. The interpreters travelled with the participants at all times. The majority of formal meetings and dialogues were staffed by the simultaneous interpreters and technician, reinforcing informal exchanges. Less informal meetings, presentations, and tours were alternately staffed by the escort and simultaneous interpreters using consecutive interpreting. The interpreting service was adequate and, particularly in the case of simultaneously interpreted sessions using remote equipment, enhanced the meetings and presentations.

(Ground Transportation)

Vans for ground transportation was provided in all three cities. With the exception of minor delays on two occasions, no major problems were encountered.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

As noted in the Introduction, the Seminar was designed to achieve several interrelated purposes: to provide participants with technical information and contacts of use in strengthening the operation of their parliaments, to facilitate contacts with legislators and encourage stronger bipartisan support for the democratic legislative process in Central America, and to promote informal dialogue among the Central American legislators themselves.

The subsections below assess the Seminar's effectiveness in meeting these goals.

Technical Elements

The presentations and meetings incorporated into the Seminar's schedule exposed participants to a range of technical support systems in the United States Congress and at the state houses in Massachusetts and Minnesota.

Although the participants were interested in the various technical presentations on library and computer systems, there was general agreement among participants that most were unprepared by their own national experiences and educational backgrounds to understand and digest the explicitly technical information provided in the briefings. Nonetheless, many participants indicated appreciatively their recognition that the intent of the technical meetings was precisely to familiarize them with modern, state-of-the-art systems for providing support services to parliaments and individual legislators.

(Library & Computer Systems)

At the United States Congress, the participants received a thorough briefing on the operation of the Library of Congress and the Congressional Research Service. This included a tour of the Library of Congress' facilities and a presentation on research services and computer systems available to members of Congress. At the Massachusetts State House, the participants were also given general briefings on and tours of the library and computer systems. At the Minnesota State House, the participants met at length with the director of the Reviser's Office for a presentation on and demonstration of the computerization of legislative drafting and revision. (The Costa Rican delegation expressed an interest in the possibility of adapting a variant of this system to their parliament.)

Of the meetings and presentations in the three capitols, this meeting with the Minnesota Reviser's Office was the most comprehensive and of the greatest interest to the participants. During that presentation, Stephen Cross, the state reviser, described the process by which all legislation is edited and modified by lawyers using computer terminals. The Minnesota State House incrementally installed computer equipment for revising legislation over a period of ten years. The participants generally agreed that the presentation by the Minnesota Reviser's Office was more comprehensive and less laden with technical jargon than those received in Washington and Boston. This put the installation and operation of such a computer system into perspective for the participants. We commend the Minnesota Reviser's office as a stop over for visiting legislative groups from other parts of the world as well.

(Budget & Finance & Staff Structures)

In Washington, Boston, and Minnesota, the participants received briefings on budgetary, financial, general support staff mechanisms, and organizational structures.

In Washington, the participants met with staff members of the Congressional Budget Office and the House Ways and Means Committee. The presentation by Deputy Director Ned Gramlich of the Congressional Budget Office covered the role of this nonpartisan arm of Congress serving both houses with economic information independent of budgetary submissions from the Executive branch. Because of its

nonpartisan nature, the CBO presentation served to highlight an example of the legislative branch strengthening its role in the governing process. The House Ways and Means Committee presentation was led by Chief Counsel Joseph K. Dowley. This presentation centered on issues of taxation, social services and trade. The discussion prompted a series of questions and answers, particularly on trade and foreign aid issues. Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski spoke to the group and remained for almost the entire discussion, responding to questions from the participants.

In Boston, the program began with a presentation on the operations of U.S. state legislatures by Mr. Stephen Lakis, president of the State Legislative Leaders Foundation. This presentation gave the participants general background on the role of state legislatures in our federal system. The participants agreed that this briefing was extremely useful prior to examining the state legislatures in Massachusetts and Minnesota.

The participants received background briefings on the structure of the Massachusetts State House by Chief Clerk of the Senate Edward O'Neill and Second Assistant Clerk Douglas Boyer. The presentation covered administrative aspects of State House operations, including committee and other legislative structures. The participants also met with Senator Patricia McGovern, chairwoman of the Ways and Means Committee, and Deputy Massachusetts Budget Director Bruce Bullen. This valuable presentation and discussion drew parallels between the budget structure of the Central American legislatures and that of the Massachusetts state government.

