



Chron



*Phil Caplan*



THE  
NEW REPUBLIC

1220 19th St. NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-331-7494  
Fax 202-331-9275

58 MAY 18 AM 11:48

LEON WIESELTIER

15 May

5-18-98

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Gene, but I just want you to know that  
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the world.

End of prodding. Don't worry about getting  
back to me about this. But ny offer to give you  
lunch before we're too much older still  
stands.

Best --

*Leon*

*Phil Caplan*



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MAY 18 AM 11:48

LEON WIESELTIER

15 May

Dear Rahm,

A while ago, maybe a couple of months or so, Joe Lieberman nominated Gene McCarthy for the Medal of Freedom, at the instigation of some of Gene's friends. Gene has just come out of five months in hospital & in physical therapy. He is very frail. (Except mentally. -- I just saw him for lunch.) Perhaps the idea of presenting Gene with the medal was considered and rejected; but if it had not been considered or rejected, then I write to see if the pace of the process can be accelerated. I can't imagine that the President would object to honoring Gene, but I just want you to know that in this matter we don't have all the time in the world.

End of prodding. Don't worry about getting back to me about this. But ny offer to give you lunch before we're too much older still stands.

Best --

*Leon*

'98 MAY 18 PM6:41

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 18, 1998

**MEMORANDUM FOR: PHIL CAPLAN**  
**FROM: NELSON REYNERI, JR.**  
**SUBJECT: LETTER FROM MAYOR PENELAS**

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Per our discussion, here's a copy of Mayor Penelas' letter and Sylvia Mathew's response. Your advice is appreciated.

Attachment

Nelson -  
I'll defer to Sylvia, Micky and  
Caplan as to whether this should be a  
response from POTUS or Sylvia, although it's  
certainly appropriate to be from POTUS.  
More importantly, I'd make sure Scott  
+ NSC sign off on the letter.  
Phil  
5/19

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

May 11, 1998

Alex Penelas  
Mayor  
Office of the Mayor  
Miami-Dade County  
Stephen P. Clark Center  
111 N.W. First Street, Suite 2910  
Miami, FL 33128-1994

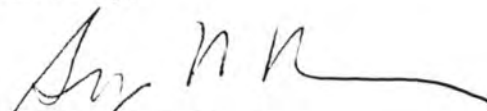
Dear Mayor Penelas:

Thank you for writing the President regarding your concern for Hondurans living in the United States. President Clinton supports fair and firm immigration policies and recognizes the tremendous contributions that immigrants have made to our country.

Though Hondurans were not included in the group of Central Americans afforded specific relief in the Nicaraguan and Central American Relief Act (NACARA), in the signing statement that accompanied its enactment, the President stated that Congress should not have continued to permit the application of new, harsher immigration rules to other persons with pending cases. Changing the rules in the middle of the game is unfair, unnecessary and contrary to our values. We intend to revisit this issue at the earliest opportunity.

I have shared your letter with Mickey Ibarra and Lynn Cutler and have asked them to stay in touch with you as developments occur. Also, please contact them directly on this issue. Thank you again for writing the President.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sylvia M. Mathews', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sylvia M. Mathews  
Assistant to the President and  
Deputy Chief of Staff



# OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

## MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ALEX PENELAS  
MAYOR

April 20, 1998

The Honorable William Jefferson Clinton  
President of the United States of America  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Clinton:

The purpose of this letter is to express concern for the plight of Hondurans living in the United States. It is my understanding that Hondurans are the second most deported group of immigrants from our country. They are being deported in disproportionate numbers when compared to other alien groups that represent a much larger population than Hondurans in the United States.

Unfortunately, Hondurans have been left out of two recent measures taken by the United States in the immigration arena. The first being the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA) and the latter the recent Executive Order of Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) granted to Haitians. The purpose of NACARA was to grant relief to people from Central American countries, such as Honduras that assisted against the spread of communism in that region. However, Hondurans were left out of this legislation. That having happened, we expected that Honduras would receive DED while congress considers a technical correction to NACARA by including Hondurans wherever relief is provided to Nicaraguans and Cubans; or by passing new legislation that would grant permanent residency to Hondurans.

Legislation has already been introduced, and more is being considered, in Congress that would grant permanent residency to Honduras. Unfortunately, Hondurans continue to be deported in large numbers while legislation is pending. These same people who are being deported might also benefit from the legislation if passed. The granting of DED will also strengthen the global position of the United States and show the world in this time of uncertainty that the United States does protect its allies. As you know, Honduras was the only country willing to help the United States in its battle against the Sandino-Communism which was prevalent in the region, but moreover in Nicaragua. Honduras collaborated with the United States in every imaginable way, with their money, their land, but overall their blood. The United States recognized the danger that Hondurans were in at this stage of the Cold War and facilitated the granting of visas. These very people have now established homes in the United States and have American-born children who range anywhere from two through sixteen years of age. It would be a travesty to have these children, who are U.S. citizens, deported because of the legal status of their parents.

