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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING

DATE, TIME February 10, 1982, 9:40-11:30 a.m.,  
AND PLACE: The Cabinet Room

SUBJECT: The Caribbean Basin

PARTICIPANTS:

The Vice President  
Admiral Daniel J. Murphy

USTR  
Ambassador William E. Brock III

State  
Act. Secretary William J. Stoessel, Jr.  
Ambassador Thomas O. Enders  
Ambassador J. William Middendorf

JCS  
Admiral Thomas B. Hayward  
Lt. General Paul F. Gorman

Treasury  
Secretary Donald T. Regan

White House  
Mr. Edwin Meese III  
Mr. James A. Baker III  
Mr. Richard G. Darman  
Mr. Michael K. Deaver  
Judge William P. Clark  
Mr. Robert C. McFarlane

OMB  
Mr. Ed Harper

NSC  
Mr. Henry Nau  
Mr. Roger Fontaine  
Col. Michael Wheeler

CIA  
Mr. William J. Casey

USUN  
Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick

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Judge Clark opened the meeting by observing that after a year's work, we have reached a plateau where we can consider a comprehensive political, economic, and security policy for the region.

- We are now at a watershed in U.S. foreign policy.
- That comprehensive political, economic and military strategy for the Caribbean region will be the first one since the elaboration of the Monroe Doctrine.

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NLS MOS-016#19140  
By LOJ, NARA, Date 12/21/05

- By Caribbean region I mean not only the insular Caribbean, but Central America as well plus countries of the northern rim of South America. In other words, our neighbors.
- Such a strategy is consistent with the high priority this Administration has always placed on this hemisphere.
- Our strategy is rooted in the most fundamental national security interests and concerns of this country.
- The greater Caribbean is to us what the Mediterranean is to Europe. It is our frontyard. (Not our backyard -- a metaphor which suggests an area of marginal concern.)
- In the postwar period, the U.S. has been free to pursue and protect our global interests because we enjoyed a secure Western Hemisphere.
- That is no longer the case entirely. If we continue to drift it will not be true at all, and that will have major impact on our ability to meet our global obligations.
- In the region today, we are faced with a combination of threats. No one instrument of U.S. foreign policy can deal with them successfully.
- The problems range from weak economies to often weaker political institutions which invite subversion by forces, indigenous and foreign, that are anti-democratic and avowedly anti-American.
- The chief instigators are Cuba and its patron, the Soviet Union. But this by no means exhausts the lists of troublemakers who work with Havana and Moscow. We must in the 1980s add Nicaragua and Grenada to the list as well as Vietnam, Libya and the PLO. Others primarily Warsaw Pact members, are making their contribution too.
- It is a formidable political, military, economic, propagandist apparatus facing us with new targets of opportunity being developed all the time.
- Others in this room will be more explicit regarding the nature of the threat, but it is clear the threat to the Caribbean is unprecedented in severity and proximity and complexity.

- By contrast, the Nazi threat in the 1930s and 1940s and the Castro threat in the 1960s were more limited in scope, with fewer resources being expended. The strategies were of a less sophisticated nature, and were employed for a shorter period of time.
- Our approach must match and exceed our adversaries in all of the above. In particular, our strategy must be sustained and sustainable. There will be no quick fix. And it won't be cheap.
- Our overriding objective is to promote peaceful and positive economic and political change within the region -- change that is compatible with this country's interests and values.
- To do that we must make a long-term commitment to political and economic development while strengthening the internal security of the Caribbean region countries -- ensuring at the same time that hostile and totalitarian forces are defeated.

Judge Clark then proceeded to outline the meeting's agenda:

- Intelligence update - William Casey
- Military Threat/Military Requirements in the Area - Admiral Hayward
- Economic Requirements - Bill Brock
- Regional Strategy - Tom Enders

Judge Clark observed that the agenda would conclude with a discussion of a speech to be given by the President -- the when, where, and how. Clearly the bottom line is the President's ability to express the problem and bring along the American people and their representatives.

The DCI then began his briefing by pointing to the Cubans and their worldwide presence.

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One reason for this, the DCI observed, is because of demographics. Cuba suffers from a bulge in the age group entering the labor market. Fifty percent of the population is youth. There is unemployment at home, and many young and trained men can find jobs overseas.