The Boston schedule included two meetings that were dedicated entirely to a discussion of regional economic issues, both Central American and of New England. The Bank of Boston hosted a luncheon for the participants at which executives of the bank described the role of banking in the economic expansion and recovery created in Massachusetts by high technology industries. The exchanges included discussion of how this economic plan might be applied to developing countries, and, especially, to the Central American situation. Among the elements discussed were constructive government support for private sector initiatives through favorable tax and tariff regulations, and programs by the banking community to support small and medium sized enterprises and industries. The executives of the bank distributed materials outlining the cooperative efforts undertaken by the state government, banking industry, and private sector investors ranging from small businesses to multinational corporations to create a favorable investment climate in Massachusetts.

The second meeting on economic issues was hosted by the deputy directors of Governor Michael Dukakis's Office of Economic Development. The presentations and discussions echoed those held at the Bank of Boston and outlined the Governor's policies and legislative initiatives directed at strengthening the state economy through greater investment and economic growth.

In Saint Paul, the participants were briefed on support mechanisms in the State House by John Post, the director of Senate Research, and Michael Finn, the director of House Caucus Research. The presentations focused on both nonpartisan professional and partisan political support available to Minnesota State legislators. Mr. Post's presentation focused on the nonpartisan informational services rendered by his office to individual legislators drafting bills and responding to constituent requests. Mr. Finn's presentation, however, explained that his office, supported by general state funds, seeks, in this case, to publicize and advance the work of Democratic party members of the legislature for partisan purposes. A similar office works for Republican members of the legislature. Both Mr. Finn and Mr. Post responded to questions on the economic and demographic makeup of the state and how these factors affect their work.

Meetings and Dialogues

The participants held a series of meetings and dialogues with congressional leaders, administration officials, state leaders, and others during the course of the Seminar. The individuals with whom the participants met are listed along with particulars from some of the exchanges.

There was near unanimous agreement among the participants that the meetings involving direct contact with elected legislators were personally of greater interest and value than the technical meetings

included in the schedule. The participants understood the importance of the technical portions of the schedule, but felt that meetings with congressmen and government officials were of more use to them as politicians and elected representatives.

(Washington, D.C.)

In Washington, the participants met and/or held exchanges with: House Speaker-designate Jim Wright [D-TX]; House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski [D-IL]; Representative Robert J. Lagomarsino [R-CA] (Ranking Minority Member, House Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere Affairs); Representative Benjamin Gilman [R-NY] (Ranking Minority Member, Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse & Control); Representative Bob Livingston [R-LA]; Senate Majority Leader Robert Dole [R-KS]; Senate President Pro Tempore Strom Thurmond [R-SC]; Senator Albert Gore [D-TN]; Senator John D. Rockefeller, IV [D-WV]; Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives Jack Russ; Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Raymond Burkhardt; Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs Walter Raymond.

The participants met with Speaker-designate Jim Wright on Monday, December 7 (the day of his election to the Speakership by the House Democratic Caucus). Speaker Wright spoke with the delegation in Spanish for thirty minutes in his office. They exchanged views on United States-Central American relations and U.S. support for demarcation in the region. By mutual agreement, the delegates

proposed to Speaker Wright that a delegation of U.S. congressmen visit one Central American capital for an informal legislative meeting with leaders from the five democratically-elected parliaments represented in the Center for Democracy delegation. Speaker Wright immediately agreed to the suggestion. (The Center is currently working with the Speaker's staff to follow-up on the exchange and plan for the meeting). Later that evening, the participants attended the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee reception at the invitation of Majority Whip-designate Tony Coelho [D-CA] where they met informally with several Democratic members of Congress not listed above. Speaker Wright also dedicated the main part of his speech at the reception to the Central American congressmen, congratulating and encouraging them in their efforts to build and defend democracy in the region.

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Dan Rostenkowski spoke with the participants during the presentation on the Committee's work made by its chief counsel, Joseph K. Dowley. The exchange centered on the work of the committee.

