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Authority EO 12958  
NARA Date 9-28-04

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A/ISS/IPS, Department of State  
E.O. 12958, as amended  
September 4, 2008  
*(6)*

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S/S-7217685  
EXECUTIVE

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

*FOB-1/Darien  
GAP  
CO 35  
FO 2/CO 35  
AC 5*

November 7, 1972

Dear Mr. President: *DR. MIGUEL PASTRANA BORRERO*

From the earliest days of my public career, I have taken a deep interest in building friendship and confidence between the United States and the nations of Latin America and in fostering the economic development of the Latin American countries. One of my dreams, which I believe is shared by millions throughout our hemisphere, has been the bridging of the Darien Gap, thus opening the Pan-American Highway for traffic throughout the Americas. In 1969, I discussed this matter at some length with President Lleras, and we agreed that every effort should be made to go forward with the highway. I am pleased that planning and preparation for its construction have so far proceeded on schedule.

As you are aware, one of the principal problems we have faced has been how to avoid the spread of foot-and-mouth disease into Panama and further northward as a result of constructing the highway. I understand that a solution to this exceedingly serious problem has been more difficult to achieve than we had earlier expected. In addition to the discussions on this subject between officials of our two countries, my Government has consulted the governments of Mexico, the Central American Republics and Panama. These countries would all suffer serious economic losses if their cattle became infected with foot-and-mouth disease.

I believe all governments concerned agree that the costs of allowing foot-and-mouth disease to spread as a result of Darien Gap Highway construction would be unacceptable. Consequently, I have instructed Ambassador Saccio to discuss with you the seriousness with which I

*Leonard*  
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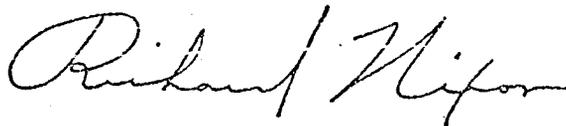
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view this danger and the measures my Government considers essential to its prevention. I am aware that carrying out some of these measures in Colombia may involve difficulties and costs for your government. I assure you that the United States is prepared to assist in resolving the problems which might arise, in order that construction of the Darien Highway in Colombia can be continued.

I hope you will be able to give your personal attention to this most serious matter. I am sure that through the cooperation of both our governments, this problem can be resolved and construction can move forward according to schedule.

With warmest regards.

Sincerely,



His Excellency  
Dr. Misael Pastrana Borrero  
President of the Republic of Colombia  
Bogota

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