Cuba's ability to project influence is also due to Soviet arms and support. The Soviets gave Cuba some 66,000 tons of military equipment last year -- more than \$1 billion in arms including SA-6s, MIG-23s, T-62 tanks, MI-24 helicopters, etc.

Cuba has a modern army with substantial reserves plus 200 MIG aircraft. It receives \$8 million a day in aid in the form of cheap oil and a subsidized price for Cuba's exports: nickel and sugar.

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The Director then said there was a consistent pattern in all Cuban activities. That is, Cuba and Castro would bring together the various guerrilla factions within the target countries and after they were unified Havana would supply them with arms, training, etc. in order to make the guerrilla more effective. The Director also pointed out there is a growing concern from other Latin American countries about subversion in Central America. Fifteen countries voiced their objections to the French and Mexican Communique that gave status to the insurgent forces in El Salvador. In the

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OAS there was a 23 to 3 vote endorsing the electoral solution in El Salvador. Only three countries voted against: Nicaragua, Grenada and Mexico. And finally, the Central American Democratic community has been formed, that is, those countries including El Salvador, Honduras and Costa Rica which are now requesting help from the United States and other friendly nations like Venezuela and Colombia to prevent further militarization of Nicaragua which they perceive as a threat to them.

In the meantime, the Director added, Nicaragua continues to build-up its military capability, MIGs are expected soon. Nicaragua's build-up in military strength will intimidate its neighbors and tip the balance in El Salvador in favor of the guerrillas against the government forces because, quite frankly, people join what appears to be the winning side. [REDACTED]

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The conclusion on the part of the Director of Central Intelligence is that the Soviets are in a no lose situation. If we don't act we lose credibility and the Soviets gain an increasing number of allies within our own hemisphere. If we react strongly, the Soviets will be able to say the United States is no better than the Soviets are in Poland.

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Admiral Hayward described the Soviet military presence in the Caribbean. He first pointed out the signals intelligence capability in Lourdes near Havana, Cuba. Secondly, he mentioned again the Soviet combat brigade in Cuba. Third, he mentioned the TU-95 Bear reconnaissance airplanes which have a continuing presence in Cuba and fly near the eastern seaboard of the United States. He pointed out the Soviet naval ship visits in the Caribbean. He mentioned the major contribution of Soviet aid to the Cubans -- that arms shipments in 1981 were the biggest since 1962. He also pointed out that the Soviets have equipped the Cubans so that they can operate some 11,000 strong in Ethiopia, with some 20,000 troops also in Angola.

Admiral Hayward pointed out that so many Cubans abroad, particularly in Africa, provide us some opportunities for counterpressure. So far as the Cuban threat is concerned, Admiral Hayward pointed out that through the Caribbean flows some 45 percent of our imported energy needs including oil and coal, and in wartime some 50 percent of materiel that would be shipped to NATO. Threatening those sea lanes of communication was a Cuban military machine that has been built-up significantly in the last few years. Admiral Hayward then showed the range of new Cuban fighters -- MIG-23s and even possibly MIG-25s -- how far they extended from Cuba around the Caribbean and how much further they could be extended. He also pointed out that the range of such fighters would be considerably extended if they were based also in Nicaragua and Grenada. He mentioned, too, that the Foxbats and MIG-25s, though an interceptor, and probably would be served for reconnaissance purposes only due have longer larger radii than do the MIG-21s or the MIG-23s.

As far as the Navy is concerned, the Cuban Navy is growing. It now has two Foxtrot diesel submarines which are good submarines, very capable. They are very hard to detect because they are quiet vessels. Secondly, patrol boats of the Osa category as well as the Komar both equipped with Styx missiles ship-to-ship and the build-up there in terms of these patrol boats continues. There now are about 30, 2 more will be added to the fleet. Finally, there is a Koni class frigate which is not an impressive ship in itself but will be used for training purposes. Also, there are numerous smaller patrol craft. Finally, in terms of threat, Admiral Hayward pointed out that Cuban air defense capabilities are increasing dramatically. SAM sites are now all over the island. There is highly sophisticated radar and the island itself is well protected in terms of their defense.