I am aware and support efforts by the Honduran Unity (Unidad Hondureña) of America to obtain a humanitarian relief and justice for Honduran families residing in our country. I respectfully request your consideration of their legal status and allow them to stay here where freedom welcomed them and where they contribute significantly to our society.

Thank you for your time and cooperation with this matter, but more importantly for your true leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alex Penelas", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Alex Penelas  
Mayor

PAGINA EDITORIAL

17/ABR/98

THE MIAMI HERALD

The Miami Herald / Editorial / Friday, April 17, 1998

## Revising history and policy

**H**ere is the love-hate relationship that the United States has with Hondurans: "While Hondurans were certainly affected by the civil wars in Central America," President Clinton recently wrote to U.S. Rep. Ilcana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Miami, "there was no civil war or widespread violence in Honduras compelling Hondurans to seek the protection of the United States."

Thanks for the memories, in other words. But don't expect the United States to give any breaks to Hondurans who migrated here during the 1980s, fleeing a homeland that was a base for U.S.-backed Nicaraguan contras.

Yes, Honduras benefited from U.S. military aid, and indirectly from U.S. aid funneled to the contras camped on its border with Nicaragua. And its strife wasn't comparable to that of Nicaragua, Guatemala, or El Salvador during the 1980s. (Still, even without civil war, Honduras was more than "affected" by U.S. Central American policy.)

By the time Nicaragua's war ended in 1990, Honduras sheltered some 55,000 contras and their families and perhaps 100,000 more Nicaraguans who had fled across the border. The influx caused major dislocations. Border fighting alone displaced thousands of Honduran families and discouraged investment.

**FOR HONDURANS**  
**Allies in U.S.-backed wars**  
**of 1980s, they deserve**  
**protection from unjust**  
**new immigration laws.**

"The United States was heavily involved with a lot of these countries during the time of all this upheaval," Mr. Clinton well assured Central American heads of state last May. "We

ought to be sensitive to the disruptions that were caused during those tough years."

Unfortunately, Washington hasn't been sensitive. First, Congress passed, and the President signed, a Draconian immigration law in 1996. In practice, it retroactively eliminated humanitarian relief from deportation. Then last year's law granted relief to Nicaraguans, Guatemalans, and Salvadorans while excluding Hondurans and Haitians.

According to 1996 U.S. estimates, some 90,000 Hondurans illegally live in the United States, many as a consequence of 1980s' "disruptions." Many have U.S.-born children who would be traumatized by their parents' deportation. A South Florida advocacy group has even sued on behalf of 193 such children, seeking to stop the deportations.

President Clinton pledged to seek to restore the old rules of humanitarian relief for longtime immigrants. Commendably, he pledged to seek relief for deserving Haitians, and he protected them from deportation in the meantime. Hondurans who peaceably have lived years here deserve no less compassion.

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

November 14, 1997

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Immigration Bill

During my trip to Central America in May, I pledged to address the circumstances of Central Americans who were treated unfairly by last year's immigration bill. The bill's strict new rules threatened to uproot hundreds of thousands of people who came to our shores fleeing violence and persecution. In July, I transmitted to the Congress a legislative proposal that offered relief to these people. I am very pleased that the Congress has now passed provisions that do just that.

In the 1980s, a large number of Central Americans sought refuge in the United States because of the civil war and human rights abuses that then plagued that region. As I noted during my trip, the United States has a particular obligation to help these people because they and their families have now established deep roots in our communities and because sending them home in large numbers at this time would very likely disrupt the important progress these countries have made towards peace, democracy, and economic reform. As a result of these new provisions, these people may now be considered for permanent status under more generous rules than were imposed by the recent immigration bill.

Nevertheless, I am concerned about several aspects of this legislation. First, I am troubled by the fact that it treats similarly situated people differently. The Central Americans covered by this bill fled similar violence and persecution; they have established similarly strong connections to the United States; and their home countries are all fledgling democracies in need of our assistance. The relief made available to these people should be consistent as well. I believe, however, that these differences can be minimized in the implementation process.

I am also concerned about the plight of certain Haitians who are not covered by this legislation. Before we helped restore democracy to Haiti, many Haitians were also forced to flee their country because of persecution and civil strife. They deserve the same treatment that this legislation makes possible for other groups. We will seek passage of legislation providing relief to these Haitians early in the next session of Congress, and take appropriate administrative action while we pursue this solution.

Finally, I believe that Congress should not have continued to permit the application of new, harsher immigration rules to other persons with pending cases. Changing the rules in the middle of the game is unfair, unnecessary, and contrary to our values. We intend to revisit this issue at the earliest opportunity.

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