

# Withdrawal/Redaction Sheet

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Document No. and Type	Subject/Title of Document	Date	Restriction	Class.
06. Memcon	Memorandum of Conversation with Jose Cordoba, Chief of Staff to President Salinas, and Brent Scowcroft [FOIA exemptions redacted] (5 pp.)	10/21/91	(b)(1)	C

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- P-5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
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THE WHITE HOUSE  
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2005-0357-MR  
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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with Jose Cordoba, Chief of Staff to President Salinas of Mexico (U)

PARTICIPANTS: General Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs  
William T. Pryce, Senior Director, Latin American Affairs, NSC (Notetaker)  
  
Jose Cordoba, Chief of Staff to President Salinas of Mexico

DATE, TIME AND PLACE: October 18, 1991, 4:05 - 5:00pm DST  
White House

Dr. Cordoba: Said that he asked for the meeting [redacted] (b)(1)

[redacted] (b)(1) Mexico was hoping that the North American Free Trade Agreement could be finished before the U.S. elections.

General Scowcroft: Responded that the United States also would like to see the Agreement finished before the U.S. elections.

Dr. Cordoba: [redacted] (b)(1)

Cordoba then went into a little bit of the Mexican substantive position, [redacted] (b)(1) on three items: textile quotas, automobiles, and dispute settlement mechanisms. He said that Mexico was interested in an immediate phase out of quotas on textiles. [redacted] (b)(1)



(b)(1) (b)(1) He felt that treatment of third country imports should be the same for all countries. (Ø)

Mr. Pryce: Interjected that country of origin problems were a very important and delicate item for the United States because there was fear in the U.S. that Free Trade Agreement could be used as a back door for imports from third countries. We had to be very careful that this not happen or be perceived as to having happened. (Ø)

Dr. Cordoba: Said that it was also a question of tariff peaks.

(b)(1)

General Scowcroft: Responded that tariff peaks are a problem for us in all negotiations. (Ø)

Dr. Cordoba: (b)(1) Dr. Cordoba said he realized that (b)(1) the Uruguay Round was taking place at the same time and there was a fear that if the U.S. made concessions in Mexico, this would weaken its bargaining position with the Uruguay Round. (b)(1)

(b)(1) (b)(1) Mexico was also interested in a successful Uruguay Round, but did not want to have this hold up progress on the North American Free Trade Agreement. We would have to have serious negotiations before the Uruguay Round. Cordoba said that there was a meeting coming up on October 27 between the Ministers, and he hoped that this meeting would result in determination to have a draft of a Treaty by the end of the year.

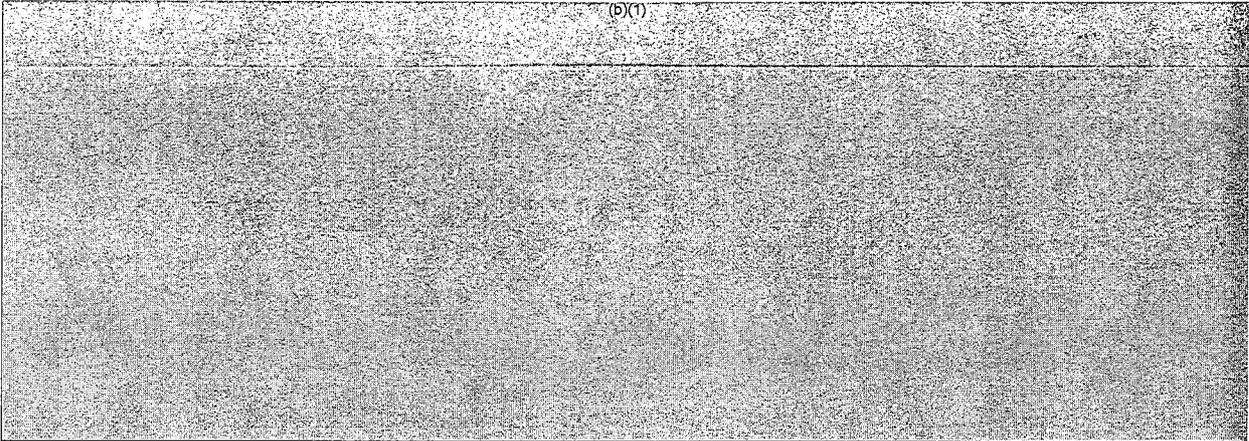
(b)(1) He added that maybe a quiet meeting between the three principal negotiators after the October 27 meeting would be useful in order to hammer out an agreement. (Ø)

General Scowcroft: Repeated that tariff peaks are a problem for us. And added again that he hoped there could be a draft by the end of the year. (Ø)

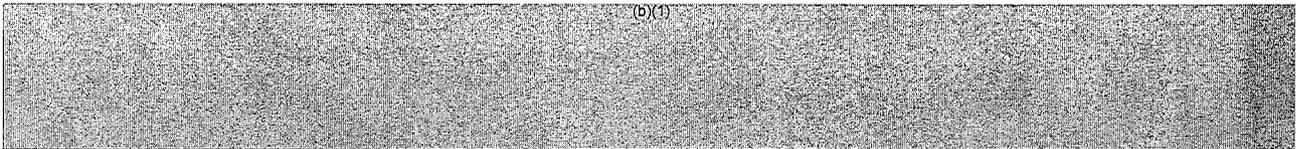
Dr. Cordoba: Said he hoped that the essential difficult problems would have been dealt with before the December 14 meeting between the two Presidents and the final draft could be finished at the end of the year. (Ø)

General Scowcroft: Said that it might very well be possible to consider a private meeting of the three Ministers. He reiterated that the President is very interested in having an agreement