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In terms of the military requirements on the part of the United States, Admiral Hayward pointed out that we need a number of things. [Redacted]

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In terms of security assistance, Admiral Hayward pointed out that there has been a decline in the number of American military attaches and advisors throughout the region including Central America. We now have a total of 62 military advisors and attaches in El Salvador which is not nearly enough and that our training capability in the last four years again has nearly collapsed throughout the entire region. Admiral Hayward pointed out that we need an FY 82 supplemental of \$75 million in security assistance in the region and in FY 83 we need additional funds in order to improve airfields around the region which we may have need of. Admiral Hayward then pointed out that General Woerner in his report believes that for El Salvador alone we will need a total of \$150 to \$200 million over the next five years. Admiral Hayward then pointed out that besides building up our intelligence we also need to stimulate further anti-Sandinista activity. Admiral Hayward mentioned that by late March we will have the ability to mount or support guerrilla operations in Nicaragua. Admiral Hayward then pointed out that in terms of U.S. naval activity in the Caribbean we are now doing double of what we did nearly two years ago including training exercises, port calls, etc., all sending signals to the Cubans that we are back in the Caribbean and that we mean business.

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Admiral Hayward concluded by saying for the last three years the Joint Chiefs have sent strong letters to the Secretary of Defense regarding the needs of our hemisphere which we have neglected. We need to do more. We need to have more people and we need to spend more money in terms of security assistance. Admiral Hayward also concluded that the President had, by his actions and by his statements, made this possible where it had not been possible before. The military favored the President getting out in front on this issue.

Judge Clark then introduced Ambassador Bill Brock, Special Trade Representative.

Ambassador Brock outlined the economic requirements for the new policy. His first remark was that the region, in fact, had to be divided between the insular Caribbean, the island states of the Caribbean, and Central America. Problems in each area were different. For the long-term to deal with fundamentals of the problems we had to create a long-term strategy which involved economic growth and job creation. This long-term strategy could not depend on one element such as aid or trade, but had to be a combination of aid, trade and investment. The most novel as well as the most important item in this mix is the advocacy of a one-way free trade area which would be guaranteed for at least twelve years. Ambassador Brock then pointed out that in all fairness the free trade area would be extremely controversial; there will be difficulties in getting it through the Congress; the arguments against it will include that if we extend free trade area to the Caribbean there will be pressure from other countries to give them similar privileges. It does, in fact, weaken the U.S. case against preferential trade areas which we have always made, and from Congress there will be objections in organized labor particularly because they will see one-way free trade as a job export measure. But, in fact, it won't hurt the American economy, the effects will be minor, but the criticism will come anyway.

The long-term plan thus has all of the ingredients of aid, trade and investment. We really have no other option. On aid, for example, we must give aid on a short-term basis to prevent bankruptcy of the number of countries which are in severe short-term difficulty. In terms of trade, it is a free trade area with the exception of textiles. This will provide economic opportunities and incentives to invest in those countries. The

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most important incentive for investment will be the free trade areas. It will not only motivate U.S. investors but indigenous investors in the Caribbean, as well as Asian and West European investors because they now understand that there is guaranteed access into the North American market.

Ambassador Brock then pointed out that in the meantime while we were doing all this we intend to keep the other donor nations, like Canada, Mexico and Venezuela, on board in terms of the CBI. In trade they seem to be moving a bit more but they need to be more forthcoming in terms of trade advantages they can offer.

At this point, Assistant Secretary Enders said that he believes the donors, in fact, will give more.

Ambassador Brock then pointed out that while that is true, the pressure on the donor nations must be maintained. This is a long-term strategy, and probably nothing tangible will be accomplished until five to eight years have gone by. This is not a short-term measure, it is not a quick fix. We, in short, need both short-term and long-term aspects for a combined policy if it is going to work.

With that, Judge Clark then introduced Assistant Secretary Enders from the Department of State to outline our regional strategy.