On the morning of December 9, the participants met with Congressmen Benjamin Gilman Robert J. Lagomarsino, and Bob Livingston. The breakfast meeting was to have been hosted by House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Dante B. Fascell [D-FL]. Chairman Fascell was chairing an emergency meeting of the full committee at that time and therefore unable to attend the meeting. The Republican congressmen discussed foreign policy issues with the participants

including approaches to protecting democratic institutions in Central America from the threat posed by the Nicaraguan government, the external debt crisis, U.S. economic assistance to the region, and narcotics enforcement problems. The participants also raised the U.S.-Central American dialogue proposed to Speaker Wright. The congressmen reacted favorably to the proposal.

Continuing Contacts, Dialogue & Assistance

As outlined in the preceding subsections, the participants and the Center succeeded in fostering increased interest in supporting the democratically elected legislatures of Central America. Interest in continuing dialogues and exchanges was evident in Washington, Boston and Saint Paul.

In Washington, the participants pursued the idea of holding an informal dialogue between representatives of the United States Congress and representatives of the five Central American legislatures participating in the Seminar. The suggestion was that this forum should first be held in a Central American capital and subsequently, on a yearly basis, rotated between the United States and Central America. Speaker Wright, and other members of Congress with whom the participants spoke, reacted favorably to the idea. At the participants request, the Center is currently engaged in making arrangements to hold the first such meeting in April or May. The delegations from Costa Rica and Guatemala expressed formal interest in hosting such a meeting. To date, the Center has received a

telegram expressing support for the initiative from the president of the Costa Rican Legislative Assembly, Dr. Rose Marie Karpinski (See attachment). A similar communication is expected from the Guatemalan Congress. Center staff and Board members are presently meeting with Speaker Wright's staff and that of Majority Leader Robert Byrd, along with the staffs of two minority leaders and other legislators in Western Hemisphere affairs to develop timing and an agenda for this meeting.

As indicated in the subsections describing the participants activities in Boston and Saint Paul, there was specific interest on the part of the state legislative leaders involved in continuing dialogues and discussions begun during the Seminar. Specifically, Massachusetts Senate President Bolger indicated that he hoped to lead a delegation of state legislative leaders to Central America. Minnesota Senate President Hughes and Majority Leader Moe expressed similar interest.

On the technical level, the individuals that made presentations before the participants in Washington, Boston, and Saint Paul expressed complete willingness to answer any further questions and to continue to work with the Central Americans in their efforts to strengthen their legislatures technically. In addition, the State Legislative Leaders Foundation, which assisted the Center in preparing the Boston and Saint Paul portions of the program, indicated that its membership of legislative leaders from all fifty states would be willing to pursue any requests for technical assistance made by the participants.

On the question of the \$300 million appropriated for aid to democratic countries in Central America, the participants received assurances from Speaker Wright, individual congressmen, and the Presidents special advisers with whom they met that specific efforts would be made to reinstate the appropriation in 1987. (See attachment, Allen Weinstein, "Central American Emissaries," The Washington Times, December 24, 1986.)

Dialogue Among the Participants

The quality and nature of dialogue observed by the Center staff among the participants suggests that the internal exchange among participants was perhaps the most successful element of the Seminar. Twelve opposition and governing political parties, ranging from social democratic to free market conservative, were represented among the members of the five parliaments. As a group, the participants cooperated with one another and generally accepted all points of view expressed during the Seminar. In the materials distributed to the participants prior to the Seminar, the Center indicated its intention to create informal but frank dialogue. It was made clear from the beginning that views expressed in the meetings would be considered to be those of an individual legislator and not representing a party or national delegation.

The Center held two meetings between the participants and the Center staff. The contrast between these meetings helps explain the

evolution of the relationships and the nature of dialogue among the participants. The first meeting was held in the Madison Hotel in Washington on the evening of the participants arrival in the United States. During the course of the evening, the participants talked with Center staff members, but otherwise largely remained in country or party groups. The second meeting was held at the close of the formal schedule in Saint Paul. Before, during, and after the discussions at this meeting, the participants mingled without regard for party affiliation or national delegation. Each participant spoke of the importance of the meetings and discussions held during the Seminar to their countries and to Central America as a region. A Guatemalan participant expressed the sentiment of the group by saying that they had come to the Seminar thinking as nationalists and members of their parties, but were leaving increasingly thinking of themselves as Central Americans.