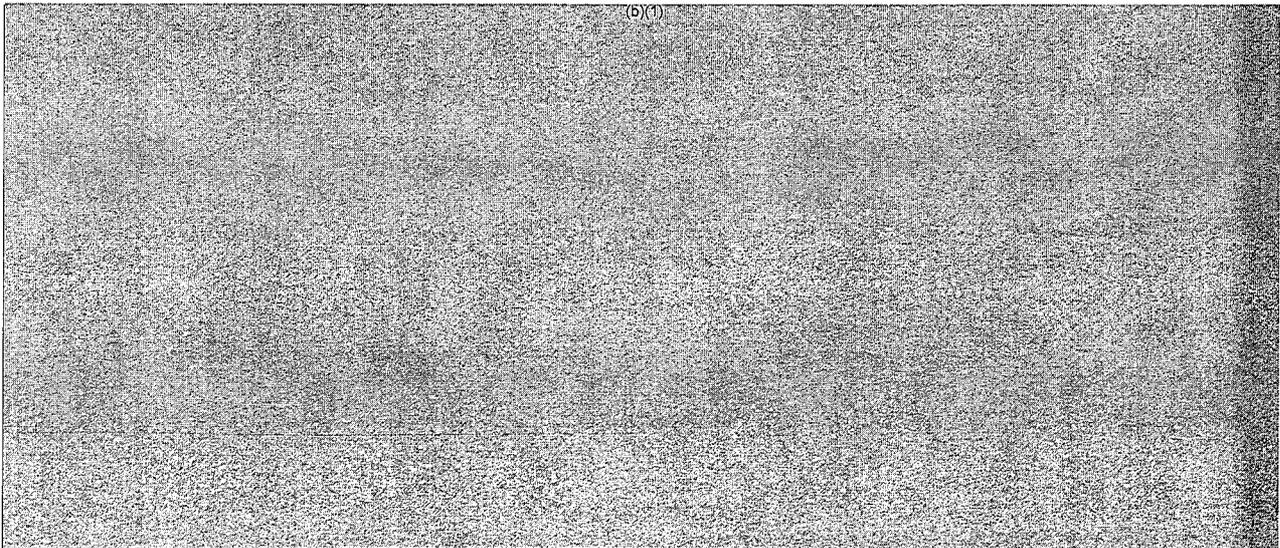
concluded in the first half of next year. If we ask for a draft by the end of the year, we may have a final agreement in January. (C)



General Scowcroft: Responded that in all candor, what we want is to get rid of Castro. He wanted to remind Cordoba that is our basic position. He added that it is obvious that the economic situation was worsening and things will be tough for Castro. He asked whether the Mexicans had something particular in mind. (C)



General Scowcroft: Responded that we are prepared to respond to an initiative from Castro, that if he does something positive, we would try to recognize that. He has done nothing so far. We have seen nothing come out of the recently concluded Party Congress. If Castro frees up his economy, if he opens up to democracy, we would be ready to support such moves. But, we have seen no indication that he wants to do so. (C)



(b)(1)

General Scowcroft: Said, that the U.S. is not trying to have Castro overthrown. We disagree with what Castro is doing and would like to see change. We do not think there should be action until he actually makes reforms. (Ø)

(b)(1)

General Scowcroft: Responded that this was reassuring, that we would be very distressed if Mexico were to do so. (Ø)

(b)(1)

General Scowcroft: Responded that if the Soviets sell oil to Cuba at hard currency world prices, the situation will be very difficult for the Cubans. We worry that Castro continues to export arms. We don't want this. If there is a real solution to Cuba, real changes, we would be supportive. But we do not see anything good coming from pumping up the economy until there are reforms. (Ø)

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

EL SALVADOR

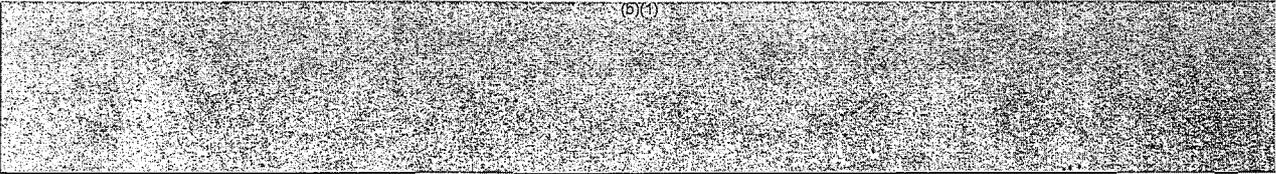
Dr. Cordoba:

(b)(1)

(b)(1)

Dr. Cordoba: Said that Mexico thought it was useful to have the talks alternate between Mexico and New York. Mexico was perfectly happy to have the talks in Mexico, but in some

(b)(1)



General Scowcroft: Said he agreed completely; that we thought it would be best to have the next meeting in New York, and that it was necessary to keep the pressure on the FMLN. (C)

Dr. Cordoba:   
 (C)

TUNA

Dr. Cordoba: Mentioned, as the conversation was drawing to a close, the tuna question. He said that at the last binational meeting in Mexico City, Mexico had agreed that it would not pursue its case in the GATT and the U.S. had agreed to seek to change the U.S. legislation. President Salinas has now decided that Mexico should be able to meet the requirement of the U.S. legislation, perhaps by January or February. And that there would therefore be no need for the U.S. to seek new legislation. (C)

Mr. Pryce: Said this would be very helpful for U.S.-Mexican relations and for Mexico's position worldwide, if it were able to meet these requirements. (C)

Dr. Cordoba: Said that the Mexican tuna industry was not happy with President Salinas' decision, but the President recognized that dolphins were a very emotional issue; that they seem almost like humans; and that it was important for Mexico to comply as soon as possible. (C)

There was general agreement that this was a very positive development and should help the atmosphere for the Free Trade Agreement.

-- End of Conversation --