Assistant Secretary Enders pointed out that there are really three elements. First of all, we have to win on the ground in El Salvador and deal with the source of the arms problem in Nicaragua and Cuba. Secondly, we need to obtain the support of the American people as well as the United States Congress, and thirdly, we need to mobilize support in the region, that is, the hemisphere. All of these are interrelated. One will help the other. Without one the others will also be similarly and negatively affected. Enders pointed out that there is, in fact, three audiences here. There is a large, unmobilized majority who don't want the Communists to win in Central America. There is equally a large majority which is appalled by the violence going on in Central America. And there is a small, activist minority, the old Vietnam network plus some of the church people who are hostile to any American activity in the region short of Communist victory. In the region, itself, many countries in fact fear a Communist victory. Little by little they are coming out and expressing their fears, but

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they are also hedging because they are not yet convinced the United States is going to take the leadership in this and that its commitments will be sustained over a long period of time. Ambassador Enders also said that in the case of Mexico we can't do much. Mexico talks left and rules right. The President tried but cannot move them off their particular position. It may be true that the next President de la Madrid may cut back a bit, and there are indeed initial signs of nervousness of some Mexicans that things may not be going well in Central America, but the bottom line is you cannot count on Mexico to change fundamentally its position on Central America and the Caribbean.

Enders then pointed out that there are six elements in our strategy for the Caribbean. First, we must hold on the ground in El Salvador, we must create a larger army and we must issue or extend greater amounts of economic aid. Second, we must press on in terms of the reform process in El Salvador. That means human rights, elections and land reforms. And while it is true that strengthened military requirements is needed in order to ensure a victory over the insurgents, the reforms are necessary to help maintain the support of the Congress. Third, we must take the war to Nicaragua. They are vulnerable, we may not be able to overthrow them, but we can raise the costs to them and to their patrons in Cuba and the Soviet Union. Fourth, we must isolate Nicaragua. We are beginning to do that with the Central American Democratic Community, the CADC, who are the immediate neighbors of Nicaragua. For the moment it is an economic and a diplomatic political unit, but if the Soviets and Cubans push too hard in terms of militarizing Nicaragua, the CADC can then be turned into a military coalition and it could be the nucleus of a Rio treaty action. The fifth element is the Caribbean Basin Initiative, the CBI. It is interesting, Ambassador Enders pointed out, that Cuba's reaction to the CBI is that they see the CBI as a threat. They believe that if Jamaica and some of the other islands are turned around economically by the CBI, that is, they succeed, then the Cubans won't be able to touch them. The sixth element is placing direct pressure on Cuba itself, Radio Marti is now finally moving forward. Dante Fascell has now agreed to the radio station; additional Congressional support is coming forward. We intend to break the monopoly of the Cubans and a large part of our audience will be the kids, that is, the under-30 segment of the population which the Cuban leadership is concerned about. The point in general is to put pressure on the Cubans at home. We are also moving ahead to

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take care to put into place measures that will prevent another Mariel, which is a threat the Cubans can always launch against us. We are tightening the embargo. We are moving to restrict the Cuban UN Mission in New York, as well as the Interests Section in Washington. We have prepared a series of exercises in the Caribbean, all of which are to give the Cubans a sense of threat to them.

Two final remarks made by Ambassador Enders: First, that the strategy just outlined is an incomplete strategy. There is no pretense that a full strategy has yet been worked out. Secondly, there are contingency plans from which we can operate. They are prepared, but a number of questions have to be raised. Could we sustain action such as an embargo against Cubans over a long period of time? Secondly, can Castro himself claim victory merely by surviving such a blockade, even if under reduced circumstances? And thirdly, even if you went to the source or head, could the tentacles of the Cuban operation, such as in Africa and Central America, continue anyway? What we need, Enders pointed out, is a political concept and an interrelated concept. We have not done that yet, we are still working on it. We must press forward on all fronts. If we do not, then most certainly our policy or our overall objectives will not be met.

Judge Clark then moved on to introduce the necessity for making a speech. At this point, before getting into that, he summarized quickly the measures that have already been taken, decided upon, and those measures which are still pending the final review. He then listed those measures taken and those measures pending. He pointed out, in addition to measures taken and measures pending, that while we are expediting Radio Marti, the Cubans themselves are expediting the jamming equipment to prevent Radio Marti broadcasting from getting inside Cuba. On the question of the speech, he then turned to Bud McFarlane who addressed the question of structure of the speech, as well as where the speech should be given and when it should be delivered.