During the course of the Seminar, the members of each country's delegation made efforts to seek out and speak members of the other delegations. The individual members of the country delegations also took advantage of this opportunity to speak to members of opposition or ruling parties from their own legislatures. Listed below, by country, are observations made by Center staff members.

(Guatemala and Belize)

Guatemala and Belize are listed together because of the extraordinary nature of the dialogue that occurred between the

members of these two delegations. The presence of the Belizeans became a focal point of the Seminar, (excepting Guatemala for purposes of this point) the other delegations dedicated toasts to their "Belizean brothers" and made other efforts to welcome them.

The Guatemalans proved even more hospitable, surprisingly so, in this regard. Their delegates explained that they had come prepared to seek out the Belizeans and to talk to them. (One Guatemalan, in his remarks during the final meeting with the Center staff, said: "We have looked for our Belizean brothers at international meetings in Buenos Aires and elsewhere, but we didn't find you. But now, at last, we have met and we have talked."). The Belizeans, apparently, had also come prepared to investigate a rapprochement with the Guatemalans. Both delegations expressed surprise and delight at the rapidity and ease with which their contacts progressed. This was due, in the Center's opinion, to the high caliber of the individual participants, and particularly to the presence of the first vice president of the Guatemalan Congress and the vice president of the Belizean Senate. The Guatemalans added that they hoped to receive a Belizean parliamentary delegation in Guatemala in the near future.

(The Belizean delegation, represented by three members of the United Democratic Party and the leader of the opposition Peoples United Party, reported that they had found opportunities to speak to one another that would have been impossible in the reportedly tense political atmosphere of their parliament).

(Costa Rica)

The Costa Ricans appeared to have the least difficulty in approaching the other delegations. However, their delegation was divided evenly, with two members each representing the majority National Liberation Party and the minority Social Christian Unity Party. The members of the Costa Rican delegation indicated that the Seminar had afforded them the first opportunity since their last, divisive election to talk to each other about domestic matters without the political animosity that has marked this session of their assembly.

(El Salvador)

The Salvadoran delegation was comprised of two Christian Democrats, one member of the National Republican Alliance (ARENA), and led by First Vice President Hugo Carillo of the National Conciliation Party. Given the fragile political relations among these political groupings, the Salvadorans worked well together on a personal level and individually they were comfortable in their contacts with other participants.

(Honduras)

The Honduran delegation was comprised of two members of the ruling Liberal Party and two members of the opposition National Party. They seemed to work well as a delegation and on a personal

level with the other delegations. Nevertheless, while each participant expressed opinions as an individual, some of the Hondurans' statements caused mild consternation among other legislators. The Hondurans, particularly in light of the Nicaraguan incursion into southern Honduras at the time of the Seminar, repeatedly called for the United States to "move quickly to eliminate the source of the conflict [in Central America]." Several delegates expressed concern that the Honduran statements might be construed as representing the views of the entire group, which, though generally critical of the Nicaraguan government and its anti-democratic actions, ranged in viewpoints on how best the countries of the region should respond politically to the Sandinista problem.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 20, 1986

To the Central American Legislators:

Welcome to the United States. It's an honor for me to greet you, as elected legislators from neighboring countries and as individuals who share a commitment to the democratic ideals we hold so dear. I'm pleased that you are visiting the United States and are participating in the seminar organized by The Center for Democracy of Boston University.

Today, the United States is proud to be working with you and other free men and women to strengthen democracy in this hemisphere, especially in Central America. Much progress has been made, yet serious challenges remain. One government, rather than seeking democracy, has betrayed its people and allied itself with totalitarianism from outside this hemisphere, threatening all the democratic progress that has been made throughout the region.

Strategically and morally, this dagger pointed at the heart of Central American democracy cannot be ignored. The struggle for representative government, human rights, and economic opportunity has been too hard-fought to ignore this danger. We must stand firm for free elections, democratic institutions, and free speech throughout the hemisphere and stand together to counter any attempt, from left or right, to undermine the gains that have been made. The unity of democratic peoples is the greatest weapon against tyranny. I know you will be discussing these issues and more in the days ahead.

