

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with Virgilio Barco Vargas, President of Colombia

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Virgilio Barco Vargas
Note Taker: William T. Pryce

DATE, TIME August 28, 1989, 3:52 - 4:00 p.m.
AND PLACE: Kennebunkport, Maine

President Barco called The President to thank him for our help with Colombia's narcotics problems.

President Barco: I just wanted to call you to thank you for all your help.

The President: You are very nice to call and I hope we can be of help now and in the future.

President Barco: I want to inform you that we are making a number of further arrests of cartel members.

The President: I am delighted to hear that. I know that it has been a tremendous strain for you and your government and we admire you. We don't want to push in any direction you are not comfortable with. We are here to help you.

President Barco: We are doing everything that is possible. I wanted to let you know there are two issues where you were especially helpful. One is the troop issue and your personal comments were extremely helpful. I know that the Attorney General's statement was taken out of context. The second is I understand the Bennett Plan emphasizes consumers which is right. As you know, this is the only way to end the drug problem and I must congratulate Mr. Bennett for his plan.

The President: We are going to put a lot of emphasis on the consumer side. We have to keep after the users and do more on the education side.

President Barco: I may be addressing the United Nations on September 29 and I hope I will be able to visit you before then.

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The President: I certainly want to work that out. I don't have my calendar but I will see what we can do to get together. I will be in New York at the U.N. about that time.

President Barco: We have been looking forward to the next summit and I believe I have a very good place in Cartagena for it. Maybe your security people could look into it.

The President: We will be talking about that at a meeting tomorrow. It's a very timely suggestion.

President Barco: We can look into it -- check it out and have it ready for your people to look at it.

The President: I think that would be very helpful.

President Barco: I can talk to Ambassador McNamara so that he can make an inspection ahead of time.

The President: Yes, that would be very helpful. We will tell our Ambassador.

President Barco: I have heard from our people and they are doing very well. I am sending a very personal friend of mine who can be very helpful. His name is Raphael Pardo. He is the one who has been keeping track of the guerrillas. He will be arriving tomorrow in Washington.

The President: There are a lot of rumors on the new Justice Minister. What is the status?

President Barco: She is very smart and a very brave young lady. She was a little scared and I asked her to leave one day before the group to pacify her. She is at ease now and has not resigned at this time and is not thinking of doing so at this moment.

The President: The reason I asked about it was all of the speculation going on.

President Barco: I asked her to leave one day before the group and that led to press speculation. I believe she is very smart, very serious and she has told me she will not resign but that is as far as I know.

The President: The only reason I asked is because of the rumors on that point.

President Barco: The rumor started in Bogota.

The President: Oh, did it? Well, that is your business but I just wanted to know about it.

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President Barco: She has been very brave and very useful but she has not resigned.

The President: I would expect you would be getting enormous support in your country.

President Barco: Yes, we have been getting good support.

The President: Again, thank you very much for this phone call and I hope to see you in New York in the next few weeks.

President Barco: Please feel free to call me at any time.

The President: I'm glad we have stuck together and we have a lot of other problems to talk about later -- Panama.

President Barco: I want to thank you again for all your help.

The President: Goodbye and good luck!

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