Bud McFarlane addressed the problem in the following terms: That while we can propose solutions, we cannot carry out the solutions to these problems without the support of the American people. The American public must understand the nature of the threat because for most Americans this hemisphere has always seemed to be a quiet, even a docile area, and extremely non-threatening. They don't know what our interests are in the region, they don't understand oil flows, they don't understand NATO support in wartime, they don't understand the importance of Mexico.

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Now, it is essential that we not come on as alarmists, and this morning, Mr. President, we have been alarmists. We cannot, in fact, create a consensus overnight. This is a process that is going to take time. We must elevate the public awareness of what is going on, and that means three things: why the area is important, how it is threatened, and what we can do in economic, political and military terms. And military would be the last of the terms, but all of these must be understood by the American people.

He also pointed out that strategists like to work on solutions, but when they come up with the solutions they then always dump them in the lap of the President for him to take the consequences. It is important to understand that the speech be non-alarmist, but educational. It must point out what would happen if we don't do anything. It must lay out the economic requirements. It must also show that the long-term solutions will not be possible without a security element, too. And the security element has two dimensions. First, taking actions that will let countries help themselves, and secondly, actions that can blunt the Soviet and Cuban efforts in the region. In terms of when the speech should be given, there is a great deal of legislation that is supportive of this policy. Radio Marti of the Caribbean Basin Initiative, one-way free trade, etc. In order to get that legislative support, we need to move promptly and we need an early date and we need Presidential leadership. The plan would be first to consult with the Congressional leadership regarding the problem, regarding the solutions, outlining pretty much what will be contained in the speech. Then the speech would be delivered by the President. The OAS is considered to be a good platform and the date would be around the 22nd or 23rd of February.

Bud McFarlane then concluded his discussion and Judge Clark asked for questions around the table.

Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick stated that the question of Central America is something that she has been talking about for a long time; in fact, it was the first thing she ever talked about to the President. She added that what you really need here is a map of the world, to show that the Caribbean and Central America are our fourth border. It is basic for any speech by the President that this concept be driven across, that we have a very different kind of problem than we had as in the case of Vietnam. This is our border we are talking about, and our security, and our vital national interest. Interests which are very immediate and very concrete and are very different from the sorts of interests that may have been threatened in the past. It

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is a mistake, she added, to stress only that we are facing weak political institutions and weak economies, but that we are facing the projection of military power by the Cubans and the Soviets on our own border areas. At a minimum they may neutralize us, at maximum they can threaten us. Therefore, we need to protect the national security of the United States and secondly, we need to protect the national security of our neighbors. We need independent countries who are not pawns of an imperialist power; we need to protect our own national sovereignty. That has always been the policy of the United States since the 18th century. The President needs to be clear and straightforward on this.

Jeane Kirkpatrick pointed out that while she favors economic policies, Guatemala and El Salvador can't wait for economic policies to improve their situation. The civil war is going on right now. It is true that we can do a lot in the insular Caribbean, but we must be up front about this, CBI serves our long term interests because it provides aid in such a way as to orient these countries toward the United States, making them more interdependent with us.

Jeane Kirkpatrick added, it is important to give the speech, it is important to be honest and share the problem with the people. In Congress, it is true, she has talked to many of them, they don't want to face the problem but they agree that it is important.

Mike Deaver then said, are you saying that the Russians must get out?

Jeane Kirkpatrick said, Yes, something like that.

Mike Deaver then said what if they don't?

Jeane Kirkpatrick replied that we do not need to threaten war, but we must share with the people the sense of concern. We must make some moves and leave the rest for the Soviets and the Cubans to wonder what we will do next. Deaver said, but what do we say to the press and Congress. Kirkpatrick responded, we do have a program. We can go to the OAS, invoke the Rio Treaty, and adopt measures that will have teeth.

Mr. Deaver then responded, yes, but how do we deal with the Soviets?

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Jeane Kirkpatrick went on, You don't need to go to the source. I think we need to engage in some linkage. Cuba can do so well in the Caribbean because it is so well supplied by the Soviets and the Soviets feel free to do so without penalty.

