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MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Carlos Salinas, President of Mexico,
on February 28, 1991 (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
Carlos Salinas, President
Notetaker: Nancy Bearg Dyke

DATE, TIME February 28, 1991, 9:31 - 9:37 a.m. EST
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: Hello, my friend. How are you? (U)

President Salinas: I wanted to call to congratulate you on the decisive victory for the US and coalition. (U)

The President: You are nice to call. It is a victory, and our forces and the coalition forces did a superb job. But, there is no sense of elation because it is not really over. That man (Saddam Hussein) is still putting out propaganda and failing to recognize what has happened. I am pleased with how it has gone up to now and that the killing has stopped. (U)

President Salinas: People know he is a liar. (U)

The President: Do you think they do? (U)

President Salinas: The returning Iraqi soldiers will tell the truth: They had no feeding, no leadership, no support. (U)

The President: Yes, but the problem is he is still there and putting out propaganda. The troops will tell the truth, I agree. The destruction has been tremendous. In the debriefing of 50,000 prisoners of war, many are turning on him and saying he lied, he deceived them. I know it will work out in the end. I am pleased, but it's not a clean finish yet. (U)

President Salinas: Congratulations on your masterful political handling of the situation. (U)

The President: It was a team effort -- Jim Baker and Scowcroft and his team. I got good advice. The UN part was good --

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yourself included. Things fell into place. Diplomacy worked well. I am being given more personal credit than I deserve. (U)

President Salinas: You put at risk your political career with your decisions, and for that you deserve credit. (U)

The President: You're nice to say so. How are things at home? (U)

President Salinas: Fine. People are supportive of fulfilling the UN resolutions. (U)

The President: Good. There is more work coming for the UN. The UN has to cross the Ts and dot the Is. Now we can shift back to other matters. My interest in this hemisphere is not diminished but I have just been focusing on the Gulf. (U)

President Salinas: I was so pleased that on the same day as the ceasefire, you approved the free trade negotiations (?). (He was probably referring to the sending of the Enterprise for the Americas legislation to the Congress.) (U)

The President: It's not hollow rhetoric and we won't forget it. I appreciate your call and know this has posed political difficulties for you too, so I appreciate your support. Are you coming here any time soon? (U)

President Salinas: In April I will go to Canada to see Brian Mulroney, then to the University of Chicago and San Antonio. (U)

The President: If I am down there or you are around here, we could have a cup of coffee. It is good for us to stay in touch, so you'd be welcome to come in. What is the San Antonio appearance? (U)

President Salinas: Thirty centuries of Mexican art. (U)

The President: I think I know someone putting that on. (U)

President Salinas: Congratulations again. (U)

The President: Love to your wonderful family. (U)

President Salinas: Same to yours. (U)

The two parties say goodbye to each other. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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