

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 5, 1977

To Senator

It has been four months since we negotiated an agreement on the new Panama Canal treaties. At that time I wrote to you stating my belief that these treaties are fair and equitable, and essential to assure the continued effective use of the canal for American commercial and security needs.

I am writing again to reaffirm that position and to pledge my full effort to convince the American people that the agreement serves the best interests of the United States. A recent nationwide poll by CBS-*New York Times* indicates that Americans will support the treaties when they understand that

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(Note: This is typical of many personal letters President Carter wrote to members of the Senate trying to convince them to vote for treaty ratification.)

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our country has the right to defend the canal. By a margin of more than 2:1 (63% to 24%) Americans say they would support the treaties if -- the treaties provided that the United States could always send in troops to keep the canal open to ships of all nations." As you know, the Treaty of Neutrality and the recent Statement of Understanding provide the United States this right.

It is essential, therefore, that the American people be given a full, factual explanation of the new treaties. I, with members of my Administration and many distinguished Americans, will undertake this task in the coming months. I urge you to support the treaties and to help in laying

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the facts before the public so  
that this education process can  
go forward as you approach  
a final decision in the Senate.

I ask this of you in what  
I truly believe to be our highest  
national interest. I need your  
help.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Carter