At this point, Ambassador Brock interjected and said that no matter what we do we may not, in fact, succeed. We can't change the situation overnight. We might not make it in El Salvador. We must prepare the American people for this. We must make the speech and make it very carefully. Furthermore, the speech has to be carefully balanced because it it is only done in a security context, then we revive the Vietnam syndrome. Furthermore, we must differentiate the U.S. response to the Caribbean and the Soviet response to Poland. The US is strengthening political and economic institutions. We are taking a long-run approach to improve human conditions in this area.

Ambassador Brock mentioned that both Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands are real assets in the regard. They suggest how the United States deals with its neighbors by helping them to help themselves economically. We need to exploit these facts to contrast with the Soviet response.

At this point, Ambassador Middendorf interjected that he felt that the OAS was a good platform, we can sell it from there and the whole Administration can sell its strategy once the President sets down the guidelines. Congress needs to be worked more; Central America is in turmoil, but the point is that if the turmoil continues and it is not stopped by American action, that Central Americans, Mexicans, and whatever, will be heading north, 10 million, 20 million, 30 million going to the United States and they will be seeking jobs. They will find jobs and they will displace Americans. Congress is beginning to understand that the turmoil in Central America therefore has a direct impact on our domestic situation in the future. Ambassador Middendorf said that there is a big problem in the Caribbean but there is also a very big opportunity.

Ambassador Stoessel then pointed out that Secretary Haig believes in this strategy and that we should be given the chance to support you. Secretary Haig believes in the necessity to give the speech and he believes that the speech itself will give the chance for the rest of the Administration to support the President. As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, it is very important for a long-term relationship with the Soviets that they realize how serious we are in our own front year and that it is important for the Chinese to understand this as well.

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Mr. Carlucci expressed Secretary Weinberger's support for the program. He believes in a balanced strategy and the absolute necessity of mobilizing U.S. opinion in regard to the speech. He also raised the question of how to handle Castro, particularly in a public forum. Here is a question where we don't want building up, we want to constantly undercut him. Furthermore, we must remember that Castro's extremely skillful in using U.S. public opinion media. Overall, Mr. Carlucci believes our program is in pretty good shape, but we need to go forward with this speech.

Mr. Carlucci then turned to Secretary Fred Ikle. Secretary Ikle warned against that Fidel Castro has amazing ability to use and manipulate our media and that furthermore a Cuban military intervention in Central America would be disastrous for the United States.

Secretary Baldrige echoed agreement with the remarks of Ambassador Brock.

At this point Mr. Deaver said that he understood the program and the need for the program, but he was not clear as to why the speech should be made by the President at this time.

Judge Clark responded that he agreed with Ambassador Kirkpatrick that the problem was a large one and the President must share this problem with the people and the Congress. That the speech itself is only one pillar of a public affairs strategy; it is not the beginning and it is not the end of that strategy. We need to sustain momentum with the Congress and the public. We need to have public appearances by the Cabinet. We need a White House strategy public affairs under Jim Baker's control to coordinate that strategy.

Again Judge Clark pointed out our effort will not begin nor end with the President's speech. That unless the speech is made, we won't be credible in the nation. Our efforts will not go forward. In fact, little will happen, or not enough will happen.

Mr. Baker, at this point, stated that he agreed with the program. He believes in a strong legislative public affairs strategy program, but he does also believe that the speech alone won't solve the problem, won't give us the consensus, and may risk a revival of our Vietnam problem. The President should and can

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address the economic situation at an appropriate time, but a speech that deals with the security problem will add to our serious domestic political problem. We must go to the Congress first. We cannot put the President out in front until we have an answer and until we have a strategy underway.

At this point Mr. Meese interjected by saying he shared a similar concern. He believes that the CBI is one of the best initiatives that we have in this Administration. It is a logical follow-up to Cancun. Let's press on this. Let's not mix in El Salvador with the CBI because that will kill it. If we try to use both economic and security at the same time we will lose both.

Secretary Regan then said that he agreed with Mr. Baker. He said, first we must ask ourselves who is this speech for? Is it for Havana and Moscow, or is it for Duluth? With our internal economic problems it would be very difficult to get people's attention on a region outside the United States. Furthermore, by raising the question of security you are uping the ante by dwelling on the threat.

