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THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

Executive Registry

86- 1192x

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March 20, 1986

For Immediate Release

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today's vote in the House of Representatives was a dark day for freedom.

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This vote must be reversed. The Soviet Union cannot be permitted to enjoy the luxury of knowing that, once captured, a country will be relegated forever to the Communist camp. We declare our unwavering support for freedom and for peace-loving people struggling to overcome communist tyranny.

Those Democrats and Republicans, who stood with the forces of freedom, have the Nation's profound gratitude, and my own.

But you have more. You have my solemn determination to come back, again and again, until this battle is won, until freedom is given the chance it deserves in Micaragua.

Tomorrow, I will begin to press in the Senate -- and then back again in the House -- for the real and effective assistance for Nicaragua's freedom fighters which was denied them today -- and which those brave men and women deserve.

The American people have begun to awaken to the danger emerging on their doorstep. And one day, in the not too distant future, that awareness will come home to the House of Representatives.

We are gaining ground; we are winning converts. The next battle will bring us the victory this just and good cause rightly deserves.

Finally, I have some special words today for the freedom fighters. The events of today and those that will take place over the next week are preparation for the day when democracy returns to Micaragua. A chance to realize that while democratic peoples are sometimes slow to wake to imminent danger, when they do awaken their commitment to freedom and their resolve for victory is unshakable.

So, to the freedom fighters of Micaragua I say: Have faith; have hope. The American people are just now awakening to the justice of your cause; just now realizing that your struggle is their struggle. Soon, with our support, your courage will ensure the triumph of your cause, our cause, and all of humanity's cause—the cause of freedom.

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