All the best for a successful seminar, and I wish you Godspeed as you visit and speak with your American counterparts in Washington, D.C., Boston, and St. Paul.

Ronald Reagan



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS
GOVERNOR

December 1, 1986

Allen Weinstein
Boston University
The Center for Democracy
1155 15th Street, N.W.
Suite 1010
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Allen:

I enjoyed receiving your letter and I, too, hope we will be able to work together to foster democracy and world peace.

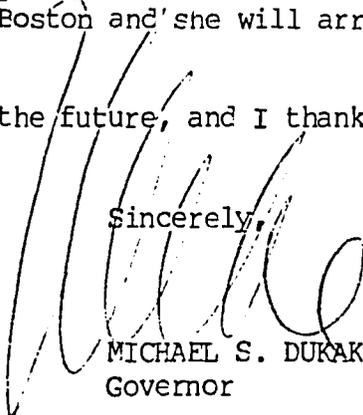
I would greatly enjoy meeting the Central American legislators who will visit Massachusetts this month, but during the time they will be here I will be in Florida.

Although I can't meet with them in person, I hope you will extend my warm personal best wishes to the visitors from Central America. I hope their stay in the Commonwealth will be both enjoyable and productive and that they will learn much that can be applied to their own countries.

Please call Norma Fenochietti, my Director of Scheduling, at 727-7185 when you know when you'll be in Boston and she will arrange a time for us to meet.

I look forward to seeing you in the future, and I thank you again for writing to me.

Sincerely,



MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS
Governor

COMMENTARY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1986

ALLEN WEINSTEIN

Central American emissaries

A cross section of Central America's democratic leadership dropped in to Washington in mid-December and moved about virtually unnoticed, despite meetings with future Speaker of the House Jim Wright and other key legislators in both parties. Although the president had other priorities and did not meet with the 20 legislative leaders from government and opposition parties in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras — representing 12 Conservative, Christian Democratic, and Social Democratic political parties — he dispatched two National Security Council aides to assure the visitors of his administration's unflagging commitment to assuring the future of democracy in the region.

Many were not entirely persuaded, nor were they more responsive toward similar avowals of support from Democratic and Republican congressional leaders. For one thing, the Central Americans had watched with some

confusion over the past several months as the \$300 million appropriated by Congress to Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras as a component of the compromise "contra" aid legislation "for assistance to the Central American democracies" somehow disappeared into a budgetary black hole.

What happened to those funds, the legislators asked repeatedly of Washington insiders, money needed desperately for economic support in their countries? Where did it go?

The answers were neither consistent nor reassuring. Congressional Democrats and administration officials blamed one another for dropping the ball at the close of the last session. At a National Security Council briefing, the visitors were promised that the administration would submit to the new Congress a supplemental appropriation proposal for the \$300 million to honor the earlier funding, but virtually every member of the delegation asked — puzzled more than irritated — whether Washington leaders believed that the money could be extracted more easily from a Gramm-Rudman-Hollings budgetary cupboard in 1987 than during the previous year, when, at least, the proposal had been dangled before moderates in an effort to raise the comfort level of those unwilling to support military aid to the "contras" without some civilian carrot for the democracies.

The question of aid aside, the 20 parliamentarians proved a lively and valuable reminder — and one definitely needed in Washington these days — of how far democratization

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in Central America has proceeded over the past half-decade. They had come for meetings with their U.S. counterparts and for seminars on *Norteamericano* legislative procedures. Their presence was timely in a capital preoccupied with Iranian arms sales and "contra" funding diversions. The *Centroamericanos* were invited guests — cheered by the attendees — at a large Democratic House reception. They exchanged luncheon banter with Sens. Bob Dole, Albert Gore Jr., John D. Rockefeller IV, and Strom Thurmond. They traded divergent views on political vs. military solutions for constraining the Sandinistas at a breakfast meeting with Republican Reps. Benjamin A. Gilman, Robert J. Lagomarsino, and Bob Livingston, while later that day they listened to Democratic Rep. Dan Rostenkowski of Illinois explain the intricacies of U.S. tax legislation.

