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Moynihan Finds Report Misses Mark on Soviet

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 12 — Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan said today that he found no evidence in the report of the commission on Central America to support its position that a Soviet-Cuban challenge in the region represented a serious threat to United States security interests.

The New York Democrat, who made his first official visit to four Central American countries last month since becoming vice chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said: "I'm not saying there is no evidence. But if you go to all this effort, facts please."

Instead, he said, in an interview in his Senate office, the commission had resorted to a "doctrinal position."

Mr. Moynihan said he had come away from the region persuaded that the insurgents in El Salvador and the Sandinista Government in Nicaragua had reached a point where they understood the "necessity of an accommodation with the United States."

He added, "That is a possibility that has to be exploited; there are many ways to do it." He declined to be specific.

Catholic Church Criticism

The Senator, describing the report by the commission headed by former Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger as "not the kind of report I would have written," took pains to point out the quick criticism of it by the the Roman Catholic Church in El Salvador.

"The Archbishop there, Msgr. Arturo Rivera y Damas, with whom I met last month, has stated the commission has erred completely in its emphasis on military aid," Mr. Moynihan said.

"The church knows that American military aid ends up more or less equally in the hands of the insurgents and the Government. They fear that more of such aid will simply increase the level of violence and reduce the possibility of a settlement."

Mr. Moynihan has been reluctant in the past to talk about policy in Central America, saying that he is not an expert on the region and that as vice chairman of the intelligence commit-

tee he has to be circumspect. He has said that military aid to El Salvador should be contingent upon progress in human rights.

He said he voted in the last session of Congress to provide money for covert aid to Nicaraguan rebels opposed to the Sandinista Government only after the Administration agreed to modify its goals from the overthrow of the Government to stopping the flow of arms from Nicaragua to neighboring countries.

The Senator, who met with church and labor leaders in El Salvador, as well as Provisional President Alvaro Magaña and United States Embassy officials, said "informed observers" there told him the insurgents were "self sustaining" and "on their own."

"They said that at a minimum, 30 percent of the American military aid landed in the hands of the insurgents," the Senator reported.

Mr. Moynihan said that he met in Nicaragua with Tomás Borge, the Minister of Interior, and Sergio Ramírez Mercado, another member of the junta, and that the two men went to great lengths, without conceding that the Salvadoran guerrillas had ever operated from their territory, to point out that there was no need for the insurgents to use it as a base now.

The Senator said he had encountered concern in Nicaragua that the United States invasion of Grenada might lead to similar action by the United States in Nicaragua.

"I said to them that I didn't see any disposition to behave that way" toward Nicaragua, the Senator said.

Mr. Moynihan called El Salvador a country "filled with rich Catholics" and went on, "If anyone wanted to test the uselessness of the oligarchy, they should see the cathedral, the grimmest thing, not even whitewash inside."

"It is so selfish," he said of the oligarchy, "that it wouldn't even decorate the cathedral in which they murdered the Archbishop." The Senator was referring to the assassination in March 1980 of Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, the country's most outspoken human rights advocate.