Director Casey interjected by saying that unless you alert the country, you won't get the support from the Congress or the country on the Caribbean Basin Initiative. You must go and outline the whole problem as it is.

Mr. Baker then asked how. Mr. Casey responded by saying, we must spell out the CBI. The CBI itself cannot be justified without a sense of threat.

Mr. Baker then emphasized that we must do what we need to do, but don't put the President up front until public opinion and the Congress begin to understand the problem better than they do now.

Ambassador Enders said that he had been speaking to many Congressmen perhaps as many as 100 in the last few days, and that out of 100 perhaps 95 were aware of a national security problem in Central America. He also said that 30 of them also asked, what will the President say? And that he, the President, is the only one who can define the problem as such. Unless there is such definition by the President, the Congress will not follow. It is also true, Mr. Enders said, you don't have to spell out the solution in detail. What you want to do is point out the need for a sustained broad-gauged, interrelated effort.

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Admiral Hayward then joined in by saying that he, speaking in the name of the Joint Chiefs, thinks that the speech is important, that without it the Congress will not help us, the President must take the lead, and the security element must support and protect all the other elements that we have been discussing.

The President then asked what was the population of the region. The answer was at least in South America, Central America and the Caribbean some 350 million people. The President then noted that we were some 220 million people. He also pointed out that he understood the differences were being expressed at the table. He also understood the need to mobilize our efforts, but if the President fails to mobilize those efforts how much further behind will we be? He also pointed out that many people believe that we will be in a war soon. He also pointed out that many people believe, including some of his own supporters, that this President is likely to get us into a war. The President then asked, if I do make a speech, how do I avoid an I told you so reaction among the public? On the other hand, if we look further down the road I would not want history to record that there was a time when we could have headed off this hemisphere becoming an extension of the Warsaw Pact. Lenin may then turn out to have been right when he said that someday the Western hemisphere would be ripe fruit after Europe. Can we answer the question on how to tell people this is our Southern border. What a bastion of strength it would be if North and South America had bonds like those between the U.S. and Canada. No Kremlin would want to take on that. How do we frame a speech that keeps the protesters out of the snow. We never explained Vietnam, did we? Eisenhower told Kennedy that more troops would be needed. We tried to fight a war pretending there was none. We need concepts of what the speech would say. Shouldn't we say that there is too much misinformation, that we did not discover El Salvador in this Administration, that we are trying to address the economic problems of El Salvador, that we want to be a friend, that the CBI is our way of helping countries to achieve self-sustaining growth, that we will continue our close friendship with Canada and Mexico, that in the end we are all Americans. Can we do a speech without making it sound like war? We are seeking to offer the advantages of our economic system to others. We have had good neighbor policies before. None of them succeeded. We forget our size and our strength. We tried to impose our way. We should go to the Caribbean and say we are all neighbors. Let's hear your ideas and together bring about the things you are interested in.

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The problem is how I am perceived. I was a hawk in Vietnam because I believe if you ask people to die you should give them a chance to win. The best way to prevent war is to get to the problem early. Can I do something without adding to the perception of me as a hawk?

Judge Clark then said that we have received the President's charge. By noon Friday, we would have some concepts prepared.

The Vice President pointed out that people are asking what are we doing in Poland? We haven't been put on the spot yet with Cuba. No one has said, what are you going to do about MIGs. Some people on the Hill are asking for help on explaining aid to El Salvador. We need some suggestions about the cancer which is Cuba. But don't ask the President to get out front. What are you going to do about Cuba? The OAS appeals to me. We could mobilize opinion there. But don't raise Cuba and action without knowing what we intend to do.

The President concluded the meeting by saying, let's talk about others, not Cuba. Let's isolate them. It is the only state that is not American. Let's give Cuba a chance to rejoin the Western Hemisphere. I'm not thinking about this in the speech. It is more like talking about the North American Accord. North and South America together equals China, a pretty big collossus if we were all buddies.

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SUBJECT: Minutes of NSC Meeting -- February 10

Attached at Tab A are the minutes of the February 10 NSC meeting held in the Cabinet Room.

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve the minutes of the February 10 NSC meeting.

Approve

Disapprove

DECLASSIFIED  
ON 03/16/01 BY SP-6  
10/10/01 DATE 10/10/01

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