Their favorite single meeting was the one with soon-to-be House Speaker Jim Wright, who held forth in graceful Spanish on the problems of the hemisphere. Before the meeting ended, a spokesman for the Central Americans — naturally, in flawless English — invited a U.S. congressional delegation to meet with their five legislatures informally next year at some capital in the region, an invitation which Mr. Wright accepted on the spot. Should the meeting take place, a critical channel of exchange and mutual cooperation between the United States and the democracies or democratizing countries of Central America will have been created.

Many U.S. leaders fail to recognize that, with the exception of Nicaragua (an ominous exception), democratic political forces have never been stronger throughout the region.

During the past three years alone, the electoral process has brought notable changes to the region's political environment. In Belize, the long-excluded political opposition came to power, while in Costa Rica, the long-dominant Social Democrats retained control of the presidency but under a young and vigorous technocrat determined to puncture any residual perceptions of his country as malleable to U.S. pressures.

In El Salvador, President Jose Napoleon Duarte's Christian Democrats continue to consolidate their political control while a more effective, less abusive military leadership has apparently foreclosed the prospect of any near-term insurgent victory.

Meanwhile, in Guatemala, Christian Democrats led by Vinicio Cerezo took control of both the presidency and Congress in a landmark 1986 election, which reduced considerably — though it did not terminate — military influence in the country. Finally, the turmoil of Honduran political life subsided after a recent national election and change of presidents.

It would neither be accurate nor just for the United States to claim the dominant role in this impressive regional renaissance — Nicaraguan aside — or to deny the role of democratic evolution in the region.

moderate to political shifts in power brought about by electoral changes, as we have done in all five countries. The meetings between elected legislators from Central American democracies and U.S. congressional leaders represent a notable evolution in hemispheric relationships, much more so if the United States delivers on its promised \$300 million supplementary assistance package.

The test of a civilized individual, the writer E. Scott Fitzgerald once wrote, is the ability to keep two opposed ideas in the mind at once while retaining the capacity to function.

Congress is now confronted with this test. *Idea No. 1:* Two thorough investigations by House and Senate of the Iran-"contra" funding diversion activities. *Idea No. 2:* A funding commitment to Central America of \$300 million, urgently in need of fulfillment.

If Congress meets that test, it might wish to consider another conundrum. *Idea No. 1:* Same as above. *Idea No. 2:* A new political initiative to prevent complete abandonment of the goal of restoring democracy to Nicaragua because of a deep national division over funding of the "contras." This would require policies devised in bipartisan congressional discussions with the administration and in collaboration with the democratic governments of Central America. Those Nicaraguans both at home and abroad struggling to bring about democratic change — political opposition leaders, the church, business and labor groups, *La Prensa's* embattled editors, and — yes — elements in the "contra" leadership clearly identified with the earlier anti-Somoza struggle — need reassurance now more than ever.

The nurturing of democratic institutions by Central American political leaders (from conservative to social democratic) is slow, delicate, and often frustrating, demanding steady and reliable support from the United States.

This is not the time for Congress either to abandon its own previous \$300 million bequest to the region or to toss the hopes of genuine Nicaraguan democrats on the scrapheap of history because of the covert follies of American adventurers seeking to evade the legitimate checks and balances of democratic governance.

After their days in Washington, the *Centroamericanos* traveled first to Boston and then to St. Paul, Minn., to study state legislative processes and meet with parliamentarians in both states. The delegation enjoyed the meetings, if not the below-freezing temperatures. Their trip to the United States was the first such occasion in which Central American legislators from the five countries had come together to share common perspectives and problems. It was also the first time in which public officials from Guatemala, which has asserted a historic claim to much of Belize, participated jointly — and amicably — with their Belizean counterparts in a regional event, foreshadowing a possible rapprochement between the democratically elected leaders of both countries.

At a wrapup session among the 20 visitors prior to their departure for home — the temperature at the time was 5 below zero Fahrenheit and the wind chill factor brought that figure down to 40 below — one bemused Guatemalan congressman rose to commit irony. What are we to make of the fact, he asked, that we Central Americans have had to travel over 3,000 kilometers to such a frigid yet hospitable place to confront the need for closer association among the democracies of our own, more climatically comfortable region? None of the legislators appeared troubled by the question, though all agreed: next year in Central America.